

# MOUNTAIN NEWS

Winter 2007

MOUNT DIABLO INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION

## President's Message.....

First and foremost, thank you for your dedicated membership with MDIA. You, and the other 400-plus members, are the lifeblood of MDIA. Without your support and encouragement, MDIA could not accomplish meaningful work for Mount Diablo State Park and the visiting public.

Secondly, thank you for your support of me as President of MDIA. 2007 will be my third year as President, and my seventh year on the Board.

On October 28, 2006, MDIA conducted its annual membership meeting (from 2-4pm) under the oaks in Mitchell Canyon. Refreshments were arranged by Liede-Marie Haitsma. It was an interesting, fun, and productive meeting. The sun shone, and it was shirt-sleeved weather. About 50 members attended.

Prior to the start of the meeting, Yulan Tong led a most interesting tree and shrub identification walk in Mitchell Canyon. Yulan is a dedicated docent at both Park visitor centers—Summit and Mitchell Canyon. She is also author of the beautiful book, *LILIES IN THE FIELD*.

Gary Bergren, East Bay painter, displayed several of his beautiful Mount Diablo paintings. Gary has generously authorized MDIA to reproduce his paintings in MDIA publications.

Since not all of the MDIA members could be at the annual meeting, here is an abbreviated "State-of-MDIA" message that I gave:

"I'm proud to be able to say that MDIA is in super condition, both financially and operationally. The MDIA membership numbers have increased significantly in 2006, in part due to a membership solicitation drive earlier in the year. MDIA now has 400 members. Financially, MDIA is in great shape. Of course, over 95% of the monies taken in by MDIA is returned to the Park in the form of goods and services that are intended to directly enhance the visiting public's experience in the Park. I'd like to recognize one very generous deceased member, Elsie Richey. Earlier this year, when Elsie passed away, she left in her estate \$9,000 to MDIA. As of September 30th, MDIA's net worth was \$144,000. So, I'm happy to be able to report that MDIA is on solid financial footing. The Board has several initiatives underway to wise-



Rich McDrew,  
President

ly spend that money for the benefit of the Park and the visiting public.

MDIA had five major goals and objectives in 2006, and made the following accomplishments in those areas:

1) **TRAIL THROUGH TIME.** This Trail traces the 200-million-year-old geologic history of Mount Diablo utilizing a seven-mile trail with 20 strategically placed interpretive panels extending from the bottom of Sycamore Canyon to the Summit.

A lot of work was done in 2006 by Craig Lyon and Roi Peers,

and the project should be completed in 2007.

Contractor on last four panels failed to deliver.

Many of the other 16 have failed and need to be replaced.

The free self-guiding brochure is in process.

2) **INVESTMENTS.** The focus is to spend MDIA resources wisely. A list of ten projects has been developed by the Board with Park management input:

Complete Trail Through Time.

Install a webcam at the Summit.

Do Trees/Shrubs and Bird publications.

Install selected interpretive panels.

Improvements to the Mary Bowerman Trail.

Install an ADA telescope on the Mary Bowerman Trail.

Junior Ranger Program initiatives.

Hire a summer intern for the Park.

Disposal of selected debris.

Install ADA compliant benches.

Expand merchandising program.

3) **MEMBERSHIP COMMUNICATION.** Continue to keep MDIA membership informed.

Annual report now in color.

Improved *MOUNTAIN NEWS* and *MOUNT DIABLO REVIEW*.

Using occasional email.

4) **COMMUNITY VISIBILITY.** Continue MDIA outreach programs.

Table at a variety of events.

More newspaper articles have appeared about MDIA.

Helped create the *BAY NATURE* supplement.

Made several talks to community groups and school classes.

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5) TRADITIONAL ROLES. Don't lose sight of MDIA's ongoing responsibilities.

MDIA has adopted the Globe Lily Trail for cleanup.

Continuing to pursue grants.

Leading hikes is a priority.

Operating the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center.

Publish the MOUNTAIN NEWS twice annually.

Publish the MOUNT DIABLO REVIEW three times annually.

Maintain the telescopes on the Summit.

Ongoing planning for the new edition (the 6th) of the Trail Map.

Trail signage is ongoing.

Trash removal work has completed its 6th year.

Maintain the MDIA web site.

Other business was conducted. Sue Donecker presented awards to 50 of MDIA's more active volunteers. Mike Nelson, the publication committee chair, was presented with the volunteer-of-the-year award. MDIA Board members were elected, included are three new directors: Leslie Contreras, Tom Nootbaar, and Maria Tice. In addition, a motion was made and approved to change MDIA by-law section 5.2 to increase the Board size from 14 to 16. (The two new Board directors added at a subsequent Board meeting were Jeff Bransford and Jim Mitchell.)

Park Superintendent, Craig Mattson, gave an informative talk on various projects being slated to improve the Park, including major road repairs and restoration of historic features.

A unique and interesting program was presented on raptors by two docents from the Lindsay Wildlife Museum. They had live raptors on display.

Finally, a variety of MDIA merchandise was raffled off to the attendees.

The 2007 MDIA annual membership meeting has been set for Saturday, November 3rd. Reserve that date now on your calendar, and we will be sending you a reminder as that date approaches.

Enjoy Mount Diablo State Park—it belongs to you!

Enough! ... Now go visit and enjoy The Mountain!

### MDIA will be working on Globe Lily Trail on the 7th of April?

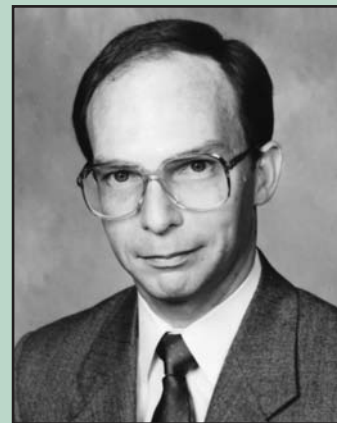
We will stage at the visitor center at Mitchell Canyon. Leave for Globe Lily Trail at 9:00am, returning at 3:00pm. Bring lunch, water and gloves. Please wear long-sleeved shirt, long-legged pants and a hat for sun protection. Tools will be furnished.

If you wish to contribute articles or photographs for any of the MDIA publications, contact Mike Nelson at 925 686-9295 or via e-mail at <janmike@astound.net>.

## Steve Elliott

### Biographical Summary

- Born in Oklahoma, Steve has lived in Florida, New York City, Illinois and St. Louis. He moved here from Toronto, Canada.
- Steve is married and has two kids in elementary school. His wife is a pastor at a Methodist Church. Steve is retired from a 25 year career with an international consulting firm. His last assignment was as a senior partner in the telecommunications industry. Previously, he ran technology businesses in Canada and the firm's global software and hardware sales.
- In addition to serving MDIA as Treasurer, Steve has been Secretary. He leads the Park's Junior Ranger Program, hosts school groups, handles MDIA's contracts, works on the trail crew and helps with back-country patrol.
- Steve also volunteers at the Lindsay Wildlife Museum and the Blackhawk Museum. He leads the outreach programs of his church and is organizing trips to New Orleans to assist with recovery from Hurricane Katrina and a medical mission to Guatemala.
- Steve bikes or runs Mt. Diablo regularly. He enjoys snow skiing. He has explored rivers and mountains around the world, including places like: Greenland, Antarctica, China, Turkey, South America, Zambia and elsewhere.



Steve Elliott,  
Treasurer, MDIA

East Bay   
NATURE

....Enjoy Nature!

**Joanie Smith**

Owner

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Thank you EAST BAY NATURE! This retail outdoor nature store helps to maintain the MDIA web site, and hosts the server for free.

## MATCHING GIFT PROGRAM

If you or your spouse work for, or retired, from a corporation that operates a "Matching Gift Program", your contribution to MDIA may be matched by your employer. Obviously, this doubles the financial impact to MDIA. In addition, if your employer conducts an annual charitable gift drive, you can designate MDIA to be the recipient of your payroll deduction gift. Please ask your employer's Human Resources Office if they have a "Matching Gift Program" or a "Workplace Giving Program".

MDIA Board of Directors Meeting Schedule for 2007  
Meet 7:00pm at the Alamo Safeway Store  
MDIA members welcome to attend regular board meetings

January 25 — Annual Meeting of the Board  
February 22—Executive Session  
March 22 — Regular Board Meeting  
April 26 — Executive Session  
May 24 — Regular Board Meeting  
June 28 — Executive Session  
July 26 — Regular Board Meeting  
August 23 — Executive Session  
September 27—Regular Board Meeting  
October 25 — Executive Session  
November 3—Annual Membership Meeting  
Hike at noon, meeting 2:00pm to 4:00pm  
December 6—Regular Board Meeting

## A GENEROUS GRANT

Thank you to the California State Parks Foundation (CSPF)! The CSPF generously granted to MDIA \$5,000 to be used to help offset the cost of the booklet, TREES AND SHRUBS OF MOUNT DIABLO. This booklet, authored by well-known Berkeley native plant expert, Dr. Glenn Keator, will be released later this year.

## WHEEL WORKS

Fred Asaf  
Store Manager

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Phone: (925) 945-1900



## THE RED-HEADED FLICKER

by Edith Valle-Riestra

One of MDIA's early Board members, Elsie Richey, passed away in July 2006. Elsie left in her estate \$9,000 to MDIA. That money is being used in her memory to create a bird identification booklet entitled COMMON BIRDS OF MOUNT DIABLO. Elsie was a very active member of MDIA. She always woke up early to prepare delicious pancake breakfasts for all the campers at MDIA's yearly campouts on Mount Diablo. She also led many bird walks, usually accompanied by her husband, Gerry. Gerry was great at spotting birds, but not at identifying them. He was known to call out, "There's a chicken hawk", to everyone's amusement. Elsie was always very patient with him, and with the rest of the group.

Elsie was once the editor of this publication, MOUNTAIN NEWS, in addition to contributing to KITE CALL, the newsletter of the Ohlone Audubon Society. Elsie had flaming red hair, and thus gained the nickname of "Red-Headed Flicker".

I'd like to share an article Elsie wrote for KITE CALL in July 1983 which was read at her memorial in August 2006:

"A couple of days ago—I think it was Sunday—I managed to find time—oops, what's a flicker doing with that kind of a frame of mind? Better to say, I was where I was so I took my time getting to where I needed to be.

"I enjoyed following along the way listening to my feathered brothers as they sang for the joy of singing. (I wish my voice was more melodic; I'd really like to burst forth in joyful song at times.) Then it seemed that there was always someone behind me, sort of irritated at me because I chose a leisurely pace. So why didn't the 'nervous-jervous' just pass me?

"The question is, why are people always in such a hurry? Humans seem to never slow down to enjoy the view or savor the aromas or feel the soft breezes. (I'm glad I can.) So why do they choose a route through the hills that twists and winds, when they're really in such a rush? It's sort of dangerous to skid around those curves on one wing, so to speak. They may never get to see what's around the next turn. Meantime, I'm going to loll along, stopping where I want, to drink in the beauty of fresh green leaves, blue sky and warmth. Hope I don't get hit from behind!"

Now, whenever a Flicker with a red cap is spotted—as we stroll—Elsie's friends will remember her gratefully.

Thank you WHEEL WORKS! This retail tire store is recycling, at no cost to MDIA, dozens of old tires found in Mount Diablo State Park.

Mary Bowerman

*"My dream is that the whole of Mount Diablo, including its foothills, will remain open space... that the visual and natural integrity will be sustained."*

*"Over the last 25 years I have participated with Save Mount Diablo in achieving the preservation of much of the area in my original dream however, as Senator Nejedly once observed, 'She's always asking for more'.*

*May Save Mount Diablo fully realize my dream during my lifetime."*

*"Little did I know 65 years ago that my senior project would become my life's work"*

Dr. Mary Bowerman was co-founder of Save Mount Diablo in 1971 and served on its Board of Directors until her death (d. 8/21/2005 in Lafayette, California).

Mt. Diablo State Park's *Fire Interpretive Trail*, at the summit, was named in her honor on 5-22-1982. Late last year, the trail was officially renamed the "Mary Bowerman Trail." A formal dedication ceremony is expected to be held by *Save Mount Diablo*.



Stop 1—Trail begins in a grove of scrubby oaks.



Stop 6—A good place to rest for a minute.



Stop 7—Turn the corner, North Peak is in front of you.

Like most organizations, MDIA does some communication via email—it is not only timely but cost-effective. Nancy Topp maintains the MDIA email directory. If you would like to add or update your email in this directory, please provide it to Nancy at <mnvtopp@pacbell.net>. Please be assured that your email will not be shared with any other organization or company without your permission.

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