



# NEWS FROM

## THE URBAN GARDEN CENTER

VOL 20



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## Erosion Control with Peanut Groundcover?

Volunteers (Ohana members, O.M.G.s and all other volunteers) are integral to the fantastic projects and experiences that the gardening public benefits from at The UGC. The breadth of the expertise that these volunteers bring to The UGC is invaluable. A volunteer that one can see working in the Rose Garden and other areas of The UGC where help is needed is Lance Santo. He comes to The UGC with a background of working on conservation projects along waterways and has done irrigation consulting, among many other professional endeavors.

Lance is the volunteer responsible for planning, as well as the planting of, the perennial peanut groundcover above the Rose Garden to stabilize the slope.

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## Best of Both Worlds

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Hawaii Tropical Fruit Growers ('HTFG') Conference, held in September 2013, was a joint conference with The California Rare Fruit Growers ('CRFG') i.e.; the 'Best of Both Worlds'. This year's conference commenced in Honolulu, before moving to sessions on Maui, in Hilo and Kona, Hawaii and on Kauai. On Oahu, M.G.s Terri Langley and Jessie Kojiro coordinated a group of volunteers that assisted conference organizers. The

UGC volunteers helped beforehand by packing gift bags that conference participants were to receive, as well as moving materials to this year's conference site at Kapiolani Community College. Volunteer Susie Ota assisted by harvesting fruit from The UGC Orchard for display at the Conference and M.G. Roger Olegario was the driver for the vanpool. Numerous M.G.s and volunteers assisted during the Conference and Conference organizers appreciated their

participation. Mahalo to all! The participation of the CRFG added a new dimension to the Conference, for Example; CRFG Member Joe Sabol and his amazing team demonstrating their plant grafting technique which they teach to students in So. CA schools. Attendees also 'travelled' to Ecuador and several other 'around the world' spots during presentations by several of the speakers.



follow".

Reservations for a Japanese tour are limited and can be made through The UGC Office.

## 日本人観光客が庭を訪問 (Japanese Tourists Visit Garden)

The UGC recently provided a docent tour to a visiting Japanese family during their October vacation to Hawaii. Mr. Akihiro Oba and his family heard about The UGC from a friend and wanted to visit. They were very impressed with the broad level of volunteer support and the many interesting projects ongoing at The UGC. "This

place is very relaxing" he remarked. Mr. Oba is a retired Fire Chief from Yokohama, Japan where he supervised 3 fireboats in that port city.

When asked if other Japanese tourists come to visit the garden, Docent Tour Guide/M.G. Intern Todd LaVine replied "not yet, but we're preparing for others to



# The Art of Food Preserving

M.G. Terri Langley grew up in Omaha Nebraska, where she was so lucky to have a wonderful grandmother who was magic in the kitchen, and a master with food.

Her grandmother grew up on the plains of Nebraska as a homesteader and learned from her mother the art of food preservation. Terri remembers being mesmerized with her as she watched, and sometimes helped, her 'put-up', her garden bounty. The jars, vegetable garden, berry bushes, and root cellar are all fond memories, when Terri thinks of grandma.

Terri has always wished she had learned more from grandma, so when she first heard that there was a food preserving course that resembled the Master Gardener program, Terri knew it was for her. The more she found out, the more excited she became, and to seal the deal, it was being taught by Ken Love: farmer, chef, and fruit hunter. Ken had adapted the California Master Food Preserver Handbook to reflect the tropics, and is credited for bringing this

program to Hawaii.

Terri traveled to Captain Cook on Hawaii Island for 3 weeks to take the course: a hands-on study of the art of food preservation. They learned about freezing, drying, canning, fermentation and pickling. Students made jams, marmalades, pickles, soup mixes, fruit leathers, and even canned some chicken soup.

They also had lessons on charcrudery, pressure canning, hot packing, and lactic aids. One theme that ran throughout each lesson was the importance of food safety. Processing requires a great deal of food science knowledge; each skill has a set of protocols needed to safely produce edible food. Terri was lost in a world of possibilities; an old world process with new world techniques. Terri was hooked from the beginning!

She received the highest grade in her class (you go, girl!), and has since experimented with the many types of food preservation. In Terri's professional life at MA'O Farm,

she has been able to help off set the waste stream by grading and sorting the 'off' produce to use in value added pickles, and ferments. They dry herbs, peppers, and bananas, all adding to MA'O Farm's line of products to sell. Terri has also begun to share what she has learned by leading workshops and doing public demonstrations. For Terri, it's all about the whole plant: roots & stems make the best pickles!

Terri's Pickling Recipe for the HMFP Final is located on Yahoo Groups.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/OahuMG/files>

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## PEANUTS

The perennial peanut was selected as the groundcover for the following reasons:

1. Easy to start from cuttings or seeds.
  2. Spreads but not evasive like so other groundcovers.
  3. Easy to plant on steep grade as above the rose garden.
  4. Low maintenance.
  5. Drought tolerant but needs water for green leaves and yellow blooms.
  6. Low nutrient requirement, but like most legumes it requires adequate Ca. No nutrients applied except Ca as coral.
  7. Once established it will minimize soil erosion and suppress weeds.
  8. Low growing and can tolerate shade; hence shrubs or trees can be planted in the area.
  9. If herbicides are needed to control weeds, there are selective herbicides; there are selective ones that can be used.
  10. Can be mowed and will tolerate some traffic.
- A disadvantage is that it is slow to establish. Usually it will take up to six months to cover the ground. If faster coverage is required, plant at 8 x 8 inches spacing and close in will occur within three months. Lance planted the perennial peanut on The UGC slope 5.0' on center. This allowed for his recent inter-planting of over 100

roses on the slope!

Lance has previously used this groundcover on other projects, including a site off Kunia Road. That site is sprinkler irrigated. Soil erosion is not detectable on that slope of 600 ft. long and 30 ft. wide. He has also used perennial peanut in coffee (15 years) to suppress weeds and in the landscape at HARC. He also has used the peanut in "grassed waterways" because it is hardier and requires less maintenance than any available grasses such as Bermuda grass.

We look forward to The UGC slope looking as filled in and healthy as the photo of Lance's HARC planting of perennial peanut groundcover.

Mahalo, Lance, for bringing your expertise and devoting your time to projects at The UGC!

## KAIMUKI MIDDLE SCHOOL FIELD TRIP TO UGC

Kaimuki Middle School ("KMS") Sustainability Coordinator Lianna Lam worked with Jayme Grzebik and Oahu Master Gardeners to organize a field day for one hundred forty 8th grade students on Oct. 16, 2013 at The UGC. The purpose of the field trip was to kick off an interdisciplinary unit (math, science, social studies, language arts) about food sustainability and democracy,

with the culminating project for the kids to start an urban garden of their own at home.

Groups of students rotated through five stations set up throughout the gardens to demonstrate composting, alternative urban gardening methods, themed gardens, native Hawaiian pollinators, fruit varieties, and CTAHR college and career readiness. The demonstrations were led by Jayme Grzebik, Aubin Stremmer, Bea Sailer, Anna Yorba, Susie Ota, and Barbara Alexander. Representatives from CTAHR also spoke to the students about career opportunities.

Aubin and Bea led the students on a tour of the various theme gardens: Alike Rabbit, Labyrinth, Boardwalk, Children's Garden, Sensory, and Sundial. They explained the theme of the gardens, identified the plants and how they fit into the theme. Due to time constraints, hands on activities were not included but the students were challenged to experience the gardens using their five senses. Hopefully, they will be able to use their creativity to incorporate some of the ideas into their own gardens at school or at home.

Susie and Barbara asked the students to ID a wide variety of fruits harvested from The UGC Orchard.



Master Gardeners Mhel and Brian Cyr making a Bokashi mix for the Oct SSAG. Mhel also taught worm composting with Ann Tanaka and Brian assisted Mindy Jaffe in preparing for the composting session



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As an assist, the poster of Hawaii Tropical Fruits was posted and the students were able to visually compare the photos and ID several of the fruits that were new to them. There was also some fruit to taste that elicited various responses (there is a reason we add sugar to make jellies!). Nutrition was discussed as well as where to naturally find the various plants.

The students very much enjoyed the exposure to so many different aspects of sustainability and urban gardening. The fruit tasting was especially popular. Ms. Lam reported that the next day back at school they built a sheet mulch garden area and started hydroponic and container lettuce. We look forward to seeing the results of their adventures in gardening and we are pleased to be able to contribute to the future of sustainability in Hawaii.

Go and grow KMS Students!!

**MA'O FARM TOUR AND FAREWELL GATHERING**

Over 50 M.G.s & UGC Ohana gathered at a Waianae farm, on a Sunday! It was the largest gathering of M.G.s, Tour Leader/M.G. Terri Langley had seen in a while! There was a walking farm tour, as Terri (also a MA'O employee) described the

programs at MA'O. Terri's focus was the MA'O story, the youth that run the everyday operations as they navigate their way through college, their customer base & social justice mission and sustainable organic agriculture practices.

The group then gathered for a feast of pizza & delightful desserts brought by the attendees. The earthen oven was packed with ono homemade pizzas, as everyone got into the act, by making their own signature pizzas. Chef Raul,

(Lydi Morgan-Bernal's husband) manned the busy oven for 3 hours!

We then honored departing UGC staffer, Leah Rothbaum, with lei, gifts, cards and all our Aloha for her generous contributions to our program. Glenn Cordeiro made her a very unique & beautiful hand-carved koa jewelry box, and she teared up when she opened it.

It was a day of relaxation and fun, as well as a learning experience for the attendees.

They found out about the cool kids on the west side; breaking all the stereotypes and changing their communities, one college degree at a time.

Mahalo to MA'O Farms!

## Grafting Hui Still Cutting Up

The Grafting Hui, coordinated by M.G. Richard Karamatsu, meets monthly at The UGC, learning various propagation techniques. The entire Grafting Hui has improved their grafting skills, and several have become very successful with their grafts. Prior to each grafting session, the Hui normally spends 20-35 minutes each 3rd Saturday, weeding, fertilizing, planting seeds or cuttings, transplanting or other necessary functions that make up the total grafting process. There were eleven participants for the September 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday meeting. The highlight of the October 3rd Saturday session was an air-layering demonstration/session conducted by Wally Kaniaupio (M.G. Class 2012).

The Hui's 3rd Saturday sessions are open to active Master Gardeners, UGC employees and active volunteers that have gone through orientation.



## Additional Farmers' Markets With Plant Doc. Booths

M.G. Rick Chavez is now coordinating a Plant Doc Booth at the Saturday Pearlridge Farmers' Market on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> outing for this Plant Doc Booth, M.G. Phyllis Fong demonstrated Vermicomposting and drew an interested crowd. Folks had lots of questions for Phyllis. Bags of Vermicast, as well as UH seeds were sold at the booth. Contact Rick to volunteer.

M.G. Jack Sharpsteen is coordinating the latest North Shore/Hale'iwa Farmers' Market Plant Doc Booth. Please contact Jack to volunteer and for details.

**And Ongoing...**The Windward Mall Farmers' Market Plant Doc Booth is a regular stop for many market goers. George Kutterer is coordinator of this booth. Join the group of M.G.s busy at this booth on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month.

M.G. Margaret Mortz is coordinating the KCC Farmers' Market ("FM") Plant Doc Booth. This FM is a busy, busy stop for local shoppers as well as tourists. As the longest serving FM Plant Doc Booth, this booth has a team of M.G. 'regulars' staffing the booth. To see if there is an extra slot for a volunteer on the last Sat. of each month, contact Margaret.



# Gardeners Give Peace A Chance

At this year's Peace Day Hawaii 2013 on September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013, from 2-5pm, at the Urban Garden Center in Pearl City we continued the theme of cultivating peace through gardening in the schools and community. On display were exhibits by the Master Gardener Program, MA'O Organic Farms, Kokua Foundation, and Hawaii Farm to School Network. The site and the event are supported by the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawaii, and by a coalition of community groups.

The 2013 Distinguished Peacemaker Award was presented to Kumu Ramsay Taum, in recognition of his lifetime career advocating the spirit of aloha in Hawai'i and around the world — in the fields of ecology, business, communications, economic development and Hawaiian culture. A Special Award went to the Honolulu Rose Society for their addition to the Peace Garden Pathway. Former State Representative Lyla Berg presided at the closing ceremony.

Special tribute was made in creating the Aloha Peace Lei connecting peacemakers from Hawai'i to China for the October gathering in Beijing. Participants enjoyed a free family day of exploring the many variety of plants and gardens, educational materials, lei-making and making handprint pledges for peace. Performances included: A Burmese Buddhist Monk Blessing, Korean Thunder Hawai'i, Chinese Lion Dancers, O'Infinity Chant, Harp & Nepalese singing bowls, Ohana Hula & Band Hui, and Nia Dancing.

**Errata:** In the July-August, 2013 "News From The UGC" Newsletter, we would like to make the following corrections/clarifications to Page 4: ~ It was in 1987; the UH-CTAHR research division was not interested in obtaining the site from the instruction division. ~ George Kobashigawa, was an agricultural research technician, and John Enos, was the owner of Ideal Construction, Inc. ~ In the late 1980's Master Gardeners played an important role in developing and maintaining the gardens.

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

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**[Newsletter coordinators](#)**

**NOTE: PLEASE SEND ARTICLES/PHOTOS/INFORMATION FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER TO THE ABOVE INDIVIDUALS BY DEC 20<sup>TH</sup>.**