



SAN DIEGUITO HERITAGE MUSEUM

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About Wendy Haskett . . .

Meeting Wendy Haskett for the first time was like greeting an old friend. With her big hats and warm smile, she seemed to know everyone in town. She loved people, writing, teaching writing, her community. Her interest in local history turned her into a walking, talking time machine. You really felt you knew what it was like to live long ago in San Dieguito.

Digging for stories about our area's early history was one of her passions. As Wendy interviewed hundreds of people for her newspaper columns, she found each person had a new story, tidbit, funny anecdote, memory, or fact about San Dieguito's past. It seemed as though Wendy painted with words, helping readers picture the storytellers, how and where they lived, and what their daily lives were like.

Wendy was a longtime member of the San Dieguito Heritage Museum and often met with school groups, bringing history to life with her lively presentations. Then she had a great idea. She collected her stories in books called *Backward Glances*. People loved reading these popular books and they're still available at the Museum. Wendy completed three volumes and planned many more, but she passed away three years ago before her grand project could be completed.

Recognizing the importance of her work and the methods she employed, the Heritage Museum now sponsors the annual **Wendy Haskett Writing Contest** to honor her memory and encourage us all to learn of our own heritage from those who still hold memories of our past. This contest introduces you third graders to the study of your own heritage, while sharpening your ability to convey your ideas to others through strong writing skills.

Wendy would have loved watching you third graders do your own historical detective work, by talking with your family, neighbors, business owners, or reading about our early pioneers.

About San Dieguito's Early History . . .

Early pioneers to the San Dieguito region did not have an easy time. The land was unforgiving. The cactus and the yucca were strange. Water was scarce and familiar crops would not grow. Some newcomers left discouraged, but many stayed. They pulled together, building homes, churches, schools, meeting houses, railroad stations, and shops. They found new crops to take the place of the old. The railroad brought new people eager to make a new life. As water arrived from Lake Hodges the population grew more rapidly.

As our area did well, many old structures were bulldozed to widen roads and build shopping malls. But many were spared. Some continued in the same use, some were converted to new activities, and others were moved to new sites for new purposes. Ask someone to point them out to you—these are the surviving structures of an earlier age. And when you see them for what they once were, you can almost hear the voices of the pioneers who lived and worked there.

But what is true of the old buildings is also true, in a different way, of the pioneers themselves. The earlier generations have passed on, but many of their descendants, their grandchildren and great-grandchildren, walk among us, unrecognized until someone makes them known to us. That was what Wendy Haskett did for us. She found new and interesting sources for knowledge of the past of the San Dieguito region by talking to people who lived that history or learned about it from their own grandparents and great-grandparents.



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Third Annual Wendy Haskett Writing Contest

with Prizes for Winning Essays

Who's eligible? . . .

All third grade students from the San Dieguito Region: Encinitas, Cardiff, Del Mar, Leucadia, Rancho Santa Fe, and Solana Beach.

What's required . . .

You'll write an original essay of up to three pages on life in the San Dieguito region during days gone by. Your job is to collect information from the living memories or written accounts of our older generations, describing lives and experiences from an earlier period of local history. Your essay might describe families, games and play, schools, work, holidays, or neighborhoods. You might note changes that have taken place over the decades by comparing and contrasting the past with your own experiences of the present. The essay should contribute to our understanding of the changing nature of our community even as it demonstrates our connection to our local heritage.

What is the contest deadline? Where should entries be sent?

You must draw or paint an original piece of art to accompany your writing. Number the pages of your essay. Write your name, your teacher's name, and the name of your school on the back of your entry.

Essays and art must be delivered to the San Dieguito Heritage Museum by **Friday, March 27, 2009**.

Who will judge the essays?

A panel of writers and teachers will judge the essays, looking for those that best illustrate some aspect of our changing way of life in the San Dieguito Region. The judges will look for papers that are original, thoughtful, and well-organized. The judges will expect to see that the observations about life in the past are contrasted with life in the present, and that the student's conclusions are supported by the observations. **Winners will be announced on May 1, 2009.**

What prizes will be awarded?

Essays: First Prize, \$100 Second Prize, \$50 Third Prize, \$25

Art: A \$50 Prize for the best original artwork accompanying an essay

Each prize winner will receive a trophy and one of Wendy's books.

Each contestant will receive a Participant's Ribbon.

Presentations to the winners will take place at the winners' schools.



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Third Annual Wendy Haskett Writing Contest

Helpful Hints

Select Your Topic

People like to read about the old days. They want to know how ordinary folks lived their lives in the past. So your topic might be about everyday life when things were different. Children collected eggs on the farm and walked long distances to school. A mother washed clothes every Monday and darned the family socks. Or your story might be about an event, a bit of history that changed people's lives. The family had to cope with wartime rationing. A son or daughter went away to war. A farmer moved to town and became a baker. A son or daughter went away to college for the first time in the family's history. A student had to transfer to a big new school from a one-room school. The house burned down and the family had to move to a new home. Remember, the events of your story must take place within the San Dieguito region.

Collect Your Information

Older family members or neighbors are a good source of information. They like to tell stories of the past based on their own experiences. But you will likely need additional information to set your scene for the reader. A visit to your library, the Internet, or the Heritage Museum can help. Pictures seen there provide interesting details. Horse-drawn buggies shared the road with autos. The streets weren't paved. An avocado ice cream cone at the grocer's cost five cents. Steam locomotives ran through town. Select whichever details will help your reader understand your story in its own time and place.

Organize Your Ideas

A Focused Beginning: A good way to begin your story is by telling the reader very briefly what your story is about. You can include some of the descriptive details that help the reader to share a picture of the past in which your story takes place. You need to identify the time and place at which your story happens.

A Middle with Interesting Details: Tell your story. Remember, the reader wasn't there to see history happen. You're sharing your own picture of the past, the bit of history, or the events that took place. Tell how the events affected the lives of the people who experienced them.

A Strong Ending: Finally, end your paper with a closing statement that briefly summarizes your story and contrasts the people and events in it with the way we are and the things we do today.

Write Your Paper

Your story must be written on no more than 3 sheets of 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper. You must include your own artwork to illustrate your story. Your paper must be original, written by you alone.

Deliver your paper by mail or in person to the San Dieguito Heritage Museum not later than March 27, 2009. Judging will be complete by May 1, 2009. Prizes will be personally awarded to the winners. Winning entries will be placed on display at the Heritage Museum.