

NEWS & VIEWS

SPRING 2016

Tri-Valley
Conservancy

PRESERVE LAND.
CONNECT COMMUNITIES.
ENRICH LIFE.



You helped connect these 4th grade students with the outdoors and gave them an appreciation for protecting open space.

Ding! Ding! Ding! Engaging the Open Space Leaders of Tomorrow

by Laura Mercier

“Ding!” The calls sing around me. Not a sound I usually hear on the trail, but it’s wonderful music to my ears. The dinging sounds are being made by the enthusiastic fourth grade students that you are helping to connect with the outdoors through our new **DISCOVERY YOUTH IN NATURE PROGRAM.**

Every time students find something really interesting along our trail, they call out “Ding!” It’s an audible confirmation that these boys and girls are thoroughly enthralled by their trip into the wild world around them. As I walk up to respond to one such call, a group of students is ed around a sun-bleached bone that the teachers and I surmise is from a small mammal, one of the many wildlife that make their homes in Holdener Park. A look of pure awe crosses the students’ faces as we turn to continue further into the park and more adventure.

For nearly every one of the 70 fourth graders from Joe Michell Elementary School who participated in the pilot program last fall, it was their first opportunity to explore the park. Holdener Park was protected thanks to your support and is the newest open space in the

Livermore Area Recreation and Park District. Even more exciting was the fact that for several of the students, this field trip was their first time hiking. Ever! This field trip, the second part of the three-step nature program, was critical for connecting kids with the outdoors.

As we crossed a bridge, “Ms. Joe”, as the students call Joelle Cook, our Youth Education Consultant who led the field trip, asked the students a trick question. “Is this dry creek bed part of our watershed?” Ms. Joe had visited the students’ classroom a few days prior to the trip and discussed watersheds with them. “Yes!” came a girl’s confident reply. She was, of course, correct, and the students busied themselves gazing down under the bridge with renewed interest. Realizing our interdependence with nature is a pretty important connection for each of us to make, whether or not we enjoy spending time in nature. The next connection came when one of the students asked if anything

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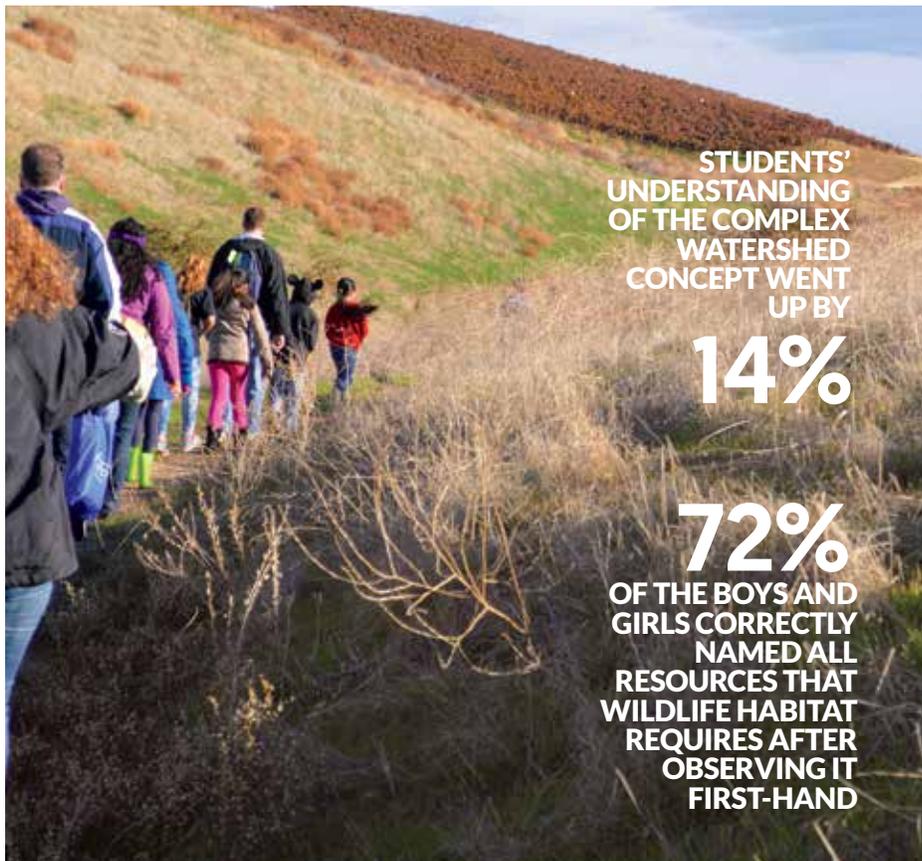
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lived in the creek, at which point I gushed about rare species like California red-legged frogs, California tiger salamanders, and fairy shrimp that rely on seasonal water like this and only live in areas like ours. The students contemplated the resources we all depend on as we hiked up a steep hill.

Once we all made it to the top, we saw the entire Tri-Valley laid out below us. Open spaces and urban areas were clearly visible. We continued our discussion of the importance of resources that we and wildlife share. They all had one thing in common—open space. Open spaces for parks to visit, like the one we were exploring that day. For agriculture, so we have food to eat. And why it's helpful for those open spaces to be grouped together so wildlife can safely find food, shelter, water, and that special someone to continue the species with.

When we came to a small sun-dappled hollow, the boys and girls got to embark on their favorite activity of the day—a “Solo Hike”. Each student walked a lovely stretch of trail [with a chaperone stationed at the beginning and end] on their own. As the children absorbed the sights, sounds and scents, I often saw them stop to take a closer look at something or reach out to touch a leaf. They recorded their experiences in journals, which honed their skills for the observation games Ms. Joe gave them next. Gathered under a sprawling oak tree to help shield us from the raindrops that began to fall, the students stood in place while they went on visual hunts for a clothespin and got an idea of the value of naturally occurring camouflage and shelter for wildlife. Then, completely undaunted by the drizzle, students scurried about the trail on a quest to find something “smaller than a penny” to discuss before saying goodbye to this “classroom” and heading back to their normal one.

When Ms. Joe visited their school again a few days later, the students enjoyed conducting their own small experiments to demonstrate some of the principles they learned about at Holdener Park. Before she left, she asked the boys and girls the same questions she had when she first met them. After having just this one chance to connect with the outdoors, 83% of students wanted to do their part to conserve more water. 76% of the students said that they wanted to protect their town's



STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE COMPLEX WATERSHED CONCEPT WENT UP BY

14%

72% OF THE BOYS AND GIRLS CORRECTLY NAMED ALL RESOURCES THAT WILDLIFE HABITAT REQUIRES AFTER OBSERVING IT FIRST-HAND



Students reflected on what they saw, touched, smelled and heard during their “solo hikes”. Nearly half of the boys and girls had never hiked before.

open land, even if they couldn't visit it.

When you protect the Tri-Valley's open spaces forever, you're ensuring that that these children and the generations after them will have parks to visit, wildlife to marvel at, and food to eat. This pilot of the Discovery Youth in Nature Program was funded by every one of you who contributed to Fund-A-Need at Jeans and Jewels in 2014.

You made a huge impact in these students' lives. And that's just the first step. With your support, we plan to expand the Youth in Nature Program to three schools this year, so more children have the opportunity to understand the value of open space and form their connection with the outdoors. Jackson Avenue Elementary School has already requested the program for this school year.

YOU CAN HELP MORE CHILDREN CONNECT WITH THE LANDS YOU PROTECT BY MAKING A DONATION AT TRIVALLEYCONSERVANCY.ORG OR BY CALLING 925.449.8706.

Freeze Frame Photography Competition Welcomes Youth

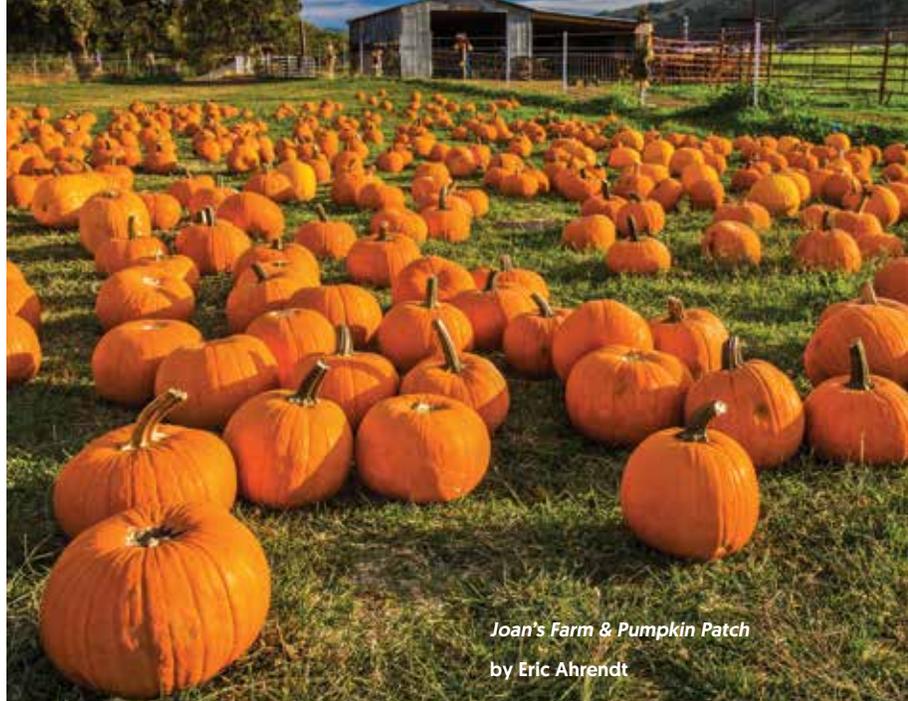
CAPTURING BEAUTY FOREVER, SAVING LAND FOREVER

The open spaces you protect in the Tri-Valley aren't just pretty to look at. They give us places to learn, play, relax and grow food, too. What better way to show our fellow community members why these lands need to be protected than by showcasing their beauty with photographs that capture it forever? That's what our annual Freeze Frame photography competition is all about. We're tapping into the Tri-Valley's talent to save its precious lands. This year, we're inviting the next generation to help inspire other kids through their photographic perspective, too. We've added a youth category open to students from 6th through 12th grades. We all need these lands protected forever.

Registration and photo submission will take place from July 1st through July 31st, but you can start taking your photos now. Winning photographers in each category will receive prizes and awards, and their photographs will be featured in both a travelling exhibit and Tri-Valley Conservancy communications—including a calendar—to help protect more open space.

We can't wait to see your perspective of the Tri-Valley!

For more information, please visit trivalleyconservancy.org.



Joan's Farm & Pumpkin Patch
by Eric Ahrendt



North Livermore Passing Storm by Gene Freiders



Wildflowers and Hills by Eric Ahrendt

*We borrow the earth
from our children*

Let them inherit open space.

**You can protect Tri-Valley's beautiful lands
for future generations by remembering
Tri-Valley Conservancy in your estate plans.**

To learn more about our Heritage Society, contact Kellie
at (925) 449-8706 or khayes@TriValleyConservancy.org

Environmental Advisory Council

FROM THE TRI-VALLEY TO THE DISTRICT

You're making such great things happen here in the Tri-Valley that State Assembly Member Catharine Baker has asked Tri-Valley Conservancy to join her Environmental Advisory Council. Our Executive Director Laura Mercier and dedicated volunteer board members will join other local environmental leaders to share insights on our district's natural lands, public parks, trails, wildlife corridors, and ecosystems. The Advisory Council will be a valuable resource to the assemblywoman as she prepares to vote on environmental-related legislation. We're honored to help represent our community!

A Walk in Nature Can Change A Life

WALKING IS THE BEST MEDICINE CHANGING LIVES ONE STEP AT A TIME

by Laura Ness



After being told he may never walk again, Richard Deets found Inspiration in nature and walks at least four miles a day. Now, he's helping to preserve land for future generations.

When he was just 18, Dublin resident and retired math and science teacher Richard Deets suffered a life-altering collision while riding a motorcycle in southern California, where he grew up. "The doctors told me I might not walk again," shares Deets. He was in the hospital and rehab for nearly four years, during which time he forced himself to walk, to the amazement of his medical team. It made his legs stronger and it motivated him to read works by the great explorers and conservationists, like John Muir.

Among his favorite inspirational books Deets counts *Of Men and Mountains*, the autobiography of outdoorsman and Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas. The young Douglas spent his youth hiking the mountains of Washington to strengthen his weak legs, and in so doing, developed a keen appreciation of nature.

Another is *Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills*, written by The Mountaineers.

When he wasn't reading, Deets was out walking. In fact, he went on to become an accomplished international hiker with a special

fondness for mountains. He's since summited Mt. Adams, Mt. Whitney and Mt. Rainier, and served for many years on the Search and Rescue Squad out of Sierra Madre, where he often hiked on missions in the Eastern Sierra.

Today, Deets is happy to live so close to hiking trails like Brushy Peak. He can walk out his door, and in less than a mile, be on a trail that leads him straight into nature, where he finds his daily dose of communion with the things that matter most to him.

"Nature is very important to me," says Deets. So much so that he got involved with the "Save Doolan Canyon" movement in Dublin and spoke before the City Council about the critical role it played in his rehabilitation so long ago, and how it inspires and motivates him daily. He still walks 4 to 6 miles every day, regardless of weather. Another of his favorites is Pleasanton Ridge, which he describes as "more of a hike," at 12 miles round trip.

He acclaims Tri-Valley Conservancy for their role in trail expansion and preservation, and is a proud supporter and advocate. He cannot think of a more important mission than to

preserve nature from the ravages of over-development. It's one of the reasons he and his wife, Susan, chose to relocate to this part of Dublin from their home in southern California over seven years ago.

His friend Norm Petermeier, a Tri-Valley Conservancy Board Member, inspired him to become a Tri-Valley Conservancy supporter. "We are so happy they are preserving land for future generations," says Deets, who credits the organization with adding and repairing many miles of trails since he moved to the area.

Deets strongly feels that connecting with nature is exactly what young people, with their constant electronic overstimulation, need every day. Beyond the physical exercise, it brings an appreciation for a universe that operates independently of human fabrication.

"Music is incredibly important to young adults," observes Deets, a longtime school principal as well as teacher. "But most have never heard the song of a meadowlark, which is truly some of the most beautiful music on earth."

Livermore Valley Uncorked Wine Competition and Celebration

UNCORKING THE BEST OF THE LIVERMORE VALLEY



2016 winners: Jay Flachsbarth and Brent Amos from Las Positas Vineyards, Alex Wolfe, Dave Doig and Katie Boyd from 1846 Wines/Nottingham Cellars, Chris Tarantino for Darcie Kent Vineyards, Shannon Foster for McGrail Vineyards, Jennifer Fazio with Steven Kent Winery, Neil and Larry Dino with Cuda Ridge Wines, Jess Plautz from Rubino Estates Winery, Mayor Marchand of Livermore. Not pictured: Cedar Mountain Winery & Port Works, Concannon Vineyards, Page Mill Winery, Crooked Vine, Stony Ridge Winery

You uncorked the best of the Livermore Valley at the 7th annual Uncorked wine competition and celebration in April. Winemakers, aficionados, supporters, and community neighbors alike came out to drink wine and save land.

Nearly 200 guests tasted the competing wines, enjoyed delicious appetizers, and were the first to hear the announcement of the of the wine competition winners.

Livermore Valley clearly produces amazing wines. 93% of the wines that entered the competition were awarded a medal by the panel of esteemed judges, who blind-tasted the wines. The wineries all made a great showing but four wines really stood out in the competition winning the "Best of" title for their category. Best Port was awarded to Cedar Mountain Winery & Port Works' 2005 *Late Bottled Vintage Souzao*. Rubino Estate Winery's *Infinitum* won Best Dessert. The Best Red medal went to Darcie Kent Vineyards for *Stone Patch 2012* which was also the Best Cabernet Franc. One wine took home three awards including the most coveted award of all. Best in Show, Best White and Best Sauvignon Blanc medals jingled merrily together around the bottleneck of 1846 Wines/Nottingham Cellars' *1846 Sauvignon Blanc 2015*.



Board Member Lori Souza and Advisory Council Member Dick Quigley cheers to a wonderful evening in support of the Tri-Valley's open spaces and agriculture.

Wines in the competition are made from grapes grown in the Livermore Valley American Viticultural Area. The event promotes the Tri-Valley region's viable agricultural economy that produces first class wines.

Proceeds from the event, sponsored by Heritage Bank of Commerce, help us preserve more land for parks and local agriculture while attendees get to enjoy the delicious fruits of those efforts. If you didn't get a chance to taste these award-winning wines, it's not too late! We've put together a Livermore Valley Uncorked Shopping List just for you!

**HELP PROTECT MORE OPEN SPACE FOR PARKS, FARMS & VINEYARDS
AT TRIVALLEYCONSERVANCY.ORG**

BERYL ANDERSON

2016 WINE COMPETITION SHOPPING LIST

**BEST IN SHOW
BEST WHITE
BEST
SAUVIGNON BLANC**
1846 Wines
1846 Sauvignon Blanc 2015
NottinghamCellars.com/1846

**BEST RED
BEST CABERNET FRANC**
Darcie Kent Vineyards
Stone Patch 2012
DarcieKentVineyards.com

BEST DESSERT
Rubino Estate Winery
Infinitum
RubinoEstatesWinery.com

BEST PORT
Cedar Mountain Winery
& Port Works
Late Bottled Vintage Souzao 2005
CedarMountainWinery.com

BEST CHARDONNAY
Concannon Vineyards
Reserve Chardonnay
Livermore Valley 2014
ConcannonVineyard.com

BEST MERLOT
McGrail Vineyards
Merlot Picazo 2012
McGrailVineyards.com

BEST OTHER RED
Cuda Ridge Wines
Malbec 2013
CudaRidgeWines.com

BEST OTHER WHITE
Steven Kent Winery
Lola 2015
StevenKent.com

BEST PETITE SIRAH
Page Mill Winery
Petite Sirah 2013
PageMillWinery.com

BEST RED BLEND
Las Positas Vineyards
Coccineous 2013
LasPositasVineyards.com

BEST SYRAH
Crooked Vine Winery
Syrah 2013
CrookedVine.com

BEST ZINFANDEL
Stony Ridge Winery
Stony Ridge Zinfandel 2013
StonyRidgeWinery.com



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Mark Your Calendar

MAY 1-31

Freeze Frame 2015 Top 12 Exhibit
at Robert Livermore Community
Center

JUNE 1-30

Freeze Frame Top 2015 25 Exhibit
at Livermore Public Library

JULY 1-31

Freeze Frame 2016 competition—
photo entries accepted
See our website for details

JULY 1-AUGUST 31

Freeze Frame 2015 Top 25 Exhibit
at Alameda County Administration
Building, Oakland

SEPTEMBER 1

Freeze Frame 2016 photography
competition reception, awards
and exhibit.

NOVEMBER 4

Jeans & Jewels & All That Jazz—
6pm-11pm at Casa Real at
Ruby Hill

NOVEMBER 25

Black Friday Hike—10am-12noon
at Sycamore Grove Park

DECEMBER 15

Volunteer Appreciation—
Details will be forthcoming!

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Want more details about any of these events? Call 925.449.8706, email info@TriValleyConservancy.org, or visit us online at TriValleyConservancy.org.

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