



Mission Trails Regional Park News

Volume 20, Number 2

-A Publication of the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation-

Spring/Summer, 2009

Explore Mission Trails Day 2009 Free Family Fun May 16

Looking for ways to help your kids have a great time on a limited family budget? Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP), one of the largest urban open space parks in the United States, offers great opportunities for free year-round outdoor fun. On Saturday, May 16, families are invited to learn more about those opportunities through an annual celebration entitled: Explore Mission Trails Day (EMTD.)

Young children will discover the joys of nature during themed nature walks, arts and crafts projects (for ages 3 and up), free pony rides, Indian storytelling, and up-close encounters with raptors, reptiles and other live animals. Times vary but most events will happen between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Older kids and adults will have a chance to discover the art of nature photography, try out high-tech hiking poles or mountain-bikes and experience an (almost) full-moon hike (weather permitting). These activities will take place in several different areas of this diverse park, but will mainly be centered around the Visitor



Ms. Frizzle entertains the crowd during EMTD

and Interpretive Center and the Mast Boulevard Equestrian Staging Area.

EMTD focuses on introducing children to nature, without having to drive to the back country. Scholastic Publishing's Ms. Frizzle™ will help educate little ones about one of San Diego's most common wild critters, courtesy of the San Diego Natural History Museum. The wacky, red-

haired character from the book series, *The Magic School Bus*®, will present a special program about coyotes in the Visitor Center's outdoor amphitheater at 9:30 and 10:45 a.m. and again at 12 noon. This program, for children ages three to eight years, teaches basic conservation concepts and how to observe and live near these wily neighbors.

EMTD, continued on page 3

Summer Twilight Walks From Kumeyaay Lake Campground

Join MTRP Trail Guides for free special interpretive walks at twilight this summer. Walks start from the Kumeyaay Lake Campground entry station and last approximately one and a half hours. Come and enjoy an evening walk in the park and learn about some of the changes that occur during dusk and evenings. Participation in these very popular walks will be limited in order to maximize your enjoyment; sign up by phone or in person at the Kumeyaay Lake Campground Entry Station, 619-668-2748.

Saturdays:

June 20, 7:15 PM

July 18, 7:15 PM

August 1, 7:00 PM

August 15, 6:45 PM

August 29, 6:30 PM

September 19, 6:00 PM



A Message From Councilmember Marti Emerald

In November of 2008, the voters of Council District Seven elected me to serve as their representative on the San Diego City Council. I am honored and privileged to serve one of our region's most valuable and treasured resources in our city - Mission Trails Regional Park.

As a resident of Tierrasanta with Mission Trails Regional Park right in my backyard, I have fond memories of hiking the park with my daughter and visiting the Mission Trails Visitor Center when it opened. Now, as your City Councilmember, I will continue to embrace Mission Trails with my full commitment and dedication to enhance, promote and preserve the wonderful qualities that make this park so valuable for the visitors and residents of San Diego.

In my new role as Chair of the Mission Trails Regional Park Task Force, I am dedicated to continuing the excellent tradition of establishing great relationships with the City of San Diego and Mission Trails users. As Chair, my top priority is to promote Mission Trails as a unique and valuable resource for all of San Diego County.

In addition to promoting the outstanding resources of this park, I am also eager to roll up my sleeves and get to work on some important projects. These projects include updating the Mission Trails Regional Park Master Development Plan and Natural Resource Management Plan, moving forward with important trail realignments, continuing the enhancement and dredging of Old Mission Dam, beginning the design and construction of the Equestrian Staging Area Comfort Station, and encouraging the beneficial and important educational programs throughout Mission Trails Regional Park. Finally, in an effort to promote public participation and utilization of the park, I look forward to moving the Mission Trails Task Force meetings from City Hall in Downtown to the beautiful and natural settings of the Mission Trails Visitor Center at One Father Junipero Serra Trail.

We have already started work on many of these projects, and I am thankful for the assistance and partnerships of individuals such as Dorothy Leonard, Chair of the Mission Trails Citizens' Advisory Committee, Senior Ranger Tracey Walker, Mission Trails Foundation President Joe Morse, and Mission Trails Foundation Executive Director Jay Wilson. I sincerely look forward to a long and healthy relationship with those who care as deeply about this park as I do.

Thank you and see you on the trails!

Save the Date Photo Contest Reception May 31, 2009

You are cordially invited to attend The Seventeenth Annual Amateur Photography Contest Awards Presentation and Reception to be held May 31, 2009 at 2:00 pm at the Mission Trails Visitor Center.

Prizes and refreshments provided by
Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation

This year's Annual Photography Contest and Reception Sponsored by
San Diego Fire Fighters, Local 145

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Advisory Committee

Past President Mission Trails Regional Park

Foundation

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Superior Court Judge, retired

California State Senator, retired

For older children and adults, Adventure 16 Outdoor Outfitters will operate a booth until noon at the base of Cowles Mountain, loaning high-tech hiking poles to those interested in trying them out on their way up the mountain and back. Also for older members of the family, a workshop on nature photography will be presented at the Visitor Center. "See the Park through Your Camera," will be offered at 9 a.m. in the classrooms.

Small children can ride ponies for free (only until 1:30 p.m.) in one of the equestrian arenas near the Mast Blvd. entrance to the Park. In the same area, Trek Bicycle and the San Diego Mountain Biking Association will offer mountain biking displays and demonstrations.

Project Wildlife will bring rescued wild animals to the Visitor Center for the public to view; other wildlife groups will present live raptors and reptiles. Weather permitting, a special scope will be set up on the terrace for sunspot viewing with local astronomer/naturalist George Varga.

In the early evening, Naturalist Lee Kirchevel will lead a moon-lit hike in the Park, followed by a stargazing party from 8 to 10 p.m. in the Kumeyaay Campground parking lot.

Mountain biking or hiking through the Grasslands, stopping for a picnic lunch under a spreading live oak

tree or tracking deer near Kumeyaay Lake are simple activities available anytime, but, when combined with free pony rides, a chance to see live raptors face-to-face or learn about coyotes in a fun way, this special day is a guaranteed kid-pleaser.

EMTD is an annual joint venture of the City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department and Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, a non-profit fund-raising and advocacy organization for the park. San Diego Landfill Systems and the County of San Diego are this year's Title Sponsors; the event's Community Sponsors for 2009 include Superior Ready Mix and Olive Garden Italian Restaurant. The San Diego County Water Authority is a 2009 Neighborhood Sponsor. KyXy Radio is the event's media sponsor.

The annual photo contest is sponsored this year by San Diego Firefighters, Local 145, while Kaiser Permanente is sponsoring the free pony rides for little ones.

A detailed map of the park and schedule of other Explore Mission Trails Day events, including book signings by authors, guided nature walks and arts and crafts activities are available online at www.mtrp.org or at the Visitor and Interpretive Center information desk. Volunteers can also answer questions at (619) 668-3281.

Pam Crooks

In Memoriam



Walter Odening was a Ph.D. in biology with many years of experience in environmental studies. He retired as Director of Biology for the Chambers Group, Inc. Walter Odening, a real gentleman and scholar, passed away on April 11, 2009 after a valiant struggle with prostate cancer. Dr. Odening, a Tierrasanta resident, was a true friend of the park, serving as the Tierrasanta Community Council representative on the MTRP Citizens' Advisory Committee beginning in 1994 and subsequently as a member-at-large. He enthusiastically accepted a seat on the MTRP Foundation Board of Directors in 1996 and served faithfully until his death. Just weeks before his passing, Walter and his wife Linda donated funds for the purchase and installation of a picnic table for the Oak Grove Trail picnic area.

Should anyone wish, his family would like donations in his memory made to the MTRP Foundation endowment fund. Checks should be made payable to MTRP Foundation with "in memory of Walter Odening" on the memo line. Checks should be mailed to MTRP Foundation, One Father Junipero Serra Trail, San Diego, CA 92119-1008.

NEW IN THE GIFT SHOP

We are excited to introduce a new product in our gift shop. A local San Diego business, GREEN FIELD PAPER COMPANY, is making high quality tree-free journals with 25% hemp and 75% post consumer recycled paper and note cards with tree-free paper that is 100% post-consumer. Their papers are acid-free and with no chlorine bleach. They are archival quality, with Classic European-style laid finish.

We are featuring a selection of their blank note cards and journals for your creative pleasure.

The surprise is that their note cards are embedded with a mixture of North American wildflower seeds and the designs are printed with soy-based inks. When their note cards have been

received and enjoyed they can be torn into small pieces and planted in your garden! In this way they are not only a GREEN product, but one that can become red and yellow and purple and blue as the wildflowers grow, giving pleasure throughout the year.

We are even going to plant some at Mission Trails Regional Park in an area just outside the Visitor Center. In addition we are planning a planting at a local elementary school so that students can learn about creative ways of helping our planet and beautifying our environment.

We invite you to come see our selection of fine GREEN FIELD paper products and purchase some for your own enjoyment.

Equestrian Circle Dedication



On Saturday, April 4, Equestrian Circle was officially dedicated. This section of road is an extension of Mast Boulevard running west of State Route 52 into Mission Trails Regional Park. This was the culmination of a long process to change the name of the street to reflect MTRP and the adjacent Equestrian Staging area. Joining in on the celebration l-r Stacey LoMedico, Director of the Park and Recreation Department; Jay Wilson, Executive Director of MTRP Foundation; Mo Praga riding Tango; Mary Brodgon riding Sophia; Nathan Batchelder, Council Representative for Councilmember Marti Emerald; Marty McIlhenny riding Emmit; Senior Ranger Tracey Walker; CAC member Mike Pent; Dorothy Leonard, Chair of the MTRP CAC; and Joe Morse, President of the MTRP Foundation

Meet Our Newest Trail Guides

Welcome to our new graduates of the Mission Trails Regional Park Trail Guides program. The new graduates have been attending classes on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings the past 10 weeks to learn about the plants, animals, geology, and history of Mission Trails. They are eager to share their knowledge with the public; please join them on one of the up-coming Ecology Walks. See our on-line Event Calendar for more information.

Thank you to the class instructors for their outstanding efforts. These dedicated Mission Trails volunteers include Bill Howell, Reva Block, Judy Alvarez, Dave Bailey, Wendy Esterly, Bill White, Fred and Linda Kramer, and Ranger Heidi Gutknecht.

Mission Trails Regional Park has over 150 volunteers working in a variety of ways to maintain the park and make educational programs available to the public. When on our web site, www.mtrp.org, go to "The Park" and then "Volunteer!" for more information about volunteer opportunities.



Trail Guide class of 2009 - Top row (l to r): Julie Webb, Juliana Harrigan, Lucas Schabel, Cheri Barbour, Rudy Spano, Larry McKinnon, Nancy Conyers, Jon Lotta; middle row (l to r): Arleen Hitchcock, Wayne Cherry, Tom Hale, Yvonne Ellen, Jo Ann Ellen, Bob MacDonald, Kristi Scrivener, Emmy Haviland, Ed Wilson; bottom row (l to r): Joe Juarez, Flavio Santoyo, John Hopper, Louise Sebastian, Roy Warfield, Chris Axtmann, Penny Wright, Tom Thompson, Louise Thomas. Not pictured: Mike Gibbs and Debbie Gosch.

New Predator Exhibit Recently Dedicated



David Gomez, Cynthia Hight, Valerie Salatino and Nancy Moran

The new exhibit to educate the public about predators that live in San Diego open space canyons and parks, including Mission Trails Regional Park, was dedicated on Saturday, March 14, 2009. This exhibit includes information about mountain lions, coyotes and other predators that live in Mission Trails. The animals are displayed in a setting of faux boulders and a background wall mural depicting their habitat as found in the park.

Guests were welcomed by Mission Trails Foundation president Joe Morse and San Diego City Council member and Mission Trails Task Force Chair Marti Emerald.

The mountain lion on display in the exhibit is a replica of an adult female mountain lion. We have a replica instead of an actual taxidermy specimen because the California Wildlife Protection Act of 1990 (Proposition 117) not only prohibits trophy hunting of the California mountain lion, but also makes it illegal to possess any part of a lion acquired thereafter. This mountain lion was painstakingly created by Nancy Moran and the realistic boulders by Valerie Salatino, both of Nature Works.

The 26 by 15 foot mural that frames the exhibit was created and executed by Cynthia Hight and David Gomez. Cynthia, an award-winning graphic designer, is adept at painting, illustration, sculpture and photography. Her work at the Visitor Center includes the Old Mission Dam mural, plant illustrations for the interpretive signs on the plant identification walk, a set of illustrated note cards available in the Gift Shop, and various brochures about the park and its features. Norman Brett with Sky Graphics crafted the information graphics.

This new exhibit, a joint project of Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation and the City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department, is sponsored by Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, The Heller Foundation of San Diego, City of San Diego Special Promotional Programs, and San Diego Gas and Electric, A Semptra Energy company.

San Diego Natural History Museum Programs at Mission Trails

For the first time this summer MTRP is offering four, week-long educational programs for children ages 6 to 10 in conjunction with the San Diego Natural History Museum. Each session will be held on a Monday through Friday from 11 AM to 2 PM at the Mission Trails Visitor and Interpretive Center, One Father Junipero Serra Trail, San Diego. Each class is \$105 per child. The classes and dates are listed below.

A Bug's Tale, June 22 to 26
The Secret Life of Reptiles and Amphibians, July 13 to 17
Environmental Ed-ventures, July 27 to 31
Creepy Crawlies, August 17 to 21

To register for the classes print the registration form available in PDF format on our web site mtrp.org, or pick one up at the Visitor Center and mail to MTRP Foundation, One Father Junipero Serra Trail, San Diego, CA 92119-1008, along with your check made payable to MTRP Foundation. For additional information call (619) 668-3280.

Spring, continued from rear cover

disturbance in the natural eco-system. What do these disturbances have in common? They all are caused by us. What can we do about this? Preserving Mission Trails can be easier than you think. Being responsible and considerate to protect, preserve and enhance our natural environment are the keys to help it flourish.

The beautiful stone walls of the Oak Canyon Trail and the astonishing Spring waterfall may not just be a thing of the past, but a gift for the future. The hidden treasures of Mission Trails are a legacy our children deserve to discover, enjoy, and preserve.

Mission Trails Intern
Aimee Baca

Upcoming Art Exhibits

April 25 – May 8, 2009
(two week show)

Melva Riley (Oil)
Mike Kemp (Oil)
Creela Villani (Oil)

May 10 - June 12

Seventeenth Annual
Amateur Photography
Contest

June 13 – July 10, 2009

Joan Hansen
(Oil, Acrylic, watercolor)

July 11– August 7, 2009

Joe Darin (Photo)
Chuck McPherson
(Watercolor)

Interpreting the River

Four new interpretive signs have been placed along the Old Mission Dam trail. These signs are designed to educate the public and the hundreds of school groups who visit the site each year about the importance of a constant source of water. The sign shown above explains the history of the dam, its function, and its importance to early Spanish settlers in the region. If you have not been to Old Mission Dam in a while, now is the time. With the recent rains, the water level is high and flowers are beginning to bloom.

These four new interpretive panels are a joint project of MTRP Foundation and the City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department, with funding provided to MTRP Foundation by Friends of Mission Trails Regional Park, the City of San Diego Special Promotional Programs, and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. The illustrations are by Jan Stamm; the panels and stands were produced by Paul Riha of Stone Imagery.



*One of four new panels at
Mission Dam*

An Invitation



A fifth panel, located along the Mission Dam trail prior to the footbridge crossing the river, welcomes visitors to the Oak Canyon Trail and defines its many charms.

This panel is a joint project of MTRP Foundation and the City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department, with funding provided to MTRP Foundation by Friends of Mission Trails Regional Park, and Pardee Homes. The illustration is by Jan Stamm; the panel and stand was produced by Paul Riha of Stone Imagery. Photo by Nancy Varga.

Notable Donations

January – March 2009

Steward - \$2,500 - \$5,000

Founder - \$1,000 - \$2,500
Edmund & Ruth Gibbs -
in memory of Edmund Gibbs Jr.
Marie Tuthill

Trailblazer - \$500-\$1,000
Tierrasanta Foundation

Path Finder - \$100-\$500
Joe and Nancy Acevedo
Mary Jo Grubbs
Henry & Shirley Mann
Tammi & Stephen Marshall
Roger & Jo Matthews
James & Nan McKay
Jim & Susan McNeil
Richard Moll - *In memory of
Lin Ackerly*
Charles and Ann Nickel
Jodi Roisman
Phyllis Roland
Ruby Sanforth
Robert & Laurel Windrem
Elizabeth Williams
Fred Zuckerman

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instructions.

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 owing to 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. 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	_____
MTRP Foundation Endowment	_____
Education Program Fund	_____
Library Fund	_____
Library Endowment Fund	_____
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 _____

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Check Date _____ No _____
Amount _____ Data Base _____
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**Mission Trails
Regional Park Foundation**

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Web Site: www.mtrp.org

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Mission Trails Regional Park News

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Mission Trails Regional Park News is a publication of Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, Inc., published four times a year.

Editor: Roland Roberge

Printed on Recycled Paper

TO VIEW A COLOR PDF VERSION OF THIS NEWSLETTER
GO TO <http://www.mtrp.org/newsletter.asp>

A Perfectly Beautiful Spring Morning

On February 26th, two astoundingly skilled birders, Richard Griebel and Christine Harvey, joined my mentor, Ranger Mika Shimada, and me on a hike down the Oak Canyon Trail. The trail, at the time unfamiliar to me, was astonishingly beautiful.

Just a few minutes into the hike, a surreal landscape emerged from the hillsides. Striking yellow and copper stone structures lined the mountain walls. An array of vibrant greenery followed the streams of fresh spring rainfall. When we reached our destination just south of Highway 52, the fresh streams flowed down a series of stair-casing stones, creating a waterfall seen only in the beginning of Spring. The view was spectacular.

It is hard to believe that a scene like this can exist in the midst

of a congested and busy city such as San Diego. Mission Trails Regional Park is the largest open space park in San Diego and has been part of our city since 1974. Yet a treasure such as Mission Trails is one that is a mystery to most people.

Mission Trails is home to a large variety of plant and animal species. Some, like the Orange-Tip Butterfly, the Tunnel Spider, and Poison Oak, can be seen firsthand.

While these species are currently thriving, others, like the California gnatcatcher, are gradually disappearing. There are many reasons for this. Letting dogs run loose in native habitat, introducing non-native species into those habitats and driving off-road vehicles on conserved land, all create a



(left to right) Christine Harvey, intern
Aimee Baca and Richard Griebel

Spring, continued on page 6