



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*

It's hard to believe Autumn is here. Seems like yesterday the Park was bustling with campers, kids and thousands of visitors on Family Day. Kudos to Marilyn Regan and Betty Woodward once again for their logistical engineering feat in putting Family Day together in August. Thanks also to members, Park docents, Park and administrative staff for making it such an outstanding event.

I am very pleased to announce that after a decade of fund-raising efforts CBTA has delivered a second \$250,000 check to California State Parks toward the long-awaited New Visitor Center. The Association has so far donated \$500,000 for the project which is now on track to open Spring 2012.



Vince Sereno, State Park Superintendent for the Calaveras Sector; Marcy Crawford; Michael Romo, Project Manager for the Northern Service Center/Acquisition and Development of the California Department of Parks and Recreation.

CBTA, in keeping with its Strategic Plan, has been busy partnering with local organizations to raise our profile in the community. As partners, we have contributed to the reprinting of the Greater Arnold Business Association's *Arnold Guide* and we were co-sponsors with the Ebbetts Pass ByWay Association for the September 11 celebration.

In September, author Carol Kramer was here for a book signing event for our new book *Calaveras Big Trees* by Carol Kramer and the Calaveras Big Trees Association. We combined the event with Michael Wurtz's seminar *John Muir of the Big Trees*. The book is now a best seller in the Visitor Center and may also be purchased online at our website www.bigtrees.org.

A few reminders for the upcoming winter months..... Saturday and Sunday, November 20 and 21, CBTA will hold its annual Holiday Open House and Sale; Thanksgiving weekend, the Warming Hut will re-open for the winter season and as soon as the snow falls the guided snowshoe tours will replace the 1 p.m. Saturday walks. On Wednesday, December 8, the annual Holiday Potluck will be held; and on Saturday, December 18, CBTA is holding a *Historical Ride through the North Grove* and a *Visit with Santa* at Big Trees. Fundraising Director Mary Stai has had a lot of fun putting this together and is hoping to make this an annual happening at the Park.

On behalf of the Calaveras Big Trees Association, I wish to extend our very best wishes to all of you for a wonderful Holiday Season.

One final note...Calaveras Big Trees Association formally endorsed Proposition 21, the California State Parks Initiative, this summer. By the time you read this, we will know whether or not the voters of California approved it.

Membership Renewal Time by John Woodward

As promised in the Summer 2010 edition of the Big Tree Bulletin, the new membership structure for 2011 is in place effective October 1, 2010. The new application brochure and return envelope were mailed to all active and past (2008 and 2009) members in mid-October.

Just in case you missed this mailing, we have enclosed a 2011 membership envelope with this issue of the Bulletin. Look on the inside of the envelope flap for pertinent information for renewing your membership.

I would like to thank the CBTA Membership Committee members Sue Hoffmann, Susan Ralya and Mary Stai for their help in designing, printing and distributing the new format.

Remember that CBTA is a private, non-profit, charitable 501 (c)(3) organization and your membership is tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

Your contributions as a member of **CBTA** are a big reason the Park has been able to offer the educational and interpretive programs that make a visit to Calaveras Big Trees State Park such a rewarding and exciting experience for visitors of all ages.

CBTA NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT!

Holiday Sale by Bunny Firebaugh

This year's annual CBTA Holiday Sale will take place on Friday, November 19, 2010 from 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. CBTA members, docents and state employees that shop that day will save 40% on most items and 30% off books. This is CBTA's way of saying "Thanks" for all you do for Calaveras Big Trees State Park.

The sale is open to the public on Saturday, November 20 and Sunday, November 21, from 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. CBTA members, docents and state employees that choose to shop those days will receive their standard discount.

Enjoy hot apple cider and homemade goodies and get great deals on all your holiday needs while supporting Calaveras Big Trees State Park.

A Santa's Express Donation Station will be in the Visitor Center during the sale, so please bring in your donations of non-perishable food items. Santa's Express makes holiday meals a reality for families that otherwise may not have one.

New Interpretive Center by Bruce Thomsen

Here we go again!! As this issue of the Bulletin goes to press, plans for construction of the new Interpretive Center at the Park are expected to go out for bid. You think – it's gotten this far before and nothing happened – actually it went farther along in the process. Bids were opened, a low bidder was selected and the state paperwork was being completed when it was decided to stop and alter the design with additional money from the (at the time) newly passed Proposition 84.

As new plans were being worked up with the additional money, the state stopped spending any money, including funds derived from bond sales, so the project came to a screeching halt.

Finally, after the first of the year, money was freed up to stimulate the economy and the bonds were sold so the project was put back on the drawing board.

The Association's involvement with this has been to assist with the design of the building, mainly the sales area and the office that CBTA employees will occupy and to contribute \$500,000 toward construction of the building. Half of the money was given to the state during the first bid go-around. At the Board Meeting on September 29, President Marcy Crawford handed a check to the state Project Manager, Michael Romo, to fulfill our obligation. There will, however, be needs for sales displays and some audio-visual equipment not covered by the state's financing.

If all goes according to the time line, there should be a ground breaking for construction of the building in mid-April 2011. Construction should be completed in the Spring of 2012. The next phase will be started with installation of the exhibits by a private exhibit designer, Split Rock Exhibits. The third and final phase is the completion of the sales area.

So we are looking to the Fall of 2012 to have a grand opening!! Keep your fingers crossed...we are all hoping for this long awaited 5700 sq. ft. Interpretive Center to be completed on time.

In Memoriam

Bill Bowman
Mike Perez
Jeff Bates

Family Day 2010 by Betty Woodward/Marilyn Regan

Thanks to all of the wonderful presenters, volunteers, Park staff and Rangers, this year's Family Day was a great success.

Over 500 cars came through the entrance station bringing approximately 1700 people into the Park. The mild weather was a perfect backdrop for all the folks enjoying activities and demonstrations, from reptiles to face painting.

Thank you to all the presenters who shared their interests and expertise with us: The Great Mother Lode Brass and Reed Band; Mike Sutton with his fabulous collection of reptiles; Rich Jones and his raptors; Earline and Stan Smith with Peppermint Creek Carriage Company; Fred Velasquez with Miwok Culture demonstrations; Nancy Longmore and Smoky Bear; Ebbetts Pass Fire and their fire truck; The Calaveras Fly Fishers; Denise Coombs of Star Gazers; the "Passing Thru" Blue Grass Band; Arts of Bear Valley; Katie Delgado, our artistic face painter; First Five with a great craft table for young ones; Wild Things; The Logging Museum; storyteller Jennifer Aguirre, and our local Search and Rescue.

Ebbetts Pass Loyal Order of the Moose Lodge provided wonderful barbecued hamburgers and hot dogs, along with a generous donation to CBTA. Pioneer Electric hung our

banner across Highway 4 in Arnold. Thanks also to Linkline Transportation, Arnold Subway sandwiches, Sierra Hills Market and Big Trees Market for all their help and support.

The crafts, organized and staffed by docent volunteers, including Carolyn Rector, Anita Fife and Carol Watson, provided all-day creative fun for hundreds of children. Cocked hat bowling once again was a big hit.

Calaveras Big Trees State Park, normally such a special place, was made even more special with so many families enjoying themselves. Thanks again to all of you who helped make this year's Family Day possible.



Welcome to CBTA.....

Cynthia Barton
Waller, TX

Dennis and Betsy Borruso
Castro Valley, CA

Jane Presto and Joel Buettner
Davis, CA

Barbara Hall
Pleasant Hill, CA

Sally Hoffmann and Family
Murphys, CA

Benjamin and Sylvia Johnson
Los Altos, CA

Carolyn Jones
Modesto, CA

Dirk, Julie and Clint Kessler
San Francisco, CA

McCoon Commercial Real Estate
Arnold, CA

Deb and Tom Parrish
Palo Alto, CA

Shelley Shakes and Family
San Ramon, CA

David and Vicki Stanley
Arnold, CA

Bruce Tallakson
Arnold, CA

Park Update

by Gary Olson, Superintendent I

Hello and THANK YOU! It has been a very busy summer at Calaveras Big Trees, coupled with reduced staff and no budget, but we survived!

Tough years like this one only demonstrate how beneficial the partnership is between CBTA and the State Park. Without the financial assistance from CBTA, we would not have been able to offer the quantity of interpretive programs this year, mainly due to funding for interpretive staff.

Many of you may have noticed that we have removed some trees from the Campfire Center area in preparation for the construction of the new Visitor Center. The bids should go out shortly, contract should be awarded in January/February, and construction should begin around April.

This project would not have been possible without the fundraising efforts and major financial support from CBTA and the community. Thank you to everyone who has worked on this project over the years.

On behalf of the trail volunteers, I would like to thank CBTA for their financial support towards the new trail crew tool trailer. We received a grant from the State Park Foundation and CBTA provided additional funds to make this project happen. The tools have arrived and we are waiting on the graphics to be installed on the trailer. Soon you will begin to see the trailer out in the Park as the volunteers help maintain the trails.

Without CBTA support, we would not have been able to make these improvements. So again, THANK YOU for everything that you have done.

Holiday Event

by Marcy Crawford

On Saturday, December 18, from noon to 3:00 p.m., the Calaveras Big Trees Association is presenting ***A Historical Ride Through the North Grove***. Join us for a Magical Journey in a Winter Wonderland among the Giant Sequoias. This is a holiday event for the whole family to enjoy. Docents will be dressed in 1850's attire; adults and kids will ride around the North Grove area in a horse drawn wagon past the Sentinel Tree, recreating the way 19th century visitors entered to the Park.

At the end of the ride have your picture taken with Santa in historic Jack Knight Hall and enjoy hot cocoa, hot apple cider and cookies. Bring your cameras! The hall will be decked out with twinkling lights, wreaths and a 15 foot tall tree festooned with all sorts of ornaments, candy canes and tinsel reminiscent of an old-fashioned holiday.

Purchase advance tickets NOW. \$8 adults and \$6 kids under 12. Tickets at the door will be \$10 adults and \$8 kids. Ticket price includes entry to Calaveras Big Trees State Park. You can buy your tickets online at bigtrees.eventbrite.com or call (209) 795-3840.

*Sunshine is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces up, snow is exhilarating;
there is no such thing as bad weather, just different kinds of good weather ~ John Ruskin*

This 'n That.....

Back by popular demand.....CBTA has decided to reprint its collection of recipes originally published in 2005. Look for the Cookbook at the Visitor Center and local businesses in time for that perfect holiday gift.

The Warming Hut will be opening again this season the day after Thanksgiving and will be open weekends through March. Because of its popularity, the hours have been extended from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Bring the family, and, after your hike, sit and warm yourselves around the fire and enjoy complimentary hot chocolate, cider or coffee.

As soon as there is enough snow on the ground, the Park's Saturday 1:00 p.m. guided snowshoe hikes will begin. Adult and kid snowshoes are available free on a first-come, first-served basis. Tours last one to two hours and may be cancelled in case of hazardous weather, trail or road conditions. Call the Ranger Station at 795-2334 or the Visitor Center at 795-7890 on Saturday morning to be sure the snowshoe walk is scheduled that day. In the meantime, the regular North Grove guided hike is still happening on Saturdays at 1:00 p.m.

Did you ever wonder where the wooden bowling alley we use every Family Day had its origins? In the 1850's, when tourists were flocking to the Grove to see the Big Trees, they stayed at Lapham's Big Tree Cottage. Visitors played Cocked Hat Bowling, a forerunner of the modern game, in the bowling alley built upon the downed Discovery Tree. A saloon was attached to the alley so players could find some refreshment after a few games. Although the Discovery Tree log is still there, the building was crushed by snow a long time ago.

About ten years ago, three of Calaveras Big Trees State Park docents, Gaylord Blackburn, Robert Brown and John Seaman, built a replica of the original Cocked Hat Bowling alley and set it up for Family Day. It was an instant hit. Robert Brown and John Seaman have since moved from the area, however, you can still see Gaylord Blackburn working at the Park wearing his tool belt and being Mr. Fix-It wherever he is needed.

*If we had no winter, the spring
would not be so pleasant
~ Anne Bradstreet*

FUN FACTS.....

CHICKAREES are very territorial and it is not uncommon for a single chickaree to claim one tree as its own, living in it for as long as three or four years and fiercely chasing off any competitors.

GIANT SEQUOIAS can only reproduce from seeds, unlike their cousin, coast redwoods, which more commonly reproduce from stump sprouts.

Who would win the race? **BLACK BEARS** can run 25 to 30 miles per hour, **GRIZZLY BEARS** 35 miles per hour and some published accounts say 41 miles per hour. By comparison, a fast **HIGH SCHOOL HALFBACK** can run a 40 yard dash in 4.5 seconds, which translates to 18.2 miles per hour.

RACCOONS do not hibernate but may, during very cold times, sleep for several days and soon be out in the night looking for edibles. They do not wash their food but sort out inedible parts with their sensitive hands, preferring to do this in water as it improves their sense of touch.

LADYBUGS do hibernate in spectacular mob scenes, usually in a hollow log or protected by leaves, needles and layers of snow. They deliberately add body fat by eating large helpings of pollen before joining the hibernating multitudes in a temperature that is fairly steady, however, cold.

In ancient times, both **DRUIDS** and **ROMANS** hung sprigs of mistletoe in their homes and places of celebration to bring good faith, peace and love.

The central material in a **HUMMINGBIRDS'** nest is spiderwebs. The webs are gathered by spinning them around their bill, to be wrapped around their nest later.

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The Board meets monthly the last Wednesday at 1:00 p.m. and is open to the public. Please call the office at 795-3840 to confirm meeting date, time and place.

The CBTA dues year is the calendar year. You may renew your membership by mailing a check payable to CBTA in the envelope enclosed with your Winter Bulletin or renew/donate through our website www.bigtrees.org. Your membership/donation is tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

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