



## ANOTHER GREAT BROOM PULL

Eight in the morning on the road, Sunday, with brownies in tow. No traffic, another beautiful cloudy summer morning over the golden gate bridge. Got to my house on Birch Road to pick up tools, couldn't resist pulling out the sticky gallium growing over the plants in the garden, Albert side. I threw the gallium over the new fence, from whence it had come. And likewise the giant leafed nasturtium coming from the

Woods's patch. Take that. Your vegetation, not mine. Picked up shovel, clippers, gloves, exchanged greetings with Hector and headed over to Judith Larners' to get the invaluable broom pullers. Did they get my message? Were they out in the shop waiting for me? Yes!

Last broom pull I was the first one at the knoll, fussing about being the first one...and the one who had come the longest distance. Of course, Janine was ahead of me, putting out signs and cones to indicate where to come if anyone cared to help us with the work. This time I was prepared. No annoyed look on my face, just happy to be there, able to do the job, happy to do it.

We are a stalwart bunch, absolutely without question devoted to our task of ridding the knoll area of broom and cotoneaster so that the emerging native plants, coyote bush, coast oaks, coffeeberry, can see the light of day. We spread out, working where our hearts told us, some to remove cotoneaster, with their daunting root system, others to remove grasses around the oaks and coyote bush. Me, I focus on the scotch and Spanish broom on the canyon side of the knoll.

Small, inconsequential seeming things bring great pleasure these days. To conquer the physics of the broom puller to get the larger plants and to be able to pull out others by hand. I see the results immediately with no one behind me second guessing whether this should have been done this way or that.

A few people passed by, ladies on their cell phones hardly looking left to right, dads with their kids asking what we were doing and giving praise and best of all, Tish's daughter Luddy with young Oliver in tow. You can see him in our group picture, holding a shovel just his size.

Our broom-cotoneaster piles are all over the knoll. We'll try to consolidate them over the next few weeks. When the knoll is mowed, we will all be able to see the results: natives surging upward and outward in the longer spring-summer photoperiod, piles of pulled plants turning into good compost.

We will be at it again, perhaps once or twice over the rest of the dry season. Watch for the notice and don't forget...there will be brownies.

Genie McNaughton

Picture: front row: Oliver, Janine, back: Ken, Tish, Meg, Genie, Luddy behind the camera