



August 2022

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 – Mark Anthony Cole
Wood Chips Coordinator – vacant
Fertilizer Coordinator – Joe Nagy
Inspection Coordinator – Eva Story
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
Fred Shotlow – Advisor

Read the newsletter online:

<http://www.altadenacommunitygarden.com/newsletter.html>

Donate to the Garden:

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

Article submissions:

submissions@altadenacommunity.garden

Visit our [Blogs and Vlogs Journal](#)

Visit our [Facebook members discussion group](#)



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Upcoming Events

- 4pm-7pm Wednesdays: The Farmer's Market
- 25th Annual Concert Series 7:00 pm at Farnsworth park:
 - Sat. July 30 Eileen Quinn and the Leapin' Lizards
 - Sat. August 6 Blue Breeze Band
 - Sat. Aug. 13 Upstream
 - Sat. Aug. 20 Post Action Heroes
 - Sat. Aug. 27 Boys of Summer
 - Sat. Sep. 10 TBD

News

Survival of the Altadena Community Garden

The Altadena Community Garden has been provided space, maintenance and utilities by the County for a half century. Despite impassioned efforts to dissuade The County from taking this step, the Garden will henceforth (along with many other organizations using county land) be responsible for its own upkeep – at a cost far in excess of what could possibly be covered by Garden dues and other existing fundraising efforts. In short, to pay for maintenance, insurance and especially water, we will have to raise vastly more funds than ever before if we are to remain in existence.

To address this shortfall, efforts are being made to cut costs and raise funds as quickly as possible. The road to financial self sufficiency is full of challenges, hurdles and potholes but has been well traveled and there are many who are well versed in the skills required to take us through to a successful conclusion. For further information please see below the articles below by Mary McGilvray and Allison Burdett. Please visit our new Altadena Community Garden [Donation page](#). Please also consider volunteering to help: volunteer@altadenacommunity.garden



ACG Donate

Volunteers needed

Our efforts to make the Garden sustainable will require a number of measures and participants with specific skills. If you can help with any of the following or know someone who can, please respond to volunteer@altadenacommunity.garden. Skills required:

1. Fundraising
2. Publicity
3. Twitter posting
4. Photography/videography
5. Video editing
6. UAV photography
7. Article/post writing
8. Nextdoor posting

Need gardening help?

There are some on the Garden waiting list who would like to help any current gardeners who need assistance. Contact Mary McGilvray <membership@altadenacommunity.garden> if you are interested.



The Times, They Are A'Changin!

– Mary McGilvray, Membership/Orientation

Yes, indeed they are.

So, grab your favorite beverage and have a seat.

As you may know, we (The Garden) received a draft Lease Agreement from the LA County Department of Parks & Recreation, or “the County” in November of 2021. For half a century the County has paid for our utilities, and has taken care of all of our maintenance needs (new spigots, perimeter boards, signage, annual picnic sponsorship, sheds and deck construction, etc.). We know of no other Community Garden on County land that has been supported in this fashion for this length of time.

Since we were made aware of this and were sent a draft of the Lease Agreement, we quickly met as a board and formed a response committee (Silvera Grant, Mary McGilvray, Eric & Elisa Callow, Val Zavala, Leo Stallworth, Debbie Maust, Sharon Sand and Ted Krontiris). For the last eight months, we’ve worked really, really hard to get County folks to understand our perspective. We gathered statistics and interviewed many, many individuals to create a clear story about the Garden. We shared stories from original gardeners. We put together a list of community partners, and shared our accomplishments and contributions to the surrounding community.

Then, we diligently prepared our response to the Draft Lease with a pro-bono lawyer from Jericho Road. We bantered back and forth, did more research, had more discussions. What they were asking for seemed unreasonable and impossible. After all, we’ve been here for 50 years and have gotten everything we wanted.

What, US?

We may be small, but we’re mighty.

We returned a very marked up Draft Lease to the County, after being assured that we would be given an in person meeting with County Parks leadership. At this meeting, five high-level staff members including the Chief Deputy Director of the entire parks system listened to us with respect, offered ideas of outside resources and were generally on our side. But in the end, they said sorry, but no. The main points in the draft Lease Agreement were not negotiable if we wanted to remain where we are.

I know. It took me a while to wrap my head around the fact that what we have, was no longer sustainable.

The LA Department of Parks and Recreation website indicates that it is the largest parks system in the country. Its mandate is to "...offer extensive recreational, social and cultural programs at 444 park sites in every Los Angeles neighborhood from the valley to the sea...".

As an administrator in this arena, one would probably have to believe in this inherent value. Personally, I think serving the public in this way is a good value to believe in too. Currently, 182 parks have multiple relationships with separate organizations that use County parkland. As such, our Garden has the unique privilege of using County land that is defined as not open for public use, and most days serves a finite community. Our public benefit includes holding educational events, keeping the garden list for new members and associates to join, hosting community picnics, and more. We just happen to be an organization with a fence and a set of gates that separate us from the rest of the parkland. As I said before, we may be mighty, but we're pretty small in the bigger scheme of things.

The County's Department of Parks and Recreation is required to have formalized documents with all organizations that utilize park land. During the pandemic, the County became aware of several older organizations that had no such agreements with them. "Equity for all" is what they are striving for. The "ask" they make is the same across the board - You take care of everything within your walls, we'll take care of everything outside. Seems reasonable. More importantly, it seems doable.

The General meeting on Saturday, June 25th, 2022 proved that we still have garden members who care a great deal. Over forty folks showed up. Half of those stepped up to volunteer their help. I'm sure more of you will as well.



Garden membership meeting Saturday, June 25th, 2022

We need every single member to help out. Period.

Members have been supplied with the minutes of this meeting through email. They are also on our website and have been sent out in the post to those without computers. You can see that we need to move swiftly and need everyone's help.



We are forming a committee to address issues of water conservation and education to bring our usage and costs down; we are creating a maintenance committee to develop strategies and alliances with outside groups (i.e., the Conservation Corps and Eagle Scouts) to help with our large maintenance issues; we are creating a media/out-reach committee to sync up our already existing communication outlets (both internal and external) and to expand our presence. Finally, we are creating a fund raising committee to foster relationships with donors and generate much needed funds to keep us going.

So, as Silvera says, **It's all hands on deck!!**

Join a committee, make donations or volunteer! (volunteer@altadenacommunity.garden)

I'm forever grateful to be part of this wonderful place. Please, let's keep it going.



A report from our followup, very important, second meeting...

– Allison Burdett (plot #49)

We (The Garden) received a draft Lease Agreement from the LA County Department of Parks & Recreation, or "the County" in November of 2021. For half a century the County has paid for our utilities, and has taken care of all of our maintenance needs (new spigots, perimeter boards, signage, annual picnic sponsorship, sheds and deck construction, etc.). During the 7/16/22 Executive Board Meeting, there was a unanimous vote to sign the

lease agreement with an effective date of 8/1/22. Per the county, in just 6 short months from the effective date of the lease, the Garden will become 100% responsible for the water and maintenance costs. The time to act and ensure the future viability of The Garden is now! The clock is ticking, and every dollar required to pay our water, insurance and maintenance must be raised if we are to keep our beloved Community Garden financially viable beyond February 1st 2023 when the bills start coming due!

The good news? Many of our members have already stepped up to volunteer their time and knowledge to serve on our committees and offer up ideas for fundraising (and also “friend-raising”!). Through our committee work, we are identifying an annual budget, fundraising plan, outreach activities, and plans for expanding our engagement with the Altadena community. This transition into a lease agreement with the county is definitely a huge change, however we have every confidence that we can work together to sustainably plan for the financial needs of running The Garden. The other good news is that we will again be resuming The Garden’s rich tradition of engaging with our local community and sharing our knowledge, skills, and love of gardening with many events, tours, and activities open to the public.

Tell your neighbors! Tell your family and friends! Tell your colleagues! Know someone in philanthropy? Please connect us with as many people as possible to support this beloved Altadena resource!

We already have a fundraising link on our website, please share it: [Altadena Community Garden donation page](#).

What is the easiest thing you can do? Please share our fundraising link and follow the Community Garden on Facebook, Instagram and Youtube to help increase our online contacts and impressions. You can like and share our posts to help us draw more attention to saving the garden!



The Garden Minutes are available through email and are also available on our website. During the 7/16/22 meeting, we formalized several committees:

- Water Conservation Committee: advise the board on water management policies to reduce our usage and costs, including educating members on “water-wise” gardening practices
- Maintenance Committee: develop internal volunteer strategies and alliances with outside groups (i.e., the Conservation Corps and Eagle Scouts etc.) for large maintenance projects
- Media and Outreach Committee: coordinate our existing communication outlets (both internal and external) and expand our online presence.
- Fundraising Committee: foster relationships with foundations, donors and generate much needed fundraising sources to ensure the garden can pay for its bills

What’s next you ask? The committees will begin to meet and form recommendations to the Board of work-plans to take place over the next few months. Since we will not be able to pull from County resources any longer, we will need ongoing participation and volunteer time from every member in order to properly upkeep the needs of the garden, from maintenance to outreach, fundraising, and assisting with programs/projects.

Every member needs to ask themselves: If not us, who? If not now, when? Now is the time to pitch in and ensure that the garden you love is the garden you keep!

Join a committee, gather donations, promote The Garden on social media, volunteer for a project!

Again, as Silvera says, It’s all hands on deck!! (volunteer@altadenacommunity.garden)



Grow Vegetables... Anywhere!

– UC Master Gardener Naz Fatima Shekarchi

Have you ever been curious about growing your own food? Maybe you think you need to have a green thumb and botanical expertise, or need to have a huge yard and lots of tools to get started. But the truth is, almost anyone, anywhere, can grow food. And today, it's more important than ever.

In the early 20th century, growing food in cities emerged from the necessity to ease the difficulties of world war I by creating a way to give families access to healthy vegetables and fruits grown near their homes. — Similarly, the global pandemic of 2020 created an unprecedented challenge in terms of food access in a time of sudden economic strife and uncertainty in addition to all the logistical challenges created by the long period of lockdowns which made it difficult to deliver food to people when so many businesses were shut down.



Long before the pandemic, the way our modern cities have been developed and divided often leaves fresh produce out of reach to so many citizens that don't live in affluent neighborhoods with access to farmers markets and well supplied local supermarkets.

Having access to fresh produce is so much more than meeting the challenges or uncertainties of catastrophic global events, food sovereignty, and equity. Growing and sharing food is the great thread that connects our human family, heals our spirits, creates joy, friendships and connects us to one another in meaningful ways that has been a beacon of our development and community as a species on this beautiful planet.



Today, anyone curious about gaining gardening knowledge, getting their hands in the soil, learning new gardening skills or fine tuning their basic gardening skills has access to a wonderful resource. The Grow LA Vegetable Garden Initiative helps kickstart new gardeners on their journey to planting container gardens, growing food in their backyards or joining a community garden.

The four session Grow LA Vegetable Garden workshops are taught at multiple locations throughout Los Angeles in the Spring and Autumn. The classes are led by volunteer UC Master Gardeners. Once students complete the four sessions, they become UC-certified Vegetable Gardeners and can gain access to a great support system through the community of gardeners within The Grow LA Vegetable Gardening workshops. You can learn more about the program and find additional resources by visiting:

https://celosangeles.ucanr.edu/UC_Master_Gardener_Program/Grow_LA_Victory_Garden_Initiative/

Let's get gardening!



Altadena Community Garden Barbecue

– Sandy Chang

Long before becoming members of the Altadena Community Garden we had stumbled upon its annual fundraising barbecue, a neighborhood gathering and open air cookout announced through a flyer of provincial charm. With much anticipation, we purchased two ten dollar tickets and counted the days to what promised to be a grand celebration.

The community showed up on the blistering July day and was welcomed at the gate by gardeners who adorably fumbled with making change and struggled to keep the line moving as it became increasingly apparent that none had held a ticketing booth day job. Once inside, the aroma of charred meats beguiled one to a parking lot turned courtyard with rows upon rows of picnic tables and benches. Makeshift counters ran along the perimeter lined by aproned volunteers with large serving utensils in hand and colossal trays of food in front. Townspeople chitchatted with one another as they meandered through the garden marveling at summer crops until above the exuberant buzz a voice came on the loud speaker calling out tables pegged for the buffet line. The crowd jostled each other to the procession, the slow moving line only adding to the collective ravenousness.

A seemingly never ending spread awaited at the end of the procession displaying various grilled meats, barbecued links, breads, and sides. Gardeners of all ages and colors serve up scoop after scoop of roasted chicken, smoked sausages, potato salad, summer pastas, home grown vegetables and desserts. The long line of hungry patrons snaked round and round the courtyard whetting appetites not the least bit dampened by the sweltering heat.



Kathryn Barger addressing ACG picnic guests

The fete is interlaced with speeches from local dignitaries and the Garden's president with announcements about awards, appreciation, recognition, photo-ops and a raffle drawing. With donations from local businesses, the garden was able to offer up an array of prizes ranging from electronics to tools to admission to notable downtown Los Angeles venues. Friends and strangers sat shoulder to shoulder feasting on home cooking that perfumed the air with aroma and inebriated the crowd with good will. An adjacent seated family gifted us a roll of raffle tickets before taking leave and as we polished off our plates, shouts of joy erupted all around us from the drawing. Because of the generosity of strangers, we too won a bag of compost, gift certificates, a handheld gardening spade and tickets to the LA Philharmonic and LACMA. Spreading the goodwill, we similarly gifted a certificate to a fellow attendee. There was such an abundance of prizes and comradeship that it seemed everyone walked away bearing gifts.

After a rich desert of homemade cobbler, the crowd slowly and reluctantly dispersed. Friendly volunteers nudged participants into taking home leftovers so with full plates and fuller hearts, we too wound our way down the hill, saddened to leave such an alluring place and its warm gardeners.

A few weeks later, sitting in the Hollywood Bowl amphitheater thanks to tickets from the raffle, I think back to

that gem of a garden, its endearing people, and forests of lovingly tended crops. I schedule a reminder on the phone to keep an eye out for this beloved Altadena tradition again come next year.



The Online Garden

Our new Social Networking Committee is opening new channels and will no doubt have much to add to this column.

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.

Our new [Blog and Vlog annex site](#) with a member-produced ACG Journal now exists where members may chronicle different Garden projects, endeavors and insights.

Progress is being 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 Joe Nagy, is delighted to receive contributions of news, prose, verse, screeds, diatribes, artwork and other media appropriate for inclusion therein.

When Thomas Grey in [his ageless poem](#) eulogized the poor and illiterate souls laid to rest in the country churchyard and bemoaned their ignorance, the pages of human knowledge having been denied them by their poverty, it was indeed the case that they had been prevented from access to knowledge of arts, literature, language, science, philosophy and all the best that humanity's cultures had amassed over the centuries. Grey acknowledges that the ignorance was not their fault but was an inevitable symptom of their lot in life.

The average citizen of a developed country today cannot be similarly exonerated of guilt. Any networked device – phone, tablet, screen – yields vastly more content than than all the greatest libraries and archives of history, and search engines and translation apps instantly remove any remaining barriers to finding and understanding that unprecedented wealth of human knowledge. Yet the common modern soul remains intentionally and willfully ignorant, in some ways even more so than the rustic peasant farmers of Grey's 18th century poem.

Is it not time, perhaps to acknowledge this anomaly, to start a trek through some arcane corner of wisdom and lore that has occasionally subconsciously intrigued one. The world awaits you.



Our LFL

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

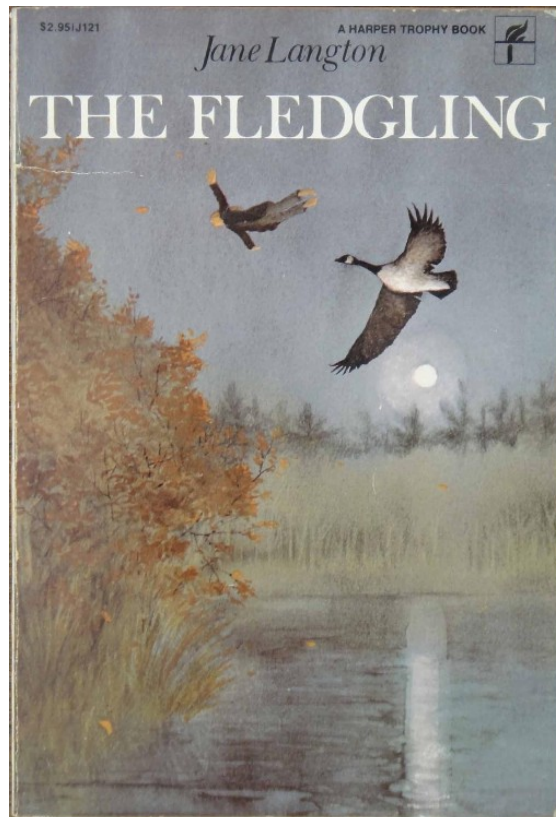


Our LFL Nook, Photo: Sean MacGillivray

Hello fellow plot lovers! (Get it? Garden plots and book plots -- pun intended!)

I hope all your summer reading and weeding and planting and watering has been going splendidly. This time around, I just want to share with you about a book I found in our Little Free Library titled *The Fledgling* by Jane Langton. It was published in 1980 by Scholastic and was a Newberry Honor Book in 1981.

I really enjoyed this book because it is about being a kid and learning how to fly like a bird, and a villain who makes every effort to prevent it. So many times we find someone who comes along and thwarts our natural path, who can't see us for who we really are, and we must be vigilant to become ourselves despite such obstacles. Whether it's the gopher who just will not stop "sharing" our harvest or a neighbor who won't listen to reason about using too much water, we must strive to be kind, humble, and have clear boundaries!



I have put *The Fledgling* back in our LFL by our handsome deck. Thanks to whomever we are

indebted to for the contribution of this wonderful book.

Happy reading,

Jared Burton, LFL Librarian, Plot #44A



Desultory Droppings

Compost for the cranium

The Garden

– **D. Titchenell**

([Audio](#))

Allotment or community
Such gardens are, where e're they be
But plot or glebe of fecund soil
Which yields when blessed with simple toil
A trove of carrots, chard and beets
And pristine veggies that one eats
Commensurate with what was sown
When we have nurtured on our own
A crop without the toxic sprays
That taint the food for which one pays.
But can a garden so conceived
Survive without support received
From state or county? – possibly
We'll do our best, but we shall see ...

Garden Merchandising

The Garden's efforts to become a self sustaining financial entity may take many forms, one of which may be simple merchandising efforts. One of the simplest types of products to produce would be well presented cards, bookmarks, bookplates or informational reference guides that serve both to show one's support of the Garden and to further the visibility of the Garden, its links and resources. Other garden related, easily produced items would also be in order. We need to avail ourselves of the extensive talent of our membership – artists, writers, researchers, poets – to design, produce and market such items. A few ideas:

T shirts displaying "I helped save the Garden" variants.

An Altadena Planting Guide. Data specifically tailored to our Mediterranean foothill climate.

Postcards showing the beauty of the Garden.

Bookmarks depicting the garden with reference to Garden literature.

Bookplates.

Simple garden implements with our Garden logo on them.

All of the above may contain links and QR code links to the Garden donation page.



ACG Donate

Please put some thought into designs and confer with members of the fundraising committee. Unique copyrightable content is best as it provides something not to be found elsewhere. Certainly planting guides could be copyrightable as could pictures and verse.

Let's also come up with some cogent, impressive and inspiring garden devices, and then take pride in using or deploying our new Altadena Community Garden dibble, our ACG hose mending kit, our ACG water dowsing/divination rod, our ACG chocolate birdbath or ACG Luminous Sundial. Please join the discussion on our [private Facebook discussion group](#) or email us (volunteer@altadenacommunity.garden).

Wallowing in Weltschmerz

– Stephen Colley

([Audio](#))

When buried up to your neck in cow dung
it's hard to retain your Weltanschauung.
It's harder still to clench your jaw
and every day display sang froid

when confronting a world so traumatized.
But letting yourself be schwärmerei-ized
merely smears your soul with blight
and ruins your Gemütlichkeit.

So make tomorrow merriere
by getting off your derriere
to join the dance, a true believe
in the art of joie de vivre.

Overcoming Attachment

([Audio](#))

Why send me a bloated great MS Word file
Or a PDF picture with format and style
To convey a few lines of text easily said
Or an address or date I can keep in my head?

An email's text content is all that I need,
No attachments that need a vast program to read
Which could contain viruses, trojans or worse
When the content is just a place, time or some verse!

Zoo Poo

Zoo Poo continues to be available in the Garden fertilizer bin in arbitrary quantities. It comprises a number of ingredients, scatological and otherwise, possibly including dik dik doo doo, oryx ordure, flamingo feces, emu excrement, eland effluvium, dugong doodle, markhor merde, camel crap, sheep scheiss, toucan turds, penguin poo, mandrill manure, dromedary droppings, duiker doodle, gerenuk guano, cob coprolite, flea frass, kangaroo kak, elephant excreta and saiga stool. Initial testing leads one to conclude that it is not devoid of noxious weed seeds, but may, given time and further composting, serve well as a source of highly diverse, not to say exotic, garden nutrients.



Notifications and reminders

From the President

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.