



Central Coast Chapter CRFG

March 2022 Newsletter

by Jenny Weaver & Tom Sheldon

crfgccnewsletter@gmail.com

April 2022 CRFG Meeting

We will be meeting in person on Saturday April 9, 2022:

Where: Halcyon Farms (formerly Rutiz Family Farms) 1075 The Pike (corner of Elm St.)

Arroyo Grande

When: 1:00 – 3:30 p.m.



Rutiz Family Farms (now Halcyon Farms)

Our Hosts will either be long-time farmer Jerry Rutiz (who retired at the end of February after 40 years of farming) and/or Ariela Gottschalk and her husband Jeff Pienack who took over on March 1st.

Besides growing lots of vegetables, the farm grows some of the best strawberries and blackberries! Although other fruit may not be growing right now, later in the season there will be melons, peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers, squash...THEY'RE ALL FRUITS!

Please carpool, walk or ride a bike. Parking is limited because the Farm Stand will be open for regular business. Halcyon Farms is not Certified Organic but they use "organic farming practices and no pesticides".

Halcyon Farms grows a variety of vegetables. Also many types of fruit will be available grown by other farms that are Certified Organic or use organic inputs &

methods (apples, avocados, blueberries, citrus, dates & tomatoes). There's bee pollen, honey, grass fed beef & duck (maybe chicken) eggs too.

Vegetable and herb starts from Transitions Growing Grounds are available.



Announcements

Newsletter submissions: *Please help contribute to these newsletters!*

I'm the editor, not an investigative reporter! Even if Linda, our Secretary, is at a meeting, she can't take notes AND photos. "A picture is worth a thousand words", so please take photos of CRFG events and submit them to me. Include the following:

- Who's in the picture (as best as you know)
- Where and when it was taken
- What's going on in the photo

Short and simple is just fine! This way, readers will get more than one account of a meeting. I will do my best to include the entries. Please make it "Print Ready" so I just have to cut and paste!

If you found an interesting article or video, likewise, please include a brief description of it and why you think it would be of interest to others along with the link. Once again, a short description is fine as I may not have time to review the article or video before publication.

And please, share something that is "growing on" in your own garden or orchard. We thank you.

Submit here by the 15th of each month: crfgccnewsletter@gmail.com

Cuesta College will be having its vegetable transplant sale:

- In Paso Robles on Friday April 8th and Saturday April 9th on the North County Campus.
- In SLO at campus on Saturday April 9th.

Order forms are still pending. Check the Cuesta College Calendar for Events. The sale is through the Ag Plant Science Department at this address.

<https://www.cuesta.edu/calendars/index.html>

April 9th 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. **The Central Coast Greenhouse Growers Assoc.** (CCGGA) will be having their annual tour and plant sale. 9 nurseries will participate. Thanks to Karen for suggesting this be announced. Start off at the CCGGA Education Center at Nipomo High School. Check CCGGA's website for mask requirements and details.

Start early so you make it to our CRFG meeting at Halcyon Farms at 1:00!

<http://ccgga.com/ccgga-events/open-house>

Past Events

February 12th Marv, one of our "Gifted Grafters" was invited by a private group, the Los Osos Valley Garden Club (LOVGC), to give a grafting demonstration. He did it at the home of a LOVGC member. She had a RED DELICIOUS apple which she decided WASN'T DELICIOUS!! So, Marv grafted 14 different varieties onto it! He also cut back a large avocado tree that never bore fruit. He will wait until it sprouts and then will graft on various avocado scion wood.

The LOVGC gave a donation of \$50 for our CRFG Central Coast Chapter Scholarship Program. "THANK YOU" Marv and the Los Osos Valley Garden Club!

This March, everyone has Spring Fever! What a busy month March has been so far! Some call it March Madness.

March 1st The CRFG CCC Grafting Committee taught a class for new Master Gardeners. In winter, Joe and Art ordered 350 "M 111 EMLA" apple rootstocks for various grafting events. The roots arrived at Art's house and were stored at the Cal Poly Crops cooler. The M111 is a very good rootstock that is semi-dwarfing and is resistant to wooly apple aphid and is quite tolerant to fire blight and crown and root rots.

<https://apples.extension.org/apple-rootstock-info-mm-111-emla/>

At this Master Gardener class, Joe taught with his usual safety tips and enthusiasm! Art, Marv, Jim, Linda and Nell also participated.

March 5th CRFG Board of Directors-only pruned Sabol Orchard. By Jenny with the help of Nell

Nell W. and Jill S. organized an "orchard pruning and sprucing up event" at the home of Joe and Jill. Jill counted up the trees ahead of time: a total of 58, with 9 lining the narrow driveway! While Joe and Jill were attending another event, a platoon of CRFG pruners trimmed Joe's apple trees on their lane and many fruit trees in the orchard.

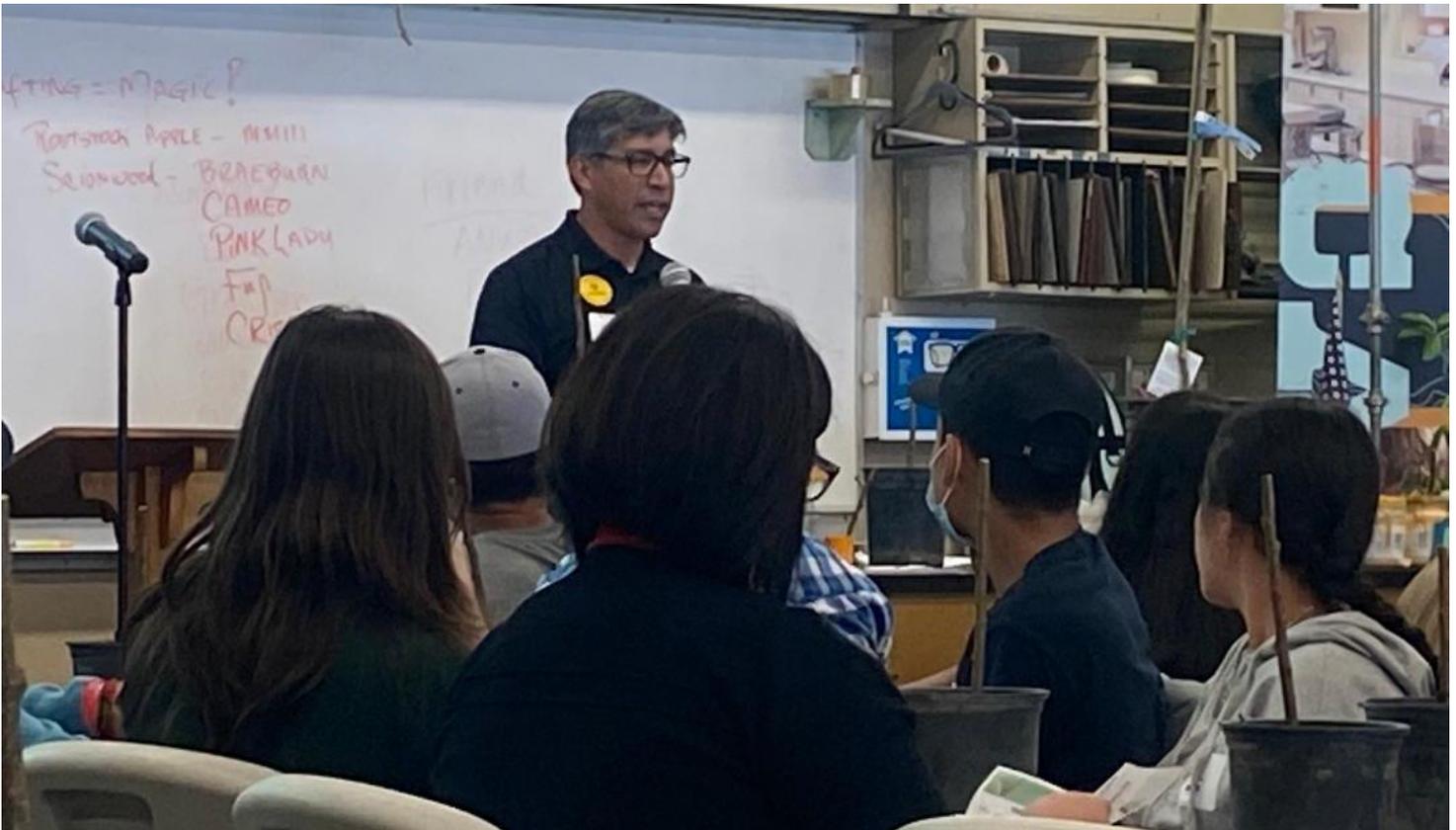
Nell, Larry, Mark, Pat, Dick, Marv, Seth, Robert & Carol, Les, Manny and Dara, all pitched in bringing trucks, pruning tools, disinfectant, brooms, shovels, munchies, rakes, orchard ladders, wheelbarrows and a shredder! Much was accomplished. What wasn't shredded and spread in the orchard was hauled away in pickup trucks. Everyone was working so hard they did not have time to take photos! Gabrielle, Karen and Jenny would have helped if we hadn't had other commitments. But we were there in spirit! It takes a CRFG village to prune an established orchard!

March 10, CRFG Apple Grafting Committee at Cal Poly's 26-Hour Event. By Jenny with help from Nell, Art, Sharon and Larry

This event was sponsored by Cal Poly and organized by Dr. Robert A. Flores, Professor and Department Head of Agricultural Education & Communication Department. He joined the department in 1983. Robert Flores was one of the first students that Joe mentored at Cal Poly! Joe also mentored Alex Flores, but years later. They are not related.

Our CRFG Apple Grafting Committee, headed by Art and the "Gifted Grafters" volunteered as they have for many years at the annual "Cal Poly 26-Hour" event held for potential new students. Don't worry, CRFG wasn't there over night! But it was a big commitment of about 4 hours on site and many more with preparation! They helped with two grafting sessions each with 45 students! A lot of effort went into preparing for the event. Scion wood (Braeburn, Cameo, Pink Lady and Fuji) was gathered by Mike Cirone from his See Canyon orchards. Thanks to Mike and Art for collecting and storing the scion wood. The volunteers were organized by Art and Sharon. CRFG CCC volunteers assisted with gathering pots, potting soil and potting up 100 apple rootstocks. Art, Bob, Sharon, Peggy, Jim, Pat, Nell, Larry, Marv, Joe, some friends of theirs and Cal Poly Pomology Science Students

helped out (see red and green aprons). Alex Flores, a high school teacher taught the two grafting sessions. "Grafting is Magic" was the theme. Joe was there and received a huge "Thank You CRFG" and "Happy Birthday" card.



Alex Flores, high school teacher. "Grafting = Magic!"



Birthday card for Joe



Alex teaching apple grafting, Joe (white cap, right back) cheerleading!



"Learn by doing" at its safest & finest



"Getting Started is 50% of the job" & the red aprons are ready to help



*Back row: Bob, Jim, 3 Cal Poly Pomology students.
Middle row: Sharon, Peggy, Pat, Nell.
Front row: name unknown, Larry, Marv, Joe, Alex*



Presentation of "Thank you California Rare Fruit Growers and Happy Birthday Joe"



Finished grafts, wrapped, gooped and labeled, ready to go home with each student.

March 12 CRFG Chapter Meeting

by Jenny

With the help of Jill and Nell again, a SURPRISE birthday party meeting was held at Joe and Jill's house.



Joe Sabol on his birthday

Members attended in 2 shifts (by alphabet) to better manage the parking and so Joe could have time to visit with us. Many of us had not seen Joe and Jill and some other members for several years! It was a wonderful afternoon outside in their large parking area, surrounded by many fruitful trees and flowering plants.



Les and Robert cross paths



Gathering for cake

Joe and Jill's "number 2" son Jeremy was there to help with the festivities.



Dick, Jeremy, and Jill



*Prof Jeremy and Prof Joe
("The apple doesn't fall far from the tree!")*

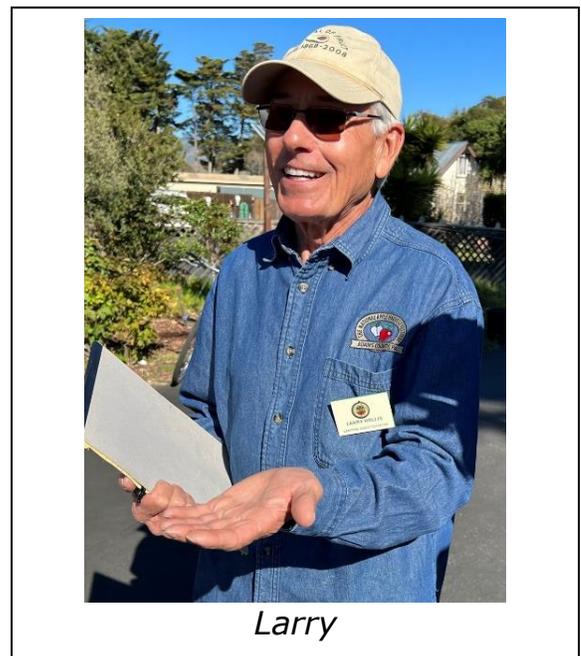
We had refreshments and multiple cakes thanks to Evelyn. If you fell in love with the carrot cake like I did, see the recipe at the end of the newsletter!

Evelyn's Carrot Cake



Evelyn's carrot cake—only two servings left (see recipe below)

Larry gave a nice presentation of Joe's history of involvement with our chapter, the CRFG Demonstration Orchard, 3 festivals of fruit (1996, 2006 & 2016) and the state CRFG Inc board of directors, High School Grafting Program, Scholarship Fund, to name just a few.

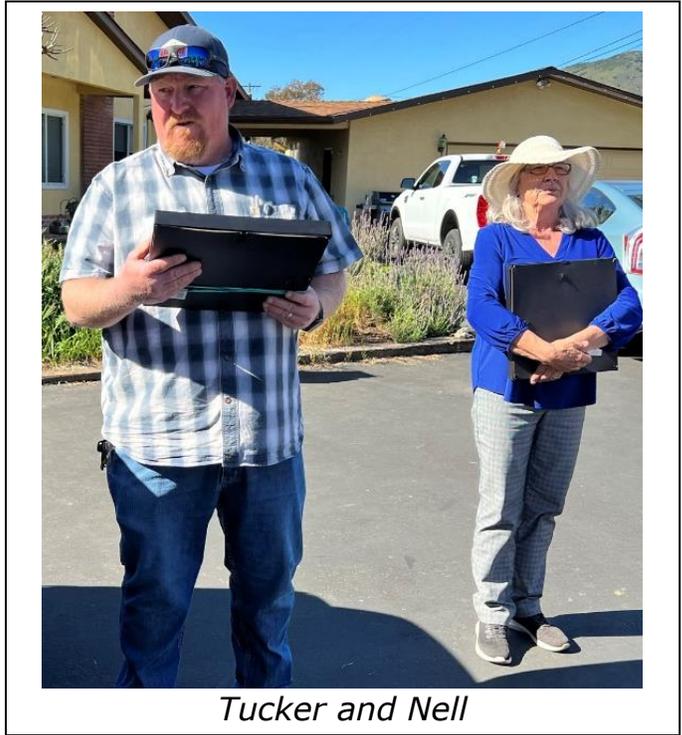


Larry

Tucker presented two artistic shadow boxes made by Nell. They included special grafting aprons that Joe used. One apron commemorates the 50th anniversary of CRFG, the other Joe's thousands of students he has taught how to graft (with only one knife injury!). What great memories they held for all of us.

Watch the video here:

<https://youtu.be/lmLnvrkIIYM>



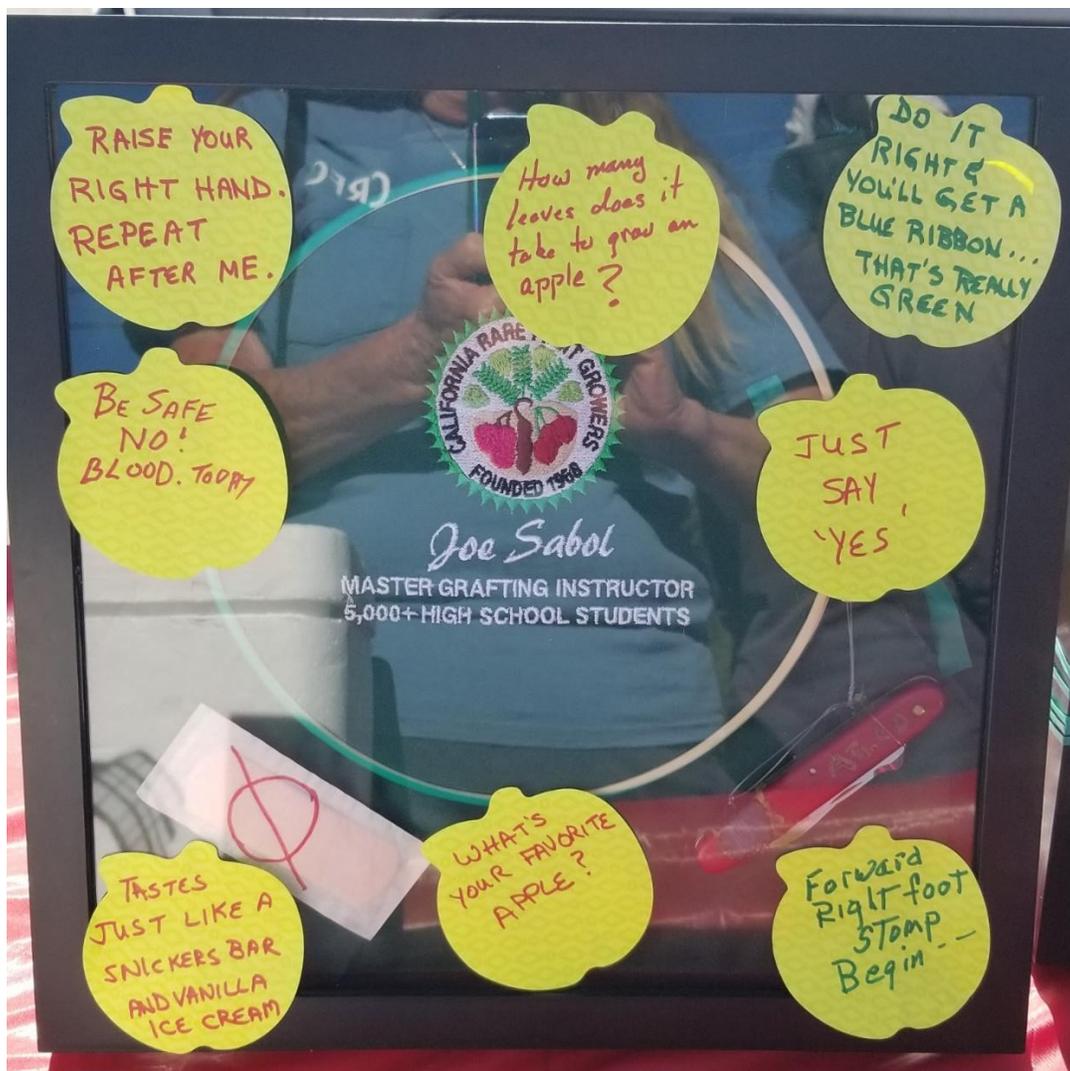
Tucker and Nell



Jeremy, Jill, and Joe Sabol



Joe, Tucker and Nell with memory boxes made from CRFG aprons



Some of Joe's famous sayings when he taught apple grafting again & again. Ignore confusing reflection of Jenny taking photo! Memory box created by Nell



Some of the happy birthday partiers.

Back row from left: Linda, Evelyn, Joe, Manny, Jill, Jim, Choung, Tom, Dara, John, Carol, Marie, Paul, Jenny, Dick. Kneeling: Larry, Robert, Marv, Mark



Marv collecting pots from Joe's vast collection for future planting and grafting projects. (Jill said people had been throwing these pots over their fence for years!). Robert, Carol, Joe, and Tucker in the background.

A Little History

By Tom

Note: The local Central Coast chapter of the CRFG was started in 1993. It hosted the Festival of Fruit in 1996, and then again in 2006 and 2016.

There was some discussion at Joe's birthday party about when the Cal Poly Orchard was planted. I got involved in a conversation with Larry Hollis, Marv Daniels, and Paul Moyer where 1997 was mentioned as the original date. Paul said he had a digital photo from 2001 that showed people planting. That photo is included below and it shows the irrigation and some trees that were most likely planted back in 1997.



2001 Photo by Paul Moyer taken with state-of-the-art (turn-of-the-century) 2mpxl Sony Floppy Disc camera

Later, Joe Sabol, Robert Scott, and Larry were talking about the same thing. Joe said the orchard was planted after the 1996 Festival of Fruit because there was some money left over to do the work. He said the group wanted to establish an orchard at Cal Poly that it could call its own. Joe said "we put our name on the gate and we started planting, and Cal Poly's orchard people were happy because they got access to the orchard." Robert mentioned that Burchell Nursery donated trees for the planting and Joe mentioned that Dave Wilson also donated a bunch of trees.

Dara Manker came to the rescue with accurate information once again. She has been documenting the orchard (and CRFG) for years on the CRFG Web site. I personally am going to spend time reviewing the site much more than I have. The orchard is described at this link:

[Orchard History | Crfgcc \(crfg-central.org\)](http://Orchard History | Crfgcc (crfg-central.org))

Here's a snip from the site:

"Way back in 1996 the Central Coast Chapter of the California Rare Fruit Growers hosted the state meeting, a "Festival of Fruits." A profit of just over \$1500 was made. Co-chairs Jay Ruskey and Steve McShane created a committee and after

much deliberation, debate, and discussion, the decision was made to "partner up" with Cal Poly and create a "community/demonstration orchard" in 1997 for all to enjoy and share. The \$1500 donation was made to the Crops Department and our partnership was formed with an informal contract signed by both parties."

Marv mentioned to me in an email that Laura Lopez was a co-chair about 20 years ago and that she used the orchard as her Senior project. He also provided these tidbits about the organization at that time:

- Janet Gallo was a Secretary or Treasurer in the early years. She and John came to all the meetings.
- Gerda was always at the meeting and always brought dessert.
- Rhonda Underwood was a secretary in 2001
- Owen Baynham was a regular.
- Al & Dawn King were early members. Marv didn't think they were officers, but thought Al was a good speaker. He helped with Festival of Fruit in 2006.

Jenny remembered that Gerda had a jujube orchard at her house in Paso Robles and that she used to bring the best jujube crisps to the meetings. Gerda's jujube trees are still growing today (we know people who bought the place next door a few years back).

CRFG ORCHARD UPDATE

by Dara

I took these pictures a week ago when Manny and I dropped by the orchard after attending Joe's birthday party. The apricots, pluots, and plums are in bloom! The mulberry is full of (still unripe) fruit! It's beautiful in the orchard right now.

Picture of Royal Lee Cherry (left, foreground) and Flavor King Pluot (right, background).





Gold Kist Apricot (left) and Royal Lee Cherry (right). Photos by Dara

And some orchard news:

Two months ago, Cal Poly experienced a surge that damaged a lot of main water pipes. One of those was the pipe that feeds the orchard. The orchard was without water for a few months. We checked in the afternoon after Joe's birthday party, and the pipe had been fixed. The orchard has water once more, hurrah!

Also, we picked up a used non-working lawn mower on Craigslist. I fixed it, and now it's available in the orchard for anyone who wants to use it. It's chained to the kiosk along with the orchard ladder and wheelbarrow. The combination for the lock is now the same as that for the toolshed. If anyone decides to mow the orchard or part of it, remember to wear long pants, sturdy shoes, and eye protection! And PLEASE BE CAREFUL NEAR THE DRIP IRRIGATION LINES!!!



"Murray the Mower"

EVELYN'S CARROT CAKE RECIPE

Carrot Cake with Lemon Cream Cheese Frosting

(From California Heritage Cookbook with **modifications & notes by Evelyn.**)

1 cup salad oil
1 cup brown sugar, packed
3/4 cup granulated sugar
4 eggs
1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup whole-wheat flour
1 tsp. salt
2 tsp. baking soda
2 tsp. baking powder
2 tsp. cinnamon
3 cups grated carrots, packed
1 cup crushed, well drained pineapple
1/2 cup chopped walnuts or golden raisins (optional)

In mixing bowl, blend together salad oil and sugars. Add eggs one at a time, beating after each until blended. In second bowl, combine flours, salt, soda, baking powder and cinnamon. Add the flour mixture to oil mixture and beat just enough to blend. Fold in carrots, pineapple and nuts.

Pour the batter into greased and floured 9"x13" cake pan. Bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 45-50 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool cake in pan on a rack for 10-15 minutes. Turn cake out on rack and cool completely. Frost with Lemon Cream Cheese Frosting. Refrigerate for at least one day before serving to allow flavor to fully develop.

Holds in the refrigerator 5-6 days unfrosted or frosted. Can be wrapped in airtight plastic wrap and frozen for 2-3 months. Yield 16 slices.

Note: Can also be baked in two 9inch round pans 40-45 minutes. If cake falls much in center in either size pans, bake at 360°F next time. Oven not being hot enough can cause cake to fall. Also may fall if pineapple not really well drained.

LEMON CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

8 ounces cream cheese, softened – do not substitute soft or light cream cheese
1/2 cup butter, softened
1-pound powdered sugar
1 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
1 Tbsp. grated lemon peel

In mixing bowl, blend cream cheese, add the butter and cream together until fluffy. Add the powdered sugar vanilla and beat until well blended. Stir in lemon rind by hand. Spread on Carrot Cake.

Note: I stir in grated lemon by hand at end to avoid catching most of it in beaters.

SUGGESTED ARTICLES, VIDEOS AND LINKS

Jaleah recommended this Smithsonian article about wild figs. This informative and interesting article in the Smithsonian magazine, March 2022 and available online. It is titled "Gather the Wild Figs" and is written by Jacob Roberts about the efforts of David and Priscilla Burke hunting for wild fig plants. They found one on top of a 60-foot concrete grain silo in Tehama County, California! Excellent photography by Christie Hemm Klok.

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/california-search-for-ultimate-wild-fig-heats-up-180979538/>