

MAU MONTHLY

Newsletter of the Mounted Assistance Unit for the California State Parks

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

JoDean Nicolette, President

Keeping dry? As I am writing this we are having the first real break in the weather for about a month. I have sure missed riding and hanging out with my horses. I bet you have too.

As you start to get out there again, or even intrepidly ride in the rain, keep this in mind: Each rider, horse, and horse-rider team is different in confidence, ability, and impact. As you decide where and when to ride, please use your best judgment. Consider your safety, the safety of your mount, and the safety of park visitors. Please also consider your impact on the park trails we so often take for granted. We'll do our best to keep you posted on the conditions and safety as information becomes available.

We have lots of great stuff planned this year! Wildflower Tours, Play Days, Park Support, and more! Read on to fill yourself in.

Ride safe and well.
JoDean

MAUs/BAUs "HOOF IT" FOR ANNADEL

On February 7th hikers, cyclists, and equestrians collaborated to make the first annual Annadel State Park Half Marathon Fundraiser a huge success. The run, co-sponsored by Fleet Feet Sports and Empire Runners, was conceived of and largely organized by Fleet Feet manager Marc Strozyk.

Three hundred runners covered thirteen miles through hill and dale (not to mention mud, creeks, and puddles) to show their support for our beloved state park. MAU and BAU members offered support by riding the course in the days before the race to identify blockages, offering a uniformed presence along the course on race day, and by riding sweep after the race. Proceeds from entry fees, totally \$20,000 (yes, you read it correctly), were donated to a local fund for Annadel.

VISITORS CENTER UPDATE

A lively and dedicated group met in early January to start plans for the new Annadel Visitors center.

Representatives from all user-groups attended, as well as representatives from the Valley of the Moon Natural History Association, and the public. The meeting, facilitated by Karen Barrett, Regional interpretive Specialist, focused on designing exhibits for the new facility. The building, partially constructed, sits next to the ranger offices (modular) on Channel Drive as you enter the park. If you are interested in participating in future planning meetings, or have ideas, email Karen Barrett at kbarr@parks.ca.gov.

NEW PARK HOURS

YAY! Jack London is open seven days/week again! I ran into Ranger Lawton, who asked me to put out the good word. Sugarloaf Ridge is also open for day use seven days/week. Annadel remains open at full capacity as well. The fight is not over—keep the pressure on, and read on for more you can do!

SUPPORTING YOUR STATE PARKS

State Parks Advocacy Day is March 8th this year. The state parks need you and your voice in Sacramento. I checked with the powers-that-be, and it is

A-OK to show up in your uniform to this event. Quote: "This is one day that rabble-rousing in uniform is sanctioned." If you are interested in going, please feel free to use the Yahoo list serve to arrange carpooling. For more info check out www.calparks.org.

DOCENT TRAINING DATES SET

The dates for this spring's training have been set for the following Saturdays: March 20 and 27, April 10, 17, and 24, and May 1. Recruit your friends. We always need great volunteers. Folks interested should contact Susan for more info (sstmarie@parks.ca.gov).

MEMBER OF THE MONTH

Get to know your fellow MAUs!

March member: **POPPY**
AKA: California Poppy
Breed: Morgan



Age: 13 years old
Member since: 1986
Coloring: Chestnut w/one white sock and a fuzzy star
Escorts: Mickey Cooke
Discipline: Trail riding

Poppy is one of three Morgan MAU horses at our place in Glen Ellen. Flora, her dam, is 30 and Flyboy is 20. They work hard to keep Poppy in line.

Poppy and Flora come from the Woodside Morgan line in Olema. Born in a poppy patch in the month of May, she came by her name honestly. She likes to "go!" These Morgans have been MAU volunteers for 24 years. If they could talk what tales they could tell about life in our parks! Although Flora and Flyboy are contending with Cushings syndrome now, Flyboy is still doing his patrols. He enjoys getting out.

Poppy is usually found patrolling on Sonoma Mountain trails at Jack London or in the regional park or Sonoma Developmental Center in Sonoma Valley. She also enjoys Tolay Regional Park.

BACKCOUNTRY HORSEMEN FIRST AID/WILDERNESS CLASS A HUGE SUCCESS

Good for you if you attended the Backcountry Horsemen First Aid and Wilderness Medicine course the last weekend in January! The attendance was great and the teacher was fabulous. The weather undermined them a little by presenting beautiful days to ride on the course weekend. If you missed it, don't worry! They'll be offering another opportunity this spring. Watch for a Large Animal Rescue Course and First Aid for Horses, as well. Watch this newsletter, our listserve or the BCHC site (www.northbayunit.com) for more info.

LARGE ANIMAL RESCUE GUIDE AVAILABLE

The likelihood that a horse will survive an accident (automobile or other) is more dependent on the knowledge and confidence of the rescuers than the extent of injury to the horse. Learn what to do (and how) if your horse gets into a tough spot with this nifty new publication by Michelle Staples. SAVE YOUR HORSE: A Horse Owner's Guide to Large Animal Rescue is a thorough, easy to read guide about the safest way to get large animals out of unplanned situations. The MAU, by the way, donated a copy to the Diablo Vista State Park Rangers. BCHC purchased a bunch at bulk rate, so you can get them cheaper. For a copy, contact MAU member Sandra VanVoorhis at sanvan@grapevinetrading.com.

WILDFLOWER RIDE DATES SET

Marci Cook and Marci Phillips are offering an encore performance of their popular Wildflower Tour rides this spring. Save the dates: April 17th and May 8th at Annadel. More details to come!

SAVE THE DATES!!
Spring Horse Testing: April 24th
Spring Membership Meeting: May 2nd
Fall Horse Testing: September 11th
Fall Membership Meeting: November 13th

