



CORAL CURRENT

CORAL REEF ALLIANCE 2012 ANNUAL REPORT

DR. MICHAEL WEBSTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Nearly two decades ago, a group of divers united to form the Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL). From that day forward, we have been focused on a singular purpose: saving coral reefs. At first, we worked primarily to lessen the impacts from dive tourism on reefs. Over the years, we have broadened our work to more directly respond to growing stresses on these magnificent—yet imperiled—ecosystems.

In collaboration with local communities, we have implemented programs that improve the health and resilience of reefs through strategies like reducing fishing pressures, minimizing sediment and other pollutants reaching near-shore ecosystems, and better enforcing existing management rules.

More recently, we have recognized our opportunity—and our obligation—to do even more for reefs by ensuring that our regional successes resonate on a global scale. For example, by taking what we have learned working with hotels in Hawaii to develop a successful program in Mexico, or using a business plan developed in Fiji as a blueprint for one in Honduras, we are now developing a program that connects local leaders with the world's best ideas, tools, and resources.

As we continue to evolve as an organization, it is imperative that we more effectively express who we are and what we do and encourage others to join in our efforts. In this special annual report edition of *CORAL Current*, we discuss an important step we are making in this direction by launching a new logo. We are also thrilled to share details about several new projects and initiatives underway that illustrate how we are meeting the many challenges facing coral reefs. You will learn about the Reefs Tomorrow Initiative, a partnership between CORAL and a team of renowned researchers and conservation practitioners that will help guide future conservation and management decisions on coral reefs. And finally, you will find out about the expansion of our work to new locations and to tackle new threats.

I look forward to sharing the outcomes of our projects and initiatives with you over the next year and beyond. We are very fortunate to have such dedicated and loyal supporters and are grateful for your continued partnership.

JIM TOLONEN BOARD CHAIR



Coral reefs continue to be compromised by threats like pollution, overharvesting and damaging fishing practices, and climate change. However, we are encouraged by the fact that science-based local actions can improve the future of these amazing and critical ecosystems.

In fact, in every community in which we have developed partnerships and trust, we are seeing positive results: better protection for reef ecosystems and economic benefits to the community.

CORAL is at an exciting inflection point. Under the leadership of Dr. Michael Webster and his team, we are expanding and elevating the scope, effectiveness, and urgency of our work. We are increasingly being recognized by the conservation, philanthropic, and science communities for past successes, and are being selected to perform even greater work to ensure healthy reefs. As you will read in this annual report, we have accomplished a lot this past year and are poised to move forward with a strong vision for future successes.

I am personally energized by the opportunity to expand our work. To this end, we are also growing our Board of Directors and welcomed the addition of several new board members already this year. Additionally, we are recruiting members for a new CORAL International Council, an advisory group that will help the Board and staff by promoting CORAL's mission, fostering a deeper integration of science and policy in sustainable reef health, and developing resources to support conservation initiatives aligned with local, cultural, and economic interests. These additional leaders will help ensure our future global momentum and impact.

CORAL is more committed than ever to working with our partners around the world to implement on-the-ground conservation strategies that benefit reefs—but we need your continued help. We are grateful for your past support and look forward to your future engagement.

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Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL)

Cover: Close-up of the tentacles of a magnificent sea anemone (*Heteractis magnifica*). Photo by Gareth Williams.



CORAL REEF ALLIANCE

New Look

“Rebranding CORAL is a tremendous opportunity to both reflect on our past and think strategically about the direction in which we are heading.” — Dr. Michael Webster, *Executive Director of CORAL*

CORAL was founded in 1994 by a group of scuba divers committed to promoting sustainable tourism in coral reef destinations. Initially, our green dive flag logo was an ideal representation of this work, as we were in essence “greening” the dive community.

Fast-forward nineteen years: divers remain—and will always remain—some of our greatest ambassadors, helping us implement programs that leverage tourism for the benefit of reefs. But over the years, we have broadened the scope and scale of our interventions to take a more comprehensive approach to coral reef conservation. Today, our team looks at all aspects of the reef and uses the best science and tools available to provide durable solutions to the many complex threats facing reefs.

To better project the organization we’ve become, in 2012 we embarked on a rebranding effort. The first public iteration of this process is our new logo, one we are confident expresses the expanding scope of our work in every detail.

Our new logo evokes many elements of a healthy coral reef. The outline is a stylized butterflyfish—a quintessential reef fish. Butterflyfish are found on reefs around the world and rely on

healthy reefs for their survival (many actually eat coral polyps). The curvy white bands are reminiscent of the color patterns of butterflyfish, but also of the branched and curving shapes of the reef itself: picture a fish swimming through a matrix of corals. In the curve on the far left, you might see an ocean wave, a tabletop coral, or a mollusk shell. And the shade of blue we chose represents the color of the clean, clear, shallow water that coral reefs need to survive and that we are trying to ensure.

Finally, the logo highlights the connection between the communities with whom we work and the reef: notice the suggestion of indigenous artwork, and a traditional fishing hook (in the swirl) that has long connected humans to the reef.

The logo, however, represents only one aspect of our rebranding effort. In the coming months, you will notice a shift in the look and feel of all of our communications—from our print and online publications to our business cards. And later this spring, we will launch our redesigned website, which will better tell our story, make information easier to find, and attract more people dedicated to protecting coral reefs.

What’s Behind CORAL’s New Logo? To create the logo, CORAL enlisted design and branding expert Mat Squillante of Squillante Studios. Mat’s keen eye for design and visionary thinking were crucial to this project. “As I browsed through reference material to draw inspiration for this assignment, I found certain patterns and shapes that were repeated throughout the coral and the marine species living on the reef,” says Mat. “I worked with line and space to bring these two elements together into one graphic. The fish and coral are somewhat camouflaged together resembling the oneness between the fauna and flora of coral reefs.” [What do you see in the logo?](#)

New Sites Building MPA Networks

Since our early days, marine protected areas (MPAs) have been a cornerstone of our conservation efforts. After all, while the advantages of MPAs are well documented, only about one percent of the world's oceans have been designated "protected." And the reality is that many of the current MPAs exist only as "paper parks," where resources are scarce, management plans are poorly developed, and legislation is inadequately enforced.

Historically, we have worked to strengthen the management of existing MPAs; now, we're going one step further, adding new sites that help establish biologically connected networks of protected areas that are more advantageous than one alone.

Bay Islands, Honduras



Photo by: Antal Boresek

CORAL is working to protect Tela's magnificent elkhorn coral.

In Honduras, we are applying the lessons learned from our progress with the Roatan Marine Park to two ecologically important areas in the region—Utila and Capiro Banks. This strategic move is part of a larger effort to build momentum for a network of MPAs across the Bay Islands.

Utila, the third smallest of the Bay Islands, shares important fishery resources with both Roatan and mainland Honduras. It currently has two designated Areas of Special Interest within the Bay Islands National Marine Park, but management of these MPAs has been passive.

Last year, CORAL hired Pamela Ortega to boost the management capacity of Utila's MPAs and surrounding resources. Pamela has made considerable inroads in gaining local support for more effective conservation management. Her efforts include piloting conservation workshops and producing a community newsletter to align common environmental interests; she is now working to establish a fund to support the island's management activities. "For

nearly a decade now, I have been involved in different layers of Utila's conservation movement," she says. "Never before have I seen such a positive shift in awareness as there is now. Since CORAL started working alongside our partners on the island, people seem more committed and ready to take conservation to the next level."

The neighboring town of Tela and its associated reef, Capiro Banks, are also strongly connected with Roatan and Utila. In 2012, the mayor of Tela declared Capiro Banks—an impressive reef boasting 69 percent live coral cover—a protected area.

This municipal decree provides protections to the reef and its approximately 800 endangered elkhorn coral colonies. While a municipal decree offers some level of protection, it does not offer the same level of visibility and durability that federal designation does. CORAL is developing a proposal to see this area federally declared as an Area of Wildlife Importance to ensure its lasting protection.

Sunda-Banda Seascape, Indonesia



Photo by: Jeff Yonover

A gorgeous Bali reef.

CORAL is also working to create an ecologically connected and socioeconomically sustainable network of locally managed marine areas (LMMAs) in the Sunda-Banda region of eastern Indonesia. Our primary region of focus is the rapidly developing area of Amed in northeastern Bali, where we've been working for several years. And now, we are also investigating conservation needs and opportunities in a traditional fishing community called Lamalera in Lesser Sunda, and exploring ways to help that community protect and conserve their marine resources. Both areas have highly significant marine resources that are threatened by unregulated and unmanaged activities.

CORAL is engaged in a multi-partner effort to build broad support at the community and government levels for co-managing a network of LMMAs in the Sunda-Banda Seascape. Our first project is to help to develop a financing mechanism to generate economic incentives for at least two major coral reef destination regencies in Bali—

Karangasem and Buleleng—by replicating the successful voluntary donation dive tag program at Amed.

"This multi-tiered project is really exciting," says Jason Vasques, Assistant Director of Conservation Programs at CORAL. "If we succeed in our efforts, Bali will be a leader in supporting ecosystem-based management with regency-level entrance fees and incentives that promote large scale conservation. It would also serve as a good model for other communities in how to integrate resource management with the necessary incentive and finance structures."

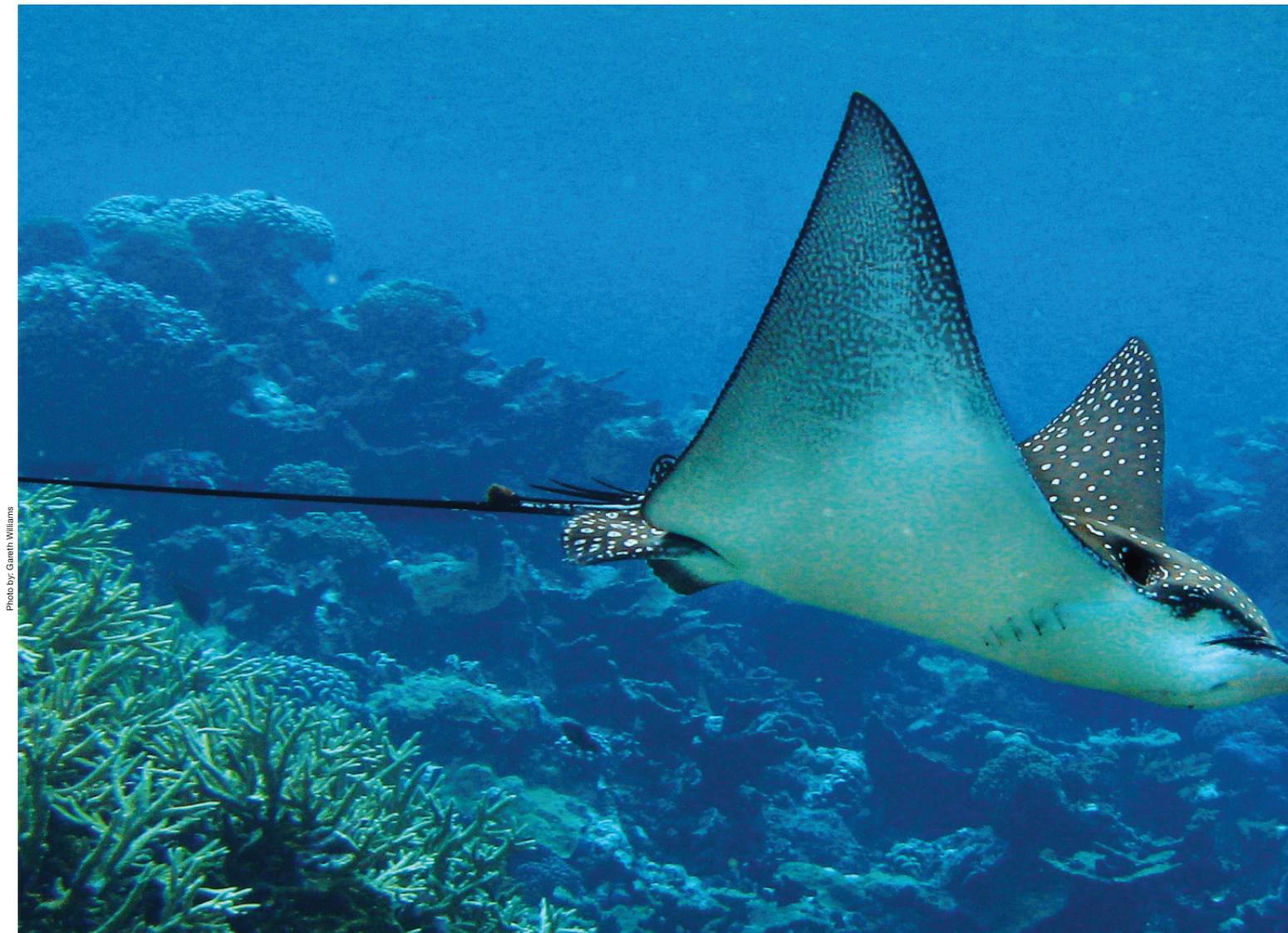


Photo by: Gareth Williams

A spotted eagle ray (*Aetobatus narinari*) glides silently over a pristine reef in Palmyra.

New Science An Initiative Supporti

Around the world, coral reefs are suffering from threats including overfishing, pollution, ocean acidification, and increasing temperatures. With limited resources and varying conditions from place to place, how do we ensure we are investing in conservation strategies that have the greatest benefit for reefs and are most likely to succeed in the long term?

To help answer that question, CORAL is working with a group of researchers from academic institutions and other conservation organizations to develop a

set of tools that will guide reef managers as they evaluate difficult tradeoff decisions. Known as the Reefs Tomorrow Initiative, this project will use computer models and field studies to build a true scientific understanding of how reefs function, respond to combinations of threats, and rebound from disturbances like coral bleaching events.

We are starting this work in the remote and pristine coral reefs at Palmyra Atoll. Palmyra is part of the Northern Line Islands, located halfway between Hawaii and American Samoa in the

middle of the Pacific Ocean. Purchased by The Nature Conservancy in 2000, Palmyra and its surrounding waters are permanently protected as a National Wildlife Refuge. Its reefs are considered to be some of the healthiest in the world, boasting vast numbers of large fish and high coral cover in clear blue water. By understanding how these healthy ecosystems withstand and recover from disturbances, we can better manage our interventions on degraded reefs.

CORAL looks forward to applying what we learn in Palmyra directly

to management and conservation actions through partnerships with local reef managers in the Pacific and beyond.

“We tend to find the same threats plaguing coral reefs in each of our project sites, yet it can be difficult to know how best to address and prioritize these threats to maximize our conservation impact,” says Dr. Michael Webster. “By developing empirical data at Palmyra that better explains how reefs work and how threats interact in a management context, conservation managers will be better equipped with the tools and



Photo by: Gareth Williams

Colorful convict surgeonfish (*Acanthurus triostegus*) over *Acropora* corals in Palmyra's clear, blue waters.

ng Conservation and Management

knowledge they need to be successful in their roles.”

A \$2.5 million grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation established this partnership between CORAL and an elite team of scientists and conservation experts from the American Museum of Natural History, Stanford University, The Nature Conservancy, the University of California-San Diego's Scripps Institution of Oceanography, the University of California-Santa Barbara, the University of North Carolina-Wilmington, and Victoria University of Wellington (New Zealand).

John Kaye, Program Officer of the Marine Microbiology Initiative at the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, is looking forward to the outcomes. “With CORAL's leadership, the research team will attempt to fill a critical gap in knowledge of coral reef science and its application to management and conservation,” he says. “Ultimately, this understanding should inform science-driven management and conservation of coral reef systems in many critical and threatened locations.”

Introducing Madhavi



Dr. Madhavi Colton, a trained ecologist with a Ph.D. in marine biology from the University of Melbourne (Australia), recently joined CORAL as program director of the Reefs Tomorrow Initiative. In this new role, Madhavi is collaborating with a team of top-notch research and environmental institutions (see main story) and is tasked with managing the project's many moving parts. Madhavi is no stranger to large scientific research projects. In her last position, she developed and

directed interdisciplinary and scientifically rigorous programs monitoring California's marine protected areas, working closely with resource managers and policymakers to develop an understanding of how science can be incorporated into decision-making processes.

A self-proclaimed “applied ecologist,” Madhavi is drawn to roles that bridge the gap between science, management, and policy. She looks forward to working with our partners to provide a science-based tool that conservationists and managers can use to save coral reefs.

New Interventions Improving Water Quality

“The focus on water quality is a natural transition for us because we have been working with hotels to improve their level of sustainability and environmental reef stewardship for some time,” says Rick MacPherson, Conservation Programs Director at CORAL. “We are building on our years of experience, working with multiple stakeholders to ensure that destinations retain and enhance the exceptional resources that make them appealing for tourism.”



Photo by: Michael Webster

A white-mouth moray eel (*Gymnothorax meleagris*) and knobby finger coral (*Porites duerdeni*) in clear Hawaiian water

To thrive, coral reefs need clean, clear water. When a healthy reef is overwhelmed by excessive nutrients, the ecosystem can undergo a shift from a coral-dominated reef to an algae-dominated reef, setting in motion a series of events that alter the reef's biology and productivity. Bottom line: the impacts of excessive nutrients are incredibly damaging to the reef and the surrounding environment.

CORAL is increasingly focusing on wastewater management as we broaden our conservation interventions to ensure we are addressing the root causes of coral reef decline. Around the world, wastewater pollution from coastal communities is becoming a common and substantial problem for nearshore reefs. In 2012, we launched new initiatives with our hotel partners in Hawaii and Mexico to explore previously

untapped opportunities to drive sustainable wastewater management practices.

Through a program launched last fall as part of the larger multi-partner West Maui Ridge to Reef Initiative in Hawaii, CORAL is working with hotels to help them transition from using potable to reclaimed water for landscaping, a practice that will keep millions of gallons of treated wastewater from being injected into underground wells each year.

Nutrient-laden wastewater from these gravity-fed wells has been shown to emerge within the nearshore reef system, fueling algal growth and contributing to reef declines, so redirecting and recycling this water for landscaping is a common sense solution.

Scientists, resource managers, and many others in the community have been calling for increased reuse of wastewater

for irrigation for many years, but progress has been slow due to limited infrastructure and funding. Fortunately support for water reclamation is gaining momentum, and the West Maui Ridge to Reef Initiative—a collaborative effort addressing land-based pollution as a means to reduce stress on coral reefs—is defining project priorities for wastewater reuse.

“CORAL is an ideal partner, always looking for ways to coordinate, synergize, and leverage our collective resources and efforts,” says Tova Callender, the West Maui Watershed and Coastal Management Coordinator. “Since CORAL has already built the needed relationships with the visitor industry in West Maui, important stakeholders are already engaged and working to improve water quality, reducing the outreach, education, and project work we need to do.”

As some wastewater infrastructure improvements are implemented by the County of Maui (others have yet to be funded and approved), Hawaii Field Manager Liz Foote is developing a series of resources that will give hotels the information and tools they need to transition to recycled water. Liz is also facilitating comprehensive water use surveys and workshops that disseminate much-needed technical expertise to staff from several West Maui properties.

In Mexico, we are just beginning our water quality work. Unfortunately, the existing water standards in the region were not developed with reefs in mind and need much stronger environmental criteria. Working together with our partners in the Mesoamerican Reef Tourism Initiative (MARTI), we are encouraging local businesses to take wastewater treatment more seriously and are aligning key stakeholders to strengthen current effluent disposal standards.

By targeting the root causes of coral reef decline, such as poor water quality, overharvesting, and destructive fishing, and creating partnerships with communities to work on these problems together, we are building sustainable solutions that will help make coral reefs more resilient to the many threats they face—and ensure their survival in a changing world.



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We are proud to report a significant increase in our conservation investments during the last fiscal year (more than 36%), thanks in large part to increased support from thousands of donors, foundations, corporations, and government agencies. We are truly grateful for your partnership and are honored to recognize some of you on the enclosed donor list.

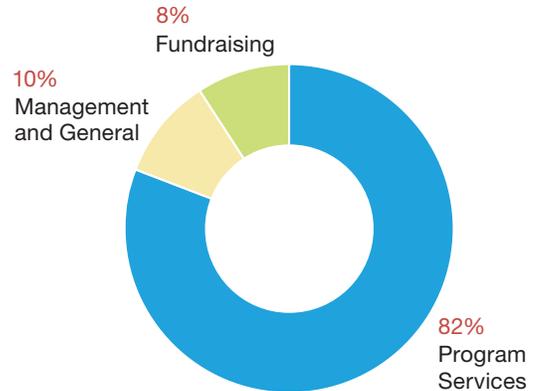
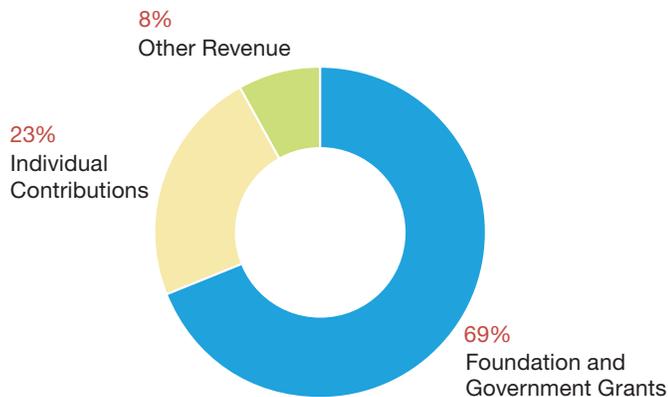
We would also like to extend a special thank you to our partners, volunteers, photographers, and former staff and board for your time and expertise over the last year. Your commitment is critical to our ability to unite communities to save coral reefs. [From all of our staff around the world: thank you, gracias, bula, mahalo, and terima kasih!](#)

Support and Revenue

Foundation and Government Grants	\$1,641,770
Individual Contributions	\$543,305
Other Revenue	\$190,916
Total Support and Revenue	\$2,375,991

Expenses

Program Services	\$1,689,287
Management and General	\$201,832
Fundraising	\$177,674
Total Expenses	\$2,068,793



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Jeffrey Weiss

*Those listed made at least four contributions in 2012.

Gifts in Honor

Gifts were made in honor of the following by those listed in italics:

Matthew Ballard
Betty Ballard

Patricia S. Bam

Anonymous

Joseph Cloherty

Sarah and Brian Freiermuth

Dr. Steve Cohen

Couponstogo.com

Connie Curtis

Hoyle Curtis

Molly Davis

Sheila Tasker

DiDi

Betty Miles

Andre Dominguez Family

Juan Dominguez

Carlos Dominguez

Juan Dominguez

Eddie Dominguez

Juan Dominguez

Tony Dominguez Family

Juan Dominguez

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Dupont's 35th Wedding Anniversary

David A. Denis

Dafne Egipciaco

Casey Beaupre

Glenn Fager's Birthday

Sue Fager and Paul Schmiechen

Anna Feiner

John Feiner

Jerry Foster

Robin Ehrlich

Sara Grimes

William Kumprey

The Guardsmen

Riccardo Gale

Happy Hanukkah to

Kim and Jack

Douglas Schamber

Shelly Henderson and

Ray Gabler

Priscilla Smith

Augustus Huston

Mark and Eva Huston

Jane's Birthday

Alice Frankel

Roger Janeway

Jon Neustadter

Don and Doris Johnson

Dale and Marcia Johnson

Kaela Johnson

Nick Earp

Longin Kaczmarzky

Cary Nelson

Ken Kendall

Sam Warren

Chloe Klangos

Jay Manyik

Gina M. Koncz

Jeffrey Koncz

Chuck Korger

John Savoy

Ginny Krone

Elizabeth Krone

A. E. Lamberts

Marcia and Mark Rowland

Larry Litzky

Juan Dominguez

Justin Long and Sandi

Gordon's Wedding

Randall Nibbe

Coral Lowrie

Kavitha Ramsamy

Liz Zeitler

Aidan Lucas's Birthday

Susie Dianne and Michael

David Barnello

Felicia H. and Song Ki Jung

Lucas Family

Douglas and Elizabeth McLearn

Michelle and Brian Radecki

Amy Ruberi

Richard Joseph Andrew

MacPherson

Manuel Alfonso

Chryssa Maloney

Janelle Nixon

Charlie Martien

Leslie Martien

Joe Megaw

James Megaw

Anna Missner and Sophie

Handloff

Jonathan Missner

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Kimberly Morrell

Bessie Ostertag Family

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Alex Renaud

Kirk Renaud

Randy and Jessica Rodgers

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Violet Fully Rosenberg

Steve Rosenberg

Kimberly Schamber and

Dr. Jack Dunitz's Wedding

Douglas Schamber

Douglas and Ruth Van der Heide

Simone Sheridan

Sarah and Brian Freierenmuth

Gabrielle Starling

Julie Starling

Marilyn Steinberg

Phillip Malter and Susan Turner

Eve Strickberger

Deborah Miller

Andy Tarczon

Laura Allen

Cooper Thorne

Laura Higgins

Molly Powers Tora

Carolyn Powers

Ms. Elizabeth Wagner

Lolly and Jay Burke

Martin Wagner

Accredited Investors, Inc.

Donna and Gale Young

Diane Snider

Seth and Tonya Zimring

Mark Zimring

Gifts in Memory

Gifts were made in memory of the following by those listed in italics:

Dr. Anthony Basher

American College of

Veterinary Surgeons

Kathleen Boldy

Valerie Botte

Tim Concannon

Marty and Jeff Dawson

Julie Fischer

Jeffrey Hicks

Robert Munger

Lori and Tim Powers

Meg Sutherland-Smith

Ciannon Basher

Philip Basher

Michael Bauer

Brad and Lauren Greider

Meg Sutherland-Smith

Larry Berg

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Pieter Dykema

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Pamela Latimer

Christi Leigh Shealy Hallberg

Miguel Favorel

Kiran Chandra Kochhar

Ajay Kochhar

Simon and Helga Korch

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Ken Krieger

Andrea Beltzner

George and Gladus Dwire

Lisa Gallo

Helen J. Krieger

John Lee and Terry Mitchell

Kathy Murphy

Katherine Sally Platzoeder

Katherine Reed

Sue and Jan Rovner

Jonathan White

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Elissa A. Manka

Mick the Wonder Dog

Natasha Yankoffski

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Eileen Babin

Betsy and Tom Bevilacqua

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Margaret Drenchko

Ida and Bob Emert

Joe Geiger

Frank D. and Monica Grimaldi

Janet Groth

Dana Jabush

Kim Joho

Joan Juba

Mercy Kuriyan

John Kush

Tom Lepionka

Leonard and Barbara Lizzi

Terri and Peter Macor

Clarence and Esther Merrell

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Mountainview Youth

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Business Department

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