

The Ponderosa

The Pine Ridge Association Newsletter
Henry W. Coe State Park



Benches in the Park

By Libby Vincent



Barbara Bessey enjoying the memorial bench for Kevin Gilmartin on the Forest Trail. Photo courtesy of Paul Liebenberg.

Last year, volunteer Mukesh Jani returned from a foot patrol hiking the Blue Ridge loop and bemoaned the fact that there were no decent benches along the way to rest up and take a break. Mukesh suggested that someone should “think of creating more hiker friendly facilities along the magnificent trail system.” So we did.

Winslow Briggs and I brainstormed the possibilities of putting in some benches, approached the Pine Ridge Association board for funding, which the board was happy to provide, and Winslow ordered the first three benches from the California State Parks Foundation. We decided that these benches would replace existing but falling-down benches on the Springs Trail, the Forest Trail, and the bench on Blue Ridge at the top of Hobbs Road that Winslow described as being “functional only if your legs were at least five feet long.” Given that these first three were replacement benches, there was no need to provide the required State paperwork (project evaluation forms or PEFs) so they could be installed without delay.

We asked Barbara Bessey if she would like one of the benches to be dedicated to her husband Kevin Gilmartin, who died two years ago. Barbara

Summer 2013

Inside this issue:

<i>Benches in the Park</i> by Libby Vincent	1, 2
<i>Henry W. Coe Trail and Camping Map 2013 coming soon</i>	3
<i>Some Coe Park History</i> by Teddy Goodrich	4
<i>Coe Park Outing for Equestrians</i> by Chere Bargar	5
<i>Cats and Dogs</i> by Barry Breckling	6
<i>Park Events and Informa- tion</i>	7
<i>News from the Volunteer Committee</i> by Manny Pitta	8
<i>News from Gilroy Yamoto Hot Springs</i> by Laura Dominguez-Yon	9

Continued on page 2....

Benches in the Park continued....

was delighted by that prospect and we worked with her on the wording for the back of the bench. In due course, three benches arrived, and we decided to install the first one for Kevin and Barbara on the Forest Trail, a short distance from the east end of the trail. The bench that was there had been a favorite place for Barbara Kevin to linger while birding. Barbara said they liked to sit quietly and wait for the birds to come to them.

Early in May we scheduled a work day to remove the remains of the fallen-down bench and assemble and install the new bench. Mukesh was there to help, as was Barbara, plus Paul Liebenberg, Dave Perrin, Sam Parker, and park maintenance staffer Eric Griggs. That same day we hauled some hardware out to the location of the replacement bench on the Springs Trail, just west of the side trail down to Lion Spring. A while later, Paul Liebenberg returned to remove the loads of poison oak from all around the bench on the Forest Trail. He's one of those lucky people who never suffers from any reaction on being exposed to poison oak.

At the end of June, a group of us met again at Eric's shop and loaded up his truck and also Paul Liebenberg's truck to haul people, cement, hardware, and water so we could finish installing the Springs Trail bench and install the Blue Ridge bench. Eric and park aid Tony Oldofredi had done fantastic work to assemble the benches and soak the soil to prepare the areas where they were to be installed. They also removed the old bench from Blue Ridge Road. We were able to install the two new benches that day, despite the heat.

Going forward, we have sufficient funds from the PRA board, and from contributions in memory of volunteers and friends of the park, to place five more benches in the park:

Bench in memory of Ben Swindle at Wills Pond
 Bench in memory of Fitz Fitzharris at Coit Lake
 Bench in memory of Rich Allsop, location TBD
 Bench at Frog Lake
 Bench at Poverty Flat

All new benches will require PEFs and Winslow is more than happy to take care of these when he's back in action and his new shoulder is fully functional. I suspect we'll start with the memorial benches and put new benches at Frog Lake and Poverty Flat next. If possible, Winslow and I would like to continue working to place benches at different locations in the park where they'll serve visitors well. Among other places, we're thinking of:

China Hole
 Jackass Trail at Blue Ridge Road or the south end of Jackass Trail on Poverty Flat Road
 Top of Willow Ridge Trail on Willow Ridge Road
 County Line Road at the top of the Alquist Trail under the large oak nearby
 Mississippi Lake, south end, on the dam
 Pacheco Falls

Other suggestions?

We hope you get to enjoy the three newly installed benches to rest up and enjoy your favorite panorama of Coe Park.



Eric Griggs, Ted Tawshunsky, Sue Dekalb, Libby Vincent, Tony Oldofredi, and Mike Meyer and the new bench on Blue Ridge. Photo courtesy of Paul Liebenberg.



Libby Vincent and the new bench on the Springs Trail. Photo courtesy of Paul Liebenberg.

Henry W. Coe Trail and Camping Map 2013:

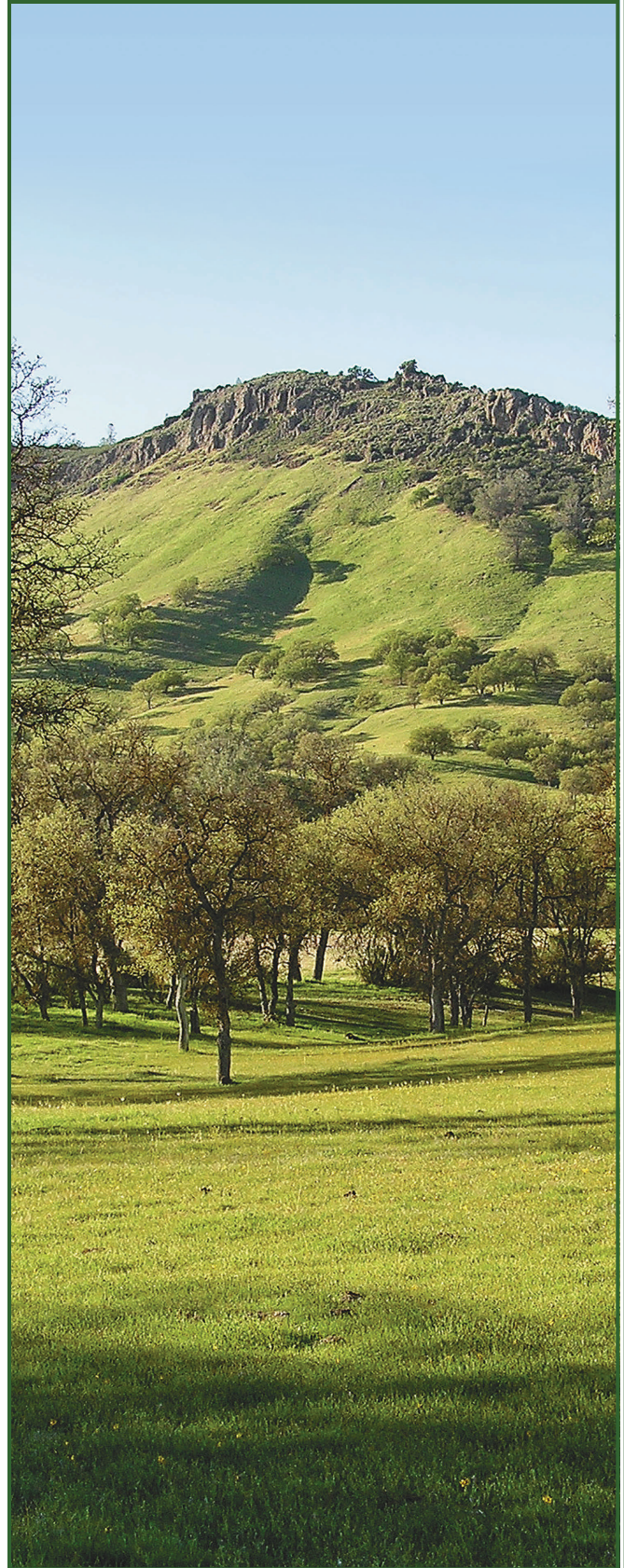
Coming Soon to a Visitor Center near You

By Winslow Briggs

Since the Henry W. Coe State Park trail and camping map was first published in 2002, and with a second edition in 2006, the Pine Ridge Association has sold over 20,000 copies of the park maps—close to 2,000 per year. Present supplies are almost exhausted (indeed there are no plastic maps left and only about 250 paper maps) so there was clearly urgency to publish the third edition. Hence, over the past six months volunteers have actively worked to get a new edition ready for the printer. The PRA is once again having 10,000 maps printed, this time all of them plastic. (Printing the map takes a printer with a LARGE press. Pikes Peak Litho, our printer, claims that if it is no larger than a double bed they can print it.)

Why not just reprint the existing map? Initially, there were a mere 36 reasons, but closer scrutiny identified another dozen. For example, the Jim Donnelly, Middle Steer Ridge, and Grapevine trails were all realigned to become more user-friendly. Of course, this process changes mileages, eliminates or adds trail junctions, and generally produces some challenging proof-reading. It also changes mileages for various hikes shown in the tables. For some reason, Hartman Peak was never labeled. The word “Falls” was missing after “Hole-in-the Rock.” Arnold Field was left nameless. The trails around the main visitor center were not labeled in the inset map. A major contour line was labeled 1400 in one spot and 1600 nearby. Minor contour intervals were 50 feet for complicated technical reasons and could now be converted to 40-foot intervals like USGS topographical maps. Some trails had been swallowed by voracious chaparral and had fallen into complete disuse. In the worst cases, unused and deleted by nature, they had to be deleted from the map. New springs have been identified and are added. A spring that hadn’t flowed for at least seven years has been eliminated. Our new weather station in the Lakeview acquisition is now shown on the map. “Coyote Creek Entrance” is changed to “Coyote Creek Gate.” (A legitimate park entrance should have at minimum parking space and restroom facilities!) The above is a sampling of the almost 50 items requiring attention. Fortunately, unlike the situation for the 2006 map, there have been no changes in the park’s boundaries—a good thing because the map itself already touches the right-hand margin of the paper. There isn’t much room for expansion.

The third edition has a lovely image on the front of the Rooster Comb in the springtime taken by Bob Patrie. If you are feeling ambitious, you should make the trip to see the Rooster Comb yourself. Be sure to take the new map along.



Some Coe Park History

by Teddy Goodrich, Historian, Pine Ridge Association

The Shafer Corral

When cattle baron Henry Miller asked his foreman, Henry Schafer, and Henry's wife, Mary, to file homestead claims along the East Fork of Coyote Creek, he wasn't trying to add to his vast real estate empire; he was seeking to control the water in Coyote Creek. For some years in the late 1880s, real estate speculators had been acquiring land along Coyote Creek. Their methods were often devious; the land was purchased or homesteaded by men and women who then gave the title to the land to the speculator. The motive of these speculators requires a bit of imagination, but it seems most likely that their goal was to build a reservoir to impound the water of Coyote Creek. At that time, agriculture was a booming industry in the Santa Clara Valley, and water from the reservoir could be sold to farmers for a handsome profit. Fortunately, their plans never came to fruition.

The Schafers built a corral on their homestead land as part of the improvements that were required before a homestead patent could be given. The corral was in a favorable place along the creek and was used for years by ranchers for gathering their stock. Their name, minus the "c," stuck long after the Schafers were gone.

Those aware of the many connections between old Gilroy families will not be surprised to learn that Henry and Mary Schafer were the great-grandparents of another well known Gilroyan and one-time owner of the Dowdy Ranch, John Scherrer.



Henry Schafer



Mary Schafer

The Cellar

Most of us know how hot Coe Park can be in the summer. We avoid the trails until the cooler part of the year, but what would you do if you were a homesteader, confined to your claim for five years until you could "prove up"? A friend of rancher Mike Mahoney provided part of the answer; you arose very early, often before dawn, to work, napped in the afternoon during the hottest part of the day, and resumed work again once the sun sank low on the horizon.

Obviously, preserving fresh food in a hot climate was a challenge. If cattle were the cash crop, ranchers didn't kill them for food; rather, they hunted wild game. When someone was successful, the fresh meat was shared with the neighbors so it could be consumed before it spoiled. With no refrigeration, other foodstuffs—potatoes, root vegetables, cheese, even butter—could be kept fresh in a cellar.

Most of us think of a cellar as a basement under a house. My grandmother's house had such a cellar, accessed by a slanting door on the ground by the side of the house. Concrete steps led down into a space under the house where my grandmother stored her jars of home-canned jam, fruit, and vegetables. The cellars constructed by homesteaders were very different from this type of cellar. Essentially a hole dug into the earth or the side of a hill, they were constructed near a water source, spring, or creek for the cooling the water provided, but they were outside rather than under the homestead cabin. A few of these rock-lined cellar holes still exist in Coe Park. The rock structure next to the Willson Cabin is a cellar. In the Dowdy Ranch area, another structure is in the creekbed near the place where the old Brem/Ryan home once stood. One of the oldest, Orren Dowdy's cellar, is under a big oak tree by Orestimba Creek near the Orestimba Corral. Though the bottom is filled with leaves and debris, it is still about five feet deep, rock lined, and very close to where a large pool of water collects in the creek bed.



Orren Dowdy's cellar, constructed about 1870. Please do not disturb it or any other historic or prehistoric artifacts in the park.

Coe Park Outing for Equestrians

By Chere Bargar

A Coe outing for equestrians was held May 31 through June 2. Mounted assistance unit (MAU) members spent many hours pruning and grooming all the trails for a number of miles around Coit Camp, which was our staging area. The parking areas were weed whacked and water troughs were hauled in as well as water to fill them up, thanks to Ranger Cameron Bowers. We planned menus, bought groceries, and brought in supplies. We handed out maps and suggested highlighted routes that corresponded to flagging tape on the trails. Some guests rode on their own, others chose to ride with MAU volunteers.

The weekend was HOT! We were concerned that the heat might cause some problems for riders and/or horses on the trail, but everyone took plenty of water with them and routes were planned that provided enough water for horses.

Volunteer Lynne Starr and her husband, Dick, served meals you'd find in a fine restaurant. They kept their cool by taking dips in a water trough. Saturday evening, volunteers Christine Amber and Brian Deutscher provided some great entertainment with guitar and songs (we learned that they used to be members of a band). Singalongs, stories, and laughter made this an evening of fun for everyone.



Evening entertainment.



Keeping cool!

Photos by Sue Dekalb

Cats and Dogs

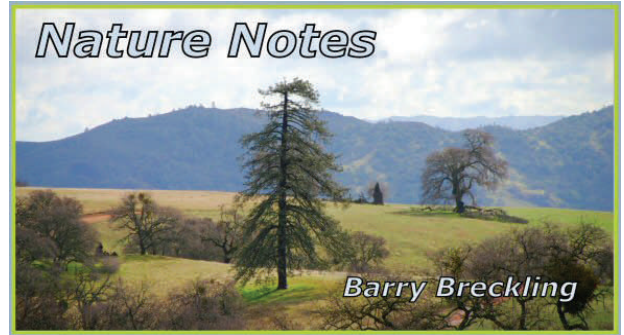
By Barry Breckling

Summer dust is a great place to look for the tracks of Coe Park cats and dogs: mountain lions, bobcats, coyotes, and gray foxes. How do cat and dog tracks differ? Lion and bobcat tracks are round in general outline while coyote tracks are more oval. Since mountain lions and bobcats have retractable claws, their tracks don't show nail marks, while coyote and fox tracks do show nail marks. I've seen lion claw marks only once. The tracks were in snow and the lion apparently stuck its claws out to keep from slipping. Occasionally, coyote tracks don't show nail marks, probably because they wore their nails down on hard surfaces. Lion tracks are 3 to 4 inches long; coyote tracks are 1½ to 2½ inches long. Bobcat tracks are usually less than 2 inches long. Gray fox tracks can be distinguished by their small size, usually only about 1½ inches across.

Lions and bobcats have a "big toe (like a thumb)" and a "little toe." Their inside toe is larger and their outside toe is smaller. Coyote tracks show bilateral symmetry: Draw a line down the middle of a track and you have mirror images. The two outside toes are the same size and the two inside toes are the same size. And while we're talking about coyote toes, let's compare them with domestic dog toes. The two outside toes on coyotes are larger than the two inside toes, while most domestic dogs have smaller outside toes and larger inside toes.

The back of a lion's heel pad is three lobed (and the more deeply lobed it is, the older the cat), and the front of the pad has an indent. The back of a coyote's heel pad is not lobed and the front is not indented.

Lions and bobcats (and foxes, to confuse us) are direct-register diagonal walkers. That means that when they're walking their normal walk they place each hind foot precisely where the front foot was placed, so you'll usually see only two prints. However, their front feet are larger than their hind feet (in order to support their head and chest, which are heavier than their hind quarters), so in good dirt you can often see the imprint of the smaller back foot within the track of the larger front foot. Coyotes are indirect-register diagonal walkers. Their hind foot will land just behind where their front foot was, or sometimes partially on top of the front track. If the back tracks of a coyote are slightly more to the outside of the front tracks, you're looking at the tracks of a female. They



have wider hips to allow for giving birth. If the back tracks are more to the inside, then you have a male, who has narrower hips and a wider chest cage. This method of determining male and female tracks will work on other diagonal walkers, including deer, horses, and wild pigs (and even lions and bobcats, if you look carefully to see if the back track is to the inside edge or outside edge of the front track). The method doesn't work on rabbits, raccoons, and skunks which are gallop or pace walkers.

If you're out and about on dusty summer trails, you might want to stop now and then to check out the tracks left by the abundant (nonhuman) animals in Coe Park.



Mountain Lion



Coyote



Bobcat



Gray Fox



Lion tracks are round in outline



Coyote tracks are oval in outline

Park Events and Information

Mark your calendars—important dates and other announcements

Also see the Coe Activity Calendar at <http://www.coepark.org/calendar.html>



Saturday October 5, the annual
Tarantulafest.

More information including ticket
sales is available at
www.coepark.org

Moonlight ride, Saturday, September 21

Meet at Hunting Hollow entrance for a pot luck dinner at 6pm and then ride into the park at 7pm. For more information call Chere Bargar 408-683-2247.

Trail work days, see www.coepark.org for more details.

Changes at Hunting Hollow

If you've been to the Hunting Hollow entrance of Coe Park in the last couple of weeks, you'll have noticed that the old ramada has gone and that there's a new structure there. The new structure is 19x19 feet with a metal roof and is set back from the center of the parking area closer to the hillside on the south. The iron ranger and recycle bins will be moved closer to the new ramada shortly, and a designated ADA parking space will be created next to the ramada in the near future. Designs for new interpretive signs next to the ramada are well under way, and a vault toilet will be installed when funding can be located.



Fish Pond. How many pond turtles do you see?

Photo by Dave Stoner

News from the Volunteer Committee

By Manny Pitta

Volunteers play a major role in operating Henry W. Coe State Park, from staffing the visitor centers, running the Coe Connections programs for elementary schools, and maintaining trails and springs to producing and staffing major park events. Contributions of volunteer time and energy help make every visitor's experience positive and memorable. Thank you to all volunteers for your continuing dedication to Henry W. Coe State Park!

The end of the summer is fast approaching, which means that the volunteer training program is about to begin again. We received 22 applications for this year's class and have 12 more people who were not able to participate last year. Interviews are now taking place in the Dunne Avenue visitor center so we can get acquainted with the volunteer program applicants, provide more detailed information about the program, and answer questions. For anyone interested in participating, there is still time to join us. You'll find a description of the program and a link to the application at:

<http://coepark.net/pineridgeassociation/support-coe/ununiformed-volunteer-program>

This year's volunteer training begins on Saturday, September 7 with a full day of classroom and outdoor activities, followed by another full day of training on Saturday, September 14. Trainees will then participate in the much-anticipated annual ridealong on the weekend of October 12-13. The remainder of the training consists of training days in the specialties of the mounted assistance unit, foot patrol, mountain bike patrol, trails and springs maintenance, staffing the visitor center, and, new this year, Gilroy Hot Springs interpretation. Of course, October will also bring the annual Coe-Ed Day on Saturday, October 27 which is an optional training day for all volunteers and trainees. Stay tuned for more information.

During the July volunteer committee meeting we discussed, in addition to volunteer training plans, the upcoming Tarantulafest, February 2013 annual meeting plans, volunteer T-shirts to wear during outdoor activities such as foot patrols, and volunteer parking tags to use while volunteering in the park. Long-time volunteer Bill Frazer reported that six of last year's trainees had reached the 50-hour mark and would move from trainee status to volunteer.

Members of the volunteer committee are: Jim Wright, Liz Brinkman, Ken Howell, Cynthia Leeder, Manny Pitta, and John Thatcher. Please feel free to contact any one of us if you have any questions or need more information.

PRA New 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. If you have chosen to receive *The Ponderosa* electronically and, for some reason, it is undeliverable, we will send the next issue via USPS.

Bruce Hartsough, Los Altos
Dennis & Mary O'Malley, Morgan Hill
Steven Tanaka, Watsonville

Email: membership@coepark.net
US mail: 9100 East Dunne Avenue, Morgan Hill, CA 95037
Phone: 408-779-2728



News from Gilroy Yamato Hot Springs

by Laura Domínguez-Yon

Remember the story of the blind men asked to describe an elephant? Each touched a different part of the elephant so each description was different. The same can be said of Gilroy Yamato Hot Springs (GYHS). My memories are of the 1950s renaissance under the Sakata ownership through its slow deterioration during the 1960s.

Russ Mabery's memories of GYHS were from his mother's memories of and love for the place that she, Florence Roop Mabery owned in the late 1930s. Her father, George B. Roop, owned the place in the 1920s and her grandfather George W. Roop first developed it into a resort in 1865 and maintained it through the 1920s.

I had the good fortune to find Russ through a comment he wrote on a soakers' blog. Soakers are people who love soaking in mineral springs. Russ was clarifying the history of GYHS for readers. I wasn't aware that any descendents of the owners of GYHS—other than the Sakata children and grandchildren—existed. I was excited to look him up and see if he would have more information. Russ teased me about our first phone conversation. His version: "I was at home minding my own business when this crazy lady called." Yes, I'm that crazy lady, and I appreciated Russ's encouragement and passion for GYHS even though he called me "*The Friend of Gilroy Hot Springs*" and "kiddo."

Russ helped me establish of Friends of Gilroy Hot Springs and Gilroy Yamato Hot Springs Association, serving as treasurer and boardmember. With his wife, Jodie, daughter Lisa, son Jason, and daughter-in-law Morgan we began the annual GYHS Walk Through History public tours with entertainment, rallying public support and raising awareness of GYHS. All of Russ's family—including three more children, three siblings and their families—support GYHS.

Russ died unexpectedly in early June. His death is a great loss to his family, friends, and the extended community. His family generously requests that donations to the Russ Mabery Memorial Fund benefit GYHS. The intention for this fund is to produce books and interpretive materials for GYHS, sharing Russ's family legacy and benefiting Coe Park by sharing the history of this unique place. Russ's family is contributing information and some resources for this project.

Your contributions are most welcome. We look forward to receiving contributions of information and expertise as well as donations. Checks should be made out to the Pine Ridge Association with a note "Russ Mabery Memorial Fund for GYHS."

Contributions to the Pine Ridge Association are tax deductible under tax I.D. Number 942308466. Please mail checks to:

c/o GYHS, 1236 Miller Avenue,
San Jose, CA 95129-3932.

We would like thank the following donors for their contributions to the Russ Mabery Memorial Fund:

Richard W. Morgan, Alamo, CA
Thomas & Linda Prescott, Minden, NV
Helene M & Michael T Maher, Alamo, CA
Marlene & R. M. LaGuillo, Pleasant Hill, CA
Joseph & Julie DeMarco, San Gabriel, CA
Dennis & Doris Jeanne Rolls, Lake Havasu City, AZ
Donna L & John P. Turner, Payson, AZ
A.E.C. International, South San Francisco, CA
Laura Dominguez-Yon, San Jose, CA
Primo E. & Rosemarie I. Facchini, Alamo, CA
Charles E & Shannon C Blevins, Helendale, CA
Ray & Yolanda Carlson, Grants Pass, OR
Jane Dubitzky, Bozeman, MT
L. Douglas & Jeanne K. Snider, Danville, CA
Carol Schmidt-Mulcahy, Diablo, CA
Sue Ann & Thomas Moore, Danville, CA
Alexandra True & Dan Dellett, Antioch, CA
Jeffrey & Tami Mabery, Lancaster, CA
Pat Slovik, Pleasanton, CA
Pat Clark-Gray, Marina, CA



We would also like to acknowledge the very generous donation of six printer/copiers by a private donor in Los Angeles. These printers will be a big help with the printing needed for Coe Park activities.



Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Morgan Hill, CA
Permit No. 160

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

408-779-2728
www.coepark.org

PRA Board of Directors

Diana Goodwin, President
Ron Erskine, Vice President
Steve McHenry, Secretary
Dan McCranie, Treasurer
Dan Benefiel
Ken Howell
Cynthia Leeder
Paul Liebenberg
Stuart Organo, Supervising Ranger

Mailing & Distribution

Jodie Keahey
Linda Keahey
Margaret Mary McBride
Diane Scariot
Pat Sharfe
Martie Sinclaire
Carolyn Straub
John Thatcher
Heather Ambler, e-distribution

Contributors for this issue

Heather Ambler, publisher
Libby Vincent, editor and author
Chere Bargar, author
Barry Breckling, author
Winslow Briggs, author
Sue Dekalb, photographer
Laura Dominguez-Yon, author
Teddy Goodrich, author
Paul Liebenberg, photographer
Judy Mason, artist
Manny Pitta, author
Dave Stoner, photographer

PRA Volunteer Committee

Jim Wright, Chair
Liz Brinkman
Ken Howell
Cynthia Leeder
Manny Pitta
John Thatcher
John Verhoeven, Ranger

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 Jim Wright, jimtina@yahoo.com.

Please send submissions and ideas to the editor at: PRAnewsletter@wildblue.net.

Deadline for the next issue: October 31, 2013

© 2013 The Pine Ridge Association