



# Friends of Sausal Creek

*Promoting Watershed Protection*

www.sausalcreek.org  
(510) 501-FOSC (3672)

June - July '04

You are cordially invited to attend

## Splendor in the Bunch Grass

**A Celebration of FOSC Volunteers, Donors and Recent Accomplishments  
& Grand Opening of the New Structures at the Native Plant Nursery**

Sunday, August 8, 4-6 pm  
Joaquin Miller Native Plant Nursery



Food, drink, awards and merriment • Friends and family are welcome

RSVP: (510) 501-FOSC or coordinator@sausalcreek.org

### Long Time Volunteer Welcomed to FOSC Board

The FOSC board of directors is pleased to welcome Sheelah Weaver. She lives in the San Antonio District in the lower watershed and has been a steadfast volunteer since our earliest days. Sheelah has long been active in environmental and social issues. She helped found the Oakland Green Party local, and served for 5 years on the San Antonio Community Development Council Board. In her youth she worked for a decade with an organization that provided political and material support for liberation movements in southern Africa. Currently, she works for a software company where she does training and support for large business management systems for printing and mailing businesses. We are delighted to have her on the Board where she will be working on special events and serving on the Fundraising Committee.

—Linda Morse

### The FOSC Blog

At the June 16 monthly meeting, Robert Stewart will teach attendees how to post comments and articles to our new blog.

Many community groups face the challenge of distributing timely information. While an email discussion list, like the FOSC listserv, remains a valuable communication tool, it usually only reaches the people who subscribe to the list. A regular website is also very valuable, but the publishing tools are often too difficult for anyone but a web-developer to use. An ideal solution would support multiple authors, include simple publishing tools, focus on the newest information, provide well-organized and easy-to-access personal journals, archives, and allow for public comments. Enter the "weblog."

A weblog, or blog, is a website that primarily consists of brief posts organized in reverse chronological order, i.e., the new stuff always appears at the top. The content of a blog is also usually organized by topic, or category. While blogs are often used as personal journals, they also serve as excellent tools for a community of like-minded individuals to easily share information. Blogs also allow people to respond to posts. Authors of both articles and comments on a blog don't need to have any computer programming skills. Publishing an article to the blog can be as simple as sending an email.

I will be integrating the FOSC blog into the FOSC website in June. Interested in being an author? Please email me at robert\_stewart@mindspring.com for a quick tutorial.

—Robert Stewart

### Two Tremendous Workdays

Earth Day and the Julia Morgan School for Girls (JMSG) work-a-thon were fantastic successes! On Earth Day, nearly 150 volunteers accomplished a tremendous amount of work in the canyon and at Dimond Park. Volunteers cleared and mulched trails and stone circles, hefted stumps from the creek, weeded, and groomed the demonstration garden, removed acacia, ivy and other invasives from the canyon, relocated a very

stubborn sign at the El Centro trailhead, picked up trash in the park and at Barry Place, and cleared and gardened at the Benevides site. The Joaquin Miller Native Plant Nursery was also full of activity. Fifty hard-working members and alumni of the Student Conservation Association (SCA) removed invasives, transplanted seedlings, and completed a French drain project that was designed and led by FOSCer Alex Naughton (see following article).

A week later on May 1, the JMSG work-a-thon boasted 80% participation with over 150 students and parents taking part in this annual FOSC volunteer event. Students and parents worked side by side in the nursery, canyon, and demonstration garden. The workday made a huge impact on all three sites and helped prepare the demonstration garden for its appearance as part of the *Bay Friendly Garden Tour*.

Thank you, Earth Day and JMSG crew leaders and volunteers for your tremendous work! Thanks also to our generous Earth Day donors and supporters: **Compadres Bar & Grill, Arizmendi Bakery, Ultimate Grounds, and the Office of Jean Quan.**

—Alisa Shor



### The Proof is in the Puddle

Alex Naughton, a soil scientist on the hunt of interesting projects, came by our nursery one day last fall. Our dedicated nursery folk showed him the troublesome drainage problem in our shade house. Pools of mucky water were growing algae and fungus on the floor. Alex reckoned that a French drain would solve the problem. Donating time and expertise, he put together a budget and a plan. On Earth Day, Alex led a very motivated SCA group in this successful project. By the end of the day, the water on the shade house floor was moving into the drains and out of the structure. The end of the drainage currently looks like a puddle but we'll plant rushes and other seep growers there, adding a new water feature to the nursery. Every time we walk through the shade house without getting black slime on our shoes we say a quiet thanks to Alex N!

—Kristen Hopper

## Friends of Sausal Creek

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**Next monthly meeting is  
June 16. Take note: no  
monthly meeting in July.  
Happy Summer!**

Don't miss our next monthly meetings on June 16 and August 18, 7-9pm at the Dimond Library. Newsletter printed on recycled paper. Thanks for recycling!

*The Friends of Sausal Creek's Restoration Committee has launched a "Six Sites Program" to work in each of the major ecological communities of our watershed: Riparian, Oak Forest, Redwood Forest, Grassland, Chaparral and Coastal Scrub. This approach provides opportunities for learning about our watershed's diverse plant and animal habitats, and helps us focus our attention on preserving species rare in the watershed. This article is the first in a series on the six sites.*

### The Nursery's Serpentine Grassland

Friends of Sausal Creek who haven't visited the nursery in Joaquin Miller Park since its early days will find the hill above the growing grounds transformed.

Thanks to dedicated volunteers, the looming Acacia trees, the broom thicket, and the poison hemlock are gone! Instead, these invaders have been reduced to brush piles which serve as shelter for dark-eyed juncos. Volunteers have also made space for other natives to flourish. There's purple needlegrass (*Nassella pulchra*, nominee for California's state grass) and the state flower, the California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*) growing atop the official state rock (serpentine). There is also a surprise patch of *Calochortus luteus*, or gold nuggets.

We've created an area for growing some of the rarest-in-the-watershed grassland species: jewelflower (*Streptanthus glandulosus ssp. glandulosus*), Venus thistle (*Cirsium occidentale var. venustum*), and farewell-to-spring (*Clarkia rubicunda*) have been collected and propagated. Oaks have sprouted in the deeper soil at the top of the hill, so we took a cue from nature. The Education Program added more oaks and oak understory plants amid the acacia stumps during the winter.

It's a major transformation, and a cheering sight to the volunteers who remember the looming invaders on the hill. Join us on the next "Nursery Grassland" workday, when we will continue to make space for California grassland natives.

—Karen Paulsell

The Friends are sponsored by the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and the City of Oakland, with additional support from CH2M Hill and private citizens.



### Late Friend of Sausal Creek is Honored

The **Ed Wilkinson Memorial Bench** was dedicated on May 2, 2004 at Lakeside Park. The bench was installed thanks to donations collected by the Sydney B. Mitchell Iris Society, of which Ed was also a committed member.

## FOSC ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, call 501-FOSC or email [coordinator@sausalcreek.org](mailto:coordinator@sausalcreek.org) to get information about all activities. Also, for details about ongoing projects, check the Volunteer section of the Friends' website at [www.sausalcreek.org](http://www.sausalcreek.org).

### Monthly Meetings

#### No meeting in July!

~5<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month~

- Wednesday 6/16, (none in July), 8/18, etc. 7pm-9pm; Dimond Library, 3565 Fruitvale Ave. All welcome!

### Board of Directors Meetings

~2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month~

- Wednesday 7/14, 8/11, 9/8, etc. 7pm-9pm at the Chabot Space & Science Center. All welcome!

### Saturday Workdays

~many, but not all, Saturdays~

- Restoration Activities, 9am-noon
- Nursery Activities, 1:30-4pm

Info: Kristen Hopper, 387-9744 or [field@sausalcreek.org](mailto:field@sausalcreek.org) or go to [www.sausalcreek.org/volunteer/calendar.html](http://www.sausalcreek.org/volunteer/calendar.html).

### "Splendor in the Bunch Grass"

- August 8 (*see invite on reverse*)

### Aquatic Insect Sampling

~5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month~

- Sunday 6/20, 7/18, 8/15, etc. 9:30am-noon; info: Emma Brown, 527-2507.

### Water Quality Monitoring

~now, 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month; **please call first to confirm ♂ for location~**

- Sunday 6/20, 7/18, 8/15, etc. 9am-noon; info: Mark Lane, 219-8036.

### Seed Gathering

~times and locations vary~

Help gather native seeds for propagation efforts. Info: Kristen Hopper, 387-9744 or [field@sausalcreek.org](mailto:field@sausalcreek.org) or go to [www.sausalcreek.org/volunteer/calendar.html](http://www.sausalcreek.org/volunteer/calendar.html).

June-July '04 newsletter contributors: Kristen Hopper, Linda Morse, Karen Paulsell, Alisa Shor, Robert Stewart. Editing and design, Jennifer Stanley.