



Bulletin
of the
California Horticultural Society

August
2006

MEETINGS

4:00 PM Botanical gardens walk with speaker at Strybing Arboretum.

Parking is available behind the San Francisco County Fair Building on 9th Ave.

5:30PM NO HOST Dinner will be at Park Chow Restaurant, 1249 Ninth Ave; San Francisco.

7:15 PM Meeting will be held at the SF Botanical Garden's Hall of Flowers at 9th Avenue and Lincoln Way; San Francisco. Announcements, Plant Forum, Program.

***Donation requested \$5.

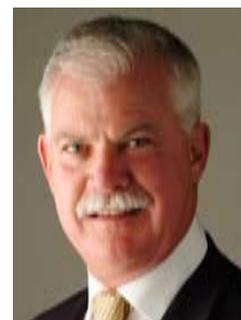
Monday, August 21, 2006

Co-sponsored with San Francisco Botanical Garden Society at Strybing Arboretum

"DEVELOPING NEW PLANTS"

Presented by Dr. Scott Trees, Director of "New Crops" for Ball FloraPlant, Guadalupe, California. He has worked as a plant breeder for almost 30 years. His work now involves the development of new horticultural crops via traditional breeding methods as well as mutation breeding and finding ways to shorten the product development cycle. One of his key interests is developing effective screening techniques that will allow for the selection of commercially useful traits early in the breeding process. One of his newest creations is "Mystic Spires" salvia, a product resulting from irradiation work with the genus. He currently breeds pelargoniums, verbenas, snapdragons, and osteospermum. He is credited with 144 patented varieties with others pending.

In his search for new crops or breeding lines, his travels have taken him to Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Europe, and other places in the world where he has developed cooperative agreements with government botanic gardens and institutions.



The Plant Drawing each month is an important source of funds for the Grants and Scholarships Program. In August, the drawing will include donations from **Berkeley Horticultural Nursery**, courtesy of Paul Doty and to **San Francisco Botanical Garden**, courtesy of Dr. Don Mahoney. Our appreciation to **Suncrest Nurseries Inc.**, Watsonville, courtesy of Michael Craib, the **San Francisco Botanical Garden**, courtesy of **Dr. Don Mahoney** and members Kristin Yanker-Hansen and Linda Baptiste who contributed the outstanding selection of plants for the July meeting.

Monday, September 18, 2006

Co-sponsored with San Francisco Botanical Garden Society at Strybing Arboretum

"WHEN PLANTS CASCADE"

Presented by Ted P. Kipping, noted horticulturist

"When Plants Cascade" even the most quotidian, over used workhouse plants seem more refined and expressive when allowed to flow over the edge of a wall or container revealing a new quality of form and seeming gracefulness in their release from the merely vertical or horizontal. Other plants, unusable in most garden situations "come into their own" when given an opportunity to cascade. Let us explore and celebrate some of the possibilities. I am sure your creativity will conjure up many more.

Monday, October 16, 2006

Co-sponsored with San Francisco Botanical Garden Society at Strybing Arboretum

"Love it, Grow it, How to propagate plants for fun and profit"

Presented by Kathy Echols

Plant Propagation has fascinated people since the beginning of time. Once you start propagating plants, you find that you can't stop. Making new plants starts out with seeds and gradually works into plant parts. From there, you gradually work your way into doing a little hybridizing and soon, you are a total addict. Kathy Echols has been propagating plants for the last 23 years and has been teaching the subject for the last 17. She is past president of International Plant Propagators Western Region, and will talk and show slides of the methods of propagation. She will share techniques she has found that will help you be successful as a propagator. Have you always wanted to grow some special plant that you own? Come learn how to do it.

Whoa. If anyone of you has been outside this summer (and being gardeners, I'm fairly certain we all have) you've noticed that it's been super crazy HOT. Now, I know that a lot of the East Bay folks are used to 90s and 100s and accept that as being a part of summer but being a San Francisco resident, I'm feeling a little overwhelmed! I thought I had to water my pots a lot when temps moved into the upper 70s, Now we're having consistent days in the upper 80s and I have to say, a lot of my plants are looking rather peaked!

It's just these kinds of days that help me realize what an important role gardeners play in today's society. Where do people go to escape the sun's relentless rays? Shade! What provides deliciously refreshing shade? Trees! Who plants trees? Gardeners! Hooray gardeners!

Not only are trees a great escape from the heat, they are also quite efficient at sequestering some of that excess carbon we humans are spewing into the atmosphere, further helping to cool things down. Double bonus!

Trees aren't the only good things we plant. It's been shown that, even in full sun, landscaped areas are up to 10 degrees cooler than their surroundings, often bare dirt or concrete. Although it might not feel that way when you're mowing a lawn at noon,

just imagine how bad things could be if that lawn were black asphalt! Yikes.

And then there's the hard to quantify psychological factor. Recent studies have shown that people living in areas with trees and landscaping are better able to handle the stresses of daily life and, believe it or not, are often thinner! Odd, but true.

Since we're all so busy making life better for everyone around us, we should get together and talk about how great we all are. Oh, wait, we kind of already do that every month. Well, then, we should invite all of our other isolated gardener friends so we can tell them how great they are, too! (Especially since our membership is slightly down this year and I'd like to keep our numbers up.)

Ever take any horticultural classes? Might as well invite your classmates to a Cal Hort meeting to socialize and learn new hort-related things. Ever eat out at a restaurant? Why not stand up and just invite the whole place to a meeting? Actually, I can think of quite a few reasons not to do that, but the first idea, the one in the classroom, that's a good one.

OK, now it's all up to you! I look forward to seeing a whole crop of new faces at the next meeting!

Alameda Gardeners!

NEW Bay-Friendly Landscape Maintenance training & qualification program for experienced public and private professionals who manage landscapes in Alameda County starts up in January 2007.

Learn cutting edge techniques for landscaping locally, reducing waste, conserving water and energy and protecting air and water quality. Comprehensive classes will be taught by sustainable landscaping experts and include hands on activities. Each participant will receive a free copy of the *Bay-Friendly Landscape Guidelines: Sustainable Practices for Landscape Professionals* and other sustainable landscaping resources.

Individuals who complete the training and pass the final exam will:

- Be recognized as "Bay-Friendly Qualified Landscape Professionals"
- Have your name listed on the Bay-Friendly website and in a press release
- Receive a Bay-Friendly Landscaping label pin or uniform patch.
- Include your name on a handout/brochure for BF Gardening workshop participants. (*Over 300 residents participate in the workshop series annually*)

Applications will be available in September 2006. Please visit www.BayFriendly.Org for more details and to apply.

The Bay-Friendly Landscaping Program is offered by StopWaste.Org.



1. Phlox paniculata ‘David’

POLEMONIACEAE

Kristen Yanker-Hansen, Danville

This native of eastern North America which was shown is a very lovely white form of the common perennial garden phlox. Kristen likes this form because the clear white flowers hold up in intense sun and heat and the plant is less susceptible to mildew than other forms of the garden phlox. Phloxes need regular summer water and the clumps should be divided every few years. They particularly do well in warmer areas.



drought tolerant it does like occasional summer water. It likes full sun and is tolerant of fairly cold winter temperatures.

2. Petasites fragrans

ASTERACEAE

Kristen Yanker-Hansen, Danville

This plant from Asia is a near relative of our own native Petasites which is a tall groundcover along streams in the redwood region. Unlike our native, the Asian species is evergreen and is smaller staying less than a foot tall. It functions the same as our native in that it is a good cover good for areas where there is a lot of leaf litter as it puts up new leaves continuously which obscure litter. It may be invasive as it spreads by shallow underground runners, but it is still useful for confined areas of dry shade. The flowers are small white clusters on 10 inch stems. The peltate leaves are round and can get to 8 inches across. *See photo below.*

3. Callirhoe alcaeoides ‘Logan Calhoun’

Malvaceae

Kristen Yanker-Hansen, Danville

This plant is a native of the southwestern United States and is well adapted to our dry summers. It forms a large underground tuberous tap root from which every year rise numerous wirey stems which bloom for a long period with hollyhock like flowers which in this form are very silky white. The leaves are dissected and are somewhat lacey. It spreads wider (to 3 feet) than it gets tall (about 1 foot) While it is somewhat

3. Talbotia elegans

VELLOZIACEAE

Martin Grantham, Berkeley

Martin says this plant grows as a groundcover on wet cliffs in South Africa where the white flowers can profusely cover wet seeps. It appears somewhat like a small orchid as the leaves are slightly leathery and are on stiff petioles. The plant displayed made a wonderful hanging basket, but Martin also grows it as a groundcover in moist shade. The flowers are about an inch across and are somewhat like crocus flowers. The family is an unusual southern hemisphere family with many interesting yucca like species in the interior of Brazil.

4. Scilla socialis ‘Zebra’

LILIACEAE

Bruce Peters, San Francisco

Depending on what book you read this may be called either a Scilla or a Ledebouria as its name has been changed several times. But whatever name you use it is a wonderful little plant for a small container. In our climate it is easy to grow outdoors and can bloom profusely when grown well as this specimen was. The flowers are like small lily-of-the-valley flowers and are produced on small spikes. It is often considered a succulent and so is a good houseplant. It likes regular water when actively growing and may go deciduous to its bulbous bases if kept cold or dry during its winter resting period. This particular form has spectacular horizontally mottled silver and burgundy leaves and is very attractive even without flowers. It is slightly dwarfed than the species, usually staying under three inches tall. *See photo above.*



Ferns from Around the World and for California Gardens
Martin Grantham

Bringing an attention to detail ranging down to the microscopic, Martin Grantham presented the July 2006 gathering of Cal Hort with useful information about fern propagation, beautiful photos of exotic and native species, and lessons in the special language of pteridology, the study of ferns.

Grantham is a renowned expert in propagation and new plant introductions for the Bay Area. His travels and work in South Africa, the Andes, and beyond have given him the opportunity to bring new species into cultivation from like climates, and he has generously discussed them more than once with the Cal Hort membership. Besides ferns, his specialties include woody members of the IRIDACEAE, orchids, liverworts, the rush-like RESTIACEAE family, and the cycads. Along with the talk he offered for sale a number of unusual plants that he had propagated, such as the lovely weeping New Zealand conifer, *Dacrydium cupressinum*, and *Dianella ensifolia*, a rare stemmed member of its blue-fruited genus in the PHORMIACEAE.

He started his talk by admitting, “No matter how well we take care of our ferns, they will never bloom.” His explanation of ferns’ reproductive cycle brought the room back to high school biology, without the gossipy note-passing, and with much better results in comprehension.

The non-flowering ferns offer much in the way of beauty and horticultural utility, form and color. Frond forms range from entire (e.g. *Asplenium nidus*, *Oleandra neriiiformis*), to pinnate (*Polystichum minutum*, the Western Sword Fern), to bipinnate, and quadripinnate (*Lophosoria quadripinnata*, natch), to indeterminate (*Gleichenia spp.*) and on to the stag-horn fern genus *Platyserium*, whose growth habit, with distinct shield fronds and fertile fronds, must have a distinctive pteridological term I missed.

Colors in ferns are underappreciated, Grantham pointed out. The colony-forming *Blechnum occidentale*, produces a show with its salmon new growth rivaling many flowers. New growth often carries the non-green colors in ferns, but mature growth in many species offers variation, too.

The drought-tolerant genus *Cheilanthes* that Grantham featured in his slides has many species with silvery, powdery or gray foliage, the better to deflect dessicating sunshine with. Their rhizomes tucked often into rock crevices, these ferns belie the common image of the dew-drenched fern on the dappled forest floor. Check out the excellent collection of these dryland ferns at UC Berkeley Botanic Garden, Grantham’s former haunt. (On the other end of the spectrum at Berkeley is a giant fern with virtually no tolerance of dryness, an apparently

cold-hardy species of *Marattia* tucked into the bank of Strawberry Creek in the shade of the Asian collection.) Grantham also noted species of ferns that tolerate dry shade, root competition, and other difficult garden situations. Several lovely epiphytic ferns, like *Elaphoglossum* and *Polypodium*, were in his slide show.

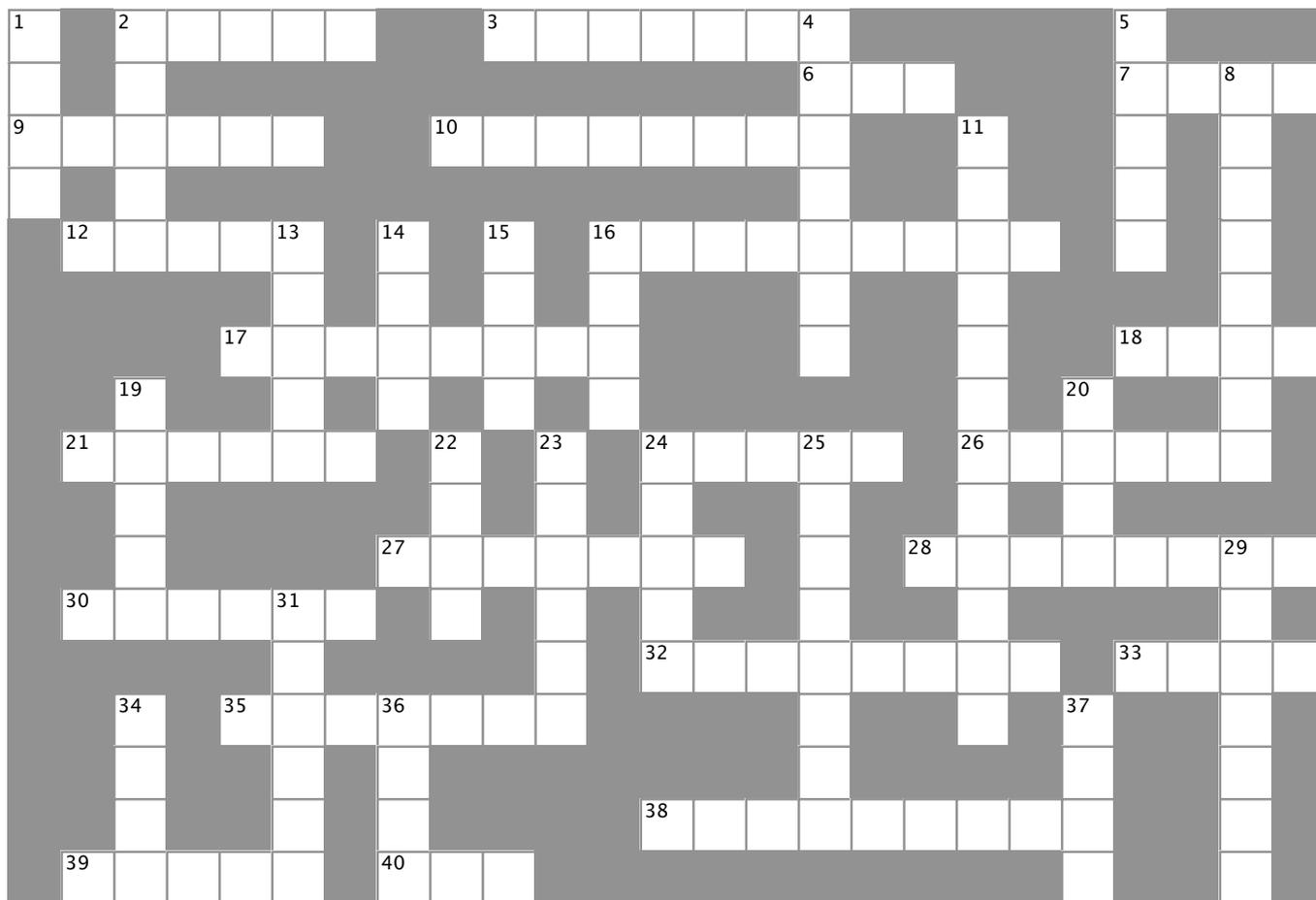
Grantham’s information on tree ferns was particularly rich. The stems of these Golden Gate Park icons include adventitious roots that expand the girth, enhancing stability, water transport, and, in the case of the South African *Cyathea dregei*, providing a degree of fire tolerance. The exquisite symbol of New Zealand, *Cyathea dealbata*, the silver tree fern, would tolerate the climate here like its mates the *Dicksonias*, but it does not make the transition very well from controlled greenhouse conditions into outdoor vagaries of wind, sun, and, most of all, humidity. Thus, its silver-backed fronds are extremely rare in our otherwise ferny gardens. On the other end of the hardening spectrum is *C. tomentosissima*, a diminutive tree fern from the New Guinea highlands adaptable to strong light exposure and chilly conditions. True to its specific name, it’s covered in coppery hairs, especially the unfurling crossiers. Perhaps this “new” variation on the tree fern will soon join the mix of *Dicksonia antarctica* and *Cyathea cooperi* in our gardens.

Much of the second half of Grantham’s talk was devoted to the process of propagating ferns from spore, generating many questions from the audience. A true evangelist of ferns, he enthusiastically shared secrets born of his enormous efforts to enrich our Bay Area horticultural palette. It was an exceptionally educational talk from an accomplished plantsman in our midst.



Click image for larger version

Photo by Till Westermayer - flickr.com/photos/tillwe/



Across

- 2. Basic leaf color
- 3. Grown without pesticides
- 6. Quercus
- 7. Can be mowed
- 9. Digging helper
- 10. Popular species of Japanese Acer
- 12. Goddess or fly trap
- 16. A fragrant lawn?
- 17. Popular primitive Genus, with trees and shrubs, often large (!) flowers
- 18. Zea mays or Dracaena fragrans
- 21. These huge flowered plants from Australia can't handle much phosphorus.
- 24. Long and thin soil tillers
- 26. Leucantha, greggii, guaranitica
- 27. Common bedding plant in Solanaceae
- 28. These get VERY large.
- 30. Color of dandelions and Helianthus
- 32. French word for these slimy garden pests.

Down

- 1. Banana
- 2. Hand protection
- 4. Adds organic matter to soil
- 5. Flower
- 8. Spring blooming pea family vine, most often chinese or japanese
- 11. Tropical mint relative with hundreds of named cultivars
- 13. No direct sun
- 14. Tasty in a julip
- 15. River bottom often have this
- 16. When heavy, holds a lot of nutrients
- 19. To cut or dried fruit
- 20. Ready the fields for planting
- 22. Holly
- 23. Genus of cherries
- 24. Color of Limnanthes douglasii flower edges.
- 25. Can be a large cloud forest daisy tree
- 29. "Sleeping" plants

The last crossword was such a hit, we thought we'd give you another. Let us know what you think! editor@calhortsociety.org or (415) 203-

4407. Of course, if you'd like to submit a hort themed crossword of your own for publication, don't let anything get in your way!

Epimediums

Family: BERBERIDACEAE

One of the most common horticultural headaches for gardeners on the west coast is dry shade. It seems like everyone suffers from this problem, although you wouldn't know it if you look at the plant stock in most larger retail nurseries. You'll find lots of shade plants, but almost all of them require lots of water. This is why I like the Bishop's Hats, or epimediums. Once established, most of these delicate-looking plants do great with minimal summer watering. In return, they provide delicate flowers in the spring, and airy foliage throughout the year. New growth is often red or bronze, adding more interest to these great plants. In the fall, the leaves often turn a nice burnished bronze color. There are lots of species and cultivars out there- one website lists almost 30 varieties! Most grow from 8 inches to two feet tall, and produce white, yellow, pink or lavender flowers. Although I wouldn't describe epimediums as fast growers, some species can form a ground cover for a small area within a few years.

One of the more interesting names for epimediums is 'Horny Goat Weed'. Supposedly, these plants have an aphrodisiac effect if eaten, which was first noticed in goats who grazed on some of them. It is believed that an ingredient in these plants functions in a manner similar to the drug Viagra. Feel free to experiment- I've been told that the leaves make a nice tea...

These plants grow their best in partial shade, although I've seen them happy in some pretty dark places. Most references say that epimediums prefer compost-rich, well-drained soil. While this is true, many of these plants can't read, because I've seen them growing nicely in nasty, clay-tainted soil-like the kind that I've



[Click image for larger version](#)

Photo by Michael G. Halle - flickr.com/photos/halle/

got in my garden. The slowly spreading clumps can be divided to propagate these plants for your friends, who will all want them after reading this article.

PHOTO CONTEST

The California Horticultural Society is having a photography contest for its members. In this round, we are offering no prizes, but think of the honor that will be bestowed on the winners!



Enter as many horticulturally oriented photos as you choose.

Our intention is to allow the entrants to submit photographs until after the vacation season has ended. September 31, 2006 will be the deadline. The rules of the contest are on the California Horticultural Society website (www.calhortsociety.org) .

The contest is limited to members of the California Horticultural Society. Membership is only 40 dollars so, tell your friends!

HORTICULTURAL CALENDAR

Wednesday Evenings in July & August

Twilight Tours—Explore the U.C. Botanical Garden after hours on a variety of topics. 5:30 – 6:30 PM, members \$8, non-members \$12, www.botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu or (510) 643-2755.

August 12

Flora Along the Oat Hill Mine Trail—An in-depth slide lecture of the history and plants of Oat Hill. 9 am – noon at the Regional Parks Botanic Garden, members \$25, non-members \$30. (510) 841-8732 or www.nativeplants.org

August 17

IPM Walk — with Bob Franklin PCA, Arborist, and SFBG gardener. 4–6 PM at SFBG. SFBGA (415) 558-8039.

August 19 & 20

Dahlia Show—Annual show sponsored by the SF Dahlia Society at the County Fair building in Golden Gate Park. www.sfdahlia.org

August 19 & 20

Edible Garden Festival—Featuring demonstrations, winetasting, music, a marketplace and more, at Copia Center for Wine, Food and the Arts. More info at (707) 259-1600 or www.copia.org

Third Fridays, September – May

Ikebana Demonstrations—Come see accomplished Ikebana artists create beautiful flower arrangements in the County Fair Building in Golden Gate Park for a \$5 entry fee, starts at noon. Hosted by the SF Chapter of Ikebana International. For more info and a list of events go to www.ikebana.org.

September 9

3rd Annual CCMG Garden Walk— six open gardens plus Garden Talks on Grafting, Healthy Gardening, IPM, Bees, Gourds, Exotics & Succulents and a plant sale! Tickets are \$15 per person. For tickets or questions contact Patty Click at mclick777@aol.com or (925) 682-6719.

September 10

Native Treasures: Gardening with the Plants of CA—Nevin Smith will discuss topics from his latest book. 1:30 PM at the UC Santa Cruz Arboretum, members \$10, non-members \$15. (831) 427-2998 or www2.ucsc.edu/arboretum.

October 26-29

ASCFG Conference—Assoc. of Specialty Cut Flower Growers will hold its annual meeting in San Jose featuring a wide variety of presentations and tours. For more info (440) 774-2887 or www.ascfg.org.

January 2007

Bay-Friendly Landscape Maintenance Training—A 'sustainable' landscape qualification program for experienced professionals who manage landscapes in Alameda County. Hosted by StopWaste.org, applications available in Sept 06. More info at www.bayfriendly.org or (510) 614-1699

SF Botanical Garden Society
(415) 661-1316 • www.sfbotanicalgarden.org

August 12

Plant Sale—General Sale with shade plants. 10 AM – 1 PM at the Nursery.

August 19

Dazzling Dahlias—Don't miss this in-depth Dahlia Day with Eric Gaensler. 9:30 AM – 1 PM, members \$25, non-members \$35.

September 11 – October 16

Ornamental Trees—A seven session course with Charmain Guiliani. 6 – 9 PM, Fee TBA.

Filoli Center
(650) 364-8300 x 508 • www.filoli.org

Third Thursdays until October 19

Artist Access to the gardens—Enjoy after hours access for artists and photographers. 3:30-6:30. \$15 members; \$20 non-members. Call for tix or order online..

August 18 & 19

Introduction to Botanical Art—Two day hands-on workshop.. No previous art experience required. \$150 members; \$180 non-members. 9:30-3:30. Call for tix or register online.

August 16 & 17

Twilight Hikes—Nature education docent led walks. 6 PM – 8 PM. \$10 members; \$15 non-members. \$1 children ages 5–12. Advance registration recommended. .

Send submissions to calendar@calhortsociety.org
Deadline for publication is the third Monday of each month for the following month's Bulletin. Events during the first ten days of the month should be remitted two months ahead..

EARN CEU CREDITS

We now offer Continuing Education Units for the California Certified Nursery Professionals—a program of the California Association of Nurseries & Garden Centers. Attendance at our monthly lectures and plant Forum will qualify you for one CEU. Sign in at the registration desk *following* the program.

URGENT!!!!

The current **Calendar Editor** is imminently going to have her hands full with other projects, so we need someone to take over the Calendar duties. Job entails simply going through press releases and emails and formatting for our newsletter. A great way to keep your finger firmly on the pulse of Bay Area Horticultural activities and gain the gratitude of your fellow members.

HELP!

Email the editor@calhortsociety.org for more info.

PHOTO CONTEST!

Check out Page 6 for information on Cal Hort's new photography contest!



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Membership year begins January 1 and includes a full subscription to Pacific Horticulture. Dues are \$40 individual, \$50 joint household, \$25 Student (with proof of enrollment). To join, or for full range of membership levels, please visit our website at www.calhortsociety.org or call (800) 884-0009.



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