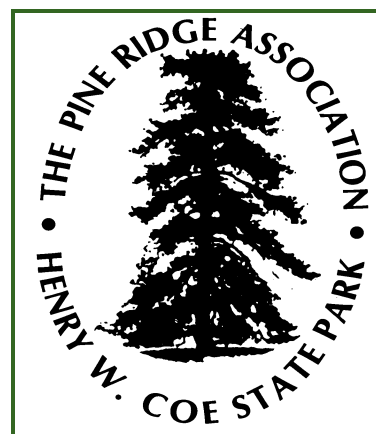


# The Ponderosa

The Pine Ridge Association Newsletter  
Henry W. Coe State Park



## Midsummer Night's Hike

By William Shakespeare, er, David Cartwright



Full moon over Hunting Hollow parking lot. Photo by Colin Winter.

On the night of the full moon closest to the summer solstice, eight intrepid souls set out at sundown to hike through the night until dawn. After a hot, sticky day in which Coe Park temperatures topped 100 degrees, the evening felt cool as we coasted effortlessly up the Jim Donnelly Trail. Toward the top of hill on a cloudy evening the moon became inquisitive enough to want to see what we were up to and showed itself to us in its full glory. Meanwhile, in the western sky Venus and Jupiter appeared so close to each other that they seemed to be dancing a tango.

The moon and distant lightning strikes would swamp our senses. At the top of the ridge we turned east to chase the moon, a pursuit that would take all night until it set in the west before us as we returned to Hunting Hollow at dawn. Clouds constantly traversing the moon added a spooky, almost Halloween-like feeling. Tramping along Steer Ridge we got our first sighting of lightning strikes illuminating ridges to the northeast. This spectacle would intensify and last for at least another four hours! The July moon, after all, is known as the Thunder Moon.

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Summer 2015

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## Midsummer Night's hike, continued....

We began to slow down a bit. Dropping down briefly from Steer Ridge, we took a welcome break and a late night snack at Willson Camp while we filtered water. Around midnight with the moon still keeping a wary eye on us we continued our quest along Wagon Road as it drops down into Coon Hunter's Gulch. Folks normally tucked up in bed endured one last climb to Phegley Ridge before taking a much anticipated nap. With bodies seemingly dumped at random along the fire road, some slept soundly for two hours or more, others slumbered between periods of moon watching or storm watching, while others merely tossed around on the hard ground.

By 4:00am, we were on our way again fortified by some rest, a few espresso beans, and the promise of a new day. Tired, hungry, happy bodies reached our journey's end in the morning pre-dawn light before heading off to breakfast together, where nobody was counting calories! As one of us put it "...a night to remember, and those pancakes were the best I've ever had!"

Let's make this hike an annual event. Interested??



Photos by George Alexy.

## Important notice:

**Dowdy Visitor Center will be open on Labor Day Monday, Sept 7.**

**Dowdy Visitor Center will close for the season on Sunday, Sept 13.**



Bobcat in Hunting Hollow.  
Photo by Sue Dekalb



## (Lungless) Salamanders of Coe Park

Of the five salamander species in Coe Park, three are lungless. By lungless I don't mean an aquatic form, with gills, but rather land-dwelling salamanders that breathe through their skin, belonging to the family Plethodontidae.

Lungless salamanders are unique among vertebrates. All mammals, reptiles, birds, and other amphibians possess lungs, and fish have gills. Yet lungless salamanders have thrived for over 40 million years and comprise the largest family of salamanders in the world. In the Appalachians, a

hotspot for salamander diversity, the biomass of lungless salamanders is believed to exceed that of any other form of animal life.

Interestingly, it appears that lungless salamanders did not arise directly from an ancestor with gills but from one with lungs, losing them in the evolutionary process. We tend to think of evolution as constantly adding, but in truth elements are discarded as well. Still, what benefit could there possibly be to a life on land without lungs? After all, lungs permit animals to attain large sizes, and expend far more energy, resulting in increased strength, mobility, and endurance. Creatures can move faster, travel farther, and keep going longer given the benefit of a pair of lungs. But sometimes, less is more. By maintaining a small size, lungless salamanders are able to exploit an abundant food source—small insects and arthropods—that larger land dwellers hardly touch. Further, their low metabolism allows them to eat less often and live longer (up to ten years) than similarly sized lizards. So, lunglessness does have its advantages after all.

Although some species of lungless salamanders breed and lay eggs in water, none in the western U.S. do. The three species inhabiting Coe Park all lay clusters of soft, gelatinous eggs in moist places beneath or within logs, stones, or in burrows, which hatch as miniature versions of adults. Unlike newts or California tiger salamanders, Coe's lungless salamanders never enter water and thus are not found in creeks, ponds, or wetlands. They must, however, keep their skin moist, and therefore are only active above ground in wet or humid weather, almost always at night. Seasonally, they emerge from aestivation with the arrival of rains in late fall, and retreat underground as the weather dries and warms in spring, becoming inactive until the rains resume. The three species of lungless salamanders found in Coe are the arboreal salamander, California slender salamander, and yellow-eyed salamander.

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Arboreal salamanders (*Aneides lugubris*) range from northern California south to northern Baja California, primarily in the Coast Ranges and adjacent valleys. They are stocky, dark-colored salamanders with a profusion of pinpoint-sized yellow dots on the back. All of Coe's lungless salamanders prefer woodlands, but arboreal salamanders are especially suited for forested habitat. With enlarged toe tips and prehensile tails, they are excellent climbers, and have been documented sixty feet up in the canopy, though they are equally at home on the forest floor. They are particularly associated with live oaks, often nesting in them and aestivating there during the dry season. While live oak forests are their premier habitat, they can also be found in chaparral, and are present in suburban and urban areas bordering natural habitat.

Another physical feature of arboreal salamanders is an oversized head housing prominent jaw muscles, enabling them to produce a surprisingly strong bite. Arboreal salamanders are one of the few salamander species that may bite when handled, and the tiny but sharp teeth are capable of drawing blood. They have been known to mortally wound snakes that have attacked them.



Arboreal salamander, showing the tiny but sharp teeth, capable of drawing blood.

Photo by Val Johnson.

Continued on page 4...



## (Lungless) Salamanders of Coe Park continued....

The geographical distribution of arboreal salamanders raises some interesting questions. Arboreal salamanders are present on the Farallon Islands and it's safe to assume they weren't brought there by people, nor did they swim or float over from the mainland. Rather, they are relicts from a time when the Farallons were connected to the mainland, millions of years ago during the Pliocene Epoch. Another disjunct population is found in the foothills and lower elevations of the Sierra Nevada east of the Bay Area. Their presence there suggests that the species was once found across the Central Valley at a time when the valley was less dry and hot, during a period of glaciation. Salamander distribution can sometimes shed a light on our geographical past.



Arboreal salamander.  
Photo by Gary Nafis.

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Slender salamanders may be the world's smallest terrestrial vertebrates, able to enter the holes of worms, termites, and other minute prey that larger creatures can't access. At their largest, they reach five inches, much of which is the tail, and their slender bodies are comparable to those of earthworms. Because their limbs are so disproportionately tiny, people often mistake them for worms. Cryptically colored, with earth-tone bodies, they are rarely seen, active on the surface only on damp nights. When they are observed, it is almost always after lifting a cover object such as a log or stone. They are abundant, if seldom seen, occurring in a variety of habitats besides woodlands. They too are frequently found in suburban and urban areas.



Slender salamander.  
Photo by Joseph Belli.

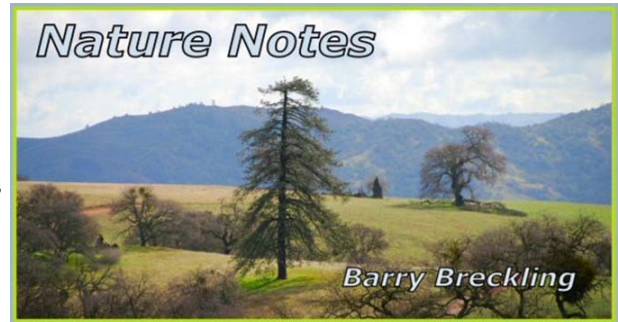
Slender salamanders are also among the most sedentary animals, not surprising given their small size and lack of lungs. A slender salamander may live its entire ten-year life in an area no larger than your kitchen. Unlike arboreal salamanders, slender salamanders don't bite in self-defense. Instead, they employ a couple of different strategies to foil would-be predators. One is that they can, like many species of lizards, lose their tail. But losing a tail is not to be taken lightly—tails store fat needed to endure the dry season, and a salamander that loses its tail may not survive the summer. Another strategy is to coil and fling themselves away upon being touched, as close as a salamander can get to jumping. They can project themselves as far as two feet which, depending upon the predator, may be sufficient.

For taxonomists, slender salamanders are either a dream come true or a nightmare, depending on one's point of view. Fifty years ago, when species were identified by physical characteristics, there were just two species of slender salamanders recognized in California. Today, advances in DNA research have determined that there are (at least) 18 species, many restricted to small geographic areas isolated from other populations, with common names such as San Simeon slender salamander and Kern Canyon slender salamander. Given their limited mobility and the physical barriers to movement, perhaps it is not surprising that so many species exist in the state. Here at Coe Park, we have just one, the California slender salamander, *Batrachoseps attenuatus*, the most widespread of the clan. Who knows? Perhaps, given twenty years or so and continued DNA research, we might have an Orestimba slender salamander or a Hunting Hollow slender salamander as well.

There is yet another kind of lungless salamander inhabiting Coe, the yellow-eyed salamander, but its story is so unique and interesting that it warrants its own article. We'll save that for next time.

## Springs of Coe Park

What an unlikely location for a ranch headquarters, high on a ridge, open to the worst of the winter weather. Someone said that Rhoda Coe, Henry W. Coe's wife, loved the wind and thus the choice was made. Someone else said that cattle naturally prefer to go uphill, which would make cattle gathering easier. But the obvious reason the ranch complex was built on this little knoll was the availability of water. The ranch buildings were constructed just below one of the best springs in the entire mountain range. Water was plentiful for cooking, washing, and human and cattle drinking.



A woman sits on a rock at the base of a plume-shaped growth of rushes that follow a stream of water emanating from a spring farther up the grassy slope. The spring would later be called Plume Spring (and even later changed to Arnold Spring for its proximity and probable use by homesteader Oscar Dilly Arnold). The woman cracks open acorns and then pounds the insides into a meal in one of the bedrock mortar holes in the rock. The acorn meal was a staple food for her family, but the meal was inedible until she used the water from the spring to leach out the harsh tannins.

A sleek, powerful shape moves stealthily through the shadows on top of a large chert outcrop, then freezes at the edge and peers down at a doe sipping water from a spring twenty feet below. The spring would later be named Lion Spring. This outcrop also has bedrock mortar holes, but the mortar holes are unusual, having been chipped out of hard, glassy chert. This chert was more commonly used to make knives, scrapers, and arrow points.

Rangers and early park volunteers visiting Sada Coe would pull out maps, hoping that she would mark the location of various springs. She'd refuse to look at the maps, but she did provide detailed directions that made it easy to find these remote and in many cases historic resources.

Many springs at Coe have cool, sweet, pure water. Take Black Oak Spring for example. Its water is refreshingly cool and, unlike most springs, it's said to flow at a higher volume in the summer than in the winter. Then there are the mineralized springs. Around the Madrone Soda Springs resort, visitors (and the preceding Native American residents) had various choices of flavored water. You could drink from one spring to cure this or that ailment, or you could drink from another to cure certain other disorders. "Another is strongly impregnated with iron and arsenic for which, for debility, skin diseases, asthma, and other affections, [it] has proved an excellent curative." This spring has not been located in recent years, which might be a good thing since drinking water with arsenic in it might not be a good idea. One of the main sources of water at "the Springs" was not actually a spring but a shallow well with an old-time, long-handled pump. People who drank water from the well reported that it tasted like a glass of water with a couple tablespoons of baking soda stirred in. But the distasteful water was easily improved with the addition of a little sugar and lemon juice. Alkali (soda) mixed with acid (lemon juice) makes for carbonization, and thus lemon soda.

This year, springs at Coe may be flowing at their lowest recorded levels, but what does flow continues to supply vital water for people, animals, and plant communities.

Lower Grapevine Spring, flowing and full.  
July 2015. Photo by Heather Ambler.

For more information on Coe Park water resources visit:  
<http://coepark.net/pineridgeassociation/planning-your-visit/water-resources>





# Reopening the Walsh Peak Trail

By Paul Liebenberg

The Walsh Peak “trail” is actually an old ranch road that runs to the peak along the ridge dividing the Mississippi and Orestimba Creek drainages. The northern end of the Walsh Peak Trail begins on County Line Road just south of the end of Coit Road. In a way, the Walsh Peak Trail could be considered a continuation of County Line Road as it originally follows the boundary between Santa Clara and Stanislaus counties, whereas County Line Road makes a shortcut across the upper Orestimba watershed.

This old ranch road was never cataloged by the Department of Parks and Recreation and was never shown on official Coe Park maps. A portion of it does appear on older USGS topo maps; from the dates on these maps it would have been built after 1955 but before 1971. This portion appears to have been built to facilitate access to an adjacent fence line. At some point in time the park’s boundary was located along this ridge; now it’s deep within the park.

In 1993 a peak register was placed on the summit and over the years a few hardy souls have made the climb to Walsh Peak, usually straight up from Kaiser/Aetna Road.

Fast forward to 2008 and a group of PRA members and park volunteers including Winslow and Ann Briggs, Bob Patrie, Ranger John Verhoeven, Libby Vincent, and Chris Weske made the trip along this trail as it had recently been “cleared” by the Lick Fire. Winslow was impressed and thought the trail should be opened up permanently and added to Coe Park’s trail inventory. Winslow often lobbied for this; he would mention that from this trail Walsh Peak would be an excellent destination for Backcountry Weekend visitors with loop and shuttle potential.

At this year’s Backcountry Weekend Winslow mentioned this to me again and given that we were nearly finished with the Jim Donnelly Trail project it seemed like the time might be to right embark on a new endeavor. Permission was secured from park staff with the condition we could clear brush and fallen trees from the road corridor but we could not do any tread work or trail rerouting. (This may come at a future date but paperwork must be filed and approved.)

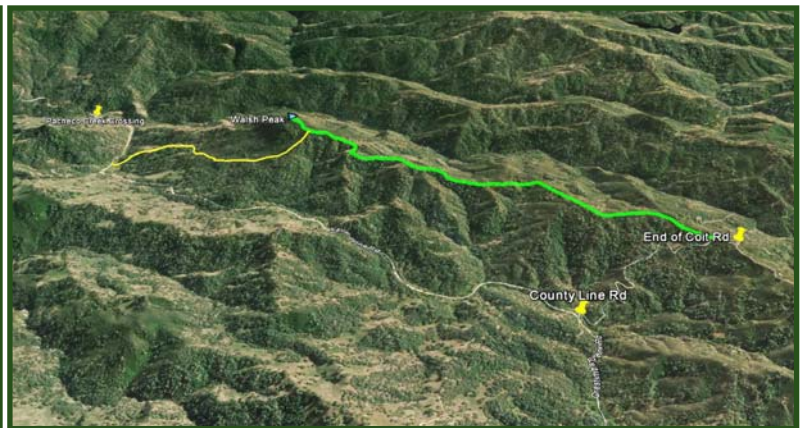
After eight days of work we have cleared 99% of the ridge route to the peak; only a couple of chainsaw-sized logs remain to be removed by park staff but they are easy to get around. This portion of the trail is a little over 1.9 miles in length and while gaining only about 140 feet in elevation undulations results in about 450 feet of climbing. Not bad for the fantastic views afforded at the summit!

Coe Park volunteers who have helped on this project are: Dan Benefiel, David Cartwright, Sue Dekalb, Paul Gillot, Dan Healy, Jodie Keahey, Allene Liebenberg, Art Pons, Lynne Starr, and Ted Tawshunsky; two non-uniformed volunteers, Don Clare and Spence Woods Jr., joined us.

In the weeks to come, we will continue clearing the second phase of this project; the 1.3 mile portion of the trail that descends back down to Kaiser/Aetna Road from the saddle just before the peak. See the photos!



Crew hard at work. Photo by Paul Liebenberg.



Birds-eye view of Walsh Peak Trail from 9000’ looking southerly. Screenshot, created by Paul Liebenberg.

# Ranch Day

By Chere Bargar

Over 300 people enjoyed perfect weather and learning about Coe Ranch history at the Ranch Day event this year. Glen McGowan and his border collies working sheep are always popular. Colleen Combes brought her grandmother’s spinning wheel again, and the kids stood in line to card and spin wool. Colleen’s display of different types of materials that are spun and items made from them are interesting to kids as well as their parents. There were many animals to pet, a leatherwork demonstration, a hand pump to learn how people had to get water before they could turn on a faucet, displays of ranch artifacts, and craft projects. Kids made prairie dolls and learned that people coming west in covered wagons could not carry any extra weight. Girls could not bring their dolls so they made cloth dolls from pieces of petticoats or aprons. Kids learned about the lifecycle of the wasps that cause oak galls when they made animals and other items from galls. It was fun to see how kids are so creative. They learned why roping got started while trying their skill at roping a “steer.” There was a tractor to sit on, pictures of animals as well as pelts and stuffed animals from Celia McCormick’s wonderful collection. Many took turns churning butter and eating the results of their work and sampling some of the whey. People learned about the importance of springs to wildlife and what a critter stick is. New this year were pony rides which proved to be very popular. There was still some water in the creek and of course most kids managed to “fall in.”

Lunch was served on picnic tables set up in the shade. It’s so much fun to share our wonderful park with so many people, for many of whom this was their first visit to Coe Park. This event would not be possible without the help of many volunteers. THANK YOU TO ALL OF YOU!



Fun on a tractor.  
Photo by Marty Cheek.



Very popular pony rides.  
Photo by Marty Cheek.



Joe Meerscheidt giving a leatherwork demonstration.  
Photo by Marty Cheek



# Ken Howell: The Man Who Runs the Run

By Peter Verbica

Little did Ken Howell realize that his days of running cross-country and the quarter-mile at Morris Hills High School in Rockaway, New Jersey would come into play at Henry W. Coe State Park years later. You'll have to talk to Ken directly to find out his race times back then, but one thing is indisputable: his love of the sport continues and Coe Park has been the beneficiary.

Ken is a bear of a man, with a warm smile, reassuring voice, and easygoing manner. He graduated from Georgia Tech with a degree in industrial engineering and married his better half, Phyllis, in 1962. Ken worked at the IBM facility on Bailey Avenue in San Jose when Silicon Valley was closing in on its pivotal place in high technology. Coe Park provided a respite for Ken from his long work hours and a place on weekends for him to stretch his long legs hiking the hills. He still enjoys the park's natural beauty and the fellowship among its volunteers.

In 2004-2005, Ken was tapped by former Park Ranger and long-time Ponderosa contributor Barry Breckling to run the Coe Park 5k/10k Fun Run and Walk. This mantle was passed on to Ken by Bev VanderWeide, another long-time volunteer and accomplished equestrian. Early on, Ken sought the advice of fellow IBMer, Larry England, a director of the Ohlone Wilderness 50k trail run. As a testament to Ken's persuasive skills, Larry still volunteers as a timer for the Coe Park run.

As those of you know who've participated in the Coe Park 5k/10k Fun Run and Walk, it begins at the Hunting Hollow entrance near Coyote Lake off Gilroy Hot Springs Road. If you're wondering why Hunting Hollow was chosen as the run's location, Ken explains that at 3.1 miles long and modest total elevation, it's the perfect location for a 10k out-and-back run or walk. Drawing participants from as far as Arizona and beyond, the run has generated positive responses from runners who post on social media. The past couple of years volunteers have done a stellar job to ensure that ample supplies of water, energy drinks, snacks, and freshly cut fruit are available for the participants along the course and at the finish.

Ken has made Coe Park's popular event a centerpiece of his volunteering efforts, clocking in well over 2,500 hours of volunteer time. As Ken explains it, his work involves coordinating flyers to hand out to fellow volunteers, store owners, at PRA board meetings, and other events. In addition, Ken updates the PRA website each year with information about the next event, reaches out via social media, and enlists volunteers who help with signage and parking. Ken leads by example, receiving huge support from other Coe Park volunteers, uniformed and nonuniformed, including Dave Raiman, the finish-line photographer, Rosemary Rideout, Steve McHenry, Manny Pitta, Diane Scariot, Carolyn Straub, Linda and Jodie Keahey, Mitsi Shine, Ken Hulick, Tom Conrad, Bruce Tanner, Joanne Rife, Jim Brady, Dick Stone, Don Wong, Jim Wong, and more than 40 others. Ken will be the first to admit that putting on a successful run is a job that requires as much help as possible.

When all is said and done, Ken confides that there's one person he always owes the greatest thanks to after he's put on a full-court press for three busy months before the big run; as you might guess, it's his wife, Phyllis. Her husband slowly returns to his normal schedule, but only after the all the trophies and T-shirts are handed out, and the run results and photographs are posted online. Then Ken can take a well deserved rest because for him the run is more than a 10k. It's perhaps better described as an ultra-marathon, one in which he has definitely earned a trophy buckle.



Ken Howell with Ranger Jen Naber.  
Photo by Mitsi Shine.

See more about the 2015 5k/10k run on page 15....



# Yellow Star Thistle Volunteer Days

By Sue Dekalb

Yellow Star Thistle is an invasive weed from Eurasia that was introduced in the late 1800s. It is estimated that Yellow Star Thistle now grows on 10-15 million acres in California alone. It creates dense stands that native plants can't grow through, and that most wildlife won't eat.

As some of you know, the Hunting Hollow area used to be full of wildflowers and then Yellow Star Thistle invaded the hollow and choked out many of the native species of grasses and flowers. It also caused injuries (mostly to the eyes) of bobcats, coyotes, foxes, and deer forcing many of them to move out of the area to hunt in easier areas.

Coe Park staff and volunteers have worked very hard over the years to help return the hollow to where it was before the invasion of Yellow Star Thistle. There have been years of spraying and hand pulling in the hollow where the task seemed almost hopeless. Yellow Star Thistle usually appears in May and can remain until October. The peak months are May, June, and July so it takes a huge effort to keep it under control. Once the plant starts flowering it can drop hundreds of seeds from each flower with about 95% of the seed being viable soon after dispersal. Every plant left in the field can generate hundreds of new plants the following year and the seeds can still germinate for up to three years.

Mason Hyland, Environmental Services Intern with State Parks Monterey District, organized two volunteer work days to hand pull Yellow Star-Thistle in Hunting Hollow. As you might expect, there wasn't a long line of volunteers waiting to jump in, but some hardy folks came out in the heat and pulled Yellow Star Thistle on Sunday June 14th and Saturday June 20th. We managed to pull 250 pounds (wet weight) of Yellow Star Thistle from the area. The nice thing about this project was that you could see the results of your labor by the end of the day.

A big thanks goes out to Alan Schmitz (volunteer visitor), Diane Scariot, Liz Brinkman, Mike Hundt, Ted Tawshunsky, Chris Weske, and Mason Hyland.



Coyote amongst Yellow Star Thistle.  
Photo by Sue Dekalb.



The crew.  
Photo by Mason Hyland.

## News from the Board of the Pine Ridge Association

By Ron Erskine

Manny Pitta summarized the July 6th volunteer committee meeting. David Cartwright is working on an updated and streamlined volunteer manual. The committee discussed implementation of a mentor program for new volunteers. There are currently 17 applications for the fall volunteer training program.

Ranger Stuart Organo, Gavilan Sector Supervisor, reported that the Monterey District received a budget \$400,000 more than last year but cautioned that much of that will go to other district sectors. The money will provide some additional staffing—a seasonal maintenance person and one or two park aides.

Cynthia Leeder reported on a solid financial year so far. The PRA has \$138,000 cash, \$73,000 inventory (mostly PRA publications), and net income for the year to date of \$14,000. Visitor center sales are \$25,000 and event income is \$25,500 with all events showing a profit.

The newly formed finance committee has not yet met but is tasked with creating an annual budget and reviewing investment strategies.

Paul Liebenberg reported that work on the Jim Donnelly Trail is complete and the windmill at Hunting Hollow is operational. Paul Gillot and Jodie Keahy have done an extensive survey of trail signs and listed the “needs” to get trail junctions properly marked. Funding options (State, PRA, grants, fundraising campaign, donation box) for this work were discussed. The board asked for a prioritized list of needs so they can better assess funding options.

There will be a meeting of concerned staff and PRA members on August 12, 2015 to discuss priorities for projects included in the Interpretive Master Plan.

Michael Hundt presented some ideas and approximate costs to upgrade the white barn adjacent to the visitor center and make it suitable for presentations and other activities. Stuart reported that the first step is to talk to Matt Bischoff, State Historian, Monterey District, whose support is required before the project can proceed.

The next PRA board meeting will be at 6:30 pm on Tuesday September 8th, 2015 in the Gilroy Library meeting room. All PRA members are invited to attend.

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## 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.

René & Michele Ruiz, San Martin  
Diana DeFrancesco, San Francisco  
Steve Booker, Live Oak

Melvin Hetrick, Citrus Heights  
Gene & Judy Hermitte, Concord, North Carolina  
Joe Navratil, San Jose

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



# Volunteer Committee Report

By Manny Pitta

*The goal of the volunteer committee is to provide the staff of Henry W. Coe State Park with assistance and advice in managing, supporting, and coordinating the activities of the uniformed volunteers.*

*The volunteer committee consists of the volunteer coordinator and six uniformed volunteers.*

## Transitions

After serving as a member of the volunteer committee for several years, Liz Brinkman is moving on to other volunteer duties. Thank you, Liz, for all your good work on the committee!

Dave Waldrop has joined the committee, adding to his duties coordinating visitor support station activities and also co-coordinating the Coe Backcountry Weekend. Welcome to the volunteer committee, Dave. We're glad to have you!

## Highlights

The interpretive activities and outreach programs have been given a boost with Mike Hundt's guidance. Upcoming interpretive activities include ranger walks, volunteer hikes, and Saturday evening programs. PRA outreach programs scheduled for the fall include the Coyote Valley Family Harvest Feast, YSI Wildlife Festival at Alum Rock Park, 2015 Day on the Bay: A Multicultural Festival at Alviso Park, and Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society Wildlife Education Day. For scheduled activities, see the Coe Activities Calendar on [coepark.net](http://coepark.net) or the Henry Coe State Park Outdoors Meetup group (now with over 280 members!).

We are producing parking passes for use by Coe volunteers when they are engaged in volunteer activities. The passes are credit card sized, laminated, and are to be placed on the vehicle dashboard. The passes will be mailed out during August. Thanks to Allene Liebenberg for getting this done.

David Cartwright is making progress on the new volunteer handbook, which will be accessible by Coe volunteers on the volunteer website. Contact David if you would like to help out.

The 2016 annual meeting of the Pine Ridge Association, which will take place on Saturday, January 30, will feature Zara McDonald from the Felidae Conservation Fund. Zara is the group's president and will talk about mountain lions, bobcats, and global wild cat ecosystems. Thanks to Carolyn Straub for her work in scheduling Zara.

New volunteer training will start on September 12. This year's training will include visitor center training and practice, which was previously optional. We will also be expanding the radio and emergency procedures training, adding more time for some of the classroom sessions, and extending the plant communities and animals hikes. To join the program fill out the application at:

[www.coepark.net/Support Coe/Uniformed Volunteer Program](http://www.coepark.net/Support%20Coe/Uniformed%20Volunteer%20Program)

Volunteers, if you would like to help with any of the training, please contact Manny Pitta.

If you have any questions on the above topics or the volunteer committee in general, you can contact any of the committee members who are listed on the last page of *The Ponderosa*.

## Park Events and Information

Mark your calendars—important dates and other announcements

Also visit [www.coepark.net](http://www.coepark.net) for more information about all activities.



### Saturday October 3, the annual Tarantulafest.

More information including meal ticket sales, visit [www.coepark.net](http://www.coepark.net)

Come to the Coe Park Tarantulafest and rub elbows (so to speak) with some of our fuzzy, friendly eight-legged guests of honor. The event is held at the visitor center campground, which has breathtaking views across the ridges and canyons of the backcountry. With a meal ticket you can sit down and enjoy great home-cooked food at our barbecue.

Take a leisurely nature walk with a volunteer naturalist and search for tarantulas or go on a geocaching hike. Enjoy live music by The Sada Springs Jug Band, made up of Coe Park volunteers and friends. Hang out at our kids' activities table and create Tarantulafest keepsakes.

The raffle, being such a success last year, is back with some great prizes available. Visit [www.coepark.net](http://www.coepark.net) for more information regarding the raffle, or call Adam at 408-779-8956.

The ever popular snakes will be back this year and Wildlife Education Rehabilitation Center of Morgan Hill will also be there with an educational exhibit.

For those of you who received a letter about the raffle in July, along with tickets to sell, please note the following corrections: The website to view a complete list of prizes and sponsors is [www.coepark.net](http://www.coepark.net) and the address to return the ticket stubs, check(s), and any unused tickets is: The Pine Ridge Association, Henry W. Coe State Park, 9100 East Dunne Avenue, Morgan Hill, CA 95037. Thank you.

### PRA Outreach Events and Activities, 2015

The PRA outreach program aims to talk to as many people as possible at events all over Santa Clara Valley about what a lovely place Henry W. Coe State Park is for hiking, relaxing, and enjoying nature. We encourage people to come to Coe Park not only for hikes but also to bring their families for campouts, nature walks, and interpretive talks. We encourage them to turn off their devices and soak in a little nature, listen to the birds, photograph wildflowers, then relax and enjoy the view.

The outreach volunteers have attended three events so far this year and plan to attend five more this fall. We participated in the Wildflower Celebration at Ulistac Park, had a wonderful time on Earth Day at San Jose State, and enjoyed a lovely day at the Festival in the Park at Hellyer Park.

At each event volunteers set up a popup tent and area to hang picture displays, the park map, a table full of information on Coe Park including the uniformed volunteer program, upcoming PRA events and activities, park maps, and a table full of games. So far in 2015 volunteers have handed out maps and brochures and provided information to more than 1,300 people, many of them interested in returning to Coe Park after a long absence or visiting the park for the first time.

#### Coming up in the fall are the following outreach events:

- September 19th, Coyote Valley Family Harvest Feast
- September 27-28th, 26th Annual Taste of Morgan Hill
- October 4th, YSI Wildlife Festival at Alum Rock Park
- October 11th, 2015 Day on the Bay: A Multicultural Festival at Alviso Park
- October 17th, Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society Wildlife Education Day

Please join us, stop by and say hi. Please help us out at one event this year; you'll have fun for sure. If you would like to help, please contact Mike Hundt, [mdmhundt@pacbell.net](mailto:mdmhundt@pacbell.net).



# 2014 Financial Report

By Cynthia Leeder

Final financial numbers for 2014 are now available and I am reporting them here against both 2013 and the first half of 2015.

As I look at the numbers, I see some positive trends. First, we have been steadily increasing our total assets, in particular our bank accounts, while running an overall profit.

Second, our total inventory is decreasing. Most of our inventory is in PRA publications of which the park map is a big seller. Unfortunately, we still have a large supply of some publications that sell slowly.

Third, our interpretive programs have been running an overall profit. To keep them profitable, I ask that everyone keep an eye on expenses while considering ways to save. Treasurers after all hate to write checks!

Otherwise, I would say that 2014 was a good year and 2015 is shaping up as a good year as well. At this point the PRA board has not authorized contributions to the Department of Parks and Recreation toward Coe Park projects but that is something the board will be looking at this summer. There is so much the park needs and the board will be considering where we can contribute. In the meantime, thank you for all of your efforts!

<b>Balance Sheet</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015 *</b>
Total bank accounts	\$87,534	\$117,672	\$138,678
Accounts receivable	\$15,378	\$0	\$0
Total inventory assets	\$83,893	\$80,132	\$72,937
Total marketable securities	\$134,461	\$136,638	\$137,153
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$321,266</b>	<b>\$334,442</b>	<b>\$348,768</b>
<b>Profit and Loss</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015 *</b>
Total contributions	\$41,302	\$24,105	\$4,417
Total investment gain/loss	\$910	\$2,448	\$615
Total visitor center sales	\$22,863	\$36,196	\$24,981
Total program revenue	\$40,881	\$37,839	\$27,805
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$105,956</b>	<b>\$100,588</b>	<b>\$57,818</b>
Total cost of goods sold	\$36,355	\$19,734	\$10,977 **
<b>Total Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$69,601</b>	<b>\$80,854</b>	<b>\$46,841</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Total business and operations expenses	\$31,291	\$20,391	\$13,136
Total interpretive program expenses	\$28,470	\$27,732	\$15,549 ***
Total visitor center expenses	\$3,578	\$1,267	\$1,026
Total contributions and grants	\$38,600	\$18,800	\$0
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$101,939</b>	<b>\$68,190</b>	<b>\$29,711</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>(\$32,338)</b>	<b>\$12,664</b>	<b>\$17,130 ****</b>

\* 1st half estimated

\*\* 2015 first half cost of goods sold estimated

\*\*\* Pending receipt of invoices not yet paid for business and program expenses

\*\*\*\* 2015 first half profit likely closer to \$14,000 after expenses



## News from Gilroy Yamato Hot Springs

By Laura Domínguez-Yon



Newly restored Texas Cabin. Photo courtesy of California State Parks.

Gilroy Yamato Hot Springs (GYHS) serves as a window into Coe Park. We are repeatedly reminded of this when visitors say that they have never visited the park before. Many visitors live in Gilroy, San Martin, and Morgan Hill and haven't ventured along trails or into places their car can't take them. When visitors come to GYHS, they express surprise at the beautiful drive along Coyote Creek and awe about the tranquility they feel when they stroll along the path, seeing the sights, feeling the breeze, smelling the oak, eucalyptus, laurel, sycamore, the moist moss, or the mineral water. Yes, most of our visitors are curious about the hot springs—over 95% of the inquiries are about soaking in the water. People know about the rejuvenating effects of hot mineral waters and hope to find a source close to Silicon Valley. Although they may be disappointed that GYHS springs are not yet accessible to the public, they are pleasantly surprised at the tranquil setting and that rejuvenating feel veteran hikers experience when surrounded by nature at its finest.

Saturday July 18, 2015 marked the red ribbon cutting at the newly restored Texas Cabin at GYHS. Over 80 visitors and volunteers viewed pictures of the restoration process and toured the cabin and other parts of this historic area. The restored cabin features four separate accommodations with two shared bathrooms. The 1920s building used elements from an earlier building at the same location when owner and operator William J. McDonald and family revitalized the popularity of the resort. Matt Bischoff, Laura Dominguez-Yon, and Tim Lantz shared stories related to the people and activities at GYHS between 1865 and the 1960s. Refreshments were provided by the Pine Ridge Association. Authors Ian Sanders, Michael Brookman, and Richard DiGiacomo had copies of their books on hand, and miniature model creator Gael Troughton featured the HO scale miniature models of the Gilroy Hot Springs hotel, 1913 Stanley Steamer Gilroy Hot Springs taxi, a penny scale seen in GYHS historic photos, and the Nebraska cabin.

### Save the Date

GYHS event Saturday October 24, 2015, 9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.: commemorating twenty years as a California Historical Landmark. Dignitaries and participants in the original event will be present and you can enjoy exhibits, tours, and music. \$15 per person admission fee helps fund restoration efforts.

Continued on page 15....



## News from Gilroy Yamoto Hot Springs continued....



Texas Cabin.

Photo courtesy of Richard DiGiacomo.



Pat Clark-Gray, Regional Interpretive Specialist, Monterey District, California State Parks, Matt Bischoff, State Historian, Monterey District, California State Parks, Dean Yon, PRA volunteer, and Laura Dominguez-Yon, GYHS spokesperson, cut the red ribbon before visitors and volunteers at the July 18, 2015 Texas Cabin rededication event.

Photo courtesy of California State Parks.

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## Henry Coe 5k/10k run 2015

Once again the 5k/10 run was a huge success. See <http://coepark.net/pineridgeassociation/programs-events/annual-events/hh5k10kresults> to view results.

Thank you to all the volunteers who help make this event a success and a special thank you to Ken Howell for being the man who runs the run.



Ken Howell, presenting awards.

Photo by Mitsi Shine.



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*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: [PRAnewsletter@wildblue.net](mailto:PRAnewsletter@wildblue.net).

**Deadline for the next issue: October 31, 2015**

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