Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve

Edgewood Explorer ESERVE • EDUCATE • RESTORE

December 2017

Volume 24 Number 4

2017 Annual General Meeting

by Bill Korbholz, Friends of Edgewood President

Our general meeting this past October was quite a contrast to the heavy rain that greeted us last year. We had beautiful warm weather with blue skies.

After the delicious food once again provided by our good friends at Arguello Catering, we launched into the program.

The theme of this year's meeting, our 25th, was our education initiatives. Education is one of the Friends' top three priorities, habitat management infrastructure development being the other two priorities. To highlight the many activities (16 of them!) in which the Friends are engaged that relate to education, I offered a brief summary of each program. To keep things interesting, Kathy Korbholz interspersed questions throughout the presentation, challenging guests to come up with the answers. So we not only spoke of education, we educated. [You can find some of the questions and answers later in this newsletter - see Edgewood Trivia.]

Perhaps the highlight of the day was the presentation of this year's Best Friend Award. Each year our Board selects an individual whose contributions during the year were outstanding. I was very pleased to present Pam Gage with this year's Best Friend Award. Pam has been our webmaster since 2012, and since then she has implemented major improvements, keeping the website looking attractive and fresh. Thank you and congratulations, Pam!



Pam Gage (left) receives 2017 Best Friend Award from Bill Korbholz © 2017 Kathy Korbholz

We concluded the afternoon with our official meeting, in which Linda Leong (incumbent), Angela Mallett, and Todd Reimche (incumbent) were elected as

> Directors for 3-year terms starting in 2018.



Friends enjoy food and camaraderie at our annual meeting. © 2017 Kathy Korbholz

Next year we will be celebrating our 25th anniversary, so watch out for announcements describing various special events during the year. 🔊

SAVE THE DATE! Docent Training begins January 17, 2018 Register by Jan 10!

INTHIS EXPLORER...

2017 Annual General Meeting	1
Volunteer Spotlight - Alf Fengler	2
'Tis the Season of Giving	3
San Mateo Thornmint Numbers	4
2018 Call for Docents/Schedule(insert)
Junior Explorers Fall 2017	5-6
Edgewood Trivia	6
2017 Bluebird Monitoring Report	7-8
Membership Form	9
EC Hours 2018 Board Events	10

Volunteer Spotlight - Alf Fengler

by Trevlyn Williams

Alf recalls the first date he had at Edgewood. It was July 30, 2005, a Saturday summer weeding session. The abounding knowledge of present-Ken those Himes, Paul Heiple, and



Alf Fengler © 2017 Kathy Korbholz

Bill and Kathy Korbholz among others-made an indelible impression on him.

At that time, Edgewood trails were a training destination for Alf in preparation for doing stretches of the Pacific Crest Trail. By chance, Alf had met none other than Ken Himes on the trail during one of those visits to Edgewood (has this happened to anyone else?). That meeting resulted in Alf joining the July weeding session.

Since that weeding initiation, Alf has become one of Edgewood's most dedicated volunteers—first as a weeder then as a docent and, thereafter, contributing photographs and the mystery quiz, leading nature hikes, teaching in the docent-training program, and acting as a Bay checkerspot-spotter and plant phenologist—all of which earned him the '2008 Best Friend of Edgewood' award for his many contributions as a volunteer.

That first 2005 weeding session gave Alf glimpses of a monarch butterfly, which he captured with a newly acquired small digital camera. Those first photos, together with images of plants and animals seen at weeding sessions thereafter, have become what is now a very extensive and well organized digital catalog of some 33,000-plus images captured at Edgewood.

Alf has made it a point to be sure he has seen most, if not all, of the plants to be found at Edgewood. This comprehensive, first-hand experience with Edgewood's flora made him an excellent candidate to take on plant-phenology monitoring for the Bay checkerspot reintroduction project. During the spring, Alf checks on the abundance and senescence of plant species that are key to the survival of the Bay checkerspot butterfly.

Alf's boundless curiosity, combined with his disciplined-approach to learning, also led him to acquire expertise in identifying native and nonnative grass species. Alf has led a number of grassspecific walks at Edgewood for the California Native Plant Society. Lichens and bryophytes (mosses and their kin) have more recently joined Alf's get-to-know list.

One of the special weeding projects at Edgewood in which Alf has been engaged is that of Adopt-a-Site. A volunteer with experience and wide plant knowledge adopts a small site for which they take personal responsibility to weed out invasive plants. Alf's site, located on the northeast end of the central ridge above the Franciscan trail was a weeding priority due to the prevalence of rock rose, Cistus incanus, in that general area. Alf recounts with amusement how, when with earnest effort all the Cistus plants in his site were removed, the next spring, to his horror and disappointment, the site was covered in hundreds of Cistus seedlings. What he learned from that experience is that this species practices allelopathy, with established plants chemically inhibiting the growth of neighboring plants. This story does have a happy ending, though. (Weeders don't give up!) With Alf's conscientious, persistent efforts and help from other weeders, this site is now free of Cistus. Today, natives such as two species of rein orchid, bunch grasses, coyote mint, California everlasting, ruby chalice clarkia, golden yarrow, and many more (Alf has counted sixty native species) flourish once again on his adopted slope.

Alf has spread his environmental volunteering largesse beyond Edgewood and is also a volunteer with Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space Trust. Trail maintenance and special projects, such as the re-establishment of native vegetation at Pulgas Ridge Open Space, are amongst the responsibilities with which Alf has been entrusted.

The truly remarkable part of Alf's volunteer life is that, prior to July 2005, he had no particular interest

(continued on Page 7)

'Tis the Season of Giving! Field guides, T-shirts, & more

Wildflower Guide \$1

Color brochure with photos and descriptions of 20 of the preserve's common native wildflowers. A must-have for springtime visitors.

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 keys, descriptions and drawings of 481 vascular plants found at Edgewood. 2004. Paperback.





Checkerspot T-shirt \$20

Commemorating the reintroduction of the Bay checkerspot butterfly to Edgewood. 100% cotton. Available in Adult S, M, L, XL.

I'm a Friend T-shirt \$15 or \$20

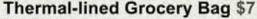
Our t-shirt design is perfect for all friends of Edgewood. Available in burnt orange and dusty blue. Adult sizes S M L XL XXL \$20. Youth sizes XS S M L XL \$15. 100% cotton.





Frisky Finds a Home \$15

An engaging story about a little gray squirrel born in a treetop nest in a woodland habitat. This story is a fun way to explore interrelationships between plants and animals, and the need for all living things to have an appropriate habitat. By Friend of Edgewood Carol Hankermeyer. Paperback.



13"x15" thermal-lined grocery bag zips closed on top. Visit the Education Center to purchase, because we don't ship this bulky item from our online store.



Purchase in the Bill and Jean Lane Education Center or www.FriendsofEdgewood.org/shop

Online prices include shipping fees.

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
belongings, it is hard to find the right
belongings, it is har

San Mateo Thornmint Numbers Continue to Grow!

by Christal Niederer, Creekside Science

The federally endangered San Mateo thornmint is found only at Edgewood, but now Edgewood has four colonies instead of just one. The single existing colony has been persisting with supplemental seeding and habitat management (mowing and dethatching),

but a single population is vulnerable to chance events like extreme weather,

as well as normal population fluctuations. To lessen the vulnerability, Creekside Science identified additional areas within Edgewood Natural Preserve (Preserve) that have similar soils and vegetative associates suitable for thornmint. With volunteers from Friends of Edgewood and the Edgewood Weed Warriors, we installed seeds at the new sites in December 2015. Because we had promising results, we seeded again in December 2016.

The first year we installed 250 seeds in each of 80 1-meter square plots spread at four locations (including the original colony) throughout the Preserve. By May 2016, there was a total of 5,756 plants occupying 196 m², the highest number and area since this project began in 2008. The original site had 3,624 plants, most of which were from plots seeded since November 2009. In the wild, never-seeded portion of the original colony, there were only 183 plants, so we know this project is key to reversing the dangerously low numbers.

Seed increase efforts at the Creekside Grow Facility in 2016 yielded approximately 47,000 seeds. With this large bounty, we increased our seeding efforts in December 2016. We seeded new plots at all four colonies again, but this time we had more plots (110 total) and 400 seeds per plot.

In May 2017, with our team of volunteers, we counted a new record of 7,549 total plants occupying 237 m². This increase sure felt good! In both years, two of the new colonies had higher numbers than the original with the same seed input (and the one that did the worst was not far behind the original site). This means our new sites have similar, if not better, habitat value for San Mateo thornmint. We believe establishing new colonies is key to preventing extinction of this species.

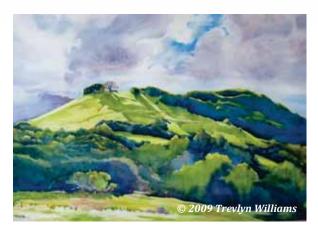
The heavy rains in 2017 seemed to help the thornmint, but they also favored its key competitor, nonnative annual grass. Shortly after monitoring, Creekside Science and San Mateo County Parks ranger Dinora Dunsmore-Bertoni very carefully stringcut the grassy habitat around the occupied thornmint plots. Reducing the invasive grass cover and increasing bare ground favors the thornmint.

Creekside Science plans to seed again in the upcoming season. We have an even larger number of seeds to work with this year, thanks to our head propagator's green thumb.

We also began an experimental treatment with dodder, a native parasitic plant which we noted attached to thornmint. The poor thornmint doesn't need any more threats! Working with Yerba Bioadvocacy, we began the first year of an experiment to see what happens when both dodder and its main host, the common hayfield tar plant, are removed on a small scale.

We remain grateful to Friends of Edgewood, Mellam Family Foundation, and San Mateo County Parks Foundation for continued funding of this project. We also appreciate our partners at San Mateo County Parks for mowing and other support; our volunteers and staff from the UC Berkeley Botanical Garden and California Native Plant Society; as well as California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We are also thankful for efforts by San Francisco Public Utilities Commission biologists who are spearheading efforts to introduce the plant onto San Francisco Water Department lands.

Become an Edgewood Docent!



- Are you inspired by the beauty of Edgewood?
- Are you curious about the plants, animals, soils, and climate that make Edgewood uniquely diverse?
- Would you like to help others better understand, respect, and support not only Edgewood but our entire natural world?

If your answers are "yes!" we welcome your interest in becoming an Edgewood Wildflower Walk Docent.

What we do: Wildflower Walk Docents lead interpretive nature walks throughout the year, but especially during the spring wildflower season. Experienced docents are asked to lead at least three hikes each year. No previous training is required to become a docent. We'll help you gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence to lead walks and interpret the preserve's natural resources.

Training schedule: Friends of Edgewood offers docent training each year, January through April. Eight Wednesday evening classes are paired with Saturday morning field hikes. Opportunities for shadowing and participation in leading public Wildflower Walks complete the training.

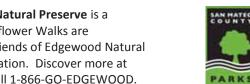
What's covered: You'll learn about Edgewood's geology, plants, and wildlife, along with its history, preservation, and on-going restoration. Along the way, you'll develop the interpretive strategies and skills that make for a great walk experience.

Cost: A \$40 course fee is payable at the first class.

Contact: For more information or to register, contact Sandy, the Docent Training Coordinator, at docent-trainer@friendsofedgewood.org. You'll find the complete 2018 training schedule on the back and at www.FriendsofEdgewood.org/become-a-docent.

Registration closes January 10, 2018 – Training begins January 17th







Friends of Edgewood -- 2018 Docent Training

Wednesday Talk	Saturday Hike	Topic	Main Presenter	Opening Presenter
7 pm - 9 pm	9 am - 1 pm			
Jan. 17	Jan. 20	Introduction and History	Kathy Korbholz	FoE President's Welcome
				Bill Korbholz
Jan. 31	Feb. 3	Geology	Paul Heiple	Intro to Leading Walks
(1-week gap)				Trevlyn Williams
Feb. 7	Feb. 10	Wildlife	Ken Hickman	Ed Center Coordinator
				Laurie Alexander
Feb. 21	Feb. 24	Floral and Leaf Morphology	Trevlyn Williams	Docent Coordinator
				Todd Reimche
Mar. 7	Mar. 10	Oak Woodlands	Drew Shell	
Mar. 21	Mar. 24	Chaparral and Coastal Scrub	Ken Himes	Ranger's Welcome
				Stephen Kramer
April 4	April 7	Grasslands	Alf Fengler	
April 18	April 21	Leading Walks	Trevlyn Williams	Jr. Explorers Program JE Coordinator



Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve is a San Mateo County Park. Wildflower Walks are organized by volunteers of Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve, a nonprofit organization. Discover more at FriendsofEdgewood.org or call 1-866-GO-EDGEWOOD.



Junior Explorers Fall 2017

by Carol Hankermeyer

Adding the successful Edgewood teams mentioned in the September 2017 Explorer, Huey-Shin Yuan, Paul Anderson, and Laurie Alexander have combined their talents very effectively in coordinating the Junior Explorers (JE) program. They were certainly busy this fall managing the flood of field trip requests from schools that formerly sent their classes to another field trip program that terminated this school year. We've also benefited greatly from the influx of new docents from that discontinued program, who were looking for new volunteer opportunities and found Junior Explorers appealing. We welcomed them with open arms. Laurie gave them an Ed Center orientation and explained the program. Then they shadowed field trips led by experienced JE docents so they could learn the special features of Edgewood natural communities. Peggy Berlese, Linda Susan Booras, June Brown, Carolyn Chaney, Pamela Fletcher, Linda Franklyn, Susan Gross, Tony Kramer,

Patricia Perry, DeeDee Stovel, and Peter Thurston are now officially Junior Explorer docents. Welcome!

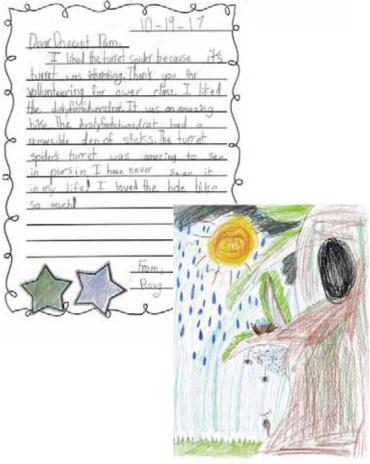
This fall, 11 scheduled field trips served over 200 students. As always, the field trips have yielded some charming thank you notes, special moments, and exciting surprises for both students and docents. Susan Booras reported that when asked about their favorite thing on the hike, one little girl said she loved learning she could become an equine trail docent ranger after graduating from college. As many as 4 deer at a time have made convenient appearances to entertain our school groups on the trail. One second grade class studying seeds was enthralled by a black squirrel scurrying on the forest floor burying acorns. A perfect example of seed dispersal by animals! I didn't tell anyone I had hired the squirrel in advance to perform at just the right moment.

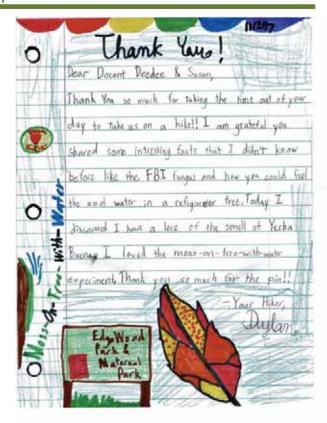
Many, many thanks to Junior Explorers docents, old and new, who have led field trips this fall! Following are a few examples of the notes from appreciative kids from Lincoln Elementary School's 3rd Grade who want to add their thanks to you. �











EDGEWOOD TRIVIA

- 1. Everybody loves a picnic. The food for the Friends of Edgewood annual general meeting has been donated by a local caterer for the last 15 years. What is the name of that caterer? (a) Bits and Bites Catering; (b) Max's Café Catering; (c) Mimi's Deli Catering; (d) Arguello Catering
- 2. Edgewood's topography (the surface features, including the, hills, creeks, and other bumps and lumps on a particular hunk of earth) contributes to its diversity. Other contributing factors are soil, slope and aspect. What is the difference between the highest and lowest elevation in Edgewood, in feet? (a) 376; (b) 489; (c) 533; (d) 5280
- 3. Weeds defined as "plants in the wrong place" threaten some of our favorite wildflowers. What is the largest weed in Edgewood, as measured by individual plant mass? (a) Fuller's teasel; (b) Eucalyptus tree; (c) Yellow-star thistle; (d) Tree of Heaven
- 4. Encouraging naturalists and stewards of the future, the Junior Explorer program has conducted educational walks for children aged 4-17. The more walk leaders, the more programs can be offered to local children. How many years has the Junior Explorer program been in existence? (a) 10; (b) 15; (c) 20; (d) 5280
- 5. Edgewood was formerly part of a Spanish land grant. The land was divided and sold many times before John Isaac acquired a portion of the property in 1891. Where did he get the building materials to build a home for his bride at Edgewood? (a) He bought the wood from William Page, owner of Page's Mill; (b) He recycled material from an international exposition; (c) From trees felled at Edgewood; (d) Home Depot
- 6. How many bluebird nest boxes are there at Edgewood? (a) 12; (b) 24; (c) 30; (d) 5280

Answers: 1d, 2c, 3b, 4c, 5b, 6b

2017 Bluebird Monitoring Report

by Frances K. Morse



Mama bluebird. © 2017 Frances Morse

Our 2017 Western Bluebird (WEBL) monitoring season was filled with surprises, disappointments, unanswered questions, and drama from House Wrens (HOWR)! Whitney Mortimer, Chris O'Connell, and I checked our 24 nest boxes weekly from early March until early July. Thanks to John Morse for enthusiastically substituting when needed.

This season followed a few years of drought and a heavy rain year in 2016. Here are our season results:

2017 Nest Box Data Summary (24 boxes)

Bird	Nests	Eggs	Hatched	Fledged
WEBL	11	41	28 (68%)	16 (39%)
TRSW	7	35	35 (100%)	17 (49%)
ATFL	1	4	4 (100%)	4 (100%)
HOWR	3	1	0	0
Total	22	81	67 (83%)	37 (46%)

Overall, we had 22 nests, 81 eggs, 67 hatchlings, and 37 fledglings. After no signs last year of Ash-Throated Flycatchers (ATFL), we were pleased that a pair of them chose a grassland box to nest and fledge their 4 eggs. Tree Swallows (TRSW) also had a fairly normal year, hatching all their eggs, and fledging almost half of them. In contrast, it was not a good year for our Bluebirds. Only twenty-eight eggs hatched (68%), and sadly, only 16 babies (39%) fledged into our park.

We find it helpful to look at our results over time. As you can see in the Five-Year Results table, our bluebirds have been declining the last couple of years – with 2017 being the worst year across most measures, especially fledging rate.



Bluebird eggs and feather. © 2017 Frances Morse

Five-Year Results: Bluebirds

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Nests	11	9	17	15	17
Eggs	41	40	74	74	79
Hatchlings	28 (68%)	34 (85%)	59 (80%)	63 (85%)	64 (81%)
Fledglings	16 (39%)	28 (70%)	54 (73%)	52 (70%)	50 (63%)

(continued on Page 8)

(Volunteer Spotlight...continued from Page 2)

in or knowledge of either plants or anything naturerelated, other than simply enjoying the outdoors. The passion for the natural world he witnessed in folks like Ken Himes, Paul Heiple, and Drew Shell inspired Alf to gain his own body of expertise and fields of practice. The inspiration, knowledge, enjoyment, and friendships to be had as a member of this volunteer community are all a part of what he treasures most about his involvement at Edgewood.

A dedicated and knowledgeable Friend of Edgewood (FoE) volunteer, Alf is an inspiration for us all in our commitment to FoE's mission to preserve, restore, and educate – ourselves as well as others. ♥

(Bluebird Report....continued from Page 7)

We are seeing a similar pattern (but not as dramatic) across all species:

Five-Year Results: All Species

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Nests	22	17	24	19	21
Eggs	81	81	106	93	95
Hatchlings	67 (83%)	59 (72%)	80 (75%)	77 (83%)	77 (81%)
Fledglings	37 (46%)	53 (65%)	70 (66%)	61 (66%)	63 (66%)

We're not quite sure what's happening, especially with bluebirds, but we have some conjectures (but no proof!). The grasses were taller this season and grew tall sooner than usual. This may have made it more difficult for mama and papa bluebirds to find insects for themselves and their babies. Relatedly, it had been reported that there were fewer grasshoppers this season (a morsel particularly favored by bluebirds) and that spiders were smaller in size. Additionally, the 2016 season followed a drought year, suggesting that the birds that fledged that year were not as hearty as usual. We also have had an increasing number of House Wrens (HOWR) raiding our boxes, building their large stick nests on top of WEBL nests and tossing WEBL eggs to the ground. Finally, in many ways bluebirds may not be as robust a species as other birds. (For example, in a recent large Cornell Lab of Ornithology study, it was shown that predator guards were effective for most species (7% increase in fledgling rate), but were not effective for bluebirds. The study suggested that perhaps bluebirds have more serious or different survival problems compared to other species.

Going forward, we will be talking with San Mateo County Parks personnel about possible mowing on some of the grassland areas where we have nest boxes. We are also planning to move some boxes, perhaps nearer to the BCB habitat areas which are well maintained in terms of non-native grasses.

As we usually do, we will report our results to the California Bluebird Recovery Program (CBRP) (http://www.cbrp.org) which monitors the bluebird population statewide, to see if the trends we experienced this season were present across the state and San Mateo County.



Selfie of bluebird box monitors, Whitney Mortimer and Frances Morse. © 2017 Whitney Mortimer

We are looking for more volunteers to help with the nest box monitoring next year. Please see our ad elsewhere in this newsletter.

In the meantime, enjoy the smaller number of bluebirds that will be flying around next spring and hope for a better season next year. ♥

Help Wanted: Bluebird Nest Box Monitors



Hungry to help? Interested in going off-trail at Edgewood Wanna get up close and personal with baby bluebirds? Don't mind scraping a little bird poop from the inside of a nest box? Then, join the bluebird nest box monitors team! We need both regular and substitute monitors. No experience needed. Training provided. Monitoring the nest boxes is intense work for 4 months each season, but it is highly rewarding and fun! If you are interested in helping, please contact Frances Morse at: info@FriendsofEdgewood.org.

Nature Hikes from December 2017 to February 2018

December 16: TBD - Roger Humphrey

What About All The Moss? – January 20:

Rebecca Reynolds

February 17: Preview of Coming Attractions

- Kathleen Goforth

All of our Nature Hikes start at the Bill and Jean Lane Education Center in Edgewood Park at 10 a.m., unless otherwise noted.



mail.

Yes, I'd like to become a Friend of Edgewood! Here's my membership donation to support preservation, education, and restoration:

mere's my mem	persnip donation to suppor	t preservation, education, and resto
Join or renew onlin	ne at FriendsofEdgewood.org	I'd like to get the newsletter by email
\$25 Friend \$100 Steward	\$50 Advocate ** Other: \$	Please keep my thank-you gifts. Please keep my donation anonymous.
Lake University	re receive a set of six Edgewood	riease keep my donation anonymous.
	rs of \$100 or more also receive a n to <i>Bay Nature</i> Magazine.	Make checks payable to Friends of Edgewood, and mail to:
Name		Friends of Edgewood PO Box 3422
Address		Redwood City, CA 94064-3422
		For volunteer opportunities, visit www.FriendsofEdgewood.org/Get-Involved
City	STZIP	WWW. Heliadole agowood.org Cot Hivored
Phone		Friends of Edgewood
Email		PRESERVE - EDUCATE - RESTORE

Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve PO Box 3422 Redwood City, CA 94064-3422

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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.friendsofedgewood.org

PRESERVE • EDUCATE • RESTORE

Page 10 Edgewood Explorer December 2017

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.

2018 Board of Directors

Laurie Alexander Sandy Bernhard Kathy Goforth Bill Korbholz Kathy Korbholz Linda Leong Angela Mallett John Morse Todd Reimche Howie Smith



UPCOMING EVENTS

2018 Docent Training Register by January 10

Adopt-A-Highway

Next Sessions: 12/2, 1/7, 2/3

To volunteer or get more information, contact Dave Hershey at adoptahighway-coordinator@friendsofedgewood.org

Third Saturday Nature Walks

10 AM @ BJLEC (heavy rain cancels)

Second Sunday Bird Walks 1/14,2/11

8 AM @ BJLEC (heavy rain cancels)

For more, see http://www.friendsofedgewood.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.friendsofedgewood.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@friendsofedgewood.org.