

NEWS & VIEWS

The Employee Newsletter of California State Parks



Spring 2010

Earth Day Volunteers Work Their Way Through State Parks

The E-Day Invasion was launched with thousands of men, women and children volunteers who cleaned, collected, recycled and planted their way through more than 25 California State Parks. They turned out in droves on Saturday, April 17, for the 13th California State Parks Foundation's annual Earth Day.

How successful was it? Consider this: More than 2,700 volunteers turned out to collect 646 bags of trash, plant 350 native trees and more than 2,400 native plants, install hundreds of feet of irrigation lines, install fencing, add decomposed granite to hundreds of feet of trails, and

►AUBURN, Page 4



Auburn State Recreation Area—California State Park Ranger Bill Deitchman gives the morning briefing to the more than 170 volunteers who turned out at the base camp for the Auburn SRA cleanup. Clearly noticeable was the spontaneous enthusiasm from the crowd, responding to Bill's instructions and pep talk with cheers and applause for getting on with the work of the day.

Frontier Past Returns to Old Town San Diego



The Cosmopolitan Hotel renovations are finished after three years of work.

One of the oldest and most significant historic structures in California, the Cosmopolitan Hotel and Restaurant in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, is getting ready for a reopening. The Cosmopolitan reopening, along with the success being generated in the Fiesta de Reyes shops and restaurants complex that reopened in the park last year, is generating a new tourism draw that is sparking a business surge for Old Town San Diego.

The Cosmopolitan Hotel and Restaurant dates back to 1827, when it was erected as a one-story, adobe hacienda for Juan Bandini. In 1869,

►COSMOPOLITAN, Page 6



Director Ruth Coleman

Healthy Parks Mean Healthy People

Last week I had the honor of attending the first International Congress on Healthy Parks, Healthy People, 2010 in Melbourne Australia. Sponsored by Parks Victoria—the parks department that serves the state of Victoria, Australia—the congress drew over 1,000 delegates from 38 countries. (In keeping with the general ban on out-of-state travel, I went on my own time, funded by Parks Victoria).

For the first time in anyone’s memory, people from the health profession and the park profession came together to discuss the need to promote the connection of humans to nature and the notion that we cannot be healthy as people if our protected lands (including parks) are not healthy, too. It was fascinating to hear health professionals confirm humans’ innate biological need for contact with nature in order to stay physically, mentally and spiritually healthy. They described efforts in England where

doctors now write “green prescriptions” directing their patients to take walks in parks as part of their treatment for a variety of illnesses. They spoke with alarm about the threats from obesity and depression caused by people’s detachment from nature in the developed world.

For the first time since Homo sapiens emerged on earth, we will soon have more people living in cities than in rural areas. More than ever before, this means we need parks near to those city people to meet their health needs and to provide the ecological services—like clean water, clean air, and the natural substances that will be turned into future medicines—which make healthy human existence possible.

I know we all get discouraged when we feel the public views us as a luxury. I came away from this conference convinced that each of us has an extremely important task to communicate a fundamental truth: you cannot have healthy people without healthy parks.

Earth Day in California State Parks



Irvine Finch Earth Day project: Hamilton City High School volunteers.

Earth Day in California State Parks



Earth Day volunteers at Folsom Lake.



Crystal Cove State Park

Earth Day at Auburn State Recreation Area

►FROM PAGE 1



Auburn State Recreation Area - Yvonne Gutierrez leads her group up a hillside from the North Fork of the American River, trash collection bags in hand. Behind Yvonne is her family, plus a friend, including Aminah, Jadon, Christian Newton and husband Michael, who is a Pacific Gas and Electric Company employee from Roseville.

more.

What would we say to that? Whew! It is a good thing that we have an army of volunteers who, during tough budget times, are willing and able to apply muscle and sweat to keep our parks in the best shape possible.

Organized and presented by the California State Parks Foundation, this year's Earth Day Restoration and Cleanup Program concentrated their efforts in 25 parks across the state. The main sponsor for the day's activities was once again

Pacific Gas & Electric, which hit the trail with literally hundreds of their employees and their families to make up the bulk of the work force. They were joined by environmental and community groups from across the state.

Over the past 13 years of the program, the tally of work done is a little staggering, and tremendously gratifying. More than 67,000 Californians statewide have been mobilized. Those folks have restored hundreds of miles of trails, planted thousands of trees and

flowers, installed recycling bins and removed tons and tons of trash from wildlife habitats, beachfronts and estuaries.

In addition to the main presenting sponsor, PG&E, more than 35 other businesses and organizations helped as associate sponsors, grant providers, media sponsors and refreshment providers. They are too numerous to mention here, but all deserve a standing ovation for preserving, protecting and enhancing America's finest state park system.



Auburn State Recreation Area—Under the towering Forest Hill Bridge, outside the community of Auburn, volunteers for the State Park Foundation’s Restoration and Cleanup Program walk the trails of the American River Canyon looking for trash to remove. They found an old car body, a refrigerator and some batteries and a whole lot of used beverage cans and bottles.



Auburn Sector Superintendent Mike Lynch signs up the volunteers for the Earth Day work.



On-the-trail to a cleaner park, and perhaps a touchdown, we find Dave Sturgeon, with PG&E in Davis; Kelley Garnett, with Pg&E in Rocklin; and Anita Yoder, a volunteer from Placer County.

Cosmopolitan Hotel Reopens in June

►FROM PAGE 1

the wooden second story was added by Alfred Seeley, making the building a hotel and stage coach stop.

Formerly known as the Casa de Bandini, the 10-room boutique hotel and downstairs restaurant, complete with mid-1800s antique furnishings, will reopen in June as a living/working museum. Bill Mennell, project manager for California State Parks, said the department has wanted to restore the building since 1968, when the State first took over the area as an historic park.

Those working on the restoration during the past 3 years have said it is surprising that so much of the building remained intact from its earliest use, and even more remarkable how many of the key remnants from the original structure remained, found hidden as they peeled back the layers of renovations that occurred from the 1930s through the 1950s.

The restored hotel and restaurant will be operated by Chuck Ross, who assumed management over the Old Town shops and restaurants now known as Fiesta de Reyes last year from Delaware North. The restoration cost about \$6.5 million, the money coming from Delaware North, park bond funding and Ross. Ross told the San Diego Union Tribune that people are going to see a beautiful representation of what life was like back in the 1860s.



The newly renovated hotel lobby. There are 10 rooms open for public use, with furnishing and decorations that date to the mid-1800s. Beds, dressers, mirrors, settees, end tables and room embellishments were found by scouring eBay and Craigslist.



A replica of the kind of stage coach that made regular stops at the Juan Bandini building. This is a regular part of the historic recreation at Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, a gem in the park system.

If Walls Could Talk: Restoring the Cosmopolitan Hotel



The Cosmopolitan Hotel at Old Town San Diego State Historic Park.

By Cynthia Hernandez
Archaeological Project Leader
Old Town San Diego State
Historic Park

Part of the process of the restoration of the Cosmopolitan Hotel is the curation of the artifacts found. These could be the ones dug up during archaeological investigations or parts of the building that are recovered and saved as samples of the different construction periods the building underwent through the years. A curator is the specialist that oversees the care, research, documentation and proper packaging and storage of collections.

Archaeological project leader Niloufar Minovi recently recovered two pieces of wallpaper from room 104-B, which is located on the side facing Calhoun Street. The wallpaper was peeling off a three foot reveal. The reveal is the area on the sides of an opening.

The whitewash over the wallpaper was peeling off and it was possible to see a faint pattern of green flowers and leaves. A black dusty layer was also noticed in between

the whitewash and the floral pattern. Minovi explained that the wallpaper was on a layer of very smooth mud plaster over adobe blocks. There are fragments of red fired brick in this mud plaster. Testing these brick fragments may give us a relative date range for the wallpaper. The wallpaper is very brittle, the floral design is almost gone, the original colors are gone with the exception of some faint light green and it's very difficult to make out the pattern. A professional curator will have to do the final curation and stabilization. In the meantime, we archaeologists are committed to giving "first aid" to the artifacts, to protect them and avoid further damage. In our role of "first responders", we dusted the wallpaper with a soft brush, photographed it, and stored it in between acid free tissue paper, acid free cardboard, and inside an archival plastic box to keep it away from light and moisture. Although the floral pattern was faded, a similar pattern was found that dates between the 1840s and 1880s.

In the early 1700s wallpaper was used in public buildings, and by 1760 it was starting to be used by wealthy families. By the 1820s its use was more common and more families could afford to paper their walls. While the earlier wallpaper was made with hand-carved wooden blocks, later on these were replaced with a wooden cylinder which was rolled over a continuous sheet of paper. By the 1890s the use of wallpaper declined because it was hard to clean, and considered unsanitary, and some manufacturers developed waterproof wallpapers. Wood pulp was the main component of machine-made wallpaper in the 1850s, which made it brittle and brown.

It is hard to know exactly what happened in this doorway. What was that black dusty layer? Was it mold seeping through the adobe bricks? Could this be the reason why the wallpaper was whitewashed over? The archaeologist's task is to listen to what the walls have to say.



A wallpaper remnant with the floral pattern enhanced.

Marines Land at Cuyamaca Rancho State Park



Ray Lennox, Park Maintenance Chief, Montane Sector

Just say the magic word: Two dozen marines and their Lieutenant felled 44 dead trees, replaced 200 cubic feet of rock wall, and cleared several miles of trail in just a week.

By Nedra Martinez Superintendent, Montane Sector

Beware the power of your desk mate at Marconi Training Center. Montane Sector Maintenance Chief Ray Lennox was attending class at Marconi back in December. His desk mate had just received an email asking if anyone would like a platoon of Marines to come out to their park for a week of service. Ray's desk mate couldn't use them so he asked Ray. Ray said the magic word, "YES."

Several months and many phone calls later, MWSS 373 Marine Combat Engineers arrived at Green Valley Falls Campground from the Miramar Marine Corp Base.

Twenty-four marines and

their Lieutenant, Kim Huynh, arrived at the park on March 1st and worked with the Maintenance Staff from the sector for one week. While it is generally agreed that everyone was sore and tired, they also agreed that it was one of their best weeks. Lt. Huynh was very impressed with the park, the staff and the projects and they are making plans to come back this summer.

Green Valley Campground has been closed this winter, so we were able to house them in the campground without disturbing anyone. They brought their own kitchen setup (MREs) along with tents and we supplied a restroom with hot showers and plenty to do. It was a little weird to see all of the Military green trucks,

trailers, and equipment in the campground, but the color of their trucks soon faded into the background.

The Marines and staff accomplished several projects that would have taken weeks if not months to do with our current staff. They were given instructions on safety and procedures and felled 44 dead trees, replaced 200 cubic feet of rock wall, and cleared several miles of trail. All in just one week!

In these times of looking at partnerships and trying to figure out how to get projects done, I would have never thought of working with the local military. I am sure glad that Lt. Huynh was thinking of us and that Maintenance Chief Ray Lennox said the magic word, "yes."

Vallecito Ranch Acquisition

Martha Baker - the Anza-Borrego Foundation



Cutting the ribbon to officially open the Vallecito Ranch acquisition are (left to right) Donor Frank Colver, Anza-Borrego Foundation Trustee (and long-time ABDSP supporter) Diana Lindsay and retired ABDSP Superintendent Mark Jorgensen. The celebration included people in 1850s dress, a reenactment and a Wells Fargo stagecoach.



Left: Anza-Borrego Desert State Park Superintendent Kathy Dice and Associate State Archaeologist Joan Schneider discuss the celebration at Vallecito Ranch opening. Right: Acting District Superintendent Gail Sevrens tell people about the Vallecito Ranch acquisition and what it means to ABDSP.

Prescribed Burn at Cuyamaca Rancho State Park

Reprinted from *Tracks*, the newsletter of the Colorado Desert District. All photos by Gary Reece.

Colorado Desert District's Environmental Services Intern Gary Reece, Park Maintenance Worker II Scot Martin, Senior Maintenance Aide Michael Tabanao, Maintenance Aide Daniel Aceves and CalFire personnel started and monitored a prescribed burn on Cuyamaca Rancho State Park's Middle Peak the last week of November.

For eight days, they mopped up, removed trees from roadways, cut smoldering trunks and monitored the area until a fortuitous storm brought rain to finish the cleanup.

The heavily wooded area, which had burned in the 2003 Cedar Fire, was burned again to make room for new trees as part of Cuyamaca's reforestation project.

Post-Cedar Fire vegetation consists of a monoculture of *Ceanothus*, a native chaparral species that responds very well to fire.

"That is why we are finding dense stands of *Ceanothus* at Cuyamaca in areas formerly occupied by pine forest," Retired District Superintendent Mike Wells wrote. "*Ceanothus* was there before the pine forest and remained on site as a seed bank waiting in the soil."

Mike reported he had observed this pattern in the years following the 1986 Peak Fire when *Ceanothus*



Top: District Park Maintenance Worker II Scot Martin uses a drip torch to ignite a prepared plot on Middle Peak at Cuyamaca Rancho State Park. The 70-acre plot was masticated and allowed to cure prior to being burned in preparation for reforestation.

Below: Maintenance Aide Daniel Aceves (left) and Senior Maintenance Aide Michael Tabanao are hard at work mopping up after a prescribed burn at Cuyamaca Rancho State Park.



was so thick that he thought the forest had converted to chaparral.

“However, after about five years I began to see the green tips of Coulter pine saplings poking through the chaparral canopy. By 1998, when I was doing my dissertation research on the ridge, the *Ceanothus* had died out in many places leaving only its bare skeletons in the forest understory,” he reported

According to Mike, it’s not that *Ceanothus* has taken over the forest, it’s that there are fewer pine seedlings because the fire was so intense that few seeds survived.

“Middle Peak is not very attractive after the burn, but it is ready for planting,” Gary noted. “One thing that we have noticed is that trees planted in ash-covered areas always do better than the surrounding area.”



Above: Senior Maintenance Aide Michael Tabanao attacks another tree that was smoldering after the prescribed burn at Cuyamaca Rancho State Park. Below: The devastation of the prescribed burn is evident below, but this is just the groundwork for the phoenix that will arise.



Interpretation and Education Meetings Go Virtual

By Carolyn Schimandle
State Park Interpreter III

Interpretation and Education Division

How do you meet face-to-face with colleagues from all over the state when you have little travel budget or time?

For California State Parks' Interpretation and Education Division, the answer is videoconferencing. Staff at other locations have been videoconferencing in to weekly division meetings for the last five years, so going statewide was a logical next step. We have now had five statewide all-interpreters meetings, and two for the designated District Interpretive Coordinators. While most sites participated by videoconference; some used the teleconference option. Teleconferencers could also watch and listen to the videoconference online. All participants join in with their supervisor's permission. We held the most recent meetings on November 4, 2009—an all-interpreters meeting in the morning, and a District Interpretive Coordinators meeting in the afternoon.

Our first virtual meeting was in April 2008. It connected eleven sites via videoconference, and two by teleconference. Seventeen sites videoconferenced for last November's all-interpreters meeting, and nine other sites phoned in, from headquarters, district and sector offices, parks, and service centers. A total of over fifty interpreters participated in this latest virtual meeting.

Besides having more sites and participants with each meeting, we have all become more comfortable with the format and technology. As at any face-to-face meeting, "attendees" ask questions and make comments. The first virtual meeting was rather formal and stiff. Now the moderator actually has to work to keep the meeting on schedule, as

more interpreters at different sites actively participate.

The videoconferences have allowed the Interpretation and Education Division staff to solicit input and share recent developments with the field, such as new park publications and Junior Rangers materials, what's available in the statewide interpretive panel program, cooperating association and volunteer support news, and the latest from the photo archives, PORTS, and Children in Nature programs. At the end of each all-interpreters videoconference the field participants share what is happening in their districts. Everyone enjoys getting to hear and see colleagues from all over the state. The most recent meeting was also an important opportunity to share accurate information and dispel rumors about the effects of budget cuts, and to hear from the field how the cuts were affecting them.

We hope to continue with quarterly videoconferences, even after budget constraints ease and we can resume annual district interpretive coordinator meetings. Videoconferences save money, allow more employees to participate—including seasonals—and are easier on the environment than physically traveling to meet. The equipment is easy to use, and IT staff members have been great at helping with set up and trouble-shooting when needed. Our next step is to add more features, such as Powerpoint presentations. While a videoconference will never give the same experience as a true face-to-face meeting, the personal interaction and immediate feedback make them several steps above voice-only teleconferencing and group emails. The Interpretation and Education Division has definitely found Value in Virtual.

Promotions and Appointments



Ann Malcolm, Chief Counsel

Ann Malcolm joins California State Parks after more than two decades in the California Natural Resources Agency. She began her state service in 1986 as Deputy Director for Program and Policy with the California Conservation Corps. Three years later, she joined the Department of Fish and Game's Office of the General Counsel, and served as General Counsel from 2007 to this February, when she joined us at California State Parks. She attended law school at Loyola following her bachelors at Cal State Long Beach.

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1/1/2010

Yvonne M. Heuston
Hungry Valley
1/1/2010

Museum Curator II

Ann M. Fry
Park Operations
2/15/2010

Michael S. Howard
Ocotillo Wells
1/15/2010



John Arnold's Mailbag

We recently took a docent-led tour of the beautiful Adamson House in Malibu. Our guide shared lots of good info with the group which made the tour especially enjoyable.

Thank you for providing an excellent tour of a delightful home. We also toured the Will Rogers House with Jean as our docent. She did a stellar job of imparting information and anecdotes to make the Rogers family "come alive." We greatly appreciate the care the Parks System has put into these properties and also into Hearst Castle.

Regarding help from Reservation Services:

Thank you. Some really nice person called me on my cell from your office, can't remember her name [Susan Smith] and I was able to get at least 2 nights at one of my favorite sites on line (never got thru on the phone).

The purpose of this email is to express my gratitude and thanks for the superb care given me and my companion on Sunday, February 7. As background, my companion and I were riding our bicycles on the American River recreation trail on Sunday afternoon. [My companion] suffered a brain aneurysm near the Willow Creek access to the trail soon after 3 PM. I called 911 and two Park Rangers and the Folsom Fire and Rescue responded.

Thereafter, from my viewpoint, everything was handled in a professional yet caring and compassionate manner.

In addition to aiding [her], the Rangers were concerned about my welfare. They transported me and both bicycles back to my vehicle parked in Rancho Cordova. This extra effort put me at ease and is greatly appreciated.

Thank you for keeping Mt Diablo open during these economic times. It is such a beautiful place so close to where we live.

I would like to compliment Suzy Jackson for just doing her job in an exemplary manner. Being a senior citizen and not very computer savy, I had some confusion about which passes I ordered and which passes I should have ordered and ended up ordering the Golden Poppy when I needed the full parking permit. I was pretty disappointed and worried that I would have to face hours "holding" on the phone and getting shifted from office to office, or even lose my money... Anyway Suzy was so cheerful and helpful and took care of my problem immediately. It seriously restored my faith in the bureaucracy.....and I can seriously say that it is the first time I have ended a call to the government with a smile on my face.

So hats off to Suzy...

maybe you can just pass on the compliment. She is a sweetheart

Good morning. Recently my family visited the Will Rogers SHP to take in the sights and to learn a bit about Will Rogers and his lifestyle. We were very pleased with the way the grounds were kept, and amazed with the amount of people who were there with families just to hang out, and enjoy the facility.

Traffic had led us to a late arrival, and we had missed the ranch house tour. As we walked around the ranch house, we encountered a room with a video of Will's history being offered (recommendations to upgrade this). As we sat through the video, we noticed most of the people left before its ending, however we stayed and enjoyed some comments by a Park Volunteer named Leo. Leo is an elderly gentleman, who I can only imagine must be in his 80s, and was truly a delight to talk with. After the film, we had discussed with Leo which sights to see at the facility and how we were disappointed that we had missed the Ranch House Tour. The next available tour was not until late afternoon (for some reason only two tours were offered that day) and with our schedules, we would miss that one also.

Leo took the time to walk us around the Ranch House,

almost giving us our own private tour and narration of Will Rogers, the Ranch House, and some of its history. He was very knowledgeable about Mr. Rogers's activities and involvement with politics and celebrities, the Ranch House, and the general facility. It was apparent that he really did enjoy being there as a volunteer, and to interact with the people who came to the Park.

You don't get a chance very often to see someone like this, who will volunteer their time and who enjoys it so much. He made our visit to the SHP a hit, as it could have been somewhat of a loss having missed a tour of one of the main attractions. Please pass along praises to Leo for us, it was a joy!

We recently spent a week in the Newport Beach area and had several occasions to ride our bikes and hike in this wonderful State Park. We just want to compliment you on how well this is laid out, how informative the signage is and how nice your staff is. We know the difficult

times all California State agencies are facing but at this park you are doing an excellent job.

I had the pleasure of visiting the Bale Grist Mill a few weeks ago and I cannot rave enough about how wonderful the experience was. The tour guides were knowledgeable, friendly, and professional. I was most impressed by the level of maintenance needed to run the Mill and make it suitable to the public and this was done wonderfully. Also that the tour guide(s) could keep me (a 27 year old) entertained for over an hour talking about a mill

On the day of our visit we were informed that the Mill might possibly be closing due to budget cuts and other factors. I honestly think this would a true injustice to visitors and the history of California. If there is anyway to keep the park open and keep the marvelous staff, please do.

I want to thank you all for a wonderful experience at Fort

Tejon. I am not a camping/ outdoors person, but more of a room service type person, so I was dreading the trip a little. I really enjoyed watching my daughter participate and getting her hands "dirty". She loved all of the activities and I enjoyed working the laundry and candle making station. The food was absolutely fabulous and I want to know where you get your bacon!! We came home and made our own butter too. I also enjoyed the history lessons, you all have such a wealth of knowledge. It is apparent to all, that you love what you do and enjoy passing along what you know. I'm sure the kids in Mrs. Chapman's class will have a lot to talk about at school this week. We look forward to visiting with you again with little sister and Dad in tow! Hopefully by then I will have removed the smoke smell from my hair!! We would also be interested in any summer programs that you may develop for the future.

News & Views

2010

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Submit articles to newsandviews@parks.ca.gov

Please include captions and photographer's name with all photographs.

Photographs must be TIFF or JPEG format. We cannot use pictures embedded in Microsoft Word documents.

Please limit article length to 300 words. Articles may be edited for clarity and length.

Articles are accepted on a rolling basis.

State Parks has Best Site Ever for Finding Recreation

FindRecreation was created by California State Parks and the GreenInfo Network. Interactive features allow you to find camping, hiking, and more. Use it to find open-space recreation opportunities all over California—not just California State Parks.

No matter where you are. No matter what kind of outdoor park-style recreation you are looking for, you can find it on this site within a few clicks and a few minutes, period.

California State Parks and the GreenInfo Network announced a web portal on May 7 that makes it dramatically easier for the public to search for any kind of open-space and recreational lands in the Golden State. No matter where you happen to be and no matter what other part of the state you want to search, the FindRecreation web site shows you everything from federal wilderness areas to neighborhood tot lots.

“FindRecreation is truly a huge step forward,” said Ruth Coleman, director of California State Parks. “If your family decides some weekend

morning that it wants to find a specific kind of recreation area, this gives you a virtual tour in minutes and you are on your way.”

Here’s what you do. Go to www.findrecreation.parks.ca.gov. Enter your home address, city or zip code and the site will show you a detailed street map or aerial image of every recreational opportunity in the area. By clicking on a particular site, you can learn more about it, and get transit or driving directions directly to it.

But here is a real bonus! You can view any site in an interactive 3D map, using Google Earth technology and high-resolution imagery from Microsoft Bing maps. For many areas, you can also see available trails, parking sites, restrooms and viewpoint outlooks. After that, it is all up to the user to get packed and get going.