



# OVER THE GARDEN GATE

Volume 26 Issue 9

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May 2026

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## Mel Machado Almonds and Bees



We've all seen the massive almond orchards here in the Central Valley, driven past when they're in bloom, marveled at the 'Valley Snow.' But did you know that California supplies 100% of the nation's commercial supply of almonds? And 80% of the world's supply? In 2025, the production was forecast at 2.8 billion pounds! At the bottom of the chain is the humble honeybee.

Every February, California's \$5+ billion almond industry relies on the annual migration of nearly 90% of all US honey bee colonies, nearly 2 million hives, two per acre, to pollinate the trees. Hives are trucked in from across the United States from as far away as Florida to meet the demand.

Mel Machado, a previous speaker, is returning in May to share with us some of the intricacies of the bee-almond relationship and how it impacts almond production. Mel began his career at Blue Diamond Growers in 1992, working as a Field Supervisor in San Joaquin and Stanislaus counties. He worked through the organization as a Special Projects Coordinator and Assistant Director. In 2014, Mel assumed the role of Director of Member Relations, where he is responsible for overseeing the cooperative's grower/member relationships and activities.

Mel's industry affiliations include serving as an Alternate on the Almond Board of California and holding positions on the Production Research and Scientific Coordinating Committees.

Mel graduated from California State University-Fresno in 1979 with a Bachelor of Science in Plant Science. He earned a Masters in Vocational Education from the Consortium of the California State University in 1986. Mel holds a keen interest in flying and photography.

Please join us!

## Nancy Robinson, President



Well, our Spring Garden Tour last month was spectacular. The team did a fabulous job. The homes were spectacular and the weather was perfect! The pollinator festival was a fun community event. We sold over 3 dozen painted rocks. Our last meeting of the year is coming up fast. It will feature the Late Bloomers contest with a Tropical Vacation theme. I'm anxious to see all the creations. Don't forget the planting of the Downtown Pots on Saturday, May 2. And the last Hands-on Workshop: Flower Pounded Hankies.

I'm looking forward to a fun relaxing summer after the Del Rio Luncheon. We still need a few volunteers for the Stanislaus County Fair Exhibit. Shirly Stewart will chair, but she needs help, especially doing the heavy lifting and carrying plants. I'll ask for signups at the next meeting. This is another event to let the community know about the Modesto Garden Club.

Happy Gardening,  
Nancy



## Volunteer of the Month:

Janice Garcia,  
Vice President,  
Education



## Cheryl Carmichael, Director, Scholarships

### MODESTO GARDEN CLUB AWARDS 6 COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

The Scholarship Committee rated 14 applications for scholarships and awarded scholarships to the top six applicants.

**Lily Pulido** is a senior at Enochs High School. She will attend MJC to begin her journey to become an Agriculture Teacher.

**Izabella Moules** is a senior at Turlock High School. She will attend MJC to begin her journey to become an Agriculture Teacher.

**Trace Jarvis** is a senior at Turlock High School. He will attend Fresno State in the Fall majoring in Agricultural Business with a focus on farming trees and grapes.

**Lauren Clark** qualified to receive the award for the third time to continue her education in plant production. She is completing her AA at MJC and will go on to Fresno State in the Fall.

**Degan Butler** is a senior at Denair High School. He will attend MJC to study Agricultural Engineering.

**Tyler Bianchi** is a senior at Oakdale High School. He will attend MJC and major in Agriculture focusing on management and crop production.

Thank you to the committee: Pat Logan, Sara Rhodes, Khani Gustafson and Marie Fuhr for their support and perceptions about these worthy candidates.

## Budding Gardeners by Dee Godfrey

I joined the Club in October 2025 and found that there are many opportunities to be involved in general club activities and Budding Gardeners is a way to participate with friends. Budding Gardeners are groups of nine to twelve members who enjoy each other's company and participate in activities together. For example, during the Spring Garden Tour, several groups were docents at the same address while others caravanned to the gardens to walk through them together. There is Downtown Pot Planting twice a year ('pot' as in planters) and several members from each group participate together. Outside of Garden Club activities, many groups do things together. They meet once a month (or more frequently) for lunch or coffee, to tour nurseries and public gardens, go to the movies, talk about their favorite TV shows, share gardening tips, and take short trips. They sit together during the hospitality time and general meeting. During the holidays, one of the members will host her (or his!) group for a relaxed party. Budding Gardeners is a way to make friends and do fun things with someone else who has at least one similar interest: gardening!

Once founded, the groups tend to stay small and stick together. They'll get together to talk about upcoming events and activities that sound interesting and that they might want to go to. There's a lot of activities in the area that would be much more fun to go to as a group, even just threes and fours. Right now, a new group, the Socialites, is in its forming stage and I would like to know if you would be interested in participating. I'd like to have a monthly meeting to get together and meet you face to face. I know that Wednesdays at 10am doesn't work for many of you so tell me what *does* work! If you're not able to meet on a regular basis but would like to be informed of upcoming small group activities, I can do that – just let me know! Email, text, or call [darilynng@outlook.com](mailto:darilynng@outlook.com), cell phone 209-765-6390. I hope to hear from you soon!

## Carla Latimer, Hands-On Workshop



May's Workshop is "Flower Pounded Hankies!" Sign up and pay \$30.00 for your workshop kit at the May Meeting. Flowers are provided but make it extra special by bringing flowers from your yard! Your workshop kit will go home with you after the class to continue more artworks of your choice at home!

May 18<sup>th</sup> from 9-11 am at the MGC Office.  
Questions? Call Carla Latimer at 209-324-3549.



## Lee Lundigran, Vice President, Fundraising

### Fall Gathering - September

Plan to attend our 2026 Fall Gathering. This year's Modesto Garden Club *Fall Gathering* event is still looking for a host and a date. If that is you – let us know! Tickets are \$50 each \$90 per couple. Keep your eyes open for the upcoming details. Call, text, or email our new VP Fundraising DeAnn Bauche at 209-484-1899 or DeannBauche@icloud.com to join the Fall Gathering team and help create this relaxing evening.



### 2026 Spring Garden Tour

The April 18, 2026 Spring Garden Tour was a triumph. Over 850 attendees joined the tour. **Income has reached over \$26,000**, the most collected in the past 5 years. Silent auction income continues to be collected as this article is written.

### **MANY THANKS AND RECOGNITION:**

~To all who participated including our garden owners, members, docents, Raffatunity and refreshment donors, and the many members of the public who spent the day with us.

~To the five gardens that wowed us! Thank you Kimberly Spina, Evangelina and John Paoluccio, Jennifer and Troy Wright, Garritt Vick and our very own Planters and Groomers for opening your lovely gardens and inviting a stream of interested garden lovers to visit.

~To the Master Gardeners for your educational booth with gardening tips and information.

~To the committee chairs and their teams who worked to make this a great Spring Garden Tour! Raffatunity Chair Lydia Scott, Refreshment Chair Jeanette Robinson, Ticket Chair Nancy Holmes & Dee Godfrey, Design and Print Chair Mary Lou Rice, Docent Chair Atlanta Jordan, Publicity Chair Sue Hudgens; Logistics Chair Scott & Lydia Smith, Garden Hostess Gift Chair Dede Heisinger and for all around support from our President Nancy Robinson!

~To each and every docent and their friends who filled over sixty docent positions. Docents wore the club green cobbler apron with our embroidered Modesto Garden Club logo as they smiled and welcomed our many guests.

### **RAFFATUNITY SUCCESS:**

Over 90 donated Raffatunity prizes including gift certificates, trees and plants, wine and wineglasses, garden statuary, garden tools, soil amendment, handmade items, lovely place settings, and art were displayed for bidding. MANY tickets were sold! A second area of silent auction items continued to be celebrated this year.

### **REFRESHMENT TRIUMPH:**

We hope you were able to get to Garden #5 at the Modesto Garden Club office to indulge in the yummy refreshment spread all were invited to enjoy. Delicious sweets, savories, wine, and soft drinks were served to hundreds of hungry and thirsty attendees. It was a magnificent garden tour - hope YOU were there!

### *Over the Garden Gate*

Published 10 times a year, September – June, by the Modesto Garden Club, Inc.

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**newsletter@modestogardenclub.org**  
(deadline is the 20th of the month prior)

Submit ideas and comments to:

**newsrequest@modestogardenclub.org**

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## News and Notes

- 🐞 A Japanese Maple Care seminar is in the works for May at the Garden Club Office. Check your email for date and time!
- 🐞 The 2027 Spring Garden Tour will be held on **April 17, 2027**. Save the date!
- 🐞 The Spring Garden Tour yard signs will be re-used next year. Please store them or return them at the May General Meeting or to the office on Wednesday mornings, 9am-noon.
- 🐞 If you have pictures you'd like to be considered for use by the Multimedia Team, please send them to [newsletter@modestogardenclub.org](mailto:newsletter@modestogardenclub.org) along with your name and a brief description such as the event it was taken at or who and what it's a picture of. Your name is most important so credit can be given where credit is due!
- 🐞 A new Director of Scholarships is being sought. If you want to have a direct impact on a student's life, please consider this opportunity. Cheryl Carmichael, the current Director, will show you how it works. If interested, please contact Nancy Robinson or Janice Garcia.

It's that time of year again – membership dues for the upcoming year are due! \$50 per member may be paid starting May 1<sup>st</sup> and are due by July 31<sup>st</sup>. If you want to be listed in the yearbook, make sure to get your dues in by July 31 and please confirm your listing is correct!

**Late Bloomers  
Contest**

Break out the leis  
and sunscreen, it's a  
**TROPICAL**  
theme this time!  
May 14<sup>th</sup>

MODESTO GARDEN CLUB, INC. IS HOSTING

**Plant Sale  
& Craft Faire**

**PLANT SALE**  
Flowers, annuals,  
perennials, vegetables,  
succulents and  
**MUCH MORE!**

**CRAFT FAIRE**  
Over 20 local vendors with  
handcrafted, unique gifts,  
and food items!

**LOCATION**  
Modesto Covenant Church  
913 Floyd Ave  
Modesto, CA 95350

**DATE/TIME**  
Saturday,  
**MAY 9, 2026**  
**10AM - 4PM**  
Plant sale ends at 2PM

**FREE TO THE PUBLIC!**

**FREE PARKING**

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

MGC Website

# General Meeting



# Scholarship Winners



# Pollinator Festival

OVER THE GARDEN GATE



# Spring Garden Tour

#1: 6437 Covert Road

#2: 4801 Quinturn Lane



#3: 1600 Pristine Court



#4: 1114 Brady Avenue



#5: Modesto Garden Club



Raffatunity and Silent Auction





## Coming Events

### May 2 – Downtown Pot Planting

Modesto Garden Club Office  
622 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Modesto  
9am – noon

### May 2 – Turlock Garden Club Spring Garden Tour

Tickets available on the day of the tour at  
1838 Abigail Lane, Turlock  
Adults – \$25, Children under 12 - \$10

### May 9 – MGCI Plant Sale and Craft Fair

Modesto Covenant Church  
913 Floyd Avenue, Modesto  
Plant Sale: 10 am – 2 pm  
Craft Faire: 10 am – 4 pm

### May 12 – Multimedia Group Meeting

Modesto Garden Club Office  
622 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Modesto  
9:30-11:30

### May 12 – Valley Lode District Meeting

Hosted by Foothill Garden Club  
Fiddletown Community Center  
14445 Fiddletown Road, Fiddletown  
9 am – 1:30 pm



### May 14 – General Meeting

913 Floyd Avenue, Modesto  
Hospitality 10am – 11:15am  
General Business 11:15 – noon  
Speaker noon – 1pm  
*Mel Machado – “Almonds and Bees”*  
Late Bloomers Contest: Tropical Theme

### May 18 – Hands-on Workshop

Modesto Garden Club  
622 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Modesto  
9am – noon  
*Flower Pounded Hankies*

### May 28 – MGCI Board Meeting

Modesto Garden Club  
622 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Modesto  
8:30 – 11am

### June 3 & 4 – Summer Luncheon and Table Viewing

Del Rio Country Club

### July 31 – Membership Dues Due

### August 13, 2026 – General Meeting

### April 17, 2027 – Spring Garden Tour

## Fall Gathering September 2026