



CRC's GREEN SCENE

A bimonthly newsletter of the Sustainability Committee at Cosumnes River College

In This Issue:

CRC Celebrates Earth Week 3-4

'Imagine,' Creek Week, Socratic Dialog Among Earth Week Traditions 5

Student Profile: Veronica Vogan 6

CRV bottle collection program continues 6

Reader Reviews: Films: The Future of Food, King Corn 7

SSF Club Explains Zero Waste on Earth Day 7

News In Brief: Worms Update, Sustainability Honors for CRC, Sustainability Conference in June, Green Scene Awards 8

From Afghanistan to Zimbabwe: Why flatlanders should care about mountains

Andi Salmi reports on this year's Earth Week keynote address by Dr. Stephen Cunha, formerly of CRC, now Chair and Professor of Geography at Humboldt State University. Dr. Cunha travels widely throughout the world and has served as a consultant for the World Bank, USAID, and World Conservation Union. He works for better geography education in American schools and has received CSU's highest award for sustained excellence in Social and Behavioral Sciences teaching.

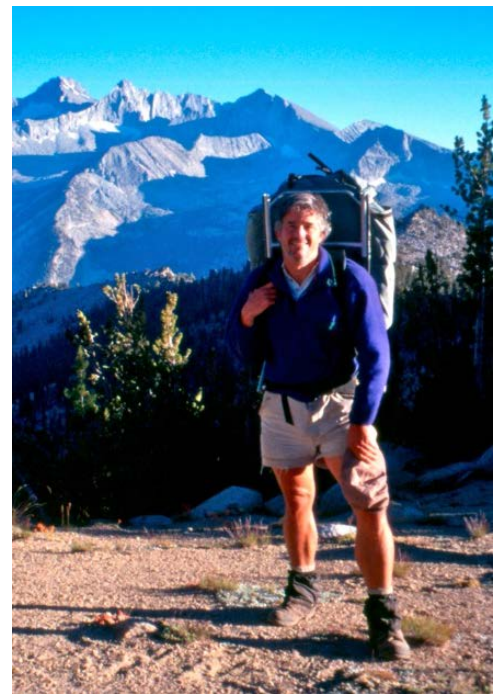
Dr. Stephen Cunha's Earth Week keynote address highlighted the many ways that mountains are important to all life on the planet. He engaged us with spectacular photographs of mountain regions throughout the world, most taken during his own travels, and astounded us with amazing facts, from the mountain in Kauai that receives more than 400" of rain each year to the Atacama desert in Chile that received rain last year for the first time in recorded history.

Dr. Cunha opened with a discussion of the many different definitions of mountains, suggesting that the best way to view them is in terms of climate and vegetation, as mountains provide various zones of soils, climate, and vegetation at different

altitudes. He went on to point out that mountains cover one fifth of the world's surface and are home to 10% of the human population.

Yet 3.5 billion people – half the world's population – are directly dependent on the resources of mountains, including water, minerals, timber, and clean air. Mountains are vital to humans as water towers, capturing moisture

(SEE CUNHA, PAGE 2)



Keynote speaker Stephen Cunha has traveled widely, gathering photos and insight about mountain regions. In this photo, Cunha poses atop Gardiner Pass in Kings Canyon National Park circa 2005. The majestic Kings-Kern Divide looms in the distance.



Cunha: Mountains Provide Vital Resources

FROM PAGE 1

and returning it to the earth as rain and snow. They are also sites of great biodiversity, especially in tropical regions, which provide important economic plants such as coffee, tea, bamboo, and timber.

A fascinating service of mountains is the preservation of a wide diversity of traditional cultures. Because different groups of people live in isolated mountain regions, separated from other cultures by the rigors of snow, they retain their own traditions, unaltered by contact with other cultures.

In response to a question, Dr. Cunha stated that climate change could lead to changes in mountain glaciers and therefore affect water storage as well as ranges and migration patterns of species.

CENTER: The Andean Highlands near Cotopaxi, July 2012. The patchwork of fields indicates small family farms, worked by hand. The recently plowed fields reveal the dark, rich volcanic soil that indigenous peoples have farmed since pre-Incan times.

RIGHT: A woman from Otavalo, Ecuador (elevation 8441 feet), clutches her recent purchase – a guinea pig that is a local delicacy, especially when roasted on a spit over an open fire.

PHOTOS BY STEPHEN CUNHA



LEFT: The drainage basin just west of Pioneer Lakes and north of Mono Pass. The darker rock along the top ridge line is volcanic rock, now uplifted by the underlying granite. This region is part of the roadless 200-mile long High Sierra corridor.

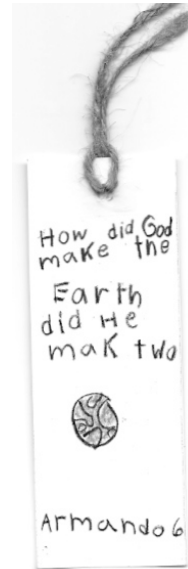
PHOTO BY STEPHEN CUNHA



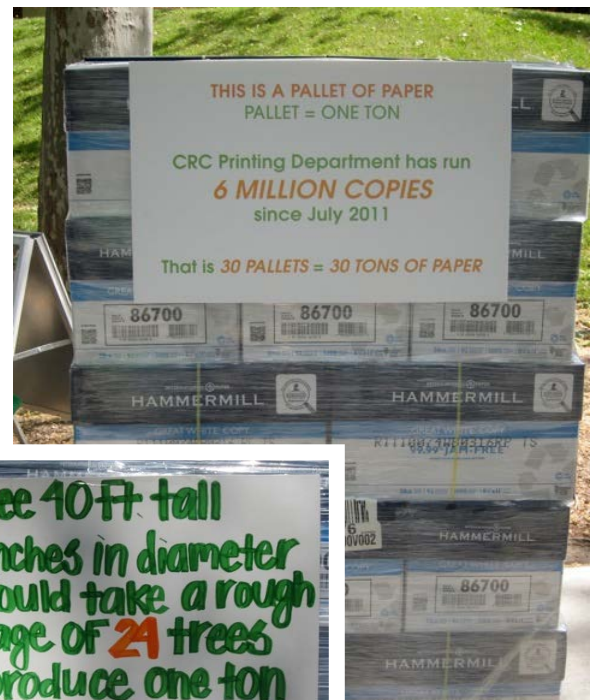


CRC's Earth Week brings Films, Speakers, and Music

RIGHT: Bryan Rodriquez and Haseeb Rahimi, from the Child Development Center, display each step of their composting project (see Green Scene, Feb/Mar 2012). The children also made bookmarks (far right) to pass out to Earth Day visitors. Armando (age 6) used his bookmark to ask "How did God make the Earth – did he make two?" **BELOW LEFT:** Mary Zimelman, Uriel Gonzalez, Steven Khong, Alea Turner, Khang "Kevin" Khong and Lorena Thomas, students in Colette Harris-Mathews's Communications 331 class, demonstrate how to cook chocolate cake, eggs, and chili in a solar oven. **BELOW RIGHT:** CRC has printed six million copies since July 2011, which is equivalent to 30 tons of paper, or 720 forty-foot trees.



PHOTOS BY ANDI SALMI



CRC Earth Day: Think, Change, Act!

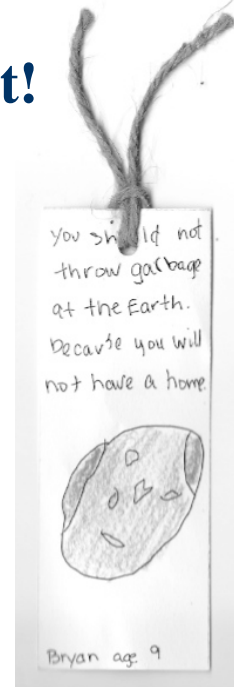


PHOTO ABOVE BY DEBRA SHARKEY ;
PHOTOS TOP AND RIGHT BY ANDI SALMI

ABOVE LEFT: Geography students Becka Schneider, Lauren Szoboscan, and Samir Qayoumi display earth-friendly products. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Bryan, age 9, made a bookmark with the advice, “You should not throw garbage at the earth because you will not have a home.” **BELOW LEFT:** Geography student Kirsten Kennedy quizzed passersby with questions about sustainability, awarding candy to those with correct answers. **BELOW RIGHT:** Students Sergio Arauza, Alexander Nunez, and Serina Liu sort garbage collected from trash bins around campus, showing how the majority of it actually could have been composted or recycled.



'Imagine,' Creek Week, Socratic Dialog Among Earth Week Traditions



Cleanup Inspires Students

Claudia Mongalo reports...

Early Saturday morning on April 14, 2012, a group of CRC students from Winnie LaNier's Dynamics of Leadership class, eager to make an impact on our environment for Earth Week, participated in the creek cleanup for Laguna Creek.

When we first arrived at North Laguna Park on Jacinto Avenue, we were amazed by the number of people in attendance. About 200 people had turned out for the park cleanup and about thirty of us for the creek cleanup. Smaller groups cleaned different sections of the creek, and by the end nearly the entire creek was clean.

We had an unspoken competition going on amongst our group, racing to see who could collect the most garbage and the most unique items – which included a pair of pants, compact discs, children's toys, and every type of ball from soft balls to dog toys. We also picked up a lot of broken glass, which could be harmful to young children playing near the pathways.

The moment that had the most impact on me was when a member of the community thanked us for cleaning up their creek, reminding me that even the smallest actions can make a difference.

PHOTOS BY ANDI SALMI



FAR ABOVE: Students perform John Lennon's 'Imagine,' sponsored each year by the Social Responsibility Committee. **ABOVE:** Prof. Rick Schubert leads "A Socratic Dialogue on Moral Considerability," which has become an Earth Day tradition. **RIGHT:** Haylie, age 5, asks "Where will they grow?" on her CDC bookmark. **FAR RIGHT:** Students Addie Thao, Baylea Martin, Bianca Velasquez, and Claudia Mongalo enjoyed making a difference by cleaning up Laguna Creek.





Veronica Vogan Returns to School, Studies Sustainability

Editor's Note: In this series, we spotlight CRC students with an interest in sustainability issues.

Born in Memphis, TN, but raised in California from age 7, Veronica Vogan became interested in things environmental early on through her love of tigers and other big cats. Learning they were endangered, she decided she wanted to help preserve endangered species.

In El Dorado High School, she loved – and excelled in – AP Biology and planned to attend UC Davis as a biology major. However, life – including marriage – intervened, taking her back to Memphis, where she raised her two children, dispatched for police, fire, and ambulance for the local sheriff's department, and completed her GED at the local community college.

A divorce and other life circumstances brought her back to California, where she returned to school in 2008 as a biological sciences major at CRC. The Biology 390 Field course to Monterey and Point Reyes was a turning point: Professor Sharkey told her of the new environmental studies major, and she knew right away she wanted to complete a dual major in environmental studies and geography.

This semester Veronica began working part time as a paid intern in the natural resources division of the BLM and as a geography tutor in the CRC Tutoring Center.

Veronica was also appointed secretary of the Students for a Sustainable Future Club. On Earth Day, she helped out with the SSF and Environmental Economics booths and attended the mountain environments presentation.

In 2013, Veronica will earn AA degrees in environmental studies and geography, but will continue at CRC for another year to complete transfer requirements for Sac State.

Veronica realizes how lucky she is to have access to a quality education and supportive professors like Professor Sharkey and would like to encourage students to consider preparing for a green profession by majoring in environmental studies and/or geography.



Veronica Vogan will graduate next year with AA degrees in environmental studies and geography.

CRV bottle collection program continues



Donna Leiva reports...

During the Spring 2012 semester, almost 800 containers were collected from around the CRC campus and diverted from the landfill. Collection in the CRC cafeteria facilitates the sorting of trash items into the correct trash, recycle, and compost

bins. Batteries and other e-waste items are also collected and recycled.

During the Summer 2012 semester, I hope to recruit more volunteers to expand regular collection from trash bins and to collect from campus events. I will also plan to make it easier for staff and faculty to donate their own

recyclables. Raising public awareness of the problem with trash, especially plastic bottles, is an important part of this program, and doing regular collections around campus is a great opportunity to share this crucial information.

Want to volunteer or donate your containers? Feel free to email me: crv4crc@yahoo.com



Reader Reviews from the *GreenSCREEN* Film Series

King Corn

Screened on March 8

In the documentary *King Corn*, college friends Ian Cheney and Curt Ellis embark on a journey to grow an acre of corn and follow the crop to its various destinations. Much to their surprise, they find their corn isn't designed for direct human consumption. A high percentage goes to the production of ethanol and high fructose corn syrup, exposed here as a cheap sweetener with little nutritional value that is in almost every processed food found on grocery store shelves.



They discover that some of their corn goes to export – to the detriment of markets in other countries since the US government is subsidizing production. And, in spite of the fact that the digestive system of a cow is not designed to process corn, a large amount of US corn goes to create feed for cows and huge profits for the beef and dairy industries – since corn is cheaper than grassland.

I highly recommend this documentary, which may prompt you to be more mindful about where and how your food is produced.

For more information check out the website: www.kingcorn.net



The Future of Food

Screened on March 15

The Future of Food, a documentary by filmmaker Deborah Koons Garcia, does an excellent job of providing information on the shocking

changes that are happening in food production. It exposes disturbing truths about how Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), through the genetic manipulation of DNA in seeds, have invaded our food choices, mostly at the hands of corporations such as Monsanto. The film brings up the issue of patents on GMO seeds, begging the question of whether we should be allowed to patent life. The film also investigates the plight of the family farm as it loses the battle against corporate control.

Watching this documentary has provoked me to pay closer attention to the issue of GMOs, to support regulation for the labeling of GMO products, and to commit to buying more from local farmers.

-- Donna Leiva, Instructional Assistant
CRC Library

Students for a Sustainable Future Explain Zero Waste on Earth Day

Nick Fox reports...

For CRC's Earth Week celebration, Students for a Sustainable Future (SSF) created a display explaining the concept of zero waste. To make our display itself zero waste, we recycled display boards from past semesters and wrote information on white boards using refillable

dry erase markers.

To describe composting, we had bowls containing compost at three stages (leaves and sticks, mid-compost rough soil, and fully decomposed soil). We also posed some questions for people to answer based on the information on the boards. Each correct answer earned a

small candy, encouraging students to read through the displays to find the right answer.

To join SSF, please contact SSF president Nick Fox (w1267315@imail.losrios.edu) or Prof. Debra Sharkey (sharked@crc.losrios.edu). Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month from 4:20 pm to 5:20 pm.



Cosumnes River College Sustainability Committee

Members:

Tamyra Carmona
Jon Cornelison
Steven Coughran
Julie Elliott
John Ellis
Cindy Erickson
Cath Hooper
Julie Oliver
Torence Powell
Andrea Salmi (Chair)
Susan Scott
Debra Sharkey
Linn Violett

Student Members:

Elizabeth Gaylord
Donna Leiva

Newsletter:

Cindy Erickson
Cath Hooper

We're on the Web!

*Look for archived issues
of the*

GREEN SCENE
on the CRC homepage.

Worms – Update!

Editors' note: In the Green Scene's Feb-Mar 2012 issue, we learned of Sandra Carter's adventure cultivating worms. Here the experiment continues.

March 2012:

The worms continued to live and prosper in their worm condo during the month of March. I added kitchen scraps and a bit of water throughout the month. Repeatedly, as soon as I would open the ceiling of their condo, the worms would disappear, wriggling underneath the peat moss and scraps. They are just way too shy for me to get to know them.

April 2012:

With the warming of April – and with a science experiment in mind – I introduced some of the worms into one of my vegetable garden planters. In the adjacent planter, I used the same planting soil but without the worms. In both planters I planted similar tomato and squash plants – just the regular suburban variety from the local Home Depot. I am trying to treat each planter similarly so that I can witness any difference the worms might make.

So far, I see that the planter with the worms has produced larger and taller plants. Can that be true? Check out the photo!



Sandra Carter's worm experiment: Tomato plants fertilized with worms are growing on the left, without worms on the right.

News In Brief...

Sustainability Honors for CRC

CRC has received an honorable mention from the CCC Board of Governors' Inaugural Energy and Sustainability Awards for its cafeteria composting project.

The project, implemented by Professor Debra Sharkey and five Environmental Studies and Sustainability students, established composting procedures for post-consumer cafeteria materials. The award acknowledges CRC as one of a few select California community colleges employing meaningful sustainable practices and will be presented at this June's California Higher Education and Sustainability Conference at UC Davis.

Congratulations Professor Sharkey and congrats to CRC!

June Sustainability Conference at UCD Promises Inspiration

Get inspired at the California Higher Education Sustainability Conference at UC Davis June 18-21. The conference showcases green campus innovations and best practices. Register now at www.cahigheredusustainability.org

Note: Those who volunteer to work the conference pay only \$15 to attend!



Green Apple Award:

Kudos to the CRC Student Development Office for reducing paper usage during the recent Student Elections by setting up electronic voting stations instead of using paper tallies.