

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



viewpoints

Spring 2012

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2012 ART & GARDEN TOUR

"The earth laughs in flowers."
~ RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Mark your calendars for Sunday, April 15th to enjoy the GMIA Art & Garden Tour. Inside this issue you will find the Art & Garden Tour brochure and map. Be sure to bring this with you as you visit four amazing gardens in our neighborhood.

As always, admission to our Art & Garden Tour is complimentary to GMIA members. This year we are trying something new! When members visit their first garden, they will receive wrist bands that will provide entry at each additional garden.

Nonmembers may participate on the tour for a nominal donation (\$5). There is no entry charge for children under 18 years old. While it is

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75th Annual Meeting Meet & Mingle

May 19th, 2012

Get to know your neighbors and enjoy an evening under the stars at our "Meet & Mingle" Annual Meeting on May 19th. Our meeting will again take place at the magnificent Cuyamaca Water Conservation Garden. Members have told us how much they like this beautiful venue and casual format which offers lots of opportunity for relaxed social connection.

Good news! We have extended the time for this event (5:30 to 8:30 p.m.) to allow members more time to walk about the Garden. We are thrilled to announce that GMIA member Kay McGrath, who volunteers at the Garden, has offered to give informal personal tours of the site on the night of our event.

We are so lucky to have her serve as a knowledgeable guide. Thank you, Kay.

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Attack on Planning Group Update

Our Winter Viewpoints featured an article regarding the attack on our Planning Groups. Due to the large public outcry, the Board of Supervisor's hearing to decide the fate of the proposed "Red Tape Reduction Task Force" was postponed from February 29th to March 28th. As of our Viewpoints printing deadline, the hearing had not yet occurred. By the time you receive this issue, the hearing should have taken place. Please refer to our web site at www.gmia.net to find out the results. Your GMIA Board would like to thank our members for your support in this matter, especially those who sent letters or emails to the Supervisors, and showed up at the hearing in support of our community groups. ▲

GROSSMONT - MT. HELIX



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

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Message from the President

Quality of life: elusive to define, hard to measure. What makes a neighborhood a good place to live? Most of us would agree that the wellbeing of a neighborhood depends upon many interconnected issues. Most basic of all, residents should feel safe from crime and have access to good quality education and employment. Beyond these elementary factors, there are many subjective ideas about what defines a great community. For those of us fortunate to live in the Grossmont-Mt. Helix area, we know our outstanding quality of life is largely dependent on our environment.

The unique physical assets of our region are a vital framework for our way of life. Maintaining our low density footprint and semi-rural lifestyle is the mission of GMIA. Thank you to all our members who share our commitment to be vigilant stewards of our distinctive neighborhood. Along with the Valle de Oro Planning Board, we all must work to ensure the character and quality of our community.

Nowhere is the character of our neighborhood better exemplified than by our acclaimed annual Art & Garden Tour. GMIA members generously open their private gardens and invite neighbors to visit their personal retreats. Selfless volunteers organize, administer and staff this community wide event. We come together to celebrate the magnificent beauty of our area. What a great group of people, what a wonderful place to live!

Message from Jeff Rule Art & Garden Tour Curator

Thank you to all our GMIA members who will participate in a safe and memorable Art & Garden 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 only allow parking on 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. Please be sure to leave 16' clearance for emergency vehicles and do not block driveways. Thanks for slowing down on our narrow, winding roads and parking in the recommended areas. ▲

Thank You!

Our special thanks to these renewing members who have made additional gifts to GMIA of \$25 or more the past three months: Eleanor Tobin, Brian and Judy Pike, Phil and Cynthia Garns, Robert and Marcia Malkus. ▲

Are You Current?

Please check your mailing label which reflects the expiration date of your membership. If your mailing label is not dated 6/30/12 or later, please take this opportunity to renew your \$18 annual membership either online using our secure PayPal account at www.gmia.net or via postal mail: GMIA, P.O. Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943. ▲

Cell Antennas Invasion Update

Representatives of GMIA and the Valle de Oro Planning Group appeared at the Planning Commission hearing to successfully oppose cell site plans outlined in our Winter Viewpoints article. We convinced the Commissioners that antennas located along our roads and in our front yards would add to existing utility pole blight and were not appropriate within our community. The Commissioners denied the request. The applicant then appealed their decision to the Board of Supervisors, who will have final determination at a hearing in the near future. Please reference our Winter Viewpoints for contact information for the Supervisors' offices to express your concerns. Our website, www.gmia.net will have updates and an announcement of the date of the hearing when available. ▲

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We extend our appreciation to our GMIA event committee Jocelyn Zimmerman, Larry Nichols, Allison Henderson and Kay Bickley who had the tough job of sampling delicious wine and tasty tidbits. They have chosen five excellent wines for tasting, a selection of non-alcoholic beverages, and substantial appetizers to complete the evening. Seriously, these volunteers have really worked hard to ensure our event is a success – please thank them when you see them at our meeting.

Complementing this Annual Meeting, GMIA will hold our State of the Community Forum on September 24th to update our members on issues of interest in our neighborhood. We hope to see you at both events.

Tickets for “Meet & Mingle” are \$25 per person. To reserve, you may either complete and mail the enclosed reservation form, or reserve online using our secure PayPal service at www.gmia.net. ▲



Water Conservation Garden Bonus

As a bonus to GMIA, the Cuyamaca Water Conservation Garden will offer a discounted family membership of \$40 (a savings of \$20) to our members who join that evening. Membership includes free admission to special events, reciprocal admission to over 250 botanical gardens, and discount rates for the numerous classes they hold year round (e.g. hillside gardening, succulent planters, aquaponics, creative basket making, composting, etc., and classes for children). Plus, you will have the satisfaction of knowing you support this treasure in our community.

TOUR from page 1

not our intention to open our tour to the general public, we will accommodate guests who wish to experience our event.

We will gladly enroll new members at the tour for our annual fee of \$18. Please be aware, however, that our organizational by-laws limit membership to residents or homeowners within our borders. Our geographic boundaries extend from east of Bancroft Drive, south of El Cajon,

generally north of SR94 and Rancho San Diego, and west of SR54/Jamacha Rd.

This annual event is made possible by the efforts of your entire GMIA Board of Directors and community volunteers. Our brilliant garden descriptions are written by Director Pat Ryan whose vivid prose can evoke the fragrance of blossoms wafting from the page. Gardener extraordinaire Director Don Newcom ably lends a hand in garden selection.

Director Sue Creveling graciously serves as our Volunteer Coordinator. A special thank you to Director Jeff Rule who skillfully oversees our event as our Art & Garden Tour Curator. Jeff secures the gardens, coordinates efforts leading to the day of the event, procures our event permit, manages logistics and signage, and expertly handles all the myriad details that make the Tour so special. Thank you to all! ▲

GMIA is a 70+ 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.



Orchid Talk

GMIA invites you to learn about orchids that you can grow and enjoy in your home. We will host an informative Orchid Talk on Saturday, June 9th at 10:00 a.m. at the Community Room in the Casa de Oro Library, 9805 Campo Road. Come hear Tom Biggart, owner and head grower at Granite Hills Orchids. Tom's family owned business specializes in Australian Dendrobium species and their hybrids. If you have an orchid in need of "doctoring", bring it along and Tom will dispense advice. For questions or more information, call GMIA Director Dagmar Miller at 619-579-1844. ▲

2012 Calendar

April 15	Art & Garden Tour
May 19	Annual Meeting 'Meet & Mingle'
June 9	Orchid Talk
Sept 24	State of the Community Forum