

The Friends of San Pedro Valley Park

NIGHT FLYERS

Monique Lee, “madbatter”, of the Bat Conservation Fund will come to the Visitor Center to present some fascinating facts about the world of **bats** on Saturday, October 20 at 7:30pm. Since she will bring a group of live bats in their screened boxes, be sure you bring your grandchildren, and/or neighbors with children, though this is also an adult event.



Monique is a popular speaker for organizations and school groups at libraries and campuses. She dedicates herself to educating the public about the need for bats in a healthy ecosystem. Foremost among the recipients of this energetic woman is her son, Ronan’s Mount Madonna School, where she works as an operations assistant.



(Calif. Leaf-nosed bat—**Merlin D. Tuttle** photo)

Ms. Lee lives with her family in the Santa Cruz area, where she serves on the board of the Bat Conservancy of Coastal California.

OPEN POSITIONS AT VISITOR CENTER

If you are an organizer, love to interact with people, & would like to help the Park with its arguably most important job, please contact **Jane Turrel**, 738-8319. **We need a person who will schedule coverage of the center each month. We also need more people to staff the center.** This is a chance to meet **Jane, Shirley Drye, Jim Mackey, Lois Joseph, Terry Sherar**, & a whole gang of those who love this Park! As a volunteer you will be invited to join “The Friends SPVP” dinners with Speakers before each

BRIGHT SEPTEMBER NOON BARBEQUE (WE PREDICT!) SAT, SEPT. 8, —VIS CNTR PATIO

Yes, we will celebrate the trail and habitat restoration workers with a smashingly tasty, old-fashioned cook-out with fancy side-dishes. If you are not a “chef”, you can bring a dessert, but we will look forward to a special salad or hot dish. We supply the links and hamburgers, The Board of the Friends have already pledged their “Jean’s beans”, Istvan’s raspberry bars, and Shirley Drye’s potato salad,

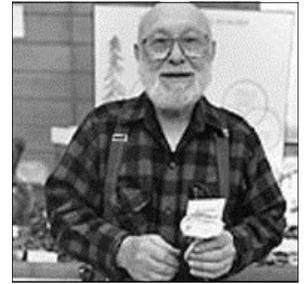


Either we have already called you or will do so and we do appreciate your call-back. (Chumpy’s clip art cartoon)

AN AFTERNOON WITH MUSHROOM MAN,

BILL FREEDMAN

Dr. Bill Freedman of the San Mateo area, will be speaking to us about his favorite subject and hobby, **Mushrooms**. Save Saturday, **September 22 at 2 pm, that is two in the afternoon.**



To characterize Bill, I can’t help but copy a statement by the San Francisco Weekly News, “[He is] a retired physician whose snowy beard, round spectacles, bright green shirt, and very large, sheathed knife make him look a bit like a friendly, man-sized gnome” Due in part to his energetic and sprightly personality, as well as this appearance, he was asked to appear on the **David Letterman** show, & judging by the laughter & applause, was a great hit.

But Bill’s initial involvement with mushrooms began as an interest in their devastatingly deadly impact on humans. He was instrumental in helping others understand the effects of such lethal **fungi** as the **Death Cap** (pictured below), spreading the word that after consumption its toxins cannot be flushed from the body. (pictured below)



Some of you may recall that he and his wife, Louise, treated Pacificans to two mushroom discovery hikes in the Park several years ago. His like-minded “mushroom” mate loves to prepare palate-pleasing gourmet mushroom dishes. Remember, she is an expert at identifying edible fungus. And recall that it is illegal and dangerous to collect anything in San Pedro Valley Park.

ON THE TRAIL

Mary Steinkamp, proprietor of “Waves”, reported a **bobcat** walking in the first field of the Weiler Ranch Road at 7am on Thursday, July 5.



Ray Trabucco would like you to look for, but not eat, the **Gooseberry** fruit at the back of the Weiler



Ranch Road. (photo of Gooseberry fruit at left) The **Osober-ry** fruit (at right), in the



same family as **plums & apples**, can also be found there.

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CHRISTINE GUZMAN, THE COUNTRY GIRL

My ancestors were the original Mormon pioneers who walked across the Great Plains with handcarts and wagons.



According to local folklore my grandfather was the first non-native baby born in Star Valley, Wyoming, next to the border of Idaho, just south of the Tetons and Yellowstone. I was born in Salt Lake City because that was where my father was sent by the FBI. He had become an FBI agent at the end of World War II. When I was six weeks old, he was sent to the San Francisco office where he remained for the rest of his career. Both he and my mother grew up in Star Valley, and from the very start my mother wanted more than anything else to get out of Wyoming. (hand cart photo by Cloy Kent)

She got her wish. Unfortunately her life became unbearable to her, and my mother and father were obliged to send us children to his parents who lived on a ranch in northern Idaho. I was four; my brother was not yet a year, and my sister was ten. We stayed there for a long time. For a child whose family had just fallen apart this was a wonderful place, even a refuge.



On the ranch I was surrounded by cousins and we were encouraged to play outside all the time. They had every farm animal associated with a ranch: horses, **sheep, pigs, chickens, cattle, both dairy and beef.** I gathered eggs, separated the cream from the milk, churned butter, weeded the vegetable garden. The ranch provided almost all of what was consumed. (yarnsoftheheart.com photo)

My aunt posted us on the high bank of the river so we could spot **salmon** going up the river to spawn. When we sounded the alarm she would come with her salmon spear and we would have salmon for dinner. My grandfather would put me on the back of the **horse** when he would go irrigating. At times he would have to cross the river and I felt the horse swimming. We slept outside in the summer on a box spring that was hung between two trees. We would swing and tell each other scary stories and watch the stars in the dark sky. There was a dairy cow who would let us get on her back as she walked around the pasture. I did not go to kindergarten, but I did go to first grade in Salmon, Idaho. (flickrhivemind.com photo)



Eventually, my father took us to California because he and my mother were divorced and he had remarried. California did not last long. My mother took us to Star Valley, Wyoming to the town where my mother and father had grown up. We went there to live near my mother's parents. We arrived in a blizzard, and the snow came streaking toward us. I am sure my mother was feeling defeated, but I found it exciting. Once again I found refuge outside in all weather. I was free to wander anywhere I wanted on my own. In winter I played in the snow with a sled and skated and slid on the frozen creeks. In spring I gathered **duck eggs** on the banks of the creeks & brought them home for my mother to "incubate" in the oven. Being outside in nature was where I felt the most at home. [Christine is a habitat restoration worker; next issue Pt.II]



AUGUST NATIVE PLANT DAY

Istvan Puski and Ranger **David Vasquez** worked hard watering and tending to the recently planted natives of the old Trout Farm tanks. Be sure to take a look of the photos of the old Trout Farm on the wall of the Visitor Center.

DRAIN DIP DETAIL

By **Joseph Piro**

The Valley View Trail got more attention on the July 14th Trail Day. The trail was recently worked on by crews that widened and cleaned it up (same nice treatment as some



other trails in the park), so **Ranger David Vasquez, Istvan Puski, Kirill and I** walked the entire length to survey it and see what we might need to touch up. While it generally looks great, we definitely have plenty of work to do tweaking the drain dips -- many are too abrupt,

speed-bump-style -- and several switchbacks need new inside ditches built. While it was primarily a survey, we did tackle fixing a few dips on the west end of the trail. At least we know where we can work the next couple of months! [during this surveying and working expedition 2 mightily attired **bucks** appeared in the brush.] (The photo of one buck and the photo above of Ranger David Vasquez to the left and Istvan Puski on the right are by **Joseph Piro** and were taken on the work day.)



A NATURALIST'S PERSPECTIVE

By Jim Mackey

Sept./Oct. 2012

Animal sounds. In our last newsletter I wrote about bird songs, especially **winter wrens**, **mourning doves** and **whippoorwills**. It prompted me to reminisce about some of my favorite animal sounds. These include the resonant hoots of a **great horned owl**, best appreciated on a cold, calm night after a full moon has risen. (I have often heard this from our house on Oddstad Boulevard, especially in winter.) Also impressive are **coyote** choruses, the quavering whistle of a loon, the ka-chug of a **bullfrog** – followed by a splash if you get too close. In Ohio we celebrated the first calls each year of the aptly-named spring peepers. **treefrogs**-(Jim Mackey photo at left shows its expanded throat vocal pouch). In Oregon I waded out into many a pond and disturbed the also aptly-named Pacific **chorus frogs**. I would stand motionless in the quiet of the pond



for several minutes until the leader of the chorus would signal, “breck-eck” – which triggered a sometimes deafening chorus of many males floating on the pond.

Have you heard the roaring of **lions** and the whooping of **siamangs** at the S.F. Zoo? We used to be treated to these sounds from our house in the outer Sunset District. All of us, being visually-oriented animals, need to remind ourselves to pay attention to the sounds and odors that we are receiving. This point is made beautifully in a book, by **Diane Ackerman**, titled “Animal Senses.” One can also demonstrate the point to students in an outdoor education class by blindfolding them and leading them toward a pond, occasionally stopping and asking them to describe their surroundings. There are many sounds and smells that are clues to the presence of a pond.

Inanimate sounds. THUNDER can rumble in the distance or



crackle and crash all around you! (Hobart King's lightning strike) (If God had a voice it would have to be bass. I don't think that they ever cast a tenor to portray god in an opera.) When our children were young we often

watched Captain Kangaroo on TV. He often presented a video arrangement of Smetana's musical composition describing a Czechoslovakian river, “The Moldau.” It began with rain drops slowly falling on the leaf litter in a forest. Soon trickles of water coalesced into streams that joined into a mighty river that surged into a sea.

In San Pedro Valley Park you can stand on a foot bridge, on the Plaskon Trail, over the South Fork of San Pedro Creek and hear the creek gurgling along underneath you – **all year-around!** That same water, shortly, will flow under the Coast highway, and be received by numerous gulls, bathing happily in it before it tumbles over and around rocks down the beach



into the ocean. (Questa Engineering Co. photo of SP Creek)

Poor Jim's Almanac. It's the season for dessert for our omnivores. **Fox** and **coyote** scats will contain **coffeeberry** and other seeds among the **rodent** hairs.

JULY FIFTEENTH AWAKENING

Written by Carolyn Pankow, observed by Katie Antista

Actually, it started at high noon on July 11th, and who would have guessed that a peaceful **bobcat**, his gut full of



flesh, hair and feather? would be perceived so differently 4 days later. This happily sated, but heavily armed feline, lay in the shade of the willows by the South Walnut volley ball area, when a **quail** family tip toed along, checking for grass seeds. Our cat simply segued into the bushes; our human, **Katie Antista**, froze, astonished at its nonchalance in the face of a possible meal

But July 15 was an entirely different day. In the afternoon, Kate was sauntering along the roadway by the South Walnut when a commotion next to the **willows** stopped her dead in her tracks. She gave a suspicious look at the scene before she realized she was now gazing at the same(?) bobcat “of a few days ago eating a young quail. (Jeff James photo)

That very afternoon a baby **quail** was blocked by the parking lot curbing, blocked from following Mom and Dad on their seed gathering foray; along came another human, a man, who plucked the tender youngster from the asphalt and placed him at the top of the little “cliff”..



At that instant a **hawk** flew overhead, a **serpent** dangling from its beak, and somewhat later a graceful yellow and black **swallowtail** fluttered by. An **angle wing** followed its own uncertain course, while **juncoes** went on a seed hunt and humans marveled at the awakening on this sunny day in mid-July.



(ShackelfordPhotoArt photo)

ON THE TRAIL (continued)

Istvan Puski, reported a **grey fox** walking out from the big cypress toward the South Walnut picnic area. At first sight of our bearded “mountain man” the fox was startled, but a soft word from Istvan seemed to calm him down, and he ambled over to the plum tree and the bridge. After 15 to 20 minutes he went down into the creek area. It was 8:30 pm on Friday, August 17—a nice day. (Lloyd Kahn photo)



Pat Robinson sighted a **Black-chinned Hummingbird** feeding on the **bottlebrush** in her yard on Higgins Rd.



on about August 11, late in the afternoon/eve. **Jim Mackey** said that her observation of , not only the dark chin, but also the white band below the blotchy throat, was correct for that species. Audubon rare bird list said one was seen on Aug 23 &25 in Santa Cruz.

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Regular “hang-out” is foothills of Cent. Valley. Congrats, Pat, on your keen eyes!

OUR GUYS AND GILEAD

By Joseph Piro

We had a special treat for our August 11th Trail Day -- Istvan Puski and I worked with a group of about 10 vol-



unteers from Gilead Sciences that came to help us! They were particularly interested in habitat restoration, so Ranger David Vasquez set us to work on removing non-native plants and transplanting native ones into the old metal tanks and around the picnic grounds near the start

Questions or letters to the editor? —email **Carolyn Pankow** at carolynjunepankow@yahoo.com or write **Carolyn Pankow**, Editor of, “**Friends of San Pedro Valley Park**”, 600 Oddstad, Pacifica, CA 94044. She is the writer of all uncredited features.

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER CALENDAR

- SEPTEMBER TRAIL DAY**
Saturday, September 8.....9am
 - TRAIL DAY BARBEQUE**
Saturday, September 8.....12 noon
 - SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING**
Wednesday, September 12.....7pm
 - SEPTEMBER HABITAT RESTORATION DAY**
Saturday, September 15.....9am
 - BILL FREEDMAN’S MUSHROOMS**
Saturday, September 22.....2pm
 - OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING**
Wednesday, October 10.....7pm
 - OCTOBER TRAIL DAY**
Saturday, October 13.....9am
 - OCTOBER HABITAT RESTORATION DAY**
Saturday, October 20.....9am
 - MONIQUE LEE’S NIGHT FLYERS**
Saturday, October 20.....7:30pm
- For all events, meet at the Visitor Center*

FACIOD

“Like crowded megacities, busy ant colonies face a high risk of disease outbreaks. New research indicates such ‘urban ants’ also know how to prevent epidemics — when an infected ant enters the colony, its nest mates carefully lick off the infecting fungus.”



"This is increasing the survival of the originally exposed individual," study researcher Sylvia Cremer, of the Institute of Science and Technology Austria

“And it turns out, the licking behavior may also help the doer by giving that individual greater immunity to the infecting fungus. Insects don't have the "adaptive" immune system that mammals do, but they are still able to fine-tune their disease-fighting systems to react to specific threats”. This is from the “Live Science” website. April 3, 2012. A more thorough analysis is to be found in the “newscientist.com” website.

(Our Guys and Gilead)

of the Trout Farm Trail. We also trimmed some low-hanging branches from various trees and did general cleaning up around several of the picnic benches. After a productive morning, we all went back to the Visitor's Center to enjoy a nice lunch on the back patio. Thanks for help everyone!

The Leaders of “the Friends of San Pedro Valley Park”:

President, **Jim Mackey**; Vice President, **Carolyn Pankow**; Secretary, **Shirley Drye**; Treasurer, **Jane Turrel** ; members at large, **Istvan Puski**; *Visitor Center staffing-open-* **Jane Turrel**, thank you; Habitat Restoration Leader, **Istvan Puski**; Trail Leader, **Joseph Piro**; Membership, **Catherine Antista**; Programs, **Carolyn Pankow**; Trailside Store, **Jane Turrel** . . .