

The Gratitude Circle

The Gratitude Circle is a place for the Board of Directors of the Conejo Recreation and Park District to celebrate and honor individuals who have demonstrated their dedication to the people of the Conejo Valley through their support for recreation, parks and open space.

The Gratitude Circle was created through a partnership between the Conejo Recreation and Park District and the non-profit fundraising organization, "Play Conejo." Not only does it provide a place for the Board to recognize individuals, the Gratitude Circle is also a place for businesses and community members to honor loved ones, recognize milestones and demonstrate their charitable support for the public parks, recreational programs and open spaces in the Conejo Valley.



The Conejo Recreation & Park District

The Conejo Recreation & Park District is an independent special district serving the Conejo Valley since 1963. Its mission is to enrich the quality of life for our community by preserving and enhancing recreational opportunities, parks, and open space.



Play Conejo

Play Conejo was created in 2012 to provide volunteer, charitable, and financial support for public park facilities and recreation programs which benefit Conejo Valley residents. Play Conejo is raising funds to help the District maintain quality parks and offer diverse and affordable recreation programs.

2015 Gratitude Circle Dedication Monday, May 18 • 5:30pm

**The Board of Directors
of the
Conejo Recreation and Park District
is proud to honor and recognize**

**Mike Berger
Dennis Gillette
Barbara Kloster**

**for their dedication
to the people of the Conejo Valley
through recreation, parks, and open space**

- Legend
1. Gratitude
 2. Children
 3. Stream
 4. Lake
 5. Volleyball
 6. Turf
 7. Restroom
 8. parking
 9. picnic
 10. Concert





Mike Berger

Mike has done an outstanding job working in community service for people in the Conejo Valley and the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area by serving on numerous boards and committees devoted to recreation, parks, and open space. His public service also extended into his professional career as a teacher, principal, and coach. The Conejo Recreation and Park District thanks and honors Mike for his decades of service.

When asked about his favorite recreation and park highlights, Mike noted that a lot of the good things happen because of supportive, quality staff and fellow board members, as well as partnerships with other governmental agencies, such as the Conejo Valley Unified School District and City of Thousand Oaks. Here's a bit about Mike:

- CRPD Director: 1984-2008 (serving as Chair five times)
- Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency Director: 1984-2008
- Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority Director: 1985-2008
- Sat on boards which preserved approximately 75,000 acres of open space in Southern California during his decades of service (See COSCA and MRCA maps!)
- Encouraged the combination of a City facility with CRPD offices along with the Arts Council of the Conejo Valley, to create the Hillcrest Center for the Arts
- Supported re-use of the Walnut Grove Equestrian Center for Ride-On Therapeutic Horsemanship
- Approved the Dog Park
- Provided input and support for the design of Conejo Creek North Park
- Strong supporter of diverse & robust recreation programs



Dennis Gillette

Dennis has devoted a lifetime to public service. He served in the US Marine Corps, Ventura County Sheriff's Department, California Lutheran University, Chair and Boardmember of the Conejo Recreation and Park District, and as Mayor and Councilmember for the City of Thousand Oaks.

Dennis has served on countless committees, commissions, and boards and has received numerous awards and accolades; the Conejo Recreation and Park District thanks and honors Denny for his service.

Of all his accomplishments, Denny is quick to point out that everything required the cooperation and teamwork of the board, staff, community institutions, and partners. Here are just a few of his favorite recreation and park highlights:

- CRPD Director 1988 -1998 (serving as Chair two times)
- Helped ensure construction of Senior, Teen, and Hillcrest Centers
- Encouraged creation of "El Parque de la Paz"
- Encouraged mutual trust and collaboration among three entities to build the "Community Pool at CLU"
- Helped Conejo Recreation and Park District navigate through difficult financial times after the property tax shifts in the early 1990s
- Worked to ensure fees from Lake Sherwood development would be used for Conejo Valley projects
- Involved in the transfer of the McCrear Ranch to the Conejo Recreation and Park District



Barbara Kloster

Barbara Kloster loves horses. She started riding at age 11 in Chicago, taking a streetcar and walking for miles to volunteer to groom the horses and clean stalls so she could get a "free" riding lesson on Sunday. When she and her husband Ed moved with their three children to Los Angeles in 1964, they first landed in Arleta, where Barbara served on PTAs, Little League boards, and rode horses at Griffith Park.

In 1973, Barbara and her family moved to Thousand Oaks, where she immediately joined Equestrian Trails Inc. (ETI) Corral #37. Over the years, she has worked in virtually every position and job in the organization, serving as President for many years. As a representative for ETI, she and others helped

move ETI from the California Lutheran University campus to the Conejo Creek West Equestrian Park. She became more involved with the District – not only as a trails and equestrian proponent – but also as an advocate for the Dog Park. In 1998-99, she served on the Master Plan Committee for Conejo Creek Park, which led to the design and construction of the baseball and soccer fields at Conejo Creek South, and the Dog Park, Community Garden, and equestrian areas of Conejo Creek West. In 2004, Barbara created an ongoing annual community event called "The Day of the Horse" to educate, entertain, and inform Conejo Valley residents about the equestrian community here in the Conejo Valley.

The Conejo Recreation and Park District thanks and honors Barbara for her devotion to Conejo Valley's equestrian roots and her tireless advocacy for trails and parks in the Conejo Valley.

Photo Courtesy: Ventura County Star

The Board of Directors of the Conejo Recreation and Park District are grateful to Mike, Dennis, and Barbara for their dedication and passion.

The quality of life in the Conejo Valley is due, in no small part, to their lifetime commitment to recreation, parks, and open space.