



February 2023

# Newsletter

*Fecund facundity from the fertile foothills*

President – Silvera Grant  
Vice President – Leo Stallworth  
Secretary – Ayesha Randall  
Treasurer – Sacha Malin  
Orientation – Mary McGilvray  
Website – Joe Nagy  
Community Outreach – Grace Lee & Erin Berkowitz  
Wood Chips Coordinator – vacant  
Fertilizer Coordinator – Joe Nagy  
Inspection Coordinator – Joanne McLaughlin  
Maintenance Coordinator – Leo Stallworth  
Correspondence Secretary – Alan Freeman  
Programs Chairperson – vacant  
Newsletter Editor – Denis Titchenell  
Archivist – Anne Reid  
Nominating – Marie Yeseta  
Albert West – Advisor  
Isaac Turner – Advisor

Read the newsletter online:

<http://www.altadenacommunitygarden.com/newsletter.html>  
[Newsletter Blog](#)

[Donate to the Garden:](#)

<https://www.altadenacommunitygarden.com/donate>

Article submissions:

[submissions@altadenacommunity.garden](mailto:submissions@altadenacommunity.garden)

[Visit our Facebook members discussion group](#)

[Visit our Facebook public discussion group](#)

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## Upcoming Events

- 4pm-7pm Wednesdays: The Farmer's Market
- February 2/04, 2/11, 2/18, and 2/25 from 10am-4pm, 6-hour class with a lunch break. Join us every Saturday in February at the Altadena Community Garden for a special Botanical Printing & Natural Dyeing workshop series with Artist-in-Residence Linda Illumanardi.
- Saturday, May 13 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Master Gardener Program will hold training class sessions at the Altadena Community Garden.
- September 30, 2023 12 noon to 6pm Annual Garden Picnic

## News

Altadena Chamber of Commerce Names Silvera Grant Citizen of the Year



*Award Ceremony -  
Silvera Grant, Kathryn  
Barger*

Altadena, CA – December 11th, 2022, the Altadena Chamber of commerce named our Garden President citizen of the year and the local Ale House as business of the year.



*Silvera Auston Grant 2022 Citizen of the Year speech at the 99th Annual Awards & Installation Dinner on February 3rd. at the Altadena Town & Country Club.*

*Photo: Deb Squared Photo*



*Silvera Grant, Kathryn Barger and Gail Casburn*

A volunteer with a focus on ensuring the sustainability of Altadena’s only Community Garden, Citizen of the Year recipient Silvera Grant has been the Altadena Community Garden’s “guardian” for over a decade. As President of the Altadena Community Garden, Silvera has volunteered over 4,000 hours of his time to make the gardens and our community both stronger and healthier.

This year Mr. Grant also received the U.S. President’s “Lifetime Achievement Award” for Volunteerism from President Biden.

## Good News!

### – Elisa Callow, Chair, ACG Fundraising, and Resource Development Committee

What do Bunco Night, t-shirt sales, a grant from Supervisor Barger, the SeedMoney crowd-sourcing campaign, a booth at the Altadena Rotary Pancake Breakfast and Christmas Tree Lane’s opening celebration, and hanging with Altadena Fraternal Order of Eagles have in common?

They are all essential to the Altadena Community Garden’s financial health.

Last year, the Garden and the Los Angeles County Department of Recreation and Parks embarked upon a formalized lease agreement that shifted the Gardens utility and maintenance costs to the Garden, meaning a new requirement for fundraising. While daunting at first, the challenge has meant a coming together of several hard-working committees and the development of a growing number of exciting events.

Rene Amy produced a fantastic Milkweed Seed Giveaway with at least six collaborating organizations that attracted a large and happy crowd to the Garden on Saturday, January 21st. The annual Garden picnic is back, now scheduled for September 30th of this year. These events and others in the planning stages will add to the Garden’s growing reputation as a community treasure and resource. We are putting our energy into “friend-raising” as well as fundraising.

Since the Lease was signed last year, a great deal has been accomplished: developing a case statement – in other words, a written document that provides reasons for supporting our Garden, distributing a member survey, and organizing our donor and membership information. The Fundraising and Media Committees have collaborated to develop event fliers and Garden informational material. Silvera and other Garden stalwarts (thank you, Sacha, Sandy, and Fonda) had been consistent participants at various community events by staffing a Garden booth. And, there have been a number of “appeals” – requests for support that have well exceeded our expectations.

So far, the total raised for 2023 is \$17,747.00 from the following sources:



*Progress Meter with Sacha Malin and Joe Nagy*

Membership appeal, General donations (including Altadena Rotary and the Eagles), the SeedMoney Crowdfunder fundraising campaign and a \$5,000 grant from Supervisor Barger's office to defray water costs. This is more than a hopeful prognosis for the Garden's future, it has helped us transform this challenge into a source of energy and excitement.

A big thanks to the hardworking members of the Fundraising and Resource Development Committee: Allison Burdett, Kevin Bolling, Sacha Malin, Debbie Maust, Joe Nagy, and Gloria Sanyika.

And thanks as well to all the Garden members who contributed so generously with your time and financial support.

## Donations

Please watch our new [Altadena Community Garden fundraising video](#) and visit our Altadena Community Garden [Donation page](#).

### Amazon Smile

In the past it has been possible, by signing up for Amazon Smile, to donate 0.5% of the price of your Amazon purchases to a charity or nonprofit of your choice and many members and friends of the ACG have done that.

Unfortunately, Amazon is discontinuing the Amazon Smile program as of February 2023. This will adversely affect many nonprofit organizations. It appears that programs replacing Amazon Smile will take decisions of choosing worthy recipients away from customers. See [NPR report \(https://www.npr.org/2023/01/19/1149993013/amazon-amazonsmile-charity-donation-program\)](https://www.npr.org/2023/01/19/1149993013/amazon-amazonsmile-charity-donation-program)

You can mail a check to: Altadena Community Garden  
P.O. Box 6212  
Altadena, CA 91003-6212

All donations are tax-deductible. Please indicate if you would prefer your donation to be anonymous.



*ACG Donate*

## Fundraising Video for the Garden

– **Mary McGilvray**

FINALLY!

After four months of diligent work by two great folks (Loretta Williams plot # 32 associate and volunteer Ori Lahav) and our crack team of Garden volunteers, we have pulled together a sweet little video for our ACG Fundraising campaign. Check it out, please “like,” “subscribe” and share it, and THANK YOU!!!

<https://youtu.be/DB7t6Du-XLo>



## News Items No Longer News At the Altadena Community Garden

January 20, 12:00 – 2:00 Altadena Station Community Conversation Content. The community was invited to the Garden for a conversation with Sheriff Captain Williams and Deputy Personnel.

January 28, 2023 9:00am-12:00 pm Fruit Tree Care Workshop with expert orchardist and Master Gardener (UCCE) Herb Machleder.

## Appreciating Our Donors

The Garden Executive Board would like to thank those individuals who have donated money to the Altadena Community Garden to supplement the Garden's 2022-23 budget. The Garden is in need of all the financial assistance that is available to meet the financial challenges in the coming years.



## The Altadena Community Garden in Perspective

– Allison Burdett

The Garden (ACG) is a unique non-profit organized and volunteer-run by residents of the local community, currently celebrating its fifth decade. The former site of the Mt. Lowe Military Academy, the land reverted to Los Angeles County ownership in the mid-1970s when the local community worked with the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation to establish the Garden. Los Angeles County completed construction of the Garden site in 1984 as the cornerstone of the Loma Alta Park redesign. Two edifices remain from the original Academy: the iconic wrought-iron entry gate on Palm Street and the park Youth Center building. The Garden has thrived since its creation, strengthening the character of Altadena and providing an array of educational and community-building resources to its neighbors. Today, however, the Garden faces an uncertain future with the sudden, unanticipated addition of approximately \$25,000 annually in new operating costs.



After more than 50 years of successful partnership with LA County sponsoring the utility and maintenance fees of the Garden, in 2023, LA County will require our organization to shoulder the full annual operating costs of water and facility maintenance at an estimated \$25,000 per year. This change is now challenging the Garden not only to develop a robust, sustainable fundraising program but to save resources by developing water conservation methods that are simple to use and cost effective.

We are committed to developing sufficient community and philanthropic support along with cost savings to avoid raising the necessary funds by charging high annual dues to our membership which would be untenable for our low-income and fixed-income gardeners who rely on the Garden for affordable, fresh food sources.

The ACG is a non-profit organization that provides gardening space, information, and education to Garden members and the local community. We believe that growing nutritional food and working outdoors in a group setting promotes healthy minds, spirits, and bodies. The Garden honors and appreciates the diversity, unique qualities, and cultural ideals of our gardeners and the community. By growing fresh food and tending the Garden together, we support harmony, cooperation, and healthy life choices for residents of LA County. The ACG is a historical community resource for mostly fixed-income seniors and limited-income families to enhance their own food security and supplement their households with fresh fruits and vegetables.



## Pollinator Palooza Extravaganza

### Native Seed Giveaway & Tropical-Milkweed Exchange – A Massive Success!

– René Amy



René Amy

The recent Pollinator Palooza Extravaganza was a massive success, no matter how one slices it! Almost 1,500,000 California-native wildflower seeds - including thousands of native-milkweed seeds - were handed out to members of the public; some two dozen tropical milkweed plants were eliminated from our community; a whole bunch of organizations (including the Altadena Community Garden)



Seed Giveaway

signed on to an Operation Pollination pledge, and, with minimal publicity, nearly 1,000 folks came to the Garden to learn more about pollinators!

Special kudos are due all around, including to the Los Angeles Beekeepers Association (which did a great 1/2-hour long presentation about bees), to the Altadena Rotary Club (which sponsored the tropical-milkweed trade-in), to Altadena's own Boggy Band (which provided wonderful musical accompaniment). Thanks also to the Pasadena Audubon Society, to the Pasadena Sierra Club and to the Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy, all of which helped to educate folks about the importance of pollinators.



*Altadena's Boggyband performed at the Pollinator Event*

The weather was amazing, and with space within the Garden for more organizations to participate, be prepared to see the Palooza return next year, bigger, better, and with even greater attendance! Content to come.

Event Producer: Altadena Maid Products

Event Host: Altadena Community Garden

Event Sponsors: Altadena Maid Products for seed giveaway, Altadena Rotary Club for exchange.



*Garden Merchandise*



## The Little Engine that Could – Wicked Earth Designs

– Elisa Callow, Chair, ACG Fundraising, and Resource Development Committee

We all know that Altadena Community Garden has a history of heroes and heroines who work well beyond their plot to support our little bit of beauty, joy, and nourishment.

Debbie Maust is one such member. The multi-generational household in Altadena that Debbie shares with her husband, John, and sons, John, Jason, and Justin, includes the busy hub of the family-owned business, Wicked Earth Designs. They are makers of custom-designed apparel and a variety of embroidered garments, bags, and even kneeling pads for our tired bones!

After hearing about the Garden's financial challenges, they went to work immediately to figure out how she and her son John could be of help. John provided the Fundraising Committee with an offer that had no downsides. Wicked



*Debbie Maust*

Earth Designs would provide custom merchandise for sale at cost. There will be no upfront investment required of ACG as most merchandise will be produced after orders are made. Debbie is covering the initial production cost of a small amount of inventory. Wow!



*Wicked Earth Designs*

I visited Wicked Earth Designs shortly before Christmas and was amazed by the beehive of activity. The whole family was shoulder-deep in a customized employee Christmas order for Porto's Bakery. Despite the busy season, the family was packing up for the Pasadena Rugby Club Family Day event. The industrial embroidery machine was spinning while their rescue dogs were cheering everyone on. And they found time to create a line of merchandise for the Garden. Debbie is realistic about the many benefits of her family's generous offer. "Selling merchandise is not going to make a huge amount of money, but the Garden needs to be better known. It is a wonderful resource for the community, and all of us can reach out to more of our neighbors and friends. Wearing the Altadena

Community Garden merchandise can help."



*Silvera Grant and Sandy Chang*

Debbie was at the Garden hosted Milkweed Seed giveaway, testing out the newly developed ACG Merchandise, and she plans to participate in future gatherings and events. Until the planned online store is up and running, Garden members can purchase garments and other items by contacting Debbie at [jojaju@aol.com](mailto:jojaju@aol.com) or [sales@altadenacommunitygarden.com](mailto:sales@altadenacommunitygarden.com).

Here are some of our gorgeous ACG members and this author modeling sample merch!



*Elisa Callow*



# It's All About the Seeds

– Sandy Chang

A little meeting announcement on the tool shed door carries with it much excitement – excitement not at the contention-prone meetings but in the tiny fine print on the bottom of the notice announcing a seeds giveaway!

Seeds are the soul of the garden and seed giveaways are always a blast! Back in the days when gardeners were allowed an unlimited number of seed packets, the membership turned up in droves carrying with them water bottles, wide-brimmed hats, and unusually large tote bags. After hurried hellos, gardeners wasted no time before storming the thousands of packets of flower, herb and vegetable seeds! The old-timers say that the key to seed success is the ability to scan quickly and still not miss that one packet of purple okra or albino beet stuck between a stack of broccolis. When a rarity comes up, snatch it before those next to you perusing their own stack while eyeing yours, beat you to it! While most learned to hoard a plethora of seeds, everyone aspired to be the true cutthroats with the extraordinary ability to check for expiration dates in the middle of a bloodbath. Oftentimes, a rare-find is left for a reason, such that its Best-Use-By-Date has come and gone for nearly a decade! After all, there is nothing worse for gardeners than, having soaked their prized seeds, sown them tenderly and tended them diligently, to reap only a few anemic seedlings destined for doom. The triumphant early birds dump tons of seeds into their oversized totes – enough to start a corner nursery – while late arrivals pick through the leftovers dejectedly, all the cabbage, kale and the like.

On the date of the meeting, seeds were nowhere in sight, an obvious attempt to deter grab-and-go, I rationalized. After all, the point is to drill through the agenda as one body! So, for the sake of the seeds, gardeners debated through budgetary concerns, dumpster violations, and water waste until red in the face, veins popping, voice becoming hoarse and then suddenly, it is over and time for seeds! Anxiously I waited and waited, still nothing but the fast dwindling crowd. Before too long everyone had left. Shifting uncomfortably, Silvera muttered something about rescheduling as I decried false advertisement!

A few weeks later after I had stopped dreaming of seeds, a text flashed across the phone announcing the illusive giveaway.

True to the promise this time, a bed of seeds organized by categories and dates lay in neat long rows – crisp packets of flower, herb and vegetable waiting to be discovered by their gardener and sown into their forever soil bed!

Roosevelt and I show up early and station ourselves strategically; he imparts wisdom on how to speed cook collards while I share cilantro recipes as we peruse blissfully and pass good finds to one another. As the crowd gets bigger, Silvera goes around reminding folks that each person is limited to 12 packets. As the rules evolve, so must the strategy. Roosevelt and I secure our allotments early, continue to leaf through the selections, and trade up when something more exotic comes along! This season, the treasure find for Roosevelt is rainbow chard and for me, it is lima beans! After an intense half-hour, the livelihood of our plots is secured for the foreseeable future. I head home to read all about lima beans and dream dreams of tender green shoots.

Special thanks to the UC Master Gardener Program for the generous donation of seeds, and to Silvera Grant, the Garden's President, for year after year of procuring, transporting, distributing, packing and unpacking seeds for the enjoyment and use of gardeners all over Altadena and beyond.





## Botanical Printing with Linda Illumanardi

Four students (one a member of ACG) joined Linda for their first botanical printing session on Saturday, February 11, printing local leaves on both paper and cotton fabric. Linda prepared some cochineal dye so that participants could have that lovely bright pink on their paper for possible Valentines cards!

The tannin of the day was made from Laurel Sumac leaves, harvested right here in our foothills. When combined with a bit of rusty water, a rich, dark background is made on the background of the fabric. Tannin + iron creates a fairly stable compound, resulting in a deep, natural color in the scoured and mordanted fabric. Linda scours the factory chemicals out of the fabric before infusing it with natural metals to stabilize the natural leaf pigments and dyes. Feel free to stop by after lunch (between 1-4) on any Saturday (that's without rain) for the month of February, and take a peek at their morning work!





## The Online Garden

A [private Facebook discussion group](#) continues to provide online space for garden members to interact, share and rant with each other, instead of, or in addition to, talking over the fence.

A [public Facebook discussion group for the ACG](#) is available. Anyone may join in. Let's show gardening delight to the world.

Progress has been made on production of [a fundraising video](#) and [Garden Blog](#) and continues to be made on production of instructional and promotional videos from the garden.

Claudia Zhao has created a [Gardens Instagram resource](#). Suggestions and contributions are most welcome.

The official [Altadena Community Garden website](#) continues to serve the Garden and Webmaster, Joe Nagy ([webmaster@altadenacommunity.garden](mailto:webmaster@altadenacommunity.garden)), is delighted to receive contributions of news, prose, verse, screeds, diatribes, artwork and other media appropriate for inclusion therein.



## Our LFL

A column centering on the Altadena Community Garden's Little Free Library

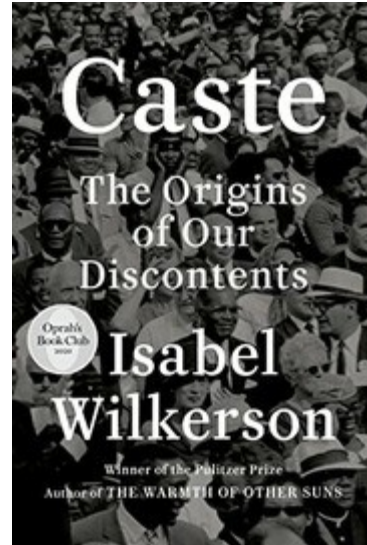


*Our LFL Nook, Photo: Sean MacGillivray*

## Books to Consider

The Book, *Caste*, by Isabel Wilkerson was suggested as a subject for study during Black History Month, and indeed it depicts racism and strata of privilege as they have existed in many cultures through the ages and around the world. Whether referred to as royalty, aristocracy, gentry, colonists, the jet set, the one percent, the HNWI (High Net Worth Individuals), they have ever schemed to keep the lower classes in their place and teach them to know their place. Mechanisms have differed with slaves, serfs, tenant farmers, factory workers, coal miners, domestic staff, food service workers kept in their place within the rigid hierarchies. Whether those mechanisms involved citizenship, licenses, degrees, guilds, pedigrees, ranks or other distinctions, they served the same purpose.

There is a well read [audiobook of \*Caste\* by Isabel Wilkerson in Archive.org \(https://archive.org/details/20220515\\_20220515\\_0959\)](https://archive.org/details/20220515_20220515_0959). Several [lectures by and interviews of the author](#) are also available.



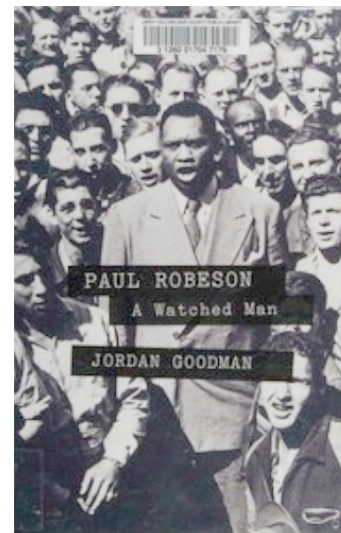
One omnipresent mechanism for constraining class advancement has always been education – the absolute lack of education imposed to maintain illiteracy or, most commonly now, the confined and directed education of compulsory schooling by government certificated teachers which has a three fold effect:

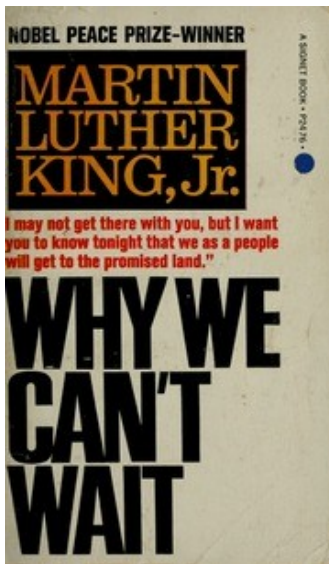
1. To instill only the basic skills needed by the unskilled worker and indebted consumer.
2. To prevent students from acquiring an education on their own.
3. To engender a general distaste for and aversion to learning.

Many despair of improving the American education system which does seem to be foundering irretrievably. Some would say however that there is little real effort being made to do so as, in its current state, it is performing just as it was always intended to.

Despite all effort to prevent it, some members of underclasses have overcome barriers and achieved academic success, have climbed the educational mountain. Most however then buy into the existing social structure, fall into line and support it. There are however those who see the caste system for the evil it really is and oppose it. They, the likes of Malcolm X, M.L. King, Paul Robeson, who prevailed despite the hurdles placed in their way are the ones who are most feared by the upper classes and the ones who have been made to suffer most. They then face the focused ire of the system and must be quashed.

Another book we could consider for black history month is [Paul Robeson, a Watched Man by Jordan Goodman](#). It concerns the governmental persecution of Robeson, a genius and polymath of the 20th century who championed lower classes and indigenous peoples around the world. Paul Robeson distinguished himself in many different fields. He became a world class athlete despite being maimed and persecuted on the field, he was valedictorian, obtained a law degree, wowed the world as a Shakespearean actor, spoke a dozen languages and became world renowned for his singing voice on stage and screen. However, he took the side of the underdog, championing the black in America and Africa, the Maori of New Zealand, the Aboriginal of Australia, the coal miners of Wales – the underclasses around the world – and endorsed peaceful coexistence with socialism and communism. As a result he was blacklisted, poisoned, stifled and marginalized through the height of his career.





Another book worth considering is [Why We Can't Wait](https://archive.org/details/whywecantwait00king) (<https://archive.org/details/whywecantwait00king>) by Martin Luther King. King knew he would not survive to see the success of the movement he was creating but chose to forge ahead nonetheless, promoting the civil rights movement of the 1960s which did frighten the proponents of the caste system and briefly showed the world how democratic reform could take place and could even threaten to damage age old caste structures. That democracy could actually have such a profound effect was unheard of and inspired a terrible backlash. Dubbed the “Crisis of Democracy,” steps were taken to prevent it from surging again and they have largely been successful.

The rebound against the Crisis of Democracy by the Trilateral Commission and others, among other things, effectively enchained the educated lower classes in bonds of educational debt to hamper their championing of further democratic causes.



## Members and their Plots:

– Mary McGilvray

### New Members as of February 14, 2023

- #20 Carol De Lilly- former associate of Stone Cole's, Carol is the Dean of Nursing at Compton Community College
- #35 Denise and Tom Ruffner- Denise is looking forward to getting her hands in the dirt before her knee surgery.
- #02 Alex Gronos (associate) - Alex is enthusiastic and will be a great help to Zia Imprieto.
- #38B Ondi Timoner & Morgan Doctor - Ondi is an independant filmmaker whose recent film “The Last Flight Home” won awards at both Telluride and Sundance Film Festivals.
- #20A Erica Slater- Fresh out of college, Erica works in marketing at Califia Farms. Even if it is raining, Erica will be able to grow vegetables solely with her sunny disposition!
- #23A Regina and Danielle Gomez- Regina and her daughter Danielle are excited to get going and harvesting.
- #35A John Mayfield- John is a Monte Cedro resident actively involved in the gardening, grounds maintenance and environmental programs there.
- #35A Carlene Miller (associate)- also a Monte Cedro resident, is a novice who is very inspired by our beautiful Garden.
- #5A Dylan Warburg and Jessica Olympia are having a blast in their new plot!

- #17A Eugene Mahmoud- Eugene is a Professor of Physics and Engineering at Mt Sac. Community College and also teaches capoeira at the Alkebulan cultural center.
- #17A Quida Draine (associate) is Eugene's mother and is a physician.
- #32A Erin Berkowitz & Kylie Obermeier- Erin and Kylie are looking forward to planting plants specifically used for fabric dying purposes. Erin is one of our two new Outreach Coordinators and will be a joy to work with.
- #43 Julie Campbell- Julie is retired from the music industry.
- #44A Kurt Zabriskie- Kurt is retired after many years working as a manager for the City of Hills Water Department.
- #53 Heather Cochran- Heather is the CFO for the Emmy's and hope to get her daughter involved in growing things too.
- #10 Mike Hee (associate)- Mike is a new Altadenan who works for the Landscape Architectural firm MLA. He is kind enough to help with Gladys Cotton's garden.



## Desultory Droppings

Compost for the cranium

### To the Pollinators

– DT  
([Audio](#))

Of the threats to our planet, what looks to be worst?  
Will it be climate change? or will something come first?  
With technology's future, pandemics and war,  
There's so much to choose from and every day more.

The fruit and the grains, all our staples for living  
Rely on the help that the insects are giving  
Every crop that we need to feed us or our herds  
Depends on the butterflies, bees and some birds.

It may seem our agrarian culture's man made  
But it wouldn't yield anything without their aid  
Yet we mistreat their habitats, kill them with spraying.  
It's such a ridiculous game that we're playing!

A pollinator's not yet a thing we can make  
In our satanic mills. It's a tragic mistake  
To think we can bypass nature's time-proven ways  
Without also risking the end of our days.

So let's plant some milkweed and sow a few seeds,  
And provide the few things that the insect world needs.  
Despite tech singularity, climate and war,  
Let us hope life on earth lasts a little bit more.

## Native Wildflower Seeds – the Land is not Ours and Deserves to Flower

– **Anonymous**

Unlike those packs requiring care  
These seeds are welcome anywhere.  
A rainy day or two and then  
They bloom one year, and seed again.

Each is content to blossom here  
And bloom in turn its time of year.  
Our spate of solely winter rain  
Serves each to live and give again.

Some field that served no butterflies  
Springs into color, seeds and dies  
A plot to no good purpose put  
Which felt no friendly hand nor foot  
Receives a clod of earth and clay  
Behold! A garden underway!

## Winter Harvest

Some wonderful harvestings from the garden of Max and Khanh Mosesman





## The Pol Robeson Tomato

The Paul Robeson tomato is a Russian heirloom tomato named for Paul Robeson, the American singer, actor and human-rights advocate whose legacy is celebrated in this issue. It is not known who cultivated or named this tomato but as its crimson color gradually blackens toward the end of summer, it is easy to understand the connection. This was clearly a tribute to a man much beloved in Russia.

Robeson performed widely in Russia and elsewhere and advocated peaceful coexistence betwixt capitalist and communist regimes. While he denounced the United States for its treatment of blacks, and championed the rights of workers and oppressed peoples everywhere, he appreciated the lip service the Soviet constitution paid to racial equality.

Marina Danilenko was co founder of a seed distribution business in Moscow in 1990 and visited The Southern Exposure Seed Exchange in Virginia in 1992, to learn about the operation of a seed company. She donated 170 varieties of Russian tomatoes to the Seed Savers Exchange, including a tomato called the “[Поль Робсон](#) (Pol Robeson).” Subsequently, Jeff McCormack, founder of the Southern Exposure Seed Exchange, included the tomato in their catalog and introduced it to the American public.



The [Pol Robeson Tomato \(Томат Поль Робсон\)](#) is available from [Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds](#)



## Notifications and reminders

From the President

### Welcome

Let's extend a warm welcome to Associate Member Grace Lee in plot in plot 36B and new Garden member Erin Berkowitz in plot 32A to the Altadena Community Garden Executive Board as Community Outreach Coordinators. Grace and Erin will work with the community to establish a working relationship between the Garden and community.

Let's also welcome newly elected members Elisa Callow and Val Zavala to the Altadena Community Garden Executive Board. We wish them well in their positions of Chairperson for the Resource Development & Fundraising Committee and Chairperson for the Water Conservation Committee respectively.

### Farewell

We are sorry to see you go:

Mirna & Greg Roach - plot 35 - Thank you for your many years of membership and service to Garden. Mirna served on the executive board as treasurer and was supportive of Garden's programs. As you depart to have more time for camping and traveling, we wish you safety and enjoyment.

Chuyen Nguyen & Dwane Christnsen - plot 38B - Although your time was short with us, we appreciate your love and support for the Garden. Thank you for the items that were left in your plot for the new Garden member. Be well and stay safe.

### Appreciation

Let me extend our gratitude to Jared Burton and Kelly Fernandez for their support and vital contribution to the growth of your beloved Altadena Community Garden. Kelly, your leadership as chair of the Deck Revitalization Committee contributed to the current appearance of the area around the deck. Jared, your contribution in developing the Little Free Library will continue to be a significant addition to the Garden and community. As you leave us as members, remember that you made a difference and your contributions will have an everlasting positive effect on the Garden and community. As you continue to experience the joy of parenthood, we wish you the best. You will be dearly missed.

Darrel, Priscilla & Lauren Shurney - plot 20 - Thank you for your many years of membership and support. We will miss your participation in our Annual Community Garden Picnic. We wish you the very best in your future gardening endeavors.

Roosevelt Pullem - plot 23 - Thank you for your many years of membership. The best to you and your family in your future gardening endeavors.

Let's extend our sincere thanks to our vice president and maintenance committee chairperson, Leo Stallworth for dividing plot 20,23 and 35. With these divisions we have three additional plots for leasing.



Thank you Elisa Callow, chairperson for the Resource Development & Fundraising Committee, Mary McGilvray, chairperson for the Communication Committee, Val Zavala, chairperson for the Water Conservation Committee, Leo Stallworth, chairperson for the Maintenance Committee and all the committees members for the tremendous amount of work that has been done to ensure that the Garden continues to grow and be of service to the community.

Thank you Joe Nagy for securing a new load of wood chips and fertilizer for the Garden.

Thank you Albert West for the bags of worm meal fertilizer for some Garden members.

## Fertilization

You can get for free, 50 pound bags of worm meal fertilizer for your soil and plants. This is the very best fertilizer for your soil and plants. Location:

Rainbow Reptile Store  
129 E. Spruce Street  
Compton, CA 90220  
310-635-0032

## Theft

Recently we have received several reports from Garden members about missing items from their plots. Please note that it is a violation of the by-laws (Article 3, Section Q) to remove any items from a Garden member's plot without his or her approval. Doing so will result in the immediate termination of your membership.

## Tiller Use

From Vice President Leo Stallworth

Gardeners, when using the tiller, please make sure to put in the correct mixture of gasoline in the tiller, put the cap of the gasoline container back on the container, close it, and clean the tiller before returning it to the shed.

## Expert Gardening Consultation Offer from Jessica Yarger, UC Cooperative Extension

Dear Gardening Community Member,

Do you have a garden related question? Having trouble identifying a certain pest or want to get some information about how to start a vegetable garden?

Master Gardeners are available to answer all your garden related questions, including tree care, pest management, and soil health.

You can call the Master Gardener Hotline at (626) 586-1988 or send an email to [mglosangeleshelpline@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mglosangeleshelpline@ucdavis.edu).

Regards,

Jessica Yarger  
UC Master Gardener Program Assistant  
University of California Cooperative Extension  
Los Angeles County  
700 West Main Street  
Alhambra, CA 91801



# Be Water Wise

## TEN RULES FOR SAVING WATER IN VEGETABLE GARDENS

**1. Use organic soil and compost.** Organic matter in the soil helps retain moisture for longer. Amend the soil with plenty of organic matter before planting your crops. It absorbs water several times greater than its weight, making sure all that water is available for plant growth instead of being wasted away in surface runoff and groundwater discharge. Organic soil is also rich in nutrients and overall soil health. This includes compost which you can make from home using kitchen scraps.

**2. Use mulch to reduce surface evaporation.** Mulching the soil doesn't just help in keeping the weeds down. It also helps keep the moisture in by reducing surface evaporation. Spread a thick, 3 to 4 inches layer of organic mulch over moist soil to keep your garden from drying out. Composted manure, compost, grass clippings, straw, shredded leaves, or any other organic material is a good choice for covering your soil.

**3. Water in the morning or evening.** The aim is to water during the cooler parts of the day when **evaporation is low**. Early morning is the best time to water your vegetable garden since the sun isn't too bright at this time, and the soil has a better chance to absorb the water deeper into its layers rather than losing it to the atmosphere. It also gives the plants sufficient moisture to lower the chances of stress during the afternoon sun, especially during peak summers.

**4. Water the roots, not the foliage.** Watering the foliage doesn't just mean you're wasting water; it also means that you're exposing your vegetables to several diseases. Water is only *absorbed* by the roots, not the leaves or the stems. When using the hose or the watering can, point the spray of water towards the base of the plants to reach the roots easily, taking care not to waste any water on the foliage.

**5. Use drip irrigation.** Drip irrigation is one of the most efficient ways to water crops while ensuring minimum wastage. It can reduce water consumption by as much as 60% while increasing yield by 90% compared to traditional irrigation techniques. Overhead irrigation wastes more water to stems and leaves and allows faster evaporation. In contrast, drip irrigation offers a steady drip of water right next to the plant's base so that it's quickly absorbed by the roots - just where it's needed.

**6. Choose vegetables that don't guzzle water.** You may love cucumbers, spinach, cabbage, celery, corn, onions, leeks, carrots, broccoli, radishes, and Brussels sprouts but their shallow roots require more water. If possible, choose deeply rooted plants such as watermelon, winter squash, pumpkins, parsnips,

asparagus, okra, tomatoes, rhubarb, and sweet potatoes can reach down and tap into lower water reserves for moisture. They require less frequent watering.

**7. Know your plants' requirements and water just enough.** Different vegetables have different watering requirements. Read the seed packet carefully to understand their weekly/daily watering needs so you can only offer what's necessary. As a general rule for most crops, you can stick a finger in the soil to check if it's moist 1 to 2 inches below the surface. If the finger comes out dry, it's time to water the crops.

**8. Plant crops with similar watering needs together.** Planting thirsty crops like tomatoes, corn, and melons nearby can help you water them efficiently, with little wastage. Plan your vegetable garden such that you plant the crops with the highest watering needs at one end, those with low watering requirements at the other end, and the rest of them arranged in the center.

**9. Create a waffle garden.** An intelligent way to prevent irrigation water from running off is to build a waffle garden. It's simply rows of square cells separated from each other by earth berms. This creates a reservoir around your vegetable plants to hold the water until the soil gradually soaks it. This technique prevents wastage by surface runoff, making sure all the water is utilized by the plants.

**10. Keep the weeds out.** Weeds compete with vegetable plants for water and nutrients. If you've mulched the soil, weeds are less likely to appear in your garden. Even so, if any do find their way in the garden, pinch them out, so they don't take up the plants' water.

*(Compiled by our Water Conservation Committee Chairperson, Val Zavala in 2022. Revised in February 2023. Adapted from Home and Garden, June 2021)*

## Call for Newsletter Submissions

Have you done anything interesting lately that you would like to share with garden members in the next newsletter? Please let ideas propagate in your imagination and share the harvest with us. Artwork is most welcome. As the ACG Newsletter will be in digital form, multiple media may be included as links. Please submit creative thoughts or material to [submissions@altadenacommunity.garden](mailto:submissions@altadenacommunity.garden).



The Altadena Community Garden at Loma Alta Park is a unit of the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation

