Preliminary text message: Docents were treated to an extraordinarily entertaining and informative lecture by Richard W. Halsey, Director of the California Chaparral Institute. The Institute is a non-profit research and educational organization focusing on the ecology of California’s shrub land plant communities, wild land fire and how Mediterranean-type ecosystems have helped shape human culture. His enthusiasm and splendid sense of humor kept the group laughing and learning throughout his presentation. His principal message is that we docents must be missionaries for our ecosystems; we

must infect people with our enthusiasm for nature. He said visitors will forget details - names of plants and animals - but will remember and be touched by our passion for the splendor of our Reserve. He went on to talk about the plant communities of a Mediterranean climate, and pointed out that because of protection, southern California may have the most pristine systems in the world – especially at Torrey Pines where some of the oldest growth maritime chaparral thrives. The closest other healthy stand of old growth maritime chaparral is Los Osos Elfin Forest near Morro Bay.

Halsey discussed the place of fire in the life of chaparral, some myths that abound and threaten its existence and truths that need to be known to preserve it.

Here are four truths about chaparral communities:

1. Chaparral can be eliminated by the wrong kind of fire. There are many myths about how chaparral “must burn” to be healthy. Yet if fires are too frequent, the plant community cannot survive. Burls become too stressed and seed banks do not get replenished. The natural state is infrequent (50-100 years), intense, wide-spread, very hot fires fueled by dense growth.

2. Very little grows under the canopy because most seeds are naturally dormant. It is not some plant chemical that keeps seedlings from sprouting, rather it is bunnies, and seeds that lie dormant until fire cracks their hard shells or chemicals in smoke release their growth. After a hot fire there is little competition and few predators to destroy new growth.

3. Chaparral fire is different from a tall forest fire. The latter type of fire destroys undergrowth. Chaparral, being dense, impenetrable and prone to huge fires produces a different fire which burns the canopy and understory. Frequent fire in the chaparral means that the community does not get dense enough to burn hot, destroy the biomass, and prepare seeds for sprouting. In fact, frequent fires may destroy chaparral forever.

4. Old growth chaparral is a beautiful rare resource that does not need to burn. We as docents must educate people to appreciate and value this disappearing resource.

(Cont. on p. 3)
From the President

We welcomed Steve Usher back from his medical sojourn in Japan at our last meeting. Also, Tom and Susan Polakiewicz are back from South America. Welcome back Steve, Susan and Tom!

As we wait for the California Legislature to decide the fate of the State Park System, the Docent Society has been active in the effort to keep our parks open. The latest event was a rally at the North Beach parking entrance to support the proposed State Park Access Fee. There may be one or two of you who have not yet heard of the Fee. Under the plan voted out of Committee, Parks will lose their entire General Fund Budget allocation. The registration fee for each auto in California will be increased by $15. These funds will be dedicated to the Parks. This combination should substantially increase funds available to the Parks over the inadequate General Fund allocations of the past few years. Another feature of the Access Fee is that every auto with a California license plate will be allowed free entrance to all day use State Park areas. At long last, this proposal provides a long term solution to State Park funding. If you have not already done so, please write your assembly member and state senator to support the fee. Your Reserve thanks you.

A group of docents has been meeting periodically to discuss ideas for repairing and upgrading the Lodge and Museum. Ideas have ranged from repainting the interior to constructing a whale and marine mammal display in the enclosure on the west side of the Lodge. These ideas are still in the discussion and investigation phase, and we need a lot of work before any of the proposals can be a reality. The group has come up with a lot of creative ideas that could increase the enjoyment of the Reserve and heightened the interpretive experience for our visitors. If you have ideas that you think would assist this effort, give me a call or send an email.

Reminder: On August 22nd, the Torrey Pines Association and the Docent Society will be holding a 35th birthday party for the Extension. Lots of activities are planned, including dedication of new interpretive signs, docent-led walks, native plant displays and other interpretive opportunities. Please keep the date clear on your calendar. Several training walks will be scheduled in the Extension in the next month or so. Come over to the Extension and we will learn about this “hidden” part of our Reserve.

Pass the Access Fee!

Rick Vogel
President,
Torrey Pines Docent Society
So – we must connect people, especially children, with nature and become “Chaparralians,” communicating our love for this rare natural environment. You will never know how many visitors you will impact with your passion!

Find Richard Halsey’s new updated revision of Fire, Chaparral and Survival in Southern California in the docent bookstore.

Docent Chronicles
June '09
Next General Meeting
July 11, 2009  9 a.m.
St Peter’s Episcopal Church
Rec Hall
334 14th St
Del Mar
Program: Trail Interpretation
Project Presentations by newly graduated docents.

President Rick Vogel called the meeting to order at 10:55. The 2009 Docent class graduated by treating us to a song and guitar accompaniment by their class minstrel, Richard Chance. (See page 4)

Morning lodge duty people should give visitors a dated parking pass and take their $8 parking fee money if the kiosk is unattended, putting the money in the donation box.

Discussion of closing the Reserve was substantial, but as no decisions have been made and it is all speculative discussion, the exchange of ideas is not detailed here. The question arose about forming a group to maintain progress in times of disruption such as these. No decision was made on this.

Treasurer’s report: (Ken King) May’s store sales are $3,000, which is better than May's historical average, and total income was $4,800. But expenses for the month were $6,400, so our cash flow was a negative $1,600 compared to the small surplus that we had planned. We still have about $58,000 in the bank, though.

Ranger Report: Razor Point trail is now open to Yucca Point. (Ed. Note: The entire trail system is now complete and open. [Temporary maintenance closures, however, may occur at any time.]) The ranger staff is not able to comment on Reserve closure issues.

TPA Report: Peter Jensen’s letter was published and is considered very well done. It is posted in the docent room.

Children’s Program: (Laura Lowenstein) It was a good year, ending in May. Thanks to all participants. Laura asked all Children's Program participants to stand so they could be recognized and thanked.

Communications: (Ann Williamson) Will Cox will be developing a system to register hours remotely.

Library: (Mike Yang) New additions are books on humming birds and peregrine falcons.

Bookstore: (Nancy Woodworth) Judy Schulman has included baby shoes woven of Torrey pine needles with her craft. The store carries Rick Halsey’s book on chaparral fires; the old edition will be replaced by the new one.

Trail Patrol: (Mike Pisor) Razor Point is now open and, to Mike, seems “cozy.” An Eagle Scout project has added eight new boxes for distributing maps at trail heads. Thank you to the Seabees for their efforts to maintain the trails. Training for Trail Patrol will likely be in September to allow general orientation of new docents.

Recycling: (Frank Burham) Someone stole the cans to be recycled! There are 18 recycle members.

Seabees: Meet at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesdays to work on the trails.

Extension Celebration: August 22 will have John Neville’s presentation on snakes and Nancy Conney of Sky Hunters Raptor Education and Rehabilitation. There will be docent walks coordinated by Joan Adamo.

Whacky Weeders: (Barbara Wallach for Steve Tarkington) Vests are available to Whacky Weeders for $7 for off-trail work. We meet at 8:30 a.m. on Mondays, but come any time and leave any time.

Point of Sale devices: (Ken King) The cash register project is nearing completion. Is there any concern about spending the approximately $5,000 for a system to make life easier for the lodge duty volunteers? The system will accommodate credit cards. We are the only “park” store to currently use paper and pencil. No concerns were heard. The selection of a vendor is imminent and will be made by the committee of Rick Vogel, Nancy Woodworth, Cecil Hornbeck and me.

Connie Beardsley requested an organizer or chairperson for the Plein Air Festival (October 31, 2009).
Welcome to the New Docents of 2009

Photos by Herb Knufken

The proud 2009 class of 16 new docents graduated with honors on June 14, 2009. After the presentation of their badges, new docent Christie Anderson spoke, as their representative, of their gratitude to the training team and all the docents who presented topics, mentored and led walks. Richard Chance played his guitar and sang a delightful original song about being a bird-nerd, a plant-nerd, a nature-nerd and best of all, a docent. We surely have 16 wonderful additions this year, devoted folks who are going to make great contributions to Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve and our docent society.

Children's Program

July 2009

Summer is here and we hope everyone who worked so hard this past school year with the Children’s Program is enjoying a few months off. There are a few things to note as these days rush by.

A field trip to San Elijo Lagoon is planned for July 23 at 9 a.m. Meet at Lomas Santa Fe and Rios (north end of cul-de-sac) in Solana Beach. Look for more information via email as the date nears or call Laura or Cecily.

We will all meet again at a workshop for 2009-2010 preparation on Sept. 10th at 9 a.m.

Enjoy the summer and the Reserve.

Cecily Goode
Children’s Program Director
Laura Lowenstein
Program Coordinator

Trail Patrol Report

by Mike Pisor

Good news! Razor Point trail is open. It is a "round-trip" until refurbishing of the trail that links up to Red Butte is completed. [Ed Note: It is now completely open] It was great to stand at the Overlook and greet a few visitors. The trail poles seem secure and the small over-look area suits the narrow confines of the point.

Trail patrol put in a total of 100 hours on 182 main Reserve trails and 9 Extension trails in the month of May.

We are now in the summer months...do not forget to patrol on the weekends, take maps to the trail boxes and PLEASE check the lodge to ensure the desk is covered before you go out. LODGE DUTY HAS PRECEDENCE OVER TRAIL PATROL.

A huge round of applause goes out to the SEABEES (Sheldon Krueger and Frank Burham and all who assist) for the obvious maintenance improvements that they are accomplishing on the trails. Cables, poles, sand relocation and planning future work is all to their credit and the benefit of the Reserve.

Trail Notes

George Beardsley writes:

May 16: A visitor at the beach observed a pelican kill itself by diving into the beach; evidently it mistook the reflective wet sand for water. Sure enough, a dead pelican was there, just south of tower #1. I wonder how often this happens? The tide was fairly low when I saw the corpse; I expect it to have been swept out to sea with the next rising tide.
Reminders for questions about groups
by Diane Greening

Handle educational group inquiries as follows:

- All educational groups must reserve through the website: www.torreypine.org, Education tab, Teacher’s Corner.
- Signups for the docent-led Children’s Program will not be available until August 15th.
- School groups wanting to come in the summer, or on a self-guided trip can reserve a Ranger/Park Aide talk at least two weeks in advance.
- Others may schedule a Special Walk for a fee.
- Please do not accept “reservations” by phone. We use email exclusively to ensure fairness (first come, first served) so that docents and Park Aides can track when groups are in the Reserve.

Groups (educational or otherwise) planning to use only the beach facilities should get a permit from Debbie Valdez, dvaldez@parks.ca.gov. Debbie also issues wedding, memorial service, and commercial photography permits.

Finally, if you see parents with children in the Lodge, please let them know about the Junior Ranger program that starts at 10 a.m. on M/W/F through August 14th.

As we work to improve the museum, you may find some exhibits have been moved or taken out temporarily while work is being done. I’ll try to post changes in the Lodge Duty Manual so that you’ll know what’s going on and where things are.

Diane Greening

Lodge Notes

Keep your eyes open for changes at the Lodge. You may have already noticed the Kumeyaay display now has larger text and a brighter background or the new cactus and fern display. Museum committee members Lillian Lachicotte, Frank Burham, Barbara Wallach, Nancy Woodworth, Laura Lowenstein, Judy Schulman, Ken King, Nan Danninger, Ranger Mike Winterton and Interpreter Diane Greening have been discussing many topics: repair and painting, better displays of our collection, and new exhibits. Our goals are to preserve the historic character of the Lodge while improving the interpretive experience for visitors with better-organized, legible exhibits. Current projects include repairing and refinishing the display cabinets (thanks to the Seabees), refreshing the displays inside, and creating a history book with photos and information about early Torrey Pines.

As we work to improve the museum, you may find some exhibits have been moved or taken out temporarily while work is being done. I’ll try to post changes in the Lodge Duty Manual so that you’ll know what’s going on and where things are.

Diane Greening

Docent Coordinators

Bird Count- Kathy Estey
Bookstore- Nancy Woodworth
Children’s Program- Cecily Goode*
Duty Calendar- Barbara McCardle,* Irene Larrimore*
Library- Mike Yang, Bonnie Hornbeck
Membership- Walt Desmond
Pincone- Lillian Lachicotte
Programs- Sherry Doolittle*
Recycling- Frank Burham
Refreshments- Chuck Anders
Special Walks- Margaret Fillius
Torreyana- Bobbi Krueger
Trail Patrol- Mike Pisor
Training- Jeff Spivak*, Jeannie Smith
Whacky Weeders- Stephanie “Steve” Tarkington
See Roster for phone or email.

Historrey A-Z

stands for something Different.

Instead of an article, this month I would like to share with you photos from a pamphlet for the Torrey Pines Day Camp. (see page 6)

Ed Note: Judy Schulman was a 2008-2009 nominee for the UCSD Employee of the Year-Health Sciences Division. In addition to her accomplishments as an 11-year UCSD employee, her 31 years of community service as a member of the Torrey Pines Docent Society was a deciding factor in her nomination.

July 2009 Torreypines
1950s, TPSR was the location of this camp, which was run by the San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation. Director Ivan Olsen led the camp for its over 25-year duration. Thousands of San Diego children learned about nature through hiking, making crafts, swimming, and participating in campfires and cookouts. My thanks to Diana Bergen for giving me this pamphlet. By the way she is the dark-haired little girl that appears in both photos. She is currently the Senior Landscape Architect at UCSD and a former TPA president. Obviously attending this camp was a good influence! For more information about the camp, please refer to Bobbi Krueger’s article in the January 2008 Torreyana.

THE CACHET OF GEOCACHING
By Ken King

When my children were little, they loved a game that we later called “orienteering,” where I would lay out a short course, hand them a compass, and say: “Let’s walk 30 paces along the 53° line and see if we can find the next instruction.”

Thanks to a marvelous technological device - Global Positioning System (GPS) - today’s “orienteering” is called “geocaching”. At www.geocaching.com you find this definition: “Geocaching is a high-tech treasure hunting game played throughout the world by adventure seekers equipped with GPS devices. The basic idea is to locate hidden containers, called geocaches, outdoors and then share your experiences online. Geocaching is enjoyed by people from all age groups, with a strong sense of community and support for the environment.”

Sounds like fun, right? Now think of our beloved Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve. In our May monthly meeting docents expressed concerns with geocaching related to off-trail activity, spiders and snakes lurking near the containers, and who-knows-what hidden in the boxes.

It’s a relief to know that the California State Parks has a thoughtful policy on geocaching at www.parks.ca.gov. It states: “Caches may be allowed where they do not affect natural, cultural and historical resources, visitor safety or other park users.” That means that in Cultural Reserves, Natural Reserves (that would be Torrey Pines) and State Historic Parks, geocaching is “typically not allowed or encouraged (unless approved by the District Superintendent).”

Sure enough, on the posted list of specific State Parks, Torrey Pines SB and Torrey Pines Natural Reserve allow “virtual caches only.” Virtual caches are managed at www.waymarking.com. About 200,000 locations worldwide are listed, and a half-dozen of them are in or near our park. Rather than finding a physical treasure, Waymarking “is a way to mark unique locations on the planet and give them a voice. While GPS technology allows us to pinpoint any location on the planet, mark the location, and share it with others, Waymarking is the toolset for categorizing and adding unique information for that location.”

Geocaching.com appears to be a very responsible organization, discouraging participants from placing caches in sensitive areas, and generally cooperating with State Parks when an illegal cache is removed. However, if you search for “torrey pines” on the Geocaching.com site, you will find a great little geology lesson on marine terraces that draws in part from information attributed to our own Don Grine! It describes a nature walk and even has a little quiz at the end of it.

If docents discover a cache in the park, leave it and notify a ranger of its location. If I get asked about geocaching when I am on lodge duty, nature walks, or trail patrol, I will let the visitor know that virtual caches are allowed, and let them know about waymarking.com!
Torrey Pines Docent Society Bird Survey: June 6, 2009

Number of species: 62

Gadwall 8
Mallard 10
California Quail 13
Pacific Loon 1
Common Loon 1
Pied-billed Grebe 6
Brown Pelican 20
Brandt's Cormorant 2
Double-crested Cormorant 6
Great Blue Heron 1
Great Egret 7
Snowy Egret 16
Green Heron 1
Black-crowned Night-heron 1
Osprey 1
White-tailed Kite 1

Northern Harrier 1
Red-tailed Hawk 5
American Kestrel 3
Peregrine Falcon 5
Common Moorhen 2
Killdeer 4
Heermann's Gull 3
Western Gull 11
Caspian Tern 15
Elegant Tern 47
Mourning Dove 17
Greater Roadrunner 1
White-throated Swift 9
Anna's Hummingbird 24
Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird 3
Nuttall's Woodpecker 3
Olive-sided Flycatcher 2
Black Phoebe 6

Cassin's Kingbird 1
Western Scrub-jay 2
American Crow 8
Common Raven 21
Northern Rough-winged Swallow 18
Cliff Swallow 31
Bushtit 4
House Wren 2
Marsh Wren 2
California Gnatcatcher 8
Wrentit 18
Northern Mockingbird 4
California Thrasher 2
European Starling 3
Orange-crowned Warbler 1
Yellow Warbler 2
Common Yellowthroat 15
Yellow-breasted Chat 1

Spotted Towhee 19
California Towhee 27
Savannah Sparrow
(Belding's) 10
Song Sparrow 6
Black-headed Grosbeak 2
Red-winged Blackbird 19
Hooded Oriole 1
House Finch 150
Lesser Goldfinch 19
House Sparrow 3

Observers:
Blair Francis, Will Cox, Kathy Dickey, Hank & Jane Baele, Don Grine, Rhea Bridy, Herb Knufken, and Jack Friery

A protest rally protesting the possible closing of Torrey Pines and other State Parks was held on June 20, 2009. Photos taken there by Herb Knufken may be seen at this link: www.pbase.com/herb1rm/tp_protest

Previous months are posted on the TPSNR website at www.torreypine.org
On the menu bar point to "Activities" and then click on "Bird-sightings."
### July 2009 TPDS Visitor Center Duty Calendar - Updated 6/29/09

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To sign up for an opening, call docent on duty (858 755-8219) to confirm the time & write your name in the Logbook. If you cannot do your duty, please try to find your own substitute by switching with another docent or using the short-notice list. Then call the docent on duty to make the change in the Logbook. **Coordinators:** Irene Larimore & Barbara McCardle