

Dear Greeter for the 2025 Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour,

Thank you for volunteering for the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour; this event couldn't be held without you!

Below is information that will help make your day more enjoyable, and useful to your host and the Tour. But first...

*Please let me know immediately if you find that you cannot volunteer as a Greeter on the day of the tour, so I can try to find someone to fill your spot. Know, however, that your host is counting on you to be there, as am I.*

Some general information on volunteering is [here](#).

**Volunteer shifts are:**

- 9:30 to 5:00 (if you are volunteering all day), or
- 9:30 to 1:30 for the morning shift, or
- 1:00 to 5:00 for the afternoon shift.

**When do I sign up for my garden?** Registration opens in February or March. Volunteers can sign up to help out at a garden when registration opens at [BringingBacktheNatives.net](http://BringingBacktheNatives.net). On the registration form you will click, "I'd like to volunteer" and a pop-up will appear. If you know your host you should write, "I am a friend of XX, and only want to be assigned to that garden."

**When should I sign up for my garden?** Please register by the end of March (at the latest), and earlier if possible. By the end of March I need to know which hosts have lined up all of the volunteers they require, and which hosts need me to try and find volunteers for their gardens.

**Do volunteers need to register?**

Yes, volunteers do need to register. When a volunteer registers for the Tour, you will provide me with all of the information I need—your name, phone number, t-shirt size if you need one—or a note that you already have a t-shirt if you don't—your shift (morning or afternoon), and the position you are filling; Greeter or Garden Assistant.

Then, because you have registered as a volunteer you will be tagged in the database as a volunteer. Close to the Tour you will be sent a reminder to read the instructions for your position, and also a request that you be responsive when your host is setting up a time to meet with you prior to the Tour.

After the Tour I'll email each volunteer a thank you note, the quotes that visitor's made about the garden you staffed, and the final report.

### ***Supporting the Tour***

Please note that the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour depends upon donations that are made on the day of the tour. Because the Tour is free, many people don't think about making a contribution. The amount of donations the tour receives depends directly upon the Greeters. We have made a new "Donations" sign that has a QR code on it, which leads to the donations page on the Tour's website.

When guests arrive at your table, please greet them, ask them to drop their tickets into the jar or basket, and say, "If you haven't had a chance to make a donation yet, the QR code to make an online donation, and the donation jar are there."

This will remind people who are fumbling for tickets, looking at the various hand-outs, and glancing around the garden to help support the tour if they haven't already. Just reminding your garden tour visitors of the need for their support makes a huge difference in whether or not people help donate to the Tour.

Some people will have already donated on-line, and others will have contributed at a garden they visited earlier in the day—but your gentle reminder will make a big difference to those who have not already supported the Tour.

### ***Collecting tickets – they are so important!***

**Please ensure all of the adults that enter the garden deposit a ticket in the jar or basket that will be on the Greeting table.** If someone doesn't have a ticket (maybe they are a neighbor who is just dropping by, or a guest who has forgotten their tickets, or someone who doesn't have a printer, or just someone who is driving past and drops in), please welcome them to the garden, ask them to make a ticket, and let them in.

Recently a LOT of people came without tickets, wanting to show their phones as proof of registration, stating their printers had broken, or they had lost or forgotten their tickets. This year we have sent three sheets of tickets to each garden. Please ensure your host has put out a pair of scissors so they can be used.

Ask every person who does not have tickets to cut out a ticket to drop into the jar. If they ask why, explain that we count the tickets to track the number of people entering a garden. (Registrants were already asked to print or make their own tickets at home, but if they didn't they can cut out the tickets they need to drop into the jar on the day of the Tour, at the Greeting table. **DO NOT ACCEPT A WAVED PHONE AS PROOF OF REGISTRATION – EVERYONE NEEDS TO DROP A TICKET INTO THE JAR.**

**Taking tickets is necessary** as the number of garden visits made to each garden is reported to the homeowners, and also to funders—so it matters that every person who enters the garden is counted. The number of garden visits made to each garden is considered in the next year's garden tour planning, and it is also

included in the final report, which is provided to donors and sponsors, as well as to hosts, volunteers—so please ensure you are collecting tickets from every adult who answers keeping an accurate count of the number of visits made during your shift! (Children 16 and under don't need to provide tickets.)

Taking tickets also allows me to track how many garden visits have been made overall—the total is now over 227,000 since the Tour's inception in 2005.

**Children don't need to turn in tickets;** I don't want to stress adults out about tickets and their kids.

**Evaluation** The link to the evaluation will be e-mailed out to registrants, volunteers and hosts on the morning of the Tour. If anyone asks, you can tell registrants to look in their in-boxes or their spam boxes when they get back home for a link to the tour evaluation.

### **Miscellaneous Information**

Parking will be tight on the day of the tour. Please park a block away and walk in, leaving the closer spaces for tour guests.

### **General Greeter Responsibilities**

- Arrive on time! Your host, the other volunteers, and visitors are relying on you to be there (9:30-1:30 and 1:00-5:00 are the shifts).
- Park some distance away from the garden, so the spots near the house are available to people coming to visit the garden.
- Wear your blue garden tour t-shirt, so visitors know you are volunteering at the tour.
- **Bring a hat, jacket, sunblock, snack/lunch, and water, so you are comfortable during your shift. Tip! A mister is worth a million dollars if the day is hot, and so is an umbrella, to use as a sunshade.**
- Help your host set up and break down the materials table and put out or bring in the garden tour sign.
- **Welcome people as they enter the garden!** You are the face of the Tour; please make your visitors feel welcome. Say something like, "Welcome to Sally and John's garden!" Let visitors know that the homeowners are wearing green t-shirts; the volunteers in the blue t-shirts are also there to help answer their questions. If it's not obvious, point out how visitors get to the back garden. Let the visitor know you hope they enjoy seeing the garden.
- The tour depends up donations. When people enter the garden, please say something like, "If you haven't had the chance to make a donation yet, the QR code is there, and the jar is on the table." Checks can be made out to the "Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour."
- **Ensure that one entry ticket per adult** is collected. Groups **cannot** provide one ticket for their group. Children 16 and under do not need to provide tickets.
- **Visitors arriving without tickets or garden guides can still tour the garden.** In order to track these people ask them to cut out a ticket from the sheets that have been provided. If you run out of substitute tickets, guests can

just make tickets from the paper on the pad that has been provided. ***Do not drop a ticket in the basket with the number of guests it admitted written on it.*** There are too many tickets to review at the end of the shift for that method to work.

- Visitors who would like to be added to the Tour's email list should ***legibly*** write their name and e-mail address on the pad provided. Announcements about next year's tour will be sent via ***e-mail***, so street addresses don't do any good. (Please note; **Don't ask everyone to sign in with their e-mail addresses**; registered folks are already in the database, so having to check a long list of e-mail addresses that are already in the database just makes for a lot of pointless work.)
- If traffic near your garden is heavy, feel free to give visitors tips on where they might park. (Check with your host to see if they know of areas that might be available for guest parking.)
- Assist the host as needed.

#### **Morning Greeters (9:30-1:30)**

- Please arrive on time so that you can assist the host with setting up the table, materials, and chairs, and putting the garden tour sign in the front of the house.
- When the afternoon Greeter has arrived (at 1:00) pass along any tips you have about the Greeting process, and let her/him how the morning went.
- Complete the morning tally sheet that is attached to the plastic bag. Then count the tickets you took in over the course of the morning. That way we can track how many visitors came through each garden in the morning, as opposed to the afternoon. Deposit the morning tickets into the morning baggie included with the host's materials, and seal the bag.
- Fill out the brief form attached to the baggie (host gardener's name and your name), shift (morning or afternoon), and the number of tickets collected.
- Please fill out your own evaluation on-line!

#### **Afternoon Greeters (1:00–5:00)**

- Please arrive on time so you can take over from the Morning Greeter, as s/he will be preparing to leave so s/he can visit gardens.
- When your shift is over count the tickets you took in over the course of the afternoon. That way we can track how many visitors came through each garden in the afternoon, as opposed to the morning. Deposit the afternoon tickets into the afternoon baggie included with the host's materials, and seal the bag. Fill out the brief form attached to the baggie (host gardener's name and your name), shift (morning or afternoon), number of tickets collected, and number of visitors that came through the garden that did not have tickets.
- Your host will be tired at the end of the day. Please help break down the table, bring in the garden tour sign(s), and pack up the leftover materials.
- At the end of the day please check with other volunteers or your host to see if any of you can return the sign(s), and left-over handouts. These materials can be brought to my home in 1718 Hillcrest Road, San Pablo. If I am not at home please leave the signs and host bags behind the gate. Or, you can return

these things for your host at the post-Tour Garden Materials Returning Event that will take place at my house on the Saturday after the Tour.

Kathy Kramer and Mike May's garden  
1718 Hillcrest Road  
San Pablo  
(510) 236-9558 landline

- Please fill your own evaluation; a link will be in your in-box when you get home.

### **More on Tickets**

There have been a lot of questions about the tickets for the garden tour. Here's the skinny:

By requiring tickets I obtain information that must be provided to the funders, and some just information to help plan for next year's tour. In addition, the hosts like to know how many people came through their garden. Finally, more than 230,000 garden visits have been made since the Tour began: every ticket you collect brings the Tour closer to the quarter million garden visit goal, which we are looking forward to achieving. *So, please, collect a ticket from every adult who enters the garden.*

Below is what I am hoping we will be able to track with the ticket count:

- how many people came to each garden in the morning
- how many people came to each garden in the afternoon
- what percentage of the registrants brought their own tickets
- total number of people visiting each garden
- total number of garden visits made on the day of the tour

Here are some answers to the frequently asked ticket questions (the answers are in parenthesis):

1. **Do children under 16 need tickets?** (no)
2. **What if visitors are run out of tickets?** (People are still welcome to tour the gardens. Just have these people make their own tickets from the extra ticket pages that have been provided. )
3. **What if we are neighbors, just dropping in, and don't have any tickets?**  
Please welcome them and ask them to cut out tickets to drop into the jar.

### **Problems?**

I will be touring the gardens myself on the day of the garden tour. To tell you the truth, there isn't much I can do on the day of the event, but if you must reach me, you can call my cell phone at (510) 761-7048, or you can reach me on my husband's cell phone at (510) 932-4021.

Should a visitor need more information or have a problem, s/he can call me at home on Monday at (510) 236-9558.

Thank you again for your help. I hope you have a great Tour day!

Warmly,

Kathy