



A PUBLICATION OF THE MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK FOUNDATION • VOL 27 • NO 2 • SPRING 2016

Mission Trails Regional Park News

Calling All Nature Photographers!

**Mission Trails Regional Park's
24th Annual Amateur Photo Contest
deadline for entries is May 31st.**

Contest information on page 5

Photo by Jon Nachison - 2015 First Place Scenic 2

Photo by Carol Murdock
2015 First Place People, Flora & Fauna



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California State Senator, retired

A Message from Executive Director Jay Wilson



A lot is has been happening at Mission Trails recently: The 5-Peak Challenge has registered over 1,800 people since November 7; the first wedding at the Visitor Center is scheduled for an evening in July; the new geology exhibit "The Rock Cycle" is on display in the Exhibit Hall of the Visitor Center (read Shannon O'Dunn's article in this issue); and over 850 cubic yards of sludge and sand was recently removed from behind the Old Mission Dam.

Hikers must certainly be becoming healthier by completing the 5-Peak Challenge. When Ranger Levi Dean proposed the concept last year, everyone thought it would be a great way to entice visitors to explore new vistas within the park. The MTRP Foundation has over 2,000 pins waiting for the next 5-Peak Challenge finishers. Accept the challenge, take your time, and climb the five main peaks at Mission Trails. The gift shop is now stocked with a very special 5-Peak Challenge T-Shirt that includes the spectacular photo of all five peaks by Dolwain Green.

Out of the Ordinary Weddings and Events at MTRP

Plan a picturesque private event evening overlooking the tranquil Mission Gorge from the Visitor Center for family, friends, and/or business associates. The Visitor Center and its 4,000 square-foot Terrace offers a unique venue for that special event; whether it be a wedding, retirement party, fundraiser for a nonprofit, a celebration of life, an anniversary, a social event, or a corporate party. See Audrey Baker's article in this newsletter.

Join us for the 14th Annual Explore Mission Trails Day

Saturday, May 21, and the spectacular 14th annual Explore Mission Trails Day (EMTD), is not far away. Mark your calendars for a fun-filled day at the park. Behind the scenes, MTRP City and Foundation staff, and volunteers are already hard at work. It takes about 8 months of planning by a dedicated crew to stage this event; and it takes an additional 125 volunteers to make it a successful day. Plan for you, your family and friends to take part in this fun-filled free day at Mission Trails.

If you are a new mountain bike enthusiast, you can improve your mountain biking skills the first Saturday of the month with Ranger Araceli. Check the event calendar at mtrp.org. ■

There is an adventure waiting for you ever day at Mission Trails. Visit mtrp.org

Interested in being a part of the discussions that shape the future of MTRP?

MTRP Task Force and Citizens Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public and meet every other month at the MTRP Visitor Center.

MTRP CAC next meeting: May 5, 2016 6:30 PM

MTRP Task Force next meeting: May 19, 2016 10 AM

For future dates and agendas visit mtrp.org

Book Your Next Event at Mission Trails Regional Park

By Audrey F. Baker

When hosting a non-profit fundraiser, corporate gathering, or private celebration for a wedding, anniversary, retirement party, or celebration of life, an evening venue at Mission Trails Regional Park's Visitor Center lends a magical quality to your event.

Architecturally dramatic and grandly poised above Mission Gorge, the Visitor Center, with its two-story high windows and 4000 sq. foot adjoining terrace, affords breath-taking views of the gorge and its defining mountain landscapes.

The center's flagstone interior, detailed with marble and wood design, offers a spacious lobby and adjoining gallery displaying nature-related art created by local artists. Larger-than-life stone sculptures and Native American art create a warm, inviting atmosphere mirroring nature's unrivaled beauty.

Linda Hassakis, who began volunteering at Mission Trails in 2011, describes the reaction of many first-time visitors. "Guests often tell me, 'This place is amazing. The park is practically in my backyard and I've never been here!'" Smiling, she adds, "It's very gratifying."

In her role as Events Facilities Supervisor, Linda is part of the team that guides people through the facilities rental process. "When I pre-walk the center with someone planning an event, I feel pride in just how much Mission Trails has to offer."

Our state-of-the-art facility includes a large-screen 95-seat built-in sound theatre available for video and slide presentations, a 150-seat outdoor amphitheatre, and interactive museum featuring nature-related entertainments.

In addition to day-time meeting rooms, available 9AM to 5PM, our facility serves as a special evening event venue for up to 370 persons, offering a unique setting for indoor or outdoor dining and receptions.

Activity options include flute music, day-light guided trail tours, and star-gazing opportunities for your guests' enjoyment.

On the night of the event, Linda assists with pacing event activities, facilitating deliveries and catering tasks, and attending to those small details that create well-staged beautiful events.

Linda is passionate about the park. "It's a place to be enjoyed by everyone. My favorite time is what I call pink hour. The sunset colors are spell-binding. It's magic as the sky transforms, bringing on the special charms of an evening celebration. The inspiration of nature makes you feel a part of something bigger and, certainly, something very special."

If you want to make this special place part of your event, get started by contacting Maggie Holloway at 619-668-3280 or at mholloway@mtrp.org. ■

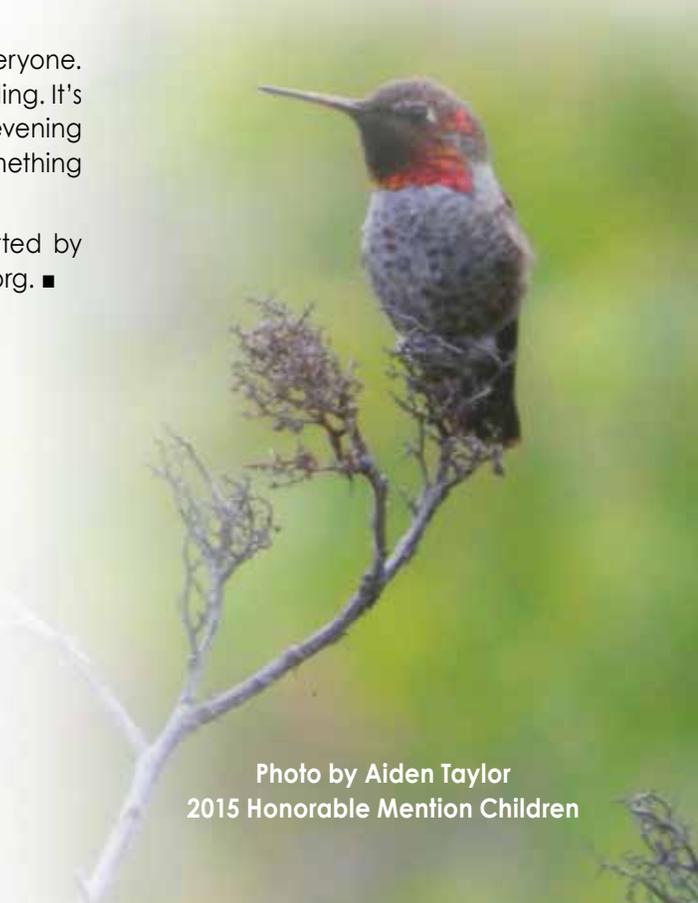
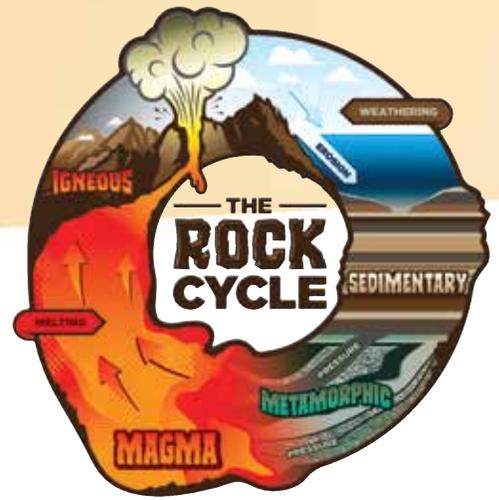


Photo by Aiden Taylor
2015 Honorable Mention Children

New ROCK'N Exhibit at the Visitor Center

By Shannon O'Dunn, MTRP Foundation Board Member

Mission Trails Regional Park has a wealth of rock exposures and formations that tell us about the geological history of western San Diego County. Crystalline igneous plutonic rocks formed miles below the surface have been exposed by erosion, along with older lava flows, and covered in places by younger, fossiliferous sedimentary layers. MTRP Trail Guides are well versed in this geology, and share their knowledge in guided walks. The MTRP Visitor Center has added an exciting dimension to our geological education for all visitors, with the new Rock Cycle display.



The Rock Cycle is fundamental to understanding geologic processes, the three rock families, and the transformation of one rock into another. Presenting this cycle to MTRP visitors in a dynamic and appealing way proved quite a challenge, and required a team effort.

Pat Abbott and I, geologists on the MTRP Foundation Board, formatted the display concept, and graphic design artist Myles Mendoza and colleague Mark Krenn implemented production of the wall and tabletop graphics. MTRP staff and Foundation board members also were part of the team that created a large-scale visual representation of outer Earth processes, and how their dynamic interaction creates and recreates the vast array of rocks we see at Earth's surface.

Mr. Mendoza incorporated standard rock family symbols and bold color to illustrate the cycle in a wall-mounted Rock Cycle graphic and tabletop coordinating artwork, to accompany other MTRP Visitor Center natural history displays. Mr. Krenn fabricated the wall art and accompanying specimen graphics on the tabletops.

Accompanying the artwork are seven large rock specimens collected by permit within Mission Trails Park by Pat Abbott and Ranger Levi Dean. Paul Healy mounted them for display and hands-on examination.

Mr. Healy built two tables, and designed a special box to fit under each rock. He filled each box with Bondo, allowing the specimen to be displayed effectively; and then bolted samples to the tables. Making the visual transfer from beautiful art on the wall to rock family samples on the tables, Mark Krenn and Myles Mendoza incorporated the same state-of-the-art materials for the wall display and cover for the table tops, allowing the colors and rock symbols to visually tie the two displays together. Explanatory text penned by Pat Abbott completes the display.

The Rock Cycle installation provides our visitors with a dramatic visual explanation of basic Earth processes above and below the surface, with hands-on learning about the earth materials produced by this cycle. Actual samples from each rock family, collected in the park, are displayed for look-and-touch learning, and sit on a color graphic with text, linking each one with their place in the Rock Cycle diagram directly above. The MTRP Foundation provided funding for design, production, and installation of this innovative earth science display.

The MTRP Foundation is proud of this team effort to bring to the park a unique visual and tactile explanation of The Rock Cycle, a key aspect of earth science curriculum at all levels of study. We invite you to see (and touch!) for yourself. ■

Rock Cycle Display Team:

Dorothy Leonard,
Shannon O'Dunn,
Pat Abbott,
Ranger Levi Dean,
Myles Mendoza
and Mark Krenn



Photo by Dennis Morrison
2015 Second Place People, Flora & Fauna

Volunteers of the year for 2015

By Jay Wilson

Each February awards are given to the top volunteers for the previous year at the annual Volunteer Awards Ceremony. Senior Ranger Quinn stated "Volunteers are the life blood of the park. We could not accomplish all that we do without our dedicated volunteers."

Those honored for 2015 are:

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| Trail Restoration: | Roy DeRego
<i>presented by Ranger Heidi Gutknecht</i> |
| Habitat Restoration: | Chad MacDonald
<i>presented by Ranger Heidi Gutknecht</i> |
| Park Beautification: | Terry Gaughen
<i>presented by Ranger Araceli Dominguez</i> |
| Park Patrol: | Marty Fink
<i>presented by Ranger Mel Naidis</i> |
| Trail Guide: | Marcia Stoner
<i>presented by Ranger Chris Axtmann</i> |
| Gift Shop: | Gary Jensen
<i>presented by Gift Shop Manager Patty O'Reilly</i> |
| Visitor Center: | Silvie Plesim
<i>presented by Visitor Center Director David Lee</i> |
| Volunteer of the Year: | Robert Graham
<i>presented by Senior Ranger Andy Quinn</i> |

The photo shows Robert Graham receiving his certificate of appreciation from State Senator Joel Anderson, presented by Senior Ranger Andy Quinn. Photo by MTRP Volunteer and nature photographer, Gerry Tietje.

Each winner received certificates of appreciation from the Park and Recreation Department's Open Space Division, San Diego Councilmember Scott Sherman, State Senator Joel Anderson, and US Congressman Scott Peters, along with a \$50 gift certificate from the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation. The evening awards program also included a dinner and door prizes. A big thank you to GR Catering and Olive Garden for the great food, and to Adventure-16, Lightspeed Outdoors, Windmill Farms, Cheers Deli & Liquor, Golden Bagel, and Rita's of Del Cerro for the outstanding door prizes. Senior Ranger Andy Quinn opened the program with high praise to the more than 100 volunteers who donate over 10,000 hours a year to Mission Trails.

Special recognition was also given to Camp Host John Gates by Ranger Aide Julie Aielts and to the three volunteers who coordinate the free concert series in the Visitor Center; Dr. Mitsuo Timita, Chuck Carter and Chris Chase, presented by MTRP Foundation Executive Director Jay Wilson.

Thank you to photojournalist Jay Renard with the East County Herald for a full page of photos in their current issue. ■



Calling All Nature Photographers!



We encourage you to enjoy the park, and pause to take that special picture to be entered into our contest. We are opening up the contest

early this year so everyone can take advantage of all the spectacular wildflower blooms and spring growth provided by a warm winter and the gentle rains. We especially encourage children 12 and under to participate.

Reception and awards will be at the Visitor Center Sunday, June 26, 2016. The photos will be displayed June 18 until July 15.

Deadline for entries is May 31, 2016

The Divisions will be:

Adults (18+) and Children (13-17)

Division categories are (4):

- Flora (plants)
- Fauna (animal)
- Landscapes
- People and/or Man-Made Structures

Special Division:

Children (12 and under)

More info and entry form at mtrp.org

Volunteers Needed!

Librarians for the MTRP Library

Visitor Center Information Volunteers

For more information call David Lee at 619-668-3278 or email dlee@mtrp.org.

Apply online at mtrp.org

NEW! 5-Peak Challenge T-Shirts

By *Patty O'Reily, Gift Shop Manager*

If you have completed the 5-Peak Challenge, know someone who has or just want to support the park and look good, let everyone know with this quality t-shirt. If your group is ready to take the challenge consider shirts for everyone. This unisex Gillian vegas gold shirt is now on sale at our Visitor Center Gift Shop. Volunteer Jesse Swanstrom happily modeled our shirt. Sales at the gift shop support Mission Trails Regional Park programs and trails.



Over 1800 people have completed the challenge. Congratulations to all. Recently Sheiln DeBardi, Loma McCloud and Erin McCloud completed the challenge and came into the Visitor Center sporting their new T-shirts.

All hikers should have a good walking stick, one carefully chosen to fit the hand and height of the owner. In our MTRP Gift Shop we have a wide selection from three different sources. ■



West Sycamore taking shape with help from the local community and Eagle Scouts

By *Ranger Mel Naidas*

Get out and explore the newest part of the park northeast of Scripps Ranch. West Sycamore, Mission Trails Regional Park opened in December 2014. If you haven't been there since the acquisition you'll notice there have been several projects that have taken place to enhance the history, cultural, resource management and recreation for park users.

Two Eagle Scout candidates have enhanced Beeler Canyon Trail by installing two additional Equestrian Puncheon bridges and one Eagle Scout candidate installed a single side kiosk at the east side where West Sycamore and Goodan Ranch Sycamore Canyon County Preserve meet. Ranger Andrew Miller has taken on several volunteer groups in performing regular trail rehabilitation. He leads a 90 minute guided nature walk every 3rd Saturday of each month. Ranger Araceli Dominguez has had several projects with the County of San Diego and Open Space Parks Herbicide Applicators in the removal of non-native and invasive vegetation.

Ranger Araceli Dominguez and Maggie Holloway, Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation staff, have teamed up to take new bike riders on friendly bike rides the first Saturday of the month throughout MTRP including West Sycamore (WS).

Check mtrp.org for upcoming WS trail crews and events. ■



Notable Donations

January 1 - March 31, 2016

Director's Circle

Ruth Gibbs Family Trust

Sponsor - \$10,000 - \$24,999

City of San Diego Special Promotional Program

Barbara Thompson Fund I at The San Diego Foundation

Founder - \$1000 - \$2,499

Steven R. Prewitt Trust

Mike Martin Family in memory of

Kathleen Ann Martin

Gary Lombardo

Pat and Jerry Johnson

Pathfinder - \$100 - \$499

Derryck and Carolyn Jones

Aaron Beard

Don Steele

Greg Carron

Elisa and Howard Wiggins

Toni Caragozian in memory of

John S. Caragozian

Al and Lori Lehman

Charles and Ann Nickel

Philip Schey

Jeri and Charlie Wilson

Mary Jennings

Michael Wu

Richard Goldberg

Stephen Thompson

Gabrielle Reilly

Photo by Aiden Taylor
2015 First Place Children under 12

Become a Friend of Mission Trails Regional Park

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation provides opportunities for individuals, businesses, community organizations, and foundations to support a variety of programs and projects within the park. Community support is important to ensure adequate funding to maintain the award winning Mission Trails Regional Park Visitor and Interpretive Center and the multiple amenities the park has to offer.

Special event and project sponsorships are also available. Sponsorships for Explore Mission Trails Day, an annual event held each May, range from \$500 to \$5,000. Exhibit sponsorships begin at \$2,500. Bench and table sponsorships range from \$1,500 to \$4,000 depending upon the item and its location in the park. Contact Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation at 619-668-3280 or mholloway@mtrp.org for additional information.

Our Funds...

Friends of Mission Trails
Trail Maintenance
Tree and Habitat Maintenance
Education Programs
Library Books and Supplies
Lake Murray
Endowment Funds
 General
 Library

Other ways you may donate....

Memorial or In Honor Of Gifts
Matching Funds
Gifts of Securities
Remember MTRP Foundation in your will
Charitable Remainder Trusts
Become a Business Friend of MTRP

Donor Levels

\$25 Individual
\$50 Family
\$100 Pathfinder
\$500 Trailblazer
\$1,000 Founder
\$2,500 Patron
\$5,000 Steward
\$10,000 Sponsor
\$25,000 Benefactor's Circle
\$50,000 Trustee's Circle
\$100,000 Director's Circle
\$1,000,000 Visionary Circle

Names of contributors of \$1,000 or more will be displayed on the donor board at the Visitor and Interpretive Center. Yearly donations are accumulated from year-to-year for donor recognition purposes.

Name _____

Business _____

Address _____

City _____ State/ZIP _____

Email _____ Phone _____

You may designate your donation for one or more of the following funds. Please indicate the amount.

\$ _____ Friends of Mission Trails - General support for all MTRP programs and projects.

_____ MTRP Foundation Endowment Fund - Earnings used for programs and projects

Special Funds

_____ Education Program Fund - Funds used for education programs

_____ Library Fund - Books and supplies for the library

_____ Library Endowment Fund - Earnings used for library books and supplies

_____ Trail Maintenance - Trail maintenance and improvement projects.

_____ Tree and Habitat Maintenance - To help maintain the park's habitat

_____ Lake Murray - Special projects at Lake Murray

\$ _____ **Total Donation**

Make check payable to MTRP Foundation and mail to:

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, One Father Junipero Serra Trail, San Diego, CA 92119-1008

To donate securely online, visit our website at mtrp.org

or charge my donation to VISA _____ MC _____

Card No. _____ Expiration Date ____/____

Cardholder's signature _____

MTRP Foundation staff use only: Date of check _____ Check# _____

Database ____ Letter ____ Newsletter ____ Web ____

Visitor and Interpretive Center

619-668-3281

MTRP Foundation: 619-668-3280

Email: mtrp@mtrp.org

Web Site: mtrp.org

Mission Trails Regional Park News

Vol. 27, Number 2, Spring 2016

Mission Trails Regional Park News is funded in part by the City of San Diego Special Promotional Program.

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, Inc., established Jan. 1988, is a non-profit public benefit corporation organized for the purpose of preserving, improving and maintaining Mission Trails Regional Park.

Mission Trails Regional Park News is a publication of the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, Inc.

Maggie Holloway, Editor

Correction: The previous newsletter incorrectly stated the owners of Cowles Mountain. Cowles Mountain was purchased from Southwest Amusement Corporation.



Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation

One Father Junipero Serra Trail

San Diego, CA 92119

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit
Organization
U. S. POSTAGE
Paid
San Diego, CA
Permit No. 658

Free Events at the Park!

Offered every month. No reservations. Check website, mtrp.org, for updates and more information.

Guided Walks in the Park

Guided Nature Walks 90 minutes long

9:30 AM from Visitor Center every Wed., Sat. and Sun.

8:30 AM from the Campground Day Use Lot every 2nd & 4th Saturday

9 AM Lake Murray Walk 'n Talk every 3rd Tues.

Bird Walks 8-10 AM with Birder, Jeanne Raimond.

Apr 16 Old Mission Dam, May 21 Campground Day Use Lot and Jun 18 Visitor Center Loop

Wildlife Tracking Walks 8:30-10:30 AM

1st Saturday of each month meet at Visitor Center

West Sycamore Nature Walks 8 AM (Scripps Ranch area)

3rd Sunday of every month

Family Discovery Walk with Trail Guides 3 PM

4th Saturday of each month meet at Visitor Center

Nature Workshops at Visitor Center

Discovery Tables between 10 AM and 1 PM VC Lobby.

May 14 - Kumeyaay Games and Jun 11 - Plant Parts

Mountain Biking with a Ranger Series (repeats in Oct)

Apr 2 - Visitor Center Loop (Family/Beginners)

May 7 - West Sycamore (Confident Beginners)

June 4 - West Fortuna (Intermediate Riders)

Astronomy at Kumeyaay Campground Day Use Lot

Stars at Mission Trails Sunset until 10 PM. San Diego Astronomy Association. Telescopes available.

2nd Friday of each month

Star Parties with MTRP Trail Guide and resident amateur astronomer, George Varga. Telescope available.

Apr 16 @ 7PM and May 21 @ 7:30 PM

Music & Art at Visitor Center

Concerts 3-4 PM in Theatre. Seating is limited (93).

Apr 17 - Lillian Palmer, Vocalist

May 1 - Quartet Nouveau

May 15 - Mary Lu Brandwein, Japanese Shakuhachi Flute

May 29 - Gregory Page, Guitarist

Jun 5 - Caprice Strings

Flute Circle 1-3 PM Outdoor Amphitheater.

2nd Saturday of each month

Art Shows displayed in the Gallery. Reception 1-4 PM

Apr 24 Marilyn Hallam Watercolor

May 22 Five Person Show

Jun 26 Amateur Photo Contest Awards Presentaion

Explore Mission Trails Day 9 AM - 2 PM

May 21st @ Visitor Center and East Fortuna Staging Area



Photo by Jon Nanchison - 2015 Third Place Scenic 2