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Published September 12th, 2012

Getting WOWed in Lafayette

By Cathy Tyson

Looking to expand the minds of residents, the Friends of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center is kicking off a series of free monthly lectures, Wonders of the World (or WOW), which will cover a range of topics from art to science, history and wildlife. Starting with a bang this Thursday, September 12 at 2 p.m. will be charming docent from the Ruth Bancroft Garden, Fred Strauss, discussing how and why Ms. Bancroft started California's largest dry garden along with information on a wide variety of succulents from aloe to yucca to echeveria. Although it doesn't look a day over thirty-five, the Ruth Bancroft Garden is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. The garden, located in Walnut Creek, started with humble one gallon pots and blossomed into a showcase of plants that thrive in our Mediterranean climate. Strauss, an Orinda resident and former water ski competitor, is on the Ruth Bancroft Garden Board of Directors where he volunteers his time as a docent; he also helps with propagation at the U.C. Berkeley Botanical Garden.

One afternoon per month a docent from one of many museums around the Bay Area will give a one-hour presentation on their current exhibit. "Prepare to be WOWed," announces the Friends. On October 16 a docent from the de Young Museum will be talking about the William S. Paley Collection; speakers are still being confirmed for November 15 and December 13.

More free information and entertainment is presented by the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation. On September 18 at 6:30 p.m., the Glenn Seaborg Learning Consortium is presenting a program by Consortium partner Alta Bates Summit Medical Center, "Find a healthy Beat: Important information for people with heart murmurs," discussing the condition and treatment. Organizers ask that folks call to reserve a seat, (510) 869-6737.

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