



NEWS FROM

THE URBAN GARDEN CENTER

VOL 25



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For those walking through The UGC and out into the orchard, you may have noticed the new signage that has been installed. The signs are a reminder to all that the orchard is a “giving orchard” i.e.; the fruits harvested are donated to the Hawaii Food Bank. Each Monday, the Fruit Hui, comprised of hardworking volunteers/M.G.s, works in the orchard harvesting the ripened fruits. The fruits are washed and sorted and driven to the Food Bank warehouse in Mapunapuna.

The UGC’s donation of fresh fruit is a welcome addition to the food that the Hawaii Food Bank distributes. The Fruit Hui harvesters have gone into the orchard and found entire crops of ripened fruits stripped from the trees. This is a discouraging event that deprives folks in need of these fresh fruits.



Pictured: New signage in the UGC Orchard

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Mangoes at Moana, Yum!

Urban Garden Center Master Gardeners participated in the 6th annual “Mangoes at the Moana” event on July 19. Five Master Gardeners manned the Plant Doctor Booth (Robert Seronio, Gail Okino, Mary Takeshita, T. Rubenstein and Todd La Vine) to provide answers to plant questions posed by the general public that attended the event.

Eight judges provided their expertise in grading a large variety of mango for sweetness, texture, taste and fiber. This year’s celebration at the Moana Surfriider Hotel included the ever-popular “Mango Throw Down” featuring local celebrity executive chefs in a friendly cooking competition using

mango as the main ingredient.

Another fun component was the “Mango Cocktail Mix-down” which was a competition between cocktail enthusiasts and professional mixologists using Cruzan Rum and mango as featured ingredients in a mixed drink. Noted local Horticulturalist and author, Heidi Bornhorst, provided an informational lecture on the importance of mango and growing basics. Guests also attended seminars about different varieties of mango grown in Hawaii and each mango’s unique texture and aroma. Experts shared best practices in growing healthy fruit-bearing trees, pruning techniques, production, how

to maintain a tree, disease prevention and other information on the care of mango growing.

The UGC Fruit Hui harvested 20#s of Zillate and Fairchild mangoes as a contribution to this event.

Mahalo to those M.G.s that participated. For all others, please consider volunteering next year. It’s fun, yummy and you will learn more about mangoes!



Aloha, Candice

Candice Tan was a member of the Master Gardener ('M.G.') class in 2009. In 2014 she achieved Emeritus M.G. status, having met/exceeded her volunteer hour requirements for the ensuing five years. She and her husband, Guido, (who also volunteers at The UGC) are soon to begin a new phase in their life, making a move to Hawaii Island.

Candice recently shared some experiences/insights on her life as a gardener and her time volunteering at The UGC.

We all have our favorite small kid time stories and Candice shared a garden-related one. Her grandmother was an avid gardener; growing fruit trees and other edible plants. Her knowledge was passed along to Candice's father and they both passed along their gardening knowledge to Candice. Candice fondly remembers always finding an ice-cold pitcher of freshly

made orange-ade in her grandmother's 'fridge. Thus, the roots of a gardener took hold.

The years passed and Candice eventually made her way to Hawaii. After years teaching and raising a family, she wanted to pursue gardening further. In an Adult Ed. Class taught by a former Ag. Instructor from Kailua H.S., she learned much about gardening in Hawaii. She liked the class and instructor so much that she took the class three times! With this knowledge, she began informally volunteering at the Olomana School, helping in the green house and learning further. However, as she continued to learn, she also sought other areas where she could learn further and in turn, teach and share her gardening knowledge/experiences.

She heard from a thoughtful friend about a presentation that Jayme Grzebik was giving at Windward Community College. The result of that was learning about the Master Gardener program, in which she enrolled in 2009. She has been a dedicated volunteer ever since. She has

especially enjoyed the special events and working the M.G. Helpline. Candice is stimulated by mental challenges and likes to do research, interacting with folks in the community and teaching.

One of the highlights from her years as an Oahu M.G. includes the opportunity to work with fellow Class of 2009 M.G. Emeritus Robert Seronio on the M.G. Helpline. She looks to Robert as a mentor who gave her the confidence to meet the challenges of helping the Oahu gardening community with their inquiries.

In addition, she (and Guido) have enjoyed learning in the Grafting Hui and Candice also took the Bee Keeping Class and enjoys participating in the group helping Scott from UH maintain the bee hives at The UGC.

Candice's advice to the Intern M.G.s is to "volunteer in lots of things" and "do not be afraid of the M.G. Helpline." Like Candice's experience working with Robert Seronio, there are other M.G.s who are happy to mentor the new Intern M.G.s with the Helpline.

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Food for Thought

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On 8/18/14, Feeding America published "Hunger in America" based on a comprehensive study by Westat, a social science research firm. The results for the State of Hawaii within this report are sobering. 123,000 households in Hawaii, comprised of 287,000 residents, receive food assistance from the Hawaii FoodBank annually. 46,000 of this 287K are children.

The FoodBank distributes food directly to various organizations, which in turn, supply the residents. For example, one such organization of the 200 agencies involved is the KEY Project on Windward Oahu. The fresh fruits are so welcome.

Volunteers/M.G.s walking through the orchard ought to pick fruit to taste only. If volunteers/M.G.s require fresh fruits for a project they ought to clear harvesting with Steve Nagano or Jayme Grzebik beforehand.

If you see someone harvesting fruits, please ask them if they have received permission to do so. If you do not feel comfortable

asking, please report this action to UGC staff ASAP. Mahalo.

Of course, nighttime theft is still a worrisome problem at The UGC. We all await the time when a comprehensive security system is in place. In addition to widespread theft of fruits, valuable equipment has been stolen and offices ransacked. If you see folks wandering about, seemingly aimlessly, during the day, please notify staff. It is our and the community's Urban Garden Center. Let us keep it safe.

Within the last year, in addition to harvesting fruit for donation to the Hawaii FoodBank, the Fruit Hui has been involved in setting up exhibits of fresh fruit, with tastings, for two large school group visitors to The UGC, as well as a visiting conference of virologists. They will also be involved with the upcoming Hawaii Tropical Fruit Growers Mini-Conference on Oahu in mid-Sept. The EFNEP folks also harvest fruits and have created recipes using this produce for their clients. It is important for the fruits of The UGC orchard to be available since the orchard is an

educational tool to the greater community.

For those interested in learning more about the orchard, the Fruit Hui annually takes an inventory of all the trees. A map from the latest survey is hung on a peg to the right of the entry door to the Field Office. The next survey will be conducted in Feb., 2015. Participating in that event is also a good learning tool.

The Fruit Hui also maintains a database of the trees in the orchard; which will include from whom the tree was acquired and the genus/species/variety. The tree is then properly tagged. Since various groups use the orchard for educational purposes, the Hui would like to provide the basic information in the database that one expects to obtain when visiting an educational facility/botanical garden/arboretum.

The Fruit Hui has also made up a 'Fruit Info. Sheet' for each genus in the orchard. These fact sheets include info. on the nutritional content of the fruit, a general description of the fruit/when ripe and uses of the fruit.

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Food for Thought

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The sheets, which contain a color photo of the fruit, are contained in a light green binder in the M.G. Helpline Office.

Maintaining an orchard as extensive as the one at The UGC is quite labor intensive. The Fruit Hui does light pruning within the orchard and volunteers check the irrigation system and fertilize the trees. Arborist/volunteers Carlton & Linda Luka do heavy pruning of the trees. Volunteers also are in the process of mulching the entire orchard. This will, hopefully, lessen weed growth and also lower water needs. H. Dale Sato, who spearheaded the creation of the orchard some 25+ years ago, is still very much involved in monitoring and assisting in the maintenance of the orchard to assure its continued productivity and diversity. Please join the Fruit Hui on a Monday and see how you can help...and learn about this wonderful resource of tropical fruit trees.

Mahalo to all the hard-working volunteers that have made the orchard what it is today, a resource for all to enjoy.

Aloha, Candice

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So, what is next for Candice? Fortunately, Hawaii Island has M.G. programs in both Kona and Hilo. Candice plans to participate in one, especially assisting with the M.G. Helpline. The UGC loss of Candice is Hawaii Island's gain! However, we will not be saying "aloha" to Candice permanently. She does plan to continue to return to Oahu and hopes to attend special events and visit The UGC.

Mahalo to Candice for her contributions these past five years and the best of luck to her in the future. We expect her grandchildren will have pitchers of ice-cold, fresh lemon/orange-ade in their future!

Nine Reasons To Try Your Hand At Plant Doctor

Dave Watson (class of 2014)

Since I graduated from class in May I've volunteered several times to help at the plant doc booths we have at farmers' markets, Second Saturdays, etc. I've found several reasons to be a Plant Doc Intern:



You learn a lot. Did you know that if you over-water a cactus it might just keep on absorbing water until it splits?

There is always a true expert there who teaches you stuff.

The customers are very polite, even when you don't know what you're talking about.

Unlike being a people doctor, there are no late night calls.

There are no long hours.

It has a touch of the drama of the ER. One lady sobbed when I told her she had aphids.

The patient never complains.

Being sued for malpractice is extremely unlikely.

In fact, if you put the patient into a vegetative state, that's a good thing.

Mahalo, Dave. For those M.G. Interns who have not yet volunteered at the Helpline or at one of the Plant Doc Booths, please take what Dave has mentioned to heart. Try it you'll like it!!

2014 Farm Fair a Fun Event



The 2014 Hawaii Farm Bureau Fair was held at Kualoa Ranch on July 13th. M.G. intern Kathy Sunada shares her experience with us.

Kathy thought the setting at Kualoa Ranch was just perfect and enjoyed it so much she intends to volunteer again next year.

Many interested folks stopped at the M.G. table and happily discussed their gardens with the volunteers. They appeared to be experienced gardeners and were happy to be able to purchase UH seeds.

Among those stopping by the table included folks interested in the Master Gardener program, among those M.G.s from other states who wished to become certified as Hawaii M.G.s. This was definitely a wonderful community out-reach opportunity.

Mahalo, Kathy.

Thanks to all who submitted photos, articles & information. We appreciate all who contribute to sharing their volunteer activities with other volunteers at The UGC.

Barbara Alexander ba@ladybuglan.com & Catherine Ano kthy_sahli@yahoo.com

Newsletter Coordinators

We would like your help!

When you participate in an activity at The UGC or volunteer for one of the off-site events, please share your experiences and photos.

Some of these events are held annually and hearing about your experience will, hopefully, generate interest for future volunteers to participate.

With DETAILS from you, we can put together an article for the “News From The UGC” newsletter.

Please contact Barbara Alexander @744-8547 or Catherine Ano @ 223-7107