



# River Park Garden Club

Newsletter, June 2022

It's official! The club's 2022 neighborhood garden tour, "Seven Special Garden Spaces," April 23, was a success. On several levels.

First, we showed off our neighborhood at its best. We made new friends —new members. And we made funds to finance the club's meetings and other varied activities.



Derek Larsen, left, Hal Colburn, center and Troy Fajerson in Derek's garden

**Fun Facts:** Our tour had about twice the number of visitors (some from as far away as Florida and the Bay Area) as 2018's tour. Twice as many sponsors, including the River Park Neighborhood Association. Twice as many advertisers And generous media support.

Our success was also due to the winning combination of avid gardeners who graciously opened their gardens to visitors plus the club's incredible volunteers who served as docents for each garden, ticket sellers, banner and sign installers, website masters and publicity. The Perennial Plant Club also sold plants and River Park artisan, Judy Lee, sold her garden art.

All these efforts were rewarded with raves reviews: "I never knew this neighborhood was even here. Now I do."

"Much better tour than my neighborhood ever had!"

"Please do this again next year!" (The RPGC board recently set April 22, 2023, the date of our next tour.)



Ann Mazur, left, Janice Stern, center and Tamis Reed at the ticket table

## Our Next Program:

## Finding Wonder in the Garden – Under a Microscope

Leilani Yang sees things a little differently than most people. Her discerning eyes led her to a career as a photojournalist.

"I became interested in photojournalism as an undergrad at Cornell," she said. She earned a masters in photo-journalism from

the prestigious photography program at the University of Missouri

After a few early newspaper jobs, the New York City native moved to California to become the first woman photographer at The Sacramento Bee.

**See: Leilani, (page 2)**

## Leilani, continued:

“What I liked about being a journalist, was that I got to see things that I otherwise would not have seen,” she said. “At the Bee where I worked for 22 years, I photographed everything, from sports to news and later did studio work photographing fashion, food, ballet dancers and making portraits – one of a German Shepard in a suit and tie.”

In 1989, she took a year’s sabbatical from The Bee to live in Beijing. She was working as an editor of the English edition of a Chinese magazine when students marched into Tiananmen Square.

Talk about being a witness to history! Leilani’s photo essay on her year living in China was published in The Bee. It included some photos of the student demonstrations.

After years of carrying heavy camera equipment, she started having trouble with her back.

“I didn’t think I would make it to 65 doing that, so I decided to change careers. I went to law school and became a lawyer,” she said. She worked as a lawyer for California State Parks for almost 15 years.

A visit to an exhibition of winners of a micro-photography competition, led her back to photography without heavy cameras.

“I went with my friend and fellow Bee photographer Frank Stork (also a RPGC member) and was fascinated by the pictures -- and the idea of photographing things you wouldn’t otherwise get to see,” Leilani explained.

As a result, for the last three years, she has been photographing small things, using a microscope to focus on plants and bugs she finds on walks with her dogs and in her garden. (Leilani’s garden was on the club’s first neighborhood garden tour in 2018.)

## Leilani will present a program of her microphotographs at the club’s June 16 meeting at 6:30 p.m. at Shepard Garden and Arts Center.

“I started putting things under the microscope and was surprised by what I saw. The first thing I photographed was a dianthus flower. With the microscope, I could see what the flower’s pollen looked like -- little jewels that were really beautiful.” she said.

“I am amazed at how beautiful things are blown up, even the bugs. I wasn’t sure about photographing bugs because I thought I might have nightmares, but I haven’t,” she said. “I put the bugs in little containers and they run around. I have to wait until they slow down enough for me to photograph them,” she said. “Then I let them go.”

When she isn’t at her microscope, Leilani is



Leilani Yang, Baci and Maddie

in her garden, or baking, or playing with her two dogs.

“I wasn’t always a gardener. I didn’t even know what an azalea was when I moved here.

But when I bought my house, I started reading about plants. My garden is not a proper landscape, just a place to play with plants. I am a trial-and-error gardener. A lot of plants have come and gone over the years,” she said. Among the ones that have stayed are roses, fuchsias, Rose of Sharon, Japanese and flowering maples, and Sasanqua camelias.

## ***SOME WATERWISE PLANTS FOR YOUR GARDEN***

To help get your garden through another drought summer, here is a list of some plants that use less water. All plants need adequate water until their roots get established. Mulching helps cut down on the amount of water needed to keep them happy. Most of these annuals and perennials are pollinator magnets!

-----Therese Ruth

### **Annuals for Sun:**

Portulaca – also known as Moss Rose – loves a hot spot, i.e. next to sidewalks.

Purslane – flowering purslane, comes in many colors, red, pink, coral, yellow, white -- a non-stop bloomer.



Marigolds – a wide selection of different colors and flowers, French marigolds help keep pests away from vegetable gardens.

Zinnias – come in almost every color, many different flower forms and from a few inches tall to a several feet tall.

### **Perennials for Sun:**

Agastache, Penstemon, Echinacea- beautiful flowering additions to any garden, many colors and sizes



California Fuchsia – a pollinator magnet; blue-green foliage, bright red-orange tubular flowers, loves it loves hot and dry.

Euphorbias- comes in many forms, mainly grown for its foliage.

Yucca – likes it hot and dry–beautiful spikes of flowers in late Spring, early summer.

Salvias – many different colors and forms to choose from, in both perennials and annuals

Lantana – loves it hot, can get very large, many single and bi-color forms



Russian Sage – beautiful blue-grey foliage and bright blue flowers.

Kniphofia (Red Hot Poker plant) – besides red, comes in bi-colors, yellow, nearly white

Manzanita- comes in many forms from groundcover to tree. Groundcover likes it dry and hot

Buddleia (Butterfly bush) – dwarf form (3' to 4') to almost tree size, as per its name, a butterfly magnet.

Nepeta (catmint) – bright blue flowers, come in different heights



### **Perennials for Shade:**

Bear's Breech – large green glossy leaves with tall flower spikes

Hens & Chicks – succulent that appreciates some relief from hot summer sun

Coral Bells – mainly grown for foliage colors – from lime green to almost black

Pacific Iris – native iris

Hellebores (Lenten Rose) – come in many leaf and flower colors

Sedums – many forms, groundcover forms appreciate afternoon shade, taller varieties need more sun to bloom.

## Glenn Hall Park and the River Park Garden Club:

### *A Long, Successful History*

The residents of River Park have been enjoying Glenn Hall Park for more than 60 years. The 7-acre park was donated to the City in 1951 by Louis B. Carlson and John Sandburg. It is named after former City Planning Director L. Glenn Hall who is described as a “great man with visions of a better tomorrow.”

In 1958, the swimming pool and adjacent building were erected. Then came the tennis courts and the original Children’s Playground -- redesigned in 2002 to make it ADA compliant. Then came major enhancements to the pool including the decorative fencing and construction of pool shade areas. In 2011, major safety enhancement features became necessary including improved visibility and lighting plus time locking features on the restroom doors. Most recently the shade structure over the picnic tables and a new Bar-B-Q area were constructed. A new adult exercise area was also added.

The River Park Garden Club has played a prominent role throughout the life of the park in enhancing the landscaping --primarily by encouraging and assisting in the planting and care of trees. This goes back some 30 years when Garden Club activist Fran Yermol was involved in planting the five native Valley Oaks that front the tennis court.

Most recently, the Garden Club has been involved in planting and caring for nine young trees: Two Chinese pistache trees front the entrance to the pool office; a Zelkova shades the Bar BQ area; a native Valley Oak and a Live Oak are just west of the volley ball courts; a native Red Cedar is south of the volley ball area; a Deodar Cedar is outside the playground on the north side of the fence; a Valley Oak is in the Children’s Play Ground west of the slides.

Also, an Oklahoma Redbud was planted in memory of River Park resident Shelley Hiscock, on the east side of the playground outside the wrought iron fence.

The River Park Garden Club just celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and its history represents years of enhancing the beauty of Glenn Hall Park.

*--Lee Ruth*

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The River Park Garden Club sends its condolences to the family of club member George Garbero, who passed away recently.

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### **Shepard Garden and Arts Activities coming up:**

June 18, 19 – Bromeliad & Carniverous Plant Society, sale 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.