

DIGGERS DIRT

The Dirt being dished this month...

General Meetings:

NO General meeting this month. Tours are from 11:00am-1:00pm for Diggers Gardens.

Look ahead...

May 3 - House tours: Nancy McGowen, Debbe Booth and Mary Blodgett, Kristin Poulsen, Annette Serrurier and Susan Kranwinkle

Jun 7 - Diggers Annual Mtg @ Lisa's



My Eden Roses starting to explode!

From the President

Dear Diggers,

What a month it has been! After surviving record rains the skies cleared for our Annual Plant Sale and Auction. Megans' home was the perfect canvas for which all our plants that were perfectly potted and groomed, could be displayed. It always amazes me (although I am not sure why since it happens every year!) how every member comes together to set up, bring food, organize, primp, groom, water, label, price, and display all with smiles on their faces and wonderful attitudes. It's a testament to our small but mighty group! I applaud you all!

Board Meeting

10:30 a.m. Monday's preceding the General Meetings at Lisa's home. Please let Lisa know if you would like to attend.

This month the meeting will take place via Zoom on 4/27 at 4:30.

Old Mill Workday

Bring your gloves, shovel and clippers... check your email for available dates

Mark Your Calendar

Upcoming GCA Dates

www.gcamerica.org

May 21-24, 2023

GCA Annual Mtg - Hybrid



A big thank you to Nina and Adrienne for leading the charge on the 3 day affair and to Yvonne and David for opening up their beautiful home and hosting our post auction dinner. Dinner was delicious and of course the Wenzlau wine and bubbly made the festivities that much more festive! I think the husbands enjoyed it just as much as we did!

Looking ahead... in May we will get the privilege of touring some of our very own Diggers gardens. In San Marino the homes are: Nancy McGowen, Debbe Booth and Mary Blodgett and in Pasadena: Kristin Poulsen, Annette Serrurier and Susan Kranwinkle. On Jun 7th we will wrap up our successful year with a lunch on the terrace at my house. Be on the lookout for a Paperless Post invitation next month. I look forward to seeing you all then!

Off to pick weeds and plant dreams!

Lisa

Supper Bloom in Santa Ynez.



Plant Sale & Auction April 2023

The plant sale and auction, once again, did not disappoint! The set up to the event may be the best part!



Our hostess, Megan - always a smile!



Sally labeling away!



Betty the Queen groomer!





Nina and Adrienne our event leaders!



Babcock family with friends



Angela orchestrating lunch!



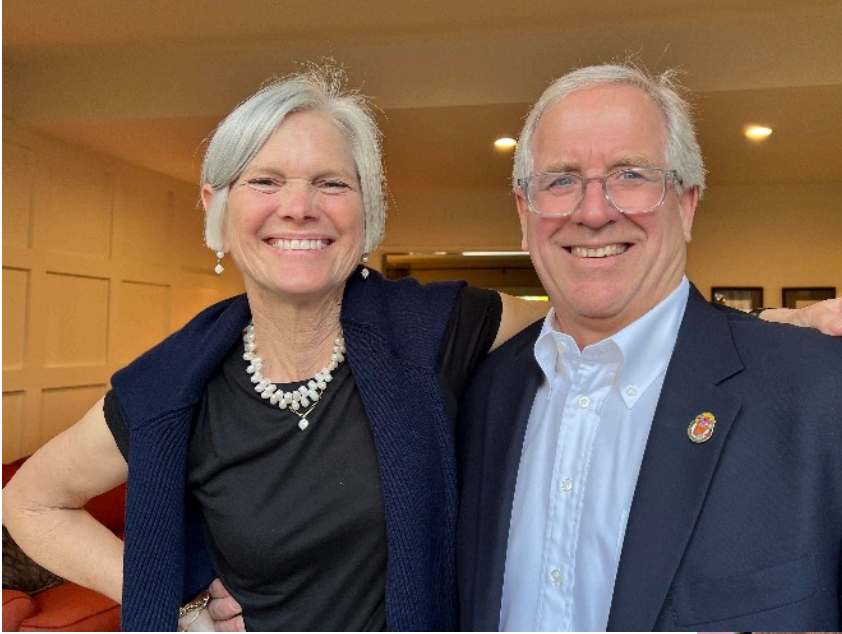
Gwen, Sally and Gretl.



Connie, livening up the auction bidding.



Live auction items.



Yvonne and David - our after dinner hosts!



The Foker's - our auction hosts!



Athena (our incoming pres.) and Phelps Wood



The Wenzlau's - our in house sommeliers and wine providers



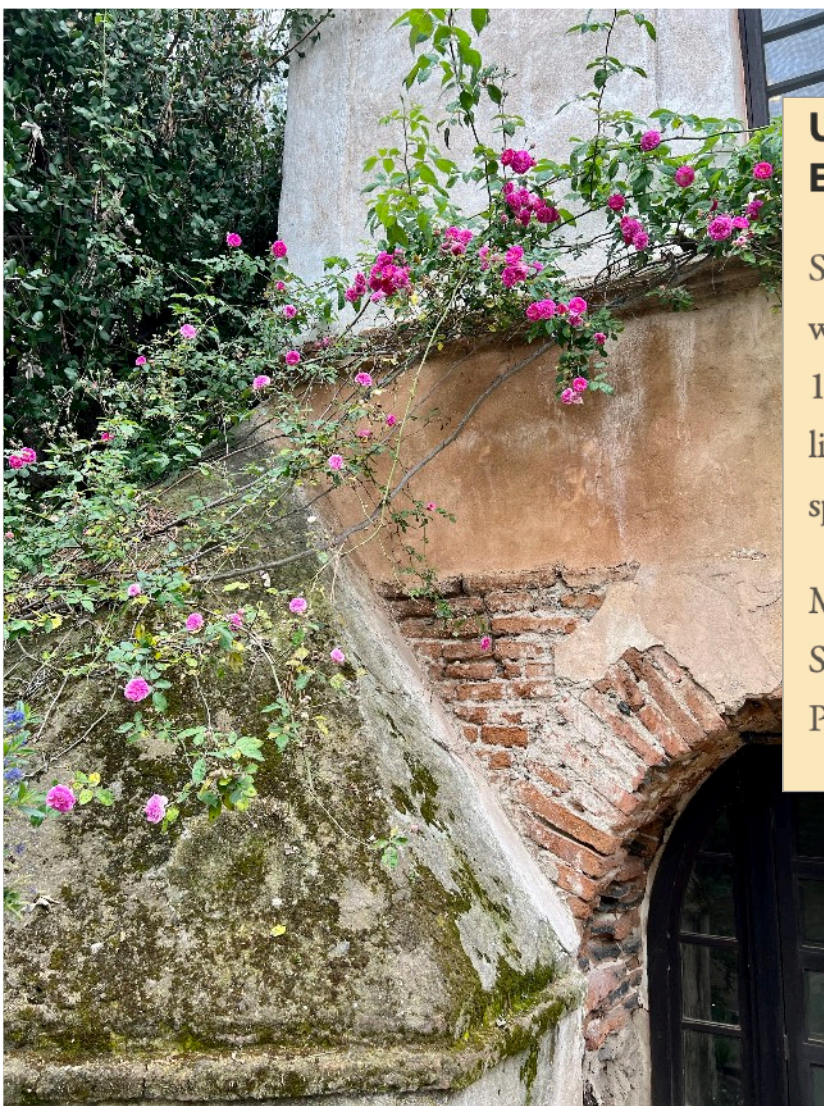
Tommy Evans between 2 Italians
(Angela and Lisa)

The Old Mill

Check out the Old Mill's website for all the fun events happening!

<https://www.old-mill.org>

Athena sent this photo of the Castille rose in bloom at the Old Mill. It's a beautiful time to stop by and see the supper bloom at the Mill!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Spring Kickoff Happy Hour
with Jardesca on Friday, May
12 from 5-7pm. We will have
live music and botanical
spritzes.

Music Under the Stars
Summer Concert Series, SGT.
PEPPER on June 17!

The NAL Recap



NAL 2023- the 40th Anniversary - by Carlin

Thank you so much for sending me to the 40th NAL conference in Washington DC where one learns a great deal about the power of the GCA and how respected it is as a reasoned voice for change.

It was a wonderful opportunity to get to know other GCA members from Zone XII since you work together throughout the conference. Brooke Garlock from Pasadena GC was a delightful and engaged companion on her first NAL trip. Hancock Park GC sent Susana Funston who told us about GreenSpace LA, an amazing project founded by members of her club. You also meet delegates from other states and compare your legislative challenges.

Monday was Education Day and I hope some of you were able to watch it online. Tuesday was Capitol Hill Day where we heard from Legislators, both Republican and Democrat, and other government officials, including John Podesta, on upcoming laws and challenges.

Wednesday, we met with our legislators, or in this case, their Aides. The California group of 20 GCA members from all over our state presented our priorities to Aides in Senators Padilla and Feinstein's offices. It was a well-organized and orchestrated presentation. We hope to meet with Judy Chu here soon.

Bills we advocated for included the Farm Bill, Recovering America's Wildlife Act, Save our Sequoias Act, Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act, PFAs regulation, Reinvesting in Shoreline Economies & Ecosystems Act, Save Our Seas 2.0 Amendment Act and Native Plant Month.

April 2023 has been proclaimed NATIVE PLANT MONTH in 41 states plus the District of Columbia, with Kansas celebrating Native Plant Month in June. More are expected by the end of the month. In the fall of 2022, the GCA launched a nationwide, multidisciplinary, cross-committee collaboration to promote native plants by formally establishing a Native Plant Month in all fifty states. It is a bipartisan Senate Resolutions and not a law, so Native Plant Month needs to be repropose every year. There is no cost to it so there is little resistance.

There were many "Ah Ha" moments. One that struck a number of us was when Dr. Lucas Joppa said "we can't keep borrowing from our environmental future to pay for our economic present". Lucas was Microsoft's first Chief Environmental Scientist, and then their first Chief Environmental Officer, leading the development and execution of the company's sustainability strategy worldwide. Proudly, he credits being a 2003 recipient of the GCA's Clara Carter Higgins Scholarship for Environmental Studies with giving him his start on his career path.

Another "Ah Ha" moment for me was the importance of native grasslands. We learned about the Myth of the Squirrel- it is not true that before Europeans arrived in North America, the forest was so thick a squirrel could have traveled from the Atlantic coast all the way to the Mississippi River without ever touching the ground. In truth, there were many open grassland spaces, vital to biodiversity. One speaker, Kyle Lybarger, told the story of a landowner who mowed all the grass around his pond and complained his pond fish were struggling. Kyle convinced him to leave parts of his grass around the pond un-mowed which provided a bug habitat and a source of food for the now happy fish! Perhaps we could all leave a little piece of wild grassland in our gardens.

Mimi Jones - In Memorandum



The NYT "California Today" (sent by Clare)



By [Soumya Karlamangla](#)
California Today, Writer

It's Monday. Exploring what makes California the most biodiverse state in the nation. Plus, in Los Angeles, some children's birthday parties are so elaborate, and expensive, that they rival weddings.



Carrizo Plain National Monument in Santa Margarita. Mario Tama/Getty Images

With Earth Day coming up, here's a relevant superlative to add to California's résumé: It's the most biodiverse state in the nation.

That means California has the largest variety of plants and animals of any state, including about 6,500 types of plants alone, roughly 40 percent of which are found only within its borders.

The state also has the world's [tallest, largest and oldest trees](#).

This impressive plant and wildlife diversity exists because of California's size; its [Mediterranean-type climate](#); and its wide range of habitats, including coastlines, mountains and deserts, which span both the [lowest](#) and highest elevations in the continental United States, according to Alison Young at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco. The state's north-south orientation plays a part, too, she said, because California stretches across many climate-defining latitudes.

"I don't think we'd be nearly as diverse if we were east-to-west long rather than north-to-south long," said Young, co-director of the Center for Biodiversity and Community Science at the academy. (Within the state, San Diego is the most biodiverse county, she told me.)

But this distinction isn't all good news. California is one of [36 global biodiversity hot spots](#) — places that are biologically rich but also deeply threatened, having lost at least 70 percent of their original native vegetation. The New York Times [published a map](#) last year showing that California had the most imperiled biodiversity of any state in the contiguous United States, with more than 30 percent of its species threatened with extinction.

“We have this tremendous biodiversity, but we also have these major stressors, including that we built ourselves into the fifth-largest economy in the world with 40 million people,” Wade Crowfoot, California’s natural resources secretary, told my colleagues at the time. In 2019, California [created an annual biodiversity day](#) to encourage the protection of the state’s living things.

In a similar effort to raise awareness about the state’s biodiversity, Young and her colleagues at the academy partnered with the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County in 2016 to start a friendly competition that they called the City Nature Challenge. The weeklong contest invited Bay Area and Los Angeles County residents to see which side could photograph and submit the most images of ladybugs, birds, worms, coyotes and other plant, animal and insect species spotted in their neighborhoods.

“We figure we’re rivals in so many other things, like baseball teams and housing costs and burritos, so let’s make a competition about nature,” Young told me. (Los Angeles County won that year with 1,601 distinct species documented, compared with the Bay Area’s 1,551.)

[The City Nature Challenge](#) has since expanded so that anyone can participate; it will be held this year from April 28 to May 1. Young said she hoped that the upcoming bioblitz event would not only help scientists better understand California’s biodiversity, but would also inspire people to pay attention to the plants and animals living in their backyards — and to care about their conservation.