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LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

January/February 2015 Volume XX Issue 1

MEETING: GRAFTING/SCION EXCHANGE

Date: January 24, 2015

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Place: Sepulveda Gardens
16633 Magnolia Bl.
Encino, CA 91316

Read Jim Schopper's column for **specific information** regarding this event.

Attention All Members If your last name begins with A-M please bring something for our Jan. table. Since we are usually eating around noon, and even though we love all those sweet treats, please also consider a dish more appropriate for a lunchtime meal.

PROGRAM: MEMBER SHARING AND DIALOGUE

Date: February 28, 2015

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Place: Sepulveda Gardens
16633 Magnolia Bl.
Encino, CA 91316

Read Jim Schopper's column for **details about participation** at this event.

Attention All Members If your last name begins with N-Z please bring something for our Feb. table. Since we are usually eating around noon, and even though we love all those sweet treats, please also consider a dish more appropriate for a lunchtime meal.

Save the Dates in 2015 – Pat Valdivia

Pat has been hard at work organizing topics of interest for the coming year. This is the information we have so far. However, all things are subject to change based on availability, unexpected circumstances, acts of nature and member interests and participation. Thank you, Pat.

March 21st – Sepulveda Gardens – David Karp-Citrus Collection at UC Riverside

April 25th – Field Trip-Sylmar High School/Tom Spellman

May 23rd – Sepulveda Gardens

June 27th – Field Trip – Jim Schopper/garden

July 25th – Sepulveda Gardens

August 22nd Field Trip

September 26th – Sepulveda Gardens

October 24th – Field Trip – Olive Tree Orchard

November 28th – Sepulveda Gardens

December 12th – Sepulveda Gardens-Holiday Party

Words From Our Chairman



Los Angeles Chapter Members,
Debbie and I want to wish you a very Happy New Year! Our hope, our prayer is that you may be blessed with good health, joy, fruit and prosperity in 2015.

As we gather on **January 24** for our **scion exchange**, I want to remind everyone to please **bring a few essentials: zip-lock bags, masking tape and a sharpie** to mark what you're taking. This makes it simple and nice for everyone. You might also want to treat the scion wood with a mixture of 10% bleach and water so as not to spread disease in your trees right before you graft.

In our February meeting, we will be having a panel discussion and a question and answer time. I also want to have an open mic time for people to discuss what they would like to see our chapter do. I know many have great ideas for our chapter and I want to hear them. Where do you want to tour? What speaker do you want to hear? This is your chapter so speak up!

At our holiday meeting (what a great party, thanks again Marcia and Marty), I proposed forming a volunteer group to meet at member's homes and help them with their yards, pruning, clean up, whatever the homeowner requests. Yes, maybe every couple of months we could meet at someone's home and work for two-three hours. I will volunteer to help out with this by showing up to work; but I do not want to lead it. So I'm hoping someone will take the lead and make arrangements as to dates, times and places. May I leave you with this thought? "Flowers always make people better, happier, and more helpful; they are sunshine, food and medicine for the soul." Luther Burbank

Best,
Jim Schopper

LOOKING BACK

By Debbie Schopper, Member at Large

NOVEMBER MEETING

Anna D. Howell, Entomologist with the University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, was our guest speaker for the November meeting, held at the Sepulveda Garden Center. Anna spoke on "Insect Pest Management", and encouraged members to email her with questions before our meeting. Ants, scale (armored and soft), mealy bugs and psyllids were addressed.



- When dealing with pests, you must properly identify the pest to properly treat it. For instance, ants: are they going after sugar or protein? You must know, in order to use the right bait.
- And when using pesticides dilute them enough so the pest can't smell it, keep baits full, place baits near, not on, a trail and be patient, it can be a slow process.
- To get rid of scale on plants you need to get rid of the ants, wrapping tanglefoot has helped manage the ant problem.
- For mealybugs, Neem oil was one recommendation and also pyrethrins.
- Leaving clippings on the ground can prevent psyllids from attacking the plants.

Anna answered questions at the end of her presentation and shared her email address for members who had questions not covered adhowell@ucdavis.edu

Note: if you suspect that your trees have Asian Citrus Psyllids (ACP) please call 1(800) 491-1899 Pest Hotline.

DECEMBER MEETING

Once again we celebrated our annual CRFG Holiday Party at the Sepulveda Garden Center. It was a fun and festive time to usher in the coming holidays. Our club honored our own with

gifts and certificates of appreciation. Member Marcia Melcombe and Mark Nudlemann sang and entertained us with many old favorites and had us all singing and laughing. We had a white elephant gift exchange, delicious potluck luncheon, and raffle.

Newbie Questions

Some members are new to the process of growing rare fruit. From time to time we will ask for input to help these "newbies" learn. More experienced members are invited to respond and share their knowledge. Responses will be shared in future newsletters.

What's wrong with my Babaco papaya?

Catherine Diaz, Editor

After our unusual weather this is the state of my tree. What do you suppose happened? What should I have done to help this tree? What do I do now? When will



I know it has become lost to my garden? Please email your answers to me and I will include your responses in the next newsletter. Alternatively, send me the actions you took with your trees to help them through the cold weather so others can be informed.

Turf Removal Program

Catherine Diaz, Editor

Several months ago I applied for the Southern California Water Smart Program through links from the City of Los Angeles/DWP turf removal/rebate program. The process was two-fold. I had to satisfy requirements for **Water Smart Program** administered through the DWP as well as satisfy the City of L.A. for my parkway area.

This was my plan and the process. I liked the grass in my front yard. It was lush, shaded and cooled the front of my house and was easy to maintain. However, even after installing efficient sprinkler heads and a "weather station" to determine appropriate watering schedules (both available for rebate)

my DWP bills were unreasonable. I wanted to keep my backyard as-is since I get greater enjoyment there. I felt my front yard is really viewed more by the neighbors than me. The first tier of funding for the rebate program comes from the *Water Smart Program* but it seems that individual cities can modify the rebates to residents. For example, L.A. currently rebates at \$3.75 a square foot while the City of Glendora has increased their rebate to about \$5 if residents show proof that they purchased replacement plants or materials from local merchants.

I went online and completed an application with a narrative of what I wanted to do. I had to state what materials, and plants I might use, submit a diagram of my proposed project, copies of my last 2 DWP bills, the square footage of the turf replacement, the intended irrigation system, along with several pictures of the existing yard and parkway. I said I wanted to create an edible garden based on plans from a few books and articles.

The *water program's* response was that they would not rebate for an edible garden but I could plant fruit trees. They also had an extensive list of approved water-wise plants, and California native plants. The parkway plan was another matter; it had to be a separate plan different from the *water program's* and approved by a City of L.A. department. Once approved, it became a supplement to that of the water program. The diagram the city required was very specific as to size and distance of intended plantings as well as a short list of approved water-wise plants or materials that could be used in the parkway, including Bermuda grass.

I still kept a part of my front yard as an edible garden but it is not eligible for rebate. Once my plan was approved I had 6 months to complete it. From start to finish of rebate application, plan approval, sourcing plants and trees and planting, digging and installing a DG

pathway, modifying my irrigation system to a full drip system, and building planting beds it took about 3 months. I had to use my own money and provide my own labor. Finally, I took my after pictures and applied for my rebate. It was approved about three weeks ago and it will take 8 to 10 weeks to receive my check.

Final outcome: my latest DWP bill has decreased by 75% from the bills I submitted for my initial turf removal plan.

The next article relates to condo associations and came to me after my application was under way. What impact do you think it could have had on my turf removal plan to install an edible garden?

Mark Preskey submitted the following information for the newsletter. The original article, authored by Donie Vanitzian, appeared in the Los Angeles Times November 16, 2014. Permission from the author was requested and approved. The author answers questions related to condo owners, associations and governing boards.

California law supports letting owners grow vegetables

By Donie Vanitzian

QUESTION: I live on Social Security alone. It is a small fixed amount. After I pay my homeowner association assessments, mortgage, insurance and utilities, I have little money left for much else. After watching my neighbor, who is a renter, grow his own vegetables, I managed to remove a thick patch of useless old lawn and plant a small vegetable garden in a portion of my home's backyard. Ever since the board saw this, they've made my life a misery with lawyer cease-and-desist letters, threats of fines and removal of my garden. Vegetable gardening is my only affordable enjoyment. Can I keep it?

ANSWER: With the passage of Assembly Bill 2561, Civil Code Section 4750 (Personal Agriculture) was added to the Common Interest Development Act effective this year.

In changing the law, California's Legislature declared: "According to a 2011 United States Census Bureau report, California has the highest

poverty rate in the United States. Giving California residents the right to grow food where they live will help reduce food costs and the overall burden of poverty for low-income Californians." It also declared that "a significant amount of California's food is grown hundreds or thousands of miles from where it is consumed. This results in high transportation costs, energy consumption, and lost economic opportunity for our state. Even food grown in the heart of California's farming region is expensive to disperse to the rest of the state due to rising fuel costs."

The Legislature recognized that lawn care is resource intensive, with lawns being the largest irrigated crop in the United States offering no nutritional gain. Finding that 30% to 60% of residential water is used for watering lawns, the Legislature believes these resources could be allocated to more productive activities, including growing food, thus increasing access to healthy options for low-income individuals.

Many homeowner associations have rules prohibiting homeowners from growing food in their yards or from selling food grown on the property. However, it is now the policy of the state to promote and remove obstacles to increase community access to fresh fruit and vegetables and encourage the practice of homeowners growing food in their private yard space for personal use or for donation to others. New Civil Code Section 1940.10 provides some definitions:

"Personal agriculture" means use of land where an individual cultivates edible plant crops for personal use or donation.

"Plant crop" means any crop in its raw or natural state, which comes from a plant that will bear edible fruits or vegetables. It shall not include marijuana or any unlawful crops or substances. In part, Civil Code section 4750 states that any provision of a governing document, as defined in Civil Code section 4150, shall be void and unenforceable if it effectively prohibits or

unreasonably restricts the use of a homeowner's backyard for personal agriculture.

This new section does not apply to provisions that impose reasonable restrictions on the use of a homeowner's yard for personal agriculture.

"Reasonable restrictions" are restrictions that do not significantly increase the cost of engaging in personal agriculture or significantly decrease its efficiency.

This statute applies only to yards that are designated for the exclusive use of the homeowner and it shall not prohibit a homeowners' association from applying rules and regulations requiring that dead plant material and weeds, with the exception of straw, mulch, compost, and other organic materials intended to encourage vegetation and retention of moisture in the soil, are regularly cleared from the backyard.

Assembly Bill 2561 also includes provisions for tenants. Providing certain conditions are met, a landlord shall permit a tenant to participate in personal agriculture approved by the landlord in the tenant's private area, under Civil Code section 1940.10.

As for your home-grown agricultural efforts, the Legislature supports you, but, as with any new law, don't expect your board to change its attitude immediately or without some educational efforts on your part.

Respond, in writing, to the most recent threat by supplying a copy of the new laws (Civil Code sections 1940.10 and 4750), and ask for written confirmation that the board intends to cease its efforts to frustrate your gardening.

Be certain to follow up by attending board meetings and obtaining copies of all meeting minutes. Do what you have to do to obtain the board's written confirmation for your files ensuring that successive boards get the message.

Share the new gardening information with your neighbors so they will be aware that they too can partake in personal agriculture.

Zachary Levine, partner at Wolk & Levine, a business and intellectual property law firm, co-wrote this column. Vanitzian is an arbitrator and mediator. Send questions to Donie Vanitzian JD, P.O. Box 10490, Marina del Rey, CA 90295 or noexit@mindspring.com.

Notes for February Meeting Member Sharing and Dialogue



CRFG Holiday Party 2014

