



OJAI VALLEY GREEN COALITION

Newsletter Issue 4

July 2008

Coalition and Community

Coming in October: Ojai's First Green Home and Building Tour

On Saturday, October 4, from 10 a.m. till 4 p.m., the Coalition will hold its first annual Green Home and Building Tour. We expect to welcome hundreds of attendees from Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties and beyond. The venues will include examples of cob construction, passive solar architectural design, energy-

efficient remodeling, and the use of recycled building materials, as well as a commercial building with many green features. At 7 that evening, the day will culminate with a VIP Reception featuring a celebrity speaker at the Ojai Foundation's new Community Room, designed with a rooftop of green, growing succulents.

Plan to come and be inspired by sustainable ideas, designs, practices, and technologies that you can apply in your own home and business!

The Coalition already has some early sponsors for this event, and is seeking many more. (See the sponsorship link on the OVGC home page).

Contribute \$100, \$250, \$500, or \$1,000 and you'll receive free tour tickets and numerous other benefits, according to your sponsorship level—as well as the priceless satisfaction of knowing you've helped support the greening of this beautiful valley.

Healthy Home Solutions

That will be the theme of this month's presentation in the OVGC "Ecology and Community" series. The July 24 program, at 7 p.m. in the Chaparral High School Auditorium, will feature Jon Cotham, a Bau-biologie® Environmental Inspector and established local contractor. The German term *Bau-*

biologie means "building biology"—the scientific study of building environments and their positive or negative impacts on human health.

According to an EPA report, scientific evidence shows that the air within our homes can be more seriously polluted than the outdoor air of even the largest, most industrialized cities. While much has been written about indoor environmental hazards such as asbestos, lead, radon, and cigarette smoke, Jon will discuss other sources of indoor air pollution associated with common household products, current building practices and materials, and standard ventilation systems, and will offer ideas for practical ways to ensure a healthy home and work environment. For further information, call the Coalition at (805) 653-0445.

In & Around the Valley

July 6, 3-5 pm, Locavore Project Forum, E. P. Foster Library, Topping Room, Ventura

July 7, 12-3 pm, a forum on The Future of CA Agriculture. Info at www.cdfa.ca.gov/agvision.

July 9, 3 pm, VCREA Conference Room, Ventura: Energy Efficiency Plan Review Info at www.vcenergy.org

July 24, 7 pm, Chaparral Auditorium, Ojai: "Healthy Home Solutions" Coalition presentation

July 26, HHW Collection Day: Call (805) 658-4323 for an appt.

July 28, 6 pm, GBCC4 presents 8th grader and Kids vs. Global Warming founder Alec Looz, Patagonia Firehouse Community Room, 259 W. Santa Clara St., Ventura

Save the Date

August 28: A presentation by Brad Lancaster, author of *Rainwater Harvesting*

Sept 20: Ojai Waterway Clean-up Day

October 4: Green Home & Building Tour and Reception

www.ojavalleygreencoalition.org



Bau-Designed Living Spaces

Small Ways For You to Take Part

If your time is limited but you'd still like to participate in the efforts of the Green Coalition in some small way, one of these "bite-sized tasks" might be just the right fit for you:

- Baking cookies for one of our monthly presentations
- Bringing seedlings or extra garden produce to share at the Food & Agriculture Committee's community meeting
- Being a docent for a few hours on our October 4 Green Home & Building Tour
- Doing online research on a particular subject for one of our action committees
- Posting flyers about our events at local businesses near your home
- Photographing our events for the e-newsletter or other media distribution
- Helping with the writing, editing, or graphic design of various publicity materials
- Updating or organizing a committee member list
- Managing a Committee's Google or Yahoo group

Another form of giving is in-kind donations, and the Coalition wish list includes lots of electronics. (They can be older if in good repair.) Please remember the OVGC if you have any of these items:

- Audio visual equipment – projector, screen, speaker with microphone, and laptop computer
- External hard drive for storage of event documentation
- Software for website maintenance, project tracking, newsletter design, or volunteer base management
- A donated facility for event use

To volunteer for a bite-sized task or make a donation from our wish list, go to www.ojavalleygreencoalition.org and click on "Contact Us." Individuals write to us about a number of topics, so in your message be sure to mention "bite-sized task" or in-kind donation. You'll receive a grateful reply from Deborah, the Coalition Coordinator, or from one of our hard-working committee chairs.

Lawn Mower Trade-In Program for Ventura County Residents

During the last Green Coalition Board meeting, Vice President Scott Eicher shared that he had traded in his gas-powered lawn mower for an electric one. You can go from 40 to zero in air pollution reduction (because a gasoline mower operating for one hour puts out as much emission as 40 new cars driven for one hour), and noise pollution becomes nonexistent.

The Ventura County Air Pollution Control District has had a rebate program in place to help residents make the switch since 1999, and the program was recently reenergized with a \$50,000 grant from the California Air Resources Board. Check out www.vcapcd.org/lawnmower_en.htm to learn details on what lawnmower brands are included in the program and where you can purchase them. It's very important to follow the steps for retiring your old lawnmower and getting rid of the used oil and gasoline. Though the Coalition doesn't promote turf lawns, if you do have grass this is the perfect time of year—and a cost-effective way—to make the switch. □



≈≈ Many Thanks to These Donors and Sponsors ≈≈

Donors:

OVGC Board Member Tyler Suchman of Tribal Core – a monthly gift
 OVGC Board Member Tim Baird, OUSD Superintendent – a monthly gift
 Pat Essick - \$100 donated at the June community presentation

Green Home & Building Tour Sponsors:

The Ojai Foundation
 Ventura County Contractors Association
 Ojai Valley Insurance
 Reel Screens of Southern California
 E. F. Moore & Company

My heart is moved by all I cannot save; so much has been destroyed I have to cast my lot with those who, age after age, perversely, with no extraordinary power, reconstitute the world. –Poet Adrienne Rich



Coalition Action Committees

"Knowledge is Power, When Put into Action"

Building & Construction – Meetings 2nd Wed., 7 pm, Chaparral High School, Room 6. Jon Cotham will present "Healthy Home Solutions" at the monthly OVGC workshop on July 24. The committee is also working on a Green Building Checklist for the City of Ojai's Planning Department counter. They'll be looking at municipal codes on the City's website. Reggie Wood will ask the Build It Smart organization for professional green building contractors to serve as docents for the Green Tour.

Communication & Publicity – Meetings 2nd Tues., 6:30 pm, 202 W. Aliso St. Committee member Camilla Beckett and her husband, Jim, are filming the OVGC monthly presentations. When Channel 10 secures the technology to show DVDs, the committee will begin regular OVGC television programming. This committee also responds to phone and email messages from the public.

Events – Meetings 1st Mon., 5 pm, 221 E. Matilija St., Suite J. Call 646-7229 for confirmation. Chairperson Kale Starbird moderated the successful "Ojai Reads" event at the Ojai Library. Events is asking other committees and their members to invite friends to the monthly presentations. They also encourage sending follow-up letters to the *Ojai Valley News* editor to help generate interest.

Energy – Meetings 3rd Thurs., 7 pm, Chaparral High School, Room 6. Jens Riege has joined Peter Cante as co-chair of the committee. They are reviewing the City of Ojai's "Roadmap to a Sustainable Ojai" and researching the City of Berkeley's plan to help homeowners finance solar installations for their homes.

Environmental Health – Meetings 2nd Wed., 6:30 pm, Rainbow Bridge. The committee is working on an educational infomark. They are also planning to provide the Ojai Unified School District with the EPA's Indoor Air Quality Kit. Call Marleen Luckman at (805) 279-2101 to participate.

Food & Agriculture – Meetings vary; some are held in backyard gardens. Call 646-7229 for date and location. The committee is directing its focus to locally grown food; its garden gatherings will allow people to exchange ideas, seeds, plants, and home-grown produce. The committee may help in the community garden.

Resource – Meetings 2nd Mon., 6 pm, 414 E. Ojai Ave. in Tim Baird's office. The Green Home & Building Tour steering committee is soliciting and receiving sponsorships to offset tour costs. The Board of Directors will join in this effort. An E-Green Directory Committee has formed. Christel Rogero, Linda Harmon, and Camilla Beckett are in the research phase.

Transportation – Meetings 1st Tues., 7:30 pm, 308 Drown Ave. Chair Kenley Neufeld attended a Community Environmental Council seminar in Santa Barbara and provided a report about it on the Ojai Post. The committee will explore carpooling or busing options for October's Green Home & Building Tour.

Waste Management – Meetings 2nd Thurs., 7 pm, Oak Grove School Main House. Call Deborah Pendrey at 649-8631. The committee presented "What Goes Around, Comes Around" on June 26 as part of OVGC's monthly community series. They will coordinate an Ojai version of the Coastal Commission's Beach Clean-up Day, calling it the Waterway Clean-up Day. They're working on a proposed quarterly recycling event with the City of Ojai.

Watershed – Meetings 1st Thurs., 7 pm, Chaparral Auditorium. The committee has received suggestion to educate the community about how to conserve water and keep it here in the valley's groundwater basin. Chair Paul Jenkin says Ojai is the only community from here to the Mexican border that doesn't import its water from elsewhere. □

IN DE PE ND EN CE



HELP US
HELP THE
VALLEY AND
THE PLANET
MAKE
POSITIVE
CHANGES
TO "GREEN"
OUR
BUILDINGS;
OUR WORDS,
THOUGHTS,
AND PLANS;
OUR ENERGY;
OUR AIR; OUR
FOOD; OUR
TRAVELS;
OUR WASTE
RESOURCES;
AND OUR
WATER.

“Ojai Reads” Is Off to a Great Start

On June 10, a good-sized group gathered at 7:00 in the Ojai Library to talk about the first in a series of environmental books to be read and discussed in the “Ojai Reads” project.

Transportation chair Kenley Neufeld initiated the project in April, choosing the book—Lester Brown’s *Plan B 3.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization*—and enlisting a panel of local experts to give their thoughts on Brown’s ideas. This community reading program is cosponsored by the OVGCC, the Ojai Valley Library Friends and Foundation, the Ojai Library, and (initially) Local Hero Books.

The three panel members were Warren Brush, a Certified Permaculture Designer and the cofounder of the Quail Springs Learning Oasis and Permaculture Farm in the Cuyama Valley; Geoff Wardle, an automotive engineer and designer and the director of Advanced Mobility Research for the Art Center College of Design; and Todd Cossairt, the Director of Sustainability at Besant Hill School at Happy Valley and also the developer of a large, collaborative general plan for community sustainability there.

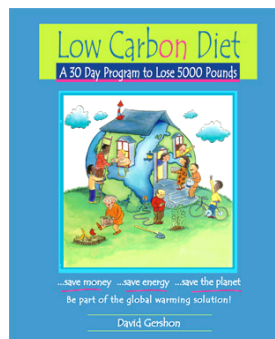
Kale Starbird, co-chair of Event Planning, welcomed the attendees and introduced the three panelists, who spoke on various topics related to Brown’s book. The lively and positive discussion was then expanded to include all of the attendees.

The next “Ojai Reads” book will be *Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight: Waking Up to Personal and Global Transformation* by Thomas Hartmann, for discussion at the library on November 3.

Help Ojai Households Lose 5,000 Pounds!

Ojai Valley Green Coalition member Caryn Bosson is forming a new “Low Carbon Diet” group in the Ojai Valley. This “30-day program to lose 5,000 pounds” is based on the *Low Carbon Diet* workbook distributed at Supervisor Steve Bennett’s valley-wide discussions last year.

Caryn cites the following statistics from the book: The typical American household generates 55,000 pounds of carbon dioxide annually. Taken collectively, U.S. households directly produce about 8 percent of the planet’s CO₂ emissions, and through our purchases we are indirectly responsible for another 17 percent. By contrast, the typical German household contributes just 27,000 pounds, and the contribution of the average Swedish household is only 15,000 pounds.



The Low Carbon Diet program uses proven methodology grounded in extensive research. It involves households joining with other households, to first measure their carbon footprint and then support each other in taking specific, measurable actions to reduce this footprint. According to Caryn Bosson, “This could be something that educates and inspires our entire community and sets the stage for larger

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Tim Baird, President
- Scott Eicher, Vice President
- Dale Hanson, Secretary
- Vivian Browne, Treasurer
- Katherine Hope, Director
- Todd Metlen, Director
- Tyler Suchman, Director
- Ken Wright, Director

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

- Cindy Cattle, Representative – Supervisor Steve Bennett’s Office
- Steve Olson, Representative – City of Ojai

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

- City of Ojai
- County of Ventura, District 1 office
- Ojai Unified School District
- Ojai Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Ojai Valley Youth Foundation
- Oak Grove School
- The Ojai Foundation
- Design + Vision, Inc.
- The Pure Body Institute
- The Ojai Post
- Ojai Trees
- Symphony of Life Spiritual Center

**323 E. Matilija St.
Suite 110-114
Ojai CA 93023
805-653-8445**

Online Donations Accepted

actions in the future.”

Click “Contact Us” on the www.ojavalleygreencoalition.org website to join a small group that will explore the Low Carbon Diet. For further information on the program, visit www.empowermentinstitute.net. □ □