The **Ponderosa**

The Pine Ridge Association Newsletter
Henry W. Coe State Park

June 1998

From under My Brim

by Barry Breckling

El Niño at Coe

It was October, only a month past the fall equinox, and the weather forecasters were saying El Niño was already lurking in the warm waters to the west. The experts were predicting an extremely wet winter, but then who trusts weather forecasters? The proof, however, is in the past. A wet winter did most certainly happen, and a wet spring as well. Some might call our visitor "Hell Niño," for the little brat certainly wreaked havoc throughout California. At Coe, however, El Niño seemed more like "El Niño Bendecido," the blessed child.

It's the 21th of May as I write, and to date we've had 45.79 inches of rain. February was a particularly soggy month. We had measurable rain every single day in February, and the total for the month was 15.89 inches (a bit above the average 5.07 inches!). Although there's still a little more than a month left in the rain year, it's not likely that we'll break the record of 49.66 inches set in the 1982–83 season. Nevertheless, this year will at least hold the record for the second highest rainfall ever recorded in Coe Park.

While mud slides were closing the roads to Big Sur and the Pinnacles and record snows were keeping campers out of the Sierra Nevada, the rain continued to fall steadily, but gently, on Coe Park. Surprisingly, our roads and trails sustained less damage this year than they have in years with substantially less rain. And, despite the rain, the park has been busier than usual, perhaps in part because El Niño temporarily closed other parks nearby.

Thankfully, El Niño gave us breaks just when we needed them. The Backcountry Weekend was the most splendid in memory, the Hunting Hollow grand opening went off without a hitch, and the Mother's Day Breakfast was nothing short of wonderful, as usual.

El Niño has given us one impediment this year. It's filled our creeks so well that hikers and backpackers have had trouble making creek crossings. During much of the winter, the Middle Fork of Coyote Creek was a barrier to all but scrub jays, bluebirds, and the like. In late April, when you'd normally be able to cross with ease, hikers and bikers had to wade thigh-high deep. Even now, in late May, the Middle Fork is just getting low enough for people to rock hop without getting wet.

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A hike in the Coon Creek drainage

A Bataan death march? (45 miles)

A hike by moonlight in August

Calendar of upcoming events

. . . and more!

Recycled Paper

All in all, 1998 has been a year of superlatives. It's given us spectacular wildflowers, the most wonderful flower season I've seen in the 20 years I've lived in the park. Some say the flowers are the best they've been in a hundred years. And it's not over yet. Last year we had plenty of rain early in the season but practically none after the deluges of January, and the flowers bloomed quickly and faded fast. Now it's late in the month of May, and there are flowers blooming that should have been long gone by the end of April.

In sheer numbers, the flowers this year have been almost unbelievable. Last year, bird's eye gilias were scarce at best. This year it seemed as though they weren't going to bloom at all, and then all of a sudden they sprang up all over the place, even in spots where I'd never seen them before. In April, hillsides that are normally green in spring were white with popcorn flowers, and now I know why they're also called foothill snowdrops. Areas where we've seen 10 to 20 purple mouse-ears in past years and raved about their abundance had 200 to 300 plants this year. One area of the Thomas addition had thousands of these extraordinary little flower faces. The rare Mount Hamilton jewelflower was thriving on the Thomas addition, and we found several new populations of the plant. The Upper San Antonio Valley glowed in a glory of goldfields, the likes of which I've never seen.

Spring may last well into summer this year at Coe Park, thanks to El Niño. If you can, try to take time to visit the park before the heat of summer makes the chilly wet winds of El Niño a vague memory of times gone by.

Purple Mouse-Ears
Mimulus douglosii

Coon Creek Commandos

by Elna Cunningham

"Anybody interested in an Eastside Coe hike next Saturday?" This was a query put out to my Wednesday hiking group by Don Savant, a recent and highly enthusiastic Coe Park volunteer and acknowledged wild man of our mostly retiree band of hikers. Always a little suspicious of Don's suggestions and having been in the past few months enticed out by him on several hearty Coe treks, the group's response was generally scowls and glares, except for three of us. Of these three who apparently have little capacity for learning, one couldn't go because of a previous commitment, and another heeded the warning about possible creek walking and said she didn't think her boots were up to it, which left me trusting to Don. Rarely a good idea. I questioned him further: Whose idea is this? Who's going, and do they know where they're going? Cross country and a little creek scrambling are acceptable, but no rock climbing. Response: Well, gee, it should be OK. This is an official Pine Ridge Association event, even written up in *The Ponderosa,* and the leader, Larry Haimowitz, is really familiar with the area. No rock climbing, Don said with some uncertainty in his voice. I did recall reading about this in the newsletter, which seemed to lend it credibility, so not wanting to waste a promised dry day and being brainwashed by Nike ads, I decided I would just do it.

The dark skies that hung over us as we headed south from San Jose on the appointed Saturday morning (February 28) lifted as we turned onto the Pacheco Pass highway. By the time we pulled off on the Bell Station road, the sky was brilliantly blue, the hills were an exceptionally vibrant green, and this began to seem like a promising undertaking. I was further encouraged when we reached the Dowdy Ranch meeting site and were introduced around to the rest of the cast. Seemed like fine, friendly folks, no one looked demented, there didn't appear to be any testosterone-crazed twenty-year-olds, there was a fair representation of my own gender—usually a factor tempering toward reason—and most reassuring of all, there was Ranger Barry Breckling in uniform! This would be just fine. How could anything be amiss when we would be accompanied by an official State Park ranger, who also seemed like a really nice guy. And our leader, Larry, was even double checking his topo map. All to the good.

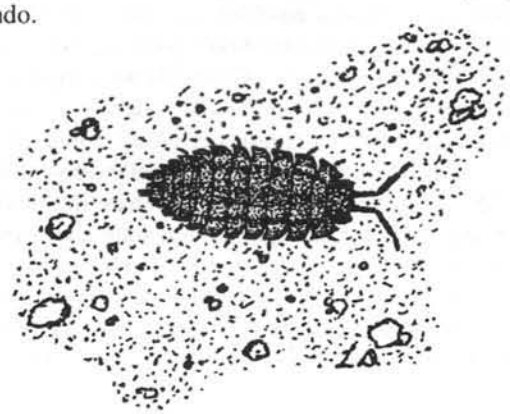
Soon our group of around 18 or maybe 20 were setting off in car pools to our starting point where I understood we would set off cross country to the Coon Creek drainage in search of a terrific waterfall and then an old cabin site. In short order we were heading up the steep, grassy hills in widely strung out groups pausing often to take in the glorious views and admire the surprising abundance of early spring flowers. What a delight to be greeted by sprightly crowds of white popcorn flow-

ers interspersed with cheery yellow fiddlenecks and to be dazzled by great arrays of purple shooting stars. And most improbably, commanding a little knoll, was a handsome green and cream colored kitchen range—only a little worse for wear (well, maybe a lot). Warmed by the welcome sun and the climbing, we quickly peeled off extra clothing layers, and a general feeling of well-being prevailed. Wow! This was going to be great.

Then came the creek and the downstream trek to the waterfall. Since the creek had burrowed itself into a steep ravine, as creeks often do, travel methodology was a high road/low road proposition, which seemed to be a matter of personal choice. The trip leader, Larry, appeared not to be in the least interested in dictatorship in this regard. After crisscrossing the creek a few times, I decided to take the high road along with a number of others, and eventually found myself on the steep slope above the gorgeous-as-promised waterfall. My hiking buddy, Don, quickly scrambled down to the foot of the falls, as is his wont, but I chose to join a likely-looking group who had settled down in a choice spot above the falls for lunch. I wasn't sure what the after-lunch plan was, as little groups seemed to be widely dispersed at various points around and across the creek from the waterfall. I decided to throw in my lot with Toni and Janet, who said they were going to return the way they had come, assuring me that everyone would again converge a little distance upstream. This was indeed the case, mostly anyway, except for Ranger Barry and Judy who were last seen crossing the stream below the waterfall and never seen again. Everyone said this was Barry's park and they would be fine and probably just wanted nothing to do with the rest of the escapade. Hmmm, what did this mean?

The rest of the escapade was to be the upstream trek to the cabin site. So, into the creek, out of the creek, alongside the ever-narrowing and increasingly vertical canyon wall. My friend Don, at one point, made an unintended highly accelerated descent of about 12 feet down the muddy wall almost into the creek but landed feet first and without serious damage. Actually, this looked to me like a decent route, which I undertook successfully in a more controlled manner. Eventually, following Larry's lead, the route was mostly in the creek. I had for quite a while negotiated the rock-hopping and finding the shallower places successfully, but finally the inevitable occurred, and the likely-looking rock I stepped on moved. My foot went into the shin deep water, which flowed with unseemly eagerness into my boot. Actually, it was almost a relief, since there was no longer any point in trying to exercise fancy footwork to stay dry; I could just barge forward, my feet squishing noisily in my boots. Well, actually, I couldn't just barge forward; there was always an obstacle, and at least twice I found myself plunging through clumps of poison oak that stretched out over the creek. Finally I began to grow just a little disgruntled about this enterprise and entertained myself by imagining it to be a movie: the heroic little band of commandos furtively advancing through the ravine to escape detection from the evil pursuers on the bluffs above. However, I gratefully abandoned my imaginings upon hearing sounds of elation from the lead group. Had we reached the cabin site? No, but they had found a wide place, semi-dry ground, and some rusting artifacts, where we could wait for any other survivors who might be behind us. Sure enough, there were others, in fact almost everyone, even Toni who we didn't think would continue because of her bad knee. I used the respite to dump the water out of my boots and wring out my socks before continuing upstream. It was a little discouraging to hear that there was some uncertainty as to the remaining distance, but there wasn't much choice as that was the easier way out. Fortunately, we did not have to fling ourselves salmon-like farther upstream for any great distance before we at last arrived at the cabin site, and better than the falling down galvanized metal shack was the beautiful wide site, finally free of the dark narrow canyon. My feeling must have been akin to Powell's crew coming out of the Grand Canyon. We tarried there a while, regrouping, investigating the relics, picking off ticks, and generally savoring being there and not in the creek. The way out was via blessed terra firma, over a hill, across the creek (a narrow, easy crossing), and down to the road. A blissful return, back again through lush green hillsides occasionally shimmering with sunlit lavender expanses of shooting stars. Life again was good. Once again in the vehicles, we made a brief stop at a stunningly beautiful waterfall and rockbound watercourse on Pacheco Creek, called Hole in the Rock, just a short distance from the road. Geez, why did we have to go through all of this misery, when the best place was so easy to get to? All right, we all know why.

Back at the campsite, a beautiful sunset was beginning to appear, and I was envious of those who were staying overnight in this really glorious place. Even though, regardless of their initially benign and sensible appearance, this was a certifiably insane (but neat) bunch of people, I was glad to have participated in this little adventure (and especially to have survived it) and might even do it again sometime. Well, maybe not so much of the creek. After all, I'm not a salmon, only a pretend commando.



An Excellent Mid-Winter Adventure

by Lyndal Hubbard

Henry Coe State Park has been a wonderful hiking retreat for us this fall and winter as we train for a hike at the Grand Canyon in late spring. Coe is ideal, with its rugged terrain and steep climbs throughout the park. As our adventures expanded in distance and frequency, it dawned on us that it would be interesting to head out from Coe headquarters to the Orestimba Wilderness, hike the 13 mile Rooster Comb Loop, and return to headquarters all in one day. After measuring the hike from the map, we saw that we were in for a 45-miler. Sobering.

For conditioning, we put in a few 25 to 34 mile hikes to the Jackson Peak, Kelly Lake area, during January and early February. During those hikes, we learned about fording waist-deep creeks in the dark and decided we'd need better rain gear if we encountered such weather on the "big" hike. Amazingly, the planned 45-miler on Friday February 20 was greeted with crystal-clear weather. It must have been an omen because it had poured the day before. Our great adventure began at 4:30 a.m. at Coe headquarters. We nervously bundled up under layers of high-tech clothing and rain gear. It was our plan to hike the most direct route to Mississippi Lake rather than take some of the more scenic trips that we had hiked in the past. This led us directly down into Poverty Flat via the Poverty Flat Road and our first creek crossing, the Middle Fork of the Coyote Creek . We knew that the waters would be up but hadn't carefully checked this crossing for the safest passage. With flashlights and bare feet, we attempted to feel our way and were surprised to find the water up to waist level. This creek was narrow, boulder filled, and swift, and we struggled under the effort to cross safely. Randy slipped dangerously but somehow maintained his balance. Fortunately, we made it unscathed, our feet frozen with the effort. Now, a 700-foot climb. Hey, nothing like hiking uphill to warm the "soles"!

Anyone who has hiked this route knows that to get to Los Cruzeros, you go right back down to the canyon bottom and cross the East Fork of the Coyote Creek. So, back into the water we went. In the early dawn light, it was much easier to find a suitable route. Going barefoot was still in order as we had many miles ahead of us and didn't want to waterlog our shoes so early in the hike. At Los Cruzeros, we placed a drop bag in one of the trees along the Willow Ridge Trail with extra food and clothing for our return trip, which would be after sunset. Hiking up the steep trail was actually very pleasant this time of the morning because we could share in the awakening of the day, apparent through the bird song and warming temperatures. Ahead lay the never-ending ridgetop route to Red Creek, with its multitude of undulating "bumps." The saving grace was the fact that this section of the hike was going to be completed at sunrise, and we were treated to a panorama of clear blue skies, distant snow-covered peaks in the east bay, and the snow-covered Sierras beyond! Amazing to think that we could be so fortunate to be out here with this 360° view without a building or person in sight. In the dead of winter, of a bad El Niño year, this was the ultimate remedy for the 9 to 5 job. The usually brutal fire road was covered in green grass, and the normally hard-packed ground was forgiving on feet and joints. And though we arrived early, we were not the first. Captured in the soft soil was an exquisitely detailed pawprint large enough to be that of a mountain lion.

We arrived at Mississippi Lake's southern end at 9 a.m. as hoped, delighting to the sound of coots muttering among the reeds. The high water level had caused an overflow on the dam's eastern edge, submerging the trail. Shoes off! But this grass-cushioned crossing soothed our feet and revitalized our "soles" once again. We placed a second drop bag here for our return from the Orestimba. For breakfast at Mississippi Lake, we ate peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, oranges, and GUs (an energy supplement containing 100 calories each). Dinner would be the same fare at the same place at the end of the day. Not bad.

So, northward up County Line Road for three miles, through private property for a mile, then down a side ridge to Red Creek and into the Orestimba Wilderness. Let the fun begin. Now we are talking **soul**! A soft day of gentle breezes and sunshine, with just a few puffy clouds floating by, greeted us in the canyon. Red Creek was flanked by lawn-covered banks of moist, green grass and wildflowers. We rested briefly along Red Creek's banks and then made the left turn up Robinson Creek and the beginning of Rooster Comb loop. This is a place where fairy tales are born. The shooting stars were at their most abundant glory seen in waves of lavender beauty. Interspersed were burgeoning groups of buttercups and pockets of geraniums. Flirting, Morning Cloak butterflies, with their velvety brown wings edged in cream, fluttered alongside the trail. The surrounding peaks of Mt. Stakes and Robinson Mountain, normally dry and rocky, were covered in green from the ample rains. This little side creek is as picturesque as anything Walt Disney could imagine. We rock-hopped back and forth several times as the trail meandered upstream. Before reaching the saddle of the ridge that would drop us into the headwaters of Robinson Creek, we stopped, filtered water, and filled our containers. Delicious!

Somehow we lost the trail near the top of the ridge (not the first time in this same area), but it made for an invigorating scramble through some rugged terrain and awakened our adrenaline. The trail, now found, continued on a gentle downward slope, luring us into the balmy paradise of undisturbed wildlife. Then, a subtle din of sound ahead piqued our curiosity. Upon traveling several more yards, it was apparent that something was definitely going on above us to our left. We

climbed a gentle slope and came upon a picture perfect pond. A little brook bubbled into the upper end and became a 20-foot fall out the lower edge of the pond towards Robinson Creek. An amphitheater framed the pond's northern boundaries, the sides covered in rich green grass. Somewhere, invisibly, hundreds of frogs were in full song, trying to outdo each other for spring mating rights. Where they hid themselves, we don't know. As Randy snuck up near the water's edge, they stopped croaking one by one. It's difficult not to choke up recalling the scene. It was utterly absorbing and awe-inspiring to witness this gift of nature. Upon reflection, it was apparent that a spell was being cast, and it was important not to tarry too long. By the way, not once did we hear "Bud-Weis-Er."

Tearing ourselves away, we abruptly came upon a small flock of Western Bluebirds perched in a leafless tree. The electric blue wings of the males flashed brilliantly as they flew from one tree to the next. Another spell was cast. Quickly we escaped into the valley as it widened into a lush, grassy meadow with a meandering creek. At one spot a fallen tree perfectly spanned the water and demanded that we cross. The creek was now too wide to jump. We were nearing the halfway point of our hike and knew that water would become more of a problem ahead. We decided to save time, plunge in, and walk our shoes dry. Wearing high-tech wool socks kept our feet comfortable and blister-free, so dampness was not a problem. At Robinson Falls, the trail veered off to the left and above us. But this precluded a good view of the falls, so we romped across country and continued along the creek above its banks. Scrambling up and down tributaries added to the excitement and provided scenic views of the powerful, churning water of the falls.

Reaching the turning point of the trip, we angled right, paralleling the south fork of the Orestimba Creek. Leaving the spectacular Robinson Creek area came at just the right time. No telling how much more we could have handled. Our souls were totally refueled and in danger of overflowing! We put our feet to the grindstone to negotiate the next 6 to 7 miles. Initially, it was an old ranch road that we followed (two coyotes on the right), until reaching the private property of Rooster Comb Ranch. Here the trail veers west and climbs above the ranch, traversing the wooded hillside. A dozen wild pigs were busy rototilling the grassy slopes. We decided to save time and mileage and follow the fence line that borders the private property. **Not!** Just more bonus climbing and technical problems in finding a suitable avenue to travel. Live and learn.

We eventually emptied out into the Orestimba Creek drainage where we were greeted by a wide, flowing "creek." For a while we scrambled along the steep banks but eventually gave up and stepped into the thigh-deep water and crossed its 40-yard span again and again and again. Believe it or not, the water felt refreshing, our shoes squishing it out as quickly as it went in. However, walking in the current, gravel, and mud slowed us down considerably.

Finally, we reached the infamous Hartman Trail. Infamous, because last spring, my daughter and I got lost attempting to hike it from east to west. The path disappeared shortly after the trailhead. After flailing around amid stiff, thick brush on steep hillsides, my daughter and I located the last portion of the trail. To avoid the same experience on this hike, Randy and I had actually scouted the trail two months earlier to flag the darn thing and discovered, in the process, that someone else had been there and done that. Oh well, better safe than sorry. Anyone who has hiked this particular trail knows that it doesn't disappoint when it comes to the notorious climbs for which Coe is known. We knew it would call upon considerable reserves to get to the top and over to Mississippi Lake.

Surprisingly, our legs slipped into the "keep on truckin'" mode and carried us to the peak at sunset. From that vantage point, we cell-phoned home (and Coe Park headquarters) to let them know that all was well with 4 to 5 hours of hiking ahead. Dinner consisted of delectable, but mashed, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, oranges (pure nectar), and GUs at Mississippi Lake. Night fell as we left the banks of the lake, and our flashlights guided us along the Willow Ridge Road once again. Endless up and down climbs waited in the darkness. Conversation ceased. Mental fortitude was tested. Conversely, our legs carried us on their own volition in spite of our dead brains! Finally, after at least twice thinking that we'd come to the Willow Ridge Trail turnoff, the trail sign appeared, rousing our spirits—38 miles down, 7 to go. With our tiny lights, I led us at a jog down the twisty trail to the East Fork. The resulting effect was spiritually uplifting and we splashed directly into the creek, foregoing the removal of shoes and socks. The cold plunge further enhanced our mood, and we kicked into gear as we ascended Jackass Peak. Yes, this is a steep climb, but headquarters was within reach, and it seemed to pull us homeward. Any stimulus at this point was welcomed!

Crossing the risky Middle Fork of the Coyote Creek was accomplished with better control this time, as we again left our shoes on and forged across. We changed flashlight batteries and began the stiff 1.8-mile uphill section. Our assignment now: "Don't think!" Just "left, right, left, right." Randy swears he went "left, left, left" a few times. We tried to focus on the incredible windless, moonless, star-filled night that still posed no threat of the predicted rain. Regretfully, we would miss the wonderful array of wildlife we had become accustomed to seeing at dusk along the mile or two of the Manzanita Point Road just before park headquarters. Turkeys, pigs, deer, quail, hawks, owls, and a rare bobcat usually wel-

comed us home following our training hikes. Somewhere, they were out there, invisible this night.

A left turn onto Corral Trail and we began the last ¾ of a mile of our journey, a nice flat stretch to reflect on all that had taken place. We had experienced a few "lows" at points along the hike, when we allowed ourselves to focus on the enormity of the task. But the "highs" more than made up for any and all of our worries and continually fueled us onward. Our goal, the Orestimba Wilderness, and in particular, Robinson Creek, had been achieved and relished. The seven hours to reach the creek and the eight hours to return was more than rewarded by the three hours spent among the creek's inhabitants. We arrived at headquarters at 10:30 p.m. and felt a little closer than usual to our nearly 50 years of age.

Summary: In all, from getting up at 2 a.m., the 75 minute drive to the park, the hike, the return home, a shower, and to bed, the project took a total of 23 hours. Distance covered was 45 miles in 18 hours. A total of 8,500 vertical feet of climbing, and, of course, 8,500 vertical feet of descending, four waist-deep creek fords, and approximately 20 calf- to knee-deep creek fords were involved. And no blisters! Caloric intake for each of us: 3 sandwiches, 4 homemade pumpkin bars, 3 oranges, 2 baked potatoes (with salt and pepper), 1 apple, 5 dates, 2 gummie-bear packets, 7 GUs, and 5 liters of electrolyte-enhanced water. We used up two AA flashlight batteries each. Two-thirds of the way into the hike, we each took 2 Advil to help keep the joints loose and any inflammation down to a reasonable level.

Moral: Would we do this again? **You bet!** Actually, this was our trial run before the wildflowers and ceanothus really kick in for some heady sights and scents. Admittedly, there were times along the trail that we both considered switching from hiking to something easier, like cards or checkers. But the afterglow, the feeling of accomplishment and the conditioning, is part of what hiking is all about. The other part is more difficult to describe. It has to do with spirit, a sense of oneness with nature that makes us feel at home. It was an honor and a privilege to "own" Harry Coe's park for a day.

Lyndal Hubbard, of Menlo Park, is 47 years old and the mother of four. Randy White, of Los Altos, is 49 and a geophysicist with the U.S. Geological Survey. Besides incredible hiking trips, they both enjoy cattle roping and outdoor volleyball competition. Ed.

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

Park News

by Kay Robinson
Park Superintendent

Two major events have reached culmination recently. Coe Backcountry Weekend was a tremendous success, as usual, with over 1,050 visitors enjoying the east side of the park. This once-a-year event introduces people to a new view of the park. It is hoped that their enjoyment and appreciation of the park will stimulate interest in, and political support for, the park. The proposal for development of the Dowdy Ranch (as covered in the last issue of *The Ponderosa*) is evidence that Henry W. Coe SP is gaining more attention and the public's desire is to have expanded access to this second largest of California's state parks.

The Bell Station Day-Use area is progressing also. This project consists of a small day-use area with parking for nine single vehicles and four vehicle/trailer combinations, interpretive panels on the history and geology of the area, two vault toilets, four picnic tables, and a short walking path. The existing trailer will be rehabilitated on the interior to serve as a reception base for incoming visitors. To be used now as a wayside rest stop, when the east side of the park is open to the public, this staging area will give needed information to potential visitors. Construction is planned to begin this summer and be completed by January 1999.

Swinging around to the west side of the park, the Hunting Hollow Grand Opening was held on Saturday, May 2, with about 150 people present. Keynote speaker Senator Bruce McPherson was accompanied by District Superintendent Joseph M. Hardcastle and Trails Advisory Committee Chair Winslow Briggs in singing the praises of this new entrance. Wonderful opportunities are now available for increasing the enjoyment and use of Coe SP. The entrance has actually been open to the public since March 28, and attendance is definitely on the rise. Especially appreciative are drivers of horse trailers who find this an easier entrance to approach. Plan to take advantage of this late spring to enjoy the extreme abundance of flowers in Hunting Hollow.

And back to where it all began 45 years ago when Sada Coe Robinson (no relation!) gifted 12,000+ acres to the County of Santa Clara for recreational pursuits: Coe headquarters continues to be the ("off-center") nucleus of the park as the site of most of our interpretive activities and the two big fundraisers. I hope you were able to participate in the Mother's Day Breakfast and that you will be involved with the fall TarantulaFest and Barbecue (October 3). We are still moving toward the expansion of the visitor center. The Fund now stands at about $80,000. Full construction drawings are completed, and the fundraising committee continues to work on additional sources of funding. Thanks to all of you who responded to our campaign at the beginning of the year. This expansion will be a source for continuing education and interpretation of the cultural history and the natural features and values of the park.

Treasurer's Report through December 1997

by Barbara Radd

The Pine Ridge Association had another excellent year. For the fiscal year ending October 31, 1997, gross profits increased $16,000 (42%), other income increased $3,000 (137%), and net income increased $21,000 (97%) over the prior fiscal year, while expenses remained virtually unchanged. Total gross profit was $52,000 (up from $39,000), total other income was $6,000 (up from $2,500), and total net income was $39,000 (up from $22,000). Equity increased by $39,000 (41%) to $132,000, and liabilities remained virtually unchanged. Major contributors to increased income were donations, the Coe Backcountry Weekend, the Fall BBQ, and interest.

Last year the Board of Directors authorized the Treasurer to change our fiscal year to the calendar year, January through December, to facilitate reporting to other agencies. To accomplish this change in accounting periods, we were required to file a tax return for the two-month period ending on December 31, 1997. On that date, the PRA's assets were as follows:

Checking:	$18,600
Savings, short term:	$10,400
Savings, long term:	
Unrestricted:	$17,200
Visitor Center:	$61,100
Equip. replace:	$6,800
Inventory:	$23,800
Fixed assets:	$1,700
Investments:	$3,800

Mike Donohue's Tangy Dried Tomatoes

by Bonnie Lemons

Mike, a high school teacher in the Central Valley town of Hilmar, starts with sweet, home-grown tomatoes. He dips the slices in lemon juice so they dry brilliant red. Then he dusts them with lemon pepper for a tingly bite. These tomatoes are worth the price of a dehydrator.

Best summer tomatoes
Lemons
Lemon pepper, or seasoning of choice

Slice tomatoes ¼" thick, discarding the end pieces, which don't dry well. Dip slices in lemon juice to preserve color.

Place on dehydrating tray, and sprinkle with lemon pepper, garlic salt, fresh garlic, or whatever seasoning you like. Be careful with chili flakes, though—they will be hotter than you expect.

Dry about 8 hours, until semicrisp, or longer if you like them really chewy. Place in Ziploc bags.

Store in freezer, where they will last indefinitely.

Pack dried tomatoes for a trail snack, or put them in ramen for a quick backpack dinner. At home, Mike soaks them in olive oil with fresh chopped garlic, then puts them on cream cheese for a dip. Try them in soups and salads, or on pizza.

August 8: Moonlight Daylight Burra Burra Hike Hike

by Lee Sims

The August moon and Coe Park—experience the pristine land and a mystical experience on Saturday, August 8, the night of the full moon.

We will hike without flashlights from the Dowdy Ranch buildings around Burra Burra Peak on Saturday night after dark. The total distance is less than three miles, the time about 90 minutes. We also will ascend Burra Burra, a quick side trip, and view most of the Hamilton Range, over to the Gabilan Range and beyond towards Big Sur, and also south beyond Pacheco Pass in the San Carlos range: spectacular under moonlight!

The following morning we will repeat the hike and observe the differences between night sounds and scenes and those in the daytime.

The Dowdy Ranch has a chemical toilet. For camping (which is recommended), bring your own food, drinking water, camping gear, and a chair. Stoves but not utensils will be available. Plan to arrive after 1 p.m. and no later than 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, August 8.

If you are afraid of your shadow, you might not want to come. The moon is so bright, you will see your own shadow; the mood is so dramatic, you will feel the shadows of people who walked these same trails hundreds of years ago.

A wonderful summer evening in Coe Park. Call me at 650/726-4958 or Roberta Wright at 408/683-2219 for more information and to sign up.

An Invitation to Join the Volunteer Program

Would you like to learn more about Henry W. Coe State Park—its history, interesting animals, beautiful wildflowers, singing birds—and share your knowledge with park visitors? Then consider joining approximately 130 others who donate some of their time as uniformed volunteers of Coe Park.

The Volunteer Program adds to the park visitor's knowledge, interest, enjoyment, and safety by assisting regular park employees through interpretation, operation of the visitor center, patrolling the park trails, and by carrying out special projects. Uniformed volunteers receive free admission to Coe Park and the other parks in the Four Rivers District and, more importantly, receive the satisfaction derived from doing a job well and providing a necessary service to the public and to the park. In addition, most volunteers find that the initial training and the continuing workshops and classes offered for uniformed volunteers each year are of significant value.

Topics tentatively scheduled for inclusion in the next series of training classes are geology, map reading, plant communities, ecology and animals, birds and wildflowers, history of Coe Park, being a volunteer, interpretive techniques, and first aid. Additional optional training classes will be held throughout spring 1999 on topics such as wildflowers, bird identification, tracking, and how to plan an interpretive program. Training will be held at the park on a number of weekends from September 12 through December 5, plus one weekend day in January. Graduation will be held on February 6, 1999.

Applications are available now at Coe Park headquarters. **August 16 is the deadline for receipt of applications.** Applicants have their choice of interview dates (August 20, 22, or 23). Interviews will be held at Coe Park, but other arrangements could be made for you. If you have any questions or if you would like to obtain an application, call the park at 408/779-2728, or visit our web site at www.coepark.parks.ca.gov.

Membership & Contributions

by Lee Dittmann

As the flowers of spring brighten up the rain-soaked hillsides of Coe, we are pleased to welcome the new members listed below, who joined before May 5th. Thank you all for your support. Welcome to the Pine Ridge Association! The number of memberships has now risen to 352.

Celia Boyle, Woodside
Herb & Alice Breckling, Lafayette
Gillian Crutcher & James Warger, Gilroy
Paula Dittmann, Sacramento
Jimothy Fahrni, Gilroy
John Fonti, San Jose
Wade Hall, Gilroy
Mark Harlan, Santa Clara
Jim Hunter, Santa Clara
Diann Lane, Morgan Hill
Todd Leonard, Gilroy
David Loeb, Berkeley
Kristiane Maas, Gilroy
Ken & Lisa Manuele, San Jose
Louise Meyer, San Jose
David Pritchett, Ventura
Joe Rich, Santa Clara
Barbara Rothkrug, San Francisco
Ed Russell, Livermore
Judge M.O. Sabraw, Fremont
David Sausjord, Campbell
Carol Selter, Soquel
Kate K. Stafford, Felton
Greg Steinbis, Morgan Hill
Daniel Straus, San Jose
Mary J. Vaughan, Gilroy
John Viljoen, Salinas
Carl Wentworth, Menlo Park
Mike Will, Gilroy
Graham & Mary Williams, Morgan Hill
Abraham Zachariah, M.D., Los Gatos

A special thanks to **Mark Harlan** for joining as a **Life Member** and to **Page Frechette, Tim Gilrein,** and **Roberta Wright** for upgrading to **Life Memberships.** Mark, Page, Tim, and Roberta join our ever-growing list of esteemed Life Members. Now on this elite list are Everett Allen, Larry Bernal Jr., Barbara Bessey, Ann & Winslow Briggs, Paul Brown, Carl Clinger, Thomas & Norma Coe, Ruby Domino, Ron Erskine, Kevin Gilmartin, Larry Haimowitz, Albert Heckbert, Vic Hill, Don Holmes, Dave Hough, Celia McCormack, Robert Patrie, David Perrin, Joseph Reader, Kay Robinson, Diane Rubida, Backpack Section of the Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club, Jay Ward Smith, Craig Tarr, Peter Coe Verbica, Mr. & Mrs. Robert G. Verbica, Libby Vincent, John Williams, and Mr. & Mrs. Joseph G. Wirth.

New Contributors to the Visitor Center Expansion Fund

Herb & Alice Breckling
Melinda Chen
Costco Wholesale (Almaden)
Paul Danielson
Paula Dittmann
Roger Divirgilio
James Durkin
Tony Ferrari
Janet King & Nancy Giannetto
The Guglielmo Family
In-N-Out Burger
Celia McCormack
Ken & Lisa Manuele
Robert & Sharon Melton
Lorens Midtgaard
Elena O. Moreno
Birgitte Moyer
Emily Nalven
Ronald Pray
Anne Rosenzweig
John & Vicki Shelton
Catherine J. Strand
Vanessa, Madeline, & Caroline Verbica
Winnifred Coe Verbica
Dennis & Sandy Voechting
Abraham Zachariah, M.D.

Thanks to **Associated Concrete Company** of Morgan Hill for offering to donate an eight cubic yard load of concrete for the visitor center expansion.

Thanks also to **Gilroy Printers** of Gilroy for offering to assist our expansion with discounts on printing.

Thanks to our Corporate/Business members for renewing:

RAM Commercial Insurance
195 San Pedro Avenue, Bldg. A
Morgan Hill, CA 95037
(408) 776-2800

Anritsu Company
(formerly Wiltron)
490 Jarvis Drive
Morgan Hill, CA 95037-2809
(408) 778-2000

ASCOT ROOFING

BILL WILSON
OWNER

757-7776	373-8922	637-6002
SALINAS	CARMEL	GILROY
LIC. 648794	MONTEREY	HOLLISTER

Special Contributions

In memory of **Leon Thomas** a generous special contribution has been made by **Robert D. Patrie**. With his contribution letter, Mr. Patrie writes:

> I first met Leon shortly after first "discovering" Henry W. Coe State Park in 1970. As a newly transplanted easterner, I was startled and pleasantly surprised to find myself surrounded by an old fashioned cattle drive as Leon and [his brother] George moved their herd through the park to the Cold Flat Ranch.
>
> His guidance and vision helped the fledgling Pine Ridge Association through its first years.
>
> Leon will be missed by all who were lucky enough to have known him.

In memory of **Shirley Ann Byham Hemeon** a generous contribution to the Visitor Center Expansion Fund has been made by **Rosse Hemeon.**

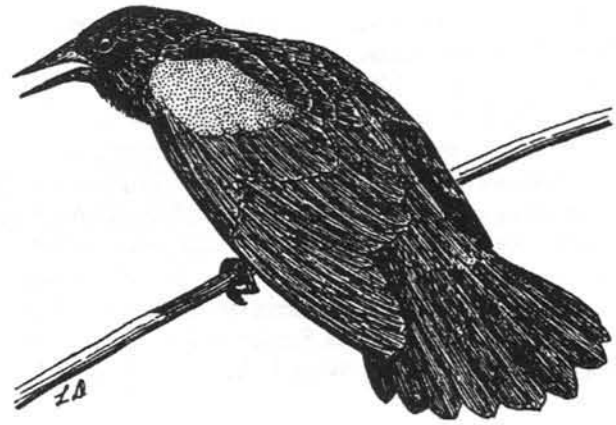
Thanks to **Laura Anderson-Morton** for her generous donation "in appreciation for the volunteers' efforts" made in finding her lost horse in January. "We would like the Coe Park Mounted Assistance Unit to decide how this money is spent."

Thanks to **Dennis Pinion & Barbara Radd** for their continued quarterly donations matching the profits earned by sales of drinks from the Coca-Cola refrigerator at the visitor center.

Thanks to **Boole & Babbage** for its gift matching that of employee **Dennis Pinion.**

Thanks to **3Com Corporation** for its gift matching that of employee **David Baumgartner.**

Thanks to **Cisco Foundation** for another gift matching the Coe volunteer hours of **Libby Vincent.**



PRA Calendar

Saturday, June 6: **Poker in the Park.** Calling all hikers, mountain bikers, and horseback riders! Pick up poker hands as you enjoy exploring the backcountry of the park. Please call Chere Barger (408/683-2247) or Kitty Swindle (408/842-6215) for more information.

Saturday, June 20: Explore celestial wonders of the sky with members of the **San Jose Astronomical Association**. Sunset and starting time is at 8:29 p.m. The public is invited to attend. For additional information, call the Association's hotline (408/559-1221).

Friday, July 3 to Sunday, July 5: **4th of July Weekend Backpack**. Join Irwin Koff and Janet Pettinotti as they lead a group into the new Redfern property. Enter the park from the Coyote Creek Gate. Please call them (408/293-8194) for additional information and meeting times.

Monday, July 13: Regular meeting of the **PRA Board of Directors**. The meeting is open to PRA members. It will be held in Woodside; please call Chair Kevin Gilmartin for more information (650/851-7813).

Saturday, August 1 & Sunday, August 2: **Garage Sale.** We are looking for a good location for the garage sale, and we need a place to store items before the sale. If you have a place to recommend or if you would like to donate items for the sale, please call the park headquarters (408/779-2728).

Saturday, August 8 & Sunday, August 9: Hike around **Burra Burra**—first by moonlight and then by daylight. It is an amazing experience and not to be missed. See the article on page 8 for more information.

Sunday, August 16: Deadline for receipt of applications to become a member of the **Uniformed Volunteer Program** at Coe Park. See article on page 8 for more information.

Friday, September 4 to Monday, September 7: **Labor Day Weekend Backpack**. Join Irwin Koff and Janet Pettinotti as they lead a group into the Orestimba Wilderness. Enter the park from the Bell Station Gate. Please call them (408/293-8194) for additional information and meeting times.

Friday, October 2 to Sunday, October 4: **October Weekend Backpack**. Join Irwin Koff and Janet Pettinotti as they lead a group to Lost Spring and then to hike the Kelly Cabin Loop. Enter the park from the Coyote Creek Gate. Please call them (408/293-8194) for additional information and meeting times.

Saturday, October 3: **TarantulaFest and Barbecue**. A flyer will be distributed later this summer.

Saturday, October 17 & Sunday, October 18: **Fall Barbed Wire Fest.** Help remove barbed wire from the park and have fun at the same time! Call Doug Meyers at the district office for more information (408/848-4006).

Saturday, November 7: **Trails Day.** Help us improve existing trails and build new trails in the park. Call Doug Meyers at the district office for more information (408/848-4006

Saturday, November 28: Join us for **Thanksgiving** at Coe. More details will be provided later.

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Henry W. Coe State Park
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Morgan Hill, CA 95038
(408) 779-2728
http://www.coepark.parks.ca.gov

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Libby Vincent, Vice Chair
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This Issue's Illustrators:	Barry Breckling	Lee Dittmann

The Ponderosa is a periodic 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 history, natural history, and management of the park are welcome. Please send submissions to the editors at 127 Glenwood Avenue, Woodside, CA 94062; or call 650/851-7813.

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