

The Dripping Faucet

OAK GROVE NATURE CENTER AND DOCENT COUNCIL

Forrest W. Landeen Remembered

Volume 2, Issue 1

Spring 2008

It is with great sadness that we must tell you that a beloved member of our group passed on. Forrest Landeen was a valued member of the Oak Grove Docent Council and a promoter of volunteerism in the community. A few of his many friends share their thoughts:

We have unfortunately had another longtime docent and supporter pass away. Forrest Landeen was the Johnny Appleseed of Oak Grove. Forrest loved teaching the children who came to the park how to plant acorns. I'll always remember the "Don't yell at me, I'm a volunteer" patch he had. It seemed humorous to me that someone would ever consider yelling at Forrest. We will miss his strong, quiet presence.

David Marraccini

I have been a docent at the Oak Grove Nature Center for twenty years. During that time I worked with Forrest W. Landeen on many occasions. He had a wisdom that one does not get from books. What I learned from Forrest is immeasurable. It was an honor and a pleasure to work

with him.

Sheldon Barr

Forrest was a pleasure to work with as he was so even tempered and interested in doing a good job on the task at hand. Forrest took "Natural History" from me at Delta College and although he was probably the oldest in the class he was never short on interest and enthusiasm. I always associated his name with his interest in the oak forest of the Oak Grove Park. He was always collecting acorns and finding places to plant them. We "labored" there together as volunteer docents, and as volunteers planting oak trees and other native plants. I am sure that we all have good memories of our hours with Forrest.

Steve Stocking

The Forrest Landeen that I knew was a soft-spoken, quiet man whose work said volumes about his love of nature and his hopes of preserving our Valley Oak woodlands for future generations.

Sometimes we would look out the Nature Center window and see Forrest's tall frame stooped over as he planted an acorn in the



*Forrest W. Landeen
February 10, 1916—December 3, 2007*

garden. Not content to propagate the Valley Oaks all by himself, on many occasions Forrest sent young visitors home with acorns he helped them plant in milk cartons. (I think instructions were given on transplanting each resulting seedling to an amicable site.)

For more than 20 years Forrest's quiet strength enhanced our Nature Center programs as he welcomed visitors on weekends or taught youngsters how to find animal tracks along the Yokuts Trail in his beloved oak woodland. (continued pg. 2)

Plant It and They Will Come

Last summer Monarch butterflies flitted the life fantastic among myriads of milkweed plants in the natural area of the park.

"How delightful," we butterfly buffs thought. "And wouldn't it be terrific if we could attract these colorful insects to the Na-

tive Plant Garden so Nature Center visitors could enjoy them?"

James located Narrow-leaf Milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*) at Hartland Nursery, and we bought 42 gallon-sized plants for the garden.

Will the Monarchs come? We

hope so.

Milkweed is the host plant for Monarchs. After wintering along the coast, the butterflies migrate inland to lay their eggs on the milkweed. The milkweed produces bitter-tasting, toxic "cardenolides" (continued pg.3)

Docent Council Board:

- President-David Marraccini
- Vice President-Pamela Reyes
- Secretary-OPEN
- Treasurer-Martha Mallery
- Recorder-Dave Wagner
- Member at Large-Darryl Pedro
- Member at Large-OPEN

Committee Chairs

- *Animal Care*-Darryl Pedro
- *Communications*-James Rexroth
- *Education*-Darryl Pedro
- *Membership*-James Rexroth
- *Native Garden*-Martha Mallery
- *Newsletter editor*-James Rexroth
- *Publicity*-Pamela Reyes

Nature Center Coordinator

James Rexroth

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Forrest W. Landeen Remembered-continued

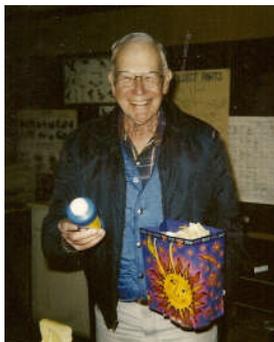
Now, as we look out the Nature Center window on Forrest's young Valley Oaks, we remember him fondly. His legacy will live on for many generations to come.

Martha Mallery

It was appropriate that he was named Forrest. I always referred to him as the "Johnny Appleseed" of oak trees. His dedication to the propagation of valley oak trees helped create a new forest for all of us to enjoy. He was a person who always brought a smile to your face whenever you were around him. He was a kind gentle soul who cared about others and sought to help them. He volunteered in many areas for

us. He was one of the founding members of the Oak Grove Nature Area Advisory Group, he operated a tractor to disc the fire breaks in the natural area, he planted and cared for the oak trees and he helped at our Zoo as well. I never saw a cookie or pastry that he didn't like. As I continue to go to Oak Grove Regional Park and I see the oak trees I will see Forrest.....and I will still smile.

David Beadles



Forrest at his 80th birthday party in 1996.

Our thanks to the people who selected the Nature Center as a recipient of memorial donations in Forrest's name: Daniel and Lynne Terry, Joan Franco, Steve and Bonnie Fentress, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Vukovich, the Rugani Family, Martha Mallery, and the Oak Grove Docent Council.

Martha Mallery, Treasurer

Good Nature Award

The Oak Grove Docent Council conceded that it would be very difficult to recreate the ambience of cheerfulness that existed in the Nature Center when Gary Nightengale was around. Nevertheless, we decided to try by establishing a new award in his name.

The "Gary Nightengale Good Nature Award" will be bestowed on an individual or group who most contribute to creating a friendly, supportive, cheerful, and good-natured atmosphere at the Center.

Forrest Landeen has already been nominated

to receive the award posthumously. Please give us your feedback and suggestions (in a friendly, supportive, cheerful, and good-natured manner, of course) for potential recipients of this award.

Our thanks to the additional people who kindly made donations in Gary's memory: Daniel and Lynne Terry, Steve Stocking, Don and Joan Cooper, and Mitzi and Russ Shepherd. We are looking forward to working with Ann and Gary's family on a special project to honor his memory.

Martha Mallery, Treasurer

Bear Creek High School Assists Nature Center

Students from Bear Creek High School's Environmental Studies class joined Nature Center staff and docents on March 19th in preparing the new pathway to connect the existing trail with the Miwok/Yokuts village area. We wish to thank them for their help, it was greatly appreciated. We will look forward to their assistance in the future.



A Reminder

Last year your contributions helped the Nature Center welcome over 3,400 visitors and feed 2,147 White-crowned Sparrows.

If you haven't sent in your dues yet, please use the enclosed envelope.

As always, your **tax deductible** donations are greatly appreciated.

Please make checks payable to:
Oak Grove Docent Council



Membership categories:

- Individual.....\$25.00
- Family.....\$35.00
- Supporting.....\$50.00
- Contributing.....\$100.00
- Sponsor.....\$500.00
- Oak Patron.....\$1,000.00

Oak Grove Regional Park Monthly Bird Census

In an effort to contribute to the overall body of knowledge of life forms in Oak Grove Regional Park, Nature Center Coordinator James Rexroth has begun a monthly census of the avian fauna.

On the second Sunday of each month, James will lead any and all who wish to volunteer their eyes and ears, through the park in the pursuit of our feathered friends.

Over time it is hoped we will get a reasonably accurate picture of the species using the park and their numbers throughout the year.

This information may be valuable in helping to track avian trends in the county and in making informed land use decisions.

We will also be noting other life-forms we encounter, from the plants and insects to the other vertebrates that inhabit the park.

So, save the second Sun-



Join us, you never know what will pop up!

day of the month (see the calendar on the back page) to join us in this important work.

If you have questions or need more information, call James Rexroth at (209)953-8814.

Nature Center Update

Things continue to progress here at the Nature Center. We have had two Eagle Scout projects being worked on.

The first is the storage cabinets and seat/step addition to the live animal area. A few more touch-ups and it will be completed. Our thanks to Matthew Horner and Troop 10 of Stockton.

The second project is a display cabinet for the Native American artifacts and replicas. This has been completed. Our thanks to William Blakely and Troop 119 of Galt.

The Government Buildings Department paint crew has completed painting the inside of the Nature Center, making it look practically brand new. A big "Thank you!" to them for their hard work on our behalf.

In the next few weeks we will be acquiring

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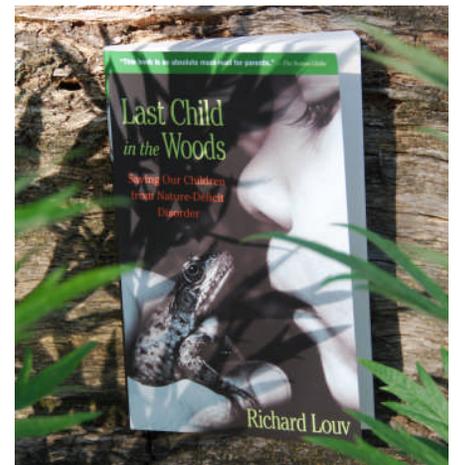
some new equipment and display pieces for the Center. On order are two new microscopes for our visitors to use to view items in the small display boxes we have set up for that purpose. Also arriving soon will be some skulls of some of the animals that live(d) here in the valley. We have already acquired some Native American replicas for display and hope to get more soon.

So, stop by and see what's happening here at the Nature Center.

Last Child in the Woods A Review

Author Richard Louv, in his book "Last Child in the Woods" makes the case for reconnecting our youth with nature and the natural world. Linking the lack of exposure and interaction with nature directly to a myriad of physical and mental health problems in our society, Mr. Louv goes on to offer practical solutions to repair the damage that's been done. He has coined the term 'Nature-Deficit Disorder' as a way to describe the problem in a simple, easy to understand way. If you're at all interested in nature and the well-being of our society, this is a must read.

James Rexroth, Nature Center Coordinator



Plant It and They Will Come-continued

which the caterpillars ingest when they chew on the leaves. The poison is stored in their tissues through metamorphosis and throughout their lives. This toxin imparts a bitter taste to the caterpillars and butterflies and birds quickly learn that Monarchs taste awful and will usually release the butterfly after pecking on a distasteful wing.

Wish us luck that the milkweed will flourish and the butterflies will find it. How exciting it will be to see the Native Plant Garden come

alive with Monarchs dancing about in the midday sun.

Martha Mallery-Native Garden Chair

Note: Do we have any volunteers willing to monitor the Native Plant Garden and the natural area for the presence of Monarchs this year?

Dates to Remember

Here are some upcoming events and dates to remember:

March 26th, 3:30—First planning meeting for 27th Anniversary of the Nature Center at the Nature Center.

March 30th, 12 to 2PM—New Docent Orientation.

April 1st, 6:30 PM—OGDC Board meeting at the Nature Center. All welcome.

April 2nd, 5PM—San Francisco Bay to Stockton Navigation Improvement Project. Public Meeting with the Army Corps of Engineers for public input on EIS/EIR at Cesar Chavez Central Library, 605 N. El Dorado St., Stockton, CA.

April 5, 8:00 AM—Audubon Society Introductory Birding Field Trip to Lodi Lake. Meet at Laurel Ave. next to the lake. Kurt Mize, leader.

April 12th, 9:30-3:30—Cosumnes River Preserve Spring Workday Extravaganza. Meet at Nature Conservancy Barn, 6500 Desmond Rd., Galt. Bring a sack lunch, drinks provided.

April 12th, 10:00-4:00; 13th, 10:00-3:00—Wildflower Weekend, put on by the California Native Plant Society-Sac. Valley Chapter at Crawford's Barn, 2715 Tiber Dr., Sacramento,

CA. Free admission, native plants for sale.

April 13th, 8:30 AM—Oak Grove Regional Park Monthly Bird Census. Meet at the Nature Center.

April 16;17;23;24;30; 9AM—School Tours at the Oak Grove Nature Center. Call 953-8814 if you would like to assist with the tours.

April 27th, 12 to 2PM—New Docent Orientation.



Busy as bees!

May 4th, 10:00-5:00—Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour. A free, self-guided tour of 60 Alameda and Contra Costa County gardens. Go to

www.BringingBackTheNatives.net to register. Questions? E-mail

Kathy@KathyKramerConsulting.net or call (510) 236-9558 between 9am & 9pm. Flyers available at the Nature Center.

May 6th, 6:30 PM—OGDC Board meeting at the Nature Center. All welcome.

May 2;9;19;27; 9AM—School tours at the Oak Grove Nature Center. Call 953-8814 if you would like to assist with the tours.

May 11th, 8:30 AM—Oak Grove Regional Park Monthly Bird Census. Meet at the Nature Center.

May 17th & 18th—Tentative date for Nature Center 27th Anniversary Celebration.

May 25th, 12 to 2PM—New Docent Orientation.

June 3rd, 6:30 PM—OGDC Board meeting at the Nature Center. All welcome.

June 8th, 8:30 AM—Oak Grove Regional Park Monthly Bird Census. Meet at the Nature Center.

June 25th, 9:30 AM—Tour at Oak Grove Nature Center. Call 953-8814 if you would like to assist with the tour.

OAK GROVE NATURE CENTER AND DOCENT COUNCIL

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Committed to preserving the natural environment of the Oak Grove and educating others to the values of continuing such preservation.

**The Oak Grove Nature
Center is on the web:
www.sjgov.org/oakgrove/**
