



OAKLEAVES

A PUBLICATION OF SMALL WILDERNESS AREA PRESERVATION

P.O. BOX 6442, LOS OSOS, CALIFORNIA 93412-6442 ❖ (805) 528-0392 ❖ FEBRUARY / MARCH 2019

Is It Time For a Name Change?

By Yolanda Waddell

Almost everyone who lives on the Central Coast of California knows about the Elfin Forest. More often than not, if you mention the Elfin Forest, the person you are speaking to says, "Oh yes, I've been there and it is beautiful." That is not the case with the name of our organization, Small Wilderness Area Preservation, or SWAP. Board members over the years have complained that they constantly have to explain what "SWAP" means, and what we do.

In the past few months, SWAP Board members have discussed the possibility of changing the organization's name to something like "Friends of the Elfin Forest." That is possible because, while SWAP was an umbrella corporation with several chapters in the past, we are down to just one chapter, the Los Osos/Morro Bay Chapter. We no longer use our chapter name because the paperwork has been done to merge our chapter's finances with those of the SWAP corporation.

The question arose: would changing the organization's name mean that we will have to change it with the California Secretary of State, and with the federal government? The State holds our incorporation records, and the federal government holds our 501©3 or tax deductible status. We have learned that other organizations have changed their "working" name while keeping their original

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Mural Painting Auction Raises \$1,050

By Yolanda Waddell; Photos by Joan Sullivan



Arne Kirkewoog, top bidder at the mural painting auction, receives the painting from Barbara Rosenthal.

At 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 15, a small crowd gathered in front of the Elfin Forest mural that is located on the east wall of the Rexall Drug and Gift Store in Los Osos. A live auction of Barbara Rosenthal's original mural painting was about to take place.

The mural painting had been on an exhibit journey around Los Osos, beginning last September with a "kickoff" reception hosted by Edward Jones Financial Advisor Deanna Richards at the Edward Jones Los Osos office. During October, November and

Auction *continued on page 3*



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*of the Los Osos/Morro Bay Chapter of
Small Wilderness Area Preservation (SWAP)*

consists of the following members:

Jan DiLeo, Chair
Skip Rotstein, Vice Chair
Dave Bowlus, Treasurer
Yolanda Waddell, Secretary
Pat Murray, Member at Large

The SWAP Board of Directors meets monthly
at 2 p.m. on the 2nd Monday of the month
at the Community Room,
Morro Shores Mobile Home Park,
633 Ramona Ave., Los Osos.

The next meetings are

***Monday, February 11,
and Monday, March 11.***

**All Board meetings are open to the public.
To confirm the date, time and location
(which are subject to change),
call (805) 528-0392.**



CONTACT SWAP

If you have questions about SWAP activities or
want to volunteer, please call
(805) 528-0392 and leave a message.

A recorded message will give information
about our 3rd Saturday Walks,
Work Saturdays, and other events.

If you have questions, concerns or comments
about any problems in the Elfin Forest,
call or write: Bob Yetter

SLO County Parks Supervising Ranger
1144 Monterey Street, SLO, CA 93408
(805) 781-1196

Owners of dogs off-leash can be cited. If you
witness dogs off-leash, vandalism or obvious
crimes, call the County Sheriff at 781-4550
or Bob Yetter at 781-1196.

HELP STILL WANTED!

We ran the following ad in the December/January Oakleaves, and possibly because of the busy holiday season, didn't hear from anyone. Please do consider the following requests for help if you have the time and capabilities needed for either of these positions. Thank you!

Website Assistants

Do you have past experience in setting up and maintaining a website? Is that knowledge just sitting there, waiting to be used again? Our Webmaster, Bob Meyer, needs help with updating and maintaining the SWAP website, www.elfin-forest.org. He says it helps to know how to work with HTML, but he will train you to use it if you aren't familiar with it. Working on the website will involve posting information and photos, and streamlining text and appearance of the website. Interested? Contact bob@elfin-forest.org. This is a volunteer position

Board Meeting Recorder

The SWAP Board needs a person to take notes and type up minutes of its monthly meetings. Each meeting takes place on the second Monday of the month in the afternoon, and lasts for two hours. This can be a volunteer or paid position. Our current recorder, Beverly Boyd, has generously stepped in to do the job on a short-term basis, and would happily turn the job over to someone else who likes to write and enjoys the challenge of condensing a 2-hour meeting onto three or four pages. If you are interested, contact SWAP Secretary Yolanda Waddell at yolanda@elfin-forest.org.

Name Change *continued from page 1*

name for legal and tax purposes, so we are comfortable with selecting a new organization name that would reflect our mission of caring for the Elfin Forest.

Before we proceed with a name change, we would like to hear from you, our members, about this. Do you like the idea of changing your organization's name to something like "Friends of the Elfin Forest?" Or not? Do you have other ideas for a name? Please let us know what you think. Send an e-mail to swap@elfin-forest.org. Thanks for your help.

Board Election Results

The December/January issue of Oakleaves included a ballot to elect (actually re-elect) three members to the SWAP Board of Directors. This was necessary because there was no Annual Meeting (Celebration) of our organization in 2018. Board members are usually elected by members attending the Annual Meeting.

All ballots received by the deadline of Friday, December 7, were counted at the December 10 Board meeting. The results were a unanimous re-election of the three board members: Dave Bowlus (incumbent) for two years; Jan DiLeo (incumbent) for two years; and Pat Murray (incumbent) for one year. There were no write-in candidates.

Thank you to all who participated in the election. If there are any questions about this election, please e-mail swap@elfin-forest.org or leave a phone message at 805-528-0392.

Please Report Sightings

Have you observed any unusual birds in the Elfin Forest? Mammals? Reptiles? Amphibians? Insects? Interesting activities or footprints of wildlife in our Elfin Forest? Unusual plants? Taken a good photo? Please report any interesting sightings to your Oakleaves editors at: oakleaf@elfin-forest.org or leave a message on SWAP's answering machine, (805) 528-0392.

Auction *continued from page 1*

December, it was seen at Rosenthal Art Studio, in the SWAP booth at Baywood Oktoberfest, and at the Los Osos Chamber of Commerce, Rabobank, the Rexall Drug and Gift Store, and Celia's Garden Café. Thanks to Deanna Richards; Melissa Jane Tucker, Manager of Rabobank; Judi Tewell, Rexall Drug and Gift Store co-owner; Brandon Dove of the Los Osos Chamber of Commerce; and Celia Alfirevic, owner of Celia's Garden Café for their generous assistance in displaying the painting.

Thank you also to Rosey Rosenthal, who created signage for the mural painting display and for transporting the display to its various destinations. Very special thanks to Pat Murray, chair of the Mural Painting Auction Committee, who tirelessly promoted the auction, arranged for viewing/bidding locations, and did countless setups of the mural painting exhibit as well as for the kick-off event and the final auction event. Members of the Auction Committee besides Pat, Barbara, and Rosey Rosenthal were Leslie Rotstein and Yolanda Waddell. Finally, thank you to Judi Tewell, who did an Elfin Forest fundraiser for SWAP; Rexall Drug and Gift Store donated ten percent of total sales on one of the store's busiest days.

Barbara Rosenthal decided to auction her painting when she learned about the cost of a project that her husband, Rosey Rosenthal was working on: replacement of five plastic panels with original Elfin Forest donor names that are attached to the mural. The original panels, made in 1994, were deteriorated and barely legible. Finally, after many attempts to find a sign maker who could print 2,600 names on four panels, Rosey connected with Signs of Success in Santa Maria. They did an expert job of printing the names and also a panel that explains why the names are there.

During the journey of the mural painting, it was accompanied by a silent auction bid sheet. Bids were to be raised in increments of no less than \$10. Slowly the bid amount grew, until just before the live auction, it had reached \$850. Auctioneer Bob Pavlik, one of our 3rd Saturday Elfin Forest walk leaders, announced the unveiling of the name panels. Rexall Co-owner Gary Tewell, removed the covers to reveal five beautiful clear Lucite panels with the names and text clearly visible.

Then the auction commenced. Auctioneer Pavlik asked for a \$25 increase over the \$850 bid. Rexall co-owner Judi Tewell raised it by \$50. A man across from her raised her bid by \$50. Judi responded by raising \$50 again. This continued, with the auctioneer encouraging them, until the amount reached \$1,000. A final bid of \$1,050 was made by Arne Kirkewoog, an artist who recently retired to Los Osos. Arne happily received the painting from Barbara Rosenthal, and Judi Tewell said that she was pleased to participate in the auction, and didn't mind losing because, after all, she has the mural.



Auctioneer Bob Pavlik and Yolanda Waddell, left, applaud as Barbara Rosenthal talks about the new donor name panels (behind Barbara) that have just been displayed. Gary Tewell, second from right, holds one of the old deteriorated name panels.

*If future generations are to remember us
with gratitude rather than contempt,
we must leave them more than the miracles of technology.
We must leave them a glimpse of the world
as it was in the beginning,
not just after we got through with it.
~ President Lyndon Johnson ~*



OAKLEAVES

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Dirk Walters, Jean Wheeler.

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An Update on Morro Bay's Eelgrass

By Rachel Pass, Morro Bay National Estuary Program
Photographs courtesy of the MBNEP

Eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) plays a number of important roles in the Morro Bay estuary. Its long blades form an underwater forest that provides a diverse crowd of creatures a place to rest and find food. Eelgrass beds also act as a nursery for a variety of juvenile fish and harbors steelhead trout that enter the estuary before heading out to sea or upstream to spawn.

The Estuary Program has been monitoring eelgrass in Morro Bay for more than fifteen years. From 2007–2016, we tracked its rapid decline from a high of 344 acres to a low of 13 acres. The rate of loss has since stabilized, but there is still cause for concern.

Since the decline began, the Estuary Program has been collaborating with researchers at Cal Poly and Cuesta College, as well as other experts, to address this issue. Together, we have worked to understand the reasons for the loss of eelgrass in the bay, closely monitored the bay's existing eelgrass, and sought effective methods to restore eelgrass to the estuary.

To this end, we completed a series of small, experimental transplant efforts during 2017. We carefully tracked the progress of those transplant plots and used what we learned to plan and carry out a series of larger transplant efforts the next year.

In 2018, staff, partners, and volunteers braved strong wind, cold water, and deep mud to harvest and transplant more than 3,000 eelgrass shoots. This intrepid group included AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Program members, Cal Poly faculty and students, staff from both local oyster companies, and community members.

Eight months after our latest transplant effort, Estuary Program staff headed out on the water to monitor eelgrass growth at all of the areas planted in 2018 and some of those planted in 2017. We were excited to see that every transplant plot had grown denser and expanded beyond its original one-square-meter size. Some patches had expanded as much as 400% of their original size.

In addition to these planted areas, we were surprised to see many new patches of eelgrass that had grown on their own, starting spontaneously from eelgrass seeds or rhizomes in areas all across the bay. Although acreage of eelgrass in the intertidal zone remains very low, we are glad to see the transplanted plots thriving and new, naturally occurring eelgrass sprouting.

During 2019, we will continue to monitor the growth of eelgrass throughout the bay and conduct additional transplant efforts. You can visit the Estuary Program blog for weekly updates on eelgrass monitoring and restoration as well as other topics related to the health of the bay. Read it online or subscribe to receive the blog by email at MBNEP.org/blog.



Volunteers from AmeriCorps' Watersheds Stewards Program and Estuary Program staff work to transplant eelgrass during low tide in Morro Bay.



The white square frame in the photograph above shows the original one-meter-squared size of this transplant plot. After sixteen months, the patch has grown much denser and has expanded considerably.



Eelgrass supports a diverse range of wildlife including invertebrates, like this crab.

Blue, Purple, Chaparral, or San Diego Nightshade

By Dirk Walters, Ph.D.; painting by Heather Johnson

(Ed. Note: Revised by Dr. Walters from the very first in his series for us, now covering well over 100 species of plants. This species originally appeared on page 7 in the December 1997/January 1998 issue. *Solanum xanti* is called Purple nightshade in the *Elfin Forest Pocket Guide*).

My original article on this species was accompanied by a grainy black and white photograph. This time the article is accompanied by a beautiful painting by Los Osos resident and SWAP member, Heather Johnson, who has given permission for us to use it in the *Oakleaves*. If you are reading this online at elfin-forest.org, you'll be seeing this painting in color with its lovely lavender flowers. I find it fun to gather together tidbits of information about Elfin Forest plants especially when it can be accompanied by wonderful art work. Hopefully, others of you, like Heather, will consider giving me a chance to come up with a story about a plant of which you're fond.

The name most commonly used around here is blue or purple nightshade (*Solanum xanti*). This plant is not pushy in its appearance unless it's in bloom. Its yard-tall stem is half woody or suffrutescent. The ordinary looking, mostly unlobed leaves are up to three inches long and lance-shaped to oval. Blue nightshade even prefers to grow near other plants and just blend in. It is taking advantage of the habitat created by its often more dominant neighbors. The dominant plant can be considered a kind of nurse plant in that it shelters the blue nightshade by creating an environment that is moister due to the shade it casts. The nurse plant also protects the leaves of the blue nightshade from drying winds by slowing them down which lowers the amount of water lost from evaporation (transpiration) from the plant's leaves. Look for blue nightshade where a little extra moisture would be expected. I've seen it around the lowest section of the Boardwalk and near Siena's View.

Blue, Purple, Chaparral, or San Diego Nightshade are some of the common names associated with this plant in California. The species extends beyond our state into Baja California, Arizona, Nevada and Oregon. Since its flowers are so beautiful, I suspect it has many other names as well. What is the meaning of the common names? There is no problem with the purple or blue names as this refers to the color of the petals or corolla. It is a common component of chaparral and its range spreads south to San Diego and beyond, so that the meaning of those names is also obvious.

The name, nightshade, however is much more interesting. It dates back at least to Medieval Europe or maybe even to Roman times and refers to pulling down around one the blackness of sleep or death. This is quite appropriate as the Eurasian



relatives of blue nightshade, including bitter-sweet nightshade (*S. dulcamara*), black nightshade (*S. nigra*), and its close European relatives such as henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*), mandrake (*Mandragora officinarum*) and belladonna (*Atropa belladonna*); are all slightly to moderately poisonous. The green parts of all nightshades contain a cornucopia of poisonous alkaloid compounds. Some compounds such as atropine (from belladonna), are still used medicinally.

There are, however, a number of members of nightshades from other parts of the world that produce edible parts. There are edible fruits of eggplant (*S. melongea*) from Africa and pepino (*S. muricatum*) from Latin America. The most important of the edible nightshades is the white, Idaho, or Irish potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) which is native to the South American Andes. Another member of this genus from Latin America is the tomato or love apple (*Solanum lycopersicon*). This plant is sometimes put in its own genus (*Lycopersicon*). It got the common name, love apple, in Europe shortly after its introduction and its use in their gardens for its intricately lobed greyish leaves and biggish beautiful red fruit. The fruit was NOT eaten at that time because it was thought to be poisonous. If one was sorrowful over the loss of a lover, it was said that eating a tomato would end the suffering. My major professor, Dr. Charles Heiser, told his botany class the story of a jilted Italian lover who wanted to end it all so he ate a number of tomatoes. Of course he didn't die and he found that he really liked their taste. So he started serving them to all his Italian friends and from there comes the association of tomatoes with Italy.

Weed Warrior Reports

By Skip Rotstein & Vicky Johnsen, Conservation Committee Co-Chairs

November 3 – Water Bars, Boardwalk and Benches

Report from Skip Rotstein:

Fall is the season for erosion control in the Elfin Forest. Dave Bowlus and Pete Sarafian shored up water bars and dug trenches to direct rainwater away from sand trails. Prisila and Rich Johnson continued their team effort to maintain the boardwalk. They reported very few loose cross boards. Emphasis will shift to placing new screws in old toe rails. A new project for coming months will be to replace the rusted screws in the center of cross boards. The rusted stubs have a tendency to back out of the wood and pose a threat to walkers on the boardwalk.

Skip Rotstein, Lannie Erickson, and new volunteer Mike Elder initiated the new “paint a bench” project by sanding three benches and painting one between 15th and 13th Streets on the upper boardwalk. Carpenter ants have been feasting on some of the boards that still appeared serviceable enough to be worth painting.

Yolanda Waddell brought the traditional chocolate chip cookies to the workers at morning’s end.

December 1 – “Un-cancelled” Work Party

Report from Vicky Johnsen:

The “First-Saturday-Work-Party” for December was cancelled due to a predicted “chance of rain” which didn’t materialize until well after lunch. No matter: Vicky, Pete and Skip Rotstein convened at 15th street at 9:00 AM in case anyone showed up. It was a beautiful morning and Vicky just happened to have some SWAP shovels in her van; therefore it was decided that some erosion repair work could be performed below Bush Lupine Point. The three “Swapsketeers” added a couple new 4X4 water bars and repositioned many more. Then they filled in washed out areas with chicken wire, brush and sand to slow down and redirect the water flow. All in all, it was a very satisfying impromptu mini work event.

...While Rich and Prisila Johnson sent this:

We spent the half-day repairing one section of boardwalk rail and replacing rusted-out deck screws. We did find some narrow-leaved ice plant near Siena’s View, per the adjacent photo. We will take our shovel and remove it in January. The photo can go in the “know your enemy” file.

Join First Saturday Work Parties

We invite you to join us on any first Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon at the north end of 15th Street in Los Osos to enjoy satisfying physical activity in fresh air amid lovely surroundings. Please dress for wind, fog, or sun. Layers work well. Long pants and long shirt sleeves are good. Sturdy shoes are a must. Take care not to park in front of driveways or mailboxes. To request more information, call (805) 528-0392.



Weed Warrior Mike Elder paints a newly sanded bench during the November work party. Photo by Skip Rotstein.



During the December work party Rich and Prisila Johnson spotted a young Slender-leaved iceplant and planned to bring a shovel to the next work party to remove this lovely but very invasive plant.

Photo by Rich Johnson.

Let’s All Pull Together—Poem

By Lannie Erickson

Weed warriors, rise Saturday morning,
We shall make our way to the field.
Our green foes shall there await us,
In the end they must surely yield.
We shall seek them in the meadows,
We will rout them midst the trees.
Not the smallest shall escape us,
Though they bring us to our knees.

At last at noon, the sun above us,
Victorious Weed Warriors will stand,
Laying down our gloves and shovels,
Smiling faces and cookie in hand.

Photos From the Forest

SWAP Docent and Conservation Co-Chair Vicky Johnsen loves her Sunday morning Elfin Forest Ambassador walks. She especially enjoyed her January walks, following that month's frequent rain showers, and sent us a lovely assortment of photos.

Shown clockwise on this page are: Morro Manzanita in full bloom with Hollister Peak in the background; a mushroom emerging from the oak leaf litter that a short while before had covered it; Fuchsia-flowered gooseberry, also in full bloom with a Rubber-band lichen perching on its branches; and a California Thrasher that greeted Vicky with a song.



Coming Up in the Elfin Forest

Text and Adjacent Photos by Jean Wheeler

Finally lots of rain, and our little wilderness area is looking a whole lot better for it. The shrubs have become a consistently vibrant green. Morro Manzanitas are covered with far more of their gorgeous white and slightly blushing pink little bell flowers than I've seen in several years (Vicky Johnsen's photo of them is on page 7).

The many large buds seen on the Buckbrush *Ceanothus* in mid January should open to nearly surround the boardwalk with their white to lavender blooms by the time this issue reaches you. Fuchsia-flowering gooseberries are providing Anna's Hummingbirds with nectar from their long red flower tubes (also pictured by Vicky on page 7). During the two months covered by this issue, we can expect lots more of our late winter and early spring plants to respond to the return of winter rains by bursting into bloom in a variety of colors.

California Peonies (my adjacent photo) are showing their unusually large lush leaves rising barely a foot or two directly from the soil. The leaves are protected from hot sun by shrubs under which they shelter. Look for them along the 11th street sand trail and near Siena's View only for a month or so in winter after rains. Adorned by a few drooping red balls of flowers an inch or two in diameter, they remain only for a few weeks; then the entire plants disappear completely for nearly another year.

The frequent rains of January should also bring on an excellent display of mushrooms, especially in the shelter of our live oak groves. Even in the driest years our annual mushroom walk revealed a few of these special and short-lived plant types. In years with enough rain before that event, we've been treated to an amazing variety of these spore-bearing reproductive parts of fungus organisms whose bodies are usually spread throughout the soil below the much smaller fruiting structure we see above ground.

Mushrooms come in an amazing variety of shapes and colors. Some are delightfully edible, but many are deadly poisonous, and it can be very difficult to discern which of those is which. There is even one mushroom we sometimes see on the annual walk in the lower oak groves that is a very appropriate resident of our Elfin Forest—it is called the Fluted Black Elfin Saddle! I took the adjacent photo of it a few years ago on our walk. See page 9 for information about this year's mushroom walk on February 16.

There are a number of migratory ducks on the estuary, including American Wigeons, Buffleheads, Northern Pintails, Northern Shovelers, and Teal, but the waters are not nearly as crowded with them as they used to be each winter until just the last few years. Periodicals by birding organizations such as Audubon and Cornell Ornithology Lab are suggesting many more birds are not migrating as far south in the last few years in response to global warming, which has raised temperatures in arctic and subarctic climates much more strongly than in middle and lower latitudes.



*Above: California Peony
Below: Fluted Black Elfin Saddle*



Virtually all species of water birds and wading birds listed in our Pocket Guide (sold on page 11) are at peak populations for the year between November and March, as are all the raptors listed, and a great many of the passerines. Watch the shrubs around the boardwalk for flitting finches, sparrows, warblers, wrens, phoebes, chickadees, titmice, nuthatches, and other little brown and little grey birds. The larger thrashers, towhees, scrub jays, quail, blackbirds, and doves can be seen and/or heard regularly. By the end of February and through March into April, we'll also have the spring migration of birds passing through, and possibly remaining for a few days en route from their winter homes in Central and South America to their summer breeding ranges in our northern states and Canada.

Come for a walk on the wild side in our small wilderness area and watch for what will probably be the finest display of wildflowers our Elfin Forest has enjoyed in a good half dozen years. Listen and look for migratory birds passing through and resident avians as they engage in mating rituals and prepare to raise their 2019 families. Try to catch a glimpse of lizards, rabbits, squirrels, or maybe even a wild coyote.

WALKS in the ELFIN FOREST

February 16, 9:30 a.m. –

Fungus Foray – Mushrooms and More

Join fungophile Dennis Sheridan on a delightful exploration of the Elfin Forest floor for fascinating mushrooms such as wood blewits, black elfin saddles, earthstars, golden caps, boletes, and poisonous amanitas. Dennis will take us on a trek to the lower oak grove next to the bay to find these marvelous fungi. Bring a magnifying lens and, if you have a mystery mushroom in your yard, bring a sample for Dennis to identify. This is not a mushroom collecting walk. All plants in the Elfin Forest are protected by law. Only a very heavy rain will cancel the walk.

March 16, 9:30 a.m. –

Marine Life in the Estuary

Cuesta College marine biologist Steve Hendricks will lead a walk focusing on aquatic life in the Morro Bay estuary. As we look over the estuary from each of the Elfin Forest's two viewing decks, Steve will talk about life histories of the dominant species found in the bay, the role they play in the estuarine ecosystem, and current threats to their survival. We'll learn how local Native Americans and early settlers fished and harvested aquatic life in the bay, and about current aquaculture within the bay. This is a rare opportunity to know more about what goes on under the surface of our estuary.

Walks in the Elfin Forest begin at times stated above at the north end (1100 block) of 15th Street off Santa Ysabel in Los Osos. Wear closed-toe shoes, long sleeves and pants to avoid poison oak and mosquitoes. Park carefully, avoiding driveways and mailboxes, and leave pets at home. The easy paced walks last 1-1/2 to 2 hours. For more information or if you use a wheelchair call (805) 528-0392.



Carolyn Geraghty (in center facing camera), discussed the intent, design and status of Morro Bay National Estuary restoration projects in the watershed and in the estuary itself, especially efforts to restore eelgrass from drastically reduced abundance in recent years.

Photo by Jean Wheeler.



Marlin Harms reported that Bob Pavlik's November walk was a "really good walk with some great readings and conversation and even a few bird sightings." Photo by Marlin Harms.



Conservation Committee members Dave Bowlus, foreground, and Skip Rotstein deliver a bench to be repaired.

Benches On the Move

By Benchy McBenchbottom; Photo by Yolanda Waddell

We benches have been very happy to see two of our sturdy SWAP volunteer friends, Dave Bowlus and Skip Rotstein, remove three of us from the Elfin Forest and deliver them to three awesome repair volunteers: Gerald Clare, Bill Richmond and Jay Waddell.

Two of the benches that were taken on their wild ride to the "repair shops" are infested with dry-rot, and will require a lot of work. Bill Richmond has offered to work on the last one of the dry-rot infested benches. The rest of us just need sanding and painting, which could well be done on site.

Working on site to restore benches in the Elfin Forest is a great way for our volunteer restorers to enjoy being in the Elfin Forest and making us look and feel 100% better. There are still about 16 of us waiting for someone to come and do some sanding and painting. Dave Bowlus tells me that SWAP will provide sandpaper, paint and any instructions that are needed. Think you can handle that? Send an e-mail to swap@elfin-forest.org with the words "Bench repair" in the subject line, or you can call 805-528-0392 if you prefer. Hope to hear from you!

Thank You to Our Generous Members

Compiled by Betsy Kinter, SWAP Database Coordinator

NEW MEMBERS:

Natalie Cady Bishop
Ella Goven*
Patrick & Ann Kimbell*
Jen Nelson*
Susan L. O'Connor
Joan Sullivan*

RENEWING MEMBERS:

Randy Ball*	Martha MacGillivray
David & Rosemary Bentley	Susan McTaggart
Stephen Best*	Hector C. Montenegro
Charles E. Blair*	Marie Moore & Elaine Mason*
Carolyn Boomer & Mike Askew*	Jerry Mullins*
William Bouton*	Bill Newman*
Roger E. Carmody*	Robert Pavlik*
David & Linda Chipping*	Nicholas & Dorothy Pier*
Lisa Coffman	Nova Poff*
Kathleen Copeland*	Barbara Renshaw*
Elizabeth Curren*	Judith Resnick*
Diane Dalenberg*	Rita Robinson
John Dilworth Jr. & Carole Maurer*	Dr. Jan W. Simek*
Ms. Ileen Doering*	Charles & Bernadette Soter*
Lurlie Edgecomb*	SWCA Environmental Consultants*
Kathy & Emil Flock*	Alyce Thorp & Bob Mayberry*
Gary Giannico*	Anthony V. Toscano*
Jan Harper	the Ungar family
Jim Havlena*	Chris & Jim Van Beveren*
Dr. Steve Jio & family	Gary & Marianne Wallace*
Ms. Christine A. Lancellotti*	Lisa Wallender*
Jennifer & Larry Levine*	Junia Wolf*
Ms. Teddy Llovet	

In memory of Barbara Machado:

Howard & Marlo Miller
Yolanda & Jay Waddell

In memory of J.T. Taylor:

Yolanda & Jay Waddell

Mutt Mitt Committee Disbanded

By Yolanda Waddell

In 2001, Sandra Beebe approached the SWAP Board with an interesting proposal. She encouraged SWAP to apply for a grant from the Morro Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP) for funds to pay for a "Mutt Mitt" dispenser and trash can for each of the Forest's seven entrances.

Sandra told the Board that she was instrumental in getting a program in Morro Bay for Mutt Mitt dispensers to be placed around the city. She said there was a marked reduction in dog fecal matter where the dispensers were placed. Since SWAP had a problem with dog feces in the Elfin Forest since its inception, the Board unanimously approved the idea of applying for the grant. MBNEP approved the grant, and Sandra and her husband Curt installed a Mutt Mitt dispenser and trashcan at all seven Elfin Forest entrances.

The SWAP Mutt Mitt Committee was formed to find "caretakers" for each of the dispensers. Board member Pat Murray chaired the committee and found a person on each of the streets, 11th through 17th, to agree to keep the dispenser at that street end filled with Mutt Mitts.

A later committee chair, Danna Weidner, gave the name "captains" to the caretakers. The most recent committee chair, Heidi Kausch, has observed that there have been fewer requests for more Mutt Mitts from the Captains. The reason is that County Parks Aides who empty the trashcans have also been filling Mutt Mitt dispensers if they are empty. The reality is that over the years, Mutt Mitts have become a part of the supply budget for all of the County Parks. Now there are Mutt Mitt dispensers in just about every location where dogs are walked.

County Parks Supervising Ranger Bob Yetter agreed that since efforts were being duplicated, County Parks should take over filling the Elfin Forest Mutt Mitt dispensers. Committee Chair Heidi Kausch has sent letters of thanks to the Mutt Mitt Captains: Carolyn Boomer, Scott Danielson, Jennifer and Brian Deutsch, Larry and Pat Grimes, Susan McTaggart, Jack Murphy and Beth Wimer. The SWAP Board of Directors thanks them as well, and also thanks Sandra Beebe, who started it all.

DONATIONS:

Andrea Davis
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Mary Lou Wilhelm
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Tamara Snow
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Skip & Leslie Rotstein for Ed Bobich lecture
at the Morro Bay Natural History Museum

**Thanks to those listed above who donated more than the \$25 (regular) or \$15 (senior or student) membership dues. The additional donations will be used for special projects in the Elfin Forest. If you recently sent a donation to SWAP and don't see your name in this issue's New and Renewing list, be assured that your gift will be acknowledged in the next bimonthly issue. Gifts are processed by two different volunteers before reaching our editors, and newsletter copy deadline is one month before the date of the issue.*



Elfin Forest Caps

One size fits all for these caps. They have adjustable straps in the back and are made of 100% cotton. Two handsome colors are available, forest green or maroon. Each cap has emblazoned in gold across its front the image of one of our coast live oaks, elfin-short but with a wide sprawling canopy, and the words "Elfin Forest Natural Area."



SWAP Shoppers' Order Form

See Photos of All Items at www.elfin-forest.org

All Prices Include Sales Tax

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Useful 56-page guide to plants and animals of the Elfin Forest. Lists for mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, arthropods including moths and butterflies, gastropods, vascular plants, lichens, and mushrooms. Some with charts for seasonality, color and more.

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Possible Name Change— What Do You Think?

The SWAP Board is considering the possibility of changing the “working” name of our organization to something more meaningful to residents and visitors, like perhaps “Friends of the Elfin Forest,” while retaining the SWAP name for legal and tax purposes.

Please read the page one article on this suggestion by Yolanda Waddell. The Board would very much like to hear what members and visitors think of this possibility, and suggestions for alternative “working” names would be very welcome.

Thinking of Switching to Online Oakleaves?

If you use your computer a lot, we encourage you to take a look at the online *Oakleaves* at www.elfin-forest.org. Being able to see the 20 or so photos in full color makes it a very attractive alternative to the black-and-white printed copy. If you miss an issue for some reason, it is there, waiting for you. Simply click on “Forest Library,” then “Oakleaves Index” and finally the year and month of the issue that you want to read. Just e-mail us at oakleaf@elfin-forest.org with the subject: Switch me to online.

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