

SM Baykeeper to Host 'Online Party'

Santa Monica Baykeeper is launching its first annual EcoGala, an event that is to be held entirely online. In an effort to lower the group's environmental footprint, Laurie Feldman, the director of development and marketing for Baykeeper is trying to turn conventional fundraising on its head.

Feldman, who has been in the nonprofit business for 20 years and actively involved in fundraising for the last four is the creator of this approach.

"Traditionally, fundraising is event focused," Feldman said. "In order for people to raise money, they have to spend money, or they have to come to a party. I think people are ready to embrace change and donate without attending an event."

EcoGala is an online "party" that takes everything one would see at an actual event and translates it online. Activities include an online auction, monthly contests and drawings, electronic gifts, a tribute journal and blog. Guests even have the opportunity to bid on items donated by celebrities, including Barbra Streisand and Jack Johnson.

"There is a lot of time and energy that goes into planning an event," Feldman said. "From getting talent to stage production to meals, a lot of money is spent. [With EcoGala] over 90 percent of the money is going to the organization."

The online event launched Feb. 3 and will run until Dec. 31, with a goal of raising \$200,000. The proceeds will go to Baykeeper's program.



BARBRA STREISAND

"We have an advocacy program that holds polluters accountable," Feldman said. "We have a watershed program that restores creeks and waterways that make their way to the ocean. We also have a kelp restoration and monitoring program in which we are trying to restore the kelp forest."

Because EcoGala is considered a progressive way of planning an event, progressive, eco-friendly promotion strategies are being enacted.

"I'm trying to take Obama's message of social networking," Feldman said. "We're using online resources such as Facebook and YouTube. I think it's going to work that way because we're out there social networking via the Internet. I want to help the environment so we're sending emails, talking about it and getting people engaged [as well as approaching publications like the Malibu Surfside News for articles]."

The Web site also released a video of the president of Heal the Bay, Mark Gold, advocating the event. Other popular endorsers include Barbra Streisand

and Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

"By hosting the event online, Santa Monica Baykeeper is taking fundraising to the next level environmentally," said Robert F. Kennedy Jr., chair of Waterkeeper Alliance. "There's no need to get in your car, no dishes to wash and no need to put on a tux, everything from the auction to the tribute journal will be online. A great creative way to raise funds without taxing our resources."

"As a longtime supporter of Santa Monica Baykeeper,



ROBERT F. KENNEDY JR.

I support and commend their innovative efforts to raise funds without taxing the earth," Barbra Streisand said. "I look forward to participating in more events like this that are creative and fun."

Another upside to the EcoGala being held online is the personal cost to the attendees. They can donate \$5, or they can donate \$10,000. Anyone can participate and can donate whatever they wish.

To find out how to "attend" the event, visit the EcoGala's Web site at, www.ecogala.smbaykeeper.org.

BY NICOLE KLIEST

LETTERS to the EDITOR

(Letters are continued from page 4)

a full-blown legal battle costing the community millions of dollars. Santa Monica Baykeeper and our coalition partners were ready to go the distance to protect our bay from this project. I am glad we didn't have to. The threats associated with this project weren't slight, community leaders responded without needing to be convinced by long legal battles and mediagenic events. The market may be Woodside's public reason for wasting \$32.5 million on the OceanWay proposal. Strong community opposition to

their senseless risks is a reason they should stay away for good.

Tom Ford
Executive Director, Santa Monica Baykeeper

THEATER THOUGHT

Editor:

Something seems to be missing from your Jan. 29 article, "Malibu Stage Co. Moves in New Direction." It felt like a description of a new production of "Othello" without any mention of its original author.

Geoffrey Ortiz and Robby Mazza may not know that Jackie Bridgeman was the heart and soul and deep pockets for the Malibu Stage Co., which she helped found and into which she poured her lifeblood for nearly 20 years. Any substantive article about the Co. needs to include her just as any new production of "Othello" needs to credit Shakespeare.

Claire Douglas

8 ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS

BEST PICTURE

BEST ACTOR: SEAN PENN
BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR: JOSH BROLIN
BEST DIRECTOR: GUS VAN SANT
BEST ORIGINAL SCORE: DANNY ELFMAN
BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY: DUSTIN LANCE BLACK
BEST COSTUME DESIGN: DANNY FELCKER
BEST FILM EDITING: ELLIOT GRUBMAN

"AN AMERICAN CLASSIC. SEAN PENN GIVES THE PERFORMANCE OF THE YEAR. THE TENDERNESS HE RADIATES HERE IS REVELATORY. A TOTAL TRIUMPH. Josh Brolin is simply astounding. Gus Van Sant's best film."
PETER TRAVERS, ROLLING STONE

"'MILK' IS HERE TO RECRUIT YOU - AND ALL AUDIENCES WHO YEARN FOR STORIES OF HOPE AND INSPIRATION. Sean Penn's transformative performance adds another chapter to the volumes this great American artist has written for the ages."
AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE

"'WILL 'MILK' BE BEST PICTURE? MY HEART SAYS YES. IT'S MY EMOTIONAL FAVORITE IN THE OSCAR RACE."
ROGER EBERT, CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

WINNER
BEST PICTURE
NEW YORK FILM CRITICS CIRCLE

WINNER
BEST ENSEMBLE
CRITICS' CHOICE AWARDS

WINNER
BEST PICTURE
SAN FRANCISCO FILM CRITICS CIRCLE

WINNER
BEST ACTOR
SEAN PENN
NEW YORK FILM CRITICS CIRCLE

WINNER
BEST ACTOR
SEAN PENN
LOS ANGELES FILM CRITICS ASSOCIATION

WINNER
BEST ACTOR
SEAN PENN
SAN FRANCISCO FILM CRITICS CIRCLE

WINNER
BEST ACTOR
SEAN PENN
NATIONAL SOCIETY OF FILM CRITICS

WINNER
BEST ACTOR
SEAN PENN
CRITICS' CHOICE AWARDS

WINNER
BEST DIRECTOR
GUS VAN SANT
SAN FRANCISCO FILM CRITICS CIRCLE

WINNER
BEST SCREENPLAY
DUSTIN LANCE BLACK
SAN FRANCISCO FILM CRITICS CIRCLE

WINNER
BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR
JOSH BROLIN
NEW YORK FILM CRITICS CIRCLE

WINNER
BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR
JOSH BROLIN
NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW

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SEAN PENN
MILK
EMILE HIRSCH JOSH BROLIN DIEGO LUNA AND JAMES FRANCO

WRITTEN BY DUSTIN LANCE BLACK AND DIRECTED BY GUS VAN SANT

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PACIFIC, EDWARDS, REGAL, UA & REGENCY (MON-THURS) WILL ADMIT AMPAS

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