

# the urban horticulturist.

A Publication of Cuyamaca College Ornamental Horticulture Department and the Cuyamaca College Botanical Society.

Winter/Spring 2015

Volume 31 Number 1

## Inside this issue:

- Rice Family Foundation Intern 2
- OH Student Remembered 2
- Instructor Dan Simpson Retires 3
- Career Symposium Thanks 3
- Water Management: A Primer 5
- Scholarship Banquet 5
- Volunteers Help Build Garden 6
- Spring Garden Festival 7
- Sustainable Turf and Landscape Seminar 8



## The Urban Horticulturist Is Online

Get the Urban Horticulturist delivered directly to your "in" box! If you don't already receive our online version, signup is easy: Go to [www.cuyamaca.edu/ohweb](http://www.cuyamaca.edu/ohweb) and click on the "Newsletters" link, or find us on Facebook.

## CCBS Members Planning for Busy Spring

As the 38th Cuyamaca College Botanical Society president, I am excited to be a part of such a wonderful club and department. The CCBS has always had legendary success every year with a great team of officers. This year, I am thankful to be working with 13 student board members. Together, each one of us makes such



Lance Rallof

a meaningful impact toward the success of the Cuyamaca College Ornamental Horticulture Department.

Our spring semester is always our busiest time of year as a club and department. We look forward to three major events. These events include 7<sup>th</sup> annual Sustainable Turf and Landscape Seminar on March 5, the 22nd annual Spring Garden Festival on April 25

*Continued on page 4*



## Cal Poly Field Trip

Valerie Mellano, center front, chair of the Cal Poly Pomona Plant Science Department, poses with Cuyamaca College OH students during an OH Department field trip in October 2014. Students toured the Cal Poly agriculture facility and were given a presentation of the career opportunities available to Cal Poly graduates. Photo by Don Schultz

## It's All About Teamwork, Rice Foundation Intern Says

By Don Schultz

"We are all a team – that's what I really like about working in the nursery," Stephanie Land says about her Rice Family Foundation internship. "We all help each other out and support each other to make the nursery the best it can be." Stephanie has been working in the Cuyamaca College Nursery for a little over a year. Beginning this June, she will be the nursery manager for the 2015-16 school year. "I really like helping the customers and solving problems when they come in with their unusual questions," Stephanie said.



Stephanie Land

It seems like a long time ago, Stephanie said, when, during her first OH class in January 2012, she was so nervous she had a hard time signing her name on the class information sheet. Stephanie grew up in Massachusetts, joined the Navy right out of high school and, like so many others in the Navy, ended up in San Diego. Eight and a half years later, with her commission completed, she decided to make San Diego her home.

Having never been enrolled in college, Stephanie visited the Cuyamaca College counseling office looking for ideas on what to study. She said she noticed a flyer describing

Ornamental Horticulture. "This looks interesting," she said to herself. "I think I'll give this a try." That experience may sound familiar to many students with a love of gardening, but it wasn't the case with Stephanie. "I had never gardened in the past," she said. "I never even had a houseplant."

In that first class, Stephanie said she was nervous. "All I knew was the Navy. I wasn't sure what to expect," she said. But she quickly became comfortable in the family-like atmosphere fostered by the department. "There just seemed to be this great camaraderie within the department. It really sucked me in!" She soon became more involved, joining the Cuyamaca College Botanical Society and then working in the nursery. These extracurricular activities have helped to improve her studies. "It really motivated me," she said. "We have so much that a lot of other OH departments don't have. I feel really lucky to be a part of it. I just want to tell everybody about it."

Stephanie, who lives in Jamul with her husband and son, is working toward associate degrees in Arboriculture, Nursery Technology and Floral Design. She hopes one day to be a horticultural consultant. "I really like problem solving. But the longer I'm in the horticulture department the more I learn about jobs I didn't know even existed."

*Don Schultz is the OH Department program coordinator.*

---

**"I had never gardened in the past. I never even had a houseplant."**

***Stephanie Land***

---

## Ornamental Horticulture Student Tyler Oehmke remembered

By Nick Spardy

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Tyler Oehmke, a student of the Ornamental Horticulture Department. Tyler died Nov. 10, 2014.

Tyler moved to San Diego in 2005 and found employment at San Diego Country Club as a mechanic. He had a turbine engine certification and mechanical training, so this job was a perfect career start. In 2012, Tyler and I discussed his desire to grow in the turfgrass industry, and he decided to pursue his education at Cuyamaca College.

Like many of his fellow students, Tyler balanced family, work, and school. Taking night classes was difficult, but he had a drive to learn and met many new friends, whom he cherished. His zest for learning was contagious to other students and made him an excellent student.

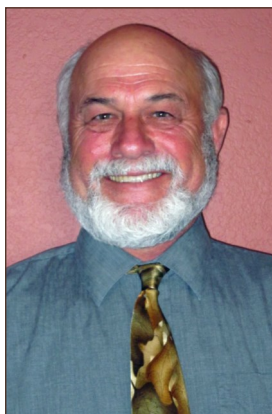
Tyler is survived by his wife, Terah; two sons, Oliver and Aidan; and daughter, Delilah. A GoFundMe campaign has been started to help the Oehmke family with financial needs. For more information, go to [gofundme.com/haf0ec](http://gofundme.com/haf0ec).

*Nick Spardy is an instructor in the OH Department and owner of Turfmaker, Inc.*

## Dan Simpson Ends 21 Years As OH Department Instructor

By Don Schultz

Dan Simpson, who has been a part of the adjunct faculty in the Ornamental Horticulture Department for 21 years, taught his last class in the fall 2014 semester.



Dan Simpson

“I have appreciated all of the fellowship among the faculty as well as the many opportunities for professional development and personal growth,” Dan said. “It has been filled with memorable fun ever since the first semester in 1994.”

Dan’s enthusiasm for horticulture – and especially trees – will be profoundly missed. For more than 20 years Dan taught Arboriculture at Cuyamaca College and, more recently he was the instructor for Diagnosing Horticultural Problems. His idea to have an Urban Forest Field Day in the spring of 1994 evolved into the very popular Spring Garden Festival.

Hundreds of Cuyamaca students over the years are better for the dedication and knowledge he brought to his teaching. Dan will continue at the San Diego Zoo, where he has been a horticulturist for 46 years.

## Business Pros Draw a Crowd For Horticulture Career Event

Five floral and landscape professionals shared their secrets to business success with Cuyamaca OH students at the second annual Horticulture Career Symposium. The event, held Sept. 22, 2014, was hosted by the Cuyamaca College Botanical Society.

Thanks to presenters Lawrence O’ Leary, Joshua Dake, Lisa Bellora, Jim Mumford and Stacy Craft for their participation – and to OH student David Boggs for organizing the symposium.

The Urban Horticulturist is published twice a year by the Cuyamaca College Ornamental Horticulture Department and the Cuyamaca College Botanical Society. It has a circulation of more than 9,000 industry members and horticulturists in Southern California and the United States. Correspondence regarding this publication should be addressed to:

Cuyamaca College  
Ornamental Horticulture Department  
900 Rancho San Diego Parkway  
El Cajon, CA 92019  
(619) 660-4023  
Email address:  
donald.schultz@gcccd.edu

### Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District Governing Board Members

Bill Garrett  
Greg Barr  
Edwin Ramon Hiel  
Debbie Justeson  
Mary Kay Rosinski

### Student Members

Zack Gianino  
Jocelyn Estrada

### Chancellor

Cindy L. Miles, Ph.D.

### Cuyamaca College President

Mark J. Zaccovic, Ph.D.

### Urban Horticulturist

Donald Schultz, Adviser  
Joan Tammariello, Editor

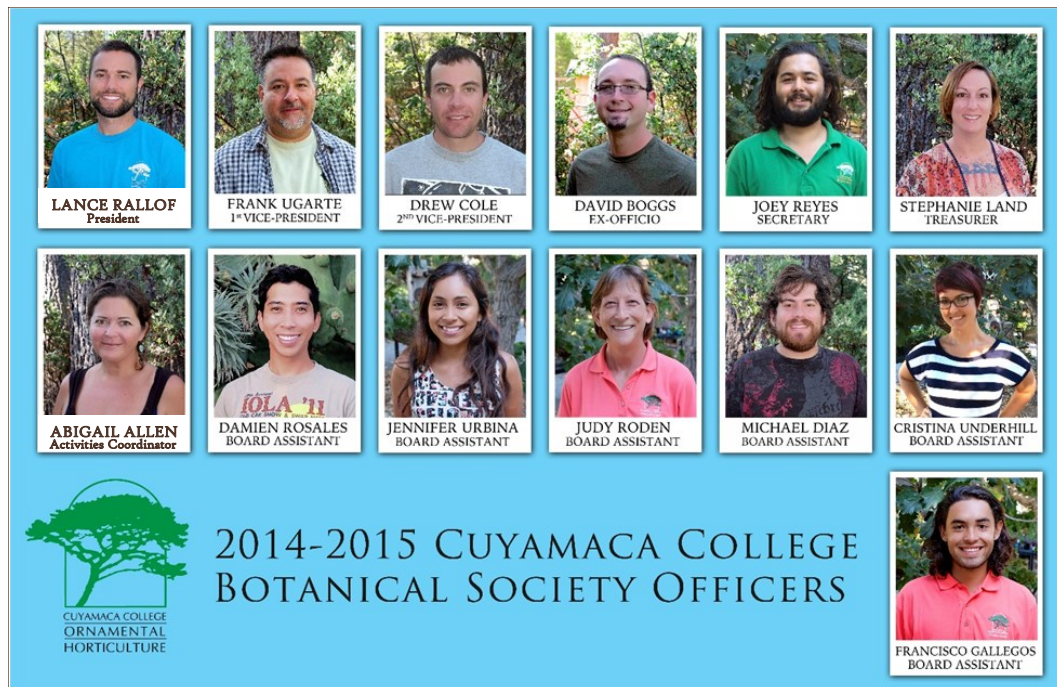
---

Dan’s enthusiasm for horticulture – and especially trees – will be profoundly missed.

---

“My hope is that this year’s CCBS makes a lasting impact and inspires future club members to strive to be creative and active in our community.”

*Lance Rallof*



## CCBS Corner

*Continued from page 1*

and our 34th annual CCBS Scholarship Banquet on May 21. The first two events are great opportunities for students to volunteer, get hands-on experience and become an intricate part of the department. The third event, the Scholarship Banquet, is our way to celebrate our students and donors throughout the academic year.

Looking back at this past summer and fall, we had our annual planning retreat in Idyllwild, Calif. This retreat is a great opportunity to get to know all of our board members and become good friends. The retreat was productive and set the foundation for the planning of all the events for the 2014-2015 academic year.

CCBS began the new semester in August with the Student Orientation, which welcomed new and returning students to the Ornamental Horticulture program. Many students made new friends and enjoyed meeting the CCBS officers.

Our second fall event, coordinated by David Boggs and CCBS, was the Career Day Symposium. This event was a fantastic

opportunity for students to meet industry professionals and learn what industry employees are looking for.

Lastly, our annual holiday gathering coordinated by CCBS Activities Coordinator Abigail Allen took place at a new venue in La Mesa called Bolt Brewery. Despite Mother Nature throwing a nice rainstorm that evening, we had a large turnout of instructors, students and alumni to celebrate all the hard work accomplished during the fall semester.

My hope is that this year’s CCBS makes a lasting impact and inspires future club members to strive to be creative and active in our community. The 2014-2015 CCBS is proud to serve in the public and to help encourage community within the Ornamental Horticulture Department.

I would like to encourage all student members to attend our monthly CCBS meetings and become an active contributor to the department. There are a lot of great activities happening here and you should be part of it! We will be posting information on our next meeting on the CCBS bulletin boards. I thank CCBS’s past, present and future and wish you all the best spring!

## Hone Your Water Management Skills with These Key Tips

By Mick Cothran

Water management can be a tricky subject for homeowners and landscape professionals alike. We all know we need to water regularly in southern California to maintain our gardens, but dialing in an irrigation system can present many challenges. After spending the last six years working in the horticulture field, with professional training in the OH Department, time spent in private and public gardens, working within water departments' conservation programs and designing and building gardens, I've had the chance to pick out a few key tools just about anyone can use to become effective water managers.

*Know your system and how it applies water.* The first and perhaps the most important step in managing water systems is to know where the irrigation equipment is, and understand how it is putting down water. Locate the irrigation controller, and test the system by turning on the stations one by one, noting where each station comes on (a map or sketch can help build a familiarity with the system) and how it applies water (rotor, spray, drip). Each station should stick to one form of application (rotor, spray, drip), and stations that have mixed equipment should be retrofitted for consistent water application.

*Adjust the irrigation schedule monthly and for weather events.* As the weather changes throughout the year, a monthly adjustment to the irrigation schedule can align irrigation with

plants' water needs. When measurable precipitation falls, turn off the system for several days or more depending on how much rain occurred and the time of year (during colder weather the irrigation system can stay off longer). During unseasonably warm weather and Santa Ana conditions, increase watering to maintain moisture in the soil.

*Test all stations quarterly or immediately after receiving a suspiciously high bill.* Regularly turning on each station of an irrigation system and performing a visual inspection for broken, damaged or out-of-adjustment equipment is a simple way to catch a problem that may be missed when stations come on automatically. A bill showing a suspicious spike in water consumption is a likely indicator of a damaged

*Continued on page 6*

---

Here are a few  
key tools just  
about anyone can  
use to become  
effective water  
managers.

---

Cuyamaca College Botanical Society

34th Annual

## SCHOLARSHIP BANQUET

Thursday, May 21, 2015

Reception begins at 6 p.m.

The Water Conservation Garden at Cuyamaca College  
12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West  
El Cajon, CA 92019

Visit our website at [www.cuyamaca.edu/ohweb](http://www.cuyamaca.edu/ohweb) for details.

---

## Schedule of Events

### Sustainable Turf and Landscape Seminar

7 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Thursday, March 5, 2015,  
Cuyamaca College

### Spring Garden Festival

9 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Saturday, April 25, 2015,  
Cuyamaca College

### Scholarship Banquet

Reception 6 p.m.  
Thursday, May 21, 2015,  
The Water Conservation  
Garden at Cuyamaca  
College

---



### That Volunteer Spirit

*OH students Damien Rosales, left, and Lance Rallof, who are also members of the Alpine Historical Society, were among volunteers who recently helped plant herbs for an exhibit on the use of herbs in early-day medicines. The Medicinal Herb Discovery Walk, at Alpine Historical Society, 2116 Tavern Road, Alpine, will include signage and a self-guided tour when it is completed this spring. For information, email [info@alpinehistory.org](mailto:info@alpinehistory.org). Photo courtesy of Tom and Judy Myers*

## Water Management

*Continued from page 5*  
piece of irrigation equipment leaking water. Testing the system is the first step in troubleshooting where that leak might be.

*Consider hiring a professional or taking a class.* If your understanding of water volumes and irrigation equipment (meters, controllers, emitters) feels stretched, hire a professional or take a class. Most landscapers will at least be able to take an inventory of an irrigation system, set up an irrigation controller (and train you in its use) and check for faulty or poorly installed equipment. Landscape professionals with training in water management can perform more thorough

audits of systems, including catch-can tests for turf (system efficiency) and application rates by station. Paying someone to help you understand what you've got and help you dial in an irrigation system will usually save money over the long term. Those with a DIY spirit should consider taking a class or two. Cuyamaca College's Ornamental Horticulture department offers three courses: OH235 (Principles of Landscape Irrigation), OH 238 (Irrigation System Design) and OH250 (Landscape Water Management). Good luck, and water with care!

*Mick Cothran is an Ornamental Horticulture student with a degree in Literature/Philosophy from UC Santa Cruz.*

*Celebrating Community Farms & Gardens • 1994-2015*

# SPRING Garden Festival

*Help support Cuyamaca College students and programs!*



**Saturday, April 25, 2015**  
**9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**  
**Cuyamaca College**

**Nursery Plant Sale • OH Class Exhibits**

CUYAMACA COLLEGE - ORNAMENTAL HORTICULTURE

# SUSTAINABLE TURF AND LANDSCAPE SEMINAR

## Thursday, March 5, 2015

*Healthy Landscapes with Limited Water*

**Approved for 5 C.E.U. hours for PCA, QAL and QAC Licenses**



**Registration is only \$75**  
before March 1

*For more information go to:*  
[www.cuyamaca.edu/ohweb](http://www.cuyamaca.edu/ohweb)



Carlos Michelin – San Diego County Water Authority  
*Local Water Supply and Delivery*

Craig Kessler – Southern California Golf Association  
*Water Supply and the Turf Industry*

Vicki Estrada, FASLA – Estrada Land Planning  
*Design Strategies for Resource Conservation*

Mike Palat – West Coast Arborists  
*Managing Tree Health Under Drought Conditions*

Dr. Akif Eskalen – University of California Extension  
*Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer Update*

David Fleming – Golf Properties Design  
*Turf Replacement Solutions for Golf Courses*

Brian Maynard – The Brickman Group  
*Turf Replacement Solutions for Commercial Landscapes*

Dr. Mike Richardson – Professor of Plant Pathology, University of Arkansas  
*Where Do Turfgrasses Fit in a World with Less Water?*

***Thank You to Our Sponsors for Your Generous Support***

