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Address 2
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San Jose, CA 95110

The Guadalupe River Park Conservancy provides community leadership for the development and active use of the Guadalupe River Park & Gardens through education, advocacy and stewardship.

This newsletter is generously supported by



Meet Us at the River Park

RIVER PARK UPDATES

Winter on the Green | Viva Parks: Sat, Dec 18 & Sun, Dec 19 from 12-4pm

Guadalupe Gardens Park Improvement Community Meeting:

Wednesday Dec 8, 5:30-7pm (virtual)

Rotary PlayGarden is open Thursday - Sunday from 10am - 4pm

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Historic Orchard Workdays: 1st Saturday of the month, 9-11:30am

Trail Clean Ups: 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 9-11am

Heritage Rose Garden Workdays: Every Saturday, 8:30-11:30am

Trail Ambassador recruitment (ongoing)

Weekly Rotary PlayGarden maintenance support (ongoing)

PROGRAMS & EDUCATION

CHIRP Homeschool programming takes place at the Conservancy every Monday (ongoing)



Become a Member!

Support programs and initiatives that uplift community through the River Park by joining our membership program!

Visit grpg.org to learn more and join.



THE GUADALUPE GAZETTE

FALL/WINTER 2021



Harmony & Health

With the days being shorter and colder this time of year, we're extremely grateful for fellow park stewards and community members participating in recent events and volunteer opportunities. In this issue, you'll learn more about recent happenings in the park, our stewardship collaborations, and the importance of place-driven community health.

We hope to GRPC you on the trail soon!

-The Conservancy Team



Chrysalis Alert!

Monarch butterfly chrysalis are spotted on our Visitor Center! We are thrilled to host these pollinators, particularly after last winter's declining CA population count.

Come visit and (carefully) meet our neighbors!

Letter from Our Board of Directors



Dear friends and supporters of Guadalupe River Park and Gardens,

I would love to congratulate the GRPC team on their 25th anniversary! Our celebratory Window on the River Park event was a huge success with recognition coming from Mayor Sam Liccardo and community organizations. Being together in person has been such a blessing for all of us.

Fall is actually my favorite time at the park, when you can walk in the early morning or after it rains and smell the freshness of fallen leaves. Growing up in Moscow, Russia I learned that the connection to nature through parks and gardens is quintessential for anyone's well being. Through my dad, I became a "nature" girl. He taught me how to identify different types of trees, berries, and mushrooms; our favorite fall family activity was picking wild mushrooms and berries.

Protecting the environment and nature, bringing parks and gardens experience for our community, and preserving them for generations to come has been my motto. I love being part of the GRPC and being able to contribute to preserving the gift of nature here. This has been especially meaningful during the pandemic as the park became the only place to unwind. In our recent board meeting we discussed the strategic plan for further development of the GRPC and also spent a lot of time thinking about how we can support the unhoused within our community. I was deeply moved by the compassion and great ideas which were explored. While the GRPC cannot solve these problems alone, I can definitely say that the GRPC is on the front lines of helping the community and making sure the park is a safe place for everyone.

For me, this time of year is also a time for reflection of how the year has been going and planning for upcoming holidays. It is a time to see how far along we are with the plans for the year and refocus the priorities for the time we have left. Please also consider year-end giving for a meaningful cause, which the GRPC mission has been for me. Every donation counts and helps us to achieve our goals.

With best wishes for the upcoming holiday season,

Katia Terentyeva
Member, Conservancy Board of Directors



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River Park Round Up



On October 9th we hosted **Pumpkins in the Park** where we distributed 800 pumpkins and had over 5,000 people in attendance throughout the day! We're glad we could bring fun in the form of inflatable slides, lawn games, free pumpkins, cultural entertainment, and more to our community in the spirit of the fall season.

On September 16 we held our annual fundraiser, **Window on the River Park**, at the Little Italy Piazza in downtown San Jose. Over 125 supporters celebrated our 25th anniversary safely outdoors, raising over \$140,000 to support park stewardship and education.



On September 19, in partnership with San Jose Walls, we hosted a booth at **Viva Calle SJ** to engage the public on future public art and programs for the River Park. The feedback from over 240 individuals (80 youth) will guide park programmng and advocacy efforts.



On October 18, the Rotary Club of San Jose and the Conservancy honored Julie Matsushima, the visionary behind the **Rotary PlayGarden**, and her late husband Mel Matsushima. As advocates for children with disabilities, the Matsushimas were instrumental in the creation of San Jose's first all-inclusive playspace.

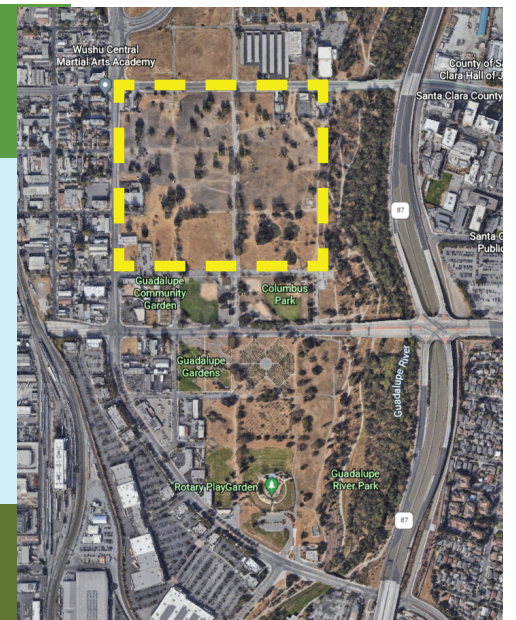
Guadalupe Gardens Park Improvements COMMUNITY MEETING

Join us for a virtual community meeting to explore Phase 1 park improvements within the Guadalupe Gardens. Feedback will guide thoughtful priorities that draw users to new recreational attractions.

Wednesday, December 8, 2021 | 5:30-7:00pm
Online Meeting (hosted via Zoom). Visit grpg.org for the link.

Co-hosted by:

SAN JOSE
PARKS, RECREATION & NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES



Neighboring Stewards



November 6, volunteers and community leaders joined to reach a milestone achievement by South Bay Clean Creeks Coalition on removing their one-millionth pound of trash in all their years of community service. Their partnership has been essential to maintaining the health of the Guadalupe River (photo source: SBCCC).



November 5, the Guadalupe River Park Working Group toured the southern segment of the Guadalupe River Trail from Woz Way to Virginia Street with City park rangers to learn more about the ranger program and progress of our cross-sector collaboration over the past year.



November 20, we had 45 volunteers help us clean up the front and back yard of our Visitor and Education Center including sheet mulching, weeding, and fresh coat of paint along the back wall spelling out the Conservancy's initials.

Stewardship Metrics: 2021	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Number of volunteers	343	238	479	--	1,060
Acres maintained	100	55	55	--	210
Volunteer hours	2,230	1,227	3,603	--	7,060
Trail patrols	55	55	45	--	155
Trash bags filled	764	1,125	2,602	--	4,491
Pounds of trash removed	22,920	33,750	65,376	--	122k
Park features restored	6	12	17	--	35

Six Months of Resilience: Our Corps Interview

In March of this year San Jose launched the Resilience Corp program, designed to help young adults gain living-wage employment and work experience opportunities while giving back to their community. The Guadalupe River Park Conservancy is lucky to have 6 of these young adults helping beautify and maintain our park for the next few months. We interviewed members David, Korinna, and Tristan to see what they liked about being in the Resilience Corp.



DAVID

What do you enjoy about working outdoors?

I enjoy being active and working outside.

Do you have a favorite area of the park, either to work in or to hang out at?

The Heritage Rose Garden and the trail. The garden looks better and better every time you walk into it.

What do you like about being a Resilience Corp member?

People are so helpful in the program, everyone is so nice. You make real, genuine friends when you have to work together on completing a task.

What do you see yourself doing when your time with the Resilience Corp is over?

I'd like to work with the city or somewhere I can help the Latino community and Spanish speakers.



KORINNA

What do you enjoy about working outdoors?

I like the nice weather, working in the mud, finding little bugs and observing their habitat.

Do you have a favorite area of the park, either to work in or to hang out at?

I'd say my favorite spot in the park is Mel's bench behind the Heritage Rose Garden, it's a chill spot to see the whole garden.

What do you like about being a Resilience Corp member?

The motto "Service to self, service to community, service to the environment" is a key thing I focus on and it's been really great for the part of San Jose we're in, which needs some tender love and care. The program's focus of finding your career path and working towards what you want to do in your future is pretty solid.

What do you see yourself doing when your time with the Resilience Corp is over?

I'm going to see if I can do a second term with the Conservation Corp. I'd like to hopefully work in something labor- oriented.



TRISTAN

What do you enjoy about working outdoors?

I enjoy how beautiful the weather is no matter the time of year, and working outdoors people can see the impact you're making immediately. When people notice that, it feels really rewarding.

Do you have a favorite area of the park, either to work in or to hang out at?

Walking the trail going towards downtown, you can see how much park there is but also the skyline as well and it's very beautiful.

What do you like about being a Resilience Corp member?

Working with a team is awesome, I'm glad the Resilience Corp is set up like that. Everyone is very helpful. AmeriCorp in general is a great program, everyone wants you to succeed. If you need help there's always resources.

What do you see yourself doing when your time with the Resilience Corp is over?

I can see myself working for the city, in either an office or maintenance job with the experience I've gained.

A Place-Based Equitable Community Recovery Strategy



To foster community recovery as we journey through the various Acts of this pandemic Epic, we must consider all the facets of community: the people, the place, and the promise. Considering what is in the pipeline for transformative civic investments: strategic spending of our American Rescue Plan funds, opportunities in the Federal Infrastructure Bill and others, public recovery programs around natural resources, tourism, neighborhoods, economic development, etc., and more; it is imperative that we frame support for our parks and other social infrastructure as essential elements of recovery.

“These are vital down payments, setting the stage for deeper, more sustained investments that will fundamentally alter the machinery of social change in our city” - Rip Rapson, “The Mayor’s Guide to Speding Federal Aid,” Route Fifty, October 22, 2021

Last October, Rip Rapson, President and CEO of The Kresge Foundation, published an article on strategies cities may adopt to leverage ARP funds for transformational civic and social investments. In it, he highlights Detroit’s investment in “critical markers” of a community-informed plan as “vital down payments, setting the stage for deeper, more sustained investments that will fundamentally alter the machinery of social change in our city.”

Reimagining the Civic Commons, a national learning network convening civic-minded cities, released a report entitled, “Place Driving Equity: An evidence-based action guide on the role of public space for shared prosperity” affirmed Rapson’s position. The study highlights the potential for our parks, public spaces, and other social infrastructure; if prioritized and invested in, it can help us reach priorities around shared prosperity, defined around eliminating racism and building trust, delivering health equity, and advancing equitable wealth creation.

Before and through the pandemic, the Guadalupe River Park has promoted place-driven equity.

- Through the Guadalupe River Art Walk initiative, we commemorate the resilience and vibrancy of the Muwekma Ohlone tribe, and showcase the works of three local artists of color. We build trust through collaborative opportunities to connect people, particularly through volunteerism, to collectively steward our natural resources.
- Through the active stewardship of our trail network and operation of our Rotary PlayGarden, we advance health equity while encouraging our region’s neighbors to run, ride, and play. We partner with community organizations to steward and actively restore our Historic Orchard to enhance our local food security.
- We promote equitable wealth creation through workforce development, access to STEM education, and nurturing community uplift through parks. Our work involves connecting employment development for unsheltered residents with park stewardship, scholarships for youth from Title One schools for science education, and partnering with the City of San Jose through the Resilience Corps initiative (citywide young adult employment program).

The challenge before us is great, but so is recovery. Recent legislative actions have opened windows of opportunity to allow glimpses of a connected, healthy, and vibrant community could look like. We must not be shy in our ambition and vision for holistic and shared civic uplift. We must lead with place-driven equity and treat this challenge as a symbol of robust and inclusive recovery that our City strives for.



Source: Lasser, Pao (dresstents.com)

Using Photography and Place to Advance Vaccination

This past summer, San Jose artists Robin Lasser and Adrienne Pao co-led a citywide billboard art project encouraging vaccinations as part of the Governor’s Office’s “Your Actions Save Lives” public messaging campaign. Entitled “Covid Bubbles: Californians Dress for Emergence.” Below is an exert from the artists’ website (dresstents.com) on the goals of their project:

“The “Bubble” represents our social, familial, or solitary bubbles that we live in during the pandemic. These public art installations, activated by Vietnamese and Latinx community members, are meant to empower San José communities impacted by the pandemic. Messages such as “Vaccinated, no more loneliness!” are written in Vietnamese, Spanish and English onto either silk lanterns or papel picado. Rather than telling people they should go out and get vaccinated, the messaging on the billboards speak to the relief, joy, and celebration one feels once vaccinated; and with how good it feels to be able to visit grandparents once again, and safely be with friends.”



Source: Lasser, Pao (dresstents.com)

The Heritage Rose Garden hosted one of two locations (Latinx Bubble) with the other being Kelley Park (Vietnamese Bubble). The project showcases a beautiful series of photographs driving change and celebrating culture by advancing the message of resilience at the intersection of art, place, community, and public health. Visit dresstents.com to learn more about the project, which includes a video of the process.



You can support using the QR code above to donate online, or send your gift to:

438 Coleman Avenue
San Jose, CA 95110

Support Our Commitment to Your River Park

Throughout 2021, the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy has been deeply committed to our work of promoting the active use, stewardship, and development of your River Park into San Jose’s civic greenway. We hope that you will consider the Conservancy as part of your annual giving this year.

Parks will continue to be vital to our physical and mental well-being as we navigate a changed world . Your gift will enable us to do the necessary work of enhancing community health through parks, and connect people to nature and each other.

Jason Su, Executive Director