



OJAI VALLEY GREEN COALITION

Newsletter Issue 8

November 2008

“Ojai Reads” Cosponsors Another Book Discussion

The Ojai Valley Green Coalition is partnering with the Ojai Library, the Ojai Valley Library Friends and Foundation, and Krotona Quest Bookshop to sponsor a discussion of the second book in the series known as “Ojai Reads.” The reading period for *The Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight: The Fate of the World and What We Can Do Before It's Too Late* by Thom Hartmann will run through Monday, November 3, when there will be a group discussion about the 370-page book at 7 p.m. at the Ojai Library.

Part I of the book looks at the science of all living things. Hartmann compares our use of fossil fuels to a Ponzi scheme, and discusses “the crisis in the oceans and aquifers” as well as climate change and the extinction of species. Part II asks the question “How Did We Get Here?” Hartmann examines our culture and the struggle between power and cooperation in a social structure for clues. In Part III, he offers ideas as to what we can do about all this, suggesting that the transforming of culture and of politics are interrelated and proposing that the answer lies in changing the way we think, talk, and act.

The library has about ten copies of the book available for borrowing, and it can also be purchased from Krotona Quest Bookshop or the Coalition for \$15.

Even if you haven't read the book, you can still plan to attend what promises to be a lively discussion. ▲

Green Coalition to Show *Air*

The film *Air* will be shown by the OVGC at the Ojai Theatre on Saturday, November 15, at 4:30 p.m. Produced by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Ventura County Air Pollution District, among others, the film presents a biography of our air, current issues, and solutions to problems in a 41-minute high-definition format.

Viewers will learn the story of air—its personality, lifestyle

changes, struggle for identity, and endurance as the “roof” surrounding our planet. The film also reveals what communities, technologies, and other countries are doing about air quality and global climate change, conveying the inspiring message that we have the power to enhance our air quality.

Executive producer Barbara Page will be on hand following the film for a question-and-answer period.

On September 24, the grand premiere of *Air* was held for invited dignitaries at the Ojai Theatre. It has since been shown at the national air directors' conference in Arizona and distributed nationally. For the November 15 screening, the public will be admitted for a suggested donation of \$5. ▲

A Day Without A Bag

... a plastic bag, that is. Visit us on Saturday, December 20, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for Ojai's first “Day Without A Bag” campaign. We'll be encouraging the use of reusable shopping bags to help reduce landfill waste, clean up our waterways, save animals, and reduce the amount of petroleum consumed and global greenhouse gases emitted in the manufacture of plastic bags.

In partnership with local retailers, the Coalition's Waste Management Committee will promote the use of reusable bags by staffing information

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In & Around the Valley

November 1, Tree planting with Ojai Trees. Details at www.ojaitrees.com.

November 3, Ojai Reads, 7 pm, Ojai Library.

November 4, REMEMBER TO VOTE for the environment and green jobs!

November 15, Screening of film *AIR* with Q&A to follow, 4:30 pm, Ojai Theatre.

November 15, CEQA Community Guide Workshop, Ventura 9 am-4 pm, www.PCLFoundation.org.

November 22, Tree planting with Ojai Trees. Details at www.ojaitrees.com.

November 23 & 30, Holiday Lights Exchange, Farmers Market 9 am-1 pm

December 20, Day Without A Bag Campaign at local retailers. 10 am-2 pm.

Save the Date

January 10, E-waste collection event in Ojai Community Bank parking lot.

January 28, Coalition anniversary celebration and presentation.

www.OjaiValleyGreenCoalition.org

November 15 Is “America Recycles Day”



America Recycles Day, coming up on November 15, is the only nationally recognized day dedicated to encouraging Americans to recycle and buy recycled products. Celebrating its tenth year, it has grown to include millions of Americans pledging to

buy recycled materials and to improve their recycling habits at home and at work. The National Recycling Coalition is the largest national nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement and improvement of waste prevention and the reuse, composting, and recycling of resources. Through America Recycles Day, it supports local communities and raises awareness by educating citizens about the benefits of recycling.

The purpose of the day is to continue to promote the social, environmental, and economic benefits of recycling and to encourage more people to join the movement toward creating a better natural environment.

United States recycling statistics have improved each year since the first U.S. recycling center opened its doors in 1896. The recovery rate of municipal solid waste (a fancy way of saying city garbage) through recycling and composting programs was up to 32% as of 2005. That's a significant increase from 1980, when less than 10% was recycled. However, since 1980 the generation of municipal solid waste has *grown by 60%*—to nearly 246 million tons per year in 2005. Taking this figure into account, our recycling numbers have actually flattened and declined with some recycled materials.

It's even more startling to learn that organic materials make up the bulk of wastes that go into landfills. Around 35% are paper and cardboard, while yard trimmings and food scraps total 25%. This organic waste is arguably the easiest material to recycle and keep local, and it produces a product 100 times more valuable than its source. This “waste” of today—more precious than fossil fuels could ever be—is tomorrow's energy . . . biomass to power our lives and energy (in the form of topsoil) to grow food and power our bodies.

The Ojai Valley Green Coalition encourages readers to visit <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/> and learn all kinds of interesting facts and ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle. Through its Waste Management Committee, the Coalition will continue in coming months and years to help educate the public on waste-management issues and work with city, county, and haulers to improve our recycling and reduce our generation of waste.

At the October 28 City Council meeting, Mayor Sue Horgan presented a proclamation recognizing America Recycles Day. Let's all pledge to do more to reduce, reuse, recycle, and buy recycled content. We're part of that 5% of the world's population using 25% of its resources, so it's really time for us to rethink! ▲

Free LED Holiday Lights

Through a partnership of the Ventura County Regional Energy Alliance (VCREA) and Southern California Edison, the Ojai Valley Green Coalition will be taking part in a holiday light exchange program. Participants will be able to bring one string of incandescent holiday lights and receive one string of LED holiday lights in exchange. LED holiday lights use 80-99 percent less energy than standard incandescent lights, and can last for more than 20,000 hours. The Green Coalition will also be partnering with Gold Coast Recycling & Transfer Station to properly recycle the incandescent lights.

The VCREA is a Joint Powers Authority composed of public agencies working in collaboration to approach the availability, reliability, conservation, and innovative use of energy resources in the Ventura County region. The Green Coalition's Energy Committee is working closely with the VCREA to bring more information and programs to the Ojai Valley.

This will be a first-come, first-served event, and we think the 112 LED strings will go fast, even at one strand per household. This program is for Southern California Edison customers, so participants must show a driver's license or Edison bill in order to exchange their lights. We'll be across from the Farmers Market, November 23, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for the exchange. If there are any strands left, we'll be back on November 30. Please call the Coalition at 653-8445 to confirm the 30th date. See you there! ▲



If it can't be reduced, reused, repaired, rebuilt, refurbished, refinished, resold, recycled, or composted, then it should be restricted, redesigned, or removed from production. —Berkeley Zero Waste Commission



Coalition Action Committees

"Knowledge Is Power, When Put into Action"

Building & Construction - Meets 3rd Tues., 7 pm, Chaparral High School, 414 E. Ojai Ave., conference room in breezeway next to Administration Bldg.

The committee members are considering the use of three different voluntary green building checklists, for remodels, new homes, and commercial projects. These checklists tie in with the "Build It Green" Program. They're also compiling a list of possible incentives to encourage people to use green building designs and principles.

Communication & Publicity - Meets 1st Thurs., 6:30 pm, 202 W. Aliso St. The committee members write and edit press releases and calendar items for monthly presentations and recently for Ojai Reads, the Candidates' Forum, the film *Air*, the monthly newsletter, and a Green Home & Building Tour follow-up report. They have also been developing plans for a Web-based green directory.

Events - Meets 1st Mon., 5 pm, 221 E. Matilija St., Ste. J. (November meeting cancelled). Call 653-8445 for confirmation. This committee provides support for the monthly presentation series, for the Ojai Reads project, and for other upcoming events such as the film *Air*. They're planning an Ojai Valley Museum exhibit and reception about the principles and activities of the Ojai Valley Green Coalition, slated for November 2009.

Energy - Meets 3rd Thurs., 7 pm, Chaparral High School, 414 E. Ojai Ave., conference room in breezeway next to Administration Bldg. The committee has a number of projects in progress: the City of Ojai Light Ordinance, a solar installation at Casitas Water District, energy aspects of the City's Roadmap to a Sustainable Ojai, a community presentation about solar energy, an AB 811 funding program (for alternative energy and energy conservation in Ojai), and an audit of the Ojai Valley's renewable energy systems.

Environmental Health - Meets 2nd Wed., 6:30 pm, Rainbow Bridge. Call Marleen at (805) 279-2101 to participate on this committee. The committee has researched the best way to inform the people of the Ojai Valley about current air quality, and has identified the website airnow.gov. They plan to provide this link on the Green Coalition's website as well.

Food & Agriculture - The next meeting, an Autumn Soup & Salad potluck dinner, will be on Thurs., Nov. 6, at 6:30 at 206 S. Blanche St. (Bring a copy of your recipe). There'll be a second meeting on Nov. 23 from 2 to 5 pm: a Mulberry Farm Tour and Biointensive Russia Project with a picnic potluck at 913 Oso Rd. Email dulanie@sbcglobal.net for more information. The committee is looking at certified and community kitchens, and recently produced a *Grow Food Party Crew* DVD.

Resource - Meets 2nd Mon., 6 pm, Chaparral High School, 414 E. Ojai Ave., in Tim Baird's office. The committee is working to identify new sources of revenue for the Green Coalition. At their next meeting they will discuss the role of the Board of Directors in fundraising.

Transportation - Meets 1st Tues., 7:30 pm, 308 Drown Ave. The committee provided a successful free bicycle valet service on Ojai Day, in the Ojai Library parking lot. This encouraged many more people to leave their cars at home and ride their bikes to the event.

Waste Management - Meets 2nd Thurs., 7 pm, Chaparral High School, 414 E. Ojai Ave., conference room in breezeway next to Administration Bldg. The committee is planning a "Day without a Bag" event for Dec. 20 and working on an e-waste event in partnership with Ojai Community Bank and the Ojai Valley Directory.

Watershed - Meets 1st Thurs., 7 pm, Chaparral High School, 414 E. Ojai Ave., conference room in breezeway next to Administration Bldg. For information, email brian@biorc.com. A prospective Eagle Scout will work with the committee on a project to map culverts, trash, and other impacts to Ojai creeks. The committee is considering an educational pamphlet about recycling horse manure to prevent runoff into creeks.

Visit www.ojavalleygreencoalition.org to join, and please pass me up the Internet stream to others – **THANKS** for reading!

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The Success of the First Green Tour

What a magical place is the new Council House at the Ojai Foundation, and how fortunate the Green Coalition was to be the very first group to hold a reception there! On October 4 the whole day felt like one of those “you should have been there” experiences, starting out with the Green Home & Building Tour and ending with Supervisor Steve Bennett presenting plaques of appreciation to the tour site owners for their leadership by example.

How often can you go into people’s homes and businesses to chat with them about how they created a sustainable green living or working space, and then that evening sip Casa Barranca organic wine, enjoy hors d’oeuvres made fresh from B. D. Dautch’s organic garden, and listen to Russ Baggerly play flamenco guitar?

Many people made this wonderful day and evening happen: Terri Mitchell (the chef par excellence), Selim Sandoval (who drove the shuttle bus all day long), Frances Fitting (who worked all day at will-call while suffering with poison oak and also found thrift store plates so we didn’t have to use rented or disposable ones), Jay Simons (who created the tour website, placed all the tour signs out in the morning, and took them all down again that night), and Deborah Pendrey, who among a thousand other things stayed up all night before the tour to create those “Green Feature” signs at the various sites. Tim Baird also thanked Sheri Ann Cate, who first suggested the tour and directed the communications and publicity.

The Coalition has a wealth of caring people who volunteered their time, energy, and enthusiasm to make a day that will go down in the annals of Ojai history, and their combined efforts made this event a big success. ▲



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tables and offering free bags to shoppers. The participating retailers will include Vons, Rite Aide, Starr Market, Westridge Market, and Rainbow Bridge.

The reusable bag sponsors are the City of Ojai, Consolidated Disposal, Ken Wright Enterprises, Ojai Farmers Market, and E. J. Harrison. ▲



A Forum of City Council Candidates

Candidates for the two open positions on the Ojai City Council faced off in a town forum on October 27, just a few days before the election. Unlike other candidates’ forums, this one, presented by the Ojai Valley Green Coalition and the Ojai Post, focused only on environmental issues specific to the Ojai Valley. Also unlike some of the other forums, the candidates were not given the questions in advance.

The candidates, incumbents Rae Hanstad and Sue Horgan and challengers Betsy Clapp, Suza Francina, and Mike Lenehan, were each given time to make an introductory and a closing statement. The ten Ojai Valley Green Coalition Action and Organizational Committees had provided questions specific to environmental issues facing the Ojai Valley, with Tim Baird, President of the Green Coalition’s Board of Directors, and Tyler Suchman of the Ojai Post acting as moderators.

The topics included graywater systems, the eradication of Arundo donax, a ban on plastic shopping bags, the Roadmap to a Sustainable Ojai, and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. All of the candidates professed a

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

Nonvoting 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

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willingness to consider environmental issues in their decision making if elected or reelected.

At the close of the forum, Tim Baird quipped, “We’ve got your comments here tonight on tape,” suggesting that whoever is elected will later, as a council member, be reminded of those comments. ▲