Amgen Cyclists Climb Mount Diablo

Mount Diablo State Park was proud to be a part of the 2012 Amgen Tour of California Stage 3 on May 15, 2012. For the first time since the eight-day professional cycling stage race began in 2006, the riders ascended Mount Diablo, one of the most revered climbs in California.

An estimated 8,000 park visitors lined the sides of South Gate and North Gate roads to catch a glimpse of the 100-plus riders who passed by in mere seconds. Most of the spectators rode their bikes or walked into the park. Amgen officials commented that they had never seen so many spectators packed along more than 12 miles of a hilly road.

Many race fans were pleased that it was “in their backyard” and were excited that Mount Diablo was included because they have biked up the very mountain that these professional racers climbed.

The Nissan-sponsored King of the Mountain (KOM) sprint took place at the Junction, where South Gate and North Gate roads meet. This was the highest elevation of the race within the park (2,170 feet). The KOM winner was Canadian cyclist Sebastian Salas, of the Optum team.

It was with great pride that Park Superintendent Roland Gaebert and park volunteer Terese Pollack presented a Mount Diablo State Park bike jersey to KOM winner Salas at the end of the race on the podium in Livermore. Recently developed by Mount Diablo Interpretive Association, the MDSP jersey is available for purchase at the Summit Visitor Center with net proceeds going directly to this park.

According to the May 19, 2012, Contra Costa Times article by reporter Denis Cuff,

The May 15th crowds were so big, enthusiastic and well managed that there is a “good chance” the race could come back to Mt. Diablo State Park, the Amgen race director said.

“The community was very supportive. If they want us back, we would consider it,” said Jim Birrell, director of the Amgen Tour of California. “It was great to have such a dramatic climb early in the race.”

In response to the race director’s positive comments, Park Superintendent Gaebert stated, “We hope that Amgen can return to Mount Diablo State Park. We all had a great time.”
Park Superintendent’s Report
Roland Gaebert

CONGRATULATIONS to Mount Diablo State Park Ranger Carl Niel-son for winning two gold medals and one bronze medal in the inaugural United States Police & Fire Championships (USPFC), held in San Diego County in June. As a former Cat 1 bike rider, I was privileged to be among the cheerleaders for one of our own, cycling Ranger Carl Nielson. It is essential for park rangers, as law enforcement officers, to be ready both physically and mentally to handle whatever might happen on their watch. The park rangers all have their preferred activities for staying physically fit; Carl’s chosen passion is cycling.

Carl participated in three cycling events over several days in the Grandmasters “A” (age: 50-54) category. His two first-place finishes were in the 2.7-mile hill climb (10:38.08) and the relatively short 15-mile road race. In that race, Carl attacked on the climb and built a winning gap; he was never caught for the Gold. Carl received the Bronze in the 10-mile Time Trial with a time of 24:34.31. Carl can often be seen training on Mount Diablo, even on his days off. No wonder he won the hill climb. Way to go, Carl!

Ranger Carl Nielson at podium

MDIA President’s Column
Jim Mitchell

On behalf of all the members of the Mount Diablo Interpretive Association (MDIA), I want to welcome you to Mount Diablo State Park and encourage you to explore all 20,000 acres of this unique mountain. Please visit the Summit Visitor Center at the top of the mountain and, on the weekends, the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center on the eastern side of the mountain near the town of Clayton. You can speak to park docents who can tell you about the park history, wildlife, and geology as well as guide you to trails that will lead you away from the roads into the park’s interior. Enjoy a lunch at one of the many picnic spots along the road, and make sure to stop at Rock City where children of all ages can explore the interesting sandstone wind caves carved into the face of the mountain.

Nonprofit MDIA, in cooperation with the California Department of Parks and Recreation, exists to enhance your visit through development of interpretive displays, leading guided hikes, development and merchandising of park publications, training and management of park docents, and support of other park programs. Today, nonprofit organizations like MDIA are critical to maintaining park programs that would otherwise be eliminated due to state budget cuts. Being an all-volunteer organization, almost all the money donated to MDIA as well as money spent on publications and merchandise in the park is invested directly back to Mount Diablo.

If you have interest and a little time, MDIA is always looking for volunteers to help in the park and with the organization. We have several programs that are currently unstaffed and waiting for volunteers to complete. Please go to our website www.mdia.org to learn more about our organization.

Summit Museum is open
7 days a week
10a.m. to 4p.m.
Summit temperature and wind conditions are updated every 20 minutes at 925.838.9225.

To submit articles or photographs for the Mount Diablo Review
email info@mdia.org or leave a message at 925.927.7222
Submission deadline for the Spring/Summer issue is January 15.
A Mountain Lion on the Mountain

In the 1970s when I was curator of the Lindsay Wildlife Museum, we were developing a way to raise and rehabilitate wild orphan mountain lion cubs. Fish and Game gave us a 4-week-old mountain lion cub (zoo surplus) to study. My friend Mark Ferrari and I raised her and roamed with her in the wild to observe her development and see what kind of “training” we’d need to give a wild orphan to help it survive when we released it back into the wilderness.

Mount Diablo, a wild island in East Bay suburbia, was perfect for this training. We roamed the mountain’s wild backside with our little cougar. Mark and I were the cub’s “mom” and we slept with her, watched her learn how to climb and fall out of beautiful oaks, splash in creeks, smell the wildflowers and stalk lizards, brush rabbits … and finally deer.

One day Mark and I were walking along one of the mountain’s dirt fire trails with the female cub, now a 70 pound teenager. Mark was in front, the cat right behind him, and I brought up the rear. I was feeling in a playful mood, so every time the lion took a step with her huge back paw, I’d reach forward with my foot and nudge the paw gently to the side, making her stumble slightly. A kid’s prank (okay, so I never bothered to grow up). The first few times she ignored me. Then she turned and glared, then a little hiss, then a snarl and a growl. Finally, she stopped, sat down until I passed, then walked behind me. I continued alongside Mark and we were both walking along and laughing at my little joke … when WHAM! My right foot went flying out from under me and I landed flat on my back gasping for air.

I looked up to see Mark laughing hysterically, while the mountain lion bent down, purring loudly, and gave me a slobbery lick on the mouth.

We continued along the trail … side by side.

Later, the three of us sat down, leaned back, one of us purring loudly, and enjoyed the incredible view of the Bay Area from our little island in the sky.

“Audible Mitchell Canyon”

Did you know that you can listen to the rush of wind and the chirps, howls, and growls of wildlife on Mount Diablo, even before you step foot into the park?

“Audible Mitchell Canyon,” the latest audio tour on Mount Diablo, combines lively interviews and music with the sounds from the mountain, all downloadable to your computer or portable digital music player to take with you on the trail.

In this tour, sponsored by Mount Diablo Interpretive Association (MDIA), you will hear a description of a two-mile stroll along Mitchell Creek on Mount Diablo’s lush north side led by MDIA guides Sue Donecker, Ken Lavin, Rich McDrew, Jim Mitchell, and Yulan Tong. Simply click on the Audio Tour link at the bottom of MDIA’s website home page, www.mdia.org, and select Mitchell Canyon to download the tour.

This tour joins other Audible Mount Diablo audio tours: “Introducing Mount Diablo,” “Mary Bowerman Tour,” the 6.2-mile “Grand Loop Tour,” and “Curry Point.” Naturalists heighten visitors’ appreciation of the sights and sounds at each stop, tell tales of the mountain’s past, and suggest what to look for around the next bend. Photographs pop up to help identify plants and animals.

Audible Mount Diablo is sponsored by the California State Parks Foundation, MDIA, and Save Mount Diablo. Former Sierra magazine editor Joan Hamilton is the producer and narrator of the series.
More detailed topographic trail maps are available for purchase at the entrance kiosks and the Summit and Mitchell Canyon Visitor Centers.

Mitchell Canyon Road does not offer a route to the Summit via motor vehicle - one must drive North Gate or South Gate Roads.

Camping at Mount Diablo State Park

Mount Diablo has three designated family camping areas and five group camps:

- **Juniper Campground**
  - 36 sites, elevation 3,000 ft.
  - Located approximately 2 miles below the summit, on Summit Road, Juniper is known for its fantastic views.

- **Live Oak Campground**
  - 23 sites, elevation 1450 ft.
  - Located one mile above the South Gate Entrance Station, off South Gate Road. Live Oak is near Rock City, where one can explore rock formations.

- **Junction Campground**
  - 6 sites, elevation 2200 ft.
  - Located where South Gate and North Gate meet at the Ranger Station. This campground is situated in an open woodland area.

**Camping Procedures**

- You may make reservations from 48 hours to 7 months in advance by calling Reserve America at 800.444.7275 or by visiting their website at www.reserveamerica.com. Reservations can be made for a specific campground but not a specific site. Campers will not be registered at Mitchell Canyon.

- Check-in time is 2:00 p.m. Check-out time is 12:00 noon.

**Group Camps**

- Are Buckeye, Barbecue Terrace, Wildcat, Stagecoach, and Boundary.

- Reservations are available for all group camps with Reserve America.

- Each campground is primitive with running water and pit toilets. Barbecue Terrace is equipped with horse ties for equestrian use. Motorhomes are not allowed in the group camping areas.

- During the fire season (generally May to October) the park is subject to closure due to extreme fire danger. Campers must call the park at 925.837.2525 or 925.837.0904 one day prior to their arrival to confirm park status.

**General Rules**

- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in the park.

- 8 people and 2 vehicles maximum per campsite.

- Each juvenile (under age of 18) must have written permission from his/her parents (with parent’s phone number) prior to camping without adult supervision. Phone verifications will be attempted.

- Quiet hours are from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.

- No electric generators from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 a.m.

- Firewood gathering is prohibited.

- Fires must be in stoves or fire pits provided. NO GROUND FIRES.

- Campfire restrictions are in effect during the fire season. Check fire conditions for appropriate use (see page 6).

- Campers are locked in the park overnight from sunset to 8:00 a.m. For emergencies dial 911.

- Peace and quiet – noise must not carry beyond your immediate camp or picnic ground.

**Group Picnic Reservations:** Call Ranger Scott Poole at 925.837.6129 x4

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**Park Fees per Car**

- Mitchell Canyon Entrance: $6.00
- Macedo Park Entrance: $6.00
- North and South Gates: $10.00 (minus $1 for Seniors 62+)
- Annual Park Pass: $125.00

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Most land adjacent to the park is private property. Do not enter without the owner’s permission.
Camping at Mount Diablo State Park

Mount Diablo has three designated family camping areas and five group camps:

**Juniper Campground** (36 sites, elevation 3,000 ft.) Located approximately 2 miles below the summit, on Summit Road, Juniper is known for its fantastic views. *Reservations available.*

**Live Oak Campground** (23 sites, elevation 1450 ft.) Located one mile above the South Gate Entrance Station, off South Gate Road. Live Oak is near Rock City, where one can explore rock formations. *Reservations available.*

**Junction Campground** (6 sites, elevation 2200 ft.) Located where South Gate and North Gate meet at the Ranger Station. This campground is situated in an open woodland area. *Available on a first-come, first-served basis ONLY.*

- All campgrounds are provided with picnic tables, fire pits or stoves, potable water and rest rooms.
- The campgrounds are mainly designed for tent camping, yet they can accommodate RVs up to 20 ft. in length. There are no hookups and no dumping stations provided in the Park.

**Camping Procedures**

You may make reservations from 48 hours to 7 months in advance by calling Reserve America at 800.444.7275 or by visiting their website at www.reserveamerica.com. Reservations can be made for a specific campground but not a specific site. Campers will not be registered at Mitchell Canyon.

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**Group Camps**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Camp</th>
<th>Nightly Rates</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Vehicles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buckeye</td>
<td>$65</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arroyo</td>
<td>$65</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildcat</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stagecoach</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundary</td>
<td>$165</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>17</td>
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</table>

Nightly Rates $30 for Junction, Juniper and Live Oak Campgrounds

Additional Vehicle (one only) $10; Senior Discount (62+) minus $2.00.
Revered Mount Diablo Supporter
Art Bonwell Dies

Arthur D. Bonwell died at his Concord home on July 14, 2012, at the age of 85. His impact on the Bay Area will be remembered by many as co-founder, in 1971, of Save Mount Diablo, an organization dedicated to acquiring land around the mountain to save it from development.

Mount Diablo Interpretive Association (MDIA) founding member Frank Valle-Riestra said, “Indeed, it was the energetic launching of Art’s land acquisition project that did so much to inspire the founding of MDIA in 1974. All of California owes Art a debt of gratitude for helping to expand our park and to preserve adjacent open lands for posterity under his gentle leadership.”

Mount Diablo Interpretive Association’s website has a new look! The site allows visitors to learn about the flora, fauna and history of Mount Diablo; find out about volunteer opportunities on the mountain; purchase Mount Diablo books, maps, and other items in the online store; and donate to MDIA to support its interpretive activities.

Other features allow visitors to take photo tours or audio tours of the mountain with information provided by knowledgeable docents. A regularly updated hike and events calendar provides a great resource for those wanting to get out and explore more.

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**YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for obeying these and other park rules.**

**Ask a Park Ranger for further information.**

- **ALL FEATURES OF THE PARK ARE PROTECTED!** Do not remove or disturb plants, animals, or geological features.
- **PARK HOURS:** Opens at 8 a.m. and closes at SUNSET. Visitors should be in their vehicles heading out at sunset to avoid being locked in.
- **ALL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE PROHIBITED IN THE PARK.**
- **VEHICLES/BICYCLES SPEED LIMIT** is 15-25 mph on park roads, 15 mph in campgrounds and picnic areas. All motor vehicles must stay on the pavement and are prohibited on trails and fire roads.
- **BICYCLES ARE ALLOWED** only on paved roads, fire roads and designated trails. Check at the Ranger Station for current regulations.
- **SKATEBOARDS, ROLLERBLADES, ROLLER-SKATES, and GRAVITY-PROPELLED devices are prohibited.**
- **DOGS MUST BE ON LEASH** at all times when out of your car; **MUST BE IN TENT** or vehicles at night; **MUST STAY IN DEVELOPED AREAS** and are not allowed on trails or fire roads.
- **FIRES: RESTRICTIONS IN EFFECT DURING SEASON** – check with Ranger.
- **FIRES MUST BE IN FIRE STOVES OR BARBECUES PROVIDED** – no ground fires.
- **EMERGENCIES:** Dial 911.
- **FIREWORKS PROHIBITED.**
- **FIREARMS/AIRGUNS PROHIBITED.**
- **HUNTING PROHIBITED.**

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**Fire Danger: How Will It Affect You?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fire Danger Reading</th>
<th>Wood fires permitted in stoves and BBQ pits in designated picnic and camp sites</th>
<th>Use of compressed logs</th>
<th>Use of charcoal</th>
<th>Use of self-contained stove</th>
<th>Cigarette smoking (including within a vehicle)</th>
<th>Park closed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
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<td>YES</td>
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<td>NO</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIGH WITH RED FLAG</td>
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<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<tr>
<td>VERY HIGH/EXTREME</td>
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### MDIA PRODUCT ORDER AND MEMBERSHIP FORM

**MAPS AND HIKING INFORMATION**

| Item                                                                 | Qty. | $  
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-----
| Trail Map of Mount Diablo State Park (6th edition)                  | 7.50 |    
| Hiking brochures:                                                    | 2.00 |    

**INTERPRETIVE PUBLICATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mount Diablo, The Extraordinary Life and Landscapes of a California Treasure</td>
<td>60.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mount Diablo Guide</td>
<td>12.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Lore - History &amp; Place Names of Mount Diablo</td>
<td>7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trees and Shrubs of Mount Diablo</td>
<td>7.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Common Birds of Mount Diablo</td>
<td>7.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mount Diablo Wildflowers</td>
<td>7.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geology Brochure and Map</td>
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**NATURE GUIDES - laminated/folded**

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<thead>
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<td>Local Birds of the San Francisco Bay Area</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Rocks of North America</td>
<td>9.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Butterflies of the SF Bay Area</td>
<td>9.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Animal Tracks of North America</td>
<td>9.75</td>
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**PRODUCTS WITH MOUNT DIABLO STATE PARK LOGO**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mount Diablo Patch</td>
<td>4.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mount Diablo Lapel/Hat Pin</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUBTOTAL** $ 

10% discount for MDIA members, California State Parks Foundation members and Park Staff

**TOTAL AMOUNT (includes tax & shipping)** $ 

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If you would like to support MDIA, please consider joining Mount Diablo Interpretive Association **Membership Application**

*Membership dues are deductible to the full extent allowed by law*

**Membership Category (check one)***

- **Student/Senior (55+)** $15
- **Individual** $25
- **Family** $40
- **Contributing** $100
- **Lifetime** $500

Donation in addition to membership dues $ 

**Name: _________________________________**

**Address: _______________________________**

**City/State/Zip: _________________________**

**Telephone: (_______) __________________**

**Email: ________________________________**

**Membership includes a free trail map and a set of hike brochures**

Checks only, and made payable to “MDIA”. Clip and mail to:

**MDIA, PO Box 346, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0346**

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**Understanding Trail Signs**

Almost 400 trail signposts identify nearly 187 miles of hiking trails in Mount Diablo State Park’s 20,000 acres.

The trail signs in the park follow the California State Parks uniform format. The name of the trail you are on is specified in relatively small horizontal type near the top of the sign.

The name that appears vertically in large type (usually another trail but sometimes a destination or park boundary) shows the termination of that particular trail; the word “TO”, in small letters, is important. The mileage to that end point is specified at the bottom.
Treat Your Family and Friends - and Yourself - to Mount Diablo Gifts for the Holidays

Consider some truly unique gifts for Christmas and the holiday season this year and, at the same time, support Mount Diablo State Park.

MDSP Jersey: Over 50,000 cyclists ride on Mount Diablo each year. A jersey featuring Mount Diablo State Park is now available for these bike riders, and hikers as well. As one of its many fund-raising products, Mount Diablo Interpretive Association, aided by a professional bike jersey designer, created the beautiful and functional jersey. All net proceeds from the sale of the jersey are used to directly support the park.


Mountain Lore, History and Place Names of Mount Diablo: Written by Rich McDrew and Rachel Haislet, the pages of Mountain Lore hold the stories of small treasures tucked throughout Mount Diablo. An estimated 250 creeks, canyons, trails, and springs exist within the 20,000 acres of Mount Diablo State Park. Most of these locations are identified by a place name that depicts common fauna, flora, topography, or local historical significance. Mountain Lore endeavors to revitalize the origins and significance of these place names.

The books can be purchased at the Summit and Mitchell Canyon Visitor Centers, by mail order (form on page 7), or online at www.mdia.org. The jersey is available at the Summit Visitor Center.

Mount Diablo State Park Phone Numbers

| Supervising Ranger  | 925.855.1730 |
| Junction Ranger     | 925.837.6129 |
| Mitchell Canyon Ranger | 925.672.4266 |
| Summit Museum       | 925.837.6119 |
| Entrance Station    | 925.837.0904 |
| Maintenance         | 925.837.6122 |
| Sector Office       | 925.673.2891 |
| General Information | 925.837.2525 |
| Summit Weather Conditions | 925.838.9225 |