



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 Vida Kenk

This is a time of transition. Overhead, the Pleiades, Taurus and Orion have replaced Scorpio in dominating the night sky. As the days shorten in our northern hemisphere on Earth, the seasons are turning from an extended and colorful Fall to the more subdued hues of Winter.

At Calaveras Big Trees State Park, we are making the transition from the old Visitor Center to the new facility, which has been many years in the building and planning process. The new building is already open to Park visitors. We are exploring how best to use this new space, with a very different retail area, completely new exhibits and video in the museum, and a new classroom/meeting space available in the staff building. This transition will continue for months, as we learn what works well and what needs to be modified. The official grand opening of the new center will occur during Memorial Day weekend 2014, as part of the year-long 150 year anniversary of the founding of the California State Parks. Do you know what was the very first California state park? **

Several CBTA winter activities start around Thanksgiving. After a walk in the Park, come into the Warming

Hut and enjoy a free hot drink while you warm up at the fire. The Hut will be open from noon to 4:00 p.m. on weekends and holiday periods starting on Thanksgiving Day, November 28. Last year, the days after Thanksgiving were the busiest time at the Warming Hut, with 758 visitors on Friday followed by 623 on Saturday.

Another option is to visit beautifully decorated Jack Knight Hall, which will be open on Friday, November 29, and following weekends from noon to 2:00 p.m. Be sure to buy your tickets online for Winter Wonderland, to be held on December 27. This joyful family event has sold out quickly in previous years.

Whatever you choose to do, check out the new Visitor Center and enjoy your park!

*** Yosemite was the first state park. President Lincoln signed the law on June 30, 1864, ceding Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove to California as a state park. Yosemite National Park was created in 1890, but California retained control of some portions. At the urging of John Muir, Congress passed a law in 1906, which President Teddy Roosevelt signed, returning the Valley and the Grove to the federal government and unifying the area as a national park.*

Partners with a Purpose *by Tom Jones*

Many of our readers knew Jim and Carmen Hickling when they were docents at Calaveras Big Trees State Park in the 1980's and 90's. They were dedicated CBTA members and Big Trees docents whose sole purpose was to help make the park a more enjoyable destination for all visitors.



Carmen was born Carmen Kottke in Mankato, Minnesota in 1910 and Jim in San Leandro in 1915. They met while ice-skating in San Diego during World War II and married in January 1945. They moved to San Leandro while Jim worked for Shell Oil in Emeryville and Carmen was an enthusiastic and creative kindergarten teacher. They moved to Houston with Shell Oil in the early 1970's. Their daughter, Jean Marie, who was born in 1947, lost a seven year battle with cancer and died in 1975.

When Jim retired they moved to their newly built home in Arnold. We lost both Jim and Carmen in 2008.

Jim and Carmen became heavily involved in wildflower projects, so much so, that they were honored in 1992 by the California Native Plant Society as CNPS Fellows for their extraordinary accomplishments in the understand-

ing, appreciation and preservation of California native plants. They extensively photographed park wildflowers, assisted our resource staff in identification and created a wildflower slide show that is still in use today. Marie and I had the pleasure to spend time with Jim and Carmen when we were both having picnic dinners at the Beaver Creek day use area.

Jim and Carmen made significant financial contributions to Calaveras Big Trees, donating funds for a memorial grove in the South Grove, providing support for the new Visitor Center and creating the Hickling Memorial Intern Fund.

As Jim and Carmen did, leaving a legacy to a nonprofit organization, such as the Calaveras Big Trees Association, is easier than you think. One of the easiest ways is to make a gift through your will. You can also leave a specific amount or a percentage of your estate or leave a 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 the CBTA office at cbtvc@goldrush.com, 209-795-1196 or email me directly at tmjones@goldrush.com.

This article was created with the help of Don and Anne Hickling, Joan Perry and Wendy Harrison.



Happy Holidays to Everyone!

by Gary Olson

The new Visitor Center had a soft opening on November first, and things are progressing very well. The grand opening will be the Memorial Day weekend of 2014. We hope to show a new preview video at the museum shortly and a new introductory video of the Park for the grand opening.

The sewer pipe relining project has been completed, but there are still some areas where the lines have failed that were only recently discovered and not in the project. The dump station project has been completed and should reopen for public use in April or May.

Many of you may have noticed the thinning project in North Grove. The work is progressing, and we will be burning the slash piles as soon as we have burn clearance from the fire department. The forest looks healthy and vibrant with the low vegetation removed. In spring you will probably notice an increase in bird activity.

With the winter weather coming soon, please be careful in the snow and ice. The new Visitor Center plaza may

be icy or slippery, so use caution and notify a staff person if you see a potential problem.

Thank you to all our winter volunteers who brave the weather to help the visitors have a great experience in the Park.

Shop and Share!

Did you know that you can raise funds for the park interpretive and educational programs when you shop for groceries? Just get a S.H.A.R.E.S. card at the Visitor Center and present it to the cashier as you check out at Savemart, Smart Foods, FoodMart or Lucky.

Sierra Hills and Angels Food markets use the Escript program. To enroll, you can download the Escript application form on the CBTA website, fill it out, and submit it on your next visit to those stores, or you may sign up in the store. CBTA earns up to 5% on your purchases.

Members who participate in this program have already raised over \$1,300 so far this year. Many thanks to these CBTA supporters!

Holiday Sale!!! Save the Date!!!

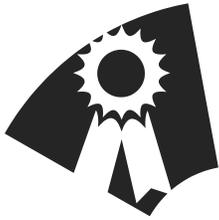
This year's annual CBTA Holiday Sale will take place on Friday, November 22, 2013, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., in our new and improved Visitor Center. CBTA members, docents and State of California employees who shop that day will save 40% on most items and 30% off books. This is CBTA's way of saying "Thanks!!" for all you do for Calaveras Big Trees State Park.

The sale is open to the public on Saturday, November 23, and goes through Sunday, December 1, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with all items 20% off for everyone, including CBTA members, docents and California State employees who choose to shop on those days.



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 a holiday meal a reality for families that otherwise may not have one.



Our Park Honored!

By Vida Kenk

At their annual “Innovations in Tourism” awards dinner on October 29, the Calaveras Visitors Bureau (CVB) honored Calaveras Big Trees State Park with the award for the most innovative attraction in the county. The awards were voted by the membership of CVB, which consists of businesses and organizations within Calaveras County. The Park was cited for the excellence of our interpretive programs, the Warming Hut that provides free hot drinks and a roaring fire to visitors, and the beautiful new Visitor Center.

In recent years, CBTA has been reaching out to local businesses to develop mutually beneficial relationships. Many local businesses donate goods and services to our fundraising events, for which we are grateful. This special award signifies that business owners recognize the importance of Calaveras Big Trees State Park in attracting visitors to Calaveras County. The CVB maintains an information facility on Main Street in downtown Angels Camp. Please visit them or their website www.gocalaveras.com for information as to events in the county.

Giant Sequoias by the Numbers

- A limb of a giant sequoia can be over six feet in diameter and over 100 feet long.
- If the “Big Stump” or Discovery Tree had not been cut down, it might well have been 32 to 34 feet in diameter today. The largest living tree is the General Sherman Tree in Sequoia National Park measuring a mere 30 feet in diameter.
- There are 75 named groves of Giant Sequoia trees along the western slope of the Sierra Nevada from Placer to Kern counties.
- The average Giant Sequoia cone has about 200 seeds, and an average tree has about 7,000 cones. So, a large Giant Sequoia could well have 1,400,000 seeds in its branches.
- Since Giant Sequoia seeds are small and flat, they easily float through the air as far as 580 feet from the tree.
- One chickaree may claim a Sequoia as its own, fiercely chasing off the competition during its life of three to four years.

Source: Giant Sequoias—150 Gee Whiz Facts (Docent training material)

Welcome to CBTA.....

Tad Folendorf, Angels Camp CA

Roger Hooson, Berkeley CA

Dana Dee and James Carragher, Murphys CA

Lew and Lynn Dawson, Dana Point CA

Catherine Hourcade, Stockton CA

Ken Smole and Jane Conway, Mill Valley CA

Marilyn Larson, Sunnyvale CA



Photo by Alan Beymer

Winter Wonderland

by Bunny Firebaugh

CBTA presents our annual Winter Wonderland on Friday, December 27, 2013, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., regardless of weather, in the beautifully decorated Jack Knight Hall. Horse drawn wagons will be driven around the meadow, and there will be children's crafts, music and more. We will serve hot cocoa, hot apple cider and cookies in the cozy atmosphere of Jack Knight Hall.

Tickets

Advance tickets are \$12.50 for adults and \$8.50 for children under 12. Tickets include entrance into the park if purchased online.

Tickets are available online at: winter2013.eventsbot.com

Tickets at the door, if available, will be \$15 for adults and \$10 for children, plus \$10 park entrance fee.

We sold out last year so be sure you get your tickets early.

Preview Trailer Debuts in New Visitor Center

by Marcy Crawford

A new Calaveras Big Trees State Park Visitor Center film is in development, and the Calaveras Big Trees Association is excited to be a part of it. In the meantime, a six-minute "preview trailer" has been prepared and will be shown in the new auditorium.

Vida Kenk, Marilyn Regan and Marcy Crawford from CBTA attended video production meetings with representatives from the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Northern Service Center, DPR Calaveras District, California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) Academic Technology and Creative Services, and Backcountry Pictures, Inc.

Academy Award nominated director David Vassar and producer Sally Kaplan of Backcountry Pictures created the preview trailer. They are also working on the longer video program for the visitor center in a co-production with CSUS Academic Technology and Creative Services.

The 12-minute film will focus on providing visitors with information as well as inspiration to spur viewers into becoming stewards of state parks. The permanent video will premier at the grand opening celebration of the Visitor Center slated for Memorial Day weekend 2014, as part of the 150-year anniversary celebration of California State Parks.

Our Business Partners *by George Leong*

As I wrote in the last newsletter, I wanted to interview a business member each quarter so that you could get to know them better. They are ardent supporters of the Park, but you almost never get to see or talk to them.

Ever notice that as the seasons change, some parts of your body seem to hurt more? I know some of that is about age, but maybe it's about all the summer activities you've been doing finally catching up with you. So what do we do about it? In my case, I went to my doctor who referred me to Acorn Physical Therapy. Coincidentally, turns out that Acorn Physical Therapy is a CBTA business member. Owners Mike and Jenna Lee are longtime members of Arnold and active supporters of the community.

Mike was born in Oakland, California, and raised in San Leandro and Twain Harte. Jenna was born in Chicago and raised in Oakland. They both attended UC Berkeley. Mike and Jenna met in Pinecrest in 1971 and married in Tuolumne City in 1972. They lived in the Bay Area for about five years and made the move up to Bear Valley in 1977. In 1983, they moved down to Arnold to be closer to their practice. They started Acorn Physical Therapy in 1982 and were located in Kline's Meadowmont Fitness Club for 27 years. When Kline's closed, they moved the practice across the highway to their present location. In their off hours, they like to play golf and generally enjoy most all of the year-round recreation activities provided in the area.

The Acorn Physical Therapy philosophy is to have a vested interest in getting people back to life goals and life dreams after injury. In addition to the physical therapy practice, they also operate an active life training called Athletes In Motion to assist anyone in achieving new dreams and new goals. Their practice includes training students in high school and preparing them for college sports or college students to compete in Division I, II and III sports. They also prepare students for the military. Some of their athletes have achieved national and international sports success. They are holistic in their approach to therapy and training, combining the physical rehabilitation with the mental adjustments needed in overcoming fears that may result from injury.

Many of their clients are CBTA members and State Park employees. They believe that the Park is a major draw to the area and businesses in the area want to partner with the Park. We are a community and each part of the community makes a difference. They believe that CBTA and the State Park foster a sense of belonging.



Time to Renew *by George Leong*

Fall is in the air! Fall is the time of the year when the trees turn beautiful bright oranges, reds and yellows. The oak leaves and pine needles float gently to the ground, which reminds me that I have work to do in the spring! It also reminds me that daylight savings is ending and the days will be getting shorter. It is time for nature to begin her process of shedding the old and prepare for her renewal in the spring.

Speaking of renewing, it's also the time of the year to renew your CBTA membership. We, the CBTA Board of Directors, would like to thank you all for your generous support of the Park this past year. Your continued support of the Park through your membership shows your commitment to keeping and preserving the Park for future generations.

This past year your membership has contributed to a number of successful events. The most exciting event this past year has been the "soft" opening of the new Visitor Center. It is quite an improvement over the old Visitor Center. Other events include the Spring concert in May, Family day in September and the very successful Murder Mystery in October. Don't forget the Winter Wonderland event in December. Last year it was a success and no doubt will be a success this year. The free summer interpretive programs like the very informative Saturday seminars, Creek Critters adventures, the Junior Rangers and Cubs activities, guided walks and the winter programs like the guided snowshoe walks and the warming hut are all made possible through your continued support.

Enclosed in this newsletter is a form for you to renew your membership via snail mail or you can renew online at www.bigtrees.org.

Mystery Theater a Success

by Mara Naber



Calaveras Big Trees Association (CBTA) hosted a Murder Mystery Dinner on September 21, 2013, for a sell-out crowd of 100 in Jack Knight Hall at the Park. Dinner guests were entertained with live music by the Stargeezers from the Bay Area. Chef Jami Saul from Hillbillies Restaurant in Murphys catered the delicious meal from appetizers to dessert, and Zucca Winery contributed and poured wine for our guests.



The Mystery Dinner was set in 1876, intended to honor Augustus T. Dowd, the “discoverer” of the Giant Sierra Sequoia. Tim Laddish from Sheep Ranch crafted a mystery that included historical figures such as John Muir, James Sperry, Samuel Heron and a surprise visit

from Snowshoe Thompson. There were villains and tree supporters, drama and humor, all portrayed by Park docents and staff.

Many dinner guests dressed in period costumes and became enthusiastic participants, responding with cheers or hisses to the action taking place on stage. Twenty guests solved the mystery accurately and received a picture of themselves taken with the cast.

Dinner guests were invited to visit local business sponsors in the weeks preceding the dinner and gather verification of their visit. Nineteen percent of our guests went out and visited sponsors from Angels Camp to Arnold. The average number of stores visited was 16.8 out of the total 24 sponsors! Most sponsor businesses felt that it was a great success in attracting customers to their stores. One business owner found that, out of 11 visitors, 10 were new to her shop. Others commented that “it was well worth it just to get people inside”.



The CBTA thanks our many sponsors who contributed to our Murder Mystery in numerous ways. This Murder Mystery dinner was a major fundraising event for 2013. Funds raised will help support high quality educational and interpretive programs at Calaveras Big Trees State Park. Without the support of our community, it would be very difficult for CBTA to provide Park programs, such as Junior Rangers, and special events, such as Family Day and Winter Wonderland.

Photography by Jim Bearden

C
B
T
A

Calaveras Big Trees Association
P.O. Box 1196
Arnold, CA 95223-1196
Return Service Requested

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
PERMIT NO. 41
ARNOLD, CA 95223

CBTA Board of Directors:

Vida Ken	President
Sanders Lamont	Vice President
George Leong	Vice President
Bunny Firebaugh	Secretary
Bruce Tallakson	Treasurer
Marcy Crawford	Bulletin
Steve Stocking	Policies/Seminars
Tom Jones	Long-Range Funding
Mara Naber	Fundraising
Marilyn Regan	Director
Paul Prescott	Director

Big Tree Bulletin:

Claudia Beymer	Editor
Sue Hoffmann	Circulation/Mailing

CBTA Staff:

Tami Rakstad-Schaner	Retail Manager
Sue Hoffmann	Admin/Retail Assistant
Debbie McGee	Bookkeeper

The Board meets monthly the last Wednesday at 1:00 p.m., and the meeting is open to the public. Please call the office at 795-1196 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.....

Web Site.....www.bigtrees.org

Facebook.....Calaveras Big Trees Association

Twitter.....CBTAssociation