

New TPDS meeting space has special meaning for one docent

By Ken King (Class of '02)

Thanks to the generosity of National University, the Torrey Pines Docent Society holds its monthly meetings at facilities on North Torrey Pines Road, just a few yards south of the Reserve's southern boundary. My first San Diego office was in this very same building complex. On December 1, 1980, the 110 employees of The Signal Companies moved into our new corporate headquarters.

The Signal Company, founded in 1929 and named after Signal Hill near Long Beach, decided to move from Beverly Hills to San Diego and hoped to find suitable land to build its headquarters. In the late 1970s, the city-owned Torrey Pines Mesa area was designated "Science/Research," but the idea of having a large (\$4 billion) NYSE-listed company build a beautiful headquarters here appealed to San Diego decision-makers. Signal was able to purchase the land and

break ground in 1979. R. J. Marvick & Associates designed the 100,000-square-foot building in the "Spanish Mediterranean" style, with multiple entrances, a half-acre courtyard surrounded by arcades, and broad central corridors in each of the wings. Oriental rugs, Spanish tile floors and oak woodwork contributed to the building's elegant look.

It was a special place to work; at lunch, we could walk across Torrey Pines Road and north along the old highway down to the Ranger Headquarters. Another option was to use the recreation center behind the building and above the underground parking garage. Yes, there was a swimming pool, tennis and racquetball courts, a weight room, lockers and showers. I wonder if the "split S" logo-shaped spa is still there.

Some of the original amenities are gone. There was a large chandelier at the entrance that's missing, and the restaurant type kitchen is gone as well. Lubach's hired the chef away, but in those days, hot lunches were \$2.00 and a cold meal was just one dollar. The room where the docents meet now was the "Oak Room" (pictured below).

Employees ate their lunches on linen-draped tables with an immense fireplace, now missing.

One of my old photos shows us planting three 15' Torrey pines. They were soon moved further away from the building, but are much taller today and look healthy. The pond in the courtyard used to have lilies, algae, and koi -- today it is devoid of life. The koi turned out to be a bad idea as a Great Blue Heron found them to his taste. Besides watching the herons deplete the koi population, on a few late working evenings, I observed a bobcat that came within inches of my office French door.

Signal employees felt privileged indeed to work next to Torrey Pines with wild areas to the north and east, and a world-class golf course to the west. But things change; Allied Corporation of New Jersey acquired the company, and a few years later we were gone and the building was up for sale. I feel quite fortunate that I can still hike Torrey Pines any time, and can even visit my old Corporate Headquarters every month. □



Four 2006 Greater S. D. Science Fair winners who received the TPDS awards

Each created an outstanding project enhancing understanding of nature, conservation, preservation, or interpretation in the Torrey Pines area, and demonstrated excellent communication skills. Jessica Chan and Ben Smith plan to visit our May 20 general meeting. David Cohn plans to visit our June 17 meeting. They feel honored by our award. Please further honor them with interested and probing questions during their visit.

David's advisor, Mrs. Roxanne Hunker, from The Rhoades School, a private school in Encinitas for gifted children in grades K-8, will also visit us in June. ! -*Theo Tanalski*

Ryan Johnson

Evidence for a Chemical Sensory Mechanism in Purple Sea Urchins

Senior Division, Zoology

Student Attends: Mt. Miguel High, Grade 12

Advisor: T. Linke Photo by Lillian Lachicotte



Ben Smith

Fossils of the Bay Point Formation

Junior Division --- Earth Sciences

Student Attends: St. John's, Grade 8

Advisor: C. Kuhn

Photos from Ben Smith



David Cohn

Burned Region Plant Regeneration

Junior Division --- Botany

Student Attends: Rhoades, Grade 7

Advisor: R. Hunker Photo by Lillian Lachicotte



Jessica Chan

Eel Grass and White Sea Bass?

Junior Division --- Environmental Sciences

Student Attends: Muirlands Middle, Grade 8

Advisor: M. Halpern

Photo by Jack Paxton



Torreyana May 2006 - Supplementary articles not included in the print version.

Earth Day 2006- Torrey Pines Docent Society and other Reserve workers. *Photos and captions by Herb Knufken*

Held in the north beach parking lot in case you didn't recognize it.



Where does this one go?



Altogether now!!



It's Super TPA Mike.



Ranger Gary trying to keep control.



We are ready for the sign ups.



I think I will place this over to the right.



The speech.



The attentive listeners.



Bird watching station.



Jack Friery setting up the bird watch scope.



Jody and Roger sharing a secret hamburger recipe.



Photo Contest, the upper half, anyway.



Jody carrying her load.



The grill masters.



Whatever I say is right!!!



Use your photo contest voting tickets, NOW.



Ranger Gary giving a TV interview.

Who are the Whacky Weeders?

This group, led by Barbara Wallach has worked every Monday for the last 2 months in the north beach lot restoring views of the lagoon and ocean.



This was a typical view along the whole sidewalk to the bridge. Two months ago even the fence was invisible, the sidewalk narrowed by encroaching plants.



A small part of the pruned trees and shrubs that must be removed before work is finished for the morning.



Weeders proudly stand in front of the pruned trees and shrubs with the newly open views of the lagoon and reserve behind them.



Brett's pickup has played a crucial role hauling away cuttings and transporting our tools from the lodge to our work areas.



"Weeders": Barbara Wallach, Diane Greening, Gil Walter, Kirsten Wilkes, Lynne Small, Bea Stoyla, Roger Isaacson, Frank Burham and Brett Lear. Missing "regular": Joellen Barnett