



FALL 2025

Volume 55 Issue 4

GMIA Succulent Swap

A Fall Celebration Rooted in Community

Forget the pumpkin spice—GMIA is kicking off fall with sun, succulents, and socializing! The annual Succulent Swap, a vibrant morning of gardening and connection in the heart of our community, will be held from 10 a.m.-noon Saturday, September 27 at the home of Wendy and Ron Caragher, 10805 Melva Road.

The swap will be open to GMIA members only from 10 – 11 a.m. The public is invited to attend from 11 a.m. – noon.

Whether you're a seasoned succulent collector or just plant-curious, this event has something for everyone:

- **SUCCULENT SWAP:** Bring your best cuttings (no fire sticks, please!) and trade with fellow plant lovers.
- **PK POTTERY POP-UP:** Shop handcrafted planters with flair.
- **POTTING STATION:** Create your own mini garden masterpiece.
- **SIP & SOCIALIZE:** Enjoy Gladly Coffee, sweet treats, and neighborly chats.

It's more than a plant swap—it's a celebration of community, creativity, and connection. Come for the clippings, stay for the camaraderie. 🌱

GMIA's Succulent Swap

Saturday, September 27

10805 Melva Road

Members only: 10 – 11 a.m.

Public: 11 a.m.-noon





GROSSMONT-MT. HELIX
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Viewpoints is a community newsletter published by the Grossmont – Mt. Helix Improvement Association.

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

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MISSION

GMIA, formed in 1938, is a nonprofit 501 (c) (4) public benefit membership organization. Our mission is to preserve the character and enhance the quality of the area and foster pride in the community. We are served by an all-volunteer board and do not employ any paid staff.

Two Groups Are Better Than One

Many people know there are two organizations that protect Mt. Helix Park and the surrounding neighborhoods. You've seen the different signs for events. But do you know how they're different?



THE GROSSMONT-MT. HELIX IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION (GMIA) was formed in 1938 to improve and protect our community. It is a 501(c) (4) organization, which means that although it is non-profit, it can lobby governments to protect our zoning, code enforcement, planning and land use, transportation and traffic control. GMIA can get involved in issues that protect the safe, semi-rural lifestyle of our community.

For example, GMIA is the organization that led the fight against the placement of sexually violent predators in our residential neighborhood and fought to reduce the number of homes that could be crowded into the former Fuerte Drive chicken ranch. GMIA hosts several community events each year and is probably best known for the Spring Art and Garden Tour. The organization is completely volunteer-run and there are no paid positions. For more information go to <https://gmia.net/>



**MT. HELIX PARK
FOUNDATION**

THE MT. HELIX PARK FOUNDATION is a non-profit organization, organized under state law as a 501(c)(3) and their goal is to protect and improve the park that was built in 1925.

Members of GMIA helped form the Mt. Helix Park Foundation in 1999 to save the park from closure. Since then, the Park Foundation has completed several major restoration projects on the 2,000-person amphitheater, 35-foot cross, rock walls, and electric gates. They added hiking trails and restored native habitat to support pollinators and wildlife.

The Park Foundation supports GMIA's annual Walk to the Top on the first Saturday in January. Mt. Helix Park may be best known for the Sunrise Easter Services that have been held every year since 1917. They also host numerous events, including Christmas on Mt. Helix, Nature Day, Pups & Pizza, Astronomy Night, and the famous Food & Wine Festival fundraiser. For more information and to learn more about the history of the park, go to MtHelixPark.org 🌱

Thank You Donors!

Special thanks to these members who donated \$25 or greater in excess of their dues.

Suzanne Cadwallader and Arthur Raybold
Leo and Adrienne Culp
Marion Eggerston
Andrea and Frank Goicoechea
Randy Kesling
Kurt Krasne

Daniel Lamb and Henry Jordan
Paul and Janel Pehau
Judith and Peter Prichard
John and Linda Quinn
Emily Weld
Robert and Holly Yarris

IT WAS A HAPPENIN'

In June, GMIA held its fab annual dinner meeting at the Cuyamaca College Student Center, and our theme was the 60s. Attendees came wearing their groovy 60s threads and it was outta sight!

The program began with the awarding of the prestigious Al Platt award to the awesome Allison Henderson. Then Andy Lawler, Chief of the San Miguel Fire District, informed us about far-out fire safety issues affecting our area. Can you dig it? Our keynote speaker was historian Jim Newland, who talked about the people who helped form our Mt. Helix-area. Jim is a popular speaker and always has some great stories.

Thanks to Bill Major Catering for providing a delicious meal. And a special thanks to our sponsors: Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District; EDCO Disposal Co.; Helix Brewing and San Pasqual Winery. 🌱



SILENT AUCTION

A silent auction raised more than \$2,300 for GMIA. Thanks to those businesses and individuals who donated to the auction, including:

Nancy Anderson	Lake Jennings Camp, Fish & Hike
Brigantine	PK Pottery
Cameron Fitness	Pot Headz
Camp Bow Wow	Michelle Brister Aesthetics
Casa de Pico Dirty Birds	Sherry Richter
Joanna Vargas Corona/Corva Studio	Spa & Glam
ECHO Chamber Concerts	Tami's Tender Touch
Himalayan Cuisine	U.S.S. Midway
KW Pottery Studio	Water Conservation Garden



How do you thank someone who does so much for our community?

You can give them the annual Al Platt Award for exemplary service! That is what GMIA did for Allison Henderson at our annual dinner meeting in June

Allison has lived on Mt. Helix since 1992 and has been involved in almost every civic organization since then. Her volunteer efforts include serving on the Valle de Oro Community Planning Group, Friends of Casa de Oro Library, and the San Diego National History Museum. She was a founder of the Community Character Coalition (C3) which fought against the large residential development of the chicken ranch in 2008 – 2010.



**Allison
Henderson**

Plus, she has been on the GMIA Board of Directors off and on since 2003. She served as treasurer and was president from 2006 to 2009.

Why does she do so much?

"It gets you out of your own head. It's not all about you," she said. "'Besides, there's just not enough tax money to do everything that needs doing in our neighborhood or our world, so we all need to step up."

We are grateful for everything you do, Allison! You make life better for all of us in the Grossmont-Mt. Helix community.



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Please look at your mailing label on this newsletter to ensure your membership is current. If the date is June 2026 or later, your dues are paid, but you are welcome to renew in advance.

An annual household membership is \$25. You can renew online at www.gmia.net or mail your payment to GMIA, P.O. Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943.

Fire Protection Information

San Miguel Fire Chief Andy Lawler passed on some website information to help our fire protection efforts. The best site to start would be www.sanmiguelfire.gov which includes, among other information, incident status, fire hazard severity zone maps, disaster preparedness, burn permits, inspections and more. The following websites can also be helpful.

Alert California Live Camera Feeds <https://cameras.alertcalifornia.org>

ALERTCalifornia has more than 1,144 cameras deployed across California providing a 24-hour backcountry network with near-infrared night vision to monitor disasters such as active wildfires. ALERTCalifornia cameras can perform 360-degree sweeps approximately every two minutes and can view as far as 60 miles on a clear day and 120 miles on a clear night.

Genasys Protect <https://protect.genasys.com/search>

Genasys Protect is an evacuation management tool that helps communities and first responders more effectively plan and execute evacuations. Here residents can look up their addresses using the search bar and use the zone map to find evacuation information for their area. Users can save multiple addresses and will receive evacuation warnings and orders for saved locations.

WatchDuty Fire Updates <https://www.watchduty.org>

Watch Duty is an application designed to provide real-time updates on wildfires. It provides users easy-to-read maps showing burn areas, evacuation zones, fire cameras and more, all sourced from publicly available data and verified by a team of fire fact-checkers. 🏔️

CALENDAR

