

We are pleased to present the first issue of our monthly Newsletter. This is a direct result of requests from several of our Department's employees who want to be better informed on the activities and policies of the Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens.

The history of our Department is one of rapid progress. We have grown from a total Departmental staff of less than 20 in July 1953 (when our Department was created) to a total that now numbers over 110 employees. This is an increase of over 450% in less than seven years. No other County Department can boast such tremendous expansion. Unfortunately, one of the biggest problems associated with this type of growth is that of communications. In 1953 we had no problem "letting everybody in" on the news of the day. This is not as easy to do now, considering the size of our staff and the varied locations from which we operate.

Such is the history of how and why this publication has come into being. The future of the Newsletter depends on your interest and your comments. We want you to feel free to tell us just what you think of the Department's Newsletter and to suggest any improvements.

The Newsletter will be distributed each month with your paycheck of the 10th. Examples of the type of material that will be in the Newsletter follows:

Personnel news; news dealing with our Department's various sections - including functions and responsibilities of the sections; news of coming and past events; special interest news; County and Departmental directives, policies, and procedures; school information and courses; news on the library - including current books and periodicals of interest; news of County job examinations; and articles dealing with supervision.

This Newsletter belongs to you. It is for this reason that the heading of this issue is blank. We want you to name the Newsletter. If you want to add a design to your suggestion, go ahead. Forward your comments or suggestions to Richard Watson, Senior Administrative Assistant.

#### Department Expansion

Our Department has expanded to the south coastal region of Los Angeles County. The dedication and planting of three Ginkgo trees were held on April 20 at the site of our newest addition - the South Coastal Botanic Gardens. Many notables of Los Angeles County and south coastal cities participated - including Supervisor Burton Chase and past Supervisor John Anson Ford. Following a luncheon at Redondo Beach, a motorcade drove to the site for the ceremonies. Dr. Stewart officially accepted the new site for the Department.

#### Our Famous Peafowl

Our last estimate indicated that the Arboretum flock had increased from approximately 150 to 300 birds. 150 were declared surplus and bids for them were accepted by the Department of Purchasing and Stores. The chief purchasing agent, Mr. Calin, stated that more people from all over the United States showed more interest in the Peafowl than any other item that the County has put up for sale in its entire history. The surplus has been sold and bids were accepted until May 5 for the eggs. It is hoped that we can maintain a control over the increasing number of Peafowl by selling a portion of the eggs.

Don Graf is to be congratulated for his forethought in compiling an information sheet describing the habits of Peafowl in relation to their domestication. The sheets are being distributed to the successful bidders when they are given their birds. For your information, we have included a copy of Don's information sheet "Peafowl and Their Care" with this Newsletter. Sully's men, especially Norm Aronson and Bob Casas, can tell more about Fowl play.

#### Sports

The Arboretum is well represented in the sports world. In football we have Norman Aronson, playing left-right-front tackle. In hockey, Bill Hawkinson plays left wing, right wing, forward, and occasionally goalie. Baseball catchers are Fernando Ramirez and Frank Simerly. Basket ball guards are Bob Casas and Charlie Pott-hast. All of the above "athletes" are members in "good-standing" in the A.P.L. (Arboretum Peacock League). This information was submitted to us by C. A. Sullivan, referee and umpire. Sully tells us that Bill Hawkinson was temporarily side lined as a result of trying to make a vicious tackle. He's back in action now. Our men have been quite good. They have collected about 100 of the 150 birds to be distributed.



### Turfgrass Plots

By the time you read this, we may have the first series of Turfgrass Plots seeded. Along the road, north of the Administration Building and across from the South African Section, a demonstration experimental Turfgrass Project is being installed. This is a cooperative venture between the Arboretum and the County Farm Advisors Department. There will be at least 19 different grasses on display. The present plan is to manage the grasses at two mowing heights and two different fertilization programs. As soon as the initial preparation is completed, grass labels and other facts concerning lawn installation will be made available.

### Hat's Off

Congratulations to Dorothy Pool, in charge of the Children's Education at Descanso, for remaining calm in the face of adversity. One morning early in April, Dorothy looked up from her desk in the Children's Building at Descanso - straight into the eyes of a bobcat. She reached for the phone and realized the switchboard wasn't working as Frances was gone. After a few deep breaths she decided to talk things over, stood slowly, and the cat backed up!! So, watchfully, 15 feet apart, they eased out the back door and down the trail. Dorothy watched him disappear through the brush. The bobcat had been sighted in the rose garden the week before, and remains of a freshly eaten squirrel had been found near the children's gardens. He was seen again two weeks ago.

### Personnel

Welcome to Louis Holman, our new Janitor at the Arboretum.  
Congratulations to Fernando Ramirez on his recent promotion from Park Maintenance Man to Arboretum Gardener at Descanso Gardens.  
We bid a fond farewell and wish the best for the future to the following employees who have recently left the Department:  
Ralph Ames, Plant Pathologist, has gone to Mitchell's Tree Service, San Gabriel.  
Paul Wieland, Gardener at Descanso, has gone to the Federal Government.  
Carl Howe, Park Maintenance Man Helper at Descanso, has retired.  
Calvin Adams, Janitor at Descanso, gone to Building Services Department.  
Streeter "Butch" Turner, temporary Janitor at the Arboretum, has taken a permanent job at the Mechanical Department.  
Jerry McDonald, Janitor at the Arboretum, has gone to the Hollywood Bowl.

### New Hours of Operation

The Arboretum is now open until 7:00 PM each evening. The Demonstration Home Garden, however, will not be lighted on weekends until the weather warms up - probably the middle of May or first of June.

### Coming Events

The last Audubon Society sponsored Bird Walk will be held on May 15. The walks will then be discontinued until the fall migration begins.

The annual membership day of the Arboretum Foundation will be on May 17 at the Arboretum.

### The Library

Among recent books received in the Arboretum Library are "Exotic 2" and "Garden Plants in Color". New staff members may be interested to know that the library is open on Saturdays and that they are welcome to borrow books under certain rules.

### Your Social Committee

At a recent Social Committee Meeting, the 1960 officers of the committee were elected. The new officers are: Richard Watson, Chairman; Al Bardelli, Vice-Chairman; Marty Martinez, Recording Secretary; Jack McCaskill, Corresponding Secretary; and Kathy Woods, Treasurer. Other members are Marie Castleman, Bobby Vargas and ex-officio member Don Graf.

The first social event of this 1960 season will be our Annual Picnic. It will be held at the Kellogg - Voorhis Campus of the California State Polytechnic College in Pomona on July 10. The June 10 Newsletter will have more information on the Picnic for you.

The next Social Committee Meeting will be held on Friday, May 20, at 2:00 PM at the Arboretum. All committee members should plan to be present, as plans will be discussed for the picnic and for a Departmental outing to a Dodger Baseball Game.



### Descanso Blooming News

Rhododendron are in full bloom like an Easter parade in May.

History of the Rose Section - a reference library over the entire Christian era. See what an important niche Empress Josephine occupies in the development of roses.

All America Rose Selections - modestly repeating visitors' comments, "Unbelievably gorgeous".

Native Plant Garden - Humboldt lilies are making their debut. Still good color in late wildflowers.

### Visitors

Descanso played host to the following people last month: Mr. Willinger, a photographer from England, who took pictures for many of the top-notch magazines of that country; Miss Penny Prudan, operator of the first English speaking TV station in the Virgin Islands, will spotlight her Descanso visit on one of her TV programs; and a number of foreign students from U.S.C. and U.C.L.A.

The Arboretum welcomed the visit of Mr. and Mrs. Wallace R. Stevens of Stevens Brothers Nursery, Bastion Hill, Wanganni, New Zealand. During the past few years we have exchanged seed with Mr. and Mrs. Stevens and have many plants growing on the grounds that came from seed they sent to us.

### Strictly Personal

The following employees had birthdays during May: George Spalding; John Valadez; Jess Tomory; Francis Ching; Marie Castleman; Rito Cervantes; Wren Saxton; Robert Whitsell; Dorothy Pool. HAPPY BIRTHDAY to one and all!!!!!!

Congratulations to Marty and Eva Martinez. We understand you are in the process of producing a "1960 Model".

Ross Goodrich has the mumps. Call him and cheer him up. He has a phone by his bed. At. 4-6203.

Bud Hallberg is vacationing in Florida. As chairman of the Los Angeles Palm Society, he is representing our area at the Palm Society Convention in Florida.

### Arboretum Foundation News

Through the Foundation, Mrs. Robert Casamajor has donated the glasshouse used by the late Mr. Robert Casamajor for his orchids. This 16 x 45 foot aluminum, three compartmented, air conditioned glasshouse will be used for agricultural and horticultural activities in the Children's Education Department of the Arboretum. It is located just to the north of the residence house in the Children's Education area at the Arboretum.

The Foundation is sending Glenn Hiatt, Orchid Specialist, to England for the Third World Orchid Congress and to Botanic Gardens in other foreign countries. He leaves on May 22 for a trip that will take about a month. BON VOYAGE, Glenn!!

A generous donation from Mrs. Archibald B. Young has made possible construction of the fourth of the group of orchid glasshouses. This house will be completely air conditioned with latest equipment and shaded with screen cloth.

Since Mrs. Turner's retirement, Mrs. Elsiw Murray has been carrying on the Foundation work.

### Vital Statistics

The Arboretum weather station recorded 2.77 inches of precipitation during the storm of April 27 and 28. This brings our total to 11.40 inches for the current season which compares with 11.48 inches for the same period last year.

Our "Box Score" on attendance at the Arboretum shows that as of May 1, our cumulative count for the calendar year 1960 is 134,081 as compared to 118,993 for the same period in 1959. The Arboretum's one millionth visitor since we started taking visitor count (January 1, 1955) passed through the turnstiles sometime during the Orchid Show.

### Examinations

When we definitely know of coming Civil Service examinations that our employees are qualified to take, we will notify you of them in the Newsletter. To be sure, however, you should make it a habit of referring to the County's Promotional Opportunities sheets. Sometime within the next couple of weeks notice of an examination for Park Maintenance Man will appear. Those of you who are qualified should plan to file an application. The examination is open only to our own Departmental employees, and is being given for an opening at the Arboretum.



## PEAFOWL AND THEIR CARE

### Habits in Relation to Domestication

Peafowl are impatient of confinement; they need only thick shrubbery or other ground cover for their nests, and trees in which to roost. They are hardy and survive even if sometimes covered with snow when roosting. If owners find that they must confine them, large grassy runs should be used. As a roosting place a tall shed, open to the side with the most favorable exposure, is suitable. Because the birds are noisy, especially at night, the roosting place should be at some distance from dwellings.

Peafowl are not inclined to stray. Penning and feeding newly acquired birds for a few days will localize them. In exceptional cases the hen may be kept penned until the cock settles down in his new environment.

Peahens seldom lay during their first year, but do lay a few eggs during their second and third years, gradually increasing the number until the full complement of five to nine eggs a year is reached. If larger numbers are found in a nest, layings of more than one bird probably are present. The peahens are excellent mothers and take assiduous care of their slow-growing chicks, which are not fully grown until they are nearly a year old.

The cocks do not attain full plumage, including their impressive trains, before their third year. The trains are molted late in summer and are not fully grown again before the end of winter. The cocks are belligerent, and it is sometimes necessary to eliminate the worst-tempered ones or take special measures to protect smaller poultry. If the male peafowls are allowed plenty of room they are likely to establish favorite spots for displaying themselves, and attachment to these spots tends to keep them apart from other males with which they might fight.

Peafowls have the reputation of doing mischief in gardens, a point to be considered in confining the birds.

### Propagation

Peafowls are polygamous, and four or five hens usually are allotted to one cock. Intensive production methods can be applied to a certain extent, for if her eggs are taken away the peahen will lay a second and even a third clutch. The eggs can be incubated artificially or under hens or turkeys, and the young should be reared by foster parents, preferably by the turkey. The period of incubation is from 28 to 30 days.

While the ordinary course is to allow peahens to rear their young in their own way, and some authorities state that confinement is fatal, others urge that there are advantages in confining the peahen or the foster mother in a large coop, which should be in a well-lighted but sheltered place. The coop should have a wire floor of quarter-inch mesh hardware cloth. It should be kept on grass and moved frequently.

The young can be penned with the mother for the first week and then given their freedom, the mother being kept in the coop from six to eight weeks according to weather conditions. A critical period for the young extends from hatching time up to the age of 6 to 7 weeks. If at large with the hen during this time they may be killed by fatigue and exposure from following their mother either in wet grass or hot sun. When their crests are well grown it is safe to allow them to run freely with their parents.

### Food

When plenty of insects are available, young peafowls on free range need little extra food. They may be given a mixture of chopped lettuce, hard-boiled egg, and prepared pheasant meal. If natural food is scarce or if the birds are closely confined they may be fed as recommended for young pheasants. They soon learn to eat grain, however, and may be given millet, mixed small grains, and when grown, scratch feed and whole grains even as large as corn. It is advisable to feed also a portion of chopped green stuff, vegetables, or roots, and it is necessary to keep grit, broken oyster shell, and water available.





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