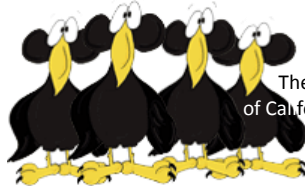




# THE SCARECROW



VOLUME 3-ISSUE 2 FEBRUARY 2011

The Gardeners of the Grove is a member of the Sacramento River Valley District of California Garden Clubs, Inc. and the Pacific Region of National Garden Clubs, Inc.

## A message from our president



Lorraine at Mission Inn, Riverside, CA

One of January's garden club activities certainly proved that 'if you want to get something done, ask a busy person or, in this case, several busy and talented club members. I'm referring to the challenge brought to our club to develop a landscaping plan for the side yard of the Secret Garden property. Focusing on a Mediterranean theme, GOTG's nine-member team didn't take long to meet that challenge. They came up with a well-thought-out plan that was presented to Jennifer and Victor Khal on January 17. They were very pleased with the ideas and intend to incorporate most of them. When the time comes, the team will be available to offer assistance in plant selection. Jennifer stated that if any club members want to get involved in the ongoing work there, they should contact her. It will be very rewarding to watch the progress and see the transformation. Jennifer said that they hope to complete the project by April 21. Team members are: Ruth Hayes, Bonnie Jones, Ron Schager, Phil Teeters, Mary Ellen Trapp, Carol Wheeler, Jeanne and Ken Williamson and I. Thank you all for taking time out of your busy schedules to work on the Secret Garden project. Way to go!

At our January 20 general meeting, I couldn't help notice how some members were drawn to a table

displaying a few garden-related publications and magazines contributed by one or two members. The thought crossed my mind—*what a great way to share!* Maybe you have garden magazines you've read and no longer want. Let's start a three-month magazine swap at our February, March and April meetings. Bring just one or two gently used magazines to the reading table for others to peruse and swap for the ones you want. It's a great way to review magazines we don't subscribe to. If you wish, return those magazines at a future meeting for others to enjoy and swap for new ones.

Our first-ever, club sponsored Garden Tour is scheduled for August 6, 2011. We anticipate a successful fundraiser; however, member support would be appreciated to help plan and coordinate the event. Our 2-member Tour Committee really needs help, so they are forming a planning committee immediately. And, *speaking of sharing*, this is your opportunity to share your hard work and gardening skills by hosting a garden tour at your residence. What a great way to share a bit of your gardening passion with others who share a common interest! If interested in joining the planning committee and/or including your garden on the tour, please contact Lou Jean Thomason or Diana Stuck.

Like most garden clubs, ours is a beehive of activity where, behind the scenes, something is always happening and someone or a committee has taken on a task or club project. For example, the Membership Committee is working on the May 21 Membership Drive to be held at the Secret Garden. The Tour & Fundraiser committee members finalized their plans for the June 8 Lavender and Roses Bus Tour. Flyers are circulating and paid reservations are arriving in the mail. Don't be left behind on our only daytrip of the year!

**HAPPY**



**GROUNDHOG DAY**

## The Second of February

*There's only one day the whole long year,  
That I hope and pray the sun won't appear.  
The 2<sup>nd</sup> of February, you all know,  
The groundhog goes searching for his shadow.  
If he should find it, the story is told,  
We'll have six more weeks of Winter's cold.  
But if it is cloudy, his shadow's not there;  
There will soon be warm weather and days will be fair.  
So please Mr. Sun, just for this one day,  
Find a big dark cloud and stay away.*

*Author Unknown*

Hope to see you at our next general meeting on Monday, February 28<sup>th</sup>.

*Lorraine Radke, President*

## The City Gardener

*By Carol Wheeler, Editeur de Jardinage*

### 2011—Year of the Zinnia

For decades zinnias have been a flowering annual of choice for spreading color throughout the garden as well as for cutting to bring indoors. Years of breeding have brought striking new colors, shapes, sizes, and growing habits to the humble zinnia. Named for Dr. Johann Zinn, who wrote the first description of the flower, zinnias became successful in the garden by the mid-19th century. They originated in Mexico.

Like dahlias and chrysanthemums, zinnias have a variety of flower forms; single, semi-double, or double. They also come in an amazing array of colors, just about every color but blue. Most are solid but some, in particular *Z. Haageana*, are bi-colored with a contrasting color at the tip of each petal.

Zinnias are hot weather plants that do not gain from being planted early. They may be subject to mildew in foggy places or if given overhead watering. Sow seeds where plants are to grow or plant nursery plants. Zinnias grow best in full sun, which means 6-8 hours of direct sun daily. They prefer moist, well-draining soil—work in organic matter whether in the ground or containers.

Zinnias have been referred to for years as the “cut and come again” flowers. Cut one flower stem above a pair of leaves and, within days, two new stems with flower

buds will have taken its place. They can be used fresh or dried in floral arrangements.

Zinnia Elegans make excellent cut flowers. Properly handled, they will last at least a week in a vase before they begin to look tired. Zinnia Angustifolia is less frequently used in designs, but the flowers are long lasting and add an airiness to arrangements.

Gather flowers in the early morning before the sun has had a chance to dry or wilt them. Select blooms that have not fully opened—they will continue to open indoors. But, do not expect tight buds to open. Bring a bucket of water into the garden and place the stems in it as you cut so they don't become clogged by air bubbles. Once indoors, re-cut the stems under water, removing the lower leaves and let the flowers rest for a few hours before arranging them.

The National Garden Bureau has chosen 2011 as the year of the zinnia. A bed full of purple zinnias—what a lovely thought—to brighten our gloomy winter skies. Ahhh!

Taken in part from *The National Gardener* Winter 2011

## Garden Hints for February

It's not too late! Finish pruning roses, fruit trees, shade trees and deciduous shrubs and vines.

Established evergreen shrubs, hedges and vines can be tidied up and trimmed.

By mid-month or just before bud swell, spray fruit trees. Use copper sulfate or fixed copper to control leaf curl on peaches and nectarines. Spray other deciduous fruit and nut trees with horticultural oil to control scale, red mites and aphids.

Still cold? Watch for frost warnings; keep tender plants covered at night, uncovered in the daytime. Tender plants, need to be well watered; stressed plants are more subject to killer frost. Leave frost damage on plants; damaged leaves may help protect the rest of the plant from further harm.

This is a great time for planting new trees and shrubs, especially ones with outstanding fall foliage.

Check garden tools for spring readiness; clean, sharpen and oil, if needed, or maybe get a new pair of clippers.

It's not too early to start laying mulch. Toward the end of the month plant summer bulbs: Dahlia, cannas, gladiola, liatris

Fertilize fall planted annuals and perennials.

Watch for aphids on roses—blast with hose or use insecticidal soap.

Divide summer and fall blooming perennials—discard older coarse center growth, replant outer sections.

Divide if clumps are crowded or last year's bloom was sparse.

When the ground dries, prepare beds for flowers and vegetables. Amend soil as needed with compost.

### Footsteps in the sand, cont.

This is the second installment of my anonymous friend's Christmas letter about the Sonoran Desert.

*Living far from the city with all its lights, we are blessed with a view of the night sky that reveals thousands of stars and a moon that shines so clearly that it lights the entire desert with its gentle glow.*

*Clumps of mountains dot the horizon, rising in rugged splendor above the sloping valleys and flatlands that surround them. In the clear desert air, they are easily visible from miles around. The morning and evening light and stormy skies make them just pop up out of the landscape.*



Mitch Dobrowner, El Capitan Valley Arizona

*The usually dry stream beds—washes—are lined with trees. In the winter, the dry beds become fast moving streams, providing water that sustains the trees. I love walking among the dry washes beneath the canopy of Palo Verde trees.*



*I am no botanist, but my father did grow flowers [my friend's father was a Dutch farmer] so I have devel-*

*oped a keen interest in plant life. A great variety of plants abound in the desert: cactus, trees, grasses, wild flowers are all around. They are many shapes and sizes. But none of them appears out of place. Each has its own niche and lives in harmony with the others. As I walk along in the morning light on a little dirt road, I feel like I am walking in a manicured park. Nothing is out of place.*

*Another amazing sight is to see how ingeniously each plant has developed strategies for survival.*

(To be continued)

### Birthington's Washday Treat

Here's a quick and easy dessert for February. The red cherries make it perfect for both Valentine's Day and Washington's Birthday (or Birthington's Washday, as my Dad used to say).

#### CHEERY CHERRY CRUNCH

- 1/2 c. butter or margarine
- 1 pkg. yellow cake mix
- 2 cans (1lb. 5oz. each) cherry pie filling
- 1/2 c. chopped walnuts

Heat oven to 350°. Cut butter into dry cake mix until mixture resembles coarse cornmeal. Reserve 1 c. of this mix. Pat remaining mixture into an ungreased 13 X 9" pan, building up 1/2" edge. Spread pie filling over cake mixture to within 1/2" of edge. Mix walnuts and the reserved mix and sprinkle over the top. Bake 45-50 minutes. Serve warm with whipped cream or ice cream.



Staff Photo

The editor's second piece!

#### Variations:

- Lemon cake mix with peach or apricot filling
- White cake mix with blueberry filling
- Spice cake mix with apple filling

That's it,  
Jeanne

**Editor's note:** Jeanne's recipe is yummy good. But at our ages, we shouldn't be eating the whole thing; especially, in this household where the responsibility for eating goodies rests on one person—Porky Me. So plan on sharing—fortunately, I have four hungry boys just down the street and two granddaughters coming over tomorrow. Someone could make it for one of our meetings! (I think I'll take another picture.)

## Our next meeting

Our next meeting is scheduled for **Monday, February 28, 2011** at the Jessie Wright Suites at 9275 E Stockton Boulevard **at 6:30 PM**. Bushnell Gardens Nursery manager Richard Swanson will be our guest speaker. From his 25 years of experience, Mr. Swanson will share with us *how to make our winter gardens vibrant and colorful*.



Bushnell Gardens Nursery manager  
Richard Swanson

Bushnell Gardens Nursery is located at 5255 Douglas Boulevard in Granite Bay.

## The bear went over the mountain...

### Sacramento River Valley District

Club member, Ron Schager, chatted with us last meeting about the wonders of composting. During the discussion that ensued, there was a great deal of enthusiasm expressed about worms and worm castings and a seeming desire to know more.

While browsing the SRVD Web site, I stumbled across this piece in the River Valley Garden Club's November 2010 newsletter about **Worm Fancy**.

*Our passion is the redirection of food wastes out of our landfills. Worm Fancy is comprised of two families located in the Sacramento suburb of Antelope. Michelle and Kate started Worm Fancy with their husbands to bring*

*vermicomposting to the local elementary schools. After visiting the school lunchroom and watching the volume of food waste put in the trash every day we knew something had to be done. Unfortunately there are no funds to start a vermicomposting project in the school system. So we started Worm Fancy to help fund our outreach into the schools.*

*Worm Fancy is your ideal Sacramento area source to buy worms and worm castings (excrement of the earthworm called vermicomposting). Worm Fancy is a local business focused on teaching people about vermiculture or vermicomposting. We want you to learn to successfully use composting worms to compost your kitchen scraps and turn them into odorless organic fertilizer for your garden or house plants.*

*Our dream would be to see a worm bin in every Sacramento Area home diverting tons of food waste from our landfills every year. Outreach in the elementary schools is one step in teaching how each household can make a difference in the reduction of waste.*

*Worm Fancy*

Learn more about Worm Fancy at:

<http://www.wormfancy.com> or contact Michelle and Kate at 916.560.8023. Their email address is [wormfancy@live.com](mailto:wormfancy@live.com).

### California Garden Clubs, Inc.

California Garden Clubs' *Garden Patch Pointers* has a good article about growing and using herbs. Always plant them near the kitchen, otherwise, like me; you'll reach for the conveniently handy, commercially dried herbs on the kitchen shelf. (It's only 22 steps from the stove to our herb garden. You'd chuckle at the excuses I can come up with for not making the trip.)

Check out:

<http://californiagardenclubs.com/content/potted-chrysanthemums-perennial-phlox-and-grass>

### Pacific Region of National Garden Club, Inc.

The official publication of the Pacific Region of NGC is *WACONIAH* [the Dakota word for fountain or spring?]. It is available by online subscription:

<http://www.pacificregiongardenclubs.org/WACO.htm>

### National Garden Club, Inc.

The National Gardening Club's link to Gardening Tips includes two interesting articles worth checking: *How to Make Softwood Cuttings* and *Heirloom Roses*.

*How to Make Softwood Cuttings* discusses starting evergreen azaleas, privet, mock orange, butterfly bush and others from softwood cuttings.

*Heirloom Roses* highlights the benefits of growing heirloom roses over cultivating modern day roses. It may make a believer of you.

Visit:  
<http://www.gardenclub.org/gardening/growingtips> .

## Membership

We are 37 members strong. No new members joined last month. Please remember to bring a prospective new member to our next meeting.

## Upcoming events for 2011

February 5, 2011 – 10AM -Elk Grove Community Garden Pruning Workshop

February 17, 2011 – SRVD Board Meeting and luncheon. Speaker: Bill Judson on gardening is exercise.

March 16, 2011 – SRVD bus tour “Bouquet to Art” S.F. De Young Museum

March 23 – 27, 2011 – San Francisco Flower & Garden Show, San Mateo Events Center

March 26 & 27, 2011 – Sacramento Garden & Art Center’s Spring Sale

April 1 -3, 2011 – Northern California Wildflower Weekend, Feather Falls Casino & Hotel, Oroville  
[www.norcalwildflowers.org](http://www.norcalwildflowers.org)

April 5 – 7, 2011 - Flower Show School, Folsom. Hosted by SRVD

April 7 -9, 2011 – California State Flower & Garden Show, Cal Expo

April 16, 2011 – 9:30 AM to 2:00 PM - Open Garden, Historic Rose Garden, Sacramento Historic City Cemetery

April 19, 2011 – 9 AM, Morningsun Herb Farm, 6137 Pleasant Valley Rd., Vacaville

April 23, 2011 – Elk Grove Community Garden Plant Sale

May 11, 2011 – Elk Grove Garden Club bus tour. Cornerstone Gardens, Sonoma

May 21, 2011 – GOTG Membership Drive “Cupcakes & Bouquets” at the Secret Garden.

May 26, 2011 – SRVD Board Meeting and luncheon. Speaker: Renee Reibel on fun and fabulous flower arrangements for summer. *GOTG Raffle Committee to conduct raffle.*

## Web sites

**National Garden Club Inc.**

<http://www.gardenclub.org/home.aspx>

**Pacific Region of National Garden Club, Inc.**

<http://www.pacificregiongardenclubs.org/>

**California Garden Clubs, Inc.**

<http://www.californiagardenclubs.org/>

**Sacramento River Valley District of California Garden Clubs, Inc.** <http://srvd.org/>

**The Elk Grove Citizen:** [www.egcitizen.com](http://www.egcitizen.com)



## CLASSIFIED

Volunteers–GOTG

2011

**HELP WANTED** volunteers for the **fund raising, and membership committees.**



# THE SCARECROW

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