

Friends of Santa Teresa Park Newsletter

August 2008 Website: <http://www.stpfriends.org> Editor, Webmaster: **Ron Horii**
Meetings: first Thursday of the month, Santa Teresa Golf Club, 260 Bernal Road, San Jose, upper clubhouse/banquet facility, 7 pm. (<http://www.santateresagolf.com>)



Santa Teresa County Park is a 1627-acre island of open space at the southern gateway to Silicon Valley in San Jose. It sits near the end of the Santa Teresa Hills between the Almaden Valley and Blossom Valley. Its highest point, antenna-topped Coyote Peak, reaches 1155 feet. For the thousands of urban residents who live next door to it, the park is a quick getaway into the country. It has 18 miles of trails that are popular with equestrians, bicyclists, and hikers. Trails lead through hillsides, meadows, and shady forests. The trails lead along rocky ridgelines and up to hilltops, with commanding views of the Bay Area. The rainy season brings flowing creeks, waterfalls, and ponds. The hills are covered with spectacular displays of wildflowers in the spring. The historic areas provide glimpses into the past, dating back to the 18th century. Developed areas include the Santa Teresa Golf Course, the Pueblo Picnic Area, and the archery range. For more information on Santa Teresa Park, see: <http://www.geocities.com/santateresapark/>, or the County Parks website (www.parkhere.org, click on Find a Park, Santa Teresa County Park).

Friends of Santa Teresa Park Vision, by Mike Boulland

Our vision is to help protect, enhance, maintain and restore Santa Teresa Park through education, volunteer involvement, coordination and communications with Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation staff and community.

Friends of Santa Teresa Park Association, by Mike Boulland

On the first Thursday of every month the Friends of Santa Teresa Park members meet to plan activities. Our members are very dedicated to helping improve the park with activities that support the creation of new trails, interpretive events and good times. Issues such as expanding activities for hikers, bikers, equestrians, geocachers, and photographers are always discussed. Most popular at our meeting is a beautiful monthly slideshow of the park. Often hidden scenic views, wild animal shots and wildflower slideshows give our members a fantastic new view of rarely-seen sights from our popular park. Our active group often supports various other organizations and coordination of events throughout the County Parks. Specifically, our members volunteer for 4-H activities, geocaching classes, and trail events as they are scheduled. Often after many volunteer events, our members get together for a lunch or barbeque. Participation in FOSTP meetings allows its members to link up with other Santa Clara County Parks programs. Many times, our members are asked to participate in other county events and programs, allowing them to attend special events, such as the annual Fantasy of Lights at Vasona Park and our annual holiday recognition meeting. The Friends of Santa Teresa Park has been recognized twice for its park support as Volunteer Group of the Year by the Santa Clara County Parks Department Volunteer Coordinating Council. Plan to join us at our next meeting at the Santa Teresa Golf Club Upper Banquet Room at 7:00 PM monthly. If you are interested in helping out at the park or just want to know what's going on, you are welcome to join us. We could always use more help. See our website for more information. You can also join our Yahoo Group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FoSTP/>

Events Calendar (Most of the park events require reservations. For more details and contact information, see the FOSTP website under News or the County Parks website under Park Activities.)

- Saturday, Sept. 6, 2008, Raptors in the Wild, Santa Teresa County Park, 10:00am-12:00pm. Call (408) 225-0225.
- Saturday, Sept. 6, 2008, Lost in Space Night at the Bernal Ranch, 7:30 pm-10:00 pm. Call (408) 226-5453.
- Saturday, Sept. 13, 2008, Scrub-A-Dub & Old Time Games, Bernal Ranch, 1:00pm-3:30pm. Call (408) 226-5453.
- Saturday, Sept. 13, 2008, Bugged-Out Movie Night – Praying Mantis, Bernal Ranch, 7:30pm-10:30pm. Call (408) 226-5453.
- Saturday, Sept. 20, 2008, Santa Teresa Community Fest, George Page Park, Santa Teresa Blvd. & Miyuki Drive, 11am-5pm. (see <http://www.communityfest.org/>)
- Saturday, Oct. 4, 2008, Free Outdoor Photography Class, Bernal Ranch, 10:00am-12:00pm. Call (408) 355-2240.
- Saturday, Oct. 25, 2008, Bugged-Out Movie Night – Tarantula, Bernal Ranch, 7:30pm-10:30pm. Call (408) 226-5453.
- Saturday, Nov. 8, 2008, Introduction to Geocaching, Vasona County Park, 9:00am-12:00 pm. Call (408) 355-2240.
- Saturday, Jan. 17, 2009, Introduction to Geocaching, Almaden Quicksilver County Park, 9:00am-12:00pm. (408) 355-2240.

Past events this year at Santa Teresa Park included trail work days, a summer day camp, an outdoor photography class and wildflower walk, bugged-out movie nights, a Healthy Trails hike, a bike safety class, raptor hike, and a dog walk..

Rancho Santa Teresa Historic Site Future Plans for an Expanded Historic Area, by Mike Boulland

Back in 1992, the founding members of the Friends of Santa Teresa Park (FOSTP) organized with a vision to preserve the Rancho Santa Teresa Historic Site for future generations. Today, after years of dedication and encouragement by FOSTP members, that dream is becoming a reality as the Santa Clara County Parks Department is designing a new site plan for this important local, state, and nationally-recognized historic area. The new plan expands public access to include several historical areas purchased over the years that are currently off-limits to visitors. With this design, a new interpretive center building will be built to share the rich oral and written history of the Santa Teresa Spring site that has been used as a gathering place by prehistoric man to today's modern society. We can look forward towards the new areas that will provide for expanded educational and environmental programs, interpretive displays, and outside picnic areas to be used with other cultural and community events. Currently, the Rancho Santa Teresa Historic Area serves many local schools for historical tours and for local daily walking exercise trails by residents. Local community residents are delighted with the new plan and feel this new interpretive center will be a fantastic addition to our community as it will improve the quality of life for

residents by giving more historical identification to our Santa Teresa neighborhood and surrounding community. A community meeting was held on May 8 by project manager Antoinette Romeo to present the overall design theme and collect comments. A follow-up community meeting will be held in the fall to present more details of the plan. For more information, go to the County Parks website at <http://www.parkhere.org>. Click on Planning and Development, then Santa Teresa County Park Historic Area Site Plan. You can also see the links in our July 2008 meeting minutes: http://www.stpfriends.org/FOSTP_Minutes_07_03_08.html

The Norred Trail, by Ron Horii

The Norred Trail, the newest trail in Santa Teresa, opened in spring 2007. It was named after Buck Norred's Ranch, which was a popular destination for horseback riding, parties, and picnics until it was sold in the 1990's. It is now part of the park. The Norred Trail is not long, less than a mile, but has become one of the most popular trails in the park. One of the reasons is its easy accessibility to residents of the Santa Teresa Community. It starts above the Bernal-Gulnac-Joice Ranch on Manila Drive, branching off the Joice Trail a short distance up the hill. It runs nearly level along the hillside, overlooking the Bernal Ranch, Santa Teresa Spring, the Bear Tree Lot, and the Pyzak/Bonetti Ranch site. It provides a very good view of the historic area, San Jose's Albertson Parkway, and Bernal School. It turns and runs through the Buck Norred Ranch site, where it passes close to several old ranch buildings. The trail ends at the base of the Mine Trail next to the Mounted Ranger Unit. A neighborhood trail entrance is at Brockenhurst Drive off Heaton Moor. While it is a pleasant, peaceful, scenic trail now, it was born as a result of neighborhood complaints. The Coyote-Alamitos Canal runs along the base of the Santa Teresa Hills. A section of the canal around Norred Court runs behind a group of homes that were built after Buck Norred sold his ranch. The property line for those homes includes the canal and part of the hillside above it. People were using the canal as an illegal trail, and were thus trespassing on private property. Still, there was a need for an easy trail along the hillside to connect the Bernal Ranch with the Mine Trail. The Norred Trail was created to fulfill that need and divert traffic away from the canal. It runs above the Coyote-Alamitos Canal, far above the homes below, but not so high that it requires a long climb to reach it. The Norred Trail can be used as part of a long trail loop that includes the Joice, Bernal Hill Loop, and Mine Trails. Because we have been so involved with the Norred Trail, starting with holding the initial meetings that led to its inception, the Friends of Santa Teresa Park have adopted the Norred Trail. For more information and pictures on the trail and surrounding areas, see: <http://www.stpfriends.org/Norred/NorredPix.html>

Wildflowers and Photography

Santa Teresa Park has beautiful displays of spring wildflowers and scenic views. Here are park pictures from spring '08: <http://www.stpfriends.org/STP-2008/Stile.html>, <http://www.stpfriends.org/BernalHill-Spring08/Bernal-Hill-1.html>, <http://www.stpfriends.org/CoyotePk-08/CoyotePk-08.html>. The pictures were taken by Ron Horii. He's been giving a class on outdoor photography at the Bernal Ranch for several years. (See: http://www.geocities.com/rhorii/Outdoor_Photography.html) The next class is on October 4 from 10am-12pm in the new barn at the ranch. The class is free. Call (408) 355-2240 for reservations.

Geocaching

Geocaching is a popular activity worldwide. It is a sport and hobby that involves using GPS receivers to locate hidden caches, containing a logsheet or book for logging the find. Some include trading items. There are thousands of geocaches in the Bay Area alone. Santa Teresa Park has several dozen. For more information, see the official geocaching website: <http://www.geocaching.com>. For information on geocaching in Santa Teresa Park, see: http://www.stpfriends.org/STP_Geocaches.html. FOSTP member and park docent Sam Drake led a geocaching class in Almaden Quicksilver Park in June: http://www.newalmaden.org/Geoclass/GCCLass_06-14-08.html. He will be conducting 2 more in the future. Reservations are required. See the events schedule.

Trail Work Days

Santa Teresa is known for its miles of beautiful trails through the hills. Keeping them looking good and safe for park users takes a lot of work. All the trails are unpaved and subject to erosion and invasion by weeds. The trail work crews go out and repair damaged sections, improve drainage, smooth out rough areas, and clear brush from the trails. Santa Teresa has many environmentally-sensitive areas, so park users should stay on the trails to avoid damaging these areas. See our special reports page for links to pictures of past trail days: <http://www.stpfriends.org/SpecialWebPages.htm>. For trail days this year, see <http://www.stpfriends.org/TrailDay-06-07-08/TrailDay-06-07-08.html>, http://www.stpfriends.org/Fortini_05-03-08/Fortini.html. To learn how to get involved with these programs or other volunteer opportunities, please contact the County Parks Volunteer Program office at 408-355-2254 or email heidi.mcfarland@prk.sccgov.org

4H Projects

Coyote Crest is the local 4H club that has been working on projects at the Bernal-Gulnac-Joice Ranch. Their projects have included the chickens, rabbits, and historic garden. The club meets at the Coyote Grange on Monterey Highway. FOSTP members Jenel Vincze and Holly Davis are leaders. If you would like to join or just check out Coyote Crest 4-H Club, come to their open enrollment night September 11th at 7:00 p.m. at the Coyote Grange Hall, 8140 Monterey Road, S.J., 95013. 4-H is a youth development club for boys and girls ages 5-19. For more information, see the Coyote Crest 4H website: <http://clubs.ca4h.org/santaclara/coyotecrest/>. Santa Clara County 4H website: <http://clubs.ca4h.org/santaclara/>

Boy Scout Projects

Santa Teresa Park has provided many volunteer opportunities for the Boy Scouts, involving dozens of scout troops. Some examples of scout projects in the main part of the park include the trail bridges and the Nature Trail signs. 26 scouts have earned the Eagle Scout rank with projects in the historic area. They include the chicken coop, rabbit hutches, benches, cabinets, cattle roping stations, heritage garden, raised garden boxes, split rail fencing, and painting the historic buildings. On-going and future projects include more split-rail fencing, garden box restoration, and picnic table restoration. See the BSA, Santa Clara County Council: <http://www.scccbsa.org/html/index.html>