



Trailblazer

A Newsletter Published by the Friends of Stevens Creek Trail

Summer 1999

TRAIL UPDATE

Reach 3

The bridge over Central Expressway and the railroad was dropped into place in the early morning hours of Christmas Day, 1998. Steven Haze captured this momentous event by saying "I saw the last section of the bridge drop into place just as the sun rose." Connections are what this trail is all about—connections to our neighbors, connections to our environment, and connections to our lives.

The Reach 3 Dedication held at Landels School on April 24th was well attended and featured Congress Representative Anna Eshoo, Assembly Member Elaine Alquist, County Supervisor Jim Beall, Mayor Mary Lou Zoglin, and our own Environmental Planning Commissioner and Friends President Tom Frankum. Hospitality was a treat, the day was gorgeous, and the trail was splendid. The Reach 3 Gift Catalog Plaque was unveiled and

lots of pictures were taken. A Mercy Street family later wrote that they found the trail to be a remarkable surprise upon learning about it when they moved here from Seattle. It is a happy sanctuary from traffic and asphalt. The letter started out with the exclamation, hip-hip-hooray to all of you! Thank you so much for the beautiful Stevens Creek Trail. The City of Mountain View did a great job putting on the dedication.

Reach 4

Segment 1 has been slightly realigned and is proceeding to bid. Segment 2 is currently in the process of a feasibility study including public meetings this fall. We will need you trail supporters to be present! Watch our website or call our hotline for more information.

Cupertino

Funding for developing a plan for all of Cupertino reaches of the Stevens Creek Trail was approved by the Cupertino City Council on May 24th to be part of the 1999/2000 City budget. The plan will include feasibility, geologic studies, environmental impact analysis, and grant funding proposals. The City has also purchased a key parcel that became available to augment what already exists of the trail in and around Blackberry Farm and McClellan Ranch.



Left to right: US Representative Anna Eshoo, Santa Clara County Supervisor Jim Beall, State Assemblywoman Elaine Alquist, Environmental Planning Commissioner and President of the Friends of Stevens Creek Trail Tom Frankum and Mountain View Mayor Mary Lou Zoglin addressing the celebrators.



About 300 trail supporters celebrated the Reach 3 Dedication Saturday, April 24, at Landels Elementary School.



Mountain View City Councilmembers Mike Kasperzak, Sally Lieber, Ralph Faravelli, Mary Lou Zoglin, and Mario Ambra assist in cutting the ribbon to open Reach 3.



Locals discover Reach 3 at Landels Elementary School.



In May there were a number of co-sponsored volunteer work days along the trail. The Foundry High School participants led by Instructor Randy Klein removed an estimated two tons of debris from Reaches 2 and 3. The Synopsys "Green Team" participating in the Mountain View Adopt-A-Trail program under the direction of City staff completed a retaining wall near Central Avenue which had been started by a crew from the Foundry High School the previous day. Alta Vista High School volunteers organized by Life Sciences Instructor Jack Shimizu installed a bench which was paid for by the Friends of Stevens Creek Gift Catalog. The work was done under the direction of City staff and FOSCT volunteer Scott Harger. Students at Alta Vista High School volunteer once a month during the school year to do trail projects.

Trail Workday Highlights



The Synopsys Green Team at work taming an embankment.



Habitat restoration using native plants.



Foundry students doing some groundwork preparation.



Students from Alta Vista are digging by drilling.



Foundry students seen on a debris recovery safari.

GOINGS AND DOINGS

In January, The Friends participated in the first Bay Area Restoration Workshop. In April, the Friends helped sponsor the 16th California Trails and Greenways Convention.

Did you know that the Whisman School requires the Stevens Creek Wildlife Corridor between the school yard and the trail be incorporated into instruction at every grade level? They have since 1997.

Did you know that in 1998 The Friends partnered with Mountain View and Cupertino staff to produce 15 Trail Days, totaling over 1000 hours of volunteer work on the trail? This is three times the total of 1997! High school students provided the majority of the time. Adopt-a-Trail, Scouts, Peninsula Trail Center, and other efforts would be additional to this.

Guided Walks: Mid-Peninsula Open Space District Docents provide guided walks at the upper end of Stevens Creek Trail nearly every month. Docents also provide walks at the lowest end of the trail next to Shoreline Park on a less frequent schedule. Walks may emphasize different aspects of the environment, from birdlife to crawly critters to earthquake scars. Parking and restrooms are available. Call 650-691-1200 for a schedule.

On Sunday, September 12th, at Landels School will be a catered picnic to thank our volunteers for their efforts. Look for an invitation and mark your calendars.

Friends Board to Expand

At its recent strategic planning meeting, the Board of Directors of the Friends of Stevens Creek Trail (FOSCT) made it a priority to expand the board of directors to assist the organization in accomplishing its mission: The Friends of Stevens Creek Trail promote community pride and involvement in the completion, enhancement, and enjoyment of the Stevens Creek Trail and wildlife corridor.

FOSCT is seeking highly motivated and committed individuals to add to the board to assist with implementation of an exciting action plan. If you think you may be interested, please call the FOSCT President, Tom Frankum, at (650) 964-1270 for further information.



What is that Flower?



California Buckeye blossom. Photo by: Brother Alfred Brousseau

California Buckeye

Anywhere along Stevens Creek from May through June, you may notice a tree that appears to be covered with white candles. This is the California Buckeye in bloom. This tree is a regular in stream corridors. It is usually the first to leaf-out in spring, and the first to go dormant in summer...a competitive strategy. Named for its large seed which looks like a chestnut, this comes as no surprise since the Buckeye is the one and only cousin to the chestnut.

Fremontodendron

One of the most spectacular flowers you will see along the sunny sections of Stevens Creek Trail is the Flannel Bush, also known by its generic name, Fremontodendron. This bush grows from 4 to 20 feet around with many poppy-like blooms running the length of each stem. It likes drought. Perhaps a reason this perennial is not more famous is that its blooming period is a brief one in midwinter. The south bay variety is distinct from the north bay variety, having bigger leaves and flowers. The Flannel Bush gets its name from its fuzzy (but not soft) leaves. It is a relative of the cacao plant.



Flannel Bush blossom. Photo by: Scott Harger

Steelhead Watch



Water District Biologists briefly corral a steelhead in Stevens Creek as part of ongoing studies.

Native Stevens Creek Steelhead appear to have had a successful run this season, with large and vigorous individuals sighted moving up-stream as early as January. Steelhead make their way as far as the reservoir in our creek. Any surviving eggs will hatch this season and add to our wild trout population until they decide to move down to the sea in perhaps two or three years. When you see steelhead in the creek, the Friends would like to hear about it!

Call us and tell us where, when, and how many. The same is also true for quail—the tassel-topped state bird of California as well as deer or coyote sightings. This information provides a picture and backdrop for discussions with staff at the Water District and Fish and Game.



Yes! I want to help the Friends of Stevens Creek Trail develop, use and enjoy the Stevens Creek Trail in 1999!

My company matches contributions! Company _____ Phone _____

I will help FOSCT by making a tax-deductible donation of \$ _____

I would like to volunteer on a Trail Work Day.

I would like to distribute the newsletter to my friends and colleagues. Please send me _____ copies.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

My gift is in honor or memory of: Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Thank You

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**Mark Your Calendars for
Sunday, October 3rd, 1999!**

The 6th Annual Trailblazer Race will be on Sunday, October 3rd, 1999. The nature walk will be back again after last year's successful debut. The youth races will be back and so will the Cupertino Parks and Recreation Department to put on an even grander set of youth events.