

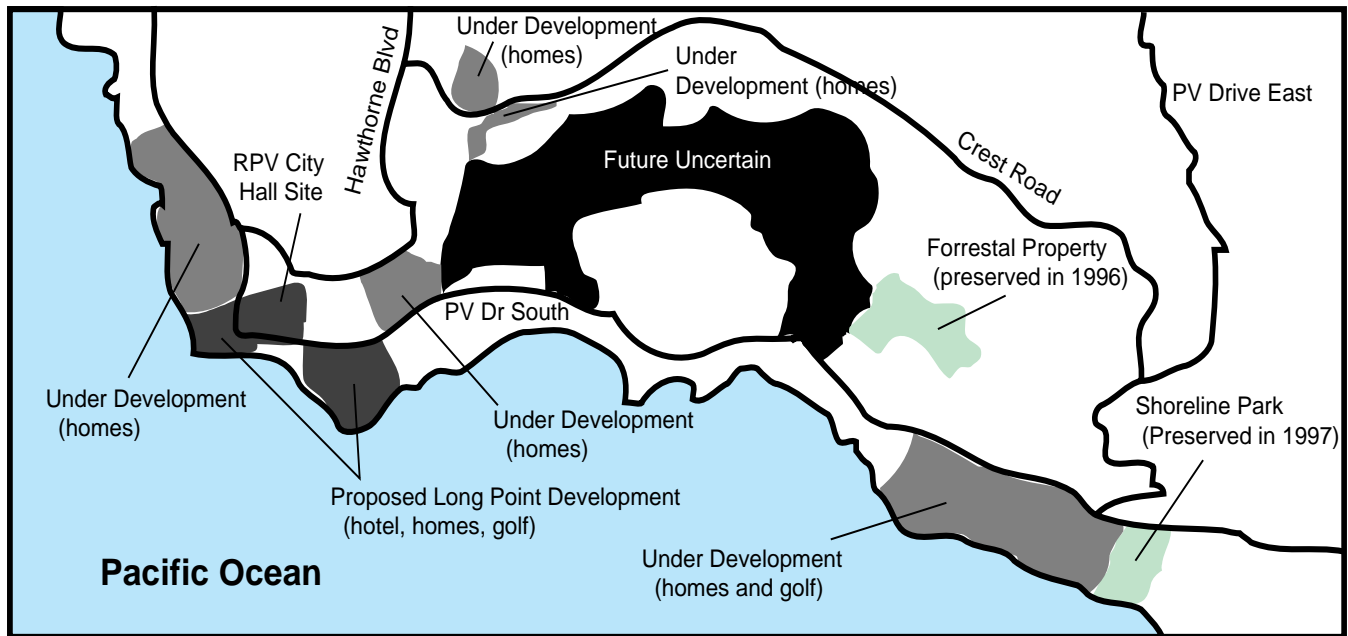


OPEN SPACES

Volume 10, Number 4

Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy

Fourth Quarter, 1998



Dramatic Changes Underway on Peninsula

The improving economy has brought with it an improved market for new homes. As a result, over the last year, dramatic changes are occurring on the Peninsula. Some examples:

- Major open space areas near San Pedro are being turned into homes and a bluff-top golf course.
- Travelers on Crest Road will notice two major developments—one where the Northrop buildings once stood, and another across the street.
- At the end of Hawthorne Blvd., just north of the Pt. Vicente Lighthouse, bulldozers have finished reshaping the land for another bluff-top development, this time over 70 homes.
- Across the street from the old Marineland site, homes are once again being built in a development that was stalled for years.

All told, five new developments totaling approximately 320 new homes and affecting approximately 550 acres of land are now under con-

struction.

Over the last ten years, some developable land has been removed from play by the Conservancy. The 20-acre Lunada Canyon property, the 28.5-acre Chandler property (now the Linden H. Chandler Preserve), the 160-acre Forrestal property—all could have had development, but now are protected forever. The 53-acre Shoreline Park property, although not developable in homes, has also been preserved as natural open space as a result of Conservancy work. In addition, open space is being preserved within developed areas. Development is changing the face of the Peninsula forever.

What's coming? A recent application submitted to the City of Rancho Palos Verdes by York Long Point Associates proposes additional changes—a 400-room hotel, 75 attached units, 15-20 detached single-family homes, 50 guest houses, 3-4 restaurants, and an 18-hole golf course

which would cover the old Marineland site, the City Hall property, and a portion of the open space in the new development at the end of Hawthorne Blvd.

A portion of the property required for the project is the City Hall site, deeded to the City by the United States Department of the Interior in 1979 for "the perpetual use ...for public park and public recreation area purposes." If a golf course is to be approved for this site, it must be determined that a golf course is consistent with this deed requirement.

What are other issues with this potential new development? According to the "Initial Study/Environmental Analysis: Long Point Specific Plan" recently prepared for the City of Rancho Palos Verdes, the project could have "potentially significant impact" in a number of areas, including transportation/circulation, biological resources, land use and planning, noise,

Continued on page 2

Preservation of Open Spaces--

A Statement of Purpose

The Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy is a nonprofit, non-political, public-benefit corporation formed to preserve undeveloped land in perpetuity as open space for historical, educational, ecological, recreational and scenic purposes.

A diverse group of volunteers from the South Bay makes up the PVPLC's managing Board of Directors and its adjunct advisory board. These private citizens have been drawn together by their belief that open space is crucial to the well-being of our community.

Land acquisition by the PVPLC is through purchase and gift. In addition to the good will engendered by gift giving, land-owners and others who donate land or funds to the PVPLC may realize significant tax benefits.



Continued from page 1

utilities, and geology.

The City must now make a determination of whether the project "may or may not have significant unmitigatable environmental impacts." If it is determined that the project would have significant impacts, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) would be required to further evaluate issues.

The Initial Study is undergoing a 45-day public review period, and comments from the public and responsible agencies on the project relative to environmental issues are to be submitted to the City of Rancho Palos Verdes. The first public hearings were held in January.

The future of the last large area of open space remaining in the South Bay, the 1,000-acre landslide moratorium area in Rancho Palos Verdes, is still uncertain. Owned by York Capital Group and Palos Verdes Land Holdings Company, both having development as a goal, proposals for homes, golf or other revenue-producing uses may be expected—unless the Conservancy is successful in its efforts to acquire these properties.

Our vision is the creation of a 1,000 acre "Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve" in this area—a site where generations to come may enjoy the special peace and solitude unique in the South Bay. Will we be successful? We need the active, vocal support of our community to make our vision reality.



Lunada Canyon Update

by Eric Randall

Lunada Canyon is the first parcel of land owned by the Land Conservancy. Donated by the E.K. Zuckerman family in 1992, its 20 acres of land have been preserved as open space in perpetuity. The canyon is bordered by Abbottswood Drive on the north, by Kings Harbor Drive on the south, and El Rodeo Road on the east, with access to the canyon from Posey Way and Rock Park Drive.

In October, a steering committee comprised of representatives of the neighborhood was formed to guide the Land Conservancy in developing plans for the future of the canyon. Members of the committee include Dr. and Mrs. Archer Parham, Conservancy steward-

ship director Alison Lipman, and local resident and Conservancy Board member Eric Randall. Committee membership is open and interested local residents are invited to participate. Following a suggestion of the Steering Committee, preparation of a master plan for the canyon has begun.

The most visible recent changes at Lunada Canyon are the fences and signs installed in August at the Posey Way and Rock Park entrances. Split rail fences were selected both for aesthetics and low maintenance, and the signs announce that the land is a natural preserve and encourage all that pass to treat the land with respect. The neighbors have reacted fa-

Continued on page 3



White Point Preservation Effort Initiated

San Pedro's White Point has played an important part in the evolution of the Peninsula, from the resort hotel and spa operated by local Japanese early in the century, to the fortifications and large guns installed above the bluff to protect Los Angeles harbor. More recent use of portions of the property has been construction of housing for Air Force officers. Now a community group is forming to preserve the remaining 100 acres as natural open space.

Led by Leah Marinkovich of Rancho Palos Verdes, this group has defined a vision that the former military reservation will be "preserved in perpetuity for recreational, educational and ecological purposes and

vow to restore a natural environment nurturing to the native birds, plants, and animals which once thrived here."

The Conservancy has offered to assist the effort by developing an agreement with the City of Los Angeles for land which is to be preserved in its natural state. Under the agreement, the Conservancy would be assigned day-to-day management and habitat restoration responsibilities. There would be no cost to the City for these services.

Subject to specific terms of the agreement, the Conservancy would lead a community-based effort to remove debris and undesirable plants, restore native habitat, establish and maintain hiking trails, and provide

interpretive signage.

The Conservancy would also work with local historians to develop exhibits highlighting the historical and military significance of the property. We would work to incorporate programs in local schools where students can assist with restoration, take nature walks, and otherwise use this property and its features as part of their educational program.

The property would be open to the public for hiking, bird watching, and similar low intensity uses.

Individuals interested in assisting in efforts to preserve the property should contact Marinkovich at (310) 831-3609.

Continued from page 2

vorably to these improvements.

Land stewardship is active at Lunada Canyon. Periodically there are volunteer days focused on habitat restoration, with the major thrust being removal of nonnative plants, such as ice plant and anise, which have intruded and overgrown some spots of the canyon. Restoration of native plants will encourage native butterflies and birds to frequent the area.

For several years, Vista Grande third grade classes have had nature

walks in Lunada Canyon. These walks are part of the Conservancy-led natural habitat segment of the PVP Unified School District's Hands-On Science Program.

Please call the Conservancy's of-

fice (541-7613) if you'd like more information on activities at the canyon or on the Canyon's steering committee.



Coming Back to Life...

...will be the subject of a two-day workshop presented by Dr. Joanna Macy at Pacific Unitarian Church. The workshop will "offer methods to release energy for creative ac-

tion, and to organize ongoing support groups for personal and social change." Call (310) 519-8952 for more information.

On a Solitary Trail Hike

By Julia Foster

How far do you go on the Peninsula for that hour with nature? Under the eucalyptus trees shuffling the leaves like a scarecrow? Along the Shoreline Preserve on a cliffside walk to see remnants of the Dominator? There are so many wonderful spots to get away from everything and to just be by yourself for a true Emersonian renewal.

The median strip on PV Drive North is popular with horses and people. From Del Cerro park, heading down the narrow dusty trail to Portuguese Bend with a view of the entire bay, you can take a great hike with magnificent vistas.

Or maybe you'll head cliffside to Lunada Bay canyon for the sweeping white water coastline. Or go take pictures from Paseo del Sol, finding the necklace view of the bay.

A short walk at sunset at Paseo Lunado is delightful: dogs, youngsters, and lovers form silhouettes against the sky. Surfers, friends and neighbors meet to watch that red/orange sun disappear into the sea. Then each goes his solitary way.

Great Way to Keep Fit

For a real brush with nature, trail hiking is rewarding and a way to keep physically fit. I've found that there are many trails and many people who will tell you about them at the drop of a shoelace. From the minute you buy your Happy Camper hat, compass and canteen you may be hooked, right here on the Peninsula where even the names of trails are intriguing: Rattlesnake Canyon, the Burma Road, Bitter Water, or out where Altamira meets a steep rocky incline, there's a spot fondly called Heart Attack Hill.

Besides that light backpack you will probably carry; clothes you wear are important. For comfort and weather, light loose fitting clothes are good, with a layer to be shed when the sun comes out.

Especially important is the firm walking shoe, according to podiatrist, Dr. David Bernstein, who stated the requirements of a good walking shoe. "A well fitting shoe gives adequate support and shock absorption," he said. "People who do serious amounts of standing, walking or biking realize the importance of a supporting shoe to prevent injury from strains to the foot."

No Maps for Some Trails

With the right clothing and good walking shoes, you head for the trails.

There are so many wonderful spots to get away from everything and to just be by yourself...

Unfortunately, there are no maps for some of the walking trails; they're often just discovered and remembered. However some walking trails are well known. From the curve of Paseo del Mar you can park and stroll along the median strip to the south city limits. The path is firm gravel and the city has planted Australian pepper trees, ficus and eucalyptus along the course, which was first landscaped by neighbors. Today the walking trail reaches past Paseo Lunado all the way to the city limits.

Local author Donald Gales has listed names of canyons and trails in his Wildflower handbook*. Rattlesnake Canyon, known years ago as Rocky Canyon, runs south of St. John Fisher to the dip on Crenshaw and descends steeply west of the Vanderlip estate, all the way down to Abalone Cove west of Wayfarers' Chapel. That's just about as far west as you can go without setting sail.

A little known trail starts from the rocky shores of Rat Beach, (named for Right After Torrance), and here if you walk up the access road, you can stop at the gazebo and then at the marker which commemorates Gabriellino Indian Village, Chowigna. Here the Rancho de las Palos Verdes

Historical Society held an event which was attended by one of the last living Gabriellino.

Trail Surrounded by Ivy

If one walks past the former Malaga Cove school grounds to Arroyo and Via Media, there is a path starting up the hills, surrounded by climbing ivy, pines and honeysuckle. You can cross Palos Verdes Drive very cautiously, then take the upper cut, crossing the fire road to continue on the path.

It has hundreds of steps made of railroad ties, which were put in by former, now retired, inspector of public works Norm Crochetiere when he first started with city maintenance.

"Fire roads are for emergency use," he stated, "but there are many open paths."

Exit on Via Del Monte, halfway between the Plaza and Via Somonte. Continue up Del Monte to the 700 block and cross the street. Here the path continues with stone steps, matching the original path pictured 30 years ago. Continue on to exit on upper Via Somonte.

You have just traveled the Somonte Canyon path, traced years ago when no reputable hiker or cyclist ever took to public streets. According to Jack Bauman, long time resident, kids actually hiked to school. There were planned pathways then, one just north of the library, called the Chico path. In the early days some 35 miles of bridle paths were also used by hikers.

There were no horses on the Altamira Canyon or Rattlesnake trail when I started down the wide road, new shoes digging in and the aluminum canteen hitting my hip bone. The only thing I forgot was lunch, which is highly recommended. I remember this trail, even sometime ago, wide at first, then with connecting exits that weave continuously to Palos Verdes Drive South and the ocean.

Continued on page 8

1999 Plein Air Art Show Scheduled for May

The 1999 plein air art exhibition entitled "Seasons of the Day" will display Peninsula landscapes at six different times of day: dawn, morning, midday, afternoon, twilight, and night.

The exhibit hall will be arranged so that each painting will be viewed in a specified order that will take the viewer through an entire day and night. The paintings, viewed in this manner, will dramatically reveal how an area is transformed and will show its many moods.

The exhibit will feature the paintings of California Art Club artists Daniel W Pinkham and Rick Humphrey, who were featured in the first exhibition in 1997. Humphrey has organized each of the yearly

events, which last year attracted over 1,000 guests.

Describing the show, Humphrey said, "We wanted to do something that hadn't been done before. When

we paint on location, we see how light and shadow affect an area. You discover so many moods in the landscape. A very familiar spot in the day can look so completely different at night. Add to this the ever-changing weather conditions, and you have infinite possibilities. We thought that the viewer might enjoy seeing the vast array of colors that one area can

give as the weather, light, and shadows change."

This year's exhibit, a collaboration between the California Art Club and the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy, promises to be the most distinctive yet. If you love the open spaces of the Peninsula or just love to view art, this is the show to see. You may view previews of the paintings on-line at: www.pvplc.org/art99.htm.

The opening reception is Sunday, May 2 from 1 to 4 P.M. at the Malaga Cove Plaza Library, located behind the Malaga Cove Plaza in Palos Verdes Estates. The show will run through May 27. Artists will donate a portion of the proceeds from sales of paintings to the Conservancy and to the Palos Verdes Library District.



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Membership Tops 1,200 in 1998

Thanks to energetic membership efforts in 1998, our membership nearly doubled, going from approximately 600 in 1997 to over 1,200 in 1998. A major influence was our first color brochure, which was mailed to residents on the Peninsula and

in several neighboring cities. We will provide a list of our 1998 membership in our next newsletter. We are most pleased that so many people and families have shown their support for preservation of Peninsula natural areas by contributing to our organization.

Haiku Corner: The Peninsula from Another Perspective

By Jorg Raue

Haiku, which had its origin in 17th century Japan, is a unique form of poetry that centers on nature. Haiku poems consist of three lines, with five, seven, and five syllables, respectively.

For over 300 years, haiku was strictly tied to the seasons. Beginning around 1920, some Japanese haiku poets began to compose haiku without links to the season, but usually with a strong sense of place—an aspect quite common in non-Japanese haiku of today—and always involving the world of nature.

Through haiku we can share feelings and see nature's events more clearly. Try to compose a haiku about an observation in nature that has given you a good feeling and,

hopefully, your haiku will cause the reader to have similar feelings.

My plan is to share with you haiku that involve single events of scenery and nature, and specifically, events that occur on our beautiful Peninsula.

Here is another example:

eucalyptus trees —
layers of bark litter ground
stems clean, smooth, like new...

Here are some haiku submitted to this corner:

and seacliffs crumbling
stand, backs stooped at ocean's
edge
old men in frayed clothes

by Jess Morton

kestrel wings flutter
mouse scurries in brush below
kestrel dives quickly

by Bill Ailor

no rain yet this fall
but from tree-tops lost in fog
slow drops are falling.

by Catherine Ratner

If you have composed a haiku about elements of our Peninsula, please submit them for possible publication in this corner. My e-mail address is: jraue@flash.net.



Annual Picnic Celebrates Volunteers



Former Board member Loren DeRoy received the Conservancy's Volunteer Service Award, the Conservancy's highest honor, for her work in organizing and coordinating our Ten Year Anniversary Celebration. The award was presented by President Bill Ailor at the Conservancy's annual Volunteer Appreciation Picnic in November, 1998.



Chefs Bob Bothamley (left), Allen Franz, and Craig DeRoy prepare burgers for hungry picnickers .



Shirley Borks received a special thanks for her orchestration of the Anniversary Banquet held in September.



Good food and good fellowship were enjoyed by the 30 participants, who shared a damp afternoon taking shelter in the home of Loren and Craig DeRoy.

Nature Center Offers Science Program for Children

Four Sunday programs devoted to the science of nature and the environment will be presented by "Mad Science of Los Angeles" at the George F Canyon Nature Center in Rolling Hills Estates. The programs will be held on February 28, March 28, April 25, and May 23, and will include demonstrations, games, and

activities designed to explore and discover the world around us. Guaranteed to be fun, educational, and entertaining, the sessions, for ages 5 through 12, are \$10 per child per session. Call (310) 547-0862 for more information.

Inner Fat: Good and Bad for Different Birds

When a bird has eaten a lot before the long fasting period, and thus built-up sufficient inner fat, the body gets the needed energy by deteriorating bodily fat, with no harm to the bird's body. Then when the necessary fasting period ends, the bird will have enough muscular strength to feed again and to preserve its life.

In contrast, if a penguin, particularly an Adélie penguin, has too little inner fat, its body gets the needed energy by deteriorating certain muscles; and that can lead to the penguin's death because it wouldn't be able to swim or to escape from a predator.

As for other bird species, many little adult birds eat heartily early in the winter in anticipation of winter food shortage. That eating increases the body fat during the day, and allows it to be nourishingly utilized during a cold night.

Studies in England have found that members of the several bird species retain less body fat than the ornithologists had expected. This finding suggested to the ornithologists that there must be a problem for those birds if they retain a lot of body fat. Further studies indicated that high body fat would reduce the maneuverability of such a bird, giving it higher risk of being a predator's prey.

In the late 1950's, use of bird-toxic pesticides led to an almost complete loss of sparrowhawks, a primary predator of the great tit (*Parus major*), in most of Britain. Before then, the average weight of the great tit was relatively

low, a condition necessary for high maneuverability. Then, in areas where the sparrowhawk was eliminated by the pesticide, the great tits' average weights rose noticeably, especially during the coldest weather, so that each of those birds had body insulation and no worry about predation.

When those pesticides were controlled in the late 60's, the sparrowhawks increased in number and spread, and by the late 80's, they had returned to the early 50's locations and population levels. Continued studies into the late 90's have confirmed all the ideas that had been previously derived by the ornithologists.

Here on the Peninsula, our Land Conservancy is doing great things to preserve habitats and to restore useful botanical organisms to assure that the local and migratory birds that reside here have sufficient reserves.

by Joseph K. Slap



Jim Moore Joins Conservancy Board



Jim Moore of Rancho Palos Verdes was elected to the Conservancy's Board of Directors at our October meeting. Moore replaced Loren

DeRoy, whose two-year term expired in 1998.

Jim and his wife Lois are natives of Seattle, Washington, and have lived in Southern California for more than 40 years. A resident of the Peninsula since 1967, Moore was active on Save Our Coast and in the formation of Rancho Palos Verdes, and currently serves on that city's Traffic Committee.

He has also been prominent in the effort to plan, obtain approval for, and implement a trails and habitat plan for lower Hesse Park.

Moore, a registered mechanical engineer, retired from The Aerospace Corporation and now operates a consulting business.

Help save open space!

Your tax-deductible donation helps us save natural areas on the Peninsula.

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Continued from page 4

A View of Bays and Coves

Here you can see all of the bays and coves of the entire coastline. After taking a branch path swerving to the gully, I found a ridge of tall pines, standing like sentinels. This area, some of which was planned as a copy of an Italian villa, was graded in 1928, part of the dream of the late Frank Vanderlip, who founded Palos Verdes Estates.

You might even see in the distance what was known as cypress alley and the Vanderlip peristyle, with columns of marble and steps leading down between tall rows of cypress trees.

The Portuguese Bend Pony Club used to have horses, looking like miniatures from the top of the hill. Somehow a sensation of other-worldliness lies in the mist of the hills, where thousands of acres were once planned for European carousels and bridle trails.

I thought of the tribes of ancient Gabrielinos who wandered on the highest hills overlooking the vast Pacific ocean. They would hunt and fish, tar up their canoes and head for the trading "malls" of the Indian neighbors in Catalina. But once back on the beautiful Peninsula, they too enjoyed their solitude.

* "Wildflowers, Weeds, Wildlife, and Weather of the Palos Verdes Peninsula," by Donald M. Gales. This book is available from the Conservancy, (310) 541-7613.

Photojournalist Julia Foster is a Palos Verdes Estates resident and a contributor to national newspapers and magazines. A former associate editor of the Palos Verdes Review city magazine, she is a member of writers' groups, including International Food, Wine and Travel Writers Association, and Manuscripts and Surfwriters.

Open Spaces

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