



SOUTH SKYLINE ASSOCIATION

www.southskyline.org

JANUARY 2015

## **SOUTH SKYLINE ASSOCIATION GENERAL MEETING**

**PLACE: Saratoga Summit Fire Station 12900 Skyline Blvd.**

**DATE: Friday, January 23, 2015**

7:00 pm – Refreshments - please bring a dessert to share. SSA will provide beverages.

7:30 pm – SSA Board Elections, Shelley Ratay, Deputy Director of the Sempervirens Fund will give us an update on improvements to Castle Rock Park entrance, followed by the featured presentation.

### **TOPIC: Climate Change in the Santa Cruz Mountains**

Climate change in California is all about the water. With our alternating rainy and dry seasons, the flow of water through soils, vegetation, and watersheds is the critical factor determining habitability for plants, animals, and humans. USGS hydrologists used projected precipitation, temperature, solar radiation, soils, and bedrock geology to generate maps of monthly surface runoff, groundwater recharge, plant water use, and drought stress at an 18-acre scale. The maps allow hydrologic responses to climate change scenarios to be projected through the century. These maps are now accessible through the Conservation Lands Network Explorer ([www.bayarealands.org/explorer/#](http://www.bayarealands.org/explorer/#)). The tool can be used to extract water supply estimates for custom areas over 30-year periods. This talk will cover important conclusions of the study and feature map views of the results for the SSA area. Importantly, summer drought stress is projected to increase with rising air temperatures; this aridification leads to increased risk of fire and vegetation transitions.

### **GUEST SPEAKER: Dr. Stuart Weiss, Chief Scientist, Creekside Center for Earth Observation.**

Stu is an authority on Bay Area conservation and population biology and microclimate characterization. He obtained his PhD from Stanford University and worked over fifteen years at their Center for Conservation Biology before founding Creekside Center for Earth Observation. As principal investigator for more than 50 grants and contracts he has worked with numerous nonprofit and government organizations including US Fish and Wildlife Service, California Energy Commission, Silicon Valley Land Conservancy, and Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD). Recently Stu and Creekside have been working with MROSD on grassland management on Russian Ridge to enhance cover and diversity of native wildflowers and bunchgrasses.

**DIRECTIONS:** The Saratoga Summit Fire Station is located on the west side of Skyline Blvd. approximately 1 mile north of the intersection of Skyline and Highway 9. Bring a flashlight as it might be necessary to park along Skyline.

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# ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE SSA PRESIDENT

Michael Rowe

SSA Board Elections are January 23rd, 2015. The positions currently held by the following board members are up for election: Patti Begley, Kim Hamilton, Larry Myers, Eric Jewett, and Dave Anderson. On an encouraging note, Patti, Eric and Dave have notified me that they will run for another term. On the other hand, we need to find replacements for Larry Myers and Kim Hamilton who will not run for another term. Regardless of returning candidates, anyone is welcome to run for a position, and your nominations are welcome at this time. Nominations can be submitted via email or USPS to Michael Rowe (rowe517@gmail.com), 23101 Hwy 9, Boulder Creek, CA 95006. For all new candidates, please submit nominations and a short biography before the next general meeting on January 23rd.

Finally, from the SSA Bylaws, please note the following:

Members of the Board are elected by the general membership (majority of those present) at the annual meeting in January. If there is more than one candidate nominated for a position, then voting for that position shall occur by secret ballot.

The terms for the officers shall be one (1) year from the February business meeting until their successors are elected the following February business meeting. The terms of all other Board members shall be two (2) years starting February 1. There is no limit to the number of terms a Board member may serve.

Best regards and thank you in advance for volunteering to help the South Skyline community by serving on our board.

## Current SSA Board Members

<b>Members</b>	<b>Neighborhood</b>	<b>Board Responsibility</b>
Patti Begley .....	Highway 9 - Santa Cruz County .....	Vice President, Membership/Communications Committee, Website Committee
Barbara Bekins .....	Highway 35 - Rocky Creek .....	Public Safety & Water
Kim Hamilton .....	Highway 35 - Oakridge .....	Public Works
John Harriman .....	Las Cumbres .....	Secretary
Dave Anderson .....	Highway 9 .....	Public Safety
Larry Myers .....	Las Cumbres .....	Public Safety, SSEPO
Marianne Rose .....	Highway 35 - Long Ridge .....	Communications Committee, Website Committee
Ruth Waldhauer ....	Portola Heights .....	Membership/Communications Committee, SPUG, Website Committee, Adopt-A-Highway
Larry Watson .....	Highway 9 - Santa Cruz County .....	Website Committee
Eric Jewett .....	Saratoga Gap .....	Adopt-A-Highway
James Morris .....	Saratoga Gap	
Michael Rowe .....	Highway 9 - Santa Cruz County .....	President
Kristen Anderson ..	Highway 9 - Santa Cruz County .....	Treasurer

## RENEW YOUR SSA MEMBERSHIP NOW - BEFORE YOU FORGET

Please take a moment and renew your SSA membership for 2015. For just \$15 a year, your membership dues help SSA publish the *Skylines* newsletter, offer free classified ads, and provide speakers for our general meetings,. Your SSA membership is also necessary to participate in the Skyline Propane Users Group (SPUG) to get discounted rates on your propane service. The membership form is on page 3

of this newsletter and can be found on the SSA web site at <http://southskyline.org> -->

**Join Us -->membership application**

Mail your form and dues to:

SSA Membership Chairperson

22400 Skyline Blvd. Box 35, La Honda CA 94020

Questions? Contact: [ruth\\_waldhauer@yahoo.com](mailto:ruth_waldhauer@yahoo.com)

## South Skyline Association Annual Membership Renewal/Application

South Skyline Association (SSA) fosters a sense of community spirit, keeps residents informed of public agency actions and other issues of concern in the South Skyline sphere of influence, protects the rights and represents the interests of those in our area, and engages in various projects to enhance the unique South Skyline environment.

Regular membership is open to property owners and residents in the South Skyline area at least 18 years of age. The SSA area includes Skyline Boulevard and feeder roads between Skylonda and the southern terminus of Skyline Boulevard. Those outside the area may apply for Associate Membership (non-voting) by paying regular dues. Membership includes delivery of the "Skylines" quarterly newsletter, and participation in Skyline Propane Users Group (SPUG). Please provide the following necessary information:

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Property location in the SSA area: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

\*Email (will be kept confidential): \_\_\_\_\_

\* **Associate Members** - To help conserve on paper and postage, out of area members will receive an electronic copy of the Skylines Newsletter if a paper copy is not requested. **An Email address is required.**  
Check here if you prefer a paper copy: \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if you do NOT want to be listed in the SSA roster: \_\_\_\_\_  
(The SSA roster is distributed to SSA members only.)

Are you a participant in Skyline Propane User Group, or wish to be?": Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Tank: Own \_\_\_ Rent \_\_\_

Supplier: Amerigas\_\_\_ Kamps\_\_\_ Suburban/SJ\_\_\_ Suburban/SV\_\_\_ FerrellGas\_\_\_ Other\_\_\_

**Return this application and a check for \$15.00 (payable to "South Skyline Association") to:**

**SSA Membership Chairperson  
22400 Skyline Blvd. Box 35  
La Honda, CA 94020**

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**SSA Is What We Make It**

Let us know if you have a talent or skill that would be useful. We are particularly looking for articles for Skylines, volunteers to help set up for general meetings, informal legal advice, and people to monitor government agencies (counties, parks, MROSD). Any comments for the SSA Board are also welcome.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**SSA maintains a web site at <http://www.southskyline.org>**

Have you used the SSA web site? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, how often? \_\_\_\_\_

What information were you seeking? \_\_\_\_\_

What are your suggestions for improving it? \_\_\_\_\_

**Please continue to second page of form for donations and volunteer opportunities.**

## South Skyline Community Groups That Could Use Your Help

Below are four South Skyline community groups that are dedicated to improving the safety and beauty of our area. If you would like to contribute some volunteer some time or make a donation.

**Please circle an area of interest or enclose a separate check for each organization.**

Volunteer (circle area of interest)	Donations (separate checks)	Amount Enclosed
<p><b>South Skyline FireSafe Council:</b> This organization is seeking donations to continue our home defensible space chipping, roadside fuel break, and education programs. The SSA will match your donation.</p> <p>Name: Address:</p> <p>Email and/or phone #:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Take training and observe inmate crews.</li> <li>- Join us, help with projects.</li> <li>- I'd like a free home consultation on my defensible space + home resistance to firebrands + water supply.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Enclose Check</b>    \$</p> <p><b>Payable to</b></p> <p><b>SSFSC</b></p> <p><i>(donations are tax deductible)</i></p>
<p><b>South Skyline Firefighters</b></p> <p>Name: Address:</p> <p>Email and/or phone #:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Want to volunteer.</li> <li>- Want more information about being a volunteer</li> </ul>	<p><b>Enclose Check</b>    \$</p> <p><b>Payable to</b></p> <p><b>South Skyline Firefighters</b></p> <p><i>(donations are tax deductible)</i></p>
<p><b>South Skyline Emergency Preparedness</b></p> <p>Name: Address:</p> <p>Email and/or phone #:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am interested in joining SSEP</li> </ul>	<p><i>Not seeking donations</i>        ---</p>
<p><b>Adopt-A-Highway Volunteers</b> are responsible for gathering litter along Skyline Blvd. every two months. The sweep takes about an hour and a half. A crew of 6 people is ideal.</p> <p>Name: Address:</p> <p>Email and/or phone #:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I would like to sign up for a day.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Not seeking donations</i>        ---</p>
<p><b>Skylines Newsletter</b></p> <p>Name: Email and/or phone #:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I'd like to volunteer to help edit or publish the newsletter.</li> <li>- Send me info on what help you need.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Not seeking donations</i>        ---</p>

## NEWS FROM THE FIRE SAFE COUNCIL (SSFSC)

Eric Isacson

### *The South Skyline Fire Safe Council (SSFSC) accomplished a lot in 2014!*

The year began with an in-kind grant obtained through the California Conservation Corps (CCC) to maintain vegetation reduction along 4 miles of the Kings Creek Truck Trail (KCTT) where we had previously cleared several decades of neglected growth that had nearly closed this important fire trail. We have found that vegetation grows back so fast that it must be trimmed back every year. The CCC performed the 2014 maintenance using grant money from Proposition 40.

We have been approved for a 2nd in-kind grant through the CCC to extend the vegetation reduction along KCTT another 3 miles to Highway 9. This work was scheduled to start early in January.

The CCC has approved a 3rd in-kind grant funding a 3 week vegetation reduction project along nearly 5 miles of private roads in the Portola Heights community. It was scheduled to be done in December.

Our largest project in 2014 was the 3-months long clearing along Highway 35 in San Mateo County. It is described in a separate article in this issue. We have received an \$8,000 grant from PG&E as partial funding for this project. Additional PG&E grants are pending.

In the Spring and again in the Fall we provided free chipping to homeowners to assist in their creation of defensible space around their homes. Several dozen homeowners have benefited. Several made contributions to the SSFSC to help defray the costs. Much of the remaining cost was covered by a \$5,000 grant from the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors.

The SSFSC also provided free fire safety consultations to a number of homeowners. These carry no obligations but help homeowners identify potential wildfire vulnerabilities before a possible inspection by their insurance companies or by Cal Fire.

In looking forward to the next several years, we have submitted 4 large "concept proposals" totaling well over \$500,000 for grant funding from the new Cal Fire State Responsibility Area Fire Prevention Fund. These would open fire access and escape routes in the Deer Creek, Las Cumbres and Portola Heights areas; open an emergency route between Portola Heights and Middleton Tract; and install more

### South Skyline FireSafe Council

324 Skyline Blvd,  
La Honda, CA 94020  
[www.southskylinefiresafe.org](http://www.southskylinefiresafe.org)

*The Skyline Boulevard  
region in the Counties of  
Santa Cruz, Santa Clara  
and San Mateo*



than a dozen water tanks at strategic locations difficult to reach with Cal Fire tankers. We expect to hear back on these proposals early in January.

We are very grateful for the contributions and grants we have received from a variety of sources in 2014; donations from local individuals totaling more than \$3,500, State Farm Insurance \$5,000, Apple matching funds, Benevity matching funds, MROSD \$1,000, PG&E more than \$10,000, SSA \$3,000, Santa Cruz County \$5,000, Caltrans in-kind traffic control etc., CCC/Proposition 40 nearly \$50,000 in-kind, and the Santa Clara and San Mateo County Fire Safe Councils. These contributions will enable us to continue implementing projects to improve the wildfire preparedness of the South Skyline community.

Our greatest gratitude goes to the more than a dozen volunteers who serve as "sponsors," helping watch over the fire crews clearing vegetation. Every day they volunteer saves us more than \$1,300. If we had to hire commercial crews they would cost us more than \$1,500 while the Cal Fire crews cost only about \$200.

We need your help to continue these programs. You can help by making a cash donation to the SSFSC, a 501c3 non-profit, or by volunteering to sponsor the Cal Fire crews who do most of the vegetation reduction work, or by helping plan and manage projects. The latter offers great opportunities to get to know your neighbors, to get out "in the woods" and become familiar with otherwise inaccessible parts of our community, and to help protect all of us from wildfire.

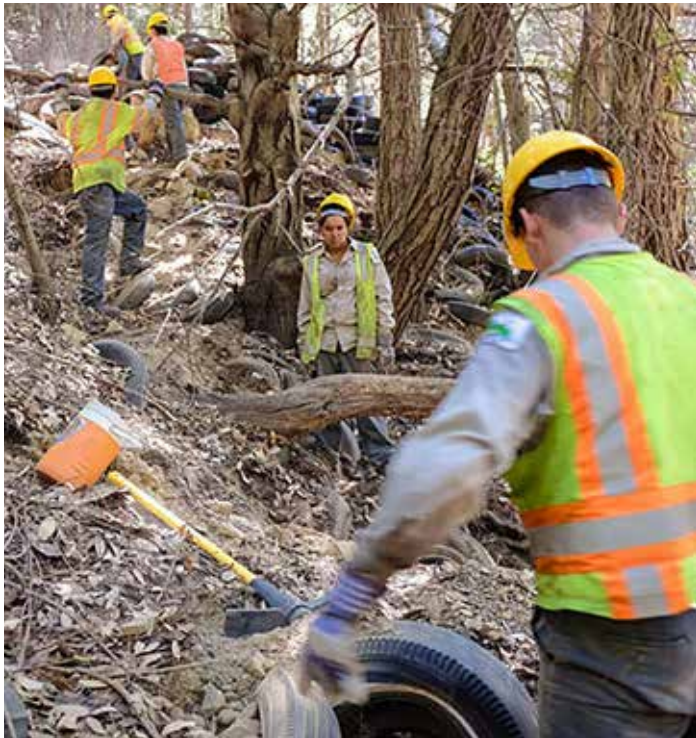
In addition to fire crew sponsorship we have a special need for Board Members. We meet once a month to plan, review and initiate a variety of fire safety projects. If you'd like to help, please contact our President Bill Guenther at 650-949-2416 or [waguenther1@yahoo.com](mailto:waguenther1@yahoo.com).

## TOXIC FIRE HAZARD MITIGATED

### *8000 Tires Removed from Dump Near Castle Rock*

*Eric Isaacson*

In the 1980s State Parks purchased 160 acres adjacent to Castle Rock. It turned out to have been used as a dump, mainly for tires. In the 1950s a caretaker had earned a little money by charging service station owners to haul away worn out and damaged tires. He buried some of them on the property but many he simply pushed off his truck and let them roll and slide down the steep slopes of the property, coming to rest wherever they might, often in piles in ravines.



During the Castle Fire in 2008 several tires were found burning way down in Kings Creek, half a mile below Castle Rock Falls, where they had been washed by storm runoff. Partly because of the danger of tires further uphill in concentrated piles catching fire enormous resources were utilized to control the fire including four engine water bombers and fire engines from as far away as New Mexico. If it hadn't been for these efforts the prevailing winds could have driven the fire upslope to the main concentrations of tires near Skyline Blvd. If this had happened - or if it were to have happened later - the fire would have been nearly impossible to extinguish and would have blanketed a broad area along Skyline with toxic smoke.

In 2012 the South Skyline Fire Safe Council conducted



a feasibility project while clearing vegetation along the Kings Creek Truck Trail to determine what it would take to remove the tires. The project was subsequently taken over by the Portola and Castle Rock Foundation. Their efforts resulted in Calrecycle, the State agency responsible for cleaning up tire dumps, allocating \$200,000 of the disposal fees we pay when purchasing new tires to clean up the dump.

The project began in September 2014 with State Parks providing general direction. Calrecycle first used San Jose Conservation Corps workers to manually drag as many tires as possible up the steep slopes and pile them where they might be reached by an excavator. A contractor then used an abandoned road cut to provide access for excavators and track mounted dump trucks to remove the piles and others partially buried.

Some 80 tons of tires were hauled to a landfill in the Altamont where they will be ground up and used for the daily cover required of landfills. In addition the contractor removed several discarded cars and car parts along with other metal debris. At the end of the project erosion control measures supervised by State Parks were taken and most of the temporary access road removed.

**continued**



## Tire Removal continued

Unfortunately the budget did not allow all the tires to be removed. Some are still buried in ravines and trenches and a few are scattered far and wide over the steep slopes between Castle Rock and the Kings Creek Truck Trail. These buried and isolated tires are not as great a fire hazard as those that were piled on the surface and removed. But they are now on Calrecycle's priority list and additional funding may be available in the future for removal of at least the buried tires. From a practical viewpoint it will be nearly impossible to find and remove all the scattered instances of one or a few tires.

A big *Thank You* to Calrecycle and the Portola and Castle Rock Foundation!



Photos: Eric Isaacson

## EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

*Lisa Short Chupity*

Much has happened in the communications world since Spring. The **SC4ARC (SC4 Amateur Radio Club)** renovated the old communications tower and it's trailer, cleaning it up, repainting it, lubricating it's joints, and making sure it was safe to operate. Just two weeks ago, it was taken down to the Redwood City corporate yard, where it received new LED tail lights, and had an ID number engraved on it. It was used during the annual ARRL Field Day, June 28 - 29, and again during the annual SET (simulated emergency test), held October 18.

**Field Day** is an annual event specifically to train in setting up communications in a possible emergency situation without the benefit of "on grid" power. It is also a contest running 24 hours, and lots of fun! You can be sure your local South Coast Hams will be ready in an emergency. Setting up the communications tower with an antenna, we were able to reach other stations near and far.

Our annual **SET (simulated emergency test)** was based in the field adjacent to the La Honda fire house, and was centered around a magnitude 9.0 earthquake. Four people were deployed to triage La Honda Elementary School, passing information to a Resource Communications operator, who passed it to La Honda EOC (Emergency Operations Center), who passed the information to the Red Cross Office in Burlingame. Meanwhile, in the Portola Heights



neighborhood on South Skyline, residents used a combination of GMRS radios and Ham radios by licensed operators. There were some reception challenges with both GMRS and Ham radios on various frequencies, but, traffic was passed to Bryan Osborne (KD6UCA), who was South Skyline Net Control, who used Radio-Grams to relay information to La Honda EOC, who then relayed information to the Red Cross. Fire trucks were on scene in Portola Heights. Ham operator Pat O'Coffey noted in the debrief "firefighters did a great job of describing their concerns – better defensible space; clearing along and over on roads; better signage (with actual addresses on the street signs); identifying septic areas; explaining the realities of fire fighting in our community."

**WinLink update:** We have a new WinLink system set-up, where licensed Hams can pass e-mail traffic via Amateur Radio. Since Peter Chupity set it up, the WinLink station, based on Skyline Boulevard, has been used frequently by Hams all over the Bay Area. Santa Cruz County communications has designated the station as their back-up station, should their own fail for some reason.

The **SC4ARES** is an amateur radio emergency service covering the mountain and coastside communities of La Honda, San Gregorio, Pescadero, Butano, Loma Mar, and the South Skyline area. It is affiliated with the SC4 Amateur Radio Club. SC4 Amateur Radio Club welcomes those interested in amateur radio for emergency communications and neighborly talk. License is free. Simple exam. No Morse code. We offer classes. Visit [www.sc4arc.org](http://www.sc4arc.org) or write: SC4ARC, PO Box 237, La Honda, CA 94020

## HIGHWAY 35 CLEARING PROJECT

*John DeLong*

Over a three month period from July to October, the South Skyline FireSafe Council (SSFSC) coordinated and managed a major clearing project along Highway 35 within San Mateo County. The funding for this project came from a generous **grant from Pacific Gas & Electric Company**. Clearing work was performed by CalFire supervised inmate crews from the Ben Lomond Conservation Camp. Traffic control and chipping machines were provided by CalTrans. Daily supervision and sponsors (to observe the inmates) were provided by local community volunteers coordinated through SSFSC.

SSFSC President Bill Guenther spearheaded this project, coordinating the various agencies and making it all happen. He contacted the camp every day to learn if and how many CDCR CalFire crews we would be getting that day. He managed the power equipment we had borrowed and rented, assured the porta-potties were serviced and located close to the work being done, and made sure the clearance prescription we desired was met.

By early October, when CalTrans informed SSFSC that they were done with this project, we had cleared approximately 8.4 miles of Skyline Blvd within San Mateo County. The desired prescription, with CalFire and CalTrans approval, was to clear to the CalTrans easement - the 100 foot wide fence line installed when Highway 35 was built almost a century ago. The area cleared totaled about 48 acres.

This project turned Skyline Blvd into a defensible fire break, providing firefighters a reasonable opportunity to stop a wildfire from crossing the highway. Other advantages have been obvious to residents all along the route: vastly improved site-lines when exiting side roads, better visibility of deer on the edge of the road at night and exposing some beautiful natural rock and cliff formations that many of us did not even know were there.

Similar work was done within a Santa Clara County portion of Highway 35 in September and October. This project used commercial clearing and chipping crews, CalTrans traffic control and supervision and management by the Mid-Peninsula FireSafe Council, a branch of the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council. The less aggressive prescription they used was specified by CalTrans vegetation management

because the work crews were commercial. Money for that project was also provided by a Pacific Gas and Electric Company grant.

SSFSC is currently working on other grants to complete these projects, improve emergency egress routes and to help create other strategic fire breaks throughout our South Skyline community. We need additional sponsors to observe inmate crews. Let us know if you can volunteer: [jmdelong@aol.com](mailto:jmdelong@aol.com)

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## SOUTH SKYLINE FIRE SAFE COUNCIL COMPLETES 2014 FREE CHIPPING PROGRAM

SSFSC has just completed four full days of brush chipping serving over 20 residences and including over 40,000 cubic feet of brush chipped. This is in addition to the spring chipping which included three full days of chipping serving 19 residences and the Las Cumbres brush pile.



The program is managed by the South Skyline Fire Safe Council and is designed to provide free chipping of brush that is cleared by homeowners to comply with the defensible space around their home and also for fuel reduction along access routes. SSFSC volunteers solicit resident's applications, check the brush piles for size and location, hire contractors through a competitive bid process and then supervise the actual chipping. Juan Huerta Tree Service was this year's contractor, many thanks for their hard work. Fire safety is the primary goal in particularly this year due to the drought conditions in our area. San Mateo Fire Safe Council, Santa Clara Fire Safe Council, Santa Cruz County and donations from people in our community make this possible.

This year thanks to the additional support from Santa Cruz County we were able to offer two periods of chipping. This program will continue next year as well. Watch for flyers and news in this publication around March. Spring chipping will begin around May first.

Many thanks to John DeLong, Ed Hayes and the Board of the South Skyline Fire Safe Council for making this possible.



## SOUTH SKYLINE FIRE & RESCUE NEWS

Andy Seigel, Captain, SSF&R

2014 was a very busy year for us. As of this writing, we are on track for 225 incidents. In addition to our regular training, we participated in a record number of inter-agency drills. We are also spending more time helping out with the volunteer academy and EMS training than in years past. We are making good progress on advancing team members as engine drivers and EMTs.

Looking forward, we are very excited to have two candidates for the upcoming 2015 volunteer academy. We hope everyone has a safe and happy New Year! Visit our website at <http://southskylinefire.org>.



## THE SOUTH SKYLINE STORY

Janet Schwind, Skyline Historical Society

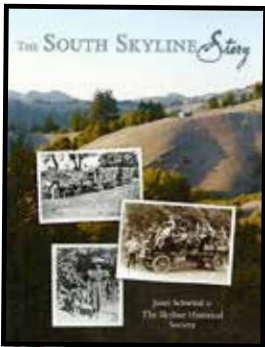
Our book, *The South Skyline Story*, seems to be very well received and is selling well. Readers are surprised that a small group of local yokels could produce a book of such high quality. I am deeply grateful to the all volunteer production team of Chuck Schoppe (printing and sales), Peggy Schoppe (proof reading and sales),

Eric Isacson (maps), and especially Linda Stinchfield, the professional book designer. You all insisted on attaining high standards, and kept me on my

toes. Successive board members of the South Skyline Association believed in the project and were willing to back it financially. I am also grateful to those of you who contributed family photos and stories, transcribed tapes, conducted interviews, and did research, all of which added rich substance to the narrative.

*What a great community we have!*

The book can be purchased at Alice's Restaurant and from Skyline Historical Society President Chuck Schoppe, email: [chuck\\_sch@hotmail.com](mailto:chuck_sch@hotmail.com) or phone: 408-867-9229 Your cost: \$27.01 including tax plus \$6.10 shipping priority mail.



Seated left to right: Kristeen Pemberton, Betsy Moore, Linda Stinchfield, Dick Schwind, Janet Schwind, Lynne Penek-Holden. Standing left to right: Cliff Jenkins, Annie McPherson, Ruthie Wilkins, Chuck Schoppe, Peggy Schoppe, Ann Whitesell, Eric Isacson, Ruth Waldhauer, John DeLong, Sharon Peters. (Some of these people are our SSA and SHS members. A few others contributed family information or editing skills and came to celebrate with us.)

## THESE DOGS DON'T HUNT

Sarah Schoen

In winter, it is the dark red bark of the leafless, creek-following shrubs that capture your attention. Old joke: “How do you tell a dogwood? By its bark.” Redosier dogwood (*Cornus sericea* ssp. *sericea*) is the most common member of the genus in our area. The common name is in reference to the similar red bark color of red osier willows.

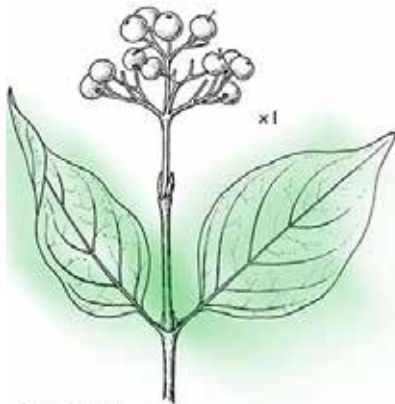


Fig. 438 CORNUS GLABRATA



Redosier Dogwood Photo: David Schoen



Redosier dogwood is a winter deciduous shrub, up to 12 or 15 feet tall. Its reddish brown, generally hairless twigs have a white pith inside and leaves growing opposite from each other. The elliptical-shaped leaves are 1 ½ to 3 ½ “ long, about 1.5 to 2 times their width and they are pointed at each end. Leaf margins are smooth and slightly wavy. The leaf underside of this subspecies is paler than above and covered with dense hairs (*sericea* means hairy). However, it is the leaf veins that stand out. Found in 4 to 7 pairs for this species, they V out from the midvein, and then arc toward the leaf tip, a bit like longitudinal lines on a globe. When dogwood leaves are torn apart, veins may reveal a latex-like substance inside.

Individual small white flowers are not showy, and grow in an umbel-like cyme. The flowers are about ¼ to ½ “ across; the cymes are several inches across. Flowers are in 4 parts, with 4-lobed sepals, 4 petals, and 4 stamens. The ovary is inferior – below the petals. Flowers appear April to June, as or after the leaves emerge - the start of the flowering and budding period is controlled by temperature. Flower pollination requires the help of insects, primarily bumblebees, but also other bees, flies, and butterflies. In addition, redosier dogwood is one of many food plants of the spring azure butterfly (*Celastrin ladon*), whose caterpillars eat the flowers.

Fruits are white to cream drupes, about ¼ “ across, and grow in clusters, ripening in late summer or fall. They can remain on the shrubs after the leaves turn

color and drop in autumn. The berries are eaten by many birds and some mammals, who distribute the seeds. Ingestion by birds has no effect on, or slightly increases germination, while ingestion by some mammals increases germination. Germination is also increased by cold stratification. Additionally, redosier dogwoods can reproduce asexually, forming clonal colonies from rooting stems, root crowns, and stolons.

Redosier dogwood was used medicinally by many Indian tribes and for different purposes. Costanoan/Ohlones treated fevers, making a decoction from the inner bark. While there are no references for California Indians eating the berries, tribes further north in British Columbia and Montana did so. While reportedly nontoxic, all references do not recommend eating berries of the local dogwood species.

Redosier dogwood is also known as creek dogwood and American dogwood. Our other local species is brown dogwood (*Cornus glabrata*). Also a winter deciduous shrub, it has yellowish brown, reddish brown, or gray twigs. Berries are whitish to pale blue. Brown dogwood can be most easily distinguished from our redosier dogwood subspecies by its leaves, which have only 3 to 4 pairs of veins and by the leaf undersides, which are not hairy (*glabrata* means smooth). In the Santa Cruz Mountains, brown dogwood is more common on the eastside than the west.

Some other species of dogwood not native to our area, including the small trees Pacific dogwood (*Cornus nuttalli*) and the eastern dogwood (*Cornus florida*) have relatively large, individual, showy flowers. These are due to large white bracts, outside of the tiny true petals.

With the exception of the southeastern U.S., our subspecies of redosier dogwood is widespread in North America. Brown dogwood is found in Oregon and California. Both are found in moist woodlands. They are relatively easy to cultivate from cuttings, rooted stems, or seed, with or without removing from the fruit.

## TAKE A HIKE - EL CORTE DE MADERA

*Ruth Waldhauer*

El Corte de Madera is Spanish for “a place where wood is cut.” The stumps of giant old-growth redwoods mark this as one of the places in the Santa Cruz Mountains where sawmills feverishly tried to keep pace with the growing demand for lumber in San Francisco following the Gold Rush. The timber-rich head waters of El Corte de Madera and Harrington Creeks had the most mills in San Mateo County. At least eight and perhaps as many as fifteen different mills operated here in the late 1880s. With a sharp eye you may be able to pick out former mill or cabin sites.

Begin the hike starting from the Skeggs Vista Point parking lot. Cross to the other side of Skyline and about 100 yards north enter at CM01 where there are MROSD information boards with a map holder. Follow the Tafoni Trail, a dirt road that soon begins to climb on a moderate grade past towering Douglas Firs. These magnificent trees dwarf their companions such as Coast Live Oak, Tanbark Oak, and Blue Blossom. The road levels and curves right, and after 0.9 miles brings you to a junction. Turn right, still following the Tafoni Trail, for another 0.1 miles, turn right on the trail that leads to the tafoni sandstone formation. Geologists use the term tafoni to describe the cave-like indentations and delicate honeycomb structures formed on the surface of sandstone by just the right combination of weather and atmospheric conditions.

Return to the Tafoni Trail, and either head back to Skeggs Vista Point, or turn onto the Fir Trail. The Fir Trail brings one to a beautiful vista overlook, a perfect picnic spot. Through the rapidly encroaching trees on the slope below are the rolling grasslands running down to the coast. Just below is a sea of chaparral, including Chamise, Manzanita, Yerba Santa, and Coffeeberry; a fascinating spot to enjoy before returning to Skeggs Vista Point and your car.

With so many interesting trails at El Corte de Madera, you may choose to explore further. Consult the map available at the trail head.

### **How to get there:**

Skeggs Vista Point is 3.7 miles north of Skylonda on Skyline Boulevard, RT 35.

## EL CORTE DE MADERA TAFONI

*Sarah Schoen*

Tafoni is a special sandstone formation – all tafoni is sandstone, but not all sandstone is, or can become, tafoni. Sandstone is a sedimentary rock formed of 80-90% sand in a matrix of silt and clay. As any beachgoer knows, the sand needs some sort of glue to form a rock. This can be silica, iron oxide, or calcium carbonate. For a sandstone to be suitable for tafoni formation, there are two requirements. First the sandstone needs to be a solid block, formed from a cataclysmic event, rather than formed in layers over time. Second, the type of glue must be calcium carbonate.

The El Corte de Madera sandstone rocks originally formed from sand off the southern California coast about 30 million years ago, possibly in a deep marine canyon. Dissolved calcium carbonate from shellfish and microorganisms was mixed in. Over time and under pressure, it formed sandstone. The rock was carried upward and northward on the Pacific plate along the San Andreas Fault. As mountains moved up in elevation, wind and rain removed the looser material, exposing the sandstone.

Tafoni is Italian for cavern. Tafoni is formed by cavernous weathering. To form tafoni from sandstone, it helps to have a Mediterranean climate. During winter, rain falls from the clouds and dissolves atmospheric carbon dioxide on its way down to earth. The aqueous CO<sub>2</sub> forms carbonic acid and the rain drops become acidic. When raindrops land on the sandstone, they dissolve into the porous rock and flow along cracks toward the interior. The acidic water dissolves some of the calcium carbonate glue, and in some locations more than others. During the summer water evaporates off the surface of the rock. More water is pulled from the rock's interior up to the surface by capillary action. As the water evaporates, it leaves behind a hard calcium carbonate shell, called duricrust, up to 1 foot thick. The rock is harder on the outside than parts of the inside, depending on the amount of calcium carbonate remaining.

Then something, for example a tree fall, happens to break off a portion of the hard outer shell. The exposed softer portions of the rock are more prone to weathering from rain, wind, or animal activity. The process forms unusual honeycombed formations over hundreds or even thousands of years. The tree trunks, cannon balls, knobs and ridges in the fret work have more calcium carbonate and are more resistant to erosion.

Tafoni is fragile and best admired from a distance.

# SPUG QUARTERLY REPORT

Ruth Waldhauer

Skyline Propane Users Group (SPUG) was formed to benefit SSA members. For information about joining, or for members wishing current information on the agreement, please contact Ruth Waldhauer at ruth.waldhauer3@gmail.com or 650-948-1466. Information is also available on our website: www.SouthSkyline.org.

SSA has agreements with Amerigas, Kamps Propane, Suburban Propane, and FerrelGas. The open market

price is about \$1.00/gallon higher than the SPUG price. Prices are subject to change as frequently as wholesale prices change. The prices SSA posts are for the first of the month. Our SPUG rate is based on a keep-full basis, not will-call service.

You are not required to pay sales tax on propane if you do not have natural gas available where you use propane. If you get your propane from Amerigas, you will need to submit a sales tax exemption form. Contact Amerigas for the form.

## Recent SPUG prices (\$/gallon)

	Amerigas	Suburban San Jose	Suburban Scotts Valley	Kamps Propane	FerrellGass
January .....	2.59	3.549	3.199.....	2.69.....	2.64
February .....	2.84	3.659	3.499.....	2.96.....	2.79
March.....	2.90	3.699	3.599.....	2.79.....	2.65
April .....	2.49	2.499	2.499.....	2.09.....	2.02
May .....	2.09	2.499	2.399.....	2.09.....	1.82
June .....	1.99	2.499	2.19.....	1.99.....	1.77
July.....	1.99	2.499	2.099.....	1.76.....	1.80
August .....	1.99	2.499	1.97.....	1.75.....	1.75
September .....	1.99	2.499	1.97.....	1.79.....	1.80
October .....	2.01	2.499	2.04.....	1.99.....	1.91
November.....	2.03	2.499	2.09.....	2.14.....	1.98
December.....	2.13	2.499	2.29.....	2.19.....	1.77

*Those whose SSA membership has lapsed will be disqualified from receiving the benefit of SPUG price for propane.*

## GEORGE JOHNSON MEMORIAL BENCH

Ruth Waldhauer

A very special Skyline resident, George Johnson, passed away on September 5, 2014. George Johnson served with the South Skyline Volunteer Fire Department for 33 years, and responded to over 15000 callouts. In his memory, a memorial bench is now installed at the Saratoga Summit Fire Station. Articles about George Johnson and his contributions to our community appeared in the October 2014 issue of *Skylines*.

The memorial bench, created and built by metal artist Bill Sorich, is the gift of South Skyline Association and South Skyline Fire Safe Council.

## ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY

*Ruth Waldhauer*

On Saturday, September 6, the South Skyline Association (SSA) and Skyline Historical Society (SHS) volunteers included Holly Harrison, Armen Leonian, and Ruth Waldhauer. Despite not having a full crew, we did a respectable job of gathering litter. Apologies, no photo. I forgot to bring my camera.

On Monday, November 24, the SSA and SHS volunteers included Eric Jewett, Lillian McMath, Dick Schwind, and Ruth Waldhauer. After cleaning up at the Vista Point below Russian Ridge, we divided into two groups: Eric and Dick headed south to SMC mile post 2 and back to the VistaPoint, while Lillian and Ruth headed north to Rapley Ranch Road (SMC mile post 6). Lillian found the head of a three-three point Buck Deer along side of the road. What a trophy!!! Other than being full of duff, it was in excellent condition.

SSA & SHS volunteers are responsible for gathering litter every two months. The sweep takes about an hour and a half. So far over 160 names are on the

*Eric  
Jewett,  
Lillian  
McMath.  
Dick  
Schwind*



honor role listing those who have participated. We love getting new recruits. Please volunteer just once. You will find it rewarding and fun. Contact Ruth Waldhauer at [ruth.waldhauer3@gmail.com](mailto:ruth.waldhauer3@gmail.com)



## 6TH ANNUAL DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

*Mid Peninsula Open Space District*

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District invites photographers of all levels to participate in its 6th Annual Digital Photography Competition, running through March 31, 2015, for a chance to win prizes!

The District seeks compelling digital nature images that capture the diversity of its open spaces: submitted images may show wildlife, plant life, natural landscapes, or people interacting with nature on any one of the District's 24 preserves open to the public. The Contest gives visitors and residents alike the opportunity to get outdoors and explore the wide range of habitats across District lands, including riparian, grasslands, chaparral, and redwood environments.

Photos can be entered in one of these categories: wildlife, plant life, landscapes, people, mobile device photography.

One category per image, please.

Participants may submit photos online through March 31, 2015 for a chance to win a GoPro HERO Camera.

Download Contest Flier to post or share!

More Information:

**[www.openspace.org/contest/info.asp](http://www.openspace.org/contest/info.asp)**

Please review the complete contest rules and legal conditions before entering.

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District  
330 Distel Circle, Los Altos, CA 94022

## SKYLINES NEWSLETTER VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The former editor has resigned. A new editor is needed. A team of 3 people share the work of answering emails, soliciting and reviewing articles.

(See article page 4) Contact: [ssa\\_activities@yahoo.com](mailto:ssa_activities@yahoo.com) or 408-872-1775

## HELPING NEIGHBORS

*Dick Schwind*

I am working on extending to our South Skyline area the 'Mountain Neighbors Helping Neighbors' organization. This is a young, all volunteer nonprofit organization operating in the Summit Road area. It links up volunteers with temporarily needy people. Typical tasks are providing a ride to a medical appointment, changing a smoke detector battery, bringing in some fire wood, or taking trash out to the pickup site.

When a request for help is received by the coordinator it is emailed to all the volunteers. Whoever wishes to help at that time responds. Often a little help can allow people stay in their beloved mountain home and not be forced to move to the valley! While interest has been strong as expressed at South Skyline General



Meetings, progress has been slow at getting volunteer applications returned. We need the volunteers before we can offer to help the needy! Call or email me if interested in being a volunteer (or have lost your application) and I will send/email you the application. My goal is to be able to make the step up to offering help to the needy at the January SSA General Meeting. For more information, contact Dick Schwind 408-867-9422 or [schwindr@yahoo.com](mailto:schwindr@yahoo.com)

## WHOLE MOUNTAIN SOURCE BOOK

*Michele Witten*

The deadline for the Twentieth Edition of the Whole Mountain Source Book is January 31, 2015 for advertisers to place ads and changes to the Community Services. If you have a business that services the Santa Cruz Mountains you will benefit by placing an ad in the book and putting your information at the fingertips of your neighbors. The Whole Mountain Source Book is an annual publication and website resource for the unincorporated mountain communities of the Santa Cruz Mountains that is filled with useful information and advertisers who work in our mountains. Books are delivered free of charge to all rural routes in the Los Gatos, Santa Cruz Mountains, and Redwood Estates Post Office Boxes. The Skyline

area receives books at the South Skyline Association April meeting or at the Skywood Trading Post. Extra copies go to the realtors, stores, churches, schools, and various other community businesses. Email [advertise@wmsb.net](mailto:advertise@wmsb.net) or call 408-353-3535 Prices are very reasonable. Deadline is January 31, 2015.

[www.wmsb.net](http://www.wmsb.net)

[www.LosGatosMountainHomes.com](http://www.LosGatosMountainHomes.com)

[www.SantaCruzMountainsWineries.com](http://www.SantaCruzMountainsWineries.com)



## CLASSIFIED ADS

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fun, effective Award Winning dog training classes- all levels& private lessons, Including 'up on the hill' since 1995. Experienced instructors (25+ yrs exp) Classes Monday evenings in Atherton & Saturday mornings at Woodland School in Ladera (Portola Valley). Gift Certificates for Classes & Lessons- a useful, 'Green' Gift! Please call 650-851-5500 650-851-5500 anytime.

### John& Barbara Mountain Realtors

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### Russian Ridge Winery

Owned and operated by South Skyline residents. Open for tasting every Friday 5-9 pm and every Sat/Sun 12-5 pm. Tasting room at 919 Wahington St., San Carlos. www.russianridgewinery.com

### Pineda Tree Service

A local and reliable business that specializes in crown thinning & cleaning, hazardous tree removal, poison oak removal, and property cleanup for fire regulations. Free Estimates. Insured. CSL # 991767 Email: Pinedaslae@gmail.com Phone: (650) 208-2734 or(650) 208-2734 Salomon Pineda

### Free Fire Fitting

for those in the South Skyline Fire & Rescue primary response area. This fitting will allow the connection of a fire hose to your water supply and can be utilized by the fire department to access the water necessary for fire suppression. Please visit <http://southskylinefire.org/> for more information under the "Help us help you" section.

### Learning Strategies

One-on-one tutoring in your home by qualified educators. K-12, all subject areas including test prep ISEE, HSPT, SSAT & SAT, Contact Learning Strategies , [www.creative-learning-strategies.com](http://www.creative-learning-strategies.com) or email [victoriaskinner@creative-learning-strategies.com](mailto:victoriaskinner@creative-learning-strategies.com) or call 650-747-9651 for a free phone consultation.

### Residential Design

Country and ur-ban custom houses, remodel and ad-ditions.20+ years experience in Califor-nia. See some of my work at: <http://www.TSVresidential.com> Taruno S. Vega 650-747-0654 [taruno@coastside.net](mailto:taruno@coastside.net)

### Planning for Drought

Water well performance analyses for South Skyline area residents. Details at [WellWatchers.net](http://WellWatchers.net) or email [Larry@WaterMatters.com](mailto:Larry@WaterMatters.com) for more info.

### Skyline Broadband Service

Offering high-speed wireless Internet with speeds up to 25 Mbps in much of our 500-square-mile coverage area. <http://SkylineBroadbandService.com> phone: 650-917-9279

### James Morris, Real Estate

Broker Associate with Alain Pinel Realtors and General Contractor With over 30 years of experience in construction and property development, including septic and well systems, uniquely qualified to evaluate, market, acquire, renovate mountain prop-erties. Please call 408-828-1998, email [jmorrison@apr.com](mailto:jmorrison@apr.com) or visit my website at [www.jrmmnorcalhomes.com](http://www.jrmmnorcalhomes.com)

### SC4 Amateur Radio Club

Welcomes those interested in amateur radio for emergency communications and neighborly talk. License is free. Simple exam: No Morse code. We offer classes. Visit [www.sc4arc.org](http://www.sc4arc.org) or write: SC4ARC PO Box 237 La Honda, CA 94020

**Ads are free to SSA members. Membership is \$15 per year.**

**Membership forms are available at [www.southskyline.org](http://www.southskyline.org)**

**Please limit each ad to 45 words. Ads will be shortened when space is limited.**

**Email ads to: [Skylineseditor@yahoo.com](mailto:Skylineseditor@yahoo.com)**

## **SOUTH SKYLINE ASSOCIATION**

**Box 400, Star Route 2**

**La Honda, CA 94020**

### **Consider Getting**

#### **Your *Skylines* by Email**

For those members who receive the *Skylines* through the Post Office please consider the option to receive it on-line. This will save paper as well as postage. If you sign up for this option you will be notified by email when the next issues is released. Sign up and update your email address with Ruth Waldhauer at: ruth.waldhauer3@gmail.com or 650-948-1466

Those members who live locally where we stuff mail boxes will continue to get a paper copy.

### **SSA Calendar - General Meeting**

Friday January 23, Cal Fire Station

Business meetings will be held Feb. 12, and March 12 at 7:00pm

**President Michael Rowe**

**408-872-1775**

**Skylineseditor@yahoo.com**

#### ***Skylines* is Published Once A Quarter**

*Skylines* invites individuals to submit articles and artwork.

**Policy on Classified Ads:** Ads are free to SSA members. No continuing ads will be accepted. They must be resubmitted for each issue.

***Skylines* Ads and News Articles:** The deadline for submitting ads and articles for the next issue is March 15, 2015

**Send all ads and articles to:** SkylinesEditor@yahoo.com,

***Subject Line for articles should read: FINAL DRAFT***

We reserve the right to edit all submissions. We assume no responsibility for omissions, incorrect information or personal opinions.