



Central Coast Chapter CRFG

February 2023 Newsletter

by Jenny Weaver & Tom Sheldon

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<https://www.crfg-central.org>

In This Issue

(Click the link to jump to the section)

[Next CRFG Meeting](#)

[March Meeting \(Workshop\) Details](#)

[Announcements](#)

[Store Items Still Available](#)

[Scion Exchange 2023](#)

[Scion Exchange 2023 Photos](#)

[Workday at Joe and Jill Sabol's Orchard](#)

[Lemon Jelly Recipe](#)

Next CRFG Meeting (is a Workshop)

We are hosting a “Propagation Workshop” at the Cal Poly orchard to create items that will help fund our Chapter’s scholarship account. Bring cuttings of edibles that grow on their own roots, such as figs, pomegranates, and grapes. Divisions are also welcome, such as strawberries, herbs, etc. We will also be grafting leftover rootstocks. Bring hand tools, gloves, a hat, and sunscreen. The items will be sold or raffled or auctioned at future events to benefit the scholarship fund.

For more details, see Nell’s write-up and description further down in this newsletter.

When: March 11 (Sat), 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m

Where: CRFG Demonstration Orchard, Highland Dr and Mount Bishop Rd., San Luis Obispo (see map on next page)

Parking: See the map below. Some of you know you can also park on the dirt above the curb along Highland Drive.



March Meeting (Workshop!) Details

By Nell Wade

Even though the calendar says Winter, Spring is in the air!!! The sun is warming my lower back as well as on all the growing plants I'm working on. My crazy 'experimental', unknown peach varietal has already passed its peak bloom and is setting fruit like mad!! Time to get back seriously into the garden/orchard/field again.

To that end, while you're out trimming and pruning your plants, please save your cuttings/divisions/seedlings/etc that can be propagated and bring it to the Chapter's orchard at Cal Poly on March 11th. *Help us create fundraising plant material for our Scholarship Fund.*

These items should be fruit related. What does that mean? You can stretch it to include items such as 'walking onions' and other plants that could contribute to the health of your fruiting plants. This plant might be an important factor in IPM (Integrated Pest Management), or has soil enhancing properties, or other attributes. If so, these plants could be included. Please remember our 'fruit only' policy and "no citrus."

If you don't have plants to donate, just bring yourself, gloves and a couple of tools, along with the usual, sunscreen, hat, etc. We'll have tables set up around the site with a specific task designated for each table. There's something for everyone to do, so don't let a fear of propagation, "brown thumb-ism" or grafting stop you from attending. We need plants to be watered, labeled and put into categories; plant material to haul away, as well as the eternal weeds to pull.

Why is this meeting/workshop important? This year we've placed an emphasis on fundraising for Scholarships and to see what our Chapter can muster going forward. We want to create a sustainable program where we don't deplete the chapter's resources by overfunding students with our limited resources. or even under-serving the students if we could have given more. This has never happened before, nor is it probable in the future. But we want to have a base year going forward - so we have something to project from for future years. This is our base year - and we need your help.

With our limited outreach, we felt it best to concentrate on selling fruiting plant material that doesn't cost too much to produce and sell it at our community events for near market value. We don't want to compete with nurseries, nor are we in the commercial plant wholesale business. We simply want an efficient and reasonable way to fund-raise for our scholarship program.

Next year's goal has not been decided and we're open to all ideas on attaining more funding. As the chair of the committee I'd love to have your input and suggestions as to what other fundraising activities we might pursue.

Help us make this year's fundraising focus a reality - come help out, visit with members, bring and enjoy fruit/snacks and let's enjoy the Spring weather.

Once again the event is March 11th at the Chapter's Orchard off Highland Ave.

Show up at 1:00 to socialize. The official workshop gets underway at 1:30 and goes until 4:00.

Thanks!

Nell Wade (along with Karen Kolba, Linda Robertson, and Tucker Schmidt)

Announcements

Big Shout Out to Farm Supply!

Cara Wright of the Farm Supply Company donated multiple bags of pine shavings and potting soil to our group for the potting efforts at the Scion Exchange.



Also a big shout out to Nell for organizing this.

Please support the Farm Supply store by visiting their locations at:

Farm Supply Company, 224 Tank Farm Rd, San Luis Obispo
Farm Supply Company, 1079 El Camino Real, Arroyo Grande
Farm Supply Company, 2450 Ramada Drive, Paso Robles



Quilt Raffle

The winner of the Quilt Raffle at the Scion Exchange will be announced at our March meeting. You can still buy raffle tickets by contacting Roxy at central_coast@crfg.org

One Cool Earth

Sharon Lovelady is helping "One Cool Earth" develop their new orchard and is requesting donations of fruit trees from CRFG members. Please help out the school and help propagate some of the incredible fruit trees our group has developed by donating. Tree donations to schools is an obvious good choice here for our group and Sharon says she will coordinate pick up and delivery to the schools.

Three staff members from One Cool Earth have recently joined our group! Here is a description of One Cool Earth from their Web site (<https://www.onecoolearth.org/>)

"One Cool Earth is a non-profit organization that unites communities and schools to create thriving school garden programs that grow successful students! Thanks to the support of partners, we've seen great adoption of our garden education program and NGSS-aligned curriculum. Working within local partner schools, we improve the nutritional and environmental literacy of our youth."

If you would like to donate plants or get more information, contact Sharon Lovelady at smlovelady2011@gmail.com or 805-610-2900.



Celeste Geary of One Cool Earth, one of our newest chapter members.

Volunteers Needed at the Old DeVincenzo Orchard

Tucker and Marv were collecting scion wood at the "Dr D" orchard which is now managed by The Land Conservancy. They spoke with Dylan who said there was a large amount of damage to the trees and a ton of debris hung up in the trees from the flood. The following flier outlines volunteer days to help clean up the orchard. To register, click here: [Storm Clean up at Apple Orchards! Tickets, Multiple Dates | Eventbrite](#). You can also scan the QR code in the flier below if you printed this out.

Trees in Need!

Volunteer Days

Sunday, March 5th
Sunday, March 12th
10am-12pm
Monte Rd, near
San Luis Bay Dr

**Help us clear
storm debris
from apple trees!**

The orchards at San Luis Obispo Creek Floodplain Preserve were under water in the January storm, leaving many trees covered in debris that needs to be removed or the sunlight they need will be blocked.

Your efforts will make an impact for local food and agriculture, as well as local business which lease the orchards.



Scan here to register!



THE LAND CONSERVANCY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

Enviro
ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Pheromone Strips Still Available

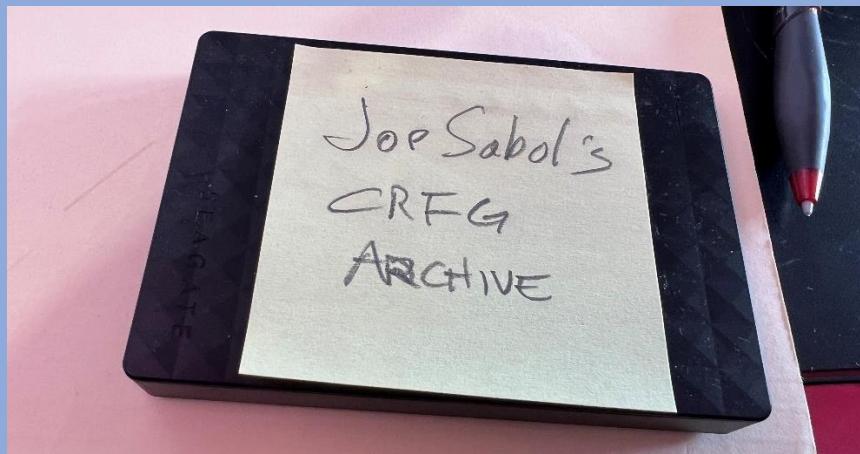
Terri Monell still has pheromone strips to sell if you missed out. If you have apple trees, stone fruit trees, or nut trees, you need these to control Codling Moth and they are super easy to put on your trees. Pheromone strips do have a shelf life, but will keep pretty well in the refrigerator. Still, let's help Terri get rid of the last of this year's batch. They are available for a donation of \$10 for twelve strips or \$2 for two strips.

Other store items are still available. See the pictures further down in this newsletter. All sales are donations and all proceeds go to the scholarship fund.

You can contact Terri at terrimeo59@gmail.com or 805-546-8981 or 805-440-5818

Joe's Archive

I suppose I (Tom) am now the official chapter archivist. Jenny and I visited Joe and Jill a while back and created a backup of all CRFG-related items on Joe's PC. This drive now has thousands of photos and other documents going back to the Garden of Eden.



I'm not sure what to do with the archive at this point, but at least we have it. One thing I will do is create a table of contents of the folder structure so everyone can get some idea of what is on the drive. Then if you need something or would like to reminisce over old photos, I can get you copies. It occurs to me that Joe might have some good stories if he were interviewed while looking at the photos.

Store Items Still Available

Terri Morell says that items from the Scion Exchange store are still available for a small donation. These items are pictured on the next couple of pages. Contact Terri at terrimo59@gmail.com or 805-546-8981 or 805-440-5818 for more information.

Remember, all sales are actually donations and all proceeds go to the scholarship fund.

Here are some comments from Roxy:

*One of the nicest things I think we offer at the Scion store is **one-on-one** information to give to our young grafters... They have many questions and are so interested in what they actually need to use for their newfound hobby. Manny, Mick and Terri were there, knowledgeable, and willing to help with all questions. I think folks were very grateful for that.*

We had a couple new items...Joe always did all the buying for the store in the past years, all useful for grafting...He bought it, the store sold it. End of story...I loved that.. but this year I added a few extra items.

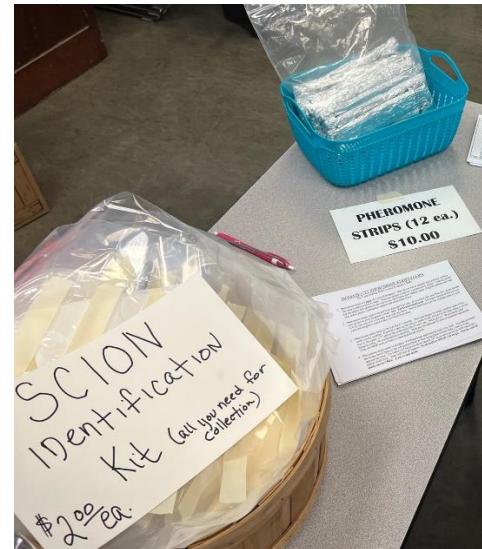
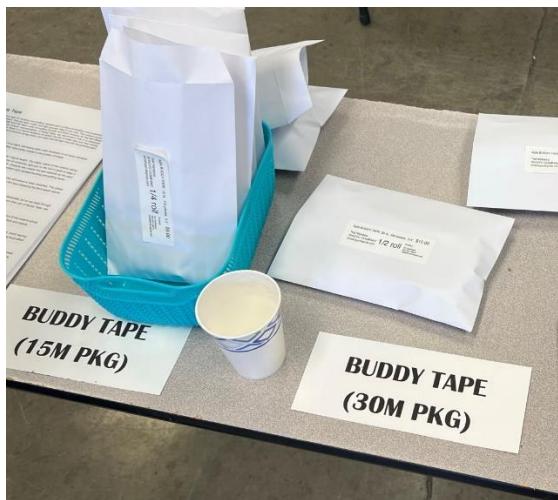
I wanted an inexpensive grafting knife. Thanks to Robert and Larry for helping navigate the many selections. Joe always liked the Swiss Army Knife, but it is pricey for the "newbie". So, in addition, we bought a nice one from Zenport,for \$12. We also got these items:

- Zenport pruners
- Aluminum tree tags
- Various fun things for the garden and for the kids.

I would be very grateful for any ideas you may have for future sales...We can always try. Please let me know.

I like the idea of the Swap-O-Rama because it creates a lot of fun in the store. We didn't have much this year but with more participation maybe we can have more items next time. Please start saving any garden-related items for next year. The sale of garden related items is really just a nice way to contribute to the Chapter....people are more than generous because we tell them to "make an offer"... thoughtfully, they do.

Evelyn, graciously made some wonderful, and difficult Passion Fuit Jam.. Sold, before we opened!! Thank you for your contribution, Evelyn





Scion Exchange 2023

Report by Tom Sheldon

The California Rare Fruit Growers Central Coast Chapter hosted its annual **scion exchange** on the Cal Poly campus on Saturday, February 18th. The event has been on hold during the pandemic, but it resumes in full force and with great success. Hundreds of people attended the event, both members and the public.

Thousands of scions of various fruit trees were spread out on tables in the double-size classroom of the Cal Poly Crops Unit building. Outside, snacks and homemade fruit treats were available. A number of members were assisting at the root stock table and visitors could even have plants potted. Four separate grafting demonstration tables were set up with presentations by Marv, Dick, Robert, and Christine.

There was a fully stocked store with books (name your price) and a full line of essential accessories including buddy tape, pheromone strips, pruners, grafting knives, grafting seal, and many other items. Terri even did a song and dance to sell things. Actually, Terri and Art were standing there and they jumped aside when I raised my camera. I said "people seem to jump out of my pictures," so Terri jumped back in for this paparazzi shot.



Terri doing a song and dance to sell things. The steps our group members are willing to go to make this event happen is incredible!

The event was preceded by a setup day on Friday. Members prepared and categorized the scions, set up tables and signs, and did a number of other things including enjoying some great food.



Setup event on Friday, February 17 (Photo by Roxy)

From what I can tell from my limited experience attending this event, it was a “really big shooow” and a big success. I’ve included some pictures below but you can see the full set of videos and a slide show by clicking on these links:

- 2023 Scion Exchange video: <https://youtu.be/ZkOL7YGZrbQ>
- 2023 Scion Exchange slide show: <https://youtu.be/cB3cOkYhetE>
- Robert Scott’s grafting demo: <https://youtu.be/vmuqBCA2oVU>
- Christine’s grafting demo: <https://youtu.be/-do51UWJRYQ>
- Dick Pottratz’s grafting video: <https://youtu.be/bg6qKxioT-M>

Sorry I didn’t get good video of Marv’s demonstration. I didn’t catch him at the right time and then too many people were in the way to get close-up shots. He was demonstrating his precision graft-cutting tool.

Reviews

It was a really good event and many long-time attendees were happy the event returned after the pandemic issues. Personally, I heard some young people, (probably Cal Poly or Cuesta students) say "this is so awesome" as they walked into the yard. Here are some of the comments from the CRFG Facebook site:

- *"Something so cool! Saturday I will be donating scions from trees that I grafted from scions that I got at a scion exchange from previous years! I'd like to encourage you to attend this Saturday! Not only is it a lot of fun, but there is so much to learn! And, there will be rootstock available to graft those scions onto!"*
- *"Spent the evening labeling all my scion wood and will start grafting this afternoon!!!! Yesterday was awesome!"*
- *"What a great event! Thank you all for sharing your time and knowledge!!"*
- *"It was my first time going. Had a great time! Thank you everyone for making it happen."*
- *"Thank you for continuing a wonderful tradition."*
- *"Ugg, I missed it"*
- *"Thanks to CRFG central coast for hosting the first scion exchange I've attended. Super cool talking to so many enthusiastic and intelligent folks. I brought my kids with me and even they were entertained the whole time...and now we have a bunch of new fig varieties to try out!"*
- *"I need to make it down one of these years."*

Some of our members made some comments through emails. I think they are worth printing.

"It is a pleasure to see the annual scion exchange back after being stopped due to our being cautious with Covid. Many members contributed to making the exchange successful and the availability of scion wood donated by participants was overwhelming. Many of the scion varieties are not available elsewhere. As these scions grow out into branches and trees, some will return to the CRFG scion exchange in the future as scion wood for future grafters." --Jack Swords (local Chapter founder).

"It was another successful Scion Exchange! I am always impressed that the whole group pitches in and helps. I think all our guests felt welcomed and were thrilled to learn more about grafting and delighted with the great scion selections." --Elaine Rathbun

"I think it was a great scion exchange! Lots of man hours went into making this a success. Joe trained everyone well! Good job CRFG members!" -Terri Monell

Scion Exchange 2023 Photos

Here's a partial list of photos. Be sure to see the photo slide show on the CRFG-Central YouTube channel. Here's the link to the slide show:

<https://youtu.be/ZkOL7YGZrbQ>. For other videos, refer to the links earlier in the article.



Some of the setup work crew



Seth opening the Scion Exchange to the Public



Tucker and Jack preparing for the crowds



Waiting to get in



Where to go first?



Members get first grab



Apple scions were popular



Cherimoya and sapote fans huddle



Carol giving out advice



Plums and plum crosses!



Dick ready for his first client. Art trying to dodge the camera.



Robert Scott grafting demo



Roxi and Terri working the "Store." All sales are actually donations and all proceeds go the scholarship fund.



Roxy giving a sales pitch... er, donation pitch



Books were donated by members





Marv had his audience deeply focused on his cutting technique



Robert Scott demonstrating whip and tongue grafting



Two "customers" placing their order for potted rootstock. Orders were delivered immediately without shipping charges



There's also time to chat—no one was watching the clock



This quilt, called "Brightness in the Garden," was donated by the Central Coast Quilters Guild. The winner will be announced at the March meeting.



Julie Turney providing security, along with Ashley, one of our newest members and a scholarship recipient



Elaine assisting with the many food items donated by members



Christine, a member of the Golden Gate & Redwood Chapters, demonstrates some detailed grafting and safety techniques. You can watch a video of her demo here:

<https://youtu.be/-do51UWJRYQ>.





Seth opening the event to the public



Dick Potratz and Robert Scott in the middle of a grafting demo. You can watch their demos here <https://youtu.be/bg6qKxioT-M> and here <https://youtu.be/vmuqBCA2oVU>

Work Day at Joe and Jill Sabol's Orchard

Contributions by Terri Monell and other attending members

Besides the scholarship fund to help students, perhaps one of the best things our group does is help other members with their orchard. Usually, our expert pruners are on hand, plus a few people hauling debris or sprucing up other areas.

A work party was organized in February to do a little pruning and cleanup at Joe and Jill's orchard. Below is a brief description of what happened by Terri.

Four work days were scheduled (2/13, 2/14, 2/20 and 2/21) and most of the planned work was completed by 2/20. A few members made arrangements to go back and do some extra work, including some grafting.

- On February 13th, Tucker Schmidt, Marv Daniels, Mark Woelfle, Wendy McKeown and John Mottman arrived to do some work.
- Dick Pottraz arrived on the 14th to do some pruning and other work.
- On February 20th, Carol and Robert Scott, Manny Magana, Dara Manker, Nell Wade and Mark Woefle showed up to finish up the job.

Over the course of those days, the entire orchard and even the lane were pretty much completed. This created a couple of piles of trimmings that were to be hauled away by a tree trimming service. Plenty of mandarins from a large tree were available to members.

Robert Scott mentioned that Joe was out watching and that his catch phrase for the day was "I think I'm dreaming"! He said "A lot of pruning was done-- mainly the Owari Mandarin was thinned by picking off old fruit and small ripe fruit. Carol and I pruned the driveway. The apple tree's needed some branch thinning and to



Joe Sabol "outstanding" in his orchard

have some old dead wood cut out. There were a few trees in the main orchard that also needed pruning. Nell cleaned out the greenhouse of old dead and half-dead dragon fruit plants and cut some selected named varieties to propagate for the upcoming March meeting. We also thinned out and pruned some berry plants. Some of the trimmings went into the green waste can but we added to an existing pile of branches. Apparently, a tree came down from next door and uprooted one of Joe's old fig tree. The church next door was paying to have a tree service remove the tree and branches."

Mark Woelfle mentioned that when he worked on the 20th, "Joe came out and unofficially supervised work from a lawn chair (no physical work but he was very pleasant and gave lots of complements. It was a good day. We may work one more day to cut off some dead dragon fruit and do some final trimming."

Marv mentioned that John Valenzuela was supposed to show up. He's known for bringing scion wood from the North Bay Chapter to our scion exchanges. According to Dara, John Valenzuela had car problems, and Tucker volunteered most of the day helping John get to a mechanic.

Dara also mentioned that Joe sat in the sun and watched Manny prune the mulberry tree, frequently telling him he was making good cuts, and other comments and compliments.

Finally, Terri contacted Jill Sabol after the last workday and received this note: *"We had a great crew here today. They did a new thing our son thought was important also. They took all the mandarins off the tree and then topped it well and pruned some branches underneath also. Manny topped the mulberry tree more. They took care of the trees down the driveway. Manny and Dara came, Mark W , Nell Wade, Carol and Robert Scott. Joe sat outside and talked with them and watched until we left at 11."*

Lemon Jelly Recipe

By Elaine Rathbun

One of our guests at the 2023 Scion Exchange, David Cardiel, made some delicious homemade sourdough bread ... it was still warm. We sliced it and served it with 'lemon jelly' that David also made. Several members asked for the recipe, David was happy to share it with our group. The jelly was wonderful, not too sweet with a definite 'lemon' 'pop'. It was an excellent use of lemons.

- 4 lemons (zest before squeezing) Meyers work best (Hopefully you get 1-1/4 cup juice)
- 1-1/2 cups water
- 4-1/2 cups sugar
- 1 package of liquid pectin
- 1 tablespoon of Fresh Ginger- minced

Juice the lemons and if you don't get 1-1/4 cup of juice, juice some more. Bring the lemon juice, zest, water, and ginger to a boil. Add the liquid pectin. Bring that to a boil, and then add the sugar. When that turns to a rolling boil, keep boiling for another minute.

Place into jars and seal. Place jars in water bath and boil that for 8 min. Jars should seal once removed and cooled.

Makes about 3.5 pints of jam. That's it, easy peasey.

David said he will probably attend the March meeting and will bring some more of his "neighborhood famous bread." He's even willing to make special requests such as cheesy or spicy bread. You can contact David at davecardiel32@hotmail.com. Just make sure to tell him you saw this article in the newsletter.