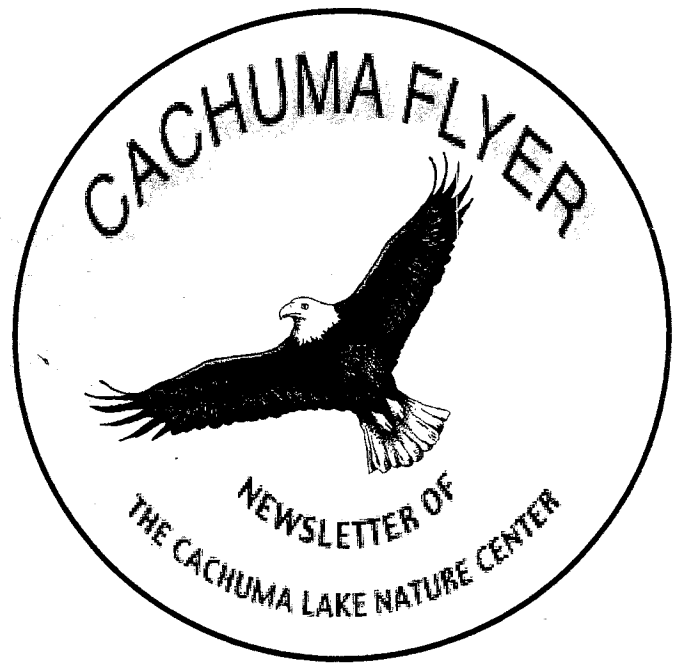


BARN DANCE SUPPORT NEEDED!

Save Saturday October 2 for CLNC Second Annual Old Fashioned Barn Dance and BBQ. Your support is needed. Publicize this event at every chance; let everybody know that all proceeds benefit the nonprofit Nature Center and enable us to continue our work with visitors, students, and members of our community. Help us advertise the Barn Dance. If you need flyers or an e-mail informational notice, contact Lynda Williams-Terres at (805) 964-5142 or e-mail <lwill@sbceo.org, or contact Linda Taylor at the Nature Center (805) 693-0691. Help us set up the event. We'll be starting on Wednesday, September 29 with the big push Thursday, Friday, and Saturday morning. Plan your time to come and join us; we definitely want you there.



SECOND ANNUAL BARN DANCE

BY LINDA TAYLOR

ISSUE #71 Sept / Oct 2004

The public is invited to attend a Barn Dance and Barbecue to be held October 2, at Cachuma Lake recreation hall to benefit Cachuma Lake Nature Center. Square dancing called by Darrin Gallina, round dancing with cuer John Lebeck and ballroom dancing will be featured. A complete meal of tri-tips and chicken including salad and dessert will be served. Beer, wine, and soft drinks will be available to purchase. The Floyd County Boys will play during cocktail hour.

An old fashioned country store will sell homemade baked goods, jams, jellies, and other handmade goods. All proceeds benefit the Nature Center. The fun begins at 4:00 with a no host bar, dinner at 5:30 and dancing to follow.



Rose Hodges, Linda Taylor, and Barbara Gutmann help stock the country store for Cachuma Lake Nature Center's annual Barn Dance October 2.

Tickets are \$20. if purchased prior to September 24; \$25 at the door. Tickets for children 6 years old and younger will be for sale at the door for \$5. Entry to the Park is free by showing a Barn Dance ticket at the gate.

Camping is available at the Lake: full hook-up sites are \$25 and basic campsites are \$18. All sites are first come-first served.

Al and Lynda Williams-Terres, Santa Barbara, are chairpersons of the event with other volunteers assisting. Sandi Witcher of Buellton will manage the country store.

The Nature Center is a non-profit organization which developed and operates the Center in the Cachuma Recreation Area. Open Tuesday through Sunday, the Center features exhibits about the local natural and human history with an emphasis on hands-on activities. For additional information about the Barn Dance and Barbeque please call Lynda Williams-Terres at 964-5142.

Memorial Bench Dedication

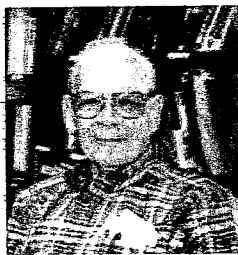
By Linda Taylor

Recently Cachuma Lake Nature Center Docents and Directors dedicated a Memorial Bench to honor three significant volunteers: Docents the late George Hughes and Connie Howerton, and Director Helen Logan. Family members of each were invited to the Docent Recognition and Memorial Event held at the Center August 8.



Connie Howerton was a founding member of the organization, served as president of the Docent Organization in 1992-'93 and 1995-'96 and as secretary in the late 1990's. As liaison between the Board of Directors and the Docent Organization she was an objective messenger between the two bodies. She served on numerous important committees during the early organizational years and later was a stalwart hostess almost weekly in

the Nature Center.



George Hughes, another founding member, also served as Docent Organization president during 1989-'90, 1992-'93, 1997-'98. His patient leadership was important during early organizational years of the Nature Center in formulating the master plan and coordinating between the Park Department and the Nature Center. His interest in the out of doors was conveyed to visitors during nature walks, lake cruises, educational presentations, writing, and exhibit development, particularly in the field of geology. His ability to fix anything was a great asset to maintenance of the Center's building.



As a Director, Helen Logan initiated many programs for the Center, spearheading early efforts at grant writing, pushing for the establishment of the Oak Canyon Trail within Cachuma Lake Recreation Area, recruiting additional Board members, handling publicity for an important fund raiser: the Trout Derby. She also served as Vice-President of the Board.

Located on a new brick patio, which was funded by a grant from the **Michael Towbes Foundation**, the Memorial Bench partially surrounds a giant Valley Oak in front of the Nature Center. The bench was designed by Daryl Rutherford, and built of redwood by Daryl, Dick Cofiell, and Dale Sorenson

Dick Cofiell and
Liz Mason enjoy
the Memorial Bench



A Great Horned Owl Visits the Nature Center

By Linda Taylor

Nearly two hundred adults and children gathered under the shade of the oak in front of the Nature Center on Saturday, August 21, to see and hear Morgan Ball's presentation on raptors. Morgan, a biologist specializing in birds of prey and who works at Vandenberg Air Force Base, was accompanied by his three-year-old Great Horned Owl, Skids. Morgan Ball began his presentation with the owl's "horns" which are really tufts of feathers that show an owl's moods and act as camouflage. When the horns are up, the owl is content; when flattened, the owl is apprehensive. The placement of the horns serves as camouflage and helps the owl blend into a tree.

Because owls are nocturnal, Skids panted and then needed to be sprayed with water, especially on his feet, to cool him down in the midday temperatures. The eyes and ears of the Great Horned Owl are used mostly for searching out food and surviving. The ears, the primary sense, are slots located asymmetrically on each side of the head. With one ear higher than the other, one ear is tuned downward and the other upward, giving the owl a greater audio range. After locating a tasty morsel with its ears, the eyes can spot the prey. The enormous eyes let in a lot of light to aid with night vision, but the Great Horned Owl has very limited color vision. Also, it can see things far away but up-close is mostly blind. Owls live on a diet of small animals such as rodents, other birds, snakes, lizards, and whatever comes within range of hearing. "Wise Old Owl" is a definite misnomer for owls because of their very small brains. They don't have much to think with—they just respond. They will sit and in one place for hours on end for food to come by. Their lightweight body and feather structure enables them to swoop down on prey easily and silently (Skids weighs only one and a half pounds!). Their very flexible beak allows them to swallow large chunks of food. Pellets, which owls regurgitate before eating, contain evidence of what was eaten recently. When examined, a pellet contains bones, teeth, hair, and other indigestible materials from a meal.

When Morgan demonstrated the radio tracking system he uses to locate Skids, he involved all of the children who wanted to participate. Since Skids identifies Morgan with his food source, he definitely doesn't want to stray far away. Owls' predators are mainly humans, then coyotes,



bobcats, and other birds such as crows and hawks. During the tracking demonstration many crows came by to check out the owl in their territory. After the most informative and interactive presentation, Morgan stayed around to allow anyone to touch the talons of the owl and to get a close up look at him. We all thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated Morgan Ball's and Skids's presentation.

Looking Up

By Helen Osenga

Where are all those planets? All the bright visible planets are in the morning sky, but the evening sky still has some bright stars.

In the west, heading toward the horizon this September and shining yellow-orange, is Arcturus. Another equal in brightness is icy-white Vega shining almost directly overhead. Arcturus is 37 light-years away (220 trillion miles) and Vega is 25 light-years distant (150 trillion miles).

As the night grows darker, look to the right of Arcturus in the northwest and you should find the Big Dipper standing on its bowl, said to be in the upright position to "hold water". Stars in the Big Dipper are about 80 light-years away.

Fall begins on September 22 at the fall equinox. Let's take a tour of the fall sky. After dark high in the northeast, look for the flattened W of Cassiopeia, the Queen. Perseus is just below the Queen toward the horizon. Both these constellations lie along the Milky Way. Now look due east of Cassiopeia for the big constellations Andromeda, the Princess, and the Great Square of Pegasus, the Winged Horse. Andromeda and Pegasus share one of the stars of the Great Square. Looking toward the east, the star that is on the left of the tilted square is Alpheratz, the shared star. Andromeda is made up of two lines of stars coming off to the left from Alpheratz.

Make an effort to get up before dawn for a look at those bright planets. Very bright Venus rises at least three hours before sunrise. Much fainter Saturn will be above Venus. By the end of October, Venus will be above Saturn and they will be getting closer together every day.

A total eclipse of the Moon will be visible in the Santa Barbara area the evening of October 27. The Moon rises at 6:03pm and the total eclipse will begin at 7:23pm and end at 8:44pm. Don't forget to put this on your calendar, you won't want to miss it.

Some information for this article came from the September/October 2004 edition of Star-Date Magazine a publication of the McDonald Observatory, the University of Texas at Austin. Visit them online at stardate.org



OUR GIFT SHOP

COME IN AND SEE OUR NEW ITEMS

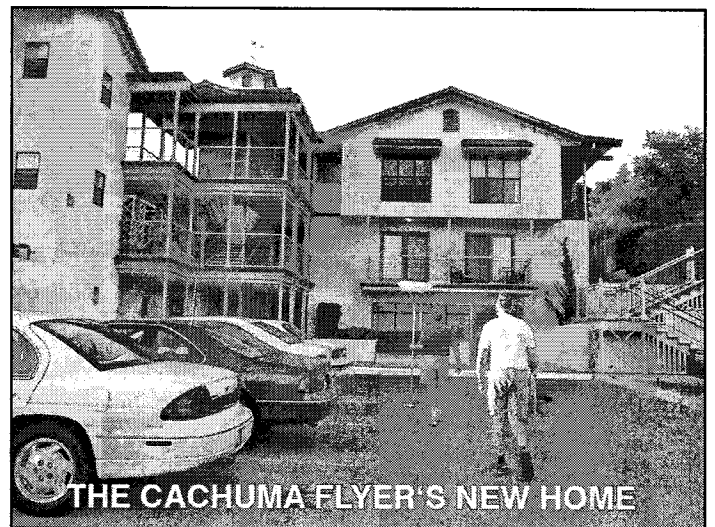
- Clairmonts Lavender
- Cachuma Lake Nature Center magnets

Also we have some things going out at 1/2 price

STOP IN TODAY!



Nature Center Docents 2004



The Editorial Office moves to new quarters in the Solvang Lutheran Home. Lots of sleep and three meals daily at the proper times. Very healthy! No more breaking away from the computer at 2:30 AM and reaching for a candy bar for dinner.

What Gets Stuck in Your Socks

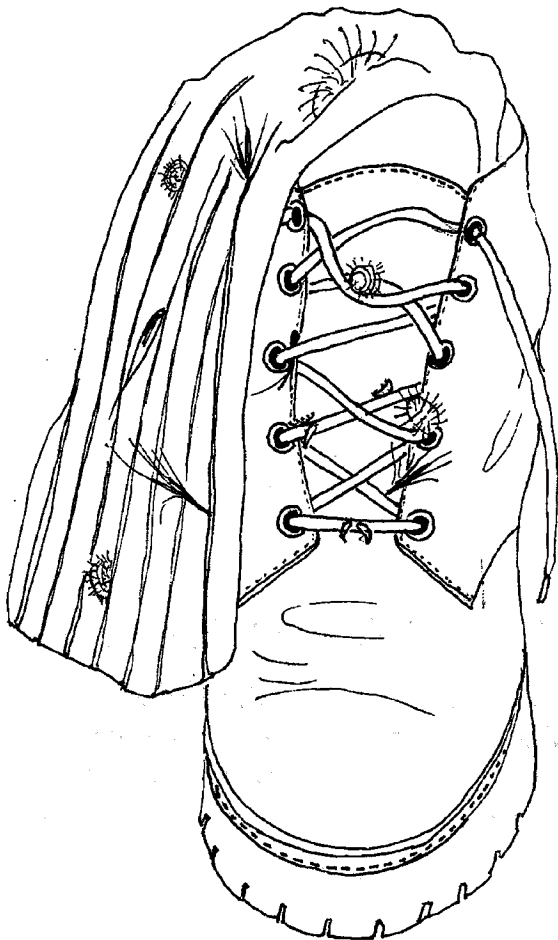
By Linda Taylor

Subject of a recent "Educational Minute" - Ed.

Take a walk in the chaparral & grassland of our area. Afterward, examine all the little things stuck in your socks and shoelaces. What are all these irritating little things? In general, they are seed coverings, the means by which a plant spreads its seeds around the Park, the state, and sometimes, the world.

Contrary to the writer's initial opinion, plants which disperse seeds in this manner are not necessarily exotic plants—many are natives.

The most ominous is Cocklebur, *Xanthium strumarium*, a plant more eligible to call Santa Barbara County home than most of us. Cocklebur, has a huge bur—about 1/2 to 3/4 inches long—which is a total pain in your socks or your dog! It is a profuse native plant along the banks of Cachuma Lake. Its prickly seed pod contains two seeds. Seeds and young plants are especially poisonous to livestock; however, leaves and stems of a mature plant may also cause illness and death in cattle, sheep, pigs, and poultry. Its Latin name, *Xanthium*, refers to a modest yellow blossom; *strumarium*, meaning tumorous or swelling, must refer to the the burs themselves.



Some incredibly tenacious burs, recognizable by any hiker in the area, are the seed cases of American Wild Carrot, *Daucus pusillus*. *Daucus* is an ancient Greek name; *pusillus* means small or insignificant; these burs, approximately 1/4" long, are small—but certainly not insignificant, when you have to pick them out of your socks, shoestrings, or sweater. This plant, with many U. S. native species belongs to a family of about 3,000 species that live in the northern hemisphere. Carrots, parsley, celery, caraway, anise, and dill belong to the genus *Daucus*, of which some members are poisonous. Roots of *Daucus* are edible, e.g., cultivated carrots. Although it is sometimes referred to as "Yerba de la Vibora" (herb of the viper) and Snakeweed, several other plants are also known by these common names.

Both native and exotic species of Foxtail or Wild Barley, *Hordeum*, occur in California. A subspecies was used for food by Native Californians. Each "spur" of the fluffy Foxtail carries a seed which may become caught in clothing and pet fur and ears, where they may be a considerable problem. One of the most interesting burs is Bur Clover, *Medicago polymorpha*. *Medicago* is from Greek for alfalfa; *polymorpha* means many forms. Introduced from the Mediterranean, this plant is a legume; it belongs to a huge family of plants *Fabaceae* (*Leguminosae*), which are the beans of the world. They are hugely important as food sources for humans and animals; the seed looks like a microscopic lima bean. Bur Clover is familiar; its round, prickly bean pod is coiled up on itself to form a ball. The green plant is a plague to folk who like a nice lawn. With leaves like any clover, it grows long runners bearing the burs which are a pain to barefoot children. Bur Clover is a nitrogen-fixing plant, releasing nitrogen into soils, and is closely related to alfalfa and other clovers. Wild Oats, *Avena fatua*, was introduced to the west from Europe and is one of the grasses that has succeeded in almost crowding out native bunch grasses. The "hitch-hiking" part of the plant is covered with tiny hairs and contains the seed. Wild Oats can be ground into flour or cooked as a cereal, similar to cultivated oats. Note: there are several plants with the same common name. *Avena* means oats; *fatua* means foolish, or worthless—like the word "fatuous." Russian Thistle aka Tumbleweed, *Salsola* spp, is one of the most common weeds of the American West. Native of Eastern Europe/Russia, its Latin name refers to the fact that it is salt tolerant. The genus name is in dispute at this time. Tumbleweeds arrived in the U. S. in the late 1800s in South Dakota mixed with flax seed imported by Ukrainian farmers. Tumbleweeds had tumbled their way to the Pacific Coast by 1900. While green, it provides fodder to Bighorn Sheep and Pronghorn. When the plant dries in summer or fall, a thin layer of cells in the stem splits, allowing the plant and its thousands of seeds (an estimated 250,000 per plant) to break from its roots and roll across acres of ground, dispersing seeds as it rolls.

Tumbleweeds now occur in Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Egypt, Greece, Hawaii, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, South Africa, and Turkey.

So the next time you return from a hike with a sock full of burs and stickers, test yourself on their names and origins.

Docents of the Year

By Linda Taylor

On August 8, the Board of Directors of Cachuma Lake Nature Center held its Annual Docent Recognition Event, on the patio of the Center. Director Carol Smagala was the chairperson of the event. Several individuals were recognized for outstanding service.

Patricia Martin and Alan Schwartz of Santa Ynez were chosen Docents of the Year for outstanding volunteer service to the organization.

Patricia Martin, a relative newcomer to the group, has stepped in willingly and efficiently to assist with many tasks. She took on the immense job of trout derby registration two years ago and has done a nearly flawless job of keeping a database with thousands of names and addresses, organizing large mailings, and onsite derby registration.

She has led numerous groups of school children through the Nature Center and on nature walks, and has assisted with the Saturday morning nature walks for the public. Providing the educational minute for docent meetings, writing articles for the newsletter, coordinating Feederwatch, a Cornell University bird census program, have also been ably accomplished by Ms. Martin. While Docent secretary, she assisted with the important but tedious job of overhauling Docent policies.

Alan Schwartz has invested more than 900 hours this fiscal year for the Nature Center. His primary role is that of newsletter editor, a difficult and, at times, frustrating job which entails prying copy from reluctant or procrastinating writers, learning new design programs for the computer, dealing with computer glitches, and with various printers—both mechanical and human. Through it all he has maintained his wit and good humor.

Alan also works at all the fund raisers and has contributed many photographs both to the newsletter and to other publications, such as the annual report. His ability to format on the computer has been of great use for various publicity needs.

Nature Center Derby Loses Oldest Angler

Dutch Wilson (Raymond) passed away August 21, while celebrating the opening of deer season. Dutch was repeatedly the winner of the prize for the Oldest Angler to catch a trout at the Nature Center's annual Trout Derby. His good nature and pluck at the age of 94 years will be missed at the Lake.



A special award was given to Daryl Rutherford of Santa Barbara, for building outstanding wood-working projects for the Center, including a Memorial Bench which was recently dedicated. Mr. Rutherford's enthusiasm and initiative in finding new projects and implementing them has earned him the "Eager Beaver Award."

Neal Taylor, a founding member of the Nature Center and member of the Board of Directors was honored for his many hours of volunteer time and effort during the past fiscal year on behalf of the Center. Assisting with the Annual Trout Derby fund raiser, the yard sale, the barn dance, the "Road show"—an outreach program for local service clubs—and planning and presenting two workshops on fishing for children are among his contributions to the Center.

A special award was given to Liz Mason for her assistance to the Nature Center, above and beyond the confines of her job. She has assisted the Center by making contact with many professionals in the community to offer their services for docent training programs and public lectures. She, personally, has helped with docent training, occasionally provided the educational minute at monthly Docent meetings, participated in Feederwatch and, at least monthly, replenished the fresh plant display.

CACHUMA LAKE NATURE CENTER

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Vice-President	Kirby Duncan
Secretary	Position Vacant
Treasurer	Lynda Williams-Terres
Carol Smagala • Neal Taylor	
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Treasurer	Annie Ruano
Newsletter Editor	Alan Schwartz
Executive Director	Linda Taylor