

Volunteers to spruce up Granada Native Gardens

By Lea Blevins, STAFF WRITER

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LIVERMORE — Volunteers soon will be able to restore some serenity to Granada Native Gardens, but not without some hard work first.

The garden, which saw some of its worst vandalism this fall, received a \$5,000 donation from the General Electric Co. for restoration.

"I was amazed," said garden coordinator Louann Tung, a Livermore resident. "This is about what we need to make it happen." Granada Native Gardens, one third of an acre of land situated along Murrieta Boulevard between Holmes Street and Stanley Boulevard, was created and planted in the fall of 2003 and spring of 2004. It features plants native to California.

The garden is located on Livermore school district property, but it's maintained by about 20 volunteers, many are members of Friends of the Arroyos.

The donation from GE, made possible through local employee Ann Ciurczak's sponsorship, will largely go toward replacing outdoor information panels and their support holders.

Near Halloween, the panels were torn out of their displays and tossed into the nearby creek.

Other damage Tung regularly finds in the garden includes graffiti and broken mosaic tiles on tabletops.

The donation also will help to fund new bench seats that will be sturdier and easier to clean, she said.

Bench seats made of slate will be replaced with a recyclable material called Trex, which combines reclaimed plastic and wood.

"It's very durable stuff," Tung said.

It's going to take some effort, though, along with replacing the mosaic tiles on the garden's three wildlife-themed tabletops.

Volunteers already have a schedule planned for garden restoration, beginning in January. But Tung said she hopes the city of Livermore will join in the project this time around.

To help prevent future vandalism, Tung asked the City Council about having a light installed over the garden. She said Mayor Marshall Kamena even suggested installing a Web camera on site to help with security.

Dorn Driggs, manager of the city's maintenance division, said the maintenance department was familiar with the concept, but was waiting for the police department to find out more information on light installation.

"We really need a light out there," Tung said.

The garden always can use additional volunteers, too. They plan to work on the garden about once a month through the first half of next year. Anyone with a background in construction would be especially helpful when it comes to installing the Trex, Tung said.

"It's always good to have new people," she said.

For more information, e-mail Louann Tung at lstung@pacbell.net.

