

Meet Us at the River Park

EVENTS & PROGRAMS

- **Historic Orchard Workdays**
1st Saturdays, 2nd & 4th Wednesdays
every month, 9-11:30am
- **Heritage Rose Garden Workdays**
Every Saturday, 8:30-11:30am
- **Trail Clean Ups**
1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 9-11am
- **Earth Day Trail Cleanup**
Saturday April 22, 9-11am
- **Nature Trail Tours**
2nd Saturday of month, 10:30-11:30am
- **Camp Guadalupe summer camp**
Registration is currently open



Adopt a rose to honor a loved one and support the stewardship of our publicly-accessible botanical treasure.

More at grpg.org.

This newsletter is
generously supported by



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.



SPRING 2023

THE GUADALUPE GAZETTE



SPRING 2023
NEWSLETTER



THE GUADALUPE GAZETTE

A Nod to Spring

Shifting seasons yield past efforts of resilience to blossoming opportunities of celebration. The Guadalupe River Park offers in full display these changes in our natural environment, and the civic shifts in our neighborhoods. As staggering rainfalls seed striking blooms, our focus on restoration and reconnection yields a Spring season with much to celebrate. These River Park milestones are led by impassioned champions of our civic greenway. You constantly show that the Guadalupe River Park is your River Park. Bravo!

In this issue, we excitedly share information on the atmospheric river, Heritage Rose Garden history, the people who contribute to activating the River Park, and more.

- The Conservancy Team



Heron Watch

The Great Blue Heron has returned to the River Park! This large birds stops by every year to snack on gophers in front of the Rotary PlayGarden.

Come visit and see if you can find the Great Blue Heron or any other migratory birds!

Letter from the New Board President



Dear Friends, Supporters, and Allies of the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy -

My name is Andrew Sandler, and I'm honored to have been elected to fill the role of Board President of GRPC. I want to start by thanking Marguerite Lee for her tireless efforts in leading the GRPC board through the last several tumultuous years of the COVID-era – and for her decade-long commitment to the River Park. It's through her work with staff and supporting groups, that we now have a clearer idea of our purpose and the space that we create for the city.

I come into the role with a growing understanding that the River Park is an incredible asset. A string of jewels that extend from Discovery Meadow, through Arena Green, the PlayGarden, Heritage Orchard and Rose Garden, and down through our being-designed Prototype Park stretching between Columbus Park and the Airport.

After years of advocating for the environment and inclusion of our neighbors and visitors, we're being joined by partners who are equally invested in seeing the Park evolve. Some key projects include:

- The transformation of Arena Green with the removal of the ranger station.
- The ever-nearing opening of the Rotary PlayGarden expansion.
- The finalization of plans for the dog park that will anchor Prototype Park and the Master Planned development of Guadalupe Gardens.
- And the commitment of over \$1.5M in funding from the federal government to develop Urban Agriculture within our charter.

With our expanded board and new members, we're taking a more holistic approach to our outreach. We reached unprecedented engagement and investment with our COVID-replanned Windows on River Park celebration. Pumpkins in the Park welcomed some of our highest-ever community engagement after two years of isolation. And Viva Calle has allowed staff to brainstorm ideas with passionate neighbors who now experience the opportunity to get to know us in person.

Thanks to strong leadership from our Governance and Executive sub-committees, we have the largest and most diverse class of board members that we've seen in years. We've refined our process for identifying, interviewing, and onboarding incredible folks and it's only made us stronger. Through thoughtful oversight, we're in a position to continue to invest to grow staff and deliver even greater impact to the Park and the City.

With all of the opportunities in front of us – to see our staff grow, to deepen relationships with local partner organizations and local leaders, to accelerate the development of our Master Plan – It is a privilege to work on it with you all.

Thank you,

Andrew Sandler



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River Park Round Up

Second Saturday Trail Tours

Join the fun with trail tours at the River Park every second Saturday of the month! Trail Tours serve as a wonderful overview of the River Park, with Guadalupe Guides stopping along the route for observations and small investigations according to what piques our group's interest, making it a unique experience each time. We hope you can join us for one on April 8, May 13, and June 10 at 10:30 AM!



Planting Trees in the Historic Orchard

In February over 100 trees were planted in the Historic Orchard thanks to help from staff, volunteers, and the UC Master Gardeners of Santa Clara County. Tree varieties included olive, apple, pear, and persimmon to name a few and were chosen based on climate resilience as well as their significance to the region once known as the Valley of Heart's Delight.



Rotary PlayGarden Expansion

We are nearing the end date for the Rotary PlayGarden expansion project and couldn't be more excited to offer this with treasured playground with even more inclusive play structure options for children throughout San Jose and beyond.

Pune Statue Update

The Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj statue on the Guadalupe River Trail near W Taylor St was located and returned to the City at the end of February. A damage assessment will be performed and a future plan for the statue will be determined. We are extremely grateful to see this cultural landmark relocated and appreciate the concern people expressed from near and far.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj statue at Guadalupe River Park

The statue was located and will be returned to the City.

A damage assessment will be performed and a future plan for the statue will be determined.

People of the River Park: Environmental Educators

Between CHIRP, Camp Guadalupe, Trail Tours and other environmental programs, a lot of preparation and planning goes into hosting these events. Making sure things run smoothly and creating an engaging time for different groups of people to learn about their local environment is a task that staff members like our Environmental Educators and Rotary PlayGarden attendants perform every week. In this new section, learn more about the People of the River Park below and be sure to stop and say Hi or ask questions if you see them out in the Gardens! They will also both be instructors for our upcoming summer camp, Camp Guadalupe, which is currently open for registration on our website.

KATRINA SEMENE

Environmental Educator & Education Program Administrator

When did you first join the GRPC?
I started volunteering in 2014 and then became a Guadalupe Guide in 2016.

What do your job duties consist of?
I lead field trips, workshops, and other learning sessions with the intent to spread awareness of environmental stewardship as it relates to the River Park. Now I also help with administrative work related to our education programs.

Do you have a favorite area of the park, either to work in or hang out?
I love to walk the path where Anita St meets the East Guadalupe River Trail. You'll pass by Buckeye Trees, Bay Laurels, Coast Live Oaks, then immediately see the Coast Redwoods. It's one of those spaces where I just have to point out to the school groups on how biologically diverse this park is.

What is your favorite part about working at the River Park?
The first one is that I have the opportunity to work both indoors and outdoors. The outdoor part of my duties lets me interact with the public and inform them of the park's significance to this area. My second one is that the Conservancy staff and volunteers are incredibly dedicated to the stewardship of the park. It's definitely a small, but mighty team. :)

What do you wish more people knew about working in a public park?
It's not only a green space for local residents, it's an active biodiversity highway which so many native species rely on to travel from one place to another.



JUSTIN MACMILLAN

Environmental Educator & Rotary PlayGarden Attendant

When did you first join the GRPC?
I started working at the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy in February 2019 and have been here ever since.

What do your job duties consist of?
I'm a Guadalupe Guide and some of my duties include leading field trips and our CHIRP program, educating the public at outreach events, and being a Rotary Playground attendant.

Do you have a favorite area of the park, either to work in or hang out?
My favorite part of the River Park is the river and the mural under the Coleman Ave overpass.

What is your favorite part about working at the River Park?
My favorite part about working at the Conservancy is that I get to be outside and educate children and adults about the local ecosystems.

What do you wish more people knew about working in a public park?
I wish more people knew about the Visitor Center and what it has to offer. We have a lot of cool animals and displays for people to interact with.



The Heritage of San Jose Roses



One of our favorite parts about the beginning of Spring is seeing the start of beautiful blooms in the Heritage Rose Garden. However, containing gorgeous flowers is not the only thing the Heritage Rose Garden is known for.

Roses are one of the most unique and historically significant flowers, with over 150 species and thousands of hybrids in existence dating back millions of years. In the Heritage Rose Garden, we host over 3,000 different varieties from rare species that come from all over the world. Each rose has a unique story to tell; some were painstakingly crossbred in people's backyards, some traveled an ocean to get here, and some were even found in old cemeteries.

With Mother's Day approaching soon, we wanted to give recognition to avid rosarian and "The Mother of Guadalupe Gardens", Loretta "Lorrie" Freeman, who was instrumental in the creation of the San Jose Heritage Rose Garden. As a volunteer coordinator, personal collector, and former president of the Santa Clara County Rose Society, Lorrie was one of the driving forces behind the implementation of the Heritage Rose Garden, giving much of her time, energy, and money to the creation of this plot of land. When we asked Lorrie's children about what the Heritage Rose Garden meant to their mom, they fondly remember her commitment to the installation of this notable collection of heritage roses in San Jose.

"Reflecting on our Mom's time spent establishing the Heritage Rose Garden, the three words we think of are relentless, dedication, and visionary...She and a group of other committed volunteers had the vision of what you see there today. Mom was relentless in pursuing it, as she was with so many other projects, and pursuits of her own...She obviously inspired many volunteers, and turning the space into a lovely public amenity for San Jose is a significant legacy"

"She would go down to the gardens early, stay late, travel as far as Germany to bring back cuttings to propagate for the garden. It was inspiring to see and the result was amazing, even to us back then!" - Dr. Anne

Marie McNeill, daughter of rosarian Loretta "Lorrie" Freeman



Today, we honor the legacy of Lorrie Freeman and other passionate rosarians who were involved in the creation of this treasured garden with rose replantings, volunteerism, public programs, and a partnership with the South Bay Heritage Rose Group. There are many ways to support the Heritage Rose Garden including volunteer work days every Saturday, the Adopt a Rose program which has special promotions for Valentine's and Mother's Day, and also the establishment of The Mel Hulse Fund in memory of the former Heritage Rose Garden Volunteer Director. We hope you choose to support this cherished San Jose rose garden and come stop and smell the roses soon!

Tom Liggett, Mel Hulse, Kelly Kline, and Lorrie Freeman at the Heritage Rose Garden during its initial planting.



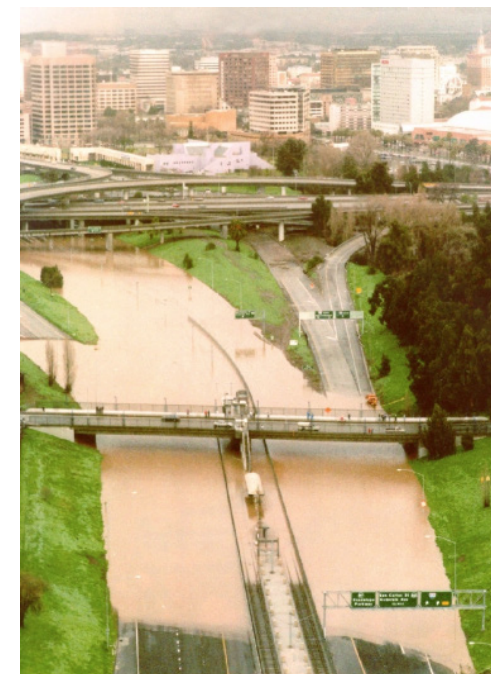
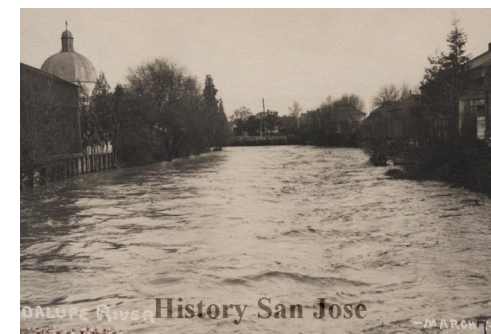
The Return of the Mighty Guadalupe River

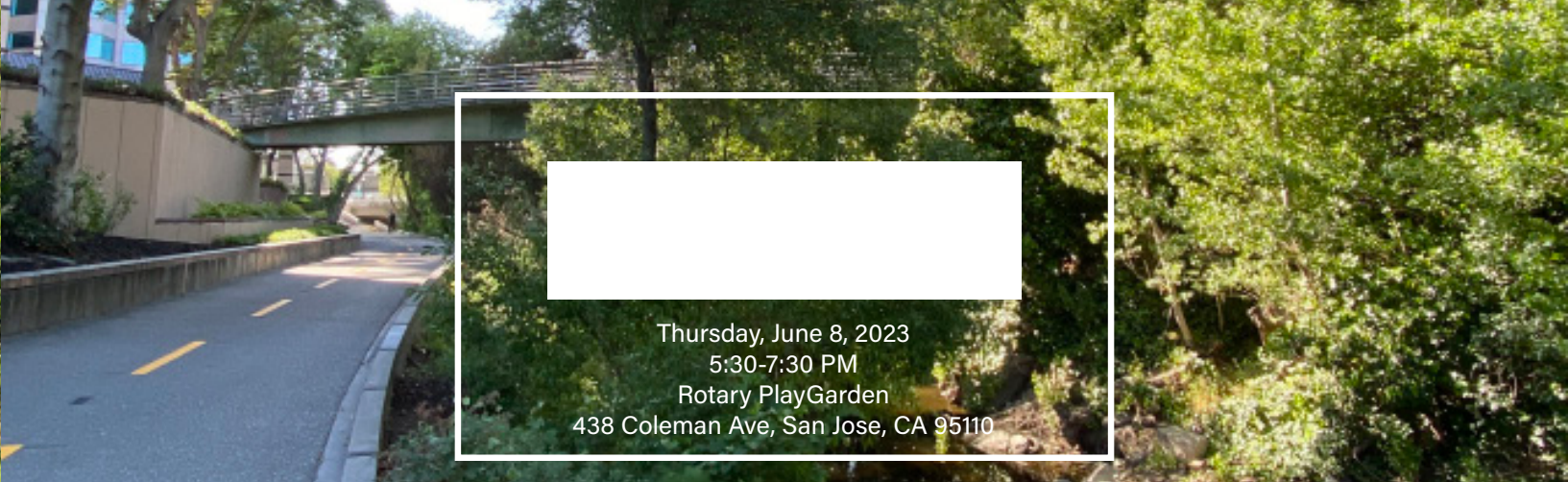
The significant rainfall this past winter brought much needed relief to our region's water supply, following a prolonged period of historic droughts in California. The force and volume of the storms were not without consequences, causing flooding, displacement, and property damages.

It has been nearly two decades since the completion of the Guadalupe River flood control project with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Santa Clara Valley Water District. It has been even longer since rainfall recently experienced would have further reached downtown San Jose and the surrounding communities. The Guadalupe River Park, with its parallel trails, culvert systems, and native ecology,

continues to serve its function as a regional park, civic greenway, and flood protection project. We owe the weaving trails, integrated native plantings, and connection of the river to our parks network to the Friends of the Guadalupe River Park, and countless advocates who fought to ensure that our unique natural resource was not merely channelized.

To more recent San Jose residents and visitors, this season's rains reawakened the Guadalupe River, uplifting the prescene of a wild river flowing through our downtown. For longer time residents, the rainfall reminded us of the defining prominence of this River in our city's history.





Thursday, June 8, 2023
5:30-7:30 PM
Rotary PlayGarden
438 Coleman Ave, San Jose, CA 95110

A Spiritual Throughline in San Jose

Every great city has an iconic public space that is reflective of the history, culture, social dynamics, progress, and potential within that city. Stepping foot in this space gives one an immediate sense of the identity of that city, its complexity and unique offerings. For me, the Guadalupe River Park and Trail is that space in San Jose, a physical and spiritual throughline that connects the city's past to its present. As I run, bike, and stroll the park on a weekly basis, I relish in this unique view of my city, one that speaks candidly to where we are, and where we need to go.

Through the seasons, the water level of the Guadalupe River changes drastically, a nod to the history of the area. I see the river and immediately think of the original inhabitants of the region, the Muwekma Ohlone people, whose livelihood was sustained by the nature and wildlife resulting from seasonal flooding. I also think of the critical role of this water in food production and early economic development of San Jose as the city evolved under Spanish, Mexican, then American control.



The concrete infrastructure around the Guadalupe River, which prevents flooding of nearby areas and provides public access to the river, symbolizes the shift in San Jose from a small farm town to an expansive, urban city. The murals and informal art on these concrete walls are reflective of the mosaic of perspectives and backgrounds that comprise this larger population, as are the diverse activities in park spaces, from cricket matches and bike polo to picnics, fishing, and many ethnic festivals.

Present too are the negative effects of this rapid urban expansion, where extreme wealth also produces extreme poverty, emblematic in residents without shelter, people suffering from mental and physical illness, and degradation of public spaces. Unfortunately, poor perceptions of safety, as a result of these social ills, deter some residents from experiencing the park.

I use the Guadalupe River Park and Trail because it provides engaging urban trails, unique access to nature, and connectivity to many areas adjacent to downtown. But the oft unseen value of this space is that it is an honest representation of our city, displaying where we shine and where we fall short. It carries the pulse of our society, as the foundation of an iconic

civic space, and a reminder of our responsibility to alleviate the issues that affect our community as a whole.

Larger efforts by the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy to implement and advocate for park improvements are vital to this end, ensuring that this special public space is safe, accessible, and utilized by as many people as possible in the San Jose community.

Written by Lydon George, GRPC boardmember



Join Us and Play for the River Park

We invite you to play for parks at our Window on the River Park celebration! This year, we our event will be hosted on Thursday, June 8, 2023, from 5:30-7:30pm at the Rotary PlayGarden at the Guadalupe Gardens in downtown San Jose. We are excited to welcome our cross-sector of supporters to enjoy a summer evening of play in this newly expanded playspace.

This annual benefit celebrates our community's commitment to nurturing, developing, and cherishing San Jose's front yard, a civic greenway that connects people to the River and each other. Funds raised support the mission and impact of the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy, providing community leadership for the active-use and development of your River Park.

Guests will enjoy a summer evening with delicious food and drink, raffles, silent auction, live music, and other activities. We encourage you bring your inner-child and explore the newly expanded playspace.



We hope you consider supporting the Conservancy through sponsoring or attending our annual celebration. Let's play for parks at Window on the River Park this summer!

Email Jason Su at jason@grpg.org or visit grpg.org/window-on-the-river-park to learn more.





Annual Impact Report

2022

Conservancy Overview

San José is a thriving, multi-cultural city that deserves a vibrant River Park threading through its energetic core. For decades, the River Park and Gardens have served as San José's front yard, welcoming residents and visitors alike with respite, connection, and learning. More than ever before, the River Park presents an opportunity to alleviate the current social, economic, and environmental pressures.

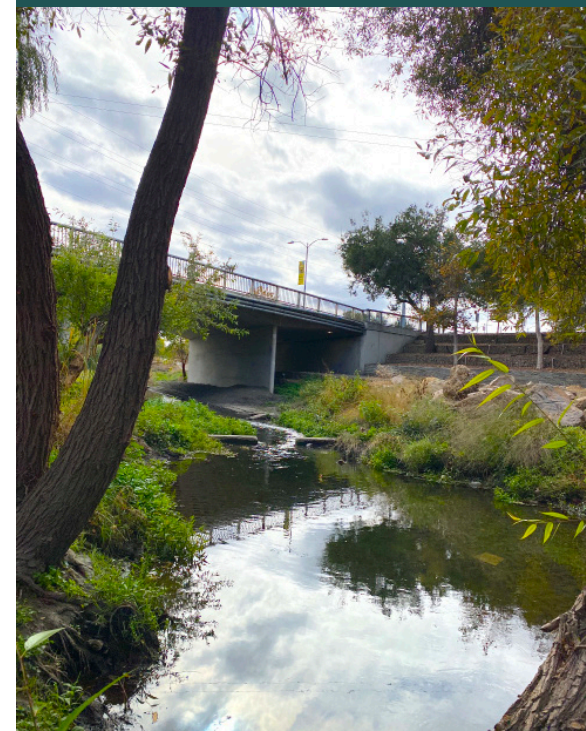
2022 allowed for us to continue building on the importance of community connection during a time of continued social recovery. The Guadalupe River Park has provided a public space for convening amongst longtime community members and newcomers alike, restoring a sense of commonality and cohesion with each other and the surrounding natural environment.

2022 Highlights

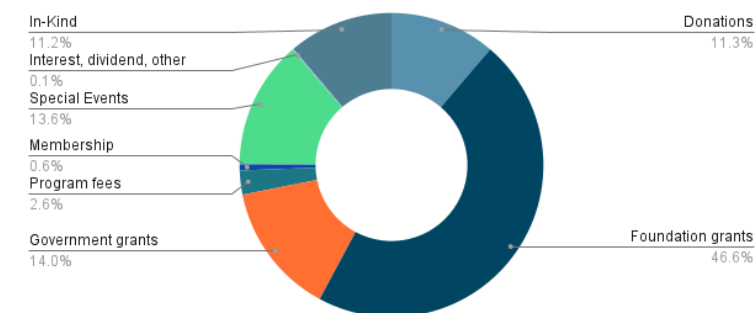
- Added nine murals to the Guadalupe River Art Walk painted by local artists.
- Broke ground on the Rotary PlayGarden expansion project.
- Provided free and engaging public programming for parkgoers of all ages.
- Partnered with other community organizations to cohost a San Jose mayoral forum.
- Added more than 50 new trees to the Historic Orchard for our revitalization project.



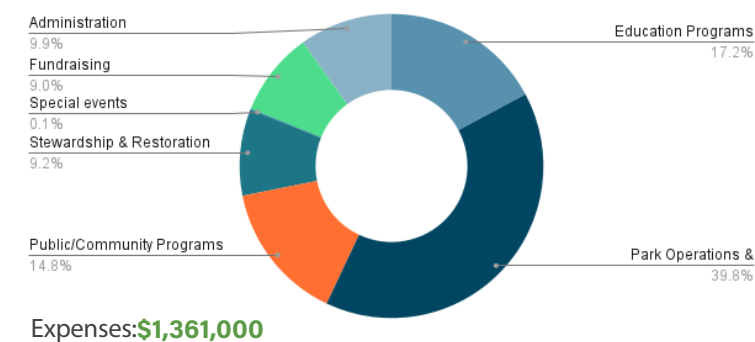
2022



Financial Information



Revenue: **\$1,404,000**



Expenses: **\$1,361,000**

Education

Connecting our youth and community to our natural resource

- 1,043** Youth education participants
- 381** Public program participants
- 126** Total programs

We added more public programming in the River Park with trail tours and storytime in the Rotary PlayGarden.

Advocacy

Providing community leadership for our River Park

- 75,863** Visitors to the Rotary PlayGarden
- 996** Conservancy supporters & members
- 9** Murals added to the River Art Walk

We broke ground on the expansion of the Rotary PlayGarden.

Stewardship

Nurturing cherishment of San Jose's civic greenway

- 1,957** Volunteers
- 6,606** Volunteer hours
- 65,049** Pounds of debris removed

We collaborated with Downtown Streets Team and San Jose Conservation Corps to bolster park maintenance.