



Fall 2006

California Shade

*A Newsletter From The California Department of
Forestry and Fire Protection Urban Forestry Program*

2004 Nobel Peace Laureate Wangari Maathai Joins Canopy & The City of East Palo Alto In Ceremomial Tree Planting

On April 30, 2006 Canopy, a Palo Alto-based non-profit tree group and the City of East Palo Alto hosted *A Sunday With Wangari Maathi Ceremonial Tree Planting* in East Palo Alto. The event celebrated the tenth anniversary of Canopy and launched the Trees For East Palo Alto Initiative, which will plant at least 1,000 public trees by the end of 2010. The event was sponsored by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the U.S. Forest Service, Hewlett Packard, Pacific Gas and Electric, Lockheed Martin, Jensen Corporation, and numerous other local businesses.

A native of Kenya, Professor Maathai received the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize for her contribution to sustainable development, democracy and peace. Her achievements as a leading international environmentalist and stateswoman started with the simple act of planting a tree. When she began planting trees in



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Hot Topics

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Proposition 12 Grants

Look for new simplified grant applications at the UFEI web site at www.ufe.org. Grants for fiscal year 2006 include: "Green Trees for The Golden State" for community tree planting, "Leaf-It-To-Us" for tree planting projects at California schools, and "An Urban Forest For Every City" for education, demonstration and community urban forest infrastructure development projects.



Proposition 12

Life Frames Inc. Uses Urban Forestry Grant to Plant 200 Trees at San Miguel Child Development Center in San Francisco

Life Frames, Inc. and A Living Library have planted 200 California Native Trees as part of the development of two new Learning Zones at the OMI / Excelsior Living Library & Think Park at the San Miguel Child Development Center in southwest San Francisco.

The Redwood Reading Circle, the Learning Zone and the World Stage Multicultural Learning Zone are now filled with a variety of native species of trees including redwoods, redbuds, several varieties of oaks, buckeyes, ceanothus, bigleaf maples, bay laurel, toyon, and others. The trees were funded by a Proposition 12 grant through the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Urban Forestry Program.

"My students are very excited about the transformation that's happening in our yard," said Aurora Hernandez, Lead Teacher at San Miguel Child Development Center. "They are eager to go and work, collecting rocks, spreading soil and planting trees and seeds. We brought out books to our new Redwood Reading Circle and they were overwhelmingly joyous."

Ten students from Grinnell College in Iowa flew to San Francisco and spent their spring break preparing



Children skip through the Redwood Reading Circle at A Living Library & Think Park.

the ground and then planting the trees with students from San Miguel Child Development Center, James Denman Middle School and Lick Wilmerding High School and with A Living Library teachers. Doug Wildman of Friends of the Urban Forest demonstrated the correct way to plant a tree, insert stakes, and tie the trees.

Grinnell student Elisa McCool said, "I would definitely say that being involved in A Living Library was a fulfilling, holistic, and nurturing experience. I felt really engaged and involved and it was gratifying to begin to transform an area of concrete into a living, dynamic, beautiful learning and teaching environment."

Gary Louie, Project Manager of the Facilities Department of San Francisco Unified School District, said, "I was very impressed to be in an urban setting to see A Living Library, such a positive program where students and the community come together to make it a reality. It's wonderful to see a garden like this with native trees. We hope it becomes a showcase and model for other school programs."



Site of the Redwood Reading Circle before planting.

the mid 1970s, it was to address problems that poor women faced because of uncontrolled deforestation. She realized that without trees these women lacked the environmental benefits trees provide: shade from the hot sun, firewood for cooking, fruit for their families, wood for building material, and the vital income and self-reliance that comes through the sale of tree-related products. She developed this concept into a broad-based grassroots organization, the Green Belt Movement, which in turn led to the planting of more than 30 million trees in Africa. In a Time magazine interview after she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize she was asked, "What next?" "More trees," she answered, "I will grow more trees."

The community tree planting took place at the intersection of Bay & Newbridge Roads in East Palo Alto with presentations by Ruben Grijalva, Director of the California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection, and Ruben Abrica, Mayor of East Palo Alto. Children and adults alike joined Professor Maathai in planting the trees that will grow into the Wangari Maathai Grove. The evening program featured a dinner and keynote address from Professor Maathai.

"When we plant trees, we plant the seeds of peace and the seeds of hope."

-Professor Wangari Maathai

Canopy, a Palo Alto-based urban forest advocacy organization that works to educate, inspire and engage the community as stewards of young and mature trees, has partnered with the City of East Palo Alto in The Trees for East Palo Alto Initiative. This cooperative effort will plant and install irrigation for 1,000 public trees by the end of 2010, provide three years of follow-up care, educate residents in the planting and care of community trees and assist the City of East Palo Alto in creating a comprehensive municipal urban forestry program. Canopy recently secured a \$142,000 Proposition 12 grant through the Department of Forestry & Fire Protection's Urban Forestry Program that will cover the planting of more than six hundred trees in areas that currently have little to no vegetation and will also fund the initiation of an urban forestry program within the City of East Palo Alto.

Right: Glenn Flamik, Urban Forestry Program Administrator for the California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection, helps Bakari Spencer, age 4, plant one of the trees in the Wangari Maathai Grove. More than 350 people turned out for the planting and dedication ceremonies.



The Wangari Maathai Grove

The tree species planted to create the Wangari Maathai Grove were selected to symbolize the many cultures and parts of the world represented in the East Palo Alto population and for their adaptability to the East Bay's climate and soil.

Olea africana - African Olive: Native to a large area of Africa, this savanna tree is very similar to the Mediterranean olive which grows well in this area. An olive branch is a universal symbol of peace.

Persea 'Mexicola Grande' - Avocado: A strain of small-fruited avocado native to Mexico, this variety has been chosen for its ability to withstand cold temperatures.

Persea 'Fuerte' - Avocado: A commercial strain of large-fruited avocado that is a hybrid of West Indian and Central American avocado varieties.

Casimiroa edulis - White Sapote: This productive fruit tree native to the highlands of central Mexico has large sweet fruit with white or yellow custardy flesh.

Metrosidero excelsa - New Zealand Christmas Tree: This hardy south pacific evergreen tree produces a good show of red flowers in the summer with a few flowers through much of the year.

Arbutus 'Marina' - Marina Madrone: This tree shares the beautiful bark and trunk of the California madrone, but is smaller. It is native to San Francisco and serves as the local addition to the grove. It is also noted for its abundant flowers and red and yellow fruit.

AT&T Donates \$1,000,000 to the National Arbor Day Foundation

On Friday, April 21, 2006, standing atop the Fresno Grizzlies' dugout between the 5th and 6th innings, with lightning flashing, thunder clapping, and rain pouring, AT&T Pioneers presented a check to the National Arbor Day Foundation for \$1,000,000. On hand to accept the check on behalf of the National Arbor Day Foundation was Darla Mills, Forestry Assistant II from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Urban Forestry program.

AT&T Pioneers was founded in 1911 as the volunteer arm of AT&T. Today it is an employee group consisting of almost 800,000 current and retired AT&T employees who have pledged to make

their communities better places to live. In order to help conserve natural resources, AT&T collaborated with AT&T Pioneers to spread the word regarding a paperless billing campaign. AT&T agreed to donate one dollar to the National Arbor Day Foundation for every customer that signed up for paperless billing. The company had no idea what the response would be and were completely overjoyed when the millionth customer signed up.



Below: Check presentation ceremony at the Fresno Grizzlies baseball game.

Goleta Valley Beautiful Plants Live Oak Tree In Honor of CDF

On May 20, 2006 the Goleta Valley Beautiful Board of Directors presented an Honor Tree Award to the California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection (CDF) at their 32nd Annual Awards Banquet. The award recognizes CDF for their commitment to enhancing the beauty of Goleta and the Santa Barbara Community. Goleta Valley Beautiful, a non-profit organization for tree education, youth community activity, urban forestry management and neighborhood beautification advocacy has planted a Coast Live Oak tree at the Page Youth Center in Santa Barbara, California near a collection of other Honor Trees. The plaque shown at the right is located at the foot of the tree.

Goleta Valley Beautiful has planted more than 800 trees in the Goleta area using Proposition 12-funded tree planting grants awarded through CDF's Urban Forestry Program. In addition to providing shade trees along public rights of way and in selected public parks, the group used their grants to establish a Memorial Grove for firefighters at the site of the Santa Barbara County Fire Administration Headquarters. Fifty-four coast live oak trees now line the entry way to the Fire Administration Building and feature a memorial plaque at the foot of each tree. Goleta Valley Beautiful also planted shade trees for a large Little League play area and for a 33-acre residential treatment center for children ages 8 - 17 with developmental disabilities or dual diagnosis.



Pruning Strategies For Mature Trees

By Bruce W. Hagen

The most compelling reason to prune mature landscape trees is to reduce their risk of failure. This may involve the removal of dead, decayed and weakly-attached branches, shortening (reducing) competing leaders — particularly those originating low on a tree, and thinning to reduce wind resistance or 'end weight.' Long, heavy or poorly tapered branches can also be problematic and should be considered when assessing a tree for pruning. Priority should be given to improving branch spacing, influencing branch size relative to the trunk or parent branch, and changing branch orientation and growth rate. Making proper pruning cuts, keeping them as small as possible and removing as few living branches as necessary to meet the objective should be the arborist's primary goal.

Pruning of mature trees should always be approached with restraint and a thorough understanding of tree structure and function. After all, pruning is a wounding process that reduces leaf surface area and photosynthetic capacity. Furthermore, the resulting wounds provide avenues through which wood decay fungi can invade. To resist invading pathogens and prevent decay, injured trees must then expend stored energy to form callous tissue that will ultimately close the wounds. The removal of living branches, buds and embryonic stems with leaves can stimulate (invigorate) growth



in the remaining branches and buds. Finally, pruning can greatly alter tree architecture—positively or negatively.

Structural pruning is the removal or shortening of live branches or stems to influence orientation, spacing, growth rate (subordination or invigoration), size relationship,

strength of attachment and ultimate size of branches. It is most appropriate for young trees and those that are not yet mature. The term subordination has been proposed for the shortening of competing or codominant branches. Gilman (2002) defines subordination pruning as “the



removal, typically the upright or end portion of a parent branch or stems, to slow growth rate, so other portions of the tree grow faster.” Thus, subordination, which shortens a branch or competing leader to a lower, lateral branch can be used to reduce branch weight, change branch orientation or alter growth rate to improve the size of a pruned branch relative to the trunk/parent branch.

Structural pruning of mature and over-mature trees can be problematic because structure is well established, growth is relatively minimal, and often there are a number of serious defects. In many cases, it's too late to correct these problems easily. Emphasis then should be placed on keeping such trees relatively safe and healthy by removing large dead branches and large branch stubs, shortening long heavy branches and by avoiding unnecessary removal of living branches, particularly in the interior of the crown. Large competing branches should be reduced moderately to lessen end-weight and risk of failure. Those with included bark should also be reduced, but supplemental support systems may be needed to ensure adequate safety. This helps avoid making large wounds. If moderate thinning is the objective remove only small branches (less than four inches in diameter) in the outer canopy. Avoid removing main scaffolds and secondary limbs. Branches that are more than about a third the diameter of the trunk, and those that are more than about 15 years old (depending on species and other factors) may not be able to restrict spread of decay following removal (Gilman 2002).

The pruning of large older trees that have never been structurally pruned and those that have been lion-tailed is a challenge. Over-mature and declining trees are particularly prone to failure due to increasing size and slow growth. Such trees are

unable to produce enough annual increment growth to offset increasing branch weight and/or developing decay. Weight reduction in older trees should be considered, but leaf surface area is critical.

Emphasis must be placed on reducing excessive end weight and/or crown reduction to prevent branch failure. Crown reduction—the selective pruning of branches in the outer crown to decrease height and spread, can significantly lessen the risk of branch failure or uprooting. Adequately reducing the crown of large trees often requires making relatively large ‘reduction’ cuts—greater than 4-inches in diameter. Such cuts are more likely to develop a column of decay because there is no natural protection zone to resist pathogens. Branch protection zones occur only within the branch collar of lateral branches that are relatively smaller than the trunk or parent branch. Smaller reductions cuts, though, are more likely to close without developing appreciable decay. The goal should be to remove as little foliage as possible, while meeting the objective of weight and height



reduction. Work on declining trees is best done over several years to reduce stress. Unless there are no other options, large pruning wounds should be avoided. Trunk decay is often the result of removing large scaffold branches or codominant branches. Such wounds usually close slowly and branch protection zones, should there be any, are typically weak. Large pruning wounds that cut across heartwood can result in significant decay.

In cases where trees have grown too large or have become hazardous due to root decay, restricted root zone, weak branches, etc. crown reduction may be the next to last resort. Practitioner must recognize that tree canopies can only be reduced to a limited extent without causing stimulating profuse sprouting, sunburn damage or initiating serious branch decay. When crown reduction is warranted, shorten (reduce) branches in outer canopy back to laterals that are 1/3 to 1/2 the diameter of the branch being removed. Branches larger than four inches in diameter generally

should not be reduced unless there are no other alternatives. When moderate crown reduction is unlikely to mitigate a particular hazard and there is a desire to avoid removal, topping may be the only option make the tree safe, although it is generally considered to be unacceptable for most trees. Trees pruned in this manner will require careful monitoring and additional maintenance.

The appropriate strategy for pruning mature trees will depend on the tree’s species, age, size, condition health and objective. Considerations must be given to the trees’ history of failure, type and severity of structural defect including decay and environmental factors such as wind, topography, soil factors, etc., that could contribute to failure.

Excessive thinning

Although young trees are fairly tolerant of pruning in excess of 25 percent of the foliage, mature, over mature and stressed trees are sensitive to the loss of even 10 percent of their foliage. Excessive thinning may cause such trees to decline or predispose them to secondary pests due to the stress.

Current pruning practices, rather than focusing on mitigating potential structural problems, emphasize thinning and removal of dead branches. The practice of ‘crown thinning’— the selective removal of small, live branches throughout the crown to reduce leaf surface area, serves little or no purpose in most cases. It’s a little like ‘bloodletting’, an archaic medical practice abandoned at the end of the 19th century. The intent was to cleanse the body of impurities or to allow evil spirits to escape. The premise seemed logical at the time but the science was faulty. We now know that bloodletting can be harmful, particularly when it is done to excess. The same can be said of thinning. The removal of the larger dead branches is quite justifiable because it reduces risk potential. Moreover, the pruning of large, dead branch stubs is thought to prevent or reduce the development of many wood decay organisms by facilitating more rapid closure of the branch collar.

The ANSI A300 (Part 1) Pruning Standards define thinning as the “selective pruning to improve branch spacing, direct growth, eliminate weak and defective branches, reduce end-weight and wind sail or to reduce branch weight. The majority of these branches should be removed from the outer third of the crown. Thinning should leave trees with a generally symmetrical crown and with an even distribution of branches on individual limbs and throughout the crown.” Furthermore, the standards state “not more than 25 percent of a tree’s foliage should be removed within an annual growing

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season.” It adds that the percentage of crown thinning must be adjusted to account for inherent tolerance, age and condition, and environmental factors.

‘Thinning’ to open a tree’s canopy is not necessarily a problem unless too much of the foliage is removed. Health, vitality, age and species characteristics must be considered when determining a tree’s tolerance to foliage loss. The objective of pruning also determines how much pruning is needed. At any rate, removing more than 25 percent of the crown is seldom warranted, and is usually counterproductive. Excessive thinning of trees with dense crowns to reduce wind-sail and potential for toppling may

actually increase potential for limb breakage by allowing thinned branches to sway more freely. Removing more than 20 percent of the canopy often stimulates vigorous growth, increasing foliage density to a level greater than that prior to pruning.



The typical response to excess thinning is increased shoot elongation and epicormic sprouting along previously shaded branches. In this manner, excessive thinning creates additional work because these dense sprouts must then be managed. Many tree care companies simply remove the sprouts during the next pruning cycle. In general, sprouts should be selectively ‘thinned’ rather than removed, because they produce needed energy. The more vigorous shoots can be shortened and cultured as potential branches.

One of the most visible effects of excessive pruning is the release of latent (epicormic) buds—sprouting due to the exposure of previously shaded bark to sunlight. Sprout growth is typically quite vigorous because there is a surplus of water, minerals and stored energy, and because hormonal regulation has been disrupted. Growth in the unpruned branches is also increased because fewer growing points remain. Carbohydrate reserves are tapped to produce sprouts. Reserve energy is also diverted to wound sites to resist decay (CODIT). The overall effect is stress and weakened natural defenses. Other impacts include

an altered architecture with increased hazard potential. In addition, excessive pruning done at the wrong time can lead to sunburn damage to the bark of newly exposed branches. Furthermore, the exposure of previously shaded bark can lead to sunburned tissue. The bottom line is that excessive pruning affects health, appearance, structure, and increases maintenance costs.

It should be noted that moderate thinning may be useful to reduce wind-sail in trees in windy areas and those growing in shallow, wet or coarse soils. Crown thinning may also help to reduce damage due to snow-loading. Trees weakened by decay and those with girdling roots or other serious root defects may also be candidates for moderate thinning and crown reduction. Selective thinning to reduce end-weight, or shorten (reduce) branches can reduce limb weight in order to compensate for structural defects. Trees plagued by certain leaf diseases may also benefit from moderate thinning.

A misconception that still persists is that thinning the crown is beneficial because it increases light



and wind penetration into the canopy. Despite relatively low light levels, interior foliage in many trees is productive. Sunflecks are short duration points of light that penetrate a tree’s crown as the sun moves. These bursts of full sunlight play an important role in temporarily increasing photosynthesis. Additional light enters the crown as leaves and branches move in the wind. The level of light intensity, though, varies greatly by species and is dependent on crown shape and foliage density. Little interior foliage forms in trees with very dense canopies. In most trees, though, foliage extends well into the inner crown where diffuse light or full sun enters for short periods. Interior foliage (shade-leaves) can function at a relatively low light intensity. Branches that are no longer productive

are simply shed. This is a natural process and generally not a concern. Because density of interior foliage varies by species, moderate thinning may be useful to stimulate and retain inner branches to aid in developing branch taper in large, wide spreading trees. The need for thinning is justified by species characteristics, failure patterns, age, size, environmental factors, objective, etc.

'Lion's-tailing', another common pruning practice, is problematic. It involves the removal of many of the inner and lower laterals, which shifts growth and the load-bearing surface toward the top of the tree, placing greater stress on the scaffold branches and trunk. Lower laterals are vital because they help to distribute wind loading more evenly and dampen the effects of strong wind. Furthermore, they increase branch taper, reducing the potential for branch breakage. Lion-tailed branches, which typically grow vigorously, add little caliper below the foliage. One further complication is that the branches are often weakened by decay due to the number, size and quality of pruning cuts made to strip out the laterals. So, lion's tailing weakens branch structure, increases limb breakage potential, stimulates water sprouts and can lead to sunburn injury. Of greater concern, though, is that this practice leaves few options in the future to shorten overly long branches or reduce end-weight. In many cases, removing critical, outer canopy foliage, cabling heavy branches or removing large branches are the only options left to maintain safety.

Arborists must start using a more prescriptive approach to pruning rather than applying the same treatment to all trees. Pruning must be based on more than minimal pruning standard, aesthetics or outmoded ideas. What is needed is a more comprehensive guide reflecting the current science-based knowledge about tree structure, biology and response to pruning. One publication: *An Illustrated Guide to Pruning*, Second Edition, authored by Dr. Ed Gilman's of Florida State University- meets that need. This book is the most detailed,



comprehensive and reasoned publication now available. Arborists would do well to study it.

Reference: Gilman, Edward F. 2002. *An Illustrated Guide to Pruning*. 2nd ed. Delmar, Albany New York

Online Information.....

A new website tool for homeowners living in forested native tree environments, *ForesTree* contains information on over 60 insects and diseases as well as useful information on preventive tree care practices and where to get additional technical help if needed. Visit www.ufe.org/forestree for more information.

The Environmental Protection Agency has launched its new online urban heat island Mitigation Impact Screening Tool (MIST) at www.epa.gov/heatisland. MIST provides urban planners and environmental policy makers with a web-based means of assessing the range of likely impacts of heat island mitigation strategies averaged at the city scale.

Trees in our communities A well-treed city can improve air quality by trapping particulate matter and filtering harmful pollutants. The Environmental Protection Agency has recently made provisions for urban trees to be included in State Implementation Plans to improve air quality. The USDA Forest Service has recently developed a new website for "Building the Case for Urban Tree Canopy Inclusion in State Implementation Plans". For more information visit www.treescleanair.org.

Watershed 263 - Soundprint, with support from American Forests and the US Forest Service, recently produced a series of documentaries on the value of urban forests. The website is located at www.trees.soundprint.org.

CDF Welcomes Two New Urban Foresters

Lynnette Short, a field Forestry Assistant II for the San Diego Unit of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) has been appointed to one of two Regional Urban Forestry Specialists' positions serving the greater southern California regional area. She replaces Eric Oldar, who retired earlier in 2005.

Short was born in the San Diego area and spent much of her childhood in the Escondido area. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in natural resource management from Cal-Poly San Luis Obispo in 2003. She began her career with CDF as a seasonal firefighter in San Diego County and returned to work for CDF full time upon her graduation. Lynnette plans to continue her career with CDF by focusing her attention on the urban forestry needs of the greater San Diego area.



Abigail Forrest, a field Forestry Assistant II for the San Bernardino Unit of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) has been appointed to one of two Regional Urban Forestry Specialists' positions serving the greater southern California regional area. She replaces John Melvin, who transferred earlier this year to fill a like position serving Northern California.

Forrest was born in Southern California and spent much of her childhood in Lake Arrowhead, a mountain resort within the Southern California area. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in natural resource management from Cal-Poly San Luis Obispo in 2002. She began her career with CDF in 1998 as a seasonal firefighter, serving in a seasonal capacity for both San Bernardino and San Luis Obispo counties for a total of five seasons. Following in the footsteps of her father, Doug Forrest, currently an Assistant Chief with CDF in Sacramento, Abigail has chosen a career path that keeps the "Forrest" growing in public service.



Invasive Vine Threatens Trees and Shrubs

Japanese Dodder Vine Found In Several California Counties

Japanese dodder (*Cuscuta japonica choisy*), also known as “devil’s guts,” was first found in the United States in 1941. Since that time it has been eradicated in several southern states and is currently reported in Texas, South Carolina, Florida and California. This species of Dodder is not known to be toxic. It is an aggressive vine that attaches itself to its host and literally sucks the life from it by sinking its roots into the vascular system of the plant or tree. Once the vine is attached to a host it no longer needs its roots in the soil for nutrients, and relies solely on the host plant for sustenance. The vine also blocks sunlight by thickly shrouding its host with bright yellowish orange stems that twine around the host plants’ own stems. It can grow up to six inches per day.

The vine germinates in the spring near the soil surface, flowers in late summer and fruits in early fall. Flowers are small, (1/8 inch) and are bell-shaped and cream-colored. The fruit is a small capsule with up to four coffee grain-sized seeds which are rough and irregularly ovate. A single plant can produce over 2,000 seeds, which remain viable for up to 20 years. It can also reproduce via fragmentation and attachment to a new host.

While there are 50 other dodder species native to the United States, officials suspect the Japanese dodder was imported for use as an herbal medicine. Many cultures have used dodders for medicinal purposes, including the American Indians who used them to treat tuberculosis. Early American settlers used dodders in a bath for children with fever and it is used in Asian medicine for a variety of ailments.

In California, the Japanese dodder has been reported in Yolo, Contra Costa, Sacramento, Shasta, Los Angeles and Yuba counties. It poses a threat to trees and shrubs, and crops such as alfalfa, asparagus and tomatoes.

If you find an infestation of Japanese Dodder do not attempt to remove or control it. Document the location, collect a sample of the plant and send to Fred Hrusa, California Department of Food and Agriculture, Plant Pest Diagnostics Center, 3294 Meadowview Road, Sacramento, CA 95832. Call 916-262-1100 with sampling procedure questions. If your infestation is confirmed as Japanese dodder, contact Steve Schoenig, Weed Eradication Program Manager, sschoenig@cdfa.ca.gov, 916-654-0768.



** Photos courtesy of the Napa Farm Bureau at info@napafarmbureau.org

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