



# GARDENING ON THE EDGE

NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTEREY BAY MASTER GARDENERS  
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## Paulownia tomentosa

— Bonnie Pond, MG '00

A native of China, *Paulownia tomentosa*, also known as the Princess Tree or Empress Tree, is one of the world's fastest growing trees. It is a member of the Dragon Tree Family in China. Chinese tradition held that a *Paulownia* was planted at the birth of a daughter. When she was later married, the tree was harvested and its wood used to create something for her family. Planted as an ornamental shade tree, its timber has been used for hundreds of years for furniture, toys, buildings, musical instruments and packaging.

*Paulownia* has rough bark. Its light green heart-shaped deciduous leaves are very large – sometimes 12 inches long and 7 inches wide. Formed in fall, its brown olive-shaped buds flower in spring. Blossoms, lilac blue with yellow inside, arrive before leaf out in the spring. The fragrant blossoms are held upright in clusters 6 to 12 inches long and last several weeks. Seed capsules shaped like tops remain after the flowers drop. Bees love *Paulownia* blossoms so honey is an added plus for this versatile tree.



According to some of my sources, this tree likes regular water and well-drained soil, and doesn't do well in the wind. Other contradictory information states that it grows in all types of soil, including toxic soils, and is drought tolerant. Some varieties are deep rooted while others have surface roots. Both of my trees have surface roots and one of them produces root sprouts. I have transplanted several of these but I don't recommend them for flowerbeds because of their dense shade and shallow roots. Also, constantly falling leaves cover up other plants; but since they are high in nitrogen, they are good mulch and may be used as food for animals.

The *Paulownia* was brought to the U.S. and North America, like many other plants, as a stowaway. The seeds were inside packaging of *Paulownia* wood and soon upon arrival became a forest. This tree is a prodigious seeder and the fastest

growing tree in the world. Combined with its ability to grow anywhere, under all conditions, it became known as an invasive exotic. Now, however, cultivars that aren't invasive can be purchased.

As a source of wood this tree is quite remarkable. Its timber is yellow, the color of ash, and straight-grained but light, dense, and resistant to rot and insects. It does not crack, warp, or split and is also fire-resistant and a good insulator in heat or cold. Many new products are being made with this versatile wood particularly in the construction of boats and RV's.

*Paulownias* grow well under adverse conditions including air pollution caused by smoke and dust, and are therefore valuable for cleaning the air; they also prevent soil erosion. As an addition to your garden, consider the *Paulownia* tree for its many wonderful possibilities -- all on the positive side. (Photo by permission -- "Davis Wiki"/"DavisWiki.org.)

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# Hotline - What's It All About? — Paul McCollum, MG '04

What a great program we are involved in! We have learned in our training classes that the need for “Research Based Horticultural Information” for dissemination to the general public originated in Washington State in the mid 1970’s because the office of the farm advisor was being overloaded with inquiries from local gardeners. This need generated into a trained group of local knowledgeable gardeners being trained and then volunteering time on a “Hotline.” This allowed the farm advisor (like our very own Steve) to devote his or her time to other pressing research projects. From that beginning the program was then introduced in Oregon in 1975 and then in California, starting in 1980 as a pilot project in two California counties – Riverside and Sacramento. In 1995 the University of California graduated its first Master Gardeners of Monterey and Santa Cruz counties.

The mission of the Master Gardener Program is education – in fact, the “prime directive” is written: “The mission of the Master Gardener Program is to provide current, research-based, home horticulture information and education to the citizens...”. Without question our program has evolved and now includes: an annual garden tour, garden projects in almost every local city, school grants, and this year we have added the Garden Faire to our long list of worthwhile endeavors. In October of this year we will begin making our presence known at a number of our community farmers markets on a monthly basis. With all this being said, let us direct our attention back to our roots – the “Hotline” to answer gardening and horticultural questions with University of California research answers.


All of us who have completed the training course have spent at least three mornings with a certified Master Gardener manning the hotline and being trained to understand how to answer questions – ranging from A to Z – using our know-

ledge from the classroom lessons, the impressive library in the MG office, the internet, and the thousands of printouts located in the file cabinets in the main office. No matter what the garden-related question, we have at our disposal the tools to give an educated answer.

The hotline is a fun and rewarding activity. The volunteer never knows what kind of question the person calling in might ask; but one thing can be assured – we do our best to find the answer. I think the hotline is the most important job we do as far as fulfilling our mission statement is concerned. I have spent many hours trying to help answer questions over the phone, taking in samples that people bring in, and helping those who come into the office to ask a question. There is always something to do during the hours you are on duty. Returning calls that have been left on the answering machine, researching the pending file, mailing out printed answers to those questions, and even, at times, finding the opportunity to research the answers to gardening questions or problems you yourself might have.

This year it has been my privilege to help train a number of members of the 2006 class. Everyone was eager to learn and enthusiastic in their approach. I feel confident that they will all do well and grow in knowledge in the process. Below you will see two trainees at work researching a question and finding the answer (notice the happy faces after finding the answer).

I would encourage more Master Gardeners to volunteer for the hotline. It is time well spent and it helps educate the public as well as helping to relieve our hard working office staff.

My thanks to Robin Sanders for researching and supplying the Mission Statement. 



*Erin Kincheloe and Carol Lacey  
doing their research.*



*They found the answer!*



*Judy, Steve, and Robin  
-- always ready to help!*

# Smart Gardening Faire Report

Sheryl McEwan, MG '03 and Tom Karwin, MG '99

In September of 2005, the Garden Faire Planning Committee proposed to conduct the first Smart Gardening Faire under the auspices of the Monterey Bay Master Gardeners. The Committee included co-chairs Sheryl McEwan ('03) and Thomas Karwin ('99) along with Darby Kremers ('97), Martye Lumpkin ('01), Betsy Shea ('04), Gina Strup ('04) and Steve Tjosvold (UCCE).

The goals and objectives of the proposed Faire were as follows:

*The overall goal of the Faire is to pursue the mission of the Monterey Bay Master Gardeners "to extend research-based horticultural informational and create and promote educational and recreational gardening activities in Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz counties."*

*The specific objectives are to provide access to basic, up-to-date information about horticulture, and increase public awareness of local, gardening-oriented non-profit organizations and businesses that offer information and other resources needed to advance gardening practices.*

The Board of Directors allocated \$5,000 in support of the Faire and authorized the co-chairs, McEwan and Karwin, to take specified actions to present the Faire, with the condition that the Monterey Bay Master Gardener's financial support be based on securing matching funds from other sources.

The Faire Planning Committee subsequently adopted a work plan, as outlined below:

- 1) Fall Quarter 2005: Initial Planning & Organization
- 2) Winter Quarter 2006: Recruit speakers and exhibitors
- 3) Spring Quarter 2006: Conduct Publicity Campaign; arrange for Food Services; Book Acoustic Musicians, etc.
- 4) June 24, 2006; Conduct the Smart Gardening Faire
- 5) September 1, 2006; Report project to Sponsors.

The Faire Planning Committee soon grew to include Paul McCollum ('04), Cynthia Jordan ('94), Simon Stapleton ('06), and Bonnie Pond ('00). By the day of the event, the following Master Gardeners volunteered in various roles to help put on the Faire. All the volunteers made essential contributions to the ultimate success of the Faire:

Paula Anthony ('06)	Mary Nosse ('04)
Dan Bowman ('06)	Robin Sanders ('95)
Chris Carrier ('06)	Amy Savage ('06)
Natalie Chambliss ('00)	Randa Solick ('06)
Sharon Ettinger ('00)	Tammy Tahara ('06)
Robin Hazard ('98)	Judi Taylor ('98)
Melita Israel ('95)	Debra Van Bruggen ('06)
Roberta Jackson ('06)	Richard Wallstrom (06)
John Kiegelis ('06)	Rina Weingold (06)
Alicia Molina ('04)	

## Attendance

Estimates of attendance have ranged from 1,000 to 1,500 persons. Because admission was free of charge and the site was accessible from several directions, this range represents the best available data on attendance. Each hour, volunteers counted people who arrived through the primary entry to the Faire, and thus provided our most conservative estimate of attendance.

## Guided Tours of the Nature Walk

A representative of the California Chapter of the Ecological Landscaping Association, landscaper, Michael Kusiak, conducted three walking tours of the Nature Walk, which showcases the use of drought-tolerant native plants in the landscape. Each of these tours lasted 60 to 100 minutes and attracted an average of twenty persons, including strangers, "newbies," educated nursery folk and plant enthusiasts.

Plant labels funded by the San Lorenzo Valley Water District's Educational Grant Program enhanced the experience of the visitors. In his report, Michael Kusiak made the following observations, "Many [of the visitors] were wowed by the garden. I see its popularity growing as a retreat and a resource for the community. People were impressed with the display."



*Skypark's Nature Walk has been Sheryl McEwan's Master Gardener project since 2004*

## Speakers

The Faire presented ten very well qualified speakers on aspects of the "smart gardening" theme, with an emphasis on water conservation and landscaping with drought-tolerant native plants.

**Barrie Coate** – Consulting Horticulturalist, recognized as the premier tree and native plant specialist in California;  
Topic: Most Common Garden Problems

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**Christopher C. Elliott** – Owner of Aqua Green Landscape Irrigation Co. and Instructor in Cabrillo College's Horticulture Dept. Topic: Water Conservation in the Garden Landscape

**Monique Smith Lee** – The “Bat Lady” has been rehabilitating bats for five years, working with the California Bat Conservation Fund. Topic: Bats - Our Friends in The Garden

**Arlie Middlebrook** – Head of Middlebrook Gardens, who has designed over 100 native plant gardens in California, and author, with Glen Keator, of California Natives in Style (coming in 2007). Topic: Create a Beautiful Natural Garden... and Stop Global Warming.

**Elizabeth Murray** – Multi-talented artist and teacher, and author of Cultivating Sacred Space: Gardening for the Soul. Topic: Catching the Light: from Monet to Monterey Bay

**Cynthia Sandberg** – Owner of Love Apple Heirloom Tomato Farm, where she grows and sells over 100 different kinds of tomatoes. Topic: How to Grow Better Backyard Tomatoes

**Robin Sanders & Judi Taylor** – Lead members of MBMG's Plant Propagation Team. Topic: Plant Propagation

**Renee Shepherd, Ph.D.** – Owner of Renees' Garden, where she offers 240 varieties of specialty garden seeds, and author of three cookbooks. Topic: Easy Gardens for Busy People

**Michele Swanson** – Owner of CLTV8 Garden Design and recipient of several awards, including the People's Choice Award and a Gold Medal at the 2006 San Francisco Flower & Garden Show. Topic: Inside Your Outdoor Room - Designing Garden Rooms

**Thomas Wittman** – Founder of Gophers Limited, with over two decades of experience with non toxic pest control. Topic: Non-toxic Burrowing Rodent Control

Master Gardener Alicia Molina, the volunteer coordinator of speakers, praised the speakers: “They were professional, prepared, serious, playful, and completely enthusiastic!”

Audience response to the talks was also quite positive and attendance was good, as follows:

#### **Morning Speakers (9:30 – 12:30)**

Robin Sanders & Judi Taylor	20
Robin Sanders & Judi Taylor	30
Arlie Middlebrook	30
Barrie Coate	45

#### **Afternoon Speakers (12:30 – 4:30)**

Christopher Elliott	20
Thomas Wittmann	70
Monique Smith Lee	20
Cynthia Sandberg	20
Michele Swanson	20
Renee Shepherd	50
Elizabeth Murray	20

### **Expert Panel**

In addition to hearing the prepared presentations, visitors to the Faire had the opportunity to ask their gardening questions of a panel of three local landscaping professionals, representing the Central California Chapter of the Ecological Landscaping Association. The panelists included Roxanne Evans, owner of Ecocentric Design Company; Brett Graf, Owner of Habitat Gardens; and Ken Foster, owner of Terra Nova Ecological Landscaping. The audience of about twenty home gardeners kept the expert panelists busy with a series of questions on aspects of soil management, cultivation, irrigation, and control of pests and diseases.

### **Exhibitors**

A wide variety of garden-related businesses and non-profit organizations participated in the Faire:

Plant Societies and Groups	5
Activities for Children	4
Education + Marketplace	16
Marketplace	23
Entertainment	3
Delicious Healthful Food	4
Total	55

For a full list of the exhibitors, visit [www.smartgardening.org](http://www.smartgardening.org).

The event provided the first local opportunity for these groups to join in raising public awareness of the importance of sustainable gardening and landscaping practices in protecting environmental health. We are currently in the process of inviting exhibitors to provide feedback on their experiences at the Faire, with the intention of identifying “what worked” and “what should be changed.”

### **Publicity**

**Shea-Campbell & Associates, Inc.** orchestrated the Faire's publicity campaign, which included wide distribution of a poster and a rack card.

Additional components of the campaign were as follows:

**Metro Santa Cruz** – (2) quarter-page display advertisements, June 7 & 14, 2006

**Metro Santa Cruz** – Smart Gardening Faire Supplement, with Program (Appendix C)

**KSCO-AM** – Rosemary Chalmers Interview of Master Gardener Cynthia Jordan

**Santa Cruz Sentinel** – Feature Article, June 22, 2006  
Smart Gardening Faire Banner Display–Chamber of Commerce at Mount Herman Road, Scotts Valley (near the site of the Smart Gardening Faire)

Multiple Announcements in Newsletters of Local Garden Societies

In-person Presentations at Meetings of Local Garden Societies

### **Large-scale Mulch Grinding Demonstration**

One of the highlights of the Faire was the demonstration by Vision Recycling of grinding organic waste into mulch. For the dramatic event, the company brought equipment they valued at \$1,000,000: a truck transport that delivered raw organic waste and removed mulch; a loader; and a huge tub grinder.



Visitors learning about recycling organic waste into garden mulch



Vision Recycling's tub grinder in action

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Tom Del Conte, owner of Vision Recycling, described the large-scale mulch grinding process to a group of fascinated home gardeners. He focused on the role of recycling organic materials in the pursuit of environmental protection objectives. The demonstration lasted only about twenty minutes. In that short time, the grinder reduced approximately fifteen tons of organic waste to mulch.

**Sponsorships**

The Monterey Bay Master Gardeners contacted selected local government agencies and garden-related businesses to invite their support of the Smart Gardening Faire. In all cases, our emphasis was on sponsorships or partnerships in the pursuit of common goals. We defined three levels of sponsorship in terms of categories that are widely used: Bronze (\$100 – 499), Silver (\$500 -999) and Gold (\$1,000 and more.

**Gold Sponsors**

- City of Santa Cruz (in-kind)
- Metro Santa Cruz (in-kind)
- Monterey Bay Master Gardeners
- Scotts Valley Water District
- Shea-Campbell & Associates, Inc. (in-kind)
- Thomas Karwin & Associates (in-kind)
- Vision Recycling (in-kind)

**Silver Sponsors**

- San Lorenzo Valley Water District

**Bronze Sponsors**

- Corona Clipper
- Ecological Landscaping Association (in-kind)
- Elkhorn Native Plant Nursery
- Goldsmith Seeds
- Hines Horticulture
- Jerry Allison Landscaping
- Santa Cruz Garden Club
- Scotts Valley Fire Protection District (in-kind)
- Sierra Azul Nursery

We are very grateful to these agencies for providing timely financial or in-kind support for the Smart Gardening Faire. Their confidence in this first-time offering of the Faire enables it to grow into a resource for home gardeners, garden-related public and private organizations within the Monterey Bay region.

**By working together, everyone wins! ☞**

**Discount for Master Gardeners**



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# Growing a Website

Tom Karwin, MG '99 and Christina Kriedt, MG '06

TOM:

The board has appointed a committee to make recommendations for the website for the Monterey Bay Master Gardeners. The committee includes Betsy Shea, Carri Wagner, Christina Kriedt, Mark Breckenridge, Martye Lumpkin, and Tom Karwin. Gina Strup, who created the original website, assisted in moving the web address, [www.smartgardening.org](http://www.smartgardening.org), to a new web server that supports several useful features. Christina is the webmaster for the new MBMG website, and Mark continues as the webmaster for the existing website of the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE):

<http://montereybaymg.ucdavis.edu/>.

The basic idea here is to have separate websites for UCCE and MBMG in recognition of their separate roles and responsibilities. The committee is preparing recommendations in two basic areas:

- 1) page publishers and
- 2) content guidelines.

This article presents some preliminary thoughts in those two areas.

## Page Publishers

The MBMG website will consist of several sections or pages, e.g., the Masters Tour, the Smart Gardening Faire, the newsletter, Gardening on the Edge, and others. Each of these pages could have a page publisher, a Master Gardener who would ensure that the information his or her page is complete, accurate and up-to-date. The webmaster's role focuses on the appearance, organization and functioning of the website.

## Content Guidelines

Here are some guideline areas that the committee is considering:

- Information that should be posted on the UCCE website
- Information that should be posted on the MBMG website
- Information for the "Members Only" area of the MBMG website
- Advertising on the MBMG website
- Links to other websites

These topics probably do not cover all the important aspects of website guidelines. It will always be possible to add or delete information and functions to the MBMG website, but we should always have a plan! Contact any member of the website committee with your comments, questions and ideas.

[www.smartgardening.com](http://www.smartgardening.com) 

CHRISTINA:

Communication makes the world go 'round. And today the most powerful communication system in our entire shrinking world (you may quote me on this) is the Internet. No organization is complete without a web presence; and no other form of communication has as much potential to enrich and advance an organization as the WWW. It is a seriously potent tool.

Any organization appears more professional if it can direct the public to an elegant, uncomplicated, comprehensive website. "Having a website is not about keeping up with the status quo. It can be a powerful tool in the development of your organization.... A website can help your organization with volunteer recruitment and fundraising. It can be a major factor in creating community partnerships and resource networks." (National Mentoring Center. <http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/webdev.html>. May, 2002.) We can direct potential members, sponsors, contributors, and event participants to our site where they will find an accurate and thorough description of the Monterey Bay Master Gardeners, our projects, and our mission. Users will find the information they require about programs and events; applications; phone numbers and/or email addresses of contact people; and our address and driving directions. We will be able to recruit membership while we provide the public with information about smart gardening, individual plants, pest updates, weeds, and IPM strategies. And, perhaps most importantly, we will be reaching a wider audience to heighten public awareness about our mission and the significant gardening/environmental issues we all face.

We can disseminate information to our membership faster than a tabanid fly ("...a deer or horse fly...has been clocked at 90 miles per hour," says Rudy Scheibner, entomologist emeritus at the University of Kentucky in Lexington." USA TODAY. [http://www.usatoday.com/tech/columnist/aprilholladay/2005-02-11-wonderquest\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/tech/columnist/aprilholladay/2005-02-11-wonderquest_x.htm). 2006.); and the password protection ensures that our private information stays private. Cruzio says, "Keep in mind that anyone with a computer and Internet access can find your site and see what you put on it — unless you password-protect it. Cruzio has a password feature which works on all or part of a Web site hosted with us." We have several directories on their server (the big computer that holds our web pages and sends them to your computer); and the directory that contains our private information (all the information that is just for Master Gardeners' eyes), is secure and only accessible through the correct login and password. The information that is sent back and forth is encrypted. All of our protected information is as secure as possible with the most cutting edge technology.

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Just for our membership we can provide:

- forms and schedules
- phone/email lists
- calendars – hotline, classes, events
- photos of events
- plant of the week/month
- person of the week/month
- garden of the week/month
- links to other sites – UC, other master gardener sites, plant databases, garden info sites
- tips and tricks (“Over the Garden Fence”)
- class syllabi
- online polling to gather information from members

And so on. If you do an online search for ‘master gardeners’ you’ll find sites all over the country. Look at them and think about what you’d like to see on your master gardener site. Let us know by Yahoo email. It takes a while to grow a good site -- we’ll all reap the benefits. ☞



All the links will be ‘hot’ in the online version of the newsletter.  
[www.smartgardening.org](http://www.smartgardening.org)

## Favorite Gardening Websites E-Poll...

— by Natalie Chambliss, MG ‘00

The E-Poll asked what favorite internet resources you use for gardening either for plants, seeds, gardening tools, plant information, etc. Here are the responses – a good list to keep handy. Thanks to all who responded.

**Maryann McCormick** --Two favorites of mine are: California Backyard Orchard for fruit/nut tree info <http://homeorchard.ucdavis.edu/index.shtml> and National Gardening Association for lots of kid/ed projects and general info on home gardens <http://www.garden.org/home>. They also gave Anzar High garden an award, so I really like them!

**Christina Robertson** -- My latest favorite is <http://www.growitalian.com> where you can get a wide assortment of seeds from Italy. Another great site is <http://www.seedsavers.org> - tons of info, etc.

**Claudia Boulton** -- I use the following three websites as reference sites for native plants which I use in designing gardens for homeowners:  
[http://www.cnps.org/links/native\\_plant\\_nurseries.htm](http://www.cnps.org/links/native_plant_nurseries.htm); and  
<http://www.suncrestnurseries.com>. This one I love because Annie has such a wealth of interesting, charming and unusual plants (and not just annuals):  
<http://www.anniesannuals.com>.

**Leora Worthington** -- This site has photos and descriptions of thousands of plants:  
[www.hortipix.com/hortipix/](http://www.hortipix.com/hortipix/) This site has good general info regarding conservation practices in yards with further references to technical resources  
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/feature/backyard/>

**Robin Hazard** -- These are two sites that I just ran across by accident recently but looked kind of interesting, hope this helps: <http://www.oldhousegardens.com> -- bulbs, etc; and <http://www.californiagardens.com> for info on gardening in California.

**Mary Wilson** -- If you're interested in California native plants, you should bookmark the web site for Las Pilitas Nursery. It is a wonderful resource.

[http://www.laspilitas.com/plants/california\\_plants.html](http://www.laspilitas.com/plants/california_plants.html)

**Patty Nicely** --Peaceful Valley Farm Supply is a great provider of organic supplies and information, and they have a decent website: <http://www.groworganic.com>

**Al Derrick** -- I check in to these sites and compare notes with other gardeners:

<http://www.gardenweb.com>

<http://davesgarden.com>

<http://www.thegardenforums.org>

**Tom Karwin** -- There are many really good websites for gardeners. For openers, I like all of the sites by the national, genus-oriented societies, e.g., ARS, AIS, etc. If your interest/question is focused on a particular genus, you can usually find the answer or a link to the answer on the respective national society site. Then, I like Dave's Garden <http://davesgarden.com/>, which has a long list of excellent resources for gardeners. It's worth exploring! Another site is Cindi's Catalog of Garden Catalogs:

<http://www.gardenlist.com/>, which is a well organized, easily navigated listing of mail-order nurseries and garden centers. If you want to find a source for any given plant, you can almost certainly find it here. Dave's Garden (above) has a resource for this purpose, as well, so between the two you can find just about any plant on the market. Another favorite is CalFlora <http://www.calflora.org/> which you've called attention to in June, in an e-mail to the MBMG list. It's the "on-line gateway to information about native and introduced wild plants in California." and has several new features that are quite useful. ☞

## Al's Corner: Potting Soil -- What Is It? ————— Al Derrick, MG '95

My local landscape supply sells ten mixes of “potting soil” by the yard to the nursery trade. Obviously, there is a demand for so many “recipes” because not all plants are the same and each plant’s growth responds best to its favorite soil. For the home gardener the soil mix should be flexible enough to suit the majority of plants with the addition of additives to accommodate the unusual. Plants that I grow are expected to be planted out the same season.

The mix I buy in bulk is intended to support the plant for a few months until it can be sold in mostly one-gallon size pots. Each of the four nurseries that I have worked in as a volunteer has used this same formula soil. The feature that makes this mix work is that it cannot become saturated to the point of root damage. This winter, with 65 inches of rain on hundreds of pots, I had no root damage. Should neglect cause the pots to dry out, the mix does not shrink and pull away from the pot; and when water is added it will accept it readily.

The major components in this potting mix are ground bark (referred to as ‘forest products’) coarse sand, and volcanic rock (similar to perlite). When the landscape supply makes the mix it adds a fertilizer good for about three months, as this formula has very few plant nutrients. Because I buy a half-yard of mix at a time it may be several months before I use it all. To compensate, I always add one teaspoon of time release 14-14-14 when I pot up a one-gallon pot.

Besides the initial time-release fertilizer, I make regular liquid fertilizer applications. I use a growth formula and then a bloom booster as the plant approaches its bloom cycle. Plants not sold in the season in which they were potted become root bound and will need to be refreshed. As a plant approaches the rootbound condition, it will need ever more frequent watering to prevent wilting. This is the clue that the soil has been depleted and will need to be refreshed. Knock the plant out of the pot and cut off an inch or so of the solid roots at the bottom of the plant, as in the photo below.

Add enough new soil along with another teaspoon of fertilizer to bring the crown to about an inch below the pot rim.

Plants potted into large pots for the long-term can have problems with drainage not caused by the type of soil. For instance, *Clematis* send their roots to the bottom of the pot and will plug up the lone hole within a year or two. To repot a *Clematis* in bloom you will need to cut the plant to within a foot or so of the pot’s edge and risk losing any more bloom this season. However, It is quite easy to add drainage holes through the side of the pot at the bottom, as in the photo below, to provide additional drainage without disturbing the plant. If a pot does not have tapered sides, it will be almost impossible to remove a rootbound plant without breaking the pot or destroying the plant.



The decorated glazed pot pictured below contained a *Clivia* for several years. Even though *Clivia* blooms well in a crowded pot, the day will come when the roots will rot if not divided and repotted. In this case a decision was made to sacrifice the plant to save an expensive pot. Seedlings of this *Clivia* in one-gallon sizes are now in my nursery and the pot can be replanted, should I decide to do so. ☞





# Quarterly Meeting

— Tammy Tahara, MG '06 and Alicia Molina, MG '04

Tammy Tahara and Alicia Molina, our new co-coordinators for our quarterly meetings, prepared a jam-packed schedule for the 40 plus MGs that attended the meeting on Saturday, August 12. The day began in the conference room of the Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve with our business meeting chaired by none other than our illustrious Madam President, Martye Lumpkin.

The program continued as we took a short drive to Succulent Gardens Growing Grounds. Robin Stockwell, owner and operator of the grounds, greeted our large group and filled our heads with as many succulent growing tips we could take in. The group was itching to head to the greenhouses where row upon row of succulents and cacti were calling each MG's name.

We concluded our tour with a buying frenzy and our lower-than-wholesale prices! Thank you, Robin! Robin commented that he truly enjoyed his morning with us and asked us to spread the word that he is now open to the public. You may visit the Succulent Gardens Growing Grounds at the corner of Amaral and Elkhorn Road in Castroville. Call 831-632-0482 or visit their website at [www.sgplants.com](http://www.sgplants.com). Robin Stockwell also happened to be featured in the August Sunset Magazine.

Our meeting continued back at the Elkhorn Slough reserve with a very thought provoking and educational lecture given by Barb Peichel, Wetland Coordinator, who is presently spearheading a very large collaborative effort to restore and conserve our local tidal wetlands, second in size only to the San Francisco wetlands. Barb concluded our day with a trail tour of the reserve where we were able to observe many bird and plant species. You can find out more about the Elkhorn Slough reserve or their volunteer /restoration work schedule by visiting their website at [www.elkhornslough.org](http://www.elkhornslough.org).

Three lucky MGs also left the day's events each with a beautiful container of succulents which they won during our noon raffle. It was a full fun-filled day. Thank you for attending and we hope to see more of you at the next meeting. We already have plans in the making for another great meeting. ☞



Robin Stockwell educating the MBMGs



Members selecting from among the seemingly endless rows of succulents and cacti



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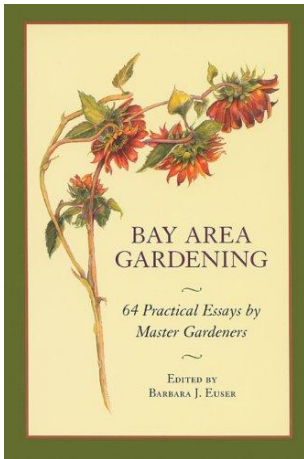
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# Book Review

Kari Olsen, MG '06



## Bay Area Gardening: 64 Practical Essays by Master Gardeners

Barbara J. Euser, Editor  
Solas House, 2005.

When it comes to garden know-how, the Marin County Master Gardeners wrote the book – literally. Beginning in 1999, Marin County MGs began writing a weekly gardening column for the *Marin Independent Journal* as part of their community educational

efforts. Recognizing the value of practical gardening advice specific to their region, local gardeners saved these columns for future reference resulting in “many little stacks [of clippings]” says Master Gardener and Editor Barbara Euser. “As a person who keeps many such little stacks, I know how difficult it is to find a particular article at the moment I need to refer to it. Publishing a book of Master Gardener articles seemed a good way to alleviate the problem of scattered stacks of clippings accumulating in the houses around the county, as well as to expand the availability of these articles to other gardeners in the Bay Area.” Published in 2005, Bay Area Gardening: 64 Practical Essays by Master Gardeners is the result of these efforts.

The book is written with many readers and gardeners in mind. The 64 topic-specific articles are organized into 13 loosely grouped chapters including: garden design, climate, soil, seasonal, specialized and habitat gardening, flowering plants and plants of special interest, propagation, weeds and invasives, insects, controlling pests, and interactions in the garden. Each article presents a simple but highly useful summary of information designed not just to be read but also to be put into practice. Because each essay originally stemmed from a newspaper column, the sections are short keeping complicated topics such as “soil” from becoming overwhelming to a beginning gardener. Even the newest gardener will find four pages entitled “HMO for Healthy Soil” or “Why Should I Mulch?” accessible and easy to understand.


Readers with more gardening experience will discover information that sparks their interest in trying something new or learning more about particular garden practice. For instance, a gardener interested in propagating plants from their own garden will benefit from reading over the topics covered in the propagation section before reaching for a more detailed reference. In my case, reading the section titled “The New Heucheras” inspired me to look again at a plant I had felt so-so about in the past. The result? Four new Heuchera varieties now live in my backyard.

As for lifetime gardeners whose accumulated knowledge could fill a book of your own – and you know who you are – everyone knows you can’t resist adding a new gardening book to your library. Besides, don’t you want to celebrate such an ambitious project created by fellow Bay Area Master Gardeners?

The last three chapters are particularly relevant to the UC Master Garden program goal of providing community education about best practices for weed and pest control. The extensive topic list emphasizes the importance of selecting methods that provide long-term prevention or suppression of pest and weed problems with a minimum impact on human health, the environment, and in the case of pest management, the significance of protecting beneficial garden insects.

Most of the essays address Bay Area-specific gardening topics including fire-safe landscaping, drought-tolerant plant selection, microclimates in the garden, Bay Area gardening seasons, habitat gardening, the proper care of native oaks, SOD, and what to plant under redwoods. The book concludes with an extensive list of Bay Area gardens to visit, complete with a detailed description, directions, tours, hours and fees. Website addresses are also included if available.

After perusing a number of sections that interested me I discovered what I liked best about this book: “Practical” is the key word, both in the book’s title and in application. The information contained in the articles is presented such that you can read it and then go out into the garden and do it...or at least start! Here’s my proof: I’d accumulated plenty of information on composting, but it was the “Creating Compost – Garden Magic” essay that motivated me to wire four pallets together and actually start the process.

The book also appealed to me in a completely different respect. In addition to being highly readable and accessible to any interested gardener, this volume demonstrates how a small educational endeavor such as a local newspaper column can expand into one that reaches far beyond original expectations by becoming available to much larger audience. Publishing a book is no small feat – Kudos to the Marin County Master Gardeners who contributed to this successful effort. 

### *Did you sign up?*

California Statewide  
Master Gardeners Conference  
Oct. 5-6, San Jose

<http://camastergardeners.ucdavis.edu/>

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*Congratulations to the many who were responsible for the fabulous success of the 9th Masters Garden Tour!*

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*Phyllis Hilton  
Stuart Walzer  
Betsy Shea  
Robin Hazard  
Maryanne McCormack*



*continued from back page--*

**County of Santa Cruz sponsors FREE Composting Workshops**

*Saturday, October 21, 1-3pm*

Cabrillo Environmental Hort Center, Rm # 5110, 6500 Soquel Dr., Aptos

*Saturday, October 28, 3-4pm*, Wilder Ranch State Park, 1401 Old Coast Rd., north of Santa Cruz on Hwy 1

Learn how to make organic fertilizer in your own backyard! In this 2 hour workshop Master Composters will teach you how to successfully compost food scraps and garden clippings. Learn what makes composting happen, what should/shouldn't be composted, different styles of making compost, and how to use your finished compost. View compost bins in action at the Live Oak Grange Compost Demonstration Site. Backyard compost bins

will be available at the workshop at a \$20 discount for qualifying Santa Cruz County residents who register in advance. Call the Rotline for details: 423-HEAP (4327). ☞

# Advanced Training, Volunteer Opportunities and Other Events

Kathleen Sonntag, MG '06

## UCSC Farm & Garden Market Cart

Tuesdays and Fridays thru October 12 noon - 6 pm

Fresh organic produce and flowers are available twice a week at the at the base of the UCSC campus (corner of Bay & High Streets).

## Harvest Festival at the Farm,

Saturday, October 7, 11 am - 5 pm, UCSC Farm

Save the date now! You don't want to miss our annual Farm celebration. Great music, food, apple tasting, an apple pie bake-off, garden talks, hay rides, kids' events, tours, displays by local farmers, chefs, and community groups, and an all-around good time are in the works. Free for Friends' members and kids 12 and under; \$5 for non-members. Call 831-459-3240 for more information or to volunteer for this great community event.

## Canning and Preserving Workshop

Saturday, October 21, 10 am - 1 pm

Feel Good Foods Kitchen, 306 Potrero Street

Friends' Board president Jeffrey Caspary shares techniques for easy ways to preserve the bounty of the garden. \$15 for Friends' members, \$20 for non-members, payable at the workshop. Pre-registration encouraged; please call 831-459-3240 or send email to [jonitann@ucsc.edu](mailto:jonitann@ucsc.edu).

## Holiday Event

Saturday, December 2, time and location to be announced

Get ready for the holidays as you enjoy a cup of tea and shop for wonderful gifts from the Friends' merchandise collection. Details to come later in the year.

## Bonfante Gardens Home, Garden and Culinary Show

Oct 6

Get a sneak peak at the Home, Garden & Gourmet Show the Friday before our event. The Park will be open for this special event from 3:00 - 9:00pm and will feature all of the show vendors, plus enjoy an evening of wine tasting, music, and walking through the gardens. (No rides will be in operation during this event). Tickets are just \$15.00 and available at the door.

Oct 7 & 8

Bonfante Gardens Family Theme Park is excited to welcome back California's Most Beautiful Home, Garden and Culinary Show. Come experience the area's best exhibits, most talented experts and special guests who can help with any decorating, remodeling, building or landscaping project. This wonderful show takes place throughout the park is free with park admission. For more information visit [www.svshows.com](http://www.svshows.com).

## Filoli Gardens -- Autumn Celebration

Saturday, October 7, 10:00 am-3:30 pm

Admission: \$15 members, \$20 nonmembers, \$5 for children 5-17, and free for children under 5. Lunch available from 11:30 am to 2:00 pm: \$15 for adults and \$8 for children. (Please reserve in advance) Make your reservation now for Filoli's annual Fall Festival. Sample some of Filoli's rare and non-commercially grown apples and pears, as well as other treats made from our heritage fruits. Enjoy lunch on the Tennis Court while listening to live music. Experience an old-fashioned hayride and special craft activities including pumpkin carving or have a balloon animal made just for you.

Learn about Filoli's history through docent-led tours of our orchards and nature trails. There will also be special exhibits featuring Filoli's first people, the Ohlone, and Filoli's fine feathered friend, the Western Bluebird. Don Burns will be on hand to answer your gardening questions and the mansion will be open and decorated with autumn-inspired floral arrangements. [www.filoli.org](http://www.filoli.org)

## Monterey Peninsula College

11/04-11/11 -- Special Topics: Designing Floral Wreaths, Garlands and Leis (ORNH296.7)

Learn how to create beautiful and fun floral wreaths, garlands, and leis for any occasion using fresh and dried flowers, foliage, and accessories. The first class session includes instructor-led demonstrations and student participation with provided floral materials. The second session, students will bring their own materials as directed. [www.mpc.edu](http://www.mpc.edu)

*continued on page 11--*



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Editor	Joan McLeod Mertz
Assistant Editor	Christina Kriedt
Design/Layout	Christina Kriedt
Circulation	Crystal Bertheau

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## Staff

Natalie Chambliss	Bonnie Pond
Al Derrick	Nancy Ruiz
Tom Karwin	Robin Sanders
Mary Koch	Kathleen Sonntag
Paul McCollum	Sharon Tyler
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Links to websites of other companies mentioned in this newsletter:

Shea-Campbell and Associates, Inc. <http://www.shea-campbell.com> (This link might not work - something about the hyphen during the conversion to .pdf. If you click on it and get an error page, try deleting the letters/numbers/symbols between 'shea' and 'campbell' in the website address in your browser and replacing them with a hyphen.)

Metro Santa Cruz <http://www.metrosantacruz.com/>

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Cabrillo College Horticulture Department <http://www.cabrillo.edu/academics/horticulture/>

California Bat Conservation Fund <http://www.californiabats.com/>

Middlebrook Gardens <http://www.middlebrook-gardens.com/> (possible hyphen problem again)

Love Apple Heirloom Tomato Farm <http://www.loveapplefarm.biz/>

Renee's Garden <http://www.reneesgarden.com/>

Gophers Limited <http://gopherslimited.com/index2.html>

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