



MOONLETTER

Valley of the Moon Natural History Association, Summer edition, June 2004

Valley of the Moon Summer Events

Hike to the summit of Jack London State Historic Park With Bill and Dave Saturday June 5th 9:45 a.m.

Audubon Canyon Ranch Docent Tour Saturday June 19 rsvp Joyce 938-4827

4th of July Hike Fund Raiser with Bill Limited spaces rsvp 938-5216

Coming Attractions :

Jack London Films in the Old Winery Ruins

Docent Recognition Dinner

Valley of the Moon State Parks Graduates 35 New Docents

On Saturday, May 8, thirty-five new docents graduated and were treated to a graduation picnic provided by the Valley of the Moon Natural History Association. Chefs Dave Chalk and Bill Meyers from Bill and Dave's Hikes expertly manned the grill. The "tamale party" was made up of John and Nobuko Felton, Barbara Allen, Helga Barron, Sandy Wald, John Risse, Dave Chalk, Joyce Moldovan and Pat Randall. Pat Randall's kitchen was turned into a tamale assembly line and produced the best tamales ever for the graduation picnic.

This year's training featured a variety of excellent guest speakers including Greg Hayes, Lou Leal, Alan Baker, Chuck Whatford, Breck Parkman, and our Rangers, Angy and Sheryl.

The skills and talents of the new docents are exceptional and varied. Their expertise will provide the park visitors with a heightened sense of energy and enthusiasm for our local parks. It has been a pleasure working with all of the new volunteers and we look forward to our continued association with everyone.



Al Stumpf Receives State Medallion

The docent graduation was greatly enhanced with the presentation by Supervising Ranger Angy Nowicki of the State Medallion to Albert Stumpf. Al has distinguished himself by organizing, scheduling and leading hikes of all types including those of K-12 school children, seniors and commercial.



Al's initiative, commitment and leadership has led to the opening of the Pig Palace, the restoration of the Cottage and the development of interpretive panels at Jack London State Historic Park.

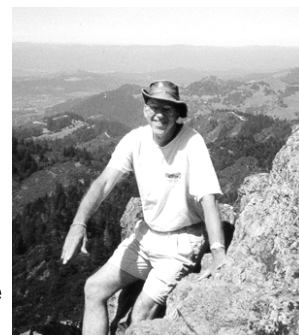
Al continues to serve as a role model to all new and continuing docents. His contributions will enhance the visitors experience for many years to come.

Dave Chalk Honored at Sonoma County Volunteer Awards Luncheon

Dave Chalk was honored at the 31st Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon. This event celebrates the many efforts of volunteers in Sonoma County. It was Dave's leadership abilities and his spirit of community that earned him this award.

Dave has brought his spirit of community to the trail work crew, now called the "trail crew family." He organizes the crews and together they work to make the parks accessible and safe for all visitors. In addition Dave and his hiking partner, Bill Myers initiated the enormously popular "Dave and Bill Hikes". Both he and Bill take great care in ensuring that all people are included in these hikes. A community of hikers has truly been formed because of their leadership skills.

The experience of the park visitors has been greatly enhanced by Dave's contribution.



Making Jack London Park More Visitor-Friendly

By Al Stumpf



Most visitors tour the Beauty Ranch on their own, without a docent guide. They find interesting old buildings with a fenced-off interior and no explanation of the buildings' story. The Project Planning Committee (Greg Hayes, Sheryl Lawton, Lou Leal, Al

Stumpf) is working hard to explain Jack London's philosophy in making the Beauty Ranch a functionally integrated and self-sustaining business. We will make these old buildings more accessible and provide interpretive panels to explain their history and function.

A new large-scale trail map of the park which includes the addition of the Developmental Center property has been completed and will be displayed in "Shelter Panels" at the museum parking lot, at the upper parking lot, at the lake, at the Deer Camp and at the Sonoma Ridge Trail.

The design of three interpretive panels (these are the low, angled panels) is nearing completion. The first panel will explain Jack's overall philosophy in building the Beauty Ranch; a second and third panel will explain the function and history of the barns and the Pig Palace. We expect to sign a contract with a graphic design firm in the near future. The panels may be in the ground by early fall. Other panels under development will interpret the cluster of buildings and ruins around the silos; the Eucalyptus trees and the terraced hills; the Spineless Cactus garden; the Ancient Redwood Tree and Jack London's Lake. These projects are partially funded by a grant from the Sonoma County Landmarks Commission and by VMNHA.

Last year, a work crew from the Benziger Family Winery cleaned out the Pig Palace, moved fences and made other repairs to open the Pig Palace to park visitors. On May 27, the winery will build a graveled handicap-accessible trail from the main trail below the Pig Palace to the Silos and from there, to the Smoke House. This small, well-preserved building has been hidden in the woods from most visitors by the lack of a trail. The cost of materials will be paid by VMNHA. We are deeply grateful to the Winery and its workers for their hard work and support of the park.

That's not all! The committee is working with Karen Barrett, District Interpretive Specialist, to open the Distillery Barn to the visitors. This project, funded by the State, will display and interpret the farm equipment used by Jack London and the Shepard family during the period when horses were the main source of power on farms and ranches. The project will soon go to bid.

Photos of Cottage Restoration by Bill Knill



Docent Council Elections

The Docent Council recently held their election of officers. Lou Leas who has served as President and Vice President for the past several years passed the torch to John Felton as President. Lou had done a remarkable job and he will be missed. He has agreed to continue on the Council and has initiated an excellent mentor training program for all new docents.



John Felton has been on the Docent Council for year and is the person we have turned to for scheduling the museum, working on the golf cart and helping with special events.

Dave Chalk will serve as the vice-president. Most of us know Dave through his work with the "trail crew family" and Bill and Dave's Hikes. He has served in a leadership capacity for two years.

Renate Bialy who recently graduated from the new docent class will serve as secretary. She has a strong background in administration, education, and foreign languages including Russian

We welcome Janice Quimby, Joan Allnut and Renate Bialy new docents, who participated in the June docent meeting. The Docent Council meeting is open to all members. The Council meets the third Monday of each month at 10:00 a.m. We are currently working on special docent events and welcome your participation.

M.A.U. President's Message for June 2004

We had a successful general meeting on May 1, 2004. Approximately 30 members were in attendance and many of us met early for horse testing. New trainee, Sarah Reid, qualified her horse, and existing members, Ishi LeClaire and Carol Heath, qualified new mounts. Our meeting was held at Lake Il-sanjo. Presentations were made to Mary Ann Daly who retired after many years of service to MAU, and to Mitch Blumenthal, who was our vice-president. Sharmaine Ege, our secretary, agreed to assume Mitch's vice-presidential responsibilities for the remainder of this year. Diane Baronoski volunteered for secretarial duties, and Isabel Reinecker volunteered as member-at-large. So, I am grateful to say that we once again have a full board! One hundred hour bar pins were presented to Donna Matern and to Jean Kilgore. Congratulations!



Ranger Matt from the Regional Parks presented members with keys to our room at Oak Knolls. Our packs and radio will be stored at this location. The Regional Parks have also agreed to place a table and chair in this room. If you were not present at the meeting and need a key, please make arrangements to obtain one from Ranger Bob at Annadel. Sharmaine presented our members with several "what to do if" situations. Ranger Bob helped to critique our answers and the whole session proved to be most informative. Kathy Sparling had t-shirts available for purchase. There are a few left. The short sleeve ones are light blue and cost \$9.00; the long sleeve ones are gray and cost \$11.00. If you would like one of these, or would prefer to order another type, please contact Kathy at 824-8224. Sharmaine had MAU business cards for each of us printed up. These are for distribution when you are on the trails and someone you meet asks for information about our organization. They will be good to have, so thank-you, Sharmaine. I have the extra business cards in my possession. If you need some, please contact me at 838-2638. There have been some questions about park permits. They were awarded to members on the basis of time committed last year. If you did not receive a permit, and you are patrolling this year and need one, please contact me and I will make arrangements with Joyce Moldovan, our volunteer co-coordinator, so that you can obtain one. Our saddlebags from Oak Knolls are missing. Did anyone take them home to wash? Please let us know and return them to the Ranger Station at Oak Knolls. They will make sure the saddlebags get to our office. We also had a good deal of discussion about our rule that states you must have 100 hours of patrol time with another MAU member in order to become a senior member. Some people feel this rule is fine, others feel it needs to be changed to 50 hours of patrol time with another MAU member instead. A motion was passed that we consider this rule change. This rule is in our by-laws and in order to change such a rule, we must notify our membership at least 30 days prior to our general meeting, and then have an election on the issue. We will have our next general meeting on Nov. 7, 2004 (please mark your calendars). The location is still to be determined. So, consider yourselves notified. Think hard about the issue. There are valid points to both sides, and be prepared to vote in November.

It was fun to see so many of you and your mounts at our meeting! All the horses behaved reasonably well considering there were so many. I have one suggestion for the future, and it is just my opinion based on my experiences. Whenever I ride one of my horses with a large group I always try to stay at least one horse length away from another horse, and if we stop, I purposely look for a hitching rail or tree away from where other horses are tied. You just never know when one of them might take a dislike to another. The weather is beautiful! I hope each of you are well and can get out to enjoy a patrol. Debby

Docent News and Notes

We are entering our busiest time of year and sincerely appreciate all of your efforts.

Several wonderful events including the Plowing Play sponsored by the North Coast Horse and Mule Association and the Jack London Symposium have already occurred at Jack London state Historic Park. Your efforts contributed to the success of these events.

We are reminding all volunteers and docents to be accessible to the visitors during their scheduled volunteer hours. The golf cart, as an example, should be attended to during those hours whether or not visitors request assistance. Those who are in the Cottage, please remember to tour the Cottage with the visitors.

It is also very important that you turn in your hours. You can turn them in either by filling out the forms provided at each park or by going on-line to: jacklondonshp@aol.com.

Thank you for your efforts and cooperation.

Valley of the Moon
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California State Parks, Valley Sector
Jack London State Historic Park
2400 London Ranch Rd.,
Glen Ellen, CA 95442
Basic Membership: \$20 per year

Board of Directors:

Ted Mogel, President
Lou Leal, Vice President, Projects
Norman Lash, Vice President, Administrative
Jim Adams, Secretary
Al Stumpf, Treasurer
Matt Atkinson
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Mary Catherine Doherty

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Articles submitted for publication are welcome and should be received by the 15th of the month, unless prior arrangements have been made.

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