

The Monterey Bay Master Gardeners

What's Happening in the MBMG

June 2010

The 13th Annual Masters Tour
MBMGs in the Spotlight at Farmers Markets
The Garden Faire 2010
Urban Agriculture
Spam
Hotline Calendar

The 13th Annual Masters Tour From Garden to Table: A Harvest of Food and Flowers.

What's Happening To Date....

Remember all the "Y2K" press and hoopla at the turn of this new century? Every time you turned on the radio or TV, there it was... Y2K...Y2K...Y2K. That's how I feel about writing one more article/email about the Masters Tour. People are going to roll their eyeballs over this.

As a co-chair and one of the garden owners, things were wearing pretty thin for me about this tour. So much organizational work and so much work to get the garden in shape. Then I went shopping for veggies to display in the photo shoot we did for the Tour poster. It was one of those "Ah Ha" moments. And it renewed my commitment to WHY we do all the work required to make the Tour a success.

The Tour gardens represent living classrooms open to the public. It's an opportunity to visually educate people about those food truths we intellectually understand but don't know how to bring to fruition. This year's focus on edibles in the garden is meant to bring home the message: grow your own!

The money raised by the Tour becomes the grant money we distribute for school gardens. We also bankroll contributions to groups like the Homeless Garden Project and other food-growing ventures. For many months, MGs Barbara Gordon, Bonnie Pond and I worked on the infrastructure for building community gardens. Some how we got sidetracked but we do need to get that project going again. Here's why...

A trip through Safeway's produce aisles netted 6 plastic bags of just about every fruit and veggie sold by this conglomerate. Normally I do not shop for produce at Safeway. But I knew that compared to New Leaf and Whole Foods, Safeway was going to be the cheapest place to buy a trunk-full of farm items, except perhaps at a farmers market.

Six bags is not a lot of greens. But the price tag for the trip was NINETY DOLLARS... \$90 for six bags of items that would spoil in a week because they are not processed and pumped full of chemicals. Here's a quick view of the register receipt (and a Safeway card was used!):

Bell peppers: 2 orange and 5 yellow = \$18
Artichokes: 4 jumbo = \$15.96 (geez... Castroville is a 25 minute drive from my house!!)
Iceberg lettuce: 2 heads = \$3.98
Romaine lettuce: 3 heads = \$5.97
Squash: 1 yellow = \$4.14
The kicker.....
Tomatoes: 3 on the vine = \$7.66
etc etc etc

Here's the "Ah Ha" moment... **WHY** would a family in these economic times spend \$90 on veggies when they could spend \$90 and get 90 meal items at Taco Bell? Or 90 hamburgers at Burger King? Or 45 frozen dinners from Pak & Save? They wouldn't!! Throw out the argument about food quality, health issues and carbon footprints. They don't count when you have to choose between a tomato at \$2.55 and an entire meal for \$3 at Kentucky Fried Chicken. And let's be honest.... Give a kid a choice between a tomato and a taco – the tomato does not stand a chance.

If our Masters Tour can educate just 100 people out of a 1000 about how to grow a veggie garden at home, look what we've done to change the course of health and happiness for 100 families. Gardens are like Twitter and

Facebook and other social networks. You plant one in a neighborhood and the rest of the neighborhood gets the message.

On a practical note, here are some scheduled garden work days. You are all invited to help in any garden as much or as little as you can:

Gail Williamson Garden: incredible arboretum-grade 2+ acres on the edge of UCSC. Wednesday, June 9, 1 – 3. Team Leader: Michele Whizin: mwhizin@gmail.com

Cynthia Jordan Garden: near UCSC, 97% ornamentals. Saturday, June 12, 9 - ?. Team Leader: Jane Godley: gdly4@aol.com

Monterey Bay Master Gardeners in the Spotlight at Farmers Markets

MBMGs and Farmer's Markets...they go together like tomatoes and lettuce, vinegar and oil, goat cheese and warm bread, eggs and spinach.

We are fortunate to have a great relationship with Monterey Bay Certified Farmers Market, the non-profit organization that oversees four Farmer's Market sites around the Bay. They provide us with a forum for advertising our various events. They also give us center stage at their workshops so that we can "show off" the Master Gardener program.

Mark your calendar for the following presentations by some very talented MGs:

Aptos Farmers Market (Cabrillo College):

July 17 @ 10:00: MG Candice McLaren "Talking Chickens"

August 21 @ 9:30: MG Bonnie Pond teaching Pique Assiette (broken dishes/tile)

Del Monte Farmers Market in Whole Foods parking lot:

August 22 @ 10:00: Candice McLaren "Talking Chickens", encore performance

Hope to see you there.

The Garden Faire 2010

The Garden Faire, 2010 is What's Happening on Saturday, June 26th at Skypark in Scotts Valley. The event builds on the experiences of the past four years, and always introduces new ideas while continuing the features that everyone enjoys. As always, admission is free and opportunities to learn about sustainable gardening (and buy garden stuff) are plentiful. Our theme this year is "Rediscovering our Roots," honoring time-tested ways to be environment-friendly.

Check thegardenfaire.org for the latest info on Sponsors, Exhibitors, Partners, Friends and Volunteer Opportunities.

Tom Karwin, '99 and Sheryl McEwan, '03, Co-chairs

Urban Agriculture

Here are several citations for recent articles in newspapers regarding Urban Agriculture.

- 1) "An Urban Farmer slow His Legacy", NY Times paper copy not sure of date but it is recent
- 2) "Two Ways to let your plants climb the walls", S. F. Chronicle, Home section, May 23, 2010 paper copy
- 3) "Documenting The Roots of Organic Farming", Sentinel, B3, May 26, 2010 paper copy

Barbara

Spam

The word Spam used to mean Spiced Ham or Specially Processed American Meats (for the English market in WWII). I've also seen "backronyms" like: Something Posing As Meat, Specially Processed Artificial Meat, Stuff, Pork and Ham, Spare Parts Animal Meat, and Special Product of Austin Minnesota. According to Hormel's trademark guidelines, Spam should be spelled with all capital letters and treated as an adjective, as in the phrase 'SPAM luncheon meat.' (Wikipedia)

I actually like SPAM, the food kind, especially fried like bacon. However, I get quite annoyed with the electronic kind of spam. Wikipedia calls it "the abuse of electronic messaging systems (including most broadcast media, digital delivery systems) to send unsolicited bulk messages indiscriminately." I call it dead annoying.

There's an indication that using the name of SPAM (the food) for repeated, unsolicited digital messages came from "the spam skit by Monty Python's Flying Circus. In the sketch, a restaurant serves all its food with lots of spam, and the waitress repeats the word several times in describing how much spam is in the items. When she does this, a group of Vikings (don't ask) in the corner start a song: "Spam, spam, spam, spam, spam, spam, spam, spam, lovely spam! Wonderful spam!" Until told to shut up." (Wikipedia, of course.)

Believe it or not, there's a webpage that provides the history of the use of the word spam -- the electronic kind: <http://keithlynch.net/spamline.html>. Thank you, Keith Lynch.

So, what's my point? Recently, some extremely well-meaning MGs submitted a lovely ad to Craigslist asking folks who have gardening questions to contact the MBMGs. Unfortunately, they provided mbmg@mbmgs.org as the contact email rather than hotline@mbmgs.org. (Please correct me if I'm wrong, but, as I recall, we did not receive one email with a legitimate gardening question.)

I see that the unwanted messages have dwindled. Hopefully, soon they'll stop altogether. Spam, spam, spam, spam ---shut up!!!

Christina Kriedt, MG06
Webmaster

HOTLINE Calendar for June 2010

Hotline June (current as of June 1)				
To sign up for a shift, contact Martye 831-633-6435 or martyel@prodigy.net				
May 31 CLOSED	June 1	June 2 Dianne Yost	June 3	June 4 Melita Israel, T T Hickman, S Rich, Y Geller
June 7 Mercy Rosario, Paul McCollum, T C Griffith	June 8	June 9 Michael Reid	June 10	June 11 G O'Conner, C King, Melita Israel
June 14 T M Whizin, T S Dautoff	June 15	June 16 Phyllis Hilton	June 17	June 18 T M Whizin
June 21 Joy Hickey	June 22	June 23 Michael Reid	June 24	June 25 Franis Grate
June 28 E Franco, M Franco, F Grate	June 29	June 30 Michael Reid	July 1	July 2

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