Executive Director’s Column

When I talk to the public about The Water Conservation Garden, I like to say that we stand on tall shoulders. From The Garden's conception in the early nineties to the strong position we find ourselves in today, this organization, its programs and its beautiful gardens and facilities exist thanks to the cumulative efforts, advocacy, and financial support of a plethora of generous individuals and institutions.

Few have played such an important role in The Water Conservation Garden’s success as the agency partners that comprise our Joint Powers Authority (JPA). Collectively, these six great entities – San Diego County Water Authority, Otay Water District, Helix Water District, Sweetwater Authority, the City of San Diego, and Cuyamaca College – believe strongly in the water conservation message. They actively promote The Garden as a public educational resource amongst their stakeholders and provide essential operational funding every year. To be sure, we are grateful to have support from other San Diego County water agencies, but it is the support of the JPA members that truly makes possible The Garden’s exhibits and popular adult and youth programs that thousands of people of all ages enjoy annually. In this time of severe drought, we are proud to say that support of The Water Conservation Garden amongst our region’s many water agencies remains strong.

Springtime Excitement

If you haven’t been to The Garden recently, you could not pick a better time. In the weeks ahead, patrons will witness an emerging palette of botanical color as the results of a new annual wildflower planting program emerge. We once again join our neighbors at Cuyamaca College for the Spring Garden Festival on April 25. Our Fruit & Vegetable Garden is being transformed by a corps of exceptional, hard-working volunteers. On May 9, we host our 2nd Annual Butterfly Festival, made possible by sponsorship from Baldwin & Sons and the County of San Diego via Supervisor Dianne Jacob. In June, we open our new Native Habitat Garden, thanks to the generosity of local Rotary clubs, Helix Water District, and numerous individual donors.

There’s something about springtime that brings out the best at The Garden. Please do come experience it for yourself.

John Bolthouse
Executive Director

News from the Board of Directors

The Garden is pleased to announce some exciting news on its Board of Directors.

In January, The Garden held its annual election of officers for the 2015 term. Re-elected to new terms were Elyssa Robertson as Board President, Tom Allingham as Vice President, and Harold Bailey as Treasurer. In addition, Peggy Matarese was elected Secretary.

We welcome Mora de Murguia, Bonnie Scott, and Joel Cloud, Jr., as the newest members of the Board of Directors. Mora is a manager at Baldwin & Sons and serves on the board of the Chula Vista Charitable Foundation. Bonnie is Professor Emerita of Women’s Studies at San Diego State University, and serves as a docent at The Water Conservation Garden. Joel, a member of one of El Cajon’s oldest and most respected families, is a real estate agent and formerly an attorney specializing in estate planning.

Finally, we are pleased to welcome Mark Robak as the 2015 ex officio representative of the Joint Powers Authority, The Garden’s primary funding agency. Mark serves on the board of directors of Otay Water District.
Native Habitat Garden Opens Saturday, June 13

The Water Conservation Garden opens its newest demonstration exhibit, the Native Habitat Garden, on Saturday, June 13. Made possible by lead gifts from Rotary Clubs of East County and Helix Water District, along with numerous other donations (see sidebar for full donor list), this new demonstration garden is an example of "ecology landscaping," an approach that attempts to replicate critical aspects of local ecosystems in residential landscapes.

Three plant communities will be represented, each with its own unique set of plants, habitat structure, microclimate characteristics, and potential plant/animal interactions: types of cover, food sources, nesting areas, etc. The close association of these plant communities will also form an ecotone, a transitional space between biotic communities with highly productive habitat value. A runoff retention basin will capture surface runoff during rains and support riparian (streamside) plants chosen to tolerate this seasonal inundation as well as summer drought. Coastal sage scrub herbaceous perennials will form the core of the habitat, and will appear as a diverse mass of 4’ tall flowers in the spring and summer buzzing with life. The perimeter of the exhibit will be planted as an Oak woodland, a mixed tree community with an associated group of understory plants that tolerate conditions of dry shade and support many bird species.

Because the Dorcas E. Utter Memorial Butterfly Pavilion sits at the center of the new habitat, special attention is given to the support of local butterfly species. Ninety percent of the keystone species in the habitat are larval host plants, plants that feed the caterpillar phase of native butterflies. This kind of comprehensive plant/animal support can only be provided by an ecologically oriented design. Generalized habitat gardening approaches that use a global palette of plants and address habitat structure broadly will only attract generalist animals already comfortable with human developed spaces. The threatened Monarch butterfly gets special pride-of-place, supported by the addition five species of native milkweeds to the habitat, each placed within the plant community that best supports them.
Member Appreciation Events
The Garden’s valued members are invited to two members-only events this year as we show our appreciation for this very special corps of Garden patrons.

FRIDAY, MAY 8TH, 12-4PM
The return of butterfly season is a wondrous time and The Garden invites its members to preview the Dorcas E. Utter Memorial Butterfly Pavilion on the eve of its re-opening. Learn about butterfly habitat, and enjoy docent-led tours of the pavilion and tasty springtime refreshments.

SUNDAY, JULY 19, 2015, 7PM
VIP MEMBER EVENT
Garden Members at The Wild Grape level ($100) and above are invited to attend our Stargazing Party with local astronomer George Varga to celebrate the 46th Anniversary of the Apollo Landing on the Moon. Moon pies, swiss cheese and other out-of-this world refreshments will be served.

Registration for these events is at www.thegarden.org or 619-660-0614 x10.

Available in The Garden Gift Shop
Mother’s Day and Father’s Day are just around the corner and we have some great gifts available in our gift shop! These lovely bird feeders and unique vegetable chimes are just a few of the new items we have to help make any garden special. Plus, we have a great selection of water-wise gardening books to help even the brownest of thumbs turn green.

The Gift Shop is open 9am - 4pm daily.

An Evening of Music in The Garden
July 26th, 6:00 - 7:30pm
(Includes intermission)

The San Diego Concert Band presents "An Evening of Music in The Garden" in The Garden’s outdoor amphitheater. The evening’s program depicts our American heritage through music that includes light classics, historical themes, and modern compositions for concert band. The award-winning band is based in La Mesa and has been playing formal programs and summer concerts in San Diego County and Southern California for over 25 years.

Tickets: Adults $15; Student/Military/Senior (55 +)/Garden Members: $12; Children (5 and under) free. Concert-goers are welcome to bring a picnic dinner. Alcoholic beverages not permitted. Tickets on sale mid-June in The Garden Gift Shop or online at www.sandiegoconcertband.com.
Overlooking the ocean, on the border of the Point Loma and Ocean Beach neighborhoods, is an eclectic dwelling known in these parts as the “Hippie House”. The San Diego band, Liquid Blue, is headquartered here and their manager, Scott Stephens, has created a welcoming garden along Sunset Cliffs Boulevard that is an International Peace Site, a Master Gardeners-certified “Earth-Friendly Garden”, and a Surfrider Foundation “Ocean-Friendly Garden”. We met up with Scott Stephens to learn more about his attention-getting, water-wise garden.

WCG: What was the inspiration for your water-wise garden’s design?

SS: I believe in using native plants, especially as San Diego continues to grapple with drought conditions. They are low-water users and are emblematic of the beauty our region. When we moved here two years ago, we removed the lawn right away and began working with Clayton Tschudy, The Water Conservation Garden’s horticulture director, on a landscape design, and with John Noble of Coastal Sage Gardening on the installation. Having learned about peace sites around the world while touring with Liquid Blue, I envisioned our yard to be a symbol of peace for the community, and it became an officially designated peace site by the nonprofit, World Citizen. We installed a peace pole like those found at peace sites throughout the world with an inscription that reads, “May Peace Prevail on Earth” in several languages.

WCG: What are some of your favorite plants?

SS: Definitely Californian native plants from right here in our region. And, those that bloom and will attract wildlife, especially butterflies and other beneficial insects like bees. Our garden includes yarrow, California poppies, and beach evening primrose.

WCG: Have there been any unexpected benefits from your garden?

SS: We get a lot of people stopping by to admire the garden and the peace pole, and the mural on the wall that surrounds it all. People take pictures and we let them walk through the garden. The Master Gardener Association of San Diego County certified our yard as an “Earth Friendly Garden” because it adheres to these principles of qualification: appropriate plants; nurturing the soil; responsible pest management; protecting wildlife; conservation of water and protecting water quality; conservation of energy and protecting air quality; and reducing waste. Also, Sunset Cliffs Natural Park across the street is installing an entire garden of all native plants and the people managing it are very excited that our two gardens will create a theme all around. We enjoy that our yard seems to make people happy.
MAY

Member Event: Butterfly Pavilion Open House Free
Friday, May 8th, 12:00 noon - 4:00pm
Garden members are invited to a special preview of the butterfly pavilion on the eve of its re-opening. Learn about butterfly habitat, and enjoy pavilion tours and delicious springtime refreshments. Details and registration at www.thegarden.org.

Butterfly Festival
Saturday, May 9th, 9:00am - 3:00pm
Celebrate the return of San Diego’s butterfly season and the re-opening of the Dorcas E. Utter Memorial Butterfly Pavilion! The festival will engage all ages with butterflies, highlighting the important role these amazing insects play in our ecosystem. Kids are invited to dress up for the Pollinator Party with Ms. Smarty-Plants™ and Miss Metamorphosis! Event details at www.thegarden.org/butterfly. Admission: Members Free, $5 (18+ years); $1 (3-17 years). Free Parking.

Home Compost Workshop Free!
Saturday, May 16th, 10:00am - 12 noon
Learn the basics of composting, how to compost with worms, and how to save water in the process with the Solana Center for Environmental Innovation’s FREE workshop at The Garden! Compost bins will be on sale with subsidized prices for Unincorporated County residents. Cash or check only. Limited to 20 participants. Register at www.solanacenter.org or call 760-436-7986 x222.

Growing and Caring for Water-Saving Fruit Trees
Saturday, May 23rd, 10:00am –12 noon
David Yetz of the California Rare Fruit Growers presents a “tasteful” class on growing and caring for citrus and other fruit trees. Class includes fruit sampling. Members Free, $10 Non-Members

JUNE

Dog Days of Summer Free!
Wednesdays, June - August, 4:00pm - 7:00pm
Stroll The Garden on Wednesday summer evenings when we stay open late for our leashed canine friends and their companions. Enter to win a fabulous doggie gift basket from KAHoots Pet Store (one per month) and pick up some sample bags of dog food as you explore the sights, smells and sounds of The Garden.

How to Hire a Landscape Contractor and Save $$$ Free!
Saturday, June 20th, 10:00am - 12:00 noon
Join Education Director Pam Meisner for an informative, common-sense approach to hiring a landscape professional. You’ll learn which questions to ask, how to properly plan, and receive money-saving tips too! Class made possible by the San Diego County Watershed Protection Program.

Toss the Turf
Saturday, June 27th, 10:00am - 12 noon
More Beauty, Less Water, More Fun! With ongoing drought conditions, now is the time to remove your thirsty turf (lawn) and replace it with a beautiful water-saving landscape. Instructor and landscape designer Jan Tubiolo will guide you through all the steps to create a turf-free space you’ll be proud of. Members Free, $10 Non-Members

Habitat Gardening
Saturday, July 11th, 10:00am - 12 noon
Join Horticulturist Clayton Tschudy, as he guides you through the process of creating a water-saving habitat garden, drawing upon The Garden's new “Native Habitat Garden” as an example. Your habitat garden will draw birds and butterflies to your yard, offering endless opportunities to observe and enjoy the wonders of wildlife while supporting their populations. Members Free, $10 Non-Members

Leaf Imprint Glass-Making
Saturday, July 18th, 10:00am - 12 noon
Join Debbie Solan of FusionGlass in a creative glass-making experience that ends with a unique piece of botanical art made by you. Bring 2-3 favorite leaves for imprinting, or search for the perfect specimens at The Garden. Class includes all supplies, instruction and firing of two art pieces that you will keep. $30 Members, $50 Non-Members

JULY

VIP Member Event: Star Party in The Garden Free!
Sunday, July 19th, 7:00pm
Garden Members at The Wild Grape level ($100) and above are invited to attend our Stargazing Party with local astronomer George Varga to celebrate the 46th Anniversary of the Apollo Landing on the Moon. Moon pies, swiss cheese and other out-of-this-world refreshments will be served. Eligible members must register at www.thegarden.org or 619-660-0614 x10.
“Wine and Walk: An Evening Stroll in The Garden” Free!
Wednesday, July 22, 6:00pm – 8:00pm
Enjoy a beautiful summer evening, a glass of wine, and a guided journey through The Garden to discover little known plant facts with landscape designer Jan Tubiolo.

An Evening of Music in The Garden
Sunday, July 26, 6:00pm – 7:30pm (includes intermission)
The Garden welcomes the return of the San Diego Concert Band for a third-annual joint fundraising concert that will showcase an outstanding evening of pops, classics, marches, and brand-new compositions from the Band’s repertoire. Tickets and information at www.sandiegoconcertband.com.

Say Cheese! Making Cheese. That Is!
Wednesday, August 12th, 6:00pm – 8:00pm
Spend a delicious summer evening with Don Axe, owner of Valley View Farms in Spring Valley, CA, making (and tasting) a variety of cheeses from locally sourced goat’s milk.
Members Free, $10 Non-Members

Sprinkler Repair and Landscape Maintenance
Saturday, August 22nd, 10:00am – 12 noon
When was the last time you checked your sprinklers? Landscape architect Steve Sherman of California Landscape Designs shows you easy ways to maintain your sprinkler system and irrigation controller, and offers a variety of tips to make landscaping easier. Members Free, $10 Non-Members

Designing Lush Landscapes with Colorful Water-Wise Plants
Saturday, August 29th, 10:00am–12 noon
Learn how to achieve a lush-looking landscape even in the drought. Christiane Holmquist, owner of Christiane Holmquist Landscape Design, will introduce you to a variety of plants that use little water but offer lots of eye-popping color and lush greenery for a landscape that says wow! Members Free, $10 Non-Members

**ONGOING PROGRAMS**

**Butterfly Pavilion – Open Fridays - Sundays, May 9 - August 31st**
Visit the Dorcas E. Utter Memorial Butterfly Pavilion for up-close encounters of butterflies native to the San Diego region! The Pavilion is open Fridays - Sundays, 9:00am-4:00 pm, with docent-led tours. **Admission: $3 (18+ years), $1 (3-17 years).** Garden members and children under 3 years free.

**FREE Garden Tours – Every Saturday at 10:00am**
Tour the lush, charming, and water-wise Garden with a knowledgeable docent to hear what makes our garden special, and be inspired to create a water-wise landscape of your own. Check our website for a listing of monthly themed tours.

**FREE Special Access Tour – Every Third Sunday at 10:00am**
Have trouble navigating the terrain of The Garden? Let us take you for a ride! Explore The Garden from the comfortable Verbeck Shuttle with a Garden Docent. This tour seats only 4-5 people. Advanced reservations required. Call 619-660-0614 x16.

**Professional Landscape Design Consultations**
Spend 45 minutes, one-on-one, with a professional landscape designer and leave with a basic design plan and list of suggested plants for your own drought-tolerant landscape. Bring a photo of your property, a list of areas you want to re-design, the dimensions of the space, and photos of design styles you love. **Call 619-660-0614 x10 for appointment availability, designer information and reservations.** Members $60, Non-Members $75

**Ms. Smarty-Plants™ School Tours and Assembly Program**
Calling all kids groups! Join Ms. Smarty-Plants™ as she takes you on a magical, fun, and interactive journey through plant adaptations, the water cycle, conservation, and much more. **Become a Ms. Smarty-Plants™ Earth Hero!** To book an educational tour of The Garden or a school assembly program, contact Education Specialist Jillian Quint at 619-660-0614 x16.

**Our Mission**
“To educate and inspire through excellent exhibits and programs that promote water conservation and the sustainable use of related natural resources.”
Ms. Smarty-Plants™ hits a home run on top of the Padres dugout at the 2015 San Diego Festival of Science & Engineering held at Petco Park. Inspired to save water, people are pledging to take shorter showers with the Ms. Smarty-Plants™ “pinky swear”!

In partnership with the Alzheimer’s Association, The Garden has developed a new program for the Association’s “Early Stage Connections” group for individuals living with early stage dementia, enabling them to socialize and have meaningful outdoor experiences with their families in nature.

Ms. Smarty-Plants™ was a featured educator at The Children’s Water Education Festival in Irvine. The festival is the largest of its kind in the U.S. with more than 7,000 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students attending. Ms. Smarty-Plants™, along with fellow presenters National Geographic and the Wyland Foundation, took this unique opportunity to educate students about local water issues.
Milkweeds Magnetic to Pollinators

The native California milkweeds, like their cousins from the midwest and the subtropics, have exceptionally showy blooms that come in a range of colors, high nectar production, and specialized pollen structures called pollinia that provide concentrated energy value for pollinating insects. This is why milkweeds attract all manner of pollinators including hundreds of butterflies, the wicked-cool spider wasps, and native beneficial bees. Milkweeds also support other natural predators and parasitoids of many crop pests making them useful for integrated pest management in your home vegetable garden. In a recent Washington State study, Showy Milkweed (Asclepias speciosa), which is also native to California, attracted the most beneficial insects of any plant in the study, such as mite-eating ladybeetles, minute pirate bugs, hover flies, and parasitic wasps (David G. James, unpublished data). As if this weren’t enough, there are many herbivores that are specialized to feed on the alkaloid sap in milkweeds including seed bugs, longhorn beetles, and the Oleander aphid, all of which are specialists and will seldom move to other plants in your garden.

And let’s not forget the threatened Monarch butterfly, the ultimate milkweed herbivore, whose caterpillars use milkweeds as their obligate larval host plants. Planting any kind of milkweed in your garden will help support Monarchs, but planting native milkweeds will also support the full range of local beneficial insects and the native milkweeds themselves, whose natural populations are also in decline because of intensive development. As the milkweed goes, so goes the Monarch.

The Water Conservation Garden is growing three native milkweed species that will be available for sale in mid-April. Showy Milkweed (Asclepias speciosa), Indian Milkweed (Asclepias eriocarpa), and Narrow-leaved Milkweed (Asclepias fascicularis) are all medium-water use plants best grown in hydrozones or near the house where you can occasionally give them an extra drink. All three are winter deciduous, but will come back in late spring timed with the summertime peak of Monarch season.

Featured plants:
1. Asclepias eriocarpa
2. Asclepias speciosa
3. Asclepias fascicularis

FLAVORS OF THE GARDEN
Infused Water—Cucumber, Strawberry & Thyme

Infused waters are a delicious way to stay hydrated this summer without any added sugars or calories. Simply combine your choice of fruits, vegetables, and herbs in a pitcher of water with ice to create endless flavor combinations. An infusion of cucumber, strawberry and thyme is both refreshing and interesting.

INGREDIENTS (washed)
1 small cucumber, sliced into rounds
6-8 strawberries, sliced
2 sprigs thyme, bruised to release oils

DIRECTIONS
Add all ingredients to a large pitcher (up to one gallon). Cover with 4 cups of ice then fill pitcher with water. Refrigerate for 2 hours or overnight to develop the flavors, then enjoy.

In a recent Washington State study, Showy Milkweed (Asclepias speciosa), which is also native to California, attracted the most beneficial insects of any plant in the study, such as mite-eating ladybeetles, minute pirate bugs, hover flies, and parasitic wasps.
IN THE GARDEN

More Docent Artistry in The Garden

Recently, The Garden’s mulch exhibit received a lovely freshening by “Tri-Team” docents Rosalie Dosik, Pauline Garcia, Sonya Heiserman, Bonnie Kime Scott, Kathryn Clayton and Carol Gross. This very creative group, whose artistry can be seen throughout The Garden, used warm earth colors with linear design overlays and textural brush strokes to enliven the 10 concrete cylinders that are a part of the mulch exhibit. Garden visitors can view and touch a variety of mulches housed within these beautifully decorated cylinders, and view a variety of succulents that some of them will now display.

We extend our sincere thanks to this very creative group for once again adding to the beauty of The Garden.

Become a Garden Member!

Membership at The Garden comes with a host of benefits including free classes, free admission to national and international botanical gardens, and discounts in the Gift Shop and at partner nurseries.

To become a member, call 619-660-0614 x10 or visit www.thegarden.org and click “Get Involved.”

GREAT MEMBER BENEFIT!

Garden members now receive a 10% -15% discount on all purchases at the following partner nurseries. A current membership card must be presented at the time of purchase.

- Barrels & Branches Nursery – Encinitas (www.barrelsandbranches.com)
- Cedros Gardens – Solana Beach (cedrosgardens.com)
- Gardens by the Sea – Leucadia (gardensbytheseanursery.com)
- Hunter’s Nursery – Lemon Grove (huntersnursery.com)
- Kniffing’s Discount Nursery – El Cajon (kniffingsnursery.com)
- Mission Hills Nursery – San Diego (missionhillsnursery.com)
- Rancho Valhalla Nursery – El Cajon (ranchovalhallanursery.com)
The following donors generously contributed to The Garden during November 2014 - February 2015

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**Las Patronas Supports The Garden’s Education Programs**

The Garden is grateful to Las Patronas, one of San Diego’s oldest and most active philanthropic organizations, for a recent grant supporting The Garden’s community outreach programs. Look for more details in the next edition of In Bloom!

**The Garden thanks the following Corporate Members for their ongoing support:**

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- Barona Band of Mission Indians
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- CalAmerican Water
- City of San Diego
- GDH
- Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District

- Helix Water District
- Hunter Industries
- Hydro-Scape
- Metropolitan Water District
- Otay Water District
- San Diego County Water Authority
- SDG&E
- SoCal Shade
- Sweetwater Authority

For more information on Corporate Membership, please visit www.thegarden.org or contact John Bolthouse, Executive Director, at 619-660-0614 x11.
The Garden is thankful for ongoing support from the members of our Joint Powers Authority:

![Joint Powers Authority Logos]

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