

# *Gardens of the World*

## **News Release**

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#### **GARDENS DOCENTS AND ALL THAT JAZZ**

(Thousand Oaks, CA) The Gardens of the World here just completed its ninth annual, free summer jazz concert series and reports more than 2,000 local residents and visitors were drawn to the area. A dozen volunteers helped support the Sunday concerts, assisting guests, answering questions about the Gardens, and making certain the appreciative crowds were comfortable and having a good time enjoying the music.

Sally Johnson, one of the senior volunteers, has been a docent for all of the 10 years that the Gardens has been open to the public. She said, "The Gardens is an intimate, beautiful setting for the concerts. The atmosphere is relaxed. The music is great. It's small-town friendly and uptown entertainment. Each year, we see attendance growing, including friends and multi-generational families enjoying the Gardens together."

Johnson, an avid gardener at her home, marvels at seeing the Gardens mature over the years and how it continues to attract visitors from all over the world. More than 20,000 guests stroll the 4.5 acres annually and docents such as Johnson often guide free tours and

explain the plants and authentic garden settings that represent France, Italy, Japan, and England. There is also a California Missions Courtyard and an American Bandstand, which is center stage for the concerts.

Johnson was joined this year by some other very experienced Gardens volunteers and some new ones to help out with the jazz concerts: Claire Shaw (10 years); Marti Meister (8 years); Chris Majors (7 years); Shirley Jorgenson (6 years); Georgene Cole (6 years); Tim Powell (5 years); Carol Abrams (4 years); Andrea Binder (three years); and Gayane Martirosyan and Bill McIntyre (both six months).

This year's concerts featured some of the country's most accomplished and eclectic musicians—The Phil Norman Tentet, The Barry Rillera Blues Band, Open Hands, and The Late Nite Big Band—performing everything from blues to jazz to swing.

Marianne Coulson, resident manager of the Gardens of the World, noted, “The concerts, which are funded principally by the Hogan Family Foundation in Newbury Park, benefit the community at large, bringing in exceptional entertainment, offering a wonderful venue for family and friends to gather, and making a positive contribution to the local economy. There are really no comparable concert venues anywhere else.”

Coulson concluded, “Our volunteer docents provide the support necessary to help ensure everyone has a good time in a safe, clean environment. We are truly blessed to have such dedicated people making each concert such a special event.”

For additional information, sponsorship opportunities, and to apply as a docent, contact Marianne Coulson at 805-557-1135 or [Coulson@hoganfoundation.org](mailto:Coulson@hoganfoundation.org).

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**About the Gardens of the World:** The Gardens of the World is a 4.5-acre cultural garden open to the public and located across the street from the Thousand Oaks Civic Center on Thousand Oaks Boulevard. The authentically-landscaped Gardens commemorate various cultures of the world, including Italian, French, Japanese, and English. There is also a California Mission Courtyard, an American Bandstand for free

summer jazz concerts, and the Resource Center, where local artists can exhibit their works. The Gardens of the World is owned and operated by the Hogan Family Foundation. Admission is free. Reservations are required for Docent tours and any group visit. For more information, visit [www.gardensoftheworld.info](http://www.gardensoftheworld.info).