

MAU MONTHLY

Newsletter of the Mounted Assistance Unit for the California State Parks

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July 2010

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

JoDean Nicolette, President

Hey Folks! I hope your summer is going well. If you're like me, the long days have definitely offered more opportunities to ride. I have enjoyed seeing you out there in all three parks and in the regional parks as well.

This summer brings us some great new MAU activities. Several members provided support for a ceremony at Jack London State Park, and I am hoping for more opportunities like this for us in the future. In addition, we will be having our second annual MAU Play Day soon (read more about both in this newsletter).

I am happy to remind you all that the licensing fee made it onto the 2010 ballot. Please shamelessly advocate for this measure, which will provide stable funding for the state parks in the future.

Remember to keep your eyes and ears open for hazards out there. We have had a few close encounters with rattlers, and other critters. As always, ride safe!
JoDean

LICENSING FEE ON THE BALLOT

Great news! Secretary of State Bowen certified the California State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund Act of 2010 for the November 2010 ballot! Thanks to everyone who helped the campaign gather more than 760,000 signatures, nearly twice the number required to qualify the measure! Our MAU added its name to the official list of supporters. Let all your friends know how important this initiative is for our state parks!

MAU'S PARTICIPATE IN GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY

On Sunday, June 20th, 8 equestrians and 3 cyclists provided an official and uniformed presence for the groundbreaking ceremony of the Sonoma Mountain North Slope Trail, which is part of the larger Bay Area Ridge Trail project. The North Slope segment connects Jacobs Ranch to Jack London State Historic Park. The planning committee for this event consisted of the Open Space District, Sonoma Land Trust, LandPaths, the Bay Area Ridge

Trail Council, Sonoma Mountain Preservation, and the state and regional parks. Mounted Unit members patrolled from the Jack London parking area to the Sonoma Mountain summit, and offered assistance and education. Despite the presence of hundreds of guests, the horses were calm and approachable. The success of this event sets a great precedent for MAU participation in future state park events. If you're interested in future events, let us know.

CELEBRATING JACK LONDON STATE HISTORIC PARK'S 50th ANNIVERSARY

As you likely know, this summer we are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of Jack London State Historic Park. The VMNHA and the volunteers have done a great job organizing and setting up a series of fabulous events. We should send out a special thanks to Elisa Stancil (VMNHA Board member, and spouse of MAU records keeper Chuck Levine) for all the legwork and organizing.

Events include June 27th's Celebrate the Park event,

which was a well-attended community celebration featuring local businesses and artists, and the Moonlight Adventure, scheduled for July 24th. The Moonlight Adventure features behind the scene tours of the Jack London property, a silent auction, live music, and a special presentation by Sue Hodson, Literary Curator of the Jack London Collection, Huntington Library, in San Marino, Ca. Susan St. Marie is asking for volunteers for this event. Please contact her if you are interested in helping. In addition to celebrating the lives of Jack and Charmian London and the rich history of the park, the 50th Celebration is a fundraiser. All proceeds will go to VMNHA and their efforts to support our Valley of the Moon state parks. For more info, visit www.jacklondon50th.com. To volunteer, contact Susan at sstmarie@parks.ca.gov, or Elisa at estancil@earthlink.net.

MEMBER OF THE MONTH

Get to know your fellow MAUs!

July member: **LUNA**



Debby and Luna at the beach

Breed: Peruvian Paso (PP)

Member since: 1995

Coloring: Bay

Escort: Debby Bailey

Discipline: Trail riding

I have qualified four Peruvian Pasos for the MAU (Ensueno, Travis, Margarita, and Luna). I am proud to tell you that my Peruvian Pasos were the first gaited horses on the MAU. Ensueno was my first PP to qualify (he was 13) and he even received recognition from the National Peruvian Horse Registry for his accomplishment! Ensueno and I patrolled the parks proudly together until his death at the age of 27. I enjoy interacting with the public and doing what I can to help keep our parks preserved and safe for our visitors. But to be honest, I am selfish and I really enjoy the time I spend on the back of my equine buddies, and the time I have to chat with my MAU friends. I was never much of a hiker, and if it wasn't for my horses and the MAU, I would have never been able to enjoy the beauty of our state parks here in Sonoma County as much as I have. I am saddened by the fact that I can't ride as much as I used to, but I am trying to graciously accept this. It surely helps to know that our unit is thriving and that it will continue to do so, due to the commitment each of you has made. It is a joy for me to see that the MAU's value has been recognized by both equestrians and non-equestrians. I have had the greatest time, and made some of the most wonderful friends. I got to become so close to my horses as a result of MAU. I wish each of you the same.

MAU PLAY DAY:

OCTOBER 16th!

Save the Date! October 16th is set for another rowdy and fun Play Day with your fellow MAUs! Josette Brault will be lending her expertise to the event set up. The event will be held at the Rincon Riders arena, and we will be saddled and ready to start at 9am. Make sure you let me know if you'll be attending so that we'll have a head count (jdnicollette@earthlink.net).

LAKE SONOMA MAU

If you are interested in joining the Lake Sonoma MAU/BAU, contact MAUs Marci Cook (mcook@wusd.org) or Nadine Lavell (nlavell@sonic.net), or call Cindy Rowe at 707-484-8717. To participate, you'll attend an interview/orientation, and a horse or mule testing as required. They require 6 patrols a year.

UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES

Fall Horse Testing:

September 18th. Saddled and ready at 10am at the Spring Lake Parking Lot.

Play Day: October 16th.

Saddled and ready at 9am.

Fall Membership Meeting:

November 13th. SCDRC 5:30 for dinner, then meeting to follow.

