

VOL. 21



# Laguna Beach Garden Club Weeder's Digest



FEBRUARY 2026  
MEMBER NEWS

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

*“I want every bird, butterfly and bee ... to feel  
drawn to my lilies, surfinias, jasmine, roses,  
honeysuckle, lavender and anemones ...”*

-Francis Mayes

## A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR • DALYNN MALEK

I am sure that most of us have felt lucky to have the wonderful weather we have had this past few weeks. Intermittent showers followed by days of glorious sunshine are just two of the perks of southern California living. Those of us who have family or friends in other parts of the country



know the hard times they have endured this past few weeks with huge amounts of snow and frozen roads. When was the last time you heard of Niagara Falls freezing? Well actually it is just the surface water, but it is still pretty spectacular! So enjoy the California sunshine and go outside to putter around in your garden.

COME JOIN IN  
THE FUN

## Events This Month

General Meeting  
February 13



### Container Garden Auction

Bring your floral donation and/or bid on other members' creations. Any size, any theme is perfect! Laguna Presbyterian Church

- 9:00 am floral container drop off/delivery
- 9:30 am Social & Auction bidding
- 10:00 am Meeting (see page 3)

## Trips & Tours February 25

### Modjeska House and Gardens

Sign up at the February 13 meeting (see page 5)



## President's Message

# Valuing a Simpler Valentine's Day

I have fond memories of sitting around the kitchen table with my mother and sister, making Valentines for our friends and aunties, cutting out flocked roses from an enormous book of wallpaper samples, and adding doilies and crepe paper ruffles. Our mom encouraged handmade cards for every occasion, especially Valentine's Day, a tradition I delight in upholding. For me, Valentine's Day is about connection and affection, not empty signifiers of romantic love.



Valentine's Day is a bit like hot chocolate: it warms the heart, but it can quickly become sickening if you overdo it. In terms of ecological impact, it can sometimes be a disaster. Simple, sincere, and responsible gestures make a

more lasting impact than a bouquet of roses grown in Ecuador or Colombia, or a box of chocolate made from cocoa that originated in a narrow band near the equator in West Africa, South America, or Southeast Asia.

Give your love flowers, but instead of a cut bouquet that has generally traveled hundreds of miles, is drenched in pesticides, and dies in a few days, gather flowers from your own garden or choose a living arrangement, such as one of the splendid container gardens available at the Valentine's Extravaganza!



Or ignore high-pressure advertising that says the only way to show love is to buy something shiny and new, and instead make a loving gesture

straight to the planet. Which is why, on February 14, when the tide is out, you'll find me on the beach picking up litter, my little Valentine to the Earth.

-Nancy Englund President



Want to Save the Bees? Focus on Habitat. Not Honey Bees

Keeping honey bee hives will not help the 3,600 bee species native to North America. In fact, it might do the opposite. The best solution to bee declines is to address underlying causes like habitat loss and pesticide use. Native flower gardens can support all bees.



## *The Valentine Extravaganza will be the Highlight of our February Meeting*

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 **February 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 February 13th**.

For questions, please contact **Mary Jones** at [ibjones@cox.net](mailto:ibjones@cox.net).



## Time to Show some Valentine's Day Love to our Beloved Laguna Food Pantry!

I received a heartfelt thank you from Anne Bellyea, Executive Director of Laguna Food Pantry for all the love we shower on them and their clients every month. At the January meeting we collected 195 egg cartons, including 45 from **Mary Lewis** and her neighbors, bringing our total this club year (since Sept) to 1285, saving the Pantry almost \$580! We're well on our way to beating the Sept 2024-May 2025 total of 1422. Way to go!

Remember to 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.

Sorry this keeps changing but life is all about change, right? We no longer have a home for ANY plastic egg cartons of any size. **Please bring only cardboard.** Laguna can only use ½ or full dozen, clean and with lids. If you bring cardboard 18's or 24's we have a home for those thanks to Karen Nelson

Another shout out to Club member **Tom Hensel's** son Casey, for being our pickup and delivery service for the Pantry. I sure appreciate him and each and every one of you for showing your love to our Pantry.

-Jane Leary



## Live Auction

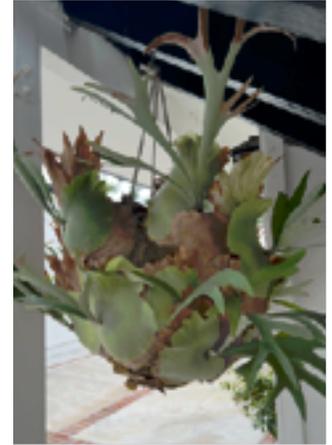
*Hello my friends,*

*I'm a **Platycerium bifurcatum**, but you can call me Staggy the Staghorn. I am the star of the first-ever live auction at the Valentine's Extravaganza!*

*I was lucky enough to be adopted by my current plant parent, **Kim Hall**,*

*when she bought the house where I live. I'm sure I was a big part of why she bought the house. I am a stunning, mature Staghorn fern; even **Ruben Flores** admits that I am gorgeous and thriving! I have grown so much that Kim and I have reached a mutual understanding that I need more space, preferably on a tree or fence, where I will receive bright, indirect light and occasional watering. Other than that, I don't need much, and in return, I will provide mystery and glamor to your garden. It has taken me decades to reach this impressive size, which is why I am so valuable. I hope you have an excellent place for me to shine my bright leaves. Now remember, I am a big deal, so bid high and often in the live auction! By the way, the winning bidder will get free delivery. I can't wait for you to see me at the February meeting!*

*Love,  
Staggy*



# January Trips & Tours

## Casa Romantica Trip & Tour and February Options

**D**aytrippers, we were the largest T&T group in some time, with 36 attendees enjoying the docent-led tour of **Casa Romantica Cultural Center and Gardens in San Clemente**. It was a beautiful SoCal winter morning, and looking out at the San Clemente pier, one could appreciate the natural disaster that closed the historic home and grounds of Ole Hanson. After an 18-month closure caused by a major April 2023 landslide, Casa Romantica partially reopened on October 4, 2024. While the Main Salon and interior rooms are open, the Ocean Terrace, amphitheater, and lower gardens remain closed to the general public for ongoing, multi-phase, \$8.5 million cliff stabilization efforts.

We, as Laguna Beach Garden Club T&T attendees, had special access to slip beyond the “No Entry” signs to see the recovery and progress, to learn of the future additional plantings and pathways marked by blue and red flags peppering the plant beds and slopes. Enthusiastic docents also gave the history of Ole Hanson and shared extensive details on the interior space of the historic building.

After our guided tours, eighteen club members savored lunch at Trevor’s on the Tracks in San Juan Capistrano where we also serenaded Helga Yaillen, celebrating her 84th birthday!

Our January T&T was an excellent kick-off for 2026, and tentatively, the February T&T will be to the **Modjeska House and Gardens** or alternatively a nursery crawl. Look out for more information at the February general meeting and Constant Contact email blasts.

*-Patty Gaffney & Synthia Scofield*



More photos from  
Casa Romantica in  
San Clemente



# *A Piece of Magic is a Hat*

It is never too early to begin planning your hat for the **Gate & Garden Tour Hat Contest!** Last year I started about 2 months ahead to get my bespoke Lucky Cowboy hat made by the lovely **Ally Cook** owner of Lucky Cowboy! It was the most pleasurable and entertaining afternoon ever! I thought we were making my hat, but she looked deep into my personality to make my “Bee” themed hat very “me”! What I learned from that afternoon is that you need to wear your hat with confidence as if it is part of who you are. Ok, I did not master that trick, but it made creating my hat so much more fun to try to envision how I could do that.



Ally has once again agreed to chair the Hat Contest Committee to the delight of Susan Denton! She plans on bringing even more fun and new categories for the contest and of course there will be a prize awarded to the winner in each category.

The first category will be “**Silver Linings**”, using the Pantone Color of the year “Cloud Dancer,” a soft white that symbolizes calm, this hue encourages quiet reflection, creativity and a blank canvas for new ideas in a noisy world. She encourages you to explore soft whites, ivory, pearl, and subtle shimmer, with sheer fabrics, layered textures, and luminous details.

The second category is “**Tides and Texture**” a homage to the natural beauty of the coastline of Laguna Beach. Think shells, sea glass, driftwood and natural forms.

The third category is “**Whimsy and Wonder**”, this category is all about imagination and joy. You are invited to surprise and delight with playful concepts, storytelling elements. I personally think this is where the bees, hummingbirds, butterflies and all things pollinators can freely fly their “freak” flags while being lighthearted and fantastical!

The fourth category is “**Western Chic**”, a stylish interpretation of western inspired design for everyone. Wide brims, boho details, leather accents, fringe, embroidery, florals, natural textures, and sun-washed tones are encouraged. This is a very fun and versatile category where you can actually “decorate” your existing cowboy hat for the event, and then change it up for daily wear.



Ally would like to convey that guests are encouraged to style their entire look to complement their hat for extra bonus points, letting creativity shine across every category! Many of you may remember seeing **Jeanette Morrice** at the tour the last several years. She was the inspiration for the contest. She arrives at the tour with her posse of friends all dressed “to impress,” with her entire ensemble augmenting the statement that is her hat! Before Susan and I knew her name we referred to her as the beautiful woman in the cherry dress and spectacular hat.

Let’s go all out and have fun interpreting these great new contest themes and remember the words of Christian Dior, “**Without hats there is no civilization.**”

*-Karen Nelson*

## January Green Thumb Crafts

Eleven creative Garden Cub ladies met at Dalynn Malek's home January 16th, armed with lots of leaves and a creative spirit to make botanical themed prints. For two hours colors were mixed, then brushed onto leaves, and finally pressed onto paper. The reveal of the resulting print was oft times received with delight or other times with "let's try that one again!" Much experimentation took place as the participants discovered which leaves worked best and what color combinations were pleasing to the eye. At the end of the morning this artistic bunch proudly showed off their botanical beauties. The "patchwork" collage on the top row right, was made from all of the practice prints I made before and during the workshop.

*-Dalynn Malek*



# Getting Involved

## Patriots Day Parade 🌻🌻🌻

Calling all Garden Club members for the lifetime experience of marching in the 59th Patriots Day Parade, and showing off what a force we are for the community of Laguna Beach. Remember, marching with our club is camaraderie, fun, and all downhill!



Check your calendars and sign up at the February meeting.

**When:** Parade is Saturday, March 14, 2026

**Where:** Laguna Beach HS Parking lot on Park Ave.

**Time:** 10 am arrival. Please be prompt as the Parade starts at 11am.

**Dress:** Comfy shoes, blue jeans, white top, Garden Club apron, decorated hat with flowers

**Comfort:** Water, sunblock, tissue, phone if desired, lipstick with color, sunglasses.

**Parking:** Park in a neighborhood to avoid meters. The parade ends at city hall.

### Jobs:

- Garden Club banner (2 people)
- Garden Tour banner (2 people)
- “Rakettes” (drill team that will learn an easy drill)
- LOTS AND LOTS of members to pass out Garden Tour postcards, wave to the crowd, and spread cheer!

**Everyone please participate! The more the merrier! Let’s show our community all that we do and all of our spirit!**

**For questions, contact Diane Kloke:**

[kloke@cox.net](mailto:kloke@cox.net), cell 949-280-4568



## Volunteer of the Month

**Leslie Gray** was selected as **Volunteer the Month** of January.

Leslie, a has been volunteering her time for the Club since 2024.



## Member Number Two Hundred Fifty

**Lynn Jax**

presented the 250th member

**Jenny Pass** to the membership. Jenny is excited to join in the club’s many activities.



## Name Tag Wearer Winner

**Wendy Grande** was “caught” wearing her name tag at the January meeting she has been a member since 2024.



## February Raffle Fun

The hive has been busy preparing for the Valentine Extravaganza and the raffle is looking to be exceptional this year. There is over \$1800 worth of wonderful items waiting for your raffle ticket! Tickets are 1 for \$5 or 7 for \$20, cash, checks or credit cards accepted. Here is just a partial list of some of the raffle items that will be available:

- Beautiful handmade birdhouse table runner by Lisa Tapper.
- Stunning monarch butterfly print and a set of seven watercolor note cards by Susannah Kulikauskas.
- The Ecology Center basket filled to the brim with treats by Mary Sanchez.
- A \$100 bill up for grabs from Marti Bruno.
- A mini power saw by Wood Ranger that is lightweight, cordless, powered by a rechargeable 24 V battery from Nancy England.
- Art from local artists Hugo Rivera, Monica Prado, Collen McCallion and LCAD.
- Gift cards from Better Buzz Coffee and Green Thumb Nursery.

Come by the raffle table and see what the hive has been procuring for this special event.

*-Polly J Parkey February Raffle Administrator*



## Membership News

### Membership Update

**W**elcome to February and Valentine's Day. Wow! I am pleased to announce that we now have **256** members as of January 19, 2026.

Our next meeting is February 13, our annual Valentine Extravaganza – this is a definite event NOT to miss.

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 January, 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, Friday, February 13 meeting would be perfect time to visit with all the fantastic things happening on that day. There will even be a short film about Hortense Miller. 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](mailto:lynnmjax@icloud.com) or cell: 949-294-1500.  
Lynn Jax, Director of Membership

### Another Perk of Membership – Discount Card at Nurseries

Come to the Membership Table to pick up your **DISCOUNT CARD** from California Garden Club, Inc (CGCI). Because Laguna Beach Garden Club is a member of CGCI, we receive discount cards to pass out to our members to use at local nurseries for a possible discount. Mind you that not all nurseries honor the discount (usually 10%), but many do; for example, Laguna Nursery, Green Thumb, Plant Depot, and sometimes (depending on who checks you out) Home Depot or Lowe's. All you have to do is ask.

Please take **ONLY ONE** card as we receive these cards based on the number of members.

Sign the card and keep it in your wallet.  
Valid through 2027.

*-Lynn Jax*



## Bring a Guest to the February Valentine's Extravaganza Open-House - Feb 13<sup>th</sup> And Get Rewarded

Do you love Laguna Beach Garden Club?

**Bring a Guest to Our February Valentine's Extravaganza Open House on Friday, February 13<sup>th</sup> and get a ticket for a chance to win a gift!**

Here's how it works:

*Who's Eligible?* Any current LBGC member who brings a guest(s) to the February 13<sup>th</sup> meeting.

*How to Enter?* Simply attend the meeting with your guest(s) and check in with Perry Stampfel. You will receive one ticket for each friend you bring. The goal is to increase sales by having lots of "shoppers" at this event.

*When is the Drawing?* The winner will be announced during the General Meeting Announcements, scheduled to begin at 10:15am.

The more friends you bring, the more chances you have to win!  
We can't wait to welcome new faces and celebrate together.

### Centerpiece Silent Auctions

Are you planning on entertaining Valentine's weekend? There will be **TWO Hostess Table Centerpieces to bid on this month!** Come to our February Garden Club and bid to take one home! They will be **lovingly designed by Teresa Gossard and Christina Kim**. Each month, a unique theme will be lovingly designed, created and donated by our talented and generous Garden Club Members. A silent auction bid sheet will be next to the centerpiece. Minimum bids start at \$25.00 and bid up at \$5.00 increments. Bidding will close at the start of the general session meeting (10:15am).

A giant **Thank you to Michelle Highberg** for creating our fabulous Hostess Table Centerpiece for January and *Congratulations to our lucky winner* for placing the winning bid!

Thank you, Teresa and Christina!  
We can't wait to see you work your Valentine's magic!

-Linda Richardson





## **Hortense Miller Garden, Laguna Beach**

### **Art in the Garden Workshop Sun-catchers**

**Saturday, February 21, 2026 from 9:45am – 12:00pm**

A sun catcher is a fun way to bring art and elegance to your garden. Men, women, boys, and girls are invited to this free workshop at the world famous Hortense Miller Garden in Laguna Beach. Take inspiration from the beauty around you to create your own interpretation of our coastal landscape of sea and flowers.

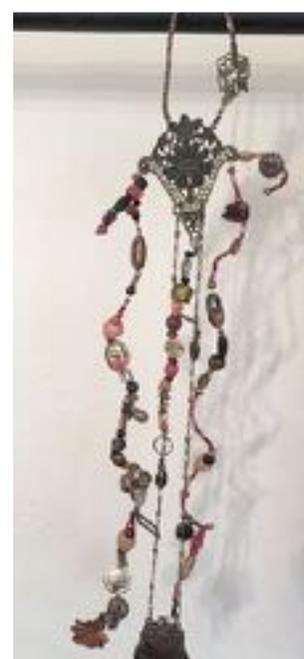
The workshop is free to participants who bring their own beads or materials are available for a \$20 fee. Reservations are required. To request a spot e-mail [diane.lannon@gmail.com](mailto:diane.lannon@gmail.com)

Directions on how to get to the garden will be provided with registration.

The Hortense Miller Garden, a hidden Laguna Gem, features a 2.5 acre garden with over a dozen unique trails and a pristine Mid-Century Modern home build by Knowlton Fernald in 1958 on the slope of Boat Canyon. Tucked under towering Torrey Pines, planted from one gallon saplings in 1959, there are over 600 plant species of which about 150 are California natives. The wondrous variety of plantings gives the garden color and texture during every season. The walls of glass of this home offer breathtaking ocean views. The original furnishings give the home a rare authenticity, fitting of a true Laguna artist. The Aviary Gallery features an exhibit of the original renderings of the home drawn by the architect in 1958.

Contact: Diane Lannon [diane.lannon@gmail.com](mailto:diane.lannon@gmail.com) 949-374-2696 cell

**Friends of Hortense Miller Garden P.O. Box 742 Laguna Beach, CA 92652**



## Annual Photo Contest – Deadline for submissions April 17

It's that time again and the deadline to submit is fast approaching. Members submit photographs from their gardens for our annual photography contest. There are 2 contests: one for the Front Cover and one for the Back Cover featured on our Membership Book. The winners of the 19<sup>th</sup> annual contest were the front cover by Linda Richardson and the back cover by Brian Jones..

### Photo Contest Rules

1. Photo entries are due to the Photo Contest chair, Perry Stampfel, by **Friday, April 17, 2026.**
2. Garden Club members may submit one photo for the **FRONT** and one for the **BACK** cover.
3. Renewed membership is required.
4. Photos must be **HIGH-RESOLUTION**. If using iPhone or Android when sending the photo, be sure to send the photo in "ACTUAL SIZE" – not small, medium, or large. Minimum photo size of 4,000 KB is required.
5. To win the **FRONT** cover contest, the photo must be **horizontal or square**.
6. To win the **BACK** cover contest, the photo must be **vertical or square**.
7. The entry must be a **recent** photo of some part of the member's garden.
8. By submitting the entry, the member declares that he/she owns the rights to the photo.
9. Entries will be judged by the Board by the end of the club year.
10. The winner's photo will be featured on the front and back cover of the 2026-27 Membership Book.

**NOTE:** We encourage a variety of photos, including but not restricted to garden settings or features, mass plantings, and flowers.

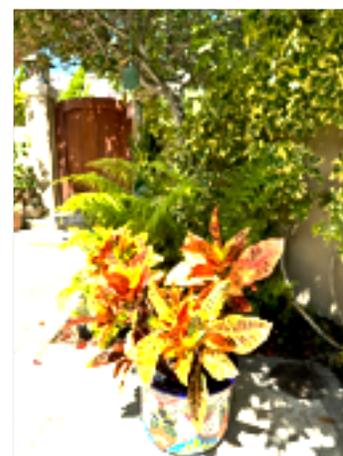
Submissions should be sent to Perry Stampfel via email. You will receive a reply confirming that your photo has been received.

Rules are also listed on **page 47** of your Membership Book.

For information contact:

Perry Stampfel  
Cell: 949-294-1502

Email: [stampfel@icloud.com](mailto:stampfel@icloud.com)



Examples of possible entries for the contest left to right: Paul Wenger, Perry Stampfel, & Diane Kloke

## Got Dull Garden Tools? Tool Sharpening will be available at our February Valentine's Extravaganza meeting!

We've asked Evan Richardson of [Razor Edge Sharpening Website](#) ( [Yelp Reviews](#) ) to offer his garden tool sharpening service to our members at the February Valentine's Extravaganza meeting. In exchange, **Evan has agreed to donate a portion of his profits to our Club.**

**When?** During our February LBGC Valentine's Extravaganza on **Friday, February 13, 2026, from 9:30 am-11:30 am**

**Where?** In the **Church parking lot**. Tables will be set-up with signage and volunteers will be on hand to check you in, receive your tools (please put a mailing label with your name on the handle of each item), and provide you a receipt.

**What? Pruners, Loppers, Mower Blades, Hoes, Hatchets, etc.** Any garden tool(s) that can be sharpened. **Please no serrated edges, electric tools or chainsaws.** You're also welcome to drop off any **kitchen knives** that need sharpening. Those will be inventoried and sharpened the following days, targeting delivery on Monday the 16<sup>th</sup>.

**How?** Please **place a return address label on the handle of each item** you want sharpened in a **sturdy box or bag, ensuring sharp tips are secured** (wrap in a towel or bubble wrap).

**Drop off tools at the designated table located in the Church Parking Lot**, next to the reserved spaces.

**Cost:** See below: Please bring Cash or pay by Venmo:

**Tools will be sharpened on a first come/first served basis.** Evan will complete as many orders as possible while on-site. If your tools haven't been done by 11:30, he will take them back to his shop to complete the job and will contact you to arrange a convenient pick up or delivery date.

Questions? Call or text Linda Richardson (949) 607-6633.

<b>Product</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Price</b>
Hand-held pruners/garden shears		\$8
Two handed Pruning Shear		\$12
Disassemble/Reassemble		\$2
Rust Removal (not deliverable today)		\$2
Mower Blade		\$10
Hatchet/Axe		\$15
Pocket Knives (Small/Large)		\$6-12
Knives	<3.5"	\$8
Knives	3.5-5"	\$10
Knives	5-7"	\$12
Knives	7-9.5"	\$14
Knives	9.5-12"	\$16
Knives	>12"	\$16+\$1 per inch



*\*Percentage of sales  
donated to Laguna Beach  
Garden Club*

## Better Buzz Partners with the Garden Club

**B**etter Buzz, a new coffee spot in Laguna Beach known for their handcrafted coffee drinks, held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Thursday, January 22, and selected Laguna Beach Garden Club as their non-profit of choice to receive 20% of the sales for that day. Many Garden Club members stopped by. I even dressed up in the Bee costume, borrowed from Jane Leary. The mayor, Mark Orgill, attended along with representatives from Katrina Foley's office and other officials. Better Buzz is the perfect partner for the Club as the whole store is Bee-themed. They offered samples from the Laguna Beach exclusive menu, including Main Beach Matcha (my favorite as I don't like the taste of coffee), Laguna Beach Best Drink ever, and the Crescent Bay Croissant Sandwich. Everything is yummy and the seating is comfy and welcoming. So if you are feeling the need for a "coffee fix", snack, sandwich, or pastry, stop by Better Buzz and let them know you are from the Garden Club. Let's show them a thank you for their support. They are located on Coast Hwy across the street from lifeguard tower and near the pedestrian pavilion.

*-Lynn Jax*



# For Those of Us With A Not-So-Green Thumb

## 9 Difficult-to-Kill Plants No Green Thumb Required



Snake Plant  
(*Dracaena trifasciata*)



Pothos  
(*Epipremnum aureum*)



ZZ Plant  
(*Zamioculcas zamiifolia*)



Rubber Plant  
(*Ficus elastica*)



Cast Iron Plant  
(*Aspidistra elatior*)



Peace Lily  
(*Spathiphyllum*)



Chinese Evergreen  
(*Aglaonema*)



Spider Plant  
(*Chlorophytum comosum*)



Heartleaf Philodendron  
(*Philodendron hederaceum*)



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