



Ojai Valley Green Coalition

Monthly E-News

July 2010

This Month's Community Presentation: *The Film Coal Country*

Since long before the Gulf oil spill dominated headlines, an equally compelling drama has been taking place, year in and year out, in the coal-rich hills of the United States. The Ojai Valley Green Coalition will spotlight this complicated issue with its Saturday, July 24, screening of the documentary film *Coal Country* at the Ojai Theatre, 145 E. Ojai Avenue, at 4:30 P.M.

While California's attention is drawn to the crisis in the Gulf of Mexico, 10 percent of Southern California Edison's power is currently coming from coal. With the possibility of reduced offshore drilling, that percentage may very well increase, which makes coal mining a very timely issue. The film, written, produced, and directed by Phylis Geller together with executive producer Mari-Lynn Evans, examines the economic and social effects as well as the catastrophic environmental consequences of the modern coal mining that feeds the ever-growing need for electricity.

Coal Country brings into sharp focus many little-known yet monumental changes to the once pristine and peaceful coal-

mining region. It uses compelling footage and the personal stories of miners, residents, and coal company representatives whose day-to-day lives are affected while feeding our nation's hunger for power.

According to the website for the film, the public needs to understand the meaning behind promises of "cheap energy" and "clean coal."

"Are they achievable?" it asks, "and at what cost?" See the film and find out. You will not go away untouched.

According to the film's producers, these personal stories explore the true cost of coal and the search for an alternative fuel source. The stories also pose the question of whether coal industry opponents are really protecting the earth or standing in the way of affordable energy. For more information about the movie, go to



<http://www.coalcountrythemovie.com>.

This screening is being offered through the generous sponsorship of REC Solar, Nutiva, and Serendipity Toys. There will be a \$10 suggested donation at the door. 🌱

Andy Lipkis Inspirational at *Dirt! The Movie*



L-R: Caryn Bosson, Andy Lipkis, Dulanie Ellis

I was one of the lucky audience members at the June 26 Ojai Valley Green Coalition screening of *Dirt! The Movie*. It was a double treat, because I was inspired not only by the highly informative and enjoyable film, but also by the up-close-and-personal discussion of environmentalism by Andy Lipkis, founder of

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



L.A.'s TreePeople, who is featured in the film.

Lipkis, who has been an environmental leader for more than 40 years, founded the organization at 15, an age when most young people are too overwhelmed with balancing their school and social lives to focus past their noses. He was inspirational yet approachable, making his remarkable path seem the most natural thing in the world.

"This film was five years in the making," said Lipkis, who underscored the timeliness and importance of the film's message. "Five years ago, who could have imagined the scene that we now see happening in the Gulf?"

He called *Dirt! The Movie* "a cookbook for a radical and rapid healing of the Earth" that has now become an even more pressing emergency. "Our vision, our hope, our highest intent and life's commitment is that we build a transition road," the TreePeople founder said, "a safe 'freeway offramp' that can attract as many people as possible to make the shift."

Lipkis told the audience that they will probably be some of the "first responders," the ones who are needed to help our world along the road to recovery. He pointed out the importance of local volunteers during Hurricane Katrina, as people worked together to accomplish what no one could do alone, adding, "We need to take it to the next level. We need an army of change."

Lipkis said he is committed to "retrofitting the entire L.A. area, regreening the environment." He and others are focusing on a three-step plan. The first step is seeing the city as a contained sustainable ecosystem by managing it with cooperation at all levels and throughout all areas of government, business, and volunteer organizations. The second is to attract people to become part of the movement of change by finding and promoting "attractive role models" for action, rather than relying on the model of self-sacrifice and restriction. Third: bringing in more money and developing an easily navigated free system on the Web to give people the tools to make a difference.

Lipkis and *Dirt! The Movie* offered heartening examples of how people around the world have already begun this process, by removing asphalt and using biomimicry techniques, eliminating harmful agricultural methods, increasing tree coverage, using natural water-retention systems like bioswales, and reducing the heat effects that

Don't Miss Out

(for a limited number of guests)

Date



Saturday
July 31, 2-5 PM

Location

Michelle's Place
235 Fernando
Meiners Oaks



at her small urban farm with chickens, vegies, native plants and fruit trees.

From El Roblar, north on Lomita and west on Fernando.

What to Bring

- **A Vegetarian Entree or Side Dish** Casserole? Salad? Dessert? Whatever you love, so will we. Eggs and Dairy are okay, and substitutes are good to learn.
- **20 copies of the Recipe**
- **your own dish, flatware and mug**

RSVP

By July 28th, please.

Tell us what you're bringing, including a guest who is requested to bring a beverage to pair with your dish. Reply to:

ojaiculinaryclub@gmail.com

add to global warming. Humans are beginning to use Nature's own techniques to heal the Earth.

"I have a profound sense of hope," said Lipkis, who first came to Ojai back in 1993, after the Rodney King riots, to reflect on his life's path. "I've come to believe that maybe man has evolved to be the Earth's healer—the human as healer. As you saw, things like those microbial fuel cells in the film are more important than they were five years ago or even five months ago. We now have the potential to light the world with alternative fuel sources."

—Linda Harmon

Thinking in Green

Deborah Pendrey
OVGC Executive Director



Facing the Facts about Where Our Energy's Been Coming From

When it comes to energy use, hypocrisy abounds in my life. I'm adamantly against all forms of coal extraction and any further oil drilling, yet I use the end-product energy of both every day through household and transportation consumption, along with many petroleum-based products. And I'm one of the ones consciously reducing.

In my opinion, energy is an issue that can't be dealt with by individuals changing their light bulbs and taking public transportation. Governments and the energy industry at large must take the lead and hold us all to a higher standard of efficiency and conservation while converting to renewable sources.



Here in the Ojai Valley, it's easy to forget how and from where our energy comes to us, and at what price. But there are areas of our country where home, health, and landscape are being sacrificed to

such a degree as to seem Third World.

We in the Coalition work hard to be on the side of positive solutions, but some things can't be painted rosy from any angle of approach. Coal mining—and, in particular, mountaintop removal for coal extraction—is one of those. We're hoping that you want to know the facts, face the facts, and discuss the facts, and that you'll join us for our July 24 film viewing of *Coal Country* (see page 1).

In screening this film, our intent is not to depress you and make you feel hopeless but to inspire you, as the folks in the film can't help but do as they come up against the powerful wall of special interests, yet get up every morning and do it again. Such hope,

courage, and care for the future in the midst of so much blackness should give us all a new standard by which to say "No more!" It's time to transition; it's time to think green.

Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change small portion of events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation. It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance. —Robert F. Kennedy

State Measure 94 Becomes Proposition 23

On June 22, a ballot measure that would suspend AB 32, California's historic climate change law, qualified for the November 2010 ballot. Proposition 23, the California Jobs Initiative, would require that AB 32 and its greenhouse gas reduction program be suspended until the unemployment rate in California drops

below 5.5 percent for at least four consecutive quarters. This would essentially overturn the landmark law, because since 1976 California's unemployment rate has rarely dipped that low.

This ballot measure would also suspend emission reporting and fee requirements for major polluters. AB 32 serves as a model worldwide, for it has already resulted in the growth of clean technology and given rise to many new jobs. A suspension of this climate change policy would freeze progress on both a national and an international scale.

As reported by Margot Roosevelt in the *Los Angeles Times* on June 23, 2010, the battle over the initiative, launched (and mostly funded) by Texas oil giants Valero and Tesoro, will pit that industry against environmentalists and the state's clean-tech businesses.

Let's get the facts and then spread the word:

- <http://www.stopdirtyenergyprop.com>
- [http://www.ballotpedia.org/wiki/index.php/California_Proposition_23_the_Suspension_of_AB_32_\(2010\)](http://www.ballotpedia.org/wiki/index.php/California_Proposition_23_the_Suspension_of_AB_32_(2010))
- <http://www.suspendab32.org>
- <http://www.jobs2010ca.com>



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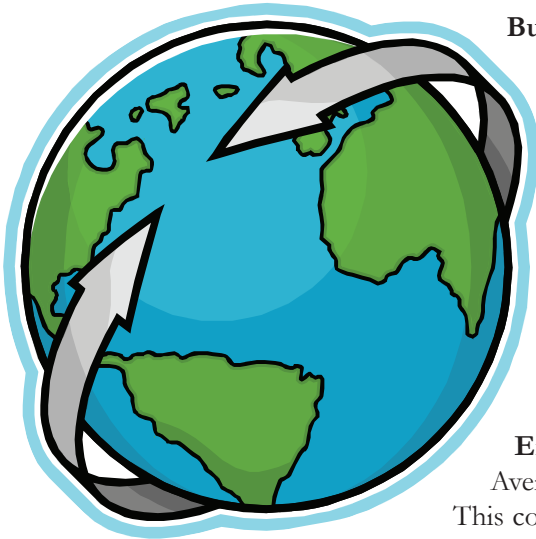
WRITERS – PRESS RELEASES, PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS, CALENDAR NOTICES
1-2 HRS PER MONTH.

OCTOBER 2 GREEN HOME & BUILDING TOUR SITE COORDINATORS – ASSIST DIRECTOR AND WORK WITH A SITE TOUR HOMEOWNER 3-4 HRS PER MONTH (THROUGH EVENT DATE)

A RECYCLING ENTHUSIAST – THIS AT-HOME PROJECT IS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A REUSE/ RECYCLE RESOURCE PAGE FOR OUR WEBSITE. LOTS OF GOOD MATERIAL ALREADY GATHERED. NO TIME CONSTRAINT (but this year would be nice).

What's Going on in the Coalition Committees

“Knowledge, Put into Action, Is Power”



Building and Construction - Meets on the 3rd Tuesday at 5:30 P.M., Chaparral High School, 414 E. Ojai Avenue, in the conference room off the breezeway next to the Administration Building. The committee is collaborating with Community Action of Ventura County to educate local residents about the weatherization and energy-efficiency programs now available, and continuing plans to assist in this year's Green Home & Building Tour and Trade Show.

Communications and Publicity - Meets on the 1st 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 submitted to the *Ojai Valley News*.

Energy - Meets on the 2nd Wednesday at 7:00 P.M. at Chaparral High School, 414 E. Ojai Avenue, in the conference room off the breezeway next to the Administration Building. This committee will be hosting our July film, *Coal Country*, and is developing a campaign to reduce energy usage in our valley by 10 percent. Contact the Committee Chair, Shawn Jacobson, at sjacobson@recsolar.com.

Event Planning - Meets on the 1st Monday at 5:00 P.M., 221 East Matilija Street, in Suite J. Call 669-8445 for confirmation. The committee is always working on details for the next monthly community presentation, and is currently also preparing for the reception for October's Green Home & Building Tour and Trade Show.

Food and Agriculture - Meets on the 4th Saturday from 4:00 to 6:00 P.M. in Ojai. The committee is still busily planning gleanings and team-gardening projects. Email Committee Chair Dulanie Ellis-La Barre at dulanie@sbcglobal.net for meeting venue information or more information on this committee or its Grow Food Party Crew and Culinary Club subcommittees.

Government Liaison Work Group - This group, with its purpose defined as advocacy support for the Action Committees, meets on the 3rd Wednesday at 6:30 P.M., 202 W. Aliso Street and is currently working on an advocacy policy for the Coalition. Contact Committee Chair Renee Roth at rraeroth@roadrunner.com for further information.

Resources - Meets on the 2nd 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 planning a membership drive and is enlisting sponsors for the Green Home & Building Tour and Trade Show. Besides fundraising, its responsibilities include obtaining grants and keeping tabs on the Coalition's budget.

Transportation - Meets on the 1st Wednesday of the month at Papa Lennon's (in the outside courtyard area), 515 W. El Roblar in Meiners Oaks, across the street from the Project Ride bike shop, at 4:00 P.M. The committee has been gathering input for the public comment period regarding the Ojai Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan, including a potential bike lane on Grand Avenue. Contact Committee Chair Suza Francina at SFrancina@aol.com for more information.

Waste Management - Meetings are temporarily suspended; contact Co-Chair Deborah Pendrey at (805) 669-8445 for information on this committee's upcoming plans and projects.

Watershed - Meets on the 1st 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 Committee Chair Brian Holly at brian@biorc.com for more information on the committee and its plans for further creek-restoration work under a new grant it has received from the United States Department of Fish and Wildlife.

An Update on the Draft Ojai Light Ordinance

When we got a place on the June 22 agenda to present to the Ojai City Council our pitch for the revised light ordinance, my husband George and I went around the town and photographed unshielded lights, excessive lighting, misdirected lighting, and glare. The Chair of the Energy Committee, Shawn Jacobson, started reworking a Dark Sky Association PowerPoint presentation and included the Ojai examples that we had photographed.

We rehearsed the presentation, which included an analysis by Brian Skaggs of the Ojai Valley Inn and Spa of how improved lighting had saved the Inn money. With a Southern California Edison rebate, it took the Inn management only six months to recoup their retrofit investment.

We were then ready to educate the city on how to save money on electricity and guide lighting use in the future.

George and I got there early so that I could pass out a flyer on lighting and safety and say thanks to those who came. When it was time for our slot in the agenda, I spoke first, feeling

more fire of conviction than nervousness about public speaking. I directed the Council Members to the packet I had assembled for them to get a “Lighting 101” crash course. I pitched the need to draw a line for the future, and talked about how no cost, no penalties, and no risk is a good thing now.

Then Shawn showed the smooth, well-balanced PowerPoint presentation and we kept to our promised 15-minute time limit.

At the end, Mayor Steve Olsen said that he thought the city could decide on this ordinance. I flew up to the microphone, powered by my fiery energy, and asked, “When? One month, two, three, six?” Steve looked at City Manager Jere Kersnar, and Jere said, “One month.”

So, after almost four years, it has now been recorded in the City Council minutes that action is asked for in one month—and Ojai may soon have a light-reduction plan on the books!

— Gail Topping, author of the ordinance and OVGC Energy Committee member

The Progress of the Ojai Creek Restoration

The Coalition’s spring creek-restoration work, still being carried out through a Southern California Wetland Recovery Project (SCWRP) grant, consisted of two further restoration days on April 3 and 17. On these two Saturdays, volunteers removed non-native plants and also planted oak seedlings.

On Saturday, May 29, the Ojai Trees group planted three additional California sycamore trees at the Ojai Creek restoration site.

Then last month on Saturday, June 19, the OVGC continued the removal of invasive-species regrowth (*Vinca minor* and Himalayan blackberry) and also spread mulch throughout the site to keep weeds and non-native plants from resprouting. Many thanks to Mark Hatton for the donated mulch! Newly planted trees were also deeply watered to ensure their survival through the summer. About a dozen volunteers, consisting of students and other community members, came out in support of the workday, and three members of the

C.R.E.W. also joined in the efforts. The work was mostly focused on the north end of the restoration site. Approximately 95 percent of all the willow and mulefat cuttings that were planted in the spring have survived, and now show signs of significant rooting and growth.

During the week of June 21, several palm stumps from trees that had been cut down earlier in the year were ground, creating more mulch for the site.

As we wind up the SCWRP grant in September and October, we will be gearing up to continue the restoration work through a \$25,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife. Watershed Committee Chair Brian Holly and Executive Director Deborah Pendrey recently met with Fish and Wildlife representative Mary Root to walk the project and confirm its parameters. Over the summer, permits and paperwork will be prepared to continue the restoration work in November under the new grant. 🌍

In and Around the Valley

July 10, Saturday, Ocean-Friendly Gardens Workshop, 9 A.M., Ventura Maintenance Yard, surfrider.org/ventura. (See page 5.)

July 24, Saturday, Wild about Ojai: An Introduction to Geocaching, 8 A.M., ovlc.org

July 24, Saturday, *Coal Country* film, 4:30 P.M., Ojai Theatre. (See page 1.)

July 24, Saturday, Household Hazardous Waste and E-Waste Collection Day: Call (805) 658-4323 for an appointment

July 25, Solar Sunday, 11 A.M.-4 P.M., Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, cecsb.org

July 26, Monday, Solid Surface Design, 5:30 P.M., USGBC C4 at Patagonia Firehouse Community Room, 259 W. Santa Clara Street, Ventura, usgbcc4.org

July 31, Saturday, Culinary Club Tasting Social, from 2-5 P.M. (See page 2.)

Click below to follow the Ojai Valley Green Coalition on Facebook and Twitter!

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Interviewing Thacher Grad William Logan, Author of *Dirt* (the Book)

Last month's community presentation film, *Dirt! The Movie*, was based on the book *Dirt: The Ecstatic Skin of the Earth* by William Bryant Logan. I spoke with Logan while he was in town for a Thacher School reunion.

Logan, now a New Yorker, spent four years at Thacher. He later became an award-winning translator of Spanish poetry and a writer-in-residence at Manhattan's Cathedral of St. John the Divine, as well as a well-known author. I learned that he is also a certified arborist, trimming New York's trees to supplement his income.

A former *New York Times* columnist, Logan has just finished *Oak: The Frame of Civilization*, which *Publisher's Weekly* has called a "sprawling biography of a tree," and he is researching his next book, *Air*.

"I found the most wonderful quote for *Air*," Logan told me. "The clouds pass, the rain does its work, and all beings come into their forms."

Of the three topics of Logan's books—dirt, oak, and air—the author said, "My wife, who is a landscape painter, pointed out that these are the three planes of landscape painting: the earth, the trees, and the sky. They all work together."

Logan's book looks at human history and the human relationship to the land. Change is what the book and the film are after. The writer doesn't want people to go back to *all* the old methods, but "to reach way back and take whatever we need to go forward."

We talked about the open space movement and about community-supported agriculture and the approaches that organizations like the

Ojai Valley Green Coalition are now taking

"It was striking to see this town look so much more like it did forty years ago than I expected," said Logan. He remarked on the local greenbelts, saying, "You're blessed to be on the edge of the National Forest."

Logan believes that the main thing that needs reawakening in our time is not grand ideas but "the sense of neighbors." Paraphrasing one of his favorite French philosophers, Gabriel Marcel, he added, "All changes come about because a few people of good will get together for a common purpose. I believe we can't resolve all the problems of the world but we can resolve to solve the problems directly in front of us."

And that can't fail to inspire others.

—Linda Harmon

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.**

\$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 What have you got? _____

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.)

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To join online, please go to www.OjaiValleyGreenCoalition.org

Phone: (805) 669-8445 • Email: membership@ojaivalleygreencoalition.com

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-newsletter, action/event notices, and acknowledgment in the e-news
- 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 organic OVGC T-shirt

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