



Barbara Spencer in her signature sun hat talks tomatoes in front of hundreds of varieties for sale at a previous Tomato-bration.

## IN SEARCH OF THE PERFECT TOMATO OVF's 8th Annual Tomato-bration Saturday & Sunday, March 31 - April 1

by Deborah Gray

**N**ovice and seasoned tomato growers will have the opportunity to mingle with fellow nightshade lovers at OVF's annual Tomato-bration on Saturday, March 31 and Sunday, April 1. The event will start with a 9:00 a.m. pre-sale of tomato plants. At 10:00 a.m. Barbara Spencer's workshop will cover tomato varieties, as well as cultivation methods suited for our Southern California coastal climate. Barbara will offer about 90 varieties of heirloom seedlings grown on her Windrose Farm in Paso Robles. Wondering what motivates her to return every year, we posed several questions.

OVF: Last month at the Farmer's Market you spoke to Christy Wilhelmi, one of our OVF Board members, and said that Tomato-bration kicks off your season. Why is that?

*continued on page two...*

## Letter from the Editor

**F**inally, after our Southern California winter, spring has arrived. It's time to think about what to plant for the upcoming season. And the new iPad has arrived too. Thus is life in this 21st Century.

Outside of OVF lies what some may call "the real world," where everyone seems to be expected to be reachable at all times in all places, the world seems to be moving in double time. Don't get me wrong, I thank my lucky stars every time I get a text alert that, say Charmin is on sale at the local supermarket for the next 90 minutes.

But then we have the time with our plots at OVF. After a day of being on line, tending one's plot, even pulling weeds can show how doing one thing and doing it well is as rewarding as anything we did earlier in the day. Usually more so. Rooted in the moment, worries fade into the background. Even awareness of the traffic noise on Centinela Avenue seems to diminish.

Here, we are fortunate enough to have these great vistas. OVF workshops and community outreach. Enthusiastic garden members, with a definite sense of community. Tomato-bration. Contests come harvest time. Greeting the day at sunrise. Just being still and watching the sunset at the end of the day. Watching the subtle change of seasons. Observing the differences in the play of light according to the angle of the sun

There are many rewards tending one's garden. Fostering plants and watching them grow. Spending a few moments off the grid, learning from other gardeners. Enjoying the beauty we are so privileged to be surrounded by.

And it gives me a lot of good things to post on my Facebook page!

Happy Gardening.

*Melody Girard, editor*

### What's in this issue...

- 2012 EVENTS HIGHLIGHTED
- OVF DONATES! A NEW PROGRAM
- IN SEARCH OF THE PERFECT TOMATO
- GARDEN MASTER'S REPORT

# Garden Master's Report

**RECYCLING** I am happy to report to you that our recycling program here at OVF is a real success. In 2011, we redeemed our CRV (California Recycle Value) bottles and cans for a total of \$2,028 for the year. Since we started the program in 2007, we have taken in \$6,114.

Warren Miyashiro and Maurice Haber use their own trucks to transport the bottles and cans to the CRV recycling yard in Santa Monica where they exchange them for cash. Please deposit only "CRV" labeled bottles and cans in the bin. Wine bottles, for example, are not recyclable.



Nancy Howell, Phase III-L and Athena Alexander, Phase III-U, sort the containers and bag them. PLEASE DO NOT dump trash or any item with food residue on it, because it quickly ripens to a truly smelly and disgusting mess.

A special thanks to Marc Southon in Phase I-L for donating a large number of CRV bottles and cans from his workplace. If you donate CRV recyclables collected from work or home, OVF will be very grateful to you, too.

— Ed Mosman, Garden Master

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*Barb:* In our county, San Luis Obispo, tomato sales are really in April and May, because we have frost until May.

*OVF:* Is there anything new in the tomato-growing world this year?

*Barb:* New seems to be staying with the reliable varieties. Just doing it better.

*OVF:* In past years, your prices have been very competitive with other local sales. Are you able to give us your price list for 2012?

*Barb:* 4-inch pots will be \$3.00 each. Almost everything is that size, though we may also bring plug trays with plants at \$1.00 each.

*OVF:* What takes place at the Tomato-bration workshop?

*Barb:* The workshop has really become a brainstorming session. We always review the basics of tomato growing. Then we move into specific questions and issues that have arisen for people over the last season. We have been known to get into related subjects of ecology and sustainability. This can happen when discussing organic growing!

*OVF:* Can you think of anything that has impressed or surprised you most about your experiences at Tomato-bration?

*Barb:* I always love the people and the wonderful growing they do in their plots. There is a tremendous amount of knowledge about gardening at OVF. And it is always reinvigorating to talk to people who garden or farm for the love of it!

## OVF IN THE COMMUNITY

### Calendar of Events

#### SAVE THE DATES FOR THESE 2012 EDUCATION EVENTS

##### April - 6:00 p.m. for 4 weeks

Garden member Steven Ballantine will host a series of Sunset Yoga sessions in the meeting area on four Thursdays in April.

First session April 5 at 6:00 p.m.  
YOGA - MEMBERS ONLY

##### May 26 - 9:00 a.m.

"Good Bugs Better Garden: Manage Pests & Increase Yields without Pesticides"

9:00 - 10:30 a.m.

LECTURE - OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

##### July 15 - 10:00 a.m.

"Saving Summer's Bounty: Safe, Easy Ways to Preserve Your Harvest," Rachael Narins, L.A. County certified Master Food Preserver, chef, instructor & partner in Chicks with Knives

LECTURE - OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

##### August 12 - 11:00 a.m.

5th Annual Tomato Tasting

11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

TASTING - MEMBERS ONLY

##### September 9 - 11:00 a.m.

"Organic Gardening 101"

The dynamic duo of Nina Rumely & Judith Morris share basics of gardening without the use of chemicals or pesticides.

LECTURE - OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

##### Ongoing

#### OVF DONATES!

A new, twice-monthly food collection program to benefit our neighbors in local communities.

Please see the OVF calendar for dates.

FOOD COLLECTION - MEMBERS ONLY

For more information contact Melody Girard

[www.educationchair@oceanviewfarms.net](mailto:www.educationchair@oceanviewfarms.net)

## In Memoriam



### Agnes Frances Mosman

December 29, 1934 - March 7, 2012

*Garden Master Ed Mosman's  
loving wife of 58 years.*

*While Agnes didn't often come to the garden,  
she spoke with and got to know many OVF  
members when they would call Ed at home.*

## OVF DONATES!

### Share Your Garden's Bounty with Neighbors in Need

OVF member Alicia Bacon has organized a fresh produce donation program to benefit nonprofit food organizations who serve our local communities. Fresh fruit and vegetables will be collected on the second and last Sunday of each month between 3 and 5 p.m. in the parking lot at Gate 3 (Phase II), near the main shed.

“We have established ties with Westside Meals on Wheels and the Westside Food Bank. As our collections of produce increase, so too can the number of charitable food distributors we donate to,” said Alicia Bacon.

Participation is completely voluntary. Produce donations not only help the hungry, but also improves OVF's ties with our community. Please note that your donations do not count toward community credit for OVF work hours.

Donate only fresh, good quality produce that you would give to your good friends. Please make sure that they are as free of dirt and critters as possible.

“The produce donated at our first collection was beautiful,” said Alicia. “We expect to increase the amount and quality of our donations.”

Thanks go to Steve Ballantine for helping with the collection and the photography. Alicia anticipates that more volunteers will be needed to help with collections.

For more information, contact Alicia at: [ovfdonates@oceanviewfarms.net](mailto:ovfdonates@oceanviewfarms.net), or (310) 394-9339.

### ELECTION SLATE: VOTE ON APRIL 14TH

OVF will hold its annual elections at the April 14, 2012 General Meeting. The positions up for election this year are:

- Chair
- Treasurer
- Recording Secretary
- Education Secretary
- Phase Representative - I Middle
- Phase Representative - I Lower
- Phase Representative - II Lower
- Phase Representative - III Lower
- Phase Representative - IV Lower

If you would like to run for any of these positions or have any questions about running for a position on the OVF Board, please visit [www.oceanviewfarms.net/whatsnew](http://www.oceanviewfarms.net/whatsnew).



### Middle School Class Tours in January

OVF Garden members Denise Molitoris and Ron Fine accompanied a group of nine middle school children and their teacher from a local school for mildly autistic children as they toured OVF on January 11. Activities, adapted to the students needs, included experiencing their different senses, such as touching and smelling different herbs and flowers and seeing and identifying specific vegetables that Ron and Denise picked from their own plots. A scavenger hunt to find vegetables or fruits of certain colors was also included, followed by lunch in the meeting area.



## New and Old Sunset Activities at OVF

### SUNSET YOGA MEETS FOR FOUR THURSDAYS IN APRIL

Garden member Steven Ballantine will host a new series of members-only Sunset Yoga sessions in the meeting area on four consecutive Thursdays in April, beginning April 5 at 6:00 p.m. Both beginners and more experienced yogis can benefit.

“Sunset is a great time of day to embrace kindness and gratitude. We will gently explore breath and body awareness to increase health and well being,” says Steve.

Required: email Steve in advance for more details, instructions and other information: [stevenballantineyoga@gmail.com](mailto:stevenballantineyoga@gmail.com).

### OVF GARDENERS MUST EXIT AT SUNSET, DESPITE OTHER ACTIVITIES

It’s spring, a time when Little League activities often conclude after dark. However, OVF members must exit the garden by sunset, regardless of any Little League crowds, film crews or other persons who may linger in the parking lot and fields after the sun has set.

Gate closers must stay until everyone leaves the garden. Please put yourself in the gate closers’ Wellingtons: would you want to be kept waiting to go home, so that a fellow gardener could finish watering? Or walk all over six acres looking for the unidentified person whose car is still in the parking lot?

Unsure about when the gates close? Just look on the OVF home page, [www.oceanviewfarms.net](http://www.oceanviewfarms.net), or the *Los Angeles Times*.

# Veggie Power!



*Denise Molitoris grew this monster 12-pound cauliflower from a mixed seed selection of purple, chartreuse and white cauliflowers. She planted “Chef’s Blend Heirloom Seed” from Botanical Interests, available online or at local nurseries.*



*Even the bus stops in Japan salute tomato power!*

## WORKDAYS - EVENTS

### MARCH

**31 Sat** 9-4 Tomato-bration

### APRIL

**1 Sun** 9-4 Tomato-bration

**8 Sun** 3-5 OVF Donates!

**14 Sat** 9-12 Workday

12 Potluck

1 General Mtg,

**Elections**

**29 Sun** 1-4 Workday

**3-5 OVF Donates!**

### MAY

**12 Sat** 9-12 Workday

**13 Sun** 3-5 OVF Donates!

**19 Sat** 9:30 Board Mtg

**27 Sun** 1-4 Workday

**3-5 OVF Donates!**

### JUNE

**9 Sat** 9-12 Workday

12 Potluck

1 General Mtg,

**10 Sun** 3-5 OVF Donates!

**27 Sun** 1-4 Workday

**3-5 OVF Donates!**

Visit our Web site  
for the 2012 calendar

[www.oceanviewfarms.net](http://www.oceanviewfarms.net)

## HELP WANTED

### GREENHOUSE VOLUNTEERS

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

### ASSISTANCE NEEDED AT EDUCATION EVENTS AND FOR SCHOOL & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Volunteers needed for upcoming events throughout the year. Check out the calendar and email Melody Girard at [educationchair@oceanviewfarms.net](mailto:educationchair@oceanviewfarms.net).

### HANDY RAIN INFORMATION

Rain measurements from rain gauges operated by LA Dept. of Public Works:

[http://www.ladpw.org/wrd/precip/alert\\_rain/](http://www.ladpw.org/wrd/precip/alert_rain/)