

## *Soaking in a sense of place* “Open Fridays” enchant at Glen Oaks Ranch

by Sheri Cardo



Volunteer host Kathleen Mugele takes a break from her duties at Glen Oaks Ranch to do some bird watching from a comfortable spot in the meadow. Photos by Lance Kuehne Photography.

The air was soft and the fragrance of sun shining on spring flowers infused the air, making every intake of breath a delight and wonder. Even though it was May, the creek roared through the landscape, heavy with the late season rains so unexpected. Lizards scampered up the south side of the old stone barn seeking warmth while a few happy hikers spread out on the new trails, binoculars at the ready. The birds did not disappoint — more than 33 species were sighted that day, along with a multitude of wildflowers.

Welcome to “Open Fridays” at Glen Oaks Ranch.

This latest incarnation of our historic 230-acre ranch in Glen Ellen allows for members of the Sonoma Land Trust to make a reservation and explore the property at will on the second and fourth Fridays of each month from May through October. Thanks to our newly-trained cadre of volunteer hosts, visitors are warmly welcomed and provided with information, trail maps, birding guides, walking sticks and tours of the post-Civil War Italianate mansion.

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A dark-eyed junco eyes hikers along the woodland trail at Glen Oaks Ranch.



Western fence lizards are abundant at Glen Oaks and protect against Lyme disease in a unique way. When ticks carrying Lyme feed on the lizards, the Lyme bacteria die.



Monica Schwalbenberg-Pena spent her morning at Glen Oaks birdwatching along the trails.

## Who we are

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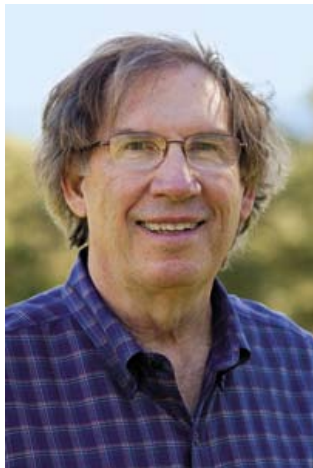
### SLT Mission

The Sonoma Land Trust protects the scenic, natural, agricultural and open landscapes of Sonoma County for the benefit of the community and future generations by:

- Developing long-term land protection strategies;
- Promoting private and public funding for land and conservation;
- Acquiring land and conservation easements;
- Practicing stewardship, including the restoration of conservation properties; and
- Promoting a sense of place and a land ethic through activities, education and outreach.

### Contact

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## A note from the Executive Director

### Going back in time and swimming upstream

This issue of our newsletter celebrates Glen Oaks Ranch and the opportunity it affords to step back in time. Our current knowledge of who lived and worked on the ranch following the demise in the late 1800s of Charles and Ellen Stuart, who built the fine stone mansion and sturdy stone barn, is spotty. We are not sure who was living and working on the ranch when our famous neighbor Jack London and his wife Charmian moved to town, just up the road, a little more than a hundred years ago. Both our ranches have had their ups and downs. While we are working to bring Glen Oaks Ranch back to life, Jack's place — far better known and now owned by all of us — is under stress. While it has become one of our best loved state parks and draws London fans from around the world, it is slated to be closed because of the State's financial mess.

What would Jack do? Well, he'd probably have a drink. But after that, he'd get to work writing and raising money, which is what we are doing. We are joining in an alliance of State Parks, County Regional Parks, and many of our fellow nonprofit organizations, including the Sonoma Ecology Center, to keep all of the state parks in Sonoma County open and flourishing. We are flying into the wind, but this is a county that cares about its parks and open lands. Our hope is that by the end of summer we will have found some local solutions worthy of the heritage we enjoy.

And while we are in the neighborhood, Sonoma Land Trust has just signed a contract to purchase a stretch of Stuart Creek between Glen Oaks Ranch and the London place that is notorious in piscatory circles for its formidable fish barrier. In time, the high concrete barrier will come down, the creek will be restored and steelhead will swim again under Highway 12 and up through Glen Oaks Ranch and the Bouverie Preserve to the headwaters of Stuart Creek.

The parks crisis is an opportunity to do things you think you could not do before. We hope to use this one to make the parks better and keep the fish swimming.

A handwritten signature of Ralph Benson in black ink.

Ralph Benson



Time seems to stop when you're at Glen Oaks and the options are many. Some guests stake out a bench and read, some set up their canvasses and paint, some hit the trails, some share a picnic, some chat with the docents and each other, some record their bird sightings on the communal white board, some relax by the creek. The beauty of “Open Fridays” is that you can do whatever you wish at your own pace. The property is yours to explore and enjoy.

## If the land could talk

Glen Oaks Ranch is highly significant for its history, natural resources and location. When you're there, surrounded by the beautiful old stone buildings and rusty old farm equipment, you can't help but feel as though you're stepping back in time.

While Native Americans fished for steelhead in Stuart Creek and gathered acorns from the surround-



“Lilacs and Lawn Chair,” a pastel of Glen Oaks by Clark Mitchell, who said: “What a splendid spot Glen Oaks is! Such variety, from the house itself, to trails up into the hills, wildflowers and the creek. A wonderful morning.” Find more of Clark's work at [www.cgmitchell.com](http://www.cgmitchell.com).



Hikers have their choice of meandering along Stuart Creek on the Phyllis Ellman Trail or rambling through oak and riparian woodlands leading up to chaparral habitat on the George Ellman Trail (pictured here). Photo by Lance Kuehne Photography.

ing oak trees, the ranch's modern history began with General Mariano Vallejo acquiring it as part of El Rancho Agua Caliente land grant in 1839. It then changed hands a few times before it was purchased in 1859 by Charles Stuart, who gave the ranch its name and built the adobe stone mansion and barn, smokehouse, stone walls and vineyard. When Charles died in 1880, having become one of the largest wine producers in the state, his wife Ellen managed the winery and became one of California's first women winemakers.

After the Stuarts, the ranch was farmed by the Quiens family and others for many years before becoming the home of Roswell and Camille Cochran and their daughter Joan in 1952.

By 1988, with both of her parents having passed away, Joan devoted herself to the restoration and protection of the ranch. Through her efforts, the ranch was deemed the most intact 19th Century agricultural complex in the Valley of the Moon

and, in 1994, was accepted into the National Register of Historic Places. Shortly before she died in 2002, leaving Glen Oaks Ranch to the Sonoma Land Trust, Joan replanted the historic vineyard and protected the ranch by granting a conservation easement to the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District.

The easement divides the property into smaller agricultural and historic areas, and a significantly larger “forever wild” area, which includes Stuart Creek, oak and chaparral woodlands, grasslands and open meadows. This wild land, being adjacent to 500-acre Bouverie Audubon Preserve, which itself shares a border with Sonoma Land Trust's 300-acre Secret Pasture, means that area wildlife have the benefit of more than 1,000 acres of connected habitat.

## Back to the future

Joan Cochran's foresight protected this natural landscape in perpetuity and the Sonoma Land Trust is

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# Springtime on the land

The lushness of spring brought an abundance of hikers outside seeking the sparkling landscapes of Sonoma County. From wildflowers and stunning vistas to good company and sunny solitude, it was all sought and found on Sonoma Land Trust properties this past season. Look for even greater opportunities for getting out and enjoying our properties as the Land Trust develops a new “On the Land” initiative. *Stay tuned ...*



A sunset wildflower hike at Tolay Creek Ranch brought out hikers eager to stretch their legs after a long workday. Photos by Lance Kuehne Photography except where noted.



Baylands program manager Julian Meisler leads SLT's popular public wildflower hikes; here he is identifying one of the many grasses found on Sears Point Ranch.



Sonoma Land Trust members were treated to a hike on the Lone Antler Trail at Little Black Mountain Preserve, which culminated in endless panoramic views on this clear spring day.



*Our coastal jewel, the Jenner Headlands, draws hikers from all over the county and beyond who want to enjoy the dazzling views and breathe in the crisp sea air. Photo by Kristin Martinez.*



*It's all about communing with the flowers — and getting the perfect shot! — on our Baylands wildflower hikes. Photo by Scott Hess Photography.*



*Anne and Juliet Wurr explored the trails at Glen Oaks Ranch on an “Open Friday” in May.*



*These hardy hikers braved an early evening rainstorm before setting off in search of the wildflower fields on Cougar Mountain.*



*Taking some quiet time on Tolay Creek Ranch.*

## The Legacy League

### Celebrating future gifts to protect the land forever

By Beverly Scotland



This portrait of Joan Cochran hangs in the stone mansion at Glen Oaks Ranch.

### Why planned gifts are so important

Joan Cochran died in 2002 and left Glen Oaks Ranch to the Sonoma Land Trust. She also established the Glen Oaks Fund at the Community Foundation Sonoma County to pay for the improvement and upkeep of the ranch. Interest generated from the fund pays a portion of the costs to keep Glen Oaks Ranch maintained and open to the public.

Additional funding is made possible by the generosity of our donors. The Glen Oaks Ranch bequest paints a picture of how important planned gifts are to creating a legacy of open land for future generations. Without the farsighted vision of its owner, Joan Cochran, this treasure that graces the Sonoma Valley would never have been pro-

tected forever. But you don't have to own an historic estate to make a planned gift.

### Designating a planned gift in your will

Many consider a bequest in one's will to be the perfect planned gift. A gift in your will lets you help us in the future without using any of your assets today.

- It gives you flexibility and lets you balance your philanthropic goals with your concerns about living expenses, medical costs and loved ones.
- It lets you measure your commitment because your gift can be made as a percentage of your assets.
- You can make a larger gift that would be beyond your capacity while living.
- It's easy! Contact our office for sample language to include in your will.

### Gifts of real property for conservation or sale

Because the Sonoma Land Trust is set up to acquire land, we are uniquely qualified to handle gifts of real estate of any kind. Gifts of property that may be sold with the proceeds used to support our work are particularly welcome. It is important that you contact us if you are contemplating a funded gift of your property for permanent conservation or a conservation easement.

### Remainder interests in personal residences and farms

You can deed your home or farm to the Sonoma Land Trust and reserve a life estate that allows you the use and

enjoyment of the property for the rest of your life.

Other planned gifts include **Giving from your IRA**, creating a **Charitable Remainder Trust** and designating the Sonoma Land Trust as the beneficiary of your **Life Insurance policy**.

### Legacy League

In 2000, the Sonoma Land Trust formed the Legacy League to honor the commitment of people who make gifts in their estate plan or will. Even if you wish to remain anonymous, we encourage you to notify us about your intended planned gift so that we may enroll you in the Legacy League. You will be invited to the annual League event (usually held in October) and, unless you wish to remain anonymous, we will recognize you in our annual report.



Glen Oaks Ranch in the Sonoma Valley.

### For assistance

For questions or to help you get started, please contact me at (707) 526-6920, ext. 108 or [beverly@sonomalandtrust.org](mailto:beverly@sonomalandtrust.org). We always recommend that you discuss planned gifts with an attorney, accountant and/or other financial advisor and we can offer referrals.

*Beverly Scotland is SLT's development director.*

## In honor

*From August 16, 2010 through April 30, 2011, Sonoma Land Trust friends made gifts to honor these events and exceptional people.*

In honor of **Ralph Benson**: Iryne and Ian Black  
In honor of **The Book Club**: Wanda Burzycki and Marc Mager  
In honor of **Robert Brent**: Reuben Weinzveg and Padi Selwyn  
In honor of **Betty Burridge**: Peter and Olivia Leveque  
In honor of **Len and Melinda Cairney**: Joe and Signe Minuskin  
In honor of **Amy Chesnut**: John and Lena Chyle  
In honor of **Art and Jill Dawson**: Margie and Bruce Obendorf  
In honor of **Pete Dayton**: James and Dorothy Walters  
In honor of **Lauren and Scott Dixon**: Mr. and Mrs. Stephen M. Friedman  
In honor of **Phyllis and Bill Draper**: Henry and Emily Evers  
In honor of **Pat and Ted Eliot**: Nancy and Kyle Kirwan  
In honor of **Pat and Ted Eliot's 60th wedding anniversary**: Denise Sobel and Tom Oczkowski  
In honor of **Emily Evers**: Nancy and Kyle Kirwan  
In honor of **Mr. H.J. Fabian and Dr. Judith Janaro**: Fabian George Sardina  
In honor of **Linda Felt**: Patricia Cullinan  
In honor of **Neal Fishman joining the Board**: Terri Nevins and Walter Wright  
In honor of **David Franklin**: Mary Mueller  
In honor of **Julian Glasser**: George and Cynthia Doubleday  
In honor of **Everett Gorin**: Joe and Susan Gorin  
In honor of **Dick Hafner**: Bill and De Andersen  
In honor of **Mary Hafner**: Sally Pooler  
In honor of the **Half Moon Neighbors, LLC**: Dale Harding  
In honor of **Nancy and Dean Hanson**: Bill and Margaret Batchelor  
In honor of **Ed Harrington and Dan Scannel**: Susan Hirsch and Susan Leal  
In honor of **Paul Harris**: Kai Harris  
In honor of **Bob Hasenick**: Carol Hasenick  
In honor of **Kimberly Hughes and Steve Moazed**: Chip and Jeanne Allen, David and Theresa Garabedian, Allyson and Eric Wilinski  
In honor of **Cathie and Pitch Johnson**: Henry and Emily Evers  
In honor of **Berta Kaliski**: Jeff Diamond and Amy Zimmer  
In honor of the **Ames Morison Family**: Ann and Ron Allan

In honor of the **Moylan Family**: Daniel Needham  
In honor of **Jane S. Ophuls**: Amanda Hamilton and Tim Hemmeter  
In honor of **Johanna Patri**: Carol Williams  
In honor of **Barbara Prince**: Bill and Margaret Batchelor  
In honor of **Richard Retecki**: Kenneth Roberts  
In honor of **Dr. Harry and Dee Richardson**: Dr. and Mrs. Herbert Brosbe  
In honor of **John and Jane Robb**: Betty L. Pommon  
In honor of **Adam, Tricia, Avery and Charlotte Rosenblatt**: Sally and Toby Rosenblatt  
In honor of **Jamie, Kerry and Owen Rosenblatt**: Sally and Toby Rosenblatt  
In honor of **Joshua Rymer and Tim Frazer**: Susan Hirsch and Susan Leal  
In honor of **Maggie Salenger**: Jeanette and Whitney Evans  
In honor of **Phyllis Schmitt**: Mike Heffernon  
In honor of **Scott and Ruth Swasey**: William and Shirley Swasey  
In honor of **Sue Weingarten**: Kathleen Mugele

## In memory

*The singer lasts a season long while the song remains forever.*

In memory of **Debbie Andrieux**: Kathleen Mugele  
In memory of **Hughes Andrus**: Frank and Bonnie Pauli  
In memory of **Audrey Ayers**: Walter and Lu Benson  
In memory of **Ralph Benson, Sr.**: John P. Strebelt  
In memory of **Jerri Brizee**: Louise and Roy Lattimore  
In memory of **Capt. Donald C. Campbell, USN (Ret.)**: Thomas Larish and Laure Campbell  
In memory of **June Carlsen and Kathleen Boyle**: William Carlsen and Kathleen O'Shea  
In memory of **Jimmy Condon**: Jana Denegri  
In memory of **Myrtle H. Cox**: David B. Cox  
In memory of **John C. Cummings**: Kelsey Cummings  
In memory of **Michael Curtis**: Walter and Lu Benson  
In memory of **Edward S. Doyle**: Nancy Doyle  
In memory of **George and Phyllis Ellman**: Sharon Ponsford and Chris Jones, Laura C. Hutchinson  
In memory of **James Fitzpatrick**: Kathleen Mugele  
In memory of **Luanne Gilbert**: Maxine Durney  
In memory of **Jack Guggolz**: Betty Guggolz  
In memory of **Corrie Isaacson**: Laura Graham  
In memory of **Fumiko Katano**: Nicole and Marc Katano  
In memory of **Bill Knudtsen**: Susan Wielk  
In memory of **Anthony and Margaret Kroha**: Elizabeth and George Landreth  
In memory of **Manfred T. Kruck**: Laura Graham  
In memory of **Charles Lang**: Sara Lang

In memory of **Carter Larsen**: Charles and Perry Freeman  
In memory of **Joanne Lennon**: Dan Lennon  
In memory of **John Liddell**: Corinne Jones and John Saari  
In memory of the **Linch Family**: Donald Linch  
In memory of **Alan Littman**: Walter and Lu Benson  
In memory of **Victoria Littman**: Walter and Lu Benson  
In memory of **Arch C. Luther, III**: Arch C. Luther  
In memory of **Marian Marioni**: Walter and Lu Benson  
In memory of **Walter and Lucille Markham**: Ann Cress  
In memory of **Peter McAndrew**: Anne Teller  
In memory of **Margery Foote Meyer**: L. Bruce Meyer  
In memory of **Rie Rogers**: Walter and Lu Benson  
In memory of **Phyllis Schmitt**: Peter and Olivia Leveque, Kathleen Mugele  
In memory of **Charles Schulz**: Walter and Lu Benson  
In memory of **Elena Fiorentina Scola**: Arch C. Luther  
In memory of **Mike Shutt**: Deborah Bezona  
In memory of **Shirley Spivak**: Helen Burch  
In memory of **Carter Thacher**: Walter and Lu Benson  
In memory of **Harry Warner**: Dohn and Beryl Glitz  
In memory of **Irene Worth**: Mark Ginsburg  
In memory of **Dee K. & Verlin Y. Yamamoto**: Keith and Kathleen Yamamoto





## SONOMA LAND TRUST

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www.SonomaLandTrust.org

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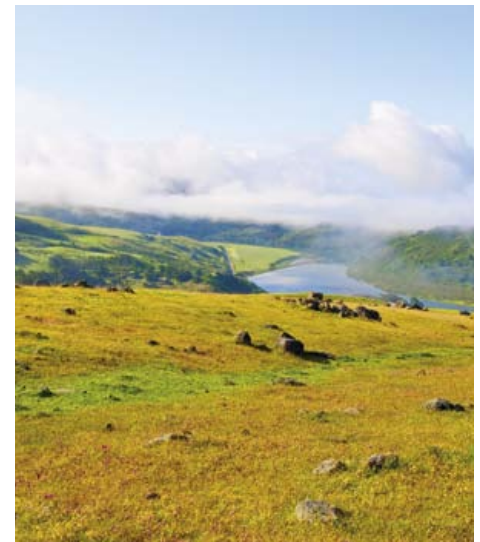
### Jean Schulz Wildflower Meadow

In 2009, local philanthropist Jean Schulz pledged a \$2 million matching gift to the Sonoma Land Trust, saying, “I want our grandchildren and their children to be able to enjoy the same stunning vistas and to experience land that is as ecologically healthy as what we see around us today.”

In gratitude for this extraordinary gift that helped to ensure the protection of the Jenner Headlands and the

stewardship of its many biological resources, the scenic meadow that overlooks the ocean and bursts into bloom every spring has been named the Jean Schulz Wildflower Meadow.

Thank you, Jean, for helping to ensure that our children and grandchildren will be able to stand in this beautiful flowering meadow and see the same stunning vistas we see now ... *forevermore.*



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#### “Open Fridays” enchant at Glen Oaks Ranch *(Continued from page 3)*

carrying out her wishes. The ranch has been cleaned up and is being restored, two trails have been built, the vineyard is replanted and partner organizations are bringing children to the property for environmental education. Step by step, we are stabilizing and restoring the stone buildings, which is a slow and expensive process. But the land is thriving and the trails need more people to “get out and tromp on them,” as visitor Anne Wurr said, to

prevent them becoming overgrown.

So we invite you to treat yourselves to a lovely, leisurely day in the Valley of the Moon at this remarkable ranch that you are helping bring back to life through your support of the Sonoma Land Trust.

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“Open Fridays” take place on the second and fourth Fridays of each month through October from 9AM–7PM. You must be a member of

the Sonoma Land Trust and you are welcome to bring a guest or two. Reservations need to be made at least 48 hours in advance by contacting Reta Lockert at [reta@sonomaland-trust.org](mailto:reta@sonomaland-trust.org) or (707) 526-6930 ext. 105. Tours of the old stone mansion are conducted at 11AM. Sorry, no pets and no smoking.

*Sheri Cardo is SLT’s communications director.*