

The secret garden of Encinitas: It’s no secret anymore

By Lonnie Burstein Hewitt

The friendly Encinitas Community Garden (ECG) was a new discovery for me and my husband, though it’s right across the street from San Diego Botanic Garden (SDBG) and is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year. There’s no obvious signage, so we just never noticed it before.

A garden with a strong emphasis on community, it was officially incorporated as a nonprofit organization in 2009 by a group of local volunteers who wanted to create a communal space in Encinitas for gardening and education.

Among the original founding members were Sanford (Sandy) Shapiro, a Master Gardener who also volunteers at SDBG, and Doug Long, who did the garden’s design and was its vice president through 2024. Once the Encinitas Union School District agreed to give them a lease, ECG became a reality, offering raised garden bed plots to individuals and families in Encinitas at reasonable annual fees and welcoming all new members.

The garden now has 108 plots for vegetables and flowers in three different sizes, and some of them are raised high enough for older folks or people with back injuries to garden without bending. They use captured rainwater, share all tools and their greenhouse, and have monthly potlucks and other events for members.

There are currently 12 garden plots available, so if you’re interested, see their new website below on how to become a member.

Want to visit the garden? Come to one of their workdays, the third Saturday of every month, from 10 a.m. to noon. Just show up at the gate, and they’ll let you in.

They’re making plans for a grand 10th anniversary celebration this October, and creating a cookbook of members’ recipes, which will be for sale in Encinitas and beyond. Check the website for event details as autumn approaches.

Encinitas Community Garden is located at 441 Quail Gardens Dr., Encinitas. Phone: 858-367-3646 Website: www.encinitas-communitygardens.org



Four members of the ECG board (l-r): Teresa Koecher (secretary), Allison Blackwell (former deputy mayor of Encinitas), Agnes Maufit (an original board member, who started soliciting grants for the garden in 2010), Joan Herzkowitz (Master Gardener and new board member). **PHOTOS BY MAURICE HEWITT**



Taking a break from weeding: Hope McBride



A plot of spring flowers and veggies.



Young strawberries

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