



Mission Trails Regional Park News

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In Memoriam



Jeanne Blair
Gift Shop Manager

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation

Jeanne Blair was a native San Diegan. Both her father and her husband were naval officers. Jeanne attended the University of North Carolina and San Diego State University, putting herself through college while working in the retail business. During her career, Jeanne was an area manager for Buffums Department Stores and later an associate with Saron Jewelers in Hillcrest. In December, 1994, she was recruited out of retirement to set up and manage the Foundation gift shop at the Visitor Center, which opened on February 5, 1995.

Jeanne enjoyed relating her fond memory of her introduction to the Visitor Center during its construction. She knew the Center, even without its roof or windows, would be a jewel and yearned to be a significant part of it. Little did she know at the time how significant she, her great sense of humor, and her joy of living would be in making the Center such a great success. Jeanne loved the park and recruited many of her friends as park volunteers.

Even after being diagnosed with colon cancer in the fall of 2002 and receiving treatment thereafter, Jeanne continued to manage the gift shop and work as a volunteer in the Center until October 2003. Jeanne passed away on January 2, 2004. She will be remembered for her gracious demeanor, positive attitude, and wonderful smile.

Donations are being accepted to pay for a bench with a commemorative plaque in her memory. The bench will be located on the visitor Center terrace. Make checks payable to MTRP Foundation, and mail to One Father Junipero Serra Trail, San Diego, CA 92119-1008.



MTRP.ORG

Where is the best place to get updated information on events, activities, trail closures and other interesting or vital information about Mission Trails Regional Park? Visit mtrp.org. The MTRP site includes, among other things, current information about art exhibits in the Visitor Center, a calendar to view all the upcoming events in the park and recent news articles pertaining to Mission Trails. The site has recently been redesigned for improved navigation.

During the November fire, the only place to get

information on how the fire was affecting Mission Trails was at mtrp.org. This event was so significant that a link was created specifically to inform and educate the public concerning fire in the park. A map was quickly created and published on the web to identify areas closed to the public.

Park staff never considers the MTRP web site finished; it is an ongoing project designed to inform and educate.



A Message From Councilmember Jim Madaffer

How sad to see the devastation brought by the recent fires. Our once beautiful park has been burned beyond belief with the loss of 2,800 acres. Some people measure the fire in terms of losses. I measure it in terms of successes and say thank goodness we didn't lose any lives or structures.

Most of the park is open to the public. However, the interior of the park is closed to the public as is the entrances at Mast Boulevard, Clairemont Mesa Boulevard and the Grasslands entrance from Junipero Serra Trail. This will prevent further destruction until natural regrowth and trails restoration can occur.

Since the recent rains, we're seeing vegetation beginning to grow back and we want to prevent further damage to sensitive vegetation. With the first rain storm came renewed concerns about erosion. Runoff and mudslides have potential to do great damage and so controlling erosion has taken on an even greater significance. Erosion control measures have now begun with the staging area at Clairemont Mesa Blvd being used as a base. In addition, I have asked the City Manager to expedite the process of repairing the pedestrian bridge at the end of Clairemont Mesa Boulevard that provides access to Mission Trails Regional Park.

We have made recent policy changes in order to prevent another disaster such as this. Even before the fires, I supported the need for necessary equipment and personnel for our fire department and police department. This will continue to be a top priority.

At City Council meetings near the end of last year, we directed the City Manager to make changes in a number of areas including improving our brush management policy adjacent to structures, eliminating shake shingle roofs in our City as well as waiving building permit fees for fire victims.

I heard from lots of folks and read many emails to pursue many common-sense suggestions including changing construction standards for homes near open space areas. Ideas included the protecting of eaves, creating a wider defensible space between homes and open space, and the use of stucco instead of wood siding near open space areas. We changed city-wide standards to allow residents to create a larger defensible space behind their homes. Many areas that did not burn remain vulnerable and it's important we move quickly to allow residents to protect their homes and property while being mindful of habitat considerations.

I am also working to create a disaster preparedness coalition within the communities of the 7th District, please call my office if you'd like to get involved. These community-based committees will be trained in everything from earthquake and fire response – all geared toward helping authorities immediately following any future disaster. And there will be future disasters of some type, so it's best to be prepared now.

Lastly, as I've said many times, we are indebted to our fire department, police department and other emergency personnel who valiantly battled against the Firestorm of 2003. The outpouring of

help and support from the public was most gratifying. The staff and volunteers at Mission Trails Regional Park also deserve much credit for their hard work in restoring the park. I want to say thank you on behalf of the many people who love and use Mission Trails Regional Park.

And on a sad note, it was difficult as we mourned the passing of Jeanne Blair who served the Mission Trails Foundation as a gift-shop consultant.

Jeanne had a wonderful heart and did so much to help the park she loved. She will be missed.

As always, I welcome hearing your comments regarding Mission Trails Regional Park or any other issue. Call me at (619) 236-6677 or send an email to jmadaffer@sandiego.gov. I invite you to visit my Web site at JimMadaffer.com.

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DEPARTURES AND ARRIVALS



David Benedict
Departing Visitor Center Director

David joined the Mission Trails staff as Center Director in March 2001. He was responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Visitor Center and community programming. Before coming to Mission Trails, David worked for six years in the City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department's Community Parks Division. He attended San Diego State University and has a degree in Recreation Administration. David was recently promoted to Center Director 3 for the Standley Recreation Center at UTC. The staff, volunteers and the Foundation board of Mission Trails are sad to see him go but wish him all the best.



Debbie Waddell
New Visitor Center Director

Debbie started work at Mission Trails as Center Director for the Kumeyaay Lake Campground on August 30th, 2003. Her duties included the day-to-day management of the campground and its registration process. She was recently promoted to the Center Director position for the Visitor Center. Previously, Debbie spent the last three years as the Assistant Center Director at the North Park Recreation Center. Before working for the City of San Diego, she worked for five years with the City of Anaheim at a recreation center that provided programs to people with developmental disabilities.



Patty O'Reilly
Gift Shop Manger

Patty became the Mission Trails Gift Shop Manger on December 1, 2003. A native Californian, she has been a San Diego County resident since the age of five. Patty opened GOOD TASTE, a gift shop in La Mesa Village, in 1985. For 12 years, Patty managed the business and did all the purchasing. In 1997 she changed her focus to consulting and personal shopping. In addition to raising three children, community service has been an important part of Patty's life. She has served on the San Diego County Mental Health Advisory Board and the La Mesa Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. She served as president of the La Mesa Village Merchants Association in 2002 and 2003. Patty is also a member of the Board of Directors of Kids on the Block of San Diego.



Kumeyaay Lake Campground

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

The earth continues its seasonal dance! The wind is beginning to blow warmer, soothing winter-worn bodies and sweeping away cobwebs. All around us, life begins to blossom and bloom with welcome beginnings. Due to the Cedar fire, spring promises to be extra special, with plant and flower growth not seen in many decades. From devastation comes promise.

Now is the time to enjoy all the wonders that Mission Trails has to offer! Join Mother Nature and experience the park in all its glory, both day and night. Kumeyaay Campground is your perfect stepping stone to Spring - come celebrate the sights, sounds, and smells of this special time with us.