



# AMIA

THE ANDERSON MARSH INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION  
*Promoting education & interpretive activities at  
Anderson Marsh State Historic Park*

PO BOX 672, LOWER LAKE, CA 95457 (707) 995-2658 WWW.ANDERSONMARSH.ORG WINTER/SPRING 2020



Some of the over 130 people who participated in this year's 1<sup>st</sup> Day Hike pose by the South Barn before setting out. *Photo by Gae Henry*

## **New Year's Day Hike at Anderson Marsh Hike sets state record for third consecutive year**

**By Henry Bornstein, AMIA Board Treasurer**

Over 130 people visited Anderson Marsh State Historic Park on New Year's Day to participate in the Seventh Annual "First Day Hike" held at the Park. For the third consecutive year, this was the largest number of hikers for any January 1st hike in the entire California State Parks system.

Every year, state parks in all 50 states offer First Day Hikes as a way to promote healthy lifestyles and year-round recreation at America's State Parks. AMIA has been organizing these January 1<sup>st</sup> hikes for seven years and we have

had over 100 hikers participate each year.

Hikers covered a 3-mile loop over the Cache Creek Nature Trail and Ridge Trail, traveling over a boardwalk to the creek and through oak woodlands. The large number of Lake County residents who decide each year to start the year off right with this family-friendly event is a credit to our county and to the connection its residents have with the nature that surrounds them.

We look forward to seeing you at the Eighth Annual First Day Hike on January 1, 2021!

# President's Message

## Some thoughts on the State Parks re-organization

By Roberta Lyons

In the Spring of 2011, a group of Anderson Marsh Interpretive Association (AMIA) volunteers were enjoying a California League of Parks As-



sociations (CALPA) Conference at Mendocino when word came down from on high (from Ruth Coleman, then director of California State Parks) that 70 of California's beloved State Parks were slated to close because of budget problems. And guess who was first on the list? Anderson Marsh State Historic Park, of course.

Not because we deserved closing more than any of the other parks, but because of the first letter of our name – the list was alphabetical.

Afterwards, it was revealed that State Parks had been stashing away about \$50 million in a "special fund," and the outrage that ensued sparked the agency to spend that money on keeping the parks "open," but just barely, and it didn't really change the dire financial situation of our park. That is when AMIA entered into a "Partnership Agreement" with State Parks and took over funding and operating some of the basic elements at the park. This, of course, would not have been possible without the generous help of our many local business and individual members who thankfully continue to support us to this day.

Fast forward almost 10 years. And I do mean fast forward. I can't believe it has been that long since we heard the depressing news. As a result of the 2011 fiasco, a group was formed dubbed "Parks Forward," and they were tasked with

creating a new and more workable format for operating California's parks. This format is now being implemented. You can read about the details in Treasurer Henry Bornstein's article, on page 4 of this newsletter.

My comments will focus on just a few of my observations about the reorganization.

We had a great meeting with our new District Superintendent, Matt Teague, a few weeks ago and he informed us about the efforts State Parks is making to fully staff both of our State Parks. As of now, we are short three State Park Rangers. There is one ranger for both State Parks working now. This is bad, I know, but the State isn't happy about it either and is trying to fill the positions. One of the positive features of the reorganization is that a Natural and Cultural Resources position has been created for the district and that position has been filled. Also, the State has been working with members of the Koi Tribe (the Native American group that occupied the Anderson Marsh area and Indian Island before European settlement) to facilitate monitoring of the cultural artifacts at the park in order to prevent looting and vandalism.

We are also slated to have a District Interpretive Specialist who will be working at both Anderson Marsh State Historic Park and Clear Lake State Park. If the positions are filled, the job of our interpretive associations will be much easier. As things stand now, we are still scheduling and leading school field trips along with our monthly nature walks and house tours. Although the State has taken back some of the costs of park operations, AMIA is still needed to carry out many functions and tasks. Helping a great deal has been the great maintenance crew based at Clear Lake State Park. In fact, Wendy Lieberg,

*(Continued on page 3)*

# Clear Lake Sector Maintenance Chief honored with State Parks Champion Award

By Henry Bornstein

If you've ever wondered who is responsible for making sure that the trails, buildings and our resources found at Anderson Marsh State Historic Park are properly maintained so that they can be safely enjoyed by the visiting public – meet Wendy Lieberg, Clear Lake Sector Maintenance Chief.

## Will reorganization do what it promises?

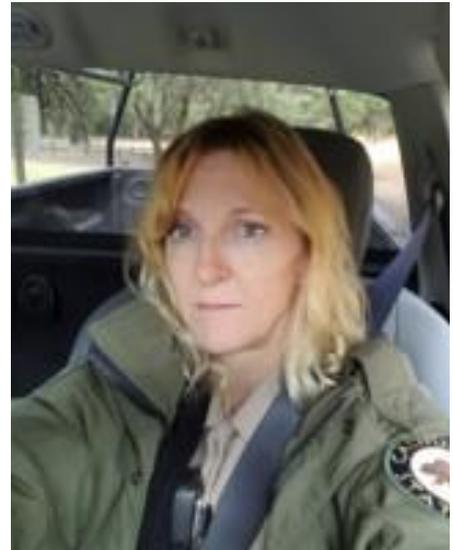
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our Maintenance Chief has been awarded the State Parks Employee "Champion" award for the second straight year!

From what I can observe, it is still an open question as to whether or not Parks Forward and the resulting re-organization of State Parks will have positive results. It is too soon to tell, especially since there is so much difficulty in finding suitable candidates to fill the open positions here in Lake County.

Meanwhile, our group of volunteers and supporters, including the board of AMIA, will continue to support, protect, and enjoy our beautiful State Park. We really have no other choice.

Wendy is a wizard at getting things done, often with limited resources and a reduced staff to command. The great job she is doing was recently recognized at State



Park's Northern Buttes District "All-Hands Meeting" held on February 18 at the Lake Oroville State Recreation Area.

At the meeting, which is held each year to recognize State Parks employees hard work and accomplishments over the past year, Wendy was awarded the District Champion Award, having her name engraved on the Champions plaque for the second straight year.

Congratulations, Wendy! We are lucky to have you here in Lake County.

## ANDERSON MARSH NEWS

is published by the  
Anderson Marsh Interpretive Association  
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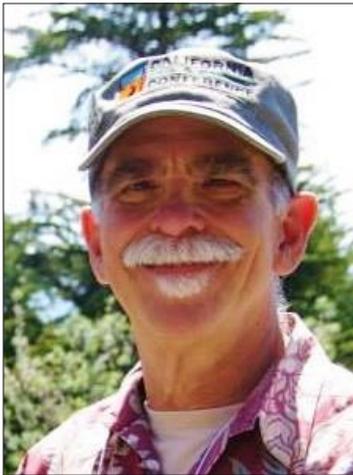


**Roberta Lyons** - Newsletter Coordinator  
Newsletter Layout - Robin Winniford

# Treasurer's Report

## The “Transformation” of the State Parks System

By Henry Bornstein, AMIA Board Treasurer



There are some dramatic changes to the structure of the California State Parks system taking place and the two state parks in Lake County have been seeing the effects of these changes. So how is this effecting Anderson Marsh State Historic Park?

As described in Roberta Lyon's President's message (page 2), this story begins in 2011, with the State Parks "financial scandal." The ensuing investigations led the California Secretary of Natural Resources to appoint a "Parks Forward" Commission in 2013 to help guide the future of the State Parks.

In 2015, based on the report produced by this Commission, California State Parks assembled a "Transformation Team" to carry out the recommendations of the Commission. In 2017, the plan produced by the Transformation Team recommended changes to the structure of the State Parks system.

Among the many changes recommended by the Transformation Team was a new "organizational model" for running the state parks. The idea was to eliminate duplicative management positions and make things more efficient by eliminating the old "geographic" management system and

replacing it with a "functional" or "programmatic" management system.

Now – what the heck does that mean?

The best way to explain it is to use the two Lake County state parks as an example. Under the old "geographic" system, Clear Lake State Park and Anderson Marsh State Historic Park were both in the "Clear Lake Sector," which was run by a Sector Superintendent, who reported to his (or her) boss, the District Superintendent.

The Sector Superintendent was stationed in Lake County and was responsible for making all decisions relating to all programs in Lake County, including public safety (the Park Rangers), maintenance, interpretation, resource preservation, etc. So, if there was a maintenance issue in Lake County, the Sector Maintenance Chief would contact the Sector Superintendent about it. If AMIA wanted to hold a special event at the Park, we would contact the Sector Superintendent about getting a special event permit. If a member of the public (or a politician) had a question, the Sector Superintendent could answer it. You get the idea – the buck stopped there (with the Sector Superintendent being supervised by the District Superintendent).

So – if our brilliant Maintenance Chief (see the article about Wendy Lieberg receiving the Champion award on page 3) had a brilliant idea, she had to go to the Sector Superintendent to get it approved, who maybe had to go the District Superintendent for funding, who had to ask his District Maintenance Chief if this was a good idea, who then called the Sector Maintenance Chief to

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check it out and then told his boss what he found out – you get the idea. Sometimes things went around in circles for a while before anything could get done.

The Transformation Teams said: “Wouldn’t it be a lot easier if Wendy (the Sector Maintenance Chief) could just call up the District Maintenance Chief and the two maintenance people could directly figure out if this was a good idea or not?”

So that is what happens under the new structure of “functional management.” The Sector Superintendent’s job has been eliminated. (Bill Salata, our former Lake County Sector Superintendent is now the Chief Ranger in the North Coast Redwoods District.) Our Maintenance Chief now reports directly to the District Maintenance Chief, who has authority to make maintenance decisions in the district (subject to general supervision by the District Superintendent).

The same thing is true for all of the other functions being done at the Park – our Supervising Ranger (when we get one) will report directly to the District Chief Ranger, our Interpreter (when we get one) will report to the District Interpreter, etc.

This sounds fine – except what happens when there is no one hired as a Lake County Interpreter or Lake County Supervising Ranger? As discussed in our President’s message, as I write this article, State Parks has still not been able to hire an Interpreter or a Supervising Ranger for Lake County (or to fill the other Ranger and maintenance positions that are open). Until that happens, without a Sector Superintendent, we have no one here to be “in charge” of that aspect of local park operations. So everyone is having to improvise until we can see how all of this is going to work.

What this means for AMIA is that we have become BFF’s with Matt Teague, our hard-working District Superintendent, who is having to handle issues we are bringing up directly, without the help of anyone “local” to help out. We have a great relationship with Superintendent Teague and we are sure that he is just as anxious as we are to get the local staffing situation resolved so

we can see how the new system is going to work and he can get back to doing his job without having to make repeated trips from Oroville to Lake County to meet with these pesky folks at AMIA.

So, let’s hope by our next newsletter, we can introduce our new local State Parks team and report that the bugs in the new system are being worked out. Meanwhile, AMIA will continue to hold things together as best we can and hope for more State Parks support in the future.

## In Memoriam



**Billy Gear, Park Docent and AMIA Volunteer pictured with a snake found at the park. Billy was a Certified California Naturalist.**

## Billy Gear

**By Gae Henry**

We were all saddened to learn of the death of long-time Park Docent & AMIA Volunteer Billy Gear in the fall of 2019. Billy was a “renaissance man,” teaching philosophy and comparative religion at the Lake County Campus of Woodland Community College in Clearlake.

Billy was very active in leading public nature walks at Anderson Marsh State Historic Park, as well as at Clear Lake State Park. A Certified California Naturalist, he was constantly learning about nature and always willing to share his passion and knowledge. He assisted with many projects related to the Park, and was awarded the AMIA Volunteer of the Year award. Billy also volunteered to work with local children with the Children’s Museum of Art & Science (CMAS).

Our condolences go out to his family and to all of his many friends. Rest in peace.



Santa posed for pictures by the fire in the dining room.



AMIA Treasurer Henry Bornstein helping park cars with a Lower Lake High volunteer.

# Christmas at the Ranch

By Don Coffin & Gae Henry

Our 2019 annual Christmas at the Ranch, held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in December, was a great success. The weather was wonderful, allowing time to be spent in the Ranch House yard as well as inside. The event was well-attended with over 250 members of the public enjoying free refreshments along with visiting Santa. The crowd sang Christmas favorites and brought the old Ranch house back to life, joining musical helpers Don Coffin, Cathy Dion, David Neft, Harry Lyons, Tom Nixon, Rick McCann and Joan Moss. AMIA volunteers and Board members, along with students from Lower Lake High School, helped with parking, welcomed guests, answered questions and kept the refreshment area well stocked.

Many thanks to the musicians and other volunteers who make this possible each year. This was the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this event, which has become a hallmark of AMIA's efforts to introduce people to Anderson Marsh State Historic Park. AMIA thanks the Lake County community for its support of this annual open house.



Music and cookies in the parlor.

# In Memoriam

## Betty Taylor, long-time AMIA Director and supporter remembered

By Roberta Lyons

Betty Taylor, one of the original founders of the Anderson Marsh Interpretive Association (AMIA), died on October 10, 2019.

### Betty June Taylor

Betty June Taylor was on the original board of directors for AMIA and along with her husband Roger, participated in the early activities of the Cultural Heritage Council (CHC) and AMIA in the 1980s and 90s. Betty was there when the famous (and still remembered) Blackberry Festival was initiated and stayed on the Board for many years.

Born in Oakland, California on February 23, 1927, Betty married Roger Taylor, a railroad man, and moved to Southern California in 1950. She and her husband raised two daughters there before they moved to Clearlake, where Betty worked as a speech aid and sign language interpreter in the schools. She and Roger were

big supporters of the purchase of the Anderson Ranch by the State of California to become the Anderson Marsh State Historic Park. That purchase was finalized in 1984.

As one of her many activities at the Park, Betty developed a furnishing plan for the historic Anderson ranch house and helped to purchase the items to populate the old farm house which gave it a homey feel.

Betty moved to Beaumont, CA in 2007. She was preceded in death by her husband, Roger Taylor, survived by two daughters, Charlen Taylor and Gale Taylor, both of Beaumont; grandson, Teddy Taylor of Beaumont; granddaughter, Mariah Cataline, great grandson Anthony Cataline and great granddaughter Aella Cataline, all of Sneedville, Tennessee.

All of us at AMIA celebrate her long life of accomplishment and public service.

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**DOUBLE CRESTED CORMORANT:**  
February of this year found many hundreds of these colorful birds flying together low over the water in Cache Creek in Anderson Marsh State Historic Park, diving into the water for small bait fish and then later in the day, perching in the trees along the shore of Cache Creek.

*Photo courtesy of Audubon California*





**A Great Blue Heron carries a twig to its nest. This is just one of the sights you are likely to see on a birding boat tour at the 25th annual Heron Days at Anderson Marsh.**

## **Redbud Audubon Heron Days boats will tour Anderson Marsh**

The 25<sup>th</sup> annual Heron Days birding boat tours sponsored by the Lake County Redbud Audubon Society will be held this year on Saturday-Sunday, April 25-26 and May 2-3. The event features 90-minute pontoon-boat birding tours to see nesting birds and wildlife at two different locations on Clear Lake.

Saturday and Sunday, April 25-26, boats will leave in the morning from the boat launch docks at Lakeside County Park in Kelseyville.

The boat tours will go north along the shoreline of Clear Lake to the heron rookery near Corinthian Bay.

Saturday and Sunday, May 2-3, boats will leave during the same hours from Clear Lake Campground on Cache Creek, directly across from Anderson Marsh State Historic Park. The boat tours will explore birds nesting along Cache creek and in Anderson Marsh.

This is a wonderful opportunity to see Anderson Marsh from the water, with an experienced Audubon guide to explain the birds being seen on the tour. Besides several species of nesting



### **Tour boat exploring Anderson Marsh.**

herons, egrets and cormorants, tour guests may see nesting osprey, yellow-headed blackbirds, and Western and Clark's grebes in courtship displays where they "dance" in pairs across the lake surface.

Boat tour tickets are \$30 each and will be available for on-line purchase beginning on March 16 at [www.redbudaudubon.org](http://www.redbudaudubon.org) or call (707) 263-8030.



A recent kayak trip along Cache Creek into Anderson Marsh.

## Kayaking in Anderson Marsh State Historic Park

By Lisa Wilson

A wonderful way to explore Anderson Marsh State Historic Park is by kayaking along Cache Creek and into Anderson Marsh. This scenic “out-and-back” water trail goes along the riparian habitat of Cache Creek and into the tule marshes of the Park. Paddling at a leisurely pace, a recent trip took about three hours. Presently, the best place to launch on Cache Creek is at Clear Lake Campground, where you can launch your own kayak for a small fee or rent a kayak. Cache Creek is quite calm, though the current may be strong depending on the time of year.

Clear Lake’s current form was created thousands of years ago by a series of earthquakes that elevated the northwestern lake basin, cutting off drainage into the Russian River. The water rose until it found a new outlet – Cache Creek – which drains eastward into the Sacramento River. The name Cache Creek comes from Hudson’s Bay Company trappers who “cached” their furs along the Sacramento River and smaller tributaries.

You’ll paddle through oxbows and waterfront neighborhoods, and then past Slater Island’s

bird rookeries and by Garner Island before getting to the tule marsh.

Over the years, 84% of the original wetlands on Clear Lake have been destroyed. But here, 540 acres of tule marsh have been designated a natural preserve. This remaining tule marsh is vital to the ecosystem of the entire lake, providing protection, food and breeding areas for many species of wildlife.

Winter is a great time for birding. On a recent February excursion, we saw double-crested cormorants, common mergansers, a bald eagle, red-tailed hawks, wood ducks, great blue herons, great egrets, California gulls, mourning doves, buffleheads, and pied-billed grebes. We even saw river otters.

For more information, you can check out the following resources:

- Konocti Regional Trails [www.konoctitrails.com](http://www.konoctitrails.com)
- Clear Lake Campground [www.campclearlake.com](http://www.campclearlake.com)
- All Trails [www.alltrails.com](http://www.alltrails.com)



Students get a chance to see the exhibits in the South Barn Interpretive Center.

## AMIA offers field trip and tour opportunities

By Gae Henry

For the past 13 years, AMIA has worked to ensure that students, seniors and other groups have the opportunity to attend field trips and tours at Anderson Marsh State Historic Park. To help facilitate this, AMIA has donated money to Konocti Unified School District specifically to pay for the cost of the field trip busses that allow the District's students to come to the Park. AMIA also supports California State Parks by having one of its volunteers act as "Field Trip Coordinator," working with teachers and others to set up and coordinate field trips at the Park. In addition, AMIA provides the volunteers on the day of the field trip in order to provide a variety of learning experiences including a guided nature walk, tours of the historic Anderson Ranch House and exploratory experiences in the South Barn Interpretive Center.

Hosting student field trips and public tours of the Park not only provides one of the ways that AMIA fulfills its mission to promote educational and interpretive activities at Anderson Marsh State Historic Park, but it is also a way for AMIA



A group of high school students learning about tules on the Cache Creek Nature Trail.

to "give back" to the Lake County community that has supported both AMIA and Anderson Marsh State Historic Park for the 38 years since AMIA's formation.



**A group of hikers stop to admire the acorn woodpecker granary tree on the Marsh Trail.**

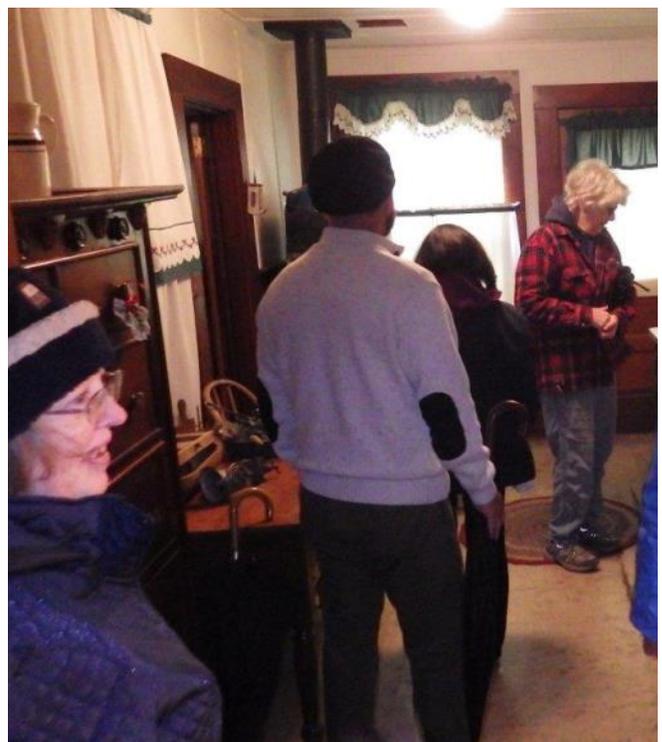
## **2020 Guided Nature Walks and Ranch House tours**

Anderson Marsh State Historic Park will hold monthly guided Nature Walks in 2020 starting at 8:30am on the second Saturday of each month except December. There is often a tour of the Historic Ranch House after the walk. Rain will cancel the walk. If rain cancels the walk and a tour is scheduled, the tour will begin at 8:30am. Please call 707-995-2658 or email [info@andersonmarsh.org](mailto:info@andersonmarsh.org) to see if there will be a tour.

The Nature Walks will be led by California State Parks volunteer docents. The hikes usually last about two hours. The actual route taken will depend on the weather and the condition of the trails. Participants should bring water and wear sturdy shoes and a hat and binoculars if they have them.

Participants are asked to arrive at the parking lot by 8:15am so they can have time to explore the wildlife found in the ranch house yard.

See you at the Park!



**A tour group in the Ranch House kitchen.**



A group of birders on the boardwalk on Cache Creek Nature Trail.

# Birding in Anderson Marsh State Historic Park

By Lisa Wilson

Anderson Marsh State Historic Park is a favorite among birdwatchers. The National Audubon Society has given Clear Lake area the distinction of an Important Bird Area (IBA).

Any time of year is rewarding, but the spring brings something special. Grebes create floating nests in the marsh and rookeries along Cache Creek are usually full of great blue herons, great egrets, and double-crested cormorants.

Other birds commonly seen are American white pelicans, ruddy ducks, pied-billed grebes, coots, mallards, osprey, white-tailed kites, red-

tailed and red-shouldered hawks, northern harrisers, phainopeplas, cedar waxwings, hooded mergansers, acorn woodpeckers, Lewis's woodpecker, northern flicker, wood ducks, green herons, black-crowned night herons, ring-necked pheasants, wild turkeys and the occasional sighting of bald eagles and golden eagles.

Also seen at the Park in the spring are many other birds including juncos, western bluebirds, tree swallows, lesser and American goldfinches, oak titmouse, song sparrows, spotted and

*(Continued on page 13)*



Clark's Grebes seen "rushing" at Anderson Marsh. *Photo by Gae Henry*

## Birding in AMSHP

*(Continued from page 12)*

California towhees, many species of warblers, red-winged and Brewer's blackbirds – well, it's a long list.

The Redbud Audubon Society hosts an annual Heron Days, a wonderful celebration of nature and a rare opportunity to explore the Park by boat with an expert bird guide and see the nesting activities up close. For more information, see the article about the Heron Days tours on page 8 of this newsletter.



Phainopepla. *Photo by Gae Henry*

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Western Grebes and their chicks. *Photo by Gae Henry*



Osprey. *Photo by Jim Duckworth*



American White Pelicans.  
*Photo by Jim Duckworth*



# AMIA thanks our generous supporters

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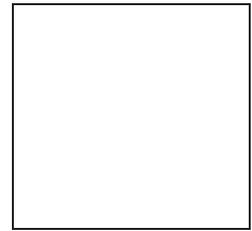
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# ANDERSON MARSH INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 672 LOWER LAKE, CA 95457 (707)995-2658  
WWW.ANDERSONMARSH.ORG — info@andersonmarsh.org



## ANDERSON MARSH INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION

*Dedicated to the preservation of all facets of the park. New members are always welcome! Come Join the Fun!*

### 2020 AMIA Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Special Interest (music, education, history, ecology, archaeology, other): \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to know about volunteer opportunities

AMIA members receive two (2) newsletters a year, special invitations to attend events being held at the park and the satisfaction that comes from supporting a community treasure and working to preserve it for future generations.

#### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES:

##### Annual

Amount	Membership Level	Member Benefits
<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	Educator/Student	Newsletter
<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	Individual	Newsletter
<input type="checkbox"/> \$35	Family	Newsletter
<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	Supporter	Newsletter and Newsletter Mention
<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	Sustainer	Newsletter, Newsletter Mention, Donor Event and DVD of "A Walk Through Time" film
<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	Patron	Sustainer benefits + special recognition at event
<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	<b>Business Supporter</b>	Newsletter, Donor Event, Newsletter Mention, Website Link
<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	<b>Business Sustainer</b>	Business supporter benefits +DVD of AMSHP film

Please send check and completed application to

### AMIA

**P.O. Box 672  
Lower Lake, CA 95457**

Or join online by  
visiting us at

[www.andersonmarsh.org](http://www.andersonmarsh.org)

For more info call AMIA  
at 707-995-2658