

MOUNTAIN NEWS

Spring/Summer 2013

MOUNT DIABLO INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION



The Biannual Membership Newsletter

President's Message



Jim Mitchell, President, MDIA

Thank you for being members of the Mount Diablo Interpretive Association and supporting Mount Diablo State Park through what may have been California State Parks' toughest of all years. We have been able to continue to fulfill our mission of enhancing the visitors' experience, through your membership fees, donations, purchases of merchandise from our website and visitor centers, and due to the hundreds of hours many members volunteered in the park.

Mount Diablo State Park remains one of the pristine parks in the state's system largely due to your support. While we hope the darkest days are behind us, MDIA continues to stand vigilant in its support of our beautiful mountain. We ask you to please continue to help us fulfill our mission. As president of MDIA, I am proud to announce that with your support we have plans in place this year to continue to upgrade inter-

pretive displays, publish additional material about the mountain such as an updated trail map, maintain docents at the Summit and Mitchell Canyon visitor centers, and invest in park infrastructure wherever we can.

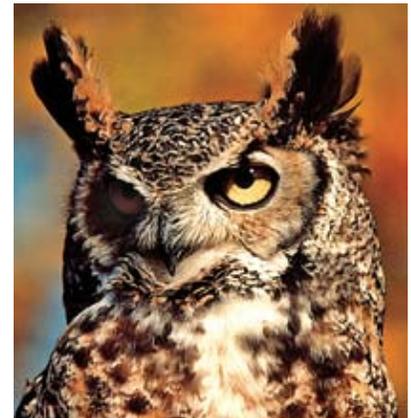
I would like to give special recognition to retired Park Superintendent Roland Gaebert. Roland has been a true friend and supporter of MDIA and has helped in many ways for us to accomplish our mission. His enthusiasm for Mount Diablo State Park and his willingness to work closely with MDIA to accomplish many of our activities will be missed. I expect we will see him from time to time in the park and we all wish him well in his retirement.

One of the larger events that we supported in the park in 2012 was the Amgen Tour of California. Some of the best bicyclists in the world raced through Mount Diablo State Park. This leg of the race was so successful that Amgen has announced that this year they will finish one leg of the race at the Summit of Mount Diablo. More information will be posted on our website as we get closer to this exciting event.

Annual Membership Meeting

The 38th Annual MDIA Membership Meeting was held October 27, 2012, at Mitchell Canyon in Mount Diablo State Park to celebrate our accomplishments, do some MDIA board business, and recognize member volunteers for all the work they do in the park. In addition, Roland Gaebert

gave an update on the park, and Polly Gusa and Julie Ross from the Lindsay Wildlife Museum gave an excellent talk on raptors.



Great Horned Owl

Accomplishments

I started out the meeting by reporting that MDIA's financial situation continues to be strong with a solid base of loyal members and donations. MDIA launched a new website at mdia.org with many features that members and park visitors have been asking for, such as an events calendar, online store for publications and merchandise, photo gallery, and audio tour of many of the park's attractions and hikes. The website has generated over 700 contacts for MDIA that we now can reach with email newsletters and announcements. We also supported the development of an additional installment of Audible Mount Diablo. From our website you can link to different audio tours, including an

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Meet MDIA Director Burt Bogardus

Long-time MDIA members may know about Burt Bogardus and his park-related activities, but many of you probably know little about him other than that.

Burt is a California native. He was born on October 13, 1943, in Montebello, which coincidentally was the site of one of the aviation beacons similar to the Mount Diablo light. He grew up in Pasadena, and, although he had no brothers or sisters, he had numerous cousins. When he was six, his parents bought



a small cabin in Angeles National Forest, and they spent almost every weekend there. He developed an early love for hiking and the outdoors, and frequently went off at a young age exploring alone.

Following high school graduation, Burt attended UC Santa Barbara, majoring in Physics, although he changed his major several times. He

eventually transferred to UC Berkeley, majoring in Biology with a teaching minor in English. While at Cal, he became heavily involved in the protest movement against the Vietnam War.

Burt applied to and was accepted by the U.S. Peace Corps. For two years, he taught biology, mathemat-

ics, and physics in a government secondary school at Mpraeso, Ghana. During summer breaks, he explored Ghana, Togo, Dahomey, and Nigeria.

Upon leaving Ghana, he withdrew a portion of his “readjustment allowance” to travel around the world. For six months, he traveled extensively throughout Egypt, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Japan before returning to the United States.

Burt became a State Park Ranger in 1971, living in a small trailer at Mount Tamalpais for \$22 a month rent. Two years later, he was transferred to San Clemente State Beach, and in 1975, he came to Mount Diablo State Park, where he worked until his retirement in 1993.

Over the past twenty years, Burt has been involved with numerous park volunteer projects, including removing old barbed wire fencing, installing trail signs, maintaining the telescopes and the Mount Diablo beacon (which is undergoing restoration this year), and serving as a property steward for Save Mount Diablo’s nearby Young Canyon.

Burt is a lifelong atheist and frequently expresses his opinions in Letters to the Editor, so his ideas regarding religion are well known to local newspaper readers. He is a life member of American Atheists, Freedom from Religion Foundation, the Sierra Club, and American Mensa, among numerous other affiliations.

In his ninth year on the Board as a director for MDIA, Burt has now contributed even more years as a volunteer in the park than as a ranger. If you have any questions about park history within the last forty years or so, check with Burt; with his wealth of knowledge, he just might have a story to share with you. ■

President’s Message, continued from page 1

introduction to the mountain, Mitchell Canyon hike, and the Grand Loop Tour. Of course, MDIA continued to publish the *Mountain News* and *Mount Diablo Review*. We also were able to support a number of activities in the park including funding of park aides, merchandising at the Summit and Mitchell Canyon visitor centers, continuing development of the Native Plant Garden at Mitchell Canyon, and over 40 guided hikes. We were also able to invest in park infrastructure through trail maintenance, the trail signage program, and park maintenance.

MDIA Business

During the meeting, returning board members Mike Woodring, Ruth Ann Kishi, and Burt Bogardus were reelected to board positions, and new board member Walter Moeller was elected to a three-year term.

Recognition

I was able to recognize our 16 board members and 50 docents; and 29 publication, 20 hike leader, 15 trash removal program, 9 trail map and 9 trail signage volunteers. These member volunteers all con-

tribute significant time to MDIA and the park and they play a key role in our ability to meet our goals.

MDIA has accomplished a great deal this year, and we are committed to continuing to meet our vision of enhancing the park visitors’ experience through support of programs and services at Mount Diablo. Information about the park and MDIA can be found at our website, www.MDIA.org. Please visit your beautiful Mount Diablo State Park, and I encourage you to get involved in the many opportunities we have to volunteer and contribute. ■

Make a Difference as a Park Maintenance Volunteer

By Steve Williams



Park Maintenance Volunteers (left to right) Steve Williams, Steve Elliott, and Spencer Fulweiler
• Carl Nielson

It was July 2012, and Sue Schwartz, Mount Diablo State Park's Maintenance Supervisor, was pondering the growing list of deferred maintenance projects on the whiteboard in her office.

She had wisely chosen to use her regular staff for urgent, high-visitor-impact projects, such as the burst water main at the Summit that occurred recently. How was she going to get this other work done?

Then she remembered the Earth Day project in April, during which a group of volunteers rebuilt the redwood fencing around the propane tank at the Summit. As one of the park's volunteers, I led this effort that day and later completed it with help from Steve Elliott, a long-time volunteer in the park.

Sue wondered if this small group, which now included volunteer Spencer Fulweiler, would be interested in tackling some of these deferred maintenance projects, and we responded with a resounding yes!

We enjoyed the work at the Summit and wanted to do more to contribute to the park. Sue and I met and sketched out several projects:

- ◆ Refurbish the interior and exterior of the South Gate Entrance Station.
- ◆ Paint and modernize the restroom used by park aides and volunteers who staff the South Gate Entrance Station.
- ◆ Replace the loose tiles in the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center.
- ◆ Remove the large sliding doors in the restrooms at Macedo Ranch and install regular doors.

The goal of our group is to focus on completing deferred maintenance projects that improve the visitor experience so that park maintenance staff can address larger, more critical projects that require their expertise.

Thanks to MDIA's ongoing funding and support, the Maintenance Volunteer group has already completed refurbishing the South Gate restroom and the South Gate Entrance Station. The group wishes to acknowledge Sue Schwartz and her team for their continued cooperation and encouragement.

With a list of projects that continues to grow, the group is looking for additional volunteers with maintenance experience, and definitely with enthusiasm. Rest assured, all volunteers are given safety training in the use of park power tools and equipment before tackling a project. Anyone interested may contact me, Steve Williams, Team Lead of Mount Diablo State Park's Maintenance Volunteer Group, at stepwill47@comcast.net. ■



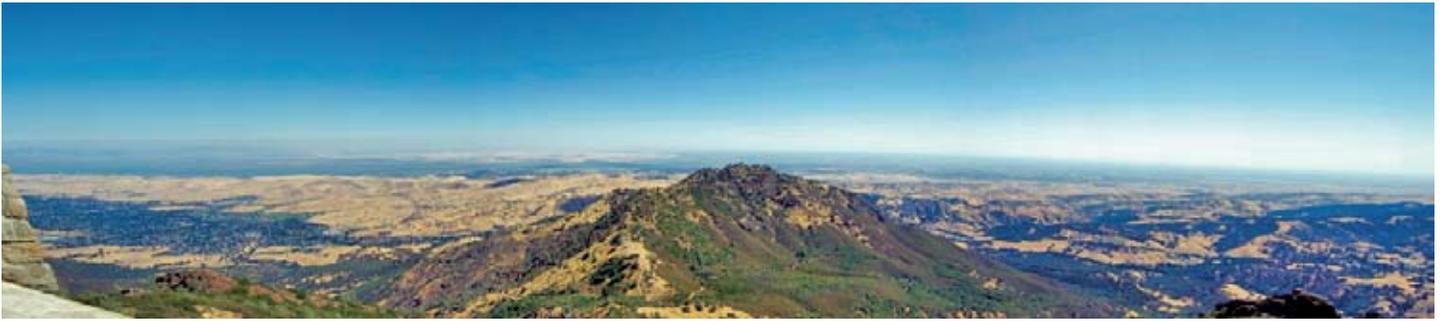
New Redwood Fencing at Summit

• Steve Williams

Sign Up to Receive MDIA Emails

MDIA encourages all members to sign up to be on MDIA's email distribution list. Email communication is faster than postal mail as well as more cost-effective, which is an important consideration for a nonprofit organization such as ours.

Please email your address to info@mdia.org and include "Mailing List" in the subject line. Also, please notify us if you change your email address. Rest assured that your email address will not be shared with any other organization or company without your permission and that MDIA will not inundate your mailbox with emails.



• Kirsten Pearsons

MDIA Intern: My Summer on the Mountain

By Kirsten Pearsons

Hello everyone! My name is Kirsten Pearsons and I am a student at UC Davis. During the summer of 2012, I had the opportunity to intern for the Mount Diablo Interpretive Association (MDIA). I grew up in the shadow of the mountain, and I thought I knew quite a lot about the park's cultural and natural history. Now more than ever I understand the quote, "The more you know, the more you know you don't know."

During my internship, I helped MDIA with a wide variety of their projects. I was a docent in the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center, at the Summit, and on the trails. I also assisted with trail signage work and attended both a Trail Maintenance Day and a Trash Removal Day. The days I worked in the park were rather physically demanding, but because of this, they were some of the most rewarding. I helped with the new editions of the map and trail guide, cross-checked mileages of trails with a GPS and an "old-fashioned" wheel, worked with trail data on the computer to extract elevation profiles, and surveyed picnic areas. I even got to help out on some of the tarantula treks!

I learned an incredible amount about Mount Diablo's cultural history and natural history from the projects I worked on, from the publications I read, and especially from the people I worked with. When I roved at the summit toward the end of the summer, many visitors commented on how much I knew about the park—everything from where the restrooms are to "what kind of bird makes that noise."

I was in the park almost every day I was working and saw quite the collection of wildlife and wildflowers. Some of the more unique flowers and animals I saw were a juvenile coyote, a western skink (with a sky-blue tail), a golden eagle, a spotted towhee, dudleya (a native succulent), red ribbons clarkia, and the lovely purple penstemon.

Whenever I go to Mount Diablo, or any park, for that matter, I will feel like I have a responsibility to

be an ambassador for the park. I know now more than ever how important places like Mount Diablo are, and I hope I will get to share that knowledge. ■

2013 MDIA Board of Directors

	<i>Term Through</i>
Jim Mitchell, President	2014
Mike Woodring, Vice President	2015
Liz Watson, Secretary	2014
Steve Elliott, Treasurer	2014
Lisa Anich	2015
Burt Bogardus	2013
Leslie Contreras	2014
Leslie Dawson	2013
Sue Donecker	2014
Ruth Ann Kishi	2015
Ken Lavin	2013
Rich McDrew	2014
Walter Moeller	2015
Keith Patterson	2014
Maria Tice	2013

2013 MDIA Meeting Dates

Board Meetings: 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.,
fourth Thursday of the month, at
St. Paul's Episcopal Church Youth Center,
1860 Trinity Avenue, Walnut Creek

- April 25 • May 23 • June 27
- July 25 • August 22 • September 26
- October 24 • December 5

October 26: Annual Membership Meeting, 2:00 p.m.
to 4:00 p.m., with docent-led hike at noon.

Contributions to Mountain News

If you have an article or photo you would like to contribute to the *Mountain News* or any other MDIA publication, please leave a message at 925.927.7222 or email info@mdia.org. Thank you!