



Beyond the Garden Gate

Elk Grove Garden Club

www.elkgrovegardenclub.org

December 2022 Vol. 15 Issue 4

MONTHLY MEETING

December 8, 2022

Gil Albani Recreation Center
8830 Sharkey Avenue, Elk Grove
Continental Breakfast 10 am
Meeting 10:30 am

**DON'T FORGET TO BRING:
NONPERISHABLE GROCERIES
FOR THE FOOD BANK AND
THE CANS YOU HAVE SAVED
FOR THE PETAL CONNECTION'S
FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS.**



Jan Scheeler

12/3



Next Book Club Meeting

January 17, 2023

Book Selection:

Silent Spring by

Rachel Carson, 1994

Editors:

Silvia Boggs

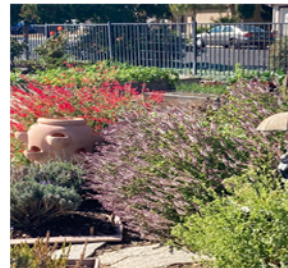
Olinda Cortez

Program on Sharing:

Elk Grove Community Garden and Elk Grove Food Bank

Susan Muckey, Vice President

The December meeting of sharing includes learning about two volunteer groups that serve the Elk Grove community, and how they work together.



The Elk Grove Community Garden is located at 10025 Hampton Oak Drive, Elk Grove. The 1.13 acre plot was donated in 1999 to the City of Elk Grove by developer Lennar Communities. In 2009 the EGCG became its own 501(c)(3) public nonprofit. Bernadette (Bernie) Fenwick will tell us about the programs and events the garden offers to Elk Grove.



The Elk Grove Food Bank was established in 1974 by the Ministerial Association. In 2004 it became an independent 501(c)(3) corporation. It has grown to 16 programs, 12 employees and over 800 volunteers. Valerie Erwin, Community Outreach Manager, will speak to us about the services the Food Bank provides to the community.

Simple Holiday Crafts

VP Susan Muckey will introduce us to a few crafted items that can be made quickly, and sometimes without instruction because just seeing them is enough to know how to proceed. You'll likely want to take pictures with your phone. We will not be crafting as a group, just gathering ideas.

Message from the President

Mary Adams-Wiley

Holiday greetings to all of you! You're on schedule with your planning, arranging, shopping, and decorating, right? Me neither. But, I do have plans to start earlier next year. Whoops, I likely say that every year. I'm going for a minimal look this time with a small tree (up but yet to be decorated) and only some of my favorite Christmas treasures that I've accumulated over a few decades.

I have been baking though because Thursday is the delivery date for the Holiday Cookies project. I assigned myself to do the gingerbread boys, and as always it was a lot of fun and took twice as long as I remembered from previous years.



Super-Successful Fundraiser Last Month

For a few years our club has done an auction to support a \$500 scholarship for a student at Cosumnes River College. This year in an effort to provide a \$1000 award, and to expand our goals in the future, we developed a plan with something for everybody, and a greater focus on inviting guests so we were not just selling to each other. We left two elements from the past in this year's effort — the food although more limited, and the auction. We added craft tables which were the hit of the day, and beautifully arranged by Claudia Horn. Claudia also provided the overall floor plan and had the flexibility to move the food inside when the lobby space was suddenly no longer available.

Drum Roll — The Treasurer, Scott Nicholas, reports that the deposits from the November 10 event including only a few of the payments for the holiday cookies on site or immediately after receipt of orders were \$ 2,514.50. Scholarship donations including for craft items that Donna Williams made last summer brought the total just over \$2700. There is more income to be posted this month on the cookie sale and a few expenses as well, so you will be updated again with the December 31 Treasurer's report.

Crafter Donna Williams brought in the most money, Claudia Horn gets best decorator award, but the person who had the best time, was the luckiest, and the most excited to be there was Mary Anne Strohmaier who won the Raffle for a \$300 holiday quilt provided by Elk Grove NorCal Sewing and Vacuum Center. Congratulations, Mary Anne!

Photos from the Fundraiser are posted on our Facebook page.

Two Important EGGC Business Items

Mary Adams-Wiley

(1) Amendment to Bylaws. Attached to this Newsletter is an amendment to the Bylaws written by Nancy Baldwin and Ellison Cowles, approved by the club's board, and now ready for your consideration. It is the responsibility of the President to . . . “notify the entire membership of any proposed amendments to the Bylaws at least thirty (30) days prior to consideration for adoption”. This is your notification that you should read the material, ask your questions now, and be prepared to vote at the January 12th meeting.

(2) Election of EGGC Secretary for the next 6 months to complete the term formerly held by Christine Burnett who resigned due to health concerns. Vivian Sellers, Master Gardener and Past-President, although not truly looking for another position, has generously agreed to accept this office if elected. The vote will be at this Thursday's meeting.

Why Attend the SRVD District Meetings?

Past-President Nancy Baldwin

And what the heck is SRVD? Well, The California Garden Clubs Inc. organizes itself into districts and then clubs. Our district is the Sacramento River Valley District. The SRVD includes 14 clubs in the region, ranging from Vallejo to Folsom.

The SRVD meetings are worth attending because they are an interesting way to spend a morning. They have good programs with speakers an individual club may not be able to attract, plus a raffle, plant sale, and lunch. One meeting each year (probably the May one this time) is particularly interesting because each club reports on what they have been doing, which can generate lots of ideas for potential speakers or programs for our club. It's also a way to get to know some of the members of the other clubs in our district.

Grab a friend or two, carpool from Burlington Coat Factory (our traditional meeting spot), and spend the morning among like-minded people.

Check your Yearbook for the schedule of upcoming meetings. The next one will be February 15, 2023. The speaker will be Taylor Lewis, UC Davis Nursery, Arboretum, and Public Garden Manager. UC Davis presenters have typically put on excellent programs.

There will be a signup sheet at the January and February meetings, so we know how many to expect for the carpools. Hope to see you there!

Christmas Cactus

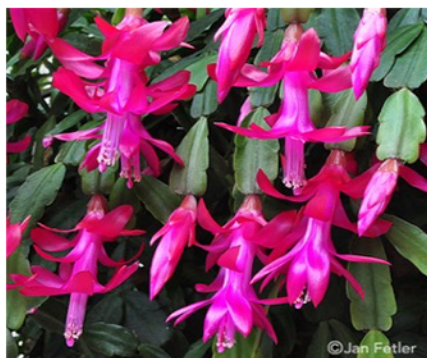
By Jan Fetler

There are 2 *Schlumbergera* varieties that bloom in late fall. Both are often called Christmas Cactus. The plant most folks grow is actually a Thanksgiving cactus (*Schlumbergera truncata*). It blooms in many colors and usually begins in November. Flowers are held horizontally, and leaf segments are serrated with soft, pointed edges. Hybridizers are working on yellow varieties like 'Christmas Flame' displayed here.



Schlumbergera truncata, Thanksgiving cactus

The "real" Christmas cactus (*Schlumbergera buckleyi*) is similar but usually blooms in December or later. The color is hot pink (only) with flowers hanging in a pendulous fashion. Leaf segment edges are rounded.



Schlumbergera buckleyi Christmas cactus

There is another similar plant. The Easter cactus (officially *Hatiora gaertneri*, but often offered as *Rhipsalidopsis gaertneri* or *Schlumbergera gaertneri*) that blooms in spring. Flowers come in many colors, but with a single whorl of petals, they are shaped like daisies. Leaf edges are rounded. Culture instructions are similar to the two above, but check online for more details.



Hatiora gaertneri Easter cactus

Culture for *Schlumbergera truncata* and *buckleyi*

Plants bloom best when roots are crowded and when they live outdoors spring through fall. Shortening days and cooler temperatures signal plants to set flower buds. Give them plenty of light but no direct sun. Outdoors, choose a location on the north side of a fence or building. Indoors, a sheer curtain that blocks direct sun works for most exposures.

Plants are very hardy and have virtually no pests. Overwatering is the biggest threat to their health. They are succulents and can store some water in their leaves. Water when the soil surface is dry but not more than about once a week. They should never sit in a pool of water.

Red leaves are a sign of stress. In some cases, just a heavy bloom can be the stressor—as in the blooming plant pictured at the end. Other common causes include too much sun/sunburn and over-watering. If the plant looks doomed with shriveled, drooping leaves, take some cuttings and propagate according to instructions below.

Repot in spring when plants begin active growth, but think "root bound" for best blooming. Any good potting soil will do. Spring is also a good time for some all-purpose fertilizer. Go easy on fertilizer.

Propagate by twisting off leaf branches. Shorten cuttings to the newest three to five leaves. Put cutting in water to cover the lowest leaf by half. Roots will form on the end resting on the bottom of the jar. You can also propagate in pots. In that case, allow the cuttings to sit on a shelf for a day or two to "callus" the cut end. Place cuttings in fresh potting soil, water and cover with a plastic bag to maintain moisture.

To bathe, spray the plant with a hose to clean off the summer dirt. Then mix mild liquid soap (Castile is best or use insecticidal soap) with water and spray the wet leaves. Water beads dissolve and the plant will dry to a lovely sheen. This bathing method works for most houseplants.

Garden centers and even grocery stores have plants by November. They have been growing under ideal greenhouse conditions so don't be surprised if buds/flowers drop when you get them into your home. They will adapt for future years. Enjoy!



*Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year*