



# Mission Trails Regional Park News

Vol. 13 No. 4

Publication of Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, Inc.

Fall/winter 2002



## NEW EXHIBITS REVITALIZE THE INTERPRETIVE CENTER

The Mission Trails Regional Park Visitor & Interpretive Center is one of the finest facilities of its kind. It has received the City of San Diego 1995 William Earl Hayden Award for Building Project of the Year and The American Society of Landscape Architects Centennial Medallion that recognizes the Visitor Center site as a National Landmark for Outstanding Landscape Architecture. People from all over the world have visited and commented on its beauty, splendor and accessibility. With its commanding view of the San Diego River, outdoor interpretive plant walk, comfortable library, large theater for viewing the two informative videos and inspirational slide show, and its well planned interpretive features, the Visitor Center is a great place to begin or end a hike or simply a quiet place to spend a few hours. The staff and volunteers of the park are continually upgrading and adding to the comprehensive educational components at the Center. In this respect the interpretive elements have undergone some significant changes and improvements.

Recently installed is the Seismometer; one of the few in the county that is accessible by the general public. Two monitors display real time seismic activity at various locations throughout San Diego County, including Mission Trails. The seismometer is so sensitive it will record the stamping of feet; so, bring your friends and family and record your own earthquake.

Another new exhibit displays numerous minerals, rocks and fossils found in the park. A large

sample of petrified wood was recently found and will soon be on display in the exhibit.

Another recently installed exhibit consists of information on bird and bat houses. It was put together by volunteer Gordon Patty who is the spearhead of our bird and bat house project in Mission Trails.

While here take some time to study the beautiful new, twenty-six foot long, mural created by Cynthia Hight and David Gomez. It depicts the Mission Dam, as it appears today, as well as numerous animal and plant species found in the park. See how many you can find.

Future projects will include an improved exhibit focusing on the history and culture of the Kumeyaay people. Other displays will be centered on the Earth Sciences; some will depict mounted specimens of birds found in the park; and a few will be hands on exhibits to entertain and educate the children.

The Mission Trails Regional Park & Interpretive Center is located at One Father Junipero Serra Trail off of Mission Gorge Road one hundred yards east of the Jackson Drive intersection. For a map and more detailed directions visit [www.mtrp.org](http://www.mtrp.org). Admission to the Center is free and it is open every day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. except New Year's, Thanksgiving and Christmas. The Center is a great way to spend a quiet and inexpensive day alone or with family and friends. Also, bring along some sturdy shoes to spend some time outdoors.



## A Message From Councilmember Jim Madaffer

On the banks of the San Diego River, Governor Gray Davis recently signed into law legislation that will have a tremendous and long-lasting impact on San Diego. Assemblymember Christine Kehoe watched as the Governor signed AB 2156 – her measure to establish the San Diego River Conservancy. Mayor Dick Murphy, Councilmember Donna Frye, Councilmember Toni Atkins, San Diego County Planning Commissioner Michael Beck and I were there for this great moment.

All of us share the goal of restoring and preserving the San Diego River as it flows 52 miles from Julian to Ocean Beach where it empties into the Pacific Ocean. Many people are working to accomplish this. The formation of the Conservancy enables us to have a framework to accomplish this goal. A conservancy also qualifies us to receive state funds. It will take time. Most likely the results will not be seen right away but the impact this will have on the future is tremendous.

The Governor announced that \$12 million will be provided as seed money for restoring the San Diego River. These funds can be used for clean water projects, habitat restoration, recreational development and land acquisitions. The San Diego River now becomes a priority and our long awaited goal will be one step closer to reality.

The San Diego River runs through Mission Trails Regional Park. Think what the possibilities will be for MTRP as well as the San Diego area! Thanks to the efforts of many who are working on behalf of the San Diego River; one day this river will be the prominent centerpiece it deserves to be.

As always, I welcome hearing your comments about Mission Trails Regional Park or any other issue. Call me at (619) 236-6677 or send e-mail to [jmadaffer@sandiego.gov](mailto:jmadaffer@sandiego.gov). I invite you to visit my Web site at [JimMadaffer.com](http://JimMadaffer.com).

## ARBOR DAY



This year's Mission Trails Regional Park Arbor Day celebration will take place at the Kumeyaay Campground on **December 7, starting at 9 a.m.** Participants will be planting Coast Live Oaks and native shrubs.

Information on how to join the festivities will be sent out shortly and will be posted on our web site in November. You may also call the Visitor Center at 619-668-3275.

## THE FOUR WINDS

December 14, 7:00 p.m.

Usher in the Winter Solstice with an enchanting evening of Native American Flute music with the sounds of The Four Winds. This talented group uses traditional flutes and instruments. This popular, free event fills up quickly, so come early to get a seat. For your convenience the Visitor Center will be open from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.



### Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation Board of Directors

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*California State Senator Retired*



## **NEW BMX SITE OPENING SOON**

Well, believe it or not, The Deerfield Quarry BMX bicycle site is looking to open, hopefully, by the first of the year. Thanks goes to Superior Ready Mix for providing 2500 tons of material, for the BMXers to do their thing. Thanks to Sycamore Landfill: Johnny, Neil, & Gabe for the grading! Another "big thanks" to Superior Ready Mix: Arnie, Jim, Tracy, Ed, Gary, and all the crew who provided the dirt, equipment, & time to help make this a reality. As soon as the last of the dirt, a couple of short fence runs, and some signage are in, we'll be ready to let the kids go to town. Of course, then starts the process of revegetating the decommissioned Visitor Center BMX site. Any help?

### **Other Projects**

Another big project was the grading of the Cowles Mountain Service Road. A big thanks to SDG&E: Don Nottingham & Bob McDonald for the great filling and grading of erosion ruts on the road. Just a really nice favor from SDG&E to help us with a formidable project. Also, kudos to MTRP Ground Maintenance Workers, Tom Folk & Miguel Aguilar for their invaluable support on these projects. Couldn't do it without you guys....Thanks! By the way - the combined value of all the free labor and material for both the Deerfield BMX site, and Cowles Service Road exceeded over \$170,000.

Unfortunately, the recent "heat-wave" has slowed down a lot of our trail work. We have made the first cut of the Visitor Loop Connector Trail. It's ready to use, but we'll be doing a bunch more to finish it up. Ranger Mel Naidas is working with Scouts to provide fencing in this area to protect our rehabilitation efforts at the nearby Visitor Center former BMX site.

The rock climbing community did a big project on "Adopt A Crag" day, brushing-in volunteer trails, and repairing erosion controls built into the trail tread. Thanks to Dave Kennedy for coordinating this project, and Miguel Aguilar for covering my part while I was at the Trails Conference. Another thanks to Art Messier, for his help with some of the more technical problems on the Climb Trails.

San Diego Mountain Bike Association completed another big piece of trail repair on the North Suycott Trail fondly or locally know as E-Ticket. This was part of a nation-wide event "National Public Lands Day". Thanks to Everett Newman for putting this together and coordinating the mountain bike community. Thanks to all who continue to prove that the mountain bikers "are" good guys (and ladies...).

Finally, thanks to my steadfast trail volunteers. You know who you are. Hopefully, as the weather cools down, we can move forward on some projects that won't kill us. Let's hope for a good winter!

*Ranger Rick Thompson*



## **Kumeyaay Lake Campground**

The "dog days of summer" have ended and winter is upon us. We rejoice in the fact that we have no snow and hope for a season of sprinkles. There are those who say that San Diego has no change of season, but they are mistaken. It's just a little less obvious. All we need to do is pay a little more attention to detail - Mission Trails and Kumeyaay Campground being the perfect place for that!

The towering Sycamore lose their large palmate leaves and the cottonwood stand sentinel until spring, but the Coast Live Oaks continue to grow majestically while springing forth with acorns, even after a summer of drought. Our snakes grow slow and are rarely seen, but food is plentiful for the foragers who delight us with their antics while waterfowl enjoy our temperate climate. Everything is still alive and celebrating our cold nights, but glorious days.

Campfires never smell as good as they do in winter; possibly a leftover from days of old, with the comfort of what kept people alive. Winter gives us an excuse to indulge in hot chocolate and hot apple cider and conversely, an opportunity to hike and bike more to burn off those excess holiday transgressions!

Kumeyaay Campground celebrates Southern California's year around great weather by expanding our program offerings like Full Moon Hikes, Arts and Crafts and Saturday at the Movies, tracking, dog walks, trail guide interpretive walks and the always popular Campfire programs, Star Party and Kids Night Out. Better weather prompts volunteer groups to come out more often to help keep our park and campground clean and safe, and sometimes spend the night after their hard day's work.

With a campground made for groups, why not spend part of the season in a new and exciting way by inviting family and friends to sleep under the stars this winter. Celebrate our change of seasons by immersing yourself in them. I bet you'll be glad you did!

*Ranger Luanne Barrett*

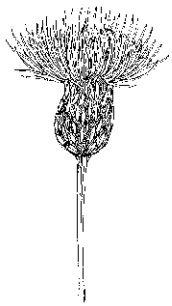
**Recycle your glass, plastic and aluminum  
at Kumeyaay Campground. Containers  
are located in the day-use parking lot.  
Proceeds go to MTRP Foundation.**



## MISSION TRAILS HERBARIUM

### Volunteers Wanted

Collecting plant samples in natural settings can be a very satisfying and educational pastime. Mission Trails Regional Park has recently started a herbarium, starting with grass species in seed. The collection will consist of permanent physical specimens of plants that are found within the park, each identified by its name. Plant specimens will be pressed, dried, and mounted for, decades of preservation. It is planned that the public could eventually have access to the herbarium, as they do to a book library.

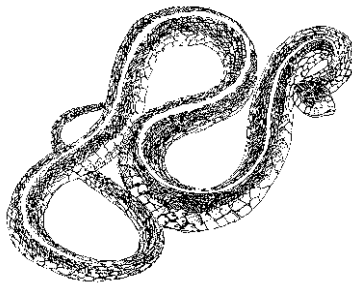


In-depth knowledge of plants is not required to volunteer for this project. Nature lovers committed to learning, following procedures and having fun are encouraged to take part. Each specimen selected for mounting will have the name of the individual collector next to it. If you would like to share in the making of the Mission Trails herbarium, please contact the Ranger staff at (619) 668-2747.

*Ranger Paul Seiley*

## Sensational Snakes

For a chance to see live snakes and learn about their habitats and habits, join Trail Guide, Alicia Berg for "Snake Education" in the lobby of the Visitor Center



**Saturday, Dec. 28, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.**

### **Holiday Shopping at the Gift Shop**

Lots of fun and practical items are for sale in our gift shop. The Matilija Poppy and Flowering Plants t-shirts are now available in red in addition to many other colors.

Dee Adams will have a variety of designs on her small holiday gourd ornaments.

And, there are many stocking stuffers to choose from.



**Open 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
seven days a week**

## KIDZWATCH

KIDZWATCH Program at Mission Trails is now in its third year at Mission Trails Regional Park. This program makes it possible for youth to enjoy recreational and educational nature-based experiences. Since the first KIDZWATCH Program took place in October 2000, twelve successful programs and outings have taken place, each offering information and instruction in outdoor safety, vegetation identification, wildlife appreciation and cultural history.

Each KIDZWATCH experience is unique, based on the dynamics of the group. All events begin with a slide show presentation illustrating the abundance of the park's natural beauty and highlighting its historical value. This is followed by time spent exploring the Visitor Center and its interactive exhibits, including the excavations of pre-historic fossils, the culture of the Kumeyaay Indians who lived in Mission Trails approximately 20,000 years, and the recently installed seismograph equipment that monitors earthquake activity throughout the southern part of the state. Next, the participants follow a trail guide into the park for a hike, where many of the youth come into contact with nature for the very first time. The sights and sounds of the city are replaced with the sounds and sights of the natural world. Along the way, the trail guide points out the cultural and historical relevance of what the participants see, engaging them in the learning process with specifically tailored questions and answers so that they can fully appreciate all that they are experiencing.

Approximately 1100 children who are KIDZWATCH "graduates" and 550 parents have learned from park rangers and trail guides who come from Mission Trails, Balboa Park and Tri-Canyon. The park rangers and trail guides responsible for the KIDZWATCH Program serve as positive role models in the hope that all participants will become stewards of the park -- as kids, as teens, as adults and as seniors.

KIDZWATCH invites youth of all ages, abilities and income levels, from all parts of the city, to come and explore the park through the program, so that they can learn about nature awareness and appreciation, and join in a committed effort to promote long lasting, positive and supportive relationships with nature.

*Ranger Mel Naidas*



## Recent Awards



Pictured on the left are a few of the MTRP volunteers and staff who attended The Seventh Annual Volunteer Recognition Event "A Day in the Park" sponsored by The City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department and the San Diego Friends of Parks and Recreation Foundation. Winners of the America's finest Volunteer Awards were Gordon Patty (front row, third from left) and Dorothy Leonard (front row, fourth from left). The Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation received the "Be A Friend" award. On the right Foundation President, Joe Morse kindly accepts the award from Center Director, David Benedict.



## Recent Projects



Employees from Pyxis Corp. celebrated Hands on San Diego by volunteering to clear trails, pick up trash and rethatch the ewaa.



Seen here are two individuals from a group of California Conservation Corps workers rebuilding the Cowles Mountain Trail.

## Notable Donations

July - September 2002

**Steward** - \$5,000-\$10,000

County of San Diego Special Promotional Programs  
San Diego Landfill Systems

**Founder** - \$1,000-\$2,500

Friends In Memory of Betty Kruger  
David and Shinja Scheidnes  
In Memory of  
Kap Soo and Soon Ok Choi

**Path Finder** - \$100-\$500

Pat Abbott  
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Capt. and Mrs. Bob Gillett  
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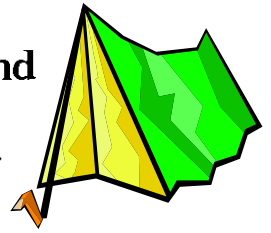


## Walks, Talks & Other Events at the Campground

*Park at the Day Use Parking Lot.*

*For outdoor activities bring water and wear sturdy walking shoes.*

*Canceled if raining.*



### Boots and Paws

People and pets can socialize as we learn about your dogs care when out in the park and the effects dogs have on the surrounding habitats. Dogs must be on a leash. Bring water for you and your dog and a bag to pick up after them.

*Meet at the Kumeyaay Campground Entry Station.*

**Saturdays, Dec. 7th and Feb. 1st, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.**

### Who's Been Here?

All ages are invited to join Ranger Barrett for a beginning wildlife tracking walk. Play detective and discover the mystery of the critters that lead active lives while we sleep.

*Meet at the Kumeyaay Campground shade structure.*

**Saturday, Nov. 2nd and Jan. 4th, 8:30 - 10:00 a.m.**

### Full Moon Hike

Join us for a walk through the park under the bright light of a full moon. Learn to move in a quiet way to improve our chances of viewing wildlife that are just coming out to eat.

*Meet at the Campground Day Use area.*

**Saturday, Jan. 18th, at 5 p.m.**

### Half Day Junior Naturalist Program

Join Naturalist Lee Kirchhevel and explore nature and your own senses in wonderful new ways! Learn how animals see, hear and move and how you can become more of a part of it! Bring a sack lunch.

Cost is \$5.00 per child. Space is limited, so sign up early at the Kumeyaay Campground.

For more information call (619) 668-2746.

**1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade:**

**Friday, Dec. 27 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

**4th, 5th, and 6th grade:**

**Monday, Dec. 30 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

### Kumeyaay Campground Campfire Programs

Join campground staff and special guests for a campfire show! Dress warm and bring a flashlight. For more information check the park web site or call (619) 668-2748.

*Meet at the campground amphitheater.*

**Saturdays, Nov. 30th at 6:30 p.m., Dec. 28th at 5:00 p.m., Jan. 25th at 5:30 p.m., Feb. 22nd at 6:00 p.m.**

### Star Party

Come out to the park and check out the stars with George Varga. A telescope will be available to view the stars!

*Meet at Kumeyaay Campground day use parking lot.*

**Saturdays, Nov. 9th, 5:00 – 7:30 p.m.,**

**Dec. 7th, 5:00 – 7:30 p.m. (Thin, crescent, waxing).**

**Jan. 25th, 5:30 – 8:00 p.m. (No Moon).**

**Feb. 8th, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. (Gibbous, waxing)**

### Arts & Activities

We will be making simple crafts for the upcoming fall and winter season. These are crafts that any child, aged 3 and up, will be able to do.

*Meet at the Kumeyaay Lake Campground shade structure.*

**Saturdays, Nov. 23rd, Dec. 28th, Jan. 25th, and Feb. 22nd at 11:30 a.m.**

### "Saturday at the Movies"

Join us for nature videos and a chance to learn more about our environment.

*Meet at the Campground shade structure.*

**Every Saturday from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.**



### **BIRD WALKS**

**With David Kisner, Kerry Kenwood and Jay Rourke**

**All walks are the third Saturday of the month 8:00-10:30 a.m.**



**November 16th** - Grassland birds. Meet at the dirt lot on the corner of Bushy Hill Drive and Father Junipero Serra Trail.

**December 15th** - Mast Blvd. Restoration Site

**January 19th** - Lake Murray Loop from Kiowa entrance/parking lot

**February 16th** - Kumeyaay Lake from Campground parking lot





## **Winter Solstice Hikes on Cowles Mountain**

**Time:** 6:00 a.m. on Friday, December 20, through Sunday, December 22, 2002.

**Starting Point:** Trailhead adjacent to the parking lot at Golfcrest Dr. & Navajo Rd.

**Description:** The Mission Trails Regional Park Trail Guides will lead pre-dawn hikes to the area of the solstice observatory on Cowles Mountain on the 20th and 22nd of December. The Canyoneers of the San Diego Natural History Museum will lead the hike on Saturday the 21st. 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.



## **MTRP Trail Guide Training Begins in January 2003**

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 interpretation skills by taking a veteran trail guide on a sample walk. Trail Guide graduates are expected to lead at least one walk per month.

*The next session begins in January 2003.*

*Please contact Ranger Sue Pelley (619-668-3279) for further information.*

## **Terrarium: A World in Miniature**

*With Aenne Carver*

*Co-sponsored with Natural History Museum.*

Plant a beautiful bubble bowl with long lasting houseplants. This is not a typical terrarium, but more of a tiny Chinese-inspired landscape with a garden path, twig trees, and hills for a centerpiece of Zen! Cost \$40, includes a \$20 materials fee.

**Meet at the Visitor Center.**

**Saturday, February 1; 10:00 – 12:00 p.m.**

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## **Native Plant Walks**

Ranger led walks will introduce you to the remarkable plant world of Mission Trails Regional Park. Walks from the campground may include Oak Canyon. If interested, contact Ranger Paul Seiley at (619) 668-2747.

**Meet at Visitor & Interpretive Center.**  
**(Wheelchair accessible)**

**Saturday, Dec. 7th & Feb. 1st, 8:30-9:30 a.m.**

**Meet at Kumeyaay Campground.**

**Saturday, Nov. 2nd & Jan 4th, 8:30-9:30 a.m.**

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**When exploring the East and West Fortuna areas of the park, remember, if you find a piece of unexploded ordnance, don't touch it; mark its location; call the Fire Department at 911 and wait for their arrival!**

## **Kids Night Out**

Hey Kids! Join us at the Visitor Center for an evening of fun and adventure.

Activities may include a cookout, marshmallow roast, arts and crafts, campfire stories, and much more.

Registration begins two weeks prior at Kumeyaay Campground.

**Space is limited so sign up early.**

**No organized groups and no drop-ins.**

**Drop off and pick up at Visitor Center.**

**Ages 7 - 12 years, Cost \$10.00 per child.**

**Saturdays, Nov. 16th, Dec. 14th, Jan.**

**11th, and Feb. 8th from 5:30-9:00 p.m.**

**For information, call (619) 668-2748.**







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

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Organization  
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Permit No. 658

E-mail: [mtrp@mtrp.org](mailto:mtrp@mtrp.org) Web site: [www.mtrp.org](http://www.mtrp.org)  
Visitor & Interpretive Center: (619) 668-3275  
MTRP Foundation: (619) 582-7800

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**Fall/Winter 2002 Issue  
Mission Trails Regional Park News**

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

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*Printed on Recycled Paper*

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
**Donor Level**  
\$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 funds where you wish  
your donation to be used.

General Park Support \_\_\_\_\_  
Library Fund \_\_\_\_\_  
Library Endowment Fund \_\_\_\_\_  
Education Prog. 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 \_\_\_\_\_