



September 2023

Newsletter

Fecund fecundity from the fertile foothills

President – Silvera Grant
Vice President – Leo Stallworth
Secretary – Vacant
Treasurer – Sacha Malin
Orientation – Mary McGilvray
Media/Website – Joe Nagy, Mary McGilvray
Community Outreach – Grace Lee & Erin Berkowitz
Wood Chips Coordinator – vacant
Fertilizer Coordinator – Joe Nagy
Inspection Coordinator – Vacant
Maintenance Coordinator – Leo Stallworth
Correspondence Secretary – Alan Freeman
Programs Chairperson – Vacant
Bulletin Chairperson – Denis Titchenell
Fundraising – Elisa Callow
Water Conservation – Vacant
Archivist – Anne Reid
Nominating – Marie Yeseta
Albert West – Advisor
Isaac Turner – Advisor
Fred Shotlow – Advisor

Read the newsletter online:

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

[Fundraising Video for the Garden](#)

[Donate to the Garden](#)

Article submissions:

submissions@altadenacommunitygarden

[Visit our Facebook members discussion group](#)

[Visit our Facebook public discussion group](#)

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News

Garden Picnic Planning Update – From the President

After a two year absence, the Altadena Community Garden Annual Picnic & Resource Fair is back. Celebrating 50 years of membership and service to the community, the picnic will be held on September 30th from 12 to 6 pm in the Garden and lower Loma Alta Park. The picnic is sponsored by our 5th District Supervisor Kathryn Barger. If you are a public or private organization who would like to participate in the picnic, please contact René Amy at sat9forum@earthlink.net to arrange for a booth space to showcase your organization.

Ticket Sales:

\$15 advance ticket sale will be available online and from Garden members. Tickets will also be available at the entrance gate on the day of the event.

Letters to get raffle items for the picnic are available in the large tool shed. We would like for each Garden member to get at least one raffle item for the picnic. However, you are welcome to get as many items as you would like for the picnic. Our raffle committee chairperson, Denise Yuag will arrange to get the items from you before the picnic. In getting your item or items, consider trying



Upcoming Events

- Fridays 4-8pm New Altadena Neighborhood Farmer's Market
- September 9, 2023 membership meeting 10 am Garden Deck
- September 23, 2023 at 6 pm: Build-'N'-Bake-A-Pizza Party on the Deck
- September 30, 2023 12 noon to 6pm Annual Garden Picnic

to secure a major item for a first, second and third place drawing. We will discuss more about this aspect of the picnic at our meeting on the 9th. Please plan to attend.

Picnic tickets and letters to solicit raffle items will be available at the General Membership and Picnic Planning Meeting September 9, 2023 at 10:00 am. Please plan to attend. Seeds will be available.

Build-'N'-Bake-A-Pizza Party on the Deck

– René Amy

All Garden members are invited to attend a fun and FREE Build-'N'-Bake-A-Pizza Party on the deck on Saturday, September 23, starting at 6 p.m.!

This will be another fun-focused event for Garden members, giving us a chance to chat, eat, and enjoy each other's company in a relaxed and convivial atmosphere.

It'll also be a great chance to talk about any last minute issues concerning the Annual Picnic that will take place the following Saturday, September 30.

For this event, please bring a couple of toppings for pizza – and maybe a little something on the side, as well.

We'll bring along an oven to bake personal-sized pizzas, as well as dough and sauce – and your Garden-fresh toppings will make the difference!

Representative pizza image from the Internet – and rest assured, results will vary!

This event is not Garden-sponsored, but is rather, simply, a group of Garden members getting together to enjoy their hard-earned harvest and each others' company. Please join us!



Help Get Their Message Out: Participants sought for Community Resources Fair!

– René Amy

We're looking for local nonprofit organizations and businesses to participate in the Garden's FREE Community Resources Fair to be held alongside the Annual Picnic on September 30 – and your suggestions are most welcome!

Located alongside the Garden, in Loma Alta Park, the FREE Community Resources Fair is free to everyone in the community, and we'd like your suggested organization or business to be a part of it!

We'd like these great groups to get their message and mission out and to let community members know of the helpful services they offer.

We're particularly interested in having participating groups and businesses explain the great things that they have done, as well as their plans to do more in our community in the future.

As an example, a grocery-store owner might explain the total value of food they donate annually to local food banks. A nonprofit might detail their plans to plant trees in the national forest behind us. A healthcare

provider might offer free blood-pressure checks. A Realtor might explain their participation in a program like ShelterBox's "Sell A House, Give A Home" program. What they do for the community matters to the community – and we want to help them get that message out to the community and to the local officials, politicians, and other leaders who will be attending.

Registered nonprofit organizations are welcome to solicit memberships. No commercial sales at the event, please!

Participation in the Community Resources Fair is FREE!

We ask that participating groups arrive by 11 a.m. to get set up and organized, and that they stay until 6 p.m. We have a limited number of tables and chairs available, and will also have a limited number of canopy-shaded space available - but that participants please plan on bringing and using their own. We'll have a limited number of volunteers on duty to help them move and set up, but ask that participants please understand that most Garden members will be helping with the Picnic itself – so they should please bring carts, if needed!

To reserve a space, or if you've got questions, please feel free to reach out to René Amy at sat9forum@earthlink.net

Donations

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

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



ACG Donate

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

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.



ANNUAL PICNIC 2023 Member Dish Assignments by Plot Number

– Mary McGilvray

ANNUAL PICNIC 2023

Members Dish Assignments



Please bring a Home Style dish to serve 50 people.

Deliver your dish to the Garden by

10:00am, September 30th!

PLOTS 1-32A

BRING A SIDE DISH IN A RECTANGULAR OR OVAL ALUMINUM CONTAINER IF YOU NEED TO KEEP IT WARM. INCLUDE YOUR NAME ON IT AND LIST THE INGREDIENTS

PLOTS 33-44

BRING A VEGETARIAN DISH IN A RECTANGULAR OR OVAL ALUMINUM CONTAINER IF YOU NEED TO KEEP IT WARM. INCLUDE YOUR NAME ON IT AND INGREDIENTS ON IT

PLOTS 44A- SHED PLOT (INCLUDES 01-04

& H PLOTS

BRING A VEGAN DISH AND DO THE ABOVE STEPS

If you have any questions or concern, please contact Silvera Grant at:
silveragrants@gmail.com or (626) 398-9840



I heard It Through the Grapevine

– Sandy Chang

In the winter, the grapevine that spectacularly drapes hundreds of feet across the Garden's southern fence lies dormant, happily hibernating after a long and productive season. I give it a good watering and can almost feel the water coursing through its parched trunk reaching all the way to the ends of its knotted vines.

Every spring as life returns to earth, the grapevines too begin to inch along the fence with the emergence of a few new leaves. During any April showers and if one stared at it long enough, the naked eye can almost see the vines lengthening and swelling as its roots drink full of the deluge of spring.

In the summer, the grapevine responds eagerly to the warmth of June by quietly producing layer upon layer of leaves until they are easily the size of hands, tiny pearls of pale green grapes snug under its foliage. When the wind blows, the tender leaves sway gently and whisper softly to anyone willing to listen. One afternoon, I snipped off a dozen or so young leaves to wrap a stuffing of rice, ground meat, herbs and laid them simmering in a pot of grapefruit juice from the Garden's own grapefruit tree. By dinnertime, the fresh leaves have turned into a platter of herby lemony dolmas.



*A camouflaging cat in the grapevine next to Sandy's plot.
Photo: Sandy Chang.*

Right before autumn and while the sun remains in full force is when the grapevine thirsts after every drop of water that hits the soil. The robust vine soaks up the heat and delivers up hundreds of clusters of deep purple grapes dangling on its weighted twines. The heavily laden vine beckons passersby to harvest before ravenous ants move in and leave nothing behind. I gather a basketful of Rogers Red grapes sweet with thick skin and large pulp. At home, the grapes are washed and brought to a boil with sugar until the pulp separates. The liquid is then drained into jars of sweet tarty compotes to be enjoyed all season long.

The grapevines are the Garden's extension of love to the greater community. It feeds not only those within, all passing by, but also our wildlife neighbors. Listen to the vine's whisper and share with us your favorite recipes on instagram and Facebook. Special thanks to the Grapevine Committee for preserving the vines when it faced threats of removal years back, to gardener John Lynch of plot 30 for purchasing plants for that area, and to garden members as well as the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation for their tireless efforts in loving, maintaining, and pruning the Garden's spectacular grapevines.

For more information on the Altadena Community Garden's [Rogers Red grapes](https://calscape.org/Vitis-'Rogers-Red'-(Rogers-Red-Grape)?srchcr=sc5bb3b6b749fe0), please see below link, [https://calscape.org/Vitis-'Rogers-Red'-\(Rogers-Red-Grape\)?srchcr=sc5bb3b6b749fe0](https://calscape.org/Vitis-'Rogers-Red'-(Rogers-Red-Grape)?srchcr=sc5bb3b6b749fe0)



Garden Merchandise



Content

Various products from the Garden will be available at the Picnic.



Hose Repair Revisited – kit available at the Garden



Hose-mender fitting

and leaves a large fixture in the middle of the hose which can be awkward and may prevent pulling it through things.

One way to fix a garden hose leak is to cut the hose, clean up the ends and splice them together with a store-bought “hose mender” fitting which includes a rigid sleeve inserted into the hose ends and clamps on either side. This works well but involves time and expense



Self-fusing silicone tape

Several cheaper and often better solutions exist including the use of dedicated self-fusing hose repair tape, but one solid and simple solution stands out as best in most instances. To simplify this solution, the Altadena Community Garden has created a hose patch kit which contains equipment and instructions to provide many many hose patches,.

These kits will be available at the ACG Picnic on September 30, 2023.

Duct tape, or slightly better, gaffer tape is commonly available and wide enough to handle most leaks. One must use at least three or four layers of tape as, otherwise, full water pressure will find a path through the weave of the tape and send a tiny jet through it eventually. The more layers of tape, the better.

If used on its own, a duct tape patch will simply result in water squirting out the ends of the patch, but this can be solved by tying an *ad hoc* hose clamp with a piece of cord. Yes, a constrictor knot tied with strong, non-slippery cord does the job nicely.



Constrictor knot tying

How to tie a constrictor knot.

With the hose passing across in front of you, push the string from the string origin forward and to the right over the hose and pull it back under the hose. Then push it forward over the hose again but this time to the left passing over the first one, creating an X. Then pull the string back under the hose to the left of the string origin, pass it to the right, over the string origin and the under the middle of the X you created before. Line up the turns with each other and cinch it tight. This knot is the key to the whole process as it seals the ends of the tape, preventing leakage.

Leave long enough ends on the string to cinch it down well – ideally almost to the breaking point of the string. experiments applying such knots to the ends of a duct taped patch was entirely successful. This solution does however depend upon solid structural resistance of the hose itself as, unlike using the hose mender fixture, there is no rigid internal sleeve to clamp down upon.

A triple or quadruple pass of two-inch-wide duct tape wound over the leak in a matter of seconds with tied constrictions on either side is our simple, cheap and ideal solution to hose leaks. Duct tape on its own may lose

adhesion and come unstuck over time, but when tied down this way, that problem is also solved. Patches thus done have been very robust and have withstood the test of time.



Duct tape patch with constrictor knots



Cinching a constrictor knot tight from underneath

It does work! But the hose must be strong enough to resist the tied constrictions; softer spongy hoses will not allow for a good clamping job. And a constrictor knot tied in simple cotton string seems to hold and work best.

Of course, all patches are temporary and when a hose has already started to have leaks, the patch might well last longer than the hose.

The Altadena Community Garden Hose Patch Kit contains a roll of tape and a ball of string – enough for many patch jobs, together with instructions on how to use them.



Constrictor knots tied on the patch with a extra overhand knot



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), 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

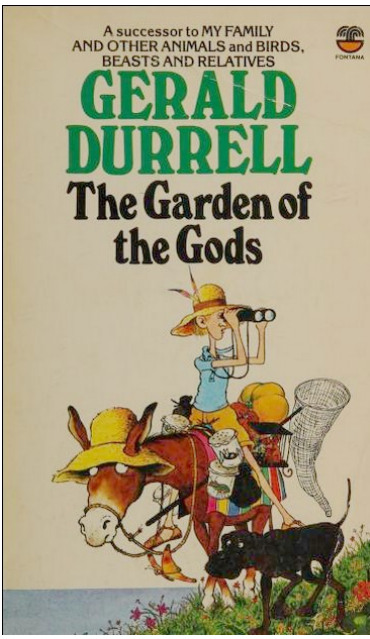


Our LFL Nook, Photo: Sean MacGillivray

A Book to Consider:

The Garden of the Gods by Gerald Durrell

“The gods look down, and this unnatural scene they laugh at.” – Shakespeare



Thus begins the chapter of *The Garden of the Gods*, entitled *The Garden of the Gods*. Inspired by the theme of Andrew Marvell's wonderful poem in the Desultory Droppings section below, a bit of research into works treating deities and gardens revealed many, but this one by naturalist, Gerald Durrell, OBE, stood out as both salient and familiar.

Durrell's childhood memoir, *My Family and Other Animals* (1956) was a runaway success and, though he published nearly 50 books during his career, this one and two later works chronicling the same period remain quite unique among them and became known as the Corfu Trilogy – as it was on the Greek isle of Corfu that they took place. The third of these is *The Garden of the Gods*.

Unlike the youngsters of so many British families abroad, Durrell was not sent home to a boarding school in England but was homeschooled, and as such, joins the ranks of an illustrious few who share that distinction and went on to

distinguish themselves globally. He had a series of tutors whom he variously parodies, exaggerates and idolizes throughout the Corfu Trilogy.

The Garden of the Gods is an outright gem of storytelling and, though we know it to be something of an amplification of the facts (often influenced and coached by his novelist elder brother, Lawrence), the author nonetheless retains a delightful, if perhaps somewhat oxymoronic understated hyperbole while expressing himself with a seemingly effortless eloquence which extends also to include the dialog of his family members – probably a fairly accurate picture of the language used among them which prompts one to conclude that his was a perfectly ideal homeschooling environment. The experiences of the eccentric Durrell family, their lapdogs, *Widdle* and *Puke*, their homemade rowboat, the *Bootle-Bumtrinket* and a series of house guests, suitors and acquaintances traverse these delightful pages. Though brilliantly written with confidence in a readership capable of parsing, interpreting and appreciating subtle and less subtle semantic nuance, it is only occasionally likely to baffle the lexically challenged modern American reader.



Gerald Durrell OBE

Quite late in life after the failure of a long but ill-fated relationship, Durrell fell in love again and remarried. [His famous love letter to his wife to be, Lee McGeorge, is an utter masterpiece of moving prose](#) and was featured on [Letters Live](#) and read by Tom Hiddleston. This work stands as a remarkable tribute by a writing genius.

The full Corfu Trilogy, including *The Garden of the Gods* is [available for online borrowing at Archive.org](#).



Desultory Droppings

Compost for the cranium

From The Mower

– **Andrew Marvell**

[Audio](#)

...

Where willing Nature does to all dispense
A wild and fragrant innocence ;
And fauns and fairies do the meadows till
More by their presence than their skill.
Their statues polished by some ancient hand,
May to adorn the gardens stand;
But, howsoe'er the figures do excel,
The Gods themselves with us do dwell.

The Gardener

– **Stephen Colley**

My garden may have too much mulch
or seem a thistly, gristly gulch,
have sometimes more manure than flower,
its fleshy fruit less sweet than sour.

Sometimes, for no apparent reason,
spite of all my anxious care,
it gets neglected for a season –
turns, like me, more foul than fair.

No matter, though. However plain
and anything but evergreen,
this potted plot of blooms unseen
by all but me, it's worth the pains.

The Open Garden of the Gods

Yes of course you're welcome, but only if you can play nicely.



Notifications and reminders

From the President

Appreciation

Thank you Ardra Grubbs – plot 21 and Denise Yuan – plot 23 for taking the minutes in our meetings as we continue to search for a replacement secretary on our executive board. Our appreciation to the painters from the county for doing an outstanding painting job on the deck and the other structures in the Garden.

Inspection & Plot Condition

In preparation for the picnic, we will have an extra dump of the dumpster each week to provide more space in the dumpster for the trash from your plot and walkway. Please give your plot and walkway your immediate attention by removing the nut grass, crabgrass and weeds.

We are still in need of an Inspection Chairperson to conduct monthly inspections of the Garden plots. The current state of the Garden plots shows the lack of an Inspection Chairperson. Please contact Silvera (silveragrants@gmail.com) if you are interested in this executive board position.

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.

Regards,

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



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.



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

