

Girl Scouts create native garden at PVIS

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Frances Dygean and Katherine Jorgensen have completed their Silver Award Project at Palos Verdes Intermediate School by beautifying a dirt patch in front of the school with California native plants. The Girl Scout Troop 7895 Cadettes not only spruced up the appearance of the dirt patch but also helped native insects and animals.

Frances and Katherine spent the past year working on the project that included site plan development and gardening. They also learned about drought-tolerant California native plants, which are low-maintenance and have natural defenses against pests and diseases so pesticides are not needed, preventing toxins from seeping into the ground water and oceans as well as indiscriminately killing beneficial insects and animal life. The plant species selected for the PVIS garden are native to the Peninsula and also will benefit the Monarch butterfly species.

Frances and Katherine are promoting the garden as a way to educate the community about all the benefits and the resources that are readily available, such as the California Native Plant Society – found at www.CNPS.org – that has information on plant selection, gardening and education.

The PVIS native garden project could not have been completed without funding to purchase plants and mulch provided by the school's Booster Club, the support of Principal Frank Califano, and the help of mentor Neil Uelman, a naturalist from PVP Land Conservancy.

All plants were grown locally at the Palos Verdes Land Conservancy nursery. The Girl Scouts had volunteered at the PVP Land Conservancy nursery in San Pedro to help with the native plant seedlings. They became inspired last year when they completed their Girl Scout Bronze award while developing a brochure for the George F Canyon Center demonstration garden where they first learned about California native plants. The two friends hope this project is enjoyed by the community, and it inspires others to consider native plants as the smart choice for the environment and resources.



Caption: Frances Dygean, left, and Katherine Jorgensen work inside the PVP Land Conservancy nursery. The Girl Scouts have created a native garden at the entrance to the Palos Verdes Intermediate School.

