

Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Jan. & Feb. 2003

Volume 17, No. 1

Good Flower Season Starting

Mike Kelly

Early rain is already producing early flowers. If we continue to get the rains promised by El Niño this will be a good, perhaps even a spectacular flower year. Here's what we're already seeing. The sour (but I like it!) smell of California spine bush (*Adolphia californica*) is on the air, much earlier than

See p. 4 for more



Pictured above is the yellow flowering Golden Aster (*Heterotheca sessiliflora* ssp. *sessiliflora*). You'll be able to see this picture in color in the newsletter at www.penasquitos.org very shortly. It was confused with related species, but recently confirmed as a distinct species by taxonomic study, both physical and chromosome comparison. It's rare and once occurred from San Elijo Lagoon south to Baja in coastal locations. Many locations were built upon. One is threatened by the border fence project. Surveys next summer should identify the remaining populations and numbers. The plant above was photographed Christmas week in Torrey Pines State Park's Extension. To help with these surveys call Cindy Burrascano, Native Plant Society Conservation Chair at 619.421.5767 or Mike Kelly at 858.566.6489 or email Mike at mkellysd@aol.com.

Off-Roading and Black Mountain Park

Ranger Tom Miller

When I first started doing patrols on Black Mountain I came across a man illegally riding his dirt bike. I approached the man and explained the regulation against off-road vehicles. Coincidentally, at that very moment, what appeared to be a police helicopter came down and hovered directly over us. The man glanced up at the helicopter and said, "You guys are really serious about this!! I said "yes" and there are many good reasons to stop illegal off-roading.

See p. 5 for more

Bequest to Friends William (Bill) Fleming

Mike Kelly

William (Bill) Fleming passed on in 2002. Bill was a long-time supporter of the Friends and the fight to save Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. As part of his estate Bill made a generous bequest of more than \$15,000 to the Friends. Bill's sons, Alex and David, requested that part of the money be used to do upkeep on the 'Elberta Fleming Trail' and for reprinting the brochure that visitors using the trail can use to identify interpretive points along the trail. The Friends will certainly honor these wishes.

Friends members and park visitors

See p. 5 for more

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The Tracker's Corner

Awareness and Concentric Rings

Barry Martin

Do you remember the rings that emanate out from the point of impact a pebble tossed into quiet water makes? In still water these rings are even and expand out further and further gradually dissipating in strength as they get farther away from the source of the disturbance. These rings are known as concentric rings, and do not occur only in water. Concentric rings emanate in all directions as a result of any disturbance in any environment. Just think about the times at work when the boss comes through an area, or at a busy place such as an airport terminal when a celebrity moves through. There are noticeable and usually predictable changes in the demeanor of the people around as these events occur.

You most likely have become very good at reading the concentric rings in places like work and at home, but what about outdoors. In the woods or other natural areas would you know if there is a deer in the thicket ahead by the activity of the birds? Or if there is

See p. 6 for more

Good Flower Season Shaping Up

As the article on the first page of this newsletter illustrates, 2003 is shaping up to be a good year for wildflowers. Many of the guided walks listed below will feature these and other flowers. Why not join us on these enjoyable outings.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour Every Saturday & Sunday

San Diego County Parks 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.**

January

Peñasquitos Canyon Volunteer Trails Work Party

Sunday, January 5, 8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Join Ranger staff to help build and restore trails. Wear good boots and work clothes and bring water and sun protection. Meet at the Ranger's Trailer in the Equestrian Center at the corner of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks at Ranch

Saturday, January 11, 8 – 9 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the 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.**

Habitat Restoration Work Party in López Canyon

Saturday, January 11, 9 a.m. – 12 noon. Join the Friends in planting native species, weeding exotics, and installing erosion

control devices in López Canyon grasslands. Wear good boots and work clothes and bring water and sun protection. Meet in the cul-de-sac at the end of Pacific Mesa Blvd. Take Mira Mesa Blvd. east from I-805 or west from I-15 to Pacific Heights Blvd. Go north, then right on Pacific Mesa Blvd. to the end. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 F5.**

Sacred Drum Hike with Will Bowen

Saturday, January 11, 3–4:30 p.m. Take a short hike to a power spot for Native American-inspired drumming, story, song, prayer, and ceremony. Bring a drum or rattle and a blanket to sit on. 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.**

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizens' Advisory Committee Thursday, January 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.**

Black Mountain Nature Walk /Rancho Peñasquitos

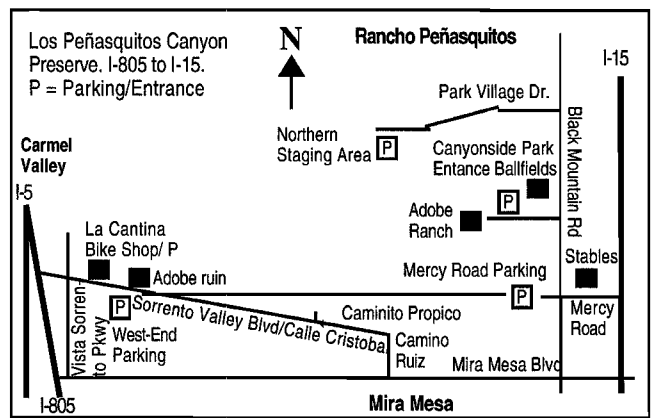
Saturday, January 18, 9 – 11 a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Nature Walk to Waterfall /North Staging Area

Saturday, January 18, 3:30 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk to the waterfall and back, about 4 miles. Good chance to see 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 7A.**

Peñasquitos Canyon Trails Work Party

Sunday, January 19, 8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Join Ranger staff to help build and restore trails. Wear good boots and work clothes and bring water and sun protection. Meet at the Ranger's Trailer in the Equestrian Center at the corner of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**



Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sunday, January 19, 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.**

Black Mountain Habitat Restoration Work Party /Rancho Peñasquitos

Sunday, January 19, 1–3 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help remove exotic weeds and plant native vegetation. Meet at the glider port off the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee.

Monday, January 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.**

Black Mountain Trail Work Party / Rancho Peñasquitos

Saturday, January 25, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Carmel Mountain Flower Walk with Diana Gordon

Saturday, January 25, 9 – 11 a.m. Tour one of San Diego's newest nature preserves with Torrey Pines Docent Diana Gordon. Good chance to see wildflowers. Take SR-56 east from I-5 to Carmel Country Road. Go right (south) across the

See p. 3 for more

(Calendar cont'd)

bridge and immediately look for and park in a small dirt parking lot on the right. Wear hiking boots, bring water and sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See **Thomas Guide p. 1188, C7.**

Small Things of Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Saturday, January 25, 10 a.m. Join Les Braund, President of the San Diego Mycological Society and the Friends' Board for this nature walk emphasizing the small things of nature such as mushrooms, liverworts, and lichens. Learn about the interactions between wildlife and mushrooms or lichens. Good chance to see native wildflowers. 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.**

Habitat Restoration Work Party in Peñasquitos Canyon

Saturday, January 25, 1–4 p.m. Join the Friends in planting and weeding along the Trans County Trail. Wear good boots and work clothes and bring water and sun protection. Meet at the Ranger Trailer in the Equestrian Center at Mercy and Black Mountain Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 D7.**

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sunday, January 26, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. See wildflowers and 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 D7.**

Nature Walk in López Canyon with Barbara Moore

Sunday, January 26, 2–4 p.m. Enjoy the birds, beasts and blossoms 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 D5.**

February**Carmel Mountain Vernal Pool & Flower Walk with Diana Gordon**

Saturday, February 1, 9–11 a.m. Visit vernal pools, one of San Diego's rarest habitats. Good chance to see wildflowers. From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At its intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed straight on what has become Carmel Mountain Road. Go

up the hill several blocks to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots, bring water and sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208, C2.**

Peñasquitos Canyon Volunteer Trails Work Party

Sunday, February 2, 8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Join Ranger staff to help build and restore trails. Wear good boots and work clothes and bring water and sun protection. Meet at the Ranger's Trailer in the Equestrian Center at the corner of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Fire Ecology in West End of Peñasquitos Canyon w. Mike Kelly

Sunday, February 2, 1–3 p.m. Join naturalist Mike Kelly on a walk through a recent fire area in the west end of Peñasquitos. See wildflowers, resprouting shrubs, discuss erosion, exotic weed invasions and more. Meet at the corner of Vista Sorrento Parkway and Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 C5.**

San Diego Bird Festival February 5 – 9

This annual festival features dozens of classes, talks, bird walks, bird kayak trips, boat trips, mixers and more. Festival headquarters is at the Marina Village at Mission Bay Park, San Diego. For more information, contact:

Nature Festivals of San Diego County
POB 120426, Chula Vista, CA 91912
619-516-0139
registration@sandiegonaturefestivals.org

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks at Ranch

Saturday, February 8, 8–9 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. 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.**

Habitat Restoration at PQ Waterfall

Saturday, February 8, 9 a.m. Join the Friends in planting an area at the Preserve's waterfall and a nearby slope. Wear sturdy boots, work clothes, and bring water and sun protection. 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.**

Nature Walk to Waterfall /North Staging Area

Saturday, February 8, 4 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk to the waterfall and back, about 4 miles. Good chance to see 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 7A.**

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sunday, February 9, 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.**

Black Mountain Nature Walk /Rancho Peñasquitos

Saturday, February 15, 9–11 a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Sacred Drum Hike with Will Bowen

Saturday, February 15, 3–4:30 p.m. Take a short hike to a power spot for Native American-inspired drumming, story, song, prayer, and ceremony. Bring a drum or rattle and a blanket to sit on. Meet at the West End Parking Staging Area in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Peñasquitos Canyon Volunteer Trails Work Party

Sunday, February 16, 8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Join Ranger staff to help build and restore trails. Wear good boots and work clothes and bring water and sun protection. Meet at the Ranger's Trailer in the Equestrian Center at the corner of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sunday, February 16, 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.**

Black Mountain Habitat Restoration Work Party /Rancho Peñasquitos

Sunday, February 16, 1–3 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help remove

exotic weeds and plant native vegetation. Meet at the glidern port off the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hikin boots and bring water and sun protection. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Nature Walk in López Canyon with Barbara Moore

Sunday, February 16, 2–4 p.m. Enjoy the birds, beasts and blossoms 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 Trail Work Party / Rancho Peñasquitos

Saturday, February 22, 8 a.m. –12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hikin boots and bring water and sun protection. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Small Things of Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Saturday, February 22, 10 a.m. Join Les Braund, President of the San Diego Mycological Society and Friends' Board Member for this nature walk emphasizing the small things of nature such as mushrooms, liverworts, and lichens. Learn about the interactions between wildlife and mushrooms or lichens. Good chance to see native wildflowers. 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.**

Carmel Mountain Vernal Pool & Flower Walk with Diana Gordon

Sunday, February 23, 9 – 11a.m. Visit vernal pools, one of San Diego's rarest habitats. Good chance to see wildflowers. From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At its intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed straight on what has become Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill several blocks to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots, bring water and sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208, C2.**

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, Emden Rd. on the left, and a dirt road to the right. Take the dirt road to the right and 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. **See Thomas Guide p. 1169.**

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.**

(Flowers cont'd)

we have seen before. It's a dominant shrub along the north side of Peñasquitos Canyon on the south facing slope. It's also blooming in Sabre Springs near the north side trail above the old treatment plant. California bush poppy (*Dendromecon rigida*) is opening its bright yellow blossoms in the Torrey Pines State Park (TP) and Torrey Pines Extension and should be blooming further to the east in the next week or two.

Spice bush (*Cneoridium dumosum*), one of California's true native citrus, is now offering us its fragrant blossoms in TP and in Peñasquitos Canyon (PQ). In PQ you can see a lot of it if you hike north from the Carson Crossing up the SDG&E utility road. Be careful, some folks are highly sensitive to this plant and break out in welts if they touch it — so, smell, but don't touch!

Wart-stemmed ceanothus (*Ceanothus verrucosus*) is just beginning to open its first white blossoms in TP, Carmel Mountain (CM), and the west end of PQ (up one of the side canyons at the west end). Mission manzanita (*Xylococcus bicolor*) with its dainty bell-shaped flowers can be seen in TP, along the old stage-coach road in the new extension of PQ east of I-15. This is the old dirt road above the new pump station that connects to the Sabre Springs trail system. You can see a lot of them blooming on the ridge trail on the east side of Black Mountain Park (BM).

Winter currant (*Ribes Indecorum*) is getting ready to bloom and can be seen in TP, PQ on the south side above Sycamore Crossing, in López Canyon in the first big finger canyon upstream from the Camino Santa Fe bridge, on the south side, up the canyon a bit. You can also see it under the I-15 bridge in PQ and along the Miner's Loop Trail in BM. California sunflower (*Encelia californica*) is blooming in many places, including TP and PQ. Wild cucumber (*Marah macrocarpus*), a native vine is blooming in cooler, shady and wetter places.

Volunteers and Rangers will be leading walks in most of these places beginning in January and continuing through the spring. See the hike schedule.

Volunteer Activities

See our calendar on pp. 2-4 for details on the following volunteer opportunities. Individuals can just show up. Groups should call Mike Kelly at 858-566-6489 to sign up.

Trails Work

Peñasquitos Canyon Jan. 5 & 19;
Feb. 2 & 16.

Black Mountain. Jan. 25, Feb. 22.

Habitat Restoration

Black Mountain Jan. 19, Feb. 16.

Peñasquitos Jan. 11, Jan. 25, Feb. 8

Thanks to the many volunteers who led hikes, built trails, surveyed wildlife and endangered plants, helped with the newsletter, or restored habitat. We'll catch up on our recognition of our volunteers in the next issue.

News Notes

Tracking Team Spins Off

As of January 1, 2003, the San Diego Tracking Team (SDTT) has left the Friends' "umbrella" to become an independent non-profit. For about a decade the Friends have sponsored the growth of the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Tracking Team (LPCPTT). In recent years the team has recruited and trained trackers for wildlife surveys in other parts of the county. The Peñasquitos Tracking Team will continue working with the Friends while the SDTT will sponsor groups in other parts of the county. Rick Botta is the new Director of the LPCTT while Barry Martin is the Director of SDTT.

Fund Appeal Still Underway

There's still time to make your tax-deductible donation to the Friends. We'll report results and a list of our contributors in the next newsletter.

Volunteer Coordinator Needed

Call Mike Kelly at 858-566-6489 if you are interested in helping coordinate volunteers. This mainly involves calling our volunteer list before a work party.

(Fleming cont'd)

in the 1980s knew the Fleming name well. The late Dr. Elberta (Bert) Fleming (Canyon News, January 1990), Bill's wife, was one of the central leaders of the fight to protect and expand Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. She led countless nature walks and classes for schoolchildren in the park. She often testified at public hearings on behalf of the preserve.

What wasn't well known was the role Bill played in supporting Bert's efforts. Bill was an Industrial Engineer who played a quiet, behind the scenes role. For example, most of the display boards Bert toted around to events were hand made by Bill. Even after Bert's death in November of 1989, Bill and his family continued their support

of the Preserve, making generous financial donations, and giving her wonderful collection of slides, files, and educational materials to the Friends. Part of her collection of San Diego County Native California tools were donated to the Archaeology Center to be used for educational purposes. Children are able to hold in their hands actual tools that were part of the day to day life of local Indians such as the Kumeyyay as they listen to a talk about them.

The 'Elberta Fleming Nature Trail' begins at the Mercy Road parking-staging area and leads visitors to Peñasquitos Creek and the riparian area surrounding it. The creek and riparian area were always one of Bert's favorite places to take visitors, especially school kids to introduce them to nature.

(Off-roading cont'd)

First, it has destroyed much of the wildlife habitat. The wildlife is dependent upon these native plants and without them they could not survive. Also, erosion soon follows as native plants are decimated and it takes years of careful protection and management to restore these areas to their original condition.

And then there is the human cost. Over the years, there have been many serious accidents from off-roading on Black Mountain. I have been told that in one area alone, known as the "Hang Glider Port," there have been five fatalities in the last five years. They try to drive up the hill only to roll over and wreck their vehicles and themselves. These wrecks have included young children that were injured.

In California, there are many areas that are set aside and are legal for off-roading. Black Mountain is not one of them. It is too environmentally sensitive and needs to be protected — not to mention the danger to the off-roader himself. If you or some you know like to off-road, I recommend that you check the Internet. Search under "California off-roading" or go to "to find places to go." You can also call the California Off-Road Vehicle Association at 1-800-422 6782 or San Diego Off-Road Coalition at 619-449-9648.

As Rangers, it is our goal to see

Black Mountain fully restored and safe. We want every one who comes up here to experience the natural beauty and wonders of the plant and animal life that is unique to Black Mountain.

Nature Hikes

Beginning in January 2003, Nature hikes will take place at Black Mountain Open Space Park every third Saturday of every month to interpret the flora and fauna. We will meet at 9:00 A.M. at the staging area off of Black Mountain dirt road. The walk usually goes for two hours and remember to wear sturdy closed toe shoes, bring drinking water, and wear sun block.

Volunteer Opportunities

If you are interested in volunteering at Black Mountain Open Space Park, we have a trail work day every fourth Saturday that meets at the staging area off of Black Mountain dirt road at 8:00 A.M. and usually goes from 8-12 P.M.. We will also have a habitat restoration day every third Sunday of each month that will meet at 1:00 P.M. at the Glider-port and go until about 3 P.M.. Habitat restoration will involve removal of invasive exotic plants and the planting of native vegetation. For further information please call the Black Mountain Open Space Park Rangers at (858) 538-8082.

a predator in the area?

Tom Brown Jr. tells a story about his mentor, the Apache elder Stalking Wolf, that illustrates an exceptional ability to read concentric rings in the outdoors. Earlier in the day Tom and his best friend Rick had set traps but had not told Stalking Wolf (Grandfather). As they were sitting around the campfire that night in the pine barrens, Grandfather looked up with a start, glanced at Tom and said, "Your trap missed," turning to Rick, "Your trap has a rabbit." The boys looked at each other in a moment of amazement and without a word were running down the trail toward the traps. Sure enough both traps were sprung, Tom's missed and Rick's with a rabbit. It was that evening that Grandfather began to teach the boys about concentric rings and how to become so attuned and aware that not much escapes notice.

In our tracking programs at the Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve we often are heard saying, "Tracking without awareness is not Tracking!" We work on being so sensitive to the environment we're in that very little escapes our attention. After all, if you don't have all the clues how are you going to solve the mystery? Tracking involves solving many mysteries, the question is always, "what happened here?"

Being able to read concentric rings begins with slowing down and tuning in to the area in which you find yourself. We teach some elementary techniques which help you achieve a higher level of awareness in our beginning Tracker/Naturalist Class which will be offered in the spring this year. We expand on those techniques in our Intermediate and Advanced classes, check our website for schedules. Also, signing up for our quarterly wildlife survey and associated training is an excellent way to develop and expand these skills.

Tunnel Vision?

Imagine having the awareness of Stalking Wolf! Not likely for most of us, being raised in a culture that imposes a sort of "tunnel vision" mentality. He, on the other hand, grew up in a culture that nurtured a much different

approach. His is a world to be savored, his world is a rich and abundant place where all life is sacred and worth caring for.

We may never gain the degree of awareness Stalking Wolf attained, mainly because of all the conditioning we've had and the commitments we allow ourselves to be constrained by. But it is possible to gain a much higher degree of awareness if you are willing to establish some new habit patterns, preceded by a little different mind set.

A "new" Way Of Thinking

Before you are ready to make a commitment to do something you likely have agreed in your own mind that it is what you *want* to do. If your decision is based on free will then, naturally, your level of commitment will be a lot more conducive to a successful outcome. The point I'm trying to make here is that you have to want to change before you can change.

To develop the kind of awareness I'm talking about requires a concerted effort that will seem cumbersome at first, but as with any skill, if you put in a lot of practice over time it will become natural to you.

So with that mindset, I would say that the prerequisite to developing a high level of awareness is to look at the world in the light of a new way of thinking. This is not really so "new" but rather, it is the old way we looked at things.... when we were very young! Remember when everything seemed fresh and new, mainly because we'd never seen much before and it literally was fresh and new to our young eyes!

The best asset a tracker can start out with is what Tom Brown refers to as "the questioning mind." Isn't that a description of a youngster; "Why" is one of the most commonly heard words by parents of young kids. "Why" is also one of the most commonly heard words from a good tracker as in "Why is this gait pattern so irregular," or "Why don't you get to the point Barry."

O.K. the point is that you will tend to want to open up and be more aware if you start looking at the world like a kid again . . . no not acting like a kid, but looking at the world through fresh

eyes, like a kid does. And what the heck, yes, act like a kid once in awhile and be willing to go outdoors and get dirty!

Tune Your Senses

We teach a little exercise called the "sense meditation" and strongly recommend that you do this exercise every time you change environments. It only takes a few seconds of your time and the payoff is huge considering the time invested. It is simple, first stand or sit comfortably and just pause. Take a deep breath and relax your body as you exhale. Gaze out in wide angle vision or "owl eyes" as Tracker/Naturalist Jon Young calls it, in other words see everything, not really focusing on anything. You are able to detect movement in your peripheral vision.

While gazing in wide angle vision, seeing everything but not really focusing on anything, be conscious of all you hear, all around you...birds singing, kids playing, traffic in the distance . . . soak in everything.

Now add feeling, the skin is your sense organ covering the LARGEST body area, what are you feeling? Which way is the wind coming from, are you warmer on one side than the other?

Next, while still aware of all the previous senses, add smell. Sniff the air and pick out the different aromas from the bouquet you happen to be in at the moment. This sense is closely related to taste, so if you smell water near, you can often discern a rusty taste as an example.

By the time you have gone through this sequence, even though it can be done in a short amount of time, you will find that you have determined the rhythm of whatever locale you are in. You can meld with that rhythm or if you sense something isn't quite right you can choose to make an exit or use the appropriate caution.

The sense meditation is a very useful tool for helping you maintain a relaxed flow as you move through an environment, natural or otherwise. If you make it a habit to do a quick sense meditation every time you move into a new environment; i.e. riparian to grassland, or car to office, your ability to maintain a heightened state of awareness will be greatly enhanced.

2003 SCHEDULE

Wildlife Survey & Tracking/ Naturalist Training

The Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Tracking Team, in conjunction with The San Diego Tracking Team, presents the 2003 schedule:

Introductory One-Day Trainings for Wildlife Survey Volunteers

January 18; October 18
9:45 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Contact for registration and information: Patrick at 760-471-9197.

This free training includes basic track, sign, and habitat recognition, as well as details on the implementation of survey protocol, and is required for transect volunteers.

Wildlife surveys are scheduled for
January 19 – February 28;
April 20 – May 30;
July 19 – August 31;
October – November 30.

Tracker/Naturalist Weekend Classes

Beginning Weekend Classes
March 15-16, repeated May 17-18

Intermediate Weekend Classes
June 21-22

Advanced Weekend Classes
September 27-28

Contact for registration and information: Rick at 858-672-0584

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

The Intermediate Class delves into the finer details of tracking, awareness, and philosophy.

The Advanced Class is devoted to in depth track analysis and interpretation. There is a small fee for each of the three classes.

Beginning & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Second Saturday every month at 8:00 a.m.

Everyone is invited to join an experienced tracker/naturalist Lee and Uli for free, easy tracking walks, either at the beginning or intermediate levels to learn about the art of tracking and the flora and fauna of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Simply show up at the Ranch.

All events take place at the Adobe Ranch House in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Take Canyonside Park Dr. off Black Mountain Road and follow the signs to Ranch House parking.

(Awareness cont'd)

Movement

How you move through an environment will have an effect on how aware you happen to be as well. Stalking Wolf moved through the woods as though he was floating, barely making a sound. How much will you notice if you are crashing through the brush?

We teach the "fox walk" which is a gentle way of movement, easy on your body and easy on the earth. When you combine the fox walk method of balance and foot placement, along with what you might call the "cat form" style of movement you become an awareness sponge soaking up all that is going on in the environment you are traveling through.

What is the cat form? Just picture in your mind how a cat moves and you've got it! Think of how a cat will move a few steps, pause, sniff the air, look left and right, behind and up and down then continue a few more steps and repeat the process. Emulate the cat

by pausing every so often and look all around, down at the ground for tracks, up along the ridge lines and tree tops, back down the trail from where you came, listen, sniff the air, feel . . . sounds like a lot like the sense meditation!

Patterns of Awareness

By doing these things all the time you develop your own patterns of awareness. Soon they become habit for you with a little practice and you are suddenly in a new world, Stalking Wolf's world! After a little more time in this state of awareness you will discover an additional bonus; your intuitive skills will increase substantially, a valuable tool for a tracker, or anyone else for that matter.

We encourage you to put all your awareness skills to use in a nonstop way; remember the questioning mind, always use *all* your senses, utilize the sense meditation often, the fox walk

and cat form movement techniques all combine in your own habit pattern of awareness.

Tracking Team Class Schedule

Check out our class schedule, we can help you get started or help you stay involved. The Tracking Teams of San Diego County are doing wildlife surveys every quarter and we accept volunteers to assist after completion of a one day volunteer training. If you are inspired to go on from there we offer three levels of Tracker/Naturalist weekends; beginning, intermediate, and advanced. These classes are interspersed through the year. There is also a monthly tracking walk for an additional opportunity to practice your skills. Check our web site for details and dates at www.sdt.org.

We look forward to seeing you at one of our events, in the meantime, see you on the trail! Will you know I'm there?!



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

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to see back issues, and infor-
mation on wildlife surveys
and the Tracking Team.

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: Rick Botta, 858.672-0584
Volunteer Coordinator:
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: _____ 1/2003

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

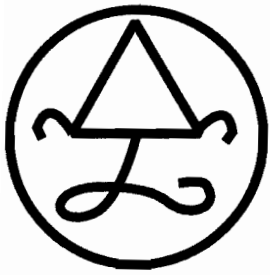
Home Phone _____

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.

Mar. & Apr. 2003

Volume 17, No. 2



Is that a giant snake they're holding? Nope, it's a wattle, an anti-erosion roll of straw in mesh, one of many installed in erosion gulleys in the native grasslands on the south slope of López Canyon at the head of the Old López Road. Volunteering on a beautiful January day were, from left to right: Carrie Schneider (Calif. Native Plant Society Pres.), Alex & Lynne Preisser (Friends' members), Geof Smith (Chair, Peñasquitos Canyon Citizens Advisory Committee & Sierra Club), Erik Jensen, & Marney Griffin (Amer. Soc. of Landscape Architects). Not pictured but helping were Debra Jones (Exec. Dir. San Diego River Park Lakeside Conservancy & long-time Friends' member) & Mike Kelly (Conservation Chair for the Friends). A star-studded cast of volunteers! Thanks all.

The Effects of Watershed Urbanization on Stream Hydrologic Characteristics and Riparian Vegetation of Los Peñasquitos Creek.

Michael D. White, Ph.D.

Riparian habitats, particularly in the arid Western U.S., are renowned for their high productivity and habitat value. In coastal San Diego County, riparian habitats are characterized by a diverse vegetation community, which is typically dominated by trees such as various willow species, cottonwoods, sycamores, and oaks. The plant species in riparian vegetation communities, such as in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, are largely determined by stream flow patterns, the shape and gradient of the stream channel, and the depth and dynamics of ground-

See p. 6 for more

Highlights Inside

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The Friends: Two Decades — What Next?

Brian D. Swanson, President

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Over the decades, just as the communities on our borders have matured, so too has the Friends' organization. And, we've expanded our vision and focus. For instance, we now are very involved with nearby areas such as Carmel Mountain, the Del Mar Mesa, and Black Mountain. All of these areas are in the process of being connected to Peñasquitos Canyon via open space linkages and other preserves.

For many years our focus was necessarily on the fight to save as much of our ecosystem as possible. Those battles are probably behind us now as our borders are almost 'built out.' Recognizing this, several years ago we began to focus on the task of *managing* these lands. We began projects to eradicate and control exotic invasive weeds and to restore native habitats. We supported the Tracking Team in developing scientific protocols

See p. 6 for more

Flowers Busting Out All Over

With all of the rain we've been getting, a wonderful flower show is already underway in our parks in the north city area. Join us for a guided walk or just cruise on out for yourself. You should be seeing different flowers opening up (or fading away!) with every passing week throughout the spring.

Rain (more than a slight drizzle!) cancels walks. If there have been heavy rains in the days before a walk, call the Preserve Ranger phone 858.538.8066 to see if the Preserve has been closed due to impassable trail/ road conditions.

Wear good hiking boots and bring water & sun protection.

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.**

March

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Saturday, March 8, 8 – 9 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. **C**Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. 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.**

Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sunday, March 9, 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.

Monday, March 10, 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.**

Black Mountain Nature Walk /Peñasquitos

Saturday, March 15, 9 – 11 a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1 or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.**

Peñasquitos Canyon Volunteer Trails Work Party

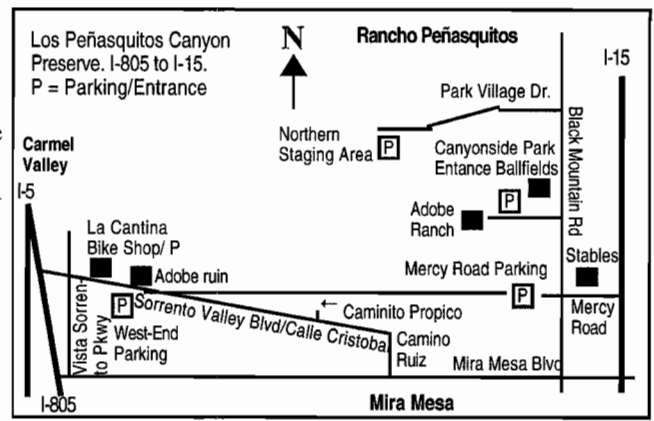
Sunday, March 16, 8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Join Ranger staff to help build and restore trails. Wear good boots and work clothes and bring water and sun protection. Meet at the Ranger's Trailer in the Equestrian Center at the corner of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads in Mira Mesa. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 858.484.3219 for directions.**

Black Mountain Habitat Restoration /Peñasquitos

Sunday, March 16, 1–3 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help remove exotic weeds and plant native vegetation. Meet at the glider port off the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1 or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.**

NEW: Nature Walk to Walden Pond & Waterfall

Sunday, March 16, 1-3 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk onto the Del Mar Mesa, to Walden Pond and the Preserve's waterfall. Good wildflower walk. Meet at the end of Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and water. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7) or call 858.484.3219 for recorded directions.**



Peñasquitos Preserve Citizens' Advisory Comm.

Thursday, March 20, 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.**

Black Mountain Trail Work Party / Peñasquitos

Saturday, March 22, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1 or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.**

Habitat Restoration Work Party in Peñasquitos

Saturday, March 22, 1 – 4 p.m. Join Mike Kelly in planting and weeding along the Trans County Trail. Wear good boots and work clothes and bring water and sun protection. Meet at the Ranger Trailer in the Equestrian Center at Mercy and Black Mountain Roads in Mira Mesa. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 D7 or call 858.484.3219 for directions**

Frog Hike

Sunday, March 23, 3 – 4:30 p.m. Look for & learn about frogs, toads, and tadpoles, their life cycle, appearance, behavior and importance in the overall ecology of the region. Wear shoes that can get wet. Meet at the Sorrento Valley Meeting Area at 4206 Sorrento Valley Road, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208. Or call 858.484.3219 for recorded directions.**

Carmel Mountain Vernal Pool & Flower Walk with Diana Gordon

Sunday, March 23, 3–5 p.m. Visit vernal pools, one of San Diego's rarest habitats. Good chance to see wildflowers. From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At its intersection with Carmel Mountain

See p. 3 for more

(Calendar cont'd)

Road, proceed straight on what has become Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill several blocks to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots, bring water and sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208, C2** or call **858.484.3219**.

Nature Walk in López Canyon with Barbara Moore

Sunday, March 23, 3–5 p.m. Enjoy the birds, beasts and blossoms 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 D5** or call **858-484-3219** for recorded directions.

April**Peñasquitos Canyon Volunteer Trails Work Party**

Sunday, April 6, 8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Join Ranger staff to help build and restore trails. Wear good boots and work clothes and bring water and sun protection. Meet at the Ranger's Trailer in the Equestrian Center at the corner of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Saturday, April 12, 8 – 9 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. 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**.

NEW: Nature Walk to Walden Pond & Waterfall

Saturday, April 12, 1–3 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk onto the Del Mar Mesa, to Walden Pond and the Preserve's waterfall. Good wildflower walk. Meet at the end of Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and water. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7)** or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Frog Hike

Sunday, April 13, 4–5:30 p.m. Look for & learn about frogs, toads, and tadpoles, their life cycle, appearance, behavior and importance in the overall ecology of the region. Wear shoes tht can get wet. Meet at the West End Parking-Staging Area on the south side of Sorrento Valley Blvd., 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.** Or call **858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Black Mountain Nature Walk /Peñasquitos

Saturday, April 19, 9 – 11 a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hikin boots and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Peñasquitos Southern Lagoon Trash Cleanup

Saturday, April 19, 9 – noon. Join Mike Kelly and a troop of girl scouts in cleaning out storm deposited trash in an important bird sanctuary. Anyone who can bring a raft or small boat for the channel part is most welcome! Wear old clothes! Meet at the corner of Roselle St. and Estuary Way in Sorrento Valley. Wear hikin boots and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 A5** or call Mike at 858.566.6489

Peñasquitos Canyon Volunteer Trails Work Party

Sunday, April 20, 8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Join Ranger staff to help build and restore trails. Wear good boots and work clothes and bring water and sun protection. Meet at the Ranger's Trailer in the Equestrian Center at the corner of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sunday, April 20, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. See wild- flowers & 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 Mtn. Habitat Restoration

Sunday, April 20, 1–3 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help remove exotic weeds and plant native vegetation. Meet at the glidern port off the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hikin boots and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082

Black Mountain Trail Work Party / Peñasquitos

Saturday, April 26, 8 a.m. –12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hikin boots and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Carmel Mountain Flower Walk w. Diana Gordon

Saturday, April 26, 3–5 p.m. Tour one of San Diego's newest nature preserves Torrey Pines Docent Diana Gordon. Good chance to see wildflowers. Take SR-56 east from I-5 to Carmel Country Road. Go right (south) across the bridge and immediately look for and park in a small dirt parking lot on the right. Wear hiking boots, bring water and sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See **Thomas Guide p. 1188, C7** or call **858.484.3219**.

Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sunday, April 27, 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**.

DIRECTIONS**Black Mountain Open Space Park, 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.**

See p. 4 for more

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.**

Park Village Drive Meeting 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 and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7).**

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.**

(Trails cont'd)

home. This is my plea on behalf of the flora that has no voice, stay on the trails! Please do not make your own trails. Every footfall crushes the tender shoot, every step off the trail is one step closer to bare ground. I'm sure many have noticed the excessive widening of the trails throughout the Preserve and numerous trails cutting across the grassland. This is not the result of one user or one group of users, but the result of many not stopping to think where they are and how their actions affect this invaluable place.

Both the County and City Staff are beginning a campaign to repair the damage that has been done to the Pre-

Who Are Those Guys?

Dave Wenk, San Diego Mountain Biking Association

I've been riding my mountain bike in Black Mountain Park for years, and whenever I encounter a hiker – whether I'm huffing my way to the top or I'm carefully picking my way back down the trail over and around softball-sized rocks – I get the same incredulous reaction: "You're crazy!" I even get that reaction from the hang glider pilots! Actually, we're not crazy – we mountain bikers probably just have an underdeveloped sense of self-preservation.

Notwithstanding our long-term survival prospects, you've probably seen a lot more of us in Black Mountain Park recently. Recognizing that Black Mountain Park is rapidly becoming one of the jewels of the city's open space preserves, the San Diego Mountain Biking Association (SDMBA) last year appointed a liaison to work with the rangers, citizens advisory committee, and the community at large to help preserve the park for all users. Since then, we have turned out in force at the last two clean-ups, participated in trail restoration, and educated our fellow mountain bikers on the rules of the park.

This year we'll be stepping up our efforts in Black Mountain Park a notch. On April 13, the International Mountain Bicycling Association (www.imba.com) Trail Care Crew – a nationally recognized team of trail construction and maintenance experts – will work with SDMBA and the park staff to restore and improve some of the park's trails using cutting-edge techniques. On April 26, SDMBA will return with a team of 15 – 25 mountain bikers / trail workers to continue the projects started earlier in the month. In August, SDMBA will once again bring a team to bear on projects identified as critical by the park staff. Of course, we'll also be participating in regularly scheduled clean-ups, habitat restoration, and trail work throughout the year.

The San Diego Mountain Biking Association is committed to educating the users of public lands in San Diego County in the safe and appropriate use of mountain bikes; contributing to the building, maintenance, and patrolling of riding areas in San Diego County; maintaining or regaining access to suitable trails throughout San Diego County; and working with other trail user groups, land managers, and policymakers to develop fair and responsible policies governing the use of public and private lands. For more information, please visit www.sdmdba.com.

serve. We're asking for your cooperation in our efforts to give these portions of the Preserve back to their owners. If a trail is posted with a sign, then it is a designated trail, if there are no signs, then don't use it. This includes the many trails that are just a few feet off the main double track. There is plenty of room to pass, even if a vehicle comes through, so there is no need to go onto these side trails. Without use, many plants will start growing back on their own. It is understood that many of these paths are the result of users avoiding mud that occurs during and after rain. It would be best, if you don't want to get muddy feet or tires, to not go into the Preserve

right after it rains. This causes many maintenance problems, specifically erosion and big mud puddles. If a trail appears to be blocked, by branches or is posted with a sign that says "trail closed" please respect the signs, don't create another trail around the sign or move the branches. There are still many trails to enjoy, and if you stay alert you might be surprised at what new things you can discover every time you visit.

If you value Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, as much as I am sure you do, please help us preserve this Canyon in its magnificence for the future, our children and the flora and fauna we come to enjoy.

Volunteer Activities

See our calendar on pp. 2–4 for details on the following volunteer opportunities. Individuals can just show up. Groups should call Mike Kelly at 858-566-6489 to sign up.

Endangered Plant Surveys depend on weather! Call Mike Kelly at 858.566.6489 to volunteer.

Trails Work

Peñasquitos Canyon Mar. 16, Apr. 6 & 20.

Black Mountain. Mar. 22, Apr. 26

Habitat Restoration

Black Mountain Mar. 16, Apr. 20.

Peñasquitos Mar. 22, Apr. 19.

Wildlife Surveys/ Trainings

Wildlife surveys are scheduled for

April 20 – May 30;

July 19 – August 31;

October – November 30.

Next training: October 18

Tracker/Naturalist Classes:

Beginning Weekend Classes

March 15-16, repeated May 17-18

Intermediate Weekend Classes

June 21-22

Advanced Weekend Classes

September 27-28

Contact for registration and information: Rick at 858-672-0584

News Notes

Sorrento Valley Road Victory!

In late February the San Diego City Council voted 7-2 to close a 1.1-mile segment of Sorrento Valley Road. This segment runs adjacent to the eastern boundary of Peñasquitos Lagoon. The vote culminates a long campaign by environmental and community activists to keep the road closed to vehicles and prevent further harm to the sensitive biological resources the lagoon supports. The road will continue to serve as a nature trail for hikers and bikers. Congratulations to the many who fought this battle!

Los Peñasquitos Trails

Ranger Gina Brown

Los Peñasquitos is a great place to recreate. The creek, trees, an abundance of native vegetation, and the chance of spotting of wildlife all contribute to the Preserve's magnificence. It's my pleasure to announce the completion of the initial trail work on the Trans-County Trail Connector running from Black Mt. Rd. to I-15. It's through the efforts of several dedicated people spending many back-breaking hours that we can all enjoy this portion of the Preserve. The construction of this section of the Trans-County Trail is evidence of the planning, dedication, and time it takes to construct a safe and useful trail through this inestimable resource.

Trail construction is a science, any that have worked on a trail crew before knows a little about the planning and techniques that are used to keep a trail safe and manageable. As was mentioned at the outset, Los Peñasquitos is a wonderful place to visit, but remember, we're just visitors. The Preserve really belongs to the flora and fauna that live there. When we, as individuals, make our own trails or use trails that we are not authorized to use we're destroying much precious vegetation and encroaching on the rights of the wildlife that call the Preserve their

See p. 4 for more



Native bunch grass (*Nasella pulchra*) bursting out of protective plant tubes at Flower Field Experimental site in Peñasquitos Canyon. A report on these experiments is downloadable at URL: http://www.sci.sdsu.edu/SERG/restorationproj/woodlandgrassland/pencan/penasquitos_final.htm. These experiments were funded by the San Diego Foundation with a grant to the Friends, partnering with the Soil Ecology Restoration Group of San Diego State University & Alliant University.

(Watershed cont'd)

water. We often find willows and cottonwoods along streams with permanent flow and high groundwater. Sycamores and oaks tend to be more abundant along streams that flow intermittently, or in areas further removed from stream channels and on higher flood terraces.

Scientists are becoming increasingly aware of the negative effects that urbanization can have on ecosystems. The loss of habitat for species such as the California gnatcatcher and San Diego Coast horned lizard has led to development of regional habitat conservation programs such as the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP). It is also becoming clear that urbanization can produce adverse changes in water quality, when rain carries chemicals and sediment from streets, landscaped areas, and graded areas into creeks, lagoons, and the ocean. Moreover, urbanization increases the amount of impervious surfaces in a watershed. Impervious surfaces, such as streets and buildings, prevent rainfall from soaking into the ground. Instead, rainfall runs off of impervious surfaces and is carried into storm drains. These storm drains direct storm runoff into our canyons and streams (not into the sewer!) and, in doing so, can cause significant changes in the patterns of flow and the shape of the stream channel. My colleague, Keith Greer with the City of San Diego MSCP Division, and I wanted to see if watershed urbanization may also change stream flow patterns and, as a result, change riparian habitat characteristics.

We investigated the effects of watershed urbanization on the stream flow characteristics and riparian vegetation community of Los Peñasquitos Creek. Los Peñasquitos Creek and the riparian habitat associated with it is part of the City of San Diego's MSCP preserve system. We utilized records from the stream gage, located upstream of Black Mountain Road, to assess stream flow changes that have occurred since 1964. We used historic aerial photographs to measure land use changes in the upper portion of the watershed (upstream of the gage station) and riparian vegetation changes in the lower portion of the watershed

(downstream of the gage).

During the period 1966-2000, the area of urban land uses in the upper Los Peñasquitos Creek watershed increased from 9% to 37%. Over the same time period, median and minimum daily discharges (cubic feet per second), total annual and dry-season runoff (acre-feet per year), flood magnitudes, and flood durations in Los Peñasquitos Creek all significantly increased. Floods that occur every 2 to 3 years, which can affect the shape of the stream channel, increased by as much as 7-fold from 1964 to 2000. Particularly telling were the increases in the minimum discharge (17% per year) and dry-season runoff (13% per year) from 1972, the last year the Pomerado Waste Water Treatment Plant discharged treated sewage effluent to the creek, to 2000, the last year of our study. Historically, much of Los Peñasquitos Creek was dry during the summer months, but it is now a permanently flowing stream, and flows are continuing to increase. Much of this increased stream flow during summer months is likely runoff from irrigation of lawns and landscaping in urban areas of the watershed.

Accompanying the changes in stream flow characteristics were altered channel shape, a doubling of the area of riparian vegetation along the creek, and a shift in the distribution and composition of the riparian vegetation community. These changes were particularly evident in the reach of the creek in the vicinity of the Peñasquitos Ranch House. The stream channel in this area today is narrow and incised, but in a 1928 aerial photograph of the same area, the channel is broad and braided. The riparian vegetation in this area today is characterized by dense willows and cottonwoods along the channel and beautiful old sycamores and oaks in the floodplain adjacent to the creek. However, our analysis shows that the willows have established since about the late 1960s, and in 1928 the sycamores were likely the dominant tree species in this part of the park. It appears that the changes in stream flows and the shape of the channel from the waste water discharge and runoff from urban areas have resulted in conditions that favor willow species over sycamores and

oaks. The conclusions of our research suggest that the increased area of impervious surfaces and imported municipal water supplies associated with urbanization appear to have changed the historic riparian vegetation community by altering stream flow characteristics and channel shape.

This study was funded by a grant from the **San Diego Foundation** and the entire report is available on the Conservation Biology Institute website at: www.consbio.org

(Two Decades cont'd)

to survey the status of our wildlife and especially the adequateness of our wildlife corridors to the outside world. We also partnered with the San Diego County Archaeological Association in protecting the historic adobes in the Preserve and the many prehistoric cultural sites in our area.

We're proud that our pioneering efforts in natural and cultural resources management have inspired other volunteer groups to do the same. In fact, we have helped train other volunteers through our Special Weed Action Team (SWAT) and the Friends (now San Diego Tracking Team) Tracking Team.

One activity that's been a constant are our interpretive programs. Nature hikes have introduced thousands of people to our preserve and helped educate people about the importance of protecting our biodiversity.

BUT, here we are at the ripe old age of 20! We're looking at what we're doing and thinking about the future. We need input from you, our members, to help us know what you think we should focus on for the next 10 years. What are we doing right and should continue doing? What could we do differently? What are we missing – if anything? Is our geographic focus or the north city area — Peñasquitos Canyon, Del Mar Mesa, Carmel Mountain, Black Mountain — appropriate? How can we build our membership for the next 10 years of challenges? We plan a retreat later this spring where we plan to discuss this. Please send us your ideas via mail (see Friends' mailing address) or e-mail (bswanson@sempra.com), and I'll share them with our leadership and report back to you.

Fund Appeal Results

Mike Kelly

A big than kyou to the following folks who donated more almost \$2,000 despite our bad economy:

- Nancy Acevedo
- Dave Bilak
- Rick Botta
- Neil Bouscaren
- Burke Family
- Susan Califa
- K. Crampton
- Jim & Pat Daley
- Michael Debell
- Lenore Edidin
- Alex Fleming
- Mike Fry
- Ronald Getoor
- Robert & Sharon Greenamyer
- Ann Hegwer
- Linda Henning
- Fred & Linda Kramer
- Hans Leenhouts & Christine Audette
- Suzann & Bill Leininger
- Rob & Linda Leiter
- Dan & Jan Lucas
- Paul & Carol Micheletti
- John Mullen
- Catherine Nash
- Joanne Odenthal
- Karl & Laura Olsen
- Sharon & Joel Pankey
- Mary & Alex Pisciotta
- Ann Pogue
- Jim Powers
- Lynne Preisser
- Rob Rhew
- Scott & Carole Rieker
- Liza Rosenberg
- Liz Rozycki
- Ernie Schnepf
- Walt & Marlene Shaw
- David & Noralee Sherwood
- Don Steele
- James & Marie Thayer
- Trejo Family
- Mr. & Mrs. Winfield Wagner

The Biscotti Factor

Ranger Paul Kucharczyk

Being the ranger assigned to the Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch House, one of my concerns is the upkeep and maintenance of this historic structure. I recently attended a four day training on historic adobe structures. Sponsored by California State Parks and held at Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, I am now a mud expert. Much like the Monsanto experience at Disneyland, we became familiar with adobe right down to it's molecular level. Including lectures and practical hands-on experience mixing adobe mud and making adobe blocks, we also attempted repairs to the interior of the Casa de Estudillo.

Sun-dried adobe is the world's oldest building material, going back 8,000 years. More than half the world's population lives in some type of earth building. It's cheap and readily available in many places on earth where there are no alternative materials to choose from. When dry and protected from water, such as arid deserts, hard adobe structures can stand for hundreds, even thousands of years. Where rain and ground moisture are a factor, that hard sun-dried adobe block shares the same fate as a cookie dunked in a cup of coffee! It can crumble and dissolve before your eyes.

Modern materials aren't compatible with adobe when used as a finish coat or for repair. Paint, concrete, and other obvious solutions actually accelerate the disintegration of adobe by trapping moisture between the incompatible layers, causing the clay to crumble. Lime plaster and lime wash are the time tested finish coats, and adobe mud is the only way to repair adobe. These more permeable materials allow the adobe to "breathe," and the recipes are historically accurate.

Stop by and examine the exterior of our historic adobe ranch house. It tells it's own story by the cracks, and the repairs undertaken by seasonal park attendant Ronald Babcock. He is also a graduate of Adobe U.

Get Involved at Black Mtn. Park

John M. Barone

You may have noticed something different about the park if you've visited the park recently. Rangers have installed new six-pack signs in addition to some "Off-road vehicle activity prohibited" and "No illegal dumping" signs along the northern park boundary. The signs seem to be working well except for the 5% S.A.D.I.'s (Selfish And Disobedient Ignorants) who no matter what will always find a way to off-road and dump their trash illegally.

On Feb. 1st, 38 volunteers from the local high school key clubs planted 46 native plants just east of the Black Mountain staging area parking lot. These plants will help restore a previously disturbed area that has been damaged by illegal off-road activity over the years. The recent rains that we have received will help saturate the soil and give the plants a better chance for survival.

Park rangers are working with the National Parks Service, California State Parks, regional park districts, other city agencies, and park user groups to help manage the trail system within the Black Mountain Park boundary. Miners Ridge Loop Trail along with other park trails are becoming more and more popular with the local mountain bike community and park rangers need these users to get more involved in helping us land managers to maintain and protect our trail system if mountain bikers want to continue using the trails. Rangers are currently working with the S.D.M.B.A. (San Diego Mountain Bikers Association) to try and deal with many of these challenging trail issues. We ask local mountain bikers to get involved with the San Diego Mountain Bike Association or call the park rangers directly at (858) 538-8021. Trail volunteers will, learn how to protect their local mountain jewel, help provide a safer trail experience, and gain valuable knowledge regarding the ethics and maintenance of trails.



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

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www.penasquitos.org

to see this newsletter in color,
 to see back issues, and infor-
 mation on wildlife surveys
 and the Tracking Team.

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: Rick Botta, 858.672-0584
 Volunteer Coordinator:
 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: _____ 3/2003

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

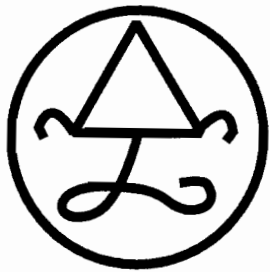
Home Phone _____

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.

May & June 2003
Volume 17, No. 3

New PQ Bloke on the Block



The City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department is proud to announce the appointment of Senior Ranger, Rick Thompson to Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Staff on March 1, 2003. Previously, Rick was assigned to Mission Trails Regional Park for 4 years, with responsibilities including trail design & maintenance, habitat restoration, coordination of volunteers, interpretation, and enforcement. Ranger Thompson developed and coordinated stewardship trail maintenance, habitat restoration, and volunteer patrol programs with the mountain bike, rock climbing, and BMX communities to assist in management and maintenance in the park. Prior to working for the City of San Diego, Rick worked for California State Parks at Torrey Pines State Reserve as the Trail Coordinator and aide to the Resource Ecologist. Ranger Thompson has strong ties with the North County community, and hopes to reestablish working partnerships with local groups. Rick enjoys traveling throughout the Southwest and Central America, with interests in the Anasazi and Mayan cultures.

June 8

Artists & Black Mountain Park

Selena Wilson

Join other artists and myself at 8 a.m., Sunday, June 8 at Black Mountain Open Space Park in Rancho Peñasquitos and express your view of our precious environment with your art. We'll meet at Hilltop Community Park and walk a short distance into the open space from there. Hilltop is found at the end of Oviedo Way, off Black Mountain Road (Thomas Bros. 1189, E2-3). All skill levels are welcome to come and take advantage of the chance to study and portray a beautiful subject.

I'll lend a hand for any technical assistance needed, as well as to provide some background information on the area and its flora/fauna.

The American landscape has long been the subject of many art pieces. Romantic and mysterious, painters have captured the vast prairies and rugged mountain terrain in poetic compositions, immortalizing the beauty. One tends to think of only times past, but what about today's landscape?

The remnant patchwork of native land that is enveloped by human development can be as romantic and mysterious as the unspoiled lands of yesteryear, but how long will they last? In light of our ever changing landscape, it's important to record what parcels of open, undeveloped land that are still available. These are visual histories of what others found here upon settlement, the location that sustained and intrigued them. We all see things differently, and a wonderful way to convey one's own perspective is through

See p. 4 for more

Highlights Inside

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New

Ranching Activities at the Rancho

P.J. Piburn

As part of the Interpretive Planning process, the Poway Grange (part of the Rainbow Valley Grange) will be exhibiting some of their farm animals at the rancho. The children will be practicing their showmanship in preparation for the Del Mar Fair. We expect to have rabbits, goats, a steer and a mule on site. Visitors will be encouraged to ask questions, view and even pet the animals. (No chickens this year due to the Newcastle disease epidemic.)

We will be performing evaluations of the program so please come out participate, and give us your feedback. If this pilot program is successful, we hope to have an ongoing relationship with the Grange to provide ranching interpretation to weekend visitors.

Date: May 31, 2003

Time: 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Place: Adjacent to the barn at the Adobe Ranch House, reached by taking Canyonside Way off Black Mountain Road in Rancho Peñasquitos.

Guided Hikes Good Way to See Wildflowers and Wildlife

With the rains we had the Preserve was closed for several weeks this winter and spring, causing a number of hikes to be cancelled and for many to miss a good wildflower show. With good weather back you still have a chance to see wildflowers. This is also wildlife breeding and birth season. Enjoy the aerial ballets of bird parents with their fledglings as they first take to the sky. Catch a glimpse of mule deer fawns or bobcat kittens and listen for the songs of coyotes this summer. Our late afternoon and dusk walks are best for the mammals, while early morning walks are best for birds.

Wear good hiking boots and bring water & sun protection.

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.**

May

Saturday, May 3

"Arch(aeology) in the Park" is an annual event sponsored by the San Diego County Archaeological Society in cooperation with the Park and Recreation Department's of the City and County of San Diego. The theme of this year's FREE educational family event, Avenues in Archaeology kicks off Archaeology Month in May by being held on Saturday, May 3 at the historic Los Peñasquitos Ranch House County Preserve (north of Mira Mesa Boulevard off Black Mountain Road) from 10 AM to 3 PM. As an educational event, there will be displays by various archaeology firms, university/college Anthropology Depts., and also agencies to show the public and potential students of anthropol-

ogy what archaeology is and how to get involved in the discipline as a career or avocation.

Scheduled events include tours of the adobe, City College students excavating on the knoll, hands-on activities for children, a stone tool-making demonstration, and a mock excavation for the kids; snacks will be available for sale. Visitors are encouraged to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy under the trees.

Call 858-538-0935 or e-mail: sdcas@email.com

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sunday, May 4, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. See wildflowers & 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.**

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

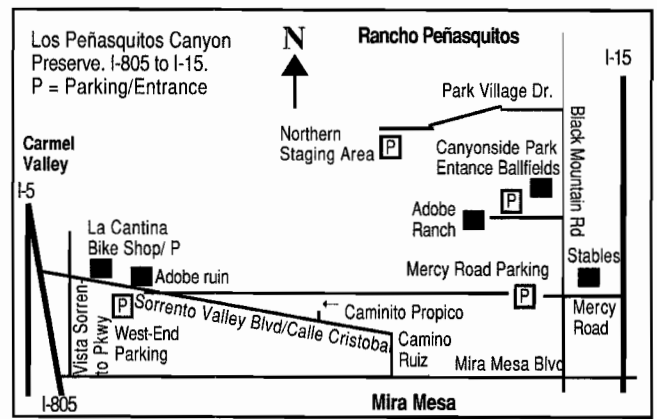
Saturday, May 10, 8 – 9 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. CLearn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic 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.**

Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sunday, May 11, 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.**

Peñasquitos Preserve Citizens' Advisory Comm.

Thursday, May 15, 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.**

Black Mountain Trail Work Party / Peñasquitos

Saturday, May 17, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1 or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.**

Nature Walk to Walden Pond & Waterfall

Sunday, May 18, 1-3 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk onto the Del Mar Mesa, to Walden Pond and the Preserve's waterfall. Good wildflower walk. Meet at the end of Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and water. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7) or call 858.484.3219 for recorded directions.**

Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee.

Monday, May 19, 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.**

Black Mountain Nature Walk

Saturday, May 24, 9 – 11 a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1 or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.**

Herbology Hike

Sunday, May 25, 4–5:30 p.m. Learn to identify the plants, trees, and shrubs of the canyon. Find out how they were used by

(Calendar cont'd)

Native Americans, Hispanics, and Euroamericans. Meet at the Sorrento Valley Meeting Area at 4206 Sorrento Valley Road, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **Thomas Guide p. 1208. Or call 858.484.3219** for recorded directions.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting

Tues., May 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.

June**Nature Walk from Mercy Road**

Sunday, June 8, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. See wild-flowers & 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.

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Saturday, June 14, 8 – 9 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. 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**.

Black Mountain Trail Work Party / Peñasquitos

Saturday, June 21, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hikin boots and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Nature Walk to Walden Pond & Waterfall

Saturday, June 21, 3-5 p.m. Join Pat

Watkins for a moderately paced walk onto the Del Mar Mesa, to Walden Pond and the Preserve's waterfall. Good wildflower walk. Meet at the end of Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and water. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7)** or call 858.484.3219 for recorded directions.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting

Tues., June 24, 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.

Black Mountain Nature Walk

Saturday, June 28, 9 – 11 a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hikin boots and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Herbology Hike

Sunday, June 29, 5–6:30 p.m. Learn to identify the plants, trees, and shrubs of the canyon. Find out how they were used by Native Americans, Hispanics, and Euroamericans. Meet at the West End Parking-Staging area, 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

Sunday, June 8, 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**.

DIRECTIONS**Black Mountain Open Space Park, 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 hangling 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.**

Park Village Drive Meeting 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 and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7).**

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.**

Wildlife Surveys & Tracking Events

Here is the schedule of upcoming San Diego Tracking Team (SDTT) Wildlife Tracking Events produced in conjunction with the Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve Tracking Team (LPCPTT)

Next Wildlife Surveys

Spring: April 20 - May 30

Wildlife surveys are conducted across San Diego County in each season. Volunteers who have attended any of the offered trainings are eligible to assist in the survey teams. If you have previously taken the one-day Volunteer Training, or any of the weekend Tracker/Naturalist trainings you can sign up for survey teams by calling Patrick. Otherwise sign-up for one of the training mentioned in this schedule. Contact for information and sign-up: Patrick at 760 471-9197.

Tracker/Naturalist Weekend Classes

Beginning Weekends — May 17-18

Intermediate Weekend — June 21-22

Advanced Weekend — Sept. 27-28

Contact for registration and information: Rick at 858 672-0584.

The Beginning Class is devoted to developing tracking and awareness skills, with emphasis on wildlife physiology and habits, how to move in nature, and techniques for recognizing habitat and associated flora and fauna. 8-8 on Saturday and 8-4 on Sunday.

The Intermediate Class delves into the finer details of tracking, awareness, and philosophy. 8-5 on Saturday and 8-4 on Sunday.

The Advanced Class is devoted to in depth track analysis and interpretation. 8-5 on Saturday and 8-4 on Sunday.

There is a small fee for each of the three classes.

Tracking Walks for Everyone

Dates: Second Saturday of every month at 8 a.m. at both Beginning and Intermediate wildlife tracking levels. Just meet Lee and Uli at the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve ranch-house. No sign-up required.

Volunteer Activities

See our calendar on pp. 2-4 for details on the following volunteer opportunities. Individuals can just show up. Groups should call Mike Kelly at 858-566-6489 to sign up.

Endangered Plant Surveys depend on weather! Call Mike Kelly at 858.566.6489 to volunteer.

Trails Work

Peñasquitos Canyon Call Ranger
Gina Brown at 858.538.8066
Black Mountain. May 17, June 21.
8 a.m.- noon.

Arch in the Park Avenues in Archaeology

"Arch(aeology) in the Park" is an annual event sponsored by the San Diego County Archaeological Society in cooperation with the Park and Recreation Department's of the City and County of San Diego.

The theme of this year's FREE educational family event, Avenues in Archaeology kicks off Archaeology Month in May by being held on Saturday, May 3 at the historic Los Penasquitos Ranch House County Preserve (north of Mira Mesa Boulevard off Black Mountain Road) from 10 AM to 3 PM. As an educational event, there will be displays by various archaeology firms, university/college Anthropology Depts., and also agencies to show the public and potential students of anthropology what archaeology is and how to get involved in the discipline as a career or avocation.

Scheduled events include tours of the adobe, City College students excavating on the knoll, hands-on activities for children, a stone tool-making demonstration, and a mock excavation for the kids; snacks will be available for sale. Visitors are encouraged to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy under the trees.

Call 858-538-0935 or e-mail: sdcas@email.com

(Art cont'd)

art. A painting or drawing can be more informative than a photograph. The artist has license to distort reality, putting emphasis on what he/she finds most fascinating in the image.

.Bring your own materials (sketch pad, pencil, pastels, canvas . . .) and don't forget sunscreen, hat and water for yourself!

My phone number is 858-672-6163, if any one wants to call for more information or to rsvp

(Symbolism cont'd)

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 sarothroides*) 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.

The Symbolism of Flowers

Will Bowen, Ph.D.

[With a great flower show underway we thought it appropriate to reprint this article by Will.]

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!"

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



Adolphia californica
(Calif. spine bush).
Visit our web site
(www.penasquitos.org)
to see this picture in
color.

6 Tree Planting at Canyonside Stables

Maryanne Martone

Volunteers from Canyonside Stables spent part of Superbowl weekend planting trees around the Canyonside property on January 25th. Canyonside Stables borders the east end of the Los Peñasquitos Preserve and is home to the historic Mohnike Adobe. This activity was supported by a community tree planting grant from the National 4H Council underwritten by the Deft Corporation, awarded to the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) of Los Peñasquitos Preserve.

The event was organized by the CAC and Mindy Kane, a boarder at Canyonside. Mindy's daughter Shannon served as the volunteer youth coordinator. Over 25 boarders, their friends and families and Canyonside employees participated in the event. They planted a total of 35 native species, including sycamore, coast live oak, cottonwood and white alder. The decision was made to go with native trees so that they can eventually survive typical San Diego conditions without additional care.

The date was planned to coincide with the rainy season but instead occurred at the end of a very hot and dry January. So the volunteers deserve extra kudos for digging in hard ground on such a hot day! The organizers wish to extend special thanks to Mike Kelly of the Friends of Peñasquitos for donating the oaks and cages and for providing valuable planting advice and also Ranger Gina Brown for delivering a load of mulch. And a special thanks goes to the youth volunteers: Shannon and Jason Kane, Rachel and Erica Goossens and Elizabeth and Daniella Mercado, for their outstanding efforts. The volunteers continue to care for the trees and are happy to report that the bare sticks planted in January are all sprouting leaves, supporting new growth and actually beginning to look like trees. In a few years, horses, riders and visitors to the ranch and those passing by on the cross county trail will be able to enjoy the beauty and shade resulting from their efforts.



Part of the tree planting crew. Left to Right: Jason Kane, Gunnar Martone, Don Kane, Shannon Kane, Mindy Kane, Rachel Goossens, Fred Goossens, Joan Goossens and Ella Hahn.

(Symbolism cont'd)

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."

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 hookerii*) 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.

See p. 7 for more

Black Mountain Park

Lori Charett, Sr. Park Ranger

Our Loss, Mission Trails' Gain

Congratulations to John Barone for his recent promotion to Senior Park Ranger. For the last year, John has been assigned to Black Mountain, Crest Canyon, San Pasqual, and Mt. Woodson Open Space Parks. During this time, he worked hard, showed great enthusiasm and dedication to the improvement of these open space treasures. John was instrumental in enhancing Black Mountain Park by working with volunteers to enhance the Miners Ridge Loop Trail, removing illegal dumps, blocking off-road/illegal trails and installing signs and serving the community within Black Mountain, among meeting many other challenges.

John has been re-assigned to Mission Trails Regional Park. So luckily he is still in our Open Space Division! We will miss him in our parks and we wish him much success in his new assignment.

Many Thanks to SDMBA

I wish to recognize Dave Wenk with the San Diego Mountain Biking Association (SDMBA) for his dedication and hard work in enhancing our trails at Black Mountain Park. Dave came on the scene last year and showed great enthusiasm in serving as our Black Mountain Park Citizen Advisory Committee's liaison to SDMBA. Dave has been attending our committee meetings and has spent numerous weekends in Black Mountain helping in Park cleanup or trail maintenance projects. He has even gone so far as developing a plan and mapping out our trails with GPS, logging the areas that need improvement and recruiting volunteers to help in our efforts to make the Miners Ridge Loop trail more user friendly. Furthermore, Dave just announced that his application for a \$500.00 grant award to enhance Black Mountain Park has been awarded.

Park Ranger staff recently attended a very valuable trail training seminar organized by the SDMBA for land managers and trail enthusiasts. Members of the International Mountain Biking Association Trail Care Crew

(IMBA) conducted an excellent training in trail design, construction and maintenance followed by a visit came to Black Mtn. Park to evaluate the Miners Ridge Loop Trail and provide expert recommendations. On behalf of the Park & Recreation Department, thank Dave and the IMBA staff for their time and expertise.

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who has volunteered their time, contributed their labor and skills to our parks, we can't do it without you!

If you haven't had the opportunity to reap the rewards of your labor or just can't get enough of trail work, please join us for the next scheduled trail project. Wear sturdy shoes, work clothes and bring water. Meet at the parking lot.

Event Schedule Changes

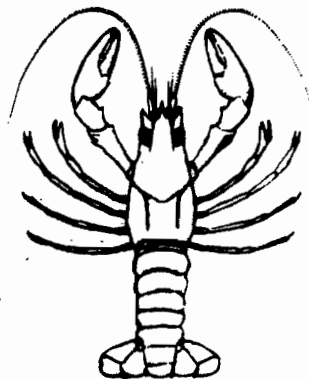
Due to our Ranger shortage now, we won't be having the habitat restoration work parties, but will continue the trails work parties and the nature walks, but on different days than in past months.

Trail Restoration Work Party: third Saturday of every month from 8 a.m. - noon (May 17th, June 21st).

Nature Walks: fourth Saturday of every month at 9 a.m.

Both meet at the Black Mtn Park parking lot. Wear sturdy shoes, bring water. Hike is moderately paced. Rain cancels.

If you have any questions, please contact Sr. Park Ranger Lori Charett at 858-538-8082. See you on the trail.



(Symbolism cont'd)

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."

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 of 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

See p. 4 for more



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
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 mation on wildlife surveys
 and the Tracking Team.

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: Rick Botta, 858.672-0584
 Volunteer Coordinator:
 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: _____ 5/2003

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

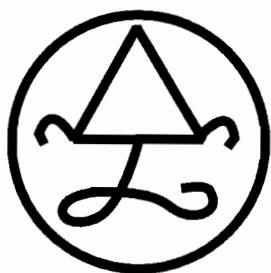
Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

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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.

July & August 2003
Volume 17, No. 4

San Diego a 'Hotspot' Biodiversity and Peñasquitos Preserve

Mike Kelly, Conservation Chair

You're probably familiar with the word "biodiversity." It gets used a lot in discussions of habitat loss and preservation, and endangered species loss and protection. What does it mean for Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and for San Diego?

The table¹ in the box to the right lists the plant and animal species, habitats, climates, and soils for the San Diego/Northern Baja California region. More plants and animals live in our bioregion than any other area of similar size in North America. This diversity is one of the things that makes nature in our region so interesting. But this rich biodiversity is at risk from sprawling development. And the explosive population growth that drove development in the last decades of the 20th century is projected to continue, pushing San Diego from 2.6 million people at the turn of the century to 3.8 million by 2020.² Our region is part of what is being called an "extinction crisis" by Conservation International³ (CI) and many other organizations and scientists. The founder of the relatively new scientific discipline of Conservation Biology, Michael Soulé, says ". . . we're precipitating the greatest wave of extinctions since the dinosaurs."⁴

Biodiversity Hotspots

Beginning in 1988 Norman Myers, a British ecologist and author of *The Sinking Ark*, worked with some 100 other conservation scientists and CI to

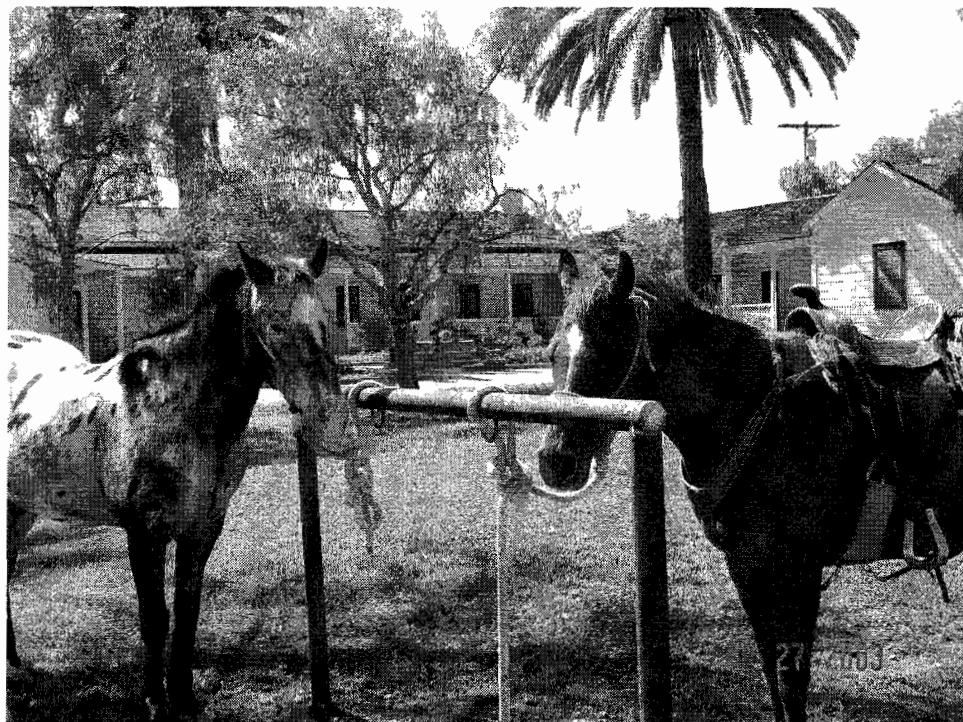
See p. 4 for more

Diversity of Life

Plants	2,000+ species
Insets	20,000+ species
Spiders	22,000+species
Amphibians	11 species
Reptile	62 species
Birds	482+ species
Mammals	146+ species (includes marine species)
Rodents	60 species
Bats	28 species
Climates	13 zones
Soils Series	53 (divided into 244 categories)

Highlights Inside

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Dr. Marvin Gerst's horses tied to one of two new hitch rails installed at the historic ranch house. Dr. Gerst donated the materials and Supervising County Ranger Paul Kucharczyk provided the labor and supervision. Dr. Gerst is a candidate member of the Citizens' Advisory Committee for the Preserve. He previously served on the committee in the 1980s and owns property in Carmel Valley, adjacent to the expanding Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve..

Wildlife Time

Early morning, dusk and after dark walks are the best time to see and hear our newest wildlife additions, whether they be mule deer fawns, coyote pups, fledgling hawks, or bobcat kittens.

Wear good hiking boots and bring water & sun protection. Bring a flashlight if you're joining one of the evening walks.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

Every Saturday & Sunday

San Diego County Park ranch house docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa María 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.**

July

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Saturday, July 12, 8 - 9 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. 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.**

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sunday, July 13, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. See wild-flowers & 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.**

Peñasquitos Preserve Citizens' Advisory Comm.

Thursday, July 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.**

Black Mountain Trail Work Party / Peñasquitos

Saturday, July 19, 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hikin boots and bring water and sun protection. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Birds and Beasts of López Canyon

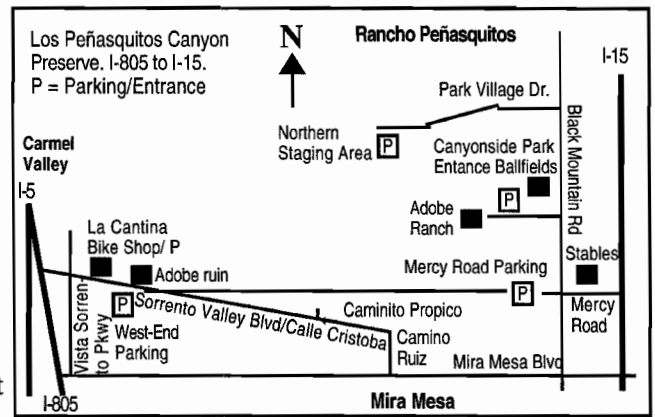
Saturday, July 19, 4-6 p.m. Join Friends' president Brian Swanson for a late afternoon walk to look for hard-to-find summer visitors like blue grosbeaks and chats, and the many raptors which call this canyon home. Brian will also share the history of the old López homestead. Meet at the west end parking staging area. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

West End Night Hike

Saturday, July 19, 8-9:30 p.m. Enjoy a hike in the canyon after dark. Look for deer, coyote, owls, and bats. Admire the stars, constellations, and moon. Learn about how Native Americans and the ancients viewed the night sky. Meet at the Sorrento Valley Meeting Area at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road. Going east turn left into the last parking lot on the left. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee

Monday, July 21, 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.**



Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, July 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.

Night Wildlife Walk to Waterfall

Thursday, July 24, 8-10 p.m. Join Mike Kelly for a moderately paced walk to the waterfall and back, about 4 miles. Good chance to see deer and other wildlife. Meet at the kiosk at the intersection of Camino Ruiz & Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots, bug repellent, and bring water & a flashlight. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Black Mountain Nature Walk

Saturday, July 26, 9-11 a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Camp Kearney Hospital Dump Site & History.

Saturday, July 26, 7:30 p.m. Historian Susan Walter will deliver this Mary Ward Memorial Lecture & slide show, part of a summer evening lecture series that has become a tradition at the historic ranch house. Free to the public. People are invited to bring a picnic dinner to enjoy before the talk. Bring a folding chair, a jacket, bug repellent, and a flashlight. 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.**

(Calendar cont'd)

August

Birds of Summer

Saturday, August 2, 7–9 a.m. Join Friends' president Brian Swanson to see Birds when they're most active, in the early morning, after breaking their overnight fast. Early morning is often good for seeing other wildlife as well. Meet in the paved parking lot just east of the ranch house, off Canyonside Park Drive.

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Saturday, August 9, 8–9 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. 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**.

Night Wildlife Walk to Waterfall

Sunday, August 10, 7:30–9:30 p.m. Join Mike Kelly for a moderately paced walk to the waterfall and back, about 4 miles. Good chance to see deer and other wildlife. Meet at the kiosk at the intersection of Camino Ruiz & Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots, bug repellent, and bring water & a flashlight. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.

Black Mountain Trail Work Party / Peñasquitos

Saturday, August 16, 8 a.m. –12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

West End Night Hike

Saturday, August 16, 8–9:30 p.m. Enjoy a hike in the canyon after dark. Look for deer, coyote, owls, and bats. Admire the stars, constellations, and moon. Learn about how Native Americans and the ancients viewed the night sky. Meet at the Sorrento Valley Meeting Area at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley

Road. Going east turn left into the last parking lot on the left. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

Peñasquitos Volunteer Projects

Sunday, August 17 and Friday, August 22, 9–4 (or any part thereof!) join the boy scouts in helping cleanup invasive weeds (Giant reed and Cape ivy) and trash from lagoon sites. Meet at the corner of Roselle and Estuary streets in Sorrento Valley. Call Mike Kelly for more details at 858.566.6489.

Black Mountain Nature Walk

Saturday, August 23, 9–11 a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Archaeological Discoveries in the Santa Maria Valley (Ramona)

Saturday, August 23, 7:30 p.m. Archaeologist Richard Carrico will present this slide show lecture as part of a summer evening lecture series that has become a tradition at the historic ranch house. Free to the public. People are invited to bring a picnic dinner to enjoy before the talk. Bring a folding chair, a jacket, bug repellent, and a flashlight. 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**.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, August 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.

DIRECTIONS

Black Mountain Open Space Park, 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**.

Park Village Drive Meeting 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 and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7)**.

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 Sorrento Valley Road. **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**.



Coast horned lizard. This MSCP covered species is in trouble from development of its habitat, over collection by the public, and loss of its main food source, the native harvester ant. This latter is being killed off and displaced by the exotic Argentine ant which is not edible to the lizard.

identify 25 biodiversity hotspots in the world. In an article "Biodiversity hot spots for conservation priorities,"⁵ Myers laid out a strategy for focusing our limited conservation resources on these hot spots where conservation dollars would go toward protecting more plants, animals and habitats at one time. The 25 worldwide hotspots identified by Myer and CI cover less than 2 percent of the Earth's land area, but contain 44 percent of the earth's vascular plant species and almost 40 percent of four important vertebrate groups. More species per dollar can be protected with the hotspot strategy.

Our bioregion was identified as one of these 25 hot spots worldwide. Why did we make this list?

Myer and Conservation International used Endemism and the degree of threat were the two key criteria used to identify hotspots. Endemism is having species of plants and animals found nowhere else. The more endemics a given bioregion has the higher it would rank as a hotspot. Endemic plant species were used as opposed to endemic animals since plants are the basis for most other life. The degree of threat is the extent to which loss of habitats, plants, and animals has already occurred in a region. Hotspots generally have lost at least 70 percent of their natural vegetation and the worst hotspots have already lost 90 percent.

San Diego's losses: how we measure up

While we're accustomed to thinking of big time habitat losses occurring in the world's tropical climates such as

the rainforests, our own losses here in San Diego are sobering. Widely accepted estimates of our losses are 90% of our riparian (streams and their associated greenbelt) areas, 95% of our native grasslands, all of our coastal dunes, about 70% of our coastal sage scrub, more than 90% of Maritime succulent scrub and Southern Maritime chaparral, and 97% of our vernal pools^{6,7}.

On a species level, we have some "200 plant and animal species that are federally and/or state-listed as endangered, threatened or rare; proposed or candidates for listing; or otherwise considered sensitive."⁶

As you can see, San Diego fits the criteria for a biodiversity hotspot and is a real part of the extinction crisis underway.

Where are the threats to this biodiversity coming from and why should we care?

Causes of biodiversity decline

Historically, farming and grazing were responsible for much of the loss of native habitats. In much of the tropical world, this is still the case. In recent decades, however, it's development — residential, commercial, and industrial — that is responsible for our loss of habitat.

But there are other factors causing a conversion of native habitats to non-native habitats with a consequent loss of species diversity. These include explosive invasions of exotic plants and animals. For example, a single non-native weed such as Yellow star thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*) has taken over more than 10 million acres of California natural and ranchlands, replacing many other species that once occurred there.

Something as subtle as nitrogen pollution of our soils occurs when vehicle pollutants become airborne, carried aloft by wind and then deposited downwind on these soils. This excess nitrogen can't be used by most of our native plants, but do promote exotic, invasive grasses from the Mediterrane-

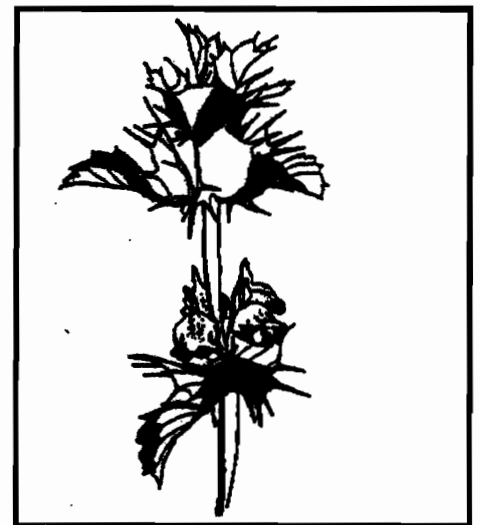
an, which in turn promote a too frequent fire schedule that destroys native coastal sage scrub habitat. Other climate changes are also causing additional stresses to native habitats and species, many already on the brink.

Why be concerned over these losses?

There are practical, moral, and aesthetic reasons we should be concerned about losing our biodiversity. Only in the past decade have we seen the concept of ecosystem services reach the radar screen of the scientific and conservation communities in a big way, although it has yet to become part of the general public's consciousness. Natural ecosystems filter pollutants from our waters, mitigate floods and droughts, moderate weather, improve our air quality and provide animal and plant foods for our sustenance. Characterized as "nature's basket of goods and services," a loss of biodiversity can reduce the productivity of these natural systems, of this "basket."

I have personal experience with such a loss. As a young child back in Massachusetts, I didn't know it, but my generation would be the last to harvest chestnuts from nearby woods. Chestnuts were once the most important hardwood species in the eastern

See p. 5 for more



San Diego thornmint (*Acanthomintha ilicifolia*). Found in Peñasquitos Canyon and other locations, an adequate number of populations appear to have been conserved. A major threat, however, comes from invasive weeds.

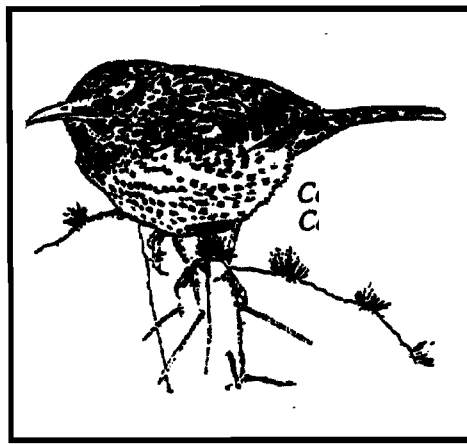
(Biodiversity cont'd)

U.S., occurring in forest size stands. But disaster struck when Chestnut blight (*Cryphonectria parasitica*), killed off the entire national population of mature American chestnut trees⁸. It is only found as a minor component of the understory of our forests, occurring only as sprouts from old stumps. This loss rippled through the natural ecosystems of the east as well as our human economy. Chestnut trees provided tannin, food, and timber for centuries before their loss. The chestnut crop (hard mast) was a predictable annual crop that was critical for wildlife. The trees that came in their place don't provide this reliable or abundant a crop. Historical accounts clearly document wildlife was much more abundant before the blight destroyed the chestnut. Many similar examples could be cited. Too often we are blasé about the loss of components of the complex web of life we still know so little about.

Aesthetically, how important is the singing of birds to you? If you live on Guam, you can answer this question from personal experience. You don't hear birds singing there now due to the introduction of the exotic brown tree snake to an island that never had a snake species. It decimated the bird populations. It would bother me, how about you?

Morally, and I'll put this personally, I believe our human species has an obligation to protect the diversity of life on our planet. As the most intelligent species on the planet, a self-conscious one at that, and the one most responsible for modifying this planet — often to the detriment of natural ecosystems and species — it's our responsibility to protect our rich biodiversity and the web of life that sustains all of us.

There's another reason to be concerned about losing biodiversity and, perhaps surprisingly to many, it's our own mental and physical health! The much celebrated scientist and author, E.O. Wilson, penned a book titled *Bio-phililia*. In it he makes a case for the need of our human species to remain connected to the natural world. We evolved with and as a part of nature for millions of years and a need for this connection appears to be "hard-



Coastal cactus wren. This bird is in deep trouble. It appears not enough of its habitat is left or conserved to ensure its future existence.

wired" into our very being. Only in recent decades have we become increasingly disconnected from nature with a consequence of a sense of unease and alienation. Scientific experiments have actually been done that demonstrate this affinity for nature in a variety of ways. Apparently, our affinity for asphalt and buildings isn't strong enough to cancel out this affinity for nature.

Personally, I know that my #1 antidote for the stresses of modern life is to get outdoors and immerse myself in our local nature. Even if I'm doing heavy duty bush-whacking plant surveys or restoration work that physically exhausts me, I know that I've forgotten whatever nonsense was stressing me out before my outing and that I have a deep sense of satisfaction when the day is over. Biophilia? You bet.

What is being done – can be done – to protect our biodiversity?

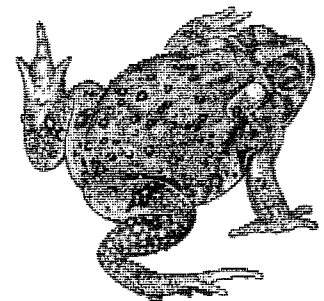
Despite my not suprisingly 'doom and gloom' introduction to this crisis of biodiversity we can sound a positive note. Internationally, nationally, and locally, there are many efforts underway to protect the biodiversity of our planet. Let's focus on our local efforts.

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve is part of a plan to conserve as much of our biodiversity as possible in the face of this crisis. In the City of San Diego, this plan is called the Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP). The County itself, and different jurisdictions within the County, have developed or are currently developing varia-

tions on this plan with somewhat different names (not important). The plan is to acquire and protect enough open space lands within the various cities and the unincorporated areas of the County to conserve the majority of our remaining at-risk habitats and plants and animal species. The MSCP began with existing open space parks, including Peñasquitos Canyon, Mission Trails, Black Mountain, San Dieguito River Park, Tecolote Canyon, Marian Bear Park, and Rose Canyon Open Space, and other city owned natural lands such as those owned by the Water Dept. The concept of the MSCP is to add additional core preserve lands and connect up as many of these core preserves as possible with wildlife/trail linkages or corridors. The flip side of the MSCP design was that all large scale development would take place outside the MSCP.

These various habitat plans were negotiated with the state and federal resource agencies and commit the local jurisdictions, as well as the state and federal agencies, to buying hundreds of millions of dollars of new open space lands. This process is well underway in the City of San Diego and parts of the County. The plans also commit these same jurisdictions to actively managing these lands. In some cases this means restoring land degraded by centuries of grazing or agriculture. The plans also require regular monitoring of many of the endangered

See p. 6 for more



Arroyo toads are found along the San Luis Rey, Sweetwater, and San Dieguito rivers, among other areas. Loss of its habitat, sand mining in its area, and road crossing mortality all negatively impact this species. Toad undercrossings anyone (they do it in England)?

(Biodiversity cont'd)

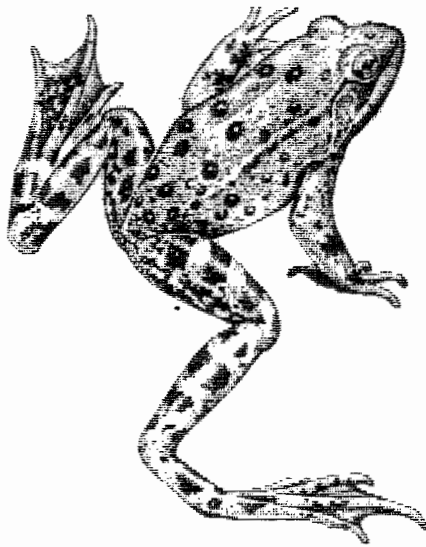
plants and animals, even entire habitat types, to establish baseline data and recognize trends, especially those that might require active managerially intervention. Such a species is the Least bell's vireo, a small songbird that makes its home in our riparian (streamside) corridors. Giant reed (*Arundo donax*), a 30 foot tall invasive grass and the Brown cowbird both negatively impact populations of the vireo and require intervention.

Giant reed invades riparian systems and displaces the cottonwood, willow, and mulefat species that support the vireo. Hence, removing this grass has become an important management tool for improving vireo populations. Cowbirds are nest parasites that negatively impact vireos by laying their eggs in vireo nests, sometime pushing vireo eggs out. In any case, the cowbird young are bigger than the vireo young, often crowd the latter out of the nest and receive the food meant for the vireo chicks. Management intervention in this case takes the form of trapping cowbirds in vireo habitat areas.

The role of volunteers

Environmental groups split over the MSC and related plans. All saw shortcomings in the plans, including habitat types or species that were not adequately protected. Some viewed the plans as much better than the previous lack of a comprehensive plan and the piecemeal, fragmented open space system. Others thought that species by species protection under the Endangered Species Act was a better way to go. Lawsuits were even filed against the plans. The Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve (Friends) and the Endangered Habitats League (EHL) were among those groups supporting the plans and their implementation despite their shortcomings. Even some opposed to the plans final form are now working to improve them and fighting for effective implementation of them.

Volunteers played an important role in the design and development of these plans and now have an important role to play in implementing them. Non-profits such as the San Dieguito River Park Conservancy focus on acquiring



Red legged frog. This amphibian appears to be extinct in San Diego County and in steep decline elsewhere in the state. Loss of habitat, pollution, and exotics such as crayfish are all implicated in its decline.

new land parcels critical to the design of their park. They build popular support for the park plans and help raise private as well as public funds to buy these lands.

Volunteers such as the Friends play a somewhat different role. Our land battles are largely over and our parks in the north city (outside of San Dieguito) are almost built out. Our focus has shifted to helping to manage the natural and cultural resources in our parks. In fact, the City's MSCP calls out the Friends work on invasive weed species as a model for the park system. Many non-profit volunteer groups now routinely carry out invasive weed control in many parks.

The Friends also began wildlife tracking surveys to acquire data and trends on our wildlife and the utility of various wildlife linkages. This work is now going countywide with new tracking teams forming in other open space areas. Endangered plant surveys have been a staple of volunteer work in Peñasquitos, Carmel Mountain, Del Mar Mesa, and Black Mountain for many years. Data from these wildlife and plant surveys are now included in major management documents and have already helped shape policy decisions within the MSCP.

The Friends and other non-profits also help to protect and restore cultural

resources, whether it be the old stagecoach road that carried the first trans-continental mail from San Diego through Peñasquitos east or the restoration of the Sykes Adobe at Lake Hodges by the San Dieguito folks.

Some of us are working to increase the role of the non-profit Friends groups, conservancies, and land trusts and their many enthusiastic and talented volunteers in the future implementation of these habitat plans. Why not join us?

References

- ¹Multiple Species Conservation Program Outreach Committee. March 2003. Diversity of Life.
- ²Ibid. SANDAG (San Diego Assoc. of Governments) forecast.
- ³Conservation International. www.conservation.org/xp/CIWEB/strategies/hotspots/hotspots.xml
- ⁴Sierra. July/August 2003, p. 46.
- ⁵NATURE. Feb. 24, 2000, Vol. 403, No. 6772, pp. 853ff.
- ⁶Multiple Species Conservation Program. August 1988. City of San Diego.
- ⁷Oberbauer, T. 1990, as reported in "Environmental Assessment Proposed Vernal Pools Stewardship Project." April 1997. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Portland, Oregon.
- ⁸Campbell, F. and Schlarbaum, S. 1994. Fading Forests: North American Trees and the threat of Exotic Pests. Natural Resources Defense Council.

To learn more about these habitat plans, visit the City of San Diego and County of San Diego web sites. Maps are also posted there.



Mountain lions are another species covered under the MSCP.

Notes

Tracking Team & Wildlife Surveys

There are no wildlife surveys scheduled for July or August. To get up-to-date information about the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve or the new San Diego Tracking Team trainings and surveys, visit the tracking team's web site at www.sdtt.org.

Garden Hoses Needed

If you have old garden hoses you don't need anymore — even leaky ones — we can use them for our restoration work. Give Mike Kelly a call at 858.566.6489 or email mkellysd@aol.com. We'll use these to run water to restoration sites.

Stagecoach Committee

The Stagecoach Committee will begin meeting again, probably in September. An effort is underway county-wide to mobilize various groups in support of the 150th anniversary of the first transcontinental mail delivery, which of course, was delivered by the "Jackass Mail" out of San Diego. Other historic trails will be part of the commemoration. Our Peñasquitos stagecoach committee will focus on continuing to document Peñasquitos' part in this and strive for historic designations, both local and national, for the portions of our trail still in existence. This documentation will also help in preserving sections like the old spur to Poway which recently suffered some erosional damage. Call Mike Kelly at 858.566.6489 or email mkellysd@aol.com to put your name on the list for notification of the next meeting.

Friends: planning for the next decade

As President Brian Swanson reported in our March 2003 newsletter, the Friends are rethinking our priorities for our next ten years. Frankly, we need some rejuvenation and redirection! You can help us by communicating your ideas on what the Friends can do that would interest you and your family here in our north city parks. Contact Brian Swanson at BSwan-son@sempra.com

Volunteers Help Finish Trans County Trail



Senior Rangers Bill Lawrence (center) and Rick Thompson (right) recognize the efforts of volunteer Denis Driscoll at the Dedication Ceremony for the Trans County Trail on National Trails Day. The Trans County Trail is a trail system that will extend from Torrey Pines State Park east through Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, east into the mountains, and end up in Anza Borrego State Park. Three bridges and more than a mile of new trail were recently completed in an effort that involved many hundreds of volunteer hours. The trail now connects east from the equestrian center at Mercy and Black Mountain Road under I-15 where connections can be made to the Sabre Springs trail system.

Welcome New Members

It's been a while since we recognized our new members. Here they are from the past year.

Judy Alvarez
Mary Mohnike Brown
George & Benita Gray
Terry Hunefeld
Mary Morrison
Scott Murray
Rasmus Family
Lisa Ross
Anthony & Rebecca Wood

See you on the trail!

Volunteer Activities

Boyscouts Invite You to Join in Restoration Project

Scripps Ranch Troop 663 invites you to join them in a project to restore several sites in Peñasquitos Lagoon Sunday, August 17 and Friday, August 22. The scouts are organizing an effort to remove two highly invasive weeds, Giant reed (*Arundo donax*) and Cape ivy (*Deleria odorata*) from Peñasquitos Lagoon sites and trash accumulated from winter storms. The projects will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. to allow volunteers to come for a couple of hours or for the whole day! For more info call Mike Kelly at 858.566.6489.



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

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to see back issues, and infor-
mation on wildlife surveys
and the Tracking Team.

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: Rick Botta, 858.672-0584
Volunteer Coordinator:
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: _____ 7/2003

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

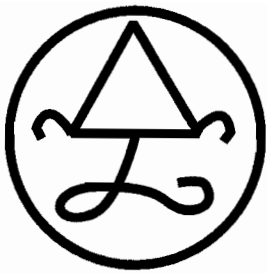
Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

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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. 2003
Volume 17, No. 5

Black Mountain Volunteers

Ranger Tom Miller

On June 14th of this year, I was privileged to be a part of an Eagle Scout project led by Jeffrey Black on Black Mountain. He had recruited 16 other scouts and volunteers to install a peeler pole fence (*see photo below*). Jeffrey's purpose of this project was to "construct a barrier to prevent off-road vehicle damage in Black Mountain Park." He had planned every detail and had obtained the necessary approvals and materials for the project. The boys worked over six hours straight and didn't stop until everything was finished. Altogether, Jeffrey and his scouts had put in 113 hours. It was a great experience working with them.

There have been other groups that have done volunteer work on Black Mountain. Most notably the Black Mountain Latter Day Saints Church, Key Club, Rotary Club, Mountain Biking Assoc., and some outstanding individuals who have shown up on the 3rd Saturday of every month to do trail work.

Recently I met with 5 other Eagle scouts in regard to new projects on the Miner's Ridge Loop and Canyon Rim Trail. It was exciting to see their enthusiasm and to realize the long term improvements that will be accomplished. I'm looking forward to seeing all of these happen as soon as possible.

Volunteers have always made a tremendous contribution to our Parks and Recreation program. And now with proposed cuts in our City of San Diego budget, they are more important than ever. There are major projects that would not happen if it wasn't for the participation of volunteers. Thank you all for your deep commitment and willingness to help out.

If you or your organization is looking for an opportunity to join in and participate in a volunteer project, call 858-538-8021 for more information.

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Trail Closure

The Trans County Trail on the wouth side of Peñasquitos Creek from the equestrian center east to I-15 will be closed temporarily, from Sept. 2 to Nov. 30. The closure is necessary because the Metropolitan Wastewater Dept. will be cleaning and repairing the sewer line to avoid future spills.

Check in with the the Metropolitan Wastewater Dept. at 858.292.6484 for more information or to confirm the re-opening of the trail.



Transition Time

As we enter September we enter the time of transition, as summer stubbornly hangs on with episodic heat waves, but evenings' quick cooling down presages the inevitability of the coming fall. Early morning, late afternoon, dusk and evening walks are still the best bet temperature wise.

Wear good hiking boots and bring water & sun protection. Bring a flashlight if you're joining one of the dusk or evening walks.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour Every Saturday & Sunday

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa María 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.**

September

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Saturday, Sept. 13, 8 - 9 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. CLearn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. 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.**

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sunday, Sept. 14, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced

nature walk. See wildflowers & 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.**

Del Mar Mesa & Waterfall Walk

Sunday, Sept. 14, 3-5 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk up on the Del Mar Mesa, then on to Walden Pond and the Waterfall. Meet at the end of Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and water. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7)** or call 858.484.3219 for recorded directions.

Peñasquitos Preserve Citizens' Advisory Comm.

Thursday, Sept. 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.**

Black Mountain Trail Work Party / Peñasquitos

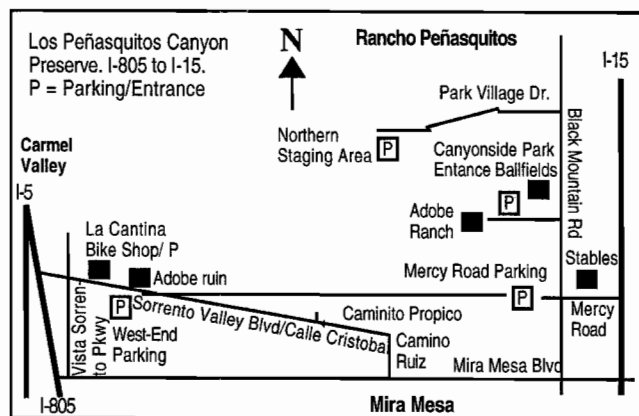
Saturday, Sept. 20, 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee

Mon., Sept. 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.**

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting

Wed., Sept. 24, 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.

Night Wildlife Walk

Thurs., Sept. 11, 7-9 p.m. Join Mike Kelly for a moderately paced walk, about 4 miles. Good chance to see deer and other wildlife. Meet at the kiosk at the intersection of Camino Ruiz & Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots, bug repellent, and bring water & a flashlight. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Black Mountain Nature Walk

Sat., Sept. 27, 9-11 a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

The Moche "Giants" of Peru.

Sat., Sept. 27, 7:30 p.m. USD Anthropology professor Alana Cordy-Collins, PhD will present a slide show on the discover of giant mummies in the deserts of Peru. Cordy-Collins work was featured in a recent National Geographic. This lecture is part of a summer evening lecture series that has become a tradition at the historic ranch house. Free to the public. People are invited to bring a picnic dinner to enjoy before the talk. Bring a folding chair, a jacket, bug repellent, and a flashlight. 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.**

(Calendar cont'd)

Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sunday, Sept. 28, 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**.

October

Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sat., Oct. 4, 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 from Mercy Road

Sun., Oct. 5, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. See wild– flowers & 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**.

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Oct. 11, 8 – 9 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. CLearn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. 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**.

Del Mar Mesa & Waterfall Walk

Sat., Oct. 11, 3–5 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk up on the Del Mar Mesa, then on to Walden Pond and the Waterfall. Meet at

the end of Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and water. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7)** or call 858.484.3219 for recorded directions.

Black Mountain Trail Work Party / Peñasquitos

Sat., Oct. 18, 8 a.m. –12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Stage Coach Walk in Sabre Springs

Sat., Oct. 19, 9–noon. Join Mike Kelly and explore an old stage coach road, complete with free standing, mortarless walks. Learn about the 150th Commemoration of the 1st Trans Continental Mail delivery in 2007 and local plans to celebrate it. Learn the latest research on the route of the 1st Trans Continental Mail route through Peñasquitos Canyon. See **Thomas Guide**

Black Mountain Nature Walk

Sat., Oct. 25, 9–11a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting

Wed., 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.

DIRECTIONS

Black Mountain Open Space Park, 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**.

Park Village Drive Meeting 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 and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7)**.

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 Sorrento Valley Road. **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**.

It's time to confront reality

Our immigration-overpopulation crisis

Edward Di Bella

The single greatest threat to preserving open space habitat, endangered species, precious natural resources and a decent quality of human life in the United States of America is immigration-fueled population growth. Don't flinch. While that statement might strike you as somewhat harsh, it is indisputably true. So much of what the conservation movement has worked and fought for these past few decades is being undone and it is time to say "Stop!"

In the last issue of this newsletter, Conservation Chair Mike Kelly contributed an excellent overview of the decline of global biodiversity and showed that our region is a hotspot of this disturbing trend. Mike correctly pointed out that a number of factors are contributing to the devastation, including the spread of non-native plants and animals as well as shifts in climate. The preponderant factor, however, is loss of habitat through development. The impetus behind this should be the focus of our concern.

Houses and commercial buildings do not appear like mushrooms emerging naturally from the soil. They are built to satisfy human needs. It is obvious that the presence of more people in a given area will ultimately mean greater demand for housing as well as schools, hospitals, supermarkets and other structures that provide necessary services. As we have seen here locally, the net effect is to leave patchworks of open space that provide not only for our recreation, but also as refuges of last resort for flora and fauna that are increasingly hard-pressed in the fight for survival.

As matters stand now, the situation is dire. The continued viability of major mammal species such as the mountain lion is now called into question. In a recent article in the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, attention was drawn to the precarious existence of these creatures. If corridors are not secured linking to various open space preserves, the mountain lion will be doomed in the South Coast Ecoregion of Califor-

nia.¹ Such a scenario is an abomination. I strongly concur with Mike's sentiment that human beings have an ethical obligation to preserve the diversity of life on this planet.

Open space preserves such as Los Peñasquitos Canyon are included in the Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP), an effort to halt the rapid slide of local species toward their permanent demise. In a nutshell, future development is to occur outside of these core areas, thus effecting a compromise between development and conservation. That is how it is supposed to work in theory.

As I see it, plans such as this can only work *if* all other factors ultimately attain some kind of stability. That does not describe the current situation. Population growth in our region, state and country is explosive. This growth threatens our environmental goals for the reasons described above. Immigration is the primary cause.

The statistics are staggering. California's population is now officially calculated at somewhere near 36 million people. According to a pair of studies undertaken by Californians for Population Stabilization (CAPS), using both federal and state data, California's population grew by 13% percent in the 1990s, adding more than 4,208,000 people. That figure is larger than the entire population of Ireland. Direct immigration was responsible for about 57 percent of the growth, and the rest came mainly from births to foreign-born women. Let's make this clear. **Virtually all net population growth in California is due to direct immigration and births to immigrant women.**

At current rates of growth, California's population will **double** in 40 years.² The situation for the United States as a whole is equally disheartening. According to the latest projections published by the United States Census Bureau, current rates of growth will lead to a national population somewhere between 403 and 552 **million** people by 2050.⁽³⁾ That is within the

lifetime of young people now in college. Again, the bulk of that growth, perhaps 60-70%, is due to recent immigration.

Do you think we have problems now trying to preserve endangered species and habitats in this country? What will the task be like when there are another 100-250 million people here, with no end in sight? Clearly, our efforts are futile unless these growth rates are checked and soon. So, what is to be done?

First, we must overcome fears and inhibitions that have hindered the conservation movement from tackling the issue. Allegations of prejudice and racism are nothing more than emotional terror tactics, designed to stop debate and paralyze conscientious people from doing what is both right and necessary. In my personal experience, those who hurl these slanders are often some of the most nasty individuals whose agendas include anything but care or concern for conservation.

Second, we must put aside hoary old clichés about being "a nation of immigrants." The United States is not a nation of immigrants. Most people who have lived in this country were born and raised here. We have been greatly influenced by immigration, but that is true of every nation at some point in its history. We are not unique in this respect. It is time to see our country as a mature, settled land in need of stability and prudent restraint toward those wild places that remain.

Third, we must demand that the federal government do its job and finally halt the massive flows of illegal immigration. While about one million people are entering the country by legal means, it is estimated that some 750,000 per year are arriving or staying illegally. Section 4 of Article 4 of the United States Constitution obligates the federal government to protect the states from invasion. Once this is done, we must insist that legal immigration be reduced to more historically

See p. 6 for more

Protecting the Willowly Monardella

Mike Kelly, Conservation Chair

López Canyon is home to one of only five populations of a highly endangered plant: the Willowly Mint (*Monardella linoidea* sssp. *viminea*). And — it's not doing so well in López Canyon. Our Monardella is of the mint family, square stemmed and highly fragrant — with what most describe as a strong spearmint odor. I just know I love to smell it! (*Check out the photo accompanying this article on our web site to see it in color.*)

This plant is listed by both the State of California and the Federal Government as an endangered species. It's also a species with a high priority for conservation under the City of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Program, a habitat conservation plan to protect a representative cross-section of the rich biodiversity of habitats, plants, and animals that is unique to San Diego (*see Canyon News*, July 2003).

Partnership

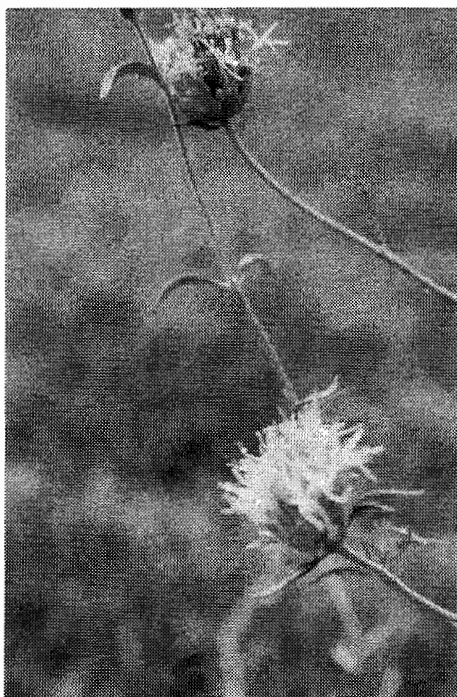
The Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve (FLPCP) and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) have been partnering for more than a decade to protect the López Canyon population of this plant. Cindy Burrascano of CNPS and myself have been organizing volunteers from both groups to survey this plant in López Canyon for about a decade now. Dozens of volunteers have joined us in surveying this endangered species over this past decade. We used historical records of this plant, especially the excellent sensitive species map developed by County Biologist Maggie Loy and the Native Plant Diversity Database (CNPS and Calif. Dept. of Fish & Game) to resurvey the locations of this plant in López Canyon. We quickly found that a number of the known locations of this perennial species — meaning it's going to come up in the same location year after year — were gone. After several years of surveys and studies we identified three factors — all related to development in the watershed — leading to a more than 50% reduction in the number of this species in López Canyon.

Development changes water flows

These three factors were habitat conversion, erosion of its base habitat soil type, and invasive plant species competition.

Willowly mint has a very specific habitat preference. You won't find it next to year round streams. Rather, it likes the first terrace up from the main channel of ephemeral streams. These are the arroyos that only carry water during winter time rains. In López Canyon these terraces are being eroded away by winter time flooding. This flooding has increased in velocity and force since development occurred in this canyon's upper watershed in the 1970s. An aerial from the 1960s shows López Canyon's bottom to be heavily vegetated with very little evidence of bare cobble rock. A year 2000 aerial shows a dramatic difference with much of the vegetation gone, with bare cobble remaining. What happened?

Development dramatically reduces how much rainfall can be absorbed before runoff occurs into adjacent canyons such as López Canyon. In addition,



Willowly mint flower. Visit our web site (penasquitos.org) to see this in color

tion, storm drains concentrate much of this runoff into a few locations into López Canyon. These flows are larger and faster and become highly erosive. Much of the topsoil and the plants it supported, including trees, shrubs, grasses as well as our endangered mint, has washed away, leaving bare cobble behind. Over irrigation by homeowners and businesses also means some of the soils are already saturated even before rainfall occurs.

Habitat conversion

At the top of the watershed, an opposite phenomena occurred. A check dam and detention basin were built into Montongo Street where it crosses the head of López Canyon. This dam captures and holds irrigation runoff and light rainfalls, promoting a conversion from dry arroyo vegetation to riparian vegetation. This habitat conversion is believed responsible for losing the Willowly mint that once occurred in the upper canyon since the plant can't compete with larger, denser riparian plants, especially the trees. This dam also captures silt, "cleaning the runoff before it continues downstream. Such "clean" water is what hydrologists call "hungry water," that has a propensity to pick up soil downstream, hence promoting erosion of the islands and terraces our mint lives on.

Invasive weeds

When the native vegetation is eroded away, this disturbance opens up the habitat to invasive by invasive weeds. Such weeds in López Canyon include mustard, fennel, italian thistle, chrysanthemum and their numbers have exploded along the canyon bottom. These weeds started crowding out the Monardella. They become thick enough to reduce the moisture available to native plants and to prevent the plants from conducting photosynthesis.

Solutions

The Friends and CNPS moved beyond just doing surveys, beginning to do invasive weed control and studying the hydrology of the canyon with the

See p. 6 for more

(Monardella cont'd)

help of engineers experienced with such situations. While the major solutions to the overall erosion problem are too expensive to implement at the current time, we did identify some small erosion control projects that can protect most of the remaining Monardella plants in López. The City MSCP staff succeeded in obtaining grants to develop engineering plans and to implement them in the field.

Ajacks

The plans called for installing "Ajacks," 6-pointed star shaped concrete devices (*see photo*) to armor two locations with the plants against erosive water flows. The Ajacks work to absorb the force of rushing water, slow it down, and encourage silt to drop out, helping to rebuild the edges of these terraces and islands.

In August 2003 the Urban Corps was hired under one of these grants to install the bulk of the Ajacks. Senior Ranger Rick Thompson and myself oversaw the installation. In October volunteers will finish the installation (*see box*).

Once we are convinced we have at least stability in the sites we are arming, we will begin planting Monardella plants. Under permits from the Resource Agencies the Friends and CNPS have collected seed from the

Lopez Canyon population and from the General Dynamics population. Seeds were tested for their viability and germination rate. The General Dynamics (GD) population is much bigger than the López population. Because of its larger size, the GD population was expected to be genetically healthier. The smaller López population was thought to possibly suffer from genetic inbreeding due to the small number of plants. The GD population had significantly more viable seed and a higher germination rate than the López population. For now, only plants grown from the López plants will be outplanted.

Erosion Control Project in López Canyon

Sat. Oct. 25th., 9 - 1

Meet at López Park,

Volunteers are needed to finish the installation of the Ajacks erosion control devices described in the accompanying Monardella article. López Park is located at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. Call Mike at 858.566.6489 for more information.

(Immigration cont'd)

normal levels such as 200,000 per year.

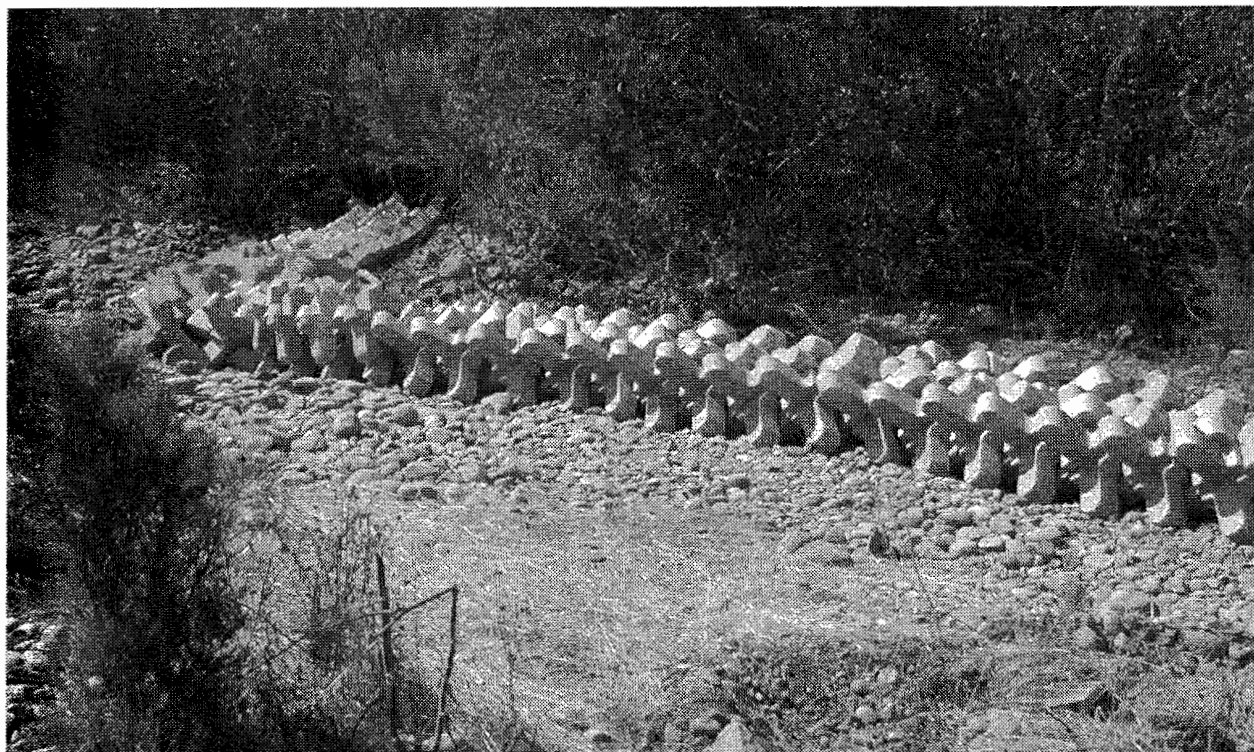
Fourth, we must all become more personally involved. I urge you to visit websites where you can obtain more information about these issues and access easy-to-use tools for communicating with our legislators. Two good places to start are the websites for Californians for Population Stabilization and NumbersUSA, which has scorecards on how our representatives vote on these issues as well as faxes that you can send to Congress via their site. Check them out!

It's time to take a stand. Silence and passivity make us accomplices in the destruction of nature's splendor and the grandeur of God's majesty. Find within yourself the inflexible courage to fight for the species whose survival now rests in our hands.

That's my opinion. What's yours?

Notes

1. Life in transition, *San Diego Union-Tribune*, August 13, 2003, page F-1.
2. The reports commissioned by CAPS can be read at .
3. Census Bureau figures are available at . Refer to the tables at <http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/popproj.html>



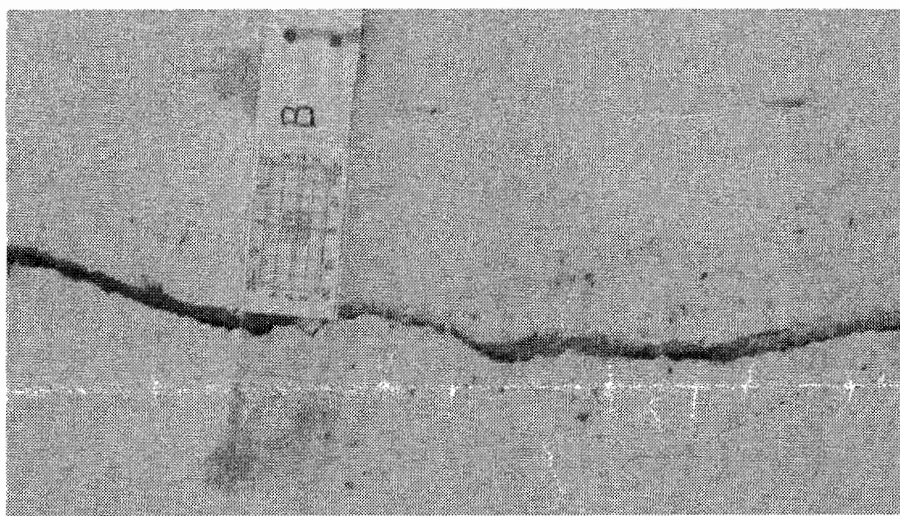
**Inter-locking
Ajacks in
López
Canyon will
help protect
the Willowly
mint.
Photo by
Mike Kelly**

If Walls Could Talk

County Ranger Paul Kucharczyk

One of the challenges the staff at Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch House face is the restoration and the repair of this facility. We are dealing with earthen walls on unstable soil. The two room building on the south side of the courtyard, wing 'C,' is exhibiting stress as its south wall is separating from the rest of the building. This problem has been identified and patched numerous times for almost 100 years. Photos taken in the 1920s clearly show the same cracks causing us concern today. Dried adobe block is not elastic, and once cracked, offers little structural integrity. Simple patching will not correct the underlying problem.

Someone once said, "If you can't measure it, you can't manage it." Have you noticed the 13 plastic overlapping grids glued to both sides of various cracks on the walls (*see photos*)? Crosshairs are monitored to observe movement, measured in 1 mm increments. Also noted are the temperatures at each reading. Within one month, I have observed 2 cracks widen by 1 mm each. Insignificant? Hardly. Over many months the data will be analyzed and reviewed for recommendations for future restoration plans.



Wing "C" wall crack with measuring device in place. Photo by Mike Kelly



Trans-County Trail volunteers, from left to right: Dennis Driscoll, Jay Mann, Jim Snyder, Curtis Battle, and Bill Witzel.

Notes

Wildlife Survey Training

Date: Oct 18, 2003

One facet of the Peñasquitos Tracking Team is the quarterly Wildlife Survey. The survey consists of multiple teams around San Diego County. The survey is carried out with the benefit of volunteers from all walks of life. The tracking team offers a **free** one-day training session before each survey. This free training includes basic track, sign, and habitat recognition, as well as details on the implementation of survey protocol, and is required for survey volunteers.

Advanced Weekend Tracker/Naturalist

Date: Sept 27-28, 2003

Location: Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

The Advanced Class is devoted to in depth track analysis and interpretation. Must have taken intermediate class. Call Rick for registration and information: 858 672-0584

Garden Hoses Still Needed

If you have old garden hoses you don't need anymore — even leaky ones — we can use them for our restoration work. Give Mike Kelly a call at 858.566.6489 or email mkellysd@aol.com. We'll use these to run water to restoration sites.

Trail Construction Continues in PQ

Work on the Trans County trail continues. Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, a dedicated group of volunteers (*see photo to left*) comes out to repair erosion on the trail, trim back the brush and remove trash. This work is occurring on the trail section from I-15 east to the Poway City border. Now, you can hike 14 miles from the far west end of Los Peñasquitos to the Poway line, passing through many different habitat types! Try it out!



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
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Web Site

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to see this newsletter in color,
 to see back issues, and infor-
 mation on wildlife surveys
 and the Tracking Team.

RENEWAL DATE 05/00
 TARJA SAGAR
 849 SHADOW LAKE DR
 THOUSAND ca 91360

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.

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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: Rick Botta, 858.672-0584
 Volunteer Coordinator:
 Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.566.6489
 Webmaster: Rick Botta
 Wildlife Surveys: Dean Woods: 858.672.1120

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: _____ 9/2003

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

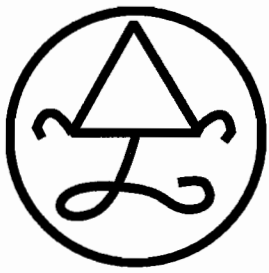
Home Phone _____

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.

Nov. & Dec. 2003
Volume 17, No. 6

Dec. 6: Rainbow Valley Grange Will Have Livestock on Display Farm Animals at Rancho Peñasquitos

P.J. Piburn

Known throughout San Diego County for its lush, fertile, spring fed meadows, Rancho de los Peñasquitos served as prime agricultural and ranching land for hundreds of years. Now a wildlife preserve, and historic/archaeological district, the rancho once again hosts activities representative of its past "glory days."

From its small beginnings as a watering stop for travelers, to its days as a magnificent showcase for George Alonzo Johnson's fine cattle and race horses, to the last roundup in the 1980s, the rancho has provided a home and safe haven for farming, grazing, and wildlife. The San Diego County Parks and Recreation Department now

See p. 7 for more

Golfers Tee off on Protected Habitat

Lisa Ross

[Excerpted from the Carmel Valley News/Del Mar Village Voice]

The Meadows Golf Course at Del Mar, owned by Manchester Resorts, was cited for 22 municipal code violations by the City of San Diego in August for allegedly bulldozing protected native habitat in old Shaw Valley without a permit in spite of several orders to stop work.

Manchester representatives said that city contractors building a horse and hiking trail connecting Los Peñasquitos Canyon and Carmel Valley dumped the dirt first, so they were forced to stabilize the situation. Stabilization included the installation of tee boxes that lengthened two fairways. A creek bed was also partially buried.

It is now the end of October, and in spite of assurances by The Meadows representatives that they would "work with the community and the city," play

See p. 4 for more

Highlights Inside

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Local Scouts Perform Lagoon Conservation Project

Robert James (Boy Scout)

Boy Scouts from Scripps Ranch and Peñasquitos performed an invasive plant control conservation project in Peñasquitos Lagoon this past August. This work party was orchestrated and lead by Eagle Scout Robert James from Scripps Ranch Troop 663 as part of a William T. Hornaday Conservation Award project. Equipped with loppers, gloves, and protective clothing, these thirty-seven scouts and adults spent two full hot August days in the Lagoon removing giant reed (*Arundo donax*) and Cape-Ivy (*Delaeria odorata*); two known highly destructive invasive plants in Southern California. The volunteers contributed more than 255 man-hours to the success of this invasive pest plant removal project.

By far the greatest threat to vanishing riparian resources of coastal Southern California is the invasive grass species known as *Arundo donax*. Removal of *Arundo* from coastal drainage systems provides numerous downstream benefits in terms of native species, wildfire protection, and water quantity and quality. *Arundo* is a genus of tall perennial reed-like grasses with six species native to the Middle East

See p. 6 for more



Goats on display at an earlier Grange event at the Peñasquitos Ranch House.

'Winter Time'

The season we call winter here in San Diego – so different from much of the country – will soon be upon us, hopefully with cooler weather, rain, and no more fires! Cool weather is a great time to explore the Preserve, perhaps on longer hikes than usual.

Wear good hiking boots and bring water & sun protection. Bring a flashlight if you're joining one of the dusk or evening walks.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour Every Saturday & Sunday

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa María 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.**

November

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Nov. 8, 8 – 9 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. 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.**

Del Mar Mesa & Waterfall Walk

Sat., Nov. 8, 3–5 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk up on the Del Mar Mesa, then on to Walden Pond and the Waterfall. Meet at the utility gate at the end of Park Village Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and water. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7)** or call 858.484.3219.

Black Mountain Trail Work Party / Peñasquitos

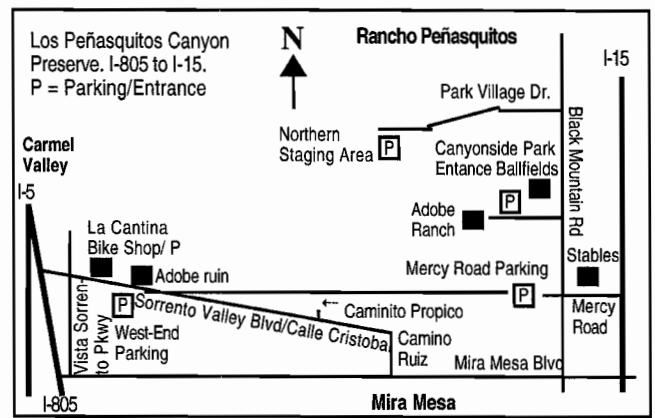
Sat., Nov. 15, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Holiday Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., Nov. 16, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. See holiday native plants and learn 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.**

Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee

Mon., Nov. 17, 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**



Peñasquitos Preserve Citizens' Advisory Comm.

Thurs., Nov. 20, 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.**

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting

Call Pres. Brian Swanson at 760-739-5451 for the date and time of the monthly meeting, still to be scheduled because of proximity to Thanksgiving holiday.

Black Mountain Nature Walk

Sat., Nov. 22, 9–11 a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Healing Traditions Hike North

Sun., Nov. 23, 3–4:30 p.m. A hike to learn about the healing traditions of North American Indians. Explore drumming, oratory, song, story, and other healing arts. Practice sage blessing, calling the Four Directions, feather healing, and sacred pipe ceremony. Bring a drum or rattle and a blanket to sit on. Hike is for adults. Meet at the West End Parking Staging Area in Sorrento Valley. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

(Calendar cont'd)

December

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sat., Dec., 6, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. See holiday native plants and learn their and other plants' 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**.

Farm Animals at Peñasquitos.

Sat., Dec. 6, 9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m. The Rainbow Valley Grange will have live livestock on hand for the family to view and touch. Watch them work with their animals. Call P.J. Piburn at 858.484.7504 for more information. 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**.

Del Mar Mesa & Waterfall Walk

Sat., Dec. 6, 3–5 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk up on the Del Mar Mesa, then on to Walden Pond and the Waterfall. Meet at the utility gate at the end of Park Village Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and water. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7)** or call 858.484.3219.

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Dec. 13, 8 – 9 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. 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**.

Black Mountain Trail Work Party / Peñasquitos

Sat., Dec. 20, 8 a.m. –12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Healing Traditions Hike South

Sun., Dec. 21, 3–4:30 p.m. A hike to learn about the healing traditions of **South American Indians**. Learn to use stones and rocks for divination and healing. Build your own "Mesa" or altar for doing self healing work on the archetypal level. Bring a drum or rattle and a blanket to sit on. Hike is for adults. Meet at the West End Parking Staging Area in Sorrento Valley. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors Meeting

Call Pres. Brian Swanson at 760-739-5451 for the date and time of the monthly meeting, still to be scheduled because of proximity to Thanksgiving holiday.

Black Mountain Nature Walk

Sat., Dec. 27, 9–11 a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 D1** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

DIRECTIONS

Black Mountain Open Space Park, 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**.

Park Village Drive Meeting 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 and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7)**.

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 Sorrento Valley Road. **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**.

(Golf cont'd)

continues on the tee boxes.

Their explanation, now contained in a cross-complaint sitting in the City Attorney's office, did not pass the smell test for the City Councilman and two local planning boards.

Councilman Scott Peters held a press conference in late August demanding that the bulldozers stop after City code enforcement officials could not grab anyone's attention at the golf course for three weeks.

The 15-member Carmel Valley Planning Board, which includes developers, realtors and residential representatives, issued a unanimous request for the City Attorney to pursue stiff penalties for proven violations, require full restoration of the area and seek further fines to help other community open space areas.

The Del Mar Mesa Planning Board followed suit, citing violations of the community plan. At the last meeting, Board member Jan Hudson asked for the resignations of the Meadows representatives on the board. Both have refused to step down.

Both boards expressed outrage at the betrayal of agreements painstakingly crafted in the past among people

highly suspicious of each other in the mid-1990s.

Construction of The Meadows and its future resort in the old Shaw Valley was held up for a decade because the area served as both a wildlife corridor linking Los Peñasquitos Canyon to Peñasquitos Lagoon, and as a recreational hiking and horse riding area.

A vote of the people was required to allow construction of a hotel that would make the golf course commercially viable. The politics simply was not there – few community planners or environmentalists were willing to give up a lovely and environmentally sensitive area for a golf course and resort.

And then, an idea floated out of then Mayor Susan Golding's office – if the golf course was built according to environmentally sensitive plans, and the hotel could generate \$12 million for open space acquisition through a room fee, would environmentalists and community groups sign on to a ballot measure approving the resort?

In short, the answer was yes. The ballot measure passed with most hands on deck. And the golf course was delivered as promised. Designed around a variety of endangered habitat areas, it became a great course for golfers

during the day, and a fine playground for critters at night.

It is also one of the main trail routes connecting Carmel Valley trails with Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve.

The Meadows served as an example for other municipalities that golf courses could not only exist with sensitive habitat, but could help provide significant wildlife corridors. A perfect meeting of environmental, recreational and economic interests-until now.

Today, golfers are using the new tee boxes and The Meadows now includes them on their maps. No further action has been taken by the city. The Councilman's office says that it is now up to the City Attorney.

The continuation of this situation is a bad signal for other private entities who have built near or around sensitive protected habitat.

Please write or email City Attorney Casey Gwinn, Mayor Dick Murphy, the Code Enforcement Department and Councilman Scott Peters and insist that the City take quick and immediate action to stop play in protected areas, now.

Lisa Ross is a political writer and consultant, and a member of the Del Mar Mesa Planning Board



Two new golf tees illegally built on park land next to the Shaw Valley trail.



Above: Volunteers finishing the installation of erosion control material called "Ajacks" in López Canyon to protect the endangered Willowly monardella (*Monardella linoides* ssp. *viminea*) (see Canyon News, Sept. 2003). Volunteers included: California Native Plant Society leaders Cindy Burrascano and Carrie Schneider, boyscouts Alex Nunn and Bradley Markano, City of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program staffers Holly Cheong and Kalio, Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve members Wendy Dalls, Terry Gaughen, Edward Di Bella, Mike Kelly and Josan Feathers and Julie Gary and Joel Calland. Photo by Mike Kelly.

Below: As volunteers descended into López Canyon for the above project, they were treated to the sight of a young buck with his new single point antlers standing in the morning mist. López Canyon has always had a good population of mule deer such as this.



and Asia. It was intentionally introduced to California from the Mediterranean in the 1800's in Los Angeles as an erosion control agent in drainage canals, and was used for thatch roofs on barns and other buildings. Today it is an invasive pest throughout the warmer coastal fresh waters of the United States. Arundo grows along lakes, streams, drains and other wetlands. It is a tall, erect, cane or reed-like grass, 2 to 8 meters high. It stocks can reach a diameter of 1 to 4 cm. It can grow more than 5 cm per day. Its looks a lot like bamboo. It's also known as giant reed, bamboo reed, giant reed grass, arundo grass, donax cane, giant cane, river cane, and bamboo cane.

Arundo can rapidly invade streambanks and roadside habitats. Once established, it has a strong ability to out compete and completely displace native vegetation. With proper management, areas infested with arundo may be restored. Manually removing is one way to control the weeds. Cutting the stock 4 to 6 inches above the ground

followed by chemical application of commercial Roundup is effective in its control.

Cape-Ivy is native to South Africa. It has bright green star shaped leaves, and produces bright yellow flowers in late summer. The plant is a creeper, twining by means of long shoots throughout trees and bushes. European Colonization introduced it and more recently, it has been used for landscaping around buildings because of its apparent attractiveness and its rapid growth. It can be found now throughout California coastal riparian regions. Cape-Ivy rapidly grows and covers the original vegetation beneath, and keeps it from receiving sunshine, thus interfering with the native plant's ability to conduct photosynthesis. It does not only invade habitat for native plant species, but also affects aquatic life that inhabits riparian areas. It appears to contain alkaloids that are toxic to other living organisms. Cape-Ivy is now listed as "most invasive and damaging wild land pest plants by the Cal-

ifornia Exotic Pest Plant Council." There are several methods for removal of Cape Ivy. Mechanical removal by hand is effective for small plots; however, the total removal is very difficult because its roots tend to break easily as it is pulled up. Herbicide application to leaves is not well absorbed due to the leaves waxy nature. Labor-intensive mechanical removal by hand right down to the roots followed by application of a combination of two fairly benign herbicides at low concentrations has been shown to be effective in its control.

The scouts and adults who participated in this conservation service project all learned about the importance of invasive pest control and the role they can play and the impact they can have in the future survival of riparian native species.

Mike Kelly, Conservation Chair of the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, helped with the choice of sites, surveys, and on-site coordination.



Robert James (center) of Boy Scout Troop 663 from Scripps Ranch works with fellow scouts in cutting, pulling and stacking Giant reed (Arundo donax) from an infestation in Peñasquitos Lagoon.

Notes

(Farm animals cont'd)

Restoration Volunteers Needed

Sat., Nov. 22, 9 am –1 pm

A big part of our restoration work in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve is controlling invasive plants that displace our native plants and wildlife. This volunteer work party will focus on the new extension of the Preserve east of I-15. We'll be taking down invasive eucalyptus and palm trees on the site. There's something for everyone to do. Our meeting place is a bit difficult to find, so follow these directions! Our meeting place is close to the intersection of I-15 and the Mercy Road / Scripps Poway Freeway. Get on I-15 and head to the Mercy Road / Scripps Poway Freeway exit. Take this exit and go east on the Scripps Poway Freeway to the first light. At the light, make a U-turn and head back down towards I-15, but stay to the right. Before you get to I-15 look for an access road on the right just before the intersection. Go right onto this access road and follow it down to a circular cul-de-sac. Park here at our meeting place. Bring sun protection and wear sturdy foot wear. Gloves and tools will be provided. Call Mike at 858.566.6489 for more information.

Sun., Dec. 14, 9 am – 1 pm

Meet at the Rangers' trailers in the Equestrian Center at the corner of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa. Volunteers will be weed whacking to prepare a section of the Trans County Road for revegetation with native plants. Later this winter more native plants will be planted to fill in gaps along the trail. We've been working this section of the trail for 3 years now and expect to finish it this winter. The Trans-County Trail, when completed, will stretch from Torreys Pines State Beach all the way to the Anza-Borrego Visitor's Center.

Call Mike at 858.566.6489 for more information.

manages the rancho. As part of that management, the Department cares for the historic property, and provides tours and school programs. More than 1,400 children visit the adobe each year to study California history and pump water from the artesian spring. Regular tours are held each weekend and special events are held throughout the year. In its effort to properly manage this facility, the community is invited and encouraged to participate in the Department's interpretive planning process.

Please plan on visiting the rancho on Saturday, December 6, from 9:30 am – 2:30 pm. The Rainbow Valley Grange Poway Fair Team will be displaying their livestock. Come watch them work with their animals. *The Department will be performing evaluations of the*

program and request feedback from those who attend.

Grange activities vary with the seasons and could include: Comparing varieties of goats, meat, fiber, and milk; watching ducks and geese preen in their pools; seeing steers, mules, and horses; observing and trying roping, spinning, weaving, and grooming; petting rabbits. Learn how people and animals lived and worked on the rancho. Join the fun and get answers to all your questions about Grange and Rancho de los Peñasquitos.

Tours of the adobe are given at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays. For more information on this event, contact our school program coordinator, P.J. Piburn, at 858-484-7504. For more information on all San Diego County Parks and Recreation facilities and programs, visit <http://www.sdparks.org>.



Cattle on display at an earlier Grange event at the Peñasquitos Ranch House.

Membership Campaign

The Friends are launching a campaign to increase our membership to improve our ability to protect the preserve and to provide more resources to help manage its natural and cultural resources. Help us win new members. Call or write us for free copies of our newsletter and mission brochure to pass out to your friends and neighbors. Email Mike at mkellysd@aol.com or call Mike at 858.566.6489 to order your materials.



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

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 mation on wildlife surveys
 and the Tracking Team.

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: Rick Botta, 858.672-0584
 Volunteer Coordinator:
 Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.566.6489
 Webmaster: Rick Botta
 Wildlife Surveys: Patrick Campbell, 760.471.9197

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: _____ 11/2003

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.