

OPEN SPACES



View to the north from the middle of the new Ventura River Steelhead Preserve. See map of the new preserve on page 6. Photo by Brooke McCallister.

Protecting the *Entire* Ventura River!

You may have heard about the coalition advancing the vision of the "Ventura River Parkway" stretching 16 miles from the river's headwaters to the ocean. Our goal is to connect people with their healthy, functioning river through appropriate and sensitive riverside parks and trails.

There are a number of important aspects of this effort, but perhaps one of the most notable is that it strengthens the coordination of the various entities working to protect the river, like the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy which works on the upper portion of the river and the Ventura-based conservationists who work on the lower portion of the river. The members of the coalition know each other well – we have spent quite a bit of time working together to bring down Matilija Dam – but with the articulation of a whole-river conserva-

tion vision in the form of a Ventura River Parkway, we are taking a big step forward.

Roughly coincident with the launching of this whole-river conservation vision, the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy was able to acquire approximately one mile of the river – now the Ventura River Steelhead Preserve. This preserve lies very close to the traditional dividing line between the upper and lower reaches of the river. Not only is it near the hydrologic confluence of San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River, but it is near the geographical confluence of the extended Ojai Valley and Ventura communities.

In addition to offering a home to many species of rare wildlife, this preserve offers an opportunity to bring together people from all parts of the Ventura River basin. The OVLC has hosted hundreds of school children on this and other preserves in our partner Once Upon a Watershed's

environmental education programs, and the location of this preserve will make it even easier to offer environmental education opportunities to Ventura children as well as Ojai children. The OVLC has already had requests to allow the study of the effects of climate change on the river at the Steelhead Preserve, and other conservation organizations focused on the river have expressed interest in using the buildings at this central location as a home base for community outreach and other conservation work. Of course we also have a goal to create appropriate opportunities for the public to learn about this special place, which contains significant cultural resources in addition to natural ones.

We are excited about the opportunities created by the new Steelhead Preserve, and we have launched a \$250,000 fundraising campaign to enable us to make the necessary upgrades to prepare this place for the planned uses. As always, your support is greatly appreciated.

OJAI VALLEY LAND CONSERVANCY

P.O. Box 1092 • Ojai, CA 93024
370 W. Baldwin Rd. A-4
Tel. 805.649.6852 • Fax 649.8913
info@ovlc.org

www.ovlc.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Roger Essick, *President*
Larry Rose, *Vice President*
Stefanie Coeler, *Secretary*
Cari Guerrero, *Treasurer*
Mary Bergen Jesse Grantham
Margot Griswold Brian Holly
Allan Jacobs Don Reed
Cricket Twichell Nathan Wallace
Barbara Washburn Deborah Whorf

STAFF

Greg Gamble, *Executive Director*
Rick Bisaccia, *Preserve Manager*
Darcy Gamble, *Development Director*
Marti Reid, *Office Manager*
Brian Stark, *Conservation Director*
Todd Bertola, *Restoration Technician*

RICK BISACCIA'S PRESERVE MANAGER'S JOURNAL

Help On OVLC Nature Preserves - Thanks!

OVLC would be hard put to get things done as well as we do without volunteers of all kinds pitching in. There is quite a network of people ranging from "eyes and ears" volunteers made up of people who are out hiking on the preserves and know what to look for and how to report back to the Preserve Manager. **Jesse Grantham** keeps an eye out on the Ojai Meadows Preserve at certain key spots to report partying and to keep the Preserve Manager abreast of bird nesting so that weeds aren't cut for fire clearance too early.

Besides helping with trail maintenance now and again, **Leon Pahle** has given a morning report on conditions and picks up trash on the Ventura River Preserve trails and the highly used swimming holes. **Jon Dieges** changes out mutt mitts and empties the trash cans on the Ojai Meadows Preserve.

Sue Gruber and Stefanie Coeler open and close our Oso trailhead gate several times a week and generally help the Preserve Manager keep an eye on the trailhead area and make reports. Hiker and equestrian **Becky Adams** helps take care of graffiti and gives excellent trail and conditions reports. **Trevor Marshall** had been helping out every Wednesday for months doing trailwork, sign installation and restoration work all day while going to school full time, until he was hired on to do restoration work. **Roger Dickens** committed himself to working one day a week in restoration planting and weeding on the Ojai Meadows Preserve. **Mike Gourley** has done trailwork every other week for a year now with the trail crew and his mighty hedge trimmer on Fuelbreak Road Trail, Ilvento and the Ventura River Preserve. Mike also donates the cost of fuel and upkeep on his equipment and believes that everyone who uses the trails should "help keep them up."

Rob Young has adopted a portion of Oso Ridge and Chaparral Crest trails and weed whacks them when they need it as well as working on the trailcrew. For years **Ollie Wilson** has sent weekly trail conditions reports from his hikes on the Ventura River Preserve.

Swimming hole season is the Preserve Manager's most hectic time of year and it is during this time he especially counts on his stalwarts to keep him in the loop. **Barb Muska, Helen Miller, Robin Daniels, and Karin Dron** have been instrumental in the OVLC Preserve Manager's ability to catch people in the act of doing harm to a preserve. There are many others who help OVLC care for these open spaces and to all we are grateful.



Photo left: Steelhead Preserve from the south; Ventura River beyond trees on the right, future conservation center is mid photo by the giant redwood. Les Dublin.

Above: Doriane Raiman's documentation of Rick Bisaccia on the job at OVLC's preserves.

PRESERVE MANAGER LED HIKE: WILLS AND RICE CANYONS LOOP ON THE VENTURA RIVER PRESERVE

October 26, Wednesday, 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

This roughly 5 mile walk will be led by Rick Bisaccia, OVLC's Preserve Manager and experienced naturalist. There will be some elevation gain and a river crossing. Please pack a picnic lunch for your enjoyment. Meet at OVLC's Oso Road Trailhead at the intersections of Meyers and Oso Roads at 9:50 AM sharp. Please bring water, hat, long sleeves, and food. This hike has a limited capacity so reserve your space now by calling Darcy Gamble at 649-6852 x6 by October 20th. Dogs must be on leash to attend.

PRESERVE ANNOUNCEMENT BOARD

Thanks to you we made the \$10,000 match and have \$20,000 to build the bridge at the Ojai Meadows Preserve. We are getting the engineering completed now. Build time depends on the City of Ojai's approvals and the weather.

The new Steelhead Preserve is not open to the public yet. It will take us time and money to officially turn this into an accessible preserve.

Important surveys and additional information tells us the following about critters on the OVLC preserves:

- 1) The river bottom is an animal highway at night;
- 2) Red-Legged frog (endangered) surveys going on at OVLC preserves;
- 3) Birds species are still increasing at the Ojai Meadows Preserve. See bird checklist at ovlc.org/2011/07/birdchecklist/

The new electronic gate at the semi-new Old Baldwin Trailhead at the south end of the Ventura River Preserve will be ready to use any day now - if not already. Trailhead hours are 7:30 AM to 7:30 PM daily until winter.

Dogs must be on leash to use the OVLC Preserves per County ordinance and OVLC rules.

More than half of OVLC's preserve users are not members of the OVLC. Please educate your friends about who owns and manages the preserves. These places are made possible because of your OVLC membership gifts. Write to the Ojai Valley News and spread the word on the trail. Thank you.

FEATURED FOLIAGE: JIMSON WEED AND GIANT BLAZING STAR

There is a hint of fall in the air and oaks and California Black Walnut trees are already setting acorns and nuts. And believe it or not, as a partial result of excellent spring rains, some plants are still flowering.

The two natives (shown below), Jimson Weed and Giant Blazing Star are impressive plants. Giant Blazing Star has amazing star-like yellow flowers and can get up to six feet tall. Jimson Weed (also called Datura or Toloache) with its impressive moth pollinated trumpet-like white flowers was probably the most important medicinal plant of the Chumash and certain other southern California tribes. Jimson weed is highly poisonous and was used in various Native American religious rites. Both Giant Blazing Star and Jimson Weed are said to have medicinal uses which varied from pain relief to treatment of skin diseases. Purportedly some tribes outside of California chewed the roots of Giant Blazing Star for thirst prevention and one tribe was known to mix the fried seeds with water to create gravy. (Important note: Jimson Weed is a poisonous plant and can be very dangerous.)

This year's spring rains were good for our local ecosystem – high water levels brought us copious grasses, seeds, nuts, and insects which makes for healthy populations of wildlife as seen in growing populations of quail and rabbits which feed the larger predators. And with rain always comes flowers.



Giant Blazing Star, Steelhead Preserve Jimson Weed, Steelhead Preserve

MAKING A DIFFERENCE ONE DAY AT A TIME

Olivia and Alana Adelman are some of our most fun volunteers. (left to right below)

Two of our most fun volunteers are twin 13 year olds Olivia and Alana Adelman. They came to us at Ojai Day 2010 when Olivia approached our booth looking for volunteer work at the encouragement of her Father, Stephen Adelman. Olivia helped us with some mailings once or twice and then she brought her sister Alana. Most recently, they called almost all of our current members to invite them to the Steelhead Preserve party in July. You may have either talked to one of them or heard them on your voice mail. We hope they made you smile as much as they make us smile.

These two young ladies are smart, driven, athletic, and charming. They swim, surf, act, and sing. One day they even sang a cappella for us in the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy's office. Recently, they sang and danced as orphans in Ojai Art Center Theater's well received production of "Annie". They have two sisters who are equally as talented and well adjusted. If you see them on the street or have them in a class at school, please thank them for contributing so much to the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy one day at a time.



MEMBERS MAKE IT POSSIBLE

HISTORIANS & CONSERVATIONISTS REJOICE

Consistent volunteering makes a big impact in the Ojai Valley. Charley Sledd, retired attorney who worked at Washington Mutual in Seattle, moved to Ojai with his lovely wife Sandy so they could enjoy the slower pace, warmer weather, and beauty that Ojai provides. In this transition Charley has become an avid cyclist and volunteer.

In addition to driving for HELP of Ojai's van service, and cycling long distances, he has been working as the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy's electronic archivist for 18 months. Charley scanned every bit of media that has been saved about the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy for the past 24 years. Charley's persistence, patience, and excellence has created an electronic documentation (a sweet resource for conservationists and historians) just in time for the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy to celebrate 25 year of existence.

Not only is Charley a dedi-

cated and exceptional volunteer, he is smart and infinitely kind. We are grateful to Charley for his time and are working on another project for him that we hope will keep him engaged here at the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy. Please thank Charley when you see him around town.

The next step in this important project is to make this resource available to the public online. If you would like to help let us know.



Weekly Office Help Is So Appreciated...

Ojai residents **Judy Mize** and **Margaret Berry** have been helping in the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy's office roughly once a week for more than six months. They alternate days and work on projects that suit their tastes. Ms. Mize has been known to contact our members extending our gratitude for gifts and letting them know about recent events, and Ms. Berry helps with data entry and has an ongoing digitizing project that will improve OVLC's access to its land files.

Both women come with enthusiasm, expertise, and dedication. We are grateful for their consistency and flexibility. The different personalities in the office at different times make the OVLC a dynamic and progressive place to work.

Special Projects

Volunteer **Matt Moody** is using his graphics skills to create a plant guide for the Ojai Meadows Preserve. The guide will consist of existing plants, future plants, and photos for identifying said plants. This guide will serve as a tool for staff and docents. Thank you Matt!

Getting Back to Nature - OVLC's End of Year Fundraising Drive Begins Nov. 15

DOCENT RANKS KEEP GROWING

We've doubled our docents! On August 11th Preserve Manager Rick Bisaccia led a docent training hike on the Ventura River Preserve. Joined by veteran docents Art Vander and Barbara Washburn, it was the second training this year for our docents and by far the most active with six new docents attending. The two hour hike was designed to provide information on the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy and the Ventura River Preserve which will arm the new docents as they share the preserve with other guests.

Every docent led tour is based on the same script and background material and tells how OVLC acquired the property and what current projects are taking place on the property. However, each tour is unique because of the personality of the individual docent and their interaction with the group they are leading. Our newest docents join our veterans in bringing the Conservancy's work alive for the public.

The docent program is key to educating the public and promoting the importance of the Conservancy's efforts to protect the views, trails, water and wildlife of the Ojai Valley. Each year they lead school children, seniors, newcomers and tourists on tours of both the Ojai Meadows Preserve and the Ventura River Preserve. At some point they will host tours at OVLC's new Steelhead Preserve.

Welcome to our new docents: **MaryAnn O'Connor, Joyce Gibbs, Laura Fulmer, Nancy Eldblom, Brenda Farr, and John Pavelko.**

If you are interested in becoming an OVLC docent, please contact Marti at 649-6852 x2 or marti@ovlc.org. We hold two trainings a year, one in the spring at the Ojai Meadows Preserve and the other in late summer on the Ventura River Preserve.



Beautiful Lupine found on the Ventura River Preserve.

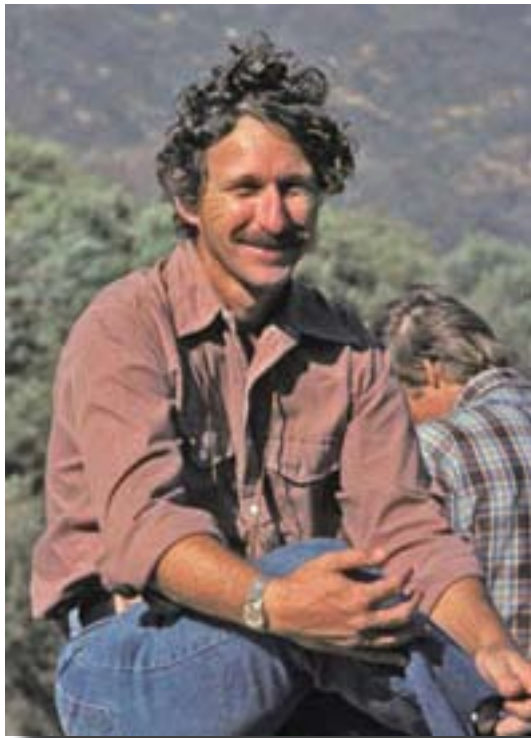
BECOMING THE OJAI VALLEY, GEOLOGIALLY SPEAKING

Sat., November 5, 2011, 10 AM to Noon
Fall Session Wild about Ojai

UCSB Professor of Geology Edward Keller will discuss the forces that created the Ojai Valley which are still at work today. Keller is also the chair of the Environmental Studies program at UCSB.

In this fall episode of the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy's "Wild About Ojai" educational learning series, we will focus on the physical past and future of the Ojai Valley. You will learn how a web of earthquake fault lines actively shaped our valley tens of thousands of years ago and how the same fault lines and other forces are still working to shape our landscape.

Professor Keller did extensive research on the valley's geologic structure in the 1980's. He is the author of several books, including "Active Tectonics: Earthquakes, Uplift and Landscape" and "Environmental Geology".



Wild about Ojai events are free for OVLC Members and \$10 for non-members. Become a member today! Reservations required please! 805 649-6852 or marti@ovlc.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER

Oct 1st, regularly scheduled first Saturday tours at the Ventura River Preserve and the Ojai Meadows Preserve. Meet at 8:30 AM at the Riverview Trailhead or the Meadows Trailhead at the kiosk off Hwy 33.

Wealth, Spirituality and the Natural World (see the bottom of this page).
October 12th 10:00AM-11:15 AM
or October 13th 5:30 PM-7:00 PM

Wills-Rice Canyons Loop Hike
October 26th 10:00 AM-2:00 PM
(see page 2 for details)

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

November 5th, 10:00 AM-Noon,
Becoming the Ojai Valley (details left)

WEALTH, SPIRITUALITY, AND THE NATURAL WORLD: GIVING, FAMILY VALUES, AND THE HUMAN SIDE OF WEALTH

This discussion takes a holistic, values-based approach to wealth management and seeks to provide lessons on living in harmony with your money, and how you may use your money as a vehicle for love, clarity, and your highest aspirations and ideals.

Estate and financial planning should begin with the fundamental question "What does 'wealth' mean to you?" If your personal answer includes having strong, healthy family relationships, living out life passions, or making a difference in the world, then your planning strategy should be designed to meet these objectives.

This discussion will provide advanced strategies for helping achieve core financial objectives such as reducing taxes and preserving financial wealth, while also helping you address important questions such as: 1) "What is an appropriate inheritance for my children?"; 2) "How do I talk to my children about money?"; and 3) "How would I like to be remembered?"

OVLC will complement this discussion with literary art exploring the link between giving spirituality and the world outdoors.

Juleby Hirsch is a Financial Advisor at Morgan Stanley Smith Barney. He works with forward-thinking individuals, families, and nonprofit institutions wishing to make a contribution to the world beyond their wealth. Juleby's family has been living and doing business in Ojai since the 1950's. Juleby is currently on the Board of Trustees at Waldorf School of Lexington. Juleby graduated from the University of California, Berkeley with a B.A. in Economics and a minor from the Haas School of Business.

October 12th, 10:00 AM to 11:15 AM or October 13th, 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM



CLASS HELD AT OVLC OFFICE

370 W. Baldwin Road in Ojai at HELP of Ojai's West Campus. Please RSVP to Darcy at 649-6852 ext 6 by October 7, 2011. Members only please; Annual membership is \$35.00 per household. Maximum class size 20.

950 Winter Street, Waltham, MA 02451, Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC., (781) 672-5127 Member SIPC.

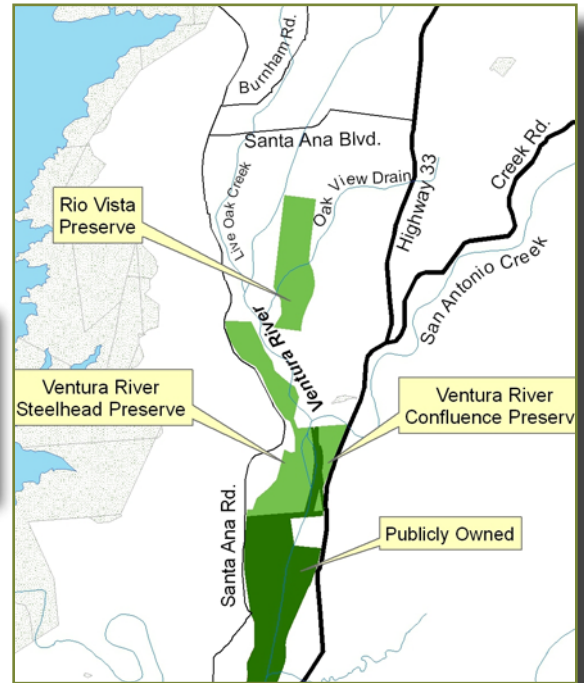
**Morgan Stanley
Smith Barney**

VENTURA RIVER STEELHEAD PRESERVE

ANNOUNCING A VERY EXCITING STEELHEAD PRESERVE CAMPAIGN

The Ojai Valley Land Conservancy has recently acquired approximately one mile of the Ventura River which offers perhaps the river's best refuge for the endangered Southern California Steelhead, as well as a home for 29 other rare, threatened or endangered species. This new Ventura River Steelhead Preserve also has buildings which are slated for use as a Conservation Center, hosting scientists, school children, and the public. Although this preserve provides outstanding opportunities for observing, studying and enjoying nature, a significant amount of work needs to be completed to prepare it for this public use.

The Ojai Valley Land Conservancy seeks your support in its effort to raise \$250,000 to prepare this new preserve for public enjoyment.



Community Benefits:

- Brings the community one step closer to the goal of protecting the entire Ventura River.
- Protects rare wildlife.
- Enriches children's and adults' understanding of the watershed and its animals and plants.
- Protects Ventura River water.
- Preserves an intact cultural landscape.

The necessary \$250,000 includes funding for trails, signage, fencing, a required new access road, a maintenance fund, and necessary modifications to landscaping and facilities to accommodate expanded public use. This goal can be reached through a combination of gifts and short term pledges, and for the maintenance fund portion of the campaign, planned gifts. If a supporter is interested, there are opportunities to name a trail or other parts of the preserve in memory or honor of a loved one.

Educational Opportunities

This Ventura River Steelhead Preserve is the only place in the Ventura River basin and perhaps in Ventura County that offers at the same location indoor and outdoor opportunities to learn about a functioning southern California river. OVLC's goal is to give students the opportunity to get "knee deep" in the study of the ecological facets of the Ventura River in the morning, and then come inside during the hot afternoon and continue their education in a classroom setting. The general public will have an opportunity for passive and sensitive recreation on the site like birding, or attending educational events at the Conservation Center.

Helps Save the River

With the acquisition of the one-mile long Ventura River Steelhead Preserve, roughly 6 miles of the 16 mile long Ventura River are now permanently protected. Along these 6 miles, and as envisioned for the remaining 10 miles, the OVLC and its partners are creating a Ventura River Parkway with the primary goal of



Cultural landscape directly above by Les Dublin. Pool above by Sally Carless.

Steelhead Preserve Campaign continued from page 6

connecting people with their healthy, functioning river via trails and riverside parks. Our vision includes the removal of Matilija Dam, the acquisition of lands in the floodplain of the river, and replacing exotic species such as Giant Reed (aka Arundo) with native vegetation.

Protects Cultural Resources

The Ventura River Steelhead Preserve protects the core of the historic Hollingsworth Ranch. The Hollingsworth family cared for this land for decades, and one of the family's more well-known members, former Ventura County District Attorney James Hollingsworth, built the property's historic rock house in 1935. Our goal is to preserve the ranch compound as a Conservation Center where students, scientists and the community can observe and learn about the outstanding natural and cultural resources on the preserve.

Protects Rare Wildlife

The Ventura River Steelhead Preserve protects rare wildlife, including the endangered Southern California Steelhead. As recently as the mid 1900's, an estimated 5,000 steelhead spawned each year in the Ventura River. Recently steelhead runs have been reduced to less than 100. There is hope and a plan for recovery. The deep cool pools on the Steelhead Preserve provide a critical refuge for the migrating steelhead when other parts of the river dry up.

To discuss how you can help make the Ventura River Steelhead Preserve Conservation Center a reality contact Executive Director, Greg Gamble at (805) 649-6852 x 1 or greg@ovlc.org.

THANK YOU OVLC FRIENDS FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS! MEMBERSHIP ACKNOWLEDGMENTS & GIVING LEVELS WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER AND WILL BE BASED ON CUMULATIVE GIVING.

NEW MEMBERS

Bill Hessel & Dawn Rosalind
 Burton & Irene Munger
 David Hurwith & Wendy Elliot
 Elyn Zimmerman
 Eric Dilks
 Evan D Laszlo
 Gail Furillo
 Jeff & Katie Haydon
 Jim & Susan Moody
 Joyce Gibbs
 Kathleen Fagen
 Keith & Marcy Maxwell
 Lee & Marianne Cothorn
 Leslie & Bruce Bouche
 Lori Pye
 Margaret Berry & Mark Silbernagel
 Mary Hotz Hogen
 Olivia & Alana Adelman
 Paula Kahn
 Rob & Maureen Young
 Sherril & Jeffrey Scharf
 Sue Ellen Case & Susan Foster
 Stephen Carter

GIFTS IN HONOR OR MEMORY

From Benjamin Efraim and
 Burton & Irene Munger and
 Anonymous (2)
 In honor of Jerry Kaplan's Birthday
 From Donna Zarcone
 In honor of the warm hospitality of
 Don & Sheila Cluff
 From Gwen Bell & Alex Seizew
 A gift membership for Keith & Marcy
 Maxwell

**BECOME AN OVLC
 SPONSOR AT**
ovlc.org/join-us/business-sponsors
online or call Darcy at
649-6852 x 6
for a list of benefits.

THANK YOU BUSINESS SPONSORS

OJAI MEADOWS LEVEL

Old Creek Ranch Winery
www.oldcreekranch.com

Rabobank
www.rabobank.com

SAN ANTONIO LEVEL

Euterpe Farms
 667 South Rice Road

Channel Islands Sportfishing
channelislandssportfishing.com

Law Office of Thomas E. Malley
www.thomasmalley.com

The Oaks at Ojai
www.oaksspa.com

Riverview Ranch
 (805) 290-5724

Shanbrom, Casey and Associates
www.shanbrom.com

Vintage Production California
www.oxy.com

SULPHUR MOUNTAIN LEVEL

Barnhart & Barnhart Insurance
 Services, Inc.

Grove Care, Inc.
 Index Fresh

Meiners Oaks Ace Hardware
 Oso Ranch

Rains
 Rogers, Sheffield, & Campbell
 LLP (Phil Moncharsh)

Waite, Jacobs & Atkinson, Attorneys
 Wildland Fire Specialists, LLC

IN-KIND SPONSORS

bitVision
 Ojai Phone Book

Ojai Valley Directory
 Bostrom & Associates

The Ojai Vineyard
 Ojai Valley Directory

Bostrom & Associates
 The Ojai Vineyard

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

* We need a late model pick up truck to use for our restoration work . Please contact brian@ovlc.org.



* Thank you Zen Cats above and Three Rivers Band for playing at the Steelhead Preserve party on July 22nd. Zen Cats play "fun and familiar favorites". Book at suscorez@gmail.com or 805-901-4814. Call the OVLC office for Brian to book the stellar Three Rivers Band.

Join Us In Celebrating OVLC's 25th Birthday!

Celebrate the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy's 25th Birthday, which will take place in 2012, by throwing yourself a party and inviting people to give donations to the Land Conservancy.

If someone asks you, "What would you like for your birthday?" you can tell them, "a gift in my honor sent to the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy."

All of these "gift" donations will be acknowledged in next fall's birthday edition of the OVLC newsletter. OVLC came into being on September 1, 1987.

The person who gets the most gifts in honor of their birthday from October 2011 to October 2012 will receive a present from the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy's staff.

Consider taking your celebration back to nature by hiking on one of the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy Preserves with your friends. **Tell us about your celebration and you may be featured in the newsletter.**

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU! HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO
THE OJAI VALLEY LAND CONSERVANCY!**

