



5497 Highway 9
 Felton, CA 95018
 831-335-4478



Hill in Zayante where bigfoot was seen in 1998

www.bigfootdiscoveryproject.com December, 2008 / January 2009 Volume 4 Number 8 & 9

Message from the Curator

Now that we've hit rock bottom financially, we've had to double up on the last two newsletters. This issue brings us up to date by combining both the December and January issues into one mailing. This saves a bit on postage and also allows us some extra time for the two main things we're currently working on: fund-raising and Operation Y.E.T.I..

Last issue was accompanied by a letter announcing the extreme financial condition that has finally overtaken us. So far only one of our subscribers has been able to respond to our outcry for help. For that reason I want to thank Laura Walsh for upgrading her membership. Although that amount won't stop the foreclosure, it does indeed help with the everyday expenses that keep the museum open, and is greatly appreciated.

Thinking about the lack of response, I came to the realization that my letter spoke of the thousands of dollars needed to "keep the project going strong as it is envisioned." Perhaps I need to make a clearer statement of our condition and what is "envisioned."

The cry for help mentioned the newly opened Bigfoot Riverside Retreat as being in foreclosure, and that is true. It would take \$20K or more to stop the foreclosure, but at this point we're prepared to go through that process in such a way that we can still hang on to the museum and keep the Discovery Project underway. The project—as envisioned—would include the Bigfoot Retreat as a revenue source, a place to hold events such as book signings, mini conferences, and as "Base Camp" for local bigfoot ecotours. These tours would be a revenue source and a method of enlisting

volunteers to help with our local research. (As most of you probably know, the BFRO has been holding bigfoot expeditions that double as a source of revenue for a number of years, and most of their volunteer researchers are recruited from the ranks of those who have attended one or more of their expeditions.)

We're planning to offer our own local ongoing ecotours, enlisting the aid of volunteers. They would pay a fee for the experience of learning how to "hunt" for bigfoot, and be given inside information on the likeliest places to go in search of a bigfoot experience (encounter or physical evidence of one passing through the area.) The museum would also continue to sponsor bigfoot events such as Bigfoot Discovery Day, and start offering various classes for both kids and adults having to do with wildlife studies and art. We also intend to keep expanding the local field studies network.

This is where Operation YETI comes into play as our first official ongoing project: to record the sounds of nocturnal animals across Santa Cruz County. The name is a takeoff on SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) and stands for Yells as Evidence for Territorial Incursions. We have already recorded a number of screams in the night that seem anomalous and unrecognizable. In addition, we have a number of individuals in various parts of the county who have been reporting ongoing events that may be bigfoot related. I'll speak of some of these events later in this issue.

My point is that the Bigfoot Discovery Project as envisioned has many facets. It is

clear that the economic situation in this country is dire for almost everybody. We couldn't have picked a worse time to go broke. Obviously, if families are worried about putting food on the table and whether the bread winner will stay employed, they have little discretionary cash to put towards bigfoot studies. But every little bit will help. We don't intend to give up on the project even if we're forced to move out of the house. But the downturn in the economy is so severe right now that even if we start living in our minivan, we'll still have trouble keeping the museum viable if nobody else steps up to help.

The Winter months are the toughest as our museum has many more visitors in the Spring and Summer. I guess what I'm trying to say is that we need help to make it through the Winter, and even small donations will make a difference. If you find any value in what we're trying to accomplish, and appreciate being kept abreast of the latest goings-on in the world of bigfoot research, please dig deep and see if you can possibly help to keep the project afloat. All we're asking is that you consider renewing or upgrading your membership early this year, and encouraging your bigfooter friends to join up.

There will be a period of readjustment, but we will continue our quest to resolve this mystery, one way or another. Remember, Roger Patterson had been hunting bigfoot on a regular basis for ten years before he shot that famous film with Bob Gimlin. We've only been at it full-time for five years.



Sounds in the Felton Quarry

In the previous newsletter I mentioned that Ralph Jack, Bill Tucker and I went up the hill above the museum and staked out the quarry, as a part of our new project, Operation YETI. After circumnavigating the quarry to understand the layout and look for the best observation point we ended up on a gravel hill above the main pond. From this position we experienced big sky as we were nearly at the top of the ridge. This happened to be just a night or two before the meteor showers and so we saw many shooting stars that night.



This is the ridge above the quarry where we saw the deer eyeshine.

We found the source of the creeks that flow down on both sides of the museum, Shingle Mill Creek just north of us and Gold Gulch Creek to the south. The sound of running water is constant at the quarry as these creeks form out of underground aquifers we were able to see trickling out of the side of one large sand hillside that had been exposed, and also bubbling up right out of one of the dirt roads circling the quarry. The pond that we setup next to was filled with various waterbirds, all of which we still have not identified. These birds (especially the ducks) were very vocal and would respond to our calls.

On the occasion when Ralph and I had previously staked out near the quarry, we saw eyeshine on the ridge above us that turned out to be deer, and I had occasion to look directly into what appeared to be the eyes of a cougar, with a nitevision scope. It seemed to be just sitting behind some brush watching us. But on the second night we saw no animals above the quarry although I may have seen eyeshine coming from the branches of a tree on the ridge above the hillside I mentioned above. I thought they were stars at first, but when I looked again with the scope, they were gone and no stars were to be seen in that part of the sky. All in all, there

was a great deal of activity taking place on the way up there as we observed many deer in the front yards of homes as we climbed the hill towards the quarry, and as mentioned earlier, there were sounds of a great many birds present in the pond.

But the most unusual thing we experienced were the almost constant sounds of siren-like screams that seemed to come from up the valley to the north of us. We first noticed these distance sounds as we were hiking around the edge of the quarry to get our bearings. They were very indistinct and obviously coming from far away, but seemed to be happening on a regular basis. Ralph brought a digital audio recorder that we had running most of the time we were up there, and he had his camcorder ready and going most of the time as well. We got there at around midnight and didn't leave until 5:30 a.m., after we had recorded some pretty amazing sounds.

As the night progressed the sounds came closer and we became aware that a pack of coyotes were getting near. I let out with a popping sound similar to that heard when a gorilla beats its chest, which got an immediate response from a duck. Those sounds triggered a bark from a nearby dog, and that was quickly followed by coyote cries and barks. As a matter of fact we were then surrounded by what seemed to be at least three bands of coyotes who were communicating with each other through barks and calls. We also heard a mimicing of their cries coming from a distance, apparently mixed together with what sounded like at least one "whoop." We couldn't actually see the coyotes but we could tell by the sounds that they were very close by, and split up into several groups. These recordings will be made available online soon.

The Zayante Triangle

This is our name for a research area that continues to produce sighting reports on a regular basis. The area includes a Ben Lomond neighborhood below Loch Lomond, Quail Hollow and Zayante. On December 28, 2008 I received an email from a man who lives off West Zayante Road. He stated that the day before, his wife had gone out for a smoke on the back porch at about 4 p.m. and observed "what was described as a large head with black furry

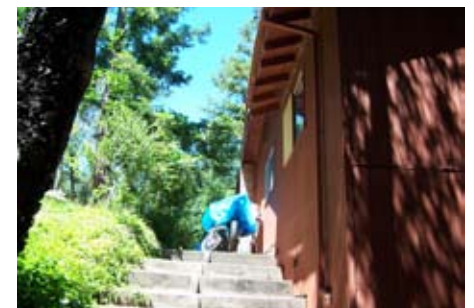
spiky hair standing about 6 feet high ..she only saw the back of the head as it disappeared..she was thinking it was a bear or a black panther." I immediately replied, asking if I could come by and take a look at the area in question.



Looking up to the porch from the viewpoint of the black animal.

Then a day or two later, I had a visit from Mike deGregorio, who lives in the same general area, and has had numerous visits by a nocturnal prowler over the past four years. He came to report that his granddaughter (age 14) had been awakened at about 2 a.m. the night before by a prowler who was just outside the window. It made a couple of "whoops" and she heard a "clicking sound" shortly after it tapped on the screened window twice. The girl got up and went to her Mom's room to spend the rest of the night. Talking with Mike, I mentioned the other report of a black hairy animal; I told Mike I had not heard back after I responded to the email, so he said he'd talk to the neighbor. It turned out he knew the man, and had "jammed with him." His house looks down on the same gully that passes behind Mike's, just a couple hundred yards downstream.

He informed Mike he had not replied to my email because his wife was upset that he had notified the museum of her sighting. She did not want any strangers to come and disturb their privacy, so Mike



The window in question is the first one coming down the stairs. The wildlife trail is to the left.

asked if the man would show him where the creature was seen. This he agreed to do and Mike videotaped their hike into the gully, where they saw a possible large footprint in the grass, and found areas where animals (at least as big as deer) had obviously slept under roots and an overhang. This is the same drainage where the creature escaped that took Mike's chicken back in the Fall of 2004.

In response to all this Ralph Jack and I decided to stake out Mike's house to see if we could observe any nocturnal activity in that area. We got carried away with other matters and got to Mike's house a little later than we had intended (about 1:30 a.m.) We drove downhill past his house, and as we did two bright lights went on, flooding the front yard, the driveway and the street in front of his house. He obviously was tired of the nocturnal prowler events, and had installed a light with a motion detector to discourage incursions into his front yard.



Area where animals have been sleeping.

We turned around in front of the house where the black animal had been spotted and parked across the street from Mike's where we had a view of the front of his house and the street in front of it. There was another car parked just uphill from our spot that partially blocked my view of the street, as I was on the passenger side, but Ralph could see the entire street from his viewpoint, and he had the camcorder.

We chose this location because in previous investigations we discovered a major wild animal trail next to Mike's house. This trail originates from the hill across the street, and we were worried that creatures that normally cross the street would be discouraged from doing so by the Christmas lights on Mike's front roof. The motion set floodlight went off after about 15 minutes.

But there is a hill next to Mike's house and a tree and shrubbery in the front corner of his lot, that stopped the light from spreading up the street. So there was a sharp demarcation between the edge of the cast light on the street and the very dark area further up the hill from the house in question. It was in that dark area we hoped to see a prowler cross the road to enter the trail next to Mike's house.

After a wait of about an hour, just as I had shut my eyes for a second, Ralph yells out "I see it sneaking across the street." I looked, but could see nothing from my vantage point. As I uttered the response, "where?" Ralph grabbed the camcorder and leaped out of the car, running up the hill into the dark, and disappearing behind the parked car in front of us. I watched for anything leaping out from behind the car, and after a few seconds I saw a deer jump up onto the trail next to Mike's house, with Ralph's spotlight right on it.

When Ralph returned to the car he said that when he looked up he thought he saw someone leaning over and sneaking towards the trail, right next to the edge of the light. As he moved closer he realized it was four legged, but he continued after it to see if he could capture it on tape. That he did. Then, about half an hour later, he looked up into the dark again and thought he was looking at a biped standing still in the middle of the road, staring, with major eyeshine. This time he raised his super bright spot light and managed to tape it right from the car; it turned out to be another deer. We waited another hour after that, but nothing else transpired.

This incident didn't produce THE prowler, but it did reestablish the reality of the wild animal trail, and proved that the animals are not discouraged by the house lights, as long as they can stay in the dark, even when they're walking just inches from the edge of the bright cast light.

The Olympia Quarry

The Olympia Quarry is another part of the Zayante Triangle, located east of East Zayante Road. I went up on the hill overlooking the quarry, which is accessible from Mt Hermon Road, on the last hill as you enter the San Lorenzo Valley. I went up there a few months ago with Mike deGregorio, because he mentioned a possible sleeping nest he'd seen there a couple of years ago.



Looking at the Zayante Triangle from the hill above the Olympia watershed.

The Zayante Triangle area encompasses two quarries; one active and one mined out, a large fenced watershed, and a state park called Quail Hollow Ranch; the northern extreme of the area includes Lompico, Newell Creek and the Loch Lomond watershed. From the hill its possible to get an overview of most of the area. Also, if you look across the highway in the opposite direction towards the coast, the next ridge is in the Hansen Quarry, also mined out, and the source of a black bear sighting four years ago, just 200 yards from the main road leading into the valley.

We found possible large footprints in ground cover of pine needles in a bipedal configuration, and the remains of branches and twigs that had made up the "sleeping nest," but it was spread apart and no longer looked like anything special.

King's Creek Footprint

On January 8, I received an email from Geoff Miller, who lives above Boulder Creek. We have been to his place several times in the last year, and wrote about it in a former issue. We went up there and cast a faint track, and spent time monitoring sounds around his house for several hours one night and only heard raccoons. He sent a photo of another track he found near his house. I'll print it here, but we have not been up there yet to follow up on this. We'll let you know when more is known.

--Michael Rugg



Geoff's track photo... the large toe is splayed: is this a case of hallux varus?

2008 – Looking Back on the Year Gone By – Sure Was Memorable!

by Tom Yamarone

As with every year, the winter months are spent close to home. In 2008, we ventured out into the forests of Santa Cruz County on several occasions in January and February. Nothing much happened but it was nice to have friends stop by and attend the monthly museum meetings. Cliff Barackman and Bart Cutino were there in February along with several new attendees and we had a fun night at the museum and the local pizza parlor.

Planning got underway for Bigfoot Discovery Day II around that time and we worked on organizing the best little conference the west coast had seen since 2005. (Actually, the first Bigfoot Discovery Day the year before was pretty darn good, too! That was quite a gathering!) This one would feature Dr. Jeff Meldrum again along with Kathy Moskowitz Strain, Rick Noll and new bigfoot author David Paulides. In addition, this year's event would be held solely in Felton.



Scenic and wild Eel River in Mendocino County.

In the meantime, the first BFRO expedition of the year in California ventured into the Mendocino National Forest. It was beautiful country and seen for the first time that year as they had the roads plowed to allow us access. The weekend was memorable for the campfire jams and the late night road walks. A spirited group happened to gravitate to our campsite and we capped it off in style. However, you do not get far in field investigating by spilling those late night stories – unless you have tape or video! What happens in Mendo, stays in Mendo, right? Yowie!

Yes, one new song led to another. Robert Leiterman had sent me lyrics about Australia's natural wonders

and the yowie. I picked up my book on the yowie and wrote a song inspired by Robert's poem. That was the first one for 2008. While out on expedition in Mendocino County, another inspiration hit and "Ode to Bobo" was penned upon returning home. Two weeks later, Mark Stenberg and I were back in the forests for a weekend outing and the songs were in full swing.



Tall trees in the Siskiyou National Forest in Oregon.

June found us in the Siskiyou Mountains at the Oregon-California border on expedition again. No evidence was obtained, but it certainly was an amazing location. During the day, we took some time to venture up the highway and discovered two local roadside attractions: Big Cats World Park in Cave Junction, Oregon and Oregon Caves. Looking back on the weekend, these were the memorable discoveries.

An excellent daylight sighting occurred north of Willits, California on July 8th. The report came by way of Eric Altman and the Pennsylvania Bigfoot Society. After interviewing the witness several times, a reporter from Willits called and interviewed me. The article eventually made the paper on October 29th. There is a BFRO report on this incident as well.



Cliff Barackman talks at the February monthly meeting demonstrating his field equipment and discussing techniques.



Tom, Bob Gimlin and Bob Strain relaxing at the Bigfoot Retreat. (photo courtesy T.Yamarone)

The highlight of the year was Bigfoot Discovery Day II. What a gathering that was! Not only was the conference portion very interesting and successful, but the Bigfoot Riverside Rereat was christened with a weekend gathering

of friends and ‘footers.

I traveled up to Yakima, Washington, picked up our good friend Bob Gimlin, stopped by Eureka, California for James “Bobo” Fay and made our way down to the event. That was some magical week indeed! (That’s a whole other story...) The weekend and the conference are well documented at the bigfootforums and in the September newsletter.

We had another two outings to close out the summer – one in the Sierras and one at Bluff Creek. And a quick weekend getaway with Bobo to Yakima in November found us traveling with Paul Graves and Bob Gimlin to see



photo by Tom Yamarone

James "Bobo" Fay, John Green, Bob Gimlin and Paul Graves examining original track casts in John's study.

John Green at his home in Harrison Hot Springs, British Columbia. (That’s a whole other story, too!) There are some photos from this weekend and most of the year at www.bigfootsongs.com. 2008 will be remembered for all this and much more. Big plans are already underway for 2009. I’ll look forward to sharing it with all of you. Happy New Year!

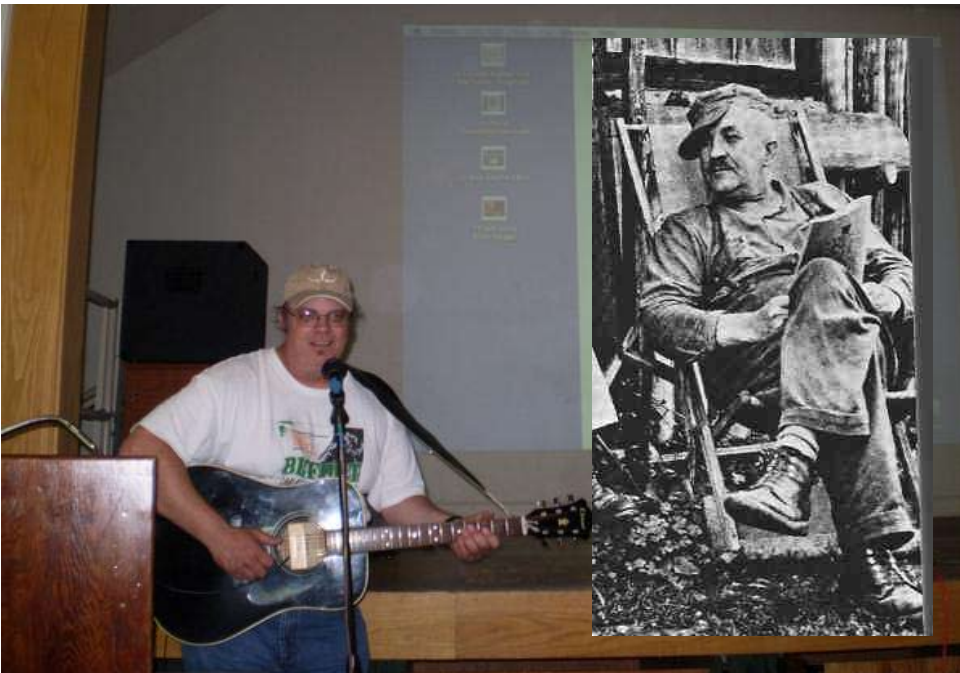


Sunset on a memorable year - from the Santa Cruz Mountains above Big Basin Redwoods State Park. (photo by Tom Yamarone)



Albert Ostman – “You Not Only Saw Sasquatch, You Got Carried Away!”

The third bigfoot song I wrote back in 2004 was “The Ballad of Albert O.” It’s a semi-humorous retelling of the Albert Ostman story. You know the one – the guy who gets picked up in his sleeping bag and carried up and over several ridges only to be dropped unceremoniously at the feet of his abductor’s ‘family’. This story took place in 1924 and was told to John Green in the late 1950s. I had heard from a friend in Canada about someone he met who had worked with Albert Ostman on a logging crew. Albert was telling his sasquatch story back then. I received the following email on December 17, 2008. It comes from my good friend and museum member Alex Solunac of Victoria, British Columbia. Here’s a recap of his interesting encounter with Albert Ostman’s former co-worker:



Tom sings the Albert Ostman song with a picture of Albert himself. (Tom photo by John Douglas, Ostman photo by Rene Dahinden)

“About 15 years ago I was back in my hometown Duncan (B.C.) and I stopped in at an old used book store. The old fella behind the sales desk was the grandfather of a kid that I went to school with, I think that his last name was King. I asked if any Sasquatch books were in the store and we started to talk about the subject. It turns out that this guy worked with Albert Ostman back in the 1940's at a logging operation near North Vancouver. He told me that one day the crew was up on the mountainside having lunch when one of the guys mentioned that old Albert had been kidnapped by one of those wild Indians called Sasquatch. Mr. King told me that he had been working on Albert's crew all Spring and he had no doubt that Albert was a joker or one to pull one on someone. Albert wasn't there when this conversation took place among his co-workers, so Mr. King told me that near the end of the day, he asked Albert about this claim made by one of the guys on the crew. Albert said that this did happen, and proceeded to tell him the same story that we know well from John Green's book. I went and found John's

book On the Track of the Sasquatch in the store and opened the book to the chapter that Albert wrote. The old guy started to read this and I could see that he was amazed that the story that Albert had told him was in a book. We talked about his other logging experiences and he was telling me that he had taken lots of B&W photos back in the 30's and 40's and some of them were going to be used in a historical book about the opening of the Grouse Mountain ski hill in North Vancouver. I asked him if he had any photos of Albert, and he said that he might have as he had lots of photos from his logging days. Unfortunately, I never made my way back to the store, and about two years later the store was gone and I had heard that Mr. King had passed away. I saw John Green last month and was talking with him about Albert and Mr. King, and John was excited that someone had heard Albert's story before he came forward with it in 1959. As there was some question at the time if anyone had heard of the story before he went public with it.”

Thank you, Alex, for sharing this very interesting account with us! The Albert Ostman story is one of the early classics in the sasquatch lore. I don't have a problem wrapping my mind around his situation and story. You must understand that from my perspective, his prospecting trip was a wild adventure to begin with – getting dropped off on some wild, uninhabited shore with the arrangement to be picked up in a couple of weeks. That's just some crazy vacation planning in the modern, suburban sense. Albert was interviewed by both John Green and Rene Dahinden and was consistent with his tale. Love him or leave him, It's a fascinating story in the sasquatch lore.



Alex and Lesley Solunac from Victoria, B.C. visiting the museum in June 2005. (photo by Tom Yamarone)

What we need now is more evidence, documented in a consistent manner for sharing with others. Eyewitness accounts are important as well. They may provide corroborative information of future events. Let's see what 2009 brings in that way. Hopefully, some good evidence and some great encounter stories! We know they're out there inhabiting the isolated (and some not-so-isolated) areas of our state and our continent. Keep on the track – but bring some photos back!