



COUNCIL THYMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE CALIFORNIA CONSULTANTS COUNCIL
Published since 2013

CALIFORNIA GARDEN CLUBS, INC. - NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS, INC.

Chairman's Message

"What a difference a day makes." by Ernest Easley, one day we are on a ship attending the Tri-Refresher and the next month, we are home as we all shelter-in-place due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Let's get everyone up to date on what is happening in the CCC world.

- **Recommended Bylaw Change** that should have been voted on at the CCC meeting at convention 2020. The proposed Bylaw will be voted on at the CCC meeting at convention 2021. Refer to February 2020 *Council Thymes* for entire wording.
- **Nominations and Elections** - Speaking about Bylaws it is that time of the year where a nominating committee of three (3) members shall should have been elected at the Council Meeting held at the CGCI Winter Board Meeting in the even-numbered year.

Please take the time to consider

- Being part of the nominating team.
- Better yet, are you interesting in being one of the Vice Chairman?

I am happy to talk with you about any and all the positions. Being on the committee and part of the board opens different avenues that you might not have traveled before. We have several new CCC members that this can provide an opportunity to get involved.

Thank you to the consultants who contributed articles for this issue of *Council Thymes*, and thanks to Julie West, assistant editor. If you have a topic or article you would like to include in our next edition, feel free to send it to me for consideration to include it. **DEADLINE: July 31, 2020.**

Welcome to all new members who have joined the CCC! We now have 53 members. Thank you for making the CCC a success this year and we look forward to another year.

Susan C. Bennett, CGCI CCCC

(California Consultants Council Chair)

Our Next Meeting



Due to circumstances beyond our control the CCC meeting for the May 2020 Convention was cancelled.

At the Winter Board meeting, the members voted on the following:

- * Consultant of the Year: Michael Biedenbender of Chula Vista Garden Club, Palomar District
 - * Consultant of the Year: Leticia Biedenbender of Chula Vista Garden Club, Palomar District
- Congratulations to both individuals!**



2019 - 2021 CCC Officers

Chairman: Sue Bennett
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Secretary: Pat Claves
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Treasurer: Nina Bilonski
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Parliamentarian: Greg Pokorski
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Vice Chairmen:
Environmental Consultants: Julie West
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Gardening Consultants: David West
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Landscape Design Consultants:
Carolyn Villi
CaRonV39@yahoo.com

Tri-Refresher Update

Alexis Slafer, 2020 Winter Board Tri-Refresher

A Tri-Refresher was offered in conjunction with the recent 2020 Winter Board Meeting, hosted by Costa Verde District, held on the Queen Mary Hotel in Long Beach. The intent was to save time and cost by holding the Tri-Refresher in conjunction with the winter board meeting -- held early February 2020.

Following the California Consultants Council business meeting, the CCC sponsored two hours of Tri-Refresher lectures by Price Sheppy. Four hours of refresher lectures were planned for the board meeting lunch-programs and workshops. With the final two hours of lecture on Thursday.

The speakers – topics were diverse and included:

- Price Sheppy – *"Critters of Concern" and "What's Spreading through California?"*
- Jennifer Swart & Kelly Takai – *"The Water in Our Backyard: Local Water Solutions for Southern Los Angeles County"*
- Jennifer Lentz – *"Creating a Climate Resilient California using Nature-based Solutions"*
- Steve Lang – *"Enhancing Landscapes with an 'Art Full' Perspective"*
- Kevin Alison – *"Native Refugia: the Benefits and Practice of Native Plant Horticulture"*
- Jeanette Schelin – *"Lessons in Sustainability from Behind the Gates of a Japanese Garden"*
- Tom Perkins – *"Soils and Soil Biology 101"*

There were twenty-eight attendees (two participated for self-enrichment). Congratulations to the following refreshing consultants -- whose credentials are in good standing until December 31, 2025 (see page 7 for a list of who attended and their status)

The following are some comments that this Chairman would like to share, in case you are considering implementing a similar format:

- The refresher attendees who were members of the CGCI Board reported that this was a good use of their meeting/refresher time.
- However, non-board members expressed concerns related to their expenses of money and/or time.
- Because the refresher ran over four days, there were either hotel room or parking expenses.
- Those not staying at the hotel experienced traffic and long travel times over the four days...requiring very early start times or a late evening return home.

- Arrangements were made for part-time attendees who were refreshing to enter the room after lunch. Some chose to purchase lunch and participate in the full experience. While others entered earlier than scheduled and felt awkward as they sat and waited while others were finishing their meal.
- The educational activities and meeting registration process was a little more complicated than usual.
- Determining fees, clarifying procedures and recording and managing paperwork was cumbersome.

This chairman will be pleased to discuss this Tri-Refresher with you at any time.

All in all, the Tri-Refresher was a wonderful experience for this Chairman and the members of Costa Verde District. Thank you for your support and participation!

CONGRAUCTIONS ON A VERY SUCCESSFUL TRI-REFRESHER

*Did
you
know?*



*Sansevieria trifasciata
is now called
Dracaena trifasciata.*



Gardening Schools

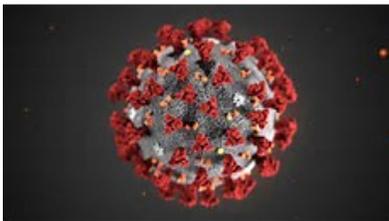
By: Greg Pokorski,
Gardening Schools Chairman



Congratulations and thanks to Berni Hendrix and Valley Lode District for making this school happen and for not letting

Eleven Gardening Consultants refreshed their certificates at the Tri-Refresher on the Queen Mary in conjunction with CGCI's Winter Board Meeting. This was the fourth refresher for Sue Bennett, Nina Blonski and George Speer, who thereby became Master Gardening Consultants. Congratulations.

All four courses of California Gardening School Series 26 sponsored by Valley Lode District took place from mid-February to mid-April. The first two courses took place in the classroom in Turlock. Then COVID-19 reared its ugly head. The school's sponsors did not want all their preparation to go to waste, so they quickly figured out how to conduct the school by Zoom and the last two courses took place as virtual courses on the originally scheduled dates.



I was among those who spent a weekend (April 18 & 19) at our computers to attend Course 4. I attended as CGCI Gardening Schools Chairman (along with NGC Schools Chairman Barbara Hadsell and Josephine Goodenow (formerly from California and formerly a member and chairman of our Council) who is the NGC Gardening Schools Accrediting Chairman for our region), to monitor the virtual school experience for possible further use by NGC. We have participated in subsequent NGC meetings to come up with recommendations for other NGC schools to be able to utilize Zoom as a Plan B option during this time of 'safer at home' meeting and travel restrictions.

The course was quite a success. Attendees were required to sign in and out of each session, therefore assuring that everyone was present for all class sessions. The curriculum and class hours were the same as for a traditional in-the-classroom course. It was felt by some that the topic of Plant Identification and the supplemental subject involving a video garden tour would have been more effective in person, but overall reactions were very positive. Dale Pollard, the instructor for all topics, was great and kept us engaged and interested.

something like coronavirus get in the way of its completion.

Four members of my club attended Course 4 and felt this was good use of our time and were glad we participated. And this opportunity put all attendees in touch with gardening during this period when it has been difficult to share the gardening experience and information with others.

The school produced 18 new Gardening Consultants – one from Maryland – and ten new Provisional Gardening Consultants.

Congratulations to these new California Gardening Consultants:

Bonnie Bundesen, Deborah Clipper, Diane Davis, Manjeet Dosanjh, Rachel Dyer, Rose Kennedy, Linda King, Tammy Lucich, Sandy Mann, Diane Mendoza, Sherry Molinari, Susie Nystrom, Olga Psomostithis, Penny Peters, Judy Sylvester, Bob Taylor and Linda Zier.

Eight Consultants refreshed throughout the four courses of the school.

Congratulations to:

Alexis Slafer and Bette Tang,
who both became Master Consultants.

Mary Fleer, Ilene Herringer, Krystal Migliore and Maria Orefice will lapse if they do not refresh by December 31, 2020.

Please contact me for information about your Gardening Consultant status and about holding a Gardening School in your area.



Build an Insect B & B

By Julie A. West,
CCC Environmental Consultants Vice-Chairman

Are you looking for an afternoon project? The March/April 2020 issue of *Sunset* magazine had a short article that caught my attention. It emphasized there is a lot more than just bees and butterflies when it comes to beneficial insects. Bug B&Bs or insect hotels provide a welcome refuge to a variety of beneficial insects that include ladybugs who munch on aphids; parasitic wasps, lacewings, hoverflies and even spiders that all do their part to keep predator insects at bay, too.

When building a bug hotel, you may choose to focus on one species of insect or create a hotel for multiple species of insect guests by providing a variety of plant material. It's important to know how different species may use it (especially over winter) - solitary bees prefer to nest in hollow stems while ladybugs may use it to overwinter in groups among dry plant material with twigs that provides them with both food and shelter. Hoverflies lay pupae in leaf debris, straw, or pinecones while lacewings enjoy rolled up corrugated paper. A piece of wood with holes drilled into it makes an excellent bug hotel for solitary bees and parasitic wasps.

You can easily build one out of recycled materials such as bricks, drain tiles, old fruit crates, wooden pallets or even stacks of old logs or boards for framework. Use thin wooden boards such as balsa to create small cubbies. Imitate nature by filling cubbies with small twigs, acorns, bamboo, straw, and other foraged natural materials found in your yard. Add the final touches by gluing moss, pinecones, and lichen to decorate. (See photos)



Building your bug B&B is part garden art and part habitat. Hang the bug hotel outside in a place where you want good bugs to gather and you're open for business. The *Sunset* article stated: "You provide the bed, and they'll take care of breakfast in your garden."

June is Pollinators Month! Here are 7 things you can do to help pollinators in addition to building bug B&Bs:

1. Plant a few nectar and pollen-producing flowers to feed pollinators. Many of the plants for pollinators are container-friendly and low maintenance!
2. Supply diverse and sustained food sources by planting a variety of native annual and perennials with a long series of bloom at different times.
3. Provide habitat and supplemental food sources that support a variety of pollinators and wildlife. Allow some areas to grow "wild" that provide safe spots for nesting and shelter.
4. Plant milkweed and other butterfly host plants. Dill, fennel and parsley support swallowtails so plant extra to share!
5. Avoid the use of chemical pesticides and go organic!
6. Support your regional beekeepers - buy local honey and locally-grown produce at Farmers Markets.
7. Make an impact outside your home and spread the word to friends, neighbors and co-workers.

NGC Landscape Design

By Alexis Slafer,
CGCI Landscape Design Schools Chairman

Who Would Have Thought?

When the January Landscape Design Schools article came out in the most recent *Council Thymes*, who would have thought that we'd be in this pandemic or be practicing "Safer at Home" protocols? Our personal, community and garden club lives have been turned upside-down... We are trying to exhibit positive behaviors (in so many ways) and stay safe. We are certainly aware of our quality of life and the environment.

This is a time for self-reflection and to (re)evaluate our current life focus and our goals for the future. Are you considering how to gain knowledge for self-enrichment or perhaps how to become an advocate for good land use in your community? Or perhaps you think that you would like to help others. There are so many ways that we can do any and/or all those things. Take a moment and consider what we learned in our Landscape Design Schools and refreshers or read one of the required or suggested books that are on the Landscape Design Schools reading lists.

Right now, landscape architects -- along with many others are considering how community, togetherness, knowledge, stability, health, sustainability, education and diversity will change in the environment of our "new normal". These are changing times and as Landscape Design Consultants we can offer design expertise to our neighbors and other members of our communities. Let's make an effort to improve our health and quality of life in every way and at every level possible.

Consider how rewarding it would be to host a Landscape Design School. You could reach out to a whole classroom full of interested students at one time. And, you could include those who want to become NGC Landscape Design Consultants or those garden club members (as well as the general public) who are just interested in gaining knowledge for their own personal benefit. The new curriculum has shifted its emphasis to include more small-scale residential design. As we are spending more time at home, consider how you might want to redesign your own garden. How can we take advantage of this opportunity to create a beautiful environment, plant a vegetable garden, design an orchard, and invite pollinators (and other critters) to our homes? And, once our ideas are finalized, get some exercise through the implementation!

In the previous articles this chairman asked our Landscape Design Consultants to act as the local chairman when your club or district sponsors a Landscape Design School...after all, you are the ones with the knowledge and background pertaining to

attending the schools. Not only does sponsoring a school provide wonderful education for the attendees, it can also increase your membership and (while not an actual goal) could also be profitable. Let's hope that our next schools are not too far into the future. But, in any case, it is not too early to begin planning. This Chairman is happy to chat with you about planning a Landscape Design School. Take care and stay safe!



Plant America with Trees: Each One Plant One

By Greg Pokorski

NGC Gardening School Committee is challenging Gardening Consultants to be involved in this program and to take a leadership role in it. Also, the NGC Landscape School has suggested that Landscape Schools utilize supplemental subjects (electives) involving Landscaping with Native Trees.

As a member of the NGC Plant America with Trees Committee and as president of Southern California Garden Club in the San Fernando Valley section of Los Angeles, I wanted our club to participate in the Plant America with Trees initiative. We have a long history of supporting tree plantings through our annual Arbor Day events and frequent donations to the Penny Pines program. But I hoped the club could do something special and something extra in response to NGC's encouragement that each one (member) plant one (native tree). This program has been featured in the November-December 2019 issue of *Keeping in Touch* and the Winter and Spring 2020 issues of *The National Gardener*.

I didn't think it was feasible for each of our members to personally plant a tree or to provide the physical labor to engage in a tree planting activity. Suggestions were sought at a club board meeting and discussion continued through the course of several more board meetings. Finally, it was decided that we would contribute to the Tree Dedication program of *TreePeople*, a Los Angeles nonprofit founded in 1973 and dedicated to improving urban ecosystems. Our club was an early supporter of this organization. So, we made a significant donation on behalf of each of our 134 members and have received acknowledgement that "A grove of one hundred and thirty-four trees has been dedicated to honor Southern California Garden Club members." I am proud that our club helped plant trees to help offset the loss caused by natural disasters and intentional deforestation and that our action contributes to NGC's commitment to preserve natural areas in our communities and world. We challenge all NGC clubs to participate. What a difference we can make if we all participate!

Environmental Schools

By Leticia and Mike Biedenbender,
CGCI Environmental Schools Chairmen

When you can't go to the classroom – be creative

Schools are closed due to Covid19. The Home Depot's and Lowe's in our area are reporting more people are doing gardening, yard improvements and yard repairs. Some schools in our area give out food lunches for students who would normally be at school to eat.

The Chula Vista Garden Club grows plants for students to work with at the schools. In the past we taught the students

- how to transplant from a pot,
- how to be gentle with a plant, and
- how to take care of a plant.

Our next group of plants for the schools was ready to ship but with the schools being closed, what does one do? We contacted the principal and inquired about giving students plants when they pick up their school lunches.

Principal said "Yes" and was extremely excited.

We loaded up the truck with plants. We went to the school Wednesday morning. When the cars pulled up, we gave an onion plant and a chocolate tomato plant to each child. The families were shocked, excited, and thankful. Some families said that they were going to start a garden with their children or add it to their already started garden. We learned that a lot of families loved the idea and look forward to seeing us again. We plan to do another future delivery.



Picture of our truck fully loaded with our club logo



Member goes up to car to hand out the plants.

Who will be our (NGC's) next Shining Star!

Representing Significant Individual Accomplishment



Four and Five Star Membership represents a significant individual accomplishment and entitles the eligible member to be recognized by NGC and their state garden club for having successfully completed all four of the National Garden Club Schools, and then graduating to master status in each School. These members are recognized and honored as a small minority of garden club members who have successfully completed these demanding requirements. Four and Five Star Members receive a special certificate and are eligible to purchase special lapel pins.

Four Star Member

A Four Star Member has successfully completed all aspects of all four NGC Schools.



Beverly Brune
Edris Edgar
Shane Looper

Five Star Member

A Five Star Member has achieved Master Status in all Four NGC Schools



Patricia Clayes
Robin Pokorski
Julie A. West



NGC SCHOOLS

Greg Pokorski,
NGC Landscape Design Schools Chairman & NGC Gardening Schools Advisor

There has been no garden club downtime for some of us during this coronavirus 'safer at home' period. Yours truly has been working non-stop with Schools Policies Committee members (Judy Newman, NGC Environmental Schools Chairman, and Barbara Hadsell, NGC Gardening Schools Chairman) to review the NGC website (a new website is scheduled for a June launch), to review and update the common Schools forms and Handbook that were launched a year ago and to develop guidelines for Plan B virtual school options during an emergency period such as the current one. The fillable forms for all Schools administration will contain clarifications and will be more user friendly when the new NGC website begins. Handbook updates/clarifications should be posted soon after that.

The Spring issue of *Newscape*, the NGC Landscape Design Schools & Councils newsletter was distributed March 5 and is posted on the Landscape Design Schools page of the NGC website. Check it out. And don't forget to read the schools news and articles in *The National Gardener* and *Keeping in Touch*.

Michigan Garden Clubs is planning a **virtual Tri-Refresher on June 4 & 5**. They have a capacity of 100 and are giving first preference to their own members. But if you need a refresher this year, this is a great opportunity. See their website – <https://michigangardenclubs.org/education/refreshers/> Registration deadline was June 1.

List of Tri-Refreshers and their status	
<p><u>Gardening Consultants</u> Sue Bennett (new Master) Nina Blonski (new Master) Geneva Martin Judy Powers George Speer (new Master)</p>	<p><u>Master Gardening Consultants</u> Joan Craig Myrtle Findley Greg Pokorski Robin Pokorski J. David West Julie A. West</p>
<p><u>Environmental Consultants</u> Cynthia Jackson Adele Kelly Lynn MacFarland Marybeth Muir Alexis Slafer</p>	<p><u>Master Environmental Consultants</u> Greg Pokorski Robin Pokorski J. David West Julie A. West</p>
<p><u>Landscape Design Consultants</u> Melvin Gaines Launa Gould Martha Hunt Gudrun Kimmel Maria Krenek Shane Looper Linda Smith George Unrine Judy Unrine</p>	<p><u>Master Landscape Design Consultants</u> Joan Craig Myrtle Findley Greg Pokorski Robin Pokorski Carolyn Villi J. David West Julie A. West</p>

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