



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve
Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve
Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Jan., Feb., Mar., 2011
Volume 25, No. 1

What's Blooming?

Mike Kelly

With our early and frequent rains, we're already into a good blooming season. Winter currant (*Ribes indecorum*) is in full bloom now. In Peñasquitos Canyon you can see it on the slope under the I-15 bridge over the Trans County Trail near where Kara Knott Way comes down from the Scripps Poway Freeway. Currant is also at the west end of the Preserve, south side trail, on the slope above the south side of the trail, about 0.75 – 1 mile in from the parking area.

Mission manzanita (*Xylococcus bicolor*) is in full bloom too, showing off its delicate bell-shaped flowers. Best place to see it massed is on the ridge trail on the Montana Mirador Trail along the eastern hills of Black Mountain Open Space Park. Manzanita can also be seen along the Miner's Loop Trail, in scattered locations in Peñasquitos Canyon in and near the chaparral and on Carmel Mountain.

California sunflower (*Encelia californica*) is blooming in some places, including our Cactus wren restoration site along the Luzardi Loop trail on the south side of Luzardi Creek in the Santa Luz grasslands, just a few hundred yards west of the Camino del Sur bridge crossing over the creek.

California spine bush also has an early bloom underway. See it



Winter currant (*Ribes indecorum*)
photo by Mike Kelly

on the slope above the north side trail in Peñasquitos Canyon, especially between Peñasquitos Creek trail access west to the waterfall. Be sure to smell it (carefully, it has spines!). I love its sour/sweet smell.

Closer to the coast, the Sea dahlia (*Coreopsis maritima*) is just beginning its blooming period, as is the white flowering and rare lilace, wart-stemmed ceanothus (*Ceanothus verrucosus*).

(see *Blooming* p. 7)

Highlights Inside

Hikes and Volunteer Opportunities	2-3
Canyon Crest Troops Nature Walks	4
New Restoration Season Starts	4
Fund Appeal Update	4
Trail for All People Status Report	5
In Wilderness is the Preservation of the World	5
Cobblestone Trail Work	6
Membership Application	7
Don't be left out!	7
Friends' Directory	7
Holiday at the Rancho	8

2010 in Review

Brian Swanson

Yet another banner year has flown past! The Friends supported the Preserve in a variety of ways. We led a variety of well attended walks, including tracking walks, natural history walks, vernal pool walks, owl walks and Scout walks.

Thanks to our hike leaders Don Albright, Diana Gordon, Mike Kelly, Linda King, Mary Lueking, Pat Watkins, Will Bowen, Brian Swanson, Les Braund, David Robertson, Arne Johanson, Rick Botta, and Lee Kircheval. So many people have been introduced to the wonders of the Preserve through their thoughtful walks.

Our Outreach Coordinator, Pat Watkins, ably assisted by Friends' Board members Mary Lueking, Mike Kelly, Anne Harvey, and Brian Swanson, designed an exciting new membership brochure. The group is now working on a wonderful new trail map that includes the trails in all our canyons.

Under the guidance of Friends' Conservation Chair Mike Kelly, two big, ongoing restoration projects were worked on. These included restoration planting near the waterfall and planting cactus and plants typical of a coastal sage scrub habitat for the endangered coastal cactus wren in the Santa Luz grasslands of Black Mountain Open Space Park.

The tracking team presented a number of day
(see 2010, p 7)

Upcoming Hikes and Volunteer Opportunities

All of our hikes are free. There is a fee for the Tracking survey classes. See below for details.

Wear good trail sneakers or boots and sun protection (hat or sunscreen or both), and bring plenty of water. Call 858-484-3219 for more information.

Repeating Events

Every Saturday and Sunday:

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa María de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Park Driveway off Black Mountain Road between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **Thomas Bros. p. 1189 (C7)**

Every month:

Wildlife Tracking Walk

Sat. 8 a.m. - 10 p.m. Jan. 8, Feb. 12, Mar. 12, Apr. 9, May 14, June 11, July 9, Aug. 13, Sept. 10, Oct. 8, Nov. 12, Dec. 10

Everyone is invited to join an SDTT tracker for a free, easy introductory tracking walk to learn about the art of tracking and the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Look for tracks, scat, and further evidence that coyotes, bobcats, raccoon, deer and other wildlife have been in the area! Information at www.sdtt.org. Meet at the Historic Adobe Ranch House on Canyonside Park Drive and Black Mountain Road, Rancho Peñasquitos. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**

Volunteer Trash Pickup Lopez/Peñasquitos Canyons

Sun., 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Jan. 23, Feb. 27, Mar. 27, Apr. 24, May 22, June 26, July 24, Aug. 21, Sept. 25, Oct. 23, Nov. 27

Trash pickups in Lopez & Peñasquitos Canyon. Volunteers needed! Community service credits available. Meet at Lopez Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. Call Ranger John Garwood at 858-538-8066 for more info. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (J3)**

Every two months:

Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee

Thurs., 6:30 p.m. Jan 13, Mar 10, May 12, July 7, Sept. 8, Nov 10

Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. Meet in the

Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Park Driveway, Rancho Peñasquitos. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**

Peñasquitos Canyon Citizens Advisory Committee

Thurs. 6:30 p.m. Jan. 20, Mar. 17, May 19, July 14, Sept. 15, Nov. 17

Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the Historic Adobe Ranch House on Canyonside Park Driveway and Black Mountain Road, Rancho Peñasquitos. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tues., 7 p.m. Jan. 4, Mar 1, May 3, July 5, Sept. 6, Nov. 8

Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Park Driveway, Rancho Peñasquitos. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**

Quarterly:

Beginning Tracking Wildlife Surveys

Sat. 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Jan. 15, July 16

This class prepares you to participate in surveys that monitor the wildlife in major open space preserves and other critical areas. Topics include basic recognition and identification of animal tracks and other signs, introduction to track patterns and gaits, wildlife journaling, an overview of the survey protocol, and more! Classroom time is supplemented with plenty of time in the field ("dirt time").

This training is required for survey volunteers and also serves as a prerequisite for the Intermediate Tracker/Naturalist class. After this training, students are expected to participate in at least one SDTT wildlife survey. Preregistration is not required for individuals, but requested for groups. The \$25 fee includes a number of valuable reference materials. Dress prepared to spend time outdoors and bring a sack lunch and water.

Also, please bring your calendar to sign up for transects. For more information:

760.715.4102 or www.sdtt.org. Meet at the Historic Adobe Ranch House on Canyonside Park Driveway and Black Mountain Road, Rancho Peñasquitos. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**

Intermediate Tracking for Wildlife Surveys

Class: Wed. 7-9 p.m. Mar. 16, Sept. 21
Field: Sat. 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Mar. 19, Sept. 24

This class expands on the beginning training and includes recognition and interpreta-

Maps of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and Black Mountain Open Space Parks are available at www.penasquitos.org

tion of tracks and sign on a variety of surfaces. There are exercises in speculative tracking, aging, soil dynamics, debris interaction, trailing, mammal skull and dental identification, and tracking on various substrates. Additional gait interpretation is covered. Cost: \$50 (\$10 discount for SDTT or Friends members). Pre-registration required. Go to www.penasquitos.org/classes.htm for more information or e-mail lppt@cox.net to register.

Advanced Tracking Wildlife Surveys Class: Wed. 7-9 p.m. May 18, Nov. 16

Field Sat. 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. May 21, Nov. 19

The Advanced Class continues to develop your tracking proficiency. Subtle details of track identification are presented. Techniques and exercises for trailing animals through various surfaces will enable you to stay on the right track. Drills and exercises will help expand your knowledge base, point out areas to work on, and give you a preview of the tracker evaluation process. Cost: \$50 (\$10 discount for SDTT members). Pre-registration required. Go to www.penasquitos.org/classes.htm for more information or e-mail lppt@cox.net to register.

Hikes & Volunteer Opportunities

January

Cactus Wren Restoration Volunteer Project

Sat. Jan. 1, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Help the Friends restore coastal sage scrub habitat for the endangered Coastal Cactus wren in the Santa Luz part of Black Mountain Open Space Park. Eligible for community service hours credit. New meeting place: cul-de-sac off the east side of Camino del Sur, about 1 mile north of its intersection with San Dieguito Road in the Santa Luz development area. Groups and individuals welcome. Groups please RSVP! Call Mike Kelly at 858-342-8856 or email mkelly1@san.rr.com for information, maps, and directions.

Geology Walk through Time

Sat., Jan. 8, 9 - 11 a.m.

Walk through time with geologist Don Albright. Hike will take you through hundreds of millions of years of geology, visit the waterfall, and see a rare fossil. Wear good footwear for steep trail. Meet at Lopez Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa, one long block east of Camino Santa Fe. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**

Miner's Loop Trail Walk, Black Mountain Open Space Park

Sat., Jan. 15, 9 - 11 a.m.

Join hike leader David Robertson to hike the Miner's Loop trail on the north face of Black Mountain Park. Meet at the parking staging area at 14850 Carmel Valley Road, about 1/4 mile east of the intersection with Black Mountain Road in Rancho Penasquitos. **Thomas Guide p. 1169 (E7)**

Friends' Open Space Volunteer Project

Sat. Jan. 15, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Help the Friends restore recently acquired open space lands in Rancho Penasquitos. Eligible for community service hours credit. Meeting place to be determined. Groups and individuals welcome. Groups please RSVP! Call Mike Kelly at 858-342-8856 or email mkelly1@san.rr.com for more information, including maps and directions.

Vernal Pool & Flower Walk on Carmel Mountain

Sat. Jan. 22, 9 - 11 a.m.

Tour one of San Diego's newest nature preserves with Diana Gordon. Learn about rare Southern maritime chaparral. See spring flowers and learn about vernal pool lifecycles. Meet at 4730 Fairport Way at Shorepoint Way in San Diego. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (C2)**

Lopez Homestead History Hike

Sun. Jan. 30, 3 - 4:30 p.m.

Hike into Lopez Canyon with Will Bowen, PhD, to learn about the Old Lopez Homestead - a small turn-of-the-century dairy farm. Visit the orchard, the Old Road, and see the remains of the barn, house, and milking station. Discover the importance of the Lopez Family in early San Diego history. Meet at the West end Parking Staging area. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (E7)**

February

Geology Walk through Time

Sat., Feb. 5, 9 - 11 a.m.

Walk through time with geologist Don Albright. Hike will take you through hundreds of millions of years of geology, visit the waterfall, and see a rare fossil. Wear good footwear for steep trail. Meet at Lopez Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa, one long block east of Camino Santa Fe. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**

Cactus Wren Restoration Volunteer Project

Sat. Feb. 5, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Help the Friends restore coastal sage scrub habitat for the endangered Coastal Cactus wren in the Santa Luz part of Black Mountain Open Space Park. Eligible for community service hours credit. New meeting place: cul-de-sac off the east side of Camino del Sur, about 1 mile north of its

intersection with San Dieguito Road in the Santa Luz development area. Groups and individuals welcome. Groups please RSVP! Call Mike Kelly at 858-342-8856 or email mkelly1@san.rr.com for information, maps, and directions.

Vernal Pool & Flower Walk on Carmel Mountain

Sun, Feb 13, 1 - 3 p.m.

Tour one of San Diego's newest nature preserves with Diana Gordon. Learn about rare Southern maritime chaparral. See spring flowers and learn about vernal pool lifecycles. Meet at 4730 Fairport Way at Shorepoint Way in San Diego. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (C2)**

Friends' Open Space Volunteer Project

Sat. Feb. 19, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Help the Friends restore recently acquired open space lands in Rancho Penasquitos. Eligible for community service hours credit. Meeting place to be determined. Groups and individuals welcome. Groups please RSVP! Call Mike Kelly at 858-342-8856 or email mkelly1@san.rr.com for more information, including maps and directions.

Carroll Canyon History Hike

Sun., Feb 27, 3 - 4:30 p.m.

Hike out with Will Bowen, PhD, to explore little known Carroll Canyon. Learn about Pueblo Lands, the coming of the railroad, and the ranch farms of Bonafacio Lopez, Pierre Bovet, Andrew Cassidy, and Max Dietrich. See large trunked oaks and an old cattle tunnel. Meet at the corner of Scranton and Carroll Canyon Road. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (E7)**

March

Cactus Wren Restoration Volunteer Project

Sat. Mar. 5, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Help the Friends restore coastal sage scrub habitat for the endangered Coastal Cactus wren in the Santa Luz part of Black Mountain Open Space Park. Eligible for community service hours credit. New meeting place: cul-de-sac off the east side of Camino del Sur, about 1 mile north of its intersection with San Dieguito Road in the Santa Luz development area. Groups and individuals welcome. Groups please RSVP! Call Mike Kelly at 858-342-8856 or email mkelly1@san.rr.com for information, maps, and directions.

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Sat., Mar. 5, 9 - 11 a.m.

Walk through time with geologist Don Albright. Hike will take you through hundreds of millions of years of geology, visit the waterfall, and see a rare fossil. Wear good footwear for steep trail. Meet at Lopez Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira

Mesa, one long block east of Camino Santa Fe. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**

Vernal Pool & Flower Walk on Carmel Mountain

Sat. Mar 5, 9 - 11 a.m.

Tour one of San Diego's newest nature preserves with Diana Gordon. Learn about rare Southern maritime chaparral. See spring flowers and learn about vernal pool lifecycles. Meet at 4730 Fairport Way at Shorepoint Way in San Diego. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (C2)**

Loop Hike from Camino Ruiz Trailhead

Sun., Mar. 6, 8 - 11 a.m.

Join naturalist Mary Lueking for a moderately paced 3.8 mile look hike. As we go down the trail to the canyon floor, we should see many wildflowers and other native plants and animals as we pass through varying habitat zones. Please bring water and wear shoes suitable for portions of the trail that are steep and uneven. Approximate elevation loss/gain is 200 feet. Meet at the trailhead near the entrance to Camino Ruiz Park in Mira Mesa. (11489 Camino Ruiz). **Thomas Guide p.1209 (B1)**

Carson Crossing to Sycamore Crossing Loop Hike

Sun., Mar. 19, 8 a.m.

Join naturalist Linda King on this moderately paced loop walk to the waterfall, Sycamore Crossing and Carson's Crossing. Meet at the kiosk near 7107 Park Village Road at Celome Way, Rancho Penasquitos. **Thomas Guide p. 1188 (J7)**

Tadpole and Fairy Shrimp Hike

Sun. Mar. 20, 4 - 5:30 p.m.

Hike out on Carmel Mountain with Will Bowen, PhD, to look for tadpoles and fairy shrimp in the road pools and puddles formed by the early Spring rains. Meet at the Carmel Mountain Trailhead, 4730 Fairport Way at Shorepoint Way. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (C2)**

El Cuervo Adobe History Hike

Sun., Mar. 27, 4 - 5:30 p.m.

Hike with Will Bowen, PhD, into the west end of Penasquitos Canyon for an intimate look at the ruins of the "El Cuervo" Adobe. Learn about the Alvarado family who lived there. We will also take a short side hike to see Norwood Brown's old cattle roundup corral. Meet at the parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (C/D5)**

CANYON CREST TROOPS NATURE WALKS

Anne Fege

[Anne Fege, a local biologist and lifelong Girl Scout, volunteers her time to lead nature walks for local Girl Scout troops. She was kind enough to share some of their experiences in our open spaces. Contact her at afege@aol.com or 858-472-1293]

Girl Scouts are exploring the nature near their schools and homes! Troops from Canyon Crest Service Unit have discovered lizards, a snake, coyote scat, aromatic sage, a waterfall, footprints of raccoons, and places to run fast.... all during their troop meetings and within their own neighborhoods!

Brownie troop 8730, (leader Jennifer Disser) walked into Black Mountain Open Space from Hilltop Community Park, discovered a bee colony in an abandoned car part—and watched it from a distance! Daisy, Lily, Anna and Alena wrote in their thank you note, “On the hike, some of our favorite things were touch-smell-listen, and the camera game.”

Daisy troop 8734 (leader Ellen Dunn) were fascinated by the water

skippers in Penasquitos Creek, explored a grave site, smelled black sage leaves, learned to identify poison oak, saw coyote scat and a lot of horse scat and were surprised by a bird flying out of the nest she had built in an interpretive sign box!

Junior Troop 8438 (leader Susie Jennings) took a long walk in Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve. Lauren led the “What do you see?” activity (describing objects without seeing them), and everyone took a close look at the leaves on the native plants that help them survive the dry summers. The girls greeted Brownie Troop 8057 at the bridge over Penasquitos Creek, as they began their “bridging” ceremony there.

Brownie Troop 8810 (leader James Patterson) hiked to the waterfall from the trailhead at the end of Park Village Avenue. They crossed over Penasquitos Creek on a bridge, and then at the waterfall stepped from one rock to another to cross back again! One of the Brownies is allergic to poison oak, and now she (and all of them!) can identify it! They discovered that some like to walk fast and others slow, and they met up with an equestrian group that introduced them to their horses.

Daisy Troop 8913 (leader Rachel Clay) explored the park next to Sundance Elementary School, each girl noticing and touching one of the big trees and then giving a show-and-tell to the others about “her” tree.

Brownie Troop 8002 (leader Lisa Gibson) walked from Sundance Elementary School along two canyons and discovered they were standing under the Highway 56 and bike path bridges! They saw a four-inch-long snake that looked like a worm, two lizards, coyote scat with only fur remaining, and footprints of raccoons in a small puddle. Leader Lisa’s account: “We hiked down an incredibly steep hill despite the fact that at least three of the girls were very scared and stated quite clearly that they weren’t going to do it. To make a long story short, they all did it without help as I refused to hold anyone’s hand, but was happy to coach and encourage all the way down. It was an awesome confidence builder for many, and a great opportunity to be a team. I was thrilled with the encouraging spirit of all the girls.”

Brownie Troop 8171 (leader Angela Rogers) walked up the trail at Black Mountain Open Space starting from Hilltop Park. They could see four islands in the ocean and then the sunset as they sang taps at the end of the troop meeting.



New Restoration Season Starts

On December 11, 2010, volunteers from boy Scout Troop 648 (Mira Mesa), Westview High School, the California Native Plant Society and the Friends did a great job of clearing the invasive mustard weed from our two-year-old restoration site at the waterfall in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. They also watered the existing plantings and planted additional natives. We’ll extend the planting into the newly cleared area after the first of the year.

The volunteers included Cindy Burrascano, Edward DiBella, Julie Erazo, Karl & Heidi Garrett, Mike Kelly, Nikki Kirchner, Alex, David & Larry Paul, Maddi Rasmus, and Haley Shesser.

Fund Appeal Update

Pat Watkins

Many of you recently received a letter from Friends President Brian Swanson telling of our recently acquired parcels and the opportunities the Friends have to obtain grants to help with the natural habitat restoration of those properties. We asked for your support to help raise funds to meet the conditions of those grants.

Your donations will go toward creating brochures and flyers to introduce the Friends to the new neighbors acquired with the parcels and for the materials for new educational kiosks to be built by Eagle Scouts for the new parcels.

We appreciate all the responses we have received and will publish a full list next month of all the generous donors.

For more information regarding this, and other Friends activities, please contact Brian Swanson at 760-739-5451.



Members of the Canyonview Elementary School Roots and Shoots Club helped Ranger Gina Washington on the Del Mar Mesa putting rocks around vernal pools that are on trails to protect them from bikes, equestrians, and hikers.

Trail for All People Status Report

Jas Arnold

The Trail for All People was featured in an infomercial submitted by Black Mountain Ranch LLC to the Union Tribune. This article, shown within the New Homes section, appeared in the Saturday, December 4 edition:

Black Mountain Ranch LLC has deeded approximately two acres to the city of San Diego. Located within Black Mountain Open Space Park, these two acres will accommodate Arnold's Trail for All People, a 1,000-foot-long, paved loop that will be five feet wide and gently sloped to accommodate wheelchair users. The trail will be integrated within an existing 25-mile network of trails that wind their way throughout Santa Luz, Del Sur and the slopes of Black Mountain.

Other outstanding progress news is that I now have the updated title report and signed deed which I will deliver to the city of San Diego's hands on Monday, Dec. 13, 2010. Currently a dirt path, the Trail for All People next will go through an entitlement process and then fundraising for trail construction. The trail may be completed as soon as Spring, 2012.

"In Wilderness Is the Preservation of the World"

Elberta Fleming

This quotation from John Muir is on the original t-shirts of the Los Peñasquitos Preserve. Although Los Peñasquitos cannot compare with the grandeur of John Muir's Yosemite, it has been a pristine small gem surrounded by metropolitan growth. Its pockets of wilderness offered beauty and serenity, where one could shed the pressures of survival in today's hectic existence. John Muir would have appreciated this small oasis of wilderness.

In the preface to his book, *Our National Parks*, published in 1906, John Muir wrote:

In this book, made up of the sketches first published in the Atlantic Monthly, I have done the best I could to show forth the beauty, grandeur, and all-embracing usefulness of our wild mountain forest reservations and parks, with a view to inciting the people to come and enjoy them, and get them into their hearts, that so at least their preservation and right use might be made sure.

In his book, he also explains his philosophy:

Thousands of tired, nerve shaken over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity. Awakening from the stupefying effects of the vice of over-industry and the daily apathy or luxury they are trying the best they can, to mix and enrich their own little ongoings with those of nature, and to get rid of dust and disease.

Man, too, is making many far-reaching changes. This most influential half-animal, half angel is rapidly multiplying and spreading, covering the seas and lakes with ships; the land with huts, hotels, Cathedrals and clustering city shops and homes, so that soon it would seem, we may have to go further than Nansen to find good sound solitude.

What John Muir wrote almost a century ago has come true with the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. This gem of wildness has changed within the past year. There are still small pockets of serenity: but very soon this rare oasis will no longer become the "natural preserve" that people of San Diego fought for two decades to save. The park will be completely surrounded with dense housing projects, and many roadways, creating easy access to trails to once-wild areas.

[Editor's Note: For those of you that are newer members of the Friends, Elberta Fleming was one of the original founders of the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. This article was originally published in the Friends' newsletter in March, 1989. There have been many changes made to the Preserve since this article was written, and many people have worked long and hard to make sure those changes were for the good of the preserve. As a result of all that effort, the Preserve has grown, is not completely surrounded by dense housing, and is still a rare oasis of wilderness to be appreciated by all that visit.]

Cobblestone Trail Work

Erik Basil

[The following article is based on an email Erik Basil of the Peñasquitos Canyon CAC and Multiuse Trails Coalition. Thanks to the MTC and the San Diego Mountain Bike Association for their hard work! Sempra Energy has recently donated a truck load of cobbles from a nearby job site that will be used in future trail work. Thanks to them too! Edited by Mike Kelly.]

The joint trail work day, conducted by the Multiuse Trails Coalition and SDMBA on December 18th, 2010 went very well. We had 19 hard workers in addition to our "turbo-Ranger," Gina Washington. That's about 15 more than the MTC Trail crew has had out there in the last few years for our annual maintenance and, once the decision was made to forego the work on Bridges Trail due to muddy conditions on the canyon floor, this meant we had a lot of manpower to put onto Cobbles.

We took things a step beyond the MTC's annual maintenance, went large on a few sections and made significant upgrades to the trail that will benefit the habitat and all visitors to our preserve. It will be at least a few weeks before these trails are dry enough for responsible types like those reading the LPCP-CAC site to ride or hike upon them, but when you do, you will find a trail that's been very nicely improved, both for the benefit of visitors and the preservation of the habitat.

I realize that many folks aren't familiar with the Cobblestone Trail that's on the north side of the canyon near the waterfall. In the past I described the erosion controls, sight-line trimming and illegal trail closures done in coordination with Ranger Washington and her crew of volunteers. So, if you can think of Cobblestone from the top, as I do, here's a quick rundown of what we did:

• *Top section, Straightaway:* re-installed drain above the

switchback; recobbled section for water control;

• *Upper Switchback:* installed replacement drain in middle of curve; recobbled section, repaired large berm and drain at apex; re-opened blocked culvert drain under trail;

• *Section two, below Kiosk:* repaired 4 large desilting/drain sections; repaired/enlarged diversion drains above the straight run to the Ess-turn;

• *Section 3, straight run to Ess Turn:* filled and covered the rut developing in the center section (Ranger Washington gets huge kudos for this one) returning it to 2004 conditions (!); repaired the cross-trail drain; repaired the diversion drain above the Ess;

• *Section 4, below the Ess and above Red Ruts:* repaired the "flat surface drains"; installed new drain at split rail fence/horse trail repair;

• *Red Ruts:* repaired cross-trail drain; repaired secondary diversion; filled and contoured lower rut section (this was a big job that returned this to 2004 conditions or better);

• *Descent to Queens Trail:* rebuilt mid-run diversion drain and obstructed the non-trail drain exit; scraped and filled the sandy ruts leading to Queens Trail; installed new diversion drain above turn;

• *Queens Trail to Cobbles 2* (human-power trail): repaired diversion drains below turn; raised trail bed below turn; enlarged drain below turn; repaired "mud bog drain" at the next Ess, obstructed base of closed trail/road to west;

• *Closed trail intersection to Duck Pond* (human-power-trail): repaired flat surface and bog area overflow drains;

• *Duck Pond* (multiuse): removed 36" or more of brush along top of dam, to re-expose the former trail bed and relocate the trail from the edge of the dam face. (Huge job).

• *Other Trimming:* sight-line trimming from upper Ess-turn down to first sec-

tion of Lower Cobbles at the split to hike/bike v. hike/horse.

In other words, a whole lot of work in four hours! As both MTC and SDMBA typically do, most of the disturbed soil areas have been "camouflaged" to maintain a narrow-trail appearance and much of what was done will be very hard to see (other than where drains are obvious) by the time the trails dry out in a few weeks. One notable exception is that the trail across the duck pond dam is much wider, relocated away from the slope of the dam face and should develop some shade canopy in Spring -- you'll sure notice that!

Best of all, perhaps, is that we got this work done before the big rains we're supposed to get this week -- the size and aggression of the water controls on this trail are primarily to protect the trail from fast-moving water like we'll have in the rainy parts of the season. If we're lucky enough to be free from traffic on the trail while it's muddy, the work we've done will keep Cobblestone in great condition for the coming year and enable us to maintain it simply with the small crew for the next several runs.

After the Spring rains, the MTC crew will go back out for one, last sight-line trimming and minor, "post weather" repairs to the work done this weekend, if needed.

Thanks again to all the SDMBA and MTC volunteers that joined with Ranger Washington for this work day!



(Blooming from p. 1)

We have just a few of them in Peñasquitos Canyon proper, in a finger canyon on the north side of the creek, below Sorrento Hills. For big masses of them visit our Carmel Mountain Preserve or the Guy Fleming Trail in Torrey Pines State Reserve, just west of our Preserve. Time your visit for mid-January when the bloom should be in full swing. Bush poppy (*Dendromecon rigida*) can also be seen.

Also at Torrey Pines, you can see some annuals in bloom including Southern suncup (*Camissonia* ssp.), San Verbena (*Abronia* ssp.), and milkmaids (*Cardamine californica* var. *californica*).

Fuchsia-flowered gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*) will be sporting its beautiful red blossoms against its bright green foliage along trail sides such as the Trans County east from the Ridgewood Community Park access to the I-15 and in other places (including my own slopes).

Come out, visit the canyons and preserves and enjoy what's shaping up as a great flower show this winter/spring. Send photos and locations of the flowers you find to mkelly1@san.rr.com or nelson.janet1@gmail.com. We will share them on the website and/or in the next newsletter.

(2010 from p. 1)

and weekend training workshops, in addition to regular tracking walks and transect studies.

The Friends' Board continues to monitor its new parcels, and had another field trip to assess the habitat this summer. We received grants from the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Partners for Wildlife, to help restore and enhance the habitats of these rich properties. Each of our eight parcels has a riparian component, whether it be a seasonal creek, a freshwater marsh or a vernal pool. We are very lucky and excited to steward these properties. We are hoping to install kiosks and develop a stewardship program among nearby residents of the Penasquitos community.

2011 promises to be a busy year in the Preserve. Volunteer to help with a project. Please join us at our bi-monthly board meetings, at a work party, or on the trail!

Don't be left out!

Want to keep up with all the events sponsored by the Friends of Peñasquitos? Get all the latest information and details by giving us your email address.

Email your contact information to Mike Kelly at mkelly1@san.rr.com or to Pat Watkins at pwatkins2008@gmail.com.

Membership Application

Membership category: (circle 1 below)

Senior (62) or Student \$10	Individual \$15
Family \$20	Sponsor \$30
Corporate \$250	Patron \$100
Life \$1000	
Contribution \$ _____	

I/We are interested in the following:

___ Volunteer to help a committee (call to discuss)

___ Hikes

___ Indian Culture

___ Educational Workshops

___ School, Family, Youth Programs

___ Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call **858.484.3219** or **858.342.8856** for more information.

Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Brian Swanson	760.739.5451
Vice-President: Don Albright	619.443.5937
Treasurer: Pat Watkins	858.538.2527
Secretary: Edward DiBella	619.563.0717

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Les Braund, Anne Harvey, Mike Kelly, Mary Lueking, Janet Nelson

Walk Leaders

Don Albright, Will Bowen, Diana Gordon, Arne Johansen, Mike Kelly, Linda King, Mary Lueking, David Robertson, Brian Swanson, Pat Watkins

Committees

Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.342.8856
 Newsletter: Janet Nelson, 619.519.3150
 nelson.janet1@gmail.com
 Tracking Team Coordinator: Rick Botta,
 858.672.0584
 Webmaster: Beth Williams



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Holiday at the Rancho

Penasquitos Citizens' Advisory Committee Chair Dr. Marvin Gerst, (above, left) and Friends' President Brian Swanson share a prickly moment while visiting Rancho de Los Peñasquitos for its annual holiday celebration. The delicious food, cheerful visitors, docents, volunteers, and staff were entertained by the melodious tunes of the Zzymzzy Quartet. A good time was had by all.

