

January 2011

# La Lavandería



Rancho Guajome Adobe County Park

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## Rancho Guajome Adobe: The Year in Preview

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You may be expecting a customary article about how excited we are for the coming year and how we are going to be so busy we are going to lose our minds. Well, that's exactly what you're going to get! I've spent a week mulling over ideas for the front page, and this is the best I could do (this is a good time to remind folks to submit articles, announcements, ideas, photos etc.).

In fact, we are looking forward to a very busy year on several fronts. However, we are also going to be facing some major challenges and changes from our typical daily operations schedule.

First off, we already have 15 weddings booked for next year, which ensures we will have plenty to do on weekends in the spring and summer. Second, we will be working on developing at least one new special event this year. We have batted around event ideas that have ranged from a "Day of the Dead" event to an "Adobe Days" event. We are in the earliest stages of deciding what type of event could be successful at the rancho. Third, park hours and public access to our trails, gardens

and historic structures will most likely be expanded in the near future. As always, nothing is set in stone yet and I cannot go into detail, so stay tuned and be unofficially prepared for some likely changes in 2011 (is that ambiguous enough?).

Finally, we have some New Year's goals to address. I would like to see us conduct more off-site interpretation and education. In 2010, I was able to attend three promotional events and visit one school. However, I would like to be able to "bring" Rancho Guajome to more classrooms and public venues. With school budget reductions, teachers have found it difficult to arrange transportation to our park. Outreach programs, such as, classroom visits, Ranger talks and off-site adobe brick-making demonstrations, are some of the many ways that I believe Rancho Guajome staff and docents could make a positive impact in local communities.

Let me know what your goals are for 2011, as they pertain to Rancho Guajome. Thanks and Happy New Year!

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## Docent Appreciation Lunch

### Pit Stop Diner in Oceanside to Host Docent Appreciation Luncheon

Docents are invited to the annual docent appreciation lunch.

Please RSVP @ 760-724-4082

Where:

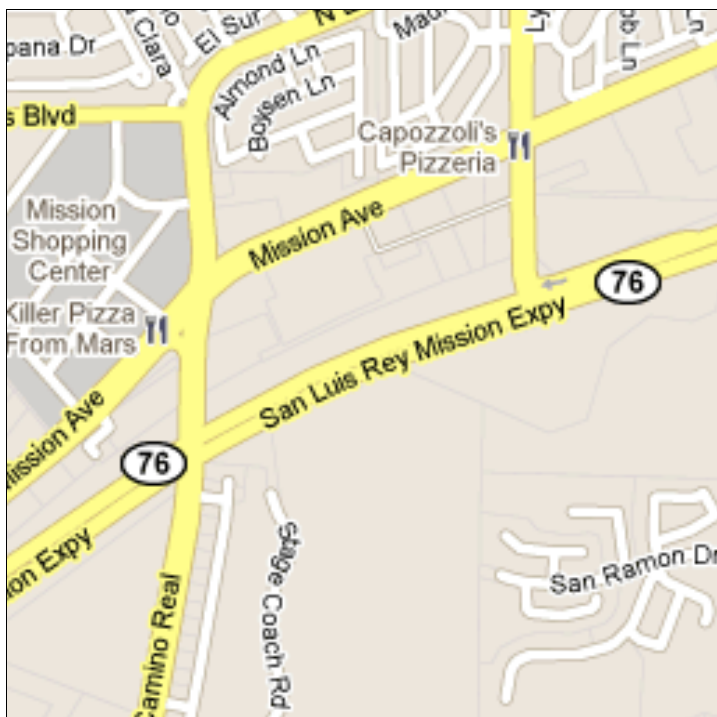
The Pit Stop Diner, 3825 Mission Ave.  
in Oceanside

When:

Tuesday, February 1st @ 11am

Menu:

Diner food: burgers, hot dogs, pastrami sandwiches, fries, milkshakes etc.



## Special Events

### Docents and Park Staff Mull Over New Event Ideas

In order to diversify the special events we coordinate at Rancho Guajome, park staff and docents have been brainstorming some new event ideas. At the last docent meeting event ideas such as, Day of the Dead, an Art Exhibition and other promotional events were discussed. However, since I was unable to attend I thought I would submit my own idea for a new special event.

Drum roll please...."ADOBE DAYS"! "Adobe Days" will focus on what life would have been like for people at Rancho Guajome from the mid to late 1800s. We will hold hands-on adobe building demonstrations for the public, have live Californio-style music, non-profit booths (history and archaeology based organizations), as well as, a Chili cook-off. In addition, anything that represents the bucolic, agricultural based lifestyle of past Rancho Guajome residents will be acceptable (e.g. farming equipment, farm animals, folk art vendors, produce vendors etc.). Anyway, that's a rough idea of what I think would be a good event for RGA.

## Ranger's Report: Organic Landscaping

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Imagine, for a moment, how much fertilizer and pesticide residue makes its way to the ocean as runoff. The recent rains in December most likely transported heaps of chemicals used in landscaping, such as, phosphorus and nitrogen along our waterways and eventually out to the ocean. Large concentrations of nitrogen and phosphorus can cause "dead zones" in our oceans because they ultimately starve aquatic environments of oxygen, which of course is not good for marine life. One way to help prevent this nasty, fertilizer soup from entering our waterways, is to go organic. Organic landscaping involves the use of compost, humus, worms, blood meal, bone meal and other natural products, as opposed to chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides. Many organic products are cheaper to use, and can be produced on site in worm bins and compost piles. On the other hand, chemical fertilizers go through a complex process that uses natural gas to create nitrogen rich compounds that plants love, but pollute waterways. In addition, since compost and humus are created from the very plants you grow on site, it is a sustainable practice—whereas, chemical fertil-

izers are produced from a finite source. Here's a quick checklist to get you on the path to organic landscaping:

- 1) Start a compost pile using a mixture of green and brown yard clippings (e.g. grass and leaves).
- 2) Buy a worm bin and a bag of red worms, and feed them with eggshells, fruit and vegetable scraps from your kitchen. Also, the "compost tea" that is produced by the compost process is great for soil and plant health.
- 3) Use mulch and add organic matter to your landscape to improve soil health and suppress weed germination.
- 4) Plant native plants and Mediterranean plants, they don't require fertilizer and use less water.
- 5) Use natural weed killers that contain vinegar, lemon juice, clove oil and other similar compounds.

The most beneficial outcome of organic landscaping, is the improvement of soil quality. Soil quality improves with the addition of organic matter, instead of chemical fertilizers. Organisms like bacteria and worms will thrive in an organic rich landscape and plants will be healthier.

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## Important Dates and Events @ RGA

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- ◆ Jan. 1: Wedding Ceremony
- ◆ Jan. 11, 25 & 27 School Tours
- ◆ Feb. 2nd: Docent Appreciation @ the Pit Stop Restaurant



Sign up now for school tours, weekend tours and gift shop shifts! Make it simple, just call the park or email us. 760-724-4082/ [Jason.schwartz@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:Jason.schwartz@sdcounty.ca.gov)

## Jake and Mel Rock the Bakery

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La Lavanderia went backstage to uncover the mystique surrounding the indomitable duo of Jake and Mel. At least once a year Jake and Mel play the San Luis Rey Bakery in Ocean-side for family and friends. Docents Jerry and Tina Colling, Carole Shanahan, as well as, Ranger Jason and his lovely wife, had front row seats for the concert of the season. The duo played rock and blues from the 50s and 60s. Look for future shows to be publicized in La Lavanderia.



- ◆ Docent Meeting @ the Graham House @ 10am on the 1st Tuesday of every month
- ◆ Furniture Committee @ the Graham House @ 9:30am on the 2nd Wednesday of every month

## Park Projects & Updates

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### Work Begins on New Pergola

We will be constructing a new pergola in the center of the Victorian Garden. The existing pergola has seen better days. The new pergola will be about the same dimensions, but much more stout. It should make a nice addition to our popular wedding site, and may become a focal point of wedding ceremonies. Caretaker, David Duran, has extensive experience as a contractor and will be the brains behind the operation.

### Graham House Kitchen Update

During the many days of rain in December, we had time to begin the update of the Graham House kitchen. Park staff began by cleaning and prepping the walls and cabinets for paint, as well as, removing the old counter, which will be replaced with tile. The floor will also be tiled, so we will have a durable and relatively maintenance free floor.

### Access Gates

New access gates for pedestrians will be installed near the front gate and rear gate, in preparation for our new operating schedule. Stay tuned.

## FYI: Landscape Industry Show in LA

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**The largest green industry show in the West will take place June 12-13 at the Los Angeles Convention Center**

If you have any interest at all in the green industry, such as, landscaping, landscape architecture, gardening or irrigation, then the Landscape Industry Show is the place to be. There will be dozens of vendors introducing new products to use in the landscape. There will also be workshops, talks, certification courses and demonstrations relating to all aspects of the green industry.

Free exhibition hall passes are available online at [www.clca.us/lis](http://www.clca.us/lis)

The show is geared toward contractors, professionals and students, but there are also plenty of workshops and products that will appeal to the homeowner and gardener.



# General County Info



## Main Office Address:

County of San Diego  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
9150 Chesapeake Dr; Ste 200  
San Diego, CA 92123

## County Parks and Recreation:

Web Address: [www.sdparks.org](http://www.sdparks.org)

## San Diego County Parks Society

P.O. BOX 957  
Bonita, CA 91908  
SDCPSOC@aol.com  
(619) 267-7323 office  
(619) 267-7329 fax

## General Information & Questions:

Dept. Phone: (858) 694-3030  
Park Office: (760)724-4082

## E-mail:

Hector.live@sdcounty.ca.gov  
Jason.schwartz@sdcounty.ca.gov

## Reservations:

(877) 565-3600; M-F 8am-5pm  
or on-line at: [www.sdparks.org](http://www.sdparks.org)



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**A legacy preserved**