

July 1, 2018



Angeles Chapter Banquet

By David F Eisenberg

The Angeles Chapter's annual banquet was held on May 6. Adam Schiff was the Keynote Speaker. The Chapter recognized the contributions of Charlotte Feitshans and Carol Henning.



Italian Holiday at Harwood

By Delphine Trowbridge

Ttalian Holiday was celebrated by the Verdugo Hills Group at Harwood Lodge on June 2-3. We celebrated Festa della Repubblica with Italian food, music and hikes. We had a good turnout of 20 people; most were Verdugo Hills regular members but we had a few new people such as Shuja Obeol and Silviana Behrens. We also had members that we had not seen for a while such as Garen Yegparian, Jacqueline Meese, Daphne Sturrock, Dotty Juarez, Suzi orozco-Neu and Ed Katch with ever faithful Roxie.



News & Notes

Several people went to the ski lift and journeyed to the notch to have lunch and enjoy great views. Annette took a group to the Zen Center and another group hiked to the waterfall which had a trickle of water coming down. At 5 pm Happy Hour got underway and the ravenous group devoured the delicious Italian treats and wines offered. Meanwhile the kitchen crew prepared Spaghetti and salad for dinner. This was followed by an assortment of tiny cakes and coffee. The remainder of the evening was spent in conversations in various little groups.

In the morning only Garen and Shuja did the early morning activity. Everyone came together for a breakfast of pancakes, sausage, and strawberries. We all did our chores and had our group photo. Some of the group left early and others stayed to enjoy the porch and fresh air.

Plogging

By Delphine Trowbridge

This is the Swedish fitness craze for people who want to save the planet. The term is a mash-up of jogging and the Swedish "plucka upp" meaning pick up (litter). Plogging not only helps the environment, it's quite good for your health as well. A half-hour of jogging plus picking up trash will burn 288 calories for the average person. Maybe our hike leaders can carry trash bags on our hikes.

Grayson Pollution Checked but not Stopped

By Michael Beck and Dan Brotman

n April 10 Glendale City Council voted 4-1 to put a 90-day pause on the proposed Grayson natural gas plant expansion. It instructed GWP (Glendale Water and Power) to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) from the renewable energy industry. On May 3 GWP complied.

That was the good news.

The bad news is that the process itself is flawed – in two ways. While the RFP has drawn a lot of interest, much of it involves selling battery storage to GWP and putting solar on City-owned sites, all things GWP was planning anyway. Interest in projects involving private sites—hospitals, commercial buildings, schools, residential

units—appears more limited. Meeting Glendale's power needs locally will require distributed, or what are known as "behind-the-meter" solutions, including solar and storage but also energy efficiency and demand response. The Glendale Environmental Coalition has reached out to GWP to assist in drumming up support for these types of private solutions using a model tested recently by similar community organizations working collaboratively with Edison in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, but GWP has declined the offer. This is a bad sign.

The other flaw is that GWP has put up a requirement for contingency power (capacity held in reserve in case transmission lines or other systems fail) that is way out of step with other utilities. They say they want 50% more capacity that Glendale has ever needed even on the hottest summer days. Typically reserve margins are around 15-20%. This practically sets up the process to fail, or at least to end in a situation where GWP gets some of the gas they wanted.

We also have a concern around transparency. GWP has resisted community oversight or any type of independent evaluator to ensure they take an evenhanded and unbiased approach to this process. We will continue to push on this, since community buy-in is critical to a successful outcome. We will keep you posted on this via our Verdugo Views alert system.

There is still reason for optimism but we all need to remain vigilant and "bird-dog" the process. The RFP holds out the potential for Glendale to become a real clean energy leader. But it won't happen without your support. Please contact the mayor and city council members to tell them we want full transparency and community involvement. And that means not just getting two minutes to speak at a City Council meeting! (See #1 below).

Clean energy is more reliable, more popular, and cheaper than GWP believes. Our key challenge is to facilitate the entry of clean tech developers into Glendale, to make it as easy as possible for clean energy project to be built.

Typical of the incredible ideas now coming on line is the planet-saving (and money-saving!) Virtual Power Plant (VPP). Companies like Sunrun and others can link

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thousands of rooftops into a solar and storage network, delivering reliable power to homeowners and back to the grid – while benefiting both homeowners and the utility financially.

How you can help:

- 1. Contact Glendale City Council members who voted in favor of the pause to ask for full transparency and community involvement: Zareh Sinanyan (Mayor), Vrej Agajanian, Paula Devine, Vartan Gharpetian. Phone: (818) 548-4844 (Council Switchboard). Email: zsinanyan@glendaleca.gov, vagajanian@glendaleca.gov, vagajanian@glendaleca.gov, vagajanian@glendaleca.gov, vagajanian@glendaleca.gov, vagajanian@glendaleca.gov, vagajanian@glendaleca.gov, <a href="mailto:vag
- 2. We need volunteers to assist us with research, outreach, design work, event planning, and many other things. Please send a message if you are at all interested in participating. The next month could well be the most critical in our entire campaign. Contact VerdugoHillsGroup@gmail.com
- 3. If you live in Glendale, own your home, and don't already have solar on your rooftop, please consider participating in the VPP. Check out <u>cleanenergyglendale.org</u>
- 4. If you know of, or better yet have relationships with, any site owners or large users of power, please let us know. We'll be compiling them into a database and then reaching out. (See contact under #2.)

Plethora of Plastic

By Carol Henning

By the time you have finished reading this page, an entire garbage truckload of plastic waste will have entered the ocean. "...all these cups, lids, straws, bags wrappers and bottles that get used for a matter of minutes are suffocating the planet, especially our oceans," says Greenpeace (letter, April 16, 2018).

A sperm whale found dead on the southern coast of Spain was killed by the 29 kilos of plastic in its stomach. Experts from a wildlife recovery center concluded the whale had died because its digestive system became blocked. The whale could not expel the plastic he had swallowed. This caused the young whale to develop peritonitis, an infection of the abdomen leading to a painful death. Scientists have found that 90 percent of

the world's seabirds, a third of the sea turtles and over half of all whales and dolphins have ingested plastic. Every year, one million birds and 100,000 marine animals die from eating plastic waste, observes the Endangered Species Coalition (email, May 4, 2018). Discarded plastic fishing lines and nets, and six-pack plastic can holders trap and entangle turtles and seabirds. Plastic is also killing coral reefs.

There are "an estimated five trillion pieces of plastic in our oceans today—enough to circle the Earth more than 400 times," Greenpeace points out (letter, April 2, 2018). Plastic waste has been found in the ocean from the Arctic to the Antarctic and from the surface to the sea-floor. It even accumulates on the beaches of remote islands in the South Pacific. One of these is Henderson Island, which is more than 3,000 miles from major population centers.

The June, 2018 issue of *National Geographic* contains a map of the world showing the location of Henderson Island along with the locations of observed plastic in the open oceans, the 39 river basins that collectively disgorge millions of tons of plastic a year into the ocean, and the locations on land of mismanaged municipal plastic waste (all plastic that is not recycled, incinerated or landfilled.) The section of the "Planet or Plastic?" story titled "A Toll on Wildlife" includes disturbing photos of a loggerhead turtle completely ensnared by an old plastic fishing net and a stork trapped in a plastic bag at a landfill. Both the turtle and the stork were released from their plastic prisons by the photographers. Otherwise, the animals would have died.

However, before letting the dark side of plastic cause us to set our lips in a grim line, let us remember that, in their early applications, plastics saved some wildlife, namely elephants. In the mid-1800s, piano keys ("She sure can tickle the ivories."), billiard balls, and combs were made of elephant ivory. Laura Parker, writing in *National Geographic*, says that a billiards company in New York offered a \$10,000 reward to anyone who could come up with an alternative. The first new material invented was celluloid, made of cellulose, the polymer found in plants. Plastics made from fossil fuels are just over a century old, coming into widespread use after World War II. But nylon parachutes and lightweight airplane parts helped

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the Allies win that war. Today, plastics lighten every car and jumbo jet, saving fuel. As cling wrap, they extend the life of fresh food. In airbags, incubators and helmets, they help save lives.

Once plastics began to be made from petroleum, oil companies had waste gases like ethylene coming out the stacks of their refineries. Chemists discovered they could use these waste gases, monomers, as building blocks to create new polymers. The long-chain molecules made of monomers are strong, light and durable. These attributes make them useful but also problematic when disposed of carelessly. Plastics were so cheap to produce that they began to be used to manufacture items we never intended to keep. "Virtually half of the plastic ever manufactured has been made in the past 15 years," observes National Geographic. The Coca-Cola Company makes 128 billion plastic bottles a year. It seems the speedy growth of plastic production has far outstripped the ability of waste management to keep up.

The theme of this year's Earth Day was ending plastic pollution by Earth Day 2020. "Of the 300 million tons of plastic sold each year, about 90 percent ends up in landfills, in the oceans—and in our bodies," explains Amy Goodman, host of "Democracy Now!" (April 20, 2018). Dr. Marcus Eriksen has led 20 expeditions around the world to research plastic marine pollution. He is considered an expert on microplastics, small, brokendown fragments from larger items. In the ocean, animals bite plastic; the sun breaks them down; the waves crush them. They contaminate fish. The toxins that stick to plastics pollute all organisms in the food chain. Some synthetic chemistry in pre-consumer plastic products are endocrine disruptors and are carcinogenic. Erikson says that over 1,060 organizations have asked for an end to single-use plastics. "When I say 'single use,' I mean it's the plastic bags, the bottles, the cup lids, the straws, the little plastic stir sticks—these things that you use once and then throw away, but using a material designed to last forever." ("Democracy Now!" April 20, 2018). It is time to end the linear system of companies making stuff, selling it and then ducking any responsibility for it. The mountains of waste are burdensome, and taxpayers must pay for the cleanup—if there is any.

An organization called Break Free from Plastic is focusing on oil and gas extraction and the issues related to fracking. One of the by-products of fracking is a natural gas liquid called ethane. In order to turn ethane into plastics, one must crack it. Facilities that crack ethane into ethylene are called crackers. They make ethylene pellets that can be turned into plastics. According to Priscilla Villa, the South Texas organizer for Earthworks, Exxon, the climate-change-denier-in-chief, is proposing to build the world's largest cracker facility in Portland, Texas. It is a vulnerable place to build this kind of facility given the frequency of hurricanes. Moreover, the emissions that come from many of these facilities contribute to bad air quality.

Ted Siegler, a Vermont resource economist quoted in National Geographic, points out that, "We know how to pick up garbage. Anyone can do it. We know how to dispose of it. We know how to recycle." It is a matter of building the necessary institutions and systems before the land is covered with plastic trash and the ocean turns into a thin soup of plastic. Science and industry can design new plastics and plastic products that are either biodegradable or more recyclable. Globally, 18 percent of plastic is recycled. Plastic bottles are easy to recycle if they make their way to recycling facilities, which most of them do not. Small items such as bottle tops, drinking straws, stir sticks and the like are harder to recycle and often discarded. Polystyrene, used in foam cups, egg boxes, packing peanuts and still some food take-out containers, is difficult to recycle. The plastic used to make credit cards, pipes and fittings, synthetic leather and window frames (polyvinyl chloride) is very difficult to recycle, as are nylon fabrics and compact discs.

Another way industry can help is to pay for its plastic profligacy. Siegler suggests a worldwide tax of one penny on every pound of plastic resin manufactured. The tax would raise billions of dollars that could be used to finance garbage collection systems in developing countries. And we know that nothing gets corporations' attention faster than reaching into their wallets. Industry must be induced to take responsibility for the plastic products it pours onto our planet, responsibility for the process from beginning to end. This is called circular management.

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Governments can help too. Norway now recovers 97 percent of its plastic bottles, a big part of beach trash (and Norway has a very long coastline). How does it do this? It requires deposits as high as 32 cents per bottle, and most Norwegian supermarkets have machines that swallow bottles and spit out refunds.

What can each of us do to curb our contributions to the plastic glut? One hundred billion single-use shopping bags are used every year in the United States. These have been banned now in some cities in some stores, but they are still readily available. I admit they come in handy as containers for cat poop. But frozen food bags, potato chip bags, etc., are good to use for pet waste, as are newspaper and packaging material. Back in the '90s, I began to do my shopping with reusable canvas and net bags. Most store employees eyed me suspiciously. Once I was detained by store security (To me they seemed like hired thugs.) at a Von's supermarket. The big men were sure I was a shoplifter and that my black canvas bag, given me by a local NPR station, was a booster bag. Even after examining both the bag and my receipt for the merchandise, they detained and scolded me. Afterwards I tried to tell a manager. She rolled her eyes, seeming to beseech heaven to rid her of this weird woman who had put her groceries in a sinister black bag and was babbling about caring for Mother Earth. Nowadays, in many places, the personnel at check-out counters accept reusable bags as normal.

However, attitudes toward other single-use plastic items have yet to appear on the radar of many businesses and people who work in food service. Ordering iced coffee at Descanso Gardens recently, my sister and I mentioned the plastic straws that were available alongside the packets of sugar, etc. Americans toss 500 million plastic straws every day! Consider this video, available on YouTube: A biologist is using the pliers on a Swiss army knife to try to extract a plastic straw from a sea turtle's nostril. The turtle writhes in pain, bleeding profusely. Its ordeal lasts eight minutes. Finally the straw gets dislodged from the turtle's nose. Use paper straws or, better yet, no straws. If you must use a straw, carry a reusable metal one. Our words to two different people at Descanso elicited blank stares, but a recent radio broadcast carried the news that a company manufacturing paper straws cannot keep up

with the new demand for them—a hopeful sign. Still, I was disappointed to see that, in the cafeteria of the downtown building in which L.A. County Supervisors have their offices, plastic straws and polystyrene take-out containers are readily available.

Around the world, nearly a million plastic beverage bottles are sold every minute! Plastic bottles of water are convenient but hardly necessary save as a means of delivering clean drinking water to people who have no access to safe potable water. The rest of us can use our refillable water bottles. We can buy bar soap instead of the liquid kind in plastic bottles. We can try not to buy produce sheathed in plastic. Items ordered on-line or by telephone are often protected with layers of plastic bubble wrap, bags, film, packing peanuts. Last summer, when my broken leg kept me at home, I decided to order some meals from a service recommended by Kaiser, my healthcare provider. The food was tasty and reasonably priced, but the packaging that protected it from spoiling and from being crushed or tossed around was voluminous. I could hardly find the food among all the packaging. For that reason, I did not re-order. I wrote a note explaining my decision. Maybe someone read it.

On May 29, 2018, it was announced that the European Commission is seeking to ban an array of single-use plastic items, including plastic plates, cutlery and straws. This effort to cut down on waste and keep it out of the ocean will require the approval of the European Parliament and all E.U. member states. It will be a hard sell, but the E.U. estimates that the ban would prevent 22 billion euros' worth of damage to the environment and prevent 3.4 million tons of carbon emissions. There is no chance for this kind of ban even to be considered in the U.S. under our current regime. In fact, the U.S. recycles only nine percent (half the global average) of its plastic.

I confess to having a special fondness for the little plastic bottles of shampoo and lotion on offer at hotels. I lunge at them eagerly upon entering bathrooms in distant hostelries. Breaking my addiction to these tiny toiletries will not be easy. (Is there a 12-step program for this?) Meanwhile, let us all use less, recycle more and raise consciousness, including our own.

For more information see <u>bird-rescue.org</u> and <u>bbc.com/news/science-environment-44579422</u>.

ACTIVITIES

July 9 Monday

Ballona Wetlands and Playa Vista

Enjoy an easy paced hike as we explore Ballona Discovery Park, the freshwater Marsh and the new planned community of Playa Vista. Wear comfortable shoes, bring \$\$ for lunch. Heavy rain cancels. Meet at 8:30 at Verdugo Hills rideshare point or 10:00 at Discovery Park, 13110 Bluff Creek Drive, Playa Vista. Take Lincoln Blvd to Bluff Creek Dr., turn east and the park is located next to Playa Vista Elementary School. Park on Bluff Creek Drive or nearby streets. Ldrs: Evelyn Alexander, Carol Henning, Charlotte Feitshans, Delphine Trowbridge

July 11-13 Wed-Fri

Car Camp at Dogwood

Escape from the hot, smoggy city and camp with us in the beautiful San Bernardino Mountains with its tall pine trees. We will camp at the Dogwood Campground named after the trees with beautiful flowers which bloom in June but may still be in bloom. The campground has flush toilets, hot showers, hiking trails and is a short distance to Lake Arrowhead Village. Pick up a flyer and make your reservation. Spaces is limited. Ldrs: Evelyn Alexander, Delphine Trowbridge and Frank Atkin

August 5 Sunday

Long Beach Museum of Art, Naples Canals, Belmont Shores

Enjoy a visit to Long Beach Art Museum. Stroll along the canals of Naples and see the shops of Belmont Shores. Heavy rain or excessive heat (90+ in Long Beach) cancels. Meet 10 am at Verdugo Rideshare point, or 11 am at Long Beach Museum of Art, 2300 E. Ocean Blvd. Bring \$ for museum and lunch. Ldrs: Evelyn Alexander, Bruce Hale

August 6 Monday

Monthly Meeting

Bruce Hale will present "Spain from Bilbao to Gibraltar" with slides and commentary from his month-long trip in Spain last fall. Highlights of the program include Bilbao and the Basque Region; the Camino de Santiago (famous pilgrimage route); Seville and Granada, and the site of the most-visited spot in Spain, the Alhambra. During this armchair tour, enjoy Spain's distinctive culture on the Iberian Peninsula. Social at 7 pm and the meeting starts at 7:30. Meet in the Library community room (2809 Foothill Blvd., La Crescenta). Enter from rear.

September 10 Monday

Monthly Hike

Stairway hike in Pasadena-La Loma Rd. 2.7 miles and 996 stairs. This is a green, partially shady walk through one of Pasadena's western most neighborhoods, filled with charming stairways and a virtual arboretum of mixed tree varieties. This is an excellent choice for a hot day. Meet 10 am at the intersection of N. Figueroa St and Colorado Blvd., where Eagle Rock meets Pasadena. Bring \$\$ for optional lunch. 90+ morning temperature cancels hike. Ldrs: Delphine Trowbridge, Bruce Hale, Evelyn Alexander, Carol Henning

October 1 Monday

Monthly Meeting

Join the Verdugo Hills group for a program entitled 'A Cornucopia of National Parks' and presented by Michael Beck. Michael has visited most of our parks and is an excellent photographer specializing in mood scenes. Everyone is welcome at 7:00 pm for social time and refreshments. Program starts at 7:30. Meet in the auditorium of La Crescenta Library (2809 Foothill Blvd, La Crescenta). Enter from the back. Handicapped accessible.

November 5 Monday

Monthly Meeting

Note: Because of the Election our November meeting has been canceled. [The library is a polling place and they need to set up the room for the next morning, November 12 doesn't work either because of Veterans Day]

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Zielinska, Ewa

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All links are live. You can email leaders or visit websites by clicking on a link.

Email and Phone info is not available in the web version to protect privacy.

Volunteers Needed

Verdugo Hills Group is always looking for new people for our Management Committee.

We are looking for hike leaders, event planners/ leaders, committee members, etc.

If you would like to help in directing our wonderful group, please talk to our membership chair, JUDY ANDERSON

To contact leaders or for more information on our Group, email VerdugoHillsGroup@gmail.com.

Verdugo Views

Meetings

Verdugo Hills meets first Monday of each month except July and January. Meetings are located at the La Crescenta Library (2809 Foothilll Blvd—Enter in the back). Social Hour: 7 pm, Meeting: 7:30

Web Page

angeles.sierraclub.org/verdugo

Support Committee

(Directory of Support Committee and Leaders is on inside back page.)
Delphine TrowbridgeChair/Mailing
David F EisenbergVice Chair/Newsletter Editor
Carol HenningCo-Conservation/
Chapter Delegate
Charlotte FeitshansSecretary/
Alternate Chapter Delegate
Michael BeckClimate Change/Hospitality
Annette KargodorianTreasurer
Judy Anderson Membership/Treas Asst/
Publicity
Gene & Terry Paulin Political Advisor
Bruce HaleOutings
Marlene Vella
Susana Reyes
Garen YegparianPolitical Compliance
Evelyn Alexander Programs
Dotty & Mike SandfordFundraising
Lucile DavisSocial Secretary
Richard Castro

Conservation Round Table

Carol Henning, Michael Beck, Gene Paulin, Evelyn Alexander, Delphine Trowbridge, Judy Anderson, Marlene Vella, Charlotte Feitshans

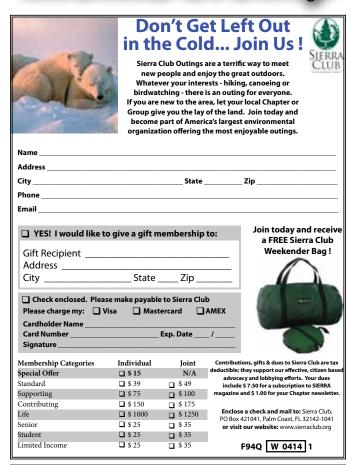
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Submission Instructions

Deadlines are the 15th of even numbered months (Feb, Apr, June, Aug, Oct, Dec).
Send stories by email (preferably) to:

Send pictures by email at full resolution. Email if you wish to make arrangements to scan a picture

Membership





21308 Jimpson Way Canyon Country, CA 91351 Address Service Requested Nonprofit Org U.S. Postage PAID Los Angeles, CA Permit No. 36438