

Mount Diablo Interpretive Association

2019 Annual Report



AUTUMN MOUNT DIABLO • LINDA KWONG

____PRESERVATION THROUGH EDUCATION____

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Message from the Board

In 2019, Mount Diablo Interpretive Association (MDIA) continued its 45-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 new maintenance projects and educational opportunities. We have also continued to provide interpretive services to park visitors and the general public through guided hikes, publications, and community outreach. We are proud of our accomplishments this year and look forward to our continued support of the park and community in the future.

MDIA Board

MDIA's Board of Directors currently consists of 11 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 2019, we said goodbye to one of our board members, Jenn Roe. She was instrumental in developing our Interpretive Programs Committee (IPC), heading up the Volunteers in Parks committee (VIP), and serving on our Finance oversight committee. Additionally, Jenn is responsible for creating so many of our wonderful interpretive posters and brochures, a role we hope she will continue as an MDIA volunteer. Thank you Jenn.

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, new volunteer Tere Dixon has taken over as our webmaster, and new volunteers Maren Smith and Bobbe Foliart along with longtime volunteer

Tom Nootbar help us distribute newsletters throughout the community. Thank you to Steve Beatty who works tirelessly behind the scenes to produce our Wildflower Bloom Report. A special thanks to Mike Woodring for helping to update our MDIA Trail Map to the new 8th edition. Thank you.

Mission

In 2019, 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 percent 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



MARIPOSA LILY • DAN FITZGERALD

Board Retreat

In November, the Board held its first retreat to plan goals for the following year. Thanks to the generosity of Save Mount Diablo, the Board met at Curry Ranch. Renee Rubin Ross, who leads a program at California State University East Bay to train leaders of nonprofit groups, acted as the meeting facilitator. The program included a discussion of park agreements, brainstorming, prioritizing, and a brief hike around the property. With Ross's assistance, the Board developed goals and implementation strategies for 2020. Board members have been busy implementing these strategies in cooperation with Mount Diablo State Park staff. The Board is reviewing progress on these goals quarterly at their regular meetings and intends to have a similar annual retreat next November to assess accomplishment of these goals and set new goals for 2021.

Board Goals fo 2020

- Renovate the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center
- Increase Member Participation and Training
- Expand the use of Electronic Interpretation
- Enhance Board Governance and Oversight
- Replace/Improve Park Interpretative Panels
- Engage Cyclists in Park and MDIA Activities



MOUNT DIABLO SUNSET • MIKE BRANDY



WHITE-TAILED KITE • ERIN WILSON

Finances

MDIA’s 2019 contributions to the park included funding the following projects:

- Publishing and printing 70,000 copies of the *Mount Diablo Review* newsletter, which is distributed to park visitors and community organizations
- Producing a new Audible Mount Diablo Guide on the Falls Trail
- Creating a new Mount Diablo Geology Map to be debuted in 2020
- Updating the Mount Diablo State Park Trail Map (8th edition)
- Supporting the Mountain Talks educational speaker series
- Funding for the Diablo Stove Restoration Team
- Designing and producing more in our interpretive poster series
- Supporting docent training through the Volunteers in Parks Program (VIPP)
- Supporting Junior Rangers, Volunteer Appreciation Days, and the Native Plant Garden
- Purchasing lumber and tools for campground maintenance
- Funding Mount Diablo Discovery Day and First Day celebrations

MDIA Membership

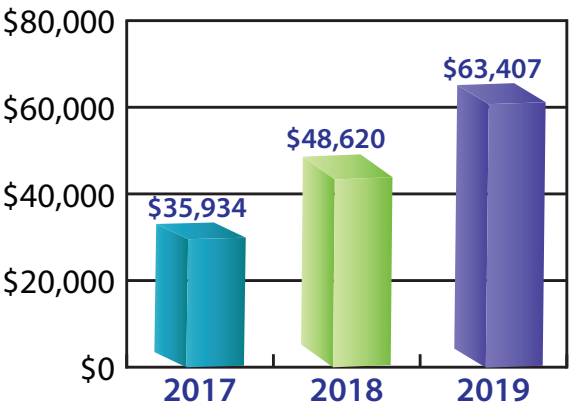
Total membership at the end of 2019 was 347.

- Life 78
- Contributing 34
- Family..... 41
- Individual 27
- Senior 163
- Student 2
- Associate 2

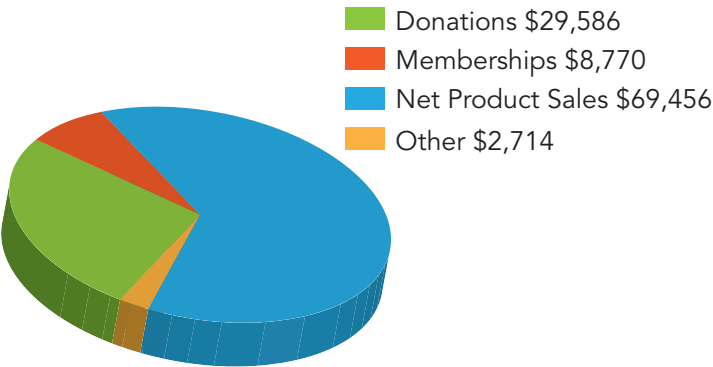
Donations and Memberships over \$500

- California State Parks Foundation \$5,000
- National Philanthropic Trust..... \$4,000
- Valley Spokesmen Touring Club..... \$3,000
- CSAAA Insurance \$2,500
- Chevron Matching Funds \$1,820
- Phil Reed \$1,200
- Sharon Landwehr..... \$1,000
- Donald & Georg Palmer \$1,000
- Steven Ricks..... \$550
- Mike Brandy \$500
- John Nasstrom \$500
- Wicked Events and
Diablo Multisport Connection..... \$500

Annual Contributions to the Park from MDIA
2017—2019



MDIA Sources of Revenue for 2019



Merchandising

Merchandising in 2019 remained our main source of revenue, particularly at the Summit Visitor Center where visitors can choose from a wide variety of educational, interpretive, and informational products, along with apparel and souvenirs, and a selection of convenience items such as food and drinks. Apparel and interpretive items are also offered for sale at the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center, at community outreach events, and online through our retail portal at mdia.org. Additional sale of publications occurs via wholesale orders, at the entrance kiosks, and at the sector office.

Thank you to Dan Fitzgerald, Steve Smith, Nancy Topp, 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 70,000 copies of our biannual issues of the park newsletter, the *Mount Diablo Review*, for distribution to park visitors. This year, featured articles focused on how rangers determine fire risk, how wild turkeys came to California, the wonder of park natural history, Mount Diablo’s banquet for butterflies, how to identify poison oak, and the president’s column. Current and past editions of the *Review* can be accessed on our website at <https://www.mdia.org/newsletters>. In addition, we also published or reprinted the new Tarantula Handout, the Fern Brochure, revised MDIA Trail Map, Mary Bowerman Trail Brochure, and View from the Top Brochure.



Tarantulas

Protect these gentle giants.

Late summer and fall is a time when tarantulas are most at risk. That’s when the male tarantula, four to seven years of age, leaves the safety of its burrow to wander about in search of a mate. It dies later that same season.



If you are lucky enough to see a tarantula, do not touch it. It may look tough, but a tarantula can be injured if handled. Please observe from a distance.

California State Parks strictly forbids disturbance of all wildlife in the park.

You might see a tarantula with a bald spot which is created in its own defense by flicking abdominal hairs into the nose and eyes of its predator.



All tarantulas live in burrows, which they dig with their fangs and front legs — unless an abandoned burrow is available. Burrows are about the diameter of a quarter and are lined and sometimes covered with spider silk.

Female tarantulas live as long as 25 years. After mating, a female lays a hundred or so eggs that hatch into spiderlings the following spring.

Tarantulas are nocturnal, spending most of their time underground even while hunting. A hunting tarantula waits in its burrow for an insect to walk by. The spider then rushes out and grabs it.

Tarantula venom is very mild and won’t harm you — unless you’re the size of a small lizard or cricket.

PHOTOS: JENN ROE, KAREN SHACKLETON

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www.mdia.org

Park Maintenance

The Maintenance Volunteer Group (MVG) had another busy year helping to maintain many of the park facilities, with MDIA supporting the costs associated with purchasing building materials needed to complete the repairs. This year saw the repair of the training room roof, several map kiosks throughout the park, installation of a boot scraper at Macedo Ranch, waterproofing a section of the summit observation deck, installing new picnic tables, painting the North Gate kiosk, and cleaning up the Campfire Center. A group of volunteers led by Steve Elliott has been working diligently to repaint all of the metal park gates as well.

Trash Removal Project

Starting in December 2018, the Trash Removal Project (TRP) volunteers focused their monthly efforts on helping the state parks remove a dilapidated fence from South Regatta Road (SRA) in Benicia along the border of the Benicia State Recreation Area. After six work days, all of the fence was removed and all debris had been cleared—much to the delight of the neighborhood, which also borders the Benicia SRA. This effort, totaling about 400 hours, resulted in the following materials being removed from the SRA:

- **Wood** = 8,550 board feet
(this excludes the fence posts)
- **Metal** = 8,000 pounds
(primarily wire fencing, but also thousands of nails and other hardware)
- **Fence Posts** = 400
- **Cement** = 5 tons
(nearly every fence post was supported with concrete bases ranging from 15 to 75 lbs.)



FAIRY MOTH • MERRIK BUSH

In August, September, and December, TRP assisted MDSP with fire defense projects around the residence at the Junction and South Gate Road. This was heavy chaparral on steep terrain and required over 400 hours of volunteer work.

In August, six TRP volunteers replaced the signpost at Eagle Peak, which had been vandalized and removed. The replacement signpost was made of heavy gauge metal and very heavy. That and all the tools, including an impact drill with a wide diameter stone cutting bit, had to be carried to the site from Meridian Ridge Road. Amazing work with just 38 volunteer hours.

In November, TRP also helped with trash removal around the base of Mammoth Rock in the Castle Rocks area.



BURT BOGARDUS AND STEVE SMITH



CALIFORNIA FUCHSIA • DAN FITZGERALD

Hikes

In 2019, Volunteers in Parks Program (VIPP) docents led 68 guided hikes, three Summit Programs, and two Wildflower Talks. The hikes were for the general public, students, and private groups. These programs included wildflower and butterfly walks, the popular summer night hikes, and longer destination treks, from five to 15 miles. The tarantula walks started August 31 and ended in late October, with a total of 20 events.

We decreased our Tarantula Walks from 33 to 20 because of the overuse of the Mitchell Canyon area. A large sandwich-board sign was created to educate the public and was placed at the entrance to the Mitchell Canyon Fire Road.

We had 30 docents assisting with the hiking program this year, and we want to thank all the dedicated hike leaders and docent helpers. It's through their effort that the hiking program continues to be a vibrant and popular asset to the park and the public.

Publicity and Outreach

MDIA representatives raised awareness of Mount Diablo State Park and MDIA at a handful of community outreach events in 2019, including Creekside Arts at the Clayton Library, a Spring Nature Event at Wild Birds Unlimited, Clayton Cleans Up in Clayton, Mount Diablo Discovery Day at the Summit, and the San Francisco Bay Flyway Festival in Vallejo. We would like to thank our tabling volunteers, including Steve Smith, Nancy Topp, Dan Fitzgerald, Dick Nicoll, Jenn Roe, and Michael Marchiano.

Website

The MDIA website continues to provide information about park regulations, destinations and trails, camping procedures, and the natural resources and cultural history of Mount Diablo. The website also lists scheduled group hikes, docent-led nature walks, and presentations by local experts. All are open to members and the public. In 2019, the website was expanded to showcase the Native Plant Garden (located behind the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center), which provides a glimpse of the diverse native plants in the Diablo Range. If you haven't visited mdia.org lately, please check it out!

Mount Diablo Interpretive Association

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	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

2019 MDIA Board of Directors

Steve Smith, President.....	2019
Dan Fitzgerald, Vice President	2019
Staci Hobbet, Secretary.....	2020
Nancy Topp, Treasurer.....	2020
Leslie Contreras.....	2020
Linda Kwong.....	2020
Carol Lane	2019
Dick Nicoll	2020
Jenn Roe.....	2019
Liz Watson	2020
Mike Brandy	2020
Wally DeYoung	2020

MDIA Committee Leads

Archives	Nancy Topp
Contracts	Dick Nicoll
Corporate Governance.....	Staci Hobbet
Fundraising/Grant Writing.....	Carol Lane
Hikes.....	Leslie Contreras
Insurance	Nancy Top
Interpretive Displays.....	Steve Smith
Interpretive Program Committee	Jenn Roe
Marketing, Outreach and Publicity..	Steve Smith
MCVC	Leslie Contreras/Nancy Topp
Membership	Liz Watson
Merchandising.....	Dan Fitzgerald/Steve Smith
Native Plant Garden	Carol Lane
Nominating.....	Staci Hobbet
Park Maintenance	Steve Smith
Publications	Dick Nicoll
Telescopes	Carol Lane
Trail Maintenance	Carol Lane
Trail Signage.....	Steve Smith
Trash Removal	Dan Fitzgerald/Burt Bogardus
Volunteers in Park Program	Jenn Roe
Website and Social Media.....	Steve Smith/Dan Fitzgerald

Life and Associate Members

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

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

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).

