

# SLAM

DESIGNING THE SOUTHWEST  
SOUTHWICK LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL MEMO  
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southwick  
LA

*Promise me you'll always remember: You're braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think. - Winnie the Pooh*

## ANNUAL SLA RETREAT- BY: CASSI DAWES

The Southwick LA retreat was on September 12th and 13th of this year. The SLA family enjoyed some intense discussions on Friday geared toward improving us as an office and as individuals before enjoying a wonderful tour of The Las Vegas Springs Preserve. We were pleasantly surprised to be guided by the one and only Linn Mills (instead of the self guided tour that we had planned). He quizzed us on our plant identification, botanical name, geology, and design knowledge along the way. He was kind enough to provide us with the correct answer and give us credit for it when we were unable to provide



the correct answer. It was a lot of fun. We then enjoyed a tasty lunch at Wolfgang Puck's eatery (The Springs Preserve Café) on the grounds and finished up the day by visiting more exhibits. I think one of the office favorites was the flash flood exhibit. If some of you have not visited the Las Vegas Springs Preserve yet, I highly recommend it. With the wonderful fall weather, it's a perfect time to visit. One great feature, that I often forget is offered, is the Springs Preserve library. The library offers "information on ecology, flora and fauna of the Mojave, water conservation, green architecture, wildlife, education, visual and performing arts, archaeology and history of the Southwest, nonprofit management and museum studies." The library is non-circulating, but there are tables and outdoor seating areas for reading and researching. On Saturday we finished off our retreat with a wonderful dinner and cruise at Lake Mead aboard the Desert Princess with office mates, friends and loved ones. We enjoyed dinner, dancing, a nearly full moon, wonderful weather and good company. A good time was enjoyed by all.

P.S. Now through October 31st, the Las Vegas Springs Preserve will have the Haunted Harvest for the Halloween season if you are looking for a spooktacular family event.

## RAINBOW SUNSET COMMERCIAL PLAZA

Take a drive out to the southwest side of town for work or some shopping and you might find yourself at the Rainbow Sunset Commercial Plaza. SLA's goal with this large corporate center was to create a pedestrian scale through the use of plazas, enhanced paving and plant materials. Colored and textured walkways provide a more pleasant experience when walking from building to building or from parking areas to buildings. This pedestrian realm provides circulation and visual appeal for individuals walking through the space. Benches in protected, shaded areas provide places to step outside for a break and enjoy the outdoor air. The plant layout helps create a formal design that adds a dynamic play between resting space and circulation routes. A Tuscan planting palette, coupled with lush palm plantings which accentuate the vertical plane, add color and abundant texture to the horizontal plane. Architectural lighting and extensive use of up lighting allow for continued use at night. Overall, the design of the development and its individual spaces allow for multiple users to enjoy, work, and thrive in a lush environment full of varied experiences.



## FAVORITE FLORA: YUCCA RIGIDA - BLUE YUCCA



Specimen, accent, silhouette, however you want to use this plant, the Blue Yucca (*Yucca rigida*) is a great plant for most desert landscapes. This blue/green succulent is a favorite of Nicolette Fisk as she loves the glistening yellow hues when the sun hits the rosette just right. Make sure you give this plant some room to grow as it usually grows a single, columnar trunk up to 12 ft. or higher (older plants may branch) and can spread up to 5 ft. The rosette at the top of each stem consists of 2 ft. stiff spine-tipped leaves so make sure not to place this plant too close to walkways, pools or patios. In spring or early summer this plant will produce a

wonderful display of creamy white flowers atop a short woody stalk from the center of the rosette. Don't overwater the Blue Yucca as it is very drought tolerant and once established may live on watering it only once or twice during the hottest part of the year.

Who knew a plant could be a symbol of how they became a landscape architect? Find out more next month...

## PHOTO OF THE MONTH



EERIE NIGHT IN CREMOLINO  
CASA WALLACE, ITALY  
LINDZAY GREEN