



ALTADENA HERITAGE NEWSLETTER

JULY 2009



GOLDEN POPPY URBAN HOMESTEAD FETE JULY 26 PARTY TO CELEBRATE GARDENERS, SUMMER HARVEST

Barnyard, abundant gardens, and orchards will glow golden (but hopefully, not hot) Sunday, July 26, at 6:30 p.m., for this year's Golden Poppy Urban Homestead Fete on the grounds of Kazi Petelka and John Steinmetz's home at 2027 Mar Vista Avenue.

Our hosts are musicians *extraordinaires* with the Los Angeles Opera, and Kazi is a passionate rare fruit grower, gardener, poultry raiser, and culinary artist who uses her produce to set a fine fresh table, and also bottles, cans, cordializes, pickles, and otherwise preserves her bounty. Nothing goes to waste, not even the feathers from the poultry, used in millinery or costumes for the opera! Kazi will give entertaining tours of her remarkable creation — guaranteed inspiration for any gardener.

Amongst the chickens and turkeys and other live music, we shall celebrate being able to share this abundance with home-made baked goods, salads,

and desserts whilst our 2009 Golden Poppy Awards are given to special gardeners who use water wisely as they add beauty to their neighborhoods. Be sure to reserve either at altadenaheritage@earthlink.net, or at 626/797-0054. Entry is \$10 members, \$20 non-members, or one free ticket included with new family memberships who join that evening.

CHECK OUT PLANS FOR LIBRARY!

Drawings and floor plans for Altadena's proposed library extension will be on display in the central reading area over the summer. These proposals call for a huge expansion, which might not all be realized. We think the architects did a good job in honoring the Boyd Georgi design!

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

This year of 2009 is a banner one for Altadena Heritage — with a great board of directors and wonderful new energy. Our mission has evolved as times and needs change and new folk join our board. Now we are building on our core mission of cultural and architectural preservation and education by plotting a complementary new course — making our homesteads energy and water efficient, and using our resources cleverly to make Altadena more productive.

The first workshop of our Sustainability Series on May 30th, *Altadena: Heritage of Abundance*, gave us a glimpse of what our community was and what it can be — a veritable agricultural and horticultural paradise. We have new board member Eileen Alduenda to thank for motivating our new focus, which was the first in a series of hands-on and real-world-helpful workshops on water conservation, energy efficiency, home improvements, and growing your own food. We want people to come to our events, meet neighbors, and walk away with knowledge, information and connections they can use NOW to help conserve resources and enrich their lives in these trying economic times.

Something very special happened among the roses on a perfect early summer afternoon June 25th. David Ford and Wes Tanaka from Southern California Edison handed us a check for \$11,000 in board member Anita David's lovely garden, Wow! We intend to use this welcome infusion to reach out to the community more effectively with our Sustainability Series and with an improved web presence. We also will update Heritage's special treasure, our database of Altadena homes and structures built before 1930 — and transfer it to a more stable platform. Thank-you to two board members: Michele Zack for writing the winning proposal in SCE's competitive grant program, and to Sandra Miller, whose earlier proposal Michele built upon. And mostly,



Board members Thomas Stahl, Mark Goldschmidt, Michele Zack, and Eileen Alduenda with David Ford (second from right) of Southern California Edison (photo: Susan Goldman).

big big thanks to Southern California Edison for its support and partnership in our endeavors. We are seeking computer savvy volunteers to help us with technical aspects of grant projects, so that we can stretch the money as far as possible. Send us a message at our website if you can help!

I can't close without mentioning other sources of new inspiration for Altadena Heritage. The first is CofeA — Cooperative Food Exchange of Altadena. This group of dedicated home gardeners and food lovers has found a way to share their agricultural bounty and build community at the same time. Many are relative newcomers to Altadena, enjoying the good soil and sunshine to produce bumper crops of fruit and veggies. We are partnering with CofeA in a series of food-related classes. The first, “Jammin with Derek and Jim” took place in Altadena’s Community Center June 28; participants went home happy with warm jars of backyard-grown plum jam! We also support and admire the efforts of Altadenawantsacoop.org — and hope that “wants” is transformed into “has” in the not-distant future. It is great to see such energy roiling through town, turning Altadena into a model of sustainability through the efforts of many positive people.

Mark Goldschmidt,
Chairman

FIRST IN SUSTAINABILITY SERIES: HOMEMADE IN ALTADENA

Gray clouds and the early hour failed to dampen enthusiasm.

A rooster, a hen, a hive of honey bees, and groaning tables of home-produced food under market umbrellas welcomed more than 100 people to *Altadena: Heritage of Abundance*, the first of the “Sustainability Series” sponsored by Altadena Heritage. Cheerful chords from Ian Whitcomb’s piano added to the cacophony Saturday May 30th at the Community Center as attendees gathered to taste and swap home garden bounty and learn tips on sustainable living.

Mark Goldschmidt, Chair of Altadena Heritage, introduced the series. This first event focused on urban homesteading, local produce exchange, and efforts to start a grocery cooperative. Conserving water and electricity inside and outside as you repair and rethink that dear old (or even newer) house will be topics of future workshops, tours, and demonstrations.

Altadena Historian and Heritage Board Member Michele Zack gave an illustrated lecture on Altadena’s rich agricultural and homesteading past. (Visit Altadenaheritage.org to see how the land looked pre-Altadena!)

Erik Knutzen of Homegrown Evolution, author of *The Urban Homestead*, entertained by sharing how he transformed a small residential site into a productive, money-saving homestead. He covered a variety of steps anyone could take, such as creating a container garden if you lack space, reducing the size of your lawn and replacing it with a vegetable garden or drought tolerant landscape, or capturing rainwater and solar energy on your site. Visit Altadena Heritage’s website to link to Erik’s website and urban homesteading resources.

Marcia Coppess from Cooperative Food Exchange of Altadena (CofeA) explained how the exchange works by providing a forum for sharing produce, information, and resources related to gardening and home food production. From managing pests to raising chickens and goats in the city, CofeA is a virtual “Garden Fence” whose members also meet face to face! CofeA and Altadena Community Garden members and attendees filled many tables with fresh herbs,



Board member Alan Zorthian swaps Altadena-produced honey.

citrus, eggs, and other produce to swap.

Altadena Heritage and CofeA will co-sponsor food related workshops, the first, on jam-making, took place on June 28 and was a great success. Goat cheese making and other “how-to” demonstrations will be announced to Altadena Heritage members via email as they are scheduled. Be sure we have your email address — don’t miss out!

Patrick Reagan wound up the morning (so much information before 11 am!) with an overview of cooperatives as a business model and an update on efforts to bring a grocery cooperative to Altadena.



UPCOMING: Fieldtrips & Workshops on water use in the landscape (efficient irrigation systems and practices, rain water harvesting, and greywater systems); and residential energy efficiency including insulation, restoring windows, doors, and hardwood floors.

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**YOU'RE INVITED!
ALTADENA
HERITAGE
GOLDEN POPPY
URBAN
HOMESTEAD FETE**

SUNDAY, JULY 26

6:30 PM

2027 MAR VISTA

**A GOOD TIME TO JOIN
OR RENEW**

**MEMBERS \$10
NON-MEMBERS \$20**

CALL OR EMAIL TO RESERVE
ALTADENAHERITAGE@EARTHLINK.NET

PLEASE BECOME A MEMBER

JOIN OR RENEW TODAY...
BE PART OF SOMETHING SPECIAL!

PLEASE EXPRESS YOUR SUPPORT
FOR THE PRESERVATION AND
APPRECIATION OF OUR COMMUNITY'S
UNIQUE ENVIRONMENT.

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- \$15 STUDENT/SENIOR (65+)
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