

Nancy Backstrand

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pretty poor because of all the cattle-grazing. It was very eaten down, very rocky.”

At first the docents just gave tours on weekends. But then they faced the new challenge of starting a week day school program. She estimates they had up to 150 students a day at times.

Since the cattle had not left that long before, there were still a lot of “cow puckies” around. But this didn’t daunt the kids at all. Not only that, but she would have teachers call her afterwards, explaining that — unknown to all — some of the children managed to get back to school with frogs and garter snakes stuffed in their pockets.

These days Nancy is working on a history of the Santa Rosa Plateau. Life has thrown her another challenge — this time, loss of her eyesight. But as always, she isn’t letting it get her down. The book is almost ready to go to press.

In Memory

Lee Backstrand, husband of Nancy Backstrand and friend of the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve, died Friday, March 25, 2005. He was 76 years old.

Lee was also a member of the California Nature Conservancy and the Friends of the Santa Margarita River.

He and his wife’s kindness and hospitality are remembered by many Plateau activists.

“Music Under the Oaks” Concert Set For September 24

The Foundation will be tackling its single largest fundraiser early this fall with an outdoor concert of John Denver music, as performed by John Adams and friends. The performance is to be held out behind the visitor center.

Because of the limited space, only 250 seats can be sold. The price is \$50 a ticket. The show will start at 7:30 pm and end around 10:30, with approximately a half hour intermission.

Some tickets have already been sold, so please call concert chair Joanne New at 698-0365 as soon as possible to guarantee your seats.

Besides the show, beverages and CD’s of the band’s music will be on sale.

A silent auction will feature an offer by renown artist Elin Pendleton, who will paint a commission for the winning bid. “I’ll paint their favorite scene of the Reserve, at their favorite time of year,” explained Elin.

Also up for bid will be \$100 worth of framing from Bella Gallery, a bicycle and a hand-made quilt depicting scenes of nature, sewn by Pat Mitro. Wine donated by local wineries will also be on the list.

As of this writing, the major corporate sponsors for this event are Temecula Valley Bank, Arrowhead Credit Union, Community National Bank and State Farm agent Scott Koch.

The band will be staying at Comfort Inn & Suites, who are giving us a discount.