OPEN SPACES

SEPTEMBER 23 - SEE BACK COVER FOR MEMBER DISCOUNT AND MORE DETAILS

MOUNTAINFILM ON TOUR

OJAI

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Oak Restoration at the Ventura River Preserve – 25 acres of Coast Live Oaks were planted last winter and the plantings are looking great. Additional plantings will occur this winter to fill in plants that have been lost to the elements (deer, gophers, rabbits, summer heat, etc.). Thank you to the OVLC Restoration Field Crew for all their dedication and hard work to make this project so successful!

An oak circle planted in January of 2017. See the article in our Summer 2015 newsletter on our website, “Why the oak circle?” for more information on restoration plantings.

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Rice Creek Realignment and Restoration Project: For the first time since we realigned Rice Creek, water flowed continuously through it—thanks to two big storms in February and March. This was a very exciting time for our Restoration Team at the OVLC! During these storms, there was a good degree of channel forming activity (channel cutting and sediment deposition), a change that was anticipated when designing the creek realignment project. Interested in geomorphic processes associated with stream formation? You can see it all happen here! In some places, the channel bed has cut enough to reveal the underlying historic channel cobble and even a few boulders. Small areas of vegetation were lost to high flow, but we knew this would happen at some point as the stream seeks more sinuosity.

Upcoming Winter Habitat Restoration Projects include continued oak restoration at Ventura River Preserve, riparian revegetation along San Antonio Creek Arundo Removal Project, and oak restoration at the Ojai Meadows Preserve.
Are you Wild About Ojai? We are.

Welcome to our newest partners!

Awhai Pottery

“I value the wild open space around Ojai and want to support the efforts of the OVLC.”

– Emily Brown, owner of Awhai Pottery

The Southern Los Padres Trekking Company

“Growing up, Ojai was always the gateway to our backcountry adventures … and so great is it that the “gateway” has a group providing the community more opportunity for adventures right in town through its conservation and advocacy! The OVLC’s work is so important during these charged times, and the preserves offer a much-needed respite for the wearied soul. I’m glad to have the opportunity to give back and support the Conservancy’s important work.”

– Craig Carey, owner and lead guide

OVLC Welcomes to the Board

The OVLC welcomes Nathan Wallace back to our Board of Directors this fall.
Nathan is an avid hiker, skier, and camper. He enjoys anything in the outdoors. He spends the majority of his time with his wife Rebecca and their three children. He also makes sure to spend time with family including his mother, aunt and uncle, and his younger sister and her husband who all live in Ojai.

The OVLC is governed by an all volunteer board. Read more about our board members at ovlc.org.

THANK YOU to all the volunteers who came out and helped us staff Patagonia’s parking lots for the Ventura County Fair. In one day/evening you helped raise over $5,200 for the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy!

Recent Restoration Grant Announcements

California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Fisheries Restoration Grant

$398,037
This grant, in combination with our Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) grant, will achieve the removal and ongoing herbicide treatments of approximately 23 acres of Arundo along 4.75 miles of San Antonio Creek from Camp Comfort to the Ventura River. Arundo is an invasive plant that looks similar to bamboo and has invaded our creeks by out-competing native creek plants. Ten acres, where large areas of Arundo were removed, will be revegetated with native creek plants.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

$10,979
This grant will fund ongoing herbicide treatments and biological monitoring of Arundo at Camp Comfort. This project is a collaboration with the California Conservation Corps and the County of Ventura Parks Department.
In his nearly 10-years as the OVLC’s Preserve Manager and Stewardship Director, Rick Bisaccia has defined what preserve management means in the Ojai Valley. He has long been the face of the preserve system, and he worked tirelessly to bring the best quality outdoor opportunities to our community. We owe a great debt to his service and his contributions will not soon be forgotten.

In his years at the conservancy, Rick has been a policeman, social worker, construction foreman, trail boss, naturalist, artist, cat herder, janitor, and an important leader on local trail development and construction projects. Conservation has been a calling for Rick. He cultivated a valuable cadre of volunteers and contacts with neighbors and government agencies—his phone number has probably been on more speed-dials than anyone else in the valley.

Rick always told the best stories at OVLC staff meetings. Just when he thought he had seen it all, something even more interesting would happen. Once he encountered campers on the Ventura River Preserve dressed in garb out of the 1860s who had ridden horses to the preserve from the Figueroa Mountain area. While he had to move them on, he respected their fortitude. His preserve reports, no matter how mundane, spun yarns that could match any old-time-story-teller.

Something that many of you might not know about Rick is that he is a talented artist; once working as a cartoonist. He employed his art skills for the OVLC by expertly painting over graffiti on rocks. His proprietary blends of spray paint returned defaced boulders into their natural states. This work was done in fulfillment of a vision Rick has brought to the preserves—that they should always appear clean and natural.

Rick has never been afraid of getting dirty. Often seen juggling a pick-mattock and a chainsaw in his trail-hero coveralls, Rick has dispatched more fallen trees than most trimming companies and rallied volunteers to cut and maintain miles of local trails. His well-worn work truck has hauled more garbage than some small garbage companies and he has weed-whacked an area larger than the state of Connecticut. Throughout it all his Assistant Preserve Manager, Betty the Preserve Dog, supported him.

Rick leaves enormous shoes to fill, but his priorities and standards of care for local preserves will remain the priorities of the OVLC and his eventual successor.

On behalf of all of us at the OVLC, Thank you Rick! We wouldn’t have come this far without you.
Ojai Valley Museum Exhibit
“Protecting the Ojai”

It’s not too late to stop by the Ojai Valley Museum to see their current exhibit entitled “Protecting the Ojai.” The exhibit chronicles thirty years of local land conservation by the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy. Included in the display is a time-line of our major milestones along with displays provided by some of our local community partners. Altogether, the exhibit shows how a local community took action to protect the open spaces they cherish.

Among our featured exhibits is a large (4’ x 4’) 3-D relief map of the Ojai Valley. It provides locals and visitors alike a unique perspective on the geography of the Ojai Valley, and it places the OVLC preserves in a regional context. Despite the “do not touch” signs, guests at the opening reception couldn’t keep their hands off of it. For what it’s worth, we can’t either. It’s like seeing the valley from an airplane without the TSA security. We want to thank local photographer David Byrne for doing the aerial photo and our friends at Solid Terrain Modeling in Santa Paula for making this possible.

The exhibit also features the work of local artists. The Ojai Valley Fiber Collective contributed a hand-made representation of the Ventura River Watershed. It is hand-dyed, and stitched using shibori, appliqué, felting, and embroidery techniques on a re-purposed wool blanket. Their hope is that this map, the work of many local hands, will inspire a deep sense of the essential interconnectedness of all life in the Ventura River Watershed. In addition, students and parents at Meiners Oaks Elementary School contributed a life-sized model of a Coast Live Oak tree. It helps set the scene for a display about conservation, as the mighty oak is a symbol of longevity and permanence. It is certainly an impressive feature. We appreciate volunteer Wendy Osher for coordinating the artistic contributions of the Fiber Collective and Meiners Oaks Elementary. In the back of the exhibit, you will find a wall projection featuring local landscape photographs contributed by local photographers Carl Huffman and Mark Slaughter.

There is also much to learn about local birds and wildlife. Volunteers Jenny Fitzgerald (whose Town Talk is September 24th) and Wyatt Harris organized the collection of wildlife photographs from the OVLC preserves by setting up wildlife camera traps. The photos show who is using the OVLC preserves at night when our human visitors are sleeping. Yes, the 500-pound bear travels on OVLC trails! We also have an assortment of foxes, skunks, raccoons, bobcats, deer, and a lot of birds. Volunteer John Merk constructed our wildlife displays and kiosk. They are beautiful and we could not have made these on our own.

The exhibit runs through September 24th, and is a great way to learn more about the OVLC. Make plans for a visit today!
Jerry Gale Jones, esteemed Portland businessman, philanthropist, spiritual seeker and meditation teacher, peacefully passed away on December 29, 2016, at his home in Ojai, California.

Jerry was a lover of art, design, literature, and the outdoors. Whether jogging on the beach on an early summer morning, skiing the slopes of Mt. Hood or Mt. Bachelor, or backpacking in the Wallowa Mountains, he had a lifelong love affair with Oregon’s outdoor wonderland. Physically active and athletic most of his life, Jerry was a member of The Multnomah Athletic Club for almost 50 years and an early proponent of organic foods. He loved to learn and experience new things, and his sincere, open-minded interest in people and places served him well throughout his full life.

Jerry’s love for the outdoors and open spaces was what drew him to the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy. He enjoyed spending time on the trails with his family. After his passing his daughter Shannon wrote to us saying hiking on conservancy lands with her father are some of her happiest memories in Ojai.

Jerry wanted to ensure these special places would be cared for forever and to do this he remembered the OVLC in his estate plans with a generous bequest of $100,000 to our endowment.

Leaving a Legacy

There is something compelling about the notion that a gift at a person’s passing can give life and renewal—not just for a short time, but forever. Remembering the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy in your estate plans ensures the open spaces you love in Ojai today, will be protected for current and future generations to enjoy forever.

The Ojai Valley Land Conservancy is proud to announce the launch of Pushing Up Poppies—OVLC’s new legacy giving club. It honors, thanks, and recognizes those who have included the OVLC in their estate plans. Members will be invited to Pushing Up Poppies Legacy Giving Club events, and enjoy special benefits at upcoming OVLC events.

If you have made your plans known to the OVLC, you will be receiving information soon about the Pushing Up Poppies Legacy Giving Club. If you have included the OVLC in your estate plans, but have not yet shared this information with us, please let us know. We would love to hear from you and learn why Ojai is important to you. Your legacy gift, along with many others like yours, will keep the Ojai Valley’s views, trails, water, and wildlife protected for future generations! Inspire and influence others by letting us know about your planned gift today.

Interested in joining or need to update your recognition preferences? Contact Tania Parker, Director of Advancement today. (805) 649-6852 x6 or tania@ovlc.org.

You can also join or update your preferences online at ovlc.org/pup.

Pushing Up Poppies
OVLC Legacy Giving Club

Giving the Gift of Forever

The OVLC is turning 30! Come celebrate with us Saturday, October 14 at our Annual Member Celebration. Tickets will be limited and reservations required, so watch for your invitation in the mail soon. It will be a night not to miss!
MOVIE NIGHT UNDER THE STARS - LIVE MUSIC BY THE CHILLZ, FOOD TRUCKS & BEER

This year we have a bigger (and better) screen, a better sound system, and more food trucks! Bring your blankets and low-back chairs and stake out your spot on the lawn. Enjoy music by the chillz, beer from Topa Topa Brewing, and 9 food trucks.

SEPTEMBER 23, 2017
A FUNDRAISER FOR THE OJAI VALLEY LAND CONSERVANCY
OJAI VALLEY SCHOOL LOWER CAMPUS SPORTS FIELD
GATES OPEN AT 5 - FILMS START AT 7:15
INFO & TICKETS: OVLC.ORG/EVENTS

Want to go with a friend? Have someone in mind who you think should be an OVLC member? Have them join today and they will receive two free tickets!
Tell them to type “Mountainfilm Tickets” in the comments section of the donation form and we will send them two complimentary tickets with a first time donation of $35 or more.