



THE TERN TIDE

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Amigos Volunteer Achievements in 2017

By Jennifer Robins, Judith Huck and Michelle Miller

Amigos de Bolsa Chica conducted 23 free Wetland and Bird Tours with 277 visitors in 2017. Amigos also volunteered at booth events at the California Coastal Cleanup, Shipley Open House, Earth Day at the Bolsa Chica State Beach and Earth Day at Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve. They also volunteered at the STEM Fair at Spurgeon School, Girl Scout Annual Volunteer Conference and Goldenwest College's Science Showtime.

Thank you to the following for volunteering for these events: David Beeninga, Nancy Boyd-Batstone, Patti Cacho-Negrete, Nancy Curtis, Kim Dipasquale, Jerry Donohue, Lori Donohue, Chuck Drescher, Barbara Felberg-Jackson, Terry Hill, Bob Johnson, Terry

Jorris, Rachael Lloyd, Karen McReynolds, Bobbie Placek, Gregg Placek, Jennifer Robins, Jim Robins, Janelle Sorenson, Bill Stern, Elissa Warantz, and Brian Westcott.

Amigos de Bolsa Chica conducted six private tours for 393 children and adults. Many thanks to the following docents who lead these tours: Jerry Donohue, Chuck Drescher, Barbara Stewart, Al Vari, Terry Jorris, Jennifer Robin, Jim Robins, Vic Leipzig, and Janelle Sorenson.

Amigos de Bolsa Chica's FLOW program hosted 643 students from 18 schools. Eight bus scholarships were

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First Saturday of the Month Tour

Free tours of the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve led by Amigos docents.
9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Last Saturday of the Month Bird Walk

Free bird walk led by Amigos docents. 9:00 am.
Reservations are encouraged,
714-840-1575

Free monthly tours are on a first come, first served basis. Carpooling is encouraged as parking at the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve is limited.

Comparing Contaminants In Green Sea Turtles In Urbanized California Habitats

By Daryth Morrisey

The Eastern Pacific green sea turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) have been sighted in the Bolsa Chica Wetlands, off our coast, and even in Dana Point Harbor occasionally. But did you know that there is a resident population of these turtles close by? 22 turtles were first documented in 2008. This urban population resides in Seal Beach in the San Gabriel River near the Los Cerritos Wetlands. It is one of two foraging clusters found off the coast of Southern California. The other aggregation resides in the San Diego Bay. This is the most northernmost range in the Western United States for this species. During our winter months, they have been documented warming themselves in front of the So Cal Edison Power Plant discharge pipes. Jacuzzi anyone?

Amigos de Bolsa Chica's FLOW program and REI hosted a "Turtle Talk" on September 21 at REI in Bella Terra. We were fortunate enough to have Arthur Barraza, a graduate student at CSULB's Shark Lab under Dr. Chris Lowe, share his and his colleagues' research on green sea turtle contamination loads. This article is a synopsis of Arthur Barraza's PowerPoint presentation.

Arthur began his presentation with an overview of green sea turtles. They live up to 80 years old. They are endangered worldwide and threatened in the United States. There are multiple subpopulations. We are most familiar with the Hawaiian and Eastern Pacific aggregations. The most common reasons for their Endangered/Threatened status is due to bycatch (for example, drift nets catch on average 8 other species for every one swordfish caught), egg harvesting, and pollution. The Eastern Pacific and Hawaiian populations appear to be recovering. Green turtles inhabit coastal areas to forage for long periods of time only leaving to breed and lay eggs. These areas have high human activity and are highly urbanized. This leads to turtles accumulating several anthropogenic contaminants.

The contaminants were broken down into two groups: Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), and trace metals.



Arthur Barraza gives a fascinating talk on contaminants in the increasing numbers of sea turtles appearing in Southern California waters to an interested crowd at REI. Photo by Thomas Anderson.

POPs comprise of: Pesticides (PCB's and DDT's), and Flame Retardants (PBDE's). Trace metals occur naturally at low levels in the environment. Some are essential vs non-essential, and both can overwhelm the metabolism.

There are similarities as well as differences when comparing the Seal Beach and San Diego Bay turtles. Genetically, they are similar. They are linked to nests on Revillagigedo Islands off Michoacán, Mexico. Their diets are also similar. They are omnivorous, eating both meat and plants. Where their differences lie are primarily location, and power plant access. The power plant in San Diego closed in 2010. The turtles there surprisingly stayed.

Arthur then stated the hypothesis on his research: green sea turtles from Seal Beach and San Diego Bay will have different concentrations of POPs and trace metals. Overall, 42 turtles were captured and released, 17 from Seal Beach and 25 from San Diego (under NOAA permit #16803). Blood was drawn and sample shavings from the scute were taken. The scute is a thickened horny or bony plate on a turtle's shell with a

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Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

By Thomas Anderson



Close to 50 volunteers gathered on Thursday, November 16 at Don Ramon's Mexican Restaurant in Huntington Beach. The Amigos de Bolsa Chica hosted a dinner to show appreciation for these volunteers' efforts in the never-ending struggle to educate the world about the importance of healthy coastal wetland ecosystems. Many of the volunteers who attended, having either completed this year's FLOW Citizen Scientist training or the docent training class, were brand new to the Amigos de Bolsa Chica family. Other volunteers who attended had been contributing their time and talents to the cause for many years, and a few had been in the game since it began over 40 years ago.



The honoree of the evening was former Amigos President Shirley Dettloff. Not only had the evening's organizers been able to completely surprise her, they themselves had been surprised the organization had not before honored her decades-long efforts. As one of the Amigos de Bolsa Chica founding members, Shirley had been among the first group to begin a community effort which has not stopped. In addition to being President of the Amigos in 1989-90, Shirley went on to be elected to the Huntington Beach City Council and Mayor, and was also appointed to the California Coastal Commission for a six-year term.

Former Council Member and Mayor Ralph Bauer spoke fondly of his time working with Shirley and how she never had a bad word for those with whom she completely disagreed. Met Nutter, the Coastal Commission's first executive director, also spoke

Amigos President Jerry Donohue surprises Shirley Dettloff at the annual volunteer appreciation event with Volunteer of the Year. Photo by Thomas Anderson.

affectionately of his time working on many highly complex issues with Shirley and her attention to fairness and detail. Vic Liepzig, another Amigos President and colleague from the City Council was grateful for Shirley's determination and resolve to see the Bolsa Chica preserved from development and successfully restored. Last, Shirley's husband Bob, also a force in the community, spoke lovingly of his wife's willpower and fortitude. Truly an inspiration for volunteers of all ages.

While the world has changed dramatically in the last 40 years, it has been and will likely always be volunteers, individuals who selflessly give their time and energy to good causes, who make the world a better place.

Volunteer Achievements continued from page 1

awarded to qualifying schools that otherwise would not have been able to participate. We are grateful to the following Citizen Scientists who gave their time to the education component of the FLOW program: Adam Babcock, Bryce Barrera, Brian Barrera, Rick Beard, Franloie Cruz, Nancy Curtis, Annie Daw, Cheyenne Deleo, Elizabeth Deleo, Kim DiPasquale, Jerry Donohue, Roman Garcia, Sydney Gumz,

Melissa Herikson, Judith Huck, Terry Jorris, Sarathi Kandekumbura, Jason Kuhn, Michael Lawrence, Jeanne Lepowsky, Gina Lumbrumo, Mark Mermudez, Chie Mizuno, Judith Moman, Kevin Montevideo, Daryth Morrissey, Tanya Murray, Bryce Perog, Thomas Pfeifer, Jim Robins, Jennifer Robins, Emiko Schwab, Bill Stern, Joana Tavares-Reager, Karen Thomas, Kevin Urgula, Eric Vargas, Tony Wong, Jonah Zeko.

FLOW New Citizen Scientist Training

By Michelle Miller

Amigos de Bolsa Chica held its biannual FLOW Citizen Scientist Training on October 6, 2017. The training was led by Citizen Science Advisor and creator of FLOW, Joana Tavares, also an Earth Science graduate student from UCI.

The three-hour training began with a general overview on the importance of citizen science and the work we do at Amigos. Training continued outdoors and the volunteers learned how to sample the water at the tidal inlet using tools such as a refractometer and a plankton net. Afterwards, we relocated to the wetlands, where Joana and Jerry Donohue, President of Amigos, talked briefly about the history and ecology of the area. We finished up the training at the Visitor Center, where Joana went into detail about phytoplankton and algal blooms. Much enthusiasm was expressed, especially because there had been recent phosphorescent blooms in the area at night.

Out of the ten volunteers that we trained that day, we acquired three dedicated FLOW volunteers: Annie



Joana Tavares teaches new Citizen Scientists how to analyze the phytoplankton content in the water samples taken from the tidal inlet and the walkbridge in the wetland. Photo by Michelle Miller.

Daw, Gina Lumbruno, and Karen Thomas. The three citizen scientists have been volunteering every Friday since the training and we couldn't be any more grateful for their enthusiasm for our organization. The Fall FLOW training also gave us a new docent, Kim DiPasquale. He has been to several FLOW Fridays, completed the whole docent training, and will be leading tours soon.



Joana Tavares lectures on the purpose and importance of proper methods of collecting water samples from the bridge over the tidal inlet. Photo by Michelle Miller.

If you are interested in becoming a FLOW Citizen Scientist and want to join in on the plank-TONS of fun, or just want to learn more about the program, e-mail flow@amigosdebolsachica.org. We sample the water at the tidal inlet and wetlands on Fridays and we pass on our knowledge to students 2-3 times a month. We also send our data with the California Department of Public Health to ensure the safety of the public and its coastal waters.



2017 Docent Class

By Jennifer Robins

Amigos de Bolsa Chica had a very successful Docent Class this year. There were nine attendees who all completed the class conducted in September and October. The new docents are Brian Bradford, Monica Brady, Susana Coronel, Kim Dipasquale, Abra Gasser, Victoria Masjuan, Bobbie Placek, Gregg Placek and Janelle Sorenson. Their backgrounds include volunteering with the homeless and harvesting produce for the Second Harvest Food Bank of OC, managing volunteers in the City of Santa Clarita, conducting in-home hospice care, helping with riparian restoration project, leading restoration projects in Upper Newport Bay, volunteering for Relay for Life and Harvest Crusade, Environmental Activist, Leader and Speaker with The Climate Reality Project, working at the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium and



New docents left to right: Monica Brady, Susana Coronel, Gregg Placek, Bobbie Placek, Janelle Sorenson, Brian Bradford. Photo by Jennifer Robins.

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layer of keratin similar to fingernails. In the Seal Beach population, Selenium, Cadmium, and Mercury were most prominent. While Selenium is an essential metal and needed for survival, it can be toxic in excess. The excess can come from environmental contamination through urban runoff or agriculture. These turtles showed a much higher Selenium level than previous studies that date back to 2010. The San Diego Bay turtles had higher concentrations of PCBs, Aluminum, and Nickel in their system. The PCBs detected were those that cause neurological damage (non-dioxin-like) as opposed to cancer causing (dioxin-like). The Flame retardants were banned in 2010. They had been detected

volunteering with the Newport Bay Conservancy. Their varied experiences and knowledge will provide important valuable skills and competence for our organization.

The presenters for the sessions were Brian Westcott for History, Jim Robins for Restoration, Dr. Vic Leipzig for Ecology, Elissa Warantz for Birds and Endangered Species, Kelly O'Reilly for Fishes and Marine Invertebrates, and Rachael Lloyd for Wetland Native Plants. Brian, Jim, Vic, Elissa and Rachael are Amigos docents with many years of experience. Kelly is the Manager of the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The 22-minute video, *Saving the Bolsa Chica Wetlands*, was presented to the class to provide insight to the enormous amount of time and effort that saved the wetlands for future generations. A three-hour Perimeter Tour of the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve was given by Dr. Vic Leipzig. A Bird Tour of the BCER will be scheduled in the future.

Facilitators for the class were Jennifer Robins, Jim Robins and Jerry Donohue. Bill Stern returned for a refresher and provided excellent advice and encouragement to the new docents about conducting tours. If you are interested in signing up for the next Docent Class to be held in 2018, please contact the Amigos office at info@amigosdebolsachica.org or call 714 840-1575.

in the San Diego population prior to that, but have not been detectable after the ban. Overall, green sea turtles from each location appeared to have their own unique contaminant signature related to where they live. Future studies will need to keep in mind these contaminant signatures when studying whether these contaminants are negatively affecting these sea turtles' health.

The research presented was extremely informative, all who were present learned so much. Follow the San Gabriel River Sea Turtle Monitoring Project on Facebook for up to date information and best places to view these turtles.

America the Beautiful – Thanks to Volunteers with Vision

By Shirley Dettloff

America the Beautiful . . . I think we can all agree that we live in a beautiful country. Any of us who have traveled across our country by car or train, are totally aware of its beauty. We have a wonderful National Park System. Our monuments, the reserves, a coastline on both coasts which surpass any in any part of the world, the wetlands, and so many others publicly owned spaces that their mention would fill this page. Why do I bring this up when there is so much chaos in the world destroying so much beauty? Because if we just look around our own community we have much to be thankful for right here at home.

In Huntington Beach we have a magnificent coast, the Bolsa Chica and Huntington wetlands, a park system that can match any city with a 350 acre Central Park, and the Newland House reflecting our city's early history. And of course we are all familiar with the 40-year fight to preserve and restore the Bolsa Chica. I bring this up because none of this would have been achieved without the passion and hard work of hundreds of citizens like you, people who believed that a resource was important and were willing to fight for its preservation.

All of the areas have been saved because of YOU! You fought at every governmental level, and the

resources of a private developer and WON! It was ordinary people who achieved extraordinary things. It took committed individuals to ensure 350 acres right in the middle of Huntington Beach had been saved for a great park. This was an extraordinary achievement. The Newland House would now be a part of a shopping center had it not been for dedicated people, and the Huntington Wetlands would have been developed into homes and shopping centers as well. Within a state where great achievements happen frequently, these greatest of achievements took place right here in Huntington Beach!

The coast of California was saved because of a ballot measure protecting the coast, the Coastal Act. Many of you stood on street corners, day after day collecting signatures. What would the coast look like today without it? As a former Coastal Commissioner, I can tell you the coast would have a solid wall of housing and commercial development from Oregon to the Mexican border. And so give yourself a big THANK YOU for being a part of a wonderful movement that set out to save invaluable resources and WON many of the battles because you never gave up! You are what makes America the great nation it is: PEOPLE AND THEIR PASSION, FORTITUDE, PERSEVERANCE, AND COMMITMENT!

Remembering Kay Dolton

By Dave and Margaret Carlberg

Kay Dolton, long-time Amigos member, passed away October 20, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. in Kansas City, Missouri after complications from surgery. Kay and Terry Dolton were fixtures in the early years of Amigos de Bolsa, absorbed in the frenetic pace of the lawsuit against the developer, fundraising to pay for attorneys, and creating an education program to build public awareness of the importance of wetlands and open space. Kay had worked as a registered nurse until retirement, and had been in charge of the medical station at many of the Amigos' annual "Running is for the Birds" 5K/10K Run & Walks.

She is survived by her son Jon; daughter Alexia; and husband Terry who was president of Amigos from 1991-93. Terry had also been treasurer of the Bolsa Chica Foundation during the critical years of the Amigos' lawsuit against Signal, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Amigos until 2008. Kay and Terry moved to an assisted living residence in Missouri in August of this year. Their daughter, Alexia Swanepoel, had been Amigos' Executive Director from 2002-2007. Kay and Terry were devoted to each other, and their love carried them through their life together.

Jerry's Last President's Tern

By Jerry Donohue

Santa Barbara Audubon Visit

On November 15, Charles Falzon and I were able to attend the monthly meeting of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society. David and Margaret Carlberg, founding Amigos members, presented a three part program about Bolsa Chica. Dave began with a PowerPoint on the history of Bolsa Chica, followed by a showing of our 2016 short film, Saving The Bolsa Chica Wetlands, and concluding with Margaret showing fish and bird data collected over the past ten years since the opening of the tidal inlet. This event was held at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History and had 35 avid environmentalists asking excellent questions for 20 minutes. We have invited this group to visit the Bolsa Chica for a tour in the near future.

Lands Pass Update

A daily user fee is set to be implemented February 1 for visitors to the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve. (See the Fall 2017 Issue of the *Tern Tide* for details on this statewide program.) This pass can be purchased with a smart phone or online. School groups and volunteers are among those exempt from this new fee. Shirley Dettloff and Jerry Donohue are visiting local state legislators in an attempt to get this fee rescinded. Stay tuned.

Thank You, Amigos

As this will be my last chance to make comments in this section, I want to thank you all Amigos for the opportunity to help lead this organization these past 4 years. My wife Lori and I enrolled in the docent training class 10 years ago and we loved listening to and learning from many of the founding members who now have completed over 40 years of hard work saving the Bolsa Chica wetlands. Today, though the area is protected several issues have arisen that still require our vigilance. The continued need to dredge the tidal inlet and the imposition of user fees are the two major issues that you will hear more about in the next few months.

Amigos has always felt like family to me. Volunteering gives back to the community but when you get the opportunity to volunteer and educate at the same time a double blessing is received. Whether leading a wetland tour or helping pull in a phytoplankton

sample with a net, there is something special about investigations into nature. At a recent Saturday bird walk people were commenting about how they had driven past this south parking lot at 60 miles per hour for years without stopping to see what it contained. That had been my story for many years as well. Now I can walk to the BCER in 15 minutes and then spend several hours enjoying the wildlife or just the beauty and silence from the Pocket Pond.

The Amigos legacy is carried on by a small but dedicated group of individuals who year after year attend board or educational meetings. Some of these people work quietly, often without the recognition they deserve for their efforts. It is grass roots citizen groups like ours that makes this country great. Amigos has been fortunate to attract some young people over the years, mostly through FLOW. I think we have acted as good role models so even if their job opportunities forced them to leave our area, our imprint still remains with them. Furthermore, in the next few months we are working with the Senior Center in Huntington Beach to lead tours for seniors and maybe enlisting their support for some of our projects as well. I am thankful for all the help you have shown me over the years and I will continue to volunteer and serve where needed. See you at the wetlands or at FLOW. Thanks, Jerry.



Jerry Donohue, pointing, teaches Citizen Scientist trainees about the coastal wetland ecosystem. Photo by Michelle Miller.



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AMIGOS DE BOLSA CHICA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I support the specific and primary purpose of Amigos de Bolsa Chica, which is to advocate the preservation, restoration and maintenance of the Bolsa Chica, to encourage the public acquisition of all the wetlands and sufficient surrounding open space to create a viable ecosystem, and to provide education about the importance of wetlands.

ANNUAL DUES

\$ 10 Student

\$ 25 Individual

\$ 40 Family

\$100 Sustaining

\$1000 Life Member

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Additional Contribution:

\$ _____ Fund operational expenses \$ _____ Fund education projects \$ _____ Total enclosed

Please check if you are interested in volunteering for:

Education outreach Grantwriting Social media Wetlands cleanup Leading tours Fundraising

All contributions to Amigos de Bolsa Chica are tax-deductible as allowed by law under IRS Code Section 501(c)3.

No goods or services were provided in consideration of this gift.

Return application to: Amigos de Bolsa Chica, P.O. Box 1563, Huntington Beach, CA 92647