

Friends of Tecolote Canyon

March/April 2023

This issue is dedicated to the small army of volunteers, past, present and future who help protect and restore our open space, and those who educate and encourage others to care for and enjoy Tecolote Canyon

In the mid-sixties Community Planning groups were initiated pursuant to the requirements of a new federal agency called, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Sargent was near first in line to join the Clairemont Mesa Development Committee, taking her advocacy with her. She found agreement with the other members and a team was formed that included the Linda Vista Planning Group and wide community support. After an arduous twelve-year campaign, Sargent's vision became a reality in November of 1977 when the San Diego City Council made the unanimous decision to dedicate Tecolote Canyon as the first major open space park. The dedication document included provisions for a visitor center and an advisory committee, and so the Tecolote Canyon Citizens Advisory Committee (TCCAC) was created to help advise the City Counsel and staff on matters related to this newly formed open space. *(Continued on next page)*

An army of Volunteers ~ a Canyon Avocate's Legacy

Grace "Peter" Sargent was a remarkable woman. Growing up as a child, her father was a ranger in the Sierras, and during those early years, she learned to love open spaces. Grace Sargent and her husband, Marston Sargent, an oceanographer at Scripps, moved into one of the first 200 houses in Clairemont in 1951. At that time the rest of the mesa was undeveloped and Grace would ride her Indian pony all over the remaining expanse, which would soon have over 100,000 residents. All that was left untouched was Tecolote Canyon, and she sought to protect it. As far as I know, she was the first known advocate for its preservation.



Marston and Grace "Peter" Sargent with their daughter, Jean Anne

Alone we can do so little together we can do so much~ Helen Keller

When the Tecolote Nature Center opened in 1994, TCCAC decided to create an award to be given each year to an individual, taken from Tecolote Canyon's small army of volunteers, who demonstrated a particular dedication to the Tecolote Canyon Natural Park and its Nature Center. The committee decided to name the award after Grace "Peter" Sargent, the first advocate for the preservation of Tecolote Canyon Natural Park.



Grace and fellow advocates meeting with the city clerk

Being a volunteer is one of the most selfless acts one can do for their community, and it has a wonderful impact.

The importance of volunteerism to Tecolote Canyon and our Nature Center cannot be understated. We are facing tremendous environmental issues as a society, and although we are blessed to have an outstanding ranger staff, led by Sr. Ranger Steve Smith, and Nature Center Director Marla Gilmore, the job of keeping Tecolote Canyon the vibrant and unique piece of natural space that it is will often land on its volunteers. These people selflessly share their hearts, minds, and bodies to the cause of preserving this precious place so that others may share in the same special love and connection that they have for the natural world. It is a precious gift, and one that will be most important for our society to maintain and nurture both now and into the future. So, with that, we'd like to tell you about some of the people who have done so much for our precious Tecolote Canyon Natural Park and Nature Center.



2020 Grace Peter Sargent Award Recipient ~Cheryl Lowe

By 2020, Cheryl Lowe had been volunteering at the Nature Center for about 5 years. Cheryl logged in 27 volunteer hours in 2020 and has a lifetime total of about 266. Cheryl and her husband relocated to San Diego from Oregon to spend more time with their children and grandchildren, and so it was while watching her grandson's baseball game at Tecolote baseball fields that Cheryl came into the nature center to check us out. This visit would be the start of many and we are all so thankful that Cheryl walked through our doors that day! We love Cheryl's positive outlook, welcoming smile, and sense of humor! Cheryl helps plan and organize a variety of activities for our children's programs. She takes notes during activity planning sessions and keeps great records of previous activities, how many people attended, which crafts and activities were well received, and keeps an inventory of our supplies. During cleanup she says "just put it on the cart and I'll put it away". She is wonderful at keeping us organized and laughing! Thank you Cheryl. Because of Cheryl's attention to detail, we are able to run amazing programs for the community in an efficient manner. After events, Cheryl is the first person to start cleaning up to make sure that everything is put back in its place. She helps with special events, field trips and programs doing everything from set up to clean up and even cutting crafts out at home and baking brownies for Family Day. She helps make the center a happy place for our community!

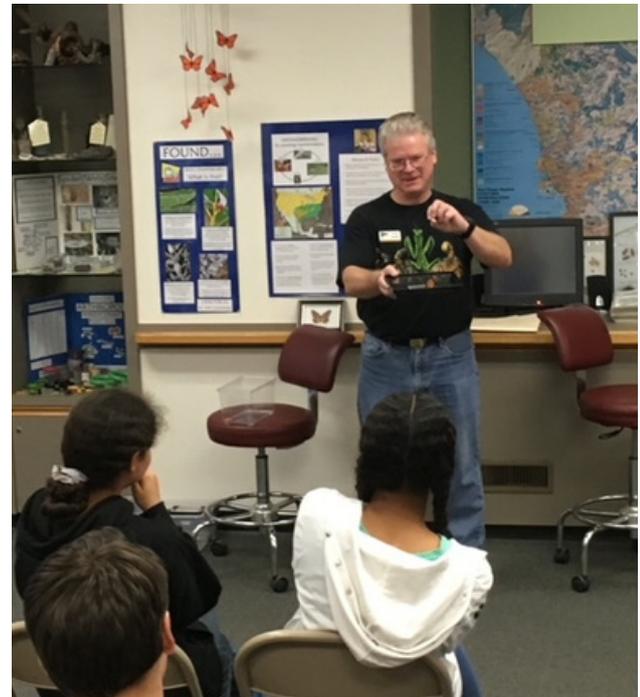
2021 Grace Peter Sargent Award Recipient ~ Jerry Jacobs

Jerry has shared his passion for all things nature, and particularly entomology, with our community as a Tecolote Canyon volunteer since 2015. His hobbies/interests are Marine Biology, Natural History, Entomology, Microscopy, and Photography. It's evident that he loves learning. He has a BA in Chemistry, BA in Biology, MS in Marine Biology, and a PhD in Zoology. The Tecolote Canyon community is fortunate to have a volunteer like Jerry sharing his fascination with and knowledge about the living world with us.



Jerry Jacobs is perhaps better known to several of us as **Jerry *The Bug Guy* Jacobs**. When Jerry brings his Insect Zoo and expertise to various public events, he quickly becomes known as a Pied Piper. If you've been fortunate enough to attend a public nature event that Jerry has volunteered, you've maybe noticed he can be difficult to see through the crowd. Particularly young enthusiasts, as well as nature enthusiasts of all ages, flock in droves to surround Jerry and his *Insect Marvels*. When you're in Jerry's proximity, you might soon find a Madagascar Hissing Cockroach crawling along your hand as you begin to love the intriguing creature as much as Jerry does. If presented with an insect discovery, he'll light up and leave you with swarms of fun facts about your found creepy crawly. He's responsible for Tecolote Canyon patrons finding awe in the smaller details and for helping to spark wonder about tiny buzzes, crawlers, and critters often cast off as pesky.

If you subscribe to the Friends of Tecolote Canyon newsletter, you've had the pleasure of reading Jerry's well-researched articles on species in Tecolote Canyon. When everything around us closed down and volunteering was on a long pandemic hold, Jerry kept our community engrossed in nature. He wrote several articles during the earlier pandemic months that provided Tecolote Canyon neighbors with much appreciated nature respites. His journal-quality articles with bibliographies leave us readers with plenty of research rabbit holes to dive down. Jerry's creature information is as entertaining as his catchy and memorable play-on-word titles. For many of us, it's now impossible to see an Orange-throated Whiptail lizard and not hear Devo's song Whip It as its soundtrack. Jerry has a way with words and a joy for canyon life that enrich our creature sightings, brighten our canyon experiences, and help us appreciate and love canyon biodiversity.



Next time you're at a Tecolote Canyon event and notice a cluster of youth or nature lovers simply hovering in one place, you can be fairly confident that Jerry The Bug Guy Jacobs may be at the center. He'll welcome being BUGGED, and is probably educating the group about a fascinating living being we can look for on the canyon trails.

Thank you, Jerry, for your years of education about the biodiversity in Tecolote Canyon!

The Tecolote Canyon Nature Center Staff, Tecolote Canyon Citizens Advisory Committee, and the Friends of Tecolote Canyon, would like to tell you about some of the outstanding volunteers who made a difference in 2022!



Lauriel Adsit this year...and over the years, she has created a partnership with University High School to bring all of the beautiful art work to the garden fence and patio (tiles and paintings). She is a member of the Tecolote Canyon Interpretive Group, the new mural committee (inside the nature center), and has given us some great input from an artist's prospective and canyon user. Lauriel is a naturalist for the Friends of Tecolote's education program, and Rose Canyon's education program, and she assists with special events and information tables. Lauriel started volunteering in 2015. **Thank you Lauriel!**

David Harpster has been an active community member for years. He serves as a member of TCCAC, walks the canyon regularly, and often reports on any issues that may be of concern. Most recently David signed up to volunteer with Canyonlands to assist our staff to lead our restoration volunteer projects. **Thank you David** for being such a wonderful friend to our canyon and our partner for so many years!

Bud Phillips has been volunteering since 2014 and has been particularly active over the last few years. Bud is a Canyon Compadre on Ranger Cameron's Wednesday crew, he and his wife Dayle participate in our monthly restoration projects, and Bud also signed up to volunteer with Canyonlands in order to help our staff lead the monthly restoration projects. Bud is always willing to help the staff and visits regularly after his 10 mile canyon hikes to keep us updated on trail conditions and anything in the canyon that the rangers should be aware of. **Thanks Bud!**

Jim Roberts officially began volunteering in 2009. He is a TCCAC member, Tecolote Canyon Interpretive Group member, and Weed Warrior. Jim has a background in Physics and Radiobiology, and has an interest in hiking, birding, native plants, and caring for his neighborhood canyons. Jim took on restoring an area of central Tecolote Canyon where he worked usually on his own to eradicate large amounts of non-native plant species. He planted many natives that he often grew from seed at his home. He involved neighbors to get them on board with his goals, as well as Park Rangers and other volunteers. Today the area of central Tecolote Canyon is a much more ecologically sound portion of the canyon. Without individuals like Jim Roberts, Tecolote Canyon would not be as healthy as it currently is, **Thank you Jim!**

Our Natural Park open space exists today because of the concerns of citizens who have volunteered their time and effort towards its protection and towards preserving this urban biodiversity treasure for our community, city, state, and the world to enjoy both now and hopefully for many, many more years to come. One of the volunteers mentioned above will be selected as the 2022 Grace Peter Sargent award winner at the next TCCAC meeting in March.

Please stay tuned into our newsletter to find out who it is!

The Tecolote Canyon Citizens Advisory Committee, staff, and The Friends of Tecolote Canyon would like to say thank you again to the many, many volunteers who have shared their time and effort to help make the Tecolote Canyon Natural Park such a special place to so many.

The Tecolote Canyon Advisory Committee.

Thank you to our sponsors

SDGE: A Sempra Energy Utility

Scott Chalmers

Clairemont Town Council

City of San Diego

Many generous neighbor volunteers and donors



Tecolote Nature Center

5180 Tecolote Road
San Diego, CA 92110

Hours of Operation*
Wednesday—Saturday
10:00am—4:00pm
Closed Sunday—Tuesday
Occasionally when understaffed the center may close on short notice

The garden, patio, and outdoor restrooms are open everyday.

Volunteer Opportunities ~ Something for Everyone!

Jr Volunteers (community service) | Native Plant Garden
Tecolote Canyon Advisory Committee | Weed Warriors
Environmental Stewards Canyon Program (ESCAPE)
Docents | Interpretive Guides | Art & Crafts | Park Patrol
Nature Center Hosts

If you are interested in volunteering, we welcome you to come in and speak with any staff member.

Also, please consider joining our Meetup.com group Friends of Tecolote Canyon and Nature Center as another way to stay connected with our events and the events of our nature loving partners.

TCCAC meets at 6:30pm on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at the Nature Center. For more information about TCCAC you may contact Darrel Madison at .

