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Proclamation for Moraga Garden Center's Kenny Murakami

By Vera Kochan



Kenny Murakami prunes a Japanese Maple in a Moraga yard Photo A. Scheck

such as providing daffodil bulbs for the annual plantings on Moraga's hillsides and roads; giving valuable advice on many projects along with providing locally-sourced plants for the Hacienda de las Flores gardens; offering instruction in pruning techniques and the prevention of fire-blight (a pear tree killer) for the 100-plus-year-old pear trees on the Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School property; free consultation to the Moraga Gardens Farm that provides produce to local schools and nonprofits; and his partnering with the Moraga Garden Club in helping to design the Moraga for Monarchs habitat at the Rancho Laguna Park.

A photography professor at Santa Clara University, Takeshi Moro, was so taken by the community's reliance on Murakami's advice and quality vegetation that he decided to create a photo book based on plants purchased at the Moraga Garden Center and how they are thriving in people's yards. He plans on printing a limited number, and once the costs are cleared, all proceeds from sales will go to Murakami. The book will be available at Lafayette's Orchard Nursery, Lazy K, Orinda Books, McDonnell Nursery, Ace Hardware Moraga, and Across the Way.

The Moraga Garden Center will close its doors for good on Oct. 31. The website's mission statement can also serve as its epitaph: "Our goal is to introduce our customers to the wonderful diversity of the plant world, from the edible to the ornamental, to the curiosity. Our goal is also to help our customers become more successful and knowledgeable gardeners with sound science-based advice. A more knowledgeable gardener is a better gardener."

Mission accomplished, Kenny!

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