



OVER THE GARDEN GATE

Volume 27 Issue 2

A Publication of Modesto Garden Club Inc.

October 2026

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Craig Hilliker *Olive Oil*



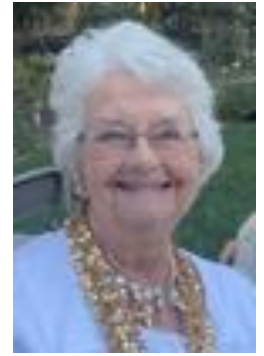
California produces over 95% of all olives grown in the United States. We're right in the middle of olive harvesting season here in California. The Central Valley heat speeds up ripening, allowing an early kick-off to harvesting, typically running from early September through mid-November. Stanislaus County is the premier processing, milling and commercial hub for the olive industry, especially olive oil. Historically, 75-80% of California's olive harvest went into cans as table olives but times are changing; the larger percentage now goes into olive oil.

This month's speaker comes to us from Sciabica Olive Oil. Craig Hilliker is the Master Sensory Analyst and Quality Director at Sciabica's California Olive Oil, where he brings over a decade of expertise in olive oil quality, sensory analysis, and consumer education. Certified as a Master Sensory Analyst of Olive Oil from the prestigious Robert Mondavi Institute of Wine & Food Science at UC Davis, Craig has spent years refining his craft, including seven years on the United States IOC Sensory Panel and six years with the American Oil Chemists Society (AOCS). Not only is Craig a walking encyclopedia of olive oil knowledge, but he's also a Certified Beer Quality Analyst with experience judging both extra virgin olive oil and beer competitions. At Sciabica's, he's on a mission to keep this small family business as the most awarded olive oil producer in the United States. When he's not ensuring top-notch quality, Craig loves busting myths about olive oil—he's all about helping consumers understand what real quality tastes like.



Nancy Robinson, President

We're off to a busy start. I hope all of you who were able to attend the Fall Gathering enjoyed the evening. I want to thank DeAnn Bauche, our Fundraising Chairman for a job well done. The event was held in the beautiful backyard of John and Evangelina Paoluccio. Scott and Lydia Smith were instrumental in making the event happen. Lydia made all of the decorations, which were absolutely beautiful and elegant. They led the team of people who set up the day of the event and tore it down the next day. They all worked so hard. Also, my daughter, Jeanette, was the caterer and responsible for a fabulous pasta bar. She and her team worked hard preparing the dinner, serving and cleaning up. We also had volunteers serving wine and providing desserts. The music was fun and entertaining, and many took advantage of time to dance. All in all, it was a fabulous event and those who were not able to attend missed an excellent time that kicked off this year at the garden club.



We've also had one Hands-On Workshop. Be sure to look through this newsletter for all the upcoming events. We're starting off with a bang!

If you were at the last general meeting, you saw our new yearbooks are ready. If you were not at the meeting, you may stop by the office any Wednesday morning – 9:00-12:00 – and pick one up. Dee Godfrey has done a wonderful job putting it together – and this is her first yearbook.

Just as a personal update – for those who didn't know – I had a rod put in my right femur the beginning of September, which has limited my physical activity. Doctor says I'm healing well and should be back to my previous activity level shortly.

Can't believe Halloween is just around the corner. I hope all of you are finding just the right activities the club offers for your interests. If not – call me.

Happy Gardening!

The Search Is Over

As most of you know, this is Nancy Robinson's final year as President of the Modesto Garden Club. After an extensive search for the Vice-President who will follow in the President position, the nominating committee has selected, and the Board of Directors has approved, Dee Godfrey to be that person.

There will be a special election at the October General Meeting to approve the choice. If accepted, Dee will spend the next eight months learning the position prior to the General Membership election in April. She is very excited and honored to be selected and will continue to edit the newsletter and yearbook and helm the Multimedia team until a new Chairman of Communications can be found. Nancy will continue to be a big part of the Modesto Garden Club after her tenure is over. Please give your support to both of these ladies during the transition!



New Members

Welcome to our newest members:

Melanie Ashby
Judy Aspesi
Jani Buer
Marilyn Burdge
Rebecca Candelario
Lisa Druet

Nikki Hess
Desiree Higgins
Jan Hill
Donna Hoegh
Nancy Hudson-Lobello
Peggy Longwell

Allen Mittering
Elsa Osnaya
Janette Smith
Shawna Sneed
Susie Soares
Gary Wick

We hope you find a welcoming hand and a place where you will make new friends and find opportunities to be as involved as you want to be!

Hands-On Workshop

At the most recent Hands-On Workshop, plain clay pots were transformed into beautiful containers for anything from kitchen utensils to flowers. It was easy and fun, a great way to spend some time with other club members and make something pretty.



The next Hands-On Workshop will be on November 23rd from 9am to 12 noon at the Club office, 622 14th Street, Modesto and we'll be making Vintage Toy Truck Christmas Wreaths. The Cost is \$40 payable when you sign up and there's room for 16 people. You can sign up at the October and November General Meetings during the Hospitality time.



November 21: Hands-On Workshop
 Location: Modesto Garden Club Office
 622 14th Street, Modesto
 Time: 9am – 12 noon
 Project: Vintage Toy Truck Christmas Wreath
 Cost: \$40, 16 spots



Pictures are illustrative only, not the actual project but along the same lines.



News and Notes

At the September 24th Board Meeting, the Board of Directors voted 9-6 to change their titles from Vice Presidents to Chairmen. A Vice President position was created to be filled by the person next in line for the President position. This brings the Modesto Garden Club in line with California Garden Clubs, Inc. and other clubs and organizations.

It's time once again to replant the downtown pots on Saturday, October 3rd. Meet at the Club office, 622 14th Street, Modesto at 9am. Lunch will be provided. Bring your garden gloves and trowels. See you there!

The Member Art Appreciation Open House is quickly approaching. It will be on Saturday, October 24th at the Club office. See the flyer in this newsletter for more details.

The first Out-Of-Town Tour of the year is happening on October 17th for those who have registered. Meet at the Park-and-Ride lot at Vintage Fair Mall at 10am to take the chartered bus to Oakland for a two-hour tour of the San Francisco Bay aboard the USS Potomac, FDR's "Floating White House." Afterwards, we will travel to Jack London Square for a late lunch/early dinner before coming home, arriving at approximately 6 pm.

The New to You table will be available at the November General Meeting during hospitality time. You are welcome to bring Christmas items and plants to sell. Thank you to Don and Annette Dedini for taking over the New To You table!

The Newman Garden Club is sponsoring a Blue Star Memorial Marker. The ceremony is on October 2nd at 11 am, 1334 W. Stuhr Road in Newman. Blue Star Markers honor the men and women who serve in the United States Armed Forces. The Marker program is managed by National Garden Clubs, Inc. and funded by local garden clubs. Only the local clubs can sponsor and place a marker; Modesto Garden Club placed a marker last September at the Commemorative Air Force Central California hanger in Modesto.

~Continued~



Mark your calendar for the
Spring Garden Tour
 on April 17th!



The 2026-2027 Yearbook will be available for members at the October General Meeting during hospitality time and at the office on Wednesdays from 9 am – 12 noon. It's chock-full of information including schedules of activities, who your Board Members are and their areas of responsibility, and a directory of members. Pick yours up so when someone says, "It's in the book," YOU will know where to look!

Is your Japanese Maple tree looking a little droopy? Do you want to learn how to trim it back to health? Come to a seminar on October 10 and learn from tree expert and Master Gardener Andrew Carmichael the proper way to trim a Japanese Maple. The seminar runs from 9 am to noon at the Club office and it's free! You don't even need to own a Japanese Maple: you're welcome to come to learn a new skill so put it in your calendar and we'll see you there!

Louise Nelson is looking for used greeting cards with pretty covers to be recycled. There's a Hands-On Workshop coming up in January where we'll be making new cards from old ones so they will be put to good use. If you want to see how it's done, make plans to join the Workshop in January. Details are in the book as is Louise's contact information or you can drop them by the office on Wednesday mornings from 9 am to 12 noon.

Ever wanted to try your hand at decorating a table for the Elegant Holiday Luncheon? Now's your chance! One table is available for the December 2nd and 3rd 2026 event. Break out your Christmas finery and decorations and show off your decorating talents to an appreciative crowd. Contact Linda Pedego at (209) 523-1420 if you're interested.

October Gardening Tips Zone 9a & 9b

October — Avg: 79°F / 51°F

- **Plant Fall Veggies:** Direct sow carrots, beets, and radishes. Transplant broccoli, kale, and lettuce.
- **Get Garlic Grounded:** Tuck garlic cloves and shallots into rich soil for a spring harvest.
- **Final Butterfly Window:** Establish spring-blooming nectar plants now so roots adapt before winter.
- **Final Mosquito Wrap-up:** Continue draining water catchments until overnight lows drop below 50°F.



Volunteer of the Month

Dee Godfrey



General Meeting

OVER THE GARDEN GATE

MODESTO GARDEN CLUB, INC
INVITES YOU TO THEIR ANNUAL



Art Appreciation Open House



Join us to celebrate the talents of fellow Modesto Garden Club members

This event is *free* to all members and guests

OCTOBER 24, 2026
Open from 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Modesto Garden club Office
622 14th Street, Modesto

Light refreshments are provided

All members are invited and encouraged to display their artwork!

Are you an artist in oils, acrylics, or watercolors? Do you paint or sculpt? Perhaps you enjoy spending your time working on needlepoint? You might even be a pottery designer expressing creativity through clay and glaze? Create lovely succulent displays? Do you make mosaics?

Take part in a tour of our beautiful clubhouse and gardens and enjoy a day surrounded by creativity and community.

We look forward to seeing you there!

CALL ART APPRECIATION CHAIR DAN YOCKEY 209.661.6554

- Sign up to enter
- Pick up your art at end of event
- Information about dropping off artwork
- Any additional information



Modesto Garden Club, Inc.

modestogardenclub.org

622 14th Street, Modesto, CA 95354

LATE BLOOMERS CONTEST

Fall Centerpiece

OCTOBER 8
GENERAL MEETING





Christmas Home Tour

Date: Thursday, Dec. 10th

Time: 1-5 pm

Location:
2517 Bridle Path Lane
Modesto

Admission \$10 at the door
Finger food & beverages provided

Modesto Garden Club Inc.
 Established 1924



Over the Garden Gate

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(deadline is the 20th of the month prior)

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All activities arranged for or sponsored by the Modesto Garden Club, Inc., are for the convenience and pleasure of the members and their guests who desire to participate. Modesto Garden Club, Inc., does not assume any responsibility for the well-being or safety of the participants or their property in any manner pertaining to activities.



622 14th Street
Modesto CA 95354-2505

Coming Events

October 2: Newman Blue Star Ceremony

Location: 1334 W. Stuhr Road, Newman
Time: 11 am

October 3: Downtown Pot Planting

Location: Club Office, 622 14th Street, Modesto
Time: 9am – 12 noon

October 6 & 20: Planters and Groomers

Location: Club Office, 622 14th Street, Modesto
Time: 9 am – 12 noon

October 8: General Meeting

Location: Modesto Covenant Church
913 Floyd Avenue, Modesto

Hospitality: 10 am – 11:15 am

General Meeting: 11:15 am – 12 noon

Speaker: Craig Hilliker, Sciabica Olive Oil

Topic: *Olive Oil*

Late Bloomer Contest: *Pumpkin/Fall Centerpiece*

October 12-14: Pacific Region Garden Club 82nd Convention

Location: Thousand Oaks

October 13: Valley Lode District Meeting

Host: Linden Garden Club

Location: Linden Lion's Club
5014 N. Market, Linden

Time: 9 am – 1:30 pm

October 17: Out-Of-Town Tour

Location: Vintage Fair Mall Park-and-Ride

Time: 10 am – 6 pm

Cost: \$125

October 24: Member Art Appreciation Open House

Location: Club Office, 622 14th Street, Modesto

Time: 9 am – 3 pm

Cost: FREE!

October 29: Board Meeting

Location: Club Office, 622 14th Street, Modesto

Light Breakfast: 8:30 am – 9 am

Board Meeting: 9 am – 11 am

