



## UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe December Newsletter 2024

Thanks for the memories, 2024. As we close this year, we are happy we managed to reach so many of you this year, from the Grow Your Own Festivals and our Plant Sale, to the Farmer's Markets, the elementary school programs, and this newsletter. Thanks for reading it; we hope you find our tips and news useful. We will be back next month with some features on year round food gardening in Tahoe as well as new contributors. As always, your feedback, questions, and suggestions for this newsletter are welcome. Please **email me!**



Enjoy your holidays and let it snow!

**Sandy Gainza**  
UCCE Master Gardener Volunteer, Newsletter Editor

## UPCOMING EVENTS



**Support  
Master  
Gardeners**

### Giving Tuesday is December 2

When you invest in the UC Master Gardener Program, you're helping provide valuable gardening resources, hands-on workshops, and empowering gardeners to support school and community gardens.

Your donation connects a love of gardening with UC's expertise, making a real difference in your community. ☐

Give today and help grow a greener future!

**Click this link and select the Master Gardeners of South Lake Tahoe from the list!**

### Grow Your Own Returns!

Dave Long and Carrie Scarvie

The 2025 Grow Your Own Festival dates have



been confirmed, so mark your calendars. The South Lake Tahoe event will be held at the Historic Tallac Estates, near Camp Richardson, on Saturday, May 31, 2025 from 11am - 3pm. The Tahoe City event will take place on Friday, June 6 from 4pm-7pm at the Tahoe Environmental Research Center's Field Station in Tahoe City. This year the Slow Foods Lake Tahoe events in Truckee will be separate from our Garden Festivals. The Truckee dates are Saturday, May 17 for root crops and seeds, and Friday, May 30 for plants. If you have a favorite vegetable that grows well in Tahoe, let us know and we will

try to include it in this year's offerings.

The Grow your Own festival is a community celebration that has gathered over 1000 people to talk about gardening each year. The program existed for over a decade, with the current festival format entering in its third year. This year we will host schools that want to sell plants, hanging baskets or packaged seeds. Plants not sold by the Master Gardeners will be donated to school and community gardens in the Tahoe area. Proceeds help support other UC Master Gardener projects, including school programs.

## Looking for a volunteer opportunity?

Know anyone who needs volunteer hours? Consider helping the UC Master Gardeners with the Grow Your Own festival. We are looking for help with moving and carrying the festival plants. For more information, please contact the UC Master Gardeners organizing the Grow Your Own festival by clicking their name to email them.

Grow Your Own organizers: [David Long](#) or [Carrie Scarvie](#).

## Save the Date: Seed Swap!

January 25 is the annual Douglas County Master Gardener Seed Swap. If you are interested in acquiring new and interesting seeds for your garden, don't miss this event. You can bring seeds to exchange or pick up some that you haven't tried. 9 am to 1 pm, suggested donation is \$5. Douglas County Senior and Community Center, 1329 Waterloo Lane, Gardnerville, NV.



- [Click here for a list of UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County events.](#)
- [This link will take you to the complete list of UCCE Central Sierra events.](#)
- [Click here to learn about UCCE Master Gardeners of Placer County events.](#)
- [UCCE Master Food Preservers of Central Sierra events are listed here.](#)
- [University of Nevada Extension events are found here.](#)

## School Spotlight - Zephyr Cove Elementary School

Erin Eisenlohr

On November 22, the Master Gardeners helped second graders in Ms. Boulet's class at Zephyr Cove Elementary School learn a bit about flower bulbs. They planted tulips,



daffodils and grape hyacinth into pots for Valentine's Day gifts.

The Master Gardeners discussed different types of bulbs, which parts of the flower sprouts from the bulb, and how to plant bulbs correctly. A key part of the program was to discuss how to “trick” (force) the bulbs to sprout and grow, timing them to be in bloom as Valentine's Day gifts. Each student planted three types of bulbs into a one-gallon nursery container. The pots were watered, placed outside and covered with a tarp. In about six weeks the containers will be uncovered and moved to the grow domes and watered again. After a few weeks in the grow domes the sprouted bulbs will be ready to bloom. The containers will be decorated before going home with the students. Along with the plants, each student will write a Valentine's Day card that will contain care instructions for the plants.



This is the second year that second grade students have worked on this project. Amanda Malarkey and her daughter Daisy, school volunteers, helped Master Gardeners David Long, Vicki Schussel and Erin Eisenlohr.



Want to try forcing bulbs at home? This [informative article](#) from the Iowa State Cooperative Extension explains what you need and how to do it.



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

Statewide Integrated  
Pest Management Program

**Missing your garden during the winter? Try browsing these informative sites!**

Sandy Gainza

If the cold and snow have you hanging out indoors instead of working in your garden, take a few minutes to browse a few of these websites designed to increase your gardening knowledge and help you solve some of your gardening problems. The UC IPM website (University of California Integrated Pest Management) has a multitude of resources at your digital fingertips. Here are few of my favorites:

**Plant Problem Diagnostic Tool** This interactive webpage allows you to enter your plant name, plant part, and damage. Then it will list the possible diseases or pests and provide useful identification photos to help you figure out what is damaging your plant.

**Video Library** Want to know how to catch a spider? There's video for that. Need to get rid of bedbugs? Ants? Aphids? Overcome by dandelions? There are about 100 videos and tutorials from a minute to 45 minutes long, all research based and made to UC standards.

The UC Master Gardener program has a very comprehensive website called the **GardenWeb**. Visit this website to find a compendium of Master Gardener lore from all over the State of California. There is a link to a list of all Master Gardener events across the state. Some are Zoom or online based, so you can attend remotely!

## We will miss you, Eileen!

Dave Long

Lake Tahoe Master Gardener Eileen Hoyt passed away this year on July 30. A Celebration of Life Service was held at Nevada Beach followed by a luncheon on November 3. Eileen's sister Helen Frazer hosted the service and lunch. Eileen was one of the regular Master Gardeners that set up and worked our booth at the El Dorado South Lake Tahoe Farmers' Market. She always had a smile, a surprisingly loud, infectious laugh and a continuing interest in learning new things. She often showed up to help with the Grow Your Own Seed packing parties, and volunteered at our tabled events. Eileen worked for many years at the Tahoe Conservancy in the role of Information Technology specialist. She traveled quite a bit over the years, in her travel van – thinking nothing about driving across the U.S. to visit friends, family or to attend a class. She loved Lake Tahoe, where her ashes were placed. Eileen will be missed by all of us.



## December Tips for Tahoe Gardeners

- **Keep your gas line and water shutoff and any nearby fire hydrants clear of ice and snow in case of emergency.**
- **Store your hoses and hose nozzles in a protected area.**
- **Rake and clear needles and leaves within five feet of your house and any other structures.**
- **Houseplants: these need much less water now. Overly wet soils can lead to fungus gnats and other pests. On extremely cold nights, move plants away from icy windows to prevent chilling injuries.**
- **Holiday poinsettias do best with bright, indirect light and night temperatures in the 50's and 60's. Keep plants away from drafts, registers and radiators.**

Let the soil dry only slightly between thorough waterings. Ensure the water can drain and evaporate; punch holes in decorative foil if needed.

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