

## Trails of Santa Teresa County Park, Part 1: The Norred Trail

by Mario Blaum



I have been hiking and jogging in Santa Teresa County Park since 1985. I claim I am the person that has logged more miles in the trails of the park, although I cannot verify this. I love the park; it provides a unique opportunity to be in contact with nature close to an urban environment.

I would like to describe and illustrate different trails in the park. In this newsletter, I want to start with the easiest trail to access the park, the Norred trail. This trail is also the newest, barely a year and a half old. It came up as a necessity to connect the Joice-Bernal and Buck Norred Ranches (now site of the Mounted Patrol). Before the Norred trail was built, the ranches could only be connected by taking the streets (the Coyote-Alamitos canal trail is not an official trail and parts of it are on private property).

From the Joice-Bernal Ranch, you find the Norred trail by taking the Joice trail up. Roughly two hundred yards and then the two intersect. However, the ascent is steep and some people have complained about accessibility. Once you are on the Norred trail, it will take roughly .8 miles to reach the Norred Ranch, mostly flat. The trail is in good shape, but be careful with poison oak in some sections. Low altitude views are great from the Norred trail. It runs parallel to Manila Dr. at the beginning, then it curves and you can see the Bernal Intermediate School. It ends at the stables of the Norred Ranch, where it connects with the Mine Trail, taking you to other parts of the Park that will be described in the next newsletters.

If you choose to continue up on the Joice trail, you will encounter stunning views of the valley. The Joice trail eventually meets with the Bernal Hill Loop trail, which joins the Mine trail. Going down the Mine trail you can take the Norred trail to complete the loop, making for a beautiful moderate hike.

Above is a picture I took of the Norred trail view from the Joice trail during a photography class given by Ron Horii.

### More pictures from the Norred Trail, by Ron Horii:



On the Norred, looking back towards the Joice Trail



View of the historic site at Curie and San Ignacio

**Family Fandango, pictures by Ron Horii**

On Aug. 23, 2008, the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Fandango was held at the Bernal-Gulnac-Joice Ranch. There were entertainers, exhibitors, historical displays, crafts, games, food, and lectures. Here are some pictures of the event. For more pictures and descriptions, see: <http://www.stpfriends.org/Fandango-08/Fandango-08-1.html>



Delfina Garcia displayed rancho artifacts



Dancers from El Grito de la Cultura



Mounted Ranger Patrick Silva



Frank Martinez IV as a Spanish soldier



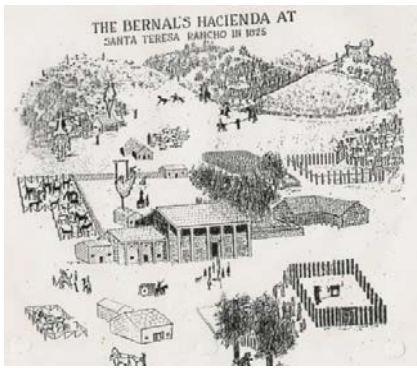
Singing Cowboy Cisco Jim



Lynne Paulson at STFNA's animals tracks game table



Jenel Vincze at 4H's seed planting table



## Santa Teresa Park's Legendary Sites By Mike Boulland

With a little background reading about the history of California and the United States, Santa Teresa Park's trails offer several short half-day self-guided historical hikes that you and your family can enjoy. These hikes will lead a family on a fun adventure to fascinating destination points that may rival many historical spots in America. Santa Teresa Park is overloaded with many unrecognized important historic sites that played a significant part in the creation of our state and nation. The park also includes several ancestral sites of the Muwekema Ohlone Indian tribe, the Bernal family rancho, and the Berryessa family rancho sites.

### Coyote Peak

The first hike to take is an excellent historical adventure that leads you straight up to the top of Coyote Peak. Your effort to reach the top of the mountain rewards you and your family with a fantastic view of the north to San Francisco and a spectacular view south to Gilroy.

### Battle of Santa Teresa



Visitors may glance down at the Coyote Valley overlooking one of the park's little-known historical sites, a site where the Battle of Santa Teresa took place, a battlefield where no one was killed but stopped a major Mexican military action. In 1844, Mexican Governor/General Manuel Micheltorena and 300 soldiers were prevented from conquering Northern California from this mountaintop and surrounding hill by a small band San Jose volunteers. The battle



was famous since it was the first battle where early California settlers won a victory during their fight for freedom against Mexico.

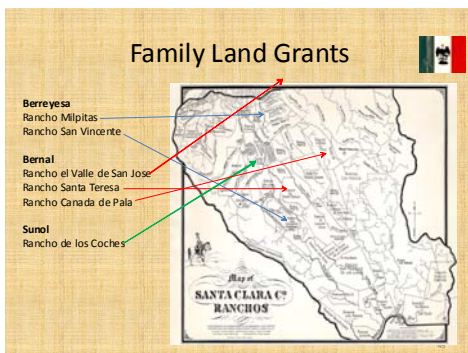
### The old wagon road to New Almaden

The most historic trail in the park starts out of the Pueblo Parking Lot at the Mine and Fortini trails. This trail is called, "The old wagon road to New Almaden." It is historic because of its connection to two major historic rancho sites in the Santa Clara Valley: Rancho Santa Teresa and Rancho San Vicente. Walking the trail's route connects you to the actual sites where Maria Zacarias Bernal and husband Jose Reyes Berryessa built their adobe brick hacienda rancho. This important site was home to Jose and Zacarias Berryessa whose large land grant holdings included the rich New Almaden Mines in Santa Clara County, and the fertile lands of Napa and Marin Counties.



### Rancho San Vicente

Rancho San Vicente's land and its wealthy New Almaden Mining holdings were fought over in the United States courts for more than ten years. In the end, Zacarias Bernal Berryessa won the ten-year legal fight to retain her family's land and establish women's rights to own mining claims and property in America, but the victory cost her family the lives of three generations.



Hikers and history buffs following the Fortini trail to the San Vicente Rancho may enjoy the challenge of discovering locations where many historical stories of grand family fandangos, heartbreaking tragedies, night-riding murders and homesteading squatters took place. Once you arrive at the site, stand on the trail close to the barn, take time to reflect and understand the importance of Zacarias Bernal Berryessa's pioneer spirit that this Berryessa Adobe home site celebrates.

### **Rancho Santa Teresa**

Today visitors who visit the Rancho Santa Teresa Park's historic sites are astonished to learn that when they use the parks trails they may follow the same old wild animals or Native American paths that lead them today through 6000 year-old Muwekma Ohlone Indian villages or to the sacred grotto at Santa Teresa Springs.

Now, take the time and to enjoy Santa Teresa Park's trails with your family. "Go out and Play" with your loved ones by walking and hiking in this park to discover its fascinating and enjoyable history that intertwines with the story of settling the American West and our current modern life.



### **Santa Teresa Park Wildflowers by Ron Horii**

Santa Teresa Park is one of best places in the Bay Area for viewing spring wildflowers. When the winter rains come, the brown hills begin to turn a verdant green. Starting around late February and peaking in April, the wildflowers come out in force. Though you can find wildflowers blooming all over the park, there are certain trails that have the best flower displays. The Rocky Ridge Trail runs along the ridgetop leading to Coyote Peak. The lower part of the trail runs through Big Oak Valley and climbs up the ridge. On the way, it has purple lupines, yellow buttercups, poppies, and tidytips. The trail runs up through rocky serpentine out-croppings. Along the top of the ridge, the trail becomes lined with poppies, goldfields, and redmaids. The switchbacks on the Stile Ranch Trail on the Almaden Valley side of the park are famous for being lined with brilliant displays of poppies. Farther up the hill and down in the valleys, you'll find a wide variety of flowers, including jewelflowers, goldfields, buttercups, owls clover, and phacelia. Along the Fortini Trail, you'll see the hillsides covered with poppies, tidytips, and popcornflowers. The Joice Trail leads up the from Bernal-Gulnac-Joice Ranch into increasingly spectacular displays of wildflowers. The steep ascent up the hill passes by thick stands of orange fiddlenecks with patches of purple vetch and blue miniature lupines. As the trail levels off and passes by serpentine outcroppings, you see a garden of all kinds of flowers, including poppies, creamcups, tidytips, ithuriel's spears, and the endangered Santa Clara Valley dudleya. The Joice Trail ends at the Bernal-Hill Loop Trail. The lower part of the loop trail leads next to a steep hillside covered with white purple-tipped spring beauty, blue gilia, white Chinese houses, and glowing yellow goldfields. Finally, as the trail turns to overlook the Bernal Ranch, you'll see an amazing sight: the whole hillside carpeted with bright flowers of all types, poppies, popcornflowers, tidytips, creamcups, and ithuriel's spears. For pictures of these wildflowers and more, in color, see:

<http://www.stpfriends.org/BernalHill-Spring08/Bernal-Hill-1.html>, which also has links to other pages.



Rocky Ridge Trail



Stile Ranch Trail



Joice Trail