

September, 2007

# The Spout

A newsletter  
for Docents & Volunteers at  
The Water Conservation Garden



Part 1: Docent News &  
Docent Team Reports

*Dirty Docents:  
Lydia C and Linda S in back  
Kay M and Richard W in front.*



## A Very Special Team

The core members of the Special Project Team, aka, "Dirty Docents" in one of their final work sessions. Remember the day temps topped 100? That day.

If you're interested in joining in – as a regular, or when your schedule permits – this is the team for you!

See the Spout Part 2 for contact information, or contact Laurie Furry:  
[laurie\\_furry@yahoo.com](mailto:laurie_furry@yahoo.com)



President's  
Message  
BY ANNE M

It doesn't feel much like Autumn early in September. Given the triple-digit temps of August, you may find it hard to believe how busy it's been in the Garden.

The Irrigation Loop looks better every day as construction reaches its final hectic phase. Thanks to dedicated volunteers and docents, the Garden is managing to look remarkably well in the heat. This is a reassuring reminder that a garden that conserves water doesn't have to look like a parched desert.

As the season cools, events in the Garden heat up. The Fall Plant Sale on 10/27 and we look forward to welcoming a new class of docents who we hope to see at this major event. If you'd like to get in on the action, contact me at:  
[mayers1@juno.com](mailto:mayers1@juno.com)

### NEXT DOCENT MEETING



Saturday, Sept. 29, 2007  
9:00 AM

Garden's covered Patio  
Members and Guests Welcome!

# In The Garden

## Fig Tree

By: Midge H.

The Water Conservation Garden hosts a green fig that looks like it will never ripen. Well, don't wait around if you have one of these in your garden. It's not the famous Mission that turns purple, but possibly a Kadota.

### HISTORY

Figs dating back 11,400 years were recently discovered near the ancient city of Jericho. There is evidence that figs were among the first cultivated crops, and it is proposed that

### TALKING POINT:

*Ficus 'Kadota' is a medium to large honey fig, richly flavored and sweet, especially in hot weather. It is probably is the most important single fig cultivar grown by man..*

### GARDEN LOCATION

*Maintenance loop, directly uphill from the Topiary interpretive sign.*

### FLOWERS AND FRUIT

The fig is commonly thought of as fruit, but it is properly the flower of the fig tree. It is in fact a false fruit or multiple fruit, in which the flowers and seeds grow together to form a single mass: a specially adapted type of inflorescence.

### POLLINATION

The flowers are pollinated by very small wasps that crawl into the fruit to lay eggs. Without this service fig trees cannot reproduce by seed. Typically, only one species of wasp can fertilize the flowers in one species of fig, and therefore plantings of fig species outside of their native range result in effectively sterile individuals.

they may have been intentionally grown 1,000 years before humans domesticated wheat and rye.

One of the more famous varieties listed in my Sunset Western Garden is the famous Bo tree is one (*F. Religiosa* or *Peepul*) associated with Buddha. It has glossy leaves suited to the tropics.



# Garden



By: Carol S.

Pay No  
Attention to the  
Woman



Some docents and volunteers who keep journals prefer to remain (mostly) anonymous.

Whether you'd prefer to use a "secret identity" or will permit use of your first name and last initial...

Passion +  
Joy

At first glance the acts of journaling and gardening seem very different; but upon reflection, many similarities exist. Both are addictive, demand a regular time commitment to be done well and yield unexpected rewards. It's important to have the right tools – clippers, trowel, gloves and hat for gardening; journal and good pen for writing. Each has its' natural place in the rhythm of the day. Journaling is ripe with possibilities early when the subconscious is more accessible or later in the evening as a reflection. Gardening (especially in east county) is best done early in the morning or late in the afternoon to avoid the heat.

Often journaling or gardening compel me to meander down an unpredicted path. I pull on my gloves, intending to weed the overgrown bank, but instead happily spend my time pruning a totally different area. I begin a journal entry about the morning sky and find myself reliving childhood memories. Whether journaling or gardening, my inner child is invited to come out and play. She may simply dig in the dirt or she may be surprised by strong emotions which require attention. Both are healthy and cathartic – each in its' own way. Both provide a breathing space in busy days, a haven which allows me to just be.

And so I journal, I garden, seeking balm for my spirit and balance for my soul. I am addicted and continue to pursue my passion and joy.



## Water Conservation Tip

Water districts and other conservation professionals suggest outdoor water use amounts to 50-80% of your home water use. But how do you know how much your family actually uses?

At the recent Docent meeting, **Jan Tubiolo** shared the following information to help you to estimate what percentage of your household water use is for outdoor landscape. Most of our local water districts bill us for water in increments called "units" which equal 748 gallons. Water districts have estimated that each member of a typical household uses 3 units of water per month.

Multiply the number of people in your household by 3 and that will tell you approximately how many units per month is used indoors. You can then subtract the indoor water use from the total, to estimate the amount (and percentage) of outdoor water use.



*Every minute your volunteer helps support the Garden's mission. Hours should be recorded in the binder in the Docent Shed, unless you work from home and report electronically to Laurie.*

Please report hours in these categories:

- 1) Kiosk, Tours & Gift Shop
- 2) Special Garden Events
- 3) Garden Volunteer Landscapers
- 4) Office Coverage when staff is unavailable
- 5) Accounting & Financial services
- 6) Other: Docent Meetings, Staff Mtgs, Spout, Mailings, Field Trips, Training, Classes, etc.

*Hours in the first 5 categories are valued and reported as donations to the Garden, so it is important to have supporting time sheets.*



## Each Garden Has Its' Own Surprise

5/25/04

Gardening is a sheer delight—digging in the dirt, pulling weeds, shaping plants to match my vision just to have them do whatever they decide to do—grow, bloom, languish or die. The main things I have learned from gardening are patience and a sense of wonder and awe. The color, hue, shape, smell and feel of each plant is unique. Combined they create a feast for the eye and



## The Buzz!

By Laurie Furry, Volunteer and Children's Programs Coordinator

Insert Laurie's column

## Poppies in the Garden

4/4/06



Poppies are one of those flowers with a name that matches a characteristic.

One day they are closed up tight and the next they pop open to share their bright golden face with the world.

We need more poppies.

Carol

Calif  
ornia



## Docent Team Updates



Many docent teams are on summer break, but expect docent and volunteer activity to pick up as the weather cools down.

### “Walk Abouts” –

**Sue C** reports that regular sessions of this team will resume at the end of September. In the meantime, he weeds don't take summer vacation, so docents and trained volunteers are welcome to stroll about and weed any time!

### Veggie Garden Team

Our final harvest of the season will be on Tuesday, Sept 18 at 9:00

am. That morning, **Ellen D** and **Anne M** invite everyone to join us beginning about 9 am. We will remove most of the warm season crops, and if the time and the temperature permit, we will till in some delicious compost. Join us to share the labor, to preserve some seeds, and to share the final bounty of this summer's crop.

### Container Garden Team

Teammates **Cynthia H** and **Rosalie D** are planning the proposed redesign of the hardscape patio adjacent to the container garden. As the weather cools, volunteers will be needed to help repaint, replant, and enjoy the cooler temperatures for outdoor work.

“There reigns a rusty richness everywhere;  
See the last orange roses,  
how they blow  
Deeper and heavier than in  
their prime,  
In one defiant flame before  
they go.”



Container Garden Team leaders: **Rosalie D** and **Cynthia H** prepare their proposal to re-plant the raised beds behind the hardscape exhibit