

# Edgewood



# Explorer

March 2009

Volume 16 Number 1

## YOU AND YOUR INTERPRETIVE CENTER— NOW YOUR EDUCATION CENTER

By Bill Korbholz

Readers of this newsletter will know that we have been providing periodic updates on the progress of the Edgewood Interpretive Center over the past years. In fact, if you search for “Interpretive Center” on our newsletter website—<http://newsletters.friendsofedgewood.org>—you’ll find almost two dozen articles dedicated to the subject. So yes, this has been of great interest to us.

The first newsletter article I found dates back to March 1999—(<http://www.friendsofedgewood.org/newsletters/1999/9903/visitor.htm>)—when past president, Peter Ingram, first reported the germ of an idea for a “visitor center,” and asked readers for suggestions. We’ve come such a long way on our journey since then, and now the dream is about to come true, thanks to a generous six-figure gift recently received from Bill and Jean Lane. More on that later, but first let’s review some of the key events that got us to where we are today.



*Rendering of the Learning Center area of the proposed Education Center*

**1997.** San Mateo County adopted a new Master Plan for Edgewood that called for the development of “a low-intensity, small-scaled interpretive center at the Old Stage Day Camp” if shown to be feasible.

**1998.** The Parks Foundation was founded and Julia Bott was chosen as its Executive Director. By December, it had launched a capital campaign to raise funds for the Edgewood Interpretive Center.

**2002.** The Acorn Group, teamed with Ron Yeo, FAIA Architect, was selected to develop the Conceptual Plan of the Interpretive Center, and conducted public workshops to solicit ideas and involvement from the community.



*Another area of the proposed Education Center*

**2004.** Julia reported on the progress of the Center in terms of site visits, environmental impact studies, and lots of preliminary design and engineering. Groundbreaking was projected for spring 2005.

**2005.** We actually did break ground in 2005, but not for the building itself. As Susan Russell and Carolyn Dorsch reported, in November of that year we inaugurated the new pedestrian bridge, which was soon followed by eco-friendly improvements to the outer parking lot and Cordilleras Creek. We still had a way to go to complete fundraising for the building and exhibits.

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**2006.** Susan Sommers Edwards, a pioneer in recognizing Edgewood's unique nature and in saving it from development, wrote an *Explorer* article reflecting back to her first experience of Edgewood in 1969. She described the importance of a Center where "ideas and values can be shared with people of all ages."

**2007.** Fundraising continued, and detail design work was completed on the exhibits and the building.

**2008.** Carol Hankermeyer and Kate Finnigan, our Docent Program Coordinators, published a newsletter article describing the importance of the Center to the Friends of Edgewood interpretive programs. Over \$1.5M had been raised for the project, but we still had about \$500,000 more to go.

At the end of the year, Bill and Jean Lane of Portola Valley, longtime supporters and leaders for environmental stewardship and education, announced that they would contribute \$200,000 toward the Center. This gift, by far the largest private donation received to date, brought us to within 90% of our goal. In recognition of this significant gift, the County has decided to name the building the Bill

and Jean Lane Education Center at Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve.

**2009.** We now need only \$200,000 more to complete funding and break ground on the Education Center building this year. We've never had more confidence in this project than now, and we anticipate inaugurating the Center, using it as a base for docent walks, next season.

As a Friend of Edgewood, you have a special relationship to the Education Center. You have shown that you value Edgewood and the work the Friends have done for the past 15 years to protect and restore Edgewood, and to provide interpretive and educational opportunities for people of all ages.

Most of you have already shown great generosity in supporting our organization and the Center specifically. We are asking you one last time to step up and dig deep to help us close the funding gap in the next few months. Either the Friends of Edgewood or the Parks Foundation ([www.supportparks.org](http://www.supportparks.org)) would be delighted to receive your donation. Please be sure to write *Edgewood Education Center* on your check. 🏠



*Two different views of the proposed Education Center. The area represented in the rendering on the left is part of the room on the far right in the rendering below*



*The Bill and Jean Lane Education Center at Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve is now the Interpretive Center's official name*

**FLOWER POWER**

Look at the trees, look at the birds, look at the clouds, look at the stars. . . and if you have eyes you will be able to see that the whole existence is joyful. Everything is simply happy. Trees are happy for no reason; they are not going to become prime ministers or presidents and they are not going to become rich and they will never have any bank balance. Look at the flowers - for no reason. It is simply unbelievable how happy flowers are. ~Osho



*Milk Maids (Cardamine californica var. californica) © Alf Fengler*

Some people worry that artificial intelligence will make us feel inferior, but then, anybody in his right mind should have an inferiority complex every time he looks at a flower. ~Alan C. Kay



The career of flowers differs from ours only in audibleness. ~Emily Dickinson



I perhaps owe having become a painter to flowers. ~Claude Monet



The temple bell stops but I still hear the sound coming out of the flowers. ~Basho



A morning glory at my window satisfies me more than the metaphysics of books. ~Walt Whitman



The violets in the mountains have broken the rocks. ~Tennessee Williams



If you've never been thrilled to the very edges of your soul by a flower in spring bloom, maybe your soul has never been in bloom. ~Audra Foveo

Flowers really do intoxicate me. ~Vita Sackville-West



The flowers of late winter and early spring occupy places in our hearts well out of proportion to their size. ~Gertrude S. Wister



Men do change, and change comes like a little wind that ruffles the curtains at dawn, and it comes like the stealthy perfume of wildflowers hidden in the grass. ~John Steinbeck



*Pacific Western Hound's Tongue (Cynoglossum grande) © Alf Fengler*

**ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY**

It's very gratifying to see the ranks of our road warriors growing. Recently, 3 new volunteers have donned safety hats to help us beautify our 2-mile stretch of I-280 adjacent to Edgewood. Welcome to Andrew Griffiths, Karen Johnson, and Bonnie MacKinnon! In this past quarter, they were joined on our monthly forays by Carolyn Dorsch, Dave Hershey, Billy James, Bill and Kathy Korbholz, Margaret Marshall, Ken Seydel, Jan Smith, Lisa Tough, and Michael Yantos. We removed 25 bags of trash from our adopted site this period.

"The more the merrier" definitely applies to highway adoption, since the length of time required is so strongly influenced by the number of volunteers. With such great participation, we can often finish by 10:30 a.m., in plenty of time to enjoy the remainder of the day.

There are still openings for others to join the fun. For more information, contact Ken Seydel. You'll be safety-trained and issued your very own hardhat and picker. 🚧

**ADOPT-A-WEEDWAY**

Want to be an Edgewood Weed Warrior? Go here to learn more: <http://edgewood.thinkersrus.net/> 🌻

**MEPHITIS MEPHITIS (rhymes with delight us)**

by Anne Koletzke

*Mephitis mephitis* may rhyme with delight us, but what it means is “stench stench,” and it is the rather unkind (surely one “stench” would have been enough), if accurate, scientific name for the striped skunk, native to the Bay Area and all the Americas.

Skunks in general haven't fared well at the hands of humans when it comes to naming. The Eastern spotted skunk's name, *Spilogale putorius*, means “Stinking Spotted Weasel,” and Southeast Asia calls its particular brands of skunk “stink badgers.” Even the seemingly innocuous English word, “skunk,” comes from the Algonquin word, “segongw” or “segonku,” meaning “one who squirts.” Until recently, skunks were considered members of the weasel family (Mustelid), but now they have been given their own family, which is great, but did the scientists have to call it Mephitidae, meaning “noxious odor”?! That makes the striped skunk's full name Noxious Odor Stench Stench. Now I ask you, is that the kind of name you'd like to have on *your* birth certificate?! Would *you* like to be solely identified and known for all eternity by. . .well. . . by your least attractive characteristic?!

Indeed, skunks haven't fared well at the hands of humans when it comes to much of anything. We have trapped them and hunted them and poisoned them and shot them for the chick-killing, egg-smashing, mean-spirited, rabies-carrying stinky pest most people consider them to be. This does them such a disservice.

The truth is, skunks are timid, slow, unaggressive to the point of being docile, and not particularly ambitious about anything. Opportunistic and omnivorous, whatever comes along is pretty much OK by them. Carrion for dinner? OK. Garbage for lunch? OK. Veggies? Sure, fine. Luanne Johnson, a scientist studying the effect of skunks on waterfowl, says that although skunks will eat an occasional chick, they “don't seem to go out and hunt methodically. They're just ambling down the beach, and they bump into them [the chicks] and then they'll eat whatever's in front of them.”

Skunks can and do hunt if they have to, of course, and are, in fact, reputed to be very good mousers. And they eat a lot of insects. Even *bees*—the skunks mess around with the hive and then, when the annoyed bees fly out, swat them out of the air and into their mouths.

Spending his days sleeping in an underground den, usually one dug by someone else, the skunk spends his nights doing that “ambling” thing mentioned earlier, making no effort to be cautious about who might see him. Because, the truth is, the skunk wants to be seen. It's why he wears that flashy black and white coat, which is like a neon sign

blinking, “Here I am! Over here! Remember me? Remember what happened the last time you and your stupid brother tried to mess with me? You want that to happen again? Huh, do ya?!” And for the most part, this hubristic behavior works like a charm. It just doesn't work for the great horned owl and the red-tailed hawk, who, with their notoriously poor sense of smell, dine on skunk quite a lot. It also doesn't work for cars.

Approximately half the skunk deaths in the U.S. are due to human activity. For all the traps we set for them and for all the guns we shoot at them, it is the cars we drive that kill more skunks than anything else. When faced with the automobile, skunks are betrayed by their short, stubby legs, their abysmally poor eyesight, and their fondness for just ambling along. Against the car, their bold coloring and mighty spray are useless.



Baby striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*) ©fieldsbh (Creative Commons)

In any other situation, however, the skunk's ability to wield that mighty spray with pinpoint precision up to 10 feet, and with less precision up to 20, is astonishing. Equally astonishing is that except for males during mating season, one skunk never sprays another. But the *most* astonishing thing about the skunk is that he never wields his spray in an act of aggression, but only in self-defense—or in the case of a mother, in defense of her kits.

And even then, the skunk will try anything and everything else first—growling, foot stomping, teeth chattering, false charging, back arching, tail raising, even walking on his hands—to discourage his attacker. There is great wisdom in this, for a skunk has only so much vile-smelling liquid at his disposal—around 2 tablespoons worth, good for about 12 small squirts or one really big one. But the one really big one totally depletes the skunk's supply, and although it begins to refill immediately and can be squirtable within a day, it takes 5 to 11 days to refill completely, which leaves the skunk far more vulnerable than when he's out ambling with a full tank.

A powerful weapon demands powerful restraint and cautious use. If the skunk can know this, why is it so difficult for us to grasp? 🦨

[www.dragoo.org](http://www.dragoo.org)

[www.edwardwillett.com/Columns/skunks.htm](http://www.edwardwillett.com/Columns/skunks.htm)

<http://wallpaper.searchrealm.com/information/Skunks.html>

<http://marciabonta.wordpress.com/2008/03/01/polecat/>

[http://animaldiversity.umnz.umich.edu/site/accounts/information/Mephitis\\_mephitis.html](http://animaldiversity.umnz.umich.edu/site/accounts/information/Mephitis_mephitis.html)

[www.lioncusher.com/animal.asp?animal=216](http://www.lioncusher.com/animal.asp?animal=216)

<http://fohn.net/skunk-pictures-facts/index.html>

[http://dnr.state.il.us/ORC/Wildlife/furbearers/striped\\_skunk.html](http://dnr.state.il.us/ORC/Wildlife/furbearers/striped_skunk.html)

**THE HEALING PLANTS OF EDGEWOOD**

**The Delicate Fairy Lantern**

by Mary Anne Leary

As we venture into the spring season, Edgewood Preserve is blessed with an abundance of flowering plants that will be blooming over the next few months. One of the April-to May-bloomers is the Fairy Lantern or White Globe Lily.



Fairy Lantern (*Calochortus albus*) © AlfFengler

For those of you who have been out on the Sylvan Trail lately, you may have noticed one of the harbingers of spring, the lovely

long basal leaf of the Fairy Lantern. This leaf may represent a plant that will proceed to develop and flower or that may rest for the season. The Fairy Lantern is in the genus *Calochortus*, which means “beautiful grass” in Greek. The “ch” in *Calochortus* is pronounced with a “k” sound, which reveals the name’s Greek origin. The species name of *albus* refers to the white color of the flower.

The genus *Calochortus*, a member of the Lily (Liliaceae) family, is categorized into three sections (subgenera): the first section, *Calochortus*, is made up of Fairy Lantern and Cat’s Ear-type species; the second section, named *Mariposa*, is composed of the Mariposa Lilies; the third section, *Cyclobothra*, consists of mostly southern species that have the same characteristics as the flowers of the *Mariposa* section, but have bulb coats that are covered with coarse hairs versus the membranous bulb coats of the plants included in both the *Calochortus* and *Mariposa* sections. In this article we will be exploring the flowers of the first section, the Fairy Lantern, with a reference to the Cat’s Ear type species. In our June article we will explore the flowers of the second section, the Mariposa Lily.

The genus *Calochortus* is restricted to western North America, from southern British Columbia in the north, to Guatemala in the south, and as far east as the Dakotas. The vast majority of species grow in California (with 52 species, including varieties), with Oregon having the next greatest concentration of species (19 species, including varieties). Lewis and Clark discovered the first *Calochortus* in an area that now resides within the state of Idaho. It was Frederick Pursch in 1814 who proposed the genus

*Calochortus* and described the flower (*C. elegans*) that had been collected by Lewis and Clark.

Plants of the *Calochortus* genus are edible with no parts known to be toxic. It is well known that the Native Americans used to roast the bulbs, as did the Mormon settlers as they traveled west. Toni Corelli states in her book, *Flowering Plants of Edgewood Natural Preserve*, that the Native Americans boiled and roasted the bulbs or steamed them in pits, and also pounded the fried bulbs into flour to make into a mush.

The healing qualities of the Fairy Lantern are concerned with healthy maturing and acceptance of adult responsibilities. People in need of the Fairy Lantern flower essence may have experienced difficulties during childhood that did not allow them to develop fully on the physical or emotional level. Such people often become needy and lack the inner strength to accept responsibilities that are a part of growing up. Their bodies can stay somewhat pre-pubescent making it difficult to adjust to life as a functioning mature adult. The Fairy Lantern flower essence can assist such people to let go of childish dependency or sense of helplessness and begin to deal with whatever issues that did not allow them to move through the early developmental process of childhood in a more healthy and natural manner.



Though the Cat’s Ear type of *Calochortus*, *C. tolmiei*, does not grow in Edgewood Preserve, it does


Fairy Lantern (*Calochortus albus*) © Frances Morse

grow nearby throughout the Santa Cruz Mountains, and as close as the Phleger Estate bordering Huddart Park in Woodside. Often called Star Tulip this flower bears the healing qualities of serenity and receptive listening. It is a beautiful flower essence that is helpful for those who feel cut-off from their own sense of soulfulness and the ability to receive inner guidance. The Star Tulip flower essence can help to enhance one’s dream state and encourage a sense of inner quiet that is conducive to meditation, prayer and the development of intuitive capabilities. 🌸

References:  
 Callahan, Frank, “The Genus *Calochortus*,” *Bulbs of North America*  
 Gerritsen, Mary E. & Ron Parsons. *Calochortus: Mariposa Lilies and their Relatives*  
 Kaminski, Patricia & Richard Katz, *Flower Essence Repertory*


## EDGEWOOD DOCENT TRAINING 2009

by **Mary Wilson**

We are halfway through the Friends of Edgewood Docent Training this spring. As seems to happen only every 4 or 5 years, we have a huge class. Our 17 prospective docents bring a wide range of experience and knowledge about Edgewood and its plants. Our welcome rain fall has not fallen on our walks thus far but has encouraged the early flowers. This weekend we saw more Purple Mouse-ears along Clarkia Trail than I have seen during my four years of coordinating the docent training. Fragrant Fritillary were visible in the grasslands south of the fence near the Sunset entrance, but not near the trail. 

## EDGEWOOD WILDFLOWER WALKS 2009

by **Kate Finnegan**

Our hike season begins on March 14th and runs 13 weekends until June 7th departing from the Day Camp, as well as 4 Saturdays in April departing from the Clarkia trailhead. Groups of 10 or more are encouraged to contact us through our website to let us know they are coming. We can also accommodate request hikes for different dates & times or for special interests by arrangement. Please contact us through our website [www.friendsofedgewood.org](http://www.friendsofedgewood.org). 



## EDGEWOOD VOLUNTEERS—HELP WANTED


### Kiosk Kween, King, Kaptain, or Kommittee

One or more people needed to help coordinate and manage the kiosk displays, and to keep them up-to-date and attractive. It takes only a few hours a month, depending on the number of people who come forward to share the work and how it's divided. In addition to creativity, you'd get to use some planning and computer skills. You'll need some botanical knowledge, too. But you won't be starting from scratch—you can work from samples and templates. The job would be easier for people who live nearby, or are in the area fairly frequently year round (about once a month, depending on season). Interested? Contact Frances Morse, current Kiosk Kween.

### String cutting

Volunteers needed to help county staff on special weed-treatment days. Previous experience using a mechanized string cutter desired. County staff will provide safety certification and equipment. Will take place several half days in late spring and summer. Sign up for one session or more. Contact: [christal@creeksidescience.com](mailto:christal@creeksidescience.com)

### Watering

Volunteers needed to help with supplemental watering in our revegetation areas. Requires carrying several gallons of water at once. Will occur occasionally during dry spells in winter, spring, and early summer. Sign up for one session or more. Contact: [christal@creeksidescience.com](mailto:christal@creeksidescience.com) 

## SOME SPRING EVENTS AT FILOLI & CNPS

**Filoli Flower Show.** "Kaleidoscope of Flowers" Mothers' Day Weekend May 8 – 10, 2009. Tickets go on sale March 30.

### CNPS

**Growing Natives. Celebrating California's Beauty In Dry Times.** Saturday, March 28, 2009 at Lafayette Community Center, 500 St Mary's Road, Lafayette, & Sunday, March 29, 2009, at Regional Parks Botanic Garden, Wildcat Canyon Road, Berkeley. Two-day symposium on creating beautiful, water-wise gardens with California native plants. Sunday afternoon: garden visits to the Fleming garden in Berkeley and the Greenberg garden in Lafayette. Early registration recommended. For more information, visit [www.nativeplants.org](http://www.nativeplants.org) or call Margot Sheffer.

**7th Annual Going Native Garden Tour.** Sunday, April 19, 2009, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. A free, self-guided tour of home gardens that are water-wise, low maintenance, low on chemical use, bird and butterfly friendly, and attractive. Locations throughout Santa Clara Valley and Peninsula. Registration required at <http://www.gngt.org> before April 18, 12 noon, or until the tour reaches capacity. For more information, email [info@gngt.org](mailto:info@gngt.org)

**Spring Native Plant Sale.** Saturday, April 4, 2009, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Hidden Villa Ranch, 26870 Moody Rd, Los Altos Hills. For more information, visit [www.cnps-scv.org](http://www.cnps-scv.org), email [cnps\\_scv@yahoo.com](mailto:cnps_scv@yahoo.com), or call 650-941-1068. On sale: scores of species of native plants, seeds, and bulbs suitable for California gardens, as well as native plant books, posters, and note cards. Cash or checks only.

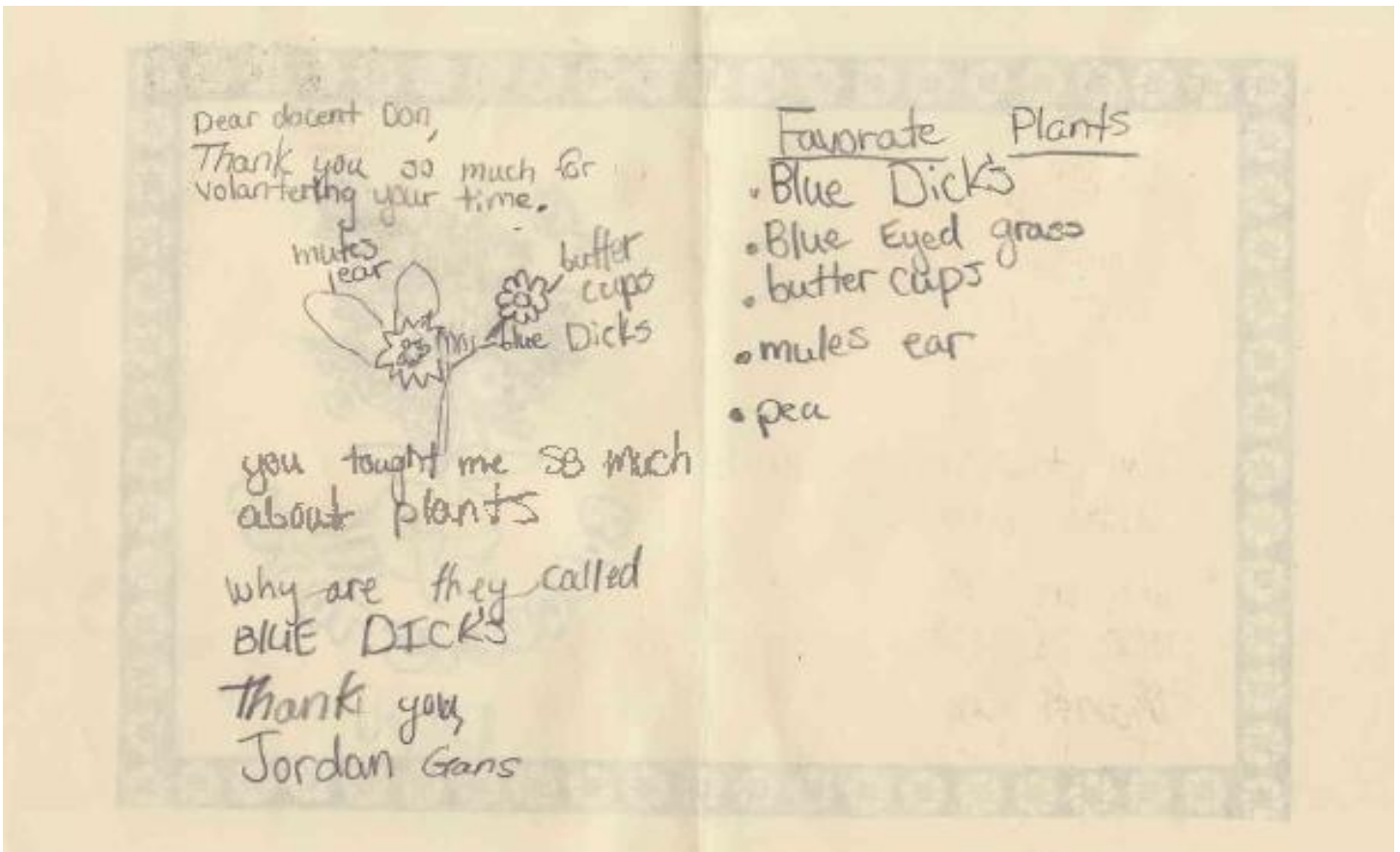
**37th Annual Wildflower Show.** Saturday & Sunday, April 25 & 26, 2009, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Mission College, Hospitality Management Building, 3000 Mission College Boulevard, Santa Clara. For more information, visit [www.cnps-scv.org](http://www.cnps-scv.org), email [cnps\\_scv@yahoo.com](mailto:cnps_scv@yahoo.com), or call 650-941-1068. Two-day expo showcasing the plant biodiversity of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. over 400 species of wildflowers and native plants will be on display. Free classes on native plant identification and gardening with native plants. On sale: native plants, books, posters, seeds, and note cards.



.....

The world is mud-luscious and  
puddle-wonderful.  
~e.e. cummings

.....



**MEMBERSHIP DUES**

New or renewing members may clip and complete this section to pay **tax-deductible** annual membership dues. Please send your check payable to **Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve** to the return address on the back of this panel. Renewing members can determine their membership expiration date by checking the six-digit code to the right of their name on their mailing label. For example, if the code is 06/2006, membership runs through June 2006.

Questions? Call (866) GO-EDGEWOOD or contact membership-coordinator@friendsofedgewood.org.

**\$10 Student/Retired** (includes quarterly newsletter)

- \$25 Friend** (newsletter)
- \$50 Advocate** (newsletter, set of 6 Edgewood photo greeting cards)
- \$75 Supporter** (newsletter plus choose one):
  - Set of 6 Edgewood photo greeting cards and 1-year subscription to BAY NATURE magazine
  - Toni Corelli's *Flowering Plants of Edgewood*
- \$100 Steward** or  **\$250 Guardian** (newsletter, set of 6 Edgewood photo greeting cards, plus choose one):
  - 1-year subscription to BAY NATURE magazine
  - Toni Corelli's *Flowering Plants of Edgewood*

**Please do not send any premiums.**

**I am enclosing a gift of \_\_\_\_\_.**

Please send \_\_\_ copies of *Common Native Wildflowers of Edgewood* (\$2.50), \_\_\_ copies of the *Edgewood Vascular Plant List* (\$3.00), \_\_\_ copies of the Apr-Jun 2004 BAY NATURE magazine (\$6.00), \_\_\_ copies of Flowering Plants of Edgewood Natural Preserve (\$25.00). Includes tax, S&H. All items subject to availability.

I would like to participate in the following:

- Docent program
- GIS/GPS mapping
- Newsletter/web
- Public relations
- Weed management
- Schools outreach
- Habitat restoration
- Adopt-A-Highway

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Day Telephone Eve Telephone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

**RAIN**

I'm singin' in the rain  
Just singin' in the rain,  
What a glorious feeling  
And I'm happy again.

I'm laughing at clouds  
So dark, up above,  
The sun's in my heart  
And I'm ready for love.

Let the stormy clouds chase  
Everyone from the place,  
Come on with the rain  
I've a smile on my face.

I'll walk down the lane  
With a happy refrain  
Just singin', singin' in the  
rain.

~ Arthur Freed

**RAINBOW**

My heart leaps up when I behold  
A rainbow in the sky:  
So was it when my life began;  
So is it now I am a man;  
So be it when I shall grow old,  
Or let me die!  
The Child is father of the Man;  
I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural  
piety.

~William Wordsworth



**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- DOCENT-LED WILDFLOWER WALKS.** See article on page 6 and the enclosed flyer.
- BIRD WALKS.** Last 2 bird walks of the season will be on 3/29 & 4/26 starting at 8:00 AM at the inner Stage Coach parking lot. Rain cancels. Hikes resume in the fall. For more information, contact Marilyn at [birdwalks@friendsfedgewood.org](mailto:birdwalks@friendsfedgewood.org)
- ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY.** The next sessions will take place on 4/4, 5/3, & 6/6. Rain changes everything. To volunteer or get more information, contact Ken Seydel.

The Edgewood Explorer is published quarterly by the Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving Edgewood for the human, plant, and animal generations to come. The newsletter is produced by Anne Koletzke with contributions from many Friends. For more information about the Friends of Edgewood, visit our web site at [www.friendsfedgewood.org](http://www.friendsfedgewood.org), mail us at PO Box 3422, Redwood City, CA 94064-3422, call or fax toll-free at (866) GO-EDGEWOOD (866-463-3439), or email [info@friendsfedgewood.org](mailto:info@friendsfedgewood.org).

Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve  
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*The Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve exists to protect and celebrate Edgewood as a unique treasure by promoting exemplary stewardship, and by reaching out with informative public programs*  
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