

THE RED ROCK RAG

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News and Views on Red Rock Canyon

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EDITORIAL

The moment has arrived

It's hard not to feel a little sorry for the late John Bock, longtime owner of the magnificent Red Rock Canyon property, who died last week.*

Famously irascible, Bock, 80, had spent the last 25 years of his life in sporadic negotiations with would-be purchasers of the land. His price (currently \$15 million) was always about 50 percent above fair market value. For the last couple of years, the property was under contract to Zydeco, a New Mexico outfit whose principal, Richard Yates, was just as eccentric as Bock himself.

Well, Bock's dead, and with his option to buy expired, Yates is, at least for the time being, out of the picture. (He has since shifted his interest to the old Manitou spa building.)

As far as Red Rocks, an immense window of opportunity has been created for open-space advocates. Hopeful rumors abound: maybe a partnership involving Manitou Springs, Colorado Springs, El Paso County, Greater Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), the Trust for Public Lands, the El Pomar Foundation and thousands of small individual donors?

We do know that there are lots of dedicated, competent people who have been involved in the effort to preserve Red Rocks for several years. The moment has arrived; either it'll happen now, or it never will. If it does, we can congratulate ourselves for electing Richard Skorman, Ted Eastburn, Sallie Clark, Judy Noyes and Margaret Radford to Council; not to mention Manitou Mayor Marcy Morrison. I'm confident - even manically so - that they'll find a way to do this particular deal.

... By John Hazlehurst, reprinted with permission of the *Colorado Springs Independent*

* Originally published March 21, 2002.

TPL exploring Red Rock Canyon possibilities

On Friday, April 12, representatives from the Red Rock Canyon Committee, the Red Rock Canyon Foundation, the Trails and Open Space Coalition and Voters Network met with Woody Beardsley of the Trust for Public Land for a briefing on TPL's interest in the Red Rock Canyon property and to provide input to TPL.

TPL is definitely exploring possibilities for the Red Rock Canyon property and is committed to work toward a Red Rock Canyon open space. TPL hopes to preserve the entire property as public open space, if the community can bring together the needed resources. TPL is open to various possibilities, and is willing to help coordinate fund raising efforts at an appropriate time.

Section 16 trail work scheduled

Mark these dates on your calendar to work on the Section 16 trail: May 19, June 15, and October 19.

The trail needs lots and lots of waterbar work and a better switchback with a rock wall at the top of the closed section.

If you can help on any of the work days, please e-mail Gary Michels at gmichels@coloradocollege.edu or call him at 998-8849 a few days before the trail work date so he can have tools and refreshments ready.

Also, call or e-mail Gary Michels if you can do weekday work on the trail.

Our Thanks

The Red Rock Canyon Committee wishes to express its appreciation to two anonymous contributors who have made contributions for operating expenses during the past month.

We would like to express our thanks to Voters Network for sponsoring Tom Faudree's attendance at the workshop on nonprofit organizations which was sponsored by the Voters Network and Citizens Project.

We would also like to express our appreciation to the Village at Skyline for providing our meeting room.

CALENDAR**Meetings of Possible Interest:**

- May 2 **Red Rock Canyon Committee**
7:00 P.M. Village at Skyline (off Lower Gold Camp Road), Activities Room, Building No. 4 (The Easternmost Building - enter from the parking lot north of the building)
- May 7 Manitou Springs City Council
7:00 P.M. Manitou Springs City Hall
606 Manitou Avenue
- May 8 **TOPS Working Committee**
4:00 P.M. Colorado Springs
Parks and Recreation Building
1401 Recreation Way
(East of I-25, 2 blocks north of Uintah)
- May 14 Colorado Springs City Council
9:00 A.M. City Council Chambers,
The historic City Hall, Nevada & Kiowa
- May 19 **SECTION 16 TRAIL WORK DAY**
contact Cary Michels at 598-8849 or
gmichels@coloradocollege.edu
- May 21 Manitou Springs City Council
7:00 P.M. Manitou Springs City Hall
606 Manitou Avenue
- May 22 TOPS Working Committee
7:30 A.M. Colorado Springs
Parks and Recreation Building
1401 Recreation Way
(East of I-25, 2 blocks north of Uintah)
- May 22 **Manitou Springs Open Space
Advisory Committee**
7:00 P.M. Manitou Springs City Hall
606 Manitou Avenue
- May 28 Colorado Springs City Council
9:00 A.M. City Council Chambers,
The historic City Hall, Nevada & Kiowa
- June 6 **Red Rock Canyon Committee**
7:00 P.M. Village at Skyline (off Lower Gold Camp Road), Activities Room, Building No. 4 (The Easternmost Building - enter from the parking lot north of the building)

NOTE: Scheduled meetings can be subject to change or cancellation.

Check these web pages within a week of scheduled meeting for items of interest:

Colorado Springs City government:

www.springsgov.com

El Paso County government:

www.elpasoco.com

Also, check the CONO web site for related announcements and links:

www.cskonno.org

TIDBITS**Dogbane**

If you hike the Section 16 trail starting from the Section 16 trail head, in the first quarter mile you will see dogbane as one of the most abundant plants. The scientific name for the dogbane genus is *Apocynum* which means "noxious to dogs." The plant is distasteful and poisonous to animals; and they usually avoid it. Because dogbane is poisonous to cattle, it is included in the that magnificent compendium, *Weeds of the West*, which was published by the University of Wyoming in 1991.

In a most apt description, Michael Moore has called dogbane, "a tidy looking herb." Its smooth almost oval leaves spaced opposite one another at generous intervals along the smooth, round, rather slender greenish red-brown stalks are decidedly a picture of tidiness in nature's design of a plant. There are several widely distributed varieties of dogbane which readily cross breed giving rise to a variety of sizes and colors of flowers. Our dogbane typically has numerous pink to white bell shaped flowers which are 1/2" long or less; and the plant typically grows to around 2 feet tall. Dogbane seed pods are typically over 2 inches long and very slender, opening to release tufted seeds somewhat like milkweed seeds. Dogbane is also similar to milkweed in its milky sap.

A 1935 publication, *Uncultivated Native Plants Used as Sources of Food*, by E. F. Castletter mentions gummy latex from *Apocynum* being mixed with clay and chewed by some New Mexico Indians. In 1928, the *Forty-fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* did not mention *Apocynum* as "food" or "gum", but described medicinal uses of *Apocynum* for treating coughs, colds, heart palpitations and earache, as well as its use as a charm. Michael Moore also described medicinal uses for dogbane root in *Medicinal Plants of the Mountain West* (1979), although his list of conditions for which dogbane might be indicated is somewhat different and includes treatment of alcoholism and stimulation of hair growth. Moore cautioned that the variable availability of the pharmacological agents in dogbane and the toxicity of the plant limit its medicinal use.

The pithy core of the dogbane stem is surrounded by a strong fibrous sheath. Several tribes have used the strong dogbane fibers to make cords, nets, and cloth. In the Southwest, the fibers were also used for weaving baskets. A few beautiful, and extremely old, dogbane baskets are preserved in museums.

These uses of dogbane fibers have given rise to another name for the plant, "Indian hemp." The name Indian hemp has led to some amusing but potentially dangerous confusion since "Indian hemp" (in this case referring to India) is also a name for marijuana.

Don Ellis

NOTE: The following resolution by the Board of Directors of the Trails and Open Space Coalition was presented to the TOPS Working Committee at its April 10 meeting

**Trails and Open Space Coalition
Red Rock Canyon Resolution**

WHEREAS, the mission of the Trails and Open Space Coalition is to preserve open space and create a network of trails in the Pikes Peak region; and

WHEREAS, with the option to purchase the Red Rock Canyon property by Zydeco not being renewed and the change of ownership due to the recent passing of John Bock, the potential exists for the City of Colorado Springs and partners to again work toward preserving the property as open space for the residents and visitors to the Pikes Peak region; and

WHEREAS, there is potential for new persons or companies to acquire and develop the property; and

WHEREAS, the City of Colorado Springs is currently discussing opportunities to acquire all or some of the property; and

WHEREAS, the TOPS Working Committee previously expressed a vision to preserve at least 500 acres as quality open space; and

WHEREAS, the Trails and Open Space Coalition supports that position; and

WHEREAS, control of the entire property by the City of Colorado Springs would enable a public planning process for Red Rock Canyon to proceed in a proactive manner and would reduce development pressure and increase negotiation opportunities.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED By the Trails and Open Space Coalition Board of Directors, that the Board hereby requests the City of Colorado Springs to work to preserve Red Rock Canyon by securing control of the entire property by real estate contract or by securing an option to purchase the property or by similar means.

DONE THIS 27th Day of March, 2002, at Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Trails and Open Space Coalition Board of Directors
By: Dan Cleveland for
Charlie Paterson, President

YES, I WANT TO SUPPORT RED ROCK CANYON OPEN SPACE!

- Enclosed is my contribution to the Red Rock Canyon Committee for operating expenses
(Check payable to "Red Rock Canyon Committee", not tax deductible.)
____ Do ____ Don't acknowledge my contribution in the Red Rock Rag.
- I want to be involved
My efforts could best be used for: _____
- Keep me informed with the **RED ROCK RAG**.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

For more information, contact **Linda Hodges** at the **Trails and Open Space Coalition**: 633-6884,
or e-mail: help@saveredrockcanyon.com

Opinions expressed in **THE RED ROCK RAG** are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion
of the Red Rock Canyon Committee.

WE WANT YOUR INPUT!

Letters, articles, comments (and glossy photos) may be sent to:
Rag Editor
Red Rock Canyon Committee
P. O. Box 2352
Colorado Springs, CO 80901-2352

Electronic submissions may be sent to:
rag@saveredrockcanyon.com
Please send electronic text in plain ASCII (txt) format.
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