Mt. Helix Park's Magazine

FROM THE TOP

ISSUE 2 FALL 2013

MT. HELIX PARK FOUNDATION

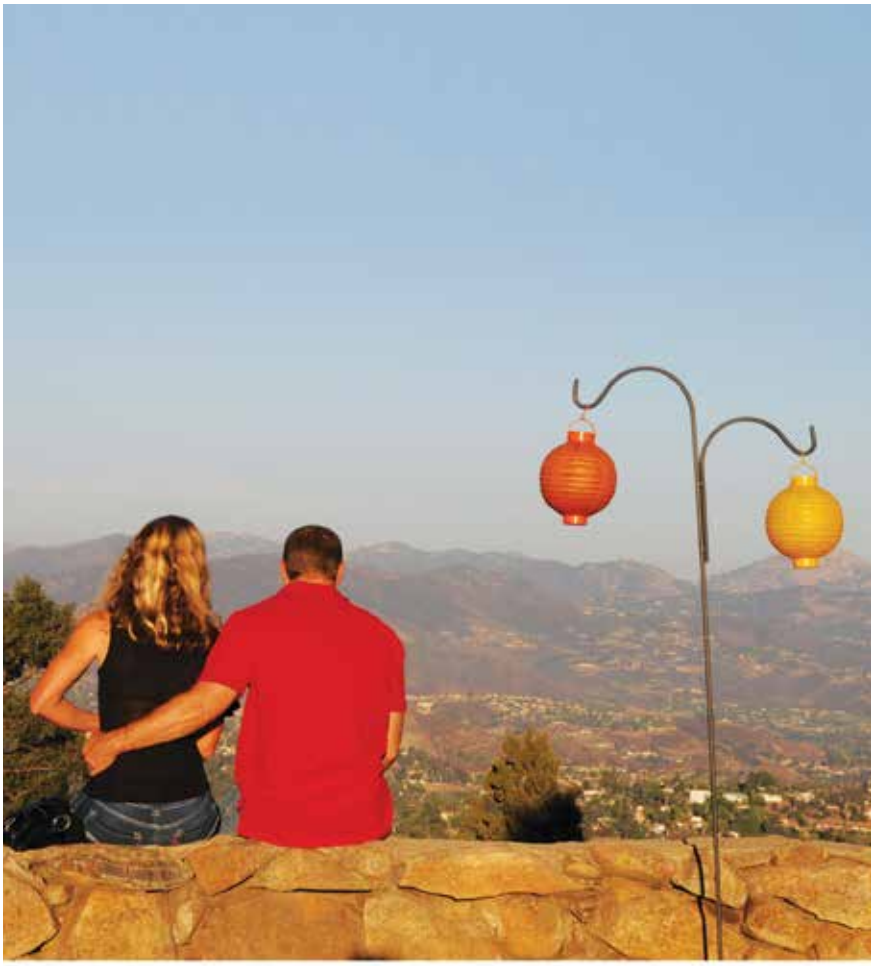
Dedicated to Preserving Mt. Helix Nature Theatre and Park

6th Annual heART of Mt. Helix Raises More Than $80,000

MORE SECURITY Approved by Board of Directors

VOLUNTEER Spotlight

NATURE | EVENTS | LOCAL HISTORY | PEOPLE | PRESERVATION



Successful heART Allows for Additional Security Funding

The security of our guests and staff is of great importance to us," asserted Foundation Board President Mark Allan. The financial success of this year's heART event has made it possible for the Board to allocate funding for additional security cameras and safety lighting from our annual budget. We anticipate this should be in place shortly. A shout-out goes to Keith and Judy Meeker who also made a generous gift restricted to this effort.

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 tstotz@mthelixpark.org.

© Copyright 2013 Mt. Helix Park

Editors
Alice Smith
Tracey Stotz

Graphic Design / Layout
Victoria Vinton
Coyote Press Graphics
victoria@coyotepressgraphics.com

Writers
Peggy Junker and Tracey Stotz

Photographers
Gary Junker, Gary Severt and Tracey Stotz

Cover Photograph
Blair Golden, goldeneye-photography.com

Executive Director
Tracey Stotz

Office Administrator
Peggy Junker

Wedding Coordinator
Darlene Braasch

Board of Directors

Mark B. Allan, President
Eric Fletcher, Vice President
Andrew Phemister, Secretary
Chris Roberts, Treasurer
Jeff Swiney, Facilities Manager
Robert Ball, Immd. Past President

David Avants
Norm Hapke
Caroline Harrod
Keith Meeker
Alice W. Smith
Signe Von Verdo
Rose Walters
Kathy White

www.mthelixpark.org



Tracey Stotz
Executive Director

Peggy Junker
Office Administrator

From the Executive Director

The original Foundation Board of Directors took a chance on Mt. Helix Park. They felt it was a worthy part of our community, worth their time and effort to preserve. This is inspiring to me and I hope it is to you too …

A new chapter of the Mt. Helix Nature Theater story began when the Mt. Helix Park Foundation was formed in 1999 to settle a lawsuit over the memorial cross. The County of San Diego resigned as trustee of the park and amphitheater land that had been put in trust by the children of Mary Carpenter Yawkey and the foundation took over. With this shift, government financial support ended and the Foundation became solely responsible for raising the funding to preserve and maintain the Park as well as oversee all improvements.

I can only imagine what those early Foundation Board meetings were like. One of the most interesting things to me, in reading the minutes from those meetings, is the ambitious commitment made by founding board members Mark Allan, Robert Ball, Bob Cederdahl, Penny Halgren, John Mead, Al Platt and Sheryl Russell. They tackled everything from establishing a new 501(c)3 organization and organizing fundraising plans to determining who would handle landscaping maintenance and what facility improvements were deemed necessary for the site. This was a small but mighty group. The initial list of site improvements included benches, interpretive nature trails, permanent entry gates, and restored memorial plaques. All of which have been completed! From early on they even discussed acquiring the four acres of land adjacent to the trust property which was owned by Cox Communications.

Although it took roughly six years to purchase the land, it did happen. For the past two years the Foundation Board of Directors has been actively raising money to pay down the loan. In the last year alone, the loan has been paid down $67,000 to a balance of roughly $85,000. Looking into the not-so-distant future, the Board foresees a time when the loan will be paid off and the dream of adding parking and permanent restrooms to the site will become a reality. Currently, the Board is working on a master site plan which also incorporates other long-range site improvements such as improved lighting and electrical. Watch for more information on this in 2014. In the meantime, if you want to help pay down the loan on the adjacent land there is a donation envelope enclosed. (You can restrict your gift to anything you choose or make a donation to general Park operations.)

The original Foundation Board of Directors took a chance on Mt. Helix Park. They felt it was a worthy part of our community, worth their time and effort to preserve. This is inspiring to me and I hope it is to you too as you think about giving your time and financial support.



heART Raises More than $80,000



Dancing under the stars on Mt. Helix

Sinking back into a comfortable chair in the Hip Chik Lounge, event master of ceremonies Sam Bass of KYXY had a big smile. The live auction was going well and the Sixth Annual heART of Mt. Helix was clearly going to be a financial success. "It all came together nicely," he exclaimed.

That is the magic of the heART – the committee works feverishly behind the scenes to transform the amphitheatre into a glowing, creative, fun space providing the backdrop for an event like no other in San Diego County. Who else can claim this 360 degree view as well as delectable restaurant tastings, visual artists in action, two stages of entertainment and a signature cocktail developed just for the evening?

The major sponsors help ensure that this isn't just a fun event but also that it is a great fundraiser. Run box of major sponsors (located below) with possibly the above line as a pull quote in this portion of the story. "When supporters like Ron and Mary Alice Brady kick off the live auction by saying, 'We will donate $10,000 if you can raise the rest in the auction,' you know that you will make your financial goal," commented Executive Director Tracey Stotz. Added Co-Chair Kathy White, "Local businesses were so generous this year our silent auction was also a hit."

Restaurants providing samples of their culinary arts that night were Anthony's, Baby Cakes, Brigantine, CaliComfort, Grove Pastry Shop, Hacienda Casa Blanca, Hooley's, Mardi Gras Café, Point Loma Tea with All Things Bright and British, Rubio's, Sadie Rose Bakery, Starbuck's, Riviera Supper Club and Terra American Bistro. Alchemy's team staffed the bars and produced a refreshing signature Watermelon Cooler for the event. Ballast Point beer was flowing. The sunset was spectacular and even the weather cooperated—it wasn't too hot this year—just another perfect night on Mt. Helix! ■



Painter and committee member Chuck McPherson works on his live auction donation



Local pageant winners added glamour to the event



Spanish guitar and performance by Maldonado Music



Grove Pastry sets up treats



Auctioneer Pierre Charmasson incites the crowd to bid

heART Major Sponsors

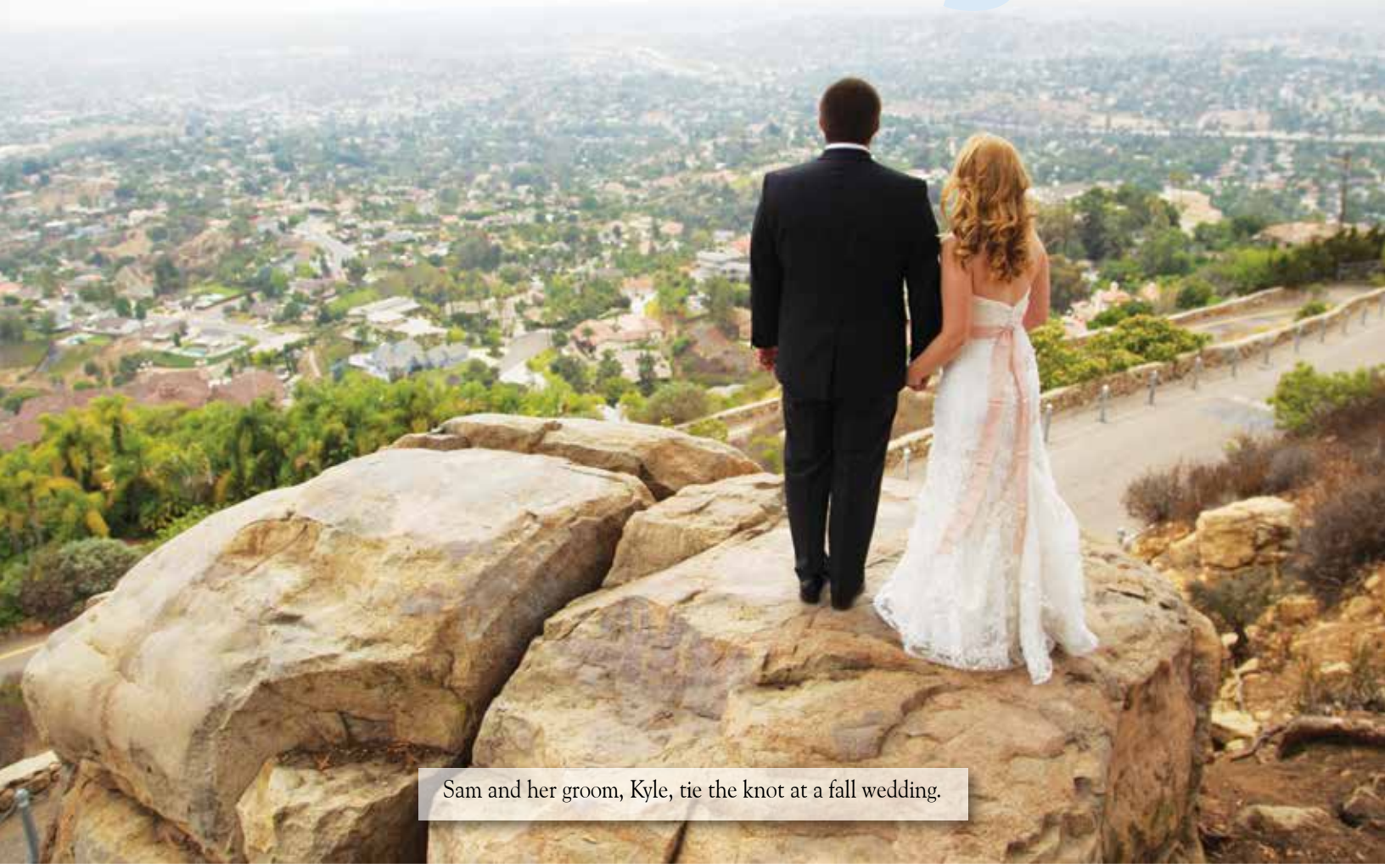
(for a listing of all sponsors please go to the Park website)

Anonymous
Mark and Connie Allan
Enhancery Jeweler's
Eric and Babs Fletcher
Goldfield Stage
Hip Chik Chairs
Macy's
Rapid Dry
San Diego County Credit Union
Alice and Joe Smith
Spring Valley Veterinary Clinic

Next heART Set for Aug 16, 2014

If you are interested in being a part of this fun, community, event please email Executive Director Tracey Stotz at tstotz@mthelixpark.org to let her know of your interest. Committee meetings will start in late January. The following subcommittees have openings: Restaurant Recruitment, Silent Auction Design, Graphics, Program Ad Sales, Media Coordination and Underwriting.

weddings



Sam and her groom, Kyle, tie the knot at a fall wedding.

New Wedding and Event Coordinator Joins Park Staff

Professional bridal consultant and events planner Darlene Braasch (certificated through the Association of Bridal Consultants) is a new member of the part-time staff.

"We are excited to have Darlene join us. She brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm," said Executive Director Tracey Stotz. Not only are her skills a good fit, but she is also a local resident who has lived for 25 years on Mt. Helix. Call Darlene at (619) 741-4363 to book your spring wedding. ■



Darlene Braasch works in the office on Friday mornings from 9 am until noon.

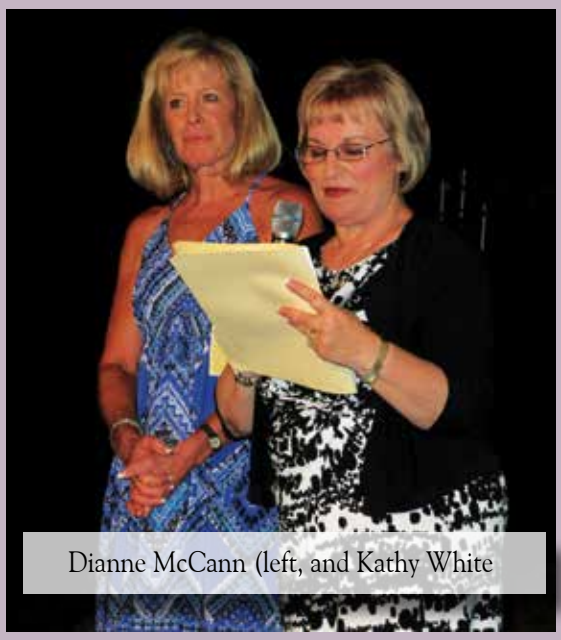
Volunteer Spotlight

Dianne McCann and Kathy White

Don't tell Mt. Helix residents and volunteers Kathy White or Dianne McCann that something can't be done, because that will only further focus their sights on making sure it gets done, and done well.

Just ask Executive Director Tracey Stotz, who has worked with these two volunteers for seven years.

"It is such fun to work with these dynamic women. They both are enthusiastic and give their all to any job asked of them," commented Stotz with a smile.



Dianne McCann (left, and Kathy White

White, one of the creators of the heART of Mt. Helix event, has served on the Mt. Helix Park Foundation Board of Directors for nine years and chaired or co-chaired the heART since its inception.

"I don't take no for an answer very well," confessed White adding that she sees everyone as wanting to volunteer, "and eventually, they do." It is a testament to her determination.

Perseverance has served her well. She and her husband, Marty, launched the well-known Enhancery Jewelers in La Mesa 35 years ago, growing the business into one of San Diego's premier jewelry stores now located in Mission Valley.

White believes that too many are thwarted by a challenge. "I think anytime you've started a business from scratch and grown it, you know the pitfalls of starting something. You have to be a visionary. Not be afraid to start from zero," she explained.

Like White, McCann exudes the same "can do" quality. An auto finance executive for 19 years at J. P. Morgan, she says she learned from her mother, "a phenomenal person," recalls McCann. "She taught me that there is no other choice than to be happy where you are and (doing) what you are doing. It wasn't a choice to be negative and say poor me."

And with that attitude McCann joined White for the first heART event as a member of the decorating committee and eventually at her side as co-chair for an event that boasts earnings at more than half of the Park's entire operating budget.

McCann also can be found at the Park planting cactus and succulents in specific locations to help keep visitors on the groomed trails and off the open slopes. She is the one wearing the apron and dragging the 100 foot hose to areas without irrigation!

When asked what qualities each of them brings to the table, McCann says an ability to multitask. White identifies her ability to visualize projects, but both credit their success with the heART event to a core group of talented volunteers who comprise the committee, a board of directors that allows them to be creative and an Executive Director that supports and encourages them.

Their reasons for becoming involved with the Park are just as diverse as their strengths. White progressed to the Park after a long list of volunteer stints as a parent. With her three sons grown, the Park, she explains, connects her to a community she values.

McCann, an avid gardener, says the Park inspires her and she wants to see it preserved.

"I really feel very strongly that it is one of several gems of San Diego," professes McCann. "It would be terrible if we allowed it to go into disrepair. It's so important that we continue to have those traditions or places that people can take their families and enjoy the outdoors and the view."

Be it working as a board member, planting a prickly cactus, or soliciting underwriting for the heART, these are two women who find no task too large or insurmountable when it comes to supporting Mt. Helix Park and Amphitheatre.

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.

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

Make an End-of-the-Year Gift to Support the Park

Please consider making a donation to Mt. Helix Park in the enclosed envelope. Each donation received from October 13 to December 13 will give the donor one entry into a raffle for a variety



of prizes including a season pass to the Del Mar Thoroughbred Club, San Diego Symphony tickets, a gift certificate to Brody's Burgers and more. All donations are tax deductible and appreciated.

FALL / WINTER CALENDAR



Pets have always been welcome. Seen here is a photograph from the 2005 Pets on Parade.

Sunday, October 20, 4 pm – 6pm
"Yappy Hour" Hosted by Camp Bow Wow in El Cajon

Leash up Fido and meet other dog lovers at the San Miguel Fire Station, 10105 Vivera Drive at Mt. Helix Drive, for a dog walk up to the amphitheater. At the summit, you will be rewarded with wine, cheese, crackers and a "Puptini." The cost is $5. There will also be a raffle (tickets are $1).

Sunday, December 15, 6:30 pm – 8 pm
Annual Sing-along Christmas Caroling



Bring the family for this free event guaranteed to get you in the holiday spirit. Shuttles will run from the San Miguel Fire Station beginning at 6:15 pm. Dress warmly and bring a flashlight. There will be complimentary baked goods (provided by the SPRITES) as well as free hot cocoa and coffee. There will also be a raffle. Suggested admission will be a canned good for the local food pantry.