



Riviera Garden Club

Sea Breeze

COSTA VERDE DISTRICT, CGCI, PACIFIC REGION, NGC

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FROM OUR PRESIDENTS

Gloria Rezek Ellyn Meikle

CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

(Ellyn Meikle is sending you her message first.)

Welcome back to Riviera Garden Club! We have several interesting and fun things for the 2024-2025 season.

We started with a wonderful program at the Mary and Joseph Retreat. There were many attendees, so the room was almost at capacity. The raffle prizes were wonderful. Thank you to those who donated them. Each table had a lovely centerpiece made by **Pat Heilmann**. We had a new game to see who would get the centerpieces.

The Ikebana presentation was wonderful. **Valeria Brinker**, a Master in the Sangetsu School of Ikebana, presented a wonderful program. A couple of Ikebana arrangements were raffled, and all tickets purchased had an opportunity to win one of these beautiful arrangements produced by the program guest. Thank you to **Teresa Henderson** and **Marie Hoffman** for coordinating this program and **Linda Rosenfeld** for coordinating and hosting the luncheon, and **Pat Heilmann** for the centerpieces. (continued on page 2)

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Oct. 15, 2024 RGC Board Meeting 9:30 a.m.
at the home of Marilyn Rubin
- Oct. 18 Celebration of Life -Geneva Martin
South Coast Botanic Garden (SCBG) 12-3
- Oct. 20 Bertie Wood Memorial Service
St. Lukes Presbyterian Church 3 p.m.
- Oct. 21 CVD (Costa Verde District)
general meeting SCBG 10 a.m.
- Oct. 22 RGC General Meeting 9:30 a.m.
South Coast Botanic Garden (SCBG)
- Nov. 5, 2024 RGC Board Meeting 9:30 a.m.
at the home of Marilyn Rubin
- Nov. 12 RGC General Meeting 9:30 a.m.
at the SCBG

Riviera Garden Club has earned the **BLUE RIBBON** achievement award from CGCI (California Garden Clubs Inc.)

(Ellyn Meikle's message continued from page 1)

The RGC Board of Directors is working on various items about the holiday party, fundraisers, excursions, day trips, the plant sale, and other fun events for us to participate in. It is encouraged for members to participate in any way they can with club events, etc. Even if it is a minuscule amount. Your new RGC yearbook has a lot of information for your review. Please note page 2 with the Member Responsibilities section.

A big thank you to **Linda Meighan** for producing this yearbook. I look forward to supporting our RGC Executive Board of Directors with decision-making concerns and with committee activities. **Ellyn Meikle, co-president RGC**

If you have questions about other RGC member items, please refer them to **Gloria Rezek** as she is the Co-President of Membership.

(Here is the Co-President Message from **Gloria Rezek**)

A heartfelt welcome to all our returning members, new members and guests. We have many exciting plans and fun adventures planned for our year ahead and hope many of you will participate and enjoy.

REMINDERS:

NOMINATING COMMITTEE - We're searching for three members to appoint to the nominating committee starting this month. The committee will make its report for the Board in February in accordance with the revision in the Bylaws, Article VII. These volunteers will have five months to search for and talk to potential candidates for Board positions. It'll be helpful to review the Duties of Officers described in the Bylaws, Article VI. Please reach out to us, **Gloria Rezek** or **Ellyn Meikle**, if you'd like to help on this committee.

EXCURSIONS - **Alberta Brice** is accepting suggestions for extra excursions to add to our RGC 2024-25 program year. Members would drive on their own or carpool. These excursions could be a visit to a unique or specialty plant nursery, local garden tours or even plant sales.

BUDDY BENCHES – **Carolyn Pohlner** will continue to collect plastic caps for the Buddy Bench program. Please keep saving them and bring them to an RGC general meeting.

Gloria Rezek
Co-president RGC

ACCEPTABLE CAPS

medicine bottle caps	drink bottle caps
milk jug caps	flip-top caps (ketchup, mustard)
detergent caps	spout caps (mustard)
hair spray caps	spray paint caps
toothpaste cube caps	ointment tube caps
deodorant caps	caps w/ RECYCLE NUMBERS of (2) (4) (5)

ACCEPTABLE LIDS

cottage cheese container lids	cool whip container lids
mayonnaise jar lids	coffee can lids
yogurt lids	cream cheese container lids
peanut butter jar lids	butter container lids
ice cream bucket lids under 8"	Prescription bottles labels removed

**SADLY MISSING THESE RGC FRIENDS WHO PASSED IN
AUGUST and SEPTEMBER 2024!**

Geneva Martin

Bertie Wood

Celebration of Life for Geneva Martin - Friday Oct. 18 noon-3 p.m.

South Coast Botanic Garden on the lower meadow

Memorial Service for Bertie Wood – Sunday Oct. 20 3 p.m.

reception to follow

St. Lukes Presbyterian Church 26825 Rolling Hills Rd. Rolling Hills Estates

Bertie Wood will be remembered by her friends and family, Torrance Unified School District colleagues, garden club friends and church members as a beautiful, gracious, intelligent, helpful, laughing and friendly lady. Bertie joined the Riviera Garden Club in 2009 and immediately offered to help the club with any chores or activities where help was needed. Bertie kept the RGC hostess supplies in her garage for many years. She held plant sale preparation workshops in her back patio. Several times Bertie and her late husband Wistar allowed RGC to use their property for the annual RGC spring plant sale.



Bertie volunteered to weed the garden beds in front of the El Retiro Library. She was impressively thorough and conscientious with that chore and literally weeded herself out of a job. Bertie loved birds, nature, gardening, traveling, sports, music and people. She had a passion for completing jigsaw puzzles and playing Scrabble with friends. Last spring Bertie moved to the Quaker Friends House in Santa Rosa. Sadly, while living there, she suffered several severe respiratory infections which hospitalized her. When she was released from the hospital, she didn't return to the Friends House

but instead, moved in with her daughter Carole and family in Sausalito. The day before our dear friend **Bertie Wood** died on Sept.12, she was able to say “good-byes” to her 4 children, their spouses and numerous grandchildren. **Bertie Wood** lived a wonderful life and is missed by all who knew her.



Our beloved club member, **Geneva Martin**, passed away quietly on the morning of August 25, 2024. Her battle with cancer is over. Her husband, **Patrick Garvey**, thanked us for the cards, and he was able to demonstrate to Geneva that she was a loved member of the community that she helped build.

There will be a **Celebration of Life on Friday, October 18th, from noon- 3:00 pm at the South Coast Botanical Garden lower meadow**. Please dress with appropriate shoes and hat as the sun will be on our backs. There will be cocktail party-type food and

light beverages. You will all get a formal invitation arriving shortly in your email. If you do not open your emails, I'm sure a friend will pass you a copy.

If you would like to speak about your story of Geneva at this event, please let **Gloria Rezek** know. If you cannot attend and have some words you would like to share, please give a written summary to Gloria, and she will see that it is presented at the event.

There will be an announcement referring to Riviera Garden Club's **scholarship fund in honor of Geneva Martin**. Information will be announced at the celebration.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THESE RIVIERA GARDEN CLUB MEMBERS

September	October	November
20 Laurie Vaillant	5 Linda Meighan	8 Meredith Grenier
20 Patricia Ellis	8 Kay Kanuit	18 Charlie Sappington
24 George Unrine	17 Beebe Moorhead	19 Pati Johnson
25 Mary Watson	19 Mary Eninger	28 Diane Connell
	20 Mary Alessandra-Cook	30 Marilyn Rubin
	28 Sheila Kutkus	
		

WELCOME TO THE RIVIERA GARDEN CLUB, NEW MEMBERS!

Patricia Ellis	Teresa Larson
Trish Pederson	Sandra Bailly

THE BEAUTIFICATION OF EL RETIRO PARK By Ellyn Meikle

A contributor to the California Garden Club, Inc.'s Cactus and Succulent Committee, **Phyllis DeCrescenzo** is a former *Riviera Garden Club* member and now a dedicated South Coast Cactus and Succulent Society member. **Phyllis** and her husband, **Robert DeCrescenzo** have developed and maintained a 300-square-foot cactus and succulent garden at El Retiro Park in Torrance. In 2012, **Phyllis** filled this space with succulents, cacti, palms and geraniums. Palms were donated and planted in the garden and in front of the library building across the way. The *Riviera Garden Club* donated fencing to protect the garden.



Phyllis and **Robert** faithfully tend to this garden within this public park that is surrounded by playgrounds, picnic areas, sports venues and other public facilities. They often receive praise from the community for their diligence and dedication to this garden.

Every Wednesday, 9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m., weather permitting, **Phyllis** and **Robert** are weeding, cleaning leaves, planting and watering when necessary. Over the years, members of *Riviera Garden Club* (**Marilyn Rubin... currently**) have volunteered to assist them with the upkeep of this garden. They do receive succulent donations to add to the variety of species in this area.

Phyllis DeCrescenzo is with Ellyn Meikle at El Retiro Park.



The plaque on top of the tree stump



Phyllis and Robert DeCrescenzo

THE BEAUTIFICATION OF EL RETIRO PARK (continued from p. 5)

In 2022, the City of Torrance installed a permanent plaque in honor of **Phyllis and Robert DeCrescenzo's** contribution to this parkland. It is displayed on top of a tree stump that is about 3 feet high.

Besides being award-winning cactus and succulent collectors, they are a creative force in producing a variety of cactus and succulent arrangements for display and merchandising as members of the South Coast Cactus and Succulent Society.

Phyllis and Robert DeCrescenzo enjoy walking and riding bikes, feeding the less fortunate twice a week, going to the Long Beach Swap Meet monthly, and participating in regular activities with their Model A car club.

RIVIERA GARDEN CLUB/ RIVIERA HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION LANDSCAPE AWARD

Riviera Homeowners Association
Riviera Garden Club
Outstanding Landscape award June 2024
5514 Highgrove Street
Marie Hoffman



Marie Hoffman's home is located at 5514 Highgrove Street in a cul-de-sac above PCH and Torrance Fire Station #4. Three years ago **Marie Hoffman**, a local realtor, had a dream of creating a garden for pollinators. She has had a lifelong love of gardening and a desire to save our planet.

Removing all of the grass and leaving only 4 mature trees, **Marie** created a blank slate in her yard in preparation for new landscape. During a whole year with COVID restrictions, **Marie** watched the sun patterns in her yard and walked the space over and over, placing old chairs and traffic cones in places she thought plant beds and hardscape should go. She was encouraged by her friendship with neighbor **James E. Carney**, a 1955 original owner on her street and one of her best friends. Using a yellow pad and pencil, **Marie** drew the plan starting at the bottom of her steeply sloping lot where her wonderful neighbors had installed a DG (decomposed granite) pad.

Marie hired a team of workers who commenced excavating and building stairs which curved naturally up the sloped lot. The amazing workers slowly and surely used landscaping timbers to create a retaining wall for the steps. The leftover dirt was used to form a patio at the top. **Marie** called her long-time friend, **Mike Garcia**, owner of Enviroscape LA, for advice. **Mike** encouraged **Marie** to do the hardscape *the right way*. He advised her to hire a landscape architect, have real drawings done, and get an accurate bid on the necessary work. **Mike Garcia** introduced **Marie** to architect **Chad Yagodzinski** who used Marie's pencil drawings and explanations of her ideas to turn them into real blueprints. Contractor **Simon Flores** was hired to build the hardscape, a deck and a new front porch. **Simon** worked with Marie on every detail including important last minute changes to make sure the yard was accessible for differently-abled friends who might be using walkers or wheelchairs. Now it was time for **Mike Garcia** and his Enviroscape crew to step in to install the latest irrigation system, Rain Bird Copper Shield drip irrigation. **Mike** and his workers focused on planting at least 75 % California friendly, waterwise and native plants in **Marie's** garden.

Fast forward three years! **Marie Hoffman's** garden has won 3 awards from the California Landscape Contractors Association. One award was for the best residential landscape in all of Los Angeles. Her garden will be featured in the South Bay Waterwise Garden Tour on October 13 this year. A link to the waterwise garden tour website is included.

<http://www.southbaywaterwisegardentour.com/>

Marie Hoffman works daily as a realtor with the Hoffman Murphy Real Estate team plus she is a garden coach under the Enviroscape name, helping other people in the South Bay join together to create gardens that will help save our planet, one garden at a time.

PHOTOS FROM MARIE HOFFMAN'S GARDEN



PHOTOS from the Mary & Joseph Retreat Center RGC MEETING



Valeria Brinkers, Sangetsu School of Ikebana, created these floral arrangements.

RGC FRIENDS AT THE MARY AND JOSEPH RETREAT CENTER



COSTA VERDE DISTRICT (CVD) EVENTS

by Ellyn Meikle

All Costa Verde District (CVD) events and information start on page 28 of your yearbook. Since you are an RGC member, you are automatically a member of CVD. Please participate by attending their programs. See Member Responsibilities on page 2 to support Costa Verde District functions. If you have any comments, suggestions, or questions regarding CVD, or California Garden Clubs, Inc. (CGCI), please do not hesitate to contact me, **Ellyn Meikle**.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT RGC GENERAL MEETINGS

NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS: We will have our RGC General Meetings at the South Coast Botanic Garden (SCBG) unless otherwise noted. See page 11 in your yearbook.

THERE IS INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW:

In the Space Use Agreement with SCBG, RGC must provide them with a roster of attendees 48 hours in advance of our meetings to have members get through their gates for free. All attendees must check in at the front window before entering the gates.

If a name is not on the list, a regular garden fee will be charged for admission to SCBG. Therefore, if you know a friend or new member who is not on our membership list and wants to attend our meeting, please let **Regina Taylor** know the Wednesday before our meeting, and she will update the attendee list. If you are a paid RGC member, your name is already on the list.

Questions? Ask **Ellyn Meikle**, SCBG Liaison



Email: president@rivieragardenclub.org

Sea Breeze editor: Marilyn Rubin

Check out our website at www.rivieragardenclub.org