



## *ECHS Annual Meeting Oct. 24*

# WASP shares her love of flying

The El Cajon Historical Society's Annual Meeting will be held at 5 p.m. Thursday, October 24, at Junction Steakhouse, 777 Jamacha Road, El Cajon (formerly Jamacha Junction). Be sure to get your reservations in

early (see back page for details). Our special speaker is Jean Landis. As a Women's Airforce Service Pilot (WASP) during World War II, she shuffled fighter planes between U.S. military airfields.

In July 1943 the growing numbers of women pilots being trained for U.S. Army Air Force service were consolidated into the Women's Airforce (one word) Service Pilots, the WASPs. By the end of the program, 1074 women had flown every type of military aircraft from the B-29 to America's first jet, the P-59. Fighter aircraft, particularly the P-47 and the P-51, were ferried in great numbers by the WASPs. These women loved single seaters and considered flying fighters the essence of what it meant to fly. One woman fortunate enough to be assigned fighters for most of her wartime career was Jean Landis. Landis was sent to Brownsville, Texas, for fighter transition training, and when time came for her first flight in a fighter, she drew a P-51.

*(continued on page 2)*



*Don Hall (left) and his brother Rick try out the new door.*

## New door greets visitors

Wouldn't W.D. Hall, one of the carpenters who built the world-famous Hotel del Coronado, be proud to know that two of his great-grandsons, Don and Rick Hall, had built and installed a new but era-appropriate hardwood and glass front door at the Knox House Museum! This beautiful piece of hand-craftsmanship replaces what board members think was a 1940s door installed by one of the Knox's many former owners.

W.D. Hall was creator/owner/operator of his own popular lumber business for 76 years in what was to become downtown El Cajon. The lumber company continued to exist until the 1970s when the area was purchased and replaced by the City of El Cajon's new City Hall, the East County Performing Arts Center, and its landscaping.



## Haunts invade museum Oct. 25

As part of its involvement with the Downtown Art Walks, the Knox House will sport a HauntFest theme and participate with the downtown galleries and businesses in HauntFest on Main from 5 to 8 p.m. Friday, October 25.

Discover what happens when the new school principal buys the local haunted house and tries to live there. Master story-teller Carroll Rice will captivate your imagination with his new short story *No Such Thing as Ghosts* on our haunted night.

Be sure to come by the Knox House for some old-fashioned fun.

## President's Message

# Fall Highlights

### Dear Members and Friends of ECHS,

Now that the fall season is upon us and summer's "heat wave and humidity" are over, I hope you're looking forward to the upcoming events we have planned.



First on the agenda is our Annual Meeting which will be held Thursday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, starting at 5 p.m. (dinner served at 5:30 p.m.) at Junction Steakhouse, 777 Jamacha Road, El Cajon (formerly Jamacha Junction). Be sure to get your reservations early to secure a seat as our program speaker is Jean Landis, a lady who piloted U.S. Air Force Bombers during WWII.

The nominees for the 2014 ECHS Board will also be presented at the meeting for approval. The 2014 Board Members will hold office from January 1 through December 31, 2014.

The Knox House Museum will be open on Friday, October 25, from 5 to 8 p.m. for El Cajon's annual Hauntfest. We participated last year and had a grand time with haunting stories told by Board Member G. Carroll Rice.

The holiday Wings & Snow Downtown Walk will be held Friday, December 6, from 5 to 8 p.m. The Knox House Museum will be decorated for the holidays for you to enjoy. Be sure to add these dates to your calendar.

We have been able to keep the Knox House open the first four Saturdays of the month from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for visitors and researchers. We require two docents during the visiting hours and would appreciate having a few more volunteers. We can also use help with paperwork, research, and filing in the office. Want to help? Leave a message at (619) 444-3800.

Thanks you all for the support you have given to ECHS this year, in the past, and in the years to come.

Sincerely,

*Fran*

## Pilot soars at annual meeting

(continued from page 1)

Jean also flew a number of other types, including the P-47. Jean recalls that the P-47 was a bucket of bolts compared to the Mustang; it was too heavy and sluggish.

"But when you got in a Mustang, it felt like you had just strapped the wings on. You didn't feel you had any fuselage around your body; you were a part of the airplane."

Jean had the good fortune to be stationed at the Ferrying Division in Long Beach flying nothing but P-51s. The new fighters were picked up at Inglewood and flown all over the country, particularly to New Jersey where they were prepared for shipping overseas. Reactions to a woman climbing out of a P-51 were varied – mostly startled.

"Once I few into a field that was off-limits but the weather was bad," she recalls. "I had a slight mechanical problem so I called in and asked for permission to land. I kept radioing 'P-51 ready to land; awaiting final landing instructions.' It was sort of garbled and they kept asking me to call in again and again. Finally they said: 'Waggle your wings if you receive!' So there I was waggling away and pretty soon they came back: 'Lady, the only thing we see up there is a P-51! Where are you?' I replied, 'That's me! I am the P-51!'"

"They couldn't believe it. They were looking for a Piper Cub or something. Finally, when I landed, what a welcome I got. Word got around that a gal was flying that thing. By the time I had taxied up to the line, following the little Follow Me truck, there were lots of guys around to see what kind of woman was flying this P-51. They'd never heard of us, the WASPs.

"We had to pay for all our clothing, had no medical or insurance benefits or many other military benefits," Jean recalls. "The WASPs were subject to military discipline and lived in the Officers' Quarters, but they were not allowed most military privileges and received less money than men doing the same job. But we were there to fly and loved every minute of it."



**JEAN LANDIS**

## *Do we have your e-mail?*

If you received this printed copy of the *Heritage* in the mail, we don't have your e-mail address. Please send us your e-mail address at [ech0997@att.net](mailto:ech0997@att.net) so that you can receive updated information.

## New documentary set here

“A Box Full of Rocks: The El Cajon Years of Lester Bangs” is a new documentary by Grossmont College instructor Raul Sandelin. Leslie Conway “Lester” Bangs (December 13, 1948 – April 30, 1982) was an American music journalist, author, and musician. He wrote for Creem and Rolling Stone magazines and was known for his leading influence in rock music criticism. The film chronicles his childhood years as he grows up in El Cajon.

A premiere screening of “A Box Full of Rocks” will take place at Grossmont College’s Lester Bangs Memorial Reading starting at 7 p.m. Tuesday, October 22, at the college in Room 220.

For more information, visit the Lester Bangs Archive website at [www.grossmont.edu/english/lesterbangs](http://www.grossmont.edu/english/lesterbangs).



*ECHS President Fran Hill (center) and Curator Mike Kaszuba (right) met with Manjeet Ranu, director of the City’s Planning Department to discuss the housing project that will be replacing the El Granito Ranch (and the camel) on the south/west side of Avocado/ directly across from Von’s shopping center, near Chase Avenue.*

## New at the Knox

by Mike Kaszuba, Curator

### WOMEN’S BOOTS

Donated by: Cindy Breece

Description: These boots originally belonged to Orpha Naomi Hawks, née Frissell, who was born in Amery, Wisconsin in 1897. When Orpha died in 1991, these shoes, which appear to have never been worn, were passed on to her sister Esther Barlow, and then on to Esther’s daughter Cindy of Lakeside. The boots are custom-made black leather lace-ups with pointed toes and stacked 2" heels fashioned for an extremely dainty foot. The insides are lined, and the sewn-in label identifies them as the Martha Washington style, a turn-of-the-century favorite.



They were manufactured by the F. Mayer Boot & Shoe Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, circa 1910. Frederick Mayer was a German emigrant journeyman shoemaker who came to this country in 1851 and began his own shoe shop business, growing steadily over the next three decades. In 1880 he embarked on a wholesale shoe venture, manufacturing fifty pairs of high-quality shoes per day, and in a few short years built the business to over 10,000 pairs per day, becoming a major name in the US shoe industry while retaining a reputation for reliability and quality. His was a hard-working, enterprising immigrant success story of the type that made this country great.

These boots are now on display in Amaziah and Illa’s bedroom. Thank you Cindy for this remarkably well-preserved addition to our collection.



# Video captures train ride along historic route



ECHS's Eldonna Lay discovered a new video available on YouTube: Train ride from Plaster City through the Carrizo Gorge to Jacumba that she describes as follows:

Ride along on an old engine along the tracks laid for the San Diego Arizona Railroad as it travels through a near-barren desert and up the climb through the historic tunnels chipped out of the mountains at the beginning of the last Century.

From Plaster City, through the astonishing Carrizo Gorge switchback up and into Jacumba, it's a trip to remember. Out of commission for

decades, the tracks can now carry engines and cars again, so take this historic journey in the comfort of your own home. Be sure to have plenty to drink beside you because the landscape is so desiccated that you'll want to "wet your whistle" now and then. By the time the ride ends in Jacumba, you might find yourself inspired to look again at the model of this exemplary trip in the Railroad Museum in Balboa Park.

When the San Diego and Arizona Railroad route was proposed so many years ago, doubters called it the "Impossible Railroad" because of the

number of tunnels required, and the severe drop down onto the desert floor. As the video takes you through some of those tunnels, you'll wonder how many hours it took chipping them out of so many mountains without power tools. The complexity of the switchback alone made it one for historical mention as being an engineering triumph.

## El Cajon in WWII

by Fran Parsons Hill

Way back in 1944, El Cajon had a street dance on Halloween on Magnolia Avenue near where the EC Chamber of Commerce is located. In those days, there was a dirt ball field in that block. A library building and recreation hall was at the east end of the field. There were a few street lights but it was still pretty dark.

People of all ages danced the "Jitter Bug" in the street.

During that time gas was rationed and stamp books were issued allowing families to purchase a limited supply of coffee, butter, shoes and other items. Used cooking oil and grease were saved for recycling.

Cars and buses drove with the lights dim at night and the windows in homes and businesses had shades or drapes to cover the windows at night.

Gillespie Field was a training base for the Marine Paratroops and we could hear the airplanes circling the El Cajon Valley getting ready for the Marines to jump. Cars would line up along North Magnolia near the base to watch the troopers jump from the airplanes. Once their parachutes opened, you could hear them laughing and calling back and forth to each other as they floated safely to the ground.

### Welcome New Members

- ◆ Rita Cloud
- ◆ Delores Rios-Ruis Howard
- ◆ Carmen Hurrle
- ◆ Terri Lamp
- ◆ Judi Littrell
- ◆ Kenneth Bruce Siebrand
- ◆ Robert (Bob) Tea
- ◆ Rebecca Taylor upgrade to Enhanced Life

## ECHS Profit & Loss Budget Overview

January through December 2014

### Income

Miscellaneous Sales	\$ 410.00
3rd Grade Essay Donation	600.00
Book Sales	150.00
Donations	1,200.00
Dues	2,200.00
Investment Income	25.00
Opportunity Drawings	600.00
Quarterly Meetings	2,000.00
Special Events	905.00

**Total Income** **\$8,090.00**

### Expense

Insurance	\$1,600.00
Newsletter-Publications	300.00
Office Expense	1,000.00
P. O. Box Rental	175.00
Postage	400.00
Quarterly Meetings	1,800.00
Safe Deposit Box Rental	215.00
Sales Tax	100.00
Security	300.00
Storage	700.00
Telephone	1,000.00
Third Grade Essay	500.00

**Total Expense** **\$8,090.00**

Net Income 0.00



*Docent Becky Taylor explained “how people lived in olden times” to a group from a local Boy Scout troop who visited the Knox House September 21.*

## Knox House needs docents

Last year, more than 400 third grade students toured the Knox House Museum, thanks to the generous donation of time on the part of a loyal, but small, band of docents. This school year, we already have two schools (eight classes, about 200 children) scheduled for tours in January and March. At least four docents are needed for each tour. Usually two classes arrive on one day, and one class tours the Wieghorst Museum (which pays for the buses) while the other class tours the Knox House, then the classes switch museums.

All you need to be a docent is an eagerness to share El Cajon’s history with curious third graders and adults. A two-page “Docent Guide” includes the information about the exhibits. If you’d like to be a docent, please leave a message for Becky Taylor at (619) 444-3800.

### El Cajon Historical Society Board of Directors

President ..... Fran Parsons Hill  
 Vice Presidents ..... Joe Klock, Jonna Waite  
 Treasurer ..... George Dall  
 Recording Secretary ..... Carla Nowak  
 Curators ..... Mike Kaszuba, Eldonna Lay  
 Archivist ..... Fran Hill  
 Office Manager..... Mary Saxton  
 Maintenance ..... Rick Hall  
 Membership ..... Christy Klock  
 Essay Contest ..... Alice Rodriquez, Becky Taylor  
 Centennial Representative ..... Bonnie Fredensborg  
 Heritage Editor ..... Anita Tinsley  
 Members at Large ..... Ellen Anderson,  
 Richard Lay, G. Carroll Rice, Karna Webster  
 Telephone Messages (619) 444-3800

## ECHS Proposed Officers and Board Members

*This proposed slate of officers and board members will be nominated and voted upon at the annual meeting October 24.*

The following Officers are proposed for one-year terms starting January 1, 2014:

- President ..... Carroll Rice
- Vice President ..... Fran Parsons Hill
- Recording Secretary ..... Gloria Chadwick
- Corresponding Secretary ..... Vacant
- Treasurer ..... George Dall, C.P.A.

The following persons are nominated for election to the Board of Directors for three-year terms that will end December 31, 2016:

- Fran Parsons Hill
- Dick Lay
- Carroll Rice
- Lou Toth

The following Directors will continue to serve with terms ending December 31, 2014:

- Gloria Chadwick
- Christy Klock
- Joe Klock
- Carla Nowak

The following Directors will continue to serve with terms ending December 31, 2015:

- George Dall
- Eldonna Lay
- Mary Saxton
- Becky Taylor

The following persons are recommended to serve on the Nominating Committee for the year 2014:

- Fran Parsons Hill
- Joe Klock
- Eldonna Lay
- Carla Nowak
- Becky Taylor

*Respectfully submitted by the 2013 Nominating Committee:*

Rick Hall  
 Fran Parsons Hill  
 Christy Klock  
 Joe Klock  
 Eldonna Lay

# Poultry Farming during the Depression Years

## *Introductory Note by G. Carroll Rice*

Personal narratives are precious resources for our Historical Society. In the following essay, ECHS member Milman Youngjohn shares his memories about poultry farming. (Last issue focused on citrus growing.)

Since his parents' Pepper Drive property was devoted to citrus and poultry production, Milman was in a unique position to observe two phases of Depression era agriculture. His experiences parallel those of many El Cajon Valley residents in the 1930s as the region transitioned from an agricultural to industrial base.

## Memoirs of Poultry Farming in the El Cajon Valley 1930-43

by **Milman Youngjohn**

Although the orange grove along Pepper Drive was beautiful and produced generous quantities of oranges, citrus could not be sold for the cost of production. So Dad turned to poultry, more specifically white leghorn chickens. These were laying hens, not fryers or roasting birds. There were many abandoned poultry enterprises in the area but Dad thought that there was still opportunity.

Dad selected the hillside up behind the house and away from the orange grove as the location for two chicken houses. The land was leveled using a horse drawn Fresno, a kind of scooping device that would shave off an inch or two of high ground and dump it in the lower places. All of the construction materials came from the W.D. Hall Company in El Cajon. This was the largest and most important lumber yard and hardware store in the entire area.

These were no ordinary chicken coops. Each was 212 feet long with four rooms on each side of a central feed room. That's eight rooms with a capacity of 250 laying hens each, bringing the entire flock to 4,000 birds. Although this was a large chicken operation by Valley standards, it would not be able to exist in today's world where birds are counted by the hundreds of thousands and kept in individual cages. About a quarter-acre fenced yard was in front of each room so the chickens could get out of their enclosed quarters and scratch a little dirt or take dust baths. They would be considered "range chickens" today.

The chicken houses were beyond state-of-the-art. There were private laying quarters and a conveyor which ran the entire length of the building for carrying feed and other supplies. When the rooms were cleaned, the conveyor carried the litter out of the end of the building onto a scaffold with the farm truck waiting below. The

conveyor was then tipped dumping the litter into the truck from which it was spread as fertilizer in the orange grove.

The buildings faced south to allow in the most sun. The south walls were wood only about half way up with the upper half being chicken wire. Four foot wide lever controlled visors were built along the south roofline. These could be closed in case of rain or adverse weather of any kind. Other chicken farmers and agriculture officials as then existed would come to inspect this innovation.

Youngjohn chickens were not union birds. Dad rigged up an alarm clock with a spring loaded device which he set to turn all of the chicken house lights on at 2:30 a.m. So those chickens would be up eating and laying eggs by 3 a.m. and looking forward to another 16-hour day. Within a few days after the war began, we were awakened by sirens and a general clamor in the backyard at 3 a.m. The police had arrived en masse saying that the lights from the chicken houses would be seen at sea 25 miles away and serve as a beacon for the prowling Japanese fleet. No more lights they said. Torn between the dilemma of national security and the need for food, an agreement was reached whereby Dad draped the light emitting side of the chicken house with fumigation tents used in the grove. That satisfied the officials and things went on as before.

Dad bought the feed at the San Diego Cooperative Poultryman's Association at 22<sup>nd</sup> and Imperial. We had a 1930 Model A stake bed truck with dual tires. This indestructible vehicle would be loaded with 72 sacks of feed (about 7200 pounds) every week or two for the trip to the farm. Pepper Drive has only a modest grade but that loaded little truck had to labor up in low gear.

The baby chickens, at only three or four days old, came from Kimber Farms in Petaluma, California. Art Kimber, a scion of that distinguished clan, was a dorm mate at Berkeley after the war. The baby chicks would arrive at Union Station in San Diego for transportation to the farm via the little truck that could. You could hear them peeping through their cardboard box containers. Once at the farm, they were put in a room under a temperature controlled electric brooder with water and special feed. In only a matter of days the chicks would start to lose their down and start to sprout feathers. Although these chicks were supposed to be all females, a few males with their larger cones would start appearing in a couple of weeks. Determining the sex of a day-old chick was, and still is, a mystery. Nobody that we ever knew could do it but the "sexers" at Kimber Farms were at least 95% accurate.

We would keep the roosters until they were about half-grown. A dealer would pick them up at the farm

along with non-laying hens that had been culled from the flock. If a hen's pelvic bones were less than three fingers wide, she was not laying and was put in with the roosters to be sold. Then there was the problem of "setting" hens that sit on laid eggs trying to hatch them. Of course the eggs were infertile and would never hatch. Setting hens quit laying, start losing feathers, and make a belligerent "cluck, cluck" sound. If disturbed, they'll give you a good peck. Such bad tempered, frustrated would-be mothers also wound up in the pen awaiting pick up.

There was never a significant problem with disease among the flocks on Pepper Drive. Dad would occasionally take a sick chicken into the pathologist at the San Diego Zoo but nothing ominous was ever reported.

Cannibalism was a very serious problem and a threat to the viability of the enterprise. Who knows, maybe the chickens were bred so heavily toward egg production that cannibalism emerged as a side effect. Cannibalism or "picking out" usually occurred when a chicken was laying an egg. This presents exposed tissues for the cannibals to pick at and they soon have the victim bleeding and usually dead.

To retard the cannibalism, Dad tried tin pants which consisted of a shiny hinged tin cup that fastened to the chickens' tailbone as a kind of armored device protecting the egg laying parts. I will never forget coming home from school and seeing thousands of mirrors reflecting back at me from the chicken yards on the hillside. Somebody had convinced Dad that this sort of chicken chastity belt would solve the problem but it didn't work.

Next was the concept that if you sprayed the entire chicken red, the cannibals wouldn't know where to pick because everything looked like bloody tissue. That didn't



*One of the chicken houses can be seen in the background in this photo of farm cat Ginger.*

work either. Chickens molt annually and lose all their feathers except the larger ones in the wing and tail. Years after the painting episode you would see a chicken with a red tail feather here or a red wing feather there.

One summer my father offered me \$300 to patrol the chicken rooms and apprehend the cannibals. But there was a catch. For each chicken that got cannibalized during the summer, my \$300 would be reduced by \$1. It still seemed like a no brainer for me to accept the job. First day on the job while I was fantasizing about the \$300, I noticed a pile up of chickens in the corner of one of the rooms. I discovered two picked-out chickens at the bottom of this heap making me down to \$298 before I really got started. Well, I wound up getting something like \$30 for the summer's work and learned not to count my chickens before they hatched.

Our whole family would work cleaning, weighing and casing the eggs in 30 dozen crates. The eggs were graded into four sizes: large, medium, small, and peewee. We did not candle them (using a light to check for interior defects), leaving that to the jobbers who would pick them up at the farm and distribute them throughout the county.

There were a few accidents on the farm like when Dad caught his hand in the belt driving the old jack pump. Then you went to Dr. Knox. Dr. Knox was the epitome of a country doctor. His office was above the drug store on the northeast corner of Magnolia and Main. The drug store itself with its soda fountain and revolving stools was straight out of Norman Rockwell.

The shadow of World War II was creeping across the Valley in 1939 when the first military draft began. Navy fighter planes dove in training dogfights above Rattlesnake Mountain. Dad and I scoured Valley farms with the truck picking up and delivering any kind of scrap metal people would give us to assist with the war effort. My parents could have gotten me an agricultural deferment but it was never considered, and on June 6, 1944, I took the bus from El Cajon and reported to the San Diego Naval Training Station.



*The Youngjohn family gathered on the front porch - Dad is at upper left and Milton at bottom left.*

*A complete copy of this essay and many others are available at [www.elcajonhistory.org](http://www.elcajonhistory.org).*

# Winning essays capture historic El Cajon

Students from 14 elementary schools submitted essays covering various aspects of El Cajon's history in the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Third Grade Essay Contest. The winning essays are being included in this newsletter as space permits. The first place winner was published in the July 2013 Heritage. The following are four more winning essays.

## 2nd Place

### El Cajon in the 1900s

by Riley Noble Chavez, Bostonia School

My family has lived in El Cajon for several generations. My third generation grandfather Aldert Vander Bleek migrated to the U.S. from Dutch Holland. He came to this county in search of the American Dream.

As a young butcher he met the girl of his dreams, Nellie Griffin. They met in Minnesota where she was originally from. They decided to start a family. The Northeast was not providing the life they were hoping for. In the early 1900s they chose to make a go of it, in the great West. They had heard many tales of the good life the West could give to them and their five children. Whose names were Orville, Adele, Annabelle, Joyce, and Eugene. As a family of pioneers they traveled by car to the West.

In 1923 they settled in California. In a place called El Cajon. Some called the land "The Valley of Opportunity." When the family got to El Cajon they found a bit of land and staked their claim. That land is now where Douglas Avenue is. That is near where the library and the fire department are now located. Back in those times many settlers would seek shelter on public land and make it their own.

Spanish settlers were called "Padres." When the Padres traveled to a place that looked like a box shaped area in a valley they named it "El Cajon" or "The Box" in Spanish. The Padres and many other settlers traveled to the valley for their animals to graze on the grass

of the valley floor. The surrounding mountains made a perfect place for the animals to graze with running away. The valley also helped gather water when it rained.

As a member of one of the oldest families to settle in El Cajon, I am not only proud to be Spanish. I am also proud to know where my family chose to raise several generations. I am proud to be a part of El Cajon's history.



*Stephen Mahoney (right), Assistant Superintendent of the Cajon Valley Union School District, presents the 2nd Place trophy to Riley Noble Chavez.*

## 3rd Place

### The Mother Goose Parade

by Savanna Davis, W.D. Hall School



*Savanna Davis took home the 3rd Place trophy.*

The first parade was in 1947 and was organized by Thomas Wigton Jr., a business man that wanted to "do something for the children" of El Cajon and the surrounding cities. The parade has everything you would like to see in a parade Marching Bands, Floats, Clowns, a Queen and her Princess Court and Horses even Classic Cars with people waving in them. The Mother Goose Parade always takes place the Sunday before Thanksgiving Day. It is the largest parade in San Diego County. The parade is televised on T.V. for people who can't get out to see it in person.

Santa Claus has been at all of the parades since the beginning to kick off

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the Holiday Season. He is at the end of the parade on his own float with his sleigh and reindeer. The floats in the parade can choose a nursery rhyme theme or something related to the annual theme for that year. Bands from the local high schools march in the parade wearing the school colors and play instruments. Floats are created by businesses in the area and high schools to represent their theme. Many people volunteer their time to create all of the floats in the parade.

## Virginia Stead/Natural Life Award Red Diamond Rattlesnake

by Nicholas Nance, Fuerte School

If you live in El Cajon, California you'd better look out for the red diamond rattlesnake!

The red diamond rattlesnake can be found from Southern California down to Baja California, Mexico. These snakes can be found up to 3,900 feet above sea level. They usually like to hide

in cactuses and inside large piles of brush. Although these rattlesnakes can be found at all times of the year, you should use extreme caution from April to November.

The red diamond rattlesnake sometimes breeds with the southern pacific rattlesnake. King snakes, on the other hand, don't breed with rattlesnakes. This type of rattler is able to have 3-20 babies at once. When the snake is born, its scales are a sort of grayish color. Their scales turn more reddish as the snake matures. The baby rattlesnakes stay with their mother until they have their first shed.

The adult snake eats squirrels, mice, rats, birds, lizards, and bunnies. The baby snakes eat lizards and other small reptiles and mammals. Depending on the size of the snake's meal, they can last up to three weeks with eating.

The red diamond rattlesnake is usually 2.5-3.5 feet long. It is rare but they are able to reach up to 5 feet. The venom found in a full-grown red diamond rattlesnake has three times the amount needed to kill a human. If the rattlesnake's fangs are lost, they are rapidly replaced with venom-filled fangs. If this snake bites you it can cause swelling, lots of pain, and vomiting.

The predators of the rattlesnake are king snakes, roadrunners, and owls. This dangerous rattlesnake has five threats. Three of those threats are: fire, getting captured and sold illegally, and killed when houses are built in their habitat. The other two threats are people and vehicles.

If you are in El Cajon and you see a red diamond rattlesnake, stay calm and slowly walk away from it. Do not make sudden movement, or it will strike!



## Nettie Kersten/Judges Award El Cajon Settlers

by Beckett Rice, W.D. Hall Elementary

I chose this topic because I felt that people want to know more about the settlers, including me, that came to El Cajon. The people I chose were George H. Cowles and W.D. Hall. Their lives are very interesting.

W.D. Hall came to El Cajon with his parents when he was 18 years old. He was originally from Michigan. He had a job as a carpenter at the Coronado Hotel. He saved a lot of his money and used it to buy land. After working some more and getting married he bought a lumberyard. He got tired of hauling lumber to his yard so he decided to buy some new land that was closer, but he didn't have enough money. He had to get a business partner. This is how Hall and Kessler Co. began. He also started a town newspaper. He always helped his community from installing a roller and steam boiler to process

grain for feed to building a water tower and pumping water to the city. He was on the school board and the president of the Chamber of Commerce. He was a well known, helpful man in the city of El Cajon.

George A. Cowles has a background that began in the cotton business. He started his own cotton mill at the age 21, but it burnt down. He then became a broker in the NY cotton business when was 25 years old. He was the president of NY Cotton Exchange at the age of 30. He traveled with his wife and then came to El Cajon in 1877. He purchased about 4,000 acres of land where he planted fruit trees, grapes, olives, grain and potatoes. He was called the "raisin king of the U.S."

He also raised horses and cattle. He was also a V.P. of a bank and a director of the California Southern Railroad. He was responsible for extending the railroad which even went through his own property. I found George A. Cowles life very interesting I bet so did you!

W.D. Hall and George A. Cowles loved their community and always helped out. They helped form El Cajon the way it is now. I learned a lot about them.

### Editor's Note

The winning essays are posted at [www.elcajonhistory.org](http://www.elcajonhistory.org) (under "Education"). Since the third graders conduct their own research, the Historical Society cannot guarantee that all of the information is historically correct.

El Cajon Historical Society  
P. O. Box 1973  
El Cajon, CA 92022

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## ECHS to hold annual dinner meeting Oct. 24

ECHS's 2013 Annual Dinner will be held at 5 p.m. (dinner at 5:30 p.m.) Thursday, October 24, at Junction Steakhouse, 777 Jamacha Road, El Cajon.

There will be a brief meeting for election of officers and approval of the budget for next year, followed by an outstanding presentation on women flyers.

Three dinner entrees are available: Steak Bites with salad, Fish Tacos with rice/beans, and House Pasta with salad (vegetarian). The cost for the meeting remains \$15.

Reservations are mandatory and must be received by Monday, October 21.

### Annual Meeting Reservation Form

Number Attending \_\_\_\_\_ (\$15 each)

Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ *Reservations not kept become a donation*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Dinner Choice:  
(if more than one person, indicate number of each)

Steak \_\_\_\_\_ Fish Tacos \_\_\_\_\_ Pasta \_\_\_\_\_

**DEADLINE MONDAY, OCTOBER 21**

Mail reservations and checks to:  
ECHS  
P.O. Box 1973  
El Cajon, CA 92022-1973

To:

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## Great Gift Idea

If you're in search of something to give a friend or relative for Christmas, why not give a membership in the El Cajon Historical Society? Individual memberships are only \$12. You can also pay your 2014 membership dues at the same time.



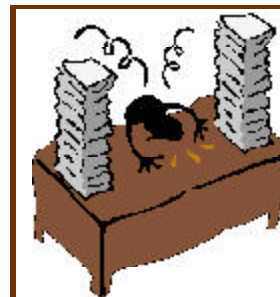
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## Any problems with new newsletter distribution?

Do you know of any members who have not received their newsletter?

Due to changes in bulk mail postal regulations, the *Heritage* changed its distribution system. For those who are comfortable with electronic media, the *Heritage* is now sent by e-mail. However, paper copies of the *Heritage* are still sent by regular mail to any member who does not have e-mail or to any member who requests to receive printed copies.

Some e-mail account security settings may block the delivery of the newsletter. If you know of any member who is not getting their newsletter, please let us know so that we can get one to them.



### HELP WANTED

Volunteers are needed to help with paperwork, research, and filing in the office. If you'd like to help, please leave us a message at (619) 444-3800.