



MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT  
Celebrating Over 45 Years of Open Space Preservation

# VIEWS

QUARTERLY NEWS ON OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION AND PROGRAMS • WINTER 2017-2018

## A Message from the General Manager

Dear Friends,

Before I left the golden hills of my native East Bay for the Peninsula's forested slopes, I was given an oil painting of the East Bay hills. The Santa Cruz Mountains appear as a blue ridge on the distant horizon. This beautiful artwork has adorned my office wall for the last decade, during which I have had the honor of leading Midpen. The painting serendipitously encompasses many of the Bay Area landscapes I've spent the last 47 years caring for and working to preserve.

As I prepare to retire at the end of the year, I feel a deep appreciation for the many talented and passionate people I work for and alongside every day. And I am confident these landscapes are in good hands.

*(Continued on page 2)*



La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve



Groundbreaking at La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve

FUNDED BY

MEASURE AA

2014 OPEN SPACE BOND

## La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve Lower Area Now Open!

Construction of the new parking lot at Sears Ranch Road has been completed, and beginning Friday, December 1, visitors can now access lower La Honda Creek without a permit! The new 22-space parking area provides visitors access to 6 miles of new trails for hiking and horseback riding, ADA-accessible restrooms and new interpretive signage. Many thanks to local voters, who passed Midpen's Measure AA in 2014, which helped to fund this project.

### Future Public Access

Plans for public access to the central portion of the Preserve are in development, including the Red Barn area. More improvements for public access will follow the 30-year master plan. To learn more about the Preserve visit: [www.openspace.org/preserves/la-honda-creek](http://www.openspace.org/preserves/la-honda-creek). 🦋





Mount Umunhum, Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve

Frances Freyberg

“We are inviting all of you to connect with nature as you explore new areas of open space at Mount Umunhum and La Honda Creek, with Bear Creek Redwoods and more to follow starting next year.”

# A Message from the General Manager (continued from page 1)

I am immensely proud of the body of work we have achieved together over the last ten years. We’ve created a strong foundation ensuring Midpen is financially sustainable and able to fully serve the public into the future. We’ve added 8,000 acres of open space to the regional greenbelt, helping the complex web of life these landscapes support. We’ve restored waterways, grasslands and forests so they in turn can provide for life. We’ve blazed new trails, including a vision for Midpen’s future, a plan to achieve it and the resources to make it happen through voter-approved Measure AA.

We are inviting all of you to connect with nature as you explore new areas of open space at Mount Umunhum and La Honda Creek, with Bear Creek Redwoods and more to follow starting next year. There are more projects than I have room to mention and I want to thank you for your unwavering support, excellent guidance and hard work that has made all of this a reality.

I look forward to returning home to the East Bay and spending time with my best friend and wife, Carlene, and our two grown daughters. However, I’ll always have an eye on that blue ridge in the distance where I was lucky enough to have spent a decade working with all of you fulfilling Midpen’s important mission. I’ll keep my hiking boots on, though, and don’t think I’ll ever stop my daily walks to marvel at nature as I’ve done since I was a boy. And I will always work to protect the environment wherever I can.

Whether we have met, worked together, or simply communicated through the pages of this newsletter because we share a common love for nature and open space: Thank you for being a part of my professional journey. It has been a privilege to serve you and steward these lands. I know you will continue to be an engaged and critical part of Midpen’s work caring for the land that ultimately supports us all. See you on the trails.

Sincerely,

*Stephen E. Abbors*  
Steve Abbors

“It has been a privilege to serve you and steward these lands. I know you will continue to be an engaged and critical part of Midpen’s work caring for the land that ultimately supports us all. See you on the trails.”



Clockwise starting in upper left: Steve and Carlene, Sierra Azul OSP; Steve, Carlene, and Val, Sierra Azul OSP; Steve at La Honda Creek OSP; Steve and Walter at Russian Ridge OSP (Jack Gescheidt); Steve and Val at Sierra Azul OSP; Steve and staff at Sierra Azul OSP (Erin Ashford)



# Outdoor Activities

WINTER 2017-2018 | December – January – February

## MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

### GENERAL INFORMATION

With this newsletter in hand and a sense of exploration in mind, we invite you to enjoy the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District preserves. These 26 extraordinary preserves include over 63,000 acres of permanently protected open space, from redwood forests to bay shoreline. We encourage you to participate in the wide variety of adventures offered inside *Outdoor Activities*.

The activity durations listed are averages based on our experience. However, always allow extra time in your schedule for unusual circumstances, or the slower pace of some groups. You can help by arriving a little early to ensure a prompt start for each activity. The activities are FREE; some require reservations.

All activities are developed and led by docents who have completed a District training program. These docents volunteer their time to share their knowledge of nature with you. For more information about the volunteer docent program, visit the District's website at [www.openspace.org](http://www.openspace.org), or phone the District at 650-691-1200 weekdays, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. 🦋



Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve

Midpen Staff



Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve

Karl Gohl

### ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

#### To Ensure Your Experience is Enjoyable, Please Review this Information

- Please be courteous to other trail users. Stay alert and make your presence known to other trail users well in advance, particularly when approaching from behind.
- Heavy rain cancels hike activities unless otherwise noted in the description. If there is light rain or the threat of rain, go to the meeting place. Docents will plan to meet participants – hike route or duration may be altered due to weather and trail conditions.
- Participants are encouraged to make personal decisions on comfort and willingness to drive or hike in stormy or threatening weather conditions.
- For a mountain bike or horseback ride, heavy rain within two days prior to the activity will cancel it.
- Hikers yield to horses; bicyclists yield to hikers and horses. Observe trail speed limits (15 mph max; 5 mph when passing).
- Equestrians must provide their own horses (no stallions). Lead lines are required and breast collars are recommended for all horses, and helmets must be worn by all riders under age 18.
- For all hikes, wear boots or sturdy walking shoes appropriate for rugged trails. Dress in layers (T-shirt, long-sleeved shirt, sweater, and/or jacket). The weather can be unpredictable. No matter what season it is, be prepared for rain, wind, fog, or sun!
- Carry ample drinking water with you. Water is not available on preserves.
- Bring sun protection (hat, sunscreen) and consider insect repellent.
- Restrooms are not always available; please plan accordingly.
- Please carpool if possible. Parking is limited in some locations.



La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve

Cindy Reesler

#### Special Note

If you have a group of 8 or more people who would like to attend a docent-led activity listed here, please contact the Docent Program Manager to discuss in advance at 650-691-1200 or [docent@openspace.org](mailto:docent@openspace.org). Other arrangements may need to be considered for your group. 🦋

Header photo: Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve by Karl Gohl



## WHERE TO MEET

Directions to preserves featured in this season's schedule of *Outdoor Activities* are listed below. Some preserves have more than one access point. Some activities meet at different locations than where the activity will actually occur. If an activity does not meet at the preserve listed, or if there is more than one preserve access point, the alternate meeting location will be indicated in italics on a separate line following the preserve name as part of the activity header. (For example: **Skyline Ridge Meet: Russian Ridge** or **Russian Ridge Meet: Caltrans vista point**). If no information follows the preserve name, then refer to the detailed directions for the preserve or alternate meeting location listed below.

Note: Restrooms are not always available; please plan accordingly.

**PLEASE CHECK THE LISTED DESCRIPTION TO MAKE SURE YOU MEET YOUR ACTIVITY LEADER AT THE CORRECT LOCATION.**

### EDGEWOOD COUNTY PARK

Exit I-280 at Edgewood Road. Head east on Edgewood Rd. about 1 mile to the park entrance on the right (at Old Stagecoach Road).

### EL CORTE DE MADERA CREEK

Meet at the Preserve parking lot located on the west side of Highway 35 (Skyline Boulevard), about 1-mile south of the Caltrans Skeggs Point parking area and 2.7 miles north of the intersection of Highway 35 and Highway 84.

**Skeggs Point:** Meet at the Caltrans vista point on the east side of Skyline Boulevard, about 4 miles north of La Honda Road (Highway 84) and 1.5 miles south of Kings Mountain Road. Please note that Caltrans prohibits a left turn into the parking lot when approaching from the north along Skyline Blvd.

### LONG RIDGE

**Peters Creek Trailhead:** Meet at the roadside pullout area on the west side of Skyline Boulevard, 3.6 miles north of Highway 9 or 3.3 miles south of Page Mill Road. If you are coming from the north on Skyline Blvd., the pullout is just past Portola Heights Road on the right. From the south, the pullout is near the Palo Alto city limits sign on the right. There is additional parking across Skyline Blvd. at the Grizzly Flat trailhead (Santa Clara County Park).

### LOS TRANCOS

Meet at the Preserve parking lot on Page Mill Road (across from Monte Bello Preserve), 7 miles west of I-280 or 1.5 miles east of Skyline Boulevard. Those traveling from I-280 on Page Mill Rd. should allow approximately 35 minutes travel time.



Rancho San Antonio  
Open Space Preserve

### MONTE BELLO

Meet at the Preserve parking lot on Page Mill Road (across from Los Trancos Preserve), 7 miles west of I-280 or 1.5 miles east of Skyline Boulevard. Those traveling from I-280 on Page Mill Rd. should allow approximately 35 minutes travel time.

### PICCHETTI RANCH

From the intersection of I-280 and Foothill Expressway, go 3.5 miles southwest (toward the mountains) on Foothill Boulevard/Stevens Canyon Road. Turn right on Montebello Road. The Preserve is 0.5 miles up Montebello Rd. on the left.

### PULGAS RIDGE

From I-280, exit Edgewood Road. Drive 0.75 miles on Edgewood Rd. toward San Carlos/Redwood City. Turn left (north) on Crestview Drive, then immediately turn left on Edmonds Road. Follow Edmonds Rd. to the Preserve parking lot entrance on the right.

### PURISIMA CREEK REDWOODS

**North Ridge parking lot:** This entrance is on Skyline Boulevard next to the now closed Kings Mountain Country Store. The parking lot is 4.5 miles south of Highway 92, and 8.1 miles north of Highway 84.

#### **Purisima Creek Road**

**entrance:** From the Highway 92 and Highway 1 intersection in Half Moon Bay, travel south on Highway 1 approximately 4.3 miles. Turn left on Verde Road. After turning on Verde Rd. and traveling 0.25 miles, continue straight to remain on what becomes Purisima Creek Road. (Verde Rd. splits off to the right.) Travel approximately 3.7 miles on Purisima Creek Rd. to reach the Preserve.



Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve

### RANCHO SAN ANTONIO

From I-280, take Foothill Boulevard south and turn right almost immediately onto Cristo Rey Drive. Continue about 1 mile, veer right around the traffic circle, and turn left into the park. Go to the lot farthest to the right and meet near the restroom at the bottom of the hill.

### RUSSIAN RIDGE

**Mindego Gateway parking lot:** From I-280, exit Page Mill Road and head west. Drive about 9 miles to the junction with Skyline Boulevard, cross over Skyline Boulevard and on to Alpine Road. Continue on Alpine Rd. for 1.5 miles. Parking area is on the right. Allow 45 minutes travel time from I-280.

### SARATOGA GAP

Meet at the Caltrans vista point on the southeast corner of the Skyline Boulevard (Highway 35) and Highway 9 intersection.

### SIERRA AZUL

**Jacques Ridge parking lot:** Meet at the parking lot located near the intersection of Hicks Road and Mt. Umunhum Road in San Jose. Exit Highway 85 at Camden Avenue. (From northbound Hwy. 85 turn left on Branham Avenue and then turn left on Camden Ave. and from southbound Hwy. 85 turn left on Camden Ave.) Travel on Camden Ave. about 1.6 miles. Turn right on Hicks Rd. and travel for about 6.3 miles. Turn right on Mt. Umunhum Rd. The Preserve parking lot will be on the right.

#### **Mount Umunhum Summit parking lot:**

Meet at the parking lot at the top of Mt. Umunhum Road. Exit Highway 85 at Camden Avenue. (From Southbound Hwy. 85 turn left on Camden Ave. From northbound Hwy. 85 turn left on Branham Avenue, then left on Camden Ave.) Travel on Camden Ave. about 1.6 miles. Turn right on Hicks Road and travel for about 6.3 miles. Turn right on Mt. Umunhum Road and travel for 5.3 miles to the Preserve parking lot on the left.

## SKYLINE RIDGE

Meet at the Preserve parking lot on Skyline Boulevard located one mile south of the Skyline Blvd. (Highway 35) and Page Mill/Alpine Road intersection. After entering the Preserve, turn right and go to the farthest parking lot. Those traveling from I-280 on Page Mill Rd. should allow approximately 45 minutes travel time.

## ST. JOSEPH'S HILL

**Little League Field parking lot:** Take Highway 17 south toward Los Gatos. Exit at Highway 9-Los Gatos/Saratoga and continue west on Hwy. 9 (approximately 0.33 miles) to University Avenue. Turn left on University Ave. toward downtown Los Gatos. Turn left on Miles Avenue and proceed two blocks to the parking lot on the left for the Little League field.

## STEVENS CREEK

### SHORELINE NATURE AREA

Meet in the "Kite Area" parking lot at Shoreline-at-Mountain View Park. From Highway 101, take Shoreline Boulevard east to the Shoreline Park entrance. After passing the entrance kiosk, turn right into the parking lot.

## THORNEWOOD

From I-280, take the Highway 84/Woodside Road exit. Follow Highway 84/Woodside Road through Woodside and then to a junction with Portola Road at 3.3 miles. Bear right to stay on Highway 84, now La Honda Road. At 4.9 miles from Highway 280, turn left at a brick wall marked 895-897; look for the District sign just inside this gate. The small parking area is on the right about 500 feet from the entrance gate. Please do not drive beyond this lot toward the private residences.



Karl Gahl

Monte Bello Open Space Preserve

## THORNEWOOD (continued)

Alternatively, from the junction of Highway 35 (Skyline Boulevard) and Highway 84 in Sky Linda, take Highway 84/La Honda Road north 1.9 miles and turn right at the brick wall marked 895-897.

## WINDY HILL

**Skyline Boulevard parking area:** Meet at the parking area on Skyline Boulevard, 2.3 miles south of La Honda Road (Highway 84) and 4.9 miles north of Page Mill Road. 🦋

## KEY TO SYMBOLS



**Easy Hike:** Flat to gently rolling hills. Total elevation gain less than 200 feet. Leisurely pace.



**Moderate Hike:** Steeper or more frequent uphill grades. Total elevation gain 200 to 600 feet. Leisurely to moderate pace.



**Strenuous Hike:** Steep hills and/or long distances. Total elevation gain greater than 600 feet. Moderate to vigorous pace.



**Suitable for children:** must be accompanied and supervised by an adult. See the activity description for any additional information.



**Wheelchair accessible.**



**Stroller accessible:** Jogger-type suggested.



**Meal/snack break:** Bring a lunch, dinner, or snack as appropriate.



**Dogs on leash:** Well-behaved and socialized dogs are allowed, and must be controlled on a maximum six-foot leash.



**Equestrian Ride:** Riders under age 18 must wear a helmet. Lead lines are required and breast collars are recommended for horses. Equestrians must provide their own horses (no stallions).



**Reservations required:** Reservations for activities requiring them will only be accepted within the two (2)-week period just before the activity date. To make a reservation or a cancellation, visit the District's Web site [www.openspace.org/reservations](http://www.openspace.org/reservations) or call 650-691-2150 (enter 2). If you provide information prior to the reservation acceptance period, it will not be processed. Please limit your reservation to a maximum of four (4) people.



**Easy Nature Ride:** Slow, leisurely pace, minimal climbing, and multiple stops to observe nature.



**Introductory Mountain Bike Ride:** Outings include demonstration and practice emphasizing trail etiquette and techniques required for dirt riding followed by a 5- to 7-mile ride on fire roads and single-track trails, with occasional natural history stops. Riders should be in good physical condition to perform climbs and descents.



**Intermediate Mountain Bike Ride:** Intended for participants with dirt single-track riding experience; able to climb and descend steep and moderately-rough trails. Recreational ride at a moderate/brisk pace; 8+ miles on a wide range of fire roads and single-track trails. For experienced riders in very good physical condition with good endurance.



**Advanced Mountain Bike Ride:** Intended for participants with dirt single-track riding experience; competent at climbing and descending steep and rough trails. Moderate to fast pace, 10+ mile ride on a wide variety of trail conditions. For experienced riders with a high level of physical fitness and excellent endurance.

**Note:** For all rides, bicyclists must wear helmets and bikes must be in good condition, and the participants must be very familiar with the operation of gears and brakes. Mountain bikes are strongly recommended for all except the Easy Nature Rides. Easy Nature, Introductory, and Intermediate Rides include a natural history component that is provided by the docents during the rest stops. Advanced rides develop and improve mountain bike skills – any natural history discussion stops are secondary to the overall riding experience.



**Healthy Parks, Healthy People – Bay Area:** Introductory level and easy to moderate activities for people of various ages. Some activities have a health and wellness focus. Visit [www.hphpbayarea.org](http://www.hphpbayarea.org).



# DECEMBER

## Earthquake Hike

Sunday • December 3

Los Trancos • 2-3 mi

2:00pm to 4:30pm



Join docents Paul Billig and Huey-Shin Yuan for a fun and educational hike along the San Andreas Fault. On this leisurely stroll, you'll stop to discuss the wonder of plate tectonics, examine remnants left by thousands of major earthquakes, and learn how to prepare for future earthquakes. This easy hike with minimal elevation change is well suited for actively engaged children (who are capable of hiking 2-3 miles and attentive listening) and those needing a less physically challenging outing.

## Explorer Hike: Skyline to Sempervirens

Wednesday • December 6

Long Ridge • 4.5 mi

Meet: Saratoga Gap

10:30am to 2:30pm



Embark on a moderately-paced hike with docents Kate Gudmundson, Lynn Jackson, Dennis Smith, and Mary Brunkhorst. You'll hike the Skyline-to-the-Sea Trail from the Saratoga Gap Vista Point to the Sempervirens Vista Point (located in Castle Rock State Park) on this out and back trek with an approximate 400-foot elevation gain. You'll walk through lovely mixed evergreen forests to reach your destination where you'll enjoy expansive views of the Santa Cruz Mountains descending toward the sea.

## Signs of Winter

Wednesday • December 6

Pulgas Ridge • 4 mi

1:00pm to 4:00pm



Enjoy a hike featuring signs of the upcoming season with docents Liz Foreman and Kathryn Strachota. Plant and animal life will indicate seasonal changes as you hike along the Blue Oak, Dick Bishop, Dusky-footed Woodrat, and Cordilleras Trails, and take in the scenic views from the top of the ridge. This moderately-paced hike includes some hills and uneven terrain with an elevation gain of about 800 feet.



Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve

## Mount Umunhum Down and Up

Sunday • December 10

Sierra Azul • 5 mi

Meet: Mount Umunhum Summit parking lot

8:00am to 1:00pm



Enjoy the recently opened Mount Umunhum area with docents David Schwaderer, Greg Azevedo, and Huey-Shin Yuan. You'll hike down from the summit to enjoy the view from the Guadalupe Creek Overlook before returning to the summit. Bring ample drinking water and a power-snack for this strenuous out and back hike that includes approximately 700 feet of elevation change each way. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after November 26.**

## Scenic Aerobic Hike I

Wednesday • December 13

Rancho San Antonio • 4-6 mi

10:00am to 1:00pm



Join docents Huey-Shin Yuan, Louise Casey, and Mary Brunkhorst for a moderately-paced, exercise-focused hike on trails with beautiful scenery. "Scenic Aerobic" hikes are offered at different preserves every second Wednesday. The route of each hike will be determined by the docents based on current trail and weather conditions.

## Fleas Navidad

Saturday • December 16

Pulgas Ridge • 3 mi

9:00am to 11:00am



Celebrate the beginning of the holidays by joining your canine companions on a moderately-paced hike. The pups will enjoy smells along the Blue Oak, Hassler, and Polly Geraci Trails as docents Ann Reisenauer, Patty Lovelace, and Susan Bernhard describe the natural surroundings. All dogs must be on leash. Please bring plastic bags for poop scooping. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after December 2.**



Lisa Corle

Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve

## Fungi and Other Fruit

Sunday • December 17

Long Ridge • 4 mi

10:00am to 2:00pm



Look for the 'fruits of the season' along the Peters Creek and Long Ridge Road Trails with docents Chris MacIntosh and Susan Petersen. Depending on rain and weather, you may find lots of fungi, berries, acorns, and plant seeds; it's also possible that birds and animals may already have harvested much of these. There is always plenty to see and hear on an early winter's walk around this Preserve, whether it be turtles sunning themselves, Steller's jays complaining, or the rain regreening the moss and lichen.

## Redwood Oxygen

Sunday • December 17

Purisima Creek Redwoods • 5.3 mi

Meet: Purisima Creek Road entrance

10:30am to 3:00pm



Find out why you'll be breathing some of the cleanest air in the world with docents Bob Segalla and Sam Berry on the Purisima Creek and Craig Britton Trails. You'll be shown reminders of the redwood logging history on this leisurely-paced out and back hike. This 500-foot elevation change hike is suitable for capable children and has a downhill return. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after December 3.**

## Earthquake 101

Sunday • December 17

Los Trancos • 2.5 mi

2:00pm to 4:30pm



Join docents Strether Smith and Nina Bell on the San Andreas Fault for an introduction to earthquake science and lore. You'll explore the fault zone and participate in a discussion of plate tectonics, fault types, local earth deformations, and the inevitable earthquake that Bay Area residents can expect sooner than later — by geologic standards. This easy hike with minimal elevation change is well suited for those needing a less physically challenging outing. Engaged children 8 years and older are encouraged to attend.

Karl Gehl

### Explorer Hike: Enjoy the Wind

Wednesday • December 20

Windy Hill • 5-6 mi

Meet: Skyline Boulevard parking area  
10:30am to 2:30pm



Join docents Dennis Smith, Lynn Jackson, Kate Gudmundson, and Mary Brunkhorst on a tour of the upper regions of this notoriously breezy Preserve. You'll take a short climb on the Anniversary Trail to an excellent view point, then descend the Lost Trail as it winds through forest and chaparral habitats. You'll enjoy your lunch at a comfortable spot, then take a leisurely walk back down the trail, wondering at how you could have missed all those interesting things on your way up!

### Escape the Holiday Madness

Saturday • December 23

Picchetti Ranch • 4.5 mi

10:00am to 1:30pm



Escape for a while from the holiday crowds! There are a wide variety of plant communities in the Bay Area, and many are found in this Preserve. Join docents Martin Manley and Linda Smith for a moderately-paced hike. You'll discuss how the varieties of plant communities have adapted to their unique environments. If the weather allows, a lunch break is planned at the picnic tables down by Stevens Creek. At the end of the trip you'll have the option for a little wine tasting (on your own) at Picchetti Winery. Please note that a shortened version of this hike will go ahead in light or moderate rain — it can be a wonderful time to see this Preserve if you have good rain gear.

### A Road Less Traveled

Monday • December 25

Skyline Ridge • 4.0 mi

Meet: Russian Ridge  
10:00am to 12:30pm



Join docents Stephen Buckhout and Stella Yang on Christmas Day for a short out-and-back hike on Old Page Mill Trail to explore a section of the former road to Page's Mill. You'll travel at a slow to moderate pace through mixed evergreen forest and chaparral with sandstone rock outcrops. If there's been winter rain, you may see some small waterfalls.

### New Year's Eve Fun

Sunday • December 31

Skyline Ridge • 11 mi

9:00am to 2:00pm



Want to have extra fun before the New Year? Join docents Huey-Shin Yuan and Vivian Neou for a fast-paced aerobic hike through five preserves — Skyline Ridge, Monte Bello, Los Trancos, Coal Creek, and Russian Ridge, where you'll travel through mixed evergreen forest, chaparral, and grassland communities. You'll enjoy beautiful views of the Bay Area from the top of Borel Hill, and might be able to spot the Sierra foothills if the day is clear.

## JANUARY

### Healthy New Year Resolution

Monday • January 1

Sierra Azul • 11.5 mi

Meet: Jacques Ridge parking lot  
8:30am to 3:00pm



If "stay healthy" is one of your New Year's resolutions, you can start with a fast-paced aerobic hike to the newly opened Mount Umunhum area where you'll enjoy a spectacular view of the Bay Area. Join docents Huey-Shin Yuan and Vivian Neou for a refreshing hike along Woods Trail, Barlow Road, and Mt. Umunhum Trail. You'll enjoy a well-deserved lunch at the summit after a 2,500-foot elevation gain before hiking down the mountain to the Bald Mountain parking lot where you'll be shuttled back to the meeting location.

### A New Year in Nature!

Monday • January 1

Picchetti Ranch • 4.5 mi

10:00am to 1:30pm



Greet the New Year with docents Gerri Tiernan and John Seyfarth on a moderately-paced hike to learn a little history, explore a seasonal pond, and enjoy a lovely view along the Orchard Loop and Zinfandel Trails. You'll hike into adjoining Stevens Creek County Park for a brief lunch stop at picnic tables. A visit to historic Picchetti Winery (on your own) is an option at hike's end.

### Explorer Hike: Winter Waterfowl

Wednesday • January 3

Stevens Creek Shoreline

Nature Area • 4.0 mi

10:30am to 2:30pm



Embark on a birding expedition with docents Kate Gudmundson, Dennis Smith, Lynn Jackson, and Mary Brunkhorst to look for waterfowl and other birds visiting the San Francisco Bay as they migrate along the Pacific Flyway. You'll enjoy the salt air and bay views as you leisurely walk the Levee, Bay, and Stevens Creek Trails. You'll scout a variety of habitats including a tidal marsh, salt ponds, sloughs, and a creek in your quest to see feathered friends from near and far.



Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Area

### Umunhum Vistas

Saturday • January 6

Sierra Azul • 3-5 mi

Meet: See text below  
8:30am to 1:00pm



Join in on a popular walk along the new Mt. Umunhum Trail and enjoy unparalleled vistas with docents Greg Azevedo, Huey-Shin Yuan, David Schwederer, Nina Bell, and Emma Finter. Along the way, you'll hear stories about Mount Umunhum's past, more recent, and current place in history. Time will be allotted to meander the mountaintop and enjoy all the summit has to offer. **(Note: Directions will be sent. Participants will carpool/shuttle to a trailhead. Hike route subject to change depending on parking availability at area trailhead parking lots.)** Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after December 23.







Robin Lord

Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve

## Fungal Fun

**Saturday • January 6**  
**Purisma Creek Redwoods • 7 mi**  
**Meet: North Ridge parking lot**  
**9:00am to 4:30pm**



Fungus, mushroom — what's in a name? Slimy brown blobs — aren't they? How about red, yellow, or white; underfoot or overhead; tall and thin, or short and wide? Join docents Chris MacIntosh and Lynn Jackson to hike up and down trails in different environments as you train your eyes to notice the sometimes camouflaged, but always fascinating fungi that flourish in winter. You'll enjoy the variety of size, shape, and growth habits on this non-technical fungus appreciation hike along the North Ridge, Whittemore Gulch, and Harkins Ridge Trails. The rain (or lack of) will determine what is seen. Bring lunch, stamina, and your curiosity.

## Earthquake Hike

**Sunday • January 7**  
**Los Trancos • 2-3 mi**  
**1:30pm to 4:00pm**



Join docents John Seyfarth and Strether Smith, and please see the activity description for December 3.

## Scenic Aerobic Hike I

**Wednesday • January 10**  
**Picchetti Ranch • 4-6 mi**  
**10:00am to 1:00pm**



Please see the activity description for December 13.

## Creature Feature

**Saturday • January 13**  
**Edgewood County Park • 2.5 mi**  
**9:00am to 12:30pm**



What do dusky-footed woodrats look like? What are their stick houses like inside? How many live in one house? What do they eat? Who wants to eat them? How do they find mates and raise pups? Why are they called packrats? Come ask docents Kathryn Strachota and June Cancell all your questions and learn about this keystone species. Curious children are particularly welcome! This is a very interactive, illustrated, moderately-paced hike along the Sylvan, Serpentine, Franciscan, and Baywood Glen Trails. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after December 30.**

## Tafoni Trek

**Saturday • January 13**  
**El Corte de Madera Creek • 5 mi**  
**Meet: Skeggs Point**  
**9:30am to 1:30pm**



Take a break from seasonal activities and get outside with docents Sarah Schoen and Jayita Bhojwani to explore this wooded Preserve along the El Corte de Madera Creek and Tafoni Trails. You'll enjoy learning about tafoni sandstone formations — a geological wonder of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Afterwards, you'll have lunch with a view at the Vista Point, before hiking back to your starting point.

## Explorer Hike: New Year Resolutions

**Wednesday • January 17**  
**El Corte de Madera Creek • 5 mi**  
**Meet: Skeggs Point**  
**10:30am to 2:30pm**



Welcome the New Year and join docents Lynn Jackson, Dennis Smith, Kate Gundmundson, and Mary Brunkhorst as you explore the forest and chaparral habitats of this Preserve. You'll hike the El Corte de Madera Creek, Resolution, and Fir Trails with a lunch stop at the Vista Point. Time permitting, you'll visit a tafoni sandstone formation.

## Introductory Geocaching

**Saturday • January 20**  
**Los Trancos • 2-3 mi**  
**10:00am to 2:00pm**



Join docents Debbie Mytels and June Cancell, and an REI Outdoor School Instructor to search for geocaches, or hidden treasures, using GPS units supplied by REI. This fun and interactive outing is great for all ages. You are encouraged to bring small trinkets (inexpensive children's toys, less than 2 inches in length are ideal) to use as trade items for the cache. This activity is an introduction to geocaching and is geared toward the first-time geocacher, but all are welcome.

**(Note: This activity includes some off-trail hiking; long pants are recommended and closed-toe shoes are required.)**

**Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after January 6.**



## Signs of Winter

**Tuesday • January 23**  
**Pulgas Ridge • 4 mi**  
**1:00pm to 4:00pm**



Join docents Liz Foreman and Lina Mesa, and please see the activity description for December 6.

## Umunhum Barlow Explorer

**Saturday • January 27**  
**Sierra Azul • 4-5 mi**  
**Meet: See text below**  
**8:00am to 1:00pm**



Join in on this wonderful outing below the summit of Mount Umunhum where you'll enjoy many unique and unparalleled vistas with docents Greg Azevedo, Huey-Shin Yuan, David Schwederer, and Nina Bell. Stories will be shared along the way about Mount Umunhum's past, more recent, and current place in history. This hike does NOT include the summit area; hike route will either be from the trailhead near Bald Mountain parking lot to Barlow Road and on to the Woods Trail to return to Jacques Ridge parking lot, or an out and back hike starting from the Jacques Ridge parking lot, depending on trailhead parking availability. There is a steep trail section — proper footwear is important. **(Note: Directions will be sent. Participants will carpool/shuttle to a trailhead.)** Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after January 13.



Isabel W.

Picchetti Ranch Open Space Preserve



## Walking with the Ancients

Saturday • January 27

Russian Ridge • 3 mi

Meet: Mindego Gateway parking lot

10:00am to 12:30pm



Join docents Maureen Draper, Naureen Moon, and Nina Bell on trails once used by Native Americans, and Spanish explorers and settlers. With awesome views of Butano Ridge and Mindego Hill, you'll walk among majestic ancient oaks, pausing at times to learn and wonder about how this land was used in earlier times.

## Owls of Monte Bello

Saturday • January 27

Monte Bello • 3 mi

3:30pm to 9:00pm



Join docents Karen DeMello, Jan Hintermeister, and Cathy Brown on this moderately-paced hike to learn about the rarely seen but sometimes heard owls of this Preserve. You'll begin with mini-tutorial stops to learn about local owls, then stop for dinner at dusk. As you retrace your steps in darkness, be prepared to stand quietly and patiently in the cold to listen for owls along the way. Whooooo knows, maybe you'll get lucky and hear one! Wear quiet clothing, bring dinner, a flashlight (with red cellophane covering if possible), and binoculars (if you have them). **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after January 13.**

## View from the Ridge

Sunday • January 28

Long Ridge • 5 mi

10:30am to 3:00pm



Join docents Bob Segalla and Paul Billig to explore what this Preserve has to offer. You may see newts along the lush Peters Creek Trail and enjoy a tranquil pond, green forests, ridges, and grasslands on the Long Ridge Trail. You'll stop for an ocean view at the Wallace Stegner bench. This moderately-paced, 600-foot elevation change hike is suitable for capable children.



Yonil Seoniz

Ravenswood Open Space Preserve

## FEBRUARY

## Wonders of Cherry Springs Pond

Saturday • February 3

Sierra Azul • 3 mi

Meet: See below

8:30am to 12:00pm



Join docents Greg Azevedo, David Schwaderer, Nina Bell, and District staff Ellen Gartside for a moderately-paced hike at a special access area of this Preserve that will traverse mixed evergreen forest and grassland. You'll discuss local history, and learn about the pond environment and flora of the area while enjoying views of Santa Clara Valley and the surrounding Preserve. **(Note: This activity includes some off-trail hiking; long pants are recommended and closed-toe shoes are required. Directions will be sent.) Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after January 20.**

## Earthquake Hike

Sunday • February 4

Los Trancos • 2-3 mi

2:00pm to 4:30pm



Join docents Paul Billig, and Marilyn and Bill Bauriedel, and please see the activity description for December 3.

## Explorer Hike: Baylands Winter Birds

Wednesday • February 7

Ravenswood • 2 mi

Meet: See below

10:30am to 2:00pm



Join docents Dennis Smith, Lynn Jackson, Kate Gudmundson, and Mary Brunkhorst on a short and leisurely-paced hike to observe the habitats and birds special to this recovering salt-marsh environment. You'll get a whole new perspective on the northern section of this bayfront Preserve as you visit this northern area. You'll

observe and identify the many birds that use the old salt ponds, now converted to tidal flats, as their winter home, and learn more about the history of this area, from marshland to salt production to protection as open space. **(Note: Directions will be sent.)**

**Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after January 24.**

## Clues to Local History

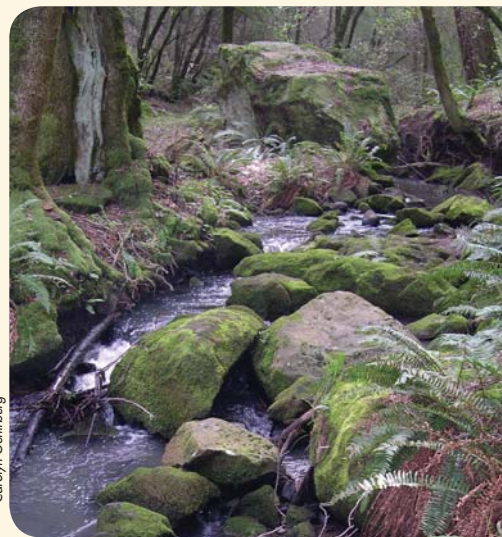
Friday • February 9

Long Ridge • 4.6 mi

10:00am to 2:00pm



On this loop hike with docents Debbie Mytels and Gerri Tiernan you'll follow the shady Peters Creek Trail, pass by the green "carpet" at Jikoji Pond, and stop for a snack while taking in a terrific view from the Wallace Stegner Bench on the Long Ridge Trail. Along the way you'll seek out signs of this Preserve's colorful history and hear a few stories of local lore including why Stevens Creek County Park's parking area on Skyline Boulevard is called "Grizzly Flat".



Carolyn Geniberg

Long Ridge Open Space Preserve

## Introductory Geocaching

Saturday • February 10

Los Trancos • 2 mi

10:00am to 2:00pm



Join docents Sarah Schoen and Maureen Draper, and an REI Outdoor School Instructor, and please see the activity description for January 20. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after January 27.**

## Scenic Aerobic Hike I

Wednesday • February 14

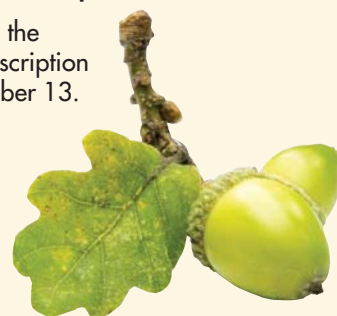
St. Joseph's Hill • 4-6 mi

Meet: Little League Field parking lot

10:00am to 1:00pm



Please see the activity description for December 13.







Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve by Brian Malone

## Chinese New Year Celebration

Friday • February 16  
El Corte de Madera Creek • 10 mi  
10:00am to 3:00pm



Join docents Huey-Shin Yuan and Vivian Neou to celebrate the Year of the Dog. You'll explore this beautiful and heavily-forested Preserve along the Olion, Steam Donkey, Gordon Mill, Timberview, Giant Salamander, and Fir Trails. After a visit to an old growth redwood tree and a 30+% grade (steep) climb along the Fir Trail, you'll enjoy lunch at a scenic spot with a picnic table. This fast-paced aerobic workout includes 2,000 feet of elevation gain.

## Fungal Fun

Sunday • February 18  
Purisima Creek Redwoods • 7 mi  
Meet: North Ridge parking lot  
9:00am to 4:30pm



Join Chris MacIntosh, Emma Finter, and Naureen Moon and please see the activity description for January 6.

## Explorer Hike: Wildflower Treasure Hunt

Wednesday • February 21  
Thornewood • 4 mi  
10:30am to 2:30pm



Experience the delight of discovering early spring wildflowers with docents Lynn Jackson, Kate Gudmundson, Dennis Smith, and Mary Brunkhorst. Descending through chaparral into redwood forest at a leisurely pace, you'll travel along the Schilling Lake and Bridle Trails on this out-and-back hike. If the timing is right you'll be treated to a display of fetid adder's tongue near your shaded creek-side lunch spot. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after February 7.**



Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve

## Search for the Everlasting

Sunday • February 25  
Picchetti Ranch • 5 mi  
10:30am to 3:00pm



Join docents Bob Segalla and Greg Azevedo to enjoy the wonders of this Preserve so close to home. You'll discover if the cudweed plant (sometimes called everlasting) smells like maple syrup to you. A lovely view awaits along the Orchard Loop and Zinfandel Trails and you can listen to the sound of Stevens Creek as you enjoy lunch at a Santa Clara County Park picnic area. Capable children can handle this moderately-paced hike with a couple of 200-foot climbs. A visit to Picchetti Winery is optional (on your own) at the hike's end.

## Signs of Spring

Wednesday • February 28  
Pulgas Ridge • 4 mi  
1:00pm to 4:00pm



Join docents Liz Foreman and Mary Jo Colton, and please see the "Signs of Winter" activity description for December 6.

Photos below by Renée Fitzsimons

## Ready to Get Engaged? – Spring Training 2018 and You

What compels someone to become a docent for the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) – to volunteer to plan, research, and lead others on a nature walk, hike, ride, or other outdoor activity in one of the District's amazing preserves? These elements do: a strong desire to share a love of nature with others, a commitment to lifelong learning on a variety of environmental topics, an enjoyment of the outdoors, and a willingness to get to know and understand a landscape – both natural features and human history.



### The District has a proposal for you.

Consider training to become an Outdoor Activity Docent. Interested individuals complete an application and interview process, and then participate in a 14-week training course – April through June plus. The course is offered every other year and each class has 20- to 24- docent trainees.

There are lecture sessions on Thursday evenings, and all-day field sessions on Saturdays. The course content includes ecology,

mammalogy, geology, Ohlone culture, biotic communities, birds, flower form and function, herpetology, interpretive techniques, District guidelines and procedures, safety, and more. The course is taught by the District's Docent Program Manager in conjunction with outside instructors who are experts in a variety of fields.

Once your training is complete you and your docent cohort propose and provide activities on preserves that are organized around engaging topics and themes. Docent-led activities create a framework for enriched experiences of nature, mutual enjoyment, and a deeper understanding of conservation values – plus there is the adventure of discovering new places and making new friends.

### Take the plunge!

We invite you to visit the volunteer page on the District website to find out more and send us your "RSVP" (interest form) for the spring training [www.openspace.org/volunteer](http://www.openspace.org/volunteer)







FUNDED BY

MEASURE AA

2014 OPEN SPACE BOND

## A Healthy Return on Your Measure AA Investment in Open Space

Ever since Midpen was created by local voters in 1972, a small portion of property tax paid within our service area has been supporting our organization. Local voters strengthened that symbiosis between Bay Area property values and our region's abundance of natural lands when they passed Measure AA in 2014. Measure AA is an authorization to issue \$300 million of bonds, also paid to Midpen through property tax, being used to fulfill the community's vision for their public open space.



Mount Umunhum,  
Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve

### Here's how Measure AA, specifically, works:

Homeowners pay annual property tax based on their home's value. A small portion is for **Measure AA**, depending on how much of the bond Midpen has issued.

Today, homeowners within our service area pay a Measure AA property tax to Midpen of .90 cents per \$100,000 in assessed home value, or **\$9 per year for a \$1 million home**.

Measure AA funds have already allowed Midpen to accomplish several priority projects identified by the community in our vision plan, including access to **Mount Umunhum** and **La Honda Creek** Open Space Preserve.

Over the next several decades, Midpen will use Measure AA funds to **fund all 25 vision plan projects** providing more preserved, restored and accessible open spaces contributing to our community's health and quality of life.

The Measure AA property tax rate being paid to Midpen has stayed lower than expected for the last several years, under \$10 per \$1 million in assessed home value, in part because of **Midpen's conservative and prudent approach** to finances according to our Chief Financial Officer Stefan Jaskulak.

"We're very mindful as to how much debt we issue. When we do issue debt we take advantage of the lowest possible interest rates. That helps to keep the tax levy as low as possible," Jaskulak said. "When we issue bonds, we're now issuing them as green bonds to emphasize that our projects are **environmentally responsible**."

In August, Midpen's board of directors voted to divest of all investments in non-renewable energy including fossil fuels. "We have many other investment options, so it doesn't hamper anything," Jaskulak said of the change. "It aligns our investment policy with Midpen's vision and mission."

*Photos at top of page Measure AA Project Preserves, from left La Honda Creek OSP, Russian Ridge OSP, Sierra Azul OSP, and Purisima Creek Redwoods OSP*

### Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Board of Directors

**Pete Siemens—Ward 1** (Cupertino, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Saratoga) | **Yoriko Kishimoto—Ward 2** (Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Palo Alto, Stanford, Sunnyvale)  
**Jed Cyr—Ward 3** (Sunnyvale) | **Curt Riffle—Ward 4** (Los Altos, Mountain View) | **Nonette G. Hanko—Ward 5** (East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Palo Alto, Stanford)  
**Larry Hassett—Ward 6** (Atherton, Menlo Park, Pescadero, Portola Valley, Redwood City, San Gregorio, Woodside)  
**Cecily Harris—Ward 7** (El Granada, Half Moon Bay, Montara, Moss Beach, Redwood City, San Carlos, Woodside)

Stephen E. Abbors—General Manager | Peggy Gibbons—Open Space Views Editor | Renée Fitzsimons—Outdoor Activities Editor





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Photos below by Erin Ashford.

## Mount Umunhum Grand Opening The Gifts of Mount Umunhum

This past September, we celebrated the completion of an incredible journey: Getting the summit of Mount Umunhum cleaned up, restored and opened for everyone to enjoy. Since the grand opening, thousands of visitors have enjoyed the many gifts this

**"Spectacular view  
and easy road  
access to the summit.  
Beautiful blend and  
preservation of the  
historical aspect and  
native environment."**

world-class destination has to give. The clean air, the incredible 360-degree views, and the connection to the sights and sounds of nature. While it has been a long journey, we couldn't be more thankful to our partners

and the public who came together for support of Measure AA which helped make the summit of Mount Umunhum accessible to everyone. Mount Umunhum is truly a gift to the people of present and future, and we hope you continue to visit

this spectacular destination and enjoy the many gifts it has to offer for years to come.

From our perspective, some of the greatest gifts to come from this project have been the overwhelmingly positive experiences and responses shared by visitors. Here are a few examples from the grand opening events.

"Complete & utter excellence of planning. Beyond expectations."

"I bought my house about 15 years ago and ever since I've been wanting to get up this mountain that is visible from my street. So it was very fulfilling when the wait finally ended. As a bonus, I got to do it with my wife and children (12 year old girl and 8 year old boy). The views were truly breathtaking and sweeping and I hope to be back soon."

"It was wonderful and I appreciate all the hard work and perseverance that went into the acquisition, design, building and grand opening. I look forward to many hours of enjoyment hiking Mt. Um. Thank you!"

"Incredibly impressed with the improvements that were made to the road up there. Since the grand opening I've been back to the summit three times. Once by driving and twice on my bike. It's awesome." 🦋



*They enjoyed spectacular views, learned the mountain's rich history, explored new trails and connected with nature atop one of the highest peaks in the Bay Area.*



*The Grand Opening Celebration offered visitors a first look at the restored mountaintop via three guided tour options.*



*Participants received round-trip shuttle transportation, a guided tour, and an opportunity to visit booths from partner organizations.*

## STORIES OF MOUNT UMUNHUM

Experience a "virtual"  
guide around the Summit  
at your own pace.

Download before your visit

