

**Ballona Creek Renaissance...**

A 501c(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to renewing Ballona Creek and its watershed for a healthier, more sustainable environment and community.

(We're also known as BCR)  
[www.ballonacreek.org](http://www.ballonacreek.org)

**Contact us:**

Ballona Creek Renaissance  
PO Box 843  
Culver City, CA 90232

Jim Lamm, President  
310-839-6896  
[jim.lamm@ballonacreek.org](mailto:jim.lamm@ballonacreek.org)

**Officers and Directors**

Jim Lamm, President  
Gerald Sallus, Vice President  
David Valdez, Secretary  
Richard S. Hibbs, Treasurer  
Lucy Blake-Elahi  
Bobbi Gold, Newsletter Editor  
Cathi Lamm  
Irene Reingold  
Amy Rosenstein  
Sandrine Cassidy Schmitt  
Mim Shapiro

**Advisory Council**

Michele Bigelow  
Steven Coker  
Lori Escalera  
Bob & Pat Hadley  
Scott Malsin, Webmaster  
Dino Parks  
Marina Curtis Tidwell

**In this issue:**

1. Creekside Native Plant Garden
2. Park To Play
3. Baldwin Hills Reservoir Failure
4. One Big Park Concept
5. Culver City Bikeway
6. Ballona Creek Rocks
7. DrainWatch; Harvesting Rainwater
8. New Board and Advisory Council Members
- 9-11. Around the Watershed

**CREEKSIDE NATIVE PLANT GARDEN FLOURISHES!**

The rains of 2011 have been a bonanza for BCR's creekside native plant garden on the grounds of Culver City High School/Middle School. California native plant flowers are usually subdued, but our golden poppies are blooming in joyous abandon, and the blue-eyed grass, encelia and others are putting on good shows, too. Gardenmaster / BCR president Jim Lamm and his crew have installed markers identifying plants and designed a large two-sided interpretive sign which can be read from the bikepath and inside the school grounds. You can see all this from the Ballona Creek bikepath just west of the pedestrian bridge crossing the creek between Overland Avenue and Sepulveda Blvd.



Winter rains produced abundant spring blooms in the native plant garden on school grounds adjacent to the Ballona Creek bikepath. Photo by Jim Lamm.

Of course, every garden needs maintenance. The rains have been good to the uninvited plants, too, and we also need to check the irrigation system for the dry months, reset plant markers, and other tasks. BCR will hold volunteer maintenance days as needed. To be notified of opportunities to help out for a couple of hours on a Saturday, ask [jim.lamm@ballonacreek.org](mailto:jim.lamm@ballonacreek.org).

This student learning project was funded by a grant from the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation and made possible also by the cooperation and assistance of Culver City Unified School District. Download complete information about the garden from our website at <http://www.ballonacreek.org/news/PIEGardenproject.pdf>



## BALDWIN HILLS PROJECTS: PARK TO PLAYA

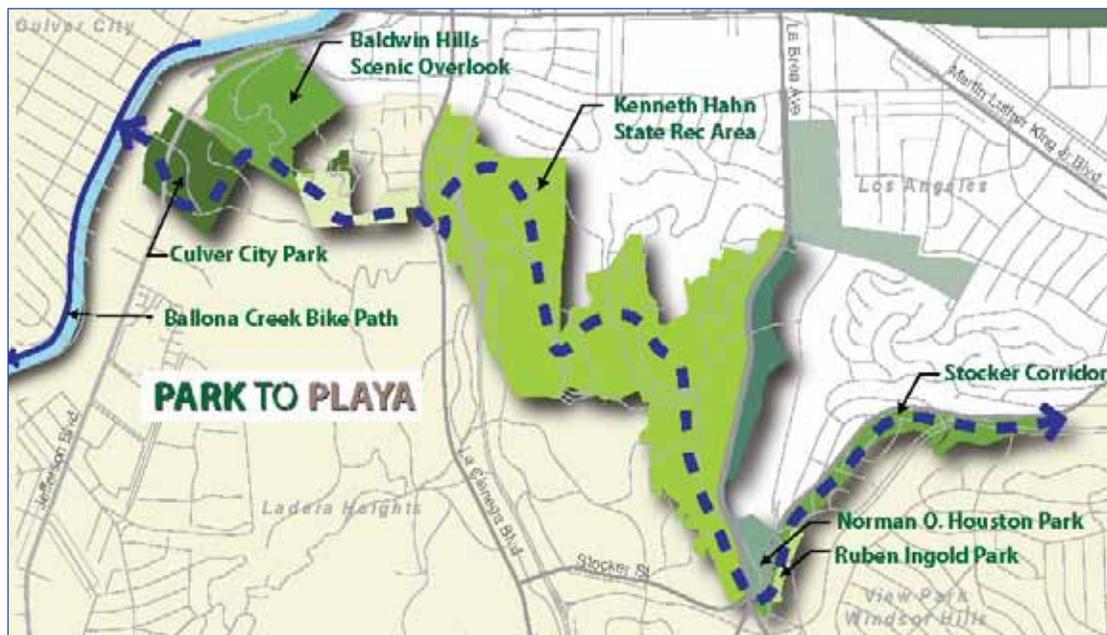
By Michele Bigelow, with additional contributions by Dino Parks

The “Park to Playa” project is an emerging, 14-mile continuous public trail from the eastern slopes of the Baldwin Hills to the sea at Playa del Rey, just south of the Marina. It will accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists and provide some amenities to make it more than just an urban survival trek.

Most of the public trail already exists. In the Baldwin Hills, existing facilities include Culver City Park, Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook, Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area (KHSRA), Norman O. Houston Park, Ruben Ingold Park, and the trail on the Stocker Corridor. The trail will connect to the Ballona Creek Bike Path at Duquesne Avenue near Culver City Park.

**Connections.** How to fill in the gaps and improve the trail was the subject of the first public meeting, held January 25, 2011. Michele Bigelow and Dino Parks attended on behalf of BCR. The meeting was chaired by consultant Ron Milam, a founder of L.A. County Bicycle Coalition, and two members of the consulting firm Alta Planning and Design. Also present were representatives of Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, the Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority, the Baldwin Hills Conservancy, LA City and LA County Parks Departments as well as many members of the local community including bikers, hikers, birders, dog-walkers, and students from nearby Dorsey High School, showing the importance attached to this long-term project.

A primary concern is how different groups of users—say, hikers and bikers—can safely and enjoyably share the trails. Some trails will be wide enough for bikers and hikers to share, but many people prefer bikers and hikers to be separated. Other trails will be much narrower hiking trails. Parts of the Baldwin Hills are very steep, limiting riders to people strong enough to ride bikes up and down them. Other activities of potential conflict are dog-walking and bird-watching. A further problem is trail erosion caused by heavy seasonal rains, making footing or tire traction treacherous.



Connecting the existing public spaces will require some new access points, trails, and land acquisitions or easements across private lands. Safer pedestrian and bike crossings of major roads are needed at the intersection of Stocker St., La Brea Ave., and Overhill Dr.; crossing the bridge over freeway-like La Cienega Blvd; and on Jefferson Blvd at the Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook, where stone steps and hiking trails are a magnet for exercisers.

### Wish lists of amenities for the parks included:

- More restrooms and water fountains
- Mileage and directional signage
- Interpretive signage, including information on native birds, animals and plants, and history, especially Native American history
- Plastic bags for dog cleanup
- Trash and recycling bins
- Emergency phone call boxes, especially in areas lacking cell phone reception
- Possible dog park at KHSRA
- Watershed protection at KHSRA, such as bioswales or rain gardens (as at new Eastern Gateway at La Brea and Don Lorenzo)

**More public workshops are planned.** The next one will be Tuesday, May 3, from 7-9 PM at the Visitor Center at Kenneth Hahn SRA.

## Water... the essence of life on earth but a force for disaster in excess

In 1951, the City of Los Angeles built a reservoir in the Baldwin Hills, at the north edge of what is now Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area (KHSRA). A shallow basin was excavated in the hilltop, but the volume was increased by building low compacted earth dikes on three sides, while the lowest side was formed by a large earth dam. It loomed over a community of homes.

Only 12 years later, on December 14, 1963, it failed. Nearly 300 million gallons of water burst through a crack in the dam, devastating the homes below. Five lives were lost and 277 homes destroyed or damaged by the water, mud and debris. Thanks to the observations of the reservoir caretaker who alerted police a few hours earlier, an emergency evacuation averted an even greater tragedy.

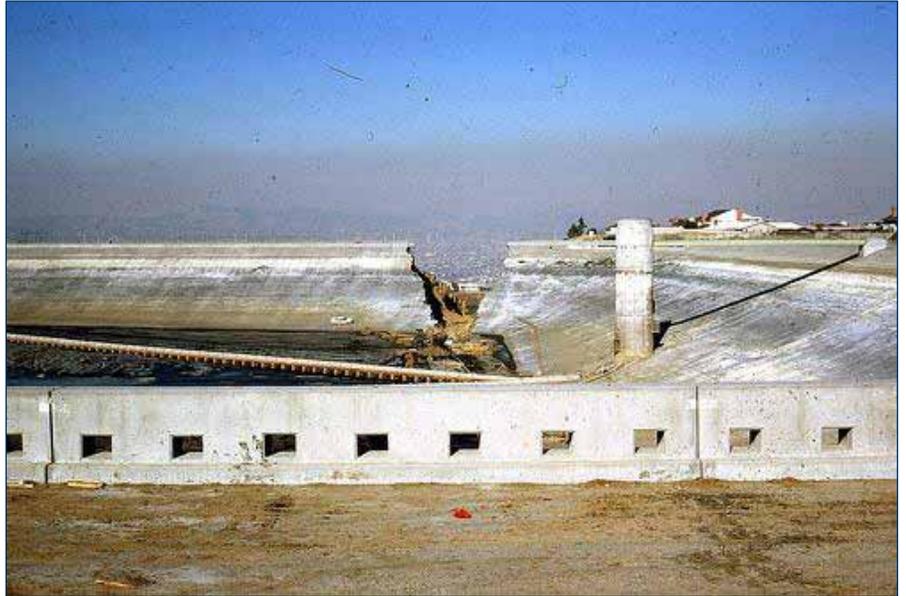
An impressive 3-minute YouTube video of footage from a news helicopter is here: (You should watch it.) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kleNM8cm6J8>.

The water flooded nearby streets and businesses and eventually made its way into Ballona Creek. Long-time area resident Suzie Bone of Culver City remembers playing in the creek as a child and that "When the Baldwin Hills dam broke, we stood by and watched peoples' possessions float by."

## Why did it happen?

The following information is summarized from a 1971 report in Science magazine and additional information on the UC Davis website (see footnote):

Two major factors were at work. First was the system of earthquake faults running through the Baldwin Hills. The largest is the notorious Newport-Inglewood fault, but that one was not below the reservoir. A previously unknown two-pronged fault now known as the Reservoir Fault lay directly underneath. Movement of up to 7 inches on the Reservoir Fault probably triggered the dam failure by breaking the asphalt floor of the reservoir, and allowing water to undermine the dam by washing soft sediment away below it. The west side

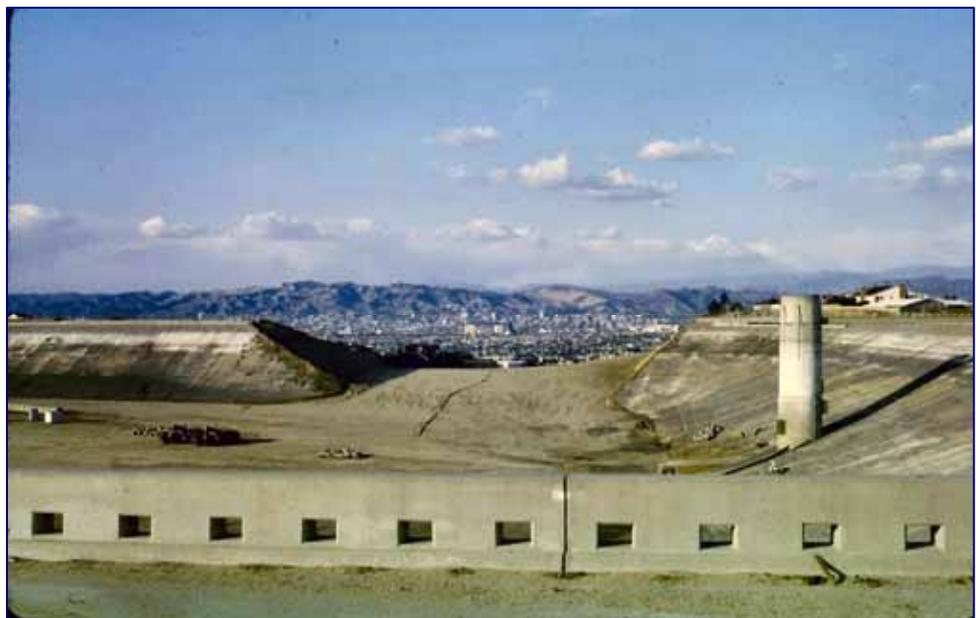


View of the breach a week later (photo by srk 1941)

of the fault subsided, leaving the paved bottom of the reservoir without support. The basin cracked, water flowed through, washing more dirt away and setting in motion the terrible chain of events.

## But there was no earthquake, so what caused the subsidence?

The Inglewood oilfield was discovered in 1924 and developed rapidly. Pumping became more expensive as oil pressure dropped, and production declined. In 1954, three years after the Baldwin Hills Reservoir was completed, Standard Oil experimented with pumping salt



Cleanup begins, and even the massive earth-moving equipment is dwarfed by the reservoir basin.

## BALDWIN HILLS HISTORY: THE 1963 RESERVOIR DISASTER (continued)

water into the oilfield to help to drive more oil out in so-called "secondary recovery." The results were good, and full-scale brine pumping began in 1957.

Meanwhile, ground subsidence had been taking place above the Inglewood oilfield. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power had been concerned about it as they planned the Baldwin Hills Reservoir, but the data were not good enough to define the extent of subsidence until 1955, four years after the reservoir had been built. By 1957, however, surface cracking and faulting had begun to show in surrounding streets, at precisely the time that Standard Oil began its full-scale brine-injection program. Some areas of the Baldwin Hills had settled as much as 10 feet over 40 years, and the hilltop on which the reservoir was built subsided about 3 feet, with the southwest corner dropping more than the northeast corner. Eight more surface faults were activated in the local area by 1963, when finally the dam broke. Various studies indicate that injecting water into earthquake faults lubricates the fault zone so that opposite sides slide past each other more easily.

The site is now a grassy, tree-studded basin surrounded by a walking path. Renamed "Janice's Green Valley", it's part of Kenneth Hahn SRA, which opened 1983, and can be reached by driving to the top of the main park road.



The reservoir basin is now "Janice's Green Valley"

Information sources:

D.H. Hamilton and Richard Meehan, "Ground Rupture in the Baldwin Hills", *Science*, April 23, 1971, pp 333-344.

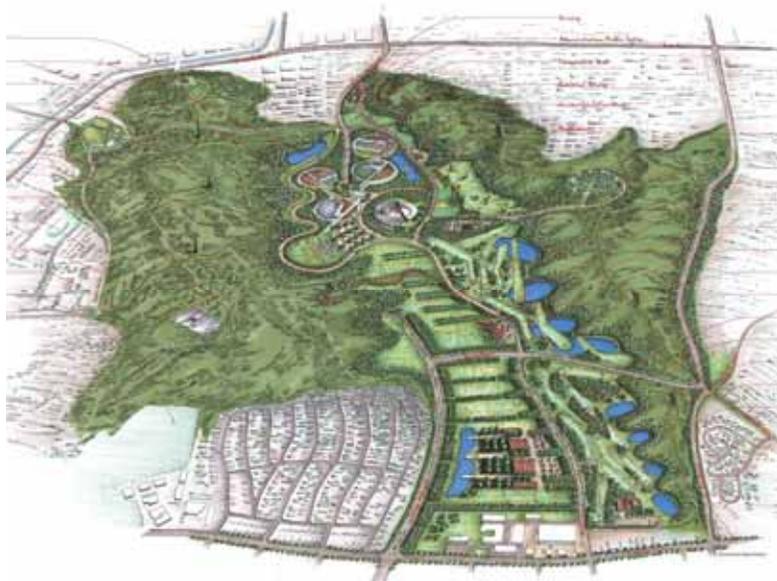
University of California, Davis, website:

<http://mygeologypage.ucdavis.edu/cowen/~gel115/115/CHXXsubsidence.html>

## THE VISION: ONE BIG PARK

A companion concept to the "Park to Playa" project is the "One Big Park" vision, which has actually been around for over a decade. It assumes that as the current oil fields are gradually depleted, they will eventually be purchased by public agencies and added to the parklands piece by piece to form a much bigger park. (The zooming price of oil unfortunately has delayed full park development by making these acquisitions more difficult, as existing marginal oil fields are still worth pumping.)

A public workshop process resulted in a suggested park design incorporating natural areas for hiking and bird watching, organized play areas such as ball fields and tennis courts, several lakes, and an amphitheatre. One interesting feature is the concept of a land bridge half a mile long covering heavily travelled La Cienega Blvd, which runs down the middle of the oil fields, allowing wildlife and people to move through the whole park instead of just half. (Sketch by Mia Lehrer & Associates.)





Left: Looking east before renovation along the Culver City bikeway section between Overland Ave. and the pedestrian bridge, showing cracked blacktop, concrete-sprayed slopes, and giant weeds. Right: same section after renovation, with the plants still in their infancy (expect more color as they mature).

## Overland Avenue Gateway and Trail

The City of Culver City recently completed renovating a nearly 1000-foot section of bikepath and the adjacent areas from Overland Avenue west to the pedestrian bridge crossing the creek. We wrote about this project in our October, 2010 newsletter.

Photos show the original and renovated section. The “Postcards from Ballona” mural has been integrated into the design. Rock walls, landscaping, a pedestrian path, new gate, lights and a repaved bikepath are features. There are also two emergency call boxes. When the landscaping grows and blooms, the makeover will be a delightful addition to the enhanced bikeway entrances. There are no benches or drinking fountains, as are found at some of the other creek gateways.

With the completion of this project, half the entrances to the bikepath have been improved so far. Several public agencies wish to create a new entrance at Higuera St., to facilitate connecting to the Baldwin Hills Scenic overlook and other residential and commercial areas. But first, Culver City is just beginning engineering studies to replace the Higuera St. bridge, which is too narrow

to safely accommodate cyclists. That in itself is likely a three-year project. Also, since the bikepath is much lower than the surface streets at that location, a long ramp would have to be built. And an environmental impact report would be required for all that.



The “Postcards from Ballona” mural, left, is integrated with the decorative new entrance gate, center, and a more attractive safety fence, right.

## BCR SUPPORTS SCULPTOR'S CREEK ROCK FORMATIONS

If you've cycled, walked, jogged or skated along the western end of Ballona Creek bikepath within the last year or so, you've seen them: dozens, perhaps hundreds of structures of three rocks precariously balanced at the water's edge on the north bank of the creek. The "statues" are created with nothing but materials from the creek- rocks, sometimes chunks of concrete and occasionally sticks that have drifted by.

This form of temporary public art is the creation of Dr. John Nielsen, a no-longer-practicing chiropractor. He gradually began creating these rock structures as personal therapy after being forced to close his massage school on Venice Blvd. when the State of California shut down the agency that licensed his school. Now



they've become a source of enjoyment for many passers-by. John rebuilds them several times a week after the winds, tides, stormwaters, tsunamis and sometimes vandals knock them down. People see different things in the structures: abstract herons and egrets, religious symbols, little soldiers guarding the creek and its wildlife.... Says BCR President Jim Lamm, "I really appreciate how John has created something new along the creek bank, shaping thought-provoking and ever-evolving formations with his hands."



John also often removes accumulated trash, a visual and environmental benefit.

But a few people don't like the rock creations and have complained to LA County Flood Protection Division, which manages the creek channel. And that's a problem, because according to the County's rules for safety and other reasons, no one is allowed in the channel without authorization. So John received a notice to stop and that his work would be taken down.

At internet warp speed, an email campaign poured in to the local County offices asking that John be allowed to continue his work. BCR has stepped up, working to add this project to the list of projects it sponsors along the creek and in the nearby watershed. We've begun the lengthy process to apply for the permit on John's behalf and provide the \$1 million insurance policy required by the County.

Meanwhile, in Norway, next to John's native Denmark, a state-sponsored art museum, UKS, recognizes the value of his work and is providing an opportunity for him to construct similar work there. Says John: "They will purchase ten tons of rocks and bring them to the gallery and I'll spend a couple of hours daily building my rock kachinas for a period of six weeks. The museum pays my airfare and accommodations and a small honorarium. I don't know what else might come from it. But it definitely gives me the formal recognition as a 'real' artist."



## BAYKEEPER'S DRAINWATCH PROGRAM

DrainWatch is Santa Monica Baykeeper's attack on water pollution in the rivers and on the beaches of Los Angeles County. DrainWatch is mobilizing dedicated volunteers to conduct hands-on monitoring, data collection, and water sampling needed to identify and curtail pollution caused by urban runoff. Baykeeper staff and volunteers identify and sample storm drains flowing to beaches along the L.A. County coastline and in major waterways emptying into the Pacific Ocean, *including Ballona Creek*.

DrainWatch volunteers learn about the causes and implications of stormwater pollution. They are trained to visually monitor the health of a stretch of coastline or creek and in the scientific techniques for taking water samples from drains, which are then sent to a certified lab for bacteria and metals analysis.

DrainWatch is a periodic, systematic sampling program that will establish baseline data across our coastline and track pre-existing and new contaminants to their source. Santa Monica Baykeeper, water regulatory agencies, and municipalities will then use this data to identify and ultimately eliminate sources of pollution.

Baykeeper will first identify all drains that discharge into Ballona Creek's "day-lighted" (uncovered) portion west of Cochran Ave. They expect to take one or more samples from every flowing drain this dry season and will also sample the majority of drains in Ballona Creek during the first storms of next winter season. Safety and accessibility will determine the final number.



Heather Burdick collects a sample of fluids from a drain beneath the Santa Monica Pier.

Baykeeper is now recruiting volunteers. For information, visit <http://www.smbaykeeper.org/drainwatch> or contact Lara Meeker at [lara@smbaykeeper.org](mailto:lara@smbaykeeper.org) or (310) 394-6162 X101. *Photo by Baykeeper*

## HARVESTING RAIN

It's raining, and the rain runs off your roof, driveway and lawn down the street into the storm drain to Ballona Creek and the ocean. A week later, your plants and lawn are thirsty, so you turn on the sprinklers or hose and pour drinking water into your yard, much of the water running off down the street into the storm drain to Ballona Creek and the ocean. Come summer, citing the water shortage, officials announce restrictions on when and how long you can water your yard.

You can help reduce this wasteful cycle by harvesting rainwater and storing it for later use. Various municipalities sponsor programs to connect downspouts to barrels to store water. Later, you can use this stored water for your yard.



Simple and now cheap, too, if you live or own a business in Culver City.

The Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission and City of Culver City offer professional installation to the first 500 residents or businesses for a requested donation of a mere \$40 to cover materials. Other requirements are that the property must have rain gutters and an accessible downspout with an area of about 2 ½ feet square to place the barrel (see illustration). To use the water from the rain barrel, you can either fill watering cans or attach a hose to the spigot. To sign up or get more information, phone Heather at

(424) 645-7017 or Ivan at (310) 961-4606 or go to [www.ccrainwater.ballonawatershed.org](http://www.ccrainwater.ballonawatershed.org). A pilot project in the Mar Vista neighborhood was very successful.

## NEW BOARD AND ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS



Rich Hibbs



David Valdez



Michele Bigelow

We are pleased that some knowledgeable community members have recently joined BCR. Long-time Secretary and Treasurer Bobbi Gold has stepped down from those posts but remains on the board and is happy to have such capable replacements while she concentrates on the newsletter and helps out a little with website maintenance.

### Rich Hibbs

Rich serves as our new treasurer, and we're counting on him keeping us in the good graces of the IRS and our bank account positive. Rich has been a Certified Public Accountant since 1987, past chair of the Culver City Chamber of Commerce, currently involved in numerous non profit boards (i.e. Culver City Education Foundation, Ballona Lagoon Marine Preserve, Matrix Institute on Addictions, Inc., Human Interaction Research Institute, CC Chamber of Commerce, Open Paths Counseling Center, etc.) as a member and/or advisor. Voted Culver City's Best Accountant by the Culver City News readers poll in 2009, and again in 2010. Avid coach and referee for AYSO Region 19 (Culver City/Mar Vista/Palms). Proud parent of two children in the Culver City School District (son in El Marino and daughter at the Culver City High School). As a board member of the Ballona Lagoon Marine Preserve, Rich was involved in the development of the walking path and interpretative signage at the Lagoon, which was featured in an article in our April 2010 newsletter. His website is [www.RichHibbsCPA.com](http://www.RichHibbsCPA.com)

### David Valdez

David takes over as BCR secretary. He is a practicing attorney advocating on behalf of consumers in Car Dealer Fraud, Lemon Law and Identity Theft cases and is a former Director of the Culver Marina Bar Association. David has also coached baseball for Culver City High School's Winter Program and for Venice High School. He frequently runs and bikes on the Ballona Creek Bike Path and comes to BCR with a special interest in water use and conservation.

### Michele Bigelow

Michele joins our advisory council with a long history of volunteering and working for local environmental organizations. She is currently the Community Outreach Coordinator for the Ballona Wetlands Land Trust, a non-profit community organization founded in 1994, dedicated to the acquisition, restoration, and preservation of the entire Ballona Wetlands ecosystem. Michele is also an avid bicyclist and interested in improving the creek and watershed bikeways.

**This newsletter is available as a print edition and an online document in PDF format (both in color).** If you're getting one version and prefer the other, let us know at [editor@ballonacreek.org](mailto:editor@ballonacreek.org) and we'll switch you. Note that in the online version, the blue links are clickable.

## Keeping ourselves busy

Throughout the seasons, BCR is involved in many varied public or private group events. Here's a brief rundown on events not covered elsewhere in this issue

Nov. 16- We joined the rally to encourage LA County Supervisors to **ban plastic bags** and help reduce one of the most devastating waste problems on the planet. In the absence of Statewide legislation, the supervisor's decision to enact a ban in unincorporated Los Angeles County laid a good foundation for cities to follow.

Bi-Monthly- BCR participates in the **Ballona Creek Watershed Task Force** stakeholder meetings, which provide a forum for public agencies, non-profit organizations, and other interested persons to learn and dialog about watershed issues and opportunities. They are normally held in the Dan Patacchia Room at Culver City City Hall, 9770 Culver Blvd, on the second Tuesday of each odd-numbered month at 1:30 PM. The public is welcome. For more information, contact Diana Hurlburt of the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission at 310-216-9899 or [dhurlbert@santamonicaabay.org](mailto:dhurlbert@santamonicaabay.org). Agendas are available a few days before each meeting.

February 8- Jim provided a well-received illustrated talk followed by Q&A to the **Culver City Cultural Affairs Commission**. It was designed to give the commission a better understanding of Ballona Creek and its watershed, including its community and the arts aspects. Having provided programs for many organizations, businesses, neighborhood groups, and schools, Jim welcomes speaking invitations.

March 24 and 28- We conducted our third annual Ballona Creek watershed and wetlands classroom/field-trip combo for third-grade students at **Lycée Français de Los Angeles**, led by BCR's June Walden, Irene Reingold and Jim Lamm at the school; in the wetlands, they were joined by Jeri Rozadilla and Christian Alvez, docents from Los Angeles Audubon and Friends of Ballona Wetlands, respectively.

April- BCR provided educational booths and activities at **STAR Eco Station Children's Earth Day** (April 10), **Sony Pictures' Earth Day Extravaganza** (April 19), **Ballona Wetlands Earth Day Restoration and Cleanup** with Friends of Ballona Wetlands (April 23), and **EarthFest LA** at Kenneth Hahn Park (also on April 23).

April 16- we participated in Loyola Marymount University's **Urban Ecology Workshop**, part of LMU's broad-based Sustainable City program.



BCR President Jim Lamm and boardmember Sandrine Cassidy Schmitt at the November 16 ban-the-bag rally. Photo by Meghan Sahli-Wells.

April 26- we provided a screening and discussion of **"Bag It"**, a thought-provoking movie about plastics in our neighborhoods, creeks, and ocean and what we can do. BCR's Jim Lamm and other local activists were interviewed for the film.

Since Fall 2008, BCR President Jim Lamm has taught a 10-week Urban Ecology course and a one-day **Wetlands Ecology workshop** at Antioch University-Los Angeles (currently located in Culver City). As a part-time Adjunct Instructor, Jim helps small classes of mature students gain a better understanding of environmental issues in an urban context.

April-June- **Ballona Creek Restoration and Stewardship Project** (BCRS) With the receipt of the long-awaited County permit, this project with Friends of Ballona Wetlands and Mar Vista Family Center is restarting. An educational/training field trip with Jovenes para el Rio, the youth project team from MVFC, is set for May 17. Planting Day is June 25, in conjunction with a MVFC community cleanup. Meanwhile Jovenes para el Rio recruits local planting volunteers and provides fliers and posters. Los Angeles Conservation Corps may provide some of the native plants as well as assistance with the site preparation and irrigation. We expect this to mesh well with their pending creek-side native planting project that will extend from Inglewood Avenue to Sawtelle Avenue, employing and training local youth. BCRS is funded by the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project.

## Visions: Ballona Creek Greenway Plan

Ballona Creek, once a natural creek, was encased in concrete by the US Army Corps of Engineers starting in the 1930s, to control flooding. Ballona Creek Renaissance was the first group interested in improving its appearance. BCR was formed in early 1995 (we called ourselves the "Ballona Creek Art Project" at that time) and after surveying, planning, finding funding and getting permissions, executed our first project in 1997, the "Postcards from Ballona" mural at Overland Avenue.

Soon our focus expanded beyond art to broader appearance issues, environment (water quality, habitat and ecology), recreation and education about all these matters. We worked with public agencies and other organizations to tackle bigger projects, which we've described in our newsletters. In 2001, we helped form the Ballona Creek Watershed Task Force, a forum for representatives of public agencies, nonprofit organizations, businesses and individuals to share information and help plan projects to manage and improve the watershed.

A small group of task force members walked the entire 9 miles of the open creek over the course of many months, looking for opportunities to create projects enhancing the creek and the experience of the creek. Slowly, ideas coalesced, inspired by Task Force coordinator Jessica Hall. The Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission (SMBRC) recently released a two-volume document, the Ballona Creek Greenway Plan, examining the possibilities for projects along the creek.

The Greenway Plan describes opportunities to reconnect residents with their creek, create a green corridor of trails and points of access, enhance habitat, mitigate stormwater runoff, redevelop land to improve watershed functions, re-establish riparian areas, and increase the health and sustainability of the region. The plans are indeed visionary, integrating a naturalized stream with the surrounding community. The document is available online in several segments at:

<http://www.santamonibay.org/smbay/BallonaGreenwayPlan/tabid/199/Default.aspx>

### SMBRC's April newsletter is now available

SMBRC's newsletter devoted to the Ballona Wetlands Restoration Project is full of wetlands and other information. Visit [www.ballonarestoration.org](http://www.ballonarestoration.org) and click on the link for "Current Newsletter" at the bottom of the page.



Sample vision: the creek west of Centinela Ave., envisioned as meandering instead of straight and incorporating the athletic field of Marina del Rey Middle School. (Image courtesy of SMBRC)

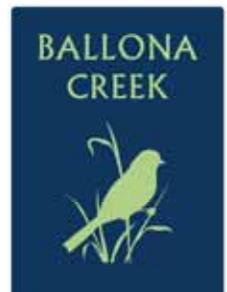
## Wetlands Restoration Public Meeting

Environmentalists, scientists and state officials have widely varying ideas about how to improve or "re-store" the Ballona Wetlands, some very mild, others quite drastic. (See the illustrated article in our October 2010 newsletter.)

The Sierra Club will host a community meeting to present ideas for rejuvenation. Presenters include the Ballona Ecosystem Education Project, Grassroots Coalition, the Ballona Wetlands Land Trust, and Sierra Club Ballona Wetlands Restoration Committee. **Tuesday, May 10, 7 pm to 8:30 pm.** Burton Chace Park, 13650 Mindanao Way, Marina del Rey, in the Community Room. Parking is adjacent to the community room and also farther east on Mindanao.

## MRCA signage for Ballona Creek

The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, which has been responsible for access gate improvements along the creek, is in the process of improving both directional and interpretive signage. The little stylized image of a Belding's Savannah Sparrow, an important wetlands bird, will appear on directional signs.



## BCR Logoware!

We're gearing up to offer BCR Logoware for donations of \$50 or more. The first option is a 100% cotton T-shirt with our logo, designed by Lori Escalera, in glorious full color (our name and website address are on the back in blue). Sizes available as of now are S, M, and L. Supplies of each size are limited.



The other option is a handsome and sturdy tote bag designed for us by the June 15 Collection and made of sustainable, eco-friendly jute, rattan cane and 100% cotton in off-white. It has both cane handles and a 35-inch long, one-inch-wide shoulder strap. Bag size is 14" wide, 13" high and 7" deep. Our logo and name in green and blue are in the front, and our website address in blue is on the back. The entire design is attractive but not too fussy for guys. For more information about these totes and the rest of their collection, visit <http://www.june15collection.com/>

You don't have to take a gift if you want your entire contribution to benefit BCR. If you do select one, it will be mailed to the address on your donation form on the back of this newsletter. Please be sure to include your phone number or email address in case there's a problem. For other questions, contact Jim Lamm at (310) 839-6896 or [jim.lamm@ballonacreek.org](mailto:jim.lamm@ballonacreek.org).



If you prefer to use your credit card to donate, you can do that on our website via Paypal. The Paypal page has no address or phone information nor check boxes for the bag or T-shirt, so you'd have to get in touch with us separately if you want one of those.

## Phone number for toxic spills in LA County

Call 1-800-675-HELP anywhere in LA County. Also see the comprehensive phone list by Lisa Fimiani of Friends of Ballona Wetlands on our website.

**Want to volunteer with BCR?** Some ways to be involved are: staffing our booths at events, updating our website content, planning public programs, researching grant opportunities, planning fundraising events, working with native plant gardens ...and other ways according to your skills, interests, experience and available time. Contact Jim Lamm at (310) 839-6896 or email [jim.lamm@ballonacreek.org](mailto:jim.lamm@ballonacreek.org) .

Editor: Bobbi Gold

This newsletter reflects and celebrates the diversity of the people and activities of the watershed and beyond. La Ballona Creek Renaissance Program is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our Tax ID # is 95-4764614. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Please mail contributions to Ballona Creek Renaissance, P.O. Box 843, Culver City, CA 90232. For address corrections, additions or deletions, please call (310) 837-3661 or email [editor@ballonacreek.org](mailto:editor@ballonacreek.org). Unattributed photos are the property of BCR.



P.O. Box 843 Culver City, CA 90232

Address correction requested

## APRIL 2011 NEWSLETTER

**BALLONA CREEK RENAISSANCE** needs your help to renew the Westside's forgotten river and its watershed!

\$1,000     \$500     \$250     \$100     \$50     \$25    \$\_\_\_\_\_ other

I would like to volunteer my time     I would like to join the board of directors/advisory council

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please use my entire contribution to benefit BCR's programs, **OR**

I'd like a T-shirt for my donation of \$50 or more (circle size: S M L ), **OR**

I'd like a tote bag for my donation of \$50 or more

Name/Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Firm: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make your donation payable to "Ballona Creek Renaissance"**

Mail to: Ballona Creek Renaissance, PO Box 843, Culver City, CA 90232.