Time Travel, Edible Plants, and a Stroll down Guy Fleming with a Guitar

by Sherry Doolittle

The seasoned docents were given a treat when two teams of the Docents of 2009 presented their final projects at the general meeting. Team One, consisting of Mark Reynolds, Molly McConnell, and Renee Klein, began with Mark taking us back through time to what Torrey Pines and, specifically, the Red Butte area might have been like more than 45 million years ago. He spoke and presented pictures of the flora, fauna, and geological formations one might have seen if we could have fast forwarded through time to the present. He added interesting highlights about what was going on in the rest of the world as well. Next, Molly McConnell entertained us with how the Kumeyaay used the varied plants in the Reserve. She covered many plants from A to Z with infused humor and her own added, reflective comments. Finally, Team Two began with Sharon Thompson narrating with the polish of a professional MC. She presented a beautifully written pictorial tour of the Guy Fleming Trail. Richard Chance accompanied her presentation with his guitar. She thanked her team, Richard, Christie Anderson, Mary Alper, and Paula Shaw and told of the team effort and fun they had doing it. Richard topped it off with his wonderful song, Bird Nerd. An added surprise for the membership was getting to sing Happy Birthday to Richard with Mark playing Richard's guitar. This assemblage of new docents shows what a special group they are. As movers and shakers, they will add tremendously to our many talents in the Docent Society.

May Docent Meeting Notes

Excerpted from notes from the TPDS General Meeting, July 11, 2009 by Secretary, Bill Eckles. Complete minutes in docent library.

President Rick Vogel called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m. following the refreshment break and two delightful presentations presented by the 2009 graduating docent class. Congratulations to all the new graduates for an outstanding class.

Treasurer’s Report: (Ken King)

Bookstore sales this month were $3,800, continuing a high rate for the year. Congratulations and thanks to Nancy Woodworth. Expenses to date - including the flower brochure, hangtags and electrical work at the Lodge - have been high, creating a negative cash flow. Progress continues on the purchase of a new point of sale apparatus. Ken expects to have a final selection made by month’s end.
**Point of Sale Purchase:** (Rick Vogel)  
Rick requested a favor of the membership. While standing rules require a month’s notice to the membership before voting on large expenditures ($3,000 or more) he had failed to announce the need to approve purchase of the point of sale apparatus at last month’s meeting. Thus, a special exception would be needed to vote for approval at this meeting.

We discussed how the purchase would relate to a possible park closure and the insurance of the system if the park were closed.

A motion to make a rules exception was passed. Next, a motion was made to acquire a point of sale system for a price not to exceed $4,500. This also passed and had limited opposition.

**Announcements:** (Rick Vogel)  
Cups will be sold at refreshment breaks for $1.00 each to reduce waste. PBS will again air Wonderlan for $1.00 each to reduce waste. PBS will again air Wonderlan and several docents on Aug 18, 4:30 a.m., Aug 23, 4 p.m., and Aug 30, 5:30 a.m.

**TPA:** (Pat Masters for Peter Jensen)  
Pat thanked those who attended the June rally. The rally generated television and newspaper coverage for the park closure issue.

August 22nd is the date for celebration of the 35th anniversary of the Reserve Extension’s 150 acre acquisition. (See article on page 7.)

**Joan Adamo,** who is coordinating many activities for the celebration, requested volunteers to sign up.

**Endowment:** (Steve Usher)  
The Endowment has grown about 6% this calendar year to date, but had lost money last year. Additionally, money had been disbursed from the Endowment during the year.

**Docent of the Month:** For July, **Eileen Conway** is the honoree. She was selected for her outstanding work answering questions of visitors to our website. She not only handles a large volume of work, but also addresses challenging questions.

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**Children’s Program**

Starting August 15th teachers can sign up online for the coming school year for the Children’s Program docent led hikes. If you are a docent doing Lodge Duty, please direct all inquiries from teachers to our website, torreypine.org. Advise them to click on the Education menu. Please do not give out Laura Lowenstein’s or Cecily Goode’s phone number or email address to any teacher.

Children’s Program docents take advantage of these last weeks of summer as September is fast approaching. Come join us at the Lodge on Thursday, Sept. 10th at 9 a.m. to repair and organize the props used in presentations.

**Diane Greening** can always use any docent to assist her with the Jr. Ranger Programs held at 10 a.m. August 3rd, 5th, 7th, 10th, 12th and 14th. If interested email her at dgreening@parks.ca.gov. Our website lists the topics on the various dates.

The next scheduled OAKS (Optional Advanced Knowledge Session), better known as sharing while hiking, is Thursday, August 20th at 9 a.m. Meet at the Del Mar Scenic Parkway cul-de-sac for a hike in the Extension. Be sure to bring water and apply your sunscreen.

**Cecily Goode**  
Children’s Program Director  
Laura Lowenstein  
Program Coordinator  

“**Library Duty**”  
_by Mike Yang_  
It's time to initiate "a few good docents" to the wonders of "library duty."  
**Bonnie Hornbeck** and I (the current librarians) are looking for interested docents who would like to contribute to the increase of knowledge of the whole wide world (not to mention docents) while earning "docent time!"  
As a co-
librarian you will identify and review new book additions to TPDS’ collection, prepare books, CDs and DVDs with all the necessary stamps, labels, envelopes, etc. prior to shelving, updating and maintaining the spreadsheet catalog on the computer, and perform other interesting tasks such as telling amusing stories at the monthly general meeting (smile). We have a big job scheduled for Tuesday, August 18 at 9:30 a.m., to do a complete inventory of the library and help is most welcome. E-mail Mike or Bonnie for more info or to volunteer.

**Whacky Weeders**

*Article & photos by Steve Tarkington*

There aren't many areas of the Reserve that the Whacky Weeders haven't attacked to prevent invasive species taking over our native plants. Weeders wearing bright orange vests can be seen throughout the Reserve. On any given day you can spot Wes Farmer on Carmel Valley Road pulling and stacking *Carpobrotus* (iceplant). Some stacks are as tall as Wes, as this photo shows:

With suggestions from Bea Stoyla, photo below, the Weeders could be seen on the main road into the Reserve pulling and bagging crystalline iceplant. It is prolific along the road edges, down in gullies and in the dividing islands. Others like Ann Smith-Mercandetti on the Guy Fleming Trail and Dave Economou on the Parry Grove Trail are dedicated to their work discouraging invasive plants.

The Whacky Weeders will be focusing their energies at the Extension for the next several weeks in preparation for the 35th Birthday festivities. This is a good opportunity for you to both explore the Extension and to help with the birthday preparations by weeding and some trail maintenance. We welcome your help and participation. Please let me know and I will add your name to the email list. This work is fun with lots of camaraderie among docents. I learn something new about plants, birds or other aspects of Torrey Pines Reserve every week.

The park aides will be working every other Saturday on Carmel Valley Rd. until the eradication of the *Carpobrotus* is completed, followed by planting and nurturing natives. The Whacky Weeders continue to meet Mondays at 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Stop by and lend a hand when you can.

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**Lodge Duty Gems**

by Gabrielle Ivany

I was very pleased being named Docent of the Month for June of 2009 for all the hours of doing Lodge Duty. You would think that someone with that honor would know all the answers or at least know enough not to be flustered by visitors, but think again.

On July 7th I parked my car in my usual spot for lodge duty when I remembered that I should use the Docent of the Month spot, last chance for doing that. So I moved the car from one spot to the other, actually not necessary because there was plenty of parking available.

Inside I took over at the desk and started my watch. As I was completing a book sale, I saw a mother and her children slip out the door clutching an armful of cones, suspiciously looking like Torrey pine cones. I asked what they were carrying and was told that they found the cones just lying around outside. They were very nice and understood when I told them that they could not take them home. They returned the cones where they found them and left.

Visitors wanted to know how rare our Torrey pines are, whether they would grow in other places, whether our Lodge had been a hotel, where they could stay for the night, how they could go to the glider port (those directions on the slip of paper are really handy), why we have picnic tables in the back but don’t allow picnicking. I had to advise one family who broke out apples for everyone on the front porch that they should wait to eat them until they were at the beach. Why is the blue crab called a sheep crab? I’m still looking for an answer to that.

One mother coming back from a hike asked for a Band-Aid for a scratch on her daughter’s leg and I was happy I could give it to her. A family came in and as the parents asked for directions, their little boy roughed up the skunk. He got a lesson from me on how to touch the animals.

Then, a phone call. A lady called from the upper parking lot because her car wouldn’t start. She demanded someone come and jump start her car.
and when I told her there was nobody to help, she immediately asked to be transferred to the ranger, my superior. When I told her he was not in, she told me I should radio him, plus she demanded to be transferred to the kiosk. I tried to convince her that it would be best for her to call outside for help. She remained upset and aggressive until I finally had to end the call because people in the Lodge were waiting for me.

Shortly afterwards, Ranger Mike came back and promised to look for the lady, but didn’t find her. Half an hour later she called again to complain about my hanging up on her. She wanted to report me! OK, so much for Docent of the Month. After some conversation she seemed friendlier and I wish I had asked her in the beginning to come into the Lodge since she was close by. Personal conversations are so much better. As I was leaving after 3 p.m., I took a swing through the parking lot where she said she was, but she had left. So ended this Docent of the Month’s very busy lodge duty shift.

**Living on the Edge**

by Joan Adamo  
**Photo by Roger Isaacson**

We live on the edge of the Torrey Pines Extension. The cul-de-sac entry to the Mar Scenic Trail is a few yards from our front door. Since we live in a townhouse, we don’t have much of our own backyard, but the Extension provides us with a wonderful natural space, full of the sights, smells, sounds and feelings that many a gardener would love to achieve. Some examples---

On a Saturday evening toward the end of June, we took a quick walk around 6 p.m. We inhaled the wonderful scent—it’s fresh, complex, spicy, pine, sage, sagebrush. What else contributes to this enticing aroma? Whenever we’ve been away, this aroma lets us know we’re “home again.”

Although the lush flower display of March and April was finished by June, the scarlet larkspur, my favorite Extension discovery, was at its peak. When I first saw this species a number of Junes ago, I rushed home to identify it in *Margaret Fillius’* book, and every year since have carefully watched various individual plants develop. Last year I was furious to find that a larkspur at the T-intersection of the Mar Scenic and DAR trails had been broken off by someone on the trail-- I took it personally!

I also noted on that evening walk in June that the laurel sumac bushes were full of buds, that the California buckwheat display seemed particularly lush this year, that the white sage along the DAR cut was spreading and had lots of flower stalks, and that all the coyote brush were looking green and healthy, preparing for their late summer bloom.

Looking south over the lagoon from the end of the DAR Trail’s west wing, we observed the Lodge glowing in the late afternoon sunlight, over on the hill of the main Reserve.

Walking back down the hill, we felt the cool evening air swooping down the canyon of the main trail. We listened for owls, but weren’t lucky on that particular evening. A red-tailed hawk that had been circling noisily overhead all afternoon had quieted down. But at night lately we have been hearing a group of coyotes, probably a young family nearby. Our least favorite night sound, scurrying on the roof, sometimes comes in the middle of the night; it’s rats collecting and eating those delicious Torrey pine nuts. Finding their shells and scat nearby in the morning is not so exciting.

During the day, hummingbirds, towhees, quail are regulars, including quail babies who land at our front doorstep, and then call to Mom “How do I get out of here?” (They always manage.). The various lizards enjoy sunning themselves on our sundial or back wall, and, very occasionally, a king snake appears. We have noted that the young ones seem to like narrow spaces: we found one lodged in the track of a sliding door, another under our garage door. But it doesn’t take too much encouragement to get them to find another home. Happily, no rattlesnakes have chosen to visit us.

Some people pass by, but not too many. There are joggers and walkers, some of them with dogs. (As they pass behind our house they are not technically on TP Extension property,
but terribly close.) And there are children who walk to and from the Del Mar Heights School every day with their parents—what a nice way to start and end the school day.

We love living “on the edge” of the Torrey Pines Extension with its intriguing aroma, and the mysterious music of the wind in the pine needles.

Docent Question of the Month (DQOM) Updates

Credit: Jim Larrimore

[Ed: Due to space limitations the regular article will be in the next Pinecone]

Sighting of blue whales off TPSNR was reported in the August 2007 DQOM. This summer blue whales are being sighted off the San Diego coast at nine to thirty miles. H&M Landing is offering Blue Whale Cruises from San Diego Bay on Sundays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. from July 19 through August 30, 2009, in collaboration with the San Diego Natural History Museum Whalers. As many as 50 whales have been spotted over a small area. Call (619) 222-1144 for more information.

(Note from Roger Isaacson: Speaking of blue whales, I have been looking pretty often the past couple weeks, since July was a good month the past couple years. Yesterday (July 21) between 4 and 5 p.m. I saw about 6 spouts and 3 backs a couple miles off shore from 10th St, DM. I use 8 power binoculars.)

Migrating animals observed at TPSNR, including Monarch butterflies, were the topic of the February 2009 DQOM. In July 2009, a new record for insect migration was published by biologist Charles Anderson in the Journal of Tropical Ecology. He claims that every year millions of dragonflies fly across the sea from India to Africa (Uganda, Tanzania and Mozambique), stopping on the Maldive and Seychelles islands. The dragonflies are mostly globe skimmers (*Pantala flavescens*). They take advantage of moving weather systems and monsoon rains to complete a round trip migration of 14,000 to 18,000 km. The monarch butterfly covers only around 7000 km in an annual round trip from Mexico to southern Canada.

Time to Party! And Interpret the Extension!!

*by Patricia Masters*

In our summer of budget woes, looming park closures, layoffs, furloughs, and gnawing uncertainties, it is a breath of fresh air to refocus on a great conservation victory—the preservation of Torrey Pines Extension, the groves of Torrey pines north of Los Peñasquitos Lagoon. This hard-fought battle, waged against the forces of booming residential development and governmental indifference, started with a small group of local conservationists and evolved into a nationwide fundraising effort.

A bit of history

It began in November 1964 when Robert and Gloria Bates were walking among the groves near their home and discovered bulldozers razing Torrey pines to build a road.

Media campaigns spearheaded by the Torrey Pines Association (TPA), the Sierra Club, Citizens Coordinate for Century 3, the San Diego Museum of Natural History, and the Torrey Pines Wildlife Association succeeded in April 1967 when the State allocated Park bond funds to purchase the Extension. But for the first time in the history of California State Parks, private matching funds had to be raised!

The TPA took charge of the fundraising campaign, led by Peggy Fleming and Tom Whitaker, with seed grants from the Ellen Browning Scripps Foundation. By the spring of 1970, over 3,000 donors had contributed or pledged more than $700,000. The Legislature then confirmed the allocation of $900,000 in Park bonds, and the first 73 acres of the Torrey Pines Extension were acquired in August 1970. With a total of 168 acres preserved by 1974, TPA declared a victorious end to the campaign.

What’s happening now

The Extension has languished over the past decade with little maintenance, and many of the trails are in poor condition. In addition, native vegetation is competing with invasive exotic plants from neighboring residences, and wandering pets are disturbing the natural balance of wildlife.

The TPA is moving forward with efforts on Trails Management Planning, which will require some additional fundraising. We also are using the third anniversary of the successful Extension Campaign to rebuild ties to the neighborhood and raise awareness of the ongoing need to preserve native habitat and wildlife.

All these goals come together at the Extension Celebration on August 22nd! The activities planned will be a great opportunity to interpret the resources of the Extension both to kids and adults. Many exhibitors will be providing information on native and drought-tolerant landscaping, irrigation, mulching and composting. Our speaker, Vickie Driver from the Water Conservation Garden at Cuyamaca College, will tell us how to go dry for good.
We will kick off the event with introductions of honored guests: State Senator Christine Kehoe, Assemblymember Nathan Fletcher, Mayor Crystal Crawford, Councilmember Sherri Lightner, members of the Fleming and Whitaker families, and major volunteers and donors.

The “birthday party” concludes with awards for the best habitat-friendly landscape designs, kids’ photos, and a free drawing for Hydro-Scape products – plus cake and other refreshments.

Please help us celebrate and interpret the spectacular resources of Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve’s Extension – it truly is a remarkable grass-roots achievement and a tribute to those conservationists who saved it.

Extension Campaign
by Maryruth Cox

At the end of 1969 the Torrey Pines Extension Campaign seemed to be at a standstill. In five years of hard work the campaign had raised $660,000. But now, according to the terms laid out by Governor Reagan, in order to get the grant of $900,000 from the state, local citizens had to match it by June, 1970. How would it be possible to raise another $240,000 in the next six months?

Undismayed, the valiant supporters of the extension fought on. To add more clout to the campaign the advisory committee was expanded to include civic leaders such as Helen Cobb and Clinton McKinnon, and scientists such as R. Phillips and Ed Creutz, as well as other prominent citizens of San Diego.

Renewed efforts were made: Carl Hubbs wrote to each of his fellow board members at the zoo, “please consider a personal contribution.” USIU sponsored a conservatory concert to benefit Torrey Pines. The Sierra Club joined with the TPA to sponsor a “Walk for Torrey Pines.” Fourth graders at the Briar Patch School gave $104, and their teacher wrote: “I wish you could have seen the hope and light in their eyes when they asked, ‘is this enough to save the Torrey Pines?’”

Still the donations poured in. The Fletcher company gave $100,000; the pupils of the John Adams school contributed 11 pounds of coins; sums ranging from $1 to $50,000 flooded in from eager supporters of the new extension.

In June, 1970, the state legislature passed the Budget Bill of 1970 and item 355 reappropriated the $900,000 for Torrey Pines that had been previously set aside. Local citizens had raised $800,000 which together with the Federal grant of $400,000 was more than enough to match the state monies, and the funds were released for acquisition of the extension. In October of 1970 Ivy Baker Priest, the state treasurer, sold $100 million in park and school bonds, including the $900,000 for the extension, to a syndicate headed by the Bank of America, at an interest rate of 5.57%.

It was time to celebrate! In mid-November 108 people attended the Victory luncheon at the Atlantis restaurant at Sea World. Sally Spiess and Harriet Allen organized the event at which speeches by park officials and campaign workers mirrored the triumphant feelings of the crowd.

The hard work of acquiring the extension was not over. In a letter to T.J. Cohn from T. Whitaker, December 29, 1970, Whitaker wrote: “The full amount to match the state bond money was not raised ($900,000). We did, however, raise approximately $800,000 in cash and gifts of land, and the state received a grant from the Federal government of $400,000. With these sums on hand the state has commenced purchase of the land for the extension, but we still need money to obtain all the acreage we originally intended to purchase.” It would take four more years until in 1974 the state finally dedicated the extension.
Volunteer to Help at the Extension's 35th Anniversary Celebration
All Docents are invited to participate in the Extension's 35th anniversary celebration on Saturday, August 22, at the Del Mar Heights School. But, as you may guess, your help is needed to ensure a smooth and successful event. If you did not sign up at the July docent meeting, please email Joan Adamo <jadamo@ucsd.edu> to volunteer.

7:30 a.m.  Setup
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  Program, Children's Activities, Exhibits, Refreshments
12:00 to 12:30 p.m.  Cleanup

Training Walks
Not so sure of your knowledge about the Extension? Come to our docent training walks to brush up and learn more--

Tuesday, August 11, 9:00 a.m.  Plants with Margaret Fillius
What's blooming in August? Which plants are endangered?

Thursday, August 13, 9:00 a.m.  Geology with Don Grine
Special features of the Extension? Differences from the main Reserve?

Meet at the parking lot of the Del Mar Heights School, 13555 Boquita Drive, Del Mar.
Directions from Del Mar Heights Road (west of I-5),
-turn south on Mercado    -turn left on Cordero    -turn right on Boquita
-road ends in the school parking lot
There will also be an OAKS walk in the Extension on Thursday, August 20; time and meeting place to be announced.

Torrey Pines Docent Society Bird Survey: July 4, 2009
Total of 72 species (unusual sightings shown with an asterisk and in italics)

Gadwall 3  White-faced Ibis 3
Mallard 4  White-tailed Kite 1
California Quail 19  Red-shouldered Hawk 4
Common Loon 1  Red-tailed Hawk 4
Pied-billed Grebe 7  American Kestrel 1
Western Grebe 1  Peregrine Falcon 2
Sooty Shearwater 1  Clapper Rail (Light-footed) 1
Brown Pelican 20  Common Moorhen 5
Brandt's Cormorant 3  Kildeer 2
Double-crested Cormorant 1  Greater Yellowlegs 1
Least Bittern 1  Willet 1
Great Blue Heron 3  Heermann's Gull 35
Great Egret 7  Western Gull 14
Snowy Egret 12  California Gull 2
Green Heron 1  Caspian Tern 3
Black-crowned Night-Heron 2  Forster's Tern 2

Elegant Tern 1  Mourning Dove 18
White-throated Swift 1  Anna's Hummingbird 22
Nuttall's Woodpecker 5  Downy Woodpecker 1
Black Phoebe 7  Say's Phoebe 2
Ash-throated Flycatcher 3  Cassin's Kingbird 1
Western Scrub-Jay 2  American Crow 51
Common Raven 19  Northern Rough-winged Swallow 9
Cliff Swallow 19  Bushtit 49
House Wren 9  Marsh Wren 2
California Gnatcatcher 11
Wrentit 22  Northern Mockingbird 2
California Thrasher 1  European Starling 1
Phainopepla 1  Orange-crowned Warbler 2
Cowbird 2  Yellow-rumped Warbler 1
Hooded Oriole 7  Common Yellowthroat 11
Brewer's Blackbird 2  House Sparrow 6
Brown-headed Cowbird 2  Lesser Goldfinch 33

Observers: Blair Francis, Herb Knufken, Jack Friery, Gary Grantham, Kathy Dickey, Hank and Jane Baele, Don Grine, and Anonymous
The Pinecone, a calendar of events, notes from business meetings, and other items of specific interest to the docent membership, is published bi-monthly (even months). For odd months we publish the Torreyana. Please submit items by the 20th of the month to the Editor Editors@torreypine.org. Items for publication may also be left in the Torreyana mailbox in the docent library.

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