



Mission Trails Regional Park News

Vol. 14 No. 2

Publication of Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, Inc.

Spring/Summer 2003

Valued Volunteers Honored

The City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department and Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation honored outstanding volunteers at the annual awards ceremony held Saturday evening, February 1, 2003 in the theatre at the Visitor and Interpretive Center.

Greg Chiles was selected as Volunteer of the Year for 2002. If anyone deserves an award for being the volunteer of the year, it is Greg Chiles! He is an amazing young man who has made it a goal to familiarize himself with all aspects of the park. Congratulations Greg!

Other awards presented included Howard Runk, Visitor Center; Joanne Prescott, Gift Shop "Shopkeeper"; Len Trentacosta, Habitat Improvement Team; Everett Neuman, Trail Crew; Kathy Perry, Park Beautification Team; Jean Tomcavage, Visitor Center Library; Nancy Varga, Trail Guide; George Varga, Patrol; Kelly Barrett, Campground. Certificates of commendation were presented to these honorees by City of San Diego Councilmember Jim Madaffer.

In addition, the following volunteers were recognized for completing five years of service at Mission Trails: Kelly Barrett, Helene Angoco, Sally Kotnik, Bob Gillett, Nancy Varga, Daniece Moden, Roberta Wisniewski, and Robert Eberhardt

Betty Neill, Greg Chiles, Laura Goupillon, Winona Sollock, and Terry Gaughen logged the highest number of volunteer hours in 2002. Each received a gift certificate to a local restaurant. Thank you to the following restaurants for their generous donations: Antica Trattoria, The Brigantine, The Fish Merchant, Cheers Deli and Megan's Café.

Special recognition certificates were presented to **Camp Hosts:** Daniel Brawner, Jim and Jo Anne Holman, **Bird Box Project team:** Alicia, Brian and Danica Berg, Dan Conaty, Gordon Patty, Charlie Eglin, Helen Angoco, Richard Griebe, Bob King, Carol Mason, Daniece Moden, Carmen Schneider, Teresa Wilkinson, Bill Goldschneider, Tim Koeske, Dan Leonard, and Julie Warner, **Information and Directional Signage:** Paul Globerson & Greg Chiles, **Cowles Mt project:** Terry Gaughen, **Outstanding Intern:** Laura Goupillon, and for **Valuable Assistance at the Visitor Center:** Winona Sollock.

In 2002, 154 volunteers recorded 25,673.5 volunteer hours by staffing the Visitor and Interpretive Center and the gift shop, leading walks in the park, patrolling park trails, working on trail maintenance, habitat restoration and park



Greg Chiles

Volunteer of the Year Greg Chiles

Mission Trails Regional Park is fortunate and appreciative to have numerous young people who work as volunteers and interns. They spend long hours, helping park staff at the Visitor Center, Kumeyaay Lake Campground and in the field. We are pleased to have recently honored one of these valuable volunteers.

For two years, Greg Chiles has been a volunteer at Mission Trails Regional Park. "When I moved to the East County," he says, "I found out about Mission Trails and all the wonderful volunteer opportunities they offered. I soon found myself volunteering on the weekends. I worked on several teams: Park Beautification, Habitat Protection and Trail Improvement and I also worked in the entry station at Kumeyaay Lake Campground, helping campground staff with data entry and gathering information from campers". Often spending 12 hours a day at the park working on different projects and sometimes staying the night to be ready for a 5 a.m. patrol, Greg soon became a regular and much-treasured fixture at the park.

After Greg completed the Mission Trails Trail Guide training program, which required 60 hours of indoor and outdoor class time, he became a volunteer trail guide and

Volunteers, continued on pg 2.

Chiles, continued on pg 5.



A Message From Councilmember Jim Madaffer

I hope that you can join us on May 3rd for Explore Mission Trails Day. It promises to be an exciting event with activities for the entire family such as arts and crafts, trail guide walks, interpretive wagon rides and a star-gazing party. There will be things to see and do throughout the park including the Visitor Center, Kumeyaay Lake Campground and the Old Mission Dam. This will be a perfect opportunity to invite your friends who have never visited the park and show them all that it has to offer. I've always said that there are three crown jewels in San Diego's park system. There is Balboa, which is the cultural park, and Mission Bay, which is the aquatic park, and then there is Mission Trails, which is the natural park. For more information about Explore Mission Trails Day, call (619) 668-3275.

The Visitor Center was the site of our recent District Seven Community Forum. It was an opportunity for people to hear City Manager Michael Uberuaga's presentation on the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2004. We also had an informative presentation by Jay Foley of the Identity Theft Resource Center about this wide-spread crime. There was an excellent turnout for the forum and I'm confident that the spacious and comfortable venue the Visitor Center provides was a key reason for the event's success.

We congratulate and say goodbye to Senior Ranger Paul Kilburg and Ranger Rick Thompson. Both of them have done an outstanding job and deserve credit for their many accomplishments at Mission Trails Regional Park. We wish them well in their new positions.

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

Volunteers, continued from pg 1.

clean-up projects, maintaining the kiosks and other visitor amenities, and assisting at the campground and on other projects where help is needed. In addition to the 154 regular volunteers mentioned above there are groups who periodically work on special projects, individuals who participate in the Saturday morning work crews, Trail Guide trainers, Citizens' Advisory Committee members and MTRP Foundation Board members who contribute countless hours to making Mission Trails Regional Park one of the jewels in the City of San Diego park system.

For More Information About Volunteer Opportunities

Go To www.mtrp.org And Access The "Volunteer" Link
Or Call 668-3278



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The Gentle Mysterious Rosy Boa



These docile snakes live in Mission Trails Regional Park, but not many people see them. They are generally nocturnal (they party at night) and spend most of the day hiding under rocks

and debris. I find that in this area, the snakes don't read the guidebooks and come out when they feel like it! So, if you are out walking and see a grayish snake, some with faded stripes down their body, chances are it's a Rosy Boa. If you want to get technical, they can range anywhere from gray to pinkish brown; and the stripes can vary between brown to black. The more heavily patterned ones are more likely to be found in the desert.

They average three feet in length and are non-venomous. They kill their prey, which is usually a small mammal or bird, by constriction. If you want a more detailed description of this process, you can find it in most snake books. Their eyes have vertical pupils like a cat (elliptical pupils, for you science people). This allows them to let in more light at night.

Please do not collect snakes from the wild. You can buy Rosy Boas in pet stores, but you had better know what you are getting into; most snakes live an average of ten years.

Alicia Berg, MTRP Trail Guide.

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



Explore Mission Trails Day

On Saturday May 3, 2003 Mission Trails Regional Park will hold a parkwide event highlighting its various features, opportunities and user groups. Volunteers will be located at major trailheads to answer questions and aid the public.

Activities will include wagon rides at the Mast Blvd. staging area, a musical concert featuring Los Californios at the Visitor Center Amphitheater, primitive skills demonstrations, arts and crafts, and storytelling for children at the Visitor Center. Rangers and Trail Guides will be available for trail guided walks and the San Diego Tracking team for wildlife tracking walks. User groups such as the San Diego Climbing Coalition, Project Wildlife, San Diego Mountain Bike Association, San Diego Mountain Rescue and others will be on hand for information and demonstrations. The event will be capped off with a Star Party at the campground.

For a full schedule of events and starting times, visit www.mtrp.org and access the Event Calendar link or pick up a schedule at the Visitor Center.

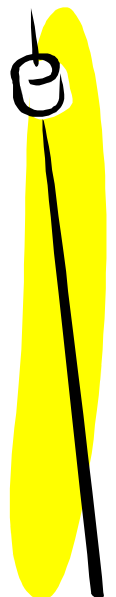
Kumeyaay Lake Campground

Can you believe the long lazy days of summer are upon us again? For many adults, summer evokes fond memories of family vacations, all day outside play, summer camps, a long awaited break from school and a time to renew friendships. This is the time we dreamt about all year long!

Time rolls on and there is no doubt that things have changed, but at Mission Trails and Kumeyaay Lake Campground some things can stay the same. Time honored traditions are still available here. Hiking and biking all day long, enjoying flowers in all colors that grow everywhere you look or sitting in the shade of a majestic oak tree reading a great book - what wonderful ways to spend the day! Stretched out in your tent after a long sun-warmed day enjoying the great outdoors, a gentle chorus of frogs and insects sing you to sleep. Plan your day - enjoy a guided nature walk, arts and crafts activities for the kids, a movie, learn to track animals, look at the stars through giant telescopes or walk the land of the Kumeyaay.

Come to Mission Trails and Kumeyaay Lake Campground where the warmth of the sun and the long lazy days remind us of how good it is to find a balance between intense activity of school and workday life and the lazy idle hours of doing nothing except enjoying our ability to relax and let go. Summer at Mission Trails - It doesn't get any better than this!

Ranger Luanne Barrett



Staff Changes at MTRP



Rangers Paul Kilburg and Rick Thompson

Two of our esteemed staff - Senior Ranger Paul Kilburg and Ranger Rick Thompson - are "movin' on up." Paul was promoted to a new Senior Planner position in the Open Space Division last month. He will serve as liaison with other city departments to address potential environmental impacts from their maintenance activities and capital projects and work with community groups to protect our open space. Rick was selected to be the new Senior Park Ranger for the Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve. Both of these valued colleagues will be missed; remember, though, they're just "down the road." We congratulate them and wish them well.

We are fortunate to have had the MTRP Senior Ranger position filled quickly and welcome John Barone to the assignment. John has been a city Park Ranger since 2000, initially at Balboa Park and Chollas Lake and recently at Black Mountain Open Space Park. Prior to that he was a Park Ranger with the San Dieguito River Park, the Supervising Ranger with the City of Chula Vista, and Park Ranger with the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service at sites in this area. Fluent in Spanish, John has a B.S. in Forestry and Natural Resources Management from California Polytechnic State University, with emphasis in Environmental Management. A hearty welcome, John, to the MTRP family.

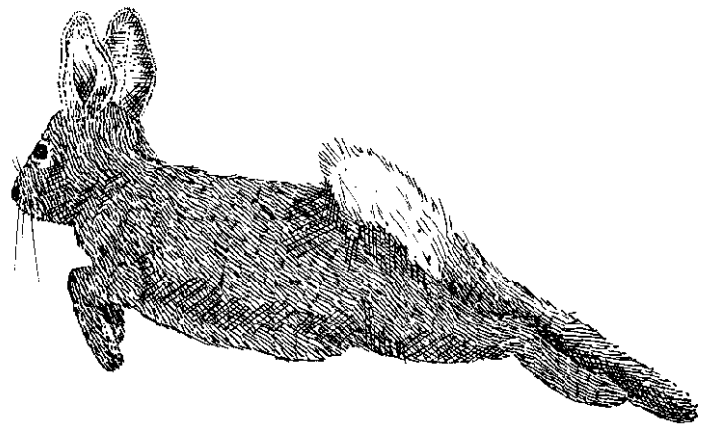
Don Steele

BUNNIES IN THE PARK

The Hare Has Hair and the Bunny's Bare

Bunnies overwhelm the Park in the spring. Furry critters with long legs, extended ears, stubby tails and chisel-like teeth belong to a group called Lagomorpha. Not all are rabbits; some are hares. To a mammalogist, that's a big deal. A major difference is with the little ones. Newborn hares have hair, can see, hear, and bounce around — like a frisky colt, ready to run with mother hours after being born. Newborn bunnies (technically, rabbits) are hairless, blind, deaf and helpless — like kitties or puppies. In the park, we have hare households as well as families of true rabbits. Members of the Lagomorph lineage prefer to feed at dawn or dusk, but mid-day forays are not unusual. The largest hip-hopper in the park is a wild hare called the Blacktail Jackrabbit. The gray-brown "jackhare," with black-tipped ears over six inches long, is the size of a big alley cat. The stump of a tail is black-topped. Because of its ability to bound through the brush, the jackrabbit avoids dense chaparral and is often seen out and about — sometimes nibbling on Tierrasanta lawns and gardens.

Other resident rabbits include two cottontail species, each about half the size of the hare. The smallest, the brownish Brush Rabbit, with two inch ears, weighs about two pounds. It is the bunny least likely to be seen because it skitters not far from the brush.



Audubon's Cottontail (or Desert Cottontail) is larger by a pound and its dark-tipped ears are longer by an inch than the brush bunny. Peter also adds gray-yellow to its coat and has a whiter cottontail. Brer Rabbit prefers thickets to brush and a southern kin, no doubt, knew Uncle Remus.

Even though there may be some slight question about Lagomorph egg laying, the rabbit reputation for out of control reproduction is deserved. In years with moderate temperatures and adequate rainfall, they reproduce like rabbits year round. Excess bunnies don't go unnoticed. On your next walk in the park, be alert, you may observe rabbits-run-amuck being dutifully controlled by a wily coyote or helpful hawk. Try not to think of the Easter Bunny.

Bill Howell



eleventh annual photo contest

We are now accepting photos for this year's annual photo contest. Applications for the 2003 exhibit are available at the Visitor Center and www.mtrp.org.

**The deadline for submitting photos is
May 30, 2003.**

now leads nature walks and talks in the park. "In all my years of working with volunteers, I have never met one as enthusiastic as he is," says Marla Gilmore, Center Director for Kumeyaay Lake Campground. "He's been a huge help with our Kid's Night Out program doing everything from being the barbecue guy, leading games and hikes or art projects—we can count on him to help all staff in all areas of the park".

"My first impression of Greg was of a young man with a tremendous sense of giving," said Ranger Rick Thompson. "He was—and still is—eager to help, hard working, self-directed and not shy of any task put in front of him. He has become more involved with all facets of park management. He continues to grow and progress here, completing one of the most comprehensive natural resource training courses ever offered. He's a pleasure to work with and we hear nothing but good comments about him from park visitors and workers alike".

Under the supervision of Ranger Mel Naidas, Greg currently does volunteer patrols through Mission Trails both day and night and assists in the installation of split rail and two-rail fencing and directional and informational signs. (Greg has so far installed more than 500 feet of fencing.) He also plots the locations of native and non-native plants by means of compass readings and maps, helps lead trail walks and talks with the STAR/PAL and KIDZWATCH programs and volunteers for Project Wildlife.

Ranger Naidas says, "When I first met Greg, I was a Kumeyaay Lake Campground Ranger and he was working on the irrigation lines at Kumeyaay Lake for Ranger Paul Seily. Soon, he was helping me ensure all campers and their vehicles had valid permits by registering them into our system. He gave newcomers briefings about nocturnal animal activity, fire restrictions and other park rules and regulations. His growth has been tremendous."

In addition to all this and his newest venture of participating in the Bird Box program, Greg currently attends Grossmont Community College where he majors in Administration of Justice. "My plan is to get my B.A. and become a State Ranger or work for the Department of Fish and Game." He has also taken on the responsibility of being in the Navy Reserve and working part time for the County of San Diego Parks and Recreation at the Lakeside Recreation Center.

When asked if there is anything he is especially proud of, Greg replies, "The work that the volunteers, the rangers and the staff do to make Mission Trails the great place it is."

For more information on the Kid's Night Out, STAR/PAL, KIDZWATCH, Bird Box and other programs, visit the Mission Trails Regional Park website at www.mtrp.org. To find out about volunteer opportunities at the park, please contact Dave Benedict at 619-668-3278.

Stacey Fullwiler

Star Party

June 7 from 8 to 10 p.m. Waxing quarter Moon (1/4 means that the Moon is one quarter along in its journey around the Earth. Waxing means that the Moon is growing brighter and brighter each night as it approaches Full Moon.) We anticipate being able to view M13, the Hercules Cluster, double star Albireo in Cygnus, and the Ring Nebula in Lyra. There are other interesting objects but they may be wiped out by the light of the waxing Moon.

August 16 from 7:30 - 10 p.m. The Moon will be rising about a half hour before the end of the star party. It will be four days past being a Full Moon. We should be able to view some neat globular clusters, especially M22 in Sagittarius. We should also be able to see the Lagoon Nebula, the Trifid Nebula and some great open clusters like M6 and M7.

Notable Donations

January – March 2003

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

City of San Diego Special Promotional Programs

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

Joseph E. Dziuba Family – *In memory of
Lucas Douglas Strauss*

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Trailblazer - \$500-\$1,000

Path Finder - \$100-\$500

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