



ALTADENA HERITAGE NEWSLETTER

MAY 2009

ALTADENA: HERITAGE OF ABUNDANCE MAY 30 WORKSHOP KICKS OFF NEW SUSTAINABILITY SERIES

Spend the morning Saturday, May 30 getting revved up to do the creative work of gardening — as you learn more about Altadena’s heritage of Abundance. From 9 to 11 a.m. at the Community Center, Altadena Heritage will present the first in a series of events, workshops, and home tours on sustainable living. We will kick off with presentations designed to inspire and increase the edible elements in Altadena gardens:

Erik Knutzen of Homegrown Evolution will help expand your efforts or begin urban homesteading. Author of *The Urban Homestead*, Erik encourages people to start from where they are today to live simply, abundantly, and self-sufficiently — and not to get intimidated by how far they might be from a “completely realized” urban homestead. He will share examples of projects from his family’s site and detail simple steps to inspire beginning or increased home-based food production. The result is more abundant landscapes of fruits and vegetables, superior produce, shrinking grocery bills, and a sense of accomplishment! Books available for sale, and author for signing.

Altadena neighborhoods are already rich in such landscapes. Marcia Coppess, a founding member of COFE (Co-op and Food Exchange of Altadena) will explain how this local food exchange links together people who share produce from home gardens, orchards, and chicken coops. COFE has increased the variety of home-grown produce its members enjoy, as they swap garden tips and solve the problem of 100 pounds of plums ripening at once. A luscious display of home-grown produce will stir our gardening aspirations, and attendees are invited to bring some of their own harvest to swap. Growing and sharing produce is one element of sustainability — supporting local businesses is another.

There are efforts underway to add a food co-op to Altadena’s business community, and Patrick Reagan, host of *Altadena Wants A Co-op* website, will provide information about how a co-op works and his group’s



efforts to create such a local business venture.

Board member and local historian Michele Zack will round out the morning with a short talk about Altadena’s history of abundance — building on research shared in her presentation on *Altadena’s Nurseried Past* at last year’s Altadena Heritage event, Breakfast at Nuccio’s.

There will be plenty of time for questions, and we will also discuss future Sustainable Altadena events. Please bring your ideas, and help us hone in on the workshops that would be most useful to you from

(please turn to page 3)

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

SEED PLANTED BY ALTADENA HERITAGE
INSPIRES NEW HILLSIDE ORDINANCE

PAGE 2

I am proud to remind our members that on October 30, 2004 Altadena Heritage hosted a roundtable we called *Visioning Altadena: The Future of Our Hillsides*. The objective was to assess our situation and to find community-based solutions to preserve Altadena's hillsides and views. Now, an ordinance to do just that is on its way to the Board of Supervisors and Altadena Heritage can take pride in our part of getting the ball rolling.

When famed architectural photographer Julius Shulman, then 94, addressed a Heritage event in early 2004, he warned that our most precious heritage — our beautiful foothills — could soon become a jumbled mass of tacky houses. "I just drove past the Glendale Hills, and Altadena is going to be the same if you don't do something before it's too late."

At that time, estate values were climbing fast, and hillsides previously considered unbuildable were suddenly viable for development. The same year, a developer had plunked down terrible houses on Devonwood Drive, one right on top of a much-loved trail that he managed to "vacate" legally by simply declaring no one was using it. Neighbors grieved for the beautiful lost hillside, joined by hikers and equestrians who could no longer enjoy the trail they had meandered along for years.

Altadena Heritage's roundtable (held in the Library's Community Room) had the desired effect: it spurred formation of an ad hoc committee modeled on the working group that, ten years earlier, had crafted Altadena's "Community Standards District" to fend off neighborhood-altering mansionization. The committee's task: to decide what could and should be done to protect our hillside heritage. Thomas Stahl, myself, and other Heritage members served

along with concerned citizens, large foothill landowners, Altadena Foothills Conservancy, and Town Council members to formulate common sense guidelines, balancing the rights of all stakeholders by considering grading, existing trails, development on ridgelines, and a host of other factors. We met monthly for years; our chairman was a neighbor of the "Devonwood Debacle," Patty Mulligan, who helped us sift through the hillside protection provisions of neighboring communities and led us tirelessly. We judged there was room for three more La-Vina-sized developments plus many smaller lots in privately owned hillside property. We considered ridgeline visibility and reviewed satellite images to determine where development would have the most serious impact. Los Angeles County planners helped us to draft a Hillside Ordinance that was clear and enforceable. Every household received notice of a public meeting held



, to go over proposed changes, and to get everyone set up to learn and ask questions. A large majority supported the ordinance with a few modifications; these are currently being worked in, and we expect the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to vote to protect our hillsides sometime this summer.

Membership in Altadena Heritage is your gift to the community. Your support keeps us involved in the kind of long-term, important work described above, and in fact Heritage is the only such organization in Altadena. We worked to warn Altadenans in effect with the library committee throughout its long process of evaluating future needs and planning a building program. And now, we have embarked on an

exciting new "Sustainability Series." Beginning May 30, Heritage will host a number of events — significant, sociable, and educational — that will positively impact our neighborhoods, our lives, and our planet. Saving energy and water as we fix up our houses and grow more delicious, healthy food in "Homestead Altadena" is the goal. So please renew your membership and invite your neighbors to join.

– Mark Goldschmidt, Chairman

GOLDEN POPPY GOES BARNYARD

SAVE THE DATE JULY 26, 4-7 P.M.

In keeping with this year’s sustainability theme, Altadena Heritage’s Golden Poppy Awards and Garden Party will be held at the amazing Altadena Homestead of Cozzi Petalka and John Steinmetz — LA Opera violist and bassoonist, respectively. Cozzi, rare fruit aficionado and gardener who raises turkeys (making sausage from ones that grow too big to roast on Thanksgiving), will speak about farming in Altadena. Tours of the family homestead will be offered. Golden Poppy honorees this year will be those who create beauty using drought tolerant plants; they will tell the stories of their gardens and answer questions. Saving water is saving energy!

This annual event will support our sustainability series and is a Membership-building event! Bring friends and neighbors with you to enjoy a feast of Altadena-produced comestibles and home-grown delicacies. Don’t miss this rare opportunity to see and enjoy a fully-realized Altadena homestead. Reserve now at Altadenaheritage@earthlink.net.



Hillside Ordinance public meeting, February 15, attracted 150 Altadenans.

(Abundant Altadena... Continued from Page 1)

among the many we are considering. This event is free to Altadena Heritage members, a perfect morning to **join or renew your membership!** Non-members are also welcome to join us for \$5 entry fee. Please RSVP to Altadenaheritage@earthlink.net or 626/799-0054; walk-ins welcome, space permitting.

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

**SUNDAY, JULY 26
SAVE THE DATE!**

**MEMBERS ONLY
RENEW OR JOIN**

RSVP
ALTADENAHERITAGE@EARTHLINK.NET
OR
626/797-0054

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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