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## Moraga Garden Club Celebrates Forty Years

By Linda U. Foley



Photo Andy Scheck

All worthwhile undertakings start with a seed of an idea. And so it was that the thought to start a Garden Club in Moraga germinated over coffee around a kitchen table 40 years ago.

Three fairly new transplants to Moraga-Shirley Engstrom, Pearl Duncan and Mercedes Brewer-put their collective idea into action. To get off the ground, they contacted the California State Garden Club for guidelines. Basic requirements were-a meeting place and a certain number of people to start.

The Holy Lutheran Church became their first meeting place and to everyone's surprise, twenty people turned up in response to distributed fliers. The time was ripe and positions were filled effortlessly with Brewer becoming the first MGC president. Brewer's husband was in the nursery business which was a definite plus.

In the ensuing years, the non-profit Club has flourished, growing its membership to 130 people. Its diligent pursuit-dollars and determination-of beautification includes: planting and maintaining one garden at the Hacienda, five gardens at the Commons, the triangle at the intersection of Rheem Boulevard and Moraga Road, the urn in front of the Library, the Holy Trinity Cultural Center and the atrium at John Muir hospital. The Club also collects funds for reforestation, creates a monthly floral arrangement for the Library and decorates the Christmas tree. In addition, in the fall, the Club purchases 1000+ daffodil bulbs which are divided between the elementary and middle schools and the Town. Also, donations are given to the schools and Library to enhance their gardening and green environment collections.

The monthly meeting held at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center typically features experts including authors on topics as varied as growing orchids, establishing a vineyard, proper pruning of roses, composting, flower arranging, and growing edibles, to the

importance of bees to the health of your garden.

Monthly field trips range from herb farms and botanical gardens, to a variety of specialty nurseries and interesting venues such as the Disney Museum in San Francisco.

Its one and only fundraiser-a salad luncheon and speaker-is held in April. The salads are prepared by members, with moderate fees for members and guests. This year the event takes place on April 15th at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center and features NY Times best-selling author Amy Stewart offering a behind-the-scenes look at the floral industry.

There is no doubt that Moraga has come a long way in forty years, not the least of which is the beautification of the scenic corridor, a daffodil delight in spring. The Moraga Garden Club is a blooming example of what caring gardeners can "dig" into to enhance their community for everyone's enjoyment.

The next Moraga Garden Club

meeting for members and their guests will be held on April 15, 9:30 a.m., at the Holy Trinity Cultural

Center, 1700 School Street, Moraga. Best-selling author Amy Stewart will offer a behind-the-scenes look at the floral industry in her talk titled, "Flower Confidential."

For membership information call Tracey at (925) 283-4751.



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