

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

Preservation through Education and Stewardship

Russian River District State Parks

Volume XXVII, Number 3, Fall 2012



Bullfrog Pond Campground Open!

Michele Luna, Executive Director

Well, we did it and it's going very well. Despite the wonderful support we have received from State Park staff there were some who were concerned about Stewards taking on operating a State Park like Austin Creek State Recreation Area. Granted it's only been three weeks, but so far operations are going as planned and we've accomplished a lot in the past few months. We've had good luck with campers who are very grateful that Bullfrog Pond campground is open again. We are also staffing the Armstrong Redwoods/Austin Creek entrance station, thus collecting fees for both parks and splitting the day-use fees between the two parks. We are now responsible for keeping the trails cleared and patrolling the backcountry in order to keep the natural and cultural resources protected. Let us know if you want to help out, we can certainly use more volunteers. Public

Assistance volunteers are out in the back country on horseback and foot once or twice a week. They are a huge asset to the park.

We were very fortunate to hire an experienced Field Operations Manager, Tom Webb, who has worked for State Parks as a member of the natural resource team, in County Parks collecting fees and overseeing campgrounds and as an interpreter at the Discovery Center in Santa Rosa. He possesses all the skills we were looking for and is doing a fine job. Tom has helped transition the park aides who were working for State Parks to working for Stewards as service aides (slight job title change). Both Sierra Wisheart and Louie Guglielmino have been very helpful during the transition. We are also very happy to have Kim and Dan as our new camp hosts. They come up from Santa Cruz every other weekend. There are opportunities for others to camp host as well. A small camper was recently donated, which Kim and Dan are excited to fix up so there will even be a comfy place to sleep and cook soon. Besides the camper, Stewards purchased a used truck and tool trailer for volunteer workdays. We plan to keep the campground open as long as we can and maybe all year. The backcountry sites are not open yet but we are formulating a plan to get them open as soon as we can.



Special thank you to everyone who has donated to help our efforts and in particular to the **California State Parks Foundation** for their \$56,000 grant, the **Olmsted Park Fund** for a \$2,000 grant and to the Dean Witter Foundation for their \$25,000 grant to help us reopen **Pomo Canyon and Willow Creek Campgrounds**, which we plan to do as soon as the hazardous tree work is done.

Mission

Stewards Promotes, Restores, and Protects Your State Parks.

Vision

Stewards if 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@mcn.org

www.stewardsofthecoastandredwoods.org

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

UPCOMING EVENTS

Old Grove Festival and Great Feast	Sat., Sept. 15, 2012
Willow Creek Watershed Education Program Training	Fri., Oct. 5, 2012
History of Willow Creek and Sonoma Coast	Sat., Oct. 6, 2012
Stewards' Annual Membership Potluck Picnic	Sat., Oct. 20, 2012
Whale Watch Orientation	Sat., Nov. 10, 2012
Annual Volunteer Celebration and Auction	Fri., Dec. 7, 2012

Board Members

Bill Bambrick, President
Rich Lawton, Vice President
Mike Von der Porten, Secretary
Gregory Fearon, Treasurer
Jo Anne Ackerman
Hollis Bewley
Jan De Wald
Jeff Edmonds
Andrea Johnston
Elizabeth Vega

Advisory Board Members

Cindy Brennan
Kathie Lowrey

CAL

Greg Probst, Sonoma Coast
Ranger

Executive Director

Michele Luna

Administrative Director

Annie Cresswell

Administrative Assistant

Melanie Russell

Programs Manager

Sukey Robb-Wilder

Office Assistant

Nik Szcsey

Office Specialist

Margaret Ellsworth

Operations Manager

Tom Webb

Service Aides

Sierra Wisehart
Louie Guglielmino

Office Volunteers this Qtr

Clara Else

Newsletter Contributors

Bea Brunn
Sukey Robb-Wilder
Greg Probst
Annie Cresswell

E-News

To receive our E-Newsletter please go to our website and sign up for these periodic updates. You can customize your subscription.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Michele Luna, Stewards Executive Director

54 Million in Undisclosed Funds, A disappointment for State Parks Staff and Supporters

What a shock for us to find out that funds within California State Parks were not being fully disclosed. This news prompted a full scale investigation that has left many employees with State Parks and park supporters feeling dismayed.

Through our E-newsletter, Stewards is keeping our supporters up-to-date on the investigation and subsequent legislation that has now gone to the Governor's desk for signing.

AB 1589 (Huffman):

Main provisions are:

- Urges the creation of a master plan for California's state park system
- Urges the formation of a multi-disciplinary advisory council to provide recommendations for sustainable funding for state parks
- Requires DPR to produce an action plan by July 1, 2013 to increase revenues
- Exempts non-profits that are operating parks from possessory interest (i.e. property tax) on state property they are operating
- Creates a tax check off to buy an annual day-use pass for state parks

AB 1478: (Blumenfield)

Appropriates \$20.6 million of the undisclosed funds and \$10 million of Prop 84 funds, to be used in the following ways:

- \$10 million to be used to match, dollar for dollar, donations in FY 12-13 & FY 13-14 that have been and are planned to be made to keep parks open
- \$10 million to be generally used by DPR to direct toward parks at risk of closure, with priority to parks with donor, operating or other agreements w/ DPR
- Allocates up to \$500,000 to pay for investigations underway
- Strengthens the State Park & Recreation Commission (SPRC) by establishing specific qualifications for appointing Commissioners and gives new authority to the Commission to increase transparency and oversight of DPR's budget
- Appropriates \$120,000 annually in FY 12-13 and 13-14 to support the activities of the SPRC
- Appropriates \$10 million of Prop 84 dollars for capital outlay project.
- Creates a moratorium on park closures until June 2014
- Makes technical changes to the already-enacted State Park Enterprise Fund

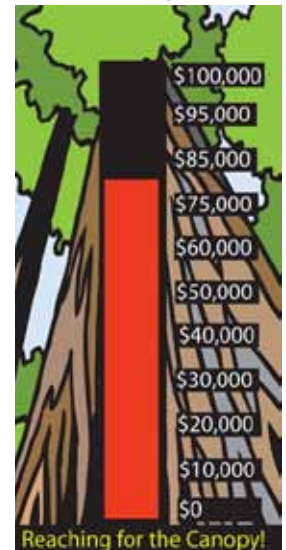
Stewards is growing - New Staff

In the past two month Stewards has grown from four staff to nine. I introduced Tom Webb, our Field Operations Manager and Sierra Wisehart and Louie Guglielmino, our new Service Aides on page 1.

In addition, Stewards was pleased to offer temp positions to two people who we met through their participation with two different subsidized government programs.

Nik Szcsey worked for us two years ago through the Youth Employment Corp. and then came back this year and is doing a great job as our new office assistant. Margaret Ellsworth has also been looking for work for some time and participated in Sonoma Works for a number of months. We recently hired her as an office specialist because of her IT skills and expertise with databases. Already she has made significant contributions in troubleshooting and installing new technology services in our offices. Stewards also has a new office in the Ranger Station at Armstrong Redwoods, which has been set-up for park operations.

With new staff comes the pressure to keep them all employed. With our new added workload having extra employees is essential. We are asking for your support in helping us sustain our new operations with a donation. Won't you help us reach our goal to raise \$100,000 by October 1st?



We Thank you for your Support!

CAL REPORT

Greg Probst, Sonoma Coast Ranger, CAL

As I write this article on the last “unofficial” day of summer, I realize that this was the 15th summer season in which I have had the pleasure to work for California State Parks.

This summer was overshadowed by the revelation of accounting discrepancies with some state park funds . Yet from a field perspective, this summer was no different than my first summer season in 1998: It was BUSY!

I was fortunate enough to meet visitors not only from California but also from all over the United States and the entire globe. Getting to meet and assist visitors from Sacramento to Russia to South Africa and beyond makes my job a unique and special one.

In the end, I think it should always come down to the positive personal experience of any individual who comes to visit one of the hundreds of California State Parks. Even with these challenging fiscal times, our visitors still got to enjoy the park experience whether it was camping for the first time with family and friends, exploring a historic Russian fort, flying kites along the foggy Sonoma Coast, or taking a leisurely stroll in the shade beneath the towering redwoods.

The park visitor’s experience could not have been such a positive one without the generosity, hard work, and dedication of people like you. Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods’ staff, board members, volunteers and donors continue to help make beautiful memories for the thousands of state park visitors that came for a visit this summer.

As the summer of 2012 comes to a close, Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods is taking a journey into uncharted waters as you are now operating Austin Creek State Recreation Area. The park visitor, who recently was faced with a “Park Closed” sign, is now getting to enjoy the beauty and wonder this special place has to offer.... all because of you!

Even with the fiscal uncertainties that tomorrow may hold, I am still looking forward to the Summer of 2013 and beyond. I know that by working together in cooperation with Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods, we can all make our park visitors’ experiences positive ones that will last them a lifetime.

VOLUNTEER HOURS DUE

It’s that time of year to start documenting all the volunteer hours you give to your State Parks. Besides ensuring your invitation to our Annual Volunteer Celebration on December 7th, Stewards uses your hours to document our success. Many grants will allow us to match funds we solicit with the value of your volunteer hours. Currently, the Independent Sector equates the value of volunteer time in California to be \$24.18 per hour.

Turning in your hours is quite easy. You can download a form on our website: <http://www.stewardsofthecoastandredwoods.org/pdf/volhoursform.pdf> or you can fill out an online form at: <http://www.stewardsofthecoastandredwoods.org/volunteerhours.htm>. Or call or email the office and we will mail or email you a form. (707) 869-9177 or stewards@mcn.org.

We thank you for your help.

LINDA RATH IS RETIRING

Armstrong Redwoods State Reserve, Group Picnic Area
Saturday, October 6, 2012, Noon to 5:00pm
Potluck - Bring a side dish to share/BBQ meats will be provided
Cost is \$10 per person to cover expenses and a gift

RSVP by Friday, September 28th to:

Liz Beale (707) 865-2394, lbeale@parks.ca.gov



When Linda Rath came to the Russian River District it was a breath of fresh air for Stewards. We’ve worked with wonderful State Park employees over the years and working with Linda has definitely been working with the best of the best. Her wonderful sense of humor, fair way of dealing with concerns and her willingness to give over and above the call of duty is why she stands out as one of the best State Park employees Stewards has worked with. Instead of saying “no” to an issue, she takes the time to research and explain why something may not be possible. Mostly, she is willing to come up with ways to make things work and is willing to take an active role in troubleshooting and finding those solutions.

Stewards wishes Linda a wonderful retirement and will miss her shining smile. She will be moving back to the Monterey/Big Sur area where she has a home.

PROGRAM UPDATES

WHALE WATCH

Bea Brunn, Whale Mother

This is traditionally the calm season for Whale Watch, however this year we have had whale sightings all year.

There has been lots of food in the water so there are many Blue whales and Humpback whales feeding like crazy, some close enough for people to view.

Another unusual sighting has been Gray whale mothers and calves close to shore this late in the season—to the delight of us humans and also hopefully good for the whales.

It is almost time to start thinking about our 2013 season. Our annual Whale Watch orientation will take place on Saturday, November 10th, starting at 9:00am, I look forward to seeing all of you there. The training may be taking place in a new location this year so stay tuned.

Again, my heartfelt thanks to all of our faithful volunteers for all of your help through the years.

Editor's Note: Special thanks to Bea, our beloved Whale Mother, who has been coordinating this program since 1986. She is truly an amazing woman and a huge asset to Stewards and the Whale Watching community.



Whale Watch Orientation

Saturday, November 10, 2012

9:00 am to 1:30 pm

Bodega Bay Fire District - 510 Highway 1

ONLINE REGISTRATION REQUIRED

http://www.stewardsofthecoastandredwoods.org/seminar_registrationpage.htm

Join us for one of our most popular volunteer orientations. Learn to assist the public in viewing the annual gray whale migration. Docents are at Bodega Head on weekends January to May.



Willow Creek Watershed Education

Volunteer Orientation

Friday, October 5, 2012

9:00 am to 3:00 pm with lunch break

Inspire students in an exciting watershed field study program where they learn about the life cycle of salmon and attributes of a healthy watershed.

History of Willow Creek & Sonoma Coast

Saturday, October 6, 2012

1:00 to 4:00 pm

Instructors: Historian Dan Murley

Learn about the cultural history of Willow Creek, part of Sonoma Coast State Park, including fascinating information about the Kashaya Pomo and Russian American Fur Company and Loggers.

ONLINE REGISTRATION REQUIRED

http://www.stewardsofthecoastandredwoods.org/seminar_registrationpage.htm

A "LEBARON FAMILY" WELCOME

Doris Dickenson, Visitor Center Docent

In early August, Karen Basli of Connecticut and Roberta Roberts from Montreal, both descendants of the LeBaron family who once owned part of Armstrong Woods, visited our state reserve. It was my privilege to give them a tour of the redwoods. This is the third time members of the LeBaron family have come cross-country to see the forest that their ancestors, Harrison LeBaron and his sons, had a part in preserving. We really appreciate their family interest in the park and its history and hope to see family members again.

In case you have forgotten park history, Kate Armstrong had been given 400 acres of redwood parkland by her father, and upon her death, it passed to her sister, Lizzie. Lizzie divided it with her brother, Walter, who quickly sold his portion to Harrison LeBaron, a family friend and local dairyman. Harrison's sons were the ones who, with Lizzie, sold the redwood acreage to Sonoma County as a county park in 1917.

STAY-CATION IN AUSTIN CREEK SRA

Annie Cresswell, Stewards Administrative Director

Every summer my parents, both my siblings, their families and mine plan a camping trip together. Usually we take a week or more, early in August and go to some far away California location to camp, hike, fish and just relax. As this summer started there were many big work/life projects for many of our family members and we just couldn't seem to make our usual week away work. As August started to wind down I was feeling really disheartened that we weren't going to be together for our trip, then I had an idea and posed the question to the group.

"How about we stay close to home and do a short trip?". The very next question was "were would we go?". I suggested Austin Creek State Recreation Area. Why not its close, it's open and believe it or not many of my family haven't spent time there.

We arrived on Friday, August 31st and spent two nights. The view up to the campground is breathtaking! We set up camp and started exploring around the pond. My 10 year old niece took a wade in the pond followed by a sponge bath by my mom. We saw ducks and lots of wonderful birds. Because of the fire closure we got creative with our campfire ring. We wanted the feel of a fire so we placed



one of our coleman lanterns in the ring and it was great. S'mores were another challenge that was overcome with a fork and the propane stove.

Saturday we packed up lunches, water and the two year old and hiked down the fire road to Gilliam Creek trail and headed out to the Austin Creek backcountry. What a wonderful hike with spectacular views and incredible natural areas and just to say ten creek crossings (yes I counted)!

The creek was full of fish, salamanders, and crawdaddies. My niece had so much fun and boy did it bring back

memories of doing just the same thing when I was a child growing up in Cazadero. We spent the day exploring. When it was time to head out we all thought it would be so nice to stay but we packed it all up and headed back down the trail. When we got to the fire road, boy the fun began. Did I say it was 1.5 miles straight down, which in reverse is 1.5 miles straight up. Well we all made it and I'll just leave it at that.

Sunday early morning I woke to the sound of ducks at the pond, birds welcoming the sunrise and the joy of being fully aware of my surroundings. It ended too soon but I was very grateful we were able to explore a new place close to home. If you haven't spent time in Austin Creek SRA I highly recommend you try it. Just the drive up the mountain is an adventure and a beautiful sight to behold. Get out there and enjoy your park, it's right there!



Volunteer Opportunities

Call the Stewards office:
869-9177 x1# or email
volparks@mcn.org

Program Activities Armstrong Redwoods

- Visitor Center Staffing
- Friends of Armstrong Redwoods
- Docent Tour Guides
- Trail Maintenance
- Habitat Restoration Project
- Pond Farm Interest Group

Sonoma Coast State Park

- Visitor Center Staffing
- Seal Watch
- Whale Watch
- Tidepool Programs
- Watershed Program
- Environmental Living Prog.
- Sonoma Coast Stewardship

Other Projects

- Recycling & Firewood
- Office Help & Special Events

Volunteer Program Coordinators

- Joyce Bacci, ARVC
- Lanny Keyston, AR Trails, FAR
- Laura Parent, Pond Farm
- Linda Fisher, Jenner VC
- Bob Caricato, Seal Watch
- Bea Brunn, Whale Watch
- Suzanne Abrams, ELP
- Vacant, Willow Creek Ed.
- Bill Bambrick, Sonoma Coast Water Quality Monitoring and Trail Crew
- The Sorensons, Marine Debris & Beach Cleanups
- Hollis & Jerry Bewley, Tidepool Programs
- Louise Patterson, MAU
- Mark Anderson, Foot Patrol

UPCOMING EVENTS

California State Parks Presents
the Seventh Annual
Old Grove Festival
A Benefit for
Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods
Redwood Forest Theatre,
Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve

Saturday, Sept. 15, 2012
"Swinging in the Redwoods"
Dan Hicks and the Hot Licks
Opener: **Solid Air**

Gates open: 4:00 pm
Great Feast: 4:00 - 8:00 pm
Solid Air: 6:00 pm
Dan Hicks: 7:00 pm

Tickets available online
General - \$25, Child \$10 (one child free with an adult), Redwood Circle \$40
Great Feast (Cajun Gumbo) - \$15 per person, Veggie Option - \$10

www.oldgrovefestival.org
(707) 869-9177



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND POTLUCK PICNIC SATURDAY, OCT. 20, 2012

10:00 - Bullfrog Pond Campground Tour and Interpretive Talk (meet by the Stewards office to carpool)

Noon - Potluck picnic at the Group Picnic Area in Armstrong Redwoods SNR
Stewards provides beverages, plates and utensils (unless you bring your own)

Followed by Guest Speakers and an Annual Report

This year we would like to celebrate Stewards taking over operations at Austin Creek SRA in conjunction with our Annual Membership meeting and potluck picnic. Begin your day with a tour and interpretive talk at newly opened Bullfrog Pond Campground. Meet at the Stewards office at 10:00 to carpool up to the campground. Wear layers.

At noontime we will convene in the Armstrong Redwoods Group Picnic Area for what always turns out to be a scrumptuous potluck picnic. Stewards will provide beverages, plates and utensils. If you would like to bring your own plate and utensils that will help us be as green as possible.

We are inviting our local legislators to speak and Executive Director Michele Luna will provide a brief Annual Report.

We look forward to seeing you there!



In Appreciation of our Donors

Foundations/Agencies

Bodega Bay Fisherman's Festival
California Coastal Commission
California State Parks Foundation
Community Foundation Sonoma County
County of Sonoma
Dean Witter Foundation
The Medtronic Foundation
Monterey Bay Sanctuary Foundation
The National Environmental Education Fnd
Olmsted Park Fund
Save the Redwoods League
The Sebastopol Rotary

Businesses/Corporations

Concrete Images Inc.
Creature Pictures LLC.
Gravy Productions LLC.
Hubbubble LLC.
North Bay Corporation
Paydirt Pictures
River Reader Bookstore
Roll Giving and Paramount Community Giving
Sophies Cellars
Webhelper

Event Sponsors 2012

Sea Star - \$2,000 plus

Affinity Solar Energy
Prudential CA Realty - Guerneville
Russian River Getaway
The Hot Tub Place

Wildflower Sponsors - \$500 plus

Fern Grove Cottages
Mr. Trombly's Te
Russian River Recreation & Parks District

Mushroom Sponsors - \$100 plus

John De Salvio (Graphic Design)
Garden Grill
Westamercia Bank

In-Kind Sponsors

Bohemian
GSZ Photo~Grafix & Printing
Coffee Bazaar
KRUSH 95.9
Segway of Healdsburg
Sonoma West Times and News
Sonoma County Gazette
Spud Point Crab Company
WaccoBB

Wineries/Breweries

Balletto • Barefoot Winery • Bear Republic
Lagunitas • Kendall Jackson • Wildhog Vineyards
Korbel Champagne • Matanzas Creek
Hook & Ladder • Moshin Vineyards • Kendall Jackson
Lake Sonoma • Russian River Brewery • Old World
Winery • Alexander Valley • Gallo • Ravenswood

Osprey Circle Donors 2011-12

\$5,000 plus

Family of Owen and Virginia Keech Bird
Michael & Elaine Von der Porten

\$2,000 plus

Camille LeGrand
Gregory Fearon
Alden Olmsted
Laura Morgan

\$1,000 plus

Dennis McAuliffe
James Barnes
Doris Dickenson
Rob Dickerson
Leslie de Haseth
Gail Ellestad
Carmen Finley
Terry Grant
Gary Heck Foundation
The Neil and Amelia McDaniel Charitable Trust
Carol Mitchel
Betty Reiss
Elizabeth Zitrin

\$500 plus

Barry Applebaum
Bill Bambrick
Efren Carrillo
Casini Ranch Family Campground
Doris Dickenson
Lawrence E. Jones School Expeditionary Learning
Barbara Gegan
Diane Gifford
Tina Kelly
Michael & Margaret Kennett
Lucasfilm Foundation
Kevin C' Connor
Sandy Leonard in memory of Robert Leonard
Kathie Lowrey
Dennis Martino
Rita O'Neill
Janet Randall
Betty Reiss
Gilbert Roberts/Penelope Cohen
Julie and Kurt Whitaker

Medtronic Workplace Giving

Diane Gifford
Linda Price

NEW MEMBERS

Patron

Alden Olmsted
Sandy Leonard

Contributing and Business Members

Leslie Mills Risbrough

Family Members

Maru Lou Cranna
Rob and Karen Ricker
Donna Smith
Geoffrey Smith
Savita Wilder

Individual Members

Patricia A. Zuccaro

Senior/Students

Christine Caliandro
Dennis G. McCormack

Stewards members receive this quarterly newsletter by email or mail .

Members are also entitled to 20% discount on purchases at Stewards-run visitor centers and at our special events. In addition, Members can attend our educational seminars for a \$5 donation.

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

Membership 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.

For Information on contributing to Stewards' Endowment in support of Armstrong Redwoods please contact Michele Luna at the Stewards office (707) 869-9177 X4#.

CALL 800-320-0476 TO MAKE A VEHICLE DONATION IN THE NAME OF
 STEWARDS OF THE COAST AND REDWOODS

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

PO Box 2, Duncans Mills, CA 95430

(707) 869.9177, FAX (707) 869.8252

stewards@mcn.org, stewardsofthecoastandredwoods.org



Return Service Requested

NONPROFIT
 ORGANIZATION
 US Postage PAID
 Permit No. 6
 Duncans Mills
 95430