

LOCAL PEOPLE,

By Jim Buckley

Montecito Journal, June 1995

Timothy Kirshtner: The Man Who Hates Trash

Montecito Beautification Day will come and go. Many of us will help out on this first Saturday of November, and then put away our plastic gloves and trash bags until next year.

Not so Tim Kirshtner. He hates garbage. Tim has been busy cleaning Hammonds and environs, on his own for the past nine years. He only recently added Butterfly Beach and The Biltmore, to his route. If you know Butterfly, you have probably seen the blond young man earnestly collecting trash. Lots of it. Mr. Kirshtner was instrumental in getting the County to finally approve the new concrete containers at the steps, and along the road. He also helped to convince MarBorg to increase trash pickups to six days a week.

For a while the Montecito Community Foundation, with money from Haley/McGuire fund was paying Tim for a small part of the cleanup. That money has since dried up though (\$120 a month, basically \$10/hour for twelve hours). "It wasn't enough," says Tim. "It takes me ten hours a week to clean the beach, so I was doing mostly volunteer work."

A local boy

Tim was born on Coronado Island in 1976, and his family moved here when he was one year old. He attended El

Montecito, Montecito Union, SB Junior and Senior Highs, and onto City College. Tim has been a surfer his whole life, having spent days on waves from San Francisco to Baja and Australia. In all those places, he has always picked up trash. On a recent trip to Carlsbad, just north of San Diego, to visit his mother he spent the weekend surfing and cleaning up Carlsbad State Beach and a campground called Salsipuedes.

“It’s mostly people littering out of their cars. It doesn’t even have to be at the beach, but when it rains it washes off all the city streets, and it all goes right down to the ocean. It’s mostly just little things too-cigarette butts, Styrofoam, bottle caps, just tiny little things. I get a lot of beer bottles, but basically just small stuff. That’s why it’s so difficult,” as he points out, as he shakes his head in dismay.

Making a business out of it

Styrofoam is a big problem. Part of Tim’s passion is planning for the future, making people think about natural packaging, like corn-based packaging material, plastic-like plant cellulose, which could dissolve in water and would prove to be more environmentally sound. “If someone could develop a cup that would hold hot liquids well but would break down immediately, that could go a long way towards cleaning up the environment,” Tim suggests.

Tim’s mother, Mary, formerly worked at Montecito Video (when Dana Newquist owned it). Tim also worked there. Other family members are sisters Kelly, Shannon, (who is a UCSB student), and Kathleen and brother Patrick. Tim is also involved in native plant restoration, which he studies at SBCC.

Kirshtner has decided he wants to make a business out of his desire for clean beaches, and has begun making inquiries as how to go about it. He is looking for guidance from other businessmen as to what kind of licensing he needs, etc.

“I would like to work 40 or 50 hours a week, on my own, and if I make enough money doing it, I could then hire more people. Then I’ll have to think about workers comp, trash bags, and other materials, stuff like that.” If you think you have something to offer Tim, he can be reached at 805 969-4582.