The **Ponderosa**

The Pine Ridge Association Newsletter
Henry W. Coe State Park

Late Spring 2002

From under My Brim

by Barry Breckling

Spring, Again

Barry: OK, I've got *The Ponderosa* article done.
Judy: What? You just went out on the deck ten minutes ago to get it started.
Barry: Well, I do have to type it up, but it's pretty much done.
Judy: What's it about?
Barry: Spring. And how absolutely unbelievably beautiful it is out there right now, and how everyone **has** to get up here and enjoy it.
Judy: You say the same thing every year.
Barry: Oh . . . yeah, that's right. Well it's still the truth. I guess I could take pictures, and you could put them out on the website for everyone to enjoy, but that's no way to really enjoy spring at Coe. People just have to get out and experience it for themselves.

So, I had gone out on the deck to see if I could come up with an idea for a From under My Brim article, and the only thing that struck me was how absolutely unbelievably beautiful it was. The temperature was in the mid-70s. The hummingbirds buzzed around me making hummingbird sounds, and off in the distance I heard an oak titmouse going, "schtibet, schtibet." Jays and robins, and flickers and towhees all added to the chorus, and a red-tailed hawk came in on cue with an opera singer's cry.

On the north-facing hillsides and areas of the ridge tops, the deciduous oaks were leafing out. They just couldn't get more beautiful. Blue oaks with their pastel fluorescent green, valley oaks even brighter, and the black oaks with everything from pastel blood red to luminescent green. Nothing is nicer than the deciduous oak ridges when the oaks first start to leaf out. And mosaiced into these glowing hills were the dark and bright greens of the evergreens—the bays, pines, madrones, and maples. On the top of the ridges, where the forest gave way to the meadows, it looked like someone had just rolled out large green carpets across the landscape. From a distance, it looked like the meadows would be a fine place to play golf.

Off across the little canyon to the northeast, I could see a large patch of lavender on an open hillside. It's the rocky chert hillside where I know the lavender-colored serpentine linanthus grows, and in the little grassy area right in front me are owl's clover, fiddle neck, hound's tongue, buttercups, bladder parsnip, blue dicks, miniature lupines, and red maids (actually I've renamed them "magenta maids"—they certainly aren't red). I know if I were to just take a short walk, I

Inside this issue . . .

Did you know Robinson Mt. is really Robison Mt.?

How many pigs are there in Coe Park anyway?

We should all learn more about Gilroy Hot Springs.

The Rummage Sale branches out to the internet.

. . . and more!

recycled paper

would see so many more wildflowers. Our "What's Blooming Now" list in the visitor center almost fills the board. And then there's the very faint perfume of some unknown distant flowers drifting in the wind and swirling around my nose.

In just two days, I should be out in the park for a two-day backpack trip. I don't think I could have picked a better time, but now that I think about it a bit more, I'm remembering how spring progresses. It just keeps getting better and better. Spring tapers off towards the end of May and into early June, but until then, every day is absolutely unbelievably beautiful in these hills. You don't really have to get up here and enjoy it. I'll take pictures.

Those Dratted Place Names and The Tale of a Homesick Miner from Tennessee

by Teddy Goodrich, Historian, Pine Ridge Association

A tendency to obsess about obscure questions is an occupational hazard for me. Most people wouldn't give a second thought to matters that can cause me hours of mental anguish, not to mention hours spent in various archives and libraries searching for answers. I ponder the fate of the two-story house at Frog Lake, wonder if the blacksmith shop at headquarters is one of Wesley Boden's homestead buildings, and have yet to find out the type of business the Widow Hobbs owned in Milpitas.

Then there is the matter of names on the land. The origin of many of our park names can be traced to homesteaders. Schaffer Corral, Mahoney Meadows, the Jackson Trail—all are named for homesteaders, and each has its own story. Sometimes we have only a name, but on rare occasion some bit of information gives us the impression of a real person. Take Mt. Sizer for instance. Samuel Sizer was a homesteader; Sizer's corrals even appear on the first federal survey map in 1881. Thanks to an interview with Henry Sutcliffe Coe, we know Mr. Sizer was an educated man. Henry called him "a Cornell man," so now in my mind he assumes a different stature than that of an itinerant sheep herder, and I wonder why he wasn't doing something with his education!

Some of our park names have suffered from misspellings that have been perpetuated by the map-makers. Fortunately Wilson has been changed to Willson, the correct spelling for Horace Willson, whose 10,000-acre cattle ranch lay east of Gilroy Hot Springs. Hat Spring on Red Creek has been changed to Hatch Spring, to honor the original homesteader. Robinson Creek and Robinson Mountain are still misnamed. Originally the name given to them was Robison, after Eli Robison who homesteaded there in the 1870s.

However, the name I have puzzled over most is Burra Burra. (Well, truthfully, Orestimba is right up there, too!) For years I assumed Burra Burra was a corruption of Buri Buri, the name of an Indian village near San Francisco, and later the name of the land grant, Rancho Buri Buri, awarded to Jose Maria Sanchez. The land grant was located where the cities of Colma and San Bruno are today.

But, I ask, how did the name migrate south to a peak near Pacheco Pass? I don't think anyone interviewed the Indians about place names; in fact I don't think anyone interviewed them about much of anything. I discovered that the Dowdys called their ranch Burra Burra Ranch, and when I found they had lived in Colma before settling in Gilroy, I thought I had the answer. Ooops. My mistake; they lived in **Coloma**! What a difference an "o" makes!

Well, I thought, perhaps Henry Miller brought the name with him. Rancho Buri Buri had been one of his first acquisitions on his march to cattle baron fame, and by 1860, Henry Miller was living in Gilroy. The name was certainly an early one. The official 1866 map of Santa Clara County contains the names of very few landmarks, but marked very clearly in township 10 south, range 5 east, is the Burra Burra Mine and the Blue Ridge Mining District. Hmmm. Did the mine give its name to the peak, or had the peak provided the name for the mine?

I had often passed by the mine while hiking around Burra Burra Peak. The mine was fenced off years ago, but the entrance has since collapsed and poses no threat to public safety. There is a large tailing fanning down the hillside, indicating the shaft must have gone into the hillside for some distance.

Last summer it became necessary to construct a history of the Dowdy Ranch headquarters area as a preliminary to the opening of the park's southern entrance. The contract historian was very interested in the Burra Burra Mine, and I became determined to find the answers to those questions that plague me. Who was there? What were they searching for? When did they leave? Months have passed, and I still do not have answers to those questions. Mining claims, I have learned, are kept in the recorder's office of each county, and the index to mining claims in Santa Clara County is in stor-

age—somewhere. So far no one I have contacted seems to know exactly where the index is.

One evening in complete frustration I logged onto the internet and typed in the search words, Burra Burra Mine. What came onto the screen blew me away. There were dozens of Burra Burra sites, most from two basic sources, the Burra Burra copper mine in Australia and the Burra Burra copper mine in the **Blue Ridge** mountains of Tennessee! Both are tourist attractions, and the Tennessee mine is on the National Register of Historic Places.

I don't know our miner's name. I don't know what he was searching for. Was it copper, or more likely, quicksilver? Was he successful? Who financed him? Why did he seek out this particular peak for his mining operation? Possibly he was a southern sympathizer. There were many in California during the Civil War.

Some questions have been answered. We now have a definition for Burra Burra, and I never did think those big berry Manzanita plants gave much of a blue cast to Blue Ridge. Someone will have to rewrite the definition for some of our park place names.

Meanwhile I continue to search for a homesick miner from Tennessee, and always in the back of my mind are those interminable questions that plague me: Where in that canyon was Kelly's cabin, and who was Kelly anyway?

P.S. If anyone has any influence with the county recorder's office . . . .

Wild Pigs in Henry W. Coe State Park

by Bonnie Doran

Wild pigs have been present in California for over 200 years. They are an invasive, alien species. This study is an attempt to look at one small section in a repeatedly impacted area of Coe State Park.

Invasive is defined as an alien species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. Alien is defined as any species, with respect to a particular ecosystem, capable of propagating that species, which is not native to that ecosystem. Pigs were introduced into California, and there are no natural co-evolved predators. California has a hybrid mix of feral pigs originally from the Spanish colonial period from the late 1700s through the early 1800s crossed with the European wild boar; the latter were released in 1926 in Monterey County. Physical characteristics and genetic analyses have confirmed this mix for Coe Park's pig population.

Recently, these pigs have had significant range expansion. After the early 1960s, they moved from about 10 primarily coastal counties into 49 of the state's 58 counties. The highest density so far studied has been found in Coe State Park. "High density" is defined as greater than 2.5 pigs/kilometer^2; Coe has 2.4–5.6 pigs/kilometer^2. Last year's estimated population was 1,245+ pigs in the park!

About half of Coe Park's area has been rooted: 55%–65% of oak grasslands and 40%–50% of oak woodland habitats. No figures were available for chaparral areas. The main forage the pigs seek is the mature acorn crop, though they also eat plants and a significant number of insects, worms, salamanders, etc. A study done last year by the University of North Dakota states that at least 50 native animals are being adversely affected by the pigs. Fawns are heavily dependent on the mature acorn crop in the fall in order to survive their first winter. Both jays (Steller's and scrub), squirrels, and band-tailed pigeons are a few of the other animals that also rely on the acorn crop. The pigs consume a large amount of chaparral fruits and downed pinenuts, which many non-acorn-eating animals need (including the coyote). There is some speculation that the pigs may also transmit to the native ungulates diseases, such as brucellosis, tuberculosis, and trichinosis.

Another significant impact is the "decrease in the availability of above-ground biomass for invertebrate and vertebrate grazers/herbivores." Physical damage to tree seedlings has caused a noticeable decrease in tree regeneration on top of the intense loss of mature acorns in the soil. Few large tree seedlings greater than 200 mm. in diameter were found in the study. Pigs have destroyed a large percentage of available Indian soap root as well as other bulb plants such as wild orchids and shooting stars, to name just a few of the many other plants.

Soil profiles have been disturbed and soil processes altered such as denitrification and microbial-mediated mineralization. Erosion has increased with possible impact to the ephemeral and permanent water courses and the species that live in and around these courses. Riparian areas have been extensively hit as well. Competitive relations have been altered between native and nonnative weedy grasses and herbaceous plants. Rootings have decreased the diversity and abundance of small terrestrial vertebrates by repeated soil and vegetation disturbances. These animals include voles, salamanders, frogs, and shrews.

Park visitors have increasingly commented on the negative visual impact of the pig rootings as well. There is no way to quantify these effects.

The pigs have no natural enemies to keep their numbers controlled. Cougars take only a very few, and coyotes have been known to take only very young pigs. Plans have finally been

formulated to begin removing at least some of the pigs from Coe Park, and officials are in the process of doing a Memo of Understanding with the Department of Fish and Game to begin eradication at some point in the future.

Sources:

Breckling, Barry; Ranger, Henry W. Coe State Park, Nov. 17, 2001. (interview)

Fish and Wildlife Service, Invasive Species, *invasives.fws.gov,* Nov. 2001.

Pinnacles National Monument, www.nps.gov/pinn/resource/pigimpact.htm, Nov. 2001.

Sweitzer, Rick A., and Loggins, Ron E.; Wild Pig Management Plan for Henry W. Coe State Park, University of North Dakota, Aug. 2000.

Danger on the Roads!
by Bonnie Doran

For the California newt, that is—namely, us and our cars! They are slow-moving, don't-see-too-well, blend-with-the-surroundings little creatures. Their scientific name is *Taricha torosa.* They are tan to reddish-brown above, yellow to orange below, with the back and belly colors blending where they meet. They cross the roads in springtime on their way to the water courses to find their mates. Please watch for them and **gently** move them (with gloves on!) downslope off the road. They look just like a stick, and not everyone is going to recognize them as a living creature, especially from the driver's seat. Thank you!

PRA Annual Meeting a Success!
by Barbara Bessey

The annual meeting of the Pine Ridge Association was held this year in Morgan Hill on February 9. Barbara Bessey opened the Pine Ridge Association portion of the meeting. She introduced the members of the Board of Directors. The officers of the Board of Directors for 2002 are: Barbara Bessey; President; Kevin Gilmartin, Vice President; Winslow Briggs, Secretary; and Dennis Pinion, Treasurer. The other board members are Ann Briggs, Stephanie Charles, David Perrin, and Derek Smith (Uniformed Volunteer Committee Chair). Barbara Bessey briefly summarized the mission of the PRA, which includes the promotion of interpretive services at Coe Park. She reminded the PRA members that the board welcomes applications for funds for projects that fit within the association's mission and gave some examples of such projects.

David Perrin reported on another successful two-week visit from the Landmark Volunteers. This group of high school students, largely from the east coast, worked for two weeks on a number of projects in the park—one week working at Coe Headquarters and one week working at various locations in the back country. Each attendee pays his or her own way.

Dennis Pinion summarized the financial status of the PRA; it is financially very strong, and over $213,000 have been raised to support the expansion of the Visitor Center.

Winslow Briggs reported that the new park map was currently being printed, and that both paper and plastic copies would be available for sale at the Visitor Center within a few weeks. We were very impressed when FedEx delivered a package to him at the meeting that contained one of the newly printed paper maps, so that he could show it to the attendees! Barbara Bessey and Dennis Pinion then presented members of the Map Committee (Bob Patrie, David Hildebrand, Bill Levey, Ann Briggs, and Winslow Briggs) with a framed portion of the last version of the map that was proof-read prior to printing, which was specially engraved to express the appreciation of the association for the Map Committee's efforts to make the new map a reality. Kay Robinson, our Park Superintendent, also acknowledged the heroic efforts to map the trails by presenting plaques of appreciation to Bob Patrie and Bill Levey, who spent many months walking all the trails in the park.

Ann Briggs reported on the new point-of-sale (POS) system that was successfully implemented in the Visitor Center as of January 1, 2002. She commended a number of volunteers for helping get the system in place, especially Gary Keller, who was instrumental in getting the right computer hardware and making the new system operational. Barbara then presented Ann and Gary with statuettes in appreciation of all of their

efforts over the past year to select a system and to get it installed so successfully and by the target date of January 1. Kay Robinson also acknowledged their efforts by presenting them with plaques of appreciation.

Barbara provided a summary of the 2001 annual conference of the California League of Park Associations (CALPA), of which the PRA was a co-host. On the last day of the conference, approximately 60 people were transported to Coe Park and treated to interpretive exhibits, guided walks, and lunch. A recent issue of CALPA's association newsletter indicated that they felt that the conference was a huge success. Barbara commended Dennis Pinion for his role in working very hard to make the conference so successful.

The meeting of the PRA uniformed volunteers followed. Derek Smith, Chair of the Uniformed Volunteer Committee, stated that the number of active volunteers is over 140. These volunteers donated a total of 19,522 hours in 2001. Of this total, 4,325 hours were spent staffing the Visitor Center. This is an amazingly large number of hours. The uniformed volunteers were extremely active during 2001, as evidenced by the large number of award presentations that followed.

Eighteen new volunteers graduated from the training program and became trainees: Ken Adair, Marty Asplund, Shirley Asplund, Nancy Barlow, Victor Bubbett, Tim Charles, Gillian Fairclough, Daniel Lewis, Diana Maloney, Bambi Moise, Chuck Nelson, Linda O'Heron, Tim O'Heron, Bruce Rideout, Rosemary Rideout, Fred Rounds, Susan Stillman, and Richard Wildanger.

Nineteen trainees, who had completed the requirements of the training program and had served 50 or more hours, advanced to Volunteer status: Heather Ambler, Einar Anderson, Jim Bailey, Priscilla Campbell, Jim Citta, Pat Dallam, Brian Guina, Holly Harper, Mike Harper, Pete Henshaw, Nancy Hildebrandt, Sharon Holland, Susan Hund, Dan McCranie, Greg Scott, Lykke Smith, Nancy Thomas, Andrea Van Cuylenburg, and Paul Yellow Horse.

A tape measure, which was engraved to honor the recipients of the 2001 Visitor Service Award, was given to volunteers who spent 48 or more hours working in the Visitor Center or on other visitor-centered activities during the past year (e.g., staffing the Coe Backcountry weekend event, presenting programs to visitors, or leading interpretive walks or hikes). This year, sixty-one volunteers were eligible to receive this award: Everett Allen, Heather Ambler, Jim Bailey, Norm Berube, Barbara Bessey, Lee Blanchard, Judy Breckling, John Briese, Ann Briggs, Winslow Briggs, Robert Buchner, Priscilla Campbell, Stephanie Charles, Susan Cheu, Pat Dallam, Ruby Domino, Phyllis Drake, Stew Eastman, Tim Fast, Bill Frazer, Kevin Gilmartin, Rob Glover, Teddy Goodrich, Kate Hager, Larry Haimowitz, Mike Harper, Nancy Hildebrandt, Don Holmes, David Hornby, Jodie Keahey, Irwin Koff, Janet Koff, Don Mason, Jim Mason, Judy Mason, Margaret Mary McBride, Dan McCranie, Mike Meyer, David Perrin, Lois Phillips, John Prior, Don Savant, Pat Scharfe, Sandy Sill, Martie Sinclaire, Rob Sinclaire, Derek Smith, Toni Sousa, Richard Stone, Kitty Swindle, Marlene Testaguzza, Nancy Thomas, Lisa Thornquist, Carolyn Tucker, Nancy Valencia, Andrea Van Cuylenburg, Bev VanderWeide, Corrie Vincent, Libby Vincent, Chris Weske, and Bill Workman.

Four individuals, who had volunteered 200 or more hours of which at least 100 hours were spent in the visitor center, were promoted to senior volunteers: Norm Berube, Rob Glover, Wade Hall, and Laura Welch.

Fifteen volunteers received special recognition for the tremendous numbers of hours they have spent on Coe Park volunteer activities. Between them, they have donated over 40,000 hours to the park! Fitz Fitzharris, Don Savant, Derek Smith, and Bill Workman each volunteered 1,000 hours of service. Gary Keller and David Perrin each volunteered 2,000 hours of service. Chere Bargar, Ann Briggs, Winslow Briggs, Teddy Goodrich, Martie Sinclaire, and Marlene Testaguzza each volunteered 3,000 hours of service. Judy Breckling and Bill Frazer each volunteered 4,000 hours of service. And Ruby Domino has volunteered a total of 6,000 hours!

A special silver pin with the association's logo was presented to those individuals who have participated in the volunteer program for ten or more years. Nine individuals were so honored this year: Michael Brookman, Tim Fast, Jim Gregory, David Hornby, Irwin Koff, Loren Mansel, Lois Phillips, Libby Vincent, and Bill Workman.

A special gold pin was presented to those individuals who have participated in the volunteer program for twenty or more years. This year, a pin was presented to Don Holmes.

Kay Robinson, Park Superintendent for the Coe Sector, made a special presentation to those individuals who had donated 200 hours or more within the past year (this also includes the time spent by some uniformed volunteers who volunteered time to other state parks, and the time that some non-uniformed individuals volunteered to Coe Park). Each received a free annual pass to state parks in California. Thirty-five individuals received the award this year: Everett Allen, Richard Auser, Chere Bargar, Barbara Bessey, Judy Breckling, Ann Briggs, Winslow Briggs, Priscilla Campbell, Julie Chase, Ruby Domino, Phyllis Drake, Stew Eastman, Bill Frazer, Kevin Gilmartin, Teddy Goodrich, Larry Haimowitz, Don Holmes, Irwin Koff, Janet Koff, Bill Levey, Jim Mason, Margaret Mary McBride, Dan McCranie, Bob Patrie, David Perrin, John Prior, Lee Sims, Martie Sinclaire, Rob Sinclaire, Toni Sousa, Kitty Swindle, Marlene Testaguzza, Chris Weske, Bill Workman, and Roberta Wright.

Kay also indicated that she had tabulated all of the hours that have been volunteered by the uniformed volunteers since the program began in 1980. Over the twenty-one-year period, a staggering total of 221,690 hours were logged, including 53,000 hours worked in the Visitor Center! If a full-time work year is considered to be approximately 2,000 hours, then this number of hours is the equivalent of almost 111 person-years!

Barry Breckling presented the Uniformed Volunteer Committee's Golden Bear Award for exceptional service to **Larry Haimowitz.** Larry started in the second class of uniformed volunteers back in 1981. Within a year, he had created the first tarantula hike, which was attended by 62 people. Somehow, and maybe we will never know, the event was publicized in Japan, as he got inquiries about the hike from Japanese residents. This ever-popular hike has evolved as the theme for the PRA's fall BBQ TarantulaFest. Larry, often referred to as the "bug" specialist, has presented evening slide programs for the public on the various "bugs" in Coe Park. He has organized many hikes, including many that are offered to PRA members, and he is an avid patroller on foot. In recent years, he has developed his skills in the area of flint napping, and he has put on demonstrations for the public. Larry may be best remembered for his part in the campfire program at the Coe Backcountry weekend several years ago: he came clothed only in a bear skin, and he regaled the very attentive audience with stories from a Native American perspective.

Kay Robinson announced that **Stew Eastman** was this year's recipient of the state's award honoring volunteers who have contributed much to state parks. Stew became a uniformed volunteer in 1993, and he has volunteered more than 2,500 hours to Coe Park since that time. He has been very actively involved in the training of the uniformed volunteers and has served on the Volunteer Committee and as its chair. He developed the trail guide for the Forest Trail, including a large print version for visually impaired visitors. He has worked on all of the major PRA-sponsored events, including the Mother's Day Breakfast, the TarantulaFest and raffle, the Coe Backcountry Weekend, as well as participating in community events (such as the Mushroom Mardigras) to share information about Coe Park. He has also participated in the Coe Connections program, which introduces school students to the natural history of Coe.

The PRA Annual Award is given to an individual who has contributed outstanding work in furthering the mission of the association in preserving and enriching Coe Park. This year's award, which was presented by Barbara Bessey and Ruby Domino, went to **Phyllis Drake.**[1] Phyllis joined the uniformed volunteer program in 1983, and she has donated 2,585 hours to Coe Park activities since that time. She has been very actively involved with the volunteer program, and she has served as a member of the Volunteer Committee for five years. One of her passions is horses, and she has been actively involved with the Mounted Assistance Unit (MAU) at Coe since its inception. She helps check out both horses and riders, she has taken part in searches and rescues in the park, and she has carried out many patrols on horseback. She has been very actively involved with the Coe Backcountry Weekend events, by being a member of the planning committee as well as setting up and working at the event. She served as the Director of the Coe Anza Trail Committee for the National Parks Service. She has also worked on many other activities and events, including springs maintenance, the mailing of the *Ponderosa* newsletter, the Rummage Sales, and Mother's Day Breakfasts.

After all of the serious awards were presented, humorous awards were announced. This year's award presentations were hosted by the very creative and funny Barry Breckling and Lee Sims, with assistance from Bonnie Lemons. Traditionally, a number of the awards go to the new uniformed volunteers who have entered the program as a way of introducing them to the rest of the volunteers, as well as to other more experienced volunteers who have distinguished themselves in some amusing ways over the past year. After the meeting, a delicious lunch was provided by the Uniformed Volunteer Committee; special thanks to Roberta Wright, Kitty Swindle, and Chere Bargar for all of their efforts in the kitchen! A good time was had by all!

Congratulations to all!

This year's speaker was Larry Serpa, an aquatic biologist, who has worked at the Nature Conservancy for twenty-five years. If you would like to know more about his background and experience, check out this link to the Nature Conservancy website: *http://www.tnccalifornia.org/science/bios/lserpa.asp.*

Most of Larry's comments were about the Mount Hamilton Project, which includes over one million acres of land between Highway 1 and Route 5. Just two days before the annual meeting, the Nature Conservancy issued a press release that announced that it had purchased the area around the Gilroy Hot Springs, a historic property, and was hoping to transfer it to the California Department of Parks and Recreation for inclusion in Coe Park.[2]

The Mount Hamilton Project began in 1998 with the purchase of two large ranches in the Diablo Range. The purchase of the Simon Newman and Romero ranches made it possible for the Nature Conservancy to begin its efforts to protect the vast Mount Hamilton natural area. The project is intended to protect all of the wildlife that occurs in these areas; it is not intended to enable the public to have access to move through the entire area. A number of conservation easements have been established, which means that there are certain restrictions on the use of the land, such as the prohibition of condo-

minium development and restrictions on the amount of cattle grazing in the areas.

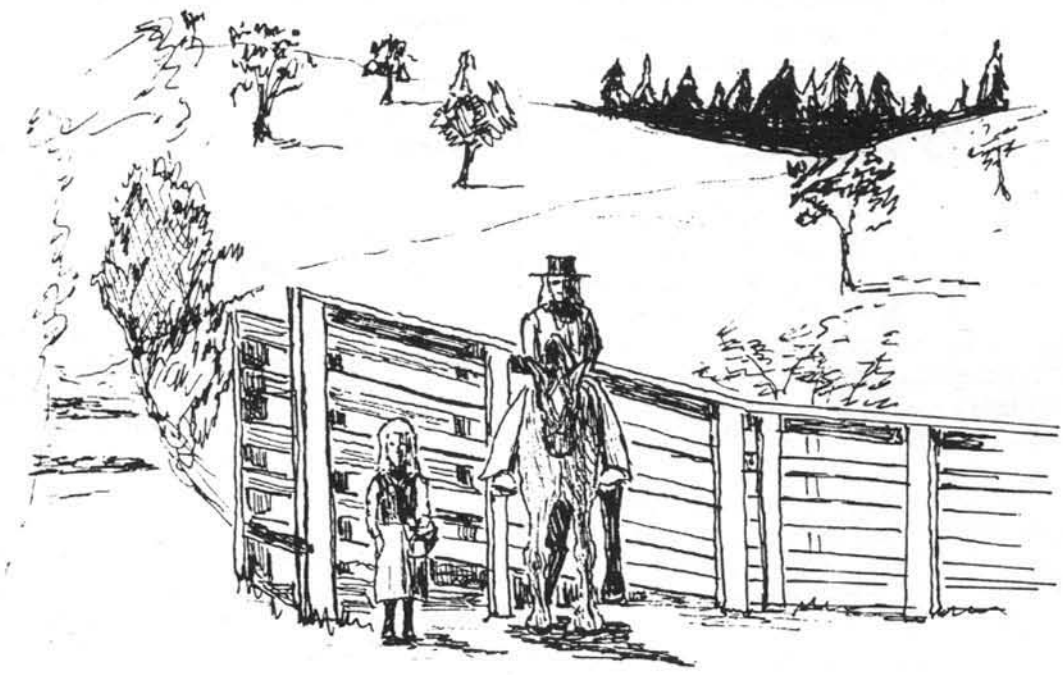
Larry's very thoughtful comments described the intent behind the land conservation. The lands included in the project have very different management strategies, and, taken together, they can all work towards the protection of the biodiversity in the area. Coe Park has one kind of strategy in terms of managing the natural resources. The active cattle ranches represent a different management strategy. Rather than targeting certain species for protection (such as the red-legged frog or the spade foot toad), the Nature Conservancy is trying to protect overall species diversity by working with each of the different land management strategies and not limiting their efforts to protect certain species. In the protected cattle ranching areas, fences will be installed approximately 100 feet from either side of the stream banks, so that the streams and nearby pasture areas can develop. By working with the different land management policies, the Nature Conservancy hopes to protect all of the endangered species as well as protecting the rest of the ecosystem for future generations to enjoy.

Truly, my favorite animal is whatever fellow resident of the planet I happen to be looking at any moment, from the slender salamander under a log, to the golden eagle swooping down to snare a ground squirrel, to the fairy shrimp gliding through a vernal pool, to the foothill yellow-legged frog splashing into the stream, to a solitary bee spending the night within the soft embrace of a desert wildflower. They are all equally fascinating, all creatures of wonder. The more we learn about nature, the more I come to understand how much there is still to know.

Larry Serpa

[1] Unfortunately, Phyllis was in the hospital and not able to attend the annual meeting. Her daughter, Kelly Garcia, accepted the award plaque and a basket of flowers on her behalf; a videotape of the annual meeting was subsequently sent to her.

[2] See the following article that contains a short history of the Gilroy Hot Springs area.



A Short History of Gilroy Hot Springs

At the PRA Annual Meeting, Joe Hardcastle, the Superintendent of the Four Rivers District, announced that the Nature Conservancy had just purchased the historic property of the Gilroy Hot Springs. The Conservancy plans to transfer the 240-acre property to the Department of Parks and Recreation for inclusion in Henry W. Coe State Park. To read the February 7, 2002, press release, follow this link on the Nature Conservancy website: *www.tnccalifornia.org/news/pr_13.htm.*

Ranger Nedra Martinez forwarded the following information about the history of the hot springs, which came from the initial environmental impact report. No sources were listed for this report. As with most cultural history narratives, this one has some holes in it. Until more research is carried out, this account should be used as only a starting place for the history of the Gilroy Hot Springs.

reprinted from the *Gilroy Hot Springs Resort Project Draft Environmental Impact Report,* December 1990

Local folklore assigns the (modern day) discovery of Gilroy Hot Springs in 1865 to Francisco Cantua, a sheepherder, who homesteaded the property. On the 1866 Santa Clara County map, the springs are listed as "Ortega Hot Springs."

In the early 1870s, Francisco Cantua sold the hot springs property to George Roop, a local rancher who began developing the first resort. In 1879, he constructed a three-story redwood hotel containing 32 furnished apartments, large parlors, a dining room, a billiards room, fountains, and a flower garden, all supplied by piped in water. In addition, there was a hotel annex with 17 rooms, 19 cottages, a post office, and livery. The source area fed 16 bathing rooms, a mud bath, and two plunge baths (one for each sex), each with a cold shower, dressing room, and "sweat room." Masseurs were on hand for the visitors of the baths throughout the April–November resort season. A wooden kiosk or gazebo was erected over the hot springs. In the 1890s, hunting and fishing became popular resort activities, and a clubhouse was built. Gilroy Hot Springs and Madrone Hot Springs were connected by a six-mile scenic bridle path and remained the area's main attractions into the 20th century.

In 1913 the resort received a "facelift," including repainting and papering the existing building, erecting new cottages (all installed with acetylene gas), renovating the grounds, roads, walkways, and baths, building a garage for autos, and adding a gasoline power plant to the existing acetylene plant. A Stanley steamer "stage" replaced a horse-drawn wagon, which was used to bring guests to the resort from the rail station at Gilroy.

In 1917, an outdoor swimming pool, large wooden deck, and 18 dressing rooms (10 for men and 8 for ladies) were added. Some cabins presently found at the site may have been built during this period for the private use of regular visitors. Seven years later, W.J. McDonald, the resort manager, purchased the property from Mr. Roop. However, by the end of the 1920s, due perhaps to changing fashion, medical trends, or the Depression, the resort's popularity began to fade. In 1932, the Southern Pacific Railroad discontinued its twice daily "auto stage" to the resort, sealing its fate.

In 1938, McDonald sold the property to H.K. "Harry" Sakata, a Watsonville vegetable-grower. After renovation, the resort became popular with Japanese-Americans. It was renamed the Gilroy Yamato Hot Springs and was the only Japanese-American owned commercial hot springs in California. Additional private cottages were built by wealthy San Franciscans. A brochure dated 1940 advertised accommodations for "150 guests in large main hotel and annex or in 24 housekeeping cottages for 2–8 people, equipped with electric light and oil cook stoves.... Among prominent San Francisco people who have built their cottages: S. Enomoto, wholesale florist of San Francisco."

The outbreak of WW II brought an abrupt end to this second, brief period of prosperity. After the war, Masuo ("Captain") Kataji came to work as caretaker for Mr. Sakata. The resort was eventually reopened, either as a rest home or a resettling center for Japanese-Americans, but locals continued to patronize the baths and the Japanese masseurs, as long as they were available.

In the early 1960s, the resort cabins were condemned for public use by the state due to hazards from the acetylene heating system. In 1964, Mr. Sakata sold the property to Robert Thompson and the Gilroy Hot Springs Partnership, a group of Los Altos area investors who used the resort for a family vacation spot. Mr. Kataji remained as caretaker until his death in 1973.

Of the 25 recorded structures, at least 18 date to the first resort period, 1870–1932, when it was operated by George Roop and W.K. McDonald. The second construction period, 1938–1942(?), is represented by five structures, including a Buddhist Temple, built during the period of Mr. Sakata's ownership.

A 1980 fire destroyed the old hotel, the hotel annex, and five nearby buildings. The remains of the burned buildings were bulldozed and buried in the area of the clubhouse site, which had been destroyed in the 1960s.

In 1988, Gilroy Hot Springs was sold to Fuyuyama International of Japan and run by Masaru Seido. In May 1995 Mr. Seido was successful in having the site designated as a Cali-

fornia Historic Landmark (number 1017) and listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NPS-95000906). (Gilroy Historic Society records)

Park News

by Kay Robinson
Park Superintendent

Thank you to all Californians who voted in favor of Proposition 40 on March 5. This was the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2002. Of the $2+ billion approved, about $500 million will be coming to California State Parks. Unlike previous bond acts, these funds will be applied more to rehabilitation of facilities rather than acquisition, although land purchases are still targeted. As I have mentioned before, our rehab of the visitor center is listed as Priority #1 for the park and is ranked within the top three priorities of the Four Rivers District, the organizational unit that receives the funds and determines the spending priorities. So, it is my fervent hope that this $500,000+ project will be funded during the next fiscal year. We have a full set of plans, they are being reviewed at this time for ADA and fire safety compliance, and the project is set to go as soon as funding is available. If we are successful with bond funding, then the funds accrued by the Pine Ridge Association will be able to be diverted to interpretive displays.

The Good, the Bad, and the Piggly The park is being and has been invaded: by plants and animals that are not native to California (or at least this part of the state) and that are having a detrimental effect on our park. Sudden Oak Death is a plague that has infected primarily oaks in eleven coastal counties. It is a fungus related to the blight that created the Irish Potato Famine. The fungus now seems to be cropping up in other plant species as well, such as rhododendron, redwoods, and tan oaks. Knock on wood, it does not seem to have yet infected any of the trees in Coe, but we are keeping a close eye on some particular specimens that show open lesions.

Yellow star thistle is always a "thorn in our side," and we are continuing with our second year of abatement with the application of Transline on a meadow in Hunting Hollow. The application last year certainly did reduce the population, but according to research several years of treatment are needed. A second method of manually pulling the plants and a third method of biological control with hairy weevils is also continuing. The plan is to continue with the fourth method, control by prescribed fire, in one meadow, but only if there is enough biomass to support a fire. Tamarisk has also been found in the park—two small shrubs in the streamcourse of Coyote Creek. They were first noted last summer, and both plants were grubbed out by hand. We'll continue to watch out for the spread of this invasive species.

On the animal side of things, we are aware of a potential threat of invasion by cowbirds. These birds are home wreckers, literally. They lay eggs in established native birds' nests. When the baby cowbirds hatch, they demand a disproportionate share of the food supplied by the foster parents, and they may even push the other baby birds and eggs out of the nest. This is leading to a decline in native songbird populations throughout the West. They are attracted by hay and manure, which is why we request that all equestrian users of the park rake and remove as much horse droppings and hay as possible. Follow that time-honored wilderness philosophy: Pack it in, pack it out. If our visitors can help us control the manure build-up, then we should be less likely to see an explosion of cowbirds. And lastly, piggies. This month we are embarking upon a multi-year contract for the removal of pigs from the park. In a competitive bid process, a contractor was selected who, throughout the park, will bait an area, erect wire mesh traps, trap the pigs, destroy them, and remove the carcasses to a tallow factory. It is estimated that there are 3.1 pigs per square kilometer at Henry Coe State Park. That calculates to over 1,100 pigs within the boundaries of the park. This contract will reduce that by perhaps 25% to 40% the first year. As the pigs become more wary, it will become increasingly difficult to trap them, but it is a necessary continuing program if the oaks, riparian zones, wildflowers, and general environmental health of the park are to be improved.

Enjoy the spring weather and the wildflowers at Coe State Park. I hope you will be able to get out to the park at one of the special events or an interpretive program or on your own at either Coe headquarters or Hunting Hollow.

Coe ♬

by Barbara Bessey, President, PRA

The new park maps that Winslow Briggs described in the last issue of *The Ponderosa* are now available for sale at the Visitor Center ($4 for the paper version and $5.50 for the plastic version). I think you will really enjoy using this new map, as the information about the trails is extremely accurate. Remember that it has 50-foot contour lines and shaded relief coloring; and it includes UTM grids for hikers who use GPS.

Coe Park is beautiful at this time of year. To help you appreciate what wildflowers you are seeing, Webmaster Judy Breckling has again put pictures of the current blooms on the Coe Park website. Follow this link to see what is blooming at the time you visit the park: *www.coepark.org/wildflowers/blooming.html.*

For those of you who are avid photographers, you should consider submitting your entries (of beautiful Coe Park scenes, of course!) to the next Photo Contest sponsored by the state of California. Although the most recent submission period ended in March, there is another one later this summer. Information and the winning photos of previous contests can be found by following this link to the website: *www.ca.gov/state/portal/myca_homepage.jsp.*

Spring is a very active season at Coe Park. We are busy getting ready to host the Coe Backcountry Weekend at the end of April and the Mother's Day Breakfast in May. Both are extremely popular events and fill up quickly. However, there is still plenty of time to register for the Hunting Hollow Run/Walk.

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!

"Virtual Rummage Sale" is Launched

by Dan McCranie

This year, we will be launching a new fund raising tool, dubbed by Barbara Bessey as the "Virtual" Rummage Sale. The idea for this program came as a result of two separate fund raising efforts that we undertook last year.

In the "real" rummage sale of 2001, we noticed that we had a handful of donated items that should have a high resale value, especially if shown to a broader audience. These were high-end computers, printers, scanners, etc. Our concern was that we wouldn't get the best price if we put these products out in the rummage sale.

When looking for corporate contributions to support the extraordinary new Coe Park map, we came across several companies that, although they were unable to provide any cash to us, informed us of excess products or equipment that they would be glad to donate to the Pine Ridge Association.

As an experiment, we took about six items that were donated for the Real Rummage Sale and put them on EBay™. EBay™ is the largest and most effective web-based auction system in the world. We took pictures of the items, wrote a brief description of each item, and launched the project. Within two weeks, Priscilla Campbell and I were the proud sellers of all the items, with a net value in excess of $625 . . . or about 10% of what we took in for the entire Real Rummage Sale.

So, we have now decided to try using EBay™ and high-value donated items as a year-round fund raising effort. We began the project in the first week of April, with donations of electronic test equipment from a silicon valley company. These first results have been very encouraging. The proceeds from the rummage sales go to further the programs at Coe Park, including the expansion of the Visitor Center.

We think that this could become a fairly consistent fund raising program for the PRA, and we would like your help in making this program a success. Here's a proposed process:

1. Collect high-value products from individuals and corporate contributors. The reason that we suggest high-value products is that EBay™ does charge for this service, and it is fairly labor intensive (photos, write-ups, responses to questions, collecting funds, packing and shipping, tracking finances, etc.), so we'd like to have a high unit value. In general, anything that can sell for greater than $50 would be a good candidate.

2. For those of you who are not familiar with EBay™, go to their web site at *http://www.eBay.com.* You can get a good idea of the wide range of products that sell at this site. In general, ANYTHING sells. I've had the best luck, however,

with goods that can be easily shipped, so furniture tends to be a bust.

3. Once you've collected the items, contact me at (408) 848-9788, and I will arrange, either with you or with the company, to receive the goods. It would be very helpful if you can provide to us a brief description of the item for use in creating the text copy. We will photograph the item and launch on EBay™. We will also provide you or your company with a receipt for the donation.

If you have any further questions, contact Dan McCranie at (408) 848-9788 or (408) 848-3223. My fax is (408) 848-3184, and my email is JDMcCranie@AOL.com.

New Members through March

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!

Eric & Monica Bernhard, Pacific Grove
Judy & John Bridell, Minneapolis, MN
Sharon Danann, Cleveland, OH
Michael Gilmartin Family, San Jose
Josh Grant, Laguna Hills
James Greene, Oakland
Chris & Melanie McNeil, Gilroy
Michael Robey, Alameda
Jon Vickroy, Morgan Hill
Bill Weismuller, San Jose
Billie Zwolinski, Sunnyvale

We need your help to keep our membership list current and accurate. We have lost touch with two Life Members. If you have contact information regarding **Vic Hill** or **The Wirth Family**, please let us know. We also need your help to **identify two members** who sent in membership applications or renewals that did not include name and address or the envelope bearing the return address became separated from the application. If you are a paid member, your *Ponderosa* mailing label includes an expiration date. (No expiration date for Life members and organizations.) If you have renewed and the date on the mailing label remains 12/31/2001, please contact us. If you have not renewed, please consider doing so. If you have any question regarding your membership or to let us know of any change of address, please contact us.

E-mail: PRA@CoePark.org
Snail mail: P.O. Box 846, Morgan Hill, CA 95038-0846
Fax: 408/778-5749
Phone: 408/779-2728

PRA Calendar

Saturday & Sunday, April 27 & 28: **The Backcountry Weekend at Coe Park.** Pertinent information and tickets were mailed in early April to the successful individuals who were selected by random drawing to attend. Please note: In the event of rain, the event will be canceled.

Sunday, May 12: **Mother's Day Breakfast.** Tickets for this very popular event went on sale on April 15. The breakfast will be served at Ridge View Camp starting at 8:30 a.m. Ticket supply is limited, and the event sells out very quickly. For more information, call the Coe Park Visitor Center at (408) 779-2728.

Saturday, May 25: **Moonlight Over the Hill Hike.** Join Larry Haimowitz for this strenuous hike to Blue Ridge under the full moon. Picture ponderosa pines standing in the moonlight on top of Blue Ridge. For more information, please call Larry at (408) 778-6088.

Saturday, June 15: **Fourth Annual Hunting Hollow 10K Run/5K Walk.** See the enclosed flyer for more information and how to register for this event. For additional information, please call event coordinator Bev VanderWeide at (408) 778-0034.

Saturday & Sunday, September 7 & 8: **Coe Park Rummage Sale.** Start saving your items to donate to the rummage sale; the proceeds further the programs at Coe Park. This year's location will be the San Jose High School in San Jose. If you would like to help with this event, please contact event coordinator Bambi Moise at (408) 294-0767. More information will be provided in the next newsletter.

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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.

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