

SYCAMORE SAGE

June 2007

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Spring has been wonderful in our Reserve! Lazuli Buntings and Showy Penstemon's are breath taking examples of our birds and flora. The new visitor center/ranger office is coming along with the expected opening in September. The Friends have been busy with the annual survey of endangered plants; invasive non-native control; trail building; and participating in the hikes and Wildlife Tracking activities. Thanks to Karen Larsen Gordon, Mike Kelly, Cindy Burrascano, Gardner Grady, Claude Edwards and Phoenix Von Hendy for their leadership in these events. A Memorial Fund has been established in Memory of Kate Slade Murty. (See story below). We are grateful to her friends and family for choosing us. We are working with The County of San Diego Parks and Recreation to use these monies in an appropriate form. Perhaps some taxidermied hawks for display in the new center as well as a bench outside to watch the real hawks in flight.

Please note that the summer hours are now 9AM opening and 7PM closing. The late start will allow folks to visit the reserve after work.

Carol

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Minutes: Friends of Goodan Ranch and Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserves

May 7, 2007

In Attendance: Carol Crafts, Phoenix Von Hendy, Karen Larsen Gordon, Terry Callan, Ann Laux and DeAnne Erickson.

The meeting was called to order at 7:15p.m.

The motion passed to approve the minutes of the meeting held February 5, 2007

Financial report by Treasurer, DeAnne Erickson:
\$2,546.55 in checking,
\$192.48 in savings, and
\$6329.96 in a CD totaling:
\$9,068.99.

Old Business:
Sunrise PowerLink - applicability of the project has been referred to the Federal Energy Commission, which challenges the jurisdiction of states regarding critical energy planning.

Historic District Designation – the application packet is on its way, with a request to have the document prepared for review and discussion prior to the next Friends' meeting on 8/6/07.

New Business:
Reports:

Wildlife Survey - Phoenix stated that a recent wildlife survey yielded signs of fox and wood rats. Volunteers, who also enjoyed observing thrasher species, conducted the survey.

Trail work – Terry reported the San Diego Mountain Biking Association hosted trail work on May 5th with 10 volunteers who repaired the trail west of the ranch house heading north towards the crossroads.

Programs – The plant hike on 4/28 had 7 guests and the bird hike that same afternoon had 8 guests. Thanks go to Phoenix and Claude Edwards for leading the outings!

Plant Monitoring - Karen and Carol monitored thorn mint twice, with Adam and Jerome from the County of San Diego joining in with sophisticated field mapping equipment. Thanks for joining us!

New Construction – Carol reported that the JPA hope to hold their next meeting in September or October in the new visitor center at Goodan Ranch. In addition, she met with Caileen and Maureen in order to discuss the interpretive component of the new building. Display cases describing the MSCP, green building features, seasonally applicable items and area history are all good possibilities. The Goodan family has begun sending

photos of their time spent at Goodan Ranch to Carol, and she has been assisting the Santee Historical Society in sorting materials, some of which relate to Sycamore Canyon. A kiosk with information may be added by the existing restroom. Carol has suggested a hand washing station beside the outside restroom.

Additional recommendations from those in attendance include: A display highlighting the various volunteer organizations that support Goodan Ranch (Friends, SDMBA, Poway Trails, SDTT), as well as examples of local flora and fauna.

Hours of Operation – Friends expressed concern over the later opening of the Preserves. Suggestions include requesting split shift hours for staff or earlier starts on weekends. Terry is to inquire about the position held by the San Diego Mountain Biking Association. Karen will tally citizen comments received through the website in order to share them with the County Parks and Recreation staff.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00p.m.

Next meeting: August 6, 2007, 7:00p.m. at Coco's Restaurant, Poway

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Kate Slade Murty

Have you ever taken a walk along the sycamore canyon

filled creek at the end of Garden Road, just past Garden Road Elementary School and the park? If you have not, take the time to do so. My mom enjoyed this walk daily with her dog Buddy, a black and white cocker spaniel. If you live in the area, you may have seen her. She almost always wore her red funny hat and her hiking boots. Sadly, my mom passed away on May 10th, Mexican Mother's Day, a special day for our family because my mother lived in Mexico City for twenty years where my two sisters, my brother, and I were born.

Yet, this is a story of hope and of celebrating life. My mother was diagnosed with lung cancer almost two years ago. This diagnosis did not stop her from living each day to the fullest. As a retired teacher, her passions were her volunteer work, her garden, native plants, and wildlife. When her husband and she sold their 500 tree Fuyu Persimmon Farm in Fallbrook and decided to move closer to the medical facilities that they both needed, they decided that Poway would be the ideal place to live.

They found the perfect house on Garden Road. My mother fell in love with this little house because of so many reasons. First, it had a beautiful view of the rock covered mountains. Next, she loved seeing people ride their

horses down the road from her house. In addition, she loved the tall and majestic sycamore trees and the wildlife that surrounded her neighborhood.

She also enjoyed the small town feeling of Poway. She became active at the Senior Center; she delivered meals to other seniors in the area and developed some amazing friendships with the people she met. She cherished her yoga classes. And, as a retired teacher, she also did some volunteer work at Garden Road Elementary School. Her passion for plants led her to Old Poway Park where she helped the Poway Valley Garden Club. Saturday mornings were always reserved for the farmers' market! Trips to Poway Lake always were a special time for her. Saturday afternoons or Sunday mornings were her time to go find peace at St. Gabriel's Catholic Church.

Many of these activities were short lived due to her lung cancer and her loss of energy. But, it was so hard for her to stop helping others and doing what she loved. She started cutting down on activities one at a time but continued to do as much as she could. Complaining and giving up were not her style.

Walking her dog, Buddy, along the sycamores on Garden Road was one activity she did almost until

the end. Yes, her walks got shorter and at times she needed assistance from her children or her husband. But the joy she felt when she was out watching her pair of nesting hawks kept her going there until her last days.

When she knew that her time at Garden Road would soon end, she decided to have a Celebration of Life. Her main purpose for this special event was to have the opportunity to take her friends and loved ones out to this magical place along the creek. As March 25th approached, she realized that her illness was making her weaker and weaker. The day before her celebration, she talked to us and told us that she didn't think that she would be able to make it out to the creek. We told her it would be okay, we would take her friends and family to enjoy the sycamores and look for her hawks and their nest.

On March 25th, we all worried that this gathering would be too much for my mom. We asked her if she wanted to go ahead and have her celebration, and she nodded yes. Talking was difficult for her. To our amazement, she found energy that day and decided that she would go with us to the creek. We drove her down to her regular parking spot, and with help from her daughters, she got out of the car. What happened next brought tears to our eyes. As if on cue, a hawk took flight and

squawked and squawked. As it flew over our heads and landed in the big dead tree in the middle of the pasture across the street, we all smiled.

Celebrate life and the beautiful town you live in. Take a morning or afternoon and walk along the sycamores and the creek. Maybe you will also have a magical moment and see the soaring hawks.

After taking this walk, you may want to consider getting involved in your community. Volunteer in an area that you are passionate about. Take a walk with your dog and just smile at those you meet. Remember that in giving of ourselves we receive. And who knows, maybe you will see that funny lady with the red hat and hiking boots walking her dog, Buddy.

Written by her youngest daughter, Natalie Weston.

Donations can be made in the memory of Kate Murty to:

Friends of Goodan Ranch and Sycamore Canyon
c/o 13030 Birch Lane
Poway, CA 92064

Poway Valley Garden Club
P.O. Box
Poway, CA 92064

Fire Ecology Poems (found on display boards within the Park).

1. "Out Of The Dusk A Shadow,
Then, A Spark.
Out Of The Cloud A Silence,
Then, A Lark.
Out Of The Heart A Rapture,
Then, A Pain.
Out Of The Dead, Cold Ashes,
Life Again."

John Banister Tabb

2. "The Phoenix Hope, Can Wing Her Way
Through The Desert Skies. And Still
Defying Fortune's Spite; Revive From Ashes And Rise".

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra

3. "Oh Joy! That In Our embers Is Something That Doth Live,
That Nature Yet Remembers What Was So Fugitive."

Wordsworth

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Birds Observed at the Sycamore Canyon County Park

Sunday 22 April (2:15-4:15 pm) and Saturday 28 April (3:45-6:45 pm), 2007

By Claude G. Edwards, et.al.

Acorn Woodpecker, Anna's Hummingbird, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Bewick's wren, Black-chinned Sparrow, Black-headed grosbeak, Blue-gray gnatcatcher,

Bushtit, California quail, California thrasher, Cassin's kingbird, Common raven, Costa's hummingbird, Fox sparrow, House finch, House wren, lark sparrow, lazuli bunting, Lesser goldfinch, Mourning dove, Northern mockingbird, Nuttall's woodpecker, Orange-crowned warbler, Osprey, pacific-slope flycatcher, Red-shouldered hawk, Red-tailed hawk, Rock wren, Rufous-crowned sparrow, Song sparrow, Spotted towhee, Turkey vulture, Western bluebird, Western tanager, Western scrub-jay, Wilson's warbler, Wrentit, Yellow warbler, Yellow-rumped warbler.

These forty bird species were seen and / or heard during afternoon mid-spring walks along the Martha's Grove Trail and return to the Sycamore Canyon Road trailhead / parking area. Additional species are certain to be encountered in other parts of the park, whether resident or migratory. These are especially noteworthy as a reference to the progress of recovery of the sage scrub, chaparral, and oak woodland habitats that were burned during the Cedar Fire in 2003.

California's last intact Mexican land grant, Rancho Guejito; will it fall prey to subdivisions?

Eight times the size of Santee's Fanita Ranch; Guejito is only about one thousand acres less than MCAS Miramar and Fanita

Ranch combined. Thanks to the Cleveland National Forest and a patchwork of natural lands, both Fanita & Guejito remain linked for wildlife migration and habitat. These habitat blocks and wildlife corridors are key to conserving San Diego County biodiversity.

Please read the **LA Times** in depth report on Rancho Guejito:

COLUMN ONE

A plot both wide and thick

Untamed acres in San Diego County belonged to an Old World empire builder. A bitter feud concerns their future.

By Mike Anton, Times Staff Writer
May 24, 2007

<http://www.latimes.com/news/la-me-rancho24may24,1,5296786.story?page=1&ctrack=1&cset=true&track=rss>

www.sdcrn.org as a Friends group, we support The San Diego conservation resource network.

<http://www.calsmerge.com/asd/environment>

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/planguide/checklist.html>

www.owlpages.com/

www.sdcwa.org; click on "infrastructure"; then "esp"; then "San Vicente Pipeline"

<http://www.blueskyreserve.org/>

We need to keep following 2 issues: the Water District's San Vicente Pipeline and SDG&E's Powerlink.

Contaminated Pet Food - Find a current report at:

<http://ent.groundspring.org/EmailNow/pub.php?module=URLTracker&cmd=track&j=141513008&u=135572>

. Call 858-694-2838 or 888-551-4636 if you find a dead bird.

County Notes:

The Spring 2007 Program Guide for the County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Reservation, has been electronically published. In the Program Guide, you will find many useful bits of information about camping, picnicking, and otherwise enjoying your County Parks. Many family-friendly events are listed for your information and enjoyment. You may access the Program Guide by following this link: <http://www.co.san-diego.ca.us/parks/docs/destinations.pdf>. Feel free to bookmark this link and/or print out a hard copy for your personal reference. We look forward to seeing you at a County park or one of our special events this fall/winter.

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Thank you to all who have
joined, renewed or made a
generous donation.

RENEW OR JOIN NOW

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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____ \$10 Senior 62 plus
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____ \$30 Sponsor
____ \$100 Patron _____
\$250 Corporate _____ \$1000
Life

PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHECK OUT TO "FRIENDS OF GOODAN RANCH"

AND SEND IT TO:
MEMBERSHIPS/13030
Birch Lane, Poway, CA
92064

All Membership
renewals are now due 1
January of each year.

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www.goodanranch.org

858-513-4737

Friends of Goodan Ranch & Sycamore Canyon Open Space
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