



Pinnacles Partnership Voice

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Denise Louie, PNM'S Research & Resource Management Chief, is writing a blog from Argentina concerning the Pan-American Condor Biologist Exchange Program. The pictures above are from the blog: www.condoresargentinos.blogspot.com

PAN-AMERICAN CONDOR BIOLOGIST EXCHANGE PROJECT

On September 11, 2008, a team of biologists from the Pinnacles National Monument arrived at the Parque Nacional Qebrada del Condortio in Argentina to work with their Argentine colleagues in the preservation of Californian and Andean condors. "Our purpose is to develop a program of a five scientists exchange each year to study the condors in both countries," said Eric Brunnemann, superintendent of Pinnacles National Monument. According to an AP report from Buenos Aires, there are 300 condors in California; half are in captivity, and half are free flying. In Argentina there are between 2,000 and 3,000 Andean condors.

According to Denise Louie, one of the benefits of the biologist exchange program is the opportunity for Pinnacles' biologists to learn about the state of the art GIS/Google Earth script used by Argentina biologists to visually demonstrate range and distribution of individual birds. Denise explains, "At Pinnacles, we also use GPS/GIS technology but we can improve how we display/visualize distribution and range information by adopting the Argentine biologists' procedure. Another impressive part of the Andean condor project is the emphasis on both science AND culture to protect the condor. Great attention is given to nurturing relationships with local and indigenous communities. The community's sense of great pride in condors soaring the landscape is as important as the biology." Denise further reports that, among other beliefs, Andeans believe the condor is a link between earth and heaven, adding, "The Argentine biologists explained when the condor is in the peoples' heart, there is no need for conservation."

Jan Shriner, PIPA Team Leader

Calendar

October 3rd, 2008 9:30 – 11pm
Telescope Viewing
(See Page 3 for more info)

October 3 - 5, 2008
San Benito County Fair
www.sanbenitocountyfair.com
Come visit the Pinnacles Booth!

October 11th, 2008
Pinnacles Art Show & Reception (See Page 3)
For info: (831) 389-4486 ext 243

October 11th, 2008
1st Annual Condor Classic
www.condorclassic.com
For info call SBCC: 831-637-5315

Oct 19th, 2008; 10am – 3pm
Community Celebration
West side of Monument
(See Page 3 for more information)

November 1st, 2008
Next Condor Release
For info: (831) 389-4486 ext 259

IN THIS ISSUE OF THE VOICE

PIPA's Board of Directors selected 5 projects from a list of priorities provided by park superintendent, Eric Brunnemann. Outcome goals for each project must be met by June 2009. These projects represent a close partnership between PNM, PIPA and various other private and public entities. Each project has a member of the PIPA Board to serve as a team leader to coordinate PIPA's role in each project. The reports of the 5 PIPA team leaders are included in this issue of the Voice. This page features the Pan-American Condor Biologist Exchange project. Reports for the other four projects follow on Page 2.

PINNACLES PARTNERSHIP 2008-2009 PROJECT REPORTS

ASTRONOMY NIGHT SKIES

Our goal is to one day have an annual Star Party at the Pinnacles National Monument, with the hope and expectation of having multiple parties in one year. To date I have had numerous meetings with park officials, Eric Brunnemann and Carl Brenner. We have considered the best areas in the park for the night skies parties, and are very excited about the possibilities of actually pulling this off. Planning this event(s) is not as easy as I first expected. I now realize that working with a government entity may be somewhat harder to deal with than I anticipated. Not to say that Eric and Carl haven't been there for me every step of the way. On the contrary, both of them have given up much of their own free time in order to help me with our endeavor, and they seem to be more excited about this than I am. But now I have a more realistic realization of what must be done and how to accomplish our goal. A couple of times I have gone out to the park with some of my amateur astronomers friends with our scopes and spent the late night hours enjoying the dark skies that are available there to test the skies first before we go around bragging about how great they are. And did we find out how great they are, wow, the best around. I now will have no qualms about bragging. Our next test was to put on a test run star party. I made some contacts with other astronomy clubs, Santa Cruz and San Jose, and invited them out to let them experience our beautiful skies. We decided to hold it at the parking lot next to the amphitheater. The park put on an astronomy program that night and after all the audience came up to join us at the party. Except for the occasional car lights now and then, things couldn't have gone any better. All the visitors had a great time, and the astronomers were more than excited to let anyone that wanted to look through their scopes. As far as the response from the visiting astronomer? They couldn't stop raving about the skies. When we told them about our ideas of moving the party farther north to the better location with no light interference they all said they couldn't wait to come back when we were ready for them. There are other star parties around, but local astronomers have to travel many miles to get to them. With our central location so much closer to the Central Coast area, It is not an exaggeration to expect fifty to one hundred participants once we get our party going. The benefit to holding the star parties at the Pinnacles is that it is a two fold adventure, enjoying our great skies at night, and taking advantage of the Park during the day time, (after they get up late that morning, that is). I am very excited, to say the least. Thanks to Carl, Mike, and Tammy from the Park (Tammy did a great job with here astronomy presentation) the night was a great success, they did a wonderful job. And everyone appreciated their time and effort. What's next? We will continue to hold our meetings with the hopes on picking out the best and most available location for our star parties. The big question is: When? That I can't answer as yet. But stay tuned. As things progress I will be getting back to all. Clear Skies....

David Baumgartner, PIPA Team Leader

WAYFINDER

A team from the Pinnacles Partnership is completing the planning phase for a first-ever "wayfinder" display near the monument's east entrance. The display will be located near the new visitors' center, located in the old Pinnacles Campground Store, and provide a tool for introducing Pinnacles to visitors, even when park staff is not present. Based on guidance from Pinnacles staff, the wayfinder will be comprised of a series of interpretive panels with themes drawn from the familiar National Park Service arrowhead logo. The logo features five resources, and all of them are protected at Pinnacles National Monument. Thus the panels may address flora and plant communities, wildlife, water, geology and cultural history. Other panels are expected to introduce visitors to essential information about the monument, including the park's significance, species of special concern, safety, maps and volunteer and support opportunities. By keying the wayfinder panels to elements of the NPS arrowhead, other interpretive displays throughout the monument may subsequently identified by the same elements as a key to their content.

Mark Paxton, PIPA Team Leader

CAMPGROUND RESTORATION

This year we will concentrate on removal of invasive weeds in a portion of the campground; specifically, the Star Thistle, Mustard and Horehound. PIPA will soon begin to recruit volunteers for this purpose. The effective removal of these weeds is a three year cycle before it is practical to replant the areas with native plants. An in-depth description of the reintroduction of native plants will be included in the next issue of the Voice.

Tim Regan, PIPA Team Leader

SCIENCE CAMP

Science Camp at the Pinnacles has long been a goal of the NPS. A class from the Felton Middle School was selected for the inaugural camp which occurred on May 20-22, 2008. According to Carl Brenner, Chief of the park's Interpretation & Education Division, classes from three schools have already applied for the 2009 Science Camp season. In preparation for the 2009 season, the science camp team is revising and expanding curriculum and Teacher Training materials. PIPA is currently working closely with Carl and his staff to create a Visioning Team for long-term goal planning. Visioning Team members are being sought from among educators, PIPA members, and other interested community members.

Julie Dupris, PIPA Team Leader

PINNACLES ART SHOW EVERY FRIDAY, SATURDAY AND SUNDAY FROM 9/19 TO 10/12.

As part of the yearlong Centennial Celebration, Pinnacles is launching an Artist In Residence program in the Fall of 2008. This program immerses artists in the serenity and tranquility of a park wilderness setting. Far away from the lights, sounds and distractions of city life, artists can expect to find inspiration in the solitude of Pinnacles. This program will involve many art councils, guilds and galleries in the process of selecting the artists and providing locations for displaying their work. We hope to create a solid base of stewards that help the park through their artistic endeavors. Please join us at Galleria Tonantzin for a Pinnacles Art Show from September 19th to October 12th, 2008. This month-long showing culminates with an Artist Reception on Saturday, October 11th, which coincides with both The Condor Classic and The San Juan Bautista Gallery Walk. A portion of all art sold during this month will benefit Pinnacles Partnership.

Galleria Tonantzin is located at 115 3rd Street in San Juan Bautista, California. The reception on October 11, 2008 is from 5 – 7 p.m. PIPA members, friends and family are encouraged to join us and visit with the exhibiting artists. There is no fee for admission and refreshments will be served. For more information, call Michael Rupp at 831.389.4486 ext 243.

TELESCOPE VIEWING ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE PINNACLES

Pinnacles National Monument, in partnership with Hartnell College, will host a telescope viewing near the Chaparral Ranger Station on the park's west side on Friday, October 3, 2008, from 9:30 to 11 p.m. Views of Saturn, Jupiter, star clusters, and other deep sky wonders will be made available to the general public at this pristine dark sky location.

DON'T MISS THE NEXT CONDOR RELEASE AT THE PINNACLES

Park staff is holding the next release of the park's juvenile California condors on November 1, 2008 on the east side of Pinnacles National Monument. Parking will be on a grassy lot off of Highway 25 just past the turn-off to the park. Park staff recommends arriving early to allow sufficient time for parking, riding the shuttle bus to the trail head leading to the site, and walking the 1.5 mile trail to the release site. (Transportation with wheelchair capabilities will be available to deliver participants with disabilities directly to the site). The goal of the "soft condor release" used by Pinnacles' condor biologists is to minimize human interaction with the birds when the juveniles are ready to join their adult peers in flight. Biologists place carcasses in a double door trap early on the morning of the release to entice the birds to enter. Once the selected juveniles enter the trap, the door leading back to the flight pen is closed and the outer door is opened. The hope is that the juveniles will take advantage of this escape route to flex their wings and soar! Park staff is currently planning the final details regarding the November 1st release. For updated information, call Brent Johnson at (831) 389-4486 ext 259.

PINNACLES NATIONAL MONUMENT HOSTS 3RD ANNUAL COMMUNITY CELEBRATION DAY

The third Annual Pinnacles Community Celebration, to be held on the west side of the monument, Sunday, October 19, 2008 from 10am to 3pm, will highlight a variety of recreational and educational opportunities found within the local communities' own backyard. Pinnacles is waiving the \$5 entrance fee, so everyone is encouraged to attend this event to learn more about the park, as well as local, state, and federal services and opportunities that are available in the community. While education will be the main focus of this event, there will also be entertainment in the form of Native American and local dancers, ranger walks and talks, and a kid's activity area. Pinnacles National Monument is in a time of great transition. The recent reintroduction of endangered California condors coupled with the addition of significant new lands has focused increasing attention on this once-quiet park. However, these events could not be possible without the vision and commitment of a group of community members who began a grassroots campaign to preserve the Pinnacles Rocks in the late 1800's. As Pinnacles moves into its next 100 years, this event provides outstanding opportunities to forge new connections with the diverse population and organizations that makes up the Central Coast region of California. For more information, please call Michael Rupp at 831.389.4486 ext 243.



PIPA is the beneficiary of the first-ever Condor Classic, a bicycling event expected to draw cyclists from across California on October 11th, 2008. Staging at San Juan Oaks golf resort, the classic offers a series of rides ranging from a short ramble through the farm roads of San Juan Valley to a 100-mile challenge with Pinnacles as its centerpiece.

With 200 or more riders expected, the event is intended to showcase San Benito County as a tourism destination and to highlight the unique resource that is Pinnacles National

Monument. The Condor Classic is organized by the county Chamber of Commerce tourism committee, and Pinnacles Partnership emerged as an ideal partner early in the planning stages because of its dedication to promoting the monument as a significant regional resource.

The event offers four different rides, a 20-mile farmland tour, a 40-mile ride showcasing local wineries, and 100-kilometer and 100-mile rides that visit Pinnacles. Riders will receive commemorative T-shirts, a post-ride barbecue, entertainment and full support during the ride.

Further information is available on the web at www.condorclassic.com. For info call the San Benito County Chamber at 831-637-5315.



**PIPA MEMBERS & FRIENDS ARE STILL NEEDED FOR THE CONDOR CLASSIC
“PITSTOP” AT THE PINNACLES NATIONAL MONUMENT ON
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2008
CALL PAULA GRACE AT (831) 634-1012 ext 12.**

DONATIONS TO PINNACLES PARTNERSHIP ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE. PINNACLES PARTNERSHIP IS A 501 (C) 3 NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION, FEDERAL TAX NUMBER 76-0849623. FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL PAULA M. GRACE AT (831) 634-1012 EXT 12.



EXCITING NEWS FROM OUR PARK PARTNERS:

GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Pinnacles National Monument is working on a new general management plan (GMP). The last plan was completed in 1976. The general management plan will help us make decisions on directions for resource management, visitor use and interpretation, and facilities management. It will help us to decide how best to use the new Pinnacles Ranchlands we acquired in 2006. It gives you the opportunity to express your thoughts, ideas, and vision so that together we can keep Pinnacles a wonderful resource for the future. The latest newsletter presents four preliminary alternatives for managing Pinnacles. Each alternative has a different approach to cultural and natural resource management, facilities, and visitor opportunities. The planning team developed these alternatives based on Pinnacles' purpose and significance, issues that need to be addressed, legal mandates, and comments that were provided during the scoping period. We sincerely value your input regarding the future management of Pinnacles National Monument, and thank you in advance for your participation. For more information, please call Carl Brenner at (831) 389-4486 ext 265.

Join the Centennial Volunteer Cadre of Pinnacles National Monument



Volunteers needed to help the condors and more!

- Be a Nature Center/Visitor Center Assistant.
- Be a Facilities Assistant.
- Be a Resource Education Docent.
- Be a Wildlife Assistant.
- Be a Vegetation Assistant.
- Be a Special Event Assistant.

You can help in the office or the field. You can choose to help rangers with interpretation and visitor education or assist biologists and botanists with the monitoring and protection of the resources or assist maintenance staff with upkeep of facilities such as trails, buildings and roads. Duties could include assisting wildlife biologist in various invertebrate and vertebrate surveys; monitor for pig activity within the pig enclosure; assisting with the condor recovery program; leading nature walks; staffing the visitor center; trail maintenance, campground cleanup; monitoring vegetation and removing non-native plants; data entry; assisting with many of our

large-scale public events such as the upcoming Condor Classic on October 11!

Volunteers welcome for one time commitments at special events but local volunteers are also needed that can commit to assisting the National Park Service 4 times a month for a minimum of four hours during each shift for many of our positions. Weekday, weekend, daytime and evening shifts are available.

For more details or to learn about all the current volunteer openings including fulltime internships go to <http://www.nps.gov/pinn/supportyourpark/volunteer.htm>, call (831) 389-4486 x 242, or e-mail pinn_volunteer@nps.gov.

PLEASE CONTACT PINNACLES NATIONAL MONUMENT TO JOIN THE NPS TEAM!

PINNACLES EARLY HISTORY: Managing Resources at the Pinnacles (1960s and 1970s)

This is the fourth installment from Timothy Babalis, Historian, National Park Service:

The early years at Pinnacles National Monument were dominated by efforts to develop the park's physical infrastructure. Roads and trails had to be constructed to provide access to monument resources; campgrounds, comfort stations and other amenities had to be installed to provide services for the public; and administrative facilities had to be constructed for the staff who worked there. So long as these basic elements were still lacking, construction would remain the park's highest priority. This pattern broadly reflects the history of the Park Service as a whole, with development the overriding concern at most of the national parks during the agency's first fifty years, or roughly speaking, from the early twenties through the end of the Mission 66 program. But even as Mission 66 construction was being implemented, other priorities were beginning to emerge as well. Both scientific and historical research were receiving greater attention as concern for the professional management of park resources—both cultural and natural—grew. At the same time, greater emphasis was increasingly being placed on the preservation of resources, rather than on their development. This change in emphasis was in part a natural evolution within the Park Service, but it also reflected shifting values in American society as a whole, as environmentalism, wilderness and historic preservation all became important issues by the mid-1960s. Mission 66 would be the last major initiative in the Park Service to put so much emphasis on development alone, and even before it concluded in 1966, the program was already being criticized. By the end of the decade, engineers and landscape architects were having to share pride of place in the Park Service with resource management professionals trained in such disciplines as geology, the biological sciences, fire ecology, history and archeology.

Geology was one of the first subjects that early resource managers focused on—understandably, since the monument had originally been established to protect its unique geological features. The earliest attempt to understand Pinnacles' geology (and, in fact, one of the earliest scientific studies ever done at Pinnacles), was an investigation made by Philip Andrews, a graduate student at the University of California at Berkeley in 1933. His thesis was later published as "The Geology of the Pinnacles National Monument" and remains the most complete reference on this subject. During the 1950s, park staff created interpretive exhibits and a geology trail using Andrews' notes and mineral collection. By the early seventies, another geology student, Vince Matthews, also undertook research at Pinnacles. His interest was seismology, the movement of the earth along fault lines. Matthews demonstrated that the Pinnacles formation was an ancient volcano which had been split in two by the famous San Andreas Fault; he found the other half of the volcanic formation lying 195 miles south in the Tehachapi Mountains near the present town of Lancaster. This discovery became an important piece of evidence supporting the modern theory of plate tectonics.

(Continued on next page)

PINNACLES EARLY HISTORY: Managing Resources at the Pinnacles (1960's and 1970's) *Continued from previous page*

By the 1960s, resource managers were beginning to acknowledge that Pinnacles possessed other valuable resources in addition to its geology. The first Resource Management Plan, completed in 1966, listed chaparral—Pinnacles' ubiquitous shrub community—as one of the monument's most important and unique natural resources. At that time, no other national park or monument in the United States contained an example of this unusual vegetation type, which is uniquely associated with Mediterranean climates and occurs in only a handful of places around the world. In 1963, a young scientist named Peter Bennett, then working as a seasonal ranger at Pinnacles, conducted the first systematic research on the monument's chaparral community in a study of deer-browse relationships. Among his findings, he concluded that the chaparral was heavily overgrown as a result of fire suppression, which had been practiced at the monument since the 1920s. This, he believed, had created an unnatural condition which was detrimental to the health of the chaparral and the wildlife that subsisted on it (his study had focused on deer).

The resultingly heavy fuel loads also created a serious risk to human life and property should any wildfire ever succeed in getting started. Peter Bennett's concerns were shared by other resource managers in the Park Service and eventually resulted in a program of prescribed burning at Pinnacles by the early seventies. This was intended to restore the chaparral to what was then believed to be a healthier, more natural condition. Whether it did or not is still debated, as I will explain in more detail in the next installment. (To be continued).

Timothy Babalis, Historian
National Park Service

THANK YOU TO OUR MEMBERS!

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