

Mt. Helix Park's Magazine

FROM THE TOP

ISSUE 9 SPRING / SUMMER 2017



MT. HELIX PARK
FOUNDATION

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

**Amphitheatre
RESTORED!**

**Volunteer
Spotlight**

**TIE the KNOT
at the Park**

**Flower Lover's
GUIDE
to Mt. Helix Park**

**Summer
Events**

**10th annual
heART of Mt. Helix
Approaching**

PARK HOURS

SEPT 1 - OCT 31: 5:30 AM TO 7:00 PM | NOV 1 - FEB 28: 5:30 AM TO 5:30 PM
MARCH 1 - MAY 31: 5:30 AM TO 8:00 PM | JUNE 1 - AUG 31: 5:30 A.M. TO 8:30 PM

NATURE | EVENTS | LOCAL HISTORY | PEOPLE | PRESERVATION



Congratulations to Timothy and Marissa who became engaged last Christmas at Mt. Helix Park.

Engagement photo by Rebekah Atkinson

From the Executive Director

As we move away from our rainy weather and into longer sunnier days, we at the Foundation begin revving up our coordination efforts for the biggest fundraising gala of the year: the heART of Mt. Helix. I started volunteering in 2009 as entertainment chair. In a blink of the eye it's 8 years later, and here I am overseeing the 10th annual event. To that I say "WOW!" However, it's not as tough as it might seem because of the wealth of passionate heART committee volunteers led by event chair, Dianne McCann, who has been a vital member of the committee since the very first heart in 2008. What amazes me every time I speak to Dianne, a committee chair or member, is the devotion each one brings to their responsibilities in making the heART not only the best experience for our guests but also a financial success for the Foundation. This level of pride and commitment leaves no doubt in my mind that this year's heART will be another memorable evening for you to enjoy with your friends and family---all while helping us raise the necessary funding to keep Mt. Helix Park our community's remarkable and cherished retreat.



Nicole Roberts
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MT. HELIX PARK

From the Top is a semi-annual publication of Mt. Helix Park.

To contact the Editor call 619-741-4363 or email nroberts@mthelixpark.org. © Copyright 2017 Mt. Helix Park

EDITORS

Alice Smith & Nicole Roberts

WRITERS

Peggy Junker, Jeffry Swiney,
Nicole Roberts

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Gary Junker & Peggy Junker

COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Nicole Roberts

GRAPHIC DESIGN / LAYOUT

Victoria Vinton
Coyote Press Graphics

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Nicole Roberts

ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Peggy Junker

WEDDING & SPECIAL EVENT

COORDINATOR

Cynthia Bauer

like us on facebook 

www.mthelixpark.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mark B. Allan, PRESIDENT
Eric Fletcher, Vice PRESIDENT
Tracey Stotz, SECRETARY
Norm Hapke, Chief Financial Officer
Jeff Swiney, VP of FACILITIES
Robert Ball, IMMD. PAST PRESIDENT
David Avants
Ron Brady
Caroline Harrod
Keith Meeker
Andrew Phemister
Ed Piffard
Alice W. Smith
Don Teemsma
Joseph Ventura

Mt. Helix Park Amphitheater Restoration

by Jeffry Swiney

One of the main features of Mt. Helix Park, as any visitor will tell you, is the amphitheater. Constructed out of concrete on a base of solid rock, it has continued to provide, with the exception of the cross, the most recognizable feature of the park. As to be expected at 92 years old, these 40 plus rows of sturdy steps - which have given thousands of visitors the opportunity for both exercise and relaxation - clearly began showing its age with its share of cracks, chips, spalls and discoloration. The latter was due to the accumulation of dirt and various organic growths on its surfaces from decades of exposure to the natural elements.

The Board of Directors made the decision to request a local civil engineer, Mr. Jeff Moody, to perform an engineering assessment as to the overall status of the amphitheater. Mr. Moody confirmed that despite its age, the amphitheater was basically sound, which bodes well to the 1925 engineering. Following this, Michael Wheeler from Christian Wheeler Engineering performed a limited evaluation of the existing concrete surface, noting the distressed features of the amphitheater. From this study, 235 areas requiring repairs were identified.

After receiving competitive bids from a number of concrete firms, the Board contracted with Morello Concrete Construction, Inc. to perform the necessary repair work. They power washed all of the steps, bringing to light the original concrete coloration in order to better match the new concrete and aggregate mix. The repairs were performed from late August through September giving the amphitheater a much-needed facelift and bath returning it to its like-new construction glory.

Park visitors have already begun voicing to staff their appreciation for making these much-needed repairs. It is anticipated that this preventative maintenance will keep the amphitheater in tip-top shape for many decades to come.

Whether the amphitheater has its usual full-house attendance of nearly 1000 visitors at the annual Sunrise Services, or seating for theatrical plays, the annual heART gala, or even a night of Christmas Caroling, it provides an unforgettable seating experience. All of this was the wish of the Park's original founders. For in 1925, Cyrus Yawkey and his sister Mary Yawkey White had a vision to provide a park whose purpose was to serve the greater community of this region.

The Board of Directors has established a reserve account for the purpose of maintaining the beautiful facilities within the park. Thanks to generous Park donations over the years, along with proceeds from the last heART gala, and major gifts restricted to this project, the necessary funding was available to undertake this work. The Board is gratified to use these contributions and thanks all who have helped support the park in this endeavor. ■



Crew from Morello Concrete Construction, Inc. repairing a step nose after power washing the steps to better match original concrete color.



Cracks, rebar exposure and old patches on the 92 year old amphitheater.

Two live auction item sales and one major gift from the 2016 heART gala, totaling \$6100, were restricted towards the amphitheater restoration project. Special thanks to: Alice and Joe Smith, buyers of "Step into your heART", an original watercolor donated by Chuck McPherson which he painted live at the event, Stan and Tina Marie Cheslock for their purchase of the sterling silver bracelet donated by goldsmith Terry Whyte of Golden Artistry which he created exclusively for the heART event to represent the step pattern of the amphitheater, and Mary Fletcher-Harker for supporting the gala with a cash donation.



Ribbon cutting: pictured left to right: Dalton Griffith, Jeffry Swiney, Mark Allan and Nicole Roberts

SUMMER EVENTS

10th annual the heART of mt helix

August 12, 2017
5 to 10 pm

Annual summer fundraiser
benefitting Mt. Helix Park

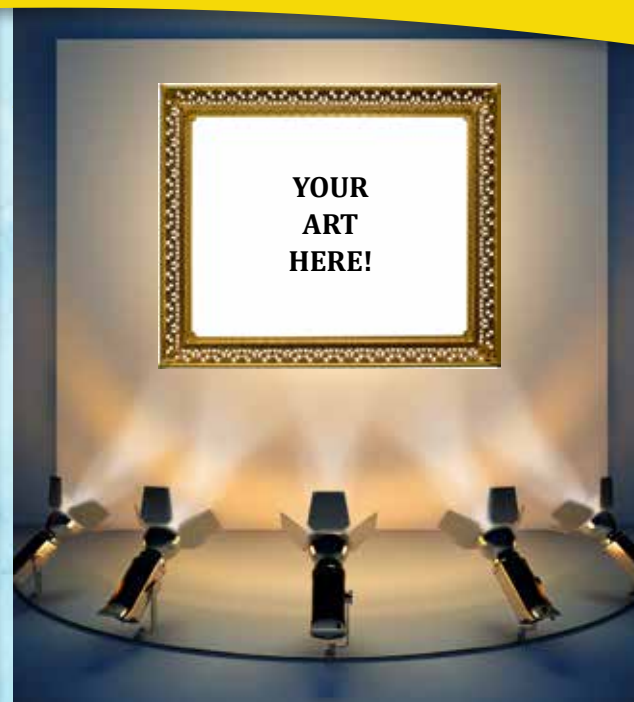
Live Music, Food Tastings,
Beer & Wine,
Live Artist Displays,
Silent and Live Auctions,
Dancing under the stars to
The Might Untouchables

Tickets on Sale!

\$75 General Admission
\$125 Reserved Table Seat

Park Members receive \$15 off up to
(2) General Admission tickets

Order online at
mthelixpark.org



Inaugural Juried Art Fundraiser Kicks off the 10th annual heART Event

Benefitting Mt. Helix Park

With the core theme of the heART event, established in 2008 by event founder Kathy White, to highlight all forms of art to honor Mt. Helix's historical beginnings as an artist colony, Mt. Helix committee member, Roz Oserin, has introduced an exciting new ART element to this year's heART experience. Roz, who has been involved for many years donating several of her original pieces for the silent auction and participating in live demonstrations of her art, has organized a juried art show to premier at this year's 10th annual event. The show is open to anyone interested in submitting up to three pieces of their original artwork depicting a recognizable image found within the Mt. Helix community.

Noted local artist and Mt. Helix resident, Duke Windsor, will serve as the juror. Duke's paintings have been exhibited and received awards at juried solo and group

See ART to the right



Star Party with a View

JULY 15TH ATOP MT. HELIX
DUSK TO 10 P.M.

Mt. Helix Park is only open past sunset three times a year. Mark your calendar for a visit on Saturday, July 15th, so you don't miss a rare opportunity to not only experience the views from the Park in the dark, but also a chance to explore the lights in space. Volunteers from the San Diego Astronomy Association will be stationed all around the cross and will be sharing their powerful scopes, giving you the opportunity to see far beyond the naked eye. We also invite you to bring your own scopes. This is a free community event with shuttle service parking starting at 7:30 pm from the lower lots at the intersection of Vivera and Mt. Helix Drive, across and adjacent to the San Miguel Fire Station. A telescope loading and unloading zone will be available in the upper Park parking lot. This event will be cancelled in the case of inclement weather or heavy fog, so be sure to check the Park website at mthelixpark.org if these conditions are present on event day.

A Special Thank You

To Jim Newland and The La Mesa Historical Society for their contributions towards the 100th annual Easter Sunrise Service held at Mt. Helix Park on Sunday, April 16, 2017. Mr. Newland's article "A Century of Mt. Helix Easter Services Started on La Mesa's Mt. Nebo," which was originally published in the La Mesa Patch in April 2011 and revised for distribution at this year's centennial Easter Sunrise Celebration, can be read from the Park website at www.mthelixpark.org/easter-sunrise-service. ■



Become a Park Member

Become a "Friend of the Park" member and be a part of the legacy that was established in 1925. The preservation and enhancement of Mt. Helix Park is an opportunity for Southern California residents to come together and ensure that Mt. Helix Park continues to be a source of pride for the community and a place for future generations to come for enjoyment, exercise, meditation and inspiration. Every dollar raised supports Park operations and free community programming. Every Park member receives...

- ✍ A mailed hardcopy of From the Top magazine
- ✍ Discounted tickets to the heART of Mt. Helix gala
- ✍ Regular emails on current Park events and Programs

Please look over the Annual Fund Giving Levels in the enclosed envelope and become a "Friend of the Park" member today by making a tax deductible gift.

*Park Membership
dues contributed to
the Amphitheater Step
Restoration Project
completed in October
2016.*



ART continued

exhibitions and corporate venues in San Diego and Southern California, and they are held in private collections throughout the U.S. and Europe. He is best known for his urban scenes, portrait commissions, and military historical works. Cash prizes totaling \$750 will be awarded to the top three artists. Four honorable mentions will also be awarded. All seven selected artists will receive one free entry to the heART event where their winning piece will be showcased. In addition, all seven selected pieces will be exhibited at the Nainsook Framing + Art Gallery at 8130 La Mesa Boulevard in La Mesa for two months. Mt. Helix Park Foundation will receive a portion of the proceeds, if sold at the heART event or the gallery. The prospectus and entry form can be obtained by going to the mthelixpark.org home page and clicking "Events," "heART of Mt. Helix," and then the link under "Calling All Artists!" For more information, contact Nicole Roberts at 619-741-4363. Entries are due June 30th, so don't delay! ■



Volunteer Spotlight: Katerina Mattis

by Peggy Junker

When Landscape Designer Katerina Mattis was asked to help redesign the plot in front of the Park office, she agreed without hesitation. Working primarily with clients in Point Loma, Del Mar and La Jolla, she willingly ventured east to Mt. Helix Park for a project that she felt passionate about in a place she feels a connection to.

Having visited the Park for walks, caroling and family picnics, this Swiss-born wife and mother of two said she had never been to a place that reminded her so much of her family's summer home and mother's birthplace on the coast of the Aegean Sea.

Introduced to this hidden treasure by longtime friend and Assistant Executive Director, Peggy Junker, Mattis immediately volunteered to assist the Park's Habitat Restoration Group, removing invasive weeds and planting native plants. Her work on the office plot design began in 2015. After almost two years of sketches, meetings and edits, Mattis and volunteers from the restoration team set the plants in the ground thus completing the project by November of 2016.

Traveling to and from her Point Loma home to work with Facilities Manager,

Jeff Swiney, restoration lead, Ed Piffard and Junker, Mattis was determined to make sure the ideas of all those involved were incorporated into her designs.

"I usually work on residential projects, and I only must communicate design ideas to two people," she explained adding that during this project she worked with the board members who had differing opinions. Her affinity for the task, however, made it worth the extra effort. "I like working on projects that I feel passionate about, and I knew I would feel this way about this one."

Featuring two circular hardscape areas, Mattis had to take into consideration multiple uses for the area which serves not only as one of the entrances to the Park, but also as a staging area for large-scale events such as the heART of Mt. Helix and theater productions. Using California native plants exclusively, she worked closely with Piffard to identify just the right placement and combination including some varieties not already existing in the Park, but which Piffard was hoping to reintroduce. Similarly, she collaborated with Swiney to redesign and restructure the swale to more efficiently channel runoff which was causing erosion from the large amount of recent rainfall. Piffard and Swiney designed an accompanying irrigation system. Together they achieved one of

the key criteria for the project – blending everything with the surrounding rock building, walls, and natural landscape to create an aesthetically pleasing space that will serve a variety of functions in the future.

"I've lived in San Diego for over 20 years, but I didn't visit Mt. Helix Park until about 7 years ago," recalls Mattis of her first introduction to the Park. "I immediately fell in love with the Park. It's such a special place and I couldn't believe that I had just now discovered it," she said adding that since her initial introduction she has attended two heART events, yoga and was even a docent on the Garden Native Tour that featured the Park last year. ■

For information on how you can become a Mt. Helix Park volunteer, contact pjunker@mthelixpark.org or call the Park office directly at (619) 741-4363.

2016 heART of Mt. Helix

Thank you to the following event underwriters, major donors, auction item and in-kind gift donors,
participating restaurant vendors, live performing musicians and artists
whose generous gifts helped us reach our fundraising goal of \$100,000

"Cowboy Jack" Johnson
Act II
Al & Janet Johnstone
Alaska Airlines
Alice and Joe Smith
Alpine Beer
Amy & Tim Holscher
Anthony's Fish Grotto
Aquarium of the Pacific
Arizona Biltmore
Ayres Hotels
Babouch Moroccan Restaurant
Ballast Point
Banbu Sushi
Bank of Southern California
Barona
Barry Cogdill
Benchmark Brewery
Bikes and Beyond
Bob and Debbie Ball
Body Beautiful Car Wash
Bolt Brewing
Bradford Renaissance Portraits
Brigantine
Café Moto
Cali Comfort
California Ballet
Canyon Ranch
Carnegie Hall
Casa de Pico
CBS: The Dr. Phil Show
Chris Anderson
Chris Quinn
Christina Fries-Miller
Chuck McPherson
Cissy Walters & Todd Bowers
Claudia & Neal Hicks
Cliff and Susan Clifford
Colleen Olsen
Continental Catering Coronado
Brewing
Coronado Playhouse
Cottonwood Electric Cart Service
Cynthia Elisa
Del Mar Thoroughbred Club
Dentt Landscaping
Dianne McCann Succulent
Gardens
Douglas and Jean Sherburne
Dr Curtis L Howard
Dr John C Fleming
Dream Dinners
East County Family YMCA
Edible Arrangements
Embassy Suites Santa Ana
Enhancery Jewelers
Eric & Babs Fletcher
ERoma Skin Care and Day Spa

Festival of the Arts of Laguna
Beach
Ficklin Vineyards
Frank's Pizza Joint
Galardi Group
Golden Artistry
Golden Gate Hotel and Casino
Goldfield Stage
Grace Schlesier
Grande Colonial Hotel & NINE-
TEN Restaurant
Green Flash
Grossmont Dermatology
Hacienda Casa Blanca
Haskell & White LLP
Hazel Waters
heART of Mt. Helix Committee
Members
Helix Brewing Company
Helix High Charter School Pipe
Band
Henebery Celebrated Whiskey
Hilton San Diego
Himalayan Indian Cuisine
Hooleys
Hotel Erwin
Indian Canyon Golf Resort
Indian Hills Golf Club
Intertwest Electric
Jamacha Project
Jim O'Donnell & Chris Cundari
Joan Bohnstedt
John and Leslie Cylke
John Grasberger
John Iannessa
Joybaked Artisan Bakery
Jurupa Hills Country Club
Karen Higdon
Kathy McLaughlin
Kevin Sage
Kimberly Sant
KPBS
Kristoff Cigars
La Jolla Brewing
La Jolla Music Society
La Mesa Holistic Massage
Therapy
Ladera Vineyards
Lake Shastina Golf Resort
LaMar Brown
Landmark Theater
Larry Kennard
Lazy Dog Restaurants
Leah Higgins
Legoland
Lori Copeland
Mainly Mozart

Marine Room Restaurant
Mark & Maria Allan
Mark Phillips
Mary Qualls
Mary's Donuts
Mary Fletcher-Harker
Matador Bowl
Menchie's Frozen Yogurt
Mike Hess Brewing
Mingei International Museum
Mircle Springs Resort & Spa
Morongo Casino Resort and Spa,
an enterprise of the
Morongo Band of Mission
Indians Tribal Government
Museum of Contemporary Art SD
New Jersey Devils
Nick Carter
Nora Clemens-Gallo
Norm and Valerie Hapke
Opus One Winery
Oriental Trading Company
O's Printing
OtterBox
Parker's Lighthouse
Patricia Polak
Penelope Quirk
Pick up Stix
Pine Ridge Vineyards
Pink's Famous Hot Dogs
Posh Nosh
Pimm Valley Casino Resorts
Prov20 Media
PRP Wine International
RCP Block and Brick
Rebecca's Retreat Senior Day
Program
Roberta Labistida
Ron and Mary Alice Brady
Rosarito Beach Hotel
Roz Oserin
Rubio's
Sally Ault
San Diego Air and Space Museum
San Diego Automotive
San Diego Ballet
San Diego Chargers Theater
San Diego Repertory
Company
San Diego Symphony
San Diego Zoo Global
San Francisco Opera
Santa Anita Park
Sawdust Art Festival
Scratch Gourmet
SDG&E
Seaworld
Sky Sailing, Inc.
Small Luxury Hotels of the
World

Soup Plantation
South Point Hotel Casino &
Spa
Spirit Cruises
Spring Valley Veterinary Clinic
St. Petersburg Vodka
Stampin' Up!
Stanley Steemer
Starbucks Coffee
Steele Canyon Golf Club
Sycuan Golf Resort
Tahoe Donner
Terra American Bistro
Terry Whyte
The Antigua Group
The Fish Market
The Habit Burger Grill
The Hills Local Pub
The Jamacha Project
The Meh
The Mighty Untouchables
The San Diego Museum of Art
Tom Williamson
Tommy's World Famous
Hamburgers
Tracey Stotz
USS Midway Museum
VJB Vineyards & Cellars
Vom Fass
Warehouse Restaurant
Wendy's
Wetzel's Pretzels
Wheel Fun Rentals
Wheel of Fortune
Wines for Humanity
Workout With Kirk

Contact Nicole Roberts at
619-741-4363. to support
the 2017 heART with a
sponsorship or auction
item donation.

Flower Lover's Guide to Mt. Helix Park

by Peggy Junker

Drought-breaking rainfall is giving Park plants a boost as is evident from a crop of native California lupine that has sprung up all over the hill. These tall, purple, flower clusters have started to bloom and new plants can be seen coming up in almost every corner of the Park.

Poppies, native cucumber, phacelia, miner's lettuce and pearly everlasting have also been among the first to sprout up. Along the road, just inside the gate, native sweet pea can be found with its bright fuchsia petals; it is harder to find, but worth the search.

Mallow, planted by the Mt. Helix Park Habitat Restoration Group and its sub-group, the Adopt-A-Plot team, are beginning to show their soft orange blooms in the landscaped beds between the parking lot and amphitheater as well as just outside the Park office.

Favorite of Park plant aficionado and board member, Ed Piffard, is the purple and white ceanothus, or mountain lilac, that has started to flower. Prevalent in many local open space parks, this species has been replenished in Mt. Helix Park by restoration volunteers over the past two years. Though many of the new plants will need a season or two before they show an impressive bloom, one well-established bush can be seen on the north side of the amphitheater, just above the stone wall.

The healthy rainy season has also marked the beginning of the battle against invasive mustard, London rocket and other weeds which continue to threaten growth of the Park's native plant population. Ongoing work by Adopt-A-Plot and other volunteers is providing a critical check on these weeds and allowing "good plants" to flourish. To become a volunteer, or to adopt a plot within the Park, contact pjunker@mthelixpark.org or call the office Monday, Wednesday, or Friday from 9 a.m. to noon at (619) 741-4363. ■



CUCUMBER



SWEET PEA



POPPIES



MINER'S LETTUCE



LUPINE



MALLOW



CEANOTHUS



MT. HELIX PARK FOUNDATION

4901 Mt. Helix Drive
La Mesa, CA 91941

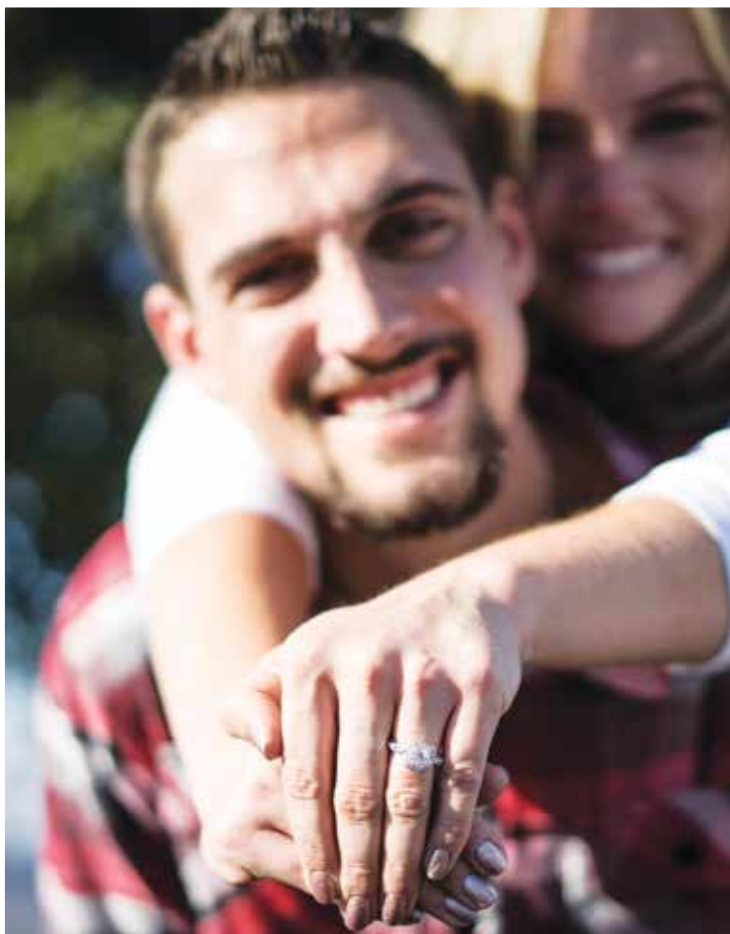
Please visit www.mthelixpark.org and from the home page select "Contact Us" to send your email to be included in the electronic magazine distribution set to begin with the next issue. Park members will continue to receive a mailed hard-copy of the magazine.

Become a Park Member

Please consider becoming a "Friend of the Park" member by making a tax deductible donation in the enclosed envelope. Your donation helps ensure Mt. Helix Park remains an oasis of beauty in our community by supporting on-going operations and free public programs.



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



Why Not Tie the Knot At Mt. Helix Park?

There is no more spectacular venue to have your wedding than atop Mt. Helix Park. With easy parking and a comfortable shuttle ride circling up the mountain, your guests will be treated to views of the Park's natural beauty, historic architecture, and breathtaking vistas of San Diego and beyond.

In addition to weddings, Mt. Helix Park is available for memorials, religious services, non-profit events, and fundraisers.

Please contact us (619) 741-4363 for more information.

[Click for Park Rental Information](#)