



Green Valley Gardeners

A Service Club Made Up of Gardeners

Celebrating our 35th year!

SAND N SEEDS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - Chuck Parsons

I was tending my garden plot today, pulling some of the bolting winter items, planting some tomato plants propagated by Elissa and preparing a few rows for sowing summer crop seeds. While making this seasonal change in my plot, I realize it is time to see some of our winter-resident friends disappear again for a few months. Life here in the Sonoran Desert returns to a slower pace, which is welcome, but at the same time I'll miss the winter folks!

Year 2015 has begun very strong for our club. The plant sale was a roaring success – breaking previous records for our spring sale – and we also had a successful garden tour. We've had interesting speakers at our seminars – at least I've learned a lot! The member event at the Historic Canoa Ranch was outstanding. The Ogden gardeners' onion patch is doing superbly. At membership renewal each year, we typically drop in numbers and then slowly rebuild to that number or a bit higher by fall. We already have more members than in 2014 – that's a record.

Thanks to all the volunteers that make it all happen!

CONTENT

President's Message	1	Ogden Community Garden	6
Fundraisers	2	Plot Holders Forum	7
Winter/Spring Plant Sale	2	In Your Plot: March	7
Spring Fair with TC&SS	2	Swiss Chard Recipe	9
May Ogden Onion Sale	2	Community Garden at Desert Meadows	9
Members Social Activity	3	Editorials	10
Sunday in The Garden	3	Nominating Committee	10
Project Updates	3	Home Gardening	10
Arid Garden	3	Membership Update	11
Canoa Ranch	4	Petals of Giving	11
Desert Meadows Park	5	Circle Your Calendar	11

FUNDRAISERS

SPRING PLANT SALE



SPRING FAIR WITH Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society



MAY 2015, ALLEN OGDEN COMMUNITY GARDEN, ONION SALE - George Stone

Onions!!!! They are coming. I promise. To date we have sold over 750 lbs. of the estimated 2,000 lbs. And—they are still in the ground. I'm very pleased with that. 750 lbs. translates to \$1,500, that's even better. We have a sales team in place, but if you want to order for yourself and maybe even for a neighbor email me at 123gstone@gmail.com or call 343-9690 .

Wife or husband got a birthday coming up? Get them an onion. They may be so overcome with gratitude, they cry. Just a little garden humor! Better quit while I am ahead.

MEMBERS' SOCIAL ACTIVITY

SUNDAY IN THE GARDEN – Marita Ramsay

Our last event of the season will be held on Sunday, May 3rd, beginning at 1 PM in the Arid Garden. In addition to snacks, beer, wine and iced tea will be served. Music will be provided by the "Slow Lane Cruisers", a blues band playing tunes from the early 20th Century to the present. Please come and enjoy the afternoon with us in this beautiful oasis.

The Arid Garden is located off Encanto Blvd just east of Camino Del Sol.

For additional information please call Marita Ramsay (208 290 7770) or Cathy Merritt (503 245 5914.)

PROJECT UPDATES

ARID GARDEN UPDATE – Mary Kidnocker

For sure March was a busy month in the garden. Jim Campbell and Jackie Jensen have done a great job cleaning out the main arroyos, which carry lots of water during summer monsoon storms. Byron Hinton has kept busy with heavy-duty trimming, woody plant removal, and transplanting bushes to sunnier locations.



Volunteers installed 25 new plants from the Spring Plant Sale. This meant that our "irrigation guys", Hans Hohle, Russ Symes and Dwight Kidnocker, had to get water to the plants until established. During a visit with Arborist Doug Doherty of Bartlett Tree Service, all the volunteers had an opportunity to listen and learn, as the garden trees were inspected and discussed.

The beautiful cactus flowers have been popping up for a couple weeks... everything from small apple-green blooms to the many huge, brilliant-colored trichocereus. Each day the garden has been inundated with scores of visitors, many with cameras and/or easels.

Don't miss this spring spectacular... come visit your garden!

HISTORIC CANOA RANCH – Jack Davis

As luck would have it, the rain clouds parted and sun filled the day for the Gala Event, March 19 at the HCR as a product of the HCR and Members Activities Committees. Some even wondered if it was the native peoples' heritage at the site that may have been responsible. A total of 130 GVG members and guests enjoyed tours of the Ranch and the kitchen gardens, new trees, indoor plantings, and site of the future project, the patio garden at the Jr House. These projects are the result of the unique partnership between GVG and Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation (NRPR) and Native Nursery. The purpose of these projects is to provide surroundings which were similar to that present from the early 1900s-1960s. Under a Master Plan developed in the 1990s, following Pima County purchase of the site, extensive reconstruction of the deteriorated buildings had occurred as highlighted by docents present at numerous areas along with GVG volunteers. During the self-guided tours, attendees also experienced Tango dancing of the period by Ben, June, and Ann of the GVR Argentine Tango Club.



As the group completed tours, they gathered in the shade for a ranch style BBQ lunch with serenading of country western and Mexican songs of the ages by Angel Perez. Then, the Spanish flamenco dancing of Zandra Pardi simulated entertainment as may well have been present during the days when HCR was one of the largest and most progressive cattle ranches in Arizona as well as the social center.

This event honored not only HCR history, but, in addition, as described by Robert Vaughn, chief of the HCR and special events for Pima County NRPR, the unique civic partnership with GVG which now serves thousands of regional visitors and tourists annually. A few snapshots of the activities as well as the GVG teams in period dress are attached. A special thanks is given to NRPR leadership and staff and GVG volunteers for making this Members Activity a success.



Desert Meadows Park - Chuck Parsons

Our YouthBuild volunteers have finished the grape arbor – it looks great! Just in time too, the grapes vines are bursting forth. We noticed that the south ramada was attracting several picnickers, so we decided to have the kids pour a cement pad to make it more pleasant to use. They are now building the foundation for a low wall structure – it will eventually be a stucco wall partially enclosing a picnic area under some mature mesquite trees. We call this the “barrio picnic area”. Leslie is contemplating adding some child-sized furniture in this area so we can entertain our grandkids.

Kathy Stone and Gene Van Dyken are putting final touches on the new berm that provides a nice back drop to the sign along La Huerta. Kathy is already visualizing what we can do with money from the NEXT grant! I love it!!

Over all, the park looks great! The flowering trees and succulents have been putting on a nice display. The perennial beds in the hummingbird and butterfly garden are really nice. Vines along the fence are beginning to mask it and at the same time provide some nice blooms – and blackberries are forming too. I hope we get to them before the birds!



YouthBuild volunteers pouring footing for barrio picnic area wall



Gene Van Dyken establishing plants along the new berm



Blooming vine growing on fence surrounding the garden plots

OGDEN COMMUNITY GARDEN – George Stone

April is my favorite time at the garden. The Chinaberry tree in our neighbor's yard still emits its fragrance in the early part of April, and, as you walk into the garden and catch a drift of that tree—well—you're ready to do some serious gardening. April is also the month that most of us put the Queen (tomato) into their plots. This year I believe the gardeners have made a concentrated effort to plant a variety of tomatoes, where last year the Early Girl was the norm. I'm trying the Phoenix this year. Someone told me the Phoenix was being sold at Walmart in Sahuarita, so I rushed over and sure enough, there were 3 plants left. Grabbed them all and have not seen a one, for sale, anywhere else.

The Ogden purchased a small trailer designed to be used to transport equipment to various places. The trailer came in 2 boxes and needed to be put together. Thanks to John Kozma, Dennis Allen, Mike Allen and Jerry Wiebe who did just that. We have BIG plans for that little trailer. Stay tuned.

Have talked with several gardeners at the Desert Meadows, and they want to get together and plan some events, so if you have some ideas and want to take part, please talk to me about them. I'm also in contact with several Tucson Community Gardeners and they have expressed an interest in some form of collaboration. A visit to one of their gardens in Tucson is being planned for July.

Most everyone knows that every Thursday afternoon, at the garden, I mentor 10-year old Max Fadlalla. I'm pleased to tell you Max has his family's plot entirely planted. Max has worked hard and seems to be developing a desire to garden. We learned, from Max, that several of his friends want to learn and do some gardening, but I just do not have the time to handle them all so I ask you-----would you be interested in mentoring a little boy? I warn you---their minds do not stay on gardening very long , they are not as strong as you may think, at first they want to garden --then they don't--then they do--then they don't. Interested? Talk to me. See you next month.



Brownie plot at Ogden Community Garden

PLOT HOLDERS FORUM

IN YOUR PLOT: April - By Lorna Mitchell

Planting Time! Visions of vegetables dance in our heads; red juicy tomatoes, long green cucumbers and zucchini, bright orange cantaloupe, purple and white eggplant, yellow and red peppers, watermelon and honeydew, endless squash, even okra and corn. We all dream of the abundant harvest ahead but it doesn't happen by itself.

Soil preparation is very important before planting. Digging in abundant organic matter like composted vegetation, steer manure, or peat to our desert soils along with fertilizers goes a long way to making that dream a reality.

Tomato plants can be set out anytime. Check the plants for any hitchhikers like aphids, insect eggs, etc., and remove before transplanting. Test irrigation; dig holes for each plant at a spot that gets adequate water. Space to allow room for growth; indeterminate plants need support which can be added in a few weeks. Remove the lower yellowing leaves and bury the stem in the soil up to the growing leaves, new roots will grow from the stem and offer more support and nutrient intake. Water once with a nutrient solution such as Miracle Grow or make your own with 1 – 2 teaspoons of

ammonium phosphate in a gallon of water (weaker is better). These new little babies will need TLC for a couple weeks; check often, a lot can go wrong. A translucent gallon milk jug with the bottom cut out and lid off can be situated over a small transplant for a couple of weeks to offer shelter, just make sure water supply is getting to the roots.

Transplants of eggplant, peppers, cucumbers, okra and melons will appreciate the warmer nights of mid-April before living in the garden. They survive cooler temperatures but don't grow much. There is still time to start seeds of melons and cucumbers at home (see last month's article) then set out the end of April. You can keep them warm at night and give them a head start.

Seeds for summer squashes, green beans, leaf lettuce, radish, etc., can go in the ground early this month. Soaking the seeds in water 12-24 hours before putting in the ground can hasten germination; keep the ground moist by a couple short watering cycles each day. Not too wet, not too dry. Read the package as to depth of planting, space as desired but you may have to thin. Allow room for successive plantings every three weeks or so if you want a continual harvest.

While you are buying seeds for spring planting think ahead and buy seeds for FALL planting! Usually when it's time to plant in the fall the seeds you want are not found, so buy extra summer veggie seeds for August planting. Also, buy packs of parsnips, turnips, cabbage, broccoli, kale, peas, cauliflower, carrots, beets, and chard that are out now but don't go into the garden until after most stores have seeds off their shelves. Store the seed packets in the house on a cool shelf, NOT in the garage or in your locker at the garden where they will get hot. They will wait patiently for you to put them in the ground.

Our community garden is a great place to learn from each other. Walk around, talk to people and find out what they're doing, let's share our knowledge and make our garden a very inviting place.

Those are my plot thoughts for now, Happy Gardening!

Lorna Mitchell



Elissa harvesting

Harvesting the last of your Swiss chard?

And, maybe have a new plant of basil? Give this recipe a try:

SWISS CHARD AND ONION FRITTATA

Cooking Light April 2015

4 tsp olive oil, divided	4 tbsp small fresh basil leaves, divided
1 cup thinly sliced onion	1 tsp minced garlic
4 cups trimmed and thinly sliced Swiss chard	4 large eggs, lightly beaten
½ tsp salt, divided	1.5 oz Gruyere cheese, shredded and divided (about 1/3 cup)
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper	
2 tbsp chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley	
2 tbsp grated Parmesan cheese	

1. Heat a 10-in ovenproof nonstick skillet over medium-low heat. Add 2 tsp olive oil to pan; swirl to coat. Add thinly sliced onion; cook 12-minutes or until onion is tender, stirring occasionally. Sprinkle with ¼ tsp salt and black pepper.
2. Combine parsley, 2 tbsp basil, garlic, eggs, and remaining ¼ tsp salt, stirring with a whisk. Add chard mixture to egg mixture. Stir in 1 oz Gruyere cheese.
3. Preheat broiler to high.
4. Wipe pan clean with a paper towel. Return pan to medium-high heat. Add egg mixture to pan; cook 30 seconds. Reduce heat to low; cook without stirring, for 4 minutes or until eggs are partially cooked. Sprinkle egg mixture with Parmesan cheese and remaining 0.5 oz Gruyere cheese.
5. Place pan under broiler. Broil 1 minute or until eggs are thoroughly cooked and cheese is browned. Remove pan from oven. Run a silicone spatula around edge and under frittata to loosen from pan; slide frittata onto a plate or cutting board. Sprinkle with remaining 2 tbsp basil. Cut frittata into 4 wedges.

THE COMMUNITY GARDEN AT DESERT MEADOWS PARK - Chuck Parsons

We have some new information about donations to the food banks:

The Sahuarita Food Bank at The Good Shepherd Church on La Cañada has a clipboard hanging on the wall above their small scale to record all donations from GVGardeners. They can accept donations beginning at 12:30 pm on Thursday or at 8:30 am on Saturday. Their hours are quite limited. GVG has this food bank listed as a 'partner' on our Freeport McMoRan Foundation grant application. It is important that we have a respectable tally by the end of the year.

The Green Valley Food Bank provides a receipt. Please ask for the receipts and give them to me or Elissa – that will be the best way to tally the donations at the end of the year. If you do not ask for a receipt, it gets logged as unidentified donor in their records. Donations are made at the back door.

We are in the process of identifying which plots will be vacated for the summer season by the assigned plot holder. These will be planted and maintained by GVG volunteers during the summer months with the harvest going to a local food bank.

Elissa Dearing received a donation of tomato plants from Civano which she has planted in one of the available in-ground beds. We have one raised bed dedicated to cucumbers. Another in-ground bed is dedicated to cantaloupe. We are eyeing another raised bed for bush beans. Assuming a good harvest we should have several pounds of fresh, healthy produce going to our local food banks.

EDITORIAL

Nominating Committee - By Chuck Parsons

Last month I introduced the nominating committee being chaired by Hal Tokuyama. He and the committee will be identifying potential candidates for our fall board election. We will be electing three new board members.

The newly elected members will participate in electing officers for 2016. We currently have 4 officers – president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. We have learned this year that the job of treasurer is now too large for one person. A second person needs to take on some of the role – this need not be a board member. A logical support would be for a person to collect all water fees and seasonal fees from the plot holders at our two community gardens. Water collections are done three times each year for Ogden and seasonal fees are collected twice a year at Desert Meadows Park.

The secretary takes notes at each monthly meeting and at the annual retreat where the board addresses more strategic topics.

It is common practice for each board member to act as chair or co-chair for a committee. For example, I hold the position of president and also chair the Desert Meadows Park project. Thom Metcalf has chaired the plant sales, Judy Christensen has chaired membership and Billee Hoornbeek has co-chaired the seminar committee, while serving as board members. If you elect to run for a board position, I recommend that you also identify where your skill and interest might also serve the club as a committee chair or co-chair.

Next month I plan to discuss the role of president – both as identified in our by-laws but also as I have experienced first-hand.

In the meantime, if your interest has been piqued to serve on our board, please contact Hal Tokuyama by phone at 805-479-6770 or by email at haltok@gmail.com – thanks.

HOME GARDENING – Jeanette Potter

I became a member of GVG to renew the spirit of my home gardening and volunteer to further my knowledge. One of the Seminars really interested me, roses. If you remember, it was the first

gardening seminar this season, with Les Hayt, a retired owner of Greenbelt Nursery in Green Valley. I took notes and followed his directions. I had a rose that was close to death. I pruned exactly like he told us, and used Epsom salts for fertilizer. It now looks better than the day I bought it. The new season brought fifteen glorious buds and now filled with full roses. My husband is now letting me keep my roses.

All the other seminars have brought much knowledge and new friends. What a great way to start my retirement. Our home garden is blooming better than ever. Working in the Arid Garden and Desert Meadows Park has indeed expanded my gardening experience; I have a great interest in wildflowers. Recently, I joined the planning committee for the series of future seminars. I am looking forward to another great season of seminars.

MEMBERSHIP – Judy Christensen

We are happy to welcome 14 new members this past month. Say hello to Glen and Joanne Aldridge, Ann Christian, Jeff Carruthers and Mary Ferguson, Martha Jump, Nancy Lerew, Lois Rose, Sue Schlesinger, Diann Shively, Kay Sobol, Inga and Ron Spivak, and Faye Swist. We appreciate each of you and your commitment to horticultural/ environmental education and community service.

Our total membership is **now 278!**

As our weekly public seminars come to a close for the season, we hope you all have a relaxing summer. Whether in the desert Southwest or other climes, have fun gardening! Hope to see you May 3rd at our annual “Sunday in the Garden” reception in the Arid Garden.

PETALS OF GIVING



April's birth flower is the daisy which conveys innocence, loyal love, and purity. It is also a flower given between friends to keep a secret; the daisy means "I'll never tell."

DONATIONS RECEIVED IN MARCH: Pima County Native Nursery – plants, Nighthawk Native Nursery – plants; Judylynn Gries \$100 to Arid Garden and Michael F. Pinson, R.Ph \$100 to Arid Garden.

CIRCLE YOUR CALENDAR

- **May 3rd**, Sunday in the Garden – Arid Garden
- **May 5th**, GVG Fundraiser - **Onion Harvest**
- **May 15th**, GVG Fundraiser - **Onions ready for pickup**