

OVF NEWS

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Melody Girard, Editor



OVF President Frank Harris cradles the prized DeLoach Award Stone.

PUTTING THE DELOACH COMMUNITY GARDEN AWARD TO WORK

This fall, DeLoach Vineyards awarded Ocean View Farms \$4,000 for placing among the top five community gardens with the most votes in an online voting contest. OVF will use the award to enhance the garden's educational activities. Thanks to our members for their persistence in voting daily and to those in the Mar Vista community who also voted and cheered others on.

A greenhouse project is one of the proposed uses for some of the funds. Other proposed uses include improving outreach to neighborhood schools and updating public information materials. OVF members are encouraged to roll up their sleeves and apply their energy to developing projects that could benefit from this grant. Please see the Volunteer Opportunities column in this newsletter for job descriptions and contact information.

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- SLOLA: SOWING SEEDS OF DIVERSITY
- COMMUNITY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Letter from the Editor

You may have noticed on the Internet that seed libraries, or seed banks as they are often called, seem to be popping up everywhere. Today, people are not just motivated to save seed out of nostalgia for the plants that Granny used to grow. Serious seed-savers are on a mission akin to saving the world's food supply. The hope is that open-pollinated, traditional plants may possess genetic traits that could one day secure our food supply in the face of global climate change.

Some critics assert that the biotech/chemical companies' aggressive global marketing of their GE seeds (with required chemicals), along with their acquisition of commercial seed companies is "the number one threat to seed biodiversity." The Center for Food Safety states that as a result of these strategies, the top ten seed/biochem companies now control 57 percent of the global seed market (www.centerforfoodsafety.org/campaign/save-our-seeds/).

Plants that have developed traits in response to the land and ecosystem in which they were grown are called "landraces." Landrace strains have the potential for greater resilience than hybrids. Native or landrace plants are disappearing from the seed supply as the biotech companies file patents for plants that subsistence farmers have grown for generations for free.

What can we do as gardeners to maintain plant diversity? Well, naturally, we can save seeds and support seed banks. Another way to encourage the conservation of plant diversity is to patronize companies that have taken the "Safe Seed Pledge." The "Garden Watchdog" at Dave's Garden website is a good resource you can use to check a company's consumer rating, and find out if they took the "Pledge."

Hybrids have a place in agriculture and in home gardens. Many resist disease and produce lovely vegetables and flowers. But, making an effort to conserve the traditional plant strains and keep their genetic diversity available is a noble and worthwhile activity.

And it can be a lot of fun, too.

— *Melody Girard, editor*

Garden Master's Report



AUTUMN IN L.A. Here in California some say there is no Fall, but I think the plants know better. Did you ever try planting tomatoes late

in September and they just don't seem to want to grow? I personally think the air changes and there is a nice cool crisp feeling in the afternoons. It is time to remove the summer plants and get some ammendments into the soil to get ready for planting lettuce, cauliflower, peas and broccoli.

SORRY, BUT FRIENDS CAN'T HELP OUT *Don't* let non-members work in your plot. The operative word here is "member." OVF by-laws and insurance stipulations prohibit non-members from doing any labor on OVF property. Plus: you won't get credit for having a friend do your work.

WATER KEYS TO UNLOCK WATER BIBS can be purchased at the shed office for \$2 each. We still encourage you to use the green valves attached to the hose bibs. When you are done using the water, please turn the water off from the green valve only, so that anyone without a key will be able to control the water flow using the accessible, plastic valve!

THANK YOU, GOOD GUYS OF THE PLUMBING CREW Yoichi Yamada and Maurice Haber deserve our gratitude for their excellent work. They help keep the water system in the garden in good working order.

WHEELBARROWS A lot of wheelbarrows are being left at the shredding area in the path. Please return your wheelbarrow to the shed area when finished and clean it out for the next person to use. And don't leave it by the shed expecting the gate closer to put it away for you.

COMMUNITY WORK HOURS There are only a few work-days left this year to fulfill your required volunteer hours. We would hate to lose you, but you will not be permitted to renew your membership next year unless you meet this obligation.

VOLUNTEERS FOR THE BEAUTIFICATION PROGRAM

can set their own hours. Contact Lorraine Zecca by email, telephone or leave a note in the BEAUTIFICATION mail slot in the wheelbarrow shed. You will be assigned a specific task to complete. You will not, however, get credit for work that you have "assigned" to yourself.



— Ed Mosman,

Garden Master

OVF IN THE COMMUNITY

Calendar of Events

11:00 AM
SUNDAY, JANUARY 8, 2012

Open to the public

Nina Rumely's

Famous Rose Pruning Workshop

Ocean View Farms will host the FREE workshop: "Winter Rose Pruning for Southern California" for garden members and the general public. Bring gloves and pruners for hands on experience as we walk through the garden. Nina will share tips on growing organically, pruning all types of roses and finding the best tools for the job. Rain date: January 15th. Volunteers who want to help with this or any workshop contact: educationchair@ocean-viewfarms.net.

11:00 AM - 12:30 PM
SUNDAY, MARCH 4, 2012

A members-only event

OVF 101

for New and Old Members

presented by

Judith Morris & Nina Rumely

New OVF members are strongly urged to attend this members-only "OVF 101" workshop. The workshop will provide an introduction to OVF rules and procedures, how-to's of organic gardening practices, and the optimal seasons for planting various crops. All OVF gardeners welcome! The workshop and open discussion offers ideas for how to prepare and maintain your plot, as well as a chance to network and meet new members.

APRIL, 2012

DATE TO BE DECIDED

Open to the public

5TH ANNUAL TOMATOBRATION

Asian Tiger Mosquito: A Dangerous New Pest

911

by Ed Mosman, Garden Master

The replenishing rain is nice, however, water collecting and remaining on members' plots increases breeding sites for mosquitos. If you have read the pest alert notices posted around the garden, you know that a new mosquito was discovered in El Monte. It's called the Asian Tiger mosquito, and believe me, you don't want these guys within miles of you.

In Southeast Asia, this tiny insect carries such horrifying diseases as the Dengue virus—some forms of which can develop into a hemorrhagic fever—Yellow Fever, St. Louis Encephalitis and many other life-threatening diseases.

The Asian Tiger mosquito has gotten a foothold in the U.S. Southeast and parts of the Midwest. Their success at breeding is scary, too. Eggs laid in dry weather stay dormant for months, then with a little water they hatch! It lays its eggs in very small cavities, including discarded soda cans, pipes and stockpiles of construction materials.



Victims usually don't see this quarter-inch pest, but they will know the Asian Tiger mosquito by its "aggressive daytime biting habit." The usual methods for controlling our night active mosquitos don't seem as effective on the Asian Tiger Mosquito. The alternatives come with a lot of problems and it's not known exactly what will eradicate them most effectively. That's why getting rid of breeding places within 3 days of a rain is so important.

If we are diligent about keeping our plots free of even small amounts of water, we can keep this dangerous pest from becoming established here. *For more information: <http://abc-news.go.com/blogs/health/2011/09/14/asian-tiger-mosquito-spotted-in-southern-california/>.*

4th Annual Tomato Tasting



Tomatoes lined up for judging. Amanda Goodpaster's black cherry tomatoes won first place. Second place winners are all smiles.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS: RENEWALS & FEES

OVF 2012 Renewal Payments Due February 2
Fee Increase Will Defray Operating Costs

RENEW ONLINE

If you opted for the convenience of online payment, look for an email notice on January 9, and post your payment via PayPal by February 3. To sign up to receive your renewal notice via email, please visit www.ebill.oceanviewfarms.net.

RENEW BY MAIL

If you are paying via USPO, your renewal letter will be mailed on January 10, and your payment must be postmarked no later than February 2. OVF will NOT accept any renewal fees placed in the mail slots in the wheelbarrow shed.

IS YOUR INFORMATION CORRECT?

Please make sure that your address and email are correctly entered in OVF's database or you will not receive your renewal letter. Review your contact information online: www.myaccount.oceanviewfarms.net.

WHY FEE INCREASES?

OVF remains committed to keeping plot fees affordable. However, operating costs necessitate an increase in plot fees to \$44 per plot, beginning in 2012—the first increase since 2004. The \$6 member insurance fee is now included in your \$44 per plot renewal statement. Members with Associates must still pay an additional \$6 fee.

COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

All 2011 Community Service requirements must be completed to renew your membership. To enhance equitability among members, in 2012 each person *must complete 12 hours of Community Service for each plot they rent*. There are many opportunities to earn Community Service credit by performing a variety of tasks. Some jobs allow you to set your own hours, so schedule conflicts need not keep anyone from performing Community Service. Review "Volunteer Opportunities" in the OVF News and online for job listings.

MULTIPLE PLOTS GRANDFATHERED

At their regularly scheduled meeting on November 19, the OVF Board of Directors finally settled an extremely contentious issue that has been the subject of intense discussion among gardeners for many months.

After a protracted dialogue in which Board members and gardeners presented wide ranging points of view, the Board voted to allow holders of multiple plots to retain them. All new gardeners will be allowed one plot. In compliance with the agreement between OVF and the L.A. Department of Recreation and Parks, requests for additional plots will not be considered while there is a waiting list for new membership.

SLOLA Sows Seeds of Diversity Locally

by Melody Girard

Founded with only 25 members in December 2010, the Seed Library of Los Angeles (SLOLA) has grown to nearly 200 members and has been recognized in the "Resource Preservation" category at the 4th annual SEED Awards (Southern California Environmental Excellence Development) after just 9 months of operation.-

Much like a regular library, a seed library is a depository held in trust for its members/patrons. After paying a lifetime membership of \$10, members can withdraw seeds for free. In exchange, they agree to grow the seeds into plants, then return harvested seed to the library's collection.

SLOLA meets monthly at The Learning Garden at Venice High School and each meeting includes an educational presentation about how to save seeds from specific

plants.

"People save seeds for a host of different reasons from ideology to old-fashioned thriftiness. We welcome gardeners of all ages and skill levels, including apartment dwellers," said SLOLA Chair and Founder, David King.

SLOLA's mission is to build and maintain a seed collection, educate members and create a local community of seed-saving gardeners. "We seek to preserve genetic diversity, increase food security and... safeguard alternatives to genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and empower all members through a deeper connection with nature," stated a SLOLA board member.

SLOLA's Web site: <http://slola.org/> and facebook page.

El Mas Picante Staves Off Winter's Chill

December. Of course, all the tomatoes and peppers are long gone. Yet there's a surprise in my garden. Planted in June, I had simply forgotten it. Now it's a four foot-tall bush with blue-green foliage. And it's covered in purple blossoms! Delightfully, I find a few bright red fruit, smaller than an egg and apple shaped, hence the name: Chile Manzano. I loved the idea of it being a perennial when I planted it, but did not expect winter fruit production.

Its Latin name, *Capsicum Pubescens*, refers to the trichomes, or hair-like outgrowths from the flower bud. The obsidian black seeds look beautiful against the intensely red fruit.

It has a fruity taste, but wait—there is some heat sneaking up—oh, It's hot! No wonder that in parts of the Americas these chilis are called "el mas picante de los picantes," or the hottest of the hot. Great to warm up a beef stew on a cold winter night.

Oh, I must remember to wear gloves the next time I slice into one of these little bombs.



The Seed-Shop

Here in a quiet and dusty room they lie,
Faded as crumbled stone or shifting sand,
Forlorn as ashes, shrivelled, scentless, dry.-
Meadows and gardens running through my hand.

In this brown husk a dale of hawthorn dreams;
A cedar in this narrow cell is thrust
That will drink deeply of a century's streams;
These lilies shall make summer on my dust.

Here in their safe and simple house of death,
Sealed in their shells, a million roses leap;
Here I can blow a garden with my breath,
And in my hand a forest lies asleep.

— Muriel Stuart

"A potato has two more chromosomes than a person and the same number as a gorilla."
Charles Nevin, on genetics

WORKDAYS - EVENTS

December & First Quarter - 2012

DECEMBER

10 Sat 9-12 Workday
12 Potluck
1 General Mtg
25 Sun 1-4 Workday

JANUARY

8 Sun 11 Rose Pruning
9 Mon 6:30 pm Board Mtg
14 Sat 9-12 Workday
29 Sun 1-4 Workday

FEBRUARY

2 Last day to mail renewal
3 Last day to renew online
11 Sat 9-12 Workday
12 Potluck
1 General Mtg
26 Sun 1-4 Workday

MARCH

4 Sun 11-12:30 OVF 101
10 Sat 9-12 Workday
17 Sat 9:30 Board Mtg
25 Sun 1-4 Workday

Visit our Web site
for the 2012 calendar

calendar.oceanview-

WANTED

GREENHOUSE PROJECT LEADER

To assist in planning, supervising and construction of new greenhouse. Please contact Frank Harris at: frank@oceanviewfarms.net

GARDENING EDUCATION EVENT PLANNERS

Have fun conducting OVF social activities and earn community hours! Help plan, set up events, and coordinate Education Workshops. More info: educationchair@oceanviewfarms.net

COMMUNITY OUTREACH VOLUNTEERS

Tour docents and volunteers needed to explore how OVF can outreach to neighborhood schools. Volunteers who interface with minors must be fingerprinted and fulfill security requirements as stipulated by Recreation and Parks. Contact Melody at educationchair@oceanviewfarms.net.