March did the marelange into spring throughout the Golden State. Despite the fact that the Sierra Nevadas only realized 17% of the Average Rainfall this first quarter, and the snow pack is less than 50% of average, the state flower, Eschscholzia californica, still can be seen burnishing hillsides and on disturbed sides of highways, intermingled with Lupinus bicolor – reminding us that California truly IS Blue and Gold.

Someone in a workshop this past month was determined to explain how beautiful the gold (yellow) hillsides were at this time of year on one of the roads inland from the coast. He was referring to the exotic, invasive Sahara mustard (Brassica tournefortii) that has overrun our state, dominating available soil moisture and inhibiting the germination of the indigenous CA native annuals. In Borrego Springs, a community in the heart of California’s largest state park (640,000 acres) that relies upon the annual wildflower extravaganza for its economic health, town leaders are considering night-time “Dark Sky” tours because the mustard has so drastically reduced the wildflower population.

I began thinking about the psychological phenomenon “the norm to conform;” the majority of people appreciate most what they see others already doing. To the ordinary Californian, the mustard that is omnipresent, must be good thing. The same applies to Stipa tenuissima. When it is sold in every nursery, planted ubiquitously in commercial and public settings, and shelter magazines laud it in landscapes – it’s hard to explain to the general public that stipa is a scourge. It sometimes seems that many design professionals, contractors, property owners, and media are all marching lock-step in what is essentially an anti-California aesthetic.

Let’s celebrate this Spring by marching to the beat of a different drummer. The
national APLD tag line is “We define landscape design!” So, when are we California designers going to start defining landscape design?

Buying into the paradigm of predominantly exotic landscapes built upon the traditional conventions of soil preparation, irrigation, drainage, and maintenance is not defining landscape design – it’s following the pack. Defining landscape design requires leadership. Defining landscape design requires the courage to step out and do the merengue! Defining landscape design requires professional landscape designers create a NEW NORM.

While we sit around waiting for the tipping point when the general public demands sustainable best management practices, the California environment careens toward crisis. If the general public has to see a different landscape all around them to understand and embrace it as normal, then let’s get out there and drive the public awareness to the tipping point!

I call upon all professional designers to DESIGN landscapes in harmony with the natural world and then sell it! We can do it! And APLD CA is doing its part to support you.

Last month, at the Del Mar Flower & Garden Show, members from the San Diego District provided 30 minutes of landscape design for a $30 donation – an idea in and of itself that proved to be radical and galvanizing. This grass roots outreach opportunity proved essential for the public to experience professional landscape design and understand the critical role designers have in connecting people with a real California experience at their own properties.

A collaboration of the San Francisco Bay Area Districts designed, installed, and hosted a beautiful landscape at the San Francisco Flower & Garden Show. This event that brought our professional designer members into contact with as many as 40,000 – 60,000 people!

In June, members of the Greater LA District will provide 25 minute consultations all weekend at the Dwell on Design conference, the largest modern design event in the country. Let’s encourage more of these mini-design consultations at every opportunity and throughout the state! The “Designer Is In-volved!”

Did you know that the California board ratified a collaborative agreement last year with PlantRight, an organization founded in 2005 to address the ongoing sale of invasive garden plants in California in an environmentally sound and economically viable manner? The 4th annual Spring Nursery Survey will be taking place this month. PlantRight will be working with APLD CA and select volunteers across the state to collect data about invasive garden plants for sale at retail nurseries. Participation begins with the viewing of a prerequisite webinar or pre-recorded video. Organize your colleagues throughout your districts, and get involved in this vital effort! Lead us!

On April 18th the California board will be gathering in the North Bay. Our guest speaker, Deb Lane, Water Resources Analyst at the City of Santa Rosa, will tell us more about the California Urban Water Conservation Council’s Landscape Committee work on the California landscape NEW NORM. Deb co-chairs this highly influential committee, which recently delved into redefining the landscape practices that will be encouraged and supported by agencies and municipalities throughout
Doesn’t that sound like a great reason to get involved with APLD CA board? Spring into action! Come lead the merengue with me!

In this edition, look for:

- Featured Member, Stephanie Bartron, APLD
- Appreciating the Urban Farmer Store
- APLD Members win big at the Spring Home/Garden Show in San Diego
- APLD SF Flower and Garden Show Display Wows Thousands of Visitors to the Show
- Sacramento District Hosts Rain Garden Tour
- Village Nurseries' reps to present Sunset Western Garden Collection at Greater L.A. District Meeting

Stephanie Bartron, APLD
Gracing Los Angeles with "Gardens That Fit"

Stephanie Bartron, APLD
Owner of SB Garden Design in Los Angeles
www.SBGardenDesign.com

I have been designing gardens since the dawn of this millennium. I came to garden design via studies in art and urban planning, and then decided, completely naively, that I should combine my visual talents with my love of gardening and become a garden designer. I found an apprentice position (at Elysian Landscapes, with the brilliant Judy Kameon and Ivette Soler), and after three years ventured out on my own.
I joined APLD while still an apprentice. I happened upon an article about right-to-practice issues, and couldn’t imagine being a garden designer without participating in this organization working so hard to protect my livelihood.

I've attended several amazing national conferences, including New York and England/France, and was happy to coordinate the conference in Los Angeles. I am thrilled that we have grown a thriving and active district in LA, too. I so appreciate all the friends, support and inspiration APLD involvement has brought over the years, and I look forward to becoming more active again in the future.

One of the most valuable connections for me has been with G3. I was lucky to attend their first training sessions, at the urging of fellow APLD designers, and was blown away. They brought together all the pieces of sustainable design and landscaping, and my design work was completely transformed from a focus on aesthetics to a much deeper understanding of the whole garden; it’s systems, functions and being. Sustainable and aesthetic appropriateness are my design starting points. We call them “gardens that fit.” I also enjoy working with hillsides and grade changes to shape dynamic living and viewing spaces. Rain gardens are my latest obsession, and I’ve been designing a lot of play spaces and tree houses lately, carving them into unused hillsides and slopes. Kids love to climb!

My office has changed over the years, from one to three associates. Currently, Diane Michaeli works with me. She has mastered VectorWorks, and uses her graphic design background to make our plans, and our communications (newsletter, blog, website, external sites like Houzz and Pinterest) beautiful and current. She has also earned her certificate in permaculture, and we work together on plant designs that always start with locally native plants and edibles.

Most of our clients are word-of-mouth, but people have also been finding us on the web. Recently, people have been finding us on Houzz. I think this website is becoming a go-to site for homeowners, and as the home and garden publications continue to close their doors this and similar sites are filling the void.

I love transforming peoples’ home environments, and love that we, as a group of professionals, are helping to transform the physical world, making a truly greener planet many gardens at a time.

Members, Sponsors, and Guests:
Check out the chapter calendar of events in your area.

Don’t miss this spring's big events!

Traveling through the state? Make sure to consult the calendar for events in the area.

Editor's note:
I invite you to check out SB Garden Design's website. It is crisp, well-designed, content-rich, and inviting. I love how a heavy emphasis is put on water-efficient landscapes. The blog is compelling, with beautiful photos and content that goes back to 2007.

Nice job, Stephanie. You seem to be contributing effectively to the ushering in of the new paradigm in landscape design in California.
In Appreciation of The Urban Farmer Store,
APLDCA Gold Sponsor

By Lori Palmquist

I offer my sincerest thanks to the Urban Farmer Store.

When I became interested in irrigation about 16 years ago, Patrick, who worked in the San Francisco store, and Bill, who was, and still is the supervisor of the repair and installation department, were my unofficial mentors and teachers.

For a couple of years, I would go into the store periodically, and follow Patrick around like a puppy, asking him irrigation questions. When I made mistakes in the field, Bill was the first person to respond to my SOS call, and assist me in making things right.

Had the Urban Farmer Store not been there, or had the employees of the store not been so willing to teach and assist me, I would probably not have blossomed into the irrigation nerd/expert I am today.

Thank you, Tom Bressan, for creating and maintaining such a fine company and store. Thank you for your continued commitment to landscape water-efficiency. Thank you for your many years of focused (free) classes for landscape professionals and homeowners alike. And finally, thank you for allowing me to teach my own irrigation classes in your classroom in Richmond. I honor and salute you, and wish you the very best in all that life has to offer.

Ryan Prange, APLD

First Place Winner at Spring Home/Garden Show in San Diego
For a listing of our District Boards of Directors, please visit our website:

www.APLDCA.org

For a complete listing of the APLD International Board of Directors, please visit:

www.APLD.org

We welcome submissions to this newsletter. To contact us about potential content you would like to submit, please email:

newsletter@apldca.org

---

**Kimberly Alexander and Lisa Bellora**

Second Place Winners at Spring Home/Garden Show in San Diego

---

**San Diego District Goings-on**
MEMBERS AT THE SHOW

Last month while our APLDCA San Diego District was busy tending the front entrance to the Spring Home/Garden Show, three of our members were busy inside with show entries.

Our San Diego District member Ryan Prange, APLD of Falling Waters Landscape, Inc. took home 1st place with Best of Show! Congratulations Ryan!

Our San Diego District members Kimberly Alexander of Allee Landscape Design and Lisa Bellora of Ornamental Gardens by Lisa working jointly, received 2nd place with Best of Show! Congratulations to both ladies!

As a district, we are excited to see our members active in the landscape design community.

CONTINUING WITH BENEFICIAL MEETINGS

This past week our San Diego District had the chance to have one of our Design/Build members, Jesse Cryns of JCMS Landscaping speak to us on the very important topic of budgeting. He was able to enlighten us on how important it is to start looking at costs at the beginning of every designer/client meeting and how we need to get comfortable with that subject. Jesse talked us through all aspects of a project, starting with ‘average’ demolition costs, labor rates, utility costs, lighting, fencing, concrete, etc. He was careful to remind us how fluctuating costs can be. But when looking at getting quality work built, he was able to give us some real useful guidelines.

There were so many questions flying back and forth we are going to have to have Jesse back to continue this discussion later this year. Understanding budgeting is vital to us as designers and to all our projects to deliver our clients viable design work. It is relevant to us as business people, to help us with our relationships with contractors and in the end, to get our projects ‘built’!

APLD Goes to New Heights with SF Flower & Garden Show Exhibit
Photographs by Jude Parkinson-Morgan

Story by Anne Weinberger

As visitors approached the entrance to the 2013 San Francisco Flower & Garden Show, their eyes were drawn upward to a fanciful interpretation of a hot-air balloon encircled with a banner reading “Landscape Design . . . The Sky’s the Limit!” The balloon was the centerpiece of a three-part garden display created by members of APLD’s East Bay District.

Design team members Janet Cohen, Jeannie Fitch, Alison Fleck, Linda Middleton, Kathleen Olson and Anne Weinberger had the task of transforming the six-foot-diameter metal globe from last year’s display into a focal point that would reflect the 2013 theme, “Gardens Make the World Go Round.”

For an added splash of colorful, garden-esque whimsy, the balloon was festooned with enormous painted-metal flowers and positioned as if gently landing in an undulating meadow.

After a wild and woolly adventure . . . tracking down an artisan in Mexico to custom-make the flowers; metalsmiths to weld the balloon to a topple-proof six-foot stand, a YouTube video on weaving burlap into a giant basket; a sign company to create 16-foot panels with a collage of landscape design drawings; and, naturally, having a field day at Devil Mountain Wholesale Nursery . . . the last day and a half were dedicated to the joy of putting it all together with an amazing crew of volunteers.

The end result was a breathtaking vision that combined the vibrant hot-air balloon with the serene no-mow meadow sprouting with Carex pansa and Lomandra ‘Breeze.’ Two flanking planters exploded with rhythmic drifts of foliage color from
Aeonium ‘Chocolate,’ Euphorbia ‘Ascot Rainbow,’ Coleonema ‘Sunset Gold,’ Hebe ‘Wiri Blush,’ Phormium ‘Guardsman’ and more. These shades of burgundy, chartreuse, fuchsia and purple were echoed in the paint colors of the balloon’s metal flowers.

This great four-month burst of volunteer creativity and energy brought APLD to the forefront of a garden show that attracts tens of thousands of attendees. A perfect hello to spring.

The design team would like to thank these dedicated volunteers and generous sponsors:

**Martinez Crew:** Laurie Callaway, Sarah Herman, Linda McSwain, Carol VanderMeulen

**San Mateo Crew:** Dina Blackwell, Dawn Engel, Mary Fisher, Karen Hunt, Linda McSwain, Clara Muggli-Toyloy, Jude Parkinson-Morgan, Lynn Saunders, Patricia St. John, Lesley Turner

**Garden Show Caretakers:** Michelle Bellefeuille, Kathy Brenner, Cathy Edger, Jon Geary, Judith Piper, Patricia St. John, Shale Well

Architectural Metalsmiths

Artesanias de México

Del Conte’s Landscaping (gold sponsor)

Delta Bluegrass (gold sponsor)

Devil Mountain Wholesale Nursery (gold sponsor)

Galanter & Jones

Lyngso Garden Materials (gold sponsor)
Sacramento District Hosts
Free Rain Garden Tour

Article by Aimee Hendrie

While the rains have all but stopped here in Sacramento, integrating rain gardens is still on our mind.

To that effect the Sacramento District hosted a free rain garden tour that brought out close to 20 designers, landscape architects, students, and even the real estate industry. The tour highlighted a large scale rain garden at the Sacramento Animal Shelter, a residential garden, a stop at native plant nursery Cornflower farms, and concluded at the Elk Grove Rain Garden Plaza.

Much of the Sacramento area has a history of past flooding, as well as a potential for future flooding. By looking at natural systems like Del Myer Park, we hoped to gain a better understanding of the natural ecology and systems at work. The question then was, can we or should we mimic those principles in the home-scale garden?
The definite highlight of the tour was the Elk Grove Rain Garden. This is a great demonstration space that features:

- An interactive display on permeable hardscape
- Lots of great drought-tolerant plants
- Water-tolerant plants for your rain garden
- A beautiful rain garden

If you are in the neighborhood swing by. It’s worth the trip.

---

**Village Nurseries Representatives to speak at Greater L.A. District Meeting on May 18th**

APLDCA gold sponsor, Village Nurseries’ reps Dicksey Williams and Janet Sluis will present the Sunset Western Garden Collection at the District meeting of the Greater Los Angeles District on May 18th, at the Arlington Garden in Pasadena.

**Janet Sluis** – Product Development Services, Inc./The Sunset Western Garden Collection

Janet is the curator of the Sunset Western Garden Collection. Born into the sixth generation of a Dutch seed family, plants are in her DNA; at the age of six she was hybridizing ranunculus and growing kale in her garden. After studying Marketing, Horticulture, and Agricultural Business, she spent twenty years in production and product development for wholesale plant nurseries in California. When she is not traveling in search of new plants, you can find her battling slugs in her Berkeley test garden.

**Dicksey Williams** – Marketing Coordinator – Village Nurseries

After 22 years in sales with Hines Nurseries the time came to retire in 2005. Dicksey delved into reinventing herself by creating a jewelry business, which is still thriving today; however the love of plants and the nursery industry constantly called to her to return, which happened in 2011. As marketing coordinator her duties include monthly e-newsletters, sales collateral pieces as well as administrator for the Village websites.

Visit the APLD event calendar for more details of the talk and the garden tour.