

Landscapes

Peninsula Open Space Trust Spring 2008

The look of the true West still clings to the rock-studded woodlands of southern Santa Clara County. Cowboys work small herds on horseback, with help from a trusted dog. Right now you can catch a glimpse of their way of life by driving along Uvas Road in Morgan Hill, a designated scenic road, where windmills turn among the sycamores and weatherworn oaks crown the promontories.



Open Spaces Connect South County

A beautiful Morgan Hill ranch — 865 acres belonging to the Blair family — is now safe from encroaching development, thanks to a joint effort by POST and the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority. POST's involvement in the acquisition means the look of the West will not vanish to make way for ranchettes and trophy homes. Once the ranch is added to adjacent Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve, the planning process will begin for trails and facilities for hikers, cyclists and equestrians.

"The pressure to build private estates in the western hills of south Santa Clara County is intense," says POST President Audrey Rust. "With support from residents and public agencies, POST will be able to lead the way toward creating a balance between development and natural landscapes. Proposed development in Coyote Valley is just minutes away, so it is essential we act now while it is still possible to connect open space lands here."

Owned by members of the Blair family since 1952, the land has been used

Cattle make their own trails through scenic pastures on ranchland to be added to Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve.

POST Looks SOUT



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Great oaks and lichen-covered rocks characterize the newly protected property. The city of Gilroy is just visible between the near foothills and the Diablo Range.

for raising beef cattle. Now the land will help connect community parkland from Los Gatos to Coyote Valley south of San Jose.

“POST negotiates and reaches a compromise that is good for both sides,” says Richard Blair, who concluded the sale on behalf of his family. “By organizing to buy land, POST allows people who have the passion for open space to exercise it by giving to the organization.”

POST played a vital role in working with the Open Space Authority to coordinate a complex \$8.65 million funding package. POST secured a \$2 million grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation for the purchase. POST also supported efforts to secure additional funding from the California Coastal Conservancy in the form of a \$2.34 million grant and a \$2 million loan to the Open Space Authority. Santa Clara

County Department of Parks and Recreation put in \$1 million, and the Open Space Authority added \$1.31 million to complete the purchase, slated for March.

Rangeland Habitat

Cattle aren’t the only animals at home on this range. Mountain lions, bobcats, foxes and black-tailed deer roam at will. Fifty bird species have been seen in the area as well as rare and threatened creatures, including the California red-legged frog, California tiger salamander and Bay checkerspot butterfly. The checkerspots are known to favor dwarf plantains that grow on serpentine soils.

The new ranch property has serpentine outcroppings as well as deposits of Morgan Hill poppy jasper, a microcrystalline quartz colored by iron-rich clay. When polished, its red and yellow dots resemble poppies.



The Open Space Authority plans to incorporate the ranch into the 3,017-acre Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve, adjacent to the property and already under its management. POST worked with the Open Space Authority in 2003 when the agency purchased a portion of the land for Rancho Cañada del Oro from POST. Together the properties are a strategic part of a trail and wildlife corridor that might one day weave through Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve, above Lexington Reservoir, and continue through Calero, Uvas Reservoir, Uvas Canyon and Almaden Quicksilver county parks.

Ranchland Park

And the cows? People will continue to see them grazing on Rancho Cañada del Oro and on the new ranch addition. Justin Fields, local cowboy and champion roping competitor, holds leases in both

places, where his ability to create responsible grazing rotations as well as maintain fences and water systems has been much praised. According to Patrick Congdon, general manager of the Open Space Authority, "Cattle-grazing has proven to be a very effective tool in maintaining the health and vitality of grasslands."

From the highest points on the new ranch, visitors will enjoy beautiful views of Mount Umunhum, Rancho Cañada del Oro and the blue-green ridges of the Santa Cruz Mountains. The view east of the ranch reveals the spine of the Diablo Range sloping south from Mt. Hamilton to enclose Gilroy's valley floor. When the property eventually opens, visitors will be able to hike, bicycle and ride horses, and the public will have a "home on the range." ■

*(clockwise from left)
Justin Fields and his wife,
Arleah, "bring in" calves
for special care. Rock
outcrops beg for closer
examination.*

Richard Blair *Recalls the*

Richard Blair grew up in surroundings so beautiful they seem like movie sets. He worked cattle, mended fences and learned the lessons of self-sufficiency that life on an expansive cattle ranch in Morgan Hill could teach.

"It was a great lifestyle," says Richard, even though ranching was a difficult livelihood, one that has all but disappeared from Santa Clara County. Richard, an engineer by training and now a salesman for Sharp Electronics, is the youngest of four brothers. His family moved to the ranch when Richard was 12. Though his parents continue with the ranching life, none of the boys made a profession of it.

A Farmer's Dream

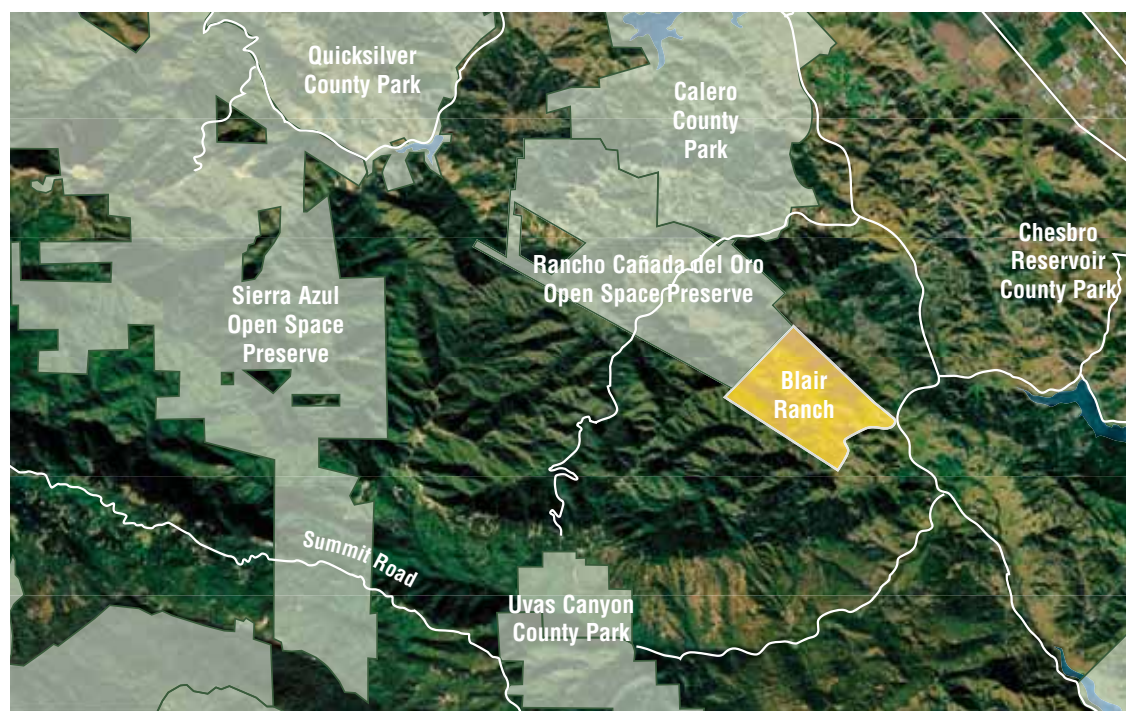
It all began with Richard's grandfather, Ralph Johnson, a farmer who grew pears, sugar beets and barley on

the fertile soil now occupied by the Great America theme park in Santa Clara. Grandfather Johnson always wanted to own a cattle ranch. With proceeds from the sale of the farm, he was able to secure his dream in the foothills of Morgan Hill.

"At first he had only a simple cabin to use as a party house. He liked to invite friends out to the ranch for afternoon barbecues. The highlight was a scenic jeep ride around the property. The ranch roads, still in use, were made specifically for those jeep rides," says Richard.

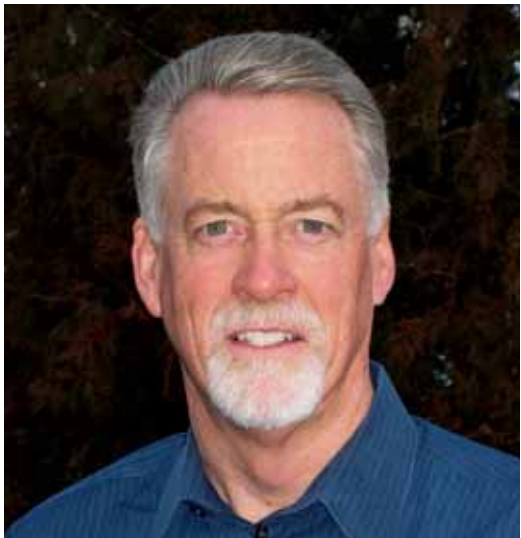
Old-fashioned Collaboration

"As kids we had the lifestyle of cowboys," says Richard. "We worked the ranch ourselves." The calves were raised for a year before they were sold at auction or to brokers. During their year on the ranch, the cows, mostly



The new ranch lies in close proximity to important open space land in the region.

Pleasures of Ranch Life



Herefords, were routinely brought in to be branded, sprayed for flies, de-horned, inoculated and castrated.

Work parties from five or six neighboring cattle ranches joined the Blairs for annual yearling round-ups, as would regulars with good riding skills who simply enjoyed the action. The Blairs in turn helped their neighbors. Over the years, Richard experienced the loss of shared purpose among neighbors along with the loss of supporting professions that served the needs of cattlemen. He believes the saddle-makers, harriers and veterinarians serving horsemen may actually be a bit stronger now.

Like his grandfather, Richard invited friends to the property. He and his wife created a party spot, complete with a chandelier hung from a tree. They lined the area with bricks and brought in a picnic table, hammocks and a swing. The chandelier was wired to a battery to keep things festive after dark. They also invited friends for stargazing in August when the shower of meteors known as the Persids could be seen clearly from the hilltops.

Thinking Ahead

Protection of the ranch by POST and the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority will not end the Blair family's enjoyment of rural life. The family still owns 126 acres surrounding the main ranch house. Richard's parents continue to live there and graze cattle—not for the money, but to keep the place mowed and reduce the threat of fire.

"Though there is general agreement within my family about the benefits of making the ranch public land, the decision to sell was hardest on my dad. To him the ranch is not 'open space' or 'parkland.' The ranch is his home, and he has very strong, protective feelings about it," explains Richard.

"At first we looked for a buyer who would enjoy the ranch in the same way we enjoyed it," he says. "We knew we didn't want to sell to a developer. We had already seen what happened to the family property in Santa Clara. We agreed it would be better to see the land left open." ■

An antique hay rake has become metal sculpture.



© 2007 Karl Kroeber



Chris True: Mindego's Last Mountain Man

"I've always loved trucks and tractors, anything mechanical," says Chris True in a deep, gravelly voice. Bundled in heavy bib overalls, layers of shirts and a red plaid hunting cap, he looks more like the truck driver he sometimes is than the cowboy he has been since age 13.

That's how old Chris was when his family bought Mindego Hill, 1,047 acres of scenic hillsides west of Skyline Boulevard near La Honda. POST purchased the ranch in October with the hope of transferring the land to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) later this year. Chris leases the grazing rights and lives there as he prepares for life at his next retreat, a 2,500-acre ranch located 22 miles outside Midvale, Idaho (population 182).

In a conversation with POST, Chris tells us what it was like growing up on Mindego Hill.

Q: *What are some of your earliest memories?*

A: My parents bought the ranch in 1954. There wasn't any phone service until 1958, and we didn't get electricity until 1960. My parents and brother had a house in Palo Alto where they stayed during the week. The state granted me a hardship driver's license when I was 13.

Q: *What were some of the fun aspects of life on the ranch?*

A: Remoteness and beauty. Very few neighbors. We could hunt deer, ducks, quail, mountain lion. Now it's illegal. In 1955, when I started at Pescadero High

School, I rode horseback three miles to La Honda. It was still about a 40-mile bus trip to pick up kids from all around. In the morning the horseback ride took 25 or 30 minutes. In the afternoon, because it was uphill, it took at least an hour. There were chores before and after school. We milked a Jersey and a Golden Gurnsey. The rest of the cows were Angus.

Q: *Where did you park the horse for the day?*

A: I left my horse in a stable across from the bus stop on a ranch owned by the Coughy family. They were sixth-generation ranchers. That's where I met my wife, Veronica. She was a year behind me in school. In my junior year the school district allowed the bus driver to pick up the few students living on the Alpine Road loop in his private car....

After a stint in the Navy and ten years hauling gear for famous rock stars, Chris returned to Mindego Hill and the ranch life he learned in his youth.

To read more about Chris True and his life on Mindego Hill, go to www.gomindego.org/interview



Needs Your Support!



PRIVATE FUNDING GOAL
\$6.9 million

\$5.7 million
RAISED TO DATE

\$6 million

\$5 million

\$4 million

\$3 million

\$2 million

\$1 million

The calves are dropping, California poppies are popping, Mindego Creek is flowing high... Spring has sprung on Mindego Hill!

Today, we ask for your support to complete the preservation of Mindego Hill. Located within a strategic swath of more than 30,000 acres of open space, this signature property is a critical link in a chain of open lands extending along the spine of the Santa Cruz Mountains. With your help, Mindego Hill will join this patchwork of protected lands—Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve, Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve, Coal Creek Open Space Preserve—and create a recreational paradise for you to enjoy.

Every Gift Counts

Thanks to donors and partners who have already made gifts to our GoMindego campaign, POST has raised \$5.7 million toward the needed \$6.9 million in private

funds. Each dollar you give to POST for Mindego Hill will be multiplied by \$3 from public and private sources to cover total purchase costs of \$29,400,000.

The campaign timeline is short—just nine months to raise \$6.9 million from people like you. Mindego Hill is due to transfer to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at the end of June. Your contribution to the campaign is essential to ensure that POST meets this transfer deadline.

Please visit www.gomindego.org to learn more about this dramatic landscape and the importance of helping keep Mindego Hill's views open, our watersheds clean, our wildlife habitats sustained and our rich California history preserved.

Please make your gift today. Thank you for helping us achieve higher ground! ■

POST PARTNERS:

In Their Words...

POST has been a partnership organization since 1977, when the fledgling Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) saw the need for a private organization to help with land acquisition.

The value of partnerships with public and private agencies has proven itself over and over in POST's 31-year history. In this issue we highlight Julie Packard and Craig Britton from two of POST's important partnership agencies.

Julie is executive director of the Monterey Bay Aquarium and a trustee for the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the first foundation to fund POST's land-saving work.

Craig is retiring after 30 years with MROSD, our most frequent public partner. He started as land acquisition manager, becoming general manager in 1994.

POST is grateful to have such accomplished partners in our land-saving work.

Julie Packard: David and Lucile Packard Foundation

“I’m very pleased that the Packard Foundation was POST’s first foundation partner and has continued to be a major source of funding for POST since 1980. The Packard Foundation was created by my parents in 1964. Its goals were based on their convictions about giving back to the communities responsible for the success of Hewlett-Packard, the company my father founded with his business partner Bill Hewlett. The foundation’s interests grew from there, expanding to state, national and global concerns.

“I grew up in Los Altos Hills, then a relatively rural place with many apricot orchards—very different from what it is today. My father loved farming and ranching. He and Bill Hewlett bought ranch properties, so we spent time there. It was easy to make a connection with the land. I had time to spend outdoors.

“The Peninsula’s rapid transformation over the years had a profound impact on me, one that continues to inform my decisions and those of the Packard Foundation. Over time, the foundation has grown more strategic. We’re not interested in ‘plain vanilla’ land transactions, but in higher-level activities that become an imbedded part of the community. To us, what counts is protecting functioning ecosystems.



To do this requires science-based conservation programs. The foundation also supports innovative methods for achieving long-term protection.

“POST is clearly an outstanding example of a successful leadership organization for the whole land trust movement. POST is constantly testing new ways to involve private landowners and the public and to leverage an array of funding sources. POST thinks big. They’re creative and persistent. That’s why in 2001 our foundation, along with the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, each contributed \$50 million to POST’s *Saving the Endangered Coast* campaign. We knew POST was capable of making a big difference. And they still are. Our foundation continues to support POST through an organizational effectiveness grant as well as individual project funding.

“In the end it isn’t just about protecting our own backyard, it’s about setting an example on a national—even global—scale. California has always led the nation in terms of environmental protection, and now that leadership is more important than ever.” ■

Craig Britton:

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

“At the end of March I retire after 30 years at the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. As I look back, I’m proud of what we have accomplished together with POST. From just about any spot on the midpeninsula, you can look up and see the foothills. For me, that’s all the experience you need to truly appreciate open space—you don’t even have to touch it. Just to be able to look at it and breathe it in is enough for me.

“MROSD and POST pioneered the public/private partnership. This relationship blossomed over the last 30 years. I think it has become a benchmark nationwide. We each understand our roles, and we don’t get in each other’s way, and as a result, we’ve been successful beyond our wildest dreams!

“From our first shared acquisition—Stevens Creek/Shoreline Nature Study Area in 1980—we discovered how to work together, and since then we’ve entered into many different kinds of transactions—direct sales, gifts, bargain sales, percentage agreements, leases, exchanges and even the purchase of a corporation. Some agreements defy categorization. Wow, did I enjoy those!

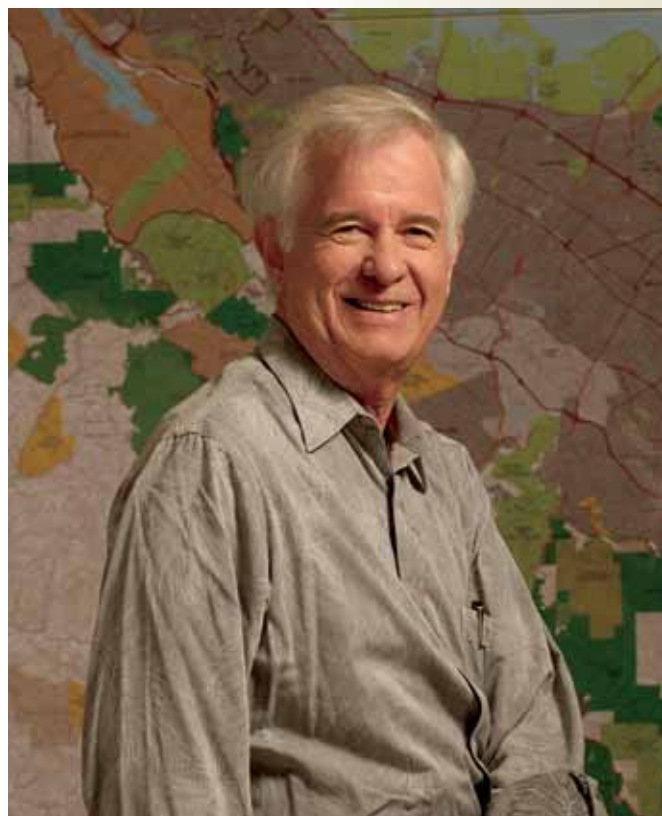
“Former POST Board member Ward Paine used to say, ‘MROSD takes on the hard stuff like public hearings and all the other trouble public agencies seem to attract.’ Meanwhile POST is very effective raising money from private sources, bringing together multiple agencies and garnering great press.

Our success could not have been achieved without the taxpayers’ support and money.

“MROSD’s 2006 acquisition of Driscoll Ranch—at 3,681 acres, the largest property we’ve ever acquired—would not have been possible without POST and the California Coastal Conservancy. Donors give POST the ability to buy land at the time it’s for sale. POST can respond quickly to protect properties, then hold them, sometimes for years, while public agencies like MROSD are working through channels to qualify for grants and meet the legal restrictions of being a public agency.

“Once Driscoll or other large properties like Mindego Hill become MROSD land, we begin a planning process to develop trail systems, parking areas, rest rooms, fences—public amenities we must be prepared to manage forever.

“When I think about what we’ve achieved with POST, I don’t think any other organizations have this relationship. It is unbelievable.” ■



POST Adds Coastal Parcel to Pillar Point Bluff



© 2007 Neal Kramer

In December 2007, POST purchased 3.67 acres of oceanfront property on the bluff north of Pillar Point in Half Moon Bay. The \$495,000 acquisition will be added to POST's Pillar Point Bluff property, 119 acres surrounding the new purchase on two sides.

"With this purchase, we add ocean frontage to Pillar Point Bluff, protecting even more of this dramatic stretch of land that the community and visitors enjoy," says POST Executive Vice President Walter T. Moore. "The area is already popular with hikers, joggers, dog-walkers and other visitors. As POST works with its public agency partners to improve the trails at Pillar Point Bluff, we will integrate this new parcel into the planning process." ■

Djerassi Program Offers Sculpture Tours

"Walk in the Wild," the annual public sculpture tours offered by the Djerassi Resident Artists Program (DRAP), begin in April and run through October. Participants can choose a "Director's Tour" led by Executive Director Dennis O'Leary (\$40 per person) or a "Two-Mile Tour" led by program staff (free of charge).

All tours include a selection of more than 40 site-specific sculptures created on scenic 580-acre grounds in Woodside. An easement purchased by POST in 1999 protects this beautiful land in perpetuity. Tour reservations are required. Call (650) 747-1250 or visit <http://www.openspacetrust.org/activities/tours.html> ■

Little Basin Season Opens

POST and Sempervirens Fund donors are invited to enjoy Little Basin for day or overnight use from March through the end of October.

Camping at Little Basin is not to be missed. Now is the time to experience this lush, family-friendly mountain wonderland before it opens to the public as part of Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Campsites are available for \$25 per day; cabins are \$50 per day.

For more information about facilities, charges and reservations, please visit the Little Basin Web site at www.littlebasin.org ■



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Montara Mountain, part of Rancho Corral de Tierra, overlooks POST's new parcel near El Granada.

POST Adds 204 Acres to Coastal Open Space

POST's purchase of 204 acres of hillside land near El Granada for \$3 million in November, will ensure that inappropriate development will never take place on the shoulder of magnificent Rancho Corral de Tierra. The new property is surrounded by Rancho Corral, 4,262 acres acquired by POST in 2001 and destined to become part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA).

"This purchase helps complete an important and much larger conservation picture along this part of the San Mateo Coast," said POST President Audrey Rust. "A prominent ridge on the new property is easily seen by visitors looking south from Rancho Corral de Tierra. The new parcel provides additional options to connect Rancho Corral to surrounding protected lands and greatly expands opportunities for the region's network of scenic hiking trails." ■

New Plan for GGNRA

The National Park Service (NPS) seeks public participation in creating a new general management plan to guide decisions about the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) for the next 20 years. The plan will address how to manage 4,262-acre Rancho Corral de Tierra, soon to become the park's southern entrance. Please visit www.openspacetrust.org for more information.

Public workshops to discuss the plan are scheduled for later this spring. Walks on Rancho Corral de Tierra are scheduled for March 29 and April 5. Call (415) 561-4930 for reservations and directions. ■

Federal Funds Approved

Senator Dianne Feinstein's instrumental support of POST's funding request for Rancho Corral de Tierra has finally paid off. At year's end, President George Bush signed a bill awarding POST \$1,960,000 from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund for Rancho Corral, protected by POST in 2001. With the continued efforts of our local representatives, we will seek the remaining \$13,040,000 to complete the sale and transfer of this magnificent landscape to the National Park Service and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. ■

Tributes

OCTOBER 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2007

Your honorary and memorial gifts to POST create a lasting tribute to friends and loved ones by helping to protect the beauty, character and diversity of the San Francisco Peninsula and Santa Cruz Mountain range.

If you would like to make a tribute gift, please contact POST's Annual Giving Manager, Kathleen Ward, at (650) 854-7696.

GIFTS IN HONOR OF

Hannah and Katie Abbott
Alisdair and Ina
Mr. and Mrs. Alan Anderson
Phil and Erika Bailey
Scott and Ky-Van Benson
Anne and David Bernstein
Mary Bernstein
Helen Boyer



Lichen on Blair Ranch © 2007 Ann Duwe

Russ, Jim and Gloria of
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Laramie Brown
Robert and Barbara Buce
Sara Bunting and Kevin Fetterman
Jenny and Ken Burke
Jeron Carr and Sherry Crow
The Cassanego Family
Alex and Ky Cheng
Dalan and Karen Clancy
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Gordon C. Clark
William S. Clark
Grace Elizabeth Coffee
Janet Cook
Laura and Graham Crooke's marriage
John David and Jessica Waters's
marriage
Francine De Martini
Stephanie dePascal
Judy Dietel's birthday
Ellen Dolores
Jeff Enderwick and Shinyung Oh's
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Luis Fajardo
Ken and Kristen Farley
Jean-Max and Nicolas Fawzi
Rene and Peter Fenerin
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Beverly and Duane Foremaster
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Dulcy Freeman and Kelly Foster
Karen Fryling
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Inga Giske
Tom Giske
Nancy Glaser
Sima Hayutin
Marcella Heintz
Janice Hickman
Galen Horchner's birthday
William and Mary Hughes
Max, Lisa and Matthew Jacob
Roger Jacobs
Joel Jensen
Ray and Liz Juncosa
Charles "Chuck" Katz
Anna and Madan Kumar
Harold J. Leavitt and
Jean Lipman-Blumen
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Linea Stewart
Marion Softky's 80th birthday
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Olivia Stathis
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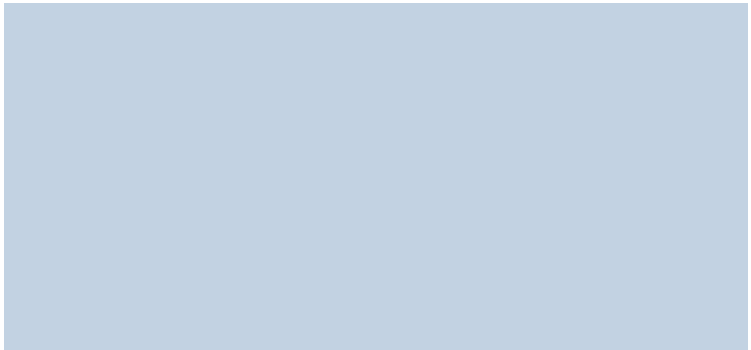
Karie Thomson
Sandi Thompson
Kathleen Tolvanen's birthday
Peter Trinkhaus
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Ted and Nancy Vian
Heather Wakelee and Alex Meyer

John and Jane Weil
Sally Werlinich
Elizabeth White
Nicholas Wilcox's birthday
Pierre Yves
Pat Zimski and Merry Ross
Barbara Zummer and Kevin Mayer

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Milli Yates
Alice Young
Dr. David Zlotnick



The mission of the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) is to give permanent protection to the beauty, character and diversity of the San Francisco Peninsula and Santa Cruz Mountain range. POST encourages the use of these lands for natural resource protection, wildlife habitat, low-intensity public recreation and agriculture for people here now and for future generations.

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Consider a Charitable Remainder Trust

By establishing a charitable remainder trust with POST, you can provide for the future of land protection while deriving lifetime income and significant tax benefits.

A charitable remainder trust (CRT) can help you:

- Avoid capital gains tax on appreciated assets
- Receive a significant and immediate income tax deduction
- Arrange for annual or quarterly cash payments for you or your designees
- Realize substantial estate tax savings

For donors with highly appreciated assets, such as real estate or stocks, charitable remainder trusts are an excellent option. The asset can be used to establish the trust, then sold without incurring capital gains tax. After the asset is sold, the trust reinvests the proceeds and provides you or your designees with income for life or for a term of years. At the end of the period the trust dissolves, and the remaining trust assets go to POST.

There are many types of charitable remainder trusts designed to meet different personal income, tax and charitable gift goals. We would be pleased to provide a confidential proposal outlining the tax and financial implications of a charitable remainder trust for you. Please also consult with your financial and tax counsel to determine what type of arrangement best meets your situation.

We invite all donors with CRTs benefiting POST to join our Open Space Legacy Society, which recognizes donors who are providing future support to POST through planned gifts.

For more information, please contact:

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Director of Planned Giving
Peninsula Open Space Trust
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Help us achieve higher ground...

GoMindego

Your gift now means Mindego Hill will bloom every spring.
To make your gift online, go to www.gomindego.org

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LANDSCAPES
SPRING 2008

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