

## New CEO assumes leadership of the Gardens

"Maureen is a great fit for the Gardens. She is a very transparent and honest person. She has a vision, and she loves what she does. People sensed that about her."

-Amy Fass, chair of the Gardens board of directors



## Changing of the Guard

**O**n a warm summer evening in June, Gardens residents, staff, board members, and community leaders gathered in the Gardens' Social Center to celebrate **Randy Stoll's** nearly 19-year career as President/CEO of Mt. San Antonio Gardens. Although his retirement was long planned, because of his long tenure, his departure was a momentous occasion. During a program of wistful recollections, humorous stories, and heartfelt gratitude, resident **Bob Tranquada** spoke on behalf of the residents' Gardens Club. He described the organization's achievements under Randy's stewardship and described him as, "a creative genius, who managed a myriad of affairs so well, we weren't always aware we'd been managed or that something required management."

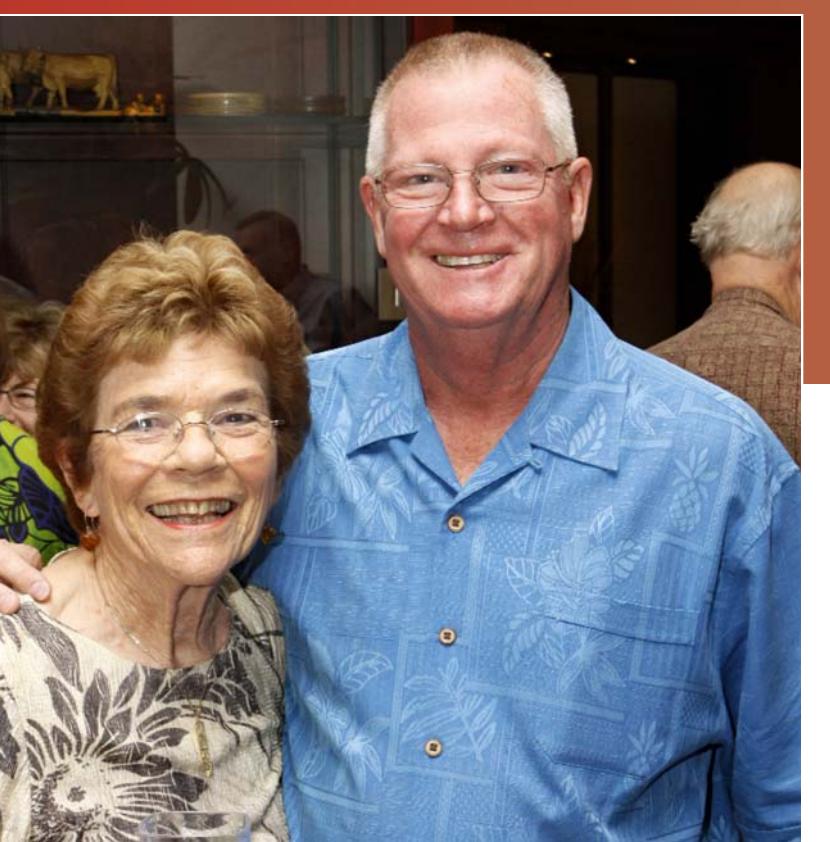
"Randy has been a great executive," said **Amy Fass**, chair of the Gardens board of directors. "Beyond management skills, what made him so successful were his personal qualities. He was extremely transparent. He listened very well and used that input to come up with better decisions. He was strong but flexible."

When Randy announced his retirement months in advance, the board formed a search committee, chaired by board member **Ron**



Resident Dick Kirkendall and Randy Stoll share a private moment at Randy's retirement celebration in June. Before moving into the Gardens, Dick had chaired the Gardens' board of directors in the mid-1990s when Randy was the new CEO.

Continued on back page



During his tenure as the Gardens' CEO, Randy Stoll was well-loved by residents. Here, Resident Fran Gilfry says her good-byes at his retirement celebration.

## Changing of the Guard...

Continued from page 5  
to the Gardens."

Maureen was also struck by the strong affection, and respect, the residents and staff share for each other, which, she says was "palpable" on the first day she visited the campus.

While embracing the Gardens' long-term strategic plan, Maureen has already begun to define some of her own priorities for the organization. Those include a more robust technology effort that encompasses equipment, infrastructure and staff utilization, and translating some of the culture change concepts that are working so beautifully in the Evergreen Villas to the Gardens Health Center (skilled nursing facility).

"Maureen is bringing her own personality and skills to the position that will take the Gardens even further," says Amy. We are in good hands."

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September 2014

**The New Leaf**

**Settling In**

## The New Leaf

Mt. San Antonio Gardens is a nationally accredited Life Care senior community in Claremont and Pomona, California.

*The New Leaf* is a newsletter for friends and family of residents, board and staff, as well as individuals who have inquired about life at the Gardens.

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## Downsizing

**Thurs., Oct. 23, 2014**  
10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.  
at Mt. San Antonio Gardens

**Refreshments & a booster shot of motivation!**

**Reservations are required; please call (909) 399-1279**

*Please give names of attendees, your phone number, and mailing address.*

*Confirmation will be mailed within a week of your response.*

**Find out what Bill Davis and his daughters experienced when he moved to the Gardens.**



Resident Gania Trotter leads the Garden Belles during a performance.

# The New Leaf

September 2014

## Performance arts at the Gardens

## Talent, wit, and creativity take center stage

**t**alent comes in many forms at the Gardens. For those with a passion for performing arts, the opportunities have never been more plentiful.

When **Jean Korf** moved to the Gardens in 2009, the staff, she says, took one look at her resume and encouraged her to start a theater group. A Fellow of the American Theatre, who has spent a lifetime acting, directing and teaching, Jean discovered a whole new outlet for her creative talents at the Gardens.

With the exception of a few "pros" like **Mary Cavena**, a graduate of the Pasadena Playhouse, Jean mostly found at the Gardens a lot of wonderfully talented people who had absolutely no experience in theater. "It is very gratifying when someone comes along without any experience, and they're really quite good," she says. While Jean helps them with techniques, the talent is typically natural.

The troupe's first performance in 2010 was "You Can't Take It With You." Later they



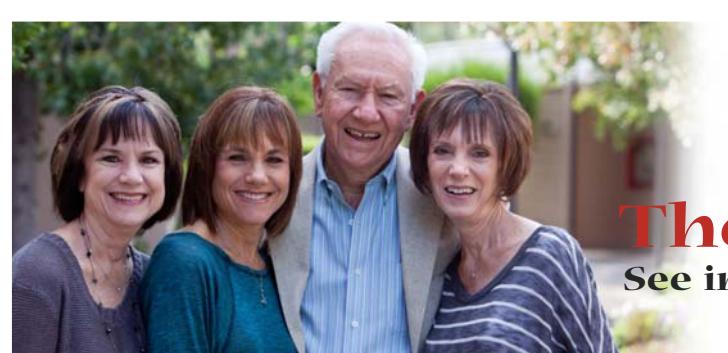
Alan and Cherie Carlisle dance the tango on stage for the "Fabulous, Frivolous Follies."

performed "12 Angry Jurors" (changed from "12 Angry Men," since the Gardens' "jury" included women), and "Harvey." Next on the docket is the French farce, "The Imaginary Invalid."

"Residents who have never acted are sometimes frightened at the prospect," she says. "But these are very intelligent people, and most are quite willing to try." Jean carefully nurtures her actors but keeps the bar set high. She laughs about some of the realities of working with mature actors, including herself. "We can't always remember our lines!" So she encourages them to find creative ways to "cheat." Lines written on a prop that the actor uses in his or her role, for instance. "It's a very equalizing experience. It doesn't matter what their background or achievements. We all have the same trouble memorizing lines!"

They improvise in other ways, too. Actors, who Jean insists build character studies for their parts, source their own costumes. Plays

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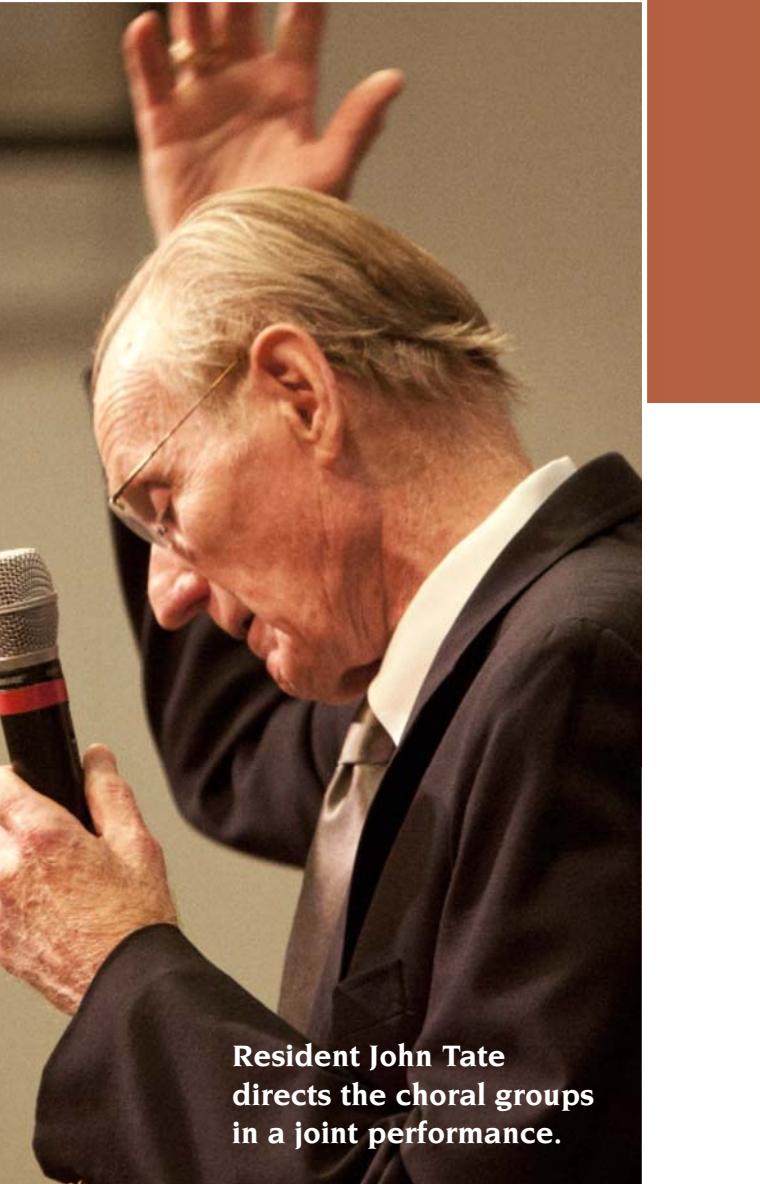
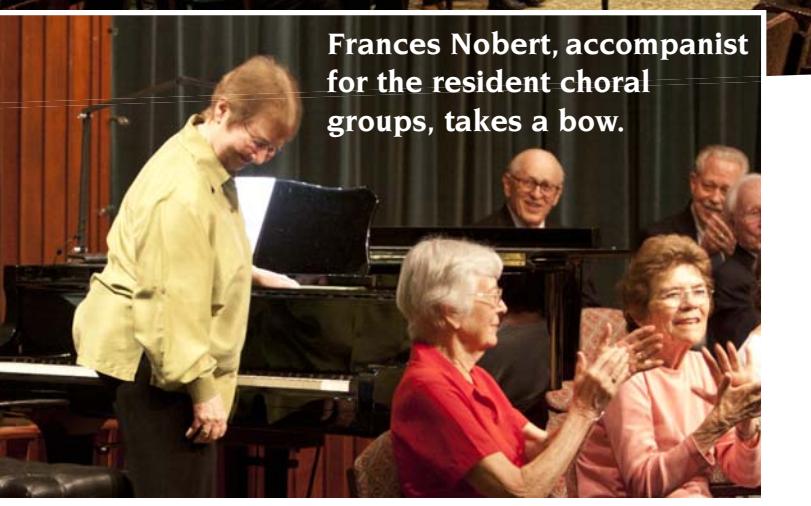
**The Road Ahead**  
See invitation on back page.

## Performance arts

*Continued from page 1*



Frances Nobert, accompanist for the resident choral groups, takes a bow.



Resident John Tate directs the choral groups in a joint performance.

are adjusted to accommodate the limitations of their performance space. Jean scours the Gardens' public areas for props. "This is like a great prop house," she laughs. "The staff is very, very helpful, if I spot something I'd like to use in a performance. I couldn't do it without their support." The same goes for the residents' Audio-visual Committee, which handles lighting and sound. "Good sound needs tender loving care," says Jean, and that's what she always gets for their performances.

And good sound is what the Gardens choral groups always deliver. First organized by **John Tate** in 2007, when he recruited seven men for the Music Men, today 52 male and female residents comprise two groups, the Music Men and the Choral Belles. John finds the choral groups attract a lot of residents who haven't sung since high school.

"When they join and start singing again, they always say they had forgotten how much fun it is," he says. If someone is rusty, John gives them individual help. "I work them pretty hard," he admits, and he recognizes the challenges that come with age. "The most difficult thing for all of us is being able to sing a piece well and

fluently. We forget things easily that sometimes we need to repeat more frequently in our rehearsals."

Voces change, too, so he adjusts some arrangements for lower ranges. Harmonies may be changed to sing in unison. And men and women can move between choral groups, depending on where their voice range places them in a composition. Helping to bring all this together is **Frances Nobert**, who is a highly accomplished pianist and organist. "She makes it possible for us to do what we do," John is quick to point out. "She makes us sound good!"

The hard work pays off. They meet once a week and schedule as many as 4 to 5 performances a year. Each requires a rigorous rehearsal schedule. Members sign up for the performances they can fit into their schedules. Highlights include an annual Fourth of July

patriotic sing-along, major programs in the spring and fall, a performance in the residents' "Fabulous, Frivolous Follies," and performances at the Gardens' annual memorial service.

While the theater and choral groups require a serious commitment, the "Almost Annual Fabulous, Frivolous Follies" are

Virginia Crosby, Lee McDonald, Jean Wright, and Malcolm Davis play first graders in a skit for the Follies.



## Settling In

For the two retired public administrators – Don with the L.A. County Department of Public Social Services and Evelyn with the U.S. Department of Justice – the move to the Gardens was the next logical step in their process of simplifying and downsizing.



Don and Evelyn Brown

ur Claremont friends tease us that we won't have time for them anymore now that we're here at the Gardens," laughs **Evelyn Brown**, who moved to the Gardens with her husband **Don** last year.

"The joke is that Gardens residents get so involved here, there's no time for outside

activities!" Not true, of course. But Evelyn concedes she has traded

in a club membership for the convenience of yoga in the Gardens' Wellness Center, and she's now getting her aerobic exercise with the residents' walking group right on campus. "It's nice not to have to drive everywhere," she admits.

And while the Browns have done their best not to dive headlong into the myriad volunteer opportunities at the Gardens, Evelyn has already joined the Diversity Committee, and Don, an avid

genealogist, plans

on joining the

residents'

Genealogy

Committee, and is

already an active

member of the

disaster response

team.

But their

community

connections remain

strong. Fans of the

cinema, Don and

Evelyn have been

part of a local film

club for years. The only difference is that now when

the Browns host their Claremont friends for an

evening of movie critiques and cocktails, Evelyn

serves refreshments that are beautifully prepared

and delivered to their apartment by the Gardens'

catering staff.

"It's so easy to entertain here," she marvels,

whether in their home or in the Gardens' Dining

Room. The same goes for travel. When they pack

their bags for a weekend at their place in Big Bear

Lake, or a trip to Canada for a wedding, or an

overseas vacation to satisfy their wanderlust, it's

just lock the door and go.

For the two retired public administrators – he with the L.A. County Department of Public Social Services and Evelyn with the U.S. Department of Justice – the move to the Gardens was the next logical step in their process of simplifying and downsizing. When Evelyn's mother needed to

move to an assisted living facility, the couple

learned quickly about the importance of planning ahead. "That experience armed us with a lot of information," says Don. The Gardens' "The Road Ahead" presentation finally influenced the couple to make their move. "Learning about Life Care was eye-opening and knowing we could come here, live independently and enjoy all of this," Don says, "helped make our decision."

Evelyn also attended the Gardens' downsizing seminar and put all the tips and service provider referrals to use when they moved from their family home of 35 years in Claremont into their apartment at the Gardens. "It is such a help to have someone do the packing and and preparation for the move. "It just makes it a pleasant experience," says Evelyn.

"We knew that the people at the Gardens would be interesting," she says, "but the warmth and friendliness of everyone, from the minute we arrived, was an unexpected surprise. Many residents reached out to introduce themselves and make sure that we felt welcome and at home."

"So many of the people here are fascinating," Evelyn adds. "And while we didn't know anyone when we first moved in, we quickly discovered that when you have like values, experiences, and interests, you fit right in."

Avid travelers, the Browns appreciate the fact that they can just turn the key and go without worry.



The Browns' well-appointed garden suite bedroom

A Fellow of the American Theatre who has spent a lifetime acting, directing and teaching, Jean Korf now directs the Gardens' theater productions.



Guest artist Steve Nevil and Gardens Resident Mary Cavena perform in "Harvey."



The "Tip-Top Tap Alongs" perform in the Follies.