Thousands Attend Ojai's and Ventura's Earth Day Events

Earth Day organizers in Ventura and Ojai couldn’t have asked for more beautiful weather at this year’s events on April 23 celebrating our planet.

Ventura’s Earth Day Eco Fest drew thousands who enjoyed bright sunshine, great food, musical entertainment, children’s activities, education and a Green Auto Expo. In all, over 90 eco-friendly exhibitors and vendors were on hand at the celebration held between the Ventura Promenade and Surfers’ Point, including a Harrison Industries table that was manned by food waste coordinator Donald Sealund.

Meanwhile the theme of Ojai’s celebration at Oak Grove School was “Trees for Our Valley,” and the folks at the Ojai Valley Green Coalition were proud to welcome Vandana Shiva, a world-renowned Indian scholar and environmental activist, as featured speaker. The day also included live entertainment, world food, environmental presentations and art and education exhibits. Sales representative Fred Lopez represented Harrison Industries at the event.

It’s great to have Earth Day, but you can make every day Earth Day by doing the right thing and recycling! It’s easy, and our planet will thank you.

Buena High, Mound Elementary Earn Ventura Green Awards

In celebration of Earth Day and in the ongoing effort to support local initiatives to protect Ventura’s environment, the city of Ventura Environmental Sustainability Division, Ventura Water, Harrison Industries and Agromin presented the 2015-2016 Green School and Watershed Hero Awards at the Ventura City Council meeting on April 25.

Harrison Industries General Manager Lynn Harrison and I were pleased to honor Buena High School with the Green School Award this year in recognition of staff and students who manage its recycling, composting and gardening programs. These students collect materials from classrooms weekly with a specially designed handmade cart.

Continued on page 2
These efforts have diverted nearly 500 pounds of material from ending up in the landfill just this school year. They created an educational video documenting their process. Buena also has a school garden, which students from the metal shop, carpentry, art and science classes helped build. Students assembled the drip irrigation, propagate seedlings and collect leftovers from the cafeteria salad bar that are composted and used in the garden to enrich the soil.

The winner of the Watershed Hero Award is Mound Elementary School for converting 1,600 square feet of turf into a native plant garden. The school installed six rain barrels to capture water for reuse in their extensive gardens located throughout campus. Mound Elementary participates in a partnership with several local growers to learn about organic farming. This partnership celebrates the rich agricultural history of the region while teaching students about the complexity of water supply and demand in Southern California.

Mound Elementary also built an aquaponics greenhouse, with students caring for a butterfly garden, and they recycle milk cartons and compost food waste through the pilot lunch waste recycling program, supported by the Ventura Unified School District, Harrison Industries and the City of Ventura.

Congratulations to staff and students at Buena High and Mound Elementary for earning these wonderful awards!

Hundeds Bid CSUCI President Rush Farewell

It was quite a retirement dinner for Dr. Richard Rush on April 9 honoring his 15 years as the founding president of California State University Channel Islands. Over 900 attended the event held in front of Air Force One at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley.

At CSUCI, Dr. Rush always put students first, supported underserved students, and built partnerships that facilitated expansion and prosperity during a time of economic hardship. The newest campus in the CSU system, CSUCI is now the nation’s fastest-growing public university offering degrees up to a master’s and recently received accreditation for its first doctoral program in Education.

Proceeds from the dinner will be gifted to support student scholarships in honor of Dr. Rush. His last day is June 30, and he will be sorely missed. CSU trustees have selected Dr. Erika Beck, who currently serves as the

Continued on page 3
Hundreds Bid CSUCI President Rush Farewell - continued from page 2

provost and executive vice president of Nevada State College in Henderson, Nev., as CSUCI’s new president. Dr. Beck hopes to continue Dr. Rush’s vision for the university and build on his accomplishments.

Harrison Vice President Myron Harrison and wife Sharon joined Gold Coast Recycling General Manager George Harrison and his wife Danielle at the dinner. Harrison Industries congratulates Dr. Rush on his well-deserved retirement and welcomes Dr. Beck to beautiful Ventura County. We wish her all the best in her new endeavor!

Ventura Celebrates 150th Anniversary with Picnic and Great Music

Ventura celebrated its 150th anniversary in style with a fantastic community family picnic on April 2.

Hundreds attended the community get-together at Plaza Park that featured carnival games, races and contests, and an historic treasure hunt. Revelers danced to the music of the Barrelhouse Wailers Jazz Band and the Cash Cats. The event was capped off by a swinging concert by Ventura’s own world-renowned boogie group, Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, held at Mission Park. Harrison Vice President Jim Harrison and I were fortunate enough to go, and it was really an incredible end to a long and fun day.

Another featured event was a chocolate cream pie-eating contest entered by 10 former Ventura mayors as well as current mayor Eric Nasarenko. I was privileged to serve as a judge along with Ventura County Supervisor Steve Bennett and Dr. Richard Rush, president of California State University Channel Islands. It was great fun watching the mayor and former mayors dive face-first into the pies. Nasarenko proved too much for the former mayors, emerging the winner.

In addition, the grandchildren of George Harrison, general manager of Gold Coast Recycling Center & Transfer Station, were among several kids given the key to the City by former mayor Cheryl Heitmann. Councilmember Heitmann urged the kids to place their key in safe keeping so that they can come back for the 200th anniversary in 2066 with key in hand and maybe pass it on to their grandkids. Talk about long-range planning. Knowing the Harrison family’s longtime connection to Ventura, I’m sure they will be there to celebrate!
The city of Carpinteria has a great economic outlook, according to Mayor Gregg Carty and other public officials who spoke at the Carpinteria Valley Chamber of Commerce’s 2016 State of the Community luncheon on April 22.

Carty told a crowd of about 200 business leaders and community members at the Rincon Beach Club that the city welcomes industrial development, as long as it does not detract from its small-town beach charm. He also reviewed numerous proposed and already-underway infrastructure and development projects in Carpinteria, and laid out proposals for the city’s future, including more robust climate-change policies.

Salud Carbajal, who represents Carpinteria on the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors, also was on hand and covered the county’s fiscal status. He said the county has a budget of almost $1 billion, with almost $300 million in its general fund, and is keeping up with funding necessities like capital improvement projects and retirees’ pensions.

Harrison Industries was a sponsor of the annual event. Vice President Jim Harrison, General Manager Lynn Harrison, Contracts Manager Daniel Harrison and I attended, and in honor of Earth Day – officially recognized the following day on April 23 – we handed out a small bag of Agromin potting soil to all who attended.

“The Ball of Masquerade” was the theme of the Fillmore Chamber of Commerce’s Annual Community Awards and Installation Dinner on March 7.

The annual event at the Veterans Memorial Building honors Fillmore’s finest. It was only fitting that the late Rigo Landeros, Fillmore’s longtime fire chief and Fillmore’s interim city manager a few years back, was recognized with the Outstanding Community Service of the Year award. Landeros died unexpectedly on Jan. 7 and his wife Laura and three children accepted the award for him.

I had known and worked with Landeros for years, and no one loved his community more than he did. The Harrison family joins me in offering our condolences to this fine man’s family and community.

Others honored included former mayor and city councilman Ernie Villegas with the Lifetime Achievement Citizen award and Leo Vasquez as Citizen of the Year. The Bank of Sierra won the Business of the Year award.

I can’t list all the winners, but I’d like to give a shout out to Nick Bartels, the Ventura County Sheriff’s Department’s Explorer of the Year for Fillmore. Nick is the son of Bill Bartels, the city’s former recycling coordinator.

Harrison Industries is a gold sponsor of this wonderful community event. Vice President Jim Harrison and General Manager Lynn Harrison and his wife Patty attended the “Ball of Masquerade” with me. It was a great evening and again proof that Fillmore, as its motto proclaims, is “The Last Best Small Town in America.”
Pacific Coast Business Times Honor is Truly a Team Effort

I am truly honored to have been named for the ninth consecutive year as one of the Top 50 Women in Business by the Pacific Coast Business Times. Being governmental affairs and public relations director for Harrison Industries, Agromin and Gold Coast Recycling & Transfer Station is hard work but it also is a labor of love for me.

I share this award with the management staff and over 200 employees of Harrison Industries, Agromin and Gold Coast Recycling whose tireless commitment to recycling has made Ventura County the most lauded and praised county in California. All of our client franchises, including the cities of Ventura, Camarillo, Thousand Oaks, Ojai, Fillmore and Carpinteria – have surpassed the state’s strict 50 percent waste diversion goals, and we’re on pace to reaching the state’s mandated 75 percent recycling goal by 2020.

I was proud to be a member of the Ventura City Council when Ventura established the first citywide recycling program in the county in 1990 and am thrilled to be still heavily involved in our ultimate goal of Zero Waste!

The awards reception was held on April 14 at Deckers Outdoor Rotunda in Goleta. I thank the Pacific Coast Business Times and Editor Henry Dubroff for this wonderful honor and congratulate the 49 other honorees who help keep the economics of Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties at such a high level and help make the communities in the Tri-Counties great places to live.

Sincerely,

Nan Drake, Harrison Industries

email: nand@ejharrison.com
phone: 805-701-9809
web: http://www.ejharrison.com