Thanks for your Support

In an organization like ours there tends to be a small active core group who take on the mundane chores necessary to the continued existence of the organization. Things like arranging for a place to meet, paying the rent, writing and publishing the newsletter, providing for interesting and varied programs, projects and field trips, making sure there are coffee and cookies available, etc., etc. The various offices and committee chairs are often “recycled” within this group and the general membership is content with this situation.

Eventually, however, members of the core tire, age, develop other interests, or for other reasons are ready to move on. At times like these it is sometimes very difficult to find members who are willing to change from passive to active roles and take on the various tasks.

I'm happy to say this hasn't been the case here, and, as you see in this issue, your nominating committee has recruited a fine group of willing workers to take over the several vacancies and new positions that needed filling, including my job.

I'm very grateful for the willingness of members to step up when needed. I'm also very grateful to those stalwarts who are willing to continue on in their current jobs. Both signify the kind of energy needed for a volunteer organization to remain viable, and I'm proud to be a member of such a group.

Please join me in expressing appreciation to these individuals.

- Warren Shaw

We are in the early stages of establishing a chapter nursery and are in need of potting supplies. If you have any of the following, please bring to a meeting or email Peggy Jones <autumn_aspen@hotmail.com>

- flats
- pony packs
- 4” pots
- 6” pots
- 1 gallon pots

Are you interested in helping with the Nursery? Contact Peggy Jones to find out what you can do to help. Look for updates and more information in future newsletters.

It's early December and Madeleine Mitchell is enjoying her homegrown Christmas color -- Toyon berries. She planted two small plants a few years ago and they are now about 5 feet tall and loaded with berries. Nearby, the California native rose, (Rosa californica) is also loaded with red rose hips which she leaves for the birds.

The unseasonably warm weather sent a Carpenteria at the Unitarian Church into bloom in November! Jeanne Larson also had one stalk on her Cleveland Sage in bloom. California Fuchsia was still in full bloom even with recent frosty nights.

Out at China Creek, Peggy Jones and son Morgan have seen lots of wildlife among the natives -- the same young deer was spotted several times, plus its scat and tracks. Raptors are dominant with Cooper's hawk, Red shouldered hawk, Northern Harrier and Kestrels. There's a pair of White tailed kites that have been hunting and harassing a redtail hawk.

In the foothills change and growth have slowed with the arrival of rain and frost. Deciduous trees continue defoliating (but sycamores still bright gold), grasses and other annuals sprouting,, and lichens and mosses very happy. Most plants are dormant [at least above ground] and settled in to wait for spring.

The succulent roots from Douglas Iris divisions purchased at the November meeting are coming along and will soon be ready to put into the ground.

Things are starting to pop up. The fog drip is probably helping. The large vacant lot Jeanne Larson passes on daily walk is showing a pale green haze.

I see the beginnings of filaree and although the lavender-blue vinegar weed are only gray silhouettes, if you brush against them, the memory of summer comes rushing back. The needlegrasses are bright green and I imagine how green winer in the Valley probably was when native grasses dominated…

-- Editor
This quarterly meeting started Friday night with a bang at the 40th anniversary party at Tilden Park in the Berkeley hills [a lovely area I'd like to see in the daylight sometime]. The beautiful Nevada building, where, apparently some of the first formative meetings of the Society took place, was jammed with hundreds of members, old and new, in a party atmosphere.

There was a huge silent auction, wonderful food and beverages, shared memories by two of the founders and a horticulture award presented to the East Bay chapter. Camaraderie was rampant.

Some of the same buoyant spirit helped carry delegates through the long and sometimes tedious business of the Saturday meeting. As usual we worked through an impressive agenda. Some highlights:

- CC officers elected: Jim Bishop [Mount Lassen], council president and Brad Jenkins [Orange County], board president.
- Passed [finally] Vision Statement revision.

Contrary to popular opinion, the month of December is a great time to work in the garden. It is especially good to work in a native garden because many native plants are actually growing now preparing for spring.

Today, I have been planting evergreens in my foothill yard -- specifically Tecate Cypress (Cupressus forbesii) and Piute Cypress (Cupressus nevadensis). Both of these native cypresses are very drought tolerant, relatively fast growing to about 12 feet in height, add fragrance to the garden, and have a further value for the mountain areas because they are not tasty to deer! Drought tolerant evergreens are becoming increasingly important for our local environment and I have been focusing on planting them for the following reasons:

This time of year the Valley is plagued with very high, unhealthy levels of particulate matter air pollution generated from human activity, specifically PM 2.5, particles that are 2.5 microns in diameter or smaller. For reference, the smallest particle that can be seen with the naked eye is 40 microns in diameter, so PM 2.5 is really small and invisible except for its effects! PM 2.5 is so small that it easily enters the lungs and passes directly through the tissues and into the bloodstream. Once in the blood it is able to pass directly through cell walls and invade all the tissues in the body. The reason this is so damaging is that most of the PM 2.5 in the San Joaquin Valley this time of year is not just benign dust particles. It is a toxic soup of chemical particles including known carcinogens such as benzene and other poly-aromatic hydrocarbons, pesticides, ammonia, and nitrates.

Everywhere on the Valley floor is affected, including the mountain communities such as Prather, Auberry, Yosemite Lakes, and others. Evergreen plants are able to take in these particles through their leaves and remove them from the air that we breathe. Unfortunately all the evergreen plants in the Valley can't remove all the air pollution that humans generate, but they help. The best thing would be to not have these particles in the air in the first place, but that is the subject for a future article.

Evergreens also add essential free oxygen to the atmosphere. That is very important this time of year in northern latitudes because many deciduous plants are losing leaves and with them their oxygen producing ability. As human activity adds increasing amounts of carbon to the atmosphere it bonds with free oxygen to form CO2. Evergreen plants reverse this process through photosynthesis removing CO2 and releasing free oxygen. CO2 sequestered in plant tissues is one of the planet's best ways of balancing the atmosphere.

Unfortunately, “slash and burn” agriculture, deforestation for development, and other attacks on the forests of the world are reducing the planet’s ability to sequester CO2. These events combined with our global industrial and transportation use of fossil fuels is driving the increase in CO2 levels that is resulting in increased planetary temperatures and changing climate patterns. Planting native evergreens is one way that people can personally make a difference and help reduce global warming.

Finally, drought tolerant native evergreens are ideally suited to our local rainfall levels. The cypresses that I planted today will require only minimal watering during their first summer; maybe once every two weeks. After that, they should survive without summer irrigation and that will help our other major environmental problem in the San Joaquin Valley, water availability!

Well, I feel pretty good about my efforts today. I helped reduce local air pollution, reduce global warming, saved precious water, and you can do the same! Go out and plant some drought tolerant native evergreens this month and make a difference in your world! Happy planting!!

For more information about particulate matter pollution in the San Joaquin Valley and how you can work to reduce it, visit the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District website at www.valleyair.org. Also, be sure and check the Air District’s AQI Index forecast before you do heavy exertion in your garden. The air quality may be too unhealthy for your intended activity that day and instead you can spend time inside researching which evergreens you want to plant!

-- Joseph Oldham

-- Warren Shaw
CHAPTER MEMBER’S BALLOT
FOR ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2006

Return on or before Tuesday, January 17, 2006 or bring to the meeting on that date.
(Members that receive the newsletter by e-mail will also get a printed copy this month.)

The California Native Plant Society requires Chapters to elect their Chapter board officers. Officers serve one-year terms. Even though there are no contested offices in this election, please vote to support our Chapter’s goals and programs. Only members of the Sequoia Chapter of CNPS who are current in payment of their dues may vote.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate or Write-In</th>
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<tr>
<td>President: [ ] Peggy Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President: [ ] Paul Mitchell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer: [ ] Jeanne Larson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary: [ ] Marian Orvis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mark here to vote for the entire slate: [ ]

THANK YOU FOR VOTING!!

We are happy to welcome the following Board members and thank Joanna Clines (exiting Programs Chair) and Howard Latimer (exiting Horticulture chair) for their years of work in those roles.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Director at Large, Madera County</th>
<th>Director at Large, Fresno County</th>
<th>Programs Chair</th>
<th>Horticulture</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verna Arnest</td>
<td>Jim Seay</td>
<td>Jane Pritchard</td>
<td>Joseph Oldham</td>
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We welcome your comments, suggestions, and ideas regarding the Chapter and its activities, including the type of programs that you’d like to see. Feel free to comment below:

________________________________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________________________________
JEANNE LARSON
3457 EAST REDLANDS
FRESNO CA 93726-5862

Fold along dotted line so address is on the outside, seal with tape, and stamp.
Remember: Postage is 37¢ until Dec. 31. 39¢ starting Jan. 1
Send newsletter contributions, corrections, or suggestions to Thelma Valdez at <nmtv@att.net>. The next newsletter will be the January issue. Contributions are due by Friday, January 6.

Would you prefer to have your newsletter sent via e-mail as a PDF instead of printed and delivered by the U.S. Postal Service? If so, email Helen Shaw <helshaw@netptc.net> and let her know.

Do you know of a field trip or related plant event scheduled for 2006 that you’d like to be included in an upcoming newsletter? Send me the information!

Cattail (Typhus latifolia)
Dedicated to the Preservation of the California Native Flora.
For a membership brochure call Helen Shaw at 559/855-4519.
CNPS Web site:  < www.cnps.org >

We know that December is a busy time for everyone and yet it is also the time the chapter votes for new Chapter Officers. Please take a few minutes to pull out the enclosed ballot and mail it in.

Thank you for your time!