



Laguna Beach Garden Club

Weeder's Digest



“Serve Our Community, Protect Our Planet & Share the Love of Gardening”

COME JOIN IN
THE FUN

Events This Month

General Meeting Jan. 9

Dr. Ari Novy
Plants Are (Almost) Everything
(see page 3)

Laguna Presbyterian Church

- 9:30 am social
- 10:00 am meeting



Green Thumb & Crafts Jan. 16

Printmaking With Plants Workshop

9:30 am at Dalynn Malek's home
(see page 5)



Trips & Tours Jan. 21

Casa Romantica San Juan Capistrano (see page 5)



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR • DALYNN MALEK

Living in southern California we are fortunate to have a temperate climate that allows us to enjoy our plants & gardens year round.

The past few weeks have found us spending more time indoors due to the rains and Holiday festivities. Your indoor plants can benefit from the extra attention they can receive during this time. Here are 10 simple tweaks from *Garden Design* to keep yours healthy through winter and ready for spring, like watering less (most

plants grow more slowly right now) and boosting humidity with a pebble tray or humidifier. Easy win: rotate pots a quarter-turn when you water so they don't lean toward the light. Enjoy your indoor gardening!

https://www.gardendesign.com/houseplants/winter-care.html?utm_source=article-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=winter-houseplants-1-1-26



President's Message

The Best-laid Schemes o' Mice an' Men

Gang aft agley (my dad would deliver this with a rich Scottish burr.)

I watched the sun set on the solstice in Santa Fe, NM, seated under bare cottonwoods, their upper branches catching the last red light long after the sun had slid from view, cutting snowflakes from tissue paper, catching up with my big sister, and finding slivers of joy during an odd Christmas.

I'm excited to leave 2025 behind and stride into 2026.

I am also eager for all of you to participate in the **Valentine Extravaganza**, the little sister of fundraisers! Bring a friend! Bring a container to buy plants, boutique items, and raffle tickets. Please bring your favorite thing about the garden club and share it!



I'm convinced we can grow the *Valentine Extravaganza* into a community event as well-known as the *Gate & Garden Tour*. Our fortunate location in downtown Laguna creates the opportunity to invite the public to learn about the projects we support, the speakers we present, and all our activities. Plus, it gives them a chance to spend their money.

Introduce a friend or neighbor to the garden club at the February 13 meeting.



The main event is a silent auction of container gardens donated by club members. All sizes and shapes are welcome, from joyful little pops of color to lush, elegant masterpieces, quirky containers paired with plant oddities, to serene monocultures. The internet is awash with brilliant ideas for container gardens. I'm eager to see what you create!

Remember to drop off your gently used treasures for the boutique so we can store them for you. Declutter, regift, and let go! Step into the New Year with confidence!

-Nancy Englund



The Valentine Extravaganza is in February, but you can bring boutique treasures to the January 9th meeting.

January Guest Speaker Ari Novy

“Plants Are (Almost) Everything”

Dr. Ari Novy, the San Diego Botanical Garden’s President and CEO, is not just a plant biologist. His amazing career spans from an estate gardener in Italy to sustainable gardening in the Philippines to Executive Director of the U.S. Botanic Garden, to name a few! Many of our members recently raved about their experience with Dr. Novy, touring the 37-acre garden with an extensive collection of Mediterranean climate plants as well as award winning children’s gardens.

Dr. Novy is a plant biologist with a wide range of expertise in plant science and education. He started his career in student support services with New York University. Dr. Novy completed his graduate work at Rutgers University in New Jersey, where he conducted research on plant population genetics, invasive species, plant conservation, horticultural improvement, agronomic risk assessment, beekeeping management, plant evolution and agricultural economics and policy.

Dr. Novy remains an active researcher, holding an appointment as Adjunct Associate Professor at the Salk Institute for

Biological Studies. He is the founding co-chair of the Food & Agriculture Professional Section of the American Public Gardens Association. He has served on task forces and advisory panels



for diverse groups including the White House Council on Environmental Quality. He is immensely proud of having been a science advisor for the most recent seasons of “The Magic School Bus”.

Please join us on Friday January 09, 2026, at 09:30-10:00 for social time and refreshments, meeting begins promptly at 10:00AM. Meetings are held at Laguna Presbyterian Church in Tankersley Hall located at 415 Forest Avenue, Laguna Beach, Ca. Non-members are invited to attend for free on their first visit. For more information on the garden club:

www.lagunabeachgardenclub.org
No parking in the Church parking. Plenty of street parking available.

Are You Interested in Leading Trips & Tours?

Do you have ideas for Trips & Tours destinations? Are you organized, do you like to write, or take great photos? If so, volunteer to be a Special Administrator or be a T&T team member for the 2026/27 garden club year. **Synthia Scofield** and **Patty Gaffney** will be stepping down as the T&T Special Administrators with the last T&T of the Garden Club year, April 2026. Can you believe that Synthia has been organizing T&T day trips for over a decade?! Patty partnered with her for the last three years after serving four years on the Board in finance positions.

If you’re interested, please inform Mary Jones, Synthia Scofield or Patty Gaffney and feel free to ask Patty or Synthia questions about the positions.

Daytrippers, it has been so much fun being your T&T Duo, and we plan to join in on future day trips after we “retire!”

-Patty Gaffney & Synthia Scofield

Just Do 2 — Bee the Difference

At our **January 9th General Meeting**, we invite you to stop by the “**Just Do 2**” **Volunteer Table** and sign up for **two volunteer opportunities** this year. That’s it — just two! Whether you have a little time or a lot, your involvement helps keep our programs, events, and community outreach growing strong.

Volunteering is more than lending a hand:

- It’s a wonderful way to meet fellow members.
- It lets you share your talents (or discover new ones)!
- It strengthens our club and our connection to the community.
- And it makes LBGC an even more vibrant place to belong.

We have a variety of **open volunteer positions**, with options to fit different interests, schedules, and energy levels. From helping at meetings to assisting with events or behind-the-scenes tasks, there’s truly something for everyone.

So when you arrive at the January 9th meeting, make it a point to visit the **Just Do 2 Volunteer Table** on the patio next to the treats. Pick two opportunities that speak to you, sign up, and know that your participation truly matters.

-Sharon Stephens



A special Valentine's raffle will be held at the February 13th meeting

Some of this year’s exciting raffle items are...

- Veuve Clicquot Champagne with a See’s Candies gift card
- A Hortense Miller Garden membership plus a special gift.
- The Winery Restaurant gift card with two bottles of selected wine
- The Magic Castle (Los Angeles) — admission for a party of 4 to this exclusive, members-only magic club experience

There will be more raffle prizes added! There is something for everyone!

There will be several Garden Club members will be selling cash only raffle tickets, credit card sales will be available at the treasurer’s table.

A big thank you to all who have generously donated.

-Polly J. Parkey February Raffle Administrator Team



CLUB NEWS

Green Thumb Crafts

Printmaking With Plants Workshop With Dalynn Malek

Date: Friday January 16th

9:30 AM

Location: Home of Dalynn Malek
29652 Alta Terra Laguna Niguel

Cost: \$10

Payable: When you sign up at the
January 9th meeting

Class will be capped at 12 people
Each attendee will be making leaf
prints and adhering them to
canvas board.

Questions: contact Dalynn Malek
dalynnmalek@gmail.com
949-702-0521



Save The Date!

Let's show up strong for the **Patriot's Day Parade**
on March 14th, 2026!

Meet at the LBHS School District Parking Lot at
10am with your apron, your walking shoes, your
flowered hat, and your sense of Garden Club pride!

More information to follow next month.

- Diane Kloke



Trips & Tours

It's not too late to Sign Up for the January Trips & Tours

Daytrippers, you can still sign-up for the docent-led tour of **Casa Romantica Cultural Center** and Gardens on **January 28th**, followed by lunch at Trevor's at the Tracks and a self-tour of Mission San Juan Capistrano. Sign-up at the January general meeting, and please be prepared to pay the tour fee of \$8 in cash at the T&T table. You will see reminders and updates at the meeting and in Constant Contact emails.



As usual, we will gather at St. Catherine of Siena Parish for carpools at 9:15 am., leaving promptly at 9:30 am. Parking is in front of the church and is free; address is: 1042 Temple Terrace, Laguna Beach. We appreciate drivers!

January 28, 2026 T&T Line-Up

1. 10:00 am tour of Casa Romantica, 415 Avenida Granada, San Clemente; prepay the admission/tour fee of \$8.00 in cash to Synthia Scofield or Patty Gaffney at the January general meeting.
2. Lunch at Trevor's at the Tracks, 26701 Verdugo Street, San Juan Capistrano
3. For the self tour/wander of Mission San Juan Capistrano, you will pay admission at the door: \$15 for ages 60+ or \$18 for ages 18-59. Address is 26801 Old Mission Road, SJC.

The T&T Duo looks forward to touring with you!! -Patty Gaffney & Synthia Scofield

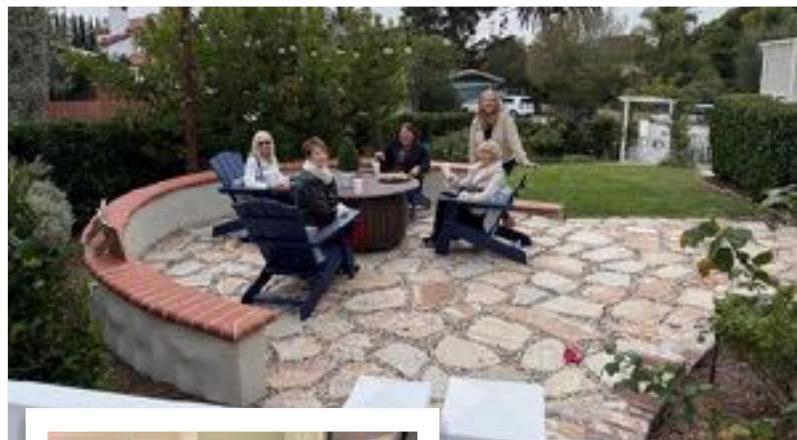
Annual Holiday Member Tour

On December 12, 2025, three of our members graciously opened their homes and gardens for the Holiday Member Tour, held a few hours after the December meeting. It was a festive occasion, providing a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with old friends and meet new members. The Tour was a big success with nearly 80 members attending. This year our route took us to Laguna Beach at Lois Zeller's home, San Clemente at Lisa Goodlad's home, and Capistrano Beach at Barbee Martin's home.

Each home on the tour was unique in its own special way, and of course, everyone enjoyed the delightful variety of nibbles and drinks. The holiday decorations were spectacular. These members really went all out, definitely setting the festive mood.

Thanks to **Lois Zeller**, **Lisa Goodlad**, and **Barbee Martin** for their holiday hospitality. **Mary Jones & Lynn Jax** scouted the areas and gardens and organized the event.

-Lynn Jax & Mary Jones



Barbee Martin's home



Continued on the next page

More Fun at the Holiday Open House



**Lisa
Goodlad's
home**



**Lois Zeller's
home**



Do Bees Make New Year's Resolutions?



No, bees don't make New Year's resolutions like humans, but they engage in sophisticated collective decision-making and goal-oriented behaviors, like choosing a new home or foraging, which function similarly to setting and achieving goals. They have colony-wide "goals" for the season, like making honey and raising new bees, and individual bees constantly refine choices for nectar, demonstrating purpose-driven actions!

Since we know that the bees in our collective Laguna Beach Garden Club hive are what are considered "premium" bees (referring to their breeding for high-quality strains known for desirable traits like disease resistance and superior honey production and gentleness, sold by suppliers for starting the strongest hives) we expect no less than the most wonderful outcomes from our group!

As we turn the page on 2025 and head into 2026, we begin our journey into a very busy season for the annual *Gate & Garden Tour*. This beloved tour has become a force to be reckoned with, not only for our club but also as a point of pride for what makes Laguna Beach such a magical place. It is the engine that fuels the scholarships we provide, the wings under the projects we undertake and the many community collaborations that continue to expand our reach to do good where and when we can. All this while we manage to make every effort fun as well as a genuine way to connect with each other and exhibit the philosophy of "the good of the hive". A trifecta of awesomeness in my humble opinion!

Here is my ask, let's not wait to be asked to help. Let's preemptively look at this list of tasks needing to be done and lean into them big time! 1) Susan needs someone to champion (aka Chair) the Security Committee for the event. (Could be a fun task for a husband or couple!) 2) A set of folks are needed to help with the route set-up/clean up. 3) Do you have a business or friends with a business that would be interested in placing an ad in the tour brochure? Maybe it's a business you frequently do business with, or you have a relationship with...start there.

You do not need to be a member to help with the tour. On tour day we have many friends and family members that get inducted into our hive for the day just to meet all the needs that are required by the tour. If you can assist in any or many of these tasks, please see Susan Denton post haste! Let us not make Susan do all the heavy lifting!

Now for the cool part for all the members, the February 13th General Meeting is the **ONE AND ONLY** opportunity to buy discounted tickets to the Gate & Garden Tour. Regular tickets will be \$50 and VIP tickets will be \$70. (This represents a \$10 savings off!) **CASH OR CHECK ONLY-No credit cards.** You can buy as many tickets as you like! So if you are bringing your entire posse, you can be the one who is the hero by buying all their tickets at your member discount pricing but only on that **ONE** day! Oh my, you will be the most popular queen bee in your hive! Just a reminder, even if you are volunteering you must buy a ticket to go on the tour. Remember this is how we raise money to fund all the good that we do, and each and every one of us must volunteer for some task associated with the tour.

My friends and I have made this one of our most fun events of the year. We all come and volunteer to do whatever Susan needs (including our husbands) and we bring friends who help and then we all go on this magical tour and have the best day! The volunteer shifts are just a couple of hours so you can volunteer first and then tour, or tour first and then volunteer, totally your choice!

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." Mahatma Gandhi

-Karen Nelson

Our Members Shine



December Centerpiece

Carolyn Bent created the centerpiece for the December treat table. A member since 2010 and a Lifetime member, Carolyn lends her creative skills to not only table scapes, but also by making the floral display for the golf cart that leads our members in the Patriots Day Parade, as well as the signage for the *Gate & Garden Tour*, and designing our membership book. Carolyn is one very creative lady!

December Volunteer of the Month

Jean Platt was selected as the Volunteer of the Month. Jean, a member since 2024, is always willing to volunteer to help with Thank you Jean for all you do for our club!



Proud Name Tag Wearer

Linda Peters, a new member, was rewarded for wearing her name tag at the meeting. She is pictured here with **Lynn Jax**, Director of Membership. Wearing one's name tag helps to welcome new members to the club by letting them know everyone's name.



Holiday Baking Equals Egg Cartons for the Pantry!

What a hive! At the December meeting we collected **221 egg cartons**, including 36 from Mary Lewis and her neighbors, bringing our total since May 2025 to 1090, saving the Pantry almost \$500!

No doubt with the holiday baking season winding down you'll have plenty more to bring to our January 9 meeting.

A thought – be like Mary Lewis and ask your neighbors to donate their egg cartons. It's fun for me to see a random bag of cartons at my front door and will be fun for you, too.

Reminder, our Pantry can no longer use plastic. Their need is for cardboard, half or full dozen, clean and with lids. If you do bring plastic 12's or 18's with lids, we'll find a home for them, too.

Shout out to Club member Tom Hensel's son Casey, for being our pickup and delivery service for the Pantry.

See you all on January 9!

-Jane Leary



Cranberry White Chocolate Chip Cookies

From Mary Jones

Ingredients:

2/3 cup softened butter
2/3 cup brown sugar
2 eggs
1 1/2 cups oatmeal
1 1/2 cups flour
1 tsp baking soda
1/2 tsp salt
1 cup craisins
1 cup white chocolate chips

Directions -

Preheat oven to 375 degrees
Combine butter & sugar in a large bowl & then add eggs.
In a separate bowl: combine oatmeal, flour, baking soda & salt.
Slowly mix the oatmeal & flour into butter mixture.
Stir in the cranberries & white chocolate chips.
Bake for 8-9 minutes.
Makes 3 dozen

One of the highlights of the Member Holiday Tour (besides the lovely homes and gardens) was the delicious treats provided along the way. **Mary Jones'** delicious Cranberry White Chocolate Chip Cookies were so delicious several members requested the recipe. Enjoy making them and don't forget to bring your empty egg cartons to the January meeting.



Spark of Love Holiday Toy Drive 2025

Santa's Garden Club helpers were hard at work this holiday season. Just look at all the toys, games, bikes, scooters, helmets and soccer balls! It took three firemen to load up their sleigh, I mean ambulance, and they got them to the North Pole in time for Santa to work his magic, bringing Christmas smiles to kids and families in Laguna and beyond.

The generosity of you, our members, is what makes our club shine during the holidays and all year long!

-Jane Leary



Membership Update

Welcome to January and another new year. Wow! I am pleased to announce that we now have **249** members as of December 29, 2025. I was hoping to meet that magical number of 250 members, but we will definitely get there soon.

Our next meeting is January 9, with social time beginning at 9:30 am and the business meeting starting promptly at 10 am, with another fabulous presenter as part of our Speaker Series.

If you have not picked up your 2025-2026 Membership Book yet, tables will be located inside for your convenience. At this point in the year, if you want your book, NOW is the time to pick one up.

Name tags – reminder to wear yours to receive a ticket to be eligible to win a great prize as a reward for wearing it. If you joined the Club in December, your new name tag will be ready for pick up. Any new member who has NOT received your name tag, please stop by and pick it up. If you ordered a replacement or spare name tag, it will also be ready for pick up.

If you have a friend, neighbor, or colleague who might be interested in our Speaker Series, please invite them to attend a meeting to see if we are a good fit. The first meeting is free, and we accept members at any time.

Please feel free to contact me at any time via email: lynnmjax@icloud.com or cell: 949-294-1500.

-Lynn Jax, Director of Membership



Centerpiece Silent Auctions

Each month, our **Hostess Table Centerpiece Silent Auction** has gotten progressively more active in bidding wars. Whether you're entertaining the first weekend of the month, or you just want to spoil yourself with a one of a kind arrangement, please bid on our centerpiece each month!! Thanks to our passionate garden club members for helping to raise more money for our school gardens and scholarships.

If you're new to the Garden Club, each month, a unique theme will be lovingly designed, created and donated by one of our talented and generous Garden Club Members. A silent auction bid sheet will be next to the centerpiece on the Hostess Table of Treats located in the courtyard. Minimum bids start at \$25.00 and bid up at \$5.00 increments. Bidding will close at the start of the general session meeting (10a). If you have an interest in designing and donating a hostess centerpiece for an upcoming meeting, please let Linda Richardson know.

A giant **Thank you to Carolyn Bent** for creating our fabulous Hostess Table Centerpiece featuring her cherished heirloom glass ornaments and Trees for December. These were lovingly shared to view and no auction was held.

January's Hostess Table Centerpiece will be artistically designed by Michele Highborg.

Thank you, Michele! We can't wait to see you work your new year's magic!

-Linda Richardson



LBGC GARDENERS!!!! LET'S START THE NEW YEAR WITH NEW GARDEN ATTIRE... YOU DESERVE IT!

Come visit our gift shop
At the next meeting and treat yourself to a pair
of new gloves or sun hat. We also have a new
supply of floral caps and aprons.
Coffee cups are on sale at \$10.00 each & garden
Christmas ornaments will be reduced. 😊

*HAPPY NEW YEAR
FROM THE GIFT SHOP STAFF*



Tidings from the December Holiday Raffle

Item Won

Jeanne Yale Succulent Wreath
Mae Ho Christmas Basket
Laguna Coast Pottery Gift Card
Roger's Garden's Paperwhite Kit
Duet Hand Dyed Scarf
Honey Baked Ham Gift Card
Spode Christmas Cachepot w/ lavender
Laguna Coffee Gift Cards
Polly Parkey Holiday Basket

Lucky Winner

Gloria Potocki
Carolyn Muzyka
Cheryl Czyz
Susan Lister
Linda Homscheid
Jane Barnes
Linda Peters
Ken Hanzlik
Carolyn Muzyka

Thank you to those who helped secure or made generous donations!
Many thanks to those who sold tickets and participated!

-Vicky Adams-Cuccia December Raffle Administrator



Valentine Extravaganza

One of the Garden Club's most exciting and enjoyable events of the year is almost here! Join us on **February 13th** for our Valentine Extravaganza, a day filled with creativity, shopping, and fun.

Club members will showcase their talents by creating **container gardens, gift baskets, art pieces, and other one-of-a-kind items** for the Silent Auction. Every item will include a **Buy-It-Now option**, so if you see something you love, you can skip the bidding and take it home immediately.

Our popular **Raffle** returns with the chance to win a fabulous prize. Outside, the **Plant Table** will offer plants ready for planting, cuttings, and a variety of plant-related items and books.

Be sure to visit the **Boutique**, featuring unique treasures donated by our members. This is a great time to clean out closets and garages—items do **not** have to be garden-related. Boutique donations may be brought to the **January meeting**.

And there's even more! This event offers a one-time opportunity to purchase **Gate & Garden Tour** tickets at the discounted price of **\$50.00** and **\$60** for VIP (cash or checks only).

For the first time ever, we will also have an **on-site tool sharpening service**. Bring your garden tools to be sharpened while you wait, or drop them off during the event.

If you are donating items to any area, please deliver them between 9:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. on **January 13th**.

Photos included show some of the wonderful Silent Auction creations from **2024**.

For questions, please contact **Mary Jones** at ibjones@cox.net.



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www.LagunaBeachGardenClub.org

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