

Hello Nature Friends,

The big news at Placerita is of course that the Open House is coming soon: Saturday May 14 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Do not forget to mark this date on your calendar. A huge thank you goes to Joan Fincutter, Andrea Donner and Sandra Ballaram who are sharing the responsibility for organizing the big event. Open House is a fun event for the whole family with animal presentations, panning for fool's gold, guided hikes, face painting, food and drinks. There is free parking and admission to the park so come and enjoy a fun day, you will have a very good time!



Graduation

Fifteen new docents received their docent and county badges during the ceremony. It is always a joy to welcome those fresh and happy faces into the Placerita family. Our warmest congratulations for completing all the docent requirements.

Lanita Algeyer prepared a special recognition program for a few hard-working docents: Erica de Poor-Helped Ron with class of 2016, also volunteers in the gift shop and outreaches. Joan Fincutter- helped with rainy day program presentation to class of 2016, helps Fred with pond maintenance.

Mara Cohen- always signs up for school groups. Barry Schmitt-first docent to volunteer when more docents are needed for field trips.

Thank you all and congratulations.

Andrea Donner

Andrea was named Hart Park Volunteer for February 2016. Andrea is multi tasking and made some great decisions for us at Placerita. Under her supervision, each Wednesday is Nature Box day. A few boxes are opened and explained to the school groups and the visitors and it is a great success. Nicely done on both fronts, Andrea!

Docent List

The new docent list has been updated by Mona Ruberry who did an excellent job of collecting the dues. We have 117 official members for PCNCA. Thank you all for paying your 2016 dues and thank you Mona for all your work,

Tataviam Dwelling

The signage in front of the Tataviam dwelling that Denny Truger composed has been installed. He also built a drying rack and he is starting to build a lean-to. This corner of the park is taking shape. Thanks, Denny.



The Rattler

Sponsored by the Placerita Canyon Nature Center Associates
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Placerita Canyon Nature Center Over 50 Years of Nature Education

Strategic Plan

Park habitat restoration
Native plant nursery
Monitor docent volunteer hours
Improve / Increase Park Trail signage
Improve Heritage Trail to meet ADA regulations

The Braille Trail

So many details are in the planning stage. Last month, we found out that the trail will be made wider and a raised ramp will take a straight shot through the tunnel. Eight stations are planned along the trail in little coves so people in wheel chairs won't block the rest of the trail traffic. Each curve in the trail will be indicated with a slight ripple on the concrete side of the trail so people using a cane can feel the warning. Interpretive signs will also be in Braille and the picture will be in relief. The wordage will make people ask questions before they come to a conclusion. A treasure box with natural material (like acorns or leaves) will be at each station. A large rest area is planned at the Oak of the Golden Dream with picnic tables to allow visitors to enjoy the quiet and shady spot. We received much planning help from people on the East Coast who already have such a trail.

Blooms of the Season

by RuthAnne Murthy:

This is the time to venture off to the Ecology Trail. Several spectacular plants are blooming there now. The wooly blue curls are showing off their spectacular blossoms with their vibrant blue hue. Patches of dark burgundy wild peony are at their peak and the rare white star lilies are bursting open. At the top of the hill, the gray-green yerba santa is in full bloom, painting the entire area lavender. As you head back toward the Nature Center, don't miss the wish-bone bush with its lovely magenta blooms with bright yellow stamen. Of course, there are the faithful regulars such as sun cups, fiddleneck, common phacelia, and purple nightshade that we should not take for granted.

Museum Security

Two motion detectors are going to be installed to improve security.

Spring Cleaning

It has become apparent that storage for events like the Open House and the Craft Fair and our every day needs have created a real shortage of storage space and the storage shed in the parking lot had lots of very old and unused stuff. A "work party" was scheduled for Monday, April 11 at 1:00 pm.

Teresa Jacobs offered to arrange lunch and eight docents showed up to lend a hand: Jack Levenberg, Herb Broutt, Bill and Lanita Algeyer, Ingrid Brown, Fred Seeley, Al Hofstatter, and Joan Fincutter. We had the shed cleaned out by 2:30 pm. We then moved the Holiday Craft Fair stuff into the shed which opened a huge amount of storage capacity in the main building. By 3:00 pm it was all done and everyone should give themselves a round of applause!

Thanks so much to everyone who pitched in!



April Weeding/Trail Enhancement

by Robert Grzesiak

The weeding group for April pulled, scraped and bagged nine fifty-gallon bags of weeds. The volunteers concentrated their efforts around the pond and protecting the growth of the newly planted milk weeds.

"I spy with my little eye...."

Sue Sutton made fun panels that children can grab when they enter the museum with all kind of questions: "Find a bird that runs fast!" "Find something without legs." "Find a leaf that looks like a hand." Thank you Sue, this will make the visit so much more fun for the little ones.

Weekend Cleanup

After the Easter weekend, we welcomed 15 County Park employees who volunteered to clean up areas of the nature center close to the buildings. I have to mention that many visitors came to the park on Easter Sunday armed with eggs filled up with confetti, so cleanup was not easy duty!