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# Mesa Community College rose garden continues to bloom

## April tour to highlight care needed for colorful, healthy flowers

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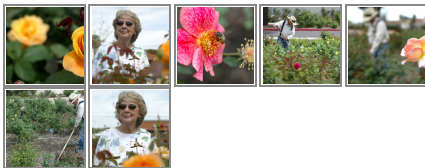


[Tim Hacker/Tribune]

### Mesa Community College Rose Garden

One of the numerous roses seen inside the Mesa Community College Rose Garden, Tuesday, March 26, 2013 in Mesa. [Tim Hacker/Tribune]

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#### Mesa-East Valley Rose Society Annual Rose Garden Tour

**Where:** Mesa Community College, 1833 W. Southern Ave., Rose Garden

**When:** 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 14

**What:** Purchase \$10 tickets and maps at the Rose Garden between 8:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. to start the self-guided tour.

**For more info:** [rosegarden.mesacc.edu](http://rosegarden.mesacc.edu) or [roses4az-mevrs.org](http://roses4az-mevrs.org) or call (480) 831-2609

Posted: Thursday, April 4, 2013 7:43 am | Updated: 2:59 pm, Thu Apr 4, 2013.

By Michelle Reese, Tribune | 0 comments

A walk through the Rose Garden at Mesa Community College with its curator includes stops at roses named Chihuly, Julia Childs and Day Breaker. This decades-old garden continues to grow and bloom each year through the work of hundreds of volunteers – and they're ready to share their expertise.

Next month, the Mesa East Valley Rose Society's annual rose garden tour will start at the MCC Rose Garden, with its five acres and 56 beds of roses. The volunteers will teach others how to create the same spectacles in their own homes.

"People will be able to see how to grow roses in pots, raised beds, smaller gardens and larger gardens," said the MCC Rose Garden's curator, Marylou Coffman.

During the tour, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 14, visitors will see the more than 9,000 bushes at the MCC garden, as well as visit the Dobson Ranch Rose Garden and five private gardens. The cost is \$10 per person, with proceeds benefiting the MCC garden and the Mesa East Valley Rose Society.

"It's a good way for people to see what grows well here," Coffman said.

Phyllis Henslin, who leads the work on the section dubbed "phase two" at the MCC Rose Garden, said more than a hundred visitors were on the campus just this week to see the blooms. A common response from visitors is, "I didn't think you could grow roses in the desert," she said.

But it's very possible, as the garden shows, with the right amount of soil, drainage and care, Coffman said.

"They need to know how to water. It's the No. 1 killer of roses – not watering enough," she said.

The blooms of the new year really start in mid- to late-March, after the two months of "deadhead" work done by volunteers in January and February. During weekends those months, Mesa East Valley Rose Society members teach the public how to prune the gardens, then set them to work to get the thousands

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Sun Valley Community Church, Gilbert

##### Cellar Pub Tastings

Sun Devil Liquors

of rose bushes ready for the next blooming cycle.

The MCC Rose Garden has more than 350 varieties of roses. It is also the site of American Rose Society garden test beds. Each year, dozens of new varieties are planted and given to two years to show their beauty and staying power.

Visitors from Alberta, Canada, who stopped by the Rose Garden this week with their Mesa host, were surprised to buy the colors, scents and types roses. With a short rose-growing season in Canada, seeing the many blooms in the desert was a surprise.

"It's stunning. It's absolutely gorgeous. If I had to pick a favorite, I couldn't," said Janece McEachern of northern Alberta. "We're all gardeners. No wonder we're drooling."

The MCC garden is the largest public garden in the Southwest, and it's about to get larger. Coffman said new beds are being planned for Dobson Road as part of the streetscape changes going on along the Fiesta District. There to be four new beds with 30 to 40 buses in the next year, she said. That section will be dedicated to the memory of Elizabeth "Betty" Harvey Rhodes and John J. Rhodes, the first Republican U.S. Representative for Arizona.

Last year, the society planted a yellow rose bed along Southern Avenue at the site that will be the new entrance to the college, once the city has decreased the number of lanes along that road.

Other changes include the addition of benches into the Veteran's Garden section. They are being donated by the Arizona Federation of Garden Clubs and should be in place by the end of the year.

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**Contact writer:** (480) 898-6549 or [mreese@evtrib.com](mailto:mreese@evtrib.com)

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- **ARTICLE:** Marvel at roses on garden tour
- **IMAGE:** Mesa Community College Rose Garden
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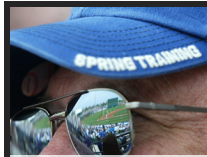


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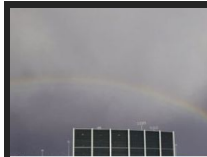
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