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SAVE THE BAY INVITES COMMUNITY TO ATTEND GALA CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF PROTECTING AND RESTORING SAN FRANCISCO BAY *Special Anniversary Evening to Feature Inaugural Bay Steward Awards, Local Fare and Auction*

OAKLAND, CA – October 19, 2011 – Save The Bay, celebrating its 50th year as the oldest and largest organization working exclusively to protect and restore San Francisco Bay, today announces its November 3rd gala celebration in San Francisco, *Splash! 50 Years of Making Waves*. Founded in 1961, Save The Bay will commemorate 50 years of preventing massive bayfill projects, halting destructive dumping, re-establishing wetlands and public access to the shoreline and rallying community to save the Bay.

“Save The Bay has been a driving force for protecting San Francisco Bay, helping to ensure the Bay is the centerpiece of the region’s character and pride,” said U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein.

“If Save The Bay had not vigorously protested its destruction, San Francisco Bay and the surrounding environment would not be the beautiful natural treasure it is today,” said Save The Bay Executive Director David Lewis. “We are thrilled to invite the Bay Area community to join us as we honor the heroes that saved the Bay half a century ago and share our vision for a healthy Bay to improve the region’s quality of life and economy in the next 50 years.”

The gala will be held from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on November 3, 2011 at the City View and Terrace at the Metreon in San Francisco. **Individuals and corporations can purchase tickets online at www.saveSFbay.org/tickets**. The evening will feature dinner fare from local restaurants, a live auction and the organization’s inaugural Bay Steward Award ceremony, sponsored by the America’s Cup and Schwartz MSL, honoring the following recipients:

- Lifetime Achievement Award: Esther Gulick, Kay Kerr and Sylvia McLaughlin
- Corporate Bay Steward: Cupertino Electric
- Community Bay Steward: City of San Jose, California
- Individual Bay Steward: Ron Blatman

Other sponsors include Bank of America, NBC Bay Area, Davis Polk and Wardwell LLP, Ghirardelli Square, Port of San Francisco and Wells Fargo.

The Save The Bay Story

By 1961, one-third of San Francisco Bay was diked off or filled in for development and there were plans to fill 60 percent of the remaining shallow Bay, leaving only a narrow shipping channel. The public had access to less than six miles of shoreline, and the Bay was choked with raw sewage and industrial pollution.

Kay Kerr, Sylvia McLaughlin and Esther Gulick fought back, forming “Save San Francisco Bay Association” by offering membership for \$1 and mobilizing tens of thousands of residents to save the Bay from destruction, initiating California’s first modern grassroots environmental movement. Since then, the organization – now known as Save The Bay – has achieved dozens of victories, including:

- Won a legislative moratorium against bayfill, closed the garbage dumps ringing the shoreline, and helped stop raw sewage flowing untreated into the Bay.
- Established the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), a state agency to regulate the Bay and its shoreline that has served as the model for worldwide coastal zone management.
- Launched our *Community-Based Restoration Program*, engaging tens of thousands of community volunteers and students to restore Bay wetlands.
- Stopped San Francisco International Airport’s runway expansion project that would have filled two square miles of the Bay.
- Secured passage of Healthy Bay Beaches legislation to protect public health by requiring regular and consistent water quality monitoring at Bay beaches.

- Established the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority to generate funds for Bay wetland restoration – a giant step toward re-establishing 100,000 acres of healthy wetlands around the Bay.
- Secured the first-ever regulations in the Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit to require Bay Area cities to reduce the trash they discharge into the Bay.
- Worked with San Jose to pass a landmark ban on single-use plastic bags – the strongest policy in the country and one that will significantly reduce plastic pollution in the Bay.

The biggest part of our whole effort was to create awareness about the Bay and its connection to everyone around it," Sylvia McLaughlin said. "I just hope people continue to appreciate the treasure of the San Francisco Bay. We want this to be here for those who come after us and beyond."

Save The Bay in 2011

As a result of Save The Bay's work, the Bay is cleaner and healthier today than it was 50 years ago, and the region is now known for its commitment to sustainability and conservation. In fact, a half century after the organization was founded, the Bay Area is poised to host the biggest and most prestigious regatta in the world – the America's Cup – right here on San Francisco Bay. Further:

- More than half of the Bay is ringed with public trails, linking a necklace of shoreline parks.
- Large-scale restoration projects are underway, including the largest tidal wetland restoration project on the West Coast in the South Bay Salt Ponds.
- Over 50,000 students have helped to restore the Bay through Save The Bay projects since 2000.
- 35,000 citizens are involved with Save The Bay's mission and ongoing projects.

Individuals interested in learning more about Save The Bay's history are encouraged to visit www.saveSFBay.org or play the non-profit's online trivia game, **Battle for the Bay** at www.battleforSfbay.org.

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Supplemental Information

Save The Bay Anniversary Gala: Splash! 50 Years of Making Waves

- November 3, 2011; 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
- City View & Terrace at the Metreon, San Francisco
- Emcee: Diane Dwyer, NBC Bay Area News Anchor
- Auctioneer: Mark Buell
- Honorary Co-Chairs: U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein, California Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom, The Honorable William K. Reilly
- Exclusive VIP reception honoring the event's Host Committee, sponsors, and Bay Steward award winners
- "Taste of the Bay" cocktails and bites prepared by local restaurateurs
- Premiere of special short film by *Saving the Bay* producer, Ron Blatman
- Save The Bay's inaugural Bay Steward award ceremony
- Exciting live auction of exclusive items and opportunities
- Delicious three-course meal provided by Back to Earth Catering
- Entertainment by local favorite Lavay Smith & Her Red Hot Skillet Lickers
- Photography by Drew Altizer Photography

Bay Steward Award recipients

Lifetime Achievement Award: Esther Gulick, Kay Kerr and Sylvia McLaughlin

In 1961, Sylvia McLaughlin, Kay Kerr and Esther Gulick formed Save San Francisco Bay Association (now Save The Bay), spurred into action by the City of Berkeley's plan to fill in 2,000 acres of San Francisco Bay and the thought that the Bay could very easily be turned into a river-like shipping channel. Appalled that the filling of their beautiful natural treasure was considered "progress" and further, that there was very little public access to the Bay, the three women quickly mobilized their communities, and thousands of residents joined for just \$1.

What began as a small group of women concerned about the future of the Bay grew into the modern grassroots environmental movement in the Bay Area. These "tea ladies" were initially dismissed as irrelevant and their goal was derided as impossible. And yet they helped build and lead a massive citizens' movement that won a moratorium against Bay fill; established the first coastal zone management agency in the country, the Bay Conservation & Development Commission (BCDC); and helped to create the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

Corporate Bay Steward: Cupertino Electric

Cupertino Electric was founded in San Jose in 1954, and has since become instrumental in spurring the growth of the entire Silicon Valley technology industry. An innovative and forward thinking company, Cupertino Electric also has a long-standing tradition of generosity, involvement and service to the community and to San Francisco Bay. They have been an enthusiastic partner of Save The Bay for several years, providing valuable volunteer muscle to help restore the Bay shoreline.

Most recently, Cupertino Electric helped Save The Bay greatly increase its efficiency and capacity to restore native wetlands by helping to fund, supply, and power our new greenhouse at the Palo Alto Native Plant Nursery this year. The greenhouse allows for a longer growing season, better climate controls and larger more robust plants. This game-changing piece of Save The Bay's restoration and education programs would not have been possible without the incredible generosity and continued support from Cupertino Electric.

Community Bay Steward: City of San Jose, California

San Jose – the largest city in the Bay Area and the third largest city in California – has emerged a leader in reducing the amount of plastic pollution that is clogging our creeks and Bay by banning single-use plastic bags. In December 2010, the city passed an ordinance that bans plastic bags and places a small charge on recycled-content paper bags. San Jose's ordinance applies to more retailers than any policy in California and should be a model for cities across the region, state and country.

Save The Bay applauds San Jose's commitment to cleaning up its neighborhoods and creeks for the benefit of its citizens and San Francisco Bay. Save The Bay works diligently to reduce the plastic bags that pollute our waters, smother wetlands and harm Bay animals – and working with cities such as San Jose is a key strategy in preventing this pervasive Bay pollution. Save The Bay looks forward to working with City of San Jose – a proven environmental leader – to improve San Francisco Bay for generations to come.

Individual Bay Steward: Ron Blatman

Ron Blatman is executive producer and creator of the KQED/KTEH public television series *Saving The Bay* – the first television program to tell the story of San Francisco Bay and the people who have shaped and reshaped it over the centuries. *Saving the Bay* offers an inspirational history of how the efforts of a few forward-thinking individuals helped to save the centerpiece of the Bay Area – home to millions.

Saving The Bay won four regional Emmy awards, including Best Documentary in 2010. When the series premiered locally on KQED/San Francisco in October 2009, it had the single highest ratings of any PBS program in the nation the evening of its initial broadcast, with the audience increasing every 15 minutes until the end. The series has since been re-run locally and premiered nationally in April 2010 showing viewers nationwide the beauty and fragility of San Francisco Bay. By bringing both the progress and the plight of San Francisco Bay to a much larger audience, the series has made Bay Area residents interested in the Bay and its future, reminding many that it must be protected and restored to improve our quality of life and economy now and into the future.

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