

# The COTTLE ALMANAC

Martial Cottle Park Newsletter



*Earth is here so kind, that just tickle her with a hoe  
and she laughs with a harvest.*  
Douglas Jerrold 1803-1857

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## From my tractor seat

*Welcome to Martial Cottle Park: Our journey from working family farm to historical agricultural park.*

*By Eric Goodrich,  
Park Manager*

Farmed by the Cottle/Lester family for 150 years, from 1864 to 2014, **Martial Cottle Park** was locally known as the Cottle Ranch. Named after our donor's grandfather, Martial Cottle, the park represents 287 acres of what once was the *Valley of the Heart's Delight*.

The journey towards being a public park began in the 1960s, when Walter Cottle Lester's mother, Ethel, watched the Santa Clara Valley develop from agriculture into the Silicon Valley. Her wish was to have her family's ranch become a public park where future generations could see and feel what it was like to live on a farm. As a steward for the ranch, Mr. Lester fulfilled his mother's vision by donating his family's land to **Santa Clara County** and **California State Parks** in 2003.

In the recorded deed, Walter Cottle Lester specified the park would "Inform and educate the public about the agricultural history of the Santa Clara Valley." The deed language was used as a guiding principle through the community and partner-based public master planning process.



Photo by Ron Horii

Design and construction of the park followed, while Mr. Lester lived out the rest of his life in the home where he was born. Portions of the park opened incrementally, beginning the morning after Mr. Lester's death on January 31, 2014. The park fully opened in May 2015. The historic ranch area, including all of the buildings, is undergoing environmental evaluation and is presently closed to the public. The time frame when this portion of the park will open has not been determined.

Using the deed language as a driving principle, a primary goal of the master planning process was to have a cooperative management zone where entities other than County Parks would work in partnership to provide educational opportunities with demonstration gardens, as well as research, experimentation, teaching, training, events, and workshops related to gardening, urban forestry, and agriculture.

A key element in reaching the vision of Walter Cottle Lester is collaborating with our park partners and sister agencies. **Jacobs Farm**, an organic sustainable farm was selected to commercially farm 190 acres of the park, establish a local farm stand, and provide educational programs.



*Walter Cottle Lester and his Golden Retriever, Junior.*

## Tractor seat...

*Continued from page 2*

The **University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE)** provides programming through **Master Gardeners, 4-H, small farm research, and composting.** Our **City Forest** plans to provide educational programming on urban forestry. There are also future plans for a **community garden.**

Combined with **Santa Clara County Parks'** programming, our partners showcase sustainable and environmentally appropriate farming and gardening practices, support youth leadership development and underserved communities, build relationships with the community through participatory learning experiences, and enhance access to healthy food.



*Photo by Ron Horii*

Community engagement, relationships, access, and environmental and social responsibility with a focus on agriculture were significant in the vision of the Cottle/Lester family.

I encourage each of you to explore what **Martial Cottle**

**Park** has to offer. Enjoy nature, have fun at the **Discovery Farm**, look around the **Visitor Center**, take a walking tour, eat fresh produce from the **Farm Stand** and watch the farming operation at work.

Celebrate the agricultural heritage of Santa Clara Valley and enjoy the harvest time with friends and family.



**2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Harvest Festival**  
**Saturday, October 1, 2016**  
 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM  
 at  
**Martial Cottle Park**

### Activities

- Cottle Cattle Corral
- Jacobs Farm Pumpkin Patch
- Master Gardeners' Fall Garden Market
- Tractor & Truck Displays
- Music
- Food Trucks
- Community Partners Expo

*For more information, see page 17*

## Meet our Community Partner: Jacobs Farm

*Continuing the tradition of farming at the Cottle Ranch*

*By Janae Clark, Marketing Coordinator, Jacobs Farm Del Cabo*

When we envision farming in the Valley of the Heart's Delight, we may think back to the nineteenth century, when the county was dotted with farms and agriculture was one of Santa Clara County's main industries. We'd be less likely to picture the current technology-focused Silicon Valley as an ideal place to continue the tradition of farming, but **Jacobs Farm**, located in **Martial Cottle Park**, is restoring and redefining Santa Clara County's rich farming history. This unique, organic urban farm offers the community an opportunity to reflect on where food comes from and experience fresh produce from *their* own backyard.

**Jacobs Farm's** commitment to sustainable organic farming began in 1980. Founders **Larry**



Photo by David Tuttle

**Jacobs** and **Sandy Belin** started their farming journey in Pescadero, on the San Mateo County coast, and have since expanded their California production to nine other locations, including the newest, our farm at **Martial Cottle Park**. The **Martial Cottle Park Farm** is yet another example of their mission, "...to provide great tasting, healthy, safe food grown in a way that protects and sustains the environment... enriching the lives of all of our employees as well as the communities in which we farm."

Backed by over thirty years of sustainable organic farming experience, **Jacobs Farm** at **Martial Cottle Park** is our most diverse farm, with 190 acres of

our widest variety of fruits, vegetables, and culinary herbs. Our abundant summer crops, including tomatoes, such as Dry Farmed Early Girls and numerous varieties of heirlooms, along with plums, pluots, specialty melons, and culinary herbs, are being harvested now. In addition to harvesting, our farm team has planted our Jack O' Lantern and Sugar Pie pumpkins, specialty gourds, and more, just in time for the **Second Annual Harvest Festival** on Saturday, October 1st.

**Jacobs Farm** has a qualified team of dedicated farmers at **Martial Cottle Park** and we also work with diverse groups in that contribute to and



Photo by Diane Bacon

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## Jacobs Farm

*Continued from page 4*

enhance our team. Last year, students at **Valley Christian Junior High School** completed a one-year program growing winter wheat and garlic, and they will return in September to plant and cultivate kale, Brussels sprouts, cabbage and fava beans. In addition to the junior high school students, we've partnered with the **Farmer Veteran Coalition** to provide veterans with hands-on experience on how to run a sustainable, organic farm while also teaching integrated pest management, harvest and post-harvest handling and food safety. **Matt Smiley** and **Dustin Cutler**, from the **Farmer**

### Jacobs Farm Stand Hours



Monday–Friday  
10:00 AM to 7:00 PM  
Saturday–Sunday  
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

For current events and farm information please visit:

[www.jacobsfarmca.com](http://www.jacobsfarmca.com)  
[www.facebook.com/JacobsFarmCA](https://www.facebook.com/JacobsFarmCA)

**Veteran Coalition**, and **Lawson Joos**, an intern studying at the **University of Arizona**, work full time in our 2-acre u-pick garden. They are preparing the community u-pick field for a medley of exciting and delicious produce.

With the help and support of the **Santa Clara County Parks** and our local neighbors, we are teaching the community about the importance of organic, local farming and how it directly benefits their communities. Healthy people eat healthy food, and healthy food starts with a healthy soil.



*Photo by Diane Bacon*

## Meet our Community Partner: University of California Cooperative Extension

By Jessica Schweiger,  
University of California Cooperative Extension

In April 2015, the Regents of the University of California signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the County of Santa Clara that allowed the **UC Cooperative Extension** to “develop and conduct a dynamic educational center for agricultural literacy and science based horticulture at **Martial Cottle Park** that will benefit the health of the local community and promote a sustainable natural environment.”

If you’ve strolled through **Martial Cottle Park** over the past year and a half, you’ve seen that vision begin to appear: lambs grazing in the **4-H** livestock pasture, raised garden beds being built, trees being planted, and vegetables and native plants popping up in the **Master Gardener** demonstration garden. Maybe you helped install an irrigation system with **Master Gardener** volunteers or learned about healthy soil at our soil pit workshop. These are early glimpses of the **UC Cooperative Extension** plans at the park: as a space where Santa Clara County residents can connect with the region’s agricultural past *and* present through a working urban farm and pasture, and as an outdoor classroom to learn backyard gardening and composting using environmentally-friendly practices.

Through the **4-H Youth Development Program**, “city kids” can learn about livestock and sustainable grazing practices, while **Master Gardeners** host adult volunteer workdays and provide workshops on growing fruits and vegetables, safely managing garden pests, and drought-resistant landscaping. This year, we hope to expand these successful **4-H** and **Master Gardener** efforts and launch new initiatives such as a small farm training academy, pasture poultry project, and composting demonstration and education. Potential research and training will focus on issues impacting California cities and the Santa Clara County food system: urban agriculture, closed-loop farm livestock systems, working rangelands, management of green waste, water conservation, and soil health.

UC  
CE

University of California  
Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Cooperative Extension

The past year at **Martial Cottle Park** is just the beginning of a long partnership between **UC Cooperative Extension** and **Santa Clara County Parks**. **Martial Cottle Park** will be an educational resource, bringing an understanding of sound, research-based sustainable agricultural practices and land management to the residents of Santa Clara County.

So this Fall, join **UCCE** for fun, practical learning about agriculture and natural resources—we’ll see you at the park!



## Meet our Community Partner: Master Gardener Program

By Pamela Roper and Nancy Creveling,  
UCCE Master Gardener Program of Santa Clara County  
Co-Liaisons to Martial Cottle Park

The **University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) Master Gardener Program** began in 1981; the Santa Clara County Program started in 1982. It is an effective partnership between the University of California and county governments.

**Santa Clara County Master Gardeners at Martial Cottle Park** provide research-based information on sustainable urban horticulture practices, primarily focused on training and demonstration in:

- *Establishing and caring for home gardens and orchards,*
- *Creating and maintaining four acres of garden, orchard, and growing grounds,*
- *Determining the adaptability of vegetable cultivars for Santa Clara Valley's home gardens,*
- *Working landscapes with low-water requirements and native plant species, and*
- *Creating and using compost.*

### At our parcel we offer:

- *Classes and workshops,*
- *Demonstration gardens,*
- *Garden trials testing varieties and yields, and*
- *Methods to manage gardens under drought conditions.*

### Projects currently underway include:

- *A native plant garden,*
- *Raised garden beds with flowers, herbs, and vegetables,*
- *A Farm Stand/Information Booth, and*
- *A barn with a rain catchment system.*

We plan to have many opportunities to showcase our research and ornamental garden harvests, as well as being a place to come for information and advice. Our greenhouse, which will be installed Fall 2016, will allow us to grow vegetables, herbs,

flowers, and water-wise plants for our **Fall and Spring Garden Markets.**

Our vision to bring community members to our parcel and provide training and hands-on home garden demonstrations has become a reality! Over ninety community members, assisted by **Master Gardener** volunteers, built fifty-one raised garden beds and assembled drip irrigation systems this year.

Our partnership with the **Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department** is instrumental in helping us develop our parcel so we can put down roots and share **University of California**-based research with the community. Our official hours are **Wednesday and Saturday from 9:00 AM until noon**; however, **Master Gardener** volunteers are also on site **Tuesday and Friday mornings**. We have **Advice to Grow By...Ask Us!** or better yet, stop by, roll up your sleeves, and attend a class or just help in the garden. See our workshop schedule on page 16. We welcome **Martial Cottle Park** volunteers and other community members.

Our website has the details:

[ucanr.org/sites/sccNew/Master\\_Gardener/mastergardeners.org/scc.html](http://ucanr.org/sites/sccNew/Master_Gardener/mastergardeners.org/scc.html)



Visit us on **Facebook**: [sccmastergardeners](https://www.facebook.com/sccmastergardeners)



## Meet our Community Partner: The *New* Sunset 4-H Club

By *Katie Oxford*,  
Sunset 4-H Club Leader

For over 100 years, the **4-H** youth development organization has been providing opportunities for children ages 5-19 to discover their passions through hands-on, experiential learning. Over 6 million children across America belong to **4-H** clubs, where they have the opportunity to partner with adult volunteers who facilitate learning, while allowing the youth to explore, set goals, share ideas, experiment, self-direct their own learning, and receive feedback on their completed projects.



Photo by Katie Oxford

By partnering with **Martial Cottle Park**, the **University of California Cooperative Extension** was able to start a new club, based on-site at the park that provides the opportunity for children and adolescents who live in the surrounding area to participate in a wide range of projects that

include raising small animals and livestock, gardening, and beekeeping. Although **Martial Cottle Park** is the home of the **Sunset 4-H Club**, the 8-acre parcel in the park that is set aside for **4-H** is open to all **4-H** members in the county to house animals and host outdoor projects.

This past year, members of the **Sunset 4-H Club** cared for a flock of 15 lambs and three ewes as they grazed the 8-acre pasture. The animals were owned by individual club members who worked together throughout the project to care for the entire flock. They learned about livestock health and safety, grazing management, how to prepare an animal for market, and how to negotiate with customers to market their product. They even had the opportunity to bring their lambs to the **Santa Clara County Fair**.

My children have always loved being around large animals and livestock, but I never thought it would be possible for them to be able to raise these types of animals here, in the middle of a large urban area. The **Sunset 4-H Club at Martial Cottle** gave my children the opportunity to raise lambs just a 10-minute drive from home and the kids are talking about trying to raise beef cattle at the park next year.

The **Sunset 4-H Club** is open to all children ages 5-19, and will



be offering a wide variety of projects next year, both on-site at the park and off-site. Some of the proposed projects for the 2016-2017 year include gardening, beekeeping, market rabbits, chickens, cavy (guinea pigs), leadership, geocaching, dairy goats, sewing, and reptiles.

The club meets on the third Thursday of every month, in the evenings, and our first meeting of the year will be on **September 15<sup>th</sup>** at 6:00 PM. This will be an **Open House** meeting where project leaders will present their project information and new and returning club members can sign up for the projects they are interested in joining. The meeting will take place at the **4-H** parcel at the park (on the Chynoweth side).

For more information about joining **Sunset 4-H Club** or to attend the **Open House** meeting in September, contact the club at: [Sunset4HClub@gmail.com](mailto:Sunset4HClub@gmail.com)

For more information about the 4-H opportunity, visit their website at: [4h.ucanr.edu](http://4h.ucanr.edu)

## Meet our Community Partner: UCCE Small Farm Program

*By Aparna Gazula,  
Small Farms Advisor,  
University of California Cooperative Extension*

Agriculture in Santa Clara County is valued around \$276 million, and the county has around one thousand farms covering 229,927 acres. Of these one thousand farms, 92% of the farms are small farms (farms that have less than \$250,000 in sales per year).

As part of the **University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE)** system, the **Small Farm Program** in Santa Clara County develops, implements, and evaluates extension education and applied research programs on critical issues and problems faced by small-scale farmers and specialty crop producers in Santa Clara County.

The **Small Farm Program** conducts field research on specialty crops, including crops new to production in California, and also provides production and marketing information to small-scale farmers. The applied field research focuses on crop production practices of importance for farmers in the county, and emphasis is given to issues related to nutrient management, irrigation, integrated pest management, and soil health. Alternative/modified crop production practices aimed at reducing grower dependency on pesticides, minimizing environmental impacts, and achieving sustainability are key to the program. Critical issues related to marketing, compliance with food safety, labor, pesticide and water quality regulations that affect the economic viability of small-scale family farms are also be addressed by the program.

The **UCCE Small Farm Program** manages four acres of land at **Martial Cottle Park**. This land gives us an opportunity to offer in-field demonstration-based educational workshops to small and beginning farmers in the county.

Currently we are working towards the establishment of an irrigation system for the **Small Farm Program** site at **Martial Cottle Park** and improving the soil health. Upon improving our parcel of land, we plan to offer:

- Demonstration-based classes and workshops for beginning farmers on topics such as business planning, marketing, food safety, cottage food training, and other basic farming workshops/in-field demonstrations.
- Training and demonstration for beginning farmers on farming practices, such as site preparation, soil testing, land preparation, planting, production, management, and marketing of specialty crops.
- In partnership with the **UCCE Livestock and Natural Resources Program**, **UCCE Composting Education Program**, and the **UCCE Urban Farming Program**, some of the proposed topics to be offered in the near future include: small farm management; soil health management; drip irrigation; stone fruit production; berry fruit production; organic farming; crop pest management; production of alternative/specialty crops, such as microgreens and mushrooms; pasture poultry; ruminants and hogs; marketing; and value-added products.

For further updates and details of workshops to be offered please check future issues of this newsletter and our website:

[cesantaclara.ucanr.edu](http://cesantaclara.ucanr.edu)

## Meet our Community Partner: Master Composters

By Cole B. Smith,  
Composting Education Program Coordinator,  
UCCE

As the Bay Area moves in the direction of a sustainable future through renewable energy, public transportation, and green infrastructure, it is important that a critical component is not forgotten – waste. As a state, we are one of the leaders in the nation in the production of trash per person with an average Californian producing 35 tons annually, compared to the average Oregonian producing 18 tons. Even worse, the largest amount of our trash, by tonnage, is organic material, such as food. Organic material is a valuable resource that not only reduces greenhouse gasses when managed properly, but can create a value-added product called compost that can be sold.

At the **University of California Cooperative Extension**, our mission is to protect our environment as well as the livelihoods of our residents. At **Martial Cottle Park**, we see a wonderful opportunity to reach out to the South Bay community about the environmental importance of recycling organic material and creating compost. The **Composting Education Program** is a community-based, volunteer-driven program that educates and supports Santa Clara County residents in diverting household organic waste.

*As a state, we are one of the leaders in the nation in the production of trash per person with an average Californian producing 35 tons annually, compared to the average Oregonian producing 18 tons.*

At the park, we will be providing free classes in backyard composting and worm composting, as well as demonstrating various composting technologies. We envision our research and education site as a resource hub for residents, landscape professionals, and small- to mid-size agricultural operations, as well as staff from municipal agencies. Our extensively trained volunteers, the **Master Composters**, are the cornerstones of our ability to execute our mission. These dedicated members will be available as instructors, mentors, and guides to aid participants in all technical aspects of recycling organic material.

Starting in the spring of 2017, we will host workshops, demonstration field days,

speakers, and work parties at **Martial Cottle Park**. The public will be invited to work side-by-side with the **Master Composters**, learning the ins and outs of the science of rot.

As a program, we also administer the **ROTLINE**, a phone hotline for composting technical assistance, as well as a resource website.

Please stay tuned for more information on the South Bay's first composting research and education demonstration site.



Photo by Philip Cohen, Flickr: compost CC BY 2.0

## Meet our Community Partner: Our City Forest

By Renae McCollum,  
Community Relations Manager,  
Our City Forest

**Our City Forest** has been Silicon Valley's nonprofit urban forestry and environmental stewardship leader since 1994. We believe in the power of trees to turn our neighborhoods and cities from gray to green, and we believe in the power of people to help achieve this transformation. **Our City Forest** invites YOU to join with us in appreciating, protecting, growing, and caring for our urban forest.

At **Martial Cottle Park**, **Our City Forest** continues to develop its site, which is home to the beginnings of an arboretum. Young trees planted at the parcel represent common species in Santa Clara County, and these trees will act as a public resource. Residents, who are interested in planting trees in

their own yards or just curious about their urban forest, will be able to learn about and see specific types of trees. **Our City Forest** currently hosts volunteer workdays focused on watering and helping these trees to get established in their new home.

In October 2016, the site will also become home to a native landscape, enabling visitors to explore drought-tolerant plant options to replace lawns and save water. **Our City Forest** will host workshops about the trees and plants that can thrive in our climate and volunteer workdays to help us create and maintain these living classrooms. Once more plants are established, we will eagerly open the site to the public.

Finally, **Our City Forest's** long-term goal is developing an education center with regular workshops on water catchment, urban ecology, tree planting and care, and other aspects of our programs important in cultivating a sustainable San José. Prior to this education center, we plan on hosting events in the natural classrooms.



Photo by Our City Forest



### Ongoing Programs

- **Community Planting**  
Plant a tree near your street or in your yard; become a neighborhood planting coordinator and see your community transform!  
[ourcityforest.org/plant-trees](http://ourcityforest.org/plant-trees)
- **Lawn Busters**  
Convert your lawn into a drought-tolerant dreamscape; DIY with plants from our Community Nursery OR Our City Forest offers an all-in-one package for qualified homeowners.  
[ourcityforest.org/lawnbusters](http://ourcityforest.org/lawnbusters)
- **Volunteer with us!**  
Weekly opportunities are posted at:  
[ourcityforest.org/volunteer](http://ourcityforest.org/volunteer)

**Interested in helping us develop our Martial Cottle Park site?**  
Please contact us at:  
[volunteer@ourcityforest.org](mailto:volunteer@ourcityforest.org)

Please continue to visit:  
[www.ourcityforest.org](http://www.ourcityforest.org) for more information on these future programs. We're excited to have our services and knowledge more readily available to communities in this part of Santa Clara County!

## A volunteer opportunity awaits you at Martial Cottle Park

There are many opportunities to volunteer at **Martial Cottle Park**, depending on your interests, skills, and availability. We are seeking volunteers who care about **Martial Cottle Park** as much as we do!

### Visitor Center Docent

Staff the **Visitor Center**; answer questions; provide park information; and interpret the history of the family, the ranch and the artifacts in the **Visitor Center**. **Great if you like interacting with people, sharing your knowledge, learning, and being indoors!**

### Land Steward

Work on a team to care for the park landscaping and help keep it beautiful! Work may include weeding, deadheading roses, pruning grapevines, pruning trees, and trimming bunch grass. **Great if you have experience or interest in caring for landscaping and like being outdoors!**

### History Research

We are continually learning more about the Cottles, Lesters, their ranch, and the context and history of the Valley during the ranch's operation. Help with historical research projects. **Great if you are a fan of history, research, or the Cottle/Lester family!**

### School Programs

Planning is underway for school programs to begin in the 2016-2017 school year. There are opportunities to participate in the planning and piloting processes and to help lead the school programs themselves. **Great if you love working with students, can improvise in a pinch, or have a teaching background!**

### Trail Watch/Trail Count/Litter Pickup

Help keep a look out on the trails for various activities; count pedestrians, bikers and dogs to help park staff track our user trends; and pick up litter along the way. **Great if you want to get in a walk or bike while volunteering!**

*Volunteering at Martial Cottle Park comes with some great benefits:*

- Learning a new skill or using one you've already got
- Sense of community and stewardship of the park
- New friends!
- Enrichment field trips to places like **Wilder Ranch State Park** and **Joseph D. Grant County Park**
- A uniform to wear on duty
- Training
- Better health – physical strength from trail counts or weeding, mental strength from sharing knowledge with visitors, and emotional strength from connecting to something bigger than yourself.



Photo by Diane Bacon

## Volunteer opportunities

*Continued from page 12*

### Nest Box Monitor

Monitor the nest boxes for barn owls, kestrels, blue birds, and other activity as part of the park's natural resources management program. **Great if you are an experienced birder!**

### Archives and Collections

The park has extensive work to complete in order to process all of the archives and collections belonging to the Cottle/Lester family. This will help us to better understand and interpret the history of the family and the ranch. Processing the archives and collections includes scanning, photographing, documenting, and properly storing the artifacts. **Great if you are organized, detail-oriented, and love working with old objects.**

### Newsletter

Serve as a writer, editor, or photographer for the

community-wide newsletter or a revamped volunteer newsletter/bulletin. **Great if you love writing, editing, or taking photos!**

### Special Projects

Examples include **Eagle Scout** projects, woodworking projects, or one-time projects, such as tree planting days. Do you have a special skill or project that the park could benefit from? Talk to park staff to learn more about how your project or skill may fit in!

### Special Events

Join us for special events at the park, such as **Harvest Festival**. Help with setting up and taking down equipment, running an activity/station, or guiding visitors in the parking lots. **Great if you love festivals and working with the public!**

*If you'd like to join the volunteer team as a steward, advocate or superfan of Martial Cottle Park, please email our Volunteer Park Lead, David, at [David.Zittlow@prk.sccgov.org](mailto:David.Zittlow@prk.sccgov.org). He will arrange an interview and park tour with you. Next steps may include a volunteer application, LiveScan fingerprint background check, training and uniform issuance. If you have any questions, call the Martial Cottle Park office at (408) 535-4060.*



Photo by Diane Bacon



Photo by Diane Bacon



Photo by Joyce Chesno

## School Programs at Martial Cottle Park

*By Carolyn Schimandle,  
Park Program Coordinator*

When Walter Cottle Lester granted **Martial Cottle Park** to **Santa Clara County**, he specified that it primarily would be a “historical park that informs and educates the public about the agricultural heritage of the Santa Clara Valley, as exemplified by the Martial Cottle family, dating from the 1850s into the 20th century.” He was especially interested in children learning about the valley’s farming legacy, so developing a school program has been a high priority from the beginning. Planning is now underway, and we hope to be able to begin offering programs in late spring 2017.

The initial programs will be for second grade, based on the alignment of the park’s interpretative framework with the second grade academic content standards. As staff and funding allow, the program will expand to third grade, and then eventually to fourth. While the primary focus is meeting history and social science content standards, science, math, and English and language arts

standards will also be incorporated.

*We are excited to be fulfilling this important element of the Cottle/Lester family’s vision, serving the surrounding community and connecting Santa Clara Valley children to their shared agricultural heritage.*

The program will use hands-on activity stations with brief introduction and closing sessions, rather than a lecture or tour format. The Park has committed to developing at least six activity stations from which teachers can choose to customize their program. This was one of the many program development decisions based on preferences expressed by teachers during the planning process. Pre- and post-program materials and activities for classroom use will also be available but not required for participation, and there will be a teacher’s guide produced

during the program development process.

The interpretive period for the program has not been finalized, but will tentatively be a flow of history with brief information on the Muwekma Ohlone, Spanish, and Mexican use of the land; some on the earlier Cottle site history; and a concentration on how the community around the ranch changed dramatically during the pre- and post-World War II era.

Initially, there will be a limited number of program times and days available, with more added in future years as the docent group and permanent education program staffing increases.

The teachers who have participated in the planning process are very excited that this program will be available so close to so many schools. We are excited to be fulfilling this important element of the Cottle/Lester family’s vision, serving the surrounding community and connecting Santa Clara Valley children to their shared agricultural heritage.



*Photo from the Martial Cottle Park Archives*

## The Park Ranger Logs

*By Lisa Pappanastos, Park Ranger*

Whether you're coming to the park for a family picnic, bike ride, or a relaxing afternoon in the park with your pup, here are some things we'd like you to know.

### Reservations

**Martial Cottle Park** has five reservable picnic areas and five non-reservable picnic areas, which are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Groups of 20 or less may use any of the first-come, first-served picnic areas. Larger groups need a reservation.

To reserve a picnic area, visit [www.gooutsideandplay.org](http://www.gooutsideandplay.org) or call our reservations line at (408) 355-2201.

### Trail Use

**Martial Cottle Park** features approximately 3.5 miles of paved trail for use by pedestrians, bicycles, and dogs. The trail is open from sunrise to sunset.

The **Cooney Ranch Trail**, which connects **Martial Cottle Park** to the Blossom Hill Road neighborhoods adjacent to Highway 85, will remain closed until repair work to the trail can be completed to make the trail safe to use and the area safe to enter. The time frame for completion of the repair work has not been established.

Large portions of the paved trail that extend from just north of Highway 85 to the western Chynoweth Avenue entrance require extensive repairs. These portions of the trail are the subject of a dispute between the County and the County's construction contractor and have not been accepted by the County. Until the trail is repaired and accepted by the County, it cannot be opened for public use.

Both the eastern Chynoweth and Snell entrances are open and accessible to the Blossom Hill Road neighborhoods.

The County understands the neighborhoods' frustration and is working diligently to resolve the situation and safely open the trail. We thank you for your continued patience.

## Park Rules

- Plants, wildlife, and natural features are protected.
- Park is open 8AM to sunset. Trail hours are sunrise to sunset.
- **Smoking in the park is not permitted.**
- Motorized devices are not permitted on trails.
- All firearms, air guns, paintball guns, bows and arrows, slingshots, etc. are strictly prohibited.
- Alcoholic beverages may be consumed at a minimum of 30 feet from parking lots.
- No dumping or littering.
- **Pets must be on a 6-foot leash. Please pick up droppings! Pet waste bags are available at several locations along the trail.**
- Helmets are mandatory for everyone under the age of 18, while operating a bicycle, scooter, skateboard, etc.
- Drones are not allowed.
- Deed restrictions prohibit the use of lawns for organized sports activities.
- For emergencies, call 911.

## Upcoming Events and Programs at Martial Cottle Park

**Saturday, September 24**

10:00 – 11:30 AM

Master Gardener parcel at  
Martial Cottle Park

**Master Gardeners Workshop:**

*Ground Squirrels or Gophers in Your Yard?*

Please join us at this free class and learn how to control these pests.

**Saturday, October 1**

10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Martial Cottle Park

**Second Annual Harvest Festival**

(see page 17 for more details)

**Saturday, October 1**

10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Master Gardener parcel at  
Martial Cottle Park

**Master Gardeners Fall Garden Market**

Cool Season Vegetable plants for sale, succulents, educational training and much more!

10:30 – 11:00 AM

*Alliums - Grow Your Own Onions and Garlic*

11:15 AM – Noon

*Succulents – Marvelous Drought Tolerant Plants!*

Noon – 12:30 PM

*Composting – Reduce Waste and Improve Your Soil!*

12:30 – 1:15 PM

*Cool Season Gardening – Fresh Produce All Year!*

**Saturday, October 22**

10:00 AM – Noon

Master Gardener parcel at  
Martial Cottle Park

**Cover Crop Workshop**

Let your soil work while you rest! Open to the public. Meet at the Master Gardener parcel at Martial Cottle Park.

**Saturday, November 5**

10:00 AM – Noon

Master Gardener parcel at  
Martial Cottle Park

**Garlic Workshop**

Learn how to select the best varieties for the Bay Area, grow, harvest and store your own, then practice planting in our beds.

**Saturday, November 12**

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Our City Forest Community Nursery  
1000 Spring Street, San Jose, CA 95110

**Our City Forest Fall Plant Sale**

Come visit and choose from our selection of hundreds of species of drought-tolerant and native trees, shrubs, grasses, and groundcovers. Our plants are hand-cultivated from small cuttings and ready to plant! We will also host nursery tours, arborist chats, and native plant workshops. Information and sign-ups for our popular **living holiday tree program** will be available as well. Snacks and beverages provided! More details at:

[www.ourcityforest.org/nursery](http://www.ourcityforest.org/nursery)

The nursery's regular open hours are Thursday–Saturday, 9:00 AM – Noon

**Saturday, November 12** (Pre-orders begin)

**Our City Forest Holiday Rent-A-Tree:  
Rent a Living Holiday Tree!**

Rent a tree for the month of December and celebrate a sustainable holiday season. Pre-order yours beginning November 12. More information will be posted at [ourcityforest.org](http://ourcityforest.org)

**Every Saturday and Sunday**

2:30 – 3:30 PM

Martial Cottle Park Visitor Center

**The Martial Cottle Park Experience**

Take a tour of the park's core, discovering the land's past, present, and future. Trained staff and docents provide answers to questions. For more information, see page 18.

# Second Annual Harvest Festival



Saturday  
October 1st  
10am-3pm

Come celebrate  
our valley's rich  
agricultural history!

- Food & Produce for Sale
- Jacobs Farm Tours
- Kids Activities
- Pumpkin Bowling
- Pumpkin Painting
- Petting Zoo
- Square Dancing
- Music & More
- Parking \$6 Public transportation encouraged



5283 Snell Avenue, San Jose

Visit [Parkhere.org](http://Parkhere.org) for more info or volunteer opportunities



Call the Martial Cottle Park office with any questions: (408) 535-4060.

We count on **volunteers** to make Harvest Festival a success! If you're interested in volunteering at Harvest Festival, please contact [volunteer@prk.sccgov.org](mailto:volunteer@prk.sccgov.org).

**We can't wait to see you there!**

## Have you had *The Experience?*

By Carolyn Schimandle, Park Program Coordinator

Each Saturday and Sunday afternoon, **Martial Cottle Park** visitors are invited to participate in **The Martial Cottle Park Experience**, a one-hour tour around the park's core, discovering the land's past, present, and future. Trained staff and docents provide answers to questions such as:

- *Who's farming that field?*
- *Why isn't this parcel developed like everything around it?*
- *When did this become a park?*
- *How was sustainable design incorporated in the park development? and*
- *What additional features and programs are coming?*

Park visitors learn about the Cottle/Lester family and their vision to share the valley's agricultural past with future generations, the partners that work with **Santa Clara County Parks** to fulfill that vision, and the County Parks' plans to make even more of the vision a reality.



Photo by Diane Bacon

To experience **The Martial Cottle Experience**, meet at the **Park Visitor Center** at 2:30 PM on a Saturday or Sunday. Wear comfortable walking shoes and bring water. Walking distance on the tour is about ½ to ¾ mile, depending on the tour guide. The tour route is flat, and accessible with walker, wheelchair, and stroller.

### Contributors to this issue of *The Cottle Almanac*

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**Martial Cottle Park • County of Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department**  
**5283 Snell Avenue • San José, CA 95136**  
**Park Office: (408) 535-4060**  
**Reservations Office (Monday–Friday): (408) 355-2201**

<http://www.parkhere.org>

<http://www.facebook.com/SantaClaraCountyParks>

## Cottle Ranch is rooted in history

By Dave Zittlow,  
Park Volunteer Lead

When new settlers entered Santa Clara Valley in the mid-1800s, they were quoted as saying the valley appeared as one giant wheat field studded by oak trees. Long before the pink and white blossoms of fruit trees blanketed the valley, wheat and barley were grown on the valley floor and cattle grazed the hillsides. It was into this environment that Edward Cottle brought his family in 1854, after traveling from Missouri with 600 head of cattle, and settling along the Coyote River south of San José.

Within ten years Mr. Cottle acquired 640 acres of **Rancho Santa Teresa** from José Joaquin Bernal. Edward Cottle later deeded 350 acres to his son Martial Cottle, for whom the park is named. The 287.54 acre remainder of this property is now **Martial Cottle Park**.

Access to water on the ranch allowed the Cottles to compete with surrounding ranchers. Although many of these ranchers soon switched from grain and cattle to orchards, the Cottles did not. Imagine wheat waving in the fields and horses pulling a McCormick reaper, beef cattle grazing on the "Back 40" and being driven down **Cattle Run Trail** to the corrals. This was the way of life for over a century on this ranch.

Prominent orchardist Henry Lester married Martial Cottle's daughter Ethel in 1913. During this era, prunes and other stone fruit were the foundation of the valley economy. At its peak, thirty-nine canneries processed a variety of fruit. Henry Lester managed profitable orchards elsewhere in the *Valley of the Heart's Delight*, including prunes and pears directly across Snell Road from the Cottle Ranch. Ethel's brother, Montimer, ran the Cottle Ranch and continued growing hay, beef cattle, and row crops. Ethel and Henry's son, Walter, took over the ranch in 1943 at the age of eighteen.

Japanese tenant farmers lived on the ranch and farmed row crops from the 1910s until their internment in 1942. The Cottles and Lesters remained friends with at least two of these families, and corresponded with them while they were interned. Filipino farmworkers worked at the ranch from before World War II until at least the 1960s. During the war, the family grew sugar beets and tomatoes as part of the war effort. The tomatoes were canned and sent to the troops.

After the war, Santa Clara County saw more and more development. For decades, Ethel Lester watched as 60,000 acres of neighboring orchards and ranches were sold to developers. In the 1960s, she instilled in her children her vision that their ranch be kept in agricultural use and education forever in the form

### Did you know?

*After Pearl Harbor, the need for sugar greatly increased. Sugar was needed for the production of industrial alcohol, which was used to manufacture munitions and other war materials.*



*In 1943, the U.S. Beet Sugar Association declared that every time a 16-inch gun was fired, one fifth of an acre of sugar beets went up in smoke.*

of a park to be enjoyed by all. Walter Cottle Lester made his mother's wish come true when he deeded the ranch to the **County of Santa Clara** and **State of California** in 2003 for use as "a public historical park that informs and educates the public about the agricultural heritage of the Santa Clara Valley, as exemplified by the Martial Cottle family."

**Martial Cottle Park** is here today because the Cottle/Lester family wanted to preserve the agricultural history of Santa Clara Valley, while simultaneously creating a space for farming in the valley in the future.

## A look back at our first year

By Dave Zittlow,  
Park Volunteer Lead

Not many communities get to experience the development and opening of a new park, and I had the privilege of watching the park open from an inside perspective as a volunteer.

As soon as I could, I began volunteering, even when the buildings weren't open yet. One of my first tasks was to hang bulletin boards in the park office building and label the park's new tools.

In the year and a half since beginning to volunteer at **Martial Cottle Park**, I have witnessed volunteers bond over pruning grapevines, I have seen relief on visitors' faces when they realize this will be a park forever, and I have seen a community come together to care for this park as their own.

When the park opened on May 15, 2015, volunteers could be counted on one hand and, as you might expect, we faced the growing pains associated with establishing a new park. Today, we have thirty-six regular volunteers involved in all aspects of park operations, including staffing the **Visitor Center**, maintaining the landscape, monitoring the trails, patrolling for litter, processing collections, doing historical research, and assisting with school programs.

As the volunteer team grew, a team of nine volunteers developed a newsletter for volunteer communication. The publication was so successful that *The Cottle Almanac* is now a park-wide newsletter (being read by you!)

When the park opened last year, the **Visitor Center** looked bare, with only interpretive signs and a few displays, and it was only open two days a week. Today, it is open five days a week and has a multitude of historic items that belonged to the Cottle/Lester family that help us tell their story.

As many neighbors have observed over the past few years, the Cottle Ranch now has new drought-tolerant, low-water landscaping. In the past six months, the **Land Steward Volunteer Team** has twice deadheaded the park's 135 rose bushes; has hard-pruned,

trimmed, and tied its 140 grape vines; and has pruned and thinned the 102 pepper trees. Weeding is an ongoing activity, as we try to keep the lawns and wood-chipped areas clean.

At this time last year we were not charging fees and could not take reservations as the newly planted lawns were not yet established and surrounded by orange mesh fencing. Now picnic areas are nearly booked for the summer and fall, park attendance is picking up and the lawns are regularly used for family outings.

**Jacobs Farm** has increased its planted acreage since coming on board in March 2015 and improved their **Farm Stand**. **Master Gardeners** have been developing paths, plantings and raised beds in their parcel. Eighteen sheep mowed down the grasses in the **4-H** parcel and **Our City Forest** has demonstration trees growing in theirs.

While it appears from the above that we have made great progress in the past twelve months, we know there is much more work to be done. I invite you to participate in the development of **Martial Cottle Park**, by watching it grow, barbecuing at the park with your family, attending **Harvest Festival**, or joining our team of dedicated volunteers.

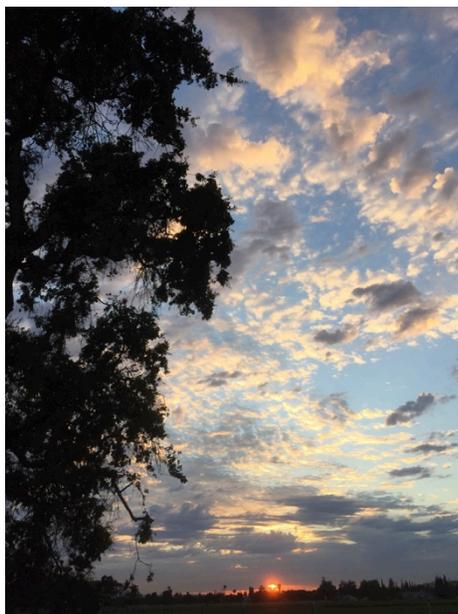


Photo by Diane Bacon