



June 2006

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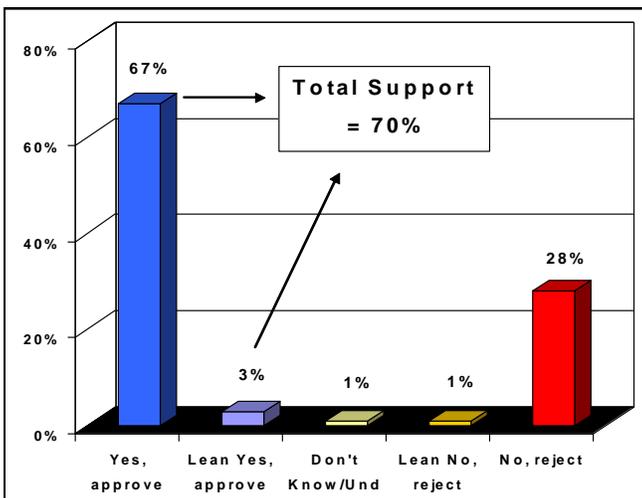
## PARKS FOR THE FUTURE

By Julia Bott

Parks for the Future is the proposed ballot measure to provide dedicated funding for our county parks, city parks, and special districts.

Support to place the measure on the November ballot has been building over the spring and early summer. If two-thirds of the voters approve it in November, it would raise the sales tax by 1/8<sup>th</sup> of a cent, from 8.25% to 8.375% in San Mateo County. That increase, projected to cost the average person \$18 per year, would bring over \$16 million annually in revenues devoted to parks.

The strong level of support for the proposed increased in sales tax, reflected in the poll of likely voters conducted this past April, encouraged Parks for the Future supporters.



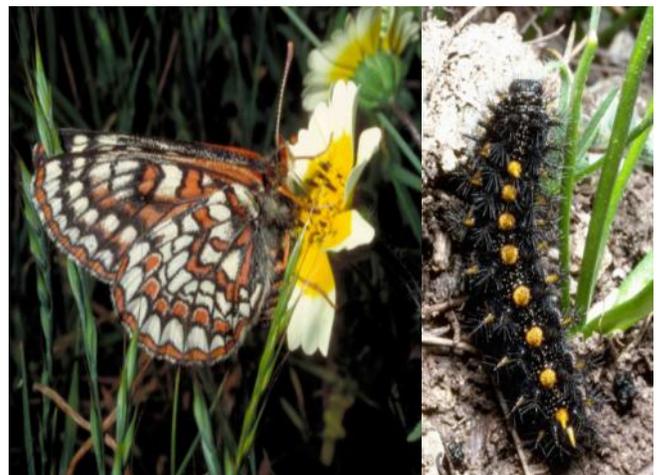
As the graph shows, after hearing both positive and negative arguments, voter support remained at two-thirds. These results were even stronger than the poll conducted in January 2005, likely due to the efforts over the past 18 months to refine the measure and educate the community.

*(Continued on page 6)*

## RETURN OF THE BUTTERFLIES

By Bill Korbholz

By this time next year, hundreds of Bay checkerspot butterflies will be flitting again at Edgewood Natural Preserve.



Photographs by Stuart Weiss

The reintroduction of this animal is the culmination of work begun in 2001 by Dr. Stuart B. Weiss, Ph.D., Consulting Ecologist, Creekside Center for Earth Observations.

The nutrient poor serpentine grasslands at Edgewood previously supported one of the very few remaining populations of the butterfly, a federally threatened species, on the San

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## ORIGINAL EDGEWOOD PAINTINGS TO BENEFIT EDGEWOOD

Trevlyn Williams, Friends of Edgewood member and docent, is showing a new series of paintings entitled Edgewood Views 2006. The paintings will be exhibited at Gallery House, 320 California Ave, Palo Alto (enter through Printers Inc. Cafe). The show opens June 27<sup>th</sup> and ends July 22<sup>nd</sup>. You are invited to the artists' reception Friday July 7<sup>th</sup>, 6-8 pm at the gallery.



Trevlyn will again be donating 10% of sales proceeds of the show to the Friends of Edgewood.



Trevlyn has painted in watercolor for 15 to 20 years. An Emerald Hills resident and frequenter of Edgewood, she has been inspired to paint this lovely landscape. She hopes that her art will be one of the many avenues through which people can gain further appreciation of our precious and beautiful local environment. ☸

## NEW DOCENT GRADUATES

By Mary Wilson

This year the Friends of Edgewood docent training program graduated 6 new docents. They are a group with many different ties to the Preserve and much to contribute to our efforts as docents.

I hope you will meet or have met our new docents on walks this spring and summer and will help them to bridge the gap between training and doing. In alphabetic order we welcome:

- Peigi Duvall, who brings her knowledge of native plants from her work with the local and state-wide horticultural wing of the California Native Plant Society,
- Alf Fengler, already an accomplished “weed warrior” who now can weed AND lead walks,
- Kate Finnigan, who has developed an interest in the Docent Outreach program for school-age children,
- Linda Smith, who has already added to her docent training knowledge by attending the Bay checkerspot butterfly docent enrichment (as did Alf),
- Trish Taylor, who grew up in a house in the Day Camp Area before the land became San Mateo County property and who is helping with the next docent enrichment about the history of the park, and
- Trina Warren, who is experienced with school-age children and is enlarging her skill set to include adults who want to know about wildflowers.

I am grateful to each and every one of them for making my job as training coordinator so much fun.

In addition, I want to thank John Trewin, our new Acting Head Ranger at Edgewood for

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## BIRD SONG (PART 2)

By Lee Franks

*This is the second of 2 installments by Lee on this subject. Part 1 appeared in the March 2006 newsletter and described how birds learn songs and the mechanics of producing such complex sounds. —ed.*

Nearly half of the birds in the world do not sing. They are not, however, silent. Far from it. All birds use sounds to communicate. Most use vocalizations that are short and unmusical and cannot be termed as song. These sounds have considerable functionality and are labeled call-notes or calls, to distinguish them from true song.

Birds generally have 5 to 15 distinct calls with a variety of overlapping functions. These functions include proclamation of territorial ownership, warnings of potential dangers, and maintenance of social contact. Most have some calls that are used only for occasional special purposes. Contact or association calls, for instance, help birds keep track of one another while foraging or when in dense vegetation. Alarm calls signal danger and advise escape flight.

Birds start using calls early in their lives, in some species even before they are hatched. Quail chicks are able to communicate with each other and their mother from inside their eggs. They are thus able to synchronize hatching so that they emerge from the eggs within the space of a couple of hours.

### Dialects

Just as our speech patterns vary regionally, the songs of many birds also show geographic variation. Local variants are called dialects.

They are commonly found in songbirds with populations restricted to particular habitats (coastal, for example), and separated from other populations by unsuitable terrain. The song of the Spotted Towhees, which are Edgewood residents, are composed of just a buzzy trill without any introduction.

Vocal dialects appear to be learned. Young birds

hear the songs sung around their natal territories by their fathers and neighboring males, and acquire the peculiarities of these renditions. Many ornithologists believe that dialects serve as indications of genetic adaptation to local conditions.

The dialects thus enable females to choose males from their own birth area, who presumably carry genes closely adapted to the specific environment in which breeding occurs. Experimental work with several species has shown that females are more responsive to their own song dialects than to more distant song dialects.

### Mimicry

When one species copies the vocalizations of another species, it is referred to as “vocal mimicry.” This vocal characteristic is well known in the Northern Mockingbird and the California Thrasher, both Edgewood residents, but little is known about its precise function, raising interesting questions.

Do mockingbirds and thrashers communicate directly with the species they imitate? Do they use vocal mimicry to help exclude other species from breeding territories? Why are non-avian sounds such as the barking of dogs, screeching of machinery, human whistling, etc., sometimes incorporated into a bird’s repertoire?

The answer to this last question may be simply that natural selection has favored a large and diverse repertoire in some species like the mockingbird and thrasher, and that one way of increasing repertoire size and diversity is to incorporate sounds from the surrounding acoustic environment. Some birds like Jays use vocal mimicry to attract help in mobbing of predators. Neighbors of the species being imitated then gather to scold and help discourage the predator.

### References

Ornithology, Frank B. Gill ; W. H. Freeman and Company, New York

(Continued on page 7)

## EDGEWOOD PHOTOS WEBSITE HONORED

In our last issue, we reported on the new Edgewood Photos website, <http://photos.friendsofedgeswood.org>, which was launched on March 1.

Since then, response has been extremely favorable and complimentary. The general public as well as Edgewood docents are making good use of this informative resource.

The Friends of Edgewood have been invited to submit and present a paper on this website to the Society for Conservation Biology and the Society for Conservation GIS at their joint conference this June. These are two highly respected scientific organizations and we are honored to have been invited. The paper is entitled “A Participatory Web Resource for Plant

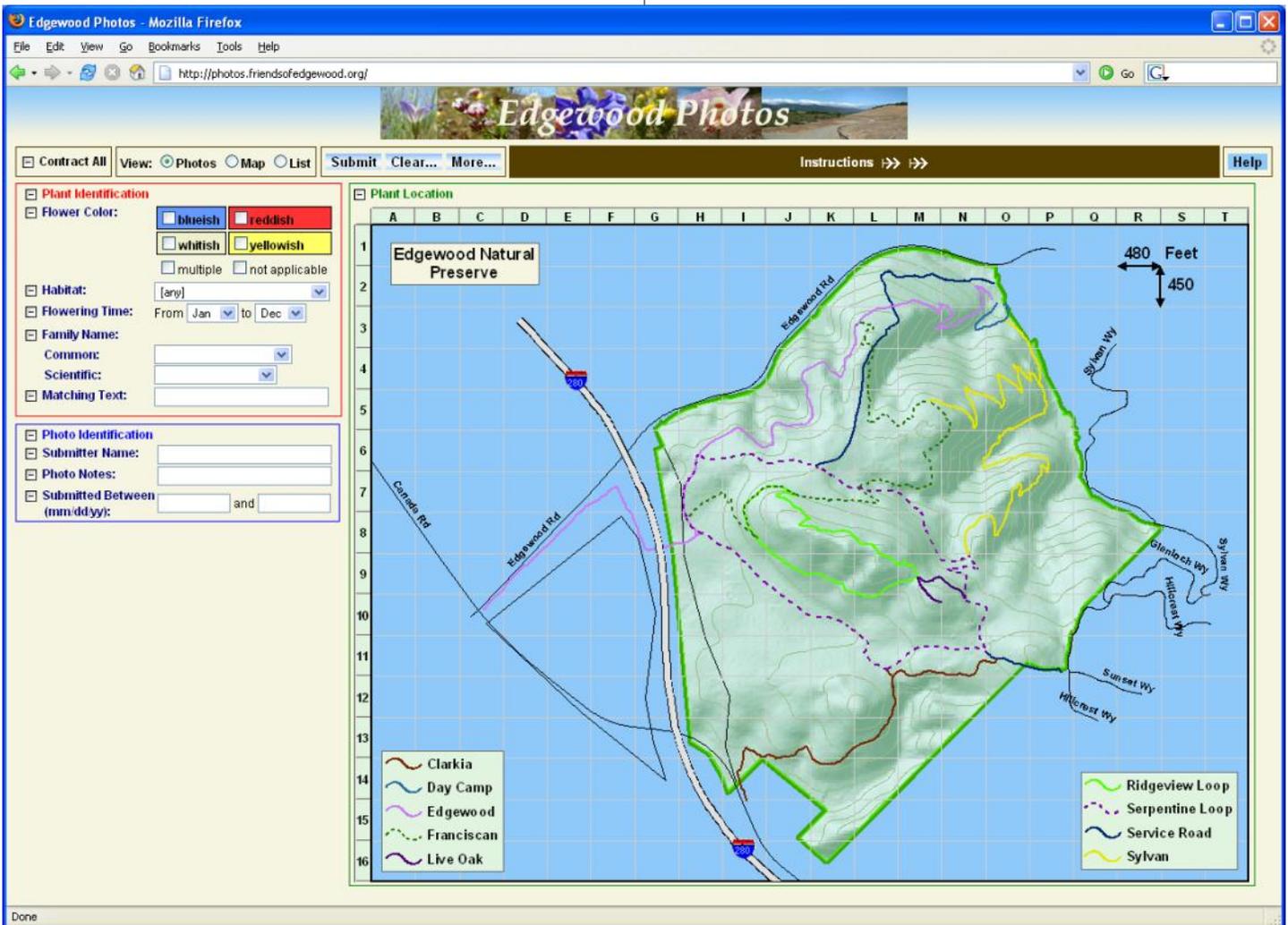
Identification and Location at Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve.”

The conference takes place June 24 to 28 at the McEnery Convention Center in San Jose. Our presentation is at 1:30 on June 28. For more information please see <http://www.scgis.org/>.

We now have over 1200 photos covering about 2/3 of the plant species at Edgewood. Perhaps even more impressive is that we have location data for most of these plants as well so you can find the trail and quadrant in which they occur.

As summer approaches, the late-flowering lilies take on the spotlight at Edgewood. You can find beautiful photographs of the Mariposa lilies by typing “mariposa” into the Matching Text box and then clicking on the Submit button.

Give it a try and let us know what you think. ☺



## HABITAT RESTORATION PROGRESS

By Ken Himes

The heavy rains earlier this year have fueled many of the noxious weeds at Edgewood. This year we've noticed more Italian thistle, *Carduus pycnocephalus*, than ever before.

However, our volunteers have come out in record numbers, and despite the increased weed coverage, we will complete more Italian thistle sites this year than last year.

In May we logged over 500 volunteer hours, about a 45% increase over last May. Our year-to-date total is 1378 hours, well ahead of last year.

Our relationship with Carlmont High School continues to be favorable. The kids get community service hours and, together with their parents, have helped with much of the weed removal during April and May.

Looking ahead, June is the month that we shift our attention from Italian thistle to yellow star-thistle, *Centaurea solstitialis*. These plants have already begun to bolt, and Parks & Rec will be mowing them in certain locations. The optimal time to mow is when approximately 5% of the plants have flowered. At that time the plants in general have expended maximum energy in growing, and they have difficulty recovering from the mowing.

Edgewood is one of the most pristine parks in the County parks system, thanks to our dedicated volunteers. It's easy to join us. Crews go out every Wednesday evening at 5:30 during the summer, every Friday morning at 8:30, and occasional Saturdays. You don't need any training or tools, just a desire to help preserve Edgewood's natural habitats.

For details on how to get involved, call me or email John Allen. You can also consult <http://edgewood.thinkersrus.net>.

Thanks to all those who have volunteered in the past. See you at Edgewood. ☘

(BUTTERFLIES, Continued from page 1)

Francisco Peninsula. Its population numbered in the thousands in the mid-1990's, but by 2000 had crashed to under 100. In 2002 the population dropped to zero, the victim of "drive-by extinction," as Weiss puts it.

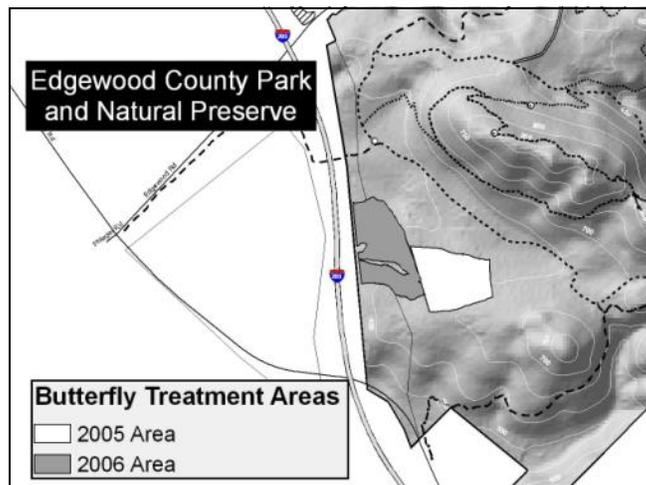
Emissions of ammonia and nitrogen oxides from 100,000+ vehicles on Highway 280 have fertilized a substantial area of serpentine grassland and allowed for invasion of Italian ryegrass onto the nutrient-poor soils.

The result: lots of ryegrass that has outcompeted the native plants on which the butterfly depends for food. While in its caterpillar form, this insect loves to munch California plantain, a plant that has adapted to thin serpentine soil conditions. If it can't find plantain, it will settle for Owl's clover. These native plants are easily overwhelmed by the ryegrass.

From 2001 to 2004, Weiss conducted experiments on Edgewood's grasslands to determine the optimum treatment techniques to reduce the ryegrass and increase the native plant cover. He concluded that a combination of mechanical mowing and weedwhacking worked best.

Last year nearly 8 acres were treated, and this year another 8.5 were added. A side-effect of the mowing is that the native flowering plants love it. Visitors this season were dazzled by the vibrant colors coming from the mow sites.

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## ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY UPDATE

By Ken Seydel and Bill Korbholz

The Friends of Edgewood adopted the section of I-280 adjacent to Edgewood in December 1998 and have been beautifying it every month or two ever since. Since 1999, over 800 bags of trash have been removed. Prior to 1998, Ken Seydel had been tending to the site all by himself for about 8 years.

A total of 8 volunteers helped us clean our section of I-280 adjacent to Edgewood during April, May, and June, 2006.

With the heavy rains this spring, the ground has been soft and the grass tall (until CalTrans mowed it along with the trash). We filled 21 bags of assorted garbage in a total of 8 hours. Aside from the usual hubcaps and car parts, we pocketed \$3.01!

Thanks to our freeway warriors who joined us during this period: Carolyn Dorsch, Bill & Kathy Korbholz, Jane Kos, Margaret Marshall, Susan Russell, Ken Seydel, and Michael Yantos.

If you have an interest in joining our great group, contact Ken Seydel. We will see that you are safety trained and equipped with your very own Picker, hard hat, goggles, gloves, and bright orange vest. ♻️

*(PARKS FOR THE FUTURE, Continued from page 1)*

The money will help all of the parks in our community -- city, county and special districts. All proceeds must be used for park and recreation related functions but each jurisdiction will have the authority to spend the funds according to their need. Funds could be spent on maintenance, operations, activities and programs, capital improvements or acquisition, and jurisdictions could vary how the money is spent over the life of the tax.

The income from the sales tax will be **additional** revenues for parks. Under the measure, cities and the County will be required to maintain their general fund contributions to the parks and recreation budgets. The added revenue will mean

County Parks & Rec could hire additional rangers and specialized staff, such as a resource manager, as well as have funds for maintenance and improvement projects.

Community support is very important at this stage and there is a lot that you can do. Offer your personal or business endorsement. Ask your local city councilmember, your employer, or other organizations of which you are a member to support Parks for the Future. Of course volunteers or donations will be important in a successful campaign.

For more information and to find out how you can help, contact Julia Bott, San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Foundation at (650) 321-5812 or [Julia@SupportParks.org](mailto:Julia@SupportParks.org). ♻️

*(BUTTERFLIES, Continued from page 5)*

Having proved that native serpentine grasslands can be sustained, Weiss intends to reintroduce the butterfly by transplanting both caterpillars and butterflies from Coyote Ridge just south of San Jose east of Highway 101 where the butterfly population is thriving. Reintroduction is planned for early spring 2007.

Much of Weiss's work has been funded by grants from the US Fish and Wildlife Foundation and PG&E. This year REI awarded a grant to the Friends of Edgewood (see the March 2006 issue of the *Explorer*), and after consulting with Weiss and Parks & Rec staff, we decided to devote it to habitat restoration and sharing this inspiring story with the public.

We plan to produce some interpretive display boards and an attractive full-color brochure describing the butterfly's amazing story. These educational materials will remain valuable for years to come, as hand-outs at docent-led wildflower walks, various Edgewood events (such as Earth Day), and school group outings.

We also hope to invite community-wide participation in some celebratory events to help us herald the return of our beloved butterfly to Edgewood. ♻️

(BIRD SONG, Continued from page 3)

Birder's Handbook , A Field Guide To The Natural History Of North American Birds, Paul R. Ehrlich, David S. Dobkin, Darryl Wheye; Simon & Schuster Inc, New York ☸

(MEMBERSHIP, Continued from page 8)

generations to come.

We are accomplishing this mission by acquiring and sharing knowledge about Edgewood's special nature, actively participating in the weeding program, and continuing our strong involvement in the butterfly restoration and interpretive center projects.

If you have a friend or relative who may wish to join us, please let me know. I'd be happy to send a copy of our newsletter and membership brochure. I can be reached at 1 (866) 463-3439 or membership-coordinator@friendsofedgewood.org. ☸

**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.

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Name

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(NEW DOCENT GRADS, Continued from page 2)

attending this year's training sessions. It was really nice to have him along with us on our hikes. We learned from him and, I hope, we helped him learn what it is about Edgewood that we value so much.

Our presenters really are responsible for turning out our well-prepared new docents. They did a wonderful job of conveying information and enthusiasm to their very appreciative audience.

Our thanks go to Ken Himes, Toni Corelli, Paul Heiple, Bob Buell, John Allen, Julia Bott, Carolyn Strange, and Carol Hankermeyer.

Thanks are also due to Peter Ingram for letting us use his facility for our meetings and for his inspirational welcome and graduation comments.

I enjoyed coordinating this year's training and am very proud of our new graduates. ☸



- \$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 reeting 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



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- ❑ *Saturdays and Sundays, through June 11, **DOCENT-LED WILDFLOWER WALKS.*** 10 am, Day Camp and Clarkia Trailhead. See [www.friendsofedgeswood.org](http://www.friendsofedgeswood.org) for details.
- ❑ *June 27 - July 22, **EDGEWOOD VIEWS 2006.*** See the article on page 2 for details.
- ❑ *Saturdays, June 17, July 15, July 29, **HABITAT RESTORATION DAYS.*** See [edgeswood.thinkersrus.net](http://edgeswood.thinkersrus.net) for details.
- ❑ *Monthly, **ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY.*** The next sessions are scheduled for 7/9, 8/5, and 8/27. Contact Ken Seydel to volunteer or for more information. ♻️

## FRIENDS OF EDGEWOOD MEMBERSHIP

By Yvette Pirie

The Friends of Edgewood now count well over 200 families among our members. Since membership dues are our primary source of revenue, we rely on our members to sustain the organization and help offset the costs of our very popular docent program and other organizational expenses. Of course, we also rely heavily on the nucleus of members who actively volunteer.

The benefits of membership are both tangible and intangible. In addition to this quarterly newsletter and membership premiums, members receive the satisfaction of knowing that they are contributing to our mission of preserving Edgewood for the human, plant, and animal

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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 Bill Korbholz with assistance from Laverne Rabinowitz and contributions from many Friends. For more information about the Friends of Edgewood, visit our web site at [www.friendsofedgeswood.org](http://www.friendsofedgeswood.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 [info01@friendsofedgeswood.org](mailto:info01@friendsofedgeswood.org).

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