

NEW PROJECT PROMOTES OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Learning through Action, an innovative education project developed by the Land Conservancy for elementary students, recently held the first in a series of field work study trips. The program incorporates an interactive learning curriculum with current classroom studies based on California science standard lesson plans. Focusing on kindergarten through grade five, the field trip activities give students the ability to explore science through their own field investigations.



Some tools the students used on their field trip.

identify and sort items, such as rocks, minerals and preserved insects into their proper categories. They were taken on a “mystery hike,” in which leaders pulled unknown objects from a bag and asked students to identify the properties of each object. Such properties included traits like fuzzy, squishy, hard, rough or smooth. They were then instructed to explore the trail themselves and find natural objects which had the same properties.

For second and third grade, students took on the role of detectives and investigated the question,

“How can we use science to help us investigate and explore the natural world?”

Students were guided through three different activity stations, each building on the last, slowly increasing in complexity.

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The first student field trips took place at Linden H. Chandler Preserve in October. For Kindergarten through 1st grade, the guiding question was,

“What makes up the natural world?”

Students were asked to investigate three components of a habitat; animals, plants and rocks/minerals. The main focus was to identify and compare the properties of the different objects encountered on the preserve.

Through visual aids, tools and even scientific specimens, students were asked to



Kids making a compass.

Wildflower Watch!

Toyon's (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) are in bloom!



- This beautiful perennial shrub is native to the Peninsula and is part of the coastal sage scrub habitat.
- The fruit is consumed by birds, coyotes and other mammals.
- In the early summer it produces small white flowers.
- In fall and winter it produces bright red and berry-like fruit in large quantities.

NEWS ITEMS

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A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As I welcome this New Year, I find great joy in reflecting on the Land Conservancy's many accomplishments in 2008. Thanks to the generosity of you, our donors, and the participation of numerous public and private partners, we have continued to improve the conservation values of the land we preserve, touched the lives of the next generation by engaging them in environmental education, continued our monthly Nature Walks, and provided opportunities to the public to assist with land stewardship through our outdoor volunteer projects.

I also recognize that due to the current economic climate, our members and supporters might have some questions about how the economy and the State budget impasse may impact the work of the Land Conservancy. In terms of the general economy, we do recognize this downturn and its potential negative impact on revenue to our organization. We are responding by examining all areas where additional efficiencies can be realized and also employing adaptive management solutions such as utilizing more volunteers to continue to accomplish our mission.

From the State budget perspective, this crisis was brought to a head when the State Treasurer suspended nearly \$4 billion dollars worth of bond projects that were already underway. This has forced the Land Conservancy to temporarily halt the bond-funded habitat restoration projects at George F Canyon, the Fishing Access area, and at MacCarrell's Canyon. The building rehabilitation project at White Point Nature Preserve is also affected. As soon as the current budget impasse is resolved, work on these projects will be resumed.

Even in this challenging economic climate, our support is strong, thanks to our diversified supporters and project partners. Results of the recent election show that open space preservation remains a priority across the nation, where voters approved sixty-two referendums to acquire or otherwise protect open space.

The Land Conservancy is well positioned to continue the work of our mission and face this challenging economic environment. With your support we will continue to preserve and maintain the open space in this special place that we call home.



Andrea Vona

Andrea Vona
Executive Director

Update on Filiorum Acquisition

The City of RPV's long-standing moratorium on new construction in the Portuguese Bend landslide area has been put into question because of a recent court decision. This decision increases the urgency of completing the planned acquisition of the Filiorum properties. The 218 acres we expect to acquire, is a significant part of the last remaining large block of open space remaining on the Peninsula and is critical for establishing a wildlife corridor and reopening closed trails.

A state requested appraisal for Upper Filiorum has been completed. We are looking to secure grant funding approval in May 2009 from the Wildlife Conservation Board.

If you have questions or would like to make a donation or a pledge toward the acquisition please contact Bob Ford at 310-541-7613, X 202. You may also donate online at www.pvplc.org.

OPEN SPACE PRICELESS FOR LOCAL ARTISTS

Landscape paintings are romantic expressions of the freedom and beauty of natural settings. Inspired by their passion for open space and their childhood memories of the stunning coastal Palos Verdes Peninsula, a group of local artists came together in 1998 to form the Portuguese Bend Artist Colony (PBAC).

The artists, Richard Humphrey, Stephen Mirich, Daniel and Vicki Pinkham, Kevin Prince, Thomas Redfield and Amy Sidrane, view the open space on the Peninsula as a priceless asset.

They feel that they have a natural affinity for working with the Land Conservancy because they want to create a record of the wild beauty of the Peninsula through their art.

“Preserving the open spaces of the Palos Verdes Peninsula is invaluable to our community,” Rick Humphrey explained. “It is a lasting gift that we can pass along to our children and it is our hope that the paintings we have created will continue to inspire and herald that message for generations to come.”

Jean Stern, Executive Director of the Irvine Museum describes the PBAC’s work as truly significant, and paintings now fill the collections of many local art collectors like Jim and Carolyn Cheney. Jim, a past Land Conservancy board member, felt that these paintings drew him closer to the land itself, and the realization of how vulnerable the area is to change led him to support and join the Land Conservancy.

For Dan Pinkham, this kind of response is exactly the kind of impact he would like the artists to have. “Our Colony’s paintings record the physical beauty of our peninsula while also revealing the opportunities to experience the qualities that make us human.” He continued, “Open space and the arts come together to provide the fertile ground for nurturing this appreciation of life, for generations to come.”

We are fortunate to have these artists as members of our community and the Conservancy appreciates the many ways that the artists support the Land Conservancy.

Original oil paintings by the Portuguese Bend Artist Colony members will be featured at the PVPLC Fine Art Exhibition and Sale in 2009 at Terranea Resort. Watch for details and dates in the next newsletter or visit www.pvplc.org.

BEAUTIFUL NOTE CARDS NOW AVAILABLE

A new collection of note cards featuring some of the artists’ finest paintings are now available from the Land Conservancy. Each set of 12 paintings is reproduced on high quality card stock. You may view and purchase cards at www.pvplc.org. They are priced at \$20.00 a set and \$2.00 for postage. You can also purchase directly at the Land Conservancy office.



Portuguese Bend Artist Colony member Rick Humphrey painting out in the open space.

YOUR GIFT IS IMPORTANT

Your donation will be put to good work by the Conservancy on a variety of programs. There are many ways to donate to the Land Conservancy:

- Join the *Mariposa Circle* by giving \$1,000 or more annually, with special thank-you events and benefits.
- Join the *Legacy Circle* by giving \$5,000 or more for three years, with signature thank-you events, additional benefits and permanent recognition at the Del Cerro site.
- We also offer many planned giving options.

For more information, call Bob Ford at 310.541.7613 or e-mail rford@pvplc.org.

The Land Conservancy and REI Collaborate

Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI) has joined the Land Conservancy for the past several years on increasingly successful volunteer projects. Scott Wood, REI Outreach Specialist says, "REI Manhattan Beach has been proud to sponsor projects with the Land Conservancy. Our members and employees are like-minded individuals who not only love outdoor recreation, but also understand the importance of stewardship in the community."

Not only does REI sponsor outdoor volunteer work days, but they have also recently provided us with two new grants. The first was awarded in July 2007 for \$5,000 to create our Team Leader Program where volunteers help lead projects such as trail maintenance, habitat restoration and plant propagation. The grant provides for training new leaders, purchasing tools, materials to build a tool shed, a canopy for workdays and much more.

In August 2008, REI awarded us a \$10,000 grant to fund our Volunteer Trail Crew Program. These funds provide tools, supplies and training materials that will allow participants the ability to improve and maintain nearly 42 miles of recreational trails in our preserves.

On February 21st, REI will sponsor a Volunteer Work Day at Portuguese Bend Reserve. They will provide breakfast items, juice and coffee, information on REI events and programs and store coupons. Scott recalls what happened on a recent volunteer day, "There was a rock that must have weighed a ton. With a bit of teamwork, it was dug up and rolled into place to form the base of a rock staircase. Without the strength of these volunteer efforts, we might still be waiting for a crane!" To get more information and sign up to volunteer with the Land Conservancy and REI, call Leslie Buena at 310.541.7613 X 213.



Scott Wood, REI Outreach Specialist and Lynne Day, REI employee at PVPLC's work day June 7th, celebrating National Trails Day.

NEW: A Walk with Van Gogh

The Land Conservancy is beginning an exciting collaboration with Art to Grow On Children's Art Center introducing a new art-based nature walk in George F Canyon Preserve centered around Vincent Van Gogh's "Sunflowers."



Vincent Van Gogh's "Sunflowers" painting.

Creativity, inspiration and fun are the focus of this event. The first "Van Gogh Nature Walk" will be held Saturday, March 21st from 10 am - 12 pm. Kristina Ellis, Director of Education at the Land Conservancy, believes the "combination of nature and art will be a valuable learning tool for children and create opportunities to provide students with a sense of inspiration and wonder for our natural world."

The first hour will be a nature hike with an experienced naturalist, then a break for refreshments. In the second hour, families will take part in an art project developed by Art to Grow On, an organization that encourages artistic self-expression and gives children the opportunity to realize their own extraordinary potential as thinkers and creative human beings. "Each child has a gift in the way they view the world, and our program allows curiosity, discovery and the imagination to unfold" says Lauren Perelmuter, Owner and Founder of Art to Grow On.

Parents and grandparents, please bring the kids and spend an enriching and enjoyable morning on the preserve at this special event for Conservancy members, families and friends. The cost is \$25 per family. For registration call Christen Kitner at 310.541.7613 X 201.

Growing up on the Peninsula- *by Loren Derooy*

I cannot imagine what it would be like to raise kids in a community without local access to natural, open space for children to explore. After all, most of my generation grew up in neighborhoods where such wild areas were just around the corner. It was in these patches of woods, fields and streams that we played and discovered things about nature and fostered an appreciation for wildlife conservation. Unfortunately, as communities have become overdeveloped, many kids now must travel hours to a state or national park if they want to experience nature. When I think about the interests and vocations that my grown children chose to pursue, I found obvious connections to their early childhood experiences on the Land Conservancy's preserves.

I won't pretend an altruistic motivation in introducing my children to the Peninsula's open space areas; it was really more of a practical means for me to survive the terrible twos and beyond. As a young mother, I found long walks down George F Canyon an exceedingly more pleasant way to occupy two very active little boys, than say, spending an afternoon at Chuck E. Cheese's. When my boys were young, they focused their attention on the small things, insects mostly, like harlequin bugs and swallowtail caterpillars. For my older son, Doug, his early interest in entomology led to a lifelong passion for fly-fishing even spending a summer to become a Certified Fly-Fishing Guide. On the other hand, my younger son, Bryant, liked photographing the things he found interesting in nature and this also grew into a lifelong passion of his. Bryant received an international scholarship and awards from the North American Nature Photography Association for his photography and also participated in photographic expeditions with National Geographic.



Doug and Bryant hiking in the Bugaboo Mountains in Canada.

As the boys grew up they both remained actively involved in Land Conservancy activities. In high school, Doug was a summer intern for the Land Conservancy and worked on creating a catalogue system for the native seed collection at the nursery. Bryant did volunteer work at the White Point Nature Preserve and submitted his photographs to the Land Conservancy's photo contest. As to the impact these experiences have had on my boys, just consider what they chose to study in college. Doug graduated from Berkeley last June with a major in Conservation and Resource Studies with an emphasis in Energy and Policy and is currently working in San Francisco as an intern for the State of California Public Utilities Commission. Bryant is in his second year at the

University of British Columbia (UBC) in Vancouver, Canada studying Fine Art and Natural Resource Conservation and is hoping to combine these two areas of interest in the Global Studies Program offered at UBC.

Both boys also grew up hiking and mountain-biking in the preserves and they continue to enthusiastically enjoy these and other outdoor activities. Doug completed an Outdoor/Wilderness Leadership program and competed nationally in both cross-country and downhill for the Cal Cycling Team, while Bryant enjoys mountaineering and rock climbing in the Canadian Rockies. We are an outdoor family and my husband and I are happy that the Land Conservancy has helped our children to love and respect the environment and pursue outdoor activities that allow them to enjoy the wonders of the natural world.

New Outdoor Education *Continued from page 1*

Beginning with a single electrical current, students turned an ordinary metal screw into a simple magnet by using copper wire and a battery. Following that, they made their own rotating compass points with small bar magnets and popsicle sticks, exploring the earth's own electromagnetic field. Their knowledge was put to the test when they went on a hike and were asked to apply the use of earth's electromagnetic force by using a real compass to find their way through "the wilderness."

After being taught how to take simple readings, each group set out on a path marked with each coordinate for the students to find. They were only given one coordinate at a time and were not able to continue before finding the next coordinate. Despite a long day in the searing heat and inevitable post-lunch slow-down, students were enthusiastic and energetic throughout the day, racing to find each new coordinate along the trails. We are happy to say each student group was successful and everyone found their way back to the school bus that day!

4th and 5th grade students will begin their field trips in February, exploring Earth Science at Forrestal and White Point Nature Preserves.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

BECOME A TEAM LEADER

Join the Land Conservancy's 13 Team Leaders from Peninsula and Palos Verdes High Schools. Team Leaders help with projects on volunteer workdays, ensuring that all volunteers receive adequate instruction and tools to complete their projects. Leslie Buena, who is in charge of the Team Leaders and Outdoor Volunteer Workdays says, "The positive energy that my Team Leaders bring help to create an enjoyable working environment and their enthusiasm is contagious."



Team Leaders Laura Botzong and Michael Hester enjoying an Outdoor Volunteer Day at Agua Amarga Reserve.

Team Leaders have a fun outdoor volunteer opportunity that helps develop leadership skills, and the Land Conservancy to complete restoration projects more quickly and cost-effectively. Jason Liehr, Team Leader since February 2007 and a senior at Palos Verdes High says, "It feels really good to give back to my local community and even more so, knowing that our work benefits the environment." He went on to say, "Each year more students become aware of the program, get involved and show their appreciation for the land they live on."

The Land Conservancy has Team Leader positions available for students and adults; if you are interested, please contact Leslie Buena at 310.541.7613 X 213.

KEEPERS NEEDED

Help the Land Conservancy successfully manage the Alta Vicente Reserve by becoming a volunteer with KEEPERS (Keeping an Extra Eye on the Preserve for Environmental Review and Stewardship). This program requires a once a month visit to the preserve, and a commitment for one year. No experience necessary and training is provided. For more information on the KEEPERS Program, please contact Leslie Buena at Lbuena@pvplc.org or 310.541.7613 x 213.

ALCOA VOLUNTEER DAY

Over 80 employees and families from the Torrance and Carson Alcoa plants volunteered on October 18th at the White Point Nature Preserve. They planted 600 native shrubs, mulched, repaired trails and helped construct a new kiosk. The kiosk will house educational and informational bulletins for the public, and act as a welcome center to the new garden and Nature Center. Thank you to Alcoa for your generous support of the Land Conservancy's efforts.



The new kiosk Alcoa employees built.



Alcoa employees working hard planting native plants and repairing a trail.

In Honor

Your remembrance and celebration gifts to PVPLC create a lasting tribute to friends and loved ones by helping to protect the beauty and character of the Palos Verdes Peninsula. If you would like to make a donation in remembrance or celebration please call Mary Lopes, Donor Relations, at 310.541.7613 X 206.

We Remember

- Bernice Augenbraun** given by Marilyn Montenegro
- Diana Berman** given by David Berman
- Rosanne Chapman** given by Martine Tocco
- David Clum** given by Marie Clum
- Ed Dunford** given by George and Barbara Gleghorn
- Margaret Fraser** given by David and Ann Hall
- Joanne Meagher** given by Joseph and Virginia Williams
- Bill Millar** given by Rosellen Trunnell
- Dave Scarbrough** given by George and Barbara Gleghorn
- Mel Tierney** given by Irene Hasserjian
- William Tollife** given by George and Barbara Gleghorn

We Celebrate

- Bob Daniels 80th Birthday** given by The Mitchells and The Carrolls
- Bob and Joyce Daniels** given by Ron and Judy Daniels
- Kathy and Bob Ford** given by Jean and Tim Parsons
- Leland Wayne Howard** given by Anthony and Lettie Vona

UPDATES

FIRE IN RPV

In November, a small fire was started when a crow flew into a power pole near the Alta Vicente Reserve adjacent to Rancho Palos Verdes City Hall. County Fire crews were on the scene and contained it very quickly, with no structural damage



Photo: Tom Underhill Peninsula News.

reported. Many of the fires on the Peninsula that have occurred in recent years have been traced back to incidents involving birds. In order to combat the problem, Southern California Edison will be installing a hawk perch on the power pole, as well as on one behind the City Hall Administration Building that is used by red tails and kestrels. Edison also proposed to install similar perches and nesting platforms on poles that are favored by raptors in other open space areas around the Peninsula.



OPEN SPACES

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George F Canyon Nature Center

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DEMONSTRATION GARDEN INSTALLED

The George F Canyon Demonstration Garden has been completed! The plants are newly installed, so they are still small, but should reach maturity in 1-3 years. There are native grasses, shrubs and trees throughout the garden. Interpretive signage will be installed soon. Please take a look and stroll through the beautiful garden. George F Canyon is located at the intersection of Palos Verdes Drive North and Palos Verdes Drive East. The garden can be accessed at the upper gravel parking lot off of Palos Verdes Drive East.



Newly installed steps and habitat at George F Canyon.

**GEORGE F
CANYON EVENTS**

FEBRUARY 7

MARCH 7

APRIL 4

Bird Walk
George F Canyon
9AM

Meet naturalist Loretta Rose at the Nature Center. We supply binoculars.

FEBRUARY 7

MARCH 7

APRIL 4

Hike at
George F Canyon
1PM- 3PM

Join our expert guide for a lovely hike. \$3 per person will bring you into a wonderful world of discovery. Please call 310.547.0862 for more information.

FEBRUARY 7

MARCH 13

APRIL 10

Night Hike
George F Canyon
Time to be arranged
This hike will bring you to the top of the canyon for a fantastic view of the city lights below. Limited to 20 people. Call 310.547.0862 for reservations.



WINTER/SPRING CALENDAR

Join us for these exciting events and volunteer opportunities! Reservations are recommended for all Volunteer Workdays and they are required for workdays at the Nursery.

For information and reservations, call Christen Kitner at 310.541.7613 X 201. Directions and information about our nature walks can be found at www.pvplc.org/naturewalks.

FEBRUARY 7

Volunteer Workday
Nursery
9AM - 12PM
Restore PV blue butterfly habitat.

FEBRUARY 14

Nature Walk
Madrona Marsh
9AM - 11AM
Come visit this ecological jewel in the middle of Torrance.

FEBRUARY 21

Volunteer Workday
Portuguese
Bend Reserve
9AM - 12PM
Help with trail maintenance.
Sponsored by REI.

FEBRUARY 28

Team Leader Training
9AM - 3PM
See story on pg. 6

MARCH 2

PVPLC Presentation at the local chapter of The California Native Plant Society
South Coast Botanic Garden
7:30 PM

PVPLC will be presenting our current projects to the CNPS. This is open to everyone and is free. Call for more information.

MARCH 7

Volunteer Workday
Three Sisters Reserve
9AM - 12PM
Help with trail maintenance.

MARCH 14

Team Leader Training
9AM - 3PM
See story on pg. 6

MARCH 14

Nature Walk
Malaga Dunes
1PM- 3PM

Explore the ancient sand dune inland from Malaga Cove Plaza. See wild roses and other rare wildflowers unique to this area.

MARCH 21

Volunteer Workday
Nursery
9AM - 12PM
Transplant native seedlings at the Nursery.

MARCH 21

Nature Walk with Van Gogh
George F Canyon
10AM - 12PM
Allow your family to explore nature and their creative side! Call 310.541.7613 X201 for more information.

MARCH 28

Volunteer Workday
Portuguese
Bend Reserve
9AM - 12PM
Help with trail maintenance.



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