



<http://www.crfg-la.org>

#### 2015 Chapter Officers & Committees

Chairman:  
Jim Schopper  
818-362-3007 [chairman@CRFG-la.org](mailto:chairman@CRFG-la.org)

Treasurer:  
K Payton  
818 222-7556 [treasurer@CRFG-la.org](mailto:treasurer@CRFG-la.org)

Newsletter Editor:  
Catherine Diaz  
818 772-9523 [editor@CRFG-la.org](mailto:editor@CRFG-la.org)

Program Chairman:  
Pat Valdivia  
805 584-6244 [editor@CRFG-la.org](mailto:editor@CRFG-la.org)

Photographer:  
Edgar Valdivia  
805 584 6244 [photo@CRFG-la.org](mailto:photo@CRFG-la.org)

Historian:  
Emory Walton  
805 497-8835 [historian@CRFG-la.org](mailto:historian@CRFG-la.org)

Food Coordinator  
Chris Warren  
818 362-8537 [food@CRFG-la.org](mailto:food@CRFG-la.org)

Plant Sales  
David Payton  
818 222-7556 [plants@CRFG-la.org](mailto:plants@CRFG-la.org)

Plant Sales Associates  
David Melcombe  
Tony Stewart

Secretary  
Margaret Frane  
310 828 0092 [hospitality@CRFG-la.org](mailto:hospitality@CRFG-la.org)

Development Fund:  
Bob Vieth  
805 495-9789

Members at Large  
Marcia Melcombe  
818 349 8677 [atlarge@CRFG-la.org](mailto:atlarge@CRFG-la.org)  
Debbie Schopper  
818 362 3007 [atlarge@CRFG-la.org](mailto:atlarge@CRFG-la.org)

# LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

2015 Volume XX Issue 6

## MEETING

**Date:** November 28, 2015  
**Time:** 10:00 a.m.  
**Place:** Sepulveda Gardens  
16633 Magnolia Blvd.  
Encino, CA 91316

**Program:** November 28: Program: Edgar Valdivia will speak on pomegranates. He will cover many of the new varieties that have been introduced to the United States through the USDA Germplasm Repository and how to grow pomegranates in general. For those of you that bought the pomegranate plants donated by Dr. Ivan Thomas he would ask that you contribute information on how they are doing. Edgar will have a few of the best soft seed pomegranates on display.

**Additionally:** Plant Sale. See *further details in this issue*.

**Attention All Members:** If your last name begins with **A-M** please bring something for our November 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.

## HOLIDAY PARTY:

**Date:** December 12, 2015  
**Time:** 10:00 a.m.  
**Place:** Sepulveda Gardens  
16633 Magnolia Blvd.  
Encino, CA 91316

Our Festive Holiday Potluck! Remember this is a **full meal**, not just snacks. It is a chance to prepare your favorite dish. Please bring a dish that serves 8-- and it would be great if you would include the recipe. Bring food to share and wear colors of the Season! Once again we can look forward to **Marcia Melcombe** and Mark Nudelman entertaining us with some wonderful music!

**Attention All Members:** The holiday party will include a potluck and we are asking all members attending to bring food for the event.

## Save the Dates – Tentative Calendar 2016 – Pat Valdivia

This is the information available so far. Things may change based on availability, circumstances, acts of nature, etc.

**January 22<sup>nd</sup>** - Meeting Sepulveda Gardens 10:00 a.m. - Grafting and scion exchange

**February 26<sup>th</sup>** - Meeting Sepulveda Gardens 10:00 a.m. Daniel Nelson from *Laverne Nursery*

**March 26<sup>th</sup>** - Field Trip to Sylmar High School - Tom Spellman, Tree Symposium and scholarship fundraiser

**April 22<sup>nd</sup>** - Field Trip **1 p.m.** to *Huntington Farms, Huntington Botanical Gardens*.

Please note time **change 1 p.m.**.

**May 27<sup>th</sup>** - TBD

**June 24<sup>th</sup>** - TBD

**July 22<sup>nd</sup>** - TBD

**August 26<sup>th</sup>** - TBD

**September 23<sup>rd</sup>** - TBD

**October 28<sup>th</sup>** - TBD

**November 25<sup>th</sup>** - TBD

**December** – Holiday Luncheon TBD

## Words From Our Chairman



Dear Los Angeles Chapter Members,

I sincerely hope that all are in good health and spirits as we approach the holiday season. For me, fall is garden clean up time. There's a need for some rototilling in the vegetable garden and some last minute pruning mainly waterspouts and lower growth on the trees. We had to net our Fuyu persimmon tree for the first time this year. The parrots found it and raided it. There were ten to fifteen feasting one morning. After chasing them away, we attempted to cover the tree and what a pain to spread the net over the entire tree! But we got it covered and the birds have not been back. Our persimmon tree is ten years old this year and I discovered several fruits with seeds in them, never had seeds before this year...

This being the last newsletter of 2015, I want to remember a few of my favorite times. We started off with a great scion exchange; we visited some great member gardens; we awarded a scholarship to one of the Sylmar High School students; we enjoyed some great speakers; and, a member asked me to help him rob his bee hive and split the bounty with me what a sweet deal! I mean, what's not to love about this chapter of the CRFG. This is a great organization that is made up of dedicated, serious hobbyists, experienced growers, and very generous people that share their fruit and knowledge.

I am still working on a pomegranate press/juicer. We built a proto-type basket and used my

hydraulic press to crush the pomegranates. It certainly worked but the hydraulic jack was low on fluid and then stopped working. I'm in the process of ordering some food grade hydraulic fluid to refill the jack. I'm also working on a pneumatic cylinder from an aircraft surplus store. This will work basically like a pneumatic aluminum can crusher. I also purchased a clean, used ricer but that is really labor intensive. You need to separate the seeds from the pulp. I think we could build an industrial strength ricer that does not require a compressor or a hydraulic press so that we can pass it around to anyone who wants to use it, with the only condition being you clean it and use it in a timely manner so it's available to all. Anyway, I'm having fun designing and drawing up plans for juicers hoping some day to have one to squeeze my favorite juice. If you're interested and have any ideas, please share them with me. May you all have a wonderful Thanksgiving and holiday season

Best,

Jim Schopper

*PS: To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow.*

*Audrey Hepburn*

### LOOKING BACK

By Debbie Schopper

Member at Large

### SEPTEMBER Meeting

The speaker for our September meeting was Julie Frink.

Julie, also known as the Avocado Lady, is the Curator of the Avocado Variety Collection at

the UC South Coast Research Center in Irvine. There are three races of avocados. The West



Indian which take 6 months to ripen and is less tolerant of cold, the Mexican which takes 8 to 10 months to ripen and the Guatemalan which takes one and a half years on the tree. Each of these races have many, many varieties. To know when to pick your avocado, it is helpful to know its race. The Hass (it rhymes with pass) is the most popular and widely available avocado and it is 15% Mexican and 85% Guatemalan.

Some important facts:

- The biggest killer of avocados is root rot
- The roots of the avocado are in the first few inches
- The roots grow out and up
- Good soil and drainage are necessary
- Water often

For basic avocado information and also to read the history of the Haas (it rhymes with pass) avocado, the most popular variety, go to

[www.basicavocadoinfor.com](http://www.basicavocadoinfor.com)

Denny gave a demonstration on how to properly graft an avocado.

Our meeting ended with a potluck lunch.

### **OCTOBER Meeting**

In October, our chapter visited the Buon Gusto Farm in Ventura. The beautiful orchard is located between Ojai and Ventura where with the warmth of the summer sun and the cooling ocean breeze seem to be just the perfect climate mix for growing olives. Owner, Mark



Mooring began by telling us the history of his farm and his decision to plant olives

trees. We learned how his olives are hand harvested and then milled into oil. Only the first press oil can be certified extra virgin. Cold press is made when no heat is added to the process. A 1.0 acidity level is needed to be extra virgin olive oil. We learned how to taste the oil and how to keep olive oil stored in the pantry away from heat and light. The shelf life is 2 years when properly stored.

Mark had samples of his olive oils and vinegars for the members to taste and also purchase. We

sampled California Coastal Organic olive oil infused with



mandarin orange,

Meyer lemon, and garlic basil. We also sampled California Coastal vinegars with fig, pomegranate



and champagne pear. And after all of our questions were answered we had a picnic on the farm property enjoyed the pond

and farm.

To read about Buon Gusto Farms and also to order olive oils, vinegars, soaps and gift packs (they make great gifts) go to:

[www.buon Gusto farms.com](http://www.buon Gusto farms.com)

### **OLIVE OIL ANSWER**

During our visit to *Buon Gusto* somebody asked a question of Mark Mooring. He didn't remember who asked the question. He did some research and came up with this answer:

***The free fatty acid level is less than .7%***

### **Highlighting Members**

Catherine Diaz, *Editor*

Our CRFG Chapter made quite a showing to support the fundraising efforts of CANGC (The California Assoc. Of Nurseries and Garden Centers) at their Annual Fundraiser & Auction for Schools and Scholarships on October 21, 2015.

A few years ago I took on the task of putting together the newsletter for our chapter. The intention was to give **Pat Valdivia** more time to plan our outstanding field trips. Many members have been very generous in allowing us to visit their homes. In addition, trips to grower locations have been outstanding. I recently met a member from another chapter who said she also joined our **because of our field trips**. I want to offer a special **thanks to Pat** for all her efforts to continue to make our chapter a stand out among CRFG.

The following members deserve recognition and thanks for sharing information and/or opening their homes for us to learn about their rare fruit growing efforts:

**January - Bill Brandt** demonstrated how to graft a scion to a tree.

**February - All members** who participated in the Q and A sharing of individual knowledge

**April - Steve List** for the 3rd Annual Tree Symposium at Sylmar High School

**June - Jim and Debbie Schopper** for welcoming us to their garden

**Bob Wohler** for hosting us at his home and garden and for sharing his green house filled with exotic plants

**August - Serge Shammus** for hosting us at his garden and giving us examples of how to maximize space for growing in the yard of a traditional tract home.

**Charles Portney** for sharing his knowledge as well as the fruits of his labor.

**Edgar Valdivia** for sharing his wealth of knowledge in all things growing big and small

Those who contribute to the publication of this newsletter:

**Emory Walton**

**Jim Schopper**

**Debi Schopper**

**Kathy Vieth**

**David Payton**

**Pat Valdivia**

**Deborah Oisboid**

**Me**

### **November Meeting Addition**

**Karen Payton**

**BLOW-OUT YEARLY PLANT SALE!!** **Charles Portney** will be bringing Orange Tamarillos, Babaco Papayas, Finger Limes, Pitayas, two kinds of Pepinos, Cherry of the Rio Grande, and Becky's Mystery Banana plants, as well as sprouted/ready-to-plant White Chaotes, and Sugarcane; maybe more. . .

#### **Revisiting protocol:**

Charles requests people not take or touch the plants until after

1.) he has had a chance to describe what he's brought

2.) the plant sale is officially underway.

Finally, Charles and our chapter requests that **other chapter members bring plants for the sale!!**

In advance, **MANY THANKS** for CHARLES' and EVERYONES' PARTICIPATION!!!

### **A HIDDEN GEM IN PASADENA**

*Deborah Oisboid, Member at Large*

Here is a secret place for you to visit. Take the 210 freeway south past its finish line at California. You'll be driving along an unassuming street which winds through some very nice housing, then you pass a bit of a field, some more houses, zigzag through a few other streets, and finally hit South Pasadena and the shopping district. Oops. You've gone too far.

Remember that tiny bit of a field? Turn around, go back up Pasadena Ave., turn left just before the field and park on Arlington. Look past the narrow "dry creek" lined with succulents and other drought-friendly plants. Look past the sidewalk at the field. It's not just a field.

### **Congratulations! You've discovered Arlington Garden.**

Pasadena's only dedicated public garden and a certified Wildlife Habitat, Arlington started life as a potential staging area for construction of the 710 freeway. The lot became vacant in 1961 when a 17,000 square foot mansion was sold and razed. But the freeway construction never happened, so City Council Member Steve Madison set up a steering committee to decide what to do with the property. Betty McKenney suggested a public garden. At the time there were only a couple of oaks and a few other trees. Some Cal Poly Pomona students created concept drawings as people began to visualize a garden rather than a park for sports. The City, Pasadena Water & Power, and the McKenneys began to pull together more ideas, mainly waterwise Mediterranean concepts. Pasadena Beautiful Foundation and the Mediterranean Garden Society began to assist. Neighbors began to donate funding, plants, and garden furniture.

The result is a 3-acre rambling garden with multiple terraces, "rooms" and other unique features, all drought-friendly and with a tremendous variety of flora. A classic Mediterranean patio with tables and umbrellas tops the west end, statues and urns and fountains (both dry and wet) follow you down the hill, depending on which meandering path you take. Benches for chatting or meditating dot the shady spaces beneath drought-friendly trees. A huge agave has matured and sent a spike about 20 feet tall: covered with flowers, it is alive with hummingbirds and bees. A Butterfly

Garden provides refreshment and mating places for butterflies and bees alike.

A "Wish Tree" patio has two crepe myrtles covered with envelopes and cards conveying dreams, wishes, and aspirations scribbled on anything from gold-edged cardstock to scraps of notebook paper. At the very bottom is a small grove of Washington Navel orange trees, which produces enough fruit to produce orange marmalade, sold to raise funds for maintenance and care of the Garden. A classic Labyrinth path, outlined in stone, will let you meander to a special place to meditate and reflect.

Arlington is open 7 days a week and is completely free. People may bring their dogs, as long as they are respectful and clean up after them. It is a quiet, calm place perfect for exploring, for decompressing, for meeting up, for enjoying. Their website has additional information about the plants, care, and activities. Check them out at [www.arlingtongardeninpasadena.org](http://www.arlingtongardeninpasadena.org).

### **Email and Online Edition**

**Catherine Diaz, Editor**

**FYI:** There are always a number of beautiful pictures, and a lot of information that members contribute for inclusion in our newsletter. I have to make decisions each month about what to include, edit or skip over. In the future, I may include more extra photos or information for those who receive the newsletter **via email and for the online edition, only**. So if you haven't chosen to receive the newsletter my email, but wish to do so in the future, let me know and I will forward the info to Karen Payton.

**Finally,** our newsletter is published online at <http://www.crfg-la.org>

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