



FRIENDS OF LOS PEÑASQUITOS CANYON PRESERVE, INC.

P.O. BOX 26523

SAN DIEGO, CA 92126

(619) 271-6710 • 672-3896 • 755-8775

July/August 1986 Newsletter

Vol. 2, No. 1

City Council Will Hear Park Village Appeal on July 15

by Leo Wilson

On June 16 the City Council unanimously voted to hear the appeals on the City Planning Commission's decision approving the Park Village PRD. As explained in last month's newsletter, the Friends believe that the planning commission's decision on May 22 to approve the Park Village Project was arbitrary and not justified by the record at the time of the decision. The Friends, as well as the Peñasquitos Planning Board, subsequently requested that the City Council hear the matter on appeal.

Councilmember Abbe Wolfsheimer made the motion that the appeal be heard and requested that the hearing be scheduled after July 7, the day Maureen O'Connor is sworn into office. Eventually, the hearing date was scheduled for July 15 at 10:00 a.m. The appeal will be heard in City Council Chambers in the City Administration Building, 202 "C" Street.

It is important that as many Friends members and interested parties attend the July 15 meeting as possible.

If you cannot attend the July 15 meeting, please write a letter expressing your opposition to the Mayor or your City Council Member, City of San Diego, 202 "C" Street, San Diego, CA 92101. For further information, please contact Leo Wilson at 233-4477.

Lopez Ridge Battle Looms

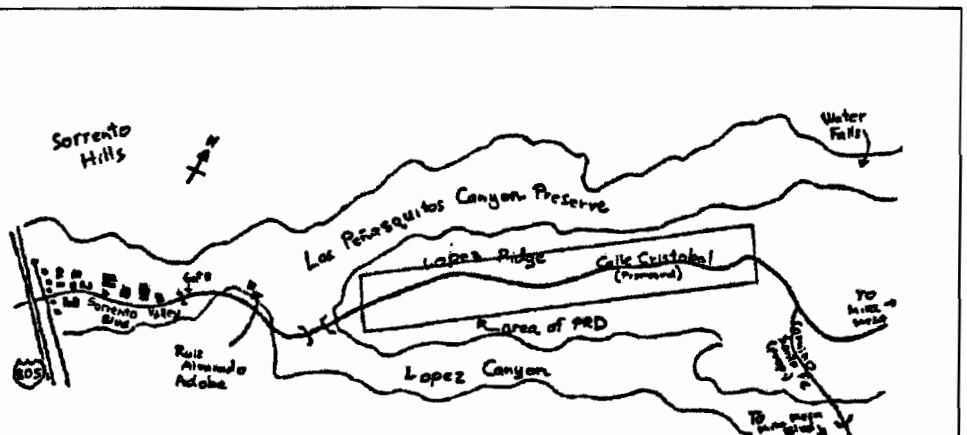
by Leo Wilson

Lopez Ridge has been referred to as an "urban wedge" which will protrude into the center of the Preserve dividing the Los Peñasquitos Canyon section of the Preserve from the Lopez Canyon section of the Preserve. Therefore, any development on the Ridge will have a significant effect on the Preserve's future as a natural reserve. Two recent developments have taken place regarding development on Lopez Ridge.

First, the original coastal development permit granted Genstar, Inc. to build

a Planned Residential Development (PRD) on Lopez Ridge expired on May 21, 1986. Genstar, however, applied for an extension of the coastal development permit prior to the original permit expiration. The executive director of the Coastal Commission granted the extension, finding no changed circumstances existed. Interested parties were given 10 days to submit objections. The Friends have submitted a letter of objection to the Coastal Commission and have requested a hearing on the extension.

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Map of Lopez Ridge Area

CAC Report

by Pam Stevens

The Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is currently focussing on three major issues affecting the Preserve: the Calle Cristobal/Camino Santa Fe assessment district; acquisition of additional key open space areas; and deleting the proposed Camino Ruiz crossing of Peñasquitos Canyon from the City's general plan.

At the July 2 CAC meeting, a presentation is scheduled on the Calle Cristobal Assessment District and the design of the roads which will be constructed. Under the district, property owners developing their land on Lopez Ridge will fund the building of the road Calle Cristobal along the ridge and across the marsh in the western preserve to connect with Sorrento Valley Boulevard, as well as the construction of the bridge for Camino Santa Fe to cross Lopez Canyon. The San Diego City Council approved the formation of this assessment district as a means of funding road construction on April 14.

VTN Southwest, Inc., is the primary design consultant for this project. The CAC presentation, re-scheduled from the June meeting, will be made by Larry Hibner of VTN. Design of the 5.41 miles of roads and two bridges (the Camino Santa Fe bridge, and a bridge for Calle Cristobal across Lopez Creek in the wetlands area) is now underway. An Environmental Impact Report is being prepared. It is expected that construction will begin in the spring of 1987.

Lopez Ridge is a strip of land separating the two major portions of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Peñasquitos and Lopez Canyons. It is broad at the east where it is crossed by Montongo Street in Mira Mesa, increasingly narrow to the west. There are several places where wildlife cross from one canyon to the other. There are vernal pools on the ridge, slightly to the west of the SDG & E powerline crossing.

While early proposals for Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve had envisioned including the ridge as well, it was never purchased. Genstar's Lopez

Ridge PRD, a 225-acre condominium complex, is planned for the western half of the ridge; Fieldstone's Canyon Country homes, for the eastern third; in between, the land belongs to various property owners, some with currently-approved development plans, others with no plans as yet.

The CAC will be taking a close look at the Calle Cristobal crossing of Lopez Creek in the marsh at the mouth of Peñasquitos and Lopez Canyons, and at plans for the Camino Santa Fe bridge across Lopez Canyon, as well as areas on the ridge where Calle Cristobal crosses "wildlife corridors."

Also at the July 2 CAC meeting, Nancy Acevedo of San Diego City Parks Department Open Space Acquisitions will report on the City's proposed open space acquisitions plan, including four areas in the vicinity of Peñasquitos Preserve, to be acquired with funds from the remaining \$20 million of Proposition C bond money. I represented the CAC at the June 11 City Council Public Facilities & Recreation Committee meeting which approved this plan.

The four areas, which now will undergo appraisals by the City's Property Department, are: 66 acres of canyon bottom and southern finger canyon land near the mouth of Lopez Canyon in the western preserve; about 200 acres of land in the north-central preserve, north of the land to be acquired from Genstar in the City/Genstar "land swap"; a 26-acre parcel of land along Peñasquitos Creek at the far western end of Peñasquitos Canyon, south of the land to be developed by Genstar in the "land swap"; and about 400 acres of finger canyon land north of Peñasquitos Canyon stretching from the west end to the central preserve.

The City/Genstar "land swap", which must be ratified by voters in San Diego as a "Proposition A" vote, since the land to be developed by Genstar is currently in the "urban reserve", is scheduled to come before City Council on July 7. The Council will vote on adopting the proposition for the ballot and directing the City Attorney to prepare the necessary ordinances. On July 28, Council is

scheduled to vote on adopting ballot ordinances the City Attorney has prepared. August 7 is the last day to file ballot arguments with the City Clerk.

There's still no word when the traffic study prepared for the City by SANDAG (San Diego Association of Governments) will be reviewed by the City Council's Transportation and Land Use Committee. This is the study which gives traffic statistics for the Mira Mesa/Rancho Peñasquitos area with and without the Camino Ruiz crossing of Peñasquitos Canyon and the Camino Santa Fe crossing of Lopez Canyon.

On June 24, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors considered sending a letter to the City in response to the SANDAG study that the traffic gains from building Camino Ruiz across Peñasquitos Canyon would not be worth the environmental damage to the preserve, and recommended that the City delete the crossing from its general plan. County parks department staff presented a report making the recommendation to protect the County's interest in its land in the eastern part of the preserve, which would be directly impacted by Camino Ruiz. I spoke on behalf of the CAC, saying that this would be an appropriate County response.

However, following a letter from the City Manager's office urging the County not to act on the issue at this time, the Supervisors voted to continue the matter, but to request the City to notify them when "an appropriate time" for input would be.

There will probably be no CAC meeting in August. The September meeting will be on Wednesday, September 3, at 4 p.m. For location information, call Nancy Acevedo, 236-7038, or Pam Stevens, 566-2261.

Notable Quote:

But all conservation of wildness is self-defeating, for to cherish we must see and fondle, and when enough have seen and fondled, there is no wilderness left to cherish.

—Aldo Leopold

What Do You Think?

The editors of the Friends' newsletter greatly appreciate contributions from members. To date, we have relied heavily on the submissions from only a handful of our 175 members. We'd like to see our newsletter have a broader base. You can help by writing letters to the editor or submitting complete articles. We'd like to receive more submissions on your memories of the canyon, wildlife sightings or any other topics that relate to Peñasquitos Canyon or its preservation. The more we know about the Preserve, the better prepared we'll be to help fight for its protection. Call Butch Weaver at 455-7651 or Bill Evarts at 586-0834; or drop us a line at Editor, Friends Newsletter, P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, Ca. 92126.

Summer Safari on Track

Twenty-seven young naturalists have enrolled in the July sessions of Summer Safari. The program, sponsored by Friends and the Youth and Education Commission of the Los Peñasquitos Town Council, is directed by Dr. Elberta Fleming. Jo Del'Homme and Bill Jennings will assist. Students will meet at Canyonside Recreation Center. The classes emphasize learning about the various plants and animals in the Preserve. Instruction will include canyon history and Indian uses of plants for food and medicine. "Pond scooping" will be featured and Dr. Fleming will show her students how to make dolls and boats from cattails growing along the creek.

Summer Canyon Hikes

Although Friends' bi-monthly hikes in the Preserve have been curtailed till fall, two other outings are scheduled. The Sierra Club is offering an evening hike on Wednesday, July 16. The hike will begin at the Preserve's west entrance and go to the waterfalls for a round trip distance of six miles. Bring a flashlight, jacket, snack and water. Wear sturdy hiking shoes. Departure time is 6:00pm. For information and registration, call Jeanne Dunham at 298-9128.

As part of America's Finest City Week, Friends are planning a special evening hike in the Preserve on August 17 or 18. Council member Abbe Wolfsheimer will join us for a first hand look at the canyon and an "on site" discussion of Preserve issues. For more information, please call Pam Stevens at 566-2261.

To reach the Preserve's west entrance:

From the north: take I-805 south, Mira Mesa Blvd. exit east, left on Vista Sorrento Pkwy., right on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to its cul de sac terminus.

From the south: I-805 north, Mira Mesa Blvd. exit east, left on Vista Sorrento Pkwy., right on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to its cul de sac terminus.

Lopez Ridge

continued from page 1

Second, the City of San Diego is presently in the preliminary stages of preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Calle Cristobal and Camino Santa Fe roadways. Calle Cristobal will cross the Preserve at the west end and connect with Sorrento Valley Boulevard. Sorrento Valley Boulevard will have the landscaping from its center and the on-street parking removed to accommodate the traffic between Calle Cristobal and Sorrento Valley Road. Camino Santa Fe will cross Lopez Canyon and connect Calle Cristobal with Mira Mesa Boulevard.

The Friends are concerned with the effects the construction of these roads will have on the Preserve. In particular, the Friends are opposed to Calle Cristobal crossing the Preserve over the wetland area at the west end of the Preserve. The Friends are now preparing to contest the present alignment of Calle Cristobal over the marsh. Several other groups and interested citizens have also expressed interest in contesting the present alignment of Calle Cristobal and Camino Santa Fe. We hope to begin forming a coalition opposing Calle Cristobal's present alignment within the next several weeks. If you would like to participate in the "ground floor" of the Lopez Ridge battle, please contact Leo Wilson at 233-4477.

Dates to Remember

- July 15 Hearing on Park Village before City Council
(see article on page 1).
- July 16 Canyon Hike (Sierra Club, see above).
- July 23 Board Meeting.
- August 17/18 Evening Hike with Abbe Wolfsheimer (see above).
- August 13 Deadline for Newsletter.
- August 27 Board Meeting.



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[Senior (62)/Students \$7; Individual \$10; Family \$15;
Sponsor \$25; Patron \$100; Corporate \$250; Life \$1000]

I am interested in:
(check all that apply)

- Hikes
- Indian Culture
- History of the Rancho

- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- The Environment: Plants, Birds,
Mammals, Geology
- Other _____



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Thank you for your support!



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September 1986 Newsletter

Vol. 2, No. 2

Sorrento Coalition Formed for Lopez Ridge Battle

by Geoff Smith

On July 28, The Sorrento Coalition was formed for the purpose of addressing the traffic and environmental impacts on Sorrento Valley by the proposed development on Lopez Ridge. Over 500 Sorrento Valley businesses received a letter announcing the formation of the Coalition. Included with the letter were a Lopez Ridge fact sheet and a flyer announcing a picnic to be held in the Preserve. The businesses were asked to return a form with their name, stating their opposition to the proposed extension of Sorrento Valley Blvd.

The goal of the Coalition will be to combine the voices of both the business and residential communities in opposing the unneeded and potentially damaging development in the west end of the Preserve. As this article is being written, responses are being received daily, indicating growing support. Personal contacts with many large corporations have been extremely favorable.

The president of the Coalition is Ms. Rosemary Agent (455-1330 ext. 448). Geoff Smith is vice president. Inquiries should be sent to The Sorrento Coalition, P.O. Box 85158, San Diego, CA 92138-5158.

Park Village to be Reconsidered

by Leo Wilson

City councilmember Abbe Wolfsheimer's persistence paid off on July 28. Two weeks earlier, on July 15, the city council rejected the appeal from the planning commission's approval of the Park Village PRD. This appeal was taken by the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and the Peñasquitos Planning Board. However, a required amendment to the transportation element of the San Diego general plan was not approved on July 15. A second vote on this amendment was scheduled for July 28.

On July 28, Wolfsheimer was prepared to discuss more than just the transportation amendment. Doggedly, Wolfsheimer made motion after motion to have the entire Park Village PRD project reconsidered. With equal determination, the representative of the city's attorney's office declared each of Wolfsheimer's motions improper. Finally, with the city attorney's acquiescence, Wolfsheimer made a motion to suspend the rules. If it passed a motion for reconsideration would follow.

Surprisingly, the motion to suspend

the rules did pass. Council members Wolfsheimer, Jones, and Mayor O'Connor, opponents of the project on July 15, were joined by council members Gotch (absent on July 15), McCarty and Cleator in voting in favor of the motion. Council member Gotch then made the motion for reconsideration, which passed by one vote.

A new hearing on the appeal was then scheduled for Sept. 23. This critical hearing will be heard in the city council chambers at 202 "C" street. We need a large turnout at the Sept. 23 hearing. If you can not attend the hearing, please write to the members of the city council to voice your opposition.

Park Village PRD will result in large scale grading and landform modification immediately adjacent to the Johnson-Taylor Ranch which is the planned visitor center for the Preserve. The topography on the north side of the canyon will be completely altered by a series of cut and fill slopes. All the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve need to get involved to stop this threat to the integrity of the Preserve. For more information call Leo Wilson at 233-4477.

Public Riding Stables: A Look Back

by John Northrop

The first public riding stable in Peñasquitos was called Black Mountain Stables. It was situated across the road from the present equestrian center (Horseman's Park) just south of the Parking- Staging area on the west side of the creek. Several large trees that shaded the house there are still standing. Patrons of Black Mountain Stables were not permitted to ride in Peñasquitos Canyon which was a private cattle ranch, and all trails leading into it were blocked with locked gates. One needed permission (and a key) to enter. Riding was done on Mira Mesa, which at that time sported a luxurious growth of chaparral and was infested with rattlesnakes. Black Mountain Road was unpaved and had several hairpin curves in it near where the House of Ice now stands. The crossing at Peñasquitos Creek was a ford which one simply drove through. In wet weather the ford was impassable and the road turned to gumbo. Residents of the Mohnike Adobe, where the manager of Horseman's Park now lives, used the trail to the east, past the well and mystery trees, to get out in winter.

Horseman's Park was opened to the public in 1972 and had a series of managers operating it on a yearly basis. When the present managers, Barbara and Joe Gerrior, took over in 1979, they negotiated a five year lease which has been extended to ten years. Under this long term lease they have repaired and enlarged the existing facility into a first class equestrian center. A tour through the area and the Mohnike Adobe (1910) or a picnic under the giant sycamore trees there is a worthwhile experience and will give the visitor a flavor of the days when Los Peñasquitos was a working cattle ranch and the vaqueros rode the trails we ride today.

HOOPA to Hike the Canyon

Do you wish to experience a walk back into time? The Homeowners of Peñasquitos Association (Hoopa) have organized a tour of Peñasquitos Canyon to be conducted by experts in Indian culture and early California history. The walk will be held on Sunday, September 7, at 5:00pm. Participants should meet at the Canyonside Park parking lot (next to the ballfields) at the Preserve's east end on Black Mountain Road. Friends are cordially invited to join their neighbors from Peñasquitos. For further information contact Kathleen Zaworski-Burke at 484-5306 or 451-1717.

Letter to the Editor

Editor's Note: *The following excerpts are from a letter sent to the Friends. We appreciate the comments and feel they are especially appropriate given the upcoming hearings on projects which will drastically affect the Preserve's future.*

...
Genstar is a persistent, aggressive and well financed corporation. I am urging each and every Friends' member to speak out against poor development by voicing their concerns at public hearings or writing to appropriate officials. Phone calls will not have the same impact because your input is too easily shunted aside the minute the receiver is placed down. Corporations such as Genstar have almost unlimited resources at their disposal to pursue any project they desire which is why active, well-planned, and personal involvement is the only way to offset heavy lobbying by developers. Even then you may receive a large dose of frustration for your efforts from public officials and city councilmembers. ...

... In addition, map boundaries seem to be set in jello and are subject to change according to persistent arguments by the developer. This is why it is important to point out apparent encroachments into the canyon, particularly at the eastern entrance. Precedent is being established that will inevitably carry forward to future developments along the entire canyon. ...

... Poor planning must not go unchecked. Voices like yours will provide the difference between minimal and maximal planning efforts aimed at balancing the desires of the developer and the interests of the public at large.

... It takes a great deal of thankless effort but in the end it will result in a community we can all be proud of. Your efforts are not in vain and will make a difference, so keep the pressure on.

Signed, Robert Chamberlain

Membership Renewals

Over a year ago many of you were enthusiastic about joining the Friends and participating in many of the fine programs that the Friends offer.

You contributed to the Friends with your membership fee because you realized that something had to be done to preserve what ever could be saved of our beautiful Peñasquitos Canyon. We rely on those who continue to support the Friends by renewing their membership.

We are proud to have all of you as special friends of the Canyon. Please take the time to renew your membership today. We will renew our commitment to providing you with the best programs we can offer and information on developments occurring in and around the Canyon.

To help remind you of your Friends' "anniversary date" our new mailing labels clearly display your membership expiration date. If you have already sent in your renewal, please consider this an extra "Thank You". If your membership date is in error or if you have any other membership questions, please contact Fred Jacobs, Membership Chairman, 484-5800 (home) or 455-1330 x509 (work).

Dates to Remember

- Sept. 7 HOOPA Hike.
- Sept. 10 Coastal Commission Hearing on Lopez Ridge, page 3.
Preserve Task Force on Canyon Roads, page 3.
- Sept. 22 Transportation and Land Use Committee on Canyon Roads, page 3.
- Sept. 23 City Council Hearing on Park Village, page 1.
- Sept. 24 Board Meeting at Canyonside Park
Newsletter Deadline.



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- History of the Rancho

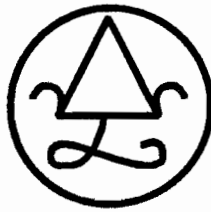
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- The Environment: Plants, Birds, Mammals, Geology
- Other _____



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October 1986 Newsletter

Vol. 2, No. 3

Coastal Commission Extends Lopez Ridge Permit

by Leo Wilson

Despite substantial opposition, the coastal commission granted an extension of Genstar's permit to build a development on Lopez Ridge. The Coastal Commission had received a large number of letters and comments in opposition to the extension. A public rally was held at the west end of Peñasquitos Preserve on September 6 opposing the permit's extension—see article on page 3.

Opposition to the extension was centered on the conflict between the Genstar permit and the Local Coastal Program (LCP) enacted last year by the City of San Diego. The LCP applies to the western end of Peñasquitos Preserve, including Lopez Ridge. It expressly prohibits grading on slopes with a gradient of 25% or more. Almost 50% of the area of Lopez Ridge has a slope gradient of over 25%. Application of the LCP to Genstar's proposed development would have resulted in many beneficial changes. In order for Genstar to have their permit extended there must be no changed circumstances from the time the permit was issued or last extended. The new LCP was an obvious changed circumstance. It affects almost 50% of the area of the project. Almost one half of the area affected was not covered by
continued on page 3

Friends' Park Village Appeal Granted

by Leo Wilson

The Friends of the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve scored a major victory on September 23, 1986. The City Council, on a 5-4 vote, granted the Friends' appeal from a planning commission decision approving Genstar's Park Village development. Genstar must now either formulate a more environmentally sensitive development for Park Village or build under plans approved several years ago. These previous plans contain about 600 fewer units than the project rejected by the City Council on September 23.

The City Council's action marks one of the first defeats ever sustained by Genstar in gaining approval of a project in the Peñasquitos Canyon area. Formally, Genstar was routinely granted approval for whatever project Genstar proposed. This should not be the case in the future.

The crucial swing vote on the City Council was Gloria McColl. McColl had visited the Preserve before the September 23 vote. In subsequent press accounts, McColl stated she changed her vote because of the beauty of the canyon and the damage planned grading by Genstar would have done.

Joining McColl in voting against the project were councilmembers Wolfsheimer, Gotch, Jones, and Mayor O'Connor. Wolfsheimer deserves excep-

tional praise as her efforts were instrumental in defeating this project. Special thanks should also be given Wolfsheimer's aide, Linda Bernhardt.

Praise also goes to all the individuals who were involved in the appeal. In January of 1986 the Friends began their opposition to the Park Village Project. Later others joined in opposition. Prominent was the Peñasquitos Planning Board who later became co-appellants with the Friends. Thanks goes to all the boards' members, particularly Barbara Fisher, Pat Recame, and Paula Taylor. Kathleen Jaworski-Burke of both the board and HOOPA was constantly on "the front line." Similarly, vital support came from the CAC (Pam Stevens) and Sierra Club (Lynn Benn), not to mention large numbers of residents and canyon users. Of course, Friends members were active opposing this project throughout the year.

The Sept. 23 hearing was attended by a large number of people opposing the project which certainly helped. Many arrived on the HOOPA bus.

The Park Village controversy is not over. It is likely to resume in the coming months. But this victory, however, may be a turning point, not only for the Park Village site, but for the entire Preserve.

CAC Report

by Pam Stevens

The Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) continues to recommend in favor of the upgrading of Black Mountain Road as soon as possible between Mira Mesa and Rancho Penasquitos, and against the construction of Camino Ruiz across Penasquitos Canyon.

At the September CAC meeting, Art Shurtleff of Genstar Development gave a presentation on Genstar's plans for building the bridge across Penasquitos Creek for southbound traffic on Black Mountain Road. They are required to do this because of their development in the area, and will build it some time next year. The bridge will be high enough for hikers and riders from Horseman's Park to pass underneath. The City will build the bridge for northbound traffic, but not until 1994-95, when it is scheduled as a project funded by the Mira Mesa Facilities Benefit Assessment.

Until the northbound bridge is built, the existing 2-lane road will serve as the northbound crossing. Riders won't be able to use the trail under the southbound bridge, but will have to cross at the planned signalized intersection at Mercy Road.

The CAC approved the general design for the southbound bridge, with the provision that City Traffic certify that the right-of-way is adequate for three lanes of auto traffic and a two-way bike lane. The CAC also is asking the City to get the northbound bridge built sooner, ideally through a cooperative effort with Genstar to build it simultaneously with the southbound bridge.

A report on the SANDAG-prepared Camino Ruiz/Camino Santa Fe traffic study was presented by Arnold Torma of the City Traffic Department at the September 10 meeting of the Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve Task Force. The Task Force, consisting of City Councilmembers Ed Struiksma and Abbe Wolfsheimer voted 2-0 to accept the report. Task Force member County Supervisor Susan Golding was absent.

However, the Task Force did not discuss the report at length and took no position on whether Camino Ruiz crossing Penasquitos Canyon and Camino

Santa Fe crossing Lopez Canyon should remain in the City's General Plan. Ed Struiksma has previously favored keeping the Camino Ruiz crossing in the plan, but designing it as an "environmentally sensitive" high bridge. Abbe Wolfsheimer has become increasingly critical of the Camino Ruiz crossing, citing the damage to the preserve that would come from even a long, high bridge.

The Camino Ruiz/Camino Santa Fe Traffic study is now scheduled to be heard by the City Council Transportation and Land Use Committee on Monday, October 27. The committee meets in Room 2000, City Administration Building, 202 C Street, San Diego 92101, starting at 9 a.m. To confirm when an item will be heard, call the committee consultant, Betsy McCullough, 236-5987.

The issue of hot air balloons in the Preserve was discussed at both the September and October CAC meetings. At the September meeting, Hans Petermann, a resident of Rancho Penasquitos and representative of the Del Mar Balloonist Association, introduced himself to the group. He explained that since receiving complaints about hot air balloons landing in the preserve, the balloonists had been self-regulating in an attempt to stay clear of the preserve.

At the October CAC meeting, Louis Solis of the City Park & Recreation Department spoke on FAA and City policy on hot air balloons. He said that balloons are considered aircraft, and the FAA has authority over the balloons while they are in flight, but that the City as a landowner can regulate their landing on City property. However, "emergency" landings are generally allowable anywhere.

The big problem with hot air balloons landing in the preserve is that the balloons and their passengers must be retrieved by trucks. This is contrary to policy for a park that's supposed to be set aside for wildlife, hikers and horseback riders, and off-limits to vehicles. Petermann said there was no way a balloon could be "walked" out of the preserve.

Questions were also raised about the balloons possibly disturbing wildlife. Petermann responded that he has flown over deer that were completely unconcerned with the balloon. He also said that white-tailed kites seemed to enjoy being near the balloons to eat prey that were flushed by their passage.

The balloonists are commercial operators who take passengers for a fee on late afternoon/evening flights from Del Mar and points north, landing on undeveloped areas to the east. At the October CAC meeting, Petermann said that the most recent case of landing in the preserve involved two balloons which took off from the Manchester off-ramp of I-5, normally far enough north to avoid any problem, but that winds were strong enough that evening that they were forced south to Penasquitos Canyon.

After much discussion—one might even say, much "hot air"—on the subject, the CAC passed two motions. The first was that the City prohibit hot air balloons landing in the preserve, except in cases of emergency.

The second was that since most balloon landings in the preserve could probably be considered "emergency", the City should establish a fee to be paid by the Balloonists Association in case of any landing in the preserve. The CAC recommended that be done through a permit system, with the Association paying the money in advance. Petermann indicated that the balloonists would probably be agreeable to such an arrangement.

The Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve Task Force is currently scheduled to meet on October 22, but due to a legislative recess that week, the meeting will probably be rescheduled. The next meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee will be on Wednesday, November 5, 4 p.m. at the Canyonside Park community room, Black Mountain Road at Penasquitos Canyon. For more information, call Pam Stevens, 566-2261.

Letters Needed:

Friends are strongly urged to help in the ongoing struggle to limit the impact of developments in the Preserve's east end by writing several letters.

Genstar's currently approved subdivision plans for Park Village on the slopes above the Johnson-Taylor Ranch now require that they get the appropriate permit from the Army Corps of Engineers because they intend to cover and interrupt the existing stream with a road (Brassica Street) and houses. Unless the Corps hears from us, Genstar is sure to be granted a routine permit. Please write your objections to the Corps granting such approval, and ask that they review the Genstar request on an *Individual Permit* basis. Ask the Corps to deny any request to allow construction on top of the *Blue-Line* stream as so designated on the U.S. Geological Survey map. Point out that building in this area will have severe impact on the Peñasquitos watershed and adversely effect the wildlife, riparian and marsh habitat, and archaeological sites. Also mention that the proposed development would be intrusive and cause unwarranted urban pressure on the Preserve because of its proximity. In writing refer to File No. 30180. Please write immediately. Letters should be sent to:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Los Angeles District
P.O. Box 2711 SPLCOR
Los Angeles, CA 90053-2325

Thank you letters are important to the City councilmembers who recently upheld the Friends' appeal on Park Village PRD and denied Genstar's latest subdivision plans (See page 1). They have done a lot of work in protecting the integrity of the Preserve and should hear from us. The following councilmembers should be complimented on their sensitivity and resolve in dealing with the Park Village issue: Gotch, Jones, Wolfsheimer, McColl and Mayor O'Connor. Let them know we appreciate their efforts. Letters can be sent to the above individuals at:

City of San Diego
202 C Street
San Diego, CA 92101

Sorrento Coalition Has Successful Debut

On September 6 the recently formed Sorrento Coalition sponsored a community picnic at the west end of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. The picnic was intended to demonstrate support in opposition against proposed development on Lopez Ridge and Calle Cristobal which would separate Peñasquitos and Lopez Canyons and make Sorrento Valley Boulevard a four-lane thoroughfare. An estimated 300 people attended between 11 am. and 4 pm. Most walked in, others rode their bikes and some supporters arrived on horseback. Formal speeches were made by Lynn Bern, Sierra Club land use chairperson, Jeanne Dunham from Cytotech, Inc., and Leo Wilson on behalf of the Friends. Wayne Bierdick and a friend provided guitar music and Friends offered short nature hikes. The event was covered by Channel 10 TV and the Los Angeles Times. For further information on the Coalition call Rosemary Agent at 455-1330 ext. 448 or write them at P.O. Box 85158, San Diego, CA 92138-5158.

Coastal Commission

continued from page 1

any previous restriction. Despite this, the coastal commission staff oddly maintained no change of circumstances existed. The coastal commission staff also contended the LCP and the prior Genstar permit were consistent. They did this despite the LCP changing the manner in which development could be built on over 25% of the site of genstar's Lopez Ridge project.

The hearing on the extension was held in San Francisco on September 10th. It was not until 7 pm, that the Genstar extension was considered. Of the 20 Coastal Commissioners, only 7, a bare quorum, remained. Most remained only because their physical presence was needed to maintain a quorum. The Agenda rushed through—approximately 20 items in one hour. Under these circumstances, the Friends' objections were given short shrift.

The Friends believe the Coastal Commission acted arbitrarily in extending Genstar's Lopez Ridge permit. The Friends plan to file suit to challenge the Coastal Commission decision in the near future.

October Hike Schedule

Lopez Canyon Hike

Date: Saturday, October 11th
Time: 8:00 am
Length: 3-4 hours
Meet: East end of Sorrento Valley Blvd.
(West end of Preserve)
Info: Call 271-6710

Geology Hike to Waterfall

Date: Sunday, October 19th
Time: 8:00 am
Length: 4 hours
Meet: Canyonside Parking Area
(East end of Preserve)
Info: Call 271-6710

Hikes cancelled in the event of rain.

Interpretative Workshop

The Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon, Inc. are co-sponsoring an Interpretative Workshop with the Western Interpretative Association (WIA) Saturday, October 25th from 1 to 3 pm. The meeting will be held at Canyonside Recreation Building. Individuals who are interested in interpretation techniques are welcome.

Johnson/Taylor Grand Opening

Saturday, November 15, has been set as the grand opening of the first phase restoration of the historic Johnson/Taylor Penasquitos Ranch, according to the County of San Diego. A public open house will take place at the ranch beginning at 2 p.m. The ranch is located at the east end of the preserve, off Black Mountain Road north of Penasquitos Creek. For more information, call Linda Zombeck at the County Department of Park & Recreation.



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(check all that apply)

Hikes

Indian Culture

History of the Rancho

Educational Workshops

School, Family, Youth Programs

The Environment: Plants, Birds,
Mammals, Geology

Other _____



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November 1986 Newsletter

Vol. 2, No. 4

Will Lopez Canyon be Washed Away?

Lopez Canyon is again under siege. The floor of this once lovely canyon, after it was purchased by the city as part of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, was gutted for the laying of a sewer line. The canyon's idyllic stream and riparian habitat were obliterated. Runoff from development adjacent to the upper reaches of the canyon has removed all the topsoil at the eastern end, leaving a sterile sluiceway of cobbles and boulders.

Now the western section of Lopez Canyon apparently will become the dumping ground for runoff from Pacific Corporate Center on the canyon's south

rim. Two 42-inch storm drains were recently installed down 45 degree slopes to the canyon floor. The effect of channeling extensive runoff down the steep canyonsides could have devastating results for the large sycamore trees near the exit of one drain, not to mention the the canyon's narrow flood plain.

These drains were constructed without the required approval of the Peñasquitos Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) or Task Force. The CAC will take up the issue at its next meeting and present its findings to the Task Force.

Dates to Remember

November 15 Bird Hike
November 23 Mystery Hike
December 13 Christmas Holly Hike
December 28 Mistletoe Hike

see reverse for details

Johnson-Taylor Opening Delayed

The November opening of the historic Johnson-Taylor ranch has been canceled. Restoration of the main adobe is complete, but the open house and related events have been postponed until the spring of 1987.

How Peñasquitos got Its Name

by John Northrop

(Editors note: the following is excerpted from the first in a series of articles on the Preserve.)

The name Peñasquitos comes from the Spanish, meaning "little cliffs," in reference to the rugged palisades that rim the canyon. A literal translation of Peñasquitos Cañon is "Canyon of the Little Cliffs." This rim rock is a reddish-colored conglomerate about 1 million years old called the Linda Vista Formation. In the Mira Mesa area this formation is 10 feet thick and is highly resistant to erosion and impervious to water. It forms the flat-topped Lopez Ridge, Mira Mesa and Clairemont Mesa to the south, Del Mar Mesa to the north,

and Torrey Pines Mesa to the west. This coarse, pebble conglomerate forms the ledgy, sometimes overhanging cliffs atop the walls of both Peñasquitos and Lopez Canyons and can be seen readily while hiking in the Preserve or while climbing the trails out of the canyon.

The Linda Vista is a unique feature of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and, indeed, has had much to do with the formation of the Canyon itself, as well as giving it its name. During the weathering and erosion processes that formed the canyon we see today, the soft marine sandstone and clays that make up the canyon's walls have been washed away, while the resistant Linda Vista

formation has sustained the cliffs. This process, called "recession of the cliffs" by John Wesley Powell in the (1876) Exploration of the Colorado describes the way in which cliffs are eaten back by weathering out of soft layers and caving in of the undermined strata.

Early ranchers took advantage of the Little Cliffs in Peñasquitos to keep their cattle from straying. The north rim of Lopez Ridge, for example was never fenced; the only fence up there is a north-south one about opposite the Alverado Crossing of the lower falls. In places where the underlying rock has been eroded out there are caves, the largest of which were used by the Indians for shelter during severe storms. Some are now inhabited by coyotes, fox and rattlesnakes so care is needed when exploring them.



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November Hikes

Bird Hike in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Saturday, November 15th from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Meet at Sorrento Valley Blvd. east (dead end). Bring binoculars, bird book if available, water and snack. Wear sturdy shoes.

Mystery Hike in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Sunday, November 23rd from 8:00 a.m. to noon. Meet at County-City Parking Staging area on Black Mountain Road. Bring Water and a snack. Wear Sturdy Shoes.

December Hikes

Christmas Holly Hike to Toyon Observation Point. Saturday, December 13th from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Meet at Sorrento Valley Blvd. east (dead end). Bring water and snack. Wear sturdy shoes.

Mistletoe Tree Hike in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Sunday, December 28th from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Meet at Sorrento Valley Blvd. east (dead end). Bring water and snack. Wear sturdy shoes.

Notes:

*For more information call Elberta Fleming 271-6710.
Hikes canceled in the event of rain.*

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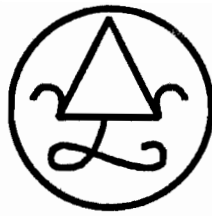
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Hikes | <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Workshops |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indian Culture | <input type="checkbox"/> School, Family, Youth Programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> History of the Rancho | <input type="checkbox"/> The Environment: Plants, Birds, Mammals, Geology |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |



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January 1987 Newsletter

Vol.2, No.5

Critical Sewer Meeting by Elberta Fleming

WATER--the Vital Essence of Man's Existence! It is our most precious natural resource. Yet in the City of San Diego this non-renewable resource is threatened by offshore sewage outfalls, discharges into Mission Bay, and millions of gallons which have fouled Los Peñasquitos Lagoon.

The City of San Diego had "befouled its own nest" so completely, that now governmental action must take place to bring the City into compliance with the CLEAN WATER ACT. There definitely should be controls to prohibit any further sewer hook-ups until these serious violations can be brought into line.

These problems have been tossed back and forth by San Diego city officials and the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Today there are serious consequences not only affecting health and safety, but the City of San Diego is now facing huge fines for non-compliance. QUESTION--who will eventually pay for these fines?

The powerful Building Construction Lobby has so far prevailed on the decision-makers to allow building construction to continue. In northern San Diego there is an uncontrolled building "frenzy." Mountains are levelled, canyons filled in, and huge housing tracts arise almost over night. Many of these land developers and builders are from areas outside of San Diego County. After they have raped the land and reaped their profits--they move on.

Frustration is rampant in many northern communities as the citizens now face traffic grid-locks, impacted schools, homes built on unstable soils, and now--taxpayers from all over San Diego may face the problem of huge fines levied for non-compliance and continued violations of the CLEAN WATER ACT.

Why compound an already serious situation by adding more effluent to an inadequate system until it is brought up to standard?

On January 23, 1987, the Water Quality Control Board and the City of San Diego will wrestle with these complicated situations. Your input is needed. The meeting will be at the State Building, 1350 Front Street. If you are unable to attend, please write about your concerns in care of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region, 6154 Mission Gorge Road, Suite 106, San Diego, CA 92120.

It is also important to write letters to City Council and the City Manager. Your concern may convince them that there is a need to control the present and future building construction until the city is able to comply with the CLEAN WATER ACT. This means a total BAN ON SEWER HOOK-UPS until Pump Station 64 is able to comply with EPA standards and the plant has met all requirements.

Fleming Honored with National Award

Elberta Fleming, charter member and education director of Friend's, was recently recognized for her many achievements in the field of natural science and education. She received the prestigious Founder's Award at the twenty-fourth annual Natural Science Center Conference held in Cleveland, Ohio, in November of this year. This conference was sponsored by the Natural Science For Youth Foundation and the National Audubon Society. Elberta founded and directed the Lake Erie Nature and Science Center for 32 years.

Although already a trained artist, she was inspired by a visit to Anna Billings Gallup, Director of the Brooklyn Children's Museum, Brooklyn, New York, the first such museum in the country, to start her own Children's Nature Center. She set about acquiring a formal educational background to fit her for such a career by persuading the College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio to design a special independent course of study for this purpose. After getting married, she started her Nature Center in her home and backyard, and it was incorporated as the Lake Erie Junior Museum in 1950.

Eleven years later her Nature Center moved into the first unit of a building specially designed for that purpose. That same year she received the Elsie M. B. Naumburg Award by the Foundation for her outstanding work. In 1973 the College of Wooster awarded Elberta an Honorary Doctorate of Humanities Degree in recognition of her development of the Nature Center.



After retirement as Founder-Director Emeritus, she has kept involved by writing an extensive history of the Center. She is working on the fifth volume which includes a follow-up of the careers of over 80 former Curators and Junior Staff Members who were guided to their present positions by their activities at the Center. One of Elberta's former students was Diane Pierce, a gifted artist who did most of the illustrations for National Geographic's field guide to North American birds. In addition to the award, Elberta was presented an original Pierce painting.

Friends are proud and grateful to count "Bert" among our numbers. Congratulations!



Rocks of the Inner Gorge by John Northrop

(ed's note: the following is an excerpt from a series of articles)

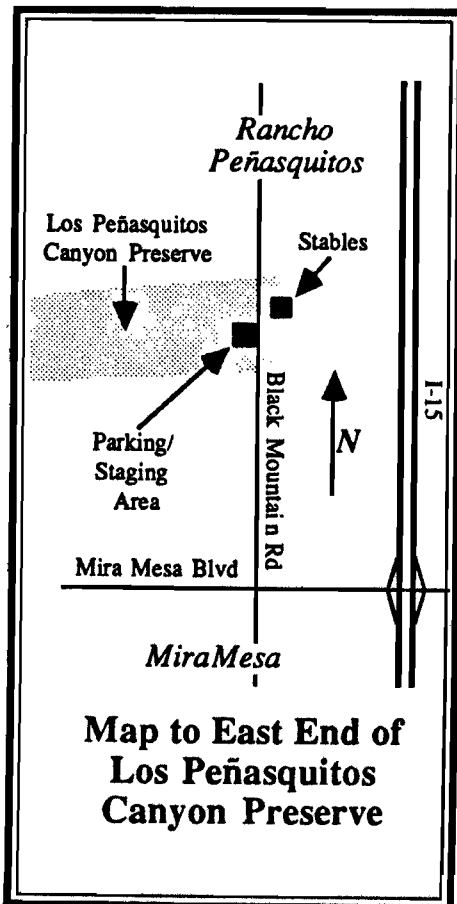
Most of the rock formations we see in Peñasquitos Canyon are sandstones, shales and conglomerates of the La Jolla group. They are about 40 million years old and were deposited in a shallow marine environment that occupied this part of California in Eocene time. There are, however, two inliers of much older rock that are exposed at the falls and about a mile below the falls where Peñasquitos Creek takes a right-angle turn to the north. These ancient rocks, about 140 million years old, are called the Santiago Peak Volcanics and consist of volcanic and metavolcanic rock ranging from basalt (a basic intrusive igneous rock) to rhyolite (an acidic extrusive igneous rock). They are interbedded with black shale and slate layers up to 100 feet thick that contain ammonite and belemnite fossils, which show the rock to be of Jurassic age. Some of the volcanics also contain fossils, indication that they were formed on the ocean floor syngentially with the black shales.

The Santiago Peak Volcanics were formed in a continental margin setting, much like the Japanese Islands are today. During the eons of time that have ensued, they were metamorphosed, compacted, uplifted, tilted and finally covered with the overlying La Jolla group of sedimentary rocks. Then, during the last million years or so, these softer sediments were eroded away by the predecessor to Peñasquitos Creek, which retained its winding course while cutting down into the volcanic rock now exposed at and below the falls. The Santiago Peak volcanics we see today are tilted about 50 degrees to the west, the highest point being the exposure at the falls. The rocks found there appear to be red where exposed, but a fresh surface is dark green to black, the red color coming from oxidation of the iron minerals in the rock. The black shale layers are likewise tilted and are thus exposed to stream erosion which formed the side canyons entering Peñasquitos Creek from the north in the area between the falls and the Alverado Crossing, about 1/2 mile downstream.

Rocks at the gorge, about a mile below the falls, also dip to the west and form a narrow, 50-foot wide gorge with 75-foot vertical sides through which the present day creek flows. At both the falls and gorge the Santiago Peak Volcanics form an underground dam, or sill, over which the creek now flows. Upstream of these sills, ground water is backed up and there are extensive marshes and swampy areas present. These marshy zones support a wide variety of riparian flora and indeed, in summer form a green belt in the otherwise parched canyon floor.

A unique aspect of the Santiago Peak volcanics in Peñasquitos Canyon is the presence of large round-to-oblong shaped boulders, about the size of a cow or a small horse, that lie about the fields on the north side of the creek above both the falls and the gorge. These huge boulders are made of volcanic agglomerate cemented with volcanic ash called "tuff." These boulders were formed on the ocean floor at the time of the intrusion of the lava much as mud balls form; i.e. by rolling down slopes and reaching great size like a snowball. After consolidation, the rocky matrix was cemented together by the volcanic ash, now turned to tuff, and the boulders interbedded with the Santiago Peak suite of volcanic rocks. They were later buried by the subsequent deposition of Eocene sediments, only to be exposed by more recent erosion. Being more resistant than other layers in which they were imbedded, they eventually became undercut and rolled downslope to their final resting place where we see them today, strewn about the canyon floor as if thrown down there by giants. Some of these boulders have small diamond-drill holes in them, reminders of earlier prospecting days when gold was prospected in Peñasquitos.

Another interesting fact about the Santiago Peak volcanics is that the old wagon route through the canyon crossed the creek just above the gorge. This crossing is unique because of its hard, rocky bottom which never becomes muddy as do the other crossings. It is also wider than the other crossings and the water is thus spread out over it so a horse can get through even in the winter floods. It is delightfully cool in summer, with water flowing over the sill and the sides overhanging with willows. Visitors to the Preserve would do well to seek out this historic roadway and traverse it as did the early settlers in San Diego.



The hikes in Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve in 1987 are being planned for the second Saturday and fourth Sunday of each month from January through June.

There will be three meeting areas: Sorrento Valley Blvd. (east) end, City-County Parking/ Staging area on Black Mountain Road, and Acama Street off Montongo Street in Mira Mesa.

January 10: Waterfall hike, Earthquake Valley: Sorrento Valley Blvd.
25: Historical Hike, Road to Yuma: Sorrento Valley Blvd.

February 14: Vernal Pool hike: Acama Street
22: Geology hike, Santiago Peak Volcanics: Black Mt. Road

March: 14: Spring Awakening, early wildflowers: Black Mt. Road
22: Waterfall hike, high waters: Black Mt. Road

April 11: Living off the Land, Indian Foods: Black Mt. Road
26: Mystery Marker Trees: Black Mt. Road

May 9: Lupine Ridge: Acama Street
24: Mesa Mint, Vernal Pools: Acama Street

June: 13: Dawn hike, hot springs: Black Mt. Road
28: Twilight hike: Sorrento Valley Blvd.

During the season there will be other special hikes such as a Photo Safari, Bird, and family hikes offered to special interest groups.

Rain cancels hikes, and there may be some changes in schedule. It will be wise to refer to local newspapers or call 271-6710.



From the Editors--Apologies are due for delays in this issue. Cranky computers and hearty holidays are to blame. Despite reality, deadlines must still be met and we will try to get off disc and on track in a more timely fashion. Your patience and contributions will always be welcome.



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- History of the Rancho

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- School, Family, Youth Programs
- The Environment: Plants, Birds,
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February 1987 Newsletter

Vol. 2, No. 6

Lopez Ridge Project Awaiting EIR Bulldozers are Moving In

By Geoffrey Smith

The Lopez Ridge PRD battle is currently focussing on the pending EIR on the Calle Cristobal/Camino Santa Fe Assessment District. These are the roads which would serve the 1500 unit residential development which has been proposed for the narrow ridge, which is bordered on three sides by the 2000 acre Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. The EIR is expected to be completed very soon, probably late January or February. When it is completed, the public review period shall provide us with an opportunity for expressing our opposition to the housing and road projects.

Several community groups are actively opposing the proposed residential project and roads. The recently formed Sorrento Coalition has met several times, and has secured the written support of over 25 Sorrento Valley businesses, as well as dozens of private individuals and community groups. It is hoped that the Coalition, by representing significant support in both the business community and the private sector, can provide a key influence to the State Coastal Commission and the City Council. Final approval on the Lopez Ridge PRD has not yet been issued by the Coastal Commission.

The recruiting of businesses is a worthwhile but time-consuming task. Each business endorsement represents

continued on page 3

Is Development-Caused Mud Slide a Prelude to Serious Degradation of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve?

by John Northrop

After the rainfall on December 19, 1986, a large mud slide occurred on the south wall of Lopez Canyon within the boundaries of the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. An estimated 60,000 cubic feet of muddy water, 400 feet of 38-inch diameter concrete sewer pipe and 15 concrete abutments, plus other debris, were included in the slide which initially dammed up Lopez Creek. Later this dam broke out and an estimated 100,000 cubic feet of silt-laden flood water went down Lopez Creek, into Peñasquitos Canyon, and was deposited in Peñasquitos Lagoon. The broken pipe remained at the bottom of the slide.

This mud slide/debris flow originated in a storm drain, dug by the McKeller Corporation, that was not completed before the rainy season began. During drain construction on the mesa rim, boulders and other debris had fallen down the canyon wall and onto the hiking trail, which caused considerable controversy from the time this storm drain was started in October, 1986. Therefore, we have been able to reconstruct the scenario that led to the disaster and to present a possible solution to prevent developers from being allowed to repeat a chain of events that has proved not only destructive to the fragile environment of Lopez Canyon and Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and lagoon, but also could be a prelude to serious degradation

of our canyon park.

The problem can be traced to the long established city policy of directing flood waters from roads to canyon bottoms. Because of this policy, developers' plans for construction on the mesa tops surrounding Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve always contain provision for storm drains diverting runoff from newly constructed roads and parking lots to neighboring canyons. This procedure was followed in the present instance. Detailed plans submitted by the McKeller Corporation were approved by the City on June 16, 1986. Construction of the storm drain started in October. Following inquiries made by concerned citizens, the site was viewed by members of the McKeller Corporation, personnel of the Park and Recreation Department and members of the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizens Advisory Committee on December 10. At that time the trench was 400 feet long, 10 feet wide and 14 feet deep and had been cut normal to the 45-degree slope on the north facing wall of Lopez Canyon. A question regarding the peak amount of water that the system was designed to carry was posed, but went unanswered by city officials.

The next week about 50 sections of 6 feet long, 38 inch diameter concrete pipe installed alongside an existing sewer line were reinforced by 15 concrete abutments

continued on page 2

Mud Slide (continued from page 1)

emplaced in the trench parallel to the contour lines to prevent gravity induced sliding. They were spaced about 30 feet apart, being closer together at the top where the slope is steeper. An earth dam was also built along the top of the slope to prevent water from getting into the trench. The rain of December 19 collected behind this wall and broke through in 4 places. There were thus three ancillary gullies created by the flood waters within about 100 yards of the main ditch which was in fact flushed out. All of the pipe and debris, plus an estimated 60,000 cubic feet of water, and the entire contents of the storm drain were dumped on the floor of Lopez Canyon, which is part of the Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve.

We thus have a God-given yet controlled experiment upon which to base our calculations of the effect of developers' storm drains on Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve in general and Lopez Canyon in particular. Far from being purely an academic exercise, this is a real world problem now because the present plans for Genstar's development of Lopez Ridge, directly across Lopez Canyon from the present disaster area, include the construction of 30 storm drains to divert rainwater into Lopez Canyon from the streets and paved parking lots proposed for this 1500 unit housing development. The scenario is alarmingly similar to the McKeller site not only because the rock formations and precipitation are the same, but also because Genstar's plans call for making a 35 feet "sky cut" and removal of 3 million cubic yards of rock from the top of Lopez Ridge, similar to the one made by McKeller on the south side of Lopez Canyon. The material removed is used to fill in side canyons which originally drained the area and then the storm drains are put in to carry off the rain water instead.

What can we learn from all this? First of all, we must impress City planners with the fact that, generally speaking, the natural ground cover and vegetation on the slopes of coastal canyons, including Penasquitos, have evolved through the last million years or so in such a way that, combined with the natural drainage pattern, runoff is minimal except in few tributary canyons. Most of the side canyons have developed alluvial fans [a fan-shaped buildup of soil] at their mouths, thus distributing the outwash over a larger area and greatly reducing the erosion. Diverting storm water into canyon bottoms unprepared and unable to handle it will cause rapid erosion and devastation to sections of Penasquitos and Lopez Canyons. This fact is well illustrated in the McKeller drain where the problem was compounded because material from the 25 feet "sky cut" on the canyon rim was dumped in the side canyon that formerly drained the area southward and away from the canyon rim. Thus all of the developed area, about 17 acres, was changed from hilly grassland to a graded plain sloping toward the canyon rim instead of the side canyon that not only has an alluvial fan at its mouth but also contained an old sediment catchment basin.

As I see it, the modus operandi of diverting storm drains into canyon bottoms to prevent street flooding should be modified when the canyon bottom is a park or, as in the present instance, a preserve. Extended, stricter hillside review zones should also be adopted by the City Council for Penasquitos, as was approved for Tecolote Canyon. Also, construction on steep slopes must be prohibited within the period November 15 through March 31. This last point is punctuated here because the Pacific Corporate Center's storm drain, similar in all respects to the one discussed above, was emplaced about a mile further upstream from the McKeller drain and backfilled before the rain of Dec. 19 and was not damaged. Further, the hydraulic effect of directing concentrated runoff to canyon bottoms should be reexamined. In the case of both the storm drains discussed above, the outflow of the drains was designed to be equipped with dispersers in order to reduce the water velocity to almost nothing. However, the outpouring is still a point source and, more importantly, the water is discharged where there was little or none before. Add to this the fact that replacing natural vegetation with asphalt and roof tops more than doubles the amount of runoff.

What else can we do to prevent future developments on the mesa tops surrounding Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve from ruining it? The first is to be sure that developers plans are reviewed by the Coastal Commission, since the Preserve lies within their jurisdiction. This Commission requires that construction be completed before January 15. McKeller's grading occurred within the coastal zone but was not completed within the time limit in effect for their permit. They are thus subject to a civil fine not to exceed \$10,000. However the damage has already been done, whether they get fined or not.

Another check point would be the approval of the City's Park and Recreation Division. In the present instance, the approval of the McKeller storm drain was considered routine. In the future, such requests must be given much more scrutiny. In addition, it is recommended that storm drains should be prohibited from leading into the narrow [200 feet wide] Lopez Canyon and directed elsewhere. What is alarming is that Genstar's 1500-unit Lopez Ridge Planned Residential Development [PRD], scheduled for the spring of 1987, includes 30 similar storm drains into Lopez Canyon. Directing storm drains into Penasquitos Canyon Preserve, which has a long history of flooding, would not only increase the flood damage there but also contribute additional siltation to Penasquitos Lagoon. What is needed here is a requirement that developers of property around Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve contribute funds to mitigate flooding of the Preserve. Such a plan is now in force in the area directly surrounding Penasquitos Lagoon. It should be extended to include Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve. Another option would be a requirement that diversionary U-shaped trenches, or gutters, be built along the canyon rim by the developer. This type of diversion channel is routinely used to protect highways, farms, and nurseries

from excess slope water runoff and could be used around the rim of Penasquitos Canyon Preserve when developed to direct the flood waters to existing drainage areas.

It is urgent that plans for drainage from developments surrounding canyon parks should be reexamined in the light of what happened in the case of the McKeller drain and changes made to avoid degradation of parks by future developers' storm drains. A study should be done to ascertain not only the number of storm drains presently planned but also the amount of water they are designed to carry and the effects on the Preserve.

Time is growing very short--public pressure is urgently needed to bring about enforcement of anti-flood requirements and plans for Lopez ridge where test borings have already been made for construction of this 1500-unit PRD. Although the PRD has already been approved by the Planning Commission, it has not been before the City Council. Members are thus urged to voice their concerns to their representatives on the council and the planning commission [all at the City Administration Building, 202 C Street, San Diego, CA 92101] as well as Susan Golding, the County Representative on the Penasquitos Task Force, at the County Office Building, 1500 Pacific Highway, San Diego, CA 92101, and the San Diego Coast Regional Commission, 1333 Camino Del Rio South, Suite 125, San Diego, CA 92108. Those interested in contributing to the preservation of the environment in Penasquitos may contact the Friends of Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc., P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92126, or the Sorrento Coalition, P.O. Box 210262, San Diego, CA 92121. Active participation in monthly meetings of the Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizens' Advisory Committee is encouraged. The committee meets the first Wednesday of the month at 4 P.M. at Canyonside Park on Black Mt. Road at the entrance to the Johnson-Taylor Ranch near the baseball field. The Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve Task Force meets quarterly in Room 2000, City Hall, 202 C Street San Diego. Call Councilwoman Wolfsheimer's office, 236-6611, for times and dates of upcoming meetings.

It will take all our efforts to preserve this valuable open space resource. Please help--do your part, and write your letters today.

Voices of the Future

Under a grant from the California Council of Humanities, Friends' board member and education director Bert Fleming helped develop a program for area elementary schools. Fourth graders at five schools participated in this special project which focused on cultural, natural and historical aspects of Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve. In addition to classroom discussions, the students went on field trips in the Preserve. Subsequently they wrote letters to various politicians and members of the media to draw attention to their concerns about the Preserve. The following verbatim excerpts are from fourth graders at Sundance School in Rancho Penasquitos.

"I wrote this letter because I want to help save Penasquitos canyon. I don't like the fact that they want to build there and I'm very disappointed that your letting them. For one your destroying nature and for two your destroying our history. I also think it is wrong of you to level mountains and then fill them in with fill, and then the soil will decide to move and the house will be in danger. Please help stop the building."

"There is a big problem concerning Penasquitos canyon. You see, there are houses going up right next to the canyon. They are building them on unstable soil. It is unstable because it is on a fill. And if they build there they will be wrecking a stream and some beautiful Tuna cacti that the indians brought there all the way from Mexico. Also, they will be robbing of animals from their natural habitat."

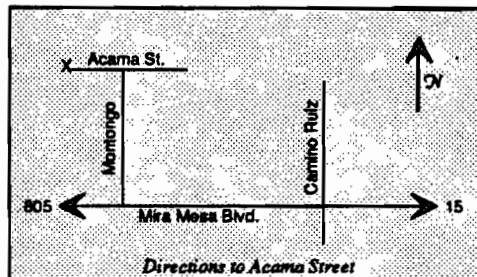
"... and this is a very important letter. I took a trip with my class to Los Penasquitos Canyon for a walk. I learned alot of things there like there is a stream running through the canyon that feeds the anamals there. andthe biggest cactus I every saw that fed the Indians when they romed the land. And that there is a real-a-state building on unstable land and there still going to build on the land and I'm asking you to stop the building on that area. Thank you."

"I would like you to broadcast this next paragraph if you can.

I live in a small community called penasquitos. My favorit place there is the Penasquitos Canyon Preserve. This is a good place for hiking and biking to see many wild life and wild plants. But so much building is going to the park so it will be down and covered by housing development.

I hope you can broadcast this letter so people will listed and fight to stop this development."

"I think that they should build in a different place because of all the plants and animals that live there. Also because it's a preserve. Haven't they heard the saying 'Take only pictures, leave only footprints.' I hope you can help me."



Lopez Ridge EIR

continued from page 1

many phone calls and letters to the company management, with personal contacts necessarily being performed during working hours. Calle Cristobal would bring Mira Mesa traffic into Sorrento Valley via a widened and extended Sorrento Valley Blvd, which currently dead ends at the west end of the Preserve. The negative impact that additional traffic flow from Mira Mesa along Sorrento Valley Boulevard would have on the business community is great, and the area businesses can be made to understand that, given sufficient time and attention.

As this article is being written, a soil engineering firm is at work on Lopez Ridge with their bulldozers, drills and backhoes, digging "test holes" for soil stability studies in preparation for construction. Although this activity cannot be considered "construction" per se, the use of heavy equipment such as this is a clear indication that time is running out. Support is needed. Action must be taken.

To help in the recruitment of support for the Coalition, or to assist in mailings or letter writing, please contact Geoffrey Smith, 3541 Burbank Court, San Diego, CA, 92111, 576-9027. This project *can be stopped* with your help

FEBRUARY HIKES

VALENTINE DAY HIKE: Visit the Vernal Pools

Saturday, February 14

Meet at Acama Street, west end-off of Montongo Street, Mira Mesa, see map above.

Time: 8:00 a.m.-three to four hour hike

Bring water and snack, Wear sturdy shoes.

Rain cancels.

GEOLOGY HIKE: Santiago Peak volcanics

Sunday, February 22

Meet at Parking, Staging area, Black Mountain Road

Time: 8:00 a.m.-four hour hike

Bring water and snack, wear sturdy shoes

Rain cancels.

BIRD HIKE:

Saturday, February 28

Meet at Parking-Staging area, Black Mountain Road

Time: 7:30 a.m.

Bring binoculars and bird book if possible

Rain cancels.

MARCH HIKES

Special Bird Hikes:

March 8, east end

March 15, east end

March 29, west end

Regular Hikes:

March 14, Spring & Wildflowers, east end

March 22, Waterfalls, east end

March 28, Walden's Pond, east end



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- History of the Rancho
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- The Environment: Plants, Birds, Mammals, Geology
- Other _____



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and send to:
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Your donation is tax deductible.
Thank you for your support!



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(619) 271-6710 • 672-3896 • 755-8775

March 1987 Newsletter - Volume 2 No. 7

RIDIN' ROUND PENASQUITOS

by John Northrop

The Lopez Canyon ride is considered one of the most beautiful of all the trails in Penasquitos Canyon Preserve. This canyon, bought by the City of San Diego about 5 years ago for inclusion in the Preserve, was originally a Mexican land grant in the 1840's to Bonifacio Lopez, one the well known Lopez pioneers in San Diego. The rancho was occupied by the Lopez family for over 100 years, right down to 1952. Remains of the ranch house and stone-masonry water tower are still there, as are the fruit trees. The best time to make this ride is in spring when the fruit trees are in blossom. According to Allen Rothero, who knew the Lopez family, the largest of the pear trees was transplanted from Casa del Lopez in Old Town. It stills bears fruit.

To reach the Lopez Homestead, starting at the parking staging area or Horseman's Park on Black Mt. road, ride down Penasquitos Canyon about two and a half miles until you reach the SDG&E power lines. Take the SDG&E service road up Lopez Ridge and then ride west along the top of Lopez Ridge about 2 miles to Lookout Point. You'll know you are there because an old pickup truck that was run over the canyon edge many years ago is visible on the slope.

After passing this point, continue west for a few hundred yards and take the left branch of the trail. This leads down into Lopez Canyon near the original Lopez cattle fence, part of which is still wrapped around the sycamore tree trunks which in turn have grown over the wire. Ride on downstream until you come to where the old Lopez Road enters the canyon from the south. The site of the original ranch house is on the north side of the creek directly opposite this trail, and the orchard is on the south

(continued on page 2)

HIKE SCHEDULE FOR MARCH

Spring Wildflower Hike

Saturday, March 14. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Parking/Staging area off Black Mountain Road. Wear sturdy shoes. Bring water and snack. Three to four hour hike. Rain cancels.

Bird Hike

Sunday, March 15. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at Parking/Staging area off Black Mountain Road. Bring binoculars, bird book if available. Rain cancels.

Geology Hike, Santiago Peak Volcanics

Sunday, March 22. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Parking/Staging area off Black Mountain Road. Four hour hike. Wear sturdy shoes. Bring water and snack. Rain cancels.

Walden's Pond

Saturday, March 28. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Parking/Staging area off Black Mountain Road. Four hour hike. Wear sturdy shoes. Bring water and snack. Rain cancels.

Bird Hike

Sunday, March 29. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at east end of Sorrento Valley Boulevard. Bring binoculars and bird book if available. Rain cancels.



RACCOON

Ridin' (from page 1)

The water tower is on the hillside west of the homestead. The seep from which water was obtained is in a grove of sycamore trees directly down slope from the tower and across the creek from it.

While in Lopez Canyon, note the bulky trunks of the sycamore trees where their branches were lopped off at shoulder height to make logs for Lopez' smoke house.

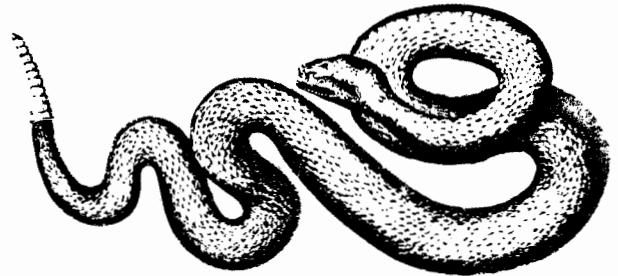
To complete the ride, continue down the trail to Penasquitos Creek and ride back up it to the start. The ride can be made in the opposite direction by starting at the west end of the Preserve (or riding down it) and going up Lopez Canyon, up Lopez Ridge and then down the power lines trail to Penasquitos.

There are several other trails that lead up Lopez Ridge from Penasquitos: one at the falls, Alverado Crossing, the lower gorge, the "narrows," and one at the present hang glider area. These trails all have counterparts up the north side of Penasquitos as well, including the power lines trail, and were used by the early settlers to cross Penasquitos Canyon. The power lines trail, for example, continues northward to Carmel Mt. Road east of Del Mar Mesa; the falls trail goes north to Walden Pond and thence to the intersection of Hollywood and Vine streets on Del Mar Mesa; the Alverado Crossing trail continues northward to Del Mar Mesa; the trail at the gorge goes on up the north rim and over into Shaw Valley; the Narrows trail heads north to the old Mecklenseck Homestead. Thus riders from San Dieguito Valley, Rancho Santa Fe, Carmel Valley and Shaw Valley can make the Lopez Canyon ride by approaching directly from the north.

An interesting variation on the Lopez ride is to start as before, but follow the SDG&E power lines trail right over the top of Lopez Ridge and down into Lopez Canyon and follow it downstream. This ride is a little tougher because the upper part of the canyon has no flood plain, and is a boulder strewn wash that is not only hard on the horses' feet, but hot in summer and treacherous in winter. However, it's a good trail to know about because after Genstar builds its 1500-unit PRD and four lane highway (Calle Cristobal) atop Lopez Ridge, it will be the only trail left and we'll have to fight for

that. As things now stand, the Master Plan for Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve shows this trail, and a small park where it crosses Calle Cristobal. However, the Master Plan has yet to be officially approved and the developers' plans recently presented at the Citizens Advisory Committee for the Preserve have not shown this trail.

All concerned riders and hikers who wish to keep access to Lopez Canyon Trail open should make their wishes known to local community planning groups, the CAC, City Planning Department, County Board of Supervisors and the City Council. Without input from the local level, this valuable bit of San Diego's heritage will be lost forever.



RATTLESNAKES!

Anyone who spends much time hiking in Penasquitos Canyon will eventually encounter one of its most common residents, the rattlesnake. In fact there is more than one species found locally, yet they are poorly understood and greatly feared. A special two-lecture program on rattlesnakes, their natural history, snakebite prevention and treatment, is being offered by the San Diego Natural History Museum on Wednesday May 6, 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. This will be a rare chance to hear from the experts and ask questions. Dr. Gregory Pregill, the Museum's Curator of Herpetology, will speak first about the natural history, taxonomy and behaviour of these venomous snakes, as well as their field identification. During the second half, Dr. Findlay Russell, one of the world's foremost authorities on the aspects of snakebites, will discuss the physiology, toxicology and pharmacology of rattlesnake venom. There will be an informal reception afterward where participants can meet the lecturers. For more information call the Museum's Education department at 232-3821.

VOICES ARE HEARD

In the last newsletter we printed some excerpts from letters written to various politicians and members of the media by fourth grade students at Sundance school following a program and field trip to Penasquitos Canyon Preserve. Michael Tuck of 10 NEWS received several such letters, and was moved to devote his "Perspective" television news editorial to the subject. In his comentary, Tuck said: "I was touched most, perhaps, by this letter from a little girl who wrote: 'They'd be building on a part of history. We will do what we can to save our canyon. I hope you will help us.' Well, I'm using their words because they say it beter than I could. Maybe somebody will listen to them."

The following verbatim excerpts are typical of those sent to Mr. Tuck:

"I don't think that its fair that the animals don't get to roam around as much. And the people are destroying history and plants. The workers work so hard for a waste. They build on unstable ground. They are destroying a natural habitat and streams and all sorts of natural things."

"... that they had much wildlife and people were going to build in the canyon. That would mean no homes for the animals. Everyone is worried about extinction but not about building which could cause extinction. I hope this letter will help people understand that too much nature is being destroyed every day."

"I have a problem. You see we have a place called Los Penasquitos canyon. I like the place, its wildlife and plants. But now there are builders there checking the soil and before you know it they're going to start building. I don't want this to happen because I like the canyon. I jog there sometimes with my dad and we both like it. I'm writing to you hoping that you will help keep the canyon as nice of a place as its ever been."

"It will also be destroying history like the tuna cactus. It will destroy rivers and streams. Deer, racons, birds, tranchales and other animals will die."

APRIL HIKE SCHEDULE

Bird Hike

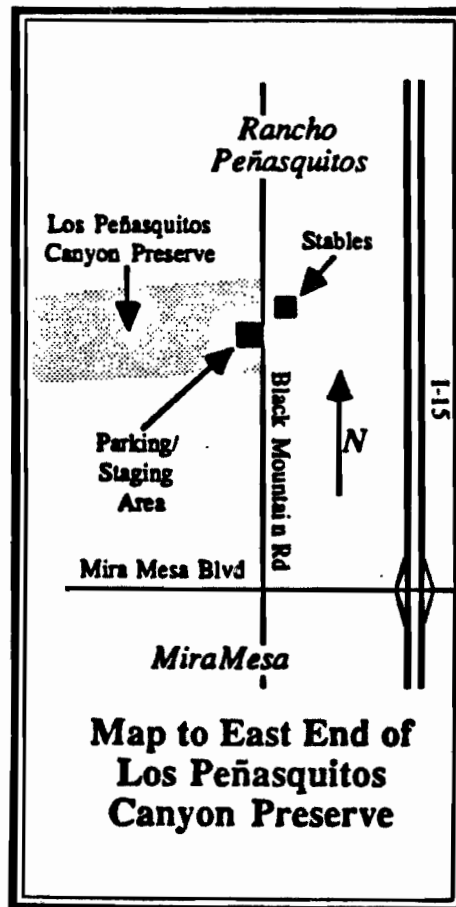
Sunday, April 5. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Parking/Staging area off Black Mountain Road. Bring binocluars and bird book if available. Rain cancels.

Living off the Land, Indian Foods

Saturday, April 11. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Parking/Staging area off Black Mountain Road. Wear sturdy shoes, bring water and a snack. Rain cancels.

Mystery Marker Trees

Sunday, April 26. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Parking/Staging area off Black Mountain Road. Wear sturdy shoes. Bring water and snack. Rain cancels.





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- Indian Culture
- History of the Rancho
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- The Environment: Plants, Birds, Mammals, Geology
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June 1987 Newsletter - Volume 2 No. 10

RIDIN' ROUN' PENASQUITOS

This is the fourth article in a series by Dr. John Northrop that has received many complements from our readers.

RIDE TO THE OLD ADOBE

There are three adobe buildings within the boundaries of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve: the Ruiz adobe, built in 1824 for Captain Francisco Maria Ruiz, the first Commandant of the San Diego Presidio; the Johnson-Taylor Ranch, built in 1861 for George A. Johnson, a Colorado River steamship captain; and the Mohnike adobe, built by cattle rancher Charles F. Mohnike in 1916. The Mohnike adobe, on the east side of Black Mountain Road, is now the manager's domicile at Horseman's Park; the Johnson-Taylor adobe across the road from this is being remodeled into a Museum and Park Headquarters; and the Ruiz Hacienda, here called the old adobe, at the west end of the Preserve, is now in ruins and has been roofed over to help preserve its remaining 3-foot thick walls.

The quickest way to get to the old adobe is to follow the main trail (from the Horseman's Park end) for six miles down to the west end of the Preserve. For a more leisurely ride, all three adobes can be visited by starting at Horseman's Park and then going to the Johnson-Taylor Ranch on the north side of Peñasquitos Creek and following the old wagon and stage

[continued on page 2]

HIKE SCHEDULE FOR JUNE

BIRD HIKE

Saturday, June 6. Meet at Sorrento Valley Blvd. east (dead end) at 7:30 a.m. Bring binoculars and bird book if available, water and a snack. Wear sturdy shoes. Rain Cancels.

DAWN HIKE

Saturday, June 13. Meet at Black Mountain Road Parking/Staging area at 6:00 a.m. Bring water and a snack. Wear sturdy shoes. Rain Cancels.

MCGUIRE RIDGE HIKE

Saturday, June 20. For those that would like to hike and view McGuire Ridge for perhaps the last time (before development destroys it). Meet at the end of Aveneda Del Gato, Mira Mesa (Camino Ruiz north to end, left on Santa Arrinta, 3 "blocks" then right on Aveneda Del Gato) at 12:00 NOON. Bring water and wear sturdy shoes. Rain Cancels. For more information call Paul McGuire, 578-3421.

TWILIGHT HIKE

Sunday, June 28. Meet at Sorrento Valley Blvd. east (dead end) at 5:30 p.m. Bring food and a beverage. Wear sturdy shoes. Rain Cancels.

RIDIN' [FROM PAGE 1]

route from there to the west end of the Preserve and the old adobe.

To reach the Johnson-Taylor Ranch from Horseman's Park, cross Black Mountain Road to the Parking/Staging area and follow the trail on the south side of Penasquitos Creek west to the first crossing. Cross over to the north side and ride down to the Johnson-Taylor adobe. The old wagon road goes west from there down to the stream crossing about two miles further west. After the crossing, it stays on the south side of the creek where the main trail now goes around the falls. Then it crosses over to the pasture on the north side. After crossing the creek there, follow the trail due west until it appears to vanish into a thicket of willows. Ride on under the willow boughs and through the water. The road bed is hard and doesn't get muddy during floods (when using this crossing after heavy rain, high boots are a must). Continue west on the south side of the creek to the adobe or recross it further down and take Kearney's trail to the west end of the Preserve and cross the creek one final time to reach the old adobe. When crossing the creek, look out for deep holes in the channel where its narrow; the wide, reed-filled places are safer. (This part of the creek bed was dug out by the Ruiz/Alverado ranchers to drain the flanking meadows so that they would be suitable for agricultural purposes. That's why the channel is straight and has flanking "levees").

On the return trip, the quickest way is to follow the main trail east to the Parking/Staging area. For an alternate route back, cross the creek and return via the trail on the north side, crossing and recrossing the creek in such a manner that you "figure 8" the stream course and ride on the south side where you had been on the north side on the way down and vice versa. You can repeat a piece of history on this ride as part of the

trail below the falls on the north side of the creek was used by General Kearney in his march to San Diego after the Battle of San Pasquel in 1846.

Other alternate routes back include riding up the north side of the canyon and then eastward along the north rim, or riding back along Lopez Ridge or Lopez Canyon. If returning via Lopez Ridge or Lopez Canyon, continue east until you reach the power lines service road, then turn north and follow the trail down into Penasquitos.

When coming back along Lopez Ridge, look out for trucks and bulldozers because Genstar has started grading 96,000 cubic yards of earth for an "animal crossing" there, even though their proposed access road, Calle Cristobal, has not received final approval and the Environmental Impact Report for the assessment district isn't even out yet!

When coming back along the north rim of Penasquitos Canyon, follow the trail on the mesa top eastward to Del Mar Mesa and then ride back down into Penasquitos via Walden Pond or continue east and come down the power lines trail.

The ride to the old adobe can be made any time of year except after a heavy rain when the Penasquitos Creek is flooded and the trail gets very muddy below the falls where the Santiago Peak Volcanic rocks are deeply weathered and form a reddish soil that turns to gumbo. The trails on both Lopez Ridge and on the north rim of Penasquitos Canyon, on the other hand, are passable even in wet weather because they are on the Linda Vista Formation which affords good footing. Don't ride in the vernal pools, though, because they become very boggy when wet.

Allow about four hours for this ride if you have a good horse; more if you don't, or if it's hot.

SUMMER SAFARI - 1987

What are the mysteries of Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve? Children enrolled in the SUMMER SAFARI will discover the magic of this beautiful historical canyon.

This enrichment program is again offered by the Friends of Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc. and sponsored by the Los Penasquitos Recreation Council and HOOPA (Homeowners of Penasquitos Association).

Safari headquarters will be at Penasquitos Canyonside Park off Black Mountain Road.

SESSION I: July 13-17 for grades 2, 3, and 4; 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

SESSION II: July 20-24 for grades 4, 5, and 6; 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

FEE: \$40 includes craft materials, rental of room and insurance.

Children enrolled in the SUMMER SAFARI will explore the chaparral jungles and cool oak woodlands. Pond scouping expeditions will investigate neighboring streams. Miniature drops of water will reveal microscopic miracles. Tracking native animals will be an added adventure.

Who formerly lived in this beautiful canyon? The early indians occupied the canyon as far back as 10,000 years before present. Spanish explorers, Mission Fathers, Mexican Californios and early American settlers are also an important part of the Canyon history.

Actual "live experiences" and creative crafts projects related to the natural environment and past cultures will stimulate the children's curiosity. They are encouraged to use their imagination to create and invent. The new horizons introduced in this program will further enrich their lives.

The SUMMER SAFARI offers an excellent opportunity for boys and

girls working towards proficiency badges in Nature, Indian Cultures, and Creative Crafts.

For pre-registration and further information call 271-6710 or write to Dr. Elberta Fleming, 10311 Caminito Surabaya, San Diego, CA 92131.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

A very warm welcome to the 200th member of Friends of Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Ellen Feeney of San Diego

ANNUAL MEETING

The Second Annual Meeting of the Friends was held on Wednesday May 27th at 7:00 p.m. at Canyonside Park at the east end of the Preserve. The first order of business was the election Officers and Directors of the Board. The following Officers were elected for 1-year terms:

- PRESIDENT Mr. Leo Wilson
- VICE-PRESIDENT ... Mr. Donald Albright
- SECRETARY Ms. Jean Ealson
- TREASURER Mr. Michael McCormick

The following Directors-at-Large were elected for 2-year terms:

Ms. Teri Jones and Mr. Robert Sauers

The following Directors-at-Large will continue in office until their term expires in May 1988:

Dr. Elberta Flemming, Mr. Fred Jacobs and Mr. William Evarts.

The "ex officio" member of the Friends Board representing the Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizens Advisory Committee is Ms. Pam Stevens.

ANNUAL MEETING (Continued)

Following the business portion of the Annual Meeting, Dr. Susan Hector provided the Friends and guests with an update on the archeological excavations at the Johnson-Taylor Ranch and the archival research that has accompanied them. Contract work was begun in 1983. The objective was to perform some archeological tests at the adobe and determine what, if any, valuable artifacts could be found prior to restoration of the adobe. In the past year, both excavation and archival research have surfaced some very interesting historical material. Items have been found and carbon dated from 3000 to 4000 years BP (before present). Much work remains to be done in identifying, dating and cross referencing many other objects. In combination with archival research of records from the San Diego "Prehistoric" period beginning in approximately 1769, we will someday have a much more accurate account of who lived in and visited the canyon and what occurred when. The efforts conducted over the past few years have already provided invaluable insight into the historical significance of the canyon. The Friends of Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc. thank Dr. Hector for her most informative update. The reconstruction of the North Wing (Wing A) of the adobe is projected to occur over the summer months and be open to the public sometime this fall.

LOPEZ RIDGE APPEAL

COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEE TO TAKE ACTION
MONDAY, JUNE 8 AT 9:00 (1st ITEM)

12th FLOOR, COMMITTEE ROOM
CITY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
202 C STREET, DOWNTOWN

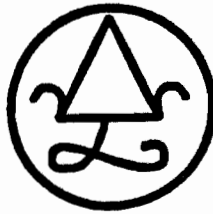
During the week of April 19, Genstar

Southwest Development, Inc. proceeded with grading and construction of a wildlife corridor underpass beneath the right of way of proposed Calle Cristobal. Several alert citizens discovered this activity and immediately filed an appeal for a hearing on the permit, which had been issued by the City of San Diego Engineering Department. The reason for the filing of the appeal generally are as follows:

1. Maps for the Lopez Ridge PRD have not yet been finalized. The corridor project is proceeding nevertheless, with only tentative maps.
2. The EIR on the Calle Cristobal-Camino Santa Fe assessment district is still under development. Therefore the road is not a certainty at this point in time, and no work should be performed on the right of way for the road.
3. The choice of this particular location for a wildlife undercrossing is poor, insofar as the original EIR for the development shows that wildlife in the area tend not to use this area for traversing the ridge, preferring instead several other low points on the ridge further to the east. Furthermore, the amount of grading which has already been performed would seem to present a deterrent to the animals.

Grading and construction on the part of Genstar was presumable motivated by Genstar's desire to become invested in the project, thereby eliminating the need to file for an extension to their Costal Commission permit.

Work has been halted on the project and the transportation and land use sub-committee of the City Council heard the appeal at its May 11 meeting. In the more than one hour of testimony, Genstar's presentation was met by an organized presentation from



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FRIENDS OF LOS PEÑASQUITOS CANYON PRESERVE, INC.

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July/August 1987 Newsletter - Volume 2 No. 11

RIDIN' ROUN' PENASQUITOS

This is the fifth article in a series by Dr. John Northrop, Member of the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon.

RIDE TO MCGONICLE CANYON

McGonicle Canyon, the next major canyon north of Peñasquitos, is easily accessible from any of the trails on the North Rim of Peñasquitos Canyon. The easiest way to get there from the park entrance on Black Mountain Road is to ride down to the Falls and take the trail up the side canyon north of the Falls to Waldon Pond. Continue on past the pond until reaching the mesa top at the hamlet of Del Mar Mesa. Then take the east-west dirt road (Shaw Ridge Road) westward from the intersection where the old Hollywood & Vine road sign is displayed. Follow this road past Bob Loftin's Ranch and Blumfield's Stable for about a mile to Carmel Valley Road and McGonicle Canyon.

On the return ride, you can go south directly into Shaw Valley and ride up it to Del Mar Mesa or continue south and ride up the old driveway to the Mecklenseck Homestead which once stood in the grove of eucalyptus trees atop the mesa. The homestead, built in 1890, was destroyed by bulldozers in 1984 several years after Walter Mecklenseck died there. If returning this way, note the two windmills in the valley below the homestead site.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 2]

JULY/AUGUST HIKE SCHEDULE

The Friends have decided not to curtail hikes through the Canyon during July and August, the HOTTEST (temperature-wise) time of the year. However, they have been scheduled late in the day.

JULY HIKES

BIRD HIKES

Saturday, July 18. Parking-Staging area on Black Mt. Road at 4:30 P.M.

Saturday, July 26. Sorrento Valley Blvd., east (dead end) at 4:30 P.M.

AUGUST HIKES

BIRD HIKE

Saturday, August 8. Parking-Staging area, Black Mt. Road at 4:30 P.M.

TWILIGHT HIKE

Saturday, August 15. Peñasquitos Canyonside Park ball fields westside parking lot at 6:00 P.M.

BIRD HIKE

Sunday, August 23. Parking-Staging area, Black Mt. Road at 4:30 P.M.

MYSTERY HIKE

Sunday, August 30. Peñasquitos Canyonside Park ball fields westside parking lot at 6:00 P.M.

[ED. NOTE: SEE PAGE 5 FOR MAPS AND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ALL HIKES!]

RIDIN' [CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]
These were once used to pump water for the farm.

There are several other interesting and historical sights worth noticing on this ride: the antique shop, which was originally a one room school house, is adjacent to the now closed Rudi's Hidden Acres Restaurant, and Lori Justice's 100-year old farm house is about half a mile south in Shaw Valley.

To the east there are two large stables: Seabreeze Farms, a thoroughbred horse farm owned by Harry Pollonetta at the intersection of Carmel Valley Road and Black Mountain Road; and Little McGonicle Ranch, a boarding and training stable, that is about half a mile further east on the south side of Carmel Valley Road. The Victorian-era house at Little McGonicle, which belongs to the Knechtel family, was moved to its present location from further down the valley several years ago. There is a large, spring-fed pond once used for raising frogs, near the house.

There are two other stables west of Little McGonicle: Peppertree Farms and Rancho Del Carmel, as well as Bob Stevens' Carmel Mountain Ranch that boasts a 65-foot schooner in the yard, and a fish farm. The Stevens' home is also a victorian-era house that was built originally as a retreat by the Sisters of Mercy around the turn of the century and has an old graveyard associated with it. The land the cemetery occupies was originally part of a farm used by the Sisters to grow food for the hospital they operated in San Diego. Workers on the farm were buried in this cemetery. Interestingly enough, area pioneers - Catholics and Protestants alike - were buried there on opposite sides of the 1.5 acre cemetery. Another pioneer, Anton Knechtel (1823-1903) was buried on a hillside above the Stevens' house across the road from the cemetery and his grave can be found along the winding trail that tops out on Carmel

Mountain and continues southward to Penasquitos Canyon.

There is also a connecting trail north of McGonicle Canyon to Gonzales Canyon and the San Dieguito River Valley beyond. The trail starts in Bell Valley, just west of Seebreeze Farms, goes northward to Black Mountain Road and on into Gonzales Canyon. Plans are being formulated now to keep this trail open around the perimeter of the North City West development.

The ride to McGonicle Canyon is a delightful and interesting ride that can be taken any time of year. The mesa top is cool in the summer because it gets the sea breezes, and warm in winter because the cool air sinks to the canyon bottoms. Allow about 2 hours each way for the ride.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

A very warm welcome to ...

Joe B. Cobern San Diego
Joan & John Horvath Family . San Diego

A note on renewals

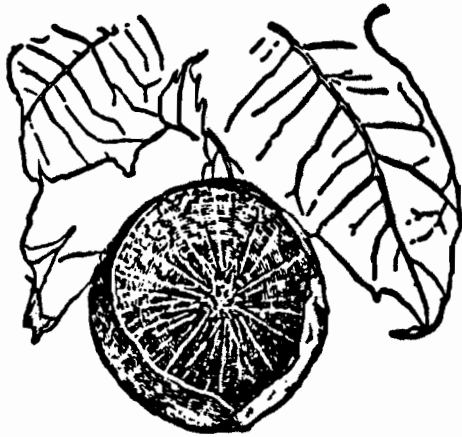
We are proud to have all of you as special Friends of the Canyon. By joining you showed your enthusiasm and support of the Friends' purpose and many have participated in the fine programs that the Friends offer.

Your contribution to the Friends, with your membership donation, covers the cost of producing and mailing your Newsletter for a year and, maybe, a little bit extra, but not much. We do rely on those who continue to support the Friends by renewing.

To help remind you of your "anniversary date" check the top line of your mailing label. If your date is incorrect or if you have other membership questions, contact Fred Jacobs at 484-5800.

WHAT IS A GALL?

BY DR. FLEMING



The mystery of Galls presents questions that are inevitably brought up on almost all the hikes conducted by the Friends of Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve, as the hikers pass through the oak woods.

Someone usually discovers a red and yellow round ball resembling a ripe apple. But apples don't grow on scrub oaks. What are these odd formations attached to the branches?

This unusual plant growth found on oaks, especially on the scrub oaks, is known as an oak apple or plant gall.

While these mysterious odd natural structures are fascinating to discover; what is the explanation for their existence?

In close examination of the oak apple, one is introduced to nature's miniature world of master architects. The oak apple is only one kind of diverse variety of plant galls which range in a broad spectrum of color, and hundreds of queer shapes and textures.

Galls are tumorlike growths composed of wild plant cells that produce an object greater in size than normal plant cells. Usually they are found on branches or leaves. Sometimes it is the fruit or bud whose development or growth has been altered. One good example is the willow gall. The weird and fantastic

shapes that evolve from the otherwise normal plant cells "gone astray" is a phenomena that had scientists puzzled for centuries.

What really causes these abnormal growths? Even today there are still questions that require considerable research to continue to unravel one of nature's best kept secrets.

Plant galls have been defined as being abnormal growths of plant tissues produced by a stimulus external to the plant itself. This stimulus may result from a mere mechanical irritation or some substance secreted by an insect in the many types of galls.

"Stranger than fiction" are the life histories and habits of insects who stimulate the plants to create an "insectean living environment" that furnishes the insect with everything necessary, including abundant food supplies and protection from enemies.

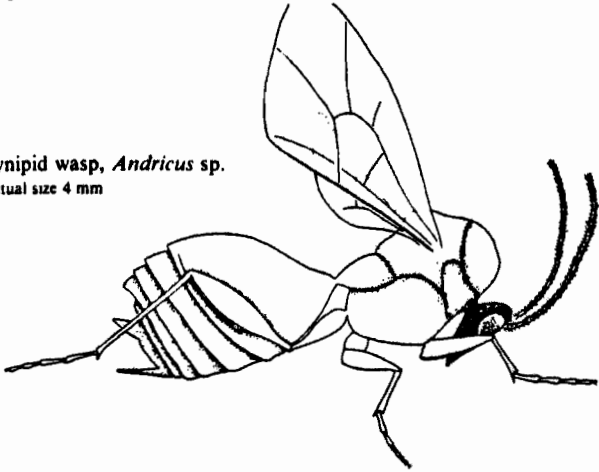
Oak apples are created by the larvae of small 1/16 inch long wasps of the family Cynipidae. These "tiny" wasps are less well known than the strange and unusual growth they produce.

If an oak apple is opened, the large gall is filled with fibres among which may be a cell in the center cradling the larva of the Cynip wasp.

The larval wasp inside the oak apple transforms into a pupa, and eventually into an adult wasp. After emerging from the gall and mating, the female will lay her eggs in oak twigs, stimulating the growth of other oak apples. Some galls become insectean condominiums as there are many different types of gall wasps.

Despite scientific investigation during recent years, the mystery of gall formation has not been completely solved. Although scientists have discovered amazing facts; there is still much more to be learned. Unfortunately, not enough research in the irritant-producing gall formation has been conducted to know the precise operating mechanism of most gall organisms, and there are still theories which need further verification.

Cynipid wasp, *Andricus* sp.
Actual size 4 mm



WIN SOME - LOOSE SOME - DRAW

LOPEZ RIDGE UPDATE

[Editor's Note: The Lopez Ridge Appeal article appeared in the June 1987 Newsletter. Several daily and weekly news papers have contained articles on this subject. This article highlights some of the efforts of the Friends of Los Penasquitos Canyon.]

The early building of an animal crossing between Lopez Canyon and Penasquitos Canyon was approved by the San Diego Transportation and Land Use Committee May 8th. Opponents of the crossing were many. Mr. Leo Wilson, newly elected President of the Friends of Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc., represented the Friends, saying the developer [guess who] circumvented local groups by starting construction on the project before the regular appeal process had been completed - an attempt by the developer to vest his building permit and the developer was not in conformance with the Coastal Commission. Council Member Abbe Wolfsheimer agreed ... that the developer had moved too much earth, a violation of the permit, to prepare for the building of proposed Calle Cristobal. Dr. Elberta Fleming, a biologist who has worked in the canyon preserve for several years and is the Friends' Educational Chairperson, pointed out: the site is not adequate

for a crossing, that the ground cover is not enough for deer to be protected from predators, that the water source in the area dries up seasonally, and that the animal use at the site is limited.

Although continued construction of the animal crossing was approved, a few conditions were added by Council Member Wolfsheimer to her motion: the developer must re-vegetate that land that was dug up, the developer could not move any more dirt for the construction of the road, and that no work on the road itself commence. Although a second animal crossing at a better location could not be mandated under current city laws, Council Member Wolfsheimer encouraged a meeting between Dr. Fleming and the city staff with a report to follow in eight weeks.

INTERIM DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (IDO)

On June 23rd, the San Diego City Council approved an IDO which will cut the city's residential growth rate by almost 50 percent for a year. Before more than 1,500 people, including environmentalists, and construction workers and community planners, the Council voted 8 to 1 in favor of the ordinance which will cap at 8,000 the number of dwelling units to be built in San Diego County over the next year, with a provision for a six month extension.

A host of IDO supporters, including representatives from the Friends, the Sierra Club, and San Diegans for Managed Growth, are all on record in support of IDO and argued that such an ordinance was needed to give the city time to catch up public facilities with the number of residential units being built. The IDO will slow building through out the County including the area near Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve and especially around Lopez Ridge. The IDO will go back before the

[CONTINUED TOP PAGE 5]

Council for a second reading on July 21st, meeting time unknown at the time of this Newsletter's publication.

NOTE; IF YOU CAN ATTEND THIS MEETING AT THE TIME AND LOCATION TO BE SPECIFIED IN YOUR LOCAL PAPER(S), DO SO! SHOW YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THIS IMPORTANT MEASURE !!!

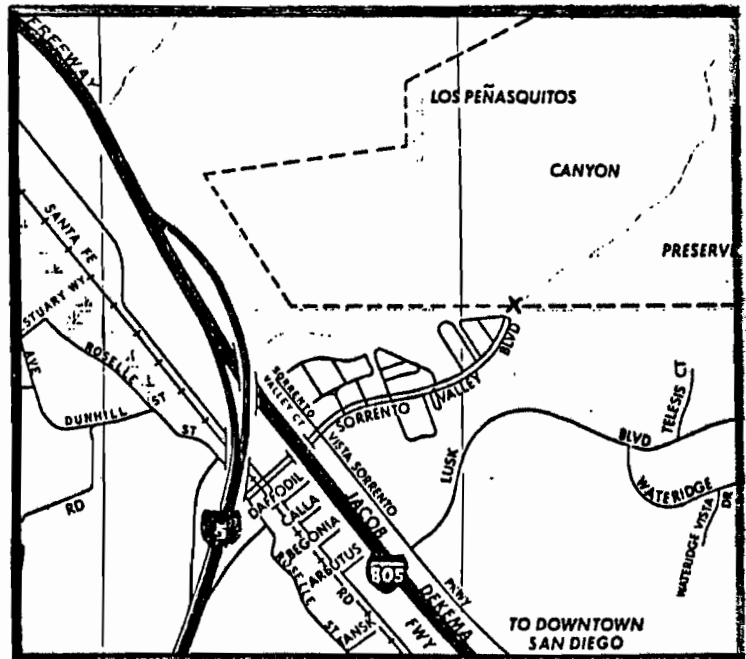
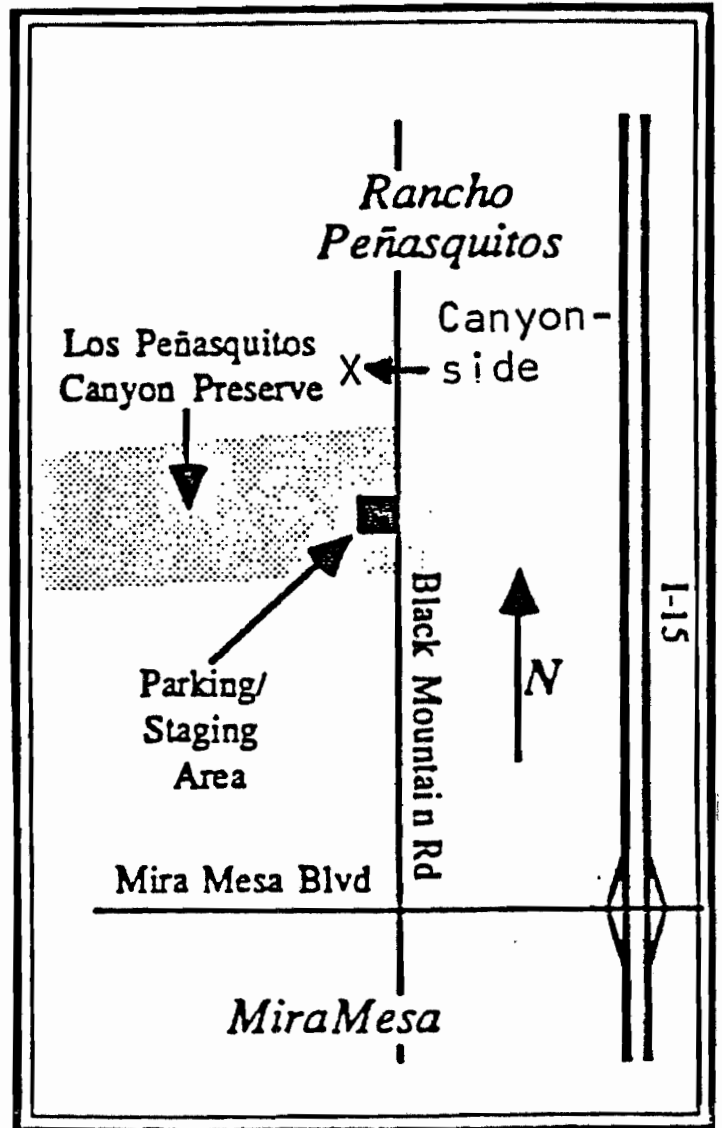
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

The current editor of the Friends' Newsletter greatly appreciates contributions from members. Do you have special memories of the Canyon, wildlife sightings, or any other topics that relate to Los Penasquitos Canyon or its preservation? The more we know about the Preserve, the better prepared we'll be to help fight for its protection. Call Fred Jacobs at 484-5800 or drop us a line addressed to:

Editor, Friends Newsletter
P.O. Box 26523
San Diego, CA 92126.

ALL-HIKE INFORMATION

Hikers should wear sturdy shoes. Bring binoculars and/or camera if available. Rain cancels. Water & snack optional.





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(check all that apply)

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Indian Culture | <input type="checkbox"/> School, Family, Youth Programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> History of the Rancho | <input type="checkbox"/> The Environment: Plants, Birds,
Mammals, Geology |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |



Please make check payable to:
**Friends of Los Peñasquitos
Canyon Preserve, Inc.**
and send to:
**Membership Chairman
Friends of Los Peñasquitos
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P.O. Box 26523
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Your donation is tax deductible.
Thank you for your support!