A close-up photograph of a flowering plant with a dense, upright spike of small, two-lipped purple flowers. Each flower has a white or light-colored center. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting foliage.

In Bloom

*Dorcas Utter Memorial Butterfly Pavilion
Plant of the Month Program
Landscapes for San Diego Project*

A Newsletter of The Water Conservation Garden

Winter 2012 - 2013
Volume 3, Number 1

www.thegarden.org

OUR MISSION

To educate and inspire through excellent exhibits and programs that promote water conservation and the sustainable use of related natural resources.

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Open daily from
9:00 am to 4:00 pm
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Cover photograph:
Salvia leucantha 'Mexican Bush Sage'

Executive Director's Column *Looking Back, Looking Ahead*



This is the time of the year when we reflect on the year about to pass while looking forward to the promise of the new year before us. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time during this, my first year as The Garden's new Executive Director. Our events have been successful, the talents on our Board of

Directors have grown, our volunteer corps is more dedicated than ever, The Garden's staff is setting new standards for professionalism, and the community's support continues to grow. I am proud of what The Garden accomplished in 2012, and expect an even greater success in 2013.

What the Future Holds

As The Garden approaches its fifteenth anniversary in 2014, we've begun to ask ourselves a fundamental question: Where do we go from here? The Garden's long-term future – an exciting one to be built on past achievements – will require introspection, imagination and commitment.

To that end, in 2013, the Board of Directors will begin working in earnest on a five-year strategic plan. The goal will be to set a clear path to The Garden's programmatic and financial future with a focus on greater self-sufficiency, sustainability, growth, and

relevance. Much of our work will be informed by feedback from those that matter most: *you, The Garden's supporters*. Look for updates on our strategic planning efforts in the months ahead.

Giving at its Best

Thanks to so many of the Garden's members and supporters, Annual Appeal 2012 is on track to be one of the most successful end-of-year fundraisers ever. As of this writing, we have surpassed the \$14,000 mark – just about halfway to our goal. We extend gratitude to all who have given (page 7), with special thanks to **Bill Verbeck**, whose repeated generosity to The Garden continues to make a meaningful difference.

We are further humbled by a recent significant gift from the **Utter family** (page 3). Made in memory of beloved volunteer the late Dorcas Utter, this gift will make possible a new butterfly exhibit, scheduled to open next summer. This will be a dynamic new addition to The Garden

and we are pleased to be able to honor Dorcas by sharing her love of butterflies with all ages.

On behalf of the staff, volunteers and Board of Directors of The Water Conservation Garden, I extend Season's Greetings to you and yours, and best wishes for a happy, healthy 2013.

John Bolthouse
Executive Director

I am proud of what The Garden accomplished in 2012, and expect an even greater success in 2013.

Meet the New Members of Our Board of Directors



Tom Allingham

Tom Allingham is owner of Backflow Services of La Mesa and has taught plumbing and backflow prevention technology at numerous community colleges. He has held leadership positions with the American Waterworks Association and the La Mesa Chamber of Commerce. Tom is an active volunteer with the San Diego Model A Club and Stand Up for Kids teen homeless shelter.



Tony Embrey

Tony Embrey has over 37 years of service in financial management for the federal government. He worked for the Naval Sea Systems Command in Virginia and, currently, Space & Naval Warfare Systems Command (SPAWAR) in San Diego. He enjoys gardening, serving as a docent at the Water Conservation Garden since 2008, and is active in the Cygnet and Civic Theatres of San Diego.



Cheryl Minshew

Cheryl Minshew is a retired educator, business owner, and former director of the Heritage of the America's Museum in El Cajon. She has served on the boards of Historic Highway 80 Foundation, Rancho San Diego/Jamul Chamber of Commerce, Grossmont College Foundation, and Dehesa Elementary School Board. She is President of the Rancho San Diego Rotary Club and was recognized as Rotarian of the Year in 2007 and 2012.

Plant of the Month Program Begins January 2013



This January, The Garden will launch its new “Plant of the Month” program. At the beginning of each month, a distinct water-wise plant will be featured in our nursery, and sold while supplies last. A companion class will be offered that complements the species being featured, and The Garden will supply information about the care and cultivation of the plant on Plant of the Month care cards. Look for Cape Honey-suckle in January and Mexican Bush Sage (featured on this month’s cover) in February.

For more information see our Classes & Events insert.

New Staff



Tamara Michaels
Educator and “Ms. Smarty-Plants™” Double Meet
Tamara Michaels, the newest addition to our education team, and a Ms. Smarty-Plants™ double! In this distinctive role, Tamara will help The Garden expand its Ms. Smarty-Plants™ programs, which have rapidly grown. Tamara holds a MA in Curriculum and

Instruction/Experiential Education with a concentration in Eco-Psychology. As an educator for over 25 years, she has worked in Special Education, has facilitated the On-Belay Team and Challenge Course, was an in-home family therapist, and is a Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor. Welcome Tamara!



Steven Zampanti
Facilities Assistant

Meet the newest member of our facilities team, Steven Zampanti. Steven is pursuing his Associate Degree in Horticulture at Cuyamaca College and is looking forward to graduating next year. Steven has been a grower for the Ornamental Horticulture department’s Nursery for the past

two years, and currently holds the position of Head Grower. Upon graduating from Cuyamaca, Steven hopes to follow on in the field of greenhouse plant production. Of his current position as Facilities Assistant at The Garden, Steven says, “I am very excited to be a part of The Water Conservation Garden team!”

Take a Virtual Tour of The Garden

A new video tour of The Garden is now online at www.thegarden.org, providing a preview for first-time visitors of all that The Garden offers, plus valuable conservation lessons. The 12 1/2 minute video, featuring Ms. Smarty-Plants™ as tour guide, was created as one part of a \$535,000 state grant to a consortium led by Cuyamaca College that is creating curriculum for water and wastewater technology programs at community colleges across the state. The video was created as a learning tool that supports the new curriculum, and due to the power of the world wide web, is a wonderful way for people across the globe to “visit” The Garden.



New Exhibit to Showcase Wonder of Butterflies

Until her passing in 2007, the late **Dorcas Utter** was for years one of The Garden’s most beloved volunteers, playing a key role in developing The Garden’s volunteer program and giving hundreds of hours of her time in The Garden’s exhibits.

Thanks to a recent generous gift from Dorcas’ family, facilitated through the partnership of longtime Garden supporter **Brad Monroe**, The Garden is pleased to announce it will be installing a new butterfly exhibit in her memory. The “Dorcas Utter Memorial Butterfly Pavilion” will introduce a new element to The Garden’s permanent exhibits – a living wildlife habitat – that will strengthen The Garden’s mission and add a new level of dynamism to its public programs.

Scheduled to open in summer 2013, the exhibit will feature a tall, 600-sq. ft. metal enclosure (called a “vivarium”) able to hold twenty visitors at a time. It will feature drought-tolerant plants, pathways and water features, interpretive labeling, and hundreds of butterflies of at least six different species native or endemic to San Diego County. In addition, a new educational program will be introduced to help students and patrons not only learn about butterflies but what types of plants attract them. The gift also establishes a maintenance endowment for the exhibit and new opportunities for members of the public to support the exhibit in perpetuity are under development.



IN THE GARDEN

Spotlight on a Species: *Salvia leucantha*

Making a colorful splash on the cover of this edition of our newsletter is *Salvia leucantha*, or **Mexican Bush Sage**, as it is commonly known.

This downy, showy plant is native to central and eastern Mexico, and is a favorite in drought-tolerant landscapes with its velvety purple spikes and white flowers. Salvias are some of the showiest plants for containers and borders,



and are coveted not only by butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds, but also by cut-flower enthusiasts for the sheer abundance of flower spikes a bush produces. Each plant needs quite a bit of room to grow—plant in the ground about 4 feet apart as it spreads out readily up to 4 feet wide, with its colorful inflorescence reaching skyward up to 4 feet from summer until fall. Beautiful grey-green foliage compliments the assertive blooms which are at their best when the plant receives full sun and well-drained soil. It is hardy to 15 degrees F. On your next visit to The Garden, be sure to visit our robust grouping of Mexican bush sage that borders the pathway leading from the container logic exhibit to the native plant garden.



Benefits Bloom for Members!

When you support The Garden through your membership, not only do you take a stand for water conservation and stewardship of related natural resources, but you reap some exciting rewards as well.

For information on membership and its benefits, and to enroll, please visit www.thegarden.org.

ADVERTISE WITH US!

For advertising opportunities in this quarterly newsletter, please contact Elizabeth Ramos at: elizabeth@thegarden.org or 619-660-0614, x14.

Winter Gardening Checklist for the Southwest

It's cold outside, but there is still plenty that can be done in the garden during winter.



Protect

Cold-sensitive plants, including desert rose, spurge, and subtropical cacti need to be covered with burlap or horticultural frost blankets when frost is forecast.

Prune

Tackle deciduous trees with loppers and pruners, including chaste tree, desert willow, and

catclaw acacia. Hold off on pruning palo verde, mesquite, or plants damaged by frost.

Plant

Get bare-root woody plants into the ground so they'll be established before the hot, dry winds arrive. Plant cool-season flowers such as sweet pea and penstemon; herb seedlings like garlic, lavender, and rosemary; and cool-season vegetable seedlings such as broccoli, lettuce and cauliflower.

Weeds

The arrival of winter rain brings weeds. Try to keep up with weeding by hand pulling or using a hoe on tiny seedlings.

Water Wisely

Turn off or reduce timing on irrigation timers, watering new landscape plantings if rainfall is scarce.

For more tips, visit *Better Homes and Gardens*, our membership partner, at www.bhg.com.

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.



Carol Stevens, 2013 Docent President



Carol Stevens

Meet Carol Stevens, incoming Docent President for the 2013 year. Carol has been a docent at The Garden since 2005, and has faithfully tended the topiary exhibit for the past four years, shaping drought-tolerant foliage into giant and impressive representations of a rabbit, giraffe, elephant and swan. Carol is enthusiastic about her new role as docent president, and along with her leadership team, aims to strengthen the docent program, building upon the successes of previous docent leadership.

Originally from Alabama, Carol has been a San Diegan since the age of nine, and has no intention of leaving “paradise”. She spent 30 years in elementary education, first as a teacher and then as an administrator, ultimately retiring from the Cajon Valley School District where she was influential in special education programs. Carol currently teaches online courses in the Childhood Development Department at Cuyamaca College, where she was teaching when a colleague introduced her to The Garden back in 2005.

Carol is a Master Gardener, and loves gardening for the patience that it fosters, and for the uncertainty of it. “Mother nature is ultimately in control”, Carol remarked. “I can plant six of the same plants, and five may thrive while the sixth plant dies, and who knows why?” She doesn’t let setbacks in the garden get her down, however, seeing each failure as an opportunity to plant something new. Regarding her work in the topiary garden, Carol said that she continues to work at the topiaries because she loves to shape things. Carol has given shape not only to plants, but to students and personnel during her years in education. We look forward to watching Carol’s vision take shape as she leads the docent team during the 2013 year.



PEOPLE, PLACES, THINGS

Anne Mayer, 2012 Recipient of The Dorcas Utter Award for Extraordinary Service

This year, the distinctive Dorcas Utter Award was bestowed upon long-time docent and former Docent President, Anne Mayer. The award, presented at our annual Docent Appreciation Dinner, is given to those volunteers who have shown an extraordinary commitment to The Garden through their “above-and-beyond” contributions in time and talent. Selected by a nominating committee led by 2012 Docent President, Rosalie Dosik, Anne’s accomplishments include editor, writer and publisher of the “Spout”— the Docent newsletter – for over 5 years, team lead of the Veggie Garden Team, and unofficial Garden Photographer. Thank you Anne for all that you have done and continue to do!



Executive Director John Bolthouse presents Anne Mayer with award.

“Ms. Smarty-Plants”™ Goes High Tech!



MSP (Ms. Smarty-Plants™) now has a Facebook page!

BFF, LOL, IDK. For those of us in the 50 years old and over category, this lingo is probably somewhat foreign, but no longer to Ms. Smarty-Plants™! MSP is now on the social-media scene with a new Facebook page that will allow her to update followers with breaking news about events, programs and community happenings. And, you’ll get fun updates about how YOU and everyone you know can be an Earth Hero! Check out the new page by searching Ms. Smarty-Plants™ from your own Facebook page.



CONSERVATION

Conservation Rebates and Services

Conserve more in 2013! Our partner water agencies are offering outstanding rebate programs to assist customers in converting their landscapes to beautiful, San Diego-friendly landscapes which thrive in our semi-arid climate using less water than traditional landscapes. See the list below for a rebate program near you.

San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA)

The SDCWA has launched a new WaterSmart Turf Replacement Program available to residents throughout the county. For information about this new program, visit turfreplacement.watersmart.org

The SDCWA offers additional residential rebates which can be found at www.sdcwa.org/conservation

The City of San Diego

The City is offering rebates for residents in their service area on a number of items, including smart irrigation controllers, micro irrigation, rain barrels, and front yard turf replacement. Free residential landscape surveys are also available. For information on these programs, visit

www.sandiego.gov/water/conservation

Otay Water District

Otay offers residents in their service area rebates on rotating sprinkler nozzles, smart irrigation controllers, and high-efficiency clothes washers in addition to offering free residential landscape surveys. For information, visit www.otaywater.gov

Sweetwater Authority

Visit www.sweetwater.org for information on free residential landscape surveys and rebates offered in partnership with the Metropolitan Water District's SoCal Water Smart program.

Note that SDCWA and all of its member agencies participate in Metropolitan Water District's SoCal Water Smart Program which offers additional residential rebates at www.bewaterwise.com

California-Friendly Landscape Contest

Enter to win!

Ten water agencies in San Diego County are sponsoring the 2013 California-Friendly Landscape Contest, which recognizes San Diego residents for exceptional drought-tolerant residential landscapes. Winners receive a \$250 gift certificate and recognition in their water agency's newsletter, with one winner from each participating agency. Contest judges consider the following elements of water-wise landscaping in their evaluation of a property: overall attractiveness, appropriate plant selection, design, appropriate maintenance, and efficient methods of irrigation. The deadline for entry to the contest is April 5, 2013.

More information is at:
www.landscapetest.com.

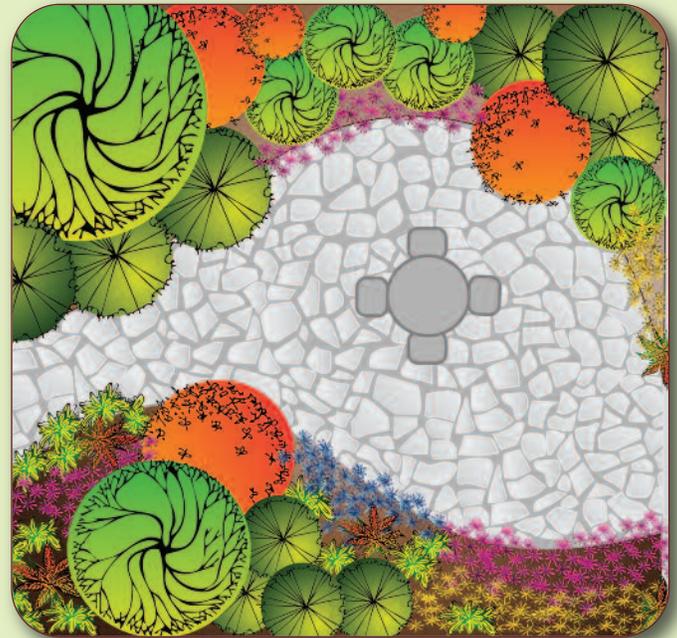
Landscapes for San Diego Project

Helix Water District, in conjunction with Padre Dam Municipal Water District, Otay Water District, Sweetwater Authority, and The Water Conservation Garden, with partial funding provided by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, acquired the services of four widely known San Diego landscape architects to draw model landscape plans that comport with the state's new Model Landscape Ordinance.

The **Landscapes for San Diego Project** produced four exciting landscape plans. They are available FREE and can be downloaded, printed, and used to assist homeowners in making their landscapes adhere to the Maximum Applied Water Allowance assigned by city and county planning divisions when redesigns or new landscapes requiring permits are developed. There are four landscape themes that fit common family audiences: Empty Nesters/Entertainer Landscape, Pet Friendly Landscape, Children Friendly Landscape, and Native/Wildlife Friendly Landscape. Beautiful plant pallets were used in these designs, and irrigation plans and watering schedules are included.

If you have questions about the plans, please contact: conserve@helixwater.org. If you have questions about Model Landscape Ordinances for your city or the county, contact your land use planning agency.

Reprinted with permission by Kate Breece, Helix Water District



FOCUS ON PHILANTHROPY

Focus on Bill Verbeck

Many of you may be familiar with the Verbeck name around The Garden. For instance, the “Verbeck Shuttle,” which Garden staff and volunteers use frequently to give public tours to patrons with mobility challenges. But did you know that Bill and his beloved late wife, Norma, were among the Founding Donors of The Garden? Ever since 1999, the Verbecks have continued to be significant contributors to the Garden. At the time The Garden was created, Bill was a Director on the Board of the Helix Water District.

In a recent conversation with Bill, he said the primary reason he is such a loyal supporter of The Garden is that he believes it is critical that people learn about the importance of conserving water. As he said, “After all, we do live in a desert!” He practices what he preaches, installing artificial turf at his home and landscaping his property with drought tolerant plants.

In addition to his water-wise ways, Bill is a wonderful model of a true philanthropist. He continues to give back to the East County community that has given him and his family so much over the years. He and his wife Norma owned Grossmont Escrow before retiring. Grossmont Escrow was a major sponsor of the Drew Ford/Kiwanis Club La Mesa Soap Box Derby Races over the past ten years.

In January of this year, the La Mesa Kiwanis honored the Verbecks for their many years of service to the community. Bill has been a member of the Club for 50 years. During that time, he and Norma generously contributed of



their time and financial support to numerous nonprofit organizations including the East County Boys & Girls Club, the Home of Guiding Hands, the Grossmont Hospital Foundation, the Jarrett Meeker Foundation, and, of course, the Water Conservation Garden. The Verbecks also donated to the Kiwanis’ annual scholarship program for graduating seniors from the Helix and Grossmont high schools.

Sadly, Norma passed away this summer. The Garden was honored to serve as the venue for her memorial and Bill was grateful that the celebration of her legacy was held in the garden that they both loved.

Thank you Bill for all you do for the community and especially for your continued generosity in support of The Garden. You and Norma have established a wonderful example of why the Water conservation Garden is worthy of the community’s support.

8th Annual Fall Garden Festival 2012 Sponsors and Partners:

The Garden is grateful to donors to the the Fall Garden Festival this year. The following sponsors/partners provided financial support and/or donation of services and products.

Sponsors

Miramar Wholesale Nurseries
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Trader Joe’s (La Mesa)

We thank the following donors who have given to our 2012 Annual Appeal as of September 1, 2012.

\$10,000

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Bobby Dean
Paul Downey and Mary Curran-Downey

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