

2005 TROUT DERBY IS SUCCESS

By Linda Taylor

The Nature Center's 2005 Trout Derby was a huge financial success. Earning nearly \$25,000, this Derby was the second most profitable derby since the year 2000. (The 2002 derby earned \$27,557, due primarily to three large, one-time donations.)

Winner of \$2,000 for catching the trout with the highest tag number was Rick Taylor, Glendale. From Orcutt, Don Pedersen took home \$1,000 for the longest trout. The majority of winners were residents of Santa Barbara County.

Registrations were lower than anticipated; Derby officials speculate this was a result of poor weather on the preceding day, scaring away local anglers. An increase in registration fee by \$5.00 per person compensated for fewer anglers. The silent auction, a new addition to the derby, earned \$1,254 which offset a drop in larger donations.

Special recognition should be given to Patricia Martin who managed registration again. Maintaining a data base of more than 3,000 names and addresses, establishing procedures for mailing identification badges, and organizing volunteers at the registration headquarters are individually huge jobs, requiring intense attention to details.

Sandi and Jerry Witcher also deserve accolades for managing the weigh-in station. When eager and anxious anglers are leaning across the weigh-in table to ensure that their fish are measured to the nth degree, much pressure is placed on the workers assigned to that job. Sandi handles the scene well, preparing accurate reports of winners, their home towns, and fish measurements for the awards show and for follow-up publicity.

Ron Wilmot again did an admirable job of organizing the awards program, as he kept track of prize winners and moved the proceedings along quickly. Approximately 70 kids were welcomed to various arts and crafts activities on the Nature Center lawn Saturday afternoon. In all an estimated 43 people volunteered their help during trout derby weekend, including various family members and friends of Docents and Board Members. Special thanks must be given to these folks who were pressed into service.

In spite of windy conditions on Saturday which necessitated closing the Lake to boat launching until mid-afternoon, most anglers appeared happy and satisfied with the final outcome of the weekend's fishing.



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WELCOME BACK

By Linda Taylor

In late February, the Nature Center welcomed back Van and Diane Barr as camp hosts. Their hard work and pleasant personalities make them very popular with volunteers, the Naturalists, and the Executive Director.

Van and Diane spent the winter in Quartzite, and will return there when their term ends here September 30. In addition to hosting and cleaning the Center during the week, Van has built a shelter to keep the bird seed cans dry. He is also working on a small nest display. Thankfully, Diane helped with Derby thank you letters!

AN EGO BOOSTER FOR ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS

By Linda Taylor

One Saturday recently Brian Lincoln was working as the host in the Nature Center. A couple with a small child came in to look around. Brian recognized their accent as German and struck up a conversation with them. He asked how they had heard about the Nature Center. They answered that a friend of theirs in Germany had visited here and told them to be sure to visit our Nature Center when they traveled to Santa Barbara.

FLINT KNAPPING HOSTS

BY LINDA TAYLOR

FirstExpert knife makers and flint knappers, Ken and Paula Largin spent three weeks at the Nature Center as camp hosts, demonstrating and teaching their craft to the public. Five times each week they brought out their tools, spread a sheet on the patio to catch chips and invited visitors to try their hands at chipping arrowheads out of chert. A curious group of all ages, men and women, gathered at each presentation. Although some people preferred just to watch, others turned out blades and arrowheads with satisfactory results. The Largins insisted that participants wear eyeglasses and they suggested gloves, long pants, and closed shoes. The Largins travel in a bio-diesel bus which burns recycled vegetable oil. With solar panels, it is a self-contained vehicle, which they are adapting from a tour bus. They willingly shared information about this interesting project. Ken and Paula have demonstrated at Dollywood, Knott's Berry Farm, and at Carmel Cutlery, which was their destination on leaving Cachuma May 19.



New Docent Officers: June Pusley, Secretary; Annie Ruano, Treasurer; Brian Lincoln, Vice-President; Sandi Witcher, President.

JUNE 2nd YARD SALE

BY LINDA TAYLOR

The mid-summer yard sale has proven to be a good money maker for the Nature Center with no overhead and little preparation required to make it a success. Net profit from each sale has averaged \$1500.

Donations are currently being accepted for this year's sale, Saturday July 2, from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Items that sell especially well are children's clothing and toys, outdoor equipment, including folding chairs, tents, back packs, etc., sporting equipment of all kinds (e.g. fishing equipment, bats, balls), costume jewelry and assorted knick-knacks and kitchen items. Please do not donate shoes unless they are "good as new." Clothing will be accepted after June 1; however, only items in especially good condition are desired. Please call the Nature Center 693-0691 after June 1, for pick up, if needed.

FRUITFUL FEEDER WATCH

BY PATRICIA MARTIN

For the past several years and this year the Cachuma Lake Nature Center has been participating in the annual FeederWatch Project sponsored by Cornell Lab of Ornithology from November through March. Thanks to Liz Mason, Halli Pedersen, Linda Taylor and Dick Cofield the Nature Center was able to report its sightings to the project. The feeders and immediate area outside the one way window in the bird room of the Nature Center were watched on two consecutive days during each predetermined count period. We counted every other week from November 17 to April 7.

Of the birds commonly seen, this year the ever faithful observers counted California Quail, Band-tailed pigeon, Mourning Dove, Anna's Hummingbird, Acorn Woodpecker, Western Scrub Jay, American Crow, Oak Titmouse, European Starling, White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Brewer's Blackbird, House Finch, House Sparrow, Lesser Goldfinch, American Goldfinch. Not so commonly seen at the feeders but seen during this year's count were Great-tailed Grackle, Spotted Towhee, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Western Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, Pine Siskin, White-breasted Nuthatch, California Towhee. Newly seen at the feeders this season were Hooded Oriole, Lark Sparrow, Bushtit, male House Finch in its yellow phase, and a Black Chinned Hummingbird.

After reporting our sightings to the Cornell lab the information is used to study patterns of migration and habits of the various birds. After all the figures are in a list is posted in the workroom at the Center with comparisons to previous years. If you are personally interested in being a FeederWatcher next season check out the website at <http://birds.cornell.edu/pfw>. Happy Birding!

ZOO TO YOU

BY PATRICIA MARTIN

Do you know that porcupines have 30,000 quills and that alligators have 6,000 teeth during a lifetime? Missy and Anita from the Zoo to You rehabilitation group showcased six animals to nearly 350 children and adults in two presentations on Saturday May 21. Pockets the Opossum and Legend the Red-tailed Hawk were big hits. Louie the King Snake who eats rattlesnakes for lunch was content to be presented by a boy from the audience. Echo the Owl, Twister the Porcupine and Spike the Alligator held the attention of all. Thank you to Barbara Gutmann and her crew of volunteers for the set up and smooth running of the event. Thank you to Carol Smagala for the ice cream.

DOCENT PROFILE: DON WIMPRESS

BY ALISON HUBBARD

Don Wimpress became a docent at the Nature Center in 1989 shortly after it opened. Don has been interested in natural history since junior high school. He thinks it's because he lived "out in the country" (north of Glendale, CA; it's all houses there now, of course). Don's first endeavor in the field of natural history was the creation of his backyard museum, which he built at age 10 of four posts four feet apart surrounded by chicken wire and topped off with a tin roof. His displays included his mineral collection, a gopher skin and a snake skin. Later renovation replaced the chicken wire with wood paneling; his operation was soon enlarged to include a bunk and a work desk. This kept him going through high school.

Don's ambition was to be a national park naturalist. There were only about seven national park naturalists in the country at the time, so even though he figured his chances were pretty slim, he took forestry in college. Soon he met Betty and got married, served in the Army, and had two kids. When he was discharged from the Army he realized that with a family he needed to be able to work in a city, not out in the woods. So he saved up to go back to school and majored in mechanical engineering at UC Berkeley.

After graduating, Don worked at AiResearch Manufacturing Company in Los Angeles for 30 years and retired at the end of 1979. The Wimpresses left their home in L.A., went on vacation, and moved into their home in Los Olivos when they returned from vacation early the following year. Don became involved with the Los Padres National Forest Interpretive Association, where his duties included leading interpretive hikes and car trips through the Los Padres National Forest back country. "This is just what I had wanted to do in the first place," says Don. He enjoyed this affiliation for over 10 years until with the advent of the Wilderness Permits he was doing more paperwork and less of the interpretation he loved.

Meanwhile, in 1988 the Nature Center came into being and advertised its first-ever docent training class. Don saw the ad in the paper and took the 14-week interpreter training in early 1989. Topics covered included Chumash history, plants, animals, insects, birds, geology and astronomy. Later, Don stepped into organizing the training program, which he coordinated and helped to teach.

Don has further contributed to the Nature Center in many ways. He coordinated the writing and wrote several sections of the Cachuma Lake Guide, which is still sold in our Gift Shop, virtually unchanged from its original version. Don also produced a plant reference book geared for the lay volunteer docent, divided by the type of plant (shrubs, trees, vines, herbs, grasses, lawn plants, etc.). The Herb section is further divided by flower color, so that anyone can use the book to easily identify any local plant they find, read a description, see a drawing, and locate where it can be found in the Park.

Continued >>

PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS

BY PATRICIA MARTIN

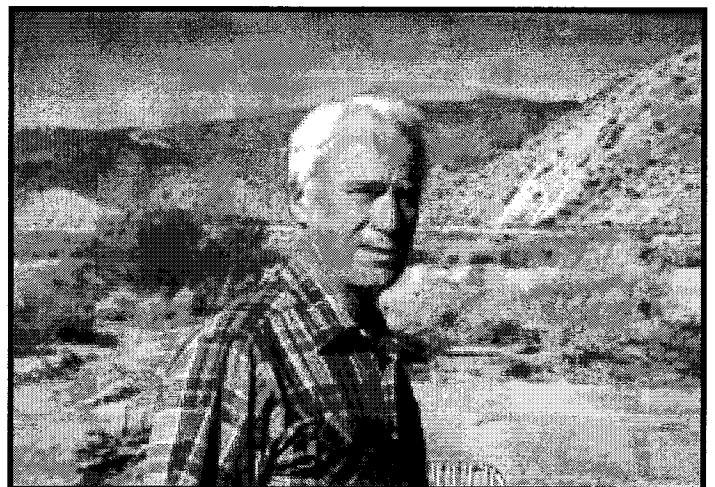
Since my election to Board President I have been faced with an ever occurring theme. "We need more volunteers." The Nature Center is becoming better known throughout Santa Barbara County and our visitor level is ever increasing. Therefore, I am asking those of you who receive this newsletter to perhaps think of and suggest people who may be interested in being a volunteer with this wonderful organization. Volunteers are needed to be on the Board, to staff the Gift Shop and Nature Center on weekends, to lead Nature Walks on the weekends and during the week with children's groups, to do data entry and simple (or even complicated) computer work, to help out at special events (Kids fishing workshops, yard sale, Barn Dance, Trout Derby, Zoo to You), to plan and execute exhibits, to do mailings, to get together and have a good time. We are ready to expand our volunteer base and to accommodate whatever time a person is able to contribute. Contact me if any of you or your friends or acquaintances want to volunteer at pmartin@silcom.com or 688-3117. We are ready to get people oriented, trained and involved in the Cachuma Lake Nature Center.

- Patricia Martin, CLNC Board President

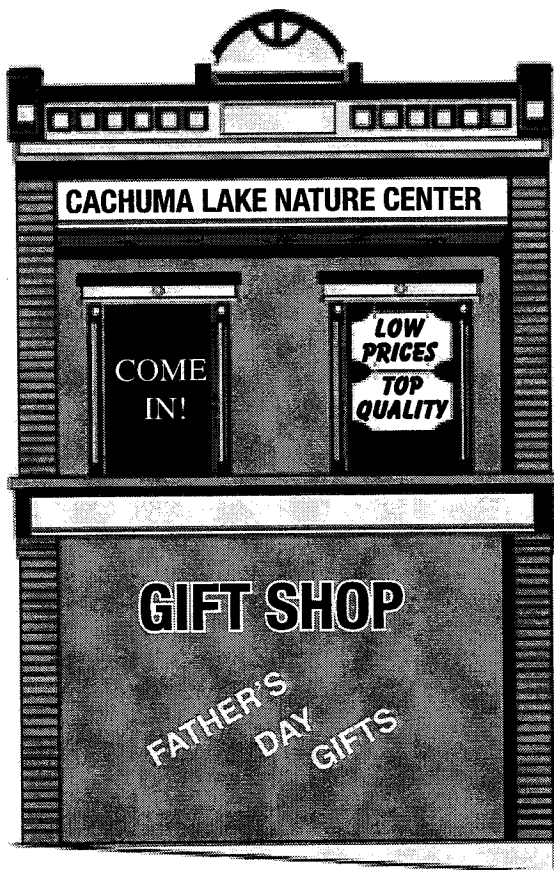
>> Don Wimpress Cont'd.

Don set up and organized the Gift Shop operation in 1996, complete with an operation guide. It was his philosophy that the Gift Shop manager have full control rather than decisions being made by a committee. The Gift Shop is still being run accordingly.

Over the years, Don has been seen regularly at Docent work meetings, building displays, leading interpretive walks, helping with docent training, and taking shifts in the Nature Center/Gift Shop. He has also served several years as both vice president and treasurer of the Docent organization. Don was selected Docent of the Year for 1991. All in all, Don has played a major role in making our Nature Center what it is today. It's hard to imagine what we would be without him.



Don Wimpress



DON'T
DISAPPOINT
YOUR DAD!



CHECK OUT ALL
THE FATHER'S DAY
GIFTS - LOTS OF
GREAT STUFF!



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