

# Mount Diablo Interpretive Association 2011 Annual Report



CARL NIELSON

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MOUNT DIABLO INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION

**Preservation Through Education**

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# President's Message



JIM MITCHELL, PRESIDENT

While the threat of state parks closing throughout California has turned into reality and no solution to the parks' budget cuts has been identified, on Mount Diablo the tarantulas appeared from their underground burrows last fall as they have every year for as long as we can remember; the wildflowers continue to bloom after the spring rains; and visitors continue to come for relaxation, inspiration, and enjoyment of the wonderful natural open space that we are so lucky to have so close to us.



KEVIN HINTSA

## MDIA'S ROLE IN THE PARK

Despite budget cuts, the visitor's experience at Mount Diablo remains mostly unchanged and, in some areas, even upgraded mainly due to your support of MDIA through memberships, donations, and purchases of merchandise at our visitor centers and website. MDIA continues to be extremely active in the state park and plays a critical role, side by side with the dedicated park staff, to fill gaps that the state's budget cuts have created. Whether it be sponsoring and leading guided hikes, providing docents for the Summit and Mitchell Canyon visitor centers, producing publications such as the Trail Map, *Mount Diablo* photo book, and *Mountain Lore*, managing the park's Junior Ranger Program, or hosting student events, MDIA is now more than ever a major part of the park's operations, necessary to maintain the level of experience park visitors deserve.

Since MDIA was established in 1974, passionate individuals have contributed both their money and precious time to make Mount Diablo one of the premier parks in the state parks system and MDIA one of the premier cooperative associations in the state. As president, I am proud again this year to be able to report on our continued success and thank all of those who have shown such generosity this year to help us accomplish so much.

## MDIA BOARD

MDIA is operated by a small group of board members and volunteers with no paid staff. This allows us to invest essentially all contributions directly back into Mount Diablo State Park. I want to thank the current board members, who are listed in this report, as well as retiring board members Nancy Topp, Roi Peers, Clayton Worsdell, and Gary Meneghin, for the significant time and effort they have spent this year supporting MDIA. Board members take on

the responsibility of initiating and managing programs from beginning to end and are the glue that holds the organization together. Without their dedication we would not be able to fulfill the many goals of MDIA. I would also like to thank all MDIA member volunteers for the time they spend working in the park on so many ongoing programs and initiatives.

## INVESTMENTS IN THE PARK

MDIA continues to be financially strong, with a loyal number of members who continue to support the park and the many important MDIA-sponsored programs. In this report, you will read about the significant investments MDIA made in the park last year and the programs we are pursuing this year. Of note are MDIA's funding for park aides to keep the Summit Visitor Center open seven days a week, continued work on both the interior and exterior of the Summit Visitor Center, new interpretive displays, and an exciting complete redesign of the MDIA website that includes a new MDIA events calendar, web store, and audio and visual "tours" of the park.

While the members of MDIA and state park staff work diligently to protect our beautiful mountain park, nature continues to reward us with inspiring views, fields of blooms, migrating birds, and the occasional spotting of a bobcat. I encourage you to get involved with MDIA, and please let all of your friends know about the wonderful work we are doing and how they, too, can get involved. But most importantly, please visit Mount Diablo State Park and let it energize you. I look forward to seeing you there.

Jim Mitchell  
MDIA President

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS • FINANCES

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND JUNIOR RANGERS

Every year, Mount Diablo State Park welcomes hundreds of students on educational field trips. Volunteers from MDIA assist with hosting some of these visits. During 2011, volunteers handled school tours and scout programs for the park, elementary through college. In addition, volunteer docents made presentations to classes at local schools. MDIA also participated in a variety of community fairs and exhibited at a teacher conference. We also donated selected educational materials to elementary school classes.

MDIA continued in 2011 as the sponsor of the park's Junior Ranger program. This program, for children 7 to 12 years of age, is a comprehensive series of sessions on Mount Diablo throughout the year. Junior Rangers I is a five-session program that includes topics such as geology, plants, animals, California Indians, prehistoric times, and the history of



Mount Diablo. Participants earn weekly awards and a Junior Ranger badge and certificate at completion. The subsequent Junior Ranger II and other advanced programs focus on more in-depth, hands-on activities and more challenging hikes.

During 2011, approximately 120 children and their parents participated in Junior Rangers, our largest year ever. Programs included the following:

- Saturday and Tuesday offerings of Junior Rangers I
- A hike to the waterfalls
- A trail work day
- The California Indians Program
- A tarantula hike
- Saturday and Tuesday offerings of Junior Rangers II

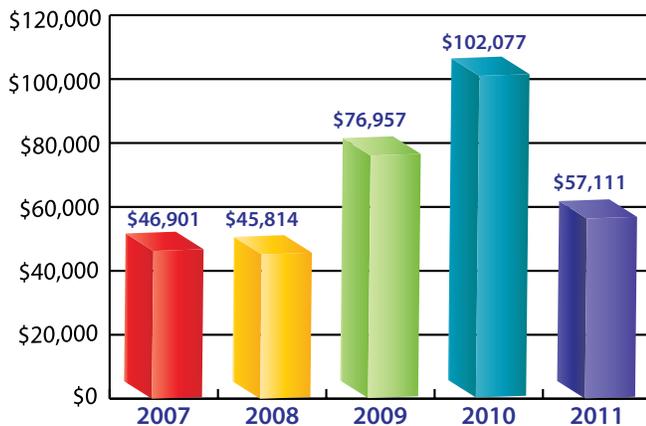
FINANCES

MDIA continues to be very strong financially. A solid base of donations, membership, and merchandise sales provides monies for ongoing park programs and new investments in Mount Diablo State Park.

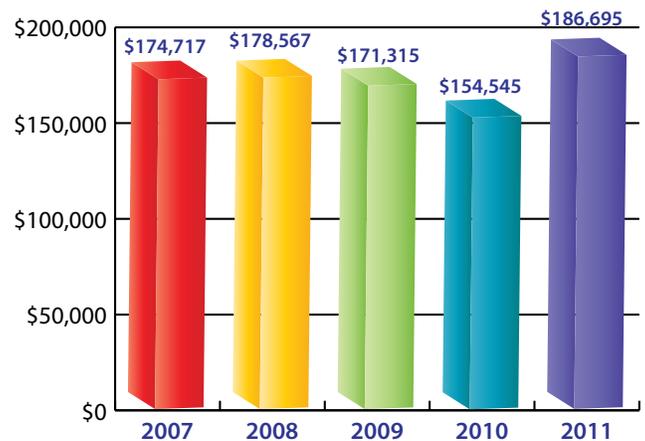
Total operating revenue for 2011 was approximately \$183,000 with net income of approximately \$35,000. Product sales more than doubled from 2010 due to the release of the new *Mount Diablo* photo book. This money will be invested in the park over the next several years.

MDIA contributions to the park were over \$57,000. This included such things as purchasing new equipment and tools, funding staff, new publications, and facility improvements. During 2011, 96% of our expenditures went to programs, investments, and other contributions consistent with the mission of MDIA. Only 4% was administrative expense.

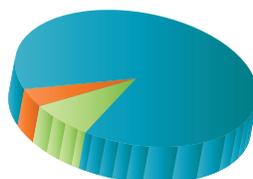
Annual Contributions to the Park from MDIA 2007–2011



MDIA Net Worth 2007–2011



MDIA Sources of Revenue for 2011



- 8% Donations • \$14,200
- 4% Memberships • \$7,300
- 88% Product Sales • \$161,500

FUNDRAISING • INTERPRETIVE DISPLAYS • HIKES • INVESTMENTS

FUNDRAISING

The core donations supporting the programs of MDIA come from individual contributors. Many of these are cash donations that individuals routinely make every year. Others are non-cash donations of materials and supplies, even cars. MDIA is grateful for this recurring base of support.

MDIA receives funding from other sources, such as corporate matching funds. During 2011, the following companies made donations to MDIA on behalf of their employees: Chevron, Prudential, Wells Fargo, PG&E, Bank of America, and Clorox. Another source of support comes from foundations and Bay Area giving programs, such as The Combined Federal Campaign and the Invest in Others Foundation.

Major gifts help fund key initiatives each year. During 2011, our largest gift came from the California State Parks Foundation. The California State Parks Foundation grant of \$4,000 funded Earth Day projects. Other large donors during the year included the following:

- AAA Insurance \$2,500
- Sharon Landwehr \$1,000
- Clorox \$ 800
- Contra Costa Cycling Club \$ 500
- Original Film \$ 500
- Carol Lane \$ 500

In addition to cash, MDIA receives a variety of non-cash donations each year that are much appreciated. For example, Scott Hein, Shirley Nootbaar, and Stephen Joseph donated art work. Dan Weiss donated a large amount of postage. And we also received two nice donations, from Mark Stott and Susan/Willy Mautner, through the MDIA Vehicle Donation Program.



MIKE WOODRING

Clayton Worsdell. Their efforts keep the hike-leading program alive. In 2012, we plan to schedule more hikes in the busy wildflower season.

INVESTMENTS

In addition to helping fund ongoing programs, publications, and services, MDIA makes investments in new areas every year. During 2011, MDIA's investments were in the following areas:

- Completion of the interior renovation of the Summit Visitor Center
- New interpretive displays at the Summit and Mitchell Canyon visitor centers
- Funding the operation of the Summit Visitor Center
- Publications:
  - *Mount Diablo* photo book
  - *Mountain Lore*, new history and place names book
- Continued work on other new publications:
  - *Mount Diablo Guide*, 3rd edition
  - *Hiker's Guide to Mount Diablo State Park*
- Beginning work on the next edition of the *Mount Diablo Trail Map*
- New fencing and other Earth Day projects
- New interpretive teaching aids
- Volunteer vests, docent shirts, and hats
- New equipment and facilities; in particular, a new storage trailer
- Beginning work on a redesigned website

For 2012, planned investments are expected to total approximately \$70,000.

INTERPRETIVE DISPLAYS

For the first half of the year, MDIA created a display at the Junction Ranger Station featuring the recent Summit Visitor Center renovation. A display highlighting various photos and text from the *Mount Diablo* photo book, by photographer Stephen Joseph and writer Linda Rimac Colberg, was exhibited at the Junction Ranger Station beginning in November.

HIKES

In 2011, MDIA/Volunteers In Park (VIP) docents led 68 hikes in the park for the general public, students, and private groups. They ranged from wildflower walks and geology tours to hikes all over the mountain. Our most popular hike again this year was the tarantula trek. We led 42 events with over 700 participants. Recognition should be given to Karen Barrett, Leslie Bartholic, Helene Cahill, Dave Caniglia, Joyce Chin, Elise Ching, Leslie Contreras, Sue Donecker, Christine Hagelin, Janess Hanson, Lucy Henderson, Jim Holmes, Ruth Ann Kishi, Ken Lavin, Michael Marchiano, Kathy McEwen, Larry McEwen, Phil Reed, Jody Sherrard, Yulan Tong, Jake Van Akkeren, Denise Wight, Mike Woodring, and

MEMBERSHIP • MERCHANDISING • PARK DOCENTS

MEMBERSHIP

As of the end of 2011, MDIA has 300 members:

- 46 Lifetime Members
- 20 Contributing Members
- 43 Families
- 39 Individuals
- 143 Seniors
- 9 Students

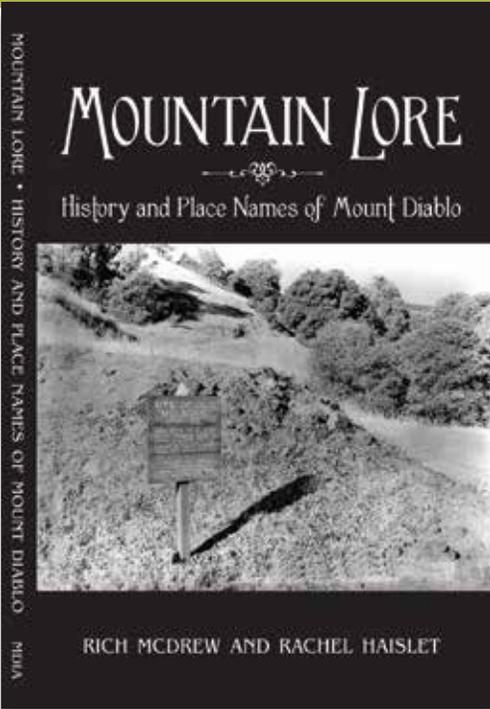
MDIA's membership renewal rate is greater than 95%, and 31 new members joined MDIA in 2011! Thanks to all of you who so loyally support MDIA and its goal of providing interpretive resources for Mount Diablo State Park.

MERCHANDISING

Excellent park attendance, new merchandise offerings, and good inventory control resulted in the best year to date in wholesale, retail, and web sales. Total revenue increased by more than 15% across the board. Sales were slow at the beginning of the year due to bad weather and park closures, but were overcome by the highest volume of sales to date during the spring and summer months. New products included the *Mount Diablo* photo book, *Mountain Lore* book, mountain scene DVDs, plastic bookmarks, fossil necklaces, and animal hats and magnets.

Almost half of our vendors went out of business last year because of the economic climate, but we were able to find alternate vendors providing the same merchandise at lower markups to prevent sales price increases and, in many cases, resulting in actual reductions in our sales prices. For example, we were able to reduce the price of our hiking sticks by 40%.

In 2012, our new website ordering system should increase the ease and quantity of web sales. We also hope to increase the



diversity of mountain scene postcards and will add the historical botanical flower posters and the Mount Diablo bike jerseys to our selection of items for sale.

PARK DOCENTS

Members of MDIA play an important role at the park as docents under the Volunteers in Parks Program. Volunteer docents provide assistance to visitors at the Summit Visitor Center, at the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center (MCVC), and as rovers on the trails. They also lead many hikes for the park.

During 2011, docent volunteers contributed almost 4,000 hours and hosted about 9,500 visitors at the MCVC, an 11% increase over 2010. This is the fifth consecutive year of visitation increases to the MCVC.

Docents helped many hundreds more visitors at the Summit and on the trails, provided reporting of trail and park upkeep needs, and responded to visitors in need of assistance. They also hosted a variety of geology, tarantula, wildflower, and family hikes.

To support the docent program, MDIA provided several training sessions:

- History of Mount Diablo, by Ken Lavin, January 15
- Preparedness and Safety for Hike Leaders, by Roland Gaebert, January 30 and February 12
- Introduction to Wildflowers, by Yulan Tong, April 23 and April 30

Owned and operated by the state park, the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center is the anchor of the Mitchell Canyon Staging Area. It is a key backcountry staging area at the park for hiking, biking, and equestrian pursuits. The MCVC provides displays on park attractions, natural history and other topics. It is the main source of hike information for many visitors.

MDIA is pleased to provide volunteers to staff the MCVC. During 2011, MDIA funded, and MDIA members worked on, exhibit upgrades and added new features at the MCVC. Volunteers also managed merchandise sales and handled most of the facility's regular housekeeping and maintenance.



Mount Diablo State Park bookmark

## PUBLICATIONS • PUBLICITY &amp; OUTREACH

## PUBLICATIONS

MDIA continues to publish the park's complimentary *Mount Diablo Review* newsletter twice a year. This newsletter is provided to park visitors and is distributed to businesses and organizations with a nexus to the park. MDIA also published its biannual MDIA membership newsletter, the *Mountain News*, along with Frank's Favorite Hikes, by MDIA founding member Frank Valle-Riestra.

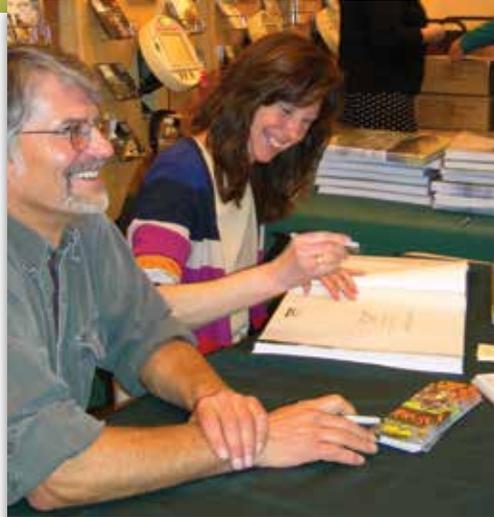
In 2011, MDIA introduced the following publications:

- *Mount Diablo, The Extraordinary Life and Landscapes of a California Treasure*, by renowned local landscape photographer Stephen Joseph and talented local writer Linda Rimac Colberg.
- *Mountain Lore: History and Place Names of Mount Diablo*, by former MDIA president Rich McDrew and student volunteer Rachel Haislet.

In 2011, work also continued on the *Hiker's Guide to Mount Diablo State Park* and on the third edition of the *Mount Diablo Guide*.

## PUBLICITY AND OUTREACH

In the first quarter of 2011, we retired our well-traveled but worn tabletop display. We replaced it with a contemporary, engaging portable tri-fold display featuring color photographs of Mount Diablo's magnificent landscapes and flora and fauna. The display also includes photographs showcasing several MDIA activities in the park and spotlights MDIA's mission statement in text. Additionally, we designed and produced a distinctive bookmark to accompany existing MDIA brochures and promotional materials handed out at public events. The popular bookmark features four colorful photos



Stephen Joseph and Linda Rimac Colberg at Walnut Creek Barnes & Noble book signing

representing Mount Diablo on one side and a list of ten favorite hikes in the park on the other.

Our largest and most ambitious publicity efforts in 2011 were focused on the book sales and signing events associated with the MDIA-published *Mount Diablo* fine art photography book. Linda Rimac Colberg, the book's author and a staunch MDIA advocate, orchestrated and publicized multiple book signings and events with the help of MDIA volunteers. She and Stephen Joseph, the book's photographer, completed 35 events in 2011, many of which included the contributions of MDIA volunteers who transported books, displayed books, and handled book sales and receipts. *Mount Diablo*



was introduced on Saturday, March 12, 2011, at the Walnut Creek Barnes & Noble at a highly publicized and well-attended book release event.

After the initial launch, book events were held throughout Central Contra Costa in such venues as the Walnut Creek Library; Moraga Library; Clayton Library (Sierra Club); Heather Farm Garden Center (WC Rotary Club, Gardens at Heather Farm); Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center; Save Mount Diablo; Lindsay Wildlife Museum (Mount Diablo art exhibit reception); Walnut Creek Chamber BASH (Animal Rescue Foundation); REI (Concord); My Backyard (Danville); Wild Birds Unlimited (Pleasant Hill); East Bay Nature (Walnut Creek); Barnes & Noble (Dublin); and Railroad Depot Booksellers (Pittsburg).

Additionally, publication and release of the book created a great deal of publicity in local, Bay Area, and Northern California media. News of the book and MDIA appeared in print in the *Contra Costa Times*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Sacramento Bee*, *Diablo* magazine, and *Walnut Creek Magazine*, to name a few.

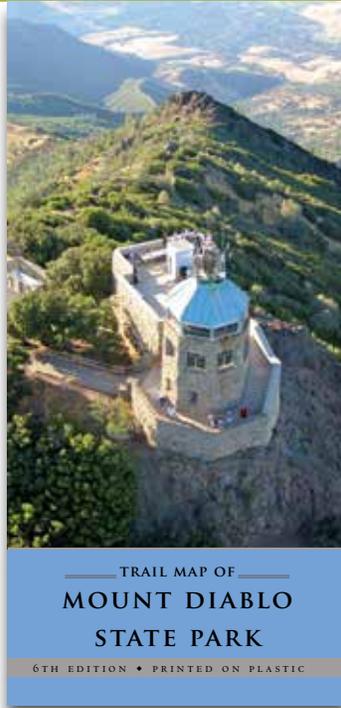
Other outreach activities included participating in festivals and community fairs and speaking at meetings to introduce and represent MDIA. For example, MDIA members staffed an information and sales table at the Clayton Creekside Arts Celebration March 5-6, the 2011 California Trails & Greenways Conference in San Ramon April 11-12, and Wild Birds Unlimited's birthday celebration on October 3 in Pleasant Hill.

In 2012, we are focusing our efforts on increasing community awareness of MDIA's efforts on behalf of the park through regular informational press releases and participation at local community events.

TRAIL MAP • TRAIL SIGNAGE • TRASH REMOVAL • WEBSITE

TRAIL MAP

The *Trail Map of Mount Diablo State Park*, 6th edition, has been a valuable asset to park visitors since its release in 2009. In 2011, several MDIA members knowledgeable in map cartography and familiar with the park through other volunteer activities began the arduous task of updating the map with improvements to prepare it for reprinting. The results of their detailed and dedicated work are expected to be seen in 2012, when the 7th edition map will be printed.



WEBSITE

In 2011, a committee began a complete redesign of the MDIA website. MDIA's website contained a wealth of data; however, it was often difficult to find. Our goal was to develop an interesting, intuitive, dynamic website benefiting members and visitors alike. The MDIA committee members and website developer retained by the board are moving forward with building the new site with our desired features, functions, content, and photos. We anticipate that the new site will allow online donations, membership registration, and product purchases. The site will be easy to update, and current events and news will be frequently refreshed.



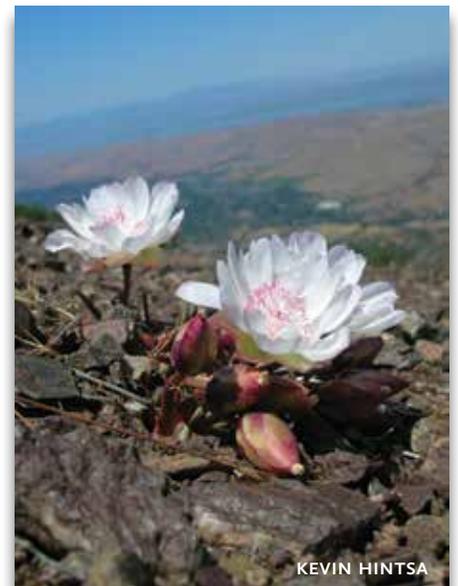
KEVIN HINTSA

TRASH REMOVAL AND HABITAT RESTORATION

MDIA volunteers, in conjunction with park staff, initially identified and documented 113 Trash Removal Project (TRP) cleanup sites in the park. Work officially began on these sites on May 20, 2001. To date, 77 sites have been cleaned up in the park. We continue our efforts to restore the habitat to its natural state and beauty, and at the same time, reduce wildlife and human hazards.

In 2011, 2,453 volunteer hours were devoted to this project, for a total of 25,987 hours since 2001. Volunteers removed the following for recycling or reuse (not including the countless trash bags of bottles, cans, papers, etc):

MDIA expects to unveil this exciting new and improved website in the first half of 2012. We welcome your feedback!



KEVIN HINTSA

TRAIL SIGNAGE

The trail signage program is managed by the park and supported by MDIA volunteers. Initiated in 1993 by MDIA volunteers Paul Bennett and Harvey Brosler, this program has resulted in signposts at all trailheads, junction points, and select-ed points of interest in the park.

In 2011, an order of 132 new and replacement trail signs was submitted. Many thanks go to the volunteers who dedicated many hours to trail signage activities such as replacing damaged and worn signs and posts, removing graffiti, and determining mileage for various trails by manually "wheeling" the trails.

	IN 2011	SINCE 2001
Wood	94 board feet	63,070 board feet
Metal	8,120 pounds	122,146 pounds
Barbed wire	64,130 feet	1,078,306 feet
Fence posts	1,361 posts	20,225 posts
Tires	169 tires	573 tires
Cement	171 pounds	25,241 pounds



MIKE WOODRING

## Founding Members

In 1974, these individuals were sparked with a fury and a zest about a cause, a mission, an idea, and energy and the wherewithal to do something about it. MDIA thanks you!

Mary Bowerman	Howard Knight
Beverly Clemson	Sam Smoker
Ron Edwards	Frank Valle-Riestra
Phil Gordon	Betty Zilen

## Life Members

"We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give." — Sir Winston Churchill.

Thank you for your generosity!

Judy Adler	Walnut Creek
Scott Anderson	Pittsburg
Sheldon Berz	Danville
Aaron & Lenore Bezzerides	Benicia
Burt Bogardus	Danville
Ron Castaldo Family	Concord
Allen & Lynda Chasnoff	Walnut Creek
Leslie Contreras	Concord
Daymond-Hanna Family	Walnut Creek
Jim DeKloe	Fairfield
Dinesh & Joy Desai	Los Altos
Fred & Sue Donecker	Clayton
William Espey & Family	Lafayette
Sharyn Fernandez	Concord
Glade Gaffney	Clayton
Betty Gallagher	Concord
Jay-Marie Garcia	Pleasant Hill
John Jeffrey Green	Monterey
Mary Israel	Walnut Creek
Ken Jordan	Pleasant Hill
Bob Justice	Lakeport
John Kinney	Danville
Sharon Landwehr	San Francisco
Carol Lane	Concord
Marjory Lee	Walnut Creek
Craig & Peggy Lyon	Colorado Springs, CO
Rich McDrew	Walnut Creek
Larry & Kathy McEwen	Walnut Creek
Ray Mengel	Bay Point
Nancy Miller	Concord
Jim Mitchell	Alamo
Shirley Nootbaar	Walnut Creek
Tom Nootbaar	Alamo
Dave Peck	Clayton
Linda Sanford	Berkeley
Deborah Green Seymour	San Francisco
Laurie Shapley	Walnut Creek
Richard & Sandra Smith	Lafayette
Sandor & Faye Straus	Lafayette
Brian & Carolyn Thiessen	Alamo
Jim Thompson	Mariposa
Maria Tice	Walnut Creek
Tom Torlakson	Sacramento
Frank & Edith Valle-Riestra	Walnut Creek
Verne Van Vlear	Concord
Mike Woodring & Ruth Ann Kishi	Concord

## Mount Diablo Interpretive Association

Mount Diablo Interpretive Association (MDIA) is a non-profit, all-volunteer organization that assists the California Department of Parks and Recreation in maintaining and interpreting Mount Diablo State Park for its 700,000 annual visitors. MDIA works side by side with State Park staff to enhance the visitors' experience and appreciation of the park.

## Goals and Objectives for 2012

- Maintain merchandise sales at the visitor centers, via mail order, and at wholesale retail outlets, and develop two new offerings:
  - Mount Diablo bike jersey
  - Set of historical botanical flower posters
- Develop a new audio guide to Mitchell Canyon.
- Complete three new publications:
  - *Mount Diablo Guide*, 3rd edition
  - *Hiker's Guide to Mount Diablo State Park*
  - *Trail Map of Mount Diablo State Park*, 7th edition
- Contribute funding and labor to upgrade the exterior portion of the Summit Visitor Center renovation.
- Fund staffing at the Summit Visitor Center (ongoing).
- Complete the redesign of the MDIA website.
- Increase MDIA name recognition and publicity for hikes and other MDIA events.
- Increase MDIA membership.
- Schedule and lead more hikes during the busy spring wildflower season.
- Continue leading and participating in educational programs, such as Junior Rangers.
- Implement a major trail signage update.
- Continue habitat restoration and trash removal, working with MDIA volunteers and other groups.
- Continue to support trail maintenance and trail adoption in the park.
- Replace damaged/weathered interpretive panels on the Trail Through Time and develop new interpretive displays as requested by the park.
- Purchase new equipment for the park, as needed.
- Purchase volunteer supplies, as needed.

## MDIA Board of Directors

		TERM EXPIRES
Jim Mitchell, President	Alamo	2014
Leslie Dawson, Vice President	Walnut Creek	2013
Deb Scharping, Secretary	Walnut Creek	2014
Steve Elliott, Treasurer	Danville	2014
Burt Bogardus	Danville	2012
Helene Cahill	Martinez	2014
Leslie Contreras	Concord	2014
Sue Donecker	Clayton	2014
Jim Holmes	Pleasanton	2012
Ruth Ann Kishi	Concord	2012
Ken Lavin	Concord	2013
Rich McDrew	Walnut Creek	2014
Keith Patterson	Concord	2014
Maria Tice	Walnut Creek	2013
Liz Watson	Concord	2014
Mike Woodring	Concord	2012