



NEWSLETTER

Summer 2016

## Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Association

### President's Report: Alan Aitken

A person would think in the age of computers, smart phones, and apps that the services provided by HRIA in the Visitor Center would not be required. However, my experience as a volunteer leads me to a different conclusion. I am amazed that people will call for information that is readily available on our website or on the internet from any number of other sources. When I ask the callers if they have a computer, the answer is always yes. Apparently the information age has yet to be fully embraced.

Our Visitor Centers provide more than maps, brochures, and information. The Visitor Centers provide a visual and tactile experience for the curios of all ages. The exhibits expose visitors to aspects of the redwood forest they would otherwise not experience on a simple hike. Whether it be the life cycle of salmon, the diorama of animals and birds, the split wood logging exhibit, or the hands-on children's activity center, having knowledge of what one may encounter on the trails enhances their experience.

And enhancing their experience is what the visitors are looking for if the number of people walking through our doors is any indicator. The July 4th weekend saw tremendous numbers coming to our Visitor Center at Humboldt Redwoods State Park. One day alone saw more than 1,000.

Our organization's mission is to interpret the redwoods to the public. We will continue in this mission by whatever media available. Please take time to visit our new, improved website. Our Executive Director, Sophia, has done an outstanding job updating the website in content and visuals.

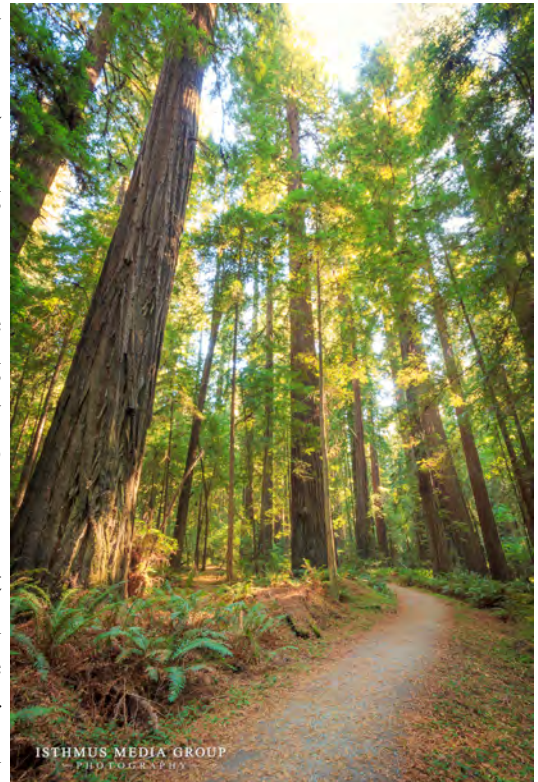


Photo by Jonah Westrich

*Alan Aitken*

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Debbie Gardner

### **HRIA Executive Director**

Sophia Eckert

### **Mission Statement**

The HRIA is an educational non-profit group working in cooperation with the California State Parks at Humboldt Redwoods State Park, Richardson Grove State Park, Grizzly Creek Redwoods State Park, Benbow Lake Recreation area and Sinkyone Wilderness State Park within the North Coast Redwoods District, Eel River Sector. The mission of HRIA is to provide visitors with stimulating explanatory information on the natural and cultural history; to help visitors see these parks not only with their eyes, but also with their hearts. We lead others from mere observation to inspire in them a sense of awe in which the human spirit finds meaning, wisdom and a connection with all living things.

## **Richardson Grove Thanks Save the Redwoods League**

By Abby Van Artsdalen, Richardson Grove Park Interpreter



Your dedication for restoring our lands  
For almost one hundred years  
Every 200,000 acres of redwood stands  
Deserves all of us to give cheers

66 Preserves and Parks  
Not once thought to be saved before  
Would not be here without your enthusiastic sparks  
For the encompassing redwoods, birds, fish and more

More than half of our Redwood parks exist  
To build connections and be cared for  
By the public who can’t resist  
To run around our forests and explore

Establish, restore, connect, study and protect  
Are all that your league stands by  
So that visitors can feel the redwood effect  
That makes children jump and old men cry

As the years go by your work gets trying  
Complexities, bureaucracies is work no one desires  
But the land you’ve already been supplying  
Brings a sense of connection that truly inspires

If it wasn’t for you our forest would be blank  
The league’s founders’ efforts were strongly driven  
Now that we are reaching the end I want to thank  
All of your passion, dedication and work you have given

## Managers Report

By Debbie Gardner, HRIA Manager

The summer has been one of the most successful ever at Humboldt Redwoods State Park! The Visitor Center has broken a new record with visitors. On July 2, there were 1078 visitors and July 3 had 1009 visitors walk through the doors. Thank you to all of the volunteers for the hard work and long hours that they put in. We couldn't do it without their efforts and dedication, as well as their passion for teaching others about the redwoods. We are always bringing in new merchandise, so come by and check it out. We have new books, magnets, hoodies, ladies tees, and lots more! Please remember that it's that time of year for membership dues, so if you haven't gotten them in, please send them to PO Box 276 Weott CA 95571. We look forward to seeing you in the redwoods!



Photo by Jonah Westrich

## Humboldt Redwoods State Park Interpreters are Back Full Force!

By Jake Josepher, HRSP Park Interpreter

Summer is officially upon us and with it brings waves of visitors to the park. A lot of these visitors come from all over the world, some of which have never seen the majestic redwoods that our park is famous for. These visitors are filled with questions about the park, some as simple as where is the bathroom or the tree they can drive their car through. While some are more complex and thought provoking, either way with questions big or small the HRSP park interpreters are here to help!

The idea of interpretation can seem abstract to many, so here is a quote to help frame the idea of what we do, "Interpretation enriches lives through engaging emotions, enhancing experiences and deepening understanding of people, places, events and objects from past and present." (Association for Heritage Interpretation AHI, 2005). This year HRSP has three seasonal Park Interpreters Elizabeth Rodriguez, Kristina Waite, and Jake Josepher and we are all excited to be here to help foster a positive and lifelong appreciation for this amazing place.



Throughout the summer we will be providing a lot of different programs aimed to groups of all ages. These programs include Nature Walks, Jr. Rangers, and Campfire programs. Nature walks are a 45min walk through different trails within the park and will be on a variety of different topics that all relate back to the natural, historical, or cultural resources that are found here. The Jr. Ranger programs are geared towards younger kids, ages 6-12. These programs are a great way to expose kids to the wonders of the natural world in a positive and safe way, they last about 1 hour. The Campfire programs are about 45 minutes in length and take place on the weekends (Thurs-Sun) and cover a verity of Topics. They take place

at all three campgrounds so no matter where you're camping within the park we try to bring the programs right to you. These programs also include songs and games and even prizes to those that really love to participate. These programs are a free service that is provided to all members of the public, so if you are interested in getting out and learning about the wonderful place that is Humboldt Redwoods State Park, please come and join us.



# The Humboldt Redwoods Mounted Assistance Unit

By Pat Farmer, MAU

The Humboldt Redwoods Mounted Assistance Unit continues to grow and develop as we strengthen our commitment to stewardship of our beloved park. Oddly enough, the M.A.U. originated during a time of challenging relationships between State Parks and the local equestrians. Development of the group provides a positive model for “harnessing” concerned citizens into greater responsibility in protecting our parks. Here is a bit of our history.

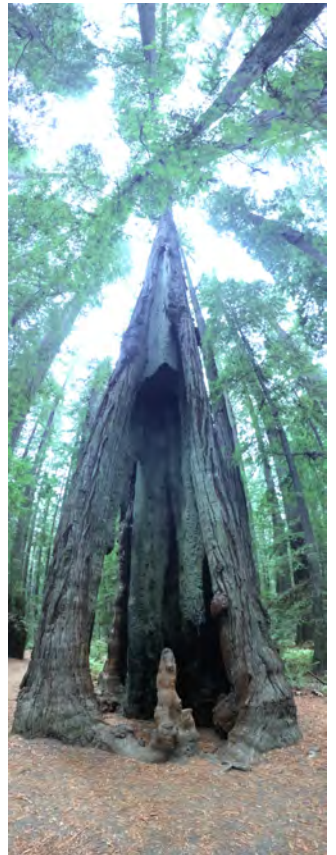
Nearly twenty years ago, equestrians became aware of planned trail closures in the area surrounding Cuneo Creek Horse Camp. Two trails had been selected for decommissioning, the Bull Creek Road, and Indian Orchard trail. Equestrians (as well as cyclists and other devoted park visitors) rallied ‘round to express strong opposition to any trail closures. Community meetings were held and dialog was heated. Parks staff may have been surprised at the energy, passion and commitment of the equestrian group, who were consistent and devoted park visitors. It might also be worth mentioning that as ‘regulars’ we were sometimes not the most rule-abiding group, as many had been riding in this area for decades and did not necessarily value rules and regulations. I remember pretty well the days of trotting along Peavine Road with my beloved Aussie Shepard running alongside, just before we cut off the road to explore an interesting deer trail. As a member of the original M.A.U. group, I sure learned a lot about these issues from the State Park’s viewpoint!

Chief District Ranger Ken Wilbur agreed to work with the equestrian group in a continued effort to address our concerns. Tempers cooled and we were able to provide more meaningful input into the parks’ decision – making process, while learning more about this beautiful area. One important issue is that many trails and roads in the park began as logging roads or skid trails. In several cases, these pathways were selected based on a course of least resistance between the area in which trees were felled and the valley floor. These trails were not intended to undergo continuous use, and they were definitely not built with equestrians or bicyclists in mind. As time went by, park staff noted some trails were suffering substantial erosion and instability.

Several were felt to be contributing damage to the ecosystem. The Bull Creek trail in particular was located in an area which had been subject to many slides and washouts, with subsequent impact on the watershed. Our chief goal therefore became preservation of the Indian Orchard trail, which provided a primary access point in and out of the horse camp, and offered cool shade with adequate water for riding over the hot summer months. Subsequently that trail underwent a major revision and overhaul, resulting in the beautiful riding and hiking trail we use today.

Aside from trail development, our group provided information about the unique needs of the horse crowd, including improved pen construction and additional shade for horses. In 2001, Ranger Ken Wilbur advised us of a wonderful development – a new ranger was scheduled to arrive, and she was an equestrian herself, with previous experience at HRSP. He recommended formation of a Mounted Assistance Unit and we eagerly agreed. Ranger Emily Peterson arrived, and our group took a new turn. Ranger Peterson worked diligently to learn about Mounted Assistance Units and to create the necessary infrastructure. Although Ken Wilbur retired, he left our group in good hands!

When we began, we received some stern lectures about following Park rules and regulations. As newly recognized representatives of the park, we were expected to be positive role models for other equestrians. We were also quite limited in terms of our volunteer service - prohibited from clearing trail, trimming brush, requesting that park visitors follow regulations, or other activities we take for granted today. We patrolled trail as a watch-and-report organization, proud to be allowed to “wear the bear” as CA State Parks volunteers. Over the years that followed, and with guidance from Ranger Peterson, trust between the equestrians of the M.A.U. and the State Parks staff grew stronger. Over time, our responsibilities and structure were thoughtfully expanded, and improvements to the horse camp continued. In 2013 Ranger Peterson accepted assignment at Grizzly Creek State Park, and the M.A.U. developed a new leadership structure. With the assistance and support of the park rangers, an M.A.U. Advisory Committee now takes a more active role, including liaison with Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Association and providing general guidance to the M.A.U, with excellent leadership from Cathy Mathena. We benefit from the oversight of Ranger Thomas Valterria, who provides ongoing support and assures a close connection with other rangers, including our liaison Ranger Luke Stone.

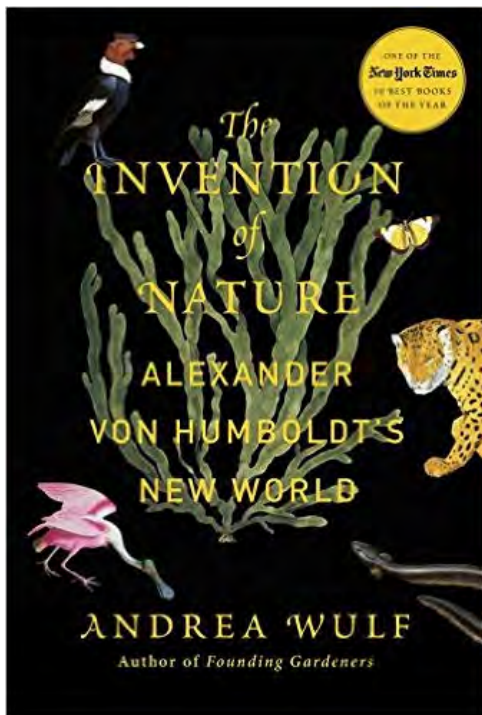


We have capped participation at thirty horse-rider teams and formalized the entry requirements, application and apprenticeship processes. We hold at least three meetings annually; one planning session (with introduction of prospective members) in the winter, one weekend to assist in readying the park for visitors in the Spring, and one to help fold up campground operations in late fall. We have been extraordinarily fortunate in having the support of the Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Association, who have provided funding for vests, patches, and several projects. Many of the improvements you see today at Cuneo Creek horse camp are the direct result of our suggestions and service, but they would not have been possible without the support of HRIA, Ranger Peterson and the other State Parks staff. The number of corrals in the campground has expanded, the water troughs both in camp and on the trail have increased in number and are well maintained, the rolling pen was installed, wheelbarrows were added, and new footing has been installed in most pens. Trees have been planted, pruned, and lovingly watered. Our groups has logged more than 9000 hours of trail patrol, including a couple of late evening searches for overdue riders. Of course, we have a new and growing list of chores and projects!

Members of the HRSP would like to express our sincere appreciation to the State Park Rangers, and we are deeply grateful to the Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Association for their continued support!

## **Review of Andrea Wulf's *The Invention of Nature: Alexander Von Humboldt's New World***

Now available at the Humboldt Redwoods State Park Visitor Center



The previous book review of *The Man Who Planted Trees* looked at the passion, of a reformed urban thug, for the champion specimens of the world's most ecologically important trees. His work was to clone and widely replant those trees with the strongest DNA, thereby contributing to the rejuvenation of the ravaged Earth. His name is David Milarch. The present review looks into the fascinating life story of Alexander von Humboldt – for whom this Redwood Park is proudly named. Alexander von Humboldt (b. 1769 – d. 1859) is a nearly forgotten giant of natural science. His insights into nature's processes were revolutionary for his day.

Reminiscent of Buddhist sages who have known for 2500 years that all life is interconnected and thus interdependent, von Humboldt realized that nature was a “web of life and global force” all interwoven as with a thousand threads. The floor of a coastal redwood forest is precisely such a creation – interconnected and dependent on the vitality of the whole. And so “*The Invention of Nature – Alexander von Humboldt's New World*” is essentially the life journey of a naturalist of prodigious brilliance and how he discovered life's/natures interdependency. The old idea of separate independent natural systems was seen for the fallacy it was.

His field of research included the montane worlds of the Andes, especially Mt. Chemborazo, the Alps, the Urals, and their adjacent valley systems. His dream of studying the Himalaya was left to later adventurers. As Humboldt understood all of nature as a single organism he was able to foresee the dawning climate change of the 20th century and beyond. He perceived this dangerous shift from knowing the importance of trees to the health of Mother Earth, and the catastrophe inherent in deforestation. (Within the last few decades science has discovered that nearly one half of Earth's biodiversity resides and thrives in forest canopies!) Alexander von Humboldt's vision from 200 years ago has never been more relevant than now...

Thank you Professor Humboldt for opening our collective eyes...

Reviewed by Bruce Riley, HRIA Volunteer



## The Path Forward is Clearing at Usal Beach

By Carla Thomas, HRIA Secretary

Coastwalk, Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Association and California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Eel River Sector joined together to hold a trail work week June 12-17 at the south end of the Lost Coast Trail. The group set up their base camp at Usal Beach and hiked up the trail each day. The group restored the trail to its original trace, continuing work that was started at the Usal Beach Earth Day event April 16 and an Americorp trail week in mid-May. David La Follette, Mendocino Coastwalk Coordinator, organized the event with Ranger Krista Pelikan, DPR. David Murray, DPR Sinkyone Maintenance Staff, and



Tarah Balden, Environmental Services Intern, DPR North Coast Redwoods District, worked with the volunteers providing tools, instruction and labor. Additional tools were provided from the California State Park Foundation Earth Day grant awarded to the Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Association. Anita La Follette removed invasive ivy from 30 alders and redwoods. Carla Thomas, Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Association, ran the chuck wagon at camp. David La Follette, Noel Yaylian, Chuck Parent, and Robert Adams did the work on the trail. The group started off the week with a Sunday afternoon hike on the new Peter Douglas 2.3 mile trail through Shady Dell adjacent to the



Coast Walk Trail Crew Members North of Usal Beach. Tarah, Noel, Charles, and Robert from the Coast Walk Trail Crew with Usal beach to the South.

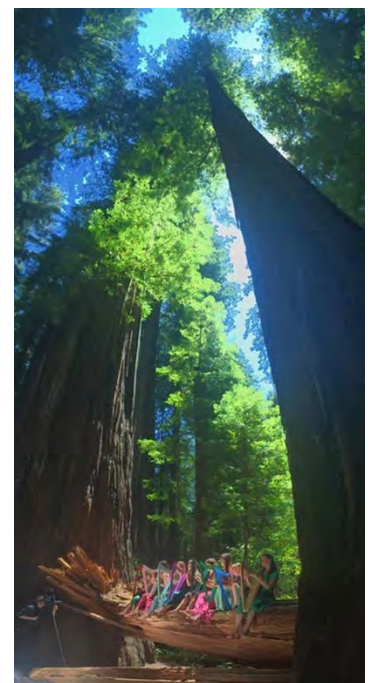
south end of Usal Beach Campground, a lovely trail with remarkable candelabra redwoods. On Monday through Wednesday they put in long days on the Lost Coast Trail repairing a stretch that had become so overgrown with brush that the trail was nearly impossible to follow. Rain forced the crew to conclude the work early, but all agreed to return for additional events in the near future. "It was great, we worked hard and got to eat as much good food as we wanted each meal" said Noel. Food for the crew was provided by Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Association. If you are interested in participating in future trail restoration events please contact Carla Thomas or Sophia Eckert [vc@humboldtredwoods.org](mailto:vc@humboldtredwoods.org) 1-707-946-2263 or David La Follette at Coast Walk [www.coastwalk.org](http://www.coastwalk.org).

## Bay Area Youth Harp Ensemble Visits the Redwoods

The Bay Area Youth Harp Ensemble (BAYHE) visited Humboldt Redwoods State Park and Richardson Grove State Park over the 4th of July weekend. Eleven harpists performed in an effort to raise money for the Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Association and our efforts. In addition, BAYHE took



footage during their visit, and are in the process of creating videos so that they can continue to forward along their message and passion for redwood preservation and conservation. The harpists had a full weekend, and were blown away by the magnificence of the redwood forests. Please visit <https://multiculturalmusicfellowship.org/bay-area-youth-harp-ensemble/> for more information about BAYHE.



## Upcoming Events!

### **August 13, 2016 - Smokey Bear's Birthday Party, 6:00pm**

Please join us at Burlington Campfire Center at Humboldt Redwoods State Park for a fun celebration of Smokey Bear's 72nd birthday! Cake and fun activities provided, fun for all ages.



### **October 17, 2016 - Avenue of the Giants Marathon, 9:00am**

Boston qualifier marathon, half marathon, and 5K on the world famous Avenue of the Giants. Visit <http://www.redwoodsmarathon.org/> for more information



## **In Memory of... Christine Aitken**

Christine was a native of San Diego California and lived there most of her life. In 1991, while residing in Oakland California, she began visiting the state's northern coast. Impressed with the redwood trees and the peace and quiet of the forest, she and her husband, having retired from their positions with the Department of the Navy, moved to Humboldt in December 1996.

On a trip to the Visitor Center, Christine met Fran Clever and was quickly enlisted to be a volunteer. Christine began her volunteer service in March 1997. Two months later she also became a docent in the park. The following January, with Cyndy Goodson as her sponsor, Christine became a member of the HRIA Board of Directors and accepted the position of secretary. In 2000 she became Membership Chairman and Sunshine Club Chairman as well.

Along with the enjoyment of assisting the visitors and working in the beautiful surroundings of Humboldt Redwoods State Park, Christine loved the fellowship, knowledge, and dedication of both the Visitor Center and park personnel. She considered her involvement with HRIA her favorite professional experience.

Christine's service is memorialized with the establishment of the HRIA library that is dedicated in her honor.







Return Service Requested

**Humboldt Redwoods  
Interpretive Association**  
PO Box 276 Weott, CA 95571  
Email: [vc@humboldtreedwoods.org](mailto:vc@humboldtreedwoods.org)

Summer 2016

**Non-profit Organization  
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**GIVE A GIFT MEMBERSHIP TO THE  
HUMBOLDT REDWOODS INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION**

You can help support the work of the HRIA by becoming a member. Funds raised through memberships, endowments and donations, enable HRIA to develop displays, purchase equipment, sponsor research, and publish interpretive literature and also to fund the expansion of the Humboldt Redwoods State Park Visitor Center and its quality exhibits. A critical element in the success of the Association is its membership and endowment program. Individuals and families throughout the country have long supported the Association. Member benefits include a 20% discount on all books, maps, posters, calendars and publications stocked for sale by the Association ( Not available to Senior/Student members), the Association newsletter and tax deductible membership dues. Members also have the benefit of knowing that they are participating in an organization dedicated to expanding the awareness of one of the most unique ancient forests left on Earth.

**Please enroll me in the Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Association at the membership level circled below:**

Student/Senior	\$10	Patron	\$500
Individual	\$25	Endowment	\$1,000
Supporting	\$50	Redwood Crown	\$2,500
Sponsoring	\$100	Donation	\$_____
Life	\$250		

Mail Check to:

HRIA

or circle

VISA/MC/DISCOVER

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