

# The Echo

## News from the Pleasant Valley Historical Society

### 2011 Dons and Doñas Selected

It is with pleasure that the Pleasant Valley Historical Society announces this year's Dons and Doñas. They are following in a tradition that dates back to 1965 when the first men and women were selected for this unique honor. The criteria for selection include outstanding service to the community and residency that exceeds 20 years in Camarillo and its environs. This year's honorees more than fulfill these requirements. They are:

**Lou Bell**

**Tom Blattel**

**Patricia Meredith**

**Brian FitzGerald**

**Michael Nuñez**

**Barbara E. Wagner**

**Eric E. Johansson**

**David M. Smith**

They will be introduced to the community on Sunday, August 28, at a barbeque at the Red Barn at the Camarillo House. Last year, this proved to be the ideal venue to meet these distinguished folks and to enjoy a meal fit for Dons and Doñas. The menu includes barbequed tri-tip and chicken, beans, salad, garlic toast and dessert. Beverages of your choice are included. Choose from beer and wine, soft drinks and water. The time is 1 p.m.; a ticket is \$45 for adults, \$15 for children 12 and under. To order a ticket, mail your check made payable to P.V.H.S. to the Society at P.O. Box 570, Camarillo, Ca 93011-0570.

Originally, the titles were bestowed to honor the memory of Don Adolfo and Doña Isabella Camarillo and the people selected form a truly distinguished list. It includes names of the many individuals who made the Pleasant Valley such a wonderful place to live.

### WHAT ELSE WAS HAPPENING HERE IN 1965?

Camarillo was listed as a city for the first time in the Ventura County Planning Department quarterly Population Report and it said that we had 10,400 residents. An economist, speaking to a local group, predicted that Camarillo would eventually reach a population of 40,000!

You could buy a two-story, three to five bedroom house in the new Edgemont track for \$25,000 to \$28,000.

The Recreation and Park Board reluctantly accepted the donation of a site for a park at the corner of Las Posas Road and Crestview Avenue. (Today, this is the Nancy Bush Park and one of the busiest in the city.)



## SOME OF THE THINGS THAT HAPPENED IN 1965, IN CASE YOU MISSED THEM

The Ponderosa Shopping Center, opened in late 1964, announced the final shop for a total of 25 stores, not including the bowling alley, the gas station and the theater.

"Lake to Top Unique Condominiums" was the headline in the paper when developers presented the concept of a development surrounding a man-made recreational and decorative lake to the City Council. It would be between Daily Dr. and Ponderosa Ave. on Carmen Ave. What won't they think of next?

The managers of the three major shopping centers agreed to crack down on young shoplifters. After several offenders were caught and handed over to the authorities, the problem was more or less solved.

A gas war spread from Oxnard to Camarillo and the prices for a gallon of gas were 29.9 cents for regular and 32.9 cents for premium.

The 4,615 acre main portion of the Camarillo Ranch was sold to developers for a rumored \$18 million. It was Camarillo's most valuable large parcel. The Camarillo Home was not included in the sale.

The Camarillo Police Department made its debut in July with 2 patrol cars operating on a 24 hour basis within the city limits. We also got our own Water Department that month. The City annexed a 2,500 acre parcel west to Beardsley Road. Another prediction said that our fair city would number 47,000 by the year 2000 and be the biggest city in Ventura County.

A Charter Day Fiesta to honor the city's first birthday was set for October 30 and 31. Highlights of the event included a barbeque at the Camarillo House; charter citizen certificates were given out; and the first Dons and Doñas were named.

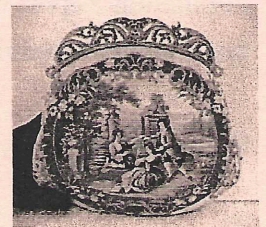
The Camarillo Daily News celebrated two years as a daily newspaper (Monday through Friday).

The Christmas Parade had a total of 106 entries and Walter Brennan was Grand Marshal for the third time.



### ANTIQUE CLUB

The display in the case now is dedicated to the Stylish Lady, Circa 1923. In it, you will see parasols, shoes, gloves, purses and all the items that help make a lady feel and be stylish.



### MEMORIALS

Fred Phipps made a donation in memory of **Dee Villano**



## From the Desk of the President

Dear Members,

In July 2010, we began our fiscal year by selecting the 2010 Dons and Doñas. The celebration was scheduled for the last Sunday in August at the Ranch House. This proved to be the perfect venue for it and we plan on being there again this year on August 28.

Our monthly Flea Markets were implemented for small and regular income to maintain the museum. Also the Restaurant Night fundraisers were scheduled for the first Monday after the release of our quarterly newsletter which has become professional and timely. We hope to see you at Daphne's on August 1. (See coupons on Page 7.)

We received a Meadowlark Service League grant of \$1,000 and we purchased canopies for our activities. We obtained a used container to store our overflow historical items. In addition to the new container, we revived and expanded the gazebo site to include more concrete and brick sitting room. We received a Rotary grant to purchase a new computer and a grant from the Camarillo Lions Club to defray the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter four times a year.

In January, we had the good luck to be a partner in a Cal State Channel Islands Marketing project and we had a fantastic social media program recommended to us by these talented students. Amy Simpson, intern, has agreed to take a position on the board to help us maintain our social media program. Look for us on Facebook and LinkedIn.

We have had donations of historical items and the museum collections continues to grow.

On May 1, we had another very successful Living History Day. If you have not experienced this special day in our garden, plan on bringing you family out for the free fun next year.

The garden continues to flourish. This venue is a front-line invitation to enjoy our museum and garden. The gazabo is a venue for weddings and available for other activities.

The city is cooperating with our request for up to eight museum signs in appropriate places through-out the city. We hope to have them up before the year-end.

My year as your President has passed quickly and I will continue to support our museum and all of the activities. Please join me as we continue our hard work. Thank you.

Best regards,

Paige Jones Hibbits PhD



## Charles Honn Garden

Betty Jo McDonald, Our Master Gardner

*The following article is written from my experience with the two plants described, inspired by a June 12, 2011 Los Angeles Times article, and information from the following sources: Matillija Nursery owner Bob Sussman, The Jepson Manual, California Native Plant Society, and the Sierra Foothill Conservancy, and the Los Angeles Times.*

Two of California's rare and beautiful flowering plants bloom in the Honn Botanic Garden during May and June. One of them is obvious to anyone who travels Las Posas Road, the other is hidden away within the garden proper, flowering demurely in dappled shade. Most of you know the majestic beauty in our front planter along Las Posas as the Matilija Poppy. Few know the delicately beautiful *Carpenteria californica*, alias Bush Anemone, which also has a white flower with a yellow center.

It is easy to use hyperbole when describing *Romneya coulteri*, alias Matilija Poppy, or Fried Egg Plant, a name which I feel does an injustice to this beauty. I sometimes wonder if our fabulous specimen growing in the front planter doesn't cause accidents on Las Posas when it is in its orgy of full bloom. I have seen people brake, turn in and pick flowers. One woman noticed I was watching her as she picked huge blossoms and she gaily waved as if she knew me, trying to pretend it was fine to pick our flowers. And honestly, it was O.K. with me--after all who can resist such beauty. These were Ruth Honn's favorite flowers and I like to think that Charles planted them as much for her as he did for the garden. If you know its secret, it makes excellent cut flowers. You must re-cut the stem, then sear it rapidly over the gas flame on your stove. Really hot water will work also and the flowers will last for several days.

If you tour the garden and search out the 3 plants of *Carpenteria californica*, Bush Anemone, you will probably pass them by if they are not in bloom. In fact, our plants just look pretty miserable when not in bloom--they were planted in the garden before I came here in 1995. But if you see them in bloom, you will no doubt gasp and say, "I want that plant!" In the late 1800's, thousands of English gardeners had the same thought as they lined up at London's Kew Royal Botanical Gardens to see the mysterious and beautiful visitor from California in flower with its pearl white blossoms and its spray of yellow stamens. The English love affair with our California jewel continues to this day. In the many books about English gardens which I have read, I often see our namesake pictured among the azaleas. *Carpenteria* is not so widely planted in its home state, but it is so rare in its native habitat, there are probably more plants living in home and Botanic Gardens than there are living in the wild.

While you may covet the *Carpenteria* for your garden, if you note the size of our Matilija Poppy happily taking over a 200 square foot planter along Las Posas, you may feel slightly afraid for your 1,000 square foot

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## TWO NOTABLE PLANTS IN THE HONN GARDEN

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front yard if you brought this baby home. Your fear would be justified if the lone specimen you plant lives. It is a finicky thing and it is sometimes impossible to figure out what you did wrong if it wilts, turns yellow and dies. All you know is that it was expensive (because it is rare), it is on the CNPS\* inventory of rare plants to watch and you killed it. And yet, and yet..... if you do the right thing, it will reward you by sending out runners and scouts to find a new place it likes in your yard--perhaps on the other side of your house. If you have the room, it can be a glorious thing in the late spring and early summer. Come fall, you will want to cut it back to the ground and during its first years you may worry that it is dead. Once it has taken hold, it is only playing possum. Come spring, it will be bigger and better than ever.

We have had people dig up some of the stray specimens in the Botanic Garden proper and replant them, and someone once collected the seeds and burned them in a planting tray covered with pine leaves in order to germinate the seeds. He said the seeds did not germinate but his kids enjoyed the display!

*Carpenteria California* is apparently easier to propagate. Dara E. Emery in **Seed Propagation of Native California Plants** says no special treatment is needed, simply sow thinly. Both these beautiful plants are happily living in our garden. They both have beautiful white petals surrounding yellow centers. One is wild, exuberant, aggressive and picky about where it puts its feet. The other is demure, a little less difficult to get started and not aggressive. Neither one need ever be fertilized. They are both adapted to periodic fires which they survive well.

They share one important characteristic: they are extremely limited in their range of growth. *Carpenteria* is endemic (the only place in the world it grows naturally) to only 7 sites in Fresno and Madera counties. Matilija Poppy grows only in limited plant communities from Ventura County into Northern Baja. *Carpenteria's* rank on the CNPS Rare plant list is 1B.2, designating it as rare, threatened or endangered. "*Californica*" is the sole species in the genus *Carpenteria*. *Romneya coulteri* holds a Rare Plant rank of 4.2, designating it as a Plant of Limited Distribution and on CNPS Watch List.

Each of these plants is worth growing in your home garden. Plant the Poppy right out in the wind and the sun, on the slope or along the ravine. Plant Bush Anemone in dappled shade and give it a little more water since its ancestry goes back to the time of the redwoods.

Local sources for these and other California Native Plants:

Matilija Nursery, 8225 Waters Road, Moorpark, CA 93021 805-523-8604

Nopalito Nursery, 4107 E. Main St., Ventura, CA 93003 805-844-7449

For more information on Endangered plants, contact the CNPS.

\* CNPS is the California Native Plant Society, 2707 K St., Sacramento, CA 95816



## HONORARY LIFE AND NEW BOARD MEMBERS NAMED

The Society is, from time to time, empowered to name certain past Board Members as "Honorary Life Board Members." This is a title of distinction and honor only, conferred upon the recipients by a grateful Board for outstanding past performance on the Board. Thus those named Honorary Life Board Members are welcome to attend the Board meetings, but at no time shall they have the right to vote on matters as a Board Member, which is consistent with the By-Laws of the Society. No sitting member of the Board of Directors shall be named an "Honorary Life Board Member."



At the Annual Meeting in June, in accordance with the above policy, the following individuals were named as Honorary Life Board Members of the Pleasant Valley Historical Society:

Geraldine FitzGerald	Founding Director
Patricia Meredith	Founding Director
Barbara Fulkerson	Longtime Board Member
Bill Doctorman	Longtime Board Member
Jane Brewster	Longtime Board Member
Dr. Steven Brewster	Longtime Board Member

Barbara Fulkerson (pictured on the left) holds her certificate for all to see.

## NEW BOARD MEMBERS INSTALLED

**Franklin Roth** has been in Camarillo since 1961 and was one of the top Civilian Employees of the Navy in Ventura County at Mugu in the Operations field. He is a member of the Noontime Optimist Club and does volunteer work through the United Methodist Church. He was recently named Senior of the Year by the Chamber of Commerce.

**Amy Simpson** has been working as an intern for the Society through CSUCI for the last year and has done a wonderful job of getting the Society on Facebook and other social networking sites. She graduated this spring and is working for Jones Hibbits, LLC.

**Olivia Fulkerson** has lived in the Pleasant Valley area all her life. She has been active in the Somis Union School Parent group, the Somis 4-H and Somis Angels Baseball.

**Dr. Rene Higgins** was also born and raised in Camarillo. She is a descendent of the Ortega family that were among the earliest settlers. She is a surgeon and the Director of Daracore Health.