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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

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Historic Orchard Workdays: 1st Saturday of the month, 9:00-11:30am
Trail Clean Ups: 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 9:00-11:00am
Heritage Rose Garden Workdays: Every Saturday, 8:30-11:30am
Trail Ambassadors: Volunteer on your own time!

PROGRAMS & EDUCATION

CHIRP registration is live and begins September 13, 2021 (in-person)
Member Appreciation Day is August 7, 2021 at our Visitor & Education Center
Mural unveiling for "We Are Muwekma Ohlone" on the Guadalupe River Art Walk is August 21, 2021

RIVER PARK UPDATES

Rotary PlayGarden is open Thursday - Sunday, 10:00am-6:30pm
Window on the River Park is September 16, 2021, 5:30-7:00pm
Pumpkins in the Park is October 9, 2021, time TBD



Become a Member!

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

Visit [grpg.org](https://www.grpg.org) to learn more and join.

Summertime Sunshine

We are now halfway through the year and that means it's summertime! We're happy to see people making good use of the longer days by enjoying a walk through the park, playing at the Rotary PlayGarden, or taking advantage of Camp Guadalupe. In this issue, you'll learn more about our ongoing education programs, what our volunteers have been up to, and hear from people who've inspired us as we celebrate 25 years of the Conservancy!

We hope to GRPC you on the trail soon!
- the Conservancy Staff



Letter from a Board Member



Friends and Supporters of the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy -

It is hard to believe we are over half-way through 2021! Summer in San Jose brings long days of sunlight, cool mornings and pleasant evenings that provide a wonderful opportunity to be outdoors and enjoy our natural areas. One of my weekday evening rituals during the pandemic has been spending time in the Guadalupe River Park, biking, jogging or walking the trails. It is incredible to have this resource in the community and I've been inspired by all the new park users who are also discovering what a unique asset this is for San Jose.

Earlier this year to commemorate Earth Day, many of the GRPC Board Members and staff met for a volunteer project in the Heritage Rose Garden. For many of us, it was our first time meeting off screen as we pulled weeds and readied the Rose Garden for the Conservancy's annual Mother's Day fundraiser. In my family, the adopt-a-rose program is a huge hit and it is rewarding to see the impact of a modest donation on one of the Park's most unique sites.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Guadalupe River Park and we hope many of you will be able to celebrate with us in September! As we reach this milestone, our role has evolved into leaders and conveners promoting conservation and education of the River Park and Gardens for the community. I am so grateful for the tireless work of the Conservancy staff who continue to drive the mission of the organization forward.

Thank you all for your continued support - we can't do what we do without you - our champions, members, supporters and friends.

Best wishes,

Natasha Marwah
Board Member



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Window on the River Park

Join us in-person for our 25th anniversary celebration of the River Park and Conservancy!

Thursday, September 16th 2021 5:30 - 7:00 PM
The Piazza at Little Italy San Jose

For tickets and sponsorship information, please email
Claire Flanegin, Advancement Officer at claire@grpg.org

Beat the Heat!

Summer is in full swing, and the weather is letting us know it! Luckily, there are plenty of places to keep you shaded and cool throughout the park no matter the time of day.

Take a break under an overpass and check out our newest Guadalupe River Art Walk murals "Do You Know The Way To The Guadalupe River Trail" near W Santa Clara Street or "We Are Muwekma Ohlone" near W San Fernando Street.

Stand on the steps near the old Visitor Center leading down to the river at Weaver's Gift Plaza, located in the shade of the building.

Cool off in the shade of our Sister City monuments and learn about places like Tainan, Taiwan or Dublin, Ireland.

Sit at shady benches and tables throughout the park, found by the Visitor and Education Center, Confluence Park East, Arena Green East, and the AIDS Memorial Grove.

Enjoy a view of the river while relaxing on flood control steps found along the path. Entrance to the flood steps can be found at the corner of Coleman Ave and Autumn Parkway, by W Santa Clara Street near Highway 87, and by W San Carlos Street next to Monopoly in the Park.

Lay out in the grass under the shade of a tree in History Plaza, Arena Green West, or Discovery Meadow.

An orchard's flowering lifespan is about 25 years, or the same amount of time the GRPC has been around!

Community forests keep us healthy by filtering air pollution, lowering our blood pressure, improving our attention span, and boosting our mood.

There are over 60,000 known tree species in the world

Common native tree species in San José include the California Laurel, Coast Live Oak, Douglas Fir, and Redwood

Different parts of a tree grow depending on time of year; foliage grows in Spring, the trunk will grow in Summer, and roots will grow in Fall and Winter.

The Return of Camp Guadalupe



The GRPC Education Team has been hard at work providing science education for students of all ages by offering various programs year round, even with new restrictions in place. Virtual Field Trips this past school year allowed us to give over 1,000 students the opportunity to learn science interactively while safely behind a screen. A 4th grade Title One teacher who utilized our Virtual Field Trip model said, "It's visual, engaging, there's art, it's in Spanish, and it's fun... Science SHOULD be fun. And that's what you brought to my students. In a world of nonstop standards and testing, you made learning FUN."

Camp Guadalupe returned to an in-person learning model this Summer. Nine weeks of camp allowed us to include a variety of different theme weeks and accompanying activities for students to learn by doing. For example, the photo above is our campers learning chemistry by making tie-dye shirts, and the one below is from when the campers learned about botany by examining roses in our Heritage Rose Garden.

Charlie was a bit nervous on his first day of Camp Guadalupe because he "didn't know anyone there" and that nervousness faded quickly the first day due to the kindness and compassion of Camp staff. Each day at pick up, he was thrilled to tell me what he learned about cartography, and still wears the wrist-compass he made when walking our dog. As a parent, knowing he was able to wrap his love for all things downtown into real-life learning was so great to see.

- Chloe, Summer Camper parent

Registration is now open for our homeschool program, CHIRP! The Community Homeschool Investigators of the River Park program allows students ages 5 - 12 to build community and learn science by working together on experiments and observations utilizing the Guadalupe River, Heritage Rose Garden, Historic Orchard, and park space. We're glad to bring the excitement of outdoor education back to students through in-person learning while still allowing accessibility through new virtual learning models going forward.

Celebrating 25 Years of the GRPC



From Friends of Guadalupe River Park and Gardens to Guadalupe River Park Conservancy, we've seen a lot of change over the last 25 years. What hasn't changed over the past two and a half decades is our commitment to providing a place for San Jose community members and visitors to take in nature while remaining in the heart of downtown by promoting education, advocacy, and stewardship of the area. Read on to see the lasting impact the park has made on some of our board members and volunteers over time.

1969 The very first plan for the Guadalupe River Park was prepared by the City Planning Department

When I became involved with the non-profit FGRPG at the time, I could understand how fortunate San Jose was to have a river running through it. The improvements to the downtown portion of the river have made the river and the surrounding areas into, to quote Frank Fiscalini, "A great Park for a great



1989 The Guadalupe River Park Task Force is created to oversee planning of Coleman Loop area into an urban park

1986 US Congress authorizes flood protection of the Guadalupe River as part of the Water Resources Development Act

1992 Construction begins on the Guadalupe River Park

Our goal was to bring a strong citizens' voice to the design of the park and promote its use by supporting volunteer efforts and developing educational programs and events such as Pumpkins in the Park. I have faith that our early vision for the GRP will be fulfilled when I see the energy and passion of the people leading the Conservancy today, and know that there is still great community support for a signature park in downtown San Jose.

-Kathleen Muller, first Executive Director



Celebrating 25 Years of the GRPC



My favorite memories are when our grandchildren were very young, I would bring them to ride on the trails. I think that the Rotary Play Garden is a great addition to the Park. I hear many positive remarks from parents who bring their children to play. Had it been there when my grandchildren were young, they would have spent many fun filled hours there.

- Greg Hernandez, longtime volunteer



1995 Guadalupe Gardens Corporation and the Friends of the Guadalupe River Park merge to form the Guadalupe River Park & Gardens Corporation

1995 Site preparation for the Historic Rose Garden completed and planting begins

1994 Site preparation for the Historic Orchard completed and planting begins

1996 Merger fully processed by the Secretary of the State of California



2002 Guadalupe River Park & Gardens Corporation renamed as Friends of Guadalupe River Park & Gardens

2005 Grand Opening of the Guadalupe River Park & Gardens

2010 Friends of the Guadalupe River Park & Gardens renamed as Guadalupe River Park Conservancy



We have celebrated many milestones: the park's grand opening, the planting of the Historic Orchard and Heritage Rose Garden, the extension and paving of the River Trail to Alviso, the establishment and expansion of the community garden, and the opening of the beloved Rotary PlayGarden, among many more. As the park matures and our community's needs evolve, our commitment is unwavering. Now, as we turn 25, we rise to meet needs for restoration, furthering park development, and deepening community connection. And as downtown development enters a bright new era, we have the opportunity to fully realize our park and community's potential.

-Joe Salvato, current Deputy Director

2015 Rotary PlayGarden opens and continues to be expanded upon

2018 Historic Orchard revitalization begins

2020 Construction on the Guadalupe River Art Walk begins in partnership with POW! WOW! San Jose





A River Park Nurtured by Community

The enduring work of the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy is founded on the legacy and ongoing dedication of our volunteers, community champions, and River Park stewards over the years. Our appreciation for our volunteers continues to deepen, particularly with those dedicated to ensuring parks for our community through this pandemic crisis.

The influence of our volunteers is far-reaching: from the convening of passionate community activists to create an organization to lead the vision for the Guadalupe River, to thousands of hands pulling weeds and picking up litter, to advocates fighting to ensure our community's parks are welcoming, accessible, and well-maintained; our River Park and our community stands on the shoulders of engaged communities and forward-thinking leaders.

With every new year comes new leaders. Whether it's a mother showing her two daughters proper techniques on handling a chainsaw while caring for our Historic Orchard, budding Eagle scouts building our new community board, engaged office workers maintaining our park, or school classrooms who combine learning with community service; the future of our River Park relies the action and service of our volunteers, who share and build on the vision for San Jose's civic greenway.

Stewardship continues to be a vital element for the ongoing cherishment of our civic and natural resources. Inclusion is what inspires diverse neighbors to work in service side-by-side on this wild river through an urban core. Action by our community carries the torch of our vision forward. Legacy is the civic trust we inherit, and the public gift we leave behind. As we cautiously and optimistically approach the potential end of this phase, we are grateful and inspired by the impact our volunteers, past, present, and emerging, have in creating a better River Park for us all.



Volunteer with Us!

Regular trail cleanups, Heritage Rose Garden workdays, and Historic Orchard Workdays are back on at the GRPG! We've been lucky to have many returning volunteers in addition to welcoming new ones who wanted to help us revitalize the trail, park and gardens.

We partnered with South Bay Clean Creeks Coalition in mid July for a cleanup, where 2.18 tons of trash was removed from the river. We believe in the power of numbers (volunteer numbers AND pounds of trash cleared!) and are glad for the opportunity to collaborate once again with different groups and organizations with the shared goal of a clean and cared for park.

If you are interested in joining us for an Historic Orchard, Heritage Rose Garden, or trail cleanup, please visit the Guadalupe River Park Eventbrite or click on the Calendar in the Events section on our website. If you would like to provide any input on volunteerism or the Historic Orchard restoration, please fill out our survey through the QR code below.

Stewardship Metrics: 2021	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Number of volunteers	343	238	--	--	581
Acres maintained	100	55	--	--	155
Volunteer hours	2,230	1,227	--	--	3,457
Trail patrols	55	55	--	--	110
Trash bags filled	764	1,125	--	--	1,889
Pounds of trash removed	22,920	33,750	--	--	56,670
Park features restored	6	12	--	--	18



Take the Orchard Survey!

1. Open the camera app on your phone
2. Hold the camera up to the code
3. Wait for a banner with a link to appear
4. Click the banner to go to the link
5. Take the survey!

“We Are Muwekma Ohlone” Art Walk Mural

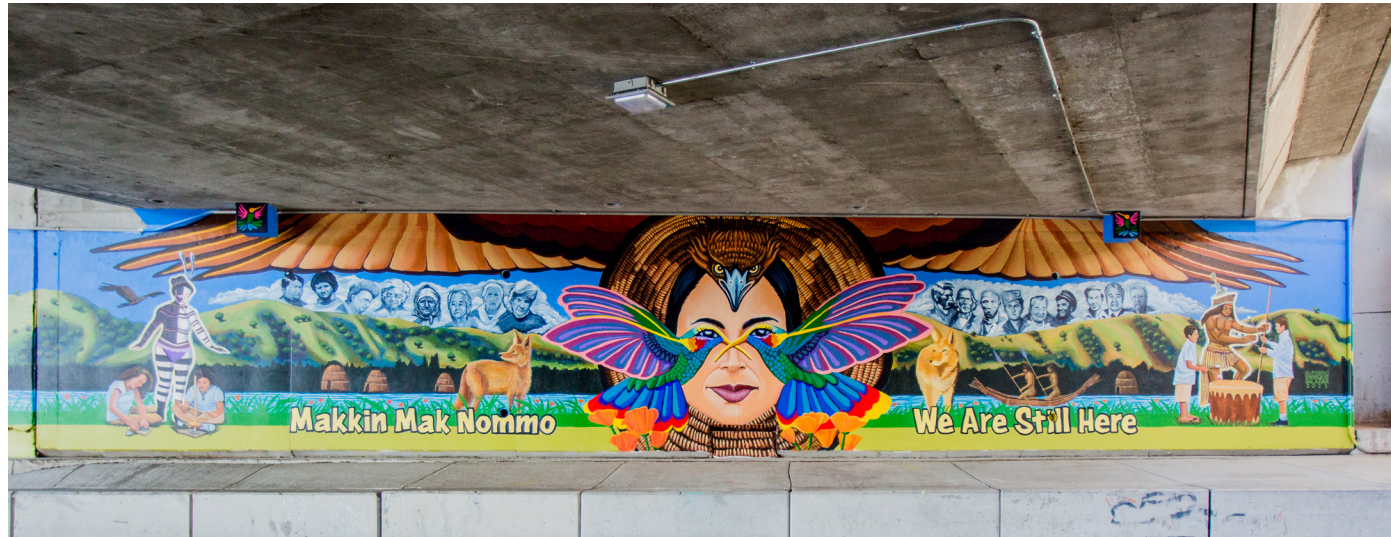


Photo credit: Ian Lundie

POW! WOW! San Jose (PWSJ) and Guadalupe River Park Conservancy (GRPC) team up to bring the experience of a global public art movement into one of San Jose’s most unique natural assets, the Guadalupe River Park in downtown San Jose, creating the Guadalupe River Art Walk. The Guadalupe River Park will act as a “nature studio,” hosting a series of Artist-in-Residencies over the course of a year to deliver the combined benefits of public art and parks.

The third Artist-in-Residence, Alfonso Salazar, recently completed his mural titled “The Muwekma Ohlone,” further expanding the Artist-in-Residencies series within the Guadalupe River Park. The latest mural is located along the Guadalupe River Trail under San Fernando Street and is now accessible to the public. An accomplished local artist who just retired from working at the post office for over 35 years, Alfonso is known for the El Tarasco mural that was painted in 1986 then whitewashed in 2011.

“This powerful mural not only tells our story, it also amplifies our VOICES in a beautifully visual way. It yells out we “were” here, we “are” here, and we “will always” be here.”

- Charlene Nijmeh, Chairwoman of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area.

“Outreach from the community inspired the concept of bringing cultural murals to the river trail and through several engagement forums we continued asking the same question, “What type of art would you like to see?” The results were educational and to highlight the rich diversity our landscape represents,” says Sarah Dreitlein, Civic Engagement Manager at the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy.

“Art and Activism are not strangers to each other and for the sake of protecting our livelihoods we paint joyful and colorful walls paying homage to peace, love, and freedom. Learning from the Muwekma Ohlone Council about what we can do as arts producers continues to shape what we want to advocate,” says Juan Carlos Araujo of POW! WOW! San Jose. “Murals are tools of awareness to think outside the box. We’ve all been put in a box to believe America was not stolen from the Native American tribes and once we can admit someone else’s wrongs, I believe we can move forward to building a better honest future.”



Photo credit: Lanny Nguyen

Artist Profile: Alfonso Salazar

“The mural I put together recognizes the Muwekma Ohlone tribe, the indigenous people who once lived along the Guadalupe River that is flowing through Downtown San Jose. Juan Carlos Araujo of PWSJ brought members of the Muwekma Ohlone tribal leadership to provide input to complete my concept. I have included Ohlone Elders in the clouds and people who have passed down their language and traditions to keep their culture alive. Charlene Nijmeh, the tribe’s current chairwoman who agreed to be the face of the art’s centerpiece. She represents the present day Ohlone people.

While the painting did keep me busy, I would spend a few minutes learning what I could about the history of the tribe before I began painting. To do that meant learning about the brutal history of the United States and in particular, California. The Muwekma Ohlone are currently seeking Federal reinstatement to be recognized as an American Indian Tribe after being declared extinct in the 1920s.”



Photo credit: Lanny Nguyen

“The Muwekma Ohlone people have been made invisible by indifference and “the politics of erasure” for far too long”, says Charlene Nijmeh, Chairwoman of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area. “Our VOICES scream out to be seen and to be heard. We demand our identity back and our inherent right of self-determination as a sovereign people. This powerful mural not only tells our story, it also amplifies our VOICES in a beautifully visual way. It yells out we “were” here, we “are” here, and we “will always” be here.”

The artist and creative team will host a river blessing and mural unveiling in partnerships with the Muwekma Ohlone Council and Indian Health Center on August 21 from 11am-12pm.



Photo credit: Ian Lundie