Spring Festival: “Let’s All Go to the River”
Sunday, May 1

Whether you live in wonderful Nevada County or if you are just visiting, everyone wants to find something that’s fun, educational and best of all - outdoors. On May 1st you are invited to come to Bridgeport and be part of the Spring Festival. This year the theme is “Let’s All Go to the River.” The River, wildflowers, bridge, barn, Historic Shell Gas Station and the Visitor Center are ready to come to life for everyone. The newest information on the Historic Shell Gas Station is available. The Gas Station has a new roof, new siding and, most noteworthy, the restored 1927 Gas Pump is ready for viewing. Visitors can learn about special events taking place throughout the spring and summer. Docents and Park Rangers will make your day special and one to remember.

This event is family oriented with an art show featuring local artists who love this area. There are activities for everyone: face painting, a wild flower and craft table, pioneer games for kids by Malakoff State Park staff, a worm garden by the Master Gardeners, the Audubon Society with bird houses, wagon rides, gold panning taught by Docents, tours of the Historic Shell Gas Station, Bridge and Barn tours and Blacksmithing. All this takes place while music fills the air, provided by local bands and singers. Local author Carol Malnor will be there to sign her book “The Blues Go Birding Across America” and to tell children about birding at Bridgeport.

The Spring Festival almost always has great weather with lots of visitors. The Penn Valley Chamber of Commerce serves hot dogs, sodas, chili and...
Gas Station Update

Committee member Hal Tiegs met recently with state maintenance people and Bill Haselhorst of the Bridgetenders docent group. A final decision was reached to build a wall to create two rooms in the gas station. The smaller front room will be a representation of the original Kneebone camp store and gas station interior. The larger back room will be used to provide interpretation of the Kneebone Ranch history. Other projects agreed upon were counters at the bottom of the store windows and removable wire viewing screens to protect the store interior when docents and rangers are not present.

Paula Bertness and Steve Pauly have been researching the history of the Bridgeport Pleasure Resort and found many interesting pictures of the dance floor, cabins and other structures of the resort. Glenn Fuller has been negotiating with Shell Oil Co. for their support of the gas station restoration. Shell is very interested in our project and several different avenues of support are being discussed.

The gas station had three installed signs during its operation. Reproductions of all three have been prepared and are awaiting installation. The “GAS” and “Groceries” signs will be installed when exterior painting is complete. The installation of the “SHELL” sign is more complex and is awaiting better weather.

Also awaiting better weather is the antique gas pump. The pump needs to be painted in vintage “Shell” colors and installed along with appropriate security precautions. When installed, the pump will be of museum quality and a major attraction of the park.

Hal Tiegs

President’s Message

Spring is here and our park is approaching the time to show off the beautiful scenery and flowers that we all enjoy this time of year. Don’t pass up the opportunity to join the Wildflower walks every weekend and get out on our wonderful trails.

Our board has been very busy and accomplishing so much for our enjoyment. After our successful Fall Festival, Glenn Fuller is busily planning our Springfest, scheduled for 1 May. Peeking into his plans I know it will be even more exciting, so mark the date in your calendar and plan to be there. He is also our Publicity Chair and has prepared a good number of articles that have been published in local and area newspapers and periodicals. Mickey Springer is planning our spring cleanup and touch-up of the Native Plant Garden. When the call goes out, please consider coming out to help. Have you seen the results of the Shell Station restoration? Hal Tiegs has been tireless in ensuring that the project goes smoothly and the results are wonderful. Signage is being procured, the restored visible gas pump is nearly ready for display, and he is deep in the planning for the next phase of the restoration that will focus on the interior of the station. Steve Pauly, in addition to being our Webmaster, is heavily involved in historical research for the park and has unveiled many important facts some of which we were previously unaware including some pictures of the interior of the gas station.

Ron Ernst is busy updating our Strategic Plan. If you have any ideas for future projects, please relay them to him. Don Denton has done a spectacular job of recruiting our next class of docents for the park. We look forward to bringing them on board. Jean Wilson continues to be the glue that holds our board together and keeps us honest. Fresh off of planning the Fall Festival, she has reviewed and made recommendations for revising our By-Laws. She does an incredible job of documenting our very active meetings! I’d also like to welcome our newest board member, Paul Keasberry. Paul is well known throughout our community and was recently the President of the Welcome Club. He will be a valuable addition to our group.

As we are all aware, our parks are under financial siege and suffering from a shortfall of maintenance funding and staffing. Our Rangers are stretched thin and working hard to keep our park safe and running smoothly. Our Association is providing as much assistance as it can. Your membership and donations are vital to our ability to provide that support. Thank you for your help.

Finally, I am sad to report, as you may have heard, that John Olmsted died. John was instrumental in the formation of the South Yuba River State Park, devoting his energy and much of his personal fortune to that effort. He was also instrumental in the formation of the Independence Trail and many other nature facilities. Right up to the end he was active in promoting his visions for lands for public use and his “Necklace of Parks” known as the “Cross California Ecological Trail.” He will be greatly missed.

Dave Anderson
Wow, what an interesting winter it has been. I again apologize for bringing Truckee weather to the foothills, but all the rain should make for a beautiful spring and summer season.

We have been awaiting the fate of our parks, but so far I have no news to report. By this time next year we will be looking at a very different parks system, but I have no idea what that might look like. We are facing budget challenges that are beyond easy fixes and are going to require some major changes in the way we do business.

Having said that, I am proud and honored to be given the opportunity to work with such a dedicated group of association members, park volunteers and employees. Through your support, we are fulfilling the California State Parks mission of educating the people of the State of California and offering a high quality recreation experience. They may not say it often, but I know our park visitors appreciate every hike, barn tour, weed pulled and construction effort you have supported.

Our ranger and maintenance staffing will no doubt be less than it was in past years, so we will be working with the SYRPA board and our park volunteers to find additional ways to keep our facilities looking good and our visitors safe.

Lastly, if you have not had a chance to meet her yet, please be sure to say hello to Ehren Pelonio, our new volunteer coordinator. Ehren has been working at Empire Mine for many years, and joins us with funding support from you and your park association. Thank you! Now, let’s hope for some sunshine!

Don Schmidt

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Fourth Annual Prospective Volunteer Reception
A Success!

About twenty prospective new docents turned out March 13 to hear our Assistant Coordinators describe volunteer opportunities at the Park. The numbers and interest level of the attendees made this event one of the best, and the “Class of 2011” looks promising indeed. The Coordinators already are looking forward to mentoring the new trainees. The State training was held March 24 and 25 at Empire, and the Park-specific training began last Saturday, March 26, at Bridgeport.

Supervising Ranger, Don Schmidt, welcomed the group and emphasized the significant contribution that volunteers make to the Park. Then, each Coordinator gave a five-minute summary of the volunteer opportunities in his or her area. Some fifteen topics were covered including Barn Interpretation by David Wood (aka Charles Athill) and What It Means to Be a Docent by Diane Marten (with recollection of a 9-year old student who did a beautiful painting to explain what was learned about riparian habitat). The contributions of John Olmsted over the years were mentioned. He helped secure several properties for the Park, and his memorial service happened to be at exactly the same time as our Reception. At the end of the program, Dick Alexander led the group on a tour of the Barn. The forecast had been for rain, but Mother Nature cooperated with the event by holding back the showers until five minutes after the end of the program. Paul Keasberry (communications), Doug Evans (photos) and several Visitor Center gals (refreshments) contributed to the success of the affair.

Don Denton

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Spring Festival, cont’d.

baked potatoes (which have sold out in past years). June’s Deli provides cakes, pies, brownies and cookies pleasing everyone. Lazy Dog ice cream sells all the flavors anyone could wish for. The Visitor Center offers books, t-shirts, water bottles, gift items, maps and information.

All of this will be available on Sunday, May 1, 2011 which happens to be May Day. Activities start at 11:00 AM and continue until 4:00 PM. Especially nice is that the Festival and parking are free. For more information call the Park Visitor Center, 530-432-2546. The website has lots of Park news for the entire season: http://southyubariverstatepark.org/

Glenn Fuller
Wildflowers Washed Out
April Should Be Better!

Unfortunately, there’s not a lot to report yet on this season’s flowers. The wildflower season is off to a slow start due to the extended rain and lack of sun.

The early bloomers on the Buttermilk Bend Trail are sparse and behind schedule due to the lack of sun, and rain has discouraged visitors on March Saturdays and Sundays. Docents are ready at 11am both days through mid-May, and we are hoping for improved conditions! At press time, flowers out include:
- blue dicks
- foothill lomatium
- popcorn flowers
- canyon nemophila
- tufted poppies
- saxifrage
- miniature lupine
- zig zag larkspur
- stork’s beak
- birds eye gilia
- western buttercups

Judy McAuliffe
Ruth & Pete Peterson

Remembering John Olmsted (1938-2011)

Naturalist/conservationist John Olmsted died March 2, 2011. He had worked tirelessly to save wild places in California from development including land at Bridgeport and Independence Trail that became parts of South Yuba River State Park. He also helped acquire Jug Handle State Reserve in Mendocino, Goat Mountain in Lake County, and the Yuba Powerhouse Ranch on the main Yuba near Browns Valley.

Visitor Center Update

As winter turns to spring at Bridgeport, the wildflowers start to bloom and more visitors stop in at our Visitors Center. Spring also heralds the arrival of a new docent class and we hope to add several new members to our current dedicated docent group. Following last year’s successful program, all new docents will be assigned their own mentor to help them learn the ropes and answer questions as they arise. In addition, a training class will be held April 4th to review policy and procedures and offer some hands on training. This class will also allow new Visitor Center docents to meet several of the current docents.

In the Park store, new items have been added to celebrate the arrival of spring. A new line of colorful women's t-shirts featuring birds and flowers is now available. For hiking the trails or visiting the beach, we have new reusable stainless steel water bottles in three colors featuring the bridge logo. In addition, carabiners are available in four colors for use with the water bottles, keys or any job requiring a very handy hook. We have designed a new bookmark to join our current selection. The new bookmark shows three wildflowers found in abundance in the Park each spring. We hope everyone will stop by and see all of our items and help celebrate spring at South Yuba River State Park.

Visitor Center Committee

History Corner

The History Research Committee met in February and discussed Park history research priorities. We began with a list of Bridgeport Questions originated by former Ranger Chuck Scimeca, expanded and modified the list, and assigned priorities. The highest priorities were assigned to documentation of the Nisenan presence and location of the earliest ferries, bridges, and roads. Now, we are recruiting history-oriented volunteers to help research the twenty five topics selected. So please step forward if you enjoy history and would like to contribute!

Steve Pauly & Dick Alexander
**Bridge, Barn & Gas Station Tours This Summer**

*An Exciting New Opportunity for Interpretation*

The public’s “Bridgeport Experience” will be expanded for Memorial Day through Labor Day with one-hour “B B & G” tours each weekend starting at 11 am. This activity will be a companion (and run concurrently) to the popular Gold Panning activity. Several docents already have expressed interest in leading these tours next summer, and we will need 5 or 6 more for our full complement of trained tour guides. The two April and May training sessions will include historic facts and presentation ideas. The training is open to as many SYRPA members as can be seated in the Visitor Center. The training classes will be given by members familiar with these three historic structures. In addition to the classroom time, the class will be treated to tours by several docents to contrast different presentation styles. The Bridge, of course, is always “open,” but the Barn and Gas Station doors will be open to the public during the scheduled tours. If you wish to be a part of this new opportunity, please contact Don Denton at 432-1888 or ddgobears@aol.com.

**Docent Training Class**

The March 26 local history training class for 13 new docents was organized by former Ranger Chuck Scimeca. The opening lecture was presented by Richard Johnson, Chairman of the Nevada City Nisenan Tribal Council. Richard (at right) described tribal history in the area including village locations, customs, basket making, food gathering and preparation, and the effect of the gold rush on customs and population. It was a fascinating time for all who attended. Chuck followed with comments on Bridgeport history from the early days to the present. Steve Pauly concluded with comments on the 25 unanswered Bridgeport history questions listed by the History Research Committee. It was a rainy day (what else?), but the topics and refreshments brightened things up!

**Independence Trail Update**

Spring awakens along the Independence Trail, as the wildflowers begin their annual resurrection back to magnificence. First to appear are Shooting Stars, Indian Warriors, and Hounds Tongue. Soon to follow will be Larkspur, Lilies, Lupines, and the rest of our floral foothills favorites. Waterfalls abound along the West Trail, especially at Rush Creek. The trail can be extremely muddy this time of year, so wheelchair users should proceed with caution (better to wait a few weeks after heavy rains). The East Trail is closed while State Parks (with the aid of CCC) works on clearing slides, repairing drainage boxes, and replacing deck material on flumes. This project was made possible through designated funding for statewide trail maintenance and will result in the East Trail becoming much more wheelchair accessible. Many thanks to State Parks for helping to keep John Olmsted’s vision of “Outdoor Access for All” alive and well on the Independence Trail.
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Benches Retrieved on Buttermilk Bend Trail
On Wednesday, March 30th, the COO of the Lake Wildwood Association, Edward Simpkins, one of our newest SYRSP volunteers, brought a crew to the Buttermilk Bend Trail to perform some trail repairs. Edward, Dan Watson and Randy Waskowiak, all of the Lake Wildwood Association along with Rangers Marc Wetherbee and James Carey, retrieved two rock benches weighing over 500 pounds each, and placed them back on their supports in two different areas along the trail. Randy also applied an epoxy mixture between the bench and supports to prevent any future vandalism. All this was done with supplies brought by The Wildwood Association crew: come-along cables, hooks, harnesses, rock bars and wheelbarrow were hauled out on the trail to perform the job. The crew bravely scaled the steep terrain to hoist these monster rock benches back in place so trail walkers can once again take a relaxing seat and enjoy the beauty that is the South Yuba River State Park. The staff thanks the volunteers and community supporters for the many hours and hard work they contribute to keep the park looking beautiful and operating smoothly for the enjoyment of all our visitors. Happy summer to all.

Ranger Marc Wetherbee