

Edgewood Explorer



PRESERVE • EDUCATE • RESTORE

December 2015

Volume 22 Number 4

2015 Annual General Meeting

by Bill Korbholz, Friends of Edgewood President

This year's annual membership meeting at Edgewood on October 18, 2015 featured a special discussion with representatives from PG&E and our own Parks staff on PG&E's activities and involvement in Edgewood. The speaker panel was led by Austin Sharp, PG&E's Customer Impact Expert. He was joined by Bobby Vogt, PG&E's Senior Terrestrial Biologist, who recently joined the PG&E team working on the hydrostatic pressure test (hydrotest) project underway at Edgewood. Rounding out the panel were Marlene Finley, San Mateo County Parks Director; Ramona Arechiga, Parks Natural Resource Manager; and Alice Kaufman, Legislative Analyst with Committee for Green Foothills.



Speaker Panel © 2015 Kathy Korbholz

Panel, L to R: Ramona, Marlene, Austin, (unknown), Bobby, Alice, Drew I could tell from the audience's questions and from the expressions on faces that audience participants were keenly interested in both the PG&E hydrotest and the longer term plans for replacing the Line 109 gas pipeline that runs through Edgewood.

Austin explained in detail what the hydrotest was all about. We learned that a pipe needs to undergo a hydrotest only once in its lifetime to ensure that it is safe and in good condition. Although the test was still in progress as of the general meeting, it has since been successfully completed. Austin also mentioned that, over the years, PG&E has donated \$110,000 toward the

restoration of the Bay checkerspot butterfly at Edgewood.

For the latest information regarding PG&E's activities relating to Edgewood, please visit <http://www.friendsofedgeswood.org/pg-pipeline-project>.

Our meeting began informally as usual with our traditional sandwich bar, generously donated by Arguello Catering. Once we got underway, I invited Julia Bott, outgoing Parks Foundation Director, to say a few words to dedicate our meeting to the memory of our dear friend and long-time volunteer, Elly Hess. I then thanked Julia for her 17 years of excellent leadership at the Foundation and especially for all

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SAVE THE DATE!

Docent Training begins

January 20, 2016

Register by Jan 14!

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that she has done in support of Edgewood Preserve and Friends of Edgewood.



After we heard updates from various program coordinators, I presented this year's

Best Friend Award to Dorothy Young for tirelessly working behind-the-scenes as our "mail center" since 2010. Unfortunately, Dorothy was unable to attend the meeting, so Linda Leong, holding up a face mask with Dorothy's picture on it, accepted the award on Dorothy's behalf.



The meeting ended with the election of Laurie Alexander (incumbent), Alice Kaufman, and Kathy Korbholz (incumbent) to the FoE Board, to serve 3-year terms as Directors starting in 2016. ✓



Lunch by Arguello Catering
© 2015 Kathy Korbholz



Docent Training 2016 by Mary Wilson

Docent training for Edgewood's Wildflower Walks begins in January. Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve's soils provide displays of grassland wildflowers like those once seen all over California's landscape. Such displays have been drastically reduced as land has been developed over the years and non-native grass and other plants have been imported, accidentally or purposefully. Docent training will explain how Edgewood's unusual soils and passionate supporters have preserved this slice of old California. Our primary purpose as Wildflower Walk docents is to educate the public about the many interesting facts and beauties of Edgewood.

Most of the training is covered in eight pairs of bi-weekly meetings: Wednesday evening talks followed by Saturday morning hikes that demonstrate, or build on, the preceding Wednesday's topic. These training sessions begin Jan. 20th and end April 30th. Docent Training will cover the history, geology, plant communities, wildflowers, and wildlife of Edgewood as well as how to lead hikes and engage the public.

The rest of the training is individualized. Participants will observe at least two Wildflower Walks and go on a one-on-one walk with an experienced docent to practice elements of leading hikes or to learn more about Edgewood. This individualized training may begin as early as March and should be completed by the second week of May.

If you would enjoy learning more about nature, and about Edgewood specifically, and you enjoy helping others to learn about and appreciate nature, please contact Mary at Docent-Trainer@FriendsOfEdgewood.org.

In Memory of Elly Hess, Naturalist Extraordinaire

by Kathy Korbholz

There are some people who try to live quietly, out of the limelight, but who have far-reaching impact. Elly Hess was one of these people who touched many lives. Elly passed away from complications of a stroke on September 14, 2015. Consequently, Edgewood has lost one of its most enduring and stalwart supporters.

Many know that Elly received the first official weed abatement permit for Edgewood in July 1989, well before Edgewood was designated a natural preserve, and at a time when Edgewood was still being considered as a potential site for a county golf course.

In her signature coveralls, Elly took it upon herself to begin the fight against the teasel invasion. (Teasel is a plant with such a thick, elongated, tap root and a sturdy basal rosette that nothing else can grow around it. Left undisturbed, it can become a monoculture.) But many readers may not know that before receiving the official permit, Elly was cited by the county's volunteer coordinator for unauthorized weed-pulling in Edgewood!



Years later, San Mateo County officially recognized Elly for those very same volunteer efforts by nominating her as a "San Mateo County Woman of the Year". The Friends of Edgewood voted her a co-Best Friend in 1995 and dubbed the meadow in the northwest corner of the preserve "Elly's Meadow" in honor of her untiring weeding efforts. After 26 years, the current Weed Warrior program, with over 60 participants, endures as a testament to what one determined woman can initiate. Without her small start, Edgewood might not be the natural gem and window into California's botanical past that it is today.

In addition to weeding, Elly served on the San Mateo County Trails Committee and helped support the Save Edgewood Coalition to protect the land that became Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve. She worked in the local schools as an Environmental Volunteer, bringing in natural artifacts, skulls, and skins so that children could learn about flora and fauna of the area. Elly served on Edgewood's trail patrol for many years where she gently guided visitors to respect the preserve's fragile resources by opening their eyes to the treasures hidden in plain sight and by sharing her love of nature.

Elly was a wildflower docent for many years. What a treat it must have been to go on one of her walks! She is remembered fondly for engaging her participants by asking them to find a particular flower and then rewarding the first person to find it with a nickel. Inflation increased that reward to a quarter in later years. When she no longer wanted to lead three-hour wildflower walks, Elly changed course and delighted visitors to the Education Center, instead, with her stories and her irresistible smile.

One of our current volunteers, Martha Vercore was recruited into the Friends family by Elly. Martha remembers Elly from her childhood. "Elly and my mother were co-leaders of our Campfire Girl group from age five to ten so I knew her from a very young age. She was always a comfortable person, like having an extra mother. And yet slightly exotic too. When we had sleepovers at their house they had waffles or pancakes for breakfast! and yogurt! Years later she invited me along on Sierra Club walks where she shared her love of flowers and nature. I never realized how much she was teaching me because we were just having too much fun!"

Elly was known for her abundant love of her family, her friends, and her flowers – in that order. We know that her memory will live on in the many friends she cultivated in the Edgewood community.



© 2015 Kathy Korbholz



Friends of Edgewood Honored With Coon Bequest

by Kathy Korbholz, Frances K. Morse, and Linda Leong



Some readers may remember Lorie Coon, a longtime lover of Edgewood Natural Preserve (Edgewood). Lorie admired Edgewood and, while her health allowed, walked in the Preserve several days a week. She and her sister, Nancy Sekany, underwrote the bench on the Franciscan Trail which provides a lovely spot on the east side of North Hill to rest, meditate, and/or simply appreciate our "hidden gem". The bench commemorates their father, George V. Dillenburg, who passed away in 1988.

We were saddened to hear of Lorie's passing in June of 2013, but we were simultaneously astounded to learn that she had named the Friends of Edgewood as a designated recipient of a portion of her estate. We were humbled to learn of Lorie's generosity, our very first legacy gift. The Friends of Edgewood (Friends) were extremely honored to be

remembered and considered worthy to receive such a substantial and personal gift.

Legacy gifts and other donations to the Friends are used to support valuable and important programs such as:

- Weed eradication and habitat restoration, which has made return of the Bay checkerspot butterfly possible and resulted in significant reduction in noxious weeds such as yellow-star thistle.
- Activities at the Bill and Jean Lane Education Center, including funding a building maintenance endowment, maintaining and enhancing exhibits, and developing new interpretive programs.
- Financial support for docent training, wildflower walks, speakers, and volunteer enrichment activities as well as special programs or services that are beyond our normal operating budget.
- Junior Explorers program, which helps children engage with nature and develops the future stewards of Edgewood and other natural places.

If, like our dear friend Lorie, you have made similar arrangements in your estate planning and wish to let us know, please contact Bill Korbholz, President of the Friends of Edgewood, at Legacy@FriendsOfEdgewood.org. You can find our gift acceptance policy on the FoE website at www.friendsofedgewood.org/gift-acceptance-policy.

Advanced knowledge of planned gifts can help the Friends to better plan how to accomplish its vision: restoring and preserving Edgewood's ecosystem as an exceptional habitat for native plants and animals and providing outstanding natural history programs so that visitors of all ages can appreciate, respect, support, and be inspired by Edgewood. ♥

"It is clear to me that unless we connect directly with the earth, we will not have the faintest clue why we should save it."
~ Helen Caldicott, *If You Love This Planet*



LEAD WILDFLOWER WALKS AT EDGEWOOD!

Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve

Docent Training 2016

What do Wildflower Walk docents do? We lead free, 3-hour hikes on weekend mornings from mid-March through mid-June at Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve. We talk about wildflowers, plant communities & why Edgewood is special.

What will you learn? The eight evening classes cover the history, topography, geology, plant communities, wildlife, and wildflowers of Edgewood, as well as how to lead a hike. Each evening class is followed by a hike in Edgewood on the next Saturday morning. The same presenter covers the same topic on both days.

Is there a fee? Yes, \$30 for training materials, payable the first day of class.

What is the schedule? Evening classes meet from 7 to 9 p.m. in Redwood City. Saturday hikes meet at trailheads in Edgewood Park and run from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Are there other time commitments? You will be paired with an experienced docent for a "one-on-one" training experience; you will also observe two wildflower walks and then help lead one or two Wildflower Walks during the spring. We will have a graduation potluck one or two weeks after the end of the training -- date, time and location TBA.

2016 SCHEDULE

<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Presenters</u>
Jan. 20	Jan. 23	Intro, History, Topography	Bill & Kathy Korbholz
Feb. 3	Feb. 6	Geology of Edgewood	Paul Heiple
Feb. 17	Feb. 20	Wildlife	Ken Hickman
Mar. 2	Mar. 5	Floral & Leaf Morphology	Mary Wilson
Mar. 16	Mar. 19	Chaparral	Ken Himes
		Weed Management	Paul Heiple
Mar. 30	Apr. 2	Oak Woodlands	Ken Himes
Apr. 13	Apr. 16	Grasslands	Alf Fengler
Apr. 27	Apr. 30	Leading Walks	Trevlyn Williams

To Register: email Mary at
Docent-Trainer@FriendsOfEdgewood.org

Registration closes Jan. 14, 2016

More information or questions?

Go to www.FriendsOfEdgewood.org or
visit the Bill and Jean Lane Education Center at Edgewood

'Tis the Season For Giving!

Field guides, T-shirts, & more

For sale at the Ed Center - ask the Host

Wildflower guide \$1

A color brochure with color photos and descriptions of the preserve's common native wildflowers. A must-have for springtime visitors!



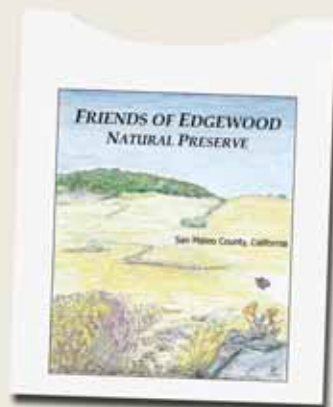
Edgewood plant list \$3

This comprehensive 27-page booklet by botanist Toni Corelli lists all of Edgewood's flowering plants – listed both by common name and by scientific name within family.



Flowering Plants of Edgewood Natural Preserve \$12

The authoritative botanical field guide to the park. Written by botanist Toni Corelli, this 368-page reference includes descriptions and drawings of the vascular plants found at Edgewood. Keys, illustrations, and a list of nomenclature and taxonomic changes.



Friends of Edgewood T-shirt \$20

Featuring Judy Mason's original artwork of an Edgewood hillside in bloom. 100% cotton, white Hanes Beefy-T.



Limited Stock

Checkerspot T-shirt \$20

Commemorating the reintroduction of the Bay Checkerspot Butterfly to Edgewood in 2007. 100% cotton, sage green Hanes Beefy-T.

Adult Sizes: \$20
Child Sizes: \$15



**Cash or check – made to
"Friends of Edgewood".**

Additional items may be available –
ask the Center host.

Stumped for a present? As friends and relatives curtail consumption and downsize their belongings, it is hard to find the right present to commemorate a holiday, birthday, anniversary, or other significant milestone. Why not make a donation in someone's honor today?



\$15

Edgewood Grassland Management - 2015

Habitat restoration for many grassland species continues at Edgewood Preserve

by Christal Niederer



© 2014 Lech Naumovich

Photo: 2014 thornmint seeding. Pictured are volunteer Alf Fengler, Creekside Science's Dr. Stuart Weiss, and San Mateo County Park's Natural Resource Manager Ramona Arechiga.

Many exciting restoration activities are taking place at Edgewood Preserve. This year, Creekside Science continued to lead our two more visible projects: the Bay checkerspot butterfly reintroduction and San Mateo thornmint enhancement. With help from several partners, funders, and volunteers, we continued to bring in federally threatened Bay checkerspot caterpillars from their large population on Coyote Ridge in San Jose. Adult numbers dropped a

little this year, but Edgewood continues to have a population in the low thousands. We will decide in February 2016 whether to bring in more caterpillars this coming season. The Parks Department continues to mow and dethatch the serpentine grasslands that the caterpillars inhabit on a rotational basis to keep invasive grass cover low and host plant and nectar source cover high.

We seeded more of the federally endangered San Mateo thornmint area this year and saw an increase in numbers from 608 in 2014 to 1134 in 2015. The drought likely made the numbers lower than they might have been, but late season irrigation led to large survivors. An unfortunate discovery was dodder plants parasitizing some of our thornmints. We plan to seed again before the end of the year, hopefully in additional areas within the park.

There are many other grassland restoration projects going on at Edgewood, several aimed to tie in with the amazing work the volunteer Weed Warriors accomplish. For example, we have contractors dig and tarp Harding grass which, in conjunction with volunteer efforts, is drastically declining this weed's numbers. Even closer to eradication is velvet grass. A key invader on adjacent San Francisco Water District land, there are few individuals left in Edgewood, and a small colony is still present just outside the preserve under the I-280 overpass. Focused work during the drought has really impacted this moisture-loving plant. *(continued on Page 6)*

2015 Bluebird Monitoring Program

by Frances K. Morse

Whitney Mortimer, Chris O'Connell, and I monitored 24 nest boxes each week from the first week of March until the third week of July. Substitute monitor, John Morse, ably assisted us.



© 2015 Whitney Mortimer

2015 was a fairly good year despite the prolonged drought. We counted 24 nests and 106 eggs, of which 80 eggs hatched (75%) and 70 birds fledged (66%). The 70 little avian additions to Edgewood Preserve included 54 Western Bluebirds (WEBL), 11 Tree Swallows (TRSW), and 5 Ash-throated Flycatchers (ATFL). The chart below shows more detail.

Bird	Total Nests	Total Eggs	Total Hatched	Total Fledged
WEBL	17	74	59 (80%)	54 (73%)
TRSW	6	27	16 (59%)	11 (41%)
ATFL	1	5	5 (100%)	5 (100%)
Total	24	106	80 (75%)	70 (66%)

As the chart shows, bluebirds exhibited the most nest and egg activity in our boxes. As is typical, the Tree Swallow fledging rate is much lower than the bluebird rate – 41% versus 73% this year. We usually have 1 Ash-throated Flycatcher pair, and their fledging rate is high (this year it was 100%!).

(continued on Page 6)

(Bluebirds...continued from Page 5) As usual, we reported our results to the California Bluebird Recovery Program (CBRP) (<http://www.cbrp.org>) which monitors the bluebird population across our state.

Despite the prolonged drought, our total fledging rate (66%) was the same as last year. However, there were some effects that may be related to the drought. For example, we observed fewer second nests, and none of the eggs in those nests hatched. We also observed more snake activity compared to prior years. (Food is scarcer for snakes, too.)



© 2015 Chris O'Connell

We experienced some particularly notable moments (good and bad) this season. For instance, we were able to record a video of a baby bluebird just beginning to crack through its shell as we

opened the box. We also saw one nest box wildly shaking on the fence as its 6 crowded bluebird babies were trying to fledge. In addition to snakes and mice, we encountered our first brown bat sleeping in a bluebird box! Regrettably, vandals completely destroyed one bluebird box. Fortunately, the



© 2015 Whitney Mortimer



© 2015 Frances K. Morse

bluebirds had already fledged from that box.

Moving forward, we will be coordinating with the Parks Department to improve our program. We plan to

relocate some of the boxes that have had little or no activity over the last 3 years, and we are considering adding some new boxes. We are hoping to install more snake guards on the nest boxes, too.

Monitoring the nest boxes is intense work for 4 months each season, but it is highly rewarding and fun! If you have ideas for the Bluebird Monitoring Program or are interested in helping, please contact me at info@friendsofthewood.org.

Given the drought conditions, the 70 fledglings in our Flight School Class of 2015 may have a tough time getting started. But, hopefully, the predicted winter rains will help them survive and enhance the beauty of Edgewood.

Viva La
Bluebirdies!



(Grassland Management...continued from Page 5)

Park crews mowed 6.5 acres of yellow starthistle off the Clarkia Trail early this past summer. What's impressive is this is the last area that still has dense stands of this pesky weed, which used to cover about 78 acres at Edgewood. Many visitors mention that, years ago, this plant grew into the trailsides and scratched their legs. While it will probably always remain at a very low density as seeds move in from outside sources, the large stands of this thistle have largely been eliminated thanks to tenacious weeding and targeted mowing.

A small mulching and seeding experiment was set up just in time for the rain. Last year, bales of native purple needlegrass were laid out in the grasslands on the north central ridge, near the intersection of the Serpentine Trail and Old Stage Road. The purpose was to remove competitors so the seeds we installed, all from Edgewood

or local stock, would stand a chance of establishing. The bales were moved to an adjacent area on the last day of October, and purple needlegrass, yarrow, California poppy, and blue-eyed grass seeds were spread on the blank canvas. We're hoping ample rains and reduced competition will help these natives grow over the next few years.

As always, Creekside Science projects take place with help from several partners, funders, and volunteers. While contributors across these varied projects have become too many to mention individually, we are thankful for all the interest and support people have given to Edgewood. We continue to be inspired by the way so many people make a difference through volunteering, funding, or carrying out their jobs with excellence. It is both the human and the biological connections that make this preserve so special. 🌿

Dorothy Young: 2015 Best Friend of Edgewood County Park and Preserve

Friends of Edgewood is pleased to recognize and thank Dorothy Young for her remarkable record of volunteer service, for working behind the scenes doing essential tasks in support of Friends of Edgewood every week, every month, and every year.

Dorothy has served as our "mail center" since 2010, folding, stamping, and mailing our newsletters, membership letters and membership premiums. She does this with a passion for excellence and accuracy.

In 2011 when the Ed Center opened, she and her husband Bob volunteered to keep the Ed Center in tip-top shape, and they have acted as our weekly Building Stewards ever since.

Dorothy performs these tasks professionally, independently, promptly, thoroughly, and reliably. She makes Friends of Edgewood look good by presenting our very best face to the public and our members.



Photo: Dorothy Young Receives Edgewood's "2015 Best Friend" Award.
© 2015 Kathy Korbholz

Junior Explorers Fall Report

by Carol Hankermeyer

Wow, the Junior Explorers (JE) Program was suddenly inundated by an unusually high number of field trip requests for the fall season! It was a challenge to meet the demand with a limited number of active docents, but it is encouraging to see that public schools have noticed our program again.

Four Arundel 3rd grade classes visited in Oct. to learn about native plants. Howie Smith introduced the kids to Edgewood's native garden, and the kids got to plant wildflower seeds. We also hosted two scout troops, a preschool class, a 3rd grade Palo Alto class, and a Sequoia High School biology class. A record 165 students participated this fall season!

We urgently seek an administrator to continue this important program. No special botanical knowledge is required -- just the ability to organize, communicate, and manage schedules. If you're passionate about nature and desire to inspire children, contact JuniorExplorers-Coordinator@FriendsOfEdgewood.org.

Third Saturday Nature Walks

Dec. 19: "Decay & Renewal" with Mary Wilson

Jan. 16: "Lichens" with Alf Fengler

Feb. 20: Hike with Kathy Goforth



© 2015 Yang Zhou

Yes, I'd like to become a Friend of Edgewood!

Here's my membership donation to support preservation, education, and restoration:

Join or renew online at FriendsOfEdgewood.org

- ☐ \$25 Friend ☐ \$50 Advocate *
- ☐ \$100 Steward * ☐ Other: \$ _____

* Donors of \$50 or more receive a set of six Edgewood greeting cards; donors of \$100 or more also receive a one-year subscription to *Bay Nature Magazine*.

Name _____

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I'd like to get the newsletter by ☐ email ☐ mail.

- ☐ Please keep my thank-you gifts.
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Make checks payable to **Friends of Edgewood**, and mail to:

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PO Box 3422
Redwood City, CA 94064-3422

For volunteer opportunities, visit
www.FriendsOfEdgewood.org/Get-Involved


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Mission Statement of The Friends of Edgewood — To protect and celebrate Edgewood as a unique treasure by promoting exemplary stewardship, and by reaching out with informative public programs. www.friendsofedgeswood.org

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Edgewood Explorer

December 2015

Bill and Jean Lane Education Center - Winter Hours and By Appointment*

Wed	9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Sat	9:30 am to 4 pm
Sun	9:30 am to 4 pm

*Subject to volunteer staffing.

2016 Board of Directors

Laurie Alexander
Alice Kaufman
Bill Korbholz
Kathy Korbholz
Linda Leong
John Morse
Todd Reimche
Mickey Salgo
Howie Smith
Mary Wilson



UPCOMING EVENTS

2016 Docent Training

Register by January 14

Adopt-A-Highway

Next Sessions: 12/5, 1/10, 2/6, 3/6

To volunteer or get more information, contact

Dave Hershey at adoptahighway-coordinator@friendsofedgeswood.org

Third Saturday Nature Walks

12/19, 1/16, 2/20; 10 AM @ BILEC
(heavy rain cancels)

Second Sunday Bird Walks

1/10, 2/14, 3/13 (spring forward)
10 AM @ BILEC (heavy rain cancels)

For more, see

<http://www.friendsofedgeswood.org/events>

The Edgewood Explorer is published quarterly by the Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and restoring Edgewood and to educating the public about its treasures. The newsletter is edited by Linda Leong and is supported by contributions from many Friends. For more information about the Friends of Edgewood, visit our website at www.friendsofedgeswood.org, mail us at PO Box 3422, Redwood City, CA 94064-3422, leave a message or fax us toll-free at (1-866) GO-EDGEWOOD (1-866-463-3439), or email us at info@friendsofedgeswood.org.