

# DIGGERS DIRT

The Dirt being dished this month...

## General Meeting:

**10:30am Program (Unless otherwise noted)  
12:00 noon Meeting**



### Nov 6 Propagation at Cindy Wenzlau's

745 Canterbury Rd, San Marino  
Hostess: Bette C, Marianne L,  
Cindy Wenzlau

## Look ahead...

Dec 4 - Gwen Babcock's  
Jan 8 - Page Haralambos'  
Feb 5 - Sally Miller's  
Feb 25 - Joint Meeting at Natural History Museum  
Mar 4 - Huntington Gardens  
Apr 1 - Old Mill  
Apr 27,28 - Auction Set-up  
**Apr 29 - Auction**

May - (TBD)  
Jun 3 - Debbe Booth's

## Board Meetings

**Mondays preceding the General Meeting at 10:00 am.  
Please let Liz know if you would like to attend.**



## From the President

November is the time of gathering in gratitude. Awareness of our disturbing impact on the environment prompts me to remember also the gifts we receive among one another. We reflect on what we gain by association when we work towards the common good in our community, zone, and country.

Fall is an especially good time for us to welcome guests to our meetings. This Bronze Star rose reminds me daily of Louisa Miller, who invited me to membership all those years ago. We are a small membership and aim to keep our group flourishing so bring a guest with consideration as a potential candidate for membership.





## Mark Your Calendar

### Upcoming GCA Dates

[www.gcamerica.org](http://www.gcamerica.org)

### NAL Conference

Washington, DC  
Feb 23-26, 2020

### 2020 Zone XII Meeting

Tacoma, WA  
Mar 25-27, 2020

### GCA 2020 Annual Meeting

Asheville, NC  
May 3-6, 2020

### Old Mill Workdays

Thur., Nov 14 9-10:30am  
Tues., Nov 19 9-10:30am



On November 6<sup>th</sup> we'll be meeting at Cindy Wenzlau's. Please bring your sharpened clippers and garden cuttings to propagate. Captured from a previous DIRT issue are helpful hints on how to care for your garden tools. And once again, we'll have a tutorial of how to plant the "perfect Diggers pot"!

There are 17 people committed to the field trip to San Diego Botanic Garden on November 13<sup>th</sup>. Members must arrive at my house by 7:15 a.m. to board the private coach. We'll depart promptly at 7:30 a.m. and head directly to SDBG where Dr. Ari Novy will provide our tour. He'll join us for lunch at the Pacific Coast Grill, after which we'll stop at Chino Family Farm <http://www.chinofamilyfarm.com/>. We expect to return to Pasadena no later than 5 p.m. There's still room for a few more so if you want to join the fun please bring \$52 to secure your place.

In this season of giving, you might consider a visit to the California Art Club's current exhibition at the Old Mill. <https://www.californiaartclub.org/exhibitions/current-exhibitions/20th-anniversary-exhibition-california-art-club-at-the-old-mill> The paintings of iconic Pasadena/San Marino scenes are remarkable and just might be a perfect gift for the special person in your life.

Please remember to bring expired pharmaceuticals for safe disposal and remember to bring baskets for holiday arrangements to the upcoming NOVEMBER meeting.

I hope you enjoy time among your loved ones during this Thanksgiving holiday. See you soon!



Liz

## Floral Design



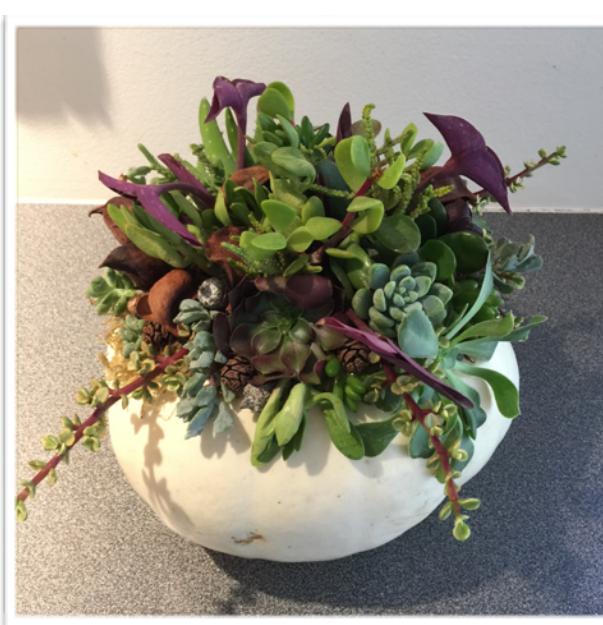
Aster - from Eugenie



Ponderosa lemon, hollowed out as fall containers - by Eugenie



Consider Camellia sasanqua  
'Apple blossom' as a single stem  
submission to the DIRT.



Sally Miller

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## Horticulture

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### Ceanothus gloriosus - Point Reyes Ceanothus



Category: Shrub  
Family: Rhamnaceae (Buckthorns)  
Origin: California (U.S.A.)  
Evergreen: Yes  
Flower Color: Blue  
Bloomtime: Spring  
Height: 2-3 feet  
Width: 6-8 feet  
Exposure: Cool Sun/Light Shade  
Summer Dry: Yes  
Irrigation (H2O Info): Low Water Needs  
Winter Hardiness: 10° F

**Ceanothus gloriosus** - A California native shrub, this variety is a prostrate groundcover that has dark blue flowers and small, toothed leaves tinged with bronze. A good choice where a fine-textured groundcover is needed for small spaces, particularly in coastal gardens. Plant in full sun to light shade along the coast and part shade inland. It is drought and salt-spray tolerant and less susceptible to deer browse due to the spiny leaves. This plant is endemic to coastal bluffs and dunes along the northern California coastline from Marin County north to Mendocino County. The genus name comes from the Greek word keanthos which was used to describe a type of thistle and meaning a "thorny plant" or "spiny plant" and first used by Linnaeus in 1753 to describe New Jersey Tea, Ceanothus americanus. The specific epithet means "glorious" or "superb".

Ceanothus thrives on benign neglect. Once established, it rarely requires additional irrigation or pruning. The roots form a beneficial relationship with the nematodes naturally present in the soil which allows the plants to

fix their own nitrogen. It doesn't require traditional fertilization and regular fertilizer can actually kill the plant. Instead, ceanothus does benefit from a more natural fertilization approach (leaves or mulch) that fosters the beneficial nematodes in the soil.

This plant is ready to be transplanted to a larger pot this fall. An 8 inch pot would be perfect. Use a well-draining soil.

*Hope we can all share our growing successes next spring!*

### *Horticulture Tips*

*Captured from Dec, 2017 DIRT how to clean and sharpen garden tools...*



**STEP 1:** Using Bon Ami, scour pruners with a scouring pad. Bon Ami is a natural cleaning powder that won't scratch. Be sure to clean all parts of the pruners including the handles.

**STEP 2:** Give pruners a good rinse to get all the Bon Ami off.

**STEP 3:** Dry pruners completely with an old t-shirt or soft rag. Sharpen with any pruner sharpening tool. The Zenport Zo95 Tungsten Carbide Sharpener, available on Amazon (\$14), works well and is easy to use. Run the sharpener across the blade at an angle, three times. Turn pruners over and do the same on the other side of the blade. Use the polishing side of the sharpener to smooth the blade.

**STEP 4:** Give pruners another rinse and dry.

**STEP 5:** Wipe blade and handles with Grape Seed oil (WD40 works too) and leave to sit for a minute or two.

**STEP 6:** Using an old sock, wipe off the oil. If using WD40 be sure to remove all the residue.

## GRAPEFRUIT BITTERS

From The Institute for Domestic Technology

Makes 20 ounces

5 grapefruits

½ teaspoon dried gentian root

1 teaspoon whole coriander seed

15 grams (½ ounce) dried ginger root (or fresh)

6 whole cardamom pods, cracked

1 teaspoon quassia chips

3 cups 100-proof vodka or 151-proof Everclear spirits

2 tablespoons honey



1. Wash and dry 3 of the grapefruits. Remove zest without any of the white pith. Dry in dehydrator or in a 175 degree oven on wire racks with the door ajar to increase air flow.
2. Wash and dry the remaining 2 grapefruits. Remove zest being careful to not include any of the white pith (or scrape it off later).
3. Place all of the ingredients except for the honey in a clean quart-sized Mason jar or other large glass container with clean lid.
4. Pour in the spirits, adding more if necessary so that all the ingredients are covered. Seal the jar and store at room temperature out of direct sunlight for 2 weeks, shaking the jar daily.
5. After 2 weeks, strain the liquid through a funnel lined with cheesecloth or a paper coffee filter (dampened first) into a clean quart-sized jar to remove all the solids. Squeeze the cloth or filter over the jar to release any excess liquid and discard the solids.
6. Add the honey to the jar and stir to incorporate, then cover and shake the jar to fully dissolve the honey.
7. Allow the mixture to stand at room temperature for 3 days. Skim off any debris that floats to the surface then using a funnel, decant the bitters in to small jars, preferably with droppers. Label with name and date.

RECIPE submitted by Sara



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## Conservation

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### Six Alternatives to Florist Foam

1. Insert stems into pebbles, sand, gravel or marbles placed in the bottom 1/4 or 1/3 of the vase.
2. Use pliable twigs like curly willow to wrapped inside of the vase as a basket weave-like framework for your other flower stems.
3. Fill the vase with *excelsior*, also called *wood aspen*. This type of shredded wood is often used to ship wine bottles – and it's biodegradable (you can also find wood aspen at craft stores). Once you tease apart the tangle of fibers, place them in a vase and insert floral stems into the material. When your arrangement is ready for the compost heap, you can toss everything.
4. Use an old-fashioned flower frog in the vase. These come in ceramic, glass or metal and can often be found for a few bucks at flea markets or garage sales. One of my favorites is a half-dome metal cage, which is heavy enough to sink to the bottom of the vase. With 3/4-inch square openings, the frog is ideal for stabilizing flowering branches and other woody material.
5. Cut some foliage. I often start an arrangement using soft, fluffy foliage as the "base" that peeks over the rim of the vase. For winter and early spring arrangements, dusty miller is a

nifty choice. It is lacy and soft – and it lasts up to two weeks in a vase. Later in the season, I'll use lady's mantle, valued for its chartreuse foliage. Once you fill the opening of the vase with the cut foliage, all the other flower stems can poke through and they will remain in place.

6. Ball up a section of chicken wire. Another time-honored trick for stabilizing especially larger arrangements and bouquets in wide-mouthed vases, chicken wire comes in rolls from the hardware store. Use wire cutters to trim a 12" to 15" length of it (use gloves to protect your hands from scratches). Gently form the piece into an open "ball" shape and insert it into the container or vase. Make sure that a portion of the chicken wire emerges above the rim so that when you place stems, foliage and twigs through the openings, your arrangement looks full.

<https://www.gardeners.com/how-to/eco-friendly-flower-arranging/7924.html>

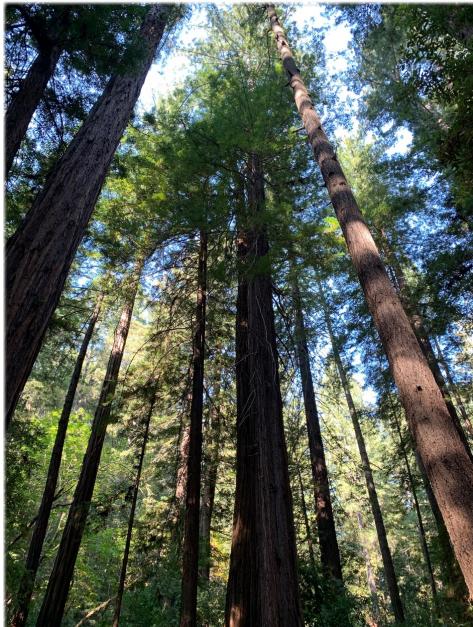
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## On the Road with the GCA (CA)

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The Future of our Redwood Forests (Oct. 2019) - click link to see more information/photos.

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/qL6vUuxgEm7h77Gw5>



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## SAVE THE DATE - Joint Meeting

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SAVE THE DATE of Tuesday, February 25th, 2020 for the joint meeting of GCA garden clubs of Los Angeles County. "Symbiotic Cities and the LA River" by urban ecologist, Kat Superfisky will be hosted by Hancock Park Garden Club at the Natural History Museum with lunch and optional tour of Nature Gardens by Carol Bornstein, Director, NHM Director.

Invitation to follow.

