

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

Preservation through Education and Stewardship

Russian River District State Parks

Volume XXXIII, Number 4, Winter 2016



Looking to the Future

Michele Luna, Executive Director

Looking to the Future is the theme of our year-end appeal letter, which many of you have received and was written before the recent presidential election results were announced. Today, that theme provides new meaning for those of us who have made our life's work protecting our treasured natural and cultural resources.

At Stewards, we are well versed in advocating for our public lands, and in particular those in our State Parks. On an annual basis we take a trip to Sacramento with other State Park supporters and give voice to our concerns for our State Parks and legislation that may affect them. Stewards works hard with our many nonprofit and agency partners to protect and educate the public about the new Marine Protected Areas along the Sonoma Coast. We celebrated with our National Park and resource agency partners as the US Congress expanded the National Marine Sanctuaries to include the Sonoma Coast last year, a huge accomplishment that shields ocean waters along the northern CA coastline from offshore oil drilling.

Stewards has great concerns for the future of the resources we work to safeguard in the wake of the presidential election. We stand ready to help educate the new administration and to encourage the continued enactment of policies that help protect our planet for future generations. As an environmental organization whose mission is tied to preserving our natural and cultural resources, we may be calling upon you to advocate for measures that address those protections and that continue federal funding for our programs, including our seabird protection program (Bureau of Land Management) and salmon restoration and environmental education programs (National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration).

As an optimist, I will keep hope in the forefront of my mind and envision success for the important causes to which Stewards is committed as we look ahead. Just as Stewards stepped up over four years ago to keep Austin Creek SRA open, we will step up again to be the voice for our State Parks and the natural and cultural resources that we are committed to stewarding. Your ongoing support will also help us continue to educate future stewards to be a strong voice when it comes to electing candidates for office who understand how important environmental policies are for our planet's sustainability.

Mission

Stewards Promotes, Restores, and Protects Your State Parks.

Vision

Stewards is the Link between People and Their Parks.

State Parks

Armstrong Redwoods State Nat. Reserve
Austin Creek State Recreation Area
Sonoma Coast State Park

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods
P.O. Box 2, Duncans Mills, CA 95430
707.869.9177, 707.869.8252 Fax

stewards@stewardscr.org

www.stewardscr.org

Stewards provides our supporters and volunteers with many ways to direct your energy towards positive action; often that's what it takes to restore faith and hope for the future. As my State Park colleague Breck Parkman advises, "We need to look forward seven generations." Let that be our goal—look beyond the next four years while working towards electing a national leader who represents our stewardship values.

On behalf of Stewards' staff, board of directors and volunteers, we thank you for your past support and hope that you will continue to share in our commitment to the future. Together we can make a difference, keeping the health of the planet at the heart of our work for the sake of our state's natural and cultural resources.

Please help us build towards the future with an end-of-year donation.

It's easy to donate online at www.stewardscr.org or by mailing your donation to the address on the left.

Refer to page 5 for upcoming volunteer training opportunities, community education seminars, certifications and workshops, EcoAdventures and Youth and Family events.

ANNUAL VOLUNTEER CELEBRATION

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www.stewardscr.org



With a Harry Potter theme, our 2016 Annual Volunteer Celebration on December 2nd was a great success. Special thanks to Stewards and State Park staff for all the planning, serving, fabulous food and great auction!

REMEMBERING VOLUNTEER RUSS WHITMAN

Russell Allen Whitman, 87, died October 25, at home in Brunswick, with family by his side. Russ was born December 25, 1928, to Frederic Bennett Whitman and Gertrude Bissell Whitman, in La Crosse, Wisconsin. The family settled in Oakland, California, where Russ met Nancy Arnold Ross, whom he married in June, 1951. They had four children between 1952 and 1960.

In 1953, after receiving a B.A. in education from San Jose State College, Russ began his career as a high school teacher and sports coach in southern California. During that time, he also received an M.A. from San Jose State College. In 1964, Russ moved with his family to East Lansing to attend Michigan State University as a doctoral candidate in the School of Guidance and Counseling.

After 30 years of marriage, Russ and Nancy divorced in 1981. Marcia Smith of California joined Russ in Orono and became his lifelong partner until her death. Upon Russ's retirement, they moved to Occidental, California in 1991 and cared for Russ's mother and volunteered with Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods. For his dedication, Russ received the Volunteer of the Year award along with other honors. His photos were used in park calendars and brochures and in postcards still available in the Visitor Center. For his work with Pond Farm, (a historical artist's colony), his name will be added to the Armstrong Visitor Center memorial plaque. Russ was instrumental in collecting valuable archival materials and photography about Pond Farm. He and Marcia also volunteered at the Armstrong Visitor Center for many years. In 2016, Russ donated \$10,000 to the Pond Farm Oral History Project.

After his mother's death, Russ and Marcia moved to Carlsbad to be closer to Marcia's three children. Russ became involved with the Batiquitos Lagoon Foundation, and was a leader in the campaign against encroaching development. For his work, he was known as "Mr. Batiquitos" and received the Outstanding Volunteer Service award.

In 2007, Russ and Marcia moved to La Costa Glen Retirement Community. After Marcia's death in 2012, Russ was diagnosed with cancer and moved to be closer to family in Maine.

Russ will be remembered for his kind and warm human relations skills, insightful compassion, great sense of humor, dedication to community service and the environment, and by the many people who called him, "my friend." Condolences and questions may be addressed to ewhitman@pantimusa.com. Please consider a donation to Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods in Russ's memory.



Sonoma Coast State Park is one of those parks where the natural wonders and the natural beauty are ever present and ever changing. Unfortunately, these natural wonders often pose a dangerous threat to our many park visitors. On February 26, 2016, this threat became a reality at Goat Rock Beach.



Sonoma Coast Surfer, by Kevin O'Connor

Aquatic-related parks, such as Sonoma Coast, represent an incredible natural and recreation resource. They also present state parks with considerable resource protection and public safety challenges. The primary purpose of the California State Park Aquatic Safety Program is the prevention of drowning by providing an effective team of trained aquatic safety professionals who protect, educate, and serve the public by providing emergency response and care, promote respect of the State's diverse resources, and foster opportunities for safe high-quality aquatic recreation. Only a safe experience can be a quality experience. Aquatic safety programs are a key element of the Department's overall mission.

In 1965, local state park staff recognized the extreme dangers posed by the Pacific Ocean (and the Russian River) so they began planning for a professional lifeguard program to be implemented along the entire Sonoma County coastline. Finally, in 1989 after many years of hard work, the budget change proposal for a state lifeguard program along the Sonoma Coast was approved. Visitors to the Sonoma Coast were finally able to have professional aquatic safety services provided to them while visiting the park.

On February 26, 2016 five family members ran into trouble when they were knocked over by a large wave. A mother and her seven year old daughter were suddenly dragged away from shore by a large second wave. The waves this day were reported to be between 15- 20 feet. State Parks lifeguard Aaron Pendergraft, a 16 year veteran, was patrolling the Goat Rock area and witnessed these two visitors being dragged out to sea. Pendergraft radioed in the situation and then quickly entered the cold and raging surf without donning his wetsuit due to the exigent circumstances of this aquatic emergency. Pendergraft kept the two victims afloat for around 27 minutes while they awaited further assistance. The Sonoma County sheriff's helicopter, Henry I, arrived and sent a long line and a paramedic down to bring each person back to safety. Three of the family members went to the hospital that day yet all five of them survived this ordeal primarily due to the heroic efforts of Lifeguard Aaron Pendergraft.

In March of this year, California Assembly member Jim Wood recognized Pendergraft for this heroic effort. Then on November 15, 2016, The United State Lifesaving Association presented Aaron with the U.S.L.A. Medal of Valor. This national award is to give recognition to an individual lifeguard who voluntarily risked their life, to an extraordinary degree, in saving, or attempting to save another person, or who sacrificed themselves for the benefit to others. Congratulations to Lifeguard Pendergraft on a job well done.

Aaron is just one of many state park lifeguards who takes pride in keeping state park visitors safe while they recreate at one of our many reservoirs, lakes, and coastal beaches. Next time you see a lifeguard out on the beach ...stop and say, "Hello". They will appreciate the gesture.

HONORING STATE PARK RETIREES



Laura Parent landed her first job as a park aide at Clear Lake State Park in 1976. She earned her BA in Environmental Studies and Planning from

Sonoma State University in 1980. That same year, she was hired as a full time Service Assistant at Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve. In subsequent years, she contributed to the maintenance of Sonoma Coast State Park until she was permanently placed back at Armstrong Redwoods in 1994. We would like to thank Laura for the 40 years of incredible service she contributed to State Parks!



Alfredo Pererya began his career at Big Basin State Park in 1976. By 1977, he was leading work crews throughout the entire Santa Cruz District with California Conservation Corps.

He has contributed to state park facilities including: Turlock Lake, Point Lobos, Hungry Valley, Malibu Creek, Malakoff Diggins, Samuel P. Taylor, and Angel Island. He finally made it to the Russian River District in 2000, and worked 16 years as the Maintenance Supervisor. We would like to thank Alfredo for over 38 years of dedicated service to our State Parks!



Gary Shannon began his park career in 1978 as a Landscape Architect with the newly formed "Trails Unit," part of the Acquisition and Development

Division in Sacramento. From 1983 to 1996 Gary worked on various planning and design projects throughout park districts north of San Francisco. A new position opened up in the Russian River District in 1996 and Gary took the job. A steady stream of planning and design projects has challenged Gary ever since, to all our benefit.

WHALE WATCH

Norma Jellison, Whale Watch Program Coordinator

November is our time of waiting in anticipation for Whale Watch season to begin. The Pacific Gray Whales are not off our coast yet, but will be soon. Most are still in Alaskan waters feeding. Some may have begun their epic migration south, especially the pregnant females in order to reach the warm buoyant lagoon waters of Baja to give birth.



In the meantime, we are being treated to Humpbacks offshore from Bodega Head. Mostly, we see their blows. On occasion, they will delight with their acrobatic lunges and breaching. Often, the treat of the day will include dolphins, porpoises, sea lions, seals and many varieties of pelagic birds. And don't forget to notice the majestic White Pelicans and other birds along and in the Bay on the way.

We look forward to a great Whale Watch season beginning December 31/January 1 through May 20/21 from Noon - 4 (weather permitting).

Many new volunteers will join our returning seasoned volunteers. We hope you will venture out to the coast in search of its beauty and the chance to see the abundant land and sea environment we are lucky to have such easy access to here in Sonoma County.

VOLUNTEERING IN THE NEW YEAR

Sarah Angulo, Volunteer Coordinator

Remember a year ago, when you made a resolution to get more involved in Stewards—and then suddenly 2016 was coming to an end? Well 2017 is a new year, and a new chance to make good on your resolution to volunteer with us! Whatever your interests, experience, or availability, we offer many volunteer opportunities within our programs to match what you're looking for. Here's how to get involved:

First you can get acquainted with our programs by checking out our website. We have lots of information available online for you to look through. Detailed descriptions and resources about our Whale Watch, Seal Watch, Armstrong Redwoods Tour Guides, Armstrong and Jenner Visitor Centers, Steward Ship, Forest to the Sea Environmental Education, Stewardship & Restoration, and Citizen Science programs all need volunteers! After familiarizing yourself with what we offer, you can move on to registering for our trainings.

Your first volunteer training is our Volunteers in Parks Program (VIP) general training on January 28th. At this training, we will go over general volunteer responsibilities, park rules and regulations, and hand out necessary paperwork. Most importantly, this training is where you will be able to glimpse what each of our programs are, and gain a better sense of which one(s) you want to be involved with. Once the general training is complete, you can then sign up for our program-specific trainings. These trainings will provide descriptions and walkthroughs of exact duties, helpful natural history, insider tips, and more about the program. Finally, after you've been to all the relevant trainings, your contact information will be passed on to our volunteer program coordinators, who will schedule you in to get volunteering!

If you are unable to make it to our January VIP general training, be sure to mark your calendars for our other training dates on June 24th and August 19th. If you are unable to make either date, then contact our volunteer coordinator, Sarah, at sarah@stewardscr.org. We can go through the same process of our general trainings individually. You can also contact Sarah for help in deciding which program to volunteer for. And of course, recommendations to friends contributes immensely to Stewards' new volunteer recruitment, so whether you're getting involved this year or the next—tell a friend about us! We're looking forward to having you with us in 2017!

WELCOME SARAH!

Sarah Angulo joined Stewards as Volunteer Coordinator in fall 2016. While obtaining her undergraduate degree at UC Santa Cruz, she interned for the UC natural reserves before becoming a campaign coordinator for a water conservation project. After graduating with a B.A. in Environmental Studies in 2014, she worked for a summer as an Interpreter for the California State Parks, then taught sixth grade as a Naturalist intern at a residential outdoor school in Sonora. The following summer she worked for her first non-profit at the Mono Lake Committee before moving on to another non-profit in Nevada City, serving as an Education Coordinator for AmeriCorps. Sarah strives to be the connection between people and nature, and hopes to bring this to her work with Stewards.



Sarah Angulo, Volunteer Coordinator

Time to Submit Your Volunteer Hours

Volunteers are reminded to submit your volunteer hours before the end of the calendar year. Your hours help us with funding and provide you with your annual State Park day-use passes. 24 hours earns a District-wide pass and 200 hours a State-wide pass. Submit

ORIENTATIONS, TRAININGS AND SEMINARS

Registration Required Online at www.stewardscr.org

Certifications & Workshops:

- February 12 - April 12 UC California Naturalist (Certification Course) – \$475.95 (members)/\$594.95 (non-members)
- March 17 - Project Learning Tree Workshop – \$35
- May 6 - Tread Trainer Course (Land Based Recreation Certification) – \$20 (non-members)/\$16 (members)
- July 1-2 - NOLS/WMI Wilderness First Aid – \$204 members, \$255 non-members

Volunteer Orientations & Trainings: FREE

- January 28 - General Volunteer In Parks Program Orientations
- February 4 - General Sonoma Coast Volunteer Orientation
- January 28 - Docent/Public Relations 101
- January 29 - Steward Ship (Mobile Marine Van) & Early Childhood Program Volunteer Trainings
- February 25 - Seabird Protection & Citizen Science Monitoring Program Volunteer Training
- February 27 - Pinniped Monitoring Program Volunteer Training
- March 4 - Seal Watch Volunteer Training
- March 12 & 27 - Tidepool Program Volunteer Training

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE OFFERINGS

Community Education Seminars: \$20 (non-members), \$16 (members)

- January 7th - Mushrooms of the Redwood Forest
- January 12 - Redwood Ed
- January 27 - Bald Eagle Viewing & Photography
- February 4 - Marine Mammal Seminar
- February 26 - Wildlife of Western Sonoma County
- March 5 - Plants of Redwood Understory
- March 11 - Botanical Art Seminar - (plus additional materials fee) \$5
- March 18 - Wildflower Hike in Austin Creek
- March 19 - Bryophytes, or What Is That Under My Foot?
- March 25 - Forest Therapy Walk



CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE OFFERINGS

EcoAdventures:

- September 22 - Fall Equinox Star Party Campout – \$20 Adults, Children 12 yrs and under FREE
- October 8 - Pelagic Seabird & Whale Watching Expedition – \$160 members, \$200 non-members (Maximum 40 people)

Youth & Family Events:

- January 1 - First Day Hikes at Armstrong Redwoods (10, 11, 1:30) and Sonoma Coast Shell Beach (1:00) – FREE
- February 5 - Toddler & Pre-K Tidepool Day – FREE
- April 16 - Easter Sunday “Critter” Hunt - \$10 per family

Volunteer Opportunities

Call the Stewards office:
869-9177 x5# or email
sarah@stewardscr.org or
jazzy@stewardscr.org

Program Activities

Armstrong Redwoods

Visitor Center Staffing
Friends of Armstrong
Redwoods
Docent Tour Guides
Trail Maintenance
Pond Farm Working Group

Sonoma Coast State Park

Visitor Center Staffing
Seal Watch
Whale Watch
Tidepool Programs
Watershed Program/ELP
Sonoma Coast & Willow
Creek Trail Crews
Pinniped Monitoring
Seabird Monitoring

Other Projects

Office Help & Special Events

Volunteer Program Coordinators

Joyce Bacci, ARVC
Doris Dickenson, FAR
Linda Fisher, Jenner VC
Mary Follis, Seal Watch
Norma Jellison, Rich &
Colleen Draffin, Whale
Watch
Suzanne Abrams, Willow
Creek Education Program
Bill Bambrick, Trail Crews
The Sorensens, Marine
Debris & Beach Cleanups
Hollis Bewley,
Tidepool Programs &
Seabird Monitoring
Mark Anderson, Foot Patrol

A SENSE OF PLACE

April Reza, Bilingual Outreach Coordinator

Bilingual Outreach work has been very interesting, and I would like to share with you some highlights of what I have learned. As a Mexican American, I came into this work with plenty of biases that were soon debunked. I learned that when camping, Latino's prefer hamburgers and hotdogs instead of carne azada. I learned that kids, youth and adults are eager to try new things and take on responsibilities such as tending a fire, helping prep meals, or doing chores, rather than having it done for them. Most importantly, I was reminded that no matter where people are from, they have an innate love for nature; some come with their own narratives and experiences of the outdoors and others are waiting to discover it...

My mother was born and lived in Tepic, Nayarit, Mexico till she was a young adult. At home we were always told stories of "home" or Mexico. Our roots, the foundation of our identity, are what give us community, a home away from home. This sense of place is beautiful, and yet, incomplete. I knew I was connected to this distant, at times seemingly mythical land, through my mother, but when I would visit I was definitely considered a gringa regardless! I was fortunate enough to have a father, who was an avid adventurer, fisherman and all-round outdoorsman. He took the entire family exploring, through the redwoods, through the backroads of our county, to parks and to the ocean. Both experiences ingrained in me a sense of identity, but most importantly a sense of place.

Navigating bicultural identity is a journey in itself. Cultural norms are constantly changing. Our mission at Stewards has been to plant seeds of stewardship so that environmental conservation becomes a widespread cultural norm. Through programs like the Campamento Familiar a.k.a. Fam Camp with Latino Outdoors and the Youth Environmental Activist Summit with Raizes Collective, our intention has been to not only create spaces where participants feel culturally welcomed, but also to inoculate participants with a bit of Conservation Cultura. In order to accomplish this, we have focused our efforts on connecting youth and adults to local public lands. Ultimately, we want them to confidently know and feel that no matter where they are from, this too is where they belong, this too is their home.

Trust is a key element in this process. Programmatically, our outings have been relevant to those we serve. With face to face invitations and phone calls, time was made to respond to our participants. We provided Spanish speaking interpreters and focused on finding the best bilingual EE interpreters our community offers. Because culturally we like to convivir in large groups, we collaborated with State Parks to provide that experience. If that meant organizing our meals pot-luck style, we shopped and delegated to provide nourishing bread to break juntos at every meal. I like to say Mi Parque, es Su Parque or My Park, is Your Park. It is with this warm welcome and sense of hospitality that we built bridges for those who had never been camping, who never before explored their local public lands, to take the initial steps to do so.

At the heart of these fun and exciting programs, resides responsibility. Conservation comes from a deep sense of environmental ethics. Many of our participants were raised and came from areas where they witnessed the direct interrelation between nature and our human well-being. They tended lands, and have an understanding of weather patterns, and the effects of climate on harvest and livestock – in essence, the direct correlation between the environment and our survival. The struggle today is to reconnect our generations, who have been raised playing on concrete instead of dirt, or fetching food in supermarkets instead of gardens. Through our stewardship programs, we hope to do our part by providing a medium for our participants to successfully reestablish their relationship to land. We hope to reestablish the basic knowledge that the well-being of our local land will directly impact our well-being. Most importantly, we hope to reestablish a sense of personal responsibility to the land, which will directly impact current and subsequent generations.

Working with the land has historically and cross-culturally been regarded as a sacred act. To be a steward is to honor a relationship of give and take. Every morning that I walk the forest floor of Armstrong Redwoods, I am drawn by nature's magnificence, I remove my cap for the sake of respecting the wondrous beauty of these towering trees. Public lands are invaluable because they allow people to see them as a sanctuary. Once people experience their local land as sacred, innately they will comprehend the sacredness of all land. Once people understand how our survival depends on this land, a sense of responsibility will naturally follow. And if that responsibility can be activated and launched into action, it is because we have undeniably discovered a sense of place. It is then that we discover that here too we belong, and understand that this too is our home.

In Appreciation of our Donors

Foundations & Agencies

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Bodega Seafood, Art & Wine Festival
California Coastal Commission
California State Parks Foundation
California State Park Rangers Association
Clif Bar Family Foundation
Community Foundation Sonoma County
County of Sonoma
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Phil Warren
Patricia Westman

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

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Stewards members receive this quarterly newsletter by email or mail, a 20% discount at Stewards run Visitor Centers and our special events and discounts on our educational seminars.

**CALL 800-320-0476
TO MAKE A
VEHICLE DONATION
IN THE NAME OF
STEWARDS.**

For information on contributing to Stewards' Endowments please contact Michele Luna (707) 869-9177 X4# michele@stewardscr.org

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

Membership/Donation Form

RENEWAL

YES, I'd like to become a member.

- Senior/Student \$25.00
Individual \$30.00
Family \$45.00
Contributing \$100.00
Sustaining \$150.00
Business \$150.00
Patron \$250.00 plus
Osprey Circle \$500.00 plus

Name(s) _____
Address _____
Phone _____
Email _____

I'd like to help with an additional donation of \$_____

Payment type: Check Charge Card Visa MC Total tax deductible donation \$_____

Make check payable to Stewards. Account # _____ Exp. Date _____

Annual Renewal Date: February 1 Signature: _____

Bequests

Your Gift to the Future of State Park Preservation

With your help, future generations will enjoy the State Parks in the Russian River District, including education and stewardship programs supported by Stewards. A gift to Stewards is a rewarding form of giving from your estate. There are several types of charitable bequests by will (or beneficiary designation).

Sample:

I hereby give and bequeath to Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods, a nonprofit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of California, with a principal address at P.O. Box 2, Duncans Mills, CA 95430, _____ percent of my estate, (or) the sum of _____ dollars, (or) the following assets _____, Tax ID # _____ provided upon request. Contact your legal advisor for further information. There are also other planned giving options for your consideration.