

THE **insider**

THE NEWSLETTER OF
INSIDE THE OUTDOORS
FOUNDATION

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Ways to Make a Difference in Your Community

Kim Casey

As 2009 gets underway, the state of the economy remains uncertain. Each of us is faced with tough decisions. Those of us who were once able to give back by supporting local non-profits are being forced to decide whether or not to continue to support these agencies in the same way. We may want to give but may not have the financial resources anymore that allow it. As the economy changes, so does the way people give. Supporting community organizations is not always about donating money. Donating time and resources can be just as rewarding. As such, companies and individuals are looking at volunteer opportunities as a way that they can help others in need. Between 2005 and 2007, California had an average of 6.7 million volunteers dedicate 896.4 million hours of service per year. The estimated economic contribution of

the volunteer hours served is \$17.5 billion annually. Community involvement at Inside the Outdoors (ITO) is possible due in part to the expansion of our programs beyond school and community programs to include volunteerism and service-learning. Service-learning deepens learning by engaging individuals in meaningful service in the local community and is a method whereby participants learn and develop through active participation; focusing on the service and learning from the experience. This educates individuals on the 'why' to make the experience more meaningful.

This year, ITO participated in the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service on Saturday, January 17, 2009. Volunteers from the Volunteer Center Orange County came out to Rancho Soñado, ITO's headquarters and a 5th grade field trip

site, and spent the day; clearing brush, removing immigrating plants from the parking lot and mid trail and relocating them to 2 re-vegetation spots, in addition to fixing eroded trails. Inside the Outdoors is also working with schools throughout Orange County on service-learning projects ranging from starting recycling programs in their school to creating activity guides and partnering with OC Parks and OC Healthcare Agency to get families and community members outside. These efforts help raise the awareness of the entire community of what local parks have to offer. The efforts made by the community members and students in these projects will have provided much needed support totaling 788 volunteer hours with a monetary value of \$17,312.36 to date.

Volunteerism not only benefits individuals and the agencies they serve,

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INSIDE

**A Message from
ITO Foundation Board Member
Steve Eaton, REI**

Inside the Outdoors is key to inspiring future innovative leaders and environmental stewards.

**Nurturing a Natural Curiosity:
Stories from ITO Students**

Quotes from students at Sage Hill School in Newport Coast participating in an Inside the Outdoors Service-Learning project.

Insider Information

What's Inside:

- * Staff Profile
- * ITO Foundation Winter/Spring events
- * The Gift of Environmental Stewardship



Steve Eaton, REI ITOF Board Member

REI's passion for the outdoors runs deep. Our core purpose is to inspire, educate and outfit people for a lifetime of outdoor adventure and stewardship.

Stewardship is our commitment to get people outside and leading healthy active lives, caring for our planet by protecting shared natural spaces, and engaging others in making a difference. Stewardship is also how we operate the co-op, finding ways to improve the environmental performance of our business while we strive to generate positive environmental, social and financial results. Our employees in our retail stores, distribution centers and headquarters each play an important role in our efforts through volunteering in service projects, recycling, identifying opportunities for efficiencies in our operations, and much more.

Outreach for the Orange County REI market consists of two stores; Huntington Beach in the Bella Terra Shopping Center, and the Santa Ana location in the McFadden Plaza. These stores work as a great team dedicated to supporting the local recreational community. Outreach is a high priority for REI, we think that stewardship and volunteerism is so important that we include a service project element in our hiring and train-

ing of all new employees. We have found that this experience is great for the environment and great for team building.

In 2007 and 2008 REI paid 75 newly hired employees to assist the Inside the Outdoors site at Rancho Soñado for a variety of projects; from cattail removal to fire restoration and erosion prevention. These projects enhanced Inside the Outdoor's learning programs REI directly supports with annual grants and donations provided by the Headquarters Public Affairs in Kent, Washington. This is an important way to connect staff to the community relationships enhancing REI culture and authenticity throughout the company.

REI Orange County continues to encourage a culture of volunteering to open spaces and taking care of our surroundings. REI supports both employees and customers to volunteer their time in the outdoors. Throughout the 2008 year REI cataloged over 2,800 hours of volunteering and over 400 people working to provide greater appreciation to the local community. REI's commitment to community is built from its strong principles and years of community involvement. Visit our website: <http://www.rei.com/stewardship> for more information on how to become involved and about the REI co-op.



REI Stores Locations

Santa Ana

1411 Village Way
Santa Ana, CA 92705
(714) 543-4142

Huntington Beach

7777 Edinger Avenue
Huntington Beach, CA 92647
(714) 379-1938

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it helps the environment by nurturing a natural curiosity and building environmental stewards of tomorrow. Our goal at Inside the Outdoors is to give children and communities experiences that make them healthier, happier, and smarter. Volunteers play an important role in helping us, and organizations like us, to accomplish this goal. It is because of the 6.7 million individuals that volunteer in California each year that makes our state a leader in volunteerism across the United States.

For more information on how to volunteer in your community contact the Volunteer Center Orange County www.volunteercenter.org or Volunteer Match www.volunteermatch.org.



**May 9, 2009
3:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Newport Coast
Community Center
6401 San Joaquin Hills
Newport Coast**



With the help of four trend-setting, eco-savvy students from Sage Hill High School, this event is sure to be even more fabulous than ITO's first ever eco-friendly fashion celebration last year. This spring, just across the street from the high school's campus, the Newport Coast Community Center will be transformed into Orange County's epicenter for eco-friendly fashion and lifestyle selections.

On top of schedules loaded with SAT prep classes and college applications, the students have been hard at work during their junior year assisting Inside the Outdoors staff with Eco-Fabulous 2009. This driven group is connecting with local business leaders and members of the community, interviewing them and creating a documentary about the misnomers and realities with green trends. They are also networking among their peers and professionals to provide entertainment, sponsorship and support of the event. This project is just one component of the Service-Learning partnership between ITO and Sage Hill High School. The students are able to choose which project interests them and through these experiences develop skills such as leadership and teambuilding while giving back to their community.

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Student Stories
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**Sage Hill School,
Newport Coast**
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**Quotes by students participating
in Inside the Outdoors
Service-Learning program**

Kayleigh, 11th grade
"I am looking forward to participating in the Eco-Fabulous Fashion Show to educate people that eco-friendly can be fashionable".

Jessica, 11th grade
"I want to make people aware that their lifestyle and the everyday choices they make can help the environment".

Michelle, 11th grade
"I joined this project because I want people to know that there are alternatives that can help them and others to live healthier, better lifestyles".

Owen, Sage Hill Teacher
"These kids live in the Orange County bubble and I want to expose them to the outdoors. This designated time allows students to serve their community and others. My students are really getting more out of this experience than they are giving".



**GRAY CROUCH
Staff Profile**

To know Gray is to love him. His enthusiasm about the outdoors is contagious and he brings a unique perspective to Inside the Outdoors' staff.

In his two years with Inside the Outdoors (ITO), Gray has held three positions. Field Naturalist, Summer Camp counselor and Program Support Specialist of Marketing. Gray brings with him a wealth of knowledge and a graphic arts degree from Laguna College of Art and Design. He is currently responsible for the design of ITO's marketing and education materials among other things.

After being invited by a friend to attend a rehabilitated bird release through the Orange County Bird of Prey Center, Gray became fascinated with wild birds and their purpose in nature. Soon Gray began volunteering at the Bird of Prey Center where he helps with feeding and cleaning. In his words, "It might sound cheesy, but I don't think of this as volunteering - it's more of a privilege. It is an honor to be able to care for such amazing animals."

Gray comes from a long line of volunteers. His grandmother, Marilyn McIntyre, received the 2008 Philanthropist of the Year award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

Gray's hobbies include mountain biking, hiking and photography. One of his favorite things about ITO is that he can easily incorporate two of his hobbies, hiking and photography, at each of the field sites.

Event Calendar

February - April 2009

FEBRUARY 28

Wildlife Cartooning and Live Animal Sketching San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Inside the Outdoors invites artists of all abilities for a fun day of art! You will learn how an animal's physical characteristics help him survive as you sketch a wildlife model. We'll also teach you simple ways to create wildlife cartoons. Bring a picnic dinner.

Cost: \$65 per person
ITO Foundation Members: \$55 per person

Advanced registration is required

APRIL 5

Leave Only Footprints, Take Only Photos Rancho Soñado, Silverado 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Join us for a hands-on art exploration workshop. Learn about professional artists who create art from nature and then head outdoors to create your own art sculptures from leaves, rocks, water and other natural objects. The sculptures will remain at Rancho Soñado as part of the natural work, but you will take away photographs that capture your imagination and inspire you to become a caretaker of the Earth.

Cost: FREE

Advanced registration is required

APRIL 26

Getting Ready for Summer Workshop and BBQ Rancho Soñado, Silverado 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Join Inside the Outdoors and REI for a camping workshop that includes songs, stories and hiking. We'll offer an optional BBQ for lunch and provide s'mores for dessert.

Cost: BBQ - Adult \$10, Children 6 and under \$5

Advanced registration is required

Check our website for other event dates!
www.insidetheoutdoors.org

HEALTHIER, HAPPIER, SMARTER. CHILDREN NEED NATURE

Help children connect to nature. The purpose of Inside the Outdoors Foundation is to provide charitable, educational, scientific, and advisory support to the Inside the Outdoors Science Study Programs. Each year, Inside the Outdoors provides full and partial scholarships to approximately 55,000 low-income students. Inside the Outdoors is able to do this through generous donations from individuals, foundations and corporations.

As an ITO Foundation member you will enjoy special benefits described below, but the most meaningful benefit we have to offer members is the satisfaction of sharing the wonders of nature with others and cultivating tomorrow's environmental stewards.

All members will receive:

A Quarterly Newsletter and events calendar, priority registration and discounts for ITO Adventures, and special volunteer opportunities.

Annual Membership

Adventurer (\$25) Individual Membership

Explorer (\$50) Family Membership, includes:

- An eco-friendly reusable cooler

Steward Circle (\$100+) includes:

Explorer benefits, plus:

- Special acknowledgement on the website and newsletter

- Invitations to exclusive Steward Circle events

Membership Levels:

• Adventurer (\$25)

• Explorer (\$50)

Steward Circle

• Terra Trekker (\$100-\$399)

• Star Gazer (\$400-\$999)

• Habitat Hero (\$1,000-\$2,499)

• Dream Catcher (\$2,500-\$4,999)

• Visionary (\$5,000+)

To join, visit:

www.insidetheoutdoors.org



FOUNDATION

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WILLIAM M. HAGERMEHL
County Superintendent of Schools