



From the Mailbag

News from Members and Friends

by Brett Pyle

“Read not the Times, read the Eternities.”—Henry David Thoreau

Another season is passing here at Mono Lake as Spring begins to edge its way into Summer. The first greening of the aspens is a wonderful sight accompanied by the pink blush of the desert peach and the inevitable allergy attacks that come at this time of year. The snowmelt roaring creeks will soon settle down to a more leisurely flow and we will find ourselves in the hot dry days of summer in the high desert. Amidst all of this, Mono Lake sits and slowly turns to its summer shade of blue. As blue as a three-year-old’s blueberry snow cone dropped in the sand, bluer than Ol’ Blue Eyes singing, “In The Wee Small Hours.”

One of our members, John G. Dillon, recently wrote, “I first saw Mono Lake in 1946. It struck me (and still does) as being gracefully out of place.” I couldn’t agree more. This lake seems to create its own world surrounded by the desert in the shadow of the snowy Sierra. There is something wild and magical and eternal here. And so each day I take Thoreau’s advice and in lieu of the morning paper I enjoy some time with the lake.

Special Thanks

A special thanks to Pete Bischoff who donated a new canoe portage cart. Come out this summer and go on one of our weekend canoe tours. It’s a great way to experience the tufa formations and the lake—plus you’ll get to see the new cart in action! Also, thanks to long-time member Tom Montgomery of Conn Creek Winery who donated a wonderful bottle of wine along with his in-store renewal.

Friends in Fresno

A very special thank you to the Sierra Club—Tehipite Chapter, Fresno Audubon Society, and the California Native Plant Society—Sequoia Chapter (CNPS) for once again sending us the proceeds from their annual Mono Lake benefit auction. They have held this auction annually for the past seven years and the proceeds have exceeded \$1,000 each year. We appreciate not only the donations but all of the hard work involved in putting on the auction each year. CNPS is hosting this year’s auction to be held November 19 at the Unitarian Church in Fresno. For details contact Marion Orvis at (559) 226-0145 or mforvet@earthlink.net.

In Memory

Velma Murray of Chula Vista made a generous donation in memory of her mother and father Byron and Flossie

Hoff. Frank and Janice Delfino of Castro Valley sent a gift in memory of Paul Green. The Walker Lake Land Company made a donation in memory of Dick Chenoweth.

Matching Gifts

Adobe Systems matched a gift from Lawrence White of Sunnyvale. Bank of America matched a generous gift from Maggie Soffa-Jackson of Brea. IBM matched gifts from Kenneth Howell of San Jose, Maria Magana of San Jose, Doris Stoessel of Los Altos, Barbara Bacon of El Cerrito, Larry Breed of Palo Alto, and Gwen Lennon of Morgan Hill. Microsoft matched a gift from Richard Bready of Kirkland, WA. Charles Schwab matched 2 for 1, donations from Steven Lanum of San Francisco, Susan K. Mills of Bakersfield, Denis R. McGuirk of Oakland, and Steven E. White of Moss Beach. PG&E matched donations from Joan C. Bacci of Guerneville, David F. Gassman of Oakland, Richard H. Moss of San Francisco, and Guillermo Rodriguez of San Francisco. Washington Mutual matched gifts from Michael C. Darlington of Auburn and Valerie White of Santa Clarita. ❖

Brett “Pops” Pyle is the Committee’s Membership Coordinator. He takes his daily doses of Ol’ Blue Eyes which he shares with daughter Sabine (Wee Blue Eyes).

What’s So Special About Mono Lake?

We asked this question on our recent renewal notices and have received many wonderful responses from members. Here is a small sampling:

“My father introduced me to Highway 395 at an early age and I’ve been coming back regularly for 60 years. Now my son and his sons are learning to love Mono Lake and Great Basin habitats too.”—Elizabeth A. Hook

“The ‘No-See-Ums’. The day after a walk by the lake the back of my neck, at the hairline, was a mass of itchy bumps. Lasted too many days!”—Mrs. Vivian Pace

“My wife and I drove to Lee Vining on December 31, 1986, stayed as the sole guests in the blacked-out Gateway Lodge, got up at dawn on New Year’s Morning 1987 to go to the south shore and take photographs. Very cold but great light. Then came a horizontal snowstorm keeping us inside for 24 hours. A fine way to start the New Year.”—John Dale Smith