

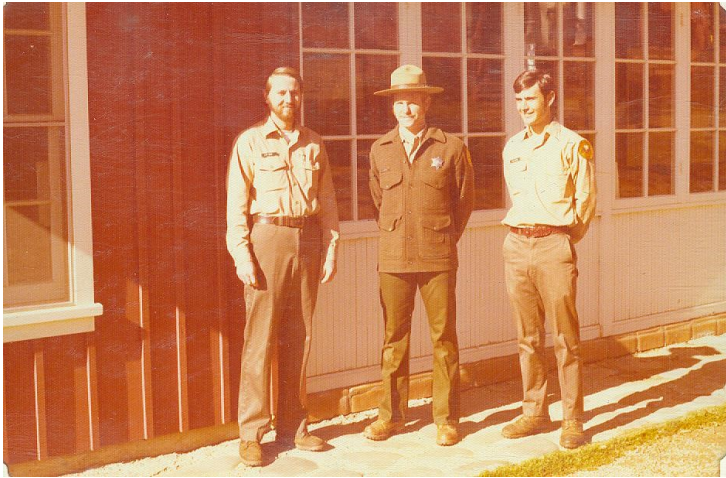


Spring 2018

# The Ponderosa







**Park staff 1976**



**Monument to Henry W Coe 1971**



**First campfire given in period costume with horse, Bobby**



**Commercial hot air balloon 1977**



**Park closed June - August 1976 due to extreme fire danger**



**De Anza reenactment passes through park 1976**

**Photos courtesy of unit photo history**

# 60 Years and Counting

By Teddy Goodrich

November 10, 2018 will mark the sixtieth anniversary of what a dear friend calls the “jewel in the crown” of the State Park System. To mark this anniversary, here are some of the events that have brought growth and change to Coe – some welcome, some not.

In 1958 a gift deed from Santa Clara County gave Pine Ridge Ranch, also known as Henry W. Coe Memorial Park, to the State of California. A little less than 13,000 acres and with the exception of the existing ranch buildings, it was a “howling wilderness.” Steley Road was paved only as far as neighboring Oak Flat Ranch, and there were no facilities for visitors.

The first supervising ranger, Wes King, moved into the ranch house December 1, 1959. He immediately began a program of posting park boundaries to discourage hunting and poaching in the park. Two old trails, Fish Trail and a connecting trail to Madrone Soda Springs were found. After months of splitting wood for the old wood stove for cooking and warmth and shaving by kerosene lantern, he wired the old ranch house for generator powered electricity.

In 1961 the road from Oak Flat Ranch to Pine Ridge was oiled for the first time, and twenty temporary campsites were installed at headquarters. The ranch house, barn, outdoor kitchen, garage and blacksmith shop were all spray painted red. In August the first bank deposit, \$12.00, was made.

New, individual backpacking sites were opened in March, 1970 at Deer Horn Springs, Poverty Flat, and Madrone Soda Springs. In August, Sada Coe Robinson came to the park to look over possible museum sites. A new hand pump was installed on the spring at Madrone Soda Springs and a fence was installed around the Monument to Henry W. Coe.

Museum construction began in 1971. Sada didn't like the plans the state submitted for the museum, so she hired her own architect and paid for the new building herself. Construction was finished in October, and the park office was moved from the ranch house to the museum. The bobcat scratching post, now residing in the “tack room,” became one of the first exhibits.

Former ranch hand Ben Nunes donated equipment for the blacksmith shop in 1972, and in March a Mayflower moving van brought furnishings from Sada's home on Mt. Hamilton Road for the museum.

The Pine Ridge Association was founded June 23, 1975 to support interpretive and educational programs and other services for visitors.

In September 1975 electricity provided by PG& E finally arrived at Pine Ridge and the noisy and often unpredictable generator was almost silenced forever.

In 1976, the De Anza reenactment traveled through the park, and a plaque was placed at Los Cruzeros to commemorate the event.

A condor was sighted on March 6 and again on April 9, 1977 near Blue Ridge and the East Fork of Coyote Creek.

November 1, 1977 – Barry Breckling reported to work. He will be the Coe unit ranger for the next thirty years

November 2, 1979 – Sada Coe Robinson passed away in San Jose. “Over the hills to the great divide. Life is such a little while”.

Continued on page 4...



## 60 Years and Counting, continued...

In 1980 the Coe volunteer program began with eight docents who received ten hours training and will staff the museum mid-March to Memorial Day.

July 1, 1981 the 17,960 Coit Ranch was added to the park, and the purchase of 34,800 acres of the Gill Mustang Ranch was completed August 31, 1981.

The first “all you can eat Santa Maria barbeque was held at Coe headquarters October 1, 1983.

On April 24, 1984 a 6.2 magnitude earthquake centered near Hall’s Valley north of Coe damaged the Cochrane Bridge, making it impassable. The bridge and Coe will not reopen until November 19, 1984

The first Mother’s Day Breakfast was held at Manzanita Point in May, 1985.

On June 1, 1987 a slide near Lake Anderson caused Dunne Avenue to drop vertically twenty feet for a distance of over one hundred feet. The park will be closed for six months.

In March 1989 break-ins at neighboring cabins were noted in the San Antonio Valley and along Orestimba, Garzas, Quinto and Romero Creeks. Groceries and sometimes clothing, including boots, were stolen. The individual responsible was called “the Weasel” or the “Spam Bandit” because of his love for canned meat. He was finally captured August 30, 1989 by tracker Maury Tripp and one of his bloodhounds.

The first cash register was installed in the visitor center September, 1989.

September 1991 brought the first hints of dam threats to the park. Dams were proposed at Pacheco Camp, on the Middle Fork of Coyote Creek, and at China Hole. In future years, dams are proposed that will flood Pacheco Creek all the way to the park boundary near Mack’s Corral and dam up Coyote Creek from Hunting Hollow east.

On January 4, 1994 the purchase of the 11,211 Redfern Ranch was completed.

Hunting Hollow opened to the public March 28, 1998.

2004 brought another threat: one of the proposed high speed rail routes will run through Robison Canyon in the Orestimba Wilderness.

On July 9, 2006 a fire began in Del Puerto Canyon and swiftly burned south into Robison Canyon and its confluence with the South Fork of Orestimba Creek. It will not be controlled until July 19, 2006.

The Lick Fire began on private property Labor Day, 2007. It will eventually burn 47,760 acres of the park and won’t be contained until September 11, 2007.

In 2007 Barry Breckling retired after thirty years at Henry Coe State Park and was honored with the Olmsted Award for leadership and vision at a special ceremony in Sacramento.

In 2007 and again in 2008 Coe, along with other state parks, was threatened with closure due to a state budget deficit.

November 10, 2018 - Sixty years and counting – where do we look for assurance that the park will always be here? Perhaps in something as simple as this: throughout the years one small constant remains: some-time each October, the golden crown sparrows return to Coe.

# PRA Annual Meeting

By Barbara Bessey

The annual meeting of the Pine Ridge Association was held in Morgan Hill on February 3, 2018.

There were seven new volunteers in the Fall training class; the total number of uniformed volunteers now numbers 130 individuals. These individuals volunteered 19,003 hours during the year.

Six people who served 50 or more hours beyond the training program advanced to full volunteer status:

Elena Armstrong  
Harry Cline  
Michael Ingrassia  
Robert Method  
Nicholas Smith  
Marla Zayed

Three volunteers who had served 250 hours or more, including 100 hours spent working in the Visitor Center, were advanced to Senior Volunteer: Michael Hundt, Michael Ingrassia, and Bob Kass.

Forty-six volunteers received the visitor service award, a special battery pack with a battery and a flashlight. These volunteers spent 48 or more hours working in the visitor center or on other visitor-related activities during the past year, for example, presenting programs to visitors or leading hikes and participating in interpretive events:

Heather Ambler	Sue Harwager	Steve McHenry
Elena Armstrong	Don Holmes	Robert Method
Chere Bargar	Ken Howell	Lois Phillips
Jim Brady	Ken Hulick	Joanne Rife
Ann Briggs	Michael Hundt	Diane Scariot
Winslow Briggs	Michael Ingrassia	Pat Scharfe
David Cartwright	John Jenkins	Lynne Starr
Harry Cline	Bob Kass	Carolyn Straub
Dale Combs	Jodie Keahey	Kitty Swindle
Mark Deger	Linda Keahey	John Thatcher
Sue DeKalb	Gary Keller	Bev VanderWeide
Bonnie Doran	Cynthia Leeder	Dave Waldrop
Bill Frazer	Allene Liebenberg	Jim Wright
Paul Gillot	Paul Liebenberg	Dean Yon
Patrick Goodrich	Jim Mason	
Teddy Goodrich	Margaret Mary McBride	

Fifteen volunteers received special recognition for all the hours they have spent on Coe Park volunteer activities over the years. Between them, they have donated 49,793.50 hours to the park! Sue Harwager, Eric Simonson, Greg Scott, Larry Fitterer, and Mark Deger volunteered at least 1,000 hours of service. Thomas Conrad, Carolyn Straub, and John Thatcher volunteered at least 2,000 hours of service. Heather Ambler, Victor Bubbett, and Cynthia Leeder volunteered at least 3,000 hours of service. Gary Keller volunteered at least 4,000 hours of service. Sue DeKalb volunteered at least 5,000 hours of service. Don Holmes volunteered at least 9,000 hours of service. And Kitty Swindle volunteered more than 10,000 hours of service!

A special silver pin with the PRA logo was presented to five volunteers who have participated in the uniformed volunteer program for ten years or more: Sue Harwager, Steve McHenry, Joanne Rife, Mitsi Shine, and Carolyn Straub.

Continued on page 6...

## **PRA Annual Meeting, continued...**

Rangers John Verhoeven and Jen Naber presented annual passes to California State Parks to 47 volunteers who had donated 200 hours or more within the past year and to couples whose combined number of hours totaled 200 hours or more. The hours include the time spent by some uniformed volunteers who volunteered time at other state parks, and the time that some non-uniformed individuals volunteered at Coe Park:

Heather Ambler	Patrick Goodrich	Manny Pita
Cliff Anderson	Teddy Goodrich	Art Pon
Elena Armstrong	Sue Harwager	Dick Rawson
Chere Bargar	Dan Healy	Eric Simonson
Jim Brady	Ken Hulick	Martie Sinclair
Ann Briggs	Michael Hundt	Rob Sinclair
Winslow Briggs	Michael Ingrassia	Carolyn Straub
Victor Bubbett	Bob Kass	Philip Strenfel
David Cartwright	Jodie Keahey	Kitty Swindle
Don Clare	Linda Keahey	Ted Tawshunsky
Mark Deger	Kelly Kersten	John Thatcher
Sue DeKalb	Cynthia Leeder	Dave Waldrop
Laura Dominguez-Yon	Allene Liebenberg	Jesus Valdez
Darryl DuBois	Paul Liebenberg	Dean Yon
Larry Fitterer	Steve McHenry	Ligaya Yrastorza
Bill Frazer	Robert Method	

Rangers John Verhoeven and Jen Naber presented free annual passes to State Parks within the Monterey District to 38 volunteers (uniformed and non-uniformed) who had donated at least 72 hours but fewer than 200 hours (and to families whose combined number of hours totaled between 72 and 200 hours):

Joseph Belli	John Jenkins	Pat Scharfe
Dan Benefiel	Chris Kangas	Greg Scott
Liz Brinkman	Gary Keller	Heike Stabenow
Richard Casey	Irwin Koff	Rainer Stabenow
Harry Cline	Janet Koff	Lynne Starr
Dale Combs	Jim Mason`	Dick Stone
Thomas Conrad	Kathy McBride	Lourdes Stone
Bonnie Daley	Margaret Mary McBride	Carolyn Tucker
Bonnie Doran	Mike Meyer	Bev VanderWeide
Ed Fox	Lori Oleson	Libby Vincent
Paul Gillot	Lois Phillips	Pauline Wood
Don Homes	Joanne Rife	Jim Wright
Ken Howell	Diane Scariot	

### **Golden Bear Award**

The uniformed volunteer committee's Golden Bear Award for exceptional service was given to Rob and Martie Sinclair. They joined the volunteer program in 1985. Since joining the volunteer program, together they have volunteered almost 11,000 hours. They have been extremely involved in preparing for and staffing the Coe Backcountry Weekend since its inception.

### **Volunteer of the Year Award**

The PRA volunteer-of-the-year award is given to individuals who have contributed outstanding work in furthering the mission of the association in preserving and enriching Coe Park. This year's award went to Paul Liebenberg. Paul joined the uniformed volunteer program in 2012. In 2017, he volunteered over 700 hours, and he has volunteered almost 4,000 hours since joining the program. He works at the park three days a week, doing trail and springs coordination, bike trail coordination, MAU training, and help with the Coe website.

Continued on page 7...

## PRA Annual Meeting, continued...

A delicious hot lunch was provided at the end of the meeting. Many thanks to the volunteers who worked hard in the kitchen preparing everything.

Congratulations to everyone!



### New Volunteers

Molly Shaw, Jeff McMillan, Bobby Barnett, Joe Machado, Cliff Anderson  
(not pictured - Matt Morley, Michael Paglianti)



Cameron Bowers presenting Rob (and Martie) Sinclair the Golden Bear Award.



Dan Benefiel presenting Paul Liebenberg the Volunteer of the Year award.



Photos by Dick Rawson



# Creatures of Coe - Blainville's Horned Lizard

By Joseph Belli

Winter is behind us; days are getting longer and sunnier. It's that time of year again: horned lizard season.

Horned lizards, as a group, need little introduction. People who have never heard of whiptails, who wouldn't know a skink from a skunk, are familiar with horned lizards, even if they erroneously refer to them as "horned toads," "horned frogs," or, in full bumpkin fashion, "horny toads." Besides rattlesnakes, horned lizards are the most iconic reptile in the park, but horned lizards enjoy a much warmer reception. They serve as mascots for schools, and the town of Coalinga even hosts an annual Horned Toad Derby. To paraphrase an old Sarah Lee ad, nobody doesn't like horned lizards.



There are thirteen species of horned lizards inhabiting dry and semi-arid lands from southern Canada well into Mexico, from the Pacific Coast to Oklahoma. Some areas of the Southwest have as many as four species; here in northern California we have just one, Blainville's (formerly Coast) Horned Lizard, *Phrynosoma blainvillii*. They're found in the Central Valley and surrounding foothills, and along the coast south of San Francisco Bay into Baja.

Like others of their kind, Blainville's Horned Lizards have squat, flattened, well-camouflaged bodies. Unlike many other lizards, their short tails don't detach. They aren't built for climbing, nor are they suited for speed, though they may scurry away to find refuge in a nearby shrub. Failing that, horned lizards can, if need be, hiss, bite, and even gore their nemesis. They can gulp air and inflate themselves to become difficult to swallow; that, along with the spikes, might be enough to deter a snake from pressing an attack. Some snakes and lizards discharge foul-smelling musk when molested. Horned lizards, bless their odor-free souls, don't do that, but they occasionally squirt blood out of their eyes. They especially employ this when confronted by foxes and coyotes, for members of the Dog Family show a strong aversion to the taste of horned lizard blood. They rarely resort to blood squirting when handled by people, however. Despite all these tactics, their main defense strategy is to remain immobile. With their cryptic color, they blend into the ground astonishingly well. It's hard to see them until they move.

Maybe that's why I see so few. But are there other reasons why I don't see as many horned lizards as I think I should? As it turns out, there's more to their story than meets the eye.

Horned lizards aren't active year round. You might see fence lizards out on sunny winter days, but you won't spot a horned lizard. They're inactive, buried just below the surface. Horned lizards actually become inactive in summer, after breeding and eating enough to build up energy reserves, and don't return until spring. They're only up for four months or so out of the year. By late summer, the only horned lizards around will be recently-hatched young, which emerge as the size of a quarter. If adults are hard to spot, hatchlings are even more difficult. They'll feed and grow quickly before burying themselves in October or November.

Besides the time of year, horned lizards also show different activity patterns based on the time of day. Hult and Germano radio-tracked horned lizards in the San Joaquin Valley and found peak activity for two hours a day in spring, in mid to late morning. By summer, that dropped to just one hour.

Temperature has a lot to do with activity levels in lizards, for they are ectotherms, "cold blooded," at the mercy of the elements. Those radio-tracked horned lizards were out in temperatures ranging from 65-105 degrees, but were primarily active between 80-90 degrees. Most sought shade when temperatures hit the mid-90s, and buried themselves when the temperature cooled below 75.

Continued on page 9...



## Creatures of Coe - Blainville's Horned Lizard, continued...

So, to see horned lizards, you've got to be out not only at the right time of year, but the right time of day as well, and the temperature has to be within a rather narrow range. As if that wasn't enough, there are yet other factors to consider. Blainville's Horned Lizards have been found in a variety of habitats: grassland, chaparral, scrub, and oak woodland, but wherever they occur, they avoid areas of dense vegetation, especially ground cover. Radio-tracked lizards showed a strong preference for open ground and areas with scattered shrubs. Perhaps that's why horned lizards in the park are seen more often in the chaparral in the central and eastern portions of Coe than in the grassy meadows on the west side. Another habitat variable is soil. Horned lizards prefer loose soils that allow them to dig, and are less common in heavy clay soils than loamy ones.

Those are an awful lot of conditions. No wonder I only see a handful of horned lizards per year.

There are other, big-picture reasons why you and I don't see as many horned lizards as we'd like: Blainville's Horned Lizards are in decline. At one time, they were abundant on the floor of the Central Valley, but today, despite all that open space, they're restricted to isolated patches of natural habitat, lands that haven't been cultivated. Horned lizards, so reliant upon the ground, can't exist where the soil is plowed.

They were probably common in the Santa Clara Valley as well, especially south county, but they largely disappeared decades ago, for not only can they not coexist with orchards, vineyards, and row crops, they fare no better in suburbia.

Habitat loss has been the major factor in the decline, but there are other reasons. Horned lizards rely heavily on ants, in particular Harvester ants, for food. In many areas, native Harvester ants have been supplanted by non-native Argentine ants, the tiny pests that invade your house in warm weather. Unfortunately, Argentine ants are not palatable to horned lizards, so their presence represents a major food loss for horned lizards.

In some areas, collecting has taken a toll on horned lizard populations. There has long been a high demand for horned lizards as pets, which is especially unfortunate, because horned lizards can be difficult to feed and care for in captivity. As hard as horned lizards may be to find, they're not hard enough for determined collectors.

The result is that Blainville's Horned Lizards are no longer found where they used to be. Though not classified as endangered, they are listed by the State of California as a Species of Special Concern, and cannot be collected or held captive without a permit.

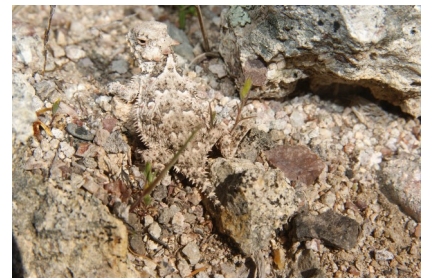
If there's good news here, it's that none of these threats prevail in Coe, and the park probably supports a healthy population. I'd like to believe that, just as there is more to their story than meets the eye, there are more horned lizards out there than the eye can see.



Hatchling horned lizard

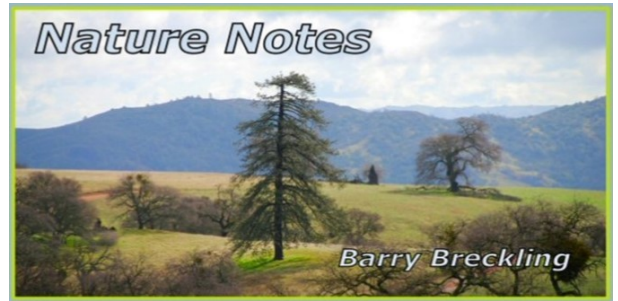


Young horned lizard



# Land of Fire

As early European explorers sailed along the eastern coast of South America, they frequently spotted fires set by Native Americans. They named the land that would become Argentina "la tierra del fuego," the land of fire. As they sailed along the California coast, they spotted whole hillsides of brilliant orange, and they also named this land la tierra del fuego. But these golden areas were not colored by the flames of fires; they were hillsides covered with carpets of California Poppies.



In 1816, members of a Russian expedition to the Pacific Coast went ashore in San Francisco to restock their provisions. Among them was the ship's German naturalist, Adelbert von Camisso, who collected some of the poppies and named the species *Eschscholzia californica* after his friend, Johann Friedrich Gustav von Eschscholtz, the ship's Estonian physician.

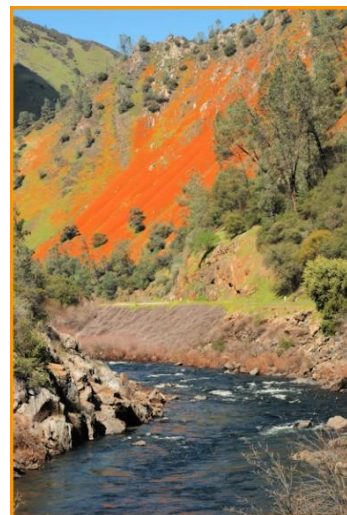
Californians tend to take California Poppies for granted. They're common and widespread, thriving in all of the California counties with the possible exception of Imperial County. The species ranges north into Washington, south into Mexico, and east through Nevada and into New Mexico. The plants generally bloom from March through October, but they can pop up during any month. Given their familiarity and showiness, California Poppies were the obvious choice for our official state flower.

Poppy petals are brilliant orange in early spring, but later in the season they often become more yellowish. Occasionally a poppy will have white petals; one white poppy used to grow at the first bend in the road past the back-country gate and another one, near Frog Lake. The plant's sepals are fused into a dunce cap shape that will eventually pop off as the petals untwist. You can expedite the process by gently lifting the cap, exposing the unfolding petals.

The California Poppy has an unusual trait. It's most commonly an annual, dying back each year and coming back from seeds. However, it's not uncommon to find plants that are perennial, sprouting anew from the root stock year after year.

Tufted Poppies (*Eschscholzia caespitosa*) looks a lot like California Poppies. Typically, they have smaller petals that are lighter in color. But the easiest way to distinguish the two species is to examine the base of the petals. California Poppies have a disk, called a torus, beneath the petals (see the photo). Tufted Poppies have no disk.

Some years, California Poppies can grow in great profusion (note the photo of the poppies growing in the Merced River canyon in 2009). Such blooms often occur in areas that burned during the previous year.





# In Memoriam - Everett Allen

By Barry Breckling

I'm sorry to report that long-time volunteer Everett Allen died on Sunday April 22nd after a brief battle with lung cancer. Most of us knew him simply as Ev.

Ev started volunteering at Coe Park in 1987, and he seemed to be at the park more often than not; of course if he wasn't at Coe, you were likely to find him at Starbucks. Although Ev was best known for his trail work, he did so much more. He was the consummate volunteer, taking on many projects, and always doing high-quality work. I feel honored to have had him as a friend--he always was very supportive of me.



I asked a few people to share a memory or two of Ev, and they sent a bunch of not necessarily short responses. Lee Dittmann's memories are of particular interest. Either Lee has great recall or he must have followed Ev around, taking notes. Here are their responses. [Publisher's note - Sorry, I did have to reduce the size of some of them.]

Ev's family knew that Coe Park was a very special place to him and have asked that any donations in remembrance of Ev be given to the Pine Ridge Association.

## Other remembrances:

### From Libby Vincent

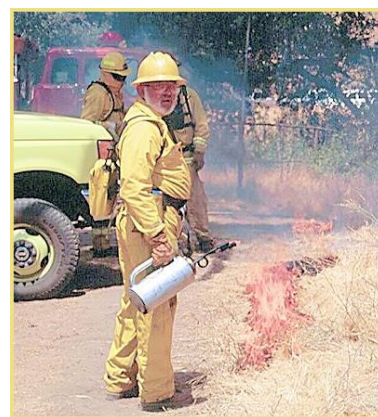
I'll never forget Ev driving in Kaiser-Aetna Road on one of the backcountry weekends in the late 1990s bearing a "flagon" of hot and fresh Starbucks coffee to share at the Orestimba Corral. I was camped under some blue oaks near James Spring but dashed to the road when Ev stopped and enjoyed every sip of that coffee. He did amazing work on the Flat Frog Trail and I remember him saying, with a chuckle, how he sold his house and moved to a condo so he wouldn't have to work in his garden. Famous last words. Ev loved telling jokes and would buttonhole anyone to relay his latest. One of his favorites included the punch line "look, no hands!" I'll spare you the other details. I think it was Ev who talked about one of his early days at the park when Ranger Breckling left later in the day, gave Ev the keys, and said "the park is yours," which delighted him. Ev lived a long and full life. It's too sad he died of lung cancer, not that we get to choose, which is a horrible way to go.

### From Teddy Goodrich

Trail building - where would we be without Flat Frog, Springs, Forest, and Live Oak Trails! His beans and killer cranberry sauce at Coe Thanksgiving. He and Kevin Gilmartin had quite a contest going on for a few years [see Barbara Bessey's entry]. And, of course, the genealogy of the Coe family. Just about two weeks ago I helped a Coe descendent, Liza Coe, find her connection to Henry with Everett's genealogy of the Coe family. Everett was involved in so many aspects of Coe - it's hard to isolate a few!

### From Chris Weske

Everett worked many of the prescribed burns at Coe as well as Mt Diablo, Big Basin, and Point Lobos. Photo from the Hunting Hollow burn July 20, 2001.



Continued on page 12...

## **In Memoriam - Everett Allen, continued...**

### **From Lee Sims**

His trail building was legendary as are the trails he built including the great cliff hanging wall on the corral trail and steps and retaining walls on the Flat Frog. The Flat Frog I think he did entirely himself with perhaps the help of an occasional youthful trail building crew. He was always focused on the work he did. He took over handling Mother's Day Tickets and did it with an unmatched thoroughness, dedication and attention to detail sometimes frustrating me. He was a character.

### **From Winslow Briggs**

Barry, didn't Everett also work on the Live Oak Trail with a group of juveniles? That was certainly a special--and most unusual--contribution. Also, I remember that there was a completely unnecessary hump right at the start of the Corral Trail and one of Everett's first actions was to flatten it. I remember wondering why on earth it was there in the first place (without doing anything about it) but it was Everett who sheared the whole hump off and leveled the trail. I marvel at his engineering skill every time I hike either the Corral Trail or the Flat Frog Trail. My politics and Everett's were different but I am part of two beloved families--a relatively small one consisting of the Coe PRA and Volunteer folks and a much larger one, the international family of plant scientists. Whatever the linkages' within these two families, they are completely and wonderfully apolitical.

### **From Lee Dittman**

A man of stories and a conservative provocateur, Everett Allen was a strong advocate for Coe Park who put his money and above all countless hours of skilled labor into improving it. Typically, Everett would drive up to Coe HQ in the morning almost every fair weather weekday, work a few hours on a trail project, and be done by noon. He used to say that doing trail work enabled him to contemplate the long-term and the short-term. The long-term was finishing the next twenty feet or so of trail while the short term was the next swing of the mattock. When an offshoot from the Trail Committee called the Loop Group formed ca. 1990 or '91, Everett got involved in working on trails, starting with the new Forest Trail. He attended a workshop presented at Coe HQ by a trail supervisor from another district. It included advice on laying out trails using a clinometer and stakes to mark the edge, rather than just guessing grades by eye as they had been constructed at Coe before that. It also included instruction on how to build lasting retaining walls in steep slopes. More than anyone else, Ev used the latter skill to improve the trails around Coe HQ. He was responsible for most of these structures along the Live Oak Trail, one of his earliest projects. The last trail project I recall him working on before I left in 1999 was widening and adding retaining wall steps to the steep wooded slopes of the Corral Trail. I know that he wanted to route and build a new trail extending from the Middle Ridge end of his Frog Lake Trail, winding all the way down to the Middle Fork, linking up Deer Horn Spring along the way. He deserves to be a new trail's namesake, and this long-overdue project should be a prime consideration. I am certain that he would scoff at renaming an existing trail for him. And, knowing Ev, he would have left no doubt about his views!

### **From Barbara Bessey**

Thirty years ago, my husband Kevin Gilmartin and I were invited by a colleague to go backpacking with him. He knew that I was just learning how to backpack and he said that he thought that he had a great place to introduce us to. The place he recommended was Coe Park. We were not familiar with this park, so I sent a letter to the park headquarters (no email or computers back then!) asking if the park staff could suggest some possible backpacking routes. I received a very nice letter back from then Coe Park Ranger Barry Breckling offering several suggestions. We went to the park for a one-night backpack trip. However, as we were leaving the Visitor Center to start our journey, our colleague asked whether any of the trails we would be hiking on took us near the redwoods. OOPS, we were told that they were in Henry Cowell State Park, which was not where Coe Park was... Well, needless to say, our colleague was crushed, and he really didn't enjoy the weekend. We kept trying to reassure him that we were not disappointed and that we were having a good time. Several weeks later, Kevin suggested that he and I return to Coe Park to give it a chance to show its glory to us. This time, we selected a three-day weekend in the spring. I took Ranger Breckling's message with us to use in discussing possible routes. When we entered the Visitor Center, we were greeted by someone behind the counter whom we assumed was a Ranger. He was very sympathetic to our story of our previous trip and said that he thought we would enjoy our upcoming weekend a lot more. He sketched out our route and gave us tips about possible missteps. So we set out on our journey. When we returned several days later, he was there and recognized us and wanted to know if we had a good time, which we did. The Volunteer who was so kind and helpful to us was Everett Allen. We always thought of him as having a big heart. Everett, you will be missed.



# In Memoriam - Steven Douglas Knepper

By Teddy Goodrich

Coe has lost a good friend. Steve was a quiet man, but when cornered, he could share a lot of history. The son and grandson of pioneer families, his knowledge of the tiniest details of the history of the hills knew no bounds. While not a uniformed volunteer, he helped at a number of Coe events: Mother's Day Breakfast, Ranch Day, and the Tfest. The beans he cooked for the latter were legendary. Steve passed away on March 30th.

Steve, you left us too soon. There were more stories to be told. We will miss you very much.

## Other remembrances:

### From Laura Dominguez-Yon

We also met with Steve Knepper's sister Barbara, and at a later date, we will have an event to dedicate the mineral well in Steve's honor. Barbara tells us that Steve helped repair & replace the dome cover (what I call the "hershey kiss" because that's what it looks like in a photo Teddy Goodrich provided when it lay on the ground beside the mineral well). We welcome PRA's assistance in creating the new event -- selecting a date, planning and holding the event, publicity. Perhaps in collaboration with the anniversary celebration? Or a separate event entirely. The family is open to suggestions.



Photos by Sue Dekalb

# Tuesday Anniversary Projects

By Sue Dekalb

Every Tuesday a group of volunteers comes up to Coe Headquarters to work on a ten-page list of projects that we would like to get done before the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in November. Rick Hentges, the HQ maintenance worker, has created a list of all the things we would like to complete before the event. Most of this work involves repairing and cleaning up areas that have been neglected for years.

If you have been up to HQ in the last two months, you have probably noticed a few things that have been done already. We have tried to concentrate on the Visitor Center first since it will become more difficult to work around that area as more and more people come to the park. Working during the week allows us to get a lot of work done without impacting the park visitors. There are also things that can't be done when there are too many people around.

There are fences to fix, painting to be done, and just general cleanup. There is a group of regulars that comes up every Tuesday: Don Clare, Sue Dekalb, Dan Healy, Jodie Keahey, Linda Keahey, Jesus Valdez, Ken Hulick, and Art Pon. Others who help when they can are Paul Liebenberg, Jim Wright, Kelly Kersten, Marla Zayad, Ed Fox, Denice Verhoeven, Sue Harwager, and Teddy Goodrich.

If you are interested in helping us work on the Tuesday Anniversary projects, please contact Sue Dekalb at [sue.dekalb@verizon.net](mailto:sue.dekalb@verizon.net).



Photos by Sue Dekalb



Photos by Sue Harwager



# Thursday Trail Work Crew

By Sue Dekalb

Every Thursday a group of volunteers goes out into the back-country to brush trails, remove fallen trees, and improve footing where necessary. Since Coe has no 'active' State sponsored trail crew, all the work must be done manually by volunteers.

Paul Liebenberg is the leader of this crew and he determines where our work would be most useful. He scouts out in advance any areas where we will work so we know what to expect and what tools to bring. Many of the trails in the back-country are so overgrown you can't even follow them through the Chamise and Buckbrush except by following the flags Paul puts out.



Removing downed pine on Cougar Trail - pictured front to back Joe Fabiny, Jesus Valdez and Don Clare

The following folks come out almost every week to do trail work: Rick Casey, Don Clare, Sue Dekalb, Dan Healy, Bob Kass, Jodie Keahey, Linda Keahey, Kelly Kersten, Allene Liebenberg, Jesus Valdez, Paul Liebenberg, and Art Pon. Others who have joined us when they can are Ken Hulick, Jim Wright, Paul Gillot, Rob Glover, Ron Erskine, Mike Meyer, Eric Simonsen, Lynne Starr, and John Thatcher.

If you are interested in joining this group on Thursdays, contact Paul Liebenberg at [pliebenberg@earthlink.net](mailto:pliebenberg@earthlink.net).



Grizzly Gulch - pictured front to back are Dan Healy, Art Pon, Don Clare, Paul Liebenberg and Jesus Valdez.



Work in progress on Grizzly Gulch

Photos by Sue Dekalb

# News from the Board of the Pine Ridge Association

By Daniel Benefiel, President, PRA Board

With several new members joining the board over the last year, we decided this was a good time to step back and think about how we're doing as an organization and what the board needs to focus on. To dig into this, instead of just the scheduled bimonthly meeting where we attend to usual business, we've been having monthly meetings led by Paul Gillot. We have been discussing our objectives, what we most want to accomplish, and where we should focus. We've had very active, productive meetings and talked about finances, membership, the need for more interpretive projects and activities, the need for increasing visitor attendance, better organization of PRA business, and better communication for the PRA and volunteers. We're still boiling this down into specific action items, but we've already learned a great deal.

We'd really love to get more input from all of the PRA members and volunteers. Please tell us what you'd like to see more of or done better!

The board has been conducting other business at the recent meetings and over email. Park staff and volunteers have been making their way through a long list of projects at HQ, getting things fixed and spruced up ahead of the 60th anniversary. The PRA still has funds donated specifically for structural repairs at HQ, and we've approved use of those for some of the repair work.

The board meets bimonthly. All PRA members are welcome. Recent meetings have been at the homes of board members in Morgan Hill. Please email [pra-board@coepark.net](mailto:pra-board@coepark.net) if you would like to attend. The next meetings will be May 8 and July 10 at 6:30pm.

---

## New PRA Members

**We are pleased to welcome the new members listed below. Thank you for your support.**

We need your help to keep our membership list current and accurate. If you have any questions regarding your membership or to let us know of any change of address, please contact us.

Susan Ellenbogen, Grass Valley  
M. Nevin Smith, Watsonville  
Richard Casey III, Gilroy  
Meg Pelose, San Jose  
Andrea Dawson, San Jose  
Richard Duarte, Merced  
Dixie Garr, Morgan Hill

Email: [membership@coepark.net](mailto:membership@coepark.net)  
U.S. mail: 9100 East Dunne Avenue, Morgan Hill, CA 95037

<http://coepark.net/pineridgeassociation/join>



**Pine Ridge Association  
Henry W. Coe State Park  
9100 East Dunne Avenue  
Morgan Hill, CA 95037**

**PRA Board of Directors**

Dan Benefiel, President  
Adam Escoto, Vice President  
Steve McHenry, Secretary  
Cynthia Leeder, Treasurer  
Paul Gillot  
Sue Harwager  
Ken Howell  
Michael Ingrassia  
Manny Pitta, Chair of the Volunteer Committee  
Stuart Organo, Supervising Ranger

**PRA Volunteer Committee**

Jen Naber, Volunteer Coordinator  
John Verhoeven, Volunteer Coordinator  
Manny Pitta, Chair  
Ken Howell  
Michael Hundt  
Kathryn Levine  
Allene Liebenberg  
John Thatcher  
Dave Waldrop

**Contributors for this issue**

Sue Harwager, publisher  
Patrick Goodrich, co-editor  
Teddy Goodrich, co-editor, author  
Joseph Belli, author, photographer  
Daniel Benefiel, author  
Barbara Bessey, author  
Barry Breckling, author, photographer  
Liz Brinkman, mailing list  
Sue Dekalb, author, photographer  
Patrick Goodrich, photographer  
Teddy Goodrich, author  
Dick Rawson, photographer

*The Ponderosa* is a quarterly publication of the Pine Ridge Association. The PRA's mission is to enhance and enrich the public's experience at Henry W. Coe State Park through education and interpretation. Articles and artwork relating to the natural history, history, and management of the park are welcome. Also, interested in volunteering? Email Manny Pitta, [mannypitta@gmail.com](mailto:mannypitta@gmail.com).

Please send submissions and ideas to the editor at: [PRAnewsletter3@gmail.com](mailto:PRAnewsletter3@gmail.com)

**Deadline for the next issue: July 31, 2018**