

Anne DeLozier

From: Solano Land Trust <info@solanolandtrust.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 19, 2011 5:45 PM
To: Anne DeLozier
Subject: News from Solano Land Trust

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Solano Land Trust News July 2011

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Help us save Rockville Trails!

[Learn more here](#)

Give online at:
www.solanolandtrust.org

Or send a check to:
Solano Land Trust
1001 Texas Street, Suite C
Fairfield, CA 94533

In This Issue

[Campaign to Preserve Rockville Trails](#)

Late breaking news: The campaign to preserve Rockville Trails



Hikers exploring Rockville Trails

Shortly after the *San Francisco Chronicle* showcased Solano Land Trust's successful purchase of 330 acres of a potential 1,500-acre park at Rockville Trails in a [front-page story](#), Associate Director Deanna Mott received an envelope that contained a check for \$5,000 to go towards purchasing the remaining 1,170 acres. The contribution came from an anonymous donor in Contra Costa County. The generosity of this donor illustrates the high importance that all Bay Area people place on protecting this land, and serves as a challenge to Solano County residents to join the Community Campaign to Preserve Rockville Trails!

[Thank you Morgan Miller Blair](#)

[Aim for Ag and Open Space](#)

[Soul Food Farm](#)

[Lynch Canyon Trail Run Recap](#)

[Rush Ranch Science Docents](#)

Upcoming Events

Please note: Rush Ranch will have limited access September 10 & 24, 2011, due to a private event.

Aim for Ag and Open Space
Sporting Clay Shoot
Saturday, August 20
8 to 10:30 a.m.: Optional
beginner's clinic
10 a.m.: Registration
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.: Shoot
1 p.m.: Lunch, drawing, & raffle
[Register now!](#)

King-Swett Ranches
Docent-led Hike
Saturday, August 6
Saturday, September 3
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.



Photo by Doug Wirtz

Citizen Science Friday
Location TBD
Friday, August 19
Friday, September 16
8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Lynch Canyon
Docent-led Hike
Saturday, July 23
Saturday, August 27
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Lynch Canyon
Ranger-led Hike
Saturday, August 20
9 a.m. to Noon

Rush Ranch
Get the Rush!
(Nature walk, wagon rides,
and more)
Saturday, August 20
Saturday, September 17

In kicking off the campaign to raise \$10.5 million for the purchase of the remaining acres, Solano Land Trust secured \$3 million from the State Coastal Conservancy.

"As a conservation acquisition, Rockville Trails has got it all—diverse plant and animal communities, wildlife corridors, a strategic location at the foot of the Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area, the potential for a six-mile segment of the Bay Area Ridge Trail, and stunning scenery and vistas," says Coastal Conservancy's Amy Hutzel. "With the foundation for an acquisition laid by the Solano Land Trust, the Green Valley Landowners Association, the City of Fairfield, and the Resources Legacy Fund, the Conservancy was glad to be able to make the first commitment of major non-local funding, demonstrating how highly we value this acquisition and hopefully making it more attractive for other organizations and individuals to follow with the rest of the funds needed."

With the Coastal Conservancy's contribution, we have \$7.5 million to raise before February 2012. If we don't raise the full amount, White Wing Highlands Associates will retain ownership and the right to develop 185 homes on the site.

Rockville Trails, located between Green and Suisun Valleys, west of Rockville Road, has been eyed for housing for the past 30 years, and several years ago the development of 370 homes was approved. But for 30 years the community never wavered in its resolve to preserve this special place, and in May 2011, Solano Land Trust placed an option to acquire the property for \$13.5 million—less than 10% of its original value when the real estate market was at its peak. With help from funds provided by local assessments, we were able to purchase the first 330 acres for \$3 million.

During the coming months we will be asking for your support so that we can finish the job began 30 years ago. Stay tuned! For more information, contact Associate Director Deanna Mott at deanna@solanolandtrust.org or (707) 432-0150 x 205.

Monica Sloboda with Morgan Miller Blair played key role in the success of Rockville Trails

Nicole Byrd, Executive Director



Negotiating a complex real estate deal like Rockville Trails and settling a 30-year-old land dispute is an incredibly complicated legal challenge. The Walnut Creek law firm, [Morgan Miller Blair](#), and partner Bruce Ring came on board early to support the project. As of July 2011, they have donated over \$200,000 in pro bono legal support!

Monica Sloboda, also a partner of the firm, was assigned to the project. She often worked on weekends and through the night to create and review the complicated legal documents that secured our option to buy Rockville Trails. Without her commitment and expertise, we would have never been able to finalize the deal. I highly recommend working with Monica if you are ever in need of legal help!

Morgan Miller Blair has committed to seeing this project through our purchase of the full property, set for February 2012. But we just had to say thank you now for the hundreds of hours that Morgan Miller Blair has donated so far. This donation is a gift to our community and the entire Bay Area. Huge thanks to Monica, Bruce and Morgan Miller Blair!

Aim for Ag and Open Space geared for beginning and seasoned shooters

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.



Photo by Karen Vittorio

Lynch Canyon
Birds of Prey Tour
Saturday, September 24
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

For more event information and
directions go to
www.solanolandtrust.org

Volunteers Needed

Lynch Canyon
Volunteer Day
Saturday, August 13
Saturday, September 10
9 a.m. to noon

Rush Ranch
Volunteer Day
Saturday, August 6
Saturday, September 3
9 a.m. to noon

Please RSVP to Natalie at
volunteer@solanolandtrust.org
(707) 432-0150 x 200

Community Events

Lake Solano Tours
Saturday, July 24
Saturday, August 13
Saturday, August 28
Saturday, September 10
Saturday, September 25
10 a.m. to Noon

[Solano County Parks](#)

California State Fair
July 14 to July 31
www.bigfun.org

Solano County Fair
August 3 to August 7
www.scfair.com/scfair.html

Suisun Valley
Harvest Celebration
Sunday, August 14
11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
www.suisunvalley.com

27th Annual
Coastal Cleanup Day

Deanna Mott, Associate Director



Picture a basement with balloons taped to the banister. A scraggly-haired nine-year-old girl is pointing a Daisy BB gun toward the balloons from across the room. That's me at my first "target practice." I grew up in a small town in Iowa where everyone waited for the opening day of hunting season. Each Saturday and Sunday during pheasant season I trudged through the snow with my dad and brother until we got

our limit. When I joined the Army and was issued an M-16 rifle, I took exceptional pride in knowing how to shoot and properly clean a gun, and always fired "expert" during qualifications. Just don't give me a grenade; I throw like a girl!

When Board President Darrin Berardi suggested a sporting clay shoot as a fundraiser for Solano Land Trust, I knew it was a great idea. I also knew we'd have some explaining to do. We knew there would be many people who didn't grow up hunting, and didn't know how much fun it was to shoot skeet, trap, or sporting clays.

We are encouraging everyone to attend our sporting clay shoot on August 20 at Bird's Landing, and you don't have to be an expert shot or seasoned shooter to participate. We're offering an optional beginner's safety and orientation clinic before the actual shoot begins. Shotguns will be available to rent on site if you don't own one.

Come see and hear our featured guest shooter, sporting clay expert and TV personality Billy Gianquinto! Tickets are \$75 per person and include optional beginners clinic, shoot, barbecue and hosted beer and wine, and raffle.

Mark your calendars and join us next month for another great fundraiser! For more information, to register, or to sponsor the event, contact Anne DeLozier at (707) 432-0150 x 209, or visit [Aim For Ag & Open Space](#).

Food & Farming: Vacaville's own Soul Food Farm provides farm fresh eggs to First Lady Obama's breakfast

By Aleta George, Editor



Alexis Koefoed at Soul Food Farms

The celebrity that drew the most attention at a recent breakfast at the Claremont Hotel in Berkeley was First Lady Michelle Obama, but Vacaville [Soul Food Farm](#) purveyor Alexis Koefoed was more excited about her eggs.

When Koefoed learned that Chez Panisse's Alice Waters—a long time supporter of Soul Food Farm—was having breakfast with the First Lady, Koefoed emailed Waters to request that she serve Soul Food Farm eggs. Waters emailed back that she would, but Koefoed didn't learn until three days later that the breakfast would also include 250 other guests!

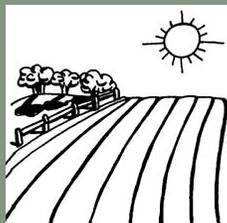
The First Lady isn't alone in appreciating Soul Food Farm eggs. Guests at Solano Land Trust's Farm Fresh Feast have also enjoyed them. The Koefoeds contribute their fresh eggs to Solano Land Trust events because they believe in the work we do. To learn more about Soul Food Farm and its purveyors, we invite you to ["Meet the Farmer"](#) on our website.

Lynch Canyon News & Views:

Saturday, September 17
[Coastal Cleanup](#)

Food & Farming

Support Solano County farmers



Community Supported
Agriculture:

[Eatwell Farm](#)
[Shooting Star CSA](#)
[Soul Food Farm](#)

Farm stands:

[Castaneda Bros. Produce](#)
[Erickson Ranch](#)
[Larry's Produce](#)
[Saechao Family Farm](#)
[Sunny Slope Orchard](#)
[The Vegetable Patch](#)

Farmers' markets:

[Benicia](#)
[Dixon](#)
[Fairfield](#)
[Green Valley \(New!\)](#)
[Vacaville](#)
[Vallejo](#)

If we inadvertently missed listing a local CSA, farm stand or farmer's market, we apologize! Let us know so we can add you next time.

Sightings

What: Intrepid pipe-vine swallowtail butterflies flying against the wind

Where: King Ranch

When: Late June

Who: Painter Susan Schneider

Trail run makes for muddy good fun

Aleta George, Editor



"Crazy Running Ladies"
at the finish

Photo by Aleta George

A record-breaking storm kept fair-weather walkers and runners away from the 4th Annual Lynch Canyon Trail Run and Community Hike, but brought out the best in everyone who did show up.

Considering the weather, there were smiles and good cheer all around, from the volunteers to the runners to the Crazy Running Ladies who braved the community hike.

Associate Director Deanna Mott and the organizing committee including Chris Abess (founder and committee chair), Eldrith Gosney, Buzz Higgins, Jim Reikowsky, and Todd Rewick, want to give a HUGE thank you to all the volunteers and sponsors. "The positive energy of all the volunteers made it a great event for the runners," said Mott, the event coordinator. "They were a dedicated bunch to be out on such a miserable day."

Even with all the mud and rain, Justin Morejohn of Davis, CA, set a course record for the 10K at 43.39. [Find race results here.](#)

In other Lynch Canyon news, the Solano County Board of Supervisors voted to approve funding to keep Lynch Canyon open for another year. That is welcome news since 70 state parks are expected to close later this year, most of them in Northern California. [Check the Solano Land Trust website for operating hours.](#)

Rush Ranch Roundup: Docents learn about the science of Suisun Marsh

Natalie DuMont, Volunteer & Education Coordinator



Rush Ranch docents in training
Photo by Natalie DuMont

Thanks to a grant from Solano County, we recently began a new docent program at Rush Ranch that focuses on marsh science, and this June over a dozen people graduated!

This new program compliments the existing offerings of the [Rush Ranch Educational Council](#) (RREC) and [Access Adventure](#). RREC volunteers organize field trips and activities about Native Americans, pioneers, the Rush family, and native plants and animals. Access

Adventure volunteers make it possible for people with disabilities to experience outdoor recreation, education, and therapy through a working partnership with horses. What's especially great is that some of the new Solano Land Trust docents are also long-time volunteers with RREC and Access Adventure!

Recognized as one of the best remaining tidal marsh habitats in the United States, Rush Ranch is protected as part of the [San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve](#) (San Francisco Bay NERR). During the four days of docent training, Sarah Ferner of NERR explained why Rush Ranch's marsh is so special. The Rush family preserved most of the tidal marsh at the ranch instead of changing its course or creating dikes and levees. Today, the unmanaged marsh still filters silt from the Suisun Slough and protects shorelines from erosion and flooding.



Photo by Ken Poerner

What: Great-horned owl and fledgling
Where: Rush Ranch picnic area
When: Mid-June
Who: Ken Poerner

What: Tri-colored blackbirds
Where: Rush Ranch horse corrals and Spring Branch pond
When: Becoming regular Rush Ranch visitors
Who: Ken Poerner

Solano Land Trust

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



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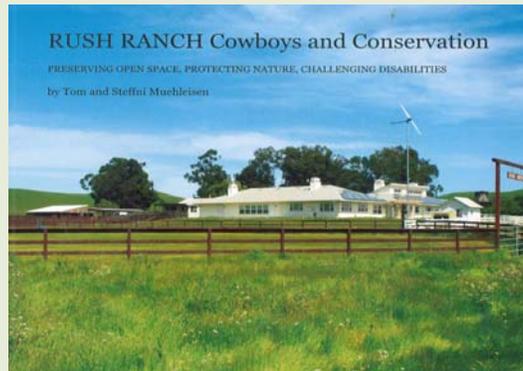
The Rush Ranch marsh is home to several endangered species including the endemic Suisun thistle, the thumb-sized salt marsh harvest mouse, and the California clapper rail. The rails had been missing from Rush Ranch, but were sighted earlier this year!

The training taught the docents that Rush Ranch serves as a living laboratory for scientific research. Across the nation, Rush Ranch is a model for how a tidal marsh should function and look. So now we can share not only why Rush Ranch is locally loved, but also how it is nationally famous!

Book for Sale

Rush Ranch Cowboys and Conservation: Preserving Open Space, Protecting Nature, Challenging Disabilities

by Tom and Steffni Muehleisen



"Our goal with the book was to highlight Rush Ranch and the conservation efforts of the Solano Land Trust. As nature photographers it is important for us to do our part in conservation. This book highlights some of the birds and wildlife that benefit from conservation. Access Adventure is also important in their work to get the disabled into the outdoors and of course NERR does the critical research to help preserve all of this."

Tom and Steffni Muehleisen

The Muehleisens initiated the project and volunteered their time and resources toward making the book. All profits go to Access Adventure, Rush Ranch Educational Council, and San Francisco Bay NERR.

[Purchase the book online](#)

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