



Winter 2025

Message from the President

Hello OVF members,

A very tumultuous start to the new year. My heart is heavy for the great loss many are feeling and for the plants and wildlife now gone from nearly 40,000 acres of our beloved Santa Monica and San Gabriel mountains. I have hiked these mountains for over 40 years.

At the recent OVF Board meeting, I asked what a lot of us are asking – what can we now do as an organization, as OVF? We shared information on how to help, connecting to existing support services and the importance of being pioneers of cultivating seeds from native plants. How can OVF help the land and the citizens? How can you participate?

Here is an example of an email I received this past week:

Hello, My godmother lost her home in Sunset Mesa during the recent fires and is an avid gardener. Do you know of any gardening programs in place for people displaced by the fires? Thank you.

I urge you to find the time to become more involved with OVF, in your garden, in your phase, in the whole community. Share your ideas and tips. Donate your extra fruits, vegetables and flowers to our OVF Donates program on Sundays. We have an awesome space to meet up for seed sharing, potlucks and workshops. Contact me directly if you would like to volunteer on a specific project

Please be kind to your neighbors and sort out differences amongst yourselves with compassion, patience and clear communication.

Looking forward to a new year with new projects and more involvement with other gardens, and the Mar Vista and Santa Monica community outside of the fence!

Join me in a renewed appreciation for our opportunity to grow on this land, the magic of sunsets, and a greater reverence for plants, animals and all things organic.

Sincerely,

[Shirley Vernale](#)

OVF President



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New shirts are in! In addition to cream and green, you can now get an OVF shirt in royal blue. Purchase at a general meeting. \$15, cash only.

Impact of recent fires on OVF gardens

Are you concerned about the impact of ash from the recent fires on your OVF garden? After the 2018 Camp Fire, the Sonoma County Master Garden Program created these resources for gardeners with similar concerns: [Produce Safety after a Fire](#); [Post Fire Food Safety.mov](#) -



Community Resources

If you are interested in getting involved in the community response to the fire, the following resources may be a place to start:

[LA County Recovers](#)

[LA City Emergency Management Department](#)

[LA 11th District Councilwoman Traci Park updates](#)

[Mar Vista Community Council](#)

[Food Forward](#)

[Mutual Aid LA Network Fire & Windstorm Resources](#)

Event Calendar

Stay updated with what's happening! Full calendar [available here](#).

February 8

12 pm - Potluck

1 pm - General Meeting

March 15

9:30 am - Board Meeting

Upcoming Work Days

[Google Drive.](#)

After the 2021 Dixie Fire, the Alameda County Master Gardener Program created this resource: [Potential Hazards of Wildfire Ash in the Garden.](#)

If you would like to learn more about soil testing, the LA County Department of Public Health provides guidelines for home and community gardens, which you can find [here.](#)

Saturdays, 9am - 12pm

February 8

March 8

Sundays, 1pm - 4pm

February 23

March 30



Renew Your OVF Membership!

January is the time for renewing your OVF membership. By now, you should have received an e-mail notification from "OVF Renewals" with your renewal status and membership dues for 2025. Dues have not changed – it is still \$100 per plot and a \$20 associate fee.

Online payment is due February 21, 2025 and can be paid via OVF's [online bill pay link.](#) It offers you the option of paying an additional \$3 to defray the costs of processing your credit card.

If you plan to mail in a check, the payment must be postmarked February 17, 2025. Please send your check to Ocean View Farms, P.O. Box 661425, Los Angeles, CA 90066.



OVF Focus: Meet Bob Gallion

Ocean View Farms is an oasis of vegetables and flowers as well as weeds and more than a few pests. But behind the scenes are some machines that would look more at home on a rural working farm. Lucky for OVF, veteran member Bob Gallion is a retired engineer who grew up in Maryland farm country and has had a knack for machine repair since he rebuilt his first car engine as a teenager. Bob is responsible for the maintenance and repair of OVF's impressive array of machinery as well as training others to do those tasks.

Bob believes that OVF may be the only community garden in Los Angeles with such a sophisticated composting program. Composting at OVF began in 1986; when then Garden Master Warren Miyashiro was part of a work crew that gathered and disposed of green waste in five dumpsters. But the dumpsters just didn't have enough capacity, and Warren convinced the group to start a composting operation. Composting was first established at the top of Phase 1, and Warren took on a passion for seeing composting grow to fulfill the needs of OVF gardeners. "In the early days of composting, it seemed impossible to have enough compost for all the members, but I insisted that one day we would accomplish that goal," Warren said.

OVF bought its first machine in 1996 but the system moved to completion in 2009 when a donor, whose name has been lost to history, provided the funds to



purchase a Mackissic Mighty Mac Electric Start Shredder-Chipper. OVF operators use the Mighty Mac to shred manure into the gourmet compost bin in the upper shredding area where it is permanently installed under the large white hopper at the Northeast corner of the upper manure bins. The original engine was replaced twice, and the machine was replaced in April 2024.

The first machine purchased, in October 1996, was our Mackissic SC 262 Shredder Chipper, which is still in use in the lower compost bins, where trained operators shred green waste and small woody material; it was replaced in 2016 with a Briggs & Stratton 18 HP. In December 2001 OVF received a Ralph M. Parsons Foundation grant to purchase the Vermeer Wood Chipper, which handles all the discarded wood walls and larger woody materials that the Mackissic SC 262 can't handle. "This is probably the most dangerous machine in our garden," said Bob. "It will chip up to 6-inch diameter logs and would shred an arm without even slowing down." He added that the knives and knife bed require sharpening or replacement about once a year.



A second Parsons grant paid for a tractor – the Toro Dingo Compact Utility Loader (with attachments). “The tractor engine has been replaced three times,” said Bob. “In 2005, Honda paid for it and OVF replaced it in January 2012 and August 2019.” “The tractor is used several times a week by trained operators to move manure from the upper bins to our lower compost bin and move manure from the upper bins to the Mighty Mac shredder hopper to shred with our Mighty Mac into our gourmet compost bin,” said Bob. “It’s also used to pile mulch, move dirt, maintain manure bins, maintain lower green waste area, install utility poles, pull small trees and move any heavy material wherever needed in the garden.”

The garden also has an Echo 16-inch chainsaw. “This is the second most dangerous machine in the garden and is used periodically by our trained operators to cut larger brush and limbs from our garden trees,” said Bob. The chain requires sharpening or replacing about once a year.

Today, Marc Jackson, one of our Tractor Operators, is also the Gourmet Compost Leader in the upper shredding area, maintains the Mighty Mac Shredder, and operates the chain saw and is one of our Tractor Operators. Steve Ballentine is one of our Tractor Operators, has primary responsibility for the Vermeer Chipper and is training other operators for the Vermeer Chipper. Lora Cain is a qualified Tractor Operator and is training on the chain saw. Brian Kimura and Masao Miyashiro are Tractor Operators and Mighty Mac Operators.

Warren’s dream of recycling green waste to provide compost for all of OVF gardeners was realized, and is on-going thanks to the efforts of this hardworking team. Bob would also like to acknowledge others who have played an important role in making OVF composting what it is today: the now-deceased Warren and Ed Mosman, as well as Frank Harris, Richard Nortman, Jay Felker, Dean Cleverdon, and Karl Lisovsky. Give them a thanks next time you see them at work!



Welcome New Phase Reps!

Phase 1 Lower

William Scot Bray, who has lived in Mar Vista since 2014, and his wife Adrienne, became members of OVF in 2020 when their son Wallace just turned one month old. (Wallace is now in TK at Mar Vista Elementary.) William believes in having a healthy, respectful connection to the natural world. He enjoys cooking, taking walks, and making metaphysical observations in preparation for his next stand-up comedy performance. He also is very proud of the medicinal plants he grows. William says he looks forward to having a conversation with and meeting everyone in the garden.

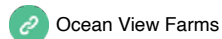
Phase 3 Lower

Emily Payne, who has been an OVF member since February 2018, grew up in a home where her parents gardened. But it wasn't until she lived on her own that she developed an interest in growing things. Now, she loves growing a wide array of veggies and flowers and says pulling weeds out of her plot helps to center her. "I put on an audio book, clean up my plot for a few hours and feel better!" As Phase Rep, Emily hopes to create a community of gardeners that are interested in getting to know their plot neighbors and sharing gardening stories.



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.



Ocean View Farms



Contact Education Chair

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