



Portola and Castle Rock Foundation

Inspiring the Protection of Castle Rock and Portola Redwoods State Parks Through Quality Educational Experiences and Infrastructure Improvements

President's Message

Thank you for your support. I'm looking forward to meeting more of you at our annual Member and Volunteer Appreciation Event taking place on November 1st! In this newsletter, we bring news of park improvement projects you're helping support, we highlight the recent member hike, announce new programs, and we share State Park news. With support from donors, members, and volunteers, the Portola and Castle Rock Foundation will continue to make a difference. Hope to see you on the trails soon!

--James Rauhen

Member and Volunteer Appreciation Event

Portola and Castle Rock Foundation

2015 MEMBER & VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENT

Save the Date!

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 1ST
11 AM - 1 PM

Portola Redwoods State Park

Additional details will be provided by Oct 10

Castle Rock Graffiti Removal Project

Over the years Castle Rock has suffered an increasing amount of graffiti vandalism. These unsightly markings on signs, trees and rocks are eyesores and detract from the visitor experience to this beautiful gem of a park. In 2014 members of the Portola and Castle Rock Foundation (PCRF) began discussions with State Parks on how best to remove these eyesores. In 2015, PCRF was awarded a generous grant from the California State Parks Foundation which enabled us to purchase equipment and supplies to conduct the first of a series of graffiti cleanup workdays in the park. Working with State Parks, the PCRF solicited volunteers for the first workday on August 8th. Volunteers came from the Park Volunteers, the rock climbing community and park visitors who responded to project postings in the park and in various outdoor recreation stores.

On the first day the team experiment with the techniques and equipment to determine which approach to use for the various surfaces. Both chemical and mechanical methods of graffiti removal were tried. The chemical agent, known as Elephant snot, was sanctioned as environmental friendly by State Parks. Grinding equipment consisted of battery powered electrical drills with various grinding attachments. Safe-Wipes were successfully used to remove graffiti from signs.

Park rangers then met with the volunteer crew in the park where teams were assigned to clean different areas. The 3+ hour work session resulted in a significant improvement in the visual appearance of the Rocks and signs in the Castle Rock area of the park and the climbing area known as the Muffins.

A big THANK YOU to Peet's of Saratoga for providing volunteers with coffee.

Through this project we hope to educate and instill a sense of protection in visitors and volunteers. We are planning subsequent workdays to continue to remove graffiti from Castle Rock State Park.



New Programs

Amazon Smile... shop and support PCRF

AmazonSmile is a great way to give back when you shop. Use the link below to shop on Amazon. Same price to you, and Amazon will donate a portion of their profit to the Portola and Castle Rock Foundation. Thank you for your support. smile.amazon.com/ch/94-3151586



Cars 4 Causes...donate your vehicle

We are pleased to announce that the Portola and Castle Rock Foundation has partnered with Cars 4 Causes. Call 1.888.444.2392 to arrange for Cars 4 Causes to remove your unwanted vehicle. We'll receive a cash donation and you'll receive a donation receipt to apply to your tax return.

http://www.cars4causes.net/charity-car-donation/portola-and-castle-rock-foundation?_vsrefdom-charity_pages



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PCR Foundation Hike – September 5th – Portola Redwoods State Park

The Portola and Castle Rock Foundation hike through the Save the Redwoods portal to the lost world of old growth redwoods at Peters Creek took place on September 5th. It was a beautiful hike and a rare chance to visit a site in Portola Redwoods State Park that few have visited via the 14 mile trek through the Park Trails. Round trip from Crocker's Curve is 4.12 miles. Thank you, Andy Vought for leading the hike.



Membership

Can you believe we almost lost our two beloved parks just four years ago? During the state budget crisis, both parks were up for closure. Our community came together. The Foundation took decisive action. **Together we kept Castle Rock and Portola open.** While both Parks were saved from closure, they remain threatened and require our continued commitment. We need the support of our neighbors, like you.

Will you support our community's cherished parks by accepting this invitation to become a Member of the Portola and Castle Rock Foundation?

You may join for \$35 as an Individual Member or up to \$1,000 as a Patron Member. To join, visit our website at www.PortolaAndCastleRockFound.org.

As a member, you will receive hiking and climbing maps for both Parks, a discount at the Visitor Center store, and organized hikes led by experienced docents. You'll also be invited to our annual Member Appreciation Event, a wonderful opportunity to enjoy the beauty of our community with friends and neighbors.

As a neighbor and member of our community, we would love to welcome you to the team that stands up for our two Park jewels. These precious local resources deserve your support.

New Welcome Panel at Portola Redwoods State Park



After receiving a generous grant from REI, the Portola and Castle Rock Foundation worked with State Parks and REI to create and install this informative welcome panel. A similar welcome panel is in the works for Castle Rock State Park.

State News



Park Ranger Jason Rule

The Portola and Castle Rock Foundation wants to thank Jason Rule for his 11 years of service in the Santa Cruz District of the CA State Parks Department as he ventures off to a new experience in the San Luis Obispo District of California

Parks! Jason patrolled **Castle Rock, Portola Redwoods** and Big Basin State Parks.

When asked about this transfer, Jason said it comes with both excitement and sadness. "There's a heaviness leaving this area - the community has been great to be a part of. Leaving friends and colleagues that I love and respect is difficult. Yet, I'm looking forward to moving on and working with a new crew."

So what does Jason love most, and find most challenging, about his job? He said the two are the same. "The diversity of the job is the best part and most challenging part of my job." When on duty, Jason has the responsibility of patrolling the parks, collecting and depositing fees, answering the phones, and interacting with the public to give them direction and answer their questions. Every day is unique. The hours can be grueling, sometimes working 15 to 24 hours when the need arose.

Jason says, "Budgetary cuts from the State level have led to difficult outcomes in the field. During the recession all the State Departments were fighting for a piece of the budget. That's when they were slating both Portola and Castle Rock State Parks to be shut down. We're still dealing with these mandatory reductions set by the State."

What advice would Jason give to those wanting to visit our beautiful State Parks? "Do a little research before you go. Your experience will be better. Learn what poison oak looks like and research how long and steep the trails are before you hike."

In Memory of Liz Burko

Liz Burko was quick with a smile, easy to laugh and could make strangers feel like they were in the presence of an old friend. She loved California State Parks, and she loved people. She will be missed. 55 years old, Liz passed away, Saturday, Aug. 22, 2015, from injuries sustained when she lost control of her scooter.



She will have a long lasting impact on State Parks. She was known for a can-do attitude and had a familiar refrain – "No problem, I got this." She led by example and nuance. Liz mentored many State Parks professionals and lead the Management Practices Training Program.

Liz worked almost 30 years for the department. She started as a docent at Año Nuevo State Reserve in 1985 and then was hired there as a park aide. She became a state park ranger in 1991 and in 2007 Liz was promoted to District Superintendent of the Russian River District, which later became the Sonoma-Mendocino Coast District. Along the way she had stops at Lake Perris State Recreation Area, **Portola Redwoods State Park, Castle Rock State Park, Big Basin Redwoods State Park** and North Coast Redwoods District.

She was a true believer in the benefits of parks and the mission of parks. She always passionately fought to improve and protect state parks. She is remembered as someone who worked well with local park partners. Liz welcomed their suggestions and wanted their input, which became incredibly important during tough economic times.

Folks are invited to share photos and memories of Liz at a special website MemoriesOfLizBurko.shutterstock.com.

A memorial service is pending. In the meantime, you can remember Liz by practicing a random act of kindness. She'd like that.