

Mount Diablo Interpretive Association

2021 Annual Report



PROPOSED NEW MITCHELL CANYON VISITOR CENTER

— PRESERVATION THROUGH EDUCATION —

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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

IN 2021, MOUNT DIABLO INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION Association MDIA) continued its 47-year partnership with Mount Diablo State Park as the park's official cooperating association. Thanks to the remarkable efforts of our members, MDIA has expanded its impact in the park through trail signage and maintenance projects and educational opportunities. We have also continued to provide interpretive services to park visitors and the general public through natural history webinars and publications. We are proud of our accomplishments despite another challenging year and look forward to our continued support of the park and community in the future.

MDIA Board

MDIA'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS CONSISTED of 15 members who are responsible for overseeing operations of the organization. We are appreciative of the knowledge, experience, and dedication of our past and current board directors and are always looking for new directors who can bring a fresh outlook, insight, skill, and enthusiasm to our organization.

In addition to our board members, other dedicated volunteers at MDIA ensure our continued success. Lisa Anich maintains our membership roster and dues, Ken Lavin answers our phones and website inquiries, Tere Dixon serves as webmaster, and Maren Smith & Tom Nootbar help us distribute newsletters throughout the community. Steve Beatty works tirelessly behind the scenes to produce our Wildflower Bloom Report. Thank you.

Mission

IN 2021, MDIA CONTINUED its mission of financial and interpretive support of Mount Diablo State Park. Merchandise sales, donations, membership contributions, employee matching funds, and grants enabled us to support a variety of projects

within the park. Because we are an all-volunteer staff, our administrative expenses remain low, ensuring that nearly 90% of our income is allocated to providing visitors with the best experience possible. Some of the many projects funded by MDIA are outlined in this report. I would like to personally thank you, our members, for continuing to support our efforts of "Preservation through Education."

—*Stephen Smith*
MDIA President



Peregrine Falcon. Photo Wally DeYoung



Proposed New MCVC

Board Retreat

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS HELD ITS third annual board retreat this year, an in-person event held prior to the surge of Omicron. We set several goals for ourselves coming into 2022. Primary among these goals is the exciting project of building a brand-new visitor center at Mitchell Canyon in the next 4 years. Other short-term goals consist of engaging the community and membership, increasing our marketing, creating and updating online nature guides, and creating resources for classroom instruction.



MDIA Board

New Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center

2021 MARKED A MAJOR MILESTONE for the MDIA Board as they moved forward with their vision of a new visitor center at Mitchell Canyon. After a Request for Qualifications for architects, the MDIA Board hired Ware Associates in March 2021 to develop plans for a new visitor center. Between March and September 2021, Ware Associates met with over 100 stakeholders, including park staff, docents, visitors, native American representatives, educational representatives, native plant garden volunteers, and equestrian groups to seek input on the new visitor center. As a result of this extensive input process, Ware Associates created a master plan for enhancing the Mitchell Canyon experience for visitors. Particular attention was paid to the needs of the underserved and educational communities, groups who are not well served by the current visitor center.

In September 2021 the MDIA Board accepted the conceptual drawings for the new visitor center. These drawings show a visitor center of about 1500 square feet (compared to the current 400 square foot trailer) and relocating the visitor center to the East side of the site so that a large covered patio would open to the Native Plant Garden. This new visitor center with

the covered patio with outdoor exhibits would serve two main purposes: to allow school groups to meet both inside the new visitor center and outside on the patio, and to engage the public when the visitor center is closed utilizing outdoor exhibits.

The building and site will exemplify the best practices of a smart, green construction. The building will be LEED certified and sustainable by including solar panels, passive heating/cooling, and natural light. It will provide ample exhibit space with an area for showing audio visual content. The landscape will demonstrate bioswales and water retention systems, and the materials will demonstrate how to build safely in an Urban Wildfire Interface Zone.

The MDIA Board is enthusiastic about the prospects for engaging a wider community with an expanded indoor and outdoor exhibit area.

MDIA has applied for a \$3 million grant through the Regional Parks Program, funded under Proposition 68. Awards will be made in 2022. In the meantime, MDIA has begun the process to seek a professional fundraiser to guide the fundraising process.

Finances

MDIA'S 2021 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PARK included funding the following projects:

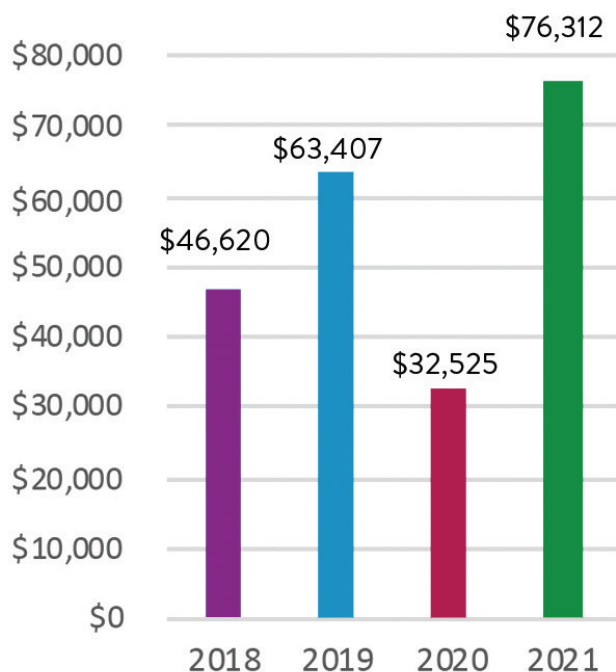
- Publishing and printing 80,000 copies of the *Mount Diablo Review* newsletter given to all park visitors and community organizations
- Producing 2 new Audible Mount Diablo Guides on the Centennial and Native Uses of Plants on the Mountain
- Hosting the Mountain Talks educational speaker series in Zoom format
- Funding for the Diablo Stove Restoration Team
- Funding the Centennial Celebration event in October
- Supporting Junior Rangers, Volunteer Appreciation Days, and the Native Plant Garden
- Hiring a design firm to produce conceptual drawings for the new Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center project

MDIA Membership

On December 31, 2021, total membership was 336.

- Life 87
- Contributing..... 41
- Family..... 43
- Individual 29
- Senior 133
- Student..... 1
- Associate..... 2

Annual Contributions to the Park from MDIA 2018–2021



Donations \$400+

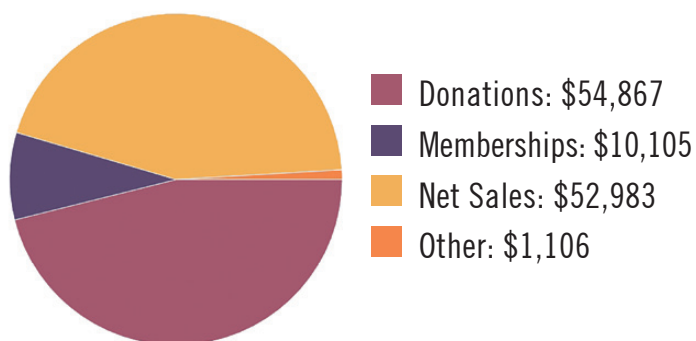
Targeted For New MCVC

- CCC Superintendent of Schools \$7,500
- Valle-Riestra Trust \$35,900
- Gallagher Family Trust \$2,100
- John & Josephine Vallalpando \$1,000

Unrestricted

- Sharon Landwehr \$1,000
- Wicked Events, Inc..... \$500
- Karl Schindhelm..... \$400
- Benevity (AT&T) - Brande Timmons..... \$500
- Chevron Matching - Terri Denslow..... \$440
- **Park Visitors**..... \$1,344

MDIA Sources of Revenue for 2021



Merchandising

MERCHANDISING IN 2021 remained challenging due to the periodic closure of our visitor centers due to the pandemic. Add to that supply chain issues and increasing inflation along with shipping concerns. Overall sales did return to near normal levels in 2021 and remained our main source of revenue. Special Centennial merchandise was designed and produced for sales in 2021 and included shirts, hats, mugs, magnets, pins, stickers and patches. Online sales continue to be more robust in the interim and we were able to generate revenue and share our materials with the many people who came to experience Mount Diablo and the regenerative powers of nature. Visitors to mdia.org can choose from a wide variety of educational, interpretive, and informational products along with a selection of apparel and souvenirs.

Thank you to Dan Fitzgerald, Steve Smith, and Linda Kwong, our merchandising team, who coordinate the design of new products, purchase ordering, inventory management, packaging, shipping, and delivery. Because all of these operations are performed by volunteers, the financial benefit is substantial.

Publications

MDIA CONTINUED TO PUBLISH OUR BIENNIAL issue of the park newsletter, the Mount Diablo Review, for distribution to park visitors. In 2021, featured articles focused on the park's centennial celebration, fire risk, natural history, and poison oak. Current and past editions of the Review can be found at <https://www.mdia.org/newsletters>.

Teacher Education Day

WORKING WITH HANNA MA, FROM the Contra Costa County Office of Education, MDIA offered educators an opportunity to participate in a one-day professional learning experience at Mitchell Canyon on November 13, 2022. 15 teachers participated in

activities designed to apply the concepts of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Life Science, Earth Science, Environmental Literacy, and Ecology to the classroom. A highlight was the nature walk led by Ken Lavin.

This day offered teachers a chance to become aware of the opportunities at Mt. Diablo and it also aligned with our MDIA vision of the future role that the new visitor center could play for students in the area. MDIA members who participated in the day included: Ken Lavin, Leslie Contreras, Dick Nicoll, Harry York, Michele Stanton, and Julie Braun Martin. Contra Costa County shared \$7,500 of their science grant for this project with MDIA.



From left to right: Julie Braun Martin, Contra Costa County Superintendent of Schools Lynn Mackey, Harry York

Park Maintenance

THE MAINTENANCE VOLUNTEER GROUP (MVG) was severely limited by the pandemic in 2021 with volunteering guidelines reducing the ability of teams to work together. Some small projects moved forward such as replacing interpretive panel plexiglass. Long-time volunteer Steve Elliott spent hundreds of hours throughout the pandemic as a one-man maintenance machine painting and repairing his way all around the mountain with too many accomplishments to list here.

Trail Signage

FOLLOWING 2020'S MASSIVE EFFORT TO install nearly 90 new trail signs throughout the entire park, trail signage work slowed. On the backs of another 2020 undertaking in which every single trail sign in the park was re-photographed and catalogued in a master database, 75 new trail signs have been ordered. There are over 400 trail signs on Mount Diablo!

Outreach

OUTREACH EFFORTS FOR 2021 increased substantially as Covid concerns began to ease. A hybrid approach to presentations allowed virtual hikes as well as in-person events as geographies began to open up.

- In February, a large local church group received a virtual tour of the peregrine falcon in Pine Canyon, and the Green Belt Alliance requested and received the same for their annual virtual “peregrine wander.”
- April brought several Outreach opportunities, including assisting Joan Hamilton in the videography for her MDSP Centennial video, as well as the videography for Native to Right Here—Tuushtak. The 24 womens clubs of Mount Diablo region received a presentation outlining the mission and work of MDIA at their annual convention.

- In August, an article for Bay Nature was published in an effort to help park visitors understand the reasons for differences in dog-related regulation in and around MDSP.
- Fall brought the formation of a new natural history documentary team called “Wild Mount Diablo,” who will produce short videos of the wild creatures of the mountain. Partnership opportunities were explored with Visit Concord, and a MDIA Outreach booth at the MDSP Centennial celebration helps visitors understand the groups’ work.

Centennial Celebration!

IN OCTOBER, MOUNT DIABLO STATE PARK celebrated its 50th birthday at the Cal State University East Bay Campus, and what a day it was! Booths showcased the park’s fascinating wildlife, history, and ways to enjoy the Park. Many of the non-profits associated with Mount Diablo State Park offered interesting displays. East Bay Regional Parks and the National Park Service joined us. Speakers included: representatives from the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, the President of Cal State East Bay Cathy Sandeen, Diablo Range District Superintendent Eddie Guaracha, Save Mount Diablo Executive Director Ted Clement and MDIA President Steve Smith. MDIA helped plan the event and helped with some of the expenses.



Wally DeYoung at MDSP Centennial Celebration

Trash Removal Project

IN 2021, DUE TO THE LIMITATIONS imposed upon the size of work parties and the lack of approved projects within the State Park, the TRP volunteers focused several monthly efforts on helping the state park with fire defense projects, including trimming back trees and brush from the heavily traveled roads. We are hoping to find some appropriate projects in 2022 to tackle and continue our efforts to bring the park back to as natural a state as possible.

Website

IN 2021, THE WEBSITE (<https://www.mdia.org/>) was redesigned with a new look and feel for improved user engagement, easier navigation, and display of timely content. The Home page is the most visited page of the website and includes quicklinks to What's New, activities (Hiking, Biking, Horseback, and Camping), nature guides, and the latest release of Audible Mount Diablo. The Home page also displays a feature article describing the proposal for a new Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center (<https://www.mdia.org/new-mitchellcanyon>), with the goal to inform website visitors of the future vision of an enhanced visitor experience at this popular threshold to Mount Diablo State Park. Finally, to support the celebration of the Centennial of Mount Diablo State Park, a temporary yet special page was created to provide a calendar of celebratory events, the Centennial Film Series (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1i1t4PlcxnE>), and a link to the MDIA Store for centennial merchandise.

Hikes

FROM JULY THROUGH NOVEMBER, MDIA was able to offer a total of 20 hikes. First up was the Common Poorwill Evening Hike followed by the Morning Nature Walk. From August to October it was Tarantula Time! The Walks/Hikes were led for school groups, the general public, and private groups, such as Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. In

addition, there were four Summit Events that included Snakes and Tarantulas. MDIA thanks all the leaders and docent helpers who assisted. Through their efforts the hiking program continues to be a vibrant and popular asset to the Park and the public.



Proposed New MCVC Plaza



Ken Lavin Hike

2021 MDIA Board of Directors

Mount Diablo Interpretive Association (MDIA) is a nonprofit, 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	Frank Valle-Riestra	Phil Gordon
Paul Carlson	Ed Earl	William Bland
Howard Knight	Mary Bowerman	John Werminski
Joanne Dean	Betty Zilen	Miles Standish
Beverly Clemson	Ron Edwards	

2021 MDIA Board of Directors

Steve Smith, President	2022
Mike Brandy, Vice President	2024
Dan Sandri, Secretary	2022
Dan Fitzgerald, Treasurer	2023
Merrik Bush	2021
Leslie Contreras	2022
Wally DeYoung	2022
Staci Hobbet, Secretary	2023
Linda Kwong	2022
Carol Lane	2023
Julie Braun Martin	2022
Dick Nicoll	2024
Nancy Topp	2021
Liz Watson	2021
Harry York	2022

2021 MDIA Committee Leads

COMMITTEE	LEAD
MDIA Executive Committee Functions	Steve Smith
Archives	Dan Sandri
Contracts	Dick Nicoll
Corporate Governance	Harry York
Finance	Dan Fitzgerald
Insurance	Linda Kwong
Membership	Lisa Anich
Nominating	Staci Hobbet
Volunteers in Parks	Dan Fitzgerald
Other MDIA Committees Functions	
Audible Mount Diablo series	Staci Hobbet
Merchandising	Steve Smith and Dan Fitzgerald
Publications	Dick Nicoll
Outreach	Wally De Young
Mountain Talks	Mike Brandy/Staci Hobbet
Website and Social Media	Tere Dixon
MDIA Committees that Coordinate with MDSP	
Hikes	Leslie Contreras
Interpretive Displays	Steve Smith
Native Plant Garden	Carol Lane
Park Maintenance	Steve Smith
Trail Maintenance	Carol Lane
Trail Signage	Steve Smith
Ad Hoc Committees	
MCVC Capital Committee	Mike Brandy/Dick Nicoll
Education	Julie Braun Martin, Dick Nicoll
Fundraising	Mike Brandy
Recruitment	Linda Kwong, Leslie Contreras

Life and Associate Members

New in 2021

Judith Adler	Peggy Lyon
Scott Anderson	Michael Marchiano
Anonymous (2)	Richard McDrew
Sheldon Berz	Kathy McEwen
Lenore Bezzerides	Shawn Mehaffey
Jim & Linda Bily	Ray Mengel
Burt Bogardus	Nancy Miller
Glen & Candace Bradley	Lynn Miller
Mike Brandy	Gordon Mills
Ron and Sheryl Castaldo	Jim Mitchell
Joseph Cavaness	Walter & Linda Moeller
Allen & Lynda Chasnoff	John Mott
Ann Chetty	John & Sharon Nasstrom
Leslie Contreras	Dick Nicoll
Marilyn Cooper	Tom Nootbaar
John & Charli Danielsen	Shirley Nootbaar
Leslie Dawson	Jon & Molly Ott
Daymond-Hanna Famly	Dave Peck
Jim DeKloe	Aaron Porter
Dinesh Desai	Jim & Gloria Redmond
Terese Dixon	Philip Reed
Fred & Sue Donecker	Brian Rubino
Stephen Elliott	Frederick Ruegsegger
Mr & Mrs William T Espey	Barbara Sacks
Tom & Carol Evans	Linda Sanford
Sharyn Fernandez	Karl Schindhelm
Daniel Fitzgerald	Jerry Schweickert
Jack & Maribel Fraser	Laurie Shapley
Spencer & Rena Fulweiler	Stephen Smith
Glade Gaffney	Richard & Sandra Smith
Garcia	Sandor & Faye Straus
John Jeffrey Green	Bob & Sue Sullivan
Claudia & Scott Hein	Stephen Taylor
Mary Israel	Brian & Carolyn Thiessen
Ken Jordan	Maria Tice
Bob Justice	Martin Tice
Judith Green Kelly	Yulan Chang Tong
John Kinney	Tom Torlakson
Mike Woodring & Ruth Ann	Frank Valle-Riestra
Kishi	Verne Van Vlear
Sharon Landwehr	Leslie Bartholic & Jake
Carol Lane	VanAkkeren
Marjory J Lee	Erin Wilson
Thomas Logue	Bernie and Lonna Wolf

Membership Contributions

Student	\$15.00
Senior (55+)	\$15.00
Individual	\$25.00
Family	\$40.00
Contributing	\$100.00
Lifetime	\$500.00

MDIA was established in 1974 as a nonprofit organization that is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes, with exempt status under IRS Section 501(c)(3).

