



Fall/Winter 2021 Newsletter

Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Association

President's Report: Alan Aitken

Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Association is back. Not that we ever went away, but after 18 months of dealing with the COVID-19 epidemic, with the on and off state restrictions, and having to open only to close on different occasions, this past summer was probably our busiest ever. All campgrounds were fully booked from April through September, and book shop sales have put HRIA back on a firmer financial footing.

This October HRIA held its first Haunted Halloween Candlelit Walk in the Redwoods. The event was sold out and from the comments by the participants was very successful. Congratulations to our Executive Director, Sophia, and Visitor Center Manager, Mary, for making this event a success. The intention is for Haunted Halloween to become an annual event.

This is my favorite season in the park. The recent rains have cleaned the giant redwoods and the trails are free from the crowds of summer. Don't hesitate to visit the park. The HRSP Visitor Center is open every day from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm with the exception of Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Wishing everyone a safe and happy holiday season.

Alan Aitken



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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, Sinkyone Wilderness State Park, Standish Hickey State Park, and 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 and 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.

THANK YOU to our volunteers at
Humboldt Redwoods Haunted
Halloween. We couldn't have done it
without you!

Alan Aitken
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Trees, Trees, and more Trees...

A Chinese proverb says: When is the best time to plant a tree? Twenty years ago.
The second best time? Today.

In 2021 C.E. to deny the climate crisis is a bit like belonging to the Flat Earth Society. The time of “alternate facts” is passed and global temperatures continue to rise. At a San Francisco tree planting on October 29, 2021 the remark, “The planet is on fire” stopped the assembled tree activists while they stood in rapt attention to the surrounding woods. It was evidently a moment of mindfulness of their surroundings - a spiritual pause of appreciation and wonder of Earth.

By the time these notes are in print, the UN summit on Climate - COP26 - the Committee of Participants - will have come and gone. The goals set in the 2015 Paris climate summit - the Paris Accords - remain unmet - both on carbon emissions and the pledge to contribute 100 billion dollars annually to the developing world. While the hopes of Paris stand, progress has been made, simply not nearly enough. The conversion to electric powered transportation and industry needs massive financial funding for solar development and deployment.

The multiple responses to global temperature rise will need to include all renewable energy sources, reduction in emissions like methane and carbon, grand scale reforestation and a global moratorium on clear cutting. Other tree based initiatives will be needed to repair polluted waterways by using phytoremediation - the practice of using willows and poplar trees to mitigate the pollution. The one inch end of tree roots are able to neutralize toxins by introducing enzymes and fungi.

And finally, the growing problem of ocean “dead zones” has found a carbon neutral solution. The presence of trees along coastlines, as well as lakefronts works a minor miracle of bringing the dead to life. When leaves decompose, they expel folic acid into the depleted iron of the water. This act oxygenates the iron and causes it to increase the growth of microscopic phytoplankton; this bounty of food strengthens the photosynthesis cycle and so natural processes are enhanced.

And so.... Trees, Trees, and more Trees...

Of the many tree books offered in the park Visitor Centers, two volumes in particular are relevant to today’s global emergency and the central role trees maintain in planetary life. The titles are To Speak for the Trees by Diana Beresford-Kroeger and The Man Who Planted Trees by Jim Robbins.

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But first, an aside: there are similarities between the realities of the planet and each of the two books main characters. In all three stories there exists a problem needing resolution, a basic strengthening of defenses and health maintaining processes. For the first author young Diana Beresford has been orphaned during her 12th year. Her mother and father died in less than a year apart and she was placed in a home with little understanding of a girl's needs as she approached adolescence.

The second main character is a 43 year old nursery man caught in the grips of chronic alcoholism. Mr. David Milarch is in search of a way past his dilemma, just as are Diana Beresford and our home Planet Earth. In each of their transformations, trees play a central life-revivifying role - for the authors the change has already taken place. For the Earth, the tree solution is imminent.

Diana Beresford was beset by emotional trauma in the extreme and yet the context of her young life held a way through this debilitating state. As the youngest and last of the O'Donoghue clan of West Cork, Ireland she was considered to be a child of the entire clan. The octogenarian elders, determined to follow tradition, decided to guide Diana through her adolescence using the 3,000 year old method called a Brehon Wardship. Diana spent her summers in the traditional clan homeland called the Lisheen's Valley. This area had sustained the clan since 1000 B.C.E.. Each of the elders had a tradition-based wisdom of ways to prosper in life, of how to take care of herself as a young female growing quickly into womanhood. Over the course of three summers, and during winters in her Uncle Patrick's house in Cork City, which contained a scholarly library that he gladly shared, Diana learned how all life and people are interrelated and interdependent. She understood how trees, indeed the Great Oak Forests, had once covered the countryside; yet beginning in 1600 the invading English leveled them. In addition to knowing what had been Diana absorbed the knowledge of trees, plants, nature and the insect and animal inhabitants of Lisheen's Valley. When she relocated to Canada for graduate school, she came in contact with the one life form which was uncommon in Ireland - TREES - Canada was covered with them and Diana and her husband set about developing a 160 acre homestead and living laboratory, full of trees and shrubs. From the 1970's onward, Diana steadily grew into a professional Botanist, a research chemist and a medical innovator, with trees always close by. An outgrowth of her decades long tree research was her concept called the BIOPLAN. She determined that if every person on earth were to plant one tree per year for six years the total of nearly 50 billion trees would successfully stop global temperature rise.

In the book about nurseryman David Milarch, his story comes into focus during a life transforming near death experience. At age 43 Dave quit alcohol "cold turkey". The abrupt change shocked his body and luckily a friend brought him to the hospital in time. He had begun to have kidney and liver failure. Less than 48 hours later Dave had a classic near-death

experience. At age 43 Dave quit alcohol “cold turkey”. The abrupt change shocked his body and luckily a friend brought him to the hospital in time. He had begun to have kidney and liver failure. Less than 48 hours later Dave had a classic near-death experience. He left his body, traveled rapidly through a tunnel of white light and landed in an area and vista point populated by “light beings.” They showed him some of the future calamities facing Earth and told him to return to life and to clone champion examples of tree species in order to save, in “archival library groves” the champion genetics of ecologically important species. He was also guided to where to find some of these champions. For Dave Milarch, the environment, art, music and unconditional love didn’t appeal much to him - at least not before his transformation. Upon returning, these areas grew in importance and enjoyment. And cloning champion trees became his life work. And continues to be. An example of the professional success Milarch has enjoyed lives in the clones made from the nearly 33’ diameter Fieldbrook Stump of McKinleyville, California. Cut down in 1900, and one of the largest coastal redwoods ever known, this stump remains rooted in the soil that has always supported it. Since coastal redwoods sprout both from seed and the root burl, Milarch was able to clone the stump and create hundreds of this particular champion. Some of those seedlings were planted this October in the Presidio Forest in San Francisco by volunteers of the Archangel Ancient Tree Archive. To date, the Archangel organization has planted 150,000 champion clones in the last 25 years. Their goal for 2050 c.e. is one hundred million plantings by using tissue culture techniques.

A concluding note... Diana Beresford-Kroeger, now retired from the University of Ottawa, has joined energies with another renowned tree scientist, E.O. Wilson of Harvard University, and together they now are consultants for the Archangel Ancient Tree Archive. One study these scientists performed assessed the ecological importance of the over 800 tree species in North America. Having determined which trees were the most ecologically important species, the efforts of Archangel Tree Archive are now focused on the top 100 tree species valued as clones. The top three choices are Coastal and Giant Sequoia and Black Willows. The sequoias sequester the most carbon of any tree species due to their size and longevity; and the willows remove toxins within the soils along rivers, lakes, and oceans.

And now that Dave Milarch has recently been joined by a technology company interested in supporting green projects, the future of his champion cloning program is brighter and more promising than ever.

Trees, trees, and more trees...

By Bruce Riley
HRSP Docent

Sinkyone Wilderness State Parks' Remarkable Summer

By Carla Thomas, HRIA Usal Project Staff

The summer was the busiest we've ever had. Since Sinkyone does not require reservations, it was at capacity most of the summer throughout the park. Most parks had all the reservations for the season reserved by early May.

Our intrepid team of volunteer camp hosts continue to host day use visitors and campers from the porch, parking area and trails. Malcolm Hillian, July Camp Host is working with California Department of Parks (DPR) and Recreation District Invasive Weeds Program and by the Lost Coast Interpretive Association from Whitethorn to hold the first of an annual Tansy Pull near Needle Rock on the 4th Saturday of July each year.



The Needle Rock Camp Hosts held an operations meeting on October 16, 2021 at Needle Rock. This annual meeting has not been able to be held since 2016, due to road closures and / or COVID. Camp Hosts discussed needs of the park and host resources that will improve visitor experience.

At Usal Beach, the campground was over capacity all summer with many visitors from other counties, particularly the San Francisco Bay area. Many of these visitors left large amounts of garbage and bush wacked in places that were not meant for camping nor driving. A remarkable group of volunteers cleaned the campground hauling truckloads of garbage out in mid-September. A huge Thank You to those volunteers.

HRIA's Usal Beach Friends Outdoor Education Staff are continuing to work with local schools this fall conducting field hikes and outdoor experiential education on campus, as well as conducting local hikes in community and State Parks. Our HRIA project staff worked closely with teachers and administrations to design activities that incorporate the student's curriculum into outdoor experiential learning. More than 300 students participated in these events from Laytonville Unified School District and Round Valley Unified School District. Grants from Save the Redwoods League Education Program and California Coastal Conservancy Explore the Coast Program funded the HRIA staff to conduct these events in May, June, September and October. Thank you to the generosity of these organizations and to the teachers, Administrations and families of these classes.

Haunted Halloween at Humboldt Redwoods

By Andrea Mapes, State Park Ranger

Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Association (HRIA) and California State Parks (CSP) staff and volunteers teamed up to host a new Haunted Halloween event at Humboldt Redwoods State Park on Saturday 10/30/21. The guided walk through Gould Grove, adjacent the Burlington Visitor Center, introduced ticketed attendees to some of the souls who have inhabited or influenced the grove over time.

Following a candlelit path towered by coast redwoods, participants were ushered along by “spirited” guides, amongst oversized creepy critters, ghosts of loggers, activists, and philanthropists, extinct reptiles, echo-locating insect-eaters, and big-footed legends. The Visitor Center also hosted children’s games designed and built by HRIA staff and volunteers. A truly collaborative effort, the team hopes to make the event an annual tradition for the community.



Photo above: State Park Ranger Nic Gunvaldson and Supervising Ranger Greg Hall as Big Foot. Photo by HRSP Park Aid Susan.



Photo top right: Makenna Dorney as Mrs. Clara Hinton Gould. Photo bottom right: Interpreter Erika Granadino and volunteer Natalia Sojka with banana slug bean bag toss. Photos by Ryan Shorrow.





Return Service Requested

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Interpretive Association**
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Fall/Winter 2021

**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, publish interpretive literature, and 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
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