

Master Gardener News

Amador County

May 2007



Your Co-Pres' Speak:



April was filled with "variable weather" and lots of MG activity. Congratulations to the new Master Gardeners Mary Jane La Berge, Dave Hennings, and Lou Ohls for all their efforts the past year, and welcome to the fold. There was a great turnout of "trainees" who are really getting involved. Glad to meet most of you.

The monthly meeting presentation by Andrew Kramer on "Presentations Made Easy" was great. We all get butterflies when speaking in front of groups, but I guarantee that if you follow the basic formats and helpful tips that were described, we all will be comfortable and successful with presentations. We should apply those principles and help out with upcoming Public Education Programs.

April saw continuing progress by Leora Smith and helpers with the Pine Grove GIT (Gardeners in Training) program. Additional helpers are still needed so please contact Leora if you can spare some time. April also saw the commencement of "Design Recommendations" for the Immaculate Conception Church cemetery area. Dennis Miller, Jackie Tarchala and Judie Marks will do a great job.

It's getting into the busy time of the year for us. We need to staff the phone clinic, preferably with two people, and there are lots of spots open. Please contact Jim or Diane Ferrell, sign up online or at the next meeting.

Sorry to say I was disappointed with the final UCCE selection for a statewide MG logo. I thought our choice was much more appropriate.

The Spring Expo was once again a huge success. With a large turnout of people attending both the classes and purchasing plants. Many Master Gardeners were on hand to help with the plant sale and deserve a real thank you for braving the rainy weather we had during the Expo. Special thanks to Janice Johnson and all the people providing plants.

CONGRATULATIONS to Andrew and Estela who are expecting their first child in September.

By the time you read this newsletter we will have had a great time at Larry Jones' home (4/25/07 evening potluck, wine tasting and garden/orchard tour). We may also have enjoyed the Duarte Nursery 5/4/07 field trip, which is always fun. And in May remember: "**Give a weed an inch and it will take a yard.**"

Hopefully the April showers bring beautiful May flowers and vegetables.

John & Jerry



MAY CALENDAR

- 5/4 – Fri. – **Duarte Nursery** field trip
- 5/12 - Sat. – **Tomato and Pepper Class**
- 5/15 - Tues. – **MG Monthly Meeting**, 1:00 pm at at Dennis Miller's house, board meeting at noon-see attached directions
- 5/30 - Wed. – **Eve. Meeting** at Penny Smith's See attached directions

Secretary's Note's



MASTER GARDENER MEETING MINUTES April 17, 2007

The meeting was called to order at the MG office at 1:10, by co-president Jerry Trottier. Andrew Kramer presented the program entitled, "Helpful Tips for Public Education Presentations." Because only 20 - 30% of Master Gardeners do public presentations, it is hoped that Andrew's presentation will encourage more to take the leap. There are many opportunities to share our knowledge with the public. That is our reason for existence and we are all more capable of doing a presentation than we realize. So let's get crackin!

A business meeting followed the program. Jerry reminded us to get business cards from Andrew to use with home visits. The county fair is July 26 - 29, and we need volunteers for informal demos. April evening meeting will be at Larry Jones' house. Bring meat for the grill and a side dish. The next monthly day meeting will be May 15, at Dennis Miller's house. Bring chairs. The next evening meeting will be May 30, at Penny Smith's. Bring chairs and pot luck dishes to accompany a BBQ. Speaker will be Duke Foster of Dry Creek Watershed Council.

Leora's Gardeners in Training Program at the Upcountry Community Center still needs volunteers for May. The Spring Expo was a great success in spite of the rain. Classes were excellent, plant sales were brisk and netted \$1200. Thanks to everyone who participated. Next Public Education Class on Growing Tomatoes and Peppers, presented by Janice Johnson, will be May 12. There will be plants for sale. The Ridge Road Nursery Clinic on May 5 needs sign-ups.

Upcoming Garden Club Tours: June 2, Foothill Garden Club; June 23, 10 - 4 PM, Calaveras Garden Tour; July 14, 10 - 1 PM, Calaveras MG Demo Garden. (Bring bag lunch; let Andrew know you're going.) Master Gardeners are needed for State Fair presentations on "hot topics." Dates are Aug. 17 - Sept. 3. The logo for the state MG program has been chosen. It is the one with the poppy in the center, not our vote but we'll go with the program.

There was an ice cream social prepared for new MGs which was enjoyed by all. **E. Beals**

RECOGNITION



Special recognition this month to Janice Johnson for working so hard and coordinating the highly

successful Spring Expo plant sale on April 14, at which more than \$1,200 was earned. Thanks, too, to Valerie Bonkowski and Jackie Tarchala for teaching "Hypertufa," to Dennis Miller for teaching about window box gardening, and to Marie Loretta for teaching container planting. Also at the Spring Expo, thanks to Larry for running the diagnostics clinic, with multiple problems brought in and diagnosed (in the rain!).

And to each and every person that teamed up to make the Expo a great success!



Recognition also goes to Janice Johnson, Jack Lyall and Lou Ohls for working Easter weekend at the Amador Flower Farm. Among other tasks they performed, Janice gave a presentation on seed starting and the kitchen garden.

The ever-busy Janice also gave a presentation to the Rotary Club on Valentine's Day on the history of flowers used for that special day.

Plant of the Month Hartweg's Iris

(As seen in our MG Calendar!)

Announcements

READY, SET, GROW... THOSE TOMATOES AND PEPPERS!

The Amador County Master Gardeners offer a free class on growing tomatoes and peppers. Janice Johnson will again be sharing her expertise with us on one of her favorite subjects. The class will focus on ways to help you grow tasty tomatoes in our upcountry climate. The class is Saturday, May 12th, from 10:00 AM to noon, at the UCCE office, 12200 Airport Road.

Be sure and plan on attending this class. You don't want to miss the chance to choose from over fifty varieties of tomato plants for sale starting at 9:30 am.

May 15th Meeting

We will be diagnosing problems in the Orchard-Pests and Diseases of Fruit Trees; Garden Tour; and Mock Home Visit at Dennis Miller's Garden! The meeting will be at 1:00 pm, Board meeting at noon. Please bring a chair.

May Evening Meeting



An evening meeting will be on May 30 at Penny Smith's home and garden. It will begin at 5:30. The speaker will be Duke Foster from Dry Creek Watershed Council. The Smith's will provide hot dogs and hamburgers. Please bring a dish to share.

Up Country Community Center



Leora Smith would appreciate any help available for the after school program on Thursday May 10th at 2:00. NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED! ;-)

Wildlife Management

Since Andrew just taught us the tips for doing a presentation, I thought I would give you all an opportunity to use them. June 16th we are doing a presentation on managing wildlife. This is a perfect class to break up into sections and having different people present. One person could do deer, another skunks, another gophers, ground squirrels and moles. I'm sure you get the idea.

Sue and I will help with the Power Point. There are already Pest notes on most of these critters, so putting together your portion should be easy.

For those of you that haven't given a presentation yet, just ask Valerie if she didn't have fun with her first class. She did an excellent job on her Hypertufa class and with the support of Jackie, one of our veteran speakers. Please volunteer before I have to give you a call. **Janice**

Just Published

Organic Olive Production Manual Paul M. Vossen

This manual provides detailed information for growers on production issues, plant nutrition, economics, pest and weed control, management of olive wastes, the conversion process, and organic certification and registration.

Using this guide you'll learn about orchard site selection considerations, irrigation needs, terrain, temperature, soil, damage from the olive fruit fly, and how these may vary for table fruit versus fruit for oil production. You'll also learn how to evaluate harvest methods—an important consideration as harvest costs typically amount to half the total production cost for olives.

This manual has been developed as a supplement to the Olive Production Manual, 2nd Edition, (3353). Organic growers are advised to consult both publications as they develop and refine their production systems. 3505 \$18.00

How to Reduce Bee Poisoning from Pesticides

This publication discusses methods and techniques to protect bees from hazards associated with pesticide application. Tables provide specific information regarding toxicity of insecticides, miticides and blossom and fruit thinning agents to honey bees; to alfalfa leaf cutting bees; to alkali bees; and to bumble bees.

PNW591 \$5.00

New Free Publications

8229 **Apples: Safe Methods to Store, Preserve, and Enjoy**

8259 **Ascochyta Blight of Garbanzos**

8225 **Reducing Runoff from Irrigated Lands: Tailwater Return Systems**

8260 **Sclerotinia Stem Rot of Garbanzos**

New Pest Notes

71434 **Avocado Lace Bug**

74135 **Coyote**

Recently Updated Pest Notes

7408 **Scales**

7441 **Weed Management in Landscapes**

**Recently Updated
Pest Management Guidelines**

3449 **Kiwifruit**

Grape Pest Management, 2nd Edition

Don Flaherty

This perennial best seller is THE guide to pest control for the grape industry. Includes control strategies for the variegated grape leafhopper and IPM strategies for control of all major grape diseases and pests.

Features more than 400 detailed color photographs.

Spiral bound. Rev. 1992.

3343 \$70.00


Amador Master Gardeners

HELP PLEASE!

Robin needs Master Gardener Minutes for the local radio station! Robin records for the Hometown radio so that we have a new topic each week. She can use your help. Even ideas will help, we can polish them up for you! Please send to Robin (volcanogirl@earthlink.net) or Andrew (awkramer@ucdavis.edu) ASAP.

You Know You're a Master Gardener When:

10. You rejoice in rain...even after 10 straight days.
9. You have pride in how bad your hands look.
8. You have a decorative compost container on your kitchen counter.
7. You can give away plants easily, but compost is another thing!
6. Soil test results actually mean something.
5. IPM rules!
4. You'd rather go to a nursery to shop than a clothes store.
3. You look for gardens open to the public whenever you go on vacation.
2. Your non-gardening spouse is actually getting involved with your gardening endeavors...digging ponds, building bird houses, watering, and pruning.
1. You are surrounded by terrific people who share your PASSION!

My apologies for not including the contact sheets in last month's newsletter. The Editor

**CONTACT SHEETS –
PROBLEMS
AND RESOLUTIONS**
By: Lucy Martin



February 17, 2007 – March 23, 2007

Problem: Wants to start an organic garden with her children.

Resolution: Client emailed office. Was contacted by return email to suggest some options including soil, manure, library resources and especially ... (that she may) request the composting material from us if she is so inclined.

Problem: Borers (?) - almonds. Peach leaf curl – peaches.

Resolution: Home visit; client has canker in almond, peach and cherry trees. His best bet is to remove them. Told client how to dormant spray and how to prune.

Problem: Too late to prune and dormant spray apple, (Golden Delicious)? Tree is still dormant – not showing any bloom.

Resolution: Considering late dormancy and no bloom and that cooler weather likely - o-k to prune, (less aggressive than Dec/Jan) and dormant spray. Sent literature: Home Publications #'s 15,20 and 22. Dennis Miller's handout on Dormant Sprays (01/02/07) - "Tree Pruning" card.

Problem: Would like to know 1st and last date of frost (Volcano).

Resolution: Left message on answering machine. Placerville (1870 ft). Last frost date 5/18. I'm at 2600 ft in Pine Grove and I seed plant May 1st. I use row cover until at least June 1st. If she needs more information she should call the MG office.

Problem: Live Oak – large – vertical slits on trunk. Very old tree – no seepage of any kind in or from slits.

Resolution: Over watering and summer watering. Recommended moving her flowers away from the roots and stop summer watering.

Problem: Lemons are being attacked by snails. Client read in Napa newspaper that a copper band around the trunk will keep them from going in the tree. True or False?


Resolution: True. The snails mucus creates a galvanic reaction when it comes in contact with the copper.

Problem: Powdery mildew on rosemary.

Resolution: Fungal disease caused by humidity. Rosemary requires lots of sun. - needs lots of space – not shaded or crowded by other plants. Try a mix of baking soda and water or Safer fungicide.

Problem: Wants to know how to spray apple trees with dormant spray. He has one apple tree.

Resolution: Client is 89 years old. Doesn't have a sprayer and can't get on a ladder. As a community service, I did a home visit on 2/24/07. I sprayed the tree with my own lime/sulphur and volck oil.

Problem: Was given some dahlia bulbs as  Wants to find out if voles & gophers will bother the bulbs, (should she plant in the ground).

Resolution: Form hardware cloth 1/2"x1/2" or Avery wire over a 5 gal bucket. Make the form at least 8" deep. Make multiple forms for multiple planting sites. Called client on the phone and gave her the above information.

Problem: Wanted to know the first and last frost dates so he can start his garden (Pioneer). He has a greenhouse.

Resolution: Sent a return email showing Placerville 1870' last frost 5/18 – First frost 10/22. Recommended he start seeds in the greenhouse next month. If he plants seed in the ground he should wait until at least May 1st. I recommended he use garden fabric to protect from a late frost and birds.

Problem: Would like information on starting tomatoes from seed.

Resolution: I recommended that she start them 6-8 weeks before she wants to put them in the garden. Since she doesn't want to put them in the garden till the end of May. ... (coming) to the Seed Starting class 03/24.

CONTACT SHEETS – PROBLEMS AND RESOLUTIONS

By: Lucy Martin

March 24 – April 20, 2007



Problem: Has worms on her oaks (oak worms) – wants to know what to spray.

Resolution: Call – had to leave message ... most people do not spray oaks, best if the worms are problems on other plants she can spray with Bacillus Thuringiensis – BT in nurseries. It is biologically safe.

Problem: What is best time to spray for poison oak?

Resolution: Called – spraying is most effective when plant is actively growing. This period is normally from April into June. The flowering stage is optimum time. Do not apply before plants begin growth or after they turn yellow or red in late summer or fall. Sent them pest Note Pub. #7431.

Problem: Concerned about humus and mulch she's putting around her trees and shrubs.

Resolution: Reassured her - suggested she not put mulch up close to tree trunks. Also advised her that she could find an MG office in SAC to avoid long distance calls.

Problem: Advice on blueberries ... just bought three different varieties.

Resolution: Advised: 1. Plant in well drained, acid soil (add peat moss to soil). 2. Plant in full sun. 3. Fertilize with acidic fertilizer. 4. Use 3" of mulch – pine needles work well. 5. Ideally plant in raised bed for good drainage and acid soil. 6. Water regularly. They like moist soil. 7. Cover with bird netting when berries appear.

Problem: Pine trees – 3 totally brown, several other trees affected. ... No new construction or change in ground level. Symptoms also on trees across creek.

Resolution: Client has a variety of conifers and a poplar on a rural lot. All have water stress. ... Client was unaware she had to water. She was informed that trees need considerable water. Bark beetles? Engraver beetles attack trees at top. Red turpentine beetles attack near ground, large, pinkish brown to white pitch tubes – a mix of pine sap and boring dust on lower trunk.

Problem: ID variety tree 8' deciduous – no thorns, (sample), smells like pineapple, 1" white flowers.

Resolution: Fruiting Quince – variety unknown. Fruit may be eaten raw or cooked into a sauce or jelly.

Problem: 1. Camellias- buds are brown and not opening. Also leaves are pale green – not dark as in the past. 2. Amaryllis – she received one in pot as a gift. Is it like other bulb plants in that it will lose its leaves?

Resolution: 1. Camellias – Exposure to direct sun and wind could cause browning of flower buds. Also could be petal blight and if so – should pick up all fallen flowers & petals, pick off all infected flowers & dispose in covered trash bin. Should also remove any mulch & dispose of it, then replace with fresh material. Deep mulch (4-5") keeps fungus spores from reaching the air. Should fertilize with acid plant food. 2. Amaryllis are attractive most of the year – remove as they wither. Spent blooms & stalks should be removed. Sent copies of info from Western Garden Book & The Gardeners Home.

Problem: She found 10 eggs the size of a quarter partially buried in the ground in her front yard when she cut the grass. It is a fenced area with dogs, foot & lawn mower traffic. She is curious about what bird or reptile may have laid them. She does not want to disturb them further – rather wait and see.

Resolution: Referred her to The Audubon Society. Called Dennis Miller. He said probably quail eggs

although early for those – although at her elev. it's possible.

Problem: Has 3 (1yr) pine trees that have been in the ground about 3 months. They are 8" - 10" tall. Wanted to know about giving them a 16-4-8 fertilizer. Trees are planted in native soil.

Resolution: ... most important thing is to make sure the trees get the proper amount of water. Recommended mulching trees to retain water. Watering deeply once a week or every 5 days if needed sooner. ... check soil first before watering. ... probably o-k to fertilize the trees but recommended fertilizing at ½ strength.

Problem: Redwood tree – 2 together (20 yrs) one is dying – may require home visit. Bamboo – 20'x20' - wants to kill out. What suggested?

Resolution: Home Visit – 2 Sequoiadendron giganteum within 8' of each other – 1-extensive die back. Species not suitable to Amador Co. - climate too hot. No evidence of bore or beetles. Recommend: Watch – if die back continues – remove ... second tree appears sound. Bamboo eradication: ... have done extensive digging – new growth minimal. Recommend: Continued digging and glyphosate application. Provided copy pg. 217, Sunset Western Garden Book.

Problem: Roses have blight on petals. Also some form of curl on leaves. Rosemary in a pot is dying back. It had been inside house.

Resolution: Found aphid & thrip on sample brought in. Sent Publications 7429 & 7404. Suggested planting rosemary outside and cutting back on water.

JUST THE FACTS

Landscapes Add Value

As the overheated housing market begins to cool down, good landscaping that increases the visual appeal of the property has become even more important, and according to a two-page report in THE NEW YORK TIMES, current studies show that good plantings can add as much as 15% to the sale value of a home: trees that reduce energy bills are big point, flowers (but not too many) are essential for a colorful but neat look, and a nice hedge (in the city I assume) can add 3.6% to the price.

Getting to Know You.....

By: Lucy Martin

It is so good to have a new member that seems to have been with us forever. **Lou Ohls** can best be described as, a heck of a nice guy --- fun-loving and caring. When he smiles, his entire face lights up and those clear blue eyes really sparkle. His demeanor is casual and that of familiar friend. He loves the outdoors and manages to have a tanned glow even through winter. He and his wife, Olivia, known as Oly live in lone. They have three daughters, all married; Miriam who has two children lives in Modesto, Sybil and Michelle both live in lone and each also has two children. The grandchildren are great fun to have around. At home they have Tubbs, "the oldest cat in the entire world," and when one or the other feels like complaining or screaming and there is no one else around to listen, Tubbs is there, patient and wise!

Lou grew up in Pacifica and San Francisco; he went to high-school there and graduated from San Francisco State with a BA in Psychology. He refers to himself as, "a humble country boy in the shadows of a big city." While attending college he worked for Standard Oil Co. in San Francisco. He did it all – gas station attendant, inside sales, at the marine station; he was part of a management program. But what he set out to do - his avocation – was to work with juveniles.

He and Oly had traveled along highway 88 enroute to Lake Tahoe and he recalls wondering, when driving through lone, "... why would anyone come here"? He did not know then that this area would become his home. In 1969 he got a reply to his resume' for a job with the Youth Authority at Preston School. As a youth counselor and later a parole agent, he supervised daily activities of the residents, counseled, trained and was involved with therapy and rehabilitation of troubled youths. His job was a mix of a youthful dream realized and fulfillment mixed with the gamut of emotions that come from a job filled with hopes and desires, accomplishments and failed expectations. His experiences remain a part of him; not in a haunting way but as something personal and very private.

He still loves lone and is totally content. He had the perfect job in the perfect place to raise his daughters in a rural area. He retired from Preston in 1996. Lou's interest in gardening evolved simply

from wanting to improve his property. His first experiences were with organic gardening. When the Internet became a part of his life he discovered Mediterranean gardening and native plants – and was inspired to transform his property with the carefree, drought-tolerant plants. He learned about the MG program through the Internet and became a Master Gardener in 2006. He got an immediate initiation by being assigned as coordinator of the Food Bank garden. He takes a lot of pride in working with the garden and he puts in a lot of hours hoping to produce lots of veggies. At home he has a year-round veggie garden and fruit trees. He particularly enjoys growing potatoes because he uses them to renew the soil for the vegetables that follow. He gives way to Oly, who is responsible for the flowers and shrubs. His favorite plant is the California Buckeye. He loves the form and the beautiful white flowers and he says, "It's a very considerate plant, after being lush and tropical in spring, it drops its leaves in the dry season and remains looking stately without being a fire hazard".

He is active as a board member of the CA Correction Peace Officers Retirees Chapter and the Amador/El Dorado Chapter of the Retired Public Employees Association. He enjoys fishing from land as a quiet and solitary sport. He watches cooking shows; his favorite is Mario Batali. He loves to cook using recipes that incorporate things from the garden. He has created a dish he calls Okie Gnocchi – made from bisquick with chard, spinach and onions - baked and topped with a porcini mushroom gravy – sounds delicious! Words that he would like to share with fellow MGs, "I try to do a little more than just my side of responsibilities and relationships, times and situations come where I get paid back."

Making a Stumpery

A rockery is made with rocks, a stumpery with....stumps! Actually, logs laid on the soil are the main basis of a stumpery, though these may be intermingled with stumps as would occur in an old forest.

A good planting medium for this woodland site can be created by putting a 6-12" layer of wood chips and letting them rot. In this medium grow ferns, brunnera, primula, astilbe, hosta, heuchera, cimicifuga and tiarella cultivars and other woodland plants.

Condensed from the Avant Gardener

