



Presidents – Wendy Tsuji & Geneva Martin
Editor – Geneva Martin

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Costa Verde District, CGCI, Pacific Region, NGC

Email us at president@rivieragardenclub.org
Check out our website at www.rivieragardenclub.org
Our schedule is online at www.localendar.com/public/RivGarden

The Presidents Message:

Auld Lang Syne

We would like to thank our 2007-2008 officers for a productive and fun year. They adhered to the club survey recommendations and so limited business decisions to the Board meetings. It was after a few of these meetings from discussions on future projects that the garden tour was selected. As we near that date, many have made new friends, strengthened friendships, worked very hard and attended long meetings, all the while keeping a light and positive attitude. After all we are just volunteers! I can say I will remember the preparation as a fun time, and hope you will too.

Perhaps focusing on the program at our general meetings is a reason for the large attendance, even at the workshops.

We want to thank you all for a great year.

And for this coming year, we would like to thank Sharon Saffer, Betty Moye, and Cecilia Ceasar for sharing the 1st Vice President office. Looks like another good year ahead.

Yearbooks

We will be dropping off yearbooks at houses as soon as we get them.

Wendy & Geneva

Membership News

At our first meeting Sept. 9th, we included a "New Member Tea", where we had a chance to meet and honor those members who joined this past year.

Over 40 members attended, as well as several Garden Tour homeowners and guest docents. We were pleased that our Garden Tour sponsors Kelly Evans and Laura Medina of Re/Max Realtors were able to join us.

Don't forget, as you sell your tickets and guide guests on our tour, to invite guests to join our wonderful Riviera Garden Club!

Eunice Hargrove, Membership Chair

Sunshine News

We are sorry to inform you that George Unrine's ailing father passed away this summer.

Gloria Jacobs had a stroke on August 16th and remains in very serious condition. You may visit her at Torrance Memorial, or send cards to her home.

Garden Tour Report

Tickets

For tickets please arrange with June Young.. For non-members they will be available at Bristol Farms, Villa Hermosa, through you, as a friendly RGC club member and by mail. Thank you for your support! Everyone please help!

Win a Prize: Every RGC member who sells 5 tickets will be entered into a drawing for a prize. There will also be a prize for the MOST tickets sold by a RGC member!

Ticket Rules Please!

We hope the following, to the point statements will bring clarity. Please contact the Geneva or Wendy if you have further questions.

- Every club member is expected to purchase two tickets. Please refer to our bylaws for further details on membership responsibilities.
- Everyone touring must be ticketed, except infants in front packs.
- Free tickets are limited to guest docents, and major sponsors to include, but are not limited to, Meredith Grenier - who has a garden column in

the Daily Breeze, the Torrance Historical Society - who will allow us to have a booth to sell our tickets at their home tour, and Kelly and Laura of REMAX Realty - who have donated the flyers and shelf cards.

Pre Tour

Only homeowners and those working all day and therefore unable to go on the tour are invited on the pre tour. Sorry, NO exceptions! It is vital to the tour's success that the number of people walking through the gardens days before be kept to a minimum! Plus we do not want to stress the conscientious homeowners days before the event. Impressed homeowners will guarantee our next garden tour's success!

Reception

Every volunteer who purchased a ticket is invited to the reception. So guest docents are not invited. Plan to meet the VIPs here: the homeowners, major sponsors and those at the educational booths. Dress is casual, and the club will provide light refreshments.

Where: Pati Johnson's home

Time: Oct 12, Sunday at 6 pm

Please RSVP to Pati by Oct 3.

Sign up for baking if you haven't yet.

Claudeene needs homemade cookies and breads for the refreshment table. She would like you to bring them to her house on Thursday, October 16.

Change in Plans

If you aren't able to work your shift, please let June Stevenson know as soon as possible, so we can fill your slot. And if you have friends that would like to be docents, tell June Stevenson.

Landscape of the Month Award

Begonia Farms Triangle Park

The Riviera Homeowner's Association and Riviera Garden Club's joint effort in presenting the Landscape of the Month Award to the City of Torrance was first on the agenda at Torrance City Council Meeting on July 8th! Ruth Vogel presented the award, specifically for the Begonia Farms Triangle Park. Alone on the podium, Ruth calmly recounted the history in getting the park completed. As the story unveiled, each main player was asked to join her to receive their

award. It took 7 years and 8 key individuals to complete this park! "*The wheels of government move at glacial speed.*" (Gene Barnett, City Council Member)



A Wall of Flowers

On my trip to Spain I visited the CaixaForum Madrid. This is a new art museum in a restored power plant, which has a 5000 sq. foot vertical garden. These are our succulent wreaths on a grand scale Geneva

Mad Hatters – Installation Luncheon

Treasure Our Members

The installation luncheon was a time to cherish our members. Donning garden hats for the Mad Hatter contest, we exclaimed over the treasure box centerpieces arranged by members. We were honored that Lou Atha and her daughter attended. We decorated her table with a large helium balloon and confetti – reminding all of her 50 year membership.

And the Winners Are

Judges for the Mad Hatter contest were Lou Atha, Shelley Lubinsky and past scholarship recipient Trent Houston. The winners of the Mad Hatter awards were June Young, most majestic,



Toni Sargent, most ecologically green, and Charlie Sappington, most comical.

Honoring Lou Atha

Irma Maggio

presented the CGCI placque for Lou's 50 years of service. Irma reminisced about meetings held at member's homes, and of the interesting, often silly items, they competitively bid on to raise club funds. Karen Lent talked about Lou's accomplishments, including her involvement in keeping the rocketship at the local park. At the end Lou reminded us of the club's roots with South Coast Botanic Gardens.

Landscape Chairs

The Riviera Garden Club honored Ruth Vogel and Mary Lenihan at the Mad Hatter Luncheon. Both have chaired the Landscape Award for the Riviera Homeowner Association since 1991. They have decided to pass on this responsibility and what they say has been a fun job.

CGCI Awards

RGC club won four CGCI awards, thanks to help from Ruth Brooker, who graciously critiqued our books of evidence. The club received \$25 for the seminar and workshop award, for which Pati Johnson's library baskets and Mary Varieur's hypertufa were entered. The club also received \$30 for the program award of 2006-2007 which were planned by Mary Varieur and Sharon Saffer.

Interviews by Karen



Amazing Lou

Congratulations to Lou Atha for being Riviera Garden Club's most esteemed charter member of 50 years! Now an RGC Honorary Member, Lou is tall, graceful, energetic and still going strong!

Lou is active at her busy Torrance accounting firm she founded many years ago. She hikes or swims two or three times a week and travels often; visiting India plus a new foreign country each year. Besides summer trips to Catalina, Lou's favorite respite is her Irish home on the Shannon River. The "Cousin Retreat," as it is called, is a family gathering place a couple of times a year. Lou recently did a two-day hike at Snow Canyon in Zion National Park.

Lou's earliest aspirations were to be a Forest Ranger. She fell in love with the outdoors as a Campfire Girl at age five. Unfortunately, when Lou got to college she found that Forest Ranging was not a career open to women at that time. Since accounting was in her DNA, via her father and grandfather, Lou took the next logical step and graduated with a degree in Business Administration.

Born in Michigan, Lou met future husband Robert, at Michigan State, on a blanket at a Spring

lawn concert (while on a date with Robert's fraternity brother). After they married, the Korean war brought Lou and Robert to California. Post-war, Robert, now deceased, went into aerospace. The couple bought their upper Riviera home 53 years ago. They loved to sail, and raised their four children, two boys and two girls, before Lou decided to return to work in the accounting field. Circumstances led to establishing her own firm. Lou is now blessed with ten grandchildren.

Some of Lou's earliest recollections of the Riviera were when the Rocketship Park was just a sand pile left by the housing tract developer. Riviera Garden Club got together with the Kiwanas' and the City of Torrance; with landscape designer, Richard Gawney, the group worked the sand pile into a park, keeping the sand from blowing into the Riviera Elementary school rooms. (The Rocketship at our park is now being documented in research being done on over 2,000 rocket ship playgrounds in the country. The Torrance "ship" is the only one that has been restored and brought up to safety code – also thanks to our club members!)

Besides Rocket Ship Park, RGC was instrumental in the support and developing South Coast Botanic Gardens. The club was also involved in raising money and implementing many other civic beautification projects: planting Vista Montana when it washed out, and working on many of the other area parkways. Lou calls the club a "working club" and she has fond memories of the strength of the community teaming together. She remembers gathering after RGC projects to have parties in each other's homes or garages and the good neighborly feel of touring each other's newly remodeled houses and gardens.

Lou Atha doesn't believe in retirement. Luckily she has beautifully balanced her life and family with her two homes, work, and travels. Lou, we are glad you are still going strong! Thanks for being an inspiration to us all! *Karen Lent*

Treasurer's Report

Thanks Dave

Dave Sargent again audited our books. He noted that we have been well served by our treasurer.

Geneva and Wendy

Sea Breeze



Our Calendar Section

Riviera Garden Club October Meeting

Although there will be a board meeting on October 21 at Geneva Martin's home from 9:30 am to noon, please note we will not hold a general meeting in October on account of the Garden Tour.

November 19 – Riviera Garden Club Bus Tour to Two Gardens

Note first of all that this is a Wednesday. Plan to meet at Lago Seco Park at 8:30 am as the bus departs at 9:00 am. The program starts with a guided tour, then for \$20 we will enjoy a preselected lunch and ends with another guided tour. Both tours will be led by docents at Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Garden of UCLA and Hannah Carter Japanese Gardens. Please send checks to June Young for \$20.

December 7 – Holiday Party Doubletree Hotel, Torrance

The Holiday party will be at the Doubletree Hotel Penthouse, 21333 Hawthorne Blvd. from 11:30 to 2. Please send checks to June Young for \$30. Your significant other and friends are invited too.



October 11 – Torrance Historical Society Home Tour

The tour will be Saturday and Sunday, October 11th & 12th from 11 to 4. Tickets are \$18 per person and can be purchased at the Torrance Historical Society, 1345 Post Ave, Torrance. At this event, the society has graciously invited Riviera Garden Club Members to sell our garden tour tickets.

Riviera Garden Club Events

- October 12 6pm*** RGC Garden Tour Reception, Pati Johnson's home, RSVP
- October 18 10 to 4*** RGC Garden Tour – *Beyond the Garden Gate*
- November 19 8:30 to 5*** RGC Bus Tour to Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Garden of UCLA and Hannah Carter Japanese Gardens. Meet at Lago Seco Park at 8:30 as the bus departs at 9am. Note that this is on a Wednesday.
- December 7 11:30-2*** RGC Holiday Luncheon. Note that this is on a Sunday. Your significant other and friends invited.

District, State and Other Club Events

- October 1 9:30 to noon*** CVD General Meeting, SCBG, featuring SCBG tram tour
- October 2-5*** NGC Fall Board, Providence, Rhode Island
- October 4 9 to 4*** California Native Plant Society Native Plant Sale, SCBG
- October 11-12 10-3*** Torrance Historical Society Home Tour
- December 3*** CVD Bus Trip