



# OAK LEAVES

A PUBLICATION OF THE LOS OSOS / MORRO BAY CHAPTER OF SMALL WILDERNESS AREA PRESERVATION  
P.O. BOX 6442, LOS OSOS, CALIFORNIA 93412-6442 ❖ (805) 528-0392 ❖ OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2002

## SWAP To Honor Emily Polk

By Yolanda Waddell

We walk in woods, forests, parks and preserves all over the United States, and indeed on the Central Coast of California, without knowing anything about the people who spent parts of their lives working to preserve those special places. One such person is Emily Polk, who came to live in Los Osos in 1970, was moved by the beauty of our oak groves, and thought up an organization called Small Wilderness Area Preservation, or SWAP. She liked the acronym because it made her think of people swapping the cost of various luxuries for contributions to save small areas near towns and cities. These areas would be used for quiet enjoyment and education of school children.

Once SWAP was formed, with Margaret Owings, Ansel Adams, and Edgar Wayburn (then President of the Sierra Club) as the first Board of Directors along with Emily, the action began. The first piece of land which she saved from development was 90 acres in Los Osos, now called the Los Osos Oaks State Preserve. She did it in two weeks, the amount of time the owner of the land gave her to come up with \$160,000 in cash for the parcel. Not only did she raise the money, but she persuaded State Parks to accept the land and manage it.

When others learned of SWAP's success, chapters of SWAP sprang up all over California. Emily lent her efforts in getting the chapters started, and encouraged them as they worked on their conservation projects. The Estero Chapter was founded locally, and raised funds to purchase the Baptista Ranch and Griffith property along the east end of the Morro Bay Estuary.

After ten years of total dedication to land-saving by SWAP chapters which involved driving all over the state, Emily turned the reins of SWAP over to others, and she and her husband Ben went to England to live. While there, she wrote, painted and gave lectures to groups who were fascinated with her stories about

Her legacy to future generations is the land which has been saved through her and others' efforts — "the gift that given once is given forever," to

*You are invited to participate in SWAP's...*

### ***Annual Meeting of the Los Osos / Morro Bay Chapter of SWAP***

**Saturday, October 12,  
Noon to 2:00 p.m.  
Church of the Nazarene  
1480 Santa Ysabel  
at South Bay Boulevard in Los Osos**

We will:

- dedicate the Elfin Forest interpretive signs
- honor our volunteers
- honor Emily Polk, founder of SWAP (see article at left)
- elect members to the Board of Directors
- open the floor to hear your suggestions for the Elfin Forest
- have a barbecue for our volunteers and members
- and for those who want to, walk around the boardwalk and see the new signs.

*We look forward to seeing you*

SWAP. Now, at age 93, she is living in San Luis Obispo County which she loves, and is writing her autobiography. Those who want to know more about her can read the entry for Emily Polk in *Who's Who in America*.

In Los Osos and Morro Bay, in Cambria, in Santa Barbara and in Glendale/Pasadena, the organization which Emily started is alive and active. Her legacy to future generations is the land which has been saved through her and others' efforts — "the gift that given once is given forever," to quote Emily. The Los Osos/Morro Bay Chapter of SWAP will honor Emily at our Annual Meeting on October 12th.

# The Interpretive Signs Are Up!

By Yolanda Waddell



*Clockwise from top left –*

1) Robert Crosby, Cary Reents and Frankie Daniels place an interpretive panel next to the boardwalk at 16th Street; 2) Cary Reents cuts a post to size while Frankie holds it down; 3) Cheryl Lesinski and Bill Hoffman of the MBNEP stand next to an interpretive panel which explains the problem of bay siltation, which was funded by MBNEP; 4) (l to r) Frankie Daniels, Robert Crosby, County Parks Planner Jan DiLeo, and Robert Crosby, Sr. met in the Elfin Forest to plan placement and installation of the panels.; 5) Some of the supervising adults: Bob Sloan and Mary Reents of the Morro Group, and Chuck Lowe, County Parks District Supervisor; 6) Margaret Mehring and friend visited the Elfin Forest to see the interpretive panel on Brant Geese which she donated in memory of her brother Dr. Bob Jones, who was an authority on the birds.

On Saturday, July 27th, three boy scouts installed six interpretive signs along the Elfin Forest boardwalk. In doing so, they brought to completion a process that began in February, 1999 with a meeting to discuss what was needed in the way of interpretive signs for the Elfin Forest. Over the span of 3-1/2 years, the content of the signs was changed a few times, a professional graphics firm (Pandora and Co.) was hired, and numerous drafts of the signs were read and corrected by the SWAP Interpretive Sign Committee, assisting County Parks Planner Jan DiLeo.

In Spring of this year, fabrication of the interpretive signs was completed by Folia Graphics in Canada. Framing and installation of the signs, the final step in the long process, was completed as service projects by five boy scouts, to earn their Eagle Scout status. Robert Crosby (Troop 308) and Frankie Daniel (Troop 6) made frames to hold the six 18 by 24-inch signs for the boardwalk, which contain information about plant and animal life in the Elfin Forest and uses of the area by Native Americans. Russell Hunter, Cary Reents, and Matt Rees framed and installed seven 20 by 30-inch welcome signs at the end of 11th through 17th Streets.

Early on Installation Day, Robert and Frankie met in the Elfin Forest with Cary Reents (who had previously installed fencing and an entrance sign at the 13th entrance as his Eagle Scout project). They were joined by Robert's father, Robert Crosby Sr.; County Parks Planner Jan DiLeo; Parks District Supervisor Chuck Lowe; Bob Sloan and Mary Reents of the Morro Group, who donated their time to make sure the installation was in compliance with County Parks and U.S. Fish and Wildlife requirements; and Lynn Heinsohn who provided the special equipment needed for installation. Nine hours later, all six signs were firmly in place. See the April/May and June/July issues of *Oakleaves* for more information on these dedicated and hard-working scouts. SWAP thanks all who were involved in producing the interpretive signs.

# Thanks from SWAP to ...

**Johnson Starlings & Associates, Inc.**  
**Real Estate and**  
**Sea Pines Golf Resort**



Our Elfin Forest Trail Guide is so popular that we have had to do a second printing. SWAP is grateful to Johnson Starlings & Associates, Inc. Real Estate and Sea Pines Golf Resort, who donated funds for the printing of 3000 copies.

(L to R) are Jim Weldon, SWAP Board Chair; Peter Starlings of Johnson Starlings; Rocky Setting, owner of the Sea Pines Golf Resort; and Rick Johnson of Johnson Starlings.

## Ernest and Allen

In 1995, SWAP was offered space on the morrobay.com web site to provide information about the Elfin Forest. Thanks to then-SWAP Chair, Rose Bowker, who wrote the text and gathered



together some photos of the Elfin Forest for the picture gallery, SWAP had its first web site. The web address was and still is

<http://www.morrobay.com/index/elfin/home.htm>.

As the years passed and new members replaced those on the 1995 SWAP Board, the web site was forgotten, and the information on the site became dated. Finally, this Spring Pat Sarafian and Yolanda Waddell took a look at the site and realized that something needed to be done. We contacted Ernest and Allen, the company which maintains the morrobay.com web site, and they made the changes we requested in short order.

SWAP wishes to thank the Ernest and Allen Co. for maintaining our web pages on the morrobay.com web site without charge to SWAP. We suggest you check it out – it looks great!

<http://www.morrobay.com/index/elfin/home.htm>

## Birders Hope to Restore Elfin Forest to Worldwide No. 1 in Big Sit!

By Jean Wheeler

The Big Sit! day-long birding event, sponsored by the New Haven (Connecticut) Bird Club with entries from many states and several foreign nations, will take place on Sunday October 13 this year. Morro Coast participants will be counting bird species from before dawn until sunset at Bush Lupine Point in the Elfin Forest. This is the tenth such annual contest the New Haven Bird Club has sponsored, and the Elfin Forest site at Bush Lupine Point won four of the past contests. Entries in the Big Sit! consist of individuals or groups, each team establishing a 17-foot diameter circle within which the birders must be sitting or standing. Any bird species they can see or hear from within the circle can be counted. Bush Lupine Point is an ideal spot for such a circle because of the great diversity of habitats in the Elfin Forest and the Estuary and the long distances which can be seen from the point.

The Los Osos birders came in second last year, passed by a Netherlands site with just one more species. Our local group identified 106 species in 2001, almost all of them before noon brought in dense fog which lasted the rest of the day. The previous year, the Elfin Forest led the world with 122 species. The several sites in California combined to

give California second place among the states and nations participating last year (Texas won), and our state had been first in 2000.

Long-time birder and coordinator of the Los Osos Big Sit! effort in the Elfin Forest, Jim Royer, will lead his annual pre-Big Sit! walk at Bush Lupine Point on Saturday October 12, the day before the official contest. Join Jim in scouting out the bird population throughout the Elfin Forest. Feel free to join if you just enjoy looking at birds. You don't have to be a whiz at identifying them on the pre-Big Sit! walk, which has been known to list about 60 species just on Jim's brief walk. See "Walks in the Elfin Forest" (page 5) in this issue for details.



### O A K L E A V E S

is published six times per year beginning in February.  
Co-editors are Yolanda Waddell and Jean Wheeler; layout is by Katy Budge.  
Contributors to this issue:

Wendy Brown, Rosemary Flamion, Pete Sarafian,  
Yolanda Waddell, Jim Weldon, Jean Wheeler.

Printed at Hay Printing, Morro Bay on recycled paper.  
Labeled and mailed at Achievement House.

Deadline for copy to Oak Leaves is the 1st Wednesday before the month of issue.



### Where To Call, Where To Write

If you have questions about SWAP activities or want to volunteer, please call 528-0392 and leave a message. A recorded message will have information about our 3rd Saturday Walks, Work Saturdays, and other events. If you have questions, concerns or comments about anything that's happening in the Elfin Forest, call or write: Pete Jenny, SLO County Parks Facilities Manager, 1087 Santa Rosa Street, SLO, CA 93408, (805) 781-5930.



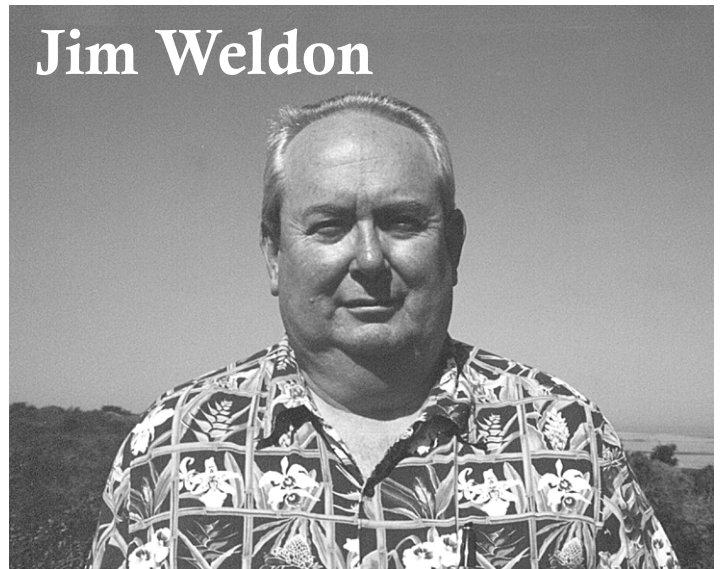
# So Long, Not Goodbye to Jim Weldon

By Yolanda Waddell

In Spring of 1999, Jim Weldon joined the SWAP Board of Directors. He was interested in our Education Committee since he had been a docent with the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum near Tucson for 9 years. Jim moved to Los Osos in 1986. He became a member of SWAP during the time that we were raising funds to save the Elfin Forest, and contributed to that effort. He was pleased to be asked to join our Board of Directors in May, 1999, even though he was already on the Board of Directors of the South Bay Community Center. SWAP benefited from his previous experience as a board member, and in January, 2000, Jim became Chair of the SWAP Board.

Under Jim's leadership, the Board became more efficient than ever in accomplishing its tasks. He believes in brevity, in meetings as well as in his "From the Chair" messages in *Oakleaves*. Small wonder that he can chair two boards of directors at once!

Although Jim is moving to Paso Robles, and so has had to resign from the Board of Directors, he has promised that he won't be a stranger to SWAP. You'll see him in our booth at the Oktoberfest, and probably at other events in the future. He has a strong attachment to the Elfin Forest, including a bench dedicated to the memory of his parents. All of us on the SWAP Board thank Jim for his years of service. We will miss him, and we know that there are other organizations and boards of directors in Paso Robles who will be very lucky to have Jim as a member.



Dear SWAP members,  
I am resigning from the Chairmanship of the SWAP Board, effective with the October 12th General Meeting, because I am moving to Paso Robles. I have served 4 years on your Board of Directors, three of them as Chair, and have witnessed many changes in the Elfin Forest.

I want to thank all of you for your continued support of our group. I will continue to be a member of SWAP and volunteer for special events such as the Oktoberfest.

Sincerely,  
Jim Weldon, Chair

## Josh Carmichael Leaves for Bay Area

By Pete Sarafian, Conservation Chair

Josh Carmichael, SWAP's conservation contractor par excellence has moved to the Bay Area to pursue his further education. Josh was responsible for planning and executing many of the recent conservation projects around the Elfin Forest. Josh, a former AmeriCorps volunteer, was instrumental in all phases of the SWAP conservation program for the past two years. While he plans to be returning periodically on weekends to assist when possible, his constant efforts will be sorely missed.

## SWAP Looking for a Few Good Men and Women

Do you want to make a difference in our environment? SWAP is looking for new board members. If you care about the Elfin Forest and want to help to preserve and restore it, you may be a candidate for our Board. We are looking for people to help us develop outreach and membership.

If you are interested, please call SWAP at 805-528-0392 and leave a message. We'll get back to you right away!



<b>October 14</b>	<b>SWAP BOARD MEETINGS</b>	<b>November 11</b>
	<p>The SWAP Board of Directors meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Coast National Bank, 1193 Los Osos Valley Road on Monday, October 14, and Monday, November 11. All Board meetings are open to the public. To confirm the date, time and location (which are subject to change), phone 528-0392.</p>	

<b>SWAP BOARD OF DIRECTORS</b>
<p>The Board of Directors of Small Wilderness Area Preservation (SWAP) consists of the following members:</p>
<p>Jim Weldon, Chair Pete Sarafian, Vice Chair Bob McDougle, Treasurer Yolanda Waddell, Secretary Pat Sarafian, Member at Large</p>

# WALKS in the ELFIN FOREST

## *Third (and Second) Saturday Walks*

### *October 12 - 8:30 a.m. (Second Saturday!)*

This Second Saturday walk, beginning at 8:30 a.m., will be a pre-Big Sit! walk. The New Haven (Connecticut) Bird Club, coordinators of the Big Sit!, have chosen Sunday, October 13, for this year's Big Sit! During this event, birders identify species of birds by sight and by call from within a 17-foot wide circle during a 24-hour period. Birder Jim Royer, who coordinates the Elfin Forest Big Sit! at Bush Lupine Point, will lead the walk. Join Jim in finding and identifying 40 to 60 species of birds throughout the Elfin Forest. This walk is for those who just enjoy looking at birds as well as for more experienced birders. You'll come away from this experience knowing more about birds, their calls, their habits and habitats.

### *October 19 - 9:30 a.m. (Third Saturday)*

Take a journey through time with Jeff Grover, Cuesta College Geology instructor. Jeff will focus on the geologic history of the Morro Bay area from the formation of the ancient morros, or Seven Sisters, to the recent development of the dunes which form the Elfin Forest. He may even give us a glimpse of what the Elfin Forest and Morro Bay will be like in the geologic future. Reading recommended by Jeff is *Assembling California* by John McPhee.

### *November 16 - 9:30 a.m. (Third Saturday)*

Whether you are an experienced film photographer, or new to photography, digital cameras present some special opportunities. They also have some special problems. Tony Krause, author of *Wildlife Watcher's Guide to San Luis Obispo County*, will talk about these while leading the monthly stroll through the Elfin Forest. For the nature lover, digital cameras are quite handy. They are small, light, and some offer a great range of features. Of course, you can do your own "darkroom" work on your home computer. We'll "focus" on macro (close-up) techniques, and also discuss telephoto options for wildlife. Whether you're really interested in photography, just trying to figure out last year's Christmas gift, or simply looking for a walk in the beautiful preserve, join us. We'll look for birds and other wildlife along the way. Tony recommends the following books: John Shaw's *Nature Photography Field Guide*; and Johnson, *How to do Everything with Your Digital Camera*. He says the best and most current information is in the magazines, such as *PC Photo*.

### *December 21 - 9:30 a.m. (Sketch Walk)*

Join artist Barbara Renshaw for a stroll along the Elfin Forest boardwalk to take in the views of the Morro Bay estuary and sandspit from Bush Lupine Point and Siena's View. You'll stop in the Woodrat Hall oak grove to marvel at the ancient gnarled Coast live oak trees. As you go, you can sketch the bay, birds on the saltmarsh, oaks, or some of the Elfin Forest's varied plant life. No drawing experience necessary. Bring a pad of drawing paper (no larger than 9.5 by 12.5), colored pencils or pastels, and some drinking water. Consider bringing a camera too. You'll be surprised how quickly you bring out the artist in you!

*Walks in the Elfin Forest begin at 9:30 a.m. (unless otherwise noted) at the north end of 15th Street off Santa Ysabel in Los Osos. Wear comfortable shoes, long sleeves and pants to avoid poison oak. Please park carefully, avoiding driveways and mailboxes. We ask that you not bring*



*The Elfin Forest and SWAP were host to ten members of Coast Walks during August. The group, accompanied by co-leaders Pat Sarafian (rear, left), Pete Sarafian and Bill Hilton (rear, right) walked from Morro Bay State Park to the Elfin Forest, then walked back after a tour of the Elfin Forest.*

## August Weeding Effort a Success

*By Pete Sarafian, Conservation Chair*

The Wonderful Weekend Weed Warriors struck in force during August. For the first time in recent years, the work party achieved its objective and could quit early! Workers fanned out throughout most of the central portion of the Elfin Forest and attacked narrow-leaved iceplant. The entire bluff west of Bush Lupine Point was combed for these invasive succulents and rid of the pests. Areas north of the boardwalk loop that may never have been weeded were cleared of the weed as well. The Warriors netted many bags of narrow-leaved iceplant before work was completed and halted early. It only took two hours. This weed used to be found all over, and was especially heavy along the trail that is now the southern part of the boardwalk along the ridge. Now it is "controllable and under control" in the Elfin Forest. Thanks go to Linda Ashworth, Al Barrow, Jay Bonestell, Bob Cunha, Maria Koenig, Bob and Sharon Meyer, Pablo Paster, Lisa Peake, Ron Rasmussen, Pat Sarafian, and Linda Young.



## Let's All Pull Together!

SWAP First Saturday work parties are held at 9 a.m. to noon on the first Saturday of each month. Volunteers should meet at the north end of 15th Street. Dress for sun and wind and bring work gloves if you can. Some work gloves, tools and drinking water are provided. Call 528-0392.

# The Raccoon

## (*Procyon lotor*)

By Rosemary Flamion

In 1612, Capt. John Smith wrote of a "beast they [Indians] call Aroughcan." Aroughcan or raccoon means "he scratches with his hands." Raccoons have extremely well-developed front feet, having five fingers of which the first one is shorter. That shorter finger is roughly comparable to the thumb of humans, but is not opposable and is unable to perform the pincer-type grasp which we humans have. Yet raccoons have the dexterity to turn on faucets, open metal garbage cans, open latches, and get into mischief. All of the fingers and toes have fingerprints like humans. Instead of fingernails, raccoons have long, non-retractable claws which are used very deftly as tools or weapons.

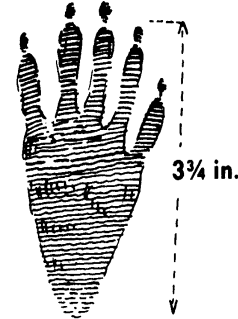
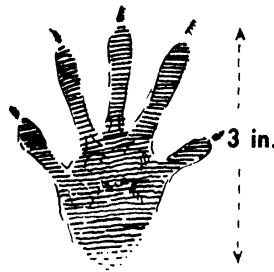
Nocturnal raccoons make nightly excursions to the Elfin Forest. Look to the sides of the boardwalk for their footprints. They are plainly visible, especially when the sand is damp after a rain. In the Elfin Forest I see raccoon scat (droppings) occasionally along the trails. They are easily distinguishable from dog droppings. However, I would estimate that for every raccoon scat, there are at least 100 dog droppings.

Raccoons are usually quadrupeds, but can also display bipedal abilities. They will stand on their back feet for a better look or to challenge. Unlike many other wild creatures, raccoons thrive in the face of encroaching civilization. Their numbers are probably higher now than when John Smith explored America. They are at home in the Elfin Forest as well as your backyard.

These omnivores, capable of eating meat as well as vegetation, come to the Elfin Forest in search of bird eggs, land snails, mice, berries, insects, spiders, nuts or fruits inland and fish, frogs and mollusks at the shoreline. They forage throughout the night searching for food in cracks and crevices or in water as their sense of touch is very strong and they don't need to see their intended target. Their sense of smell is also extremely good. Raccoons prefer to wash their food while eating. It is not for cleanliness but more as a ritual or for the tactile experience. They do not actually need to wash food to eat.

Raccoons measure about 32 inches long and weigh about 20 pounds. When meeting a raccoon in the wild, keep your distance. Aside from likely disease factors, the bite of a raccoon for its small size, can be harder than a German Shepherd. If you're holding food and they want it, they could bite.

Raccoons are very intelligent animals. When they are awake, they are actively pursuing food, experiencing their senses, or if babies, playing intensely. They are proficient tree climbers and swimmers in either salt or fresh water, enjoying both activities. Usually very quiet in their nightly forays, they do communicate with each other in a vocal array of chirps, clicks, grunts, and angry barks, when challenging.

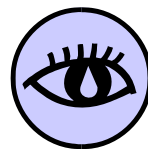


(above) Just before dawn, raccoons return to their dens in tree hollows, logs or vegetation.

(at left) Typical raccoon tracks in mud, the front foot on top. Illustration taken from *Animal Tracks* by Olaus J. Murie.

Mama raccoon can raise a litter of from two to seven young, born in the early spring. Mama and her babies travel together. Papa is absent from family responsibilities. At Montaña de Oro, I've seen foraging groups of as many as 25 raccoons. Just before dawn, they go back to their own dark dens in a tree hollow, log or vegetation, and sleep during the daylight. Raccoons consume great quantities of food during the summer to store fat. In the winter, when food is scarcer, they can become dormant and live on fat reserves; but they do not hibernate like bears.

Ed. Note: Dirk and Bonnie Walters column will return in the next issue.



## Elfin Forest Sightings

Guess who dropped in for dinner? A large, dead **gopher snake** was spotted in the fenced revegetation area southeast of Bush Lupine Point. From its body position, it appeared to have been killed but then dropped by a bird of prey. Why it was left behind is a mystery.

A **SWARM OF BEES**, possibly the one reported in the last edition of *Oakleaves*, was seen on 13th Street in August. It finally alighted in a yard next to the Elfin Forest on 12th Street. A beekeeper was summoned and succeeded in boxing the transient colony and carting it away.

During a recent work party, one of the weed warriors uncovered a **California Legless Lizard**. The silver and black creature looks like a snake and is only about a foot long. In another sighting, crows and jays were seen attacking a hapless legless lizard in a yard just south of the Elfin Forest. Somehow, they had uncovered the poor critter and were pecking at it. One of the birds flew away with a section of the tail, but most of the lizard managed to escape.

## Thank You to our New and Renewing Members

*Compiled by Wendy Brown, SWAP Database Coordinator*

### New Members:

Shirley Hulin,  
Sunset Properties\*

Alan & Anna  
Schmierer\*

Sally Short\*  
Linda Wolff

### Renewing Members:

Arthur & Lillian Armstrong\*  
Susan & John Armstrong  
Morro Coast  
Audubon Society\*  
Ruby V. Avelar\*  
Curt & Sandra Beebe  
Alese Bell  
Mary Bhuta  
Gordon Black  
Carolyn Boomer\*  
Jean P. Boyd  
Wendy Brown\*  
Doug & Lee Buckmaster\*  
Diana Casey  
David & Linda Chipping\*  
Vic, George & Doris Croy\*

Alice L. Cushing\*  
David & Evelyn Dabritz  
Suzanne Hewitt Dunton\*  
Harry & Lurlie Edgecomb\*  
Francesca Fairbrother  
Linda Faust\*  
Joanna Frawley  
Frank Freiler\*  
Richard & Charlotte Gordon\*  
Willma Gore  
Sterling & Virginia Gottlieb\*  
Larry & Pat Grimes\*  
Carla Grindle  
Marlin & Connie Harms  
Jim & Karen Havlena\*  
Susan Howe

Katie J. Karikka  
Elena Keeling\*  
Roberta Knapp\*  
Leora Markwort  
Jean & Marlene Mathias  
Marie McAuley  
Wendy McKeown  
Liz Miller\*  
Howard & Marlo Miller\*  
Janet E. Montooth\*  
Kelley & Eric Nelson  
Melvin & Mary Norby\*  
Mrs. Joseph Oshorenko\*  
Randall & Shirley Palmer\*  
Donald S. Parham

**John & Cheyanne Parker**  
**(Life Members)\***

Ronald E. Rasmussen\*  
Stanley Reichenberg\*  
Ingrid Reti  
Florence M. Ross\*  
John & Kay Semon, Frame  
Works\*  
Jan W. Simek\*  
David & Libby Tolley  
Martha & Don Vincent\*  
Dirk Walters\*  
Dean & Lynda Weldon  
Ruth L. Zank\*

A very special THANK YOU to John and Cheyanne Parker, new life members of SWAP.

Life members (donating \$1000 or more) receive the Oakleaves newsletter for life (or the life of Oakleaves).

Also, Pat Sarafian, our Property and Records Chair, will send or deliver in person a SWAP mural sweatshirt to each of them.

Their donation provides additional needed funding for our Elfin Forest recovery projects.

\*Thanks to those listed above who donated more than the \$12 membership dues. The additional donations will be used for special projects in the Elfin Forest. New or renewing members who donate \$100 or more will receive a Boardwalk T-shirt as SWAP's thank you gift.



# SWAP Shoppers' Order form

Do your  
Christmas shopping  
With SWAP!



(Please print when filling order – and indicate HOW MANY)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (with Area code) \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. MURAL SHIRTS (indicate sizes)

Words on shirt: "El Moro Elfin Forest Natural Area,  
Small Wilderness Area Preservation, Los Osos, California"

\_\_\_ Short Slv. T-Shirt (med., Lg, XLg, XXLg) @ \$15.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Long Slv. T-Shirt (med., Lg, XLg, XXLg) @ \$17.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Sweatshirt (med., Lg, XLg, XXLg) @ \$25.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. BOARDWALK SHIRTS (Only Short Sleeve T-Shirts)

\_\_\_ Small, Med., Lg, XLg, XXLg, XXXLg @ \$15.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. POCKET GUIDES

A very useful 24-page guide listing plants and animals of the Elfin Forest

\_\_\_ @ \$1.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. MURAL PRINTS

signed 5 1/2" X 17" prints by artist, Barbara Rosenthal

\_\_\_ Black matted Mural @ \$20.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ White matted Mural @ \$20.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

### SALE ITEMS (Final Clearance!)

Original MURAL Shirt

(says: "Elfin Forest Mural, Rexall Drug, Los Osos")

\_\_\_ Short Sleeve T-Shirt (only XLg left) @ \$5.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Long Sleeve T-Shirt (only small size left) @ \$5.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping cost if outside of Los Osos/Morro Bay \$2.50 = \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL OF ORDER** \_\_\_\_\_

Please check renewal date on your label.

**Booth volunteers needed!  
See reverse side.**

Address Service Requested  
Per Name or Current Resident

Los Osos / Morro Bay Chapter  
SMALL WILDERNESS AREA PRESERVATION  
A Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation  
P.O. Box 6442, Los Osos, CA 93412 - 6442  
(805) 528-0392



Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93402  
Permit No. 112

## SWAP Needs Booth Workers for Oktoberfest



On Sunday, October 27,  
we will set up our SWAP booth for the Baywood Park  
Oktoberfest, 9:00am to 4:00pm

Do you enjoy talking to people? Could you give  
us 2 or 3 hours of your time? The booth shifts (at  
least two people will be needed for each shift) are 9-  
11, 11-1 and 1-4.

Our booth is set up to be self-explanatory, and  
we will provide you with a question and answer sheet  
of the most commonly asked questions. We will sell  
T-shirts and other items listed on page 7 of this  
newsletter. Also available will be copies of our  
brochure, newsletter and trail guide. Help us to get  
the word out about SWAP and the Elfin Forest.

Please call our answering machine, 528-0392,  
if you can help us, and state which shift you  
prefer. We'll get right back to you.

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

- New Member       Renewing Member
- Member \$12       Defender \$100
- Steward \$25       Champion \$250
- Protector \$50       Guardian \$500
- Life Member \$1000
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# THIS MONTH'S TEXT

October/November 2002 Text

Conservation Effort Showing Gains  
By Pete Sarafian, Conservation Chair

Finally, after a hiatus of some five to six years, SWAP conservation efforts are starting to make visible progress again in Elfin Forest restoration. The August 2002 conservation work party actually finished their assigned weeding task early, two hours after beginning work. That is a first!

Back in 1995/96, US Fish & Wildlife Service halted all progress on herbicide spraying of veldt grass and other exotic plants in the Elfin Forest. USFWS had concerns about survival of the endangered Morro Shoulderband Dune Snail. In the years since, as the Board of Directors membership changed one by one, veldt grass and other invasives took over much of the interior and perimeter of the park, and neglect was having a ruinous effect. Since resurrecting the SWAP Conservation Committee in late 1998, SWAP volunteers have made slow but steady progress in manually restoring portions of the Elfin Forest to a healthy native California coastal environment.

The central portion of the preserve inside the boardwalk loop is virtually weed free, and portions of the perimeter are being restored from the effects of human intrusion and weed infestation. Several eroded hillsides were fenced and revegetated in the mid-1990's, but now are being maintained and expanded upon as well. While there are a number of weeds that have not been attacked, some of the worst, namely veldt grass and narrow-leaved iceplant, are now being controlled throughout much of their former range. Since pulling these weeds manually for four years, the effort required in a given area is actually decreasing. We can begin to work other areas that previously couldn't receive attention. While some of the progress can be attributed to contracted assistance from the California Conservation Corps, much of the effort came from volunteers who came out in numbers to help in weeding, fencing, planting and other efforts. Thank you all so much for your support of the Elfin Forest!

## MEGA Saves 17 More Acres

On September 5th, members of the Morro Estuary Greenbelt Alliance (MEGA), gathered at a dedication ceremony with representatives from the Partners for Conservation of the Los Osos Coastal Dunes, to celebrate the acquisition of 17 acres along the shoreline of the Morro Bay estuary and next to Montaña de Oro State Park.

The 17 acres are part of a greenbelt plan to encircle the community of Los Osos, connecting Montaña de Oro State Park with the Los Osos Oaks State Preserve, the Elfin Forest, and Morro Bay State Park. So far, MEGA has preserved 300 acres of the proposed greenbelt. Taking ownership of the property was the Bay Foundation, a group that seeks to improve the watershed and marine environments of Morro Bay. The land will be transferred to the California State Parks System, to become part of Montaña de Oro State Park.