

Garden Clippings

Orange County Independent Master Gardeners' Newsletter

Volume 17 Number 3

March 2011

March Meeting

Saturday, March, 2011

At our new location:

Rancho Santiago Community College Rm. 107
2323 North Broadway, Santa Ana, CA 92706

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.	Enrichment 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, please 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.

Program: Succulents with Penny Hlavac

California Horticultural Society life member Penny Hlavac has been gardening with succulents, drought tolerant plants, and native plants since she moved to Anaheim in 1981. Her yard has been featured in the Los Angeles Times as an example of a successful and colorful water thrifty garden.

Many succulents bloom in winter and early spring, making this an excellent time to look at specimens to add to your landscape.

Next Month: Graduation of our trainees!

Board Meeting: follows general meeting.

Gardening Events

Fullerton Arboretum. Pre-register for all classes by calling 657/278-3407

Sat, March 12: "Home Composting Workshop I". 10:00-11:30 am

Discover how easy it is to start your own home composting system! During this informative class, you'll learn the basics of home composting and receive a free booklet to guide you through the learning and start-up process.

Thurs. March 17: "How to Grow the Best Tomatoes" noon – 2pm. \$10/members \$13/nonmembers.

Get the most out of the annual Monster Tomato and Pepper Sale as nurseryman and tomato expert Steve Goto returns to share his best practices and tips for growing great tomatoes. Steve's course includes "Tomato 101" topics, growing tomatoes organically, and an introduction to Heirloom Tomato varieties.

Fri. – Sun. March 18 – 20: "Monster Tomato and Pepper Sale". 9am – 4pm, Potting Shed

This is the largest annual plant sale in the region focusing exclusively on tomato and pepper plants.

Fullerton College Horticulture Dept., 321 E. Chapman, Fullerton 92832, 714-992-7135

Fri. – Sun. Mar 4 – 6: 2011 Tomato Sale, 10am. - 4pm Fri. & Sat.; 10am – 3pm Sun.

From tiny to jumbo, in a rainbow of colors, over a hundred varieties to choose from this year - Beefsteak, Cherry, Container, Grape, Oxheart, Saladette, Sauce/Paste, Slicer. **More details on website -- <http://horticulture.fullcoll.edu>**

Leaves from the President



As it seems like everyone I talk to is sick, here is wishing you all good health. Due to a class scheduling problem, the graduation ceremony will not take place until April. This is good, in a way, as Bob Shaw will be able to attend.

I hope everyone has been thinking about the upcoming elections as we will need to decide soon on a new board. If you are interested in running for office, please let a board member know.

See you all on March 5th.

Jill O'Neill, President
Orange County Independent Master Gardeners

Green Scene Volunteers Needed!

Green Scene at the Fullerton Arboretum is April 16 & 17 and volunteers are needed to staff our table. Please contact Anne Porter if you'd like to help. Setup for Green Scene is Friday from 8am – 4pm; exhibits are open 10am – 4pm that weekend with a member only preview from 9 – 10am on Saturday. Great opportunity for volunteer hours and then you can enjoy the event on your own!

New Trainee Class Schedule

One final class remains: IPM. Contact Bob Shaw if you'd like to attend.

March 12: IPM at St. Joseph Episcopal Church in Buena Park. 8:30 am - noon

April 2: GRADUATION!

☎ Contacts

Jill O'Neill, *President*

Diane Wilkinson, *Treasurer*

Anne Porter, *1st^d Vice Pres*

Robert Shaw, *2nd Vice Pres.*

Fred Snyder, *Plant Clinic*

Jill Patterson, *Newsletter Editor*

Submit articles by the 10th of each month via:

e-mail at

or snail mail:

Jean Rice, *Vol. Hours*

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

Trainees Break Ground on Community Garden

By Patti McCarthy

St. Josephs' Episcopal Church in Buena Park (Valley View) has a LARGE lot behind their church that has been resting for over 50 years. It has become a home to trash dumpers, transients and drinking teens. The church wanted Habitat for Humanity to build housing, but it wasn't the right time, so they came up with a concept of a community garden. Bob has been having planning meetings with the church folks. The 2011 OCIMG class arrived at 9am to perform their ground breaking and get the initial project started.



Why Won't My Violet Bloom?

Part 1

By Joyce Stock

From the AVSA Web Site, FAQ

Most African violets should be blooming regularly throughout the year. Some varieties will always have one or two flowers open. Some varieties burst into heavier bloom and then rest briefly before bursting into bloom again. A few varieties are more reluctant to bloom except in excellent light, but even these should be blooming one or twice a year. If violets do not bloom, there is usually a problem with the growing conditions.

The Likely Culprit is Light

Violets need bright light to bloom well. If they are window grown, violets should be set within twelve inches of the glass; the window should be fairly large to allow generous light; there should be some light filtering, such as sheer drapes or trees outside. Do be careful of heat, however, since some window areas get quite warm. Temperatures should stay near 72 degrees. Violets that are not getting enough light will seem to reach upward. Leaves will not lie flat in a perfect circle around the pot. Whenever a grower sees this, efforts should be taken to increase the amount of light the plant receives.

Violets can be given artificial light when no good windows are available, using any kind of fluorescent tubes. Violets should be placed so that the light is just twelve inches above the foliage and the lights should be turned on for about twelve hours a day. Again, choose a growing area that is usually about 72 degrees.

Is It Hungry for Fertilizer?

Often a lack of bloom can be blamed on inadequate fertilizer. Violets need to be fertilized weekly with a good quality fertilizer designed for them. There are many good products on the market. Most growers prefer to use a formula that is mixed in the water and used every time violets are watered. If you choose to use a fertilizer that recommends monthly fertilizing, you can dilute it

to use weekly. If directions call for one teaspoon to a gallon of water monthly, simply change it to ¼ teaspoon to a gallon. Fertilizer is quite stable when mixed up, and can be saved from week to week if it is not all used at once.



Potting Soil Can Prevent Blooms

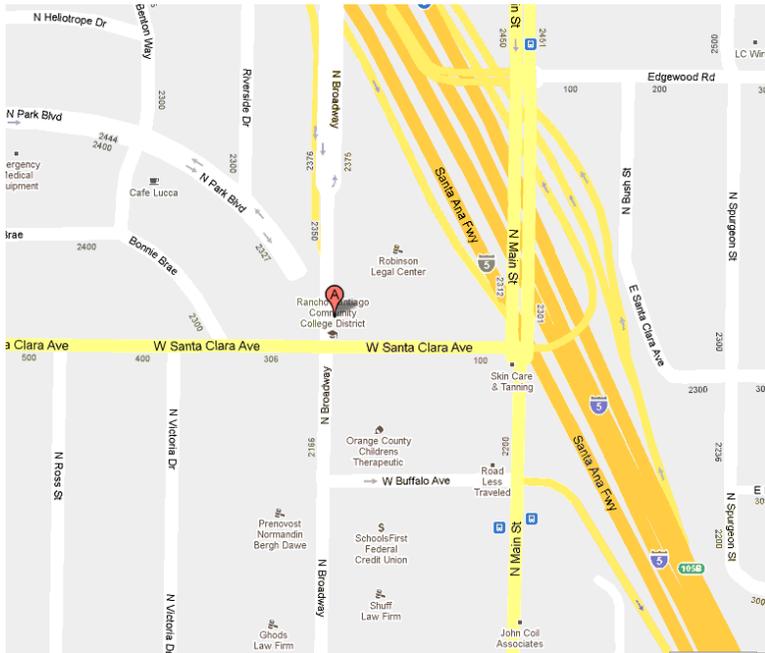
Blossoms form when roots are healthy and well-developed. Violet roots are very fine and hair-like. If

violets are potted in heavy or packed soils, the roots will not develop, and flowering will be sparse. It is hard to purchase good quality pre-mixed violet soil. Most products labeled for violets are using sedge peat which is black and smeary when rubbed between the fingers. Rarely do these commercial potting mixes have enough ingredients to lighten the soil (such as perlite or vermiculite) for violets to thrive. For many growers, the only solution is to mix it themselves. One commonly used recipe is; 1 part milled sphagnum peat moss, 1 part vermiculite, and 1 part perlite with a bit of charcoal tossed in. The texture is most important. This mix will not pack down even when wet, leaving lots of air passages for roots to grow into. When repotting violets, be especially careful not to press down on the soil or pack it around the roots.

Plant Exchange in June

This is a heads up for our annual plant exchange at our June meeting. For every plant you bring to exchange, you get to take one home. Bring 10-12 well-rooted plants of any kind or combination. Each plant must be labeled with the **botanical and common names** along with a note as to how to maintain the plant. Are you looking for a particular plant? Do you already have some special plants you'll be giving away? Let the editor know for a future column.

MAP to Rancho Santiago Community College
2323 North Broadway, Santa Ana, CA 92706



There is plenty of free parking at the Community College office building

The following routes are suggested:

From the 5 heading north: Take exit 105B for Main St/N Broadway. Keep right at the fork, follow signs for Main St. N, and merge onto N. Main St. Make a U-turn. Turn right at the first street, W. Santa Clara Ave. Take the next right onto N. Broadway. Building will be on the right.

From the 57 Freeway: Take the 5 Freeway south. Keep **right** at the fork, follow signs for **Main St/N Broadway** and merge onto **N Broadway**. Building will be on the left, on the north east corner of Broadway and Santa Clara Ave. There are entrances from both streets, but you may need to make a U-turn at Santa Clara if you can't make a left turn.

This is very close to our former location at the Lawn Bowling Club.

**Orange County Independent
Master Gardeners**

1485 Arrowwood
Brea CA 92821

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