

Dedicated to Preserving Mt. Helix Nature Theatre and Park for the Benefit and Cultural Enrichment of the People of San Diego County.

Contact us at tstotz@mthelixpark.org if you are receiving duplicate newsletters or would like to receive email updates on Park events.

Become a Friend of the Park today using the enclosed envelope.



MT. HELIX PARK FOUNDATION

4905 Mt. Helix Drive
La Mesa, CA 91941

NON-PROFIT
ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
San Diego
Permit 906



A view from Mt. Helix enjoyed by generations of Park visitors. Photo taken by Gary J. Severt.

Planned Giving Legacy

One way to make a lasting gift to the Mt. Helix Park is through Planned Giving. Remembering the Park with a bequest is an easy way to help serve as a steward of the Park for future generations. Although an attorney needs to set up the specific giving instrument, the following wording can be helpful. In all cases you want to either stipulate how the gift will be used, or give the Foundation discretion for its use. Remember, Planned Giving allows you to live on through the gift of helping others.

PROPORTIONAL BEQUEST – “I give to the Foundation for the Preservation of Mt. Helix Nature Park and Amphitheatre an amount equal to ___ % of the total value of the assets of my estate, whatever that amount shall be at the time of my death.”

SPECIFIC BEQUEST – “I give to the Foundation for the Preservation of Mt. Helix Nature Park and Amphitheatre, the sum of \$ _____ or (all my right, title and interest in the following described property _____).”

CONTINGENT BEQUEST – “In the event that _____ (name of wife, son, daughter, brother...) shall not survive me, then I give _____ (name specific assets) to the Foundation for the Preservation of Mt. Helix Nature Park and Amphitheatre.”



Volume 2

The Newsletter of the  Mt. Helix Park Foundation

2011

New "Yawkey Trail" Built by Many Volunteers

The new nature trail around and within Mt. Helix Park was inspired by two people. The first was Mary Carpenter Yawkey. Nearly 100 years ago, Mary would walk what was then just a trail that led to the summit of an uninhabited mountain to sit and enjoy the view and contemplate life. Later, Miles Stepich, a long time resident of Mt. Helix and supporter of the Park Foundation, envisioned a trail where people could leave the beaten path to enjoy the softer side of the Park. After his death in 2009, Miles' family set up a fund to help with the building of a proper trail.

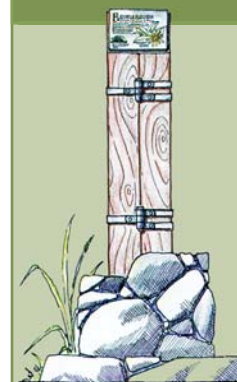
Last November, his vision became a reality as more than 50 volunteers began carving a modest trail from the southern, western and northern hillside. Under the direction of John Mead and Jeff Safford, six work parties labored to create this new nature experience. Thanks to regular work day volunteers and crews from the East County Transitional Living Center and the Armed Services YMCA, the project has gone smoothly. In addition, four Boy Scout Eagle projects, completed by Bruce Gordon, Nick Jones, Daniel Jacobs and Ladd

SEE YAWKEY TRAIL on page 7



A bench made by Scout Bruce Gordon, the latest addition to the Yawkey Trail.

Special Thanks to Our Trail Fund Donors



Mark & Connie Allan	Norm & Val Hapke	Alice & Joe Smith
Anonymous	Keith & Judy Meeker	Lisa Stewart
Corrugados de Baja	Laurie Orange	Tracey Stotz & Bob Johnson
Christian Community Theater	Colin & Rosemary Rathburn	Elaine Thorton
Chuck & Judith Duddles	Paul & Cheryl Russell	



MT. HELIX PARK

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mark B. Allan, PRESIDENT
Eric Fletcher, Vice PRESIDENT
Amanda Bond, CFO
Cynthia Adkins, SECRETARY
Jeff Swiney, FACILITIES MANAGER
Robert Ball, IMM.D. PAST PRESIDENT

David Avants
Anthony Fulton
Norm Hapke
Keith Meeker
Pat Moore
Andrew Phemister
Chris Roberts
Alice W. Smith
Kathy White

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Tracey Stotz

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

Peggy Junker

From the Top

is a semi-annual publication of Mt. Helix Park.

To contact the Editor, call 619-741-4363, or email tstotz@mthelixpark.org.

EDITORS

Alice Smith
Tracey Stotz

GRAPHIC DESIGN / LAYOUT

Victoria Vinton
Coyote Press Graphic Communications

© Copyright 2009
Mt. Helix Park

www.mthelixpark.org

From the Executive Director

The power of a community is strong, as evidenced by the uprisings in the Middle East, in the post-tornado rebuilding efforts in the South and in our own community of Mt. Helix. The recent HeART of Mt. Helix is a perfect example of what can happen when members of a community work together. Who could imagine that in this economy a fundraising event could make a profit of \$70,000 for a park? We aren't feeding the homeless or helping injured animals; this is simply a small, all be it special, place. Yet, the HeART 2011 was the largest fundraising event in the history of Mt. Helix Park, done in the roughest economic times I personally can remember. Why was it such a success? Because you, the members of our community, worked together with everyone giving something to make sure historic Mt. Helix Park has the money it needs to continue to be a safe, vibrant part of our community.



Tracey Stotz

Underwriters like Eric and Babs Fletcher and Greg and Teresa Hall ensured money collected that night would go to support the Park. Local restaurants like Hooley's, Terra American Bistro and Rana's donated fabulous food which tantalized our palates (see page 5 for a complete list of restaurants). Local businesses like Rancho La Puerta, Christian Community Theater and the San Diego Zoo gave items to be auctioned. Residents like the Hapkes, the Johnstones and the Fletchers opened their homes as auction items. Musicians like Nicole Yantos and The Choice Entertainers (loved that doo wop!) donated their talents and time. And if you weren't there and didn't get to taste the signature cocktail designed for our event by the mixologist at Alchemy Restaurant, you missed out!

An amazing committee of local men and woman worked countless hours to organize the event. And, most importantly, YOU decided to spend your money to attend and purchase one of the many auction items available that night. That is what community is about and what makes us so strong. We work together and we take care of our own.

This sense of community was also evident recently when a fire broke out in the Park. The fire appears to have been started intentionally and, more significantly, other Park visitors rushed over to put dirt on the fire to stop it from spreading while other neighbors called the fire department. Thankfully some Park visitors and neighbors understood what it means to be a part of something bigger than ourselves. Mt. Helix Park and its surrounding community is that "something" to which we all belong. Needless to say, there will always be a few who are too immature to grasp the value of community---who spray graffiti and start fires---but, thankfully, they are in the minority. The greater number and greater strength is found in those who care and those who do the right thing. Thank you for being part of that group. Working as one we can accomplish anything.

With appreciation, Tracey Stotz, Executive Director

Zarlin Pilates Returns

Join Mary Zarlin for pilates on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8:30 am – 9:30 am for a workout which builds muscle without bulk and encourages good posture, flexibility and strength. Classes are \$15 to drop-in (no advance sign up needed) or \$125 for a package of 10. Email Mary at zarlinpilates@cox.net or call (619) 247-6442 for more information.

Shop Ralphs? Sign up to Support the Park

If you are already a Ralph's shopper you can register your Club Card (their frequent shopper discount card – not a credit card) in support of Mt. Helix Park. Ralph's has a Community Contributions program which enables them to give from 1 percent to 4 percent of shoppers' eligible purchases to their charity of choice. Go to www.ralphs.com and click on Services, then click on Community Contributions where you can enroll your Club Card and designate the Park as your charity. The Park's official name is Foundation for the Preservation of Mt. Helix Nature Theatre so that is how you will see us listed. Ralph's requires re-enrollment each September so even if you were already signed up in support of Mt. Helix Park you will have to re-enroll annually. This is an easy way to help Mt. Helix.



San Diego Geocaching

Indiana Jones has nothing on local members of the geocaching community. If you aren't familiar with it, geocaching is a real-world outdoor treasure hunt where participants try and locate small hidden containers called Geocaches using GPS enabled devices. According to local enthusiasts, there are more than 5 million geocachers worldwide and more than 1.5 million geocaches. For more information search online to find out more details. Why do we mention this? Well, here are some GPS coordinates that lead to a local geocache - N 32 degrees, 46.013 W 116 degrees 58.907. Happy hunting!



YAWKEY TRAIL, continued from page 1

Carnessale, resulted in three rock wall viewpoints complete with benches that allow one to comfortably sit in a slice of wilderness, take in the spectacular views and contemplate life, much like Mary Carpenter Yawkey did so long ago.

The "Yawkey Trail," named by an anonymous donor for Mrs. Yawkey, will be an ongoing project. Interpretive signs, pointing out the vista highlights and the Park's flora and fauna, will be installed at each viewpoint within the next several months. Several Boy Scout Eagle Projects and other community service projects will include building better steps and other natural looking improvements along the trail. Now is the time to take a step into nature and enjoy the new Yawkey Trail.

Get in the Spirit

Attend Sing-along Christmas Caroling in the Amphitheater On December 11

There is nothing like singing Christmas Carols under the stars in the Mt. Helix amphitheater to warm your heart and help you feel the spirit of the season. The cool air, the twinkling lights in the distance and a cup of hot coffee make for an evening of memories. This year's free family-event will be held on Sunday, December 11 at 6 pm.

Join Gina Seashore, known as "That Music Lady," for a sing-along to all the traditional carols. Free hot coffee, cocoa and baked goods, provided by SPRITES, will be available. There will also be a raffle. Shuttles will run from the San Miguel Fire Station, at 10105 Vivera Drive, beginning at 5:30 pm. Be sure to bring a blanket to sit on.

For those who don't know Gina, she is a community music leader and teacher who has shared her love of making music with people for over 25 years. Highlights include developing a Keyboard Kamp for Kids, teaching songwriting to seniors, and musically directing many theatre productions. Gina currently teaches piano, is music director at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church and works at several schools.

Rumor has it that Santa Claus may also be making an appearance but his schedule was unconfirmed at press time. Be sure to check the Park website for updated caroling information, www.mthelixpark.org.



The amphitheater was aglow with the warmth of the holiday season.



Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer was led by a group of children from the audience at last year's caroling event



Children had a chance to sit on Santa's lap last year.

Photos by Gary Junker.

2012 Calendar of Events

JANUARY 7

Annual New Year's Neighborhood Walk co-sponsored with the Grossmont-Mt. Helix Improvement Association. Meet at the San Miguel Fire Station at 10105 Vivera Drive at 10 am and walk up to the amphitheater with your neighbors. Hot coffee will be waiting at the top!

APRIL 1

Third Annual East County Earth Day co-hosted with the Jarrett Meeker Foundation. Watch for more information on the Park website, www.mthelixpark.org, in January.

APRIL 8

Easter Sunrise Services sponsored by Christ Lutheran Church of La Mesa.

MAY 20

East County Youth Symphony free Pops concert in the Park.



Volunteer Spotlight: Mark Allan

by Peggy Junker

Sometimes there are benefits to our labor that don't correspond to any financial reward. Just ask Mark Allan, President of the Mt. Helix Park Foundation. Mark has been working for the Park for over 20 years now and the only payment he receives is knowing he has helped to rebuild a community icon. For this East County resident, husband of 40 years, proud father and grandfather of two, that is payment enough.

Mark can be seen at almost every Park-hosted event from cleanup days to celebrations; in a t-shirt and jeans, or in a suit, representing the Foundation's Board of Directors.

Summoning the collective efforts of the community, Mark along with board members and many supporters have helped area residents reclaim their Park for the benefit, not only of the community, but of the thousands of visitors who come each year to harvest the beauty and tranquility here.

Witnessing Mt. Helix Park as it is today, it is difficult to imagine that the "Jewel of East County" was once the bane of the neighborhood. But that is exactly what Mark found during a walk in 1989.

"I was appalled," recalls Mark of the Park's condition. His reaction prompted him to not only contact the County Parks Department and "put their feet to the fire" but to join the Grossmont - Mt. Helix Improvement

Association (GMIA) in order to generate interest in the Park among community leaders.

The culmination of what followed was the creation in 1999 of the Mt. Helix Park Foundation and Board of Directors. Co-founded by Mark, Bob Ball and a cadre of hard-working volunteers the entity would ultimately take over management and financial control of the Park.

"We have been blessed to have such a generous Board of Directors that loves and cares for the Park," declares Mark. He adds that not only do members donate their time generously, but "their hard earned money" as well.

"I have a strong passion for the Mt. Helix Park", declares Mark, who served alongside Ball as the board's vice president until becoming president two years ago. "I have been very involved in the formation of the Foundation and have a strong commitment to help make sure it is a success."

Almost twelve years after its formation, it is safe to say, the Park board Mark helped to create is a success. As Senior Vice President of Alliant, an insurance brokerage firm, with a passion for auto racing, this self proclaimed "adrenaline junkie," has had just the right combination of sensibility and dare-devil to navigate the Park into somewhat of a renaissance.

But, as Mark points out, "everything takes money"—this metamorphosis has been no exception. Generating the

\$150,000 in annual operation costs, with no government funding, the Park remains "financially stable and sound," assures Mark.

"Mt. Helix Park didn't used to play much of an important role in the community," recalls Mark. That is, until the Foundation took over. "Now it is a shining example of community involvement," he says, adding that the annual HeART event is "the place to be in the East County each August."

The Park has undergone drastic changes, points out Mark. Within the past year alone the Board has overseen the addition of a new office, green room and storage area, and visitors also now have the new "Yawkey Trail" complete with benches and kiosks that are under construction.

Key to the community's reunification with its Park is the fact that it is a safer place than it was when Mark first found it. One of the most critical issues that faced the Board initially was the fact that crime had gone unchecked for so long. The lack of safety made locals begin to visit the Park less frequently. One of the most important accomplishments, according to Mark, was the construction of a front gate. The gate added not only an inviting entrance, but allowed for nighttime closure of the Park. With the gates closing just after dark and the addition of a security guard and cameras, it is a much friendlier Park.

Now Mark says he and the other board members are looking at long-term goals for the Park like the addition of restrooms and perhaps even a visitor center.

"Our dream would be to someday build a beautiful reception center on the land we purchased a few years ago on the East side below the Park road," says Mark.

Mark's message to fellow Park-lovers is, that if you love the Park as much as he does and want to get more involved you should contact him or Executive Director, Tracey Stotz at (619) 741-4363. "We can always use more help taking care of this wonderful Jewel."

the heART of mt helix

The HeART of Mt. Helix is only possible thanks to the support of so many donors. Much appreciation goes to our underwriters and auction donors:

Presenting Sponsors: **Eric and Babs Fletcher**

Music Underwriters: **Greg and Teresa Hall**

General Underwriting: Mark Allan, Alice and Joe Smith, Goldfield Stage, San Diego Medical Services, South Bay Salt Works, San Diego County Credit Union, Modern Family Surrogacy, Fletcher Hills Printing and Heritage Security.

Auction Donors

A Better View Window Washing
Acacia Day Spa
Act II
Adams Avenue Grill
Adventure 16
Annalee by Devries
Aqua Clean
Art with Larisse
Art World Gallery
Atlantis Casino Resort
Bali Hai
Barona Resort and Casino
Baskin Robbins
Bella Collana
Beverly Berwick
Birch Aquarium
Blind Speed
Paula and David Block
Blue Lotus Holistic Center
Blumenthal Jewelers
Café Sevilla
Hector and Carrie Cardenas
Casa de Oro Car Wash
Catamaran
Ceramic Café
Christian Community Theatre
Chula Vista Nature Center
Cohn Restaurant Group
Continental Catering
Costco
Frank Cota
Cupcakes Squared
Cygnat Theatre
Deering Banjo
Del Mar Thoroughbred Club
Dennis Sherman Foreign Car Service
Disney Resorts
Jeff and Tania Doggett
Jess Dominguez
Mary Lynn Dominguez

Donovan's
Roberta Dyer
Enhancery Jewelers
Randy Erickson
Kim and Marilyn Fletcher
Eric and Babs Fletcher
French's Art Studio
Full Circle Acupunture
Tony Fulton
Marilyn Grame
Gary Griggs
Greg and Teresa Hall
Norm and Val Hapke
Elaine Harvey
Healing Arts Massage
Jon and Kathleen Hedberg
Roberta Henson
Bill and Karen Hernquist
Hornblower Cruises
Paul Howard, DDS
Ideal Plumbing
Dianne Jacob
Katy Johnson
Bob Johnson and Tracey Stotz
Al and Janet Johnstone
Gary and Peggy Junker
Amanda Kazemi
Larry Kennard
Knifing Nursery
Kroc Center
Lake Murray Grooming
Legoland
Lions, Tigers and Bears
Lizzy B Vintage Jewelry
Loews Coronado Resort
Ben Mandel, DDS
Maritime Museum of San Diego
Dianne McCann
Chuck McPherson
Charlie and Maria McRoberts

Mike and Linda McWilliams
Millicent Salon
Mingei International Museum
Molly Malloy's
Patrick and Rhona Moore
Mostly Mission
Myrtle Creek Nursery
Old Globe Theater
Ted and Colleen Olson
Roz Oserin
Pala Casino Resort
PRP Wine International
Mike and Mary Qualls
Rancho La Puerta
Larry and Heather Raschtschenia
Reader's Inc.
Jessica Reynolds
Ursula Robertson
Ross
Rowley Portraits
Royal Cleaners
Rubio's
An Ruf
Sail Ho Golf Course
Salon Elements
Sammy's Woodfired Pizza
Travis Samuel
San Diego Chargers
San Diego County Credit Union
San Diego Film Festival
San Diego Hall of Champions
San Diego Madres
San Diego Medical Services
San Diego Medical Services
San Diego Museum of Art
San Diego Museum of Man
San Diego Natural History Museum
San Diego Padres
San Diego Repertory Theatre
San Diego Symphony

San Diego Zoo
San Miguel Firefighters
San Pasqual Winery
Sara Elizabeth
SeaWorld
Shakers Frozen Yogurt
Shear Brilliance
Silver Creek Fine Art & Custom Framing
Simply Marvelous
Dr. and Mrs. Gary Simpson
Sky Sailing
Lauren Smeenge
Joe and Alice Smith
Gary and Pam
Spring Valley Vet Clinic
Stan Lawrence Portrait Art Photography
Marsha Starr
Steele Canyon Golf Course
Eugene and Darrell Strom
Sun Valley Golf Club
Jeff Swiney
The Bouncing Bead
The Box Shop
The Comedy Store
Tim Mulligan
Ray and Joan Kroc Center
Trolley Stop Deli
Deneen Underwood
United States Tang Soo Do
USS Midway
Viejas
Signe Von Verdo and Bob Hasselbrink
John and Angie Woodward
YMCA/East County
Ann Zamow

4th Annual HeART of Mt. Helix Deemed a Success Nets More than \$70,000

This year's HeART of Mt. Helix was our most diverse event to date," said event co-chair Kathy White. "We had new wonderful restaurants, new artistic live performances by Frank Cota, a brutalist sculptor, as well as Chris Rubio's "Crew" percussion group, and many new musical acts. When added to our exciting returning restaurants, performers and artists it was a wildly entertaining evening for all," she added.

Co-chair Dianne McCann enthusiastically exclaimed, "It is such an incredible evening and best of all the event goes such a long way in solidifying the future of the Park. The look in everyone's eyes as they experience the incredible food tasting, wine tasting, variety of entertainment is truly gratifying for the entire committee. I can't tell you how many times I heard people say, 'It is hard to believe, but this year was even better than all the other years, I don't know how they do it.'"

Yes, the HeART was an amazing event but, as McCann indicated, the best part was it was a tremendous fun-

draiser for the Park, netting more than \$70,000 for Park preservation and enhancement. Most of the funds raised will go for such operating expenses as liability insurance, utilities, personnel (3 part-timers), maintenance and security services. A chunk of the funds will be spent to upgrade the Park's security system with additional cameras and recording abilities.

Thanks to all of you who donated your time and/or services to make this the best event to date. Please patronize donating businesses and tell them you appreciate their support for Mt. Helix Park.

Sharing their Culinary Arts at the HeART were the Following Restaurants:

Anthony's, Auntie M's Cup and Cake Bakery, Casa de Pico, BMH Italian Deli, Devine Pastabilities, Grove Pastry Shop, Hacienda Casa Blanca, Hooley's Irish Pub, Rana's, Riviera Supper Club, Rubio's, Soup Plantation and Terra American Bistro.



Photos by Gary Junker

