



Music from the Mesa

Newsletter 84

Bolsa Chica Land Trust

Summer 2005

Executive Director's Message by Marc Stirdivant

The Fight to Save the Bolsa Chica Continues. . .

It's been a little over three months since you received your last newsletter and just about that long since I came on board as Executive Director.

A lot has been happening during that short period and it's been an exciting time to say the least. I've learned a great deal about the history of the Land Trust and had the good fortune to get to know many of our wonderful members. And one thing is already clear. There is still much to do to acquire, preserve, and restore the Bolsa Chica.

Inside the pages of your newsletter you'll find a wealth of information about what's been happening with the Land Trust and where we are headed:

- Evan Henry reflects on the recent decision of the Coastal Commission to approve a development on the Upper Bench.
- Julie Bixby talks about the next big battle for the Bolsa Chica, the Upper Bolsa Chica Wetlands.
- Marinka Horack describes the third year of our "Miracles of the Marsh" program.
- Kim Kolpin writes about the end of the planting season on the Mesa.

I hope you enjoy your newsletter and look forward to working with you as the fight to save the Bolsa Chica continues.

President's Message by Gerald Chapman

Let's Volunteer!

Although it may appear that the saga of the Bolsa Chica is over, nothing could be further from the truth. We still have to complete the sale of the lower bench to the state. The Upper Bolsa Chica Wetlands and the Goodell property need to be saved. And we have three wonderful Land Trust programs that are looking for volunteers:

Our "Miracles of the Marsh" program takes elementary school students on a guided tour of the Bolsa Chica. This program is perfect for retired teachers or anyone interested in wildlife, plant life, or the great outdoors.

Our tours of the Bolsa Chica take place at 10 a.m. on the third Sunday of every month and include the wetlands and the mesa with an emphasis on birds and plants. We can always use outgoing people to lead tours or help staff our information table.

And our restoration team, the Bolsa Chica Stewards, works hard at removing non-native plants and replacing them with native species. If you love gardening or just like to get your hands dirty, this is the ideal project for you.

If you are interested in any of these rewarding projects, call the Land Trust office at (714) 846-1001. We'll get you all the information you need to make an important contribution to the future of our "Coastal Jewel".

Did We Lose?

by Evan Henry

In 1980, a plan for 5,700 homes, a 1,300-slip marina and hundreds of acres of commercial buildings on the 1,600 acres at the Bolsa Chica wetlands won preliminary approval. None of it was built. Instead, a quarter-century later, the Coastal Commission approved 349 homes and a park on 105 acres. . .

*Los Angeles Times
May 28, 2005*

By now you've likely heard the outcome of the April 14 Coastal Commission hearing in which Hearthside Homes received approval to develop the Upper Bench of the Bolsa Chica Mesa. Any development on what is currently open space at the Bolsa Chica can be considered a loss since it is not consistent with the Land Trust's mission to acquire, preserve and restore ALL the Bolsa Chica. However, we have to look at this particular hearing in the context of the history of preserving the Bolsa Chica.

At the hearing, we mustered our best team of spokespersons from the Land Trust and the Amigos de Bolsa Chica and forcefully supported enforcement of the Coastal Act. I am proud of the way we worked hand in hand on our joint presentations. The Land Trust's Sandy Genis and I, along with Shirley Dettloff, Dave Carlberg and Mel Nutter of the Amigos, made our team a force of experience, knowledge and conviction. Individually, Jan Vandersloot's and Julie Bixby's public comments were like exclamation points to our presentation.

Too numerous to name were the Land Trusters in the audience who provided encouraging

smiles, comments and advice throughout the four-hour hearing. And Flossie Horgan. Let me just say that everything I may have contributed was touched in some way by her drive, her advice, or the plain fun of working with her.

The bottom line was that the developer agreed to meet all but one of the conditions recommended by the Commission staff and they convinced the Commission that the last one wasn't an issue. So, Hearthside is now able to exercise their legal right to develop on the Upper Bench.

But the history is all in the Bolsa Chica win column. There have been many wins over the years including the sale and restoration of the lowlands instead of a marina and more than a 1000 houses built on fill; the saving of Warner Pond; the Bolsa Chica legal decision setting statewide precedent for the preservation of wetlands; the ultimate development of a tenth of the housing units originally planned for the Mesa; and the way being cleared for the pending acquisition of the Lower Bench by the state.

I was feeling melancholy when I left the hearing at not having it all go our way. However, bolstered by what we've saved and knowing that the Bolsa Chica still needs us to fight for it, I realize that even though we may have setbacks, the Bolsa Chica Land Trust is a winner!

Evan Henry was a two-term president of the Land Trust and is currently Co-Chair of the Acquisition Committee

Upper Bolsa Chica Wetlands Report

by Julie Bixby



Photo courtesy of www.bixby.org/parkside

What do you get when you combine many obligate wetland vegetation species, annual 7+ consecutive days of water ponding, an underground stream, a handful of California species of special concern, a Federal species of special concern, and a species on the federal threatened list? Why, the Upper Bolsa Chica Wetlands, of course! Those who attended the Land Trust's special meeting, "Bolsa Chica: What's Next?" on May 17 got to view slides of those very aspects of the Upper Wetlands. But just because you may have missed the meeting doesn't mean you have to miss out on the great photos; all of them and more can be found at www.bixby.org/parkside, under the link "multimedia".

While the wait continues for the public hearing on the Upper Wetlands' fate (likely this July in San Diego or August in Costa Mesa), your Land Trust Board of Directors has been busy advocating the Upper Wetlands' status as a wetlands to Coastal Commission staff. That may sound funny, but it's not. Shea Homes' biological consultants have done everything in their power to excuse away and write-off the wetland parameters found on the property. The Land Trust has hired its own biological consultants to help fortify the work of local residents who have kept a close eye on the site for many years. Your tax-deductible donation will help us save the Bolsa Chica Wetlands.

To receive e-mail updates about the Upper Wetlands, e-mail mark@bixby.org with the subject line "add me to the Parkside list".

Julie Bixby is a member of the Board of Directors and is Chair of the Upper Bolsa Chica Wetlands Committee

Miracles of the Marsh Tours

By Marinka Horack



“Thank you for the cool day at Bolsa Chica! The best part was seeing the baby sharks and the heron nests,” said a young student who recently participated in the Land Trust’s “Miracles of the Marsh” program, which has just completed its third year.

Our Education Coordinator, Linda Wolfe, does an outstanding job organizing the docent volunteers, providing training sessions for them, scheduling schools for tours, and assigning docents to guide each tour. The four topics covered at each tour are wildlife, plant life, history, and water quality. Linda is always present to coordinate the docents, teachers, parents and students, and to make sure the tours run smoothly and stay on schedule. She also sends educational materials about Bolsa Chica to the teachers to prepare students for the tour.

Newsletter Editor, Dick LeGrue has put together a slide show which our docents take to the schools a few days before each tour. The students get a sneak preview of Bolsa Chica and enjoy seeing photos of the pelicans, herons, coyotes, cactus, snakes, and native plants. The students have lots of questions after the show.

Our volunteer docents include biologists, retired teachers, enthusiastic birders, and native plant stewards. Docent Bill Kettler grew up in Huntington Beach and he played as a boy at Bolsa Chica. He has interesting stories to tell the children about the Native American artifacts that were found on the Mesa. The students call docent Judy Todd the “Bird Lady” because she imitates bird calls. Docent Vi Cowden tells the children about Bolsa Chica during World War II when it was set up by the U.S. Army to help defend the coast. She tells them about World War II as an eyewitness because during the war she flew military planes from the factory to where the army needed them.

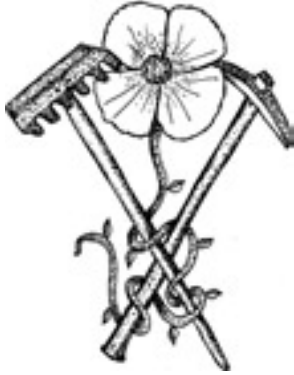
Since 2003, the Land Trust has conducted 70 school tours for more than 3,600 students, and our team of 17 docents have contributed over 1000 volunteer hours.

We’re always looking for new volunteer docents to join us. Please call the Land Trust office at (714) 846-1001 if you are interested.

Marinka Horack has been a board member since 1998 and is a docent for Miracles of the Marsh and our Sunday Bolsa Chica tours.

Grab Our Tools

By Kim Kolpin



A huge thank you to the more than 120 people who generously sent in over \$3,000 in donations for our next planting season!! And oh, do we plan on putting it all too good use. This October 15th marks our 10th Anniversary and we intend to kick it off in style! So, save the date and please plan on joining us for this very important milestone.

As you may know, our planting season runs from October through April and here are the numbers from this last season. We had 487 volunteers who gave us 1,277 hours worth of work to plant 1,704 native plants on the Mesa! And none of this would have happened without the wonderful generosity of the Land Trust members. Donations for the purchase of plants and equipment are always welcome, no matter how small.

This summer we are very busy hand watering each of these new plants to get them established, moving into our new shed, and dreaming big now that the lower bench will be protected. So, if you want a great morning in the sun, with really cool people doing something easy, join us on our workdays and help us water in these new little babes! We are out there June 18th, July 16th, August 20th and September 17th and can use all of the help we can get. Many people are beginning to make us their family event each month and are bringing their kids and grandkids, friends and family. We have hundreds of tools, but our greatest asset is our volunteers and the work and friendship they give is priceless.



Just like each of our plants, we want to grow bigger and stronger. To do that we need more volunteers to help us do more great things on the Mesa. In the next few weeks we will be having some great new flyers available, but they won't do a thing sitting in a box in my car. We need your help to get them out to the community. If you have a place to hang one, a person to hand one to, or a fridge with a bare spot, please contact me and I will get you one. Each person who joins us makes a big difference.

Thanks again for all of your continuing support and enjoy your walk along the Mesa trail! Happy Summer.

Kim Kolpin is a director of the Bolsa Chica Stewards, the restoration team of the Bolsa Chica Land Trust. She can be reached at (714) 717-6304 or Kolpin@Stanford.edu



South Parking Lot Will be Closed for Repairs

Visitors to the Bolsa Chica should note that the Department of Fish and Game will be making repairs to the south Ecological Reserve Parking Lot on Pacific Coast Highway beginning in June. Brian Shelton, the Reserve Manager, has provided the following schedule:

Phase 1 – Parking Lot Repair – June 6 to June 26, 2005

Phase 2 – Footbridge Repair – August 21 to October 8, 2005

Phase 3 – Parking Lot Paving and Striping – September 25 to October 15, 2005

Because the lot will be closed to the public during construction, the Land Trust's Wetlands Table and Bolsa Chica Tours will be located at the north Ecological Reserve Parking Lot on Warner Avenue.

Tours will take place on the following Sundays at 10 a.m.

June 19, July 17, August 21, September 18, and October 16.

In November, we look forward to moving back to our regular location in the refurbished south parking lot.

Land Trust Receives \$1,000



The Bolsa Chica Land Trust received \$1000 from the City of Huntington Beach and Simple Green on Earth Day as part of the Adopt-a-Beach program. The Trust was one of the nineteen environmental organizations in the city to receive this award.

The Adopt-a-Beach Program contracts with the environmental groups to clean a portion of the beach once a week for five months from November 1st to March 31st. This year our volunteers were Linda Wolfe, Carol Koelle, Scott and Vi Cowden, and Eileen Murphy. This is the eighth year in a row that the Land Trust has received this award.

Thank you Huntington Beach, Simple Green, and Linda, Carol, Scott, Vi, and Eileen!



Happy Birthday to the Land Trust!

On June 20th, the Bolsa Chica Land Trust celebrated its thirteenth birthday. The mission of the Land Trust is the same today as it was in 1992. . . to preserve ALL the Bolsa Chica.

**Resource Conservation:
Successful Strategies and Funding Opportunities for Creating Healthy Communities**

The Local Government Commission, the Institute for Local Self Government, the local non-profit Friends of Harbors Beaches and Parks and its Orange County Green Vision Project are jointly presenting this daylong conference on Friday, September 16, 2005, at the Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach. The event will focus on strategies to conserve land in Orange County for people to enjoy as parks, recreation areas, natural places and sources of clean water ensuring livable sustainable communities for generations.

For more information visit www2.lgc.org/events or contact:

Tony Leonard
916-448-1198, ext. 315
aleonard@lgc.org

Flossie Horgan
714-536-7262
horganf@aol.com

Registration will be available mid-June at www2.lgc.org/events.

The Bolsa Chica Land Trust is a Working Group member of the Orange County Green Vision Project.

Join the Land Trust at the Fourth of July Parade



Join the Land Trust as we celebrate America's independence at the Huntington Beach Fourth of July parade. This will be the 13th year that the we will march in the parade. From line-dancing to pushing wheel barrows, the Trust always has a great time. And this year. . . we have a lot to cheer about!

If you would like to join us, call the Land Trust Office at (714) 846-1001. We'll get you all the information. We'd love to have you with us at the parade!

Land Trust Honors "Miracles of the Marsh" Docents

For the third straight year, a luncheon honoring the docents of our "Miracles of the Marsh" elementary school education program took place at the home of Education Coordinator, Linda Wolfe. This year's event, held on June 7th, honored Kristen Coppa, Vi Cowden, Ted Dowding, Pat Fleischer, Nancy Harris, Marinka Horack, Bill Kettler, Carole Koelle, Karen Merickel, Juana Mueller, Diane Schochet, Marilyn Smith, Judy Todd, Glenna Touhey, Rudy Vietmeier, Chuck Wilmot, and Grace Winchell.

The Land Trust appreciates the great job done by all our docents!

E-Mail _____
 Telephone _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Address _____
 Name _____

_____ \$10 Senior/Student
 _____ \$15.00 Individual
 _____ \$20.00 Family
 _____ \$50.00 + Honor Roll

This is a Membership
 Renewal

Members: Renewal date shown on your mailing label
 Annual dues are tax deductible
 I want to join the Bolsa Chica Land Trust and help
 preserve the whole Bolsa Chica Ecosystem.
 Huntington Beach, CA 92649
 5200 Warner Avenue, #108
 Bolsa Chica Land Trust
 Mail Your Completed Membership Application to

Membership Renewal/Application

Directory
 Bolsa Chica Land Trust
 Exec. Director Marc Strdivant 714-846-1001
 Educ. Program Linda Wolfe 714-846-4588
 BC Stewards Kelly Keller 562-920-4215
 All Bolsa Chica Land Trust gift items available at Land
 Trust Office: Office Hours: 9:30AM to 5:30PM, M-Th

Regular Land Trust Events
BCLT Board Meetings
 2nd Thursday of each month. 7PM
 Call 714-846-1001 for location
BCLT Wetlands Table & Wetlands-Mesa Tour
 3rd Sunday of each month. 9AM-3PM
 Free Guided Tour 10AM-12noon
 PCH Parking at BC Wetlands
 For info & to help call 714-964-8170
Bolsa Chica Stewards
 3rd Saturday of each month. 9AM-12noon
 Meet in parking lot at PCH & Warner
 Habitat restoration, trail maintenance, etc.
 For information, call 562-920-4215



Bolsa Chica Land Trust
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 Email: bclt@bolsachicalandtrust.org

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We abuse the land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.

Aldo Leopold