



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 Marilyn Regan

Recently I found a speech that was written in June 1956 by Adrienne Bradley (as in the Bradley Grove). She was addressing a garden club and the speech dealt with the "saving" of the South Grove from logging and exploitation. The Calaveras Grove Association (forerunner of this Association) had recently been successful in purchasing the South Grove. Obviously she was very pleased that the grove had been procured as part of Big Trees Park. However, her message in this presentation was mixed. Her message clearly was one that stressed that our responsibility does not stop with the preservation of the Giant Sequoias. She cautioned against adding amenities that would distract from the reason for this special place.

That speech got me to thinking about the present. Our brand new Visitor Center will be opening sometime this summer. It is certainly a tribute to all the members and directors of CBTA who persevered over the past 15+ years to bring this to a reality. We are grateful to all of them, of course. While we celebrate our achievements, let's not forget that that building is meant to encourage exploration of what this Park has to offer and not to replace that experience. The goal of inviting visitors into the new center should be to peak interest in exploring the natural wonders that are here.

Since my last column we have had another successful Winter Wonderland, thanks in great part to Bunny Firebaugh and Cathy Fitzpatrick. Our first ever member fund drive was very successful thanks to Tom Jones, chair of the Long-Term Funding Committee. In addition to Winter Wonderland, Jack Knight Hall was open weekends during

December and January so that visitors could see that wonderful building in all its holiday splendor!

Now we are gearing up for a very busy and successful "high" season with interviews for summer interns. These interns are supported by funds from CBTA and generous donors.

There are several events in the planning stages, which you can read about in this Bulletin. Saturday of Memorial Day weekend is the date for a concert given by the Mother Lode Woodwind Quintet in Jack Knight Hall. Several seminars are scheduled for the Spring as well as the repeat of a weekend workshop given by Nancy Muleady Mecham. There will be ice cream socials, and, of course, Family Day.

This year we are planning our First Annual "Signature" Event, which we anticipate will be an annual fund-raiser. The "kick-off" will be a murder mystery dinner, "Murder in the Big Trees Hotel", and will happen on September 21. Our Event Committee, chaired by Mara Naber, has been busy.

This is my last column as your President. I want to say that I have enjoyed the opportunity to act in this capacity. Much of the enjoyment has come from working with a wonderful and dedicated Board of Directors. You can find them listed on the outside of this bulletin.

If you would be interested in joining us, please contact the chair of the Nominating Committee, Marcy Crawford, 795-6692 and the committee will be happy to talk with you. We especially need persons with experience in marketing and finance.

A Remarkable Lady with a Vision.....

by Tom Jones

For a girl born in rural south-central Kansas, Betty Ann became a "woman for all seasons" early in life. Her family moved to Bakersfield when she was 5 and she immediately found her love for the outdoors. Her father pulled strings to get her out of a home economics class in high school so she could take a mechanical drawing class. During WWII she worked as a draftsman for Union Oil Company in order to save money to attend university at prestigious Mills College.

After marrying Dick in 1948, they moved to Stockton where she taught pre-engineering classes at San Joaquin Delta College until retirement. Betty Ann, Dick and their



Betty Ann Prescott: 1924 - 2011

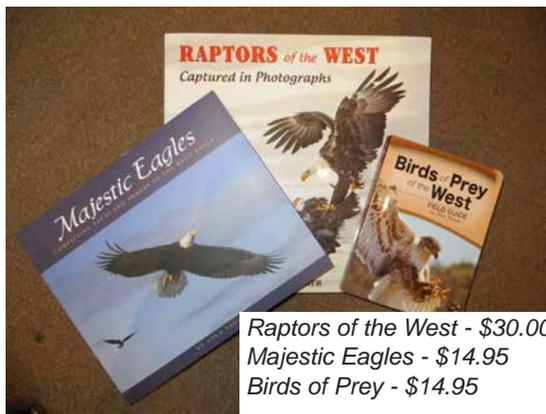
three sons camped every summer throughout the United States and Canada and found Bear Valley in 1966, thus beginning a 45 year love affair with the Ebbetts Pass Corridor. The Prescott family had camped in Big Trees State Park since the 1950's so Betty Ann's relationship to the Park was an inspiration for her. She assisted in the survey of the South Grove, led group tours of the North Grove and served on the Board of CBTA for a number of years. Always curious, she had two books checked out of the library just a week before she died.

In May 2011, Betty Ann informed Marilyn Regan and past President Marcy Crawford that she wanted to will part of her estate to the Calaveras Big Trees Association.

As Betty Ann did, leaving a legacy to a non-profit organization you care about, such as the Calaveras Big Trees Association, is easier than you think. One of the simplest ways is to make a gift through your will. You can also leave a specific amount or a percentage of your estate, or you can leave the remainder of your estate after you have provided for loved ones. Remember that all contributions made to the Park through CBTA stay in the Park. For more information regarding your estate planning objectives, contact Marilyn Regan or myself at cbtvc@goldrush.com or call (209) 795-3840.

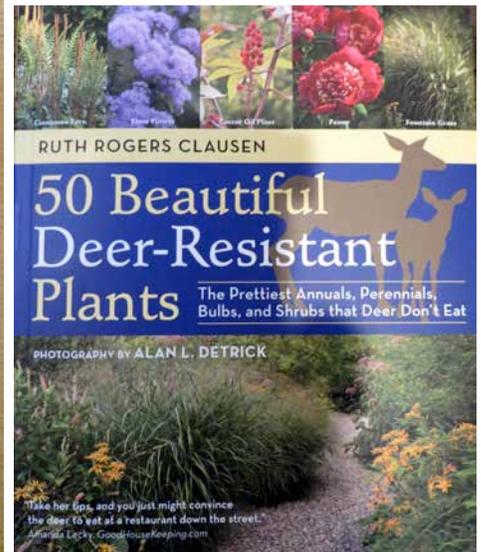
New Items Available.....

Check out our new Spring items for sale in the Book Store.....



Raptors of the West - \$30.00
Majestic Eagles - \$14.95
Birds of Prey - \$14.95

Our new Bottle Sling is made from recycled fibers produced from recycled plastic bottles. It carries 12 to 40 oz. bottles and has a strap pocket for pen, lip balm, etc. and a pouch for phone, ID and other essentials.....\$14.00. Perfect companion to our popular non-toxic BPA-free reusable water bottle.....\$2.00..



Deer-Resistant Plants - \$19.95

Park Update

Gary Olson, Superintendent 1

Where did the winter season go? Spring is rapidly approaching and soon visitors will be coming to see the wildflowers, dogwood's bloom, and stroll through the Park, exploring everything we have to offer.

The Visitor Center building is nearly complete and soon the interpretive displays will begin to be installed. As we eagerly await the opening of the new facility, we will need to plan on how we will be able to better serve the visiting public. As we transition into the new building, there may be some changes, including asking for docents and volunteers to help with greeting guests, interpretation in the museum room, and helping in the sales area. As always, it is your friendly, helpful, enthusiastic attitudes that make the experience better and more enjoyable for the visitors. Thank you all. Stand by for the opening date.

The department has undergone many changes since the story of the hidden monies. There have been many new people appointed to key positions, including a new Director who was tasked with leading the department into the future, making changes to the accounting and reporting processes, and hopefully a restoration of the public trust.

There will be a few projects this summer, including the building of a dump station facility, and relining of the sewer pipes in the North Grove campground area. These are critical infrastructure projects and the impact to the public should be minimal. Parking may be affected in the summer along the dump station road. More to come on the start dates.

Remember to enjoy the Park, have fun, and explore the world around you. See you on the trail.

Upcoming Events

Eleventh Annual Welcome New Members and Welcome Back Docents Brunch.....It is time for our Annual Brunch in the Jack Knight Memorial Hall. It will be held on Saturday, April 13, 2013 at 11 a.m. CBTA will provide a delicious brunch for all new members and new and returning docents. At this time, you will have the opportunity to meet the rangers, Park staff, CBTA Board Members and staff, new members and old friends. Also you will be able to find out about and sign up for all the programs that will be happening in the Park this year.

Please RSVP ASAP to Bunny Firebaugh by e-mail to lovetheforest@goldrush.com or by phone at (209) 795-4305. Hope to see you all there.

Natural History of the Sierra Nevada.....Calaveras Big Trees Association is again sponsoring an in-depth look at the Natural History of the Sierra Nevada in Calaveras Big Trees State Park. Hikes of two miles, demonstrations, talks, and audio-visual programs will include the topics of astronomy, animal adaptations, Sierra geology and weather. Also to be explored will be the mixed conifer forest, wildflowers, and birds, Giant Sequoias and fire ecology, people through time, and the history of the National Park Service and one ranger's story. A special field trip to the largest sugar pine in the world will be included.

The Program Leader is Nancy E. Muleady-Mecham, Ph.D. Nancy is a retired National Park Ranger, which included working 14 seasons in Sequoia National Park. She is the author of several books and recently completed a Fellowship at the University of Arizona. She is an avid backpacker, having solo hiked the John Muir Trail, the Haute Route in the Alps, and has led many seminars from backpacking to bears to geology. This program will be held July 12, 13 and 14 at a cost of \$150. For further information, contact the Visitor Center at (209) 795-3840.

Family Day 2013.....Be sure and mark your calendars for August 17. That's the day we celebrate Family Day this year. And this year is VERY SPECIAL!! Family Day is now 25 years old. We plan to recognize the event and those who worked so hard to make it the successful event it has become. Steve Burg, Sally Williams and Vaughn Smith are heading the event this year and we are counting on all of the docents to help to make this the most significant Family Day ever. Watch the notice boards and your e-mails for sign up opportunities and current news.

Mysterious Doings at Calaveras Big Trees State Park.....Save the date! "*Murder at the Big Trees Hotel*" will be enacted at an elegant dinner at Big Trees State Park on September 21. You will be able to collect clues to the mystery from local merchants prior to the event. Watch for further details.

Did you know

... there are 91,000 Giant Sequoia seeds in one pound?

May Concert

by *Bill Minkel*

The Calaveras Big Trees Association invites you to a fundraiser concert, ***Winds in the Sequoias***, featuring the Mother Lode Woodwind Quintet on Saturday, May 25, 2013 at 4 p.m. in Jack Knight Hall. This is a rare opportunity to hear selections from 200+ years of the chamber wind quintet repertoire in the intimate rustic setting of Jack Knight Hall among the giant redwoods.

The quintet's members are Janet Telford, flute, Jane Buzzard, oboe, Hank King, clarinet, Bill Minkel, horn, and Gail Buzzard, bassoon. All are long-time members of the Mother Lode Friends of Music Orchestra in Sutter Creek and often perform with various groups throughout the foothills and the central valley. Joining them for a special performance will be Anne Saunders, soprano, and Sue Hart, piano, performing the beautiful "Das Alphorn" for soprano, horn, and piano by Richard Strauss.

Janet Telford, flute, holds degrees in music from San Francisco State and Penn State Universities, is the past Executive Director of the Sonora Bach Festival, and was a founder and long-time President of the San Jose Chamber Music Society. Jane Buzzard, oboe, received her Bachelor and Master degrees in Music Education at the University of Northern Colorado. She is recently retired from teaching instrumental, vocal and classroom music at Soulsbyville Elementary School. Hank King, clarinet, is a member of several small performing ensembles, and is currently playing with the Folsom Symphony. He retired after 36 years of teaching music at Amador High School. Highly regarded as a conductor, he conducted the Mother Lode Friends of Music Orchestra in its early years, and he currently conducts the Mother Lode Youth Symphony and the Great Mother Lode Brass and Reed Band which performs at Family Day in the Park. Bill Minkel, horn, studied music at San Jose State University and for over four decades in the Bay Area played with many local groups including West Bay Opera, Scholar Opera, Nova Vista Symphony, Schola Cantorum, Bayshore Lyric Opera, Monterey County Symphony, Palo Alto Winds Quintet, and many others. Gail Buzzard, bassoon, received a Bachelor's degree in both music education and bassoon performance and her Master of Music in bassoon performance at the University of Northern Colorado. Gail is currently retired from teaching music at Summerville Union High School.

Anne Saunders, soprano, is a classically trained soprano, having studied voice on both coasts. She has soloed with numerous Bay Area groups and has performed concerts

throughout the foothills. Sue Hart studied piano at University of the Pacific and has provided accompaniment for Sierra Repertory Theater and other local groups. She and Anne have performed several benefit concerts for CBTA. In addition to classical music, they have fun performing popular and jazz genres as well.

The event will include hors d'oeuvres, fine local wines, and a silent auction for items which include a cruise package, a private alpenhorn concert at Lake Alpine after dinner at the Lake Alpine Lodge, a complimentary clock repair from Somewhere in Time, gift baskets, and numerous other silent auction gifts.

Tickets are \$25.00 which includes entrance into the Park if preordered. Buy tickets online at woodwind.eventsbot.com. If any tickets are available at the door, the price will be \$25.00 which will not include the Park entrance fee. Call the CBTA office (209) 795-3840 for assistance.

Verna Johnston Prints

by *Steve Stocking*

Verna Johnston is an author, photographer and a founding member of CBTA. This past year she donated copies of her books (*Sierra Nevada* and *California Forests and Woodlands*) and her photographic prints to the Calaveras Big Trees Association. Verna asked that the funds raised from this sale be used to help with the furnishing of the Association's area of the new Big Trees Visitor Center now under construction. All of the books were sold and all but three of the prints. Slightly over \$1,000 has been raised. The remaining matted prints may be seen in the auditorium of the current Visitor Center.

In Memoriam

*Joe Anderson
Jim Boldt
Dr. Clark Burton
Jack Rosen
Mary Dutton Smith
June Stumbles*

Seminar Schedule for 2013

by *Vida Kenk*

In keeping with the educational and interpretive mission of CBTA, four free public seminars are scheduled for this calendar year. Topics include tales told by trees, predatory animals, and subalpine ecology. The September seminar is the California premier of a remarkable video produced by the Oregon Cultural Heritage Commission in collaboration with forestry services of both Scotland and the United States of America, which presents the fascinating life of David Douglas, an intrepid explorer in Oregon, California, and Hawaii, who first described over 200 species of American plants.

All seminars are on Saturday from 10 a.m. until noon in Jack Knight Hall and are free and open to the public. Park admission is \$8.00/car. If you have ideas for future seminar topics and speakers, please contact Steve Stocking or Vida Kenk.

April 27: ***Our Past Through the Trees, an Introduction to Dendrochronology.*** Join CBT docent and Biology Professor Nancy E. Muleady Mecham as she introduces you to trees, how they grow in nature, and what they can tell us about the past when tree rings are studied. Doc Nancy completed a Fellowship in Dendrochronology at the Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research in Tucson, Arizona and is an expert on Giant Sequoia Ecology. Nancy had a 27-year career as a United States National Park Service Ranger, is a Fulbright Scholar, and has extensive travel and teaching experience. In July, she will be conducting a three-day workshop at Calaveras Big Trees State Park that was enthusiastically received last summer. For further information, contact the Visitor Center at (209) 795-3840.

May 4: ***Large Carnivores of Big Trees State Park.*** As a follow-up to the very popular seminar on bears that he presented last year, Dr. Paul Ustach of San Joaquin Delta

College is returning to provide a look at large carnivores found in the Park and the Central Sierra Nevada, focusing on coyote, bobcat, mountain lion, and wolverine. Dr. Ustach will discuss their natural history, paying particular attention to their evolutionary adaptations for finding, catching, and killing prey. Dr. Ustach will also review the latest available research on these animals.

September 28: ***Finding David Douglas.*** Video presentation by Lois Leonard, Historian/Producer with the Oregon Cultural Heritage Commission. This is the first film ever produced about David Douglas (1799-1834), the remarkable botanist from Scotland who explored western North America in the 1820's and 1830's. The Douglas Fir and Douglas Squirrel commemorate his contributions. Filmed over the course of four years on the locations where David Douglas actually went, this video has been accepted for future broadcast on PBS.

October 12: ***75 Years of Change in Yosemite Subalpine Vegetation Plots.*** Dr. Jerry Smith from San Jose State University presents information gained from on-going ecological research in Yosemite. You will see photographs of the same sites that have been repeatedly surveyed. Such long-term research allows scientists to document subtle changes in this fragile subalpine ecosystem. You don't have to be a scientist to help in conducting this study; volunteers are welcome. An earlier report on this research was presented by Dr. Smith at Yosemite National Park.

Did you know

... that in North America there are 6 different types of Raptors? (eagles, owls, hawks, falcons, osprey and kites)

Welcome to CBTA.....

Donald Anctil, Murphys, CA
Darla Barton, Sonora, CA
Stephanie Carlson, Camp Connell, CA
L. E. Duquette, Camp Connell, CA
Kathleen Farmer, Angels Camp, CA
Nancy Gardner and Bill Eppler, Arnold, CA
Dennis Graves, Murphys, CA
Dexter Hardcastle, Angels Camp, CA
Mary Kelly, Arnold, CA
Marilyn Nord, Arnold, CA

Valborg Pace, Livermore, CA
Larry Perry, Arnold, CA
Guy and Susan Pollak, Arnold, CA
Douglas Snodgrass, San Mateo, CA
Richard and Carole Swan, Murphys, CA
Kate Szaky, Walnut Creek, CA
Nancy Ward, Arnold, CA
Betty Watson, San Diego, CA
Dan Webster, Sonora, CA
Heidi and Tom Wright, Murphys, CA
Angie Wulfow, Sonora, CA

The main forest community present at Calaveras Big Trees State Park is called the Sierra mixed-conifer forest community. It is an interrelated group of plants and animals that occurs between about 2,000 and 7,000 feet in elevation in the Sierra Nevada mountain range.

Some of the trees found along the Ebbetts Pass Corridor are described below to help you in identification.

Sugar Pine (*Pinus lambertiana*): Botanist David Douglas named the Sugar Pine in 1827 to honor British pine expert Aylmer Bourke Lambert. Historically, Sugar Pine grew to enormous size as the largest species of the pine genus. The largest known Sugar Pine in the world (209 feet tall and 11.5 feet in diameter) is near Dorrington. Trees may reach an age of 400 years. Not only are they the tallest of the pines, but their cones are the longest and may reach a length of more than 20 inches. As David Douglas wrote, the cones looked “like sugar-loaves in a grocer’s shop” dangling from branch tips high above the ground.

Ponderosa Pine (*Pinus ponderosa*): This pine has a long clear trunk and a high short open crown. It averages 32” in diameter and 165’ tall at maturity. Their needles are in “bundles” of three and are stout, dark to yellow-green and about 7” in length. Their bark is orange-brown in color and arranged in large plates, similar to puzzle pieces and has the fragrance of vanilla or butterscotch. Female cones average 4”, with males cones being smaller. The female cones, like all pines, require two growing seasons to mature. The tips of the cone scales are armed with short, sharp, outcurved prickles.

Whitebark Pine (*Pinus albicaulis*): This pine lives on the higher rocky summits from approximately 7,000 to 10,000 feet. It is a 5-needled conifer with 1.6-2.8” large dark purple cones when immature. They do not open when drying but are easily broken open by the Clark’s Nutcracker bird for their seeds. Because it is a stress tolerant pine, its hardiness allows it to grow where other conifer species cannot. Thus, it is very significant in maintaining snow pack and regulating runoff.

Mountain Hemlock (*Tsuga mertensiana*): The Mountain Hemlock also grows in the higher elevations, usually above 6,000 feet up to 10,000 feet. It is an evergreen conifer growing 66 to 130 feet tall. The bark is thin and square-cracked or furrowed and grey in color. The crown is a neat slender conical shape with tilted or drooping tips. Flat,

single needles are 1/2 to 3/4 inches in length and range from dark green to blue green in color. It has small cylindrical cones 1 to 3 inches long, reddish brown in color.

Lodgepole Pine (*Pinus murrayana*): The Lodgepole Pine is known for its long, slender trunk and high, thin crown. The average tree is 24” in diameter and 70’ high. The needles are in bunches of two and vary in color between yellow-green and dark green. They average 2” in length and are usually twisted. Bark is very thin, rarely exceeding 1/2”, which tends to reduce the tree’s resistance to fire. The bark is not rigid, but with scales that are brown to gray and loosely attached.

Quaking Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*): Aspen trees grow fairly straight and become clear of lower limbs over time. Their tall trunks have smooth pale bark, scarred with black. The glossy green leaves, dull beneath, become golden to yellow in Autumn. They are sometimes called Trembling Aspen because their leaves tremble in a light breeze due to their flattened petioles (leafstalk). It is the most extensive native range of any tree in North America and can rapidly recolonize after disturbances, such as fire.

California Black Oak (*Quercus kelloggii*): This is a deciduous tree growing in height from 30 to 80 feet and 5 feet in diameter. Acorns are relatively large and its deeply lobed leaves are typically 4 to 8 inches long. They can live up to 500 years of age. It is a critical species for wildlife and may be the most important for wildlife food and cover in our forests. Cavities provide den or nest sites for owls, woodpeckers, squirrels and black bears. It provides needed shade for deer, bear, and livestock. Its acorns are popular with black-tailed deer, Western gray squirrels, woodpeckers, and orioles. The parasitic mistletoe which commonly grows on this oak produces berries which attracts birds as well.

Pacific Dogwood (*Cornus nuttalli*): This tree is deciduous and long-lived, usually growing to heights of 20 to 30 feet, but can reach heights of 65 feet in optimum natural sites. The dogwood tree blooms in May and/or June and can be found in elevations from 2,500 to 6,000 feet. In Autumn, the leaves turn pink to red. The small flowers are in a dense cluster surrounded by large white bracts (a modified leaf). It is able to photosynthesize in just one-third full sunlight so is often found growing in partial to full shade conditions of mixed forests. Sapsuckers, woodpeckers, tree swallows, vireos, thrushes, and evening grosbeaks are just some of the birds attracted to these trees for food and habitat.



Black-Headed Grosbeak



Black Bear Cubs



Acorn Woodpecker



Rufous Hummingbird



Pacific Dogwood

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Black Bear (Ursus Americanus)

I N T H E P A R K



Western Tanager



Douglas Squirrel



Black-tailed Deer

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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.

Visit us.....

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