

A Masterclass...

Imagine if the trees in your back yard kept on producing delicious, nutritious fruit throughout the whole growing season. But who has space for so many trees that all fruit at different times of the year? Well... maybe more people have that kind of space than realize.

You know when you're seeing a true expert at work, and that's exactly what happened at our volunteer day on Saturday January 7th when veteran tree grafter Bruce Van Dyke came along and shared his wealth of experience with a practical demonstration of different grafting techniques. If you think that grafting is just about getting the kind of tree you want growing on the kind of root-stock that works in your area, then you're in for a pleasant surprise.

Say, for example, you have an apple tree, maybe an 'Anna' like the one I have in my back yard. It fruits nice and early, so we won't have to wait too long to start enjoying fresh, juicy apples straight off the tree. But then what? Well, if I know someone with a 'Pettingill' apple tree that fruits much later in the season, we could graft a twig from the 'Pettingill' onto our 'Anna'. If we do the job right, we should end up with both types of apples growing on the same tree. Why stop there, why not graft on some 'Dorsett Golden' as well to cross-pollinate with the 'Anna'? Maybe you like the idea of nectarines growing on your peach tree, or vice-versa? Or different kinds of cherries all on the same tree... you get the picture.

Disclaimer... Bruce made it look easy, but then he's been grafting for longer than most of us have been alive. I'm sure we'll be putting this learning into practice at Mesa Harmony Garden, so we'll see for real if fruit throughout the growing season is an attainable ideal. Here in Santa Barbara, we do have a very long growing season!

Next volunteer day: Climbing the fence...
[That's hopefully the vines and creepers we'll be
planting, not the volunteers]
Saturday, February 4th, 9am – 12:30.
Corner of Meigs Road and Dolores Drive.

For more information about the garden, and to join our email list, visit:
www.mesaharmonygarden.org

Please support our work by volunteering, or by sending donations (we're a 501(c)3 nonprofit) to:
Mesa Harmony Garden, c/o Holy Cross Church, 1740 Cliff Drive, Santa Barbara, CA 93109

