Grafting and Planting Fruit Tree Cuttings
by
Cindy Toepfer, Kingman Area Master Gardener

All Mohave County MG’s were invited to attend a talk on grafting fruit trees and planting fruit tree cuttings given by Howard Lawrence that occurred on March 13th in Kingman. There were 12 total that attended and the MG’s in attendance were Maria Waitas, Bing Bingham, LeRoy Jackson, Janet Ortega, Shelley Lossing, Ben May, Linda Reddick, Cindy Toepfer and Cathy Bryan. Howard has over 50 years of experience grafting fruit trees and has sold many trees over the years.

He started the talk by showing us bean seeds he acquired that were buried on the Fort Mohave Reservation. These seeds had been dated by an organization and were 400-800 years old. We were then given a few seeds each.

Then Howard went into the actual grafting process. His handout will be electronically sent to you either directly to you if you live in Kingman or through your coordinators if you are in LHC or BHC. The key is to choose a stock and scion in the same species to graft i.e. stone fruits, citrus and apple/pear. Howard wrapped the stock and scion together with electrical tape and then sealed with asphalt emulsion (see picture).

Howard had cuttings from a brown turkey fig taken from an old tree in Golden Valley and handed them out. Cindy brought cuttings from Thompson Seedless grapes and they were handed out also. The key with starting cuttings, according to Howard, is to cut the bottom at a 45 degree angle and leave at least 3 bud nodes. Then place them into the soil with at least 2 bud nodes below the surface but do not leave very much above the soil (maybe an inch) because if more of the stem is above the ground, too much transpiration occurs which affects success.
“Summer time and the living is easy…” –Ella Fitzgerald.

I haven’t read a Fitzgerald biography but I imagine she didn’t do much gardening in Mohave County during the summer. While many of us find relief in air conditioned homes or other areas of the country with reasonable summer temperatures; plants often struggle during our brutal Arizona summers. High temperatures, low humidity, and high solar intensity put tremendous stress on plants. I anticipate we will receive many questions regarding heat-stress related problems on plants. I am curious and encourage you to share with me and your fellow MGs some of your experiences and creative solutions for successfully growing your plants through this difficult season.

As for the Mohave County Master Gardener Program, we finished up the Urban Home Horticulture Course with 16 students completing the course. On May 12, we had our annual Graduation Luncheon where 16 Associate MGs were promoted. We also handed out volunteer hour pins to recognize veteran MG volunteer hours. I am amazed by the amount of time each of you give to the program. Congratulations to all and a big thank you to LHC Area Coordinator Dan Alberts and his team for organizing a great event!

Other news for the MCMG Program includes moving forward with filling the vacant MG Coordinator position. The application for the position is now open and we are seeking qualified candidates to fill the vacancy. We could use some help getting the word out so if you know of a person that would be interested, please let them know. The position description and application can be found at: https://uacareers.com/postings/19649. The posting number is 23476.

I wish you all easy living, hopefully in an air conditioned building.
Debbie Miller, Coordinator
Leroy Jackson, Co-Coordinator

The Spring months of April and May brought perfect temperatures for gardening along the River, though we also continued to battle our bumper crop of weeds and begin the usual preparation for our summer heat in June. Normal winds and unusual and welcome rains were highlights of the pre-summer slowdown in activities for the Bullhead City Master Gardeners. The exodus of our winter visitors decreased the attendance at our scheduled Library events, but also gave us time to get our 2017-2018 calendar of Library programs planned as well.

We will continue the 2017-2018 year with our Second-Thursday Home Garden Days (10 a.m. – noon) from September through June, and with our eight Library programs on the Third-Thursday, September through November and January through May. (2 p.m. – 4 p.m.).

Our last two formal Library programs for this fiscal year (in April and May) were “Summer Vegetable Planting” and “Summer Preparation”, and both offered some new (for us) subject matter. The addition of a section on hydroponics was a highlight of our April program, and the audience was attentive as Richard Park, a horticulture class graduate and local farmer, joined Leroy Jackson and Dennis Lesowsky for that session. In May Sally Stevens, our weed expert (among her many talents!) and newly-graduated Master Gardener Doug Russell did a well-received program that included a section on chilies. Doug and his son had planted several different varieties of Chile seeds and were doing a scientific tracking of their growth. Both Sally and Doug are proponents of using native seeds, and both are a wealth in information for our audiences, as well as for their fellow Master Gardeners.

We also assisted the Nevada Master Gardeners with their Home Garden Day at Laughlin Library in April and May. Their schedule will begin again in September on the second Wednesday of each month, 10 a.m. to noon at the Laughlin Library.

Our assistance with the Kingman Home and Garden Show decreased this year due to some scheduling conflicts, but we hope to rectify that next year! Bill Stillman, Leroy Jackson and Dennis Lesowsky will be up in Kingman on June 24th to do an Irrigation workshop and, as always, we look forward to working closely with our friends in the neighboring MG groups!
Along with our normal activities, two new events were added this Spring. On April 26th we manned a table for the Bullhead City and Mohave County employees Health Fair, held at the City Council chambers in Bullhead City. We handed out seeds (generously donated by Home Depot and Lowes) and vegetable planting information.

On May 20th, the Bullhead City library kicked-off their Summer Reading program. We had a table there and passed out bookmarks along with our 2017-2018 Library program schedule. We will do another session on seed planting at the Library on July 8th as their Reading program winds down.

Many of us ventured to Lake Havasu for the Graduation Luncheon on May 12th, and enjoyed seeing our friends from the other groups. We will have two new Associates from the recent horticulture class, and are pleased to have three new Master Gardeners—Bonnie Muir, Doug Russell and our snowbird Amy Trutwin (who lives in Minnesota and spends January through March in this area and easily got her hours by volunteering for everything we do while she’s here! ) . Since we are the smallest of the groups, but one of the busiest activity-wise, we are always happy to increase our ranks and spread out the workload a bit for our more veteran Master Gardeners!

Our Hotline calls have been fewer than normal this Spring. We were asked to help the Board of Condo Association in Laughlin with some landscaping issues. We provided information on trees suitable for this climate but, more importantly, provided planting and irrigation information, since they were replacing trees which had blown over due, in large part, to lack of sufficient root spread to properly anchor them. All had been watered with 2-3 drippers wound around the trunks, and it was no wonder they failed.

Another call was for a leaning saguaro, and we suggested a professional do some staking while the owner tries to encourage root growth on the side of the plant away from the tilt. It has been irrigated properly so far as we could tell, but recent fierce winds have made the 50 foot plant sway, indicating root issues.
The hot days of summer are with us. My hope is everyone has a cool place to relax while the gardens grow. This has been a busy spring as it always is for us.

In March we started the spring with a Grape Pruning workshop. Followed by an “Ask the Master Gardener” (MG) day. Then we had a Spring Gardening workshop. We were treated to a Fruit Tree Grafting class for Master Gardeners. I think everyone learned something that day. I know several people tried their new knowledge on grafting. Some even reported success. We ended the month with a class on Bonsai. Our own Cathy Bryant presented a detailed workshop on how, what, when, care and history of the art of Bonsai. It was her first workshop and what a fantastic job she did. More than likely there will be a repeat workshop in the future.

In April there were no workshops scheduled because we were kind of busy with helping other groups with there contractors show. I think I learned more when I talk to people and answer their questions. My thanks go out to the Bullhead MG’S for letting us join them and learn new things. We had our monthly “Ask the Master Gardener” day the second Tuesday of April. Our big spring function was the Home and Garden show. Gail headed up the whole program. What a job she did. She came up with all kinds of new ideas. I was impressed with this years show. We ended the month with Arbor Day tree planting.

In May we did the regular Ask the MG Day. May opened the farmers market giving us a chance to do an additional Ask the MG segment at the farmer’s market location. The afternoon of the same day we went to the local Tractor Supply store for another ask the MG session. The month was ended with a final Ask the MG session at Star Nursery. With all of the Ask the MG sessions at various locations, and the regular call-in’s we have been able to answer a lot of questions. Soon we will have more time to get back into workshops, some are already scheduled.

May was also the month for graduation of the associate Master Gardeners. Congratulations to all and welcome aboard.

Our school gardening programs ended for the summer, but not before we planted pumpkins and watermelons. With a little luck they will have items to enter in the fair. In our last gathering we had a party, during which we ask each student two things; what they enjoyed most, and name one new thing they learned this year. It was quite refreshing to hear their individual responses’ and I guess we did teach them something.

With the next three months being hot I can see a lot more heat related questions. So we better get up to date on heat problems and solutions. As for me I think I will go find a good air conditioner.

Thank you all for your generous time and efforts, keeping our program a success.

Development of Landscape Design Class
by Cindy Toepfer

Sandy Hampson and I just completed Course II of Landscape Design in Phoenix at the Maricopa County Cooperative Extension building. During the “Development of Landscape Design” lecture we learned who helped shape Landscape Design in the early days and, to my interest, Thomas Jefferson played a large part during his lifetime from 1743 to 1826. Yes, this is the man who wrote the Declaration of Independence in 1796, became president in 1800 and achieved the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 to name a few. His inherited home in Virginia, called Monticello, was quite the landscaping achievement with its showcase gardens, food sources and experimental labs of ornamental and useful plants from around the world.

He grew 170 varieties of fruit trees, 330 vegetable varieties and 160 species of trees. He built a curvy wall on the property to create microclimates protecting plants from frost called the Serpentine Wall. Another interesting feature for cattle control was to dig a trench around the property, called the Ha Ha, since cattle do not like to walk into them. A visit to his Monticello home may be a great horticulture history lesson but until then visit https://www.monticello.org/ under House & Gardens.
Summer greetings to all of the Master Gardeners of Mohave County from us in Lake Havasu City. We have reached the high temperature, low humidity season here, although June the 15th is the start of monsoon season here in the low desert. I for one, welcome the rain but not the humidity. We all know of course that with one, the other is included.

Since the last newsletter the Urban Home Horticulture Class ended, and has given us 8 people that have expressed an interest in becoming Master Gardeners here in Havasu. This is certainly a positive for the Master Gardener program. As a result of the 2016 class, we have 6 that have/ will become new M/G’s. Along this line, thanks to all who attended the Graduation and Recognition Luncheon on May 12th.

The Lake Havasu City Master Gardeners had a booth at the CRBIA Home Show on March 31st and April 1st and 2nd. Thanks to all of the booth volunteers.

Home Garden Day at the Library here has been steady in regard to homeowner attendance. We continue this year round, although July and August do slow down considerably.

Have a Great Summer.
Mohave County Master Gardener Calendar Summer 2017

July

July 5th  11 a.m.-1 p.m: Home Garden Day at the Library, 1770 McCulloch Blvd, LHC (Please note that this is on a Wednesday due to the fact that the 4th of July Holiday falls on a Tuesday this year.)

July 6th  11 a.m.-?: “Seed Starting”, Youth Program, to be held at Library, 3269 N Burbank St, Kingman AZ 86402 (MGs assisting)

July 8th  11 a.m. - 1 p.m.: Bullhead City Library, Reading Program activity, “Planting Seeds” 1170 Hancock, Bullhead City

July 11th  10 a.m.-12 p.m.: “Ask the Master Gardener”, MCCE office, 101Beale St., Kingman

July 15th  12:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m.: “Desert Plants”, MCCE office, 101 Beale St., Kingman

August

August 1st  11 a.m.-1 p.m: Home Garden Day, Lake Havasu Library, 1770 McCulloch Blvd, LHC

August 8th  10 a.m.-12 p.m.: “Ask the Master Gardener”, MCCE office, 101Beale St., Kingman

TBD  Fox Creek Junior High Science Club, Bullhead City

September

September 5th  11 a.m.-1 p.m: Home Garden Day, Lake Havasu Library, 1770 McCulloch Blvd, LHC

September 12th  10 a.m.-12 p.m.: “Ask the Master Gardener”, MCCE office, 101Beale St., Kingman

September 12th  6 p.m.: Master Gardener Meeting, Bullhead City Library, 1170 Hancock, Bullhead City

September 13th  10:00 a.m. – 12 p.m.: Laughlin Home Garden Day, Laughlin Library, 2840 Needles Hwy, Laughlin

September 14th  10 a.m. – 12 p.m.: Home Garden Day, Bullhead City Library, 1170 Hancock, Bullhead City

September 14-17: Mohave County Fair, Kingman

September 19th  6:30 p.m.-8 p.m.: Business Meeting, Lake Havasu Library, 1770 McCulloch Blvd, LHC

September 20th  DEADLINE FOR FOR SUMMER 2017 WIND & WEEDS ARTICLES

September 21th  2 p.m. - 4 p.m.: “Soil Preparation for Vegetables and Trees. Planting for Color Throughout the Year”, Bullhead City Library, 1170 Hancock, Bullhead City

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Summer 2017 Wind & Weeds Assembled by Shelley, Master Gardener

KEY: Bullhead City (BHC) - Lake Havasu City (LHC) - Kingman (KNG) - All

Wind & Weeds Summer 2017