

OVF NEWS



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April - June 2005
Karen Andersen, Editor

The Gifts of Spring

One of the blessings I anticipate are my solitary walks to and from work. The roses have begun to bloom again, the birds unabashedly sing their delightful melodies and the air is pregnant with the intoxicating aroma of vibrant flowers. As nature awakens and transforms herself our leaders remain out of touch with reality. Our recent mayoral election reflected that same apathy as though our communities have become poisoned with neglect, apathy and indifference. Yet the evidence all around us of spring's rebirth serves as a constant reminder that together we must choose to make a difference. It is a time of great change on our planet when our silent meditations within are also leading to life altering positive changes to benefit all of us.

As I exited Trader Joe's tonight, I excitedly shared the beauty and scent of my freshly picked sweet peas with the parking attendant. In that timeless moment, I felt a quiet understanding between this stranger and me, for we each benefited from a previously unspoken affection for the mysterious language of flowers. He asked for a sweet pea seed so he could grow this marvelous flower. All I could offer him was my small bouquet of pastel colored sweet peas instead. In that delicious moment of fragrance, we exchanged a sense of profound hope in the midst of a chaotic world. We were soon interrupted with the anxious sound of car horns behind me as I departed along my journey home . . . May you continue to discover inspiration and hope along your unique and beautiful garden path.

Happy Gardening!
Karen Andersen, editor

LONG LIVE CUT FLOWERS!



- Freshly picked flowers should be placed in cold water, not warm. With a few exceptions, warm temperatures rob the flower of food and water, resulting in dehydration.
- Plunging flowers up to their necks in cool water quickly reduces the temperature of stems and petals, assuring that they are crisp. Indeed, low temperatures are the No. 1 factor in extending a flower's life.
- Next, refrigerate your flowers: holding them just above freezing for at least six hours before arranging them will triple their life span. Growers condition flowers this way before boxing them and shipping them, out of water, to floral markets around the world.
- Roses benefit from having their stems cut under water because it prevents air bubbles from clogging the stem and slowing the uptake of water. If their stems are recut under water every few days, they live longer yet.
- The secret to prolonging the life of cut flowers is to remove all the foliage below the water line and quickly plop them into clean water. Bacteria, introduced by an unclean vase or rotting foliage, clogs stems, slowing the uptake of water.
- Adding a floral preservative like Floralife prolongs the life of most flowers. But tulips and daffodils could care less about preservatives, and the same applies to blooms from bulbs and rhizomes and those with hollow stems.

OVF APRIL 9TH ELECTION SLATE

Garden Master - Ed Mosman
Membership Coordinator - Carrie Manaugh
Independent Project Coordinator -
Phase I Upper Representative - Tom Rice
Phase II Upper Representative - Marge Wright
Phase III Upper Representative - Clark Sheridan
Phase IV Upper Representative - Ronda Ross

If you are interested in running please contact President Frank Harris or Election Coordinator John Kennedy (Phase I, F23)

Saturday, April 9th

Community Workday 9:00 • Potluck 12:00 • General Meeting & Election 1:00

GardenMaster's Report

DON'T FENCE OVF IN The rules at OVF are very clear on building of the borders of garden plots. No fences allowed. Old doors, chicken wire, plastic fencing, fiber glass panels and old wire grates are prohibited. Walls should be made of sturdy 2 inch thick wood material and only high enough to retain the soil from the garden plot. A wood rail may be installed no higher than 2 feet from the top of the wall and the space between must be open. All trellises must be a minimum of 2 feet from all borders of the plot. Please comply with these rules or you will be asked to remove illegal construction, which may result in the removal of plants growing on the fences.

SLOW DOWN A concave mirror has been installed at the top of the driveway to allow drivers to see if there is on coming traffic approaching. Please watch for pedestrian traffic also. During the summer months Little League adds to the problem with more cars and kids. Always drive slowly on the driveway. Never park in the driveway at any time; this is in violation of the fire laws. You may utilize the area in Phase 4 to park. Avoid parking near the ball fields because foul balls coming over the screen have broken windshields. Little League does not have insurance to cover the damage to your car.

WELCOME I would like to welcome all the new OVF members and hope that you enjoy this wonderful area of nature to grow and harvest flowers and vegetables and get healthy exercise at the same time. Meet your neighbors around your plot because they may have a vast knowledge of gardening and will pass that on to you. Also they will be familiar with the Rules of OVF. Check on the work groups available to complete your community hours. One half of your hours are due by June 30. Tomato season will be here soon so be sure and come to the Tomatomania seminar on March 26 and learn from the experts how and what to plant. Read the bulletin board for all the details.

OVF WEBSITE I am new to using the internet and have enjoyed looking at all the various websites, but I have not seen a site as good as the OVF site at www.oceanviewfarms.net I think you will agree with me that it is very good. Our chairman Frank Harris helped to create it and maintains it. This report is being written on Email and will be forwarded to Karen Andersen our newsletter editor. This is high tech!

--- Ed Mosman, GardenMaster



Garden members Serbin Chang (Ph. II, C36) and Jovanka Ruby (Ph. II, A34) help GardenMaster Ed Mosman (not pictured) process OVF scrap wood into useful and ever-so-popular wood chips.

OVF HONORS

Jimmy & Yoko Takai



James C. Takai



Yoko Takai

**Congratulations
to Jimmy and Yoko Takai
(Phase I, C22-24, D21-23)
who begin their 25th year
of gardening at OVF.**



In Memoriam Monica Lloyd

*Ocean View Farms lost a dear friend
on February 22, 2005*

with the passing of Monica Lloyd.

*Monica had a BS and MD in Biology and was
pursuing her Ph.D in Research Molecular Biology
at the National Genetics Institute in Los Angeles.*

*She is survived by her husband Bob
(Phase I, F16) and will be missed by all.*

chair shots

A WELCOME AND AN INVITATION

On behalf of the Board of Directors and our existing gardeners, I would like to take a moment to extend a very warm welcome to all of the new members in the OVF class of 2005. While it's often been tough trying to garden and stay dry at the same time during these past two months, and we've all had at least three times as many weeds to pull as in a normal year, I hope you will all grow to find OVF a very rewarding and enjoyable place. We look forward to welcoming you into our ever-expanding community. I would also like to encourage you to read through our special insert article, "OVF Workgroups," which includes detailed information about our various workgroups and committees. We invite you to come and join us during these activities. It takes thousands and thousands of hours to maintain our beautiful oasis and it would never be possible without our magnificent volunteer members.

WWW.OCEANVIEWFARMS.NET

OVF is pleased to announce the launching of its website: www.oceanviewfarms.net. A special thank you goes out to garden member, Susan Dworski, for her wonderful design work. An extra special thank you goes to OVF friend, Letha Davis, for her donation of the time and energy required to complete the necessary programming to make the web page come to life. Whether you're simply looking for a little more information about OVF, want a few gardening tips and tricks, or you need to check out the next workday or pot luck lunch on our Calendar page, or review the rules and regulations or by-laws, we hope you will find it useful.

We would also like to invite all OVF members to sign up for our new email list by sending your email address to oceanviewfarms@earthlink.net. This list will only be used to send out important OVF related information, perhaps an electronic version of the newsletter, and will always be held in strict confidence.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our next Pot luck Lunch and General Meeting on April 9th.

Happy Gardening,

Frank Harris



OVF rosarians heed expert Nina Rumley on January 16th, as she initiated timid gardeners in the thornier aspects of rose pruning and feeding. On-site demonstrations in gardeners' own plots make this annual workshop a winner every year.



Moquitoes are not our pals and still pose a health threat in West Los Angeles. Eliminate all possible breeding grounds in and near your plot, including empty pots and watering cans, or neglected area where water or moisture has collected.

We'll do anything to keep our hawks happy and our gophers gone



That includes building them two fancy, hi-rise condos for nesting. Tom Rice (Phase I, Plots G15-17.) affixed one to the telephone pole near our seating area, and a second one in a eucalyptus at the top of Phase 1. Thus far it's proved to be a good dining hall. Let's keep our fingers crossed to see if it works as a nursery.



11th Annual Venice Garden Tour

Saturday, May 7th
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

This year's Venice Garden Tour promises to be another fantastic event for garden and architectural enthusiasts. Why not join all the fun and enjoy the delightful gardens along the picturesque Venice Canals and walk streets. You'll be given a map for this self-guided walking tour so you can choose which areas you would like to explore. The tour begins at Las Doradas Children's Center, located at 804 Broadway (corner of Broadway & Pleasant View, one block west of Lincoln Boulevard). Homes selected for the tour showcase inspirational, unusual and creative landscape designs. We're lucky to live in an area that offers us a peek into the homes and gardens of some of Southern California's leading landscape professionals through this spectacular event. Best of all, your participation will benefit the Neighborhood Youth Association's Las Doradas Children's Center and Learning Center. This very special community-building effort sustains an exemplary education-based childcare and after-school program



for the area's at-risk children--services which help to build confidence, character and academic skills that make a dramatic difference in their lives and the lives of their families.

If you'd like to volunteer as a docent for the walking tour, contact Susan Hamilton at atwatergarden@yahoo.com, or Barbara Baumann, at 310 569-7991. As a volunteer, you will be able to join the tour for free after or before your morning or afternoon time slot. I prefer the morning shift so I can enjoy the fresh fruit and goodies offered to the docents, then I have all afternoon free to enjoy the tour! The cost for a tax deductible ticket is \$50 in advance, or \$60 on May 7th. For more information, surf over to venicewardentour.org.



Heidi Duggal (Phase III, C53) demonstrates the aromatic qualities of cilantro to a group of 25 kindergartners from the University Village Day Care Center in Mar Vista on February 8th. Also helping to lead the group was Reyma Wells (Phase I, D14). In addition to a short lecture under the large pine tree, the students were able to pick a tangelo from one of our trees and plant a seed to take home with them.

Know Your Rules & Regs

Unless other arrangements have been made with your Phase Representative, half of the [community] hours are to be completed by July 1 or a citation can be issued. Additional citations can be issued at monthly intervals. *All Rules & Regs are posted on the bulletin board in the wheelbarrow shed, or consult your Phase Rep for a printed copy.*

APRIL-JUNE WORKDAY SCHEDULE

APRIL

9 Sat 9-12 Work
12 Potluck
1 Gen. Mtg.
24 Sun 1-4 Work

MAY

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

JUNE

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

ARBITRATORS

310

OVF seeks volunteers to serve on the Arbitration Advisory Committee. This important group may only meet once or twice a year, but the service is invaluable. A minimum of four community hours will be awarded for each hearing. To serve on this committee, please leave a note the Chair mailbox.

WRITER

310

FEATURE WRITER needed for OVF NEWS. Enthusiastic self-starter with nose for local news and willingness to dig for stories a must. Photography skills a big plus. Community hours negotiable.

CONSTRUCTION CREW

350

Our retaining walls need help! Work according to your own schedule using our tools and materials. If interested please leave a note in the Garden - master's box in the small shed with your name and phone number.

GATE CLOSERS

370

Ensure that all the OVF gates are locked at sundown. Several weeks of gate closing shifts are available. Shifts start on Sunday and end the following Saturday. See the sign-up sheets in the large shed for weeks available or contact Elizabeth by leaving a note in the Gate Monitor slot in the small shed.



OVF WORKGROUPS



Join a Workgroup Today!

With more than 300 members in our garden, OVF is very fortunate to be able to complete almost all of the tasks that it faces on a volunteer basis. From accounting and carpentry to newsletter layout, plumbing and word processing, OVF would not be the place it is without the wonderful volunteer efforts put forth by its members. Join a workgroup that interests you and put your talents to work for OVF!!!

SHREDDING COMMITTEE The shredding committee is responsible for processing all of the green waste created at the garden in preparation for its conversion into the more than 300 tons of fabulous compost created each year. Under the leadership of Garden Master Ed Mosman and Team Leader Richard Nortman the shredding committee meets every Tuesday morning starting at 7:30 AM in the orchard. Activities usually last between 1 and 2 hours followed by coffee and pastries served under the large pine tree.

COMPOST COMMITTEE The compost committee meets at 9:00 AM on Saturday of all NON-WORKDAY weekends. Under the direction of Team Leaders Dean Cleverdon, Karl Lisovsky and Richard Nortman, the compost committee begins the process of transforming the shredded green waste into wonderful, rich compost. If you are interested in working with this group arrive in the compost area below the shredder and chipper sheds at 9:00 AM on Saturday.

STABLE WASTE RECLAMATION WORKGROUP Under the direction of Compost Master Warren Miyashiro and Team Leader Bob Lloyd, this workgroup meets on Tuesday morning at 7:30 AM (concurrent with the shredding committee) to shred and process the composted stable waste delivered to OVF by the City of Los Angeles Department of Sanitation. The group generally works for one hour each week. To join the workgroup, meet at the manure bins located adjacent to the large shed between phase one and two. For any questions about the workgroup leave a note in Bob Lloyd's mailbox at plot F16.

ORCHARD COMMITTEE Under the supervision of the Orchard Supervisor, Joan Silver, the Orchard Committee meets on an as-needed basis to prune, weed, water and feed the three dozen plus trees in our community orchard. Some members of the Orchard Committee may only be involved in tree pruning, while others may adopt a group of trees to weed and water throughout the year. If you are interested in joining the Orchard Committee, leave a note in Joan Silver's mailbox at plot D4, Upper Phase 1.

MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION Gardenmaster Ed Mosman leads this dedicated group in maintaining all of the physical aspects of our six acre property. From the carpenters that build the retaining walls on our hillside lot, to members that install OVF mandated mailboxes and hose posts, to plumbers that maintain the labyrinthine miles of P.V.C. water lines and keep scores of hose bibs and rolls of winding hoses from leaking, to members that volunteer to feed and care for the garden cats, to the mechanics that maintain our shredding and chipping equipment and keep our fleet of wheelbarrows running flat-free—this group is vitally important to the success and enjoyment of the garden by all of the members. To volunteer for any of these tasks please leave a note stating your interest in the Garden master's mailbox in the small shed.

GATE CLOSERS Gate Closing Monitor, Elizabeth Kurcinak, oversees this group in securing the garden each night at sundown. Members receive community credit for successfully completing one week of gate closing, ensuring that all garden sheds, interior gates and the large double driveway gate are locked each evening. Refusing to leave the garden at sundown at the request of the gate closer is considered a grave violation and will result in immediate termination of gardening privileges. Sign-up sheets are posted in the large shed or members may leave a note in the Gate Monitor box in the small shed.

ADMINISTRATION This group encompasses a wide range of job functions supervised by various board members, from serving on the Arbitration committee, to producing a quarterly newsletter, from website design, to tracking community work hours and organizing the bi-monthly potluck lunches. For further information on any of these activities leave a note in the President's mailbox in the small shed.

A Taste of Italy



By Karen Andersen

In preparation for my visit to Italy later this year, I've been studying Italian, tasting wine, and learning how to make herbal flavored olive oils. The herbal extraction process takes four to six weeks to accomplish so this is not one of those weekend warrior projects to inflict upon yourself. You or your friends will be rewarded, however, with a unique blend of olive oil to accompany a spring or summer salad, toasty bread and a glass of Italian vino! Many of us already grow some of the herbs that are often used to complement the oil such as oregano, parsley, thyme or laurel. If you'd like to try this yourself, here are the steps to help demystify the process.

■ Purchase six or more bottles or a large can of the best extra virgin olive oil you can afford in order to achieve the best flavor. Darker bottles will help preserve the quality of the oil so exposure to light is minimized. If you prefer to use a lighter colored bottle and then keep the bottle in a dark location, this is the option I prefer so I can view the herbs when I use the oil. Although the olive oil from Tuscany is the most delicious, excellent cold-pressed oils also come from other regions of Italy such as Umbria or Lazio. Only cold-pressed oils with less than 1% acid content qualify as being a genuine extra virgin olive oil. Because the bottles must be empty before placing the herbs inside them, first empty the oil from the bottles and set it aside for future use. Clean the bottles in the dishwasher (open mouths down), remove the label and keep the bottle caps and anti-dripping devices so you can use them later. After you decide which herbs you'd like to put inside the bottle then you can design your own special labels.

■ Once the bottles have been cleaned, the next task is to harvest a couple varieties of herbs from your garden. Select the best quality sprigs you'd like to use and avoid leaves that are damaged, broken or discolored. Then wash them carefully to eliminate any trace of dirt. I use a salad spinner to ensure that no water remains and the herbs look completely dry.

■ Ah, you thought your herbs were dry! Nope. Now's the time to tie the herbs by the end of their stems with some string and hang them upside down. Even our darling herbal bouquets enjoy delighting us with their gymnastic maneuvers in mid-air! Be sure you allow enough space for

the air to circulate so you don't attract uninvited attention from mold growth. Then find a dry area of your home and attach a piece of rope or string from one edge of the wall to the other edge of the wall (near the ceiling) in a room where you don't want to advertise the results of your new hobby. Attach the herbs to the horizontal string and hang them upside down. The drying process will be completed when a piece of the thicker portion of the stem breaks easily and does not bend. Most of the leaves' green color will also have disappeared.

■ Now that the herbs have completely dried, you'll need to carefully separate them before placing the herbs you don't need into individually labeled Ziplock plastic bags for storage. Select the two different kinds of herbal stems that you want to show off for each individual glass bottle carefully so you end up with the most pleasing appearance inside the bottles and be sure both herbs' fragrance and taste don't overpower each other. The next step is to measure the distance between the bottom of the bottle to the beginning of the neck portion of the bottle. Then cut your herbal stems to a size about 1/4 inch smaller than this distance you just measured.

■ Finally, you are almost ready to insert the herbs into the empty glass bottles! This is where a pair of tweezers are useful. Assuming you have chosen herbal stems that will easily fit inside the bottles, do the following:

(1) Insert the larger branch like laurel first by gently pressing the leaves against the stem and then inserting it from its lower section where the leaves are, so that the leaves will be guided to close around it as you pass the stem through the bottleneck. Then place the branch down gently through the bottle's mouth until it falls inside.

(2) Repeat the above procedure with your second herbal stem such as parsley, oregano or thyme or another thin sized herb you prefer. You can rearrange the herbs inside by tapping motions or by using the tweezer until you are satisfied with the arrangement. At this point you could add another element, such as a dried spice (e.g., one or two white pepper seeds) tossed inside the bottle.

■ Now it's time to pour yourself a glass of chianti and congratulate yourself since you've just completed the most difficult part of this process! Take a funnel and slowly pour some of the extra virgin olive oil that you reserved earlier (after emptying the bottles), into your bottle with the inserted herbs. Stop pouring after the level of the oil reaches the beginning of the bottleneck and the oil has completely drained down from the funnel into the bottle. (Do not fill the oil to the top of the bottle.) At this point you may need to wipe the outside of the bottle to clean any oil that may have fallen on the outside of the bottle. Attach the anti-dripping device and the screw cap.

■ Prepare a label with the date, the brand of olive oil you used, along with the names of the herbs and affix the label. Place the bottle in a cool dark location for the next four to six weeks. By then you'll be ready to celebrate with some more vino! You won't need to shake the bottle during this period, just leave it alone while the extraction process occurs. Repeat the above steps for each glass bottle you want to place herbs and oil into. Ciao!