



# GARDEN VIEWS

UCCE Riverside County Master Gardener Program Newsletter

November 2016

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## Fall Kickoff Event

The Fall Kickoff social event was a great success. New MGs in Training had the opportunity to meet and greet with seasoned veteran MGs. Master Gardeners feasted on a wide range of foods presented in a potluck where no one went hungry.

Darrylyn Erickson orchestrated the first social event of the year, which was held at the Hillside Farms in Norco. With blue pumpkin in hand, Linda Powell pulled the raffle tickets for a variety of plants, planters and place settings. Dave Peterson (MG spouse to Cindy) won the jelly bean count.

A cookie contest added to the fun of the day. Gary Westad (MG IN Training) won the cookie contest with chewy peanut butter and Special K.

See photos on the following page.



## One of Our Own

Contributed By Patti Bonowitz

The South County Group of Master Gardeners is proud to say that one of its own has been approved as a full board member to the Hass Avocado Board for a period of three years. **Linda Mullins** graduated with the 2014

class of Riverside Master Gardeners. She and her husband farm avocados and coffee in Temecula Wine Country. Strong believers in sustainable agriculture, the value of crop diversity and the value of local produce, they grow eight different kinds of avocados and four kinds of coffee. They are working on their CCOF organic certification (a three-year process). They sell their produce locally and have sold their avocados to Barons and Farmsted grocers, as well as to the Bushfire chain of restaurants.

The Hass Avocado Board, which administers a national research and promotion program for Hass avocados, was established and is overseen by the US Department of Agriculture. The Board is comprised of 12 members and 12 alternate members representing producers and importers of Hass avocados. The members and alternates are voted on by their peers and appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture. The Board meets periodically throughout the year to plan marketing and research activities to benefit the industry. The national program was implemented in 2002 and its purpose is to increase the consumption of Hass avocados in the United States.



## Notes from the Desert

Submitted by Mary Ann Egan

As part of a propagation research project at the Living Desert in Palm Desert, veteran Master Gardeners have been growing *Asclepias subulata* ("desert milkweed" or "rush milkweed") from seed, with the goal of producing enough plants to help educate the public about the value of the plant, and to help supply more food for the milkweed butterflies (Monarch, Queen and Soldier) which come to the desert.

Populations of the iconic Monarch butterfly have dropped precipitously in the last few decades. Monarch caterpillars will only feed on milkweeds in the *Asclepias* family, and *A. sublata* is the only plant within the species which is native to our area. The plants of the *Asclepias* species have a milky sap which contains toxic chemical compounds. When milkweed caterpillars eat the leaves of the milkweed plant, the toxic compounds are

accumulated in the bodies of the caterpillars, making them toxic to many



predators. The compounds are retained through the caterpillars' metamorphosis to butterflies, and predators learn to avoid monarch caterpillars and monarch butterflies. A supply of milkweed plants is necessary for the continued survival of Monarch butterflies.

The *A. sublata* plant that is so important to milkweed butterflies also fits very well in desert area gardens. The desert milkweed is one tough plant. It is drought-tolerant and will accept full sun and reflected heat-- crucial characteristics for success in Coachella Valley gardens. The plant grows 3-4 feet high and up to 4 feet wide. Its slender, gray-green stems can provide a very

attractive vertical accent in a desert landscape. The few small leaves on new stems soon drop off, conserving water for the plant. Pale yellow or white flowers, which bloom in clusters from spring into fall, develop into seed pods which split and send out small flat seeds with silky threadlike plumes. The plant will tolerate most soils, but prefers coarse, sandy soils.

When I was at the Living Desert propagation nursery in early October, there were approximately 400 young milkweed plants growing in pots. Queen caterpillars were already at work on the young plants, which also had a good supply of small yellow aphids. Bob Linstead, the knowledgeable propagator for the Living Desert, has allowed the aphids to stay on the young plants as they provide food for natural controlling predators and the use of an insecticide or other type of prevention may harm the butterfly larva.



Research credits: Websites of [Living Desert Zoo / Gardens](#) and of [Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum](#); Scientific American, John R. Platt, "Butterflies Could Gain Endangered Species Protection," (1/5/2015); [Lush & Efficient, Gardening in the Coachella Valley](#), published by Coachella Valley Water District.

## Master Gardener Information Session at UCR Palm Desert

Contributed by Mary Ann Egan

On October 19 the Desert Area Master Gardeners welcomed potential new trainees to the UCCE Master Gardener program. The session provided information about the state-wide program and details about the specific volunteer and educational projects offered in the Desert Area.



Interest was high for the new class of 2016-2017 which starts on November 2 at UCR in Palm Desert. Joan Kyle-Baerman, our Desert Area's talented and hard-working chair, invited the attendees to become part of the growing, dynamic group of UCCE Master Gardeners in the desert.



Volunteer coordinator Rosa Olaiz gave a brief history of the state-wide program and explained how the Riverside County program, including the Desert Area Committee, fits in the overall structure. Barbara Kay-Levin pictured with Rosa.





Class coordinator Brenda Costantino talked about the classroom work needed and the various local projects where trainees can get some of those 50 hours of volunteer time needed to become a certified Master Gardener.



Many veteran Master Gardeners were present to answer questions and chat with the potential

trainees as they looked over some additional information and photos of the local MG projects.



Master Gardener Jerry L' Hommedieu spoke about the Living Desert propagation project.

The projects presented include those started just this year (the Braille Institute, the Coachella Valley Preserve docent project, and Living Desert propagation research project). These new opportunities, especially when added to the local on-going community-outreach projects, have desert veterans invigorated and enthusiastic about the growth and vitality of the Desert Area Master Gardener program.



Master Gardener Patricia Daniells explained how the Help Line operates.



*Master Gardener  
Dan Goldberg  
spoke about the  
Coachella Valley  
Preserve docent  
project.*

The coordinators for each Desert Area project prepared informative displays for the information session and were on hand to talk in more detail about their projects. And, of course, the veterans had an opportunity to talk with each other-- one of the best fringe benefits of being a Master Gardener!

## Rosa's Report

Contributed by Rosa Olaiz

Last year the state office set up a new feature on VMS for volunteers to add an emergency contact on your profile. To date we have several master gardeners that need to update their information. There have been numerous instances when state emergency contact information was needed but not available. In order to enter emergency contacts, go to your page on VMS; select 'Edit Your Profile' under 'Your Information' tab on the left side of screen. Add your emergency contact(s) information. After you enter the information, click "add contact" even if you only add one contact. This step must be done in order to save your contact. Go to the bottom of the page to click on "Update Profile".

I have gotten several questions about volunteer hours and continuing education hours. In last month newsletter I discussed reappointment and mentioned that in order to keep your status as an active master gardener you are required to volunteer a minimum of 25 hours at approved venues and complete at least 12 hours of continuing education hours. Listed below are activities that count or do not count toward volunteer and continuing education hours.

<b>Your Information</b>
<a href="#">Edit Your Profile</a>
<a href="#">Add New Hours</a>
<a href="#">View Your Hours</a>

### What Counts Towards Volunteer Hours?

- Education not service
- Answering home gardening questions
- Service on public education activities
- Unpaid radio and television appearances
- Unpaid articles in the local newspaper
- Service on committees
- Advisor research projects
- Demonstrations
- Workshops
- Helpline
- Data collection for UC Research
- Email Blasts
- Newsletters
- Blogs



**What Does NOT Count Towards Volunteer Hours?**

- Attending general meetings (counts as C.E. if there is an educational presentation)
- Attendance at social or holiday events
- Work for outside organizations
- Any paid work

**What Counts Towards Continuing Education Hours?**

- Must be approved in advance by UCCE Advisor or County Director

- Educational portion of meetings
- Research-based publications
- Approved videos, for example: UCTV
- Training classes
- Veteran Meeting

**What Does NOT Count Towards Continuing Education Hours?**

- Information that is not research-based
- General home improvement shows
- Topics not related to home horticulture

**UCRBG**

*Submitted by Nancy Johnson*

Master Gardeners answered questions for attendees at the UCR Botanic Gardens Fall Plant Sale. This annual event is a valuable opportunity to fulfill our mission of educating the public on everything from ants to the names of plants. It is also a learning experience for both veterans and trainees when familiarizing themselves about the plants for sale.

**Fall Plant Sale and Programs**

On Saturday, October 22, Master Gardeners presented three informational sessions.

- Fabulous Fall Gardening (Lucy Heyming)
- Invite Natives in with California Native Plants (Susan Cline)
- Pumpkins, Pumpkins, Pumpkins (Nancy Johnson)

**Art in the Gardens,**

Mark your Calendars for this annual event on November 6, from 9:00 to 3:00.

**WMWD Garden Committee**

*Submitted by Karen Fleisher*

**California Native Plants for Your Landscape**

WMWD workshop Saturday, November 12, 2016. Drought tolerant, pest resistant, easy care and beautiful...the description of a California native plant! Susan Jeff of the California Native Plant

Society will share her vast knowledge of native plants and suggest some of the best California native plants for the Inland Empire region.



## Janet's Jottings

*Contributed by Janet Hartin*

### Welcome New Master Gardener

**Trainees in Riverside and the Desert!** I have had the distinct pleasure of meeting the Riverside trainees and look forward to meeting the Coachella Valley trainees November 2nd. We are excited to have you in our Riverside County Master Gardener family.

**Upcoming Veteran's Class:** Plan on attending the Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup> continuing education class for veteran Master Gardeners from 6:30-8:30pm at Western Municipal Water District located at 14205 Meridian Parkway in Riverside. Dr. Edie Allen, a professor at UC Riverside will discuss the new Univ. of CA Naturalist volunteer program and how Master Gardeners can interact and partner with CA Naturalists.

### Save-the-Date: 2017 UC Master Gardener Conference in Long Beach!

Mark your calendar for the 2017 UC Master Gardener Conference which will be held right here in Southern California on Aug. 22-25, 2017 in Long Beach. It historically is one of the largest gatherings of certified Master Gardener volunteers in the world; well over 700 attendees from 45 counties enjoyed the last conference held in 2014 in the Sierras. The quality of the conference was documented by the fact that 99% of conference attendees surveyed said they would recommend the conference to a friend or colleague, 94% of attendees reported being satisfied with the conference topics and training, and 92% reported speakers met or exceeded expectations. A reduced conference rate is being negotiated at the Hyatt Regency Long Beach where the conference will be held. Room rate details and the process for booking will be announced soon on the statewide UC Master Gardener conference website:

<http://ucanr.edu/sites/2017MGConference/>. The conference will provide a wide variety of classroom and hands-on training opportunities and tours to update your Master Gardener skills. It also offers a fantastic opportunity to meet and network with other like-minded volunteers from all over California.

**Move Over Potatoes; the Pumpkins are Here!** In Ireland, the original homeland of Halloween, ghoulish faces were carved on turnips and potatoes rather than on pumpkins due to their availability. Irish immigrants brought the Halloween tradition to America where carved pumpkins quickly became the scary face of Halloween here.

**Honeybee or Drone Fly?** Many home-owners mistake drone flies (*Eristalis tenax*) nectaring on Mexican sunflowers (*Tithonia*) with honey bees (*Apis mellifera*). As UC Davis Dept. of Entomology and Nematology Communications Specialist Kathy Keatley Garvey says: "Sometimes it's a fly. Bee-lieve me!" The two are very similar in size and color and both are pollinators. What's the difference? Drone flies are not bees and do not sting; they are hover flies resembling the action of a helicopter. Drone maggots live in drainage ditches and can be found around manure piles and sewage, and love polluted water. Drone flies look different, too. They have larger eyes and stubbier antennae than bees and a very obvious "H" on their abdomen.



(c) Kathy Keatley Garvey

## Message from the Chair

*Submitted by Eben Longfellow*

Our Master Gardener year is off at a fast pace with events/projects – all over Riverside County. With so many veteran MGs in our county it's a shame that we have to cancel events because we do not have volunteers signing up to help ... especially Information Table events ... and some events that we have done in past years. The Goldminer in your region (Farmers Market coordinator for the desert) really needs all of us veterans to help by trying to **Adopt an Event**. In this way you can provide the coordination, leadership & mentoring to trainees to help us reach more people in our geographic regions.

Our Goldminers & DAC need veterans to volunteer to assist and help our regions grow and be more of an influence. All of our Goldminers could utilize an assistant, and people to help with things like: social functions; Information Tables; Speakers Bureau; Community/School Gardens; workshops; etc.....

Each Goldminer regions is different ... yet we all share the same mission & goals. Each GM region has different volunteers and some unique history &

experiences ... yet we all share the same mission & goals.

Please decide how you can volunteer this year and help our Master Gardener program.

**Adopt an Event** ... step up and contact the Goldminer or DAC in your region and learn of the ways you can help. The more we all help the greater our impact with educating the residents of Riverside County about sustainable & environmentally friendly horticultural practices ... and it's FUN!!!



### Fifty and Better Health Fair Janet Goeske Senior Center

- Pam Morris
- Jean Wagner
- Lori Briscoe

### **Mission Statement**

*Master Gardener Volunteers are trained by the UCCE Advisors, Specialists and other qualified instructors to provide the gardeners of Riverside County with research-based information to promote environmentally responsible and sustainable horticultural practices. Activities of volunteers are solely educational - without inclusion of any purpose or intention of carrying on a business, trade, avocation or profession for profit.*



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### **Riverside County Master Gardener Program**

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UCCE MG Program Director	Janet Hartin
Volunteer Services Coordinator	Rosa Olaz
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Liaison	
WMWD Landscape Garden	Karen Fleisher
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