



# viewpoints



## GMIA's Art & Garden Tour

Sunday, April 23, 2023  
Noon – 4 p.m.



Please plan to join us on April 23 for GMIA's Art & Garden Tour. This year, our signature event will be better than ever with five unique gardens to tour. We ask you to consider contacting us at [gmiavolunteer@gmail.com](mailto:gmiavolunteer@gmail.com) to help out at one of the gardens.

Spend an enjoyable afternoon gathering design ideas, viewing original landscaping and learning which trees and plants flourish in our region. Well-behaved children are welcome with their parents, but the gardens cannot accommodate strollers. No pets please.

This event is open to GMIA families only. Please check page 8 of this newsletter

to ensure your membership is current. If it has expired, there are several options to renew: use the enclosed remit envelope; go to [gmia.net](http://gmia.net) and renew with Pay Pal; or re-enroll on April 23 at any one of the five gardens. New members can also join GMIA by paying the \$20 annual membership fee on the day of the tour.

## Save the Date

June 24

### GMIA Annual Dinner

Mark your calendar – GMIA's Annual Dinner will be held on Saturday, June 24. Supervisor Nathan Fletcher has been confirmed as our keynote speaker.

This year, the dinner will be held in a new location: the Cuyamaca College Student Center, thanks to the support of the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District.

Arrive early and take some time to tour the beautiful Cuyamaca College campus with Interim President Jessica Robinson.

For the first time, GMIA is seeking individual and corporate sponsors to defray the costs of the dinner and our many community activities. If you are interested in being a sponsor, or know of a corporation that might have an interest in sponsorship, contact us at [yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com](mailto:yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com).

Information about registering for the dinner will be available in the next newsletter. See you then! 🌱

## GMIA Monitoring SB-9

San Diego County officials recently met with GMIA board members to answer questions about Senate Bill 9, the state legislation seeking to expand housing construction in residential zones. The legislation allows property owners in certain areas to build a second unit on their property or split their lot. Although Mt. Helix is considered to be a semi-rural area, much of the area qualifies for SB-9 based on census data.

Properties are not eligible for SB-9 for numerous reasons, including location in a high fire severity zone or in an historic district as listed in the California Historical Resources Inventory. SB-9 requires a minimum lot split size to be 40% of the original property size, and a minimum of at least 1,200 square feet, whichever is greater. For example, for a one-acre property, the minimum lot split would have to be four-tenths of an acre.

County Environmental Planner Nate Kling said that since SB-9 went into effect on Jan. 1, 2022, the county has received 15 applications for lot splits. He did not have information on how many requests had been received for second units on a property. County review of SB-9 applications is solely ministerial; the eligibility for SB-9 is based on designations made by state agencies.

GMIA will continue to monitor the implementation of SB-9. 🌱



GROSSMONT-MT. HELIX  
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

### Officers

Anne Krueger, President  
619-252-2295

Joan Camana, First Vice President  
858-449-9796

Pat Ryan, Second Vice President  
619-248-1619

Pam Coe, Treasurer/Membership

Dania Barroso-Conde, Secretary

### Directors

Teri Buehler	Vaughn Jeffery
Pete Camana	Linda Miller
Lidia Chang	Larry Nichols
Leslie Gardner	Mike Valley
Coleen Geraghty	Marybeth Wilson
Kathleen Hedberg	Holly Yarris
Tom Huffman	

**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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**yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com**

### MISSION

GMIA is an 84-year-old non-profit 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

One thing I love about serving on the GMIA board is that I don't hear crickets.

I've heard those crickets many times serving in other volunteer organizations. When a task needs to be done, the silence is so deafening at those other meetings that you can hear crickets chirping.

That doesn't happen with GMIA. When something needs to be done, someone will volunteer for the job.

We can always count on the entire board to help at our events. That was evident at the Walk to the Top, where about 300 people hiked to the top of Mt. Helix. Just about all our board members were there, doing whatever was needed to ensure the event was a success.

Let me give you a sample of the work our board members do. It's not an exhaustive list—I don't have room to describe all their efforts.

- ◆ The Walk to the Top was coordinated by board members **Lidia Chang** and **Linda Miller**, with much assistance from former event chair **Pat Ryan**. **Pete Camana** made sure we had the supplies we needed for the event. **Coleen Geraghty** took photographs as part of her duties as editor of this newsletter.
- ◆ Our next event will be the Garden Tour on April 23. That requires an extensive amount of planning and preparation. Thanks to Garden Tour chair **Teri Buehler**, along with committee members **Joan Camana**, **Pat Ryan** and **Vaughn Jeffery**, for their efforts.
- ◆ **Leslie Gardner** coordinates the volunteers for that and the other GMIA events.
- ◆ We're also planning GMIA's Annual Dinner, with a committee led by **Vaughn Jeffery** and **Holly Yarris**. We hope to see you at the dinner to on June 24 at the Cuyamaca College Student Center.
- ◆ Coordination of GMIA's Succulent Swap last year vent was led by **Larry Nichols** with his wife, former board president **Susan Nichols**.
- ◆ Each month, GMIA cleans up the Park and Ride at Fuerte and Severin Drives. **Pete Camana** leads that effort.
- ◆ **Tom Huffman** has led GMIA's efforts to have a welcome sign installed at Avocado Boulevard and Fuerte Drive. Look for the sign as you drive by!
- ◆ GMIA board meetings run smoothly because of the agendas and reports that **Joan Camana** puts together, and the meeting minutes written by **Dania Barroso-Conde**. (Dania's husband, **Adam Conde**, maintains the GMIA website.) **Pam Coe** does the complicated work of maintaining our membership lists and financial records.
- ◆ **Kathleen Hedberg** keeps us posted on political issues affecting our area and helps us advocate with our elected officials to protect our community.
- ◆ **Marybeth Wilson** is leading GMIA's efforts to welcome new residents to GMIA. **Mike Valley** frequently volunteers at our events.

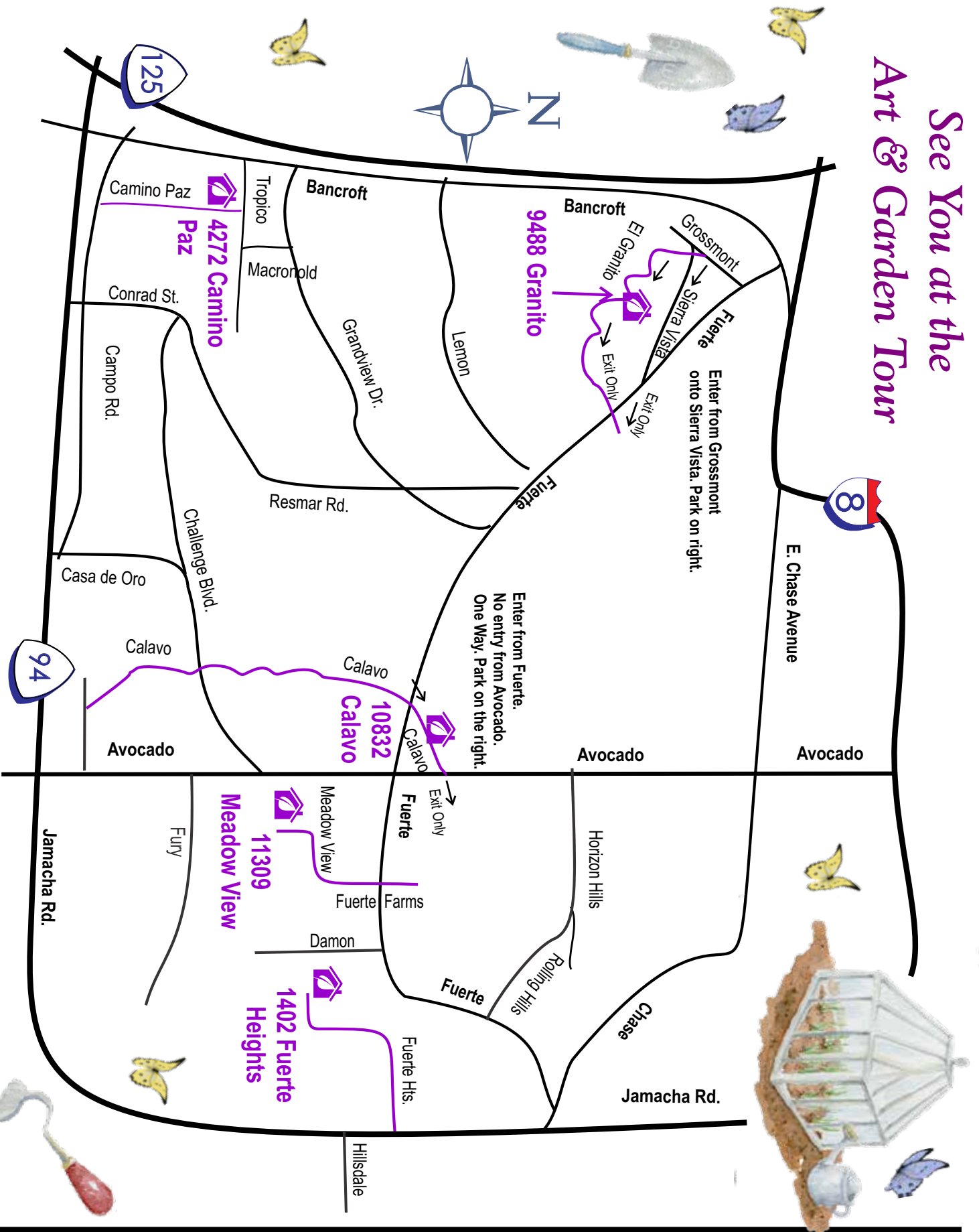
You can see that GMIA is an amazing organization.

Please urge your neighbors to join, and if you would like to volunteer for an event, contact us at [gmiavolunteer@gmail.com](mailto:gmiavolunteer@gmail.com)! 🌱

*Anne Krueger*



# See You at the Art & Garden Tour







**THE GARDEN OF  
JOYCE & PETER MCGRAW**  
10832 CALAVO DRIVE

**NOTE: Enter Calavo from Fuerte and park on the right side only.**

The McGraws' ½-acre home and yard has been a labor of love since they moved to the property in 2001. The backyard deck features three sitting areas adorned with ferns and greenery. A water feature, surrounded by a brick pathway, features a cassia tree, California lilac and oxalis. Antique metalwork is used throughout the garden, such as a wagon wheel for the water feature and a discarded cast iron bathtub that was converted into a planter of creeping fig. Renovation of the front yard was Joyce's pandemic project, in which she replaced the grass with a stone footpath surrounded by groundcover. A sign proclaims it as "Joyce's garden."



**THE GARDEN OF  
DIANNE & JERRY CANTWELL**  
1402 FUERTE HEIGHTS LANE

The Cantwells have truly personalized their nearly-one-acre property over 33 years as residents. The couple designed the home and hardscape, while planting many varieties of palms and flora. Their sloping garden features an astonishing collection of specimens, all connected by stone paths built by the owner. Colorful top dressings of natural pebbles and stones include large chunks of turquoise, which catch the sun. The collection of rare sago palms throughout the property are reminiscent of a botanical garden. Paths wander through seating areas with colored glass fire pits and a fountain bubbling out of three stone edifices. Succulent groupings line the stone walkways around this hilltop retreat featuring spectacular views to the east and west.







## THE GARDEN OF GAIL STEWART & ROB BROCKMAN

11309 MEADOW VIEW DRIVE

The Stewart-Brockman home and garden, affectionately christened *Retraite Patte de Lion* (Lion's Paw Retreat) is situated on  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an acre with magnificent eastern views of Lyons Peak, McGinty Mountain and the Laguna Mountain Range. At the back, multiple rock pathways showcase the garden's eclectic collection, which has been expanded and diversified since the couple purchased the property in 2019. A rose garden, inherited from the previous owners, is meticulously maintained. The more recent plantings include flaming pincushion protea, multicolored grevillea, flowering aloe, palm and cycad varieties from Africa, Australia and South America. All paths lead to the pool and guest house oasis surrounded by plumeria, hibiscus and other exotic plants.



## THE GARDEN OF ADRIAN CALDERON & KAMIL GODULA

4272 CAMINO PAZ

A visit to this home—built around 1960—evokes a Palm Springs vibe. The owners have lived on the  $\frac{1}{2}$ -acre lot since 2017, and have done almost all the landscaping themselves. The 20th century modern home and adjoining garden express a unified theme with large sliding doors leading to a striking desert landscape. The garden features southwestern plantings, such as Museum Palo Verde and barrel cacti, along with top dressings of gravel in warm natural colors. Artificial pink flamingos stand near a raised vegetable garden. Open spaces of decomposed granite form a base for entertainment areas decorated with colorful patio furniture, giving the impression of a desert retreat complete with sparkling pool and spa.





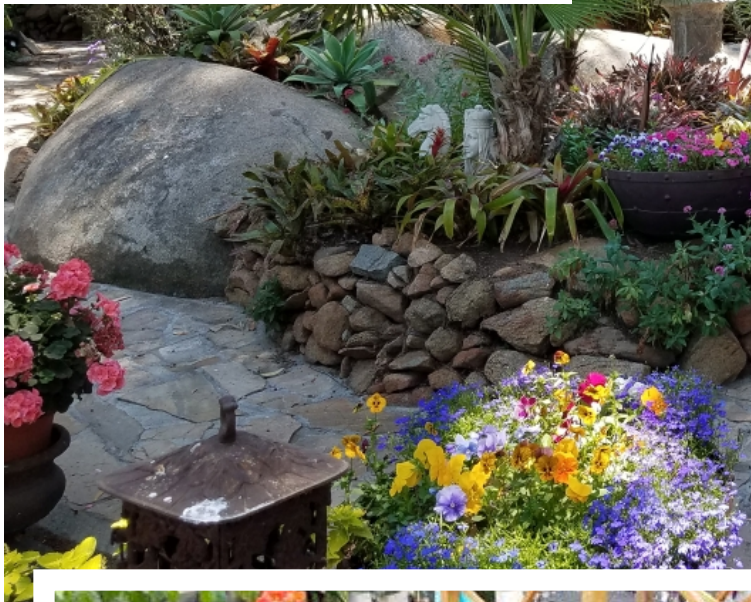
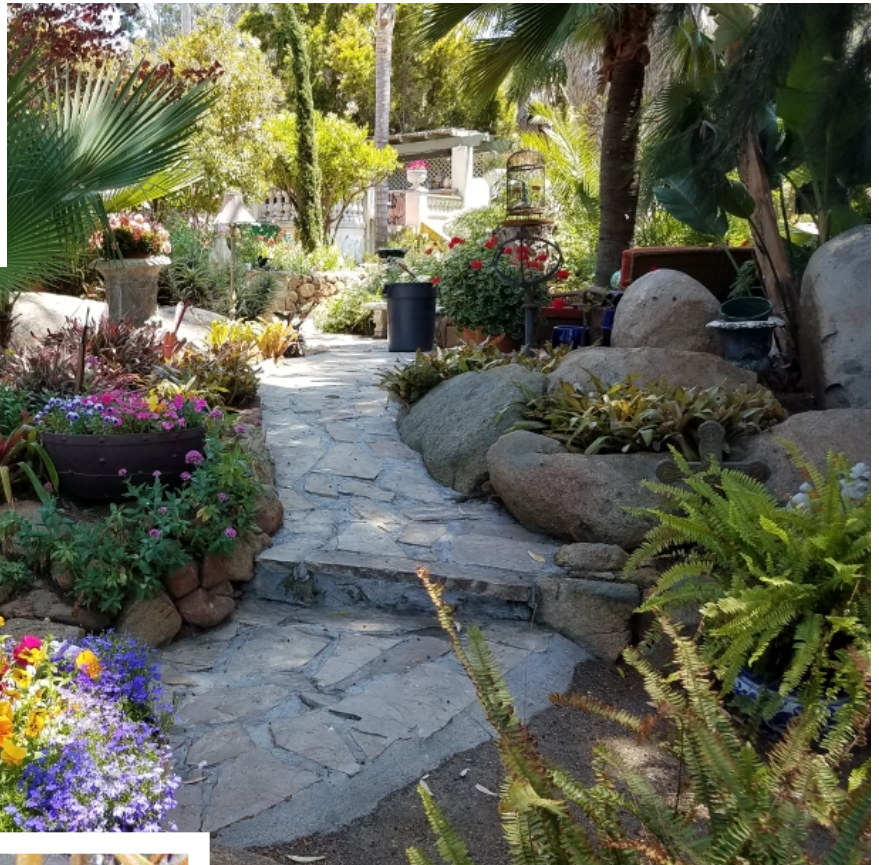


**THE GARDEN OF  
CHERI & RICK SPARHAWK  
9488 EL GRANITO AVENUE**

**NOTE:** Please drive in from Grossmont Blvd. and park on the right side of Sierra Vista on the downhill side of the property. Drop-offs/pick-ups are okay at the upper driveway on El Granito.

**CAUTION:** The property includes steep steps and uneven pavements.

This Spanish craftsman home was built in 1917 as part of the original Grossmont artists' colony on Mt. Helix. The 1.5-acre estate has been meticulously maintained by the Sparhawks since they purchased it in 1989 from the original owners. With sweeping panoramic views of the ocean and East County mountains, it's easy to see why its lawn has been the site of many weddings. The terraces and steps are lined with succulents and display a remarkable collection of bromeliads and staghorn ferns leading to numerous sitting areas. Special features include a gazebo, statuary, waterfalls and ponds, a mission grape vineyard and an oak tree dating back more than 100 years.



## Meet the Artists

Among the artists who will display their work in the gardens are: Gloria Chadwick, who describes her paintings as depicting the beauty of nature; Suzi Sterling, a glass and metal artist; Roz Oserin, who paints watercolor landscapes; Deborah Wolfe, an artist partial to flowers, leaves and bright colors; and the mother/daughter duo of Sharon Meng and Constance Grace, portraiture artists working with colored pencils.



## A Good Start to 2023

If you didn't join the January 7, Grossmont-Mt. Helix Improvement Association Walk to the Top of Mt. Helix, you missed out! More than 280 people (and many of their dogs) walked from the San Miguel Fire station on Vivera Dr. to the amphitheater, led by the Grossmont High School Marching Band. At the top, walkers enjoyed music from Jan McBride's jazz band while savoring one of the best views in San Diego County.

Multiple community organizations were on hand to discuss and display what they contribute to our neighborhood, including the Casa de Oro Alliance; the Friends of the Casa de Oro Library; the Helix de Oro Fire Council; the Helix Water District; the La Mesa Historical Society; the Mt. Helix Park Foundation; the San Miguel Fire and Rescue Dept; and the Senior Gleaners.

Special thanks go to Lidia Chang and Linda Miller, who organized the event for GMIA, and to local businesses who donated refreshments—Frank's Bakery, Gladly's Coffee (both in Spring Valley), and Mary's Donuts in Lakeside. 🌱



## A Worthy Home for your "Stuff"

Cleaning house is a rite of spring, but what to do with all the “stuff” you no longer want or need? La Mesa Thrift Shop is the ideal place to donate your gently used clothing, housewares, athletic goods, small furniture items and much more.

Managed by the La Mesa Community Welfare Association, Inc., this is the only nonprofit, privately managed thrift store in the area with an all-volunteer staff. La Mesa Thrift Shop, located at 8340 Lemon Ave., is open for drop-off and browsing Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. There is a drop-off bin for donations outside business hours.

Proceeds from the thrift shop's sales have benefited the East County Youth Orchestra, the La Mesa Historical Society, the Peter Pan Junior Theater, the La Mesa Senior Softball League and several elementary schools in our area. Last year, the association's board gave the La Mesa Fire Department funds to purchase a “mascot” puppy for the firehouse.

In addition, the association provides occasional food assistance for needy and homeless families and individuals, said Suzanne Sterling, board president.

The La Mesa Thrift Shop dates back to the 1920s, when its home was a front porch in the small, newly established town. The shop has existed at the current location since 1984.

The La Mesa Community Welfare Association welcomes donations and considers requests for funding from community groups. Contact Suzanne Sterling at 619-466-6678 during business hours. 🌱

## Pride in Our Community

A new sign welcoming people to the Grossmont-Mt. Helix community has been installed at the corner of Avocado Boulevard and Fuerte Drive. The sign is a project of GMIA and was constructed from funding by County Supervisor Nathan Fletcher and former County Supervisor Dianne Jacob. Stonework is being added to the sign soon, making it an attractive entrance to our community. 🌱





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. Family membership is just \$20 (2 years - \$40; 3 years - \$60). You may renew online at our secure website [www.gmia.net](http://www.gmia.net) or mail your payment in the attached envelope to GMIA, P.O. Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943-2751.

Note: if the date is June 2023 or later, your dues are paid in full, but you are welcome to renew in advance.

## Nominations Open for the GMIA Curb Appeal Award

**A**n attractive front yard shows pride in our community, and realtors say that a beautiful yard adds value to a neighborhood. We invite you to nominate a candidate (yourself or a neighbor) for the GMIA Curb Appeal Award.

This award recognizes front yards that display outstanding maintenance, distinctive design, and landscaping appropriate for our climate. The winner will be featured in our newsletter, recognized at our 2023 Annual Dinner, and receive a free year's paid membership to GMIA.

Help us shine the spotlight on homeowners who are making our community a beautiful place to live! Nominations can be submitted on the GMIA website at [gmia.net/curb-appeal-award](http://gmia.net/curb-appeal-award). 🏡

## CALENDAR

