



CRC's GREEN SCENE

A monthly newsletter of the Sustainability Committee at Cosumnes River College

Move Over Blue Books: “Green Books” are Coming to CRC’s Bookstore!

Debra Sharkey reports...

When a student turned in his global climate change assignment last semester, the soft green color of its cover stood out amidst the sea of Blue Books turned in by other students. On closer examination, I discovered the Green Book was printed on 100% recycled paper with the following definition of sustainability on its back cover:

“Sus-tain-able

- 1: capable of being sustained
- 2a: of, relating to, or being a method of harvesting or using a resource so that the resource is not depleted or permanently damaged
- 2b: of, or relating to, a lifestyle involving the use of sustainable methods.”

Interested to learn more about this earth-friendly product, I contacted Roaring Spring Products, the manufacturer of these nifty little exam booklets. A few emails later, Hawk’s Nest buyer Marsha White confirmed that our bookstore will purchase Green Books once the current supply of Blue Books dwindles (probably by late Spring 2009).

In a subsequent email exchange about CRC’s new Honor Code, ESL professor Lisa Marchand suggested the Code be printed inside the cover of our Blue Books. Biology

professor Julie Oliver jumped into the dialog with a suggestion that we print the Code inside Green Books instead. As of this writing, philosophy professor Rick Schubert and others are looking into this possibility.



How exciting to see this kind of synergy at CRC! The goals of academic excellence, honesty, and integrity and of increased sustainable practices are not separate but symbiotic. Such spontaneous collaborative thinking gives me hope that we can cultivate in our students the ability to think “bigger picture” and “longer term” with respect to Earth and its many inhabitants.

If future generations are to live harmoniously on what appears to be an increasingly crowded planet with dwindling and finite resources, this kind of thinking and awareness won’t just be desirable—it will be vital.

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Meet our Student Members Lizz Gaylord: another CRC student who wants to make a difference

Editor's Note: In this continuing series, we feature one of our CRC Sustainability Committee student members each month.

Elizabeth (Lizz) Gaylord, 23, already has a fair bit of life experience under her belt. A Truckee native, Lizz attended Sonoma State University out of high school, starting out as a nursing major (she is currently an EMT and CNA).

Lizz moved to Elk Grove about four years ago, where she worked for the City of Elk Grove before quitting her job to return to school. In her third year at CRC, Lizz's love of travel and geography/geology led her to Profs Scott and Sharkey and the global climate change class (Biol 351/Geog 305), where she learned of climate-change effects she had

witnessed firsthand in the mountains.

Overnight, literally, Lizz switched her major to geography and is now eagerly pursuing her new goal of working as a climate-change expert or educator some day. "Global warming makes me feel small. It seems that no matter what I do personally, I can't change the world. I joined the Sustainability Committee because I felt that finally I could be part of something on a larger, more effective scale."

Lizz is devoted to her new cause of reducing CRC's carbon footprint and of bringing about a change of attitude in CRC's student body vis-a-vis the environment—hence her rallying cry: "I can't do it, but WE can!"

Lizz Gaylord, student member of the CRC Sustainability Committee, is majoring in geography with an emphasis on climate change.



CRC Considers Graduation Sustainability Pledge

Andrea Salmi reports...

The Sustainability Committee is working with student leaders to give graduating students the opportunity to take The Graduation Pledge of Social and Environmental Responsibility.

One form of the pledge states, "I pledge to explore and take into account the social and environmental

consequences of any job I consider and will try to improve these aspects of any organizations for which I work."

While the details are still being worked out at CRC, other campuses have had graduating students sign the pledge, keep a copy of the pledge in their wallet, recite the pledge during graduation ceremonies, and wear a ribbon indicating that they have taken the

pledge and intend to carry the stated principles into their work life.

The pledge is a project of The Graduation Pledge Alliance. Their excellent website is at www.graduationpledge.org/new/



Turn your Trash into Treasure: Join a Freecycle Network™

Cindy Erickson reports...

Have things you no longer need? Looking for free stuff? Join a Freecycle™ group and clean out your clutter – without filling up a landfill!

Freecycle™ is a geographically-based Yahoo group that harnesses the power of the Internet so that members can give away things they no longer need or want to someone who could use them. Members post messages to give away (or receive) items such as computer equipment, furniture, old magazines, or clothing. Freecycle™'s mission is “to build a worldwide gifting movement that reduces waste, saves precious resources and eases the burden on our landfills.”

The nonprofit network began in Tucson, Arizona in 2003, and is now made up of 4,629 groups with more

than 6 million members in more than 85 countries around the world. According to Freecycle™, they are “currently keeping over 500 tons a day out of landfills.”

Briefly, here is how it works:

- Join the Freecycle™ Group nearest you (see Freecycle.org).
- Post your OFFER or WANTED message following the list's guidelines.
- Get replies and arrange an exchange.
- Post a TAKEN or RECEIVED when the exchange is complete.
- Everything posted must be FREE. No trading.



Green Sleuth:

Un-clutter your Mailbox – Reduce Annoying Junk Mail

Lizz Gaylord reports...

Looking for a way to reduce (rather than merely recycle) your junk mail? Here are some helpful websites:

1. www.greendimes.com This is my favorite site. A premium membership (just \$20—less than a dime a day) not only reduces your junk mail but also plants trees on your behalf. (Greendimes promises to plant five trees for each sign-up.) Greendimes claims to have stopped over 18 million pounds of junk mail and planted over one million trees!
2. www.the-dma.org Registering your name with Direct Marketing Association allows you to pick the types of mail you'd still like to receive. Your name is then added to the 'Do Not Mail List.' Downside: I have done this twice and still receive copious amounts of junk mail.
3. www.greenhome.com This site explains how to reduce incoming mail of all kinds. You can opt out of credit card and mortgage junk mail, catalogs, even pesky junk emails.



Book Review

Hot, Flat, and Crowded: Nuggets of Information for the Info-Seeker

Lizz Gaylord reports...

Thomas L. Friedman, foreign affairs columnist for *The New York Times*, has written his follow-up to *The Earth is Flat*.

Hot, Flat and Crowded, which adds climate change to the globalization issues addressed in *The Earth is Flat*, is so bursting with information and so analytical that it can be overwhelming—so don't expect a leisurely read!

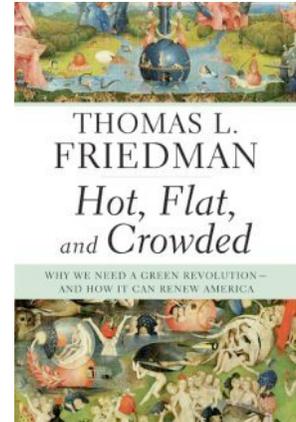
I enjoyed the book, though perhaps “enjoyed” is not the appropriate word; rather I learned much from the book,

reading it slowly in order to digest Friedman's ideas. (I have almost every other page dog-eared as well as about 50 Post-It™ tabs in the book.)

Friedman calls for a Green Revolution not only as a renewal of America but as a survival tactic. He calls for America to rise up and re-assume its role as leader in the world. His extensive experience and knowledge offers an array of ideas likely unfamiliar to most people.

For the reader who wants to

go beyond the basics of climate change, geopolitics, and economics, *Hot, Flat, and Crowded* offers an enlightening, incisive, and progressive read.



Those Plastic Water Bottles!

Adapted from Ann Rothschild's TREE tip in the Jan 9 edition of *Cross*

I was appalled to see Pam Dinsmore of the *Sacramento Bee* “Food and Wine” section recommending a “case of drinking water” in her article on saving money while shopping (1-7-09).

What is she thinking? Does she not know that bottled water is “more expensive than gasoline and has a huge carbon footprint” (democrats.org)? Here are some other things you should know—and share with friends and family who are bottled-water addicts:



- Water taken from springs and aquifers has led to a depletion of water in rural areas, taking affordable water from people and damaging ecosystems;
- The conglomerates Nestle, Coca Cola, and Pepsi Cola are pushing this water craze and claiming it is important and healthy, when in fact our tap water is perfectly fine to drink. Natural Resources Defense Council did a study and found that bottled water is not necessarily purer than tap water. Some varieties are good, but FDA regulations for bottled water are weaker than the EPA's regulations on tap water.
- Having created a growing market for bottled water, transnational corporations are getting access to springs and aquifers and municipal water supplies with no regard for environmental or social impacts. In India people are protesting Coca Cola's interference in public water systems.
- Bottled water costs 1,000 times more than tap water and it is cheaper to install a water filter on your tap than to buy bottled water.
- Manufacturing plastic bottles creates toxic, hazardous wastes and consumes much energy, and even with recycling, 30 million plastic bottles end up as garbage in the U.S. alone...every day!

Source: *Sierra Club*.



Cosumnes River College Sustainability Committee

Members:

Gregory Beyrer
 Ryan Connally
 Fred Deneke
 John Ellis
 Cindy Erickson
 Dennis Hock
 Dave Hodapp
 Cath Hooper
 Hiram Jackson
 Darlene Mathias
 Julie Oliver
 Ruth Oxman
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 Christine Scherbaum
 Susan Scott (Co-chair)
 Debra Sharkey (Co-chair)
 Michelle Smith
 Christine Wagner

Student Members:

Heather Downing
 Daniel Fagan
 Elizabeth Gaylord
 Kristiana Hauge
 Onyi Ibeabuchi

Newsletter:

Cindy Erickson
 Cath Hooper

*We welcome your
 comments, observations,
 and story ideas.*

News In Brief...

Get Involved in Earth Week 2009

Planning for Earth Week 2009 is underway, with the main quad events to take place Wednesday, April 22.

Faculty, please consider assigning environmental-themed projects and encouraging your students to participate in Earth Week activities during the week of April 20 – 24.

Volunteers are still needed for a few tasks. Interested faculty should contact chair Julie Oliver at oliverj@crc.losrios.edu for more information.



Green Summit Coming in March

The upcoming "Green California Summit & Exposition" at the Sacramento Convention Center (March 16-18) offers FREE entry to the exhibition hall and keynote events. You can register at the following website (click on the *Register Online* link in the orange box).

<http://www.green-technology.org/gcsummit/attendees.htm>

Note: There is a day-pass fee of about \$100 to attend the seminars.



Rio Bistro Switches to Compostable Plastic Cups

Check out the new 'Corn Cups' used to package pudding and fruit in the Rio Bistro cafeteria. The cups are 100% compostable because they

are made from corn instead of petroleum-derived plastic.

According to Rio Bistro manager Antonio Scalzo, the decision to switch to these cups was easy because they are cheaper (by about four cents per cup) than the old plastic cups.

The new cups have worked out so well that the cafeteria has decided to start using them for cold drinks at catered events. If you visit the salad bar, you'll also see new 2-oz salad dressing containers made from the same biodegradable material.

Antonio said he is on the lookout for additional environmentally-friendly food-packaging options that meet standards for presentation, durability, and resistance to leakage.

Way to go Antonio and Rio Bistro!

