

Fall Happenings

Now that autumn is truly upon us, I thought I would take a look back at a remarkably busy summer – especially for us here at the Indian Wells Valley Water District.

In July, we kicked off our Water Friendly Landscape Contest. This event generated more interest throughout the community than I had anticipated and I am taking this opportunity to personally thank everyone who entered for their commitment to water conservation. The three winning yards were tremendous examples of the best that Xeriscape has to offer. I'd like to officially congratulate Frances and Bob Mitchell, first place; Kathy and Bill Martin, second; and Sue and Bill Prasolowicz, third. It was obvious from the results that they'd all poured hours, creativity and energy into their gardens while making a significant contribution to water stewardship in the Indian Wells Valley.

As you probably know, we introduced the top three finishers to the community at the Water District regular board meeting on October 9. The winners seemed quite pleased to receive their cash awards but I honestly believe they preferred the original yard art trophies hand crafted by award winning metal sculptor Skip Gorman.

I'd also like to formally thank our judges: local longtime gardeners and garden club officers Merrilee Ray, Wanda Hewitt and Marianne Kistler; IWVWD employee Colleen Murphy; former Xeriscape Workshop host Judy Fair-Spaulling; and our own Board president, Harold Manning for their contribution. Frankly, I am relieved I didn't have to make the tough decisions!

In late September, we finished accepting entries for our Conservation Calendar Contest that was open to local children in grades kindergarten through five. Of course, part of effective long-term water management involves sensitizing the next generation to the water challenges that we are facing across the Valley ... and across the globe. The Calendar Contest provided them with a fun incentive to think about water in a new way, deepening their connection to our most precious resource as well as contemplating and illustrating water friendly practices.

IWVWD employees and directors alike were delighted by the hundreds of submissions we received. We are looking forward to presenting our 12 winners at our December Board meeting – and seeing the calendar put together. Of course, without the ingenuity and artistic talent of our young people, not to mention the guidance and inspiration of their teachers, this project could not have been successful.

From October 11 through 14, the Indian Wells Valley celebrated the onset of crisp weather with the annual Desert Empire Fall Fair. The Water District booth proudly

featured photographs of our Landscape Contest winning yards as well as a wide variety of water conservation devices and material. Our massaging low flow shower heads, aerated kitchen faucets and water thrifty plant guides seemed to be more popular than ever. But personally, I liked the model gliders touting water conservation – and the children seemed to as well.

Don't forget – our Fall Xeriscape Workshop is coming up on Saturday, November 3 from 10 am to noon. This event promises to be fun and informative and will showcase appearances by Caltrans revegetation expert R. Steve Miller and internationally known steel sculptor Ed McBride. As you may know, we have a finite number of reservations available. To RSVP or for more information, contact Lucinda Sue Crosby directly at 384-5518.

And finally, since the first day of winter is just a few short weeks away, you might think about scheduling your annual evaporative cooler maintenance. Having a thorough inspection by a professional to ensure it is clean and in top working order will help save you electricity and water usage come the spring.

On behalf of the Indian Wells Valley Water District Directors and staff, I wish everyone a Happy and safe Halloween.