



Letter from Doretta

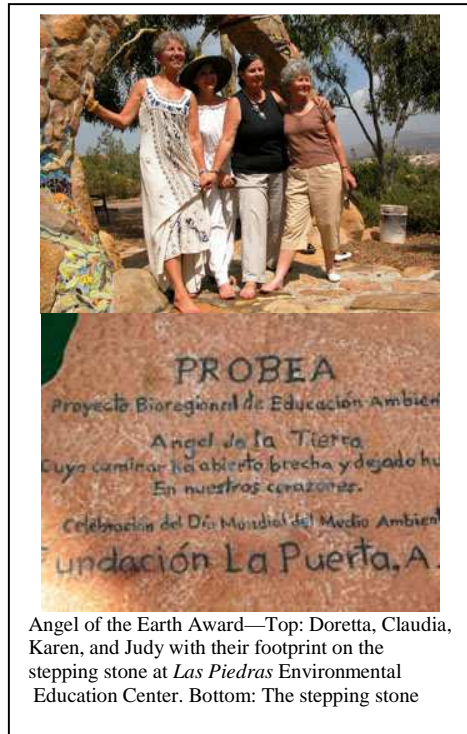
"The things to do are: the things that need doing, that you see need to be done, and that no one else seems to see need to be done." And what one little individual can do.

These words were written by R. Buckminster Fuller (from *Critical Path*, 1981) to a 10-year-old boy who asked him the question whether he was a "doer or a thinker."

The PROBEA team continues to "do" our environmental education programs in the Peninsula and we also spend a lot of the time "thinking" about how to navigate these challenging economic times.

In June 2008 we all participated in *World Environment Day* at the *Las Piedras* Environmental Education Center in *Parque del Profesor* in Tecate, BC, with all our binational friends and neighbors. Much to our surprise and delight, PROBEA was presented the first *Angel of the Earth* award for our 10 years of collaboration with Fundación La Puerta (FLP) and our contribution to environmental education in the Baja California peninsula.

We graduated 20 educators in June of last year from our year-long teacher certificate course (*Diplomado en Educación Ambiental*); our native plant nursery on the grounds of Fundación Esperanza de México (FEM) in Colonia La Gloria in Tijuana has doubled in size, and our plant inventory continues to expand through the nurturing and daily attention of our garden community workers, called *Promotoras*; closing in on our third year of facilitating *Nuestro Patrimonio Natural* (NPN) in Baja California Sur (BCS), over 300 educators have been trained in our curriculum and more than seven individuals have been trained as instructors. Ninety school/community projects have resulted from their commitment to involve students and families to put into action what was learned. More than 13,000 individuals have participated in the projects in BCS.



Angel of the Earth Award—Top: Doretta, Claudia, Karen, and Judy with their footprint on the stepping stone at *Las Piedras* Environmental Education Center. Bottom: The stepping stone

In the Baja California/San Diego County region PROBEA and COBACH (the Baja California state high school system) signed an agreement in November to work together to bring NPN to the region. The PROBEA team adapted the curriculum for this region in record time, and we implemented our pilot workshop in January. It was a tremendous success. (See story below.)

We need your support more than ever to continue our work in the Peninsula. Please consider a donation to PROBEA. No matter how large or small, it all makes a difference.

¡Muchas gracias! Doretta

Exciting News



Doretta Winkelman signs COBACH/PROBEA Agreement under Karen Levyszpiro's watch.

Initiation of *Our Natural Heritage, Bioregional Pride* in Tijuana

In May we were approached by representatives from Colegio de Bachilleres (COBACH), a public high school system in Baja California, seeking to establish a collaboration with PROBEA in a joint program. It was decided that *Nuestro Patrimonio* was the perfect fit for their needs, as well as for PROBEA's commitment to the US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) grant that we obtained in April 2008. After several meetings, we established the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding. COBACH and PROBEA signed the memorandum on November 3,

2008. COBACH agreed to enroll 35 educators from their 22 facilities in the state to participate in our pilot training.

Adaptation of NPN Curriculum

During the first few months the PROBEA team established the criteria for adapting our original Baja California Sur curriculum for this region. We also met with the representatives of Comisión Natural de Áreas Naturales Protegidas (CONANP), the national agency in charge of natural protected areas in Mexico, to express our desire to include information about the Natural Protected Areas in Baja California, and they agreed to collaborate by providing the technical data for each of the eight areas. Back at the Museum we began our research on the best approach to combining our two regions (Baja California and San Diego County) by involving our scientists from the Binational Research Center of the Californias (BRCC), as well as scientists from the Centro de Investigación Científica y de Educación Superior de Ensenada, BC (CICESE), a scientific research center of Baja California State University and CONANP in Baja California. With the help and guidance of Dr. Exequiel Ezcurra, former director of the BRCC and his team of scientists, we made the decision to design the curriculum into four ecological regions, and selected 10 ecosystems to study within those regions that connect our two countries. We also received support in selecting the flora and fauna of each ecosystem; the Museum's Graphics Department set up the design, and an exhibit artist drew our illustrations. We assembled and completed the draft curriculum in record time.

***Our Natural Heritage, Bioregional Pride* Pilot Workshop**

The pilot training was delivered to 41 COBACH (the high school system in Baja California) teachers from 17 schools in the state, one secondary school inspector from Tijuana, and 9 members of CONANP the area in charge of natural protected areas in Mexico. Next steps are to produce the final Spanish curriculum version and translate it into English, as well as to obtain funds to make the program on-going and sustainable.



COBACH and CONANP educators doing the "Picos y patas" adaptations activity at the training.

New Grants

PROBEA has been working in Loreto since 2002. We were initially invited and funded by the Hermosa Beach Sister City Association to facilitate our workshops with teachers in the 17 schools in the community. We are happy to announce that recently we received two new grants from the International Community Foundation (ICF) and the Marisla Foundation to continue our work in Loreto.

Native Plant Garden

In November 2008 we expanded the nursery at FEM, doubling its size with the help of our volunteers Dave Dalton, Security Director at the Museum, and Paul Taylor, Karen's husband. More than 500 seedlings are ready to be planted and distributed among community members and schools who want to plant native gardens.

Workshops and Training

Nuestro Patrimonio Natural

In the fall of 2008 we delivered three regular trainings and a Trainer of Trainers in *Nuestro Patrimonio Natural* in BCS. We had 23 participants in the regular workshop and seven trainers were trained in La Paz; Loreto had 11 participants, and Los Cabos 30 participants. They are all implementing their projects and field trips. Completion celebrations for BCS are planned for the last week in April. This program, implemented for the past three years with funds from ICF, has served to train 296 educators from Baja California Sur, who in turn teach more than 20,000 students and other individuals in 146 schools and organizations. Each of the participants in the training workshop commits to doing a project to benefit their community's environment, with tangible and measurable results leading to changing attitudes toward the environment for life.



Participants doing nature observations in Estero de San José Los Cabos, BCS



Students showing off their recycled materials. Loreto,



More observations, Estero de San José, Los Cabos

School Yard Habitat (SYH) training at Fundacion Esperanza de México (FEM)

In January 2009 we delivered a workshop to 25 FEM *promotoras* and teachers from the *colonias* neighboring their facility. The participants were trained in creating easy-to-care-for gardens requiring little to no water that can provide beauty and learning opportunities in the schools for the students and community residents.

Our own native plant garden on FEM grounds served in the training as a model to follow. We emphasized how small patches of habitat can supply food, water, shelter and a place to raise young for urban wildlife. In our nursery we are already propagating plants that will be available for schools and homeowners.

This project is funded by FEM's *Posada Esperanza* and the USFWS. In addition, FEM volunteers and staff have spent countless hours helping to create and maintain the gardens. To all we say, "This could not have happened without you. Many, many thanks!"

School/Community Projects

An important component of all our trainings is that participants, mainly educators and community volunteers (*Promotores*), commit to designing and implementing a school or community project to benefit the environment. Projects range from native plant gardens to battery recycling, water quality monitoring, and disseminating hazardous substances information. Since 2006, more than 200 projects have been designed and implemented by our workshop participants, and more than 12,000 individuals have participated in such projects.



Students putting into action their learning about native plant gardens

Get Involved

Support these and other PROBEA projects to ensure that the conservation message continues to be disseminated throughout the Baja California peninsula and the states surrounding the Sea of Cortés. How can you get involved?

Donate now to PROBEA! To make a donation to our program, please contact Eowyn Bates, Director of Annual Fund and Membership Programs, 619.255.0172, ebates@sdnhm.org. and send your contribution to the San Diego Natural History Museum. Please state that you would like the donation to go to the binational program, PROBEA. Thank you!

Volunteer! PROBEA seeks volunteers to assist in the office and participate in project and outreach work. Contact our Director of [Volunteer/Intern Services](#) at volunteers@sdnhm.org.

Calendar of Events*

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION
Projects Completion Celebration for “ <i>Nuestro patrimonio natural, orgullo sudcaliforniano</i> ”	April 24	Inn at Loreto Bay Loreto, BCS
Projects Completion Celebration for “ <i>Nuestro patrimonio natural, orgullo sudcaliforniano</i> ”	April 27	EPI La Paz, BCS
Projects Completion Celebration for “ <i>Nuestro patrimonio natural, orgullo sudcaliforniano</i> ”	April 28	Hotel Presidente Intercontinental San José del Cabo, BCS
<i>World Environment Day</i> with Centro de Educación Ambiental Las Piedras	June 6	Tecate, BC
COBACH Projects Completion Celebration for “ <i>Nuestro patrimonio natural, orgullo bioregional</i> ”	June 19	TBD Tijuana, BC

***Dates subject to change.**

For more information, please contact Karen LevySzpiro at klevyszpiro@sdnhm.org or call 619.255.0228.