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Published August 31st, 2011

## Great Advice and Plants Available at Master Gardeners' Fall Event

By Cathy Tyson

Who doesn't need some help in the garden? For Lamorinda residents in need of plants or garden art or those seeking advice from a pro about sick plants - this is your golden opportunity to get the answers from volunteers in the know - Contra Costa Master Gardeners. On Saturday September 10 from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at the lovely St. Perpetua Garden of Learning, 3445 Hamlin Road, Lafayette, the Contra Costa Master Gardeners will host their annual plant sale with native and drought tolerant plants, flowers and winter vegetables, new and gently used garden items and a personal favorite - help desk and sick plant clinic.

"The scope of our Fall Event is to provide information on home horticulture, pest management and sustainable landscape practices in a setting that would be fun and informational for all ages. St. Perpetua's school garden fits the bill in so many ways!" says Master Gardener and event coordinator Sue Roif.

"This school garden not only teaches sustainable and organic practices to the students, but it also provides an incredibly beautiful and playful environment for the children. Art, science, math and spiritual curriculums are enriched. The harvest is enjoyed by students and also made into culinary delights sold at the Cafe Perpetua. Sales make the garden totally sustainable. In fact, Cafe Perpetua will be open the day of our Fall Event and the students will not only be selling their goodies, but will be helping the public carry their plants, garden items, etc. to their cars," says Roif.

In addition to spearheading the creation of the garden, Master Gardener Monette Meo has worked long and hard to guide students on projects that include a chicken coop, a cold frame, rain harvesting system and more. "One of my main goals is for the children to realize where their food comes from, when it's in season and why it doesn't have to come from 3,000 miles away. From seed to plate is such a wonderful lesson," says Meo.

A variety of plants will be available at very reasonable prices and there's already an army of thirty volunteers lined up to help at the sale. Feel free to bring sick plants, or clip off a few leaves with issues for diagnosis and advice. Roif explains that the Contra Costa Master Gardeners receive training from the University of California. The organization functions as a volunteer outreach arm of the U.C. Cooperative Extension with the mission of extending research based knowledge. If you can't wait until the sale on September 10 and have plant questions, the free Master Gardener Help Desk is staffed every week from Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at (925) 646-6586.

There will be free demonstrations throughout the day and tours of the fantastic Garden of Learning.

- Composting & Vermiculture- 9:30 & 12:30
- Plant Propagation from Cuttings- 10:00 & 1:00
- Raising Chickens - 10:30 & 1:30
- Drip Irrigation - 11:00

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[back](#)

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