The Garden wishes to thank Miramar Wholesale Nursery for their Title Sponsorship of the 2012 Fall Garden Festival.
FOCUS ON PHILANTHROPY

Focus on Bill Verbeck

Many of you may be familiar with the Verbeck name around The Garden. For instance, the “Verbeck Shettle,” 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 have welcomed 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.

Meet the New Members of Our Board of Directors

Tom Allingham

Tom Allingham is owner of BackShovel 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 Embery

Tony Embery 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 Cuyamaca and Civic Theatres of San Diego.

Cheryl Minshaw

Cheryl Minshaw is a retired educator, business owner, and former director of the Heritage of the Americas Museum in El Cajon. She has served on the boards of Historic Highway 80 Foundation, Rancho San Diego/Jamul Chamber of Commerce, Grossmont College Fine Arts, and Delecio 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.

John Bolthouse

John Bolthouse was recognized as Rotarian of the Year in 2007 and 2012. He serves on the Elementary School Board. She is President of the Rancho San Diego/Rancho San Diego Chamber of Commerce, the Grossmont College Fine Arts, and Delecio 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.

New or Now Reinstating Members as of September 1, 2012

Joe Hagen
California’s Own Native Landscape Design

Kevin Bargetto
Canyon Country Landscape Design

Tricia Dau
Dau’s Garden Center & Nursery

Steve Doherty
Doherty Landscaping

Paul Downey and Mary Corran-Downey

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Cover photograph: Cheryl Minshaw with Monarch Tags
CONSERVATION

Conservation Rebates and Services

San Diego-friendly landscapes which thrive in our semi-arid climate using less available water than traditional landscapes. See the list below for a rebate program near you.

San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA)
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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 in the 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.sandiegowater.gov/water/conservation.

Otay Water District
Otay offers rebates in their service area rebates on rotating sprinkler nozzles, smart irrigation controllers, and high-efficiency clothes washers in addition to other 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 model landscape ordinances for your city or county, contact your local use planning agency. Reproduced with permission by Kate Bruce, Helix Water District.

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 created four producing landscapes. 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.

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

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™ program, which has rapidly grown. Tamara holds a MA in Curriculum and Instruction/Experiential Education with a concentration in EcoPsychology.

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!”

Horticulture depart-ment’s Nursery for the past

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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 in 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 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 Dorecia 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 Dorecia’s 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 “Dorecia 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 main-endowed endowment for the exhibit and new opportunities for members of the public to support the exhibit in perpetuity are under development.

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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.


Take more photos of your own gardens and enter them in the 2013 California-Friendly Landscape Contest. To enter, download the entry form at www.landscapecontest.com and turn it in at participating agencies by April 5, 2013.

New Class:
“Plant of the Month” Plant Care Cards
Some of The Garden’s most popular classes are now available as “take home” care plans that you can use in your own garden. Please visit www.thegarden.org for more information.

NEW & EVENTS
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.

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 pale 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.

Carol Stevens, 2013 Docent President

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 exhibits 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, 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 Donik, 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!

“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.

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.
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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.

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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 Bruce, Helix Water District

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The Garden in Bloom

FOCUS ON PHILANTHROPY

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$10,000
William Verbeck

$1,000
Richard Wright

$255-$500
Kajono, Inc.
Suellen Benson
Kay & Vincent McGrath
Mary & Steve Zeppezovsky
Tommy Pine's Landscape

$100-$499
Marly Clackworth & Phil Hastings
Tony Eckley
Patricia & Lawrence Fox
Lorraine Friggit
Edward Hamilton
Anne Mayr Family
Loislyn Metzklan
Chuck & Linda Mize
Pacific Grove Landscape
Jody & Betty Hovick
Sedna De Associates
Harold & Boy Stor

$50-$99
Karen & Patricia Anderson
L.J. & Apry
Amanda Blythman
Adrianne Bock
Sarah (Barrett) Brook
Christi & Charles Casida
Rosalee Driskel
Whitney Dunway

$10-$49
Drudy & Frances Thueson
Leonard Verbeck
Mark Shorb

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Armstrong Garden Centers
Kelby Crest Landscape
Kellogg Garden Products
Mt. Wilbur Verbeck

Village Nurseries
Copagena College

Partners
Golden Bough (La Mesa)
Rudkins
Solar Rain Watory

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In Bloom

Dorcas Ulter 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