



ATHERTON GARDEN GUILD

Since 1966

Atherton Garden Gate

December 2024 • January 2025

AGG is a member of the
California Garden Club, Inc

Calendar

Meetings

Board Meetings: 9: 00 am

Social: 9: 30 am

Meetings: 10: 00 am

Meetings are on Mondays

December

Monday, December 9

Holiday Party

Holbrook Palmer

Park Pavilion

January

Monday, January 6

Atherton Town Center

History Room

February

Monday, February 3

Suzanne Legallet's home

88 Selby Lane, Atherton

March

Monday, March 3

Atherton Town Center

History Room

April

Monday, April 7

Suzanne Legallet's home

88 Selby Lane, Atherton

May

Monday, May 5

Atherton Town Center

History Room

AGG

HOLIDAY PARTY

Monday,

December 9

Pavilion

Holbrook Palmer Park

150 Watkins Avenue

Atherton



Amaryllis

The President's Letter



*“Year’s end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on,
with all the wisdom that experience can instil in us.” - Anonymous.*

As I write the last president’s letter for 2024, I reflect on all the beautiful things I learned and will take with me moving forward. One of the best things about gardening is that we are constantly learning and growing as gardeners and people. Here are three garden lessons I have learned this year.

It’s all about the soil:

Soil provides plants with air, water, and nutrients. Garden soils have three general types or textures: sandy, loam, and clay. Good soil, tilth, or loam will hold and provide adequate nutrients, water, and air to plant roots. It will also drain well when large quantities of water are applied, and it will be easy to work without becoming sticky when wet and crusted when dry. If you have garden soil that has too much clay or is too sandy, it can be improved by adding organic matter, such as compost. In fall or early spring, spread 2-4 inches of compost and mix it into the soil to a depth of approximately 6 inches. Top with mulch.

Work smart:

Consider how much maintenance your garden will need. Think about which annuals or roses will be easier to maintain. Check out the UC Davis Arboretum All-Stars Plant List for tips on buying plants. <https://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/arboretum-all-stars> and the American Rose Society list of easy-to-grow roses. <https://www.rose.org/single-post/top-classical-choices-for-performance-easy-to-grow>. Vary your tasks to avoid repetitive movements that cause inflammation, pain, and swelling. Sit on a stool rather than bending over while gardening to reduce back strain. Pulling weeds is more accessible by pre-watering the area.

Be patient:

Gorgeous gardens take years to develop. It’s o.k. if your garden doesn’t have a polished, filled-in look with successions of blooms every week. The only perfect garden is found on magazine pages. Be patient, relax, and enjoy.

I am so grateful for my health to revel in my garden to learn, grow, and be patient. The Board of Directors at the Atherton Garden Guild wishes peace and joy to you and your family this holiday season.



AGG Meetings/Programs



Get ready for the

AGG Holiday Party • Monday, December 9

Holbrook Palmer Park Pavilion
Holbrook Palmer Park, Watkins Avenue

6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

AGG Member plus one

Wear you best party dress, velvet, silk, fur coat,
glitter and baubles. Black tie optional!

Special features: Catered cheese tasting and
charcuterie selections. Bar service will include a tasting
of vintage California red wines. This event will be a
great Holiday Party Season kick off!

RSVP by December 2nd

with a \$50 (per person) check payable to AGG

Mail to Katie Blommer

47 Turnsworth Avenue, Redwood City, CA 94062

AGG Meeting • January 6

Atherton Town Center History Room

Program Speaker Davena Gentry • “The Beauty of Birds”



Davena has been working with the Sequoia Audubon Society, San Mateo County Chapter for four years. She is an avid gardener and has great enthusiasm for the environment and the beauty of birds. Her talk will include birds in the garden and ways to help prevent the bird population from declining.



Sequoia-audubon.org

The National Audubon Society protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow, throughout the Americas using science, advocacy, education, and on-the-ground conservation.

November Meeting



AGG Member Page



Suzanne Legallet, Karen Handal, designer and author Charlotte Moss, Bettina Walton (Karen's Vassar Classmate)

Suzanne Legallet and Karen Handal joined the Garden Conservancy's benefit luncheon at the San Francisco Fall Show and met the renowned garden expert and designer Charlotte Moss. The luncheon raised essential funds for the Conservancy's CA educational and preservation programs.

Library Floral Arrangements

Photos by Patty Leugers & Rita Waschhorst



Sue Connelly



Joan Sanders



Rita Wachhorst

The annual rose pruning is the first week in February. All interested pruners are asked to contact Patty Leugers, to be added to the roster of volunteers. fourbuds1@gmail.com



Katy McCormick, Suzanne Legallet, Barbara Tyler

Mary Linn Coldiron was the force extraordinaire behind our beautiful garden that many of you enjoyed on the AGG Garden Tour in May. She created this beautiful table setting, where small groups of ladies sat and visited during the afternoon. I loved sharing all I learned at our AGG meetings with her and had she not succumbed to a cancer recurrence, would have sponsored her to join our special group. Her exquisite talents will be sorely missed..

Julie Douglass



Autumn Reflections • Photos by Rita Wachhorst



Who's in the Garden

Who's in the Garden with Katy McCormick

by Patti Spazzaferro



Which three historical or present gardeners would you invite to your dinner party?

Rebecca Sweet of Harmony in the Garden. She lived in Los Altos not far from us at the time she helped us rethink and design our garden. Not only is she an extraordinary designer, but she is one of the kindest people we've had the opportunity to work with. Sadly she's moved away and our garden is in need of a refresh! Bruce Porter, the landscape designer who came up with the lines and structure for the gardens at Filoli. Jim Salyards, the current horticulturist at Filoli, is very knowledgeable and super creative. And he's the nicest guy, too!

What is your greatest fear?

My greatest fear is regret, that I will not have done something I always thought I would, or otherwise not have embraced life's gifts.

What is your idea of perfect happiness?

Perfect happiness to me is the love and health of my loved ones, and the presence to enjoy it.

Which gardens are your favorites?

My favorite garden is the one in my mind. It has no pests digging up my recent plantings or chomping the squash blossoms off my zucchini. The flowers bloom abundantly, the apricots remain on the tree until I pick them, and no oak root fungus is strangling any of my cherished crab-apples or roses.

What have you learned recently about gardening that you wish to share?

I recently learned that Patti Spezzaferro is a talented Master Gardener who makes great suggestions about the timing to plant spring bulbs, fertilize specific plants, prune roses, and hydrangeas. I appreciate the advice she offers.

What is your favorite gardening product?

My favorite gardening product is the expandable hose.

What inspires you to garden?

Sunshine and longer days inspire me to garden.

A motto by which you live by while gardening?

Enjoy being while becoming. We are always in the process of becoming.

What is your greatest extravagance?

My greatest extravagance is travel.

What does AGG mean to you?

To me, AGG is a community of talented, interesting, and inspiring women. I am very happy to be a member of this group.

Views of Katy's garden



Horticulture Report

Horticulture Report

by Patti Spezzaferro

December Master Gardener's Checklist

- Indoors, keep holiday greens well watered or mist daily. Keep trees and greens away from hot, sunny windows and heat sources. Poinsettias should be kept away from heat sources. If you're using poinsettias to decorate outdoors, bring them out of the cold at night.
- Take advantage of the rain we get this month. December is still a great time to plant perennials, shrubs, and trees to establish roots, promoting lush spring growth.
- Plant some cool-season annuals, like violas, primroses, and pansies.
- Keep an eye out for frost warnings. Be prepared to cover plants with a frost blanket for protection. Note: remove frost blankets during the daytime hours. Keep plants watered during this time.
- Feed the birds: keep those feeders full.
- Select bare-root roses for a summer rose garden.
- You CAN plant vegetables in winter! See our Year-round Vegetable Planting Schedules for San Mateo and San Francisco Counties for what can be grown now in your area.
- Now is an excellent time to plant chilled tulip bulbs. Chilled bulbs may grow taller with larger flowers than non-chilled bulbs.
- Clean up the garden – remove excessive leaf litter, etc. – to avoid over-wintering diseases.
- Sow wild-flower seeds now for instant spring color.
- Start planning your spring garden now!

January Master Gardener's Checklist

- Pull weeds brought on by recent rains now before they go to seed.
- January is an excellent time to plant dormant fruit trees and roses.
- Top dress tender plants with a mulch mix.
- Keep the garden clean. Prune and cut back overgrown perennials, roses, and shrubs. Remove plants that haven't been doing well to make room for healthier ones.
- Protect plants from frosty nights. Cover and keep them watered - well-hydrated plants will hold up to the cold much better.
- Heaters can dry out house-plants indoors quickly, so remember to keep them watered.
- Feed the birds in your garden.
- Start artichokes, asparagus, and rhubarb.
- Start planning your summer garden now!

Book of the Month for December and January

Home in Bloom

By Ariella Chezar

"An innovator rather than a follower,

Ariella always creates floral designs that surprise and delight." Kate Berry, Domino.



Ariella Chezar is a master floral designer and author. Her work has graced the covers and pages of Martha Stewart Living, O Magazine, Better Homes and Gardens, Town and Country, and many more. She is a highly sought-after teacher and lecturer and has designed flower arrangements for The Obama White House.

A leader in the "farm-to-flower" movement, Ariella lives in The Berkshires of Massachusetts, where her garden serves as inspiration for her designs. Her arrangements evoke nature with their seasonal theme. Her stunning lush blend of flowers and branches, fruits and vegetables, and gorgeous silk textiles and ribbons create a final product that is both sensual and evocative. Buy it on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)



Inspiring Organizations

Two Inspiring Conservation Organizations

The Garden Conservancy

The mission of The Garden Conservancy is to preserve, share, and celebrate America's gardens and diverse gardening traditions for the education and inspiration of the public.

A nonprofit organization incorporated in New York State, The Garden Conservancy was founded in 1989 by renowned plants man Frank Cabot after his visit to Ruth Bancroft's dry garden in Walnut Creek, CA. He recognized that there was an opportunity to create an organization to help preserve such exceptional gardens for future generations.

The Garden Conservancy's preservation and education programs have grown significantly over the years. Since 1989, the Conservancy has helped over 100 outstanding American gardens survive and prosper. Every year since 1995, the signature garden-visiting program, Open Days, has been opening the gates to hundreds of private gardens across the country, allowing thousands of visitors to explore beautiful spaces not normally open to the public.

The Garden Conservancy assists garden owners, managers, and community organizations across the country to address a wide range of challenges from historic rehabilitation and organizational development to collections management and documentation. The Garden Conservancy also presents lectures, symposia, and other public education programs to foster the sharing of ideas and inspiration, as well as garden-study tours.



Gardens at Palmdale, Fremont, CA

The Audubon Society



Cedar Waxwing

The National Audubon Society launched in 1905, on the heels of American conservationism and a growing movement to protect birds. As with many efforts to conserve nature, women led the way: The first Audubon Society was organized by two Boston environmentalists, Harriet Hemenway and Minna B. Hall, in response to the widespread slaughter of water-birds, the gorgeous feathers of which were used to make women's hats. The pair's efforts in Massachusetts soon helped inspire similar organizations across the country.

By the time the National Audubon Society incorporated in New York State, local members had already established key bird conservation efforts across the country, including the Christmas Bird Count, where volunteers take stock of early winter bird populations, and the United States' first National Wildlife Refuge, Pelican Island in Florida.

In the decades that followed, the organization was on the front lines of the conservation movement, influencing policymakers to pass key legislation. Notable conservation laws in which Audubon helped pass include the Audubon Plumage Law in 1910 that protected wading birds from the depredations of the plume industry, the 1918 Migratory Bird Treaty Act—still one of the strongest bird-protection laws in the world today—that made it illegal to kill any non-game bird in the U.S., the Endangered Species Act in 1973, and the mammoth climate-change-focused Inflation Reduction Act in 2022. Audubon has also recently launched Conserva Aves in multiple countries in Latin America, a partnership that will protect 2 million hectares across nine countries. Meanwhile, Audubon also built nature centers and sanctuaries across the country; and helped to increase populations of many imperilled bird species, including Bald Eagles, Piping Plovers, California Condors, Least Terns, Great Egrets, and many more. Audubon's work continues today across the hemisphere in the form of scientific research, policy-making, education, community engagement, and the conservation and management of 300 million acres of bird habitat.

Audubon draws on the latest, most innovative scientific research to help strengthen the landscapes where birds live, from forests to prairies to coasts. Audubon works to protect old-growth forests like the Tongass National Forest in Alaska and invest in planting and maintaining urban trees in cities and suburbs across the Western Hemisphere, and with private landowners to help protect prairies and grasslands.

New AGG Member

Introducing Mary Tan

New AGG Member



Mary was invited to AGG by Nyna Dolby. She is caring for her 3rd garden in Los Altos, and eager to learn more about best horticultural practices, plant selection, and design possibilities for her garden. Mary was born in Taiwan, grew up in southern California, graduated from UCLA, and had a career in theater & film before marrying Joe Tan, and raising 3 sons together. Mary is also a member of The Town & Country Club in San Francisco. Other than putting in the garden, selecting blooms for arrangements, she enjoys travel, reading, playing piano, and serving as a Stephen Minister at her church..

mary@tangroup.com • (650) 619-6330

25525 Bledsoe Ct

Los Altos Hills, CA 94022

Amaryllis • “Atherton Garden Gate” Cover Flower

The secret to keeping amaryllis thriving for years is to keep the plants actively growing AFTER they have finished blooming.

- After the flowers have faded, cut them off to prevent seed formation. Seed formation will deplete important energy reserves in the bulb and reduce blooming.
- Do not remove the flower stalk until it has turned yellow.
- A green stem will continue to promote photosynthesis, which creates energy that is stored in the bulb for future leaf growth and flowers.
- If the bulb does not produce a flowering stalk in the next blooming period, it is likely that has not stored enough nutrients during the post-blooming period.
- Keeping the plant healthy and growing will promote blooming.
- After your plant has finished blooming, place it in the sunniest possible location indoors. It will continue to grow long, smooth leaves. These leaves will promote photosynthesis.
- Continue to water and fertilize the plant regularly with an all-purpose house-plant fertilizer.



Hospitality

December

Mimi Hillyard, Suzanne Legallet, Co-chairs

Dana Bonham, Carrie Drake,

Erika Enos, Ginny Nile,

Suellen Rottiers, Pam Smith,

Lynne & Dave Heppberger



Atherton Library

Hours: Monday - Thursday: 10 am - 8 pm

Friday - Sunday: 10 am - 5 pm

On your week, deliver flowers early Monday, pick up late Sunday

Closed December 24, 25, & January 1

December

2 Terri Bailard

9 Norma Baker

16 Sue Barkley

23 Karen Bartholomew

30 Judy Blommer



The Atherton Garden Guild
PO Box 685
Menlo Park, CA 94025

AGG Newsletter

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OFFICERS 2024 - 2025

President: Patti Spezzaferro
1st Vice President: Suzanne Legallet
Programs
Mimi Hillyard
2nd Vice President: Dana Bonham
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Recording Secretary: Pamela Smith
Corresponding Secretary: Kasey Hansen
Historian: Di Bryan
Parliamentarians: Julie Douglass
Joan Sanders
Newsletter: Martha Woollomes
Website/Technology: Carrie Drake

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Kasey Hansen, Pamela Smith,
Patti Spezzaferro

COMMITTEE CHAIRS 2024/2025

Atherton Library Flowers: Chair Rita Wachhorst
Donations: Chair Barbara Tyler
Holbrook Palmer Rose Garden: Chair Patty Leugers
Holiday Party: Location: Holbrook Palmer Pavilion
Committee: Dana Bonham, Carrie Drake, Erika Enos,
Ginny Nile, Suellen Rottiers, Pam Smith,
Lynne and Dave Heppberger
Horticulture: Chair Patti Spezzaferro
Hospitality/Refreshments: Chair Lynne Heppberger
June, 2024 Luncheon: Hostess: Suzanne Legallet
Committee Chair: Suzanne Legallet
Committee: Karen Bartholomew, Dana Bonham
Sue Connelly, Mimi Hillyard, Sue Matthews,
Karen Olson, Joan Sanders, Patti Spezzaferro
Newsletter: Editor Martha Woollomes
Nominating: Chair Suzanne Van Ness
Website: Chair Carrie Drake
Yearbook: Chair Terri Bailard



Birthdays

December/January

Birthday Flowers

December

Narcissus: good wishes, faithfulness

January

Carnation: fascination, distinction, love

December/January Birthdays

Dec. 1	Sue Matthews
Dec. 6	Patricia Rodley
Dec. 9	Karen Handal
Dec. 11	Mary Sweeney
Dec. 20	Dianne Schilling
Dec. 23	Jean Gee
Jan. 4	Kathy Ladra
Jan. 15	Anna Zappettini
Jan. 17	Carrie Drake
Jan. 20	Katie Blommer