DONOR PROFILE: RICHARD ROSS AND LINDA CARPENTER

Last year Richard and Linda traveled to Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park from southern California to celebrate his 85th birthday. Their visit inspired them to want to “give back” to Prairie Creek and become more of a part of it. They made a generous donation to support the restoration of the visitor center, as well as an additional gift to establish a new student intern position at the visitor center. They pledged to make an annual gift supporting this new student position, and a testamentary gift to support the position in perpetuity. Meet our generous donors: Richard Ross and Linda Carpenter.

Richard was born in Los Angeles and has lived most of his life there. After graduating from Stanford, and a 2-year tour of duty in the Military Police, he returned to L.A. and graduated from USC Law School. He practiced law for many years before deciding to return to school where he earned a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology, which led to him serving as a Referee in the Mental Health Court until his retirement.

Having grown up in the “gray and season-less city of Los Angeles”, Richard sought out more natural spaces, and he visited Prairie Creek for the first time in 1972 with his son, Tony. He recalls the impact the trip had on him: “the awesomeness of it all - the quiet, the space, the immensity of the redwoods, the circle of life (new trees sprouting on top of dead ones), and the fact that all this had been on the planet for centuries.” Richard has traveled widely and often, but Prairie Creek remains his favorite place on earth.

Linda was born in Louisville, Kentucky and spent her formative years in the western part of the state. She moved to Los Angeles at the earliest possible moment after having fallen in love with Big Sur, California. She held executive positions with Paramount Pictures, Qualcomm, Sony Pictures, and Qwest Communications before gleefully retiring in 2002. She then returned to art school...for the second time...eventually becoming interested in botanical drawing and watercolor painting. Today Linda enjoys pursuing art, traveling to new places and most importantly, taking long walks with Richard in the great redwood forests in California.

During their visit in 2017, Richard and Linda revered the resources of the park, as they had done in the past, but they decided they wanted to do more. As Richard explains, “I realized how much I loved this place, more than any other, and how much it meant to me. One of the visitor center interns impressed us with her knowledge and enthusiasm, and we thought how wonderful it would be to give other young people a chance to experience this lovely wilderness. Also, a restoration project was in progress at the visitor center, and we thought it would be nice to support that for future visitors.”

Please join us in sending a huge thank you to Richard and Linda for their generosity. Anyone visiting Prairie Creek Visitor Center will soon see the effects of these gifts, both in the brilliant restoration efforts and the eager faces of student staff.
Thank you for making Giving Tuesday a huge success!

Last November, we held a Giving Tuesday fundraiser for the Mill Creek Native Plant Nursery in Redwood National and State Parks. The nursery lies in the heart of Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park Mill Creek watershed where Nursery Manager, Dan Burgess, tends to redwood seedlings and other native plants grown to be reintroduced to nearby areas identified for restoration. Dan’s work is part of a larger goal of restoring second-growth redwood forests in order to increase connectivity for wildlife and improve stream health for salmon recovery. Donations received from our Giving Tuesday campaign will help to provide essential supplies to the nursery and to support educational programs related to forest and salmon recovery at the nursery and local schools.

Our supportive members and followers really stepped up for the Mill Creek Nursery. We were already so grateful to those who purchased seedlings to be planted and just as the year came to a close, we received a generous $10,000 donation to support the many unfunded needs of the nursery. Thank you to our thoughtful donor, and to all of those who chose to give to RPC this Giving Tuesday.
Interest in the Grove of Titans trail project has really peaked in the last few months, and we’re working hard to maintain the momentum. Since our last newsletter, The New York Times, San Francisco Chronicle, and other news outlets published articles covering the Grove of Titans project and appealing to the public for support. More recently, CBS national news traveled to Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park with representatives from California State Parks and Redwood Parks Conservancy to film a television feature about the project. The feature aired nationally on CBS twice in December and helped to spread awareness about the impacts of off-trail hiking (i.e., “social trails”) to viewers across the country.

As of January, Redwood Parks Conservancy has received over 340 donations totaling almost $40,000 from individuals across the US who want to see the grove restored. Some donations came from unlikely sources, like the $25 donation we received from a seven-year-old boy in Palo Alto and the $500 that followed when he convinced his principal to hold a school fundraiser for the Titans. Although we still have a ways to go, the incredible amount of support and exposure we’ve received for this project has kept us motivated to push forward.

In January, RPC staff was able to visit the Grove of Titans with California State Parks staff for an on-site presentation of specific plans for the elevated walkway and platforms. The visit was led by the Senior Engineering Geologist of the North Coast Redwoods District of California State Parks who shared his team’s conceptual design plans in complete detail. We left the grove with full confidence that work on this project will begin as soon as the necessary funds are raised.

If you would like to learn more about the Grove of Titans project, including how to donate, visit www.groveoftitans.org. We will do our very best to keep you updated on the status of our fundraiser.

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**Grove of Titans Fundraiser Featured on National Television**

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**Park Store Staff Pick:**

**Mushrooms of the Redwood Coast**

*Recommended by Dylan Bewley, Operations Assistant, RPC*

Our staff is most excited about a new field guide in our park stores. Have you ever wanted to learn how to identify the many mushrooms popping up along your favorite trails? *Mushrooms of the Redwood Coast* is a user-friendly and visually stunning guide to over 750 species of mushrooms found in our region. The book is written by experts and highly recommended by mushroom enthusiasts. Drop by one of our park stores and pick up a copy before your next hike. And remember, members receive a 15% discount on their purchases!

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**Message from the Director**

**Cathy Bonser, Executive Director**

*Advocacy: the act or process of supporting a cause or proposal; to recommend publicly; to speak or write in favor of*

I have deep connections to nature, dark skies, clean air and water, a quiet walk in the woods and sharing our public lands and those connections I just mentioned with my family, particularly with my four grandchildren. I am an advocate of keeping public lands available, under the control and ownership of our public land agencies who represent our love of those lands and keep them available to us.

If you are like me, you have taken note of increased fees in the national parks and of a change in how our lands are managed. I don’t lobby (that is, I don’t work to influence legislation) but I do make sure my legislators know I want to take a free walk, hand in hand with a granddaughter, on lands belonging to you and me. I treasure memories of lupine in the Bald Hills of Redwood National Park, of the smell of composting duff in the redwood forest, of the cackle of geese at Tolowa Dunes State Park, of the noise of feisty elk near Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, the scent of wild azaleas in Azalea State Nature Reserve, and the awe I feel when I see the fog roll through shafts of sunlight in the giant trees growing and thriving in protected public lands on our north coast. The wonders of our public lands leave me breathless. Consider advocating to maintain our public lands and keep them available to us.

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**RPC nominated for Nonprofit Leader of the Year**

We had a wonderful surprise this winter when we were nominated for the Nonprofit Leader award by the Crescent City / Del Norte County Chamber of Commerce. This was the first year that nonprofits were included in award nominations. Although we didn’t end up receiving the award, we were honored to be recognized by our local business community.
Help us celebrate the 50th anniversary of Redwood National Park

Redwood Parks Conservancy (RPC) and Redwood National and State Parks (RNSP) are gearing up to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Redwood National Park in 2018. In 1968, the National Park Service (NPS) recognized the invaluable resources of our redwood coast by establishing Redwood National Park. Fifty years later, NPS continues to fulfill its mission of preserving our natural and cultural resources for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.

In celebration of this milestone, Redwood Parks Conservancy is working with local museums and art galleries to organize a Community Festival of Arts & Culture honoring our incredible redwood parks throughout 2018. RPC is inviting arts and culture organizations in Del Norte and Humboldt counties to host workshops, exhibits, or other activities that highlight the rich natural resources, cultures, and history of the redwood coast. Eight local organizations are already planning activities, and we expect many more to be a part of this collective event. This will be the first-ever art event organized with Redwood National and State Parks, and we’re excited to be a part of it.

RPC and NPS staff will work together to create original event media, including a festival schedule that will be maintained on the RPC and RNSP web pages. We want to invite our members and friends to join us for this exciting event, so keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for more information.