

The Real Dirt

NEWSLETTER OF THE

RAMONA GARDEN CLUB, RAMONA CA
A CGCI BLUE RIBBON CLUB

April 2026

General Meeting: April 8, 2026

Mountain View Community Church 1191 Meadowlark Way, Ramona

Doors open at 11:15 am

10:00 am Board Meeting

April Speaker: Bob Lutticken

“All About the Abraxas Garden in Poway”



Bob Lutticken is in his 25th year of teaching at Abraxas Continuation High School, where he leads courses in Biology, Agriculture, and Aquaponics, and oversees the thriving Abraxas Garden. Originally launched with two colleagues in 2015, the garden is now fully operated by Bob, his students, and a network of dedicated volunteers. Together, they’ve donated over 65,000 pounds of fresh produce to families in need across the community.

Born in San Francisco and raised in the Bay Area, Bob attended Serra High School in San Mateo, where he honed the baseball skills that led to a seven-year career with the San Diego Padres. After retiring from professional baseball, he earned a degree in Biology and a Master’s in Education.

Following a short time at Poway High School, Bob recognized that he could make the greatest impact working with at-risk youth. That realization led him to Abraxas—where he’s been ever since. The connection between Bob and his students is unmatched. His mission is to continue expanding the school’s agriculture program and to teach as many students as possible the power of growing food and the importance of sustainability.

We will be having our famous **Potluck so bring a dish to share!!**

Don’t forget your plants and flowers for the **Horticulture Table!!**



Robert's President's Message



Well, according to my calendar, March 20th was the first day of Spring for the Northern Hemisphere. I guess that means we skipped winter this year. I just hope we don't also skip Spring.

We are now fully operational with on-line purchasing of garden tour tickets scheduled for Saturday, May 2, and early comments indicate it is a straight forward process to navigate. The plant-craft sale, and garden tour informational flyers are being posted throughout Ramona, as well as Andersen and El Plantio nurseries. So, let's all tell our neighbors, family, friends, in-laws and out-laws about our signature fundraising event for the year. Help your club to make this our best yet!

This is also the time of year where you, the membership, nominate candidates for club President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary for the 2026-27 season. In order to build a stronger Executive Board, we are also soliciting for Co-President, Co-VP, Co-Treasurer, or Co-Secretary. This is an excellent opportunity to learn by being involved in a role without the full responsibility. Many high performing clubs in the Palomar District utilize co-positions on their Executive Boards to improve decision-making as well as succession planning. With your involvement, we can do the same.

To date, we have awarded two \$500 grants to community non-profits, and have several more to consider before the end of our season. The scholarship committee has recently received a number of excellent applicants from Ramona and Montecito High Schools, and begin student interviews in early April.

There are a number of Arts & Craft workshops coming up between now and May 2, so look for the sign-up sheets at the April 8 meeting.



...Robert

Ramona Garden Club Field Trip for April

Guy Woodward Museum

645 Main Street, Ramona, CA

Wednesday, April 22, 2026 10:00 am



Our Ramona Garden Club will be having a private tour of the Ramona Museum!

Sign ups will be out at our April 8 meeting
We hope you can join us!

Time: Meet at the front of the Museum at 10 AM.

We can go to lunch afterwards for those that want to have more time together.

Donation of \$5 per person suggested

A Quick View of Upcoming Activities

April 6th & 20th - Collier Park Work Days

April 3rd & 15th - Safari Park Work Days (page 8)

April 6th - Palomar District Floral Design Forum. Poway Library - Noon

April 8th - General Meeting 11:15 am Speaker: Bob Lutticken (page 1)

**Bring your Plants and Flowers in to show on the Horticultural Table
& a Dish to share for the Potluck.**

April 22nd - Field Trip to Ramona's Guy Woodward Museum (page 3)

May 13th - General Meeting - Speaker: Sharon Reeve "San Diego Native Bees"

*****May 2nd - Garden Tour and Plant/Craft Sale - Tell your friends (page 4 - 7)*****

Newsletter deadline: **May 3rd** (late this month)



Materials Needed for Fairy Gardens

Our Crafters need small rooted succulents, fairy garden decorations, items to decorate vases and propagating bottles.

Items such as costume jewelry, ribbon, dried flowers and paints for glass vases. We also need items to display air plants for our craft day on April 24.

They can be brought to our April Meeting or

Contact Janice Strizver at 619-708-5441.

Ramona Garden Club Garden Tour

We will have 5 magnificent gardens on this year's tour.

We have started selling tickets to the event on the website:

Ramonagardenclub.com

so make sure you let all your friends and family know to buy their tickets.

They will also be available at the April General Meeting.

It is our largest fundraiser of the year with money going to the Scholarship and Grant Funds.

We will be asking all our membership to help out with this event to make it a fun and smooth running activity.



Posters are up in several places down the hill and in town! Thanks Pene for the great design . (See next page)

If your favorite place doesn't have one hanging up ask if they would let you post it there. Call Robert to see where you can pick them up.



RAMONA GARDEN CLUB

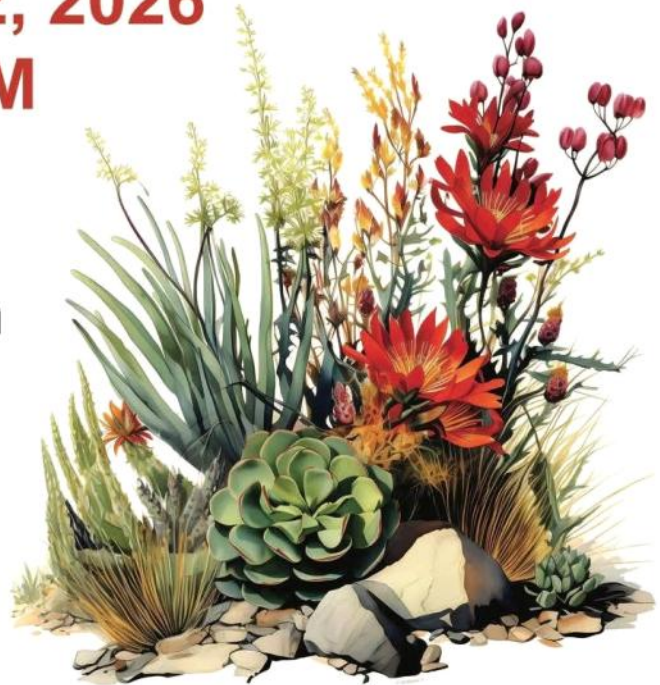
2026 GARDEN TOUR

Tour 5 Beautiful Private Gardens **\$30**

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2026

10 AM - 3 PM

Buy your tickets
in advance online at
Ramonagardenclub.com
or at Main Street Coffee,
680 Main St., Ramona.
Tickets will also be
available the day of the
tour at the



PLANT & CRAFT SALE

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2026

10 AM - 2 PM

Ramona Oaks Park
25341 Pappas Road, Ramona



Ramona Garden Club Spring Plant & Craft Sale

Ramona Oaks Park

25341 Pappas Road, Ramona, CA 92065

10:00 am - 2:00 pm

There will be a volunteer sign up sheet for the Plant Sale at the April meeting

There are three shifts you can sign up for or come and spend the whole day.
Any help is welcomed.

Set up is from 8 to 10. This involves helping unload vehicles and organizing plants.

Sales is from 10 to 2 and Clean up is 1:30 to 3.

Plant deliveries are from 8 to 9:30. You can drive your vehicle across the grass right to our tables under the shade structure. Just before the park is a small parking lot. Turn in there. The gate opens at 8.

We need lots of plants, cardboard boxes for the customers and gently used garden items to sell.

Please label all your plants with the plant name and optional growing information. If your pots have nursery labels on them please either remove the labels or black out the previous plant information.

We also need shoppers so spread the word. Hope to see you there.

Carol Wilson caroljaywilson@gmail.com (760) 315-0255

Ramona Garden Club Garden Tour & Spring Plant & Craft Sale

Still seeking a few volunteers for host/hostesses for our Garden Tour

Our most important fundraiser, the biennial **Garden Tour**, is quickly approaching and we are seeking volunteers to serve as hosts at each of the featured homes.

This year's tour will showcase five beautiful gardens.

Each home requires four hostesses: **2 for the morning shift (9:45-12:30)** and **2 for the afternoon shift (12:30-3:15)**.

Some of the properties include larger areas, and in those cases, one host may be asked to assist guests in the yard.

Serving as a host is a wonderful way to support our club while enjoying a special behind the scenes experience as all hosts will be invited to attend a pre-tour walk-through of the garden.

Pre-tour date set at April 18. We will have a hostess meeting prior to the event, ensuring you feel fully prepared and "In the Know". All necessary materials and instructions will be provided.

Please let me know if you would be interested in helping us as a host. I will have a sign-up list at the next meeting, April 8th. Or give me a call and let me know.

Julie Perreault (760) 533.4986

Guidelines For Donating Plants and Craft Items For The May 2 Sale

Based on recent Board and Planning Committee decisions, I wanted to share the following operating guidelines for the upcoming plant-craft sale. These guidelines are for *anyone* donating plants, and/or craft items.

- All donated plants will be coordinated by the Plant Sales Committee (PSC).
- Plant table locations, labeling and pricing will be coordinated by the PSC.
- All donated craft items will be coordinated by the Arts & Crafts Committee (ACC).
- Craft table locations, and pricing will be coordinated by the ACC.
- Plant vendors must be present with their plants – please, no drop and run.
- If you can not be present to sell your items, please get someone to help.
- 50% off sale time to be determined by the PSC and ACC chairs.



Thank you everyone for making this a memorable event for the RGC, and our community. ...Robert



The Scholarship Committee has received a number of applications this month that qualify for our program. We will be interviewing at least 4 students in early April before making our final selections. I'm really excited about the targeted fields of study these young scholars are pursuing! We think you will be too. Stay tuned!

...*Connie Sabon* Chairperson, RGC Scholarship and Grants Committee



As the raffle chairperson, I want to thank you for your generosity in donating items and purchasing tickets.

For those who may not be familiar with the process, we hold a raffle at the end of every club meeting. **Tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Members are encouraged to donate new or gently used items**, which are displayed on the raffle table next to the front door for everyone to see. I will visit each table during the potluck to sell tickets, so please be sure to check out the available items before you sit down.

Proceeds from the raffle support the Club's grant and scholarship program. Thank you again for your continued support!

...*Jen DeSimone* Raffle Chair



How Bees Help Elephants

The San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance works together with conservation groups in Africa to provide large bee houses to farmers. Elephants are afraid of bees, so farmers surround their crops with the houses that are all connected by wire. When an elephant touches one of the houses, it causes the bees in all of the houses to buzz, scaring the elephant away. So now farmers and elephants can live in harmony.

This is one of the things you can learn by walking through the new Elephant Valley at the Safari Park. It's an amazing experience to roam up close through their area, in what seems like their natural habitat! If you haven't been to Safari Park in awhile, the new Elephant Valley makes it worthwhile.

If you're interested in becoming a volunteer in the Herb Garden there, contact Debbie Gomez, deb4fino@pacbell.net. You'll be able to get free passes to the Park and Zoo, and walk through their habitat on the way to garden next to these magnificent animals!

Volunteers Grow our Garden Club



Request for Nominations for Executive Board

It is that time of year again where you, the membership, nominate candidates for club President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary for the 2026-27 season.

If you, or someone you want to nominate, are interested in sharing one of these roles, we are also soliciting for **Co-President, Co-VP, Co-Treasurer, or Co-Secretary**. This is an excellent opportunity to learn about a role without the full responsibility, before you are comfortable to assume it.

Please forward your nominations to Toni White, Nominating Committee Chair, ASAP

Toni can be reached at (760)-315-2186, or email: Tlwhite2557@gmail.com. Barbara Boryla bboryla@gmail.com is also helping out with the Committee.

Reach out and let them know how you can help out!

Needed for 2026 - 2027

Membership Chair: Talk to Julie for more information

- * Keeps the Roster of members
- * Signs up New Members
- * Welcomes and checks in guests and members at General Meetings

Publicity Chair: Talk to Robert for more information

- * Sends announcements out to media outlets
- * Writes short articles about our club for local papers

Newsletter Editor: Talk to Maggie for more information

- * Creates a monthly newsletter and emails to members September to June
- * Works with President, Vice President and various Chairs to get information on events in club.

It can be a much smaller newsletter than we have now... You can make it your own design!



April Birthdays

- 12th - Sandy Bedard
- 13th - Valerie Privett
- 18th - Bernette Faust
- 18th - Janice Strizver
- 19th - Pete Aragon
- 26th - Michael Hazen



Ramona Garden Club Library Flowers

What Fun!! Our wonderful Volunteers are changing out the Garden Club Tree each month to a different theme!

How many of you have checked it out when you went into the Library?

Go in, find a new book at the library or at the Library Bookstore and smile at the fun display.



From our Gardens and in Our Sanctuaries

Some of our beautiful gardens!

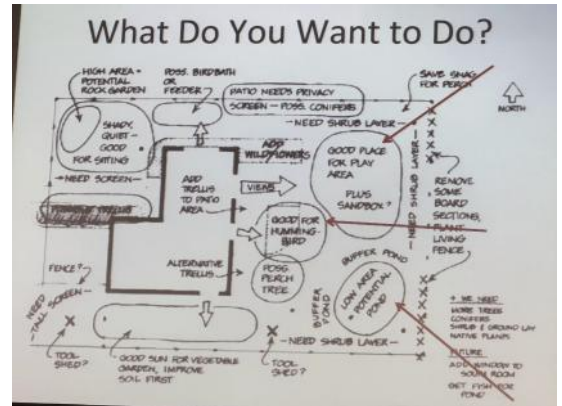


Bonnie, Robert & Rebecca went on a tour of one of our newer members, Ralph Tran's 14 acre yard. Robert's word to describe it was "WOW" !

Our members have the most diverse gardens! We live in such a special area.



March Meeting Fun!!



The March General Meeting was full of great food, good friends and lots of Information!

We had Debbie Dunn give a talk on Designing Landscaping and some of the correct plants for our area.

The Craft Chairs displayed samples of the upcoming Workshops. We started selling tickets to the Garden Tour. Horticulture Table showed some of the plants that people are growing in their gardens and of course the famous Potluck!



Tickets for the Garden Tour!! Get yours soon!



March Field Trip to the International Equestrian Center Composting Seminar



Nancy Zadrozny, the Landscape/Open Space Manager San Diego Country Estates

Nancy gave us a very informative talk about the Composting system in the Estates.

The group went over and had lunch at the Par Lounge afterwards.

Don't miss out on April's Field Trip to the Woodward Museum.



Bottle Workshop



A fun and creative time was held at the last Craft Workshop. Don't forget all these wonderful crafts will be sold at the Plant/Craft Sale on May 2!

SUSTAINABLE RAMONA PRESENTS THE

5th Annual Ramona Earth Day Festival

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2026 • 11AM - 4PM

BEGENT RANCH, 18528 HIGHLAND VALLEY RD., RAMONA, CA



Event focused on sustainability with earth-friendly exhibitors & vendors, educational workshops & demonstrations, live music & entertainment, kids treasure hunt & art display, food vendors, and more!
\$10 suggested donation for adults; kids are free!

SUSTAINBLERAMONA.ORG • FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM: @SUSTAINBLERAMONA



Seed Library stocked and ready at the Ramona Community Center!
434 Aqua Lane Ramona

Take some! Leave some! Grow flowers!

California Natives- Milkweed - Edible Flowers 🦋 🌸 🌻 🌼 🌺

Find it on the map here:

<https://monarchfellowship.org/hubs-map/>

Found on Social Media. Check it out
and let us know how it is!

Ramona Garden Club P.O. Box 1412 Ramona, CA 92065

Webpage: www.RamonaGardenClub.com

Find us on Facebook - Ramona Garden Club

Newsletter Editor: maggiocrane@att.net

Affiliations:

National Garden Clubs Inc. - Gardenclub.org

Pacific Region Garden Clubs - pacificregiongardenclubs.org

California Garden Clubs, Inc - Californiagardenclub.com

Palomar District - find through Californiagardenclub.com/ member websites