



Friends of Huddart
& Wunderlich Parks
Serving Since 1995

Wild Times

hikes • history • horses



650.851.2660 P.O. Box 6270767 Woodside, CA, 94062 www.huddartwunderlichfriends.org Fall 2020

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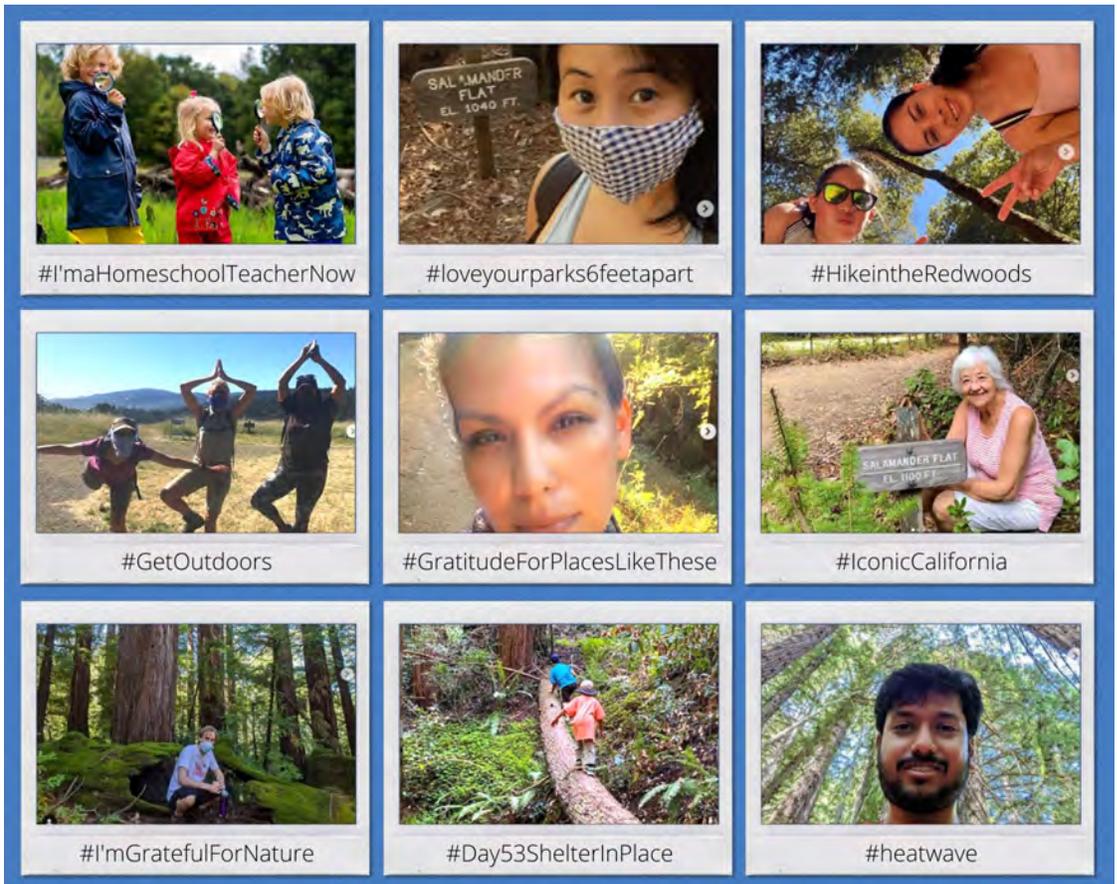
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Pandemic Stories From You

Park visitors have been taking to social media to share what the parks mean to them in these difficult times. We might not be able to do things the way we once did, but the parks provide a safe place to recreate, reconnect, and recharge. Thanks to these contributors who shared their nature connections: @3_errant_children, @charpotente_rn, @realestate.bayarea, @anitabora, @aztelevision, @dagmarlogie, @devonbreithart, @familyhiker, and @jajuramanuj. Follow us on Facebook or Instagram; and tag us @#FOHWP, #Huddart, or #Wunderlichpark in your posts!



"Nature's cathedral—this is where I come to clear my mind, meditate and pray while enjoying the sound of the creek below." @seeunsonne

In Appreciation

San Mateo County Park Rangers: Heroes on the Fire Line



Photo Credit: San Mateo County Parks

The following is excerpted from an article by San Mateo County Parks Foundation Director **Michele Beasley**. She expresses the gratitude all county parks partners such as the Friends feel for the dedication of the park rangers who were key in helping CalFire conquer the recent devastating CZU Lightning Complex fires.

... San Mateo County park rangers rushed to the fire line to assist CalFire. With Calfire's resources spread thin fighting hundreds of blazes across the state, San Mateo County Parks' resources were badly needed and proved invaluable.

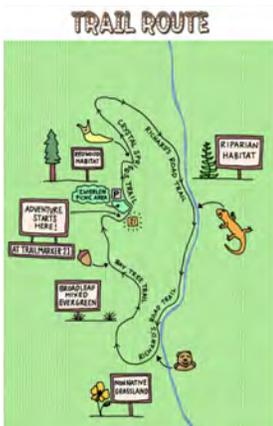
In addition to keeping people out of the parks and away from danger, our park rangers were cutting fire lines. They used hand tools to scrape away vegetation to reach soil, which removes the fuel a fire needs to grow. They also operated heavy equipment, like a masticator (a wood chipper mounted on a tractor) for hours on end to assist in creating fuel breaks. As the fire approached a repeater (a device that receives and re-

transmits signals so they can travel longer distances or be received despite an obstruction), threatening regional communications, County park rangers cut a fire line within an hour to protect it.

These are brave men and women who worked all hours to contain a wildfire that had been sparked by lightning. Once the fire was contained, efforts refocused on fire prevention projects throughout the park system. More fuel breaks are being created, especially adjacent to neighborhoods, and more areas will be cleared of fire-hazardous plants, such as French broom and eucalyptus. And while all that has been happening, let us not forget, there is still a pandemic with which to deal. With [the recent unprecedented] influx of visitors to the parks, there are still only 51 park rangers covering 190 miles of trails and 17,000 acres of parkland. They are stretched thin, doing their best every day to ensure trails are clear, restrooms are clean, and most recently, that fires are put out. So here is a big shout out to our essential workers, San Mateo County Park Rangers. Thank you for all you do to make our parks welcoming, safe, and enjoyable. We applaud you.

Note: Before the CZU fires, 16 acres of highly flammable eucalyptus had been removed from Wunderlich and replanted with oak saplings. In and around Huddart, fire mitigation included clearing large areas of shrubs and deadfall to minimize potential fuel loads.

Virtual Volunteering



Trail map featured in hiking brochures designed by volunteer naturalists.

Volunteers are at the heart of our work. Two of our volunteer naturalists, Kathy Boone and Cathy Fenn, have created self-guided hiking brochures for visitors to use during the COVID pandemic. The guides feature a range of topics from family hikes to historic points of interest to health and well-being benefits of the parks. Guides are available in English and Spanish. You can download free brochures at: <https://huddartwunderlichfriends.org/activities>.

To keep our volunteers connected and informed, we've continued to offer docent training and enrichment events to ensure their skills stay sharp for when we return to our regular park programs. With our partners at Friends of Edgewood, we've hosted interesting virtual events. During "Botany in the Kitchen" botanists dissected typical Thanksgiving meal ingredients such as cranberries to understand their botanical parts. We also featured "Oaks in October" and during "Galls" we learned all about parasitic wasps and the mysterious nurseries they induce trees to grow for their larva. We are looking forward to learning about the "Social Lives of Ants" in December. The docents also have among their resources a virtual space to continue learning about the flora, fauna, history, and Indigenous people of our parks.

Many thanks to our grant funders listed on the back of this newsletter, individual donors, and many generous experts that make these programs possible.

Dear Friends . . .

The past year has been a challenge, to say the least! I hope you are feeling some relief with the fires and the election behind us, though the COVID pandemic still affects us.

The silver lining in this dark period is that so many of you have enjoyed the benefits of connecting with nature. Both Huddart and Wunderlich parks have welcomed many more visitors. A walk among the redwoods offers much needed relief from Zoom calls, distance learning, and the general anxiety many of us are experiencing.

Despite the disruptions to our programs, the Friends organization remains strong. We on the board along with our staff and volunteers continue as dedicated as ever to supporting our park projects and programs: When allowed by COVID guidelines, the Folger Stable Carriage Room Museum is open Saturdays from 12-3 p.m.; our naturalist docents are refreshing their skills with virtual enrichment programs and interpretative projects; Lightning, our mini-horse park ambassador, delights visitors as our masked volunteers lead him around Wunderlich Park. We have sorely missed our community, but we will be ready to resume our regular programs when conditions allow.

Meantime, to fulfill our mission of promoting the many benefits to you provided by the parks, **your support continues to be essential.** This year-end appeal asks for your donations at whatever amount you can contribute. As a 501c3 organization, The Friends relies on your generous support. We have added a recurring monthly donation feature on our website for your convenience. We thank you for whatever you can give.

On behalf of the board, staff, and volunteers, I wish you all a safe and healthy holiday season. We look forward to seeing you in the New Year with all of its optimistic possibilities!



Jill Daly
Friends Board President

Sincerely,

In the Parks Now

Fungus Among Us



Fly Agaric mushroom. Many mushrooms (like that pictured) are toxic and you should never pick or eat any mushrooms from the wild.

With winter rains, something wild pops up from the forest floor, on tree trunks, and on decaying detritus. The part of the mushroom that we see above ground, the cap, is the seasonal fruiting body, while the main part of the fungus is hidden from view as a network of mycelial filaments. This network is an important part of the “world wide wood” in connecting trees and plants to nutrients and water underground. In addition to being important winter food for forest creatures like banana slugs, mushrooms also play an important role in decomposing dead wood and helping to recycle nutrients into the soil that keep forest plants and trees healthy.

Keep an eye out on your winter hikes for a wide variety of fabulous fungus in all colors, sizes and shapes, and in many nooks and crannies you may not have noticed before. Just remember to only eat mushrooms you buy from a trusted vendor and leave forest fungi from our parks to the banana slugs.

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Pandemic “Pony”

Woodside was recently named the fourth most horse-friendly town in America. Being so close to a major urban area, preserving the horse heritage of the Bay Area isn't an easy task. Ten years ago, the Friends restored the iconic Folger Stable and opened the Carriage Room Museum to share equine history with park visitors and field trips.

Thanks to a generous grant from Bay Area Barns & Trails, now the Friends is working with a unique ambassador to share the joy and delight of horses in a time of stress. Lightning the mini horse might be a young visitor's first up-close experience with a horse, and he is helping to educate the public about how to safely share the trails. Keep your eye out for Lightning, who would love a masked visit from your family or pandemic pod.

Thanks to BAB&T and Chaparral Corporation for their help with this project. This program was a labor of love for docent Lorna Basso, another volunteer working hard to make safe and meaningful programs during the pandemic.



Pandemic pod visitors are thrilled with a visit from mini horse Lightning.



Hard Times Call for Good Friends

THANKS TO OUR 2020 GRANT
PARTNERS!

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Hurlbut Johnson Trust
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future.

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Thank you,
Friends!

