

Daley Ranch News

Friends of Daley Ranch

Summer 2012

In Memoriam: Sally Thomas, Champion of the Environment



Sally Thomas, longtime FODR board member and a strong advocate for preservation of habitat and open space, succumbed on April 21 at age 66 after a long bout with cancer. She will be greatly missed by family and friends.

Sally first joined the FODR board in September of 1999 as the recreation chair. In that position, she fought for recreational opportunities at the ranch that were fully compatible with the natural environment. On May 15, 2000, Sally was unanimously elected president of the Friends of Daley

Ranch. She worked hard in that leadership position until February of 2007, when she resigned the presidency, and she continued to serve on the board until her passing.

Her overriding passion was the protection of wildlife and the native habitat in which it thrived. This was manifested in many ways during her tenure on the board.

Most prominent was Sally's dogged determination to save the Stanley Peak property from development and add it to Daley Ranch. She led the battle to raise awareness as well as funds for this purpose. Her energy seemed boundless, despite early setbacks and sidesteps. Sally's persistence met with success, when the City finally acquired the property, adding those 100 important acres to the ranch. The sweeping view from atop Stanley Peak allows ranch hikers to gaze out over the pristine lands that Sally worked so hard to preserve.

In searching the board minutes from the more than 12 years she served, numerous other issues were championed by Sally, including

- Creating the mission statement for the Friends of Daley Ranch, embracing the goals and principles that we all continue to share.
- Urging the establishment of a biological baseline study of the ranch, in order to gauge the impacts on wildlife.
- Fighting to maintain the current legal entry points to the ranch rather than allowing developers to cut new swaths.
- Advocating for biological and aesthetic buffers around the ranch.

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Friends of Daley Ranch Contact Information

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Sue Evarts 760 839-4680*

Sally Thomas continued...Rick Mercurio

- Proposing an Audubon bird survey.
- Making sure that wildlife corridors remain open and active between the ranch and surrounding open spaces
- Investigating the San Diego Tracking Team and Open Space Institute to see how they could improve the ranch's vitality.
- Training with the San Diego Foundation to learn how to write grants.
- Studying the Multiple Habitat Conservation Program as well as the City's Merkel Report to strengthen Daley Ranch protection.
- Networking with neighboring organizations including the Friends of Hellhole Canyon, Bernardo Mountain, and Eagle Peak.
- Strongly supporting the new El Caballo Park Conservancy, which protects the Caballo trailhead and the Escondido Charros family equestrian facility.

The FODR Board has established a memorial fund in Sally's honor. Donations will be used to purchase one, and possibly more, functional remembrances on the ranch, for example a wayside bench or panorama display.

Before retiring in 2006, Sally was an exemplary math and science teacher at Hidden Valley Middle School and an elementary teacher at Central School. Her daughter, Colleen MacKinnon, is expecting Sally's first grandchild this month.

Friends and family celebrated Sally's life at her home on May 26. Raising our champagne glasses, we toasted to an incredible woman to whom we owe so much.

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.

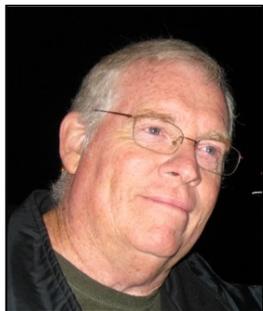
White Man's Poison / Native American Medicine—Trene O'Neill



Poison Oak (*Rhus diversiloba*) the much dreaded three leaved plant that grows abundantly on Daley Ranch was not at all feared by the first peoples. It's believed that full-blooded Indians were immune to the allergic rash which many (but not all) whites exhibit after exposure to it's leaves, berries or stems. Native Americans found many uses for the plant; the stems were used in basketry, the fresh juice as a fiber dye and a cure for warts and ringworm. Writings state that fresh poison oak leaves were immediately bound tightly over rattlesnake bites to counteract the poison. I wouldn't care to vouch

for the success of this treatment, but if in a dire situation might give it a try. Meanwhile, all hikers should beware of any growth under our Daley oaks during the year when the leaves aren't evident and learn to recognize the lush leaves and white berries in the spring and summer.

President's Message: Sally's Kitchen—Fred Woods



During many meetings at Sally's house, we entered through the kitchen, put our food on the island, opened wine and arranged the snacks while Sally messed with the oven that didn't always work. Lasagna was usually on the menu. The meetings started here. Even after a big, beautiful remodel, the pattern was the same, except the new oven worked better. We probably did more discussing in the kitchen than at the real meetings. It was a warm, comfortable feeling. I was never at her house when she wasn't in the kitchen. I half expected her to be standing at the oven when we walked in during the memorial, but she wasn't. And she won't be, any more, but I still expect it. Sally helped make

FODR kind of like her kitchen. . . . It doesn't always work right, but it has a comfortable feeling, where we can do great things together. We will miss you, Sally.

Vast Array of Distributed Solar Collectors Powers Daley Ranch

A Personal Reflection by Sally Thomas, reprinted from Autumn 2010

When Daley Ranch opened, I was wildly thrilled. As a kid, I romped merrily through similar hills to scramble up boulders and run off teenage angst. Worldly worries drowned in the aroma of sagebrush saturating my jeans and then the laundry pile. Most of Escondido's chaparral was paved or built upon while I was busy with work, family and other grown up stuff. In teaching I was frustrated that books explained endangered species in distant rainforests and places where lions and whales live. The word ecology was gibberish. Geology was so old and slow, who cared. So I signed on with docent training to learn local ecology, weather, and geology. I wanted to take students out of "barren leaves," and let them glimpse "sweet lore."

During docent training led by Virginia Moran, our little group would start up Ranch House Road and stop about every 20 steps to marvel at footprints and sign, sun position, substrate, slope, orientation, and plants. Ms Moran never failed to guide us to tiny details as well as previously under-considered awareness. Local botanist James Dillane, and chaparral champion Richard Halsey further assisted us to see plant parts and behavior in the context of climate, time, rocks, dirt, and interactions with other creatures (including humans). Small bits move my heart, still I cannot abandon the "barren leaves" and tribal elders who lead beyond my time-space and devices. Intrinsically I'm certain that minutiae at the Ranch is only a fleck of something awesome, precious, and essential.

The headline for this tale is one way to sort the details: Plants are solar collectors - ancient, distributed and still thriving - that harvest solar energy every day. Creatures eat the plants and predators eat the eaters to distribute the energy even to the scavengers, creepy things and microbes that clean up and recycle. Chaparral systems, like other natural ecosystems are wireless. Without man-made infrastructure, financial expenditure, bureaucratic entanglements, or media fanfare, they were built, operated, maintained, and upgraded, and continue, for maybe more than 14 million years without Public Utility Commission-approved rate hikes.

While I followed rabbit trails when I was younger, now I know sagebrush, chamise and buckwheat weren't so thrilled. Trails I opened made happy hunting for coyotes, bobcats and feral critters. It also set up another front for raging slow-motion floral invasion. Now when I spy a bloom of *Brodiaea orcuttii* hiding across a field or near ponds on the Ranch, I thrill at its beauty, and also wonder about its missing staminoids. But not too much of that. It's just being there that matters.

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

Go Green

Email [daleyranch@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

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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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