

I'll bet you thought I'd never get another of these done!



CACHUMA FLYER

CACHUMA LAKE NATURE CENTER NEWSLETTER

Issue 8; March 1992

DOCENT HOURS

If one person had worked for seven and a half hours a day for 365 days during 1991, that person's time would equal the hours worked by Docents during last year, 2,777 hours. Breaking down the total hours into categories of types of activities reveals where effort was concentrated.

Development of exhibits for the Nature Center consumed the most time, 1,150.5 hours, which includes research for exhibits, as well as construction.

Public contact activities, such as leading hikes, hosting at the Nature Center, conducting boat tours, and presenting evening fireside programs, took 508 hours. Attending Docent training classes or other structured educational programs used 349.5 hours. Attending regular monthly meetings of the Docent Organization took 222.5 hours.

Writing the booklet on the Lake, trail guides, articles for news releases, advertising, newsletter, and copy for exhibits used 157.5 hours. One hundred and fifty hours were devoted to administration, such as meetings of the Docent Executive Board, committees, and the CLF Board. Maintenance of building and grounds, including watering, took 88.5 hours. Eighty-one and a half hours were devoted to teaching, such as use of the telescope, basket and cordage making. Purchasing, packaging, pricing, taking inventory, etc., for the gift shop used 46.5 hours.

Docents spending the most hours on Nature Center activities were George Smith, 526 hours; Toni Runnels, 425 hours; Bob Runnels, 323 hours; Don Wimpres, 279 hours.

Figures above are not fully accurate or comprehensive. The majority of docents do not record their working hours systematically; therefore, actual total hours worked is considerably higher than reported.

NEW DOCENT OFFICERS ELECTED

Connie Howerton will again lead the Cachuma Lake Docent Organization after her reelection as president at the Annual Meeting February, 22. George Smith was elected vice-president and Janine Whyte, secretary. With the election of this trio, all three docent training classes are represented on the executive board. Connie has been a volunteer at the Lake since before the Nature Center and the Foundation were established. Janine is from the class which graduated in June, 1991.

The following standing committees were discussed at the meeting: building and grounds, exhibits, history, publicity, gift shop, newsletter, docent recruitment and training, activities, hospitality, computer. The executive board has the responsibility of establishing committees and appointing chairmen.

Most docents are in the process of developing new exhibits for the Nature Center. Karen Metschuleit showed the group a graph of rainfall rates at the Lake since the construction of the dam; she is also developing information for display on El Nino. An exhibit on Chumash use of local plants is on view in the "Chumash Room;" it is one of several Karen Osland has contributed.

By far the most time-consuming exhibit to date is the watershed mural by Toni Runnels. She has worked several hours a day, three to five days each week since September. The painting includes mountain peaks, canyons, creeks, towns and cities of the area that is drained by Cachuma and that is served by the water stored in the Lake. Additionally, a cut-away segment of the mural shows geologic structure of Santa Ynez Valley at the face of the dam.

A spread of photographs illustrating building of the dam and its first spill was collected and mounted by George Smith.

In November, Linda Taylor completed a stylized design which compares the life-size wingspan of some larger birds at the Lake.

LAKE WATER LEVEL RISES; CAMPER NUMBERS ALSO

With the dramatic increase in water level at the Lake since January 1, (approximately), attendance at Cachuma Lake has increase markedly as well. Comparing camping site occupancy on the first weekend of March, 1991, with the same weekend of this year reveals the change. Forty-six regular campsites and 118 full or partial hook-up sites were filled on this March weekend, 1991. On March 7, and 8, 1992, 116 regular sites and 136 full or partial hook up sites were occupied, a 65% increase in camping usage. These figures do not include day usage, which according to Lake staff, are also up heavily since the rains.

As of March 9, water level behind Bradbury Dam was 15 1/2 feet from spill level, which is approximately 100 feet above the low level recorded prior to March rains, 1991.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE DOCENTS: Karen Osland

Karen Osland, who has contributed many exhibits to the Nature Center and has conducted workshops for docents, was a member of the 1989 docent class. Born and raised in Lompoc, after marriage she lived for over twenty years in the Los Prietos-Paradise Road area.

After attending Santa Barbara City College, Karen graduated from UCSB with a degree in anthropology with an emphasis in archeology. One of her primary interests is Chumash use of native plants, which through lengthy study and observation she learned to identify and to determine the prime time for harvesting for special uses.

She has read extensively in the areas of ethnobotany, geology, botany, and local history, and has learned to recreate various Chumash products, such as cordage and baskets. At workshops for the Sierra Club and for the Cachuma docent training program she has taught these skills.

For fifteen years Karen worked for the Forest Service, Cal Trans and various consulting firms doing archeological surveys and excavations throughout the tri-county area. Currently she is the staff archeologist for Vandenberg AFB. She has also worked for the Long Term Care Ombudsman Services of Santa Barbara County as an advocate for residents' rights and continues as a volunteer for this organization.

Karen's wish for the Nature Center is that it offer a variety of workshops on natural history topics for both adults and children.

THE TOMOL: The Plank Canoe of the Chumash
(Material Contributed by Bob Runnels)

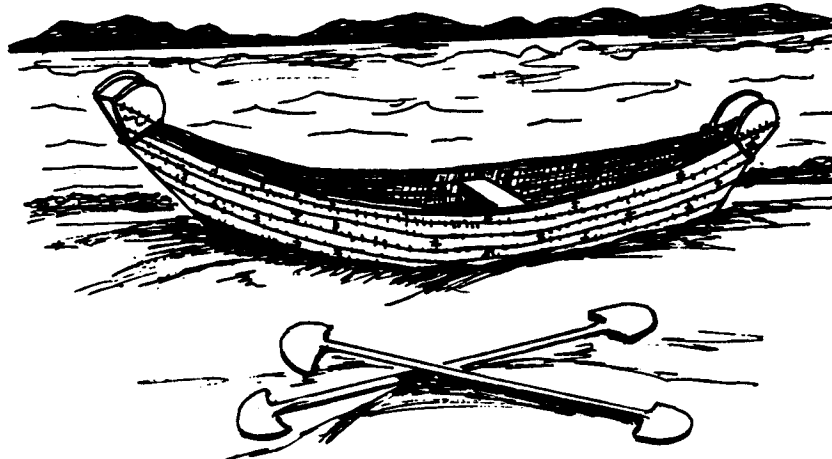
Construction of large, ocean-going canoes built from pine or redwood planks was a major technological feat of the Chumash Indians. Ranging in length from eight to thirty feet, these tomols could carry a cargo of 4,000 pounds. Built narrow--three feet wide amidships--these canoes were powered by kneeling men, paddling double-ended oars. With sides only 2 1/2 feet high and prows of 3 1/2 feet, travel was limited to fair weather; however, these early sailors traveled extensively up and down the coast and to the Channel Islands.

Redwood, washed ashore from northern coasts was preferred wood, but pine was also used. Planks were shaped into hull boards 3/4 inch thick by 6 inches wide and as long as the log allowed or was needed. Wedges made from antlers, wood or stone, a hand adze with a wooden handle and Pismo clam shell blade and stone or shell knives and scrapers were the tools for shaping the boat pieces. Sharkskin was used for sanding. After hull boards were shaped and fitted together, they were glued together using a mixture of tar and pine pitch and then sewn together with plant fiber cord threaded through drilled holes. Finally, seams were caulked with tule reeds and additional tar-pitch mixture. A coat of red ochre was applied to the exterior.

A crossbeam amidships was the only internal bracing; no ribs were used in this design. A gap between the top boards at bow and stern allowed for easy use of ropes and fishing gear.

A society called "The Brotherhood of the Canoe" constructed the boats and the director of the boat's construction was also its captain; he ranked second in importance only the village chief. The last tomol seen was near Ventura in 1870.

Most of the extant information on tomol use and construction was reported to J.P. Harrington by a Chumash named Fernando Librado who was a member of the "Brotherhood;" he died in Santa Barbara in 1905.



UNUSUAL BIRDS

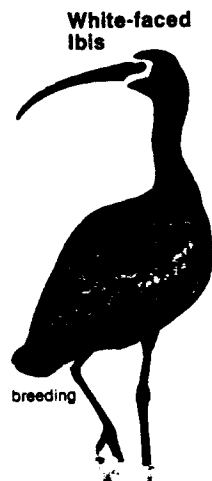
Since the fall a White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*) has frequented the Lake; it is more common to inland water bodies of the Central Valley. Its white facial plumage is a breeding mark not seen during most of the year.

A wading bird almost twenty inches long, it has a decurved bill which enables it to obtain insects and small aquatic invertebrates in the Lake shallows. Ibises are often accompanied during feeding by other wading birds which benefit by prey that the Ibis stirs up from the Lake bottom.

A spectacular sight on the Lake this winter has been a flock of American White Pelicans (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*). These birds, unlike their relatives, Brown Pelicans, do not dive for prey but fish by scooping with their large bills. They sometimes fish cooperatively; a group of birds will form a semi-circle or a line on the water, thrashing and beating the surface with their wings to drive fish into shallow areas where they can be more easily caught. The Brown Pelican is more commonly seen on salt water; the White is an habitue of inland lakes and marshes.

Usually two eggs are hatched in a clutch by White Pelicans, but the larger, presumably older sibling, attacks the younger or weaker chick, resulting in survival of only one bird. Pelican offspring gain weight rapidly, reaching a peak weight that is heavier than its ultimate adult weight at approximately nine weeks of age. This seemingly excess weight allows young birds to survive periods of feather development and the first days foraging on its own.

This bird was "Blue Listed" from 1972 to 1981, indicating severe decline in numbers of birds or in available habitat. Near the turn of the century White Pelicans were one of many species of birds hunted almost to extinction for plumage for millinery decoration.



This newsletter is a publication of the Cachuma Lake Foundation Docent Organization. It is published occasionally for members in Santa Barbara, California.
Editor: Linda Taylor