

THE SONOMA GARDENER

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Master Gardeners of Sonoma County

Website: www.sonomamastergardeners.org



October General Membership Meeting

By Phyllis Turrill

Wednesday, October 16, 2013

12:30 p.m. Social

1:00 p.m. Meeting (Note time change)

Luther Burbank Art and Garden Center

2050 Yulupa Avenue

Santa Rosa, CA

The Global Plant Trade and Pathogens- A Threat to our Forests

This meeting will feature Susan J. Frankel, who is a well known forest pathologist with the USDA- Forest Service. She has written numerous publications on climate change and forest diseases. Despite quarantines, tree pathogens are traveling across the country and around the world. She will use the sudden oak death pathogen, *Phytophthora ramorum*, as a case study to show the extent and consequences of pathogen transport and the difficulties regulators face in the battle to prevent

inadvertent pathogen spread. Also, the tree health situation in the UK will be discussed to review the alarming number of tree diseases introduced over the past few years. Have changes in nursery practices contributed to the increase in plant pest introductions? What are the factors that lead to invasive species establishment? Given climate change, urbanization and increased global trade, how will our forests fare?

Clive Brassier, a renowned plant pathologist from the UK, says that the "movement of plants and plant products between biogeographical zones by human activities is now generally accepted to be the primary mode of introduction of exotic pathogens and pests. There is therefore a tension, in terms of risk to the cultural and natural environment, between the conservation and environmental responsibilities of horticulturalists, foresters, garden designers and landscape architects and their desire for novel material or (these days) cheaper plants and instant trees." Exotic plant pathogens have been causing damage to native plant communities for over a century. As Master Gardeners we should keep informed about this to effectively educate the public.



Letter From The President

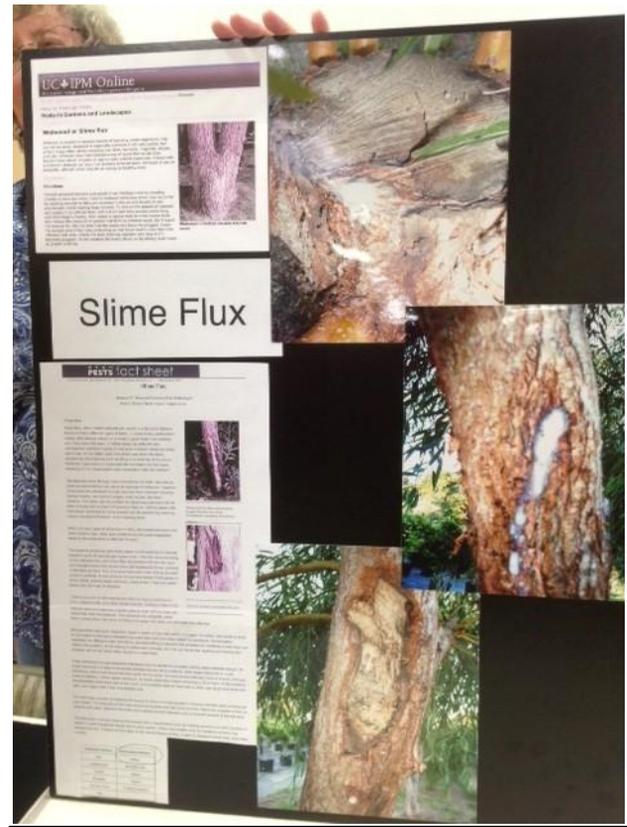
By Phyllis Turrill

Your Board keeps me on my toes and I certainly return the favor. We're always coming up with ideas. Sometimes, when I say I have an idea you probably can hear a collective groan. The problem with ideas always is then what do you do with them. Where do you start? Who is going to own it? Is this something that will

appeal to the membership? In many cases, I feel a little like we are working in a vacuum. We can't possibly know what you're thinking (isn't that a frightening thought?). What is your passion or vision? I want people feeling heard and not leaving because we are not addressing their interests.

Let's reverse the negativity of "oh, we can't do that." Bring us a proposal and let's see if we can make it work. No idea is stupid or outlandish. Let's get out there and come up with ideas to build community, forge partnerships, alliances, collaborations. I can't say this enough, **this is your organization**. If something isn't working and needs changing, we want to hear about it. If you have an idea, bring it on!

On another note, we have lost too many MGs this year. Life happens and sometimes you just want a change. However, a recurring theme seems to be "I don't like the politics." What exactly does that mean? Is it the differences of opinion, conflicts, poor leadership, gossip, policies? When I hear that, I certainly find it distressing, but it's not constructive and doesn't tell me what we can do better. I want suggestions how to improve. As our organization continues to grow, so do the challenges. You are a volunteer, giving of your time to do a service to your community and in turn getting satisfaction. Whether you give 25 hours or 300, it doesn't matter. I wholeheartedly appreciate all you do and seriously care that you are happy. I want to know if you're not.



September Meeting Recap

By Diane Barlow

Mimi Enright gave out badges to Central County MG Phil McRae, South County MG Linda Robertson and West County MG Patty Gundry.

We had a "Stump the Experts" plant clinic led by Ann Chambers, Judie Johnson, Penny Martin and Diane Virdee. They brought in samples of new things to watch out for, including a tree problem that is not supposed to have made it to our area—but has.

It started off with Ann Chambers talking about three problems she had. The first being Slim Flux, a bacterial infection on her golden willows. She researched and found information using Utah State University Cooperative Extension's Pest fact sheet. Go to the link: <http://utahpests.usu.edu/IPM/htm/ornamentals/landscape-insects-and-diseases/slime-flux> for a detailed description and pictures. She was able to treat the problem using a sharp knife and a 10% dilution of bleach. Her second problem was splits all around her California Native willow. This is the first year she has seen it

other trees. There are splits all around the trunk but other than the splits the tree has no problems. Her third problem was Fusiform Rust on her white pine. She made up beautiful boards with pictures and descriptions of each.

Diane Virdee talked about bronzing of her rhododendrons, blueberries and dogwood. Her soil had a pH of 6 and her water had a pH of 5.5. She found out that the lower the pH the more the plant is able to take up iron so her problem was iron toxicity. Surprisingly, her azaleas are doing well. She also brought in a sample of leaf spot on her blackberries.

Penny Martin brought in fruit from her trombocino squash. A normal fruit, one with blossom end rot and an unrecognizable fruit, all from the same plant. She also brought in milkweed with yellow aphids and dahlia leaves with leaf minors. She has a rule that I love, "If a plant is not happy at my house, I buy a new plant."

Judy Johnson brought in rhododendron leaves that had spider mites and talked about her Golden Delicious Apple tree.



Master Gardener of the Month Cheryl Belitsky

By Diane Barlow

Cheryl Belitsky helped her Mother in her garden as she was growing up. Her Mom did a lot of canning and preserving, and so as a family they had an appreciation for home grown vegetables and fruit. Her husband, David, grew up in the same

type of household so when they bought their first house, one of their first projects was changing the gardens and getting started on their own vegetable garden. They moved many times over the years and learned to grow and maintain plants in Texas, Wyoming, Arizona, and California. She and her husband manage a large estate in Sonoma and are responsible for the landscape, including olives trees, ornamentals, vegetable gardens and fruit trees.

Cheryl is an East County Master Gardener and joined the program in 2009. When asked what prompted her to volunteer for the SCMG program, her response was: "I have been interested in the Master Gardener program since I first began stopping to ask questions at the local Farmer's Markets in Arizona. I did look into the program in Flagstaff, AZ, but couldn't attend the trainings because of work. When we moved to Sonoma, I was able to arrange to take the training classes. This part of California offers a unique opportunity to garden year round and I wanted to learn more about what the possibilities would be and how to try to do it right! I also liked the idea of learning about the science of gardening by being under the auspices of the UC system. Another interest of mine is exploring the options for people that will enable anyone to enjoy gardening, regardless of their physical abilities."

Some of the activities that she participates in are the Sudden Oak Death group, the BBY 2014 Education Committee, volunteering at the Sonoma (city) MG desk, and at the Sonoma Farmer's Market. She also enjoys working on the Sonoma Community Center Waterwise Garden and has served on the committee for the Rosalind Creasy and John Greenlee presentations.

When asked what her most rewarding experiences as a Master Gardener were so far, her response was: "The experiences that I enjoy the most are working at the information tables at the Farmer's Market, the County Fair, and at the desk answering questions (email and some phone questions). It is great to be able to research information and then share the knowledge with someone who is interested in

the answer (or at least the information that you share). My other favorite is the SOD group. We have a great group of Master Gardeners and leader, and I have learned so much by being part of this group. I like the fact that there is always an opportunity to learn, through your own research, attending the library series, talking to other Master Gardeners and listening to what the public has to offer, and the opportunities for workshops through the statewide MG program. Learning is a lifelong pursuit and I am realizing that more and more as I go through life! And I guess, one more thing, I love being able to share the information that I have learned in the MG program as well as the fruits of our labor (fruits, veggies, herbs, etc.) with my daughter, son-in-law and grandson. Alex started before he was a year old, enjoying the garden – flowers, fruit and veggies!”

Cheryl also volunteers at Quarry Hill Botanical Gardens. She has enjoyed learning about the flora of Asia as that has provided interesting background information regarding the plants that are common in North American landscapes.

Heirloom Expo 2013

by Diane Barlow

The Sonoma County Master Gardeners shared an information table with the Marin County Master Gardeners at the Expo. On two separate evenings there was only one SCMG at the table. People signed up early on VMS filling all slots, leaving others to believe they didn't have a chance. In the future, it's a good idea to check again a few days before the event to find out if someone cancelled.



SCMG Janet Thorp (on left)



SCMG Bob Cronbach

More Heirloom Expo Photos

By Sandy Metzger



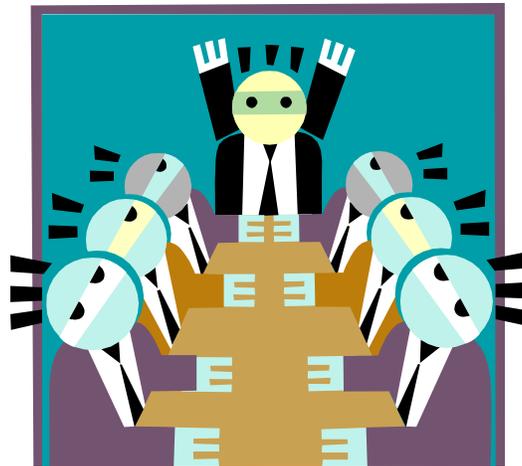
SCMG Heidi and Worms



SCMG Suzanne Young



Squash Mountain



Minutes of the Sonoma County Master Gardeners

Board of Directors Meeting, September 4, 2013

By Kathleen Fitzgerald-Orr

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm.

Board Members Present: Marsha Anderson, Jennifer Dornbush, Nicole Fainaru-Wadu, Kathleen Fitzgerald-Orr, Susan Foley, Kate Hale, Jerilynn Jenderseck, Mike Johnson, Phyllis Turrill.

Guests: Susan Angell, Mimi Enright, Pauline Haro, Phil McRae, and Kim Pearson.

Members Absent: Bonnie Walner, Ellyn Mavalwalla.

Approval of Agenda: Petaluma Garden Report rescheduled to the October Board Meeting. **Motion and resolution to approve the revised agenda.**

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: **Motion and resolution to approve the corrected August 2013 minutes .**

SCMG Member Comment and Questions and Public Comment: None

Agenda Item #1: Sonoma Garden Park: Susan Angell presented project summary including an update on the 658 garden contacts with children, parents, and teachers from September 2012 to September 2013. The children ranged in age from five to twelve. This is the most contacts they have had in the seven years at the Garden Park. Susan shared a photo album with pictures of children she served and her favorite stories. The Sonoma Master Gardeners are commended for the work and planning they have done to turn this garden into a showplace for BBY 2014. The board expressed their gratitude to Susan and her co-workers for their ongoing work in making the Master Gardener Program more visible in Sonoma.

Agenda Item #2: Library Series & Speaker's Bureau: Pauline Haro reported on both the Library Series and Speaker's Bureau in Jean Hopeman's absence. Pauline did an overview of the past year's activities in the Library Series. The contact numbers are building, and the sessions are well-attended. Only one speaker graduated this year's Speaker's Training (due to illness and travel needs.) Pauline advised the Board that an Access Speaker List is now available on VMS and that Gwen Kilchherr is now available to speak on berries. Pauline expressed gratitude for Janet Norton's publicity work. The board recognized Pauline's excellent work in coordinating the Library Series & Speaker's training.

Agenda Item #3: Additional JI Greenhouse Proposal: Kim Pearson outlined the need for and benefits of purchasing an additional shade house for use at Jail Industries. This purchase would accommodate the inventory of plants needed for BBY 2014 as well as contribute to the working relationship we have with the staff at Jail Industries. Jennifer Dornbush advised the Board that the funds could be allocated from the Master Gardeners' Donors Account.

Motion and Resolution to approve the Proposal of an Additional Greenhouse at \$800.00.

Agenda Item #4: Treasurer's Report : Jennifer Dornbush discussed the need for a line item account for communication and requested \$250.00 for Constant Contact. She also presented details concerning the Training Budget for the upcoming 2014 Master Gardener Training Class.

Motion and Resolution to approve the expenditure for Constant Contact and the budget for the 2014 training class.

Agenda Item #5: Garden Sense Update;- Phyllis Turrill presented an update of the Garden Sense Program. Brochures for use with clients are currently being printed. Phyllis expressed gratitude for the outstanding work Susan Foley did on the brochures and for Jerilynn Jenderseck's extensive plant database. Garden Sense teams will be attending further classes on irrigation, sheet mulching, garden layout, as well as further training with Sara Malone, Rosemary McCreary, and Sandy Metzger.

Agenda Item #6: Coordinator's report: Mimi Enright advised the Board that there are currently 52 applications for the 2014 training Class. She also presented an update on Latino Outreach- the anticipated grant funding is not available but the plan may proceed using funds from Waste Management and working with Wanda Tapia with Latino Service Providers. The proposed program would include outreach, translation services, and possibly additional publications in Spanish. Jerilynn and Nicole also gave an update on ideas of facilitating a smooth transition for new members as well as increasing retention of members.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM.



Desk Log Report for August 2013

By Jim Lang, Sonoma County Master Gardener
Edited by Paul Vossen

Santa Rosa Desk Calls	111
Sonoma Desk Calls	10
E-Mails	21

The following Master Gardeners worked the desk during August:

Linda Barber	Judie Johnson	Doreen Proctor
Cheryl Belitsky	Joanna Kemper	Leslie Quadres
Anne Brewer	Diane Kenworthy	Jen Roberts
Heidi Burke	Glenda Klaucke	Linda Robertson
Janet Calhoon	Ellen Knudson	Heather Smith
Ann Chambers	Joni Lateer	Valerie Stannard
Suzanne Clarke	Ann Lowings	Marilny Van Dam
Bob Cornbach	Mary Mariani	Bonnie Walner
Linda Cushman	Penny Martin	Gail Wolf
Judy Dides	Phil Mcrae	Stuart Wren
Donna Diehl	Ellyn Mauawalla	Suzanne Young
Diane Einstein	Alison Ogden	Ellen Zaslansky
Dorothy Fast	Tweedy Olson	Susan Ziblatt
Kathleen Fitzgerald-Orr	Mary Osterle	
Helen Giss	Cathy Peterson	
Patty Gundry	Ann Peden	

GROUND SQUIRRELS

I am having a lot of trouble with ground squirrels. What are some options in dealing with these guys?

Assuming that you would like to get rid of the squirrels, the best approach for most people is to trap them. Using poison bait is another option, but the possible collateral damage that can occur to other species is not something that you would want to see happen. Traps are available that work very well on squirrels and the only bait needed is regular peanuts. The only unpleasant part of trapping is the need to kill the squirrels, unless you want to take a long ride everyday to relocate them which is only dumping your problem onto someone else. Most accomplish the task of killing the squirrels by drowning them. If left in the trap, they will die fairly quickly if left in the sun, but this seems like a cruel thing to do since it takes time and is hard on the animals. Shooting them is another option, but then a lot of people don't like using guns and it can get messy. A friend of mine is using a trap that he

got on line from THE TRAP MAKER and he is having great success. A search on line will give you plenty of options.

Pest notes, <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7438.html> the official UC site that we should be using to provide answers to this type of question has the following info on ground squirrels:

- there are many types of traps, that can be baited with several different things and it does not mention peanuts
- shooting with guns is mentioned, but it is indicated as not being very effective
- habitat management is noted (PV)

HYDRANGEA

I want to plant some hydrangeas. What is the preferred soil for these plants?

Hydrangeas do best when grown in rich, porous soil, so prepare your soil well prior to planting. **And be able to give them shade and plenty of daily water in the summer. PV**

LAVENDER

I have some ten year old lavender plants that have become woody. I really don't want to have to replace these plants. What options do I have?

To keep lavender plants neat and compact, shear back by one third to one half or even more. If this doesn't solve the problem, replace the plants. Replacement might need to occur every five to seven years, so your plants might just be overdue.

MOLES

I have a mole causing damage in my garden. I really don't want to trap them because I have a dog and he could be injured if he digs up the trap. Would using poison be a better option?

NO. There is a far greater chance of your pet being sickened or killed when using poison. Other creatures can also be harmed if they get access to a poison. While it is possible to use poison safely, it takes some effort and thought and is never full proof. Try this. Go ahead and use a mole trap. After you have placed your trap, cover the area with a plastic milk crate that lets light and air get to the area, not a solid one. These crates can be purchased at many stores and are not hard to find nor are they expensive. If you think that your dog will move the crate, anchor it. A large rock might be enough depending on the size of your dog, or you can use metal or wood stakes driven alongside the crate to make it impossible for the crate to be moved. With a little thought, you can come up with a solution. Trapping moles can be difficult, much more so than trapping gophers, so it might be a good investment to spend some time attending a class that will teach you how to approach trapping so that you have a better chance of being successful. **Or you could watch Caddy Shack. PV**

OLIVE

I have peacock spot on my ornamental olive tree. Should I spray something on it now or wait until Fall?

Chemical control of peacock spot is usually not warranted unless the damage is severe. If the damage is severe, wait until fall, just before the first rains begin to apply the proper fungicide.

PEARS

I am harvesting my pears but they are soft, mushy and brown on the inside. Why?

You left the pears on the tree too long. Next year, once the fruit is full sized, check every couple of days until you see one or two pears turning yellow. At that point, if you rotate the pears upward against the stem, they should separate from the tree easily. If so, harvest the whole tree at one time. Place the pears inside the house in at room temperature and they will ripen in a few days. Placing some of the crop in the refrigerator will extend the time that you will have to enjoy them. Once taken out and place at room temperature, they too will ripen in a few days. **It is a combination of harvesting too late and high temperature. Bartlett pears can easily get cooked inside as they ripen if we get high temperatures above about 85°F, which we did. PV**

RHUBARB

Can I keep harvesting my rhubarb this late in the season. (AUGUST)

How long you harvest your rhubarb depends on a couple of factors such as the age of the plant, size of the plant, etc. When harvesting, never remove all of the leaves from a plant and stop harvesting when slender leafstalks begin to appear. At that point, the plant needs a rest. **Or just keep harvesting but always leave at least half of the plant stalks. PV**

SQUASH

I have powdery mildew on my squash plants. Why is this occurring?

Powdery mildew is caused by moisture which could come from irrigation, rain, fog or just damp air. Severely infected leaves can be removed and destroyed. The spores of this disease are in the environment and will develop when conditions are to its liking. Squash grown in warm, dry weather are less likely to develop mildew. Usually, the damage caused will not kill the plant until later in the season when the plant is ready to die anyway. Once conditions are consistently favorable to mildew, nothing you can do will prevent the plant from dying.

STUMP SUCKERS

I had a liquid amber tree removed but the stump remains. Suckers are coming up from the stump. If I spray roundup on these suckers, will damage occur to other trees that are in the area?

NO. As long as you spray when it is calm and do not get any herbicide on other growth, no damage will occur. Damage only happens to the plant material which is sprayed.

SUNFLOWER

When is the best time to harvest sunflowers in order to save the seeds to feed to birds?

When the back on the head is gradually becoming yellow and then brown, and the bracts become yellow and brown, the stage of physiological maturing is reached. You most likely will know when the seeds are ripe by watching the birds. They know.



SCMG Marketplace

NOTE: *Postings will appear for two consecutive months or please notify the editor (lindros@yahoo.com) when items are no longer available.*



SCMG Open Positions

Training Committee Leaders
Hospitality Leader
Desk Log Coordinator



Check the website calendar www.sonomamastergardeners.org for the workshops being held this month.

South County Book Club: The book club that is held in South County is entitled “Book Club Held in South County”. So that no one assumes that it is only for South County Master Gardeners, everyone is invited. It is held the fourth Tuesday of the month from 3:00 to 5:00. October’s meeting will be held October 22 at Don and Sue Deal’s home in Petaluma. The book to be discussed will be The Language of Flowers by Vanessa Diffenbaugh.

Our November book is The Earth Moved by Amy Stewart.

West County Book Club: Sunday, October 13, at the home of Penny Martin, from 3-5 pm. We will discuss The Drunken Botanist, The Plants That Create the World’s Great Drinks by Amy N. Stewart. Amy is the award-winning author of six books related to gardening, many read by members of this book club. She is the renowned horticulturist who spoke to our group in 2005 about earthworms and her book, The Earth Moved. The book club is open to all Master Gardeners.

Our November book is What a Plant Knows, A Field Guide to the Senses by Daniel Chamovitz. “This book is full of scientific studies which have helped us to understand plants over time” (from a Book Review by Kelly Brenner).

.Please bring your suggestions for books to read in 2014. We do not meet in December.

NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE: The editorial deadline is the 20th of each month. Please submit your articles on or before that date to the editor, Linda Rose, at lindros@yahoo.com. The production deadline (the date the newsletter goes to print) is the 25th of the month.

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