

Eco-Tip of the week for 7-16-17

Message of Local Environmental Advocate Lives On

By David Goldstein, VCPWA, IWMD

Last Wednesday, the local chapter of the Surfrider Foundation held a “paddle out” event in memory of Paul Herzog, who passed away earlier this month at the age of 49. Dozens of mourners on surf boards launched from Marina Park, gathered in a circle past the wave line, and commemorated the life of this prominent advocate for the environment.

For many years, Herzog worked for Surfrider, an organization dedicated to environmental advocacy, action, and education. The local chapter of the organization holds regular beach clean-up events, participates in land-use and other civic planning processes, and conducts public outreach, sometimes in partnership with public agencies such as the Ventura County Watershed Protection District. Herzog was the national coordinator of the Surfrider Foundation’s Ocean Friendly Gardens Program.

At education booths or in conversation with the public, he was fond of asking people whether they would be interested in “giving CPR to their garden.” After a brief pause, he would explain the acronym; CPR stands for conservation, permeability and retention.

Conservation includes use of mulch to retain soil moisture and prevent erosion. Conservation also includes saving native habitat through use of indigenous plants. Permeability is addressed through gaps in hard surfaces to absorb and filter water runoff. Retention of runoff means keeping water on-site to irrigate plants, replenish creeks and groundwater, and prevent flooding downstream.

When the program started, Herzog recruited Surfrider volunteers to re-landscape private yards. He then used this record of success to collaborate with public agencies, re-landscaping parkways (the planted area between the street and sidewalk), including making small cuts in the curbs and then planting in adjacent basins to absorb runoff from the street. This work was part of a larger Surfrider program called “Know Your H2O.” More recently, Surfrider focused on education and promotion of these programs, guiding home owners and public agencies to implement ocean friendly gardening practices on their own.

A Celebration of Life in memory of Paul Herzog will be held at Treepeople in Beverly Hills on August 6 in the morning.

<http://www.surfrider.org/programs/ocean-friendly-gardens/?programs/entry/ocean-friendly-gardens>