



No Art in the Gardens in 2016

FORT BRAGG, CA—May 6, 2016—Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens has announced that the annual fundraising event, Art in the Gardens, will not be held this summer. The decision was not made lightly or without considerable deliberation.

The Board of Directors made the decision at a critical time of transition for the Gardens—transition in leadership, challenges maintaining an aging infrastructure, and contract negotiations with Mendocino Coast Recreation and Park District. While many of the Gardens' annual happenings have become beloved community events, their primary purpose is to generate income that is essential to keeping the Gardens open to the public 362 days a year. Over the years, Art in the Gardens has become increasingly more complex, shifting from a volunteer-driven event to a staff-run event. All of these issues culminated in the need to postpone Art in the Gardens.

The Board is happy to announce that it has selected a new Executive Director, Molly Barker, who will begin in July. The Gardens is reaching completion on the first phase of its comprehensive water system renovation project which will reduce water usage in the Entry Garden by one-third. Trail work to patch the aging chip-seal pathways is ongoing. Initial contract negotiation meetings with Mendocino Coast Recreation and Park District have confirmed the value of the Gardens to all.

Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens is a precious asset to the local community, the coast, and the entire region. Preserving and supporting this resource is important both to those who visit the Gardens and the local economy. As a non-profit public botanical garden, funding is derived from memberships, admissions, grants, earned income (from the store, nursery, and seasonal café, weddings, and a handful of fundraising events both large and small.

Work has already begun to revitalize Art in the Gardens for the future. The intent is to develop a resoundingly successful Art in the Gardens program with brilliant art, live music, art in action, great food, wine, and beer that also nets funds for the Gardens.

In the meantime, the Gardens is inviting the community to visit and enjoy the Gardens and all it has to offer. As part of a collaboration with the Arts Council of Mendocino County, new sculptures will surprise and delight. The café, store, and nursery are accessible without entrance fees. Accessibility to all is a major priority; one can always earn a membership through volunteer work. A visit to the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens is a great way to experience the best of Mendocino County all in one location.