



Adding Artful Beauty and Value to your Outdoor Spaces



## Around the Garden

Happy summer! I'm sorry I've been out of touch. My work has kept me so busy I barely have time to breathe!

I am so excited to announce that I won the Pleasanton Weekly Readers Choice pick for Best Landscaping Service this year and I wanted to say a heartfelt thank you for all your votes. It is wonderful to be acknowledged for all the work I've done to build my business over the last 20 years. I am honored.



For those of you that planted a summer vegetable garden, I hope that you are enjoying your harvests. This tomato plant is from my garden. This is an 'Early Girl' variety and it is producing very well for me. I just love picking fresh organic fruit, vegetables and herbs that I've grown myself!

This is our 4th year in a severe drought so many of my recent projects involve removing high water use lawns and replacing them with low water use plantings, flagstone paths, boulders, seating areas, etc.. It's okay to let your grass brown but please don't forget to water your trees deeply with a hose. Trees and large plants are an investment that you don't want to lose, so a little extra care is needed to avoid the decline of established trees and shrubs. By watering these large plants, you can avoid having to replace these big ticket items later.

Here's an example of a before and after of a project where I removed the water hungry lawn and replaced it with lovely hardscape creating an outdoor living and dining area.



Since each family's needs and desires are unique, a landscape plan is usually required to properly redesign a client's space. This month's video covers the importance of working with a designer before any hardscape is installed so please check it out!

Do you currently use pesticides or insecticides in your environment? I recently went to an enlightening talk by Andrew Sutherland, an expert from UC Davis, regarding summer pests in the garden and how to manage them, without affecting the beneficial insects and bees we need for pollination. Here is a [link](#) to their site with great information on long-term pest prevention and management that won't harm you, your family or the environment! I encourage you all to learn more.

On a personal note, I've been taking photographs for years and for the first time decided to enter some of my photos to the Alameda County Fair fine art exhibit. After judging, three of my photos were featured in the fine art exhibit. It was a fun process and it felt good to step out of my comfort zone.

Enjoy the rest of your summer!



## Garden Tips

### July To Do List

- Pruning Annuals and Perennials by dead-heading, pinching off the spent blooms, keeps new blooms coming all season. Fertilizing will also keep the blooms coming.
- Plant some heat loving annuals for a splash of color in the hot days of summer. Zinnias look their best in temperatures over 90 degrees and will bloom until late September, longer if we have our Indian Summers. Annual Verbena is also a great choice, coming in good deep saturated colors.
- Feed Citrus with a citrus food and chelated iron if the leaves are yellowing.
- Control budworm with BT caterpillar killer, as it's safe in the vegetable garden.
- Keep up the vegetable production with a good organic food
- Pick vegetables while they are young. This will give you tender vegetables and keep the flowers and production high throughout the summer months.
- Deep root water and fertilize your roses this month.

### August To Do List

- Apply "Cloud Cover" to Japanese Maples for protection if they are burning up due to hot drying winds and afternoon sun.
- Start feeding Azaleas/Rhododendrons and Camellias with a 0-10-10 fertilizer to stimulate bud set and root growth.
- Plant seeds for Sweet Peas now, you'll get a nice bouquet of flowers for the fall.
- Feed Fuchsia's w/a 0-10-10 fertilizer and prune to shape if needed.
- Fertilize all your indoor houseplants this month. If you bring some outside for a little "vacation" make sure they are in a shady spot, no afternoon sun!!
- Deep water and fertilize fruit and shade trees.
- Fertilize your Roses. 1 "recipe" is 1/2 cup 12-12-12 fertilizer, 1/2 cup bone meal, 1/2 cup sulfur, 2 tbs Epsom salts and a sprinkle of chicken fertilizer.
- Deadhead fading blooms in general, this keeps the plants in bloom longer.
- If you plan on a cool-season Vegetable garden, you can start germinating seeds, such as lettuce, peas, radishes, carrots.
- Grape Myrtle trees should be in their full glory now, a great time to select your favorites. They come in varying shades of pinks/purples/white and red's and bloom summer through the fall season.

## Featured Video

In this month's video, I will walk you through a the landscape design process

### September To Do List

- Keep annuals well fed and well watered to maintain health and blooms.
- Don't let your herbs flower. Pinch off any blooms to encourage fresh growth in the foliage, which is the part you want to harvest!
- If your gardeners have blown most of your mulch away, you may want to renew a 2"-3" layer over your soil this month. This keeps soil cool around the roots, prevents weeds and is good for the long term health of the soil when it does break down. Just remember to keep the mulch from piling up around the crown or trunk of the plants, they need to breathe just like we do!
- Sow seeds now for a winter harvest. Try Collards, Kale or Swiss Chard for something different, other choices are Radishes, Carrots, Broccoli, Cauliflower or many varieties of Lettuce are available in seeds. Get the kids involved!
- Feed Azalea's/Rhododendrons and Camellia's w/a 0-10-10 fertilizer for larger blooms in spring.
- Divide Bearded Iris. Dig up old clumps and divide the rhizomes with a sharp knife. Discard woody centers, trim leaves to 6" and replant in a spot with new amended soil.
- Prune out dead, diseased or damaged limbs from trees and shrubs before winter winds.
- Feed your citrus now to strengthen for cold winter days ahead.
- Cleanup and harvest fruit and vegetable crops.



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