

The Real Dirt

NEWSLETTER OF THE

RAMONA GARDEN CLUB, RAMONA CA
A CGCI BLUE RIBBON CLUB

March 2026

General Meeting: March 11, 2026

Mountain View Community Church 1191 Meadowlark Way, Ramona

Doors open at 11:15 am

10:00 am Board Meeting

March Speaker: Debby Dunn

“Landscape Design and the Best Plants for your Landscape”



Debby Dunn is an enthusiastic advocate for the environment, with a passion for educating people about creating lush, water wise, and colorful landscapes that delight and invite pollinators and people.

She has a Bachelor of Art in Environmental Studies, a Master of Public Administration, is a 17-year Master Gardener, and has helped over 12,000 people with their landscapes.

In her present position with San Diego County Water Authority, she is grateful to be able to work on expansive programs and projects that benefit the Water Authority’s member agencies and their customers.



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



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



Robert's President's Message



Numerous March activities are in full swing to support the Spring plant & craft sale, as well as the Garden Tour of five beautiful Ramona gardens on Saturday, May 2.

The plant-craft strategic planning committee recently met, and identified what actions are needed to provide standardized guidelines for all plant and craft vendors, and improve overall efficiency going forward. Very soon, the committee will tackle how those actions will be accomplished.

The Garden Tour committee is also well under way with various workstreams going on concurrently. We will soon offer on-line purchase of tour tickets thru the RGC website, and flyers to be posted around town. An excellent way to get involved and help your club, is to volunteer to be a host at one of the five gardens. See more information in this newsletter.

Later this month, we have an interesting educational field trip scheduled about the composting process at the International Equestrian Center, located in the San Diego Country Estates. Look for the signup sheet and additional information at the March 11 meeting.

And as I have previously mentioned, attending field trips is a great way to build on existing friendships as well as develop new ones. I have learned something interesting about at least one person on every field trip I've attended.

March is also a great time to visit the Collier Park project, and take in some of the great work Teri Schmidt and her crew have been, and are doing. Work is underway to identify and plant approximately 50 pollinator plants funded by the national grant we recently received.

See you at the March meeting.



..... *Robert*

Ramona Garden Club Field Trip for March
“Composting Seminar”

International Equestrian Center - 16911 Gunn Stage Road Ramona CA 92065

Wednesday, March 25, 2026 10:00 am

We will be meeting at the International Equestrian Center, in the San Diego Country Estates, at 16911 Gunn Stage Road, on Wednesday, March 25, at 10 AM.

Nancy Zadrozny, who is head of turf development in the San Diego Country Estates, will meet us there, and give us all the information on how the composting is done in the Estates.

Please meet us at 10 AM, and park in the Equestrian Center on Gunn Stage Rd.

No carpooling necessary for this field trip!

Afterwards, we will have lunch together at the
Oaks Grille in the San Diego Country Estates.

Many club members have been asking for information on composting so this will be a good opportunity for everyone interested to join us for this fun field trip!

We will have the sign-up list available again at our meeting on March 11.

We hope to see you there!!

A Quick View of Upcoming Activities

March 2nd & 16th - Collier Park Work Days (page 4)

March 6th & 18th - Safari Park Work Days (Contact Debbie Gomez for information: deb4fino@pacbell.com)

March 2nd - Palomar District Floral Design Forum. Poway Library - Noon (page 11)

March 11th - General Meeting 11:15 am Speaker: Debbie Dunn (page 1)

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

April 8th - General Meeting - Cindy Bruecks “Edible Landscapes and Toxic Plants”

*****May 2nd - Garden Tour and Plant Sale - Save the Date! Tell your friends (page 5 & 6)*****

Newsletter deadline: March 23rd

Collier Park Work Days



Come join the Collier Work Team on

March 2nd & 16th between 8 - 11 am

Spend a couple hours helping make our park Beautiful!

We'll start preparing to plant our new grant plants and there's a lot of Spring maintenance - Weedin!!

We were awarded the National Garden Club Plant America Grant and now we get to plant the Pollinator Garden!

Let's get All Hands on Deck for these work days!

626 E. Street, Ramona, CA 92065



Succulents Needed for Fairly Gardens

We are looking for a lot of small rooted succulents to be used in Fairly Gardens for the May 2nd Plant Sale. If you have any succulents that have rooted or can root before April please bring them to the March Meeting or **contact Janice Strizver at 619-708-5441.** We will be having

a workshop after the April Meeting to put them all together. Should be a fun activity! There will be a sample at the March meeting.

The Woodward Ramona Museum's Annual Old Timey
SEED SWAP
 Saturday, March 14th from 10:00-Noon



Have Seeds to Share?
 Come Swap with Us!
 Starting a Garden?
 Swing by to Learn About Growing Plants
 in our Unique Environment

Bring seeds you have saved, excess seeds you
 purchased, seedlings, and resources to share
 Label seeds with date and variety
 Experienced gardeners will be there with tips
 No seeds? No problem! We have plenty to share!
 NO SEEDS OR PLANTS MAY BE SOLD
 645 Main Street in Ramona



Save The Date!! Saturday, May 2, 2026

Ramona Garden Club Garden Tour

Garden Tour Home Hosts Needed

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 hosts: two 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. We will have a hosts meeting prior to the event, ensuring you feel fully prepared and "In the Know". All necessary materials and instructions will be provided.

We hope you will consider volunteering your time to help make this years Garden Tour a success. Your support is truly appreciated and essential to the success of this event.

Thank you for your continued dedication to the RGC and expect a phone call from yours truly,

...Julie Perreault

julieann55@cox.net

Ramona Garden Club Garden Tour

Make sure you mark your calendars for this very special day!

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

We will start selling tickets to the event in the upcoming months so make sure you let all your friends and family know to set aside the date for this event.

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.

More information on ticket sales next month.

Save The Date!! Saturday, May 2, 2026

Ramona Garden Club Plant Sale

Ramona Oaks Park

25341 Pappas Road, Ramona, CA 92065

10:00 am - 2:00 pm

The Plant Sale is coming up in two months on Saturday, May 2. It will be held at Ramona Oaks Park in Country Estates from 10 am - 2 pm. It is probably too late to propagate plants unless you have something fully rooted.

We would love to have bulbs if you have any to divide. You can start collecting boxes for the customers.

We also need gently used garden items to sell.

There will be a volunteer sign up sheet at the March meeting.

We need the most people for setup which starts at 8.

Sales starts at 10 and cleanup at 1:30.



We have our big adventure coming up on May 2nd!! There are lots of opportunities to volunteer and help out your club. Join us and help make this the best Plant Sale and Garden Tour year ever! Thank you!!

March Birthdays

- 1st - Liz Inglis
- 2nd - Richard Taylor
- 3rd - Linda Joop
- 3rd - Kitty White
- 5th - Julie Perreault



- 11th - Jerry Raymer
- 17th - Diane Schafer
- 19th - Geffrey Wells
- 20th - Debbie Gomez
- 30th - Lisa Gouse



Diane McKee our Parliamentarian is looking for people that would like to do the brief **Inspiration Reading** at the beginning of the meeting. She has a book of different ones or you can look online under Inspirational Garden Quotes and get thousands! Just let her know you are willing to help out!

Diane McKee - 760-522-7872

Ramona Garden Club Library & Senior Center Flowers



The library has a new festive tree display! Every month someone will change the ornaments to match the season. What a fun idea! Stop by the Library and take a look.



From our Gardens and in Our Sanctuaries

Some of our beautiful gardens!



About twenty turkeys had been eating birdseed earlier. I heard a big commotion on my roof. I figured it was the turkeys and then I saw the coyote scoping them out. Got some pics and then knocked on the window and man did he take off!! Carol W.



Checking out the trash can of course!! We do grow them big in Ramona! Maggie



We love the rain but those Rainbows are wonderful!

Robert



Double the Luck!

February Meeting Fun!!

Our February Speaker was Marsha Cook on "Earth Friendly Gardening Principles" She gave us a lot of information on how to best use our time and resources in our Gardens.



Horticultural Table had a full display last month. Lets bring lots to the March Meeting!

When you have problems or need more information on garden related things don't forget our great resource:
Master Gardener Website:
Www.mastergardensd.org
HG "Hotline" 858-822-6910



Our Official Greeter!



Kathy gave our inspiration.



As always we had our famous potluck and full an opportunity table.



Cactus Jack has started a wonderful Historian display showing some of our fun history.

Check out the new Yellow Information Table at the next meeting.



Winter Meeting of the Palomar District of the CGCI



A group of us went down to Rancho Bernardo for the Winter District meeting. The Ramona Garden Club is a member of the Palomar District which is in the larger California Garden Club, Inc. & National Garden Club.

We got lots of good information of what is happening in all the garden clubs that are in the San Diego area.

The last meeting of the year will be in June. Watch for more information and plan on joining us!



Robert talked about our upcoming Garden Tour/Plant Sale.

Diana Drummey our District Director led the meeting.



Donna Payton gave us a talk on "What's the Buzz" with fun gardening facts.



About 70 members of other gardening clubs attended.

Information was presented on the CGCI President Project.

Things for sale and of course Great Food!



Cultivating the Roots of Success 2025-2027 CGCI President's Project Abraxas High School Garden Abraxas Orchard

California Garden Club President Adele Kirby has chosen the expansion of the Abraxas High School Garden—Abraxas Orchard—as her fundraising project.

GOALS: raise \$38,000 for the orchard expansion
 1. Utilize the existing 150,000-sq-ft garden from 1968
 2. Create new planting spaces for Districts, Garden Clubs, and individual members
 3. Coordinate and help create the maintenance school garden.

Project objectives include: Abraxas High will continue creating opportunities for students to learn in the field, in the garden, and in the classroom.

The new orchard expansion will include several varieties of fruit trees.

The Abraxas Garden is more than a program—it's a lifeline.
 From providing career and technical education to horticulture, agriculture, and landscaping to the students, the garden is a lifeline for the community.

HOW TO DONATE:
 Donations for the expansion fund:
 Website: www.calgardenclub.org
 Email: info@calgardenclub.org
 Phone: (760) 441-2222



Palomar District's 33rd Anniversary Season Floral Design Forum 2025-2026

POWAY COMMUNITY LIBRARY
13137 POWAY ROAD, POWAY, CA 9206

Start time: Noon

March 2, 2026 Barbara Weiler, Master Flower Show Judge and an incredible designer but also a fantastic HORTICULTURIST. Watch what she brings to the table.

April 6, 2026 "FLOWER POWER" Our most popular Program. Watch as 4 local college student designers race against the clock to complete a Surprise Package design from materials, containers and theme. Then, like a 3-ring circus, they show a "signature design," a "round robin" and then a "wrap up" design.

May 4, 2026 – The "Grand Finale" Everyone knows **Monica Lewis**, hostess, NGC FS Judge. With her Creative Designs she answers: **What has Music Got to do with IT.**

Educational Information from Nan Sterman

REALLY Cold Temperatures, NOW What?

Mountain gardens might experience hard freezes, but the rest of the region only occasionally gets cold enough for plants to experience frost damage.

If it happens in your garden, don't panic. Instead:

- DO NOT cut off cold-damaged leaves and stems until danger of frost has passed. When it comes time to snip, cut away ONLY the dead tissue – leave a trace of dead leaf or branch behind
- DO NOT cut into healthy tissue. By leaving an edge of already dead tissue, you hope to stop further decay and you will not introduce new pathogens to living tissue. Those damaged parts protect the rest of the plant from future frosts.
- Leave potted tropical and other tender plants under patio eaves.
- Leave in-ground tender plants under protective frost cloth until after your garden's last frost date.

Nan Sterman

Educational Information from Nan Sterman

Irrigation Management for March

Leave your irrigation off for several weeks after a good soaking rain

- Leave your irrigation off for several weeks after a good soaking rain
- Turn it on only once the soil dries out "two knuckles" deep (stick your finger deep into the soil, up to your second knuckle to feel the soil moisture).

Before the heat and dry air of spring and summer, update your irrigation system

- Use flexible in-line drip tubing with emitters embedded inside the tubes.
- These systems are most efficient, easiest to maintain, and wet your garden beds evenly, just like rainfall.

Don't let pots stand in water

- When soil becomes overly saturated, roots rot and plants die.
- Clean sediment from bioswales and dry stream beds so rain water can percolated into the soil.
- That "banked" water will support plants well into spring and maybe into summer.

Check your irrigation controller to make sure the automatic rain sensor shuts the system off in the rain

Nan Sterman

Follow up answers from our February Speaker, Marsha Cook

Here is a guide to composting for San Diego County!

[CIY-Guide Compost-it-Yourself Updated 2024.pdf](#)

Someone asked about Olive Fruit fly at the February meeting.

Olive Fruit Fly / Home and Landscape / UC Statewide IPM Program
(UC IPM) <https://share.google/SWM6mDJTZ1ipEt7L6>

A blue banner for a spring gardening event. The text is in yellow and white. On the left, there is a small illustration of a brown chicken. On the right, there is a small illustration of a brown paper bag. The banner features the following text: "Spring Gardening with UC Master Gardeners" in large yellow letters, "March 21, 2026 Sikes Adobe Historic Farmstead" in white and yellow, and "Saturday, 9 am to 3 pm" in yellow. At the bottom, there are two logos: the UC Master Gardener logo (University of California Agriculture & Natural Resources) and the Master Gardener Association of San Diego County logo.

Spring Gardening

with UC Master Gardeners

March 21, 2026 Sikes Adobe Historic Farmstead
Saturday, 9 am to 3 pm

UC Master Gardener
University of California
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Master Gardener Association
of San Diego County

What to Expect!

- Register for Hands-on Workshops
- Attend Free, Engaging Lightning Talks and Demonstrations
- Visit Informational Booths and Exhibits
- Free Tool Sharpening
- Free Succulent Swap
- Ask a Master Gardener
- Shop Garden-related Retail: Locally Grown Farmer's Market, 1000s of Plants, Unique Bird-houses, and More!

Learn all about seed starting, vegetable gardening, native plants, garden art, food preservation, irrigation, and more. Bring the whole family to enjoy a day of learning and fun outdoors.

Sikes Adobe Historic Farmstead

12655 Sunset Dr, Escondido, CA 92025

<https://www.mastergardenersd.org/spring-event-2026>



Photo: Sikes Adobe



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Find us on Facebook - Ramona Garden Club

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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