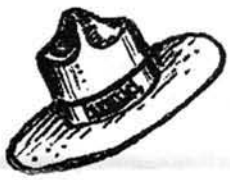
THE PINE RIDGE ASSOCIATION • HENRY W. COE STATE PARK •

# The Ponderosa

*The Pine Ridge Association Newsletter*
*Henry W. Coe State Park*

## Early Spring 2002

### From under My Brim



**by Barry Breckling**

**They Don't Make It Anymore**

Hálo heard the sound of a wisp of air flowing over a wing and turned his head to look over his left shoulder. There it was, a red-tailed hawk with a kingsnake in one of his talons, circling slowly above him, only a little above the treetops. Staring intently at the eye of the hawk, who was looking back at him, Hálo raised his right hand and said, "Ho ho, ataki ashi." You are my brother, we are as one. The hawk circled one more time and flew off to the east, but Hálo knew where Taípni was going. He had watched the male hawk take food to the nest on the other side of the ridge, in the hills above the spreading valley.

It was late spring, so there would be young in the nest, and Taípni would bring small rodents, kingsnakes, and gopher snakes to feed the young. At other times of the year, Hálo had seen Taípni's mate catch ground squirrels. She was larger than her mate and could catch larger prey. Being larger gave her more energy reserves to produce eggs and to sit on the nest for many days with little food.

In the winter, Hálo often watched the two hawks and other red-tailed hawks in nearby territories, as they perched quietly in oak trees in the forest and intently studied the ground below. After several minutes or sometimes even an hour or more, a hawk would simply hop off the limb, land on the ground, and fly back up to the limb with a mouse or vole in one of its talons. To all others around, the mouse had been invisible until the hawk caught it. On rare occasions, Hálo had seen these hawks catch and eat grasshoppers, lizards, and even small birds.

Hálo knew that the red-tailed hawks were part of the whole and had their place. It was their job to keep the prolific mice from taking over the earth.

Hálo enjoyed the love dances of Taípni and his mate, which occurred mostly in the late winter. The two hawks would circle on rising currents of air, with Taípni flying above and behind his mate. Sometimes they would do this with their talons dangling below them. At other times he would be watching Taípni's mate fly in lazy circles, and he would search the sky for Taípni. There he would be, flying high and very far away, but he would fold his wings and swoop down towards his mate. When he was only feet away, he would open his wings to brake his fall, she would flip upside down, and the two would touch talons. Sometimes they would grip each other's talons and spin around in the air.

**Inside this issue . . .**

Encounter between a coyote and a bobcat

Status of the Dowdy Ranch Day Use facility

Coe Park has a beautiful new map!

Hikes and training open to PRA members

**. . . and more!**

When Hálo was 12 years old, he first saw Taípni testing his wings at the edge of the large nest made of sticks and twigs. Taípni had spent a month in the egg under his mother's warm body, and it took another month and a half before he was ready to try flying. At age three Taípni found a mate, but a year later Hálo saw his mate grabbed by a coyote when she was trying to catch a jackrabbit. Taípni had a new mate two years later, and she was still with him now. Hálo calculated that Taípni was 19 years old now. Most years the pair would have two or three young, but when there was little food around, Taípni's mate might lay only one egg. When there was a lot of food, she would lay up to five eggs.

Taípni lived in the middle of the land that Hálo's tribe claimed as their own. Hálo valued and respected this land and the land of the neighboring tribes, the land and all its living creatures. He knew that there was only so much land, and that no more would be made.

Vernon watched as the pair of redtails circled above his ranch house, which was set at the base of the hills on the edge of the spreading valley. His father, who had homesteaded this land, would have probably shot at the hawks. He called them "chicken hawks." Although Vernon once saw a redtail grab a small bird, he had never seen one take any of the chickens that wandered the ranch yard day after day. What Vernon had come to realize was that redtails were good at catching mice and ground squirrels, and that meant there were fewer rodents eating the wheat in his little wheat field and the grain in his barn.

Vernon knew this pair nested just on the other side of the ridge to the east. Their nest was in a tall pine, almost to the top of the tree, and although it had a commanding view, it wasn't as exposed as you might guess. The tree was a little off the top of the ridge where it was sheltered from strong winds. Vernon had seen the pair use the same nest for five years and had known of their previous nest down the ridge about a half mile.

It was now late spring, and Vernon decided to see if the pair had nestlings, so he rode his horse to the ridge top and looked down at the tree with the nest in it. There was the nest, with three full-grown hawks, who looked as big or even bigger than their parents. He could plainly see the young hawks were not yet interested in flying. They were big and fat and well fed, but were lacking the attitude of a mature hawk. They were lighter in color than their parents, and he could plainly see the tail on one of them. The tail feathers were light brown, rather than red.

Vernon had spent time in the library, reading about these hawks. One book said that the young didn't get their bright rusty red tail until they were two or three years old. Even without red tail feathers, he could tell that the young birds were redtails because, like the adult redtails in this part of the country, they had darkish heads and whitish breasts with a darker bellyband underneath.

As he watched the young, one of the parents arrived and placed a fresh green pine branch in the nest. Vernon thought this was a curious thing to do, though he had seen green material in the nest before. So he made another trip to the library and learned that the hawks often collected the inner bark of trees, evergreen sprigs, and green leaves with pesticide properties and put them in their nests to discourage fly maggots, fleas, ticks, mites, bacteria, and fungus. If the pests got too bad in a nest, the hawks would abandon the nest and build a new one.

Vernon read that the red-tailed hawk is the most widely distributed of all the broad-winged hawks. He learned that their range extends from Alaska to Panama, that they live in all but a couple of the most northern provinces of Canada, and that they're common throughout the continental United States. They are found in forests with open areas nearby, in grasslands with trees nearby, in mountains up to 10,000 feet in elevation, and even in deserts.

Vernon loved spending time in the forests and meadows, watching wild animals. He always felt refreshed when he rode his horse into the hills. Just watching a redtail circle above his ranch house reduced the stress of a day, and he was having a good deal of stress these days. It was time to sell his cattle, but the price had dropped. He still owed money for the extra hay he'd had to buy to get his cattle through last year's drought, and the property taxes would be due next month. And even worse, there were people who wanted to buy his ranch so that they could build houses and a golf course there. He valued his land, and although he knew people needed places to live, he couldn't imagine houses being built in such a beautiful wild place. When his father had handed over full operation of the ranch to Vernon, he'd told his son, "You take care of this land now. Once it's damaged or gone, it's gone for good. When it comes to land, you know, they just don't make it no more."

Ray walked through the spreading valley towards the rolling hills. He carried all the equipment he needed for his survey work in his pockets and in a small pack, and he wore a pair of binoculars around his neck. He passed the area that was staked for the entry to the clubhouse, and a little farther on, he found the stakes that marked the first tee and then the 18th

tee. The old ranch house, the barn, and the other ranch buildings had tags noting that they were to be torn down. As he began to climb uphill, he found the stakes that marked the main road into the hills, and although he had not been this far onto the property before, he knew that the markers for many more roads would branch off like the limbs of an old valley oak.

He watched a lone red-tailed hawk, suspended in the air, facing into the strong, prevailing northwest wind. The hawk adjusted its wings a bit now and then, but its body was glued to the same invisible spot in the sky. He'd often seen redtails hover in the air with their wings flapping, and then swoop down to the ground and grab an unwary rodent, but he had determined that their most common hunting behavior was to perch on a tree limb or a telephone pole and wait patiently for something to move in the grassy fields below.

He knew that when red-tailed hawks soared, they usually weren't looking for food. Earlier in his birding years, he had wondered why they spent so much unproductive time in the air. He had thought that maybe flying was just as easy for them as perching. But now he believed that they simply love to fly. He was sure it was for the sheer fun of it when they would fold in their wings and do a descending roller coaster dive across the sky. They would swoop down and arc back up until they almost stopped, swoop down again, and then repeat the swoops and arcs a few more times.

As Ray reached the top of the first ridge, he noticed a big stick nest near the top of a large pine in a sheltered part of the ridge. He watched a red-tailed hawk heading for the nest with a snake in one of its talons. As it flew over him just above the treetops, it circled once. Ray could see the large eye of the hawk, and he searched it for mysteries the bird held inside. Ray knew that the hawk could see him much more clearly than he could see the hawk.

Ray had learned that the eyes of humans and hawks are similar, but that hawks have much better vision. He recalled a research paper he had read about bird vision. As animals go, a red-tailed hawk has very large eyes in proportion to the size of its head. Bigger eyes mean better vision. Hawks have lots of *cones*—cells of the retina that are good for daytime vision and receive colored light. The other type of cells in the retina are *rods*, which receive only in black and white, but are far better for gathering light. Hawks don't have lots of rods, but owls have many. Ray also remembered that the many cones in the eyes of a hawk are very tightly packed. "More pixels," he said to himself with a smile. Ray figured that the hawk looking down at him not only had better daytime vision then he had, but probably saw more colors, too.

This hawk also had him beat when it came to seeing things in the distance. He had read that hawks have a flattened lens that sits far away from the retina, giving the eye a long focal length, just like a telescope. He would have to look through very wide-angled 3- to 8-power binoculars to see as far.

The red-tailed hawk landed in the nest and looked back at Ray. It moved its head from side to side as it checked him out. Ray had seen hawks do that on a number of occasions, usually when they were looking for food. He had figured out, to his satisfaction, why a hawk moves its head that way. They use the technique to better judge distances, noting the relative motion of close and distant objects. He knew it worked; he'd tried it himself.

Ray heard the screech of another red-tailed hawk behind him, and when he looked over his left shoulder he found that he'd been fooled. There in the oak behind him was a Steller's jay imitating the call of the hawk. He should have known better. He'd heard the jays mimicking redtails so often, he'd convinced himself he could tell the difference. One time he was tickled to hear a California thrasher imitating a jay's imitation of a red-tailed hawk.

As Ray walked along the ridge top, he came to a mound of rocks. He checked his GPS and read from some old survey notes. Using his compass, he paced due east 12 yards to a large old black oak. "Yep," he said to himself, "there's an old blaze on the tree. This would be the eastern corner of the property." He walked back to the pile of rocks and drove a long stake into the ground.

Ray turned around and gazed out across the beautiful panoramic view from the ridge top. He could see almost all the property he was surveying, and he thought to himself how wonderful it is that all this land, and even the land that the hawk's nest is on, was bought from the developers at the last minute by his employer, the local open space district. The land would be preserved as open space for all time. He remembered what an old cowboy had told him, "It's important to save as much land as you can right now. When it comes to land, you know, they don't make it anymore."

## A Christmas Day Hike at Coe

**by Pete Henshaw and Holly Harper**

The cancellation of a traditional family gathering left Holly and me with no plans for spending Christmas Day 2000. After some discussion, we decided upon a hike at Henry Coe. Neither of us had ever been to the park in late December, and we thought it might be a good opportunity to see things in the nadir of seasons.

We arrived around eight and stopped by the visitor center. There we found one of our favorite friends among the Coe volunteer corps behind the desk. He was in good spirits, in a mood appropriate to the season. God was in his heaven, Jim Mason was in charge of the park, and all was well with the world.

The fall season had been relatively dry, and we found the Corral and Fish trails to be in good condition. The landscape, however, somewhat dreary under a low and pale solstitial sun, seemed rather empty and lifeless. We missed the verdant colors of spring and summer. And on a day when the park might see little visitation, we hoped to see some of the park's wildlife, possibly some of the park's pet pigs—we had seen much evidence of their rooting activities around headquarters and the campground. Or some deer or some turkeys. But there was nothing in the way of wildlife to be seen. Indeed, even the birds seemed to have taken the day off. Only the vegetation in a small way was forthcoming. We found big berry manzanita in bloom in many places, and we were able to photograph some colorful fungus on the Fish Trail.

Our route took us down the Middle Ridge Trail to Poverty Flat. The middle fork of Coyote Creek was at very low water, and we easily rock-hopped over at both crossing places. At that time we had seen neither man nor beast. It was as if we had the entire park to ourselves. After lunch we ascended the Cougar Trail. On the China Hole Trail, perhaps a half mile up from the Cougar Trail junction, we found a favorite plant, chaparral currant, in full bloom. At that point it was the highlight of our hike.

We took the Springs Trail back. In the big bend in the trail in the savannah area, we heard a meadowlark, and looked up slope to see if we could spot it. Then we noticed a coyote, sauntering along on a low rise about 50 yards to our right. It kept its nose low as it looked around, and it seemed to pay no attention to us. Wow, wildlife at last! But there was more to come. All of a sudden a bobcat, hidden in the dry grass a few yards away, sprang up and bolted toward the nearest oak. Reflexively, the coyote took chase. But he never came close to catching the cat. In half a twinkling, the cat reached the tree and bounded 12 or 15 feet up and out upon a stout limb. Below, the coyote began to trot about in ever widening circles. With binoculars we watched the bobcat, relaxed now and stretched out full length, in the process of calmly washing its paws. Now and then it seemed to glance disdainfully down at our wily but frustrated coyote. All the while neither animal had paid us any attention.

Later, by e-mail, we recounted the coyote-bobcat episode to Ranger Barry Breckling. We said we thought it was hard to believe that a coyote would want to mess with a bobcat. Despite their size, bobcats are reputed to be tough and feisty fighters, especially when cornered. Perhaps the coyote was young and inexperienced, or just plain hungry and ready to chase anything that moved. Barry's reply: "Sounds like you had one of those great days when it's wonderful out, but deep down you feel there's something more out there for you to see, and then, there it is. Wonderful sighting. I've never seen an interaction between a bobcat and a coyote. Can't imagine a coyote actually getting a meal out of a bobcat, but coyote minds can imagine that, and what you can imagine, can happen." Well said, enough said.

Our first Christmas Day hike in Henry Coe Park, even had we not witnessed the coyote-bobcat interaction, was a great success. Any time is a good time to take a hike at Henry Coe.

## Park News

**by Kay Robinson**
**Park Superintendent**

We're not quite ready for the grand opening of the Dowdy Ranch Day Use facility, but progress is being made steadily toward that goal. The conceptual drawings are completed, the project has been reviewed and approved by the Public Works Board, the Mitigated Negative Declaration Study Report (environmental review) has been completed and endorsed by our Department, Department of Fish and Game, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the working drawings are to be completed this spring. The old barn at Dowdy Ranch was demolished in October with a concern for minimizing the impact on California red-legged frogs and brown bats. It has been decided to remove the modular buildings whole (by wheeling them away on trailers) because of known presence of lead and asbestos within the fabric of the buildings. If the plan goes according to the scheduled time line, the contract will be developed this spring and let this summer, pending approval of construction funds by the Legislature in the 2002–2003 budget. Construction could begin as early as late this summer. It is unlikely that construction will be completed until the end of the construction "season" of 2003, so the anticipated opening would be spring 2004, the Dowdy Ranch Grand Opening coinciding with the final Coe Backcountry Weekend.

In late 2001, escrow closed on the conservation easement of Don Silacci. The deal was brokered by the Nature Conservancy with the major contributor being the Department of Parks and Recreation and minor contributors being the Coastal Conservancy and Santa Clara County Open Space Authority. The purpose of such a purchase allows the property to remain in private ownership and in historical use (ranching) while protecting forever the environmental and scenic values of the landscape. All development rights are suspended, and a strict monitoring of the property by State Park staff will be put into place to ensure that the owners remain in compliance with the terms of the easement. While no public access is permitted, the land will remain essentially open space, and State Parks would have first right of refusal should the property become available for purchase any time in the future. This special arrangement is further demonstration of the Department of Parks and Recreation's commitment to being stewards of the land of California.

Thanks to the voters of California who treasure open space and recreational lands, the Parks Bond Act of 2000 passed easily. The direct benefit to Henry W. Coe State Park is the acquisition of several key parcels. The Silacci conservation easement was funded from this bond act as well as the acquisition of the final 2,600-acre parcel of the Lakeview Meadows property and the anticipated 200-acre addition of the Stevenson ranch (a portion of the 4,400-acre ranch recently purchased by the Department of Fish and Game). DPR's Sacramento Acquisitions Unit staff is continuing work on negotiating with several more owners of properties that abut or are surrounded by Henry Coe State Park. Over the years we have maintained a dialogue with numerous owners, and at times we have made offers to purchase their holdings. Funds have not been available during most of the 1990s but, thanks to the Bond Act of 2000, we are in a position to renew those offers. Time will tell if we are successful. The benefit to the park and the visitors is the elimination of historic rights of way, occasional vehicular traffic through the backcountry, and the potential threat of intrusive development that would affect park viewshed.

You will have another chance in March to help preserve open space, create new parklands, provide recreational opportunities, improve water and air quality, and rehabilitate worn out park facilities. A major bond act will be on the primary ballot with over $2 billion in funding opportunities for city, county, regional, and state parks as well as conservancies and districts. I urge you to take a close look at this proposition and vote affirmatively for preserving and improving parklands and facilities.

## Coe Park Has a New Map

**by Winslow Briggs**

If you have been to the visitor center recently, you are already aware that there is a new park map under construction. As the park has grown and grown over the past two decades, and acquired more and more tangled and beautiful complexes of canyons and ridges, there has been increasing need for a whole-park map at the same scale as the current large-scale map of the western sector. Such a map should have contour lines and detailed mileages, and at the larger scale, would accommodate far more detailed information than was possible for the current map. In 1999, there was about a 2½ year supply of the current map on hand or ordered, and the time was ideal for a new effort.

In July of that year, the Pine Ridge Association Board brought together a map committee consisting of Bob Patrie, Bill Levey, Dave Hildebrand, Winslow Briggs, Ann Briggs, Kay Robinson, and Barry Breckling to tackle the project. The inspiration for the effort was a series of initial efforts by Bill Levey, Dave Hildebrand, and Bob Patrie to obtain really accurate information on trail positions, lengths, and elevation changes using satellite transmission and global positioning system (GPS) measurements. Over the next year and a half, Bob, using a very sophisticated instrument and with the able

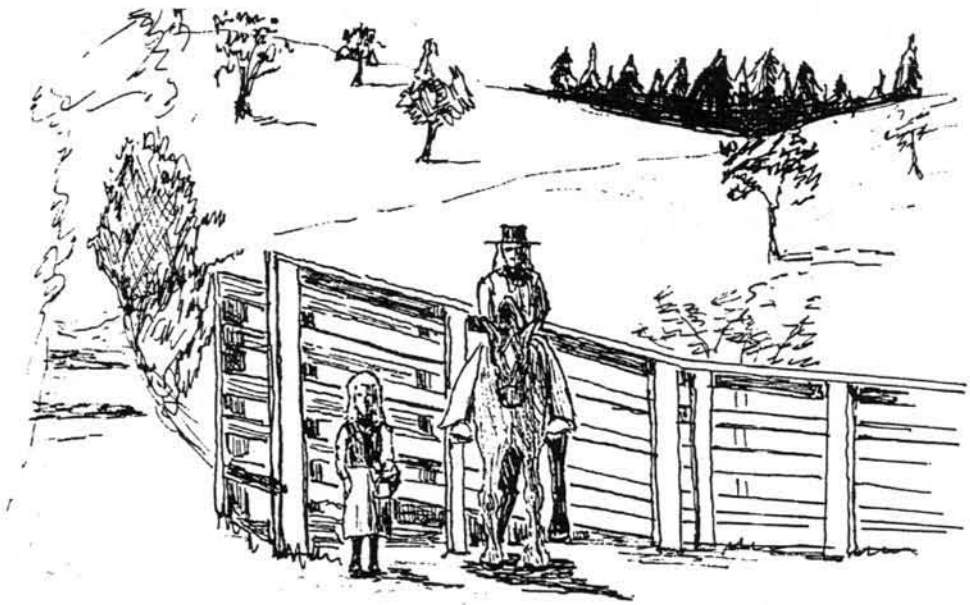
assistance from Bill and Dave, acquired masses of data sufficiently accurate that a given trail could be placed directly onto a USGS contour map with the remarkable accuracy of plus or minus 5 to 10 meters. The instrument has large storage capacity, can be directly downloaded, and the data placed accurately on a USGS base map. These volunteers obtained data on virtually every road and trail segment in the park, adding up to over 400 miles of lines of travel! Needless to say, some of these lines of travel, though based on old jeep roads, are sufficiently obscure that they have no place on a map for the public. However, all in all, the new map does show over 250 miles of roads and trails.

The next step involved identifying a cartographic firm with the resources and talent to put together the map that the committee wanted. Fortunately Allan Cartography, from Medford Oregon, had those attributes and gave us a reasonable bid. The first issue was whether we should have a single map of the whole park or divide it into two sections with enough overlap to show park headquarters on both sides. We chose the latter, as it allowed us to use a scale of 1:24,000 for the entire park, not just the headquarters region as is the case with the current map. The process was then as follows: Bob sent in digital data, and Allan produced an initial map merely showing lines of travel. Then the committee agonized over several issues: Should we indicate vegetation patterns? (No) Should we indicate elevation by changes in color? (We tried, and it didn't work.) Should we include mileages? (Yes for all road and trail segments) Should we show shading based on a westerly sun, and if so, should it be from the southwest, west, or something else? (Southwest was best.) On several issues, we chose what we thought was the best alternative and had Allan use it to make a print. They always obliged, but often suggested alternatives. In each case, the cartographer's suggestions were superior to the committee's choice, indicating that our selection of cartographers was indeed a wise one.

In the meantime, the committee assembled various non-cartographic items. Among these were hazards, backcountry regulations, regulations for bicyclists and equestrians, information on popular routes—including mileages and elevation gain/loss, an appropriate legend for both sides, information on the park itself, information on the Pine Ridge Association, locator maps, and a front piece (Dave Hildebrand's classic picture of Sada's Pine).

The map then went through an extensive development phase. Allan would produce a print and send it to the committee, the committee would edit it carefully, and send the edits back. Allan would make the appropriate corrections and send down another print. The map went through five such cycles. The first time, there were something like 129 small editorial items requiring attention. The second, there were 49. The third, there were 9, the fourth 6, and the fifth, about 8. (We completely missed "Sheep Theif Creek," far to the northeast, on early rounds, but that area was ultimately covered up by an information box!) In December 2001, we decided that the editing process had reached the point of diminishing returns: It was time to commit to print. As of mid-January, the map is in the hands of the printer and will likely be available when you receive this issue of *The Ponderosa*. Since the deadline we set for ourselves in the summer of 1999 was to have the new map ready by January 1, we were almost on schedule. (As the current map supply is now around 200 of the 6,000 ordered in 1999, it appears that we are just in time!) Production of the map was supported by a generous grant from the California State Parks Foundation and a generous donation from Cypress Semiconductor.

The committee very much hopes that you will find the new map informative and useful. Should you find errors (yes, there will inevitably still be some), please let us know. Making corrections for the next printing is a simple matter.



## Get to Know Your Park: Kelly Cabin Canyon Weekend

**(April 6–7, rain postpones to April 13–14)**
**by Larry Haimowitz**

Get-to-know-your-park hikes, an annual event, are a chance for PRA members and Coe Park volunteers to experience parts of the park that are beyond a normal day-hike. Coit Camp will be open for camping on Friday and Saturday nights, or you can come to Coit Camp on Saturday morning. We'll hike Kelley Cabin Canyon on Saturday. This is an all-day hike, mostly flat and mostly in the creek bed. Expect the canyon to be green and full of wildflowers. This is a gorgeous canyon that deserves to be better known.

You can drive into Coit Camp with a two wheel drive vehicle, but we'll need four wheel drive vehicles and drivers to get from Coit Camp to the trailhead. We need to know if you're planning on joining us for all or part of the weekend and if you have a four wheel drive vehicle and can drive, and you'll need information about access and times from me. Call Larry Haimowitz, 408/778-6088.

## Moonlight Times Two—Over the Hill

**by Larry Haimowitz**

If you've recently turned 50, this is the way to celebrate. Hike over Blue Ridge in the moonlight! Put these two dates on your calendar: March 23 for a warm-up hike and May 25 for Blue Ridge. Younger PRA members and volunteers needed as well. It is traditional for the under 50 crowd to carry our geriatric supplies—we strongly encourage you to bring large packs with room for the kitchen sink. The hikes:

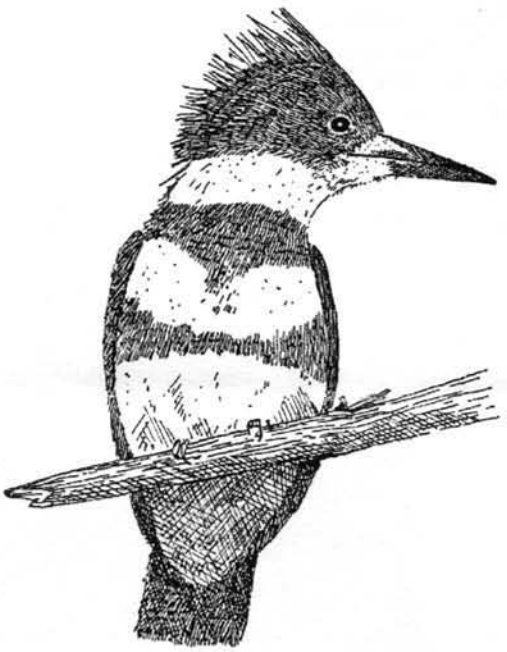
**Saturday, March 23,** we'll meet in the Hunting Hollow parking lot at 6 p.m., hike to Willson Camp via Wagon Road, and back via Lyman-Willson Road. We'll have a 68% waxing gibbous moon high in the sky when the sun sets. Overcast no problem, but we'll cancel if it's raining.

**Saturday, May 25,** we'll meet at park headquarters at 8 p.m. This is the night before the full moon, with moonrise at 6:32. Since this is a tough hike, we'll have plenty of stops and a rescue vehicle in case anyone's feet give out. Picture ponderosa pines standing in the moonlight on top of Blue Ridge, it will be well worth the effort! We'll hike the loop in the clockwise direction, heading up the Shortcut and down the Jackass Peak Trail.

To join either of these hikes, just show up at the appointed time and place. If you want more information, call me, 408/778-6088.

## Training on Bird Identification & Interpretation

If you would like to attend three morning training sessions on birds in Coe Park, please sign up. The training will be presented by Barbara Bessey and Kevin Gilmartin on three Sundays, **April 14, May 5, and May 19,** at the Coe Park visitor center. We will begin each session by taking a walk to identify birds by sight and sound. Then we will view slides, listen to bird calls, and discuss handouts. If you can't come to all the sessions, we will mail you the handouts for the sessions you missed. To sign up, send Kevin or Barbara your name, and if they don't already have it, your mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address: 650/851-7813, KGilmartin@AIR.org, or BBessey@AIR.org.



## New Treasurer Needed

**by Dennis Pinion, current Treasurer**

The PRA needs a new treasurer by the end of June 2002. The duties are: Deposit funds from the Visitor Center and PRA events, pay bills and reimburse volunteers for expenses, compute and pay state sales taxes quarterly, prepare quarterly reports for the Board of Directors, attend bimonthly board meetings, assist with the preparation of state reports, and prepare the annual federal tax forms with the assistance of a professional accountant. You will need a computer. Prior knowledge of QuickBooks would be helpful but is not required.

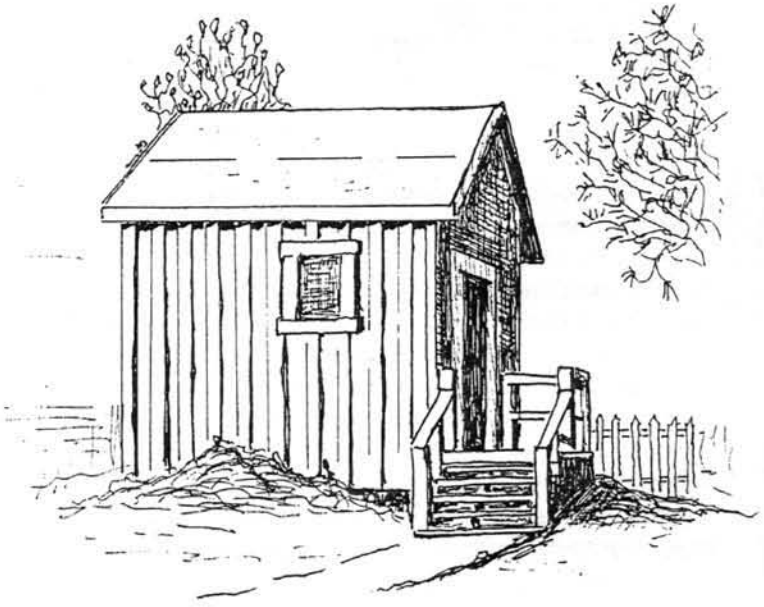
## New Members through December

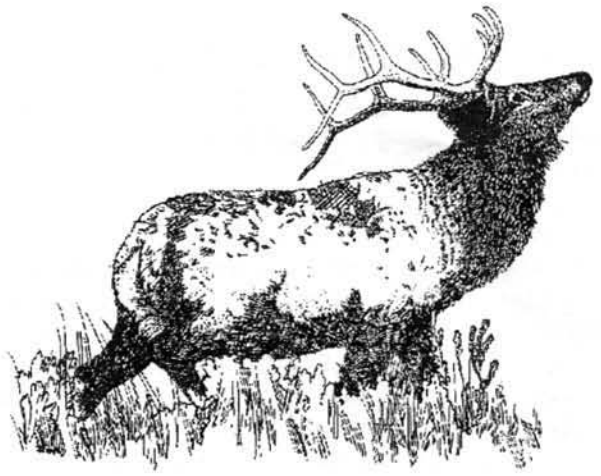
**by Margaret Mary McBride**

We are pleased to welcome the **new members** listed below. Thank you for your support, and welcome to the Pine Ridge Association!

Ken Adair, Campbell
Hal & Nancy Caplener, Morgan Hill
Stu & Andrea Carson, San Martin
Linda Hudock, Kentfield
Maribeth Lewis, Morgan Hill
Linda & Tim O'Heron, Hollister
Ron Pearson, Campbell
Laurel Reitman, San Francisco
Mark Riddle, San Jose
Elizabeth & David Schoendaler, San Jose
Susan Stillman, Morgan Hill
Joe & Judy Welgan, San Jose
Burt Welsh, San Jose
Richard Wildanger, San Jose

We would like to remind you to let us know of any change of address so your issue of *The Ponderosa* will follow you.





## PRA Calendar

*Saturday & Sunday, March 16 & 17:* The start of the **Spring Programs at Coe Park**. The schedule will be mailed to you. Generally, there are hikes on Saturdays, an interpretive program on Saturday evenings, and two wildflower walks on Sundays throughout the spring season.

*Saturday, March 16:* **Barbed Wire Fest.** Help remove barbed wire in the park. Please call the coordinator at 408/848-4006 for more information.

*Saturday, March 23:* **Moonlight Over the Hill Hike.** See the article on page 7 for more details about this hike.

*Saturday & Sunday, April 6 & 7:* **Kelley Cabin Canyon Hike weekend.** See the article on page 7 for more details about this hike.

*Saturday, April 13:* **The Spring Trails Day.** Help build or maintain trails in Coe Park. To see what a typical day is like, check out the description on our website: *www.coepark.org/trainwork.html*. For more information or to sign up, please call the Trails Day coordinator at 408/848-4006.

*Saturday & Sunday, April 27 & 28:* **The Backcountry Weekend at Coe Park.** Tickets are limited to this special event. A reservation request form is included in this issue of the newsletter, and it will also be available on the Coe Park website.

*Sunday, May 12:* **Mother's Day Breakfast.** Tickets for this very popular event will go on sale starting in mid-April.

*Saturday, May 25:* **Moonlight Over the Hill Hike.** See the article on page 7 for more details about this hike.

## Coe ♬

**by Barbara Bessey, President of the PRA**

As Kay Robinson mentions in her article, there is a new bond measure that will come before us in March. Proposition 40 is The California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Act of 2002. Proposition 40 is intended to improve our health, economy, and quality of life by providing funding to protect California's air, water, and coastlands from pollution, by improving our neighborhood parks and making them safer, and by preserving the state's open spaces and other natural resources. This proposition has garnered support from many organizations around the state. The California State Parks Foundation has an informational page on its website that provides the highlights of the bill (see *http://www.calparks.org/connections/Prop40.htm*). The text of the bill, along with the floor votes in the Assembly and Senate last September, can be found on the web (see *http://www.voteyeson40.org/text/summary.html*). Check it out to see if it is something you could vote for.

In October, the Pine Ridge Association hosted the annual statewide conference of the California League of Park Associations (CALPA). Over 100 individuals from around the state came to Morgan Hill for four days of presentations, meetings, and visits to state parks. On one day, we transported approximately 60 people to the park where they could see exhibits, including the wonderful historical exhibits assembled for our 25th anniversary celebration last year, go on guided walks, and have lunch. The weather was extremely cooperative; it was foggy in Morgan Hill as we caravanned up to the park, where we emerged in sunny and beautifully clear blue sky. The participants were extremely complementary about our role as co-hosts of the conference, and they very much enjoyed the visit to Coe Park.

The picture below was taken at the park during the CALPA conference showing the PRA board members, along with Ranger Barry Breckling and Kay Robinson, who is our Cooperating Association Liaison with the Department of Parks. I am holding an autographed copy of Winslow Briggs's latest edition of *The Trails of Henry Coe*; copies were presented to CALPA President Pat Greenstein and John Mott from the Department of Parks in Sacramento, who were the other hosts of the conference.

This is your organization. Get involved in something that interests you. Let me know if there is something you would like to participate in but you haven't yet seen an opportunity to do so. You can e-mail me any comments or suggestions (bbessey@air.org). See you at the park!

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

**Pine Ridge Association**
**Henry W. Coe State Park**
**P. O. Box 846**
**Morgan Hill, CA 95038-0846**
**(408) 779-2728**
**http://www.coepark.org**

DATED MATERIAL, DO NOT DELAY

340624 3312 24

**PRA Board of Directors**

Barbara Bessey, President
Kevin Gilmartin, Vice President
Winslow Briggs, Secretary
Dennis Pinion, Treasurer
Derek Smith, Volunteer Committee Chair
Ann Briggs
Stephanie Charles
Dave Perrin

Kay Robinson, Park Superintendent

**The Ponderosa Staff**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Editors: | Barbara Bessey | Kevin Gilmartin |
| Assistant Editor: | Barry Breckling | |
| Mailing & Distribution: | Phyllis Drake | Martie Sinclaire |
| | Margaret Mary McBride | Roberta Wright |
| This Issue's Reporters: | Barbara Bessey | Pete Henshaw |
| | Winslow Briggs | Dennis Pinion |
| | Larry Haimowitz | Kay Robinson |
| | Holly Harper | |
| This Issue's Illustrators: | Barbara Bessey | Bill Dillinger |
| | Cindie Brunner | Rosse Hemeon |

*The Ponderosa* is a publication of the Pine Ridge Association with approximately five issues per year. 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 94062-3512; or call 650/851-7813.

Copyright © 2002 The Pine Ridge Association