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FRIENDS *of* VILLA GRANDE NEWSLETTER

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OUR MISSION:

- ❖ RESTORE AND MAINTAIN PATTERSON POINT AS A RIPARIAN PRESERVE FOR LIMITED PUBLIC RECREATION USE
- ❖ PRESERVE THE HISTORIC AND UNIQUE CHARACTER OF VILLA GRANDE
- ❖ ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE GREATER VILLA GRANDE COMMUNITY

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Now that fall is here, the restoration work on Patterson Point has begun again. Overseeing this work is the Restoration And Management of Patterson Point Preserve (RAMPPP) Committee. The committee reviews the plan of action for each season, develops the restoration budget for the coming year and submits both plan and budget to the FoVG Board of Directors for approval in the spring. The terms of the committee's participants end in December, and I invite interested members to contact me if you would be interested in serving in 2013. To volunteer for this committee, send email to me at richandwanda@sbcglobal.net.

I want to thank all of the members of the 2012 RAMPPP Committee including Natalie Robb-Wilder, Linda Fisher, Jim Beck,

Jon Box, Roberto Esteves and, most especially, chairperson Victoria Wikle. They have all worked hard on the coordination and planning that needs to get done to accomplish the difficult restoration tasks. It is the combined efforts of the RAMPPP committee, the volunteers, the stewards, the Board of Directors and all of our members that have made the restoration work progress as far and as well as it has. It takes a town!

Volunteers are always welcome to work at the Preserve on our work days. No experience necessary.

Rich Holmer

President of the Board of Directors
Friends of Villa Grande

SUMMER PROGRAM SURVEY



This past summer, FoVG introduced its pilot "Recreational Opportunities" programs, designed to make the Preserve more enjoyable for visitors. Now that summer's over, we'd like to get your comments regarding the boat anchorage program, the signage throughout the Preserve, plus the portable toilet and kiosk at the Preserve entrance.

We've prepared a short 5 question online survey that will only take a minute to fill out. The Board will be evaluating all responses to decide if these programs should be offered again next summer, with or without changes.

To access the survey, please, go to:

www.tinyurl.com/FoVGsurvey-2012

STEP BACK IN TIME - WINTER DINNER JANUARY 26TH

The winter blues will fade away as we travel to the old Villa Grande Hotel and “Step Back In Time” for our next fundraiser dinner event on January 26. In its heyday, the hotel was the dining room for the whole community, and for this one night, 40 patrons will relive the experience. No-host cocktails are at 6:00 p.m., followed by candlelit dinner at 7:00 with complimentary wine, and catering by Christina at Simply Scrumptious.

Just as in olden times, entertainment will feature popular tunes of the era, a community sing-along plus a performance by a traveling troubadour. Tickets are \$85 each, and proceeds will help fund FoVG activities at Patterson Point Preserve. If you want to support the cause, but just can't be there in person, a \$25 “virtual ticket” will help cover costs and we'll raise a glass in your honor.

The old Hotel is at 21849 East Street, Villa Grande. To purchase tickets or make a donation, go to: <http://villagrande.org/winterdinner> or call Roberto at (707) 865-9558.



Villa Grande Hotel Dining Room in Days Gone By

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE OLD HOTEL

Herman Blossfeldt, a member of the guard for the last Tsar, was born in Liepāja, a town on the Baltic Sea in Latvia in 1866. Legend has it that he was a body double for Tsar Nicholas II, but he was long gone when the revolution came. Herman left Russia before 1900, spending time in Alaska and San Francisco, eventually owning (with a Lawrence Fauth) the Hotel Vermont on Valencia in the Mission District.

Sonoma county records show Blossfeldt was a resident of “Grandville” in 1913, the name of our town after it was Mesa Grande and before it was changed to Villa Grande. One of his cousins, also from Liepāja, was the patriarch of the Girot clan, which had already settled here and continues to this day. George Girot, who was born in 1916, summered in Villa Grande with his family, and remembered Uncle Herman building the Old Hotel around 1920.

In addition to the main building, Herman built 10 tent “cabin” platforms and the Goat House for summer visitors. Two of the tent cabins and the Goat House were later converted to year-round livable houses, and are still occupied.

The Old Hotel was a center of activity in the town, along with the General Store. Its dining room was always busy since several houses didn't have proper kitchens. Chef Anna Hartman was known for her meals, and her famous pastries made the “Villa Grande Dinner” a destination for summer visitors arriving on the train from San Francisco.

On January 26, Friends of Villa Grande will recreate a slice of this community history at the “Step Back in Time” dinner.

VILLA GRANDE HISTORY DAY TOURS

Another History Day in Villa Grande is planned for Sunday, May 26 during the Memorial Day weekend. This successful event in 2011 attracted over 100 history and architecture buffs who listened to stories from some of the old timers and visited 10 homes in town. We are looking for other home-

owners who would be willing to present their houses for this historical tour of Villa Grande. If you're amenable to having visitors tour the inside or outside of your home and learn about its history, please email Roberto Esteves at: friends@villagrande.org.

FUNDRAISING REPORT

Our August Treasure Chest Sale earned \$1,072, and special thanks to FoVG member Rick Hopkins for coming up from LA to help coordinate the event. Also thanks to Jane Saunders, Pat Clarkson, Rich Holmer, Kyla Brooke, Nancy Lopes, Ellin Firth and all members who donated their "treasures" and helped to staff the two day event.

The second annual Hawaiian Shirt Golf Tournament, Luau and Spa Day was a success again this year, and added \$1,262 to the FoVG coffers. A good time was had by all, and thanks especially to Greg and Susan Sampson for all their hard work.



Treasure Chest Sale at Villa Grande Firehouse

PPP RESTORATION UPDATE AND VIDEO

The first Preserve work day of the season brought out twelve volunteers on September 22. When the ivy pulling and cleanup was done, the crew gathered at Roberto's for a party and to watch the premiere of "Patterson Point Preserve: A Community Project." The 10 minute video was produced, edited and directed by Suzanne Girot.

You can watch it on our website at villagrande.org on the Patterson Point Preserve page.

Restoration work days on the preserve continue on the third Saturday of each month during the winter, starting at 1:00 p.m. All are invited.

PROPANE DISCOUNT PROGRAM REMINDER

The popularity of the FoVG propane discount program means we have reached a new (better!) discount tier for propane services. The agreement we have with Northern Energy/Amerigas Propane is good for two more years, through December, 2014.

If you're interested in the program and are a current FoVG member, contact Roberto - at (707) 865-9558 or friends@villagrande.org - and he will put you in touch with our contact at Northern Energy/Amerigas Propane.

FOVG FINANCIAL REPORT

Friends of Villa Grande began its fiscal year on July 1 with a bank balance of \$34,663. The board has approved a budget for the current year of \$46,270, which allocates \$10,000 towards retiring the debt, another \$8,000 for PPP restoration work with \$10,000 to be held in operations reserve. A portion of the restoration cost will be reimbursed through our original matching grant from Sonoma County Open Space. Additional expenditures for the coming year in-

clude insurance, fundraising expenses and a new roof for the town's former firehouse, now the FoVG and PPP tool storage facility.

The Retire the Debt program has been very successful, with the original \$60,000 loaned by FoVG members in 2009 to be reduced to \$11,400 by the end of this year. The goal is to pay off the remainder in 2013, through FoVG memberships and fundraisers. Now, that's a good excuse for a party!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

**"Step Back In Time"
Winter Dinner**
January 26
Cocktails - 6:00 p.m.
Dinner - 7:00 p.m.
Old Villa Grande Hotel

**PPP Restoration
Work Parties**
1:00 p.m.
November 17
December 15
January 19
February 16
March 9

**History Day
House Tours**
Sunday, May 26
Volunteers Needed!

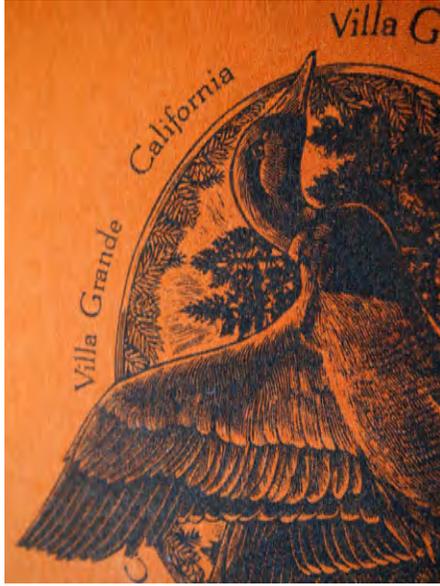
Online at:
villagrande.org/calendar

Keep current on what's happening in Villa Grande on Facebook at villagrande.org/Facebook

ON THE WEB AT
VILLAGRANDE.ORG

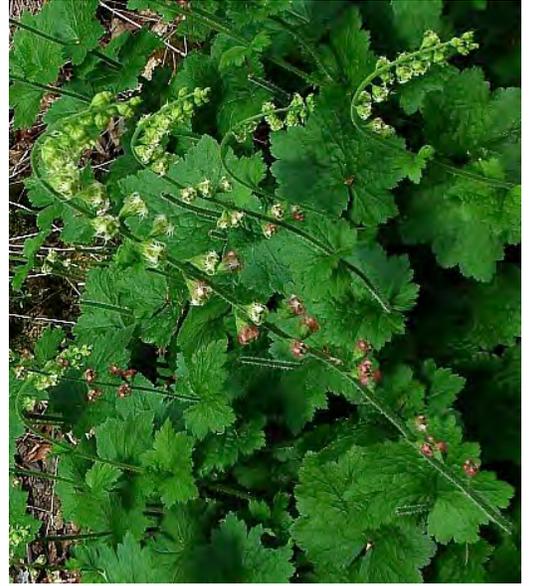
CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEA

Seeking that perfect gift for that hard-to-buy-for friend or family member? What about a Villa Grande tee shirt? We're having a closeout sale of the remaining stock, sizes limited to XXL, XL, L, and SM, just \$12 each, tax included. To order call (707) 865-9558 or email friends@villagrande.org.



TELLIMA GRANDIFLORA - FRINGE CUPS

Fringe cups is a shade-tolerant native perennial that thrives in the Preserve. Small, urn-shaped flowers grow along 1.5-2' stalks, changing from green to pink to red as they age. Leaves are fuzzy and heart-shaped with a scalloped edge.



FOVG MEMBERSHIP FORM

July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013

RENEWAL NEW

BENEFACTOR	\$ 1,000	TWO FREE TICKETS TO ALL EVENTS
PATRON	\$500	ONE FREE TICKET TO ALL EVENTS
FAMILY MEMBERSHIP	\$100	LIST NAMES BELOW
CONTRIBUTING MEMBER	\$50	SINGLE MEMBERSHIP
DISCOUNT MEMBER	\$25	LOW INCOME

ADDITIONAL PATTERSON POINT PRESERVE DONATION (\$1-\$1 MATCH) \$ _____

TOTAL PAID: Cash/Ck/PayPal \$ _____

Name of member/family members: _____

Mail Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Local Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Please send check and form to FoVG
 PO Box 28, Villa Grande, CA 95486
 or online through Paypal at
villagrande.org/FOVG/Membership