



University of Hawai'i Master Gardener Program

Maui Memoires

By Kim Perry, MG Coordinator, Kaua'i

Last month, Master Gardeners from across the islands joined together on Maui for the 2014 Statewide Conference. It was wonderful to have representatives from all five of the University of Hawaii (UH) Master Gardener (MG) Programs present at the event, including a large delegation of nine Master Gardeners from Kauai. Continuing the celebration of Cooperative Extension's Centennial Anniversary, the theme of this year's conference was "Celebrating 100 Years of Extending Knowledge and Changing Lives." On Friday October 24th, MGs gathered for an evening of food, games, and fun at the Pukalani Community Center, which offered breathtaking sunset views from the slopes of Haleakala.



Welcome night at the Pukalani Community Center

On Saturday, we piled onto the bus and embarked on a full day of educational and inspirational upcountry farm and garden tours. Our first stop was Maui Farm Inc., a community based non-profit organization that delivers farm-based horticultural therapy programs to families that are homeless due to domestic violence and other economic challenges.



Master Gardener Tour Bus



No dig beds at the Maui Farm Inc.

Our second stop was the Kula Botanical Garden, nestled in the slopes of Haleakala. This gorgeous 8-acre site housed a plethora of unique and wonderful plants and landscape features including waterfalls, a secluded koi pond, an aviary and a carved Tiki exhibit.



Carved Tiki exhibit at the Kula Botanical Garden

Our third stop was a picnic lunch at a park, overlooking the coast. The views were so incredible it was difficult to leave. But we had 3 more tours ahead, so we boarded the bus and journeyed to our fourth stop, the Maui Native Nursery, a small nursery dedicated to providing the highest quality native plant material for statewide reforestation and landscaping. We were all impressed by the creativity, dedication and hard work of the small crew there.



Picnic in the park



Maui Native Nursery

Our final stops included tours and tastings at two small family farms, the Kula Bean Coffee Farm, dedicated to growing quality beans without the use of synthetic pesticides, herbicides, chemicals or fertilizers, and the Greanleaf Farm, a permaculture farm dedicated to the maintenance of perennial agricultural systems, which mimic natural systems.



Kula Bean Coffee Farm



Greanleaf Farm

Following the tours, we met at Cary and Eddie's Hideaway, a lovely venue near the Kahalui Harbor, for a Volunteer Recognition Banquet and Awards Ceremony to acknowledge the exceptional contributions our volunteers have made to the Program. Three Kauai Master Gardeners were present to receive their awards. The Outstanding Leadership Award was presented to Eben K. Manini, who has shown extraordinary passion and commitment to our mission and has consistently involved and inspired his fellow volunteers to achieve program goals. Thomas G. Timmons received the Outstanding Service Award, which recognizes exemplary service and exceptional amount of hours of volunteer time contributed to the Program. Finally, the Outstanding Public Outreach Award was presented to Patricia D. Fallbeck for her exceptional talent and dedication working with the gardening public and for her work developing and administering an exceptional school garden program.



2014 Master Gardener Awards Recipients

The third day of the conference was dedicated to Advanced Training for volunteers, with excellent talks in a variety of topics delivered by local experts. All-in-all it was a wonderful event for Master Gardeners to learn, share, and grow together.

Upon returning home, we asked Kauai attendees to share their thoughts about the conference and their personal highlights from the event.

Here's what they had to say:

Attending the statewide conference gave me the opportunity to make new friends who share similar interests. I was able to see and hear personal stories and learn how passions turned into profits. The weekend was fun filled for all who chose to attend. - Rachele Bachran, 2014 MG Intern

Some of our 2014 graduating class jumped at the chance to participate in the 2014 State of Hawaii Master Gardener Conference which was held in Kahului, Maui in October 2014. All of us enjoyed the Conference immensely and we thank our fellow Maui Master Gardeners for a terrific presentation of your upcountry gardens.

We visited some beautiful gardens: amazing protea "trees" in a utopia of nature, upcountry Maui. Aquaponics for organic farming was truly impressive, feeding communities healthy organic foods using less water in propagation and growth.

But the farm which won my heart was the Maui Organic Farm. Here, wonderful, caring people come together to grow organic food and also nourish the souls of individuals who have had to endure lives with domestic abuse.

On the farm is a lovely conglomeration of homes surrounded by organic vegetables, farm animals, and lovely nitrogen making trees. These homes provide safe shelter for children and their parent to heal their lives through the gift of growing of organic gardens, including propagation, weeding, harvesting and preserving. Individuals helping individuals repair the losses of life's path while experiencing new life, new paths; growth through plants, caring, sharing, realizing healing.

With a nod toward permaculture, farm animals live here to provide their part in the cycle of growth. How lovely is the relationship of humankind with animals who love us unconditionally.

So not only does this wonderful group of farmers perfect the organic way of gardening, they also offer much more in the healing of lives of children and their guardians.

I was moved by the generous efforts of these wonderful farmers and their dedication of Aloha. This organic farm is a non-profit endeavor which will lovingly accept any gifts toward their mission.

- DeeDee Ventura, 2014 MG Intern

I really enjoyed the native plant nursery. Using fence panels to suspend the planted pots is a great example of preventing invasive species from spreading. The seed germination method was also new for me. By using a

circulating water pump the temperature will remain at a pristine degree, having a higher germination rate. Water conservation was also a big concern for this operation. Using proper irrigation devices can help manage water consumption, resulting in a higher yield in production.

Sunday's grafting class: the instructors were very knowledgeable and made me want to go home and try it and that I did. I believe after this class I will be successful. Personal customized tools were used and I got some new ideas.

Breadfruit class was good. Proper maintenance was shared and choosing the right type for higher elevation is important. Fruit harvesting and pest control was shared.

I am very pleased with the exposure I received and feel I have a broader understanding and will be happy to exercise/share all the new things I learned at this year's conference.

I am thankful for the opportunity and will encourage others to participate in future events.

Mahalo to all organizers. - Eben Manini, 2014 MG Intern

What a great way of sharing, ideas, making new friends and learning a whole lot to boot...the Conference was the bomb.

On opening night, our Hosts, the Maui Master Gardeners treated us to an evening of fun, food and entertainment. The welcome festivities were held at the Pukulani Community Center, which offered a fantastic view of Maui and the sunset. Guitar music played softly as we all got acquainted with each other while we enjoyed the scrumptious dishes that were prepared for the attendees.

After a short opening speech, we played bingo for some really awesome prizes... We had a few winners in the group. We laughed and joked with our new found friends. It was an all-around good time.

The Saturday tours of the Upcountry Farms were both interesting and informative. I was very interested in the home aquaponics. Took copious photos for an attempt to recreate a portion of what I saw, and hopefully grow some food.

Each garden had a theme, esthetic beauty, native plants, greens for marketing etc. There was one farm that was mapped out and we had to find items on the list, read the information and answer questions. This garden was sort of a safe haven for the abused.

In addition to the garden, they had a few animals ...chickens for eggs a few pigs. I gathered the animals were more of a therapy thing for the group the principles were helping.

We were treated to a picnic lunch at a park that boasted a panoramic view towards the ocean and coast. To the left was a pumpkin patch filled with families selecting their pumpkins for Halloween. Maui MGs had blankets laid down in various places on the grass for a casual sit down and a covered sitting area besides... Maui really had the schedule and events well thought out.

On the last day they offered special talks, I chose Ethnobiology, dang it was awesome. I want to hear more from Kumu Nāone Moringa-Kama. Would be nice to invite her to come and give us a class on Native medicinal plants. Hint, hint.

Parting was such sweet sorrow... but we all did a lot, learned a lot and made a lot of new friends....

-Alexandria Gabe Hinnebusch, 2014 MG Intern



Kauai Master Gardeners take a bit of shade after a full day of tours