

Master Gardener News

Amador County

April 2007



You're Co-Pres' Speak:



From John: I'm struck with SPRING FEVER, how about you?? Did anyone else do grafting last month? I'm optimistic that my first ever attempts will take. One graft (Gravenstein) is already "pushing".

The end of March has been beautiful, and our MG activities were impressive, as always!! The "Drip Irrigation" and "Weedless Gardening" classes by Jim Harrington and Cathy Koos-Breazeal were great at showing us how to conserve water. With the minimal winter this year we will need to conserve water and both drip systems and mulches are essential gardening practices. Thanks for the timely instruction!

During the March General meeting, Dave Hennings, Rita Martin and Emily Beals got the chance to share their "lessons learned" at last year's State Conference. Glad they took good notes because it's been a long time. Thanks, Dave for the quiz. I will try to remember that Contra Costa County has the greatest amount of shoreline (because the Delta is included). Rita, do you think if we plant enough native species, we can reverse "Global Warming"? Nice of Emily to inform us that citrus trees have an uphill battle in our area! My Navel is surviving OK, but I need to talk to it often.

Hope everyone has had the chance to meet our new trainees. I have met several and they are a great "bunch" and waiting to "bloom". They seem to be taking their classes and training very seriously. We

had better study ourselves to keep up. My compliments to the Mentors and we need to continue being involved. Also, Leora Smith has taken on a challenge with the Gardeners in Training program. Please give her all the help you can. MG's really need to "plant the seed" of gardening with the younger generation, and the GIT program is the perfect tool.

In addition to the regular meeting in April we will hold a second meeting at Larry Jones' home. This meeting will be on the 25th and we are looking forward to a large turnout with a pot lucky and significant others invited. This is a chance for the current MG's and the trainees to get to know each other. Information is detailed elsewhere in the newsletter.

Janice Johnson is organizing the Spring Expo on April 14th. This is an important public event for the community with both the plant sale and the public education classes. If at all possible plan on being there to help out. There are lots of things to do and also an opportunity to attend some great public education classes

April Calendar

April 14-Expo and Plant Sale 9:00am-1:00pm

Classes on "Container Planting"

April 17-Monthly Meeting, Ice Cream Social, "Presentations Made Easy", Trainee Recognition, Ag Office 1:00pm Board Meeting 12:00

April 25 Night Meeting at Larry Jones', Pot Luck

See attached directions

Secretary's Notes

MARCH 20, 2007

The meeting was convened by co-president, Jerry Trottier at 1:15. Three Master Gardeners who attended the State Convention in San Jose last October presented brief summaries of workshops they had taken. Dave Hennings spoke about "Sowing and Growing Sweet Peas," Rita Martin shared thoughts on "How To Create A Beautiful Garden and Stop Global Warming," and Emily Beals focused on "Growing Citrus in Marginal Areas." Rather than reproduce the entire text of their presentations here, you are urged to contact them directly for information on any of these topics. They and all who attended the excellent state convention will be happy to share their knowledge.

Jerry expressed thanks to Richard Honey, Dennis Miller, and Huba Toth for their recent home visitation above and beyond and especially to Dennis for his tremendous contribution to the MG program.

Jerry reminded everyone that it is really important to sign the attendance sheet in order to get meeting credit.

A pot luck will be held at Larry Jones' home on April 25th. He will provide "Road-Kill, Ground Squirrel & Pocket Gopher Stew" and we will bring the rest. Sounds like a yummy pot luck.

Larry reminded us that home visits need to be handled professionally. That includes leaving calling cards, not sharing personal information, being prepared to follow up with research and/or handouts either on-site or later, talking about the MG program, leaving literature, i.e. bookmarks, etc.

FYI County Fair Theme this year is: "Bumper Cars, Rodeo Stars and Ewes."

John Otto asked for feedback on the Feb. Training Program. Suggestions on improvement included: Do training later, i.e. April, Spend more time on how to solve phone clinic problems, separate problem-solving from introduction to office procedures, work with smaller groups.

We can enjoy a moment of satisfaction in knowing that because of the recent training, our contact sheet completion has improved greatly. Way to go everyone!

We reviewed our public education programs briefly. Leora's Gardeners in Training Program at the Up-Country Center is going well but needs more adult help. There are lots of kids and in order for better hands-on learning to occur, the adult to child ratio needs to be smaller. The next class is April 12th from 2:00-3:00 pm at the Up-Country Community Center. The Drip Irrigation and Lasagna Gardening Workshops went well. They were good training for 14 people from the general public and 8 MG's.

Upcoming classes are: Spring Expo April 14, Growing Tomatoes and Peppers May 12. We still need seedlings and plants to sell-contact Janice Johnson. We also need cartons, such as dog and cat food cardboard cartons, for carrying bought plants. Classes at the Expo include Container Gardening, Window Boxes and Making Hypertufa Pots. May 12 brings a Tomato Growing Class by Janice Johnson. She needs people to start tomato seeds. Michael Spinetta is working on a butterfly garden at Plymouth Elementary School. He could also use the help of volunteers.

There will be a field trip to Duarte Nursery on May 4. It needs a trip organizer as Dennis will not be able to attend. It is an excellent field trip and includes lessons on propagation.

New books in the library: SUNSET WESTERN GARDEN BOOK and THE HOME ORCHARD.

There is horse and alpaca manure available. Contact Penny Smith.

New directories are available in the office.

E. Beals

Announcements

Below is a list of upcoming training classes in Placerville and San Andreas. Please notify Andrew at 223-6837 if you plan on attending any of the classes.

Upcoming Training Classes-Placerville

All classes in Placerville run from 12:15-4:30 pm at the Veteran's Memorial Hall, 130 Placerville Dr.

4/3 Plant Disease Diagnosis
Bob Raabe, Professor Emeritus of Plant Pathology, U.C. Berkeley

4/10 Planting and Care of Landscape Trees
Pam Bone, Landscape Horticulturalist

4/17 Growing Berries and Growing Grapes in the Foothills
Chuck Ingels, Farm Advisor, UCCE Sacramento Co.

4/24 History of UCCE and Master Gardener Program, Guidelines for Master Gardener Program, Diagnosing Problems: Internet Resources and Staffing the Office.
Lynn Wunderlich, Farm Advisor, UCCE El Dorado and Amador Counties.

Upcoming Training Classes-San Andreas

All classes in San Andreas run from 8:30 am-12:30 pm at the Central Library, Mountain Ranch Rd. and Gold Hunter Rd

4/5 Plant Identification
Scott Oneto, UCCE Farm Advisor, Tuolumne Co.

4/12 Home Vegetable Gardening
Robert Norris, Professor Emeritus of Plant Biology, U.C. Davis

4/19 Planting and Care of Landscape Trees
Pam Bone, Landscape Horticulturalist

4/26 UCCE Policies and Volunteer Responsibilities, Communication Skills for Master Gardeners
MG Coordinators, Amador and Calaveras County, Dorothy Smith, County Director UCCE Amador County

Expo Plants

Please pot up and divide plants for the Expo. You can bring your plants to the Ag Building on Fri 4/13.

Please label if possible.

BUMPER CARS, RODEO

STARS AND EWES is the theme for this year's county fair. Larry Jones will be heading up the fair garden. If you would like to help please give him a call.



Home Visits

Jill will be our assistant Home Visits Coordinator. Yeah!

In the blue binder, you will find 2 pages concerning Home Visits, completely revised. The first page is for use by Phone Clinic persons. It details exactly what to do when you get a call that you think merits a Home Visit to enable diagnosis.

The second page is directed to the MGs actually doing the Home Visits.

Please read these 2 pages carefully. All MGs doing home visits will receive their own copy.

New Books

A Field Guide to Insects and Pathogens (Diseases)
of California Oaks – USDA

The Home Orchard \$25+tax

*This is by far, the best book on fruit and nut trees
that I've seen.*

It covers soil, root stock selection, tree selection,
planting, irrigation, pruning, grafting, spraying, IPM,
trouble shooting, crop calendar, fruit and nut
harvesting, and storage.

Lots of four color photography makes this book
very user friendly. Dennis Miller

Four Revised Pest Notes

Scales

Glassy-winged Sharpshooter

Weed Management in Landscapes

House Mouse

Garden Tour - Calaveras

Hello to all gardeners. I'd like to inform you about
an exciting event to take place in Calaveras Co.

June 23, 2007 from 10:00 am to 4:00 p.m. in West
Point and Wilseyville. A tour of six lovely
gardens in the area will also feature local artists and
musicians with artwork including water colors, oil
paintings, quilts, pottery, sculpture, garden art,
baskets, etc. We will also have Master Gardeners
on hand to give advice and answer your gardening
questions. A box lunch will be served at one of the
gardens for those buying tickets in advance.

Tickets go on sale May 1, 2007.

The event is presented by Art in the Gardens, in
partnership with Blue Mountain Coalition for Youth.

For ticket information call:

(209)293-7446 or (209)293-4259.

Betty Parlette-Art in the Gardens

Volunteer Opportunity

The Garden Tour in Calaveras County advertised on
this page is requesting MG volunteers to be at the
different gardens on the tour in order to answer
questions and provide advice to the garden
“tourists”. The Calaveras County MGs are having
an open garden day at their demonstration garden
on the same day, so less of them will be able to
volunteer. If you would be interested in donating
your time and expertise, please contact Andrew who
will coordinate with the Calaveras MG program.

What does the letter “A” have in
common with a flower?

They both have bees
coming after them!

Garden Tour – Amador

On June 2, 10 am until 4 pm, the Foothill Garden
Club will hold a garden tour showcasing 5 homes
on the north side of the county. A homemade quilt
will be on display at each home. Refreshments will
be served. Tickets will be available by April 20th.
For more information call Marie Loretta, 296-1571.

New Website

www.frontyardnursery.com

Sales Procedures:

Office Manager Marie Loretta, together with
Andrew and Carolyn has updated the sales
procedures to follow when selling U.C. Publications
or plants at events. The procedures are included in
the blue binder in the Master Gardener Office and
may contain new information for many MGs. Please
take time to review and follow them when involved
with sales at an event.

San Francisco Flower Show

An "undersea garden," a "metropolitan meadow," and an exhibit showing the creative reuse of materials from the wine industry were among the favorites of Master Gardeners Jackie Tarchala and Judie Marks, who trekked to San Francisco March 21 for the S.F. Flower and Garden Show.

"Under the Sea" combined low-maintenance cacti, succulents and seaside grasses set off by whimsical seashell chairs and a giant octopus sculpture, all bathed in blue-green lights and overlooked by a beach scene on the balcony above.

The "Wine Re-Defined" garden, by UC Berkeley landscape architecture students featured garden furniture built from oak wine barrels, stepping stones of recycled corks and lanterns made from old wine bottles.

"Metropolitan Meadow" consisted of windblown-looking grasses and abundant yellow-flowering species with just a sprinkling of red to match the shiny red Nash Metropolitan car parked in the middle of the garden – highlighting the fact that in 1955, the much-maligned little car got 40 miles per gallon.

Making the trip particularly enjoyable was Jackie's membership in the Garden Writers of America, which included a reception hosted by Sunset Magazine and Smith & Hawkins. Among the speakers was one of the show's judges, Fergus Garrett, head gardener at Great Dixter House and Gardens in East Sussex, England, who showed slides from Great Dixter.

Church Cemetery

Immaculate Conception Catholic Church's historic cemetery will be getting a facelift, and Dennis Miller, Jackie Tarchala, Judie Marks and John Otto met at the Sutter Creek church on March 14 to start the planning process.

Volunteers from the church and community have pledged to do the labor, but the Master Gardener committee is recommending a scenic wandering pathway for access, as well as removal or severe pruning of overgrown bushes and trees and placement of many new to spruce up the space, which at present is mostly covered with slate. Ideas for your favorite native and/or drought-tolerant species are welcomed!

Volunteer Recognition

Extra special appreciation is due Huba Toth, Dennis Miller and trainee Richard Honey for pruning fruit trees for an elderly woman whose trees were badly in need of trimming.

Thanks also go to Larry Jones, Dennis Miller, Jill North, Dave Taylor and John Nolan for the spectacular grafting class on Feb. 3, and to Dennis Miller and Marie Loretta, among others, for the rose pruning class at Grace Fellowship Church on Feb. 17.

And in March, we send kudos to Jim Harrington for teaching "Drip Irrigation" and Cathy Koos Breazeal for her "Lasagna Gardening" class, both on March 10, and to Janice Johnson and helpers for the "Seed Starting and Kitchen Garden" class on March 24.

Also, we want to reprint here a letter that program coordinator Andrew Kramer received from the grateful recipient of a home visit by Dennis Miller, Jack Lyall and trainee Richard Honey:

Mr. Kramer:

Mr. Miller came by today and I want to say what a great help he was. We got a ton of information, and he was able to diagnose some of the problems we are having. He also gave us some great advice on pruning and planting practices. One of the problems he diagnosed had to do with a disease. I thought my wife had written it down; she didn't. Would it be possible for you to ask him what it was. He told us that we need to spray for it and gave us some very good handouts on what to use and when to spray. Also he asked us what one of our trees was. At the time I couldn't remember, Would you please pass along that it was an Acacia tree. Thanks again for your support and please tell Mr. Miller how much we enjoyed his visit, and how grateful we are for what he taught us. Bill
Kudos to all!

Why is a barn so noisy?



All the cows have horns!

Getting to Know You

By: Lucy Martin

We are so fortunate, once again. We have John Otto who was attracted to the Master Gardener program and joined us in 2005. This guy is passionate in his commitment to learn, to participate and to impart as much knowledge about the program as he can. During his first year he volunteered for an Olive Fruit Fly survey that involved six months of weekly travels to retrieve orchard traps and count flies. His second year he took on the Food Bank vegetable garden. It was a challenge - but he disclosed that Steve Collins persuaded him that "there was nothing to it"! The garden did very well; it provided lots of veggies and lots of learning. This year he is serving as co-president. He is involved in all of our activities. His enthusiasm is admirable.

John is congenial and witty and pleasant. He has deep blue eyes that crinkle at the corners when he smiles that big-friendly smile. He always has a pleasant greeting. He and his wife, Lynnette live in Sutter Creek in a home that they designed and built in 1981. They have three children. Son, Michael lives in Yuba City; daughter, Michele is in Sunnyvale and the youngest, Mindy with her husband, Kyle Newton and infant son, Myles live in Sacramento. John and Lynnette adore their only grandchild and dedicate at least one day a week to pamper and to indulge him. Lynnette's family also lives in the area so birthdays and holidays become great family gatherings.

John was born and raised in Walnut Creek. He and Lynnette met while students at Las Lomas High and she invited him to a "Sadie Hawkins" dance. He admits to an immediate attraction to this cute-little girl; they became sweethearts and married in 1962 when they were both 19. His path to further education went in many directions, literature/teaching and commercial art before deciding that architecture was his calling. In 1968 he received a Bachelor of Architecture from Cal Poly. He was also commissioned into the US Army Corp of Engineers. They enjoyed a two year assignment in Frankfurt, Germany. While there they were able to travel throughout Europe. After a tour in Vietnam John resigned his commission and began practicing architecture in the east bay area.

They moved to Amador County in 1979 to raise their children in a rural area similar to what John had experienced as a child. John served as the Amador County Architectural Coordinator for 14 years and was also Building Official for part of that time. He is proud of his involvement in many projects but especially in preserving several historical buildings including the old hospital, Butte Store and the old Jackson High School. After hours John spent several years teaching adult education classes for Los Rios and Delta Community Colleges in Construction Technology. In 1993 he returned to private practice with projects throughout the region. After getting West Sacramento's new City Hall moving, John took a position as Project Director for CA Dept. of General Services until he retired in December 2004. They enjoy traveling, especially cruises. They are recreational kayakers and are pleased that several MG's share this same interest. John's other hobbies are fishing, photography and art.

His sloping city lot consists of a pear, apple and an orange tree, six rose bushes, a lawn and assorted flowers. Inspired by a MG tour, Lynnette is developing a rock garden; damage from our winter freeze is still being assessed. John enjoys pruning and has experimented with grafting other varieties onto his pear and apple trees. One thing that John has discovered is the sheer pleasure of working with plants and how therapeutic digging in the dirt can be.

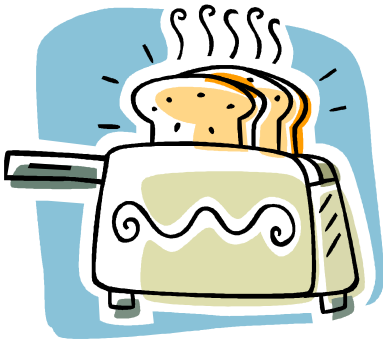
In sharing some thoughts with us he says, "It is an ongoing learning experience. I haven't met one person in the Master Gardeners program that I don't like. Or, as Aristotle reportedly said, 'In all things of nature there is something marvelous'."

**PLANT OF THE
MONTH
Pacific Dogwood
As seen in the MG Calendar**

Hi fellow bread makers,

I love the Artisan breads that cost \$3.50+ a loaf. I usually make my bread in the bread maker; it makes great bread, but not the Artisan style bread. So I decided to try this recipe that my mom cut out of The Oregonian for me. I'm glad I did as it makes an excellent loaf, with a hard, thick crust and an airy soft inside, just like I like. I used more water than the recipe called for as my dough was really dry and I cooked it in a big cast iron pot. I hope you like it as well as I did.

Janice



No-Knead Bread

Makes one 1 1/2-pound loaf

Once mastered in its basic form, this bread recipe, originally published last fall in The New York Times, is ripe for adaptation. You can try different flours, though for best results, substitute whole-grain flour for no more than half of the white (and use even less rye flour, which tastes great but is heavy). Fold fresh herbs or olives into the dough as desired, or enjoy it as it is. Leslie Cole

- 3 cups bread flour or all-purpose flour (I used King Arthur unbleached all-purpose flour), plus more for shaping dough
- 1/4 teaspoon instant yeast (such as Fleischmann's Rapid Rise brand)
- 2 1/2 teaspoons salt, or more to taste
- 1 1/2 cups plus 2 tablespoons tepid water (I used closer to 2 cups)
- Cornmeal or wheat bran as needed

AMG
Amador Master Gardeners

In a large bowl combine flour, yeast and salt. Add the water and stir until blended; dough will be shaggy and very sticky. Cover bowl with plastic wrap. Let dough rest at least 12 hours, preferably about 18 hours, at warm room temperature, about 70 degrees. Dough is ready when its surface is dotted with bubbles.

Turn dough out on a lightly floured work surface; sprinkle dough with a little more flour, and fold it over on itself once or twice. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rest about 15 minutes.

Using just enough flour to keep dough from sticking to work surface or to your fingers, gently and quickly shape dough into a ball. Generously dust a cotton (not terry cloth) kitchen towel with flour, wheat bran or cornmeal; put dough seam side down on towel and dust with more flour, bran or cornmeal. Cover with another kitchen towel and let rise for 2 to 3 hours. When it is ready, dough will be more than double in size and will not readily spring back when poked with a finger.

At least 30 minutes before dough is ready, preheat oven to 450 degrees. Put a heavy covered pot (cast iron, enamel, Pyrex or ceramic; anywhere from 3 1/2 quarts to 6 or 8 quarts) in oven as it heats. When dough is ready, carefully remove pot from oven. Slide your hand under towel and turn dough over into pot, seam side up; it may look like a mess, but that's OK. Shake pan once or twice if dough is unevenly distributed; it will straighten out as it bakes. Cover with lid and bake 30 minutes, then remove lid and bake another 15 to 30 minutes, until loaf is nicely browned. Cool on a rack. -- Adapted from Jim Lahey, Sullivan Street Bakery, New York City

Remember that gophers also need to make a living; preferably in somebody else's garden!

Knee: a device for finding rocks in your garden...☺