

# Oak Notes

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NEWSLETTER OF THE CALIFORNIA BOTANIC GARDEN VOLUNTEERS

**President:** Lynn Miller

**Vice President:**

Yvonne Wilson

**Treasurer:** Betsy MacLaren

**Secretary:** Barbara Shelley

**Goals & Evaluations:**

Marla White

**Volunteer Personnel:**

No Chair

**Volunteer Library:**

Amy Baumann

**Enrichment & Field Trips:**

No Chair

**Hospitality:** Co-Chairs Susan

Starr and Anne Odgers

**Horticulture & Research:**

Tom White

**Visitor Education:**

Co-Chairs: Ann Morgan and

Katy Douglass

**Public Relations:**

No Chair

**Native Designs:**

Linda Prendergast

**Oak Notes**

**Editor:** Patricia Brooks

**Copy Editor:** Fred Brooks

**Publisher:** Carole Aldrich

**Web Publisher:** Jennifer

Scerra and Lauren Stoebel



## FROM THE PRESIDENT Lynn Miller, Volunteer President

Last Tuesday I led a school tour for first-graders. The wildflowers were at their best and the big trees were magic castles. When we approached one of my favorite plants, a manzanita, I couldn't get a word in edgewise because the children spied a long, lowly worm crawling across the path and doing what worms do. This creature was one of the highlights of their day. We get caught up in the splendor of the Garden, but this unassuming invertebrate reminded me that I have so much to learn about the give-and-take of nature. Flora and fauna. Majestic and humble.

When over three feet of water dropped on our parched state, the Garden responded with abundance. Beautiful, but there is no shortage of weeds for the staff and volunteer work crews to clear. Thank you, Tom White, for your Horticulture and Research team leadership, and to all the volunteers who worked in and with Horticulture, the GNN, the grounds crews, and the Herbarium. You are the heartbeat of CalBG.

The Library Committee, led by Amy Baumann, keeps the Volunteer Library organized and has now reopened. Each month, members review books for *Oak Notes*, including children's books—always a good gift idea, or maybe a summer read.

School tours are back and under the leadership of Katy Douglass and Ann Morgan. The committee revised the tours to be more Covid compliant, an added task, but revisiting these long-standing tours was worth the time.

Linda Prendergast's group of Native Designers turned the Garden's bounty into spectacular arrangements, and their fall wreathmaking supports our volunteer fund. This is a win-win for us all.

## THANK YOU

The *Oak Notes* editors thank our contributors, readers, and publisher Carole Aldrich, for another year of dedication to our volunteer effort at CalBG. Have a safe summer and we'll be back in September 2023.

The deadline for articles to be submitted for the OAK NOTES is the **15th** the month **prior** to publication. Thank you for your prompt submission!

**Volgistics reminder:** Please submit your monthly volunteer hours to Volgistics. Every volunteer minute counts.

Without Patricia and Fred Brooks, Carole Aldrich, and our many contributors, we would not have an *Oak Notes Volunteer Newsletter*. Thank you, all, for your insight and diligence.

She's moved away but thank you Dorcia Bradley for chairing the busy Public Relations Committee. They made our presence known inside and outside the Garden gate.

The Hospitality Committee makes gatherings happen. Susan Starr and Anne Odgers organize the teams that bring the food, provide the décor, and always do so with good cheer.

Finally, endless thanks go to our Executive Board: Yvonne Wilson, Vice President; Barbara Shelley, secretary; and Betsy MacLaren, our treasurer; and to our staff liaisons, Ming Posa and Julie Scheuremann. They kept me on track every step of the way.

### Save the Dates:

**June 9th:** Mark your calendars for the Volunteer Year-End Meeting and Luncheon. We will recognize the volunteers for their years of service and will elect our 2023-2024 Board.

**June 28th:** Add to your calendar. The volunteers will join the Trustees and Advisors to celebrate the past year. Additional information to come.

As our year ends, I am ever grateful to you, our volunteers, for giving your time to CalBG. You are dedicated and exceptional.

Thank you all, and enjoy your summer,

—Lynn



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

**Lucinda McDade,**  
**CalBG Executive Director**

### Hello Volunteers!

As I have been thinking about what to write about for this month's *Oak Notes*, truly I cannot get *Forever California* out of my mind! It was a wonderful evening—perfect weather, the venues (Forest Pavilion and Courtyard) were glorious, the food was

good (I have not heard a single complaint although I am sure that there are some out there!), the auctioneer was on fire, and—most importantly—our guests were generous. We do not have the final accounting done yet but it is absolutely certain that we grossed more than ever before. I will update you on the net outcome when all of the 'i's and 't's of the accounting are properly dealt with! Oh! and the band was terrific and the courtyard—completely redone since the last



### A Very Happy Birthday to:

#### June Birthdays

Paul Donatelli  
Wanda Ewing  
Kasey Pitts  
Edwin Sell  
Karye Hood  
Terry Givens  
Judy Moffet-Whale  
Barbara Nakaoka  
Ernie Pianalto  
Jack Rosenbrock  
Catherine Rowlee  
Marion Swick  
Bill Waggener

#### July Birthdays

Chris Caenepeel  
Marla White  
Barbara Gentry  
Vivian Li  
Jean Beckner  
Nan Davidson (Kaeser)  
Eugene Baumann  
Emilie Ballard  
Kathleen Noll  
Ann D'Antonio

John Biddle  
Anne Moreau  
Mary Perera

#### August Birthdays

Sara Simon  
Linda Munsey  
Carol Petty  
Christine Zukowski  
Lorraine Francis  
Elene Kallimanis  
Kelly Swift  
Rudi Volti  
Stephen Zetterberg  
Sophie Hamilton  
Ray Owens  
Susan Starr  
Mary Chamberlain  
Linda Troyer  
Shaunna Gygli  
Cindy Walkenbach  
Jorene Taylor Swift  
Stephen Bryant  
Susan Winderman  
Joanna Wren

in-person gala and equipped with our terrific real dance floor—functioned marvelously.

Before going any further, let me thank all of you volunteers who helped with the event. Volunteers helped to welcome our guests and direct them to parking. You also drove the trams, helped with serving drinks and helped our guests find their way to both venues. The Wednesday work crew helped with ‘detailing’ the gardens surrounding the venues. Many of you attended, too, which was excellent! We could not have pulled it off without you!

I must not neglect to thank the members of our Major Gifts Committee—most of them Trustees and *all* of them volunteers. The chair of that committee, Cindy Walkenbach, is an officially enlisted member of the volunteer corps who is well known to all of you. The Major Gifts Committee worked hand in glove with Garden staff to make it all happen.

Join me too in thanking our Advancement staff: Jen Pizzolo and Kady Sebastian, both of whom are new since the last in-person gala. They did a spectacular job and stayed remarkably calm! Adeline Ojeda facilitated the event, acting as coordinator and also helping to liaise with the caterer. Other staff absolutely vital to the event include our Horticulture team (the garden looks spectacular and the hard work they did to ‘detail’ the venues resulted in gorgeous settings for the event). The full Maintenance crew led by Phil Majors was also entirely indispensable. Behind the scenes for most of the event, our CFO, Kristine Crosby, managed the invoicing and payment process which is a lot more complicated than first may meet the eye! I am omitting many but I don’t want to leave out Mare Nazaire. Mare is our official ‘loot wrapper.’ An artist herself, Mare knows well how to box and wrap auction items so that they may go home safely with their new owners.

The *Forever California* gala is one of the events that we do here at California Botanic Garden that cause me to say: ‘It takes a Garden!’ It really does and a major part of that Garden is you, our incredibly important and treasured volunteers. Thanks, as always, for all that you do!

## FOREVER CALIFORNIA GALA

by Jen Pizzolo, Interim

Director of Advancement

On May 7, 2023, the Garden lit up for the first time in four years as we gathered to celebrate this incredible Garden that we all love at our annual fundraising gala, *Forever California*. Through sponsorships, donations, ticket sales and both a live and silent auction, we were able to raise the much-needed funds that will allow us to carry out California Botanic Garden’s critical mission of advancing knowledge, conservation, and appreciation of California Native plants. Thank you to the California Botanic Garden Volunteer Organization for being a *Ceanothus* Sponsor of *Forever California* 2023. Because of you, *Forever California* was an enormous success!

As always, CalBG Volunteers were ready to jump in and assist wherever help was needed! Volunteers welcomed guests to the gala, drove the tram, assisted at the silent auction and served drinks at the cocktail hour. We couldn’t have done this without you!



And, once again, the Native Designs team sprang into action to create breathtaking centerpieces for the event! Guests could not stop complimenting the gorgeous arrangements—from the cocktail table bud vases to the dining table centerpieces, not to mention the extra-large vase creations at the serving tables. What a way to showcase the beauty of California native plants!

The overwhelming support of guests and Volunteers on that evening proved that California Botanic Garden is recognized as a stalwart of our community. Our Paddle Auction for the long-term health and



well-being of the Garden broke records! Guests overwhelmingly raised their paddles to support California Botanic Garden's mission and to ensure we can continue to welcome curious schoolchildren, dedicated volunteers, devoted walkers, plant lovers of all kinds, and scientists from around the world. California Botanic Garden is renowned for its dedication to the vast and unique array of California native plants, many of which are found nowhere else in the world. We advance knowledge and work to conserve these irreplaceable plants and to increase public appreciation of their value. Guests of *Forever California* made sure this will continue. With the enthusiastic support of CalBG Volunteers, members and donors, our vision of a world where California's native plant diversity is conserved, thriving, and celebrated will surely become a reality.

## CALBG LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

### Meet Ken Oto and Vanessa Ashworth



A new team is now serving the CalBG Library and Archives: Ken Otto and Vanessa Ashworth. Ken comes to the Library with many years of experience in academic libraries and archives,

most recently at Azusa Pacific University. Ken's position at CalBG has been partially endowed by Marianne Wallace whose late husband, Gary, was extremely well acquainted with the Library. Vanessa is the long-time editor of the Garden's scientific journal *Aliso* and alumna of the botany program. Together, Ken and Vanessa hope to place the Library and Archives in a position to adapt the many changes coming to libraries and archives in the future.

Some of the areas they will focus on include: developing relationships inside and outside of the Garden; devising a plan to keep the Library current in book and journal acquisitions, cataloging, and processing; prioritizing the processing of archival

materials; developing a priority, plan, and strategy for digitizing materials; reviewing Library and Archives policies and updating any as needed; identifying projects to use volunteers; touring visitors through the Library facility; giving any necessary library or research instruction to students and others; and providing reference services to Library and Archives patrons.

Several interesting tasks and projects have already come their way and are currently in progress, including the accessioning of newly acquired books and journal issues, developing a new workflow to print book-plates and spine-labels from the cataloging software, and collaborating with the Honnold Library's Special Collections. The latter will display one of the Garden's grand folio edition volumes of *Flora de Filipinas* in association with a presentation by an outside scholar. They have given several tours of the library, including to the Garden Trustees and to students from Citrus College and Mount San Antonio College. Another of their current projects is tackling a large book donation by Jean Beckner, former librarian of the Honnold Library Special Collections and a long-time volunteer at the Garden's library.

Exciting plans and activities are on the horizon, and Ken and Vanessa are looking forward to serving the needs of the CalBG Library and Archives.

### Native Designs floral arrangements exhibited at the LA Times Festival of Books



## EDUCATION COORDINATOR

### Meet Nathan Peterson



Hello, my name is Nathan Peterson, and I am the new education coordinator, along with Jennifer Scerra. I started working with youth engagement outdoors in San Francisco, where I did trail work with high school students. I enjoyed

finding ways to reframe their perspective on how to look at the natural world. Later, I worked at a science camp in Irvine and with the Orange County Department of Education doing field trips for “Inside the Outdoors.” In these jobs I became passionate about working with schools to get their students out of the classroom so they could have an immersive experience outside.

I worked for two years teaching gardening at an Elementary school in San Francisco, was a member of the school community, and got to know each student by name. I was able to redesign the garden because of a construction project, and found a passion for design work. The company I worked for went out of business, but the garden is still there and a proud point in my career so far. After traveling in southeast Asia for about a year, my fiancé and I had to cut our trip short and move back home because of the COVID pandemic, where I applied for graduate schools and earned a degree in landscape architecture. I now go to Cal Poly Pomona, where my designs and coursework focus on California native plants.

For fun I collect records, hike (on cool days), and play trumpet.

## ASSISTANT & CGU BOTANY PROGRAM COORDINATOR

### Meet Grace Stewart: Executive



Hello Volunteers! I had the pleasure of meeting some of you at the Volunteer Luncheon in April, and I look forward to meeting more of you! I’ve been overwhelmed by the warm welcome I have received in my first two months

here. While I am grateful to be surrounded by a

beautiful physical environment, I am equally grateful to be surrounded by a supportive work environment. What a joy it is to work with people passionate about the Garden’s mission who make me feel like a valued member of the team.

My position is multi-faceted—I actually have two titles! The first is Executive Assistant to the Executive Director, and the second is Botany Program Coordinator for Claremont Graduate University. My job involves interfacing mainly with Lucinda, the Research Department staff, and the graduate students. I process CGU paperwork, take notes at and compile reports for all kinds of staff meetings, and I also help with Advisory Council and Board of Trustees meetings (I compile and send out meeting materials prior to each quarterly meeting, set up refreshments, and take the minutes). Additionally, I have the opportunity to work on projects outside my department, so I’m excited to see what’s in store for me throughout my tenure at CalBG.

I grew up in Yucaipa, California (about 40 miles east of here). I completed my undergraduate studies at Claremont McKenna College where I received my BA in Environmental Analysis. I loved the liberal arts, interdisciplinary education I received that allowed me to study many subjects and approach issues from multiple perspectives. Last year, I earned my Master of Music degree in Opera Performance at Cal State Long Beach (yes, you read that right). With these degrees in mind, it comes as no surprise that I’m passionate about environmental protection and combating climate change, and that I also love to sing and perform (opera, musical theater, and choir specifically). In terms of work experience, I have held a number of positions that fall broadly into the administrative support realm (at a small symphony orchestra, at CSULB, and at an accounting firm), all of which have prepared me for the many facets of my current position at the Garden.

Working at CalBG feels like a serendipitous intersection of my expertise and interests that allows me the pleasure of returning to my old stomping grounds. I look forward to contributing to the Garden’s mission alongside all of you. Come say hi anytime!



# CACTACEAE

by Steve Bryant



Eleven genera and ~42 spp. in CA; here are some in southern California.

***Carnegiea*** (1 sp.). *C. gigantea* (Giant Saguaro). In CA, found only near the Colorado River. To 15 m, does well in local gardens. Slow-growing; branches and flowers only in age. Large white flowers which, when pollinated, produce large red-pulped fruits, a staple of the Arizona indigenous peoples. Available from specialists. Original idea for photo from Danielle Wildasinn.



***Cylindropuntia*** (Cholla, 12 spp.). All have cylindrical stems with minutely barbed sheaths over the spines, making them very painful to remove. *C. bigelovii*, the “Teddy-Bear Cholla” (an insult to Teddy-bears) is perhaps the best defensive plant in CA; shorter branches detach at a touch, and often

litter the ground underneath plants. Tends to grow in groups, called Cholla Gardens. Plant to 2 m tall, stems ~10–20 cm diam. *C. ramosissima* (Pencil Cactus) has branched, finger-thick stems. Pack good needle-nosed pliers when in a cholla area.

***Echinocactus*** (1 sp.). *E. polycephalus*. Looks like a cluster of small barrel cacti; scattered across both deserts.



***Echinocereus*** (2 spp.)  
*E. englemannii*  
(Hedgehog Cactus) has a cluster of ~8-cm-diam. stems, up to 50 cm tall; dark magenta flowers with green pistils; up to 2,400 m. *E. Mojavensis* (Mojave Mound

Cactus) has large numbers of short stems in a hemispheric mound with red-orange flowers and green pistils.

***Ferocactus*** (Barrel cactus, 2 spp.): *F. cylindraceus* (California Barrel Cactus) is our common barrel cactus of the deserts below 3,000'. Yellow flowers, spines often reddish on top of plant. Slow-growing; available from specialists. *F. viridescens* grows in coastal San Diego County.

***Mammillaria*** (Fish Hook cactus, 3 spp.). All are small, clustered cacti with numerous tubercles, each with a central hooked spine. *M. tetrancistra* is scattered across both deserts; it has pinkish flowers

## SAVOR SUMMER



### JUNE POTLUCK ANNUAL VOLUNTEER LUNCHEON

Friday, June 9th 11:30 am, Outdoor Classroom

Please bring an appetizer, main dish, salad, or dessert to share! Drinks and utensils provided; tram starts at 11:00.

*Come have fun and find out what's happening at the Garden. Don't forget your name badges!*

and bright red fruits, both in a circle near the top of the stems.



**Opuntia**  
(Prickly pears, 10 spp.).  
*O. basilaris* (Beavertail),  
looks fairly innocent,  
but is covered with  
short spines called  
glochids that are very  
difficult to remove.

Glowing magenta flowers, perhaps the brightest of any CA native plant. *O. littoralis* (Coastal Prickly pear), with generally yellow flowers, is common on cismontane slopes.

## BOOK OF THE MONTH

by Christine Ilgen,  
Volunteer Library Committee



*The Plasticology Project: the chilling reality of our plastic pollution crisis and what we can do about it* by Paul Harvey, 2022. 238 pp. Amazon paperback \$18.95

*The Plasticology Project* is an excellent account of the global problem of plastic pollution. Plastic originated as a lab accident in the 1950's, when reagents in

a laboratory experiment failed to completely react. The product became an integral part of our daily lives, with applications ranging from containers to toys, construction materials, car parts, clothing, and more. Will plastic be with us forever? It is flexible, durable, and seems indestructible: to date; chemical treatments, even pyrolysis (burning), do not destroy it. Similarly, no microbes have yet been developed that will digest plastic. Author of *The Plasticology Project*, ecologist Paul Harvey, points out that in the relatively short period from 1950 to 2022, almost 8 billion tons of plastic waste have accumulated and only 11% has been recycled.

This book is both comprehensive and detailed. For readers with some understanding of chemistry, the book's introduction to plastic will mean more (the plastics polyethylene, polypropylene, polystyrene, and so on, are chains of simple subunits such as the compound ethylene). *The Plasticology Project* focuses on plastic as a pollutant and most readers will recognize "recyclable" and "biodegradable" as familiar terms.

Many readers probably know about the Great Pacific garbage dump located in the Pacific Ocean between the US west coast and Hawaii. Another plastic dump lies off the western coast of Europe. Unsurprisingly, the source for most plastic pollution is plastic water bottles. Plastic can be degraded somewhat but the basic molecule remains. Plastic pollution is everywhere: in the air, on land, sandy beaches, and in bodies of water such as lakes and rivers. The latter transport plastic to its final resting ground in the bottom of the ocean.

Various strategies are currently being applied to plastic waste and some are promising, but most labeled recyclable and biodegradable are yet to be realized. Some may be recyclable (converted to the same or a different plastic), but so-called biodegradable plastic is still some form of plastic. For example, biodegradable plastic bags that have spent the past 10 years in my backyard compost are still intact.

Lesson learned: after downing the contents of a plastic water bottle, think twice before tossing it.

## UPCOMING VOLUNTEER FUNDRAISER AT CHIPOTLE

One way we as volunteers can support California Botanic Garden financially is to patronize a restaurant that will donate a percentage of the sales generated by its customers. You may have done this already for other not-for-profit entities. To this purpose, we are pleased to partner with Chipotle in the Sycamore Hills Plaza, located on Baseline Road and the 210 Freeway in Upland. Please consider eating at this Chipotle restaurant on Wednesday, August 16, between the hours of 4 and 8 p.m. The accompanying flyer provides all the information. Thank you, and we hope to see you there!



# DO GOOD WITH CHIPOTLE



## CHIPOTLE FUNDRAISER FOR CALIFORNIA BOTANIC GARDEN VOLUNTEERS

33% OF EVENT SALES GET DONATED TO THE CAUSE

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 16TH | 4-8PM**  
**2057 W BASELINE RD, UPLAND, CA, 91784**

ORDER ONLINE FOR PICKUP USING CODE **XVRVWNE**  
OR SHOW THIS FLYER IN RESTAURANT



For online orders to count towards the fundraiser, they must be placed for pickup only from the restaurant location of, and during the hours of, the fundraiser. Delivery orders and gift cards do not qualify. \$150 minimum event sales required to receive any donation.



# VOLUNTEERS AT WORK

Photos by Marla White and Tom White.





