Ojai’s front country trails got another “leg up” this month with a donated easement to the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy (OVLC) for the final section of OVLC’s Fuelbreak Road Trail. Most of the popular trail had been put into a trail easement in the late 1990’s—connecting the U.S. Forest Service’s Fuelbreak Road and Gridley Trail. The newly donated portion is the final link to the mile-long trail which affords beautiful views of the valley and mountains.

When Boyd Dron passed away last November, his wife Karin wanted to give a lasting tribute to his memory. “Boyd loved standing on the trail and looking down at the beautiful valley he so loved. Giving access to others is a fitting memory to him,” said Karin who feels very strongly about keeping public access open to Ojai’s mountains and trails.

Though Boyd was born at Cottage Hospital in 1932, his parents brought him home to the very property the trail runs through. It was the Depression then, and the family was building a stone house on the then four-acre property and living in a tent. The house became known as “Dronhame” reflective of the Drons’ Scottish heritage. Boyd’s father was John A. Dron, Sr., known locally as “the Major.” He had heard about Ojai after a chance meeting on a Sierra camping trip with local architect Austen Pierpont. In 1931, the family moved to Ojai. The Major was a civil engineer and well known local surveyor. He received the first portion of the property in trade for doing engineering work on
**A Taste of Ojai**

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**Improved Hiking Access through Forest Service Partnership**

It’s been a good month for improved hiking access with projects put in place in partnership with the US Forest Service (USFS). The Foothill Trail adopt-a-trail agreement and the Pratt Trailhead rehab project have finally launched. Heidi Anderson, the Ojai District’s Wilderness Trails Manager and temporary duty District Ranger Yolanda Saldana worked with OVLC to make it all happen.

One of the things that makes the recently acquired Valley View Preserve so compelling are the number of trail connections made possible. Besides OVLC’s opening of Foothill, Fox Canyon and Luci’s trails on the preserve, several trail links exist to and from the neighboring Los Padres National Forest. Two links head into the preserve on USFS land, hence the need for an adopt-a-trail agreement. This allows, OVLC to take on the responsibility for trail maintenance on the USFS portion of the trail. OVLC trail crew volunteers recently brushed those portions allowing much better access. Two new trail directional signs were installed at Fueblark Road and Pratt Trail guiding visitors to the preserve.

The Forest Service’s Pratt Trailhead is reachable by turning west at the top of North Signal Street on a signed dirt road. The trailhead affords trail users access to Cozy Dell Canyon and the Nordhoff Lookout, as well as the Valley View Preserve which is about a mile up.

When community partners act together great things can happen.  
Cleaning up the Ventura River

Pulling old dolls, smashed bicycles and discarded tires out of the river isn't what everyone wants to do on their holiday, but for some 50 volunteers on Presidents’ Day, that’s exactly what they did; and the river was better off for it.

Ojai people of all ages came together with trashcans and buckets and collected just over a ton of trash which had washed into the Ventura River where the Happy Valley Drain empties out over the cliff next to Rice Road. Besides sheets of plywood, lumber, tarps, wire, bottles, plastic bags and other garbage there was also an immense amount of micro trash; small pieces of glass, styrofoam and bits of plastic. Volunteers wearing rubber boots even braved a pond of filthy water to haul out old soaked sleeping bags and mattresses.

The project was the brainchild of Smitty West who noticed the buildup of trash and brought the project idea to the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy. Smith offered his Rice Road Euterpe Farms as the staging and meeting spot for the project. At the beginning of the project, West and the OVLC’s Rick Bisaccia gave a talk to the participants about different kinds of water pollution affecting the Ventura River and what was being done about it. The project had the feeling of an old barn-raising, where big projects are made small while the community grows closer together.

West and his musical partner Julija, along with other musicians, performed for the workers following the trash pick up, and everyone left feeling good about contributing to a cleaner river. Keeping trash out of the river is an important part of protecting fish and wildlife along the river, as well as the ocean downstream. Cleaner waterways also contribute to overall community health. We appreciate all the time our volunteers put into the project.

Flower Guide to the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy Preserves

Red Maids
Calandrinia ciliata

Lupine
Lupinus spp.

Tidy-Tips
Leptosiphon

California Buckwheat
Eriogonum fasciculatum

Common Phacelia
Phacelia arctans

India Ink Blue/Black Sage
Salvia mellifera

California Hummingbird Sage
Salvia apiana

California Poppy
Eschscholzia californica

Purple Owl’s Clover
Castilleja exserta

Blue Dicks
Dicentra formosa

Baby Blue-Eyes
Nemophila menziesii

Catalina Mariposa Lily
Calochortus catalinae

Tidy-Tips
Layia platyglossa

Blue Dicks
Dicentra formosa capitata

Black Sage
Salvia mellifera

Brewer’s Black Hole
Castilleja breweri

Common Fiddleneck
Amsinckia intermedia

Indian Paintbrush
Castilleja effusa

Indian Paintbrush
Castilleja effusa

Common Phacelia
Phacelia distans

California Hummingbird Sage
Salvia apiana

You can pull this flower guide out and take it with you on your walks through the OVLC preserves to help identify the native flowering plants and wildflowers in the winter and spring. You can also access the guide online and on your phone at ovlc.org/native-flowers.
The real beneficiary, of course, is Ojai.

protected after you.

financial accounts, you ensure your values will be

will, trust, retirement plan, life insurance policy, or

lifetime. By making the OVLC a beneficiary of your

bequest in your estate plans, you can help protect the

beauty of Ojai for generations to come. A bequest

you can use this language for your gift:

“give, devise, and bequeath [percentage/amount/description]
to the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy, a nonprofit corporation,
located at PO Box 1092, Ojai, CA, 93024, Tax Identification
Number 77-0169682.”

For more information contact Tania Parker, Director of Advancement
(805) 649-6852 x 6 or tania@ovlc.org
You can also visit ovlc.org

Legacy Giving Made Simple

Just by including the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy in your estate plans, you can help protect the beauty of Ojai for generations to come. A bequest is a simple way to support the OVLC in the future while retaining control of your assets during your lifetime. By making the OVLC a beneficiary of your will, trust, retirement plan, life insurance policy, or financial accounts, you ensure your values will be passed on after you.

The real beneficiary, of course, is Ojai.

You can use this language for your gift:

“The Ojai Valley Land Conservancy has been fortunate to have a number of locals volunteering at our preserves. A regular volunteer group at both the Ojai Meadows Preserve and the Ventura River Steelhead Preserve is Once Upon a Watershed. Once Upon a Watershed is an outdoor education program that provides hands-on watershed education, restoration, and stewardship to 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students in Ventura and Ojai. The program cultivates a sense of shared responsibility for our whole earth system, instilling confidence and hope by empowering young people to make a real difference at the local watershed scale.

Nordhoff High School students enrolled in Environmental Field Studies joined the OVLC to plant purple needle grass plugs and native shrubs species at the Ojai Meadows Preserve. In the program, students also propagated other native species in their own native plant nursery at the preserve, and were able to follow through and plant them in the preserve as well.

Earlier this year, the OVLC fostered a new partnership with Ojai TEAMS. Ojai TEAMS serves students, aged 18-22, with moderate to severe disabilities; specifically, the school provides services for students who can benefit from training that will ensure their greatest quality of life after they complete their public education. Students and teachers from Ojai TEAMS volunteer weekly at the Ojai Meadows Preserve to assist with weed management. “The students’ work with the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy has been an opportunity for them to help with the beautification and restoration of a natural area within their own community. Students are learning about different animal and plant species, working to eradicate invasive species, and enjoy this area as a place to hike and relax during their time outside of their school program,” said Evan Elder, M/S SDC Teacher/Case Manager.

A special thanks also goes out to Emily Havendick from the California Conservation Corps, and Rainey Barton, a Ventura College student, who have been volunteering weekly at the Ojai Meadows Preserve planting native species, eradicating invasive plants, mulching, and most importantly, stewarding their projects at the Ojai Meadows Preserve.

The Sespe Fly Fishers Club joined the OVLC at the Ventura River Steelhead Preserve for a morning of planting along the river
April 18 – EarthPlay: Ojai’s Earth Day Celebration at Oak Grove School
A true family friendly event celebrating Earth Day. Come visit our booth from 11 AM - 4PM!

April 18 – Native Plant Sale at the Ojai Meadows Native Plant Nursery
9AM - 12PM, Nursery Manager Ron Singer will be selling some of OVLV’s best stock of natives.

April 25 – First Annual Stewardship Director Hike with Rick Bisaccia
Explore the rarely visited ilvento Preserve with stunning views. Lunch provided. Cost $15.

May 2 – Wild about Ojai: Guided Bird Walk with Jesse Grantham
8.30 AM at the Ojai Meadows Preserve

May 3 – Guided Birdwalk/Nature hike with Peter Larramendy at the Ventura River Preserve
8.30 AM at the Riverview Trailhead

May 23 – Wild about Ojai: Animal Tracks & Signs with the Channel Islands Tracking Club at the Ventura River Preserve
9 AM at Old Baldwin Trailhead

June 6 – National Trails Day - Guided hikes at on many of the preserves. More info to come.

All Wild About Ojai Events are free for members and $10 for non-members. Become a member today! A family membership is just $35 per year. Visit ovlc.org today, or send in the attached envelope.

To RSVP for an event, contact Marti at (805) 649-6852 or marti@ovlc.org. For an current list of events you can visit: ovlc.org

Thank you to the businesses supporting the protection of the Ojai Valley.
Please support these businesses today.

OVLC Volunteer Highlights Photographe
1-2: Once Upon a Watershed students at an oak tree planting at the Ventura River Steelhead Preserve. 3-5: Students from Ojai TEAMs volunteering at the Ojai Meadows Preserve. 6-7: Volunteer Event at the Ojai Meadows Preserve. 8: Emily Hovendick and Rainey Barton mulching at the Ojai Meadows Preserve. 9: Sespe Fly Fishers Club volunteers at the Ventura River Steelhead Preserve (image courtesy of Gary Bulla).

Upcoming Events

Thank You OVLC Business Sponsors

Ventura River Sponsors
- Old Creek Ranch Winery
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San Antonio Sponsors
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- Ojai Valley Directory
- Silver Development & Associates, Inc.

March 2015 Ventura River Watershed Council Ventura River Watershed Management Plan

In March, the Ventura River Watershed Council approved the Ventura River watershed’s first comprehensive watershed management plan.

The Ventura River watershed includes the 226-acre drainage area of the Ventura River, which extends from upper Matilija Canyon and Upper Ojai, down through the Ojai Valley to the Ventura coast.

The plan, which is richly illustrated with photographs, maps, and charts, is intended to tell the story of the watershed and its many interdependencies; identify and prioritize water-related concerns in the watershed; outline a strategy to collectively solve shared watershed problems and collectively manage shared resources; and better position the watershed and its stakeholders for funding.

The watershed management plan serves as both a plan and a comprehensive online resource of information about the watershed. It will serve as a reference in support of many causes that benefit the watershed - including grant applications for watershed projects and programs.

The watershed management plan is available for download on the Council’s website (www.venurawatershed.org/the-watershed-plan), both as a complete document and as individual plan sections.

For more information, or to schedule a presentation about the plan or the watershed to your local group or board of directors, contact Lorraine Walter, watershed coordinator, at lorraine@ovlc.org, or 805/649-6852 x4.
Is your membership current?
Check your mailing label »
Green is current, if it's brown
send in this envelope, it's time to renew!

Providing a
Sense of Wonder Since 1987

Renew Your Membership Now and Help Protect Your Views, Trails, Water & Wildlife!
This year, we have already secured donations to cover our overhead costs, so EVERY DOLLAR YOU GIVE TODAY will go DIRECTLY to the PROGRAMS that steward and protect THIS LAND YOU LOVE.