



University of California

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Master Gardener Program

July, August, September 2024

Summer is Here!!

### Chair Notes - Judy

I look forward to working with you as we continue expanding our mission of providing research-based knowledge and information on home horticulture, pest-management, and sustainable landscape practices to our community here in Merced County!

First, let me thank all of you for a successful year of community engagement! You've contributed in presenting monthly community workshops, staffing our Farmers Markets and County Fair booths, creating and distributing public and internal newsletters, answering helpline questions, growing plant starts for give-aways, contributing to UC Merced's Community Garden, building both an award-winning County Fair demonstration garden and an education booth, and reactivating school gardens programs! Don't forget designing, facilitating, mentoring or enrolling in the 2024 MG Training class! Whew!

Welcome to our 2024 First-Year Master Gardeners: Jacquie, Dennis, Kristen, Hunter, Bri, Corina, Dino, Michael P, Karen, Sandino, and Michael S. We are glad you've joined us and look forward to working with you,

Please join me in thanking Mindy Muchmore-Thompson for her leadership, focus, and organizational acumen the past two years as President. Also, please join me in extending a hearty thank you to Jay Hawkes (Past President) and Debbie Morrow (Member at Large), for their contributions of time, energy, and perspective over the past two years, as they rotate off the executive committee.

I thank Mary Shasky (Treasurer) and Cathy Fossum (Secretary), Tom Dinwoodie (Volunteer Coordinator), and Maxwell Norton (UC Advisor- Emeritus) for continuing to contribute in their roles. I look forward to Denise Glassett (Vice President) and Bri Freeman (Member-at-Large) joining the Executive Committee.

Come to our Monday, July 8th, General Meeting from 5:30 - 8 pm to celebrate our successes this past year, learn more about ongoing projects, and to welcome our new members. Dinner (sandwiches, salad, and water) will be provided. We'll meet in our usual place - the UCCE classroom at [2145 Wardrobe Ave., Merced.](#)

All the best,  
Judy



Mindy, Judy, and Tom

## Garden To-Do's:

By Pat Shay

*[Note from Delores: Pat was unable to write her usual column of garden chores and asked me to recycle one from the past. This was July 2023. It still seems relevant (wet winters, hot summers). Join me in wishing Pat a speedy recovery from a broken leg.]*

In a normal year we would be considering ways to maintain moisture levels and guarding against searing temps. We can probably expect the heat to hit. Mulching is the order of the day. This practice helps plants maintain uniform moisture levels, supports plant health and leads to good harvests. As always, maintain a couple of inches of clear ground around the base of your plants – avoid letting the mulch touch plant material.

We cannot be lulled into thinking that the heat won't hit, so it is important to stay current with the weather forecast and adjust automatic watering systems accordingly. As has been mentioned many, many times, IF you still have a lawn, it is much more efficient to set sprinklers for two rotations in the morning – one at around 5 a.m. for ten to fifteen minutes and again around 6 a.m. for the same amount of time. The lawn can absorb the water it receives and utilize it properly, as opposed to one 20 – 30 minute cycle which leads to waste, or the dreaded 'urban drool' when water goes down the drain rather than onto your lawn.

Again on the lawn – adjust your mower (or tell your gardener to adjust his) to a somewhat higher level – lawn will use less water than if it is 'skinned'.

- Put some color in your yard – add salvias (reds, blues, purples) and other perennials and/or self-seeders such as coreopsis, gaillardia, rudbeckia or add annuals such as rock rose (portulaca) and zinnias. Both of the latter bloom like crazy for weeks and weeks and thrive in the heat.
- Give your houseplants a vacation – put them outside! More delicate ones can go on a shaded patio or under an overhang on an east or north facing wall. Use the mist setting on a sprinkler to get rid of dust.
- Give mature trees long, slow waterings with a bubbler once a month. The drought was VERY unkind to mature trees and this winter's wonderful rains have helped them considerably, but monthly deep watering will keep them healthy.

Summer is probably the most difficult and demoralizing time of year to garden. Veggie garden and fruit bushes/trees are ready to provide a bumper harvest for which we can be grateful, but ornamentals take a particular beating in this weather and it is up to us to adjust our approach to maximize meager water and combat sizzling temps. What we do in July is equally relevant in September for us.

Water Considerations: Look at your yard/garden from a structural perspective. There are the permanent, foundational plantings like trees and large shrubs which are the lynchpins for your overall landscape. Make sure that trees get the water they need first, followed by large shrubs/bushes. These are the elements that took the longest to grow and would be the most difficult to replace. Give them their due by making sure they get the water they need. This also includes your fruit trees. They are doing double duty at the moment...growing AND producing the fruit you're going to enjoy. Perennials are next and probably the easiest, because if you selected natives/low water varieties, they will use less water, still look good and provide nourishment and habitat for the creatures that make your garden come alive....birds and pollinators and the occasional wild-life visitor. Right along with perennials are your veggie garden plants. Their season is relatively short and they require a certain amount of water to produce the tomatoes, peppers, squash, etc. that you are planning to eat or preserve for eating in winter. By using water on them early in the day, they get the most of the application and you are rewarded with good production. Blossom end rot is a result of inconsistent watering and/or

## Garden To-Do's: Continued

calcium deficiency. Lessen by establishing/maintaining a watering routine and applying small doses of lime/gypsum. If you have chrysanthemums, be sure to cut them back early in July so that they are ready to bloom in mid-Fall. As buds begin to form, thin them for larger blooms. Annuals are last. Yes, they are lovely, but they are also expendable. Some take more water than they return in value in this difficult water time. Some look rather straggly at the end of the day but revive quite well with the next day's watering. You will do yourself a favor if you choose flowers that give you the most bang for the buck water-wise....like cosmos, portulaca (moss rose) and zinnias. If it is too tough to forego some dahlias, grow them in one place where they can all benefit from the least water. For everything: MULCH, MULCH, and MULCH. A good, thick layer of mulch helps limit evaporation – the plants get the benefits, not the atmosphere. Be careful to keep the mulch away from the base of each plant. Try to leave areas near the edges of your garden bare for the benefit of ground dwelling bees!

Make sure to keep birdbaths full – and clean periodically. If there is no edge that bees can land on, float a wine bottle cork or two so that they have somewhere to land to get their drink, or put a good-sized rock or two in the middle for a landing spot.

Another word on fruit trees. Hopefully they were thinned well in late spring, but if not, or not enough, be sure to provide staking to avoid breaking branches. As fruit ripens, be sure to keep any fruit that drops cleared from under the trees – that will avoid ant infestations and disease. If ants are climbing up to the fruit, use salad oil applied to the trunk/branches to foil their incursions.

As berries come to the end of production, cut back old canes and tie up new ones as they begin to grow. As we go later into summer and the leaves of iris/daffodils, etc. die off, it's time to dig up the bulbs to overwinter and/or share with friends. Deadhead roses as blossoms fade and give them a dose of fertilizer for the next round of bloom.

Begin to think about planting seed for winter veggies at the tail end of summer. Plan for winter/early spring flower seed as well....in hopes that we will again get the rain they need to do well. As your veggie garden fades, prepare to renew the beds by cultivating at least a foot deep and applying a good dressing of compost and fertilizer for those winter veggies you're contemplating.

- Fertilize camellias, azaleas, and rhododendrons as they begin to set buds in late summer/early fall. If they have a touch of yellow veining on leaves, apply a bit of iron.
- Provide first fertilization to citrus – you will do another application around November and again in January/ February.
- Trim back perennials as they fade so that they are ready to come back with cooler temps and hopefully rain. Divide the ones that have gotten very large or take cuttings and start new plants to put in other areas of your garden or to share. Trim a woody piece about three inches long, dip planting end in rooting compound, place in potting soil with vermiculite and keep slightly damp. (You can do the same with the cuttings you took from your chrysanthemums!)

***Don't wait for someone to bring you flowers. Plant your own garden and decorate your own soul.***

***Luther Burbank***

## Mary Shasky SPRING FIELD TRIP – April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Our first stop was at Intermountain Nursery in Prather where we were given the VIP treatment, meeting several of the employees who shared the history of the family-owned nursery and their focus on “native” plants. Intermountain is committed to providing both California native and non-native plants, which are grown in a respectful, sustainable way. Intermountain is a “growing nursery” meaning most of the one-gallon stock and bedding plants are propagated and grown onsite. Plants like Manzanita, Sage, Ceanothus, Oak, and Penstemon are just a few examples of what they grow from both cuttings and seeds. They can propagate up to 200 plants a day.

All the plants are identified to a “T”: botanical name, common name, plant description, size, bloom time, care, and elevation. The nursery is located along the confluence of Little Sandy and Big Sandy Creeks, at about 1,700 feet in elevation. Due to the convergence of these two waterways, the nursery receives cool overnight temperatures, providing a perfect location to grow plants that will become established at various locations from the Valley floor to 10,000 ft. elevation.

Our second stop was in Old Town Clovis at Blast & Brew for a delicious lunch and visiting time. After a drive through Old Town, we traveled to Clovis Botanical Gardens where we met our tour guide Anne who gave us some history of the three-acre property founded in the 1990’s with a mission to promote water conservation in the California Central Valley landscape through excellent gardens, exhibits, and programs that educate and inspire the public. We walked through the different garden areas that included Mediterranean, Cactus, Sensory, Children’s plus demo gardens. Several of the plants we recognized as plants that we had seen at the Intermountain Nursery! Over 500 members volunteer and support Clovis Botanical Garden.



## Merced County Fair: The Work Begins




*Rumor had it that DeEtte had super powers. If she donned the cape and waved her wand, all the aged and info booth work would be done. Too bad it didn't work.*

# Finished Product



DOCUMENT IS PRINTED ON CHEMICALLY REACTIVE PAPER - THE BACK OF THIS DOCUMENT INCLUDES A TAMPER EVIDENT CHEMICAL WASH WARNING BOX

 <p><b>Merced County Fair, 35th DAA</b>                  900 Martin Luther King Jr Way                  Merced, CA 95341                  209-722-1506                  Premium Account</p>	<p><b>MECHANICS BANK</b>                  800.797.6324                  90-203/4211</p>	<p><b>25165</b>                  6/11/2024</p>																											
<p>To The Merced County Master Gardeners Club                  Order 11492 E Savana Rd                  Of Le Grand, CA 95333</p>																													
<p>Pay *** One Thousand Five Hundred Twenty Five Dollars And No Cents ***</p>		<p><b>\$1,525.00</b></p>																											
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**Congrats to all the garden leaders & worker bees!**

Great job: long hours, dirty hands, sweaty brows but so worth it!

Thanks to Stepping Stone Nursery for the loan of plants and to all Master Gardeners who brought in plants and other items.

**Judge's Comments:** Beautiful plant material. Lovely hydrangeas. Lots of color throughout. Complementing components. Excellent height and interest.

**Pristine.**



Info Booth with Pat Shay, Denise Glassert, and Marilyn Manfredi



Ag Ed Booth by the new Master Gardeners with DeEtte's direction.

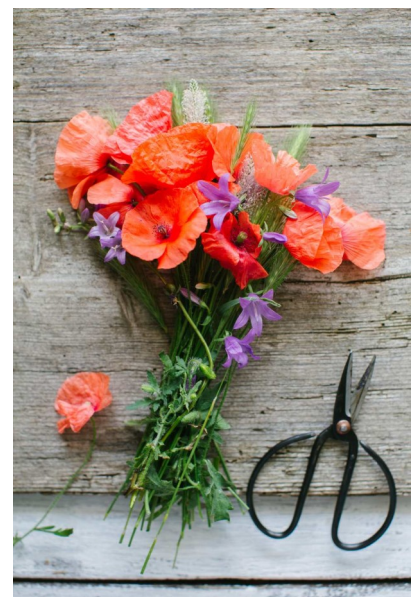
## Flower Power Quiz

1. Which 3 cut flowers are worldwide bestsellers?
2. About how many retail florists shops and wholesale cut flower distributors are in the U.S.?
3. How many cut flowers are purchased each day in America?
4. What benefits result from using cut flowers for decoration?

Answers below:

Quiz Answers:

1. Most favorites are roses, carnations, and chrysanthemums.
2. About 12,000 retail florists and approximately 500 wholesale distributors.
3. 10 billion cut flowers are purchased each day.
4. Benefits include reduced stress and improved sleep.



## Have an Interest in Gardening: Share It.

The Merced Master Gardener Newsletter is a quarterly newsletter, coming out January 1st, April 1st, July 1st, and October 1st (or close to). The articles are based on interest and events in the Master Gardening Community. If you are interested in submitting an article, just send the idea to Delores at [cabezut48@gmail.com](mailto:cabezut48@gmail.com) and she'll let you know an approximate length and the deadline for copy submission.

You can write about plants, tools, gardening ideas, gardening-related books you've read, conferences you've attended, field trips you've gone on, etc. Articles can include pics or not, depending on you. If you want to submit pics of interesting (or beautiful or unusual) plants (or flowers) from your garden, then that is ok as well.

Delores Cabezut-Ortiz and Cathy Dunn are the editors of the newspaper. They determine content length and are excellent copy editors. Anything submitted must conform to the rules of written English (or it will be by the time they finish). They are not reporters and cannot attend every event. Therefore, please remember to take pics of field trips or workshops attended and write up a few lines to submit to the newsletter (even just submitting the pics will help). Give it a try. All ideas and articles are welcomed.

### Garden Tours from April by Delores Cabezut-Ortiz.

These two garden tours were enjoyed by many of our master gardeners who arranged to meet and car pool to the various sites. I went to both and thoroughly enjoyed the days. I have already employed some of the great garden ideas we viewed. One was to use crockery crocks to decorate my garden instead of keeping them safely in the house. The other idea I plan to put into use is to create a garden plot for artichoke plants which I observed at several sites. The Vista was a great gathering and lunch for the Le Grand Tour. The Merced Tour started at Adam Gray's home on Bear Creek and included a peek at some of Susie Regert's wonderful art work. Both were well worth the price of the ticket.

MERCED GARDEN TOUR  
"ALONG THE GARDEN PATH"  
WED 4/17/2024  
10 AM - 3 PM  
LOCATIONS AVAILABLE  
WITH TICKET PURCHASE

Le Grand Garden Club  
presents  
"Generations of Gardens"  
4 Historic Gardens  
&  
Vendor Faire  
April 24, 2024  
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
\$30 per person  
Gourmet Box Lunch  
Included  
For ticket information:  
Please call 209 - 761 - 6717

# Do you have your Hours In? June 30th Has Come and Gone!

## LAVENDER FRESH FARM

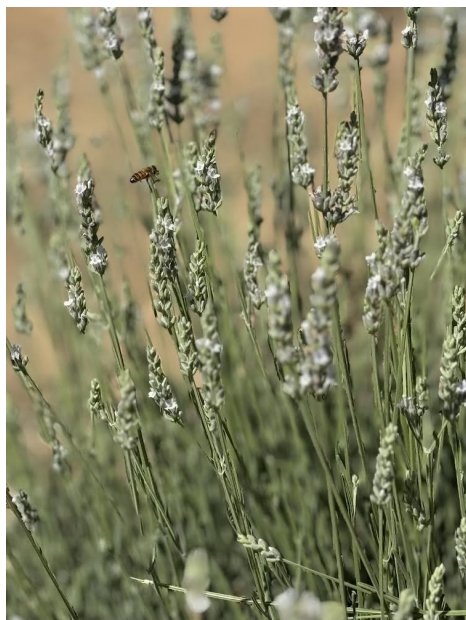
On Saturday June 15th, several Merced Master Gardeners journeyed on a field trip with the Fresno Master Gardeners to the Lavender Fresh Farm at 6790 West McKinley Ave, five miles west of Hwy 99 in Fresno.

*Lavender is known for its delicate aromatic fragrance. But lavender is more than just a fragrant plant. Essential oils derived from this versatile beauty may help relieve stress, chronic pain, high blood pressure, and asthma. In addition to its popularity for baking and making soaps, many people harvest it for floral arrangements and sachets!*

Master Gardener Richard Gillespie welcomed us to his Lavender Fresh Farm Saturday, June 15 from 9-11 AM. The group had an opportunity to gain experience about the many varieties of lavender growing there. Richard discussed soil type, irrigation, pollinators, and de-budding of the plants. He also demonstrated an observation beehive, releasing doves, and gave a tour of his distillery.

For this all outdoor event, the group was advised to plan for comfort by bringing hats, sunscreen, and water. There were also lavender plants for sale.

### Lavender Fresh Farm Photos by Lynn Sullivan



Do you see the lone bee on the lavender stem to the left?



## Information

### MMG Officer Slate for 2024-2026

**President:** Judy MacLaren  
**Vice-President:** Denise Glassett  
**Secretary:** Cathy Fossum  
**Treasurer:** Mary Shasky  
**Past President;** Mindy Muchmore-Thompson  
**Member-at-Large:** Bri Freeman  
**Volunteer Coordinator:** Tom Dinwoodie

Newsletter: Delores Cabezut-Ortiz/Cathy  
 Dunn cabezut48@gmail.com  
 Column & Photos Contributors: Every-  
 one: Mary S., Lynn, Pat S.,  
 Want to write a column? Let me know  
 the subject at [mmgnewsletr@yahoo.com](mailto:mmgnewsletr@yahoo.com)

#### Good to know gardening basics:

Merced/Atwater USDA Growing  
 Zone 9a ( low temperature range 20-  
 25°F)  
 Average First Frost 11/11-20 Aver-  
 age Last Frost 3/11-20

**High temperatures are fore-  
 cast for after the 4th. Take  
 care to hydrate, stay out of  
 the sun if possible, and check  
 on your friends. Keep your  
 pets shaded.**

### Meetings:

**Executive Board:** Last Thursday of  
 the month, 9:30-11:15.

**General Membership:** 2nd Monday  
 of the month at UCCE Office at  
 Wardrobe Ave, Merced, CA **No gen-  
 eral meeting is scheduled for June  
 or December.**

At least one evening meeting per  
 year, TBA.

**Always check the VMS Calen-  
 dar for meeting times.**

**Remember: Come to our Monday, July  
 8th, General Meeting from 5:30 - 8 pm to  
 celebrate our successes this past year, learn  
 more about ongoing projects, and to wel-  
 come our new members. Dinner  
 (sandwiches, salad, and water) will be pro-  
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For info on  
 the MG Pro-  
 gram, click  
 the QR  
 Code..



Merced Master Gardeners

[ucanr.edu](http://ucanr.edu)

**HELPLINE:** Look at the VMS to sign up for the Helpline, Monday  
 afternoons and Thursday mornings. If you need training, contact  
 Marilynne Manfredi or Debbie Morrow if you have ???'s.