

# Daley Ranch News

*Friends of Daley Ranch*

Autumn 2012

## **President's Message ...Fred Woods**



We're saddened, once again, to have lost one of our longest serving board members, Irene O'Neill. We last saw her at Sally's memorial, just about a month before Irene passed away. While uncertain of her own future, she was upbeat and looking good. Irene was an expert on our Daley Ranch native plants and birds and frequently served as a volunteer docent for our school programs. She was hoping we would be successful in our grant proposal to expand the 7<sup>th</sup> grade program to all of Escondido's Middle Schools. Well, her wish has

been fulfilled. We actually found out we were successful at her memorial in Riverside. How ironic.

The program she was eager to expand has existed for about 12 years. It brings large groups of 7<sup>th</sup> graders to the Ranch to learn about the history of the Daley family and the Native Americans who originally lived here. With great help from the Ranger staff, we provide instruction about plants, animals, climate, and geology. We bring in a raptor rescue program with real birds of prey. A large Native American display shows the students what the original inhabitants made and used in their day-to-day lives. Authentic tools, weapons, toys, and other items are there to see, and find out how they were used. New this year will be a segment about the early Mexican cowboys and how they did their jobs. Authentic costumes, and other equipment they used will be displayed and discussed. For the first time, we are working to include the restored Ranch House as a place for students to relax and listen to a historic story of the Ranch and its original owners. The inside of the Ranch House has been off limits for years and is stunningly beautiful when you see it.

If you want to be part of this program or other activities at the Ranch, we are looking for more people willing to be trained as docents. All helpers and Board members are volunteers. We can get stretched very thin and need new people. None of us thought we could be very useful before we tried. With training and practice, you can become very good at whatever volunteer task you desire. Please contact us if you, or someone you know, would like to get involved. Training is done by the Ranger staff. If we get a good response from this request, we might get an earlier group training so you will be able to help this Spring. I hope to hear from you soon.

## **Friends of Daley Ranch Contact Information**

*PO Box 461173  
Escondido CA 92046-1173*

*Fred Woods, President  
760 745-4533*

*Mike Whalen Vice President  
760 740-1370*

*Rick Mercurio, Secretary  
760 751-2275*

*Irene O'Neill, Deceased*

*Rick Paul, Treasurer  
760 432-9122*

*Carol Stanford, Communications  
760 741-7122*

*Jerry Harmon, Member  
760 480-9483*

*Dick Althouse, Member  
760 741-7629*

*Jim Schafer, Member*

*Don Piller, Webmaster  
dpiller@cox.net*

## **City Contact Information**

*Hike Schedule  
[www.escondido.org/daley-ranch-hikes.aspx](http://www.escondido.org/daley-ranch-hikes.aspx)*

*Ranger Station  
760 839-4680*

*Tracking Team  
Duane Boney 760 839-4345*

*Volunteer Coordinator  
Sue Evarts 760 839-4680*

## ***The Friends are Saddened by Death of Irene O'Neill—Rick Mercurio***



The Friends of Daley Ranch were saddened upon the passing of Irene O'Neill on July 29 after her four-year battle with lung cancer. Irene had served on the FODR Board for many years, including a long tenure as our treasurer. She believed deeply in the protection of nature's beauty everywhere, and she focused much of her energy in working hard for Daley Ranch. She enjoyed the outdoors, and was a hiker, birdwatcher, writer, artist, and native plant expert. She was one of the original docents with the Daley Ranch Volunteer Association, and was active in that organization as well as FODR.

Irene had a sharp wit and a keen sense of humor. Her passion for the environment was irrepressible and helped keep our Board focused on what mattered most: the natural and cultural treasures of Daley Ranch. She is survived by her sisters, Judith and Molly Caldwell; her daughters, Linda Gutierrez and Monica O'Neill; and her grandchildren, Quinn O'Neill-Gainer and Evan, Natalie and Mara Gutierrez.

Sharing their memories of Irene are Sue Evarts, the current coordinator of Daley Ranch volunteers, and Linda Shipman, who served in that capacity when Irene began her tenure as a docent.

**FROM SUE EVARTS:** Irene would volunteer to help us when we had middle school students come to Daley Ranch for a program. We would have around 200 students per day come for programs on Native Americans, plants, birds, reptiles, insects, geology, Daley Ranch history, and the like. Some students hiked on the Ranch while others sat through programs in the picnic area. Irene would volunteer to talk to the students about Native American uses of plants. She would gather plants (but never from the Ranch) and set up a station and talk to each group. Sometimes there were eight groups per day. She really enjoyed sharing her knowledge and know-how with these children. We could always count on her.

**FROM LINDA SHIPMAN:** Whatever Irene decided to do, she took on with a vengeance and produced an excellent product. She wanted to 'get' whatever it was she was undertaking. She made gorgeous baskets with found natural materials of pine needles, shells and feathers. She spun yarn and dyed the yarns in many different colors using local plants.

She took on the challenge of making shawii the Kumeyaay way....gathering ripe acorns, letting them dry in the sun and removing the caps and cracking to remove the outer shells; crushing the acorns with mortar and pestle; grinding again to get the meal to the consistency of light flour. But...then she had the problem of removing the tannin that would taste very bitter if left in the flour. Traditionally, the Kumeyaay put the meal in a basket, set it in a stream and let the water wash the tannins out. Irene put her meal in the water tank attached to her toilet bowl! She laughed about it, but was convinced every time she flushed her toilet the tank water would eventually leach out the tannins. She then cooked the meal and brought us samples to taste. I can't remember that I actually liked the taste, but maybe it's something that one acquires over time....regardless of how the meal is leached.

### ***Volunteer Sought for Social Media***

The Friends of Daley Ranch is finally trying to catch up to the future! We have a Facebook presence, but need a person with a little time and know-how to help us coordinate our social media efforts. If you, or someone you know, may be interested in serving as our Social Media Volunteer, please contact Rick Paul at 760 505-9840 or email him at rickpaul01@yahoo.com

## ***Introducing Jim Schafer, Newest FODR Board Member***



I moved to Escondido 32 years ago, bought a home, got married and successfully raised a family. Now it's just my wife and me with two dogs living in the same home.

One of the best things that ever happened to the City of Escondido in those 32 years was the purchase and creation of a 3000 acre habitat preserve named Daley Ranch. It is one of the "Crown Jewels" of Escondido. I joined the FODR (Friends of Daley Ranch) as nothing more than a dues paying member in 2000. Recently I was asked to become more involved.

At a recent meeting someone made the mistake of asking me what I am passionate about in regards to Daley Ranch. I only stopped expounding on all the great aspects of Daley Ranch because of time limitations. That must be the same reason I was asked to limit this correspondence to 300 words or less. That is not easy. I have been passionate about the beauty and tranquility of those 3000 acres since discovering it in the early 1980s. It is rich and full in history, geography, plants, wildlife and, perhaps most important of all, in tranquility.

The opportunities for the youth of Escondido to experience this open space and the solitude it offers is invaluable. The wildlife, native plants, and fresh air can help them connect with the natural world separated from the noise and confusion of their daily challenges. It enhanced the well being of all four of my children. Each of them in a different way, but nevertheless touching each one of them to help them to become a responsible steward of our planet and a contributing member of society. (I think that's 300 words!)

## ***Norm Syler, Original FODR Treasurer Passes Away—Rick Mercurio***

Norm Syler, beloved as an active and generous member of the Escondido and Valley Center communities, passed away on April 24, 2012, at age 78 after a brief struggle with melanoma.

Norm was in attendance at the very first meeting of the Friends of Daley Ranch in 1997. He graciously volunteered to serve as the treasurer for the new group, and he continued in that capacity for several years. He was always diligent with the books, keeping FODR on a strong and steady financial course in those critical early years. Norm loved the outdoors and recognized the value of Daley Ranch as a habitat for wildlife and as a recreational bonanza for Escondido.

Norm had been a high school social studies teacher for his entire career, first in his home state of Ohio, then in the City of Orange. He also was a coach, with a great love of baseball. After retiring Norm and his wife, Luella, moved to their dream home, which they had custom-built, overlooking Pauma Valley, with acres of avocados. Never content to stay idle, and capitalizing on his love of history, Norm took on the job as the first executive director of what was then known as the Escondido Historical Society, now the History Center. Norm also became an active member of the Escondido Rotary Club.

A few years ago Norm moved back to Orange County to be close to his grandchildren, Brannon and Katarina. Surviving Norm are his grandkids; Luella; his son, Scott; his daughter, Luann; and his son-in-law, Frank Hickey. Norm's unexpected passing generated an outpouring of love and fond memories from so many of us in the community.

He will surely be missed!

**The mission of the Friends of Daley Ranch is to:**

- Support the protection, maintenance, and restoration of the Daley Ranch Conservation Bank, native habitats and wildlife
- Promote education about the biological and historic value of Daley Ranch
- Encourage responsible recreational use consistent with conservation of native habitats and wildlife

**Volunteer Opportunities**

Contact Sue Evert at 760 839-4680 to volunteer for **Bike Patrol, Horse Patrol, or Trail Maintenance**

**Hike Schedule**

Call Ranger Station at 760 839-4680 for the hike schedule and also to sign up for a hike. The schedule is also available at [www.escondido.org/daley-ranch-hikes.aspx](http://www.escondido.org/daley-ranch-hikes.aspx)

**Go Green**

Email [daley ranch@yahoo.com](mailto:daley ranch@yahoo.com) with FODR in the subject line to get this newsletter electronically.

**Friends Of Daley Ranch Membership, Renewal and Donations**

Friends of Daley Ranch is a 501c(3) non-profit, organization.

Your tax-deductible contribution will be acknowledged by mail.

Make check payable to Friends of Daley Ranch and mail to  
PO Box 461173, Escondido CA 92046-1173

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_  Yes, email my newsletter

This is for  Membership  Building restoration

New Member  Continuing Member

\$15 Senior/Student  \$35 Contributing  \$50 Sustaining  \$100 Corporate  \$500 Benefactor  \$ \_\_\_\_\_

My primary interests are:  Conservation  Recorded History  Natural history  Hiking  Mountain biking  
 Equestrian Use  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Opportunities:  Newsletter editor  Fundraising  Building Committee  Education Committee  
 Recreation Committee  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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