

THE CONEJO OPEN SPACE FOUNDATION NEWS

Summer
of 2019

www.cosf.org

We are very proud to unveil our long-awaited new logo! Our retired "oak tree" logo served us well for many years. We wanted an updated look to reflect our new board and the new programs we hope to create and fund through generous foundation donations from supporters like you! We chose blue to represent the sky and gold to represent the color of the hillsides we get to enjoy in our open space. The mountains in the logo are a reminder that we have protected ridgelines in the City of Thousand Oaks. Thank you to Silvia Berg at SKS Graphics for her work on the design and for her continued generosity with time and talent for the Foundation.



[Donate](#)

[Volunteer](#)



Butterflies!

By Christina Robertson

This spring, our hills and trails were not only covered in beautiful flowers, but also with millions of Painted Lady Butterflies. Each year, Painted Lady Butterflies migrate from Mexico up north through California. Thanks to all the rain we had this spring, there were plenty of plants for all the caterpillars to eat. This led to a massive migration and gave us quite a special phenomenon to experience. As the butterflies

make their way north, they are pollinating flowers, mating, and laying eggs. The butterfly's lifespan is only about 3 weeks long so it takes several generations for the migration to complete. The process allowed us to witness several waves of butterflies to hatch and fly though our Conejo Valley, making it a very exciting springtime.



2019 SPEAKER SERIES SHARING OUR OPEN SPACE

WE INVITE YOU TO ENJOY OUR SELECTED GUEST SPEAKER SERIES!

Join the fun and enhance your knowledge of our open spaces, learn amazing facts about our local wildlife, regional geology, and our human connections to the land. You are sure to come away with a new appreciation of our region's natural wonders!

FREE TO THE PUBLIC

Suggested donation \$10



Living together with mountain lions and other wildlife

Thursday, June 27th at 6:30PM
Guest Speaker: Seth Riley

Seth is a Wildlife Ecologist with the National Park Service at the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. He will be talking about the local mountain lion populations, threats to their survival and ways we can both coexist with mountain lions and other wildlife in our open space and benefit by living together.



The formation of the Conejo Valley and its earthquake risk

Thursday, August 15th at 6:30PM
Guest Speaker: Derek Field

Derek has recently been focusing his career on offering interpretive hikes and talks to the general public on local geologic origins and features. His presentation will include some surprising information on the formation of familiar landmarks in the Conejo Valley and the potential for seismic changes that might impact our communities and open space.



The 6 dimensions of open space

Thursday, October 17th at 6:30PM
Guest Speaker: Aly Covington

Aly's talk focuses around the six dimensions of wellness, which include Physical, Intellectual, Emotional, Connectional, Environmental and Spiritual. In this engaging presentation, she will talk about why it is important to mindfully focus on total wellness in our lives and how the open space can help us build resilience and enable us to thrive and live life to the fullest!

GRANT R. BRIMHALL LIBRARY

1401 E. Janss Road, Thousand Oaks

Check-in and refreshments begin at 6:00 p.m. Talk starting at 6:30 p.m.

Come early to enjoy refreshments and talk with our local community partners.

Reservations suggested cosf.org/events/open-space-speaker-series/

The speaker series is not a Thousand Oaks Library sponsored event.

Trails Education Days 2019 By Christina Robertson

During the week of March 25th, the Conejo Space Trails Action Committee (COSTAC) coordinated the 28th Annual Trails Education Days. Over 1,100 fourth grade students hiked through Wildwood Canyon learning about the plants and animals that live in the area;

and attended workshops where they learned about trail safety and etiquette. COSCA Rangers led a workshop about ranger careers, while Animal Actors of Hollywood brought in animals for a workshop allowing the students to see animals like a turkey vulture and porcupine up close.

This program would not be the success that it is without the incredible 50+ volunteers who led these hikes and workshops. If you are interested in being a part of next year's Trails Education Days, which is scheduled for April 27- May 1, 2020, please be sure to visit cosf.org and fill out a volunteer form.



Trails Education Days Writing Contest Winners!

The students who participate in Trails Education Days are invited to enter a letter-writing contest to describe the things they learned during their Trails Education Days experience. Over 880 letters were submitted this year! Two winners from each school and five Grand Prize winners district-wide are chosen to receive cash awards as well as recognition

by the Thousand Oaks City Council and the CRPD Board of Directors.

Here are the winners of the Writing Contest from this year! Congratulations to Isabella Bass (Acacia Elementary), Leah Muger (Banyan Elementary), Isabella Steiner (Banyan Elementary), Otto Gasowski (Westlake Elementary), and Auden Chang (not pictured) (Westlake Hills Elementary).

Thank you, COSCA Rangers!

We are so grateful for our Conejo Open Space Conservancy Agency Rangers, who work so hard to maintain and protect our Open Space. COSF had the honor of presenting a much-deserved certificate of appreciation to our amazing ranger staff. We are so grateful for all they do that largely goes unnoticed because they do such a good job. The next time you are on a well-groomed trail, or see the maps well-stocked, the trash cans emptied, hikers rescued, and



countless other tasks, thank a COSCA Ranger!

(Pictured left to right- Ranger Michael, Ranger Rick, Ranger Ryan, Ranger Joe, Ranger Bruce, Ranger Kari, Ranger Nick, Brian Stark- COSCA Administrator, and Ranger Sean)

Spring Trail Work Day

Thank you to everyone who came out to help during the two spring trail work days. The first one was on March 16, where the Wishbone Trail was completed behind the Yarrow Family YMCA in Westlake. The second one was on April 6 in Hawk Canyon, which was heavily damaged by the Hill Fire last fall.

If you would like to be notified of these and future trail work projects, please complete the application on the website that follows and remember to select Trail Work from the pull down menu in “Area of Interest” <https://cosf.org/volunteer/>



Free Hikes!

Come get to know some new trails - or come revisit your favorite trails - in a guided group hike setting. The 2019 CRPD Open Space Appreciation Hike series is underway. Come join us for these monthly mid-range hikes! Upcoming hikes are listed below, or go [here](#) to see details of the 12 hikes we've planned for 2019. Participants must be at least 14 years old, and a responsible adult must accompany hikers under 18. No pets please.



* Saturday, July 13, 2019 from 8 am to 9:30 am Lake Eleanor Open Space – Quick Out & Back Hike – 3 miles, with option for longer

* Saturday, August 10, 2019 from 8 am to 11 am Wildwood – From Wildflower Park – 5 miles

Thank you, Conejo Valley Cyclists

We are very grateful for the generous donation made by the Conejo Valley Cyclists. Each year this local group has an annual Picnic Ride and Benefit to give back to the local community. This year, the Conejo



Open Space Foundation, along with The Mike Nosco Foundation and the Santa Monica Mountains Foundation were selected as recipients. Jerry Westby (COSF President) and Janna Williams (COSF Vice President) attended their meeting to accept the donation. Thank you very much, Conejo Valley Cyclists! For more information, visit <http://www.cvcbike.org/register-for-2019-cvc-picnic-ride--benefit.html>

Trail Trivia: Angel Vista



At 1530 feet, Angel Vista at the top of the Rosewood Trail in the Los Robles Open Space truly is a "view of the angels". But did you know that this location was really named after Thousand Oaks resident, Steve Angel? Steve was the General Manager of KNJO radio in Thousand Oaks, the Conejo Valley's first radio station. He and his wife, Phyllis, who was business manager of the station, ran it until his death of leukemia in October of 1995. He was 50. Steve and Phyllis were completely immersed in the community which is why his loss was so keenly felt and why former mayor and, at the time, COSCA director, Andy Fox, wanted to name something meaningful in the Conejo after him, hence Angel Vista. After the naming, Jeff Alexander, founding COSF director and president, took Steve's wife, Phyllis up to Angel Vista for the first time. It remains an incredibly popular hiking destination and is frequently featured on social media posts from generations of people who never knew Steve.

Spotlight on...

Who: Elayne Haggan, COSF director and former president. Elayne is a founding member and has served on the board since its beginning back in 1995. Her love of the open space and our community is evident in all of the ways she spends her time. Recently she was honored by the Conejo Recreation and Park District at the Gratitude Circle Honoree's Ceremony at Conejo Creek North (pictured above). She is a vital volunteer during Trails Education Days each spring, and a founder of the Concerned Off Road Bicyclists Association (CORBA) with a handful of other people back in 1987. Elayne told me, "We all met at a Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy meeting when the board had a vote scheduled to close trails to bicyclists. We came from all over the LA/Ventura County area, and each of us spoke in favor of keeping the trails open to MTBs." After the vote didn't go their way, they formed CORBA and "worked together toward getting access to trails we believed we were legitimately entitled to use." Eventually mountain bikers regained access to many of the trails in the Santa Monica Mountains, thanks to CORBA.



Elayne and other local residents worked to save the Mesa in Wildwood. She says, "When we bought the house in 1982, the realtor told us that the flat area "out there" was approved for two developments of 200 homes each. That sounded okay at the time, but after we started hiking and biking in Wildwood, we recognized that the Mesa had great value. One day I was riding and saw little stakes in the ground with pink tape marking the edge of the development, near the Western end of Stagecoach Bluff trail. I immediately contacted Lynn and Fred Bickle, our HOA president, who had been trying to stop the development for a long time. That started a bunch of meetings, press releases, letters to the editor, news stories, group hikes, etc. Ultimately, Council Member Alex Fiore came up with a complicated building allotment swap idea that preserved the Mesa, with the exception of a small section north of Big Sky. 51 homes were approved for that area. So when those homes started to go in, I would be hiking or riding on the now-preserved Mesa and would run into people who were totally aghast! "How can they build houses on OUR OPEN SPACE???" they would ask. So I'd tell them the short story and let them know how grateful we were to have saved 95% of the Mesa."

Can you imagine Wildwood being paved over with homes? Me neither! We are grateful for her dedication to the Foundation and to so many other organizations in the Conejo Valley.

Day job: Retired

Why is open space important to you? Spending time away from technology, traffic, and noise keeps me grounded and often reminds me of my childhood in rural Maine. The woods, fields, and rivers were our playgrounds there, and my family spent much of our time together outdoors. My parents and grandparents were "conservationists" who recognized that rare plants and animals needed to be protected, that DDT was decimating the bird population, that

littering was not okay, and so on, long before the first Earth Day. The Painted Lady butterflies we watched this spring brought back memories of the multitudes of Monarchs drawn to fields of milkweed behind the house where I grew up. I was then - and am still - in awe of nature.

What skills do you bring to COSF and/or Conejo Valley open space? A background in marketing and an ability to bring people together. Also institutional memory from having been involved for so long. Not a skill, but useful.

What do you like to do in open space? Hike, although I was also an avid mountain bicyclist for many years. Our 12,400 acres of protected open space offer short, easy hikes on fairly level ground as well as hours-long adventures with significant elevation gains. It's all good.

Where's your favorite place in to be in Conejo open space? I love every part of Wildwood Regional Park, but the Conejo Canyons Open Space is my current favorite COSCA area. The geology, abundance of wildflowers, and meandering trails are all very special.

What are your hopes for the future of COSF and/or Conejo Valley open space? I hope that COSF can expand our reach to make many more residents understand that COSCA open space belongs to us all, and we all have a responsibility to embrace and care for it. Trails Education Days introduces Conejo Valley fourth graders to their roles as open space protectors, and that's a good beginning. The COSCA Open Space Challenge brings greater awareness every year, and the upcoming COSF Speaker Series is another way that we'll draw in more people and reinforce those concepts. I hope that we can collaborate with COSCA on many additional outreach projects.

Any other thoughts or words of wisdom? We're incredibly fortunate that CRPD and the City of Thousand Oaks recognized the value of preserving open space early on. No other community has what we have. I encourage everyone to enjoy this treasure and get involved to make it even better.

Want to Volunteer? Here's How!

The COSCA Volunteer Corps has many ways for residents to help maintain and preserve the open space that surrounds our beautiful Conejo Valley. By joining with others, we can make sure that the trails, canyons, and ridgelines will be enjoyed by visitors for generations to come. You can read about the specific volunteer opportunities below, and you can submit a request to volunteer, noting your specific interests, [here](#).

- [Adopt-a-Trail Program](#)
- [Trail Watch Program](#)
- [Trail Ambassador Program](#)
- [Trail Work Days](#)



- Trails Education Days



The Conejo Open Space Foundation was formed in 1995 to promote and maintain the open space and trail system of the Conejo Valley and to educate residents as to their roles as custodians and protectors of the open space and the environment. Our [web site](#) illustrates ongoing Conejo Open Space programs supported by the Foundation that help preserve and protect our precious open space.

Follow us on social media



Copyright © 2019 Conejo Open Space Foundation, All rights reserved.



PHOTO CREDIT: KIRA KRUKOWSKI