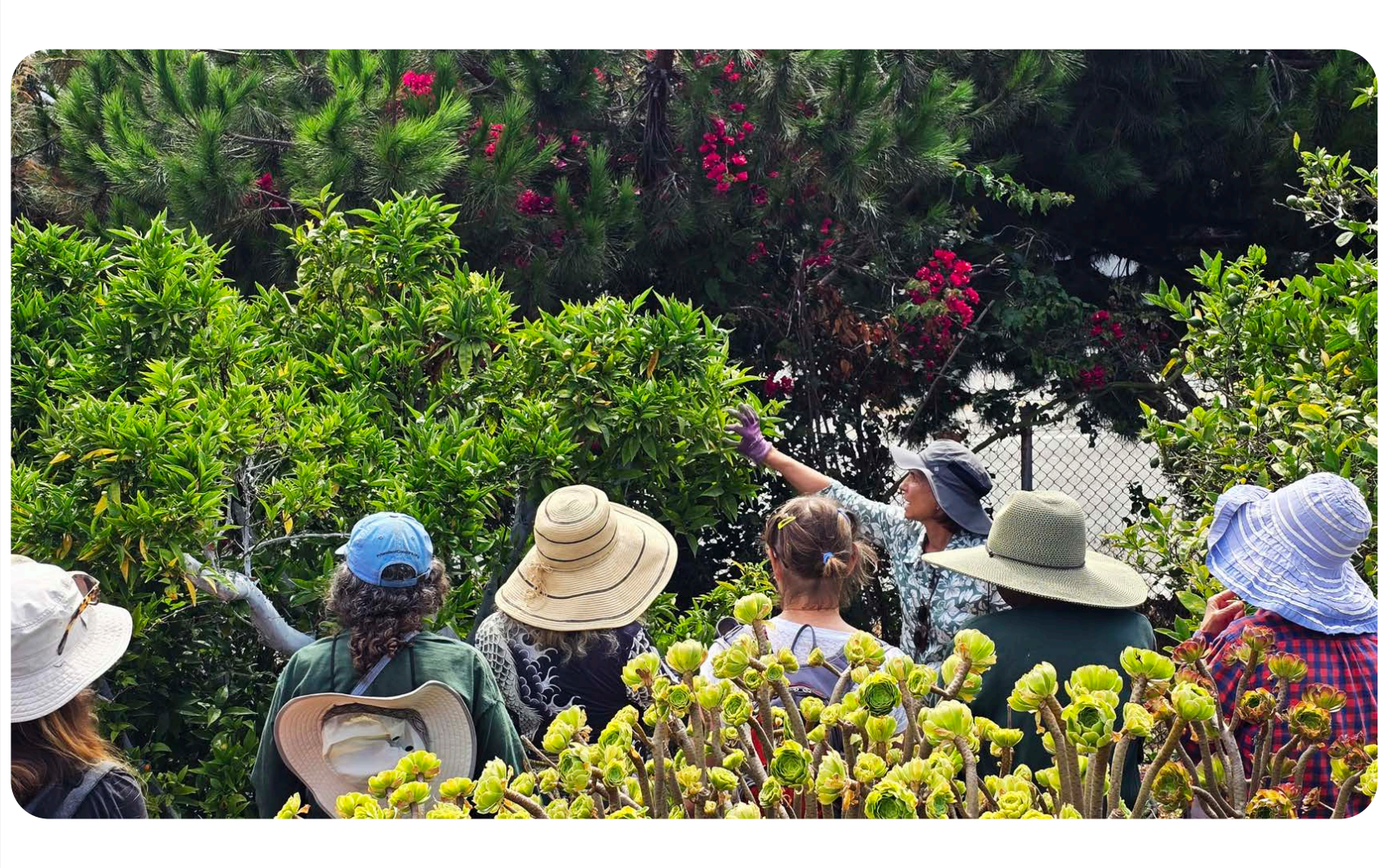
# OVF NEWS

## August 2025



## Garden Master's Message

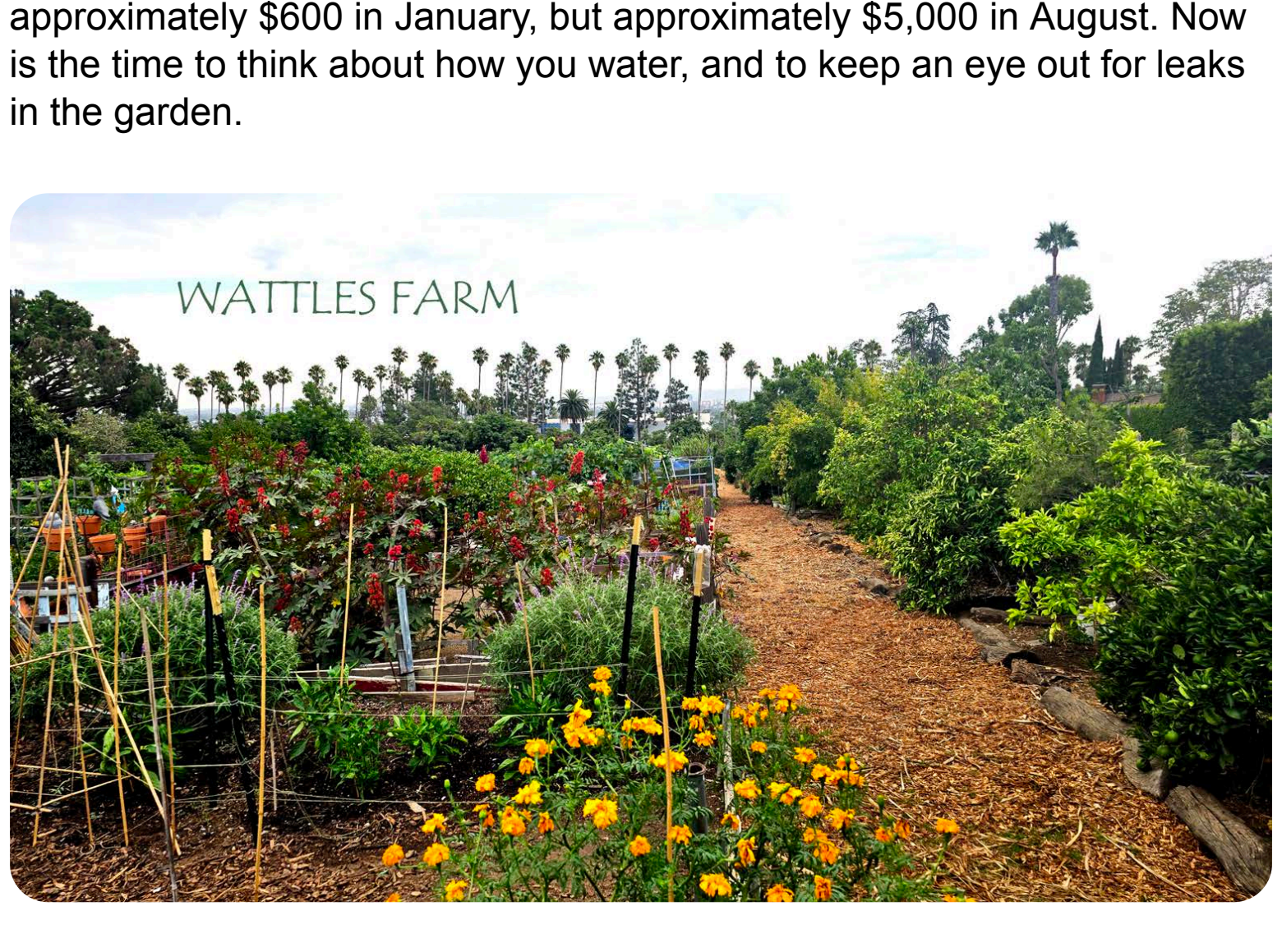
**Hello everyone,**

Four months in and there's so much to be grateful for. This garden is a group effort, and while some members do the bare minimum, those who do more are so impressive and full of joy. We get satisfaction from working together on a common goal. If you want to get the most out of this garden and your membership, then be a vital part of the community. We are one and we grow together. As GM, I will continue to listen and learn from you.

And at some point, I will stop discovering yet another person who had a special job assigned to them years ago (this month I learned of two more such people).

**Hot and dry**

It's August, arguably the hottest and driest month of the year. The weather has an impact on OVF administration. For one, a hot Sunday afternoon in August is perhaps not the most appealing time to be toiling at a workday, so the August Sunday workday has in the past had the lowest turnout of the year. (Feel free to buck the trend and come to the August 31 workday – there's lots to do.) Second, the OVF water bill goes up substantially in this hot and dry season. For example, last year's monthly water bill was approximately $600 in January, but approximately $5,000 in August. Now is the time to think about how you water, and to keep an eye out for leaks in the garden.



**Wattles Farm had a 50th birthday**

If OVF has a sister garden, it's Wattles Farm. We have a shared origin story, dating back to the 1970s and LA Mayor Tom Bradleys' community garden project, which provided startup funds to both Wattles and OVF. Both are located on LA City-owned land and administered by the LA Department of Recreation and Parks under very similar operating agreements. We share a purpose and an orientation – we are the two largest and oldest self-run organic community gardens in Los Angeles.

This month, Wattles celebrated its Golden Jubilee – 50 years as a community garden. I visited Wattles for its 50th year celebration and learned about how Wattles has survived and prospered for half a century. And it was a lot of fun, with garden tours, a bee talk, a cellist, a bluegrass band, and a magic show. There is something joyous about gardeners getting together to celebrate in their garden.

We can learn from Wattles and their experience. Because we have so much in common, I believe we should grow closer as a community garden to our fellow community gardens, like the awesome Wattles Farm.

**AI has some thoughts**

As the new OVF Garden Master, I continue to reach out to members for input and insights. A member suggested AI could help, so I asked an AI to draft a garden master newsletter article, and it popped out a pretty functional blurb, which (according to itself) is "friendly, informative, and encourages engagement."

Here's what it said: "As summer begins to wind down, our community garden is bursting with life - thanks to your continued care and commitment! August has been a month of sunshine, surprises, and so many beautiful harvests. Tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, beans, and squash are coming in strong. If you've got a surplus, don't forget about our [OVF Donates program]. It's a great way to share your bounty. Water Smart: Mornings and evenings are best to minimize evaporation. Prep for Fall: Now's a great time to start planting cool-season crops like kale, lettuce, and radishes."

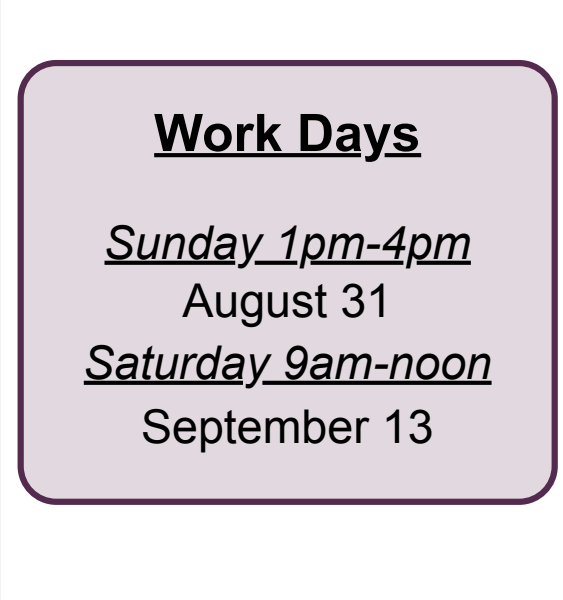
The AI, while a bit hyperbolic, got the gist; August is a transition month, still hot and still harvesting, but planning for winter.

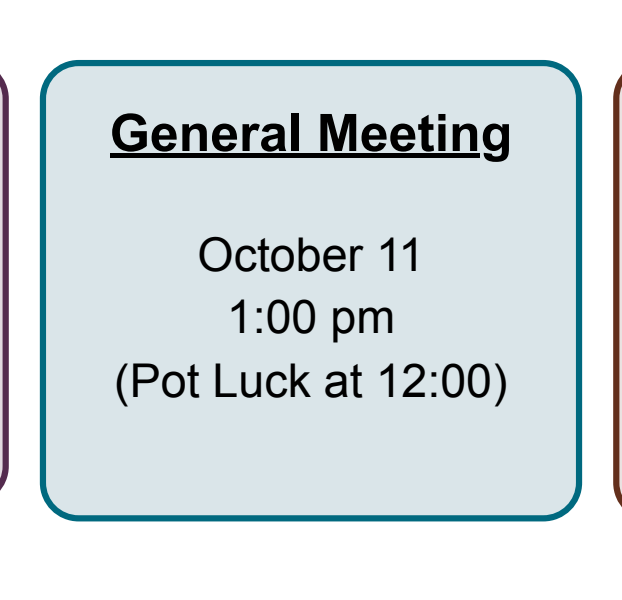
As the AI says, "Happy Growing," and I'll see you in the garden.

Les Hairrell
OVF GM

## OVF Calendar

| Work Days | General Meeting | Board Meeting |
|---|---|---|
| *Sunday 1pm-4pm*<br>August 31<br>*Saturday 9am-noon*<br>September 13 | October 11<br>1:00 pm<br>(Pot Luck at 12:00) | September 20<br>9:30 am |





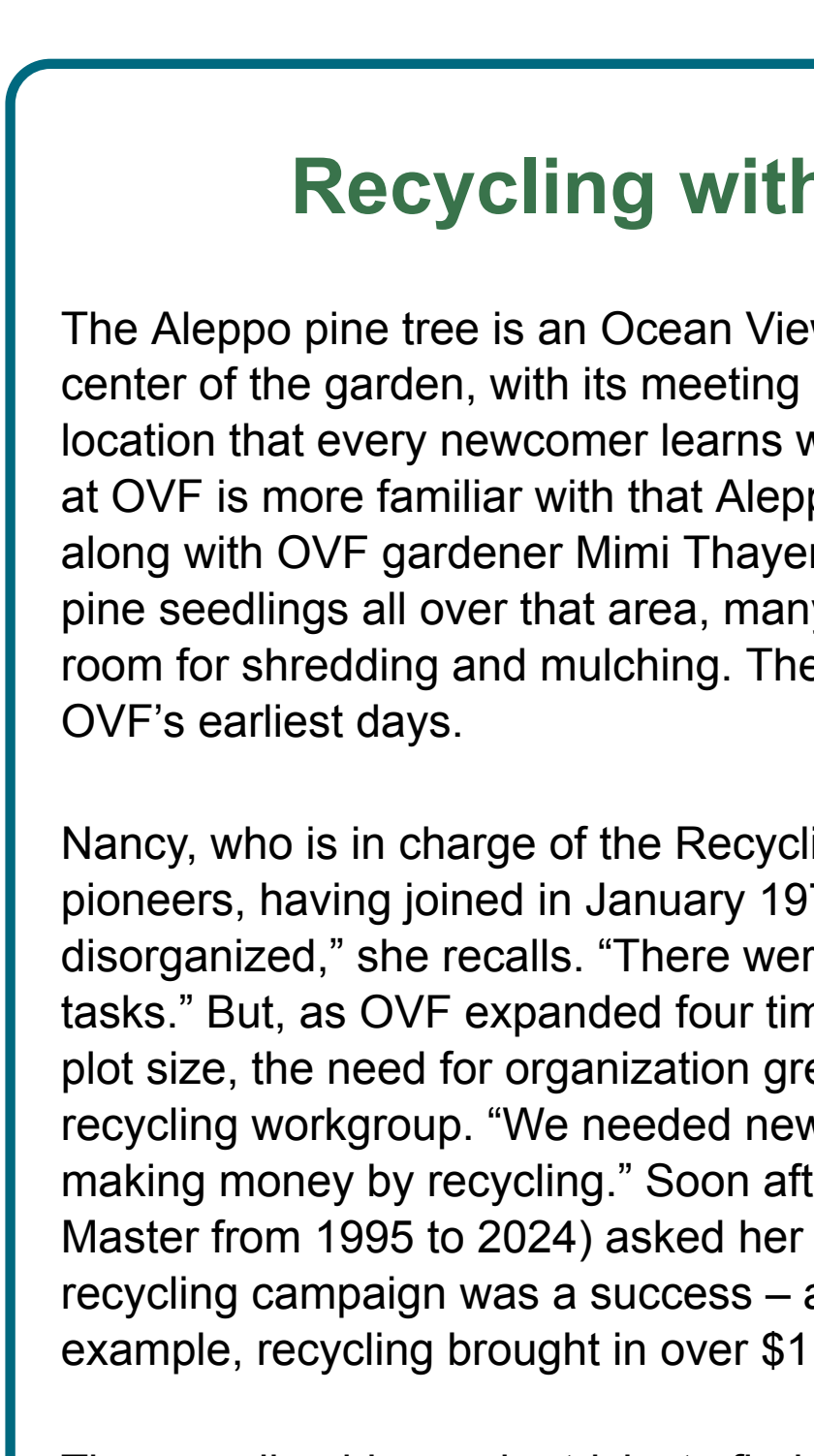
Full Calendar

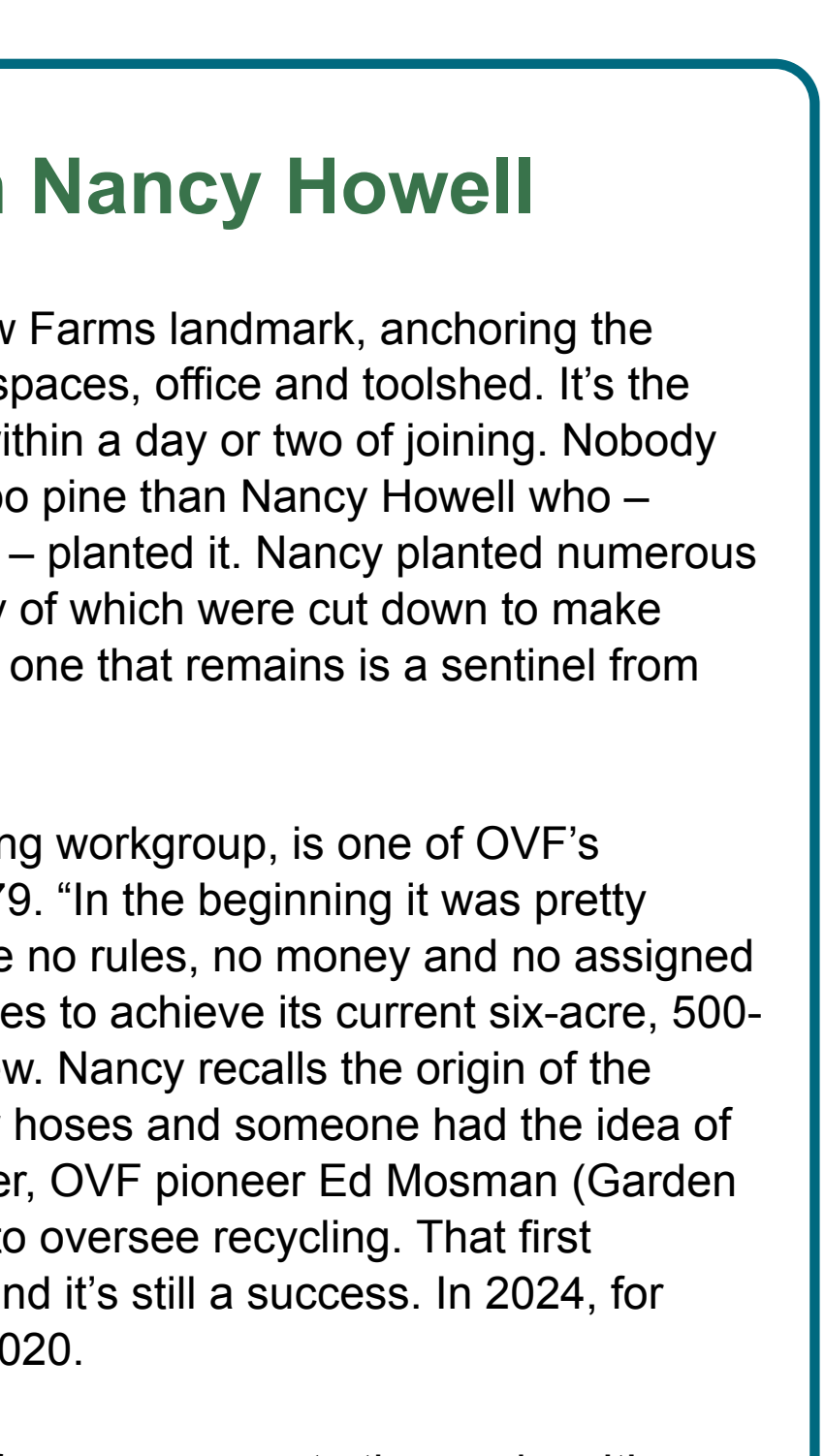
## Upcoming Events at OVF

*(All events are held at the main OVF meeting area unless otherwise stated.)*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Sept. 7, 1pm** | OVF Native Plant Club Get Together |
| **Sept. 7, 2pm** | Garden Master office hour at OVF office |
| **Sept. 13, 5pm** | Garden Master office hour at OVF office |
| **Sept. 20, 1pm** | Garden Master office hour at OVF office |
| **Sept. 26, 9am** | Garden Master office hour at P1L plot N6B |

## Workgroup Profile





### Recycling with Nancy Howell

The Aleppo pine tree is an Ocean View Farms landmark, anchoring the center of the garden, with its meeting spaces, office and toolshed. It's the location that every newcomer learns within a day or two of joining. Nobody at OVF is more familiar with that Aleppo pine than Nancy Howell who – along with OVF gardener Mimi Thayer – planted it. Nancy planted numerous pine seedlings all over that area, many of which were cut down to make room for shredding and mulching. The one that remains is a sentinel from OVF's earliest days.

Nancy, who is in charge of the Recycling workgroup, is one of OVF's pioneers, having joined in January 1979. "In the beginning it was pretty disorganized," she recalls. "There were no rules, no money and no assigned tasks." But, as OVF expanded four times to achieve its current six-acre, 500-plot size, the need for organization grew. Nancy recalls the origin of the recycling workgroup. "We needed new hoses and someone had the idea of making money by recycling." Soon after, OVF pioneer Ed Mosman (Garden Master from 1995 to 2024) asked her to oversee recycling. That first recycling campaign was a success – and it's still a success. In 2024, for example, recycling brought in over $1,020.

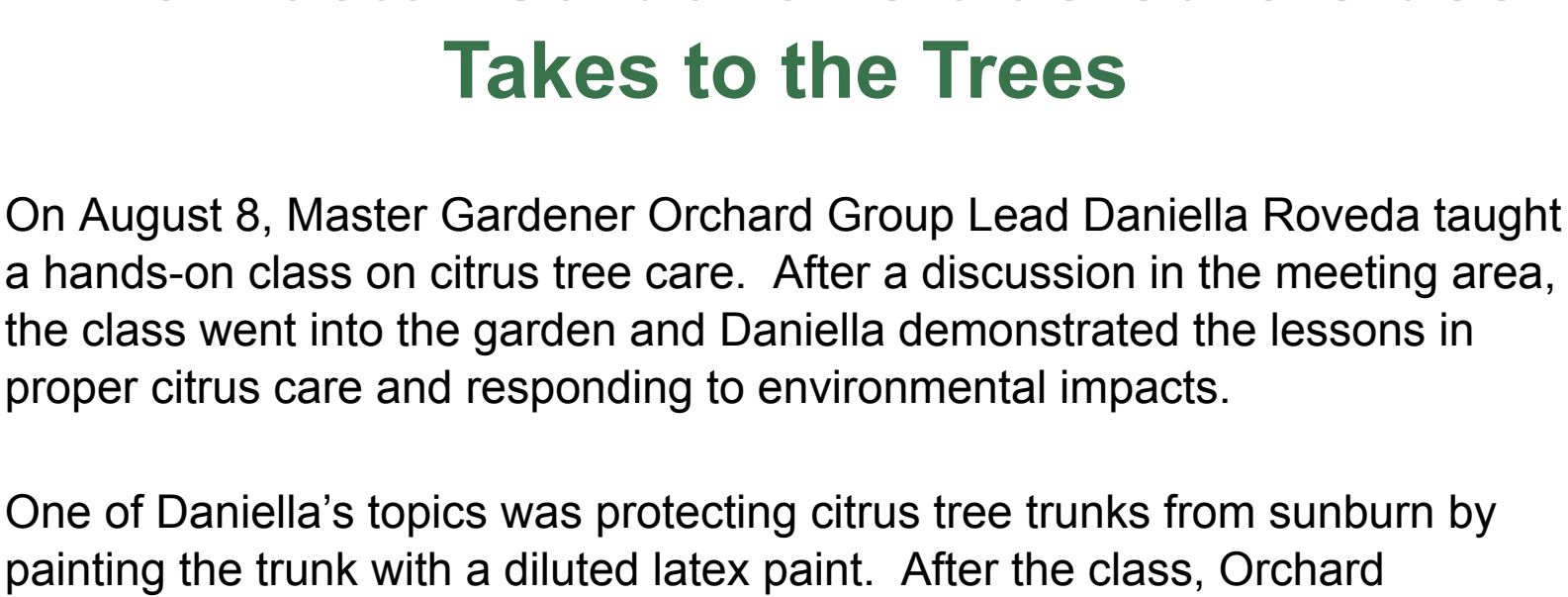
The recycling bin can be tricky to find for anyone new to the garden. It's up against the perimeter fence, just east of mulching, and closest to the main gate that leads down the path to the pine tree. The waist-high enclosure is also adjacent to a small shed, where bags of recycled materials await pick-up.

The first rule of recycling — which includes what's brought from home — is what is recycled and what is not: YES to clear plastic (i.e., water bottles) and aluminum (soda and beer cans as well as others) and NO to glass and white or opaque plastic. "Cans have to be labeled CRV [California Redemption Value]," says Nancy. "And the reason we don't accept bottles is that glass is too heavy, making its value less than a much lighter can or plastic container."

One member of the recycling team, Jon May, bags what's in the bin every Saturday, separating recyclables from non-recyclables (including plastic or paper bags holding recyclables). The task also includes smashing the aluminum cans and putting them in an empty white trash bag from the shed and plastics in black trash bags. When the bin is overflowing, Nancy pulls a few people in to help on a workday. When the shed is full of bulging bags, she calls the Garden Master who takes care of getting them picked up and taken to the recycling center.

OVF members are encouraged to bring all their aluminum cans and clear plastics to the bin – every item helps to provide a nice annual boost to the budget. "It's gratifying to know how much money it makes," says Nancy. "That's our reward for the effort we put into the task."

## August Articles



### The Master Gardener Citrus Care Class Takes to the Trees

On August 8, Master Gardener Orchard Group Lead Daniella Roveda taught a hands-on class on citrus tree care. After a discussion in the meeting area, the class went into the garden and Daniella demonstrated the lessons in proper citrus care and responding to environmental impacts.

One of Daniella's topics was protecting citrus tree trunks from sunburn by painting the trunk with a diluted latex paint. After the class, Orchard Supervisor Gale Jones and member Fran Watts took Daniella's advice and painted the orchard tree trunks.

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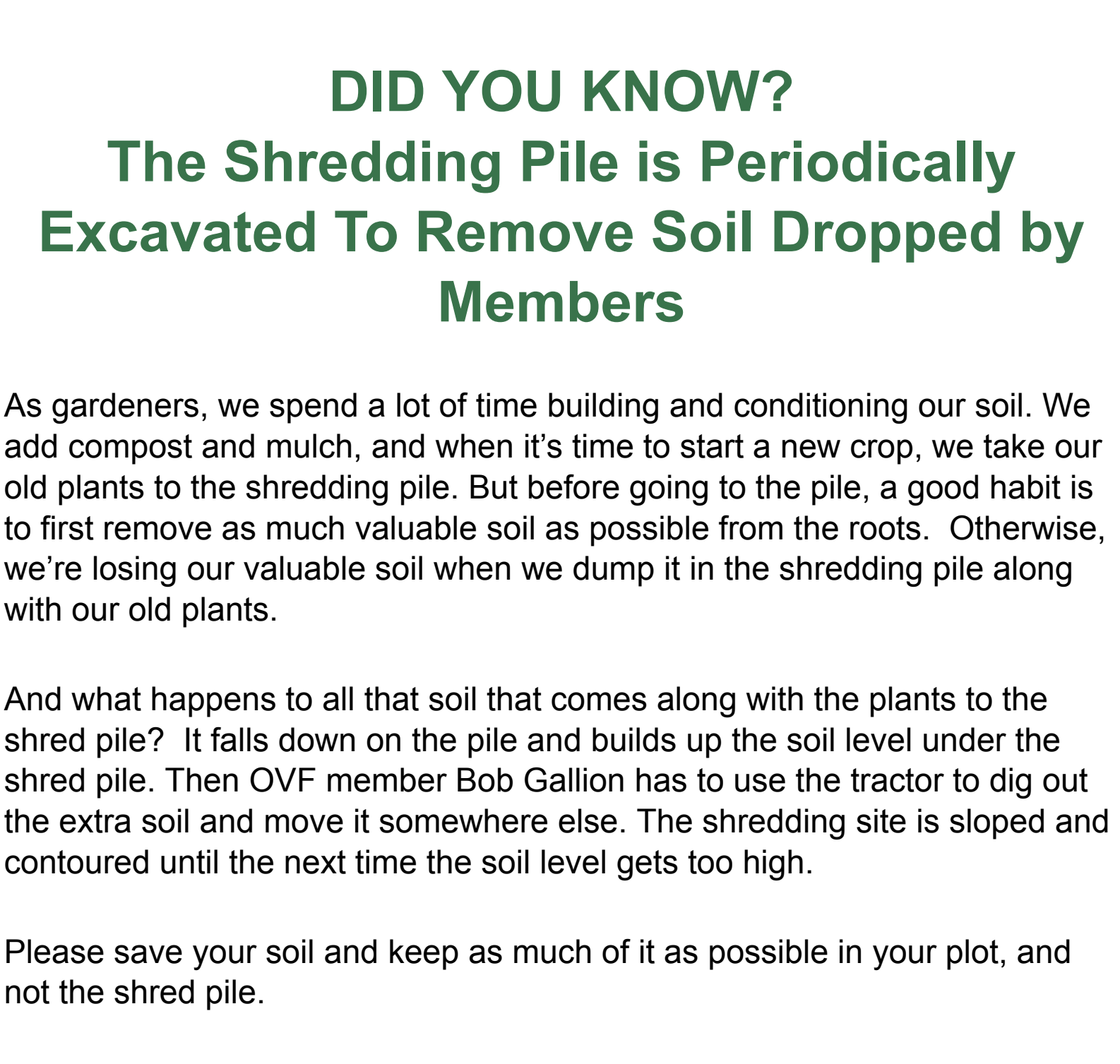
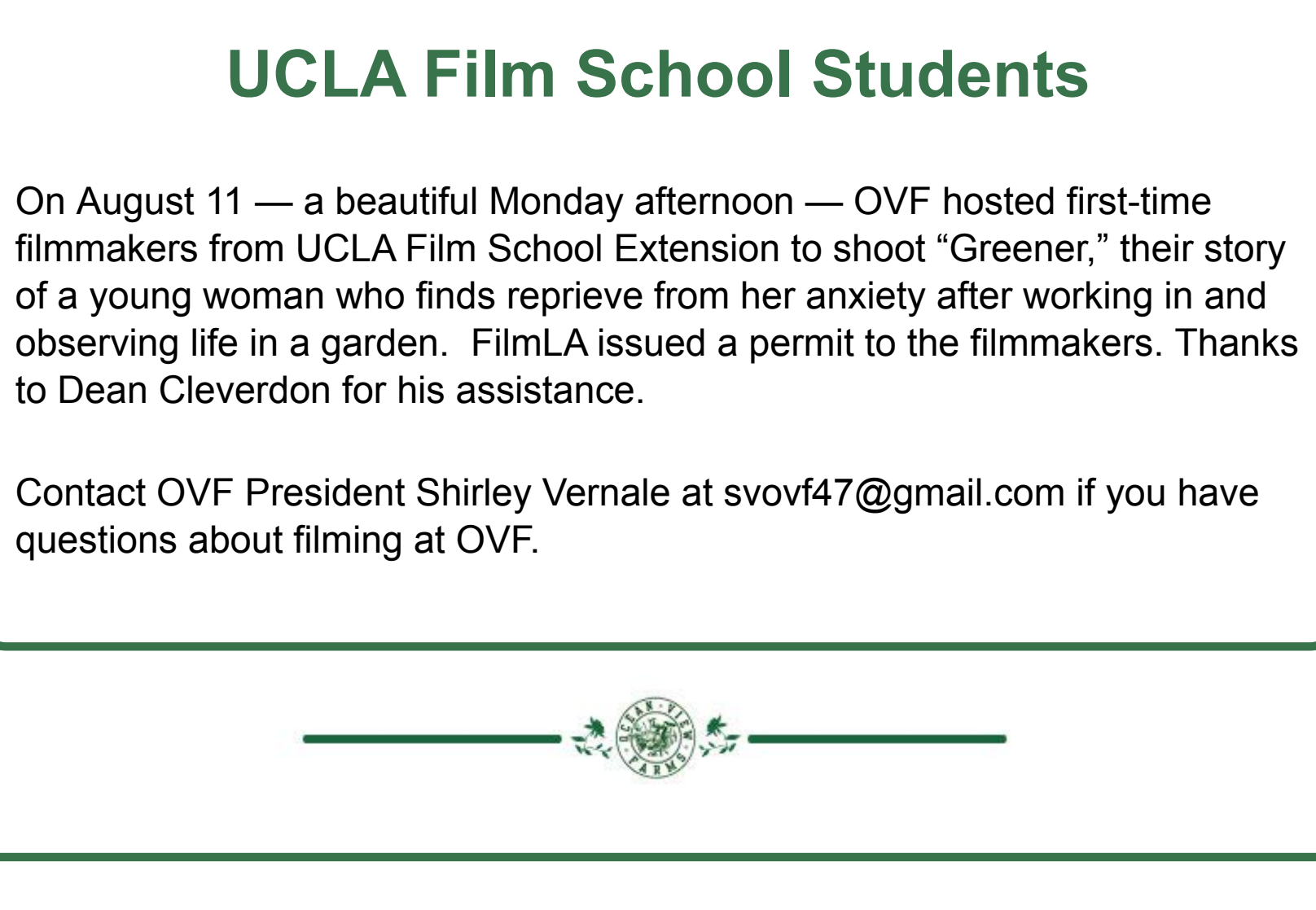


### DID YOU KNOW?
### The Shredding Pile is Periodically Excavated To Remove Soil Dropped by Members

As gardeners, we spend a lot of time building and conditioning our soil. We add compost and mulch, and when it's time to start a new crop, we take our old plants to the shredding pile. But before going to the pile, a good habit is to first remove as much valuable soil as possible from the roots. Otherwise, we're losing our valuable soil when we dump it in the shredding pile along with our old plants.

And what happens to all that soil that comes along with the plants to the shred pile? It falls down on the pile and builds up the soil level under the shred pile. Then OVF member Bob Gallion has to use the tractor to dig out the extra soil and move it somewhere else. The shredding site is sloped and contoured until the next time the soil level gets too high.

Please save your soil and keep as much of it as possible in your plot, and not the shred pile.



### OVF Welcomes UCLA Film School Students

On August 11 — a beautiful Monday afternoon — OVF hosted first-time filmmakers from UCLA Film School Extension to shoot "Greener," their story of a young woman who finds reprieve from her anxiety after working in and observing life in a garden. FilmLA issued a permit to the filmmakers. Thanks to Dean Cleverdon for his assistance.

Contact OVF President Shirley Vernale at svovf47@gmail.com if you have questions about filming at OVF.

## Recipes from the Garden

*Here's a recipe contributed by OVF gardener Rachel E. Judd. Have a recipe using garden ingredients you'd like to share? Email it to ovfdeb@gmail.com*

It's been a hot summer, but nothing beats the heat like a nice cold glass of lemonade. This recipe is for a country fair style of lemonade, where lemon and orange peel marinates in sugar for a bit before being turned into syrup. This marinating draws out citrus oils into the sugar, giving the finished drink a more intense lemon flavor. Meanwhile, the addition of oranges (a Victorian innovation!) helps sweeten the drink naturally, cutting down the need for more sugar.

This recipe can be made using sugar substitutes like stevia or monkfruit. But a little cane sugar is magic on the peels.

Mint is an optional addition. You can also make an Arnold Palmer by cutting the lemonade with iced tea, or muddle some strawberries or raspberries for a little extra sweetness. This recipe also works for limes, in which case omit the oranges, double the limes, and add in 1-2 Tbsp of fresh peeled and chopped ginger instead of mint (don't marinate the ginger peel, just the ginger root).

### Rachel's Lemonade

Yield: 8-10 glasses

Ingredients:
6-8 medium lemons
1-2 navel or cara cara oranges (blood oranges also work but will affect the color of your lemonade)
3/4 cup granulated white sugar
Pinch salt
Water to taste

Optional:
1 bunch mint
1 cup granulated white sugar
1 cup water

Process:
Using a vegetable peeler, thinly peel the lemons and oranges. Try to avoid the bitter white pith. You don't need to fully peel each fruit, mostly peeled is fine.

Toss the peels in the sugar, and let stand at room temperature for about 1-2 hours.

Juice the lemons and oranges. Combine the juices in a pitcher and set aside (in the fridge is ok).

When the peels are done marinating, add sugar and peel mixture to a small saucepan. Add 1 cup water and a pinch of salt. Gently heat the saucepan until the sugar has dissolved. Turn off heat.

Let cool, then strain the peels out. You can make a nice candy by simmering the peels in more sugar syrup; otherwise tip them into the compost bin. Add the strained syrup to the juice. Dilute with water to your preferred taste.

Mint:
Roughly chop the mint. Stir together the water, mint, and sugar in a small saucepan on medium heat until the sugar dissolves. Remove from heat, let cool, strain, then stir into the lemonade.

Chill, serve over ice. Garnish with mint sprigs or small slices of fresh or candied lemon.

## The 11/30 Workday is Cancelled

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE NOVEMBER 30 WORKDAY HAS BEEN CANCELLED FOR THE THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**.

Please enjoy Thanksgiving weekend with your friends and family. The November 30 workday has been cancelled to allow all OVF members the time to spend the holiday with their loved ones.

## Member Feedback / Submissions

If you have any feedback or comments on the newsletter, please contact the OVF Education Chair Debra Kaufman at ovfdeb@gmail.com.

## Land Acknowledgement

Ocean View Farms recognizes that we garden on land originally and currently inhabited by the Chumash, Kizh, Tongva, and Serrano peoples. We respect them as the first caretakers of this land, with gratitude for their wisdom and skills.

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