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Encinitas Community Garden features 120 plots available for residents to lease annually. Photo by Kaila Mellos

Encinitas Community Garden hosting Farm-to-Table fundraiser dinner

by Kaila Mellos ⓘ May 1, 2023 👁 788

ENCINITAS — More than 15 years ago, Gordon Smith started his journey to bring a community



preparing to host the garden's fourth annual Farm-To-Table dinner event on May 28 to raise funds to help the nonprofit maintain, improve and expand the community grounds.

The dinner will feature food by local Peruvian chef Monica Szepesy, owner of Q'ero restaurant, and music by San Diego musician Roman Palacios.

On a two-acre plot of land owned by the Encinitas Union School District, the Encinitas Community Garden offers 120 garden plots for residents to lease on a yearly basis (\$90 per year for a smaller plot and \$180 per year for a larger plot).





*Gordon Smith, founder of the Encinitas Community Garden, and Janna Roncelli, a member of the nonprofit's board, smile on April 29 while standing atop a fresh pile of mulch for the garden.
Photo by Kaila Mellos*

Residents with all levels of experience produce everything from fruits and vegetables to flowers and herbs and often share tips and tricks with each other as the seasons come and go.

Since gardeners are not allowed to use synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides, everything in the garden is completely organic and safe to eat straight from the ground, vine or bush. A composting program allows gardeners to recycle their organic waste and turn it into nutrient-rich compost.



In recent years, the garden has become even more important to residents of Encinitas as people have become more interested in growing their food and living sustainably. During the pandemic, the garden saw local interest in gardening grow as people were looking for connections to their neighbors.

“During COVID-19, it was amazing that people could come here and escape being locked down,” Smith said. “People were able to come and work with their gardens and have a little bit of interaction with people. You could ask any gardener back there at that time. It was to get out



enough for seniors to easily access.



Around the same time, Smith planted fruit trees surrounding the property to add shade and for garden members to take some of the produce.





A few of the individual plots at the Encinitas Community Garden. Photos by Kaila Mellos

“All around the outside of the perimeter, we have about 180 different fruit trees that are all growing out,” Smith said. “The different varieties of pomegranates, peaches, plums, nectarines, citrus, figs, persimmons, apples, and fruit trees are all up and down here. And they’re all starting to get pretty good since we put them in the ground. People can grab some fruit on their way up.”

Smith said he hopes to eventually feature some local art in the garden.

“I think it would be so cool if local artists came here and displayed whatever they wanted,” Smith said. “Maybe a giant asparagus or a giant carrot coming out of the ground or something just along the fences would be great.”

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The garden’s Farm-To-Table dinner from 3 to 7 p.m. on May 28 is an opportunity for the nonprofit to raise money to help refresh supplies, equipment and plots and possibly expand.



to raise money for maintaining the plots and the garden as a whole and to have a good time.”

The fundraiser typically sees around 100 people purchase tickets, and the event has sold out in the past. Tickets are available on the [Encinitas Community Garden](#) website and are sold for \$100 or \$80 for garden members. Wine, beverages, and dessert are included in the dinner service price.



The Encinitas Community Garden is located at 401-473 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas, CA 92024.

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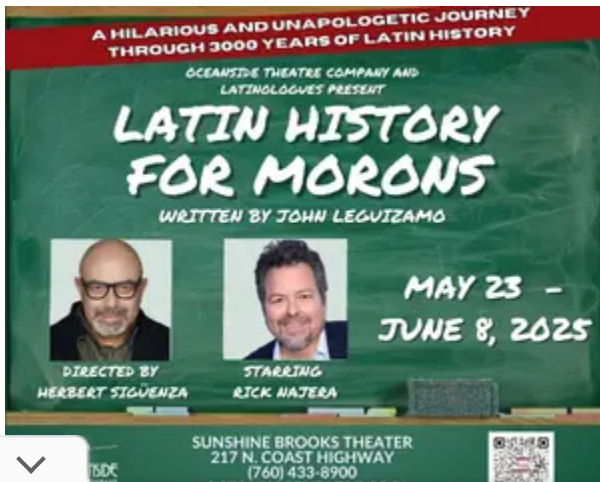
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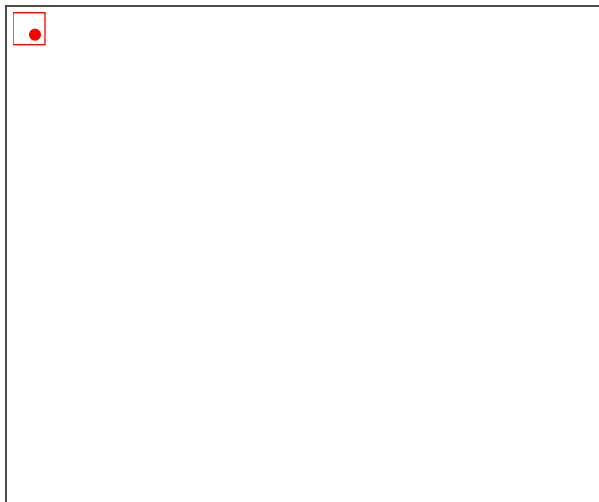
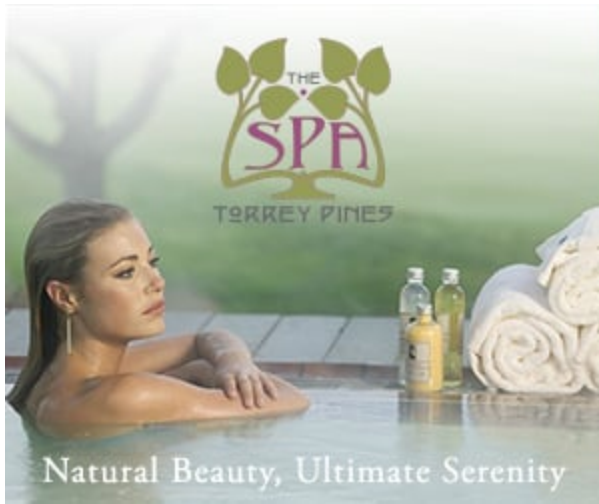


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