

FRIENDS OF SHIPLEY NATURE CENTER
SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES 2020

By
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The year, 2020, was full of many learning opportunities. Following the mandated closure of the Shipley Nature Center due to the Covid pandemic, we began to re-imagine when and how we would be able to welcome guests once more. From March through October, the gates were closed to the public while the groundskeeper staff and small groups of volunteers under direction of board members had maintained the health of the natural areas and maintenance of the campus facilities.

Groundskeepers employed by Friends of Shipley Nature Center

We employed two groundskeepers and their main activities included:

- Removal of non-native, invasive plants and trees; applying mulch on trails
- Clearing overgrown vegetation which improved pond views
- Creating organic mulch for Center
- Providing safety checks along the fence line and making repairs

Volunteers with Friends of Shipley Nature Center

Volunteers worked in the Center and their main activities included:

- Maintaining the demonstration garden and composting area
- Identifying and contracting for the removal of weak or infected trees
- Keeping the nursery plants healthy and ready for the replacement needs
- Maintaining the monthly bird count activity which is reported to Audubon
- Refurbishing outdoor displays
- All activities are handled outside as the building remains closed.

Board Members of Friends of Shipley Nature Center

Board members worked with groundskeepers and volunteers to manage their activities, and administer the nonprofit organization, including:

- Preparing Covid-19 safety protocols training for volunteers and employees.
- Presenting outdoor interactive activities for visitors geared towards children
- Reducing operating costs in-line with limited fund raising activities
- Raising donations and writing grants
- Contracting professional services to repair (1) iron entry gate, (2) fallen or diseased trees (3) mechanical door to the Interpretative Center, (4) herbicide treatment and (5) pest control.
- Installing the donated water bottle re-fill station
- Continuing to support Inside The Outdoors Program which serves elementary students in Orange County for hundreds of virtual tours at the nature center
- Assisting college students with site access for their wildlife monitoring project
- Helping youth to earn scout awards for their projects at the nature center

Partial Re-Opening

In November, 2020, we re-opened Saturdays only from 9 am until 1 pm. Visitors were requested to wear masks and to stay in socially distanced groups. We supplied masks for those who do not have one.

The response has been wonderful! We had an average of 250 guests each Saturday. Volunteers provided:

- Age appropriate scavenger hunt cards to identify wildlife along the trails
- Trail guides
- Variety of outdoor activities
- Seasonal gift items for sale
- Sale of vermicompost and organic compost
- Sale of native plants and information on planting

Board Considerations for Full Re-Opening and Projects

We continue to closely work with the City and these considerations are:

- Creating a safe-continuous trail on the Goldenwest side of the pond. This area has been severely damaged by the rise water over the past several years. The City, through the Office of Public Works, has created a drain to Slater Channel which has allowed the pond to stabilize at a level that would support access. **This will require grant funding to build a raised boardwalk installed over the submerged trails.**
- Determining how to expand days open to the public with the operating of the interpretative center, and to create events that will bring people together in a safe manner. **This will require the employing a part-time employee for the interpretative center activities.**

Our participation on the Huntington Beach Central Park Committee provides us a way to coordinate with others in creating the future of this area within Central Park. We coordinate with the Shipley to Shore project through this committee.