

## UCCE Master Gardener Twenty-First Annual Garden Tour By Becky Miller-Cripps

Mark your calendars for Sunday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, when the UCCE Master Gardeners of Tuolumne County will host their twenty-first annual garden tour from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The theme of the four beautiful and very different gardens on the tour this year is “You Can Do It.” The gardens, many of which are located in the Columbia area, will demonstrate garden-enhancement projects that you can replicate in your own garden. Projects range from creating curb appeal to growing roses, from creating a beautiful landscape to growing vegetables sustainably, all while saving water.

This year’s tour includes a four-acre garden with over 1500 roses, a garden with multiple sites showcasing sustainability, and a garden with displays of California native plants along with other blooming flowers. The Master Gardener Demonstration Garden will host local organization information tables, including the Mother Lode Bonsai Club that will raffle a bonsai plant.

Proceeds from the tour fund the Master Gardener Scholarship Fund for Columbia College students, purchase gardening reference books for the Tuolumne County Library and the Master Gardener Library, provide operating funds for the demonstration garden and also are helpful with school gardens.

The Garden Tour began 21 years ago when former Master Gardener Gary Wood noticed a limited supply of gardening reference books available for use by Master Gardeners or the public. He suggested a garden tour to raise funds for books. The tour was so successful that it became an annual event.

Garden tour tickets contain a map with directions to each of the homes. There will be directional signs on streets and roads leading to the gardens. Master Gardeners will be on hand at all the gardens to answer any questions you may have about the display gardens, your own garden or gardening in general.

Garden Tour tickets are available at Columbia Nursery on Parrotts Ferry Road and the Farmory in Columbia; Sonora Lumber, Antiques, Etc., and the University of California Cooperative Extension office – all in downtown Sonora; The Nest in Twain Harte; and Nature’s Whole Foods Depot Nursery in Standard. Tickets are \$10.00 (children 12 and under free). Tickets can be purchased from any local master



Demonstration Garden - Multiple Clematis



Demonstration Garden - Flannel Bush



Betty Boop rose. Picture provided by R.Oppedahl.



Berry Patch

gardener and will also be available on the day of the tour at the Master Gardener demonstration garden at 251 S. Barretta Street in Sonora, CA. Tickets can also be purchased on-line at: <http://ucanr.edu/tuolumnegardentourtickets>.

To make your tour more pleasurable, here are a few helpful garden and etiquette tips:

- Bring a hat, sunscreen and water, and wear comfortable walking shoes. It's likely that the weather will be sunny and warm.
- You will be visiting residential neighborhoods and parking may be limited. Carpool if possible.
- Plan a lunch break and pit stops. Restrooms will not be available in homes (snacks and restrooms available at the demonstration garden; Columbia Nursery provides restrooms and a small deli).
- Bring a camera. Ask permission from the Master Gardeners on duty before taking any photos.
- Stay on marked paths.
- Do not clip or injure plants in anyway.
- No smoking. No pets. No strollers. No food. No litter.
- Turn off your cell phone or at least put it on 'vibrate' mode.
- And lastly remember to "Be generous with your praise, gentle in your criticism."

Future columns will describe individual gardens in more detail. We look forward to seeing you on the tour.

*Rebecca Miller-Cripps is a University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardener of Tuolumne County.*



*Poppies Up Close. Picture provided by R. Oppedahl.*



*Chives. Picture provided by R. Oppedahl.*



*Coral Bells. Picture provided by R. Oppedahl.*