The Ponderosa

The Pine Ridge Association Newsletter
Henry W. Coe State Park

Summer 2002

From under My Brim

by Barry Breckling

A Hike to the Top of Pine Ridge, Just for a Lark

For weeks and weeks this spring, I kept hearing a strange bird calling from somewhere up on the side of Pine Ridge, but it was never close enough to see. Every time I went out of the house I would hear, "chep chep peurrrr" with the last bit sounding like a very robust bluebird. Finally, one day as I stepped out of my vehicle at the house and heard it again, I had had enough. I grabbed my binoculars and started trudging up the very steep old road. The bird call seemed to be coming from only about a hundred yards or so up the hill. I trained my binoculars on the tree where the sound was coming from, but there was no bird to be seen. Then some plain old bird flew from the tree I was looking at to a tree farther up the side of the ridge. Up the hill I trudged with single-mindedness. Finally I was approaching the tree where the bird had landed, and finally I could see it in my binoculars, and finally . . . it flew off farther up the ridge before I could get a good look at it. I trudged on.

As I got near the top of the ridge, there it was at the very top of a tall ponderosa pine. I looked at it through my binoculars for a long time, but it just looked like a plain brown bird. It was still too far away. I didn't really want to climb the last hundred yards to the top of the ridge; I knew what would happen if I got closer. The bird would just fly farther down the ridge and eventually, sometime about dusk, I would catch up to it on the slopes of Mt. Hamilton, just when it was too dark to identify the bird. I wasn't about to climb the last 100 yards to the top of the ridge. What had started off as a lark, an adventure to discover what in the heck this darn bird was, was turning into something resembling a bad dream.

Then, to my surprise, the bird flew back towards me and landed at the top of another pine where I could get a good look at it. I couldn't believe my binoculared eyes. It was unbelievable. No one would believe it. Maybe it wasn't what I thought it was—nope, it was clear, but I couldn't tell anyone. Well, maybe I could tell Judy; she wouldn't laugh at me.

A week passed and the bird kept calling me every time I went outside. I pictured the bird in my mind and thought, "Had I really seen it correctly?"

"Hey Judy, lets go up to Pine Ridge and see if that plant we've been trying to identify has bloomed yet, you know, the mystery mint." In the back of my mind—well, OK, in the front of my mind—I really wanted confirmation of my bird sighting. Off we went in the late afternoon up the Hobbs

Inside this issue . . .

Reflections on the beauty of the Orestimba

Wild pig management

"Why I Volunteer"

Various causes needing donated items

. . . and more!

recycled paper

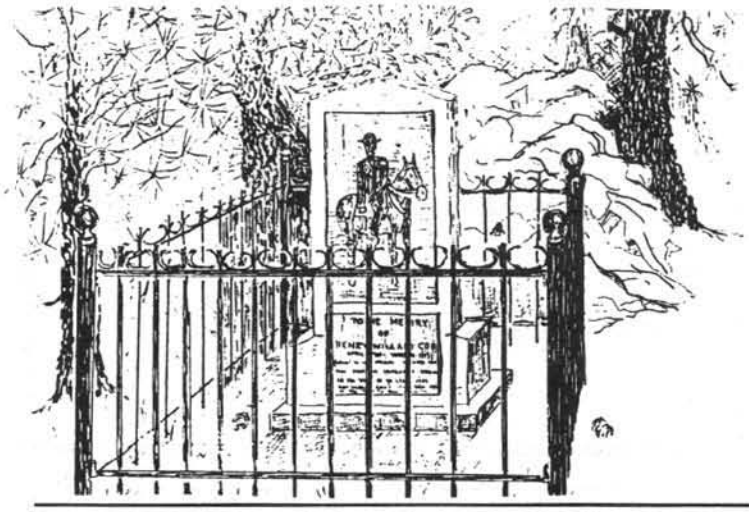
Road (we call it "Hillmaster" on days when we do it as a workout).

We went beyond the Monument a tenth of a mile and took the trail back towards HQ. There were bird sounds everywhere. Even McFee was there, the Olive-sided Flycatcher that says, "McFee's here," or as others sometimes describe it, "quick three beers." There were sounds of Acorn Woodpeckers, Red-shafted Flickers, White-breasted Nuthatches, Scrub and Steller's Jays, and off in the distance I could hear the familiar "chep chep peurrrr."

The low sun lit up the beautiful grasses along the Monument Trail, and as we headed up the Ponderosa Trail towards Eric's Bench, all of the flatness of the Santa Clara Valley and relief of the Santa Cruz Mountains were washed with the warm orange-brown glow from an early evening summer sun. Add the blazing orange of the sun shining through the "Lollypop Tree," and your breath is taken away.

My mind flashed back over almost a quarter century of Pine Ridge memories.

One of my first evenings at Coe, sitting with my back leaning against a little blue oak watching a glorious sunset and wondering what the next 25 years of my life might be about. One of my favorite places. One of Sada Coe's favorite places. Smelling a most wonderful perfume and finding the blooming buckeye trees upwind around the corner. White Mariposa Lilies dancing on the breeze. White dots floating on the hillsides, the lily flowers of the evening blooming Wavy-leaf Soap Plant. A place to see, up close, a mother mountain lion and her cub within the first few months of coming to Coe. By far the best place for a bench for memories of a grieving family. Sada's choice for the best place for a monument to her father and "other sturdy pioneers." A place to go to work out the hard times in life. A place to propose. A place to get married. A special pine called the Monument Pine that was grand in life and still grand in death. A place to feel my closeness to the universe.



With binoculars I have seen individual cars driving down Highway 101, noted various buildings I know in Morgan Hill, and have picked out the big bucket on the pole at Kentucky Fried Chicken at Dunne Avenue and 101. But often, when I look at the spectacular view from the top of Pine Ridge, I imagine that there are no buildings in the valley below. I put in my head the view that the Native Americans saw. It's a view that must be like some of the wildest places in Africa. And yes, it is a spectacular view. You can see the Santa Cruz Mountains heading up towards San Francisco, most of the Santa Clara Valley, a touch of the Pacific Ocean, the Santa Lucias, the Gabilans, Mt. Hamilton, the Diablo Range east of Hollister, and a broad stretch of the Sierra Nevada. And if you have binoculars and a clear day, you can see Half Dome at the edge of Yosemite Valley.

Well, back to Judy and me looking for the mystery mint to identify. It wasn't blooming yet. But off on the west side of the ridge we were still hearing, "chep chep peurrrr." I said, "Judy, why don't you walk down the old road by yourself and see if you can see who's making that call. I'll go back the way we came. I wouldn't want to influence your sighting." So Judy headed down the very steep old road. I went back down Hillmaster, and we met at the backcountry gate.

"Well, what did you see; did you see the bird?" I asked impatiently. "Yes, I did," she answered. "Well, well, what did you see?" I said more impatiently. She replied, "You were right! I saw the same thing you did."

Well, by now you probably think you know what the bird was. "Meadowlark," you say. Well, Meadowlarks are ground nesters and feeders. They don't spend much time in trees. The bird I saw was only in trees, and not just close to the ground but often at the top of the trees. And, I have been listening to Meadowlarks for years and learned to do a pretty decent imitation of their song. Ask our birders Kevin and Barbara if my song sounds like a real Meadowlark. Whoever heard a Meadowlark go "chep chep peurrrr"?

What was the bird? I found out that knowing the species of the bird was not really very important. I think the bird was just a messenger sent to call me to return to the top of Pine Ridge again. I had forgotten what an absolutely wonderful place it is. But . . . if you're ever walking along Pine Ridge and hear a bird going "chep chep peurrrr," don't be too surprised if it looks a lot like a Meadowlark.

Going Back to the Orestimba

by Mike Meyer

The corral wouldn't keep a calf from getting loose. It's fallen down mostly, as if the builders were just getting started, got called by the lunch bell, and never came back. The rails and posts are connected but usually laying flat on the ground. Also, to the casual non-cowboy observer, this place seems not to have had many cows, or the cows were awfully skinny. The corral is only about 6 feet wide. It's long, though, stretches 70 or 80 feet dividing the meadow in half. Still, a ramp at one end indicates it was used for loading the doomed creatures onto trucks bound for the feedlot or even for the final destination.

The meadow is somewhat longer than wide and, some 60 or 70 feet past the end of the corral, is creased with a little creek running out from two little hills. The hills around are quickly rising and covered with grass and oaks. Besides the corral, the meadow is populated only by short grass, no trees. Without the corral, this meadow would be one of the all time meadows, so flat and softly green-fuzzed with creeks on two sides. Great place for a powwow, maybe.

The hills butt down on the east into a larger creek, the Orestimba. These also rise quickly, though none goes high up. They round off after 60, 80, 100 feet so that when you're in the middle of the meadow at night, like we were, you can see stars down low on the horizon. Close, too. Orion was two-thirds of the way up to high point when we saw it, though it seems to reach right down over the meadow and grab you, it's so close looking and bright way out there in the backcountry of the park.

It turned cold when we arrived, late in the day. The cold fell on the slight valley as soon as the hill blocked the sun. Sitting in a chair in front of the cold fire ring, I felt it penetrate into the thighbones and feetbones, which, if taken to the next logical step, implies that it had already radiated into the flesh, which it had. The idea I'd had of sleeping out in the open was less and less appealing. I tried not to shiver, telling myself, this isn't bad. But finally I jumped out of the chair and went and put up a tent between Alan H's truck and mine, which were parked next to the corral. I set up my cot and placed it and the big thick pad I had brought inside the tent. I threw the bag and clothes bag inside and got a little more clothes on as many bones as I could, including the headbone.

Out from the fire ring and table, which are near the oaks and curving creek on the north end, and out from the little candle lamp that burned on the table and broke the darkness, and out still, in the middle, away from the corral and trucks, John P had meantime erected his telescope. I heard them all gathered talking in the dark, and I ambled out. John had the Pleiades lined up in his scope. He allowed me a look, and I saw the seven stars in a nice arrangement of an arc with three points above it. You could see a dozen or two other fainter stars within and without the frame that the Pleiades made.

The telescope is somewhat mysterious, even as the stars. You looked down into the eyepiece, but your vision was then bounced on a mirror or maybe two mirrors, or three, up into the 8-inch-wide telescope and up to the Pleiades. Or vice versa, maybe, with the Pleiades entering the telescope and bouncing from the mirrors to the eyepiece. I don't think it really matters—even though one of these is right, it seems like the other is. The main thing is that you see through the telescope. Or you are shown the stars through the telescope. Anyway . . . .

Ron E had asked to use John's binoculars and with them had found the Andromeda galaxy. He explained where to look. I looked free-eyed where he said, and yea, I could see it. "It only shows up in a binoculars," he added. Ohh. John found it in the binoculars, then directed his technology toward it. He never found it, though, even when the pale blue on the west turned dark. John had a disturbing hour during which he tried in vain to seize the Andromeda Galaxy with his telescope. It should not have been so difficult, he should not have failed. Alan said he had never seen John so upset. It wasn't exactly that John was upset. John is what you might call "unflappable." He'll cheerily carry a sign post for hours and enjoy the walk. If it turns out that the location for the sign is elsewhere, he shrugs and continues on. John *was* disturbed over the Andromeda Galaxy thing, though. He should have been able to locate it with the telescope. We stood talking a little and looking around the sky. I spotted my favorite, the Big Dipper. He mentioned the nebula just below Orion's belt. I said, yes, I'd seen it once with my binoculars from the driveway in Gilroy, though the picture in Peterson's Stars and Planets Field Guide was much better. "Yea, maybe I should find the nebula," John mused. I thought it was a good idea. Get his mind off the Andromeda Galaxy. He needed a success, I felt. He said the nebula was a place where some very young stars were being hatched. He turned the tube on its swivel and began the process of finding the belt and then the nebula below it. But this was not John's best night with the telescope. Somehow, the nebula was as disturbing a challenge as the Andromeda Galaxy. He could not find it. It was unfortunate. Later, he took the telescope down and put it in the back of the car.

I can understand how he felt. He had the telescope, he knows the stars, he's seen the nebula and galaxy through the telescope before, perhaps many times. But tonight, though he looked for them, he could not see them. An interesting phenomenon, one that happens to me quite often. More rarely, the opposite happens, too. The thing where you are *not* looking but are shown something.

I think this might have happened the next day, to us all. It was about noon. Almost everyone wanted to dig the hole for the sign post. I started it by driving down the two attached spades of the post hole digger. The ground did not yield, the spades glancing away. Twice, thrice, jarring glances only. A steel bar, a six-foot, 18-pound shaft with one wedged end, was used. Gonna persuade the land to yield, son. However, the land was not persuaded. In fact, it was mute, only looking up at us like the land that it was, still and quiet and mostly unhurt.

Undaunted by the unflappable, Ron E attacked with new vigor. He lifted the bar high, he brought the bar down, intending, perhaps, to see it thrust through the mantle even to the core. Phahph, a few shards sail off. No chunk, no breaking of the rock; no progress, no relief. Up down up down, then, when there is a small pile in the shallow, cupped-out hole, I go to it with the post hole digger. Down I thrust, hitting, perhaps, solid rock. The earth this time deigns to comment through a vibration, a convulsive tremor that works up the handles through handbones and armbones, across the shoulderbones, up the neckbones, and out through a chattering of the teeth into the noontime glimmer. Wheeww, I experience the Santa Monica pier merry-go-round and an ancient hangover.

"Where, oh where are they?"

"Oh where are who?"

"Them little birdies. They sound so sweet."

"Lemme try this," Alan H mutters disgustedly, taking up the steel bar. Alan's got gloves. Alan jabs with power. Dooooiiiiiinnnnggggggggggg. Keith B, snarling and thus revealing a decent set of teeth through the involuntary curling of his lip, takes the diggers. Dooooiiiiiinnnnggggggggggg. Rob G has gloves. He takes the steel bar. Similar results. I dig into my pack for gloves. Ron has new gloves. Five males with gloves fix their collective focus on the little indention in the ground. "It's the color of cement." "It'll be better at 18 inches." "They nearly put Hwy 152 through here." "Here, can I try that?" The bar and diggers go around, from man to man. My, how they strain for an inch. The inch becomes two.

Across the road under an oak, a fairer, more intelligent version of the species, Teresa B, reclines on an elbow in the grass. A paperback book is open, her head turned attentively. She is absorbed, yet serene. She is not paying attention to the great quest of the males.

Further up the hillside, to the north, there's John, who not only is not paying attention to the quest, it is as if he has put the quest out of his mind. One cannot be certain, though. John, the elder, perhaps. Certainly the only intelligent male, the wise owl, who at this time is seen sauntering in the bright sunlight on a road on the entirely grass hillside. Wanted to see if he could locate the Mount Stakes Trail, I think he said.

"Thanks, John!" "Yea, don't get lost." "Let us know when you find it." "Send a postcard."

John lifts a hand to acknowledge the greetings but does not turn his head. No bother, though, not truly. The men at the indention are the undaunted. The men at the little hole are the working men, they have an obstacle, they have gloves, they have focus, they sweat, they strain, they barely notice John on his hill among the wildflowers.

An hour later I observe John as he rearranges his pack (the dang thing needed a pat or two) and settles his head, softly, with his hat shoved low over the forehead, lunch having been consumed, eyelids easing over the blue globes with one final, comforting flutter, legs stretched, feet crossed; and also the post is standing freely on the upgrade, the signs are affixed, both post and signs having the look of permanence and together giving the impression of having always been by the side of the road in the shade of the small oak above Robinson Creek; at this time, we hole diggers sit down on the grass, and we also eat. Keith has gone across the road to Teresa, where he and she consume victuals. Alan sits in the grass, taking a bite. Ron, Rob, and I consume. My chicken is white, I cannot see the salt.

I was leery of getting too close but needed a better look at the bunch. I wanted to complete the processing after the first sighting, yet there was something inviolable about the 12 or 15 Cleveland Shooting Stars standing so straight and courageously in a tight bunch on the short-grass shelf above the Orestimba Creek bed. But as I said, I hesitated to come closer. It was as if bending down in front of them would violate their mission, disturb their union. It was almost ridiculous—a human being who is merely bending down for a better look cannot violate a plant. Yet, it seems as if they would have said this: you're not fit, you're not real, not really real, not authentic, you're here for gratification; we are real, we have short lives, we are living, really living, in this sunlight, on this grassy plain, above this course of water. Right now at this moment, this one moment in which the light is just in our faces, we are in our most challenging and most productive stage. This is survival. So do not block the light, but stand back, you.

I admit, it seems I might have read too much into it.

But, I heeded their declaration, can you believe it? I did not get much more than the first glimpse. I tried, but could not get any more. It is only remembering back, in hindsight, that I see a little more.

And here's more. Each stalk stood a half inch from the other; and each bent back, say, a quarter inch each in its slightly individualized time to the constant push of the breeze. And the whole of them formed a consciousness.

But earlier and miles back, across the road east of the place of the sign, through the grass and around an oak that had fallen into another oak—both leafless still—across this small meadow and into a shade of dark and rusted-brown trunks and under the old-lady-dyed-blue-hair needles of the gray pine, but also among the thin and shortish blue oak here and blue oak there, in the softer, greener grass of the shady bluff, and above a confluence, the Orestimba moves toward me, the Robinson rolls by me. I stand relieving myself. The Orestimba streambed is graciously wide. Or something. Maybe I can come back to that. Instead, think of the confluence of gray pines and blue oaks and occasional California juniper (treeballs) and the opposite hillside of grass and of evenly spaced oaks, the hill rising back but with a mellow interest in rising, that is slowly rising, taking its time to rise so that its higher elevations are seen further back from the creeks, from just across the creek to distant background. And as importantly as this confluence of life forms, of entities and least noticed until now, as I see back in hindsight, the light from the sun that is illuminating the grass between the trees on the hill and lighting the surface of the Orestimba waters at least in one thousand instances—the lights of these reflected surfaces spaced in an unfathomable pattern in front of the rock and in the reflection of the oak and the pine on the opposite bank—the light that makes vision and that stimulates the soul and the appreciation, this light and this confluence of entities are also of a quality that emanates, to me, a grace that stimulates every strong emotion.

But here is what I mean. That the confluence produces a soothing, even healing effect. The bluff and the light and the water and mix of trees and the rocks in the creeks—that *they* were complete and one whole. And I perceived it. And that when such a thing is so (for it must certainly be so in some places at some time and in some place) and when one witnesses and can allow it, even though not really knowing it, one cannot help or resist being included. This is what I mean by soothed and healed.

I think we hole diggers, who enjoyed our time together and had a good time, were also fortunate enough to have taken part in a day in that place. Our experiences seemed to involve some form of camaraderie or some stirring of the soul, some rousation and excitement of it . . . to . . . to the wonder of this existence, that is, this human experience that is able to perceive where we are and what we have.

And we should remember, I think, that those moments occurred only after the numbing drive out of the Bay Area, out and away from the car-induced mazes, the car-heated hazes, away from the valley once pristine from which much life spawned season to season, year to year, age to age, until this age. That those moments that we had together and individually occurred only after a long night of below-freezing temperatures in sleeping bags not intended for below freezing, after miles of posts and steel bars and post hole diggers digging into shoulders.

Did we deserve those moments? Deserve? In my estimation, no. Did we appreciate them? I believe every one did. On the way out, they had no words for what they wanted to say. It was, "I can't . . . describe . . . can you believe this?" and "It's . . . sublime" and "the manzanita and the oak . . . intertwined, sort of, so that . . . the area had a . . . I guess it was a . . . gentleness." And other statements and silent gazes in the stillbound hold the earth maintained over us, even right to darkness.

So turning now, I myself would like to thank the Earth. Thank you, Earth. For the sharing, for the camaraderie, for the healing. All this is a gracious support, extended again and again, even in spite of what we do to pave you over and forget you. Extended even in spite of the things that we invent and the ways in which we succumb to distract ourselves from what we do. Yea. For this, thanks is far too inadequate a word.

Park News

by Kay Robinson
Park Superintendent

A wild pig management program is underway at Henry W. Coe State Park. Recent studies have estimated the density of wild pig at Coe SP at 3.8 to 5.6 pigs/km^2, for a high estimated population of about 2,000 pigs throughout the park (based on 86,400 acres). Although the disease Brucellosis was not found in any of the 81 specimens trapped, it is prevalent in the surrounding population. Escape of this disease is possible into surrounding native and domestic animals. The feeding habits of feral pigs (*Sus scrofa)* are causing serious negative impacts on park plant and animal resources. Evidence of pig rooting has increased dramatically in recent years. Many streambed zones and meadows show the "rototiller" effect of pig activity. Although the activity of the pig has been compared with the historical activity typical of the California Grizzly, now extinct, the greater density and the reproductive capability of the wild pig causes the damage to be much more severe. Examples of such damage are: tilling of the soil to uncover bulbs and acorns, eating of such to prevent rejuvenation, soil disturbance leading to excess erosion and run-off into stream courses, and disruption of small mammal habitat. The significant reduction of acorns may affect both the oak woodland rejuvenation and the food source available to deer, thus affecting their ability to survive, leading to a decline in deer population.

The program began about a year ago when the Department of Parks and Recreation contracted with Dr. Richard Sweitzer of the University of California, Davis, to develop a wild pig management plan. Dr. Sweitzer's background includes numerous studies throughout Northern California, including studies at Coe starting in 1995, on the population dynamics and effect of pigs on the environment. Dr. Sweitzer's current survey in Coe involves the systematic study of the effect of pigs on the flora and fauna of Coe. He and his associates have constructed fenced areas (exclosures) to exclude pigs from rooting. He then compares the variety and quantity of forbes and small mammals both within and outside of the exclosures. Significant differences are seen in areas rooted by the pigs.

The Wild Pig Management Plan was developed by reviewing this and other previous and ongoing wild pig studies. The plan details the history of wild pigs in California, current conditions at Coe SP, and a summary of biological effects. It addresses the level of control necessary to improve ecological conditions, key areas of the park in which to focus removal efforts, and a range of alternatives and implementation strategies.

Of the several alternatives discussed, it was decided to contract with a professional depredator to reduce the population level of the pigs in the park. A number of alternatives were discarded as impractical, ineffective, or financially unsound: fencing of 77 miles of park boundary (86,400 acres, 135 square miles, boundaries apt to change in the future, cost), sterilization (impractical to assume capture and recapture of significant numbers to ensure birth control measures are effective), public hunt (safety, contrary to state law, impracticality of closing all/portions of the park), or live removal (no site or persons willing to accept pigs in the quantities we will be removing). It is anticipated that in the first year (2–3 months of the contract), 500 pigs will be removed.

The second step was to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the California Department of Fish and Game to establish the protocol of the reduction program. This document, completed in January 2002, identifies the responsibilities of the State Parks (staff and contractor) and the Department of Fish and Game, the limitations of the control program, and the term and review periods for such a program. With these two documents in hand, the contract was let by competitive bid, and a contractor was selected. He began the project on April 29; by the end of May approximately 400 pigs had been removed, significant progress toward our goal of 500+ pigs.

Public response has been overwhelmingly in favor of this project. Responses (written, in person, and by phone) have been received from park neighbors, county residents who live in neighborhoods subject to pig rooting, other open space agencies, and park visitors. There have also been a few who oppose such action, based on their personal beliefs. California State Parks initiated this action to begin to minimize the negative impact of the wild pig and restore the environment damaged by human interference. It is not the intention to completely eliminate the pigs within park boundaries. That is thought to be impractical and unattainable given the extent to which the pigs populate California and the desire of some neighbors to profit from the pigs by conducting wild pig hunts. In your travels at Coe, I hope you will be attuned to the environment and notice the changes that we expect to see over the next few years as we continue with this project.

Coe ♬

by Barbara Bessey, President, PRA

Spring at Coe Park was among one of the busiest I have seen in many years. Since a site in the headquarters campground can now be reserved in advance through ReserveAmerica, it seemed to me that the campground was nearly full almost every weekend throughout the season. The unreserved sites are available on a first-come, first-served basis. If you would like to camp in one of the 20 car camping sites at the headquarters, or if you want to find out how to reserve a space in advance, please follow this link to find out more information: *http://www.coepark.org/hq-camping.html*.

This year's "summer" rummage sale will take place on September 7 and 8 in San Jose at the San Jose High Academy. This is a good time to look through your closets for sellable items to donate. All proceeds from the rummage sale will benefit the interpretive programs at Coe Park.

The last issue of *The Ponderosa* listed all of the awards given to volunteers for their dedicated service during the previous year. Subsequently, volunteer Ruby Domino sent me a poem that she wrote about what it means to her to be a volunteer. She said that she shares this poem with the individuals who volunteer and work with her on the springs in the park. I wanted to share her poem with you.

Why I Volunteer
by Ruby Domino

It's not for money, nor fame,
It's not for any personal gain,
It's just for love of fellowman,
It's just to lend a helping hand.

It's just to give a tithe of self
Something you can't buy with wealth,
It's not for metals won with pride,
It's just for the feeling deep inside.

It's that reward deep in my heart,
That feeling that I have been a part,
Of helping others far and near,
That makes me be—A VOLUNTEER.

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!

TarantulaFest Raffle

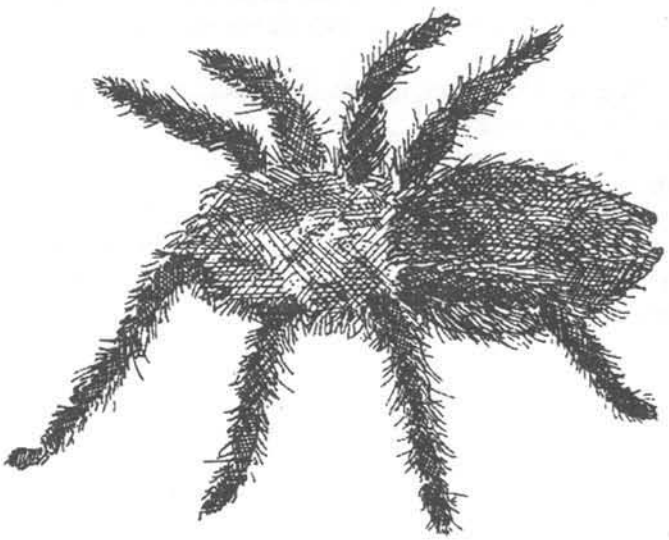
by Stew Eastman

You may think that October 5, 2002, seems a long time away, but it isn't if you are part of the TarantulaFest planning committee and seeking prizes for the T-Fest Raffle. This is the time of the year when we begin asking individuals and local businesses to donate items that we can offer as prizes. The raffle is much more successful if we have at least one or two "attractive" prizes to offer.

If you would like to assist us in this endeavor, I have two suggestions. One, if you belong to an organization that routinely contributes to groups like the Pine Ridge Association, you could contact the appropriate person in your organization first, and then I could follow up as needed. Two, if you know of a possible business donor, you could send me the information, and I will make the contact.

The Pine Ridge Association is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 organization. Any donation made to the association is tax deductible to the extent permitted by law. We also publicly acknowledge these donations.

If you can assist us in this year's raffle, or if you have questions, please contact me at 408/227-9515 or sweastman@aol.com.



Wanted: Binoculars, Working or Not

by Nancy Hildebrandt

Golden Gate Audubon Society's Latin America Committee (http://www.goldengateaudubon.org/lac/index.html) collects used binoculars and repairs them for environmental education programs in Latin America. Many migratory birds use habitat in both the United States and Latin America. Therefore, the GGAS likes to support education programs that encourage local residents of both continents to protect and expand their wildlife habitat areas. Binoculars enable many local people to observe and learn about the wildlife in their areas to a degree that is not possible without them. Learning about wildlife leads to appreciation and protection of their habitats.

We have been able to provide binoculars to environmental education and protection programs in Mexico, Panama, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and Cuba. The environmental education program of the Sierra Gorda Biological Reserve in Queretaro State, Mexico, serves hundreds of young Mexicans and their families, teaching them ecology, recycling, reforestation, and sustainable agriculture. In Panama, we are working with the Panama Audubon Society on a country-wide program to educate people to protect the endangered Harpy Eagle, Panama's national bird. In Ecuador, our binoculars have gone to a group of indigenous people, the Cofanes, who are in charge of protecting a newly formed biological reserve on their land, and in Cuba and the Dominican Republic, our binoculars have gone to ornithologists who are developing ecotourism in their countries.

The binoculars have always been enthusiastically received and have been used by students, researchers, and park personnel. By providing binoculars to these groups, the Latin America Committee hopes to begin to establish relationships with the conservation communities of the future.

If you have binoculars you would like to donate, call Marshall Hasbrouck at 510/383-9525, or mail the binoculars to:

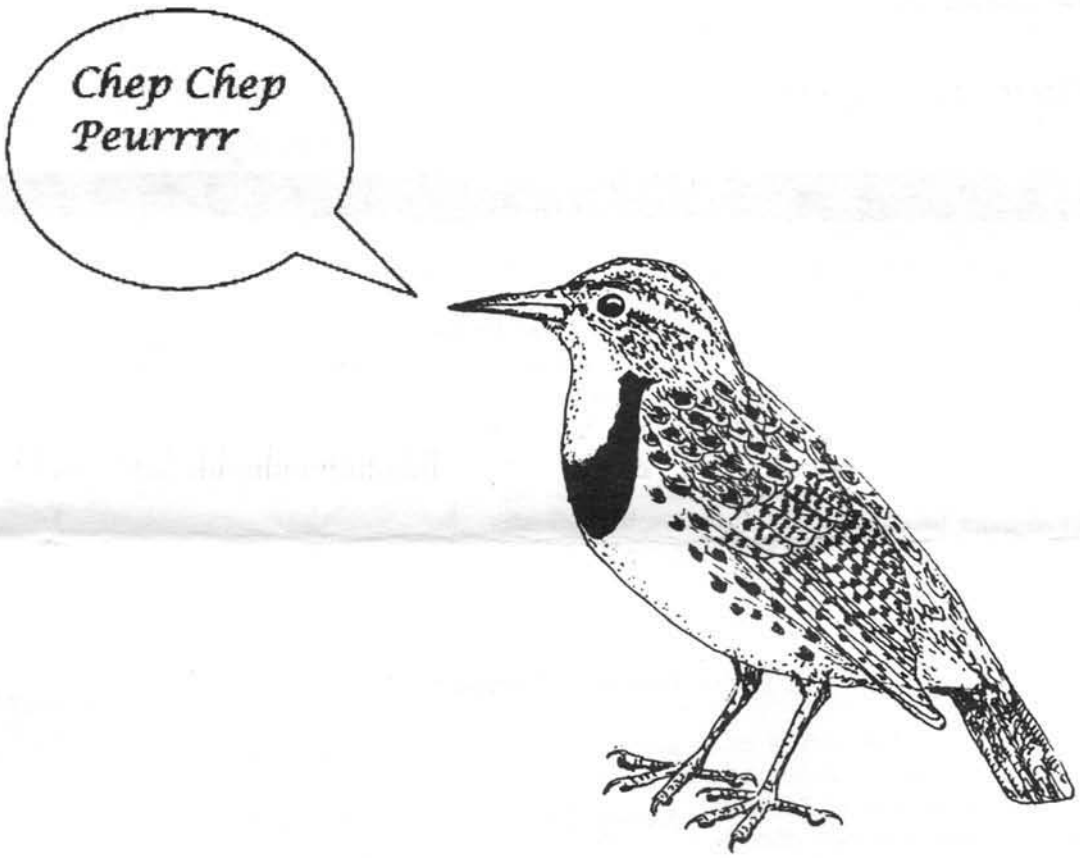
Latin America Committee, Golden Gate Audubon Society
Attn: Bob Risebrough
2711 Piedmont Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94705

If you include your name and address, a letter of acknowledgment will be mailed back, which can be used for income tax purposes.

PRA Calendar

Saturday & Sunday, September 7 & 8: **Coe Park Rummage Sale.** Start saving your items to donate to the rummage sale; the proceeds further the interpretive programs at Coe Park. This year's location will be the San Jose High Academy in San Jose. A map showing the location of the academy is on the Coe Park website: *http://www.coepark.org/garage-sale.html.* If you would like to help with this event, please contact event coordinator Bambi Moise at 408/294-0767.

Saturday, October 5: **Fifth Annual Fall TarantulaFest and Barbecue.** Join us at the campground headquarters for a day filled with games, contests, entertainment, and some of our fuzzy, friendly, eight-legged guests of honor. A flyer is included in this newsletter. For additional information, please follow this link to our website: *http://www.coepark.org/tfest.html.* Individuals who volunteer to work at this event will receive a free meal. If you would like to work at the event, please contact Linda Keahey (408/683-0521, jodielindak@aol.com) or Toni Sousa (408/778-3692, toni.sousa@attglobal.net) for more information.


Chep Chep
Peurrrr

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

340624351Z 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 Margaret Mary McBride	Martie Sinclaire
This Issue's Reporters:	Barbara Bessey Ruby Domino Stew Eastman	Nancy Hildebrandt Mike Meyer Kay Robinson
This Issue's Illustrators:	Barry Breckling 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