

ISSUE N°: 26 / JUNE 2014

THE BARN BURNER

SAN RAMON HISTORIC FOUNDATION



Dedicated to the Preservation of San Ramon's Early Farms and Homesteads



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There is plenty to see and experience on the farm. Start marking your calendars with these upcoming events!

Quarterly Recipe

We all love good food. Why not try out this issue's recipe, which includes mushrooms, a staple of any kitchen.

The Gift Shoppe

BY PAT BOOM

The Gift Shoppe was not always in the Foreman's cottage. We first started out with a "Gift Shop in a Box". We crafted some items such as candy dishes. We used epoxy to adhere decorative plates onto crystal candle sticks. We also made tea cup candles using demitasse tea cups. We wrapped each item and packed them into plastic bins. Then we would haul them up to the tractor barn each time we had an event. We unwrapped them and displayed them on a table. We really sold lots. We also made Victorian hats and sold them. It was such hard work to haul, unwrap, display, re-wrap and haul everything back to store them. We must have done that for about three years and it was getting old (or we were) and harder to do.

Then the City received a Grant to renovate the Foreman's cottage and put in flush toilets, a Welcome Center, and a space for the Gift Shoppe. We finally had space to sell our products and make money for the Farm. We started out with Mary Wohlers, Sue Yura, and myself. We needed to create a plan of operation, buy a cash register, purchase a credit card machine, set up a bank account, and find some way to display our "stuff". There was some surplus furniture available for us to use and I was able to pick up some

shelves at the flea market. We painted the walls a soft green. I picked up lace curtains at the flea market and we put them up. We used a card table for the cash register and we were in business. We trained volunteers to work in the Shoppe. We needed to borrow money from the Foundation to buy more inventories. We had such fun shopping. Our goal was to at least break even. Not to lose money. If we lost money then we would close. We began to make money, opening every Saturday while the Farmer's Market was located at the Farm. We not only paid the Foundation back but have made enough to give the Foundation \$1,500 a year for the past three years. And now we are only open one day a month since the Farmer's Market relocated to Bishop Ranch across from Whole Foods.

Our little shop has changed some over the years. We now have open shelves over both windows and a counter for the cash register, all made by our Farm volunteer, Joe Krueger. Ruth Boone, who donated the Farm to the City of San Ramon, loved chocolate, hats and tea. We still have our Victorian hats and we have many items related to teas such as tea pots, tea cups and mugs, and tea strainers. We have added children's books, tin toys, wooden musical instruments. But we have for the ladies, beautiful bracelets, beaded purses, cameo pins, lace parasols and small recipe books. We still have our crafted candy dishes and tea cup candles. Please come in and visit us and see all our fun items. All of what we make benefits Forest Home Farms.



President's Letter

BY PAUL TRUSCHKE
PRESIDENT, SAN RAMON HISTORIC FOUNDATION

As you know, we have been actively fundraising to preserve the Ole Barn.

Our goal as a Foundation is to preserve historic San Ramon.

However, no matter how successful we are, if no one comes to see what we have preserved, we have wasted

our time. We need to get people to the Farm to enjoy the fruits of our labor.

Sheep Shearing did just that as have the other events we sponsor on the Farm.

It is not getting any easier to put these events on. It takes a large number of volunteers many hours to

make these events happen. You have been very successful.

I just want to thank all of you who have given so much to make these events happen.



Bluebird Facts

Type: Bird

Diet: Omnivore

Average life span in the wild: 6 to 10 years

Size: 6.5 to 8.5 in (16.5 to 19 cm)

Weight: 0.84 to 1.09 oz (24 to 31 g)

Group Name: Flock



Connections

Pairs mate in spring and summer, when they construct small, bowl-shaped nests. Females lay four or five eggs and incubate them for about two weeks. Young remain in the nest, cared for by both parents, for an additional 15 to 20 days. Bluebirds often have two broods in a season. Sometimes, a young bluebird from the first brood will remain in the nest and assist its parents in caring for the second.



Life

Bluebirds eat small fruits and hunt insects, spiders, and other creatures from above. The birds perch, watch, and then swoop to the ground to pounce on their prey.

Bluebirds are considered fairly common, but their numbers have declined substantially during the last century. Populations have been given a boost by the birdhouse boxes that have become popular in many parks and backyards.

For more information, go to: <http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/birds/bluebird/>



California Bluebirds

On a sunny day in April, volunteers Joanne Ashmore and Camille Thompson were in the vegetable garden at Forest Home Farms when they witnessed a tender exchange between a pair of California bluebirds.

A male bluebird, carrying a juicy worm in his beak, flew in and landed on the fence next to the birdhouse. Joanne and Camille watched as he poked his head in.

Finding it empty, he hopped back along the fence. Soon the female swooped down and landed next to her mate, her beak filled with twigs for the nest. The male offered the worm to her.

When she wouldn't drop the valuable nesting material to accept his offering, he gobbled the meal down, then flew off, no doubt in pursuit of a more desirable treat for the finicky female.



BY BECKY DAVIES

Compost

Why it's Important

Youngsters find out first-hand what compost is made of and the ways it can help the environment at Forest Home Farms. Compost ingredient buckets are available at the canning program area and at lunchtime. Scraps such as persimmon pulp from canning lessons, orange peels from the citrus squeezing activities, and any apple cores or other lunchtime scraps are placed there.

The ingredients from the compost buckets, as well as bedding materials from the many farm animals are utilized to mix into compost piles. Weeds and fallen leaves are layered into the piles. The compost bins are sprinkled with water to start a great compost.

Students then take turns turning the compost pile and learn about decomposer organisms they find in the mixture.

On garden docent work days, the finished compost is added to the garden beds before the new vegetable and berry crops are planted. The rich, earthy compost benefits the soil and environment in many ways:

- * It increases the amount of moisture the soil can hold so reduces water usage;
- * It provides nutrients for the plants in a gradual, gentle manner;
- * It creates a friendly environment for beneficial soil microbes, bacteria, and fungi;
- * It improves soil structure;
- * It diverts waste from the landfill by recycling/changing “wastes” into valuable soil;
- * Compost wards off plant diseases and buffers the soil pH level.

These are great reasons to make compost and teach about the importance of compost at Forest Home Farms and at home.

Fun on the Farm

BY PAT BOOM

FOR MORE SUMMER FUN, VISIT WWW.CI.SAN-RAMON.CA.US/PARKS/PROGRAMS/HISTORIC/FORESTUPDATE.HTM

BUZZING BEES AND BEAUTIFUL BUTTERFLIES: Saturday, June 14

Take a look inside a buzzing hive of live bees. Discover why honeybees dance, what they eat, and why they sometimes sting.

The Mount Diablo Beekeepers Association will bring their demonstration hive and share fun facts about this amazing insect.

After meeting honeybees, discover some of the secrets of the beautiful butterflies of the Bay Area, make a craft, and explore the organic garden in search of bees, butterflies, and other interesting insects.

WINDMILLS AND WATER Saturday, July 12

Visit the grounds of the Glass House Museum to take a closer look at our 1930s Aeromotor and discover how these old windmills worked to pump water.

You can also try pumping with a hand pump and see the work being done by an antique hit-and-miss engine.

After exploring how people got water, get your hands wet as you use water to do laundry the old-fashioned way, sprinkle it around thirsty plants in the organic garden, and turn a handful of wool into a felt ball that you can take home.

ICE CREAM SOCIAL: Saturday, August 9

“Ice cream, ice cream, everyone loves ice cream!” Ice Cream Socials are a hit in every community. You get to eat some of the most delicious treats and visit with people in your neighborhoods and play some old-fashioned games.

That’s what we do at the Ice Cream Social at Forest Home Farms Historical Park. There will be crafts to create and sheep dog demonstrations and a variety of many things to do and see.

We will have the best ice cream for a small fee, Loard’s ice cream, with sprinkles and chocolate and caramel syrups. We also have chocolate chip cookies



with a scoop of ice cream in between....our own ice cream sandwich.

Then to top it off we have a scoop of ice cream and root beer for a root beer float. Now you can’t top that for a great summer day at the Farm. (How many times were the words, “ice cream”, printed here?) Are you hungry yet?

GLASS HOUSE MUSEUM TOURS:

Second Saturday of Each Month, 10am to 2pm

Enjoy tours of the Glass House Museum, the farm and its history, interactive exhibits, including the tractor museum, and the beautiful grounds. Visit the Welcome Center and purchase old-fashioned toys and gifts at the Gift Shoppe.



MUSHROOMS: Fry them, bake them, broil saute', cream, stuff, puree, pickle, or just nibble them raw. Use them in salads, soups, sauces, gravy, breads, soufflés, omelets, etc. There is no end to culinary creativity when mushrooms are the subject!

by PAT BOOM

Ingredients

1/4 cup warm water
1 pkg. active dry yeast
1/2 cup mushrooms, chopped
3/4 cup cottage cheese
2 Tbs. sugar
1 Tbs. onion, minced
1 Tbs. butter
2 tsp. dill seed
1/4 tsp. baking soda
1 egg beaten
2-2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, sifted

Mushroom Dilly Bread

Sprinkle yeast into the warm water and let dissolve. In a mixing bowl combine mushrooms, cottage cheese (should be room temperature), sugar, onion, butter, dill seed, soda, and beaten egg. Then stir in dissolved yeast. Gradually add flour, beating mixture after each addition. Continue adding flour until dough is stiff. When flour is well blended, cover bowl and set in warm place. Let dough rise an hour until it doubles in bulk. Punch down. Place in greased 8 inch round casserole dish. Let rise uncovered about 30 minutes until dough doubles in size. Bake at 350 degrees for about 45-50 minutes. Brush top with butter immediately after removing from oven and sprinkle with coarse salt. Let cool a little and pop it out of the casserole dish on to a serving plate. Slice and enjoy.

For more recipes, please visit our Gift Shoppe. Recipe books with authentic recipes are available for only \$4.00 each.



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