

The Monterey Bay Master Gardeners

What's Happening in the MBMG

October 2009



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Message from the President: Volunteers for Body Parts

If you were asked which body part you value the most – your heart or your brain – what would you say? My answer would be... I need them both to truly stay alive and thrive.

Volunteers are like body parts. You have some who volunteer for every event, every committee, willing to do any task. Others will pick and choose, selectively doing only those tasks that they really like to do.

Which volunteer do I value over the other? I'd want both on my Team. Many tasks, fewer tasks... it does not matter how much one does. What matters is the passion, joy, and commitment the volunteer brings to the job. And the happiness and sense of fulfillment they leave behind when their job is done.

This is my annual reflection on the topic of volunteerism. It's all so very fresh in my mind after 2+ months of gathering "body parts" for the Masters Tour. An event as complicated and well organized as the Masters Tour takes an incredible amount of volunteer recruiting - and arm twisting, and groveling, and begging. In the years when we do not have a newly graduated class to draw from, it is especially difficult to fill those time slots on the volunteer schedule.

But once again, as in other years and other tours, Master Gardeners came through and volunteered. I truly believe that the element that differentiates our tours from others is the volunteers planted around the garden, ready to assist visitors walking through. A friendly smile, an answered plant question, a quick conversation about what grows well in the area – this becomes the difference between a garden tour that you run through and one where you linger. We always have lingerers at our Masters Tour.

2010 is upon us. Hard to believe. Still more difficult to grasp is the amount of work that must be done to organize the 2010 classes. Speaking of body parts, each new class is a sorely needed blood transfusion, the life-line needed to keep the MBMG organization healthy. Traditionally, there will be new students who will volunteer for everything on the first day of class. They will bring new vitality to the program. And there will be those who remain silent.

Mixed with the "new blood", we still need the old-timers, the seasoned MG with the "tribal knowledge", to step up and volunteer for next year. We need you to be on the Board, to get out the newsletter, to plan and launch the Faire, to chair the Masters Tour. Do it all or do a little. But do something! Be the best compost you can be so the MG body continues to be healthy.

2010 will be the 15th year of the Monterey Bay Master Gardeners. A true milestone. Most marriages don't last that long. In fact, I know some MGs who've known their MG friends longer than they've known their spouses. If you were to ask them which they value more, the spouse or the MG friend, they would say "both". After all.... spouses can be volunteers too!

STEP UP and DO YOUR THING – whatever it may be – as an MBMG Volunteer.

~Cynthia Jordan, MBMG Board President, MG95

A BIG Thank You to the Garden Tour Volunteers

It is the general consensus that the 2009 Garden Tour was a success. There is only one explanation for the great turnout and the many compliments we heard: the talented tour volunteers who brought energy, fantasy, professionalism and love to the task of planning, preparing and putting into reality this special event.

Not completely understanding or foreseeing all of what was involved, we dove into the job in January, giving ourselves the traditional nine months to "birth." We happily twisted able volunteers' arms, formed into committees, plotted and planned time frames, and cohered more delightful and generous MG's to join our efforts.

Soon a picture began to take shape. The tasks of designing an artful ticket, an eye-catching bookmark and poster, planning PR strategy and tasks, and bringing together a dedicated plant propagation team progressed.

Owners of beautiful Monterey Peninsula gardens started considering and then volunteering their participation. Local MBMG community projects and the Carmel Middle School agreed to be part of the tour. Experienced speakers were offering their expertise to provide for a rich educational element of the tour. And the Arts & Crafts team, Book Sale, and Raffle teams worked hard to add an enticing browsing and shopping element.

As the date drew closer our beautiful website started to take shape, the ticket team fanned out to deliver tickets to more than twenty nurseries in addition to the online ticket sales, a first this year and successful at it.

In the end there was a final and exiting scramble to sign up even more volunteers as garden docents, to get the gardens show-ready, to print and post signage and to showcase the propagated plants in their best light.

Looking back we counted close to a hundred volunteers and many of you took on multiple jobs, what a team effort! Congratulations and a big Thank You for many jobs excellently done.

~Maryann McCormick and Barbara Schilling, MGs04

Tour Comments: Visiting and Volunteering

I was stationed at the Carmel Middle School. I've never seen the garden looking so nice. Comments were generally positive. Only enduring concern was that the plant sale had been moved which bothered the heavy hustlers who were there in the first hour and a half of opening. If something had to go wrong, that was a pretty safe goof-up.

~Chris Carrier, MG06, Volunteer

I was one of the docents at the Hilton Bialek Biological Sciences Habitat at Carmel Middle School. I saw that garden for the first time during the workday and pre-tour and am very impressed by what the staff, teachers and students have accomplished and the initiatives they have in the works. It was a fine addition to the Tour, I thought, but it was lightly attended, compared to the private gardens. People on the tour might have seen it on previous occasions, or might have been more interested in seeing gardens at private residences.

I was able to attend only one of the mini-lectures. MG Stu Walzer's talk on propagating succulents. He did a great job for a good-sized audience of interested people. The mini-lectures seem like an excellent addition to the Tour.

~Tom Karwin, MG99, Volunteer

The tour was, as always, wonderful. However, the map and directions from house to house left a bit to be desired for those of us who are not Monterey residents. Some of the streets around a couple of the gardens changed names, but that wasn't indicated on the map. The only directions were "can be accessed from..." which wasn't helpful.

When tickets are paid for in advance, would it be possible to email the addresses to the ticket-holder? That would allow us to plan in advance how to get to the various gardens, and we'd be less likely to wander around lost. We weren't able to get to the adobe downtown at all, because the streets were blocked off for a parade. If we'd had a better map or known where we were going in advance, we might have been able to find another way to get there. Fortunately, I understand that's a public garden, so perhaps we can visit it some other time.

Every year we're able to attend, this is my group's favorite garden tour. Thank you all for putting so much time and energy into this outstanding event!

~Janet Wenholz, Visitor

While we (The Hilton Bialek Habitat) were honored to be included in the MG tour this year, we were very disappointed with the turnout at our particular site. We did A LOT of preparation for the tour and were hoping to have more visitors, as the gardens have really never looked as beautiful! The few visitors that braved the weather and drive, did seem to really enjoy their visit and left feeling very inspired, so that was at least reassuring. Perhaps in the future I might suggest that we reduce the number of sites on the tour and/or not include public gardens. Regardless, kudos to the planning team for pulling off what seemed to be an overall success!
~Tanja Roos, MG06, Volunteer

The Master Garden tour was just awesome! I loved the variety of the gardens, and the wonderful hosts/hostesses. It was also nice to have them bunched together to reduce travel time....
Mystère Sapia, Graniterock - Environmental Specialist, Visitor

Thoroughly enjoyed the tour on the 12th. Plan to come again next year, if there are no schedule conflicts, and will bring friends. Thanks for arranging a lovely tour. I liked the variety of garden "looks," and especially was taken with Elizabeth Murray's soothing place.
Donna Large, Visitor

... I've been coming for years and this was a very nice tour (Linda, who was my dental hygienist started me coming a long time ago)...I particularly enjoyed the Art Museum and the house next door.

But I have to say, it was confusing at my first stop. In the past, I would get a ticket with all the gardens so I could map it out and know where I'm going and end up on the way home (for me it's over the hill in Los Gatos). This year I was told to show up at a garden and pick up my ticket. I got there and I was not listed in will call...the person there didn't know what to do and there was hesitation about letting me in. Thankfully, I had brought my PayPal receipt and they looked at it and wanted to keep my receipt! So, maybe this is something to iron out for next year.

~MaryAnn Scanlon, Visitor

... We had a lovely time and I was impressed by how many resident gardeners were present and happy to discuss their gardens.

~Marsha Gonzales, Visitor

... I enjoyed the Garden Tour tremendously. Every garden was beautifully composed and each was unique in design and visual appeal. I plan to do it again next year.

~Catherine C., Visitor

Saturday morning in Pacific Grove was foggy and very gray. From our welcoming table set on the lawn of Frances Grate's front yard, we couldn't even see down the street but that didn't hide our Garden. Just before 10:00 AM our first group visitors arrived to tour the large Pacific Grove yard. I think these are the garden visitors who plan their day to make sure that they see every garden on the tour.

Master Gardeners, Amy Savage, Joanne Velman, and I greeted our visitors and Anne Hayden greeted everyone at the raffle table. We introduced Frances to our guests and she walked around with many explaining the oak root fungus she has in her soil (which explains why she has so many potted plants) and her love of old roses and succulents. Containers of succulents lined the stairs to her home and were tucked around the yard.

As one entered the side yard, bright red dragon and white angel wing begonias popped out of the lush green and shady "room". The path way led past her newly installed water collection tank and into the sunny part of her back yard where Frances has many tiny flower *Pelargoniums*. (We were all lucky enough to get some cuttings from our favorites.) The potting shed was a hit with everyone as one wall was a display of old tools and on the potting table were blooming orchids.

Anne's raffle table was centrally located in the yard and got lots of action, even from our guests who spent all their money at the arts and crafts garden. Wearing beautifully knitted scarves they showed us their beaded

necklaces and earrings, then they went back to their car and pulled the change out of their ash tray to buy a raffle ticket. They spent ALL their money on our Tour and were having so much fun!

We had a Master Gardener from San Joaquin County who came to see the geranium plant named for Francis Grate. Karen Runyan, a local Landscape Designer who had 2 gardens in last year's Tour also visited our Garden and met Frances. It was a great day in the Garden and we thank Frances for letting us show off her beautiful garden.

Of the almost 300 visitors we had, most had already purchased tickets.

~Candice McLaren, MG01, Volunteer

I am a Master Gardener from southern California and I am moving to Carmel next summer. I attended your garden tour and lectures last weekend and really enjoyed myself. Thank you and I look forward to joining your group next year.

~Ramie Allard, Visitor

A New Resource for Gardeners is in the Works

The Water Conservation Coalition of Santa Cruz County is developing a wealth of electronic information on water conservation in the landscape. The MBMG is helping!

The WCC-Santa Cruz includes the water agencies of Santa Cruz County. These are the same agencies that have generously supported the MBMG's Smart Gardening Faire over the years. To learn about the group, visit their website, www.watersavingtips.org/.

The current project was inspired by the services of a Santa Barbara company, Gardensoft, which has produced several compact discs and websites on water conservation in the landscape. Typically, Gardensoft makes these products for county-wide uses, and features locally relevant images and text. A nearby example is the CD, *Water-wise Gardening in Monterey County*, which Water Awareness Committee of Monterey commissioned in 2007, and distributes free through that county's water agencies. The CD runs on Windows computers only.

For the Santa Cruz project, Gardensoft photographed dozens of gardens in Santa Cruz county, including several that were on the MBMG's 2008 Water-Smart Garden Tour. WCC-Santa Cruz is now selecting and organizing those images, which will be included in the final product along with Gardensoft's plant database and much related textual information. The final product will be a website, which could be updated readily, but the group might also order a limited number of CDs.

Because of constraints in Gardensoft's standard services, WCC-Santa Cruz will use its own website, www.watersavingtips.org/ as a user guide to the Gardensoft website. Here is a very preliminary and incomplete outline of the user guide:

1. Reducing Water Needs
 - a. Drought-tolerant Plants
 - i. Natives
 - ii. Mediterraneans
 - iii. Succulents
 - b. Efficient Irrigations
 - i. Drip
 - ii. ET Controller
 - iii. etc.
 - c. Lawn Replacement
2. Alternate Sources of Water
 - a. Rainwater Harvesting
 - b. Graywater Recycling
3. Retaining Water in the Landscape
 - a. Minimize Runoff & Erosion
 - b. Retaining Walls
 - c. Permeable Surfaces

- d. Mulch
- e. Organic Soil Amendments
- f. Hillsides & Terraces
- 4. Keeping Water Clean
 - a. Use Less-toxic Pesticides and Herbicides
 - b. Select Plants that Don't Need Chemicals
- 5. Inspiring Ideas for the Landscape
 - a. Additional Photos of Local Gardens
 - b. Photos of Interesting Features from Non-local Gardens

The group approved another important action recently by deciding that the home page of the new website will feature a Douglas iris, which has the most extensive range of all Californicae: coastal areas extending 700 miles between Santa Barbara, California and central Oregon (see <http://www.pacificcoastiris.org/douglas.html>).

Your comments and ideas on this project are welcome. MGs also are welcome to participate in the WCC-Santa Cruz meetings. If you would like to preview the unedited material provided by Gardensoft, or join a future meeting, contact Tom Karwin, MG '99 (tom@karwin.com).

~Tom Karwin, MG99

Report: Advanced IPM Training—Ants Weeds and Other Pests

On June 17 a few of the Monterey Bay Master Gardeners attended the advanced IPM training in Cupertino. The three classes for this session were: Ant Control, Pest I.D. and Hands-on activities using the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) website. Before we got started in the classes, we took a short quiz to see what we already knew about the topics. We took this same quiz at the end of the sessions to see what we learned.

Mary Louise Flint and Cheryl Reynolds taught the ant control class using clever games to make the information interesting. The key is to keep the ants outdoors where they feed on other pests such as fleas and termites. Place the ant bait near the place where the ants are entering the house. Let the ants do the work for you. They will take the bait back to the nest where it will kill the queen and wipe out whole ant colony in about 10 days.

Inside the house, wash up the ant trails with soap and water. Spraying ants in the house is not advisable. As Master Gardeners we should not advise people to make their own bait. Because it is non-invasive, the KM AntPro bait dispenser and organic Liquid Ant Bait are recommended (<http://www.epestsupply.com/antpro.htm>). Insecticide sprays are the least effective way to kill ants. For more information visit the web site and find the notes and videos <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7411.html>.

The next class covered the UC IMP website Master Gardeners use the most: <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/menu.homegarden.html> Karey Windbiel-Rpjas told us the new features of the web site. http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/weeds_intro.html.

Each of us had uses of a computer. We were given weeds to identify using the web site. We used the Weed ID Key (http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/weeds_intro.html). It was like playing detective and easy to use. Try it. The last class, Landscape Pest ID, was taught by Steve Dreistadt. He presented us with about 50 different pests to identify and we tried to find the least toxic solution to get rid of the pest. There are one-page Landscape Pest Quick Tips for hundreds of home and garden insects, weeds, pathogens and vertebrate pests on the website shown above.

The day was well spent. It was a chance to be with other MGs, learn about the website and get familiar with some specific information about garden pests.

~By Melita Israel, MG95

Hotline October (current as of Sep 30)				
To sign up for a shift, contact Martye 831-633-6435 or martyel@prodigy.net				
28 Joy Hickey	29	30 Paul McCollum	1	2 John Fisher
5 Peter Quintanilla	6	7 Kristi Wolf	8	9 Melita Israel
12 CLOSED	13	14 John Fisher	15	16 Melita Israel
19 Diane Yost	20	21 John Fisher	22	23 CLOSED
26 Joy Hickey	27	28 John Fisher	29	30 NEED VOLUNTEER

See www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=martyel@prodigy.net for the most up-to-date calendar

Visit www.montereybaymastergardeners/calendar for the latest Advanced Training Opps: classes, workshops, events, trainings, demonstrations....

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