



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Where passionate gardeners meet to share knowledge and learn from each other.



2019 ANNUAL AWARD BANQUET

honoring

Horticulturist of the Year:

Mike Evans

Saturday, September 28, 2019 at the Los Angeles County Arboretum

The Southern California Horticultural Society is pleased to present their 2019 Horticulturist of the Year award to nurseryman Mike Evans, founder of Tree of Life Nursery in San Juan Capistrano. The 34-acre nursery is the largest producer of California native plants in the state, boasting over 400 species and varieties. Through contract growing, rare plant recovery, and overall interest in plants, the nursery has handled over 1,000 native taxa in its history. Mike's business partner of nearly 40 years, Jeff Bohn, attends to the details of propagating and growing natives at Tree of Life, and most of the nursery staff have been there for over 25 years.

Born and raised in Southern California, Mike demonstrated an early love for the outdoors camping, surfing, and hiking. From early jobs in nurseries, both retail and wholesale, he fell in love with horticulture. He established Tree of Life Nursery in 1976, specializing in native California plants and promoting an honest approach to California horticulture, specifically authentic garden design using native plants.

Mike states, "Thank God for Hilda, my wife of 43 years, who still has a keen eye for plants at 40 mph (passenger seat botany), and brings beauty into our lives with her amazing art and floral craft." Their three grown kids spent much of their childhood picking up seeds and learning plant names.

Mike is affiliated with numerous conservation, horticultural, and botanical organizations, both past and present. His current board positions include the San Juan Capistrano Open Space Foundation as well as The Reserve at Rancho Mission Viejo, a 20,000-acre land conservancy in south Orange County. He is a professor in the

horticulture program at Saddleback Community College in Mission Viejo and is also frequently called on to give workshops and training seminars or to speak to groups on native plants and related subjects.

The Western Region of the International Plant Propagators Society awarded Mike with the Curtis J. Alley Award as well as its International Award of Honor a few years later. The Orange County Chapter of the California Native Plant Society honored him with its Native Perennial Award and also acknowledged Tree of Life Nursery with its Horticulture Award. In 2007, Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden recognized Tree of Life with its California Glory Award.

Mike says, "We hold all of these organizations in high esteem, and everyone at Tree of Life Nursery shares the credit for these accomplishments. The same is true for the Horticulturist of the Year Award from Southern California Horticultural Society. I am fortunate to be part of such an amazing team and to have so much support from family, colleagues and friends in the plant world. As growers, gardeners and plant lovers, we all go about our daily activities with persistent joy; and soon the days turn into seasons, then years which inevitably constitute a lifetime, and a lifetime with plants is enough of an award for anyone. So for me to also join the prestigious list of SoCal Hort HOTY recipients is beyond my imagination. I am very thankful."

We invite you to join us in honoring Mike Evans with this year's HOTY award. We look forward to sharing a lovely meal and also hearing Mike speak on the future of horticulture in Southern California, as he poses the question: How can millennials find an invitation into nature, using the same technology that distracts them from it?

You can purchase banquet tickets online through the SCHS website at: www.socalhort.org or mail a check with the completed form below. *Please contact Steven Gerischer (323)257-3629 with any questions.*

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Saturday, September 28, 2019

Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden · 301 N. Baldwin Ave, Arcadia, CA 91007

Join us at Ayres Hall (with easy entry through side gate)

Social Hour & Auction 5:30 - 7:00pm (Auction closes **before dinner**) • Dinner 7:00pm • Award Presentation 8:15pm

PLEASE RESPOND BY MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2019

Yes, please reserve: _____ Tickets at \$50 each

Total enclosed \$_____ (check only)

Name(s) _____

Street Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone (_____) _____ Email _____

Please check box if requesting VEGETARIAN meal(s). How many? _____

Make your check payable to SCHS. Mail with form to: PO Box 94476, Pasadena, CA 91109-4476