

Arborist Nick Araya, co-owner of TreeCareLA, was our first speaker of the new year, and presented a program titled “Tending L.A.’s Trees: Getting it Right from Juveniles to Giants.”

Photo courtesy of speaker.



He spoke about tree care culture and how Los Angeles has some of the worst tree care habits in the United States. But he also offered options for protecting our precious urban forest.

Currently a Board Certified Master Arborist, Araya has been caring and advocating for trees for over 20 years, beginning his career in the Midwest and eventually moving to Southern California in 2004. In L.A., he discovered that trees are often not given the care and respect they deserve. He launched TreeCareLA in 2011 as a way to improve and preserve the trees of L.A., including managing large and old trees and restoring damaged trees.

Araya encourages homeowners to understand how to maintain their trees’ health, safety, beauty and value - either on their own or with some experienced help. Suggestions for achieving optimum tree health included beginning with the purchase of the smallest tree a homeowner is willing to plant. He noted that within four years, a 5-gallon tree will outpace

a 15-gallon specimen in growth, as well as being healthier and longer-lived. He also advised planting trees a bit “high”, either at or above grade level, untangling their roots before planting, and only watering - deeply - once a week (or every two weeks). For more tips, he suggested checking: [www.TreesAreGood.org](http://www.TreesAreGood.org).

The presentation continued with tips on the care of juvenile trees that are beginning to put on some height and developing into their eventual mature shape. Araya remarked that in most young trees, every branch is temporary, so it is important not to over-prune, but rather to encourage lateral growth and a strong canopy. “Foliage is your friend,” a quote from the University of Florida’s Ed Gilman (an arborist and tree researcher), was the phrase Araya chose to remind homeowners to keep as much of the canopy as possible, to maintain good tree health.

He also pointed out that in L.A., 80% of the trees are medium-sized (15’-30’), and those species that could grow taller are typically “mediumized” through annual pruning. The more frequently trees are pruned, the more quickly they use up their reserve energy to push out new growth. The result of consistently depleting this reserve energy is that the tree slows down its annual growth, and disease can set in, compromising the health and longevity of the tree. He

suggested that a better practice is to thin the trees out (by no more than 30%) every five years.

Araya then shared photos of good and bad pruning practices, and suggested that rather than “mediumizing” potentially large trees, good management practices and proper care would allow the city’s urban canopy to continue growing for a healthier future. For more tips and information, or to schedule a consult, visit [www.treecarela.com](http://www.treecarela.com) or follow them on Instagram @treecarela.

✎ Sabine Steinmetz

## REMEMBERING

### Shirley Marneus

It is with sadness that we report that SCHS member Shirley Marneus passed away on January 13, 2020. A few of Shirley’s SCHS friends were invited by her family to take some of her beloved plants for preservation.



Many of them, including her *Epiphyllums*, will be donated to local societies for future shows/sales.

The SCHS will miss seeing Shirley’s friendly face at meetings and events, and will remember her for her spirit, generosity and positive attitude.

## NEWS FROM THE PACIFIC HORTICULTURE SOCIETY

For many years, the Southern California Horticultural Society (SCHS) joined with other regional horticultural societies to support the Pacific Horticulture Society (PHS) and the production of Pacific Horticulture Magazine. The goal of PHS and the magazine was to unite the various regional horticultural societies and serve as a hub for horticulture stories and news throughout the west coast. As a supporting society, SCHS was able to offer a subscription to the magazine as a benefit to our members.

Over the last decade, PHS has struggled to produce the magazine in the face of rising costs and dwindling subscriptions.

In 2018, PHS reorganized its relationship to its supporting societies. SCHS was invited to be an Affiliated Member Organization with reduced common benefits: mainly, SCHS members would receive an electronic copy of the magazine, but not a printed, mailed copy. In order to be eligible for the full benefits offered by Pacific Horticulture Society, individuals had to purchase a separate membership with PHS. In response to this change in mutual benefits, SCHS lowered its annual membership dues.

This year, PHS has decided to completely separate itself from its former supporting organizations. SCHS is no longer affiliated with PHS and we do not share any benefits.

Sadly, PHS has also officially discontinued the quarterly magazine. There will no

longer be a print or online version. Instead, they will continue to collect and publish garden writing on their website. Access to their website (and their extensive catalog of past magazine articles) is not restricted by membership - it is available to anyone.

As they look to the future, PHS is dedicated to promoting horticulture and environmental science. They plan to continue their popular travel programs and run more regional events. They also want to grow partnerships with organizations like the Association of Professional Landscape Designers (APLD) and The Garden Conservancy. SCHS encourages its members to check out their website at [www.pacifichorticulture.org](http://www.pacifichorticulture.org) and consider supporting PHS.

✎ Laura Bauer