

Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Jan. / Feb. 2002

Volume 16, No. 1

A beloved, historic flying site threatened by development.

Historic Black Mountain Flight Park

Alan Chuculate & Victor McBride

Silent, low-speed gliders have enjoyed soaring flight on the west facing slopes of Black Mountain since the 1930s. This unique flying site is one of the most consistently flyable sites in the U.S. and is visited by pilots from around the world. Local residents consider the sight of silently soaring hang gliders and paragliders part of the charm of living in Rancho Peñasquitos and the surrounding communities.

Many San Diego area flying sites (including Palomar Mountain, the bluffs of Del Mar, Cowles Mountain, Mt. Helix, Crest and Sorrento Valley) have been lost in recent years, due primarily, to the encroachment of development. The City of San Diego recently purchased a large portion of Black Mountain for the construction of a future water treatment plant. Members of the Black Mountain Open Space Citizens Advisory Committee have asked the city to work with members of the San



See p. 5 for more

Highlights Inside

Hike calendar	2
New County Historian	4
Docent Training	4
Spotted Skunks, 9/11, & Carryover Effects	6
Symbolism of Flowers	8
Volunteer Recognition	10
Sierra Club fundraiser	11
Directory	12

Pines to Spines: Trans County Trail Update

Ranger Gina Brown

The construction of the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Trans County Trail Connector (whew! That's a mouthful) is progressing well. The Trans County Trail is a 110-mile trail system from Torrey Pines State Park to Anza-Borrego State Park. It's affectionately known as the Spines to Pines Trail. The Preserve is home to about 8 miles of the Trans County Trail, from Interstate 805 to Sabre Springs. Much of the trail within the Preserve will be accessible to persons with disabilities. We're currently working on a habitat conservation fund grant which will enable us to build 1.6 miles of the trail east of Black Mt. Road to Interstate 15.

Ranger staff and a handful of dedicated volunteers have done much of the work on the trail. Community groups have also assisted with some of the trail construction. The Califor-

See p. 4 for more

www.penasquitos.org

Winter Activities Schedule

Winter has intensified the fall colors of many of the trees, especially the sycamores, cottonwoods and willows in the canyon. Many are dropping their leaves for our "long" winter, i.e., they'll be budding out in 4-6 weeks! Our "funny" weather has confused some plants, giving us early bloomers such as Winter currant (*Ribes indecorum*) which was blooming on Black Mountain in mid-November, or California spine bush (*Adolphia californica*), blooming in Sabre Springs in December or Monkey flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) in López Canyon. Soon our Fuschia flowering gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*) with its bright red flowers against its bright green foliage will be blooming. The mild fall and winter means many other plants should be coming up and blooming early.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour Every Saturday & Sunday

San Diego Archaeological Society docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's oldest residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m., on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. **La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:** 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 858.484.3219** for directions.

January

Black Mountain Hike Leader Training (open to public)

Sat., Jan. 12, 9 - noon. Naturalist Mike Kelly will continue this series of slow-paced walks leaving from different trailheads around Black Mountain Open Space Park in Rancho Peñasquitos. The purpose is to train new volunteer hike leaders in the different habitats, plants, critters, and his-

torical aspects of the park. You don't have to plan to be a hike leader to attend and enjoy the walk. Steep hills require good hiking boots. Bring water and sun protection. Meet at the locked gate at the end of Ave. Maria in Rcho Peñasquitos. Take I-15 to the Carmel Mtn. Road exit. Takes this west to Peñasquitos Drive. Right on Peñasquitos Drive, almost at the end take left on Av. Maria and park near gate, See **Thomas Guide p. 1169/1189** or call **858-484.3219** for recorded directions

"Little Things" of Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., Jan. 13, 9-11 a.m. Join naturalist Les Braund for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Bring a hand lens or magnifying glass if possible to examine liverworts, mushrooms, lichen and other smaller organisms. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area, upper level, at the junction of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee

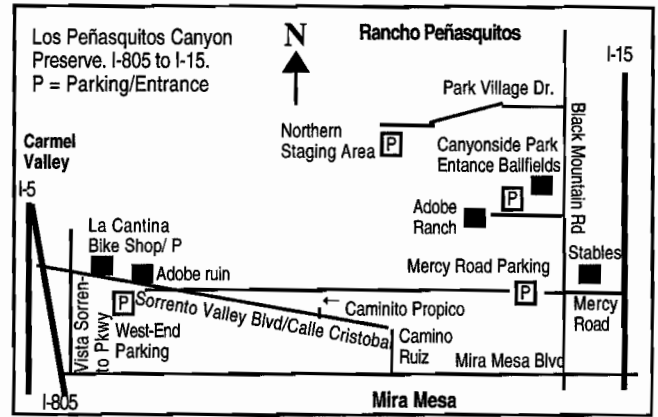
Mon., Jan. 14, 7 p.m. The public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizens' Advisory Committee

Thurs., Jan. 17, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Driveway, past the Canyonside Rec Center. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Beginners' Tracking Walk at Ranch

Sat., Jan. 19, 8 - 9a.m. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in from a member of the Friends' Tracking Team..



Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Intermediate Tracking Walks at Ranch

Sat., Jan. 19, 8 a.m. A member of the Friend's Tracking Team will lead this advanced tracking walk. Must have completed beginner and intermediate training. Wear shoes that are good in the mud. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sat., Jan. 19, 9 a.m. (2 miles). Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Rain cancels. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area, upper level, at the junction of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting

Tues., Jan. 22, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting at the Adobe Ranch House off Canyonside Drive off Black Mtn. Rd. between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos.

(Calendar cont'd)

Wetlands & Riparian Plant Hike with Will Bowen

Sat., Jan. 26, 10–11:30 a.m. Join Will Bowen to learn to identify the different wetland plants & how they were used by Native Americans, Spanish & European inhabitants in the canyon. Meet in the parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.** Or call **858-484-3219** for recorded directions.

Nature Walk to Waterfall from North Staging Area

Sat. Jan. 26, 3:30 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk to the waterfall and back, about 4 miles. Chance to see early flowers and deer. Meet at the kiosk at the intersection of Camino Ruiz & Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring insect repellent & water. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

February

Geology Hike

Sun., Feb. 3, 9 a.m. – noon. Join geologist Don Albright for a walk through geological time, including the Preserve's waterfall and a rare fossil. Meet at Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. Steep trail. Bring water and sun protection. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions

“Little Things” of Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sat., Feb. 9, 9–11 a.m. Join naturalist Les Braund for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Bring a hand lens or magnifying glass if possible to examine liverworts, mushrooms, lichen and other smaller organisms. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area, upper level, at the junction of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Black Mountain Nature Walk along Miner's Loop Trail

Sun., Feb. 10., 9 - 11:30 a.m. Join Black Mountain Park docents for a moderately paced nature walk . See

flowering native plants, learn about the abandoned gold mine and more. Steep hills require good hiking boots. Bring water and sun protection. Meet at the main parking-staging area on the north side of the mountain. Take Black Mountain Road in Peñasquitos north. After passing Maler Rd. on the right, and just before it takes the big curve into the new Carmel Valley Road, look for and take the dirt road to the right. Proceed up the hill, following detour signs if they are still up, past the hanglider area and down the hill until a sign for Black Mountain Park and a paved road appear on the right. Take this up to the parking area. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858-484.3219** for recorded directions

Beginner's Tracking Walk at Ranch

Sat., Feb. 16, 8 – 9 a.m. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in from a member of the Friends' Tracking Team.. Wear shoes good for mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Advanced Tracking Walk at Ranch

Sat., Feb. 16, 8 – 9 a.m. A member of the Friends' Tracking Team will lead this advanced tracking walk. Must have completed beginner and intermediate training. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Mysterious López Homestead History Hike with Will Bowen

Sat., Feb. 23, 10 – 11:30 a.m. Walk out to the old López Homestead. Visit the orchard's remaining quince, apricot, and pear trees. See the Old López Road and look for fossils. Examine the remains of the barn and the house. Find out where the corrals and pens were. Look inside the cistern. Learn what we know and don't know about this mysterious old San Diego family. Meet in West-end Parking-Staging area off Sorrento Valley Road, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista

Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call **858-484-3219** for recorded directions.

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., Feb. 24, 9 a.m. (2 miles). Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Rain cancels. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area, upper level, at the junction of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Nature Walk to Waterfall from North Staging Area

Sat. Feb. 24, 4 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk to the waterfall and back, about 4 miles. Chance to see early flowers and deer. Meet at the kiosk at the intersection of Camino Ruiz & Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring insect repellent & water. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

DIRECTIONS

Black Mountain Open Space Park, Rancho Peñasquitos

From I-15 taken SR 56 (Ted Williams Parkway) west to Black Mountain Road. Go right (north) on Black Mountain Road and follow it all the way until you see the last houses on the right and open space beyond. Look for a dirt road to the right and take it. Proceed about 1 mile, going beyond the bare hangliding area on the right and down a hill to a big curve and a sign for the park and paved road on the right. Proceed up the road to the staging area.

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal

This intersection is located in Mira Mesa. From the west (I-5/I-805 merge) take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east. It becomes Calle Cristobal as it passes Camino Santa Fe St. The next street is Caminito Propico. From the east, take Mira Mesa Boulevard to Camino Santa Fe. Go right on Camino Santa Fe, then right on Calle Cristobal to Propico. Park in cul-de-sac on either side. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

See p. 4 for more

(Calendar cont'd)

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area
In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Northern Parking-Staging Area at Camino Ruíz and Park Village Drive
Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino Ruíz. Left on Camino Ruíz and park. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

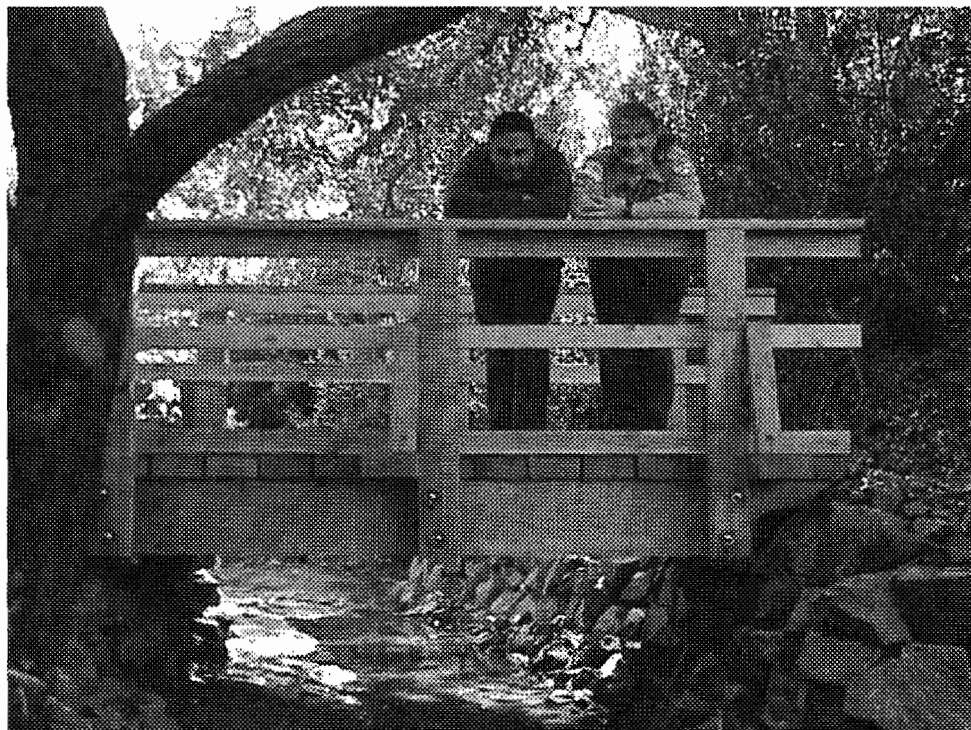
Ranch House Walks/Tours
Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyon-side Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area
Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

West-End Parking-Staging Area
South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right, past the curve. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

nia Conservation Corps spent 1,960 hours, in four weeks, working on the trail. They cut approximately a quarter of a mile of trail bed and built roughly 200 yards of rock wall. A beautiful foot bridge, spanning 12 feet, was also constructed. The bridge and foundation were built to withstand the often rising water, due to increased urban run off this time of year, which will aid horses and other users to traverse the creek safely.

There is still much work to be done; bridges and several sections of retaining wall to build, trail bed to cut, and rocks to move. Therefore, we are encouraging all who would like to be part of this exciting project to join us on the trail. There is work for persons with all skill levels. If you are interested, please contact the City of San Diego Park Rangers at Los Peñasquitos by telephone 858.538.8066 or e-mail gbrown@sandiego.gov.



Rangers David Espino and Gina Brown model one of the bridges carrying the Trans-County Trail across Peñasquitos and its tributary creeks.

(Hang glider cont'd)

hang gliding started first by being towed aloft by a boat, then the pilot would release and glide down to a landing. Bill left Rancho Peñasquitos last year (2000) with his wife Margo to retire in Lake Havasu City where he flew his hang glider in 1967 as part of the celebration of the resurrection of London Bridge. Another long-term local resident is Gregg Lawless who has served as the President of the United States Hang Gliding Association (USHGA) multiple times.

When another taller Black Mountain, north of Ramona, came into use as a soaring site, the UFO began to refer to the smaller of the two as *Little Black*, as it's still affectionately known among local pilots today.

Little Black has had a third resurgence of glider popularity since *paragliders* came to San Diego in 1989. *Little Black* was used to train the first paragliding instructors in San Diego (Ken Baier, Fred Lawley, and Lee Kaiser) in April of that year. *Paragliders* look like parachutes but are used like *hang gliders* for soaring. Their portability allows them to be carried in a backpack, enabling the pilot to hike to the top, layout, launch and then soar for as long as Mother Nature provides lifting air. This convenience coupled with the beautiful vistas to the west from Black Mountain make *Little Black* a popular destination for many of your neighbors who enjoy the sunset from their gently swaying seat in the sky.

If you have questions about soaring at *Little Black* you can contact the "pilot-in-command" Lori McBride at 858-538-0498.

(Hang gliding cont'd)

Diego Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association (SDHGPA) to find a way to allow this traditional activity to continue at this location, to prevent the loss of this little gem. We'll keep you advised as to any progress that may be made to that end.

San Diego has long played an important role in the development of aviation in the U.S. Many aren't aware, however, of the importance of San Diego's contribution to American gliding and soaring. The high-tech, computer designed gliders that fly Black Mountain today owe much to San Diego's aviation pioneers.

The *hang glider* is the earliest known airplane flown in the U.S. John J. Montgomery, for whom Montgomery Field in Kearny Mesa is named, first flew his *Gull Glider* in 1883 from Otay Mesa. The bird-like aircraft shared the same unique control method as modern hang gliders known as *pilot weight-shift*. The hang glider pilot shifts his or her weight laterally to control direction, and moves fore and aft to control airspeed.

In the 1920s wide media interest was generated as glider records for duration were set and then broken again and again by San Diego pilot-inventors.

1930 was a special year for soaring in San Diego. Harry Bowlus, who had for years displayed a passion for designing and flying gliders, set several duration records within the space of a few days. He then proceeded to lure Charles Lindburg and then his wife Anne Morrow Lindburg (who became the first woman to earn a soaring license) to the delights of un-powered soaring flight. The participation of this famous couple fired the imagination of local San Diegans. Several glider clubs sprang up, including the first all female group led by 20-year-old aviatrix Peaches Wallace. Two San Diego Senior High School students, Richard H. Benbough and Vernon M. Brown, members of the largest registered glider club in the United States, the San Diego based Bowlus Glider Club, chose the hillside of Black Mountain to fly their licensed homebuilt *primary glider*.

In the 1940s, Black Mountain was popular as a tow launch site because the gliders could then use the hill to re-

main aloft and gain altitude.

Rancho Penasquitos area came back into regular use as a soaring site when a renaissance in *hang gliding*, spurred by the invention of the Rogallo wing, returned to San Diego in the late 1960s.

The sparsely developed slopes of Black Mountain were quite popular with the numerous local pilots who formed a club in 1973 known as the Ultralight Flyers Organization (UFO). This club continues to thrive under the name the San Diego Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association (SDHGPA). One of the founding members of this club was Waldo Waterman. In 1909, at the age of 15, he built and flew his first glider. He was the first pilot to fly a glider within the city limits of San Diego. Waterman continued to design and build gliders well into the 1970s. A picture of his Waterman/Fronius Biplane hang glider was featured on the cover of the February 1974 *Flier*.

Two area residents have been noteworthy in hang gliding in America. Bill Bennett is the Australian who brought kiting to the U.S. in 1963. His

See p. 4 for more



Thoughts on the Trail: Spotted Skunks, 9/11, & Carryover Effects

Barry Martin

Indian summer in San Diego might mean a late August or early September Santa Ana condition . . . actually there always seems to be one last Santa Ana in late September, even into October before we really begin to experience the San Diego version of winter. Then there are those maverick December Santa Ana conditions that drive our friends and relatives living in places like Chicago or Spokane nuts when we tell them about going for a run on the beach shirtless while they were digging out of the first big snowstorm of the year. I've always considered myself blessed to have been able to move here way back in 1976, "needs of the navy."

. . .

There's been some discussion as to whether or not we have Spotted Skunks (*Spilogale putorius*) in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Over the last few years that question has anchored itself in the back of my mind in the "unanswered question" section, ready to pounce on any evidence I might eventually run across. The only skunk evidence I had seen was that left by our prolific friend the Striped Skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*). In fact, I'll never forget the night I realized I was surrounded by Striped Skunks in a meadow in the preserve . . . different story, maybe another time! So we know we have lots of Striped Skunks from personal observation and experience but it has also been apparent via personal observation and from examination of the *Peterson Field Guide to Mammals* range map that the Spotted Skunk would tend to be found more to the east. East, as in around Iron Mountain, Mt. Woodson and east from those areas, maybe the hills just east of Poway but historically no farther west than that with the exception of a few wandering individuals — perhaps.

Spotted Skunk, also known as Civet or Hydrophobia Cat and its Latin name *Spilogale putorius*, which gives rise to

all kinds of imaginative possibilities, is really a very handsome little carnivore. This is the smallest skunk in the west, head and body 9 to 13 in. and tail 4 to 9 in. in length, males weighing 1 - 2 lb., females 4/5 to 1 lb., all black with a white spot on the forehead and white under each ear and with four broken white stripes along neck, back and sides with a white tip on the tail.

For the sake of comparison, the Striped Skunk is much larger, weighing 6-14 lb. with head and body lengths of 13-18 in and tail lengths 7 -10 in.

According to the Peterson Guide, Spotted Skunks prefer brushy or sparsely wooded areas, along streams, among boulders; prairies. They tend to

. . .

I used to compete as a long distance runner, now I run to stay fit and to cover my "territory" in the preserve. San Diego has long been a haven for athletes with its ideal climate conducive to training . . . the Olympic Training Center is here for that reason, among others.

Running my usual route I scan the ground for tracks and sign, listen for what the birds are doing and saying, stop to check out anything unusual or to just soak in the feel of a different habitat type. (Stopping and being still can be so informative, especially if you incorporate the short "sense meditation" into your routine.)



Spilogale putorius. Spotted skunk. Drawing from Jameson, jr. *California Mammals*.

be nocturnal animals, will climb trees to escape danger but normally stay on the ground and only discharge scent in self defense by standing on its front feet and spraying directly over its head . . . putoriously I'm sure!

Mice, birds, eggs, insects, carrion, and some vegetable matter round out this little critter's diet. They nest in burrows beneath buildings or rock piles and average home range is 160 acres or less with males tending to wander farther.

It's the first day of September and I'm cruising along the trail thankful for such a beautiful day, the usual concerns floating in and out of my mind, stuff like whether or not I will have time to take 15 or 20 minutes at my sit spot today or if there will be something I need to hurry home for, and occasional thoughts spilling out of the "unanswered question" section, like the one concerning the Spotted Skunk. Just a few days prior to this run I had received an e-mail from masters candidate in biology, Sierra Hayden asking

if I'd seen any sign of Spotted Skunk around these parts, she thought one of the people she was working with had found a track of one up around Black Mountain Open Space.

Now I have come to understand that there are no coincidences; everything comes together in this huge network of interconnections that we live in . . . never-the-less I was still rather amazed when I came over a rise in the trail and saw up ahead a diminutive, **motionless** black and white lump. As I got closer it became apparent that it was a skunk but very small, then closer yet and I realized it was not the usual Striped Skunk (it could have been a juvenile) since it was not marked like a Striped and then as I got really close it hit me! No, not the smell . . . it was a Spotted Skunk! Fortunately it did not smell too bad, but it was proof positive at last that we do appear to have this species of skunk making inroads into our area, or I've just finally found proof positive that they've probably been here all along. I hid the skunk's body and came back later with my camera and measured, photographed and examined the unfortunate victim of what I suspect was the resident bobcat, who for some reason didn't get to finish it's meal . . . maybe lost it's appetite.

. . .

We all have many layers; we have the jobs we do to earn a living, the families we tend to and love and the avocations we gravitate toward. We are, by our nature as human beings, multidimensional . . . some more so than others. This is one aspect of our being human that sets us apart from any other being, our ability to adapt quickly to changing circumstances and see things from many different angles, then through the ability to reason and differentiate we make decisions appropriate to the occasion.

On September 1, 2001 I was concerned about whether or not we had Spotted Skunks in the Peñasquitos Preserve, family responsibilities, the many concerns of making the Tracking Team work, if I would ever find time to finish that naturalist course I'd started so long ago and have been so close to completing, and the realization that there was never enough time to do all that needed to be done to fulfill all my self-imposed obligations. In my rush I

was easily taking many aspects of life for granted, especially my family life.

Ten days later I was at work . . . some folks think I work at the preserve, but no, the tracking is my avocation, what I do for a living is my other passion, I fly for the biggest airline in America. We had just called for push back from the gate at LAX when all air traffic had been halted . . . later, down in operations, I watched with other crewmembers in horrified awe as the WTC twins collapsed on the TV screen.

Another aspect of being human is the ability to feel deep emotion. When your world turns upside down you grieve and it takes time to heal, but we tend to be resilient. I've always relied on my own resilience, but I did not realize the extent to which this catastrophe would affect me. Intellectually you can understand what might be in store for you when a tragedy hits, but the closeness and the magnitude of this was unbelievable. I had flown with the copilot and some of the flight attendants on one of those planes. Skunks, Tracking Team, naturalist courses all became insignificant remnants of a seemingly distant past . . . for quite some time it all just didn't matter — family and friends are what matter.

. . .

Whenever I've been faced with a difficult time or decision it has been natural to be drawn to the woods . . . nature, this is where I find solace. Nowhere is the artistry and mastery of the creator more apparent to me, this is where He has always spoken most emphatically to me — in the sanctity of the woods. One of the first things I did after returning home that day was to run to the preserve. There is great comfort in knowing that despite the chaos wrought by man, the kingbirds are still protecting their territory and the deer are still moving across the trail to feed, the coyotes and bobcat are still making a living in the area, the red tail hawk pair that lives in this end of the canyon still ply the air in graceful swooping arcs and the cooper's hawk still keeps watch from the snag just east of turtle rock.

A man named Maurice Sendak was quoted saying, "There must be more to life than having everything." I know there is, I see the world through the eyes of a Tracker/Naturalist now and

feel humbled by it all. I've seen poverty and wealth and know that there are those that are materially poor but spiritually rich beyond compare, these are the truly rich. I've dealt in the past year with a developer who is materially rich but will stop at nothing to achieve his apparent goals of winning at all costs and ultimately "having everything." His arrogance is infuriating.

There was a middle eastern Muslim being interviewed on the radio the other day, discussing through an interpreter the attitudes of many of his people towards the Americans. His point was that the Americans, who are rich beyond compare and have their way with everything infuriate him with their arrogance.

. . .

In October a friend who is a professor at one of the state colleges here in California asked me to address his Environmental Ethics class. My point to the group; why are we compelled to qualify the word "Ethics" with the word "Environmental?"

One thing I've learned after years of being steeped in the art of being aware in the outdoors is the carryover effect. If you truly work at becoming an aware tracker and naturalist you become a more sensitive person in all aspects of your life. You tend to begin thinking more in terms of the "greater good," you take time, you become considerate, you are becoming an ethical person. If we would slow down so as not to scare the birds, be willing to extend ourselves toward the greater good, we might all be ethical in all aspects of our lives and not have to further define "ethic."

We have so much to be thankful for as Americans, especially those of us who live here in San Diego. After coming out of the funk (for the most part) I was in after the 9/11 events, I realized that we need now, even more than ever, to guard our natural areas and preserve as much as we can so that those who follow us can learn to be aware and benefit from the carryover effect. We must pursue and expand our outdoor education programs ever more vigorously. We need to encourage programs that develop ethical people, not consumerist money making automatons!

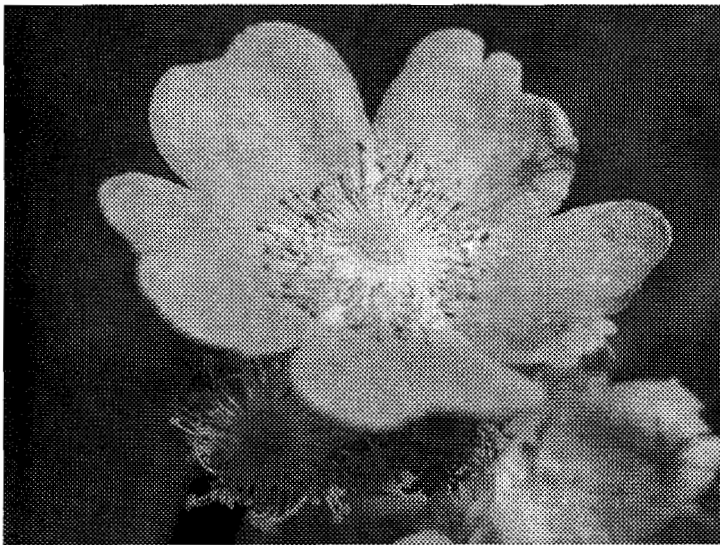
Hope to see you at one of the Tracking events in 2002, check this newsletter and/or the website for schedules.

The Symbolism of Flowers

Will Bowen, Ph.D.

Have you ever wondered whether to send your sweetheart a red, yellow, or white rose; or whether it would be most cool to wear a white, pink, or red carnation to the Prom, or which flower arrangement would be appropriate for a wedding or a funeral? If so, then you were trying to think in the language of flowers.

Flowers are a language of their own. They mean different things. They stand for, signify, or are symbolic of certain thoughts, moods, feelings, emotions, attitudes, or intentions. Different flowers are associated with different events, ceremonies, and seasons. A rose is for love, a Poinsettia is for Christmas, a Lily for Easter. We see flowers painted on Valentine, birthday and get-well cards. Jewelry often imitates flowers. The hippies had "Flower Power!"



Rosa californica. Native wild rose. Photo by Gladys Lucille Smith. California Academy of Sciences

But seriously, the very first expression of our transition from primate to human can be seen in the earliest human burials, where flowers were placed in the grave with the deceased body. The great English herbalist John Gerard may have summed it up best when he stated, in 1597:

"Through their beauty and variety of color and exquisite form, flowers do bring, to a liberal and gentle mind, the remembrance of honesty, comeliness, and all kinds of virtues."

Our modern flower symbolism can be traced back to ancient civilizations such as in Egypt, Assyria, Greece, and Rome. While initially flower symbolism was primarily the province of poets, priests, and mystics, it soon spread into common usage. Florigraphy, which is defined as the practical application of flower symbolism, reached its heyday during the Middle Ages when "courtly love" imposed ritualized constraints on knights, lords, ladies, and a host of other star-crossed lovers. The giving and receiving of flowers was a great aid to their communication.

We are lucky to have many flowering plants in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Although we can not pick these flowers (because it's a *preserve*) it's still very interesting to consider the symbolic meanings associated with some of our flowers (especially if you are a romantic!).

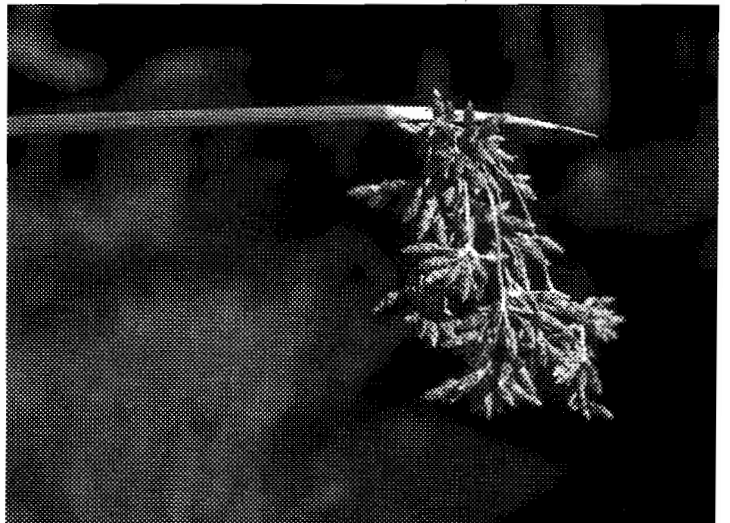
Reaching out

For a suitor to send a sprig of Bracken Fern, known in England as Brake (*Pteridium aquilinum* var. *pubescence*) to a potential mate would be a statement of enchantment, as if to say, "You fascinate me," or "I'm charmed by you." Odd, but our local Digueño Indians also consider this plant to be a "charm." The gift of a small lovely pink flower of the Phlox or Ground Pink (*Linanthus diathiflorus*) would be an open invitation to friendship, "I would like to be your friend."

If you wanted to tell someone that you loved them then it would be proper to send or give some of the fragrant pink flowers of the wild California rose (*Rosa californica*) which would be as good as saying, "I love you." To add mistletoe (*Phoradendron tomentosum* var. *macrophyllum*) to the bouquet would be to add a handful of kisses — "I send you kisses galore." If you're really serious about someone then you should send or give the gift of the vining stem, adorned with small white-yellow flowers, of Chaparral honeysuckle (*Lonicera subspicata* var. *denudata*), indicating a deep committed love, as in, "I plight my troth (solemnly pledge my fidelity)."

Responding

How does one respond to a flower message? There are many options. You could have your lady-in-waiting or man-at-arms return a scraggly yellow Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) flower, indicating that you thought the suitor was a "weed" and would not go out with them if they were the last person on earth! The return of a Snapdragon (*Antirrhinum* spp.) would indicate, "You don't mean anything to me."



Scirpus californicus. California tule. Photo ©Br. Alfred Brousseau. St. Mary's College.

A vibrant yellow Sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*) sent to a conceited suitor, who had perhaps, “dressed to impress,” would say “Your showiness and pomposity do not move me!”

Then again, you might return a yellow chamomile-scented Mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*) flower indicating that you admired their courage in reaching out. Or perhaps a yellow Goldenrod (*Solidago californica*) flower would be appropriate, meaning, “I need some time to think about this.” Or then again a purple Lupine (*Lupinus* spp.) flower saying, “Let’s not rush things; I need to go slow.”

To a suitor inquiring as to where he stood in your heart, you might send, a brilliant yellow Evening Primrose (*Oenothera hookeri*) flower, meaning, “I may learn to love you. Its too soon to tell.” This plant only flowers in the second season of growth. While a Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*) flower would clearly lay down the law, “I need to be friends first.” The tall stalk of mullein flowers was used to make candles for Church.

But if you really like your suitor then respond with the dust broom-like fluffy white flowers of Broom Baccharis (*Baccharis sarathroides*) meaning, “I shall be yours forever!” Or maybe, “You sweep me off my feet.”



Ceanothus tomentosus. Mountain Lilac. Photo by George W. Hartwell

Counter response

If the reply you receive is not to your liking you should quickly send off the white morning glory-like twining vine flower, Bindweed, also known as Chaparral Morning Glory (*Convolvus arvensis*) indicating your persistence, “I cannot accept your answer” — the perfect “clinging vine.”

If you felt guilty for overstepping yourself you might come back with Del Mar sand aster (*Corethrogyne filaginifolia*) symbolizing your regret, “I’m sorry for my rashness.” That always helps.

Faithfulness

Faithfulness is usually of great concern for lovers. If your lover inquired after it you could send White Lilac (*Ceanothus veracosus*) as an emblem of your purity and innocence. Blue Lilac (*Ceanothus tomentosus*) would mean, “You’re my very first sweetheart.” A leaf of Maidenhair Fern, also known as Venus-hair (*Adiantum jordanii*) would

signify that, “My virginity is intact, “I’m yours completely. I’m saving myself for you.” The almond-fragrant White Clover (*Melilotus albus*) would be as good as a promise that, “I shall stay faithful.”

If you were accused off an indiscretion and were angry, with poison in your heart, you might respond with Poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), meaning, “I am unjustly accused! If you felt hurt, send Stinging nettle (*Urtica holosericea*), which is like saying, “You have deeply offended (stung) me.”

If you intuitively sensed something was wrong and you thought your lover was telling stories, you could send Deadly nightshade (*Solanum* spp.), the devil’s favorite plant, meaning, “I sense deception. I don’t trust you.”

If your secret lover blew it by showing affection in public you should send some Bulrush (*Scirpus* spp.) flowers meaning, “Be more discreet in the future!” Since Bulrush grows in water this is like saying “Cool your ardor.” Or, at least, water it down.

If your lover rejected you, your tragic response should be to send the butterscotch-scented Life Everlasting (*Gnaphalium* spp.) flower bidding, “Farewell! As you request I will go. But I shall never forget you.” Everlasting flowers hold their shape and fragrance for a long while after the plant dies.

Finally, to a lover pining away it’s always best to send Oak (*Quercus* spp.) flowers meaning, “Courage! Take heart! Love will have its way.” Oak is an almost archetypal symbol for strength, courage, and fortitude.

Meetings

If you wish a secret meeting such as a clandestine walk in the canyon, send the small orange flowers of the happiness plant (it was used for treating depression in olden times), Scarlet pimpernel (*Anagallis arvensis*), which proposes or suggests a meeting. Since flowers also stand for certain times of the day or hours, if you want the meeting at 9 A.M. include Evening Primrose, Elderberry Flower (*Sambucus mexicana*) for 11 A.M., or Broom Baccharis (*Baccharis sarathroides*) for 6 P.M..

Finale

After this article is published it’s more than likely that you will receive some flowers. If you’re curious as to what they are really saying then look this article over again.

Chapparal Restoration

Sun., Feb. 3, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Join the Friends to help plant chaparral plants near the waterfall in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area, upper level, at the junction of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**. Wear long pants and long sleeved shirt, hat, sunscreen and bring water and a snack. Call Mike at 858-566-6489 for more info.

Tracking Team Volunteers

This issue we're catching up with acknowledgements for the many hundreds of hours volunteers have put in with the Friends' and San Diego Tracking Teams this past year. The members of the San Diego Tracking Team are the volunteers who not only do wildlife surveys but also help organize the activities and train new volunteers and new Tracking Teams around the county. They include:

San Diego Tracking Team

Members

Bader, Chris
Botta, Rick
Burgin, Uli
Campbell, Patrick
Hansen, Doug
Hunt, Ann
Kirchhevel, Lee
Martin, Barry
Nell, Gretchen
Richards, John
Romeo, Steve
Sagar, Tarja
Savory, Julie
Volberg, Mike
Von Hendy, Phoenix
Warburton, Lois
Woods, Dean

Many other volunteers take the Wildlife Survey training and help run one or more wildlife survey transects around the County. They include:

Debbie Andrada
Jan Andzelm
Pat Bleha
Nate Brown
Mike DeBell
Matt Deig
Janet Dotson
Jane Fenyo
Robert Fenyo
Margaret Fillius

Barbara Gosink
Dave Howes
Binardette Husband
Marty Lake Jacobson
Bill & Carol Kearney
Greg Loraine
Karen Malfara
Tammy Marren
Vernie McGowan
Sue McCormack
Kimberly Miller
Kim Mooney
Carolyn Mortus
Kathy Moser
Susan Murphy
Charity Knoll
Joanne Parker
Robert Petersen
Lynne Rescho
Linda Slobodnik
Jeannie Smith
Marcela Soruco
Lester Stiel
Denise Swanson
Teresa Thompson
Damian Valdez
Jesse Volberg
Barbara Wallach
Joan Winchell
Nancy Woodworth

Last, but not least, several individuals in different parks help support the team's efforts in numerous ways. They include:

Mission Trails RP Ranger
Luane Barrett
Penasquitos City Ranger
Jeannette DeAngelis
Penasquitos County Ranger
Reneene Mowery
Mission Trails Regional Park Ranger
Sue Pelly
Friends of Penasquitos Canyon
Mike Kelly

Trans County Trail Building Volunteers

If you or your organization would like help build the Peñasquitos link in the 110+ Trans County Trail, give Ranger Gina Brown a call at 858-538-8066.

López Canyon Native Grass Restoration

Sun., Jan. 27, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Join Cindy Burrascano of Calif. Native Plant Society and Mike Kelly of the Friends to help plant native grasses at the Old López Trailhead in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Find Mira Mesa Blvd and go east from I-805 or west from I-15 to Pacific Heights Blvd., go north on this one block to Pacific Mesa Blvd., right on this until it deadends in parking circle at the Old López Trailhead. Wear long pants and long sleeved shirt, hat, sunscreen and bring water and a snack. Call Mike at 858-566-6489 for more info.

Volunteers Accomplishments

Many thanks to the following individuals who turned out for Friends meetings, Citizens Advisory Committee meetings for Black Mountain and Peñasquitos Parks, historical surveys, restoration work parties and as hike leaders. We especially want to thank Terry Gaughn and Bill Witzel for the many times they have turned out to volunteer on the Trans County Trail building.

Don Albright
Rick Botta
The Boyds
Will Bowen
Les Braund
Cindy Burrascano
Lynne Christenson
Edward DiBella
The Dingeman Family
Terry Gaughn
Rob Hutsel
Mike Kelly
Linda King
Marilyn Kolendar
Lori & Victor McBride
Geof Smith
Brian Swanson
Pat Watson
Selena Wilson
Bill Witzel
Maryanne Young

Volunteers Needed

Jan. 8 & 9th

We need volunteers to help guide Vista High School students in planting native plants Tuesday, Jan. 8 & Wednesday, 9th, from 9 a.m. to noon. This will be the fifth year in a row that these biology students have come to help restore sites within the Preserve. Meet at the Ranger HQ trailers at the Equestrian Center off Black Mtn. Road. Call Mike Kelly at 858.566.6489 to volunteer or for more information.

Otay Tarplant Restoration

Sat., Jan. 19 & Feb 16: 9-1

Otay Sweetwater U.S. Fish & Wildlife Refuge. Help California Native Plant Society and San Diego Zoological Society volunteers protect this endangered plant. Volunteers will cut and remove weeds and sow native plant seed. Meet at Sweetwater Summit County Park in the parking lot before the check-in station. Located off San Miguel / Bonita Road off I-805. Call Cindy Burrascano for more details at 619.271.5767.

Peñasquitos Canyon Cottonwood Restoration

Sun., Jan. 13, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

We're down to 5-6 exotic *Eucalyptus trees* to remove from the Preserve. Let's celebrate 10 years of progress with this last effort! Already, in other parts of the Preserve where *Eucalyptus* were once common, Cottonwoods are once again becoming abundant as they were 150 years ago. Meet in the Parking-Staging area at the intersection of Mercy and Black Mountain Roads. Wear long pants and long sleeved shirt, hat, sunscreen and bring water and a snack. Call Mike at 858-566-6489 for more info.

Sierra Club Fundraiser

Afoot & Afield in Peñasquitos Canyon January 19th

Enjoy a morning nature tour of Peñasquitos Canyon guided by Jerry Schad author of "Afoot & Afield in San Diego County " The hike will go for 2 miles over easy terrain. Not only learn about the many hiking opportunities in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, but of special places all over the County!

WHEN: Saturday, January 19th, Time: 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

- * Receive a copy of "Afoot & Afield," an informative SD County hiking guide-book, 3rd Edition. (Jerry will write your special message and sign),
- * Relax after the hike at a catered picnic lunch. (Including fresh juice smoothies donated by Juice Evolution)
- * Includes one entry in a drawing for a weekend for two at the Nature Knowledge Workshop.
- * Support the Sierra Club Canyon Campaign!

Tickets are \$50.00 each and are tax-deductible. Proceeds go to support the Sierra Club's Canyons Campaign, building support to protect our urban open spaces.

Space is limited, so hurry and call Eric Bowlby at 619.284.9399. Or, mail your check, made out to Sierra Club Foundation and mail to 3820 Ray St., San Diego CA 92104.



Rancho Peñasquitos Girl Scout leader Wendy Hartline and scouts Cathy Shackelford, Ali Hartline, and Crystal Geary pitched in on All-Saints' Day to clean up the historic grave site of John Eichar, one-time cook at the Peñasquitos Ranch in the mid 1800s.



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
 P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196
 858-484-3219

NONPROFIT ORG.
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 Carme Mtn Rch, CA
 PERMIT NO. 286

Address Service Requested

Volunteers Needed Tues., Jan. 8 & Wed., Jan. 9 to supervise students planting in Preserve. See p. 11

Check Your Label

Take a moment to examine the address label on this newsletter. Check to see if your expiration date has come and gone. If so, please take the time now to send in a renewal check for your membership dues. This will enable you to keep receiving our newsletter, recognized as one of the best conservation newsletters in San Diego. That way you'll keep learning about the family walks; the plants and animals that inhabit the Preserve, and the many conservation projects open to you and your family or friends.

Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:
 Senior (62) or Student \$10 Individual \$15
 Family \$20 Sponsor \$30 Patron \$100
 Corporate \$250 Life \$1000
 Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:
 Volunteer to help the committee (call to discuss)
 Hikes
 Indian Culture
 Educational Workshops
 School, Family, Youth Programs
 Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____ 1/2002

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:
 Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
 P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
 Call **858-484-3219** or **858- 566-6489** for more information.

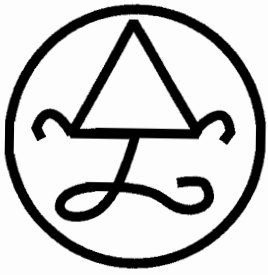
Friends' Directory

Officers
 President: Brian Swanson 760-749-5453
 Vice-President: Don Albright 619-443-5937
 Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858- 538-2527
 Secretary: Rick Botta 858-672-0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors
 Les Braund, Edward DiBella, Mike Kelly, Jill Kozuleth

Walks Leaders
 Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen, Mike Kelly, Les Braund, Pat Watkins, Linda King and Barbara Moore.

Committees:
 Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman
 Newsletter: Mike Kelly
 Plant Nursery Director: Liz Rozycki
 Stream Survey Committee: open
 Voice Mail System: Pat Watkins
 Tracking Team Coordinator: Barry Martin (484-4007)
 Volunteer Coordinator: Jill Kozeluh, 858-271-1814
 Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858-566-6489
 Webmaster: Steve Romeo
 Wildlife Surveys: Dean Woods: 858-672-1120.



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve
Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve
Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Mar. & Apr. 2002
Volume 16, No. 2

López Homestead: New Findings

Will Bowen, Ph.D.

Introduction

The Tracking Team of Peñasquitos Canyon is not the only one tracking things in the canyon to find out what's been going there. Other Friends have been hot on another trail, tracking footsteps in the sands of time, trying to better understand the history of our canyon preserve.

See p. 6 for more

Vote Yes on Prop 40

Mike Kelly, Conservation Chair

The Friends urge our members and readers to go to the polls this March 5 and vote Yes on Proposition 40. This is "The California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Act of 2002. If passed this bond initiative will provide \$2.6 billion for expanding our park

See p. 8 for more

Highlights Inside

Hike calendar	2
Volunteer Activities	4
Open House	9
Volunteer Accomplishments	10
Fire in the Preserve	11
Directory	12

More Volunteers Needed

Trans-County Trail Update

Ranger Gina Brown

The construction of the Trans-County Trail is progressing rapidly. However, we have only 17 weeks to finish building the last half-mile of trail in addition to applying the final layer of surface material and putting up signs. We have enjoyed quite a bit of volunteer support, and we could use even more.

You can come work with Ranger Brown and other dedicated volunteers on the first and third Sundays of the month from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. At the last few work parties we have accomplished a lot. With only five people we were able to complete 100 feet of trail in just a few hours. Many of the volunteers have commented on how nice it is to have taken part in such a beautiful, worthwhile project.

We are currently working on the third and final creek crossing. This entails installing a 12 foot bridge with a rock and concrete foundation, in addition to building a ramp approach on either side of the bridge. We also have much more clearing to do between the third crossing and the I-15 bridge.

If you would like to share in this exciting project, please contact Ranger Gina Brown at (858) 538-8066 or gbrown@sandiego.gov



Canyonside Elementary School students hard at work planting natives they grew in the classroom from cuttings. This was the third annual project for the school.

Spring Activities Schedule

Did everybody enjoy our week of “winter”? With so little rain most native plants and weeds are late in coming up and slow in developing. Unless we get more rain our flower show will be mostly confined to native shrubs and a small number of bulbs and annuals. But the shrubs are blooming.

Mountain lilac (*Ceanothus tomentosus*) is at its peak now on the north-facing slopes of Black Mountain Open Space Park, covering the hillside with its wonderful aroma and brilliant blue. It’s also in bloom in López Canyon and on López Ridge near the vernal pools. Winter currant (*Ribes indecorum*) is finishing its bloom in these same places, while California spine bush (*Adolphia californica*), is just beginning on the south-facing slopes of Peñasquitos Canyon (just west of the County Aqueduct crossing and just west of Peñasquitos Creek Community Park to the waterfall). Fuschia-flowered gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*) with its bright red flowers against its bright green foliage is blooming near the trail on the south side of Peñasquitos Canyon (west of Aqueduct Crossing) and on the Miners Loop trail on Black Mountain. San Diego Monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*), Blue dicks (*Dichelostemma capitatum*), Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), California violet (*Viola pedunculata*), California buttercup (*Ranunculus californicus*), California bee plant (*Scrophularia californica*) and others are bolting and should be blooming soon.

The Miners’ Loop Trail walk on Black Mountain will be a good time and place to see many of these. Join us!

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

Every Saturday & Sunday

San Diego Archaeological Society docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego’s oldest residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m., on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an

historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. **La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:** 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

March

Geology Hike

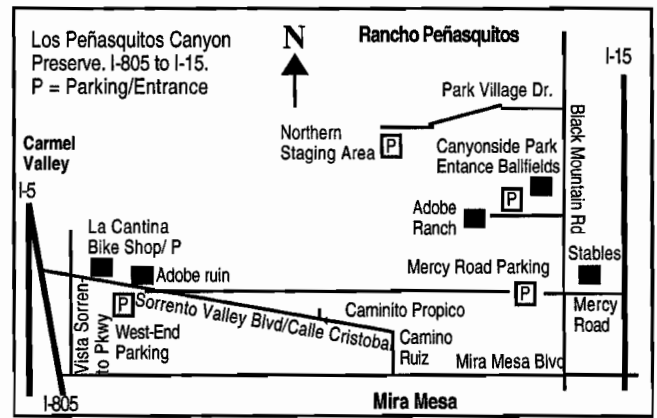
Sun., March 10, 9 a.m. – noon. Join geologist Don Albright for a walk through geological time, including the Preserve’s waterfall and a rare fossil. Meet at Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. Steep trail. Bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions

Beginners’ Tracking Walk at Ranch

Sat., March 16, 8 – 9 a.m. Children welcome! Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in from Uli Burgin, a member of the Friends’ Tracking Team. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Intermediate Tracking Walks at Ranch

Sat., March 16, 8 a.m. A member of the Friend’s Tracking Team will lead this advanced tracking walk. Must have completed beginner and intermediate training. Wear shoes that are good in the mud. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.



Mystery Tree Walk from Mercy Road

Sat., March 16, 3 p.m. (2 miles) Join Pat Watkins for this moderately paced nature and historical walk. Visit a grove of old oak trees with a Mexican era sign map carved into them and learn the legend of the Mystery Trees. See Indian grinding rocks and wildflowers and learn native plants and their uses. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area, upper level, by the benches at the junction of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Black Mountain Flower Walk along Miner’s Loop Trail

Sun., March 17, 9 - 11:30 a.m. Join Black Mountain Park docents for a moderately paced nature walk . See native flowers and learn about Indian uses of them. Steep hills require good hiking boots. Bring water and sun protection. Meet at the main parking-staging area on the north side of the mountain. Take Black Mountain Road in Peñasquitos north. After passing Maler Rd. on the right, and just before it takes the big curve into the new Carmel Valley Road, look for and take the dirt road to the right. Proceed up the hill, following detour signs if they are still up, past the hanglider area and down the hill until a sign for Black Mountain Park and a paved road appear on the right. Take this up to the parking area. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

(Calendar cont'd)

Nature Walk in López Canyon with Barbara Moore

Sun., March 17, 3–5 p.m. Enjoy the birds, beasts and wildflowers of López Canyon with the co-author of *Walking San Diego*. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing by the author. Meet in West-end Parking-Staging area off Sorrento Valley Road, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call **858-484-3219** for recorded directions.

Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee

Mon., March 18, 7 p.m. The public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizens' Advisory Committee

Thurs., March 21, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Driveway, past the Canyonside Rec Center. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sat., March 23, 9–11 a.m. Join naturalist Les Braund for this moderately paced nature walk. Les is also President of the San Diego Mycological Society (mushrooms). Learn native plants and their uses. Bring a hand lens or magnifying glass if possible to examine liverworts, mushrooms, lichen and other smaller organisms if it's rained lately. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area, upper level, at the junction of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting

Tues., March 26, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting at the Adobe Ranch House off Canyonside Drive off Black Mtn. Rd. between Mira Mesa and Rancho

Peñasquitos.

Full Moon Hike with Will Bowen

Sat., March 30, 7–8:30 p.m. A hike to observe the moon, stars, and constellations above and the canyon below. We will also watch for owls, bats, and deer. Bring a flashlight and dress warm. Meet in the parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**. Or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

April

Black Mountain Nature Walk along Miner's Loop Trail

Sat., April 13, 9 - 11:30 a.m. Join Black Mountain Park docents for a moderately paced nature walk. See native flowers and learn about Indian uses of the plants. Steep hills require good hiking boots. Bring water and sun protection. Meet at the main parking-staging area on the north side of the mountain. Take Black Mountain Road in Peñasquitos north. After passing Maler Rd. on the right, and just before it takes the big curve into the new Carmel Valley Road, look for and take the dirt road to the right. Proceed up the hill, following detour signs if they are still up, past the hanglider area and down the hill until a sign for Black Mountain Park and a paved road appear on the right. Take this up to the parking area. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions

Nature Walk in López Canyon with Barbara Moore

Sun., April 14, 3–5 p.m. Enjoy the birds, beasts and wildflowers of López Canyon with the co-author of *Walking San Diego*. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing by the author. Meet in West-end Parking-Staging area off Sorrento Valley Road, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call **858-484-3219** for recorded directions.

Beginner's Tracking Walk at Ranch

Sat., April 20, 8 – 9 a.m. Children welcome! Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment

they live in from a member of the Friends' Tracking Team. Wear shoes good for mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Advanced Tracking Walk at Ranch

Sat., April 20, 8 – 9 a.m. A member of the Friends' Tracking Team will lead this advanced tracking walk. Must have completed beginner and intermediate training. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Mystery Tree Walk from Mercy Road

Sat., April 20, 3 p.m. (2 miles). Join Pat Watkins for this moderately paced nature and historical walk. Visit a grove of old oak trees with a Mexican era sign map carved into them and learn the legend of the Mystery Trees. See Indian grinding rocks and wildflowers and learn native plants and their uses. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area, upper level, by the benches at the junction of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., April 21, 9 a.m. (2 miles). Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Rain cancels. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area, upper level, at the junction of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Geology Hike

Sun., April 21, 9 a.m. – noon. Join geologist Don Albright for a walk through geological time, including the Preserve's waterfall and a rare fossil. Meet at Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. Steep trail.

See p. 4 for more

(Calendar cont'd)

Bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Nature Walk from Mercy Road
Sat., April 27, 9–11 a.m. Join naturalist Les Braund for this moderately paced nature walk. Les is also President of the San Diego Mycological Society (mushrooms). Learn native plants and their uses. Bring a hand lens or magnifying glass if possible to examine liverworts, mushrooms, lichen and other smaller organisms if it's rained lately. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area, upper level, at the junction of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Dusk Frog Hike with Will Bowen
Sat., April 27, 5–7 p.m. Look for and learn about tadpoles, frogs, and toads and their role in the overall ecology. Listen for frogs singing. Bring a flashlight and shoes that can get wet! Meet in the parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.** Or call **858-484-3219** for recorded directions.

DIRECTIONS

Black Mountain Open Space Park, Rancho Peñasquitos
From I-15 take SR 56 (Ted Williams Parkway) west to Black Mountain Road. Go right (north) on Black Mountain Road and follow it all the way until you see the last houses on the right and open space beyond. Look for a dirt road to the right and take it. Proceed about 1 mile, going beyond the bare hangliding area on the right and down a hill to a big curve and a sign for the park and paved road on the right. Proceed up the road to the staging area.

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal
This intersection is located in Mira Mesa. From the west (I-5/I-805 merge) take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east. It becomes Calle Cristobal as it passes Camino Santa Fe. The next street is Caminito Propico. From the east, take Mira Mesa Boulevard to Camino Santa Fe. Go right on Camino Santa Fe, then right on Calle Cristobal to Propico. Park in cul-de-sac on either side. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Spring Volunteer Activities

Flower Field Plantings

Sunday, March 10, 9 a.m.

Sunday, March 17, 1 p.m.

Volunteers are needed to help plant native wildflower plants and bulbs in a restoration site near the waterfall. About 3 hours. Bring sun protection, water and hand garden tools if you have them. Easy digging. Amy Rusev of the Soils & Ecological Restoration Group at SDSU & Alliant will give a short talk on the research goals of the project. Meet at the western end of Park Village Drive in Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.** Call Mike Kelly at 858.566.6489 to volunteer or for more information.

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area
In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Northern Parking-Staging Area
Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino Ruíz. Left on Camino Ruíz and park. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Ranch House Walks/Tours
Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch. house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area
Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

West-End Parking-Staging Area
South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Help Sandbag the el Cuervo Adobe

Saturday, March 16, 2 p.m.

The sandbags have finally arrived. Volunteers will sandbag the adobe ruins to protect them from further flood damage under the direction of the County Historian, Dr. Lynne Christenson. Dr. Christenson will give a short talk on the history of this adobe and its meaning for historic preservation. Meet at 4206 Sorrento Valley in the small parking lot. The adobe is a short walk away. Bring sun protection and water. Call Mike Kelly at 858.566.6489 to volunteer or for more information.

Chaparral Restoration

Saturday, April 6, 9 a.m.

Help us finish this restoration of an eroding chaparral hill a short distance from the waterfall. We'll put some more plants in the ground and stake out erosion control wattles and put in a section of fencing. Bring sun protection and water. Call Mike Kelly at 858.566.6489 to volunteer or for more information.

Wildlife Track & Sign Survey Training

Saturday, April 13, 9 a.m.

FREE Training will include basic track, sign, and habitat recognition as well as details on the implementation of the survey protocol. Please bring a sack lunch, be prepared to spend much of the day outdoors, and be ready to take notes. Register ONLINE at www.penasquitos.org or leave a message at 858.484.3219. Meet at the Ranch House on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road in Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Bros. 1189.**

My Last Roundup

Supervising Ranger Reneene Mowry

It's with a strange mixture of excitement and sadness that I hang up my ranger hat and head to the hills (or, perhaps, to the banks of the Rio Grande and the hot springs of New Mexico!). I started my tour at Los Peñasquitos in March, 1989. At that time, the restoration of Wing A (the section of the ranch house that contains the conference room and my office) had just begun. You could see the exposed adobe bricks of the original Ruíz casa and the large holes in the ground where archaeologists had uncovered a cement lavanderia (laundry facility) and pottery olive jar that had been lying under the floor for over a century. There were no houses, or blinking traffic lights, to mar one's view along the northern rim of the canyon. Nor were there the glaring lights and noise from adjacent ballfields to disrupt the solitude and darkness of the evening hours. The City did not have rangers assigned to oversee Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve (LPCP). Instead, they paid a Pinkerton security guard to open and close the gates and make regular patrols. The guard was seldom seen unless you knew how to find his favorite hideouts, where he could be found napping throughout the day!

I've seen dramatic changes in the surrounding area over the years — lots of new homes, roads, traffic lights, shopping centers, and, of course, many more people. During this time the preserve has changed, too. There are kiosks and signage at each of the three entrances, as well as increased signage throughout the canyon. There are new trails, bridges, rock stairways at the waterfalls, and fencing to protect sensitive habitat areas. The LPCP Volunteer Patrol provides an added presence in the canyon on weekends, while the Friends of LPCP offer free nature walks and devote countless hours removing exotic plants and restoring native habitat. The San Diego Tracking Team conducts quarterly tracking surveys of our wildlife, wilderness awareness trainings, and nature programs for children. And the City now has two full-time rangers assigned to Los Peñasquitos instead of a Pinkerton security guard.

At the Rancho, Wing A and Wing C (the kitchen) have been restored, as well as the lath shed, spring house, and the walls of the duck pond.

There's a new coat of plaster and paint on the 1911 barn, and the ranch house has been freshly painted. Docents from the San Diego County Archaeological Society (SDCAS), which is headquartered at the Ranch House, give free tours on weekends and during special events. Live-in park hosts maintain the buildings and the landscaping, coordinate the third/fourth grade school programs, oversee the gift shop, and capture errant rattlesnakes! Other volunteers, called Ranch Hands, help with the school programs, maintain the flowers in the courtyard, and assist with special events. Over the past 13 years, I have been the only County staff person; however, a park maintenance work has been hired and is scheduled to arrive here in March. Unfortunately, I am retiring at the end of March and I will only get to enjoy the extra help for 2–3 weeks. (Why do things *always* happen that way?)

People often comment that I'm lucky to work in such a beautiful setting. They are right—the Rancho is a very special place, and I feel very blessed to have spent the major portion of my ranger career here. However, what means much more to me is the relationship I have enjoyed with the amazing volunteers who donate their time and talents at Los Peñasquitos. It's because of you that the rancho and the preserve have flourished, despite the added pressures of urbanization I mentioned previously. Some of you were here at the beginning of my 13-year tenure (doesn't time fly?) and have become old friends. I want to thank all the volunteers for the privilege of working with you; it has been most gratifying. In particular, I want to thank Mike Kelly, a person for whom I have the highest respect, a person who has done so much for the park, and from whom I have learned so much. Goodbye, everybody—I will truly miss you!

P.S. In keeping with the newly established all-female regime at Los Peñasquitos, the new County park maintenance worker, Mary Godeau, is also female. Now, if only my replacement is a female, too!!!

P.P.S. If you haven't yet met Jeannette or Gina, come to the Open House on March 9. We'll all be there!

(López cont'd)

The true history of the López Homestead in López Canyon has been a particularly elusive query. For instance, from the beginning we've not known when it was first settled or how it was acquired. Many theories have been put forward. Was it in the 1950s as some archaeologists and a handwritten date in a concrete portion of the site might suggest? Or much older as suggested by other aspects of the site and anecdotal evidence suggested? Recently, some new clues have come to light and pieces of the puzzle have fallen into place, offering us a much better understanding and appreciation of this important cultural resource.

U.S. patent homestead federal land grant

Although a claim has been put forward that the López Homestead was part of a Mexican land grant the truth is that it was actually a United States or Federal Patent Land Grant. The documents to support this assertion were discovered at the Museum of San Diego History Archives in a book entitled, U.S. Patent Homesteads Book #5. U.S. Patent Homesteads refers to small land grants made possible

under the Federal Land Act, passed on May 20, 1862. After the Civil War, these grants were readily given out.

Ramon López, Sr. received one such grant in what we now call López Canyon. [Fig. 1.] In the same vicinity, Pierre Bovet, received his land grant in Carroll Canyon where he had an adobe house and vineyard. He married Ramon, Sr.'s sister, Providencia. John and Sarah McGonigle of Carmel Mountain-Del Mar Mesa fame also received a grant in what is now called McGonigle Canyon (Carmel Valley). These grants were for a standard 160 acres each. Why is Ramon López important?

Ramon López was a descendant of a family that was important in the early history of San Diego. You've probably heard of Casa de López in Old Town, an original building, which was the family's city dwelling, nestled on the hill of the Presidio. The Lópezes can be placed in like company with the Alvarado family of Peñasquitos canyon, with whom they appear to have shared a keen rivalry.

The López family in San Diego begins with Becino Ignacio López, who was a Leatherjacket soldier at the Presidio barracks. Ignacio sired a large family and was to become an

Consideration, \$ _____ Date, *September 3* 1890 Book, *5* Page, *440*

Covenants *U.S. Patent*

NAME OF GRANTOR AS SIGNED, } NAME OF GRANTEE IN BODY OF INSTRUMENT

*Benj. Harrison Pres.
By W.M. Keane Secy.
J.B. Bonwill. R.O.T. & L.C.
ad interim* } *Ramon Lopez*

Ack'd _____ 188____, before _____ N. P., with official seal.

Filed, *Aug. 28* 1890, at *23* m. past *2* h. *P.* m. *Geo O. Forward*
E. G. HAIGHT, Recorder.

DESCRIPTION.

Conveys, situate in _____ County of San Diego and State of California.

Lots 2, 3, and 4 and 1/2 of S.E. 1/4 Sec. 33 - T14 - S. R. - 34 - S.B.M. in California. Containing 160 ²⁵/₁₀₀ Acres.

*Homestead Cert 1011.
Application 1809.
Act May 20 - 1862
Recorded Vol. 2 - Page 458.*

Fig. 1. Original land grant to Ramon López.

important rancher. One of his sons, Bonifacio, became a well known and admired horseman, who was also at various times the judge or arbitrator of the Old Town settlement, on the first grand jury, and acting commandant of the Mission. Bonafacio had a country adobe home and ranch in Soledad valley (Sorrento Valley — wherabouts currently unknwn). One of his sons was Jose Ramon López

Basically, then, Ramon López, Sr. went into López Canyon, which was unoccupied federal land, built a house and started a farm/ranch, as a homesteader. The date given for his initial settlement is September 3, 1890. On August 28, 1895 at 2:25 P.M. his claim for title to the land under the federal program was officially filed with the County Recorder, for Lots 2,3,4 and

S1/2 of S.E. ° Sec. 33 T14 R3W.

Pierre Bovet apparently settled on his property earlier than López, as the date of October 26, 1880 on his document implies. He filed his claim, November 14, 1895 for 160 acres in Carroll Canyon which, as you probably know, is the canyon over the hill and south of Mira Mesa Blvd.

It's known that Jose Ramon López, Sr. was born in 1847 in San Juan Capistrano. When the López family lost their Soledad adobe home after the father, Bonifacio, died in 1860, Ramon, Sr. was but 13 years of age. It's believed that the widow and children may have moved up to remaining family land in the San Dieguito valley (east of the current Del Mar Race Track). By 1869, they had sold their claim to the López adobe in Old Town

to a Patrick O'Neil.

In 1880, Ramon López, Jr. was born to Ramon López Sr. and his wife. Another child, Enriqueta was two years old at that time. In 1890, the young family moved into López canyon. In 1895, Susie López was born (she later contacted polio). Ramon Lopez, Sr. lived until 1931. Susie died in 1947, Ramon, Jr. In 1953, and Enriqueta in 1955. [The last days of Ramon, Jr. and Enriqueta have been recounted in earlier Friends' articles.]

San Diego Plat Maps

The Museum of San Diego History archives have several large old books of Plat maps of San Diego that show who owned what land where. These map books offer evidence that contrib-

See p. 8 for more

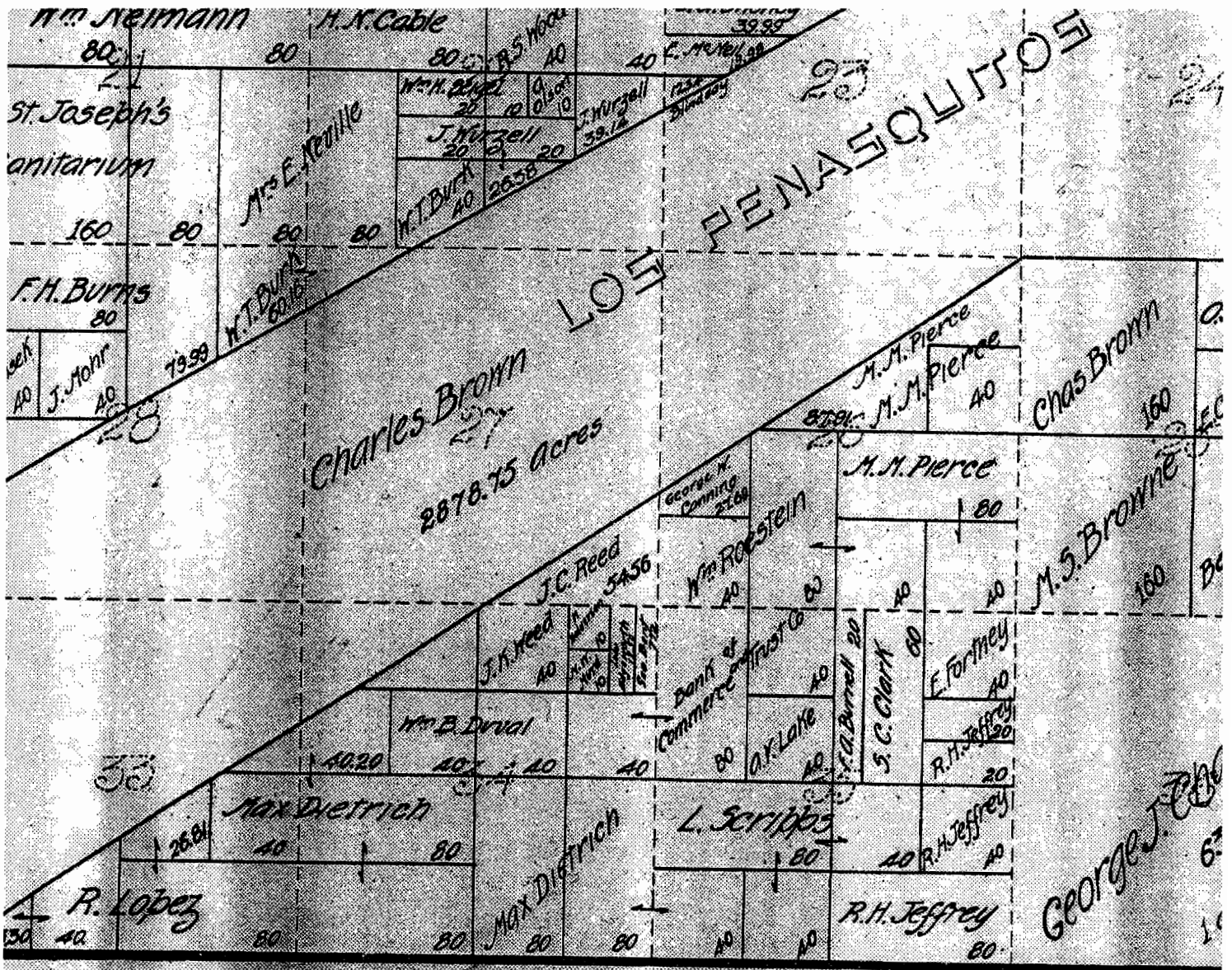


Fig. 2. 1911 Plat Map showing "R. Lopez" in the lower left hand corner.

(Lopez cont'd)

utes to our understanding of the Lopez Homestead. The Plat books of 1892, 1895, 1897 and 1911 show Ramon López as the owner of land in the López Canyon area

The maps also indicate that J.L. Lester and then Max Dietrich owned the land just north and east of Ramon López, Sr. (Fig. 2).

1901-1903 Topographic Map

A topographic map dated 1903 (Fig. 3) with surveying done from 1901-02 was also found at the archives. You can clearly see Diego Alvarado's adobe and the López house on this

map. A road passes by the López house and continues out into López canyon. According to the archives map historian., this road dead ends at another structure, indicated by a black dot, possibly a house or a windmill, as later Topos from 1930 and 1967 indicate a triangular figure with two crossed blades. Could this have been another ranch house; possibly built by Lester or Dietrich, former owners of the land directly east of López?

The map also shows that the old López Road had been built by 1901. Notice that the road triangulates and joins another road on the mesa top at two places. Now one of these branches in the road is overgrown with lemo-

nade berry. Previously we thought the Old Road had only one trail out of the canyon.

This mesa top road the Lopez Road intersects fades out on the 1928 aerial photograph of Lopez Canyon. In 1901, however, this road went over the current Mira Mesa area and down into Carroll canyon, past the Pierre Bovet adobe house, and swung around down into Soledad Canyon.

Conclusion

A long standing mystery has been finally solved and some valuable new information has come to light. It's the

See p. 9 for more

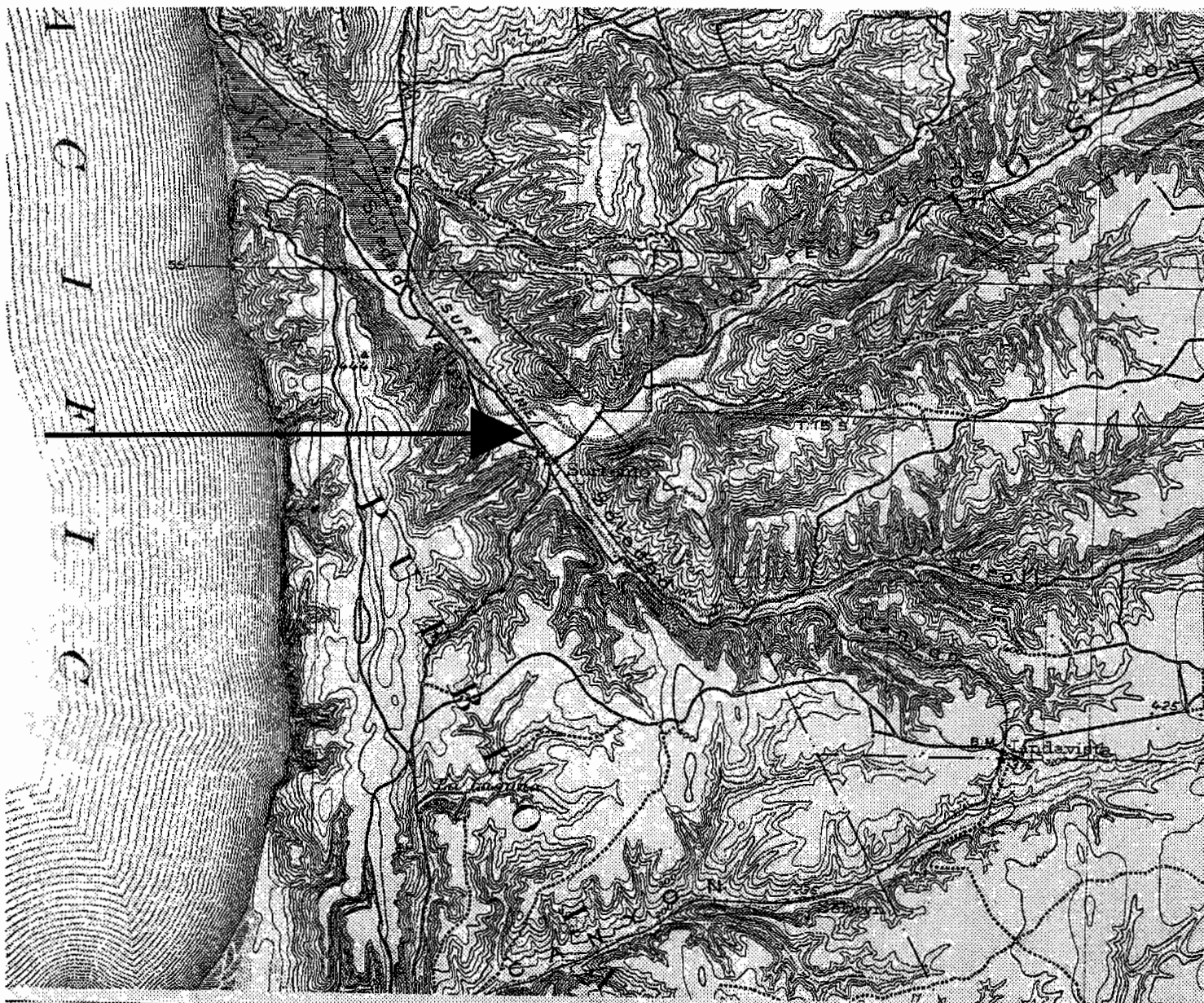


Fig. 3. 1903 Topographic map. The opening to the mouths of Peñasquitos and López Canyons can be seen where the words "Surf Line" end (see arrow). You can just make out the dotted lines going up López Canyon. A magnifying glass helps!

Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Open House

Saturday, March 9, 10 a.m. -2 p.m.

Discover what's happening in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve (LPCP). Explore the natural and cultural wonders that are in your own backyard. Find out how you can help steward this precious resource.

Bring a picnic lunch or purchase hot dogs and sodas from the Rancho Chuck Wagon. Complimentary coffee, lemonade, and herbal tea will be provided.

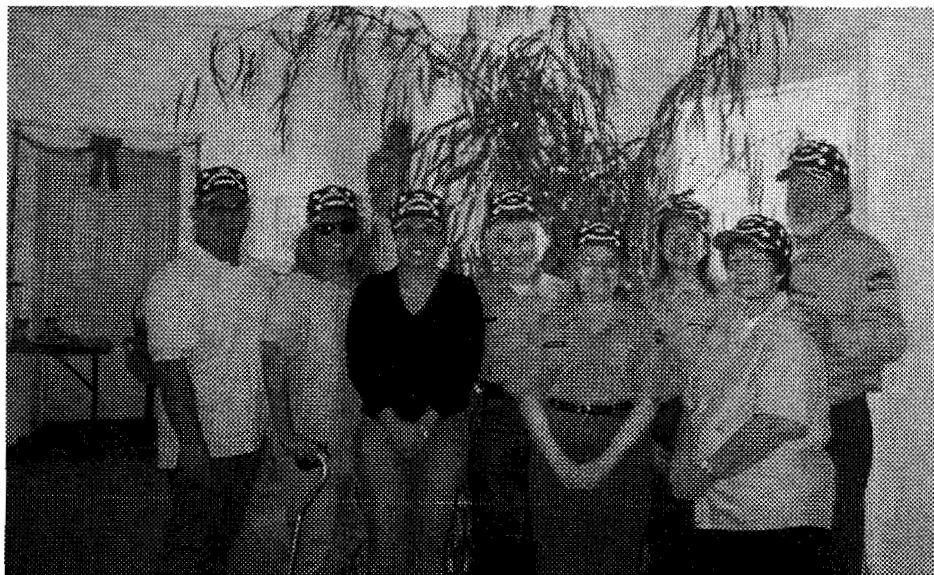
We hope you'll spend the day with us!

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 10:00 Exhibits Open | |
| Ranch House Tour: | Ranch House Docents |
| Bird Walk | Brian Swanson, Friends of LPCP |
| 11:00 Children's Nature Activities
(6-11) | Steve Romeo, SD Tracking Team |
| Ranch House Tour: | Lee Kirchheval, SD Tracking Team |
| Preserving LPCP: | Ranch House Docents |
| | A Walk to Future Restoration Sites: |
| | Mike Kelly, Friends of LPCP |
| 12:30 Bird of Prey Demonstration | County Ranger Paul Kucharczyk |
| 1:00 Ranch House Tour: | Ranch House Docents |
| Hike New Section of the
Trans-County Trail | City Ranger Gina Brown |
| 2:00 Exhibits Close | |

Directions: From I-15 exit on Scripps Poway Prkwy/ Mercy Road. Head west on Mercy Rd. to Black Mountain Rd. Turn right onto Black Mt. Rd. , and left at the first light (Canyonside Park Driveway). Follow the signs to the Ranch House parking lot.

San Diego County Department of Parks and Recreation
City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department



County Ranger Reneene Mowry and her Park Hosts. From left to right: Chris O'Quinn, Laura O'Quinn, Alma O'Quinn, Ranger Reneene, Linda Hasch, P.J. Piburn, Aggie Relaford, Guy Relaford. Park hosts donate many hours of work around the Ranch House and grounds on a weekly basis.

(Prop 40 cont'd)

system restoring the water quality of rivers, lakes and streams to ensure clean drinking water, improve the safety of neighborhood parks, protect wildlife habitat and much more. The following organizations have already endorsed this effort (**partial list**):

Natural Resources Defense Council
Trust for Public Land
Planning and Conservation League
League for Coastal Protection
Heal the Bay
The Nature Conservancy
Southern California Agricultural Land Foundation
Metropolitan Water District
Sierra Club
California Firefighter's Association

Further information about this measure can be found on web site, www.pcl.org.

(López cont'd)

aim of this continuing historical research to bring the cultural resources of this area to life once again, first in our imaginations, then as historical restoration. The López Homestead is an important turn of the century farm house and a node in a web of related families, farms, and adobes of Peñasquitos, Lopez, Carroll and Soledad Canyons. These canyon settlements were very important and intimately connected with the early history of our great city.



Native bunch grass (*Nasella pulcra*) restoration underway in López Canyon January 27, 2002. This is about the 6th year volunteers have eradicated weeds and planted native plants. Volunteers not only dig and plant, but also mulch to keep moisture in the soil and keep weeds out. After watering, planting cones are placed over each small plant. This protects them from herbivory (being eaten by rabbits, squirrels, mice), and drying winds. It creates a microclimate around each plant. Volunteers pictured here include Rob Hutsel, Cindy Burrascano, Edward DiBella, Mike Kelly, Linda Pardy, Linda Pardy, Edward DiBella, Judy from Mission Trails (!), Mike Friedlander, and James Henderson

Volunteers Accomplishments

Besides the folks recognized in the photo caption above, and the many participants in the recent wildlife survey, many of whom also volunteered for other projects, we'd also like to thank the following individuals who turned out for Friends meetings, Citizens Advisory Committee meetings for Black Mountain and Peñasquitos Parks, historical surveys, cultural preservation, restoration work parties and to lead hikes.

Don Albright
Rick Botta
The Boyds

Will Bowen
Les Braund
Lynne Christenson
The Dingeman Family
Terry Gaughn
Mel Howe
Linda King
Leslie Redick
Brian Swanson
Pat Watson
Selena Wilson
Bill Witzel

Cub Scout Den from Canyonside
Elementary School

Trans County Trail Building Volunteers

If you or your organization would like help build the Peñasquitos link in the 110+ Trans County Trail, give Ranger Gina Brown a call at 858-538-8066.

What To Expect After Fire in the Preserve

Mike Kelly, Conservation Chair

Saturday, February 9, 2002 a fire broke out at the west end of the Preserve. A power line arcing in the high winds is thought to have started the blaze. When several of us surveyed the site in the late afternoon spot fires were still being extinguished. The Fire Chief on site told us it was about 104 acres according to their topo program, about twice what the San Diego Union-Tribune wrote. It burned west into a fresh water marsh on Peñasquitos Creek and up against Vista Sorrento Parkway, currently under construction next to the I-5, I-805 merge. It also burned up the hills to the north, towards the Sorrento Hills subdivision. Brush clearance at the top proved more than adequate to offer firefighters defensible ground from which to quench the fire. In addition, a newly planted salt marsh mitigation site was burned.

What can we expect to see happen to burned areas after the fire was the subject of several emails exchanged with a resident of Sorrento Hills. Within weeks, most of the shrubs that burned should start resprouting. Their bright green foliage will stand out in sharp contrast to the blacked stems and branches. After we get some decent rains native wildflower seeds should start to germinate. Some only germinate after a fire, such as the fire following fire poppy (*Papaver californicum*). Weed seed will probably germinate and grow as well. Next year there should be a good flower show in the burned areas. One to two years after a fire is usually the best flower show. The fresh water marsh on the creek should regenerate just fine, including the cattails, rushes, sedges, and the willows. The salt marsh is another story. These plants weren't in the ground more than a year and might not have the underground storage tissues that enable many native plants to resprout after a fire. I've never witnessed the aftermath of a salt marsh burn. It will be interesting.



1992 fire on López Ridge. Above, weeks after the fire, note the robustly resprouting shrubs. Below, the first rainy season after the same burn. Literally tens of thousands of wildflowers dotted the landscape. Fire poppy is in the foreground.



Two things are of concern after a fire: erosion and weed invasion. Since it was a small fire, much of it on the canyon bottom, the erodible surfaces are modest in size. The several gulleys on the slope will need to be monitored for possible erosion and sandbagged or the equivalent with wattling materials.

In general, the fire didn't appear to be so hot as to mineralize the soil and burn the roots. In that case, the roots are still there to hold the soil and the soil surface should be porous enough to infiltrate rainwater, as long as it's not a "gully washer!"



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196
858-484-3219

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Carme Mtn Rch, CA
PERMIT NO. 286

Address Service Requested

Check Your Label

Take a moment to examine the address label on this newsletter. Check to see if your expiration date has come and gone. If so, please take the time now to send in a renewal check for your membership dues. This will enable you to keep receiving our newsletter, recognized as one of the best conservation newsletters in San Diego. That way you'll keep learning about the family walks; the plants and animals that inhabit the Preserve, and the many conservation projects open to you and your family or friends.



Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

- Senior (62) or Student \$10 Individual \$15
- Family \$20 Sponsor \$30 Patron \$100
- Corporate \$250 Life \$1000
- Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

- Volunteer** to help the committee (call to discuss)
- Hikes
- Indian Culture
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____ 3/2002

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call **858-484-3219** or **858- 566-6489** for more information.

Friends' Directory

Officers

- President: Brian Swanson 760-749-5453
- Vice-President: Don Albright 619-443-5937
- Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858- 538-2527
- Secretary: Rick Botta 858-672-0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

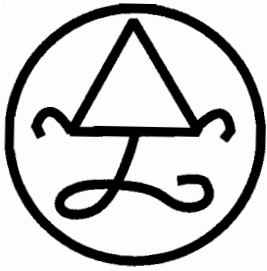
Les Braund, Edward DiBella, Mike Kelly

Walks Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen, Mike Kelly,
Les Braund, Pat Watkins, Linda King and Barbara Moore.

Committees:

- Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman
- Newsletter: Mike Kelly
- Plant Nursery Director: Liz Rozycki
- Stream Survey Committee: open
- Voice Mail System: Pat Watkins
- Tracking Team Coordinator: Barry Martin, 858-484-4007
- Volunteer Coordinator: Marilyn Kolendar, 858-484-7346
- Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858-566-6489
- Webmaster: Steve Romeo
- Wildlife Surveys: Dean Woods: 858-672-1120.



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve
Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve
Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

May & June 2002
Volume 16, No. 3

Annual Meeting & Election

Do Golden Eagles & Other Birds of Prey Have a Future in San Diego County?

Friday, May 3, 7-9 p.m.
Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch House
Dave Bittner, Director, Wildlife
Research Institute (Ramona)



Golden Eagle photo by Dave Bittner. See Page 5 for details.

Highlights Inside

Hike calendar	2
Volunteer Activities	3
Search & Rescue Tracking	4
Trans County Trail Update	6
New County Ranger	6
Black Mountain Update	7
Flower Fields Research	8
Sandbagging el Cuervo	9
Arch in the Park & Kids	10
López Homestead Update	10
Directory	12

In Memory of Lois Warburton

Kaitlin Meadows

Dear Friends, Companions, Comrades,
and Extended Loving Family Of Lois
Warburton

Our dear, intelligent, compassionate friend
Lois Warburton lost her battle with illness
this morning, April 17, 2002, at her home
in the company of her devoted husband
Harry Manning and a circle of dedicated
professionals from The San Diego
Hospice.

We will all treasure special memories of
the Lois we admired, the Lois we
respected, and the Lois whose rich



See p. 4 for more

Spring / Summer Activities

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

Every Saturday & Sunday

San Diego Archaeological Society docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's oldest residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. **La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:** 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

May

Do Golden Eagles & Other Birds of Prey Have a Future in San Diego County? Annual Meeting & Election

Friday, May 3, 7-9 p.m. Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch House. Slide show, video, lecture by Dave Bittner, Director, Wildlife Research Institute (Ramona). See p. 1 article in this newsletter.

“Arch” in the Park for Kids & Adults at the Historic Ranch House

Sat., May 4, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. This year the San Diego County Archaeology Society's (SDCAS) 'Arch' (Archaeology) in the Park will give equal emphasis to both kids' and adults' activities. See article p. 10 of this newsletter.

Beginners' Tracking Walk at Ranch

Sat., May 18, 8 - 9 a.m. Children welcome! Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in from Uli Burgin, a member of the Friends' Tracking Team. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Intermediate Tracking Walks at Ranch

Sat., May 18, 8 a.m. A member of the Friend's Tracking Team will lead this advanced tracking walk. Must have completed beginner and intermediate training. Wear shoes that are good in the mud. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Dusk Nature Walk to Waterfall from North Staging Area

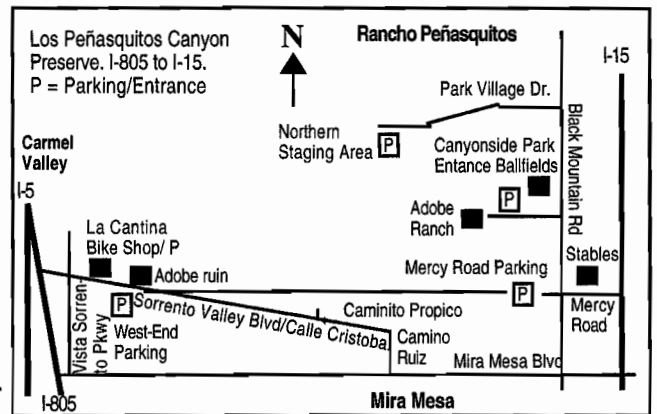
Sat. May 18, 6:30 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk to the waterfall and back, about 4 miles. Chance to see early flowers and deer. Meet at the kiosk at the intersection of Camino Ruiz & Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring insect repellent & water. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Birds and Beasts of Peñasquitos Canyon from Ranch House Parking

Sun., May 19, 7:30 - 9 a.m. Besides the many deer, bobcats and coyotes that call the preserve home, more than 160 bird species live in or visit the preserve during the year. Join Friends' president and hike leader Brian Swanson to search for signs and sightings of these critters. Binoculars recommended. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee.

Mon., May 20, 7 p.m. The public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.



Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizens' Advisory Committee

Thurs., May 16, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Driveway, past the Canyonside Rec Center. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting

Tues., May 28, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting at the Adobe Ranch House off Canyonside Drive off Black Mtn. Rd. between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos.

Bovet Adobe Hike with Will Bowen

Sat., May 25, 10 a.m. - 12 noon. Hike in Carroll Canyon to the site of the Pierre Bovet adobe, site of the first vineyard in San Diego. Bovet married Providencia López of López Canyon, and was a much sought after chef of Old Town. Helen Hunt Jackson, author of *Ramona*, lived in this adobe for a time. Meet near the Fire Station at corner of Carroll Canyon Road and Scranton Road in Mira Mesa, close to I-805. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**. Or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

June

Cattle Tunnels Hike with Will Bowen

Sat., June 1, 10 a.m. - 12 noon. Hike in Carroll Canyon to explore the cattle tunnels under the railroad line. Learn about the Chinese immigrants who built the railroad and life in turn of the century Soledad (now Sorrento) Valley. Meet near the Fire Station at

See p. 3 for more

(Calendar cont'd)

corner of Carroll Canyon Road and Scranton Road in Mira Mesa, close to I-805. **Thomas Guide p. 1208. Or call 858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Nature Walk in López Canyon with Barbara Moore

Sun., June 2, 3–5 p.m. Enjoy the birds, beasts and wildflowers of López Canyon with the co-author of *Walking San Diego*. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing by the author. Meet in West-end Parking-Staging area off Sorrento Valley Road, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call **858-484-3219** for recorded directions.

Beginner's Tracking Walk at Ranch

Sat., June 15, 8–9 a.m. Children welcome! Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in from a member of the Friends' Tracking Team. Wear shoes good for mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Advanced Tracking Walk at Ranch

Sat., June 15, 8–9 a.m. A member of the Friends' Tracking Team will lead this advanced tracking walk. Must have completed beginner and intermediate training. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting

Tues., May 28, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting at the Adobe Ranch House off Canyonside Drive off Black Mtn. Rd. between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos.

DIRECTIONS**Black Mountain Open Space Park, Rancho Peñasquitos**

From I-15 take SR 56 (Ted Williams Park-

way) west to Black Mountain Road. Go right (north) on Black Mountain Road and follow it all the way until you see the last houses on the right and open space beyond. Look for a dirt road to the right and take it. Proceed about 1 mile, going beyond the bare hangliding area on the right and down a hill to a big curve and a sign for the park and paved road on the right. Proceed up the road to the staging area.

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal

This intersection is located in Mira Mesa. From the west (I-5/I-805 merge) take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east. It becomes Calle Cristobal as it passes Camino Santa Fe. The next street is Caminito Propico. From the east, take Mira Mesa Boulevard to Camino Santa Fe. Go right on Camino Santa Fe, then right on Calle Cristobal to Propico. Park in cul-de-sac on either side. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Northern Parking-Staging Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino Ruíz. Left on Camino Ruíz and park. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Ranch House Walks/Tours

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch. house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area

Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

West-End Parking-Staging Area

South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Volunteer Events**PQ Fiesta Days: help needed staffing booth****Sunday, May 5**

If you have an hour or two free to help at the Friends booth Sunday, May 5 between the hours of 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. call Mike Kelly at 858.566.6489. As in the past we will have displays, aerials, and maps, free newsletters and other materials to hand out to the public.

Wildlife Track & Sign Survey Training**Saturday, July 20, 9 a.m.**

FREE Training will include basic track, sign, and habitat recognition as well as details on the implementation of the survey protocol. Please bring a sack lunch, be prepared to spend much of the day outdoors, and be ready to take notes. Class is **FREE!** Register **ONLINE** at www.penasquitos.org or leave a message at 858.484.3219.

Meet at the Ranch House on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road in Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Bros. 1189.**

Beginner Tracker/ Naturalist Program**June 22–23: 8 a.m.–5 p.m.**

The beginning class is devoted to developing tracking and awareness skills, with an emphasis on wildlife physiology and habits, how to move in nature, and techniques for recognizing habitat and associated flora and fauna.

Location: The Ranch House (Located near Black Mountain and Mercy Roads)

Cost: \$35 for the weekend.

Register online at www.penasquitos.org

Call 858-672-0584.

(Lois cont'd)

friendship we shared. She was a bright, articulate, opinionated, lovable, cantankerous, capable woman who devoted much of her time in the last years to duties of the Mount Woodson, Los Peñasquitos Canyon, and San Diego Tracking Teams. Lois tirelessly spoke her truth, stood by her opinions, and unflinchingly faced the enormous challenges of her illness with great dignity.

We have all been very blessed to have known and loved her. I am sure we will continue to bring her energy, spirit and mission of service to all we do in our own lives.

Let us not mourn but celebrate as she would have commanded us the gifts of her friendship and her service. Let us remember she lived so ardently among us and passed from us with such dignity.

I hope you will take a moment in your day to wish her spirit safe harbor and to reflect on ways you may affirm her legacy of truth speaking in your own life.

Please note Lois requested that there not be a formal funeral or memorial service to mark her passing and it is important that we honor her wishes and respect the privacy of her family as they grieve.

Lois and Harry request that in lieu of flowers you might make a donation to:

San Diego Tracking Team
Attn: Rick Botta
PO Box 502345
San Diego 92150-2345

It is my fervent hope, however, that you will remember her with story and good natured remembrance at your next gathering, that you will lift her name and memory in conversation, and that you will allow her example of personal integrity to light your own path.

Fare Thee Well Dear Lois
Safe Journey

May We Never Forget To Look For Your
Tracks In The Sands Of Our Lives

[Lois Warburton was a Board Member
and Secretary of the San Diego Tracking
Team]

San Diego Tracking Team Announces The Formation of the Search and Rescue Tracking (SAR) Team

June 1st and 2nd, 2002 with AB TAYLOR

If you were ever interested in mantracking or learning the skills of tracking NOW is your opportunity!

The San Diego Tracking Team (SDTT) is hosting internationally recognized master tracker, Mr. Ab Taylor the weekend of June 1st and 2nd, 2002. He will conduct his step-by-step mantracking and track-aware seminar.

SDTT will use this as the basis for the establishment of their new SAR tracking team. This will be followed by a comprehensive training program that will culminate in fully qualified tracking team members sanctioned by Universal Tracking Services (UTS) and National Association of Search and Rescue (NASAR).

Sat. June 1st

8:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Sun. June 2nd

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Los Peñasquitos Preserve Adobe Ranch House

BOTH DAYS: Bring a bag lunch. Saturday dinner will be provided. Bring hat, sun screen, sturdy boots, water. Dress as if you are going for a hike. Bring warm clothing for Saturday evening's exercises.

COST: \$55 for entire weekend, make check payable to: SDTT (\$25 is non-refundable)

REGISTRATION: Send entire fee WITH NAME, PHONE # & ADDRESSES (email and street) as soon as possible to the address below:

Ed Carpenter
18741-89 Caminito Pasadero
San Diego, CA 92128

Directions and additional information will be sent as confirmation of enrollment.

Class Limited to 21 People, So Sign Up Before May 5th, 2002. Any Questions, Please Call: Barry Martin at 619.892.7620

Prop 40 Passes!

With your support, voters in the March election approved the passage of this \$2.4 billion bond measure, The California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Act of 2002. It provides for expanding our park system restoring the water quality of rivers, lakes and streams to ensure clean drinking water, improve the safety of neighborhood parks, protect wildlife habitat and much more.

Web Site

Visit the Friends' web site at
www.penasquitos.org
to see this newsletter in color,
to see back issues, and infor-
mation on wildlife surveys
and the Tracking Team.

(Eagles cont'd)

Public is welcome

Dave Bittner, the Director of the Wildlife Research Institute, based in Ramona, will present a free video, slide show and lecture at the Friends' annual meeting. Although Dave will focus on his passion, the Golden Eagle, he'll also talk about the status of Golden & Bald Eagles, condors, hawks & owls in San Diego County. A wildlife biologist for 39 years, Bittner has been studying Golden Eagles for the past 15 years. Part of his experience with studying birds included the scientific banding of over 7,700 Great Blue Herons! Learn about the conservation challenges facing the eagles and other birds of prey and how the decline of jack rabbit & prairie dog populations can impact these raptors. Dave will also discuss why the Ramona grasslands are important to the future of some of our Golden Eagles.

As is customary, members present will be asked to nominate and elect the Friends' officers for the coming year, in a very brief part of the program.

7:00 Social with freshments

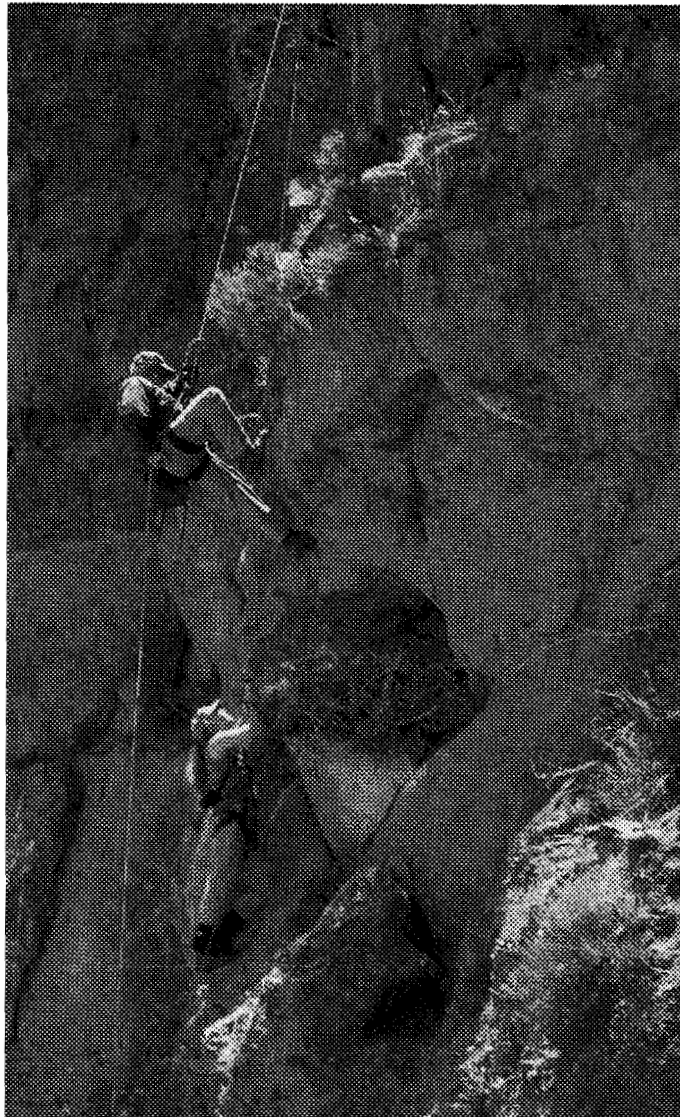
7:20 Election of officers

7:30 Lecture/slide show/video

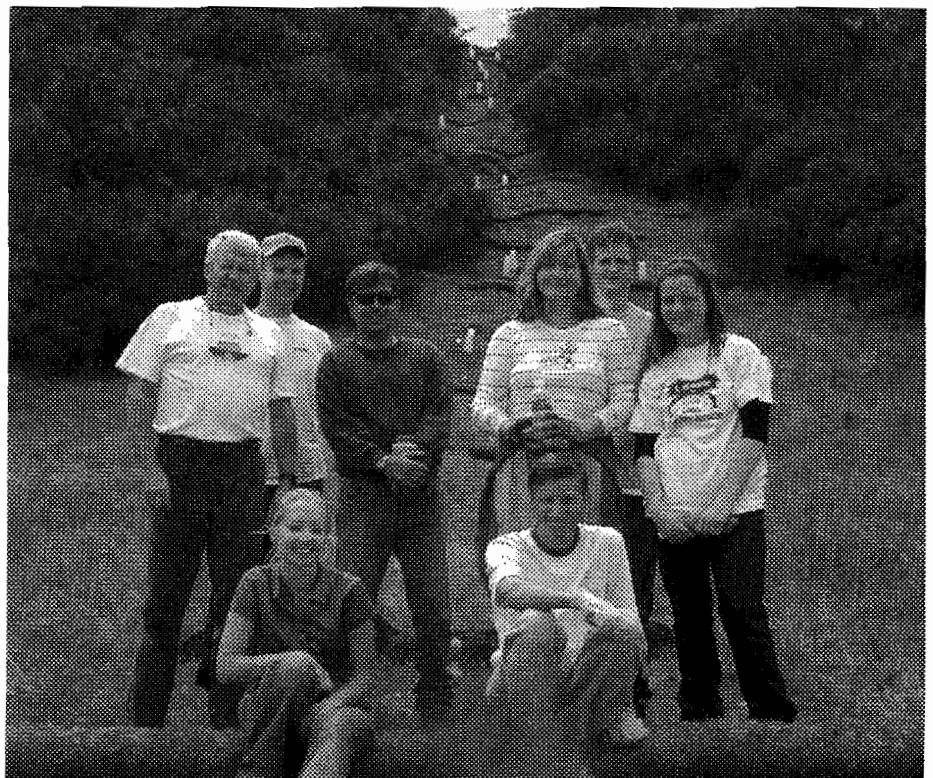
The Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch House is located between Mira Mesa and Peñasquitos. Take I-15 south or north to the Mercy Road exit. Take Mercy Road west to Black Mountain Road. Go right on Black Mountain Road one block & take a left at the first light into Canyonside Driveway. Follow this straight up to a white fenced parking lot on the left. Park & walk up path to adobe ranch house.

Sponsored by The Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve
858.484.3219 or www.penasquitos.org

In early April 2002 Friends volunteers installed straw wattling rolls and additional plants to stop erosion on a steep slope east of the waterfall. Helping out were high school students Ryan Zenkins, Ryan Palmer, Sarah Hamilton and Chris Yawks, joined by Rob Hutsel, Jim Henderson, Barbara Zenkins, Jeff Lohman and Mike Kelly.



Dave Bittner and associate rappelling down a cliff face to examine an eagle's nest. Photo by Dave Bittner



Trans-County Trail Update

City Ranger Gina Brown

The months of March and April did not give us opportunity for much progress on the trail, unfortunately. We suffered a small setback when the much needed, yet unexpected, rains came in the middle of March. The third bridge, that had just recently been installed, broke away. It went several hundred feet down stream, however, it stayed intact and suffered no damage. After much deliberation, it was decided that the best way to put the bridge back in place would be to take it apart and bring it back piece by piece. Everything was numbered and directional placement was recorded. Once the bridge was dismantled it was carried out to the trail to wait for dryer weather to put it back together. After waiting a week for the weather to dry up we started the reconstruction process. The bridge went together without a hitch, this time we secured it a little better.

With the bridge back together we completed the ramps, the bridge is now fully functional, please come out and take a look. Our next project was to control some trail erosion occurring east of the County Water Authority site. There is a storm drain on Mercy Road that drains an awful lot of water. It had a tendency to rip up the trail. Several erosion control methods had been tried to prevent the erosion in the past, however the amount of water was too great for the present drainage system. It was decided that we would install two culverts to direct the water under the trail. The next challenge was acquiring the two 15 foot sections of culvert and installing them. Digging by hand is no joy in Los Peñasquitos. The City of San Diego Canyon Resource Crew was kind enough to bring out their canyon-sensitive backhoe, and the culvert, and install it for us free of charge. One more hurdle was overcome on the Trans-County Trail.

Our next project is setting the final grade on the trail between Black Mt. Road and the second bridge. In the months of May and June we are looking forward to again having the California Conservation Corps work with us on finishing the trail to the I-15 overpass. We are still having volunteer work crews on selected Sundays if you are interested in helping. We look forward to seeing you on the trail.

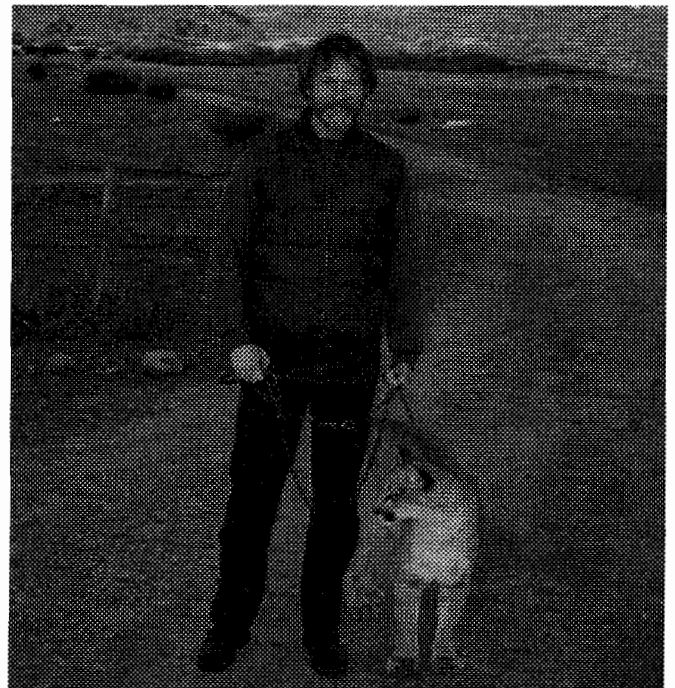
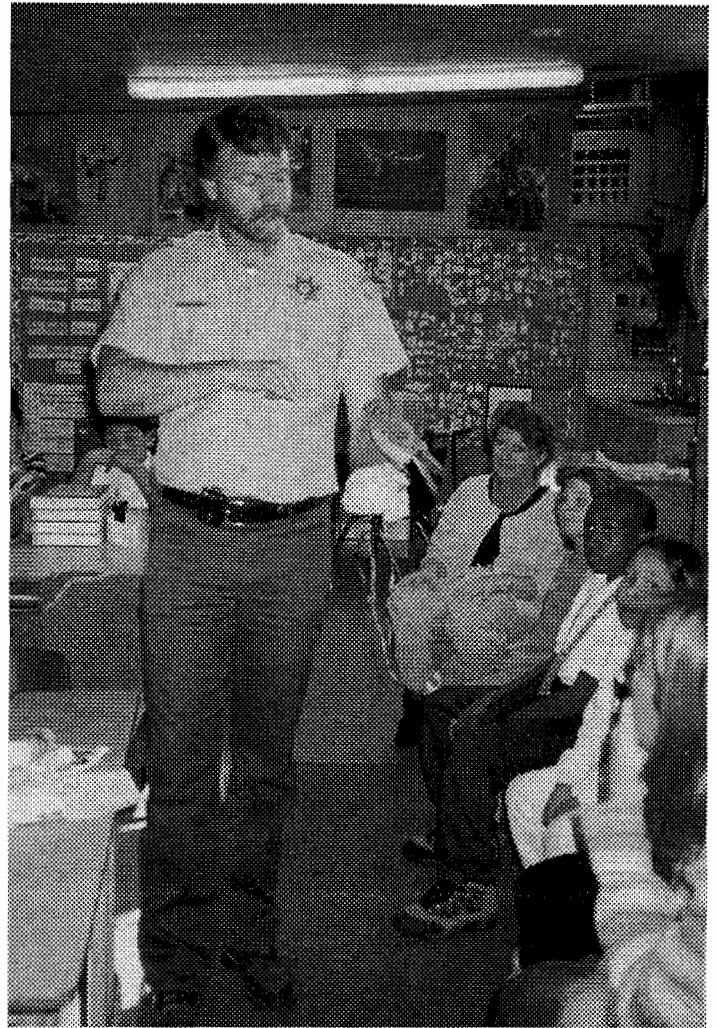
Sunday Work Party Schedule

May 12 and 26

9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Meet at the ranger trailer on the east side of Black Mtn. Rd. Please bring gloves, water, and wear sturdy shoe; hats and sunscreen are also recommended. Remember we are in rattlesnake season and there is much poison oak.

Welcome Ranger Paul!



Supervising County Ranger Paul Kucharczyk with (above) a kestrel companion, educating students about nature and (below) with a cougar. Paul is replacing Ranger Reneene Mowry who retired last month.

Black Mountain Park Update

Eagle Scout Projects, Cleanups & an Arrest

Sr. Park Ranger Lori Charett

Eagle Scout Erosion Project

Spring has sprung and that means a lot of action at Black Mountain Park. I'm happy to report that a lot of it is positive! In April, we have had Justin Sperlein (Mt. Carmel High School Student), an aspiring Eagle Scout complete a trail restoration project on the Miners Ridge Loop Trail. This entailed collaborating with park staff, San Diego Urban Corps and various community members. Justin coordinated a donation of six yards of clean fill through Mark Loeffler, a local resident, and recruited family and friends to help dig a large (16 ft. wide x 8 ft. long and 1 ft. deep) trench in the trail that was filled with rock and later capped with native soil to stop the erosion from the north-facing slope that was washing out the trail.

In addition, the Miners Ridge Loop trail received an overall face lift. Many of you may be familiar with the major erosion and ruts that made the trail difficult to traverse on foot or bicycle. Most of those are repaired through the hard work of the volunteers and staff. They sorted out rocks from dirt and hauled them up the hill in buckets and wheel barrows to strategically place them in the rills. Then the volunteers back filled and tamped down the soil to create a functional, hiker/biker friendly trail. A total of 414 volunteer hours were contributed to completing that project. Furthermore, we had the Urban Corps for a couple of extra days and they installed straw waddles for erosion control on the offending north facing slope that has severe erosion. We hope the waddles will significantly slow down the velocity of water and if any water reaches the trail, it will have much less impact and be well dissipated, thus making our sturdy restored trail last even longer.

Urban Corps cleanup

The Urban Corps last day of service in the park consisted of removing litter (large and small) along with myself and Ranger Intern Teresa Mountain from along Black Mountain Rd. We winched

out car axles, stoves and removed refrigerators, dishwashers, and everything else we could find including the kitchen sink! We proudly filled a 40 yard dumpster. But we didn't stop there.

Hanglider area cleanup

A couple of weeks later, about 35 more community volunteers from the Black Mountain Hanglider Port, Citizens Advisory Committee, Mt. Carmel High School, etc. came out to fill yet another 40 yard dumpster to the brim of household trash (refrigerators, hot water heater, car parts) and debris. At that point, we probably could have rebuilt a car with all the parts we collected! In addition, the Hanglider port was cleaned of all the residual fires/glass and of one healthy looking Rattlesnake. Many thanks to Rod who safely relocated it – I now have gray hair after witnessing that maneuver!

Special thanks to Lori and Victor McBride of the Hanglider Association who helped coordinate too.

Arrest made

Later that same day, the San Diego Police Department and I made an arrest of an illegal off-roader. There was an off-roader on a quad who failed to obey Ranger Aide Johnny's verbal warning at the hanglider port. This character also took the time out to try to shower people with dirt and rocks from his skidding quad and then proceeded to display his middle finger to everyone. Johnny advised me of the situation and I tried making contact twice. The off-roader nearly plowed into my truck and almost mowed over Teresa on the first contact. He was driving like a maniac on the wrong side of the street. I made contact a second time and he screamed lovely things at me and took off. I then contacted the San Diego Police Department (SDPD) and their helicopter responded, as did ground units. My SDPD friends promptly came to the rescue and arrested this 25 year old male (who happens to be on probation as well). The guy actually was trans-

ported by paramedics to the hospital as he was having some health issues, and a notify warrant will be issued – more than likely for off-roading, resisting arrest and reckless driving. One more down, many more to go!

Since then, it seems as the nice weather is among us, so are the off-roaders that have done so much damage to our trails and habitats. The San Diego Police and I have collaborated on many occasions, and we will continue to crack down on such violations to preserve our beautiful Black Mountain Park. Efforts are being made to install more signs, place boulders and smooth out the road a bit.

All in all, it's been a very successful spring. However, much to my dismay, there is still more litter to be removed!

Thanks to all for contributing to beautifying and preserving our open space. If you have ideas for future projects or want to help organize clean-up's, contact me at 858.538.8082.

200 Protest Hydroelectric Facility

Mike Kelly

200 residents of Peñasquitos and Mira Mesa turned out at the Rancho Peñasquitos Library April 23 for an official hearing of the San Diego Water Authority. Picket signs and speakers made it clear to the water authority that we were unhappy with a proposal to site a hydroelectric facility in the Preserve just above Ridgewood Community Park in Peñasquitos when a perfectly good alternative site exists on Mercy Road opposite the new Kentucky Fried Chicken. The Friends' Board voted unanimously to oppose the site in the Preserve because of the impacts it would have aesthetically and on the important wildlife corridor through this area. A decision will be made this June. Call me at 566-6489 to help.

Flower Fields and Grasslands Research in the Canyon

David Bainbridge

Environmental Studies Program Coordinator, Alliant University

There is general agreement that grasslands were once more common in San Diego. The accounts of the early Spanish travelers, particularly Fr. Juan Crespi and Fr. Francisco Palou, highlight the abundant good pasture near San Diego. Quoting Crespi as he headed north from San Diego in July 1769,

"We ascended a large grassy hill and found ourselves on some broad mesas all covered with grass except here and there some very small oaks and chaparral."

In addition the Kumeyaay remember growing a now extinct domesticated large seeded grass that was an important food source. As Fr. Palou noted in his memoirs,

"The heathen live on grass seeds

which they harvest in their season and make into sheaves as is usually done with wheat."

The dominant grass in many of these grasslands may have been purple needlegrass, *Nassella pulchra* (formerly *Stipa pulchra*), but disturbance was so complete before botanists arrived we don't know. It may simply be the bunchgrass that was best adapted to survive disturbance. Purple needlegrass is favored by frequent fires and this may have made it a camp follower for the Native Californians who used fire extensively and intensively. Many other grasses, flowers, and forbs were also found in these grasslands, which some ecologists suggest were flower fields with grass – not grasslands with flowers.

The conversion from perennial native grasses to weedy annuals was driven by fire suppression, overgrazing and agriculture. Purple needlegrass was apparently particularly abundant in bottomlands, the first areas converted to farmland. Much of the valley floor was converted to vineyards, orchards and irrigated or dryland farming quite early in San Diego history, long before it was abandoned and grazed by cattle again.

For restoration purposes it is desirable to return native grasses to these degraded ecosystems by direct seeding or container planting. Direct seeding is problematic, requires considerable seed, and intensive management with herbicides or mowing. Establishing

See p. 9 for more



SERG staff and Friends volunteers planting native bunch grass (*Nassella pulchra*), Blue-eye grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), Mariposa lily (*Calochortus splendens*) and other species in experimental plots northeast of the waterfall. White cones pictured are tree shelters. Pictured are several of the volunteers who turned out on two occasions for the plantings. They included Mt. Carmel H.S. Ecology Club members such as Annie Kidriz, Mariam Fernandez & Gabe Uribe, community volunteers such as Pamela Smith-Brown & Lynne Preisser, Friends' regulars such as Edward DiBella, Jim Henderson, & Mike Kelly, and SERG staff. Discussing the project goals and how to plant is – with her back to the camera – Amy Rusev, flower field project director for SERG.

(Grasslands cont'd)

plants from containers is faster and more certain than direct seeding. The best approaches for planting native grass from containers have yet to be determined, but we have good luck with container plants and treeshelters. The experiment now underway near the waterfall compares several additional treatments and variables including soil amendments, surface shaping (pits to collect rain – if it ever rains again) and fertilizer. This is a cooperative research project involving the Friends, the Soil Ecology and Restoration Group at SDSU, and the Environmental Studies Program at Alliant International University. It is funded by

a small grant from the San Diego Foundation.

We expect it will provide new insight into the best way to restore these degraded plant communities from Mediterranean weeds and exotic grasses to native grasses and flowers.

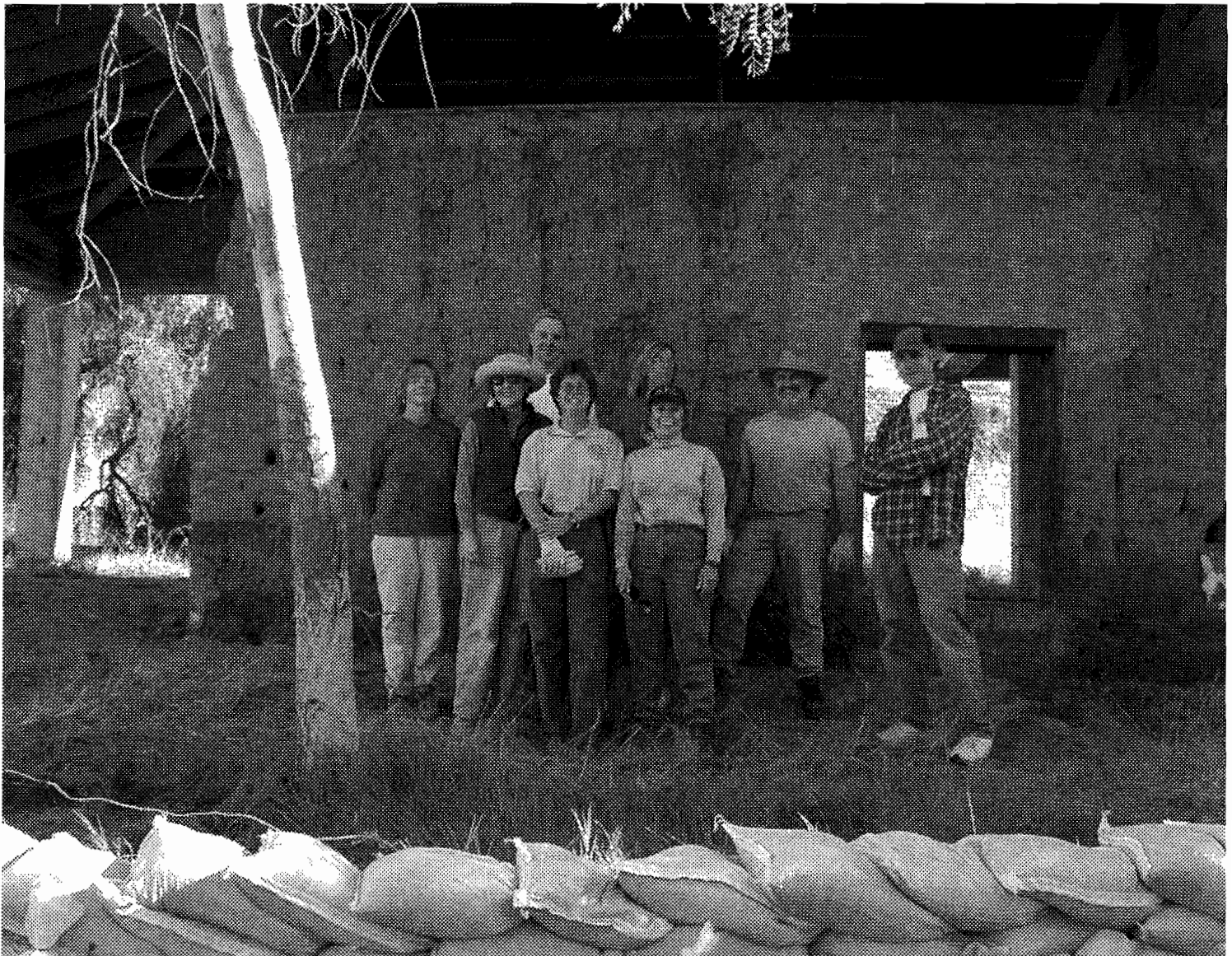
Suggested reading

- Blackburn, T.C. and K. Anderson, 1993. *Before the Wilderness*. Ballena Press. Menlo Park, Calif.
 Bolton, H.E. 1971 [1921]. *Fray Juan Crespi*. AMS Press, NY.
 Burcham, L.T. 1957. *California rangeland: an historico-ecological study of the range resource in California*. Calif. Div. Forestry, Sacramento, Calif. (excellent)
 Engelhardt, Fr. Z. 1920. *San Diego Mission*. J.H. Barry, San Francisco, Calif.
 Minnich, R.A. and R.J. Dezzani. 1998. *Histori-*

- cal decline of Coastal Sage Scrub in the Riverside-Perris Plain*. *Western Birds* 29:366-391.
 Palou, Fr. F. 1998 [1774]. *A Spaniard explores the southern California landscape, 1774*. p. 67-73. in: C. Merchant, ed. *Green Versus Gold*. Island Press, Washington, D.C. (selected readings in California environmental history)
 Shipek, F.C. 1989. *An example of intensive plant husbandry: the Kumeyaay of southern California*. p.159-170. in: D.R. Harris and G.C. Hillman, eds. *Foraging and farming*. Unwin-Hyman, London.

The author can be reached at:

Alliant International University
 10455 Pomerado Road
 San Diego, CA 92131
 bainbrid@alliant.edu



Thanks to the folks from the San Diego Archaeological Society and the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve who turned out to sandbag El Cuervo adobe ruins to protect them from flooding and further damage. Participating were Lynne Christenson (San Diego County Historian), City Ranger Jeannette DeAngelis, Judy Alvarez, Bill White, Ellen & Melvin Sweet, Patty McFarland, Jim Henderson & Mike Kelly (taking photo)

“Arch” in the Park for Kids & Adults Saturday, May 4: 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

This year the San Diego County Archaeology Society's (SDCAS) 'Arch' (Archaeology) in the Park will give equal emphasis to both kids' and adults' activities. All will be held at the historic adobe ranch house in Peñasquitos Canyon, located between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos in the north city area convenient to I-15. Activities for kids will include:

- mock archaeological digs;
- making bracelets;
- picture bingo with archaeological themes;
- storytelling;
- “archaeo” games.

There will also be docent led tours of the historic adobe ranch house and outbuildings, nature walks by the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, and tracking walks by the San Diego Tracking Team.

County Ranger Paul Kucharczyk will have some of his live birds of prey such as kestrels, owls or hawks on display and will talk about their status and challenges facing them.

Archaeologist Steve Bouscaren from City College will be conducting an actual dig with his students near the ranch and will welcome the public to visit them and learn what they have found and how they did it.

Exhibitors will include the San Diego County Archaeology Society, the San Diego Archaeology Center, San Diego State's Anthropology Department, the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, the San Diego Tracking Team and others.

Hotdogs, sodas and other refreshments will be available.

Directions: take I-15 north or south to the Mercy Road Exit. Take Mercy west to Black Mtn. Road. Right on Black Mtn.. Go one block and take a left at the first light and proceed up Canyonside Driveway past the ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Park and walk the path to the Ranch .

López Homestead: Update

Will Bowen, Ph.D.

Introduction

Recently uncovered historical and archaeological materials (*Canyon News*, March 2002), along with information provided by Dr. John Northrop (an equestrian who rode and visited the area for decades), have lead to a further clarification of the López Homestead in López Canyon. Clarification of the history and layout of the López Homestead will hopefully lead to better recognition, and eventually, to excavation, and perhaps reconstruction.

The orchard

The López family may have planted the orchard for fresh fruit, preserves, folk medicine, or to sell. However, Grace Diffendorf, a contemporary, who lived in the Baker-Cassidy ranch in Soledad Valley around the turn of the century, reports in her book *The Long Lane*, that their family tried growing fruit to sell. She reports that the round trip by wagon to market in San Diego was very long and time-consuming and they only got about a cent a pound; so it was not worth it. A better explanation for the orchard might be that it was planted as an “improvement,” which was required of homesteads to retain their title. Incidentally, historically, the one really worthwhile cash crop in this area has been lima beans. Most of the trees in the orchard died between 1928 and 1945. This might have been due to natural causes such as pests, fire or drought. But perhaps they just weren't as important as the cattle and were little tended to.

The old road

Northrop reports that the Old López Road was built in one summer with picks and shovels and team of horses pulling a hand-guided scoop. We know that the road bifurcated way up. The right fork was a faster way over the mesa to the town of Sorrento, where there was a general store, post office, and railroad stop. There, dairy products and livestock could be loaded on the train to San Diego. The left fork in the road went to a ranching or grazing complex and then wound down past the Bovet farm in Soledad (Carroll)

Canyon. Jose Ramon López Sr.'s sister, Providencia, lived here with her husband Pierre Bovet, a noted chef, famous throughout all of Old Town. According to Eva Bovet, who married a son of Pierre and Providencia, Helen Hunt Jackson, who wrote the famous novel, *Ramona*, lived here for a time.

Mesa top corrals

The López mesa top grazing or ranching complex was surveyed by archaeologists in 1979 and updated in 1981. They noted two foundations, one for a shed and another for an open garage-like structure, two cisterns (or water tanks), a pit for an outhouse, and two reservoirs or ponds, which must have been filled with rainwater, and much historic debris. The cattle were probably brought up here for grazing. The ponds provided plenty of water. You can still see them on the 1967 topographic map.

Northrop reports the ponds were still in use in the 1970s and Christian Clews, another equestrian whose family has ridden the area for decades, says he has photographs of Norwood Brown's (the last cattleman of the Peñasquitos) horses in the ponds, from the same time period. This site, fully associated with the López homestead, has all been developed.

House

The López house had a large tree in front of it which has fallen. This tree had a symmetrical trunk and branches and was probably a cypress. This tree was standing in the early 1970s according to Northrop and there is an archaeological survey team photograph showing it dead but standing in 1979. Cypress trees often are indicator plants of Spanish influence dwellings. Cypress are drought resistance and offer shade year round, although they are often scraggily looking. The Bovet adobe in Carroll Canyon had three cypress trees right behind it. A significant number of the adobes in the Louis Geddes collection of historic adobe photographs shows cypress trees nearby. For instance, Philip Crosswaite's adobe house in Old Town had one (he married Bonifacio López's daughter, Maria-

Josefa). When you are looking for old adobe or homestead sites keep your eye out for pepper trees, cypress, or *Opuntia megacantha* (Mission cactus), which were usually planted nearby.

Northrop also recalls there were remnants in early 1970s of a white picket fence that surrounded the house.

Cistern

The López cistern, which could also be called a water tank, was pumped full of water by way of a tractor motor from a seep in the creek embankment below. The cistern had a wooden cover with a pulley and a float attached below. When the water got low the float would drop and raise a wooden flag by way of the pulley. The wooden flag position could be seen from the house. Gravity would take the water down to the house. López had other such cisterns on the mesa top by the Old Road which were destroyed by development.

Barn

In a previous article, I proposed that the Barn site was out east of the house about 150 years on a raised mound area. Ralph J. Giles also thought this was the barn site. I now think that the barn, which was rather small, was located in the gully just east of the house under or beside the large eucalyptus tree now there. In the 1940 Rothero painting there is a tree to the right of house which could be the eucalyptus. However, the eucalyptus, which is fast growing, could have sprung up after the barn fell.

Underneath the eucalyptus, there are two rain furrows about 1-2 feet deep. About 12 inches down I recently noted rusted pieces of metal, large nails, part of a leather saddle and an old soda bottle labeled, "Silver Gate Soda Works." This was a very crude old bottle. Several years ago, the El Nino rains, exposed, at the bottom of the hillside right next to the tree, a wagon harness and some tools. There is a big pile of wood down in front of the eucalyptus which might have come from the barn.

López must have had trouble with rain water washing down the gully and through or under the barn in his time.

Milking station

What I called the Barn site was probably the Milking Station, where the

cows were milked. Milking was probably done very early in the morning, at about 4 a.m. All the cows were dehorned according to Grace Diffendorf, who lived on a similar ranch in Soledad Valley. Dairy products were taken over the mesa top to the train stop in Sorrento for shipment to San Diego. This site locus has rectangular cement slabs associated with it. The cement may have been a later improvement.

Smoke house

Recently Northrop cleared some exotic brush to expose the Smoke House foundation. Its about 25 yards west of the Milking Station, and just a tad to the north. Ralph J. Giles, who did a student paper – with the help of ranger Bill Lawrence – when Giles attended San Diego State, proposed that this locus was associated with feeding or watering livestock.

The Smoke House foundation is made of cement and is 8' X 9'. It has a small cement platform in the middle, about 15" X 18", and 6"-8" high. There are four -inch metal studs or nails in the corners of the platform. There is also some wood strewn about. This is where López would have smoked beef or other meats. Northrop reports that Allan Rothero told him that Ramon López cut off the sycamore trees along the creek bed at shoulder height to stoke the smoke house.

Stone wall

The 1979 archaeological site survey of the López property reported a stone wall in the creek bed just east of the house. It appears to be gone or covered up now. It must have kept the steam in its proper course.

The dump

As with many old ranches, there was an onsite dump site. It comprises an area of about 20 X 30 yards. The surface scatter of artifacts includes many old rusted cans, broken glass, a lantern hanger, a cooking pot, a milking bucket, a metal smoke chimney, and another large piece of metal. Probably many more artifacts are buried under the surface. One piece of glass had been grown right into by a coast barrel cactus. There are many pieces of Gallo wine bottles and whisky bottles with a rose design embossed on it. One completely intact bottle with the cap was

noted. According to Bunny Clews, Ramon López, Jr. was a heavy drinker in his later years and liked Red Roses brand whisky.

Windmill

On the 1903 and 1947 topography maps a windmill is indicated at the back of the property past the cable barrier that crosses the creek bed. Northrop has a photograph of the well head associated with the well which was destroyed when the sewer line went in. López pumped water up for the stock or into the creek. He could also dig holes in the creek bed, like Diffendorf says they did at the Baker-Cassidy ranch in the dry season, so the animals could drink. Historically, water is a very serious matter in this area. In dry years there was little water, with the streams dry and little forage for the stock. The stock could die off or need to be moved to a better area. Feed bills could skyrocket. This was a costly affair that could lead to inability to pay the lease, wages, feed bill, or the taxes, which could spiral into bankruptcy and loss of the land. The option of pumping water from wells by hand was a never-ending affair.

Back fence line

At the back of the property there is a one inch cable that crosses part of the creek and connects up to some barb wired fence posts. This was the back part of the López property. Northrop said this fence line went all the way across the canyon at one time.

Conclusion

The layout of the López Homestead, which was an important turn of the century dairy farm, is now being clarified and its history is being accumulated. The next step will be tax records to get a year by year picture of what was happening at the Homestead. The López Homestead has the potential to teach us much about ranches and farms of San Diego County.

The López Homestead, like the Diego Alvarado's El Cuervo adobe and the Pierre Bovet adobe in Carroll Canyon have all been the victims of a benign neglect or indifference and have deteriorated mightily over the past 25 years. This has led us to a state of significant loss which will now hopefully be corrected.

Summer Activities

Night Walks for the Summer!

With the hot weather we're emphasizing cooler times of the day and evening for our walks. We're offering more dusk and night walks than ever before in both July and August. Not only are the evenings cooler, but the smells and sounds are different and the wildlife more active and easier to see. Join us!

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

Every Saturday & Sunday

San Diego Archaeological Society docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. **La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:** 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

July

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., July 14, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee.

Mon., July 15, 7 p.m. The public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizens' Advisory Committee

Thurs., July 18, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the historic

Ranch House on Canyonside Driveway, past the Canyonside Rec Center. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Children's Hike – In Search of Hedwig: Owls in the Preserve

Fri., July 19, 7–9 p.m.

Several species of owls call the Preserve home. Grab your cloak and a flashlight to join Friends' president Brian Swanson in this twilight walk on the by-ways of the Preserve. Limited to children 7–10 years old, accompanied by a parent, maximum of 20. Reservations: 760.739.5451.

Beginners' Tracking Walk at Ranch

Sat., July 20, 8–9 a.m. Children welcome! Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in from Uli Burgin, a member of the Friends' Tracking Team. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Intermediate Tracking Walks at Ranch

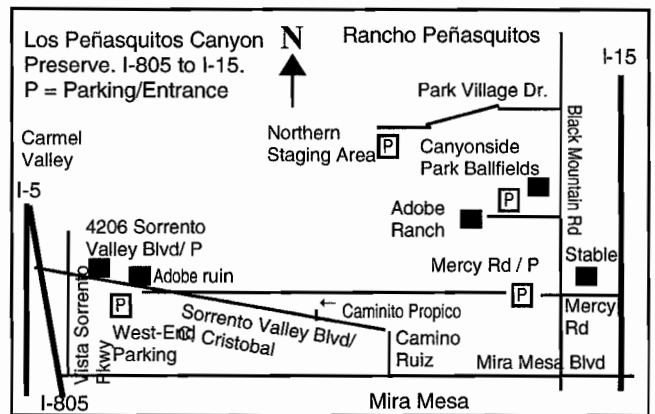
Sat., July 20, 8 a.m. A member of the Friend's Tracking Team will lead this advanced tracking walk. Must have completed beginner and intermediate training. Wear shoes that are good in the mud. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Birds and Beasts of the Twilight

Sat. July 20, 7–9:30 p.m. Wildlife abounds in the Preserve. Bring a flashlight and join Friends' president Brian Swanson on a midsummer's night for this moderately paced hike. We'll be on the lookout for mule deer, rattlers, owls, and bats. Adults only, maximum of 20. Reservations: 760.739.5451.

Nature Walk in López Canyon with Barbara Moore

Sun., July 21, 3–5 p.m. Enjoy the birds, beasts and wildflowers of López Canyon with the co-author of *Walking San Diego*. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing by the author. Meet in West-end Parking-Staging area off



Sorrento Valley Road, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call **858-484-3219** for recorded directions.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting

Tues., July 23, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting at the Adobe Ranch House off Canyonside Drive off Black Mtn. Rd. between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos.

Dusk Nature Walk to Waterfall from North Staging Area

Sat. July 27, 6:30 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk to the waterfall and back, about 4 miles. Chance to see early flowers and deer. Meet at the kiosk at the intersection of Camino Ruiz & Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring insect repellent & water. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Night Hike in López Canyon with Will Bowen

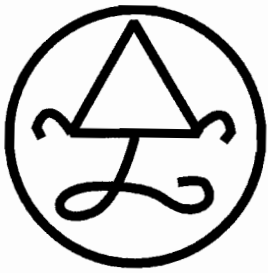
Sat., July 27, 7:30–9 p.m. Watch dusk settle on the canyon. Look for bats, owls, and deer. Observe the moon, planets, stars, and constellations. Bring a flashlight. Meet in the small parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**. Or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

August

Dusk Nature Walk to Waterfall from North Staging Area

Sat., Aug. 10, 6:30 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk to the waterfall and back, about 4 miles. Chance to see early flowers and deer. Meet at the

See p. 3 for more



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve
Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve
Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

July & August 2002
Volume 16, No. 4

Hydroelectric Facility

Keep the Pressure On

Mike Kelly, conservation chair

Public opposition and the support of City Councilmembers Brian Maienschein and Scott Peters is helping with the campaign to stop a pump station and hydroelectric facility from being located in Peñasquitos Preserve (*Canyon News* May/June 2002). The County Water Authority staff has decided against recommending to the Water Authority Board siting this facility in Peñasquitos Preserve next to Ridgewood Community Park and many homes (near the east end of the Preserve, see map below). However, the fight is not yet over, since the facility has to be sited somewhere in the vicinity of Mercy Road and I-15 where major water lines and aqueducts converge.

The Water Authority staff is now poised to recommend their original preferred site at Branicol Lane and Mercy Road in the Woodcrest Hills subdivision on the northeastern edge of Mira Mesa (see map). Heavy opposition to *this* site is what led to a search for alternative sites by a citizens advisory committee, that eventually led to the Preserve site being identified. However, the area community planning groups, homeowners' associations and the Friends unanimously opposed **BOTH** the Branicol Lane and Preserve sites.

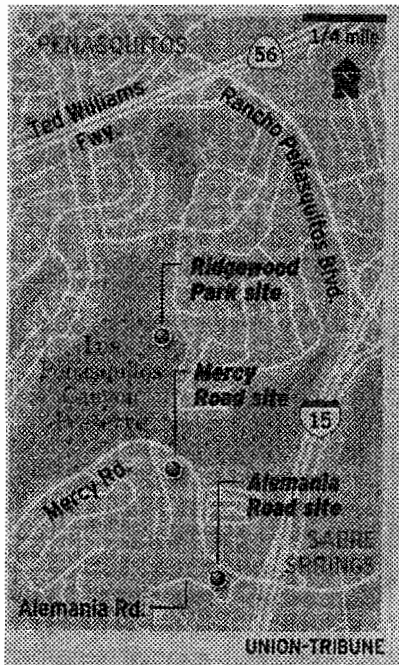
Instead, there has been unanimity of all the citizens involved in favor of another site that was studied on Alemania Road, a dirt road opposite the new Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) near the corner of I-15 and Mercy Road. This site is suitable from an engineering point of view and has no opposition. Water Authority staff claims this site to be "pristine" in comparison to other sites, a claim debunked by the Friends and others at a public meeting held in Peñasquitos in April of this year. Undoubtedly the real reason is the cost, which is mitigated by

the fact that the hydroelectric portion of the project will be making millions for the Water Authority with its generated electricity.

This means that the final site decision is very much in play when it comes to the Water Authority Board for a decision July 17. Please continue to send letters *opposing both the Preserve and Branicol Lane sites and in support of the KFC site* to:

San Diego County Water Authority
Water Resources Dept.
Attn: Ms. Kelley Gage
4677 Overland Ave
San Diego CA 92123

Also, please let Councilmembers Maienschein and Peters (202 C St., San Diego 92101) know you appreciate their support of the community's position.



Highlights Inside

Hike calendar	2
Volunteer Activities	4
Burn Area Rebirth	5
Tracking Team T-shirt	7
Notes	7
Directory	8

Love of the Canyon

Brian Swanson, president

Have you ever wondered what draws some of us to brave killer bees, ticks, and rattlesnakes? Or, perhaps, to meet small groups of strangers on buggy spring days, hot summer afternoons, foggy or rainy autumn or winter days?

It's not money. No, it's love. Love of the outdoors, love of the outdoors and love for the wild plants and creatures which call Peñasquitos Canyon their home.

Our Preserve provides many varied opportunities for sharing your time and talents. Our volunteers range in age from 8 to 70 (I apologize if I've left out anyone!) There's a volunteer opportunity for every interest and ability. It could be making phone calls to volunteers, leading walks, serving on our Board of Directors, removing exotic weeds, restoring habitat by planting natives, helping in plant and animal surveys, staffing a table at one of our community fairs . . . the opportunities are endless. Mind you, few of us do ALL of these things at the same time. A few hours a month, or more if you are inclined, is all that is required

See p. 4 for more



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

858-484-3219

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Carme Mtn Rch, CA
PERMIT NO. 286

Address Service Requested

Check Your Label

Take a moment to examine the address label on this newsletter. Check to see if your expiration date has come and gone. If so, please take the time now to send in a renewal check for your membership dues. This will enable you to keep receiving our newsletter, recognized as one of the best conservation newsletters in San Diego. That way you'll keep learning about the family walks; the plants and animals that inhabit the Preserve, and the many conservation projects open to you and your family or friends.

Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Brian Swanson 760.739.5451
Vice-President: Don Albright 619.443.5937
Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858.538.2527
Secretary: Rick Botta 858.672.0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Les Braund, Edward DiBella, Mike Kelly

Walks Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen, Mike Kelly,
Les Braund, Pat Watkins, Linda King and Barbara Moore.

Committees:

Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman
Newsletter: Mike Kelly
Plant Nursery Director: Liz Rozycki
Stream Survey Committee: open
Voice Mail System: Pat Watkins
Tracking Team Coordinator: Barry Martin, 858.484.4007
Volunteer Coordinator: Marilyn Kolendar, 858.484.7346
Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.566.6489
Webmaster: Steve Romeo
Wildlife Surveys: Dean Woods: 858.672.1120.

Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

Senior (62) or Student \$10 Individual \$15
Family \$20 Sponsor \$30 Patron \$100
Corporate \$250 Life \$1000
Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

- Volunteer** to help the committee (call to discuss)
 Hikes
 Indian Culture
 Educational Workshops
 School, Family, Youth Programs
 Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____ 5/2002

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call **858.484.3219** or **858.566.6489** for more information.

(Calendar cont'd)

kiosk at the intersection of Camino Ruiz & Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring insect repellent & water. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 858.484.3219 for recorded directions.

Beginner's Tracking Walk at Ranch
Sat., Aug. 17, 8 – 9 a.m. Children welcome! Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in from a member of the Friends' Tracking Team. Wear shoes good for mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 858.484.3219.

Advanced Tracking Walk at Ranch
Sat., Aug. 17, 8 – 9 a.m. A member of the Friends' Tracking Team will lead this advanced tracking walk. Must have completed beginner and intermediate training. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 858.484.3219.

Birds and Beasts of the Twilight
Sat., August 17, 7–9:30 p.m. Wildlife abounds in the Preserve. Bring a flashlight and join Friends' president Brian Swanson on a midsummer's night for this moderately paced hike. We'll be on the lookout for mule deer, rattlers, owls, and bats. Adults only, maximum of 20. Reservations: 760.739.5451.

Night Hike in west end of Peñasquitos Canyon with Will Bowen
Sat., Aug. 17, 7:30 – 9 p.m. Watch dusk settle on the canyon. Look for bats, owls, and deer. Observe the moon, planets, stars, and constellations. Bring a flashlight. Meet in the small parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.** Or call 858.484.3219 for recorded directions.

Nature Walk from Mercy Road
Sun., Aug. 18, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 858.484.3219 for directions.

Nature Walk in López Canyon with Barbara Moore
Sun., Aug. 18, 3–5 p.m. Enjoy the birds, beasts and wildflowers of López Canyon with the co-author of *Walking San Diego*. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing by the author. Meet in West-end Parking-Staging area off Sorrento Valley Road, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call 858-484-3219 for recorded directions.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting (tentative, call first)
Tues., August 27, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting at the Adobe Ranch House off Canyonside Drive off Black Mtn. Rd. between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos.

September

Living Room Concert Fundraiser 'Bow Willow' at the historic adobe ranch house in Los Peñasquitos Canyon.
Sat., Sept. 7, 6 p.m. potluck dinner, 7 p.m. concert. Join the Sierra Club for a summer evening of folk music at Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos, San Diego's second oldest standing residence. Relax to the acoustic sounds of 'Bow Willow', the renown folk music ensemble of Vicky Cottle, Walt Richards, and Paula Strong. Their wonderful folk music brings to life the history of the old west with stories of trains, cowboys, wide open spaces, and rugged adventure. Their music will be accompanied by the cowboy poetry of John Sedberry, whose prose exquisitely captures the feeling of the old west. Concert will be held under the stars in the courtyard of the rancho. The suggested donation of \$25 will help support the ongoing work of the Sierra Club's San Diego Chapter's Conservation Committee. To RSVP, send a stamped and self-addressed legal sized envelope to: Living Room Concert, c/o Sierra Club, 3820 Ray St., San Diego CA 92104. For more info call Geoffrey Smith at 619.299.1741 or email conservation@sierraclubsandiego.org.

DIRECTIONS

Black Mountain Open Space Park, Rancho Peñasquitos
From I-15 take SR 56 (Ted Williams Parkway) west to Black Mountain Road. Go right (north) on Black Mountain Road and follow it all the way until you see the last houses on the right and open space beyond. Look for a dirt road to the right and take it. Proceed about 1 mile, going beyond the

bare hangliding area on the right and down a hill to a big curve and a sign for the park and paved road on the right. Proceed up the road to the staging area.

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal
This intersection is located in Mira Mesa. From the west (I-5/I-805 merge) take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east. It becomes Calle Cristobal as it passes Camino Santa Fe. The next street is Caminito Propico. From the east, take Mira Mesa Boulevard to Camino Santa Fe. Go right on Camino Santa Fe, then right on Calle Cristobal to Propico. Park in cul-de-sac on either side. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area
In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Northern Parking-Staging Area
Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino Ruíz. Left on Camino Ruíz and park. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Ranch House Walks/Tours
Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch. house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area
Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

West-End Parking-Staging Area
South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Volunteer Events

Wildlife Track & Sign Survey Training

Saturday, July 20, 9 a.m.

FREE Training will include basic track, sign, and habitat recognition as well as details on the implementation of the survey protocol. Please bring a sack lunch, be prepared to spend much of the day outdoors, and be ready to take notes.

Class is **FREE!**

Register: www.penasquitos.org or leave a message at 858.484.3219.

Location: Meet at the Ranch House on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road in Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Bros. 1189.**

Trans County Trail

To volunteer to help build the final section of the Trans County Trail call Ranger Gina Brown at 858.538.8066. Groups welcome!

Intermediate Tracker/Naturalist Program

September 7-8, 8 – 5 p.m.

A weekend of delving into the finer details of tracking, awareness, and the philosophy of living in harmony with nature. The skill of reading concentric rings will be dealt with in detail, as will the practical use of reading pressure releases. Tracking problems in differing substrate types will be explored from soft sand to grass to hard dirt and aging, detection of movement via concentric ring interpretation, and study of track character via debris interaction. This class will meet 8AM to 5PM both Saturday and Sunday.

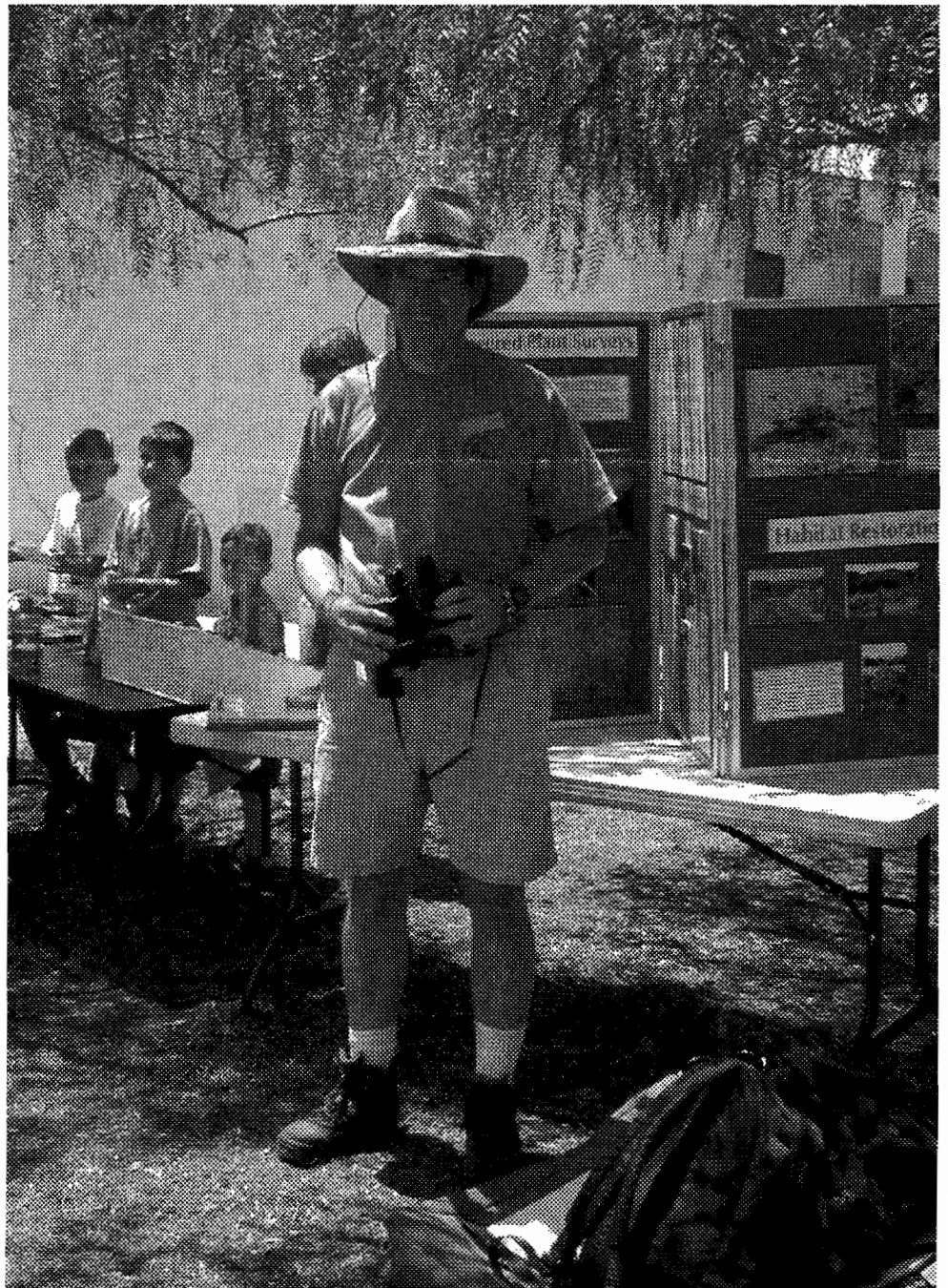
Location: The Ranch House (Located near Black Mountain & Mercy Roads)
Cost: \$35 for the weekend
Registration: www.penasquitos.org or Call 858-672-0584.

(Love cont'd)

for a rewarding experience.

A knowledge of the outdoors is not necessary. We're a friendly group, always ready to reach out and share our knowledge, and can help fill in any knowledge gaps. Unlike our 8-5 jobs, in the Preserve we don't get paid, have no annual review and can come and go as we please. In other words, if we're not having fun, it's time to do something else. I've been volunteering in

the preserve for nearly 15 years . . . and I'm not the most senior volunteer. Please consider sharing some of your time and talents on behalf of the Preserve. Call our hotline at 858.484.3219 and let us know your name, telephone number, talents and projects you'd be interested in learning more about or email us at mkellysd@aol.com. We'll do our best to match you up with a rewarding activity. I hope to see you in the Preserve soon.



Brian Swanson, Friends' president, pictured at recent 'Arch in the Park' event staffing information table with Friends' display board.

Burn Area Rebirth

Mike Kelly, conservation chair

Visited a post-burn area lately? If not, put this one on your agenda soon.

February 9 of this year, about 104 acres of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve burned in a wildfire. (Union-Tribune reported 10 acres, but Fire Chief on the spot gave us the 104 acre estimate, confirmed by visiting the site.) The area burned was immediately east of the I-5 / I-805 “merge” where the new Vista Sorrento Parkway is under construction. The fire burned a hill of coastal sage scrub and grasslands beneath the new Sorrento Hills development, a willow/cattail marsh on Peñasquitos Creek, a salt marsh restoration area just north of the creek and east through some weedy grasslands.

When we first wrote about this fire (*Canyon News* March/April 2002) we predicted that the native plants would come out of the fire just fine, since most of our native habitats (and some of our exotic) are well adapted to periodic fire. Recent visits to this area by myself, City Ranger Gina Brown, and Cindy Burrascano, conservation chair of the California Native Plant Society have dramatically confirmed this assessment. However, there were also some problems we noted.

Erosion

Several steep gulleys will be subject to significant erosion on the north slope if heavy rains occur this coming winter. Some erosion control wattling rolls have been staked out at the bottoms of several of these gullies, but were placed just to keep silt out of the restoration site below. More need to be placed higher up in the gulleys to provide adequate protection.

On our site tour Ranger Gina Brown and I agreed this would make a good fall volunteer project. Luckily, Senior Ranger Jeannette DeAngelis has scored a modest supply of free, used erosion rolls from developers in Sorrento Hills. If you see some of these 8-10' rolls being discarded in your area give Ranger DeAngelis (858.538.8066) or me (858.566.6489) a call and we'll come pick them up. And, if this project interests you or your scout (suitable for younger

scouts) or other organization, call us and we'll make you part of it.

Weeds

Lots of weeds came up in the burn area, especially mustard (*Brassica nigra*), sweet fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), Tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*), flaree/storksbill (*Erodium* spp.), wild oats (*Avena* spp.), Castor bean (*Ricinus comunis*) and a few others. If there were weeds in or next to a burn area,

weeds by using some common herbicides on them (Roundup Pro, Garlon 4), herbicides we have used with great success in restoring native plants for over a decade here in the Preserve. We were late for most of the mustard, but in good time for the fennel and others. A good followup over the next two years should enable us to greatly reduce the incidence of weeds well below pre-fire levels.

And what about the natives?



Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) and mustard (*Brassica nigra*) in the February 2002 burn area. Photo by Mike Kelly.

then there will be weeds after a burn. Certain habitats are more invasible than others. Chaparral is probably the least invasible, while grasslands are highly invasible, and Coastal sage scrub somewhat invasible.

While a fire can promote weeds in some sites it can also provide opportunities to control them and reduce them below pre-fire levels. Fire can help by reducing seed on the weed plant or soil surface if the fire occurs during blooming or seed set — which this fire did for some weeds. Fires also make access into areas easy where big shrubs once dominated.

Cindy Burrascano and I made it a priority in recent weeks to control the

Native rebirth

The freshwater marsh has already rebounded, with a fresh crop of cattails and sedges. It's hard to see evidence of the fire in the marshy areas that were burned off 100%! The willows in the marsh will take longer. A few exotic saltcedar (*Tamarix ramosissima*) need to be controlled.

The salt marsh restoration was a question mark for me. It's a 'relic' salt marsh left over from the days when the mudflats and salt marsh terraces of Peñasquitos Lagoon reached all the way into what we call Sorrento Valley today (as seen on the 1928 aerials of

See p. 6 for more

(Burn rebirth cont'd)



Four O'clocks (*Mirabilis californica*) blooming in Feb. 2002 burn area.
Photo by Mike Kelly. See this picture in full color at www.penasquitos.org

the area. I suspected it would come back, being largely composed of perennials, but I'd never witnessed a salt marsh burn first hand. I was also worried because the marsh had been heavily disturbed by the construction of Vista Sorrento Parkway and this was an attempt at restoring it. With 'relic' habitats like this with the original ecological driving force absent (salt water intrusion) the soil conditions can be borderline and make a restoration marginal. But there it is. Pickleweed (*Salicornia virginica*), Alkalai heath (*Frankenia salina*), Alkalai mallow (*Malvella leprosa*) and a few other plants, all coming back robustly after the burn. Some exotics such as Castor bean were coming up around the edges, but these were easily taken care of.

The exotic grasslands are coming back as just that, with heavy mustard and modest amounts of fennel.

The coastal sage scrub and mixed grasslands (native and non-native grasses) of the northern slope are coming back with both natives and non-natives. Native shrubs such as California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), Mexican elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*), Lemonadeberry (*Rhus integrifolia*), Bladderpod (*Isomeris arborea*)

— one of my personal favorites! — are resprouting from their crowns.

One of the most common subshrubs coming back is the beautiful four-o'clock (*Mirabilis californica*), which is robustly blooming now.

A surprise for me was to see our native bunch grass, *Nassella pulcra*, not

only resprouting but blooming and producing a nice seed crop. Common wisdom says they don't produce seed until the second year after a fire and here we are only a few months out from the fire! Having confirmed the common wisdom with other, older fires, I attribute the difference with this latest burn to the timing of the fires. Older fires I've followed up on were fall fires, burning at a time when the plant had dropped its seed and was in summer (heat, drought) dormancy, while this new fire was a February fire. Although the entire above ground portion of the bunch grass burned off, the roots, which are known for their deep penetration of the soil, would have been unscathed and *not dormant*, since it was the height of the growing season — which is probably the critical factor. Not in dormancy and in a cool — albeit dry — period, and with lots of new fertilizer (ash) — let's resprout and bloom and get some seed out!

A sprinkling of other natives coming up included: Stinking or coyote gourd (*Cucurbita foetidissima*), Wild cucumber (*Marah macrocarpus*), Morning glory (*Calystegia macrostegia ssp. tenuifolia*), saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*), Jimson weed (*Datura spp.*), San Diego goldenbush (*Isocoma menziesii*), Western ragweed (*Ambrosia psilostachya var. californica*), and Weak-leaf bur sage (*Ambrosia confer-*



Native bunch grass (*Nassella pulcra*) blooming. Most appear to have grown from seed here while in other parts of the burn this grass is resprouting from mature crowns. Photo by Mike Kelly.

(Burn rebirth cont'd)

tiflora). The latter was a new addition to our plant list for the Preserve. The stinking gourd (it really is stinky to smell!) is a groundcover vine that look like a squash in its habit, has a giant grey-green leaf, a giant, bright orange/yellow flower, and produces a non-edible, but attractive gourd that was used by Native Americans here to make a musical and decorative gourd.

A few red/orange San Diego monkey flowers (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) were also blooming. Fennel, followed by mustard, Tocalote, and Castor bean were also coming up in significant numbers. I think we did a good job spraying the Castor bean, Fennel, and Tocalote. At least two more years of weed control will be necessary to ensure that this slope comes back at least as native as before, but probably more so! This also helps from a fire point of view since the non-native weeds tend to be highly flammable, catching fire at a lower flash point than the natives present. And that's how fires start, usually in grasslands, especially exotic grasslands, then spreading to nearby habitats.

If we get anything approaching average rainfall during winter/spring 2002-2003 we should have a great wildflower show on these slopes.

Notes

National Trails Day

The recent National Trails Day celebration held at the Preserve drew hundreds of people who visited the many displays, hiked the Trans County Trail, or joined in the many activities. The event was so successful consideration is being given to making it an annual event.

Friends Annual Meeting and Election

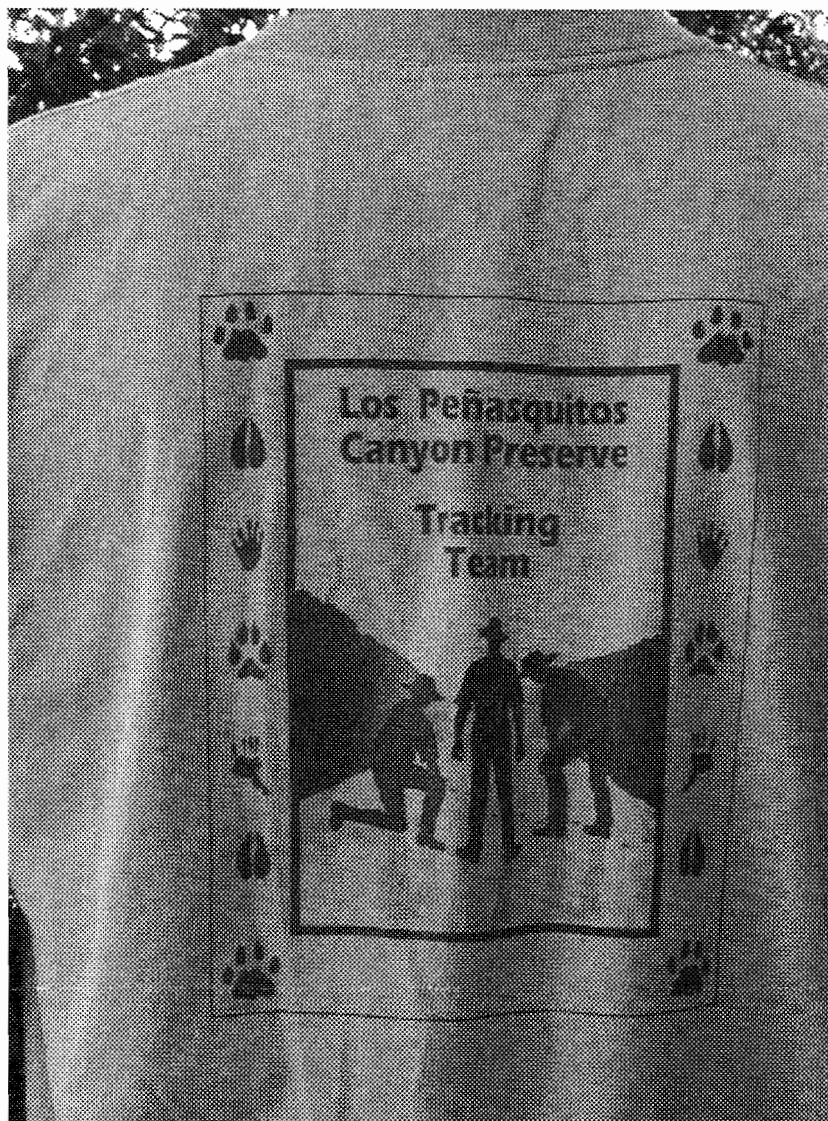
At the Friends' annual meeting held at the ranch house May 3, more than 40 people heard Dave Bittner of the Wildlife Research Institute give a great talk and slide show on the status of Golden Eagles and other raptors in San Diego County.

The Friends' officers for the new term elected at the annual meeting were:

President: Brian Swanson
 Vice-president: Don Albright
 Secretary: Rick Botta
 Treasurer: Pat Watkins

Donations for the Lois Warburton Memorial Fund

A big THANK YOU to the folks who remembered the late Tracking Team member Lois Warburton by contributing to the San Diego Tracking Team Program.



Tracking Team T-shirt

The t-shirt pictured above is now available to Friends' members for only a \$10 donation (\$15 for non-members). The front of the shirt also has a logo design on it. Your donation goes to support the Friends' Tracking Team wildlife surveys.

Mail your order form to Friends, POB 26523, San Diego 92196.

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Size (circle & indicate quantity) M _____ L _____ XL _____

Please send me ____ t-shirts at \$10 plus \$4.00 for shipping (Priority mail) and handling. Send \$1.00 extra for each additional shirt ordered.

Total enclosed: \$ _____.. Make check payable to: **FLPCP**



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196
858-484-3219

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Carme Mtn Rch, CA
PERMIT NO. 286

Address Service Requested

Check Your Label

Take a moment to examine the address label on this newsletter. Check to see if your expiration date has come and gone. If so, please take the time now to send in a renewal check for your membership dues. This will enable you to keep receiving our newsletter, recognized as one of the best conservation newsletters in San Diego. That way you'll keep learning about the family walks; the plants and animals that inhabit the Preserve, and the many conservation projects open to you and your family or friends.

Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Brian Swanson 760.739.5451
Vice-President: Don Albright 619.443.5937
Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858.538.2527
Secretary: Rick Botta 858.672.0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Les Braund, Edward DiBella, Mike Kelly

Walks Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen, Mike Kelly,
Les Braund, Pat Watkins, Linda King and Barbara Moore.

Committees:

Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman
Newsletter: Mike Kelly
Plant Nursery Director: Liz Rozycki
Stream Survey Committee: open
Voice Mail System: Pat Watkins
Tracking Team Coordinator: Barry Martin, 858.484.4007
Volunteer Coordinator: Marilyn Kolendar, 858.484.7346
Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.566.6489
Webmaster: Rick Botta
Wildlife Surveys: Dean Woods: 858.672.1120.

Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

Senior (62) or Student \$10 Individual \$15
Family \$20 Sponsor \$30 Patron \$100
Corporate \$250 Life \$1000
Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

- Volunteer** to help the committee (call to discuss)
- Hikes
- Indian Culture
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____ 7/2002

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

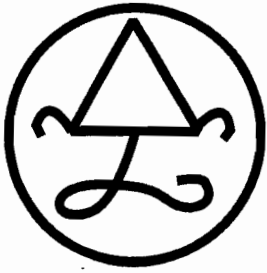
Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call **858.484.3219** or **858.566.6489** for more information.



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve
Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve
Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Sept. & Oct. 2002
Volume 16, No. 5

More Volunteers Welcome La Vida del Rancho

PJ Piburn
School Program Coordinator

Have you ever looked through a stereoscope, held a live chicken, or tried on a corset? Most of the children attending the adobe school program, "La Vida del Rancho" never have.

We are entering our eighth year of existence with great anticipation. This year we will be offering programs twice per week instead of once. We have made some

See p. 7 for more



Kaelah Bailey Wilson, 2½ years old, helps her mom, Selena Wilson, fill a dumpster with trash collected during the cleanup of Black Mtn. Open Space Park. See p. 4 for story

Highlights Inside

Hike calendar	2
Volunteer Activities	4,5
Bow Willow Concert	4
Cleaning Up Black Mountain	4
Eagle Scout Project	7
Directory	8

Hydroelectric Victory

Mike Kelly, conservation chair

Strong community pressure convinced the County Water Authority to vote **not** to place a hydroelectric facility in either Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve or in the nearby neighborhood around Branicol Lane (off Mercy Road). Instead, at its July 25 meeting

See p. 5 for more

Halloween at the Ranch House

Mary Goudeau
Park Maintenance Worker

In years past children and their parents walked their neighborhoods knocking door-to-door saying "trick or treat." Well times have changed. We at the Adobe thought of a safer approach to celebrating the holiday. Celebrate this halloween on Saturday, Oct. 26 at the adobe ranch house. Whether you like getting dressed up or just enjoy coming to the ranch house, this event

See p. 5 for more

Early Morning & Evening Walks Best Way to Beat the Heat!

The hot weather is still with us, so we're still emphasizing cooler times of the day and evening for our walks. We're offering more dusk and night walks than ever before. Not only are the evenings cooler, but the smells and sounds are different and the wildlife more active and easier to see. Join us!

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour Every Saturday & Sunday

San Diego Archaeological Society docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. **La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:** 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

September

Living Room Concert Fundraiser 'Bow Willow' at the historic adobe ranch house in Los Peñasquitos Canyon.

Sat., Sept. 7, 6 p.m. potluck dinner, 7 p.m. concert. Join the Sierra Club for a summer evening of folk music at Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos, San Diego's second oldest standing residence. Relax to the acoustic sounds of 'Bow Willow', the renown folk music ensemble of Vicky Cottle, Walt Richards, and Paula Strong. Their wonderful folk music brings to life the history of the old west with stories of trains, cowboys, wide open spaces, and rugged adventure. Their music will be accompanied by the cowboy poetry of John Sedberry, whose prose exquisitely captures the feeling of the old west. Concert will be held under the stars in the courtyard of the rancho. The suggested donation of \$25 will help support the ongoing work of the Sierra Club's San Diego Chapter's Conservation Committee. To RSVP, send a stamped and self-addressed legal sized envelope to: Living Room Concert, c/o Sierra Club,

3820 Ray St., San Diego CA 92104. For more info call Geoffrey Smith at 619.299.1741 or email conservation@sierraclubsandiego.org.

Dusk Nature Walk to Waterfall from North Staging Area

Sat. Sept. 14, 5:30 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk to the waterfall and back, about 4 miles. Chance to see early flowers and deer. Meet at the kiosk at the intersection of Camino Ruiz & Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring insect repellent & water. Flashlight optional. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 858.484.3219 for recorded directions.

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., Sept. 15, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee.

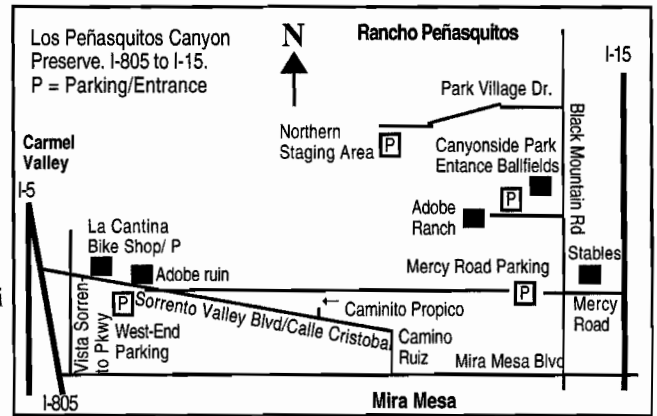
Mon., Sept. 16, 7 p.m. The public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizens' Advisory Committee

Thurs., Sept. 19, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Driveway, past the Canyonside Rec Center. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Beginners' Tracking Walk at Ranch

Sat., Sept. 21, 8 - 9 a.m. Children welcome! Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in from Uli Burgin, a member of the Friends' Tracking Team. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside



Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Intermediate Tracking Walks at Ranch

Sat., Sept. 21, 8 a.m. A member of the Friend's Tracking Team will lead this advanced tracking walk. Must have completed beginner and intermediate training. Wear shoes that are good in the mud. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sun., Sept. 22, 9 a.m. - noon. Join geologist Don Albright for a walk through geological time, including the Preserve's waterfall and a rare fossil. Meet at the intersection of Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa, in the cul-de-sac on the south side of Calle Cristobal. Wear good boots for steep trail and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call **858.484.3219**.

Nature Walk in López Canyon with Barbara Moore

Sun., Sept. 22, 3-5 p.m. Enjoy the birds, beasts and wildflowers of López Canyon with the co-author of *Walking San Diego*. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing by the author. Meet in West-end Parking-Staging area off Sorrento Valley Road, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call **858-484-3219** for recorded directions.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting

Tues., Sept. 24, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting at the Adobe Ranch House off

(Calendar cont'd)

Canyonside Drive off Black Mtn. Rd. between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos.

López Homestead Hike with Will Bowen

Sat., Sept. 28, 10–11:30 p.m. Hike out to the Old López Homestead – a turn of the century dairy farming ranch – located in López Canyon. See the ruins of the house, barn, milking station, and smoke house. Learn about life in the canyon circa 1900. Slightly difficult hike with narrow winding trail and brush negotiation. Meet at the West End Parking Staging Area in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208. Or call 858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

October**Dusk Nature Walk to Waterfall from North Staging Area**

Sat., Oct. 12, 5:30 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk to the waterfall and back, about 4 miles. Chance to see early flowers and deer. Meet at the kiosk at the intersection of Camino Ruiz & Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring insect repellent & water. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 858.484.3219 for recorded directions.

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., Oct. 13, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 858.484.3219 for directions.

Nature Walk in López Canyon with Barbara Moore

Sun., Oct. 13, 3–5 p.m. Enjoy the birds, beasts and wildflowers of López Canyon with the co-author of *Walking San Diego*. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing by the author. Meet in West-end Parking-Staging area off Sorrento Valley Road, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call 858-484-3219 for recorded directions.

Trash Cleanup at Black Mtn. Open Space Park

Sat., Oct. 19, 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. Call Ranger Lori Charett at 858.538.8082 for meeting place and details. Groups are welcome to participate. Call ahead.

Beginner's Tracking Walk at Ranch

Sat., Oct. 19, 8 – 9 a.m. Children

welcome! Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in from a member of the Friends' Tracking Team. Wear shoes good for mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 858.484.3219.

Advanced Tracking Walk at Ranch

Sat., Oct. 19, 8 – 9 a.m. A member of the Friends' Tracking Team will lead this advanced tracking walk. Must have completed beginner and intermediate training. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 858.484.3219.

Pierre Bovet Adobe Hike with Will Bowen

Sat., Oct. 26, 10 – 11:30 a.m. Hike out into Carroll Canyon (once known as Soledad Canyon) to visit the ruins of the Pierre Bovet Adobe. Learn about life in Soledad Valley, the coming of the railroad, and the history of the decline of this interesting adobe home. Moderately difficult hike with stream crossing and steep ascent. Meet near the Fire Station at the intersection of Scranton and Carroll Roads in west Mira Mesa, 2 blocks off Mira Mesa Blvd. **Thomas Guide p. 1208. Or call 858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting (tentative, call first)

Tues., Oct. 22, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting at the Adobe Ranch House off Canyonside Drive off Black Mtn. Rd. between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos.

Halloween at the Adobe Ranch House

Sat., Oct. 26, 2002, 5:30 – 10 p.m. Presented by the San Diego County Parks and Recreation and the San Diego County Parks Society. The night will include: Creepy Crawlies presentation with Rancid Ranger Paul, Owl's ... creatures of the night presented by SkyHunters, Spooky storytelling by: Park Staff, Costume contests for all ages, crafts, Pumpkin Hunt, Night hike in the preserve, Tour of the Adobe Ranch house, and Ghoulish goodies.

Rancho Los Penasquitos, Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway, west of the Canyonside Recreation Center. Call

858.484.7504 to R.S.V.P. Required Before October 22, 2002. **Cost: \$7.50 Per Person.** Children under 5 FREE. Includes all of this and more. Parent must accompany children. All proceeds go towards the Adobe Ranch House

DIRECTIONS**Black Mountain Open Space Park, Rancho Peñasquitos**

From I-15 take SR 56 (Ted Williams Parkway) west to Black Mountain Road. Go right (north) on Black Mountain Road and follow it all the way until you see the last houses on the right and open space beyond. Look for a dirt road to the right and take it. Proceed about 1 mile, going beyond the bare hangliding area on the right and down a hill to a big curve and a sign for the park and paved road on the right. Proceed up the road to the staging area.

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal

This intersection is located in Mira Mesa. From the west (I-5/I-805 merge) take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east. It becomes Calle Cristobal as it passes Camino Santa Fe. The next street is Caminito Propico. From the east, take Mira Mesa Boulevard to Camino Santa Fe. Go right on Camino Santa Fe, then right on Calle Cristobal to Propico. Park in cul-de-sac on either side. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Northern Parking-Staging Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino Ruiz. Left on Camino Ruiz and park. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Ranch House Walks/Tours

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch. house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area

Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

West-End Parking-Staging Area

South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Volunteer Events

Wildlife Track & Sign Survey Training

Saturday, October 19, 9 a.m.

FREE Training will include basic track, sign, and habitat recognition as well as details on the implementation of the survey protocol. Please bring a sack lunch, be prepared to spend much of the day outdoors, and be ready to take notes.

Class is **FREE!**

Register: www.penasquitos.org or leave a message at 858.484.3219.

Location: Meet at the Ranch House on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road in Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Bros. 1189.**

Intermediate Tracker /Naturalist Program

September 7-8, 8 – 5 p.m.

A weekend of delving into the finer details of tracking, awareness, and the philosophy of living in harmony with nature. The skill of reading concentric rings will be dealt with in detail. Tracking problems in differing substrate types will be explored from soft sand to grass to hard dirt and rock. Many different exercises will be introduced and/or expanded upon, such as track and sign aging, detection of movement via concentric ring interpretation, and study of track character via debris interactions. Deeper study of awareness factors will be explored to include 6th sense or inner-vision exercises. The class will meet from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Call 858-672-0584 for cost and registration.

Prerequisite: Either prior attendance at the Beginning Tracker/Naturalist Class, or prior attendance at the SDTT Wildlife Survey Volunteer Training along with participation in at least one of the SDTT Wildlife Surveys.

Location: The Ranch House (Located near Black Mountain & Mercy Roads)

Cost: \$35 for the weekend

Registration: www.penasquitos.org or Call 858-672-0584.

Cleaning Up Black Mountain

Senior Ranger Lori Charette

I want to thank everyone who came out to Black Mountain Park on August 4th for the cleanup. It was a huge success! Special thanks to Maryanne Young for donating water, bagels, muffins and miscellaneous items (even though she was unable to make it to the event). Many thanks to Lori and Victor McBride of the Hanggliders Association and their members & Dave Wenk from the San Diego Mountain Biking Association and their **many** members for your donations of goodies and water bottles and awesome support. Mike Kelly (one of the busiest

Next cleanup on Sat. Oct. 19th from 8 a.m.- 2 p.m., call for details. Yes, there is so much more to clean. Together we can conquer it!

people I know) came out and used his truck to haul junk to the dumpsters, thank you Mike — you were so helpful and gracious.

We got motivated about 8:30 a.m. and by noon we were trying to find space to squeeze trash into the two 40 yard dumpsters on site. It was truly and amazing sight. I don't think we determined what was the strangest thing found, but we certainly did find a lot of junk and put it in its place! Our youngest volunteer was Selena Wilsons adorable little girl who did an outstanding job cleaning up our park. We had a total of 32 volunteers help that day, what a great turn out.

The morning started with a good adrenaline rush for me (have to have it!) as I was welcoming volunteers, I notice a person jump out of the bushes and run. So naturally, I investigate. Before I know it.. I am looking at a guy who pops up out of the bushes in full camo with a rifle looking weapon in his hand, aimed away from me (thankfully) and I hear pow, pow, pow, etc. I summon Ranger John to the scene and call out the SDPD calvary. Meanwhile we determine its a couple of guys with paint ball guns. I lectured them; so I don't think they will return. Another day in the life of a Black Mountain Park Ranger!

Anyway, I really appreciate all of your dedication to improving our parks and joining us in our efforts. We couldn't do it without you.

Living Room Concert Fundraiser 'Bow Willow' at the historic adobe ranch house.

Saturday, September 7: 6 p.m. potluck dinner, 7 p.m. concert.

Join the Sierra Club for a summer evening of folk music at Rancho Santa María de los Peñasquitos, San Diego's second oldest standing residence. Relax to the acoustic sounds of 'Bow Willow,' the renown folk music ensemble of Vicky Cottle, Walt Richards, and Paula Strong. Their wonderful folk music brings to life the history of the old west with stories of trains, cowboys, wide open spaces, and rugged adventure. Their music will be accompanied by the cowboy poetry of John Sedberry, whose prose exquisitely captures the feeling of the old west. Concert will be held under the stars in the courtyard of the rancho. The suggested donation of \$25 will help support the ongoing work of the Sierra Club's San Diego Chapter's Conservation Committee. To RSVP, send a stamped and self-addressed legal sized envelope to:

Living Room Concert, c/o Sierra Club, 3820 Ray St., San Diego CA 92104. For more info call Geoffrey Smith at 619.299.1741 or email conservation@sierraclubsandiego.org.

(Hydroelectric cont'd)

the Authority's Board, representing 23 agencies, passed a measure by 59.6% to site the facility in a site identified and recommended by numerous community groups and the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve (*Canyon News*, Vol. 16, No. 4). The chose site is opposite a strip mall dominated by a Kentucky Fried Chicken outlet.

The successful struggle took over two years and was led mainly by the Woodcrest Homeowner's Association. Community Planning Groups generally supported the Association in its campaign. The Friends joined the fight along with residents of the Ridgewood Community Park neighborhoods, when the Water Authority identified a site in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, adjacent to this neighborhood park, as its preferred site in the environmental documents for the project. Ridgewood Community Park is in Ranch Peñasquitos.

The hydroelectric plant is one part of a major pipeline project designed to connect the new Olivenhein water storage facility into the major aqueducts and other facilities of the Water Authority's system.

Thanks to San Diego City Councilmembers Brian Mainshein and Scott Peters, who both attended community meetings and used their good offices to support the community's wishes. They lobbied San Diego's representatives on the Water Authority to oppose the sites opposed by the community and the Friends.

Community activists — in a throwback to past years — even organized enthusiastic picket lines of as many as 75 people on several occasions, garnering good publicity and highlighting the community's concerns. Many carried signs calling for the protection of the park and the Preserve.

Where once the Friends would initiate campaigns such as this, now we are finding that the communities surrounding the Preserve are quick to come to its defense when it is threatened, often taking the lead in organizing. This was the case with the hydroelectric facility and with the proposed Camino Ruíz bridge across the canyon several years ago. What an important development!

Schedule**Halloween at the Adobe Ranch House**

Sat., Oct. 26, 2002

5:30 – 10 p.m.

Presented by the San Diego County Parks and Recreation and the San Diego County Parks Society

The night will include:

- Creepy Crawlies presentation with Rancid Ranger Paul,
- Owl's ... creatures of the night presented by SkyHunters,
- Spooky storytelling by Park Staff,
- Costume contests for all ages, crafts,
- Pumpkin Hunt,
- Night hike in the preserve,
- Tour of the Adobe Ranch house, &
- Ghoulish goodies.

Rancho Los Peñasquitos, Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway, west of the Canyonside Recreation Center. Call 858.484.7504 to R.S.V.P. Required Before October 22, 2002.

Cost: \$7.50 Per Person. Children under 5 FREE. Includes all of this and more. Parent must accompany children. All proceeds go towards the Adobe Ranch House.

(Halloween cont'd)

is for you and your family. The night will be full of holiday games and contests, and story telling by park staff.

The night will include feature presentations by SkyHunters and Ranger Paul. SkyHunters is providing an owl and will tell all about this wonderful bird that lives here in the canyon. Ranger Paul will be showing a variety of creepy crawlies ranging from snakes to tarantulas. Neither presentation can be missed.

All of the events throughout the night will be safe and fun for all ages. We suggest that **everyone** come prepared for the costume contests. I heard that the new angora goats are expected to participate. We can't wait to see who will win. The holiday games include: a pumpkin hunt, pin the stem on the pumpkin, and much more. If you have any suggestions please contact me (Mary) at the park.

Can you imagine sitting with your little ones under the fall sky, with the breeze rustling the leaves, holding a cup of apple cider, and listening to a spirited holiday story? Not only is it just a holiday story, it will be told by your wonderful park staff. The stories will vary from the history of the holiday to the classic short stories. No matter how old or young you are everyone loves a good story.

This is a night that will be great for all ages, full of exciting events for friends and family. We hope that you'll be able to join us. We look forward to see you and your family there.

Trans County Trail

If you haven't hiked the Trans County Trail from the Equestrian Center or the County Aqueduct crossing of the creek east to I-15 you're in for a big surprise. Three bridges now make crossing the creek easy. The trail is in the final stages. Regular volunteer crews are turning out each 1st & 3rd Sunday of the Month to finish out the trail. Why not join them?

To volunteer to help build the final section of the Trans County Trail call Ranger Gina Brown at 858.538.8066. Groups welcome!

The Night-Rider

Swiftly gliding on silent wings
Down from the ebony sky
Talons gleaming in the moonlight
Hunger showing in its eye.

Swiftly pouncing, quickly rising
Prey encaptured in his clasp
Treetops looming, gently settling
Holding sustenance in its grasp.

Mist is rising, eyelids droop now
Seldom seen by all but few
Leaves encompass, night is over
Daybreak comes anew.

— Barbara Zepf

Owls at Risk Home(less) in the Woods

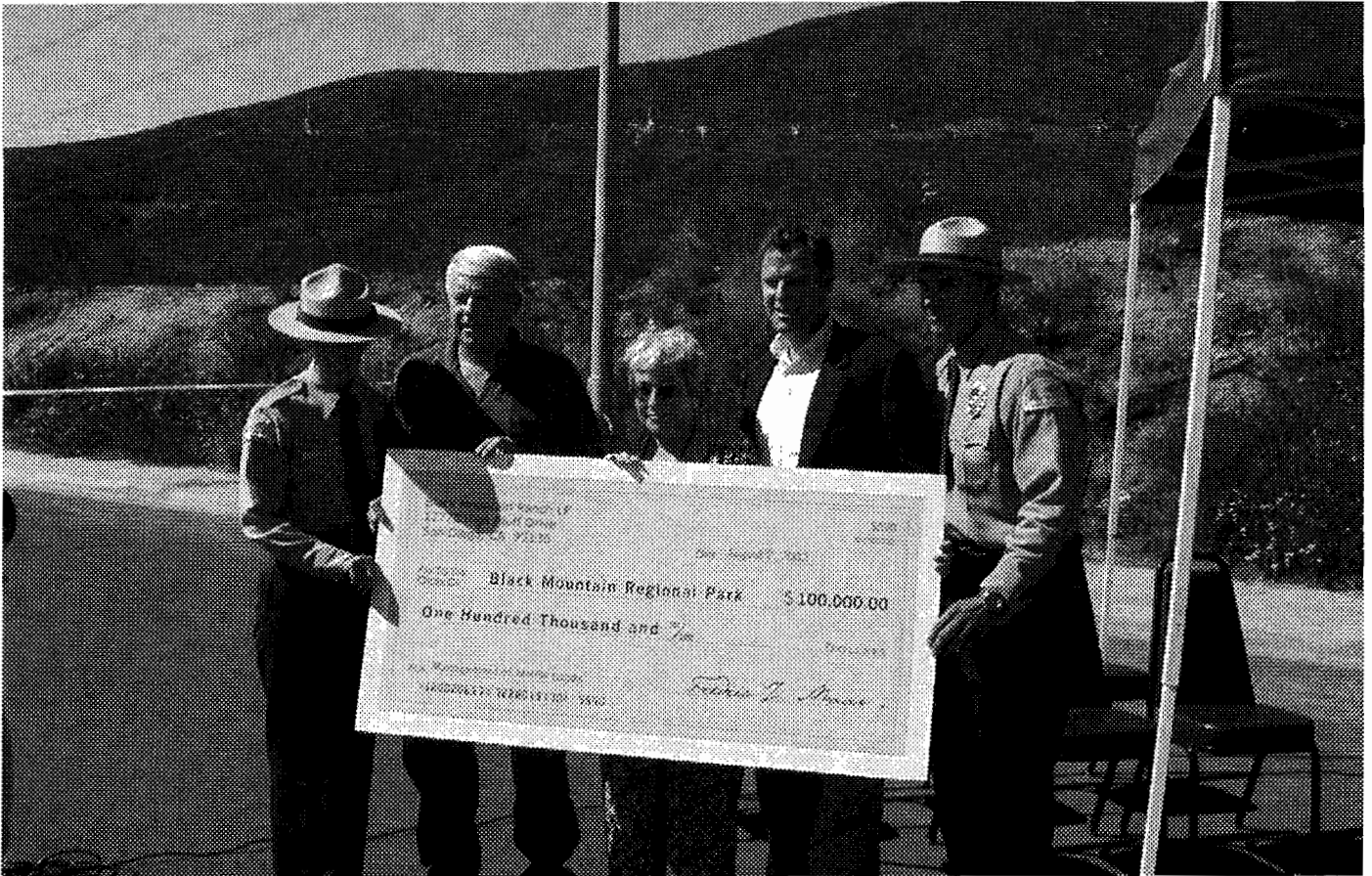
Brian Swanson, president

Like us, all of the myriad of creatures in our preserve have certain basic requirements. Food and shelter are two needs which come quickly to mind. Did you know that many creatures have specific needs which must be met or they can't live here? For instance, barn owls need a safe and secure place to lay their eggs and fledge their young. While they prefer hollows in trees, they are very adaptable, using palm trees, cliff edges, even freeway signs. In Penasquitos Canyon Preserve their favorite home is the natural hollows which develop in mature sycamores. Unfortunately, there are not enough of the right-sized hollows (they are also sought after by raccoons and other animals).

Many years ago someone placed about a half dozen "owl boxes" in the preserve. They act as substitute tree hollows, and the barn owls love them. Many are used successfully each year, turning out a new crop of downy chicks to join our "rodent patrol." Unfortunately, we see occasional vandalism to these barn owl homes.

In the past I've seen a large branch used to push and rock the boxes, which hang from a wire rope, causing the eggs to fall onto the ground. This is a senseless tragedy which I can't begin to understand. Fortunately this doesn't happen often. Last Saturday evening, though, I came upon a similar act of vandalism. Someone had pushed a branch into a box, prying the lid off and tangling the branch in the support wires. My group of hikers were pretty upset, asking who would do such a thing and why? Probably misguided and unsupervised teenage boys. Did they stop to think of the harm they were causing? If I could only get those young adults on one of my walks, they might just have an attitude adjustment that would carry them through life.

In the next couple of days I'll make an appointment with our rangers to borrow a tall ladder and repair this owl box; perhaps I'll move it to a more hidden location. No eggs were broken this time, and since it is several months before the next nesting season, there's hope that it'll be ready before the winter rains and the (hopefully) ensuing nesting activity.



Cash is always appreciated! The check shown above is for \$100,000 and is earmarked for use in the Black Mountain Open Space Park. The check is from Black Mountain Ranch LP, original landowner of Black Mountain Ranch, now the site of major residential developments. The \$100K donation was negotiated by the Sierra Club as part of the ballot measure that went before the voters as Proposition K several years ago. About half of the Black Mountain Ranch property is being preserved as permanent open space and will be added to the Black Mountain Open Space Park. Pictured from left to right are: Senior Park Ranger Lori Charett, Mike Kelly, chair of the Black Mtn. Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee, new City Parks and Recreation director Ellen Oppenheim, City Councilmember Scott Peters, and new City Ranger John Barone.

Eagle Scout Spruces Up Oak Memorial Garden

Jeannette DeAngelis
Senior City Ranger

Sahil Patel of Troop 667, has completed a very time consuming, and laborious project. In June, Sahil took on the task of spreading some 125 cubic yards of mulch in the Victims of Crime Oak Memorial Site, off of Cara Way, just east of the I-15 bridge over Peñasquitos Canyon. He and his troop have spent every Saturday since working in the garden, over 400 hours of volunteer time. The mulch had been dropped off months before by a landscape contractor along Cara Way and down into the Oak garden.

According to Sahil, "a layer of mulch, about six inches thick, was spread down the side of the road, where there are many native plants such as sagebrush, buckwheat, coyote bush, monkey flower, mule fat, lemonadeberry, and toyon. There are also native trees in the surrounding area, such as oak trees, willows and sycamore.



Sahil Patel hard at work spreading mulch at the memorial park.

This mulch will hold in water and moisture, which will be beneficial to the plants. Any weeds which may have hindered the growth of these native plants were mulched over or removed to assure their long life."

It wasn't an easy project and sometimes it seemed too difficult. But Sahil and his troop mustered up enough encouragement and support from their parents, Troop leaders and the Ranger to continue. So after numerous blisters, bodies covered in dust and lots of Kleenex the job is complete. All the spreadable piles have been taken care of. The remaining few piles will be removed at a later date. Sahil is very proud of everyone's accomplishment and adds, "The families that come to this memorial park to cherish and remember their lost loved ones will be thoroughly delighted and appreciative of the efforts made to help this memorial park, as it is a special place to many, in and out of the community." One other thing that makes Sahil an impressive Scout is that he is one of the youngest Eagle Scout candidates to have completed his service project, at 15 years of age.

(School program cont'd)

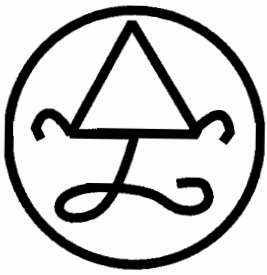
exciting additions to the program. Thanks to teacher's and student's responses on our evaluations, we have streamlined the use of the rooms in the adobe and are expanding to the barn and parking area. We are also leasing two Angora goats, Jason and Bob, to assist us in interpretation of an 1884 newspaper article about the Johnson family.

This school program is a unique experiential opportunity for local community school children. Docents leading the students are dressed in period attire. The program is fast-paced and interesting. Students are encouraged to use all their senses throughout their time at the adobe. They operate a churn and water pump, see running water, smell fragrant herbs. Next they hear period music, language and noisy chickens. They play with historic type toys. Then they examine ranching tools and learn to tie ropes like the vaqueros of days gone by. They feel kitchen artifacts, soft mohair, and possibly a freshly laid egg. Students create herbal bouquets to take home with them. Finally, they explore the wonder of nature that surrounds the ranch house as they hunt for signs of wildlife living there.

The addition of the extra day has created a need for more volunteers to assist with the programs. If you enjoy working with children, are available on Tuesdays and/or Wednesdays between 10 am and 2 pm, and would like to participate in this popular, growing, program, please call P. J. Piburn, school program coordinator, at 858-484-7504.

Web Site

Visit the Friends' web site at www.penasquitos.org to see this newsletter in color, to see back issues, and information on wildlife surveys and the Tracking Team.



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve
Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve
Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Nov. & Dec. 2002
Volume 16, No. 6

Welcome Ranger Tom and Kudos to our Volunteers!

Ranger John Barone

We'd like to welcome our new park ranger, Tom Miller, to Black Mountain Open Space Park. Tom is a graduate of Western Washington University with a degree in Sociology. Tom's wife and his two children are building their new home in Otay with a great ocean view. Tom has hit the ground running with the park ranger program on several work projects already and he has expressed tremendous enthusiasm and pride to work with such dedicated community volunteers.

Speaking of volunteers, we have to give praise to those loyal members of our community who continue to show the park support by coming out to Black Mountain on Oct. 19th and helping the park rangers fill one and a half 40-yard dumpsters full of trash from illegal dumping scattered throughout the park. The clean-up at

Black Mountain was an absolute success considering we had eleven hard working volunteers show up. We're making great strides in cleaning up the park and we are also making progress in reducing the number of illegal off-roaders. The park rangers recently installed telephone poles hammered into the ground horizontally with rebar along illegal off-road trail entrances. We'll soon be installing signs which will give the off-roaders no excuses!

There were about fifteen volunteers with the kids corp who came out to Crest Canyon on Oct. 20 to help remove ice plant and pampass grass (see photo below). Those hard working kids and their parents helped to fill up a half 40-yard dumpster. Thanks to Brett Williams of the City's MSCP staff for helping to kill several large patches of iceplant that were scattered

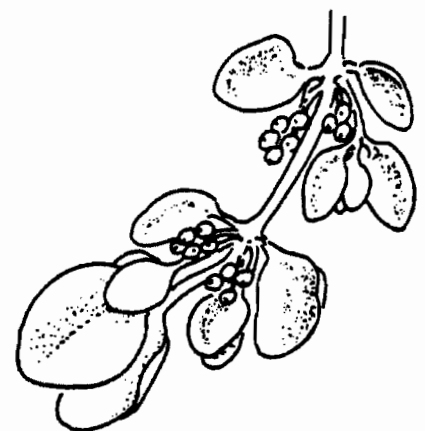
within Crest Canyon. They used large sheets of black impermeable plastic to cover the iceplant to keep it from photosynthesizing and ultimately killing it. Hip hip hooray for exotic plant removal!

As of the new year, be on the look out for a new schedule of volunteer opportunities and nature hikes offered by the Ranger staff. We all wish you happy, and safe holidays.

Apology for Newsletter

Mike Kelly

I want to extend an apology to our members for this small and late newsletter. We'll do our best to get the next newsletter out on time and with the content you've come to expect.



Mistletoe illustration by the late Dr. Elberta Fleming

Fall Colors Light Up the Preserve

Where can you find festive fall colors this year? Despite the drought, you can find some good fall colors in several places within the Preserve. For yellows visit the Sycamore Crossing area, about 1/2 mile west of the waterfall, to see the Sycamores in all their fall glory. Cottonwoods are also adding their colors as the cottonwoods planted as part of our 'Cottonwood Revival' grow to maturity in this same area.

Reds predominate in the east end, particularly as you head into the Preserve from the parking-staging area at Black Mtn. Rd. and Mercy Rd. Beware, however! The reds are poison oak. See them about 1/4 mile in, mixed in with the Coast live oak canopy. You can also see some yellows in this same area from cottonwoods and sycamores.

Another place to find the bright yellows of the Sycamores is in López Canyon, from the Camino Sante Fe bridge downstream into Sorrento Valley.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour Every Saturday & Sunday

San Diego Archaeological Society docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. **La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:** 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 858.484.3219** for directions.

November

Beginners' Tracking Walk at Ranch
Sat., Nov. 16, 8 - 9 a.m. Children welcome! Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment

they live in from Uli Burgin, a member of the Friends' Tracking Team. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Intermediate Tracking Walks at Ranch

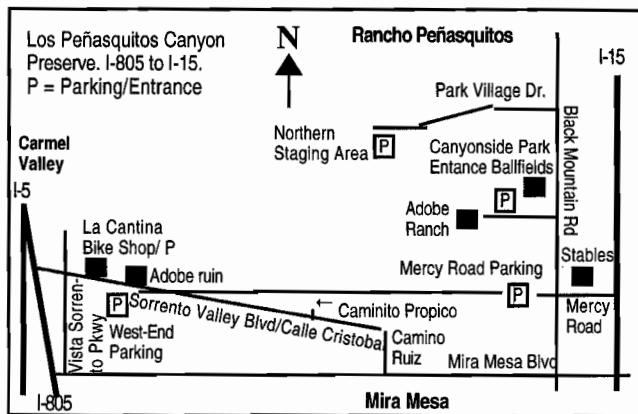
Sat., Nov. 16, 8 a.m. A member of the Friend's Tracking Team will lead this advanced tracking walk. Must have completed beginner and intermediate training. Wear shoes that are good in the mud. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Shaman's Hike with Will Bowen

Sat., Nov. 16, 3-4:30 p.m. A hike to explore shamanistic practices, exercises, and meditations to connect with the wisdom and healing in nature. Drums and rattles welcome. Meet at the West End Parking Staging Area in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208. Or call 858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sun., Nov. 17, 9 a.m.- noon. Join geologist Don Albright for a walk through geological time, including the Preserve's waterfall and a rare fossil. Meet at the intersection of Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa, in the cul-de-sac on the south side of Calle Cristobal. Wear good boots for steep trail and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call **858.484.3219**.



Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee.

Mon., Nov. 18, 7 p.m. The public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizens' Advisory Committee

Thurs., Nov. 21, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Driveway, past the Canyonside Rec Center. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting (tentative, call first)

Tues., Nov. 26, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting at the Adobe Ranch House off Canyonside Drive off Black Mtn. Rd. between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos.

December

Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sun., Dec. 2, 9 a.m.- noon. Join geologist Don Albright for a walk through geological time, including the Preserve's waterfall and a rare fossil. Meet at the intersection of Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa, in the cul-de-sac on the south side of Calle Cristobal. Wear good boots for steep trail and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call **858.484.3219**.

(Calendar cont'd)

Nature Walk in López Canyon with Barbara Moore

Sun., Dec. 8, 2–4 p.m. Enjoy the birds, beasts and wildflowers of López Canyon with the co-author of *Walking San Diego*. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing by the author. Meet in West-end Parking- Staging area off Sorrento Valley Road, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call **858-484-3219** for recorded directions.

Shaman's Hike with Will Bowen

Sat., Dec. 14, 3–4:30 p.m. A hike to explore shamanistic practices, exercises, and meditations to connect with the wisdom and healing in nature. Drums and rattles welcome. Meet at the West End Parking Staging Area in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208. Or call 858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., Dec. 15, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. See mistletoe growing naturally in the trees and the red berries of the California holly (Toyon) Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Holiday Nature Walk to Waterfall from North Staging Area

Sat., Dec. 21, 3 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk to the waterfall and back, about 4 miles. See mistletoe and possibly mule deer and other wildlife. Meet at the kiosk at the intersection of Camino Ruiz & Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and water. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Beginner's Tracking Walk at Ranch

Sat., Dec. 21, 8 – 9 a.m. Children welcome! Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in from a member of the Friends' Tracking Team. Wear shoes good for mud. Meet at the historic

ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Advanced Tracking Walk at Ranch

Sat., Dec. 21, 8 – 9 a.m. A member of the Friends' Tracking Team will lead this advanced tracking walk. Must have completed beginner and intermediate training. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219**.

Pierre Bovet Adobe Hike with Will Bowen

Sat., Oct. 26, 10 – 11:30 a.m. Hike out into Carroll Canyon (once known as Soledad Canyon) to visit the ruins of the Pierre Bovet Adobe. Learn about life in Soledad Valley, the coming of the railroad, and the history of the decline of this interesting adobe home. Moderately difficult hike with stream crossing and steep ascent. Meet near the Fire Station at the intersection of Scranton and Carroll Roads in west Mira Mesa, 2 blocks off Mira Mesa Blvd. **Thomas Guide p. 1208. Or call 858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

DIRECTIONS

Black Mountain Open Space Park, Rancho Peñasquitos

From I-15 take SR 56 (Ted Williams Parkway) west to Black Mountain Road. Go right (north) on Black Mountain Road and follow it all the way until you see the last houses on the right and open space beyond. Look for a dirt road to the right and take it. Proceed about 1 mile, going beyond the bare hangliding area on the right and down a hill to a big curve and a sign for the park and paved road on the right. Proceed up the road to the staging area.

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal

This intersection is located in Mira Mesa. From the west (I-5/I-805 merge) take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east. It becomes Calle Cristobal as it passes Camino Santa Fe. The next street is Caminito Propico. From the

east, take Mira Mesa Boulevard to Camino Santa Fe. Go right on Camino Santa Fe, then right on Calle Cristobal to Propico. Park in cul-de-sac on either side. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Northern Parking-Staging Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino Ruiz. Left on Camino Ruiz and park. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Ranch House Walks/Tours

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch. house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area

Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

West-End Parking-Staging Area

South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196
858-484-3219

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Carme Mtn Rch, CA
PERMIT NO. 286

Address Service Requested

Check Your Label

Take a moment to examine the address label on this newsletter. Check to see if your expiration date has come and gone. If so, please take the time now to send in a renewal check for your membership dues. This will enable you to keep receiving our newsletter, recognized as one of the best conservation newsletters in San Diego. That way you'll keep learning about the family walks; the plants and animals that inhabit the Preserve, and the many conservation projects open to you and your family or friends.

Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Brian Swanson 760.739.5451
Vice-President: Don Albright 619.443.5937
Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858.538.2527
Secretary: Rick Botta 858.672.0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Les Braund, Edward DiBella, Mike Kelly

Walks Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen, Mike Kelly,
Les Braund, Pat Watkins, Linda King and Barbara Moore.

Committees:

Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman
Newsletter: Mike Kelly
Plant Nursery Director: Liz Rozycki
Stream Survey Committee: open
Voice Mail System: Pat Watkins
Tracking Team Coordinator: Barry Martin, 858.484.4007
Volunteer Coordinator: Marilyn Kolendar, 858.484.7346
Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.566.6489
Webmaster: Rick Botta
Wildlife Surveys: Dean Woods: 858.672.1120.

Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

Senior (62) or Student \$10 Individual \$15
Family \$20 Sponsor \$30 Patron \$100
Corporate \$250 Life \$1000
Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

- Volunteer** to help the committee (call to discuss)
 Hikes
 Indian Culture
 Educational Workshops
 School, Family, Youth Programs
 Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____ **10/2002**

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call **858.484.3219** or **858.566.6489** for more information.