As the new Executive Director of the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy, I am excited to get to work with the board, staff, extraordinary volunteers, business partners, and community members who are committed to saving the special places of the Ojai Valley. The OVLC enjoys extraordinary support. I am humbled and energized to help affirm and deepen the organization’s legacy of conservation.

In my first few weeks on the job, I have had the opportunity to meet many of you. Speaking on behalf of the board and staff, thank you for your support. As we strategize the OVLC’s next chapter, there is one priority that we are clear on. There is overwhelming agreement that we need to revitalize the pace and scale of land conservation.

Like everywhere else, the Ojai Valley is facing challenges from a changing climate. Land conservation can play a critical role in enhancing the resilience of our surrounding landscapes. Here in the Ojai Valley, climate-related issues such as shifting fire and water regimes are front of mind, but native species and natural communities also are threatened. We are still rebuilding trails and other amenities lost in the Thomas Fire. I look forward to exploring ways that land conservation and restoration can help the Ojai Valley be more adaptive and resilient.

Please don’t hesitate to reach out to share your thoughts on what’s important to you in terms of the Ojai Valley broadly and how we should be prioritizing our focus. See you out on the trails.

Welcome New Board Members!

Tonya Peralta
As a 4th generation Ojai native, Tonya has been surrounded by and has enjoyed Ojai’s open spaces her entire life. After completing her degree in Business Administration/Finance, she began working as a corporate district manager for News America Marketing in their advertising division. About 20 years ago, she took a different path as a real estate appraiser, which eventually led to her current position as a real estate broker. Tonya and her husband of 22 years, John, raised both of their boys in the Ojai Valley. In addition to her role on OVLC’s board, she serves on the Board of Realtors in Ojai, and has a passion for animals, travel, and being outdoors. As a huge fan of the OVLC, Tonya is honored to serve on the board.

Phil Bradley
Phil’s 40-plus-year legal career started in Atlanta and then took him to Washington, DC, New York City, and San Diego. As he was winding down his professional life four years ago, Phil moved to Ojai to be close to his daughter, son-in-law, and three grandchildren. An outdoorsman all of his adult life, Phil is a regular volunteer on OVLC trail maintenance and building projects and can be found hiking one of the OVLC trails daily. In addition to his work with OVLC, Phil is actively involved in Habitat for Humanity, and still serves as a Board member and the volunteer General Counsel for Habitat for Humanity in Atlanta. He travels to El Salvador annually to build with Habitat for Humanity El Salvador.

Mission: The Ojai Valley Land Conservancy is a community-based nonprofit organization working with partners to permanently protect the open space, natural scenic beauty, wildlife, habitat, and watershed of the Ojai Valley for current and future generations.

STAFF
Tom Maloney, Executive Director
Tania Parker, Deputy Director
Jill Lashly, Conservation Director
Brendan Taylor, Stewardship Director
Marti Reid, Office Manager
Xena Grossman, Development Associate
Emmie Pinedo, Development Assistant
Nathan Wickstrom, Stewardship Manager
Caitlyn Barrera, Restoration Specialist
Destinee Rabelo, Restoration Specialist
Ron Singer, Nursery Manager

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OVLC.ORG / FIND US ON FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM

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Patagonia Action Works

Patagonia Action Works is matching any donation made to the OVLC from now until December 31, 2019—DOUBLING your impact.

Give a special year-end gift and the OVLC will receive **double your donation**! There is no better time to support conservation in the Ojai Valley than right now.

- Give your family the **gift of conservation** this holiday season.
- Donate for your **business sponsorship** now and have it doubled.
- Patagonia will match individual **gifts up to $10,000** and is giving away $10,000,000!
- **Make a special year-end gift today** and it will be twice as nice!

Visit [ovlc.org/give](http://ovlc.org/give) to make a donation.

*Patagonia will match all donations made on Patagonia Action Works between Nov. 29 and Dec. 31, up to $10,000 per donation and $10,000,000 total!*

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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**December 15**

Firestick Pottery Holiday Show & Sale: A Portion of the Proceeds go to the OVLC

**January TBA**

All About Ojai: Winter Migration Bird Walk with Jesse Grantham at the Ojai Meadows Preserve

**February TBA**

Grand Opening Hike on the Allan Jacobs Trail

For the most up-to-date information about OVLC events visit [ovlc.org/events](http://ovlc.org/events)

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**IN HONOR OF:**

- Dorothy Loebl’s Birthday from Anonymous
- Tod Cossairt Congratulations on your first 50 years together. Love, Barbara & Joel Aaronson
- Tora Parker Way to keep everyone in line at the OVLC office! Keep it up buddy. from Castlyn Barrera
- Lyndsey Kenefick’s Birthday from Helen Pugliano, Michaela Oaks, Jesse Oaks, Marta Tanaka
- Elizabeth Silva’s Birthday
- Tonya Peralta from Julie Hahn
- Sue Gilbreth from Linda L. Magret
- Anne Oppenheimer’s Birthday from Dottie Loebl

**IN MEMORY OF:**

- Allan Jacobs from Ross & Patty Atkinson
- Claudia Gall from Gall Sculpture
- In memory of my mother, Dorothy M. Moon from Cathy Moon
- Esther Robinson from Larry Rose & Lisa Larramendy
- John Shelton May your time on the trails allow John to join you in spirit and give you peace. Love, Kathleen
- Michele Briley Joe Stronks John Rona Marti & Dan Reid Terence Warner
- "Your mother will always be with you." With love, Aunt Teenie

**GIFTS MEMBERSHIP FOR:**

- Carol Williams from Dana Stephens
- Anne Richardson & Tom Bryant from Elizabeth Richardson

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**DOUBLE YOUR DONATION**

*Photo by Fridolin Schöpper*

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.
Late 2017 was a tough time at the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy (OVLC)—over 1,500 acres of our land burned in the Thomas Fire, but even before that, we lost one of our own, Allan Jacobs. When Allan passed, we lost a former Board member, a long-time champion of local land conservation, an avid hiker, and a friend to so many in the Ojai Valley. During his 15 years of volunteering with the OVLC, both on the Board and in various other capacities, Allan was outspoken about the need to protect our local landscapes and he brought many new supporters to the cause. To honor his legacy, our Board of Directors decided to create a new trail in his name. With the Thomas Fire forcing the closure of the lower Chaparral Crest Trail on the Ventura River Preserve (VRP), we had the perfect area in need of the new Allan Jacobs Trail.

We didn’t just want to honor Allan’s legacy by naming a trail after him, we wanted to build this new trail by following Allan’s example and engage the community in our work. We recruited hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians to come out to the VRP and help us design and lay out the trail. Rob Young, who helped lay out our trails on the Valley View Preserve, brought his wealth of local experience to the job of finding this new route. Erick Lord and Denni Tyrell were present every step of the way to help create a flowing, mountain bike-friendly trail, and Board member Stefanie Coeler and her husband Willi came out to evaluate the proposed route from an equestrian perspective. After we worked with the community to plan out the route, Stephen Bryne donated his services as an archaeologist to make sure we weren’t going to disturb any sensitive cultural resources. With his ok, we were ready to start building our trail!

When it came to building, the community came out in force. OVLC Field Crew and Stewardship staff led most projects, but otherwise, it was volunteers who built this trail. Volunteer groups from REI, Patagonia, Villanova Preparatory School, and The Thacher School all spent a day on the trail. This past March, on International Women’s Day, OVLC volunteers Cindy Rowe and Barb Rugo led a trail building day on the Allan Jacobs Trail, and in June the OVLC hosted a trail building day to celebrate National Trails Day.

These group volunteer days played an important part in our work. However, the majority of the work was completed by members of the community who came out to participate in our regular volunteer projects. While there are too many volunteers to list here, there are a few volunteers who were instrumental in the successful completion of this trail. Rob, Erick, and Denni not only helped with the layout of the trail, but also put in dozens of hours to make sure everything was perfect before it opened to the public.
The closest trailhead to the Allan Jacobs Trail is Riverview Trailhead on Rice Road. It is 1.7 miles from the trailhead to the southern trail junction. From Riverview Trailhead, head south on the Upper River Loop Trails until you get to the junction with the Lower River Loop, West River Trail, and Oso Ridge Trail. From here, continue southwest on the Oso Ridge Trail. You will climb up a series of switchbacks on the Oso Ridge Trail before hitting the paved canal road. Cross the paved road and continue west another half-mile to reach the junction with the Allan Jacobs Trail. Turning right at the junction, you will head north onto the Allan Jacobs Trail and follow it first through Olive Creek, a lush riparian habitat. The trail currently goes into Olive Creek, but come the new year, you will be able to cross the creek on a timber bridge, funded in part by support from the Ojai Valley Lions Club and the Rotary Club of Ojai. Once you cross the creek, you’ll climb up six mellow turns amidst dense scrub oak to get to a ridgeline. Follow the contours of the hills as you continue in a northeasterly traverse, before descending back down again into Sycamore Creek, where town drops out of sight. Surrounded by healthy chaparral landscape with mountains in the distance, you’ll feel like you are in a remote wilderness area and not just across the Ventura River from Ojai. After you ascend a few more easy climbing turns, you are back on a ridgeline with great views of the river and town in the distance. Continue traversing north to reach the end of the Allan Jacobs Trail where it connects with the existing Chaparral Crest Trail. The Fern Grotto Trail lies less than a quarter-mile to the west.

From here, you can continue to the Fern Grotto Trail which you will intersect in less than a quarter of a mile, and go north on Fern Grotto Trail, and then east on Wills Canyon Trail to take the shortest route back to the trailhead, or explore farther back into the preserve.

**ACCESSING THE TRAIL**

**Trailhead to Allan Jacobs Trail**

**Old Baldwin Trailhead:**
2 miles from the trailhead to the junction of Oso Ridge Trail and the south end of Allan Jacobs Trail.

**Oso Trailhead:**
2.1 miles from the trailhead to the junction of the Chaparral Crest Trail and the north end of Allan Jacobs Trail.

and dozens of hours each to help build it. Plus, each one of them recruited friends to help out as well! Volunteers with the most hours building the Allan Jacobs Trail were Board Member Phil Bradley with over 60 hours, Don Jackson with over 70 hours, and the most dedicated volunteer—Pat Dexter with an impressive 88.5 hours!!

We were also grateful to be building this trail alongside many of Allan’s family members! His daughter Sarah and son-in-law Josh Rosenberg happily swung some picks into the dirt with crucial last-minute help from their son Jack (age 7!). Allan’s sons Anzac and Jesse braved (and in Anzac’s case, suffered) poison oak, while working to honor their dad. Allan’s brother Jack Jacobs also cut out dense chaparral to help build his brother’s trail.

Allan’s family can feel a sense of ownership over this trail, and so too can everyone who helped out. We would not have been able to design this trail in such an enjoyable and sustainable way without volunteers trudging through the post-fire blackened hills.

The many community members who sweated and struggled to get roots out of the ground did this so that all of us could enjoy a new trail to hike, bike, and ride. This trail was made by the community, for the community, and we have no doubt Allan would be proud of it and of the community of Ojai. Now get out there and enjoy your trail!
FROM THE FIELD

Have you seen the restoration circles at our Ventura River Preserve? Each circle is composed of oak saplings, native shrubs, and glorious mulch. Yes, we said glorious!

Our field crew has been diligently working on mulching efforts, making sure that each circle is clear of invasive weeds and spreading wheelbarrow-full loads of glorious mulch around the planted natives. Because the OVLC aims to restore this site to its origins of oak woodland and riparian corridor, planted stock include only native species and the mulch will help ensure success of these plants by restricting unwanted weeds growing nearby.

Despite how much work it is to transport and spread mulch across the preserve, the field crew has enjoyed aiding in efforts to return the land to what it once was.

As the field crew wraps up mulching efforts, they are gearing up for the next planting season by collecting acorns from our preserves. These acorns will soon be planted into circles at the preserve where oaks did not have much prior luck. So next time you're walking past our restoration site, imagine a large, beautiful oak tree where each circle is and appreciate the power of the small, but mighty acorn!

CREATURE FEATURE

Blainville’s Horned Lizard

Do you know what the cutest reptile in Ojai is? Here’s a hint. It has a spiked crown, a flat body, and has extremely cryptic coloring. If you guessed Blainville’s (formerly coast) horned lizard, then you are right! We may be a little biased here at the OVLC about what cute looks like, but there are many other reasons to appreciate this creature like we do. The horned lizard is a master of disguise with its ability to sit incredibly still and lay flat against the ground without shadows to avoid being seen by predators. It is even capable of changing its color slightly to match better into its background. Despite its incredible camouflage our team has spotted this lizard several times at the Ventura River Preserve and we are looking forward to more encounters in the future!

(Please do not pick wildlife up. We had to move this animal from an area where we were working.)

Western Toad

Mulch piles are dark, somewhat damp places of refuge for a variety of critters. One creature our field crew has been encountering quite often while spreading mulch is the western toad (Anaxyrus boreas). The western toad can be recognized by its warty skin, the light-colored stripe running vertically down its back, and its horizontal pupils. Just like other amphibians, this creature is vulnerable to moisture and temperature changes. As winter brings colder temperatures to Ojai, the western toad will seek shelter underground in burrows it makes or in holes made by small mammals. Au revoir Mr. Toad! We shall see you next year!

Photo by Caitlyn Barrera

Together, our community will help protect Ojai’s open space for everyone to enjoy, forever.

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
Alajai Creations
BeCalm of Ojai
Chamber on the Mountain
Char Man Brand Hot Sauce
Dogs Fly Design
The Glass Man Professional Window Washing Company
GoOjai.com
Grayfox Investors
Jennifer Keeler, Hair Stylist & Owner at Salon Risa
Lorraine Lim Catering
Mary Nelson Skincare & Massage Studio
Meridian Design Construction
Mooney Creative
Noah Crowe, Sunrun Home Solar Consultant
Ojai Quarterly
Rowsie Vain
Sal Haus Design
The Southern Los Padres Trekking Company
Tobias Parker, General Contractor
Tonya Peralta Real Estate Services, Inc
Watercolors by Patty Van Dyke
We want to say thank you to our amazing OVLC community for joining us at the 5th annual Mountainfilm on Tour in Ojai. We are so grateful to everyone who told a friend, showed up, volunteered, posted on social media, and helped make this year’s fundraiser so incredibly successful. We had 2,000 people in attendance this year and that’s because of you!

We have so many people to thank for making this event possible!

Thank you to all of our event sponsors, including our premier sponsor Gojai. Thank you Ojai Valley School for being the greatest hosts. Thank you to our business sponsors and Wild About Ojai partners for being present at the event. Thank you Radio Skies for filling our event with your gorgeous music. Thank you to Topa Topa Brewing Co for running our beer garden year after year. Thank you to Ventura Bike Hub and Casitas Rowing Club for running our bike valet. Thank you to all of the businesses that graciously donated to our raffle. Thank you to all of our incredible volunteers that make this event possible.

We are so grateful for this event and how it brings the community together and introduces us to new friends. We hope to see you at the rest of our events throughout the year and at Mountainfilm 2020!
High school students from Oak Grove School spent a morning working to clear debris from the Ventura River preserve near the Old Baldwin Road Trailhead. Students moved lots of wood and scrap metal, as well as a tire, a couch, a mattress, and parts of an old tree house that had collected in the river bottom. The garbage was sorted and all of the wood taken to Ojai Valley Organics to be added to their green waste recycling program. After all the debris was gone, students spent time picking up trash, hiking, and enjoying the beauty of the river. For most students, it was their first time at that trailhead and they loved exploring a new spot on the river. This was OVLC’s third collaboration with the Oak Grove School and students commented that they loved getting to work on a new project and learn more about our natural resources.
Happy Holidays!

The shorter days and shifting light of autumn can elicit a time of reflection. Ojai’s open spaces are here to provide you with joy and peace throughout the bustle of the holiday season. However you appreciate or use the preserves, we hope they help center you to what is important.

As the year comes to an end, we are overwhelmed with gratitude for all that you have helped us accomplish. We look forward to new opportunities to partner with you in protecting this magical place that we call home. We hope you will continue your commitment to conservation in Ojai by making a generous year-end gift today.

From the Staff & Board of the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy