



TORREYANA

THE DOCENT NEWSLETTER FOR
TORREY PINES
STATE NATURAL RESERVE

Issue 447

October 2022

Two Heroes Save the September Meeting

by Joan R. Simon

It isn't often that Docent Society plans are upended by the weather here in San Diego, but on September 10 we had to cancel our planned picnic at the beach and the TPC's moonlight walk because of rain and hold a spur-of-the-moment general meeting via Zoom.

Ed Vodrazka,* the well-known and well-loved Torrey Pines lifeguard, read a thrilling story of challenge and survival from his newly published second book, *One Guard Out*, which details the lifeguard program on the Sonoma coast*. It was the most dangerous stretch of coastline in the United States, with someone drowning every two months, 20-foot waves occurring as often as 30 days a year, and the water temperature averaging a chilly 49–54 degrees. In 1990, California State Parks handpicked 11 guards from Southern California to start a lifeguard service there. In addition to the extraordinary physical challenges they faced, the new team had to contend with opposition from the local EMS community, which felt that the Sonoma coast waters were too dangerous for lifeguards to enter.

The first intrepid group of Sonoma coast lifeguards “created a program out of thin air” and paved the way for later guards to make these treacherous waters safer. Ed was one of them.

Our second speaker was Docent Jim Bedinger,** a “guest” at the “Hanoi Hilton” after his capture in Laos during the Vietnam War. He spoke about his newly published memoir, *Patriot, Prisoner, Survivor: An American Family at War*, the story of his war experiences and those of his family going back to the Revolutionary and Civil Wars**. He explained that the “glue” that held the POWs together during the Vietnam War was “the code of conduct, solid military training, and their faith in and love for each other.”

October General Meeting

Date: Saturday, October 8, 9 am

Location: St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Del Mar
(in person and also on Zoom)

Speaker: Beverley Whitaker Rodgers

Topic: The Whitakers of Whitaker Garden

Beverley Whitaker Rodgers is the daughter of seventh-generation Californian Dr. Thomas W. Whitaker and Mary Beverley Somerville. (Dr. Whitaker, a longtime president of the Torrey Pines Association, established Whitaker Garden in memory of his wife.) After graduating from La Jolla High School and UC Davis, Beverley had a long career as an English and Spanish teacher and counselor in the Los Angeles School District. Now living in Glendale, she has fond memories of growing up in La Jolla. She is mindfully aware of how her childhood experiences impacted the woman she is today and contributed greatly to her academic, professional, and personal success.

Refreshments: Docents with last names beginning with **J, K, L** will be responsible for providing snacks for this meeting.

His small group of ten called themselves the LULUs: Legendary Union of Laotian Unfortunates.

Jim also recounted the generous gifts that POWs received from American companies when they returned, including a Ford LTD and a week's stay at a Holiday Inn anywhere in the United States (he and his wife wisely chose New York City and they had the time of their lives).

*Ed Vodrazka is the author of two books, *Stories from Sea Level* and *One Guard Out* (both available from Amazon). To read a profile of his extraordinary career, [click here](#). (June 2021, pg.6)

***Patriot, Prisoner, Survivor: An American Family at War* by Henry James Bedinger is available on Amazon.

The Torrey Pines Docent Society publishes the *Torreyana* monthly, edited by Joan Simon and Dan Hammer on alternate months, and is formatted and produced by Roger Isaacson. Submissions are due on or about the 20th day of the preceding month and may be emailed to

Editors@torreypine.org.

Please send postal/
email address changes to:

Torrey Pines Docent Society
1155 Camino Del Mar #404
Del Mar, CA 92014

Attn: Membership or email to

Membership@torreypine.org

Web sites:

TP Docent Society: torreypine.org

TP Conservancy: torreypines.org

Visitor Center phone: **858.755.2063**

TPDS Executive Board Members:

President: Lynne Truong

Vice-president: Roger Isaacson

Treasurer: Janet Ugalde

Secretary: Matt Xavier

Directors-at-large:

Lisa Kakone

Mark Lippard

Harry Proctor

Rosemary Wareham

Gabriele Wienhausen

TPSNR Staff:

Supervising Ranger: Dylan Hardenbrook

Rangers: Stephanie Adams, Kyle Knox,
Dave Richards, Jesus "Chuy" Salinas
Rodriguez

Sr. Park Aides: Louis Sands, Ingo Renner

Park Aides: Eliana Nuñez, Zuzana Volny

© Torrey Pines Docent Society
Since 1975
All rights reserved

**FLASH - Don't forget to donate
your ZooNooz magazines to the
Museum Shop.**

General Meeting Minutes:

September 11, 2022

The General Meeting was called to order by President **Lynne Truong** @ 9:05 am.

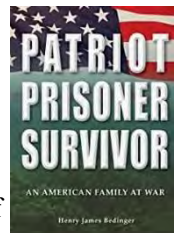
Lynne welcomed the 85 docents who joined this Zoom-only meeting.

Invited Speakers

Ed Vodrazka, former Torrey Pines State Reserve lifeguard, talked about his new book titled *One Guard Out*, which documents the dangerous lifesaving feats of lifeguards working off the Sonoma Coast. Ed read a dramatic and gripping story from his book. (See article on pg. 1.)



Jim Bedinger spoke about his book *Patriot, Prisoner, Survivor – An American Family at War*, which documents his service to his country including his internment as a prisoner of war during the Vietnam conflict. (See story on pg. 1.)



TPDS Business

Docent of the Month

Ron Styn, a recent docent graduate, was announced as the docent of the month. Ron has worked many hours this year with Special Walks, the TIK, and the Lodge. Congratulations, Ron, for your contributions to the Reserve! (See pg. 3.)

Ranger's Report

Ranger Stephanie Adams reported that the Reserve had a successful summer thanks in part to the dedicated volunteers and docents who participated with the TIK, Lodge, and Whacky Weeders. She shared that the new Junior Rangers program was also a success thanks to the park aides. Parents commented that they want the length of the program to be extended. The program will be repeated in the Fall.

Stephanie shared that the current plan is to bring a sewer line to the West Parking Lot by September 2023.

She reported that some visitors are afraid of the bees that are attracted to the new water filling stations.

President's Report

Lynne reported that the TPC Moonlight Hike, which is entirely full, has been moved to October 8. (Look for updates on Google Groups.)

BLIK update

Rosemary Wareham reported that the Beach and Lagoon Information Kiosk (BLIK) will be open at the North Lot every Sunday from 9 am to noon on a trial basis. There are two shifts to sign up for on Better Impact: 8:30 to 10:30 am and 10:30 am to 12:30 pm. There are currently 16 people on the email list for BLIK contributors and Rosemary said they need more volunteers. Experience is not necessary at this point. Since opening, the BLIK has been very busy (see article on pg. 4).

Inside

Two Heroes	1
Meeting Minutes	2
Docent of the Month	3
Lovers' Lane	4
BLIK Update	4
Music on the Sand	5
CEED Event	6
TP Book Club	7
Bird Survey	7

Mindful Walks

The Mindful Walks program, which is held on the first and third Sundays at 8 am, now has two additional docents to help out with the demand.

New Docent Training

The three-month-long New Docent Program starts on Saturday, September 16, and there are 30 people currently enrolled. Louis Sands has updated the mentor training program for those people who volunteered to mentor a new docent student.

Children's Program

The Children's Program is starting up this Fall. There will be only one class per session, but the organizers are expecting that the numbers will increase as the school districts loosen Covid restrictions. The kickoff meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 28 at 10 am. Please sign up if you'd like to contribute to this impactful and important program.

100th Anniversary of the Lodge

The Lodge anniversary committee continues to plan a celebration, which will be held on April 15, 2023.



New BI (Better Impact) Code

Roger Isaacson has created a new category for Better Impact for state programs called *state park interpretive programs*.

Lodge Survey Results

Matt Xavier presented a summary of the Two-Minute Lodge Survey results. Lynne discussed the changes that the Board has implemented based on the results. Lodge hosting continues to be a vital component of our mission.

BioBlitz

There will be another BioBlitz held at the Reserve on October 22. [Canceled]

Bird Counts

The dedicated group of birders who conduct the bird counts needs more docent participation. Please email David Walker if you have any questions and/or if you would like to get involved in this activity.

NDS Update

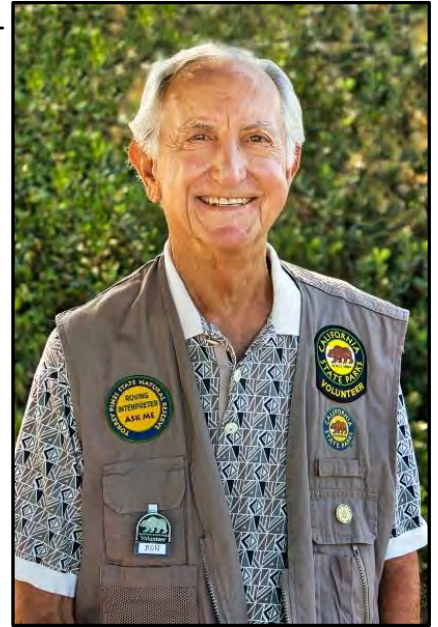
The successful Nature Discovery Series (NDS) is looking for a new leader to help develop and plan this well-attended program for 2023.

The meeting ended at 10:50 am.

Docent of the Month: Ron Styn

Photo by Herb Knufken

After 35 years as a lawyer and 21 years as a Superior Court Judge, I retired last year and began looking around for rewarding volunteer opportunities. The Torrey Pines Docent Society offered the best blend of great location, nature education, and gifted fellow docents. Joining TPDS turned out to be a great decision. I love the place and the people,



especially interacting with visitors from all over the world and telling them stories (many of them true) about Torrey Pines. I also enjoy learning and joking with my mentor, **Cres Torres**, and my classmates **Coach Vance** and **Gary McCook**.

A native San Diegan, I played in the canyons as a kid. As an adult, I ran and hiked in the canyons but never slowed down to really look at what was around me. Thanks to some incredibly knowledgeable docents who gave talks and led walks at the Reserve, I began to notice the amazing variety of nature. I continue to be astonished at how much there is to be learned about what surrounds us at Torrey Pines.

Before becoming a docent, I had not hiked that much in the Reserve. Mostly I used to come to the beach to body surf. However, I do remember one hike with my father-in-law through "Fat Man's Misery." He called it "The Lemon Squeezer" and for years incorporated stories about it into the sermons he gave as a Baptist minister. Fat Man's Misery is now only a memory, but Torrey Pines continues to amaze.

Lovers' Lane Walks

by Ingo Renner

Let's start at the beginning: I *did* warn participating docents to bring Vicks VapoRub for under their noses to help mask the stench of rotting animal carcasses. None heeded my warning, thinking I was merely joking. Little did they know they had signed up for a full-immersion CEED experience, and they were in for a surprise. An eight-foot sea lion had recently been dumped where we were heading, and it was now in full bloom! Coyotes had torn it apart, leaving only bits and pieces of bone and fur laying scattered around. And boy did it stink!



The mention of a Lovers' Lane walk must have conjured up romantic images of bygone days when young lovers would use this scenic area to park their cars to "enjoy the view." Today, Lovers' Lane is frequented only by transients and the occasional carcasses of dead animals that washed up on the state beach or that got hit crossing the highway.

Our two groups were privileged to visit this unique area in the southern portion of the Reserve, as it is closed to the public. We were able to enjoy scenic views of Sorrento Valley and walk through Southern maritime chaparral to see native plants such as warty stemmed ceanothus, San Diego mountain mahogany, bush poppy, and fuchsia-flower gooseberry. A fun and interesting docent walk, even if the stench stayed in our noses for a couple extra hours.

Special thanks to the Torrey Pines rangers for helping to arrange these walks.

We Need You:

Be Part of the BLIK's Proof of Concept

At the last general meeting, **Rosemary Wareham** reported that the Beach and Lagoon Interpretive Kiosk (BLIK) project is currently in a vital proof-of-concept phase.

What does this mean?

Two things. First, we need to establish that we docents put our money where our mouths are – that is, we need to show that we have sufficient docent participation to open a BLIK at the Torrey Pines North Parking Lot every Sunday morning in October. Second, we need to show that a BLIK would enrich visitors' experiences and their engagement with and appreciation of our beloved Torrey Pines Beach and Los Peñasquitos Lagoon.

The reward for successfully completing this phase will be huge: getting the green light to build a permanent BLIK structure!

What are our biggest hurdles?

Our biggest challenges are transporting the educational materials from and back to the North Parking Lot shed, as well as the set-up and take-down of our temporary booth. Each time we operate the BLIK, the extra-long folding table, the collapsible canopy, the chairs, and the plastic containers with the educational display material need to be transported from the North Beach shed all the way across the parking lot to our display area and then later transported back. Set-up and take down of the canopy tent requires at least three people (ideally four).

How can you help?

The BLIK operates Sundays from 9 am to 12 noon. We need docents who are reasonably strong and own a truck or SUV to help with either the set-up or the breakdown of the BLIK. Set-up takes place from 8:15 am to 9 am, and breakdown happens from 12 noon to 12:45 pm.

We also need docents working the BLIK during either the 9 am–10:30 am or the 10:30 am–12 noon shift. By way of encouragement, our booth location is fabulous: shaded, wind-protected, and near clean bathrooms with running water! Best of all, almost all beachgoers have to pass by the BLIK.

Are you concerned about knowing enough?

Our core group of BLIK enthusiasts are committed to teach and mentor any docent interested in and enthusiastic about having a BLIK. Hesitant? Just come by for a visit. You'll enjoy the experience. It will be fun learning together and engaging with the visitors!

We need you!

Come and join us in achieving our goal of establishing a permanent BLIK – which, by the way, would eliminate the BIGGEST challenge: setting up and tearing down the temporary booth.

Contact one of us for questions: **Rosemary Wareham**, **Gabriele Wienhausen**, or **Lisa Kakone**.

MUSIC ON THE SAND



This note was posted by Ranger Chuy Salinas to the TPDS Google Group on September 18:

The piano shoot was permitted. There were two peace officers monitoring. The van did get stuck in the sand and so did the tow truck who came out to get them out. I do know that it was late when they finally got out last Tuesday (past 9 pm). Unfortunately, I do not know who the artist was. This is my photo of the piano as I was driving by last Monday.

Chuy



A Towhee
I saw today a towhee slip
away between the trees --
he penetrates, as I cannot,
those sylvan mysteries.
--Maryruth Cox



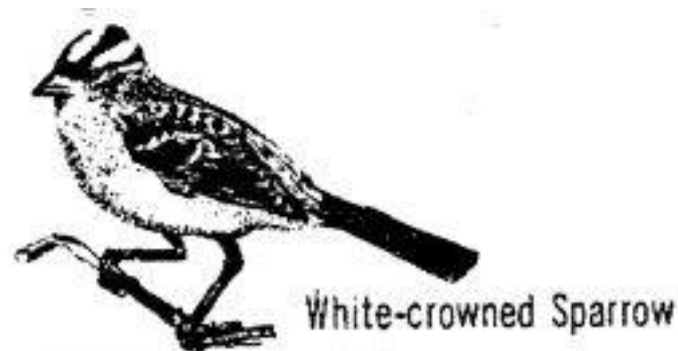
Saving Birds through Habitat

by Susanne Florin, Torrey Pines Conservancy

All docents are cordially invited to join us at the Children's Pavilion on Saturday, October 1st at 3 pm for a talk on "Saving Birds through Habitat."

Kay Charter will detail several ways we – as Californians, educators, and local community members – can create a more livable world for our avian friends. Kay is an award-winning writer and speaker who, for 30 years, has fought to reverse the tragic decline of migrating bird species. Kay is a founder and the current Executive Director of Saving Birds Thru Habitat.

This is great for all docents! Kay will bring plenty of books to give out and other educational materials. Again, this is wonderful for all educators! Sign up is on the TPC website at torreypines.org/



Nature Discovery Series: Upcoming Schedule

"Raptors: Birds of Prey," with Dr. Bob Gordon and Huxley the Harris Hawk, will take place on Sunday, October 16 at 3 pm at the Children's Pavilion. Children love Bob's talk and his hawk.

Saturday, November 19: Celebrate Native American Month with Ami Admire of the Rincon Youth Storytellers. Educational and fun for families with children.

Contact Kathy Dickey for more information.

October CEED Event: Full

Ken King leading walks through La Jolla on Ellen Browning Scripps and other highlights.

November CEED Event: Crystal Cove

When: Wednesday, November 9, 10 am

Where: Crystal Cove State Park, Laguna Beach

Duration: 1 1/2 – 2 1/2 hours (earn 1 hour of Continuing Education)

Leader: Winter Bonnin, State Park Interpreter

Meet at the Lower Moro parking lot, near Berns Amphitheatre ([click here](#) for map). We will be walking a three-mile loop trail. Day use fees for the park will be waived at the kiosk if you show the aide your Torrey Pines parking pass.

RSVP to Molly Allison by October 25 if planning to attend.

Torrey Pines Book Club

We will continue to meet via Zoom at our regularly scheduled time. Please notify **Ken King** if you plan to participate and if you need any extra help getting connected.

When: Tuesday, October 11, 1:00 pm

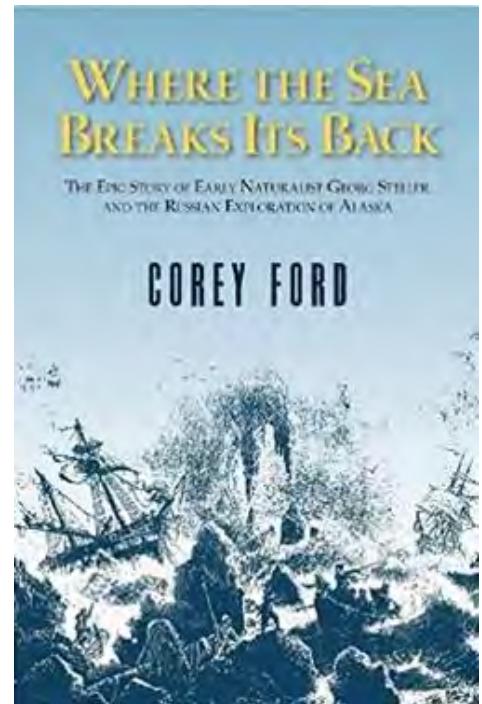
What: *Where the Sea Breaks Its Back: The Epic Story of Early Naturalist Georg Steller and the Russian Exploration of Alaska* by Corey Ford

Amazon says:

Steller was one of Europe's foremost naturalists and the first to document the unique wildlife of the Alaskan coast. In the course of the voyage, Steller made his valuable discoveries and suffered, along with Bering and the crew of the ill-fated ship *St. Peter*, some of the most grueling experiences in the history of Arctic exploration. First published in 1966, *Where the Sea Breaks Its Back* was hailed as "among this country's greatest outdoor writing" by *Field & Stream* magazine, and today continues to enchant and enlighten the new generations of readers about this amazing and yet tragic expedition and Georg Steller's significant discoveries as an early naturalist.

All TPDS docents are welcome. Meetings usually last an hour and a half.

November 8: TBD



Torrey Pines Docent Society Bird Survey: September 2022

Number of species: 58
(+4 other taxa)

Mallard 6
Surf Scoter 3
California Quail 1
Eurasian Collared-Dove 2
Mourning Dove 59
White-throated Swift 1
Anna's Hummingbird 37
Allen's Hummingbird 4
hummingbird sp. 8
Whimbrel 8
Long-billed Curlew 3
Least Sandpiper 18
Heermann's Gull 7
Western Gull 31
California Gull 7
gull sp. 2

Caspian Tern 32
Royal Tern 14
Brandt's Cormorant 27
Double-crested Cormorant 13
American White Pelican 37
Great Blue Heron 5
Great Egret 3
Snowy Egret 9
Osprey 1
Cooper's Hawk 1
Red-shouldered Hawk 1
Red-tailed Hawk 2
Nuttall's Woodpecker 6
American Kestrel 4
Peregrine Falcon 3
Western Wood-Pewee 1
Pacific-slope Flycatcher 7
Black Phoebe 15
Cassin's Kingbird 24
Western Kingbird 1

Hutton's Vireo 2
California Scrub-Jay 16
American Crow 48
Common Raven 53
Northern Rough-winged Swallow 1
swallow sp. 1
Bushtit 24
Wrentit 67
California Gnatcatcher 12
House Wren 16
Bewick's Wren 19
California Thrasher 12
Northern Mockingbird 1
Scaly-breasted Munia 21
House Finch 78
Lesser Goldfinch 40
Dark-eyed Junco 6
Savannah Sparrow 2
Belding's

Song Sparrow 25
California Towhee 61
Spotted Towhee 14
sparrow sp. 1
Yellow-breasted Chat 1
Orange-crowned Warbler 4
Common Yellowthroat 9
Western Tanager 3

Observers: Robert Turner, Anonymous, Gary Grantham, Andy Rathbone, Debbie Regottaz, Nancy Richardson, Marty Hales, Steve Neal, Sunil Bhavsar, Susan Bar, Michael Liptz, Tsaiwei Olee, David Walker, Deborah Walker

Herb Knufken's amazing photo gallery, including many birds, may be found here: pbase.com/herb1rm



Torrey Pines Docent Society
1155 Camino Del Mar #404
Del Mar, CA 92014
(858) 755-2063
torreypine.org