

A MESSAGE FROM THE ARBORETUM'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A LOOK BACK AT 2018
AND A PREVIEW OF 2019



Dear friends,

2018 has been a year of challenges and successes, and the Arb is thriving! Volunteers are buzzing with energy, students are wielding implements, and visitors are piling in. With the first rains, lots of shrubs have popped into bloom. You should stop by the gardens, even if only for half an hour, to see some fresh color and unusual forms. You deserve it!

Staff changes include the retirement of Nursery Manager Helen Englesberg, and the hire of Martin Grantham, who comes to us from San Francisco State. Melinda Kralj has been promoted to Curator of Collections, and Rick Flores has been promoted to Director of Horticulture. These two positions are garden-wide, with new responsibilities that will raise our game significantly.

We have also welcomed several new Board members, including Susan Leo, Jan Biegenzahn, and Marisa Gomez. Thanks and farewell to Janet Platin, Andrea Hesse, Susanna Gaertner, Anita Grunwald, and Susie Bower.



Two major art exhibits took place this year: the controversial “Forest (for 1000 years)”, and the long-term “Future Gardens for the Central Coast” that involved Arboretum staff and students. The openings brought in many hundreds of new visitors from the whole Bay Area, and spiked a lot of media coverage. We look forward to having more pieces as focal points in the gardens, and welcome bequests from folks who want to be sure their large sculptures find a happy home.



In operations, we’ve completed our new parking area, and have been doing much-needed pruning and cleaning throughout the gardens. New Zealand is transforming as the trees are maturing into a closed canopy. The California Conservation Garden has grown both in area and plant collections, and Brett is building paths and trails. He is working with local boulders to create cliff habitat for Dudleyas and other taxa of interest. You should see this work in progress! Seriously.

Big visions for the coming year begin with renovation of the South African section, re-planting and re-interpreting the extensive old collections, and adding new species that Martin Grantham and I saw last year in the wild. I am truly jazzed by this project, and I’m also looking for support to create four or five smaller specialty gardens within South Africa: a Maze of Restios, a Succulent Garden highlighting the *Aloes* and *Euphorbias*, a *Pelargonium* (Geranium) Garden with both wild and cultivated varieties, a small shaded Wedding Lawn, and a Grove of Silver Trees (*Leucospermum argenteum*) added to the *Erica* beds. It’s gonna be fabulous! It’s also a chance to offer more “horticultural” exposure to our visitors. Please, if you’d like to donate money or time to any of these projects, stop by my office and let me show you the sketches. Even if you’re not a total plant nerd, as I am, you’ll be turned on.

The Board focus this year will be Visitor Engagement. The Committee has focused on Docent Training and Tour Guide expansion, to welcome new audiences to our special place. (And don’t worry, there will always be lots of spots to be happily alone in the Arb.) We look for your feedback as well, to find ways for the Arb to be more accessible and inviting to the community, campus, and corporate sponsors.

We depend on your friendship to sustain us. In doing so you are honoring the community, the environment, and our personal need for flowers and foliage in our lives.

Wishing you a most healthy and prosperous new year,

Martin