

Digging Deep

Give Your Gardens Some Summer Love

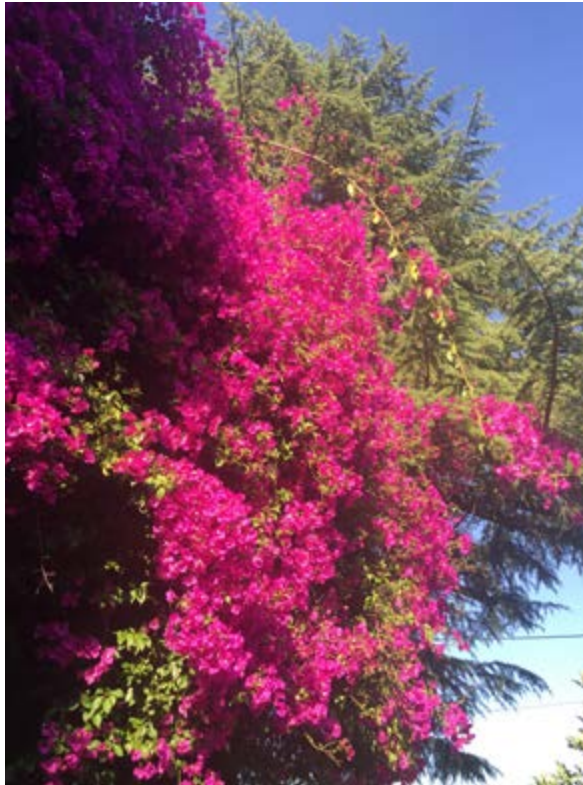
... continued from page D1



Get creative by planting basil in an old boot.

Butterflies are everywhere and the hummingbirds are the happiest I've witnessed in years, flitting from blossom to blossom with stops at the fountain for a quick drink. Hummingbirds have long memories and when you feed them they will return year after year, even migrating over 4,000 miles to get to their preferred gardens. Favorite sources of food for hummingbirds include the brightly colored blossoms of penstemon, columbine, agastache, monarda, salvia, fire poker, heuchera, rosemary, honeysuckle, fuchsia and any throated vine. Don't forget to add a gurgling water source where they will entertain you with their bathing and sipping antics.

Before hitting store shelves fruits, and vegetables travel an average of 1,500 miles, reducing quality, nutrition and taste. To increase flavor and boost the health of your family, introduce vegetables, herbs, and fruits into your organic gardening



What's summer without a wall of brilliant bougainvillea

practice. Buy four-inch pots to gallon containers of tomatoes, peppers, squash, cucumbers, eggplants and whatever else you find at your local retailer to enhance your barbecues and patio parties. You don't need a formal vegetable garden. Just tuck plants between your perennials in a place that is easily accessible to your kitchen for easy plucking. Be whimsical. Have some fun. Do as my daughter did and plant basil in a boot, thyme in a wine box, or green onions in a clear jam jar filled with water.

Who doesn't love walking barefoot in the grass on a warm summer day? Because of water restrictions, many people have allowed their lawns to die back or have replaced them with native and drought resistant plantings. If you don't have a lawn, your barefooting may have to take place in one of the parks or golf links. The Pearl's Premium grass seed that I sowed earlier in the spring is proving to be quite excellent. Although it is not



Loquats are plump and juicy.

Photos Cythia Brian

the lush deep green it was during the rainy days, it has remained a lighter jade color with a watering schedule of every five days, albeit with a few brown spots where the sprinkler missed. To walk on it is heavenly as it is very thick and carpet-like. Weeds are minimal and mowing is currently once a week. As the hot weather increases, I'll be watching closely for its drought resistant tendencies. Thus far, I am very pleased and will over-seed again in fall to enhance the lawn. If your favorite retailer doesn't carry the seed, Pearl's Premium is available on-line at www.PearlsPremium.com. Lawns are the best places for children, cartwheels and croquet.

Summer is almost here and I am definitely in love with the season. Add summer loving to your garden and be anything but boring. Share the love and be a little ridiculous.

... continued on page D14