

THE
**ANDERSON
VALLEY
LAND
TRUST**
INCORPORATED



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DEDICATED TO THE VOLUNTARY PRESERVATION
OF THE LAND AND ITS ABUNDANT
NATURAL RESOURCES FOR THE BENEFIT
OF GENERATIONS TO COME.

GOOD DIRT

The Newsletter of The Anderson Valley Land Trust
Spring - Summer 2001

AVLT Celebrates a Decade of Community-Based Conservation

The Anderson Valley Land Trust was founded on the premise that friends and neighbors who live in and love Anderson Valley can and should cooperate to protect what we love of this rare and beautiful place. Since its founding, AVLT has provided practical tools and good information to those who want to conserve and restore the natural resources of the valley.

AVLT began during the summer of 1990 when a group of about 50 interested Anderson Valley residents gathered at John Scharffenberger's house on Anderson Valley Way to learn more about land trusts and voluntary land conservation from Elizabeth Byers from the Trust for Public Land. She got an enthusiastic reception, and a dedicated group began meeting on evenings and weekends for several months, to lay the groundwork for the Anderson Valley Land Trust. The first board was elected in spring 1991: Connie Best, Bill Chambers, Joel Clark, Norm Clow, Micki Colfax, Barbara Goodell and John Scharffenberger. Connie, Barbara and Bill are still serving. We extend our gratitude to these past board members, as well as the many volunteers who have contributed to AVLT's success so far.

RIVER WORK

**Learn About Stream Restoration on
Anderson Creek with Chris Tebbutt
Saturday, May 12, 10 AM
11600 Anderson Valley Way at the Barn**

Join us for a **slide presentation and creek walk** to learn about the successful restoration of a half-mile stretch of Anderson Creek not far from the Elementary School in Boonville. The project includes the building of novel instream flow deflectors and planting of riparian vegetation on two properties. *Read Chris's article on page 4 for a preview of this fascinating event.*

This is also an opportunity to **meet Patty Madigan, the new Navarro Watershed Coordinator** working for the Resource Conservation District.

Over the decade, AVLT has pursued its mission in many ways. Since Scharffenberger Cellars donated the first conservation easement in 1992 (protecting Indian Creek), AVLT been granted a total of ten conservation easements on about 600 acres, with several more expected to be donated this year. *Good Dirt* and our workshop series have been produced twice a year since 1992. AVLT was also instrumental in organizing the Navarro Watershed Restoration Plan, which resulted in a comprehensive set of scientifically-based recommendations to improve water quality and restore salmon habitat across our 300 square mile basin. With the addition of Bruce Longstreet as AVLT's Program Coordinator, and a growing momentum of conservation and restoration work, we look forward to greater achievements in our second decade.

AVLT 2000 Financial Statements

The following summary of unaudited financial statements for 2000 was prepared by AVLT Treasurer Karen Altaras and bookkeeper Mary Anne Wilcox.

Statement of Financial Position December 31, 2000

Assets	
Cash	\$ 39,869
Stewardship Endowment	53,860
Furniture and equipment	1,877
Timber Rights	<u>430,400</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>489,288</u>
Liabilities & Net Assets	
Total Liabilities	\$ - 0 -
Net Assets	
At Beginning of Year	489,288
Change in Net Assets	36,718
At End of Year	<u>526,006</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	<u>\$526,006</u>

Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets December 31, 2000

Support and Revenue	
Donations	\$ 16,297
Stewardship Endowment	36,500
Interest and Dividends	2,667
Miscellaneous	<u>36</u>
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	\$ 55,500
Expenses	
Dues and subscriptions	\$ 425
Insurance	2,100
Licenses and permits	307
Office expense	887
Payroll	9,381
Postage	1,123
Printing & publications	2,651
Professional fees	1,294
Telephone	<u>473</u>
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 18,641
Change in Net Assets	\$ 36,718

We would like to thank our generous members for their continued support of the work of the Anderson Valley Land Trust. During 2000 our expenses declined slightly from 1999, while our revenue -- charitable donations for both AVLT's operations and for its Stewardship Endowment -- more than doubled. The Stewardship Endowment is conservatively invested to provide funds for AVLT to monitor and enforce the conservation easements it has been granted. You can make a big difference in our ability to continue serving the community by joining the AVLT and making a tax-deductible donation. **Many thanks!**

The Reincarnation of Shenoa Springs: **An Interview with Melody Haller**

Paul and Melody Haller are the new owners of Shenoa and are transforming it into a Zen retreat and natural preserve. In December 2000, they donated a conservation easement on the 160 acre property, located at the confluence of Anderson Creek and Rancheria Creek, where the Navarro begins. Laurie Wayburn recently spoke with Melody about her love of the valley and vision for the new Shenoa Springs.

When did you and Paul first come to the Valley, and what made you want to buy land here?

Paul and I used to come up to Anderson Valley for weekends with our children at Van Zandt's Resort, starting about ten years ago. We have always loved the feeling of the land, the golden hills and redwood forests, and that the Navarro is such a sweet clean river. I love the slight breeze on hot summer days, the luminous lichen and the rich scent of the forest on wet winter days. You can feel the life pulsing through this valley. We also happen to really enjoy the quirky community and feel deeply at home here.

I'm fifth generation Californian and always regretted that my family didn't invest in land, though I never really expected to have the opportunity to do so myself. As a kid, I used to ride my bike to where the Southern Californian housing tracts ended and spend my afternoons in the desert, listening and watching. During Fortune's brief smile upon us, Paul and I agreed that I could have my dream of owning a piece of California. We knew about Shenoa through the realtor who had contacted the San Francisco Zen Center, where Paul is a teacher. The day I saw Shenoa I knew I wanted to be its owner and caretaker more than I had ever wanted anything. We just passed our one-year Shenoa Springs anniversary in early March!

What were/are your goals for Shenoa in protecting it with a conservation easement?

I've seen so many beautiful areas be devoured by development, seen so many wonderful living creatures be bulldozed out of existence. I wonder what will be left for our grandchildren? We have two goals for Shenoa Springs: (1) for the retreat center to be self-supporting so that the property is never in jeopardy again; and (2) to support the maximum amount of wildlife and native plant life per cubic yard. We think of Shenoa Springs as a tiny biosphere preserve.

A tiny percentage of California's once-ubiquitous native grasslands now remains. As the grasslands, savannas and potrereros have gone, so have the voles, bobcats, butterflies and many bird species that depended on the diverse meadow ecosystem. So, we're not only trying to save what remains of this property's redwood, oak and fir forests, but we are determined to restore its meadows to native grassland. We called in Paul Kepar of Rana Creek Ranch, who is probably the state's leading habitat restoration expert, and found we had remnant stands of "old-growth" grasses--six inches tall and 300 years old! We've started saving seed from our native grasses and interesting perennials and annuals that survived the invasion of European grasses. In the meantime, as we build up our own nursery and seed stock, we used traditional farming techniques to restore several acres of farmland to meadowland. From Larner Seeds, we purchased hundreds of pounds of native perennial and annual grass seed and a selection of 17 northern California wildflowers. We used only a total of two cups of RoundUp, applied manually to the clumps of orchard grass that survived plowing. Our meadow is a success! The Baby Blue Eyes are first to bloom and it looks like we've got a healthy crop of native grasses. After we have restored all 25 acres of meadow, we hope to be supplying seed for other restoration projects.

[Continued on page 7]

River Work

By Chris Tebbutt

These are the introductory and concluding paragraphs of an article written by Chris Tebbutt for the July 2001 issue of Pacific Horticulture. The rest of the article describes the process the Tebbutts used to begin to restore a half-mile of Anderson Creek in cooperation with their neighbor, AgriPerpetua (where AVLT has a conservation easement which protects the restoration work from future disturbance).

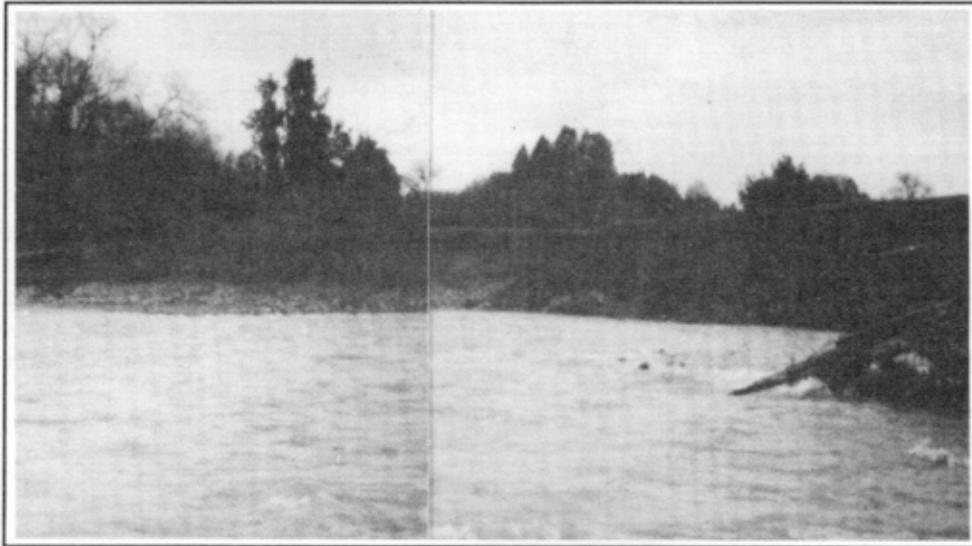
Mid-February winter storm. It has been raining for days and the soil is super-saturated. The river will be up to its mischief, running bank to bank, dark brown with sediment, violently carrying away all impediments to its will. The memory of last year's configuration will be all but gone. Every year, one is apprehensive to learn the scale of the damage left behind in its wake, after flood stage. Recently, however, even the dangerously high flows of *el niño* years have left, literally, truckloads of silt. New depositions of soil are laid down with each ensuing storm, since we have designed instream structures that are working well to slow the river's energy behind constructed deflectors. Trees are quickly planted in every nook and cranny of the "new ground," and within a year or two, this migrating soil is captured, layer upon layer, to eventually build up and replace what was once lost. For, in one winter's mayhem eighteen years ago, my neighbor lost two acres of a rich alluvial pasture, to a depth of six feet (about 20,000 cubic yards!) in one night. Such is the power of our north coast rivers.

We inherited a river with no riparian canopy, naked, wide—hugely wide—choked full of gravel, running shallow and braided, open to the extreme oscillations of high winter flows and summer-dry desert conditions. The river was "lost," its summer flow buried under ten feet of gravel. It was hard to imagine steelhead and salmon ever having lived here. Indeed, Anderson Creek, this tributary of the once great Navarro River, is symptomatic of similar eroded and degraded waterways almost anywhere in the Pacific Northwest, where extinction of the native salmonids is looming.

In regard to rivers, I am actually optimistic, for if we "cut them enough slack," they will rebound in good health and teem with fish again. While river restoration itself is a poorly developed art, and by no means a science, it is the native ingredients of our once mighty riparian forests that are the miracle workers. Imagine a tree such as white alder that can put on twenty feet of growth in four years in pure "river-run" gravel without any soil. (Red alder for the coast and north, white alder for inland heat and south) Likewise successful in such circumstances are six willow species and three cottonwoods, two maples (box elder and bigleaf), Oregon ash, the slow but tenacious California bay, coast redwood (at its best in the riparian zone), the majestic valley oak, and, in the south, native sycamore and both of the now rare black walnuts. With a constant water supply and access to newly entrapped alluvial soils, these trees are the most rapid to regenerate.

Along with the re-establishment of the river's canopy comes a rich wildlife corridor. Sixty-five kinds of birds are known to use valley riparian forests for nesting and foraging, while cottonwood/willow forests support the highest density and diversity of nesting birds of any plant community in California. As gardeners and landowners, the prescription seems straight forward: we learn which species can play "offense" in the gravel bar thickets and which species can play "defense" on the flood plain terraces. Even if we must reluctantly fence and water with drip irrigation, this is second nature to a gardener's cultivating instinct.

The goal for this half-mile stretch of river is to return the riparian zone to the polar opposite condition from which we began: from overheated gravel bars to a closed canopy of trees. For is it not a total surprise to enter a riverbed on a hot, 100° day and experience the atmosphere of moisture and "coolth," where fish can survive under a root wad in the deep dark shade?



Anderson Creek before restoration work (about 1985)



Planting same location with willows, on "bio-cell" jetties (1998)



Same stretch of Anderson Creek two years after riparian planting.

'Spring Red' Big Leaf Maple

An Anderson Valley Native

by Susan Addison

Arching over our creeks and streams here in Anderson Valley are majestic Big Leaf Maple trees that charm us with their lovely fresh green growth in spring and sparkling yellow leaves in the fall. However, if you are lucky you might also find one with bright red buds, and leaves as Ken Montgomery did more than 20 years ago. As we have begun featuring an article in "Good Dirt" about plants that are of special interest to residents of the Valley I went to talk with Ken about Big Leaf Maples and this very special tree.

People who love and work with plants often have favorites and are pleased to talk about them when given the opportunity. Ken, who grows native plants in his Anderson Valley Nursery, is no exception. He is fascinated by Big Leaf Maples (*Acer macrophyllum*), which grow from southern California to southwest Alaska in canyons and along stream banks. While they are all the same species there is a great deal of variability amongst trees from different areas. In the far north and eastern parts of the range, for example, trees show bright orange to red fall color, while further south in California the leaves turn yellow in the fall. These are variations that may be climate related, but they also may represent genetic differences. When populations of plants are isolated from one another they cannot interbreed freely and often develop variations in response to a variety of local conditions.

While some experts contend that *Acer macrophyllum* has no sub-species, botanists have differing opinions about whether certain natural variability in Big Leaf Maple represents different subspecies or not. Neither are there good horticultural selections in the nursery trade. Cultivated varieties (cultivars) could possibly be developed, however, from wild trees with particularly desirable characteristics.

Soon after moving to Boonville with his family in the late 1970's, Ken was drawn to a large, old maple tree growing the backyard of next-door neighbors, Walter and Beth Tuttle. The Tuttle invited him to come over and take a closer look. The tree turned out to be *Acer macrophyllum*, but unlike others in the area, this one had bright red new growth, most prominent in the spring. Later Ken learned from Steve Campbell of Longden Nursery in Sebastopol about several trees in the Dry Creek and Russian River watersheds that similarly had brilliant red new growth. More recently, he has seen seedlings from the Mendocino Coast north of Cleone with bright red new branches but lacking the red leaves.

Over the years Ken has propagated many seeds from the Tuttle tree and discovered that 10 - 30% of the seedlings exhibit some degree of the red-leaf characteristic with a few displaying even more intense color than the parent. He has named these seedling variants *Acer macrophyllum* 'Spring Red,' although it is technically not a cultivar because the plants originate from seed (and, thus, are genetically distinct individuals). I asked Ken if he could grow these maples from cuttings or by grafting to guarantee exact duplicates of the parent, but he has found both approaches difficult and has had little success.

No one knows for certain whether the maple in the Tuttle yard is wild or planted, but when the Tuttle bought their property the maple tree was growing right up against a shed that had been part of the old lumber mill that was there in the 50's. This is not a very likely spot to plant a tree and Walter Tuttle feels sure that the tree is wild. It is the only tree in the area that Ken is aware of that exhibits this distinctive red new growth. If on one of your rambles around the Valley you come across another one in the wild I am sure Ken would like to hear about it. If you want to plant a 'Spring Red' Big Leaf Maple in your yard please visit Ken's nursery where you will find seedlings of this tree and other local native plants that Ken has propagated.



'Spring Red' in bud at the Tuttle's house

AVLT HIRES PROGRAM COORDINATOR!

We welcome Bruce Longstreet as our new half-time staff.
Meet him at our Boonville office (14125 Highway 128).

The Reincarnation of Shenoa Springs: An Interview with Melody Haller

Continued from page 3

Could you speak a bit about what you feel is the importance of a sustainable relationship with land/the Earth?

How can humans actually walk around thinking that they are anything but an extension of the earth, of this ecosystem? The more of nature we destroy, the more we are hastening our own eventual end. One of Buddhism's core principles is "inter-dependent origination," that is, that everything in the universe came into root existence at once and is inextricably connected with everything else. You can't change one piece without affecting everything. Everything changes and everything matters too.

What role do you envision for Shenoa within the Anderson Valley community?

I guess my dream would be to help the Anderson Valley to keep and develop its sense of place. That is, rather than becoming a faux South of France, or Suburbia USA, I'd like to see people begin to develop a sense of landscape planting that feels like this place, and no place exactly else in the world.

We're just a neighbor working to take care of the land. Though we're trying to be as smart and informed as we can about our efforts, we've got a lot to learn. We'd love to hear about others' restoration and preservation efforts in the valley, too. All of you members of the Anderson Valley Land Trust are very welcome to come visit our wildflower meadow and talk to our land managers, Linda McElwee and Andy Balestracci. Situated as we are at the beginning of the Navarro River, we'd also like to learn more about how we can help restore the creeks and rivers that border our property and create more safe habitat for the fish. We're hoping that the steel bridge we are building will keep vehicles out of the river and provide some good shade for fish as well.

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___ **Yes!** I want to contribute to the preservation of the natural heritage of our valley by supporting the Anderson Valley Land Trust.

___ **I want to learn more** about the Anderson Valley Land Trust and private land conservation. Please send me additional information.

___ **I want to volunteer** my time to work with the Anderson Valley Land Trust.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Membership Category:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual (\$15) | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainer (\$100) |
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Thank you!

Please mail this form and your tax-deductible contribution to:
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