

The Gratitude Circle

The Gratitude Circle is a partnership between the Conejo Recreation & Park District and Play Conejo. Annually, the CRPD Board of Directors celebrates and honors individuals who have made a significant contribution of time, effort, or energy to recreation and parks in the Conejo Valley.

The Gratitude Circle is also a place where people can honor loved ones and support CRPD's parks and programs through charitable giving.

Past Honorees

2023

Scott Buchanan
Susan Holt
Bryan McQueeney

2022

Cecilia Laufenberg
Wyatt McCrea
Mary Power

2021

Jim Gilmore
Karen Lindsey
Steve Wiley

2019

Tim Hagel
Elayne Haggan
Bruce Stanton

2018

Richard F. Newman

2017

Doris Granholm

2016

Frances Prince
Rorie Skei

2015

Dennis Gillette
Mike Berger
Barbara Kloster

2014

Tex Ward
Mark Jacobsen

CONEJO RECREATION & PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

George M. Lange, *Chair*
Doug Nickles, *Vice Chair*
Nellie Cusworth, *Director*
Chuck Huffer, *Director*
Marissa Buss, *Director*

Jim Friedl, *General Manager*
Tex Ward, *General Manager Emeritus*



The Conejo Recreation & Park District is an independent special district serving the Conejo Valley since 1963. Its mission is to enrich the quality of life for our community by preserving and enhancing recreational opportunities, parks, and open space.

Play Conejo is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization created in 2012 to provide volunteer, charitable, and financial support for public park facilities and recreation programs which benefit Conejo Valley residents. Play Conejo is raising funds to help the District maintain quality parks and offer diverse and affordable recreation programs.



THE GRATITUDE CIRCLE

INDUCTION CELEBRATION

honoring

BEVERLY BRUNE JOE EDMISTON



for their Dedication to the People of
Conejo Valley through Recreation, Parks, and Open Space



Monday, May 13, 2024 • 5:30pm
Conejo Creek North Park

THE GRATITUDE CIRCLE

Honorees



BEVERLY BRUNE

A resident of the Conejo Valley for over 50 years, Beverly Brune and her husband, Robert, moved to Westlake Village in 1971, where they raised their three children, Kurt, Frank, and Carol.

In 1973, Beverly began her local garden club involvement. She served as President of the Westlake Village Garden Club, the California Garden Clubs, Inc., and was Chair of

the Seven Western States including Hawaii and Alaska, from 2003 - 2005.

A testament to her enduring commitment to beautifying the community can be found in the role she has played at the Conejo Valley Botanic Garden for 22 years, the past 13 as President.

The Conejo Valley Botanic Garden was formed in 1973 from a 40-acre lot adjacent to Conejo Community Park. Over the years, many volunteers have transformed this space into a lush, beautiful oasis in the middle of Thousand Oaks, enjoyed by many and providing a welcome respite for those who seek it.

The Kids Adventure Garden, which has delighted children and parents alike, opened in 2003. That same year, the name "Conejo Valley Botanic Garden" was nationally approved. She spearheaded the "Trail of Trees" project in 2007 and has steadfastly worked with a community of generous donors and volunteers to continuously improve the visitor experience.

In 1999, Beverly was instrumental in the placement of a Blue Star Memorial By-Way Marker at Conejo Creek North Park as a tribute to the Armed Services. To this day, the marker can be found on a large rock overlooking the lake.

Through her tireless dedication, Beverly has secured grants and orchestrated ambitious projects that have transformed the Garden into an area that enables visitors to commune with nature at its finest. Her work has left an indelible mark of beauty and has provided a standard of communal enrichment which will be enjoyed for generations to come.

*The Board of Directors of the Conejo Recreation and Park District
are grateful to Beverly and Joe for their positive impact.*

*The quality of life in the Conejo Valley is due, in no small part, to their unflagging
dedication and passion for recreation, parks, and open space.*



JOE EDMISTON

Joe is the son of Tasker Lee and Beula Viola Edmiston, prominent leaders in the Southern California 1960s conservation movement. The apple didn't fall far from the trees.

By the time he graduated from Montebello High School, he had already received Sierra Club Angeles Chapter's highest conservation award.

He then studied at East Los Angeles College (and was Student Body President) before graduating from USC.

His law school stint was short-lived as he was recruited by the Sierra Club to appear as an advocate before the nascent California Coastal Commission.

- 1977 - At age 28, Joe was selected by Governor Jerry Brown to serve as the Executive Director of the Santa Monica Mountains Comprehensive Planning Commission - making him the youngest California state government agency head.

- 1978 - Joe worked on the federal legislation that would create the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

- 1979 - Governor Brown signs Bill creating the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and appoints Joe Edmiston Executive Director.

Joe has been an unstoppable force for conservation ever since.

- 1985 - Joe and Tex Ward, CRPD General Manager, recommend creation of the Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority (MRCA) to their Boards. A year later, Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District joined the MRCA, which has operated via a 3-agency partnership ever since. Joe has served as the MRCA's Executive Officer since its inception.

Over the years the SMMC and MRCA have acquired and now manage nearly 90,000 acres of park land and open space throughout Southern California.

Thanks to the SMMC and MRCA, there are now dozens of treasured parklands like King Gillette Ranch, Upper Las Virgenes Canyon Open Space Preserve & Rocky Peak linking our regional ecosystems and regional communities.

As for support and encouragement of CRPD park improvements and acquisitions, **over the years the SMMC and MRCA have granted to CRPD nearly \$4.5 million** for projects such as Sapwi Trails, Rancho Potrero, McCrean Ranch, along with wildfire resiliency grants for invasive weed removal and extraordinary fuel modification.

If you appreciate open spaces, natural lands, clean air, clean water and public trails in and around Southern California, you just may want to thank the SMMC/MRCA and their fearless leader, Joe Edmiston, for decades of passionate work to conserve land and ensure public access. Cheers and thanks to Joe for his vision & tenacity and for his team of SMMC/MRCA public officials and staff who continue to create an enduring legacy of cherished public parks!

Joe is married to Pepper and they are parents to 7 kids and have 8 grandkids.