

The Grapevine

The Newsletter of George Ranch



Hengehold Vineyards, just one of the four vineyards on George Ranch

Ranch Manager Profile

by Allen Jones

James Huff has been at George Ranch for almost three years now, but there is probably a good deal you don't know about our hard working and multifaceted Ranch Manager.

James was born in 1951 in Boulder, Colorado and spent his childhood in remote Oxbow, Oregon where his father worked as an engineer on a Snake River dam installation for Idaho Power. In those early years James did a lot of hunting, fishing, and wandering in the woods. He attended a two room school and, as the eldest of four children, "helped with the chores and keeping the little ones in line."

In the mid sixties the family moved to Seattle, where James attended the University of Washington and worked at bicycle shops plus a variety of jobs for the university (including assisting a pathologist in autopsies). He received a degree in microbiology.

There has not been a linear path from there to George Ranch.

(Continued on Page 2)

President's Letter

By Harold Marsh

Neighbors:

Happy New Year!

My resolutions for the New Year as it pertains to The George Ranch are threefold:

- 1.) Build the new water tanks system by the beginning of 2006 fire season.

The new tanks have been ordered from Superior Tank and we have paid a substantial down payment to lock in the contract. All the permits and required filings have been made and approved by the County of Sonoma's Planning and Resource Management Department ("PRMD") and we can proceed with construction, to include site preparation and new water lines to connect into the current system. We have also selected a contractor, and are working to determine the best time to proceed with site preparation and trenching in the water and communications lines. It is likely to be late winter or early spring. This project has many contributors, from the

(Continued on Page 4)

Contents

- *Profile of Ranch Manager, James Huff by Allen Jones*
- *President's Letter by Harold Marsh*
- *Day Trippin' by Libby Bradu*
- *A New Hospital for Sonoma? by Steve Pease*
- *Events in Sonoma*
- *Kaplan Family Get Together by Dan Kaplan*
- *Vendor Compliments*
- *Classified Ads*
- *Reminders*



The stone faced culvert on the hiking and equestrian trail between the Zezza and Kerrigan properties.



Ranch Manager James Huff

Ranch Manager (Continued.)

Since jobs in his field were scarce when he graduated, James took an extended 22,000 mile motorcycle trip crisscrossing the country, doing pickup jobs along the way. He then spent three years in Africa, mainly

working for the Peace Corps – treating childhood diseases through a UNICEF grant, teaching paramedics, and doing some construction projects. Ask him about being a King's Warrior for King Sobhuza in a traditional African warrior regiment.

Back in this country, James interspersed a wide variety of occupations with extensive motorcycle excursions and photographic work. Three years of commercial fishing in Alaska allowed him to use his paramedic skills more often than desired and to save up enough money to buy a house for cash in Michigan. He then spent three years at a motorcycle shop where he gained an excellent knowledge of small engines (which has proven most useful here).

Next James learned restoration stone carving for building facades, then rebuilt and sold antiques. Subsequent jobs included employment at Nordstrom's fabricating fashion show displays around

the country and work on a large cattle ranch in eastern Washington.

James has been an avid photographer from childhood. As he says, "I like the two extremes of the natural world and pure abstraction."

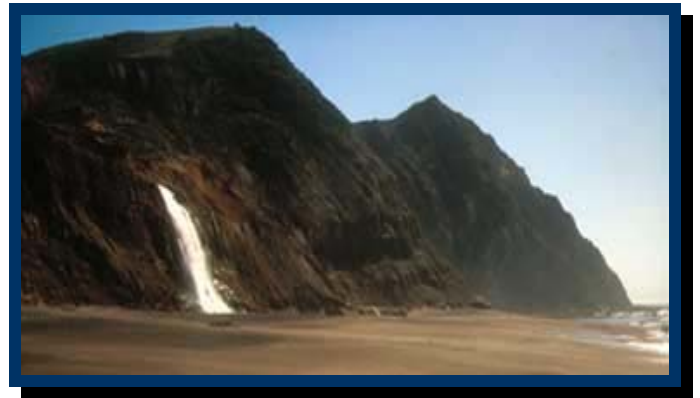
Through the various jobs and geographical locales, he has devoted much time to "his art". Many of us at George Ranch have seen and admired his impressive photographic work – from the real to the sublime. This talent continues with quite a few marvelous photographs of our own scenic landscape.

Clearly James enjoys diversity and learning new things. As you get to know him, you will discover that he's had a wealth of experiences and learned much along the way. From microbiology to George Ranch has been an interesting journey. We are glad that George Ranch made it on his itinerary.

Day Trippin' by Libby Brady

We live in such a beautiful part of the world. Why not explore it a bit? Grab a friend or three and jump in the car. Here is a sampling of fun destinations we've enjoyed.

1. Drive to Point Reyes Station with its tiny downtown area boasting the Farmers' Co-op, with the oh-so-tasty cheeses, breads and other products (hand-woven clothing and accessories). Then drive onto Inverness for a seafood lunch and a stop at the Shaker furniture store just off the main street. Stop at the Manka Lodge (where Prince Charles and Camilla stayed) to see their charming rooms. The Lodge's restaurant is known for its wild game dinners.
2. A drive in the West County to Freestone is like a step back in time. Have a coffee and sticky bun (one bun serves four people) at a wonderful bakery called Wild Flour, open Thursday through Sunday. Bring home one of their delicious loaves of bread. Then drive onto Occidental for lunch at one of their casual restaurants, and walk around town. Take a different route home through Sebastopol and stop at Kozlowski Farm (5566



Point Reyes Alamere Falls and Double Point

Highway 116 North, Forestville) — great home-made sauces, jams, pies... Pat the cows at the Joe Matos Cheese Factory (3669 Llano Rd., Santa Rosa) and pick up a half-wheel of their St. George cheese. You have to ring the bell, because they milk the cows and make the cheese in the back.

Enjoy our County!

A New Hospital for Sonoma?

by Steve Pease

One of the most important questions facing Sonoma Valley this year is whether or not to build a new hospital, and if so, where to put it?

Earthquake requirements mandate that every California hospital meet heightened seismic standards. Sonoma's current hospital is roughly 50 years old and cannot feasibly be retrofitted to meet those higher standards.

Some people feel all we need is an emergency room and wonder why not just build that? The simple answer is that California law requires an emergency room be part of a hospital. It cannot be a stand alone entity. Moreover, many medial procedures for our aging population can be safely and properly done in our hospital at much greater convenience than having them done at a distant hospital. Further, losing our hospital would have a disastrous effect on the local economy and our property values. The hospital is the area's largest employer and closing it would drive down property values as health care workers and seniors leave the valley for new jobs, or to meet their health care needs elsewhere.

The planning process has been going on for more than five years. The design has been thoroughly reviewed by numerous experts, committees of local citizens, and an independent study group commissioned by a group of private citizens. The work to date has been well done.

Financing for the estimated \$157 million facility is expected to come from an ad valorem tax (bond issue) to be placed before the voters later this year. If passed, the ad valorem tax will cost the average citizen less than the \$130 per parcel tax that has been helping finance the hospital in recent years.

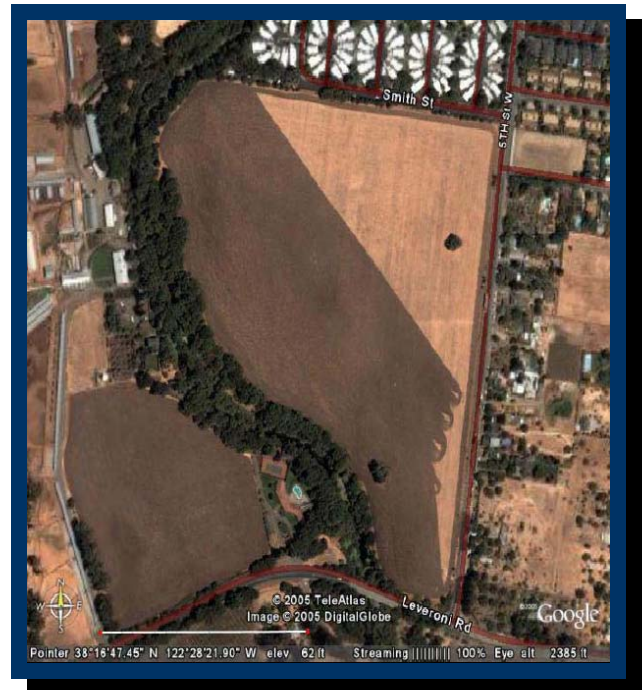
A major controversy remains -- Where to put the new hospital? One proposed site is a relatively small parcel ("The Cuneo site") a few blocks from the present hospital. A second choice is an agricultural parcel ("the Leveroni site") located a few blocks further south. This controversy involves issues of urban growth boundaries, cost, safety, flexibility, expansion space, eminent domain and other considerations.

The elected Board plans to make its decision on January 25th and put the matter to a community vote in April or May.

You can find out more about the plans, questions and different views at the Sonoma Valley Hospital Web site at <http://svh.com/sonoma-valley-hospital.html>



Old Hospital (upper right) and "Cuneo Site" (lower left).



Proposed Leveroni Site (note the scale of this aerial photo is different than the Cuneo photo shown above).

President's Letter (Continued)

original "Water Committee" of Gail Allen, Andy Massie, Steve Skolnik and John Brady to Peter Poullada, my partner on the Implementation Team in making the Water Committee's recommendation happen.

- 2.) Communicate often and more effectively.

This Board has been communicating our goals and activities periodically, but the new excitement of creating and building our own website will put us in a different league. I feel it important that we communicate about the issues we the Board are facing and what we are working on.

But communication is a two way street: send and receive. We need to hear from the community how we are doing and what is on your minds to build and maintain the best address in Sonoma.

My hope is the website will help facilitate this resolution. Many thanks go to Joyce Pease for putting this newsletter together to foster our communications. And many thanks go to Steve Pease for taking the laboring oar to design, create and build the website. We all appreciate their efforts.

- 3.) Bring the community together as neighbors.

We had a great social event last November in a simple cocktail party. What was most warming to me was the number of new neighbors and their families who showed up and shared a glass of wine with us.

We should do this more often.

Toward this end, many thanks go to Diane Kahler and her Social Committee of Florence Garvie and Nancy Sheppard. We have another event planned for the spring to



January 29, 2002 George Ranch snowfall

"bless the fleet" of new paddle boats donated by Dick and Diane Kahler. So many thanks go to both of them.

We all want a better place to call home. I'm sure you share my gratitude to the volunteers who have gotten involved. However,

we need more volunteers, because our list is long and the number of hands is relatively few. Let me hear from you.

Happy New Year and kind regards,

Harold Marsh

Events in Sonoma – February to Mid April

January 14 to February 26 – **"To Never Forget: Faces of the Fallen"**

This traveling exhibition stops at the Sonoma Valley Museum of Art, 551 Broadway, for a six week exhibition of approximately 2,000 portraits of those who have given their lives in battle.

Fee: Free **Time:** 11:00 am to 5:00 pm **Phone Number:** (707)939-7862

February 11-12 – **Olive Festival Carneros Chef Showcase**

"Olive" Carneros Chefs' Showcase Cooking demonstrations and Wine Pairing Cooking demonstrations featuring Olive influenced recipes by Wine Valley Catering, includes recipe cards from each participating winery chef and special discounts on featured wines. First come first served seating at demonstration classes.

Cline Cellars, 24737 Highway 121, Sonoma.

Fee: Free **Time:** 4:00 pm **Phone Number:** (707)940-4025

February 11 – **Twenty-First Annual Sweetheart Ball**

A Valentine fund raiser for Valley of the Moon Boys' and Girls' Club. Festivities include cocktails, dinner, silent and live auctions. The Boys' and Girls' Club is located in Maxwell Farms Regional Park, 100 Verano Avenue, Sonoma.

Fee: \$125 **Time:** 5:30 pm **Phone Number:** (707)938-8544

February 11 – **Eric Symons plays at Gloria Ferrer**

Valentine romance is in the air as Symons weaves his flamenco spell with a repertoire spanning seven centuries. Described as not

only a great musician, but also a magician when he plays, Symons offers Latin American rhythms, Brazilian jazz and new and old Flamenco music. Gloria Ferrer is located at 23555 Highway 121 just south of Sonoma.

Fee: \$25 or \$20 if under 21, includes wine and soft drinks. **Time:** 8:00 pm
Phone Number: (707)996-7256

February 18 – **VinOlivo**

“VinOlivo” is part of the 5th Annual Olive Festival showcasing premier Sonoma Valley wine and cuisine. “VinOlivo” will be featuring Meet the Winemaker, sparkling wine reception, olive oil tasting, sumptuous olive inspired food samplings from Sonoma’s best restaurants, Sonoma Valley appellation wine tasting, ¼ barrel futures auction and barrel tasting. Live auction and more. The Lodge at Sonoma, 1325 Broadway, Sonoma.

Fee: \$65 in advance or \$75 at the door, Sonoma Valley Wine Club Members \$55 **Time:** 6:00 to 10:00 pm **Phone Number:** (707)935-0803

February 25 – **“That’s Amore!”**

The Sonoma Valley Chorale Ensemble presents “That’s Amore!” at the Gloria Ferrer Champagne Caves, 23555 Highway 121. The ensemble’s performance celebrates the beauty and power of love.

Fee: \$25 or \$20 if under 21 **Time:** 8:00 pm, doors open at 7:30 pm
Phone Number: (707)935-1576 or (707)935-1999.

February 25 & 26 – **The Artisan Market on Sonoma Plaza**

The grand finale of the Sonoma Valley Olive Festival, the Artisan Market features olive-themed food, wine, art and entertainment on the Sonoma Plaza.

Fee: \$20 **Time:** 11:00 am to 5:00 pm
Phone Number: (707)996-1090

February 26 – **Olive Festival Luncheon at Viansa Winery**

Celebrate the olive with a five course luncheon in Viansa Winery’s beautiful cellar. All courses will include olive products and will be paired with Viansa’s exclusive

wines. Viansa is located at 25200 Arnold Drive, Sonoma

Fee: \$50 **Time:** Call for information and reservations **Phone Number** (800)995-4740

March 24 – **Spring Winemaker Dinner at Cline**

Cline’s winemaker Charlie Tsegeletos hosts a gourmet dinner. The evening begins with appetizers on the patio at the Adobe Mission at Cline. From there guests will be led into the vineyards and through the winery before sitting down to a three-course feast with premier wine specially selected to pair with each course. Reservations are required. Cline Cellars is located at 24737 Highway 121 just south of Sonoma.

Fee: \$115 **Time:** 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm **Phone Number:** (707)940-4025

April 5 to 9 – **Ninth Annual Sonoma Valley Film Festival**

Cinema Epicuria is still worlds apart from the big, industry-dominated market festivals like Sundance, Toronto or Cannes. Our films are heart-warming, character-driven stories from around the globe, and our festival combines the old world charm of Sonoma’s historic plaza and Sebastiani Theatre with a relaxed environment for dialogue and interaction between filmmakers and filmgoers.

Fee: Varies **Time:** Varies, call for schedule **Phone Number:** (707)933-2600

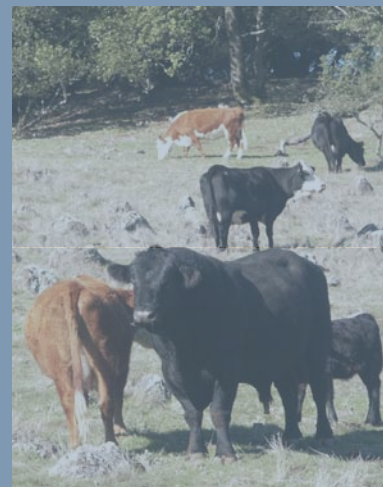
ONGOING EVENTS

Friday mornings – **Sonoma Valley Friday Farmers’ Market**

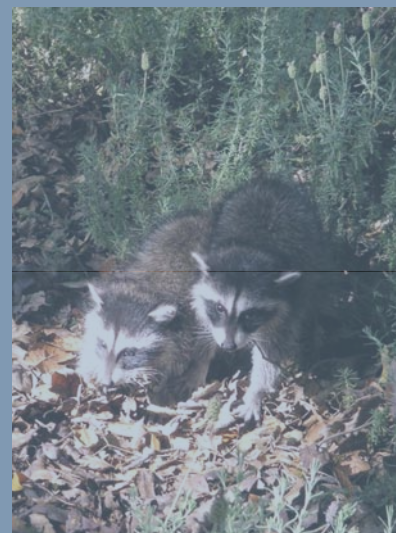
Year ‘round Farmers Market at Depot Park on First Street West, Sonoma

Fee: Free **Time:** 9:00 am to 12:00 noon **Phone Number:** (707)538-7023

And don’t forget **Ramekins** for a multitude of cooking classes. Go to ramekinsclasses.com to view their catalog or call (707)933-0450.



We are blessed with critters of all kinds on George Ranch





Kaplan Family Get Together

by Dan Kaplan

The Kaplan Family (20 of them) gathered in Scottsdale over Christmas to celebrate Danny's 75th birthday. All three generations had a grand time and Danny said "It was great to have all my DNA convened in one place!"

Vendor Compliments

Upholstery recovering and repair: Pease's have had two great experiences with The Great Cover Up, in Petaluma, 1110 Industrial Ave. Call Bob at 762-0637

Classified Ads

Diane Kahler says she has a queen size bed complete with iron headboard, footboard, feather bed, down comforter, duvet cover and bed skirt she would like to sell. Call her at 939-8388 or e-mail her at grandmacks@aol.com.

Reminders

If you haven't done so already, please fill out and return your inventory request for the Disaster Preparedness Committee to Libby Brady by e-mail (libby@vom.com) or by mail (3555 White Alder). It's very important that we hear from everyone.

Please feel free to help yourself to a copy of The Sun which is delivered to our mail boxes each Thursday morning

Stay tuned for the date of our Springtime Regatta party to be held at the clubhouse. Diane promises a couple of races, a Name the Boat contest and an all-around good time.

Tell us About What's Happening In Your Family:

Got a vendor who you think is particularly good?

Let us know and we will share it with your neighbors.

Got Something you want to peddle? We will put it "in the classifieds."

Send your ideas, thoughts and questions to Joyce

Pease at

www.jpease@vom.com



Missy in Wintertime

Always wanted to be published? You can! Write an article for The Grapevine!.



*George Ranch Community Assoc
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Sonoma, Calif. 95476*

