

SEPTEMBER MEETING RECAP: ANNUAL BANQUET & HOTY AWARD

The September meeting of the Southern California Horticultural Society was the annual awards banquet celebrating our Horticulturist of the Year. We gathered at the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden on September 10 to honor Kathy Musial, whom many said was long overdue as a recipient. While socializing before dinner, SCHS members, guests and friends braved the heat to bid on silent auction items displayed on the outside patio and then shared a wonderful meal in the air-conditioned comfort of the Peacock Café. The staff prepared a very tasty dinner (and at Kathy's request) a chocolate dessert. Her love of chocolate (and desserts) was to be one of the recurring themes of the evening.

After dinner and the close of the silent auction, everyone headed down to the Palm Room to hear some of Kathy's friends and colleagues speak about what is like working and traveling with her over the course of many years.

The first speaker was Jim Folsom, Kathy's "boss" at the Huntington Library and Gardens, who immediately joked that the idea of Kathy having a boss was preposterous. His comments about her natural inclination to be in charge led to a wistful musing of "What if Walt Disney were telling this story?", and his imagining Kathy as a princess from the San Fernando Valley. This notion of the event being a pseudo-coronation set the tone for the evening; less talk of horticulture and more of a gentle roast at the expense of our honoree. Anyone who has worked with Kathy Musial knows she is a forceful personality and that the awards presentation would take a backseat to personal reminiscences.

Our next speaker was James E. (Jim) Henrich, Curator of Living Collections at the Arboretum. He carried on with the Kathy-as-princess theme, speaking on her strong opinions about food, color (in and out of the garden) and their shared love of chocolate. Jim shared details about Kathy's love of all things Australian, and some of her shopping habits, both locally and abroad.

Kitty Connolly, Executive Director of the Theodore Payne Foundation, was up next, and she reflected on how and when she first met Kathy, as well as the 15 years they spent as colleagues at the Huntington. She actually chose to speak about Kathy's incredible plant knowledge and the well-earned admiration and respect that the horticultural community has for her.

Kitty was followed by Bart O'Brien, Director of the East Bay Regional Park/Tilden Gardens, who was one of two

speakers that came from Northern California specifically for this event. He had a very wry take on all things "Kathy" - from her travel habits (knowing where to shop for the most interesting stuff, etc.) to her firm sense of color, ("I don't do pink.") He also marveled at Kathy's wide ranging plant knowledge as well as her incredibly accurate memory of which books were housed in the library at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden (Bart's former place of work.)

The last speaker of the evening was Richard Turner, Editor Emeritus of Pacific Horticulture magazine, who also travelled from up north to present a Power Point slide show on the "Top 10 Things to Know When Traveling with Kathy" - from her preferences for not-so-early start times, to her unerring sense of direction and well planned use of packing space (i.e.: all of the snacks she brings along are consumed to make room for her shopping finds.) The audience, and princess Kathy, were amused by Richard's personal insights.

Afterward, it time to award the HOTY plaque to Kathy Musial and give her an opportunity to speak. In her own words, she reinforced all of what had come before - making light of her defining character traits, and then taking us on a thoughtful yet succinct journey reflecting on the people and places that had inspired and guided her. It was a touching talk and slide show, particularly for long time SCHS members, seeing some very old pictures of other distinguished members (many no longer with us), and hearing how they had helped her form a passionate career and a life-long love of travel. Kathy concluded her presentation with a visual travelogue set to music showing beautiful images of the many far flung places she has traveled to in search of remarkable plants (and chocolate, and great shopping opportunities...) This was just another reminder of how much she has contributed to the world of horticulture all over the planet, and that it was about time she was given this award.

Finally, we cannot finish this recap without thanking everyone at the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden who helped us bring this evening together, especially Nicole at the Peacock Café, and Jim Henrich for the predominantly Australian flower arrangements, which he pulled together from the heat stressed grounds of the Arboretum with only last-minute notice.

Thanks also to all of the SCHS board who helped put this evening together and

made it run smoothly (particularly to Laura Bauer, who never gets to hear the presentation while she's tallying the silent auction results.) And a special thank you to all who contributed to the silent auction, especially Joan Citron for providing the bulk of the materials (including that gong!)

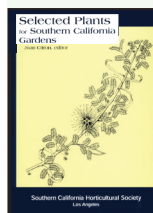
Much appreciation to everyone -

 Steven Gerischer
with Sabine Steinmetz

LAST CHANCE (Almost)
FOR SCHS PUBLICATIONS

Great Holiday Gift Idea!

We will be discontinuing the sale of our three SCHS publications at the end of December. If you would like a copy for your library, you can purchase them with a downloadable mail-order form through our website (see the Publications page) or contact Joan Citron directly at: jobie.garden@yahoo.com

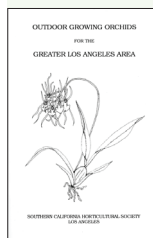
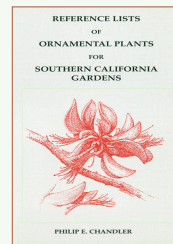


Selected Plants for Southern California Gardens

Editor: Joan Citron
Illustrator: Leslie Walker
Aka "The Opus", this brings together collected wisdom of SCHS members from Plant Forums and personal observations covering 50 years. An encyclopedia of over 2700 native and exotic plants grown in Southern California. A very useful reference! (Published in 2000; 416 pages)
Members price: \$25.00 (Regular: \$34.95) + CA Sales Tax

Reference Lists of Ornamental Plants for So. California Gardens

By: Philip E. Chandler
Editor: Kathy Musial
Can't think of what to plant in that shady location with sandy soil? This collection of reference lists is great for the landscape designer as well as the backyard gardener. (Published in 1993, 1998; 330 pages)
Members price: \$15.95 (Regular: \$19.95) + CA Sales Tax



Outdoor Growing Orchids for the Greater L.A. Area

Editor: Joan Citron
Illustrator: Leslie Walker
This booklet gives basic information on size, culture, blooms and fragrance for over 250 orchids that will do well in Southern California.

(Published in 1997, 2003; 28 pages)
Members price: \$5.00 (Regular: \$6.00) + CA Sales Tax