

Mt. Helix Park's Magazine

FROM THE TOP

ISSUE 1 SPRING 2013



MT. HELIX PARK
FOUNDATION

*Dedicated to Preserving Mt. Helix
Nature Theatre and Park*

**EAST COUNTY
EARTH DAY**

**6th Annual
heART
of Mt. Helix**

**HISTORY
of Mt. Helix**

**WEDDINGS
in the PARK**

NATURE | EVENTS | LOCAL HISTORY | PEOPLE | PRESERVATION



friend us on facebook

Social media has finally taken hold at Mt. Helix Park thanks to the efforts of our wedding coordinator, Carissa Taylor. Taylor, of a generation where social media plays a role in daily life, posts regular updates on all the activities happening in the Park. Want to know the latest speaker added to Earth Day? Are you curious about the work taking place up in the Park on a specific day?

If we have the answer you can assume Taylor will be posting it along with great Park photos on our Facebook page. Be sure to friend us if you are a Facebook user so you can share in the dialogue. Taylor is also the brains behind the new Mt. Helix Park App which lists information like Park hours and parking lot closures as well as special event specifics. To download the App go to the Park website, www.mthelixpark.org, and follow the link on the home page. ■

Check out our new FREE Park APP

SUCCULENTS & NATIVE PLANTS WANTED

Do you have succulents or native plants you are willing to donate to Mt. Helix Park? We are always looking for more low-water vegetation to add to our landscape.

Volunteer Dianne McCann, a talented Mt. Helix gardener, has been planting around the Park (check out the adorable planter outside the office) and wants your succulents (no palms, please.) Contact the office at (619) 741-4363 if you are able to donate.



MT. HELIX PARK

Mt. Helix Park's Magazine , 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.

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Tracey Stotz
Executive Director

From the Executive Director

Mt. Helix Park is a place full of fantastic visuals. The view, the historic amphitheater, the Yawkey Trail, the majestic cross and enjoyable programs all make for fabulous images. To better share what makes Mt. Helix Park and Amphitheatre so unique, we are moving from a newsletter to a magazine format which allows for more photos. We hope this gives you a better feel for what happens daily at this community asset.

Recently I received an email from one of our Board members with a link to a February 6 *Market Watch* article on five tax breaks being considered for changes as Congress tries to come to some agreement on the federal government budget. By the time you read this something will have happened – either an agreement was reached or automatic spending cuts kicked in. I just hope the tax break most near and dear to Mt. Helix Park – that for charitable deductions – wasn't touched. If it wasn't touched this year, it certainly could be on the chopping block in the future. Here is what *Market Watch's* Jonnelle Marte had to say,

"Lawmakers may be hesitant to tax altruism, but experts say the break for charitable donations could be at risk. The Congressional Budget Office examined eliminating it, as a possible option for reducing the federal deficit, estimating that curtailing the deduction for such contributions could increase federal revenue by approximately \$20 billion in 2014. One proposal that could reappear in budget talks is to set an income threshold, allowing taxpayers to only deduct contributions that exceed 2% — or some other percentage — of their income, economists say. Critics argue that such a threshold could encourage donors to bundle their contributions — meaning they'd give every other year instead of annually, to increase their chances of meeting the minimum. But proponents say it could also encourage people to boost their overall donations."

I personally am doubtful it would increase overall donations but what else can a proponent of the plan say? Bank of America recently conducted a study of giving by the wealthiest Americans (of course, most of our donors may not fall in this category but it does provide some data from which to draw conclusions) which showed at least 50 percent of donors indicated that they wouldn't maintain their current charitable giving levels if income tax donations were eliminated. Roughly 32 percent said one of their main motivations for giving is the tax benefit. (Most, at 74 percent, said they gave when moved by how their gift can make a difference.)

This is all of interest to those of us who believe in the value of the non-profit sector in America. Since Mt. Helix Park gets no government funding, without generous individuals like those of you reading this, removing the tax break for charitable gifts could hurt us dramatically. If we lost 50 percent of our funding we couldn't offer programs like East County Earth Day or Christmas Caroling (sorry, no funds to hire shuttles and rent portable-potties), we couldn't maintain the Yawkey Trail (sorry, no funds for landscape services or to repair the benches), and we could be in jeopardy of not being open 365 days a year for passive use. I shudder to think about it. There is no question our elected officials have tough decisions to make, and we need to balance the budget so our children don't suffer from our national over spending. I just hope the balance isn't reached at the expense of non-profit organizations like Mt. Helix Park. If it is, I hope we can still count on you to share the vision and contribute to this special place. ■

Tracey Stotz



heART of Mt. Helix Set for August 17

Live music, a glowing sunset, restaurant tastings, a glass of white wine, dancing under the stars, a sample of visual arts and the stunning view – these make for the perfect evening at the annual heART of Mt. Helix. This year's event, in its sixth year, will be held on Saturday, August 17. "We are pleased that much of the same organizing committee is returning to work on the heART," said Executive Director Tracey Stotz, "We have a great group of skilled volunteers, although we can always use more help." The committee kicked off planning for the fundraiser in February. At the helm are Co-Chairs Kathy White and Dianne McCann. Entertainment will again be coordinated by Nicole Roberts. Food and Beverage Chair is Tania Doggett. Heather Raschtschenia will coordinate Registration and Cashiering. Watercolorist Chuck McPherson will be painting as well as coordinating the visual artists who perform that night. Other chairmanships are still being finalized. We need volunteers to help sell advertisements in the program.

Tickets, \$50 for amphitheatre seating and \$100 for reserved table seating, go on sale through the Park website in June. The event is limited to 600 attendees, so be sure to purchase your tickets early. If your company is interested in donating an auction item, purchasing an advertisement or helping to underwrite the event please contact Tracey Stotz at tstotz@mthelixpark.org. ■

Inspired by the
Art Colony that
Founded the Area

FOURTH ANNUAL

EAST COUNTY EARTH DAY

FREE Family Fun
in the
Amphitheatre
on April 14

The Mt. Helix Park Foundation and The Jarrett Meeker Foundation will host East County Earth Day atop one of the most advantageous spots in San Diego from which to view the area's natural beauty – Mt. Helix Park. This site inspires people to be a part of the change that can make a sustainable world. On April 14, local organizations will be sharing their green message in the Park from 11 am to 3 pm at the Fourth Annual East County Earth Day.

“Thanks to our underwriters – The Allan Company, Mark and Connie Allan, Barona and John Hine Mazda – we are able to keep this important event free to the public,” commented Co-Chair Judy Meeker.

The East County Earth Day committee has created an event devoted to celebrating eco-friendly practices in ways that are fun, healthy and positive. The event features vendors, speakers, and children's activities that promise to engage and entertain the entire family. You won't want to miss the new

Earth Day Scavenger Hunt – an opportunity to trek the nature trail, decipher clues, and solve mysteries while traveling through the event for prizes and more. First-place winners of the kindergarten through twelfth grade *Endangered Animal Art Contest*, co-sponsored by Art Smarts, Inc. and the San Diego Zoo, will have a chance to win zoo passes or a Visa gift card. Live music and food hot off the grill will make for a festive event.

Beginning at 10:45 am, parking will be available at the San Miguel Fire Station at 10105 Vivera Drive in La Mesa; Grossmont High School, 1100 Murray Drive in El Cajon; and East County Communities Center (the old Spring Valley Elementary School campus off Bancroft and the 94 freeway) at 3845 Spring Drive in Spring Valley.

For details about the art contest or for a list of vendors, musical guests or children's activities visit www.mthelixpark.org. ■

FEATURED SPEAKERS

11:15 am - Marion Stacey, Hummingbird Rescue

1:00 pm - The San Diego Zoo's "Save the Backyard Animals" presentation - sponsored by the Jarrett Meeker Foundation

2:00 pm - Birch Aquarium, "Sharks in the Spotlight"

2:30 pm - Nancy Ryan & Anne Pacheco, La Mesa Fair Trade "Environmental and Social Justice Impact of Fair Trade"

East County Earth Day Committee

Judy Meeker, Co-Chair
Dr. John Bley, Committee Member
Susan Cunningham, Food Chair
Jackie Grubareck, Committee Member
Sunje O'Clancy, Scavenger Hunt Chair
Penelope Quirk, Art Contest Chair
Isela Rouillard, Music Chair
Lisa Stewart, School District Chair
Barbara Warner, Outreach Chair
Peggy Junker, Staff



Challenge Met

A challenge was issued and met but fundraising will continue. Last January, granddaughters of Colonel Ed and Mary Fletcher, Virginia Wofford and Patricia Mahoney, donated \$10,000 in memory of their mother, Mary Louise Glanz. The \$10,000 was a gift to help pay down the loan on the open space land adjacent to the Park's trust property with the goal of one day being able to develop the lot for additional parking, permanent restrooms and a small visitor center.

In addition, the ladies issued a challenge to friends of Mt. Helix Park. Raise an additional \$10,000 by December 31, 2012 and they would donate yet another \$10,000 matching gift. Great news! The challenge was met and generous donors actually gave \$31,233.87. This is a large donation for Mt. Helix Park and will greatly benefit Park visitors in the future. A balance of more than \$100,000 still exists on the loan, however, so if you want to be part of this great effort to pay off the property (so we can add parking and a permanent restroom!) you can utilize the enclosed envelope to mail in a donation. Be sure to indicate on your gift that its use is restricted to paying down the loan. Gifts are 100 percent tax deductible.



Mary Louise
Glanz

Thank you to Patricia and Virginia for moving us closer to permanent restrooms. Thank you to the following who contributed to the challenge: Mark and Connie Allan, Ross and Lillian Bond, Stan and Penny Boney, Ron and MaryAlice Brady, Cliff and Susan Clifford, Stephen and Cherry Dimeff, Wes and Marilyn Dreyer, Eric and Babs Fletcher, John Grasberger and Eva Goode, Rick and Tory Gulley, Norm and Valerie Hapke, Larry Kennard, Henry McAdams, Kevin and Leann McCarthy, Nick and Louise Nickoloff, Joe and Aura O'Keefe, Chris and Nicole Roberts, Debbie Seeman, Andy and Julie Smith and Al and Jennifer Westermeyer.

More than \$31,000 raised for the Park!

Celebrations

Mt. Helix Makes for a Perfect Wedding Venue

Mt. Helix Park abounds with natural beauty and a one-of-a-kind setting making it an ideal location for a wedding. The awe inspiring views and an amphitheatre that can seat 1000 offer a spectacular backdrop for one of the most important days in a bride and groom's life together.

Go to the Park website, www.mthelixpark.org, for more information on planning your perfect day. Wedding Coordinator Carissa Taylor would be happy to meet you at the Park and answer all your questions. She can be reached at: mthelixweddings@gmail.com

Celebrate with Birds, white dove release specialists, is one of the new Preferred Vendors partnering with Mt. Helix Park. To become a Preferred Vendor contact Wedding Coordinator Carissa Taylor at mthelixweddings@gmail.com.



Even in 1988, couples like Eva Goode and her beau, John Grasberger, were tying the knot in Mt. Helix Park.

Mother's Day



*Don't know what to give Mom for Mother's Day?
Make a gift in her name and we will send
her a card notifying her of the honor.*





MT. HELIX PARK FOUNDATION

4905 Mt. Helix Drive
La Mesa, CA 91941

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

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SPRING / SUMMER CALENDAR

March 31, 6:30 am: Easter Sunrise Services

hosted by Christ Lutheran Church of La Mesa

Park at the San Miguel Fire Station (10105 Vivera Drive in La Mesa), Grossmont High School or Grossmont Center (look for the signs) and ride the shuttle up to the service.

April 14, 11 am – 3 pm

Fourth Annual East County Earth Day

See page 5 for more information.

April 25, 6:30 to 8 pm

Annual Meeting Grossmont Health Care District

9001 Wakarusa Avenue in La Mesa. All Friends of the Park are welcome to attend and find out about the Mt. Helix Park Foundation and its plans for the Park. RSVP to tstotz@mthelixpark.org.

April 27, 9 am to noon **Creek to Bay Clean Up**

Join your neighbors for a morning of trash pick-up at Mt. Helix Park as part of a county-wide effort to clean up our green spaces. Sign up at www.creetobay.org.

August 17, 5:30 pm – 10 pm **Sixth Annual heART of Mt. Helix**

Tickets go on sale in June for this fabulous evening of live music, restaurant tastings, auctions and dancing under the stars to support Park activities. See page 4 for more details.



PHOTOS WANTED!

We will be featuring a different photo on the cover of each issue of our new magazine. The cover photos have strict specifications which we'll be glad to share with you (super-high resolution is the main one). We will give credit to each contributor whose photo is chosen, so here's your chance for local fame! This applies also to historic photos you may have in your collection which you'd like to share with our readers, your neighbors. Contact Tracey Stotz by phone or email (see page 2). ■



I Love A Clean San Diego's CREEK to BAY Cleanup

