



GATHERINGS



VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

MAY 2009

Volunteers In The Garden

The Summer Fun Programs

entitled

“What’s Beneath the Caliche at the DBG?”

will be continued this year.

Tuesdays

See Dateline on last page



Dale Chihuly, *The Moon at sunrise*. Photo by Gene Almendinger

PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS

Though I had thought about what it would be like to be President of the VIG, the reality is somewhat different. In my thoughts, goals would be easily achieved. The reality is that real accomplishments require planning, teamwork, and passion. We are an amazing group of volunteers. The role of the VIG is to give you opportunities to take your passion and make it happen.

I've always considered myself an organized person and I knew that skill would be of use in my new position. I was right. I have notes and files everywhere! I have a list of goals to achieve while President and a list of tasks to get them done. Plus I have lists of appointments and meetings I'm committed to in the next several months. I do have to be honest though. The list that tantalizes me the most is the one that I use to prepare for my summer adventures. That list aides me in packing up my life for twelve weeks as Hubby and I roam the West, virtually living out of my 1998 4Runner and a tent. It is the vagabond life; it is a good life. I cherish the time out there. And why not? Hubby does all the loading and unloading, makes my coffee and generally sees that I'm happy. I don't get out of the tent until the coffee is ready. I hike mountains and canyons then eat deep fried potato chips to my heart's content. I should complain?

I'll be leaving the Garden scene around May 13th and will return to Phoenix in early August. I stay connected by e-mail which I check at libraries all across our route. For the first time we actually have a cell phone since finding working pay phones has gotten really hard. I doubt we'll leave it turned on though. I might be physically far away from DBG, but my mind will be connected. I do my best thinking while walking and I have plenty to think about.

When I come back the Garden will have changed. Chihuly will be gone. Construction of the new Agave Yucca Forest will have begun as well as a reworking of the Aloe Bed to replace the shade tree that fell last fall. Even with changes some things stay the same. Dedicated volunteers will continue to perform - selling memberships, leading flashlight tours, deadheading plants, and doing whatever else needs to be done. You all take your passions and make it happen.

I'm going to take one of my DBG shirts with me this summer. I'll wear it proudly, and if asked, I'll say that the Desert Botanical Garden is a magical place because of the people, the plants, and the energy to be found there. Most of all, I will tell how proud I am to be a part of it!

DAWN GOLDMAN
PRESIDENT, VOLUNTEERS IN THE GARDEN

NEVER TOO LATE TO THANK YOU

Many, many thanks to the hardworking volunteers and staff who made this year's Spring Plant Sale such a success!

A heartfelt hug to all and thanks again.

GRETA SOMERS
PLANT SALE VOLUNTEER CHAIR



Cover Photo by Kevin Smith, Interpretive Ranger, Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area

VOLUNTEERS IN THE GARDEN EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

PRESIDENT	DAWN GOLDMAN
VICE PRESIDENT	MIKE GILMAN
SECRETARY	MARILYN WOLFE
TREASURER	JUDY THOMPSON

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

EDITOR/LAYOUT	NANCY WALKER
PROOFING EDITOR	ELAINE GRUBER
STAFF LIAISON	PAM LEVIN

seedlings

PRESCHOOLERS DIG THEIR HARVEST

When you are a preschooler, waiting is one of the most difficult skills to accomplish! For our Seedlings it seemed like a very long time until the seeds they planted in the fall turned into the vegetables they could eat. It was so much fun to see their excited little faces



Photo by Barbara Peters

Seedlings aren't the only preschoolers enjoying their spring harvest. This past month we returned to Booker T. Washington Head Start classrooms with a lesson on insects. We were met by enthusiastic teachers and excited children, anxious to show us the garden they had planted last time we were with them. The children had been harvesting the radishes and lettuce and are still watching their carrots grow. They were so excited to show us their radishes they about finished off the whole crop!

Many of the children had never tried radishes before and their teacher informed us that some enjoyed the radishes while others did not like their spicy flavor. We Seedling volunteers feel it is a special privilege to work with Shannon and share in sparking the children's curiosity and seeing their excitement in making new discoveries.

BARBARA PETERS
CHILDREN'S PROGRAM CHAIR

when they first saw the seedlings push through the soil and then at last see the radish and carrot tops peeking through. Finally, this spring they were able to harvest and eat the carrots, radishes and lettuce they planted.

While harvesting the carrots and finding red, orange, yellow and purple carrots they pondered questions like does a purple carrot taste like a grape? What do you think a yellow carrot tastes like? How does a radish taste? With questions like this in mind, many children eagerly tasted the vegetables they harvested. Some of the children's parents were surprised their child ate these vegetables because they don't eat them at home! This has inspired some families to plant their own vegetable gardens at home! Our lesson on seeds this past fall sure sprouted further than our preschool garden at the DBG.



Photo by Mary Versosky

GREETINGS FROM THE BOARD

At the March Board Meeting an update was given on the Chihuly exhibit. The Garden is seeing the highest attendance numbers ever recorded. The shuttle that was purchased as part of the APS donation to the Garden is experiencing great success in transporting visitors to and from the nearby light rail station. ASU students are keeping records of who and how many people are using the shuttle so that we can figure out after Chihuly if there is a need for the shuttle perhaps during *Luminaria*.

It was also reported that the building of the roundabout at the entrance to the Garden will begin in July. It will mean diverting the entry to the Garden during construction, so watch for more on that.

The Board accepted with deep regret the resignation of GEORGE LEONARD. George has served the Garden for the last five years and has been a big asset in all of the financial areas. Although we will miss George, we wish him and his wife Mary a very happy retirement and hope that they will enjoy their new life in North Carolina.

The Nominating Committee Chair BOB TANCER presented the slate of officers; LEE COHN, President; MARTA MORANDO, Vice President; KATE BAKER, Vice President; JAN LEWIS, secretary; and STEVE TUFTS, Treasurer. This slate will be voted on at the June Board Meeting.

The Board of Trustees held a retreat on Saturday, April 4, where KEN SCHUTZ presented the PowerPoint program that he is presenting to all departments and to as many VIGs that he can. The purpose of this is to collect all ideas from as many constituents as possible to be considered for the Strategic Plan for the years 2011-2016.

The Desert Botanical Garden Foundation Board will met for the first time on April 14. The next Board Meeting will be on the same day as the Annual Meeting, June 11. I hope you will all send in your ballots and attend the annual meeting.

OONAGH BOPPART
PRESIDENT, DBG BOARD OF TRUSTEES



THE GARDEN CORNER

MONARCHS BREEDING IN THE GARDEN

The monarch butterflies breeding at the Garden in recent years apparently have not read the sign on the Wildflower Trail that says monarchs are “rarely seen here.” With the mild winter weather this past year, we were treated to butterfly activity throughout the Garden on warm days all winter long. The queen butterfly, one of the more common of the Garden’s species, was observed off and on this winter; however, there were a number of monarch butterflies observed in the Garden this winter as well. This past December 13, sharp-eyed Sunday docent PATRICIA TOMPKINS even spotted two tiny, jewel-like butterfly chrysalises at ankle height along



This jewel-like chrysalis was found in the new Succulent Gallery this past December and transformed into either a monarch or a queen butterfly in January. Photo by Gene Almendinger

the path in the new Succulent Gallery. They were attached to a *Huernia*, an Old World species of succulent milkweed. CHAD DAVIS had seen caterpillars feeding on the tender tips of other nearby succulent milkweeds earlier in December. During a warm spell this January, I found the empty chrysalises split open but still attached, suggesting they had emerged in the middle of winter. Monarch or queen chrysalises are very similar in appearance, so it is uncertain which species they were.

Though not abundant in the Southwestern United States, there are pockets of breeding monarchs where milkweed is available. That helps explain the monarch caterpillars photographed by volunteer PAULA BURNS defoliating milkweeds just outside the Butterfly House this past November and seen again by several volunteers during the second week of March, including some in the Herb Garden, suggesting that the eggs were laid in February. It turns out that KIRTI MATHURA also photographed monarch caterpillars feeding on desert milkweed (*Asclepias subulata*) in Boppart Courtyard way back in early November of 2004 and on blood flower (*Asclepias curassavica*) in the Herb Garden in early December 2008, and she reports seeing lots of them again this spring. So it appears that the Garden has been providing habitat for breeding and wintering monarchs as well as a re-fueling stop for migrating monarchs for some time now. We still don’t know if these are “wild” monarchs or descendants of the farm-raised monarchs tagged and released since 2003 near the butterfly house. However, GAIL MORRIS, Friday docent and the “go to” person in the Garden for monarch information, has also observed and tagged wintering monarchs along the Salt River at Rio Salado in recent years and learned of monarchs breeding on giant milkweed (*Calotropis procera*) at Baker’s Nursery this past fall. Gail also reported that a monarch, tagged at the Garden during the fall of 2007, was observed in March of 2008 at the El Rosario Monarch Sanctuary near Mexico City in Michoacan, Mexico. It must not have read the books that say western monarchs spend winters on the California coast.

TOM GATZ
THE GARDEN CORNER



A monarch caterpillar feeds on a milkweed called blood-flower last December in the Herb Garden. Queen butterfly caterpillars look similar but have a third set of tentacles. Photo by Kirti Mathura

Hort Aide Cuttings

CALENDAR, etc.

May 8, – Field Trip to McDowell Sonoran Preserve, meeting Ruthie Carl for a tour of the new Gateway Access Area which has access to the mid-area trails of the Preserve. This new access area opens about a week before our tour and the facility is located on the east side of Thompson Peak Pkwy, north of Bell Road in Scottsdale. It will be the main entrance to this area and will include additional interpretive and connector trails. The tour will start at 8:00 am. Sign up in the Horticulture Department's break room.

Thirteen of the Horticulture Department's volunteers attended the tour of the Riparian Preserve at Water Ranch in Gilbert for our March field trip. Our tour guide spent several hours with us as we visited seven lakes on the grounds. She identified many of the birds as well as the plants and trees in the area. We found it to be a beautiful and peaceful sanctuary with many places to walk, picnic, entertain children and observe nature. If you have not yet visited the Preserve, be sure you put it on your Arizona "bucket list".

As this season of happenings and events at the Garden melts into summer, I would like to thank all of you who have participated in our potlucks and field trips. We had a good time, learned a lot and have happy memories of this last year. I certainly appreciate the superb job that ALEX SAUSEDO did as our liaison to the Horticulture Department and I look forward to working

with Alex again in the fall. Another person we all depend on for information and assistance is NANCY WHITE. Nancy is everything to everybody when it comes to the volunteers and she and her able staffers have visited us every month to keep us informed and have allowed us to share our ideas and questions. Thank you very, very much for all you do for all of us and for the Garden!

I'd also like to thank NANCY WALKER, the writers and proofers for the superb job they do with the "Gatherings" newsletter. The newsletter keeps us all informed about the activities of the VIG and the Garden – letting us know about the happenings in different departments and giving us a chance to take part in things we would not know about otherwise. We appreciate all of their time-consuming labor in putting the handsome and colorful publication together every month!

Although I mentioned that an article about roundabouts – how to use them – would be in this month's "Gatherings", I did not realize that a Summer Issue would come out around the 1st of June. I decided that since the construction of the roundabout would not begin until July, I would put the article by Bob Davis (about roundabout use) in that issue instead. Hope to see you on the trails and at the field trip in May...

LARRIE BATES
HORT AIDE CHAIR

envoy heads up

ONWARD AND UPWARD!

Recently, while I was enjoying the delightfully landscaped patio of Heard Museum North, conversation with a friendly couple disclosed a common interest: membership at the Desert Botanical Garden. The gentleman, a visiting distinguished professor from Nova Scotia, surmised that they could very possibly be the only DBG members from that area. Of course they had great praise for the Garden and the Chihuly exhibit.

The Development Department continues to report increasing numbers of memberships. As of this writing: 24,000 members. A short time ago, at the end of January we had a milestone 21,000 members. In February the Staff and *Envoys* at the kiosks sold over \$64,000 in memberships and the Plant Sale weekend resulted in an additional 271 memberships.

During the remaining days of the Chihuly Exhibit, even more activity is expected, and all *Envoys* are urged to be on "active duty" and to be a part of the Garden's Great Event which will undoubtedly be talked about for months or even years.

Finally, congratulations to ALLISON BROWN who has accepted the position as VIG's *Envoy* Chair for the year 2009-2010. Many thanks for all the dedication and cooperation of the *Envoys*, both Special Events and Info Booth for this past 2008-2009 years.

SIDNEY ALLEN
ENVOY CHAIR



Echinopsis huascha Photo by Charlie Cobeen

CONTINUING EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Summer Fun Programs entitled "What's beneath the Caliche at the DBG" will be continued this year. One important thing to note is that our meetings will take place on Tuesdays instead of Mondays.

Please mark your calendars as follows:

Tuesday, June 9 - Webster Auditorium at 10:00 a.m.

Tuesdays, June 23, July 14 and 28 and August 11
will all be held in Dorrance at 10:00 a.m.

ERIC GARTON will speak June 9th on "Experience The Nature Conservancy's Historic Hart Prairie Preserve". I hope all of you can attend.

Thank you for your support and attendance at the 2008 - 1009 VIG Monthly Meetings. Any ideas for topics or speakers will be greatly appreciated. Call me at 602-992-7438 or email me at mgedg@cox.net.

Have a great Summer!

MIKE GILMAN
CONTINUING EDUCATION COMMITTEE CHAIR

DOCENT UPDATES

LITTLE BIT OF THIS AND LITTLE BIT OF THAT

You may recognize this phrase from Scouting. At the end of a scouting week, on Sunday, we would prepare a brunch from all the left-over food. So, that's what I am going to do with this article. I am going to touch on a little bit of this and a little bit of that.

REMINDERS: Contact PAM LEVIN to take part in Flashlight tours this summer,

The Chihuly glass exhibit will continue through May, and we would appreciate any docents who can lead tours.

Butterflies will continue through May and again, any helpers will be appreciated.

OBSERVATIONS: A "BIG" thank you to all of you; you have made the experience of our visitors outstanding. I had the unique experience of working at the Information Booth and listening to our visitors' comments. They have all been positive.

Thanks to the Day Captains who organized their volunteers and made sure tours went out on time. At times it was hectic, but all of you were outstanding ambassadors for our beautiful Garden.



MOST ASKED QUESTIONS:

Where are the restrooms?

Why isn't North on the top of the map?

Where do I rent the scooters, wheel chairs, or get the audio tours?

How big is the Garden, and how many miles will I have to walk?

How did they ship the sculptures?

How much did it cost to buy the sculptures?

What time do the lights come on?

Where are the butterflies?

I am sure you have many more questions you could add to this list.

Again, thank you for being helpful, patient, and smart with the whole process of "Chihuly!" It has been an experience we will all remember throughout the years.

JUDITH ROBINS

ASSISTANT DOCENT CHAIR

FLASHLIGHT TOURS COMING SOON

The Flowers at Night are Big and Bright, deep in the Heart of the Garden. Why not plan to share these beautiful flowers and the nocturnal creatures that live in our garden with our flashlight tour visitors this summer? The tours are set up in stations so that you don't have to lead a whole tour. Stations are being updated and new stations added so even if you've been trained before, you should plan on being part of one of the scheduled trainings: May 21 & 23, and June 13 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. You don't have to be trained as a docent to be part of this program. The tours will be from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. on Thursdays and Saturdays, starting June 4 and ending August 28. Look for sign-up sheets in the Marley Building or contact PAM LEVIN at 480-481-8166.

BEV AND ED JONES

DOCENT CO-CHAIRS

Volunteer DATELINE

WEEKLY OPPORTUNITIES

Friday nights, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Jazz in the Garden, Ullman Terrace

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

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:00 p.m.
Yoga classes, Classroom A, Weisz Learning Center

Thursday and Saturday nights, June, July and August
Flashlight Tours, 7:00 p. m.



Echinopsis vatteri
Photo by Gene Almendinger

MAY

Monday, May 4
Deadline for submitting articles for Summer Gatherings

Tuesday, through Thursday, May 5 - 7
VIG "El Norte" trip to La Posada, Winslow, AZ

Friday, May 8, 8:30 a.m.
Hort Aide Field trip to McDowell Sonoran Preserve

Tuesday, May 12, 8:00 a.m.
Docent Strategic Planning meeting, Webster Auditorium

Thursday, May 21 or Saturday, May 23, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Flashlight Tour training,

Monday through Friday, May 26 through July 10
Summer Camp

Saturday, May 30, 7:30 a.m.
VIG Golf Tournament, Karsten Golf Course
(Golfin' in the Desert Charity Golf Tournament)

JUNE

Tuesday, June 9, 10:00 a.m.
Summer Fun, Webster Auditorium

Saturday, June 13, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Flashlight Tour training,

Tuesday, June 23, 10:00 a.m.
Summer Fun, Dorrance Hall

JULY

Tuesday, July 14, 10:00 a.m.
Summer Fun, Dorrance Hall

Tuesday, July 28, 10:00 a.m.
Summer Fun, Dorrance Hall

AUGUST

Monday, August 10
Deadline for submitting articles for September Gatherings

Tuesday, August 11, 10:00 a.m.
Summer Fun, Dorrance Hall

August 27 – September 8
African Safari with Ken Schutz