Enabling Garden Ribbon Cutting

On Saturday, May 9, Elkus Ranch staff, donors, volunteers, advisory board members, and UC Master Gardeners came out with the morning sunshine for a lovely Ribbon Cutting Ceremony celebrating the opening of the Enabling Garden.

This garden is beautiful with raised beds of colorful flowers, herbs and vegetables that are fully accessible for children with limited mobility or other physical, emotional, or learning disabilities. The garden also provides an area for teacher training and demonstration of principles and techniques for Horticultural Therapy for special education teachers to use in their own school gardens.

The Atkinson Foundation, Strong Foundation for Environmental Values, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and 2008 Youth Garden Grantee – National Gardening Association funded the materials and Elkus Ranch staff training for the project.

Foundation Representatives each took their turn at cutting the bright green ribbon that was tied to the Enabling Garden’s gate.

“It’s nice to experience the outcome of our donation and to see it go to such a thoughtful project,” said Bill Crandall, an Atkinson Foundation board member to Betty Curtis, Foundation Administrator.

Program staff in keeping with the Ranch’s mission statement and commitment to serving students with special needs, have created a unique learning environment with the garden. Leslie Jensen, Program Coordinator at the Ranch, received certification from the Horticultural Therapy Institute and plans to develop a series of workshops to help teachers, parents and caregivers identify appropriate garden tasks for children and young adults with special needs.

Special thanks to Augie Aguilar, Ranch Foreman, and Bruno Acosta, Groundskeeper, for building the garden.

Written by Christa Bigue, Elkus Ranch Advisory Board member
Ten UC Master Gardener (MG) Volunteers assembled at the Ranch in April to landscape and beautify the area around the Conference Center and parking lot. Program Coordinator Shannon Gibbs, MG Charlene Landreau, and Ranch Program Coordinator Leslie Jens en chose California native and other drought-tolerant plants, following a landscape plan designed by Shannon. Plants were selected for the theme of coastal scrub and rugged ranch ambience.

Using compost from the ranch’s manure pile and bark mulch from the ranch supply, the volunteers fertilized, planted, and mulched the large slope outside the conference center. A flat of Blue Fescue was spread out along the slope between two low shrubs. Some of the MG volunteers pruned and fertilized the large shrubs at the entrance to the meeting room.

What was planted?

* Flowering shrubs – *Leptospermum scoparium*
* A large white-flowering *Cistus* shrub
* A *Ceanothus “Ray Hartman”* shrub
* A *Ceanothus horizontalis “Carmel Creeper”*
* A *Cenothus “Concha”*
* A large *Leucodendron* with lovely silver seed cones

The team finished it all in one day. Everyone agreed that it was a satisfying day of hard work combined with the fun of doing it together.

Thanks MG volunteers for your living contributions to the Ranch!

Submitted by Shannon Gibbs, UC Master Gardener Coordinator

What’s New at the Ranch?

Several new animals can now call Elkus Ranch home. In December of 2008 we purchased two young Black Angus cows thanks in part to a generous donation from the Meadows family. The cows quickly settled in the pasture behind the office, frequently coming to the fence to greet visitors who offered a handful of grass.

We were warned that both cows had been in pasture with a bull and we were pleasantly surprised with the birth of a calf in early May of this year!

In February, Julie Mathiason and her family arranged for us to receive two purebred miniature donkeys and a new horse. Pippi and Sassy, the miniature donkeys, were a hit during preschool days. Suzy Q, a 19 year old quarter horse mare, became fast friends with Glory, our other horse, and the two can now always be found together up on the sheep hill.

Lambing began in March. Twenty one lambs were born and they are already up on the sheep hill grazing with their mothers.

Make sure you meet all these new residents on your next visit to the ranch!

Written by Kathi Baxter, Elkus Ranch Environmental Science Educator
News From the Board
by Roger Hoppes,
Advisory Board Member

Since joining the Elkus Ranch Advisory Board about a year ago I have had the opportunity to work with some very committed staff and other Board members. There is a sincere team effort not only to make the ranch and its programs the best they can be, but also to position the facility for a sustainable future. I first became aware of the ranch a number of years ago when my son participated in a joint program with Cunha Intermediate School. I am pleased to now have the opportunity to serve Elkus as an Adviser. The planning and hard work by staff continue to produce results.

A few highlights:

* Most important to the mission of the facility, all of the available school programs are now fully booked through June. In a recessionary period when field trips become increasingly difficult this is a testament to the value teachers place on the programs offered at Elkus Ranch.

* A grant received last year will soon result in a new interpretive display relating to the ranch's water system and more generally to the value of water conservation.

* The development phase for the Enabling Garden is now complete. Congratulations to the team for making this a reality.

* Elkus has moved into a new era of digital connection with the installation of a T-1 line to replace the current dial-up format and installation will begin soon to include a wireless system interlinking the conference center with the rest of the facility.

The Elkus Advisory Board is firmly committed to a sustainable future for the Ranch as well as for our environment. I am impressed with how much can be accomplished with limited resources. If you know of anyone who might be interested in finding out more about Elkus please feel free to pass along a copy of the newsletter and establish a new connection to the Ranch. From contributing to items on the wish list to providing operational support, a few pots for planting, to a few dollars goes a long way.

Elkus Ranch Yarn Spinners Guild

The Spinners meet monthly to spin wool. Everyone is welcome. For more information contact Leslie Jensen by email at: elkusranch@ucdavis.edu or call (650) 712-3151

Flora & Fauna

Many people have asked about the showy bushes growing along the main road near the ranch office. While the red and yellow flower bracts are starting to fade, earlier this spring these drought tolerant cone bushes looked spectacular.

The actual flowers are produced on small cone-like clusters in the center of the colorful bracts. Flowering stems can be cut and brought indoors for use as cut flowers and then dried.

If you’re looking to add some interest to your landscape, there are a number of different Leucadendron species and hybrids that are commercially available. Some even have a wonderful spicy, musk scent, giving rise to its common name of spicy conebush. Adding to their appeal in the landscape, conebush are deer resistant.

Submitted by Dr. Colleen Warfield, PhD., UC Nursery & Floriculture Advisor

New Leaf Enviro-Token Program

Marilyn Johns, Elkus Ranch Director, Elkus Advisory Board members, Joyce James, and Tracy Walsh recently hosted a table at New Leaf Community Market encouraging customers to vote for Elkus Ranch to continue receiving “Enviro-Tokens”. New Leaf sponsors six non profits for the Enviro-Token program each year.

When you use your own reusable bags and get a token and place it in our box, the ranch receives a donation of 10 cents for every token. The money we receive from the tokens helps us with the cost of feed for the animals and education projects at the ranch. Elkus Ranch has received well over $400 dollars from this program!
Thank you to our most recent donors!

Carolyn Battaini, Clyde Beffa Jr., Alan & Alisa Boehme, Douglas Brockmeyer & Mary Mitchell, Diane Brosin, Odie Cook, Charles & Barbara Erle, Pamela Estes, Frank Stanley Beveridge Foundation, Nancy Hickman, Karl Peter, Claudia MacMillan, the Meadows Family, New Leaf Community Market, Wayne Ota, Quenelle Family Foundation, San Mateo Lodge #1112 BPO Elks, and Tracy Walsh

Please consider donating to Elkus Ranch. Your donations have helped us provide camperships, classroom trips, a display for water education, and complete the Enabling Garden. We are a designated non-profit agency and all donations are tax deductible. Please make all checks payable to: UC Regents and mail to:

2009 Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sheep to Shawl</td>
<td>June 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery Day Camp 1</td>
<td>June 15-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range Camp</td>
<td>June 21-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery Day Camp 2</td>
<td>July 6-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery Day Camp 3</td>
<td>July 20-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery Day Camp 4</td>
<td>August 3-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery Day Camp 5</td>
<td>August 17-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall Pre-School Days</td>
<td>Sept. 23-25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Elkus Ranch Wish List

- New barn roofs
- 4 wheel ATV with cart
- Gas lawn mower
- microwave
- 4” plant pots
- plant flats
- plant clippers
- garden gloves (kids/adult sizes)
- cloth napkins, tablecloths, and aprons
- hand crank ice cream maker

RanchTalk

80 Stone Pine Road, #100
Half Moon Bay CA 94019
elkusranch@ucdavis.edu
http://cesanmateo.ucdavis.edu

University of California, in compliance with Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, mental or physical handicap, or age in any of its programs or activities, or with respect to any of its employment policies, practices, or procedures. Nor does the University of California discriminate on the basis of ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status, citizenship, medical condition (as defined in Section 12926 of the California Government Code) or because individuals are special disabled veterans or Vietnam era veterans (as defined by the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Act of 1974 and Section 12940 of the California government Code). Inquiries regarding this policy may be addressed to the Affirmative Action Director, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 1111 Franklin St., 6th Floor, Oakland, California 94607-5200. (510) 987-0097.