



# THE BARN BURNER



SAN RAMON HISTORIC FOUNDATION

Dedicated to the preservation of San Ramon's early farms and homesteads

Camille Thompson-Editor

## A Message From The Board

Even though we are still sheltering in place, the Historic Foundation Board members continue to meet monthly via ZOOM with Park and Community Services staff. We are working on projects that need repair or updating at Forest Home Farms. The lighting on the Ole 1850s Barn to enhance the artifacts and structure pieces is almost completed. The Meat locker is nearly ready for restoration and painting. The Garden plan will be restored with new plots and varmint proofing! Down the road, the Board would like to focus on the Boone House, which needs major repair and updating. ALL these projects need large amounts of capital. That is why we count on your membership, donations and sponsorships every year. All contributions go directly back to the Farm for projects and restoration.

We had to cancel Sheep Shearing, Oktoberfest, and Holiday on the Farm this year. These events always bring in thousands of dollars to support the Farm. We continue to partner with the City on safe and very structured events. We made scarecrows for the Central Park treasure hunt and will help with tree decorating at City Hall. The Farm will also be selling greenery packages to make wreaths and swags. See below for greenery package details.

Wishing you a safe and healthy Holiday Season! We look forward to your membership and donations. Most importantly, we look forward to seeing you at the Farm events, when this virus is conquered. During the pandemic, small family groups can still visit during park hours. Masks and social distancing is required.

Carol J. Rowley  
President,  
San Ramon Historic Foundation

### Holiday Greenery Package

- Your choice of wreath, door swag, or both.
- Materials to make each item
- Hot chocolate, cookies, mini candy canes for 4
- History of the wreath information sheet
- 4 traditional holiday recipes



- Contactless pickup available on Dec. 7, 9, 11, 14, 16, & 18 Betw. 10-4:30pm at Forest Home Farms.
- Please visit the City of San Ramon website to place your order. In the search field, type **A Victorian Holiday**, Thank you!



## Farm Life Education Program Now Online

Jessica Reaber

The Forest Home Farms *Farm Life Education Program* has gone virtual. The Farm typically hosts nearly 100 educational tours throughout the school year, a highlight for staff, docents, teachers, and students alike. In light of the recent and ongoing pandemic, all field trips have been canceled and are not set to resume in the near future. Because of this, students and teachers are not just missing a day out of the classroom. They are missing educational content that has become a mainstay for the third-grade local history curriculum. To meet this need, staff have developed the curriculum to bring the program into the classroom. Docents filmed portions of the tour that can be shared in the school's remote learning environment. A secure website hosts the videos and accompanying quizzes and worksheets. The website will be accessible to teachers upon registration.

All teachers who have previously registered their classes for the educational field trip have been notified of the virtual program. Additional information and a sample of the content is available on the Forest Home Farms webpage. Two local

(see Online Program on pg. 2)

## Online Program

*(cont'd. from pg. 1)*

teachers have been recruited to pilot this new program. The feedback received is positive and heartening. One teacher shared the very personal connection one of the students had with the content: "Today one of my students will share a movie he made on his grandma's walnut farm in Yuba City. He is there now helping with the harvest. We would have never known this if it wasn't for your video!"

Th staff is encouraged by the response and looks forward to the success of the virtual field trip program.

## San Ramon Depot Sign Restoration

*Dall Barley*

Next time you visit Forest Home Farms, be sure to check out the newly restored San Ramon Depot sign, a treasured piece of San Ramon history, now proudly displayed in the Tractor Barn.

When the Southern Pacific railroad came to San Ramon Valley in 1891, two stations, or depots, were built. The Danville Station still stands, though it was moved from its original location. The site of the San Ramon Station was at approximately the intersection of the Iron Horse Trail and Fostoria Way.

When the railroad ceased operations the depots were converted to other uses. The San Ramon Depot building was removed, and the original depot sign was placed on a smaller storage building on the site. In 1940 this building, and signage, was purchased by the Borel family and moved to their ranch at the intersection of Fostoria Way and Camino Ramon.

Over time, left to the elements, the sign's condition deteriorated. When Armand Borel passed away the property was transferred to East Bay Regional Parks District. An agreement was brokered by the City of San Ramon and EBRPD to have the sign restored and displayed at Forest Home Farms. Restoration was completed in October, 2020 by historic preservation consultant, Kyle Bernard.

The San Ramon Historic Foundation is grateful to the San Ramon 150 Committee for their generous contribution toward funding the restoration effort.



*Kyle Bernard, historic preservation consultant, pictured with the historic San Ramon Depot sign he restored in October, 2020.*



*The 129-year-old sign before its remarkable restoration.*

## Appreciation for These Generous Grants



**Thank you!**

The San Ramon Historic Foundation extends its gratitude for these generous grants. The **Kiwanis Club of San Ramon Valley**, for the third year in a row, is funding an interactive, self-guided audio tour of the farm with the use of a cell phone. The tour has had favorable comments from visitors regarding the historical information and the ease of use. This grant allows us to continue the program and update the audio tour as restored

*(see Grants on pg. 3)*

## A Day in the Life

*Patsy Galati*

When driving through the gate at Forest Home Farms to feed the animals, the greeting is amazing. Sometimes, a small family group is talking to the horses who immediately turn and run toward my car with a loud whinny. The ram, Little Joe, baas his raspy call to dinner followed by the whole flock in one loud choral performance!

The visitors question, "How do they recognize your car? They started toward you before you turned from the road!" This is almost an echo of the question, "How do you remember all of their names"?

The pregnant ewes are still expecting their lambs as I anxiously await their arrival. They will probably wait until Thanksgiving morning to decide to need my help. The summer lambs are almost as tall as their mothers. The summer ducklings are full grown and flying at times. They spend most of their daytime fun in the field with the main flock of sheep. Often a few children with their mom, delight in watching the march of the ducks to the field with my Border Collie, Brooke, who encourages them to move in the direction to the gate. Another group of visitors may watch Brooke divide the ducks from the sheep to bring them back to their coop before the day ends.

My favorite quiet time is spent after the sheep have finished eating their hay and follow me as I walk among them. They are waiting for me to talk to them and pet them. I am truly happy and thankful for this peaceful moment.



## Grants

*(cont'd. from pg. 2)*

buildings and items are added to the farm for public viewing. Visitors can pick up a brochure explaining how to access the audio tour at the Welcome Center kiosk and are able to tour the farm at their own leisure. This program is an extension of our efforts to make the rich history of the San Ramon Valley accessible to people of all ages, and we are grateful for the continued support through this grant.

Formed in 1956, the **Kiwanis Club of San Ramon Valley** is a service organization dedicated to supporting the community through volunteerism and grants. For more information, visit [www.srvkiwanis.org](http://www.srvkiwanis.org).

For the past four years, the **Dougherty Valley/San Ramon Rotary Foundation** has helped give elementary school kids an interactive and memorable experience of early farm life. Once again, the Rotary has granted funding for the next school year. For the past 14 years, almost every third-grade student in the area has visited the farm and participated in hands-on activities to learn about local history and life in the San Ramon Valley during the late 1800s and early 1900s. The farm programs, serving approximately 3,200 Tri-Valley students annually from both public and private schools, would not be possible without funding from this wonderful organization dedicated to serving our community.

The **Dougherty Valley/San Ramon Rotary Foundation's** mission is to raise money and make charitable contributions directed at youth and education within the San Ramon area and/or California, as well as causes which alleviate suffering in a time of crisis. For more information, visit [www.dvsrrotaryfoundation.org](http://www.dvsrrotaryfoundation.org).

## Support our Local Businesses

During these challenging times, it is important to support our local businesses as they struggle to stay afloat. One way you can help is to treat yourself and your family by ordering takeout meals at local restaurants.

We are all in this together. Let's do our part to help each other.



# COMING SOON!

*Due to the current uncertain times prompting last-minute program changes, please visit the City of San Ramon website for the most current information about Saturday events.*

[http://www.sanramon.ca.gov/our\\_city/departments\\_and\\_divisions/parks\\_community\\_services](http://www.sanramon.ca.gov/our_city/departments_and_divisions/parks_community_services)

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