

February 1, 2009

To Gardeners of America Members and Friends:

RE: Letters of intent to attend 2009 national convention of Gardeners of America/Men's Garden Clubs

The Santa Rosa Men's Garden Club of Santa Rosa is proud to be hosting the 2009 annual convention of The Gardeners of America/Men's Garden Clubs of America.

Our theme for the convention is "Roses and Wine in 2009" and keeping with this theme, we have several winery and garden tours being considered, including the gardens and winery at Korbel, Ferrari Carano winery and gardens; Benzinger winery and gardens and Kunde winery with their wonderful wine caves. No visit to Sonoma County would be complete without touring Armstrong Woods State Park with their 300 foot tall ancient redwood trees, or a short drive to Bodega Bay where Hitchcock's "The Birds" was filmed near the shores of the Pacific Ocean. The 20th century's most famous gardener, Luther Burbank is a Santa Rosa icon and his farm and gardens will be on our tour schedule.

[Another very interesting place to visit is the Charles Schulz museum, where you will find the cartoonist's "Peanuts" memorabilia.](#)

We obviously can't do all of the above, but for those arriving early or staying on after the convention these are all great places to visit. We have already confirmed the Korbel and Armstrong Woods tour. We have also contacted several interesting speakers for our seminars, all of which will tell the story of Sonoma County agriculture and gardening. The convention will be held at the Flamingo Conference Resort & Spa in Santa Rosa, CA on May 28, 29 & 30th. Web site – www.flamingoresort.com. The room rate will be reduced to \$119 plus 11% city and state tax per night for a standard room, 2 queens or 1 king, or \$139 plus 11% city and state tax for a deluxe room for advanced reservations. This convention rate will be extended for one week before and one week after to any guests wishing to arrive early or stay on after the convention. You just have to let us know ahead of time. An early bird registration fee of \$295 per person up thru March 31, 2009 and a registration fee of \$325 from April 1 thru May 15, 2009 will cover all meals, seminars, tours, door prizes, etc. The hotel serves excellent food, by the way.

While in Ft. Wayne, we had several offers from member clubs to make a donation to the convention that would be repaid from the profits of the convention. If we could get a quick response from these and other clubs, along with contributions from our local businesses, there is a good chance that the registration fee could be lowered.

For those attendees who are arriving early or staying on after the convention, there is so much more within northern California to visit. San Francisco is a beautiful one-hour drive to the south across the Golden Gate Bridge, especially spectacular in the early evening. Take a 30-minute drive to the east along the Valley of the Moon highway to the quaint town of Sonoma where you can sample local cheeses at the Cheese Factory and visit the village of Glen Ellen to taste the local olive oils at The Olive Press, or spend an hour at Jack London State Park nearby and tour his house and the museum. The drive to

Sonoma passes through pastoral hills dotted with vineyards and continues on to the city of Napa and the Napa Valley.

A 30-minute drive to the north takes you to Healdsburg, another small town that is a fun place to visit with its many boutique shops and restaurants. Healdsburg is the gateway to The Dry Creek Valley Appellation and a drive along Dry Creek road is a must for anyone interested in seeing the many small vineyards in the valley of the upper Russian River. Stop at the Dry Creek general store for a deli sandwich and a beer before heading back.

Lake Tahoe is a four-hour drive to the east (the drive alone is worth the trip, not to mention beautiful Lake Tahoe itself and the many casinos.) Monterey and Carmel are a three hour drive to the south. Yosemite is about a five-hour drive to the southeast. Or you may just want to stay on in beautiful Sonoma county with our natural beauty, mild climate, many wineries, fine restaurants and other points of interest. There is obviously enough here to make this your vacation destination.

Please let us know as soon as possible if you plan to attend. Email – chet36@comcast.net, phone (707) 545-5335; cell (707) 478-5211 or by mail: Chet Wilson, 1910 Tonja Way, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Thank you.

Chet Wilson
President – Men's Garden Club of Santa Rosa
Co-chairman 2009 convention