



# viewpoints

SPRING 2018

Volume 48 Issue 1

A Community Newsletter from the Grossmont – Mt. Helix Improvement Association



## Friends Don't Let Friends Buy Succulents!

### GMIA Succulent Swap

May 26, 2018, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

10805 Melva Road, La Mesa

VIP entry for GMIA members at 10:00 am  
(Non-members at 11:00 am)

Get a jump start on water-wise gardening at GMIA's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Succulent Swap. Bring cuttings or plants to share, but don't be shy if you are just getting started and don't have any extra plants – our generous participants always bring lots and there is plenty for all. GMIA will provide complimentary coffee and light snacks to round out the morning.

Enjoy the magnificent two-acre garden of GMIA members Tere Trout and Jonathan Becker. A huge thank you to Tere and Jonathan for graciously hosting this event in their inspiring low water Wonderland. Look for their huge African tortoise who can be seen wandering around the property nibbling on juicy succulents.

The Succulent Swap is open and free to the community. Please note: membership has its privileges with VIP entry for GMIA members whose dues are paid current.



## Celebrate Our Art & Garden Tour and Earth Day

Please accept our personal invitation to GMIA's premier Art & Garden Tour event on April 22. We hope you will join us for our most popular event that exemplifies the essence of our beautiful community: lush mature gardens, quiet streets, generous neighbors.

Spend an enjoyable afternoon gathering design ideas, learning what flourishes in our region, and discovering delightful landscapes in four private homes in our community. Local artists will be on hand to show and sell their work.

While it is not our intention to open our event to the general public, we will accommodate nonmember guests for a \$10 donation per person.

As always, our Art and Garden Tour is free to members whose dues are paid current. This is a family friendly event and we love to have well-behaved children attend, however, please be aware that participating gardens cannot accommodate strollers. No pets please.



Please check the mailing label on this newsletter for the expiration date of your membership. Annual dues are only \$18 per household and include complimentary admission to our Art & Garden Tour and VIP admission for our Succulent Swap. For questions about your membership, please contact Larry Nichols, Treasurer at 619-440-1607.



GROSSMONT-MT. HELIX  
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

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**Viewpoints is a community newsletter published by the Grossmont – Mt. Helix Improvement Association. Letters to the Editor should be sent to P. O. Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943-2751.**

*This newsletter reflects the efforts of your entire Board of Directors.*

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### MISSION

GMIA is a 79-year-old nonprofit 501(c)4 public benefit membership organization. Our mission is to preserve and enhance the character and quality of the community and foster pride in the area. We do not employ a paid staff and are served by an all-volunteer board.

## President's Message

A gardener's world is the world of a realist. Either a landscape is thriving, or it is not. No amount of wishing will make it grow. As caretakers of our small piece of backyard paradise, we recognize that we need to work to provide optimal conditions that enable our landscapes to flourish.

Our GMIA members know the same rules that pertain to nature apply to our community as well.

No amount of wishing will safeguard our neighborhood. Elbow grease and diligence are required to continue to ensure we maintain our wonderful semi-rural life style.

The hallmark of our community character is our mature landscape and well-kept properties. There is no better way to inspire and jump-start your own landscape than to join us on April 22 for our acclaimed Art & Garden Tour. Spring is a busy time for our organization as we launch into a series of events that highlight the unique region we call home. In addition to our Art & Garden Tour, we also host a fun-filled Succulent Swap to promote water-wise gardening and bring neighbors together (May 26). Both events are complimentary for GMIA members whose membership is paid current. Please check the mailing label on this newsletter for the expiration date of your membership. For questions, contact Treasurer Larry Nichols at (619) 440-1607 or [larry.nichols.lamesa@gmail.com](mailto:larry.nichols.lamesa@gmail.com).

It is thanks to the efforts of our hard working all-volunteer board of directors and GMIA members that we are able to provide a busy calendar of events. We welcome you to get involved and lend a hand. Other volunteer opportunities are available with our committees that liaison with county and governmental agencies to advocate on behalf of our members. For more information, please give me a call at (619) 440-1607.

Our organization is celebrating our 80th anniversary of working to preserve and enhance our region. We couldn't do it without your support – thank you for your membership. See you at the Tour! 🌱

*Susan Nichols*



## GMIA Honors Tere Trout and Jonathan Becker

Pictured here are GMIA members Tere Trout and Jonathan Becker who have generously hosted both our Succulent Swap and Family Meet Up in their magnificent garden. In appreciation, GMIA honored them with a beautiful carved stone plaque inscribed with a heartfelt quote by Marcel Proust, "Let us be grateful to the people who make us happy. They are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom." Check out the plaque installed in their landscape at our 2018 Succulent Swap on May 26! 🌱





## Fuerte Straightening Project Update and Intersection Improvements

**A**t the Alzada and Fuerte intersection, changes are being made to straighten Fuerte to create a safer intersection for homes bordering the intersection as well as drivers. Here is a summary of the project:

- ◆ SDG&E has completed moving utilities.
- ◆ Helix Water District has finished their phase of the project on Fuerte and are in the process of working on Alzada.
- ◆ Otay Sewer will commence their work upon completion by Helix Water.
- ◆ AT&T, Cox and Crown cable will then move their cable lines.
- ◆ Finally, SDG&E will remove utility poles.

After completion of the movement of the utilities, the County will advertise for bids for the project in mid-April and straightening the road is due to commence in mid-June, timed to coincide with a reduction in cars driving children to school. Detours will be in place during construction, so please use caution and allow extra time for your commute. The estimated cost of this project is \$1.4 million.

As a part of this project, the County is working with GMIA to include improvements to the intersections at Avocado and Fuerte, and Calavo and Fuerte. In 2014, GMIA initiated a request to the County to improve these unsafe and unsightly intersections. Thanks to Supervisor Dianne Jacob who has championed our effort, we are hopeful that our long awaited plan will come to fruition. We will keep you updated. 🌱

## GMIA Neighborhood Newsstands

**S**preading the news about GMIA is an important way that we build membership to support our efforts. We need a robust membership to be sure our voice is heard about is-



sues that matter to our community. To augment our outreach, we have installed a series of "GMIA Neighborhood Newsstands" stocked with our newsletter and other informative GMIA materials.

Recently neighbors have let us add our newsstands to their Little Free Libraries. We'd love to add more! If you have a Little Free Library, or live on a street that has a lot of walkers, we would be pleased to install a GMIA Neighborhood Newsstand. Let us know if you would like to help link our community together by contacting us at:

[yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com](mailto:yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com).

Thanks to GMIA board members Pete Camana and Pam Coe for spearheading this effort, and to member Dan Zamudio for providing box materials and hosting a newsstand at his home. 🌱

## Valle de Oro Community Planning Group News

by Mark Schuppert & Charles Kossman

Our Planning Group serves to assist the County of San Diego with land use decisions that affect our community. Besides hearings for discretionary permits, we are also involved with longer term concerns. Subcommittees have recently been formed to address two increasingly pressing issues.

One subcommittee, chaired by Wendy Tinsley-Becker, has been formed to help facilitate the preparation of interim design guidelines that will assist the Planning Group's decision making process related to redevelopment and rehabilitation of properties along Campo Road in Casa de Oro. This subcommittee also serves to support the Casa de Oro Community Alliance

in their efforts with Supervisor Jacob to spur the revitalization along this corridor. The Planning Group has also requested assistance by the County for the creation of a Specific Plan which will assist in achieving these goals.

A second subcommittee, chaired by Charles Kossman, was formed at the

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## Welcome to the Casa de Oro Library

by Allyson O'Brien, Casa de Oro Branch Manager

In the words of a famous musician, "When you are growing up there are two institutional places that affect you most

powerfully: the church, which belongs to God, and the public library, which belongs to you." \*

Welcome to the Casa de Oro Library! A part of our community since 1962, it continues to play an important role. Here are some of many different ways people use the library:

- ◆ Free computers are available for work and to reach out to friends and family via the internet.
- ◆ Two weekly story times for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers. Afternoons, we have kids and teens looking for something to do – and we offer a safe place for them to hang out.
- ◆ Tuesday mornings we have adaptive yoga classes for adults with developmental disabilities and their coaches.
- ◆ Yoga class for all adults, both seated and standing, is provided at 12 pm on Wednesdays.
- ◆ Classic Movie Night with our resident movie aficionado is the first Thursday of the month at 5 pm.
- ◆ During the summer, our library, along with community partner Heavens Window, provides free lunch for kids and teens (weekdays 12-1 pm). We regularly serve 25-45 meals a day during those weeks.

Of course, many people only come to pick up their next batch of books, while others come to sit and be around others. We have coloring pages for both adults and kids with coloring pencils and crayons.

Three (!) book clubs meet monthly. Our Book Club for men meets on the second Monday of the month (12:30 pm). The Coffee & Conversation Book Club has been meeting, with members new & old, for almost ten years. This group reads a variety of fiction and nonfiction – and the conversation is always intelligent (first Friday of the month at 10:30 am). The Mystery Book Club is our newest and meets the third Friday of the month (10:30 am).

The library provides ebooks and magazines that can be downloaded to your devices (no due dates – no fines!). Don't know how to do that? You can make an appointment with the librarian to learn how (don't forget to bring your device).

The library has something to offer for you. Come check us out (and please pardon the pun)! 🌱

\*The famous musician, who wanted to be a librarian before he joined a rock band, is Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones. The library is for everyone!



## Come to Dinner!

Enjoy a summer night with mouth-watering Phil's BBQ, Ballast Point beer, wine and soft drinks at GMIA's Annual Dinner on June 24th, 5:30 - 8:30 pm.

Our casual BBQ buffet will once again take place at the gorgeous Cuyamaca Water Conservation Garden. This event is a great opportunity to connect with old friends, meet new friends, and hear what's going on in our area. Supervisor Dianne Jacob will be on hand to talk with us.

The dinner is just \$12 per GMIA member with dues current. Please be sure to invite your neighbors and encourage them to become GMIA members. Your membership renewal date is located above your address on the back page of this newsletter.

Note: reservations are required. Our Annual Meeting is designed for GMIA members but nonmembers may attend for \$20 per person. 🌱

Reserve online at [www.gmia.net](http://www.gmia.net) or return the enclosed form. Don't delay.





# THE BUZZ ON BEEKEEPING

by Mary Curran-Downey

**I**n spring, local gardeners embrace the prime planting season, resulting in blooms in every shade of the rainbow, emerging sprouts of young vegetables and the sweet aroma of flowering citrus. Along with all that beauty – and sore backs and sunburned faces – come questions, and often concerns, about honey bees.

Carlos Richardson has heard them all. The owner of Mt. Helix Bees, Richardson is in the business, not of exterminating the bees, but coaxing them out of the hives they've built in house eaves, attics, garages and just about everywhere from owl boxes to air vents. The retired photography professor at City and Southwestern colleges is one of dozens of beekeepers around the county who not only remove bees, but also work to educate the public about the important role they play in the ecosystem: most of the fruits, vegetables and nuts humans eat need bees to pollinate the plants; livestock depend on bees to pollinate their food source.

"Spring is prime bee time," Richardson explained as he carefully measured the supports of a bee hive under construction in the workshop of his Mt. Helix home. The scent of freshly cut wood filled the warm morning air, while a few dozen bees circled lazily above, occasionally landing on a piece of old honeycomb on a nearby work bench.

"You'll see bees in either a swarm or in a hive. A swarm is bees on the move, they're searching for a new location to start a hive when their original one is too full of bees."

Although the sight of hundreds or even thousands of bees balled up in a backyard tree, on your fence, or on your house can be unnerving, Richardson explains that

when the scout bees find a place to establish a new hive, the swarm will move to it, usually in a day or so. When they are in this swarming phase they are usually not aggressive. At the heart of the swarm is a new queen bee. She will make the new hive viable by laying thousands of eggs per day! Once a new hive is established, it's harder to remove the bees, and they can become more aggressive when defending their colony in their new living quarters.



Richardson and other local beekeepers have several options to remove the bees from where they are unwanted. If possible, a hole can be cut, and the honey comb extracted, along with the bees. Smoke makes the bees more docile, and easier to handle, although Richardson is always careful to suit up in protective gear before attempting an extraction.

If cutting a hole isn't possible – or would cause

too much damage to the structure – a trap out, a wire screen device that bees can't penetrate to return to the hive, can be used. This forces the bees to vacate the hive over a period of time; a substitute is placed nearby, and the bees will use that their new home. It's a process that can take several weeks or up to two months, but the bees can then be relocated.

Sometimes, the only solution is extermination, especially when the bees are dangerous.



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BEES from page 5

Richardson is quick to point out that most beekeepers are not exterminators and don't do exterminations. For that, it's necessary to call a licensed pest control company.

Usually the bees you see are foraging; looking for a water source, and for nectar and pollen from all the flowering trees and plants that are starting their spring bloom. Although spring is often when people notice bees the most, they are flying and establishing new hives all year long in the area's temperate climate. Spring and early summer are when bees most often make their new hives.

Fear of getting stung, as well as having an allergic reaction to the sting, makes people react in ways that actually increase the chances of getting stung.

"Don't swat at bees," Richardson advises. "They see that as aggressive behavior. It's better to protect your face and walk swiftly away. Pull your shirt over your head if you need to and get inside to safety. Going into bushes won't help deter aggressively attacking bees. People can also get stung because of the perfume they are wearing, or because the bees feel their hive is threatened."



Africanized bees are now found throughout San Diego County, and can be very dangerous because they more aggressively sting humans and animals. Richardson said local beekeepers work to re-queen the area's feral bees when they are brought into a hive box so that the colony will eventually become gentle enough to be safe.

Bees themselves are under attack from humans as well, from a class of pesticides called neonicotinoids. These powerful nicotine-based pesticides kill insects harmful to crops, but also kill bees, birds, aquatic animals, and many beneficial insects. In January, the state's Department of Pesticide Regulation announced a move that will not allow the expansion of the use of the pesticide in California. States around the country and countries around the world are now re-examining the use of neonicotinoids. In the European Union, there is a move to ban the pesticide outright. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/feb/28/total-ban-on-bee-harming-pesticides-likely-after-major-new-eu-analysis>. Hives are also impacted by parasites like mites and either too much or too little rain.

To keep bee hives outside where they belong, it's important to check the outside of your home to seal off any entry points like cracks and cover vents with a fine screen

mesh that bees can't get through. Check house eaves and any sheds or other buildings on the property as well.

If you are stung, remove the stinger with a scraping motion of a fingernail or plastic credit card. Then wash the area with soap and water. Dab on toothpaste. An ice pack will also help with any pain and swelling. If you are stung many times, or if you are allergic to bee stings, get medical help.

If you are interested in learning more, locating a hive on your property for pollination, or in raising your own bees, Richardson suggests attending a meeting of the San Diego Beekeeping Society, held the second Monday of each month in Balboa Park, Casa Del Prado, Room 101. The society's site – [www.sandiegobeekeepingsociety.com](http://www.sandiegobeekeepingsociety.com) – also provides lists of local beekeepers who will remove hives from buildings. You can reach Carlos Richardson at (619) 822-3236 or by email at [algaenet@aol.com](mailto:algaenet@aol.com). Another source of information about becoming a beekeeper, the dangers facing bees and local educational programs for children and adults is the website for Girl Next Door Honey – [www.girlnextdoorhoney.com](http://www.girlnextdoorhoney.com). Gardeners who want to support healthy bees (both native bees and honeybees) can plant bee favorites like California poppies, salvia, and lilac. You can also support your local beekeepers by purchasing local honey at the La Mesa Village Farmers Market (3 pm - 7 pm each Friday across from the police station) and other markets featuring locally-sourced goods throughout the county. ▲

Our thanks to GMIA member Mary Curran-Downey, a retired reporter for the Union Tribune, who contributed this article.







## Community Forum Recap

Our GMIA Community Forum provided information about disaster preparedness. Thanks to our excellent presenters and to GMIA Board member Wendy Tinsley Becker who chaired this event.

Valuable tips included:

- ◆ Have an AM battery operated radio available as KOGO 600 is the primary emergency alert station.
- ◆ Have an emergency kit – build your own, or purchase one from the Red Cross or CERT program.
- ◆ Have a friend or relative with an out of area code coordinate communication with immediate family members.
- ◆ Do not rely on FEMA to take care of your losses. Review your homeowner's insurance for adequate coverage. FEMA only responds if 800 or more properties are lost, and FEMA reimbursement typically is under \$30,000.
- ◆ Have cash on hand in the form of small bills as credit card machines may not be operable.
- ◆ Shake your fire extinguisher to maintain its capability. Purchase fire extinguishers as needed.
- ◆ Know how to close your water shutoff valves in the event of an earthquake. Information is available at [hwd.com/be-ready](http://hwd.com/be-ready).

The Community Emergency Response Team Program trains volunteers for the types of disasters that our community may face. Through hands-on practice and realistic exercises, CERT members learn and train on CPR/AED, fire safety, disaster medical, light search and rescue operations, disaster psychology and other vital topics. Training is held nearby in our area. For more information, contact [CERT-smg@sanmiguelfire.org](mailto:CERT-smg@sanmiguelfire.org).

A useful website is [ReadySanDiego.org](http://ReadySanDiego.org). Guidebooks for Family Disaster Plan and Personal Survival and Wildfire Preparedness are available. Use this website to register for AlertSanDiego, the County's notification system that sends current emergency notifications to your cell phone. 🌱

## Casa de Oro Continues to Climb

by Jay Steiger

Progress continues for Mt. Helix's southside neighbor Casa de Oro. Last summer, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to support assignment of staff to work with the Casa de Oro Alliance, GMIA, Valle de Oro Planning Group, and interested residents on outreach and planning for revitalization ideas and strategies. Funding was approved for an initial study by the Michael Baker Group, who along with county planner Tara Lieberman, held a series of stakeholder interviews and then a public discussion forum. Many notable ideas were shared regarding streetscape, zoning, walkability, and business development. A formal presentation followed to the Valle de Oro Planning Group, which endorsed a proposal calling for creation of a specific plan and design guidelines for Casa de Oro.

County supervisors heard public testimony in January and chose to move forward incrementally. Initial funding was approved for a survey of local business, with future options for planning and design to be reviewed in coming months.

This was a very positive step, and the CDO Alliance is grateful to Supervisor Dianne Jacob for her ongoing efforts to assist with improvements to the CDO business corridor.

We continue to strengthen productive relations with our local sheriff's office and county planners, and have improved ties with code enforcement and other county agencies. CDO Alliance Steering Committee member and former Chula Vista city planner Ed Bachelder noted that rarely are community groups as organized and skilled as the CDO Alliance.

The Casa de Oro Alliance sponsored a 2nd annual Fall Festival in October. The festival, held on the campus of the Spring Valley Academy, featured music, dance, athletic demonstrations, crafts, food, and much fun for all in a

See **CASA** on page 8





## 2018 GMIA Annual Walk Up Mt. Helix

More photos on our GMIA Facebook page



Photos by Bob Cederdahl and Pat Ryan

### CASA from page 7

attendance. Our Beautification Committee is hard at work on the next fall festival and hopes to re-start the Casa de Oro parade. Finally, Campo Road welcomed a new family owned business, Franks Bakery, with fresh Italian style bread for sale in their storefront. The Gibaldi brothers, local residents, state that this is truly the best location for their bakery.

It takes time, but our neighborhood objectives continue to be achieved. The CDO Alliance continues to welcome all interested residents to volunteer on a committee or just drop by one of the bi-monthly general assembly meetings. Please visit the Casa de Oro Alliance Facebook page or their website <http://casadeoroalliance.org/> for information.

*Jay Steiger is a local parent and school volunteer who serves on the Casa de Oro Alliance Steering and Media Committees. ▲*

### VDO from page 3

request of GMIA to address problems caused by some short-term rentals in our area. There are several hundred such rentals in the VDO area at this time. Most are hosted and generally have not been problematic. However, there are 72 advertised non-hosted units in the Mt. Helix area, of which a small percentage are advertised as party houses. These have been a recurring major problem to the involved neighborhoods.

The subcommittee is working with Supervisor Dianne Jacob to create a pilot program of rules and regulations that that will identify responsibilities of the property owners. This should help decrease abusive behavior to neighbors; maintain residential neighborhood character; continue long-term rental availability; and help maintain the stock of homes available for sale to permanent residents. Details for the plan are in process. ▲



Grossmont - Mt. Helix Improvement Association

# Art & Garden Tour

Sunday, April 22nd | Noon - 5 p.m.

On behalf of our GMIA members, thank you to our Art & Garden Tour hosts who have generously provided their beautiful gardens for our event. This year's gardens offer a look at some recently transformed properties, as well as what homeowners are doing to become more water-wise, including removing thirsty lawns. Thank you also to our fine artists whose work will be on display for purchase and enjoyment. Wear flat shoes as some properties have a slope or stairs. Children who are respectful and under control are welcome – no playing or running around. No pets, please. We hope you enjoy this year's tour.

Please be aware: our traffic barricades, no parking signs and parking recommendation signs must ensure that emergency vehicles will have clearance at all times. County regulations require 16' of clearance (think big fire truck width) in order to safely pass parked vehicles. This is why, in most cases, we allow parking on only one side of the road. You are welcome to drop off passengers in front of the garden property entrance before driving to find suitable parking.

Tour produced by Director co-chairs Pat Ryan and Kay Bickley. Garden descriptions written by Director Pat Ryan. Artist coordination by Director Kay Bickley. Volunteer coordination by Director Sue Creveling. Logistics coordinated by Director Paul Geldbach. Design & layout by Victoria Vinton, [www.coyotepressgraphics.com](http://www.coyotepressgraphics.com).

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**The Garden of Dieter & Susan Fischer** Popularly known as “Hollywood Style Privacy Hedges,” huge Indian laurel figs line the perimeter of this unique 1.2-acre property, planted in the 1950's when it was originally developed. The hedges total about a quarter of a mile in length. They surround a hidden gem, a surprising garden retreat, tended carefully by the owners for over 30 years. It has evolved into an eclectic mix of favorite trees and plants, which showcases the owner's style and vision. Wandering through the area surrounding the lovely wooden gazebo, notice the tennis court, once a gravel helicopter landing pad. The owners planted every other plant and tree on the property, including over 50 palm trees- Sago, Canary Island, and Queen. Some notable plantings include eight former Christmas trees, bird of paradise, hibiscus, cordyline 'Red Star,' breath of heaven, milkweed to attract Monarch butterflies, and pink powder puff bush. Up the steps to the pool area are splendid views of Mt. Helix. This inviting area leads through palms and colorful plantings to the home at the top with views to the ocean. Relax around the ten-foot-deep pool, enjoying refreshments provided by the owner. As you enter the property don't miss the display of some of Dieter's vintage cars.

**Artist: Chris Witnik** not only creates black and white and sepia-tone photographs, hand colored with oil paint, but transforms wooden boxes into pieces of art and collage and necklaces from game pieces. Contact her at [witnikc@gmail.com](mailto:witnikc@gmail.com)

**Artist: Stephanie Inouye** has been sewing and crafting for 30 years. She uses a variety of materials to create dolls, quilts and hand bags. Contact her at [inouyesteph@gmail.com](mailto:inouyesteph@gmail.com)





## The Garden of Art & Lynn Patoff

As early residents of the homes across from "the chicken ranch," the owners can recall seeing roadrunners around their half acre home, which they built in 1965. With the help of Randy Rivers, owner of the Grass Doctor in Spring Valley, they transformed the lower ¼ acre former all-grass-whiffle-ball-area into what Lynn now calls her "Walden Pond." The project involved installing underground drainage to channel natural runoff from the area, and building a new patio to provide a shady perch for viewing the garden below. Drip irrigation was installed throughout, and flagstone paths now wander through the many varied water-wise plants. Original foundation plantings were saved with junipers kept as a backdrop. A wall of bottle brush, dodonaea and cape honeysuckle all camouflage the remains of the chicken ranch. A 50-year-old Indian longleaf pine and two Canary Island pines shade a small newly planted area of fescue grass. With just two years of growth into a planned five-year maturity, this garden provides a great opportunity to appreciate the growth process of a variety of drought tolerant plants. Step off the path and walk among grevillea, flax, rosemary, Mexican sage, Cleveland sage, swizzle sticks, lantana, pride of Madeira, rock roses, Hawaiian blue eyes, and 'Little John' bottlebrush. Note the appealing coast woolly bush with its soft-to-the-touch foliage.

**Artist: Sharon K. Thomas** is an award-winning artist specializing in floral watercolor, acrylic and oil. A long-time member of Foothills Art Association in La Mesa, she shows her work in Spanish Village. Contact her at [sk201@cox.net](mailto:sk201@cox.net)

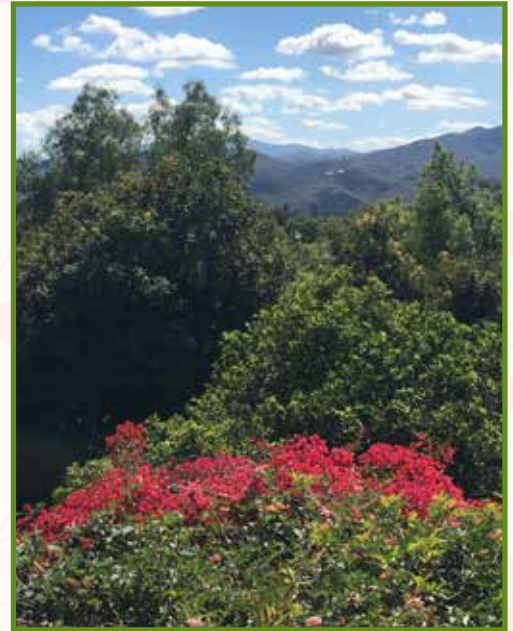


## The Garden of Ron & Kathy Buser

The owners of this hillside property consider it their "sanctuary and great pleasure in life," and indeed it's always been a work in progress for them since 1996 when they purchased it. A former avocado grove, later replanted to macadamia nut trees, it is a "gateway to one acre of terraced paths that lead to a myriad of fruit and nut trees, flowers, shrubs, games to play and places to sit and take leisure." This park-like setting feels like a botanical garden, extensively labeled by the owners with the names of the numerous plants native to Australia and South Africa planted throughout the many levels of terraced paths. Note the cascading agave attenuata, two arbors which support the bougainvillea, the jade and yuccas which line some pathways, the large Euphorbia candelabrum garden area, and the many citrus varieties and stone fruit trees. The expansive lower garden has a tranquil seating area surrounded by many large mature trees. Loop around and walk a circular route, exploring the many terraces on your way back up.

**Artist: Kristi Anderson** grows her own gourds, paints and coats them for display. Her extensive array ranges from Christmas designs to birdhouses. Contact her at [andersonrelocate@aol.com](mailto:andersonrelocate@aol.com)

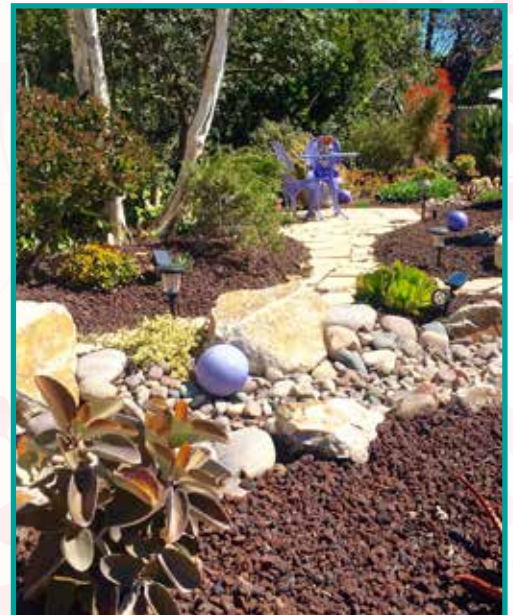
**Artist: Frank Tosatto** developed a passion for blacksmithing, recently built his own forge, and makes items from home to outdoor décor. Contact him at [sdtosatto@cox.net](mailto:sdtosatto@cox.net)



## The Garden of Keith & Judy Meeker

In 1977 when the owners purchased their one-third acre 1967 home, the front yard was grass, palms, and African daisies. The backyard was filled with eucalyptus trees and tumble weed. Over the years, they have enhanced their property with inviting and livable spaces, adding several levels of decks, patio areas for entertaining, a pool, and even habitat for goats, birds, chickens and rabbits. Three years ago, they engaged landscape designer Laura Eubanks of Design for Serenity, to help blend their foundation plantings with colorful, water-wise cacti and succulents, tying everything together with appealing islands and pockets of hundreds of plants, weaving ribbon-like around the flagstone pathways, along the driveway, harmonizing every space. The stump of a messy silk oak tree was hollowed out to contain a dramatic display of succulents. A purple iron table set and matching bowling balls add bright spots of whimsy. Sticks on fire, agave attenuata, copper spoons, sedum, graptoveria, aloe, echeveria and barrel cactus all join with myriad others to form colorful and captivating vignettes. A metal sculpture collection features a huge giraffe; "Bird Talk Lane" leads to tall cages for cockatiels, parakeets and rabbits. Dymondia grows amid granite pavers, flanked by a waterfall and pond, providing a tranquil setting to enjoy the views of Mt. Miguel.

**Artists: Cathrine & Wesley Whitaker** excel in producing a variety of jewelry and one-of-a-kind colorful glass items, including tree hangers and garden art. Contact them at [cwhitaker@cox.net](mailto:cwhitaker@cox.net).







GMIA

The Grossmont-Mt. Helix Improvement Association  
Board of Directors cordially invite you to our

# 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

Sunday, June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018

5:30 – 8:00 pm

Water Conservation Garden at Cuyamaca College.

Complimentary guided tour of the garden at  
4:30 (reservation required).

Admission: members \$12 each | Non members \$20

Dinner includes BBQ buffet,  
beer, wine, soft drinks.

## PROGRAM

- 4:30 Complimentary garden tour (by reservation)
- 5:30 Social/Dinner/Program
  - Election of Board of Directors
  - Presentation of the Al Platt Memorial Award for Community Service
  - Supervisor Dianne Jacob Q&A
- 7:30 Social, enjoy the garden

**PLEASE RSVP BY JUNE 21, 2018**  
**Questions? Contact Holly Yarris,**  
**Annual Meeting Chairperson 619-813-2165.**

You may reserve by returning the form below with your check (GMIA, PO Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943-2751), or reserve online at our secure web-site, [www.gmia.net](http://www.gmia.net). Your reservation will be held at the door. ***\*\*Please attach your questions for Supervisor Jacob to this form\*\****

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

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# Members  
at \$12 each

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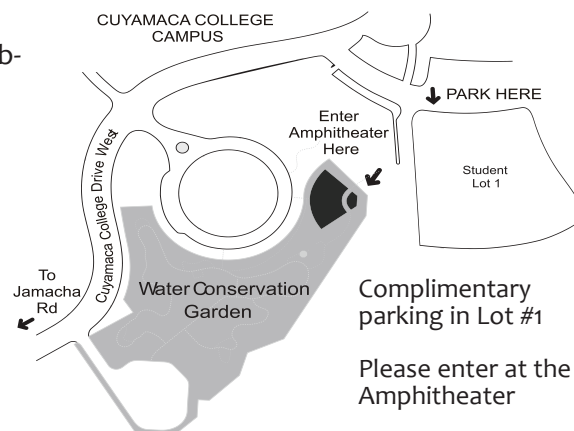
# Non-members  
at \$20 each

☐

# Vegetarian  
Menu Options

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# Attending Complimentary  
4:30 pm Garden Tour







P. O. Box 2751  
La Mesa CA 91943-2751

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To ensure your membership is current: please look at your mailing label on this newsletter. On it you will find the expiration date of your membership. Annual membership is just \$18 (2 years - \$36; 3 years - \$54). You may renew online at our secure website [www.gmia.net](http://www.gmia.net) or mail your payment to GMIA, P.O. Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943-2751.

Note: if the date is June 2018 or later, your dues are paid in full, but you are welcome to renew in advance.



GMIA is looking for members to help us:

Fuerte/I-8 Park & Ride Clean Up – 3rd Saturday every month, 9:00 am. Contact Tom O'Steen, GMIA Green Team Coordinator at [tosteen1@hotmail.com](mailto:tosteen1@hotmail.com).

Art & Garden Tour, April 22: day of event support. Contact Sue Creveling, GMIA Volunteer Coordinator at 619-971-2712 [screv@yahoo.com](mailto:screv@yahoo.com)

Annual Dinner Meeting, June 24th: day of event support. Contact Sue Creveling, GMIA Volunteer Coordinator at 619-971-2712 [screv@yahoo.com](mailto:screv@yahoo.com).

## CALENDAR

