

You're receiving this email because you're a member or supporter of Solano Land Trust. You can unsubscribe by clicking the link at the bottom of the email. If you want to share this newsletter, please use the forward link. Thank you.



## Solano Land Trust News December 2009

Welcome to our new bi-monthly electronic newsletter. The print version of *Vistas* will continue to arrive in your mailbox in the spring and fall. Only members receive the print version and invitations to special events, so [join or renew today!](#)

### It's walnut season!

*Support your local farmers*

Holidays wouldn't be the same without walnuts. For many people it's a tradition to serve them in a bowl with a nutcracker, or to fold them into cookies and bread. Even American crows know that it's walnut season. All over the county you can find walnut shells on roads where the crows have dropped and cracked the whole nut to get to the meat.



Just as walnuts and the holidays go together, so do Solano Land Trust and farmers. Two farmers with close ties to Solano Land Trust grow organic walnuts on the Dixon Ridge, 11 miles northeast of Vacaville. Craig McNamara's farm supports walnuts, irrigated row crops, and the Center for Land-based Learning, a nonprofit that connects young people to agriculture, environmental stewardship, and their own skills and confidence. Solano Land Trust holds a conservation easement on 283 acres of his ranch. Craig and his wife Julie placed an easement on the property to ensure that it would remain in agricultural production in perpetuity.

Russ Lester—who has been a Solano Land Trust board member since 1995—grows, buys and distributes organic California walnuts. He began farming organically in 1989, and is aspiring to be 100 percent energy self-sufficient by 2012. He recently

[Join or Renew Today!](#)

### COMING EVENTS

#### Members-only holiday party

Monday, Dec. 7,  
2009

5:30 to 8:00 p.m.

RSVP to Greg  
Peterson at

(707) 386-6411 x  
205 or

[greg@solanolandtrust.org](mailto:greg@solanolandtrust.org)

Hope to see you  
there!

#### King-Swett Ranches

#### Docent-led hikes

Jan. 2, 2010, 9  
a.m.

Feb. 6, 2010, 9  
a.m.

#### Lynch Canyon Docent-led hikes

Dec. 13, 2009, 9  
a.m.

Dec. 19, 2009, 9  
a.m.

Dec. 26, 2009, 9  
a.m.

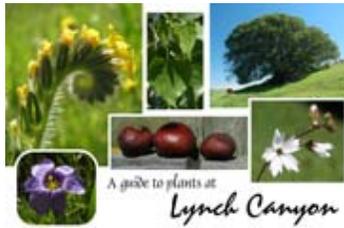
Jan. 16, 2010, 9

installed a biomass generation machine that converts 800,000 pounds of walnut shells for energy creation.

While walnuts are especially sweet and crunchy in December, they are also tasty year-round. "With current cold storage technologies walnuts don't lose their high quality or flavor," says Lester. Buy local, organic walnuts from Dixon Ridge Farms at [www.dixonridgefarms.com](http://www.dixonridgefarms.com). A jar of sweet or savory roasted walnuts makes a great holiday or hostess gift.

*(Photo of sheep grazing row crop between walnut trees at Putah Creek Ranch courtesy of Craig McNamara.)*

## Please join or renew your membership today!



Solano Land Trust depends on you. This year, more than ever, we need your support to keep our programs thriving! New members who join at the \$100 level or higher will receive a full-color *Lynch Canyon Plant Guide*. As a Solano Land Trust member, you'll

be invited to special events and receive an annual discount at our Rush Ranch facilities. If you have already renewed or joined, we thank you!

Solano Land Trust has protected over 19,891 acres of Solano County lands since 1986. There is still so much work to do. Solano County is home to many beautiful places like oak woodlands, wildflower-studded grasslands and highly productive agricultural land—and we need your support to protect them. We all need to work together to preserve these local treasures that make Solano County a special place to live, work and play. Your tax-deductible membership will help us keep these lands protected for future generations.

[Join or renew today!](#)

## Solano Land Trust holiday gift shop now open!

*This year give the gift of Solano Land Trust*

For the first time, you can now purchase a variety of Solano Land Trust products on our website. For SIGG water bottles, organic t-shirts and sweatshirts [click here](#); for T-shirts, mugs and mouse pads [click here](#). Additionally, you can purchase a *Lynch Canyon Plant Guide* [click here](#), Solano Land Trust membership [click here](#), or a personalized brick at Rush Ranch [click here](#) as a holiday gift this year. And don't forget, you can give someone the gift of peace and serenity with a relaxing weekend at Rush Ranch in our rustic guest quarters [click here](#).



a.m.  
Jan. 17, 2010, 9  
a.m.  
Jan. 23, 2010, 9  
a.m.

**Rush Ranch**  
Guided walk (9  
a.m.)  
Blacksmith demo  
(10 a.m.)  
Wagon rides (11  
a.m.)  
Dec. 19, 2009  
Jan. 16, 2010

**Rush Ranch**  
Raptor ID  
workshop  
& tour  
Jan. 9, 2010, 10  
a.m.

**Rush Ranch**  
Birding walk  
Jan. 30, 2010, 10  
a.m.

**Jepson Prairie**  
Winter raptor  
tour  
Feb. 13, 2010, 10  
a.m.



(Photo by Steve Metz)

**SAVE THE  
DATES!**

**Rush Ranch**  
Annual Open  
House  
Saturday, April  
24, 2010  
Join the Rush  
Ranch  
Educational  
Council and  
Solano  
Land Trust for  
family day

Thanks for shopping!

## Business partner in conservation profile

*Interview with Sue Fisher Jones of Valero*

Solano Land Trust partners with many local businesses that believe in and support our mission to protect working farms and natural areas. Valero Benicia Refinery is a business partner in conservation at the benefactor level. Public Affairs Manager Sue Fisher Jones is one busy lady, but Solano Land Trust's Development Director Greg Peterson was lucky enough to catch up to her by phone. He wondered why an oil refinery would have an interest in being a business partner in conservation with Solano Land Trust.

### Why is local environmental support important to Valero?

Our 500 employees have a wide array of interests including hiking, biking, photography, and bird watching. Having opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors nearby is beneficial to the health and welfare of our employees and their families.

### Why do you give to Solano Land Trust in particular?

As a company, we have a Benicia focus, but also realize that two-thirds of our employees live in Northern Solano County. Solano Land Trust is the only organization in the county working to preserve natural areas for public enjoyment. We chose to become a business partner because of Lynch Canyon and Rush Ranch, properties that are accessible to our employees and close to their homes. Our employees love spending time in nature with their families on their time off. My family likes to hike and bird watch. I support the Lynch Canyon Trail Run because of the community involvement and focus on health, and the Patwin Native American Program at Rush Ranch because it serves youth.

### Do you encourage your employees to volunteer?

Yes, we have an extensive volunteer program. During our annual "Month of Caring" in the fall, we give our employees four hours of paid time to volunteer for an organization of their choosing. This year they gave over 625 hours of time including 150 hours on Solano Land Trust properties. We also promote employee giving. With partial matching funds from Valero, our employees gave over \$680,000 to charity this year.

### Anything else you'd like to add?

Happy holidays to all!

## Sightings

*Here's what visitors are seeing on our properties*

9.20.09

at the ranch.  
[www.rushranch.net](http://www.rushranch.net)

### Lynch Canyon Third Annual Trail Run & Community Hike

Saturday, June 5,  
2010

For group,  
corporate or  
individual  
sponsorship  
opportunities call  
Greg at (707)  
432-0150 ext.  
205

[www.lynchcanyontrailrun.com](http://www.lynchcanyontrailrun.com)

Find out more  
information about  
events at:

[www.solanolandtrust.org](http://www.solanolandtrust.org)



### ATTENTION VOLUNTEERS!

#### Have some fun and become part of our team!

Volunteers are the  
heart and soul of  
Solano Land  
Trust's programs.

Join us for  
workdays on the  
land or at a  
special event.

Learn more at  
[www.solanolandtrust.org](http://www.solanolandtrust.org)

Lynch Canyon

Linda Sonner spotted a **praying mantis** on Middle Valley Trail.

10.18.09

South of Jepson Prairie

Larry Broderick watched **2 ferruginous hawks, 2 American Kestrels, 6 red-tailed hawks, 2 Northern harriers,** and **1 white-tailed kite.**

*(Photo of ferruginous hawk taken by Larry Broderick.)*



10.25.09

Lynch Canyon

Larry Broderick and class participants counted **4 golden eagles, 20 red-tailed hawks, 1 white-tailed kite, 12 Northern harriers, 8 American kestrels, 1 Cooper's hawk, 3 sharp-shinned hawks,** and **2 prairie falcons.**

11.16.09

Lynch Canyon

Robin Leong saw **3 immatures** and **1 adult golden eagle** in North Canyon.

11.21.09

Lynch Canyon

Larry Broderick and raptor tour participants recorded seeing **1 bald eagle** (first or second year), **1 Cooper's hawk, 2 red-shouldered hawks, 11 Northern harriers, 23 red-tailed hawks** (half were juveniles), **2 white-tailed kites.** Broderick said that the group had **18 golden eagle** sightings with at least 5 different birds (possibly 7), many of them juveniles.

Late November

Rush Ranch

Land Steward Ken Poerner watched over **100 long-billed curlews** fly around the Rush Ranch prairie (uplands).

*Solano Land Trust has been protecting working farms and natural areas in Solano County since 1986.*



Solano Land Trust  
1001 Texas Street, Suite C  
Fairfield, CA 94533  
(707) 432-0151 x 209  
[info@solanolandtrust.org](mailto:info@solanolandtrust.org)  
[www.solanolandtrust.org](http://www.solanolandtrust.org)

To comment on E-Vistas or to be added to our mailing list please contact [enews@solanolandtrust.org](mailto:enews@solanolandtrust.org)