



## May Center Report –February -2021

### Open Space and Regional Park Commission Meeting



#### May Arboretum Report

#### HIGHLIGHTS.

- ◆ The cactus and succulent design is nearly complete. It will encompass nearly 2.5 acres at the north end of the arboretum. The garden complies with the 2002 Rancho San Rafael Implementation Plan.
- ◆ The horticulturist was granted \$8,400.00 for additional tree pruning. Many thanks to the May Arboretum Society.
- ◆ Plaza Garden water feature was replaced and installed thanks to a generous donation from the May Arboretum Society (Approximately \$6,000.00).
- ◆ Winter seasonal staff made an impact to the maintenance of the arboretum. As a result, the maintenance schedule is months ahead. Many thanks to the May Arboretum Society for their support (approx. \$98,000.00/year through ManPower).
- ◆ Donorsnap software was purchased. This program will assist the horticulturist streamline donations and record keeping. Many thanks to the May Foundation for their support (\$800.00).

#### **May Arboretum Environmental Educational Programs**

- ◆ Laura Fraser, AmeriCorps Arboretum Educational Program Coordinator, created numerous educational programs and activities for families in January, including a new “Plant Press Kit”. The kits include a plant press, paint set, and instructions/activity sheet. Funded by the arboretum, Laura assembled the kits and made them available to her pilot group. Participants picked- up the kits at the arboretum office at a scheduled time to comply with COVID policy. A brief history about plant presses was also included and additional instructions were provided once plants were dried and ready. The program encourages kids to get outside and observe nature and engage in their natural world. It was a successful program and will be launched again February.
- ◆ In addition to the plant press program, Laura also created several online activities for kids and families. She developed a “Pine Tree Nature Craft”(early childhood), “Hibernation/Migration/Adaptation” games and activities (early childhood and elementary), and a “Gratitude Scavenger Hunt/Walk” for families to do at the arboretum. The “Gratitude Scavenger Hunt” reached 4.8 thousand people on Facebook and received encouraging remarks from the community. She also produced and posted the “Life Cycle of a Snowflake” flyer for parents to teach children about how snowflakes develop. Other flyers included “Snowstorm in a Jar” (elementary) and “Fake Snow” (early childhood) which accompanied the “Life Cycle of a Snowflake” flyer, which reached 3.4 thousand people on Facebook. Other childrens’ activities she prepared while it snowed was the “Making Snow Candy” (all ages), “Frozen Orbs” (early childhood/elementary), “Snow Volcano” (elementary) and “Ice Wreaths” (early childhood). All the activity flyers were easy to download (PDFs) from Facebook and reached 3 thousand people. Together her programs reached nearly 10,000 people on Facebook.
- ◆ Laura continued with “Virtual Story Time” throughout the month and posted one video and one craft each week. The educator also began the outline of another pilot program, a Pizza Garden and Salsa Garden. Researching seeds needed for each garden she developed an educational outline and she will



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begin propagating plants in the greenhouse in preparation for families to pick in June and July. Along with the plants, families will receive educational fun facts about the plants and how to grow and care for them.

- ◆ Laura reached the halfway mark of her time here with the Wilbur D. May Arboretum and we look forward to other programs and activities she creates during the remainder term.

#### **Tours**

- ◆ Tours were not presented this month.

#### **Reservations**

- ◆ Rental gardens are closed for the winter.

#### **Arboretum Upgrades and Projects**

- ◆ Tree pruning continues in the arboretum. Many thanks to the May Foundation for their continue support (\$10,000).

#### **Arboretum Operations**

- ◆ With un-seasonally good weather and after the snow melted, staff continued removing leaf litter and continued pruning trees and perennial shrubs.
- ◆ Phil Brazier, horticulture assistant continues to manage the Arboretum seasonal maintenance staff and projects while the horticulturist works from home.
- ◆ The horticulturist continues to maintain the plant records and arboretum assets weekly using Iris BG, ESRI, (ARC Map) throughout the year. Maintaining plant records is part of the horticulturist responsibility and a requirement to maintain their national accreditation, Level II Certification through ARBNET (ARBNET is administered through the Morton Arboretum, Lisle, IL).
- ◆ The horticulturist also manages greenhouse facility and plant production. Seed orders and nursery orders were completed. Production will begin the first week in March.
- ◆ The Arboretum webpage is managed and updated by the educator.
- ◆ The horticulturist continues to meet with new and active donors. The horticulturist also maintains the Arboretum donor data base and donor records.
- ◆ The horticulturist continues to serve as chairman of the May Arboretum Society Endowment Fund and works with other committee members and the May Arboretum Society to plan and assist with fund raising events.



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#### Visitor Data

- ◆ The May Arboretum subscribes to the Pedestrian TRAFX Counter software. The software is used to analyze and manage pedestrian flow from two the two formal Arboretum entrances, south and west. The data is collected by the horticulturist monthly using a portable data logger (G3 Dock). Adjustments were made to the gate counter to accommodate visitors entering and exiting the Arboretum.
- ◆ The number of visitors for January was 6,429. This is nearly a 32% percent increase from the previous year, 3,442 respectively. We can assume the increase is a result of a mild winter temperatures and the pandemic. The majority pedestrians enter from the Ranch House parking lot (south entrance) 3,889 and the remainder enter from the west 2,540, May Museum parking lot.

#### May Arboretum Volunteer Program

- ◆ Volunteers continue play a major role in the maintenance and operation of the Arboretum. They provide additional support to our staff and gardens. As a result of the January snow storm, gardens were inaccessible and volunteer were unable to work.
- ◆ Prior to the January storm, volunteers logged 78 hours for the month which has a service value of \$1,769.00.

#### Memorials

- ◆ The horticulturist manages and oversees the memorial tree, bench and brick program.
- ◆ The memorial bench program has been postponed to review the fee structure, memorial bench plan and sustainability.

#### May Museum Report

##### HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ The museum hosted “History in the Buff”, an after-hours Valentine’s event over V Day weekend. The three day event was limited in size to preserve social distancing. The event sold out days in advance and the guests enjoyed the event immensely.

##### UPCOMING

- ◆ The museum will open a new exhibit on March 25 called “Young at Art.” This traveling exhibition features original illustrations and books from Caldecott Medal recipients. It will be on display through April 30.