Bouquet design class, flower-arranging competition highlight this weekend’s Gerbera Festival.

Stop and smell the daisies at the sixth annual Kitayama Brothers Farms Gerbera Festival, a benefit for Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks.

The festival, part of the Monterey Bay Greenhouse Growers...
The festival, part of the Monterey Bay Greenhouse Growers Open House, will be 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, June 20.

The event features greenhouse tours, a flower-arranging competition, wine tasting by Storrs Winery, a Strawberry Shortcake Cafe, activities for kids and more.

Watch creativity under pressure during the flower arranging competition. Professional flower designers from Northern California will create beautiful bouquets made from flowers and greenery grown on-site. The competition begins at 11 a.m. and will include three rounds. After a winner is chosen, all of the bouquets will be available for purchase in a silent auction.

Professional flower designer Will Gonzalez of RainForest Fantasy in Ukiah will teach a workshop, “How to Optimize a Grocery Store Bouquet,” at 1:30 p.m. Cost is $25 and includes flowers and a vase.

Visitors can also shop the farmers market for locally grown produce and gift items, or purchase potted Gerbers, dozens of varieties of bulbs and freshly cut flowers.

Kitayama Brothers Farms, host of Gerbera Festival, is located at 481 San Andreas Road in Watsonville (next to Sunset State Beach).

Take a watercolor painting class at Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park this summer.

Enjoy plein air painting at the Mission. The City of Santa Cruz Parks and Recreation class, "Watercoloring at the Mission," starts July 7 and meets three times.
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Express yourself and your love of nature with this luminous medium by learning key techniques such as wet-on-wet, dry brush, lifting and laying down shadows. Cost is $40 for City of Santa Cruz residents and $52 for non-residents. Learn more and register on the City Parks & Rec website.

Enjoy an old-fashioned Fourth of July at Wilder Ranch State Park.
Visit Wilder Ranch's historic cultural preserve and take a step back in time to 100 years ago. Participate in an early 1900s-style Independence Day celebration including a noon family parade, games, children's crafts, live big-band minus, living history demonstrations, historic speeches and a flag-raising.

Food and drink will be available to purchase, or bring a picnic lunch. The park is located at 1401 Coast Road, 2 miles north of Santa Cruz on the coast-side of Highway 1. The event is free; parking is $10 and supports the park.

Donate to Friends when you shop at New Leaf Markets in Santa Cruz and Capitola!
Thanks to your support, we are now on the Envirotokens donation boards at New Leaf Community Markets in downtown Santa Cruz and the Westside market!
downtown Santa Cruz, on the Westside and in Capitola.

Beginning July 1, shoppers who bring their own bags can make a donation to Friends after checking out.

The Envirotokens program, started in 1993, gives customers who bring reusable grocery bags when shopping at New Leaf, a 10-cent Envirotoken to donate to the nonprofit of their choice. Six nonprofits are chosen to be Envirotokens recipients annually at each New Leaf location.

Thank you everyone who attend the PiVot Fashion First Friday event.
We had a great turnout for the most-recent Summer Series event, a PiVot: The Art of Fashion held a fashion show June 5 at the Mission. Check out the photos on our Facebook page.

There are four Summer Series events left in 2015, including the third annual Mole & Mariachi Festival, set for Sept. 19. Be sure to check one out!

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