

Meetings and Announcements

Weekly Horticulture Zoom Talks

This round of horticulture Zoom talks has ended. Altogether, I've presented 75 talks on various subjects, mostly related to gardens and landscape design. We may resume horticulture Zoom at some point. I want to thank Travel Gallery of Pasadena for hosting me, making it much easier for me to offer these talks.

Karlik announcement: Phase change

I have officially retired as of July 1, 2022. However, I consider this to be a phase change. Let me explain what that means.

In chemistry, a phase refers to a state of matter, e.g., solid, liquid, or gas. A phase change is then the altering of that state, usually by adding or withdrawing heat to increase or decrease molecular motion. For example, for water, a phase change occurs when liquid water becomes ice or vice versa. It's the same stuff, just arranged differently. Similarly, I am still the same person and associated with UC Cooperative Extension, and I have what we call emeritus status, which means I can work on projects (but not be paid). My email is still active, and I am helping out at the office in various ways.

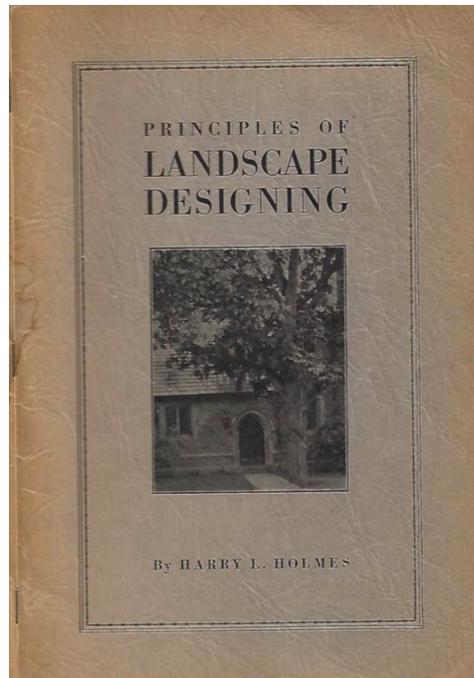
We have been talking about restarting a Master Gardener program in Kern, which we had about 30 years ago. Since that time, I've offered many horticulture classes, but we have not had a volunteer component associated with them. I will not "drive" any Master Gardener program, but I do plan to assist if the office decides to begin one.

A Publication on Principles of Xeriscape

I have been working on a publication on the principles of xeriscape, that is, water-conserving landscapes. It has passed the copy-editing stage at UC Communications and is now in the layout stage. Should be ready soon. It discusses the seven principles of xeriscape design and what steps are most important to save water in landscape irrigation. I will let you know when it is released.

A Historical Note

In my office archives, I came across a gem of a publication, *Principles of Landscape Design*, by Harry L. Holmes, c. 1933. Mr. Holmes was Instructor in Horticulture, Kern County Union High School. This booklet of 75 pages, cover seen below, was published by Future Farmers of America, Bakersfield Chapter, Kern County Union High School, press of the Bakersfield Californian.



Many classic adobe houses and buildings are shown, all this before WWII and well before the 1952 earthquake. Much of what Mr. Holmes says is still valid; plants haven't changed all that much in 90 years.

I especially enjoyed the photo, shown below, of what Mr. Holmes calls "butchery" of trees. Here is the full caption from the scan of the photo from p.52, both shown below, "Most shade trees need very little pruning and such butchery as this should never be practiced." True, most shade trees need very little pruning. As you can see, the photo does show resemblance to pruning that can be seen around Bakersfield and Kern County. Seems to be a cultural legacy of sorts.

CHAPTER XII

CARE OF TREES AND SHRUBS

When the tree or shrub is well planted only a start is made toward assurance that it is going to be a satisfactory plant for the particular location selected. Care after planting is essential and some knowledge of the traits of the particular plant must be had if proper results are to be expected.

Plantings are often abused. Wires tied around limbs girdle them, making a swelling above the constriction and weakening the tree. Ropes rub through the bark, exposing the wood to decay and destroying the vital living tissue just beneath the bark. Stock, tied to trees, break limbs, rub off the bark, or eat



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the smaller twigs and the leaves. Grass or rubbish are thoughtlessly burned near the plants, scorching the leaves, killing twigs, and making the tree or shrub generally unsightly.

Pruning. Through a lack of proper knowledge trees are often grossly abused when pruning time comes. Shade trees are often literally butchered. Tops are cut back to limbs ten to twelve inches in diameter, for what reason it is hard to tell. Some few trees, as the Poplars, mostly undesirable ones, do need quite severe heading back occasionally to prevent breaking of long soft wooded branches; but the large majority of our shade trees will develop stronger frame

work and be much longer lived if they are properly pruned. Very little pruning is necessary. Removal of interfering branches and dead wood is all that is required. In removing limbs they should be cut off clean, with a saw, and the cut made parallel

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John Karlik Environmental Horticulture/Environmental Science

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