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VENICE GARDEN TOUR SHOWCASES CREATIVITY

(Venice, CA) – On Saturday, May 1, 2010, from 10am to 5pm, the **Venice Garden & Home Tour** will feature 25-30 gardens and homes in the historical heart of Venice, Oakwood and the Palms, Milwood neighborhoods just a short stroll from the bustling activity of Abbot Kinney Boulevard and the beach community. This fundraising event that benefits the Neighborhood Youth Association's Las Doradas Children's Center in Venice, is an annual showcase of creativity that inspires California's homeowners, the one day of the year when dozens of private enclaves are open to the public. In this foray into old and new, fast-changing Venice, the walking tour will wander through quiet, palm-shaded streets, dappled with sunlight, and peek into homes open to the environment and where indoor-outdoor living is the norm. These are the "secret gardens" of Venice, private oases sequestered behind inviting gates and doors, where homeowners seek peace and beauty in their carefully tended gardens hidden away from hectic Los Angeles.

The Garden Tour inspires landscapers and homeowner gardeners who are intrigued by the use of salvaged materials used in interesting ways, by an abundance of art, by bold splashes of offbeat colors - eggplant, mustard, rust – that add spice to old stucco or creamy white wood, and where solar panels pop up amid rooftop grasses adjacent to elegant Craftsman bungalows. Tour-goers will feel the Venice vibe, the constant activity of homeowners nurturing their vegetable gardens, creating their pockets of privacy, a community where residents actually talk to each other, introduce their dogs, where bikers spin by,

clutching surfboards, and artists, interior designers, photographers do their work in home studios.

Venice hums with it's own unique energy generated by the blessing of being close to the Pacific and the home of so many creative people. The tour will visit Jay Griffith's office where inspiration for today's sustainable landscaping was developed, and will tour iconic contemporary homes by Steven Ehrlich, Marmol Radziner, Callas Shortridge, Charles Ward, among others. Many of the adventurous, influential Los Angeles architects reside in Venice where the genius of Charles and Ray Eames permeates the air, where artists have settled and worked for decades. This Garden Tour showcases the creative individual spirit that continues to thrive in Venice.

The **Venice Garden & Home Tour** is the much anticipated annual fund raising event for the Neighborhood Youth Association's Las Doradas Children's Center. Now in its 17th year, this is the well established, not to be missed garden and home tour that entices visitors from all over California. Founded by landscape designer Jay Griffith, Linda Lucks and Jan Brilliot, the **Venice Garden & Home Tour** gives financial support for NYA's Las Doradas Children's Center, a licensed child care facility in Venice that provides full-time, education-based child care to low-income working families. In operation since 1991, the center offers "at-risk" children an opportunity for the care and additional guidance that prepares them to be effective learners, ready and eager to enter and excel in kindergarten, and soon become productive and fulfilled members of our community.

The 2010 self-guided, walking **Venice Garden & Home Tour** starts at the Las Doradas Children's Center, 804 Broadway, at the corner of Broadway and Pleasant View, in Venice, at 10:00 am and continues until 5:00 pm. Neighborhood parking is available, as are shuttle buses, and biking is a suggested option. Tax-deductible rain-or-shine tickets are \$60 if purchased in advance, \$70 if purchased the day of the Garden Tour, children under 12 years of age admitted free. For tickets and information, please call 310-821-1857 or email us at venicegardentour@ca.rr.com, and visit our website at www.venicegardentour.org.

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