

Heal the Bay.

fall  
**2007**

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# currents



**Coastal Cleanup Day**

# currents

current(s) adj or n 1: belonging to the present time 2: a movement of water in a certain direction 3: the prevailing public opinion or belief 4: the newsletter of Heal the Bay



Heal the Bay.

Heal the Bay is a nonprofit environmental organization dedicated to making Southern California coastal waters and watersheds, including Santa Monica Bay, safe, healthy and clean. We use research, education, community action and advocacy to pursue our mission.

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## Environmentalism Enters the Mainstream

**T**here is no doubt about it: environmentalism hasn't been in vogue to this degree since the 20th anniversary of Earth Day in 1990. Climate change on the cover of Time, Newsweek and Vanity Fair. An Oscar for "An Inconvenient Truth." Live Earth: a concert on climate change on seven continents. Politicians staking claims over who will have the greenest city, state or country.

Despite the unparalleled media and marketing for all things environmental, we all have a long way to go to move from awareness to success. As a society, we develop far-reaching resolutions and plans, yet the leadership and resources haven't followed to make those visionary efforts a reality. We see this on green city plans, integrated water resources management plans, Ocean Commission reports, and so much more. Just because council people, mayors, commissions, and governors approve visionary plans does not mean that they get implemented. The obstacles of limited resources and substantial regulated community opposition often prove too great an obstacle for implementation.

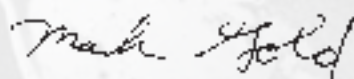
Currently, Heal the Bay has a number of environmental litmus tests ongoing in Sacramento: Senate Constitutional

Amendment 12 (Torlakson) and the Ocean Protection Council Resolution and subsequent Pacific Protection Initiative. Will the legislature and Governor take the actions necessary to allow local governments to fund flood control and stormwater pollution abatement efforts by approving SCA 12? Will the legislature and Governor take the actions necessary to implement the Ocean Protection Council's visionary resolution to stop marine debris off California and beyond? Both of these efforts require leadership that goes beyond popularity contests and the next election cycle. For example, phasing out commonly used toxic chemicals in plastics requires the leadership to stand up to the powerful chemical and plastic industry for the good of the marine environment and generations to come.

However, as the public, we can't allow these decisions to occur in a vacuum. We need to lead our elected officials by leading by example. Driving a Prius is great, but it is not enough to lead to widespread environmental change. Do you bring your reusable bags to the store? Do you avoid non-recyclable plastic packaged food and products in markets, stores and restaurants? Do you bring your own travel mug or bottle everywhere? Do you email

your legislators and council people to ask them to take leadership on critical environmental issues? Do you vote for the environment? If you answered no to any of these questions, or you're not doing what you can to conserve energy and water and stop runoff pollution, then you can do better. You can be a better environmentalist and you can lead the politicians and the polluting businesses in the right direction.

Fifteen years ago, McDonald's didn't stop using styrofoam because of a legal mandate. They did it because of an Environmental Defense campaign and public outcry. A societal shift towards environmental consumer advocacy will result in even more far-reaching gains on marine debris, toxic use and waste reduction. Heal the Bay has provided members with sustainable seafood choices and non-toxic alternatives for years. Look for us to provide even more environmental consumer choices and actions in future newsletters.



Mark Gold  
President,  
Heal the Bay



# Just Heal It...

By Randi Parent

If the old saying, “actions speak louder than words” is true, then Heal the Bay shouts out a blueprint for environmental stewardship of the Santa Monica Bay through its advocacy efforts, education programs and research.

And while environmentalism has always enjoyed a counter cultural popularity, it has gained momentum and support in the last decade and over the last eighteen months or so environmental issues have moved to center stage. Perhaps spearheaded by the success of former Vice President Al Gore’s slide-show-turned Oscar-winning movie on global warming, “An Inconvenient Truth,” the health of our planet has leapt to the forefront of mainstream concerns.

Members of Heal the Bay took the leap earlier than most; still, finding significant ways to turn those concerns into actionable solutions is not always clear. But a quick look at Heal the Bay’s web page can provide inspiration of recent successes along with information about ways to take action.

## The Beach Report Card

Heal the Bay’s 17th annual Beach Report Card, released in May, showed dramatic improvement at a stretch of Los Angeles County beach that for years was plagued with failing grades. Will Rogers State Beach was one of the most polluted in the state, showing persistent high levels of bacteria. But the most recent report card noted the one and three-quarter mile long beach is showing consistently excellent water quality during the May to October dry weather time period — good news for the millions of beachgoers who visit the popular state beach. The diversion pump and runoff detention barrier installed at the intersection of Chautauqua Boulevard and the Pacific Coast Highway four years ago to solve the stormdrain runoff problems for this beach were too small for the amount of runoff, explained Mark Gold, president of Heal the Bay.

“They (the City of Los Angeles) grossly underestimated the flow,” Gold said. “As a result there were many days that exceeded beach water quality standards.” The improvement is due to modifications in the diversion and the County filling

the area with sand between the bike path and surf zone.

A new year-round dry weather pump facility on the beach side of the PCH is in the planning stages. “This is good news that the City of LA is treating this problem as if it were a major sewer project versus proposing band-aid solutions,” Gold continued.

Proposition O funds and State funds from the Clean Beach Initiative will pay for the new facility. The Clean Beach Initiative was created in 2001, appropriating millions to target specific projects that would protect and restore water quality along the California coast. “This is an example of Proposition O and the Clean Beach Initiative really working, earmarking funds to improve water quality at a popular yet polluted beach,” Gold said. “Thanks to the City of LA with some State funding, many of the stormwater drains that lead into the Bay along Will Rogers will have runoff diverted year round by 2009,” Gold added.

Heal the Bay and the Pacific Palisades community took the lead in pressing the City of Los Angeles and the county



to resolve the high bacteria count at Will Rogers, Gold pointed out.

### **Nuisance Runoff**

While the communities of the Palisades and Santa Monica are the most engaged concerning beach water quality issues, according to Gold, Malibu residents have the opportunity to become active in preventing nuisance runoff on their property, which makes its way to the Bay as well. Examples of nuisance runoff include overly-irrigated lawns and gardens, runoff water created from car washing or the hosing down of other equipment or construction sites. "It's important to make sure the water used infiltrates into the land on site," Gold explained. Also, there has been progress in Malibu with the completion of the Civic Center runoff treatment facility, the near completion of the runoff treatment facility at highly polluted Marie Canyon, and the proposed facility at Ramirez Canyon (Paradise Cove) scheduled for completion in early 2009.

### **Support Marine Debris Legislation**

Back on Heal the Bay's website,

those looking to take action can keep up to date on the flotilla of legislation that the organization is either sponsoring or supporting (see page 6 for the Pacific Protection Initiative update). Information is updated regularly, and requests for letters of support, with links to form letters to send to the appropriate legislators are provided.

And while none of the bills in this "flotilla" refer to the elimination of plastic bags, one of the most proactive measures everyone can take is to cut down on plastic bag use. Most grocery stores are selling their own reusable canvas or cotton shopping bag; and plastic bags are one of the most persistent forms of marine pollution. The County of LA and City of Santa Monica are seriously considering joining San Francisco in a retail plastic bag ban.

### **Nothin' But Sand Cleanups**

Since their inception in 2004, these monthly cleanups have grown steadily in popularity, literally attracting hundreds of volunteers on the third Saturday of each month to clean a beach. The location changes each month, and is posted on the website.

Those who need a reminder can sign up on-line to get email alerts for upcoming cleanups. Volunteers of any age are welcome between the hours of 10 a.m. and 12:00 noon; the only requirement is that all participants must have a signed waiver, which is available on the website or at the cleanup.

Finally, the simple act of sharing an idea for conservation is action: a gentleman called the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium recently to share his idea, which began with a strange slogan: "Plastic can be good," he proclaimed. Peter Griswold called to report he had picked up a plastic bag blowing in the breeze along the beach, but before depositing it in the trashcan he decided to use it to pick up all the trash he encountered on his way to the trashcan.

"I think you should tell people to always carry a plastic bag with them," he said. "It can be easily folded up in their pocket, and used to pick up trash wherever they go."

Sometimes the simplest ideas are the action-packed ones.





## Malibu Surfing Association Hosts the 20th Annual MSA Classic

By Natalie Burdick

From September 8 – 9, 2007, the Malibu Surfing Association will be hosting one of the world's premier surfing contests, the Classic at Surfrider Beach, in Malibu. The Classic attracts 300 amateur and professional surfers and over 2,500 cheering spectators annually. This year's event will benefit Heal the Bay and other organizations working for the protection of the California coastline. Come out to enjoy this quintessentially, southern Californian beach sport, cheer on your favorite surfers, and contribute to Heal the Bay.

For more information, please visit [www.healthebay.org](http://www.healthebay.org) or [www.malibuclassic.com](http://www.malibuclassic.com) for event details.

## Upcoming Summer Events

By Natalie Burdick

### Gladstone's Art Auction

On October 21, 2007, Gladstone's will be hosting an exclusive art auction, featuring artists and imagery highlighting our local landscape and environs, to benefit Heal the Bay. For the most current information and details about this exclusive, Sunday afternoon art event sponsored by Gladstone's world-renowned, beachfront seafood restaurant, please visit [www.healthebay.org](http://www.healthebay.org) or [www.gladstones.com/events.html](http://www.gladstones.com/events.html).



Heal the Bay.

## Heal the Bay Membership Discounts

Show your Heal the Bay membership card at the businesses listed below and save! Visit [healthebay.org/membership](http://healthebay.org/membership) for the most recent list of participating businesses.



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# Monofilament Recycling Bins

By Nick Fash

What's virtually invisible underwater, incredibly strong, can last up to 600 years in the marine environment, and is responsible for countless marine life deaths? Monofilament fishing line! Every pier along the West coast is a haven for fisherman looking to dip a line into the mighty Pacific Ocean and try their luck (or as some say, skill) to take home their own dinner. Unfortunately, these very same fishermen discard an abundance of monofilament fishing line into the oceans. Monofilament fishing line is one of the most devastating types of marine debris, as it indiscriminately entangles and kills a wide array of marine life, from birds and turtles to crabs and fishes. Any diver who has spent time diving around the reefs in Southern California can tell tales about the webs of monofilament fishing line left by anglers, often stretching for many meters around the rocky points.

Unfortunately the problems are far larger than a few recreational anglers discarding used fishing line. There are massive amounts of derelict fishing gear off the Southern California coast, including nets, lines, crab and shrimp traps/pots, and other recreational and/or commercial harvest equipment that has been lost or abandoned in the marine environment. This derelict gear can seriously impact not only upon marine life and the habitats they live in, but also to humans that use the ocean for recreation.

The SeaDoc Society at the University of California, Davis Wildlife Health Center launched the California Lost Fishing Gear Removal Project in July 2005. So far, they have removed more than 10 tons of lost fishing gear. They have been trying to organize divers to help remove much of the debris that still litters our ocean floor.

But what can you do on a more local level to help protect our local marine life? Well quite a lot! This past spring a group of concerned citizens worked with myself, the City of Santa Monica, and the Pier Restoration Corporation, to create and install three monofilament fishing line recycling bins on the fishing

platforms. A big-hearted carpenter spearheaded the project along with some metal workers, who were tired of seeing first hand the damage that discarded fishing line can do. Knowing how short staffed the local authorities were to combat this issue they utilized their skills to help protect marine life, donating their time and all the materials to make this project come to fruition. The monofilament recycling bins went through a number of design modifications but are now poised to be the prototype for units up and down the California coast. So you can do a lot to help make our environment a better place, whether it be organizing a trash cleanup, supporting a local bill, or just helping spread the word, your actions along with others just like you, can add up to a tremendous impact.



Photo by Nick Fash

# Legislative Update

By Kirsten James

**H**eal the Bay is actively involved in advocating for statewide marine debris legislation with environmental partner Environment California by support and/or sponsorship of a flotilla of bills that address various marine debris issues. These pieces of legislation make up the Pacific Protection Initiative and timely updates on this series of bills can be viewed at Heal the Bay's website: [www.healthebay.org/ppi/](http://www.healthebay.org/ppi/) The following is the latest available information at press time:

**SB 899** (Sen. Joseph S. Simitian, Palo Alto) targets toxic additives in plastic. If adopted this bill would phase-out the use of packaging that contains the most toxic constituents found in plastic packaging, like Bisphenol-A, which mimics the hormone estrogen.

SB 899 passed off the Senate Floor on April 23rd. However after much consideration, the author and Heal the Bay decided to make this a two-year bill. Several important studies are due out later this year, so these

should help with our advocacy efforts. Also, this will provide Heal the Bay more time to educate the legislators and staffers on the impacts of these chemicals on the marine environment.

**SB 898** (Simitian) focuses on derelict, or abandoned, fishing gear prevention, its identification and removal.

The bill passed off the Senate Floor on June 6th. On the Assembly side, the bill was double-referred to Assembly Natural Resources and Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife. It passed these committees with several Republican votes on June 25 and July 3, respectively. On July 18th it was put on suspense, and may become a 2-year bill.

**AB 258** (Assemblyman Paul Krekorian, Glendale) promotes zero discharge of preproduction plastics or "nurdles" from plastic industry facilities. AB 258 would require the state board and regional boards to implement a program to control discharges of preproduction plastic into rivers and streams.

This bill passed off the Assembly floor on June 5th and out of Senate Environmental Quality on July 10th. After the legislative summer recess, the bill will be heard before Senate Appropriations.

**AB 904** (Assemblyman Mike Feuer, West Hollywood) would require take-out food packaging to be made of compostable or recyclable materials.

This bill was not voted on by the Assembly and will become a two-year bill. It was previously passed by the Assembly Appropriations Committee and Assembly Natural Resources Committee.

**AB 820** (Assemblywoman Betty Karnette, Long Beach) prohibits the sale or distribution of expanded polystyrene food containers at state facilities after January 1, 2009.

This bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee and did not make it out for a floor vote before the legislative deadline. This bill is now inactive.

# Epidemiology Study Update

By Polly Barrowman

Heal the Bay has partnered with SCCWRP (the Southern California Coastal Waters Research Project), UC Berkeley, and the Orange County Sanitation Districts on the most comprehensive stormwater epidemiology study ever performed. The three year study kicked off at Doheny Beach in Orange County this Memorial Day weekend and has been

running one day of each weekend since then. The study is progressing well, with high numbers of swimmers being recruited as the marine layer lifts and the weather begins to warm up. However, with the continuation of drought conditions there has been no breaching of the San Juan Creek to the beach, meaning that bacteria counts have been low. Because the frequency

of water quality exceedances for coliforms and enterococcus did not exceed 20%, the study was suspended after the July 4th weekend. This summer's effort is effectively a pilot study to work out logistical issues in sample collection, analysis, and swimmer interviews, and we expect to resume the study at Doheny and Malibu Surfrider Beach next summer.







# Malibu Source Identification Study Update

By Polly Barrowman

Unseasonably low precipitation this year has meant that previous hotspots along the coastline have been seeing a great improvement in water quality. It would appear that the lack of rain has reduced flow through the Escondido and Ramirez watersheds to the point at which fecal bacteria has ceased to have a negative impact on the beaches, especially Escondido.

After six weeks of analyses, results clearly showed that while patterns in indicator bacteria levels in each of the creeks were developing, they were not affecting beach water quality. It was therefore decided by each of the three collaborators of the study (Heal the Bay, SCCWRP, and L.A. County) to suspend the project until further notice.

## Marine Protected Area Update — Council funds local work on MPAs

By Sarah Abramson

**T**he Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission (SMBRC) received a \$210,000 grant from the Ocean Protection Council on June 14th to conduct a series of studies in preparation for the implementation of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in Southern California. With these funds, the SMBRC will catalogue gaps in research, mapping, and monitoring of marine resources in the Santa Monica Bay. The SMBRC will then use this analysis to prioritize additional research needed to create a scientifically-sound information base for the designation of MPAs in this region for Marine Life Protection Act implementation in Southern California. A special MPA Technical Advisory Committee established by the SMBRC will oversee this work. Heal the Bay has been working in close collaboration with this committee.

The Marine Life Protection Act requires the State Department of Fish and Game to implement a network of MPAs in California waters by 2011. The state is implementing this law

in regions incrementally. MPAs were established along the central coast last year, and the State is now working on the north central coast. The process may hit Southern California as soon as 2008.

Although the total cost of preparing for Marine Life Protection Act implementation in the Santa Monica Bay region (e.g. conducting the necessary studies to fill these data gaps) is estimated at \$2 million, this initial funding from the Ocean Protection Council is a welcome first step. The Ocean Protection Council also demonstrated support of this work by encouraging the SMBRC to seek Proposition 84 funding in the fall. The SMBRC is also committing funds for MPA work, and will soon vote to provide an additional \$220,000 for subtidal assessment and monitoring of rocky reef habitat in the bay. These MPA-related studies must start as soon as possible in order to inform the Marine Life Protected Areas process when it moves south.

## Bottle Caps: Leashing the Lids

By Kirsten James

Although relatively small in size, bottle caps from all types of beverage bottles have a huge impact on our marine environment. During Coastal Cleanup Day, 2005, 61,117 bottle caps were collected on California beaches. A recent study estimated that there are over 88,000 plastic caps and lids on Orange County beaches. Marine animals often ingest these discarded plastic bottle caps. For example, large seabirds such as black-footed albatrosses frequently mistake bottle caps floating in the ocean for food. The caps can block a bird's digestive system and prevent them from getting proper nourishment. This ultimately leads to starvation.

It is useful to take a look at historical litter problems and solutions to find solutions today for the proliferation of bottle caps on our beaches and in the ocean. The first aluminum cans with "pull

**(Continued on page 11)**

# Bring Back the

By Laurie Feldman

On May 31st, Heal the Bay held yet another very successful annual dinner at Barker Hangar in Santa Monica.

Some of Hollywood's biggest names, including Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Wendie Malick, Amy Smart, boxer Sugar Ray Leonard and world-champion surfer Kelly Slater, attended the 16th annual Heal the Bay 'Bring Back the Beach' dinner, which honored Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, the National Geographic Society and Brian Wilson for their exemplary contributions to

the environmental health of California's coastal waters.

Themed 'One Child Can Make a Difference,' this year's event had a special focus on the importance of early environmental education. "Children who grow up caring for the world around them learn to be more responsible and environmentally conscious individuals," said Heal the Bay President Mark Gold.

The first two honorees of the evening, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and the National Geographic Society, were

awarded the Walk the Talk awards for their efforts in bringing the environment into the classroom. "We must be diligent in our efforts to keep California at the forefront of environmental protection and resource efficiency, improving our surroundings and making our state a better place to live and visit," said Governor Schwarzenegger.

"Environmental education in our K-12 school system will prepare California's young people to be knowledgeable citizens, make informed decisions about California's future and ensure



Photo by Pamela Blackstone



Photo by Pamela Blackstone



Photo by Pamela Blackstone



# Beach 2007



Photo by Fay Sadou



Photo by Tom Galassi



Photo by Tom Galassi

a clean, healthy and secure outlook for our state." National Geographic Society also plays a critical role in California's successful Education and the Environment Initiative (EEI), which introduces environmental curriculum into K-12 public classrooms.

In addition, the benefit dinner featured a special presentation of the Dorothy Green award to Grammy® award-winner Brian Wilson by Kelly Slater. Wilson, the creative genius behind the best known surf band in history, created the

international mystique and romanticism behind California's beach culture with iconic Beach Boys songs including "California Girls" and "Surfin' USA." Wilson's band performed a full set of the Beach Boys' greatest hits bringing guests dancing to the front of the stage, while local favorites, Jacks Mannequin, rocked the house on the heels of their acclaimed Coachella performance.

Adding to the excitement, long-time Heal the Bay supporter Ford Motor Company donated a brand new, fully-

loaded 2008 Ford Escape Hybrid valued at \$32,000, which was won during the dinner's live auction for \$37,000. The extensively re-designed Ford Escape Hybrid is America's most fuel-efficient and best-selling compact SUV.

In one evening, Heal the Bay raised more than \$700,000 to promote the organization's ongoing work. For more information on the dinner and other upcoming events, visit [www.healthebay.org](http://www.healthebay.org).



# Coastal Cleanup Day

By Meredith McCarthy

At last year's Coastal Cleanup Day, volunteers at Los Angeles area-rivers, lakes, creeks, wetlands and beaches picked up approximately 35 tons of trash and 5,000 pounds of recyclables within three hours. Since Heal the Bay began coordinating the event in L.A. County 18 years ago, volunteers at Coastal Cleanup Day have collected more than 367 tons of trash and recyclables.



Photo by Haan-Fawn Chau

"Coastal Cleanup Day isn't just about the beach," said Mark Gold, President of Heal the Bay. "Maintaining clean inland creeks, rivers and watersheds is a major component of keeping our oceans healthy for future generations."

Coastal Cleanup Day is held in conjunction with the California Coastal Commission and the L.A. Department of Beaches and Harbors. Observed by 50 states and 88 countries, the event will celebrate its anniversary as "the largest volunteer day on the planet."



Photo by Stephanie Kleinman



Photo by Meredith McCarthy



Photo by Nick Fash

## **BEACH SITES • SITIOS COSTEROS**

Leo Carrillo Beach  
Nicholas Canyon Beach  
Robert Meyer Beaches  
Zuma Beach  
Westward Beach  
Point Dume  
Malibu Beach & Lagoon  
Surfrider Beach

## **DIVE SITES • SITIOS DE BUCEO**

Santa Monica Pier Dive  
Redondo Pier Dive  
Long Beach King Harbor Dive

## **INLAND SITES • SITIOS DEL INTERIOR**

Ballona Creek & Wetlands  
Malibu Creek State Park  
Topanga State Park  
Los Angeles River  
Lynwood  
Downey  
Ken Malloy Harbor Park  
Compton Creek  
Dominguez Channel  
Tujunga Wash  
Panorama City



Photo by Nick Fash

Topanga Beach  
Will Rogers State Beach  
Santa Monica Beach  
Venice Beach  
Marina del Rey  
Playa del Rey Beach  
Dockweiler State Beach  
Manhattan Beach Pier  
Hermosa Beach Pier  
Redondo Beach Pier  
Torrance Beach  
Malaga Cove  
Abalone Cove  
White Point  
Cabrillo Beach

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Colorado Lagoon  
De Forest Nature Area  
Willow Street Estuary  
San Gabriel River

# New Animals at the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium

By Randi Parent

New animals on exhibit at the Aquarium are usually introduced into existing tanks, but when senior aquarist Jose Bacallao made displaying moon jellies a priority, he also had to make room for a new tank with a specialized shape and circulation system. Moon jellies, *Aurelia aurita*, which were hatched here in April, are on display in a circular tank known as a kreisel.

The kreisel is designed without corners to prevent injuries to delicate creatures like the jellies, and includes a unique water circulation system. The gentle flow keeps these organisms suspended, moving the water in a ferris wheel style action that allows the jellies to float majestically. (Check out this issue's Critter Corner for more on moon jellies).

Kreisel tanks aren't something that can be purchased at the local pet shop. And while there are design blueprints with instructions on how to build one of these tanks, Bacallao had to develop his own design plan, scaling the tank to specific dimensions to serve the needs of the Aquarium exhibit. The kreisel was built of acrylic at Hastings Plastics in Santa Monica, and is now teeming with moon jellies.

The phylum discovery exhibit, the second tank on the right when entering the Aquarium, contains two new species: the wolf-eel, *Anarrhichthys ocellatus* and a juvenile garibaldi, *Hypsypops rubicundus*. The wolf-eels were born last November at the Oregon Coast Aquarium, and two are currently on display at the Aquarium. While only about a foot long now, they will reach at least six

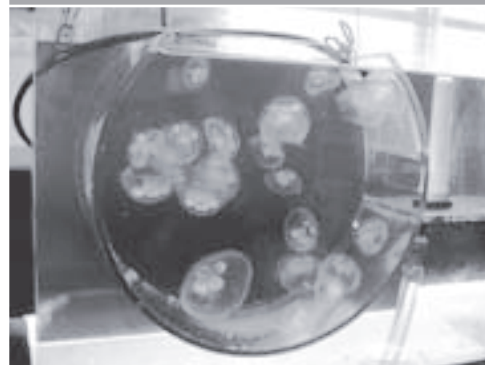


Photo by José Bacallao

feet in length by the time they are full grown, which can take up to seven years. The juveniles are burnt-orange in color, with striking dark spots. In comparison, the juvenile garibaldi is bright orange with distinctive bright blue spots. As it matures, the spots will fade away and this fish will be uniformly bright orange, like the adult garibaldi displayed in the crustacean exhibit across the gallery. The wolf-eels will change coloration as adults as well; they can be gray to brown with a hint of green.

Visit the Aquarium often to chart the growth of all the new animals, and check up on your old favorites as well.

## Bottle Caps: Leashing the Lids

(Continued from page 7)

tabs" were introduced to consumers in the early 1960s. The pull tabs became separated from the can when a beverage was opened. Pull tabs soon became a common form of litter, which was soon recognized as a design flaw. Now aluminum cans have tabs that connect to the body of the can. A similar concept for plastic bottles — attaching the cap to the bottle — would decrease the number

of caps making their way to the ocean. Ideally, the bottle and cap would be made out of the same easily recyclable plastic. Certain bottle manufactures have already connected the cap to the bottle, though probably not because of marine debris concerns.

Innovative solutions are necessary in order to solve the larger issue of

marine debris or trash in the ocean. In an ideal world, consumers would drink beverages from a reusable container. However, in today's society of fast food and convenience markets, this may not be realistic in the very near term. The concept of "leashing the lid" is one innovative idea that would lead to fewer plastic caps in our oceans.



## Theme Weekends Make a Big Splash at the Aquarium

By Randi Parent

The Santa Monica Pier Aquarium just celebrated its third theme weekend of the year, paying tribute to the end of the summer season with “The Last Waves of Summer” on August 25–26th. Following a weekend devoted to Earth Month activities in April and a “Whale of a Weekend” in February celebrating the annual migration of the Pacific gray whale, the Aquarium will round out the year with a Halloween themed weekend in late October. This established series of four theme weekends are now annual events that members and the public can count on and look forward to.

“The theme weekends give us an opportunity to provide quality education to the community, that focuses in on a particular marine topic,” said Vicki Wawerchak, director of the Aquarium. “The activities and presentations that we’re able to offer get everybody involved, from kids to adults,” Wawerchak continued. “And while the themes may remain the same, visitors can count on the activities to change each year.”

The mechanics of waves was the focal point for the most recent theme weekend held in August. An arts and crafts station stocked with recycled materials, education presentations on wave dynamics, and take-home wave models made from water bottles were just some of the highlights.

The Aquarium also brought out its remotely operated vehicle, or ROV, made by Aquarium Education Specialist Nick Fash and Kurt Holland, a member of the Aquarium’s advisory board. The ROV was operated from a station at the west end of the Santa Monica Pier, where the public was invited to drive the vehicle, which was submerged in the 30-foot deep waters. A camera from within the ROV provides streaming video projected on a screen set up above — giving visitors the opportunity to view the habitat under the pier without getting wet.

Watch for updates on our Halloween weekend, “Scary, Gooley, Dark & Spooky,” followed after the holidays by the February 2008 “Whale of a Weekend”, which will return - along with the whales — before we know it.



### And Finally... Is That Kermit the Frog at the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium??!!

By Randi Parent

Yes, Kermit the Frog visited the Aquarium on May 31st. He was interviewed in front of the Aquarium by KTLA Channel 5 reporter Gayle Anderson. A portion of Anderson’s morning segments were also broadcast from within the Aquarium, where she interviewed Director Vicki Wawerchak, showcased several of the exhibits and with Kermit’s help, encouraged viewers to practice the “10 Ways to Heal the Bay,” featured on our bookmarks. Kermit was in town as a spokes-amphibian for Ford Motor Company, which donated a hybrid vehicle for the live auction taking place that evening at Heal the Bay’s annual Bring Back the Beach Dinner.



# Thanks to Our Corporate Supporters!

By Laurie Feldman

**H**eal the Bay would like to thank Levi's® for their commitment to the environment and support on May 1, 2007. As part of the company's long-standing dedication to community involvement, the Levi's team recognized May 1st as "501® Day"—a day to encourage people everywhere to get involved in their own communities by volunteering. A large majority of employees from Levi Strauss & Co. headquarters and offices across Los Angeles County arrived in support of Heal the Bay to complete a very successful beach cleanup at Venice

Beach. Heal the Bay thanks all the employees and is grateful for their contribution and efforts. In addition, Levi's generously awarded Heal the Bay a \$3,000 grant.

On May 9th, more than 300 Sony Pictures Entertainment volunteers participated in the annual Sony Global Volunteer Day, coordinated in Los Angeles County by Heal the Bay and Sony Pictures Entertainment. Volunteers headed to the Playa del Rey beach at 62nd Avenue and Pacific Avenue from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. to collect trash and recyclables.

Every year Sony Pictures Entertainment takes part in a special day dedicated to volunteerism and giving back to the community. This year Sony has not only partnered with Heal the Bay to put together this successful beach cleanup, but they were also big sponsors of the Bring Back the Beach annual dinner and this year's September 15th Coastal Cleanup Day.

For corporate volunteering opportunities, please visit our website at [www.healthebay.org](http://www.healthebay.org) or call 1 800 HEAL BAY.

## Compton Creek

By James Alamillo and Hallie Jones

**F**or the past five years, Heal the Bay has been working in the Compton Creek watershed, a tributary of the Los Angeles River, to clean up and restore this



Photo by Frankie Orrala

important community resource. Compton Creek, a portion of which remains soft-bottomed and thus serves as important riparian habitat for aquatic life and birds, is one of the most visibly polluted water bodies in Los Angeles County. Heal the Bay has coordinated multiple cleanups along the creek, pulling out tons of trash, discarded electronics, furniture, and other articles of trash. We've been working with local public agencies and surrounding communities to change Compton Creek from a blighted public space into a community asset. Local stakeholders, including the City of Compton, the

Friends of Compton Creek, Compton Unified School District, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council, and the County of Los Angeles have initiated a number of projects in the watershed.

For example, the City of Compton recently completed an equestrian and bike path that runs along Compton Creek. In addition to the bike path, the City of Compton completed their Regional Garden Park Master Plan, which includes the development of pocket parks along Compton Creek. Also, the County has installed over 1,000 catch basin inserts within the watershed to help reduce the amount of trash that flows into Compton Creek. Finally, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, in cooperation with the Compton Unified School District, recently completed a pocket park at Compton High School. These projects, in conjunction with Heal the Bay's Compton Creek Watershed program, are making a difference in the watershed.

**(Continued on page 14)**

# Moon Jellies

by José Bacallao

One of the most peculiar and attractive animals found off the coast of Southern California is the drifting, pulsing, brainless gelatinous blob known as the moon jelly. The moon jelly, *Aurelia aurita*, is commonly found along this coast but is also found throughout the tropical waters of the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans. They typically reach a diameter of 40cm (15 inches) and are easily recognized by their translucent bell-shaped body, short marginal tentacles and the four horseshoe-shaped gonads. Moon jellies are not very good swimmers so zoologists have described them as being zooplankton; floating and drifting animals. They can technically swim but are not strong enough to combat many of the currents, tide dynamics and wave action of the oceanic coast. When attempting to swim through the water column they can move around by pulsating their bell-shaped body. This swimming activity helps to keep the animal near the surface of the water, where it can reach out and catch unwary prey.

Moon jellies are carnivorous and they indiscriminately feed on other types of zooplankton. Their primary prey includes larval snails and clams, copepods, larval polychaetes, protozoans and fish eggs. These foods usually collect on the surface of the animal where they become entrapped in mucus. Food items are then passed onto the bell margins and then the mouth via ciliary action.

Most sea jellies have tentacles imbedded with thousand of powerful, toxic stinging cells. Moon jellies have

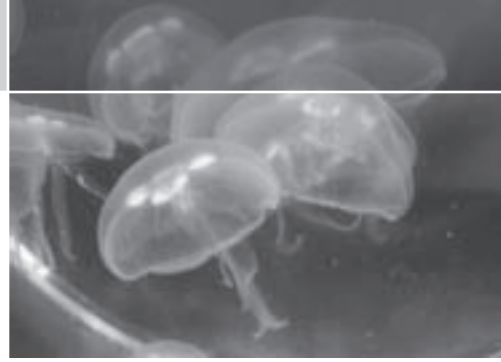


Photo by José Bacallao

weak stinging cells and as a result have a wide variety of predators including the ocean sunfish, sea turtles, birds and other sea jellies. People are also predators of sea jellies. In countries like China, Malaysia, Indonesia and the United States, sea jellies are often found on restaurant menus.

Sex in the sea is usually dull and complex, devoid of romance and any significant passion — and the moon jelly is no exception. Moon jellies reproduce both sexually and asexually, and their brief life cycle consists of four stages.

Groups of adult male and female moon jellies, in what is known as the medusae stage of their life cycle, will reproduce sexually. Fertile eggs within the female moon jelly are temporarily stored on the oral arms until free-swimming larvae are developed, known as the planula stage. These planulae will briefly swim and attach onto a hard surface, perhaps a pier piling or a rock. On this hard substrate a planula will develop into a tiny sessile polyp — the scyphistoma stage. These polyps reproduce by asexually budding duplicate polyps or by releasing a tiny disc shaped medusa known as ephyra and after several months will develop into an adult moon jelly. The entire life cycle is complete within a year and most moon jellies will not live through a second year.

Moon jellies are now available for you to gaze upon as they hypnotically float in their new exhibit at the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium.

## Compton Creek

(Continued from page 13)

Heal the Bay was recently awarded a grant from the California Coastal Conservancy to continue our work in the Compton Creek Watershed. The grant, which will cover two years, will fund community partnership opportunities, the planning and development of six

neighborhood greening projects in the lower Los Angeles River watershed (which includes Compton Creek), and water quality monitoring program. Special thanks to the California Coastal Conservancy for their support on this important project.

# Staff Updates

by Hallie Jones



Congratulations to Mark Gold, who is now the President of Heal the Bay. Mark was Heal the Bay's Executive Director for over 10 years,

and in fact was Heal the Bay's first paid employee (he joined as a Staff Scientist in 1988), and he was instrumental in growing Heal the Bay from a small grassroots non-profit to the statewide group we are today. As President, Mark will have more time to focus on the big picture issues facing Heal the Bay. Karin Hall has been promoted to Executive Director from Associate Director. Karin became Heal the Bay's Associate Director in 2002, and we look forward to her continued day-to-day

leadership in this new position. Alix Gerosa, who came back to Heal the Bay as our Operations Director after a stint in New York at Scenic Hudson, was promoted to Associate Director. As Associate Director, Alix will be even more involved in the general operations of Heal the Bay.



Amber Maron is the new Public Education Coordinator for the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium. She moved to Southern

California from New York, where she obtained her masters' degree in psychology focusing on animal behavior and conservation. Amber has worked in a variety of zoos and museums

educating the public about science and conservation. Her passion for wildlife has taken her from researching manatees in Florida, to howler monkeys in Costa Rica. She is thrilled to be joining Heal the Bay and is excited to focus her efforts on the local marine life at the Aquarium. Amber is originally from Richmond, California, in the San Francisco Bay area. She received her bachelors' in science degree in Zoology from the University of Washington. Amber likes to do yoga and now that she's in Southern California she plans to add surfing to her hobbies as well. Amber fills the Aquarium position after Emily Pratt moved to the Key to the Sea Coordinator position at Heal the Bay.

## Catalina Water Quality

By Polly Barrowman

**P**revious studies have shown that Catalina's Avalon Beach is impacted by raw sewage. All county sampling locations repeatedly receive poor grades on Heal the Bay's Beach Report Card and permanent signs can be found on the beach warning people of the health risks of swimming with elevated bacteria levels. While most problem spots along the coast have been positively impacted by the current dry weather, no change in indicator bacteria levels have been seen at Avalon, which has maintained consistently poor grades. A \$1.2 million epidemiology study generously funded by the EPA, supported by Avalon and conducted by SCCWRP (the

Southern California Coastal Waters Research Project) in conjunction with UC Berkeley's School of Public Health, Orange County Sanitation Districts and Heal the Bay began the last weekend of July, running through Labor Day and will be used to address three primary concerns. These will include questions on whether swimmers stand more of a risk of contracting illness than non-swimmers, can this risk be related to traditional indicator bacteria, and are new rapid microbial methods more predictive of swimmer health? The study design will be similar to that used at Doheny Beach. Both swimmers and non swimmers are monitored

while at the beach and enrolled in a questionnaire which tracks their exposure to the ocean water. They are then surveyed ten to fifteen days later for gastrointestinal illness, skin or respiratory problems and other health effects which are correlated to both traditional and non-traditional indicator bacteria and virus levels using a number of new and novel techniques. Results of this study could have huge ramifications, potentially contributing to the development of new water quality criteria by the EPA and ensuring faster more accurate monitoring methods.



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Amy & Jorge Delgado	Leslie Kahan	United Storm Water
Donald Dickerson	Brahmacharini Sri Lalitambika	Paula Wagner & Rick Nicita
Sandra & Jeff Dritley	Anthony Maister	Debbie & Timothy Watkins
Ken Duncan	The Maloney Family Foundation	R. Michael Wisner
Catherine & Ron Durgin	George McKaig	Karen & Richard Wolfen
Roger & Suzanne Findley	Gaby Morgerman & Patrick Morris	Sunni Won & Jeff Littrell
S. David Freeman	Jan & Larry Myers	Harriet Zaretsky
	The Reel Inn	Yvonne & David Zaro
	Cristan & Kevin Reilly	

## In Honor Of

A wonderful way to commemorate a special occasion, milestone or birthday for friends or family is to make a donation to Heal the Bay in their honor. The following people have been honored recently:

Jan Chatten-Brown	Kelly Chapman Meyer
Howard Colburn	Lisa Momberger
Katherine Deland and Michael Edwards	Jay Newman
Russell Feingold	Wedding Guests of Ellen & Mark Page
Lee Gabler	Ashton Phelps
Joanne Hertz	Nicholas Pritzker
David Hilton	Ingo Rademacher
Kyle Kassemeyer	Louise Robertson
Deb & Drew Kennedy	Mr. & Mrs. Roque
Henry McMillan	Kathryn Turk

## In Memory Of

Donations have been made to Heal the Bay in memory of the following people who have recently passed away. We at Heal the Bay extend our sympathies to the family and friends of:

Lou Ball  
Len Goodman  
Geneva Renegar  
Edgar Swaback

*\*In-kind donation*

# California Coastal Cleanup Day

Saturday, September 15, 2007 - 9 am to Noon

# 16,028

Spare tires found since 1985\*

Presented by California Coastal Commission and Whole Foods Market.



Heal the Bay.

Heal the Bay

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