

Pacifica Beach Coalition Teams Up with National Day of Service Event

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Pacifica Beach Coalition teams up with National Day of Service Event, attracting hundreds of volunteers to Linda Mar State Beach.

By [Jessie McCormick \(Open Post\)](#) January 25, 2013 at 2:08am



Two quotes from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., support this special National Day of Service in Pacifica:

"All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance, and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence."

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is: 'What are you doing for others?'"

National Service Day was first established four years ago by President Barack Obama to invigorate community volunteering.

“Appropriately, it coincides with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. day, which is dedicated to the volunteering and pioneering spirit of a great civil rights leader, and the presidential inauguration ceremonies” said Karen Gorman, coordinator of Obama’s National Day of Service event in Pacifica.

Volunteers, young and old, came from Morgan Hill, Stanford, Redwood City, San Mateo, Millbrae and Brisbane, as well as Pacifica and Daly City. The volunteer who came the furthest hailed from Pittsburg.

Despite a high surf advisory and brilliant winter sunshine, a total of over 200 non-partisan volunteers, including groups such as Terra Nova High School students and Troop 29 Boy Scouts, Pacifica Beach Coalition, Pacifica Shorebird Alliance and their leaders, congregated on Saturday (19th January, 2013) morning at either end of Linda Mar State Beach, pledging up to three hours each, to either clean the beach, bluffs and parking lots from the Pedro Shopping Center to the north end of the beach (picking up 212 pounds of trash and 10 pounds of recycling), or pull out invasive ice plant and restore dune habitat for the threatened Western Snowy Plover. Deirdre Finnegan of the Pacifica Beach Coalition said "Latecomers reported finding no litter because the earlier clean up volunteers did such a thorough job!"

Lynn Adams, President of the Pacifica Beach Coalition, taught volunteers why and how to pull up ice plant to prepare the ground for next year's planting. PBC volunteer Claudia Reinhart led a team to block unofficial trails across the dunes so the resting Western Snowy Plovers, listed as threatened under ESA, could be protected from disruptions. Approximately 800 native plants were donated by Go Native, a local Habitat Restoration company. These had been nurtured from seeds gathered from plants on this same beach. Another 200 dune grass cuttings were collected and replanted from thriving colonies at Linda Mar Beach.

Mary Petrilli, who teamed up with Clark Natwick 16 years ago with a mission to transform the ice plant dunes into native habitat for the Snowy Plover and other beach dwellers, has been planting native plants on Linda Mar State Beach every year since. Petrilli shared the story about Clark's decades of beach stewardship, usually working single handedly, and asked volunteers to honor him, Martin Luther King, Jr, and President Obama with their work. She enthusiastically explained how to carefully plant the seedlings on dunes to help them quickly get established.

"It was so heartening to see so many people come to work on our beach, both picking up litter and planting natives, as well as removing the non-native ice plant," said Adams. "This group today pulled almost as much ice plant in 2 hours, as we did all of last year!" "Now, we pray for some rain to help these plants take root", said Kathy Kellerman, volunteer plant propagator, who grew most of these plants for *Go Native* and many of the natives used for other Pacifica restoration projects, from seed.

Returning visitor Rose Pierro, from Boulder, Colorado, said, "I came here about 10 years ago, when they were planting way back by the Community Center. I've wanted to come every year since but haven't been able to. This year I was so happy to join in the planting; I can't believe how the dunes have changed and how beautiful they are now."

Volunteers, sweaty and tired, left the site happy and invigorated knowing they made a difference. Most pledged additional volunteer hours in the future to help here in Pacifica and/or projects in their own communities. Nationally this National Day of Service was a huge success. Locally it may even be a game changer for the threatened Western Snowy Plover and perhaps even for the volunteers who worked together, shared a special day, and started a journey of service, uplifting humanity with dignity, importance, and painstaking excellence!

Photo Gallery

