



Canyon News

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

April, May, June, 2013
Volume 27 No. 2

Bobcat Talk

Mike Kelly, conservation chair

Want to learn about the Bobcats that live in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve? Well, come on over to the adobe Ranch House on Saturday, April 20, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Bobcat researcher Megan Jennings from San Diego State University will present the findings from her research with our bobcats. She radio collared (Jan. 2012, Canyon News) a number of our bobcats to learn about their home ranges, where they spent their time, how close to people and houses they came, and much more. There will be a free social with refreshments from 7-7:30, then the presentation at 7:30 and a question and answer period.

The historic adobe Peñasquitos Ranch House is located on Canyonside Park Driveway off Black Mountain Road between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos.



Megan Jennings and friend

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Canyon News Is Going Digital

It's taken a long time, and much debating, but due to the increasing costs of printing and postage, Canyon News is going digital. We will no longer be producing a printed newsletter.

This means smaller newsletters, sent more often, in full color. Better photos, updated hike schedules, great content delivered directly to your email box.

There is a catch. To continue to receive copies of the newsletter, we need your email address. Please, please, please send us your email address.

Just take a minute and send your email address to our editor, Janet Nelson nelson.janet1@gmail.com.

Don't miss a single issue!

Upcoming Hikes and Volunteer Opportunities

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

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, 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.

Every month:

Wildlife Tracking Walk

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

Everyone is invited to join a knowledgeable San Diego Tracking Team instructor for a free, easy introductory tracking walk to learn about the art of tracking and the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Look for tracks and scat of coyotes, bobcats, raccoon, deer and other wildlife in the area! Information at www.sdt.org. Rain cancels. Meet at the Historic Adobe Ranch House on Canyonside Park Drive and Black Mountain Road, Rancho Peñasquitos.

Every two months:

Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee

Thurs., 6:30 p.m. July 11, Sept. 12, Nov. 14

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.

Peñasquitos Canyon Citizens Advisory Committee

Thurs. 6:30 p.m. July 18, Sept. 19, Nov. 28

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.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tues., 7 p.m. May 7, July 2, Sept. 3, Nov. 5

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.

Quarterly:

Beginning Tracking Wildlife Surveys

Sat. 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Apr. 20, July 20, Oct. 19

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 requested to reserve your spot. The \$25 fee includes a number of valuable reference materials. Dress prepared to spend time outdoors and bring a sack lunch and water. More information at www.sdt.org. Email info@sdt.org or call 760.715.4102 to register. Meet at the Historic Adobe Ranch House on Canyonside Park Driveway and Black Mountain Road, Rancho Peñasquitos.

As the weather warms up, please remember to bring plenty of water and sun protection (hat or sun screen or both) when you visit the parks and canyons.
Hiking boots or trail sneakers are recommended.

Intermediate Tracking for Wildlife Surveys

Class: Wed. 7- 9 p.m. Sept. 18

Field: Sat. 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Sept. 21

This class expands on the beginning training and includes recognition and interpretation 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. More information at www.sdt.org. email info@sdt.org or call 760-715-4102 to register. Meet at the Historic Adobe Ranch House on Canyonside Park Driveway and Black Mountain Road, Rancho Peñasquitos.

Advanced Tracking Wildlife Surveys

Class: Wed. 7- 9 p.m. May 15, Nov. 13

Field Sat. 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. May 19, Nov. 16

The Advanced Class continues to develop your proficiency as a tracker. 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. More information at www.sdt.org. E-mail info@sdt.org or call 760-715-4102 to register. Meet at the Historic Adobe Ranch House on Canyonside Park Driveway and Black Mountain Road, Rancho Peñasquitos.

Hikes & Volunteer Opportunities

April

Vernal Pool Walk

Sat., Apr. 13, 9 - 11 a.m.

Join naturalist Mike Kelly for an easy walk and learn about vernal pools, perhaps San Diego's rarest ecosystem. Meet the rare and endangered plants and animals, some extremophiles, that live in and near them. Meet at Lopez Ridge Park in Mira Mesa, at 7245 Calle Cristobal.

Herb Walk with Will Bowen

Sun., Apr. 28, 4 - 6:00 p.m.

Learn to identify the different trees, plants, and shrubs of Carmel Mountain Nature Preserve. Find out how they were used for food and medicine by Native Americans, Spanish, and Anglo-American settlers. End up with a grasp of the native flora of this preserve. Meet at the Carmel Mountain Trailhead, 4730 Fairport Way at Shorepoint Way.

May

Vernal Pool Walk

Sat., May 11, 9 - 11 a.m.

Join naturalist Mike Kelly for an easy walk and learn about vernal pools, perhaps San Diego's rarest ecosystem. Meet the rare and endangered plants and animals, some extremophiles, that live in and near them. Meet at Lopez Ridge Park in Mira Mesa, at 7245 Calle Cristobal.

Herb Walk with Will Bowen

Sun., May 26, 5 - 6:30 p.m.

Learn to identify the different trees, plants, and shrubs of Lopez Canyon. Find out how they were used for food and medicine by Native Americans, Spanish, and Anglo-American settlers. End up with a grasp of the native flora of Lopez Canyon. Meet at the West End Parking Staging Area.

June

Night Hike with Mike Kelly

Sat., June 8, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Naturalist Mike Kelly leads this moderately paced and flat hike to enjoy the Preserve at night. Chance to meet Mule deer, bats, owls, tarantulas, and more. Enjoy the smells and sounds that make the Preserve a different place at night. Bring water, bug protection, and a flashlight. Meet at the kiosk at the corner of Park Village Road and Camino del Sur in Rancho Peñasquitos.

Herb Walk with Will Bowen

Sun., June 23, 5 - 6:30 p.m.

Learn to identify the different trees, plants, and shrubs of Peñasquitos Canyon. Find out how they were used for food and medicine by Native Americans, Spanish, and Anglo-American settlers. End up with a grasp of the native flora of the west end wetlands and riparian habitats. Meet in the parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd.

Thank You to our Donors

Thank you to everyone that responded to our fund appeal. Due to your generous donations, we raised over \$6,000 for Preserve videos and park improvements

.Nancy Jo Acevedo
Norman Anderson
Susanna Ball
Barbara Bartley
Judith Bayer
Roxane and Lee Benvau
Howard and Cheryl Berkey
Mary Brown
Shirley Bruno
Robert Chamberlain
Richard and Diana Childers
Jeffrey and Christina Codling
Paul Delany and Deborah Coon
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Vivienne Seymore
Barry Snyder
Jeff and Pam Stevens
Melvin and Ellen Sweet
Judith Swink
Greg Vines and Paula Pullenza
Charles Vantassel and Kirsten Winter
Francisco and Antoinette Wong
Anthony Wood
Paul and Barbara Zepf



Please be aware of where you are stepping when out in the canyons. Snakes, lizards, and other wildlife are increasingly abundant as the weather warms.

Carroll Canyon Update

Story and Photos by Will Bowen, PhD

There is a lot going on in Carroll Canyon right now.

CalTrans is extending Carroll Canyon Road under the I-805 Freeway to help relieve traffic at the Mira Mesa /805 Interchange.

MTS is preparing to double track the railroad line and has already been changing the shape of Sorrento Grade where the train climbs up and out of the valley onto the mesa top.

ASM Affiliates Archaeological Company was hired by MTS and spent about a week cleaning up the Bovet Adobe site. They sunk small test pits all around it to help determine its perimeter so that when MTS needs to move equipment across the canyon to work on the railroad line, the site won't be disturbed. ASM has also begun to file the paperwork to have the Bovet Adobe listed on State and Local Registries of Historic Places.

In conjunction with a significant jump in the recognition of the Bovet Adobe, this author joined forces with UCSD Visual Arts Professor Brett Stalbaum and his graduate student John Figg to work on a Bovet Project of signage and description.

Professor Stalbaum, heads of *Interdisciplinary Computing in the Arts (ICAM)* major at UCSD. He has experience designing nature signs and devising GPS inspired hiking trails. Figg, his student, plans on designing cell phone applications for self guided tours at World Heritage Sites.

Our aim is to design and build a new type of historic sign for the adobe site and to develop a cell phone narrated tour. We were given lab space in the Visualization & Robotics Lab in the new Structural Materials and Engineering Building at UCSD, which is partly dedicated to technology and the arts. We hope to pioneer development of nature signs and cell phone tours using some of the new technology now available.

So far we have come up with a prototype sign and a cell phone application using the *Hiper Geo* platform which combines GPS navigation with narration that describes the history of the adobe.



On a recent hike out into Carroll Canyon we noted some very beautiful and mysterious old Coast Live Oaks. This stand of oaks was described in 1978 by San Diego archaeologist Michael Moriarty as: "The finest stand of Gallery Oaks in San Diego County." These oaks are rarely visited by anyone.





Farther up the canyon we explored the old cattle/drainage tunnel that runs under the railroad. This tunnel was used by Norwood Brown - *The Last of the Cattlemen of the Peñasquitos* - to run his herd of cattle from Carroll Canyon up into to Rose Canyon. The outside and inside of the tunnel have been subject to some artistic graffiti, which includes wolves and an abominable snowman!

We also discovered a small old overgrown road coming down from the railroad tracks into the canyon. This road or pathway was probably used by railroad passengers who disembarked from the train to walk down to the Bovet Adobe to have dinner or buy wine from Pierre Bovet around the turn of the century.



As we were returning, we ran into John Ross walking his dog along the railroad tracks. Ross has been involved with an un-materialized city plan to build a bike path alongside the railroad track for many years. However, it looks like, with the proposed double tracking of the line, this will not come to pass because there just won't be enough room.



Days of the Great Yankee Cattle Barons: Growing up on the Peñasquitos

Eve Ewing

Ed. Note: This is a reprint of a three part article originally printed in Canyon News, January, 1988

My childhood days on the Peñasquitos Ranch ride the coattails of an important and colorful era of our region's history, an era that is little known or talked about, because in a much diminished sense, it is still going on. It is too soon to be called History, and when that time comes it will be over and we'll be sorting through the letters in old attics to try to make sense of it all. But I guess that is how History works. This era is the little mentioned time of not the Spanish, but of the Great Yankee Cattle Barons of California. When I first came west as a young girl in 1945, it was an era still in its prime, though soon to vanish quickly after the post World War II migration began.

There was a time in the forties when the largest cattle ranch in California was here in San Diego County. The Peñasquitos Land Grant Ranch was just one of many owned or leased ranches by the Circle S (The Sawday and Sexon Corporation), founded by George Sawday and later joined by under-sheriff Oliver Saxon and later by Russell and Florence Peavey. Some of the ranches owned by this corporation besides the Peñasquitos were the Santa Ysabel land grant, the Santa Maria land grant known to all as Ramona, the Cuyamaca Rancho in the mountains, the San Felipe Rancho in the San Felipe Valley above Sizzer's crossings in the desert below the Banner Grade, and the Richardson Ranch now better known as University City.

The Circle S also at that time leased the enormous Warner Hot Springs Ranch, the Fenita (my childhood memory does not include how to spell this) near the Mexican border, the Scripps Ranch east of Mira Mesa, the Navy (a name given to the Navy test site grounds southeast of the Scripps Ranch), Mira Mesa, the Fairbanks Ranch, and the Guejita land grant outside Lake Wolford near Escondido, and I'm still forgetting some I'm sure. In other words,

with the exception of the Daleys who owned Rancho Bernardo, Rancho Jamul, and the Lucky Five, the Circle S quite simply either owned or leased much if not most of the prime grazing lands in San Diego County between Camp Pendleton and the Mexican border and between the ocean and the desert.

My lifelong friendship with Russell and Florence Peavey, who became major owners of the Peñasquitos in the late forties or early fifties, began in 1946 after we bought two horses, one from Oliver Sexon at the Lemon Grove Rodeo and another from Russell Peavey when he and his family still owned the San Clemente Canyon Ranch which included Clairemont Mesa. I think Russell told me his dad bought the land for some 40 cents an acre sometime after a flood in the Tijuana River Valley had swept his dairy out to sea early in this century. We lived west of Mount Soledad in La Jolla's then sparsely settled Muirlands area at that time. Whenever possible we helped the Peaveys gather the Soledad Mountain Ranch cattle, or rode over to help gather the cattle off Clairemont or the neighboring Richardson Ranch, and sometime helped load them onto railroad cars from the old corrals that used to be below what is now University City. Our English saddles and eastern ways amused Russell who tried one of our saddles for curiosity. Afterward, he asked my dad: "How do you keep from sliding off one of them pancakes?"

As a child it was especially great to wake up and find cattle had gotten out and were seen in our vegetable garden, though it was my mother's favorite site. I thought it was great because it meant we didn't have to go to school that day, but instead got to saddle up and help roundup the escapees and head them back to where the fence was down on Mount Soledad.

One day when we were riding the ridge of the Soledad Ranch, where it overlooks Rose Canyon and what is now 1-5 below. Russell Peavy pointed to the cliffs across the canyon south of the junction of San

Clemente Canyon and Rose Canyon and said: "Not too many years back we was running down some wild horses up on the mesa (known today as Clairemont Mesa), but they got to the cliffs before we could turn em or get a rope on em. They slid like kids on a playground slide all the way down the cliffs, loped easy across Rose Canyon and old 101 (it was just dirt then) and ran clean up the south shoulder of Mount Soledad just about to where we's standing right now. We knowed we couldn't catch em once they reached the cliffs so we sat and pondered their ease and speed. Them wild horses was real athletes."

After the Peavys sold the San Clemente Canyon Ranch, and the Circle S Ranch sold the Richardson Ranch (University City), they bought into the Sawday and Sexon Corporation and moved to the Peñasquitos where Russell became part owner and manager. In those days the headquarters were in the section now called Horseman's Park. The area of the Johnson-Taylor Ranch across a little used dirt track called Black Mountain Road, was long over. The Johnson-Taylor Ranch was merely the bunk house for the ranch. Little money was every spent on keeping it up; its old cracked walls were left as is. But for many years it was the home of one of Peñasquitos Ranch's longest occupants name of Hank Romero. Hank was of Mexican/Spanish Californio stock and lived his life as an ordinary cowhand. In a sense he and the then dusty disheveled state of the Johnson-Taylor ranch house were symbols of what happened to all his ancestors once the Yankee ways and savvy took over the country after the war with Mexico in the 1800s. I guess it's just one of the prices you pay for losing a war; you get to become the second class citizens.

For as long as I remember, Hank was very old, seems like he and the oak trees must have grown up together hundreds of years ago. Well, you know how old "old" people can look when you are young. There was always a lot

of sky between Hank's legs and I think his hands were given to him by a lizard. They were his badge of lifelong labor. I only once saw him without his sweat-stained gray felt hat and that was in his house. His mostly bald head was as white as a baby's bottom, and it didn't look like it could possibly belong to the Kentucky fried, brown, leathered face it was attached to. He was old, and faithful and honest and poor, and uneducated and was never more than just average smart all the years I knew him. His hard but simple life was like most cowboys who somehow never wanted to or were never able to (for one reason or another) to acquire their own ranch.

I learned a lot of things from Hank, such as new ways of swearing when things went wrong. Hank always figured he was a cut above the wet backs that were hired on now and then. And when they did something he thought was stupid, most likely an honest mistake, Hank, who also spoke Spanish, would yell at them in English. That way he got to be insulting without hurting anyone's feelings, a very useful life tool it was. At the top of his dust spouting lungs he would yell great and wondrous things like: "If your brains were rank poison, they couldn't fistic a Snow Bird". I've had the pleasure of using that wonderful, near meaningless, unintelligible expression myself when four letter words just wouldn't be acceptable. That there was no such thing as a Snow Bird, at least in San Diego County (that term wasn't even used for skiers in those days and I know Hank never even saw a pair of skis his whole life). So what it really meant was never brought up or discussed. That would have been like questioning an artist's use of colors. It was Hank's creation and none of us really wanted it explained as if that might somehow take away some of the magic, and that way it could mean most anything you wanted it to. I just framed it and hung it in the gallery of my memory where it can be seen and used when needed.

Coastal Bramble Butterflies

Les Braun

Recently while hiking around the new Canyon Hills Open Space area which connects with Penasquitos Canyon at Mercy Rd and Route 15, I discovered a beautiful green butterfly. There were several flying around and perching on Deerweed (*Lotus scoparius*). As I was sitting patiently near some deer weed, one landed and I was able to recognize it as a hairstreak butterfly.

I took several pictures and using the Common Butterflies of California, I was able to identify the butterfly as a Coastal Bramble (Green) Hairstreak (*Callopbrys dumetorum viridis*). These butterflies are not very large; they range from one inch to an inch and quarter in length. Males and females are similar.



The Coastal Bramble butterflies typically fly from late February through March. Their host plant is buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*). There are all so reports of it using *Lotus scoparius* as a host (L Orsak 1977 Butterflies of Orange County). Should you choose to look for them, they can be found on the south side of Canyon Hills Open Space in the areas facing Mira Mesa.

This picture is a female as the male are most often seen perching on the ground or on branches over washes and open areas in the chaparral. The females frequently perch on deer weed and buckwheat. They seem to favor ridge line in the foothills and are rarely found and are rarely found above 2300 feet in elevation or below 800 feet.

Membership Application

Membership category: (circle 1 below)

Senior (62) or Student \$10	Individual \$15	
Family \$20	Sponsor \$30	Patron \$100
Corporate \$250	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.
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Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call **858.484.3219** or **858.342.8856** for more information.

Canyon News is going digital!

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 Janet Nelson at nelson.janet1@gmail.com or to Pat Watkins at pwatkins2008@gmail.com.

Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Les Braund	858-566-3958
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

Jeanie Anderson, Anne Harvey, Mike Kelly, Mary Lueking, Janet Nelson, Brian Swanson

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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Children look for and learn about the fairy shrimp and tadpoles in the road pools of Carmel Mountain Preserve.

Photo by Will Bowen

This is the last printed issue of Canyon News.

See inside for more details.