

MOUNTAIN NEWS

Winter 2005

MOUNT DIABLO INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION

FROM THE PRESIDENT . . .

The following are excerpts from the "State of MDIA" message I presented verbally at the annual MDIA meeting held in Mitchell Canyon on Saturday, October 29, 2005. There were about 40 members at the meeting, so this is primarily for the approximately 250 members who were not able to attend.

"Welcome to the annual meeting of MDIA. Thank you for being here. You, the MDIA membership, are critical to the success of MDIA, so thank you for your financial and physical support of Mount Diablo State Park.

"First of all, let me recognize and thank Craig Lyon for leading a most interesting geology and mining hike this afternoon. As I'm sure most of you know, Craig is the MDIA Vice President, and manager of the MDIA Visitor Center in Mitchell Canyon.

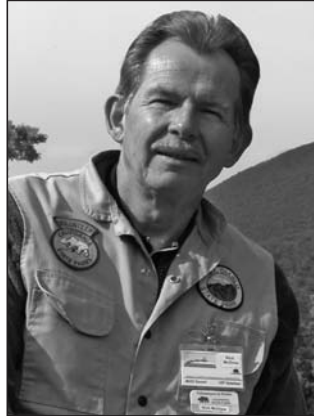
"Secondly, I'd like to recognize the wonderful staff of Mount Diablo State Park. When I say wonderful, I mean it. They are so supportive of MDIA, and its goals and objectives.

"I'd also like to recognize the great all-volunteer Board of MDIA. These folks are the real work horses of MDIA. They have made the commitment in time and energy to make the operating decisions for MDIA.

"In addition, please join me in thanking Liede-Marie Haitzma and Nancy Topp for arranging for and setting up the great refreshments this afternoon.

"Last but not least, I'd like to recognize the 31 dedicated docents who staff the Visitor Center on weekends and holidays. They do a terrific job of enhancing the visiting public's experience in the Park.

"I'm proud to be able to say that MDIA is in great shape, both financially and operationally. The MDIA membership has remained relatively constant over the years—perhaps slightly up in 2005—we have just under 300 members—but we do have a couple of initiatives underway to attract new 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, Dick Chambers. Earlier this year, when Dick passed away, he left in his estate over \$57,000 to MDIA. So, as of this month,



Rich McDrew, President

MDIA's net worth is approximately \$110,000. So, I'm proud to be able to report that MDIA is on solid financial footing. The Board has several ideas for investing in the Park for 2006. I'd love to hear some of your ideas. Call or email me at MDIA.

"MDIA accomplished five major goals and objectives in 2005, and has several initiatives underway:

- (1) Contract renewal with the State of California. Runs for five years. Sets forth how MDIA is to operate. Thanks to Steve Elliott and Brian Hickey for facilitating the renewal.
- (2) Trail Through Time—traces the 200 million year geologic history of Mount Diablo utilizing a seven mile trail that extends from Sycamore Canyon to the summit. Almost completed in 2005. Expect to be completed in 2006. 16 interpretive panels in ground 4 to go. Self-guiding brochure in process. Thanks to Craig Lyon and Roi Peers for spearheading this project.
- (3) Through the hard work and vision of Brian Hickey, Steve Elliott, and Craig Lyon, MDIA entered into a unique purchasing agreement with the Park. Instead of the Park purchasing MDIA publications wholesale from MDIA and reselling them, MDIA now provides the publications free to the Park. The Park sells them and returns the money to MDIA to reinvest in the Park.
- (4) Most importantly, MDIA has continued to partner with the Park staff and the Department of Parks and Recreation in Sacramento. We continue to partner with and network with like organizations:
 - Save Mount Diablo
 - California State Parks Foundation
 - Sierra Club
 - Greenbelt Alliance
 - Mount Diablo Astronomical Society
 - Mount Diablo Observatory Association
 - Numerous Area Hiking Clubs



Brian Hickey
Retired Park
Superintendent

- (5) Continue with our traditional rolls:
- Trail adoption–Globe Lily Trail.
- Leading hikes.
- Memberships.
- Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center.
- Mountain News–membership publication.
- Mount Diablo Review–public information publication.

- Wildflower publication.
- Education of school groups.
- Maintaining telescopes.
- Trail map–5th edition.
- State of California trail map.
- Maintaining signs on trails.
- Removing trash.
- Maintaining the web site.



Gary Bogue

"And, we can keep our stationery! The name Mount Diablo will remain Mount Diablo (see accompanying article).

"Our guest speaker is Gary Bogue. Thanks to Edith Valle-Riestra for inviting Gary. Gary needs no introduction, but I will provide a short one. He was the curator of the Lindsay Wildlife Museum in Walnut Creek from 1967 to 1979. For the past 32 years, he has written a popular daily column on pets, wildlife, and environmental issues for the 'Contra Costa Times'. He lives in Benicia with his wife, two cats, a parrot, and a cockatoo. He is the author of the highly acclaimed 'The Raccoon Next Door: Getting Along with Urban Wildlife'. The 'New York Times' identified Gary as 'the Ann Landers of California wildlife—an embedded reporter on the front lines of suburban wildlife. He helps readers navigate the state's increasingly tempestuous relationship between civilization and wilderness'.

"I'd like to close the meeting in memory of Mary Bowerman. Mary was one of the founding members of MDIA almost 32 years ago. She wrote the 'bible' on the plants of Mount Diablo—over 800 specimens.

The Fire Interpretive Trail was named in her honor over 20 years ago. She passed away on August 21, 2005, at the age of 97."



Craig Lion, leading a geology and mining hike.



Annual meeting of MDIA held in Mitchell Canyon. (with an additional guest)



MDIA Web Site

I'm sure that most of you know that MDIA has an interesting and informative web site at <www.mdia.org>. Please view it to see how wonderful it is. The MDIA web site was created by Chris Smith approximately ten years ago. The web site was then turned over to Roi Peers who continues to improve and expand its contents. Chris and his wife Joanie own and operate East Bay Nature (formerly the Wild Bird Center). Chris continues to provide volunteer computer technical support to the web site, as well as "host" the MDIA web site for free. When you are at East Bay Nature, please thank the Smiths for their generous support of MDIA.

East Bay 
NATURE

....Enjoy Nature!

Joanie Smith
Owner

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www.eastbaynature.com

MDIA Hosts School Programs

MDIA docents Steve Elliott and Sue Donecker again assisted this spring with school groups at Mt. Diablo State Park. They hosted interpretative hikes for nine elementary school classes, over 250 children and parents.

In addition, Steve visited 10 classes at elementary schools, providing an introductory program on the geology and ecology of the Park. Earlier in the year, Steve did a three session unit for two third grade classes on Native Americans, early settlers, the history and geology of Mt. Diablo State Park and the nearby area

Expanded Role—Park Publications

Earlier this year MDIA entered into an arrangement to manage the sale of publications at all Park locations. So, in addition to the Mitchell Canyon Visitors Center, MDIA now supplies and processes sales at the Summit Visitors Center, the Park entrance kiosks, the Junction Rangers Station and the Sector Office.

The net proceeds of this new arrangement will be invested in the Park. As money is available, the MDIA Board recently approved the following expenditures over the next year:

- Purchase a new DVD/VCR player for training.
- Make some improvements on the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center building.
- Establish an interpretative display regarding the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) at the Summit Visitors Center. The CCC played a major role in the development of Mt. Diablo State Park.
- Fund a summer intern from the Student Conservation Association (Summer of 2006).
- Install some of the interpretative panels currently in inventory at the Park.

Additional investments are being considered. If you have ideas you think should be evaluated, please contact Steve Elliott at 925-362-8697 or by email at stephen.a.elliott@accenture.com



Park Ranger, Ryen Goering presenting award to Rich McDrew

Poppy Awards

The annual Mount Diablo State Park Volunteer Appreciation Potluck Dinner was held on Saturday evening, December 3rd, at the Contra Costa Farm Bureau in Clayton. About 30 of the 140 Park volunteers attended. Several members of the Park staff attended, as well as the new Park Superintendent, Craig Mattson.

MDIA officers, Steve Elliott and Rich McDrew, were honored with the very prestigious Poppy Awards. Steve received the award for his work the past two years educating school groups about Mount Diablo State Park. Rich received the award for his countless hours of work he has put in on the Trash Removal Project, and other MDIA initiatives. Congratulations to both!

Globe Lily Trail

You've Been Working on the Trail Crew

It's Saturday morning no need to get up and go to work, but not you, you are a member of the Trail Crew.

At Mitchell Canyon the crowds are ready to play, but not you, you are a member of the Trail Crew.

You start with a hike toting big heavy tools, then start moving earth or trimming the trees.

And when you are done you tote the tools back and find a new place for a pain in your back.

Now you are done and look back on the day, to see what was accomplished and you start to feel good.

Globe Lilly trail is now much improved, any park visitor will easily move.

Past the flora and fauna and on to Red Road.

All because you, were a member of the Trail Crew.



Clearing the Globe Lily Trail, moving dirt for better winter runoff.



Trail Crew: Craig Lion, Sue Donecker, Laura Dubey, Fred Donecker, Warren Tighe, Stephen Elliott and not shown Mike Nelson. (left to right)

New Bay Sector Superintendent

I am Craig Mattson, I have 4 children Eric, Tyler, Thomas, and Laura. Eric and Tyler are in College at Chico State and my two younger twins are in High School. My wife Suzanne is a second grade school teacher. I have a home in Arnold in Calaveras County. For the past two years we have lived apart so my children can finish high school in Angels Camp. On weekends I have been going home, a 6 and one half hour drive each way. With me now coming to Mount Diablo the commute is just over two hours. A change that I will enjoy.

I am excited about being at Mount Diablo. The park is beautiful. I am living in the park and I hope to spend many hours hiking and bicycling the park. The parks natural and cultural resources are really special. The special history here is something I am really interested in, especially the building of the park by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930's.

I have worked for California State Parks since 1975 when I was hired as a Park Aid to clean restrooms at Carpinteria State Beach. In 1979 I became a State Park Ranger. Through my career I have worked at Carpinteria State Beach, Lake Oroville, Burney Falls, Castle Crags, Calaveras Big Trees, Columbia, and two stays in the Mojave Desert. My last assignment was at the Mojave Desert where I was Superintendent supervising 7 parks.

We have some really great parks here. It is amazing that with several million people in the Bay Area we have such a beautiful open space park. Lastly, I am excited about working with the great paid and volunteer staff we have here in the Bay Sector.

Craig Mattson, Superintendent
Bay Sector



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>.

Like most organizations, we do some communication via e-mail — it is not only timely but cost effective. Warren Tighe maintains the e-mail directory. If you would like to add your e-mail, or update it, please provide it to Warren at <warrentighe@botmail.com>

MDIA Elects Board of Directors

At our recent Annual Meeting, MDIA elected new members of the Board of Directors. The MDIA Board is a hands-on group of MDIA members who lead the operation of our organization.

Recently elected were: Liede-Marie Haitsma, Burt Bogardus, Craig Lyon, Harry Silcocks, Sue Donecker, Vern Van Vlear and Steve Elliott. Each person will serve a term of 1 to 3 years. These board members will join Warren Tighe, Harvey Brosler, Mike Nelson, Steve Wood and Rich McDrew, whose terms continue.

We welcome interest from any MDIA member in participation on the Board. Just contact Rich McDrew (phone: 925-932-7511 or email: mcdrewrich@astound.net) for more information.

New to the MDIA Board of Directors for 2006 are Sue Donecker, Harry Silcocks, Liede-Marie Haitsma and Verne Van Vlear.

Sue Donecker - Sue is a docent at the MCVC and a loyal member of the MDIA Trail Crew. She is the mother of three grown sons and now has ten grandchildren. Sue has been married to her husband, Fred, for 45 years. She lives in Clayton very near the Park.

Harry Silcocks - A long time member of MDIA, Harry is a devoted supporter of Mt. Diablo. He is active with the East Bay Trail Dogs group, building and maintaining trails of our area for over 10 years. Harry lives in Livermore.

Liede-Marie Haitsma - Liede-Marie is returning to the MDIA Board, having served once before. In addition to MDIA, Liede-Marie is quite active with the Mt. Diablo Astronomical Society. She lives in Walnut Creek.

Verne Van Vlear - A retired financial executive, Verne has a real talent for "the numbers" and has taken on the task of converting MDIA to a new accounting system and handling the ongoing bookkeeping of our organization. On the mountain all the time, Verne is an avid hiker and photographer. He lives in Concord.



Burt Bogardus, Harry Silcocks, Harvey Brosler, Mike Nelson, Verne Van Vlear, Warren Tighe, Liede-Marie Haitsma, Stephen Elliott, Rich McDrew, Sue Donecker, Steve Wood, and Craig Lion. (left to right)



Photo by Mike Nelson, taken from Pleasant Hill.

Proposal to Rename Mount Diablo

In October 2005, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (USBGN), based in Portland, Oregon, voted unanimously to reject a plea from an Oakley, CA, man to change the name of Mount Diablo. The Oakley man objected to the name on religious grounds. There was strong opposition of this proposal from people and organizations from the surrounding communities. For your information, here is the MDIA Board position on the subject, as provided to the USBGN in April 2005.

"MDIA is strongly opposed to renaming Mount Diablo. The place name is steeped in history and tradition. There are many stories regarding the origin of the name 'Mount Diablo', but conventional wisdom and most common rendition is as follows (from the MDIA publication entitled '51 Uncommon Place Names of Mount Diablo State Park'): 'The origin of the name invokes speculation. The most popular version revolves around the Spanish word diablo meaning devil. This reference is believed to stem from an 1805 Spanish military expedition that went in search of runaway Native Californians from San Francisco's Mission Dolores. The Spanish soldiers caught sight of the runaways hiding in a willow thicket near what is now Buchanan Field in Concord, and decided to wait until the next morning before capturing them. During the night, the group of Native Californians mysteriously escaped. In response, the Spanish dubbed the site Monte del Diablo, meaning thicket of the devil. Subsequently, English speaking individuals believed monte translated to mountain, and thus, tagged the summit of the nearby mountain Mount Diablo. Subsequently, generations of visitors to the mountain thought the name to be appropriate because the trip to the summit was a devil of a climb.'

"So, in reality, this place name is actually derived from a misinterpretation of a word, and was never intended or construed as derogatory.

"It is important to mention that in 1982, the National Park Service designated Mount Diablo State Park as a National Natural Landmark. The citation on the plaque reads: 'This site possesses exceptional

value as an illustration of the Nation's natural heritage and contributes to a better understanding of man's environment.'

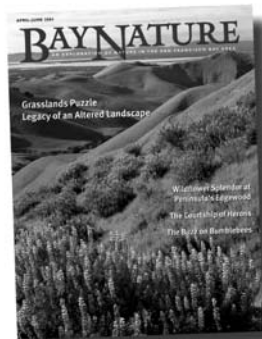
"Mount Diablo was the U.S. Geological Survey Point beginning in 1851 that established the meridian and base line measurements for property boundaries for most of Northern California and Nevada.

"Mount Diablo is a place name that is extensively used locally and statewide (businesses, organizations, hospitals, etc.). It is interesting and important to note that our local telephone directory has 47 separate listings that have Mount Diablo as the first two words of their business/organization name. Diablo is the first word in 298 business/organizations. Area city and county governments use the name Mount Diablo extensively (streets, colleges, publications, etc.). A town at the foot of Mount Diablo is named Diablo. Would Mount Diablo be used so extensively these past 150 years if the words denoted something offensive?

"Mount Diablo State Park receives about 700,000 visitors each year. Over the past 31 years, MDIA's members have talked to literally thousands of people at the MDIA Visitor Center as docents on hikes and nature walks. Peoples of indigenous origin occasionally visit Mount Diablo and go on MDIA hikes. To my knowledge, never has anyone until now, referred to the place name Mount Diablo as being derogatory or offensive."

"A must-read!" — *Sunset Magazine*

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Mount Diablo Interpretive Association
Membership Application

Membership Dues are Deductible to the Full Extent by Law

Membership Category (check one)

Make Checks Payable to "MDIA"

- _____ Student
- _____ Senior 55+ \$15
- _____ Individual \$25
- _____ Family \$40
- _____ Sustaining \$50
- _____ Contributing \$100
- _____ Lifetime \$500

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