

# MORE MESA PRESERVATION COALITION



## MMPC e-Update

Summer 2015

### You Can Help ...

### **We Need Lots of Supporters!**

It is clear that the threat of development has indeed materialized. While the More Mesa Preservation Coalition has been preparing for this day for many months, if not years, we will need the help of every citizen of Santa Barbara who wants to save this Last Great Place in southern California.

Enlist all your friends and neighbors to become part of saving More Mesa by joining our supporter list. It takes but one simple step. Go to the home page of our web site, click on the "Sign Up" button and provide us the contact information requested. We ask that you give us two forms of contact so that, in the event of your changing servers, we do not

### [What's Happening About Potential Development on More Mesa?](#)

***The county has assured us that no development plans have been submitted for More Mesa.***

***However we do know that a local team has been assembled by the owner of More Mesa to investigate development possibilities. This information was relayed to all our supporters in a "Late Breaking News" alert we sent to all of you in late July. For your information we have repeated that alert below.***

#### **Late Breaking News**

***Well, the day we knew was coming, but wouldn't welcome, has arrived.***

***On July 21st, Kenneth E. Marshall, with the development consulting firm Dudek, notified the Santa Barbara Planning Commission that he represented the Kalid Saud Al Shebaily Group (KSSG), the owners of More Mesa. He is joined by Jack Theimer and Kim Kimball.***

***The new group has sent their opening salvo in the form of objections to a number of the provisions in the updated Eastern Goleta Valley Plan. The centerpiece of their early effort is to raise the number of houses permitted to be built on More Mesa to more than the 70 that are currently allowed.***

***Mr. Marshall's objections came just two days before a recent Planning Commission hearing to approve the plan. We were also there ... as we have been throughout this entire nine year process. Dudek's letter seems to be an initial feeler about***

lose you.

Together we can save this Last Great Place.

Thanks so much!

*Valerie Olson  
President, MMPC*



***It is the mission of the More Mesa Preservation Coalition to preserve More Mesa, in its entirety, for all time. We've been at it since 2000.***

*development. We know there is probably much to come and we will keep you posted. We are assured by the Planning Department that no plans have been submitted and it is not clear whether or not any plans currently exist.*

*Look for further news in special alerts, monthly e-Updates and in the Monthly News on our web site.*

### Ask The President

**Q: How is the drought impacting More Mesa?**

**A: Severely ... and especially for our most important raptor.**

As with almost all its flora and fauna, water drives the cycle of life for More Mesa's birds. Because there has been so little rain, there is much less grass. Less grass means fewer seeds. Fewer seeds mean fewer rodents. And who eats a diet of mostly rodents ... our most important More Mesa raptor, the White-tailed Kite! The final result of this chain of drought induced events, is that we currently have only a ghost population of these very special birds. And unhappily, kites that historically live and breed in profusion on More Mesa have not produced a single chick for at least three years!



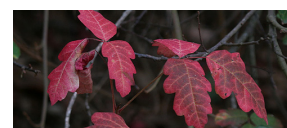
### This Month on More Mesa ... An irritating reminder

Yet another manifestation of the drought concerns poison oak, harbinger of itchy rashes. If you have been out on More Mesa you may have noticed that our abundant poison oak populations have come up in profusion this year, and this despite the lack of water. You may also be aware that poison oak being deciduous, its leaves normally turn red and die in the fall. However in this fourth year of the drought, the leaves began to turn red in mid June and are already dropping. Because poison oak branches and stems are as dangerous as the leaves (but harder to notice without their famous "Leaves of three, let them be" reminder), all who visit More Mesa need to exercise special caution much earlier in the season ... like now!



*Climbing Poison Oak in Spring*

[Learn more](#) about the various forms of local poison oak and what to do if you inadvertently wander into them.



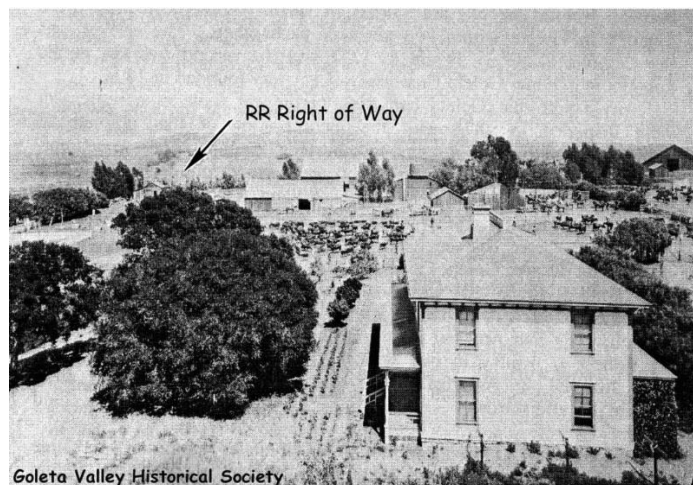


More Mesa Poison Oak in June

### The Past - A Palace for the King

Immediately after purchasing the More Ranch 1879, John Findley More, known by his neighbors as "King John," went about building a suitable castle from which he could oversee his realm. He retained the popular architect Peter J. Barber to build a grand home on the upper mesa. The chosen site had both mountain and ocean views and was close to Atascadero Creek. When completed, the imposing two-story castle, which boasted 16 "huge" rooms, was equivalent to the other palatial ranch houses in the Goleta Valley. It had 1800 square feet of living space. (In today's real estate market this would be a very small spec house, indeed.)

With its surrounding complex of barns, machine sheds, shops, cookhouse, bunkhouse and corn cribs, the Ranch House was the center of activity for the entire 2,000-acre More Ranch. So important was this hub that the ranch bell became the timepiece for the eastern Goleta Valley. The house was damaged by an earthquake in 1925 and subsequently remodeled. It still exists in one of the quiet neighborhoods on the western edge of what we know as More Mesa today.



Goleta Valley Historical Society

Ranch House was the Hub of the More Ranch

(Information courtesy of "Looking Back" by Justin Ruhge.)

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