



OPEN SPACES

Volume 16, Number 3

Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy

Third Quarter, 2004

RPV City Council Approves NCCP

The Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP), was unanimously approved by the Rancho Palos Verdes City Council on August 31st. This multi-species conservation plan will lead to the acquisition of more than 700 acres of land and the creation of the 1500-acre Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve.

The Council also certified the Environmental Impact Report and conceptually approved the Implementing Agreement for the Plan. This is a major step toward achieving the Land Conservancy's goal of preserving Portuguese Bend. There was an enthusiastic crowd at the meeting and only a few spoke in opposition to the Plan. It's very exciting to have achieved this milestone.

The Plan will now make its way through the federal approval process. Our contact at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has informed us that he is actively working on the paperwork needed and expects to have the process completed early next year.

Our newly-assigned Project Manager from the California Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), Debbie Townsend, visited Palos Verdes in early August. The fact that the WCB (which will provide the bulk of the funding for the acquisition) has assigned one of its top senior staffers to our project is further confirmation that the state is serious about providing funding.

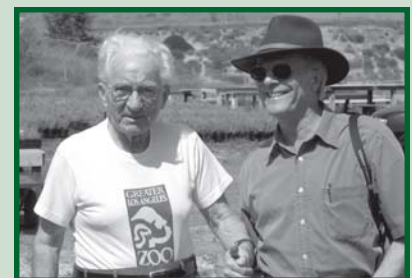


City Councilmen Tom Long and Doug Stern, Mayor Peter Gardiner, Mayor Pro Tem Larry Clark and Councilman Steve Wolowicz celebrate approval of the NCCP.

Cicorias Initiate Challenge Grant for Portuguese Bend

Michael and Virginia Cicoria have once again made a significant donation to the PVPLC as a challenge grant. They will match any donations to the Land Conservancy before the end of 2004 of \$1,000 or more up to a total of \$50,000. Their donation at the end of 2003 led to the creation of the Land Conservancy's first support group, the Mariposa Circle. Members of the Circle receive invitations to special events and regular updates on the progress of the acquisition effort, and are recognized for their major support of the Land Conservancy's work.

The Cicorias have been long-time supporters of the Land Conservancy, saying they knew that support for the preservation effort was important to the success of the enterprise. "Without the Cicorias' help," says Bill Ailor, PVPLC President, "we would not be positioned where we are today, close to finalizing the acquisition of the remaining open space in Portuguese Bend. Mike and Virginia have really made a difference to the future of the Palos Verdes Peninsula."



PVPLC President Bill Ailor thanks Mike Cicoria for his support for Portuguese Bend.



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.

Open Spaces

A Newsletter Published by the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy
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president's remarks

September 12th was a special day for the Conservancy—we thanked our many volunteers at our annual Volunteer Appreciation Picnic.

Volunteers have always played critical roles in our organization. When members of our community founded the Conservancy in 1988, we were all volunteers. As community interest grew, we needed someone to handle the increasing number of calls for information, so we hired our first part-time staff person just to answer the phone and keep records.



Volunteers Olga Jones, Mary Lopes and Sharon Nolan

While our staff has grown both to meet new responsibilities and to insure that we move aggressively on our land acquisition, land stewardship, and education efforts, our number of volunteers and the hours they contribute has also grown. In 2003, we estimate that volunteers contributed over 5,615 hours to our programs; so far in 2004, over 4,767 hours have been donated.

In September, we thanked 15 volunteers for their extraordinary support over the last year: the Biesman-Simons Family, Bob Bothamley, Dorie Boynton, Brad Davidson, Valerie Fowler, Rick Humphrey, Olga Jones, Henry Jurgens, Mary Lopes, Terry and John Miller, Sharon Nolan, Ben Smith, Beth Sohngen, and Karen Wickham.

In addition, we gave our most special volunteer award—the Silver Pin—to three individuals for their long term support: Bob Bothamley, Rick Humphrey, and Bruce Biesman-Simons (and his family). Bob has been our treasurer through the major period of growth we've had over the last four years and completely re-designed our accounting system and the computer tools we use to track our expenses. Rick is the founder and prime mover behind the *Fine Art Show and Sale* event, which began in 1998 and raised over \$26,800 this year for the Conservancy. Bruce initiated the *Spring for White Point* event in 2001 and held it in his home (with great assistance from his wife and children) until it got too large. This year, *Spring for White Point* raised over \$22,700 to support activities at the White Point Preserve.



Bob Bothamley, Rick Humphrey, PVPLC President Bill Ailor, Hale and Bruce Biesman-Simons

We have come a long way since 1988, and volunteers have made it happen. Join with me in thanking Bob, Rick, Bruce and the other volunteer awardees for their great work.



Volunteers Valerie Fowler, Karen Wickham, Henry Jurgens and Dorie Boynton

PALOS VERDES PENINSULA LAND CONSERVANCY

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 Mike Kilroy, Vice President
 Henry Jurgens, Secretary
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 Susanna Klein, Volunteer Coordinator
Education Program Director
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George F Canyon Naturalist
 Loretta Rose

W.A. Ailor

project updates

Joel Rojas and San Pedro Girl Scouts Earn Conservation Partner Awards

The Land Conservancy Board of Directors presented its highest awards for individual and community support to Joel Rojas, Director of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement for the City of Rancho Palos Verdes, and to the San Pedro Neighborhood Girl Scouts. The Conservation Partner Awards, one for an individual, one for a group, were established in 2003 to recognize those who work in the community or contribute to the Conservancy to help move its conservation goals forward.

Joel Rojas was recognized for his tireless and skillful efforts to complete the NCCP and make the preserve a reality. "It's been a pleasure to work with Joel on the NCCP," said Barbara Dye. "While the City Council has been clear with respect to their vision, it's Joel who has taken that vision and, through hard work and dedication, made it a reality."



Joel Rojas (center) accepts Conservation Partner Award from Barbara Dye and Bill Ailor.

Rojas has been with the City of RPV for 16 years. He is an enthusiastic runner, having completed ten marathons, including one on the Great Wall of China. He has enjoyed running/hiking vacations to Bali, India, Costa Rica and Wales, but he says that his favorite place to run is through the future preserve.

The award to the Girl Scouts recognizes the continued volunteer commitment that the Scouts have made to the White Point Nature Preserve. Girls from many different troops have donated time to the planting and weeding efforts that are so important in converting the White Point property to a nature preserve. In addition, they have organized and hosted Make a Differ-

ence Day on the White Point site for the past three years. Funds from this enjoyable event helped purchase the PVPLC pickup truck and wildflower seeds for the native grasslands at the preserve.

Interview with Barry Hon

PVPLC Executive Director Barbara Dye interviewed developer Barry Hon on September 10, 2004, for a video to be used in fundraising efforts. Hon owns the eastern half of the Portuguese Bend property that is critical for the formation of the Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve. We thought the following excerpts from the interview would be of interest to our members.



Q. Could you tell us a little bit about yourself?

A. My name is Barry Hon. I own 425 acres of land in Palos Verdes, the land that is being purchased to create the nature preserve. We bought this land

in 1986. We have now spent a little over \$2 million on soils tests, and we have figured out exactly where the landslide is, what causes it, and how to fix it. We have a plan now, if this purchase does not go through, to repair the landslide and build an 18-hole championship golf course on the property.

Q. What are your geologists telling you about whether it's safe to build a golf course or homes in the area at the top of the property?

A. Our geologists are sure that that area on top is safe for building houses or a golf course. If for some reason we didn't build the golf course, we would build 30 or more houses, because the factor of safety in that area is 1.5 or better, which is what is required for residential housing. Some of the areas are over a 2 safety factor.

Q. How much have you invested in this property? What's a fair return to you as a property owner?

A. We bought the land in 1986 as one purchase, so I can't say we paid a specific amount for each acre. In addition to the geology studies, we have invested more than a million dollars in environmental impact reports and studies. Until now, we've been paying taxes on land that, so far, the City has not allowed us do anything with, which we think is quite unfair. We think the actual average value per acre is much higher than \$37,000 per acre, but we are willing to accept that value as long as we can sell all 425 acres at that price.

Q. If this preservation deal falls apart, how quickly would you plan to move forward with one of these proposals?

A. If the plan to purchase the land falls apart, we are ready to apply for either the golf course or the homes. We could apply in 30 or 60 days to the City.

Q. You are willing to move forward with this transaction?

A. We agreed to this transaction for the open space about three years ago when we thought it was going to happen within the year. It's got to happen soon or we are going to withdraw our agreement and develop the property. I'm 66 years old. And I want this done before I die.

project updates

Forrestal Preserve

The Forrestal Steering Committee continues its work on the Management Plan which will go to the RPV City Council for review and approval. The Committee's most difficult task has been to agree on a trail system to recommend to the Council. The Committee has heard from numerous residents, user groups and interested parties regarding the configuration and uses of trails in the preserve. A draft trails plan is now being circulated for public comment, and a final vote of the Committee is due in October. The City Council will consider the recommendations in December.

A new sign has been posted at the Forrestal gate to inform people that the property is a nature preserve. Soon visitors will enjoy a self-guided nature walk around the quarry bowl with posts installed and a brochure written by Girl Scout Nicole Santarosa from Troop 669.



Another trail workday is scheduled for November 6th and the public is invited to come help maintain habitat and improve the trails.



White Point Nature Preserve

The PVPLC is planning for this winter's restoration efforts at White Point. The site will be re-seeded with perennial bunch grasses and planted with additional container plants in areas where the coverage is less dense. Over the past several weekends, we have had volunteer groups working to remove tumbleweed from the site. The local chapter of the California Native Plant Society has been a primary supporter of this cause, and we thank them and all our volunteers for doing such a heroic job.

We are very excited about the success and functionality of the restored coastal sage scrub habitat at the preserve, demonstrated this season by the arrival of several gnatcatchers. There are two species of gnatcatchers that occupy our region: the federally threatened California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica*) and the more common blue-gray gnatcatcher (*Polioptila caerulea*), both insect-eating songbirds that utilize coastal sage scrub habitat. Coastal sage scrub has diminished due to rapid development, and is now considered one of the most endangered habitats in the U.S. Therefore, it is no surprise that (California) gnatcatcher sightings are also increasingly rare. The California gnatcatcher lives in Southern California year-round, while the blue-gray gnatcatcher winters in the tropics. We are awaiting final verification by the Palos Verdes Audubon Society to confirm whether the gnatcatcher is indeed a California or a blue-gray. Neither species has previously been documented at White Point, and we welcome our new visitors.



Summer intern Kelly Sleeth developed a report on recommended trees at White Point Nature Preserve.

In addition to this positive news, we are pleased that the design process for the native plant demonstration garden is underway. The 15th Council District Office provided funding for the design contract, and we thank Janice Hahn for her support. The White Point Steering Committee selected Toyon Design, an award winning landscape design firm specializing in resource-efficient landscapes and ecological restoration, to provide the garden design. Their projects have won awards for design and construction excellence, water conservation, environmental education and community service. Some of the projects on their resume include the Nature Center Plant Community Gardens in Eaton Canyon Natural Area Park, the Children's Garden of the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, and the Botanical Research Center and Nursery of the Soka University of America. We look forward to the project experience this group can bring to White Point.

George F Canyon

Stop by and say hello to the new lizard and baby gopher snake at the Nature Center. The Center is hoping to extend its hours of operation and will expand its gift shop to add even more nature-themed items. It will be a great place to do some holiday shopping.

Boy Scout Troop 257 led by Eagle candidate Jim Lyons helped the Center by removing non-native vegetation around the building and near the stream crossing. The plants will be replaced by native trees and bushes that will be more attractive and will provide habitat for native wildlife.



project updates



Allison Boiles and her father review the trail map with Stewardship Director Dan Ryan

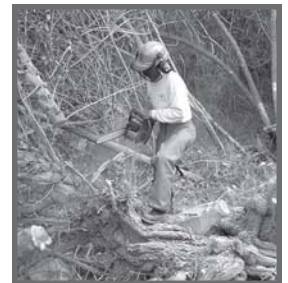
Linden H. Chandler Preserve

Look for our new Self-Guided Nature Trail at the Chandler Preserve. Designed and installed by Allison Boiles (Girl Scout Troop 669 of Torrance) for her Girl Scout Gold Award, the nature trail begins below the Little League field and extends upward and around the flat area south of Buckskin Lane. Allison wrote the copy for the leaflets and arranged to have them printed. Please come out and enjoy the results of her hard work.

Another new improvement is an interpretative sign that will soon be installed to welcome visitors to the Chandler Preserve and its trails. The sign will include an explanation of the preserve's significance as open space, its habitat value, and a history of the man for whom it was named, Linden H. Chandler.

Lunada Canyon Preserve

Work began on the restoration of the upper canyon in August. The Land Conservancy received a Wetlands Recovery Project grant to clear non-native trees from the degraded riparian area and plant native vegetation in its place. We have completed the extraction efforts, and an Eagle Scout candidate will begin planting in December. This project also includes components not directly related to restoration but to education and site amenities. Lauryn Gold of Girl Scout Troop 531 built and installed a bench that is situated on a knoll overlooking the restoration site. Lauryn's bench will provide visitors with a place to rest in the shade while birdwatching or just enjoying the serenity provided by the native wetland. Another Eagle Scout candidate will construct a trail from the end of the paved road to the center of the restored wetland. The Land Conservancy thanks the Scouts for their hard work, and all the neighbors surrounding Lunada Canyon for their patience with all of our activities at the preserve.



PVPLC Restoration Specialist Jose Gonzalez removes non-native trees from riparian area at Lunada Canyon.

DFSP Blue Butterfly Preserve and Native Plant Nursery

The nursery has been privileged to host clients of the Social Vocational Services (SVS) at our volunteer days since last May. SVS is a nonprofit organization that serves adults with developmental disabilities in both community and facility settings. As part of their daily program, the clients can choose a volunteering class as part of their curriculum. These

clients bring a lot of enthusiasm and a strong work ethic to their work at the nursery, and they have become quite proficient in seed cleaning and identifying native plants. Thanks to SVS for forging such a positive connection with the PVPLC Education Program.



Volunteers from Social Vocational Services help out at the nursery.



Members of the Board of Directors of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Chamber of Commerce recently toured the PVPLC properties, including the native plant nursery.

Education Program

With the advent of the '04-'05 school year, the Education Program will start its tenth year, bringing the Peninsula's Native American history, geology and natural history to children of the geographic Palos Verdes Peninsula. The first part of the school year will see schedules start to firm up, and by December, assignments for the 13 docents to the 17 schools will be in place. The real work will start in January and February, when actual classroom sessions begin. It is not too late to volunteer to become a classroom docent. Monthly training takes place all year long, and team teaching is very possible for first time docents. Please call the PVPLC office if you would like to volunteer.

All of our properties need volunteers for Steering Committees and volunteer days, particularly George F Canyon, Chandler, Lunada and White Point. Please call our Volunteer Coordinator Susanna Klein at 541-7613 X206 if you'd like to get involved in some way.

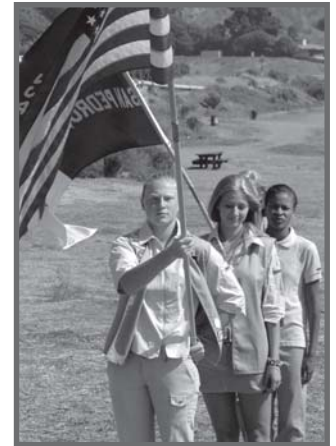
special events

Creative Picnickers Show Support for Portuguese Bend



RPV City Councilman Steve Wolowicz, State Senator Betty Karnette and RPV Mayor Pro Tem Larry Clark

Imagine a bluff top park overlooking Abalone Cove and Catalina Island! Now add live blue grass music, themed picnic tables and hundreds of picnickers. This year's Mile Long Picnic was a great success, with hobos, Sweet Potato Queens, a cowboy stove, saddles, French menus and Cal Bears decorating 40 picnic tables. RPV City Councilman Steve Wolowicz played emcee for the afternoon that included an awards presentation to our Conservation Partners and 14th Annual Photo Contest winners.



San Pedro Girl Scouts Senior Troop 724 perform flag ceremony.



Barb Ailor looks right at "home on the range".



Board Member Bruce Biesman Simons and friends enjoy their picnic with an ocean view.



Los Serenos Docents display their picnic "Menyou".

Annual Photo Contest Draws A Crowd



"Rock Outcropping Sunset" from Steven R. Thompson won the Grand Prize for 2004.

Winners of the Land Conservancy's 14th Annual Photo Contest were announced at the Mile Long Picnic on October 3rd. Steven R. Thompson of Torrance took the Grand Prize for his stunning seascape image, "Rock Outcropping Sunset". Thanks to support and some extra publicity from Mark Comon of Paul's Photo, this year's contest attracted a record number of entries, all of which were on display at the Picnic. We also thank Ted Vegvari of PV on the Net, Tom Underhill of the Peninsula News, Elaine and Will Nieves, Catalina Island Conservancy, Admiral Risty's, DSK Photo & Imaging, Cokin Filter Systems, Delkin Devices and Lowe Pro Photo Systems for contributing to the success of this event.

Winners in each category also received the following awards. Natural Landscapes: First Prize, John Harbison; Second Prize, Pat Mack; Third Prize, Mark Pribble; Honorable Mention, Michael West. Seascapes: First Prize, Mike McKinney; Second Prize, Mark Pribble; Third Prize, John Harbison. Plants & Flowers: First Prize, John R. Stinson; Second Prize, Robert J. Day; Third Prize, Dr. Gerald N. Felando; Honorable Mention, Alfred Sattler. Wildlife: First Prize, Alfred Sattler; Second Prize, Robert J. Day; Third Prize, Daniel McGoldrick; Honorable Mention, G.N. Felando. Digitally Enhanced: First Prize, Jerry Kotler; Second and Third Prize, John Blandford; Honorable Mention, Richard E. Schell. Student: First Prize, Stephen Pribble; Second Prize, Cze-ja Tam; Third Prize, Tiffany Hutchens; Honorable Mention, Scott Wilson.



Photo contest winners display their awards at the Mile Long Picnic.

membership news

Local Residents Leave Legacy for Open Space

Together, Janet and Bob McConnell and their Realtor, Sharon Nolan, donated \$3,000 in commission to the PVPLC from the sale of the McConnells' home. The McConnells are avid hikers and long time supporters of efforts to preserve open space on the Peninsula. "The McConnells have enjoyed the beauty and bounty of the open space close to their home," Sharon commented. "So it was an easy choice to give a donation to the Conservancy in their names as a parting gift and "thank you" for allowing me to represent them on the sale of their home."



Native Plant specialist Tony Baker, residents Janet and Bob McConnell, and Realtor Sharon Nolan admire their native plant garden designed by Tony.

Special Thanks!

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the many businesses and individuals who who made our 2nd annual Mile Long Picnic such a great success!



Table Decorating Contest Judges Sharon Nolan & Charlotte Ginsburg

Bob and Olga Jones; Bay Cities National Bank; Cassie Jones, Pt. Vicente Animal Clinic; RPV City Councilman Steve Wolowicz; City of Rancho Palos Verdes Staff; Charlotte Ginsburg; Sharon Nolan; The Appetizer Restaurant; Starbucks, Golden Cove; Deena Sheridan; Karen Cameron; Julie Winter; Gary and Mary Lopes; Chris and Dorian DeMaio; John Nieto; Henry Jurgens; George F Canyon Nature Center; Friends of Cabrillo Marine Aquarium; Wild Birds Unlimited; Don Christy; Rick Humphrey; Pigeon Cove Outfitters; Tony Baker; Red Onion; Assisteens; Diana Davis; Fran Wielen; Marianne Hunter; and a special thank you to all our Picnic Table Hosts.

Looking for Ways to Help?

If you shop at Albertson's, you can take advantage of their Community Partners program at no cost to you. Give them Community Partner #49000116048 when you check out and a portion of what you spend will go to fund our Education Program. Community Partner cards are also available at the PVPLC office. Stop by to pick one up or call 541-7613.

We're looking for a great shopper!

We are looking for an experienced shopper to help us organize an expanded gift shop for the George F Canyon Nature Center. The task could include buying for the shop. For the right person, this would be a fun volunteer job with flexible hours. We also need volunteers who can help staff the Nature Center and lead activities, or who have ideas for a fund-raiser for the Center.



**Vehicle donations
help our cause!**

We receive 100% of the net proceeds

For more information call: **800.203.2940**

In Celebration!

**Graduations Weddings Birthdays
Anniversaries Achievements**

Remember family & friends with a gift to The Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy. Recipients and donors will be specially recognized in upcoming issues of *Open Spaces*. For more information, please contact Debbie DiBiase at 541-7613, ext. 202.

IN CELEBRATION

Emery & Emily Reeves 50th anniversary given by Elizabeth Jane Townsend, Gloria and Howard Resin, Mr. and Mrs. Victor White, Martin and Linda Herman, George and Joan Paulikas
Janet & Bob McConnell given by Sharon Nolan
Riley Grace Crawford given by Lynn Taylor
Ben Smith given by the Gold Family
John O. Elliott celebrating his 50th birthday
Martha Bjerke's 15th wedding anniversary given by Dr. Hugh Pendleton
The Biesman-Simons Family given by David & Kimberly Stone
Jake Curran Kramer given by William & Elizabeth Kramer
Lowell Parode's birthday given by Dave & Debbie DiBiase

IN REMEMBRANCE

Shirley McGuire Martin given by William and Betty Strauss
Steve R. McKenzie given by Bridget Heller
Tina Pupa given by Jerry Pupa
Javier Venegas given by the Wagner Family
Jennifer Winkelspecht given by Brian & Lisa Winkelspecht

Fall Calendar

Nov 6

Volunteer Workday Forrestal Preserve 9am - Noon

Help remove non-native plants and repair trails in this beautiful preserve. Meet at the end of Forrestal Dr. in RPV.

Nov 7

Volunteer Workday DFSP 9am - Noon

Help us with plant propagation in our nursery at 3171 N. Gaffey St. in San Pedro.

Nov 12 & DEC 10

Senior Stroll George F Canyon 9am - 10am

Join other seniors for a delightful walk through the willows and sage.

Nov 13

Nature Walk Royal Palms Park 2pm - 4pm



Visit tide pools at low tide and learn about the history of this coastal area. Park along Paseo del Mar in San Pedro between Western and Weymouth Avenues. Meet at the park entry.

Nov 21

Volunteer Workday White Point Preserve 9am - Noon

Help us plant native shrubs with help from the Waseda University Alumni Association.

Nov 25 & DEC 30

Bird Walks George F Canyon 5pm - 6pm

Watch birds coming in to roost with naturalist Loretta Rose. We supply binoculars.

Join us for these exciting events, nature walks and volunteer opportunities! For more information, visit our website at www.pvplc.org or contact Volunteer Coordinator Susanna Klein at 541-7613, ext. 206, or by e-mail at sklein@pvplc.org.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY ON NOV 13

Join the Girl Scouts for Breakfast at the White Point Nature Preserve

Enjoy a gourmet pancake breakfast with the San Pedro Neighborhood Girl Scouts from 8:00 am until 11:00am at their 5th Annual Make a Difference Day Pancake Recognition Breakfast at White Point Nature Preserve in San Pedro. Activities also include a silent auction, trail hike, scavenger hunt and booths from many environmental and nature groups. Proceeds from the silent auction will go to the White Point Nature Preserve in memory of Sheila Epperhart, teacher, scout leader, and youth mentor. Tickets ordered in advance are \$5.00 each or \$10.00 at the door. Order tickets by e-mail at Lafree13@aol.com or call the PVPLC office at 541-7613 X204.

Nov 26 & DEC 26

Night Hikes George F Canyon 7pm - 8pm

Walk to the top of the canyon for a fantastic city lights view. Bring your flashlight. \$5/person donation requested. Reservations required, call 547-0862.

DEC 4

Volunteer Workday Lunada Canyon 9am - Noon

Help us restore this unique wetland area.

DEC 4

Nature Walk George F Canyon 10am - 11am

Learn fascinating facts about the local plant and animal communities. \$3/person donation requested.

DEC 5

Volunteer Workday DFSP 9am - Noon

Help us with plant propagation in our nursery at 3171 N. Gaffey St. in San Pedro.

DEC 11

Nature Walk Ocean Front Estates Bluff Top Walk 9am-10am



Take an easy stroll along bluff edge trails and admire newly restored habitat areas. Park on the north end of Calle Entrado off Palos Verdes Dr. West near Hawthorne Blvd.

JAN 8

Nature Walk Switchback Trail 2pm - 4:30pm



A strenuous walk where you'll enjoy spectacular views and see the infamous 18th hole. Park in the public lot at the bottom of LaRotonda Dr. off of Palos Verdes Dr. South.



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NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION

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