



Julie Schneider Ljubenkov

# Julie's Art & Nature Newsletter

Winter/Spring : 2009 & 2010

Issue #18, Volume 2, December 1, 2009

## BOTANICAL WATERCOLOR PRINTS FINALLY AVAILABLE!

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- > Long awaited Botanical Prints Available for the Holidays.
- > Patrons of the Arts Wanted!
- > Julie's New Book
- > The Unique San Diego County Landscape in Watercolor—by you!
- > Student's Mosaic Art Work
- > Update on the progress of re-building after the fire.
- > In the next issue: up-date on the Rincon Indian Reservation Native Plant Nursery

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Contact Information 4

Stop those High Water Bills — Go Native! 3

Mosaic Art Classes 2

Quality Art Instruction Books 2

Watercolor Outdoors 1

University Credit Courses for Teachers 4

Cats grading papers? Yes— you heard right! 4

December 15, 2009, Tuesday Evening, Julie will finally have some of her botanical prints for sale—just in time for the holidays! “Ever since the Firestorms of October 2007 burned down our home, and a life time’s worth of my work, I am finally getting some limited edition prints made of formerly painted botanical watercolors.”

The meeting will take place at Building #17 at Balboa Park in San Diego. The meeting will be a holiday celebration. There will be live music from 6:30 to 7:30. It is a member’s night, so instead of a guest speaker, members are invited to show slides of native gardens or their native plant travels. We also encourage attendees to bring appetizers or holiday deserts. Outstanding members will be recognizing with year end awards.



Big Berry Manzanita, *Arc-tostaphylos glauca*. 2003

Julie's botanical prints will be custom printed and matted, and for sale. The printed images are about 8 by 12 inches and sell for about \$25.00 to \$45.00 each.

Julie will also have some of the larger limited edition prints that were donated from The Southern California Academy of Sciences—who just happened to have a few left - there are only 6! This watercolor show-cases a close-up view of a rare, tiny species of Hedgehog

Cactus that grows only in the San Bernardino Mountains. The print is 17 by 23 inches, and you can get it for \$250.00 unframed or custom framed for \$350.00

For more information about the meeting see the California Native Plant Society's website at [cnpssd.org](http://cnpssd.org)



Below: *Sunrise on the Pebble Plain*, original watercolor of Munz's Hedgehog Cactus, a rare species threatened by off-road vehicles and cactus collectors. 1998



## MEDITATE AND RELAX: LET THE BEAUTIFUL SAN DIEGO COUNTY LANDSCAPE FILL YOUR SENSES

People say Watercolor is the most difficult of the painting media to learn. While that may be so, after one course in Julie's Beginning Watercolor course at UCSD Extension, [EYE ON NATURE: A Beginning Watercolor Workshop](http://extension.ucsd.edu), students turn out beautiful works of art worthy of fram-

ing. Not only is watercolor fun to do, but it is a very meditative experience. If you need relaxation and focus in your life - working from a photo of your favorite wild area, or working in nature, can be very therapeutic. It is also one of those life long learning experiences that keeps on

giving. You never get bored.

*EYE ON NATURE; Beginning Watercolor* is only offered once a year so don't miss it! It begins on Thursday evenings for 9 weeks, Jan. 21th to March 18th, 6:00 to 9:00 PM. Sign up at (858) 534-3400 or on-line at: [extension.ucsd.edu](http://extension.ucsd.edu)



Mosaic Art created by students in Julie's previous Mosaic I classes at Mira Costa College. Each Mosaic is on a flat surface around 12 by 12 inches.

## MOSAIC CLASSES FOR ADULTS

Mosaic is so much fun it never fails to bring smiles to the faces of class participants as they see a mundane concrete stepping stone or an old serving tray turn into a beautiful work of art! "What I love about this type of mosaic is that any one can do it, and come away with success" says Julie. "We use a folk art method called Pique Assiette which means 'broken dishes' in Italian. We usually start with an already made base, such as a picture frame, a glass vase, or a stepping stone and glue on all kinds of colorful and durable materials". Among these are: broken china, vitreous glass tiles, ceramic tiles, stained glass, sea glass, glass gems and other

found objects like shells, coins, old jewelry, or glass figurines."

There are two classes coming up. Our first workshop is a short one, only 4 meetings, Feb. 8 to March 8, 6 to 8 PM, where you will make one mosaic project through the City of Escondido's Community Services at the East Valley Community Center. To sign up call (760) 839-4691 or go online at: [Escondido.org.recreation](http://Escondido.org.recreation)

Our second offering is a 7 week non-credit course at Mira Costa College in Oceanside, (which we thought for sure would never be offered again due to cut-backs). It starts on Saturdays, March 20 and goes to May 8th, 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM. In this

course you will make 2 projects; one will be on a flat surface like a serving tray, stepping stone, or picture frame. The second project will be on a 3 dimensional surface such as a glass vase, bird house, or flower pot. Call Mira Costa Community Services to enroll at (760) 795-6820 or go on-line at: [www.miracosta.cc.ca.us/](http://www.miracosta.cc.ca.us/)

More advanced students are encouraged to enroll in either class since we are unable to offer more advanced courses at this time. You may work on your own project, at your own pace. Julie can help you if you require more instruction beyond the basics presented in these beginning courses.

## NORTHLIGHT BOOKS: ART INSTRUCTION TAKEN TO A HIGHER ART

For many years it has been rumored that Julie was working on a book on watercolor painting techniques. Yes, she has had offers to create a book on the subject, "How to Paint Flowers in Watercolor".

But it has not been until now that she has taken the offers seriously. Why? The pay is not good AND it's an awful lot of hard work! Who has the time? Excuses, excuses!

What changed her mind this time? "NorthLight Books is well known for its quality art instruction books. Not only is the art very well done, but the instructions are not skimpy—they walk

you through difficult procedures step by step" says Julie.

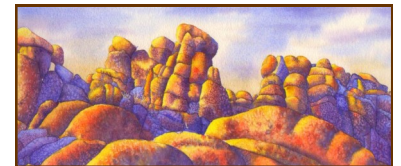
"Another good reason to do a book is to get back into my ethnobotanical (Luiseño) paintings of the local wildflowers. Since the fire of 2007, where I lost all my original art work done from the time I was in kindergarten, I have not been able to get back into my work. (This must be similar to what authors call 'writer's block'.) Having to do this book will force me into painting again."

And, it seemed about time, after 29 years of teach-

ing watercolor with a specialty in painting flowers, that she take the time to put all this experience into a book. "I think my students will appreciate having my step-by-step instructions illustrated in good photographs in a quality hard-bound, affordable book.

What will be in the book? If you have taken any of Julie's watercolor courses in painting flowers you will see many of the exercises and step-by-step processes she demonstrated in the classroom, in the book.

Stay tuned for updates!



**NorthLight Books is well known for its quality Art Instruction books.**





## LANDSCAPE IN NATIVES—YOU CAN DO IT!!!!

Things are really cooking in the Native Plant Landscaping Business! Because a lot of people have had to cut down on their water use, they have realized its time to landscape with plants that not only help restore our environment, but cut down on water use by over 90%.

Julie has been offering workshops on how to landscape your home or office for the last 20 years, but lately the enrollment numbers have gone through the roof! We also added a new activity to the course which is a field trip to a native plant nursery with demonstration gardens.

There are a lot of misconceptions about natives too and that holds a lot of people back from taking the big step of re-doing their yards. People ask, "Aren't natives prone to fire?" No, not unless they dry out and become dead-looking for brittle during our dry season which runs from summer to late fall or winter. "Don't they look dry in the summer time like the hillsides around here?" Yes, some plants do look dry, so we avoid those in landscape situations. Unfortunately some native landscaping does have an overall grey-green look and is not lush, colorful or inviting. Why? The Landscapers and the landscape maintenance guys did not know what they were doing—plain and simple. While natives in the ground are as old as the origins of the earth—natives in the landscaping is something entirely new to a lot of people.

A visit to the Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Gardens in Claremont California near Pomona will put all your concerns to rest about natives—it will even get

you excited about natives, especially when you picture that beautiful yard, with little maintenance, that will need little or no watering! At the RSABG you will see 80 acres all landscaped in beautiful, green, and colorful California native plants. And, if you didn't know they were natives, you'd have a hard time telling the difference between this landscaping and the landscaping you see every day. One big difference you'd see, if you look close, is that the native landscaping is unique and is not "the same old thing" that we see in most commercial landscaping and front yards in southern California.

You would also see that you have many choices, and with a little information you could have a beautiful, green, lush landscape without having to do that daily or weekly watering. Yes, natives take some water to get started. If you plant in the fall you can water them once a week when it does not rain and they will begin to establish their root system. By the time summer comes around, and with it no rain, sometimes your plants are ready to live on their own, as mother nature intended—without your help, or your water. But, depending upon how well your soil holds water, and how well your plants naturalized, you might need to water a little bit during the first year or two to make sure some plants have a strong foothold. While some of these new natives may like to be watered 1 to 4 times per

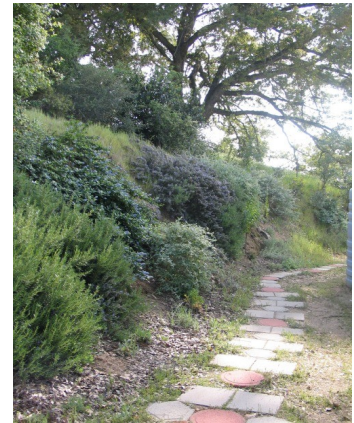
month in the summer, there are many natives that hate water in the summer and will die if you water them.

If you are ready to make that change to natives—now is the time. There are many routes you can take depending on your budget, your time, and your energy level. Landscape architects can do all your landscaping and hardscaping (walk ways, pools, patios, etc.). Native plant Landscapers can landscape any or all of your yard or business in natives. A native landscape consultant can help you with small projects by making recommendations, helping you draw up your own landscape plan, and can assist you in buying the right natives for your needs. Or, you can do it yourself totally on your own.

In any case, you need some information to begin.

Julie usually offers a couple native plant landscaping workshops through the City of Escondido and Mira Costa College at the Oceanside or Encinitas campus every semester. In these 6 hour workshops, you are given all the information you need to get started. If you can't wait for Julie's next course, Julie also offers native landscape consulting—help for those who want to do most of the work themselves, but need some help getting started. Call Julie at (760) 450-7746 or email

[JSL@ArtNatureEducation](mailto:JSL@ArtNatureEducation) you might find some workshops or lectures offered through your water company or listed with our local California Native Plant Society at (916) 447-2677, or email them at [info@cnpsd.org](mailto:info@cnpsd.org). visit the website at [www.cnpsd.org](http://www.cnpsd.org).



Native landscaping on a steep hillside behind Julie's house.

**"Fall is the best time for planting natives! Don't let this opportunity wait another year!"**



Now who says natives are not green? Here are ever-green oaks, the Engelmann Oak and a Coast Live Oak with a native wildflower/grassland on Julie's property in Pauma Valley.



### DANCING COYOTE RANCH; ARTS & SCIENCES

P.O. Box 781  
Pauma Valley, CA 92061  
E-mail:  
JSL@ArtNatureEducation.com



"In every walk with nature one  
receives far more than he  
seeks." John Muir

Dancing Coyote Ranch Arts and Sciences is a combination of two businesses. John Ljubenkov is a marine biologist who specializes in identifying and naming marine animals such as jellyfish, mollusks, corals, and other plant-like animals. His lab is in their mountain home on Dancing Coyote Ranch. John's wife, Julie Schneider Ljubenkov is an Artist, Educator, Naturalist, and Native Plant Consultant. Her art focuses on the native landscape, plants, and Native American artifacts of the Luiseño Indians of Northern San Diego County. As a naturalist she worked for many years leading nature walks into the deserts, mountains and seashore of Southern California. Today her business, Dancing Coyote Environmental Services, focuses on Native plants in the landscape; studying plants in both the wild and in the garden. She teaches workshops on how to use native plants in home landscaping and is currently helping people get their own native landscapes started. Julie teaches Art at UCSD and Mira Costa College. She also develops professional development courses for teachers for the University of La Verne as an adjunct professor.

## Julie is on the web!

Just Google "Julie Schneider Ljubenkov" on the web and you will find her art and landscaping courses, websites that show her art work in both watercolor and mosaics, and newspaper articles about her work with art and native plants.

## UPDATE ON RE-BUILDING AFTER THE FIRES



Here is our rebuilt home.  
Landscaping and other  
restoration is coming along  
slowly due to lack of funds.

Many of you know our house was burned down in the October 2007 firestorm that hit San Diego County. We have since re-built our home and moved back, but, we are still working on re-building many of the details.

Unfortunately with this bad economy hitting us hard by cut backs in Julie's teaching load and wage cut backs, and with Julie's life time inventory of art gone, she has no art sales, except commission work. Because of this, all replacement of lost items and finishing construction on the

house has come to a dead stop. Many of you know we had Farmer's Insurance and they shorted us of about 150 grand that was needed to rebuild, so we had to take on a second mortgage. That amount does not count the vast collection of books we lost, and all of Julie's Art which was potential income for us for years to come and millions of dollars for art collectors and our relatives that would have inherited Julie's Art.

We can only hope the economy recovers, or maybe there is a rich

patron out there that supports world class artists? Know anyone that wants to invest in art before it becomes over priced once the artist dies? Below is an older watercolor, luckily sold before the fire. It is part of Julie's on-going series "significance of Place" which focuses on beautiful places that hold an important place in history and in our hearts.



"Professor" Pink shows Professor Diener how he should correct papers, "Are you watching?" implores the wise Mr. Pink.

## Professional Development Courses for Teachers

If you need university credit beyond your master's degree, the University of La Verne, founded in 1891, is for you. There are hundreds of courses to choose from and you can work at home either on-line, or with independent study materials, at your leisure, with up to one year to complete your course. If you need extra help there is always a professor on staff ready to take your phone call or email. Courses are offered in Education, Psychology, History, Site Visit Courses, Art and Music History, Sciences, Computer technology in the classroom, English Literature, and Sports and Coaching. Julie offers several courses in the arts, including drawing and a new course on Integrating the Arts as tools to teach other subjects such as math, writing, language, and science. Call 1-800-793-6533 or visit <http://pdc.laverne.edu>. (Yes, we have cats that "supervise" our work- you'd be surprised at what they know, but they mostly keep it to themselves.)