



Music from the Mesa

Newsletter 86

Bolsa Chica Land Trust

Winter 2005

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Gerald Chapman

A Season For Thanks. . .

At this time of Thanksgiving, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all of you for all the help you have given the Land Trust over the years. We would certainly not be where we are today without your help.

I would first like to thank those of you who have renewed your memberships or have become new members. I hope that you will continue in the future. Without your dues and additional contributions the Land Trust could not continue.

I would also like to thank the Stewards and all of those who have volunteered to help with the restoration of native plants on the Mesa. If you have not gone out to the Mesa to see the results of their hard work, you must. Their results are truly amazing.

The docents who lead the tours and those who help with our "Miracles of the Marsh" program for school children deserve special thanks for introducing so many to the wonders of the Bolsa Chica. Their dedication is truly appreciated.

The Land Trust continues to receive grants and donations from many individuals and corporations that have enabled us to continue to expand our programs. Many thanks to you, as well.



The people who have so generously donated their time to attend the Coastal Commission meetings or sent letters to government officials will never know how valuable their acts have been to saving the Bolsa Chica. Your efforts have greatly affected the outcome of many decisions.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Board of Directors and our new Executive Director, Marc Stirdivant, for all their help. Their accomplishments have been truly amazing.

If I have forgotten anyone, thanks to you also. Remember that with all your help we can save our wonderful coastal jewel forever.

Happy Thanksgiving and may the coming holidays bring you joy and happiness.

COASTAL COMMISSION ADOPTS FINDINGS FOR BRIGHTWATER

by Sandra Genis

On October 13, 2005, the California Coastal Commission adopted findings and conditions formalizing its April 14, 2005 approval of a 349 home development on 68 acres of the upper bench of the Bolsa Chica Mesa known as Brightwater. Once the developer, Hearthside Homes, satisfies all conditions, a coastal development permit will be issued and development can proceed.

While we're sad to see any part of Bolsa Chica lost to development, the approval does pave the way for purchase of the lower bench by the Wildlife Conservation Board, which must be completed by the end of the year if we're not to lose the funds to other areas. The sales agreement stipulates that no sale will be consummated until the permit is issued for the upper bench.

Hearthside representatives asked that final permit processing be expedited, possibly by hiring additional staff at their expense. They noted the pending deadline for the sale and the requirement that the permit be issued prior to sale.

A major logjam exists in processing offers to dedicate open space, which requires specialized legal skills. At their November meeting, the Commission will consider means of allowing Hearthside, perhaps along with other applicants, to fund another staff position to expedite the process.

Various commissioners noted that while they, too, were anxious to move forward, the Wildlife Conservation Board was prepared to complete the sale immediately, and the requirement to obtain the permit prior to sale was at the behest of Hearthside. It was suggested by some commissioners that Hearthside reconsider the need to have the actual permit in hand, since the Commission's October 13th action gave Hearthside entitlement to build.

The Land Trust will continue to monitor this situation closely.

Sandra Genis is a land planner, a former Mayor of Costa Mesa and a member of the Land Trust's Board of Directors

LAND TRUST WEBSITE GETS A NEW LOOK

If you haven't visited the Land Trust's website lately, take a moment and visit us at www.bolsachicalandtrust.org. We've made it much easier to use – with new categories such as Programs and Projects, new pages such as the Sacred Cogged Stone Site and the Plants of Bolsa Chica, and new photos throughout.

We hope you enjoy it.

www.bolsachicalandtrust.org

HUNTINGTON BEACH CONSIDERS ANNEXATION OF UPPER BENCH

By Connie Boardman



The City of Huntington Beach is currently conducting negotiations with Hearthside Homes regarding the annexation of the upper bench of the Bolsa Chica Mesa. There is a huge benefit to annexation for the developer in the form of cheap and convenient City water. If annexation does not go forward, Hearthside will have to pay the Southern California Water Company to build a pipeline from the City of Cypress down Bolsa Chica Road to the project. The developer estimates this could cost \$8 million, but the Trust believes this estimate is very low.

The City benefits from annexation prior to development primarily in the form of one-time fees. The biggest of these is the park in-lieu fee. Because the developer has not set aside land for a neighborhood park, if they are annexed by the City prior to development, the City will receive an estimated \$11.69 million for its park acquisition and development fund. If the developer is not required to pay this fee, annexation is of very little benefit to the City.

The Land Trust is not opposed to annexation, but believes that annexation should not take place until the sale of the lower bench of the mesa to the State is complete. This will prevent Hearthside from using the lower bench as a bargaining chip during negotiations. We also would like the City to require the developer to purchase the adjacent important archeological site, ORA 83, and sell it to the State.

The Trust had wanted the City to wait to begin negotiations until after the lower bench of the mesa was in State ownership, but the Council voted 5-2 (Hardy and Cook opposed) to go ahead with annexation talks now.

Because of this, **THE LAND TRUST NEEDS YOUR HELP!**

Please take a moment to fill out and mail in the postcard enclosed with this newsletter. The Mayor and City Council need to hear from our membership about the annexation of the upper bench.

If you would like to send a letter of your own the address is:

Mayor Jill Hardy and City Council Members
City of Huntington Beach
2000 Main Street
Huntington Beach, CA 92648.

Sending in the postcard is especially important for Huntington Beach residents, but all of our members can help by mailing in the card!

Connie Boardman is a former Mayor of Huntington Beach and a member of the Land Trust's Board of Directors.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

By Marc Stirdivant



Great Gift Ideas from the Land Trust

If fighting the crowds, waiting in long lines, and paying high prices are ruining your holiday spirit, then the Land Trust has the answer. Let our Bolsa Chica Store be your one-stop shopping spot during the holidays.



This year all our favorite gift items are back including our spectacular 2006 "Wings Over Bolsa" calendar which is selling for the lowest price in its history.

Our beautiful "Save the Bolsa Chica" t-shirts and sweatshirts are made of 100% cotton and their colorful message will let everyone know you support saving all of Bolsa Chica.

Our handy note cards come in two sizes and feature either a beautiful watercolor of the Bolsa Chica Mesa or watercolor prints of the birds of Bolsa Chica.

And of course, we also offer the poster rendition of Lee Mothes' magnificent watercolor, "After the Storm" which is printed in light-fast inks on heavy acid free paper and is suitable for framing.



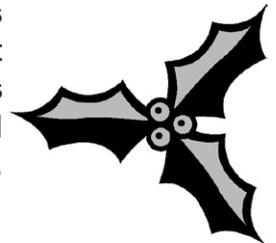
It's easy to order gifts from the Land Trust.

You can call us at **(714) 846-1001**.

Email us at **bclt@bolsachicalandtrust.org**.

Visit our website at:
www.bolsachicalandtrust.org.

From our Home Page, just click on Bolsa Chica Store for color photos and descriptions of all our items. You can print the handy Order Form at the bottom of the page, or use the one enclosed with this newsletter. Just fill it out and mail it to us. Checks are preferred, but Visa and MasterCard are welcome. Shipping is available.

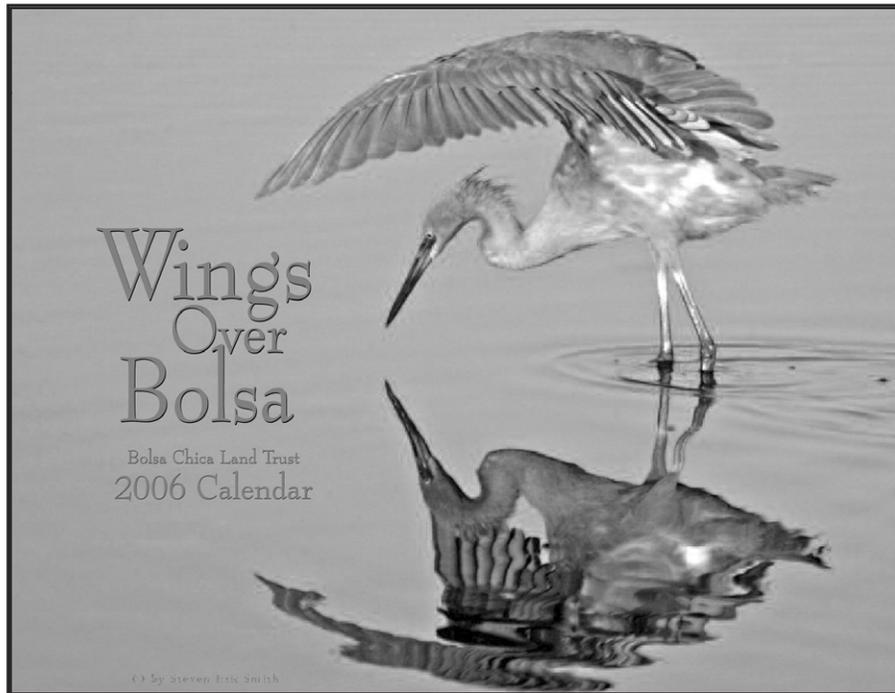


Or drop by the office. Our normal business hours are Monday through Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., but please call first to be sure we're there. We are located at 5200 Warner Avenue, Suite 108, in Huntington Beach, near the corner of Warner Avenue and Bolsa Chica Road. There's free parking behind the building.

Let the Land Trust make your holiday shopping easy.

Happy holidays!

2006 "WINGS OVER BOLSA" HAVE ARRIVED!



The spectacular "Wings Over Bolsa" calendars have arrived from the printer and they are more breath-taking than ever before. You won't want to miss the opportunity to purchase several as holiday gifts for family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. This year the calendar has been reduced in price to \$10 each, or five for \$39.95. They can be purchased by phone at **(714) 846-1001**, by email at www.bolsachicalandtrust.org or by using the Order Form enclosed with this newsletter.

LAND TRUST WINS AGAIN IN COURT!

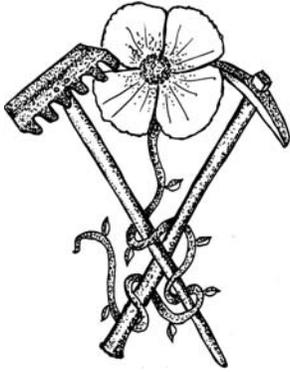
On October 19, 2005, Hearthside Homes dismissed its appeal in the case of Signal Landmark and Hearthside Homes v. Coastal Commission, the developers' challenge to both the Coastal Commission's rejection of Orange County's LCP and the Commission's proposal to preserve the entire Lower Bench from development.

The superior court decision which the developers were appealing was a complete victory for the Land Trust and the Commission. Had the decision gone the other way, the ability of the Commission to carry on with its recommendation (based on the Land Trust's advocacy) that the entire Lower Bench -- or some other large, fully contiguous portion of the Mesa -- be preserved would have been called into question.

It is quite likely that had the Land Trust and the Commission not prevailed, the pending sale of the Lower Bench would not have happened, and the fate of the Mesa would have endured in uncertainty for years, even while the State was spending millions to restore the wetlands to the south.

GRAB OUR TOOLS!

By Kim Kolpin



The Stewards would like to say a big 'Thank You' to everyone who came out to the Town Hall meeting and our 10th Anniversary work day ~ they both were a lot of fun! Our October work day is one that will have a dear place in our memories, from the beautiful Sage Ceremony given to us by Rhonda and Louis Robles, to 175 people putting 400 plants in the ground in just a little over an hour and hand watering them with 1,000 gallons of water ~ it was quite a day!

This planting season is going to be a fantastic one, and we hope you will join us. This year we are at the Point, enhancing and expanding our mature planting area, and we are also going to work on some sand dune restoration as well. The more hands we have the more plants get in the ground. It's that simple! So, if you wake up on the third Saturday of the month thinking that you would like to scatter pounds of wildflower seeds, or put some beautiful plants in the ground with a great group of people while watching the birds flutter over the wetlands, dress for mess, get your coffee to go, and come on out ~ everyone is welcome!

Kim Kolpin is a co-founder and director of the Bolsa Chica Stewards and can be reached at (714) 717-6304 or Kolpin@Stanford.edu

LAND TRUST ADOPTS A BEACH!



For the ninth straight year, the Land Trust has been selected to participate in the Adopt-a-Beach program sponsored by the City of Huntington Beach and Simple Green. The program runs from November 7 to March 31 and volunteers from the Trust will clean the beach between Life Guard stations 16 and 18 every Monday for five months.

New volunteers are always welcome. We meet at the stairs on Pacific Coast Highway and 22nd Street and work from 8:30 to 10 a.m. – unless it rains. The sponsors provide us with gloves, trash bags, and parking passes for parking on PCH.

For more information call Eileen Murphy at (714) 536-4835 or email her at murphyeile@aol.com.

STEWARDS REFURBISH MESA POINT

For the last few weeks, the Stewards have been hard at work refurbishing the interpretive area at the Bolsa Chica Mesa Point. As some of you know – and others may have seen – the Mesa Point was recently hit by vandals who sprayed graffiti, shattered the plexiglass over the interpretive panels, and even smashed one of the benches to pieces.

Working with funds from the Trust, the Stewards had one of the interpretive signs completely repainted, replaced the plexiglass, sanded and repaired the benches, installed a new kiosk panel about Bolsa Chica bird life, and replaced the nautical rope that serves as a barrier to the environmentally sensitive areas.

Many thanks go to the Stewards – and Thierry Kolpin and Mike McMahan in particular – for helping restore the Mesa Point.



*Mike McMahan of the Bolsa Chica Stewards
replaces nautical rope at the Bolsa Chica Mesa Point*

ALCOA PRESENTS GRANT TO THE LAND TRUST



The Board of Directors wishes to thank the employees of Alcoa Fastening Systems in Fullerton for nominating the Land Trust for two of their ACTION grants. Alcoa employees have worked for several months with the Bolsa Chica Stewards doing restoration work on the lower bench of the mesa.

The grants, which were awarded in October, will go toward continuing the work of the Stewards as they create a thriving coastal sage scrub habitat at Bolsa Chica. We look forward to a long and productive relationship with the fine employees of Alcoa.

Thank you, Alcoa!

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

Directory

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

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

This is a Renewal Membership

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

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



Bolsa Chica Land Trust

5200 Warner Avenue, #108, Huntington Beach, CA 92649

**Website: www.bolsachicalandtrust.org
 Email: bclt@bolsachicalandtrust.org**

Non-Profit Org.
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 Huntington Beach
 Permit #837

**All civilized governments are now realizing
 that it is their duty. . . to preserve, unharmed,
 tracts of wild nature.**

Theodore Roosevelt