

California Rare Fruit Growers San Diego Chapter Newsletter

Thursday, November 29, 2007

General Meeting & Election: 7:00 – 7:30 pm

Program: 7:40 pm – 8:30 pm

Opportunity Drawing: 8:45 pm

The Year of the Mango

Website: crfgsandiego.org

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 152943
San Diego CA 92195-2943

Meeting Place

Rm. 101, Casa del Prado,
Balboa Park, San Diego CA

2007 Elected Officers

Chair: Jose M. Gallego
Membership Chair
chair@crfgsandiego.org
619/697-4417

Vice-Chair: Mike McCright
vice-chair@crfgsandiego.org
760/749-3538

Treasurer: Zhenxing Fu
treasurer@crfgsandiego.org

Secretary: Barbara Alvarez
secretary@crfgsandiego.org

Immediate Past Chair

David Silverstein
formerchair@crfgsandiego.org

2007 Appointed Positions

Greeters:

June Andersen & Irene Sias

Librarian: Oscar Butler
librarian@crfgsandiego.org

Facilities Coordinator
Barry Resetco 858/278-3732
javaman@crfgsandiego.org

Newsletter Editor: Cielo
editor@crfgsandiego.org

Webmaster: Jose M. Gallego
webmaster@crfgsandiego.org

Program: "Guavas in San Diego" by Randy Pompoon, the "Guava King" Members are encouraged to bring guavas from their garden collection to share.

FROM "EL PRESIDENTE"

We had another successful and interesting meeting last month. Our BIG thanks go to David Silverstein for a very interesting and informative presentation on pomegranates and for such a delightful sampling of pomegranates.

Figs & Grape Cuttings Order

At our September meeting **Jon Verdick** offered to take orders for fig cuttings, please visit (<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Main/docs.htm?docid=12871>), the UC Davis Repository and let Jon know which cultivar you wish to order. The Chapter will also be placing an order for grapes and pomegranates this year (<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Main/docs.htm?docid=12254> and <http://www.ars.usda.gov/Main/docs.htm?docid=12170>), so take a look at these two links and prepare a list of the cuttings you would like to order and bring it to our next meeting. You can find the order forms at [http://www.ars.usda.gov/SP2UserFiles/Place/53062000/repositorycatalogs/orderFRM\[1\].pdf](http://www.ars.usda.gov/SP2UserFiles/Place/53062000/repositorycatalogs/orderFRM[1].pdf).

As Jon mentioned, these orders are free of charge to our members and orders will be limited to 10 varieties per member. Ed Stover, Research Leader at UC Davis and Festival of Fruit 2007 featured speaker, states that it would help them if we contribute to this project by providing them with feedback as to how the cuttings you received developed. This documentation will help them not only with their research, but also to document the feedback they receive and the use of services they provide. So, we will be updating the forms we used several years ago and ask you to complete them for our Chapter to Davis next year.

Wednesday Meetings starting January 2008

At the September meeting, the majority of the members voted in favor to move the meeting to the third Wednesday of each month to be effective January 2008. The *Fruit Gardener* has been notified to include the new schedule in the January/February 2008 issue. It's unfortunate that some members may not be able to attend the Wednesday meeting.

San Diego Wildfires and our members

As some of you know, a couple of our members were hit by the recent fires, fortunately their homes survived, but their trees did not. **Mike McCright**, our Vice-Chair, lost quite a bit of his trees, however, **Rolf Dethlefsen** and **Connie Lee** lost all of their fruit trees, except for the banana trees, which actually protected their home from the fires.

El Presidente (continued)

We wish them best and some of us are ready to help them in replanting their trees. Please let them know if you will be available help, we are planning on helping them replant in early spring.

Financial Update on Festival of Fruit

The Festival of Fruit Board met on 10/28 to finalize the financial statements. A final version of this report will be posted on our web site as soon as one of our vendors let us know their final bill. So far, we are in the black. The exact amount is not known, but is pretty close. This will be available in the December newsletter.

Quail Gardens Work Party

We had a great day at Quail Gardens on Saturday the 10th, we pruned several trees, among them the large cherimoya and all the fejoia trees. Modesty apart, I think we did a great job! I would like to thank **June Andersen** for organizing this event, her continual work at Quail Gardens and for encouraging all of us to participate in this type of volunteering. I would like to also thank members of the North County Chapter, **Ben Pierce**, Tony, **Keith Harold** (and his hard working friend Pastor) and from our Chapter, **Alan Snively**, **Jim Neitzel**, and my daughter **Sabrina Gallego**. THANKS GANG! If you want to learn how to properly prune deciduous trees and practice, please feel free to join us at our **next work party at Quail Gardens on December 8**.

See you at the meeting!

El Presidente, José



SECRETARY'S REPORT

By Barb Alvarez, Secretary

At the Last Meeting

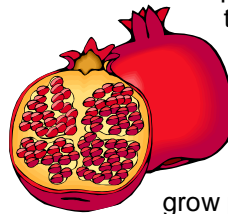
Due to the series of fires, evacuations, and smoke in the county we weren't sure whether we should meet, but things were better by Thursday, so we were able to meet. Who can forget the devastation four years ago? Those who get their newsletter by e-mail were notified that we would indeed be meeting. If you would like occasional updates related to the club, be sure to sign-up to receive your newsletter by e-mail. Our deepest sympathy to those who lost loved ones, homes or plants in this disaster. And thank you firefighters. **Zhenxing** gave a treasurer report. Jose brought up a possible donation of a 6 acre property in North County. We would maintain it and own the trees. We will be discussing joining the project with the North County Chapter. This would be a huge responsibility. We also got an offer to put a link for a book on our web site, a portion of the sales would benefit the chapter. The board will discuss these matters and if accepted bring it back to the membership for approval.

Nominations for 2008 Officers

The nominating committee took the lead for the nominations. Jose Gallego (Chair), Zhenxing Fu (Treasurer) and Barb Alvarez (Secretary) have agreed to run again. Nominations were opened for an open position of Vice-Chair. **David Silverstein** was nominated by Alva Whetton for Vice-Chair, 2nd by **Esther Cooperman**. **Cielo Foth** was nominated by **Paul Fisher**, she was not present, but declined by phone. **Steve Pruyn** nominated **June Andersen** for Vice-Chair. But to accept June needed to resign from the nominating committee, which she did. **Joy Bladykas** 2nd the nomination. See the Candidates' Forum on Page 3.

Program on Pomegranates

Immediate past Chair **David Silverstein** gave the presentation on pomegranates. We are fortunate to have such an expert in our own club. Here is information from David: If the pomegranates peels away from the stem, it should be ripe. Cooler climates promote color, however it may be at the expense of sweetness. Upper Central Valley is the best place to grow pomegranates -- hot days, cool nights.



Some notables: **Green Globe** sweet, but very hard seeds. It does well on the coast. **Red Apsheron**, dark and sweet. **Podoroa** means "prolific" soft seeded, tart. **Parfianka**, highly recommended by David, delicious and sweet. **Sin Pepe**, AKA "Pink Satin," AKA "Pink Ice", mild, sweet, delicious **Red Silk**, **Sharp Velvet Sin Pepe**. **David Archer** has these at his nursery. There is a "seedless" pomegranate with just 3 seeds (hum. It doesn't seem to have the same appeal to me as a seedless watermelon). The point? There is a white ornamental pomegranate which is very sour, surprisingly it tested very high for health benefits.

Wonderful will fruit the same year, others can take 5 to 6 years. However, be sure to let the tree grow big enough to support the fruit. Pomegranates have a wide pH and salt tolerance. The optimal amount of water is 45 inches with few deep watering per year. They primarily need nitrogen, no fertilizer is better than too much. Prune to 3 to 6 trunks. Best are spurs sprouting from older trunk wood. To avoid cracking, cut back water in August. Recommended reading "**The Incredible Pomegranate**" by **Richard Ashton** with Barbara Baer and **David Silverstein**.

To propagate. Cuttings in containers

- free draining mixture (vermiculite)
- 1 foot cutting, 2 nodes above the soil.
- wound, and use "Dip 'N Grow" (IBA)
- bottom heat (72 degrees), with it cool above the surface The alcohol in "Dip 'N Grow" helps deter fungus. **Ron Hurov** suggests placing cuttings in water with a bit of sugar for about a day before planting. Pomegranates can also be grafted.

Blind Taste Tests

David also treated us to a blind taste test (with some other contributions from others. We had about 12 different pomegranates to taste. Whatta treat! Thank you, David for an excellent presentation and the fantastic tasting. We did get to know what each one was afterwards. My favorite was 'Pink Ice'.

Fruit Tasting Table & Opportunity Table

Thank you to those who brought food: **David Archer, Joy Bladykas, Frank Habetler, Barbara Nickerson, Jim Neitzel, Judy Tadlock and Linda Williams.** There were a lot of people helping prepare the fruit, thank you. Strawberry, Lemon and pineapple guava, papaya, pomegranates, plantains, 'Keitt' mango, white sapote (no one would dare bring a black sapote), passion fruit and Fuyu persimmon. Thank you too to those who brought plants for the opportunity table. **June Andersen, Joy Bladykas, William Chow, Frank Habetler, Steve Pruyn, Lew Rishel, David Silverstein, Alan Snavelly and Judy Tadlock.** The offerings included: cholla, onion, iris, sugar cane, banana, cereus, dragon fruit, and pomegranate fruit.

**Candidates' Forum**

The following members have accepted their nomination for the Vice-Chair position.

June Andersen for Vice-Chair

A professional Registered Nurse, June has enjoyed being an active member for a long time. June was a key person in working on the 2007 "Festival of Fruit". She organizes the Home and Garden Show, and Quail Garden volunteers. June has worked closely with the board this past year in many areas. June does a lot of behind the scenes work, facilitating the meetings and is a dependable "go to" person. She has participated in many of our activities and promotes CRFG wherever she goes. June has a deep commitment to the club and desires to promote edible landscaping by having fun while gaining knowledge.

David Silverstein for Vice-Chair

I'm very happy to announce that I've accepted the nomination to run for the office of Vice-Chair. Most of you know me pretty well, as I had the privilege of serving as Chair of the Chapter for several years. Those were years of growing membership, growing Chapter finances, many interesting speakers and programs for the meetings, and access to a great deal of rare fruit material for growing and tasting. If elected, I will enjoy working with our Chair Jose' to assure that we continue to pursue these goals and any other goals that the membership wants the Chapter to pursue. One of my strengths is that I know and enjoy working with not just our Chair, but with all of the members of our current administration and everyone running for office, including June. I appreciate that it takes the efforts of many

people to maintain and improve the great qualities of our organization. And I know that rare fruit enthusiasts tend to be intelligent, independent, and opinionated people, so arriving at consensus is not always smooth in a club like ours.

For those who don't know me, my particular interests are very diverse, but I specialize in some of the lesser studied fruits such as Pomegranates and Loquats. I am the CRFG pomegranate expert and I maintain an ongoing relationship with the USDA germplasm repository at Davis, CA. This means that I gather interesting pomegranate varieties and contribute them to the collection there. This raises the prestige of CRFG. It also has the advantage of insuring that we get budwood to propagate and fruits to taste. By profession, I'm an Environmental lawyer for the U.S. Navy. I live with my wife, three kids, and numerous pets and fruit trees in Ocean Beach. I've just taken a year off from serving in any office of the Chapter and I am refreshed and ready to take on a share of the work. I only need your vote to get started.

**NOVEMBER GARDEN TIPS**

- [] Prune cane berries.
- [] Don't allow any of your citrus to go dry as the weather gets cold
- [] Keep an eye on your peaches and nectarines, as soon as the leaves fall, you can start spraying them to prevent peach leaf curl.
- [] If you live in an area where there is possibility of frost (such as Alpine) protect the trunk of your avocado or citrus trees.
- [] Start mulching all your trees, they will demonstrate their appreciation springtime.
- [] Light pruning can be done before they go dormant.
- [] Continue planting cool season veggies like broccoli, carrots, cauliflowers, lettuces and greens and potatoes
- [] Cooler weather is good time to transplant small trees and shrubs.
- [] Order bare root trees and shrubs for planting next month.



You can also visit our web site for each of the Monthly Garden Calendars: <http://crfgsandiego.org/garden.html>



2007 Pomegranate Roundup – Part 1
by David Silverstein

This has been a very exciting year for pomegranate tasting. I had the privilege of tasting pomegranates at the North County Chapter on 10/18/2007, at the San Diego Chapter on 10/25/2007, and at the Wolfskill Experimental Orchard on 11/3/2007. I'm going to describe the local tastings here, and next month, Wolfskill. Remember as you read this story that

Pomegranate Roundup (continued)

the aril is the gem-like juicy material that surrounds the seed in the pomegranate. The actual seed is inside the aril and it might be so soft as to seem almost absent or so hard and woody that you can't miss it or anywhere in between.

The North County group was most interesting to me for the fruit that the members brought in. It will be difficult to rank this fruit comparatively because I did not set up the system. We also tasted fruit from Wolfskill which Jeff Moersfelder, Pomegranate Curator, had sent down. Special thanks to Jeff. My best observations were these.

* **Grenada** is a pretty fruit with an extremely dark almost black skin and almost black arils when it is very ripe. The flavor is nice and sweet, but not terribly distinguished.

* **Fleshman** is still a darn good fruit, with dark pink arils and a fairly soft seed and a little bit of tart zing to balance its sweetness. (No surprise to long time CRFG members and complements to Paul Thompson.)

* There are a series of very nice medium dark pink aril fruit that Jim Bathgate brought. They are from an original tree of unknown name or origin on his property and some of its seedlings. These were all good and very intriguing. I heard a couple of people refer to these as typical long time traditional southern California backyard fruit, as if they were more of a type than a particular variety. This got me wondering about what the original trees were that the Spanish Missions had. (Wonderful did not exist until the late 1800s). Could Jim's trees be descendants of the original trees? Doubtful, but possible.

*Dennis Sharmahd brought a number of fruit from his seedling, **Pink Tourmaline**. These are delicious, soft seeded sweet, fruity tasting pomegranates with aril color a little darker and more transparent than Sin Pepe. These are as good as the best of this type. The fruits are not big. But they have an attractive habit of growing in tight clusters of three and four. These have gotten favorable comment at North County and San Diego chapters. I also brought one fruit up to Wolfskill this year, and they made a favorable impression there as well. I've gotten a small tree from Dennis and I'm excited about getting it in the ground and growing it up.

For the San Diego Chapter, I was a little bit more systematic. People pitched in and helped to assemble a numbered blind tasting setup. There were the seven varieties from the Experimental Orchard at Wolfskill. There were local Wonderfuls and then a few other local fruits that quantity was insufficient to compare to the whole setup. Results follow. This year I used note cards as comment cards so comments were very thin. I was able to derive first place and second place from people's notes and some people were very explicit. I will lean heavily also on member, **David**

Long's extensive notes on each variety and on my own opinion. It was pretty clear that Sin Pepe came in first, and Wonderful came in second. After that, it appears that Myagko Semyannyi Rosovyi came in third. Selected comments will clarify. DS is me. D.L. is David Long. Unattributed is from a comment card.

1. DPUN 82 Sin Pepe (aka Pink Ice, aka Pink Satin)

DL: Pink, slightly clear arils

*(SSS –denotes very soft seed) Rich complex taste, clean finish, sweet without being sugary (A+) (my favorite);

DS – A perennial favorite, well loved favorite in our chapter.

2. DPUN 35 Vina DL: Rose and Clear Aril

*(SSS) Very sweet, not bitter, doesn't taste rich; maybe more sugar and less acid in this one?

DS: Similar to Sin Pepe, not quite as balanced or fruity. But very good.

3. DPUN 122 Turan

DL: "- Clear and Rose color, very pretty aril.

*(SSS) Sweet, very mild flavor, milder than Weo 50 or King. Not bitter

DS: Overall, this was the only selection that I found to be unworthy of recommendation. It was not bad. It was even good, but the flavor was decidedly inferior to all of the other soft seeded pinks available. Comments at both North County and San Diego confirmed this but did not pin it down. Some said it needed more acidity; some said it needed more sugar; some said it simply needed more flavor.

4. DPUN 109 WEO 50

"- Arils are pink with clear.

DL: *(SS) Sweet, slightly crunchy seed, clean finish

DS: I have an affection for this one. It is juicy, fruity and slightly harder of seed. But harder seed is still quite soft and balanced with a slight nuttiness. One taster characterized it as spicy. I found this one hard to grow however and I'd recommend grafting it to vigorous rootstock if you try it.

5. DPUN 29 King

DL: Yellow outer skin Fruit Aril is rose color and sight clear.

*(SSS) Sweet clean taste. This is one of the first I tasted and it seemed a bit more watery and less acid when I went back, after being through them all. It still was good (A-B)

DS: DL hit it right on the head.

6. DPUN 109 Medovyi Vahsha

DL: Red aril with clear highlight

*(SS) Fruit is sweet but slight bitter taste to seed. (B-, C)

DS: I am very fond of this one, but it is controversial. Several people over the last few years have remarked

Pomegranate Roundup (continued)

on the bitterness. I would characterize it as complex and refreshing.

7. DPUN 139 Myagko Semyannyi Rosovyi ("Soft Seeded Pink)

DL: Arils are clear with pink highlight

*(SSS) Tart, refreshing, tangy, not sour but tart, slightly sweet (B)

DS: Loved it. I'd call that a soft pleasant sourness, not a biting one. And it is balanced by sweet. Jeff Moersfelder associated with grapefruit. Think pink grapefruit.

8. Wonderful (Local)

DL: Dark red arils

*(SS) Tart taste, acid rich, more like wine or concord grapes when compared to the others. After taste stays with you.

9. Utah Sweet (Local)

DL: *(SSS) Sweet, rich (B+) **DS**—A very nice sweet soft seeded pink. Balanced flavor.

A few other local varieties are worthy of mention. **Jim Neitzel** brought one called "**Whitey**" a red skinned fruit with dark red arils, medium hard crunchy seeds and bright sweet sour flavor on the order of Wonderful but lighter and less sour. A nice fruit. He also brought a single fruit of an unnamed variety. This was mainly remarkable for its appearance, light colored outside deep purple/black arils. However the flavor was not distinguished.

It has been an exciting season, and we are still tasting our way through a bag of miscellaneous fruit that came back from Wolfskill with us. More next month.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Special CCA Field Trip – Nov. 27th 11 am to 2 pm

South Coast Research & Extension Center

7601 Irvine Boulevard, Irvine

Space Limited to 80 by RSVP Received

Light Lunch (sandwiches) will be provided

Cost: \$10 per person, payable to CCA.

RSVP: Ken Burton

kenburton@earthlink.net or 661/297.3090

Please leave your name & phone # CLEARLY!!!

Mail Your Check (payable to CCA) to: Lynn Maxson, Treasurer, 1261 Ahart St., Simi Valley CA 93065

Confirmation will be emailed to you upon receipt of your check.

Jose M. Farre' will speak on the following:

- Cherimoya origin, distribution, propagation & varieties
- new cherimoya pruning techniques in Spain

- Q&A session about other subtropicals such as avocados, mangoes, lychees and longans.

About Dr. Farre: He is a Director of La Mayora, a very important experimental research station in Malaga, Spain. He is an expert in cherimoyas, avocados, lychees, longans, mangoes and other subtropicals.

Directions:

Southbound 1-5 or 1-405 -- or -- Northbound 1-5

→Exit SAND CANYON AVE and Proceed NORTH on San Canyon Ave.

→Turn RIGHT onto IRVINE BLVD. Go about 1 mile to SCR&EC on left. (100 yards past Lambert Rd.)



WISH LIST

Members whose fruit trees were damaged by the wildfires are encouraged to submit their wish list so our members can help get your gardens going again. Email to editor@crfgsandiego.org by the 10th of the month for upcoming newsletter issue.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Quail Botanical Gardens

□ **Dec. 8 at 10 am: SD & North County Chapters – Joint Work Party** at the Subtropical Garden. Join us and learn how to properly prune deciduous fruit trees.

□ **Dec. 7-9, 5 to 9 pm: Garden of Lights.** Quail is transformed into a dazzling winter wonderland. 760/436-3036 ext. 206 or www.qbgardens.org

San Diego Horticultural Society

□ **Dec. 10 at 6 pm** Cookie Exchange; renowned Dutch floral designer **Rene Van Rems (AFID)** will entertain us with "Holiday Entertaining with California Native Plants. Surfside Race Place, Del Mar Fairgrounds on Jimmy Durante Blvd in Del Mar.

□ **Jan. 14, 2008 at 6 pm** author, speaker, and TV personality **Nan Sterman** will discuss "**Lessons from Chelsea: International Ideas for Sustainable Gardens**" Del Mar Fairgrounds on Jimmy Durante Blvd in Del Mar. 760/730-3268 or www.sdhortsoc.org

Water Conservation Garden

Sat. 10:30 am, Sun 1:30 pm: Docent tours of the Xeriscape garden. Free. Visit their website for water-wise resources ☎ Info: www.thegarden.org or 619/660-0614 12122 Cuyamaca College Dr. West, El Cajon

**Win a prize for your water-wise landscape!
Deadline to enter is April 7, 2008. For contest rules & entry form, visit www.LandscapeContest.com**

