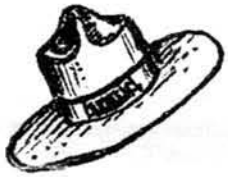
THE PINE RIDGE ASSOCIATION • HENRY W. COE STATE PARK •

The Ponderosa

The Pine Ridge Association Newsletter
Henry W. Coe State Park

Summer 2003

From under My Brim



by Barry Breckling

Trains and Boats and Planes and Super Highways

You may have noticed in the last three issues of *The Ponderosa* that I was commenting, in one fashion or another, about the potential inundation by dam of parts of Coe Park. My opinion, although not always specifically stated, was simply that it should never happen, that no one should ever even consider such a horrific trespass on the public trust.

Well, the water district has now said that they will not be causing any water to be backed up into Coe Park (as part of their Low Point Project). It feels good to have played a part in the efforts that turned things around, and if you wrote the water district or your legislators, or were involved in other aspects of this battle, you must feel good, too.

The real warriors in the battle were the Advocates for Coe led by Dennis Pinion, Teddy Goodrich, and Bob Patrie. I'm certain that their ceaseless work hastened the water district's decision. Bruce Rideout created the website for the group, and it will remain active because some people don't think of park lands as sacred places to be protected from development. The bulldog was Dennis Pinion. His research made clear what needed to be clear, his letters reminded others of the truth, his voice was loud and right. When I jokingly suggested that Dennis needed to quit his paying job and work full time for Advocates for Coe, he quipped that it felt like he already had.

Other groups weighed in. John Wilkinson with the Sierra Club, Marc Christopher from Friends of the River, and Jason Kibbey with Defense of Place. ROMP (Responsible Organized Mountain Peddlers) got involved. Our acting director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, Ruth Coleman, made her opinion clear. I've never seen so many emails, letters, articles, and such flying around, all with a wonderful singleness of purpose. One individual's email to the water district seemed to sum up the feelings of many, "Stay out and stay as far away as possible from Coe State Park. I am in huge disagreement with this project. I visited the park many times. I live in Alamo, California. What you are doing is wrong!!!"

I'm sure to have left out some people who did important work. I was delighted and heartened to see all the interest in protecting Coe Park.

No inundation, for now. But somewhere on a dusty shelf, in a backroom, someone, someday is sure to find some old turn-of-the-century plans to build reservoirs in Coe Park and think, "Hmmm, what an interesting idea." And, as strange as it may

Inside this issue . . .

An invitation to become a uniformed Coe volunteer

A moonlight hike for PRA members and friends

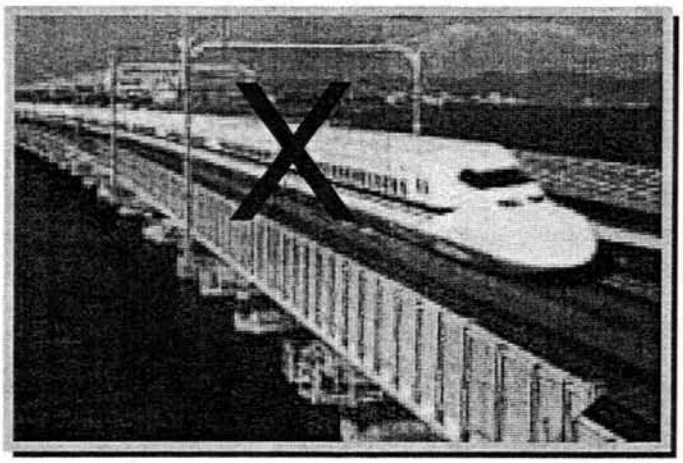
Rummage sale to support interpretive programs at Coe

Sign up for the Tarantula Fest and Barbecue

. . . and more!

sound, there are plans for a super train that would pass through the Orestimba Wilderness. Someone else is planning a super highway that would connect the Santa Clara Valley to the Central Valley (and I bet you can guess where one of the routes is planned).

Clearly, our role for the future is persistent vigilance.



Coe ♬

by Barbara Bessey, President, PRA

Barry's Brim article shares some good news with all of us about the recent decisions of the Santa Clara Valley Water District not to take actions that would cause water to be backed up into Coe Park. However, he ends by saying that we should remain watchful and vigilant, as the new era of trains and highways and such are just around the corner.

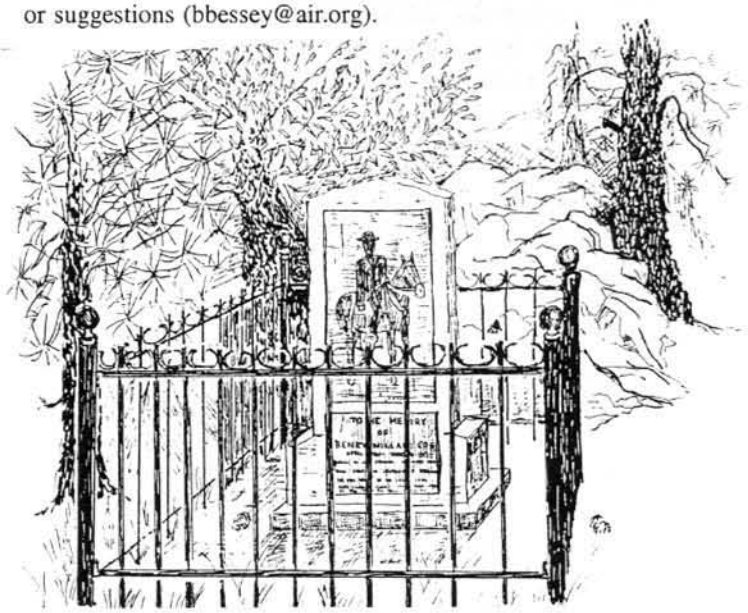
The events of the last six months have taught us much. We have learned that we were naïve in that not everyone believes that state parks should be sacrosanct and off limits to developers who seek to solve problems by encroaching on parks. We have learned that Coe Park has friends, friends who have worked tirelessly for many months in an effort to halt the dams in the park. Advocates for Coe was created to channel energies into the dam project, and this they did with amazing passion and sustained dedication. Along the way, we encountered a number of other organizations that not only shared our concerns but were willing to speak up for Coe, including the Sierra Club, Friends of the River, and Defense of Place. We learned that, if we are going to survive future threats to the park, we need to become extremely knowledgeable about the problems that developers are trying to solve, so that we can understand their needs and try to offer alternatives that can solve problems but do not violate parks.

Sada Coe donated her beloved Pine Ridge Ranch to be a park in Santa Clara Country as a monument to her father and to other early cattle ranching pioneers; eventually the land became known as Henry W. Coe State Park. Sada observes the end of the ranching days and the new changes that are taking place in her essay entitled "The Lost Trails of Santa Clara."

> *In this great year of 1968, the cattle trails have vanished, the roads from San Jose to Gilroy have become broad freeways jammed with autos racing at great speed, the big ranches have gone, and with them the old cattle people. The trails have been lost, and the sound of hoof beats echo only in one's memory. Pine Ridge is now known as Coe State Park, but as people wander and camp along its ridges, they will never know of the wild rides, the long cattle drives, and the big round-ups that echoed across the mountains in a world beyond the reach of the modern age of today. These are the trails that are lost and lie buried in the grass of yesterday, but yet, the great hills stand there, remote, secretive, hiding away their past, and watching in silent splendor the great masses of people ruthlessly building and tearing down the very structures of their foundation.*

As the demands for water and transportation and other needs of humans increase, let us not forget that parks are important, too; we should take seriously our job as custodians of the land for future generations to come.

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 at any time with your comments or suggestions (bbessey@air.org).



An Invitation to Join the Uniformed Volunteer Program

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

Uniformed volunteers add to the park visitor's knowledge, interest, enjoyment, and safety by assisting regular park employees through interpretation, operating the visitor center, patrolling the park trails, and carrying out special projects. Uniformed volunteers receive free admission to Coe Park and the other parks in the district and, more importantly, receive the satisfaction derived from doing a job well and providing a necessary service to the public and to the park. In addition, uniformed volunteers find that the initial training and the continuing workshops and classes on topics such as wildflowers, bird identification, tracking, and how to plan an interpretive program are of significant value.

There is a series of classes each fall for all new uniformed volunteers. Topics in the next classes include geology, geography, climate, ecosystems, plants, animals, humans in the park, history of the park, being a volunteer, dealing with the public, interpretive techniques, and first aid. The training will be held at the park on eight weekend days from September 6, 2003, through the beginning of December. Some of the training will occur during hikes and a camp-out in the park. Graduation will be held during the annual meeting of the PRA on February 7, 2004.

Applications are available now. August 10 is the deadline for receipt of applications. Applicants will receive a telephone call to set up a short interview, which will be on August 14, 16, or 17 at park headquarters. If you have any questions or if you would like to obtain an application, call the park at 408/779-2728, or visit our web site at *www.CoePark.org*.

August 9: Moonlight-Daylight Burra-Burra Hike

by Bill Gingras

The August moon and Coe Park—experience the pristine land and a mystical experience on Saturday, August 9, with the full moon.

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

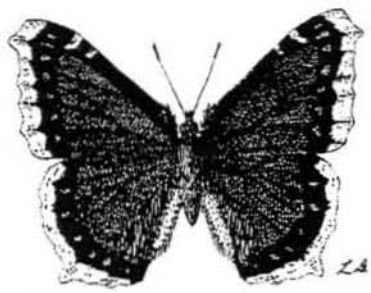
The following morning we will repeat the hike and observe the differences between the night sounds and scenes and those in the daytime.

The Dowdy Ranch, located off of Highway 152, Pacheco Pass Highway, has a chemical toilet but no potable water. For camping (which is recommended), bring your own food (dinner, breakfast, snacks), drinking water, camping gear, and a chair. Charcoal-fired barbecue grills, but not utensils, will be available. Plan to arrive after 1 p.m. and no later than 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, August 9.

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

A wonderful summer evening in Coe Park. Call me at 408/229-1040 (home) or via email at BGingras@sbcglobal.net for more information, the combination to the locked gates, and to sign up; the number of participants may be limited.

California Sister
Adelpha bredowii californica



Mourning Cloak
Nymphalis antiopa

8th Annual Rummage Sale

by Bambi Moise

Donations needed!! Time to clean out your closets, garage, and attic for saleable items. Items must be clean and in good repair if they are to sell. The sooner you can get them to us, the sooner we can begin sorting and pricing. Deliver all items to the home of Bambi Moise and Tim Charles:

266 North 20th Street
San Jose, CA 95112
408/294-0767
BambiMoise@aol.com

All items will be stored in the barn that is in the meadow behind the house. The meadow is locked, so you need to call before you come. Call if you cannot deliver the goods yourself, and we will try to find someone to deliver them for you.

RV needed from the evening of 8/22 through the afternoon of 8/24 for restroom facilities for overnight guards and day workers (not for the public!).

Workers needed too:
Transporters for people who cannot get their rummage to San Jose

Setup on 8/22: We will start setting up in the morning. Hopefully we will be ready to start selling by 4:00 or 5:00 to catch the Friday rush-hour traffic.

Sellers for :	Fri.	8/22 evening
	Sat.	8/23 a.m and p.m.
	Sun.	6/24 a.m. and p.m. until 3:00
Breakdown:	Sun.	6/24 at 3:00 p.m.
Disposal:	Sun.	6/24 at 3:00 p.m.

Please call Bambi if you can help in any of these jobs.

TFest: Saturday, October 4

by Linda Keahey

It's time to start thinking about the fall Tarantula Fest. The annual barbecue offers a choice of Santa Maria Style Steak, Marinated Chicken, Gardenburgers, or Hot Dogs. Each meal includes beans (vegetarian or regular), grilled bread, salad, and watermelon. New this year, linquica will be available to accompany the steak and chicken selections. Soda, beer, and wine will be available at nominal prices.

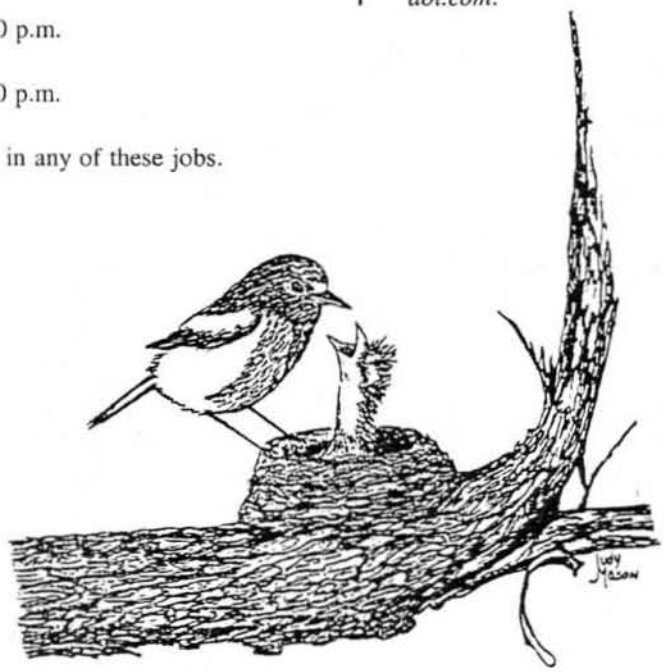
The annual raffle to benefit the Visitor Center Expansion Fund promises to have some wonderful prizes. You will soon be receiving more details about the prizes and raffle tickets in a separate mailing.

The day will be jam packed with interesting events. Park volunteers will lead several Tarantula Walks. The Interpretive Center will be open and filled with interesting exhibits and information. Tarantulas, both native and exotic, will be on display. Are you ready for a photo with a tarantula on your head or shoulder? Snakes, children's art activities, and Smokey the Bear are among some of the other interesting options. While you are at the park, take a walk on one of the many beautiful trails.

Again we are fortunate to have the Tarantula Band to entertain us with a lively and fun selection of music.

A form for ordering meal tickets is included in this Ponderosa issue. Don't be disappointed—order early.

Need additional information? Contact me at *jodielindak@aol.com*.



PRA Calendar

Saturday, August 9, & Sunday, August 10: **Burra Burra Moonlight/Daylight Hike weekend.** See article on page 3 for more information and to sign up for the weekend.

Sunday, August 10: Deadline for applications to become **New Volunteers**. Interviews will be held on August 14–16. For an application, go to *www.CoePark.org/volprogram.html*. See article on page 3 for additional information.

Friday to Sunday, August 22–24: **Coe Park Rummage Sale.** See article on page 4 for more information and to help out during this weekend.

Saturday, October 4: **Fifth Annual Fall TarantulaFest and Barbecue**. Save the date on your calendar for this very enjoyable event. See the flyer in this issue of the newsletter for more information. You can also check out the Coe website at *http://www.CoePark.org/tfest.html*.

Saturday, October 18: **Barbed Wire Fest.** Join in the fun of helping to remove barbed wire from the park. Please call the Coe Park Visitor Center for more information (408/779-2728).

Don't forget that there are Saturday night evening programs throughout the summer months. And, there are hikes and activities on some Saturdays. Please check the website for times and topics:

http://www.CoePark.org/programs.html

California Thrasher
Toxostoma redivivum

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

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Morgan Hill, CA 95038-0846
(408) 779-2728
http://www.CoePark.org

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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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