



# Ojai Valley Green Coalition

Monthly E-News

February 2010

## This Month's Community Presentation: *Our Seeds: Seeds Blong Yumi*, a Film from the Seed Savers Network

Last month, courtesy of our sponsor, the health foods company Nutiva, we brought you the film *Fresh*. This month, on February 27, at 4:30 p.m. at the Ojai Theatre, under the same Nutiva sponsorship, the Coalition will be showing *Our Seeds: Seeds Blong Yumi*, a 57-minute film in praise of traditional food plants and the people who grow them. A community seed exchange will follow the film, so bring any spare seeds to trade.

*Our Seeds*, originally made for free distribution to Pacific audiences, addresses the problems of globalized food based on hybrids that require pesticides and synthetic fertilizers, and shows how individuals and small groups have solved these problems. It's a celebration of empiric seed saving practices and diverse farming cultures around the world, and of the seed keepers who stand at the source of humanity's diverse food heritage. Because it was made for the people of the Pacific, the DVD is being hand-delivered there: into villages by canoe and up narrow walking tracks, passed from family to family.


The film is a David and Goliath story in which resilience and persuasive logic triumph over the seemingly invincible forces that control the production of most of the world's food. To make it, Michel Fanton and Jude Fanton of the [Seed Savers Foundation](http://www.seedsavers.net), joined occasionally by a local soundperson, took 160

hours of footage in many countries of Europe, Asia, and Oceania.

*Our Seeds* features Pacific islanders as they face great challenges to their way of life, their culture, and their traditional cultivation systems. They fall into the same traps as others, replacing innumerable varieties of root staples with modern hybrids that require pesticides and chemical fertilizers, importing low-quality foods such as white rice, cookies, and noodles, and thereby risking the loss of their own food crops. The film seeks to reverse this trend. Its rich sound track features mostly indigenous music recorded in the making of the film.

Intended to encourage the further development of local seed saving groups and seed exchanges, the

film explores the relationship between traditional biodiversity and traditional culture in wide-ranging locations. There are interviews with farmers and expert commentators as well as documented seed saving, farming methods, and cultural activities in both First World and tribal locations. According to the filmmakers, when it comes to traditional plant varieties, peasants in such advanced countries as France, Italy, Spain, and Taiwan share the same sentiments as indigenous Pacific farmers.

The Seed Savers Foundation affirms that it will continue telling the stories of the lives of traditional seed guardians and their importance to the world. Clips from *Our Seeds* can be found at [youtube.com/seedsavers](http://youtube.com/seedsavers) and [www.seedsavers.net](http://www.seedsavers.net). 



## Two Green Thumbs Up!

Two thumbs up for Luis Villanueva at The Shoe Doctor on El Roblar in Meiners Oaks. In addition to operating a shoe repair business, The Shoe Doctor is now the go-to place in the valley for nontoxic dry cleaning. Your dry-cleaned items come back to you fresh and clean, without the usual smell of toxic chemicals.

Bobbie Boschan, a super volunteer at the Ojai Valley Museum, earns two more thumbs up for procuring a Smart Car at the last minute for the Green Coalition's "Go Green, Ojai!" exhibit. The gleaming white car has added an attractive and crowd-pleasing feature to a great project. Way to go, Bobbie!

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Ellen Hall, President
- Dale Hanson, Secretary
- Caryn Bosson, Treasurer
- Deborah Pendrey, Executive Director
- Sue Broidy, Director
- Michael Rubalcava, Director
- Tyler Suchman, Director
- Sabrina Venskus, Director
- David White, Director
- Ken Wright, Director

### NONVOTING MEMBERS:

- Cindy Cante, Representative of Supervisor Steve Bennett's Office
- Steve Olson, Representative of the City of Ojai

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This e-newsletter is produced by the Communications and Publicity Committee



## We Welcome These Three New Members of Our Board of Directors

Moving toward sustainability in the Ojai Valley requires, among other things, an awareness of the changing situation, with the ability to be responsive and flexible as things evolve. Demonstrating these qualities, the Board of Directors of the Ojai Valley Green Coalition is welcoming three new members. Each brings new skills and expertise to help guide our ever-evolving organization.



**Michael Rubalcava** is a cameraman and editor. At the age of 20 he formed a film-production company that did projects for such companies as Disney, DreamWorks, and National Geographic. After selling his company, he worked as a freelance cameraman and then founded a second company, which eventually merged with another group specializing in new media, websites, Internet content, multimedia CDs, and DVDs. In 2001 Michael returned to freelance production service work, specializing in post-production. He is part of a freelance team that has produced numerous award-winning projects.



**Sabrina Venskus** is the principle of Venskus & Associates, P.C., a public-interest law firm. Her areas of practice include environmental law, land use and zoning, natural resources law, tenant rights, historic preservation, native burial rights, energy regulation, and government disclosure. She is a member of the Environmental Law Section of the California Bar Association, the Ventura County Bar Association, and the Executive Committee for the Los Angeles County Bar Association's Environmental Law Section. She has served as chair for various land use and planning boards, including those for the Venice Neighborhood Council, the Westchester/Playa del Rey Neighborhood Council, and the Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce.



**David White** has a B.S. in Biological Sciences and Ph.D. in Medicine from the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. He has been involved in numerous environmental groups in Ventura County for the past twenty years, including Keep the Sespe Wild and the Center for Regenerative Agriculture. Dave has also worked as the science teacher at Happy Valley School, and he is currently the garden coordinator for Food for Thought's Ojai Healthy Schools program.

We welcome these outstanding and enthusiastic new directors! 🌱



**ZERO PAY**

**LOTS OF GOOD KARMA**

**NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED**

**WRITERS: PRESS RELEASES, PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS, CALENDAR NOTICES. 2-3 HRS PER MONTH.**

**WEBSITE MAINTENANCE: ONLINE UPDATES. 30-60 MINUTES PER WEEK.**

**CONSTANT CONTACT: GRAPHIC LAYOUT OF EMAIL NOTICES. 3-5 HRS PER MONTH.**

# Thinking in Green

Deborah Pendrey  
OVGC Executive Director



## On Resolving vs. Resigning

As I reflected on my time last year with the Green Coalition, and on what may come this year, a really odd thing happened. I recalled a Wendell Berry poem that I learned for a speech class in junior college some 25 years ago. Its beauty reflects on its author, who, for me, is of historical significance.

It says to me, let us not shy away from the effort of learning skills of times past in a new way for this new century. Let's not resign ourselves to the idea of giving stuff up, being inconvenienced, or having to sacrifice, but rather resolve to create new paradigms—ways of being and doing that reverse the ravages of our time. Let's hold ourselves, our corporations, and our governments to a higher standard, and rewrite a history from which a new future can come.

Hey, if we don't rewrite it, Mother Earth will do it for us, and that probably won't bode well for the human race. Either way, I hope you enjoy this exquisite poem in the now . . . a gift from Wendell Berry to the world.

### Horses

When I was a boy here,  
traveling the fields for pleasure,  
the farms were worked with teams.  
As late as then a teamster  
was thought an accomplished man,  
his art an essential discipline.  
A boy learned it by delight  
as he learned to use  
his body, following the example  
of men. The reins of a team  
were put into my hands  
when I thought the work was play.  
And in the corrective gaze  
of men now dead I learned  
to flesh my will in power  
great enough to kill me  
should I let it turn.  
I learned the other tongue  
by which men spoke to beasts  
—all its terms and tones.  
And by the time I learned,  
new ways had changed the time.

The tractors came. The horses stood in the fields, keepsakes, grew old, and died. Or were sold as dogmeat. Our minds received the revolution of engines, our will stretched toward the numb endurance of metal. And that old speech by which we magnified our flesh in other flesh fell dead in our mouths. The songs of the world died in our ears as we went within the uproar of the long syllable of the motors. Our intent entered the world as combustion. Like our travels, our workdays burned upon the world, lifting its inwards up in fire. Veiled in that power our minds gave up the endless cycle of growth and decay and took the unreturning way, the breathless distance of iron.

But that work, empowered by burning the world's body, showed us finally the world's limits and our own. We had then the life of a candle, no longer the ever-returning song among the grassblades and the leaves.

Did I never forget?  
Or did I, after years,  
remember? To hear that song again, though brokenly in the distances of memory, is coming home. I came to a farm, some of it unreachable by machines, as some of the world will always be. And so I came to a team, a pair of mares—sorrels, with white tails and manes, beautiful—to keep my sloping fields. Going behind them, the reins I fight over their backs as they stepped their long strides, revived again on my tongue the cries of dead men in the living fields. Now every move answers what is still. This work of love rhymes living and dead. A dance is what this plodding is. A song, whatever is said.

## Seen It Yet? Last Two Weeks for “Go Green, Ojai!”

February 14 will be the last day of the Coalition's exhibit at the Ojai Valley Museum, so if you haven't yet gotten to see it, don't delay.

Since opening last December 13 with a well-attended reception, the “Go Green, Ojai!” display has been entertaining and educating adults and children alike. From the Ventura River watershed to food and agriculture, and from alternative transportation to a breakaway green home, the exhibit has something for everyone who wants to become more eco-literate about our valley and about sustainability in general.



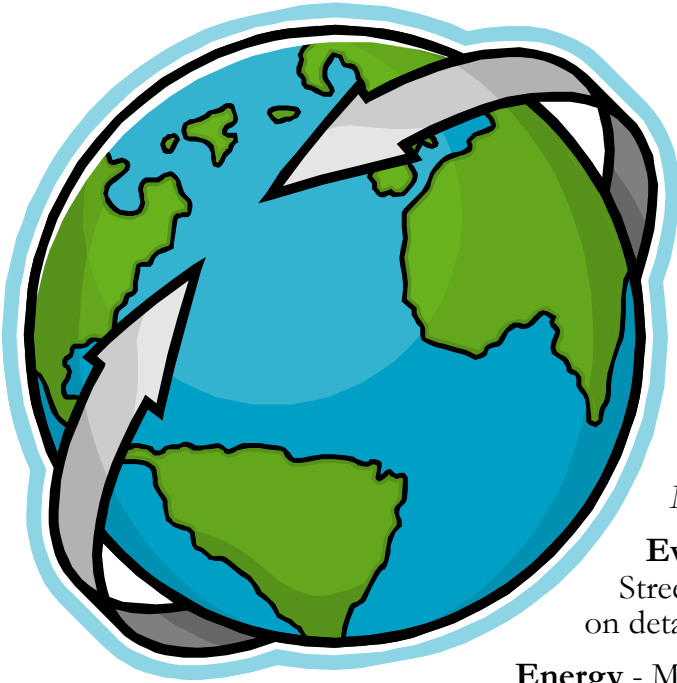
*Fred Kidder and Roger Conrad of the museum staff point out that time is running out for viewing the “Go Green, Ojai!” exhibit.*

Led by the vision and efforts of our board president, Ellen Hall, volunteers and contributors donated hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars in materials. The Coalition has produced a professional and creative exhibit of which it can be very proud. But wait—there's more! Partnering with the U.S. Green Building Council, California Central Coast Chapter, and with Community Action of Ventura County, the Coalition will deconstruct the exhibit and reassemble it to complement a new Green Resource and Education Center to be located in Oxnard. And part of the green home exhibit will be housed in a trailer for travel to schools and events throughout the county.

The Building and Construction Committee also organized a lecture series, of which three remain: on Thursday, February 4, from 7-8 p.m., Reggie Wood will present “How Green Design and Building Relates to Cost, Climate and Lifestyle”; Saturday, February 6, from 5-6 p.m., Carolyn Marie Hernandez will speak on “Renovating with Natural Materials”; and Thursday, February 11, from 7-8 p.m., Jon Cotham will discuss “Solutions to Create a Healthy Eco-Home,” followed by Cynthia Grier with “Eco-Elegant Kitchens and Baths.” For museum hours and admission prices, go to [www.ojaivalleymuseum.org](http://www.ojaivalleymuseum.org).

# What's Going on in the Coalition Committees

“Knowledge, Put into Action, Is Power”



**Building and Construction** - Meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at 7:00 P.M., Chaparral High School, 414 E. Ojai Avenue, in the conference room off the breezeway next to the Administration Building. The committee is partnering with the Energy Committee on a residential efficiency-evaluation program.

**Communications and Publicity** - Meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday at 6:30 P.M., 202 W. Aliso Street. The committee's ongoing projects include website maintenance and the creating and editing of flyers, emails, display ads, and press releases, plus radio interviews, this monthly e-newsletter, and the editing of Coalition members' letters to the editor for the *Ojai Valley News*.

**Event Planning** - Meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday at 5:00 P.M., 221 E. Matilija Street, in Suite J. Call 669-8445 for confirmation. The committee is working on details for the next monthly community presentation.

**Energy** - Meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at 7:00 P.M., Chaparral High School, 414 E. Ojai Avenue, in the conference room off the breezeway next to the Administration Building. Among their other projects, the committee members have been partnering with the Building and Construction Committee to start a home energy-efficiency evaluation program.

**Environmental Health** - Meetings have been temporarily suspended, as the Committee Chair is presently working with the OUSD school district's Green Team. Call Marleen Luckman at (805) 279-2101 for more information.

**Food and Agriculture** - Meeting dates and locations vary. Email Dulanie Ellis-La Barre at [dulanie@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dulanie@sbcglobal.net) for information on this committee or on its Grow Food Party Crew and Culinary Club subcommittees.

**Resources** - Meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday at 5:00 P.M., Chaparral High School, 414 E. Ojai Avenue, in the conference room off the breezeway next to the Administration Building. The committee is creating a unified calendar for every income-generating event held by the Coalition. Besides fundraising, its ongoing responsibilities include obtaining grants and keeping tabs on the Coalition's budget.

**Transportation** - A new Committee Chair has stepped forward to reactivate this committee: Suza Francina. The monthly meeting time has yet to be announced. If this is an area of interest to you, please contact Suza at [SFrancina@aol.com](mailto:SFrancina@aol.com) for more information.

**Waste Management** - The committee meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at 7:00 P.M., Chaparral High School, 414 E. Ojai Avenue, in the conference room off the breezeway next to the Administration Building. The next Day Without a Bag event has been postponed until the spring of this year, pending sufficient sponsors.

**Watershed** - Meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday at 7:00 P.M., Chaparral High School, 414 E. Ojai Avenue, in the conference room off the breezeway next to the Administration Building. Email Brian Holly at [brian@biorc.com](mailto:brian@biorc.com) for further information. The committee was awarded a grant by the Community Wetland Restoration Grant program for a creek-restoration project to eradicate invasive non-native plants and restore the ecosystem of the Ojai Creek riparian corridor within Libbey Park (see page 5).

## The Ojai Creek Restoration Project: Phase Two Set to Begin

On three Saturdays in November of 2009, community members and students from schools around the county began a collaborative effort to return the Ojai Creek that meanders through Libbey Park to its natural ecology and functioning state. Students, Coalition members, and the public are now being invited back to participate in the second phase of the project on Saturday, February 20, and the following Saturday, February 27.

These workdays will take place from 9:30 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. Helpers will gather for an initial training and will then continue the removal of non-native species from the creek, along with starting the planting of seeds and cuttings of native plants. Volunteers are asked to meet at the Libbey Park Gazebo in downtown Ojai. Wear sturdy shoes, long-sleeved shirts, and long pants. Feel free to bring your own shovel, trowel, and gloves; gloves and tools will be provided, but can run out in the event of a large number of volunteers.



The Watershed Committee of the Ojai Valley Green Coalition, under the leadership of conservation biologist Brian Holly, completed a site analysis, habitat assessment, stream characterization study, and stream morphology survey last summer, followed by the November non-native plant removal. Over the holidays, a tree plan was written, and an irrigation plan is in the works.

Participants may go to [www.ojavalleygreencoalition.org](http://www.ojavalleygreencoalition.org) prior to the event to check for any updates regarding time, location, or personal items to bring. To learn more, leave a message for Deborah Pendrey, Executive Director of the Ojai Valley Green Coalition, at (805) 669-8445, or send an email to Deborah at [coordinator@ojavalleygreencoalition.org](mailto:coordinator@ojavalleygreencoalition.org).

This creek and riparian habitat restoration project is being made possible by funding from the Earth Island Institute and by support from the Wetlands Recovery Project and the Coastal Conservancy of Southern California. Meiners Oaks Ace Hardware helped with supply purchases, and Consolidated Disposal Service is donating the removal and recycling of green waste. 🌱



## In and Around the Valley

**February 4**, “How Green Design and Building Relates to Cost, Climate and Lifestyle”, 7 P.M., Ojai Valley Museum

**February 4**, “Natural Investing and Financial Permaculture”, 7 P.M., Karpeles Manuscript Library, 21 Anapamu St, Santa Barbara. Info: Linda Buzzell, [lbuzzell@aol.com](mailto:lbuzzell@aol.com)

**February 6**, “Renovating with Natural Materials”, 5 P.M., Ojai Valley Museum

**February 6**, “Chumash Ethnobotany: Plant Knowledge Among the First People of Our Region,” with author Jan Timbrook, 9:30 A.M., 4221 E. Main St., Ventura, [nopalitonursery.com](http://nopalitonursery.com)

**February 11**, “Solutions to Create a Healthy Eco-Home” and “Eco-Elegant Kitchens and Baths,” 7 P.M., Ojai Valley Museum

**February 13**, “How Mushrooms Can Help Save the World” with Paul Stamets, 7 P.M., Fe Bland Auditorium, Santa Barbara City College West Campus, [sbpermaculture.org](http://sbpermaculture.org)

**February 13**, “Grow Your Own Fruit on the Cool Coast or the Hot Hills” with Jon Freeman-Wood, 9:30 A.M., 4221 E. Main St., Ventura, [nopalitonursery.com](http://nopalitonursery.com)

**February 20**, “Chaparral, Grizzly Bears & Condors” with Richard W. Halsey, 3:30 P.M., Riverview Trailhead (Rice Road near El Roblar), [ovlc.org](http://ovlc.org)

**February 22**, “Sustainable Landscape: Water Efficiency,” 5:30 P.M., USGBC C4 at Patagonia Firehouse Community Room, 259 W. Santa Clara Street, Ventura, [usgbcc4.org](http://usgbcc4.org)

**February 27**, A Coalition screening of *Our Seeds: Seeds Blong Yumi*, followed by a seed swap, 4:30 P.M., Ojai Theatre, 145 E. Ojai Avenue. (See page 1.)

**February 27**, Household Waste and E-Waste Collection Day; call (805) 658-4323 for an appointment

**February 27**, “Edible Landscaping,” 10 A.M, City of Ojai Community Demonstration Garden, [ojaignarden.com/demo-garden.shtml](http://ojaignarden.com/demo-garden.shtml)

## EEK! So Much E-Waste!

On January 9, the Green Coalition, with the help of Ojai Community Bank and the Ojai Valley Directory, pulled off a second successful e-waste collection event. In utter astonishment, and working as fast as they could, volunteers emptied cars and trucks of batteries, electronics, appliances, printer cartridges, incandescent holiday lights, and all kinds of media-storage items. The total weight of the e-waste came to 39,554 pounds. It boggles the mind . . . one little community brought us this much in four hours.

Besides Ojai Community Bank and the Ojai Valley Directory, we give many thanks to Gold Coast Recycling & Transfer, Alianza Recycling, Trader Joe's (for the cookies that kept up the blood sugar of waiting drivers and passengers), and all the volunteers who made this event possible.

These volunteers included those who met the following Saturday to sort the 700-plus pounds of batteries that went to the county's hazardous waste depot, and who packed the holiday lights and various media-storage items, whose shipping we pay for through the Waste Management Committee's printer cartridge and cell phone collecting throughout each year. If you have a place that can collect these items for us, we're glad to pick them up; contact Deborah at (805) 669-8445.

If you missed our event, we'll do another collection on January 8, 2011. In the meantime, please use the Ventura County Household Waste service. A calendar with their contact information can be downloaded from the Coalition's home page: [ojaivalleygreencoalition.org](http://ojaivalleygreencoalition.org).



Photo of Deborah Pendrey in a sea of electronics courtesy of Ojai Valley News. Photographer: Scott Wintermute

YES! I want to join the Ojai Valley Green Coalition.

I want to be a monthly sustainer for the Coalition to count on, plus save time, fees and paper:  
 \$50/month     \$35/month     \$25/month     \$10/month     Other \_\_\_\_\_

A one-time annual membership payment is better for me:

**\$25 Your donation of \$25 or more entitles you to membership benefits.**

What have you got? \_\_\_\_\_  \$500     \$250     \$100     \$50     Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

*Please print clearly, and note that email is the means by which we send newsletters, action alerts, and event notices. Thank you!*

I am paying by:  Check (payable to OVGC)     Credit Card

*(information will be securely processed through PayPal with Visa, Mastercard, American Express, or Discover)*

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expires \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_ Security code \_\_\_\_\_

*To join online, please go to [www.OjaiValleyGreenCoalition.org](http://www.OjaiValleyGreenCoalition.org)*

*or you may mail this form to 323 E. Matilija Street, 110-114, Ojai, CA 93023*

OJAI VALLEY GREEN COALITION MEMBERS RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS:

- Helping move the Ojai Valley forward as a green and sustainable community focusing on energy, water, food and agriculture, waste reduction and our watershed
- Monthly e-news, action/event notices, and acknowledgement in the e-newsletter
- Member Reward Coupons
- Coalition event discounts as noted with specific event publicity
- With a \$25 per month contribution and above, or a one-time equivalent, receive an OVGC organic cotton T-shirt