

# MOUNT DIABLO INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION

## 2015

# ANNUAL REPORT



*View of Mount Diablo from Amphitheater Trail • DERECK LOVE*



Preservation through Education

P.O. Box 346, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0346 • 925-927-7222 • [www.mdia.org](http://www.mdia.org)

# Message from the Board

The year 2015 was busy and successful for Mount Diablo Interpretive Association (MDIA). A record 10,500 visitors passed through the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center, which is open on weekends and some holidays.

Fortunately, during the past year, the park saw a significant increase in the number of individuals attending the Volunteers In Park Program (VIPP) training to become Mount Diablo State Park (MDSP) volunteers. MDIA encourages volunteers to complete this VIPP training, and also to consider volunteering for MDIA activities that support its operations.

As you read this annual report, you will see that, as in past years, MDIA helped organize and fund many interpretive activities within the park. In addition, in 2015, the board focused on streamlining some of its operational processes to make tasks easier for volunteers and park staff alike to handle the increasing number of visitors in the park.

## MDIA BOARD

The MDIA board consists of up to 16 MDIA member volunteers who are elected for one- to three-year terms, serving up to a maximum of nine consecutive years. The board develops and reassesses policies for the operation of the organization; monitors MDIA's financial health, programs, and overall performance; and contributes resources to meet the needs of the park and the organization.

Serving on the board provides members the opportunity to have frequent direct contact with park staff regarding park activities and future considerations. Board members have the decision-making authority to meaningfully influence the short- and long-term direction of MDIA. Serving on the board also provides an opportunity to use one's personal and professional skills to support this all-volunteer organization in lieu of a paid executive director and staff.

We deeply appreciate the dedication and service contributed by board members Leslie Contreras and Maria Tice, who each completed a consecutive nine-year term on the board at the end of 2015.

Maria retired at the end of 2015 as MDIA's bookkeeper. The bookkeeping effort generally flies under the radar... unless something goes wrong. Maria's work was detailed and thorough, and thus remained under the radar. A public "thank you" to Maria is well deserved for doing such an excellent job!

Leslie co-managed the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center for many years, in addition to leading, coordinating, and advertising dozens of sponsored nature and destination hikes in the park each year. She also used her artistic talent to create interpretive displays at both the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center and the Junction Ranger Station. MDIA is fortunate that Leslie will continue to lend her expertise in these areas.

## LOOKING AHEAD

In addition to visitors from around the U.S. and the world, every year Mount Diablo State Park attracts more and more visitors striving to experience a variety of outdoor activities close to their homes. MDIA continues to focus on its mission of educating and assisting these visitors as well as supporting the park in preserving and maintaining its nearly 20,000 acres of parkland. We welcome all to join us in this rewarding endeavor.

*Mike Woodring*  
MDIA President



*Mount Diablo Jewelflower* • MIKE WOODRING

## FINANCES AND DONATIONS

In 2015, MDIA continued to do what it does best: support Mount Diablo State Park. With the sales of merchandise, donations, membership contributions, and volunteer contributions, MDIA was able to provide public education and contribute funds to support the park. As an all-volunteer organization, only 6.75% of MDIA's annual revenue was spent on administrative expense.

MDIA contributions to the park for 2015 were close to \$74,000 and included funding for the following projects:

- Daily Park Aide staffing at the Summit Visitor Center
- Electrical wiring upgrade at the Junction Ranger Station
- Refurbishing the restrooms at the Macedo Ranch Staging Area
- Refurbishing the restrooms near the Summit Visitor Center
- Building the Rock City stone steps and restoring the Diablo stoves
- New telescopes on the Mary Bowerman Trail, courtesy of Tesoro
- Trail maintenance and trail signage materials
- Rock City audio guide
- School and Junior Ranger programs
- Equipment purchases for park volunteer activities
- Interpretive displays
- Production of the new *Hiker's Guide to Mount Diablo State Park*

Sales of T-shirts, hats, bike jerseys, books, publications, hiking maps, and even animal puppets provide funding for many of MDIA's ongoing projects. The majority of sales are made at the Summit Visitor Center, but MDIA also

sells various publications and merchandise at the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center, park entrance stations, several wholesale locations, online at [mdia.org](http://mdia.org), and via mail order.

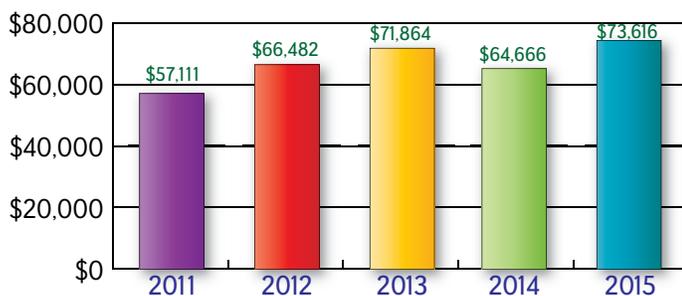
The rest of MDIA's revenue comes primarily from memberships and donations. The annual memberships provide the organization with ongoing support and a pool of potential volunteers and others who wish to support the beautiful mountain and park. Donations are made by both businesses and individuals. The following major donors gave MDIA contributions of \$500 or more:

■ Tesoro .....	\$15,000
■ California State Parks Foundation .....	10,000
■ CSAA Insurance .....	2,000
■ Contra Costa Cycling Club .....	1,230
■ Chevron Matching Funds, Erin Wilson .....	1,500
■ S.A. Landwehr .....	1,000
■ Silicon Valley Community Foundation .....	986
■ Concord-Mt. Diablo Trail Ride Association .....	680
■ Wicked Events .....	600
■ Kenneth Jordan, PG&E .....	540

MDIA's new Square system was introduced in 2015 to simplify merchandise sales transactions and credit card processing at the Summit and Mitchell Canyon visitor centers. It also enables efficient input for accounting purposes. Special thanks go to Mike Woodring, who spent countless hours researching, setting up, implementing, and providing training for MDIA's Square system.

Nancy Topp has graciously agreed to handle most of MDIA's bookkeeping and accounting functions going forward. Because of these and other dedicated volunteers, MDIA can continue to be a good steward and properly account for the public and private funds received.

**Annual Contributions to the Park from MDIA  
2011–2015**



**MDIA Sources of Revenue for 2015**



## EDUCATION AND JUNIOR RANGER PROGRAMS

Every year, Mount Diablo State Park welcomes many students on school field trips. Volunteers from MDIA assist with hosting these school tours and other educational programs, such as Scout outings.

MDIA continued in 2015 as the co-sponsor of the park's Junior Ranger Program. This program, for children ranging from 7 to 12 years of age, includes a variety of offerings. The beginning Junior Ranger Program is a five-session program on topics such as geology, plants, animals, California Native Americans, prehistoric times, and the history of Mount Diablo. Participants earn weekly awards and a Junior Ranger Badge and Certificate upon completion of the program.

Junior Ranger II and other advanced programs focus on more in-depth, hands-on activities and more challenging hikes. During 2015, the park offered a program on California Native Americans, and the group completed several related hikes in the park.



*Junior Ranger Nick Enders receives certificate from Volunteer Instructor Steve Elliott*

## HIKES



*Ranger John Hardcastle trains docents to identify feral pig activity • CLAYTON WORSDELL*

*From left: Jenn Roe, Clayton Worsdell, Diane Smith, Helen Reznick, Mike Woodring, Dereck Love, Jan Enderle, Christine Hagelin, Ruth Ann Kishi, Sue Donecker, Jake Van Akkeren, Leslie Bartolic, Staci Hobbet, Phil Reed, Leslie Contreras, Steve Beatty, Ranger John Hardcastle*

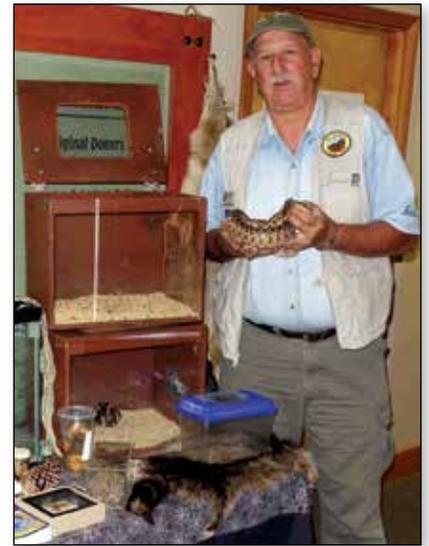
In 2015, MDIA/Volunteers In Park Program docents led 83 guided hikes for the general public, students, and private groups. They consisted of wildflower walks, butterfly walks, geology tours, and the popular summer night hikes. Longer destination hikes, from 5 to 15 miles, were also offered for the more intrepid hikers. Tarantula treks started in mid-August and

ended in mid-October. A total of 559 participants joined 22 docent-led tarantula treks.

Naturalist Michael Marchiano continued his popular and well-attended programs with eight nature presentations at the Summit Visitor Center, seven campfire presentations, and 12 Mitchell Canyon outreach events.

The docent training program this year included 11 mini-hikes, which ranged from finding animal tracks and scat to searching for galls. Leaders of these educational hikes were park rangers, experienced docents, and outside experts. The training hikes added to the docents' knowledge about Mount Diablo.

Recognition is given to Karen Barrett, Leslie Bartholic, Steve Beatty, Jim Bily, Burt Bogardus, Connie Chiba, Joyce Chin, Leslie Contreras, Sue Donecker, Jan Enderle, Christine Hagelin, Lucy Henderson, Staci Hobbet, Jim Holmes, Ruth Ann Kishi, Ken Lavin, Dereck Love, Michael Marchiano, Megan Madahar, Rich McDrew, David Morris, Phil Reed, Helen Reznick, Jenn Roe, Dan Specht, Karen Shackleton, Yulan Tong, Jake Van Akkeren, Liz Watson, Denise Wight, Erin Wilson, Mike Woodring, and Clayton Worsdell. It is through their dedicated effort that the hikes program continues to be a vibrant and popular asset to the park and the public.



Naturalist Michael Marchiano and gopher snake  
• BRUCE ERICKSON

## MERCHANDISING

The year 2015 was another excellent merchandising year for MDIA, producing continued steady sales revenue for investment in Mount Diablo State Park. The *Hiker's Guide to Mount Diablo State Park* was introduced and has proven to be very popular. The *Trail Map of Mount Diablo State Park* was reprinted and also continued its robust sales as both a standalone product and as a handy accompaniment to the *Hiker's Guide*.

To handle the increase in visitors to the park, operations at both the Mitchell Canyon and the Summit visitor centers have been streamlined through the introduction of Square for processing retail transactions. This new software application allows docents and staff to accept credit cards as easily as cash at all locations and also gives MDIA the capability to more efficiently manage accounting.

## MITCHELL CANYON VISITOR CENTER

Owned by Mount Diablo State Park and operated by MDIA, the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center is the cornerstone of the Mitchell Canyon Staging Area. The staging area is a key backcountry starting point for hiking, biking, and equestrian pursuits in the park, as well as a convenient shaded location for a picnic next to Mitchell Creek. The MCVV provides displays on park attractions, natural history, and other related topics. It is a primary source of hike information for many visitors.

Volunteers staff the MCVV, set up displays, manage merchandise sales, provide regular housekeeping, and perform most of the facility's maintenance. During 2015, MDIA funded work on exhibit upgrades and added new features at the MCVV.

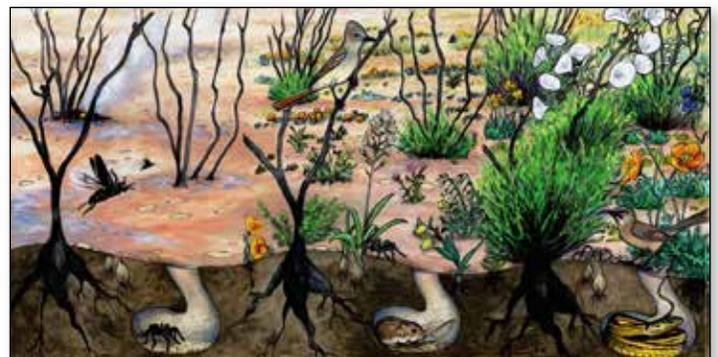
## OUTREACH AND PUBLICITY

Representatives of MDIA participated in a variety of tabling events during 2015 in an effort to raise awareness of Mount Diablo State Park and MDIA. Tabling events included the Clayton Library Creekside Arts Festival; Caring for our Creeks: A Gathering Hosted by the Walnut Creek Watershed Council; the Concord Mt. Diablo Trail Ride Association Mattson Walk and Ride; and Clayton Clean-Up Day.

Presentations about Mount Diablo State Park and MDIA were made to Clayton Valley Concord Sunrise Rotary Club, Walnut Creek Rotary Club, and the Rossmoor Lions Club.

In the October-December 2015 issue of *Bay Nature* magazine, MDIA helped fund a fascinating illustration, "The Hidden World of Chaparral," which highlights nature writer Joan Hamilton's feature story on the recovery of Mount Diablo from the Morgan Fire of 2013.

The fall release of the *Hiker's Guide to Mount Diablo State Park* generated some welcome publicity in local newspapers, magazines, and TV stations. As a result, sales of the new book were brisk at the park visitor centers and local bookstores during the winter holiday season.



Bay Nature illustration, "The Hidden World of Chaparral"

## PARK DOCENTS

Many members of MDIA play an important role in the park as docents under the California State Parks' Volunteers In Parks Program. Volunteer docents provide assistance to visitors at the Summit Visitor Center, at the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center, as roving trail docents, and as hike leaders.

During 2015, park docents volunteered thousands of hours and hosted 10,500 visitors at the MCVVC, a new record year. Docents helped hundreds more visitors at the Summit Visitor Center and on the trails, reported trail and park upkeep issues, and responded to visitors in need of assistance.

## PARK MAINTENANCE

The Volunteer Maintenance Group completed several major projects this year. At Juniper Campground, the volunteers refurbished the restrooms by repainting all exterior wood. They also completed work begun by Earth Day volunteers to replace and paint historical siding on the Rock City restrooms.

Major work was completed at the Upper Summit restrooms where the electrical system was updated, interior light fixtures were added, hand dryers and mirrors were replaced, outdated heaters were removed, and tiles were replaced. The Junction Ranger Station's electrical system was also upgraded.

In 2015, after several years of weekly hard labor, dedicated volunteers Paul Cardinet, Conrad Lowry, and Jerry Schweickert finished artfully crafting a series of stone steps in Rock City. The steps replaced a severely eroded section of the Trail Through Time.



Rock City stone steps • CONRAD LOWRY

## WEBSITE

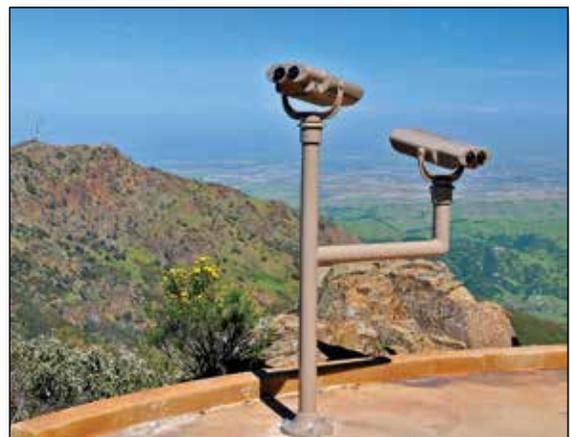


The MDIA website, [mdia.org](http://mdia.org), continues to be a vital source of information for visitors to the park. The website's calendar provides current information on upcoming docent-led hikes on the mountain and provides visitors with a means to register for these popular events. In addition, regularly updated home page alerts keep visitors apprised of trail closures, water restrictions, and other important park announcements.

Online sales through the website have contributed to robust sales of the new *Hiker's Guide to Mount Diablo State Park* and other MDIA publications and merchandise.

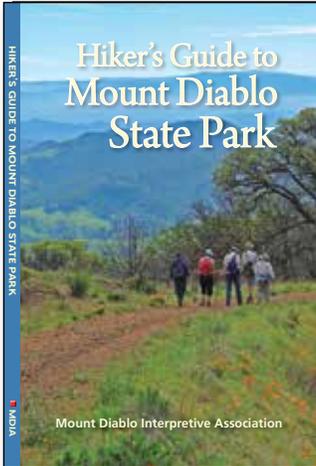


Rock City stone steps artistry • CONRAD LOWRY



New binoculars on Mary Bowerman Trail • DERECK LOVE

## PUBLICATIONS



In October 2015, MDIA introduced its latest publication, *Hiker's Guide to Mount Diablo State Park*. This beautiful, full-color 150-page book features comprehensive descriptions, maps, and profiles for 50 hikes in the park, including several new, never-before-described routes. Many volunteers devoted countless time and effort to create this publication to enhance visitors' enjoyment of the park. Copies of the book are for sale at the park's visitor centers, online at MDIA's website, and at various bookstores in the East Bay.

Originally created in 1985 by Park Ranger John Pelonio, "Some Common Mammal Tracks of Mount Diablo State Park," a free black-and-white brochure for park visitors, was updated in 2015. The brochure features new illustrations of key animals in the park and their tracks by volunteer artist Mike Nelson and text by volunteer writer Debbie McKeown.



A new MDIA bookmark was designed and distributed in 2015 to help publicize MDIA. The bookmark highlights four plants unique to the Mount Diablo region. The photos were contributed by Kevin Hints.

MDIA continued to publish the park's complimentary *Mount Diablo Review* newsletter for park visitors and the *Mountain News* newsletter for MDIA members. Both newsletters are published in spring and fall.

In addition, four e-newsletters (sent April, July, October, and December) were emailed to members and others interested in receiving MDIA email communications. The intent is to communicate timely, interesting information about the park and MDIA to supporters who request these communications.

## TRASH REMOVAL AND HABITAT RESTORATION

Over 15 years ago, MDIA and Volunteers In Park Program volunteers along with Mount Diablo State Park management (Larry Ferri and Dave Matthews) initially identified and documented 113 Trash Removal Project (TRP) cleanup sites in the park. The group officially began work on those sites on May 20, 2001. To date, 81 sites have been cleaned up and closed out in the park.

A major accomplishment this year was the removal of over 10 tons of unsightly old water pipe in Sycamore Creek along half a mile of Sycamore Creek Road.

In 2015, 2,222 volunteer hours were devoted to the TRP initiative in Mount Diablo State Park, almost doubling the 2014 hours of 1,310. Since the inception of the project in 2001, a total of 30,969 hours have been logged. TRP volunteers removed for recycling or reuse in the park the following (not including countless trash bags of bottles, cans, papers, etc.):

In 2015		Since 2001	
Wood .....	90 board feet	Wood .....	63,544 board feet
Metal.....	44,503 pounds	Metal.....	190,504 pounds
Barbed wire .....	21,925 feet	Barbed wire .....	1,143,331 feet
Fence posts .....	640	Fence posts .....	21,676
Tires .....	49	Tires .....	755
Cement .....	4,925 pounds	Cement .....	38,611 pounds



*Volunteers remove old water pipes from Sycamore Creek*

● MIKE WOODRING

## Mount Diablo Interpretive Association

Mount Diablo Interpretive Association (MDIA) is a non-profit, all-volunteer organization that supports the California Department of Parks and Recreation in maintaining and interpreting Mount Diablo State Park for its hundreds of thousands of annual visitors. MDIA works side by side with State Park staff to enhance the visitors' experience and appreciation of the park.

## 1974 MDIA Founding Members

Sam Smoker	Mary Bowerman
Paul Carlson	Betty Zilen
Howard Knight	Ron Edwards
Joanne Dean	Phil Gordon
Beverly Clemson	William Bland
Frank Valle-Riestra	John Werminski
Ed Earl	Miles Standish

## 2016 MDIA Board of Directors

	TERM EXPIRES
Mike Woodring, President	2018
Rich McDrew, Vice President	2017
Jim Bily, Secretary	2017
Leslie Dawson, Treasurer	2016
Sue Donecker	2017
Jim Holmes	2016
Bill Kariava	2018
Ruth Ann Kishi	2018
Ken Lavin	2016
Jim McBride	2018
Jim Mitchell	2016
Nancy Topp	2017
Liz Watson	2017

## 2016 MDIA Committee Leads

Archives	Nancy Topp
Contracts	Ken Lavin
Corporate Governance	Jim McBride
Fundraising and Grant Writing	Rich McDrew
Hikes	Liz Watson
Interpretive Displays	Mike Woodring
Marketing, Outreach, and Publicity	Rich McDrew
Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center	Sue Donecker
Membership	Liz Watson
Merchandising	Jim Holmes
Nominating	Rich McDrew
Park Maintenance	Jim Mitchell
Publications	Ruth Ann Kishi
Telescopes	Rich McDrew
Trail Maintenance and Adoption	Jim Bily
Trail Signage	Mike Woodring
Trash Removal, Habitat Restoration	Rich McDrew
Volunteer Coordinator	Jim Holmes
Website and Social Media	Jim Mitchell

## Life and Associate Members

Thank you for your generosity and your commitment to Mount Diablo State Park!

Judy Adler	Michael Marchiano
Scott Anderson	Rich McDrew
Sheldon Berz	Larry & Kathy McEwen
Lenore Bezzerides	Ray Mengel
Burt Bogardus	Nancy Miller
Gary Bogue	Gordon Mills
Ron Castaldo Family	Jim Mitchell
Joseph Cavaness	Walter & Linda Moeller
Allen & Lynda Chasnoff	John Mott
Leslie Contreras	Shirley Nootbaar
Leslie Dawson	Tom Nootbaar
Daymond-Hanna Family	Dave Peck
Jim DeKloe	Aaron Porter
Dinesh & Joy Desai	Phil Reed
Fred & Sue Donecker	Brian Rubino
Steve Elliott	Barbara Sacks
William Espey & Family	Linda Sanford
Tom & Carol Evans	Karl Schindhelm
Sharyn Fernandez	Jerry Schweickert
Spencer & Rena Fulweiler	Laurie Shapley
Glade Gaffney	Richard & Sandra Smith
Jay-Marie Garcia	Sam Smoker
John Jeffrey Green	Sandor & Faye Straus
Claudia & Scott Hein	Stephen Taylor
Mary Isreal	Brian & Carolyn Thiessen
Ken Jordan	Jim Thompson
Bob Justice	Maria Tice
Judith Green Kelly	Yulan Tong
John Kinney	Tom Torlakson
Sharon Landwehr	Frank & Edith Valle-Riestra
Carol Lane	Jake Van Akkeren & Leslie Bartolic
Marjorie J. Lee	Verne Van Vlear
Peggy Lyon	Mike Woodring & Ruth Ann Kishi

## Membership

At the end of 2015, MDIA had 335 memberships:

63	Life
31	Contributing
33	Family
29	Individual
173	Senior
3	Student
3	Associate

Thank you for your continued support of MDIA and Mount Diablo State Park.



Preservation through Education