



# OPEN SPACES

Volume 15, Number 2

Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy

Second Quarter, 2003



## Release of Conservation Plan Advances Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve

**R**elease of the Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP) by Rancho Palos Verdes completes a critical step toward preserving 750 acres of natural open space in Portuguese Bend. Final approval of this plan will qualify the City for state and federal open space acquisition funds critical to creation of the Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve.

In work for seven years, the plan identifies more than 1,500 acres throughout the City as habitat areas to be preserved. The 1,000 acres to be included in the Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve represent the largest contiguous parcel in the plan. The City has already preserved 260 of the acres to be included in the Preserve.

The NCCP effort was started by the City of Rancho Palos Verdes in

an effort to create a regional, multi-species conservation plan. The effort brought together the City, the California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service, property owners and the Land Conservancy to preserve and protect open space in the City critical for sustaining healthy communities of natural plants and wildlife.

The process identified several parcels of land with significant habitat. Some were city-owned, but not permanently protected from development, some were privately owned, and others had no development potential. Much of the land in the Portuguese Bend area is privately owned and, while included in the Landslide Moratorium area at present, is zoned for development.

The NCCP states “The City’s primary conservation strategy is to acquire several key privately owned parcels, dedicate selected City-owned lands, and have the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy manage this Reserve network with the assistance of the City and the Wildlife Agencies.” The PVPLC played a key role in bringing the NCCP to this point and will continue to work with the City and the agencies to make the Reserve a reality.

The NCCP document is available on the City’s web page, [www.rpv.com](http://www.rpv.com). Public hearings will take place this summer. Individuals may sign up for e-mail notifications about the NCCP on the web page.

*See article on page 5 for more information on the NCCP process.*

## Preservation of Open Spaces--

### *A Statement of Purpose*

*The Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy is a nonprofit, nonpolitical, public-benefit corporation formed to preserve undeveloped land in perpetuity as open space for historical, educational, ecological, recreational and scenic purposes.*

*A diverse group of volunteers from the South Bay makes up the PVPLC's managing Board of Directors and its adjunct advisory board. These private citizens have been drawn together by their belief that open space is crucial to the well-being of our community.*

*Land acquisition by the PVPLC is through purchase and gift. In addition to the good will engendered by gift giving, landowners and others who donate land or funds to the PVPLC may realize significant tax benefits.*

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## Open Spaces

A Newsletter Published by the  
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 Land Conservancy**  
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## We've Come A Long Way

In July of 1988, a small group of Peninsula residents submitted paperwork to establish a local nonprofit organization to preserve open space land. Modeled after the Nature Conservancy, the group echoed the belief of many in the community that open space was crucial to our quality of life. They wanted to bring a new approach to the task of preserving land. The Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy was born.

Prior to 1988, the preservation of open space and quality of life issues had led to the formation of several Peninsula cities, and development of remaining open space areas was a contentious issue in many of our communities at the time. Concerned residents fought development of areas like Ocean Trails, and City Fathers did what they believed the law allowed to preserve open space. But in the end, property owners have rights and development was inevitable.

The new organization had a different approach, one that had been used successfully by over 700 organizations throughout the nation—create a nonprofit and acquire critical areas in voluntary transactions with landowners. The organization could offer tax benefits for donations of money or land, and would focus on bringing county, state, and federal dollars as well as private funds together for acquisitions. Once acquired, land would never be developed, but would remain as it is; places where the public could enjoy the amenities natural open space brings.

Some believed the task was impossible. Land on the Peninsula was (and is) expensive. Acquisition of even small areas could cost millions.

In 1989, the group announced its first success—donation of 20 acres of developable land by the E.K. Zuckerman family. In 1993, the Conservancy led the effort to get funds for Peninsula acquisitions included in Los Angeles County Measure A. The measure passed, and over \$6 million was made available. People began to believe it was possible.

Using its portion of these funds, Rolling Hills Estates and the Conservancy acquired the land that is now the Linden H. Chandler Preserve in 1994. In 1996, the Conservancy assisted Rancho Palos Verdes in the acquisition of the 160-acre Forrestral property. In 2001, Rancho Palos Verdes used funds from a similar measure to purchase a 100-acre parcel near Portuguese Bend. Palos Verdes Estates also received funds and used these to preserve land in the Malaga Cove and City Hall areas. All of this land had development potential. Now it is preserved.

Recognizing that cities don't have the resources or expertise to manage large open space areas, and not wanting this fact to deter officials from preserving land, the Conservancy elected to assume a management role. Beginning with the Linden H. Chandler Preserve, Conservancy responsibilities now include the White Point Nature Preserve in San Pedro and the Forrestral Preserve in Rancho Palos Verdes.

In the last 15 years, the Conservancy has brought other opportunities to our community. We've provided monthly nature walks to thousands of participants, our 3<sup>rd</sup> grade education program has been provided to over 4,000 children, we've provided over 200,000 locally native plants for restoration activities throughout the Peninsula, our Fine Art Exhibition and Sale and our Picture Palos Verdes Photo Contest has helped capture and share the natural beauty of this special place.

As president of the Conservancy since its creation, I have seen and I am humbled by the good work so many people have done to bring us to where we are. Our community is truly a better place because of the dedication and talents of many volunteers, the Conservancy's staff, and the many community leaders who have joined the effort to preserve natural areas.

We've truly come a long way. One of our highest priorities 15 years ago was the creation of a Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve. With the support of our community, this goal will be achieved in the near future. And such a party we'll have...

Bill Ailor, President

## Spring Has Sprung For White Point

By Veralee Bassler

Over 300 people gathered at the annual "Spring for White Point" event at the home of Bruce Biesman-Simons and Hale Field. Highlighted by over 30 delectable dishes from San Pedro restaurants, a silent auction of art donated by 18 local artists, Jeremy Wilkinson's Great Wines International from South Africa, gorgeous Hawaiian exotic flowers from Hawaiian Resources, and Harold Greene's incredible sounds, the event raised over \$20,000 for restoration work at the White Point Nature Preserve.

We would like to thank the local businesses that contributed food donations to the May 17th fund-raising event: Babouch Moroccan Restaurant, Tasty Siam, the Whale and Ale, San Pedro Brewing Company, the San Pedro Fish Market, Vegan Terra, the Beach City Grill, A1 Imported Groceries, Think Bistro, 710 Grille, Trader Joe's, Polly Ann Bakery, Pina's, the Lighthouse Deli, Sorrento's, Fantastic Cafe', Ramona's Bakery, Little Company of Mary Hospital, The Corner Store, Jacaranda, Slavko's Harbor Poultry, Von's, Albertson's, Francesco's Italian Gourmet, La Conga Mexican Restaurant and Bristol Farms.

Corporate sponsors include: Ocean Trails Golf Club, Spirit Cruises, Papadakis Taverna, Joe and Mike Good's Automotive, Evon Mendelsohn, RN, Victoria Easterbrook, PhD, Williams Book Store, Home Depot, Yoga Bindu, Neil's, Best 1-Hour Photo, Think Bistro, Babouch Moroccan Restaurant, Peninsula Pet Clinic, Tony Baker Natural Landscaping, Hair Express-Wilmington, Nicolas Jaksic, DDS, South Shore Meat Shop, Pacific View Cleaners, Southern California Chapter of the Native Plant Society, Beisman-Simons Architecture, Bennett Landscaping, Peninsula Security, Ship 'n Mail, Re/Max Executives, Daddario Plumbing, Arthur Marshall, DDS, Marty's Village Cleaners, and Chanel Products.

"The event was a great success," said host and Conservancy Secretary Bruce Biesman-Simons. "Next year, we will host it near the White Point property so we can highlight what our community and the Conservancy have accomplished."



## Celebration Honors Ginsburgs for Stewardship Donation

Friends, family, and community members gathered on June 4 to thank Dr. Allen and Charlotte Ginsburg for their donation of \$500,000 to the Conservancy's land stewardship program.

To commemorate the Ginsburg's generosity, a bronze plaque and two stone benches were unveiled during the ceremony, which was held at the 160-acre Forrestal Preserve, at the eastern boundary of the proposed Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve.

The event drew over 80 people including local dignitaries, RPV Mayor Douglas Stern, Mayor Pro Tem Barbara Ferraro, Councilman Larry Clark, and representatives of State Assemblyman Alan Lowenthal and Senator Betty Karnette.



RPV Mayor Doug Stern, left, and PVPLC President Bill Ailor, right, join Dr. Allen and Charlotte Ginsburg at plaque dedicated in their honor.

### Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy

#### Board of Directors

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Loretta Rose

## Volunteers Promote PVPLC and Open Space at Community Events

### Palos Verdes Marathon

Runners and spectators at the 37<sup>th</sup> annual Palos Verdes Marathon had an opportunity to learn about the PVPLC as we brought our displays and information for the first time ever to this event. The marathon course traveled past the White Point Nature Preserve and alongside our proposed Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve providing spectacular scenery for the runners. Thank you to volunteers Nancy Leonard and Diana Davis who helped staff this event.

### Street Fair

The Chamber Street Fair (held in Rolling Hills Estates June 7 and 8) always provides a great opportunity for us to connect with the local community and gain new supporters. Thanks are due to several board members and also to volunteers Nancy Leonard, Diana Davis, Leslie Gold, Jeanne Morgan, Lilo Campeau, Jason Partee, Bonnie Winters, Doug Widmark, Lisa Widmark and Barb Ailor for helping out in the booth.

### Fourth of July

The Conservancy is a regular participant at the Rancho Palos Verdes July 4 City Celebration. We use these opportunities to help bring the community up to date on all of our exciting projects.



Don Crocker, well known for his enthusiasm, and Leslie Gold serve at the Conservancy's booth at Rolling Hills Estates street fair.

"We have many opportunities during the year where we represent the Conservancy at community events," said Outreach chair Deena Sheridan. "We need people who are interested in serving for a couple of hours introducing new people to our open space preservation successes and current efforts." If you'd like to share this rewarding experience, please contact Deena at (310) 541-7613.

## Art Show Raises Over \$13K For PVPLC

The Conservancy's "Open Spaces: The Peninsula and Beyond" Fine Art Exhibition and Sale netted over \$13,000 to support Conservancy projects. The exhibition featured plain aire works by artists Richard Humphrey, Steven Mirich, Daniel Pinkham, Vicki Pinkham, Kevin Prince, Tom Redfield and Amy Sidrane of the Portuguese Bend Artist Colony, and works by guest artists Bernard Fallon and David Gallup.

The event, our fifth since 1997, was held in the exhibition room of the Malaga Cove Library. Over 300 people attended our opening reception despite intermittent rain showers. "The clouds parted for a few hours on May 3," said artist and organizer Rick Humphrey. "Fortunately, those were the hours of our reception. It was a perfect day."

We want to thank the following sponsors for their contributions to the event:

- |                              |                          |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A.   | Critic's Choice Catering |
| Fastsigns                    | Malaga Bank              |
| Palos Verdes Chamber Players | Palos Verdes Florist     |
| Stonebridge Mediation Group  | Think Bistro & Cafe      |
| Vini's Party Rentals         |                          |

"We're already painting for next year's event," said Humphrey. "The rains have brought out beautiful Spring colors in the natural areas where we paint. We are pleased to be helping to preserve these lands, and these great areas to paint, forever."



## NCCP: A New Approach to Open Space Preservation<sup>+</sup>

By Allen Franz, Ph.D., and Dudley Onderdonk

When the U.S. Department of Interior “listed” the California gnatcatcher (designated it a threatened species) on March 25 of this year [1993], it initiated a striking new strategy for the protection of endangered species, an approach that is expected to have a significant impact on natural open space on the Palos Verdes Peninsula and elsewhere in Southern California.

The new approach, dubbed the Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP), had its origins in 1991 when Governor Pete Wilson attempted to streamline state endangered species protection by proactively safeguarding whole ecosystems (or at least relatively sustainable portions thereof), rather than focusing on individual species and postponing serious protective measures until after they have become critically endangered. Ideally, this program will prevent the ongoing decline of species, while at the same time simplifying and clarifying policy and practice affecting open space.

**FIRST ECOSYSTEM** California gnatcatchers live almost exclusively in coastal sage scrub (CSS), the predominant natural habitat on the Palos Verdes Peninsula, and CSS has been chosen as the first ecosystem type to be addressed by the NCCP process. While other subregions of CSS also survive southward into San Diego County, and into Baja California, the PV Peninsula is home to the last significant expanse of CSS in Los Angeles County.

Coastal sage scrub was selected as the national pilot project for implementation of ecosystem protection for two principal reasons: first, because it is home to an unusually large number of rare species—the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) has identified nearly a hundred “species of special

concern” in CSS—and estimates that there are 40 potential threatened or endangered species among that group; and, second, because CSS is one of the most rapidly disappearing habitats. At least 70% of the original extent of CSS habitat has been lost, most of it in the last few decades. Unfortunately for native species, CSS covers areas that garner top dollar for real estate development, so until recently few people paid much heed to its rapid disappearance.

Up until now, the state and federal Endangered Species Acts have been enforced on a species-by-species basis in reaction to critical declines in the population of particular species. While that was an important first step, it had several significant flaws for wildlife—plants as well as animals—and for regional planning. Wildlife warranted no systematic protection until it had reached the brink of extinction, when it was too late for some to recover.

Although some species like the grey whale, the brown pelican and the California condor seem to be recovering, at least 73 other California species have already crossed the threshold to extinction; the Palos Verdes Blue Butterfly will in all likelihood soon be added to that roster. [*Once thought to be extinct, a small population of PV blue butterflies was discovered at the Defense Fuel Supply Point in San Pedro. The PVPLC has taken an active role in revegetating preserved areas with native plants that are food for the PV Blue in hopes that the population will increase.*]

**SPECIES DECLINING** One measure of the ineffectiveness of the single-species approach is found in statistics indicating that 58% of state-listed animal species, and 75% of state listed plant species, are continuing to decline despite intense but ill-timed efforts to reverse their fate. The situation statewide has deteriorated to the point that half of California’s terrestrial biological communities are presently considered to be rare or threatened.

The single-species, reactive strategy has also imposed significant hardships on local planners and developers in heavily built areas such as coastal Southern California where they are faced with the prospect of repeated, costly and time-consuming interruptions as one species after another declines to the critical point, triggering a complex sequence of protective measures. With as many as 40 potential threatened or endangered species in CSS, continued reliance on the single-species protection strategy would be a blueprint for gridlock, preventing any coherent long-term community planning.

**NCCPPROACTIVE** How is the new approach, the NCCP, **different?** In brief, it is proactive and ecosystem-based rather than reactive and single species based. It identifies ecosystems—complex communities of species and the physical environments they occupy—and establishes minimal levels of protection to ensure the long-term sustainability of those ecosystems. The entire community of species gains protection, and component species can gain a measure of protection *before* they confront extinction.

The advantage for planners and developers stems from the fact that if an NCCP is effectively designed and implemented, then efforts to meet the needs of human communities will not be undermined by repeated interruptions as one species after another succumbs to loss of habitat and other pressures—triggering imposition of more draconian protective measures.

Just how important is the new NCCP strategy? It is the first major test of the multi-species protection strategy at the federal government level. In announcing federal protection of the California gnatcatcher in Southern California through the federally fortified coastal sage scrub NCCP, U.S. Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt insisted, “We simply must break through these environ-

<sup>+</sup>This article was first published in Open Spaces in our August 1993 issue. It is being reprinted to provide background on NCCP, a timely topic in 2003.

**Continued from page 5**

mental and economic stalemates. We have to be able to point to one community and prove they were able to...protect both a species and the local economy.”

The NCCP program for Southern California coastal sage scrub has been drawn up by a team of public and private parties, including the Federal Fish and Wildlife Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior, the California State Resources Agency and Department of Fish and Game, and an independent scientific panel headed by Dr. Dennis Murphy of Stanford University’s Center for Conservation Biology. A series of public hearings incorporated wide input into the program, principally from representatives of local governments, landowners, developers, and environmental organizations like our Land Conservancy.

**PROTECT WHAT'S LEFT** The guidelines developed by Dr. Murphy and the NCCP scientific panel call for protection of 95% of the remaining open space in each CSS subregion, with special protection for sites with better quality, less-disturbed habitat. The NCCP program temporarily blocks development of any lands that contained CSS habitat value as of March 25, 1993, until after a systematic scientific assessment has been completed and a subregional panel has identified high, intermediate, and low value habitat areas—a process which could take from one to six years. Any subsequent development will be preferentially directed to low habitat value land. The resultant Natural Community Conservation Plan will become a powerful tool for preserving remaining open space, both here on the PV Peninsula and elsewhere in Southern California.

*Allen Franz, Ph.D., is Professor of Anthropology at Marymount College and a Conservancy Board Member.*

*Dudley Onderdonk is former Director of Environmental Services for Rancho Palos Verdes and was a Board Member when the article was first published. He no longer lives in our community.*



**Our Thanks To The Corner Store**

Susan McKenna and Marisa Giuffre, both from Australia, bought **The Corner Store** three years ago and transformed it into a thriving, respected, supportive, community meeting place situated in the middle of the Palisades area of San Pedro—very near the White Point Nature Preserve.

From the beginning of our work on the White Point site, Susan and Marisa have donated gallons of great coffee and cases of water to keep our volunteers going. They also donated to our fundraising pancake breakfast last fall.

In addition, Susan has unselfishly given of her time and her incredible expertise in food preparation and presentation (she is a former food critic and caterer). Our *Spring for White Point* fundraiser was a work of art in large part due to her touch.

The coffee at The Corner Store is great. Drop by sometime if you are in the neighborhood and thank them personally for their generosity. They are at 1118 W. 37th Street, right down the street from the preserve.

**O**ur thanks to **Sean Bennett**, an ongoing PVPLC supporter, and **Bennett Landscape**, a Subsidiary of Bennett Enterprises, Inc., for the donation of a Nursery Truck that will be very useful for delivering plants to our preserve areas.



*Jim Knight presents a \$1,200 check from the Palos Verdes/South Bay Chapter of the Sierra Club to Executive Director Barbara Dye. The funds will be used to support the Portuguese Bend land acquisition effort.*

## Support PV Habitat: Plant a Black Sage

By Dan Ryan

Support the coastal sage scrub habitat and its residents by planting a black sage in your yard. The fragrant leaves and its popularity with seed-eating birds make this plant a popular choice for a bird or butterfly garden.

The scientific name, *Salvia mellifera*, describes what most know about this shrub. *Mellifera* means “honey-making” because bees utilize the plant’s nectar in the production of honey.

Black Sage is a three to four foot evergreen shrub with white to light blue flowers prevalent from late winter into summer. This sage is native to sunny dry slopes along the coast, with a range from the Bay Area to Baja. The black sage, among with other varieties of sage, is an important component of the Peninsula’s native habitat.



*Black sage.*

## Native Plants Available at PVPLC Office!

Add native habitat to your garden, using plants grown from local seed. We now have a few plants at our office (918 Silver Spur Road, Suite 108) and you can take one or two home (plant availability varies with season). If you want more, please call or come by first to place an order.

California Walnut	2 gallon	\$15
Coastal sagebrush	1 gallon	\$10
Bush sunflower	1 gallon	\$10
Bladderpod	1 gallon	\$10
Coast Goldenbush	1 gallon	\$10
Coyote bush	1 gallon	\$10
Mule Fat	1 gallon	\$10
California rose	1 gallon	\$10
Verbena	1 gallon	\$10
Toyon (Calif. holly)	1 gallon	\$10
Black sage	4” pot	\$7
Melic grass	4” pot	\$7
Needlegrass	4” pot	\$7
Dudlya virens	4” pot	\$7

*Bush sunflower.*



*Bladderpod.*



*Coastal sagebrush.*

To see these photos (and all photos in this newsletter) in color, see the pdf version of this newsletter, posted at [www.pvplc.org](http://www.pvplc.org).

## Surfrider Offers Beach Cleanups

The South Bay Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation conducts at least one Beach Cleanup a month. Our region extends from Ballona Creek south to Cabrillo Beach. We choose one stretch of beach per month and really do a thorough cleansing. All of the Beach Cleanups take place the 3rd Saturday of every month and start at 10 am unless otherwise noted. To help out at an already scheduled cleanup, all you have to do is show up **AND BRING A FRIEND**. We provide the gloves, bags, hand sanitizer and other essentials. Just dress “trashy.” For more information, see [www.surfrider.org/southbay](http://www.surfrider.org/southbay)

## Like to help? Thoughts for Giving...

The Conservancy is making a difference on the Peninsula. The lands we're preserving will be here forever; our stewardship program is restoring locally native plants to preserved natural areas; our education program is helping both adults and children learn about and appreciate unique natural features of the Peninsula. Volunteers who contribute thousands of hours and donors who provide key financial resources make all of these accomplishments and programs possible.

If you are currently or would like to donate to the Conservancy, here are some ideas that you might want to consider.

### United Way: Ongoing Support to Your Favorite Charities

Many people give to United Way by participating in campaigns through their companies. The individuals participating in the plan have the opportunity to make contributions to specific organizations approved by United Way, and this is a great way to contribute to your favorite charities on a regular basis. The Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy is a designated recipient of United Way funds. For ease of giving, our United Way account number is 18939.

### Matching Gift Programs Double Your Donation!

Your employer may offer a Matching Gifts Program that may double the contributions you make to the Land Conservancy. Please visit your human resource department for information about this worthwhile corporate giving program. If your employer is a participant, you may pick up the Matching Gifts form from your company's appropriate department. Enclose the Matching Gifts form with your next donation to the Land Conservancy. We'll take it from there!

### Planned Giving: Legacy for Future Generations

The legacy of your giving can continue by naming the conservancy as a beneficiary of your will or living trust. A bequest of cash, securities or other assets will help support conservancy programs for years to come, while providing your estate with a charitable deduction for the amount of your bequest.

If you choose to name the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy in your will or trust, please consult your financial advisor and name us as follows:

The Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) public benefit corporation, organized under the Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law of California, with principal business address of 916 Silver Spur Road #108, Rolling Hills Estates, California 90274. Our tax identification number is 33-0309722. Contact the Conservancy's office if you need assistance.

## Flying Fish, Frogs and Squirrels

By Joseph K. Slap

We humans have many talents, but we can't do what many animals can—fly without the aid of some device. There are indeed some animals that can even fly without wings or feathers.

For example, flying squirrels of North America, Asia, and Europe can fly—and they have no feathers. The largest of them, in Southeast Asia, can glide as far as 1,200 feet without wings, spreading its legs and an attached membrane to sail gently in the air. Of course their gliding distance is limited, depending on the height from which they jumped, the size of their spread and their weight.

In tropical rain forests some frogs are tree dwellers. A gliding tree frog can arch its back and pull in its stomach and spread its toes, all resulting in an aerodynamic shape that provides lift as the frog “flies” through the air.

Not all gliders live in trees. There are 43 known fish species that have fins that function as wings. Some have two fins close to the head, just behind each gill (the fish's breathing organ). Some others have four pelvic fins near the belly.

The flying fish, unlike gliding frogs and squirrels that jump from a tree, must get enough momentum to be able to leap through the water's surface and up into the air. The only one able to use its fins like wings, and flap them for flying somewhat like a flying bird, is the South America's hatchet fish. Others hold their fins in a way that lets them glide for a while, the distance depending on their fins' shape, their weight, their momentum, the wind, and other important factors such as wave height.

Off the coast of Oregon, California, and Baja California is a 6 to 18

inch-long, deep-water flying fish called the California flying fish. That fish has special features, such as a strong tail fin able to push it out of the water and return it to the air when it drops into the water, and lengthy pectoral (on its chest) fins that aid gliding. These fish often glide for as long as 30 seconds not far above the ocean surface. Its silvery body and brightly colored fins make it very visible.





PVPLC Executive Director Barbara Dye, right, accepts donation check from Sharon Nolan, left and Muriel Titzler. Dye presented a commemorative photograph of the Portuguese Bend area to Sharon and Muriel in recognition of their gift.

### A Special Gift from Long-Time Supporters

We want to thank longtime Peninsula resident, Muriel Titzler, and local realtor, Sharon Nolan for donating a portion of the sales commission on Muriel’s home to the Land Conservancy.

Muriel moved to Palos Verdes in 1953 where she and her husband, Hank, subsequently built their family home and raised their four children. Because of her daughter’s passion for riding, Muriel cofounded the Portuguese Bend Pony Club. Muriel has recently sold her home and is now moving away from the Peninsula.

Sharon Nolan has been an active member and major supporter of the PVPLC. Given her dedication and real estate expertise, Sharon was highly instrumental in the Chandler acquisition and continues to actively promote the benefits of open space to our local community.

We thank both Muriel and Sharon for their generosity and wish Muriel well in her new home.

### Long-Time Volunteer and Supporter Helen Tuttle Dies

Helen Tuttle, one of our earliest supporters, spent many an hour in the early days of the Conservancy stuffing envelopes, helping get our newsletter mailed and distributed, working at street fair booths, and helping in numerous other ways.

She, and her husband Henry, continued to volunteer over the years and she was active until just a few months ago. Helen, a Rancho Palos Verdes resident, passed away recently. We’re honored that Helen chose to remember us in her will.

We’ll miss her. We extend our sincere condolences to Henry.

### In Celebration!



Remember your Family and Friends with a gift to the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy



- Graduations
- Weddings
- Birthdays
- Anniversaries
- Achievements

Recipients and donors will be specially recognized in upcoming issues of *Open Spaces*

If you have questions, please contact Debbie DiBiase  
310-541-7613, ext. 202  
ddibiase@pvplc.org

### We would also like to acknowledge the following gifts:

- “Happy Birthday to Laura Salvay”  
*Given by Vona Dean*
- “Celebrating 50 Years of Living in Portuguese Bend”  
*Given by Norwood Teague*
- “In Honor of Bob and Joyce Daniels”  
*Given by Ron and Judy Daniels*
- “Congratulations to Megan DiBiase on her College Graduation”  
*Given by David and Debbie DiBiase*
- “In Memory of Mich Scoville”  
*Given by Joanne Scoville*
- “In Memory of Chester Kinghorn”  
*Given by Irma Remstein*
- “In Celebration of the 50th Wedding Anniversary of John and Conna Mavin”  
*Given by Ron and Leah Marinkovich*

## Education Program Concludes A Great Year

Over 1200 third-grade students in 15 local elementary schools participated in the PVPLC's 3<sup>rd</sup> grade education program this year. More than 225 parents were trained and assisted with the walks. There were 14 docents involved, and there are three more in training for next year when two long-term docents may be retiring.

The program was given in all ten elementary schools in the Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District, Peninsula Heritage School (new this year), and four San Pedro elementary schools – Park Western Science & Math Magnet, South Shores Arts Magnet, White Point, and Leland Street.

Conservancy volunteers provide four in-class sessions focusing on Peninsula plants, wildlife, geology and history followed by a nature walk, where parent-docents help identify plants and other natural features. The program was initiated in 1995, and over 4,000 students have participated.

Our goal is to expand the program into additional San Pedro schools and to add a 4th grade component, but we need additional funding to make that happen.

Education Director John Nieto commented, "This was the best year we've had in a long time. The habitat was great this year, we got raves from the parents on the walks, and the teachers were just bubbling with enthusiasm. We can't wait until next year."



## Land Stewardship Director Steve Heyn Departs for Law School



From left: Tony Baker, Executive Director Barbara Dye, Jose Gonzalez, Steve Heyn, Balthazar Gonzalez, Arthur Bonner, Assistant Director Andrea Vona, Dan Ryan (new Stewardship Director).

*Steve Heyn, the tall one, receives commemorative plaque from President Bill Ailor and Executive Director Barbara Dye.*



For the past four years, Palos Verdes Estates resident Steve Heyn has been our Land Stewardship Director. In this capacity, Steve led our habitat restoration work, developed plans for upcoming Conservancy management of natural open space areas, and was our in-house expert on plants native to the Palos Verdes Peninsula. Steve is now leaving us to pursue a law degree.

Steve says that what he found most enjoyable about his stewardship position was the variety—he worked both in the field and in the office, with responsibilities as diverse as collecting seeds from locally-native plants and developing plans for Conservancy-managed preserves.

His most significant accomplishments were the habitat restoration work at the Linden H. Chandler Preserve, the establishment of our native plant nursery, and working with the local community and the City of RPV to develop the master plan for the Forrester Preserve.

"It has been a pleasure doing such rewarding work in the community where I grew up," Steve said. "The work was challenging and it provided a unique perspective that will benefit me in my future law career."

We wish Steve the best as he expands his horizons.

## Forrestal Clean-Up: A Volunteer Shares Her Experiences

By Barbara Sattler

It's been just about a year since we started our volunteer weeding project at the Forrestal Nature Preserve. Four of us were working at our most recent weeding day. We pulled iceplant (easy), loaded it into big plastic bags, and hauled it down the hill (gets to be hard work!). By noon we had made another big clearing where there once was an iceplant carpet. It felt good to see how much we had accomplished. It was tempting to stay and get that one more plant over there—but at a certain point, one's back says "Enough!"

We could see several open patches where we had cleared iceplant and fennel over the past year from the trail as we hiked in. Good news was that the iceplant was gone, and that less and less fennel was recovering. Bad news was that some of the cleared areas had quite a bit of mustard coming up. But there were also bush sunflowers and cliff asters that now have more room to grow.

### The look of the place is changing.

The discordant pointy green fingers of iceplant are not spreading so much over everything. The dry fennel stalks were no longer marking their stands. Instead there are the soft fragrant spring leaves of the coastal sagebrush, and the pretty detail of the flowers—pink on the lemonade berry and cream-colored on the rattle pod. The tiny coyote bush leaves are fresh and green. The red paintbrush is blooming, too.

It has been fascinating to be out there working on a monthly basis, watching the subtle seasonal changes. I am impressed with how green and succulent the lemonade berry stayed all through the summer—even in such a bad drought year! It's truly amazing how well such a large plant has adapted to minimal water. On the other hand, the fennel and ice plant had accumulated so much dry dead growth that they seemed like real fire hazards.

### It's hard work, but fun.

There has been tremendous satisfaction in working on this project. It's hard work, but it's fun and whatever we accomplish is important. We can see progress in little increments, and that is its own reward. But it is also extremely frustrating. So much is left to be done. With so few of us showing up each month to do the work, all we are able to do is just a tiny portion at a time. It is disheartening to think how we might never be able to get a handle on all the weeds.

We hope Forrestal will be the cornerstone of a larger Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve. But as our visions for natural preserves get larger and larger, the need for volunteers increases. Acquisition of prop-



erty eats up the majority of funds that are earmarked for preservation. That means that restoration efforts must rely heavily on volunteers. We cannot expect success if a very small number of volunteers are expected to do more and more. The only way to success is if the number of volunteers increases.

Come on out and help next time. We'll get more done with your help.

**Forrestal volunteer days** are on the second Saturday of every month from 9 am to noon (no volunteer day in August--please call the office for the latest schedule). Meet at the end of Forrestal Drive by the Ladera Linda parking lot. Wear work clothes, sturdy shoes or boots, and sunscreen. You might want to bring your own work gloves, if you have them. Water and tools are provided and there are restrooms at Ladera Linda School.



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PVPLC Progress: Quick Updates on Major Projects
Made possible through the support of our members

Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve - We are making exciting progress toward the acquisition of Portuguese Bend. The City's Natural Communities Conservation Plan will start the public hearing process this summer...

White Point Nature Preserve - The slopes are now covered with small coastal sage scrub plants! With the community's help, more than 30,000



Elderbury, which grows 20-30 feet in height, recently planted at White Point Nature Preserve. Birds love the berries.

plants are in, with only 10,000 more to go. Trail construction should begin this year, and the fence is expected to come down within the next few months.

Chandler Preserve - Another Eagle Scout has completed a project at the preserve, planting willows in the riparian area. We greatly appreciate the help. The Advisory Board has held two meetings...

Forrestal Preserve - The Conservancy-led Steering Committee has submitted its trail proposals to the



A trail at the Forrestal Preserve.

City for approval. Once approved, work on trail improvements should begin this summer. A grant from the state Coastal Conservancy will allow us to remove non-native trees and other vegetation from the stream that flows through the quarry bowl.

George F Canyon - The Nature Center continues to welcome visitors and provide lots of exciting programs. Call 547-0862 for more information.

Lunada Canyon - Students from the PVPHS AP Environmental Science Class returned to the canyon to

weed the two acres of habitat they helped plant earlier in the spring.

Nursery and Fuel Depot - It's time to start plants growing for next spring's planting season. We will be busy collecting seed and propagating seedlings. If you are a regular hiker through the Peninsula's natural areas, you may want to join our seed watcher team to alert us when certain plants are setting seed.

Nature Walks - The summer and early fall have wonderful walks scheduled. You can check out the progress at White Point, enjoy a late afternoon walk down to Bluff Cove in PVE, and visit the tide pools of Pt. Fermin. More details are available on our web page.

Staff Changes - We are sorry to see Stewardship Director Steve Heyn leave us after 4 years, and we wish him well in his summer travels and at Southwest Law School. Dan Ryan, our current White Point Site Supervisor, will be taking over as Stewardship Director...