

The Grapevine

The Newsletter of George Ranch

October, 2006



President's Letter

by Harold Marsh

Neighbors:

One year ago, the community elected the Board of Elvin Case, Allen Jones, Andy Massie, Harold Marsh and Peter Poullada. We said last year the Board viewed its mission as threefold:

- to serve the community and its members by maintaining and improving the market value of our community and its common areas;
- to foster a strong and congenial spirit by acknowledging and benefiting from our common views and diverse opinions; and
- to protect the community's common interests as documented in the Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions ("CC&R's").

In our Annual meeting last month, I reported on our accomplishments this past year to support the mission. Many of you attended the annual meeting but for those who were unable to attend, the highlights of the major accomplishments this year include:

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Horsepower Quiz

From Brady Junction

Which George Ranch lot has the most engine horsepower on the premises as of October 16th?

a. **Thornton's**. There are two highway-building size earth movers, three tractors and a truck. The vineyard manager must be at least a little nervous. Ditto the olive person.

b. **Stanley's**. A high percentage of all known back-hoes and bull-dozers in Sonoma Valley plus numerous workers, albeit with modestly powered cars on the premises. Some are holding off rain, others are finishing the project before the rain folks take charge.

c. **Klonsky's**. Fred never saw a car he didn't like. And potential horsepower is also included in this contest. This means "How many horsepower would it have if it ran right?"

d. **Kahler's**. There are at least two super-charged eleven-cylinder Mercedes plus a racing Jaguar which actually dates back before cars probably had horsepower, and a serious John Deere garden device. All await construction of their new home over the wine cellar.

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Creek between Lots 18 & 47

President's Letter (Continued.)

- completing the construction and installation of two new water tanks;
- bringing all our receivables current;
- completing a financial review of our reserves for future capital expenditures on our roads and other fixed assets, requiring (unfortunately) we raise the assessments and water company dues and fees;
- updating our Emergency Response Plan;
- updating all our Governing Documents;
- improving communications with this newsletter, The Grapevine, and creating

and implementing our own website, TheGeorgeRanch.org. ; and

- hosting two very successful social events.

At this year's annual meeting the community voted to keep the same team together for another year. The Board and its officer's will remain the same as last year, as will each of the standing committees of the Architectural Control Committee (ACC), Building and Grounds and the Social Committees. The one change anticipated is Nancy Peterson's transition off the ACC at some point in the coming year, and we are fortunate to have Arleen Curry joining the ACC with Edna Hayes and Gemma Gallovich.

We will keep the same mission statement. While we have put a lot of effort into the physical aspects of our community over the past year (the two new water tanks, repairing the roads this coming month and addressing various road embankment repairs before the rains come this winter), we hope to put more emphasis on the social side of our community in the coming year. So Diane Kahler and her team on the Social Committee are looking for ideas. Let us hear from you.

On behalf of the Board, we thank you for your votes of confidence in reelecting this year's Board for another year. Our hope it is a less challenging year than last year.

Horsepower Quiz, (Continued)

e. **Kerrigans.** Many chopped, channeled, ported, 3 quarter race, and unmuffled hot-rods? Heaven only knows how much horsepower on a good day when he's not trying to run them on free Red Line diesel stuff.

f. **Eberhardt/Marsh.** The world's emerging premier collection of Land Rovers, Jeeps, tractors, gators and a little electric "thingy" on which, rumor has it, the chartreuse paint job reacts with pollutants put in the air by cows and actually emits horsepower - about 3 - back into somewhere.

Entries should be submitted, attached to a bottle of a pleasant wine and brought to the front porch at Brady Junction.

A meeting will be held of all contestants at which time entries will be considered in depth and a winner selected.

Entries should be submitted in time for all this to happen so that a suitable announcement can be made before the next newsletter. Any questions, ask the editor! (Ed note: I know nothing. Call Brady!)

Casey's Restaurant Review

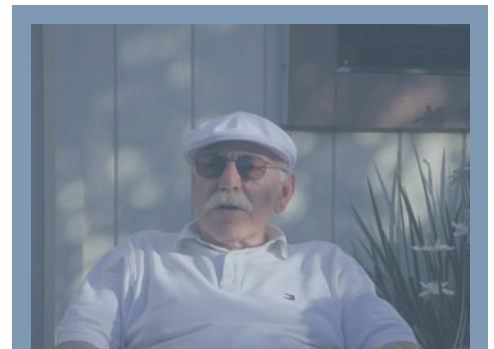
By Elvin Case

Jack's Bistro & Wine Bar – *"Excite the Palate, Feed the Soul"*

Anyone who has noticed my enlarged profile and increasing waistline can understand why our Grapevine editor selected me to write a restaurant review.

Well, here goes. Jack's Bistro & Wine Bar, located in Jack London Village in Glen Ellen, is a real find. The restaurant, with its outdoor deck and views of the adjacent hills showing all the natural beauty of Sonoma Valley, creates a very tranquil spot for dining. Owner William Magee and chef/owner James Magee do an outstanding job of transporting you to a small French village bistro right here in our valley. The food is superb and, although not large, the menu offers enough diversity and choice to please most diners.

Jack's is open for lunch and dinner with



Our esteemed restaurant reviewer (head on – not in profile!)

unique starters and entrees for each occasion and has a large and varied wine list that should satisfy most wine snobs. Reservations are a good idea.

Jack' Bistro & Wine Bar
14201 Arnold Drive, Glen Ellen
(707) 933-3043

www.jacksbistroandwinebar.com

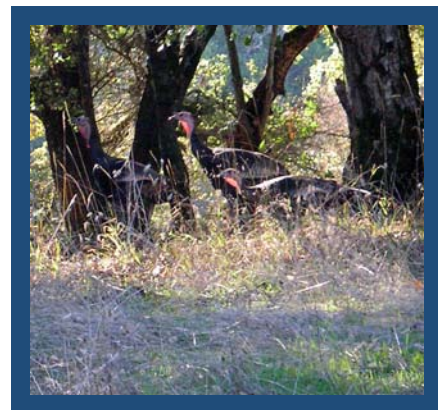
Intruder at the George Ranch

by Andy Massie

It was a quiet Saturday afternoon at home - full of chores. My dear wife had left the scene for something more interesting leaving me to fend for myself. Earlier in the day we had had various visitors, including a painter who was preparing an estimate for many of the exterior doors on the south side of our house. I wandered, at some point, into the master bedroom on my way to the toilet. I turned left into the bathroom and there in the Jacuzzi was a TURKEY.

I quickly closed the door to the bathroom to compose myself and plot a plan to evict the intruder. I soon realized that the painter had left the rear door into the bedroom open when preparing his estimate, allowing this curious bird entry. Now I had a significant challenge to deal

with. I opened the second of the double doors through which he had come, closed other doors such as the one to the rest of the house, took a deep breath and headed into the bathroom after the intruder. He was NOT happy to see me. From his Jacuzzi perch he flew into one of the windows surrounding the tub, feathers flying, banging his head, landing in a pile back in the tub. This gave me an opportunity to get to his side encouraging him to fly out of the bathroom. I stomped on the floor and he took off a second time heading toward the bathroom exit but with far too much lift, once again banging his head, now against the ceiling. I stomped again and he flew into our bedroom landing on the shoulder of an easy chair. The third stomp saw him fly into the ceiling once again, but he composed himself after plummeting to the floor and flew from there out the



Suspects

open doors, free at last.

I did my best to clean up after this most foul of fowls, though I must say I had scared most of the out of him. I reported the break in to Louise upon her return and can report that the supply of Clorox within our household has been greatly reduced. The moral of this story is, of course, NEVER HIRE A PAINTER.

Day Trippin' by Libby Brady

This summer, three couples ventured off the Mainland to Angel Island. We took the 20-minute ferry from Tiburon (one leaves at 10:00; the next at 11:00). The day we happened to go, 4,533 day-care kids were doing the same thing, so we had entertainment on the ferry. There are two ways to day-trip to Angel Island. One is to enjoy a tram ride with a guide who talks about the island and its history, and then catch a lunch along the Tiburon waterfront. The other way is the one we chose, and that is to take our own picnic lunches and then wander all around the island.

The landing dock was near a snack shop where you can pick up sandwiches and drinks. We hiked the Perimeter Trail (5+ miles). There were benches and tables strategically placed along the trail for taking a rest. The views were fabulous! There we were out in the middle of the Bay, and at every turn, there was another only-in-the-Bay-area vista...Belvedere, Alcatraz, Bay Bridge, San Francisco's

skyline, the Golden Gate Bridge. Signposts along the way revealed stories of wartime and the importance of Angel Island. It was originally developed as one of three military bases to control SF harbor during the Civil War, and became an immigrant processing facility around the turn of the century. It was an important collection point for shipping GIs to the Western Pacific in WW 11. Military housing looked so similar to that at the Presidio and other bases across the US.

There's a small encampment where it's possible to see Civil War reenactments, and you can make arrangements to spend the night (we didn't). We saw bikers and walkers, people of all ages, but never had the feeling of being crowded.

We had time after the hike to stop for a cold brew on the patio of the snack shop. We took the 3:30 ferry back to Tiburon, but there's also a 1:30 if you're doing the tram. After the ferry deposited us in Tiburon, we walked

Main Street a bit...lots of pretty shops and Sam's Cafe (been there a loooong time) and Guaymas (good seafood and pleasant outdoor dining).

Even though I came home with sore muscles, I couldn't help but be so grateful I live in the beautiful Bay Area!

Have YOU been day trippin'?

Angel Island



Musings by Maria Bassetto

I had just moved here from Marin County when I invited my mother to visit me. She was in her mid-eighties and lived on the Peninsula. I was very anxious and excited to show her my new home and the natural beauty that existed here at that time. I thought surely she would approve and be pleased with me. How could she not be, I thought. This place is a sea of tranquility and beauty and is blessed with an abundance of wild life. I felt honored to be a part of the wildlife's territory.

Soon after my mom arrived, and even before she unpacked her personal belongings, she took a moment to scan the

surroundings. "Where are the people and the houses?" she asked. I explained to her that there were none close by and that my house was the first home to be built here after George Ranch was subdivided into its current parcels.

She reluctantly expressed to me that the place was scary and inappropriate for a civilized person to live. That same night we were visited by a pair of handsome coyotes who seemed to be very friendly and were looking for an easy handout. I was delighted by the rare experience while my mom was paralyzed with fear of being attacked. Apparently she did not approve of my new lifestyle.

Volunteers Wanted by Harold Marsh

The Board will host a community work day on Saturday, October 28th, beginning at 9:00 a.m. Bring your shovels, paint brushes, saws and back and join us for a day of fixing up various projects around the common area property, such as finishing ditch/drain work above the clubhouse, trimming bushes along the

roadside, cleaning roadway gutters before rains, replacing missing, broken or dim road delineators, and painting all ranch signs. The Board will host coffee and donuts in the morning and hot dogs and hamburgers after work (say around 2:00 to 3:00). All are welcome and the more the merrier.

Greetings George Ranch by Cindy Scarborough

On this fine autumn Saturday morning at Vintage House we're hosting a private meeting and preparing for a wedding reception tonight – two examples of the productive weekend use of our lovely facility. A great venue for meetings and events – keep us in mind if ever you're looking for something close by but larger than your clubhouse.

Our volunteers are also busy over in your neck of the woods staffing our annual **Pumpkin Patch** at Vadasz Vineyards on Grove Street. If you haven't yet been by, why not stop on one of your trips into town any of these last few weekends in October. A gorgeous array of organic pumpkins, winter squashes, gourds and Indian corn for sale

awaits you – and half price if you come with grandkids!

Holiday Magic is just around the corner on Saturday, November 18th. If you've never attended, let this be the year. Coming as it does just before Thanksgiving, it serves as the kick-off event for Sonoma's winter holiday season. Elaine Bell's gastronomic delights are accompanied by fine wines from Charles Creek and Madrone Ridge wineries, and our silent and live auctions offer great gift-shopping opportunities.

Auction lot previews will be available later this month at www.vintagehouse.org where you can also download our current newsletter with information on



"Would you be Maria Bassetto?"

Autumn fog on George Ranch



programs and services available for adults of all ages – *seniors, and everyone else who plans to grow older with grace.*

Yoga, language, computer and painting classes, bridge, resources for caregivers, volunteer opportunities and so much more await you. If you're not already involved with Vintage House, we invite you to join our activities or offer your expertise on one of our committees. Help us keep the heart in *Vintage House: the House with a Heart!*

Neighborhood News

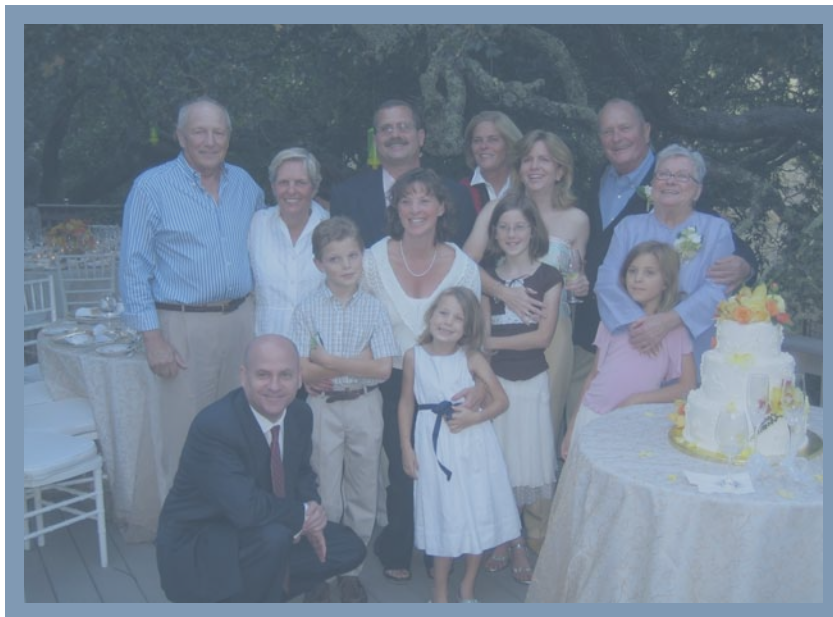
A GOLDEN CELEBRATION The Finaly kids pulled out all the stops...on the sly no less... to give their parents, Jane and Dick, a surprise party for their 50th wedding anniversary. It's still a mystery how they did it

The party took place at the Finaly residence on their back deck. It was a magical evening: the décor all white and gold with twinkling candlelight, the tables aglow with glorious floral bouquets by Anne Appleman of Sonoma, and fantastic food catered by Sara Scott of Napa.

About 40 friends and family members gathered to greet Jane and Dick when they returned home at the behest of their son, Scott, who said a friend wanted to see them. The look on their faces when they saw people from far and wide singing "Happy Anniversary" was priceless

GATE OPENERS Nancy Peterson would like to remind all of us that **nobody** at the George Ranch provides gate openers. If you need one, you should buy one that fits your needs and then use one you have or a GR neighbor's to program the new one for the front gate. Locally, Nancy found Skip and Kadi Harrah at Access Transmitters, Inc. (935-6388) who will sell you what you need – all sizes and some that hang on your key chain – but getting the code into the opener is your responsibility. Kadi can help if you provide her with a programmed opener.

CAMP HAWKSREACH Sandra and John Leland report that all went well, despite the



The Finaly Clan

100+ degree heat wave, at Camp Hawksreach this summer. All their seven sons with wives, partners, fiancés were there as well as all 12 grandchildren, ages two to eight. That made 31 people altogether!

On Labor Day weekend, son #7, Mark Leland, married Monica Lagos, a lovely young lady from Chile.

And finally, the Lelands would like to share with us (for those who don't already know), that the Mondavi Winery in Napa conducts one incredible wine tour. "It's really a special event". Remember that when you next have out of town guests.

WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS As of September 30th, Pieter Everard had twice seen a "beautiful, red, large (40 pound?) bobcat within a week. It was about a hundred feet away from my house. " He/she might have been after the many ground squirrels in my rock walls, or perhaps it was attracted to the mackerel in my wasp traps. Has anyone else seen the creature around." He also saw a fox at the entrance gate on October 12th. Pieter thinks there might be a den in the creek area behind the rock wall at the entrance. (Ed. Note: I saw the bobcat on October 12th around 2:00 pm at the mail boxes near the clubhouse. Beautiful it was.)



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