



GATHERINGS



VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER
SEPTEMBER 2012

Volunteers In The Garden

**Drs. Joe McAuliffe and
Kim McCue**

will speak about a new idea in
rescuing endangered plants.

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10
DORRANCE HALL**

9:30 a.m. - Refreshments
10:00 a.m. - Program



Photo by Adam Rodriguez

PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS

"Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower." ~ Albert Camus

Fall 2012 is upon us. Garden plants have been slumbering under the intense Sonoran summer heat. In fact, June 2012 was the second hottest June on record in Arizona. Much activity has occurred on campus. The Garden Shop has closed; it has been undergoing renovations to become the new dine-in restaurant, named "Gertrude's." (Can you possibly guess the origin of that name?).

The grand opening is expected over the holiday season. Construction of needed additional parking spaces is ongoing. The new research laboratories adjacent to the horticulture break room are moving forward with expected completion in the fall. Your volunteer leaders and Garden staff have used the "slack-time" of summer to prepare for the Fall-Winter-Spring Season. This applies especially to the volunteers and staff in the Department of Education. When you return, be prepared for what is new during Docent Kick-off Week (September 24-30).

JUDY BATES, our VIG historian and horticultural aide, thoughtfully reminded me that not all volunteers have "slack time" in the summer. A very resilient crew of horticultural aides work throughout the summer performing all sorts of chores. Congratulations to you special "desert rats." (On break, you can often find them in the Volunteer room in Marley rehydrating and snacking with the lights out.)

Irrigation lines are replaced, rerouted, and fine tuned. Inventory of the plants continues, note is being taken of what needs replacement, removal, and planting for ever changing exhibits. (Take note of the new plants at the Garden entry bridge, and the cardon on the left before you enter the bridge). BRIAN KISSINGER points out how much tree pruning is accomplished so our visitors avoid "corneal abrasions" and other injuries. Some of our volunteers work in air-conditioned comfort in the herbarium and seed room.

A newly located Garden Shop is projected to open this fall. The contract to run the shop has been awarded to an outside retail company named Event Network. This experienced group operates gift shops at the Phoenix Children's Museum, Longwood Gardens outside of Philadelphia, Museum of Science in Boston, and the Polynesian Cultural Center in Honolulu, HI. Please check

out their website Eventnetwork.com to get a feeling for the venues they run. Event Network makes a special effort to customize the retail facility according to the organization's community, cultural, and scientific mission.

As we swing into Fall operations, become an active volunteer for the new exhibits coming to the Garden. Participate on the new committees preparing for the 75th Anniversary Celebration commencing February, 2013. Please send old pictures and anecdotes about the Garden to JUDY BATES and me for an historical booklet. And plan to volunteer for the upcoming National American Public Garden Association Convention which is coming to Phoenix in May 2013. We have some exciting times ahead!

I hope to see you on the Garden paths!

MIKE GILMAN

PRESIDENT, VOLUNTEERS IN THE GARDEN



Photo by Gene Almendinger

VOLUNTEERS IN THE GARDEN EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

PRESIDENT	MIKE GILMAN
VICE PRESIDENT	ARCHER SHELTON
SECRETARY	RUTH TILY

A monthly newsletter for and by the
Volunteers of the Desert Botanical
Garden

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SUMMER CAMP REVIEW

The relatively quiet months of the summer are quickly passing us by here in Children's Education at the Garden, but we have had some time to settle down after a truly fabulous four weeks of Summer Camp.

We started off with four days of preschool camp: Here Comes the Sun! with two classes of 12 (completely sold out). Led by JENI FUHRMANN and NINA GROUT, the program explored the importance of sun protection, how plants need the sun to survive, and how animals have adapted to life in our very sunny desert.

Following Here Comes the Sun were three weeks of the "big kids" with Let's Dig In!, Solar Powered Sun Fun, and Home, Home in the Desert with a total of 70 campers. During the first week the campers learned about everything garden-related—from the mystery of seeds to how to plant and harvest vegetables. The highlight of this week was a field trip to the Mesa CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) farm.



The campers saw eggplant, corn, squash, and watermelons growing.

Our second week mirrored this theme, and the campers learned about the sun, sun dials, and even got to drive some solar-powered mini cars. The highlight of this week was a visit from the Phoenix Astronomical Society and their telescopes that allowed the kids to see both the sun and the moon.



The final week explored the adaptations of plants, animals, and humans to the stressors of the Sonoran

Desert. The week boasted two field trips (to Pueblo Grande and the Phoenix Zoo), a trip to the *Plants and People Trail* with Horticulture's RAY LEIMKUEHLER, and visits from volunteer TOM GATZ and the theatre education organization, Childsplay.

We finished off the summer camp season with an Overnight Summer Camp Celebration. Campers and their parents arrived at 6 p.m. and were directed to the Binns Wildflower Pavilion where they decorated shirts and made a giant rain stick. After snacking on cholla buds and prickly pear tea, we had a mini Flashlight Tour introduction to nocturnal animals of the desert (two Western screech owls even decided to join us!). After learning about snakes, toads, lizards, geckos, frogs, scorpions, and tarantulas, we walked along the *Plants and People Trail*. After much excitement and with the help of two swamp coolers, we managed to fall asleep around 11:30 p.m. and woke to the early sunrise around 6 a.m.



We were lucky enough to encounter Patches, the Garden's Desert Tortoise, on our bird walk before finishing the morning with a tasty breakfast.

It was a great four weeks and we couldn't have done it without the help of our amazing volunteers. Thank you so much to BECKA BERRY, PAT MURPHY, WENDY ROSE, MARY VERSOSKY, ANNA COOR, BILL COPE, PAT MCKENNA, PATTI FIELDS, PEG HILLER, YVONNE SAPPENFIELD, and our nine TEEN counselors!

EMILY MORRIS

INFORMAL SCIENCE EDUCATION COORDINATOR

The Garden Corner

GROWING UP IN THE GARDEN

If you were out of town this past hot summer, I envy you. However, you did miss a wonderful presentation here in July and, just to show there are no hard feelings, here is a short summary for your vicarious enjoyment. John Earle, the 73 year-old son of former, long-time Garden director W. HUBERT EARLE graciously accepted an invitation from MARILYN WOLFE to come and share with us his experiences growing up at the Desert Botanical Garden. Facilitated by ARCHER SHELTON, the delightful talk was illustrated with several of Mr. Earle's personal photographs, brought to life by Garden librarian BETH BRAND who scanned them into a Power Point presentation for us.

W. Hubert Earle drove his wife Lois and two young sons Art and John here from Indiana in 1945 because of W. Hubert's asthma. In 1947, Director W. TAYLOR MARSHALL hired W. Hubert as a Garden laborer (perhaps good prior experience for any Garden administrator), as a superintendent in 1950 and, after Marshall died from illness related to smoking in 1957, W. Hubert became the Garden's fourth director, a post he held until 1976. The family's first Garden home was a trailer with a summer sleeping porch. Bathroom facilities required a short hike to Webster Auditorium. In 1952, upgraded accommodations came in the form of Archer House and the Earles became the building's first residents. Bed legs were placed in coffee cans filled with chlordane dust (banned by the EPA in 1988) to prevent scorpions and insects from climbing into the beds.

The one-hour presentation flew by as John mesmerized us with tales of him and his brother running wild in the early days of the Garden. John had a run in with a prickly pear cactus patch after Art dared him to walk in the Garden blind-folded. The experience has stayed with him to this day, and currently John limits his cactus collection to just one completely spineless totem pole cactus.

John spoke fondly of his mother Lois, as he showed us a photo of her decorating an agave stalk with Christmas ornaments and the huge brass plaque dedicating the original Garden herbarium to her. The boys used the Garden Butte as a test track for their homemade carts (most of the columnar cactus on the butte were planted by their dad). The two brothers

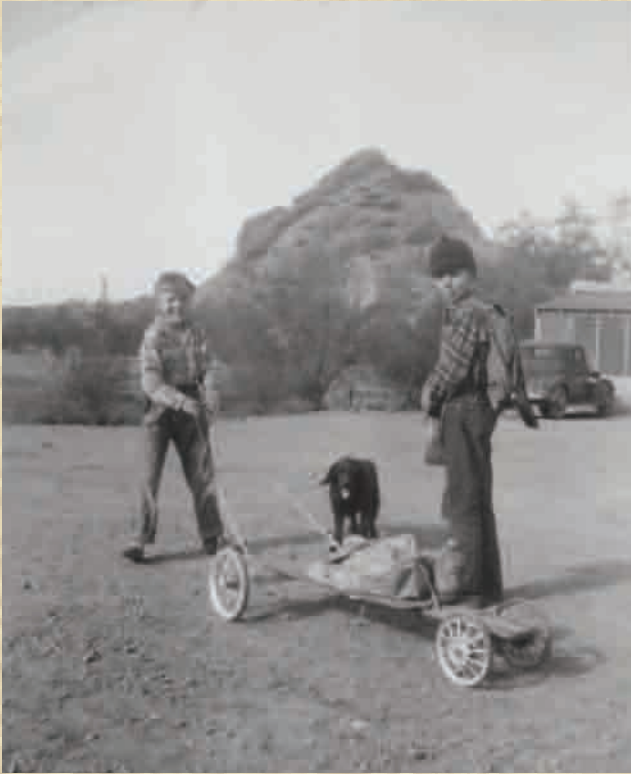


Since the Garden was closed during the summer then, the boys instituted a 'clothing optional' policy and older brother Art often ran barefoot along the Garden trails.

spent care-free days exploring Papago Park on foot and on their bicycles, swimming in the canal, climbing the buttes, digging foxholes, building forts, creating a makeshift six hole golf course with buried coffee cans, making arrows from saguaro ribs, catching chuckwalla lizards, sneaking up on couples in parked cars, repairing bicycle tire punctures, shooting rabbits, and once accidentally shooting a hole in the metal roof of the brand new Garden equipment shed their dad built. The boys never encountered desert tortoises or rattlesnakes, but John said gopher snakes were not uncommon.

It turns out that John and Art were only the third and fourth volunteers at the Garden (the first was Mrs. Therese Marshall, the wife of Garden director Marshall; the second was their mother, Lois Earle). Volunteer duties for the boys included stapling together copies of the *Saguaroland Bulletin*, selling sodas to visitors, helping direct cars in the parking lot, building paths, and encouraging visitors to stay on them. Occasionally they earned pocket money cleaning Director Marshall's apartment in Webster Auditorium and shaking the dust from his extensive collection of Indian rugs.

GROWING UP ... CONTINUED



The boys built this cart using wheels and spare parts liberated from the dump at the old prisoner of war camp (mainly for German submarine officers, John said) across what is now McDowell Road.

One dark, moonless evening, as the family sat out on the deck, the boys were terrified by what appeared to be a white robe with no apparent head, arms or legs, approaching their trailer through their gate. They were relieved to learn that the apparition was actually a

disoriented patient, a black man, who wandered in from the VA hospital that then occupied the former POW camp just across McDowell Road.

Every evening the bell on Webster Auditorium rang five times to signal that the Garden was closing. One Sunday evening, just as the bell rang, someone ran up to the Garden gate to report an injured person needing to be rescued off of Barnes Butte. The sheriff's rescue party arrived and asked Mr. Earle "What's the best way to get up there?" Mr. Earle replied, "My boys will show you. They know every trail up there. Follow them." They did and the rescue was successful. However, John told us that he and his brother always avoided the butte on the north side of McDowell. Back then it was still used for military target practice.

Afterwards, John generously presented everyone in the audience with a copy of a book written by his dad, a self-taught botanist, entitled Cacti of the Southwest.

TOM GATZ

THE GARDEN CORNER

Thanks to BETH BRAND, JOHN EARLE, and ARCHER SHELTON for helping me with this article.

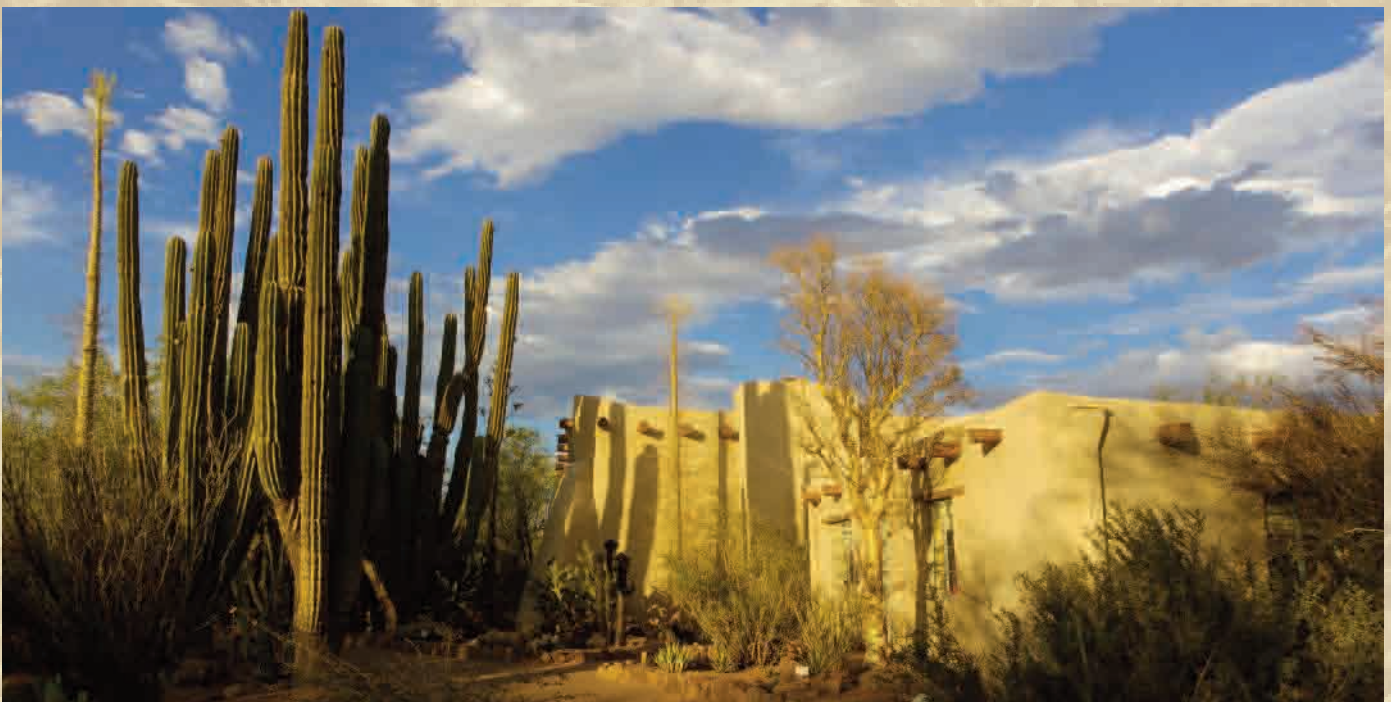


Photo by Adam Rodriguez

The Olympic Games and the Passing of the Torch

As I write this, the Olympic Games are in full swing. And just as the torch is passed from one host country to the next, the "torch" has been passed from LARRY BUSH to me as the new Hort Aide Chair. I have been a VIG for 18 months as a Hort Aide and am currently volunteering with Alex on irrigation, a day captain for the newly established Saturday group and most recently volunteering with the Cactus Voucher Program. Having had the pleasure of working with many of the Hort Aides at some point, I am excited and honored to represent such a hardworking and dedicated group of people.

Speaking of hardworking and dedicated, I would like to give a "shout out" to the 54+ Hort Aides who logged in over 1,275 hours for June and July! Despite the challenges that come with an Arizona summer – endless days of triple digit temperatures, humidity and scorching sun, the horticulture staff was able to complete several major projects that would have been nearly impossible without this help. So, Thank You!

Speaking of several major projects, the Echinopsis bed by CDL has been rejuvenated, renovation work on CDL is well underway with the installation of the raised beds and shade structure. More than dozen new shade trees were added to the Quail Run path and various locations throughout the Garden for the comfort of our members and our plants, and the *Berlin Agave Yucca Forest* received new plantings

and large surface select boulders...both of which impressively required the use of a crane for installation. I encourage you to stop by these areas the next time you're in the Garden.

Speaking of the next time you are in the Garden, for those Hort Aides who we look forward to returning, a reminder that we are now gathering in the Interpreter Headquarters in the Marley Building. It has been rewarding sharing space with the various Garden departments - getting to know better what each of them does, sharing information and advice, keeping each other apprised of what's happening around the Garden and in their respective departments. It's interesting to see the departments, while from different areas, still having the common goal of the betterment of the Garden. Not unlike the Olympics Games, the athletes, while from different countries, still having the common goal of the betterment of their sport.

Speaking of the Olympics Games...

KRISTEN KINDL
HORT AIDE CHAIR

A special thank you to Larry Bush for his words of encouragement and wisdom. I'll do my best to continue the great work he's started.



Photo by Adam Rodriguez

CONTINUING EDUCATION 2012 PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Welcome back!

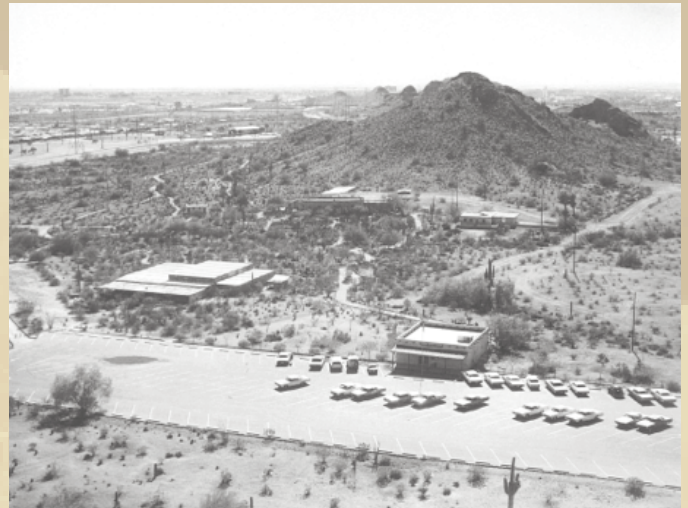
Even though the temperature is still in triple digits, Summer Fun is over for 2012. Those who braved the heat to come to the Garden found the programs fun, entertaining and unique. RAY LEIMKUEHLER introduced us to pomegranates, connecting their history from the fertile crescent of Iraq to the trees at the Garden. TOM GATZ introduced us to the snakes (and some other creatures) that are found in the Garden. JOHN EARLE shared his experiences about growing up in the Garden. SARAH PORTER spoke of a new idea, Nature Deficit Disorder. SCOTT McMAHON shared his experiences about his trip to the deserts of Peru.

We can look forward to diverse presentations and programs coming up for next season:

On September 10 - Drs. JOE McAULIFFE and KIM McCUE will speak about a new idea in rescuing endangered plants and how individuals might get involved. Species extinction is one of the consequences of the ever-increasing extent to which the planet is occupied and used by humans.

A complementary way to prevent extinction of some rare plant species is to put those species into the caring hands of the population at large. Instead of conservation efforts being carried out by a select few, enlisting the public at large to grow and care for endangered species in appropriate urban settings could contribute significantly to preventing species extinctions.

The Desert Botanical Garden has embarked on such a path in a plan to protect the endangered Arizona Hedgehog Cactus.



October 8 - Ken Schutz will give an update on things that are happening with the Garden.

November 12 - Liberty Wildlife and some of their rescued animals will introduce us to wild animal rescue and rehabilitation.

A reminder: many of our programs are recorded and are available for viewing for two months after the presentation. See Judy Aguilar to check out a CD.

Looking forward to seeing everyone September 10
Dorrance Hall
9:30 a.m. - refreshments, 10:00 a.m. sharp - program

ARCHER SHELTON
CONTINUING EDUCATION



Photo by Adam Rodriguez

Changes are happening in Research. Construction on the new DNA Lab is moving along and it's exciting to see it happening. The Herbarium windows are gone, but there are new solar tubes making it safer to walk through the darkened work room.

Lunch time has become a time for continuing education for Research. We meet in Farrington Conference Room to 'dine' and listen to staff or volunteers present something about what they do at the Garden or an area of interest to all. Programs have been varied and very interesting. CHRIS DAVIS presented on Types and Nomenclature of plants, ED TURCOTT presented on his work on agave pollen, and TOM Gatz talked about the birds in the Garden. We received refreshers and updates on the rules for mounting specimens and more. It has been a very interesting and enjoyable lunch time.

ANDREW SALYWON and RAUL PUENTE attended and made presentations at a conference in Cuba in July. They also visited the Botanical Garden in Havana. We will hear more on that later.

The Salywons, Andrew and Laura, welcomed a baby girl into their family. Catherine Mae was born July 22. Her big brothers are already busy watching over her.

DIANNE KANZLER
RESEARCH VOLUNTEER

BRING US YOUR BOOKS!

Let us help you tidy-up by accepting your gently used books for the Garden Library's Book Sale. Proceeds benefit the Garden's Schilling Library.

Fiction/non-fiction, all subjects areas are welcome (no magazines please).

Please drop donations at Garden Admissions by Thursday, October 18. A receipt for tax purposes is available upon request.

Want to help? Sign-up to volunteer in the book booth. You may get to read a little between customers.

Thanks for your support and see you at the Fall Plant/Book Sale!

BETH BRAND
LIBRARIAN



Photo by Adam Rodriguez

BED 40a

Bed 40a is located on the Core's main trail between the Cactus and Succulent Galleries. It had been planted and maintained by my predecessor, PATRICK QUIRK, and it is one of our specialty beds used to showcase the smaller species of the Cactus Family. Genera such as *Thelocactus*, *Mammillaria*, *Escobaria*, *Copiapoa*, *Parodia*, and *Coryphantha* form small single to multi-headed plants that look good when planted together and interspersed with rocks for effect.

Over the last several years, I had noticed a steady decline in the plants, starting with a yellowing of the tissue, which I had assumed was due to too much summer light, even though I erected a shade structure prior to each summer to protect them. This color persisted, however, into the fall and winter months, which indicated another problem. New plants also had trouble establishing or would manifest the same yellow color after a short time, so I then thought about there being a problem with the soil.

Our soil at the Garden is alkaline throughout with a pH above 8.0. Our irrigation water is also alkaline with a pH around 8.2. Normally cacti are fine growing in slightly alkaline soils, because this is where most of them evolved-marginal soils in low rainfall areas which tend to have more buildup of salts. The difference with having cacti here from other regions is that they receive more water than we do here, and that water is rain water, which is slightly acidic with a small content of nitrate nitrogen. Decreasing annual amounts of precipitation here have also contributed to our soil's alkalinity.

When I sent some soil samples to the lab for analysis, they tested out to have a pH of 8.7 with high concentrations of calcium, magnesium, and potassium. The soil in bed 40a was almost pure silt, as it was Patrick's preferred medium for cactus beds and containers that housed the cactus collection. While some growers and specialists use a pure mineral soil for some of their plants, the general agreement for the rest is to have very well-drained soil, whether for pots or in the ground. This allows for the rapid passage of dissolved salts past the root zone to maintain a healthy pH.

With this in mind, I decided that the only fix was to remove all the plants, about 100, remove the silt from above the original soil, and to bring in a sandy loam soil that would offer a balance of sand, silt, and clay. As is their nature, my intrepid volunteers Dan, Larry, and Tracy eagerly helped me dig up, record, and bring the plants back to Propagation for safe keeping. Later, the Hort Aides pitched in and removed the silt over the next several days using buckets and electric carts and brought in the clean fill dirt. I then added a couple inches of sand, followed by some mulch, and we turned it over to improve the drainage even further.

I was able to replant most of the cacti that were healthy and added some from elsewhere in the collection and from nursery purchases. Brian and Kenny came up with some nice specimens for me, including a large *Espostoa* and a *Pachycereus pectin-arboriginum*, and I added some new genera, namely *Haageocereus*, *Oreocereus*, and *Ferocactus* for a new look. Many of the rocks found their way back into the bed for accent and to provide a little separation. The surface is covered with a light native top dressing with some small rocks for a more natural appearance. In a couple of months, hopefully, the shade cloth will have been removed, and we will all be able to enjoy this major bed renovation.

SCOTT MCMAHON

COLLECTIONS MANAGER - CACTACEAE



Photo by Adam Rodriguez

Welcome Back *Envoys*!

HELLO

Well, here we are, ready to start a new “year.” Surely it will be cooler by the time we get things started. As you know, the real work begins in October. However, to get you ready for the season, we will have our annual kick-off party on September 24. Stay tuned for further info on that.

The first big event will be the Fall Plant Sale the weekend of October 19. That will be followed by the Pumpkin Festival, the Day of the Dead celebration, and Chiles & Chocolate (yum). So, check out the Garden Calendar and put these dates in your appointment book so that you will be available to help out. As you are all aware, we had a heck of a year last year so we will have to rally the troops to beat out last year’s numbers. **We Can Do It!!!**

There will be another *Envoy* training on October 9, so please tell any of your Garden friends to join us. We do have lots of fun. As all you need is a good attitude, enthusiasm for the Garden and you will make a great *Envoy*.

See you all real soon,
Until next time,

MARY STOCK
ENVOY CHAIR



Photo by Adam Rodriguez

I hope everyone is having a great summer and gearing up for yet another exciting season at the Desert Botanical Garden! For those of you who don't know me, please allow me to introduce myself. My name is KATELYN POULSON and in the past year, I have taken on the position of Corporate Event and Group Sales Coordinator. I was extremely thrilled to take on this new and challenging role and have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know staff and volunteers, interacting with Garden guests, and furthering the mission of the Garden.

To give you a little more insight on my position at the Garden, I am in charge of coordinating tours and activities for any adult group of 10 or more. Whether it be discounted admission into the Garden, a private group tour or specialty activity such as creating their own cactus dish garden or participating in a cooking demo, I handle it all! In addition to adult group tours, I am in charge of coordinating private corporate facility rental events including board retreats, meetings, team-building seminars, corporate receptions and corporate holiday parties.

As we move into this new season, I am excited to continue my role with the Garden and to provide guests with the opportunity to further their knowledge of the Desert Botanical Garden and desert plants in hopes they feel renewed and inspired to help us further our mission of excellence in education, research, exhibition and conservation of desert plants of the world.

I look forward to working with many of you to offer our visitors an exceptional experience that will leave them wanting to come back for more. I encourage you to provide any feedback on the Adult Group Tour Program to me as we are always looking for new and exciting ways to engage our visitors.

I look forward to seeing you on the trails!

KATELYN POULSON
CORPORATE EVENT AND GROUP SALES COORDINATOR

DOCENTS ENGAGING VISITORS

What can a docent learn from the book, The Experience Economy? Well, it focuses on best practices for creating positive, memorable experiences. The premise: our economy - more specifically, how people choose to spend their money - has shifted to acquiring experiences. People are pinching pennies on consumable goods and services to be able to afford experiences which they value.

Authors Pine and Gilmore define an "experience" as a series of events, staged to engage the customer in a personal, memorable way. As docents, we want each visitor to experience the Garden in a positive way – creating a lasting memory.

But, wait. We might assist hundreds of Garden visitors per day. Personalizing their experiences can be a challenge. Plus, much work has been invested in standardizing our methods of interpretation, insuring that the information we share is both accurate and consistent. What's more, our daily tours follow one theme: adaptation. So how can we tailor the visitor experience? I feel two of our roles offer strong opportunities.

The Greeter station is literally positioned for customization. It's our first opportunity to match a visitor's specific interests with our ever-evolving offerings. We should ask questions like:

- What brings you to the Garden today?
- How much time do you have to spend with us?
- What did you see the last time you were here?

Through personal interaction, the Greeter can help each visitor (or group) create a tailored 'Garden experience.' Key to our success: knowledge of today's events, star attractions (what's in bloom now; recent critter sightings), tour schedule and even "what's hot" in the cafe. Aligning our offerings with the visitors' specific interests will increase their perception of value.

Another chance to customize begins in the tour staging area. As visitors gather, use this time to 'mine' for personal tidbits. The questions can be simple:

- Is this your first visit to our Garden?
- Where is home?
- What aspects of the Garden interest you most?

Then put their responses to use! They farm in Iowa. They're on holiday from Manitoba. They've come for landscaping ideas. Think! How might you tie their knowledge and interests into your tour? Each comment supplies a clue to make the tour more personal.

So, make eye contact and slip in a farming term. Ask how the palo verde's little leaves compare to leaves in Canada. The point is, recognize their comments and spin them into your tour. In the next *Gatherings*, I'll share how docents can benefit from the theater secrets of street performers.

The bottom line: to the degree you can, make these personal connections. Every positive cue and event makes for a more memorable and valued experience.

SUE ALTMAN-RIFFEL
DOCENT CHAIR

Dates to remember:

Day Captain Meeting, Monday, Sept. 10

Docent Kick-off Meetings, week of Sept. 24-30



Volunteer DATELINE

WEEKLY OPPORTUNITIES

Mondays, 7:00 a.m.
Bird walks - Meet at Admissions

Tuesdays at 4:00 p.m. and Thursdays at 3:00 p.m.
Yoga classes, Munson Classroom B

SEPTEMBER

Saturday, September 1
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Last Flashlight Tour

Tuesday, September 4
Deadline for October Gatherings

Monday, September 10,
9:30 a.m.
Volunteers in the Garden Meeting, Dorrance Hall

Monday, September 10
Day Captains Meeting

Monday through Sunday, September 24 - 30
Docent Kick-off meetings

Sat., Sept. 22 and Tues., Sept. 25
9:00 a.m. to noon
Butterfly Volunteer Training

OCTOBER

Monday, October 1
Deadline for November Gatherings

Monday, October 8
9:30 a.m.
Volunteers in the Garden Meeting, Dorrance Hall

NOVEMBER

Monday, November 5
Deadline for December Gatherings

Monday, November 12
9:30 a.m.
Volunteers in the Garden Meeting, Dorrance Hall



Photo by Gene Almendinger