

Heal the Bay

winter

2009

the newsletter of Heal the Bay

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currents

Good Tidings

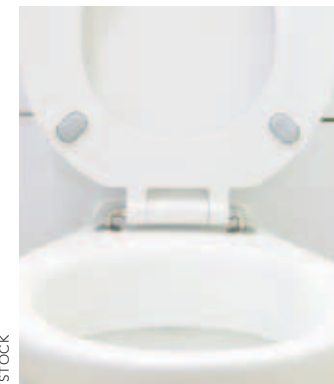


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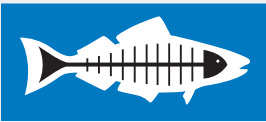
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Heal the Bay is a nonprofit environmental organization dedicated to making Southern California coastal waters and watersheds, including Santa Monica Bay, safe, healthy and clean. We use research, education, community action and advocacy to pursue our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

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Heal the Bay

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Watermark

HtB president Mark Gold reflects on our silver anniversary and a bright 2010.

I can't believe that Heal the Bay has been around for 25 years. Here's what was going on back in 1985:

- The Lakers finally beat the Celtics in the finals
- Ronald Reagan was U.S. president and there was still an East Germany and U.S.S.R. (with first-year leader Gorbachev)
- New Wave was the dominant, painful musical genre of the time
- Madonna and Sean Penn were hitched
- New Coke was introduced (and hated by the public)
- British scientists demonstrated that the ozone hole over Antarctica was growing
- Oh yeah, Santa Monica Bay had a dead zone, major sewage spills were commonplace and locally caught fish had tumors and fin rot.

A lot has changed in 25 years. But here's the short organizational history lesson: Heal the Bay started with Culver City High School teacher Howard Bennett, who was mad as hell about the pollution in Santa Monica Bay. His efforts to get the EPA to deny L.A.'s continued efforts to evade the full secondary sewage treatment requirements at Hyperion Treatment Plant caught the attention of a number of local environmental activists, including Dorothy Green. Dorothy, a force of nature and our founding president, grew Heal the Bay into the effective environmental advocacy and education group that it is today.

Our silver anniversary is a great time to reflect on our numerous achievements, but it's more critical to think to the years ahead. Some of the biggest steps towards achieving our mission will occur this year. The State Water Board should approve a far-reaching policy that will phase out coastal, once-through-cooling power plants by 2020. Also, the Fish and Game Commission will approve a network of Marine Protected Areas for Southern California. Both of these decisions will go a long way towards moving us closer to sustainable coastal marine resource management.

The State Board of Education will approve 85 units of K-12 Cal-EPA developed curricula under the Education and the Environment Initiative. National Geographic, with the support of Heal the Bay and Southern California Edison, will complete teacher environmental literacy guides (grades 3-8) for climate change, energy, water and oceans.

Locally, the City of Los Angeles is likely to approve a Low



Impact Development ordinance that requires new construction and redeveloped sites to infiltrate or capture and reuse rainwater on site to reduce runoff pollution and reduce our reliance on imported water. The city also should finally approve its Water Quality Compliance Master Plan, an integrated approach to watershed management providing pollution reduction, flood control and water supply benefits.

Maybe this year will finally be the year that the region moves forward on reducing the public's addiction to single-use plastic packaging. Look for plastic bag fees or bans and polystyrene bans to finally become prevalent in the L.A. County region this year. The move will be happy news for our rivers, beaches, bays and marine life in the Pacific.

2010 should be a year of great progress for Santa Monica Bay and Southern California's coastal waters. The last quarter century of marine conservation, watershed protection and pollution prevention has not been easy for Heal the Bay and our numerous partners, but our vigilance has made a measurable and visible difference in the health of the bay. Thanks to all that have helped make Santa Monica Bay one of the nation's great environmental success stories over the last 25 years. With our continued efforts, that success should result in a healed Bay in the not too distant future.

Mark Gold

— Mark Gold, President, Heal the Bay

Goals for 2010

It's a new year, and a busy one for Heal the Bay staff

SCIENCE

Stream Team As part of our far-reaching Stream Team program, we are launching a Stream Watch program in the Malibu Creek watershed. This program will train volunteers and staff to identify and track pollution sources and degraded habitat in the Malibu Creek watershed. We will routinely monitor construction sites, horse ranches, vineyards and other potential sources of pollution.

Beach Report Card Since 1990, Heal the Bay's Beach Report Card has been giving local beaches A-F grades based on their levels of bacterial pollution thus rating the risk that you'll get sick swimming there. In 2010, we'll expand beyond California's borders for the first time, grading beaches along the Oregon and Washington coast.

Epidemiology and Source Studies Heal the Bay has been studying the relationship between more than 35 pathogens and pathogen indicators, and swimmer health. These studies, which were spearheaded by UC Berkeley, the Southern California Coastal Waters Research Project (SCCWRP), the Orange County Sanitation Districts and Heal the Bay, should be completed in 2010. Also, Heal the Bay has been studying the high bacteria densities at Ramirez Creek (which leads to Paradise Cove) and Escondido Creek. We've determined that the bacteria is human in nature and are now moving up into the watershed to try to determine the source of these unacceptably high levels of bacteria.

EDUCATION

Santa Monica Pier Aquarium In 2010, the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium will install signs on the Pier that talk about the natural history of the Santa Monica Bay and pollution prevention. We will create and



Join our Corporate Healer Beach Cleanup Program in 2010!

NATALIE BURDICK

install marine-themed chairs and tables on the pier deck directly above the aquarium, to encourage people to visit. Inside the aquarium, we will develop an activism exhibit, in honor of Heal the Bay's founder, Dorothy Green. We are renaming our classroom "The Green Room," in honor of Dorothy's environmental dedication. And, of course, we will continue to improve our already excellent field trip education programs and public programs.

National Geographic Teacher Environmental Literacy Guides Heal the Bay has contracted with the National Geographic Society to develop Teacher Environmental Literacy Guides in four core subject areas; Oceans, Water, Energy and Climate Change. These guides, funded primarily by a grant from Southern California Edison, will be geared towards 3rd through 8th grade teachers and will include extensive background content on the subjects, specific strategies for teachers helping them to introduce these issues into the classroom

and in conjunction with existing curriculum, student activities, and resources such as videos, posters and maps. These four guides will be field tested and evaluated by teachers and will include a teacher professional development implementation plan. The goal for this project is to have these guides along with professional development workshops available for teachers in fall 2010 and for it to align with the Environmental Education Initiative (EEI) units of study and Environmental Priorities for oceans, water, energy and climate change.

COMMUNITY ACTION

Corporate Healer Beach Cleanup Program In 2010, Heal the Bay will be developing our Corporate Healer Beach Cleanup Program, which promotes corporate social responsibility by holding beach cleanups for local corporations and companies to participate in as teambuilding and community outreach opportunities.

Healthy Communities Initiative In 2010, four of Heal the Bay's South L.A. community partners will begin construction of community-driven greening beautification projects in their neighborhoods. Youth Opportunities High School of Watts will develop a community garden and install a rain-catching cistern in their building to help prevent urban runoff. Wisdom Academy for Young Scientists in South East L.A. will involve their parents in the construction of an outdoor classroom. At Washington Elementary in Compton, the PTA will develop a welcoming native plant garden in front of their school. Lastly, the St. Michael's Catholic Church community group will complete its transformation into an incorporated nonprofit organization: The Association of Communities for South Los Angeles (A.C.U.S.L.A.). This particular group, in association with Heal the Bay and St. Michael's Church, will solidify its presence in their members' neighborhoods through burgeoning partnerships with Treepeople and Community Redevelopment Agency/L.A. to further green the local area.

Spanish Language Outreach In terms of Spanish-language outreach, Heal the Bay's Spanish blog www.htblatino.blogspot.com will increase its visibility and sphere of influence, and serve as a precursor to a re-designed Spanish language site for Heal the Bay. Our online presence in Spanish will increase exponentially in 2010 to mirror and match the already intensive level of on the ground in-Spanish outreach and organizing that Heal the Bay has been working on for the past several years.

ADVOCACY

Malibu Septics Heal the Bay will advocate for State Water Board approval of the Regional Board's Malibu civic center septic system moratorium. All commercial septs

are banned by 2015 and residential septs are banned by 2019. We will continue to work with the City to get them to move forward on reducing sewage pollution to Malibu Lagoon and Surfrider Beach. (For more information on Malibu Septics, see page 8.)

MPAs Marine protected areas are one of the most effective ways to protect threatened marine life. The ongoing process to establish marine protected areas in Southern California will wrap up in 2010 with approval of the proposed maps by the Department of Fish and Game. Also, we will work with local communities to develop stewardship programs to ensure that the MPAs work well.



JENNY ADAMS

Once-Through Cooling In California, coastal power plants use once-through-cooling systems to keep their plants running at safe temperatures. Once-through cooling, a process in which huge amounts of sea water are sucked into a plant, circulated and then dumped back into the ocean at much higher temperatures, can be disastrous for local marine life (temperatures aside, fish and invertebrates get sucked into the power plant and killed or trapped by the powerful suction). In 2009, the State Water Resources Control Board released its long-awaited draft policy on the use of coastal and estuarine waters for power plant cooling. This draft policy outlines two choices—either switch to closed-cycle cooling or put in place controls that keep ma-

rine life mortality at the same levels as closed-cycle cooling. In 2010, we will push for final approval of this critical policy to protect California's marine life.

Plastic Bans In 2010, we are hoping that the City of Santa Monica and the City of Los Angeles will develop and implement strong bans and/or fees on non-reusable grocery bags. Single use plastic bags are ubiquitous in the marine environment, carrying toxins and entangling animals. They are also eaten by animals who mistake them for jellyfish. We will continue to advocate for the flotilla of marine debris bills at the State Legislature which includes a single use bag fee, smoking ban on beaches, expanded polystyrene food packaging ban and a requirement to leash the lid on plastic beverage bottles.

Los Angeles County Stormwater Permit This year, a new draft of the Los Angeles County stormwater permit will likely be released. This permit, which dictates how the County must treat its stormwater and urban runoff, is supposed to be renewed every five years, and is long overdue. Heal the Bay will work to ensure that the upcoming permit includes strong low-impact development incentives, structural pollution removal device performance criteria, as well as clear, water body specific pollution limits called Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs).

Beach Water Quality Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) Heal the Bay plans to intervene in the Los Angeles County lawsuit against the State over enforceable beach water quality requirements. The County is suing the state to prevent clean beaches from being an enforceable requirement. Meanwhile, there are hundreds of pollution limit (TMDL) violations at local beaches every year.

To check out Heal the Bay's complete list of goals for 2010, visit www.heal-thebay.org

Mixed Greens

OCTOSUIT

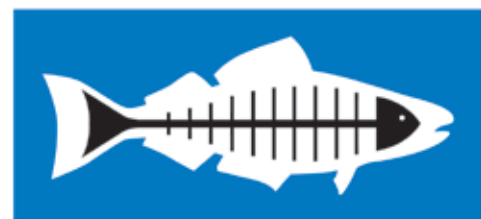


The Santa Monica Pier Aquarium thanks board member Kathy Kissick for sharing her time and millinery talents to create this octopus costume, just in time for our annual Fishy Fest, held October 31 and November 1. Malina Loehrer models Kathy's handiwork.

We Volunteers

We haven't forgotten about you, volunteers. Just like last season, we are moving our volunteer party to February (just in time for Valentine's Day). This year's party will be held on Tuesday, February 16 at VLounge (2020 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica). Details will be posted to our website www.healthebay.org

KEY TO THE SEA



where your classroom meets the ocean

Do you know a K-5th grade teacher in L.A. County? Let them know about Key to the Sea, our premier environmental education program. We're aiming to recruit teachers who will be participating for the very first time.

Our Key to the Sea program serves L.A. County teachers and students (K-5). It includes a workshop for teachers, including a curriculum guide and supplies, and a field trip to the beach for teacher and students. It is a collaborative program including Cabrillo Marine Aquarium, Roundhouse Aquarium, SEA Lab, our Santa Monica Pier Aquarium and USC SeaGrant. The Key to the Sea program aims to teach pollution prevention and watershed stewardship through hands-on standards-aligned lessons. The 2009-10 school year marked the 10th anniversary of our program. Get involved today! For more information visit www.healthebay.org/key2sea or call 800 HEAL BAY.

One of our teachers from Annandale Elementary notes, "This workshop has been one of the best workshops I've ever attended—if not the best—in the 20 years that I have been teaching."

Roll Call

Champs of Charity

Heal the Bay is incredibly honored to have received the Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Award at the L.A. Heroes of Humanity event. Heroes of Humanity is co-sponsored by the Art of Living Foundation (the United Nations' largest volunteer based accredited non-governmental organization), and the International Association for Human Values. This is the top Heroes of Humanity award and, like the other Heroes awards, recognizes those who are uplifting the community, but it also aims to give special recognition to individuals or organizations whose contributions command special notice for their commitment to human values in our communities to create a better world. Heal the Bay new media manager Tom Fleming, who accepted the award thinks that it "demonstrates that the public is becoming more aware of the direct connection between the environment and human activities and values."

SURGE STRATEGY

Aquarist Seth Lawrence talks about making the fish feel right at home at the SMPA

Bubbles rush past my mask, and through the turbid water, my eyes find the intertidal zone. It's beautiful: green, red and brown algae gently rock in the ocean swells, providing the perfect backdrop for copious marine organisms. Sea stars hold on to the rocks, clinging on for their lives with their strong, sticky tube feet. Fish find shelter from the surging water in rocky cracks and crevices. A rock-burrowing clam finds and secures a home by actually digging into the rocks. Now you no longer need a mask and dive gear to see this habitat because my fellow aquarists and I have recreated it, right here at Santa Monica Pier Aquarium.

We've replicated the dynamic intertidal zone for our new intertidal surge exhibit. We began by building a device that would mimic a natural surge motion. We chose a siphon tank to achieve this. This simple contraption is like a bucket hanging above the exhibit that slowly fills and then releases a large volume of water all at once into the intertidal exhibit. About every five minutes, this action repeats.

We quickly set to work filling the exhibit with species found in the intertidal zone of our own Santa Monica Bay. We collected several species of juvenile fish, including scorpion fish and sculpin. We also added several types of kelp fish — a crafty species that camouflages by moving to blend with the algae. The tank also supports juvenile free swimmers; fish like the half moon and blacksmith that swim in and out of the kelp blades. Some of

the juvenile fish were collected on previous dive trips. Others, like scorpion fish, were collected by an aquarist intern using fishing poles right off the Santa Monica Pier. Some were collected during SCUBA trips using nets, a difficult collection method in the surging water of the intertidal zone. Keeping true intertidal habitat in mind, we also added various invertebrate species that would be found in a tidepool like striped shore crabs, sea stars and lobsters. During the surge of water, the fish and other animals exhibit unique swimming and movement behaviors that help them survive the constant barrage of wave action along the shores, like the top smelt, that swim into the current just like in a workout pool.

The inhabitants of the intertidal tank have made the exhibit home. The kelp fish immediately moved into the slowly swaying blades of kelp. The scorpion fish moved into their nooks and crannies. Because many of these animals are often camouflaged in the exhibit, one of the best times to see the fish is during feeding time. With the smell of food in the surrounding water, all of the fish come out to feast.

Come down and experience the intertidal surge exhibit, and check out the creatures in their new home for yourself.

Not able to make it? Check out a virtual tour of the new exhibit with Seth himself at www.youtube.com/healthebay.

Warming 101

Maybe you know quite a bit about climate change, or maybe you really want to make a positive change in your carbon heavy lifestyle but are still iffy on all the details. Either way, climate change is going to continue to be a big issue in 2010 and beyond. Global warming has an incredibly detrimental effect on our oceans, which is where Heal the Bay comes in.

So what is climate change exactly?

Global climate change is the impact on Earth due to increased greenhouse gas levels in the atmosphere. Global warming occurs when certain gases create a blanket over our atmosphere trapping heat, like a greenhouse. These so-called greenhouse gases are mainly composed of CO₂, methane and water vapor. Greenhouse gases (GHGs) have always been present in the atmosphere and are essential for maintaining a habitable temperature. However, human activities such as burning fossil fuels and deforestation put more greenhouse gases, especially CO₂, into the atmosphere, which in turn traps more heat and results in temperature increases.

How does it harm the environment?

Global warming has the potential to negatively impact every corner of our planet. Climate change is altering weather patterns around the world. Warmer temperatures are altering precipitation and wind patterns, causing more extreme weather such as hurricanes, flooding, heat waves and drought. Sea levels continue to rise as ice caps melt at an alarming rate, increasing the risk of coastal flooding and erosion. Large inputs of freshwater could also have an impact on ocean circulation and the spread of dead zones in the sea. Lastly, the widespread climate change will put stress on ecosystems, as species struggle to adapt to the changing climate. The stress threatens species extinction in fragile environments, such as tropical coral reefs.

What other specific harms face the world's oceans and watersheds?

Rising water temperatures can cause animals, algae and ocean plants to move from their traditional range. Furthermore, increased ocean temperatures can lead to sickness and death for those animals that are unable to move. High ocean temperatures can lead to coral bleaching which has led to coral reef ecosystem collapse in some areas.

Changes in ocean and watershed salinity are caused

by melting ice. Organisms are all well adapted to specific salinity levels; they cannot survive outside of their specific range of adaptation. For example, you can't put a catfish into the ocean or a clownfish into a lake and expect them to survive.

Nutrient-rich, deep, cool waters that many coasts depend on may no longer be able to move up above the warm surface waters, robbing many creatures of the nutrients they depend on for survival. This is due to changes in upwelling or downwelling intensity.

Acidification of the seas is caused by the increased carbon dioxide in the ocean reacting with the water to create acids. Organisms that use chalk (calcium carbonate) to make skeletons and shells, such as lobsters, mussels, clams, and corals, cannot do so in an acidic environment. In areas where the ocean has become more acidic, the acid is dissolving or thinning the chalk-based shells and skeletons of animals that already have them.

What effect is it having locally on water and species right here in Santa Monica Bay and surrounding watersheds?

Studies are just beginning to look at specific effects in Santa Monica Bay and the species that call our waters home. Researchers at UCLA reported that fossil fuel-based car exhaust products can be found in our local waters, but direct correlations to organism health are hard to demonstrate. In other waters off the United States, ocean acidification is already taking place. These areas are seeing weaker shells in all shell-bearing organisms, leading to greater mortality.

Our kelp forests, the diverse habitat popular with kayakers, divers and fisherman, are very sensitive to small increases in ocean temperatures and cannot survive without the upwelling of nutrient-rich cold waters off our coasts. In years with strong El Niño effects, temperatures rise and kelp forests cannot thrive. Should the increased temperatures become a permanent trend, and not an occasional fluctuation, scientists worry that kelp forests will

not be able to adapt. The kelp forest is home to numerous animals and is an important habitat in the general health of the California coastal environment. Kelp beds off the Malibu and Palos Verdes coastline have continued to decline over the past few decades, but the exact role of climate change in the decline is unknown.

The beautiful beaches and shoreline property that Southern California is famous for could be submerged if ocean levels rise as predicted. Most climate change scientists expect up to a one meter rise in sea level by 2100 if GHG levels in the atmosphere continue to rise at the current pace. As ocean currents shift and change, questions remain as to what effect it will have on important recreational activities like sailing, surfing and tidepooling. While the answers to many questions remain unclear, the state of California estimates that the effects of global climate change could cost the state billions of dollars in lost tourism, jobs and property every year.

What is the Heal the Bay advocacy team doing to impact climate change?

As climate change begins to impact California's traditional water supplies, water conservation efforts will need to be enhanced and non-traditional sources will need to be sought out. Heal the Bay strongly advocates for the reuse/recycling of treated wastewater. Instead of wastewater treatment plants discharging high-quality treated water into a stream or an ocean outfall never to be beneficially used again, we promote water reuse for practices such as irrigation and industrial use.

We even support indirect potable reuse of recycled water when the water has been highly treated by ultra-filtration and reverse osmosis. In turn, using recycled water will conserve the potable water supply and protect precious ecosystems like the Sacramento River Delta-San Francisco Bay. Heal the Bay recently participated in a State Water Resources Control Board-led stakeholder group to develop a strong Water Recycling Policy for the state that encourages water recycling while maintaining water quality. Think about all the energy that can be saved (California uses 18% of its energy to transport and treat our water supply) if we reduce the amount of water being pumped to Southern California from the already strained Delta region up north.

On a similar note, we advocate for groundwater recharge of stormwater runoff. Stormwater recharge naturally filters the polluted stormwater and recharges groundwater aquifers at the same time. As we work with Ventura and Los Angeles Counties and the State on Low Impact Development (LID) policies (see page 9 for more information on LID), recharge should become more commonplace. Heal the Bay is encouraging the Metropolitan Water District to offer financial incentives (we suggest \$250 an acre foot) to increase recharge, the same way they do for water recycling and conservation.

Heal the Bay promotes the use of reusable products. Production and transportation of single use plastic bags and polystyrene cups create greenhouse gas emissions. For example, the U.S. goes through 100 billion plastic bags annually, which is the energy equivalent of 12

million barrels of oil! (For more information on reusable bags, see pages 10-11.) Heal the Bay also sits on the steering committee of Green L.A., which is a coalition of environmental organizations serving Southern California. Heal the Bay supports L.A.'s 1.3 megawatt solar plan to help wean the city from its reliance on coal power plants in Utah, and to dramatically reduce GHG generation from the City.

How can I help Heal the Bay to make a positive impact?

Whether you volunteer your time to speak to elementary school students about environmental stewardship or serve as a team captain at a monthly beach cleanup, you have a direct impact on reducing our collective carbon footprint. Hands-on teaching is the most effective tool in changing attitudes and getting people to modify long-standing behaviors that contribute to global warming.

Member donations help support the work of diligent and committed staff advocates who negotiate daily with regional and state leaders to implement more carbon-friendly practices, be it sensible water recycling programs or banning the use of wasteful plastic shopping bags. When you visit our website or Facebook pages and get informed, you can pass on knowledge to friends and family. You might even be motivated to send an email or letter to a legislator who can effect meaningful change.



No More Poo for the 'Bu

Staff scientist Susie Santilena cheers on the Malibu septic prohibition

I recently spent a very encouraging day downtown at Union Station, watching the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board debating a moratorium on septic systems in the Malibu civic center area. The measure called for a ban on any new septic system in the area and the removal of existing systems by 2015 for commercial properties and 2019 for residential properties.

And I'm pleased to tell you that the board did the right thing and voted 5-2 to approve the ban. The action marks a historic step forward in solving the chronic water quality problems in Malibu Creek and Lagoon and iconic Surfrider Beach. Heal the Bay has advocated for these changes for nearly two decades.

Surfrider Beach frequently receives "F" water quality grades on our Beach Report Card. Malibu does not have a centralized wastewater treatment system, which means it is up to the landowners to ensure that their sewage is treated appropriately. Septic systems can fail or simply degrade over time. However, there is a stalemate on statewide septic regulations and thus, no enforcement to ensure that waste is treated properly.

In case you missed the hearing, allow me to paint the picture. The Clean Water at the 'Bu Coalition came out in full force, powered by Heal the Bay, Surfrider Foundation's West Los Angeles/Malibu Chapter, Santa Monica Baykeeper and the Malibu Surfing Assn. Organizing interested parties to come to the hearing on a Thursday morning was not the easiest thing to do. Getting residents to come to support a cause that might cost them money seemed nearly impossible. Thankfully, we and our partners in the Clean Water Coalition were able to rally sympathizers, surfers, and others actually impacted by the pollution

through our outreach efforts.

We also had a secret weapon: catchy buttons and t-shirts. They worked well. The hearing was near Union Station, so there were plenty of interesting people who approached us drawn in by the prospect of free swag. One homeless person who simply wanted a shirt wandered up to our table. He claimed he cared about clean water. Fair enough, so I gave him one. One New Age dude in a tunic who just happened to be drifting through gave me the third-degree about what we were doing. I explained that we were there to rally support for the septic prohibition in Malibu.

"People are getting sick from swimming in other people's excrement," I told him.

"Well, that's an interesting point," he replied, "but wouldn't it be better to have septic systems when the zombies come?"

I suppose he had me there. No shirt for him.

Aside from the occasional character, swimmers, surfers and people who just care about water quality came to the hearing to show their strong support. One Malibu resident asked me why this is an issue of concern to people outside of Malibu.

It's a critical point: It's not just locals who use the Malibu coast. Surfrider is a postcard beach known for world-class surfing, drawing people from around the globe. Many of them come to catch the perfect wave, but instead catch pink-eye, or leave with a souvenir of gastrointestinal illness.

There is plenty of scientific evidence that a major source of the pollution at Surfrider and Malibu Lagoon is leaky septic systems in the Civic Center area. That being said, many Malibu homeowners do care about water quality and are not contributing to the problem.

I spoke to some of our members in

Malibu who have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars into their septic systems in an effort to make them as effective as possible. A point of contention is that, depending on where they live, they could be included in the prohibition just the same. For these and other reasons, it is likely that the city will pursue legal action against the Regional Board because of its decision.

The prohibition marks the Regional Board's best shot at moving Malibu toward a centralized wastewater system to solve its problems. Heal the Bay has a long history of taking on water issues in Malibu. We have painstakingly mapped 72 miles of streams in Malibu, held countless restoration events and continuously monitor water and ecological quality in the watershed. We've been a major stakeholder in efforts against the egregious violations in Paradise Cove, fought tooth and nail for protection of valuable habitat in Malibu during the marine protected area process and have been involved in the Legacy Park debate.

Despite the threat of legal action from Malibu, the board did the right thing and even added some positive elements to the staff proposal. The Regional Board has finally held Malibu accountable. Asking for public support of the prohibition was a big ask, but in the end our speaker cards in support of the prohibition outweighed those against by about four to one.

Heal the Bay is thankful when members of the public come to support our efforts at public meetings, such as the septic debate. We frequently post action alerts on our website inviting our members and supporters to participate in the democratic process. Please join us as we fight for improved water quality in 2010.

PHOTOGRAPH: iSTOCK

HAPPENING CAUSES

Bring Back the Beach, Heal the Bay's annual gala, will be held May 20th
Join Us to Celebrate Heal the Bay's 25th Anniversary!



PHOTOGRAPHS: NICK FASH



Project Save Our Surf's 24 Hours of Surf

Save the Date for a Surf-a-thon and Gala Benefit, June 19 and 20 in Huntington Beach

As an organization dedicated to the conservation of our oceans and their delicate marine ecosystems, Project Save Our Surf has selected Heal the Bay as beneficiary for their third annual charity benefit: a two day festival of surfing, film, fashion and community.

Project Save Our Surf believes that through education, awareness, outreach and involvement with local communities, people can generate significant change on our planet. They work with surfers, friends, families and local businesses to support the

essential work of clean-water organizations-like Heal the Bay.

Be sure to join Project Save Our Surf and Heal the Bay as we mark the 7th International Surf day in downtown Surf City, USA. The event will include a surf-a-thon, surf lessons, kid and family-friendly activities, live music, films, art, a fashion show and a gala reception.

For more information on Project Save Our Surf's 24 HOURS OF SURF, visit www.healthebay.org/events or www.projectsaveoursurf.com.



A Better Bag

Heal the Bay leads the fight to go reusable



Heal the Bay organized our 3rd annual "A Day Without a Bag" last month in concert with the city and county of Los Angeles. With a broad coalition of local environmental groups and retailers, including 99¢ Only stores, Albertsons and Ralphs we held giveaways and promotions at more than 50 locations throughout the entire county, giving away nearly 20,000 reusable bags. The event culminated with a media event held downtown at 7th and Figueroa with board member and actress Amy Smart, the South Bay Thrill The World trash zombie dance troupe, recycled plastic art and a sewing station converting donated tank tops into hip and washable reusable bags.

CORRECTING A PROBLEM

- Californians use approximately 19 billion single use plastic bags each year. However, less than 5% of all single use plastic bags are actually recycled.
- Instead, many of these plastic bags become litter and eventually end up in our oceans as marine debris.
- Marine debris is ubiquitous and can be found everywhere from remote arctic regions to highly populated urban beaches.
- It is estimated that 60-80% of all marine debris, and 90% of floating debris is plastic.
- Plastic bags are so durable that it can take hundreds of years to break down at sea, and some types never truly biodegrade at sea.
- Plastic bags are commonly mistaken for food by seabirds, marine mammals, fish, and sea turtles.



PHOTOGRAPH: ISTOCK

CHANGING THE WAY WE THINK ABOUT BAGS

- We can no longer recycle our way out of the plastic bag proliferation problem.
- Bangladesh, Bhutan, Belgium, China, Denmark, Ireland, Mexico City, Kenya, Rwanda, Sweden, Switzerland, South Africa, Somalia, Taiwan have all imposed a single use plastic bag fee, or a tax, or a combination of the two.
- Collectively, these countries represent an estimated 25% of the world's population that has committed to taxing or placing a fee upon, or banning single use plastic bags.
- Ireland implemented a plastic bag fee to discourage the excessive use of plastic bags (the fee was increased to 33¢ in 2007). Since 2002, plastic bag consumption and litter has decreased by over 90%.
- San Francisco was the first U.S. city to ban single use plastic bags in grocery stores.
- The cities of Malibu and Manhattan Beach recently passed ordinances banning plastic and biodegradable carryout bags at all stores and restaurants.
- The City of Los Angeles adopted a policy to ban plastic bags citywide by January 2010 unless the state enacts legislation to impose a fee on plastic and paper bags.

Trashed

An update on Heal the Bay's ongoing battle with the ubiquitous disposable bag

Heal the Bay's sponsored statewide bag reduction bill, the Single-Use Bag Reduction Act (AB 68), is being held in the Assembly Appropriations committee as a two-year bill. We have until the end of January to pass the bill out of the Assembly and send it to the Senate.

If passed, our bill would charge a consumer 'green' fee of twenty-five cents for every single-use plastic and paper grocery bag handed out supermarkets, retail pharmacies and chain convenience stores. Funds collected from this fee will go toward bag litter cleanup, litter prevention and reusable bag giveaway programs. Similar to a successful law in Ireland that reduced plastic bag use by over 90%, this fee policy is designed to give consumers incentive to use more reusable bags instead of disposable bags. If our bill is signed into law, we anticipate a dramatic decrease in plastic bags in California's coastal and inland environments. To help pass AB 68 out of the Assembly please visit our action alert page and write a letter of support at www.healthebay.org/actionalerts.



BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

As a home designer, major donor Jill Soffer practices what she preaches



Long time Heal the Bay donor Jill Soffer is an interior designer and home builder. An 18-year Santa Monica resident, she recently took some time out of her busy work, yoga and hiking schedule to speak with Heal the Bay staff about how she first got involved, and how her professional life ties in with HtB.

What was it that inspired you to be a donor for Heal the Bay? What part of our mission or what personal experience led you to choose to support HtB?

When I first moved to Santa Monica my apartment was 7 blocks from the beach. Every morning before work, I'd ride my bike down, sometimes taking a walk on the sand. I'd see tons of cigarette butts here, everyone in Santa Monica must smoke three packs a day, right here on this beach! "I didn't know then how the storm drains work, running the trash from all of L.A. right down to the ocean."

What in the early days caught your attention about us?

I heard the story of Dorothy Green and Howard Bennett, a long-distance swimmer who wanted to know why he had a rash from swimming in the bay every day. They found out that the bay was so contaminated it was making swimmers sick. They organized to do something about it, and ultimately successfully joined the fight to sue the City of L.A. for non-compliance with the Clean Water Act. I thought, "Two regular people can really make the difference."

So I joined Heal the Bay's Speakers Bureau Program and got so much out of talking to schools and clubs about HtB. It surprised me how few adults knew how the waste system works in our city. We flush and forget. I was glad to be able to share what I'd learned and I believe it made people think just a little harder about how they lived.

Honestly, everytime I see a bright green lawn, I get upset. Lawns need so much water, and L.A. is a desert.

In your own personal and professional life, what are the issues that matter most and how do they tie to the work that Heal the Bay does?

I am a home builder and interior designer. I have built or remodeled several homes in the Venice/Santa Monica/Palisades area. As a builder, I am particularly concerned about paving and storm water run-off. Because this city is so paved over, storm water isn't allowed to percolate properly through the ground and get cleaned off before it returns to the water table. It just gets shuffled out to the sea, picking up oils, chemicals and debris on its way.

My husband, Greg Adler, and I are currently under construction on a LEED home in Santa Monica Canyon. To mitigate storm water run-off, we are installing a percolation pit on the property. This is simply a deep gravel pit; rainfall on the property is diverted into the pit where it is cleaned and percolates down to the water table. Only when the rainfall is extremely heavy will the storm water spill over and out to the street.

Honestly, every time I see a bright green lawn, I get upset. Lawns need so much water, and L.A. is a desert. Lawns belong in England and Wisconsin, but not here. Not only can we not afford to waste this water, but the fertilizer used on these lawns gets washed down the storm drains and ends up in the ocean, wreaking havoc on our marine life.

What is your own philosophy on philanthropy? Why do you give in general?

This world belongs to all of us. We have no right to complain about the state of the environment, or anything for that matter, unless we also take action towards improvement and change.

Is there any advice you would give to others considering donating for the first time?

If there's an organization that you believe does good work, join it and donate. It doesn't have to be a lot of money — donate what you can. Your membership is the most important thing. More members gives a group more political clout, and a better chance of getting their work done. Just by joining, you help a lot!

The Green Room

Dorothy Green, the late founding president of Heal the Bay embodied the credo "one person can make a difference." To honor Dorothy and further her legacy of advocacy and volunteerism, our Santa Monica Pier Aquarium's classroom is being remodeled to become "The Green Room," with an interactive exhibit to promote environmental activism.

Dorothy herself would be appreciative of the collaboration currently underway to create the exhibit, because bringing people with divergent ideas together was also a hallmark of her problem-solving approach. Ogilvy & Mather, the advertising firm that has worked with the Aquarium for several years on interior and exterior signage and advertising campaigns, has designed the artistic entryway.

Whether at the Aquarium during a Heal the Bay event, or bringing a friend by to visit, "Dorothy always told me what a great job she thought we were doing here at the Aquarium," aquarium director Vicki Wawerchak recalls. "She loved seeing the students in here."

Watch for website announcements of a formal dedication of The Green Room.



Cetacean Celebration

Valentine's Day is coming up next month and the Aquarium will express its affection for the Pacific gray whale by throwing our annual cetacean celebration, Whale of a Weekend, February 13 and 14. Whale-related activities will be ongoing both days from 12:30 to 5:00 pm.

Whale of a Weekend highlights the annual migration of the Pacific gray whale, which completes one of the longest migrations of any species. A wildlife observation station at the west end of the Pier, stocked with binoculars and field guides, will give visitors the opportunity to search for whales and other local wildlife. The American Cetacean Society/Whale Watch representatives will staff the station and answer questions.

Inside the Aquarium, guests can make a variety of whale related arts and crafts, participate in story time, face painting, and film screening. A 2:30 p.m. staff presentation (both days) on whales, along with discussions of the problem of marine

debris, will round out the two-day celebration.

In addition to the emphasis on whales, the weekly presentation and feeding at the shark tank will occur at 3:30 pm on Sunday as usual.



LILLIE GROSSMAN

Jose Estrada began organizing in his community (first in Honduras, then in South Los Angeles) years ago. After being introduced to Heal the Bay at a tabling, he began teaming up with Father David O'Connell of St. Michael's Catholic Church in South L.A. and HtB to see what we could all do to improve the South L.A. community. Currently, Jose is one of our main organizers. He helps mobilize support for our causes and arranges our activities in his neighborhood. Be it a cleanup, reusable bag giveaway, construction of a green project or getting volunteers to come testify at hearings in support of HtB's legislative work, Jose has been a tireless partner in the fight for healthy communities. Recently, we asked Jose to write about his experience and background in community organizing.

The HEALING Honduran

Meet community organizer Jose Javier Estrada, HtB's linchpin in South Los Angeles

I now live in South Los Angeles, but I was born in Honduras. After graduating with a degree in Agricultural Sciences from a school in the Canary Islands, I started applying my work as a professional in the most neglected rural regions of my homeland.

I've worked in this field for over 20 years, for different governmental and nongovernmental institutions. During these years, my work in impoverished areas has offered me invaluable lessons. Only through the day-to-day witnessing of the abandonment, poverty, institutional deception, disease, malnutrition, illiteracy and many other elements in the rural regions of Honduras was I able to truly

learn about the real-world impacts of community action. There is much need in my country and I saw it first-hand. Frankly, I sometimes wonder what would happen to our poor if it weren't for the aid that foreign governments lend to Honduras to develop some community-based projects.

I would like the public to understand the real situation in which our people see themselves in the rural provinces of Honduras, which is why many end up emigrating to other countries like the U.S. It felt right for me to be working in a field that serves the poorest people of Honduras; however, I am not a relative of a powerful military official or of a great politician or of a wealthy businessman and it eventually became very difficult for me to get a job in my own country and I found myself forced to move with my family to the U.S. eight years ago. I consider myself fortunate, because thanks to my education and my working experience with different foreign governments in projects aimed at the sustainable strengthening of rural families, it has been easier for me to find work in America than it would've been otherwise.

It gives me much satisfaction to be able to work and serve the many families of South Central Los Angeles now, and to be able to fight back against the many challenges they face. Up until very recently, life in this area was incredibly difficult. The neighborhood was riddled with many gangs, violence, robberies, trash and countless environmental problems. It's been eight years since the community group I belong to decided to stand up to the many challenges we face and began our community volunteer work with the Los Angeles Police Department, the Sheriff's station in Lennox, various city departments, OneLA, Heal the Bay, and the priest of St. Michael's Catholic Church, David



South Los Angeles (A.C.U.S.L.A.), is undertaking a formal accreditation process.

We are developing projects with Heal the Bay to combat urban pollution, which eventually ends up in the ocean. We've been installing our public "Living Rooms" and are advocating for the development of our local Vermont Avenue traffic median to bring out about more public green spaces to this area, which has typically been park-poor. This month, we are also planning to begin a tree forestry project with Tree People. The possibilities are many, and as group, we are now very excited about what the future holds for our South L.A. community. When you think about supporting Heal the Bay, know that you are also supporting the work they do to help communities like mine.



Un-paving the Way

Changing how the City of Los Angeles builds

Low Impact Development (LID) has emerged as a highly effective approach to controlling stormwater pollution (urban run-off). Instead of utilizing costly engineering options for abating this potentially polluting water, LID strategies integrate green space, native landscaping and natural hydrologic functions to generate less runoff from developed (paved) land.

Heal the Bay staff members have been closely involved in the development of a Low Impact Development Ordinance for the City of Los Angeles. In essence, the proposed Ordinance would require all development to capture and use, or infiltrate on-site 100% of the runoff generated from a three quarter inch rain. In the event that infiltration or capture and use is technically unfeasible on-site, then the developer needs to pay the city an 'in-lieu fee' to go towards completion of a green street or parking lot retrofit project off site in the same drainage area. This Ordinance draws upon LID regulations that Heal the Bay and other stakeholders have worked closely on for the recently adopted Ventura County Municipal Stormwater Permit and the LID Ordinance for the County of Los Angeles.

There was a great turnout from the non-profit and landscape design communities in support of the Ordinance at the first hearing in November. Despite the overwhelming support, the Board of Public Works unfortunately moved to continue the item. The Board of Public Works was scheduled to hear this issue for the second time on December 11, where it was postponed yet again to this month. We will keep you posted.

MPA SUCCESS

The next step for marine protected areas



CHARLOTTE STEVENSON

Marine protected areas (MPAs) are safe havens from fishing. Last month, the Fish and Game Commission voted to begin the environmental review California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process on the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force's *Intergrated Preferred Alternative (IPA)* map for Southern

California. This environmental review process is standard procedure and can take up to year before the project will be signed into law and implemented. Although the IPA map fails to provide adequate protection for Palos Verdes, it does protect the most critical habitat in Malibu at Point Dume, as well as other ecologically important areas along the southern California coast.

Heal the Bay will be following the **Fish and Game Commission meetings** closely this year to ensure a high standard of protection is upheld for Southern California's coastal marine ecosystem and to try a final push for protection based on strong science at Palos Verdes. A big THANK YOU to all MPA supporters who came out to meetings this year! There will likely be a couple more opportunities for public involvement in 2010 so hang onto your blue shirt!

Trash Talk

Creating litter limits for the L.A. River to help curb ocean pollution

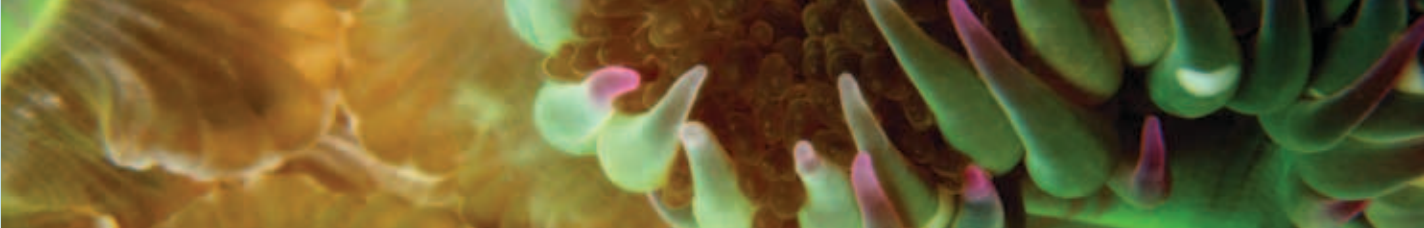


To put it scientifically, trash significantly impairs beneficial uses of the Los Angeles River. We know that urban runoff (water from street drains) effectively carries trash and other pollution with it directly from street catch basins to local streams, like our ill-fated Los Angeles River, and eventually to the ocean unfiltered and untreated. Heal the Bay staff has routinely documented excessive trash in the River during our cleanup events like Coastal Cleanup Day.

As part of the solution to trash in the River and the resulting marine debris, the Los Angeles River Trash Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) originally adopted

in 2001 was truly ground-breaking. It essentially set a pollution limit of zero trash in the River. The TMDL has withstood many legal challenges since its first adoption, and was re-adopted by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board in 2007. But in order for the TMDL trash pollution limits to be readily enforceable, the Regional Water Board must incorporate them into the language of the Municipal Stormwater Permit.

Last month the Regional Water Board unanimously voted to do just this. Now cities will be on the hook for large fines if they don't comply. Imagine, a trash free L.A. River by 2016. That's the enforceable requirement now included in the county's stormwater permit. A big shout out to the heroes of the day; Regional Water Board staff, especially Renee Purdy, and acting board chair Madelyn Glickfeld and numerous environmental groups and Long Beach councilwoman Suja Lowenthal for providing compelling testimony.



NICK FASH

THANK YOU

The following list represents gifts from September 1, 2009 through November 30, 2009.

\$25,000+

Debbie & Mark Attanasio
Audemars Piguet
State of California/California State Coastal Conservancy
The Diller - von Furstenberg Family Foundation
Grousbeck Family Foundation
City of Santa Monica

\$10,000 - \$24,999

American Airlines
State of California/California Coastal Commission
California State Parks Foundation
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Jena & Michael King
Kodak Theater
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Liberty Hill Foundation
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Hatef Behnia and wife Elenice Da Silva Pinto

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Carl Kravetz & Dr. Aliza Lifshitz
Robert Krupka
John Lamonica
Linda Lichter & Norman Marck
City of Long Beach/
Department of Public Works
Cydney & Gary Mandel
Shane Mengel
Jacqueline & Ted Miller
John Miller
Walter Miller
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Michael Weithorn
Wells Fargo Foothill
Wells Fargo Foundation
Luann & Robert Williams
Owen Wilson

\$500 - \$999

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Andy Colby
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Kathleen Gavin
Deborah & Rocky Gentner
Liberty Godshall & Ed Zwick
Michael Gora
Susan Gottlieb
Jame Greenwald
Brigitte & Hart Hanson
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Chris Karkenny
Meg & Larry Kasdan
Marvin Kay
Benjamin Leeds
April & Brett Loncar
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Margaret Maw
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Gwen McShane
Beth Moore, M.D.
Jan & Larry Myers
Michele & Mark Nasatir
Gerda Newbold & John Adler
Nic Panagos
Elizabeth Pan & Matt Wickersham
Jeny Reyes
Edwin Rodriguez
Suzan Rossow
Sanctuary Clothing, Inc.
Nadya Scott
John Seiber
Kathy Stanton
Michael Vincent
Ruth & Gerald Wagner
Kanter Woolf

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:

Cade Cohen
Tyler and Chase Donovan
Lily Elkind
Maya Elkind
Heather & Nyla Lindheimer
Mia Lindheimer
Sophie Lindheimer
Danielle & Samantha Malinsky
Nicholas Toggenburger
Wells-Fargo Foothill, Technology/Finance

IN HONOR OF

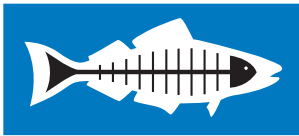
A wonderful way to commemorate a special occasion, milestone or birthday for friends or family is to make a donation to Heal the Bay in their honor. The following people have been honored recently:

Meg Alberts
David E. Anderson
Brent Barry
Tim Doyle
Regina Ferguson & Peter Hapke
Chritopher & David Freedman
Eden & Margo Funk
Marcie Giovannoni
Michael Glouberman
Kyla Gorman
Andrew Gottlieb
Sara Hess
Chris Kelly
Kris Kimble
Saran & Norton Kirschbaum
Julia Louis-Dreyfus
Dave Martyn
Tommy Moran
Guests at the wedding of Matt Wickersham & Elizabeth Pan
Jordan & Eileen Park Peed
Jim Parriott

Police Officers
Greg Popovich
Chris Robb
Hillary Rosenfeld
Derin Sarioz
Zola Berger Schmitz
Alexander Shulman
Steve & Logan Solomon
Rachel Stern
Jeff Stilson
Mike Tatum's awesome surfer maintenance crew
Lindsey Taylor
Madi Taylor
Zachary Tescher
Thrill the World 2009 South Bay/
Rolling Hills Estates, California
Sydney Walley
Krya Williams

IN MEMORY OF

Peter G. Aitkin
Steve Brown
Bill Carter
Ralph Di Donato
Elfriede J. Hurtado
Michael Kasino
Tracy Macias
Alan Mendel
James J. O'Malley
Dusty Peak
Doug Ring



Heal the Bay

1444 9th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401

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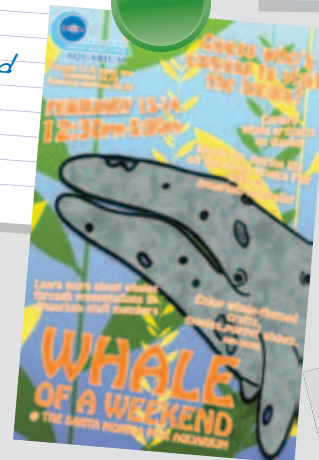
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*Saturday/Sunday
April 17 - 18*

*Santa Monica Pier
Aquarium's Earth Weekend
12:30-6pm, plus for latest
Earth Day news, follow us
at www.twitter.com/healthebay*



January 1-15

*Discover Pourtal:
a playground for the wine
enthusiast or wine curious!
During "Angel Shares Hours"
(4 pm - 7 pm
Mondays through Fridays) 15%
of Enomatic wine
tastings will be donated to
Heal the Bay.*

** Throughout January local
wineries will be doing
pourings.*



January 1 - 31

*Stop by this Santa Monica
Neighborhood pub to see
works by Stacy Wawerchak.
A portion of sales from her
collection of Chinese Brush
Paintings will benefit Heal the
Bay (West 4th at 1432A
Fourth Street.)*

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.