

# LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

2018 Volume XXIII Issue 2

<http://www.crfg-la.org>

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**FIELD TRIP: Sylmar High School**

**Date: March 10, 2018, 9:00 am –**

**PLEASE NOTE THE SPECIAL DATE AND TIME!!!**

**Place: Sylmar High School  
13050 Borden Ave., Sylmar, CA, 91342**

**Program: Fruit Tree Symposium  
by Tom Spellman from Dave Wilson Nursery.**

Our annual visit to Sylmar High School: tours of the school's agricultural gardens and hothouse, followed by the Fruit Tree Symposium by Tom Spellman, and concluding with a tree auction, with fabulous plants provided by the school and by local nurseries.

**Potluck to follow. Please bring a dish that serves 8-10 people. Remember, students will be joining us.**

**MEETING: Rachel Surls & Judith Gerber: "From Cows to Concrete"**

**Date: April 28, 2018 at 10:00 am**

**Place: Sepulveda Gardens  
16633 Magnolia Blvd, Encino, CA 91316**

PROGRAM: At one time Los Angeles County was the center of an agricultural empire. Today it's the nation's most populous urban metropolis. What happened? Where did the green go? From the earliest pueblo cornfields to the struggles of farm workers to the rise of the environmental movement, From Cows to Concrete tells the epic tale of how agriculture forged Los Angeles into an urban metropolis, and how, ultimately, the Los Angeles farm empire spurred the very growth that paved it over, as sprawling suburbs swallowed up thousands of acres of prime farmland. You will hear all about this amazing development from the co-authors of this book: Judith Gerber and Rachel Surls, PhD. Rachel, the Sustainable Food Systems Advisor for University of California Cooperative Extension in Los Angeles County, has been involved with school and community gardens and urban agriculture for over 20 years. She holds two degrees in agricultural science. Judith is a farm and garden authority who has written about sustainable farming, local foods and organic gardens for more than 25 years.

**All Members: if your last name begins with N-Z please bring something for our refreshment table.**

## **SAVE THE DATES - CALENDAR FOR 2018 LA CHAPTER**

- May 26<sup>th</sup> - Field Trip – to be announced
- June 23<sup>rd</sup> - Sepulveda Gardens - Garrett Long: "Soil Health and Regenerative Practices"
- July – *Date to Be Announced*. (To avoid conflict with the 2018 Festival Of Fruit held in Northern California at the end of July)
- August 25<sup>th</sup> - Sepulveda Gardens
- September 22<sup>nd</sup> - Field Trip
- October 27<sup>th</sup> - Sepulveda Gardens
- November 17<sup>th</sup> - Field Trip
- December 15<sup>th</sup> - Sepulveda Gardens - Holiday Party

## Words From Our Chairman



Our first two meetings of the year were great events for everybody to attend. Our scion exchange had over 100 people participating in the event. Our tables were set up with scion branches of everything from apples, cherries, figs, and plums to some rare varieties you can only find at a CRFG meeting. By now everybody should have their grafting completed and maybe even see signs of the new growth pushing through the parafilm tape wraps. Thanks to everyone who contributed scion donations from their gardens.

Field trips to our members' homes are always exciting. We get to see how others set up their gardens and how they present their landscaping. Our February field trip to the garden of our newsletter editor Debbie Oisboid was one that was a great example of a unique way to present how a grass front yard can be transformed into a beautiful oasis with signs directing you to the different areas of the garden. Her passion and enjoyment of grafting was seen in several trees both in the front yard and the backyard, where she has had much success with her grafting. Everyone that attended had a great time and enjoyed the potluck lunch that everyone contributed to after the meeting.

Looking forward to the March 10 meeting at Sylmar High School where we will get to spend the day with Steve List, the horticulture teacher for the school. He has lined up several speakers, including Tom Spellman from Dave Wilson Nursery who will be discussing backyard orchard growing.

Additionally, over 100 trees have been donated for a raffle which will follow the meeting. Raffle tickets will

be available in different amounts, so if you want to contribute to the school program you can purchase tickets anywhere from \$10-\$50 each and you will come home with a beautiful fruit tree. They have many different varieties of stone fruit as well as multi-grafted apple trees with three and four different apple varieties on one tree grafted from the nursery. Please bring either cash or a check for your donation and enjoy the trees that will be available to take home.

Be sure to tour the Sylmar High School gardens and see the exciting work that they're doing, with the kids at the school participating in all aspects. This is one of our more popular meetings of the year.

We are also looking forward to the April 28 meeting where Rachel Surls will be discussing everything from cows to concrete.

I look forward to being able to take the frost blankets off the trees and enjoying the upcoming spring season when everything comes back to life and new growth is seen in all of our new plants and fruit trees.

Tony

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## LOOKING BACK

By Debbie Schopper, Member at Large

### January Meeting - Scion Exchange

It was our annual scion exchange and we had a full house, over 100 members, guests and visitors packed into the Sepulveda Garden Center in Encino. There were cuttings from many varieties of stone fruit, Russian pomegranate varieties, apple, sapote, figs, berry cuttings, grape, plumeria, passion fruits, hibiscus, and herbs. All of these and more were available, first to those who brought scion cuttings, and second to those who did not. Our chairman, Tony Stewart, welcomed us and began our meeting with an explanation of how the exchange would run.

Member Bill Brandt gave a grafting demonstration and answered questions from those present.



Also available at the meeting were plants, cookbooks and rakes for sale. We shared a pot luck lunch.



### February Meeting - Drought Garden tour

This month, our CRFG chapter's field trip was held at our editor's home in Chatsworth. Wonder, whimsy, and wit come to mind as we toured her yards. To see what can be done with much research, Craigslist freebees, and a whole lot of enthusiasm was both challenging and encouraging to the many who attended this trip. Our handouts included a list of plants and trees and their locations, and "Diary of a Garden," the story of one San Fernando Valley's yard transformation into a drought garden. Turf was replaced with native California plants, trees, rocks, paths, creeks, herbs, vegetables and so much more. The different zones of the yard were given names such as, Aloe Alley, The Dry Creek, Jade Forest, Cactus Corner, the Bridge, and Myoporum Meadow. All (most!) of her grafts are marked and labeled with green tape. As we toured and asked questions, we also took note of those plants we, too, wanted growing in our yards, like the euphorbia "Glitz" and the mini-flower Princess plant that I liked.

In the back yard was a vegetable garden with artichoke (one purple variety), New Zealand spinach, and paprika. A sandbox from Craigslist is a perfect place to grow carrots propagated from tops cut off a bunch purchased at Trader Joe's. Elderberry (which will take over if left on its own) can be grown from a cutting. We were

advised that 6 to 8 feet is tall enough. Many of us have tasted the juice at our pot luck lunches at meetings, yum. There is also a 12-foot tall cotton tree (*Gossypium Arboreum*), and young orchard trees that include stone fruits and apples, many with grafts. Wherever your eyes look, plants are growing in pots, and being propagated awaiting their new homes in the yard or to be shared.

Our tour ended with a pot luck lunch and seeds, plant cuttings and plants given by our generous host.

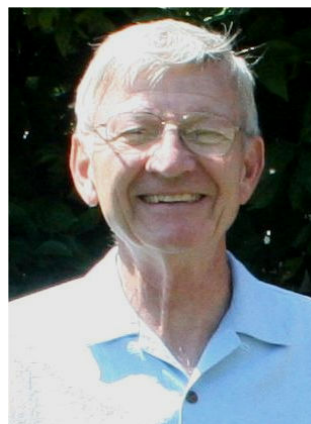
Photo courtesy of David Payton taken from his drone.



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## In Memoriam: Bob Vieth

Karen Payton & Joe Sabol



Bob Vieth's passing on Thursday, February 22, 2018, is a great loss to his family, friends, CRFG, and the realm of people and concerns in which he was involved through life. We think of him and

honor him as a generous, affectionate, humorous, intelligent gentleman with drive and commitment. We are grateful for knowing him through CRFG and having become his friend. He leaves a tremendous legacy of accomplishment and the enrichment of others' lives.

Bob was a CRFG, Inc. pioneer. The organization as we know and enjoy it reflects his decades' worth of knowledge, leadership and hard work on many levels. There is likely not a single CRFG function that he has not literally and figuratively had a hand in, even to the point of being a reliable member of the squad that for years regularly goes out from our local chapter to teach grafting in the schools. During the last many years, he's been active on the CRFG, Inc. Board of Directors, the Development Fund, and the Scholarship Committee, as well as in multiple formal and informal enterprises. As recently as three weeks ago, he and Kathy hosted a Scholarship Committee meeting.

Joe Sabol of San Luis Obispo, another CRFG, Inc. pioneer and very close friend of the Vieths, describes Bob as a strong believer in the value of scholarships. He noted Bob and Kathy generally hosted the two yearly meetings of the Scholarship Committee in their home. "Bob has been an inspiration to the Scholarship committee and to me, personally."

Joe remembers how Bob 'adopted' the apple grafting program and took over several of the Southern California schools that were just too far for the Central Coast Grafting Team. "For many years, Bob provided the leadership for the Los Angeles Chapter apple grafting program and coordinated the grafting with the high school agriculture teachers, and recruited CRFG members to go to the schools to teach grafting."

Bob will be greatly missed.

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## **The Persimmon Pest – Part 1?**

By Roy Imazu

During my latest hachiya persimmon fruit drying project this past fall, I noticed some of the fruit infested by maggots. There were several small holes in the fruit with whitish larvae inside. I consulted John Kabashima, a retired insect specialist formerly with the University of California Cooperative

Extension who is working part time as a Disney Resort employee on their Horticulture Tree Assessment team, and also with the Invasive Species Council of California on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Invasive Species Plan.

He tells me that this insect is most likely Dried Fruit Beetle (*Nitidulidae*, genus *Carpophilus*) and that window screen would be an effective barrier. I built a portable cage this past year to dry this fruit. I had enclosed it with chicken wire to deter raccoons, but now it will need window screen to protect my fruit from this beetle.

### **EDITORIAL ADDENDUM:**

The Family of *Nitidulidae* are also known as sap beetles. Many (especially *Carpophilus* and *Glischrochilus*) are found at sap flows on injured trees. *Carpophilus* beetles are small to medium size beetles (1-8mm). They prefer fungi, particularly on moldy fruit. Consequently, several species are known as stored-product pests.

(Sources: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sap\\_beetle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sap_beetle) and <http://www.coleoptera.org/family/nitidulidae>)

Roy noted that the larvae had only attacked previously harvested fruit inside his outdoor drying racks and that he had not seen the adult beetle itself. Roy has not had any pest issues on his persimmon trees except for ants, which occasionally farm white mealybugs hiding beneath the "leaf" on top of fruit.

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## **Time of the Season: Pruning**

By Deborah Oisboid, Editor

I recently attended a pruning workshop at Cottonwood Urban Farm in Panorama City. Master Gardener and CRFG member Steve Hofvendahl led a discussion on proper planting and care of bare root trees, proper pruning cuts, tool basics, and first year structural pruning in the Open Center Training System. The information is quite appropriate for this time of year. One particularly interesting concept I learned about was the Four D's.

If you are new to this concept, it's a great way to remember how to start pruning. You simply cut off any part which has one (or more) of these characteristics - once they are removed it's easier to focus on pruning to your preferred shape. The Four D's are:

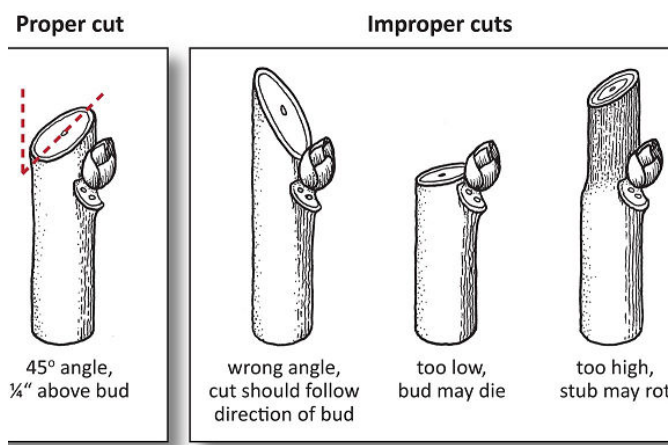
**Dead:** Remove useless deadwood, and stop insects and diseases from gaining a foothold.

**Diseased:** If it is weak, spindly, has visual symptoms of disease, or looks abnormal compared to the rest of the plant, get it out of there. Dip pruners in a solution of 10% bleach/water to prevent re-infecting the plant at the new cut.

**Damaged:** In addition to being unattractive, physically damaged branches can be attacked by insects and disease – get rid of it!

**Deranged:** Remove “nonconformist” branches that rub against the trunk or other branches, that point the wrong way, that cross other branches, and those that arise from the base of the plant when they should not (such as sports and waterspouts). This type of growth is not adding to the aesthetic value of your plant.

We also learned the best way to prune is away from a bud. Prune just above a bud “facing the correct direction”: in other words make sure new growth isn’t pointing towards the trunk but pointing away so the center stays open and airy. The cut should be sloped away from the bud.



## Gardening Tips for March/April for Los Angeles (Southwest Region)

### CLEANING:

- Remove winter-damaged branches
- Prune spring and summer-flowering plants

### PREPARING:

- Divide and replant warm-weather perennials
- Apply mulch
- Fertilize deciduous fruit trees when they leaf out.

### PLANTING:

- Citrus, bare-root trees, berries, vines
- Direct-seeded annuals such as bee balm, black-eyed Susan, cosmos, marigold, sunflower, and zinnia
- Last cool-season vegetables such as beets, carrots, cabbage, peas, and potatoes
- First warm-season vegetables such as beans, corn, cucumbers, melons, okra, green onions, peanuts, pumpkins, summer squashes, and sunflowers
- As weather warms up, plant herbs such as basil, chamomile, chives, lavender, marjoram, mint, oregano, parsley, sage, savory, thyme, and yarrow.
- Transplant artichokes, eggplants, peppers, and tomatoes

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## UPCOMING FESTIVAL

**EVENT:** The Festival of Fruit and 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of CRFG

**Dates:** July 27 – 29, 2018

**Place:** Campbell Community Center  
1 W Campbell Ave, Campbell, CA

**Program:** A full day of speakers, presentations, vendors, raffles, garden tours, “tastings”, and lunch. Optional dinner banquet with guest speaker. For more information, check out the website [www.festivaloffruit.org](http://www.festivaloffruit.org)

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## Letters to the Editor

### Open Garden Invitation

You are cordially invited to an “open garden” on Saturday, April 14, 2018 from 1 – 4 pm. The event will be at the home of CRFG member Joan Citron at 7934 Tampa Ave, Reseda, 91335, to the rear of the property. She will be sharing her “formal garden” with her Iris club and would like to invite other CRFG members to join her as well. Bring: yourself. Please walk carefully.

Have a suggestion? A question? A story to share? Send it to [editor@cfg-la.org](mailto:editor@cfg-la.org) and see it published here!