

CALENDAR

Celebrity Breakfast

Tuesday, April 1st, 7:30 - 9 a.m.

Morro Bay Veteran's Hall

\$10 ticket

Children's Day at the Plaza

Saturday, April 5th, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Mission, San Luis Obispo

State Park Advocacy Day

Monday, April 7th, Sacramento

CCNHA Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, April 10th, 6 p.m.

*Museum of Natural History
Auditorium*

Earth Day

Saturday, April 19th, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Mission, San Luis Obispo

Environmental Award

Saturday, April 19th, 3 p.m.

*Museum of Natural History
Auditorium*

"Up Close in the Parks" Art Exhibit

Opening Night: Thurs, May 1,

4 - 6 p.m.,

*Museum of Natural History
Auditorium*

Free to Public

Champagne and Hors d'oeuvres

CCNHA Executive Director

Denise Lapp Tallman

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E-mail: ccnha@MorroBayMuseum.org

Web Site: www.MorroBayMuseum.org

Have Breakfast with Local Celebrities

Please join us for the 1st annual Celebrity Breakfast where local celebrities will serve breakfast to participants and offer little "extras" for tips. The event will be held on Tuesday, April 1 (no foolin'!) at the Veteran's Hall on Surf Street in Morro Bay from 7:30 to 9 a.m. The meal includes sausage, fresh fruit, pancakes, blueberry coffecake, coffee and juice along with Champagne for Mimosa's!!! Tickets are \$10 and proceeds benefit the Central Coast Natural History Association and the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce.

All food has been donated by the sponsors of the event: Albertson's, Carla's Kitchen, Two Dogs Coffee, Hobe's and Lolo's & Papa Julio's. Celebrity Chef's include: Amy Jacobs from KSBY; Author Victoria Kastner; Morro Bay Mayor William Yates; Pat Hedges, SLO Co. Sheriff; Penny Harrington, Retired Chief of Police and Author; Pandora Nash-Karner, Chair of County Park Commission; Kirk Sturm, District Superintendent, Los Esteros, California State Parks; Patrick Mullen, Duke Energy; Billy

See Breakfast page 6

Up Close in the Parks: an Art Exhibit

The Museum of Natural History in Morro Bay is proud to announce a unique art exhibit of local artists' sketches and paintings of landscapes, flora, and fauna of our State Parks. The show opens Thursday, May 1 with a reception from 4 to 6 p.m. that evening. The champagne and hors d'oeuvre reception will be free to the public and offers an opportunity to meet and talk with artists from the "Adventures with Nature Sketch Walks," the primary artists showing in the exhibit.

Barb Renshaw and Rachael Winn Yon began leading Sketch Walks in December 2001. The walks cover many trails in Morro Bay and Montana de Oro State Parks. As Barb says, "We have looked at every view and every plant, lost a sketch book to a rogue wave at Corallina Cove, sat on netles at Shark Inlet, worked in the rain on the Rattlesnake Flat Trail, and temporarily lost the Spooner Ranch House in the fog.

See Art Exhibit page 5

CCNHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Nancy Dreher, California State Parks (non-voting) • Denise Lapp Tallman, Central Coast Natural History Association Executive Director (non-voting)

Slip of the Pen

By Denise Lapp Tallman
CCNHA Executive Director

Ok, so maybe I am not really a hiker. But when I learned that one of our Docent-led walks was a "Sketch Walk" into Sharks Inlet, where you bring your own art supplies and then paint or draw, I just had to go. It sounded right up my alley to combine art with exercise. Probably the only way to get me to put on my tennis shoes, to be honest.

Of course I knew the Docent-artist who created the walk, Barbara Renshaw. We have been working together on a great art exhibit at the museum with a champagne reception on opening night. Proceeds to benefit the Museum and all the art will be done by Sketch Walk artists of local flora and fauna and landscapes.

That morning, I drove to the meeting place in Los Osos and met other artists who were waiting with all their art supplies. I carried my colored pencils in my Poilane (Paris bread) linen bag from France. I actually thought I looked quite fashionable to go out hiking in lace socks.

Barbara has hiked all her life, and of course most people who joined us were hikers too. One woman, Rachel Winn Yon was designated the last person to hike with anyone who fell behind. Of course, that turned out to be me rather quickly.

After almost an hour of fervent hiking I finally had to quit and sit to draw. You see, I had made an appointment to speak at a New Docent Training back at the Museum and I had to hurry back before the rest of the Sketch Walk was to leave. I wanted to be sure

and draw something before I had to depart.

I enjoyed the early morning sun and drew - quite badly - the view of the bay and Sharks Inlet and some purple flowers on a green bush. I loved the act of drawing. And being outdoors in the temperate morning air. It was a great experience.

But then I had to go or else I would not be at the Museum in time. I told Rachel and Barbara thank you and good-bye and meandered back down the trail.

I hiked great coming back down the hill, the bay in obvious view. But then I saw a hummingbird. She was emerald green, as fluorescent as the city of Oz with a cherry red throat. She was too beautiful for words. I watched her for quite a while. I wished I had a camera to keep the memory forever. Then a Monarch butterfly flew by her. And a red tailed hawk high above. It was all such a beautiful photo for my mind.

I went back to walking, keeping my head down on the sandy trail so I didn't trip.

But suddenly a forest loomed ahead of me.

There had been no forest when we went up the hill.

At first I thought this was funny. I was lost. I never even considered I could be going any way but the right way because I only saw this one path, ever. I looked around and I knew basically which way was the ocean. But where was my car? I had no idea how to get out of the state park into the neighborhood I had left my car.

I had no hat. This I realized as the day became much more warm. I had no water. I had brought a diet coke. But left it in the car. A real hiker I am.

I walked and walked in the direction that seemed correct. Eventually, as the time drew near that I should be speaking, I could see roofs and a barbed wire fence appeared. I had a choice to continue my hiking on one side or the other. I began on one side and after 10 minutes decided that was wrong and hiked back to the beginning of the fence and began on that side.

Pretty soon I found foot prints and I was desperate to find my tennis shoe prints to reassure myself that I was going the right way. But, I couldn't determine if my prints were anywhere. I was now late to the Museum.

Eventually as I walked I began to recognize things. A tree that we had discussed the blooms earlier. A piece of concrete we had crossed. I walked faster. Finally, a seagull circling overhead as if he was my homing device, I saw my car!!!

Yippee! I huffed and puffed and sat in my hot car, exhausted. What was I thinking I could hike for two miles in sand dunes? Carrying art supplies? I was nuts. But...I had done it!! And I had a glorious time and a story besides.

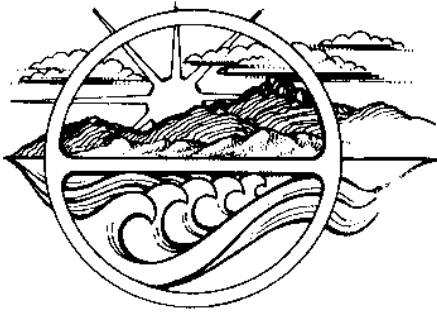
I drove off and tore down the hill to Morro Bay and the Museum. As I raced through the Exhibits, Nancy, the State Parks Interpretive Specialist, saw me and began razz-

See Slip of Pen page 6

Nature Notes

CCNHA Exec. DirectorDenise Lapp Tallman
Newsletter EditorsAnn Kitajima, Jill Hamilton
Data InputNancy Ross
Adventures with NatureSandra Beebe
Folding, Labels, MailingMailing List Crew

The deadline for the next issue of the newsletter is Friday, Apr. 11. Send copy by e-mail to: ccnha_news@hotmail.com (the preferred method). Hard copy may be faxed to the Museum at 772-7129. Hard copy or disk files may be delivered into the newsletter tray behind the front desk.



Docent Council

of San Luis Obispo Coast District State Parks

News

Volume 25, Number 4

April, 2003

THIS MONTH at a GLANCE

Docent Council General Meeting
Wednesday, April 2nd, 1:30 p.m.
Docent House

Pismo Committee Meeting
3rd Thursdays (April 17th), 9 a.m.
Pismo Nature Center

Pismo Nature Center Hours
Friday and Sunday 1-4 p.m.
Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Pismo Nature Ctr. Garden Activities
Any Tuesday at 9 a.m.
Meet in front of Nature Center
Call Grace Beigle at 773-2147 or
Susan Grimaud at 543-2141

Montana de Oro Holloway Garden
1st and 3rd Fridays, 9 a.m.- noon
Call Phoebe Adams at 528-7911 or
Sylvia Rosenberg at 534-1458

Montana de Oro Ranch House Hours
Daily, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Morro Bay Committee
Third Wednesday (April 16th),
1:30 p.m.
Docent House

DPR District Office
Ph: 805-549-3312
Fax: 805-541-4799

Docent Training at Montana de Oro

Apprentice docents and guests were entertained by the "Pecho Players," a fledgling group of first-person interpreters, who presented a "Programme of Exercises," based on similar programs that were given at special events in the town of

Morro in the year 1900. Following the entertainment Bill Hilton spoke on the history of the Pecho.

Pictured above, from left to right, are Mr. Sanders (Jim Adams),



Miss Stocking (Nancy Hillenburg), Mrs. Baxter (Earline Farrell), Mrs. Thorne (Rosemary Thorne), Mrs. McAbee (Joyce Cory), and Mrs. Thompson (Phoebe Adams).

NAIG Event Planned for April 25 at Pismo Nature Center

The Native American Interpretive Group (NAIG) will meet Friday, April 25 at 11:30 a.m. at the Pismo Nature Center. After a short meeting and lunch, Jack Beigle will lead a hike through the dunes and talk about the history of the area.

Please bring a sack lunch, water and binoculars. Dress warmly, wear layered clothing and good walking shoes. Plan on being out about four hours. For more information, call Tyra Solomon at 772-2343.

Everyone Welcome to Bird the Spooner Lawn

Sharpen your birding skills at a special birding event on April 26 from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Meet in front of the Spooner Ranch House in Montana de Oro State Park. From the Spacious Spooner Lawn participants will see how many species can be identified within a 12-hour period. At 1 p.m., Freeman Hall will discuss the finer points of raptor identification. Bring binoculars, scopes, lunch, folding chairs, and a desire to identify birds.

Evelyn Dabritz, Docent and Children's Author

Evelyn Dabritz, Co-chair of the Museum School Docent program wrote this story, among others, to publicize museum activities. *Deke, the Decorator* was written to publicize Seashore Wonders (the touch tanks).

BONNIE BARNACLE FINDS A HOME

by Evelyn Dabritz

Bonnie Barnacle was shot out of her parent's dark, protective shell into a churning sea. She was tossed high by a wave and sprayed into the wind. Swirling around, she adjusted to the surge of the water by using her three pairs of legs. This new baby barnacle was on her own.

As Bonnie looked around through the bluish-green water, she saw many other microscopic creatures swaying with her. Some floated, but many darted through the mixture of tiny plants, seaweed bits, sand particles, and bubbles. Some were scary with bristles, spikes, and hairy legs. It's a good thing she didn't have a mirror because one might consider a one-eyed, six-legged, one-shelled creature a bit unusual.

Feeling hungry, Bonnie reached out and grabbed a tiny plant called a diatom as it was floating by. Since that was so good, she grabbed several more.

Suddenly, dark shadows approached. Big mouths opened and gulped in many tiny creatures. She darted away just in time as the school of fish glided past. After nearly falling into the tentacles of a sea anemone, Bonnie realized that she had better be on guard at



Pictured here is Evelyn Dabritz, long-time museum docent, reading to a school group.

all times.

As Bonnie grew, her thin skin-like covering peeled right off. After molting again in several days, she was transformed into a different creature with three eyes, two shells, and six pairs of legs. The constant struggle to keep from being eaten and to capture her own meals amid the swirling water made Bonnie realize she must find a home, unlike moving crustacean cousins such as shrimp, crabs, and lobsters.

That wood piling looked inviting, but it was too crowded with red sponges, flower worms, mussels, sea anemones, and other barnacles. She wasn't quick enough to grab on to the bottom of a boat cutting through the surface of the water.

The tide brought her to a nice sloping rock, not too high above the water. It was nicely landscaped with sea lettuce and other seaweeds. There was space for her amid the crowded mussels,

limpets, and other barnacles. She quickly stuck out the suckers on her antennae and managed to catch hold. After spreading some glue-like material from her cement gland, Bonnie was attached by her head. All she had to do for dinner was to kick out her feathery feet to sweep the water for plankton, that wonderful soup of microscopic plants and animals. Suddenly, she was out of water as the tide receded. No problem! Her valves on top closed tightly to keep her from drying out. No hungry animal could grab her now as she was closed in her dark, secure world.

As Bonnie grew, her pinkish-red, striped, volcano-shaped shell enlarged with her. She became a beautiful acorn barnacle. Life was good. Food came to her, she was safe, and the neighbors were friendly. It would soon be time for Bonnie to launch her babies out to be rocked in the cradle of the sea. (Edited from the original, 1995)

Fourth Summer in Park Celebration

Please come to plan the fourth event of what was originally called "The Summer Solstice Celebration." Calling on all docents district wide to help with the planning. So bring your good ideas and meet at the Docent House on Tuesday April 8 at 1:30 p.m. For more information call Tyra Soloman at 772-2343.

Help with Thematic Walks Offered

Interpretive docents are invited to a "hands on" workshop putting thematic interpretation into practice on Saturday, April 5 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Docent House.

Experienced docents will offer individual help to brainstorm themes for new walk outlines or sleuth for the theme in established walk outlines. Bring a walk outline with you or work on a new walk. The basic techniques of how to lead a walk will also be covered.

Please pre-register by calling Norma Wightman at 772-7859 no later than April 3.

Peregrine Falcon Talk Upcoming

Steve Schubert, a biologist who has studied the Peregrine Falcons of Morro Rock, will offer a talk/walk on Saturday, May 17, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for all interested docents. Steve will give a slide presentation in the museum auditorium, and then the program will end with a trip to Morro Rock and observation of the falcons.

No reservations necessary.

Ask an Expert: How do plants and animals "know" when Spring has sprung?



The Sun provides the energy for life on the surface of the Earth. The recent Spring Equinox had twelve hours of daylight at all latitudes, but more importantly is the date when the length of day is increasing most rapidly. Many plants use photoperiodism, the ability to measure the length of day, to control germination, growth, and flowering. This requires plants to manufacture a pigment called phytochrome, which senses red light.

Plants also manufacture carotenoids and other pigments that enable them to grow toward the sun and to control leaf and flower movements during the day, a response

called phototropism. The light sensing pigments in your eye are rhodopsins made from vitamin A, which is derived from carotene. The pineal gland in some animals senses light (like a third eye) and produces the hormone melatonin, which influences pigmentation, reproductive processes, and other daily and seasonal changes.

by Bob Field, PhD.

If you have a question you would like an expert to answer, let Sandra Beebe know and she will try to get one of the many experts among the State Park staff or docents to answer it for you.

Change in MB Committee Meeting

The meeting time for the monthly meeting of the Morro Bay Committee has been changed to the third Wednesday of the month. The April meeting will be Wednesday, April 16 at 1:30 p.m. at the Docent House. All docents from the Morro Bay Unit are voting members and are invited to attend. Come see what the other docents are doing and share your ideas with them. Contact Curt or Sandra Beebe with questions.

Art Exhibit from page 1

Collectively, we probably have 20 sketches of Chocolate Lilies."

All art will be displayed and for sale in the lovely Museum auditorium with proceeds to benefit both the Artist and the Central Coast Natural History Association. CCNHA is responsible for providing financial support to educational programs in the local state parks.

The exhibit will be on display for several months unless all the work is sold sooner. For more information contact Barb Renshaw at 534-1865.

Support Needed for Community Events

CCNHA has paid for booths at upcoming community events so the Docents can promote their programs and activities. Volunteers are needed to take a table and chairs to the events along with CCNHA materials. Docents are needed to people the booth. They can bring mounts, learning center props, or anything else to promote their programs. For example, the Montana de Oro Living History actors will be in attendance at one event.

The dates of the community events are April 5 for Children's Day at the Plaza and April 19 for an Earth Day Celebration at the Plaza. Both event hours are from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. To help, please call Denise at 772-2694 x105.

Breakfast from page 1

Clayton, Two Dogs; Peggy Penny, Cable Access Show; Jeff Jones, Morro Bay Fire Chief; Cathie Novak, former Morro Bay Mayor; Greg Smith, Sector Superintendent, Los Esteros, California State Parks; Nancy Dreher, Museum of Natural History Curator, California State Parks; and Mary Leizear, Secretary Morro Bay Rotary.

Celebrity Chefs are: Mike Casalo, Inn at Morro Bay; Carla Borchard of Carla's Kitchen and Nick Mendoza, Lolo's and Papa Julio's. The Celebrity Maitre d' is Ken Vesterfelt, Realtor, Planning Commission.

Come and enjoy a hearty breakfast while having your favorite local celebrity wait on you! Tickets are available at the Museum of Natural History or at the door.



This Western Snowy Plover photo essay is on loan from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. It is in the auditorium of the Museum of Natural History in Morro Bay until mid-April.

Updates on Web and Email Access from the Communications Committee

For those of you who have no email, you can find Nancy Dreher's Friday Facts posted in both the Docent House and on the bulletin board in the basement of the Museum. The minutes for the Docent Council meetings and the Morro Bay Committee meetings are also posted there.

The slo-docent Yahoo group is now for all docents to communicate with each other. If you want to announce an upcoming meeting or share some other information with the other docents just send it by email to: slo-docents@yahoo.com and it

will be posted.

If you have an idea for a future article for our Nature Notes, please contact Sandra Beebe to discuss what issue it might be appropriate for. We are also looking for pictures of docent activities that can be used "as needed." Please send those to Sandra as well.

The Website now has a new look. Carol Medine Moss has worked very hard on it. Visit it at MorroBayMuseum.org You can find a copy of the newsletter there now and a printable version of Adventures With Nature.

Slip of Pen from page 2

ing me about being late. I told her to listen to the opening of this speech. It was going to be good. For, I was about to speak to the new docents who would begin to lead Walks themselves.

When the healthy, active Docents heard my story, they were doubled over in laughter.

I wonder when I'll go hiking again? One of Barbara's next Sketch Walks is to a field of Chocolate Lilly's. How can I resist?

An Invitation to Local Artists

By Barbara Renshaw

Invite artists to submit up to three pieces of work between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., April 28 at the Museum of Natural History in Morro Bay for the new "Up Close in the Parks" art exhibit opening May 1.

The art submitted must show flora or fauna of the local State Parks. Your work does not have to be a sketch you made on a walk. It should be something you consider a finished piece. Title each work and set a price. CCNHA will add on an additional 30% to benefit their educational programs.

Frame your work simply and appropriately. The following suggestions are intended to unify the show:



A watercolor by local artist Alice Cushing.

If you plan to use a mat, select white or off-white.

Simple, natural wood, black wood, or metal frames are best.

Frame must include a wire for hanging.

If you need help or have questions, please call either Barb at 534-1865 or Rachael at 528-5996.

State Park Advocacy Day in Sacramento

Executive Director of the Central Coast Natural History Association, Denise Lapp Tallman, and State Park Peace Office Association Vice-President Ray Monson, will be traveling to Sacramento on April 7 to meet with legislators. They will be joining State Park advocates from around the state to urge no further cuts to the Department of Parks and Recreation budget. The California State Parks Foundation, a non-profit organization that supports the 274 State Parks in California, is organizing the first Annual Park Advocacy Day.

"Our State Park is an economic pump for our community. It not only attracts tourist dollars but it offers residents a place of solace and peace in these difficult times," said Maryellen Simkins, President of CCNHA. "The Department has taken its fair share of cuts but more cuts will cripple them. Our legislators need to know we care about our remarkable landscapes. We have held these parks in trust for decades. I would hate to see our generation betray the trust."

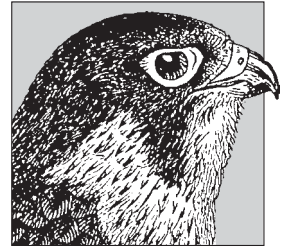
Groups that will be sending representatives include the California League of Park Associations, California State Park Rangers Association, California State Lifeguards Association, California State Supervisory Peace Officer Association, the Park Rangers Association of California, and the State Park Peace Officers Association of California.



Los Esteros State Park Superintendent Kirk Sturm thanked the CCNHA Board of Directors for raising the money for the Modernized Museum of Natural History with a Private Tour of Hearst Castle. Here board members learn about the royal blue glass tiles made in Italy that cover the room from floor to ceiling to bottom of the Roman Pool. Much of the tile is covered in 24k gold.

NHA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

CENTRAL COAST



**NATURAL
HISTORY
ASSOCIATION**
Partners in Our State Parks

Name _____ Phone _____

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

- Individual** (\$15/yr) monthly newsletter, free museum admission for self
- Family** (\$25/yr) monthly newsletter, free museum admission for family
- Sponsor** (\$60/yr) monthly newsletter, free museum admission for family & guests
20 % store discount, recognition plaque at museum
- Benefactor** (\$250/yr) monthly newsletter, free museum admission for family & guests
20 % store discount, recognition plaque at museum
- Lifetime** (\$1,200 once) monthly newsletter, free museum admission for family & guests
20 % store discount, recognition plaque at museum
- Business** (\$100/yr) monthly newsletter, free museum admission for 20 guests
20 % store discount, recognition plaque at museum
- Business** (\$1,000/yr) monthly newsletter, free museum admission for 30 guests
Patron 20 % store discount, recognition plaque at museum

Please contact me
about volunteering

I have enclosed \$ _____ This includes an additional donation of \$ _____

Please charge my Visa/MC/AE CC# _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____ E-mail: _____



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April, 2003