

The Gratitude Circle

The Gratitude Circle is a partnership between the Conejo Recreation & Park District and Play Conejo. Annually, the ConejoRPD Board of Directors celebrates and honors individuals who have made a significant contribution of time, effort, or energy to recreation and parks in the Conejo Valley.

The Gratitude Circle is also a place where people can honor loved ones and support ConejoRPD's parks and programs through charitable giving.

CONEJO RECREATION & PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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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 is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization 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.

2016 Gratitude Circle Dedication
Monday, May 9 at 5:30pm

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

**Frances Prince
— Rorie Skei**

**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. Valley
 6. Turf
 7. Restroom
 8. parking
 9. picnic
 10. Concert





Frances Prince

Frances and Harvey Prince and their 3 children – Jack, Julie, and Kris – moved into a new home in Wildwood in 1968.

Soon after moving in, she noticed some of her new neighbors picketing near Wildwood Elementary School. Upon learning about a large planned residential development project nearby (where neighbors had been led to believe there would be a park), she helped organize and form the Wildwood Park HOA and became its first Secretary and its 3rd President.

After filing a lawsuit bearing her name, the developer eventually sat down with the neighbors and worked out a plan to create the Wildflower Playfields rather than more homes and protect some of the natural canyons that now make-up Wildwood Park.

She served on the Committee of 100 that helped create the City's General Plan which seeks to preserve the ring of green hillsides and mountains surrounding the Conejo Valley.

Frances was appointed to the Thousand Oaks Planning Commission from 1972-1976 and was the first woman elected to the Thousand Oaks City Council in 1976, serving through 1984 (twice as Mayor).

During her time on City Council, she helped create the Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency (COSCA) and served as COSCA's first Chair, continuing to serve on the COSCA Board until 1984. She worked to open the Thousand Oaks Library at Conejo Creek North Park and formed and has served on the non-profit Library Foundation board since. Frances cares about protecting open space and natural lands beyond the Conejo Valley and served on the Santa Monica Mountains Planning Committee and then the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy – serving as chair in 1983-84 and helping to acquire the Danielson Ranch.

During this busy time in her life, Frances somehow managed to attend law school, graduate as valedictorian, and pass the bar exam. As she left City Council, she continued practicing law until she left to serve as full-time executive director of Senior Concerns.

Frances enjoys spending time with her kids and grandkids and traveling.



Rorie Skei

Rorie and Mike Skei moved to Thousand Oaks in 1972. Rorie has been involved extensively in open space preservation and parkland issues ever since.

Rorie started out with a BA in Biological Sciences (with an environmental emphasis from UCSB) and an MS in Environmental Science (CS Dominguez Hills) writing her capstone project on the Barranca Section of the Arroyo Conejo. Her chosen academic field proved to be a rock solid foundation for what has become a remarkable career.

- 1980 – Present Appointed to the Conejo Open Space and Conservation Agency (COSCA) Board (selected as Chairperson by her fellow Boardmembers since 1983)
- 1984 – 1990 Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Board of Directors (serving twice as Chairperson).
- 1985 – 1990 Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority (MRCA) (Chairperson)
- 1990 – Present MRCA Program Manager for Western Rim of the Valley Projects; now Deputy Executive Officer
- 1998 – Present Began working as Deputy Director of Natural Resources and Planning for the SMMC and now serves as Chief Deputy Director.

Rorie has served (and continues to serve) in a variety of other administrative, planning, and landscaping roles throughout her career throughout Los Angeles and Ventura Counties, including several other Joint Powers Authorities involving the SMMC.

Rorie's adult children Evan and Ingrid live and work in the area. She enjoys spending time with her kids and grandkids and gardening (with natives, of course).



The Board of Directors of the Conejo Recreation and Park District are grateful to Rorie and Frances for their positive impact.

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

COSCA

Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency

Established 1977

A Joint Powers Authority of the City of Thousand Oaks and the Conejo Recreation & Park District, preserving and managing nearly **15,000 acres of open space** in and around the Conejo Valley

SMMC

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy

Established 1980

A California State Agency focused on preserving open space around Los Angeles and Ventura Counties

MRCA

Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority

Established 1985

A Joint Powers Authority of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, the Conejo Recreation & Park District, and the Rancho Simi Recreation & Park District, preserving and managing nearly **73,000 acres of public park land** through Southern California