

ENH Ink

www.exploringnewhorizons.org



**EXPLORING NEW HORIZONS
OUTDOOR SCHOOLS**
a non-profit organization

Special points of interest:

- Get updated on all of the ENH sites!
- Looking for a location for a staff training, family reunion, or other group event? Our Sempervirens Outdoor School site is available for weekend and summer rentals. Contact us at (831) 338-3013.
- Tribute to ENH Founder Gary Nightengale
- Honor "Marine" Mark Nolan for his contributions to the PPEP Program.

Quotes from the kids:

"My favorite part of camp was the solo hike because I got to listen to the sound of nature instead of the sound of the television."

Student, Fall 2007

"My favorite part of outdoor school was when I sat down at the campfire and listened to the awesome songs I realized that you don't need electronics to have fun."

Student, Fall 2007

Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights

Commission Cites Link Between Health Problems and Lack of Outdoor Play

By: California State Park and Recreation Commission

Why is childhood obesity on the rise? Why are children starting to have heart problems?

Why are more and more children showing signs of stress and mental illness?

The answers to these questions are found in new research that shows today's youngest generation is bound to electronic gadgets and aren't getting exercise from outdoor activities.

To lend their support in countering the trend, the California State Park and Recreation Commission today unanimously passed a resolution to join Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger in his efforts to promote the "California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights." The Bill of Rights was created by the California Roundtable on Recreation, Parks and Tourism, a diverse organization that includes membership from the outdoor recreation industries, user groups, environmental organizations, academia, and recreation providers from the federal, state and local levels.



Children who spend time outdoors promote long term healthy life styles.

"There is a lot of evidence beginning to mount that (Continued on Page 3)

From the Executive Director: Tracey Weiss



Fall has arrived, the leaves are starting to drift from the trees and the sounds of students fill our program. Fall is a time of newness: new staff, new seasons, and new experiences for 5th and 6th grade students from the Bay Area. This year the need for financial support has greatly increased so please consider supporting a student with a financial scholarship contribution to ENH.

Recently, we have seen an increase in the advocacy surrounding getting kids outside. Legislators are looking at ways to ensure that environmental education remains a viable option for all students in the state of California. Here at ENH, we continue to educate friends and communities about the all the benefits students receive by participating in an Outdoor School program. To learn more about this movement, read

the book by Richard Louv "Last Child In the Woods" or visit the Children and Nature Network at www.cnaturenet.org.

Here at ENH, we are thrilled to see old friends visit and renew partnerships and connections with those who help make our program possible for so many. We are entering into a new partnership with California State Parks as owners of the Sempervirens Outdoor School, and we are continuing our relationship with NOAA to help financially support our Salinas students. Salinas students have new opportunities this year as they participate in restoration activities both during their time at (Continued on Page 4)

Dear Friend,

I want to thank you for letting me go to science school! What I learned is that you can hear a lot of things in the woods with some silence. I can see better with my eyes because you taught me how to see in nature. I am so grateful for letting me go. I thought I was scared to come at first but now I want to stay! The solo hike changed my life because I got to do something by myself! I hope I can come again sometime soon.

*Sincerely,
Student, Spring 2007*

Thank You to Our 2007-08 Donors!

Many individuals and organizations have combined to send over 700 underserved students to ENH. On behalf of these children, we offer our thanks and appreciation to our contributors!

Special thanks go to the following organizations...

- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- The Rancho San Carlos Education Foundation
- The Boyd Family Foundation
- The Leshner Foundation
- The North Pleasanton Rotary Club
- J.M. Long Foundation
- Bothin Foundation

Support ENH! Make a contribution today! Please return your generous gift, or make an online donation today on our secure website at www.exploringnewhorizons.org

...And our individual donors:

Coastal Oak (\$1,000+):
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Donald Shortridge

Monarch Butterfly (\$250+):
Jessica Parsons and Tom Evans

Banana Slug (\$100+):
Sheila Curtis
Craig Peters

Acorn (\$50+):
Deborah Christmas
Margaret Lynch
Jordan Garrett-Williams
Leah Rothstein

Join the Exploring New Horizons Board of Directors

Exploring New Horizons Board of Directors is looking for new members to join and support our vibrant organization. The Exploring New Horizons Board of Directors is a dynamic group of individuals that are dedicated to enriching the mission and ideals of environmental education for 5th and 6th grade youth. The Board of Directors is comprised of volunteers that share a passion for education, but offer a diverse range of skills and knowledge to help drive the organization forward. The board of directors meets five to six times a year at locations throughout the San Francisco Bay Area and at each of our program sites in Pescadero, Boulder Creek or the Pigeon Point Lighthouse.

Currently, in the efforts to meet the growing needs of our organization we are recruiting individuals to join our board. We are looking for individuals who:

- Are current 5th or 6th grade teachers
- Have current experience as a CPA or book keeper
- Current experience with fund development or marketing

If you love Exploring New Horizons and want to help support its continued growth and development please feel free to contact Tracey Weiss, Executive Director at (831) 338-3013.

ENH Ink Going Paperless!

Starting last spring, the ENH Ink publication will be going paperless! In order to better support our environment, and to stay in touch with everyone who is near and dear to our program, look forward to receiving your next issue of the ENH Ink in your email inbox.

If you would like to ensure you receive the ENH Ink online, please send a note to Tracey Weiss at tracey@exploringnewhorizons.org or call (831) 338-3013

Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights *(continued from page 1.)*



Students Find New Ways to Explore Nature

the simple effort of having children spend more time outdoors in nature counters many of the ill affects that many of today's kids experience" said State Parks Commission Chairman Bobby Shriver. "Exercise from outdoor play and being in natural areas of quiet and solitude lower the mental stresses of modern day living."

The Parks Commission hopes the resolution will urge parents to spend more time outside with their children in order reduce childhood obesity, high blood pressure, heart problems, stress, attentiondeficit disorders and other health and psychological problems affecting youth.

In his book "Last Child in the Woods – Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder," Richard Louv cites study after study concerning ailments today's children experience. Those studies, as Louv points out, also make it clear that outdoor exercise and exploration of natural environments counter the ill affects that children suffer from being increasingly under house arrest.

"Kids used to spend the bulk of their time outdoors in free play, wandering the neighborhoods, a local stream or a vacant lot," said Clint Eastwood, Vice-Chairman of the State Park and Recreation Commission. "Today, we're worried about stranger-danger and we pile on the homework, plopp them them in front of screens and turn them into couch potatoes. We should not be surprised that their physical and mental health are also plopped on that couch and going nowhere."

In passing the resolution, the Commission establishes California State Parks as the first State agency to endorse the Governor's Children's Bill of Rights Proclamation. The Bill of Rights provides that every child between the ages of four and fourteen should have the opportunity to: Discover California's past, Splash in the water, Play in a safe place, Camp under the stars, Explore nature, Learn to swim, Play on a team, Follow a trail, Catch a fish, Celebrate their heritage

"I would urge parents to examine the lifestyles of their children and find ways to increase their outdoor play activities in order to improve their physical and mental well-being," said Ruth Coleman, Director of California State Parks. "Visiting a state park is a great way to start."

In Louv's book, we find the following information:

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports that the U.S. population of overweight children between ages two and five increased by almost 36 percent from 1989 to 1999. A 2003 survey, published in the journal *Psychiatric Services*, found the rate at which American children are prescribed antidepressants almost doubled in five years; the steepest increase—66 percent—was among preschool children.

Cornell University environmental psychologists reported in 2003 that a room with a view of nature can help protect children against stress and that nature in or around the home appears to be a significant factor in protecting the psychological well-being of children in rural areas.

Many parents notice significant changes in their hyperactive child's behavior when they hike in mountains or enjoy other nature-oriented outings. Studies have provided convincing evidence that the way people feel in pleasing natural environments improves recall of information, creative problem solving, and creativity. Early experiences with the natural world have been positively linked with the development of imagination and the sense of wonder. When children play in nature they are more likely to have positive feelings about each other and their surroundings. Outdoor environments are important to children's development of independence and autonomy.



Being Outside promotes healthy life styles both physically and mentally

Thoughts from Scott “Burl” Klein: Program Director at Loma Mar

Greetings from Loma Mar~ The celebration of the Earth continues as another



2007-08 Exploring New Horizons , Loma Mar Staff

season of outdoor school begins at Exploring New Horizons. As communities around the world become aware of the state of the Earth today and we begin to assess some of the impacts that humanity has had on the Earth, it is easy to become overwhelmed. But, at ENH, we are excited because our mission has and contin-

ues to be educating ourselves and the good people who visit us to become **part of the solution**. To be **part of the solution** is to reconnect ourselves with the creek, the ocean, old growth forests and the animals and plants that inhabit these ecosystems. Ultimately, it is to understand that all natural things are connected and, as the legendary Chief Seattle stated with such clarity: “Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it.”

At Loma Mar we are fortunate to have such a talented group of naturalists who are working hard to be a **part of the solution**. The returning core of naturalists this year are Aaron “Gopackgo” Drake, Brad “Cheetah” Korpalski, Bridget “B” Posson, Josh “Bobcat” Stacy, Ryan “Orion” Brinkworth, Natalie “Luna” Gilliam and April “Acorn” Price. We were also fortunate to acquire a few new talented naturalists to come and inspire us in new ways to be a **part of the solution**. They are Lisa “Sol” Mazzola who came to us from the Rancho Alegre school in Santa Barbara. Sol has worked as a classroom teacher and as a naturalist and brings knowledge of medicinal plants. Kristin “Canyon” Brinkman from San Mateo Outdoor School (SMOE) is an artist, avid birder and brings a calm, beautiful voice to our community. Lastly, Scot “Shrike” Pipkin also from SMOE, enjoys playing a myriad of instruments and can often be found in the forest with a butterfly net, binoculars, spotting scope and a camera. We are very fortunate to have them here with us as they are definitely **part of the solution**.

In addition to the new naturalists, we have also acquired two new naturalist interns. Alexis “Cypress” Barbalinardo recently graduated from Vassar College in New York and is excited to become acquainted with life in the redwoods. The other naturalist intern is Richard “Spruce” Hodges. Spruce has a way with words and can make the most complicated concept easily understood. He also has a green thumb and hopes one day to run an organization that plants trees in school yards and vacant lots. Planting trees is definitely **part of the solution** and so are Spruce and Cypress.

Lastly, Jessi “Spark” Leary has moved from being the organic gardener to the program coordinator position. Look for Spark in a community near you. Allison Lynn has moved from being the program coordinator to the organic gardener position. She is happy to not have to coordinate the program but now her responsibility is to coordinate plants and chickens/ducks. And finally, the health of the students is very important to all of us, and is definitely **part of the solution**. Helping us this year is our full-time EMT Josh “Sparrow” Reinl. Sparrow is excited to coordinate our new Health Habitat where any student who is ill or injured can find respite in a solution that will definitely be found.

It is so pleasing to observe these cycles and to realize that we are a part of them. We are beginning a new cycle of outdoor school and we are excited about the infinite possibilities. Thank you for your support and please join us in being **part of the solution**.

See ya soon,

- Scott “Burl” Klein

From the Executive Director *(continued from page 1)*

Natural Bridges State Park and again within the Creeks of Salinas with the Return of the Natives (RON) Program through California State University, Monterey Bay.

Please stay in touch with your friends and family at ENH, send us your updated email address so we can send you our new web-based newsletter. You can share this newsletter electronically with your friends and family, and help keep folks connected to the ENH family. Secondly, if you have not visited our website recently, come by and visit www.exploringnewhorizons.org and check out our new design and layout.

Pigeon Point Hostel Celebrates 25 years and honors Mark Nolan for work with PPEEP

In September, Hostelling International celebrated the 25-year anniversary of the Pigeon Point Hostel. The event included activities for children and an eclectic mix of musical performances, including the outdoor school rockers, the Banana Slug String Band, whose nature-based songs are shared by naturalists, teachers, and children of all ages far and wide. The event had special significance to ENH, as naturalist guru [Marine Mark Nolan](#), a member of the Banana Slug String Band and current Director of San Mateo Outdoor Education, was given an award of achievement for founding PPEEP in 1984.



Musical Performance at the Pigeon Point Hostel

Marine Mark Nolan has many feathers in his cap. He made his dreams of sharing the Pigeon Point Lighthouse and surrounding beaches with children a reality with the establishment of PPEEP in 1984. He developed the elephant seal puppet show, which is an effective and entertaining teaching tool and a highlight of the PPEEP experience. He served as the Executive Director of ENH. Presently, he is dynamic member of the Banana Slug String Band and Director of San Mateo Outdoor Education.

Another award of achievement granted to Nolan is symbolic: the opening of the public access trail to Whaler's Cove adjacent to Pigeon Point Lighthouse this past summer 2007. The recycled redwood stairs provide safe access to the Whaler's Cove beach area and hold a rich history of community action.



The Banana Slug String Band sing their famous tidepool boogie

Because of the hard work and dedication of people in the community who care, students at PPEEP and the public can continue to enjoy and explore the beauty of Whaler's Cove.

We extend our gratitude to PPEEP founder Mark Nolan as we embark upon our 25th year.

Thoughts from Heidi "Tigerlilly" Plowe: Program Director at PPEEP

Greetings from where the sea waves hello to the trees!

PPEEP sends our very best wishes to former Program Director Glacier Dan Irelan, who has done so much for our program and continues his work in environmental education in the great wilderness of Alaska, amongst grizzly bears and of course, glaciers. It is my pleasure to welcome Mountain Mike Merritt, the dynamic naturalist from ENH at Camp Loma Mar, to the PPEEP staff.

The PPEEP season does not get into full swing until the beginning of January, I have had the opportunity to keep



Students Explore out at the Año Nuevo State Reserve

busy recruiting and scheduling new schools, visiting returning schools, and revamping program content. We have several new schools scheduled for this spring, including a home school group from Reno whose organizer was an ENH student. This is exciting as it extends the reaches of the network of ENH into our neighboring state of Nevada.

The Fog Signal Building at the Pigeon Point Lighthouse, which is the gathering space for meals and evening programs at PPEEP, has recently undergone an "informational renovation." This summer, California State Parks completed the installation of colorful interpretive displays to be enjoyed by the public. PPEEP will certainly utilize these displays as they will become a teaching tool to help us relay information about the rich history of the site to students.

Another development with our partnership with California State Parks is that PPEEP has taken on an active role in the training of docents at Año Nuevo State Reserve. In October, I conducted the "Working with Children at Año Nuevo" section of the docent training, helping to provide docents with insight for taking school groups on interpretive tours to the elephant seal rookery at Año Nuevo. I am glad to have the opportunity to continue working with California State Parks as I have been employed as a Park Interpretive Specialist in several State Parks throughout Northern California for the past few summers.

Be well and be in touch!

Thoughts from Steven Maes: Sempervirens Summer Camp Director



Summer Camp Staff help make the summer special for Camp Sempervirens campers

Well another fantastic summer has come and gone and we are forced to endure a whole year before we can assemble again for the 2008 summer season. This summer saw many new and exiting changes that made this summer the best. In addition to all of our classic summer camp features such as swimming, nature studies, archery, back-

packing, beach and tide pool exploration, campfires, night games, etc., we introduced camper skill sessions taught by our talented senior counselor staff. Each day campers built self esteem and confidence as their new skill developed. At the end of the camp sessions campers took pride in showcasing their new skill to their friends and

families.

Summer 2007 also saw the newly formed Earth Adventure Program. This extension of our 6th grade science camp program took campers on a two week adventure through some of California's most beautiful locations. Campers in the earth adventure program trekked through Big Basin and Castle Rock State Park on overnight backpacking trips, explored tide pools at Natural Bridges State Beach and journeyed into the Monterey Bay to partake in a little whale watching. Each Adventure brought campers closer to nature and closer to each other than ever before. Each session ended with a closing ceremony in our newly constructed redwood amphitheater. This year we invited camper's families to join us while we wrapped up the week with our favorite songs and memories. Although summer 2008 seems like a long time to wait campers and staff alike are looking forward to an amazing Halloween camp and an unforgettable spring reunion. Hope to see you there!

In memory of Gary Nightengale: co-founder of Exploring New Horizons

By: Laura Tucker

Who knew ...

That, way back in 1977, when Gary and I led our first backpacking trip with students in Yosemite, it would be so magical that we would consider changing our careers as a classroom teacher and a wildlife biologist to that of summer camp counselors?

...**Who knew...** That painting a cabin in Truckee in the winter of 1978 would provide Gary and I the time to deeply discuss this wild idea of starting our own non-profit organization and create a full-fledged summer camp?

...**Who knew...** That this wild idea would turn into a thriving environmental education program on three sites, serving 6,500 students a year, and celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2009?

...**Who knew...** That Gary would leave us so soon?

As countless ENH students and staff, as well as family and friends, mourn the loss of Gary Nightengale, let us pause to reflect on his contributions to the program we all love so dearly, and to students and teachers alike who were touched by his magical ways.



Gary Nightengale: Co-Founder of ENH

I have received many thoughts from past staff and campers. I thought I would share a few with you here:

I met Gary as a new naturalist. His laughter, joy, and natural warmth and ease with children were an enduring role model in my life's work with as an educator. His parents and family can know always that Gary has touched many, and that his legacy endures. –Outdoor education naturalist and summer camp staff; 1984-86

My memories of Gary are of his smiles, cheeriness, hard work, dedication, and loyalty. I'm glad he and I crossed paths so many years ago and I got the chance to work with him. I'm certainly better for having known him. - Summer camp staff; 1980

I remember big bears hugs, belly laughs, and the always present mug of steaming coffee. –Summer camper, Outdoor education counselor,

Thoughts from Jacob “Millipede” Sackin: Program Director at Sempervirens Outdoor School

Fall 2007 at Sempervirens is off to a wonderful start here in the redwoods. We spent a fun and informative staff training eating tomatoes, zucchini, basil, eggplant, peppers, shallots and other fresh organic vegetables from our garden while getting the staff and program ready for the school year. Sempervirens is proud to have five returning members of our staff: Steve Maes, our site manager, Shelia Golden, our gardener, June Stockbridge, our program coordinator, and naturalists Ashley Chapman and Grace Eger. We are also excited to have Patrick Maltba, our new assistant director/medic and naturalists Trent Pearce, Rosalie Hamilton and Rachel Bowen joining our staff! I am also a new staff member, and have had an amazing time learning the ropes during my first few weeks as principal. The staff has been very supportive during staff training and throughout our first few weeks. Everyone here at Sempervirens is full of passion for outdoor education and working hard to make sure that every student has an amazing time at outdoor school.

Our first closing ceremony, led by our long-term sub, Mike Merrit, brought many students to tears, and all of the teachers, counselors and students that have come through our program so far have gone home with smiles on their faces and memories to last a lifetime. The natu-



The 2008-08 Sempervirens Outdoor School Staff

ralists have done a great job inspiring students to explore the natural world and take a chance! Last week, after spending the day hiking in the redwood forest, a student exclaimed: “I never knew that the forest could be a playground!”

Summer is slowly giving way to fall as the cool breeze begins to blow and the first few drops of the much needed rain begins to fall. The monarch butterflies are starting to trickle into Natural Bridges State Park and Pileated woodpeckers have been spotted both around our site and at Big Basin State Park.
(continued next column over)

New Young Adult Reading: Islands

Our very own Jacob Sackin, the SVOS program director, is having a young adult environmental science fiction novel published this November. The novel, entitled *Islands*, provides readers a glimpse of a possible future, hundreds of years from now, in which the southwestern United States has been transformed by global warming and invasive species into a place where human beings live completely separated from the environment.



Stuck inside a giant pyramid that now houses the people of Las Vegas, Saskia is bored with her artificial life and yearns to experience the natural world. But unbeknownst to her and the other inhabitants of the pyramid, there are still survivors living outside. Abbie, a descendent of those who took refuge in the cooler mountains when the climate changed, is equally unaware that Saskia’s enclosed world still exists. Using her hunting and tracking skills, she and her brothers struggle to survive in a threatening wilderness overrun with invasive species, and dream of finding a place where they can live in peace. The death of Saskia’s grandfather and Abbie’s search for a lost village eventually bring these two stories together in a meeting reminiscent of the first contact between Europeans and Native Americans, except this time the meeting is not between two separate “races,” but two girls whose ancestry comes from all over the world. Now, each girl must choose between a familiar past and the new world the other one will show her.

The novel is being published by Windstorm Creative, an independent publishing company outside of Seattle, and it will come with a free study guide for teachers to use in the classroom. For more information, or to read a sample chapter, go to JacobSackin.com.

Sempervirens Outdoor School is filled with the positive and inquisitive energy that we love! There are probably only a few more weeks of warmth left to enjoy the swimming pool and the garden before we harvest the last of the summer crops so come on out to the San Lorenzo Valley and pay us a visit!

-Jacob Sackin “Millipede”



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Exploring New Horizons inspires young people to be responsible stewards and engaged citizens through exploration of the natural world.

Notes From the Students

Dear Friend,



Thank you for letting me go to science school! You have made me really happy. I am having a blast! I loved the barnyard boogie. At first I was really shy. I was just sitting next to the wall. After a while, I noticed there's no reason to be shy because everyone was my friend. I really broke out of my shell.

I have really changed since I got here. I'm much more fun to be with and have a lot more friend in my class. I am happy to say that its thanks to you.

Many thanks- Student, Fall 2007

*Surrounded by trees
There are no bees
This spot is a magic spot*

*Edible leaves on the ground
There is always moss around
This spot is a magical spot*

*Hearing the creek
There wasn't a squeak
This spot is a magical spot*

*Sadly I see all the stumps
In my throat forms a lump
This spot is a magical spot.*

Student, Spring 2006

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