

Amigos de Bolsa Chica THE TERN TIDE



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Environmental Community Loses Two Giants

The community and the world recently lost two giants in the environmental arena. Dr. Joel Pasco, a veterinarian and founder of the Huntington Beach Wetlands and Wildlife Care Center, died on October 24 while on a fishing trip to the Sierras. Dr. Pasco realized decades ago that there were no facilities to care for injured and sickened birds and other wildlife that were increasingly turning up in our rapidly urbanized area. He began caring for such animals in his practice and soon Dr. Pasco was known as the person to whom to bring an injured hawk or an ailing raccoon. His wild patients soon overwhelmed his veterinary hospital, which led him to help start the Huntington Beach Wetlands and Wildlife Care Center. His family and friends describe him as a renaissance man. He was a sculptor, a musician, and a master chef. His many hobbies included photography, bonsai and anything done outdoors.

The second great loss was Dr. Jan Vandersloot, who died at his home on November 4. Extremely generous with both his wallet and his time, Jan could always be counted on to support environmental causes throughout the region, including Bolsa Chica. Speaking before the Coastal Commission in 2000, he said, "The Bolsa Chica has a natural beauty that has struck me for 20 years and that should not be sacrificed."

Jan was a popular dermatologist, and soon after he established his practice in Huntington Beach around 1980, a patient mentioned the fight to save Bolsa Chica. After attending a meeting of the Amigos, he signed up as a life member and became one of the organization's most devoted supporters. Jan was an enormously effective member of the Amigos board of directors from 1981 to 1989. He left the Amigos board in 1989 and soon co-founded the Bolsa Chica Land Trust.



Both men will be sorely missed.

Amigos board members Jan Vandersloot and Dave Carlberg chat at a Bolsa Bash in the early 1980s

Amigos Plays Host To Anjo Dignitaries

On November 13, Amigos docents Margaret and Dave Carlberg led a tour of Bolsa Chica for ten officials from Huntington Beach's sister city, Anjo, Japan, along with an interpreter and members of their Huntington Beach host families. The visitors were highly impressed with the history of the wetland and its wildlife.



Visiting officials from Anjo Japan tour the Bolsa Chica.

In Memory of Buddy Hoodman

Friends of Howard "Buddy" Hoodman who passed away recently have made some generous donations to the Amigos de Bolsa Chica in his memory. Buddy was a long-time resident of Huntington Harbour and was an active tennis player, a world traveler, and had hiked all the local mountains and beyond. After he developed Parkinson's disease and couldn't manage the mountain trails, his hiking buddies visited him often to walk on the level trails in the Bolsa Chica. His wife Wanda said that his last years were happier because of having the opportunity to spend so many hours in our beautiful wetland.

2009 California Coastal Cleanup Recap

Amigos de Bolsa Chica managed the California Coastal Cleanup from the South Parking Lot of the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve on September 19th. 90 volunteers representing school groups, scouts and the public picked up recycle items and trash. Thanks to our loyal members for helping with the set-up, handing out supplies and refreshments and packing up after the event under the direction of Jim Robins, Margaret Carlberg and Jennifer Robins. Members who helped were Terry Hill, Ed Zschoche, Elissa Warantz, Julia Tafel, Ron Davis, Laura Holdenwhite, Jim Jauman, Al Vari, Jim Aldridge and Cheri Ikerd at the Information and Sign-In tables, in the Parking Lot for traffic control, at the Supplies Handout table and the Refreshment table. Thanks also to Ross Griswold and Lennox Vu who were the Photographers for all clean-up and weed abatement areas.


Donations of coffee from Starbucks, fruit from Ingardia Brothers of Santa Ana, water and snacks from Ralph's, Von's and Smart and Final markets in Huntington Beach provided the volunteers with snacks, coffee and water. Amigos volunteers enjoyed snacks and light lunch at the Bolsa Chica Conservancy after the completion of the Coastal Cleanup.



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Docent Training Class Begins January 5

Beginning January 5, 2010, a 5-week Docent training program will be held on Tuesday nights at the Bolsa Chica State Beach Visitor's Center from 7:00-9:00 pm. This training will also include two weekend field trips to the Bolsa Chica. Each week a different speaker (Helen Higgins, Vic Leipzig, Barbara Sentovich, Dave Carlberg, and Kelly O'Reilly) will share with the class their extensive knowledge in their area of expertise. In the class sequence you will learn about the history, ecology, birds and endangered species, the restoration and maintenance project, and the fish and macroinvertebrates of the Bolsa Chica Wetlands. A brand new docent manual filled with a wealth of information and a pictorial binder to use during the tours are distributed to each new docent. Current docents are invited to attend any of the classes to refresh their information, but please notify the class facilitator Patty Overley, pattydurre@sbcglobal.net if you plan to attend. To register for the program as a new docent or for more information contact the Amigos office at (714) 840-1575 or info@amigosdebolsachica.org.

Volunteers Needed

The Community Education Committee of the Amigos de Bolsa Chica is looking for friendly volunteers who would be willing to staff a table filled with Amigos literature at the wetlands. This would entail answering general questions about the Bolsa Chica and distributing literature to interested individuals about the programs offered by the Amigos. We plan to begin this on specified Saturdays and/or Sundays starting in February, and hope that volunteers could commit to a couple of hours. Volunteers do not need docent training but do need to be Amigos members. If you are interested in this project or have questions, please e-mail Lori Donohue (ldonohue@socal.rr.com) or Ed Zschoche (ezsch@verizon.net).

Company Grants Sought

Does your company have a community grant program? Many companies such as Boeing, Pratt and Whitney, and Allergan sponsor grants for supporting environmental projects. The grants usually have to be initiated by an employee. Please check with your public affairs office and let us know if your company would be interested in supporting one of Amigos de Bolsa Chica's many projects. Call us at 714 840 1575 or email us at info@amigosdebolsachica.org to get the details on our educational projects.

Wine Tasting is for the Birds

Amigos de Bolsa Chica held its Second Wine Tasting is for the Birds Fundraiser on October 24, 2009 at The Winery in Los Alamitos. Gary King, owner and winemaker, generously opened his tasting room and wine cellar exclusively to Amigos for a special night of tasting, toasting and fundraising. Mr. King offered a variety of excellent, very locally made wines to an enthusiastic crowd. The money raised goes towards Amigos operating expenses. Thank you to all who attended or made a donation.

Photo at right: Amigos members enjoy King wines.



Visitor Center at Bolsa Chica State Beach Native Plant Landscaping Project

The Amigos de Bolsa Chica and the Bolsa Chica Land Trust are partnering with Bolsa Chica State Beach to improve the outer appearance of the Visitor Center. On Sunday, November 8, 18 people came down to the beach and got the project underway. First, a lot of weeding needed to be done, and then about 40 California native plants were planted near the front entrance of the Visitor Center.

This effort to make the Visitor Center a more inviting establishment by planting local native plants, weeding and grooming the mature shrubs will be an on-going program. Volunteers are invited to join us on the second Sunday of each month from 9:00 am until noon. Tools, plants, planting instruction, and refreshments are provided. Volunteers must contact the Amigos office for specific information about the project: info@amigosdebolsachica.org or 714-840-1575.



Kim Kolpin instructs volunteers on proper planting techniques.



New native California plants at the State Beach Visitor Center.

Water Bond Measure on 2010 Ballot

As a part of the large scale water package that the California State Legislature recently passed, SB7x2 (Cogdill), there is a section of the legislation that will affect the Bolsa Chica. Through the efforts of the Bolsa Chica Land Trust, language was included that will have a great impact on Bolsa Chica. In the measure there is \$20 million for acquisition, restoration and visitor facilities. This work deserves our thanks to the Trust who has worked so hard for the protection of the entire Bolsa Chica.

The actual language of the bill reads “and not less than twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) shall be available for grants for protection and restoration of the Bolsa Chica wetlands and adjacent uplands and for associated visitor interpretive natural history or archeological facilities.”

After the Governor’s signature, this bill will appear as a bond measure on the 2010 ballot. Of course this bond measure will require voter’s support in the 2010 election. We will follow the course of the bond and keep you informed. The Water Bond is critical to the future of California where water is “gold”. Again our thanks to the Bolsa Chica Land Trust for their efforts in securing this language in the bill.

Jeff Stoddard Moves On

California Department of Fish and Game Land Manager Jeff Stoddard has left his Southern California responsibilities for a new position in the Sacramento area. The well-deserved promotion is a plus for Jeff and his family but a loss for those of us who have worked with him at Bolsa Chica and other local reserves. Jeff’s new job involves aiding land owners in grassland and wetland restoration projects. We wish him well.

Jeff was a familiar figure in Bolsa Chica while he was manager of the “old” Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve as well as that of Newport Back Bay and Coal Canyon. Recently the decision was made to designate all of Bolsa Chica as a single ecological reserve and Kelly O’Reilly its sole manager, narrowing Jeff’s manager responsibilities to Newport Back Bay and Coal Canyon. Jeff didn’t abandon Bolsa Chica entirely, however. He continued to oversee the design and construction of the walk bridge that is being installed across the channel adjacent to the Warner Ave bridge, connecting the north parking lot with the mesa trail.

Jeff’s replacement is Carla Navarro. She is a graduate of Cal State Fullerton (as is Kelly), and her master’s degree thesis was a study of rocky intertidal zones. Welcome, Carla!

Amigos Holiday Party and Docent Recognition

During the annual holiday docent party on December 9 at the home of Dave and Margaret Carlberg, 51 docents, spouses, board members, and some new docent candidates enjoyed good food and company. The year's activities were reviewed, and certificates were presented to the docents for their service in 71 tours and 8 programs. The special features of the beautiful new Docent Training Manual were highlighted by the major section reviewers and copies were distributed to all active docents. This was the culmination of a year's work editing the text and numerous illustrations, which was funded by Marisla Foundation and Allergan grants.



Barbara Sentovich was recognized as the 2009 Amigos de Bolsa Chica Docent of the Year. Barbara joined Amigos in 1994, taking the docent class immediately, and she has been an active Amigos member all

15 years. She still averages giving about 15 tours and programs each year. She was the Amigos Volunteer Coordinator, coordinating our various off site events, such as 100 volunteers for the 10 K races during the late 1990s, and writing a column in the Tern Tide each month. More than 10 years ago Barbara prepared 2 excellent slide shows for use in schools and other community events--The Bolsa Chica Story and Birds of the Bolsa Chica. Both are still used and are a source for some of the photos in the Docent Tour Photo Binder and our videos.

She is a very dedicated bird watcher, traveling afar and visiting the Bolsa Chica nearly every week year round. She has been an excellent teacher of birds and endangered species at the Amigos docent training classes for at least 6 years. As a field trip leader for new docents, Barbara teaches not only bird identification, but how to help people of all ages learn about the birds in our special habitats. She shows up even on rainy days to teach one or many eager new docents in learning about the birds! Barbara has been a major reviewer of the Docent Training Manual since 2002. This year she reviewed both Birds and Endangered Species sections to make many major changes. During the years she has kept the docents up to date on the changing status of our Peregrine Falcon and California Brown Pelican both of which are now off both Federal and State Endangered lists.

Long overdue recognition of Barbara Sentovich as the 2009 Amigos Docent of the Year was given, with the presentation of a unique photograph of an egret which had a clam clamped on its bill. The photo was taken by Ross Griswold when on a field trip with Barbara--and it is one of her favorite photos of the year! Thank you Barbara, for your exemplary service to the mission of the Amigos de Bolsa Chica.

2009 Tours - Thanks to Amigos' Docents

The following Amigos docents got out to our beautiful Bolsa Chica wetlands to share their knowledge with 253 students, Scouts, and the general public over the past year. We hosted more than 70 tours and offsite programs.

1-4 programs (including events such as Earth Day and Coastal Cleanup): Joyce Beardsley, Alma Bowman, Craig Frampton, Bob Hogan, Mary Ellen Houseal, Victor Leipzig, Kevin McCarthy, Jim Marshall, Susan Mickelson, Sharon Simmons, Elissa Warantz, Brian Westcott and Grace Winchell.

5-11 tours or programs: Jim Aldridge, Barbara Binaski, Maria Buhbe, Mike Concannon, Ron Davis, Gerry Donohue, Chuck Drescher, Dean Elder, Patti Griswold, Ross Griswold, Helen Higgins, Terry Hill, Laura Holdenwhite, Bob Johnson, Patty Overley, Jamie Pavlat, Fran Pike, Phil Smith and Julia Tafel.

12-18 tours or programs: Margaret Carlberg, Lori Donohue, Betty Murphy, Jennifer Robins, Jim Robins, Barbara Sentovich and Ed Zschoche.

And a whopping 22 to 35 tours or programs: Dave Carlberg, Barbara Stewart, and our 'Tour Greeter' Al Vari. Thanks again for ALL of your volunteer time and efforts! Amigos and the Bolsa Chica Wetlands would not be as great as they are without you.

Second Chance for Western Snowy Plovers at Bolsa Chica

By Cheryl Egger, Wetlands and Wildlife Care Center

This year a total of nine Western Snowy Plover chicks were successfully raised at the Wetlands and Wildlife Care Center in Huntington Beach and released at Bolsa Chica. Six were hatched from rescued, abandoned eggs and three chicks were rescued from an abandoned nest. Peter Knapp, monitor of Snowy Plovers at the Bolsa Chica Reserve, brought the eggs and chicks to the center for care at various times during the nesting season. All nine birds were released as healthy, self-sufficient juveniles and were observed feeding and behaving normally after release. The released birds could be important to our Threatened Pacific population of Snowy Plovers.

Two more Snowy Plovers, one adult and one juvenile, were brought to the care center by the public from Surfside this year. They both appeared to have botulism and were treated and released.

In 2008, Peter rescued and brought in three abandoned plover chicks and three abandoned eggs. The center didn't have an egg incubator at the time, so Peter bought and donated one to the center in memory of Loren Hays. Loren was a champion for these little birds and worked tirelessly with Peter to help save our local Western Snowy Plovers. The Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve is their only breeding area in Orange County. The three eggs did not hatch, but the three chicks were successfully raised and released.

All but one of the birds raised or cared for at the center were banded with color leg bands and many of them have been seen after dispersal at various coastal locations. Two of the 2008 birds were sighted in San Diego and one of them, a male, probably reproduced there. Several 2009 birds have been seen at Bolsa Chica State Beach, one at Balboa and one at Cardiff State Beach in North San Diego County.

We hope that birders will report banded Snowy Plovers to 1-800-327-BAND. It will be very interesting and exciting to know how all of these birds fare in the future. It gives validation to the center for our efforts to raise and release healthy birds and to Peter for monitoring and helping to assure that these birds to have a chance to survive.



Snowy plover chick hatched at the Huntington Beach Wetlands and Wildlife care center from an abandoned egg.



Juvenile snow plover released into wetland August, 2009.



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The President's (Last) Tern

By Dave Carlberg

As the above title suggests, this is my last column as president of the Amigos de Bolsa Chica, for my two year stint ends in January. It has been a privilege to serve you as president these 24 short months. And while the position has had its ups and downs, the former certainly outnumber the latter. I am delighted to relate some of the highlights of my two years as president. One of my greatest joys has been responding to the many communications we have received containing comments or questions about our favorite wetland. It's truly impressive to see how many people are interested in various facts about Bolsa Chica. The dozens of thank-you letters (mostly colorfully illustrated) we get from school kids whom we led on tours are another kick. Other pleasures have been in seeing progress being made in 2009 in designing a full complement of interpretive signs that will eventually help visitors to the Ecological Reserve understand all aspects of the site. The Amigos, the Bolsa Chica Land Trust, the Bolsa Chica Conservancy and the Department of Fish and Game are all contributing ideas to the project.

After many years of silence, this year experienced a sudden burst of activity toward the ultimate construction of a permanent Bolsa Chica interpretive center. The project is spearheaded by the Conservancy, an architect has been chosen and a design committee is being formed, of which I am a member. Other highpoints of 2008-09 were our two well attended annual science symposia where several local university scientists and consultants reported on the findings of their latest research in Bolsa Chica. We strongly feel the idea of providing the results of scientific research to a general audience provides a unique and valuable public service.

In case you are thinking the Amigos is all work and no play, we also threw a number of purely fun events such as our wine tasting parties, inlet opening celebration picnics, and holiday parties honoring our docents.

Speaking of docents, I am forever grateful to the many talented docents who give up their own personal time and energy to lead the First Saturday and private tours during the year. Our programs would not be possible without you. And for those of you reading this who are not Amigos docents, if you would like to join that distinguished group, an article describing our next training classes can be found on another page of this Tern Tide. Another person who deserves special recognition is Laura Holdenwhite, our office coordinator. She spends her days juggling phone calls, emails, tour schedules, and a dozen other chores that keep the Amigos going.

One of the big disappointments of 2009 was the Huntington Beach city council decision not to pursue the annexation of the entire Bolsa Chica. In a costly study by an outside consultant, the advantages of annexation were outlined, such as more rapid emergency response times, income from oil taxes (after initial paperwork costs), and bragging rights of having a major ecological attraction within the city. However, the council decided to shelve the idea apparently due to questions raised by the consultant that in my opinion were highly speculative, to say the least. It was pretty clear from the council's discussion that the majority of its members were, putting it politely, quite uninformed of the issues involved. "There's always next year."

In 2006 when the restoration was essentially completed, there actually were members who felt there was no longer a need for the Amigos. Everything that had to be done was done. Let's close our doors, they said, donate our meager cash reserves to a worthy cause, and relax. Clearly we've accomplished much since 2006 and there is still a lot to be done. Thanks to our contributors and members like yourselves, we have been able to fund most of the projects we feel must be continued. But there are many other ideas on the drawing board, waiting for the benefactor(s) to come along and make them a reality.

As 2009 winds down, Margaret and I and the entire board of directors wish you a very merry holiday season and a new year that sees a new era of peace and prosperity.

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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.

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