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Publication of Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation

Mission Trails Regional Park News

Volume 17 Number 4

Fall/Winter 2006

New Opportunity for Donors

The Charitable Giving Incentive provisions, of the new Pension Protection Act of 2006, allow for tax-free charitable distributions from a Traditional IRA or Roth IRA. It permits individuals 70½ years of age or older to make charitable gifts up to \$100,000 each year from an IRA directly to a qualifying charity without recognizing it as income. Your gift from an IRA to charity will not generate taxable income, nor will you get a charitable income tax deduction. You may also use this provision to satisfy your annual IRA required minimum distribution (RMD),

which would normally be subject to income tax. This is a limited-time provision which will close in 2007 unless Congress extends it.

In general, the new charity rules help the following taxpayers:

Taxpayers who do not itemize their deductions would previously have to report income from IRA withdrawals and then would receive no offsetting charitable deduction for contributions to charity.

Taxpayers who lose tax benefits as their income increases are better

Donors, continued pg. 6

Featured Park Flora Toyon

It's that time of year again for Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), one of our common native shrubs, to put on its party clothes. In late summer, clusters of small white flowers adorn the shrub. Come fall, they are replaced by clusters of small green berries, which will ripen to a beautiful bright red (just in time for Christmas!), giving rise to one of the plant's other common names, "Christmas-Berry."



Another common name for Toyon, because of its showy red berries, is "California Holly." Legend has it that the city of Hollywood was named for Toyon, which grows in abundance along the hillsides in that area. Supposedly, the Toyon was mistaken for holly, and the city was thus named incorrectly; in theory, had the shrubs been correctly identified, the city would have been

Toyon, continued on pg. 2

Trail Guide Training Class

Trail Guides are MTRP volunteers trained to lead interpretive nature walks in the park. Each year MTRP conducts a training program for people interested in learning about the natural and cultural history of the park and sharing that knowledge with the public. The curriculum covers ecology, botany, geology, history, birds, mammals, reptiles, insects, and Kumeyaay culture. This 10-week program involves a three-hour classroom session every



Wednesday evening and a three-hour field activity on Saturday mornings. At the end, students take a written exam on the material and demonstrate their interpretive skills by taking a veteran

Trail Guide on a sample walk. Trail Guide graduates are expected to lead at least one walk for the public per month.

The next session begins in January 2007. Please contact Ranger Heidi at 619-668-3279 for further information.



A Message From Councilmember Jim Madaffer

Everyone knows the definition of a good neighbor and appreciates when

they are fortunate to have a person or organization that acts like a good neighbor. We at Mission Trails Regional Park are fortunate to have a good working relationship with a very important entity in San Diego, namely the County Water Authority. Recently a document titled the Good Neighbor Agreement has been crafted that outlines protocol for how the CWA will handle their projects within the park. This agreement is an omnibus approach to dealing with the myriad of issues that are important both to the County Water Authority and to Mission Trails Regional Park. Please visit the MTRP website at www.mtrp.org to view the document.

During recent meetings between representatives of the County Water Authority (CWA) and members of the Mission Trails Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) representatives worked together to forge a cooperative agreement and understanding of the roles and responsibilities for the parties regarding pending Authority projects within the Mission Trails Regional Park area.

Having an uninterrupted flow of water to our region is crucial as is maintaining the biological diversity and serenity of Mission Trails Regional Park. I believe the agreement drafted is a solid understanding of roles between the parties. I am very appreciative of the time invested by Authority staff and members of the CAC to help facilitate the interests of both the Authority and on behalf of the people of San Diego who use and rely on Mission Trails Regional Park.

I'm confident that the Good

Neighbor Agreement will achieve its goal of achieving mutual agreement between the CAC and the Water Authority on a comprehensive approach to provide increased regional water supply reliability with a set of Water Authority projects affecting Mission Trails Regional Park while supporting MTRP's goals of providing educational and recreational opportunities for the region and assuring that any negative impact to the MTRP will be offset by an equally positive impact. I think that meets anyone's definition of being a good neighbor.

Toyon, continued from pg. 1

named, "Toyonwood." Doesn't have as nice of a ring to it, does it?

Toyon has long been cultivated in plant nurseries for use in landscaping since it makes a wonderful hedge, border, or divider. After its discovery near Monterey, California, in the late 1700's, seed was sent to England, where it became a popular garden plant. Back home in California, Toyon was so popular for its beautiful red berries, especially around Christmas time, that a law was passed in the 1920's making it illegal to pick or harvest wild plants. This law was enacted thanks to the crusade of concerned citizens, such as Mrs. Bertha Rice and her son, Roland, who published a small book in 1920 called, "Popular Studies of California Wildflowers." Included in the last section of this book were letters and newspaper articles of support for passing such a law to protect native plants like Toyon.

Toyon is a drought tolerant, evergreen shrub that usually grows to a height of six to eight feet in exposed sunny areas; however, in shady wooded areas, it can grow more tree-like and reach heights up to more than

Toyon, continued on pg. 6

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation Board of Directors

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Recycle your glass, plastic and aluminum at Kumeyaay Lake Campground. Containers are located in the day-use parking lot.

Proceeds go to MTRP Foundation.

Visit Our Gift Shop for the Holidays - Open 9 - 5, seven days a week

Have you checked out the Gift Shop lately? The Holiday Season is fast approaching and it is never too early to start thinking about your shopping list.

There is a new selection of books on gardening with native plants. One is for experienced gardeners, another for the neophyte. One is a "how to" and others have a more detailed narrative for those who are interested, but not necessarily ready, in starting to dig holes in the yard. They are ALL very interesting. Come take a look.

For the dog lovers who want to take their furry friends

for a walk, see the new guide, "Leave Only Paw Prints", which is a wonderful book about dog hikes in San Diego County. There is also a wide selection of our regular books as well. Browse the bookcase and you will find something for everyone.

There is a full selection of Folkmanis puppets, representing birds and animals found at Mission Trails, as well as a nice choice of low cost stocking stuffers to please all ages.

Don't forget our custom tin ornaments, including exclusive MTRP and Mission San Diego de Alcalá ornaments, and our attractive MTRP coasters featuring the



Visitor Center.

You will be impressed with our inventory of classic Kumeyaay pottery and basketry available for collectors and gift givers. We will be happy to help you select something perfect while you help to support Mission Trails.

There is always plenty of free parking and the best view in San Diego.

Art Exhibit



The Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation is pleased to present an exhibition of fine art by the "San Diego Seven" from September 23, 2006 through November 3, 2006.

The "San Diego Seven," a professional painting group, has been exhibiting together for ten years. Dedicated to promoting and preserving the traditional style of oil painting, the group members' styles range from Realism to Impressionism.

The "San Diego Seven" is comprised of award-winning artists, Betty Blount, Sandra Hayen, Robert Kelsch, Richard Johnson, Grace Charlotte Schlesier and Nancy Budahl Tschopp.

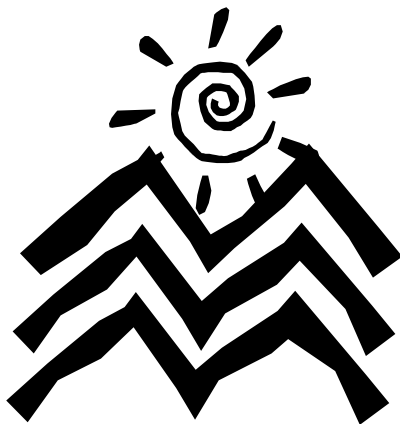
You are welcome to peruse the art from 9:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m., seven days a week at the Visitor & Interpretive Center. The art work is for sale. Most artists donate a portion of their proceeds to Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation.

To view examples of the artists work online, go to: <http://www.mtrp.org/exhibits.asp>

Winter Solstice Hikes on Cowles

The Mission Trails Regional Park Trail Guides will lead pre-dawn hikes to the area of the solstice observatory on Cowles Mountain on the 21st and 23rd of December. The Canyoneers of the San Diego Natural History Museum will lead the hike on Friday the 22nd. All hikes begin at 6:00 a.m. The starting point is the trailhead adjacent to the parking lot at Golfcrest Dr. & Navajo Rd. The solstice site is approximately one mile up the trail. The age of the site is unknown. It is known that the Kumeyaay used similar sites in

Southern California. For all three hikes, we hope to see the rising sun split by a peak on the eastern horizon. The ascent will be in the dark. Good shoes and a flashlight are recommended. These hikes continue to be among the most popular events in the park. A word of caution for anyone joining the hikes or hiking on their own: there is danger of eye damage if you stare directly at the sun. You can observe the sunrise safely for a very few seconds through narrow slits (such as between your fingers held together) or smoked glass. Plan on a two-hour hike.



Star Party with George Varga Returns

After a successful summer of volunteering his telescope and expertise at the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, George Varga returns for his Saturday evening Star parties at the Kumeyaay Lake Campground.

Saturday 21 Oct 2006 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. No Moon this evening enabling the viewing of deep sky objects like the Ring Nebula, M57 and the Dumbbell Nebula, M27. Albireo, a beautiful binary star in Cygnus, the Swan, high overhead.

Saturday 18 Nov 2006 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Dark sky except for light pollution. The Square of Pegasus

overhead.

Andromeda Galaxy, M31, and companion M32, visible in the Northeastern sky.

Saturday 16 Dec 2006 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Dark sky except for light pollution. Andromeda Galaxy, M31, and companion M32, well placed for viewing. The Pleiades rising in the Eastern sky.

Park in the day use area of the campground. Star parties are canceled when the sky is overcast. Avoid the use of flashlights and lanterns unless they are equipped with red lenses.

UPDATES

DEADLY DODDER

A new invasive species of dodder has recently been discovered in California. As mentioned previously in this newsletter, dodder is a parasitic vine, which has no leaves or roots and therefore cannot produce its own chlorophyll. It is generally yellow orange in color and looks like a mat of cooked spaghetti sitting atop its host plant. Dodder attaches root-like members called haustoria to the host plant in order to extract nutrients and water. Native dodder rarely kills its host plant although, it will stunt the plants growth.

Japanese dodder is a more prolific feeder and has been found completely covering trees and shrubs, killing the plant due to its voraciousness. It is believed to have been inadvertently introduced by Asian communities who use dodder seed and teas medicinally. Birds may have also hastened the spread of dodder by using it as nesting material.

For more information on Japanese dodder and steps being taken to control it, go online to: <http://www.cal-ipc.org/resources/news/pdf/summer2006.pdf>

LIZARDS, TICKS AND LYME DISEASE

Source: National Institutes of Health and Chronicle

UC Berkeley entomologist Robert Lane has discovered that a substance found in the blood of the common western fence lizard kills Lyme disease bacteria in the gut of juvenile ticks that feed on it. It may help explain why there is far less Lyme disease in California than in the eastern United States, where the lizard does not live. The western fence lizard -- a commonly found species dubbed the blue belly lizard in California, can carry an average of 30 juvenile black

The Leonid Meteor Shower by George Varga

Every year around 17 - 18 November the Earth crosses the orbit of comet Tempel-Tuttle. As the comet travels around the Sun, it leaves behind dust particles that range in size of a grain of sand to that of the seeds of bladder pod (Isomeris arborea). These particles (called meteors) enter the Earth's atmosphere at 40 to 45 miles per second and, because of friction, burn up before hitting the ground. All meteors appear as a streak of light in the sky and hence the name shooting star. If Earth did not have an atmosphere, all these particles would hit the surface, and Earth would look very similar to the surface of the Moon. Walking around would be hazardous to one's life.

An observer with clear, dark skies, can see about a dozen Leonids per hour no matter what year it is. However, in the first few years after the passing of Comet Tempel-Tuttle past the Sun, the

number of meteors dramatically increases, sometimes resulting in a meteor storm. The comet passed closest to the Sun in 1998 and will again do so in 2031. The meteor count in 1999 was at 3700 per hour.

The best time to view any meteor shower or to even catch sight of a meteor on any night is after midnight because the Earth's rotation is in the same direction as the Earth's revolution around the Sun. The analogy here is to that of driving a car in rain. More rain drops hit the front windshield than they do the rear.

Why the name Leonid Meteor Shower? The reason is that the point, called the radiant, from which the meteors appear to be coming from is from the constellation Leo. Again the analogy to rain. In a fast moving car the rain drops appear to come from a point ahead of the car rather than from the sky above.

For this year's Leonids the Moon will rise at or after mid-

Leonids continued on pg. 6

Updates, continued on pg. 6

Arbor Day

AT

Mission Trails



Arbor Day in Mission Trails is being celebrated at the East Fortuna Equestrian Staging Area on Saturday, December 2, 2006, 9:00 a.m. The public is invited to take part in the donation and/or planting of oaks and cottonwood. Volunteers may help with the planting - or act as cheerleaders. Volunteers are also needed to pull weeds and help with general landscape maintenance of the area. Some shovels will be available, but it would be helpful if you could bring your own. Gloves and comfortable shoes are recommended. To make a donation, please complete and mail the Arbor Day Donation Form. In order to ensure that the trees are available for all donors to plant, please make your donation by November 15, 2006. For further information, please call the Mission Trails Visitor & Interpretive Center at (619) 668-3281.

Arbor Day in Mission Trails is sponsored by City of San Diego Councilmember Jim Madaffer, City of San Diego Park & Recreation Department, Mission Trails Regional Park Citizens' Advisory Committee and Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation.

ARBOR DAY DONATION FORM

Name _____ Phone _____ E-mail _____

Address _____

I wish to donate _____ trees at \$100 per tree for a total of \$ _____

I wish to make a donation to the Tree & Habitat Maintenance Fund in the amount of \$ _____

Number of people attending on December 2 to plants trees. _____

Donations may be made () in name of, () in memory of, or () in honor of an individual, other than the donor. Please, select one category above and print the individual's name clearly below so appropriate recognition can be made, along with the donor, in the Donor Book.

Toyon, continued from pg. 2

twenty feet! Many native plant species can almost always be found growing with Toyon. Here in Mission Trails Regional Park, it is common to find Toyon growing amongst Coast Live Oak, Lilac, Lemonadeberry, Laurel Sumac, Sage, Manzanita, Redberry and Mountain Mahogany. Unfortunately, the leaves of Toyon are sometimes attacked by insect infestations, which can lead to the plant's demise if not treated as soon as possible. The Toyon shrubs located out on the back terrace of the Visitor Center are currently being treated for such an attack, and hopefully will be happy and healthy again soon!

The berries of Toyon are edible when fully ripened, but taste

awful when eaten raw, due to the small amounts of cyanide compounds they contain. For this reason, the Indians usually roasted the berries, by tossing them with hot pebbles and wood coals in a basket. A tasty cider was also made from the berries and enjoyed by the Indians and early settlers alike. The Spanish were known to slow-bake Toyon berries with sugar to make a yummy pudding for dessert.

An abundance of wildlife rely on the berries from Toyon during the bleak winter months. Apparently the leaves don't taste so great, as deer only browse on them in bad years. But, that's alright because that leaves more shelter for other wildlife!

By Ranger Heidi Gutknecht

Notable Donations

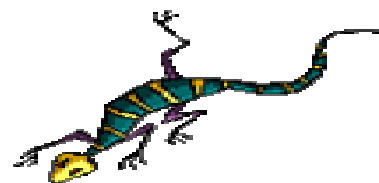
July - September 2006

Steward - \$5,000 to \$10,000
Supervisor Pam Slater-Price and
County of San Diego Community
Enhancement Funds

Patron - \$2,500 - \$5,000
Pardee Homes
RCP Block & Brick, Inc.

Founder - \$1,000 - \$2,500
John and Anastasia Garrison –
In memory of Jack Garrison
Mary Louise Glanz
Starbucks Make Your Mark Vol-
unteer Program

Path Finder - \$100-\$500
Pat Abbott
Lynn Baer
Mrs. W. W. Bemis
Dr. and Mrs. John Berry
Ramona Bush
Barbara and Michael Carr
Pete Cuthbert
Sally and Einar Gall
Robert Gordon
Jerry Gunning Plumbing
Laura Hall
Pat Harrison and Eleanor Lynch
Salah Hassanein
Mike Hurlburt
Francis T. and Evelyn C. Kleber
Kurt's Camera Repair
Dan and Dorothy Leonard
David McLaren and Diane Nelson
Family and friends –
In Memory of Bob O'Brien
Shannon Petersen -
In memory of Celia Heil
Maurjo Reser
Stephen Seaborg
Fern Steiner
Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Trenta-
costa
Jean Tomcavage
George and Nancy Varga
Vertical Hold

**Donors**, continued from pg. 1

off now that IRA withdrawals, which are normally taxable, can be redirected to charity, which allows the donor to avoid taxes.

Taxpayers who have already reached the 50% Adjusted Gross Income limit for charitable deductions and who are interested in donating more money in a tax-advantaged way.

If you are 70½ years of age or older and wish to make use of the new

Charitable Giving provisions for a tax-free donation to Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, we suggest you contact your Tax Advisor and/or Financial Advisor in order to determine whether removing money from your IRA is the appropriate way to fulfill your charitable gifting goals. It will also ensure the transaction is handled properly. The donation can be made by electronic transfer of funds or by check payable to MTRP Foundation directly from your financial institution.

Leonid, continued from p. 4

night, but because it will be waning, it will no longer be bright. As a result, barring overcast skies, fainter meteors will be easier to see.

As the date for the Leonids approach check out Gary Kronk's web page for predictions for the Leonids at <http://comets.amsmeteors.org/meteors/showers/leonidsez.html>.

Also check Dennis Mammana's Stargazer articles which appear every Wednesday in the Quest section of the San Diego Union Tribune.

Updates, continued from p. 4

legged ticks, which are about the size of a poppy seed. Larval Ticks pass through three stages of development. During each stage they eat one "blood meal." Larval ticks become infected with Lyme disease when they feed on rodents. Tiny tick nymphs can transmit Lyme disease by biting a human. If they feast on a common western lizard, however, something in the reptile's blood appears to kill the bacteria. Adult black-legged ticks who feasted on lizards as nymphs are less likely to transmit Lyme disease to humans.

Support Mission Trails Regional Park

Volunteer Opportunities

There are numerous volunteer opportunities available. No prior experience needed. We provide any training necessary.

At the Visitor Center
Front Desk
Gift Shop

Within the park
Trail Guide
Park Patrol
Work Crews



The easiest way yet to support Mission Trails

*
Simply go to www.escrip.com access the "sign up" link near the top of the page and follow the simple instructions. All it takes is five minutes.

Ways you can donate to Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation

The Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation Board of Directors extends sincere thanks to our many donors. It is because of your continuing support that we are able to fulfill our Mission - *In partnership with the City of San Diego, to preserve and protect the natural environment of Mission Trails Regional Park and to provide and promote educational and recreational opportunities.*

In addition to traditional cash donations, there are other ways you can provide short and long-term financial support for park programs and projects.

Memorial or In Honor Of gifts
Honor a friend or family member with a donation.

Matching Funds
Identify Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation for a matching funds contribution if your employer

has a policy of matching charitable gifts.

Wills

Remember Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation in your will.

Gifts of Securities

In order to allow donors to realize full tax deductions for appreciated stock, Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation accepts gifts of stock. Please call (619) 668-3280 for further details.

Charitable Remainder Trusts

With a CRT, highly appreciated assets are placed in an irrevocable trust. Those asset proceeds provide income to the donor and/or to his/her beneficiaries for life. Contact your financial advisor for information.

The Foundation's Special Funds include education and library funds, trail and tree/habitat maintenance funds, education and library endowment funds. Call (619) 668-3280 for further information. - MTRP Foundation Federal Tax ID number 33-0285093.

Mission Trails Regional Park Donor Opportunities

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation provides opportunities for individuals, businesses, community organizations and foundations to support a variety of programs and projects within Mission Trails Regional Park. Thank you to our many friends who make annual contributions to Friends of Mission Trails Regional Park. A variety of donor opportunities are available as indicated below. All contributions are tax deductible. Persons donating \$100 or more will be given a certificate of contribution. Names of contributors of \$1,000 or more will be engraved on a plaque permanently displayed at the park Visitor and Interpretive Center. Donations of \$100 and above will accumulate from year-to-year for contributor recognition purposes.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Home Phone _____ E-mail _____

Donor Levels

\$25 Individual _____	\$1,000 Founder _____	\$25,000 Benefactor _____
\$50 Family _____	\$2,500 Patron _____	\$50,000 Trustee _____
\$100 Path Finder _____	\$5,000 Steward _____	\$100,000 Director _____
\$500 Trailblazer _____	\$10,000 Sponsor _____	Other _____

Special Funds

Please check fund(s) for which you wish your donation to be used.

General Park Support	_____
Library Fund	_____
Library Endowment	_____
Education Program Fund	_____
Education Program Endowment	_____
Tree & Habitat Maintenance	_____
Trail Maintenance	_____
Lake Murray	_____

Make check payable to MTRP Foundation and send to:
Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, Attention Secretary/Treasurer
One Father Junipero Serra Trail, San Diego, CA 92119-1008

Charge my donation to VISA _____ MC _____
Card No. _____
Expiration date _____ Signature _____

Office Use Only

Check Date _____ No _____ Amount _____
Data Base _____ Letter _____ Donor Book _____
\$100+ Certificate _____ Newsletter _____
Web _____ \$1000+ Donor Board _____



**Mission Trails
Regional Park Foundation**

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 Visitor & Interpretive Center: (619) 668-3281
 MTRP Foundation: (619) 668-3280
 E-mail: mtrp@mtrp.org
 Web Site: www.mtrp.org

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Mission Trails Regional Park News

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Business Friends of Mission Trails

A new "Business Friends of Mission Trails" program has been launched this year to give local businesses an opportunity to become a neighborhood supporter of the park. For a minimum donation of \$100, your business will receive a "Business Friend of Mission Trails" window decal and acknowledgement in the newsletter and on the website. In addition to becoming a Business Friend of the Park, businesses can provide support by becoming an Explore Mission Trails Day sponsor or by contributing to a specific project. For more information on business partnership opportunities, call Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation at (619) 668-3280, send an e-mail to missiontrails@san_rr.com – or access the donor page mtrp.org/donors.asp on our web site.

Thank you to our 2006 "Business Friends of Mission Trails" ...

- A to Z Plumbing*
- Adventure 16*
- Bullfrog*
- Chipotle*
- Clif Bar*
- Cox Communications*
- Jim Gunning Plumbing*
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- REI*
- San Diego Landfill Systems*
- Silicon Space*
- Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians*
- Vons Foundation*
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