

# MORE MESA PRESERVATION COALITION



## MMPC e-Update

June 2016

### You Can Help

We are always looking to increase our supporter list. Last year we grew our base by 2%. It would be great if we could try for 10% growth next year. You can help by "talking up" More Mesa to all your friends and neighbors. Urge them to sign up to our [MMPC list](#). There is no financial obligation and all our information is held in the strictest of confidence.

We do not bombard everyone with messages ... a mere 10-11 times a year ... and our most loyal readers find the update both fun and informative.

Also, we heartily welcome your ideas for growing our supporter base ... perhaps even to reach the 1000 mark!



### What's Happening With Potential Development?

Through our contacts in county government and the development community, we are monitoring where the owners are in beginning the planning process. So far, things appear on hold.

### Our Supporters Are Great!

We get some wonderful comments from people about our email newsletter ... which is very rewarding. Thank you! And of course, we welcome your suggestions and criticisms. Still, from time to time we also look at the data, which I am pleased to report suggests that, by the standards of today's busy world, people are very interested in More Mesa. For the 11 Updates we published in 9,323 e-mails over the past year, we:

- Boasted an outstanding average "Open" rate of 45%, more than twice that for non-profits in general,
- "Bounced" only 1.7% of our messages, less than half of that for other non-profits,
- Lost only 0.11% of our supporters who decided to "Opt Out" ... these 10 people also representing a smaller average fraction of opt-outs for non-profits.



We also found that the most frequently opened issues concerned news of selection of a development team by More Mesa's owner and how MMPC was responding to whatever potential issues arose, such as how More Mesa was discussed in the Updated Community Plan.



Once again, **MANY THANKS TO ALL OF YOU FOR KEEPING INFORMED AND CARING ABOUT MORE MESA!**

**This Month on More Mesa**

**A Study in California Coastal Poppies**

Thanks so much!

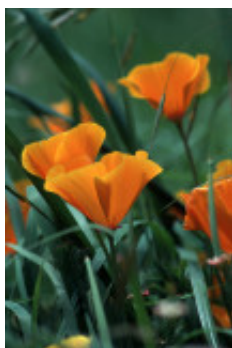
**Valerie Olson**  
**President, MMPC**



*Coast Variety Poppy*  
Photo by Lynn Watson



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



This past spring More Mesa provided an amazing wildflower show, especially given the severe drought we are experiencing. And when one thinks of wildflowers, one species in particular often comes to mind. It is the epitome of wildflowers to many Californians and our state flower, the California poppy, *Eschscholzia californica*. So popular and attractive is the species that numerous cultivated varieties of it now exist, some even developed by the famous horticulturist Luther Burbank. Its beauty and popularity has led to its widespread introduction around the country and the world; so much so, that in some areas it has become an invasive species.



Photo by Robert Bernstein

The genus is something of a tongue twister, named in honor of J.F. Eschscholtz, the surgeon and entomologist on a Russian exploration ship that visited the California coast in 1816. But as difficult as many people find the genus of *Eschscholzia* to pronounce, it seems that getting to know the local coastal poppy has even been harder. The more diversity a given region has in terms of its micro-climates, soils, and other variables, the greater the likelihood that there are organisms with unique genetic constitutions, that is genotypes, of the native plants that occur there. The Santa Barbara region is rich with such micro-climates and diversity, and those place-specific genotypes are exactly what UCSB's Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration (CCBER) restoration staff seek out for use in campus restoration projects. No, not any plant will do! Unfortunately, obtaining local material is not as simple as placing an order.

To obtain poppy plants for restoration project, CCBER staff ideally tries to collect from within those watersheds that flow into the Devereux and Goleta sloughs. More broadly, they limit collection to within about 10 miles of campus along the coast, and to within a few hundred feet of elevation above sea level. Anything within that general distance from UCSB's natural areas is considered a local genotype. The coastal variety on More Mesa exactly fits the bill!

For the text above, we are indebted to [CCBER Field Notes](#) on the Coastal California Poppy. And for the photograph above, many thanks to Robert Bernstein, who captured the image of a recent I Madonnari chalk painting also honoring our Coastal California Poppy.

**The Past - Trees Have Relatives?**

**Bet you didn't know that trees can have relatives, and sometimes they are even royalty!**



[Last month](#) we talked about a sycamore tree on Hollister Avenue and its importance in marking one boundary of Daniel Hill's property; i.e., the part that became the More Ranch. That very tree has a sister, also a sycamore, and one that is referred to as the "Sister Witness Tree, Queen of Sycamores" because of its proximity to the "Witness Tree" located across the street on Hollister.

The Sister Witness Tree is the largest known California sycamore in the United States. A giant ten stories high, and measuring 52.2 feet in circumference, the Sister witness boasts a 95.5 foot canopy. [Ken Knight](#) nominated the Sister Witness Tree for the designation of largest California sycamore after rescuing the tree from overgrowth. And in 2012 American Forests officially recognized it as a "National Champion" Tree.

Unfortunately, for now anyway, the tree is still behind a fence until adequate protection from being "loved to death" is installed in the area.

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