



The Friends of the Carrizo Plain

Carrizo Connection

"Protecting the Unique Beauty of the Carrizo"

Volume 4, No. 2

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Fall 2010

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by David Dennis

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Edited by: Jackie Czaplá and Jan Randall

President's Notes

Greetings from the Carrizo Plain.

My name is David Dennis, and I am the current President of the Friends of the Carrizo Plain. As I write this, it is near sunset at the Autumnal Equinox and the light on the hills casts the deep, long shadows that show off the many centuries of movement on the San Andreas fault. I am reminded of how fortunate we are that so many "Friends" have contributed their skill, resources and energy to help save this beautiful, quiet place that is so close to the rush of southern California. I want to take this opportunity to say thank you, for helping to protect this precious landscape. Your efforts and contributions are making a difference. Together, each year, we do more to help preserve and protect the Carrizo Plain National Monument's wildlife, geology, plants and other unique features.

With your support, the Friends of the Carrizo Plain play an important role in achieving protection for the monument through: educating the public about the Monument's special qualities, increasing public understanding of the value of

protecting the Monument's resources, and recruiting their support in protecting this unique member of the National Landscape Conservation System. The role of educating the public is one of our major objectives.

Our primary method for accomplishing that objective is the operation of the gift shop and book store at the Goodwin Education Center. Here we encounter the largest number of people who seek to understand better this last remaining jewel of California's once vast grasslands. Our ability to provide resources and materials that help explain the value of protecting the Carrizo Plain, is an important tool in increasing the public's support for conservation of the area.

We also educate the public by outreach at community events, leading informational tours, developing print and electronic educational materials for display at the Education Center, by providing participant luncheons and educational materials at volunteer activities such as National Public Lands Day. Our continued role of educating the public about the value of conserving this

landscape is very important to achieve protection for the Monument.

Some of our accomplishments.

☑ In 2006 we held a successful art auction fundraiser, "Carrizo On Canvas." The event was attended by over 200 people and the proceeds from the art sold still support efforts on the Carrizo.

☑ We host the Goodwin Education Center Clean Up Day each November, and provide support to volunteers at the annual National Public Lands Day event in the Carrizo Plain National Monument.

☑ We worked closely with the BLM to support the National Landscape Conservation System 10th anniversary celebration.

☑ Through the hard work of volunteers and the grant support of the Conservation Lands Foundation, the Goodwin Education Center gift shop and bookstore retail operations and accounting procedures have been standardized to ensure that maximum benefits can result from sales and contributions.



Information and display table:
Roger Gambs and David Dennis

VISION: Our vision is a Carrizo Plain National Monument that remains unique and preserved, providing an internationally recognized model of cooperative resource conservation.

MISSION: Our mission is to support the managing partners in the Education, Interpretation, and Conservation of the unique resources of the Carrizo Plain National Monument.



BLM presentations at the NLCS celebration

☑ Our annual newsletter "Carrizo Connection" provides information about research and volunteer activities on the Monument to our membership.

☑ Other projects include: support to the "De-fencers of the Carrizo," a fence modification volunteer group (to allow for movement of pronghorn Antelope), educational outreach tables at various civic events (Taft Carrizo Days educational event, and the Morro Bay Bird Festival annual educational event), as well as development of electronic educational media for the Goodwin Education Center.

This year, in addition to our continued work to educate the public, we seek to develop a sustainable volunteer program for the National Monument. This will be a major undertaking for us, and will require both time and resources by many people. We are very excited about this new program and the role it will play in the long term protection and preservation of the Carrizo Plain. I ask for your continued support, in what ever way you can, so that the wildlife, geology, plants and unique features of the Carrizo Plain National Monument, and those deep, long shadows on the San Andreas fault, are preserved and protected for generations to come.

Friends of the Carrizo Plain

Gift Shop

Friends of the Carrizo Plain have a gift shop at the Guy L. Goodwin Education Center on the Carrizo Plain National Monument. We offer many and varied items. We would like to bring to your attention one of our newest items, "Hidden in Plain View." This is a DVD with two programs featuring California's endangered wildlife, (in both English and Spanish).

The award-winning **Carrizo Plain** (12 min.) takes us on a journey to visit the little-known species such as giant kangaroo rats that footdrum in the night, fairy shrimp that survive without water, and owls that nest underground.

The second program, **Wildlife of the San Joaquin Valley** (26 min.), continues this journey examining the controversies and challenges managers and researchers face in protecting the endangered species of the valley."

Other items for sale include T-shirts (7 designs) in both short and long sleeves; many books, including **Carrizo Plain National Monument, a natural history guide**; bookmarks; magnets; greeting cards and postcards; posters; pins; and cups.

The education center and the gift shop will be open throughout the season, from the first Thursday of December to the last Sunday of May, Thursday - Sunday, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

National Landscape Conservation System 10th Anniversary Celebration

The Carrizo Plain National Monument is a part of a greater system of specially managed lands by the BLM, which include National Conservation Areas, Wild and Scenic rivers, National Monuments and other special areas, together these lands make up the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS).

For those who attended the 10th anniversary celebration of the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) it was a great day! Over 500 people attended the event. The Friends of the Carrizo Plain in conjunction with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) contributed to make the event a success.

The day's events included a tour to Painted Rock in the morning, a BBQ lunch, special presentations, and the day culminated with the signing of the Resource Management Plan. During the presentations The Friends of the Carrizo Plain were recognized, by the BLM, Washington office, for their outstanding work, and overall support and education of the Carrizo. After the presentations the Friends offered tours to explore the flowers, geology and history of the Carrizo.

For those who were able to attend the event we want to thank you for your continued support to the Friends of the Carrizo Plain in helping us preserve and protect this unique part of California.



Echoes From An Earlier Time

Wind blows through the walls and roof of the decaying house. A scatter of old fencing, boards, and rusting machinery lies about. A mile west from here a dust cloud moves along Soda Lake Road, and to the north a heat mirage shimmers in the distance. Driving out here I passed rusting harrows, grain tanks, corrals, a huge seeding cart. Although the center of the Carrizo Plain is dry and barren most of the year, people once farmed here and struggled to make a living. When did they arrive? How did they live? What took them away? This was the Van Matre Ranch, and for me this discovery was the beginning of an effort to collect and record histories of these early settlers. Their stories have lessons that we still need to hear today.

Some years earlier, Jackie Czaplá started a history project with these same thoughts. When the two of us met, her project had been dormant for some time. I insisted that she must resume the interviews; she insisted that I was the one to do them. We reached an agreement, and for two years now we have been together seeking and recording personal recollections of the earlier times. Our motivations were largely personal, but it is also certain that if the stories were not recorded, they would soon be lost forever. The materials that have already been collected - audio recordings, transcripts, many photos, and some written family records - have been accepted by the San Luis Obispo County Historical Society to be managed and archived there. They will be available to writers, historians, and families that are

interested and curious. Forty to fifty interviews have been completed, but still the original questions that motivated us have been answered only in part.

I wish I had known Cliff Hudson. He was born in 1908 and spent his life as an itinerant cowboy across the Carrizo Plains. As a young man a broken bone had been poorly set, and as a result one leg was shorter than the other. He made his own rawhide ropes, and when one of these broke and recoiled, he lost an eye. Falls from horses and encounters with rattlesnakes were a normal part of the job. As he moved from ranch to ranch his family went with him and his daughter, Kathleen, told us about riding with him to fix fences and to move cattle. He was known as an excellent cowboy, and was welcomed by ranch owners to manage their herds and properties. The family lived for a while in Klipstein Canyon, then on the Jobe Ranch, briefly in Bakersfield, for a year near Lebec on the Tejon Ranch, for a number of years on the Chimineas Ranch, and even in Long Beach where Clifford worked in a hardware store run by a family relative. Life in the city was painful for him, and the family returned to the Carrizo Plain after a year.

Clifford's daughter, Kathleen, remembered their stay on the Jobe Ranch, at the southern end of the Plain as her best memory. This house lies slightly west of Soda Lake Road and about a mile north of the monument boundary. It is also known today as the MU Ranch. It had once belonged to Samuel Jobe, a pony express rider, turned rancher, Kathleen's great great grandfather. As a four year old she was devastated when her father told her that the family would have to move from their home in Klipstein Canyon. Then he leaned down, put his arm around her and told her they would be living at the home where her grandmother had grown up. This was a joy, and as Kathleen related the story it was clear that she utterly adored her father.

It may be that the women who moved to the Plains with their husbands had the



most difficult, and perhaps heroic, lives of all. Mary Jane Ballantine was newly married when she left Bakersfield around 1886 to homestead on the Elkhorn Plain. This is the southeast corner of the monument and is perhaps the driest, dustiest, and most isolated spot. Her husband was Peter McCart, and his story was told to us by his grandson. It began in Ontario, Canada, when Peter's father brought his four sons together, gave them each a pistol and a horse. He spent a brief time in Bakersfield, and then chose the Elkhorn Plain as his new home. He arrived in a wet year in a season of grass without realizing what was ahead.

Mary Jane Ballantine lived in Bakersfield, and this is where she met Peter. Her father was a notable judge who rode a circuit in Kern County. Her family was prominent, and their wedding picture is classic with the groom in a formal suit, a high starched collar, and hair combed impeccably. The brides dress had lace at the collar and sleeves, and of course she wore fashionable gloves. Their house on the Elkhorn had one room and a dirt floor. The work of the homestead had gone into crops, corrals, and cattle. One child, a girl, was born, then several years later Mary Jane died in childbirth. The stillborn infant was buried on the homestead site, although the exact location is no longer known. Mary Jane was brought back to Bakersfield, more than a full days journey by wagon, and was buried there. Although Peter remarried a few years later, the homestead was never worked again. Other women on the Carrizo Plain survived, but none of them lived lives that we would envy today.

Searching out histories in the Carrizo is a bit like a treasure hunt or a detective game. At the north end of the Plain there was, and to a large extent still is, a close community where help for neighbors is the norm. Family names from earlier times are well known: Cooper, Twisselman, Kuhnle, Garcia, Beck, Wreden, Lewis. Many of these have been farming the same land for generations. The families all knew one another, and many were related - uncles, cousins, second cousins, and in-laws of all sorts. The Plain was once isolated from both the Coast and from the Central Valley so social life centered around the Carrisa School, the Farm Bureau, family events, and simple visits with neighbors. When Jackie and I interviewed a person, he or she would suggest two others that we must speak with. These contacts would lead to still more. In time we heard about harvest seasons, Halloween pranks, winter mud, and the Saturday dances, all related by many people and from many points of view. Aunt Lottie was known to some as the nurse who took care of medical problems for the ranchers. To others she was comical as she became nearsighted in older age and couldn't remove stitches without glasses. Others spoke of how she loved to bake, and although the King family was not well off, she brought cookies and cakes to her neighbors almost daily. She would stay and talk and then help new brides from coastal cities adjust to the isolated life of the Plain. This was a connected world, and the stories are themselves connected.



The south end of the Carrizo was different, and it's stories have been harder to find. Settlers and ranchers there oriented themselves toward Cuyama, Maricopa, and highway 166 rather than toward highway 58 to the north. There were fewer ranches in the south, and because this part of the Plain is now within the Monument, the families who once lived there are scattered. It is typical that when we interview one person, they recall the name of an earlier neighbor but can only guess where they live now. The detective game begins with an internet search. Google is the vehicle, and then it continues to internet "white pages." When I place a call, I have three sentences to persuade the person that I'm not crazy, one minute to persuade them that the project is both real and interesting, and then five minutes to persuade them to be interviewed themselves. I drop names shamelessly, names of people who referred me and names and histories of their own families. In fact, nearly everyone we have met, has been intrigued and ultimately glad to tell of their experiences and their family. In some ways I feel as if I had become part of their families and communities. It is truly a privilege.

What have we learned and where does this go?

The Van Matre family came from Texas, through San Diego and Paso Robles before settling in the Carrizo. They homesteaded 480 acres north of highway 58 and also worked several thousand acres in the center of the Plain where the

house and harvesters are still found. One of their family, Bud, was known as an amiable person with a fondness for raising irises. Barbara Glenn Van Matre was small and strong. She drove tractor during harvest, and neighbors relate that with no jack available she changed tires on their truck using cement blocks and a long lever to lift it. They hauled water down to their home at the center of the Plain, and like everyone else, they worked long hours that few people would accept today. In many ways people of the Carrizo Plain were like us, good and bad, strong and weak. And then they left. The harvesters are decaying and the houses are only an echo of an earlier way of life. Today in another kind of world we need to be reminded of these earlier times.



*Article and Photographs by
Craig Deutsche*



John King - family archives

Gateway Partnerships for Carrizo Plain National Monument

In 2008 the Taft District Chamber of Commerce and Visitor's Bureau entered into a formal agreement with the BLM to become the first Gateway Community for the Carrizo Plain National Monument. This agreement specifies that Taft, BLM, and the Friends of Carrizo Plain work together to educate and promote the splendor of the Monument.

BLM recognizes that without community involvement and the sense of community "ownership" it will be very difficult to effectively manage the CPNM. Taft citizens have been involved in the Carrizo Plain as long as there has been a Taft. Since becoming a gateway in 2007, Taft has been even more involved with the BLM and the Carrizo Plain. The

community provides an information center at its Chamber of Commerce office for all the BLM information available on the CPNM. The Chamber has put up signage to get travelers to come to the Chamber of Commerce for information, and information is displayed on the Chambers electronic sign daily for travelers to see. Additionally there is a continuously playing video of the CPNM as well as items for sale in the Chamber store and even air time on our very own Travelers Information Radio Station (1610 AM).

The results of this Carrizo Plain signage are very positive and some days over half the visitors to the Chamber office are for Carrizo Information. Visitors range from local residents, California visitors and groups and individuals from places like Japan and Germany. The Chamber staff found that amazing!

Taft has benefited from the Gateway status by bringing more visitors into Taft and the Carrizo Plain National Monument has gained a partner in its management of the monument. Taft is actively trying to recruit other gateway communities and so far has helped Santa Margarita in also becoming a gateway.

Taft believes the more gateway communities the better.



*Taft Chamber of Commerce building
on Highway 33*



Committee Reports: Volunteer Committee News

by Jackie Czapla

A Message from the FotCP Volunteer Coordinator:

As the new Volunteer Coordinator for the Friends of the Carrizo Plain, I am excited to be the liaisons between our existing, and future, dedicated volunteers and the BLM. I have worked with (2) good volunteer organizations in the past, San Geronio Wilderness (USFS) and Joshua Tree National Park.

I have lived on the Carrizo Plain for over 15 years and been a volunteer here for nearly as long. Although it is very remote and the weather can be extreme, I love it here. It has been thrilling to see this beautifully unique part of the country go from "Natural Area" status to becoming a full-fledged National Monument.

I encourage anyone with a desire to help serve public lands to get involved with the relatively new Carrizo Plain National Monument, there are so many opportunities. We have a new monument, a new "friends" group, a new volunteer organization as a part of the Friends of

the Carrizo Plain. The Friends of the Carrizo Plain have worked with the BLM to offer many and varied projects, as well as needing help during the height of the visitor season in the spring.

We have just had a kick-off Volunteer Orientation Barbeque on November 13, 2010. The FotCP hosted the barbeque, the food was great and there was a lot of information. Also, seeing again the many folks who have been volunteering for years and hearing their passion for this place, and meeting those desiring to volunteer, was very inspiring. The "Friends" outdid themselves in making everyone feel needed, appreciated and well fed in this event.

We will be keeping you updated on volunteer opportunities as well as what the volunteers have been accomplishing. As we develop this part of the "Friends of the Carrizo Plain" organization we will be working with the volunteers and BLM to make sure all have a sense of satisfaction while maintaining safety. The volunteers, while working with BLM supervision, hope to keep the Carrizo Plain National Monument beautiful, protected, and help the public have safe and informative visits.

Please contact me if you have an interest to be involved in our volunteer program.

Jackie Czapla,

Volunteer Coordinator

Phone: (805) 475-2017

Email:

[<carrizofriends@wildblue.net>](mailto:carrizofriends@wildblue.net)



*National Public Lands Day 2009
Overlook Hill*

Calendar of Events and Group Volunteer Opportunities

NOVEMBER 2010:

20 (Saturday) -

Guy L. Goodwin Education Center garden clean up for the upcoming 2010/2011 season;
Bring a sack lunch.
Contact: Jackie Czapla
Call: (805) 475-2017
<carrizofriends@wildblue.net>
for more information.

20 - 21 (Saturday & Sunday) * -

Sponsored by Sierra Club CNRCC;
De-fencing project
Contact: Craig Deutsche
Call: (310) 477-6670
<craigdeutsche@gmail.com>

DECEMBER 2010:

2 (Thursday) -

Guy L. Goodwin Education Center opens for the season.

4 - 5 (Saturday & Sunday) * -

Sponsored by:
Sierra Club Santa Lucia Chapter;
De-fencing Project
Contact: Cal or Letty French Call:
(805) 239-7338
<lettyfrench@gmail.com>
(prefer e-mail)

December 28, 2010 -

January 2, 2011

(Tuesday - Sunday)

A five day project
Sponsored by Sierra Club CNRCC;
De-fencing Project
Contact: Craig Deutsche
Call: (310) 477-6670,
<craigdeutsche@gmail.com>

JANUARY 2011:

1 (Saturday) -

Christmas Bird Count

22 - 23 (Saturday & Sunday) * -

Sponsored by Los Padres ForestWatch;
Contact: Jeff Kuyper
Call: (805) 617-2610
<jeff@LPFW.org>

FEBRUARY 2011:

5 - 6 (Saturday & Sunday) * -

Sponsored by Sierra Club CNRCC;
De-fencing Project
Contact: Craig Deutsche
Call: (310) 477-6670
<craigdeutsche@gmail.com>

MARCH 2011:

1 (Tuesday) - Painted Rock closes.

1 (Tuesday) - Theodore Payne Wildflower Hotline begins.

Call: (818) 768-3533
Email: <info@theodorepayne.org>
Web: www.theodorepayne.org

12 - 13 (Saturday & Sunday) * -

Sponsored by Los Padres ForestWatch;
Contact: Jeff Kuyper
Call: (805) 617-2610
<jeff@LPFW.org>

19 (Saturday) - Tours begin,
each Saturday through May 28.
Call: (805) 475-2131
for reservations



National Public Lands Day 2009
building Overlook Hill trail

APRIL 2011:

(six days yet to be determined early in the month)

Sponsored by Sierra Club CNRCC;
Contact: Craig Deutsche
Call: (310) 477-6670,
<craigdeutsche@gmail.com>

3rd week of April

California Native Plant Week
(newly designated by state assembly)

MAY 2011:

29 (Sunday) -

Guy L. Goodwin Education Center closes for the season.

* Typically the group will work on Saturday, stay overnight in one of the monument campgrounds, then use Sunday for either a hike or sightseeing.



National Public Lands Day 2009
Overlook Hill retaining wall

ORGANIZATION:

The Friends of the Carrizo Plain is a tax exempt, 501(c) (3), public benefit corporation established in 2002 to provide education about the geography and natural environment of the Carrizo Plain, for residents and visitors. In 2003, we became a Cooperating Association with the BLM to promote the mission of the Carrizo Plain National Monument, a unit of the National Landscape Conservancy System. As the organization matures, it hopes to extend its sphere of interest and collaboration to the other managing partners as well as other organizations and individuals sharing our vision of the CPNM.

Board of Directors

David Dennis — President

David Chipping — Vice President

Roger Gambs — Secretary

Ray Hatch — Treasurer (acting)

Board Members at Large

Jackie Czapla, Fred Schell, Dirk R. Walters

Committees:

Education:

David Dennis

Membership

Lodeema Hatch, Roger Gambs

Planning

David Dennis, Roger Gambs

Science

David Chipping, Dirk Walters

Volunteer

Jackie Czapla, David Dennis, Craig Deutsche

BLM Staff:

Johna Hurl, Kathy Sharum, Ryan Cooper,

Judy Sackett, Jackie Czapla, Nancy Dodson,

Steve Czapla, Doug Wreden,,

VALUES: Our values include:

- 1.) Being good stewards of the land.
- 2.) Fostering trust between the Friends of the Carrizo Plain, the managing partners and the public.
- 3.) Actively promoting and generating enthusiasm for understanding the resources of the Carrizo Plain National Monument.
- 4.) Cooperating and building consensus to achieve goals.
- 5.) Respecting the serenity of the Carrizo Plain National Monument.
- 6.) Leaving a legacy of the Carrizo Plain National Monument for future generations to appreciate.

The Friends of the Carrizo Plains, Proposed Budget for 2010-2011

Financial Update:

June 2, 2010

1. Bank Accounts:

a.) Chase Account -
Cash Available
06/02/2010
\$61,982.46

b.) Mission

Community Bank -
As of Nov. 20, 2009 =
\$8,066, no activity
thru June 2, 2010.

2. Income from the Ed Center:

Jan. 2010 \$1,569.68
Feb. 2010 \$1,232.35
Mar. 2010 \$10,359.39
Apr. 2010 \$11,526.53
May 2010 \$2,055.31
Total, Jun. 2, '10
\$26,743.26

Income

June 2010 - May 2011

410 Public Support

411 Member Dues 4,500
412 Donations 3,000
Total 410 Public Support 7,500

420 Education Center

425 Merchandise Sales
1 Books 7,500
2 Cups/Magnets 400
3 Bookmarks 200
4 Cards 1,200
6 Poster/Pins 400
7 Clothing 2,000
8 Hats 400
12 Shipping/Handling 100
Total merchandise sales 15,000
428 Cost of sales (15,000)
Total 420 Education Center 0
Total Grants 7,500
Total Income 15,000

Expense

610 Programs

611 Outreach costs 1,200₁
612 Partner support 700
613 Public Relations 400
614 Literature and distribution 1,000₂
616 Volunteer and other costs 600₃
617 Membership expenses 500

Expense

June 2010 - May 2011

610 Events and Other Programs 9,700₄
Total 610 Programs 14,000
620 Ed. Center Costs
624 Miscellaneous 400₅
625 Depreciation 288
Total 620 Ed. Center Costs 688
640 Administration
641 Postage, mailing costs 4,200₆
642 Printing, copying 4,400₇
643 Supplies 550₈
645 Business fees and taxes 8,650₉
646 Director's expenses 200
647 Insurance 2,000₁₀
654 Amortization 960
655 Depreciation 448
Total 640 Administration 21,208
Total Expenses 35,996
Net Ordinary Income (20,846)
Other Income/Expense
692 Interest Income 150
Net Proposed Budget and Net Income (20,8436)

1-additional events, 2-add events, 3-expanded volunteer program, 4-fall + spring event, 5-WAG, 6 & 7-fall and spring Carrizo Connection, 8-Accounting, 9- 25k sales, 10-Tour Insurance?

Friends of the Carrizo Plain, A Public Benefit Corporation

Name: _____

Address: _____

(Street or P.O. Box)

City: _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email Address: _____

Phone(s): _____

Membership Categories (pick one):

Individual (\$25.00) Family (\$35.00) Sustaining (\$100.00)

New Renew Donation Amount: _____

Volunteer Interests: _____

CONTACT:

The Friends of the Carrizo Plain
HCR 69 Box 3087
Santa Margarita, CA 93453

PHONE: (805) 475-2131 (December - May)

E-MAIL: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Carrizo/>

WEB SITE: www.carrizo.org

**To Join the FRIENDS of the
CARRIZO PLAIN
Please Complete the
Membership Form and Return**

If you wish to receive this newsletter in the future. In an effort to be effective in our mailing list we appreciate you reconfirming your interest in the organization through renewed membership. We encourage everyone to visit our website.

Friends of the Carrizo Plain

Fall 2010

Friends of the



Carrizo Plain

Friends of the Carrizo Plain
HCR 69 Box 3078
Santa Margarita, CA 93453

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U.S. POSTAGE
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**Bob Pavlik
Or Current Resident
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San Luis Obispo, CA 93401**

