EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Spring is Our Time!

Spring is a time of great anticipation for patrons of The Garden! Anytime is a great time to visit us but spring is truly the “coming out” season for most of the hundreds of plant species on display. Our rock roses (cistus) burst with their characteristic brilliant display of whites and pinks. Our March “Plant of the Month,” California lilac (ceanothus), offers up an elegant show of unique blue flowers. The whimsical, California-native matilija poppies (romneya) make their presence known with their unforgettable “fried egg” appearance. The colorful and lacy look of our numerous grevillea shrubs offer an elegant focal point on our pathways. The stunning brilliance of our pink trumpet trees (sababuis) will stop you in your tracks. Remember: These and the countless other botanical specimens at The Garden are on display not only for their beauty but also because they have such a minimal impact on water use. We feature them here, and you can integrate them into your home landscape, as well. Come see how inspiring water-wise gardening can be at The Garden this spring!

Make sure to join us on Saturday, April 27 for the Spring Garden Festival at The Water Conservation Garden, (see page 3). This annual family-friendly event, co-hosted with Cuyamaca College, features plant sales, garden supply vendors, workshops on gardening and landscape design, arts and crafts, petting zoos, food, and live music. There’s something for everyone at the Spring Garden Festival!

BUTTERFLY PAVILION TAKES SHAPE

As we reported to you in the last issue of In Bloom, The Garden was the recipient of an magnanimous gift from the family of a beloved donor, the late Dorcas Uutter, for the installation of a new butterfly pavilion. Garden staff has been working diligently with designers and fabricators to create what is expected to be one of the finest butterfly habitats in San Diego County. In addition, Miramar Wholesale Nurseries has generously offered to donate the plant material for the pavilion, for which we are extremely grateful. The Garden held a groundbreaking ceremony on March 6 (see page 3) and we look forward to a scheduled public opening in August.

A unique feature of the Butterfly Pavilion will be the “Friends of the Butterflies” donor program to support the pavilion in perpetuity (see page 3). Members of the public will have the opportunity to sponsor a personalized piece of artwork with their names on them for permanent display in the exhibit. Contact The Garden today to become one of our early “Friends of the Butterflies.”

John Bolthouse
Executive Director

INTRODUCING NEW BOARD MEMBER

Elyssa Robertson

The Garden is pleased to welcome Elyssa Robertson as the newest member of its Board of Directors. Elyssa is the Principal Biologist with REC Consulting. She has served on the East County YMCA Board and Dianne Jacob Trails Committee, founded the Rancho San Diego Farmer’s Market, and volunteers on habitat restoration projects.
The Cuyamaca College Ornamental Horticulture Department and The Water Conservation Garden invite you and your family to enjoy the 20th Annual Spring Garden Festival on Saturday, April 27, 2013, from 9am–4pm.

The theme of this year's festival is Celebrating Urban Farms and Gardens, and the day-long community event offers an exciting day of entertainment and education, with nearly 200 exhibitors and a bevy of experts on hand to help people reconnect with the food they eat and learn to live more sustainably in our arid southern California region.

The Garden will feature education and fun, with a special focus on creating water-wise landscapes, with professional landscape design advice throughout the day. Guest speaker Greg Rubin will give a talk based on his new book, co-authored with Lucy Warren, titled The California Native Landscape: The Homeowner's Design Guide to Restoring its Beauty and Balance. Other experts will offer information on making compost, growing edibles, cheese making, and using permeable pavement to help protect our watersheds. The "Mt. Smarty-Plants™ Grows Earth Heroes™" program will be featured in The Garden's 450-seat amphitheater in addition to other live entertainment throughout the day.

Another highlight of the event is the Ornamental Horticulture department's biggest plant sale of the year at their on-site nursery, which will be bursting with plants, including ornamentals and edibles, at incredibly affordable prices. Horticulture demonstrations will provide insight into the department's programs, and in keeping with the event's urban farming theme, visitors will be treated to presentations on beekeeping, raising goats and chickens, and more.

Children will enjoy the various animal encounters throughout the festival, including a petting zoo, alpacas, birds of prey and other critters. The Rancho San Diego Farmer’s Market, which joins the festival for the first time, will offer an international food court, locally grown organic produce, and specialty food items.

The Spring Garden Festival Committee thanks the following sponsors for their generous support of the 2013 Spring Garden Festival: San Diego Home & Garden Lifestyles, The Foundation for Grossmont and Cuyamaca Colleges, San Diego County Water Authority, Otay Ranch by Baldwin & Sons and Carollo Engineers.

For more information, visit www.thegarden.org/springfest.
IN THE GARDEN

**Tomato Trivia!**

Spring is in the air, signaling that it is time to begin sowing edible crops that will grace our kitchens in the summer and early fall. The Garden features a tomato growing class this April, and as anyone who has grown them can attest, no store-bought tomato can rival the deliciousness of one ripened on the vine and plucked at the peak of flavor. Read on for a bit of trivia for this much adored, but once maligned, magnificent fruit:

- Originally cultivated by the Aztecs and Incas as early as 700 A.D., the tomato is native to the Americas. The name “tomato” derives from “tomatl,” its name in Nahuatl, the language of the Aztec people.

- Up until the end of the eighteenth century, physicians warned against eating tomatoes, fearing they caused not only appendicitis but also stomach cancer from tomato skins adhering to the lining of the stomach.

- The tomato’s Latin name, *Solanum Lycopersicon*, translates to “wolfpeach” – peach because the fruit was round and luscious and wolf because it was erroneously considered poisonous, as it so closely resembled the deadly nightshade plant.

- All parts of the tomato plant, with the exception of its fruit, are actually poisonous due to the alkaloids they contain. When the alkaloids are suspended and diluted with water, they make an easy-to-use spray that is toxic to aphids, but still safe around plants and humans (external use only).


**WaterSmart Gardening Workshop for Teachers**

Don’t miss a unique opportunity on Tuesday May 14, 2013 to learn how to set up a gardening program at your school. Garden Based Education strongly supports the state’s academic content standards. This five-hour workshop will present the basic principles of WaterSmart gardening and includes an instructional tour of the Water Conservation Garden. Participants receive a binder with curriculum materials, plant identification information, children’s gardening guide, and ideas about starting a garden at your school. To register contact: Susan Bohlander at the San Diego County Water Authority at (858)522-6720 or sbohlander@sdcwa.org.

**APRIL PLANT OF THE MONTH**

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**Tomatoes, Marvelous Tomatoes!**

*Saturday, April 6th (10:00am –12 noon)*

Karan C. Greenwald, ”The Tomato Queen” is back for her very informative workshop on growing Heirloom tomatoes! She will have a large variety of Heirloom tomatoes on sale after the workshop.

**Members Free, $10 Non-Members**

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**VOLUNTEER AT THE GARDEN!**

There are many ways to get involved! Volunteer opportunities include areas of horticulture, guided tours, gift shop, nursery, special events, and more.

*For more information, please contact Pam Meisner at pam@thegarden.org or 619•660•0614, ext. 13*
Davila Day School Visits The Garden

Introducing the Davila Day School students! These remarkable and energetic kids attend Davila Day School’s special education program for students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and who often have other developmental challenges. Some of the students from the school, and their teacher, have found The Garden to be a very special learning environment. When the children arrive for their monthly visit to The Garden, their smiles and excitement are positively infectious to everyone around!

Education Director Pam Meisner (aka Ms. Smarty-Plants™), who is certified in American Sign Language, and her team, recently created an educational program designed just for the Davila students. Deaf children learn differently than hearing children. Tactile, hands-on teaching and visual modalities are some of the methods that work best and The Garden is a wonderful place for Deaf students to learn through these teaching methods. The children’s teacher, Keri Gravette, praised The Garden’s Deaf education program, saying, “My gratitude to The Water Conservation Garden extends far beyond a simple thank you. Ms. Smarty-Plants™ and her team have given my students the opportunity to enjoy an outdoor, hands-on curriculum appropriate to their developmental needs. Without these field trips, my students would not have access to a science curriculum or a learning environment outside of school.”

As a token of their appreciation, the Davila students gave Ms. Smarty-Plants™ a beautiful gazing ball made from a bowling ball covered with sparkling gems. Look for it to be installed in the Dorcas Utter Sensory Garden soon.

NEW! “Ms. Smarty-Plants™ Grows Earth Heroes” Program

Who’s going to save the Earth? The Ms. Smarty-Plants™ Earth Heroes, that’s who! This spring, a new assembly program called “Ms. Smarty-Plants™ Grows Earth Heroes” will launch at schools all around the county. The Garden’s education team has been hard at work on the interactive assembly program, and is excited to introduce the world to five new “Earth Heroes” who will help save the planet: Recycler, ENERG, Water Saver, Litter Gitter, and Wildlife Defender! This new program highlights diversity and gets kids “interacting” with conservation. During the assemblies, children will don capes, super-power belts, and Earth Hero-specific adornments while they make decisions about how best to save the earth. Each assembly attendee will receive an Earth Hero commitment card, featuring one of the Earth Hero characters. Look for Earth Heroes all around San Diego...you never know where they may turn up!

“Ms. Smarty-Plants™ Grows Butterfly Garden with High Tech Elementary!

Ms. Smarty-Plants™ recently partnered with Mr. Daniel Romo’s first grade class at High Tech Elementary school to create a one-of-a-kind butterfly garden and monarch way station that serves as a science lab for the students. The children and their parents helped to build the garden and the experience has really engaged the entire classroom. These first graders truly understand the butterfly life-cycle by getting to see it in action every day! Visit www.thegarden.org to watch Ms. SmartyPlants™ interview the High Tech Elementary students in their wonderful butterfly garden.
PEOPLE, PLACES & THINGS

Philanthropy in Action

The Garden is incredibly grateful to docents Vince & Kay McGrath, Sue Ellen Benson, Mary Ann Stepnowski, and Richard Wright (picture above from left to right), who recently underwrote the purchase of a new Cushman utility cart. The new cart is already hard at work helping our dedicated facilities team with various projects around The Garden. Thank you!

New Member Benefit

The Water Conservation Garden is pleased to announce a great new benefit for its members! All members of The Garden now receive a 10% -15% discount on all purchases at our partner nurseries throughout San Diego County.

- Cedros Gardens – Solana Beach (cedrosgardens.com)
- Gardens by the Sea – Leucadia (gardensbytheseanursery.com)
- Hunter’s Nursery – Lemon Grove (huntersnursery.com)
- Kniffing’s Discount Nursery – Alpine (kniffingsnursery.com)
- Mission Hills Nursery – Mission Hills (missionhillsnursery.com)
- Rancho Valhalla Nursery – El Cajon (ranchovalhallanursery.com)
- Walter Anderson – Point Loma, Poway (walterandersen.com)

Members must show a valid, current Garden membership card at the time of purchase. Contact The Garden if you need a new membership card to take advantage of this benefit.

For more information on Garden membership, visit www.thegarden.org.

New In the Gift Shop

A Garden of Gifts for Mother’s Day

The Garden Gift Shop is overflowing with new merchandise, perfect for gift-giving on Mother’s Day, Sunday, May 12. If Mom likes to play in the dirt, we’ve got floral print garden gloves, and a handy 2-in-one soil scoop and weed avenger. If relaxing in the garden is more her style, Mom will love a set of scented candles, and garden-inspired jewelry, wrapped up in a lovely garden tote, pictured.

New Book in Stock!

The California Native Landscape: The Homeowner’s Design Guide to Restoring Its Beauty and Balance

By Greg Rubin and Lucy Warren
Timber Press

Stop by the Gift Shop to get your copy of an essential new resource for conservation-minded California gardeners.

The California Native Landscape teaches homeowners how to successfully create a lush and colorful landscape with native plants. The authors stress the importance of smart garden design and combining the right plants to promote the natural symbiosis that occurs within plant communities. This new book also has cutting-edge information on the crucial role that natives play in creating fire-resistant landscapes.

Greg will offer a talk and book signing at the Spring Garden Festival! For information, visit www.thegarden.org/springfest
FOCUS ON PHILANTHROPY

Brick Paver and Bench Program

Building a legacy of giving and support for The Garden is the key to its longevity! Just as The Garden’s mission is to promote water conservation and “sustainable living”, we need to ensure that The Garden is sustainable through philanthropic contributions and support.

You can be part of The Garden’s legacy and sustainable future by becoming a donor through our Paver and Garden Bench program. In key areas throughout The Garden are spaces where you can have your name and/or the names of your loved ones inscribed on specially designed pavers and benches. This program is also open to our friends in the business community.

The Paver program offers two levels of participation as follows:

Front Gate Pavers: A limited number of pavers are located at the main entrance to the Garden and garner significant visibility. You may invest in one or more at $500 each.

Plaza Pavers: Located in the plaza just after you enter The Garden through the main entrance and in the plaza near the Gift Shop, you may invest in one or more of these pavers at $250 each.

The following donors generously contributed to The Garden during Dec 2, 2012 - March 1, 2013

*Participant in this year’s Annual Appeal $5 Challenge!

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You may have noticed the attractive benches with brass plaque dedications located throughout the Garden. You can sponsor a bench to commemorate or memorialize a person or event for $2500 for a 10-year period after which time you may renew your exclusive patronage of the bench.

We hope you will join us in sustaining The Garden! If you are interested in becoming a Garden philanthropist through the bench or paver program, please contact The Garden’s Development Officer, Lorraine Frigolet at 619-660-0614 ext. 15 or Lorraine@thegarden.org

New or Renewing Members as of March 1, 2013

Katherine Belo
Thomas & Vicki Bernitt
Andrea Bitterling
Ilene Broman
Jo Brooks Family
Sarah Brumfield
Paula Cordeiro & David O’Brien
Julia deBeauclair

Jacqueline Donnell
Ellen Downing
Kate Engler
Cynthia Essay Family
Richard Farrar
Carol Pasching
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Kathleen Hedberg Family

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$100-$249
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Judy Fink
John Linden
Chuck & Linda Muse
Pacific Green Landscape
William & Bessie Pickington
Mark & Anne Zacovic*

$5-$99
Ted & Janet Andrews
Lee Badger

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Mark Watton
Linda Whitney
Lysa Woodall*
Myra Zimmerman*

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For more information, contact Elizabeth Ramos at elizabeth@thegarden.org or 619-660-0614, x14.

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