

OVF NEWS

Published by Ocean View Farms
P.O. Box 66534 Los Angeles, CA 90066



April - June 2011
Melody Girard, Editor

Letter from the Editor

Our 35th anniversary year is a time to think about how Ocean View Farms Community Garden came to be, and how it has endured all these years. And, because I feel gratitude toward all the people who have helped with OVF's education events and the newsletter, I want to take a moment to praise our volunteers. Volunteers designed the garden, put up the shed, built the meeting area, installed the electricity and plumbing, and they continue to maintain OVF to this day. Without volunteers, this garden would not exist.

Equally praiseworthy is OVF's volunteer system itself and the people who first conceived it. I have yet to find an account of that Eureka moment when someone envisioned OVF's work-exchange system. Who first imagined it? Did a model already exist somewhere? One founding member has suggested that it may have been George Dobbs, one of OVF's early Chairman/Presidents. He championed the idea of linking membership to service, and created the Master Plan.

Our volunteer service system grew out of our the need to comply with the terms of the revocable permit, granted on June 20, 1977. It requires OVF "to promote, finance, construct, maintain, manage and operate community gardening on Department controlled property."

Over the years, the Board has adapted service hours to meet the garden's evolving needs. Early on, members worked just 2 hours per year for each plot. According to one source, it was still hard to motivate people to work. Today, twelve hours of community service must be completed. Now, all hours are tracked on a computer database—created and maintained by volunteers.

Sure, it would be a nice if we did not have to weed the pathways and prune our community trees. I wonder, however, if we haven't gained more by taking the path less traveled. As an organization, we've gained confidence in our ability to do whatever is needed to grow our own food and sustain and improve OVF.

Working alongside each other to fulfill membership requirements by maintaining and improving the garden, we have gotten to know each other, and shared a common cause. And along the way, we have created a unique community

— Melody Girard, editor



Photo: Paul Zelman

Die-hard tomato-lovers withstood the downpour to hear Barbara Spencer's tomato growing talk at the 7th Annual Tomatobration.

TOMATOBRATION 7 A RAINY DAY COUP

In spite of the unusually wet weather, more than 700 tomato plants were sold at Tomatobration on March 27. Largely due to the dedicated volunteers who stayed through the downpour, the event was a success. Tanya Brokaw deserves our gratitude for her hard work organizing and overseeing the activities. Dean Cleverdon, Nancy Nyberg and Amanda Goodpastor, Marilyn Adams, Nancy Herman, Jacob Patterson, Nina Rumley and Ona Rynerson deserve special appreciation for their hard work and resourcefulness under difficult conditions. Thanks to Lisa Carnahan Miller's sales pitch, we sold about \$160 worth of OVF logo tote bags.

What's in this issue...

- RAP DEAL: NOT SO BAD
- ORACH WHO?
- IF YOU EAT, YOU'RE INVOLVED IN AG.
- OVF IN THE COMMUNITY

Garden Master's Report

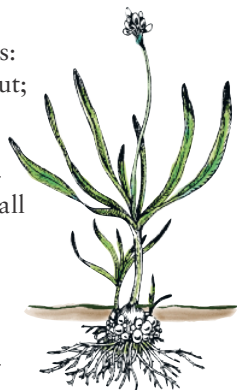
HANDLE THESE NOXIOUS WEEDS WITH CARE. The crew that shreds vegetation for OVF's compost wants to remind you that False Garlic and Nutgrass (or "Nutsedge") must never be put in the shredding pile. Carefully separate False Garlic and Nutgrass from other garden waste before putting anything in the shredding pile. The heat from the composting process will NOT kill them. Left in the shredding pile, some will escape detection and end up back in your neighbors' and your plots. Dispose of False Garlic and Nut Grass in a dumpster or a trash barrel, or in the GREEN BARREL next to the shredding area. Remove all vegetation from plastic bags or other containers before you discard it.

FALSE GARLIC propagates in a few ways: 1) dry pods crack open and seeds burst out; 2) little corms on the mother rootball fall off and start a new plant. 3) Some of the weed's tiny, brown, spider-like "legs" inevitably detach from the mother rootball when you dig them up.



NUTGRASS

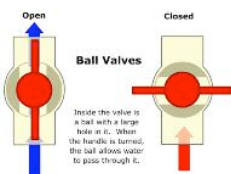
Suspended from the mother rootball by delicate threads, numerous tiny, nut-like bulbs detach easily.



Smaller than an apple seed, some of the bulbs inevitably remain in the ground when you dig them up.

ALWAYS LEAVE BRASS WATER BIBS COMPLETELY ON

I hope everyone is getting used to the green valves that we installed a while back. The were installed to reduce repair and enable gardeners to use water without a key. Always use the green valve to turn the water off and on. Use the brass bibs only if the green valve fails. We no longer issue water keys, so new members cannot use the hose when the is bib off! If you want to buy a water key, get the 5/16 size, which can be purchased at B&B Hardware, 12450 West Washington Boulevard, Culver City.



PROTECT YOUR CAR AGAINST THEFT Around 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 5, a car belonging to a Little League worker was stolen from the parking lot. Lock your car!

GARDENING, BASEBALL, AND PARKING CONGESTION

Spring brings some of the best gardening and Little League baseball weather—and parking lot crowds. Avoid parking near the playing fields, where stray baseballs can smash car windows. You may need to park on the street at times, but

OVF In The Community

Upcoming Events

SATURDAY, JUNE 26, 10:00 - 11:00 AM
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
Seed Starting and Garden Planning
presented by Christy Wilhelmi,
Lower Ph IV Rep

Recent Events

SATURDAY, APRIL 16
OVF hosted L.A. County's Free Smart Gardening Composting Workshop, attended by about 80 people, many of whom purchased composting and worm bins.

SATURDAY, APRIL 30
About 50 community visitors dropped by to tour OVF during the Mar Vista Green Garden Showcase.

faced with the prospect of replacing a windshield, street parking looks pretty good. Our neighbors share the lot with OVF as a courtesy. When the parking lot traffic gets on our nerves, let's remember the importance of being good neighbors to everyone who uses the lot.

ARE YOU UP-TO-DATE ON TETANUS SHOTS?

The bacteria that causes tetanus lives in soil, dust and manure, and can enter the body through deep puncture wounds. For more information, log on to a Mayo clinic article (www.mayoclinic.com/health/tetanus-shots/AN01497). You need a tetanus shot if you can't recall when you were last vaccinated, or have a deep wound and haven't had a booster for five years. Antiseptics and bandages for minor cuts and scrapes can be found in the First Aid Kit near the tool room door.

Hope you all have a wonderful spring and enjoy your gardens.
— Ed Mosman, Garden Master

LOCAL FOOD NEWS ON THE AIR

Chef Evan Kleiman's "Good Food," airs Saturdays at 11:00 a.m. on KCRW 89.9 FM. With a strong emphasis on local food, the show features talk about growing food and has a very active blog. Check out the links to podcasts of past shows online at www.kcrw.com/goodfood for topics of interest to gardeners and people who like to eat.

News from the Front Lines: RAP Deal Not So Bad

by Lisa Carnahan, President

YAY for OVF! Thanks to our self-sufficiency and community services and our persistence in communicating this to the Department of Recreation and Parks, it seems that we have dissuaded them from adding \$120 per plot to our annual fees.

We stayed on point with our message: OVF not only pays its way, but saves the City thousands of dollars. We divert tons of waste from the landfills, by taking the City's stable waste and recycling garden trimmings. We perform thousands of hours of volunteer service, organize and host free gardening classes, tours and children's educational activities. RAP proposes to charge an annual land use fee of \$1,000, or about \$2.00 per plot.

What brought us to this point? The calm, steady and determined efforts of Lower Phase IV Rep, Christy Wilhelmi, OVF's initial emissary to RAP's Board; President Lisa Carnahan Miller; Vice President Frank Harris; Garden Master Ed Mosman; Education and PR Chair Melody Girard; Middle Phase I Rep Teague Weybright, and garden members Kirk Dauer, Dean Cleverdon and Nancy Nyberg.

The video produced for the De Loach garden grant helped us introduce RAP to the workings of our garden and how we hope to progress in the future. We made it clear that OVF is an asset to the community and that we operate differently from other L.A. community gardens. OVF will be working with RAP to sign a partnership agreement in the coming months. It is a standard agreement that we expect will be adapted to the individual characteristics of each non-profit working with the city.

We will be reviewing the Partnership Agreement in the coming weeks. See online: <http://www.laparks.org/commissionerhtm/pdf2011/apr06/11-105.pdf>). We will prepare an amended agreement that will be consistent with OVF's needs.

You may wonder why we should pay the City or RAP anything. The fact is that the City of LA recently mandated that RAP recover all its operational costs, including legal and administrative costs, such as those related to our contract.

To serve more people on waiting lists, the current draft of RAP's contract stipulates a 3-plots per household limit on community gardens city-wide. We will, however, ask that the RAP partnership agreement allow us to grandfather in plots for members whose holdings currently exceed 3 plots.

Other than a land use fee and the limitation on the number of plots, we expect very few changes to take place at Ocean View Farms. The City of Los Angeles, specifically the Department of Recreation and Parks, has no interest in running community gardens. It is my hope and belief that OVF, which has always paid its own way, will continue to do so, and will also be allowed to make its own way in the community undisturbed by City intervention.

We ask that members with experience in law or dealing with City government contact Lisa Carnahan Miller at: lisa@oceanviewfarms.net. Volunteer hours will be given for this service, along with our tremendous gratitude

Advice from the Queen Mother of England, the birthplace of civilized gardening: "Keep calm and carry on."



Orach Who?

by Christy Wilhelmi

Are you tired of trying to grow spinach in warm weather only to have it bolt to seed quickly—or not grow at all? As warmer weather approaches, Orach Mountain Spinach (pronounced OR-ack) is a good alternative to spinach, and it grows well in our sunny climate. Even though it is considered a cool-weather crop, if you plant orach now, you'll enjoy it into the summer.

Orach Mountain Spinach (*Triplex hortensis*) is in the amaranth family, and is a relative of quinoa and lambs quarters. It's much tastier, and not nearly as invasive as lambs quarters, although it does re-seed itself very well if allowed to bolt at the end of the season.

With its iridescent leaves, alternately green or purple-red, orach leaves bead up with water much like our brassicas do. The flavor is similar to spinach with a nutty undertone, and can be used just like spinach—eaten raw or cooked. I toss raw orach leaves in to my salads to add color and texture to the dish.

SUPPORT OVF'S BID FOR A GRANT

Vote daily at:
www.deloachcommunitygardens.com/garden/12

Your votes could garner up to \$5,000 for OVF. Vote at home and the office. Encourage friends to vote.

Growing orach is easy—just plant the seeds 6 inches apart, or 4 per square foot if you're using Square Foot Gardening methods. Keep the seed bed moist until the seeds germinate. Germination can take between 12 to 14 days. Orach tolerates OVF's sandy soil, and once established, it can reach a height between 2 to 6 feet with its glorious seed stalks.

Harvest the leaves as needed and wash well before using. As orach matures, you may want to remove tough stems before eating. Orach satisfies the yearning for cool, light greens in the heat of summer, and adds color to your garden at the same time. Plant a patch in your garden and enjoy its beauty and flavor this spring.

Master Gardener Christy Wilhelmi is OVF's Lower Phase 4 Rep, founder and president of Gardenerd Consulting (www.gardenerd.com)

If You Eat, You're Involved in Agriculture

by Lisa Carnahan Miller



Welcome Spring! Or is it something else? We don't usually have dramatic seasons at the garden like other parts of the country endure. With the recent record-breaking heat and ice crystals forming on the compost piles

the next week, this winter gave one pause to wonder: just what's happening here?

I have a volunteer zucchini that is already blooming and putting on fruit. It's such a rebel vegetable. During the winter, that crazy plant laughed aloud at the cold. So while I've been planning and researching what to grow this year, the volunteers plants have been going about showing off. I often wonder about just raking in random seeds to see what wants to grow and when. Devil may care.

More practically, however, when should those lovely Tomatobration plants go in the ground? My guess is May. Last year we never really had a steady stream of warm summer weather and my tomatoes suffered. Yes, I blame the weather. You can too.

I like to grow my plants from seed. Saving the seed is also a very enjoyable experience. Saving seed at OVF will always be an adventure. With so many cross pollinating plants within reach, it is a guarantee that the new plants will not be true to type; however, they will be true to OVF, our climate and our soil. Many times I've admired a flower

or plant growing in a gardeners plot that seems to be just a little different from what I've seen before, only to find out it was a volunteer the gardener couldn't bear to pull up. This is a new year and armed with fresh plants, new micro-climate knowledg. With luck, effort and patience it will be a fantastic year of successes in the garden.

This year, I have the added good fortune of a husband to do my weeding for me. He thinks it was rather clever to get to "jump the membership list" by marrying me and becoming a household member. Little did he know, he could have been an associate in my plot, and gained access to OVF. I trust no one will let him become the wiser. I found a great man in L.A. and may have used my garden membership to entice him into happily ever after. Let us just say membership has its privileges.

"If You Eat, You're Involved In Agriculture."



NEW

OVF Tote Bags Now Available

For \$5.00 you can purchase a large, forest green, waterproof, recyclable tote bag, made from recycled materials. It has reinforced handles and a sturdy bottom board. Incredibly useful. Buy several! Every purchase goes to help fund OVF's education programs.

It's Your Garden: Vote on By-Laws June 11

A majority vote of members present at the General Membership Meeting on June 11 will determine if OVF will adopt the first revision of Bylaws since 2006.

Read the proposed bylaws online at: <http://www.oceanviewfarms.net/docs/ProposedOVFbylaws.pdf>. The revision committee focused on correcting errors, clearing up ambiguities, modernizing language for the today's technology and complying with California laws of incorporation.

WORKDAY SCHEDULE

Second Quarter - 2011

MAY

14 Sat 9-12 Work
21 Sat 9:30 Board Mtg.
29 Sun 1-4 Work

JUNE 11 VOTING DAY

JUNE

11 Sat 9-12 Work
12 Potluck
1 General Mtg.
26 Sun 1-4 Work

Visit our Web site for the complete calendar

www.oceanviewfarms.net/calendar.html

WANTED

HANDY PERSON

A member to install and repair mail boxes. See the Garden Master or leave a note with email address in the Garden Master's box in the wheelbarrow shed.

EDUCATION VOLUNTEERS HAVE MORE FUN

Meet new people and earn community hours without blisters and backaches. Volunteers should contact: education-chair@oceanviewfarms.net, or leave your contact information in the Education Chair's mailbox at the wheelbarrow shed.

"Find the seed at the bottom of your heart and bring forth a flower."

- Shigenori Kameoka

