



The Mulford Gardener

Presented By The Mulford Gardens Improvement Association

M.G.I.A. Volume XXXIV No. 4 April 2011

General Meeting – April 26, 2011 07:30pm

M.G.I.A CLUBHOUSE 13055 Aurora Drive, San Leandro, 94577 - mgia@live.com - www.mulfordgardens.org

Message from MGIA Board:

Thank you to all who attended our March 29 General Meeting to hear San Leandro City Clerk, Marian Handa explain the initiative and election process.



It's election time at Mulford Gardens. Nominations were submitted at the March 29 General Meeting; elections will follow at our April 26, 2011 meeting @ 07:30pm. Additional nominations can be made at this meeting. Please come and vote your choice for President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and Financial Secretary as well as general board members. (Current MGIA members are allowed to vote.) Join us!!

The MGIA Board wishes everyone a Happy Easter and Bountiful Spring.

Chuck Porrill, MGIA President



Lunch With Friends

Some friends joined me for lunch this week at Horatio's Restaurant located at the San Leandro Marina. There were four of us, and we were lucky enough to get a window table overlooking the Boating Dock area. It was such a lovely view and so relaxing. The seagulls were dropping down in front of our window, and it was so interesting to see all the different kinds of boats berthed right in front of us. We enjoyed it so much that we lingered longer than usual over our lunch, chatting and watching the birds and water and boats. We hear the boats might go away, and be replaced by a lagoon or duck refuge. It won't be the same. The boats make you feel like you are in any port in the world- enjoying the peaceful scene and the friendship of good people around you. We hope it stays the same; it would be a shame to lose such a treasure.

A Supporter of Save the Marina

Remember that the *Gardener* is GOING GREEN. Visit our website: www.mulfordgardens.org to read the *Gardener*, check out City Events and view pictures of our Clubhouse which is available for rental for parties, meetings, gatherings. We will continue to deliver the *Gardener* to your porch, if you have notified us. Send us your email to mgia@live.com and we will send you an electronic copy of *The Mulford Gardener* each month.



TREES AND FIELDS

- Rae Vasconcellos, MGIA Board Member

In the early farm days of the Mulford Gardens community, before the end of World War II, the avenues of First (now Marina Blvd.) and 133rd through 135th sported rows of Sycamore Trees that in turn were the refuge for flocks of birds. The tapestry of colors and sounds would change with the seasons, and were overhung in the sky by the ever-present seagull. In Spring, the robins and other migratory birds would fill up the trees in colors of orange and browns, greys and browns, mottled wood peckers and the occasional hawk. The clamor of chirps and tweets, the mimic of the mocking birds and the haunting call of the meadowlark would slowly change into the softer sounds of summer, the tiny sparrows, the towhee and the chickadees. The latter taking dirt baths in the field at the end of the day, accompanied by the sharp voice of a scrub jay snatching small ripe plums for her young.

In fall, the beautiful blackbirds would arrive, and the trees would hum with their cries and sighs, picking up pieces of walnuts harvested from garden trees, and seeds in the empty lots. The trees along the avenues were the orchestra seats for all this music and you didn't have to look at the calendar too closely to know the time of year and the seasons that were coming.

In the family gardens, Spring brought beautiful clouds of color with cherry, crab apple almond and plum blossoms. The air was filled with fragrance and ethereal beauty painted in whites, pinks, rose. The fields were being plowed and the contrast of colors made you want to pick up a brush and catch the moment on canvas. The new furrows that stretched to the horizon would fill with new plantings, and the dark, rich soil would begin to assume a patina of green, the beginnings of swelling crops of tomato, cabbage, kale and other vegetables that thrived in the moist, cool air of the Gardens area. The open land belonged to larger resident farmers and much of it was sited in Alameda County at the time, as was Mulford Gardens. The breezes and gusts of wind would pass over these fields and scents would change as the summer came along, a touch of dryness, and ripening crops getting ready for canning or picking for market. These scents would blend together with the ripening fruits of all the garden trees. The family garden trees would provide many varieties of apples, figs, walnuts, peaches, cherries, plum, almond orange, lemon and quince. Everything seemed to thrive and the prospects for canning fruits, jams and jellies grew right along with the size of the fruit! Walnuts were treasured. The green pods would fall or be knocked down from the trees, the hull easily breaking away. Inside, a beautiful, tan wrinkled walnut shell, hiding a fat, rich nut. You had to wear gloves, or the green husk would stain your hands for days and all the washing in the world would not remove it. The walnut, freed of its cover, would be put onto racks in a semi-shaded spot to dry and then be bagged for storage and use. These nuts would be used all winter long in cakes, breads, cookies, stuffing as well as a tasty snack to munch on. The fig trees provided the best jam in the world- to be spread on fresh bread and butter, or a topping for cookies, dusted with minced walnuts. The golden globes that were harvested from the quince trees were washed, cut and boiled down and strained through a cloth bag. The juice would be a soft, tender pink and boiled further with added sugar and pectin. This resulted in a jelly jar of heavenly flavors, a cross between honey and slight apple flavors. Sitting by the stove, on a cold winter morning with one of these treats on toast was absolutely the best way to start a day!

It was the theme of the times to save everything possible. Many families canned, dried and grew vegetables that could store over the winter months such as winter squashes, potato and other gourd and tuber foods. Canning was a must-do and seasonal fruits and some vegetables were stored away in mason jars in many homes. The blossoms of Spring with the help of the bees that were everywhere, ended in rows of beautiful colors on wooden shelves, or sacked, covered in hay as an extra guarantee against the long cold nights and barren soils of Winter.

Mulford Gardens was indeed a paradise with its trees full of birds and fruits; its open fields swelling with the promise of fertile crops; the bay breezes carrying the scent of salt and a beach filled with birds and driftwood and the lap of waves. It was indeed a Garden of Eden, full of fond memories filling your ears and eyes, your hands at work, your mind absorbing the natural world around you. A gift to have experienced in all its facets, a gift that I wish some of our young people could experience in its simplicity and opportunities to be part of a near natural scene.

Chuck Porrill	President
Earl Vasconcellos	Vice President
Rae Vasconcellos	Treasurer
Michelle Segelke	Secretary
Janet Porrill	Financial Secretary
Jean Morris	Gardeneer Editor
Audrey Albers	
Bo Johansen	Joyce Johansen
Steve & Alison Modifer	Webmasters

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M.G.I.A. General Meeting: Tuesday, April 26, 2011
Last Tuesday of each Month **Door Prize Drawing!**

Advertising information: Call Janet Porrill
510-352-6258



Springtime Soup (easy to make)

- 1 Lb Fresh asparagus spears
- 1 Medium onion chopped
- 3 Cloves garlic minced

- 1 TBSP olive oil
- 6 cups vegetable broth
- ½cup dried orzo or other small pasta cup snow pea pods, ends and strings removed
- 6 cups torn fresh spinach
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ¼ cup purchased pesto (optional)
- ¼cup finely shredded Parmesan (1 ounce)

1. Snap off and discard woody bases from asparagus. If desired scrape off scales. Bias-slice asparagus into 1 inch pieces.
2. Meanwhile, in a 4-quart Dutch oven cook the onion garlic until tender. Add broth, bring to boil. Stir in pasta, reduce heat and boil gently for 5 minutes. Stir in asparagus and snow pea pods. Return to boiling, cook for 3 minutes more. Stir in spinach and pepper, cook for 1 minute more. Remove soup from heat.
3. Ladle soup into bowls. If desired swirl 1 to 2 teaspoons pesto into each bowl of soup. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

Start to finish: 25 min. Makes 8 servings (about 12 cups) 133 calories per serving.

Excerpt from Better Homes and Gardens "Simple Soups and Stews"

LOCAL CHURCHES IN SAN LEANDRO
Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church
2500 Bermuda Ave., 510-483-731

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

13901 Bancroft Ave., 510-357-9192

Life Change Baptist Church
13067 Aurora Drive., 925-755-8710

Faith United Methodist Church
788 Lewelling Blvd., 510-357-5484

PUBLIC MEETINGS



San Leandro City Council:
1ST & 3RD Mondays/each month
City Council Chambers, City Hall, 835 E. 14th St

Mayor Stephen Cassidy

Michael Gregory, Dist. 1 Ursula Reed, Dist. 2
Diana Souza, Dist. 3 Joyce Starosciak, Dist. 4
Pauline Russo Cutter, Dist. 5 Jim Prola, Dist. 6

Board of Zoning (BZA) 1st & 3rd Thursdays / each month
City Council Chambers, City Hall

San Leandro School Board:
1st & 3rd Tuesday 7:00PM
City Council Chambers, City Hall



MGIA Club House Rentals
Bo Johansen 510-206-4249

Are you looking for a quaint, clean place for your Bridge/Card Club, Garden Club, Exercise group or Bunko Group Meetings? Our Club House is available for daily rentals as well as weekend/evenings. Call Bo Johansen for information on rentals: 510-206-4249.

Share your news, ideas, recipes, comments, weddings, anniversaries, birthdays, parties, awards, special events and we will make every effort to print it. Email to: mgia@live.com or mail to MGIA, P O. Box 4235, San Leandro CA 94579 or call Jean Morris (510-495-4480) with your news!



APPLY NOW FOR MGIA SCHOLARSHIP
– Available to Graduating Seniors who live in Mulford Gardens. Call Bo Johansen for application. 510-206-4249