



CRC's GREEN SCENE

A bimonthly newsletter of the Sustainability Committee at Cosumnes River College

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Tiny House Experience: The Student Perspective

Carlos Carrasco reports...

Working on the Cosumnes River College tiny house was an amazing experience. Starting out with only a 26' x 8' trailer and ending up with the finished product was both rewarding and empowering.

Looking back to the beginning of the spring semester, building a tiny house seemed like such a daunting task. Starting construction in late February left us with just under eight months to complete the tiny house.

There was not a lot of time for reflection. No sooner was one stage of construction completed than it was time to spring into the next. Once floor framing was done, it was on to wall framing. Once wall framing was done, it was on to roof framing. Once

all the framing was complete, we had to sheath the structure and put Tyvek on the exterior—and so on and so forth.

I came into this pre-apprenticeship class at the beginning of the year with hardly any relevant experience and left with a broader understanding of construction. Building the tiny house exposed me and other students to many different facets of the construction industry. Some of us found that we really liked framing while others preferred interior work and finish carpentry. Some students moved on to acquire construction management internships while others chose to go directly into the trades. We all enjoyed getting to work with students from other programs, like Architecture and Architecture Design Technology.

(see Tiny House, Page 2)





Tiny House

(From page 1)

As the competition date quickly approached, we were confident that we would be ready—even though we had had a few setbacks. One was that we really had no knowledge of plumbing. We had to teach ourselves as we went. We sprang a few leaks as a result, but we learned from the process. Just before the big day, we all had to put in a little overtime to finish the last

details. Decor and staging made the tiny house feel nice and cozy.

The competition was the true test of the mechanical systems and solar array. We had some water pressure problems and were not able to deliver the required 8 gallons of water in 10 minutes. Also, during one of the test days, our battery died on us due to cloudy weather. In the end, even though we placed fourth** (out of

nine colleges), I consider this to be a huge success. Moving forward, we intend to keep our project as a learning piece to inspire future green projects and concepts here at Cosumnes River College. ♦

**Editors' note: we hear that the tiny house projects of the top two colleges had much less undergraduate involvement, which makes CRC's achievement all the more impressive.



For a video tour and more in-depth information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/pg/916TinyHouse/videos>



Sustainability Update from Our Sister College

Don Reid reports...

This year, American River College has had a number of noteworthy improvements on the sustainability front.

We significantly decreased the number of plastic water bottles being sold by installing 11 water bottle filling stations around campus. According to the stations' digital counters, nearly 112,000 fewer water bottles have been purchased as a result.

This year, we were also able to install around campus a dozen Max-R recycle/landfill stations made from recycled milk jugs, as well as two solar-powered trash compactor recycle/

landfill stations from Bigbelly—that email our maintenance department when they are full!

In addition to these, and in an effort to expand the recycling effort, for every new recycle station on campus, we will be upcycling an old rock-sided garbage can into a student-art-covered recycle can to be set next to an existing garbage can.

We were also just able to order new recycle stations for the Student Center and hope to be installing those before the end of the year.



A waste audit after Fall Convocation determined that the diversion numbers we were seeing there were very similar to what we are seeing campus wide. By improving the infrastructure there as a pilot program, we hope to be able to document whether we can increase the amount of recyclables collected.

This year's Earth Day theme at ARC will focus on diversion; please join us on April 19, 2017—and for more information, consider following along on our Facebook/Twitter page at @SustainARC. ♦

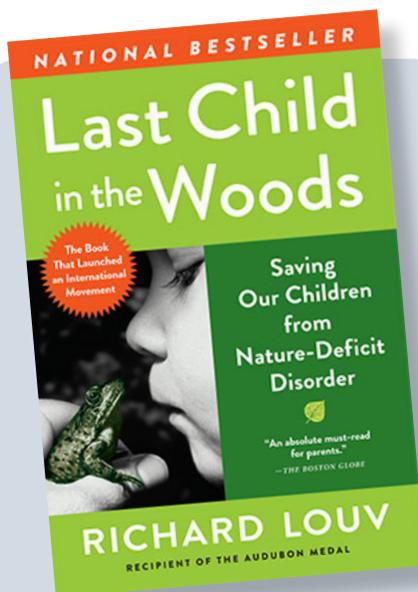
Book Review: A Student's View of 2016-17's OneBook

Irina Kurudimov reports...

In this year's OneBook pick, "Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder," author Richard Louv offers an extended definition of nature: "natural wildness: biodiversity, abundance – related loose parts in a backyard or a rugged mountain ridge. Most of all, nature reflected in our capacity for wonder." Louv regrets that the bond between nature and humans is disappearing: people don't pay attention to their surroundings or spend time in nature, and it is very rare to see kids playing outside. He goes on to argue that exposure to nature is essential for healthy childhood development and for the physical and emotional health of children and adults.

Louv states that children are spending less time outdoors and have less access to nature thanks to the replacement of open space, woods, and wetlands by manicured lawns, golf courses, and housing developments. Louv also points to children's growing addiction to electronics, citing one boy who told him that "computers are more important than nature, because computers are where the jobs are," and a fourth-grader who made the comment, "I like to play indoors better, because that's where all the electrical outlets are." Parents are also to blame with their exaggerated fears of natural and human predators—as are government restrictions and laws that make access to nature difficult.

Drawing on personal experience and the perspectives of urban planners, educators, naturalists, and psychologists, Louv links children's



If you haven't yet read *Last Child in the Woods*, the campus Sustainability and OneBook Committees encourage you to do so and invite you to join the campus conversation about this year's OneBook choice.

alienation from nature to attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), stress, depression, and childhood obesity. He is raising the alarm to save children from nature-deficit disorder.

Throughout the book, Louv presents reliable, credible, and valuable evidence, studies, and interviews, and shares his own and friends' personal stories as well as quoting from and referring to many different writers who raise the same alarm and share similar ideas to his. He talks with parents, children, teachers, scientists, religious leaders, child-development researchers, and environmentalists who recognize the issue and offer solutions as well.

At the end of the book, Louv offers practical solutions and simple ways to heal the broken bond and then provides guidance (in the section titled "100 actions we can take") for how to begin to solve the problem before it is too late. He also recommends some really good books about nature, for kids and families, focusing on the restorative qualities of nature for children and recommending that we reacquaint our children and ourselves with nature through hiking, fishing, bird watching—and disorganized, creative play. By doing so, he argues, we may lessen the frequency and severity of emotional and mental ailments and come to recognize the importance of preserving nature.

This book changed my views about our neighborhood playground. I now look at it as an antiseptic space that provides little opportunity for exploration, imagination, or peaceful time. Children need nature, and especially free play, so that they can roam, discover, and create in the wild. It may be, as Louv argues, that nature therapy can work as a form of behavior therapy for ADHD kids. The most important point here is that there's a huge world out there that our kids should be experiencing first-hand whenever possible, rather than through a computer screen. Richard Louv shows us an alternative future, one in which parents help their kids experience the natural world more deeply—and find the joy of family connectedness in the process. ♦

Save the date!
Richard Louv will speak
at CRC on April 4, 2017



CRC Student Takes a Stand on Proposed North Dakota Pipeline

Brandon Martinez reports...

In this season of uncertainty following the results of the presidential election, large numbers of people are deciding to join the environmental and social justice movements, motivated in large part by the pivotal and symbolic solidarity actions surrounding the proposed 3.8 billion dollar Dakota Access Pipeline that would take fracked oil from the Bakken oil field through North and South Dakota, Iowa, and then Illinois.

Environmental groups and Native Americans say that, should the pipeline spring a leak, it would contaminate Lake Oahe and many important surrounding rivers. Besides the potentially irreversible environmental damage, the proposed construction on the pipeline ignores the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty and threatens sites that contain burial grounds and cultural

artifacts held sacred by Native Americans.

The drama unfolding in the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota has inspired activists from all walks of life to join the voice of #NoDAPL. People from over 200 indigenous nations as well as thousands of activists—families, individuals, and leaders—have united to stand up peacefully for tribal rights while police use rubber bullets, tear gas, concussion grenades, sound cannons, water cannons (in subfreezing temperatures), and other military-style weapons that have injured hundreds of people.

As of December 2nd, USA Today estimates 1,000 to 3,000 civilians have participated in the protest at Standing Rock. Activists are also gathering at the offices of the Army Corps of



Engineers, at Citibank and Wells Fargo banks in the U.S., and worldwide in major cities including Tokyo, London, Vancouver, and Calgary.

I've personally taken this as a call to action to stand up for clean water, environmental justice, and climate issues, and I hope you will join me in doing so. For up-to-date news surrounding this issue or information on how to help, please visit www.standwithstandingrock.net. ♦

SSF Donates Filling Station



In the photo above, SSF members Natalie Guerra, Rosalia Adams (president), Tehreem Aslam, Thomas Her, and Marissa Tinsley enjoy the fruits of their labor by trying out the newest water bottle filling station on campus. They purchased the station, located in the science building, with the award money they received from winning the national Tap-a-Palooza contest in Spring 2015. ♦

CRC Duplicating Totals

In spite of regular appeals for us to monitor our copy usage, Duplicating experienced a large increase this November in copies made. That means a likely increase in fall semester totals—and potentially the highest year-round paper usage in recorded memory. To help keep the numbers down, please remember to request double-sided copies whenever possible. ♦



Bienvenidos Arrazola (Welcome to Arrazola)

Heather Hutcheson reports...

Some of us were dismayed to read that global warming seems to be escalating; according to Angela Fritz in *The Washington Post*, “This fall was the warmest on record; 2016 will be at least the second-warmest year.” Thus, we calculate our carbon footprints and do our best to make energy efficient choices, to shop locally, and to invest for the future by carbon offsetting.

At the same time, we are curious about the world and look forward to exploring other cultures, even while recognizing the environmental costs of travel. According to Foundation myclimate, from The Climate Protection Partnership in Zurich, Switzerland, a flight from Sacramento to Oaxaca generates 1.4 metric tonnes of CO₂ per person. In light of this, opportunities for cultural experiences that don't involve travel become all the more important.

Thanks to a partnership with Puente and funding from the Cultural Competence and Equity committee, nearly two-hundred students had the chance to travel to one of my favorite

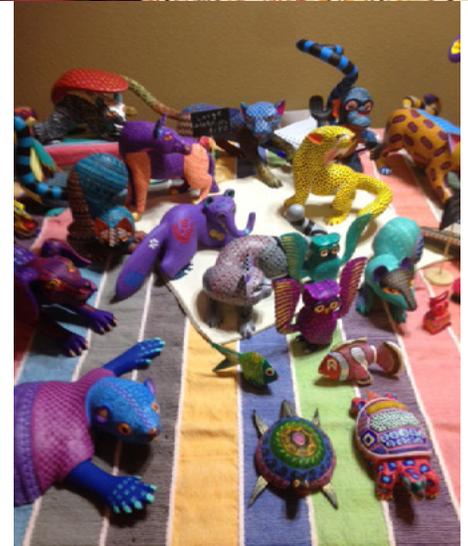


destinations in the world, Arrazola, Oaxaca, México, through the two days of art and cultural presentations by Alma Arreola.

Arreola's presentation focused on the full process of creating an *alebrije*, wooden sculpture, from seed to finished piece of art. In the elaboration of the process, she shared how the community learned the importance of reforesting and of engaging youths in the planting and maintenance of their essential copal forests.

Arreola explained that more than 60% of Arrazola's population is dedicated to the creation and sales of *alebrijes*. She also described traditional gender roles: the men carve while the women paint, and youths help with sanding and painting as they develop skill and interest in this art form.

A copal tree (right) takes approximately twenty years to reach maturity. Thus, annual planting (during the rainy season) is essential to maintaining the environment and, according to Arreola, the town's main “industry.”



Arreola delivered the story of her community, shared information about the town's governance structure, *usos y costumbres* (uses and customs), and other issues related to sustainability and civic engagement, saving us all that 1.4 metric tonnes of damage to the environment. ♦



A sign greets visitors to Arrazola: Welcome to Arrazola, a town of artisans and people of peace. In our community, the lands, services, and resources are for the enjoyment for our citizens. Don't buy problems!



Restaurant Review: Downtown's New Co-op Buffet

Steven Coughran reports...

On this cold and rainy fall evening, I can imagine no better way to fulfill my service to CRC's GreenScene than to head out to the Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op Buffet for plant-based comfort food. I had eaten at the newly constructed store just days before accepting this writing assignment, and being a creature of habit, I wondered if I might not simply choose my favorite dishes again.

On my last visit, I had thoroughly enjoyed spicy seitan fajitas with vegan mashed potatoes. SNFC's beet and arugula salad makes me grateful to have become an adult who can appreciate artful preparation of foods that as a child I thought inedible (thanks in part to my early indoctrination that food always needed to include meat).

I thought I might try the seasonal veggies taco plate or fungi pizza this evening, and I wanted to be sure to have a glass of kombucha on tap. What a tremendous luxury it is to have such a wide range of plant-based



Photo by Comstock Magazine

dishes to choose from—though the Co-op buffet offers a bounty of food for omnivores too. As I perused the offerings in front of me, my urge for comfort won out. I was delighted by the herbed and lightly oiled chimichurri roasted potatoes. The jerk tofu was just sweet and spicy enough, and the garlic greens again reminded me of how far we've come from my mother's cooking.

Really, it is simply good fortune to have such quality and tasty diversity where I shop for my groceries and to feel a sense of community with those who work and shop in my neighborhood store. I hope those of you in Laguna and Elk Grove will make the trek to 29th Street, between R and S, to enjoy a meal or take away from the Co-op Buffet. ♦

Make the World a Better Place This Holiday Season

Timaree Hagenberger reports...



You don't have to contribute to clutter this holiday season! If you have a few people on your list who seem to have everything, you might consider donating money in their names to Well-Fed World (www.awfw.org), through their Plants-4-Hunger gift-giving campaign. Every penny of your financial gift will go directly to four well-established plant-based hunger relief projects in Ethiopia, Guatemala, and India, as well as to community food gardens here in the United States (all donations are divided equally). And if you use the coupon code VEGNEWS in the comment field, Plants-4-Hunger will double your donation. ♦

Cosumnes River College Sustainability Committee

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- Steven Coughran
- Cindy Erickson
- Timaree Hagenburger
- Cath Hooper
- Christina Ocrant
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- Debra Sharkey
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- Rosalia Adams
- Natalie Guerra

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- Cindy Erickson
- Cath Hooper
- Christina Ocrant



We're on the web!

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GREEN SCENE

on the CRC Homepage