

PRELADO NOTICIAS

La Purísima Mission State Park Land Acknowledgement: We are on the ancestral land of the Chumash people who have lived here since time immemorial. We honor the Chumash people of the past and of the present who share their stories and history with us. We thank our Chumash community of today for helping us understand their vibrant culture of the past and present.



Photos submitted by Kristen McNally.

Passing of the Keys

BY KRISTEN MCNALLY

Hi, I'm Kristen McNally, State Park Interpreter I for La Purísima Mission SHP. I am so excited to return to La Purísima Mission! I have worked for State Parks for ten years and began at the Mission as a Seasonal Park Interpretive Specialist for seven years. I have worked as a State Park Interpreter I for the past three years at the Oceano Dunes District.

I grew up in the suburbs of Chicago, IL, and moved to California ten years ago. My husband Patrick and I have two



children, Riley (8) and Neil (5). I enjoy spending time with my family, especially when we go on family adventures together. My background is in education, receiving my history degree and teaching certification from Monmouth College, a small college in Monmouth, IL. I love teaching and presenting enthusiastic and engaging park programming. I am happy to return to La Purísima Mission and look forward to working with all our wonderful volunteers and staff.

Save the Date!
Founding Mass & Concert
Thursday, December 8

IN THIS ISSUE

- Babycita Update
- The Show Must go on!
- Come Decorate for Founding Day
- Look to La Tienda for Your Holiday Needs
- Mission Life with Padre Rob
- Acorns: Past, Present, and Future
- Las Posadas
- Winter Solstice
- Nature Notes du Jour
- Time to Renew Your Membership

Babycita Update

BY ANN BOGCESS

I just wanted to bring you up to date on our wonderful Babycita, the donkey. Babycita has a special health condition that needs extensive personalized care. One of our wonderful State Park volunteer animal caregivers offered to adopt Babycita and bring her to her ranch nearby where she can give her the care she needs. Babycita moved to her new home in October and settled in immediately making new friends and getting lots of love and care. We are going to miss her, but so glad to know she is in a home that can offer her all she needs.

As we look to the future, we are going to look for a couple of young healthy donkeys. But our search may take some time to get the right fit for our program. We are also looking for animal



Photo submitted: Babycita, the donkey

volunteers who are able and experienced with large animals, cattle, horses and sheep. If you are interested in, or know someone who is, please let Kristen or me know: kristen.mcnally@parks.ca.gov, or ann.bogcess@parks.ca.gov.

The Show Must Go On!

BY ROB GLASGOW

After a 3-year hiatus, the Founding Day Concert returns to our lovely Mission on Thursday, December 8 at 7pm. Join in the musical fun with the return of the Cabrillo High School Madrigal Singers performing *a capella*. They are sure to delight you with their angelic and harmonic voices. Be sure to dress warmly. Assistance from the parking lot to the church is available to those with limited mobility. Tickets are \$10.00 each and available on

<https://www.lapurisimamission.org/new-events> or at La Purísima Mission State Historic Park Visitor Center.



Photo: Founding Day Concert, 2017. Photo by Julie Campos.

Want to Start Your Holiday Season Early?

BY ROB GLASGOW

We need help decorating the Main Church to celebrate our 235th birthday. Come by on Saturday, December 3 at 10AM and join in the fun of making the Church festive. Should take about an hour.

Founding Day Mass

Founding Day Mass will be celebrated on Thursday, December 8 at noon. This free event takes place in La Purísima Mission Church. Dress warmly.



Photo: Founding Day Mass, 2021. Photo by Rob Glasgow.

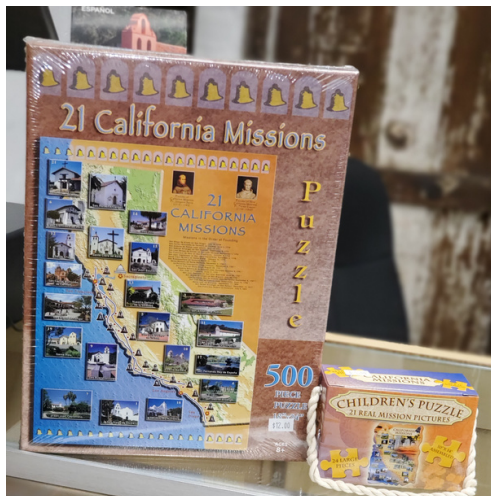


Photo: Founding Day church decorations, 2017. Photo by Julie Campos.

Come to La Tienda for Your Holiday Shopping Needs

BY MARION ROCHA CARLOS

Autumn is here and school children have returned to the Mission. The weather is also cooler and we have some items in the Tienda to keep us snug and occupied on these cold days. Mexican Blankets are very colorful and will definitely keep you warm and cozy. Colorful and comfortable ponchos are also available. They come in 3 sizes (adult, kids/youth and toddler). Two amazing puzzles are for sale: the first is called 21 California Missions. It is 500 pieces with dimensions of 18" by 24". The second is called 21 Real Mission Pictures. It has 24 large pieces and is 10" by 14". Both puzzles have all 21 missions pictured. How about a puzzle and hot cup of cocoa to keep you busy during the cold weather?



We also sell Student Packets for the 4th graders to assist them with their mission project and reports. Each packet contains a mission map, mission pamphlets, 8 small postcards, large postcard, Living History booklet, pencil, and charm & mission collector coin.

Remember the Tienda for your Christmas shopping list and we have a variety of gifts to choose from. The Tienda is a great place to find unique, one-of-a-kind and interesting gifts. Our one-of-a-kind Christmas ornaments are handmade and painted by the docents. We also have golden globe ornaments with scenes of the mission painted on them. If you come to the Mission just to shop at the Tienda, parking is free.



And if you're interested in volunteering in the Tienda, please contact Terri Sands, (805) 727-3055, tsands805@gmail.com; or Marion Rocha Carlos, idget96@aol.com.

CRAFTERS WANTED

Do you enjoy weaving or painting ceramics? We can always use a few extra hands to create the mission crafts. If you're interested, please contact Terri Sands, tsands805@gmail.com, to find out how you can help by sharing your talent or learn how to do one of the many crafts we offer in the Tienda.

Mission Life with Padre Rob

BY ROB GLASGOW

When I take the groups into La Sala, I mention that one of the traditions of the Missions was to take in all travelers who pass by. The Padre would give them food, a place to sleep and have their clothes washed. And he would not charge them anything, but he did want something in return. I then ask the children, "What did the Padre want?" hoping to get the response, "Information about the world outside his mission." But the answer I got from a fourth grader on this tour was, "A good review on Yelp."

Acorns: Past, Present, and Future

BY MOLLY MACHIN

In 2004, the oak was designated as the National tree of the United States. The U.S. joined a long list of other countries to honor the oak as their national tree, including Germany, Jordan, France, Cyprus, and Wales, just to name a few. Fossil records show that oaks, genus *Quercus*, have been around for 56 million years. Today, 435 species of oak can be found on five continents making them one of the most dominant plants on Earth! Wherever they grow, oaks become the keystone species influencing both the environment and other plants and animals in the area. The archeological record shows us that the seeds of oak trees, acorns, were first harvested and processed 15,000 years ago in North Africa and Spain.

The native population of what is now California was estimated to be 300,000 when the Europeans arrived. Virtually all California tribes harvested and ate acorns. Early explorers consistently described coastal California as being “park-like with oak woodlands.” The early California terrain where oaks dominated was

the result of intense manipulation by the local peoples using fire. Similar to the Native Americans living on the Great Plains, the Chumash knew that regular fires could encourage the growth of certain useful plants. Fire also eliminated unwanted seedlings creating less density which allowed individual trees to grow larger.

Burning also killed filbert worms and weevils which could decimate the acorn crop.

In our area, the Chumash people were skilled at hunting and fishing, but acorns provided important nutrients and calories. Classified as a nut, acorns contain protein, healthy fats, calcium, phosphorous, potassium, vitamin B, and carbohydrates. Oak trees can live up to 400 years. They start producing acorns at around 20 years of age, but they do not produce a crop until they are 50 years old. An average 100-year-old oak can produce 2,200 acorns a year. For some species, a large harvest can only occur every other year.



Photo: Acorns (Quercus agrifolia). Photo courtesy of WikiCommon.

One important advantage of having acorns as a part of the Chumash diet is that acorns can be stored for up to ten years.

When settlers wanted the Miwok people to leave Yosemite Valley, among other abuses, they destroyed their cache of acorns. Today, the Miwok and Pomo people of Northern California have made a concerted effort to teach the young people how to harvest and process acorns. A group called Tribal Youth Ambassadors harvest acorns to make and sell an energy snack called **Acorn Bites**. Indigenous groups around California are trying to revive the use of acorns by gaining access to oak groves on public lands.

Acorns are still eaten in many parts of the world. Throughout Asia, acorn starch is used as a thickener to make certain foods with a gelatin texture. Specialty growers in Greece produce acorn flour for baked goods. In parts of Italy, acorn bread is served on holidays. Because acorn flour has no gluten, some wheat flour must be added to recipes that need to rise. In Spain, farmers feed acorns to the pigs which is said to give Serrano ham its unique flavor. Acorn coffee, liquor, caramels, and beer are also produced in Europe.

Generally, the use of acorns today is limited to specialty groups but that may change in the future.

Some researchers believe that acorns are a valuable resource that has been overlooked for too long. A 2021, financial analysis concluded that acorns show promise as a potential source of new pharmaceuticals.

Neuroinflammatory benefits of Chinese acorns may lead to a treatment for Alzheimer's disease. European acorns contain chemicals that may decrease the risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancer. With the world population rapidly approaching 8 billion, the greatest potential for acorns in the future is as a food source. Oak trees are successful in a wide range of environments and require less water than many other trees. To make acorns widely available as a food source in the future will require the marriage of traditional native o



Photo courtesy of California State Parks, 2019.

knowledge and science, and a lot of patience.

Sources:

"How Oak Trees Evolved to Rule the Forests of the Northern Hemisphere," Scientific American, August 1, 2020.

"Financial Analysis of Acorns Chain for Food Production," Sandro Sacchelli, Tommaso Cavuta, Costanza Borghi, Maria Cipollaro, Roberto Fratini, Iacopo Bernetti, MDPI, June 2021.

"Indigenous Youth Reboot Acorns to Revive Food Sovereignty Developing *Acorn Bites*, a new snack from Pomo and Miwok youth, involved tribal elders, ancient harvesting methods, and navigating cultural and bureaucratic challenges," Stephen Nett, November 15, 2019.

"Earliest evidence for caries and exploitation of starchy plant foods in Pleistocene hunter-gatherers from Morocco," Louise T. Humphrey lth@nhm.ac.uk, Isabelle De Groote, Jacob Morales, and Abdeljalil Bouzouggar, Edited by Amanda G. Henry, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, Germany, and accepted by the Editorial Board November 27, 2013 (received for review September 26, 2013), January 6, 2014.

"Keepers of the Oaks: Modern Americans may preserve California better than Native Americans did," Glen Martin, July 31, 1996, Discover Magazine.

The Tradition of Las Posadas

BY MICHELE JIMENEZ-HOLTZ

Las Posadas returns to the Mission on Sunday, December 18 and starts promptly at 2pm. This free event commemorates the pilgrimage of Mary and Joseph's difficult journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem in search of a warm place to stay the night. *Posadas* is Spanish for "lodgings" or "accommodations." We'll have the traditional *peregrinos* (pilgrims) in search of a safe place to stay, singing, a piñata for kids, and refreshments afterwards in La Sala, and perhaps a couple of special "guests!"



Photo: Las Posadas, 2021. Photos by Linda Schiff.



Winter Solstice

BY MICHELE JIMENEZ-HOLTZ

Winter Solstice 2022 will begin at 1:48pm (PST). It marks the shortest day/longest night of the year and is celebrated by various cultures. Also referred to as the hibernal solstice, it occurs when either of Earth's poles reaches its maximum tilt away from the Sun. It is marked with celebrations: festivals, spending time with loved ones, feasting, singing, dancing, and fires. Diverse cultures across the globe hold special and unique traditions on December 21.

Astronomical events were often used to guide life activities. Many cultures considered winter solstice significant in the economic dependence on food and monitoring the progress of the seasons. Communities had to plan and ensure sufficient harvest and storage of food to survive winter.

Winter is also a time of reflection as we bid farewell to the year

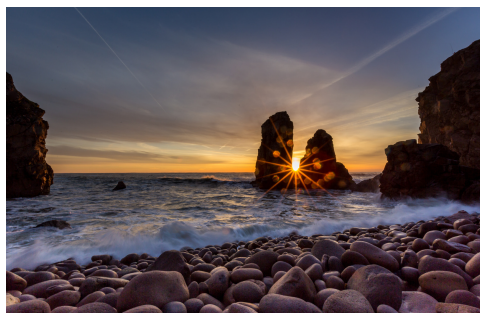


Photo: Canva stock photo.

and look ahead with hope to the new. The earth also takes a “break” as crops wane and animals migrate. Locally, our Chumash neighbors celebrated the winter solstice with storytelling, dancing, singing and ceremony. Nakia Zavalla, Cultural Director of the Santa Ynez Band of the Chumash, wrote about the “Winter Solstice and Nature’s Connection” in 2012 ([Santa Ynez Valley News](https://syvnews.com/news/opinion/commentary/chumash/winter-solstice-and-nature-s-connection/article_3c297dc8-3f59-11e2-9c9b-001a4bcf887a.html)). To read the full article, **Ctrl + Click** and follow the link, https://syvnews.com/news/opinion/commentary/chumash/winter-solstice-and-nature-s-connection/article_3c297dc8-3f59-11e2-9c9b-001a4bcf887a.html.

Chumash ceremony is a way to communicate traditional knowledge among multiple generations. Winter solstice marks the end of the year and beginning of the new. In *Chumash Science Through Time*, Guadcaec wrote, “The chiefs gathered food, goods, and shell money collected during the year...” The Wot (or high chief) would then redistribute goods as necessary. Sharing and ensuring the wellness and sustenance of the people is the essence of community. Guadcaec also wrote that Chumash astronomers were scientists with a deep understanding of relationships between astronomical changes and those seen in the physical environment in “Ceremony’s Role

in Transmitting Traditional Knowledge: The Case of `Alchuklash.” To read the full article, **Ctrl + Click** and follow the link, <https://chumashscience.com/2019/10/14/chumash-astronomers-ceremony-and-knowledge-transmission/>.


Take a moment to reflect on how your family and circle of friends have honored tradition by means of special ceremony or celebration. The stories and traditional knowledge of our ancestors may very well be the thread that holds our future together.

Nature Notes du Jour:

Winter brings super low tides:

- 12/21 Wed. 2:23pm -1.3 ft.
- 12/22 Thur. 3:18pm -1.7 ft.
- 12/23 Fri. 4:04pm -1.9 ft.
- 1/19 Thur. 2:24pm -1.6 ft.
- 1/20 Fri. 3:08pm -1.9 ft.
- 1/21 Sat. 3:52pm -2.0 ft.
- 2/17 Fri. 2:07pm -1.6 ft.
- 2/18 Sat. 2:48pm -1.7 ft.
- 2/19 Sun. 3:28pm -1.7 ft.



Gray whale migration: peaks are December (southbound)  and March (northbound). Grays have the longest migration of any animal. Book an excursion on the *Condor Express* (Santa Barbara) or with *Island Packers* (Ventura). Get up-close and personal!

Calendar: Subject to Change

	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.
Board Meeting: 10am, La Casita		22	26
Founding Day Mass: 12 noon, Church	8		
General Membership Meeting: 10am, La Sala			
Las Posadas: 2pm, outside Church	18		
Spring edition of <i>Noticias</i> article deadline			1
Student Learning History Days	2	20	17
Station Tours	15	13 & 26	10 & 24
Student Guided Tours	Wednesdays at 10am		

Additional Park Interpretive Programs and Special Events will be announced via email by Kristen McNally.

Stay Connected!

Don't forget to check out the many excellent park resources for news and videos. Please share with family and friends.

- [La Purísima Mission State Historic Park](#)
- [LPM State Park Facebook page](#)
- [LPM YouTube page](#)
- [LPM Virtual Tour](#)
- [Prelado Facebook page](#)
- [Prelado website](#)

It's time to renew your Prelado Membership! Mail it, renew online, or drop off at Visitor Center. See enclosure.

A Little Trivia: *Prelado de los Tesoros* roughly translates to *Keepers of the Treasures*.

Our mission: *We are a non-profit, 501(c)(3) public benefit corporation. Our members volunteer their time and talent to assist the staff of La Purísima Mission State Historic Park in preserving history and providing quality educational programs for park visitors.*

More Nature Notes du Jour

Elephant seals:

Jan-Feb is great for seeing moms and pups, with males vying for top position. Check them out at Piedras Blancas north of San Simeon.

Monarch Butterflies have returned (Nov-Feb) to

the Grove at Pismo State Beach just south of the North Campground (on Hwy 1).



From the Editors' Desk

BY MICHELE PITTENGER &
MICHELE JIMENEZ-HOLTZ

Thanks to all who submitted articles and photos for the winter edition. In an effort to reduce cost and paper, we send *Noticias* via email and via USPS mail only to those requesting such. Send a note to:

noticias@lapurisimamission.org

Noticias article submission guidelines:

- 600 words or less
- 2 photos max: please only submit photos of docents, volunteers, or others for which you have obtained their written permission
- Hi-resolution photos only
- Photos lose resolution the more they're transmitted
- Articles may be edited to fit format

Next deadline: **February 1**

Send to:

noticias@lapurisimamission.org



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Photo: La Purísima Mission at night, 2017. Photo by Madison Alexander.