



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

Summer has finally arrived. The campgrounds are full and the air is filled with children's laughter as they attend Cubs, Junior Rangers, Creek Critters, puppet shows and campfires. The park is alive and well, as is the Calaveras Big Trees Association.

At our June 12 Annual Meeting and Picnic, the membership in attendance reelected five incumbent directors and elected three new directors to the CBTA Board, bringing Board membership to 11. The new directors are Sanders Lamont, Mary Stai and Bruce Tallakson.

Sanders Lamont is our new Communications Director. He retired as Ombudsman from the Sacramento Bee in 2003 after 42 years in the newspaper business. He was a reporter who went on to serve as editor at three different newspapers during his career. Sanders was the Executive Editor of the Modesto Bee for 18 years.

In keeping with our Strategic Plan to diversify our Board membership, I am excited to announce that for the first time we have elected community members to the Board of Directors: Mary Stai and Bruce Tallakson.

Mary Stai, with her husband, Jeff, and their two sons, has vacationed in Calaveras and Alpine Counties for many years. So it just seemed natural when Mary and Jeff decided to leave Southern California they would come to Calaveras County. However, their early retirement never quite took hold. Instead, Mary opened the Enchanted Workshop in Murphys, and a year later they opened the Twisted Oak Winery. Mary and Jeff are longtime supporters of CBTA and host an Annual Benefit Dinner for the Association.

Bruce Tallakson has lived and worked in Arnold for 36 years. Bruce, founder and former proprietor of Tallahans Café, now owns a successful local tax service. He has been on the Board of the Greater Arnold Business Association for 10 years, four as President. He served on the Calaveras County Chamber of Commerce Board for four years, two as Treasurer, and on the Board of the Calaveras County Taxpayers Association for two years as Treasurer. Bruce is now serving as CBTA Treasurer.

The Annual Meeting also included an appearance by Mother Nature. She graced us with wind gusts sweeping through the picnic area pulling off tablecloths and blowing hats around. Without a portable public address system, the speakers resorted to shouting at the audience. Jim Gallagher of Mission Critical Specialists, watching our distress, announced that his company would be donating a public address system to CBTA. The applause rose above the sound of the wind! Thank you MCS for your generous gift that will continue giving.

Thank You!

by Marcy Crawford

With nearly 30 years of combined service to the Calaveras Big Trees Association, several of our directors have opted to retire from the Board this year. We want to take this opportunity to recognize them for their time, talent and dedication to our "Big Trees".

Charlotte Hunt served as Fundraising Director for more than six years. Her untiring efforts raised thousands of dollars for the Association's continued support of Park programs. These successful events have included fashion shows,

home tours, concerts, The Big Trees Cookbook, and The Shares Program, among others.

Anne Saunders served on the Board for six years, and as President from 2006-2008, as well as Interim President in 2009. In 2010, Anne was an advisor to the President and the Board. During her tenure, Anne, a soloist and concert performer, held several successful benefit concerts for CBTA.

Richard Szukalski served as Treasurer for six years. In addition to managing our investments and working with the bookkeeper, he also was our liaison with the State's Project Manager for the new Visitor Center. Although retiring as a director, Rich has graciously agreed to continue as the contact person with the state and serving on the Visitor Center Committee.

Richard Watson, Vice-President, has been a director for over 10 years. Dick has been involved in numerous Park projects. For many years, he ordered and supervised firewood needs for Park campers. Dick has kindly agreed to continue on our Firewood Committee, which this year will raffle a cord of wood at each of three separate events: Family Day, The Ebbetts Pass Byway Celebration, and the Annual Holiday Sale at the Visitor Center.

The Board of Directors extends its heartfelt thanks to each of you for your selfless devotion to CBTA and the Park. Your efforts have helped the Association grow, permitting us to support more Park programs every year.

HOW BIG IS A BIG TREE? by Bruce Thomsen

How will climate change affect giant sequoia and coastal redwood trees? That is the question that has led to the latest research being undertaken on the giant sequoia in the South Grove.

Starting this Spring, researchers lead by Steve Sillett, Bob Van Pelt, Anthony Ambrose, and Todd Dawson, with a variety of graduate students and technicians, laid out a one hectare plot in the South Grove. Realizing the lack of good data on the growth and size of these trees, the team began by measuring the mature giant sequoia trees in the plot from head to toe.

Using climbing gear, the team is measuring the circumference of each tree every 5 meters. To determine the actual weight of each tree (above ground; below ground is a separate issue), they are also measuring each limb, counting the number of cones, and determining the weight of the leaves on the entire tree. To help in learning how these trees grow, they are also coring into the heartwood to see how fast each layer of the tree grows.

Laboratory analysis on carbon, water, and nutrient ratios will tell how these trees have adapted to changing environmental conditions in the past.

Funded by the Save the Redwoods League, the plan is to measure the same trees every 3 years for, hopefully, the next 100 years. Save the Redwoods League has raised about \$250,000 and has a matching grant of \$500,000 to fund the work. CBTA was offered a chance to see the work in action and a representative spent the afternoon at the work site along with staff and board members from Save the Redwoods League, State Park staff, Sierra Pacific Industries and media representatives.

Work for this year in the Park and in the other 12 locations being studied has been completed with the exception of sensors monitoring temperature, humidity, rain, fog, light, wind, and barometric pressure. As each year progresses and more data is collected, many questions will be answered more completely including: "How big is a big tree?"

*R*est is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass on a summer day listening to the murmur of water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is hardly a waste of time

~ John Lubbock

Park Update

by Gary Olson, Superintendent I

It's that time of year to break out the shorts and BBQ's. Summer is finally here and the weather has been spectacular, especially in the Park. The long days and warm nights bring thousands of visitors from around the world to Calaveras and the greater Arnold area.

Thank you all for helping California State Parks survive during the worst financial year in the park's history. As of July 1, 2010, we are in a new fiscal year and we are hoping the budget crisis will soon be resolved. The governor has proposed to fund the parks out of the general fund at the 2008-2009 levels, minus 5%. But, until we have a signed state budget, the department cannot spend money and we will not know what our final budget will look like. With that in mind, we must continue to operate with current staff and reduce expenditures, yet maintain "normal" operations.

Thanks to CBTA for their continued support, we have been able to provide the staff and support necessary to continue to offer the interpretive programs, such as Jr. Rangers, cubs, campfire programs, daily guided walks, and many other activities throughout the summer.

Despite the worst fiscal year, Calaveras Big Trees has added approximately 300 acres to the Park with the generous help and support from Save the Redwoods League. The new acquired property will help maintain the Beaver Creek watershed.

The CCC's completed the ADA trail between South Grove parking lot and Beaver Creek parking lot. In addition, they were able to make improvements to the picnic facilities, open up the tree canopy for more light, and improve the overall experience for the visitors to this area of the Park.

We were able to fill the Heavy Equipment Operator position with Greg Rasmussen, a local resident, who will be a major component of improvements to the trails and roadways throughout the Park. Greg will be a major asset to the staff and you should start to see improvements to the fire roads, campgrounds, and roadways as soon as we are able to purchase materials.

CBTA also received a \$5,000 grant from California State Parks Foundation to help our trail volunteers program. The trail volunteers have been a tremendous help in opening the trails this year after a rough winter with lots of downed trees.

NOT BAD FOR SUCH A STRESSFUL YEAR! Once again, thank you all for everything you do to help and support Calaveras Big Trees State Park and CBTA.

Larson's Retiring

by Marcy Crawford

When Larry Larson retired from the United States Forest Service, he settled down in Arnold. However, retirement was short-lived because he soon found himself working as a volunteer with the Calaveras Big Trees Association. Larry served on the Board of Directors for many years, even doing a stint as President in the mid-1990's. He did the Association's taxes and handled all the finances when CBTA found themselves between bookkeepers.

He has always been a quiet, unassuming man who gets the job done. "Larry is a Financial Wizard," says Bruce Thomsen who worked closely with him during those early years.

His service didn't end there. Fifteen years ago he and his wife, Marilyn, took on the daunting task of going from handwritten membership records to putting it all on computer, building a data base that is still in use today.

Now the Larson's are retiring for a second time. Thank you for your dedicated service to CBTA. You will be missed!

Summer Intern

by Anne Saunders

Amanda Marceau is our summer intern. She will be graduating with a BS in Sociology and a minor in Environmental Science from Brigham Young University in December after which she hopes to attend graduate school in the environmental science area. She loves to travel and to play jazz on her clarinet. Amanda says she loves all the programs the Park offers but her favorite is "Creek Critters". As an intern, she is experiencing all aspects of Park operations as well as seeing how IGR and Columbia operate in comparison to Big Trees State Park. Amanda loves the "kindred spirits" she has met here and her goal is to learn and contribute to the Park.

In Memoriam

Norm Haseltine

See the History of the Park in New Book

A fascinating new book about Calaveras Big Trees State Park offers not only the story of the Park's history, but a look at it as well. Part of the Images of America series by Arcadia Publishing, the book, "Calaveras Big Trees", features nearly 200 photos, some dating to the 1850's, many of which have not been seen in generations.

This unprecedented collection of historical photos, tells the story of the discovery of the first giant sequoia, the Discovery Tree, right here in what is now Calaveras Big Trees State Park.

The book reviews the exploitation of the trees by early entrepreneurs, including the felling of the Discovery Tree, and the stripping of bark off the Discovery Tree and the Mother of Forest for displays across the country.

The book also covers:

The 42 years during which the big trees were owned by James L. Sperry and his various partners.

The early failed efforts to preserve the trees into a state or national park.

The sale of both the North and South Groves to a wealthy Minnesotan who made his money in lumber and mining.

The 31 years of Whiteside's ownership.

The sale of the South Grove to a lumber company.

The renewed efforts to create a state park.

The 1931 dedication of the Park.

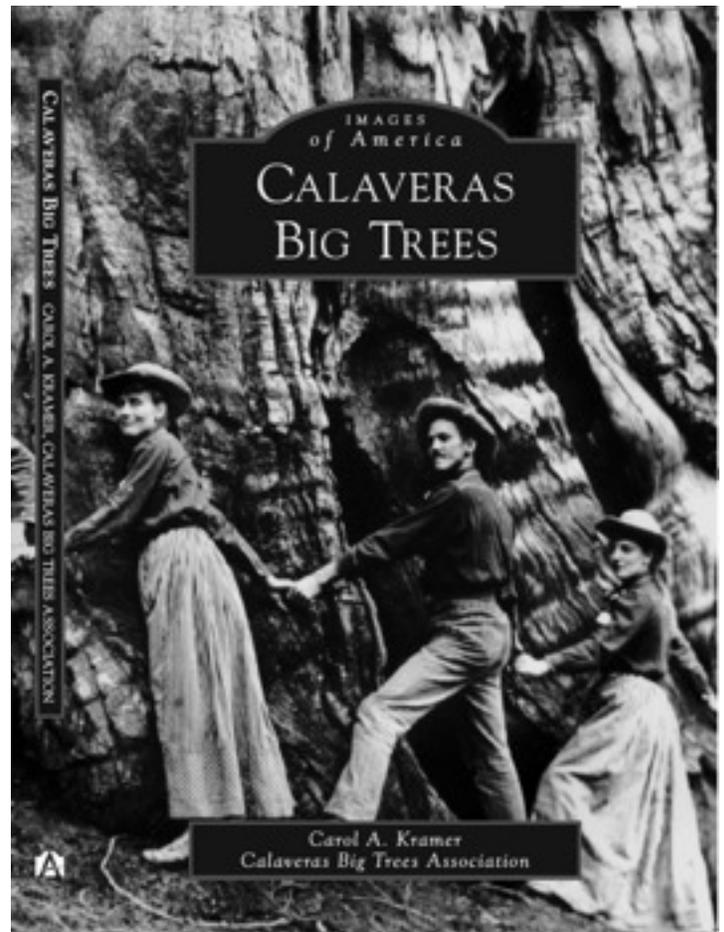
The efforts to regain and preserve the South Grove.

And, finally, the Park today.

The book was researched and written by Carol Kramer, a professional writer and history buff, and the Calaveras Big Trees Association. Board members Bruce Thomsen and Steve Stocking worked closely with Kramer to assist in identifying photo sources, providing historical information and reviewing the completed book draft. Park Interpreter Wendy Harrison also played a vital role.

The book will be on sale in early September for \$21.99 through the Visitor Center book store. Kramer will attend Family Day to discuss the upcoming book with visitors and

take pre-orders. A date has not yet been set for a book-signing event in September.



The Board of Directors is really excited about this new book, the first one in many years about Calaveras Big Trees," says Thomsen. "We think visitors will be very interested seeing the historical photos of the trees and learning the story of the Park's history."

 *The summer night is like a
perfection of thought*
~ Wallace Stevens



Betty MacPherson (c) was the grand prize raffle winner at the May Fashion Show CBTA Fundraiser. She is now spending her time trying to decide where to redeem her 8 day condo vacation - she has 3,500 choices from all over the world! Pictured with Betty are her daughter, Diane Kardas (r) and CBTA Board Member, Bunny Firebaugh (l), who drew Betty's winning ticket.

One of the many beautiful fashions modeled that day.



Choices were tough with so many great raffle prizes available.



A huge **thank you** goes out to Charlotte Hunt and her volunteer crew for the very successful Fashion Show Fundraiser held May 15, 2010 at Snowflake Lodge in Blue Lake Springs. One hundred six people attended this event, raising more than \$1,800 toward the educational and interpretive programs at Calaveras Big Trees State Park. Fundraisers such as this are so important in helping to maintain these programs and we thank all of our Association members and community members for their ongoing support which allows us to continue in our efforts to enhance the public enjoyment of our Park.

Welcome to CBTA.....

Cam Deen and Cathy Fitzpatrick
Arnold, CA

Carol Young and Family
Riverside, CA

Donn Marinovich and Sherrin Grout
Columbia, CA

Erin Abu-Rish
Seattle, WA

Fran Ford
Arnold, CA

George Leong and Family
Arnold, CA

Jana O'Connor
Portland, OR

Jane Presto and Joel Buettner
Davis, CA

Jeri and Gary Carson-Hull
Bear Valley, CA

Lauren Scott
Camp Connell, CA

Lesley Hager
Camp Connell, CA

Louise Carniglia
Murphys, CA

Maria Mouzes
Hughson, CA

Mark and Judy Diashyn
Camp Connell, CA

Tim and Chris Laddish
Sheep Ranch, CA

Tom and Suki Tutthill
Murphys, CA

Virginia Kiraly and Family
Menlo Park, CA

Writing/Sketching Seminar by Sanders Lamont

Naturalist, biologist, educator and artist John Muir "Jack" Laws will lead three seminars in the State Park in mid-August, sessions designed to help young people start and keep a daily illustrated field journal.

Laws is the author and artist whose "Laws Field Guide to the Sierra Nevada" is the standard for hikers and outdoor lovers. He is a wildlife biologist, and an Associate at the California Academy of Sciences, and has won awards for environmental education. He has been a featured speaker at the Yosemite Association and at Calaveras Big Trees State Park and throughout the Sierra Nevada.

The emphasis in all three sessions will be on developing awareness and skills in young people.

The first two-hour session will be Friday, August 13, at 6 p.m. Laws will hold a workshop designed for teachers, Park docents and naturalists who work with children. He will teach techniques for educators and interpreters to help young people observe and to draw nature. Bring your own sketchpad and pencils. A fee of \$10 will be charged for the evening session, and includes Park admission (normally \$8).

On Saturday, August 14, Laws will lead two free sessions for children and youth at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Sketch pads and pencils will be provided for students. For those coming from outside the Park for the sessions, the normal vehicle admission fee applies. All sessions will begin inside Jack Knight Hall in the Park and seating is limited.

Reservations are required for all the sessions. To pre-register contact Sue or Tami at the Park Visitor Center at 209-795-3840 Monday - Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., by August 6.

This is a great way for kids of all ages to learn the appreciation of nature. Laws, who spent six years backpacking the Sierra Nevada to research and illustrate the "Laws Field Guide to the Sierra Nevada", will share tricks and techniques for drawing birds, mammals, plants and landscapes. He will note signs of the season. He will also help attendees achieve the discipline and good habits that will help keep a journal going once begun. Here is the chance to learn to observe and appreciate the natural world in a whole new way. No drawing experience is necessary.

Scholarship Award by Marcy Crawford

The Calaveras Big Trees Association is proud to announce they have awarded the Emily M. Hewitt Memorial Scholarship of \$1,000 to Jennifer Robinson. Emily Hewitt was a California artist, author, teacher and docent whose

life found meaning when communicating her love of nature to others. She served as a docent at Calaveras Big Trees State Park where she communicated and interpreted the Park's natural, cultural and historical resources.

This year's recipient, Jennifer Robinson, is a student at Humboldt University who is majoring in Natural Resources Interpretation. Encompassing the art of outdoor environmental education, she wants to work with children in an academic setting at an outdoor science camp where she can help create positive behavioral changes in their lives.

At the Annual Meeting on June 12, Emily Hewitt's daughter Lauren gave the history of the Emily H. Hewitt Memorial Scholarship. Bruce Thomsen gave a biography of the winner, who was not able to attend the meeting. Lauren then presented CBTA with a beautiful collage depicting her mother's life that is now on display in the Visitor Center auditorium.

2011 Membership Structure by John Woodward

In view of the need to provide adequate funding for our many programs at Calaveras Big Trees, CBTA is establishing a new membership structure beginning with the 2011 calendar year. All current and renewing members will be advised by letter of this new structure in the Fall of this year.

In addition to a slight increase (\$5.00) in the individual and Family categories, the new structure will have additional categories, which will allow for increased donations and additional benefits.

The cut-off date for 2010 memberships will be September 30, 2010, and all new and renewal memberships received after October 1, 2010 for the 2011 calendar year will follow this new structure.

Live in each season as it passes,
breathe the air,
drink the drink,
taste the fruit
~ Henry David Thoreau

This 'n That.....

The Ninth Annual Art Show and Sale will be held in Jack Knight Hall from August 19 through September 6. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. The show features original art work, giclee prints and note cards created by 27 prominent local artists. A wine reception open to the public will be held on Sunday, September 5 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. CBTA receives a percentage of sales designated in support of their interpretation and environmental programs at Calaveras Big Trees State Park.

Family Day is fast approaching.....Saturday, August 21. This is always a very special and enjoyable day so be sure it is on your calendar.

A special thanks to Bruce Thomsen for the donation of sketch pads and pencils for our John Muir Laws sessions for children and youth.

Thank you all for remembering to use your S.H.A.R.E.S. card when shopping at Lucky/Save Mart Stores. CBTA receives 3% from your purchases and it doesn't cost you a cent! What an easy way to support our Association's goals!!

It has been a busy summer so far in the Visitor Center! Thank you docents, Association members, community members, and Park visitors for your continuing support.

Our first two seminars were very successful. The next two scheduled seminars will be equally interesting so be sure they are marked on your calendar. Michael Wurtz, Archivist of the John Muir Papers Collection, will be the presenter of the September 25, 2010 seminar on John Muir of the Big Trees. Dr. Harry Sharp, a retired professor from Cal Poly and Humboldt State University, will present our final seminar of the season October 2, 2010. Entitled Exploring Life at the Top, the program will be about coastal redwoods and life up in the canopy. Both are Saturday seminars beginning at 10:00 a.m. at Jack Knight Hall in the Park.

How would you like to be involved with a group of energetic, dynamic and interesting people? The Board of Directors of CBTA is looking for a group of volunteers to serve on a Fundraising Committee. The fundraising team will work closely with the Board to develop projects that raise funds to deliver high quality educational and interpretive programs at Calaveras Big Trees State Park. Some past fundraising events have included fashion shows, home tours and concerts. The Board is interested in new ideas and welcomes your talent - no experience necessary. Discover the hidden fundraiser in you! If we have piqued your interest, please call Sue Hoffmann at the Visitor Center at (209) 795-3840.

Q and A

When did Calaveras become a State Park?

The North Grove in 1931; the South Grove in 1954.

What importance have Giant Sequoia trees played in our national park system?

The first three national parks in California, and the second, third, and fourth parks created in the nation, were Sequoia, Kings Canyon and Yosemite. In all three cases, the presence of Giant Sequoia trees was a primary motivation.

What gives the Giant Sequoia their characteristic rounded shape?

Giant Sequoias continue to grow throughout their lives, no matter how large they become. However, for various reasons, eventually they no longer grow upwards, even though their branches continue to grow outwards.

What is the average snowfall in the Park?

About 120 inches.

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.

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

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