



President's Message

by Paula Elias



Dear Manteca Garden Club Members,

I just can't believe how time has passed this garden club season. The garden tour is just about here! The garden tour is our only fundraiser for the year and it takes a village to make it happen. Thanks to the garden tour chairs for doing just that; Beverly Ensley ticket sales, Wendy raffle donations, Marion docents, Cindy signs, Beth and Rescha refreshments, Pam and Gayle raffle ticket sales, Ellen Chamber of Commerce lead, Barbara Stoner our website posting and photographer, Eric making time to meet with each homeowners, Gloria who helped find gardens, and my daughter Laura for helping me with the poster and ticket design. Thanks to our docents and as I noted last month, thanks to our member homeowners. Our members make the tour happen through the tour planning, working the day of the tour and SELLING our tickets to friends and relatives. Your ticket sales make up 50% of all of our sales.

It will be a wonderful event and we will continue with our nonprofit projects and scholarships.
Enjoy the sun!

Paula

Key Dates

Meeting

Wednesday, April 5	Chamber of Commerce Coffee hosted by Manteca Garden Club, Manteca Library, 8:00am
Monday, April 17	Manteca Garden Club, Manteca Library 12:30-1:00pm refreshments; 1:00 meeting Topic: Annual Garden Tour
Thursday, April 27	Arbor Day planting at Center and Tidewater Bikeway, 10:00am
Thursday, May 11	Garden Club Pre-Tour starting at 10:00am at 1086 Golden Pond
Saturday, May 13	Annual Garden Tour 10:00am to 2:00pm

Gardening Chores for April

by Sandi Larson, Master Gardener



I went to a big box store the other day to pick up a few perennials and was surprised to see that you can now purchase hydrangeas as a basic rootstock. Makes sense. The growers save a lot of time in labor and material by popping the plants in waterproof bags with just the stems sticking out. I also saw dahlia bulbs that would be great in a pot as well as several varieties of clematis. In addition, I noticed Sarah Bernhardt herbaceous peonies that are beautiful and fragrant. I have peonies in four locations in my yard right



now. The ones in my yard that seem to do best are getting quite a bit of sun in the spring and fall but in the late spring, when the crepe myrtles get their leaves and blossoms, the peonies receive a good amount of shade which at least saves their foliage from becoming crisp.

There are lots of seeds available in stores/nurseries right now so if you're thinking about starting something like Black-eyed Susan vine or nasturtium in the ground, now is the time to pick up or mail order seeds. I've grown Black-eyed Susan vine from seed in the past and they do very well here, particularly if they can receive afternoon shade.

Hopefully the rain will let up a little this month for you to work some organic material into your soil prior to setting out seedlings in your vegetable garden.

I also like to start refreshing the plants in pots on my patio and on my front porch this time of year when smaller plants, maybe 4" rather than 1-gallon size, may be purchased. If a pot has had plants in it for several years and the plants have died because they were annuals, it's best to empty the old roots and compacted soil out and refresh with a nice quality potting soil. Something to look for when purchasing soil is whether it's best for seed starting, vegetable planting or container gardening. There are so many different types of "potting soil," even some certified organic, but I found that some contain chicken feathers and/or bio-solids such as treated municipal sewage! It's hard to decipher what's in these bags but if you read the breakdown of ingredients, you'll see the organic content.

If you know someone who can do a tune-up on your irrigation system, this is the best time of year to do that as well. As our rain slows down, you will likely activate your drip and regular irrigation. If you have plants from last year that struggled, you should start with those emitters first as they could be clogged and preventing your plants from receiving adequate irrigation. With our hard water in Manteca, it's pretty easy for your emitters to become clogged. In the last year, I had to replace my irrigation timer and two of my irrigation valves. It was not cheap but then again dead plants are expensive too.

If you are new to Manteca, you probably haven't seen this kind of soil before. We have soil that is sandy and loamy. If you drive near Bass Pro Shop, you will see an agricultural field that has such high sand content that when it's really windy, sand drifts onto the roads. We don't have as high a content of sand as the Santa Maria area of California (where many strawberries are grown because of the excellent draining soil) but in some parts of Manteca the soil is sandier than in other parts.

The nurseries and big box stores are getting tons of plants daily. With the warmer weather, folks are coming out in droves to plant color in their yards. You can put most vegetables in the ground closer to the end of April. Tomatoes and peppers won't start producing fruit until the weather starts warming up.

If you have fruit trees, this is a good month to thin out the fruit. When the fruit gets the size of a dime, that's a good time to thin out each cluster of apples, apricots and peaches. This will leave a total of two to three pieces of fruit per cluster. Thinning helps to produce larger fruit and reduces strain on the branches of fruit per cluster. (continued on Page 3)

Gardening Chores for April (continued from Page 2)

April is still a good month to fertilize roses with an all-in-one that has fertilizer and insect control.

As your roses start blooming in May, don't worry about the little beetle on the lighter-colored roses. It's called the Hoplia beetle and there doesn't seem to be any effective way to get rid of them than hand picking and throwing them into a bucket of soapy water. The beetle winters over in the soil and comes up every spring to feed on light-colored flowers, not just roses. Some gardeners even take the radical step of cutting the first set of blooms off plants and bringing them indoors to enjoy. By the time the next round of roses come out, the Hoplia beetle will be out of our gardens again. In the beginning of the season when I'm cutting off blossoms or deadheading, I prune lightly; later in the season, say early fall, I cut back the stems of roses a little lower because the majority of its grow this done by late fall.



If you find plants being eaten by aphids, you should try to spray them off with the nozzle of your hose first. If that doesn't take care of the problem, you may have to reach for some insecticide but try to stay with a product that isn't harmful to beneficial insects. These are insects such as lady bugs that can eat the aphids but lady bugs are a little hard to rein in and keep in your yard.

If you want to create new plants, April is a good month to divide daylilies, Shasta daisies, geraniums, succulents, carnations and iris. My mom used to have carnations and she was always rooting new ones.

If you want summer color, now is also a good time to plant clematis vine. Many nurseries and big box stores have them in bulb form. Plant where the top gets sun, preferably not west sun, and the roots stay cool. The foliage tends to get a little crispy if it gets too much afternoon sun.

If you're in town April 5-9, head over to the San Francisco Flower and Garden Show. Tickets are available at some garden centers or, I believe, online. At the time of this writing, Groupon actually had admission coupons for a discount. It's fun to see all the new products, orchids and mini garden designs and to get inspiration for your own yard.

Plant(s) of the Month for March

By Eric Teberg

Coprosma Taupata Gold 'Mirror Plant'

Height: 2.5 feet
Width: 4 feet
Exposure: Full sun/light shade
Foliage: Glossy foliage with soft gold color on edges and bright green in the middle
Moisture: Medium



Coprosma 'Karo Red'

Height: 3 feet
Width: 3 feet
Exposure: Full sun or bright shade
Moisture: Drought tolerant



School Gardens by Tom Powell

Update on Sequoia School Garden

Over the past few months we have accomplished several things at the Sequoia School Garden. Thanks to a grant from Raymus we were able to add 13 cubic yards of decomposed granite to cover our main gathering area and main pathways. This should help keep weeds under control and extend the accessibility to the garden through the rainy seasons. In addition Cole Dutter from the MUSD School Farm continues to supply free bark mulch, and we are close to covering the remainder of the garden, which substantially reduces weed infestation throughout the garden.

We have weeded all areas thanks to the assistance of volunteers, which includes one of our newest MGC members, Bev Eckland. Bev has also assisted with selecting and planting several plants. Her hands-on assistance along with her expertise with school gardens and as a Master Gardener has been a welcomed addition.



Again, thanks to Raymus, we have added canopy structures and netting to protect the eight raised beds from the intrusions by cats and possibly birds. We have added gardening supplies such as additional shovels, hand trowels, gloves, kneeling pads, etc. to accommodate the students as they work in the garden.

Overall the garden weathered the winter quite nicely. All of the existing trees and shrubs are looking great except for the Key Lime which succumbed to cold weather. Students have planted vegetables and companion flowers in the raised beds, pulled out weeds and spent vegetables, and harvested vegetables for the school cafeterias. Some GECAC students planted pansies in the annual bed and other students helped spread bark mulch. We are looking forward to a vibrant and active spring season.

Refreshments

by Laneia Bolle and Gloria Martinez

The following members have volunteered to bring refreshments to the April 17, 2017 Garden Club Meeting:

Refreshments start at 12:30pm.

Wendy Benavides
Pam Dias
Marion Golisano

Gloria Martinez
Mary Jo Sachs



April Birthdays

1 Jesse Soto	24 Laneia Bolle
13 Lorna Powell	25 Gloria Martinez
19 Mary Jo Sachs	28 Marie Pasquinelli
21 Diane Galeazzi	29 Betty Christy
23 Kay Harris	

