The Trail Ahead: Appreciating what it Takes to Care for our Parks

By Michele Beasley

Prepping for a good hike means packing the right gear, dressing in layers, wearing sturdy shoes and bringing lots of water, some food, a map and a hat. When I am prepared, my senses awaken fully to the sights, sounds and scents around me.

I no longer take for granted the fact that the trail is clear. While I may not see another person on the trail, I feel safe. The path has been laid out before me, trail junctions marked by signs and trailheads stocked with fresh maps. I know to watch out for poison oak, ticks and mountain lions. Being aware and prepared is key to an enjoyable outing in one of our San Mateo County parks.

Behind the scenes, there are a lot of people who work hard to make sure that our park outings are memorable, safe experiences. The Herculean task of maintaining 190 miles of trails and nearly 17,000 acres of parklands has been on my mind a lot since our years-long drought was alleviated by this past winter’s storms.

Those storms brought a deluge of rain and a lot of damage to our parks. In a normal year, park rangers work hard to prep the trails for winter storms, but when the extraordinary happens, the work multiplies and takes longer to tackle.

“Prepping the parks for winter

Each fall, in preparation for winter, park rangers engage in a series of activities to make sure the parks are safe and ready for visitors: inspecting culverts and fences, assessing trails for potential erosion and keeping tabs on unhealthy or dying trees. They build retaining walls, remove debris and install water diversion features on the trails.

Oftentimes, this work is done in partnership with volunteers and other groups who provide the extra hands needed to tackle big projects. Park rangers will work with crews from the California Department of Corrections to remove dead trees and hazardous branches near trails and picnic areas. Volunteer groups like the San Mateo County Horsemen’s Association have worked alongside park rangers to add rock on trails and install steel and pressure-treated wood retaining walls where needed. And the summer conservation crews, made up of high-school youth, have helped repair fencing along a trail to keep visitors off a dangerous cliff at Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.

Not only do the rangers spend hours on the trails looking for culvert failures and hazardous trees, they also make sure their equipment, from trucks to chainsaws, is in working order in case of emergencies.

“I was leading a hike when another hiker came along and told us there was a tree down on the trail further up ahead. By the time our group hike was done and I went to report it, I learned that the rangers had already come and cleared the tree!”

— Kathy Korbholz, Friends of Edgewood

Continued on page 6
Take a Walk on the Wild (flower) Side

By Susan Eliot Briggs, Board Member

Even though last winter’s storms brought a lot of damage to the parks, there is much to celebrate. One of the many benefits of all of the rain we experienced last winter was the amazing wildflower show that followed in spring. There were all sorts of articles about places you could travel to in order to see the most spectacular flowers, but lucky for us we didn’t need to go far — just three minutes off the 280 Freeway at Edgewood Road in Redwood City, to be exact.

As in years past, the Friends of Edgewood hosted free wildflower walks on the weekends from March - June. These walks are a great way to learn more about the plants in the park from knowledgeable docents. However, if like me, you couldn’t quite make it to the park for an organized walk, you could still enjoy the flowers on your own.

I took advantage of a rare day off in April to hit the trail early and was rewarded with a beautiful display. The first flower to greet me on the path was the purple Ookow.

Other flowers I saw on my walk included:

- Bindweed
- Crimson Columbine
- Yarrow
- Purple Ookow
- Lupine
- Sticky Monkey Flower

If you would like to learn more about the plants and wildlife at Edgewood Park, please visit the Bill & Jean Lane Education Center which is open on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays.
This summer we had some fun!

First of all, we kicked off our new park mixer, Coyote Nights. REI Co-op was our event partner on Coyote Nights. They set the scene with hammocks, camp chairs, fire pits, s’mores and more! We also had music, beer, watermelon and ‘trailheads’ of activities and information. Some people arrived by bike, others brought picnic dinners. What a wonderful way to enjoy the park and meet new people!

We also co-sponsored the first ever Coyote Point Kite Festival, which brought the Berkeley Kite Wranglers to our beautiful park on the bay for some air and wind magic! It was wonderful to see so many people either bring their own kites or design one of our donated kites to fly in the park! Both events will be back next summer.
Thank you to our generous supporters!

The following contributed between April 1, 2017 and August 15, 2017

$5,000 and greater
Environment, Health and Community Fund, a project of Resources Legacy Fund
Eucalyptus Foundation
Pacific Gas and Electric Company
REI Co-op
Mary Anne Sayler
Lyman Wear
Wells Fargo Foundation
Western Digital Corporation

$1,000 to $4,999
Bay Area Barns and Trails
Julia Bott and Paul Acklin
Faye and Emmet Brophy
Kirk Gould
Melinda Hopp
Erin Hsieh
Diana Quon
Jennifer Fischer
John Fielden
Bruce Ferry
Daniel and Marion Emmett
Carla and Gregory Edwards
Diane and Marion Emmett
Thomas Eng
Grace and Larry Egan
Gail Bent
Betty May
Joy Addison
Anne and Peter Coss
Vicki and Mark Cooper
Rita Aronica
Bob and Carol Applebaum

dollar 25 to $499
San Mateo County Parks Foundation
Norma Quickert
Peninsula Clean Energy
Franklin V Peale Jr. and Sandra Richard Paterson
John and Donna Novitsky
Douglas and Beth Mohr
Mr. Leslie Lamport
Hertha Harrington
Shirley Kwok
Robert and Thanh Mougeot
Palo Alto Medical Foundation
Douglas and Sarah Rivers
Herb Rosenthal
David and Laura Schrier
Thomas Werbe
Whole Foods Market
Bruce Wright
Steve and Catherine Zelencik

$500 to $999
Eleanor Cassinelli
Robert and Amy Chin
Sharon Erro
Hertha Harrington
Mr. Leslie Lamport
Douglas and Beth Mohr
John and Donna Novitsky
Richard Paterson
Franklin V Peale Jr. and Sandra Bernhard
Peninsula Clean Energy Authority
Norma Quickert
Recology San Mateo County
Mary Lee Wachtel

Lee and Winifred Jeyean
Carol Johnson
Barbara Kaiser
Michael and Teresa Kernan
William Kwong
Leadership Program San Mateo - Burlingame - Foster City - Hillsborough
Cathy Lego
Jack and Ruth Lemein
Emma Louie
Susan Manheimer
Perry McCarty
Phil and Mary McHale
Timothy McHenry
Dennis Meixner
Neil Merriees
Margaret Miller
Ross and Jean Millikan
Mary Lu Murphy and Glenn Baker
Rick Rordenstein and Kit Fung
George Olen
Marsha Osen
Jonathan Penn
Joseph Pfeister
Wendy Porter
Ashok Ramani and Sangeetha Raghnathan
Jacob and Maria Ratios
Victoria and Terry Rosen
Barbara Ross
Linda Saltzer
James Salyards
Sharon Savatski
Eve Schooler
Rich and Debbie Serpa
Kate and Kip Sheeline
Mark Simon
Sandy Sloan and Eric Richert
Brad Snedecor
Jim Szafarski
Joan and Linda Taylor
Kym and Lars Teppo
Eric and Stephanie Tilenius
Rebecca Tom
Ben and Preeti Verghese
Carol Sue Viele
Gregg and Margery Whitnaw
Ted and Jennifer Yamagishi

$124 and below
Christian Aabye
Joy Addison
George and Stephanie Almeida
Allan Almie
M. Ruth Anderson
Anonymous
Kenneth and Linda Bailey
Philip and Jill Bank
Barbara Bartlett
Judith Barton
Michael Bates
Stella Batha
Kay Baum
Adrienne Bennett
Gail Benton Shoemaker
Robert and Suzanne Bergesen
Ms. Barbara Bernhart
Onnied and Mariann DeLano
Ruth DeMoss
Ronald and Linda Demplein
Margaret DeStaebler
Melissa DeShayes
John Blackmore
Sheila Amoroso
Frances and Noel Biirinco
Bradley Booth
Denise and Peter Borocz
Judy Borthwick
Cathy and Michael Borrow
Avis Bouette and Alice Miller
Sheila Brady
Enid Brand
Mr. and Mrs. G. Donald Brandt
Aiden Briscoe
Stephen Buckhout and Stella Yang
Timothy Burkhardt
Louis Burton and Roger Mateo
Suzanne Butler
Mary Cachero
Allesio and Teresa Camilleri
Bill and Catherine Campbell
Kris Carey
Myra Chesley
Edmond and Deborah Chun
Mary Lou Ciranni
Diane Ciucci
Claes and Mariann Claesson
William Cianci
James Cleere
Stanley Cocolos
Fred Cofer
Edwin and Edna Colloff
Elisa and David Cooper
Zena Corcoran
Renate Cords
Susan and Robert Cossins
Kevon Cottrell
Eugene Cozzoli
Marie and Eric Dachauer
Barbara Daley
Jay Davis
David Davis
Shevin de la Roza
Celeste De Martini
Dr. Margaret DeLano
Ruth DeMoss
Kevon and Linda Denpaein
Margaret DeStaebler
Valerie Dohrenwend
Richard Dolan
Laura Douglass and Joseph Croco
Lisane Drouin and Patrick Brennan
Carla and Gregory Edwards
Daniel and Marion Emmett
Thomas Eng
Graciela Eulate
John and Suzanne Farbstein
James and Mary Farrimond
John Ferreira
Janet Finer-Moore
Shirley Fitzgerald
Stan and Ann Forman
Deborah Freeman
Robert French
Lisa and Jack Fuchs
Florine Galen
Madeline Gambelin
James and Marilyn Garrison
Anna Gawlicka
Paul and Sandra George
Mrs. Jo Gilbert

$125 to $499
Steve and Catherine Zelencik
Recology San Mateo County
Mary Lee Wachtel

[Image]
Monthly Giving

Rebecca Archer
Lee Baker
Michele Beasley
Brenda Bennett
Estelle Bertolucci
Pamela Bilz
Matthew Booth Chinester
Loretta Brooks and Chuck Heimstadt
Jennifer Bruggeman
Dorothy Cordell
Mary DeLong and Jamie Rottoto
John Echarte
Timothy Fox
Deking Francisco
Jorge Gomez
Daniel Guiney
Heather Hardy
Samuel Herzberg
Steven Hibshman
Christine Hollender
Judy Kay
Alicia Kellie
Ashley Larsen
Teresita Layal-Evangelista
Alice Leung
Kirk Lindstrom
Kimberly Marlow
Susan and Jack Marquis
Ginger Martinez
Maria Mastrangelo
Diane Ross
Robert Ervin Rosenthal
Ma Grace Rivera
Patricia Sanchez
Mary Catherine Schumacher
Amy Selmi
Diana Yen Shu
Gladys Smith
Georgi Stigall
Matthew Suzaez
Donna Vaillancourt
Gerardo Velez
Han Yun

Gifts in Honor

Stephen Buckhout and Stella Yang in honor of Paul Heiple
Shawn Christianen and Philip McLeod in honor of Katy Coonan Rhodes
Jennifer Hardy in honor of Heather Hardy
William Kwong in honor of Sharon Meers and Steve Ostertag
Leadership Program San Mateo-Burlingame-Foster City-Hillsborough in honor of Julia Bott

Gifts in Memory

Timothy Burkart in memory of Derek Mitsvalsky
Richard Goldie in memory of Kim Gysler-Goldie

Matching Gift Program

Adobe
GE Foundation
Microsoft
Paypal Giving Fund
Salesforce
United Way

Every effort was made to ensure that this list is complete and accurate.
The Foundation regrets any errors or omissions. Please contact us so we may make the proper correction.

Newsletter design by Shannon Corey
Web page by Richard Zimmerman
Stock services provided by UBS
Accounting services provided by SingerLewak, LLP

Be sure to Reuse then Recycle
This past winter’s storms wreaked havoc

Powerful storms this past winter brought intense wind, flooding and buckets of rain to Northern California. It ranks as the second wettest winter in California in 122 years of record-keeping. Our San Mateo County Parks were not spared. It is admirable how quickly park staff got to work clearing trails throughout the park system.

Challenges in the parks included everything from eroding bluffs at Mirada Surf and Pillar Point, to flooding at Coyote Point and Memorial Park; rockslides at Devil’s Slide to mudslides at Wunderlich and fallen trees at Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve. Yet time and again, park staff and volunteers were fast on the job to address problems. However, mitigating shoreline erosion and rerouting trails takes time and careful consideration.

On the coast, sometimes the best policy is to do a managed retreat, let nature do its thing and ensure that visitors are safe and aware of erosion. Visitors should always use caution when walking on or below the bluffs. In Wunderlich Park, a section of the Alambique Trail was washed away by a mudslide and remains completely impassable. The area lies at the Bear Gulch Trail intersection and restricts hiker and equestrian access to Skyline Boulevard. Rangers have scoped out an alternate route and hope to open it by early October.

Gratitude for a comfortable hike

Despite the challenging winter, San Mateo County’s parks and trails are safe and, for the most part, accessible thanks to the behind-the-scenes work of our parks department. Just as I prepare myself for my jaunt with the right gear, park staff and volunteers are working diligently to prepare the parks for you and me, so we can focus on looking for wildflowers or listening for birds, or simply letting our minds wander in peace. I, for one, am grateful for this experience.

The San Mateo County Parks Foundation is raising money to repair trails in need of extra help. Please join us in supporting this effort.
Thank you for the generous gifts you gave last spring!

As a result of your generosity, we are able to fund the following programs and projects:

- The installation of new trail signs in all coastal county parks from San Pedro Valley to Mirada Surf and Quarry Park.
- Continued efforts to re-establish the federally-listed Bay checkerspot butterfly to Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve.
- Rerouting a section of the Alambique Trail in Wunderlich Park that was washed away by a mudslide during last winter’s storms.
- Offering low-income, public transportation-dependent communities the opportunity to access two of our stunning parks through the County Park Shuttle.
- Covering the transportation costs for low-income schools and after school programs that want to take their kids on field trips, but lack the funding to do so.

In addition, we supported the Volunteer Program, Bicycle Sunday and the Summer Conservation Crews.

All of this was made possible through the generous support of our donors. Thank you for helping us steward our parks and open spaces! (For more information about this gift, visit our website at www.supportparks.org/news/)

New viewing platform at Sequoia Flat crossing in Memorial Park

Last year, we wrote about the elimination of the last two barriers to fish passage along Pescadero Creek in Memorial Park. Those barriers, a swim dam and vehicle ford, were removed. The natural creek bed was restored where the dam had been and the vehicle ford was replaced with v-notched weirs and pre-cast arched culverts. This allows freer passage for fish at a wider range of water levels, especially for juveniles during low flows.

The finishing touches for this project were completed in May. Final project improvements include a removable railing, three interpretive panels and a new bench at the Sequoia Flat crossing. This crossing is heavily used by campers in the park and the new features provide a good opportunity for them to see the creek and the new fish passage.
Thanks to thousands of individual donors like you, the Foundation has provided millions of dollars to support our San Mateo County Parks.

**Every gift counts – join us today!**

You can support the Foundation and our parks by making your donation today. Your gift will help us fund priority programs and projects that benefit park visitors and the parks’ natural resources.

- Gifts can be mailed to
  - San Mateo County Parks Foundation
  - 1701 Coyote Point Drive,
  - San Mateo, CA 94401
- Or online at
  - www.SupportParks.org

---

**Leave a Legacy Gift to the San Mateo County Parks Foundation**

Your generous contributions have helped us fund over 30 projects, and a gift from your estate could continue that legacy by providing important future support for the San Mateo County Parks.

- Gifts large and small are important.
- Charitable giving is not only for the wealthy!
- Estate gifts can be unrestricted or dedicated to specific projects or parks that are dear to you.

For more information, please contact Michele Beasley, Executive Director, at Michele@SupportParks.org or (650) 321-5812.

---

**Our commitment**

The San Mateo County Parks Foundation is committed to providing funding to improve the quality of County Parks for our community.

---

To get this newsletter by email, send an email to Michele@supportparks.org