



# Big Tree

**BULLETIN**

C A L A V E R A S   B I G   T R E E S   A S S O C I A T I O N

## From CBTA's President

by *Marcy Crawford*

After the long winter rest, the Park is awake and getting ready for the busy spring and summer seasons. The Warming Hut and snowshoe walks will soon be memories as we make way for the Association-funded Fashion Show, Annual Picnic, seminars, and all the kid-focused summer programs, including John Muir Laws Sketch Class on August 14 and Family Day on August 21.

In the meantime, the Association used these quieter months to develop a Strategic Plan to guide CBTA into the future, setting short- and long-term goals that will benefit the Association, the Park and the Community. Our overriding goal is to enhance the visitor experience. We can achieve this by assisting with the planning and funding crucial to the delivery of high-quality educational and interpretive programs at the Park; raising the Association's profile; increasing CBTA membership; fundraising; and engaging in networking, both in person and using social media tools.

The Board and the Association wishes to thank Susanne Bergum, a strategic planning expert. She has donated countless hours of time and talent to lead the

Board through this process, which will be completed in June. Susanne, we couldn't do it without you!

Speaking of June, mark your calendar for 11 a.m., Saturday, June 12, for our Annual Meeting and Potluck in the picnic area behind Jack Knight Hall. We welcome and encourage our members to attend and participate in electing the 2010/2011 Board of Directors. It's a great opportunity to meet your Board, each other, staff members, volunteers, and our student intern and scholarship winners.

My message wouldn't be complete without an update on the California State Parks Foundation's continuing efforts to Save Our State Parks. They are gathering signatures for a statewide ballot measure to create a State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund. If approved, the fund will provide stable, reliable and adequate funding for state parks through a new \$18 annual vehicle license surcharge. In addition, the measure gives California-licensed vehicles free admission to all state parks. Although the Calaveras Big Trees Association is unable to advocate for the bill, according to our articles of incorporation, we can inform the membership of the situation at hand and suggest you visit [calparks.org](http://calparks.org) for more details.

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## S.H.A.R.E.S.

by Charlotte Hunt

Our partnership with SaveMart Supermarkets and Lucky Stores S.H.A.R.E.S. program has been a continuing success due to your participation. Thank you for using your card when you shop. The proceeds (last year's total was over \$930) from this program help support our interpretive programs at the Park. Don't have a card??? Come to the Visitor Center or call (209) 795-3840 to have a card sent to you. SHOP HEARTY AND EAT WELL!

## Park Update

by Gary Olson, Superintendent

Excitement is in the air as the weather begins to change from winter to spring. The birds are returning, small animals are again running about, bobcats, deer, and coyotes are moving through the meadow, and the visitors are preparing to return to Calaveras Big Trees.

The recent storms have caused many trees to fall, knocking out power for days, damaging tables, benches, fences, and blocking roadways, but the snow and rain have also brought us to normal rain levels for this winter, which means a very good spring for wild flowers.

As you walk through the Park you will notice down trees everywhere you look. We have not been able to evaluate all the trails and fire roads so please keep us informed if you come across any problems. We will be burning the slash piles in the North Grove this year, but this will be limited to small areas and will stop before the main summer visitation begins. Burn areas will be restored to a natural condition afterwards.

Budget issues have not changed much for this fiscal budget year (through June 30). With reduced funding, we cannot spend money on what would be normal operations, so we will only be repairing things that are for public safety or legally mandated. The state has no budget for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 at this time so we cannot speculate on the impact to the Park.

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped us throughout the winter with guided walks, Visitor Center assistance, and Warming Hut operations. It was not only appreciated by our winter visitors but also by the Park staff. Also a big thank you to CBTA for providing the funding that enables us to enrich our visitor's experiences with interpretive and educational programs.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any Park problem or area of concern that you would like me to address.

Again, thank you for everything that you are doing. Keep up the great work!

## Laws Field Guide

by Marcy Crawford

John Muir Laws, author of "The Laws Field Guide to the Sierra Nevada" is coming to Calaveras Big Trees State Park for a two-day event, August 13-14, 2010. Friday evening he will work with educational groups and park docents and on Saturday he will be teaching children how to start and keep a daily-illustrated field journal. Mr. Laws is a naturalist, biologist, and educator who is a Research Associate with the California Academy of Sciences. Watch for more information in our next Bulletin.



*Every Spring is the only spring - a perpetual astonishment ~ Ellis Peters*

## Family Day

by Marilyn Regan



**Mark your calendars!!** Family Day will be August 21 this year! We have scheduled several additions to last year's wonderful program.

Wild Things, Inc. will bring their non-releasable animals, First Five will be setting up an area for pre-school children, we will have our storyteller back again, and a group from Calaveras High School's Earth Club will be among the participants. All this in addition to our regular snakes, raptors, butterflies, carriage rides, crafts, face painting, lunch, Miwok culture and bands. We are in the planning stages right now and would like to invite CBTA members to join us in bringing new and fresh ideas. Please call Betty Woodward at 795-1529 or Marilyn Regan at 795-7385 to find out time and place of the April planning meeting.

## Membership Benefits

by John Woodward

Membership in CBTA has benefits to both Calaveras Big Trees State Park and to you. As a current and/or former member of CBTA, you are undoubtedly familiar with many of these benefits but perhaps not all of them. Following is a summary:

CBTA funded programs that benefit the Park:

- Junior Cubs and Junior Rangers*
- School Tours*
- Family Day*
- Winter Warming Hut*
- Winter Snowshoe Tours*
- Support for Special Projects*
- Seminars and Campfire Programs*
- Summer Intern Program*
- Scholarships*
- Volunteer Training and Recognition*
- Interpretive Staff*
- Park Publications*
- Visitor Center Staffing and Operation*
- Library*

In addition to the enjoyment of these programs when you and your family visit the Park, membership provides the following benefits:

- 10% Discount Purchase at Visitor Center*
- Big Tree Bulletin Newsletter*
- Special Discount at Annual Holiday Sale*
- Annual Meeting/Summer Picnic*

Help protect this important resource and gain an understanding of the Giant Sequoia forest by enlisting new members and/or renewing your current membership. Click "Join CBTA" on line at [www.bigtrees.org](http://www.bigtrees.org) or complete the membership form in our brochure or in this Big Tree Bulletin.

Currently our membership dues are among the lowest for any Cooperating Association for the California State Parks. Should you wish to increase your donation, any additional amount you can afford to give will be put to good use and will be greatly appreciated. All contributions, as well as membership fees, are tax deductible.

Thank you for your continuing support and we look forward to seeing you at the Park in the future.

## Welcome Back Brunch

by Bunny Firebaugh



It is time for our Eighth Annual Welcome Back Docent Brunch to be held in the Jack Knight Memorial Hall on April 10, 2010 at 11:00 a.m. CBTA will provide a delicious brunch for all of the new members and docents. At this time, you will have the opportunity to meet the Rangers, Park Staff, CBTA Board Members, new members and see long-time friends. Also, you will be able to find out about the sign up for all the programs that will be going on in the Park this year. Please RVSP to Bunny Firebaugh by email at [lovetheforest@goldrush.com](mailto:lovetheforest@goldrush.com) or by phone at (209) 795-4305. Hope to see you there!

## Join Us.....

by Steve Stocking

Our **Seminar Season** is beginning on Saturday, May 1, 2010. Dr. Tom Hofstra, Biology Professor at Columbia College and Board Member of CSERC, will present his program on the diverse kingdom of *Fungi*. Dr. Hofstra's presentation last year on Lichen was very popular and this year's program will be equally fascinating.

Our second Spring seminar will be Saturday, May 22, 2010, on *Reptiles and Amphibians* of Calaveras Big Trees and surrounding mountains. The program will be presented by Dr. Paul Ustach, Professor of Biology at San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton. Come learn which creatures are poisonous and which are not!

Our third seminar will be Saturday, September 25, 2010. *John Muir of the Big Trees* will be presented by Michael Wurtz, Archivist of the John Muir Papers Collection at the University of the Pacific. The program will center around John Muir's interest in the Sequoias and his two visits to Calaveras Big Trees State Park.

Saturday, October 2, 2010, will be our final seminar of the season. Dr. Harry Sharp will present *Exploring Life at the Top*, a program about coastal redwoods and life up in the canopy. Dr. Sharp is a retired professor from Cal Poly and Humboldt State University. He is currently a docent at the northern coastal Redwood State Parks.

All seminars will begin at 10:00 a.m. at Jack Knight Hall in the Park. Admission to seminars is free with coffee and light refreshments provided after the programs.

## Upcoming CBTA Events.....



Mark your calendars so that you don't miss any of the following events:

April 10 - Saturday 11:00 a.m.	Welcome Back Brunch
May 1 - Saturday 10:00 a.m.	Fungi Seminar
May 15 - Saturday 11:30 a.m.	Spring Fashion Show
May 22 - Saturday 10:00 a.m.	Reptiles/Amphibians Seminar
May 30 - Sunday 6:30 p.m.	Twisted Oak Winery BBQ to benefit CBTA
June 12 - Saturday 11:00 a.m.	Annual Picnic/Meeting
August 14 - Saturday 10:00 a.m.	John Muir Laws Sketch Class
August 21 - Saturday 10:00 a.m.	Family Day
August 19 through September 6	Arts of Bear Valley Fall Art Show
Sept 25 - Saturday 10:00 a.m.	John Muir Seminar
October 2 - Saturday 10:00 a.m.	Coastal Redwoods Seminar
November 20-21	Annual Public VC Sale
Early December	Holiday Brunch

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**Year:** 1906-07  
**Event:** *Greatest Snowfall in  
Sierra Nevada*  
**Amount:** 73-2/3 feet  
**Recorded:** *Camp Tamarack*



## Welcome Spring with Fashion

by Charlotte Hunt



It's time to box up the winter wardrobe and delight that Spring has arrived...but the age-old question, what do I wear now? CBTA and Joan's Boutique are here to help. Please join us at Snowflake Lodge in Blue Lake Springs, Saturday, May 15, at 11:30 a.m. for lunch and the newest in Spring fashion. Admission price is \$25.00 with all proceeds

from this event being used for the interpretive programs at Calaveras Big Trees State Park. For reservations, call Sharon Jimenez at (209) 728-2211.

## Visitor Center News

by Tami Rakstad-Schaner

Do you believe that the Visitor Center has been selling books for 35 years? It's true! And the money that Calaveras Big Trees Association makes in the store goes back into this wonderful place called Calaveras Big Trees State Park.

We have come a long way from just selling only books, but they continue to be our most popular item, with *The Enduring Giant* and our kids Activity Book being the top sellers.

We are always on the lookout for new products. Our Sales Committee works hard to find new products that are interpretive, good quality, eco-friendly and made in the USA. We have just found a very cool eco-friendly bear that is made in the USA of soy and kapok (a sustainable rain forest crop). Keep a look out at the store as he will be coming soon.

Keep coming in to check out the new merchandise and thank you for your continuing support.

### In Memoriam

Stewart Bradley  
Dolores Hurt  
C. W. Scott

## Q and A

### When did the Park have the first campground hosts?

A little history was made when Rudy and Audrey Kratina became the first campground hosts the summer of 1990. They continued to spend their summers in the North Grove for the next 13 years.

### What does Calaveras mean?

Calaveras means "skulls" and was repeatedly used in Spanish times for places where human skeletons testified to a fight or a famine. The county, one of the original 27, was created and named by an Act of Legislature on February 18, 1850.

### Why is this publication called Big Tree and not Big Trees Bulletin?

At the Annual Meeting on 11/7/1981, membership voted on several names submitted to the Board. Our namesake, the Big Tree Bulletin and Murphys Advertiser produced only 16 issues, from 4/30/1858 to 7/3/1858. From the stump printing office, came lively accounts of local news and ads. Printed were lists of visitors to the Big Tree Grove, coming events, mining camp news with recent gold strikes, and road construction reports.

### Do you have unanswered questions?

We would like your input on future Bulletin articles, i.e., do you want to know more about Park history, Association history, plants or animals. Please submit suggestions and/or questions to the Editor at [susanjr@comcast.net](mailto:susanjr@comcast.net).

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(209) 795-3840  
Membership/Renewal Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address\* \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

e-Mail\* \_\_\_\_\_

\$ 15 Individual  
 \$ 25 Family  
 \$100 Organization/Business  
 Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to CBTA and mail to above address or  
renew/join/donate through our web site www.bigtrees.org.

\*Yes, this is a change in address and/or e-mail.

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