The staff and Board of the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy (OVLC) are excited to introduce Tom Maloney as our new Executive Director. His background in Economics and Resources Management and Administration, along with 25 years of conservation experience, make him the ideal candidate to lead the OVLC.

“We are fortunate that Tom will be joining our conservation community. He has the skills and experience to revitalize our land acquisition program and guide our strategic vision for the future,” Roger Essick, OVLC Board President and Interim Executive Director.

During his distinguished career, Tom worked for numerous conservation organizations, including The Nature Conservancy, National Audubon Society, and The Tejon Ranch Conservancy. During his six years as the Executive Director of the Tejon Ranch Conservancy, he led the acquisition of over 100,000 acres of working lands conservation easements, wrote, negotiated and received a $15.7 million state grant for land acquisition, led the accreditation process, and raised over $2 million in private support for the conservancy.

Tom credits much of his success to community engagement and connections. He looks forward to forming strong ties to the community. “Tom, and his wife Andrea, will be excellent additions to our community. They are passionate about protecting Ojai’s open spaces, and are excited to integrate themselves into all things Ojai,” Tania Parker, OVLC Deputy Director.

Tom received his undergraduate degree in Economics from Boston University and his Masters of Science in Resources Management and Administration from Antioch University New England. In 2008, he completed The Nature Conservancy’s Sawhill Leadership Excellence Program, a year-long curriculum focused on building leadership competencies and managing for change. Tom was also part of a similar training with the Land Trust Alliance.

When not working, Tom can be found out on the land. He is an ardent birder, hiker and naturalist, as well as an inept surfer. He is excited to get to know Ojai and plans to lead bird walks with longtime OVLC supporter Jesse Grantham.

Tom and Andrea will officially join the OVLC on October 1, 2019, but plan to attend Under the Open Sky (September 20) and Mountainfilm on Tour (September 21), so please keep an eye out for them and help us welcome them to our community.
The Ojai Valley Land Conservancy (OVLC) has purchased 32 acres of land just south of the Ventura River Preserve. The Ventura River corridor offers the greatest concentration of resource value of any area in the Ojai Valley, and thus is one of our priority conservation areas.

This new property, which includes a quarter mile of the Ventura River, brings us one step closer to permanently protecting the Ventura River floodplain, its major tributaries, and adjacent lands. This land is quintessential river bottom and its permanent protection benefits the river system. The OVLC has now protected over four miles of the Ventura River.

Protecting the Ventura River is part of a vision that is shared by a coalition of local groups including the OVLC, state agencies, and a national conservation organization. Our goal is to create a Ventura River Parkway—a publicly accessible and continuous network of parks, trails, and natural areas along the lower 16 miles of the river from Ojai to the ocean. Enhancing our sense of place and linking neighborhoods to nature is just part of the parkway plan. The parkway will also preserve this historic waterway, protect water quality, conserve streamside and aquatic habitat, and restore sensitive floodplains.

Since people first inhabited this valley, the Ventura River has been an invaluable water source and a gathering place. Today, our three trailheads in the Ventura River Preserve offer rare access to the river. Each year tens of thousands of people visit the Ventura River Preserve. The Ventura River corridor offers the greatest concentration of river habitat, and a gathering place. Today, our three trailheads in the Ventura River Preserve offer rare access to the river. Each year tens of thousands of people visit the Ventura River Preserve. The Ventura River corridor offers the greatest concentration of river habitat, and a gathering place.

The OVLC was able to purchase this property through generous donations from our community. We thank you for your support in protecting Ojai's open space and helping us protect another piece of the parkway dream.
Goodbye from outgoing Executive Director Brian Stark

After nine fruitful years of serving the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy (OVLC), the last four and a half of which as Executive Director, I left the organization at the end of May to accept the position of Administrator for the Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency in Thousand Oaks. I’m excited to steward a significant conservation portfolio so close to my home in Thousand Oaks, and to care for the open spaces I use every weekend. Still, I’m leaving an organization that I love and a special community that is united toward conservation. I am proud of how far we have come in building a strong and resilient organization and attracting such a talented staff and Board. I will be departing knowing that the OVLC will continue to grow and evolve to meet current and future conservation needs of Ojai.

Over the years I have met so many people who are passionate about local open spaces and have placed their trust in the OVLC to protect and care for them. Together, we have bolstered a community organization that will protect Ojai’s open spaces forever. I’m particularly proud of the OVLC’s national accreditation through the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. This placed the OVLC among the nation’s most respected land trusts and the process changed the way we think about the permanence of our organization and our mission.

I’ve also seen big changes on our preserves through the OVLC’s restoration and stewardship efforts. I spent my first five years managing large-scale projects on OVLC Preserves. At the Ventura River Preserve we re-routed Rice Creek back to its natural location after 90 years of diversion. I was fortunate to guide the project to restore oak woodlands and wetlands at the Ojai Meadows Preserve for several years. And I’m still amazed every day how our small staff ensures safe access to 2,000 acres of open space and 27 miles of quality trails.

The greatest pleasure of working at the OVLC has been time spent with our dedicated staff and those that give their time and talents to serve on the OVLC Board. I have confidence in them to maintain the high standards the OVLC is known for, and to further our mission to protect Ojai’s views, trails, water, and wildlife. I look forward to watching the OVLC thrive and I plan to stay involved as the OVLC’s national accreditation through the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. This placed the OVLC among the nation’s most respected land trusts and the process changed the way we think about the permanence of our organization and our mission.

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None of my accomplishments would have been possible without the support of the Ojai community. Thank you again for making local conservation a priority and for supporting the OVLC during my tenure here.

Sincerely,

Brian Stark

A Dinner Celebrating our Legacy to Ojai

As the sun set over the Ojai Valley, a special group gathered at the Ojai Retreat for dinner and one of the best views in the valley. It was the first gathering of the Pushing up Poppies Legacy Giving Club—a group of individuals who have committed to leaving a legacy for Ojai after they are gone.

My husband and I are leaving a percentage of an IRA to the OVLC. This bequest is a simple way for us to support the ongoing protection and stewardship of our open spaces after we are gone. We made this commitment six years ago when I began working at the OVLC, and last month I finally got to celebrate with other community members who have also committed to leaving a legacy for Ojai. Together, we form the Pushing up Poppies Legacy Giving Club, and together we are ensuring that Ojai’s open spaces will be protected forever. The impact we will make together is greater than any one of us could ever do alone, and I am honored to count myself among you.

- Tania Parker, OVLC Deputy Director, Pushing Up Poppies Member

From the top: Brian Stark, outgoing Executive Director; Brian and Rick Bosca watching Rice Creek flow for the first time since restoration; Brian and volunteer Stuart Niebel preparing to turn in the accreditation binders.

IN HONOR OF:
Caitlyn Barrera (OVLC field crew member) “Congratulations on your new job!” Folm Jan Chase
Michael Taylor’s birthday From Joane Annona, Pam Ceper, Ruben Estrada, Kate Grant, Heather Halden, Jade Hudson, Joanie Nygren, & Josey Vought
Christy Hunter’s birthday From Susan Fransone, Becca Pech, and Christy & Karl Hunter
Christopher Grant’s birthday From Cathie Ferro
Juniper Lashly From Jill Farmen & David Young
Brian Stark From Chet & Mallorie Higiers
Katie at Toga Mountain Winery “Thank you, Katie, for returning my glasses from the Mirk wedding!" From Jerry O’Brien
With gratitude to the Glenn Children From Brian & Chris Zeiner
IN MEMORY OF:
Joan Weiss Landfield From Barbara Bones, Susan Branfield, Jessica Brown & James Turnbull
My parents - Bob & Silvia Emhardt From Tanya Emhardt
Harold Glenn Jill Grantham
In loving memory of Patsy and Harold Glenn From Brian & Chris Zeiner
BEQUESTS:
Carolina Hawkins Deven Mazer
William H. Painter, Jr.
Acknowledgments: 4/18/19—8/11/19

Your legacy gift, 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. You can join or update your preferences online at ovlc.org/pup
SATEDAY, SEPTEMBER 21
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

TICKETS

- Current members - $18*
- Pre-sale - $22**
- Day of - $25
- Children under 12 - $10

*There will be no member pricing on September 21
** Pre-sale ends Friday, September 20, at 11:55 pm

Radio Skies will be playing from 5-7:15 pm, Topa Topa Brewing will be pouring delicious brews from their beer garden on the field, eight food trucks will be serving up eats, and we have a killer raffle with prizes so far from:

- Arrow Heart Yoga
- Beacon Coffee
- Black Diamond
- Bonito Coffee Roasters
- European Waxing Center
- Firestick Pottery
- Island Packers
- Newf Surfboard Net
- Patagonia
- Real Fun, Wow!
- REI
- Vapur

Dig out your low-back chairs and blankets and join us on the field at OVS for another fantastic year of films and fun!

BUY YOUR TICKETS TODAY BEFORE THEY SELL OUT

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

MERIDIAN DESIGN CONSTRUCTION
PATAGONIA
SEDILIO CONSTRUCTION
VENTURA RENTAL PARTY & EVENTS

TICKET SALES FOR FRIDAY NIGHT END SEPTEMBER 16

Join the OVLC for an intimate, locally sourced farm-to-table dinner on Friday, September 20. When the sun sets behind the historic Ventura River Steelhead Preserve, we will enjoy a collection of Mountainfilm films specially selected for this evening. With special guests from the films, this is a night you won’t want to miss. All attendees will also receive complimentary tickets to Saturday night’s Mountainfilm on Tour. This event will sell out. Please purchase your tickets early.

Visit our website, ovlc.org, or contact Tania Parker: tania@ovlc.org, (805) 649-6852
Thank you to all of our Business Sponsors for your generosity!

NATURE QUIZ:
These eggs and nests were found on our preserves this spring. Can you identify the birds they belong to?

September 20 & 21
2nd Annual Under the Open Sky
5th Annual Mountainfilm Festival

November 16-19
Land Trust Alliance Rally 2019: National Land Conservation Conference

Ojai Valley Land Conservancy
ovlc.org/events

What is Wild About Ojai?
Wild About Ojai funds the protection and management of Ojai’s open space. Participating businesses commit to donating 1% of their gross profit, or adding 1% to customers’ bills, and the proceeds are then donated to the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy to preserve Ojai’s views, trails, water and wildlife.

How do I participate?
Signing up to participate in Wild About Ojai is easy! You can sign up online at ovlc.org/wildaboutojai. Once enrolled in the program, we will work with you to get you up and running. Questions? Interested in participating? Contact Tania Parker at tania@ovlc.org or (805) 649-6852 x 6.

MERIDIAN DESIGN CONSTRUCTION
is a licensed full service general contractor that specializes in residential and commercial structures. Our vision was to make our clients projects a simple and stylish experience by offering design services with all their construction needs.

WHY DID YOU JOIN WILD ABOUT OJAI?
WE LOVE OJAI!! Growing up in Ventura, I have always loved Ojai. It is truly one of the most beautiful places on earth. My wife Sara and I found out about the OVLC through a docent we met on Shelf Road, and then I thought that I would really like to help keep Ojai magical and beautiful through protecting open spaces, trail maintenance, and advocacy for the spaces they manage. What I didn’t expect were all the fun events that we’d get to participate in and learning more about parts of Ojai we didn’t know existed. We’ve been on private hikes with other members and attended fantastic events like Under The Ojai Sky and Mountainfilm. We are huge fans of not only all of the things the OVLC organization/volunteers do for Ojai but know they couldn’t do it without the amazing OVLC staff! We are excited about continuing our support and love being able to contribute to this wonderful organization for many years to come.

Thank you to our Wild About Ojai partners who help make this possible. Visit a participating business today and take part.

A Taste of Ojai
Albaja Creations
Be Calm of Ojai
Chamber on the Mountain
Char Man Brand Hot Sauce
Dogs Fly Design
The Glass Man Professional Window Washing Company
GoOjai.com
Greyfax Investors
Jennifer Keeler, Hair Stylist
Lorraine Lim Catering
Mary Nelson Skincare & Massage Studio
Meridian Design Construction
Mooney Creative
Noah Crowe, Sunrun Home Solar Consultant
Ojai Quarterly
Romwe Vain
Sol Haus Design
The Southern Los Padres Trekkling Company
Tobias Parker, General Contractor
Toni Peralta Real Estate Services, Inc
Watercolors by Patty Van Dyke

UPCOMING EVENTS

A monarch butterfly perches on milkweed at the Ojai Meadows Preserve.

The Ojai Valley Land Conservancy
Protecting your views, trails, water and wildlife

ovlc.org
Summer Event Recap

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY

• Over 70 volunteers joined the OVLC on National Trails Day in partnership with the American Hiking Society. Even the wildlife joined in.
• Twice a year REI hosts a Wilderness First Aid Training at the OVLC in which our staff participate to ensure we are prepared when out on the preserves.
• Thank you to the 225 members who came out to celebrate with us in June—and the Todd Hannigan and Sleeping Chief for the wonderful music.
• Once a year the staff from OVLC, the land trusts of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties, and the Ventura Land Trust come together to get to know our peers and to share ideas, goals, and strategies for protecting our local open spaces.
From the Field

A pleasant surprise this summer was the late-flowered mariposa lilies (Calochortus fimbriatus) blooming on the Ventura River Preserve and Valley View Preserve. The flower is considered rare by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) and is ranked as a 1B.3 in the CNPS’s Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California. A species with a 1B.3 ranking is considered rare throughout its native range and the plant’s populations have most likely declined significantly over the last century. The native range of Calochortus fimbriatus includes southern Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and northern Ventura counties, and the plant is known to bloom more aggressively the year after a wildfire. The Ojai Valley Land Conservancy is excited to have such a beautiful flowering lily on the preserves, but we cannot stress enough the importance of staying on the trail to protect the fragile species. We hope to see more of this lily next season, but with the regrowth of the rest of the chaparral flora, we will probably see less and less Calochortus fimbriatus as time goes on.

Recently the Restoration Team has been preparing for the next planting season, which involves mulching and weed abatement at the existing restoration sites on the Ventura River Preserve. The team has also been maintaining the plants installed over the past year and they will be watering several restoration zones along San Antonio Creek. However, due to the abnormal amount of rain we received in the valley this year and the surprisingly temperate weather we had this summer, the weeds have made a comeback after our initial brushing efforts and additional trail clearance is needed. Over the next few weeks, the Restoration Team will be assisting the Stewardship Team in trail brushing at the Ventura River Preserve and quite possibly other preserves where it is deemed necessary.

Who among us doesn’t love the wonderful pictures in this newsletter or on our social media accounts? We all do, right? Well, for the most part, we have Nathan Wickstrum to thank for that—he sure can photograph nature. But he can do much more than that, and he will in his new role as Stewardship Manager. Nathan was promoted into his new role this past summer to help maintain our lands, the infrastructure and trails, and further expand his volunteer leadership responsibilities. In this new role he will also provide support to our administrative management, assisting in grant writing and planning.

Nathan started as a Restoration Field Crew Specialist in 2015, then became Field Crew Leader, and is now our Stewardship Manager. The OVLC is proud and grateful for his hard work, passion for conservation, commitment to preserving and protecting our natural lands, and of course, for those stellar photographs. Congrats Nathan!

Above photo of Hannah Garcia-Wickstrum on the Ventura River Preserve, taken by her husband Nathan.

This summer the OVLC welcomed two new members to the Restoration Team. Destinee Rabelo (right) joined us from the California Conservation Corps (CCC). While working for the CCC she gained extensive experience in trail maintenance and restoration work, and it is these qualities that make her an invaluable asset to our team. Caitlyn Barrera (left) came to us from the Santa Lucia Conservancy, where she interned after graduating from California State University, Monterey Bay. During her internship, Caitlyn worked on numerous wildlife conservation projects including researching methods for detecting the endangered California tiger salamander and restoration projects focused on working with community partners. These two women are already some of the finest crew members we’ve had on the Restoration Team, and we look forward to seeing the amazing work they are going to be doing out in the field.

Welcome to Our Crew, Caitlyn & Destinee!

LATE-FLOWERED MARIPOSA LILY

The color of the lily can vary dramatically. All photos by Nathan Wickstrum.
Bring your blankets and low-back chairs and find your spot on the lawn. Enjoy music by Radio Skies, beer from Topa Topa Brewing, and food trucks.

SEPTEMBER 21, 2019
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 donate today and they will receive two free tickets!
Type “Mountainfilm Tickets” in the comments of the online donation form and receive two tickets with a first-time donation of $35 or more.

IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP CURRENT?
Check your mailing label...

If the text is green you’re up to date, if it’s orange send in the enclosed envelope, it’s time to renew!