



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 2017

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## Skeggs Fire

# Really Close to Home

**I**t took four days and nights and 230 fire personnel before the 50-acre fire near Skeggs Point was fully contained last month. Ignited by a lightning strike during a rare and unseasonal thunderstorm, the fire expanded into an area between Highways 35 and 280, with smoke visible as far away as Palo Alto.

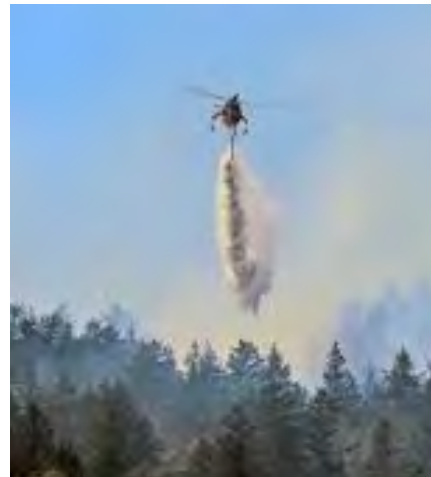
First responders, equipped only with hand tools, had to bushwhack more than a mile to reach the remote fire. Later a 12,000-foot hose was hauled in, along with a helicopter to drop fire retardant, 18 fire engines, and a bulldozer. The fire caused no structural damage, no evacuations, and only one minor injury when a firefighter was struck by a falling branch. Mostly heavy underbrush burned, with only a few trees going up in flames.

While neither Huddart nor Wunderlich were in immediate danger, both parks were closed for the duration, with Huddart reopening one day after Wunderlich. In addition, Kings Mountain Road was closed, causing two school groups that had booked hikes with the Friends' Huddart Park Nature Hikes Program to reschedule their field trips. In Wunderlich, the Folger Stable Field Trip program was unaffected. Ranger Dinora Dunsmore-Bertoni of Huddart Park and Carla Schoof of San Mateo County ensured the Friends had up-to-the minute information about the fire's impact on the parks.

Nature Hikes Docent Sandy Shapero lives about a mile from where the fire started. Many of the firefighters are Sandy's neighbors, she says, so she was able to get first-hand information from them. "They told me, 'Don't worry. You'll have plenty of time to evacuate if it comes to that.' But I was thinking about the Oakland Fire [of 1991] and thought, better safe than sorry. My husband and I packed up important documents, pictures, and clothing, picked up our kids down the mountain, and stayed in a hotel."

The fire was managed by a joint effort that included the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire), Woodside Fire District, Kings Mountain Volunteer Fire Company, San Mateo County Sheriff's Office, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, Cal Water Service, San Mateo County Parks Department, and correctional inmates from state conservation camps.

Sandy probably spoke for the entire mountain community when she sent a message to the firefighters: "When I think about what might have happened if you were not here . . . I am silent. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts."



*Left: Towering plumes of smoke from the Skeggs Fire were clearly visible from Highway 280 and as far away as Palo Alto. Right: A helicopter dropped fire retardant on the burning mountain, helping to prevent a fire ladder up the trees.*

## Grand Opening of Museum Exhibit



**Sunday, November 12**, a new exhibit opens at the Folger Stable Carriage Room Museum, highlighting the history of logging in the Woodside area from 1849 to the early 1860s.

Funded by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors' Measure K Funds, the Hurlbut Johnson Charitable Trust, and the Beverly Folger Foundation, the exhibit features the men who owned the mountains and the trees as well as the men who cut them down--from John Coppinger, who received the original land grant from the Mexican governor, to Charles Brown who built the area's first sawmill, to Colonel John Coffee Hayes, the first sheriff of San Francisco who commuted on horseback from his mountain home to his city office.

The exhibit also features the "timber beasts" who did the dangerous work of preparing and delivering the huge logs from the steep slopes below Skyline Ridge to the mills. Their lives are depicted in vintage photographs with descriptions of each arduous job as well as with the actual tools they used—such as whip saws, axes, wedges, and spring boards. Also, a life-size logger properly dressed for work and ready for action will be on view.

The grand opening of the exhibit coincides with the Speaker Series event featuring Lisa Robinson, President of the San Lorenzo Valley Museum in Boulder Creek, who will discuss the history of logging in the local mountains.

**The exhibit will be free and open to the public, Saturdays, 10:00 A.M.- 4:00 P.M.**

## Friends Partner with POST For Annual Family Day in Huddart

The Friends cohosted the third annual Family Nature Day with Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) and San Mateo County Parks in September. Docents led families on nature hikes and showed bird nests, animals skulls, and pelts as well as offered kid-centered activities. The Friends were able to upgrade the activity centers this year thanks to Measure K Funding from the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors.



Visitors examine a mountain lion skull at an activity table.

## New County Parks Director



Parks Director Jonathan Gervais

The San Mateo County Parks Department has hired a new Parks Director. Jonathan Gervais will oversee the network of 20 county parks, including Huddart and Wunderlich. Collectively, the parks provide 170,000 acres of open space and 190 miles of trails. With a budget of \$15 million, the Parks Department also works with partners such as the San Mateo County Parks Foundation as well as the Friends that supplement county efforts with public programs, docent-led hikes, and educational opportunities. Gervais's aims in his new capacity include increasing the number of people visiting the parks and enjoying the many amenities. "My goal is to increase community adoption of County Parks by increasing partnerships, optimizing customer service and internal growth of the department." Gervais's previous position was as the Parks and Recreation Director of the City of Belmont.

## Champion of the Friends

He has a quiet, calm manner, but Tom Davids, Friends volunteer extraordinaire, is pure energy. He signed on to be a Huddart Park Nature Hikes Program Docent three years ago and ever since has been a leader in every Friends project—the Huddart field trip hikes themselves, the expansion of the hikes to third and fourth graders, the launch of the new Hikes with Friends program, and the development of the new museum exhibit about the history of logging in Woodside. Not only has he devoted countless hours himself to these efforts, he has also recruited other docents to the hiking program, enabling the Friends to offer more opportunities to more schools than it ever has.

Tom says his love of nature coincides with the aims of the Friends. "To me, leading hikes is not a burden or an obligation but a privilege and the same is true of other Friends activities such as working on the Folger Stable museum project and developing hikes that focus on our magnificent redwoods."

The work of the Friends relies on champions like Tom Davids, who gives his time so generously. Contributing time is one way that helps the Friends fulfill its mission. Individual donors who fund the programs are vital to continuing the efforts of volunteers like Tom to serve the local community and its enjoyment of the two treasured county parks in Woodside.



Tom Davids, sharing his knowledge with hikers during one of his popular Hikes with Friends outings.

**Remember us  
in your end-of-year giving**

Thank You!  
[www.huddartwunderlichfriends.org/donate](http://www.huddartwunderlichfriends.org/donate)

# The Story of Logging the Woodside Redwoods

The Folger Stable Speaker Series, a free program offered by the Friends, presents its next event Sunday, November 12, 3:00 P.M. Titled “A Rough and Perilous Life: The Loggers of Woodside,” the presentation by Lisa Robinson of the San Lorenzo Valley Museum will discuss the little-known stories of redwood logging in the Santa Cruz Mountains, especially around Huddart and Wunderlich. Coinciding with the talk, the new logging exhibit in the Folger Stable Carriage Room Museum will have its grand opening.



Left: Lisa Robinson, president of the San Lorenzo Valley Museum board, will present the rich history of logging in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Right: Lud McCrary, in an early photo, will demonstrate redwood shingle splitting.

Lisa, who has lived with her family in Boulder Creek and worked in the tech field for some 35 years, is the President of the San Lorenzo Valley Museum board in Boulder Creek as well as the museum’s Collections Manager. In addition, she has written several books detailing the history of the San Lorenzo Valley and the Santa Cruz Mountains. In her talk, she will show why and how the lumber industry around Woodside began, who the men were who risked their lives to pull down the redwood giants, what role women played, and what life was like around the sawmills.

A special feature of the day’s events will be a demonstration of redwood shake splitting by 89-year-old Frank “Lud” McCrary. He cofounded Big Creek Lumber in 1946 in the Santa Cruz Mountains, and was an early proponent of protective forest management practices. Lud is particularly interested in farming, local as well as logging history, and sharing his skills with future generations. In addition, Danita and Bob Gardner will play old-time fiddle music, just as the loggers might have enjoyed on their day off.

The Folger Stable Speaker Series began nearly three years with the purpose of bringing to the community presentations featuring local topics of interest and local individuals of note. For more information on past speaker events at Folger Stable, visit [www.huddartwunderlichfriends.org](http://www.huddartwunderlichfriends.org). **Please RSVP to this free event at [www.logging.eventbrite.com](http://www.logging.eventbrite.com).**

## Letter from the President

### Dear Friends . . .

Over the past year you’ve probably noticed a big uptick in park activity at both Huddart and Wunderlich Parks. The Friends educational and recreational programs are also experiencing enormous growth.

California educational standards suggesting the benefits of experiential learning outside the classroom has driven demand for our history field trips at Wunderlich as well as our nature hikes program at Huddart. The 3rd-4th grade California History field trips at Wunderlich have exceeded the 50 program mark, reaching the limit of our two-day capacity for the upcoming semester. The K-4th grade nature hikes at Huddart Park are also nearing the 1500-students mark, many of whom are from underserved schools in the county. The Folger Stable Carriage Room Museum is regularly hosting more than 150 visitors on Saturdays. Our newest program, Hikes with Friends, is also gaining popularity as a free, fun, and educational way for families to enjoy and learn together about the nature and history of our incredible parks. The new museum exhibit, featuring the story of logging and loggers in the parks, and a community holiday open house at the Folger Stable, will top off this year’s activities.

Managing this growth while still maintaining quality programming is a challenge for a small organization like the Friends. We have been fortunate to have attracted funding from some major philanthropic groups this year and have recruited a large, talented, and enthusiastic group of volunteers to lead our programs.

The Friends’ successful ability to offer valuable free and limited-cost programs has always depended on the generosity of loyal supporters like you. The positive feedback from teachers, students, volunteers, and the general public tell us that your support and our work to continue and expand our programming are what the community desires.

**Annual Appeal.** As we look forward to the busy year ahead, we ask you to support our programs and projects financially. The majority of our operating budget has always depended on individual donations from our loyal friends like you. Whether it is history, hikes or horses that have attracted you to value the incredible two county parks we support, we’d like to ask for your financial support. On behalf of our Board of Directors, Advisory Board members, dedicated volunteers and staff who have a passion for sharing history and nature, we thank you very much.



Jill Daly  
Friends Board President



## *Holidays with the Friends*

at the Historic Folger Stable, WUNDERLICH PARK

4040 Woodside Road

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1:00 - 4:00 P.M.



RSVP: <https://HolidaysWithFriends.eventbrite.com>

### FREE FAMILY EVENT!

- PONY RIDES
- SANTA & MRS. CLAUS
- CRAFTS
- LEATHER STAMPING
- PETTING ZOO
- LIVE MUSIC

### THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

- Buck's of Woodside
- Carrie Davis of Coldwell Banker
- Don DeFranco of Sotheby's
- Putnam Subaru ● Robert's Market
- Ginna Lazar of Lazar Homes

### *You know you want to . . .*

. . . join us! The Friends has enriching and fun opportunities for volunteers. Some jobs are seasonal. All training is provided.

#### **Carriage Museum Docent**

*One Saturday/month*

*10 a.m.-1 p.m. or 1 p.m.-4 p.m.*

#### **Folger Stable School Group Docent**

*Wednesdays or Fridays 10 a.m.-noon*

#### **Huddart Park Nature Hike Docent**

*Tues. or Thurs. 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.*

#### **Board Member**

*One meeting/month + committee work*

**Give us a call!**

**650.851.2660 or e-mail**

**[info@huddartwunderlichparks.org](mailto:info@huddartwunderlichparks.org)**