



# The Rattler

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

**September-October 2019**

Editor: Evelyne Vandersande Publisher: Heidi Webber

## Hello Nature Friends,

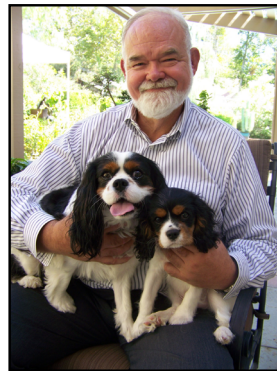
The temperature is in the triple digits, so I'm sure it seems much too early to even think about Fall. However, if you pay close attention all around, you will see the first signs of Fall. And I am not talking about school supplies in the stores.

The Western Tanager has been spotted in its southward migration. I grant you that its migration starts in mid summer to early fall. The male Hooded Orioles (another beautiful bird) will depart in August. The Turkey vultures that migrate will do so by the 3rd week of September. The leaves of the poison oak are starting to turn red, some acorns are on the ground and you might notice many more Dark-eyed Juncos than just a month ago.

The docents are feeling the change in the air too. They are going to gather for the Breakfast of the Champions, a nice way to get reacquainted with their docent friends and to brush up on their knowledge before the school groups start streaming in on their school trips.

It will be followed by the Fall Kick Off to learn about the plants on the trail: Dove-weeds are the same as turkey mulleins, telegraph weeds are those tall weeds covered with yellow flowers...

We are all going to become experts, ready for the Fall and all our new challenges!



## Meet Our New President – Fred Seeley

Let me start by thanking the Board of Directors for selecting me to be the next President of PCNCA. Both Jim Southwell and Ron Kraus have set the bar very high for the job at hand!

After driving past the Nature Center to and from work for 19 years, I finally stopped by to sign up for Docent Training in 2010. That Docent Class turned out pretty well with 11 of the 17 members receiving their 5-year pins! Next year we'll find out how many made it to 10 years.

I've made many great friends here and I enjoy sharing the passion of our members about Nature and about wanting to improve the "Placerita Canyon Experience" for our community. After joining the Board in 2010, I became the Corresponding

Secretary for the next 9 years. That is a great position to know what is going on and what kind of questions and suggestions we get through the website. Fortunately for me, I've also been involved in many other roles, committees, and projects around the Park. It has been very rewarding!

Prior to retiring and joining PCNCA, my career was in the commercial insurance industry in both the underwriting and client service parts of the business. Coming from that very competitive financially focused world to the non-profit world of working with the County and the general public has been interesting. In my view, we have established a great working relationship with the County, both Russ Kimura, Regional Park Superintendent 1, his team locally, and the folks in other departments and management, which has resulted in many terrific accomplishments in the park with more to come.

Please always feel free to let me know your thoughts, questions, suggestions, concerns, and ideas to help continue to make PCNCA even more successful and welcoming.

## Some Explanations

This Rattler is for September/October, but you are going to receive it in mid-August because Heidi Webber (Publisher) and Evelyne Vandersande (Editor) are both going on vacations in mid-August. We regret not being able to cover the Breakfast of the Champions in every detail, as we usually do. But the meaning of the event was covered in the previous issue of the Rattler, and we are covering the fact that Jim Wyzumski will receive the Bob Moss Award.

We are both very dedicated to covering the events and news at Placerita, but sometimes life takes over.

Enjoy the rest of your summer, and thank you for reading the Rattler.



### Some Changes in the Library

by Carole Frocillo

The library is a valuable resource, and will be made more user friendly in the coming months.

Each volume will be evaluated and color coded by category for easier access. Books that are no longer needed will be offered to docents, free of charge, for a period of one month. Then the remaining books will be donated to the public library.

In the next few weeks, I will be looking for any docents who may wish to help with the transformation.



### Walker Cabin Centennial

by Herb Broutt

If you have not heard, we have set October 24, 2020 as the date for the Walker Cabin Centennial Celebration.

It is going to be an Old-Fashioned Picnic. We will have a BBQ, and will play games that would have been played in the 1920's. We are hoping to have some of the Walker family attend, as well as a special guest (for now that's a secret).

We have put together committees to do the work to restore the cabin to the way it would have been when the Walkers lived there.

We are also going to have special hikes and as well as pictures and videos dating from the 1920's.

We are still looking for volunteers, so if you are interested please come to our next meeting on Monday September 9th at 10:00 AM.



### Extension of the Ecology Trail

This trail was damaged during the last fire because most of the vegetation had to be cut down by the firemen in order to protect the building. There is no water access, so it is hard to promote new growth. The cut off vegetation will come back, but it will take a few years.

Denny Truger has installed water access behind the Nature Center, close to the "greenhouse," so that became a great spot to start new planting. This is an extension of Omar Pena's plan for the area, and Frank Hoffman gave his support and authorization for watering the new plants.

Rose Krueger, Brian Broders and Robert Grzesiak have been working hard, in spite of the heat, planting and watering.

Brian has designed a sign for the new plants, including the QR code, so visitors can download information about the plants.

It looks really good and the new monkey flowers are all in bloom!



### Oh, What a night!

By Lori Wolfe

After many years of planning, countless hours of hard work by many volunteers, and much anticipation, a private inaugural movie night was held on Saturday, July 13 at the Placerita Nature Center Acorn Amphitheater.

The evening began with classic rock music provided by our own Bill Kahl while the docents and friends enjoyed socializing, beverages and dinner. Candles, tablecloths and sparkling glasses were in evidence, and we might have the beginnings of our own summer Placerita Bowl season.

After the sun went down, Ron Kraus thanked the Amphitheater Committee for their hard work bringing about this event and planning for the future of this great new venue. Denny Truger and his committee of electrical helpers was applauded for their efforts in bringing electricity to the Amphitheater. Ron passed around a uniquely Canadian snack, ketchup potato chips, and told us about Poutine which is crispy hot fries smothered in gravy and topped with melted cheese - no doubt a Canadian delicacy.

Then, at last, the lights were officially turned on at the Acorn Amphitheater! An inflatable movie screen was used to show the Canadian IMAX documentary, The Rocky Mountain Express, which details how the transcontinental railway was built across Canada.

Though not in an IMAX theater, the picture quality and sound was very good and the added ambiance of the hoots of owls, fun flying bats and a cool summer breeze made for a





## Placerita Docent Enrichment Field Trip to Mount Wilson Observatory

by Lori Wolfe

Once a year, our LA County Supervisor, Kathryn Barger, provides a luxurious bus for the PCNCA Docent/Naturalists to take a day out to learn and have fun.

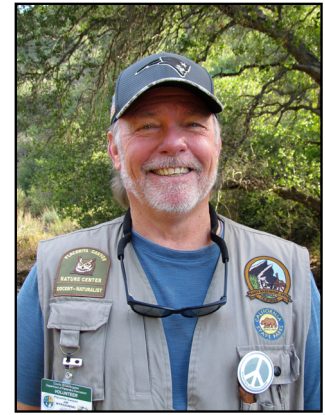
We met our own RuthAnne Murthy, the organizer for this trip, bright and early on July 21, 2019 at the Nature Center where our bus was waiting. Marisol, our bus driver, drove us safely up the narrow roads to Mt.

Wilson - skillfully avoiding a fawn who managed to give many of us a show by climbing straight up a rock face.

Upon arrival, a pair of docents greeted us and led us on a three-hour tour. Mount Wilson Observatory has a fascinating history and its telescopes and early astronomers discovered much of what we know about modern astronomy today. The personal histories of these many important Southern California characters is a long, fun story that you can read about on the Mount Wilson Observatory website <https://www.mtwilson.edu/>.

The weather was perfect and we enjoyed a picnic lunch under the outdoor pavilion as well as a quick hike before the pleasant ride home.

Thank you so much, Kathryn Barger, for providing the transportation. Also to RuthAnne Murthy our event organizer for keeping us in line, Marisol for her skillful driving and our educated docents at Mount Wilson Observatory.



## Jim Wyrozumski Will Receive the Bob Moss Award

Bob Moss was a naturalist, professional Educator and Leader. This award is presented in the tradition of Bob's memory, to recognize exceptional Volunteer work at the Placerita Canyon Nature Center.

Jim became a Docent 2017. Since then he has been very active, supporting the School trips, and always willing to bring out a snake as part of the animal presentation. He does what he can to make the hike with the kids informative, fun and make their experience a memorable one.

Special events at the Nature Center, Jim was always there early to help set up, and doesn't leave until everything is put away. Throughout the year, he helped with the summer nature box program, Junior Rangers, bulletin boards, Walker Cabin cleanup, trail maintenance, cleanup of the animal cages, and helped dig ditches to install the electrical conduit and wiring for the amphitheater.

In addition, Jim was a great source for information on various hikes throughout the Santa Clarita Valley. When the new trees were planted, he made sure they were watered every couple of days. Many times, you can see him pushing the water tank around the park, no easy task.

Jim was also active in showing Fang (Opossum) for the visiting schools and the Saturday Live Animal Show. He had just started to handle Wheely (Harris Hawk,) but due to the Quarantine, that was put on hold.

Due to Jim's willingness to get things done and his hard work, the Placerita Nature Center is lucky to have him.

Jim will be awarded the Bob Moss Cup by Dave Taylor (previous recipient of the Cup) at the breakfast of Champions.

Our warmest congratulations go to Jim Wyrozumski



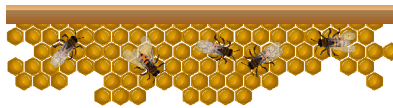
## Some Great Stuff is Happening in Placerita

by Frank Hoffman,

Recreation Services Supervisor

Marietta Ewing and I noticed five Monarch Caterpillars on the Milkweed in the courtyard so that is very good news. A few days later, we discovered a new chrysalis and another caterpillar hanging upside down in the mahogany and getting ready to create its chrysalis too.

Also, we have seen four Gray Squirrels in the picnic grounds. Those squirrels have not been seen for many years, so it was very nice to have them back. We put 6 new baby toads in the large tank in the classroom along with 150 baby crickets to feed them; these were donated by Miranda, one of our "Youth Volunteers of the Year".



## Honey Harvest Festival in Fillmore

by Glenda Perl

For 2 days in June, Placerita Canyon Nature Center set up a booth at the Honey Harvest Festival at Central Park in Fillmore.

Hundreds of visitors stopped by to look at our snakes, pet the animal pelts (what does a skunk's fur feel like?), and be amazed at the size of Sprinkles the tarantula. Beeman was a little shy around the snakes, but Sandra Balam told him about Penelope, the gopher snake and that got his interest.

The docents in action were Sandra Balam, Glenda Perl and Bill Webber. Thank you for driving all the way to Fillmore for 2 days for take part in the Festival.





### A Helicopter on Mars?

This is was presentation given at the Valencia Library through the Santa Clarita Astronomy group called the Local Group:

The guest Speaker was Bob Balaram from JPL, giving a talk on the Mars Helicopter project. It started as his very own idea and at first, he was afraid it would sound so far-fetched that it would be put aside. But it sparked some interest and was developed into a very exciting project.

It was a fascinating presentation, somewhat technical but Bob made it understandable even for less knowledgeable folks, and his enthusiasm was a joy to see. This helicopter will be part of the Rover expedition, leaving in July 2020.

Sometimes we learn from the docents and sometimes we learn from their husbands. PCNCA docents and volunteers were well represented by Sandra Balaram, of course, Robert Grzesiak, Jim Crowley, Evelyne Vandersande and Laverne Booth, previous Placerita docent and founder of the Local Group.

Good luck Bob and keep us posted!

### Craft Faire 2019

When Mari Carbajal gathered a group of us for a meeting at Placerita in early July, it was to announce that she was moving and wasn't sure how the weather conditions would be coming over the Grapevine the weekend of the Craft Faire, so she wanted us to know as early as possible that she didn't think she should be in charge this year.

By the end of the meeting, there was a committee of four: Sue Sutton, Glenda Perl and Bill and Heidi Webber. You read it right, four persons to replace Mari!

So from this point until the event, we will be plotting and planning the 2019 Craft Faire; wish us luck!

Heidi Webber



### Congratulations Joaquin Hemstreet Eagle Scout Court of Honor June 22.

Joaquin came to Placerita as a Boy Scout when he was 7 years old, and Ranger Frank knew him then.

Joaquin became a docent in the class of 2019. He did his Eagle Scout project at Carousel Ranch, and is becoming an Eagle Scout on June 22. Well done!

Over and over again, we are impressed with the wonderful caliber and qualities of the people who get involved at Placerita. Joaquin is only one example of many, but we are extremely proud of his accomplishment.

### The Great American Camp Out

by RuthAnne Murthy

The bats were flying as twilight was approaching, and Frank Hoffman and RuthAnne Murthy were anxious to get to hiking with the campers who were participating in the Great American Camp Out, a national program to get families out-of-doors. We divided the people into groups of about 20 and hiked three times.

What did we see? We found toads, darkling beetles, elderberries, scat, datura, Jupiter and Mars. I asked the children which was better, computer games or hiking. Everyone said hiking. That made it all worthwhile.



### Carbajal is on the Move...

After very careful consideration, Mari Carbajal has decided to move to the Lake Isabella area of Kern County at the end of July. After downsizing from horses, dogs, chickens, and ducks, she now has only two dogs and a cat so the move will be easy and full of new adventures.

Mari became a PCNCA member and docent in 2013. She enjoyed two years working in the Gift Shop because she said it was one of the best places for meeting the public, providing answers to questions, visiting with the kids that were so enthusiastic about the park, and learning about how to be a better



docent. Mari served as Recording Secretary on the Board of Directors from 2013 to 2018, and was acting Chair for the Holiday Craft Fair for the past five years.

At her announcement meeting on Saturday, July 6th, Mari passed responsibility for the Holiday Craft Fair to Glenda Perl, Sue Sutton, and Heidi Webber, who plan to establish a committee for the 2019 event. Mari strongly expressed encouragement for the new/newer docents to participate in this fun-loving and exciting one-of-a-kind event.

Mari will continue to be a member and docent for the PCNCA and plans to participate from her new home as much as possible. Mari commented, "Although it's a little scary to start life over in new surroundings, I'm looking forward to learning about new wildlife and new wilderness. I know I will always have friends at Placerita. There's just something about Placerita Canyon Nature Center that grows on you, so it means a lot to me that I'll never forget. I'll miss the Park, the Park staff, and all the wonderful people who've supported me these last few years. Oh, and if you come see me, bring your fishing pole."



*Miranda Clark*

**Miranda Clark and Delaney Pineda,  
Junior Volunteers of the Year for Placerita**

(This article was published by  
SCVnews.com on 7/11/2019)

This year, we have two Junior volunteer winners, who started at Placerita at the same time, and work together. Frank Hoffman, Recreation Services Supervisor, is in charge of the volunteers during the weekend, and has the opportunity to observe their dedication. He felt it was appropriate to give this special recognition to both of them. Our two honorees are Miranda Clark and Delaney Pineda.

Miranda learned about Placerita about two years ago, and volunteers faithfully each Sunday. She also helps with the special events She



*Delaney Pineda*

is an animal lover who never had animals at home, so Placerita was the perfect place for her to jump in head first. She loves every part of taking care of the animals, from their food preparation to learning all the details about their behavior. On the photo, she can be seen doing food preparation for the raptors. She is chopping frozen rats and she needs to carefully weight the pieces before feeding them to the birds so that they won't gain too much weight. Miranda knows sign language perfectly well, and she sometimes takes deaf people on the trail, providing trail interpretation in sign language. She is a senior at Hart High School who also take classes at COC to complete her GE for college application. She would eventually like to have a career in the field of sign language and become an interpreter, translating in sign language what is being provided audibly for others.

Delaney Pineda used to come to Placerita as a child, so she was very interested when she learned she could volunteer there during weekends. Her dream is to become a Park Ranger so she welcomed the experience. She is a senior at Hart High school. She would like to go to UCSB because they have a great Biology department, or alternatively the University of Wyoming because they are known for their forestry and zoology department. They often send their students abroad for study, which is a good way to learn about exotics and how to apply for grants.

She met our other Youth Volunteer for 2019, Miranda, in a dance class even before they entered kindergarten, and they found out they were going to be enrolled in the same school. They have been best friends ever since. Delaney

has had a passion for the environment since she was a little girl and it has been her motivation in her life: she wants to protect it.

Congratulations Miranda and Delaney and good luck with all that awaits you in your young lives.



**Cleaning up the Canyon Trail**

The Canyon Trail at Placerita has been closed since 2016, due to the effects of both fires and flooding. This has been a very difficult situation because the trail is very popular with visitors, volunteers and docents at Placerita. It is a multi-use trail which means it should be safe for hikers, bicycles and horses. The County could not re-open the trail until many requirements were met. Also, the trail crosses the stream at 2 different spots, and that raised a red flag for a while. However, the trail has been crossing the stream since the Nature Center was opened, so the situation was deemed acceptable after a few inspections.

The California Conservation Corp has been working on the Canyon Trail since mid July. The current schedule calls for the trail to be open in November. The trail is really overgrown but the crew, composed of young men and women, is making good progress even working in triple digit temperatures. Sometimes they have to wear a protective suit to work with poison oak, and it is difficult job with the heat. They look

exhausted at the end of the day, but their progress is obvious!

Who is the CCC?

“The California Conservation Corps is a department within the California Natural Resources Agency. We are the oldest and largest conservation corps in the nation.

Our program provides young men and women 18 – 25 years old a year of paid service to the State of California. During their year of service, Corps members work on environmental projects and respond to natural and man-made disasters. Through this work, they gain skills and experience that lead to meaningful careers. Our motto is ‘Hard work, low pay, miserable conditions and more!’. We are dedicated to developing our Corps members into citizens with character, credentials, and commitment.”

We are extremely appreciative of their efforts, and it will be great to get back on that trail!

### Sandy Holloway, Class of 2019



I was born in Madison, Wisconsin, in 1964 but was raised primarily in Southern California. Nonetheless, I am still a huge Green Bay Packers fan, and I also really enjoy watching tennis tournaments.

My love and appreciation of nature and the outdoors started at a young age. I grew up near the beach in Southern California and spent time almost every day at the beach, enjoying the beautiful weather and the ever-changing coastline. I found the sea to be a very calming and meditative place. I also enjoyed collecting drift wood, shells and sea glass. I spent many summers attending various nature and outdoor oriented summer camps. That created unforgettable memories that will last a lifetime!

I am married to my second husband, Larry Holloway, and we have 6 children between us. There are 4 boys and 2 girls between the ages of 28 and 32. We also have 4 amazing grandchildren ranging from 9 months to 9 years in age.

My work experience was in Real Estate and accounting, and I worked my way up through the ranks at a Hotel Management and Development company from a staff accountant to the VP of Finance. I “retired” as the highest-ranking woman in the company’s history. I loved the work, but when I remarried and my husband offered to take over carrying the expenses, I jumped at the opportunity since I had worked nonstop since I was 15 years old.

Now I have more time for travel, enjoying my grandkids and volunteering. I also serve as a school crossing guard in Stevenson Ranch for Pico Canyon Elementary. I love being around the school kids because you never know what will come out of their mouths and young brains! I have always had a love of both history and the outdoors, and was very much drawn to the idea of docent training.

Unfortunately, when I worked full time and still had kids at home, there was no time to make that happen. Years later I noticed the banners around town advertising the training, but my part time work conflicted with the training schedule. Then I met Dave Taylor when I was interviewing him to become a crossing guard. He was simultaneously convincing me to join the Docent Training Program! It seems to have worked out great for both of us. I developed a passion for history after having a couple of amazing teachers in school, who brought history alive through the stories they told.

We also traveled a lot growing up since my mother was a flight attendant turned travel agent. In our family, high value was placed on making time to “see the world.” Being exposed to other cultures and learning about other traditions and history really left an imprint on me. As an adult and parent, I also placed high value on travel to expose my children to the same kinds of experiences. Whether we were on a camping trip or traveling across the country, we always made a point to visit local historical spots, museums or nature centers to absorb as much as we could about the area. Placerita is the perfect place for all these interests to come together!

### Trail Treasures

By RuthAnne Murthy

As summer heat overtakes the trail, we often think that there are not many interesting plants to see. There are a few hearty flowers that survive the summer sun, but what is very interesting are the seeds that are drying and ready to start the next generation of plants. One of the seeds that I find interesting are the seeds of the flowering ash, sometimes called California ash.

Flowering ash trees are native to the Southwestern United States and Mexico in the chaparral or foothill woodlands. They grow at the altitude from sea level to 4500 feet. They can live up to 150 years. They grow up to 25 feet tall, and some consider them scrubs rather than trees.

The flowering ash has compound leaves with 3-7 leaflets on each stem. Each leaflet is 2-3 inches long. The leaf color is variable from light yellow-green to dark green depending on the location and water availability. The margins of the leaves are serrated. The leaves are quite thin and tender so the leaves fall in summer. That is one of many ways plants conserve water.

The flowers of the flowering ash are creamy white to pale yellow and bloom in fluffy clusters. They have a pleasant sweet scent when they bloom in late spring. There are male and female trees that require pollination among trees.

The seeds that look like peapods. They are about 2-3 inches long and develop in clusters. The seeds are light green and then dry to brown. The winged seeds are distributed by the wind.

So, don’t give up on seeing interesting plants on the trail this summer. Open your eyes to the flowering ash trees that are definitely a Trail Treasure.



*Flowering Ash*  
*Flaxinus dipetala*

## The 2019 NCA Annual Recognition Event

All the docents and volunteers from Placerita Canyon Nature Center are invited to join the members from the other Nature Centers to attend the Annual Recognition and General Meeting to be held at Eaton Canyon Nature Center on Saturday September 14, 2019.

We will be honored by the presence of Kathryn Barger, Supervisor 5th District and Kevin Reagan, Deputy Director Regional Agencies

Coffee and juice will be served at 9am and the meeting will start at 9:30am. A light lunch will be served afterwards around 11am.

We ask you to call Lanita Algeyer at 661-297-3174 with your RSVP, to confirm you will be attending lunch so food can be ordered accordingly. Please, it is important to RSVP so you won't go home hungry!

Business Casual dress is suggested.

The location is

Eaton Canyon Nature Center  
1750 N Altadena Drive  
Pasadena, CA 91107

The parking lot is tight and we recommend that you car pool from Placerita, leaving at 8am.

Special recognition will be given to Denny Truger, Docent of the year for Placerita and to Delaney Pineda and Miranda Clark, Youth volunteers of the year for Placerita.

Gold name tags and special certificates will be given to the PCNCA docents who have 5, 10, 15 and 20 years of service.

Five Years:

Bill Algeyer  
Mara Cohen  
Dan Duncan  
RuthAnne Murthy  
Claudette Newman

Fifteen years:

Janet Kubler  
Alan Wallander  
Sue Wallander

Twenty years:

Nikki Dail  
Roger McClure

Ten years;

Linette Brammer  
Rick Brammer



### Nature Boxes on the Patio

Some days it is very hot and the crowd is thin. But other days, kids are pushing each other to have a better view. You can never predict what is going to happen and every day is a new challenge! But it is a great feeling to give this information to our visitors, and to enhance their visit to the Center, even in the heat of the summer.

A big thank you goes to RuthAnne Murthy and Brian Broders who have faithfully showed up to offer this program to our visitors. The program will stop on August 10... after all, acorns are starting to fall and we have to think about our fall programs!



### Gary Freiburger Proposed Statement

At the board meeting in August, Gary presented the board with a statement regarding bottled water: "In support of our mission, the PCNCA pledges to limit the use of bottled water and of other non-renewable resources. Therefore, while a limited supply of bottled water may be retained for emergency use, etc. bottled water will not be available for sale in the Gift Shop or distributed at PCN-

CA events. When appropriate, docents and volunteers will encourage the use of reusable water containers."

At the Board meeting in August, the statement regarding bottled water was approved. As you can see, this is a statement of principle but doesn't lay out a timeline nor does it discuss alternatives and a plan of action.

The Board has asked Gary to form an ad hoc working group to discuss how this statement can be implemented.

Gary asked for the docent's input to insure that we consider all of the ramifications of this statement and to develop a plan of action that best serves the interest of the PCNC visitors and docents.

Thank you all for making Placerita a better place and thank you, Gary Freiburger, for your hard work.



## RESOLUTION OF FAREWELL AND THANKS

WHEREAS, Jim Owens is a native of California, born in Culver City; and,

WHEREAS, Jim developed a love for nature at an early age when his parents took him on camping trips; and,

WHEREAS, Jim has a long record of service to his country and community, having served in the US Army in Vietnam in 1968 and 1969; and,

WHEREAS, Jim is a great family man, with a long-term marriage to Sandi, and two great kids and several grandchildren; and,

WHEREAS, After retirement, Jim enrolled in docent training at Placerita Canyon Nature Center and graduated with the Class of 2009. He quickly became a valued member of the Placerita Docent family and participated in many activities over the past 10-years, including but not limited to; school field trips, docent training, preparation of the Docent Field Guide, installation of the Lyons Oak Historical Exhibit, updating of the park trail brochures, regularly supplying Black and Brown Widow spiders to

the nature center, and contributing to many events and programs too numerous to fit on this page.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Placerita Canyon Nature Center Associates Board of Directors, that Jim Owens is wished a fond farewell as he moves out of state to new adventures and that the Board sincerely thanks him for his hard work and extraordinary accomplishments in service to Placerita Canyon Natural Area and Nature Center over the past 10-years.

ADOPTED by the Placerita Canyon Nature Center Associates at its meeting of June 4, 2019.

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Ronald J Kraus, President  
Placerita Canyon Nature Center Associates

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### **The Very Best of PCNC** By Cindy Gold

We've all experienced the sheer joy of making friends, learning something new and sharing our love of nature with others. These friendships and experiences together are what makes the Placerita Canyon Nature Center so unique and rewarding. As we grow in numbers, activities and public events, things get more complicated as an organization. So we have worked together to put into words the qualities and values that create the positive environment we cherish at PCNC. The Board wrote a first draft, and at the June Docent Enrichment docents added and refined this to create the Standards of Conduct.

We volunteer at the PCNC to:

Educate and Learn

Be part of a community and make friends

Preserve, protect and improve the PCNC

Have fun.

Therefore, to the best of my ability, I will be:

Respectful

Kind

Dependable

Trustworthy and Honest

Collaborative in Planning

Cooperative in Implementation

Open-minded and Nonjudgmental

Generous with time and talent

Inclusive

We've also written examples of each quality, and both documents will become part of our Procedures and Docent Training Manuals. These simple words illustrate, remind us and confirm the very best of our community.





### Trails Update

Mr. Daniel Abratte, from the Department Facilities Planning Department visited our August 6, 2019 Board of Director's Meeting to give us an update on the Canyon Trail status and the Braille Trail signage status.

The CCC completed the cleanup work on the Canyon Trail in just 6 weeks. They did a great job! The trail is clear and it is possible to walk along, but it remains closed to the public. Now the trail has to be examined for the next layer of work: refurbishing signs, benches and other features that must be replaced or repaired. Pinch points to slow down bicycles will be replaced in the fall. A stream bed alteration permit will be needed, and it will take 60 days to be approved. That permit is required for the reconstruction to begin. Restoration, planting and reseeding will take place and we expect the Canyon Trail to be open to the public by the end of November 2019. This has been a long time coming, and we are all excited to see the activity that moves us toward an open trail again!

The Los Pinetos trail is being cleaned up by the SCV Trail Users mountain biking group, and they are also doing a great job. The Forest Service closure has expired so if the Los Pinetos trail can be cleaned up, it can be used again. The upper parking lot will be opened for the public to be able to park, however the Canyon Trail will be still closed and a fence will be erected at campground number 3 to make that very clear.

The waterfall trail will be closed indefinitely. It is very dangerous and the ground is unstable.

Braille trail:

Five of the seven planned interpretive panels are under way because two of the original ideas proved too difficult to complete. New plant panels are in the planning stage. The plants were chosen for their strong smell or tactile stimulation, so that a visually-impaired visitor can get a personal appreciation for those plants.

We were shown the plans for a few panels: the entomology panel, the nature songs panel where the visitors will be able to push buttons and hear different bird songs while using their hands to feel the silhouette of the birds, the animals panel with a discovery box built inside the panel, and the Tataviam panel explaining the lives of the local Indian tribe in the SCV.

All the panels will be raised so a visually-impaired visitor will be able to appreciate the illustrations by touching the panels.

The Predator panel is still in the works. When all the details on each sign have been approved, it will take about 8 weeks for completion.

We were deeply impressed seeing the planning stages of the Braille trail, and very pleased to have a firm date for the opening of the Canyon Trail. There is a lot of progress all around!



# SUMMER AND FALL PROGRAMS

<b>FAMILY NATURE WALK</b>	Every Saturday from 11 to noon. An easy 1-hour walk exploring the area's natural and cultural history.
<b>ANIMAL PRESENTATION</b>	Every Saturday from 1 to 2 pm. See, learn and ask questions about live native animals of the area.
<b>BIRD WALK</b>	Second Saturday of the month from 8 to 10am. For all levels of birders. Bring binoculars, water and field guide.
<b>BLOOMS OF THE SEASON</b>	Learn about native plants and what is blooming along the trails. Meet in the patio at 9:30 for a one-hour stroll on the fourth Saturday of every month. Bring your camera and questions. For more information about this free program, call 661.259.7721 or 259.7832.
<b>NATURE EDUCATION</b>	Every 3rd Sunday of the month at 2pm the PCNCA will provide a free educational program open to the public. Changes may be made, so please call the center at 661.259.7721 to verify. August is "Desert Fascinations" presented by Linda Castro, organized by Helen Sweeney. September is Wolves by Wildlife Waystation-October is Coyotes, Bobcats and Foxes by Teranga Ranch (Not confirmed at this time, call first!)
<b>TWILIGHT HIKES</b>	This program is offered on the 3rd Saturday of each month. This program begins at 8pm in August, 7pm in September and 6pm in October and runs for about an hour. Park staff and the Nature Center Docents split groups and courses through the different trails in the dark.
<b>PLACERITA NATURE TOTS</b>	Age 3-5 and one adult companion for each child. Saturday from 9.30 to 10.30. Registration open the 1st of each month, program limited to 15 children. Register at nature_tots@placerita.org
<b>BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS</b>	Saturday, August 17 (for docents only)
<b>VISTA DEL LAGO</b>	Water museum, Monday, August 26. (docent enrichment)
<b>NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM</b>	Saturday, August 24 – 10am to 3pm
<b>RECOGNITION CEREMONY</b>	Saturday, September 14 (see article)
<b>FALL KICK-OFF</b>	Monday, September 23, at 9AM (docent training session)
<b>AMPHITHEATER</b>	Program on Saturday, September 28 with Pale Male movie- 7.45 pm

For more information, please call 661.259.7721 or visit our website at [Placerita.org](http://Placerita.org).

## Happy Halloween!

