

# Garden Clippings

Orange County Independent Master Gardeners' Newsletter

Volume 15 Number 4

April 2009

## April Meeting

**Saturday, April 4, 2009**

510 E. Memory Lane/2615 Valencia, Santa Ana

### Schedule

8:15 – 9:00 a.m.	Setup Plants 'n Things
9:00 – 9:45 a.m.	Business Meeting
9:45 – 10:00 a.m.	Plants 'n Things
10:00– 11:00 a.m.	Program
11:00	Clean up

Members with last names starting with **A– G** please bring a breakfast snack. Other members are also welcome to bring goodies. Also, remember to bring along any items you wish to contribute to our Plants 'n Things raffle and any gardening catalogs or magazines you'd like to share.

### Enrichment Workshop—Roof Top Gardening – Jim Mumford

Jim Mumford, CLP, president and owner of Good Earth Plant Company, Inc. oversaw the installation of the San Diego area's first commercial greenroof at Good Earth Plants in March 2007. Located in the Kearny Mesa area, the property has three buildings which are part of the test.. The 1600 square foot green roof on their existing one-story wood-framed building has saved 23% in electricity. Intended as both a demonstration and research garden, several dozen varieties of plants are surviving and thriving in only 4" of custom blended growth media, utilizing two low-use irrigation systems.

Learn some of the techniques that were used and what you need to make your roof top garden a success. More information at their website: <http://greenroofsandiego.com/green-contractor>

**Board Meeting: Second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm at the home of Cheryl Borden.**

## Gardening Events

**Fullerton Arboretum.** Pre-register for all classes by calling 714/278-3407

**Sat. Apr. 4:** Hypertufa Pot Workshop, 1:30 – 3:30 pm.

Steve Gerischer will teach the steps to create a Hypertufa bowl from a mixture of cement, peat moss and perlite molded to resemble tufa or crumbling granite. It is lighter than regular concrete and will not be damaged by freezing after it is completely cured.

**Sat. - Sun. Apr. 18-19: Green Scene,** 10 am – 4 pm. \$6 fee for non-members.

Dozens of unique vendors and every kind of imaginable plant and garden accessory for sale.

**Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Garden** Pre-register for all classes at 909/ 625-8767 ext. 224.

**Sat. Apr. 4: Spring Plant Sale,** 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Featuring native perennials ideal for spring planting, including Pacific Coast Hybrid irises, coral bells, monkeyflowers, native bunch grasses and more.

**Thu. – Sun. Apr. 23- 26: 20th Annual Southern California Spring Garden Show"** South Coast Plaza, 3333 Bear Street, Costa Mesa 92626. Hours: Thurs. & Fri. 10am – 9pm, Sat. 10am – 8pm, Sun. 11am-6:3pm.

Information: [www.springgardenshow.com](http://www.springgardenshow.com)

Features vendors and garden clubs selling plants, garden art, and supplies; workshops, and sample landscape designs.

For many other gardening events, check <http://www.orangecountygardeners.org>

## Bee-Friendly Gardens

Helen Elich

Last week, at the bequest of some of the members I made an effort to try and get an entomologist to speak to our group. Unfortunately, his time table did not have room for us at the moment, but we will try at a later date.

In keeping with that subject, I stumbled across an article in the Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative Living March/April issue written by Paula Steers Brown.

In summarizing, I am certain that everything I write will be like preaching to the choir, but it will get me my education units and there is a fun project offer at the end.

Ms. Brown writes that in the last two years scientists have logged the crisis of the loss of the honeybees. Since bee pollination is key to agriculture, researchers are looking into various possibilities from pesticides to stress.

It is suggested that planting a 10x 10 bee friendly garden will provide significant habitat. In selecting plants it is recommended that you select natives. Bees are able to see the infrared spectrum so they tend to like blue plants and generally do not respond to white ones as much. They are also drawn to non-native plants, including ornamental lavender, hollyhocks, asters, purple coneflower, Russian sage, salvia, thyme, mint, lavender, chives, strawberries, black-eyed Susan's, sunflowers cosmos and monarda, (commonly known as bee balm).

Paula Brown writes that most bees are solitary and are generally so busy collecting nectar and pollen that they tolerate human observation.

They do need a source of water and some bees use mud as a nesting material, while others build their nests underground.

Many environmentally conscious groups are doing their part to promote this interest and as a result have a project underway called "The Great Sunflower Project". You can visit the website at [www.greatsunflower.org](http://www.greatsunflower.org) to receive seeds for native sunflowers and a kit that explains how to

track bees in the garden. Citizen scientists can then submit the data they collect to the group research effort.

Have fun! And please share if you do get involved.

## Volunteer Opportunity—Green Scene

Green Scene is our best opportunity for outreach this year. We need two members for the our table on Saturday, April 18, from 12:30-4:00 p.m. and one person on Sunday, April 19 from 9:30-12:30 Please contact Sharon Neely if you can work either of these shifts.

## June Plant Exchange

It's time to start planting seeds and rooting cuttings so they'll be ready in time for our annual plant exchange at the June meeting.

For every plant you bring to exchange, you get to take one home. Start your propagating now and be ready with 10-12 (or more) well-rooted plants of any kind and combination. Please label each plant with the **botanical and common names** along with a note as to how to maintain the plant.

If you have requests for particular plants, send them in and we can place your request in the newsletter.

### 📞 Contacts

Janet Meade, *President* .....

Sharon Neely, *1st<sup>d</sup> Vice Pres*

Bob Shaw, *Treasurer*

Fred Snyder, *Plant Clinic*.....

Jill Patterson, *Newsletter Editor*

Submit articles by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month via:

Jean Rice, *Vol. Hours*.....

Website: [http:// www.ocmastergardeners.org](http://www.ocmastergardeners.org)

## HR Bill 875/S 425

Submitted by former member Pat Cline

Don't know how I missed this one, but I just learned about these two bills (**HR 875** and **S 425**) that will be passed in two weeks unless someone stops them. I'm not connected to any gardening groups/clubs right now, so this came somewhat as a shocker...I've never been fond of Monsanto (main backer of the bills) who always seems to be in the middle of these types of issues.

I learned about it from an email sent out by our old gardening friend, Andy Lopez, the Invisible Gardener (the "Don't Panic, It's Organic" guy). As a starter, I emailed the chairperson of the **Calif. State Assembly Committee on Agriculture** from information on their web site:

<http://www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/newcomframeset.asp?committee=53>,

Cathleen Galgiani - Chair, 916-319-2017,  
[Assemblymember.Galgiani@assembly.ca.gov](mailto:Assemblymember.Galgiani@assembly.ca.gov)

Normally, I'm a very calm person, but this has me 'hopping mad'. Thanks for listening to me on my soapbox...I don't get up there often.

**From Andy Lopez' website:**

<http://www.organicdatabank.info/Green-Alert/>

Please do whatever you individually can to make sure we preserve our live natural food farms. The Bills are: House H.R. 875:

[www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd](http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd) and

Senate S 425 [www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd](http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd)

Hr 875 will require organic farms to use specific fertilizers and poisonous insect sprays dictated by the newly formed agency to "make sure there is no danger to the public food supply".

If this passes then NO more heirloom clean seeds will be allowed, only Monsanto genetically altered seeds that are now causing unexpected diseases in humans.

HR 875 Food Safety Modernization Act of 2009:

To establish the Food Safety Administration within the Department of Health and Human

Services to protect the public health by preventing food-borne illness, ensuring the safety of food, improving research on contaminants leading to food-borne illness, and improving security of food from intentional contamination, and for other purposes.

Pay special attention to:

\* Section 3 which is the definitions portion of the bill--read in its entirety.

\*Sections 103, 206 and 207-- read in its entirety.

Red flags I found and I am sure there are more...

\* Legally binds state agriculture departments to enforce federal guidelines, effectively taking away the states power to do anything other than being food police for the federal department.

\* Effectively criminalizes organic farming but doesn't actually use the word "organic".

\* Affects anyone growing food even if they are not selling it but consuming it.

\* Affects anyone producing meat of any kind including wild game.

\* Legislation is so broad-based that every aspect of growing or producing food can be made illegal. There are no specifics which is bizarre considering how long the legislation is.

\* Section 103 is almost entirely about the administrative aspect of the legislation. It will allow the appointing of officials from the factory farming corporations and lobbyists and classify them as experts and allow them to determine and interpret the legislation.

\* Section 206 defines what will be considered a food production facility and what will be enforced upon all food production facilities. The wording is so broad based that a backyard gardener could be fined and more.

\* Section 207 requires that the state's agriculture department act as the food police and enforce the federal requirements. This takes away the states' power and is in violation of the 10th amendment.

*Editor's note: Please read this legislation and decide your own course of action.*