



# Ojai Valley Green Coalition

Monthly E-News

April 2010

## This Month's Community Presentation: A Vision for the Restoration and Continuing Stewardship of the Ojai Watershed

Following our successful winter film series at the Ojai Theatre, we'll be back at the Chaparral Auditorium, 414 E. Ojai Avenue, for this month's community presentation.

If you've been reading our creek restoration progress reports in past *E-News* issues, or have volunteered for the creek workdays, you know that something pretty special has been going on in the Ojai Creek that borders Libbey Park.

On Wednesday, April 28, starting at 7:00 P.M., conservation biologist and Ojai Valley Green Coalition Watershed Committee Chair Brian Holly will lead the audience through an explanation of why we needed the restoration work and the progress of this project that began in November of 2009. Brian will then move to the bigger picture and show how we can continue with the success of this endeavor in other parts of the Ojai Watershed.

As described in its nomination for the Ventura County 2010 Climate Change Action Awards, this Ojai Creek Riparian

Habitat Restoration is no simple weeding and planting project.

For it, the OVGC Watershed Committee developed a plan and then secured collaborative partners and grant funding, as well as youth and adult volunteers, to restore the ecosystem of the Ojai Creek or East Barranca riparian corridor adjacent to



downtown Ojai's Libbey Park. In taking on the project, the committee collaborated with the City of Ojai; the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy; Ojai Trees; the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project, which allocates money from the Earth Island Institute; and the C.R.E.W., an Ojai-based nonprofit organization that, while maintaining wildlands, provides young people with job training, jobs, and opportunity to develop character and leadership skills.

A good deal of research went into the site history as well as the conducting of up-to-date habitat-assessment investigations. We know that, in the early 20th century, large rainbow or steelhead trout were regularly caught in the annually flowing creek. Since then, population growth, longer periods of drought, increasing

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# Welcome to the New Chairs of the Transportation and Energy Committees!

We're pleased to let you know that Suza Francina has stepped up to chair the Coalition's Transportation Committee and Shawn Jacobson has done the same for the Energy Committee. Both bring a wealth of expertise, along with good community activism experience, to their respective committee.

Suza was a founding member of the Ojai Bicycle Coalition, started in 1995. She was elected to the Ojai City Council in 1997, and served as the city's mayor in 2000. As an elected official, she championed many transportation-related issues such as traffic calming, the Safe Routes to School program, and pedestrian/bicycle-friendly policies. Suza also served on the Ventura County Transportation Commission,

where she advocated for bus shelters and improved public transit.

In leading the Transportation Committee, some of her stated goals are:

- the City's updating of the Ojai Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan, a necessary preliminary to the funding needed to implement the plan
- bicycle education in schools and safe routes to school
- bicycle parking everywhere it's needed, including areas like Vons
- a review of city policies, as parking for bicycles should be mandatory
- the promotion of public transportation
- the identification of places, such as the "Y" shopping center, that still need bus shelters

With his 15 years of experience in green technology, green building, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, as well as a multitude of relationships with nonprofits and educational institutions, we consider Shawn Jacobson to be a perfect fit to head the Energy Committee.

Shawn's intentions for the Energy Committee are no less ambitious than Suza's for Transportation. He wants the committee to help:

- develop a long-term energy vision and the roadmap to get there
- work toward more energy auditing, energy-efficiency retrofits, and metering
- create a digital map of all renewable energy installations and the amount of kWh they're expected to produce and note these changes for the Resource Committee

The Resource Committee has become a subcommittee of the Board, with Board Member Caryn Bosson heading it up. Caryn's skills in fundraising and nonprofit development are legendary in the valley, and for the Coalition to have her grace our ranks is a dream come true. Caryn's hope and vision for the Resource Committee is that it will bring in funds, talent, and other resources so that we can continue making the Ojai Valley the model green community that we aspire for it to be.

For photos and more complete bios of the Coalition's newest community movers and shakers, please visit our website and click on "Committee Chairs." In addition, all committee meeting places and times can be found on our website calendar. 🌍

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

## NONVOTING MEMBERS:

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

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[ojavalleygreencoalition.org](http://ojavalleygreencoalition.org)

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



## CALIFORNIA CASH FOR APPLIANCES

Rebate program kicks off on April 22, 2010 • EARTH DAY

old refrigerators, washing machines, air conditioners for **new energy efficient models**

TRADE IN

for more information

California Cash for Appliances website at [cash4appliances.org](http://cash4appliances.org)

Consumers can receive only one rebate on each type of appliance, on a first-come first-served basis until the funds are depleted.

## Two Green Thumbs Up!

Two thumbs up to the Ojai substation of the Ventura County Sheriff's Department, which, to divert harmful drugs away from children and the environment, now offers a convenient, confidential drop box where residents can deposit unused or expired pharmaceuticals. The collection bin, located in the public lobby of the station at 402 S. Ventura Street, during normal business hours, Monday through Friday from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M.

Two more green thumbs up go to Ojai Community Bank, which is striving on a daily basis to be more environmentally conscious—

including its recent decision to stop printing unnecessary reports. This initiative saves at least one ream of paper each day, so keep up the good work, OCB!

And thumbs up to City Council Member Carol Smith, who, in response to the reduction in services and threatened termination of the Ojai Trolley Service, has asked that a public marketing plan be made to increase ridership and has also pledged to ride the trolley herself once each week. Let's all consider following up on Carol's good idea to save our local trolley! 🌍

# Thinking in Green

Deborah Pendrey  
OVGC Executive Director



## Let's Make It a Top-Down, Bottom-Up Earth Day

“The Future Is Your Choice” reads the flyer headline for the Compact for a Sustainable Ventura County.

Is it? It doesn't feel like it sometimes. In fact, a lot of the times my voice—that drop in the ocean that's supposed to count—feels like it's drowning in a sea of voices all looking out for number one or the almighty dollar.

How does Mother Earth (along with those of us who, by choice, drive 55 mph on the freeway) stay afloat in the use-it-up, throw-it-away, go-faster culture that we Americans and other industrialized nations have created?

I'll tell you what we don't do. We don't rest on our laurels or stick our head in the sand. And by no means do we pull the covers over our head in the morning because it's all too much to deal with.

At my house, until we can afford a recirculation pump and bleeder valve, I'm still going to collect the cold water from my shower faucet in a bucket. But I'm leaning with the folks who are starting to really speak out about how living sustainably is necessary but not sufficient. Because it's equally important to demand legislation at all levels of government that cuts carbon emissions. We have to hit the issues from the bottom up and also come at them from the top down.

The Compact for a Sustainable Ventura County has given us all a great point of entrance into the process. Based on Map-the-Future workshops conducted around the county last fall, the Ventura Council of Governments is inviting us all to a

Sustainability Summit to:

- See the results of the Map-the-Future workshops.
- Consider various simulations of our county's future.
- Explore the consequences of the various futures to families, the economy, and the environment, and tell our leaders what we like and don't like about each simulation.

Please plan to attend. Dates and locations, along with more details can be found at [VenturaCountyCompact.org](http://VenturaCountyCompact.org).

Along with taking part in this county effort, we invite you to join our new OVGC Government Liaison Work Group. Realizing the need to advocate for policy changes along with carrying on our educational outreach, a core group consisting of seasoned change makers, environmental lawyer and board member Sabrina Vensku, and a couple of us just getting our feet wet are coming together to discuss policy instead of projects. So, if this type of effort appeals to you, join us on Wednesday, April 21, at 202 W. Aliso Street, the office and home of Sheri Ann Cate, at 6:30 P.M..

Now, I couldn't help but notice that this core group is all women, which led me to think of a mother bear and to what ends she will go to protect her cubs. I'm just saying . . .

Happy Earth Day! For this fortieth anniversary of the observance, we hope you'll join us and other community organizations on Saturday, April 24, for an EarthPlay celebration on the Ojai Meadows Preserve. See page 5 for all the details. 🌱

Don't Miss Out  
(for a limited number of guests)

Date

Saturday  
April 10, 2-4 PM



Location

Chad & Elaine's Home  
615 Santa Ana Ave.  
Oak View, CA



Their Green Home was featured in OVGC's Green Home Tour. Wait 'till you see it!

<http://maps.google.com>

What to Bring

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

RSVP

By April 5th, please.

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

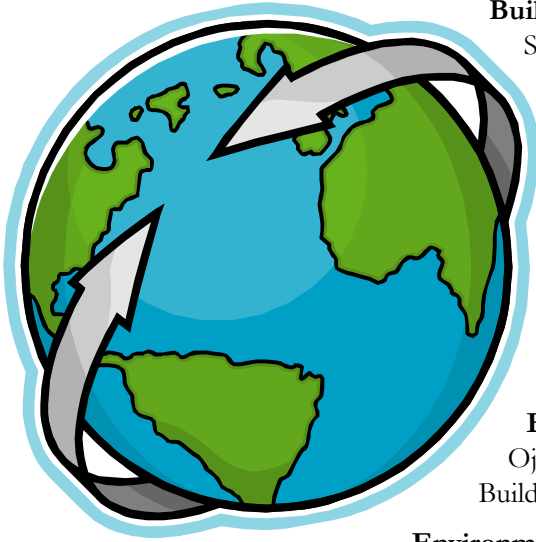
[ojaiculinaryclub@gmail.com](mailto:ojaiculinaryclub@gmail.com)

## Did You Know?

The faster you drive, the more fuel you use. While speeding may save you time, it will cost you at the pump. For every five miles you drive above 60 mph, you pay about 24 cents extra per gallon.

# 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 collaborating with Community Action of Ventura County to educate local residents about the weatherization and energy-efficiency programs now available, and starting plans to assist in this year's Green Home & Building Tour and Trade Show.

**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 submitted to the *Ojai Valley News*.

**Energy** - Meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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. The committee has a new Chair: Shawn Jacobson (see article page 2).

**Environmental Health** - Meetings are 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.

**Event Planning** - Meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> 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 EarthPlay on the Meadow and the reception for October's Green Home & Building Tour and Trade Show.

**Food and Agriculture** - Meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday from 4:00 to 6:00 P.M. at Full of Beans Coffee House & Bakery, 11534 N. Ventura Avenue in Ojai. The committee is planning an April 10 recipe swap potluck (see page 3) as well as gleaning and team gardening projects. Email Dulanie Ellis-La Barre at [dulanie@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dulanie@sbcglobal.net) for information on the Food & Ag Committee or its Grow Food Party Crew and Culinary Club subcommittees.

**Government Liaison Work Group** - This new startup will meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday at 6:30 P.M., 202 W. Aliso Street, to consider how to best organize and direct its efforts. (Read more: see “Thinking in Green,” page 3.)

**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 planning a spring membership drive. Besides fundraising, its ongoing responsibilities include obtaining grants and keeping tabs on the Coalition's budget.

**Transportation** - This spring the Transportation Committee will meet on the first 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. This month's meeting is on April 7 at 4:00 P.M. For EarthPlay Day on April 24, volunteers are needed to help with the EarthWalk, bicycle parking, and the committee's alternative transportation table/display. The committee will also be gathering input for the upcoming public comment period regarding the Ojai Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan. Contact Suza at [SFrancina@aol.com](mailto:SFrancina@aol.com) for more information.

**Waste Management** - The committee usually 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, but check with Deborah Pendrey at (805) 669-8445 to verify. The next Day Without a Bag event is on hold pending sufficient sponsorship, and the committee is working on a composting display for EarthPlay on the Meadow. The members are also designing and printing sets of recycling signs for other organizations to borrow for use at their events.

**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. See this issue's update on the Ojai Creek Riparian Habitat Restoration (page 1),

bring a beach chair for music on the meadow ♦ green living exhibits ♦ build a birdhouse or make a bird feeder ♦ plant a family tree ♦ carve a rock for an offering to the earth

garden art silent auction ♦ paint a mural ♦ rubber duckie races ♦ story telling in the grove ♦ win a framed qiclee print of this painting by Dianne Bennett, raffle tickets only \$10



# Earth Play on the meadow

A community Earth Day celebration  
on the Ojai Meadows Preserve

## Saturday April 24th

**Co-Hosted By**  
 Ojai Valley  
 Land Conservancy  
 Oak Grove School  
 Ojai Rotary West  
 Rotary Club of Ojai  
 Ojai Valley Green Coalition

**Participants Include**  
 Ojai Trees  
 Ojai Valley Defense Fund  
 Ojai Storytelling Festival  
 The Ojai Library  
 Euterpe Farms  
 The Ojai Raptor Center  
 Janis Art Workshop  
 Matilija Coalition  
 Julie Tumamait  
 Ventura Audubon Society  
 California Solar Electric  
 The CREW  
 and many more

- 10am** EarthWalk from Ojai Rotary Park to the Ojai Meadows Preserve
  - 11am** EarthPlay family fun for all ages
  - 5pm** on the Ojai Meadows Preserve
  - 1pm** Oak Grove School UnPlugged
  - 4pm** a free family concert on the Meadow
  - 8pm** Howling at the Moon benefit concert at the St Thomas Aquinas Church meadow
- visit [www.ovlc.org](http://www.ovlc.org) for more info

Take the kids home and come on back at 8pm for

## Howling at the Moon

A concert under the full moon with

### The HOUSEHOLD GODS and friends



\$25 in advance \$30 at the door  
 Tickets on sale at [www.ovlc.org](http://www.ovlc.org)  
 or call 649-6852



## In and Around the Valley

- April 10,** Ojai Meadows Preserve Restoration Tour, 9 - 10:30 A.M., [ovlc.org](http://ovlc.org)
- April 10,** Low-Flow Irrigation Work with John Lamar, 10 A.M., Ojai Community Garden, [ojaigarden.com](http://ojaigarden.com)
- April 16,** Green Shorts Film Festival Screening and Awards, 7:30 P.M., Lobero Theatre, [GreenShortsFilmFest.org](http://GreenShortsFilmFest.org)
- April 16 - 18,** Experiential Training with Tej Steiner, Meditation Mount, [meditation.com](http://meditation.com)
- April 17,** Ojai Farm to Table Tour, 9 A.M. - 3 P.M., [OjaiFestival.org/support](http://OjaiFestival.org/support)
- April 19,** Creating A Safer, More Secure and Greener Community, 6:30 P.M., North Oxnard United Methodist Church, 2300 W. Gonzales Rd., Oxnard, [surburbanpermaculture.org](http://surburbanpermaculture.org)
- April 24,** Earth Walk, 10 A.M., Rotary Park next to old Ford dealership.
- April 24,** "EarthPlay" Earth Day Celebration, 11 A.M. - 5 P.M., Ojai Meadows Preserve
- April 24,** HHW & E-Waste Collection Day: Call (805) 658-4323 for an appointment
- April 26,** LEED Education Provider Program, 5:30 P.M., USGBC C4 at Patagonia Firehouse Community Room, 259 W. Santa Clara Street, Ventura, [usgbcc4.org](http://usgbcc4.org)
- April 28,** Ojai Creek and Watershed Restoration Presentation, 7 P.M., Chaparral Auditorium (see page 1)

## A Special Notice

The Compact for a Sustainable Ventura County Summit  
 Various dates and locations  
[VenturaCountyCompact.org](http://VenturaCountyCompact.org)

enjoy local and organic food and drinks ♦ check out a solar powered generator ♦ learn more about our watershed

## Continued from page 1

groundwater extraction, and the introduction of non-native plant species have made a significant impact on this feature of the local watershed, pushing the southern steelhead trout as well as several other riparian-dependent species to near-extinction.

In preparation for the project, an Eagle Scout Candidate with Ojai Boy Scout Troop 504 organized, under Brian Holly's direction, a creek clean-up day and stream morphology survey. Then, through the winter weekends, in a true grassroots effort, the members of the Watershed Committee and 124 other volunteers all came out for at least one day of creek work, and of these, 30 returned at least once more. The volunteers included students from Oak Grove School, Thatcher School, and Cal State Channel Islands.

A group of students planted acorns along the banks and volunteers helped broadcast a native riparian seed mix throughout the site. More than 250 mulefat and willow cuttings have also been planted, and follow-up efforts continue to keep invasive species from regrowing. Most recently, as part of the local Arbor Day celebration, nine sycamore trees were planted.

The project is expected to greatly enhance the health and vitality of the creek. The removal of non-native plants is allowing for a significant increase in the native plant population, improving the hydrologic capacity of the stream and providing light to the many native oak seedlings now sprouting along the canopy understory. Most of the non-native plants have been removed, and the stream banks have been planted

with native mulefat and willow cuttings. Already there is more available surface water in the north end of the stream channel. This is thought to be directly attributable to the removal of the palm trees, since they use more water than native trees. The native trees have far greater carbon sequestration ability than the palms, for they contain a



much greater photosynthesizing biomass. Also, the albedo (reflected light) is increased by natural openings in the tree canopy, and with this greater reflectivity of solar radiation, the overall temperature in this riparian area will likely decrease. Decreased temperature, greater solar reflectivity and less available CO<sub>2</sub> has important implications for localized cooling, and broader implications for helping to slow climate change.

Not only is the restoration effort an important project that has implications for localized cooling of riparian corridors and helping lower water temperature, but it is also improving water quality and habitat for foraging birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles that inhabit and rely on the riparian zone. And it has been well documented. Using a handheld GPS, Brian Holly has identified and plotted each tree and plant. Brian is also seeing to it

that habitat conditions are characterized to develop baseline conditions that enable the restoration team to track progress.

Please save the date and join us for what will be an informative evening on the local watershed so vital to all of our lives. But before that, on April 17 (see "In and Around the Valley" on page 5) we'll

be back out at the creek for more native planting and removal of invasive plant regrowth. This will be the last day until fall to dig in and be part of this great project. If you come, please bring gloves and (if you have them) a trowel or shovel.

We wish to thank the many project partners listed above, as well as the following contributors who have given supplies

and professional services at reduced rates or no cost: BioResource Consultants, Hawks & Associates, Bostrom & Associates, Oscar's Tree Service, Angelo Spandrio for his donation of many oak tree seedlings to the project, Consolidated Disposal Services for the removal and recycling of green waste, and Meiners Oaks Ace Hardware for their help with supply purchases.

This creek and riparian habitat restoration project was made possible by funding from the Earth Island Institute and by support from the Wetlands Recovery Project and the Coastal Conservancy of Southern California. 🌱

