



NEWSLETTER OF THE RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN VOLUNTEERS

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Marla White, Volunteer President

In 1934, Susanna Bixby Bryant said the Garden's purpose was to: "...bring together in a comparatively small area as complete a collection of the rich native California plants as can be grown...thereby promoting the general welfare of the people of the state..." Our small native plant Garden provides a wonderful physical and mental retreat when we just take a stroll and enjoy the pathways and plantings. While the lack of rain has not provided us with a "Super Bloom" this year, we are starting to see many blossoms and the return of the great horned owl in the pine near the Silent Sentinel.

Overseers participated on a Saturday morning shuttling new RSABG members on tours through the Garden and encouraged the newcomers to join our organization. Kathleen Noll, David Bryant, Rick Davis, and I presented an evening information session and fielded questions from a dozen enthusiastic prospective volunteers; all of them to sign up to begin their participation.

Dozens of volunteers helped out on a beautiful Bird Fest day. Our guests loved the knowledge shared at the stations, the chance to see live raptors close-up, helped with the bird count, played the game of migrating birds encountering obstacles, and youngsters enjoyed the chance to make some crafts and fly condors through the target.

I'd like to encourage all of you to dine at Panera Bread and support the Garden on Wednesday, March 11 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Panera Bread is located at 2315 Foothill Blvd., La Verne, 91750. They will donate 20% of sales to the Garden. Please download the flyer or show it on your phone to the cashier with your purchase. If you are ordering online for pick up or delivery, use promo code "PRFUND" so your purchase will be included in the fundraiser. <http://bit.ly/Panera2020>.

The deadline for
articles to be submitted
for the April 2020
issue of OAK NOTES
is Sunday, March 15.
Thank you for your
prompt submission!!

Please join the Volunteer Organization on Friday, March 13, at 11:30 a.m. for the Spring Quarterly Luncheon, “Jewels of Spring,” in the Lantz Outdoor Classroom. Provide an entrée, salad, appetizer, or dessert to share in this beautiful setting prepared by the Hospitality and Native Designs Committees.

The end of March heralds a new chapter for our Garden as rebranding to the *California Botanic Garden* will be unveiled on March 28. There will be free admission for the public and many activities. New signage on the buildings and grounds has appeared and is already enhancing the experience for all. Help us celebrate, and consider volunteering for this special occasion.

Thanks for all you do! See you around the Garden.
—Marla



**FROM THE
DIRECTOR**
**Lucinda McDade, RSABG
Executive Director**

Hello Volunteers! Thanks to all of you who helped with Bird Festival! From all that I have seen and heard, it was an absolutely terrific day and I am sorry to have missed it. Over that weekend, I put on my plant scientist hat and headed off to Arizona for the annual census of an endangered cactus that I have been working on with former students (now colleagues and friends) for quite a few years. Our plots are located in Ironwood National Monument in the Sonoran Desert west of Tucson. We have quite a lot of evidence that the endangered cactus is being eaten by the endangered big horn sheep, which sets up a bit of a conundrum. If you are interested, visit our project’s web site: <http://turksheads.herbarium.arizona.edu>.

If you read (and have any recollection of!) my last couple of Oak Notes articles, you may remember that I’ve been advising those of you who control home

irrigation systems to turn yours off. Because we’ve had very little rain since the day after Christmas, I am afraid that it is time to do the opposite: turn your irrigation system back on. Consider length of time run and frequency, however, given that nights are cool and days are still short, warm but not hot. Also, when you first turn your system back on, check (or have someone check) it for leaks. Just this morning, I jogged by a house several blocks from ours that had a broken irrigation line and hence a giant leak that was resulting in water running down the street. Hoping for another several storms in here before we dry up for summer!

David Bryant and others have been keeping you fairly filled-in on the Master Planning for Interpretation process that we are in the midst of. You may recall that, about three years ago, we landed a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services



A Very Happy March Birthday to:

Pauline Assarian	Hevelynn Nealy
Elijah Bonnemere	Arlene Noreen
Lee Boss	Kathy Roth
Cheri Boyd	Gloria Slosberg
Lisa Broderick	Michelle Small
Charles Gale	Joan Sweeney
Barbara Hughbanks	Sharon Thompson
Christopher Jarosz	Sid Tice
Mark Kay	Lee Waggener
Natasha Khanna-Dang	Harmut Wisch
Lynn Miller	

that has enabled us to hire a small team of expert consultants to lead us through this process. Several of you—Dorcia Bradley in particular—have been very intimately involved! Dorcia and other volunteers conducted surveys of Garden visitors as we amassed information on what they come for, what they would like to see in the way of interpretation, etc.

I want to let you know that we are about to see some ‘fruit’ from all of our planning in the form of interpretation ‘trials’ out on the grounds. We look forward to your feedback on any and all of the new signage that will be going in. We are including in this the interpretive signs that we have long planned to honor Toni Clarke at upper pond. Watch for orientation stations to our three Garden areas (Alluvial, Mesa, Communities). Watch for small but informative signs about particular plants. Watch for a new map that will label more than 20 locations in the Garden and then watch for new signs that will let the visitor know when he/she has arrived a particular location and what he/she will be seeing there. We will be making full use of our design that installs pedestals and then magnets that stick to them. The magnets are inexpensive to print and easy to replace if damaged, or if we just decide that we could have done better with messaging.



It has always been interesting to me that our general paucity of signage is one piece of evidence that we were not designed as a public garden but as more of a research institute. In fact, I was told some years ago by a former Director of Horticulture that, especially

in the communities area, *NOT* having signs was understood to be a positive value. This gave—and gives!—me quite a bit of pause: as education—and, specifically, education about the values of native plants—is part of our DNA, I am mystified as to how we are to achieve the goal of educating visitors without giving them information.

Clearly, we are trying to hit a happy medium: enough signage to provide the information that our visitors want but without turning RSABG into a sign farm. A pet idea of mine (which is not yet part of our plan for new interpretation) is explaining to guests why some plants go dormant during the summer—or even that they ARE dormant. Yes, labels identifying plants that have gone dormant (e.g., our native bulbs) can look a bit like a graveyard during the summer but our guests need information and I hope that we can figure out a way to provide that information in a creative and up-beat way.

In sum, among the changes that will be coming soon to a Garden near you, is more interpretation. Again, we look forward to your feedback on all that we do. AND thanks again for all that YOU do. Each one of you makes us stronger and more effective in all of our programming!



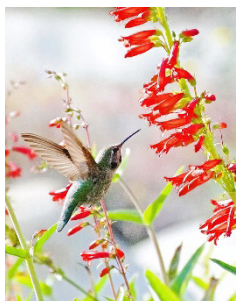
**VOLUNTEER
ENRICHMENT**
RSABG Librarian,
Irene Holiman

Monday, March 23 at noon The Sycamore Room

Make sure to attend the Volunteer Enrichment at noon on Monday, March 23. You will hear how Librarian Irene Holiman and the library volunteers are partnering with the California State Library's California Revealed project to digitize, provide on-line access, and ensure long-term preservation of RSABG's historical records. Just as it is important

to conserve and preserve our native flora, it's equally important that these records are preserved for future Garden staff, researchers, and others interested in RSABG's past.

Irene came to the Garden in 1999 as a part-time Library Assistant. She worked with Librarian Bea Beck, and Library Assistant, Shirley Carey until they both retired shortly thereafter. Currently, Irene is full-time Librarian and oversees a dedicated group of Library volunteers, who will be featured in an upcoming issue of Oak Notes.



**The pleasure of your company
is requested at the Volunteer
Organization's**

**SPRING POTLUCK
LUNCHEON
JEWELS OF SPRING
Friday March 13,
Lantz Outdoor Classroom**

Tram will start at 11:00 a.m. Dress for the weather. Those attending are asked to please bring an entrée, salad, appetizer, or dessert. Please wear your name badge. Staff is welcome to join the festivities.

Thanks to a generous benefactor, a jewelry showcase featuring matching necklace, earrings, and ID badge holder will be offered for sale—\$25 for the set. Cash or cards accepted.

The RSABG Archive collection holds many important and interesting documents pertaining to the founding of the Garden, the move to Claremont, and field notes, papers, and photographs of former staff members and research associates. The collection provides information of historical significance, including correspondence of Garden founder, Susanna Bixby Bryant, and details and reports of Garden operations and plans, all of which have been invaluable to Garden staff. The papers and field notes of former staff members have helped herbarium and research staff clarify queries about plant specimens now stored in the Herbarium collection. The photography collection of prints and slides is a history lesson of the Garden's early years of development in Orange County and its new location in Claremont.

FEBRUARY VOLUNTEER ENRICHMENT REPORT

In February, Caltech's Margaret Vinci gave an informative lecture on earthquake-preparedness. She left volunteers armed with leaflets and encouraged them to make their homes, cars, and workplaces earthquake-safe.



Caltech's Margaret Vinci lectures on earthquake preparedness



DIRECTOR OF VISITOR EXPERIENCE

David Bryant

Get your calendars out!

As cherished members of our Garden community, we are inviting all volunteers to the official ribbon cutting of California Botanic Garden. We hope you will join us on **Wednesday, March 25**, at 5:30 p.m. as city officials, Claremont businesses, College representatives, and members of the media celebrate our Garden's transformation. Refreshments will be provided and drinks will be available for purchase. Please RSVP at advancement@rsabg.org.

On **Saturday, March 28**, California Botanic Garden will open its doors to the public for the first time.

Admission will be free and we look forward to hosting department booths, activity stations, and food vendors to greet an excited crowd. Volunteer opportunities will be posted soon to Volgistics for this truly special event. We'll need help at educational and craft stations, PR tables, and more!

What to Say

Roll-out of the rebrand is almost in full swing. By March 12, we welcome you to sing it from the figurative rooftops! Here are some key messages you are welcome to share that help define and explain our rebranding as California Botanic Garden:

- **Our Legacy:** For 93 years RSABG has been at the forefront of California native plant research, conservation, and celebration. By assuming the name California Botanic Garden, RSABG will enter a new chapter as California's garden, connecting Californians and visitors from around



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: ALICE OGLESBY

**Curated by Marla White,
Volunteer President**

Alice is an active Volunteer Emerita who has volunteered at RSABG since 1998. She currently serves as a Tuesday One-Hour Garden Guide, and participates in Enrichment classes and NICE Walks. In the past, Alice was on the Volunteer Board as President and has served in several other Board positions.

When Alice moved to Claremont in 1968 with her husband Larry, a Pomona College Biology Professor, along with their two small children, she would walk the Garden most Sundays. A neighbor, Mary Coffeen, encouraged her to join the Volunteers.

Alice retired as a Professor of Microbiology at Western University of Health Sciences. She

also taught a variety of Biology courses at area colleges. She has a long history of volunteering: as a Campfire Girl, teaching science enrichment at Sycamore School, with the Claremont League of Women Voters, and serving on the Claremont School Board.

What do you like best about our Garden?

I love that it is a native plant Garden, so we are able to fully appreciate nature in action. I seem to see new things every time I come. I love the way that various plants grow and attract animals. I remain a volunteer because I think the work we do is of great importance.

Any thoughts on visitor interactions?

When even the adult chaperones are finding their eyes opened to the fascinating natural world I feel we are doing good for nature. When people appreciate the natural world they want to take care of it.

Alice feels at peace with nature and every time she comes to our Botanic Garden, either alone or in a group, she leaves feeling rejuvenated.

the world to the superlative nature of our native plants.

- **Why we deserve the name California Botanic**

Garden: Spanning 86 acres in Claremont, California, California Botanic Garden offers visitors an unparalleled experience to see and discover thousands of California native plants—including rare and endangered species. Our cutting-edge research program graduates botanists who expand and inform our understanding of California’s plant treasures. Our renowned conservation programs lead efforts in habitat restoration, propagation, seed-banking, and invasive species management. By becoming California Botanic Garden, the institution looks forward to building on a nearly

100-year legacy of preserving and perpetuating California’s botanic biodiversity and engaging new audiences on behalf of native plants.

- **Our founder,** Susanna Bixby Bryant, had a dream to “bring together in a comparatively small area as complete a collection of the rich native California plants as can be grown...thereby promoting the general welfare of the people of the state...” I am happy that this dream is becoming even more a reality as we enter the next chapter as **California Botanic Garden.**

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me at dbryant@rsabg.org or (909) 625-8767 x260.



NEW STAFF PROFILE

Kristen Barker

Hello RSABG Volunteers! I am very excited to be joining the Community Education team here at RSABG. Although it has only been a few weeks, I have already had the pleasure of meeting many of you and appreciate the very warm welcome I’ve received. I look forward to meeting and working with you all as we forge ahead into spring!



I feel very much rooted here in the Garden, as it was a large part of my childhood. My family moved to Claremont when I was young so my dad could attend The School of Theology. Living in the family housing there made the Garden basically an extension of my playground, a place where my brothers and I could explore freely, search for insects and tadpoles, and create imaginary worlds under the majestic oaks. I attribute this access to nature at such a young age to the affinity I have for it as an adult. After graduating from Cal Poly Pomona with a bachelor’s degree in Agriculture Education, I worked for the LA Arboretum in their visitor services department. Prior to coming aboard at RSABG, I worked as an “Urban Farmer” building and maintaining vegetable gardens for residential, school, and restaurant gardens, and as a garden educator for the Garden School Foundation.

I am happy to return to the place where I have such fond memories and where my journey in the garden world began. I look forward to helping foster similar experiences for the next generation of nature lovers.



VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

Kathleen Noll, Manager of Volunteer Programs

Calling all volunteers!

The Garden's Interpretive Master Plan project is moving forward with interpretive experiments appearing at several locations in the Garden. This month we will begin engaging visitors with new areas and interactions. To evaluate how visitors experience these experiments, we need your help! Interviews, and in some instances observations, will help us evaluate our experiments and see how interpretation will work in the Garden. Survey shifts will start in mid-March and continue through early May. Shifts are two hours long on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Training for conducting interviews will take place on March 13. Interviewing Garden visitors is fun, enlightening and very helpful! To sign-up for the training on March 13 and to sign-up for interview shifts, please [click here](#) or visit the [volunteer page of the Garden's website](#) and log in to Volgistics or email me knoll@rsabg.org with your preferences—I'm happy to help you get started with this important project.

Horticulture volunteers needed:

The living collection is highly visible to Garden visitors and requires intensive gardening practices and ongoing maintenance. Our incredible Horticulture staff care for native plants in three distinct realms of the Garden and spring is the ideal time for volunteers to assist with maintaining the living collection. Duties include weeding, mulching, planting and plant removal, path grooming, light pruning to maintain plant health, and perennial plant care. Grounds volunteers meet Wednesday mornings, 8:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m. and the second and fourth Saturdays of the month, 8:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m. This is

a drop-in group, no commitment necessary. Training will take place on the job and you should be willing to work outdoors in all types of weather. Contact: Ashlee Armstrong aarmstrong@rsabg.org.

Coming up:

Claytonia: AMOCA artist exhibition opens April 4

Poetry Day: April 11

Wildflower Week: April 11–19

Bird LA Day: May 2

Forever California: May 3

National Public Gardens Day: May 8

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED HERBARIUM, TWO BARCODERS FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS

Description of work: We are looking for two volunteers who can assist with our barcoding efforts to digitize (image) our specimens for two special projects. One is the California Phenology Project, which will use the specimen images to score phenology (flowering and fruiting times) to better understand the effects of climate change on our California flora. The second is the Southern Rocky Mountain Project aimed at digitizing specimens from the southern Rocky Mountain region to examine patterns of species diversification and ecological niches. Some familiarity with specimen handling is preferable but not required. Attention to detail is essential. Training will be provided by the Administrative Curator.

Shift Times: Flexible: a two-hour time block for any morning or afternoon Monday through Thursday

Where: In the herbarium

Time Commitment: At least one year



AMANDA BEHNKE
Director Of Advancement

It's Gala Season

Sunday, May 3, is the date for **Forever California**. This is the gala formerly known as Garden with a View. The Advancement Office is working diligently to secure sponsorships, obtain auction items, and take registrations for the event. Please let us know if you have ideas for sponsors or auction items. Underwriting or cash donations toward the event are being accepted. Another way to help is to donate one or more bottles of wine valued at \$20 or higher. A special thanks goes out to those of you who support this event through donating art, sponsoring, and/or attending. Feel free to stop by the Advancement Office to brainstorm how you can benefit this amazing event. The proceeds support The Garden Fund.

PRODUCTION NURSERY VOLUNTEERS

Bryce Kunzel



Herb Boss

Plants growing in a nursery are in constant need of attention; they need to be regularly watered, weeded,

pruned, and transplanted. Luckily, at RSABG we have a dedicated group of nursery volunteers who make it possible for the production nursery to produce over 20,000 plants a year!



**Val Cressy,
Jack
Rosenbrock**

Nursery volunteers do several jobs but by far the biggest is transplanting plants that have been propagated in the nursery. As our plants grow, they need to be moved up to an appropriately sized pot. Volunteers and staff work together, on a daily basis, to keep up with the high volume of plants that need to be transplanted. Nursery volunteers are also vital to the health of the plants as they grow after transplanting. During this time, the plants require regular weeding, pruning, and consistent watering.

Altogether, the nursery volunteers put in the same number of hours per week as one full-time staff person. It's not all hard work though; transplanting with a team is often lively and full of good conversation. In contrast, solitary jobs like weeding can be very peaceful. Many of our volunteers continue for years. One of our best volunteers has been working in the nursery for over twenty years! So, the next time you are out in the Garden and notice some new planting going in, or if you are shopping in the Grow Native Nursery, you can bet those plants have been in the hands of RSABG volunteers.

Production nursery volunteers work in teams of two to four people and they come on a consistent weekly

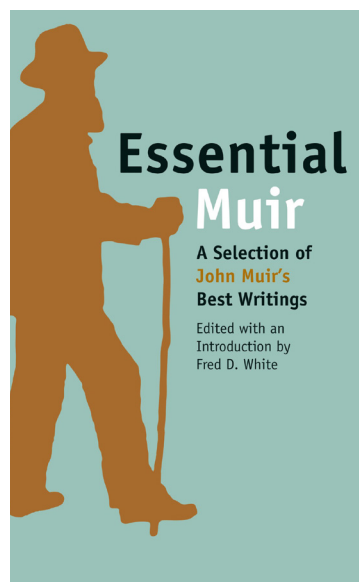
schedule. Regular nursery shifts are three hours, 9 a.m. to noon, one day a week, Monday–Thursday. Weeders, pruners, and waterers have more flexible schedules. The transplanting teams are currently full, but weeders, pruners, and waterers may be considered for “hire.” If you are interested, contact Bryce Kunzel, bkunzel@rsabg.org.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Christine Ilgen,

Volunteer Library Committee

Book cover: Amazon.com



Essential Muir: A Selection of John Muir's Best Writings. Edited and Introduction by Fred D. White. Heyday, Berkeley, CA, 129 pp. Paperback. In the Volunteer Library under History (white label, HIS on binder). Available for checkout.

Imagine yourself a pure genius, lover of nature from an early age, who described himself as a “poetico-trampo-geologist-botanist and ornithologist-naturalist and finally, the father of conservation. This was John Muir (1838–1914). In his wanderings, best known for those of the Sierras from Yosemite southward, Muir kept in his backpack a journal for penning observations of plants, animals, geology, and glaciology along the route. In the backpack were also a copy of the New Testament, a collection of Robert Burns’ poems, a change of clothes, bread and tea. During the winter, when he could no longer tramp along the routes he loved, he painstakingly assembled the journal entries into books. Only a writer as talented as Fred White, honored professor and writing instructor at Santa Clara University,

would attempt and succeed with *The Essential Muir*, a collection of Muir’s writings taken from his eight major works.

White divides his selections into five parts titled: The Visionary Inventor, The Wandering Minstrel, The Nature Scribe and Rhapsode, The Global Adventurer, and The Planet Steward. From early years in Scotland as “the visionary inventor,” Muir demonstrated inventions both brilliant and humorous. At the age of 12, his father brought him to Wisconsin, where he and two brothers had to work 16-hour days making the land suitable for farming. Thanks to some mentors, he undertook studies at the University of Wisconsin (botany, mathematics, chemistry, physics, Latin, and Greek) necessary to his subsequent, vast travels and study of nature. The breadth of his education is demonstrated in his analytical, yet poetic, writing, such as “made a bed in the pine-thicke...the best bedchambers the high mountains afford-snug, well-ventilated, full of spicy odors and wind-played needles to sing ...”

Finally, when Muir returned to Yosemite, he discovered that parts of his beloved wilderness had been destroyed at the hands of men. His subsequent writings caught the interest of President Theodore Roosevelt. Thence developed a friendship that emerged as our system of National Parks. The legacy of Muir the Conservationist perseveres. To quote White, “...May his voice always be heard...and heeded.”

COYOTES

Fred Brooks, Garden Guide

Some early American Indian tribes considered the coyote (*Canis latrans* = barking dog) a trickster—a charismatic hero that morphed between animal and man as it challenged tradition. When colonists arrived from Europe, they viewed the coyote as cowardly and deceitful. In other early civilizations the animal played various roles: bringer of winter; source of work and suffering; companion of the Creator;

symbol of military prowess; a womanizer; or a source of dancing, music, and lust.

Have you seen coyotes around your home or here at the Garden? How would you define them: as bold, secretive, interesting, frightening, or a nuisance? Their presence is not unusual, as they are native to North America and well-adapted to urban areas. Of the 19 subspecies, ours has pointed ears, a narrow snout, bushy tail, and a brownish gray coat mixed with dull orange, black, and white. Males generally range from 25–45 pounds, females 22–35 pounds. Coyotes are diurnal, so usually seen in the early morning and evening.



The coyote is essentially a carnivore, feeding on small mammals such as rabbits, squirrels, gophers, mice, birds, snakes, and lizards. When hunting in packs they will attack deer, cattle, and other large mammals. Like the non-native fox squirrel, however, the coyote has adapted to its loss of habitat to humans. When their natural diet is not available they will eat insects, fruit, pet food, and even garbage. Cats and small dogs can also become part of a coyote's urban diet, so it is best not to leave them outside unattended.

Aggressive behavior toward humans, like attacking and biting is rare. As coyotes become more comfortable around people, however, their boldness increases. If you are challenged by a coyote (arched back, lowered tail) and need to scare it away, try shouting, waving your arms and stomping your feet, throwing rocks, or banging on something until the animal leaves. But coyotes are fast learners, so this

approach may only work a few times. Regardless of how you define them, don't forget coyotes are wild animals.



**SUPPORT RSABG BY
EATING AT PANERA**
Wednesday, March 11,
from 4–8 p.m.

**Located at 2315 Foothill Boulevard.,
La Verne, CA**

Panera will donate 20% of your meal to
RSABG

Guests must show a flyer to receive credit for the sale. Either show a printed or electronic version of the flyer when ordering at the bakery café, or use the online code during checkout.

Ordering Online for Rapid Pick-Up or Delivery?
Enter "PRFUND" as your Promo Code to have a portion of your proceeds donated to the RSABG Volunteer Organization.



HELP SUPPORT

VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN

WHERE 2315 Foothill Boulevard, La Verne, CA 91750

WHEN Wed, Mar 11th

FROM 4:00pm - 8:00pm

Bring this flyer or show an electronic version to the cashier when you place your order and we'll donate a portion of the proceeds from your purchase.*

Ordering Online for Rapid Pick-Up or Delivery?*

Enter **"PRFUND"** as your Promo Code to have a portion of your proceeds donated to your organization.

Learn more at Fundraising.PaneraBread.com

*Gift card purchases, catering, kiosk and third party delivery orders are excluded and will not count toward the event.
Rapid Pick-Up and Delivery only where available.

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GOINGS ON IN THE GARDEN

Top left, Grapevine Wreath Making
Middle left, Lee Boss keeps the entry road clean
Bottom left, Grapevine Pruning
Right, Bird Fest photos

