

# Garden Clippings

Orange County Independent Master Gardeners' Newsletter

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May 2014

## May Meeting

**Saturday May 3, 2014**

Field trip to Huntington Library

Tour of the Chinese Garden

We're touring the newly reopened Chinese garden, but there is so much more to see! Even if you haven't prepaid for the tour, come and spend the morning at the Huntington. Those who are planning to carpool may want to meet on the west side of the Target parking lot at Yorba Linda Blvd. and the 57 freeway in Fullerton. It is about an hour's drive from there, so leave about 9:15. We'll meet at the entrance to the Huntington at 10:15; our tour is at 10:30.

## June Elections

Thanks to Glenn Vodhanel, Judith Wright, and the attendees at the April meeting for creating our candidate slate. We will vote at the June meeting. Nominations may also be taken from the floor.

President: Glenn Vodhanel

1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President: Mark Gotts

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President: Judith Wright

Treasurer: Nancy Shaw

Corresponding Secretary: Cerise Outhier

Recording Secretary: Mary McMurrin

## Volunteer Opportunity

The West Anaheim Neighborhood Development Council (WAND) is hosting its 18th Annual Anaheim Western BBQ at Twila Reid Park on Saturday, May 10 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be a gardening section devoted to raising vegetables and flowers in small areas such as apartment patios. It is an opportunity for Master Gardeners to sign-up for a shift and answer questions. We need volunteers—please contact Glenn Vodhanel or Nick Latimer at 714/991-5166 or email [latimers@earthlink.com](mailto:latimers@earthlink.com).

## Gardening Events

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

**Sat. May 31: "Nature Photography"** 9am – noon. \$30 non-members/\$25members.Pavilion

Amateur photographers who want to take better photos will learn from nature photographer Steve Kaye's 49 years of experience. Begin with basic concepts and then learn how to use space, light, and time to take memorable photos.

**Armstrong Nurseries:** Free classes are provided at each location. May classes include creating a hanging basket on May 3, caring for orchids on May 17, hydrangea care on May 24, and roses on May 31. Classes begin at 9am. Website is: <http://www.armstronggarden.com/pages/classes>

**Roger's Gardens,** 2301 San Joaquin Hills Rd., Corona Del Mar, CA 92625, tel.949/640-5800

One-hour seminars are offered each weekend. On May 24, at 9am, horticulturist, David Rizzo will show how to plant an edible garden using raised beds and planters. This presentation will cover how to prepare your soil, what types of edibles are appropriate for planting this time of year and how to care for them. Rizzo returns on May 30, at 9am, with Ron Vanderhoff, to discuss individual varieties of citrus, as well as water, soil and nutrition and pest concerns.

**Rancho Los Alamitos,** 6400 Bixby Hill Road, Long Beach 90815

**Sat. – Sun. May 17 - 18: "Cactus Club Regional Plant Show and Sale"**

The Rancho will be closed to the public for this private function but open to members of local and regional Cactus Clubs. Due to limited parking, please reserve by calling (562) 431-3541.

# Leaves From the President



## The Huntington Library, Museum & Gardens

Because we'll be taking our field trip this month to the new Chinese Gardens at the Huntington, I thought I'd give you an overview of the wonders of the Huntington.

It was founded in 1919 by Henry E. Huntington. During his lifetime, he amassed the core of one of the finest research libraries in the world, established a splendid art collection, and created an array of botanical gardens with plants from a geographic range spanning the globe.

**The Library:** Among the treasures for research and exhibition are the Ellesmere manuscript of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, a Gutenberg Bible on vellum, the double-elephant folio edition of Audubon's *Birds of America*, and a world-class collection of the early editions of Shakespeare's works.

The Huntington also is among the nation's most important centers for the study of the American West, with an unsurpassed collection of materials that span the full range of American western settlement, including the overland pioneer experience, the Gold Rush, and the development of Southern California.

**The Galleries:** There are three separate art galleries. The Huntington Art Gallery, originally the Huntington residence, contains one of the most comprehensive collections in this country of 18th- and 19th-century British and French art. It serves as home to Gainsborough's *Blue Boy* and Lawrence's *Pinkie*.

**The Gardens:** Covering 120 acres, more than a dozen specialized gardens are arranged within a park-like landscape of rolling lawns. Among them are the Desert Garden, the Japanese Garden, the Rose Garden, and the Chinese garden. The camellia collection is one of the largest in the country. Other important botanical attractions

include the Subtropical, Herb, Jungle, and Palm gardens.

To the north of the Scott Galleries sits the Botanical Education Center, featuring the Helen and Peter Bing Children's Garden, the Teaching Greenhouse, and The Rose Hills Foundation Conservatory for Botanical Science (a wonder all by itself!).

This is a wonderful opportunity for us to spend a day surrounded by some of the most beautiful things you can imagine. Although our tour will be over by noon, I plan to take the rest of the day exploring.

Visit them at: <http://www.huntington.org/>

Anne Porter,  
OCIMG President

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## June Meeting: Plant Exchange

All plants need to be labeled with the botanical and common names and include care instructions. Vegetables, perennials, succulents, herbs, trees and annuals are all welcome. Start your plants now to ensure they are well-rooted.

## Don Martin's Beat

### Geothermal: The Steady Heat

Did you know that in 1876, not far from the geysers of Yosemite, on a piece of property now known as Chico Hot Springs, a miner erected a few hot houses for his garden. Water from the hot springs, warmed by the geothermal heat, flowed underneath the crops and created a prime growing environment. And I will bet he didn't even know it!

How it works: Topsoil may freeze, snow may fall, the sun may scorch tender leaves, but down below there are steadier temperatures. Geothermal systems harness the heat from the earth to provide continuous, 24-hours-a-day, clean, sustainable energy production. The degree of warmth depends on the geology of the area. Heat continuously flows from the core of the earth outward, mostly by conduction. Closer to the crust, solar energy is stored in the top 100 meters. Much of the earth's core heat is trapped below the crust and heats rock and water. If water or steam is trapped, it can form a geothermal reservoir. This can be harnessed for energy.

### Vermicompost

Worms, aka red wigglers worms (*Eisenia Fetioa*), enhance decomposition of yard waste and food scraps by physically degrading and stimulating microbe activity. Worms secrete mucus which enriches the moisture and carbon and aids in the decomposition of feed stock, aka yard waste, food scraps, and animal waste. However, all vermicompost is not created equal. Like traditional compost, certain factors affect the quality, such as the feedstock and the processes used. If you solely use yard waste and food scraps, then the vermicompost nitrogen levels will be very low. But if you use sawdust or even animal waste, then the nitrogen levels will be much higher. Just like fertilizer, vermicompost can be used to adjust the PH levels in your soil. But if you use a moisture meter, it could give false readings due to its electrical conductivity (EC). There's an excellent factsheet on this topic at [http://www.extension.org/pages/18567/making-and-using-compost-for-organic-farming#.U1q\\_valPsII](http://www.extension.org/pages/18567/making-and-using-compost-for-organic-farming#.U1q_valPsII)

## Book Round-Up

By Jill Patterson

I've just finished reading a number of books of interest to those with a mind for gardening. The first, *The Orchid Thief: a true story of beauty and obsession* is by Susan Orlean, a journalist who read about a court case involving a theft of wild orchids from a reserve in southern Florida. She decided to make a trip down to the area and meet with the mastermind behind the theft—John Laroche. She tramped in the swamps, risking death by alligator, all in the hopes of capturing a look at the rare ghost orchid. Along the way, Susan explores the history behind an international obsession for orchids that began hundreds of years ago and continues to this day. Published in 1999, it is just as compelling today. It inspired the movie *Adaptation*, available at your local library.

My book group read *The Language of Flowers* by Vanessa Diffenbaugh and was unanimous in praising it. This debut novel tells the story of Victoria, a foster child who has just turned 18 and is now emancipated from the foster child system. She has isolated herself from everyone, but manages to find a job through her knowledge of flowers and their meanings. She begins to build tenuous connections as flashbacks uncover her past and a dark secret she has never dared to reveal. Flowers have always been her salvation, but she will need more than flowers to thrive.

Finally, another book group choice, *Telling the Bees*, by Peggy Hesketh was described by one picky reader as the best book she'd read in the past year. Set in Anaheim, our protagonist is a beekeeper in his 80s who discovers the bodies of his neighbors one morning. Also told in flashbacks, we learn how Albert and his neighbors grow up in the rural environment of 1930s-1950s Anaheim and the secrets they all carry. You will learn more about beekeeping and the lore of bees than you thought possible. The story finishes ten years later as Albert is able to put the final pieces of the puzzle together and solve the mystery of his neighbors' murder. I met the author at Literary Orange and she revealed that the book was partly inspired by the real life murder of two women known as the "Bee Ladies" in her Anaheim neighborhood.