

Former Pacifica Mayor is lifelong trailblazer for environmental kindness

An interview-biography with Pacifican Julie Lancelle

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Written by Jean Bartlett

June 15, 2024

(A Pacifica Historical Society Project)



On the 22nd day of April, 2024, the Open Space and Parkland Advisory Committee of the City of Pacifica, declared Julie Lancelle the recipient of the 2024 Pacifica Open Space Preservation Award. A few of the facts highlighted, in this very deserving recipient's City of Pacifica Proclamation, are as follows: Julie Lancelle has been actively involved with environmental protection efforts for Pacifica for the last 37 years including her term of 10 years on the Open Space and Parkland Advisory Committee (OSPAC), as a former Mayor and Councilmember in the Pacifica City Council, and as a member of other local committees and groups, demonstrating unwavering dedication to the environmental well-being of the community; Julie was active in the formation of the Pacifica Citizens Proposal, which played a key role in ending the plan to widen Highway 1 from Reina del Mar to Rockaway Beach; Julie became a member of the Open Space Task Force Committee in 1987, which produced the Open Space Task Force Report that set forth the City's vision and blue print for Open Space Preservation, and was appointed to the newly formed Open Space Committee in 1989, which paved the way to the establishment of the

nonprofit land conservation group, the Pacifica Land Trust, in 1991; and Julie joined the Board of the Pacifica Land Trust in 1998, and her instrumental role in the campaign to save Mori Point in 2000 helped raise \$100,000 from the community in two months to fund the purchase along with the Trust for Public Land and the National Park Service, further demonstrating her legacy as a champion of conservation in Pacifica. In addition, during her tenure on the City Council from 1992 to 1994, and 2002 to 2010, she advocated for the funding of the Pedro Point Headlands and various restoration projects from the Coastal Conservancy. (In the above 2022 photograph, Julie hikes in Pacifica's San Pedro Valley Park.)

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Pacifica City Councilmembers in session, 2003, left to right: Julie Lancelle, Jim Vreeland, Mayor Pete DeJarnatt, Cal Hinton and Sue Digre.

Pacifican Sue Digre, who served 16 years as a Pacifica City Councilmember, including three times as Mayor, worked a number of those years beside Councilmember Lancelle.

"It's not always easy to be on City Council but Julie was at all times, who she is: hardworking, conscientious, caring, ethical, honest, a good listener, and a kind person no matter what. She was a very strong advocate and active worker for our environment. Her positive achievements for our city are numerous, yet she remained and remains, very self-effacing. It was an honor to be a co-councilmember with Julie and it is an honor to be her friend."

* * *



Julie Ann (Ahlenius) Lancelle was born in Menlo Park, California, on April 4, 1948, to Uno Alexander Ahlenius and Helen Otelia (Sather) Ahlenius. She is the youngest of their three children and her two older siblings, Marlyn and Roger, were both born in Cloquet, Minnesota.

"My sister Marlyn and my brother Roger, who are both gone now, were quite a bit older than me," Julie said, adding with a grin. "In fact, I think my parents were thinking more in the direction of their retirement years and their future golfing at the local County Club when my mother discovered she was pregnant with me!"

←Julie, age 5, Menlo Park, CA.

Julie's dad Uno, was born in Åskilje, Sweden, in March of 1904, to Anders Gustaf and Sara Johanna (Karlsdotter) Ahlenius, originally, Alenius. In 1909, Uno moved with his family to Boston, Massachusetts, and in 1910, the family moved to Meadowlands, MN.

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"My father's father was a farmer and my father had many siblings."

Julie's mom, Helen, was born in October of 1905 in Shell Lake, MN, to Ole and Maud or "Mali" (Oye) Sather, and grew up in Scanlon, MN. Both of Julie's maternal grandparents were born in Norway: her grandfather was born in Stranda, Norway, and her grandmother was born in Mosvik, Norway. Born in 1869, Ole immigrated to the United States in 1887, and Mali, born in 1865, arrived in 1890. Ole and Mali married in Minnesota in 1891 and Helen's numerous siblings included Einar, Otis, Ruth, Rolan and Olive. Olive was born just after Helen in 1907. Helen's dad was a grocer. In 1903, he opened Sather's Store in Scanlon, MN. He was also the town's postmaster, and in 2020, he was remembered by the Carlton County Historical Society, as a Scanlon civic leader. He passed in 1929. Helen's mom passed in 1947.

"My parents married in June of 1930 at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Cloquet, Minnesota. My father was a skilled wood worker, though he worked in the lumber industry primarily as a salesman. He invented the weave fence, or something very similar to it. He also served his community in an elected position. In November of 1967, he was elected to the Menlo Park Sanitary District. My mother did not work outside of the home when they lived in Minnesota. But sometime after my family moved to California, she became an elementary school teacher, which she was when I was growing up."

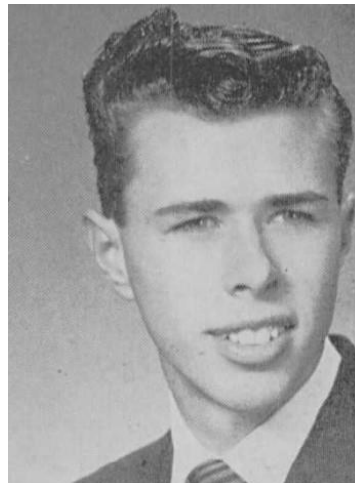
Julie's sister, Marlyn, was born in 1931, and her brother Roger was born in 1933. In 1943, during the battle years of World War II, 12-year-old Marlyn, her 10-year-old brother Roger and their parents, headed out West to Menlo Park. Marlyn attended Sequoia High School, class of 1948, and Roger was in the first graduating class, 1952, of the 1951-established Menlo-Atherton High School. Marlyn, like her mom, also became a school teacher following her graduation from San Jose State University in 1952. Julie's brother Roger, who was a member of the ski patrol during the 1960 Olympics in Squaw Valley, was an environmentalist who established Santa Margarita Island in Santa Venetia in San Rafael, CA, as open space.

"By the time I was old enough to really have a conversation with Marlyn and Roger, they were both out on their own, though of course I had many, many conversations with each of them over the years and loved them both dearly."

In 1953, when Julie was 5, she was the flower girl in Marlyn's wedding at the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church.



Marlyn Ahlenius, Sequoia High School, 1948.



Roger Ahlenius, Menlo-Atherton High School, 1952.

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"Do I speak Swedish or Norwegian? Sadly, none of the Ahlenius kids learned much of either language, though certainly we could understand some, maybe more than our parents wanted us to!"

In middle school, Julie took classes on Russian. She was trying to understand the tension between the United States and the Soviet Union and how that might affect the Vietnam War.

"I thought I should study Russian to see what Russia was up to," Julie grinned at her middle school memory. "I did not learn what Russia was up to but I did learn to speak a little Russian."

Julie also studied violin in middle school and played it in her school's orchestra.

"I was definitely exposed to the arts by my parents. My mom played the piano and my dad liked to sing. They loved to go dancing once a week."

Julie continued to play violin throughout her teen years and later, when she was on her own, she picked up the Celtic harp.

There was something else her parents exposed her to, which she became quite good at, and that was golf.

"My mom and dad were both hard workers and they loved their golf on the weekends, at the Country Club. So a great deal of my childhood was golf – whether I liked it or not. Fortunately, I did like it."

"Julie was quite a good golf player," Julie's husband Jon Lancelle noted. "She played tournaments in high school, playing throughout the Bay Area, and she took home numerous awards. Had she wanted to, she could have pursued a career in golf."



The dining room table at Julie's folks' house could hardly contain this high school golf competitor's trophies.

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Along with her parents and her siblings, there was someone else who was very much family to Julie in her childhood, and that was Doris.

"Doris was a huge part of who I am today."

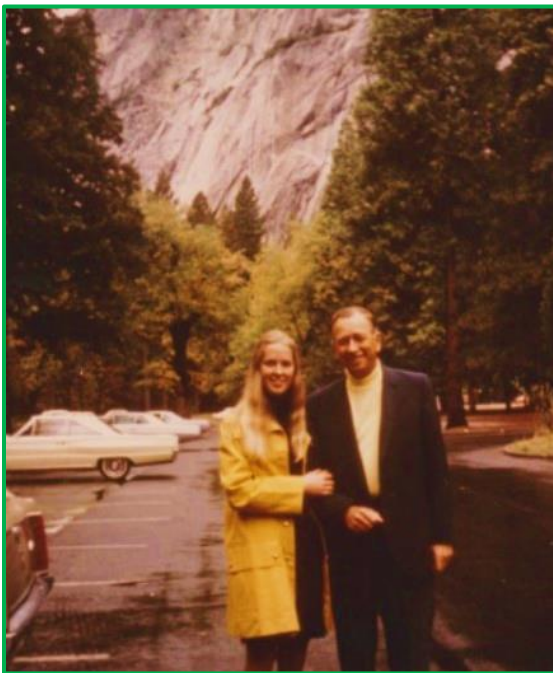
Doris took care of Julie while her folks were at work. She drove her to school, picked her up, brought Julie to her own home, out on adventures and errands, and spent time with Julie at Julie's home.

"I don't know her last name and my parents are not around to ask, but Doris meant everything to me as a kid. And she's the one that got me interested in soul and blues and Motown, people like Ray Charles, the Supremes, Stevie Wonder, Sam Cooke – the list is huge. Doris's husband was, at least when I was a kid, the impresario at the Circle Star Theater in San Carlos. He booked all these great acts. Doris was always teaching me, just by bringing me along with her, that the world was a much bigger place than the block I lived on. She was the greatest."

Julie attended Menlo-Atherton High School and among her numerous high school extracurricular activities she was Class Treasurer, junior year.

"I got my first job in high school, working in the cafeteria, so I could have money to buy records. We had the greatest record store, Joe Prein's. I spent all my money there!"

Apparently Joe Prein used to toss wooden nickels all over Menlo Park. If you were lucky enough to find that one very special nickel, you got a free 45 record.



Julie in Yosemite with her dad, circa 1966.



Julie at home with her mom, circa 1965.

Following high school, Julie did a semester at the University of California, Berkeley, and then transferred to San Jose State University where she earned her liberal arts degree.

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"My college focus was on the environment and that interest was profoundly nurtured when I was a teen. I got a job working summers in the restaurant at The Ahwahnee Hotel in Yosemite National Park – which, as we all know, is an absolutely inspiring wilderness.

Julie's life passion was fully realized when she went to work for California's First Land Trust, Sempervirens Fund.

Sempervirens Fund, P.O. Box 1417, Los Altos, CA 94023

"In 1900, Sempervirens Fund led the way to permanently protect six square miles of old-growth redwoods which are now the heart of Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Since their founding they've protected more than 36,000 critical acres of Santa Cruz Mountain redwoods with the support of their donors and partners.

"Sempervirens Fund is pioneering a new model of weaving together public parks, private land, and sustainably managed forests into a beautiful, healthy redwood ecosystem, while they also create new ways for people to enjoy and explore our region's treasured trees. They move forward, knowing that they follow in the footsteps of generations of earnest, passionate, and determined citizens working to protect coast redwoods, always.

Julie Ahlenius met Jon Lancelle in the summer of 1983, about 60 miles southwest of Yreka. Jon and his friend Bernard had made fishing their weekend plan and they were walking from the east side of Marble Mountain Wilderness—one of California's oldest designated wilderness areas, spanning 241,744 acres—to the west side, looking for fish. Bernard was aware the Sierra Club was doing trail maintenance that day, and he suggested that he and Jon stop and chat with them.

"As it turns out, Julie was a member of the Sierra Club," Jon recalled with a smile. "And there she was, working north and south, and we met at the junction."

Originally from Stockton, CA, Jon is the Acting Principal Double Bass for the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra and has been a member of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra since 1979. A graduate of San Francisco State University with a degree in music, Jon was living in San Francisco at the time, renting a house with several roommates. He liked Julie immediately and the feeling was mutual.

"I liked Jon when I first met him because I met him in the wilderness," Julie laughed. "But then we also had a nice conversation and we had a s'more together." (A s'more, for anyone who might not know, is roasted marshmallow and chocolate, sandwiched between two pieces of graham cracker.)

"So it was three things that made Jon a standout – the beautiful location, our conversation and those s'mores!"

"Julie was living in Saratoga," Jon noted, "and since we met in the wilderness when I was fishing, for our first date I decided to catch a striped bass off the coast and I took it to Julie's home and cooked it for her."

There were more dates, which included Julie attending orchestra performances and Jon joining Julie on Sierra Club outings.

They married on June 13, 1984, in Menlo Park at the Presbyterian Church on Santa Cruz Avenue.

With Jon's roommates having moved out, the couple lived in Jon's rental in San Francisco's Outer Sunset neighborhood, at 24th and Rivera, for about a year and a half.

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"In 1986, we were traveling down the coast to see friends who had bought a house in Montara," Jon recalled. "We were looking for a house and we said, 'let's turn at the first stoplight on Highway 1 and have a look at the homes.'"

"So we drove up Reina del Mar and we drove by this house, the one we live in now," Julie added. "The people who owned it had just cleaned it up and they were putting up a for sale sign. And we said, 'We'll take it!' It is such a great place. We loved it then and we still do."

←Julie and Jon on their wedding day, June 13, 1984.

"When I was a kid, my family used to drive through Pacifica on our way down the coast," Jon said. "Being from Stockton where it is a lot hotter, I didn't really like Pacifica. When I went to San Francisco State, that used to get foggy, and I didn't really like that either. But then I started to like it and once I met Julie, and we headed down the coast, I just got to love it here. You have to experience Pacifica. It's really a special place. Just driving through it doesn't do it."

Julie worked for *Sempervirens* until the couple's daughter Karen was born in 1985.

"I took time off when Karen was born and then in the late 1980s, the negotiation contract with the Opera Orchestra wasn't a good negotiation, and while things were up in the air for Jon, I went back to work."

Julie went to work for writer Tom Stienstra. An outdoorsman and author, Tom started out as a sports reporter for the *Palo Alto Times* and when Julie worked for him, he was an outdoors writer for both the *San Francisco Chronicle* and *San Francisco Examiner*. He also was writing for *Field & Stream* magazine. (He is the Outdoors Writer Emeritus for the *San Francisco Chronicle*.) Tom did a whole series of camping guides and Julie helped him accumulate information which he then fashioned into abstracts.

"It was very interesting work," Julie said, "though I didn't do it for too long, as things did settle down with Jon's job."

In 1990, the couple welcomed their second child, Henry. Both Karen and Henry are Terra Nova High School graduates, and both are UC Berkeley graduates. Earlier, Karen attended Pacifica's Alternative School, now Ocean Shore, and Henry attended Vallemar Elementary School.

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Julie and Karen on the road to adventure, 1986.



Julie and Henry at work for the wilderness, 1991.

The first time Julie was elected to Pacifica City Council was in 1992. It came on the heels of her active and ultimately successful opposition to the widening of Highway 1, from Reina del Mar to Rockaway Beach.

"I did not want to see the highway widen, I did not see it as beneficial to Pacifica and open space, so I did the only thing I could think to do – get out there and fight against it. I certainly wasn't alone in that fight."

"Julie's involvement with City Council came out of her work on Route 1," Jon pointed out. "She got a lot of support and encouragement from people in the community to run. At first, she was a little reluctant. 'Should I do this?'"

"But then," Julie smiled, "I made the leap!"

In 1992, Julie Lancelle was elected to Pacifica's City Council. Julie and the three other newly-elected councilmembers – Ellen Castelli, Barbara Carr and Vi Gotelli – joined incumbent Bonnie Wells in giving the State of California, a historical first, an all-female City Council. The four newly-elected councilmembers were from a pool of 21 candidates. The other 17 candidates were men. Journalists from all over the Bay Area, throughout the United States, and as far away as Hong Kong, Germany and Saudi Arabia, descended on Pacifica in congratulatory headlines. For the five female councilmembers, fielding calls and cameras was a bit overwhelming, though all agreed it did bring Pacifica welcome publicity. There were the eventual snarky comments as well, which primarily consisted of referring to disagreements among the councilmembers as a "catfight."

"When men disagree it's a debate, when women do it's a catfight," Pacifica City Councilmember Barbara Carr noted in a 1992 *Pacifica Tribune* interview. She also noted that after years of making it in a man's world—the late Barbara Carr was a longtime realtor who would serve 10 years on City Council, twice as mayor—she learned to ignore such slights.

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"God created men and women with equal brain power," Barbara went on to say in that interview. "But if women bring anything different, it is that they are cognizant of people's needs and listening to those needs."

In 1992, Councilmember Lancelle added, "I'm an ardent believer in the idea that the only way to solve political problems at any level is to be inclusive of other points of view."

Mayor Wells noted the 1992 Pacifica City Council was made up of independent thinkers and often times their opinions on an issue was split. But she also noted the Council did a good job listening to each other's perspectives.



Pacifica's City Council, 1992, left to right: Barbara Carr, Vi Gotelli, Mayor Bonnie Wells, Julie Lancelle and Ellen Castelli.

Julie served on City Council from 1992 to 1994. During her term, she supported the Rockaway Beach Redevelopment project which is often referenced as a model for future development.

"The project was a successful example of well-designed, sustainable development that fit the community in scale, look and density."

Julie also remained committed to her work as a member of the Open Space Task Force and later the Open Space Committee. Her work here, and with other dedicated volunteers, led to helping create the formation of the Pacifica Land Trust in 1991 and advocating for the funding of the Pedro Point Headlands before the Coastal Commission.

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Julie served two years on Pacifica's City Council and left to spend more time with her children, which would eventually include serving on the Laguna Salada School Board, now the Pacifica School District Board.

In November of 2002, the wife, parent, school trustee and Pacifica Land Trust Board member ran again for Pacifica City Council, and won.

"Julie joined the Pacifica Land Trust Board in 1998, and the work she did there, with others, helped secure her 2002 City Council win," Jon said. "This includes PLT's fight to save Mori Point. Many of today's Pacificans may not know that back in the 1980s and 1990s, there were various attempts to develop Mori Point, and then in 2000, Mori Point was put up for sale at auction."

"**SAVE MORI POINT NOW!**" the *Pacifica Tribune* headline demanded. "Mori Point is at risk!" the Pacifica Land Trust wrote. "This Pacifica landmark will be sold to the highest bidder on September 21, 2000. If you care about this spectacular place you must act now! Please send your pledge or donation today. Pass this card on to a friend who will also act TODAY!"

In a 2000/2001 edition of Pacifica Land Trust "Land News," the Mori Point fight and ultimate win was explained in the following article.

"Mori Point saved for all time!"

Mori Point became a reality due to a course of events beginning in July 2000. The then-owners of the property obtained a court order to sell the site at public auction, with \$2.5 million as the minimum bid. TPL (Trust for Public Land) indicated it was willing to work with the Pacifica Land Trust to put together a public campaign to raise funds sufficient to participate in the auction. TPL found an "angel" who was willing to provide a no-interest loan of \$2.5 million for acquisition. The California Coastal conservancy pledged \$1.0 million toward achieving the highest bid. On September 21, TPL won the auction, bidding against potential developers, for \$3.3 million.

Meanwhile, the PLT had begun an extensive grass-roots fundraising effort throughout Pacifica and the Bay Area to raise additional funds not covered by TPL's "angel" loan or the Coastal Conservancy's participation. Land Trust members were overwhelmed by the support and appreciation shown by the community for this effort. Hundreds of residents contributed to the fundraising campaign and numerous donations were of \$1,000 and more. Altogether, \$100,000 has been raised to date and conveyed to TPL to help cover non-reimbursable costs. TPL recently wrote us: "We are awed and inspired by the outpouring of support by the Pacifica community in response to the opportunity to save Mori Point!"

All of these efforts resulted in the protection of beautiful Mori Point for all time. The icing on the cake to the incredible sequence of events was the passage of federal legislation placing this property and other property, including the Pedro Point Headlands, into the Golden Gate National Recreation Area ("GGNRA") boundary expansion. This was a necessary step toward future GGNRA acquisition of the properties

To read about the still very active Pacifica Land Trust, P.O. Box 988, Pacifica, CA 94044, 650-260-4772, info@pacificaland-trust.org, visit their website: www.pacificaland-trust.org.

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"When the topic is open space in Pacifica, it is always easy to meet with others who care about the land," Julie said. "We all value the land. We've made Pacifica a kind of extraordinary place, not just for Pacificans, but for everyone who arrives in our beautiful coastal community. And I am so grateful for all the wonderful people who always come together for our open space, for our wilderness."

Julie's second tenure on City Council began in 2002 and resulted in eight years of service, including two terms as Pacifica Mayor, in 2005 and in 2009. Along with her work with the Pacifica School District Board of Trustees and the Pacifica Land Trust Board, Julie's volunteer service also included the Pacificans Care Board and the San Mateo County Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee. In addition, she served as the Pacifica Chamber of Commerce – Council Liaison.

During her second tenure on Council, she was instrumental in the completion of the Pacifica Strategic Plan, the Palmetto Streetscape Plan and the expansion of the Community Emergency Response Team Program. She additionally advocated for the preservation of the habitat at Sharp Park, balancing environmental concerns with the recreational pursuits of golf and archery.

"The Sharp Park Golf Course is a tremendously valuable recreational asset for the City of Pacifica as well as the region. It is, quite simply, a public treasure."

"When I think on it," Julie continued, "I believe my playing golf at an early age may have also inspired my fight for open space. As we know here in Pacifica, recreation and open space can be a beautiful partnership."



"I've always believed that the true wealth of Pacifica is its people; we are rich in human resources. Look at all our volunteer-driven arts and history organizations that really make such a good difference in uncountable lives: the volunteers with the Pacifica Historical Society saved our historical Little Brown Church and turned it into a Museum, their works also include saving the last car of the Ocean Shore Railroad, and they have saved Pacifica's Jack Cheese! Look at our Sanchez Art Center with Pacifica Performances, the Art Guild of Pacifica and the Sanchez Studio Artists. (Julie is one of the Studio artists, formerly working in assemblage art and now devoted to photography.) These are all completely engaging and educational art and cultural resources with unlimited value. The same can be said with our volunteer-run, performing arts theater, the Pacifica Spindrift Players. If you don't know these places, go, and/or,

look them up. We've got our Pacifica Friends of the Library and we had, until recently, our phenomenal Pacifica Library Foundation. And look at all the locals who have come out to save our one-of-a-kind Pacific Coast Fog Fest. And, oh my gosh, the Pacifica Beach Coalition. They are a constant miracle.

"I've said this before and I say it again now because it's true. Pacificans don't just sit around and wait for things to happen or to get better. We get involved to help make them happen!"

Certainly from my days of writing for the *Pacifica Tribune*, there were constant examples of the Pacifica community's penchant for volunteerism. To illustrate that point, Julie's point, here are two stories chosen specifically because they come with a photo of Pacifica City Councilmember Julie Lancelle, and because Julie wants to celebrate others in her story.

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Shelly Simon, Mayor Julie Lancelle, Clay Thompson and Patricia Thompson. (Jean Bartlett 2009 photo.)

Mildred Owen Memorial Garden dedicated by Mayor Julie Lancelle, September 12, 2009

By Jean Bartlett

Pacifica Tribune Features Writer

Saturday morning, 8 a.m. at Rockaway, volunteers came with their shovels and their rakes, their gloves, their might and their good spirits, and leaned into the earth to plant a garden in memory of the late Mildred Owen. Fifty volunteers arrived and more came. The project under the guidance, skill and dedicated care of Courtney Conlon, Laurie Keit, Bob Pickerell, David Martinez, Ralph Laughlin, Don Eagleston and Gil Anda, was exactly what the late Artistic Director of Pacifica Performances was all about - bettering your community by being of community. Neither rain, nor hints of thunder could dispel this crowd from their mission - to make Mildred, to make Pacifica, proud. Volunteers worked so hard that the planting was completed two hours earlier than expected. At 4 p.m., Mayor Julie Lancelle, surrounded by members of Mildred's immediate family: Mildred's husband Clay Thompson, her daughter Shelley Simon, and her stepdaughter Patricia Thompson - as well as other fans and friends of Mildred's - thanked the Conlon-run Pride and Beautification Committee, read from her official proclamation and dedicated this garden wonder to Mildred. An incredible cake, a replica of the bronze "Mildred" plaque mounted to the great stone in the garden, (thanks Laurie Keit for the plaque and the cake), sparkling apple cider and a good round of cheers capped off a day so like Mildred - full of joy, full of inspiration. Rumor has it, from the source herself, that Courtney Conlon and her Committee have only just begun to shake out the weeds in this town. So take a bow, Ms. Mildred, you've surely made us grow.

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Congresswoman Jackie Speier with Pacifica City Councilmembers Jim Vreeland, Julie Lancelle, Mayor Sue Digre and Mary Ann Nihart, and Pacifica Beach Coalition President Lynn Adams, at the Pacifica Earth Day after-work party. (Jean Bartlett 2010 photo.)

Lynn Adams, Jackie Speier and thousands of Pacificans put Earth first

By Jean Bartlett

Pacifica Tribune Features Writer

April 28, 2010

Culminating in a huge celebration at Linda Mar Beach, on Saturday, April 24, 2010 – Earth Day – entertainers, students, a fabulous emcee and volunteers of all ages joined Beach Coalition President Lynn Adams and Congresswoman Jackie Speier to say, we can do this. We can take care of our Earth.

Prior to the party, Pacifica beaches, bluffs, streams, hillsides, streets, schools, gardens and more were descended upon by a great crowd of concerned citizens, wearing gloves, carrying trash bags and in some cases, carrying seeds, shovels, rakes, trimmers and more.

There were approximately 75 gardening and/or pick-up sites throughout the city. The following is a sampling of Pacificans digging in.

At Ingrid B. Lacy Middle School, 50 volunteers, many of them students, took ownership of the neighborhood surrounding their school and cleaned up.

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IBL student Rhadison Stambaugh, age 11, explained why he was happy to clean up. "I go to the beach a lot and I like the beach to be clean. All the litter on the street eventually ends up at the beach so I am glad to help out."

Rodney Williams, age 12, also an IBL student, said he signed up originally for extra credit. "But I liked cleaning up," Rodney said. "I saw something nasty in the water and I knew it didn't belong there and I took it out. It felt good to do that."

At Oceana High School, students, parents and teachers, led by Oceana sophomore Naftali Moed, worked in the high school's newly carved-out garden area. Oceana science teacher Paul Orth gathered a group of volunteers and patrolled the school's surrounding areas for litter. A group of people picked up at the bus stop below the school on Oceana.

"We had about 25 people involved in Oceana projects," OHS sophomore Jeffrey Witter said. "I was with Paul Orth's group and we picked up 75 pounds of trash and 55 pounds of recyclables. It's nice to know we are helping the Earth."

Mildred Owen's family cleared 674 pounds of trash and 11 pounds of recyclables from Higgins Road. Included among the items picked up were five tires, one car battery, sheets of plywood and a 7-foot by 2-foot gate with a handle on it.

Ocean Shore teacher Fran Quartini picked up four large bags of trash along the side of the road by Ace Hardware in Pedro Point.

Approximately 75 representatives from the Ocean Shore Elementary School community tackled Sharp Park Beach, loading up numerous bags of littered finds from the beach, the berm and surrounding walkways.

Mayor Sue Digre also headed out to Sharp Park beach early and picked up plastic, Styrofoam, peanut shells, some iron and just two cigarette butts. "That made me feel optimistic," the Mayor said. "I believe there are many members of our community who clean all the time."

At Cabrillo School, an estimated 50 volunteers picked up 750 pounds of trash.

There was a school-wide cleanup at Terra Nova High School.

Pacifica's 4-H Club pulled 400 pounds of trash from Mussel Rock including a couch, a bucket of roofing tar, a bowling ball and car parts.

When Beach Coalition President Lynn Adams - overseer and enthusiastic initiator of the day's events - took to the microphone, she said she was overwhelmed and thankful for a city of Earth Day volunteers who gave us all heart and hope. She thanked and introduced members of the Beach Coalition who created and took charge of massive projects and made them happen.

She invited student representatives to the stage as she welcomed Congresswoman Jackie Speier, D-San Mateo, to the podium.

Several students asked Rep. Speier to be our Earth Day Hero in Washington, DC, and she said, "Yes." One student gave Speier a Pacifica Earth Hero button and another asked her to take four more of those buttons

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An interview-biography with Pacifican Julie Lancelle

By Jean Bartlett (www.bartlettbiographies.com)

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to the Obama family and the Congresswoman said, "Yes." Many of the student representatives described their Earth Day efforts.

The Congresswoman thanked the young people for cleaning up after the older people and asked them to say to the people they see litter, "Shame on you."

Karen Ervin, a member of the Pacifica School District Governing Board, who Adams credited with "really bringing the message to the kids," presented the Congresswoman with a letter detailing what Pacifica's children had done for the Earth. Speier said the letter will be entered into the Congressional Record. Lynn Adams presented Rep. Speier with a "Star of the Sea" Award.

"Pacifica is a special jewel to be protected day in and day out," the Congresswoman said. "It is incumbent upon us all to take care of the Earth."

The Congresswoman also discussed her recently proposed bill, HR 5061, the San Francisco Bay Improvement Act of 2010, which will direct up to \$1 billion in federal funds, \$100 million annually over a 10-year period, for the purpose of restoring more than 100,000 acres of the Bay's wetland habitat, which has suffered massive manmade abuse.

In closing, Congresswoman Speier quoted anthropologist Margaret Mead as she addressed and thanked Lynn Adams. "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever does."

When Julie's term on Council ended in December of 2010, Congresswoman Jackie Speier permanently honored and thanked Julie Lancelle in the Congressional Record "...for her outstanding advocacy and dedication to her community."

In 2011, Julie — along with Pacificans Nick and Lorraine Gust (extraordinary philanthropists and family patriarch and matriarch of the famous, family-run Nick's Restaurant) — was the recipient of a People Who Care Award. The annual award was established by the Board of Directors of Pacificans Care.

Established in 1982, the all-volunteer Pacificans Care is a "community-based nonprofit organization created to support core social service organizations in Pacifica." Its purpose is to ensure "that our neighbors in need succeed in developing a healthy, self-sufficient, and improved quality of life."

Along with celebrating Julie's service on the Pacifica School District Board and her successful efforts to protect local wilderness, 2011 Pacificans Care board member Kathy Gustavson's comments also included the following.

"One of the primary issues Julie addressed as a Councilmember was the battle to save Sharp Park Golf Course based on her belief that the principle of diversity and balance is just as essential in human society as it is in natural systems, and that balance is directly related to a community's ability to thrive over time. Her love of open space has always been about balance, and she continues to hold that as long as participants in golf and archery can minimize their impact on other creatures and respect their space, then their way of being outdoors shouldn't be unfairly eliminated. In addition to her efforts to save open space, Julie has also focused her energies toward human services as Coordinator of the Pacifica Collaborative since 2003. The Collaborative coordinates the Summer Kickoff to Kindergarten program, Turn Off the TV Week and is currently working on an initiative, Bridges to Success, to create a partnership between

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preschool and primary school teachers. Julie is a former member and President of Pacificans Care and a longtime supporter of the Pacificans Care 'Share of Care' drive."

* * *

"I do believe that one individual can change things," Julie said. "You have to try. You have to dig in. I also believe that laughter and love are essential tools in creating change."



Julie and her family – Jon, Henry and Karen – enjoy the glory of the Spruce Goose, aka, Howard Hugh's Flying Boat, at Oregon's Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum.



Jean Bartlett is a longtime Bay Area features writer: Pacifica Tribune, Oakland Tribune, San Jose Mercury, San Mateo Times, Portraits & Roots, Marin Independent Journal, Twin City Times, Ross Valley Reporter, Peninsula Progress, Coastal Connections, Bay Area Business Woman and Catholic San Francisco. She is also a former Hallmark Card writer, a produced playwright and a published author.

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