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LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

2014 Volume XIX

*(Correction: The July and August meetings will be held on Saturday. The magazine "Fruit Gardner" published the meeting to be held on Wednesday. The date was correct but the **day** was published as Wednesday)*

MEETING

Date: July 26th

Time: 10 a.m.

Place: Sepulveda Gardens

16633 Magnolia Blvd, Encino, CA 91436

Speaker: Albert Chang

Albert Chang caught the gardening bug as a young boy in the Midwest. Growing up with fresh fruits and vegetables, he is dedicated to spreading the knowledge of how to grow one's food. He spent two years as strategic adviser to Green Arrow Nursery in North Hills. Albert is currently the 2013-15 San Fernando Valley District Director for California Garden Clubs, Inc; active in the LA Mushroom Society as well as an active member of CRFG and our Chapter. He is the co-Chairman of the Scholarship Committee for California Garden Clubs, Inc., and is President of the San Fernando Valley Rose Society as well as director of the San Fernando Valley Branch of the Seed Library of Los Angeles. We are pleased and very fortunate to have Albert take time from his busy schedule to be with us. Albert will be speaking to us on the Seed Bank and the importance of keeping heirloom seeds.

Attention All Members If your last name begins with A-M please bring something for our July table. Since we are usually eating around noon, and even though we love all those sweet treats, please also consider a dish more appropriate for a lunchtime meal.

PROGRAM: Nursery walk, tour, lecture

Date: August 30th

Time: 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

Place: La Verne Nursery

3645 Camulos St., Piru, CA 93040

Guide: Daniel Nelson, Director Operations

We will have opportunity to purchase nursery stock at wholesale prices. We will discuss pre-ordering at July meeting.

Save the Date

August 5-8 – 2014 Festival of Fruit *The Year of the Quince*, Troutdale, Oregon. Attendance is strictly limited. Contact FestivalofFruit.org for more information

September – Speaker - Tom Del Hotal

October 25th – Field Trip – Buon Gusto Orchard

November 22nd – TBD

December 13th – Annual Holiday Party

Words From Our Chairman

Gardening is cheaper than therapy and you get tomatoes. ~Author Unknown

Dear L.A. Chapter Members:
California farmers



produce half of the nation's fruits and vegetables. The state's three-year drought forced its farmers to idle about 500,000 acres. This three-year drought is causing farmers to cut back production because of the water shortages. Officials are predicting fruits and vegetables will have a 6% to 10% increase in prices through the end of the year. Thank goodness most of us have fresh fruit to eat throughout the year, because we plant so many trees.

What about fresh vegetables? Have you planted a vegetable garden yet? I have a rather large garden area approximately 66' X 20' where I plant heirloom veggies, mostly tomatoes 60+plants (we can them) summer squash, sweet peppers, chilies, cucumbers, basil, garlic, etc. I don't usually plant a winter garden but I will this year. Yesterday I saw snow peas at \$4+ per pound; I read California bell peppers were selling for \$40-45 dollars a bushel in Ohio.

I hope all my fellow chapter members have a vegetable garden. Seed prices have increased over the years but they are cheap when you consider the return they give. Every year I save my heirloom seeds and start them in a cold frame. I sow twice what I need to insure a good crop then give the rest away to friends and neighbors.

Thanks to our mild weather in Southern California we can grow beets, Swiss chard, carrots and radishes year around and quite a few others. I hope you are tending your garden or planning one.

Praying for rain,

Jim Schopper

May I leave this thought with you?

Looking Back

By Debbie Schopper, Member at Large
May Meeting

For some reason, we were locked out of our meeting place at the Sepulveda Garden Center in May. So, being the resourceful people that comprise our LA Chapter, we held the meeting in the patio area. It was cramped



but the lecture did go on! Michael Wittman, of Blue Sky Biochar, was our speaker at this meeting. Michael introduced us to "biochar" a soil supplement. Biochar preserves nitrogen, making a nitrogen rich compost for your plants. It retains water and nutrients at the root level. When adding biochar to your compost, it is one



part biochar to three parts compost. Worms love it! You can google Blue Sky Biochar and Michael Wittman for more information on this product. And Biochar can

be purchased on Amazon.

Following this lecture, Michael had biochar for sale. The club also auctioned plants donated by members and shared a potluck lunch.

June Meeting

Member, Jerry Schwartz opened his home garden in Northridge for us to tour. Jerry says that there is no order to his planting, he finds space and he plants. When Jerry moved into his home 40 years ago, the yard had four walnut



trees that were over 100 years old and many oleander shrubs. What a difference 40 years, vision, hard work and a desire to plant can

make. Jerry's garden now consists of over 250 fruit trees, vegetable and herb gardens, rosemary hedges, a fence of pitaya, grapes, and one passion fruit plant that is trying to take over. His fruit trees include kinnow mandarin, sapotes, finger lime, cinnamon scented persimmons, raisin tree, various citrus, avocados, citrus, weeping mulberry, guava, Surinam cherry, loquats, pomegranates, stone fruit, kei apple, and the list goes on. Interspersed in the tree plantings are



roses, lavender, hanging baskets of epiphyllum, a greenhouse and paths through the "fruit jungle". Jerry told stories of how the bees made a hive in his composter, his drip water fence, where he has

purchased trees, and problems he has faced with pests and plants. He welcomed any and all questions and treated us to cool fruit infused water and slices of mandarins from his trees.



Photographs courtesy of Paul Kao. Thank you, Paul. All the pictures, especially those of our members, were beautiful. They will be displayed at our next meeting.

Members

In looking through old issues of our newsletter I came across this feature from July of 2007 entitled Who's Who.

DICK & EDITH WATTS (from July 2007)
Richard "Dick" Watts has gardened wherever he's had soil to work with. A native Californian, Dick has a BS degree in subtropical Horticulture from UCLA. He worked with Armstrong Nurseries and later became an Agricultural Inspector in Ventura County. He retired from

this position in 1983 and has been able to spend much more time in his Camarillo home working with rare fruits and plant culture. It was at this time that he joined CRFG and became a very active member of our organization. Dick has been in charge of "Special Events" and promoted our organization at Home Shows, County Fairs and the annual Sepulveda Fair.

By the time Edith met Dick, she already had developed a love of growing things.



Growing up in a small farming community near Lansing, Michigan, Edith was quickly exposed to farming. Plowing, disking, growing wheat, oats and vegetables was a part of her teenage years. When Edith moved to California she continued her nursing studies and graduated from the University of Phoenix. Not only has Edith been a nurse, she has also authored and published two textbooks. One is still in print. Edith, too, has dedicated much of her time to CRFG. Joining CRFG at the same time as Dick, Edith has been very active; she was the previous editor of this newsletter. She is now a member of the Development Fund, Hospitality Chairman and Secretary of our LA Chapter. There is no doubt that both Edith and Dick Watts are wonderful assets to our organization.

Edith and Dick Watts have recently decided to take a back seat within the leadership of our organization. We thank them for their years of fellowship, support and knowledge.

I think it would be worthwhile to resurrect this type of article as our membership evolves. CD

In Memorium

JULES MEISLER, a retired clinical social worker, passed away in May. Jules was a long time, lifetime member of CRFG. Because of poor health, Jules had not been to our meetings for a while. Before his retirement he maintained a beautiful garden in Thousand Oakes. Besides his

love of gardening, he also enjoyed bicycling. In fact he was co-founder of the Old Kranks, a bicycle club that welcomed men and women age 50 and older.

Healthy Jujube Muffins

Makes 24 muffins

Contributed by Barry Levine

Day 1

Combine:

5 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups **cracked wheat**

1 cup **wheat germ**

1t **cinnamon**

$\frac{3}{4}$ t **salt**

Add:

1 cup **grapeseed oil**

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup **agave sweetener**

2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups **liquid (almond milk, soymilk, milk or water)**

Mix with spoon and then store covered in **refrigerator over night**

Next day

Defrost frozen brown jujubes - enough to end up with about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups seeded fruit

Twist jujubes to remove seed, put into a screen strainer and sit in boiling water for a couple of minutes

Remove jujubes from the water, drain and then place in a large mixing bowl.

Put 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups raisins in the strainer, let sit in hot water for 5 minutes, drain and then add to the jujubes

Add 1 cup nuts (walnuts or roasted cashews) to the fruit

While preparing the fruit, process the following in a food processor:

Refrigerated **moistened cracked wheat**

3 over-ripe bananas frozen and defrosted

2T flax seed freshly ground into meal, added to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water and blended till foamy with a hand blender (can be replaced with 2 eggs)

3t baking powder

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ t baking soda

After processing, mix fruit and batter with a spoon.

Spoon batter into muffin pan pre-sprayed with cooking oil (or into paper or foil bake cups without the oil).

Place muffins in oven and set at 350°F convection bake. Let muffins rise in the oven while the oven preheats.

Set timer for **20 minutes when 350°F** is reached and continue to bake muffins

Remove muffins from the oven after baking for 20 minutes

Let muffins cool for 10 minutes before removing them from the muffin pan.

These muffins freeze well. Defrost in the refrigerator and then heat in microwave for 28 seconds before eating. Enjoy!!!

Culture in the Garden

The Three Sisters

Maya cultivated three plants together: maize (corn), beans and squash. This combination is often referred to as *The Three Sisters* and referenced Maya mythology.

The symbiotic characteristics of each plant added to the successful growth of the others.

The beans, supported by the corn stalks, add nitrogen to the soil, enriching it for the corn and squash growth. The large leaves of the squash conserved moisture and shaded the root system. They also inhibited weed growth while the spiky squash stems inhibit insects. A fourth plant, chili, was often planted along side the Three Sisters.

Nutritionally, each plant added to the Maya diet. The process of refining corn releases niacin, a necessary B vitamin (B₃) that reduces incidents of protein deficiency. Beans contain amino acids that are lacking in the corn plant. Chili helps break down corn, making digestion easier.

Coming in next issue: *The Kandil Sinap That Wasn't* by Deborah Oisboid.