

Heal the Bay

fall
2009

the newsletter of Heal the Bay

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currents



Make Your Voice Heard

INSIDE : How To Be a Citizen Lobbyist • Our Partner Organizations • MPAs: The Final Battle



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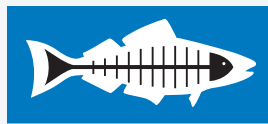
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Heal the Bay is a nonprofit environmental organization dedicated to making Southern California coastal waters and watersheds, including Santa Monica Bay, safe, healthy and clean. We use research, education, community action and advocacy to pursue our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

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On the Mark

Mark Gold offers some hard-earned advice on getting policy makers to do the right thing

When I was a biology student at UCLA in the early '80s, my professors made it clear that advocacy had no place in science. As I grew older and observed the continued decimation of rainforests, coastal wetlands and rivers, I realized they were wrong.

Who better to fight for the environment than the very people that spent so much time studying these precious habitats and ecosystems? Thankfully, there has been a major shift in academia away from a keep-quiet teaching philosophy. We're now seeing scientists play a critical role on issues such as climate change, marine protected areas in California, and fisheries management of the world's oceans. Scientists have an enormous beneficial impact on these issues because they are the credible voices to speak on environmental degradation. Why? Because they've spent the most time observing the changes in an objective manner.

Credibility is the cornerstone of Heal the Bay's success as an advocate. We use the best available science to make our case for stronger protection of coastal resources and more stringent water quality regulations. Credibility is a valuable asset that we don't take lightly. It grows over time and earns the trust of the regulatory and regulated communities. A key aspect of building this trust is recognizing that there is no need to exaggerate environmental problems. A doom and gloom approach may provide you with a win here or there and may even enhance an organization's fundraising, but the environment is in bad enough shape that there is no need to embellish its downfall.

There are other key elements to successful advocacy. One is representing a large constituency. As Heal the Bay grows, so does our influence on the issues. Today, Heal the Bay has a membership of about 12,000 people and 25,000 volunteers. High profile events like Coastal Cleanup Day that draw 14,000 volunteers definitely catch the attention of decision makers at the state and local government levels. Couple this with a strong ability to get the story out in the media. Our success with getting beaches cleaned up largely stems from the tremendous statewide coverage of the grades we give out in the annual Beach Report Card®. The more that the general public and decision makers know about the issues, the more likely regulators, elected



officials, and government staff are willing to do the right thing.

Which brings us to education. Heal the Bay's education programs and events reach hundreds of thousands of people every year. Education creates environmental stewards and it builds an informed electorate that will support environmental protection initiatives. Advocacy is a lot more effective when there is community support for your cause.

All of this requires patience and perseverance. Heal the Bay often has to bring up the same points a dozen times over five years or more before we can get regulatory agencies to make decisions to better protect water quality and coastal resources. Sometimes, a bill needs to be introduced three or more times before there is a legislature and governor willing to take the leadership to pass the law. A lot of times, an organization needs to wait out politically untenable situations. There is a time and a place to push for issues and an organization needs to be astute enough to recognize the moment to aggressively advocate on an issue.

But there is one more attribute to discuss: passion. When membership, volunteers, board and staff all care deeply about our mission and an issue, we always have a chance of success, no matter how high the odds. We're fighting for clean water and healthy communities. The passion comes from a need to improve our quality of life and protect the remaining precious natural resources that provide Southern California with so much of its identity.

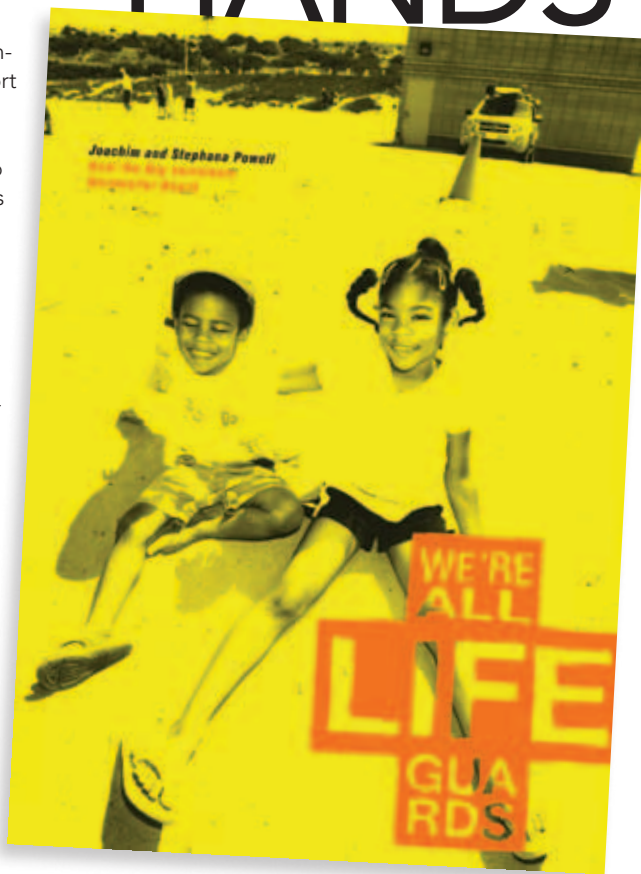
Mark Gold

— Mark Gold, President, Heal the Bay

Mixed Greens

HELPING HANDS

Heal the Bay extends a big thank you to Subaru, TEAM ONE and KCAL9/KCBS2 for their generous time and effort spent on this year's incredibly successful Coastal Cleanup Day (CCD). Perhaps you got to catch Subaru's CCD ad on TV, starring our own Sarah Sikich and Jose Bacallao? Catch it here www.healthebay.org/volunteer/ccd/2009/subaru.asp. Subaru also contributed by providing free cleanup kits at Southern California locations. TEAM ONE designed the eye catching CCD ad campaign, "We're all Lifeguards." The campaign included printed cards, billboards, wildart and even a blog. For the past decade, KCAL9/KCBS2 has been supporting Heal the Bay and CCD. They produce and air our CCD news specials leading up to the big day and help us with promos and PSAs. To check out the special, visit: <http://cbs2.com/misc/Heal.The.Bay.2.1214408.html>.



THE DAILY OCEAN

The amount of trash that flows into the ocean and threatens marine animals can seem quite grim, but Sara Bayles is making a personal effort to do her part. She started the blog The Daily Ocean, a project to collect trash at Ocean Park in Santa Monica for 365 non-consecutive days. The blog raises awareness about pressing problems facing the ocean and serves as a platform to get people involved. Sara says "people will save what they love. We have to remind them why they love the beach, the marine animals and the earth really."

To learn more about the project, go to www.thedailyocean.blogspot.com

ON THE RISE

Our Summer Beach Report Card® (BRC) yields high marks for the 3rd straight year. The BRC assigns an A to F letter grade to nearly 460 beaches along the California coast, based on levels of bacterial pollution reported from Memorial Day through Labor Day. This summer, 92% of sites received A or B grades — slightly better than last year. Los Angeles County once again had some of the lowest summer grades in the state, with only 80% of its beaches receiving A or B marks. On a positive note, Santa Monica Bay monitoring locations fared notably better than last summer, exhibiting water quality of 91% A's and B's compared to last year's 86%. For more information visit www.healthebay.org/BRC.

HtB gives special thanks to our generous sponsors The Diller-von Furstenberg Family Foundation, simplehuman, and the Surf Industry Manufacturers Association.

Fishy Freeloading

You sit down for dinner at a lovely restaurant with friends and you'd really like to order some seafood. But what's sustainable on the menu (especially because all your friends know you work for Heal the Bay and are counting on you)? Some local restaurants are making it very easy to pick something good — good for you and good for the planet. Southern California eateries Providence, Lucques, Spark Woodfire Grill, Nook Bistro and others have partnered with Seafood for the Future. Just look for the Seafood for the Future logo to find a smart menu choice. Did I mention that they also reward you for doing the right thing? You'll get a free ticket to the Aquarium of the Pacific each time you order a marked sustainable choice. Yum, free stuff.

More information on sustainable seafood is available here <http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/seafoodwatch.aspx>



Divers in a kelp vista in the Channel Islands

UNDERWATER PARK

Want proof that MPAs work? Go on a dive in the Channel Islands.

by NICK FASH

Name some national parks. Yosemite, Yellowstone, Grand Canyon or Glacier National Park might come to mind. So why not the Channel Islands?

One of our nation's greatest natural treasures sits below the waves right off the coast of Southern California. The Channel Islands are composed of five spectacular islands — Anacapa, Santa Cruz, Santa Rosa, San Miguel, and Santa Barbara — that make you feel as though you are in the Mediterranean as you cruise their shorelines.

In 1998 a group of concerned citizens championed the creation of a set of marine protected areas (MPAs) off the Channel Islands. The purpose being to protect the health of these beautiful ecosystems just as national parks on land protect terrestrial ecosystems. Not just for marine life, but also for our enjoyment and that of future generations.

When you drop anchor and submerge yourself in the waters of the Channel Islands, you plunge into a world like no other. Sea lions come to play, massive forests of kelp sway in the current and schools of fish glide effortlessly by. Having had the great joy of spending countless hours in these MPAs, I have seen things that are almost impossible to explain to someone who has never been SCUBA diving. The tranquility of the kelp forests is almost overtaken by the excitement of interacting with large California sheephead and vibrant garibaldi, as they come to observe you in their world. The strange and fascinating colorful nudibranchs dot the sea floor like confetti. If you're lucky, you may be graced with an opportunity to swim with a gray

whale on its way to or from the Arctic.

But not all of the waters off the Channel Islands are protected, and diving in these areas, while still amazing, is a shell of what I have just described. By not protecting the ecosystem, we have disrupted the delicate balance of nature and the effects are clearly evident. The towering kelp is not there, and the larger fishes are a rare sight. Some species, such as urchins and brittle stars, have moved in to fill the void, but the diversity is low and the experience is not nearly as rich and fulfilling.

It takes diving in both the protected and unprotected areas to really take scope of how beneficial the protection has been. Unfortunately, few people are able to see the contrasting areas and thus have a difficult time making the important connection.

Thankfully there are many people who dive throughout the Channel Islands, and around the world, and can share their good and bad experiences with the rest of us. Our national parks are America's real treasures, and we all must do our part to protect them — whether they are in the desert, atop a mountain or under the sea. So if you get the chance, head to the Channel Islands to kayak, sail, dive or swim, and investigate the real riches that are just below the surface.

Nick Fash is an education specialist at Heal the Bay's Santa Monica Pier Aquarium, where many of the species he describes here are on display.

GOVERNMENT AGENT

How to be a powerful citizen lobbyist By SONIA DIAZ

The foundation of our democracy is based on the premise of "a government of the people, by the people, for the people." Unfortunately, all too often, ordinary citizens are intimidated by elected officials and the government process. Here are some tips on how to get your foot in the door and make your voice heard.



INFORMATION IS POWER

Get to know your local elected officials. Because many community issues are resolved at the local level, start with your local city council, water board, county board and state representatives rather than contacting your congressional representative.

Stay informed by periodically checking for schedules and changes in meeting agendas. Many of these agendas are posted on government websites and most government bodies meet on a regular basis. In California, all state and local boards and commissions are required by law to hold open public meetings and give timely notice. Know your rights. If you feel that your local elected body is not complying with the law, contact your local district attorney or state attorney general's office.

DON'T BE SHY

Schedule an appointment with your elected official. Call the main office and ask for the scheduler. Be courteous and identify yourself as a constituent. If you gather with a group of neighbors, community club or a school group you will probably have better chances of meeting the elected official in person. Many times an elected official's schedule will be very booked and you might likely end up speaking with his or her field deputies. If you only get a chance to speak with staff, don't worry. Many times they will be the ones you can contact directly for help because most deputies are assigned different geographical areas and commu-

nity issues. Get to know them well and don't give up. They will be your main allies and will be your access point to get that critical face to face meeting with your elected official.

VOICE YOUR CONCERNS

Write a letter. Your own words and personal stories are powerful because they come directly from you rather than from a professional lobbyist. There are two types of letters that you would normally send to an elected official: a letter describing a specific community problem or issue of concern or a letter to express a particular position on a specific piece of legislation or local ordinance.

For the first type, be sure to be as specific as possible but be concise. Your letter should contain the following elements: What is the problem and where is it felt? How long has it been a problem? Why do you care? Why should your elected official care? If you made a phone call to the office, state when the phone call was made and if there was any action taken or follow up.

If your letter addresses a specific piece of legislation be sure to state: the bill/ordinance number, your position as either "support" or "oppose," and what effect the bill or ordinance will have in your community.

MAKE A CALL

When you call an office you'll usually get the receptionist. Just politely ask her or him to transfer your call to the appropriate person. If you don't know whom to talk to, just say you'd like to speak with the field deputy that is assigned to your community or specific issue. Be as succinct as possible when describing the community issue or piece of legislation. You should be able to state your position in no more than 30 seconds. Practice a few times before you call to get it right and take a deep breath. You never want to sound angry or frustrated on the phone or else you'll never get your point across. Most importantly, never rely on a single phone call to your elected official's office. Always follow up with a letter documenting the call and stating your position. Request that the deputy follow up with you until your concerned is addressed.

BUILD A COALITION OF SUPPORT

Educate your neighbors about the issue where they hang out, gather or work: schools, grocery stores, bars, barber shops or salons, restaurants, a public park or beach. These are some good spots to reach massive numbers if you want to start a petition drive or just have a one-on-

one conversation in a casual environment.

Give a presentation at neighborhood council meetings, churches, school board/PTA meetings, rotary clubs or other community clubs. These are good venues if you want to focus on a specific issue and have a longer dialogue with a captive audience.

Go door-to-door. It can be a bit intimidating at first but your neighbors will appreciate your sincerity and honesty. Your visit will make them feel comfortable and care more about the issue because you're showing that you care.

Organize a house meeting. Inviting neighbors into your home is a good way to test leadership and commitment to the cause and is a good way to recruit more volunteers.

FOLLOW UP

The Holy Grail of rules is to follow up. There is no such thing as too much follow up! In fact, your elected officials will appreciate the fact that you've taken the time to reach out to them and keep them on their toes (no matter how much you may think they hate hearing from you). And, now that you have a coalition of neighbors voicing the same concerns, chances are that they will respond sooner than you think.

Sonia Diaz, Heal the Bay's legislative associate, has successfully lobbied for several statewide bills and municipal ordinances.

Writing Right

How to compose compelling letters to the editor By Matthew King

Know your audience. Think about the types of readers a given publication attracts and what their hot button issues are. What is their level of sophistication and interest in your topic? There's a big difference between The New York Times Magazine and the Ventura County Star website. Tailor your tone and comments accordingly. For community media, localize as much as you can to show that you have roots and a vested interest in the well being of neighborhoods. For national media, don't try to solve worldwide issues single-handedly. Point out that an issue being tackled in your hometown has broader policy implications that can inform other municipalities.

Keep it tight. Editors drown in a sea of copy every day. You significantly raise your publication chances if you write clearly and succinctly. (An effective letter to an editor shouldn't be more than 100 words long.) Write in an active voice, avoiding run-ons by using short, declarative sentences. Write and rewrite to cut clutter and repeti-

tion. Have a friend proofread your letter to make sure spelling, punctuation, grammar and syntax are correct.

Speak from the heart. While it's essential to buttress your assertions with accurate statistics, what will really hook readers is emotion and storytelling. Back up theory with real-world examples that average reader can relate to – economic concerns, quality of life issues. Make sure that your rhetoric is grounded in everyday life and shared experiences. Anyone can Google facts about plastic debris in the marine environment. But only you can provide real-world anecdotes that will bring the issue to life, like sharing what you discovered taking an early morning walk in the Outer Banks seashore with your daughter. People like to read about other people – not policies and procedures.

Write with a smile. Readers will better respond to your arguments if you inject a sense of humor or self-deprecation into your comments. Speak with authority, but get off any

high horses. No one likes being lectured by a know-it-all or sourpuss. It's okay to strongly articulate your beliefs, but do it in a humble manner that recognizes others may have differing points of view.

Stay positive. Avoid doom and gloom. In a world filled with so much dysfunction and strife, people like to read about people fixing problems. When you point out shortcomings in a given policy, make sure you offer some ray of light. Suggest solutions that readers can rally around.

Ask for something. Hopefully you've engaged readers, persuaded them and primed them to act on your behalf. It's critical that you set the hook. End your letter with a very specific request to the reader – bring a reusable bag to the corner grocery store, come to our beach cleanup next Saturday, or email your city councilman.

Matthew King, Heal the Bay's Communications Director, served as daily newspaper editor for more than 15 years.

A River Runs Through It

Finding the Coastal Cleanup Day spirit in the heart of Downey. By JESSICA BELSKY



I've lent a hand four times on California Coastal Cleanup Day (CCD) with Heal the Bay. My first year was spent on Venice Beach teaching volunteers about the imperfect storm drain system. Two years back I donned knee-high yellow waders and toiled a few hours in Compton Creek with an impressive bunch of junior-high students. And last year I got to help Heal the Bay "Superhealer" Ida Tallala weigh bags of cigarette butts collected around Echo Park Lake.

Well this year, I was assigned to Downey. "Where's that?" I asked when I got my assignment. About 30 miles from where I live apparently. (What can I say, I'm an East Coast transplant, L.A.'s a big place...)

As I pulled up to the address I was given, I found myself staring at a quaint little park complete with softball diamond (and practicing team) and picnic tables. I was reminded of the park I used to play in as a kid in the suburbs near Daytona Beach. Unlike most places on the West-side, there was ample parking (Yes!). I didn't quite get it. Here was this homey green diorama — kid's playing catch, parents sitting and chatting in the bleachers, shaded areas and puppy dogs. Only one thing was missing actually—trash.

Well, I was here to document CCD so I walked over to greet my partners — teams from Semptra Energy and Keep

Downey Beautiful. I met Carol Rowland, our Downey site captain and volunteer. Carol had gathered a crowd of orange vest-clad families and was animatedly discussing watersheds and the "first flush" of the season, the initial rain of the season that washes months of accumulated debris into the storm drains and ocean.

And there; I realized that this cute little park butts right up to the L.A. River. Uh ha. So this is what we would be cleaning.

I had never seen the L.A. River up close. It's always been described to me with a sense of lament. A river, completely cemented in on all sides, flowing to the beach and effectively collecting trash and bacteria along with it. I highly doubted this river would conjure up the poetry of Langston Hughes. I hoped it would conjure up something more than disgust.

Along with the typical and copious amount of plastic bags and bottles, the most common trash littering the nearby river was broken beer and liquor bottles. I could hear the jingle and crunch of broken glass being kicked, stepped on and ground into the cement all the way down the river. There's a heavily used bike path nearby. I imagined dragging a huge vacuum down to the river's edge and going to town on all the shards.

And yet, the river is in fact surprising. In the midst of all the

asphalt and glass and trash spring up flowers (everywhere!). Egrets wade through the flowing water and a gorgeously striking heron was leaning up against a shopping cart. I will admit that it was more than mildly heartbreaking.

So there is plenty to be optimistic about. Volunteers of all ages came out in droves. One family even made the trip all the way from Diamond Bar and was personally thanked by Downey Mayor Mario Guerra, who was volunteering

himself. The family's young son heard about the cleanup effort in the newspaper (seriously awed here — young people still read the paper?!).

As I left my Downey site, impressed by the energy, good will and genuine friendliness of everyone involved, I thanked Carol, my humble site captain extraordinaire.

"Thank you for coming out here," she laughed. "Most people always ask, 'Where's Downey?'"

A Record Day

Thanks to your help and Heal the Bay's amazing corps of volunteers, this year's Coastal Cleanup Day celebrated an all-time high number of participants and amount of trash collected. This year's record totals are even more amazing, given the fact that this year's global event unavoidably conflicted with the Rosh Hashanah holidays and left many potential volunteers unable to attend.

Coastal Cleanup Education Day kicked off the volunteer driven weekend as Heal the Bay played host to nearly 800 elementary school students at our Santa Monica Pier Aquarium.. Students, many from Title 1 schools, got the marine education facility all to themselves for the day as they learned about local species, explored the shore, played educational games and spearheaded their own beach cleanup.

Buoyed by a creative promotional TV and billboard campaign (see page 2 for details), the Sept. 19 event saw some 14,038 community members scour beaches, creeks, parks, alleys, highways and stormdrains at nearly 70 locations throughout the county from 9 a.m. to noon. This year nearly half our sites were located in inland areas.

City crews, families, local businesses, faith-based organizations, schools and youth groups removed some 300,413 pounds of debris and recyclables. That's a stunning 65% increase from last year's totals. We were especially gratified to see our hard work pay off in our inaugural "Code Red" sites, five particularly trashy sites located in or near heavily urbanized, debris-choked waterways. The city and county of Los Angeles deserve special kudos for organizing an aggressive public works campaign to remove bulky, heavy items from these heavily impacted watersheds.

"Coastal Cleanup Day is a remarkable day of action," says Karin Hall, executive director of Heal the Bay. "Volunteers may have removed a record amount of trash, but



14,000 volunteers collected 150 tons of trash.

the biggest benefit of the day is raising so much awareness about the everyday steps people can take to reduce marine-bound pollution throughout the year." (For more information go to www.healthebay.org/waystoheal)

Among the most unusual items found this year was a lifesize human skull model that divers in Redondo Beach first assumed marked actual human remains. Local police were called to examine the object, which was found on the seafloor and wrapped in plastic. Authorities quickly cordoned off the area and brought forensics teams to examine the plastic skull, whose origins remain a mystery.

Other noteworthy items found this year: a dead sea lion (Ballona Creek), a severed goat's head (Malibu Lagoon), a restroom urinal (Dominguez Channel), a dilapidated 10-foot skiff (trail adjacent to Malibu Creek), and a fake mustache (Zuma Beach).

We thank all the partners and participants who made this record day possible. And remember, we need your help throughout the year. Register for our regular monthly Nothin' but Sand beach cleanups on our website.



YUJI TONE

Volunteers of America

Three fun ways for you to get involved with HtB

Baila in Boyle Heights

Join Heal the Bay on Oct. 24-25 at the 10th Annual Festival De La Gente, a Día De Los Muertos (Day of the Dead) celebration. This year, the festival will be held in Hollenbeck Park in Boyle Heights. Visit www.festivaldelagente.org for more information.

Grab your Gloves

Help pitch in to clean the beach and leave behind only what should be during our monthly open beach cleanup, Nothin' but Sand. Heal the Bay will be cleaning at Will Rogers Beach at Chautauqua on Saturday, Nov. 21 from 10 a.m. to noon. Come join hundreds of volunteers at our last open beach cleanup of 2009. We'll have no problem putting you to work.

Green for Halloween

You know what we find a lot of on the beach? Food wrappers. Make sure your trick-or-treating plunder ends up where it's supposed to (your belly, then the trash). Don't forget to bring your own reusable tote bag, pillowcase, or buckets for collecting your loot. Have a happy and safe Halloween.

The Santa Monica Pier Aquarium will be celebrating Halloween and Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) on October 31 and November 1. From 12:30 to 5:00 pm. both days experiment in the mad scientist laboratory, tip toe through the marine animal graveyard, and create colorful Dia de los Muertos crafts and masks. A glow in the dark bioluminescence presentation is planned for 2:30 pm. both days. Face painting and spooky story times are scheduled throughout the weekend as well. Costumes are encouraged.



SAIRA GANDHI

A young visitor to last year's HtB booth at the Festival de la Gente.



On Oct. 20-22, the state's Blue Ribbon Task Force working to establish marine protected areas in Southern California will select a preferred map from among the three final choices to forward to the Fish and Game Commission. And Heal the Bay needs your help one more time!

Over the last year, Heal the Bay has worked with a large group of stakeholders including commercial and recreational fishermen, coastal business owners, marine educators, government officials, and scientists to determine the best places for MPAs between Santa Barbara and the U.S.-Mexico border.

On Sept. 10, the stakeholder group finished drafting three potential maps, which are available for public review at www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/southcoast.

Map 2 was created only by recreational and commercial fishing interests and it does not meet all the scientific guidelines emphasized by the Blue Ribbon Task Force, and the Science Advisory Team. Map 3 was assembled by a mixture of conservation, government and educational interests; it meets all the scientific guidelines and is the more thorough in ecosystem protection. Map 1, or the "middle ground

map," was shaped by a multitude of diverse interests and strikes a balance between conservation and socioeconomic concerns.

It is our professional opinion that Map 3 does the best job meeting the science guidelines and protecting critical ecosystems along of our fragile Southern California coastline. Now we need your help getting Map 3 adopted.



COME & MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

Wear Blue to one of the Oct. 21 public comment periods at Blue Ribbon Task Force Meeting

Time 1:30-4:30 p.m. or 7-10 p.m.

Place Hilton Long Beach & Executive Meeting Center, 701 West Ocean Blvd, Long Beach, CA 90831

Action Support Map 3.

RSVP to Charlotte Stevenson (cstevenson@healthebay.org).

Visit www.MPAsWork.org for more information. You can also check out an amazing PSA featuring several celebrity supporters of these underwater safe havens.

SEA CHANGE

A new Santa Monica Pier Aquarium exhibit brings marine protected areas to life.

Public advocacy is essential to establishing underwater parks in Southern California waters, and a new portable exhibit at the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium is designed to inform and empower the public to be involved in the process.

The new interactive marine protected areas (MPAs) exhibit was created through the joint efforts of Heal the Bay's Science and Policy and Aquarium staffs, designed by Ogilvy & Mather and printed by PRIMARY COLOR. Ogilvy & Mather, Los Angeles, provided \$54,000 worth of pro bono work to produce the 12-panel exhibit, full of colorful underwater photographs of local marine life. The text is written in both English and Spanish, the first completely bilingual exhibit offered at the Aquarium.

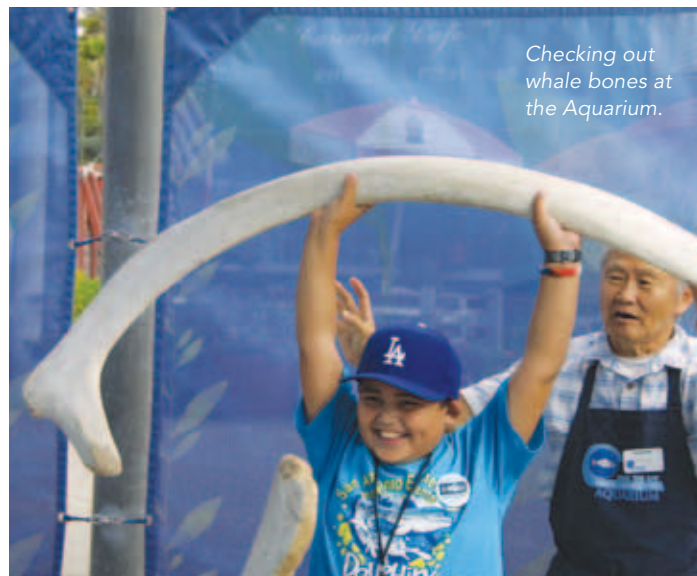
Visitors are encouraged to write postcards and sign action letters in support of the establishment of MPAs, with all the necessary supplies provided on the exhibit. The user-friendly format of the exhibit is designed to spark conversation with staff and understanding of the importance of advocating on behalf of MPAs.



SMPA visitors examine the new exhibit

Wet Behind the Ears

The Santa Monica Pier Aquarium energizes our youngest advocates. By DESIREE LANZ



Checking out whale bones at the Aquarium.

conservation, and kids learn how they can get involved with Heal the Bay to help protect their animal's marine environment to learn more about Aquadoption, email Amber Maron at amaron@healthebay.org.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES are our way to involve children in caring about the ocean while celebrating with their friends and family. Heal the Bay provides a staff member and volunteer helpers to ensure that the kids are learning something about the marine life in their own backyard. "Because that's what's engaging," says public programs manager Tara Crow. "That's what's fun about this place. We're not going to let them get out of here with just cake and ice cream." Upper level party packages include a 20-minute live animal presentation and shark touching, giving children an opportunity to learn about non-threatening shark characteristics and behavior. Older children interested in science can participate in squid explorations, in which the staff cuts open squid used for fish feed to teach anatomy.

Because passion and reason give birth to advocacy, Heal the Bay works to nurture awareness and instill awe in some of our youngest citizens. Three public programs at the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium work to achieve this goal.

AQUADOPTION serves as an important way to donate to the Aquarium and involve kids with the care of animals. As part of a 12-month program, kids receive an activity pack of educational materials as well as an update that encourages them to come during feeding times to see their animal. Children learn, for example, that a sea star eats by spitting out its stomach, or that the moray eel actually has two sets of jaws; one in its mouth and one in its throat. Aquadoption packets are stuffed with information about

THE MICROBIOLOGISTS PROGRAM began as a response to the demand for early childhood science education, emphasizing the effort to get kids hooked on science and help them feel comfortable with it at a young age. The program is a two-hour drop-off class that is both entertaining and educational, thus keeping with the philosophy of the Aquarium that the more fun a child has, the more engaged that child is and the more he/she will learn. Each class is based on a theme, and the staff tries to touch on every kind of learning style with art, stories, classroom activities, music, and videos.

With the Aquarium's public programs, young advocates are well on their way to becoming the voice of progressive policies for the future.

Look Ma, No Paper

At Heal the Bay, we've been working hard to migrate our communications online and leverage the benefits of going digital. While switching existing publications, like our monthly Volunteer newsletter SeaStars, to an online format both reduces costs and lowers our overall carbon-footprint, transitioning online also means we can now keep all of our members, volunteers and supporters more up-to-date.

Best of all, not only can we make our communications more timely by going digital but we can also now tailor them to you, the reader. Heal the Bay will be introducing two brand new email products: an e-bulletin and The Next Wave.

As a complement to our quarterly, printed members' magazine Currents, Heal the Bay is launching a general interest, online update to go out monthly. The e-bulletin will spotlight the latest ocean- and watershed-related topics, sustainability trends and discoveries, and fun local, community happenings, as well as upcoming events at the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium, volunteer opportunities, and key action alerts for Heal the Bay. To opt in to the e-bulletin, visit www.healthebay.org.

For those of you that are part of Heal the Bay's community of teachers, parents, and educators, we're introducing a new, online education resource called The Next Wave. Topics will range from guidelines and recommendations for science-based curriculum to creative instructional tips and practices to a variety of learning tools and ideas submitted from members of Heal the Bay's diverse teaching network. To subscribe to The Next Wave, visit www.healthebay.org/education and click the Next Wave link.



Look Ma, No Plastic

December 17 is our annual Day Without a Bag

It's time to mark your calendar and join us for our holiday gift to your mom, Mother Earth. December 17 is the day to remember: our third annual Day Without a Bag.

Heal the Bay started this event as a response to plastic waste in Los Angeles. In Los Angeles County alone, we use over 6 billion plastic bags a year. While you may think that the bags are free from your grocery store or mall, we see the costs to our city and the environment at every turn: bags stuck in trees, littering the freeway, floating in the ocean and being ingested by marine animals. Only about 5% of plastic bags are recycled here. It's time for a better option.

On December 17, use your own bag wherever you shop. If you don't have a reusable bag, Heal the Bay can help you out. Stop by one of our giveaway sites where you can exchange your plastic bags for a reusable bag. If you don't have any plastics bags stacking up at home-good for you! This is a major step towards winning the fight against urban blight that ultimately turns into marine debris through our storm drain system.

As a vehicle for raising community awareness about personal choices, A Day Without a Bag focuses on environmental education. The long term goal of the event is to empower communities at large to take simple, direct actions to eliminate unsightly debris and save taxpayer dollars by doing so. Please check our website for giveaway locations. www.healthebay.org/nobagday.

Gaga Over a Garibaldi

Longtime donor Janine Smith talks about her newly adopted pal

Janine Smith has been a member and supporter of Heal the Bay for 20 years. Living in Brentwood, she frequents the beach whenever she's not busy writing or spending time with her two pet dogs. Recently, she met a new friend at the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium and spoke with Heal the Bay about it.

Heal the Bay Tell me why you like living in the Southland so much.

Janine Smith Living where I do, I'm fortunate to live on the edge of the Pacific Ocean. I can see it from my house. I try to walk near it every day. Sometimes I see dolphins and that makes me feel blessed.

HtB When did you first learn about Heal the Bay?

Smith In 1989, I first learned about a (then) small organization doing important work to protect our environment.

HtB What made you want to join us?

Smith I was impressed by all the small things you had been doing; a cleanup

The bright orange fish liked to bite and chase other fish. Well, that was my kind of critter.

on one beach, and the big things as well — working with government and other organizations on important legislation. I donated my first \$1,000 to Heal the Bay 20 years ago and I've been a donor ever since.

HtB And 20 years later?

Smith I visited Heal the Bay's Santa Monica Pier Aquarium, right under the Carousel at the Santa Monica Pier. Here is the perfect place to see the difference Heal the Bay is making on our beaches and in the ocean. I

watched as dozens of excited children swarmed around the exhibits and then went out onto the beach (some for the first time) to explore.

HtB And I heard you fell in love?

Smith Yes, with a garibaldi. Vicki Wawerchak, the director of the Aquarium, explained that the bright orange fish liked to bite and chase other fish, so he has to live in the tank with the crabs and lobsters. Well, that was my kind of critter. I adopted him immediately through the Aquarium's Aquadoption program. My gift helps to pay for his care and habitat.

HtB What else did you like at the Aquarium?

Smith The escape-artist octopus, sharks and rays. You can see the critters living under the Pier, just a few feet away. It's wonderful place for a birthday party, too. Best of all, it's concrete proof that every dollar you donate to Heal the Bay is going to protect our precious ocean and all the animals in it.



We Are Heal the Bay

Meet some of our newest staff members.



Lazaro Serrano is the new public programs assistant at our Aquarium. Lazaro was first an aquarist intern with our Aquarium. In addition to his aquaristing skills, Lazaro is also bilingual and has previously worked in guest services with the Aquarium of the Pacific before joining our staff.

What made Lazaro most interested in working for Heal the Bay was seeing how committed staff is to the mission. "Also," he says, "I love that my job allows me to interact with the public one on one."



Wyatt Miller is the Aquarium's new volunteer and public programs coordinator. Wyatt is a native of central Illinois who recently completed a graduate degree in marine biology at the Oregon Institute of Marine Biology. He moved to Southern California last spring and became a fan of the Aquarium.

"Marine habitats are in trouble, and we have to let the public know what they can do to help improve these [areas] that are right in their community," says Wyatt.

Smrithi Narayan has joined us as our development manager. She holds a BA in Economics from New Delhi, India and an MBA in General Management from Georgetown University in Washington DC. Prior to her arrival in the United States, Smrithi spent her last two years in India dedicated to the cause of AIDS awareness. She worked for a nonprofit organization, Training Organization in Research Counseling & Health (TORCH).

In 1999, Smrithi worked as a business consultant for American Management Systems. After getting married in 2001, Smrithi moved to Los Angeles where she worked as a development officer at AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA). Additionally, while working at APLA, Smrithi helped found the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles (IFFLA).

The best part of Smrithi's job so far is getting to know all of our donors.

"Each donor has a personal story," says Smrithi.

She thinks it's important for us to preserve our natural spaces for generations to come.

"I love watching my almost two year old daughter explore and play in the sand and ocean as she responds with awe and wonder! It's priceless in every way."



Amanda Griesbach comes to Heal the Bay from "the land of the cheese," Wisconsin, as our new beach water quality scientist. She earned her BS in Biology from the University of Minnesota and her MS in microbiology at the University of Wisconsin. Her graduate research focused on how rainfall affects microbial loading in the beach water at 13 beaches in Wisconsin. Afterwards she worked for Kimberly Clark Corp. as a microbiologist.

She is as enthusiastic about her research as she is about spending her down-time at the beach. She hopes to expand her knowledge in order to implement changes that will not only preserve our beaches but will make them a safer place for generations to come.

Does California perhaps share some similar issues with Wisconsin beaches?

"I think California and Wisconsin share many similar issues when it comes to water quality, one of them being runoff," says Amanda "Even though the general topography and water type (salt vs. fresh water) differs, we still face similar problems."

The Buddy System

A look at some of HtB's most valuable partners in advocacy

Heal the Bay relies on the help of many local nonprofit environmental partners when we tackle our issues. Whether its collaborating on legislative strategy, coordinating a press conference in another city or herding kids around the beach for a field trip, we are grateful for our generous network of colleagues. We're all family – in fact, some Heal the Bay staff members are married to staffers at sister organizations. Here, we highlight a few of our comrades.

CALIFORNIA COASTKEEPER ALLIANCE

Mission Founded in 1999, California Coastkeeper Alliance (CCKA) coordinates, supports and enhances the work of local California Waterkeepers to ensure Californians enjoy clean water and a healthy coast.

Operations Part of the 190-member international WaterKeeper Alliance, the California Coastkeeper Alliance coordinates the 12 California Waterkeeper organizations.

Recipe for success "The combination of local grassroots programs coupled with a strong legislative and policy voice makes the California Coastkeeper Alliance extremely effective at bringing local issues to the attention of state policy makers," says executive director Tom Ford.

How we work together We partner with the Waterkeepers on legislative and policy issues. For example, we've worked with the Santa Monica Baykeeper, Ventura Coastkeeper, and San Diego Coastkeeper on the fight for marine protected areas in Southern California. Also, we work with the Keepers on the State's policy to phase out once through cooling in coastal power plants. Together, we helped represent the environmental community to negotiate the State's water recycling policy. Locally, we work frequently with the Santa Monica Baykeeper on such issues as rectifying Malibu's chronic pollution problems. Founded in 1993, Santa

Monica Baykeeper's mission is to protect and restore the Santa Monica Bay, San Pedro Bay and adjacent waters through enforcement, fieldwork, and community action.

What's next? Santa Monica Baykeeper fulfills its mission through restoration and monitoring of kelp forests, creeks and wetlands. They are currently working on lawsuits against the City of Malibu and the County of Los Angeles for chronic stormwater and wastewater problems. They will also continue to advocate for MPAs and the elimination of once through cooling from Los Angeles coastal power plants.

www.cacoastkeeper.org
www.smbaykeeper.org

THE SURFRIDER FOUNDATION

Mission The Surfrider Foundation is dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world's oceans, waves and beaches for all people, through conservation, activism, research and education. Surfrider is largely volunteer-run.

Operations With a local staff of fewer than 20 people, the San Clemente-based home office of Surfrider works with more than 60 volunteer-run chapters in the U.S. Supported by more than 50,000 members worldwide, Surfrider also has also affiliations in Australia, Japan, France and Brazil.

How we work together We partner with Surfrider on all sorts of regulatory issues. Most recently, we worked on the MPA fight. Additionally, we are both working on ending the problem of plastics polluting our ocean.

Recipe for success "Surfrider Foundation's greatest strength is our worldwide network of grassroots chapters and volunteer activists," says Matt McClain, the group's director of marketing and communications. "They allow the Surfrider Foundation

to effectively address environmental issues from a global level, all the way down to the local level."

What's next? Some of Surfrider's highest priorities right now are Not The Answer, which seeks to end the renewed effort to expand offshore oil drilling off our nation's coasts, and Save Gaviota, which is working to preserve a currently undeveloped stretch of environmentally fragile coastline north of Santa Barbara.

www.surfrider.org

NRDC

Mission The Natural Resources Defense Council's purpose is to safeguard the Earth: its people, its plants and animals and the natural systems on which all life depends.

Operations An international organization, the Natural Resources Defense Council, or NRDC, has more than 300 staff, 1.2 million members and e-activists, and offices in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C. and Beijing. The NRDC Southern California office opened in October 1989, staffed by a small group of environmental lawyers, including Mary Nichols, former NRDC senior attorney and now chair of the California Air Resources Board, and Joel Reynolds, now director of NRDC's urban program and the 2009 recipient of *California Lawyer's* Attorney of the Year award for environmental law. During the last 20 years, the Southern California office has grown to become a legal powerhouse with more than a dozen full-time lawyers who regularly prevail over corporate polluters, reckless developers and recalcitrant government agencies.

How we work together Because NRDC has such a strong contingent of attorneys, much of Heal the Bay's work with them has focused on finding legal and regulatory solutions to some of our biggest pollution

problems: water quality, including bacteria and toxin pollution and marine debris. Our work with extraordinary water quality attorney David Beckman and his staff has focused on TMDLs (pollution limits), stormwater and low impact development.

Recipe for success "We've worked for 20 years to secure litigation and policy victories that protect the Golden State's air, water, open space and public health," says Joel Reynolds, director of Urban Programs. "I believe our work is shifting the balance of power in the fight to save the environment."

What's next? NRDC will be working to pass strong climate and energy legislation, saving open space throughout the country, and protecting our oceans from overfishing and pollution.

www.nrdc.org

WILDCOAST

Mission WILDCOAST conserves coastal and marine ecosystems and wildlife. It is a unique and very effective organization that works internationally, and cross-culturally, to address water pollution in the southernmost part of California and across the border into the Baja California part of Mexico.

Operations With more than 15 staff people split between offices in Imperial Beach, and Ensenada and Acapulco, Mexico, WILDCOAST is uniquely positioned to benefit both countries. They've been especially successful at protecting open space in Mexico, with over 1 million acres of coastal wetlands preserved.

How we work together Heal the Bay and WILDCOAST are tackling MPAs together, bringing expertise in the San Diego and L.A. regions to the table. WILDCOAST and Heal the Bay have been partnering on Heal the Bay's Beach Report Card in the San Diego region.

Recipe for success "The biggest strength of WILDCOAST is our capacity to mobilize immediately on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border to confront impending threats to our coast and ocean and to communicate those threats via the media in both Spanish and English," says Serge Medina, the group's executive director.

"Right now, the biggest threat to our environment is from global climate change."

What's next? Priorities for WILDCOAST are to help permanently preserve coastal UNESCO World Heritage sites in Baja California and the Sea of Cortez, dramatically reduce beach closures along the U.S.-Mexico border and to stop the slaughter of sharks and sea turtles in the Eastern Pacific.

www.wildcoast.net

TREEPEOPLE

Mission To inspire, engage and support people to take personal responsibility for the urban environment, making it safe, healthy, fun and sustainable and to share the results as a model for the world.

Operations Los Angeles-based TreePeople was started by teenagers in 1970 who planted smog-tolerant trees around summer camp sites in the San Bernardino Mountains. The group has evolved to plant and care for trees in urban areas, educate school children, and work on critical water issues facing Southern California. With a dedicated staff and a strong volunteer force, TreePeople has made a huge difference in the literal greening of Los Angeles.

How we work together Because we both have such long histories in the Los Angeles area, and such iconic leaders, Mark Gold and Andy Lipkis, Heal the Bay and TreePeople have worked together on a myriad of issues throughout the years. Largely, our work together has focused on big picture environmental issues impacting the Los Angeles watershed, including bringing communities and community leaders together to improve the environments of millions of L.A. residents.

Recipe for success "People often come to us for trees, but what they get is so much more," says Lisa Cahill, the group's citizen forestry manager. "Our work goes beyond the simple act of planting a tree. We empower and educate residents to help their community trees thrive at schools, city streets, park woodlands and the mountains around Los Angeles."

What's next? TreePeople will continue to engage, train and support communities in underserved regions of Los Angeles County. They'll also be focusing on fire restoration in the Santa Monica Mountains, San Bernardino National Forest and Angeles National Forest, all areas devastated by the recent wildfires.

www.treepeople.org

SAVE THE BAY

Mission Save the Bay is the largest regional organization working to protect, restore and celebrate San Francisco Bay. As the Bay's leading champion since 1961, the group battles pollution and inappropriate shoreline development, making it cleaner and healthier for people and wildlife.

Operations With more than 25,000 supporters, Save the Bay focuses on restoring habitat and securing strong policies to re-establish 100,000 acres of wetlands that are essential for a healthy San Francisco Bay.

How we work together Because the names are so similar, Heal the Bay and Save the Bay are often mistaken for one another. But they are two very distinct organizations with very different missions, and of course different geographic footprints. One of the ways in which our missions do overlap, though, is through Heal the Bay's Beach Report Card. As the Beach Report Card has grown to cover Northern California beaches, we've worked with Save the Bay to help raise awareness of high bacteria levels at beaches throughout the state.

Recipe for success "Save the Bay was founded by three women in 1961 to stop plans to fill in large portions of the Bay, reduce pollution and increase public access to the shoreline. And I'm proud that we continue that important mission today," says Jessica Castelli, the group's communication director.

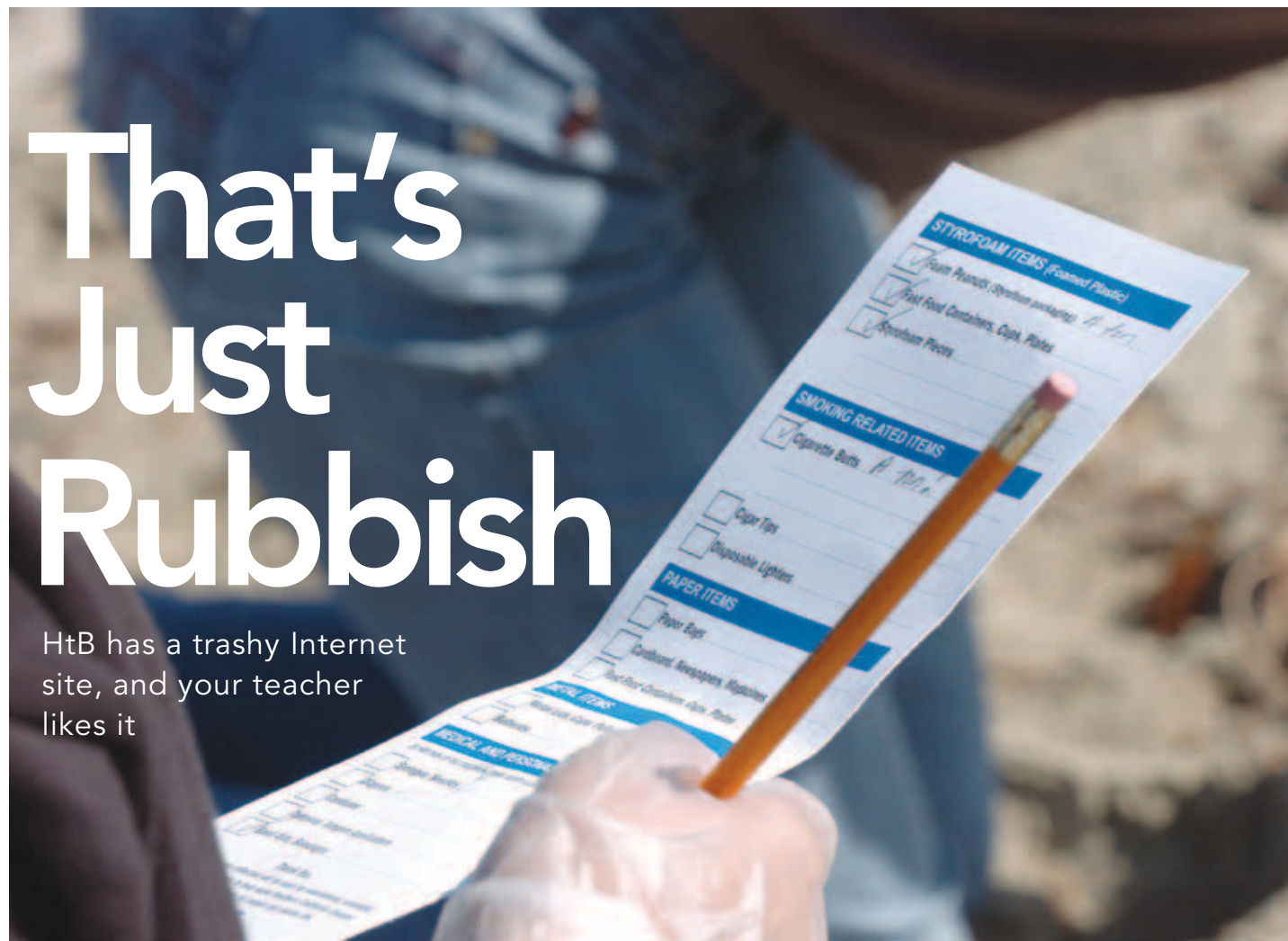
What's next? Save the Bay will work towards the goal of 100,000 acres of restored wetlands, which scientists say are necessary to restore San Francisco Bay back to health. They will continue their award-winning education program that reaches thousands of local schoolchildren.

www.savesfbay.org



That's Just Rubbish

HtB has a trashy Internet site, and your teacher likes it



PHOTOS: YUJI TONE

Ever been to a Heal the Bay beach cleanup? (psst, say yes). If you have, you've probably helped to fill out a data card about the trash you picked up. Want to know what we've done with all your stats? We've made you a personalized database.

Our new Marine Debris Database is a visual representation of the accumulation of trash item counts found on our local beaches during thousands upon thousands of cleanups. It tracks the number of cleanups at any given beach, as well as the number of tallied items found on any particular or multiple beach sites.

The database organizes the numbers individually by item or by category (polystyrene, plastics, paper, metals, etc.). For Heal the Bay, government agencies and any other statistical nerds, the database is a trend-tracking tool. Thanks to the database, we can now give advocates and legislators a clear picture of what trash items we need to tackle to ensure that our waterways stay clean.

The data being collected are gathered from beach cleanups that are part of our Adopt-A-Beach and Nothin' But Sand cleanup programs. The marine debris culprits are visually obvious in many cases, like cigarette butts and Styrofoam, but nothing is as impactful as actual data.

Now we can share the information with the public in a convenient and interactive manner. (You can access the database on our home page.) Anyone can use our Charting Wizard and see the data for any beach, date or time

period for any item or category. And don't worry technophobes, it's an easy to use graphing tool that walks you through the process of analyzing the data yourself. The database has already helped to move forward great legislative accomplishments for the health of the bay. Our data influenced the Santa Monica City Council's decision to ban polystyrene last year.

It's also an invaluable tool for the classroom. The Marine Debris Database is an educational resource for students that participate in cleanups through our various volunteer programs. The tool allows for a hands-on learning experience on the beach and a more analytical classroom setting after the beach. Students can go back to their classes and input and interpret the collected data.

Logins and passwords allow teachers and students to go into the database to manipulate the graph types that creatively display their respective totals and that encourage critical thinking about the topic of marine debris in class. We hope to educate youth first hand and empower them to make changes necessary in their lives to heal the Bay. We hope that these students become advocates and shape positive public change.

The Marine Debris Database was made possible through a grant from the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission and was created by former Microsoft database architect Jeff Littrel, a longtime volunteer and supporter of Heal the Bay.



THANK YOU

SEBASTIAN VIGNIERI

The following list represents gifts from June 1, 2009 through August 31, 2009.

\$25,000+

California State Coastal Conservancy
Edison International
Macy's West
Southern California Coastal Water Research Project

\$10,000 - \$24,999

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Employees Community Fund of Boeing CA
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United Storm Water
Elyse Walker
WeDrink
Mark Winogrand
Harriet Zaretsky
Yvonne & David Zaro



CHARLOTTE STEVENSON

AQUADOPTION

Aquadoptions at Heal the Bay's Santa Monica Pier Aquarium are a great way to express a special connection with the marine life of Santa Monica Bay. Aquadoptions have been acquired for the following:

Dave Dayen
Remy Bella Frank
Mary Jack
Paul Heller
Madelyn Kennedy
Sarah Munro Kennedy
Mt. Olive Pre-School, Room 7
Jaden Robinson
Karin Wegner

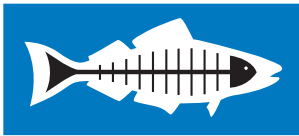
IN HONOR OF

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:

Lyn Anderson
Katie & Eric Schyler
Amanda Congdon & Mario Librandi
Vivian Canon
Joshua Corwin
Eliza Davis
Kyle Dehovitz
Tommy Dewey
Bob Foster
Barbara Garrison
Chelsey Higgins
Ether Kamm
Nathan Keller
Ken & Sandy Kurts
Jill Latiano & Glenn Howerton Wedding Guests
Erin Leonard
Kenna MaCauley
Sam Mandel
Michelle Manzo
Bob Matchett
Greg Popovich
Dylan Salinger
Rena Shultz
Harper Stroup
Harper Violet Stroup

IN MEMORY OF

William E. Bloch
June Ellen
William 'Bill' Gray
Herb Morris
Dusty Peak
Richard Samore
John Henry Smallis
Monte Valentin
Rose & Harry



Heal the Bay

1444 9th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401

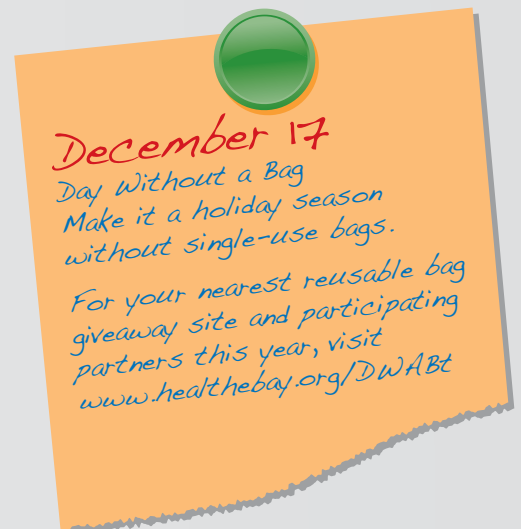
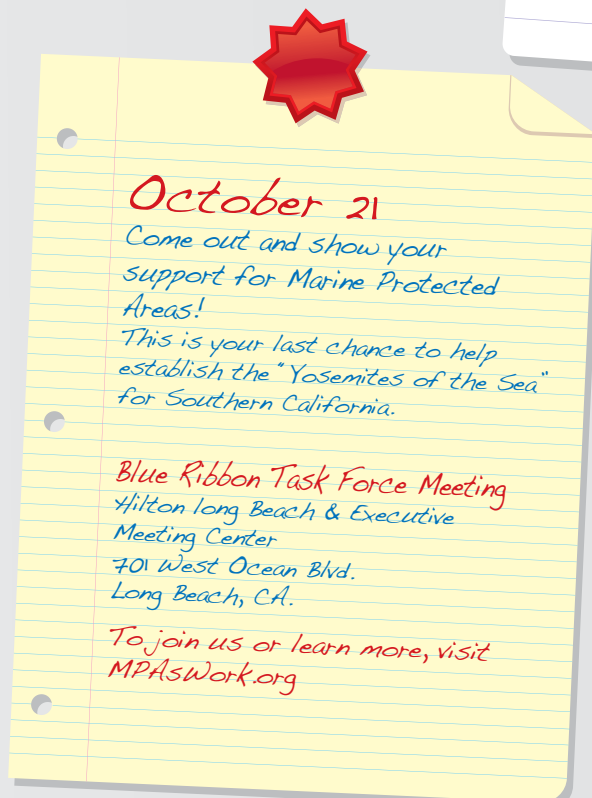
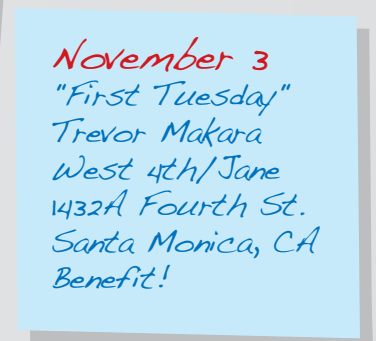
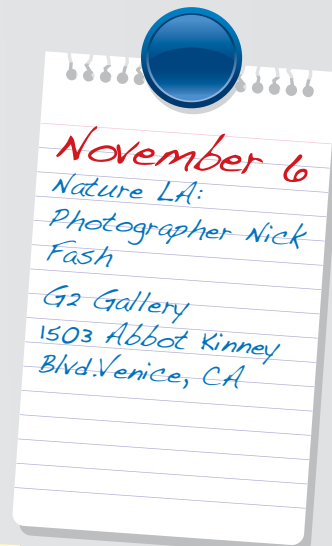
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For the latest Heal the Bay events, including benefit parties, volunteer trainings
and education opportunities, go to www.healthebay.org or www.causes.com/healthebay.