



South Laguna Civic Association • Non-profit organization founded 1946 • Dedicated to Protecting the Quality of Community Life

## A Local Ocean Hero and His Call for Kelp!

By Jinger Wallace

South Laguna's **Michael Beanan** has been named Cox Communications and the Trust for Public Lands "Orange County Conservation Hero of 2012" for his work to remove contaminated urban runoff from Aliso Creek in an innovative public/private partnership. The OC Conservation Hero of 2012 recognition is accompanied by a \$5,000 award.

Teaming up with South Coast Water District, City of Laguna Beach, County of Orange, and industry water filtration companies, community leaders and others, Mike advocated reusing urban runoff contaminating our creek and coast in a cost effective project yielding multiple community benefits. As SLCA's 2nd Vice President, Mike feels his role is to continue South Laguna's venerable traditions of protecting our hillside wilderness watershed and world class beaches, tide pools and kelp forests.

Mike's dedication to ocean advocacy and his life-long passion as an avid diver, swimmer, surfer, and sailor motivated him to donate the full \$5,000 to the Laguna Bluebelt Coalition ([lagunabluebelt.org](http://lagunabluebelt.org)) for its efforts to educate, protect and restore local coastal marine life.

Mike and others have been deeply concerned about the flow of contaminants that Aliso Creek empties into the ocean, degrading coastal marine life and posing a risk to humans. Aliso Creek remains a federally listed Impaired Waterbody under the Clean Water Act signed into law in 1972 by then- Republican President Richard Nixon. During dry summer months, Aliso Creek can reach flows of up to 5 million gallons per day of polluted urban runoff when there should be none. Spilling onto Aliso Beach, the urban runoff is known to cause humans gastrointestinal, eye, ear and other illnesses as well as generate massive Harmful Algae Blooms (HABs) offshore.

Filtration is critical to solving the pollution problem. Thanks, at least in part, to Mike's leadership, the South Coast Water District has recently approved the expenditure of \$2.2 million to launch a filtration project slated to begin this summer. Urban runoff into Aliso Creek will be filtered to above drinking standards before being blended with recycled water to improve the water district's overall recycled water quality. "While this will only remove a portion



of the daily creek flows, the filtration project demonstrates the success of citizen-local government teamwork in implementing sustainable solutions to creek, canyon and coastal water pollution," notes Beanan.

Mike's next goal is to help modernize the Coastal Treatment Plant adjacent to

the Aliso Creek Golf Course. "It will take dedicated teamwork to advocate for the best technologies using sewage-generated energy-producing fuel cells," concludes Beanan.

The completion of many small tasks eventually produces great results for South Laguna's marine ecology. To assist with ocean keeping in Laguna Beach and/or get more information, send an email to: [mike@southlaguna.org](mailto:mike@southlaguna.org)

## SLCA ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Monday, February 25, 2013 at 7 p.m.  
South Coast Water District, 31592 West St.

**South Laguna's biggest secret is planned to get even bigger.** The sewer tunnel concealed in our ocean bluffs is slated for expansion. At the 4th Ave. site a 20-foot diameter hole will be bored downward nearly 100 feet, then laterally extended until reaching the existing sewer tunnel.

The effect that construction will have on the adjacent neighborhood will be addressed by **Betty Burnett, interim General Manager of the South Coast Water District.**

Also, **Assistant City Manager Christa Johnson** will speak to a range of South Laguna concerns.

**PLEASE JOIN US** for the latest information and plenty of opportunities to make important improvements in our community, as well as plenty of friendship making.

## President's Message

By Bill Rihn



### Advice From My Father

When I finished school and began working full time, I also wanted to become involved in community activities. Someone suggested that one of the local civic clubs might be just the ticket. So I joined one, the Optimists, as I recall. But after several lunch meetings, I found that I simply wasn't enjoying it at all. So I mentioned this to my dad. His advice: if

you want to get something out of an organization, you have to put something into it. Do that and you will find that you will get a lot more out of it than you put in. I hadn't ever quite looked at things that way, but it sure turned out to be great advice. Translate that to South Laguna and become involved in your South Laguna Civic Association. I guarantee that you will get a lot more out of it than you put in. Come to some of our board meetings; the dates and locations are posted on our web site. Everyone is welcome; join us and participate!

### Projects Addressed in 2012

#### ■ HISTORICAL HOUSES

**Stonehenge House.** This house, located immediately north of the Laguna Royale condos, was built in the late 1920s by Guy Skidmore, the developer of all of Coast Royal. Guy and his brother Joe were very gracious, knowing the desire of people to have access to the beach; hence all those public walkways to the beach on both sides of the highway in the Coast Royal part of South Laguna. In the last couple of years a new owner has attempted to demolish the house and replace it with a modernized structure. In spite of our attempts to make sure that any remodel preserve the main elements of the original, the City approved the demolition. Consequently, the issue was appealed to the Coastal Commission. And there it has remained for more than seven months.

**Halliburton (also known as Hangover) House.** We spent a good deal of time trying to make sure that any remodel of this iconic house retain all its historic features, both exterior and interior. However, we failed to convince the City that the interior should be spared. For the outside, the City also has allowed the owner to repair all the concrete without any input from a historical architect or structural engineer.

#### ■ DISCUSSIONS WITH CANDIDATES

**City Council Candidates.** On October 8, we had a discussion with each of the five City Council candidates. The entire membership of our Civic Association was invited – and the event was well-attended. Everyone learned a lot about the candidates. Equally important, the candidates learned a good deal about South Laguna and what is important to us.

**South Coast Water District.** After much discussion, we decided to send a candidate's survey to each of the six candidates for this board. Every one of them responded. The outcome of the election is covered on page 4 in this Bulletin.



## ● DUES ARE DUE FOR 2013!

It's time to renew your SLCA membership

If you care about the community of South Laguna and the surrounding environment, please support SLCA's efforts by keeping your dues current.

**ALL 2012 MEMBERSHIPS EXPIRE JANUARY 1.**

Clip the coupon on page 3 and mail it with your check in the enclosed envelope to:

**SLCA, P. O. Box 9668, South Laguna, CA 92652-9639**

**Extra contributions are welcome and appreciated!**

#### ■ ALISO CREEK

**Recycling.** After several years of working with the South Coast Water District, it finally appears that the equipment to remove some of the polluted flow from Aliso Creek (in order to capture the impurities) and use that flow as recycled water is about to happen. Moreover, this filtration process reduces the amount of contaminated urban runoff getting into our ocean.

**Urban runoff.** SLCA has been working with the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board in an effort to require upstream communities to minimize their pollutants getting into Aliso Creek. The regulations are known as the MS-4 permits. This has been a contentious issue, but we continue to do our best to make sure that appropriate regulations are put in place.

#### ■ COMMUNITY GARDEN

Many know what has been accomplished in our award-winning community garden. In addition to what you see, however, we have worked hard to assure that the garden remains in perpetuity. This effort has included many appearances before the Laguna Beach City Council, much consideration as to whether we should try to become a 501c3, a 501c4 organization (ugh, the IRS) or not, selecting a charitable sponsor to help us raise funds to purchase the land, and, of course, raising all the money to make the purchase. This is obviously still on-going.



#### ■ RESULTS OF SLCA'S MASS MAILER

Last Fall the SLCA Board sent out in our community a mass mailer. The mailer informed readers about the activities and accomplishments of our civic organization, and invited people to join with us in making our end of town the best that it can be. Also, recipients of the mailer were asked to contribute financially to the ongoing work of SLCA. In addition to donations earmarked for the community garden park, people gave generously to help cover the research and publication costs associated with our book project on the history of South Laguna. General contributions also were made. More than \$2,000 came into our treasury as a result of all these contributions. The Board was particularly delighted about the 25 new members who joined SLCA in response to the mass mailer.

## South Laguna Civic Association Dues

- Individual \$25
- Family/Business \$45
- Supporting \$100
- Sponsor \$200
- Contribution for historical research \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Friend of the South Laguna Community Garden Park \$100

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Day) \_\_\_\_\_ (Evening) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

The SLCA is a non-profit organization; however, your contributions are not tax deductible.

## SLCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Bill Rihn . . . . . President . . . 415-1312
- Greg O'Loughlin . . . 1st Vice Pres . . 499-2241
- Mike Beanan . . . . . 2nd Vice Pres . . 499-6367
- Jim Joseph . . . . . Secretary . . . 499-5974
- Mary Ives . . . . . Treasurer . . . 499-2857
- Morrie Granger . . . . . Director . . . 499-2746
- Mel Harwell . . . . . Director . . . 499-0541
- Sharon Larimer . . . . . Director . . . 499-1224
- Tom Osborne . . . . . Director . . . 499-4809
- John Thomas . . . . . Director . . . 499-5099
- Barbara Bowie . . . . . Director . . . 499-9452
- Cindy Love . . . . . Alternate . . . 499-9100
- Barbara Miller . . . . . Alternate . . . 499-0505
- open seat . . . . . Alternate
- Ann Christoph . . . . . Emerita . . . 499-3574

## Garden Joy and Challenges Continue

By Ann Christoph

### ● Rollinger and Iseman Support Garden Funding

On November 13, 2012 the City Council voted 3-2 to reject the request of SLCA, the gardeners, and friends of the garden to help fund the purchase of the South Laguna Community Garden property. The very disappointing change of heart of Mayor Jane Egly tipped the balance of the votes against us. The previous month Egly had stated her support for the City's contributing a \$250,000 windfall it had recently received from sale of park property near West Street Beach.

Our testimony about the broad community benefits of the garden, and support from representatives of Transition Laguna, the Laguna Beach Garden Club, and many community members, including children who stayed very late to speak, did not sway councilmembers Pearson, Boyd and Egly. We are grateful to Mayor pro tem Verna Rollinger and Councilmember Toni Iseman who voted yes.

### ● Garden as Park Promoted

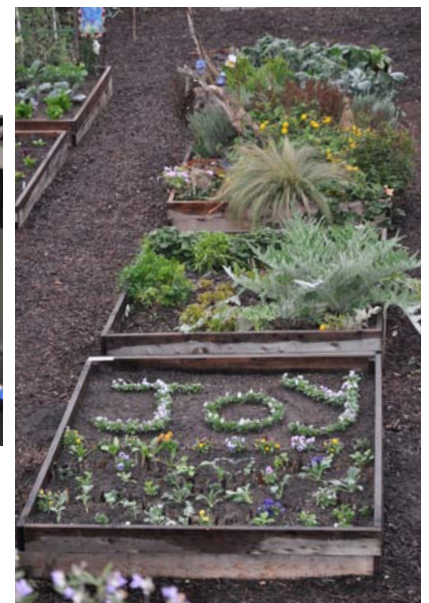
Benefits of the garden are not limited to a few gardeners. The garden is really a special kind of park, with benefits for all, and so we have expanded the name of the Garden to South Laguna Community Garden Park. The Garden Park is multi-use like other Laguna parks, but it has additional advantages. It is interactive; it encourages digging, planting and working to produce a better environment. It feeds, whereas in other parks the clippings of the plants are taken away and discarded. Our park is organic. Volunteers maintain the park and no paid outside maintenance workers are needed. Our park came from the community – for the community. The Garden Park is open for visitors to enjoy.

### ● Garden Purchase Plans

Raising funds to purchase the garden site is going forward. Charitable Ventures of Orange County (CVOC) is fiscal sponsor for the garden acquisition project.



Joanna and Jack Borella, Tom Joliet, Julia, Evan and James Henry were among the gardeners interviewed by Cindy "Ida Mae" Obrand on Laguna's FM radio station KX 93.5 on Dec. 8, 2012.



Chelsea and Daniel Vantol contribute this garden commentary.

Tax deductible contributions may be sent c/o SLCA, with checks made out to CVOC/SL Garden. Garden information is available at [SouthLaguna.org/garden](http://SouthLaguna.org/garden).

**Please come to a very important gathering of gardeners and friends of the garden:**

**Saturday, February 9, 11 a.m. at Aliso Creek Inn.**

Aliso Creek Inn has generously donated the use of a room near the golf course where we will meet to discuss the latest plans for raising funds to purchase the garden lot. There's a lot to share and we know all gardeners and friends are concerned about the garden's future and want to help to assure it will be a permanent asset for the community. Your suggestions and offers to help are most welcome!

For lunch we'll be overlooking the golf course and canyon at Ben Brown's 10th Hole, the cafe near the pro shop (no-host). There we can continue talking about our plans for the garden and enjoy each other's company.

● **RSVP** as soon as possible to Tom and Gayle Joliet [longbrdr@hotmail.com](mailto:longbrdr@hotmail.com)





P.O. Box 9668  
South Laguna CA 92652-7639

## SLCA ANNUAL MEETING FEB. 25 AT 7 P.M.

**SOUTH COAST WATER DISTRICT**  
Refreshments & appetizers will be served

*Join us for a discussion of critical issues:  
Aliso Creek clean-up & the big sewer tunnel  
rehabilitation project about to get underway!*

● **2013 DUES ARE DUE!**

## Stonehenge Project Hearings February 6 and 7

By Ann Christoph

On **February 6** in Redondo Beach the Coastal Commission will consider the SLCA and Village Laguna appeal of the City's approval to demolish the historic "Stonehenge" structure at 31381 Coast Highway. Stonehenge was one of the first two houses built in the mid-1920s in Coast Royal by Guy and Joe Skidmore. It has taken nearly a year after the filing of the appeal for Coastal Commission staff to find "no substantial issue" related to the Coastal Act. The appeal questions the City's rewarding illegal behavior by approving demolition of a historic structure that was partially demolished without permits when it is feasible to rehabilitate it, and the existence of beach stairs intruding on the public beach. See the staff report at <http://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2013/2/W18a-2-2013.pdf>



On **February 7** Laguna Beach's DRB considers the application to construct a new house designed by Mark Singer on the property.

## Three Directors Elected to South Coast Water District

By Barbara Miller

This November, residents of Dana Point, San Clemente and San Juan Capistrano voted to elect three new Board members to the South Coast Water District. The South Coast Water District distributes drinking water to our homes in South Laguna, regulates rates, and produces recycled water. (While the board's jurisdiction includes South Laguna, our community's residents are ineligible to serve on that policy-making body.) The successful candidates were **Wayne Rayfield**, **Dick Dietmeier** and **Rick Erkeneff**.

The SLCA queried the candidates before the election to get an idea of where they stood on certain key issues. **Wayne Rayfield** expressed interest in the use of gray water for irrigation and believes that the South Coast Water District should work closely with the City of Laguna Beach regarding new construction that should include provisions to capture gray water for irrigation. This would reduce the need of using potable water for irrigation and reduce the volume of wastewater. **Dick Dietmeier** cited progress being made in Dana Point regarding irrigation systems and **Rick Erkeneff** noted the desire for less urban runoff and remarked that it is important to capture runoff to convert it to potable or reclaimed water.

Water is expected to get more expensive. We cannot afford to be wasteful. We benefit from a SCWD Board that looks for local sustainable sources of water with an emphasis on eliminating environmental pollutants.