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Beautiful Gazebo Care of Garden Club

By Cathy Tyson



Gazebo Photo provided

While some residents might grumble about pulling weeds, pruning and fertilizing, these folks can't get enough of it. Formed thirty-nine years ago, the dedicated members of the Lafayette Garden Club have spent countless hours supporting civic beautification projects.

At 150 members strong, mostly women and a few men from their twenties into their eighties have endeavored to enhance their knowledge and love of gardening. Their most visible imprint on the city has been maintaining and improving the Gazebo since its dedication in 1987 to celebrate the Bicentennial of the Constitution and the adjoining Virginia Anderson Memorial Garden. Located at the corner of Golden Gate Way and Mt. Diablo Blvd, it took the Friends of the American Legion Post 517 along with Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8063, The Lafayette Garden Club and many others to get it built.

Early on there was no water at the Gazebo, so devoted member Virginia Stone and her husband filled up big buckets at home and drove them to the garden to hand water. When Barbara Peters took over she decided to ask the city for a spigot. Now they have a drip watering system, but it can be a little temperamental. At one point the Public Works Department had a water truck come by to give thirsty plants a drink.

"It's a great opportunity to dig in the earth and get to know people on a different basis than at the meetings. It's been so rewarding, I encourage everyone to get involved," said Stone. Even Barbara Peters, who has a very large lush backyard garden of her own, notes that it's been a labor of love. Because her husband Ray was part of the effort to get it erected she said, "I always felt loyal to the Gazebo." It's quite busy, with parents and children and walkers who're taking the bridge that crosses the creek and links it to the regional path. "People really appreciate it," said Peters, especially on a hot day, who wouldn't enjoy a comfortable bench and some welcome shade. The Club meets once a month where they share a potluck lunch and have a featured speaker. Ecology, flower arranging, and growing exceptional tomatoes are some of the wide range of topics speakers cover. Noting the breadth of ages of members, Ruth McCahan, past President said, "About three years ago there was a big influx of women with grammar school aged kids that add to the overall vitality of the Club." They recently re-landscaped the Anderson Memorial Garden with drought tolerant plants.

Annual fundraisers alternate between a spring plant sale and a garden tour. Last year's tour raised a phenomenal \$10,000 which the Club gave to schools to support garden projects. Their other projects include Youth Homes - helping children who live in a group home with a backyard garden, a white elephant sale and supporting a promising DVC student who is interested in horticulture with a scholarship.

They even have their own club flower - the daffodil. For more information, see website - www.lamorindaweekly.com.

gardencentral.org/californiagc/lafayette/.

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