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## Residents pull together for annual creek clean-up

By Pippa Fisher



From left: Will Elder and Jeff Gilman Photo Pippa Fisher

Leigh Creekside Park - lately a place of controversy between neighbors - provided a great opportunity for residents to pull (weeds) together on a warm and pleasant day at a shady, beautiful stretch of the creek.

This was part of the fifth annual Lafayette Creek Day, where residents old and young gathered to help with the clean-up and learn more about the Las Trampas Creek.

Under blue, sunny skies, the volunteers dug, chopped, hacked and pulled at the invasive, non-native weeds that are choking out more desirable native plant growth to help maintain a stable creek bank.

Several members of the Lafayette Creeks Committee took part, joined by Lafayette residents and several Boy Scouts from troops 200 and 243, who used the opportunity to help as part of a service project

Although the many hands made for faster clearing, the day was also about education. Will Elder, Creeks Committee Chairman and Jeff Gilman, creeks committee member had displays out depicting the creek's native plants.

Saint Mary's Aquatic Ecologist Michael Marchetti, himself a former creeks committee member, brought several tanks containing examples of the creek's native aquatic life, such as newts and encouraged residents to touch and examine the wildlife.

Stanley Middle School science teachers Jan Winter and Mandy Kush were also helping at the park.

Kush recognizes what a wonderful resource Lafayette has on its doorstep. She says that she brings her seventh-grade students down to the creek several times during the year to observe and take water samples for analysis during their year-long creek study.

Elder expects to present the commission's Downtown Creeks Preservation, Restoration and Development plan to the Lafayette City Council in June.

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