

University of California  
Cooperative Extension

# Master Gardener News

## Amador County

JANUARY 2005



### Your Co-Pres' Speak

Hi MG's,

Ah Ha! It is almost January. So does anyone know what happened to 2004? Time does fly faster and faster as we get older.



Yum Yum is all I can say about the December Pot Luck. Everything was perfect – food, favorites and suggestions for 2005. I am looking forward to the planning meeting on January 6 to see what next year will hold for us. This is always one of the best meetings of the year. Rest up from New Year celebrations and join us.

I also must bid you farewell as Co-President. Jack and Dennis will take over in January. I have enjoyed serving you in this role but now move on to be in charge of Education. Be prepared to help me expand this wonderful program!

Many Cheers – Co-Pres, Marie

I hope that each and every of you had a special Holiday Season and that you enjoy a great 2005. To end 2004, I want to thank each of the officers, chairpersons and coordinators for their hard work and the MGs for their great support and help. 2004 was a good year for our program and I am sure that 2005 will be even better. Please attend our planning meeting on January 6 and let us know how we can improve our internal and out reach efforts. In early December, I had

the pleasure of interviewing our new MG applicants along with Marie Loretta, Janice Johnson, and Chris Taylor. We had 26 applicants and only had space for 22 in the upcoming class so several had to be delayed until a future class. These applicants are really outstanding and will be great MGs. My New Years wish to you -- "May all your weeds be wild flowers" – author unknown. See you in January.

Co-Pres., Jack

### JANUARY CALENDAR

January 6 – **MG Planning Meeting**, 1:00 PM at the Ag Office.

January 7 - 9 – **Calif. State Home & Garden Show**, Sacramento Convention Center. Details inside.

January 8 – **Sacramento MGs Workshops**, 9:00 AM, Fair Oaks Park.

January 18 – **MG Monthly Meeting**, 1:30 PM at the Ag Office, Volunteer Recognition program. Board meeting at 12:30 PM.

January 21 – **Tour of Front Yard Nursery**, Placerville, 10:00 AM. Details inside.

January 28-30 – **No. Calif. Home & Landscape Expo**, Cal Expo.

# Secretary's Notes

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**DECEMBER 14, 2004**

Marie Loretta began the December meeting at approximately 12:10 PM. She invited Scott Oneto and his assistant, Sarah, to be the first in line to begin the annual holiday potluck luncheon. The potluck selection ran the gamut from Moussaka to Tiramisu and everything in between.

After everyone had socialized and had their share of the diverse delicacies, Marie convened a brief business meeting.

Bob Allen discussed a field trip to Granite Gardens in late April or early May as well as a possible trip to Duarte for those who missed the tour this year.

Marie handed out lined file cards and asked for suggestions for the Master Gardener program for the coming year. The planning meeting is scheduled for **January 6 at 1:00 PM** and all are invited to attend and offer input for programs and activities.

Joe Matthews needs new scripts for the Master Gardener Minutes that he records for the local radio station. You can email 150 word scripts directly to Joe. The scripts are done in a question and answer format and Joe can help you if you have any questions regarding the process.

The database that is compiled from the Contact Sheets was discussed. Since many members are unsure how to utilize the database there will be an informational training scheduled for the 2005 year.

Jack Lyall suggested that we begin the "Show and Tell" segment of the meeting.

Donna England brought a Fiskars Pruning Stick. It is one of her most used garden tools. It's lightweight, easy to use and is useful in pruning trees, shrubs and reaching out-of-the way places.

Steve Collins talked about "How Not To Grow A Nectarine Tree". Steve brought along a stunted nectarine tree that he'd dug up from his garden as an example of what has happened with his fruit trees. He lives on Middle Bar Road in Jackson where the growing conditions are less than ideal. A suggestion was made that planting the trees in raised beds might improve his success rate.

Dennis Miller enthusiastically discussed some drip irrigation tubes that he had purchased from Dripworks USA that have emitters that are already installed in the tubing. They are available in 1/2" and 1/4" sizes and are self cleaning. His #2 favorite tool is the Craftsman Accu-Cut tool. It is an excellent tool for whip grafting and can also be utilized as a wire and rope cutter. Dennis had a #3 tool that he wanted to share that he uses for bud grafting. He purchased the tool used for manual grafting tool from the Charlie's Greenhouse catalog.

Crystal Rosson has an old favorite tool called a Trake. It's a hand tool that is lightweight, resilient and seeming impervious to long-term use. It is a combination of a trowel on one end and a small rake on the other with a long neck in between.

Hack Severson discussed his phenomenal fruit tree crops during the past year but said that he had poor vegetable crops. He attributed his fruit tree success to the early warm weather.

Jack Lyall brought along a Victorinox deadheading tool that he picked up at the San Francisco Garden Show. Jack is an urban gardener and grows many of his plants in containers. This handy little tool cuts off the spent flower and then holds it gently between the blades of the tool until the blades are released.

Marie Loretta talked about her all time favorite book "Landscape Plants for Western Regions" by Bob Perry. It has proven to be an excellent reference book with lists of plants and photos. The book is geared towards plants that can be successfully grown in our area and stresses water conservation.

Jim Switzer discussed the six feet tall Giant Asters that he purchased from Janice Johnson's stock at one of the Expos. Jim was amazed that the plants grew and filled out so quickly and made quite a display in their very first year in his garden.

Jackie brought along her holster for pruners that can either be worn on a belt or hooked on a waistband. Her #2 tool was called Grandpa's Weeder that grabs weeds in the ground and pulls them out.

Kathy Neptune said that her favorite gardening magazine is "Horticulture".

Rita Martin's preferred garden tool is a spray bottle filled with Vinegar that she uses for organic weed control. She also loves the "Landscape Plants for Western Regions" by Bob Perry.

Janice Johnson recommends the Internet site: Garden Web, <http://gardenweb.com/>. She also likes to check Dave's Garden, which is a directory of garden companies and contains reviews from gardeners who have used the companies. Janice has a flock of Bantam Chickens that she highly recommends. Although she loses an occasional chicken to the hawks, the little chickens are allowed to run freely in Janice's garden and keep busy pulling out the seedlings of unwanted plants. If you are interested in having some of these charming little chickens, Janice thinks she will have more to share next year.

Leen Breesch is using worm castings on both her inside and outside plants and finds that this amendment makes a very positive difference.

Diane and James Ferrell followed the Dave Wilson method of pruning fruit trees and had very small yields this year. They're hoping that next year will be better. They have an old olive tree on their property and have harvested and learned to cure the olives. They sent around a jar of their large garlic cured olives for everyone to sample and the olives were deemed delicious.

Jackie Dahlberg endorsed "Horticulture" magazine and recommended it as an inspired gift for gardeners. She cited the Plant Index and Pronunciation Guide as two excellent reasons for reading the magazine.

Bob Allen spoke about the Eco Gardens facility in Pioneer. He's still trying to coordinate a field trip to the greenhouses. The operators of the greenhouses have suffered some unfortunate setbacks in getting their organic produce business off the ground. Bob will keep in touch with them and will try to schedule a visit to this unique local enterprise.

Jack Lyall ended the meeting at 2:10 PM.

### **RECIPE FROM OUR POTLUCK**

#### **Bar-b-que Sauce**

This can be used for cocktail franks or meatballs.

1 C ketchup  
1 C packed brown sugar  
1 6 oz. tomato paste  
¼ C reduced salt soy sauce  
¼ C cider vinegar  
½ t hot pepper sauce (didn't use)

Combine ingredients. Pour over meatballs or franks. Heat 4 hours on low in crock-pot.

Enjoy – Marie Loretta

# Announcements

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## FIELD TRIPS

A field trip on: PROPAGATION has been arranged for January 21 at THE FRONT YARD NURSERY located at 5801 Mother Lode Dr., Placerville (ph. 530 - 626-3494). The tour will be at either 10:00 or 11:00 am. Watch for an email message to advise. The tour will take about 45 minutes.

Other field trip dates to put on your calendar are Granite Garden Rare Plants in Sonora on Thursday April 14 and Duarte Nursery Open House on Friday, May 6.

Bob Allen

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## TREES AND SHRUBS TO THE RESCUE

Newer research has suggested that planting shrubs and trees can reduce the water run off. With ground saturation from continuing rains, the non-percolating water threatens lower lying dwellings. Certainly millions of dollars are spent in reclaiming homes and property. A possible solution is to plant those trees, (incidentally the London Plane tree has the best water absorbing capabilities). The 49ers left us history, but they sure felled a lot of trees.

## WATCH YOUR ROSES

There is a storm blowing in from Asia. It has arrived in Arkansas. No it is not another made in China problem. It is an Asian Rust, which attacks soya bean, blackeyed peas and maybe a redeeming feature Kudzu a southern scourge that came from Japan. This rust has virtually wiped out soya bean in Brazil and is threatening the \$400m crop in Arkansas. If it is caught early it can be controlled. The cost is so high that is a zero sum problem for the farmer.

America produces 40% of the world's supply and a multibillion-dollar business. So far the government is showing no interest despite request from Arkansas.

So if your roses go bye bye you know why.  
Charlie Thorp

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## HOME AND GARDEN SHOW

January 7, 8 & 9, at Sacramento Convention Center, 13<sup>th</sup> & J Streets, Sacramento. Friday noon to 8:00 PM, Saturday 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM and Sunday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

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## RECIPE FROM OUR POTLUCK PICADILLO

2# ground round  
1-1/2 cups chopped green pepper  
1 cup chopped onion  
1 cup sliced green onions  
4 garlic cloves, minced  
1 (14-1/2 oz.) can diced tomatoes, undrained  
1 (8 oz.) can tomato sauce  
1/3 cup chopped pitted dates  
1/3 cup chopped dried apricots  
1/4 cup sliced pimiento-stuffed olives  
1 Tbls. ground cumin  
1 Tsp. ground cinnamon  
1/2 Tsp. salt  
1/2 Tsp. dried oregano  
1/4 Tsp. ground red pepper  
1/4 Tsp. black pepper  
1/4 cup slivered almonds, toasted  
4-1/2 cups hot cooked rice

Cook meat, bell pepper, onion, green onions, and garlic in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until meat is browned, stirring to crumble meat. Drain well.

Place meat mixture in a 4-quart electric slow cooker. Add diced tomatoes and next 10 ingredients (through black pepper); stir well. Cover with lid; cook on high-heat setting 3 hours. Stir in almonds. Serve over rice. Yield: 9 servings

In Mexico picadillo is served with flour tortillas; Cubans enjoy it over rice.  
Jack Lyall

# JANUARY YARD CALENDAR

## **PLANTING:**

Bulbs - It is not too late to plant spring flowering bulbs, although supplies may be low at the nurseries. Purchase new flowering bulbs for the summer while the selection is still good. Remember not to till wet soil.

Bare-root plants – Roses, vines, shrubs & shade trees are all available now for planting. Have your planting holes prepared before you buy so you can go home and plant immediately. If this is impossible, make plans to heel-in the bare-root plants to protect the roots.

Shop for azaleas and camellias that are still in bloom.

Now is the time to curl up and read seed catalogs and make plans for summer flowers.

## **PRUNING:**

Attend a pruning demo.

Prune dormant, deciduous plants (flowering shrubs, vines and shade trees) DO NOT prune spring flowering plants such as lilacs or Japanese snowball.

Roses can be pruned now in the western end of the county around Lone, or on warm ridges such as Ridge Road. In cold low-lying ravines such as Fiddletown and Volcano, wait until March. Use dormant oil after pruning.

Cut back hydrangea stems that bloomed too 12". Also reduce the number of stems if you want larger flowers next spring.

## **SPRAY AND GARDEN CONTROL:**

Trees/shrubs including roses: Apply dormant oil spray to kill over-wintering insects and control fungus.

Bait for gophers now when it is easier to locate their runways and before they have their babies. Prune perennials and clean up fallen leaves.

## **GARDEN MAINTENANCE:**

Clean up fallen leaves.

Be on the lookout for frost and protect tender plants.

If rains have been light, water plants. Newly planted items and native plants need moisture now.

### Additional notes:

Order summer-blooming bulbs.

Bare-root plants COST LESS AND ADAPT MORE QUICKLY than those you buy in containers.

DO NOT DIG WET SOIL: Soil texture should be crumbly not sticky before you dig.

Sharpen and oil garden tools – pruners, loppers, hoes and mower blades.

Sand handles and apply linseed oil.

Prune first then spray. Use a sticker-spreader and wait until there are 36 rainless hours available.

When pruning, use hand shears for small branches. Use a pruning saw for 1" or thicker and loppers for mid-size branches.

Fertilize amaryllis, azaleas, and cymbidiums after bloom. Move to a protected area outside and do not let plants dry out.

Consider a cold frame to get an early start with vegetable & flowers seeds.

Spread cow, chicken or horse manure so the rain will wash nutrients into the soil.

## JANUARY VEGETABLE/ORCHARD CALENDAR

### **PLANTING:**

Bare-root plants – Berries, artichokes, asparagus, grapes, strawberries and fruit trees are all available now for planting. Have your planting holes prepared before you buy so you can go home and plant immediately. If this is impossible, make plans to heel-in the bare-root plants to protect the roots.

Put in onion sets and seed potatoes. Wait until Feb to plant other cool-season vegetables.

Sow cool season veggies in doors to set out by the end of February. You can direct seed for beets, carrots, peas, radishes, shallots and onions.

Now is the time to curl up and read seed catalogs and make your plan for the summer garden. Order disease resistant varieties whenever possible.

### **PRUNING:**

Prune dormant, deciduous plants including established fruit and nut trees. DO NOT cut off the spurs of the fruit trees as they sometimes bear fruit. If walnut trees are only 1 or 2 years old, it's best to wait to avoid winter kill of tender wood. Wait to prune evergreens such as citrus and olive trees. Established grape vines can be pruned now. However, if late spring frost occurs in your area, wait until growth begins.

**After pruning, clean up dead leaves.**

### **SPRAY AND GARDEN CONTROL:**

Peach leaf curl: Apply a dormant spray (lime sulfur/powdered copper) if you did not do so earlier. Be sure to add a sticker.

Spray all fruit and nut trees for scale insects, aphids, mite eggs, peach twig borers,

Remember apple scab fungus lives over the winter on dead leaves and fruit "mummies" of almonds, peaches and apples. To prevent reinfection, bury them in compost at least 12 inches deep or deposit in trash or dig a hole and bury them in the ground.

### **GARDEN MAINTENANCE:**

Feed citrus 6 to 8 weeks before they bloom. The amount of N depends on the age of the tree. For a 2 year old, ¼ pound of N, 3 year olds need ½ pound, use ¾ pound for 4 year old and one full pound for age 5. You can apply half of this amount now and the other half in February.

## 2005 Amador Master Gardener Office

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**Secretary:** Donna England 295-1509

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**Phone Clinics:** Peggy Sullivan 295-5255

**Speakers:** Jackie Tarchala 223-1976  
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**Newsletter:** Rita Martin 245-3119  
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### Dorothy Smith UCCE Amador County Director

The Amador County Master Gardener News is produced by the Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics – U.S. Department of Agriculture, University of California, and Amador County Cooperating

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# Master Gardener Calendar

## January 2005



<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
					1
	<b>4</b> <i>D&amp;C Rosson</i>  <i>Rose Society</i>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> <i>Chris Taylor</i> <i>Marie Loretta</i>  <i>Native Plant</i>	<b>7</b> <i>D&amp;C Rosson</i>	
	<b>11</b> <i>J. Dahlberg</i>  <i>El Toyon GC</i>	<b>12</b> <i>Hack Severson</i>	<b>13</b> <i>Steve Collins</i> <i>MG training 8:30 - 12:30</i>	<b>14</b> <i>Jackie Tarchala</i>	
	<b>18</b> <i>K Neptune</i> <i>Jack Lyall</i>  <i>MG Meeting</i>	<b>19</b> <i>Leen Breesch</i> <i>Jim Wilson</i>	<b>20</b> <i>J&amp;S Harrington</i> <i>MG training 8:30 - 12:30</i>	<b>21</b> <i>Jud Whitmore</i>	
	<b>25</b> <i>J+D Ferrell</i>  <i>Sierra Madre GC</i>	<b>26</b> <i>Lucy Martin</i>	<b>27</b> <i>MG training 8:30 - 12:30</i>	<b>28</b>  <b>Phone Clinic Hours are                      Tuesday thru Friday                      10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.</b>	