



# GARDEN VIEWS

UCCE Riverside County Master Gardener Program Newsletter

October 2016

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## After the Tears Have Cleared, Remember the Laughter

This issue of Garden Views is dedicated to Cathy Konyn and her memory. What follows are tributes to her life from her Master Gardener friends.  
*DB, Editor*

### ***Cathy in Cozumel***

In the midst of all our sadness--here's a great picture of Cathy I took the last night of a scuba diving trip to Cozumel in July. She saw these hanging planters made out of motorbike tires--**re-purpose, re-use, recycle**----and she was so tickled when Sam bought one for her. Can you tell how delighted she is? I will always remember her bright smile and her laugh. I love this picture. I thought you might want to include this with some of the pictures.

*Susan Cline 2013*

*She sleeps with butterflies.....*



Monarch Photo Credits:  
Karen Brandtman  
Betty Balo

## Tributes to Cathy Konyn

The sudden passing of Cathy Konyn has been a real shocker for the Riverside County Master Gardeners. As the editor of Garden Views, I invited members to offer testimonials as to all the contributions and friends made by Cathy. I was blessed to have Cathy as Chair Elect during my term as Chair. When she became Chair, she set high goals for everyone, most especially herself. As the Past Chair, Cathy was Eben's go-to person, continuing to work the Hotline, write for the newsletter, attend events and inspire people to become Master Gardeners. She did so many things and I hope the words of her Master Gardener friends will highlight the positive impact she had on all of us.

*Dave Brandtman, 2012*

Cathy Konyn was a very special friend who had the patience of Job. I was so impressed with the changes she initiated that undoubtedly made life so much easier when we answered the Telephone Helpline and Emails. And now it seems we actually have more time to talk with our callers. Her goal was to move us into a paperless future. Changes and suggestions were very much appreciated and very useful. She was always stopping by to see how we were doing when she visited with Rosa. I admired her spunk and unending energy, too. She was a good listener and organizer who really made life so much better for us and I miss her terribly now. She was such a dear lady who had so much more to give us. And knowing she is still watching over us somehow makes it a bit easier. I'm happy that Cathy was with us long enough to make such a difference and that we'll see one another again someday.

*Pauline Pedigo 2006*

The Master Gardener class of 2015 was most fortunate. Cathy Konyn was our leader. She contributed her humor, innate leadership, great organizational skills and love of the MG program to my class. She gave generously of her time and shared her enthusiasm and talent freely. Cathy was a wonderful teacher and showed us what real commitment looks like. She is so greatly missed.

*Nikki Helm 2015*

Happy Honest Loyal Fun Dedicated Friendly Inquisitive Brave Humorous Generous Loving  
Crazy Innovative Organized Adventuresome

✿ A good, true friend

*Linda Powell 2013*

Recently when I was considering joining the phone squad, we met & Cathy was so helpful & friendly. Her knowledge & enthusiasm was amazing. Cathy's organizing ability will be greatly missed & she leaves an enormous void in the Master Gardeners Organization. Dear Cathy we love you & miss you.

*Ann Platzer 2006*

Cathy leaves a space that will never be completely replaced with memories,  
only a feeling of ----empty loss  
repeatedly reminded by what she added,  
so much while she was here.  
Gone too soon.

*Ruth Wilson 1981*

Cathy had so many good qualities, and she was a wonderful and effective leader. But, what I remember best about Cathy is her infectious interest and enthusiasm about all things Master Gardener related. It would be pretty difficult to join Cathy in a MG event or activity and not enjoy it. Like all MG that knew her, I will miss her friendly nature, her smile, and her many talents. But, because of those qualities, she leaves us with many fond memories. RIP, my friend.

*Bill Floyd 2013*

From the first time I met Cathy as a new Master Gardener Trainee in 2013, I was impressed by her gentle and generous spirit. I was giving a workshop on pruning fruit trees at grow lab, when someone asked a question about how long it takes for bleach to sterilize pruning equipment and whether or not it is better to use alcohol to sterilize. I did not know the answer, but she did. Not wanting to upstage her instructor, me, she gently indicated that probably alcohol was better because it sterilized immediately and did not cause rusting. She also said that you needed to wait one minute for bleach to be effective. Sensing that she was a valuable resource for all of us, I asked her if she worked in a lab. She indicated that she had just retired as a medical technologist for San Bernardino County. I was very glad to have the answer to our question and more so impressed at her gentle handling of the situation. I had a feeling that she would be a valuable source of knowledge to us. As it turned out, once she became a master gardener, she jumped right in to the program, giving lectures and eventually joining the advisory board.

I personally am thankful for all the time and energy she spent to advance our program and lead us these past two years. She made an amazing impact and will be remembered by those who worked with her, as a classy lady. According to her husband, Sam, she had it in her mind for more than 20 years to become a master gardener when she retired. Though it was far too short of a time, we are fortunate to have had her.

*~Lucy Heyming 2004*

Rest in God's arms, my beloved friend.

*Nanci Nelson 2008*

## Rosa's Report

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*Contributed by Rosa Olaiz*

When I started working in the Master Gardener program I pleasantly surprised by the passion and commitment the volunteers have for gardening and the program, Cathy was no exception. She loved every facet of the program. If she did not know something, she figured out a way to find the answer. I miss her Monday morning calls, checking in to see how things are going. Her laughter filled the entire office, and her excitement, when she discovered something new, was contagious. The last time I saw her she spent 6 hours on the helpline, teaching and talking about gardening. When she left she was wearing the smile she had when she came in that morning. Cathy you will not be forgotten!



Plant Sale at UCR PD at Our 'Grow With Us' Workshop

## Fall Activities in the Desert

*Submitted by Mary Ann Egan*

The cooler days of October and November usher in a wellspring of Master Gardener activities in the desert. Desert Area Master Gardeners will be at work from Palm Springs at the west end of the Coachella Valley to Indio at the east end of the Valley.

The new activities for the year include a plant sale and edible plant presentation at a UCR-sponsored workshop in Palm Desert on October 1st; four months of weekly gardening classes at the Braille Institute in Rancho Mirage; monthly classes on gardening and related subjects at the Cathedral

City Public Library on the 3rd Thursday of each month; docent tour and training at the Coachella Valley Preserve located at the foot of the Indio Hills; and a propagation research program for MG veterans at the Living Desert in Palm Desert. The established programs that will continue include propagation classes and docent tours at Moorten Botanical Garden in Palm Springs; propagation of native and desert friendly plants at the Living Desert; resumption of the "Ask the Gardener" tables at the outdoor desert area farmers markets; Help Line staffing for drop-ins and inquiries at the UCCE office in Indio; and, of course, the new MG training class at UCR in Palm Desert.

Fall is the perfect time to put drought-tolerant native and other desert-friendly plants into desert landscaping. The cooler weather in the coming months helps the new plants get established before the test of the hot summer weather comes. A dedicated group of Desert Area MGs have been propagating native and desert-friendly plants, including the Coachella Valley native *Encelia farinosa* (brittle bush), for the last several months at the Living Desert.

Some of these propagated plants, together with vegetable seedlings grown by Desert Area MGs, will be offered for sale at the October 1st workshop in Palm Desert. Joining the other noted speakers at the event, Desert Area MG Susan Krings will describe what edibles to plant in a desert vegetable garden each season encouraging a permaculture design.



The existing propagation project at the Living Desert has been such a success and so much in demand by trainees and veterans alike that there

will now be one class each week for trainees and one morning work time per week dedicated to a propagation research program available only to veteran MGs.

The monthly classes at the Cathedral City Public Library will cover a variety of topics, all taught by Master Gardeners. The classes, which are free of charge and open to the public, started on September 15 with a class on vegetable gardening in the desert. The October and November classes will discuss edible gardening with permaculture design and changing traditional landscaping to desert landscaping. The classes will run through May.

And, we are very excited to be working with the visually impaired clients of the Braille Institute this fall. Master Gardeners will work with the clients in a hands-on basis in the greenhouse and garden at the Institute. The classes there will cover a variety of basic gardening subjects, as well as fragrance gardening, growing herbs for cooking and planting a butterfly garden.



## Mulches I Have Known

*Contributed by Karen Bradford*

As I was driving around this afternoon — in 101° heat with the truck's AC blasting — I thought about our poor plants that have just endured another bout of Santa Ana winds stripping moisture from them: from one end of the plant, by sucking it from

the stomata on the undersides of their leaves, to the other of soil around their roots.

It's been so long since we have had any rain that our plants are dependent upon us for their lives. Are you deep-soaking your trees or daily watering

your yard, especially container plants? Are you seeing your water bill skyrocket?

So, let me remind you of one very easy, low-maintenance and cost-efficient way of saving your plants from ghastly death by desiccation: mulch.

First, what is mulch? By definition from our *California Master Gardener Handbook*, it is: "Any materials placed on the soil to conserve soil moisture, moderate soil temperature, prevent soil erosion, or prevent weed growth." (Mulch differs from soil amendments, which are mixed into the soil to improve its literal structure, or tilth.)

Of course, finished compost on the top of your soil is a wonderful way to both add nutrients and conserve water by shielding the soil below it.

(Shameless compost-plug alert: Save your falling leaves and even your neighbors' falling leaves as you may be blessed, to add to your compost pile.)

What else is useful?

- Decorative bark
- Gravel or rocks
- Redwood chips or sawdust
- Peat moss
- "Gorilla hair"
- Composted sewage sludge (your call on this)
- Alfalfa hay or alfalfa meal (my favorite on my veggies and citrus)
- Dried lawn clippings
- Recycled rubber: mats or loose-fill

Some of these materials are inert, but others may affect the pH of your soil, such as peat moss being an acid-type material. Others vary wildly on their carbon-to-nitrogen ratio ("browns" and "greens"), such as sawdust being about 500:1 to alfalfa at 12:1. The brown materials also have the potential to rob nitrogen from your plants (to help decomposition), so either regularly toss a little extra nitrogen your plant's way or keep an eye on it for signs of nitrogen deficiency.

The only place you would *not* use mulch is right up against the trunk of your trees: This can cause

crown rot or other problems. Just allow a few inches for unrestricted air circulation around the trunk.

The key to mulch choice using it as a problem-solver for your situation:

- Want to provide an elegant backdrop for your plants? Like the classic little black dress, decorative bark is a never-go-wrong way to show off your roses or other specimen plants.
- Gorilla hair around palm trees seems like a logical choice, doesn't it?
- Need to walk or drive on your mulch or do you live in a really windy area? Gravel keeps you above the mud nor is it going to be blown down to San Diego; ditto for a rubber mat.
- A way to warm up the soil in a chilly spot in your yard? Rocks are an excellent thermal reservoir that passively absorb the sun's heat during the day and release it through the night. (Some plants, such as plumeria sticks, like an extra heat boost on their roots as they get started: A rock mulch in their pots is recommended.)

By the way, gravel seems to be making a comeback statement in landscape design: I've seen more mentions of it in my gardening magazines. Gravel makes me think of European gardens, as the extensive use of gravel around the grounds of Versailles (not that viewing my yard will ever cause a visitor to slap her forehead and exclaim, "That's where I've seen it! Louis the Fourteenth!"). Still, it's nice and clean and makes a pleasant *crunch* when traversed.

You may buy mulch in bulk to save some money: I've used Southern California Mulch on the east side of the 215 in Menifee Sunshine Growers on the west side of Hamner south of the 60. Each has an excellent selection of mulches and are additional nice people to whom I've spent gardening cash. Go see what appeals to you and your price range, and start mulching!

## UCRBG

*Submitted by Nancy Johnson*

### UCR BOTANIC GARDENS OFFERS PROGRAMS AT FALL PLANT SALE, OCTOBER 22-23

The University of California Riverside Botanic Gardens has announced a series of free public programs for adults and children as part of the Fall Plant Sale.

#### Saturday, 10/22

*Hours for Fall Plant Sale are open to the public from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm on Saturday 🍷*

- 11:00 Fabulous Fall Vegetable Gardens, with Lucy Heyming
- 1:00 Invite Nature in with California Native Plants, with Susan Cline
- 3:00 Pumpkins, Pumpkins, Pumpkins (for children), with Nancy Johnson

## Grow Lab

*Contributed by Debra Corbin-Euston*

It's a very busy time at GL getting planted and ready for the UCR Botanic Gardens Plant Sale. Our own plant sale is on September 24th at Grow Lab. It will be from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm.

This year we have an experimental planting of tomatoes, certain squashes, cucumbers and beans. All of these are short maturity rates of 50-60 days. We will see!! They all look so great though!! Come and buy some and plant them so you too can be a part of our grand experiment 2016!!!

We will continue to plant in succession through the fall season and have small sales to boost our budget!

#### Sunday, 10/23

*Hours for Plant Sale Sunday, October 23 are from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.*

- 11:00 The Basics of Home Composting, presented by Riverside County Master Composters
- 1:00 Autumn Story Program, presented by Riverside Public Library

*🍷 Friends of the University of California Riverside Botanic Gardens have early access to the sale at 8:00 am on Saturday morning. Friends memberships may be purchased at the gate.*

The sale emphasizes native and drought resistant plants selected to thrive in the Riverside climate. A coupon for a free packet of wildflower seeds will be available on the Botanic Gardens website, [www.gardens.ucr.edu](http://www.gardens.ucr.edu), the week before the sale. An extensive annotated list of plants included in the sale is also available on this website.

It has been a great pleasure to meet and work with some of our new trainees.

- On September 15th, as part one of our orientation, we took a tour of the entire property and learned about the different areas, including visiting with the beautiful chickens!!
- On September 17th where we will have a much more in depth orientation which means we will be propagating, cleaning, digging, chopping, trimming and organizing!!

I hope to see some of you MG Veterans out there to help with the plant sale. We need it.



## Janet's Jottings

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*Contributed by Janet Hartin*

As a tribute to Master Gardeners I have personally known over the years that have passed on (including most recently Cathy Konyon) it seems fitting to honor their shared qualities as volunteers. While their personalities varied, these ten traits stood out in each one.

**Impact Driven.** Their efforts promoted positive change. They helped consumers reduce the use of unnecessary pesticides, learn how to grow more vegetables in a small space, reduce water use, make and use compost, and a hundred other things.

**Believed in the Mission of the Organization.** They all had a firm commitment to the mission of UCCE and, specifically, the mission of the Master Gardener program.

**Collaborative Mindset.** They knew teamwork was an essential part of an effective volunteer organization. Together they moved mountains by knowing what they did best and what others did best.

**Committed.** They did what they said they would do come hell or high water. They were all exceptionally trustworthy and dependable.

**Constantly "On".** They literally lived life in the mindset of a volunteer, always looking for opportunities to share their knowledge.

**Energetic.** They were seemingly unstoppable when it came to helping out. You can't keep a good volunteer down!

**Imaginative and Creative.** They found novel ways to accomplish what most people would think were routine, boring tasks. The journey was as important as the destination.

**Flexible.** They realize things don't always go as planned and didn't sweat the small stuff. (Well, most of the time!) They turned lemons into lemonade.

**Good Sense of Humor.** They weren't afraid to laugh at themselves as well as laugh with others.

**Loved Life to the Fullest.** They all lived to be 200 plus in my book.

Rest in Peace and Thank You!

## WMWD Garden Committee

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*Submitted by Karen Fleisher*

The September workshop "Gardening Month to Month in Your Southern California Garden" presented by Laura Simpson was very well received by the approximately 68 attendees. For the first time, we set up a Water-Efficient Landscaping

table, along with a Master Gardener information table. We had quite a few visitors to the table with lots of questions. We also took several people around the demonstration garden to show them specific plants.

Our next workshop is October 8<sup>th</sup>. Christine Lampe will present "Cool Season Vegetable Gardening".

## That's a Good Question

### Question:

My 20-year-old liquidambar tree seems to be dying from the top. What is going on?

### Answer:

The most likely answer is drought stress. Even mature landscape trees need occasional irrigation. Ideally, ten gallons of water per inch of trunk diameter should be provided at least monthly. In times of severe drought or water restriction, one or two deep irrigations with a garden hose several weeks apart in spring and summer will usually keep trees alive.

It is also possible that your tree is suffering from bacterial leaf scorch. This disease is caused by the bacterium *Xylella fastidiosa* and transmitted by the glassy winged sharpshooter. Symptoms of this disease are easily confused with those caused by drought. However, in trees suffering from bacterial leaf scorch, the leaves will appear brown on their edges, while drought-stressed leaves are yellow, especially along the central leaf vein. Also, in drought stressed-trees, leaves throughout the canopy may appear wilted.

Trees that are drought stressed will likely recover when provided consistent adequate irrigation. Trees suffering from bacterial leaf scorch may die in less than two years or may decline gradually a branch at a time. There is no cure for the disease. The best management practice for this disease is to maintain tree vigor. Branches that have died should be removed, as should trees that are in a severe state of decline.

### References

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<http://www.apsnet.org/edcenter/intropp/lessons/prokaryotes/Pages/BacterialLeafScorch.aspx>

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<http://cagardenweb.ucanr.edu/Drought /Drought Gardening Tips ^>

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<http://www.colostate.edu/Dept/CoopExt/4dmg/Trees/caring.htm>

[http://sactree.com/assets/files/mature\\_trees/wateringtable.pdf](http://sactree.com/assets/files/mature_trees/wateringtable.pdf)

<http://anrcatalog.ucanr.edu/Details.aspx?itemNo=8553>

*Editor's Note: Cathy Konyn contributed this and all previous "That's a Good Question" articles. Her intent was to highlight the questions that our MG Volunteers can expect when working the Help Line or the Information Tables. Submissions for future articles are encouraged and should be sent to [jdbrandtman@gmail.com](mailto:jdbrandtman@gmail.com) and use the subject line "Good Question." Thanks, Dave Brandtman*

## Message from the Chair

*Submitted by Eben Longfellow*

Fall has finally arrived. Hopefully our daytime weather will be getting cooler, plantings can hopefully begin soon, and outdoor activities will increase. Master Gardener events are sprouting up all over Riverside County and MG volunteer opportunities are increasing.

A lot of people have been busy planning and getting things coordinated for us this fall and it's important for all of us to decide what project(s) we want to volunteer and sign up on VMS, so we will be better prepared for the event. And, when you sign up to volunteer we are expecting you to show up - so if something comes up and you can't attend please **Unvolunteer**. Additionally, if your role is vital to the event please personally **contact the Event Coordinator** listed on VMS and let them know you will not be showing up.

**Help Line, version 1.0**, is out and greatly improved. Thanks to Dennis Keats & Cathy Konyn, our computers now can communicate with each other and we are able to utilize One Note – which may have impact with all of our projects. The Help Line process has been updated and it is easier to understand the steps to help residents identify their problems with solutions, if available. Help Line training sessions will be available throughout the year.

**Information Tables-** (some call them Farmers Markets) as a project are being evaluated and we will be trying to find ways to make them more efficient on everyone involved. Information Tables are one of the best outreaches we have to educate residents about home horticulture. They are also a great way to meet others interested in the goals of Master Gardeners ... networking in our

communities, multiplying and educating more people. Please sign up to help at Information Tables.

**School Gardens** (a portion of our School, Youth & Community Gardens Project) Coordinated by Cindy Petersen with the help of Betty Balo (Chair-Elect), they will be looking at what's happening throughout S CA with school gardens, what other county Master Gardeners programs are doing, determining the level of interest in our current membership to volunteer with school gardens and identifying Riverside County school gardening needs with suggested ways to meet the needs.

Expect to hear from Betty Balo about your level of interest in School Gardening and what you think is needed in your region.

Fall has arrived and it's a great time to be a Master Gardener in Riverside County. Some Goldminer regions are having fall get-togethers to re-connect & plan the needed events for their regions while others are communicating and planning individually. It's time for all of us to decide what we want to accomplish this year with our Master Gardener certification & knowledge, and how we're going to educate more residents about Healthy Communities, Healthy Plants and Healthy Environments.

Finally, come to our Autumn Kickoff event on Sunday, October 16<sup>th</sup> from 2 to 5pm at the Hillside Farm with a potluck & cookie contest. Come meet the new trainees, reacquaint yourself with fellow MGs, enjoy the hospitality and have some fun. For more details & to sign up go to VMS.

To the fall,

Eben Longfellow



**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.*



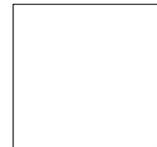
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