



OPEN SPACES

The latest news from the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy

Vol. 12 No. 3

Working to Protect The Ojai Valley's Future - Today

Fall 2005

Engel Says Goodbye to Ojai and OVLC

Jim Engel, the Conservancy's Executive Director for the last seven years, will be leaving the organization in mid-August and moving to the East Coast. "We are sad to see Jim go. He has been a great asset to the organization," says Larry Ragan, President. "However, we have an incredibly dedicated team of staff and board members who will make the transition a smooth one."

The Conservancy board is already moving forward with the recruitment of a new executive director. "Thankfully, we will be able to attract highly qualified candidates with our successful track record," says Ragan.

During the past seven years, Engel has been one of the most familiar faces associated with the Conservancy. As executive director, he was part of a successful era that saw the Conservancy grow significantly in both land protection and organizational resources. The Conservancy now protects more than



Jim Engel

three square miles of the valley and has raised millions of dollars to protect and care for these open space lands. Open space acquisitions included the Palmer Property and Besant Meadow (Ojai Meadows Preserve), San Antonio Creek Preserve, Cluff Vista Park, Confluence Preserve and what is considered the Conservancy's greatest accomplishment, the 1,591-acre Ventura River-Rancho El Nido Preserve. Engel also

played a key role in developing a working partnership with the Ojai Unified School District for the restoration of the Ojai Meadows Preserve and the visitation by thousands of school children to the Preserves.

Engel has accepted the Director of Development position with the New Jersey Conservation Foundation. Established in 1960, the Foundation has successfully protected over 100,000 acres and is the sixth largest land conservancy in the United States. Dawn, his wife, will be taking a new job with Verizon, whose headquarters has recently moved to New Jersey. "Leaving Ojai is very difficult for me and my family. We have made so many friends here," explains Engel. "This community has been unbelievably generous with their gifts of time and financial support. The professional and personal lessons learned here will enrich me for the rest of my life."

Please join us on Friday, August 12th for an Open House and an opportunity to say goodbye to Jim, Dawn, and Abbey. It will be held at the Land Conservancy Office, located at the back of the arcade next to Tottenham Court, from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

The Confluence Preserve is a vital part of the Conservancy's efforts to protect and restore the

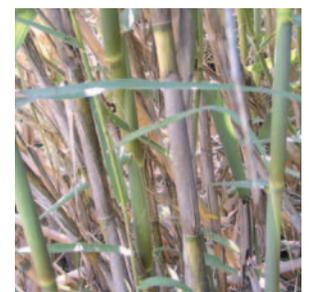
Conservancy Receives Grant to Restore Confluence Preserve

Ventura River watershed. Acquired from the Wallevik family in 2003, the thirty-acre preserve encompasses more than a half mile of the Ventura River north of Casitas Springs. The Preserve includes a healthy remnant stand of old-growth cottonwood and sycamore woodland that once thrived along the entire Ventura River corridor.

Unfortunately, the Confluence Preserve has fallen prey to the same "green invaders" that now plague every watershed in Southern California. These non-native invasive plants include *Arundo donax*, or giant reed, vinca, cape ivy, fennel, and tamarisk, to name a few. They have become a major environmental problem by crowding out native species, consuming massive amounts of water and severely diminishing wildlife habitat.

\$29,915 to initiate removal of these non-natives in order to restore the natural ecology of the preserve. The Conservancy will be working with crew members from the California Conservation Corps under the guidance of Fish Habitat Assistant Stevie Adams. The Conservancy will also be providing educational programs to elementary and high school students stressing the important role riparian habitats play in the ecological balance of the Ventura River.

Invasive plant species smother natives and provide poor wildlife habitat



In June, the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project awarded the Conservancy a generous grant of

Friends of the Ojai Valley: A Great Idea Grows

Last year, the Conservancy started the Friends of the Ojai Valley (FOTOV) for a group of members who pledged an annual, unrestricted gift of \$1,000 or more. These gifts are being used to ensure the long-term future of the organization. The fifty-one FOTOV members were invited to tours of local ranches, intimate events at Valley estates and received projects updates by mail and phone. So far this year, "Friends" have participated in several exciting activities.

'Big Picture' Tours of the Ventura River

Members enjoyed guided tours of the Conservancy's Preserves and the Ventura River region with staff and board members. During the



John Whitman talks about grape growing and ranch stewardship to FOTOV members

approximately three-hour tour participants were able to view the preserves in full wildflower displays and learn more about the Conservancy's future open space plans.

Exploring A 320-acre Ranch

On the morning of our Membership and Volunteer Celebration at Old Creek Ranch Winery, Members were treated to a

pre-event tour of the scenic 320-acre ranch, including a discussion on the finer points of wine making with owners John and Carmel Whitman. The property is home to extensive oak woodlands and lies in the shadow of Sulphur Mountain.

Casa Barranca Wine Tasting and Social

Members of FOTOV enjoyed a lovely reception at Casa Barranca, hosted by Bill Moses. Guests were able to tour the Greene and Greene designed home and spectacular grounds, and share in wine tasting and delicious hors d'oeuvres. Members heard about the latest plans for open space protection and were able to ask questions about the Conservancy's projects.

For more information on joining Friends of the Ojai Valley, contact Jane Lax at 805-646-7930 or email to ovlcmembership@ojai.net

Membership and Volunteer Celebration Draws Large Crowd

The annual celebration for volunteers and members drew more than 150 people on a lovely afternoon at the Old Creek Ranch Winery. Guests enjoyed a barbeque, wine tasting and live music performed by Rabbit Mackay. Harold Glenn and Leanne Campbell were honored by Rich Handley and the Conservancy for their special volunteer efforts on behalf of the Ventura River Preserve. "Harold and Leanne are like my right arm" said Rich Handley, Preserve Manager. "They are always there when work needs to be done."

See page 7 for more on the event

Staff Profile

Meet Derek

Derek Poultney, our new Project Manager, joins the Conservancy with five years of environmental consulting and field biology experience. In addition to volunteering for various non-profits, his past employers include ENSR, CA Dept of Food & Agriculture, US Forest Service, STAND (Serious Texans Against Nuclear Dumping), Vandermost Consulting Services, and T&B Planning Consultants. Derek has earned a M.S. in Environmental Studies from CSU-Fullerton and a B.A. in Music Composition from UCSB (College of Creative Studies). Aside from precious time with his wife, Derek enjoys music, mountains, and mammals. He is happy to be in one of the "nicest places in the world" - working to keep it that way - and anxious to supplement his lifelong dream of preserving wilderness with his lifelong pursuit of making enough money through song-writing to purchase key open space lands.



Derek Poultney

Upcoming Events

Farewell Reception for Jim, Dawn, & Abbey

Date: Friday, August 12th

Time: 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Location: OVLC Office, behind the arcade, next to Tottenham Court

Join us in saying farewell to Jim Engel and his family. Refreshments will be served.

Saturday Morning at the River

Date: Saturday, Aug. 27th

Time: 8am

Location: Riverview Trailhead

Come along on a guided hike and learn all about the natural wonders of the Ventura River Preserve. Hike leaders are Rich Handley, and Cricket Twichell.

Saturday Morning at the Ojai Meadows

Date: Saturday, Sept. 24th

Time: 8am

Location: Maricopa Hwy., next to Nordhoff High School

Join Rich Handley, Preserve Manager for an informative walk thru the Ojai Meadows Preserve and learn the history of the property and the unique features in the proposed wetland restoration.

Preserve Bird Walks

Dates: Saturday, October 15th

Time: 8am

Location: Call for location

Join birding enthusiasts from the Ventura Audubon Society to learn more about the many colorful birds residing at the Conservancy's preserves.

Saturday Morning at the Ilvento Preserve

Date: Saturday, Oct. 22nd

Time: 8am

Location: meet at the Fox Street Park 'n Ride

Take an invigorating hike with Preserve Manager Richard Handley on the Ilvento Preserve. Good hiking shoes, water and a snack are required for this 2-1/2 hour exploration.



All programs require pre-registration.
Call 646-0251 or email us at ovlcmembership@ojai.net

Don't Miss This!

Moonlight on the Meadow...Back by Popular Demand

MOONLIGHT WILL RETURN TO THE MEADOW ON SEPTEMBER 10TH

It's back by popular demand.... One of Ojai's most anticipated annual events held on the enchanting Ojai Meadows Preserve. This year's annual fundraising event will be better than ever, featuring all your friends, live music, appetizers and dessert by local chefs extraordinaire and a catered dinner under a fully lighted tent in the beautiful outdoors. "There will be lots of magic in the air," says Hildegard Tallent, decorations chairperson. "This event is all about having fun while supporting the open space that we all love."

Don & Sheila Cluff have agreed to be Honorary Chairpersons together with Event Co-Chairs and board members Barry Betlock and Wendy Lockwood. "We are delighted that Don & Sheila have agreed to be Honorary Chairpersons for Moonlight this year", said Betlock. "They have been an integral part of the success of this event from the beginning and we are thrilled that they have agreed to serve on the committee."

Auctioneer Jewels Eubanks will once again be on hand to help raise funds for open space in the Ojai Valley.

Event sponsorships are still available as are volunteer opportunities, both before the event and on the night of the event. Seating this year will be limited to 250 people. Tickets are available for \$125 per person or \$1,350 for a reserved table of 10. To purchase tickets visit <http://www.ovlc.org>. and click on the Moonlight logo.



Join us under the big white tent on the Ojai Meadows Preserve for an evening of great food, friends and music. Limited to 250 guests.

Cost: **\$125.00 per person**
\$1,350 for reserved table of 10

Date: Saturday, September 10th

Time: 5pm

Location: The Ojai Meadows at Lomita Avenue and Besant Road

To make reservations:

1. Visit us on the web @ www.ovlc.org and register with your credit card
2. Call our event hotline @ 646-0251
3. Send your check to:
P.O.Box 1092 Ojai, Ca 93024.

This is a guaranteed great time!

OJAI VALLEY
LAND CONSERVANCY

Post Office Box 1092
Ojai, California 93024
Office Phone • (805) 646-7930
Fax • 646-0253
Events Hotline • (805) 646-0251
Street Address:
250 E. Ojai Ave. #B • Arcade Plaza
Website • www.ovlc.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Larry Ragan • President
Sally Coleman • Vice President
Barbara Washburn • Treasurer
Allan Jacobs • Secretary

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Barry Betlock
Vicki Breen
John Broesamle
Roger Essick
Jim Exon
Ellen Hall
Marc Larson
Wendy Lockwood

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Steve Olsen
Sylvia Overton
Alan Rains
Michael Shapiro
Nina Shelley
Spencer Silver
Mansfield Sprague
Carl Thelander
David Trudeau
Pat Weinberger
Allan West

STAFF

Jim Engel • Executive Director
ovlc@ojai.net
Richard Handley • Preserve Manager
ovlcpreserve@ojai.net
Jane Lax • Membership Outreach Director
ovlcmembership@ojai.net
Yvette Padilla • Administrative Assistant
ovlcevents@ojai.net
Derek Poultney • Resource Project Manager
ovlcprojects@ojai.net

President's Message

Moonlight Magic

Upon our arrival in the Ojai Valley in September 2001, we knew very few folks. Laura had grown up in Santa Barbara, but our fourteen years in Idaho had coincided with other family and friends' departures from the area. Yet, we knew that we would certainly "blend in" at some level.

At our first home I happened to meet "Halvie", the infamous surfer, pool cleaner, philosopher and avid supporter of environmental organizations. We shared as he labored, and he said I would be able to mingle with many "similar folk" at this "party in the meadow" near my son's school. I called and purchased one ticket as Laura and Walker were previously obligated in Santa Barbara.

It was one warm evening, not only from the still summer air, but from the many members of the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy. Having been a board member of the Treasure Valley Land Trust in Boise, I certainly was intrigued and engaged by how involved every member was. It remains one of my most remembered and treasured events in my four years residency. I soon became a member, eager to become involved. With the companionship and support of Jim Engel, Jim Jackson, Ellen Hall, John Broesamle, and others, I was capable of becoming so familiar and knowledgeable of the inner workings of OVLC, they actually asked me to serve on the board and now as president. All because of a friends' suggestion that I attend Moonlight on the Meadow.

I relate this story because after a one year hiatus, we will be bringing back Moonlight on the Meadow this coming September 10th. Your board is proud to host this fantastic event, and will be putting together a great evening of food, music, and fabulous auctions. Obviously, your ticket and purchases will go along way to assist us in our mission of acquiring and protecting the open spaces we all love so much. But for your generosity we surely will provide an abundance of good times, food and a greater sense of our "open space" family. These members are caring and hard working believers in saving open space.

So, I request your presence at the magical evening called Moonlight on the Meadow. Come prepared to have an evening you won't soon forget. You just might make new friends and acquaintances that will enhance your Ojai Valley life. I know I did four years ago.



Larry Ragan

Leave A Legacy

Give A Gift For Future Generations Of The Ojai Valley

Please join the more than twenty families and individuals who have included the Conservancy in their will or trust. Consider the lasting impact of an estate gift for the preservation of the natural and agricultural heritage of the Ojai Valley. Your contribution will be used for:

- Preserving critical open spaces like the Ventura River Preserve
- Restoring important natural habitats
- Educating our community to be better stewards of our open spaces



If you have already named us in your estate plans, let us thank you for your generous gift and welcome you to the Conservation Legacy Circle.

For a confidential inquiry about helping to protect the future and beauty of this valley, please contact the Conservancy office at 646-7930 or visit www.ovlc.org/wills_trusts.asp.

Membership

Renewals

Every year, more than a thousand of our members choose to renew their membership. Thank you for your exceptional support! Your loyalty is greatly appreciated. The following are renewals since April 28, 2005.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Anonymous (1) | Peter & Christine Johnson |
| Michael & Marjorie Ambarian | Lynne Kada |
| Troy & Jeri Becker (Becker Services) | Stefa Kalnins |
| Tom & Nanette Benbrook | John & Maggie Kaufman |
| Alex & Kristin Brodie | Maren & Phil Long |
| Robert & Marqui Bury | Kathleen McCann True & Glenn True |
| Alice Chesley | Isabel & Patrick McPherson |
| Sara Cloud | Robert & Denise Miller |
| Crooked Creek Ranch | Mary Mitchell |
| Robert & Greta Davis | Cheryl & George Moore |
| Paul A. Dentzel | Steve & Sara Olsen |
| Margaret E. Dieges | Malchia Olshan & George Jaidar |
| Patricia & Richard Doerner | Jennifer Phelps |
| Ben Engle & Nancy Cane | Alan & Jan Rains |
| Jim & Tina Evans | Kay Renius |
| Jeffrey & Theresa Ferguson | Curt Rischar |
| Hope Frazier & Doug Andrianson | Fred & Ila Rothenberg |
| Carol Garramone & Charles Massaro | Dietrich & Valerie Schmidt |
| William Girvetz | Robert & Katrina Schmidt |
| Anthony & Kathan Glassman | Heather Shoup |
| Richard Glenn | Whit & Kay Ulrich |
| Barbara & Stan Greene | Robert & Virginia Unruhe |
| Richard & Sandra Hajas | Marvin Werber & Barbara Thornburg |
| Ellen Hall & Richard Handley | Cathy Wilcox |
| Priscilla Hickman | Bill & Susan Wilmer |
| Anthony & Barbara Hirsch | Shlomo & Sylvia Raz |
| Lamar & Sally Hoover | Brian & Christine Zeiner |
| Kent & Camille Houston | |

President's Circle

Thank you to the following members who have provided very generous unrestricted membership gifts or pledges of \$2000 or more since April 28, 2005.

- Eric & Wendy Lockwood
- Harry & Ann Oppenheimer
- Kenton Shank & Sally Coleman



CONFLUENCE STEWARDSHIP

- Lars & Sanne Wallevik
- Paul & Helle Wallevik

New Members

Thank you to our new members for their exceptional support. The Conservancy's success is due to the generous financial and volunteer support of our members. The following persons have joined since April 28, 2005.

- | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Laura Alvarez | Helene Gordon / HHL Foundation | Butterfli O'Shea & Carl Ruisi |
| Heidi Anderson | Christopher & Elenore Land | Edwin & Claire Paulson |
| Michael Barnard | David & Susanne Olson | Carey & Derek Poultney |
| Marlyn Bodo & Chuck Woods | | Christine & Bud White |
| Carol Cohen | | |

Friends of the Ojai Valley

Thank you to the following members who have provided generous unrestricted membership gifts or pledges of \$1000 or more since April 28, 2005.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Barry Betlock & Chris Bjornstedt | Jim & Susan Jackson |
| Dan & Vicki Breen | Ron & Linda Phillips |
| George & Sandy Buechley | Huora L. Williams |

ANNUAL FUND

- Don & Ruth Hauser
- Steve Matzkin & Melissa Wolfe

CORPORATE MATCHING

- Patagonia - for Sandy Buechley
- for Tom Lowe
- for Lu Setnicka
- for Kim Stroud

ON BEHALF OF

- Jack Bertsch
- Peter & Alice Soracco
- Fran Fitting
- REC Solar

IN HONOR OF

- John Grant's 50th Birthday
- William & Laura Peck

GIFT MEMBERSHIPS

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Alfredo & Montelle Bello | Judy & David Poultney |
| Michael & Hannelore Gresser | Derek and Carey Poultney |
| Dennis Stern & Catherine Gould | Charlie Sr., Tracey & Charlie Jr. Crofoot |
| Michael & Hannelore Gresser | Derek and Carey Poultney |

NEW MEMBER FORM

Yes! I'll help preserve open space in the Ojai Valley • Enclosed is my annual tax-deductible pledge/gift of:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25-\$49 Member | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100-\$249 Donor | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000-\$1999 Friend of the Ojai Valley |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50-\$99 Sustaining Member | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250-\$499 Sustaining Donor | <input type="checkbox"/> \$2,000 + President's Circle |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500-\$999 Patron | |

MEMBERSHIP NAME(S) _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

DAYTIME PHONE _____ HOME PHONE _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

Please make check payable to: **The Ojai Valley Land Conservancy**. P.O. Box 1092 • Ojai, CA 93024 or contribute through your credit card

Name on Card _____ Credit Card # _____

Exp. Date _____ Amount \$ _____

Thank You

OVLC Salutes Local Business Sponsors

Please visit <http://www.ovlg.org/sponsor-list.asp> or call us at 646-7930 to learn about the many benefits of this program.

VENTURA RIVER LEVEL (\$5,000)

Mid-State Bank

OJAI MEADOWS LEVEL (\$2,500)

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Old Creek Ranch Winery
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SAN ANTONIO CREEK LEVEL (\$1,000)

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Ojai Pixie Tangerine Growers
honored by Brokaw Nursery
Ojai Valley News
Patagonia
The Oaks at Ojai
Waite, Jacobs & Atkinson, Attorneys at Law

SULPHUR MOUNTAIN LEVEL (\$500)

Bank of America
Casa Barranca
Criterion Environmental, Inc.
Grove Care
Kava Gifts
Meiners Oaks Hardware
Morgan Stanley - Howard Smith
The Ranch House Restaurant
The Village Florist
Tottenham Court
Ventura Party Rentals
Wells Fargo Bank

Special Thanks

Stevie Adams of the CCC for her valuable guidance on the Confluence Preserve grant to remove non-native plants.

Barry Betlock & Wendy Lockwood for taking on chairpersons for Moonlight on the Meadow.

Rebecca Bury for her help with our mailing and her cheerful, positive attitude.

Leanne Campbell and Harold Glenn for being such dedicated volunteers and congratulations for their special volunteer recognition awards.

Don & Sheila Cluff from the Oaks at Ojai for agreeing to be our Honorary Chairpersons for Moonlight on the Meadow.

Sally Coleman and Jim Jackson for their excellent guidance and dedication on the Meadows project.

The C.R.E.W. and all their hard working young staff for improving our trails this summer at the Ventura River and Ilvento Preserves and Fuelbreak Trail.

Jim, Dawn, and Abbey Engel, Jane Lax, Rich Handley, and Yvette Padilla for welcoming Derek Poultney and his wife Carey into the Conservancy family, and for making the transition a smooth one.

Patrick Gorey for his computer help with auction items.

Jurgen and Martin Gramckow for lending the Conservancy their backhoe and operator to install two culverts on the Rice Canyon Road in the Ventura River Preserve.

Glenn Hawks for his generous support and engineering guidance for the Ojai Wetlands Restoration Project.

Our generous local merchants and members for their wonderful auction donations for Moonlight on the Meadow.

OVLC Board of Directors for their continuing guidance and volunteer leadership.

Jim Pendleton for helping install the Rice Canyon culvert.

Dewey Val Schorre for the donation of one of his beautiful photographs.

Carl Thelander, Jim Exon, Larry Ragan, and Ellen Hall for being such valuable and available resources as members of the Wetland Committee.

Fearless Volunteers

The Ojai Valley is blessed with an extraordinary number of volunteers who donate their precious time to the valley's many non-profit organizations. The Conservancy is one of Ojai's organizations that couldn't exist without the help of volunteers. Every aspect of the organization exists only because of volunteer involvement, from the twelve-member board of directors, to the events committee, and the Ventura River Preserve equestrian patrol.

Each year the Conservancy selects one or two volunteers for special recognition based upon their consistent dedication to our open space mission. Leanne Campbell and Harold Glenn were this year's recipients because of their exemplary commitment to furthering the goals of the Conservancy.

Leanne was instrumental in getting the Ventura River Preserve trails opened up again after the winter floods. She and her husband Doug, came out on many occasions with a chainsaw and shovel to help clear fallen oaks, dig water bars, and rebuild trails that were washed out.

Harold's knowledge of building and construction is an invaluable asset for installing donor benches on the Ventura River Preserve, building the information board at the Riverview Trailhead and erecting informational signs on the Preserve. Harold and his wife Patsy, have been active Conservancy members for many years and have donated hundreds of hours to the cause of open space preservation.

Many thanks to Leanne and Harold who symbolize the generous spirit of all our volunteers.



Leanne Campbell, right and Harold Glenn, left are congratulated for their volunteer accomplishments by Preserve Manager Rich Handley

Office Assistants

Join our friendly office staff for a few hours weekly or monthly. We need people to prepare mailings, answer phones and greet visitors, put together information boards, develop flyers, organize files, distribute newsletters and flyers around the Valley, and more.

Please contact Yvette Padilla at 646-7930 or ovlcevents@ojai.net for more information

Volunteer Opportunities Available

MOONLIGHT ON THE MEADOW- We are looking for volunteers to help with our major fundraiser which will be held on September 10th at the Ojai Meadows. Volunteer opportunities are available in the following areas:

1. Soliciting auction items before the event
2. Preparing and posting auction posters
3. Addressing invitations
4. Helping set-up the event on Sept. 9th and 10th
5. Cashiering and auction spotters on the night of the event
6. Decorations and table settings
7. Parking shuttle the night of the event
8. Clean-up before and after the event.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact Jane Lax at 805-646-7930 or email ovlcmembership@ojai.net

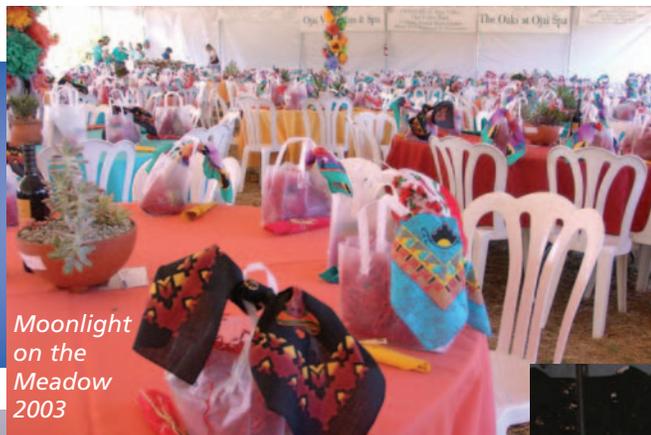
PRESERVES - We are always in need of Patrol Hosts, Trailhead Information, Trail Workers, and Hike Guides to help our Preserve Manager, Rich Handley.

For more information contact Rich at ovlcpreserve@ojai.net.

RESTORATION - Help restore the Ventura River watershed and remnant cottonwood/sycamore woodland by removing non-native invasive plants such as Arundo donax (giant reed), cape ivy, and vinca from the Confluence Preserve.

For more information contact Derek Poultney at ovlcprompts@ojai.net.

Moonlight on the Meadow Returns



Moonlight
on the
Meadow
2003



Silent Auction



Neva Williams, Brett Bradigan, and Claire Clark



Candace and Ken Delbo

Moonlight on the Meadow Returns on September 10th



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