



# CRC's GREEN SCENE

A bimonthly newsletter of the Sustainability Committee at Cosumnes River College

Photo by Jim West

April/May 2014  
Volume 7, Issue 2

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Photo above:  
This Canadian wilderness between Jasper and Banff was ravaged by fire but has made an amazing come back.

## CRC's OneBook Author Keynotes Earth Day

*Alex Casareno reports...*

It's not every day that Cosumnes River College scores a visit from one of *Time* magazine's 100 most influential persons of the century. But on Earth Day that happened—and CRC is better for the opportunity.

Earth Day visitors and students alike were treated to a Socratic dialogue on what it means to live sustainably, student-led debates and posters sessions on diverse sustainability-related topics, and a fascinating talk by Janet and David Carle on their adventures on the 38th parallel.

The capstone event of the day, however, was the visit by Michael Pollan—author, journalist, and food activist. Over 700 people packed the Recital Hall, the Black Box Theatre, and the Forum to see him in person or via live stream. Pollan, in



conversation with communications professor Georgine Hodgkinson, touched upon a variety of themes relevant to sustainability in the 21st century.

Pollan spoke of the need for consumers and young people to be aware of what they are eating, challenging students to question where their food comes from and whether the food they are eating is healthy for them or for the environment. He questioned whether it was wise for the US government to spend tax dollars on growing food for

*(see Michael Pollan, Page 2)*



## A Conversation with Michael Pollan

(From Page 1)

fuel (that is supposed to be clean energy) when the overall result is an increase in carbon emissions. (He wondered whether it might not be better to grow food for the purpose of eating instead.) He addressed a student concern as to whether the US promotes “food malpractice” by failing to better police what we eat. Pollan also talked of the need to have water policies that complement food sustainability, giving an example

of eco-friendly farming that not only nets vegetables but also raises fish.

Asked what one can do on a daily basis to promote sustainability for the planet and health for the individual, Pollan spoke of the importance of eating leftovers. Specifically, he pointed out that eating leftovers cuts down on food waste, helps reduce consumption of food products whose packaging will end up

in a landfill, and contributes to positive eating habits as families return to cooking in place of eating unhealthy fast food or convenience food.

Earth Day 2014 at CRC was a successful collaboration. Next year, with the OneBook program focusing on drinking-water, CRC can expect a continued dialogue on why sustainability matters both to the environment and to the individual. ♦

## Former Park Rangers Share 38th Parallel Stories

*Student Laurie Sisler reports...*

Retired State Park rangers David Carle and Janet Carle walked onstage with welcoming smiles in CRC's Recital Hall, where they took turns presenting a slideshow of their journey around the world, the subject of their book *Traveling the 38th Parallel: A Water Line around the World*.

Their journey started at Mono Lake, on the eastern edge of Yosemite National Park. “The 38th parallel goes right through our home in the salty eastern Sierra lake, and we often thought it would be interesting to just see where that parallel goes from here,” Janet said.

The Carles had already participated in the “water battle”—sharing the waters from the Mono Lake ecosystem with the Los Angeles area. “We had seen a really inspiring story; we lived it and had been in the middle of it,” Janet said. “We wanted to learn more about water in our home state.”

The Carles followed the 38th parallel across the Sierra Nevada, first on foot, then by boat and kayak, as they negotiated their way through the Delta and San Francisco Bay to Point Reyes.

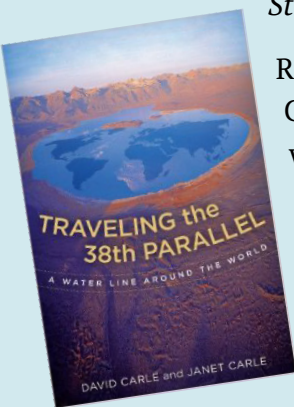
Their global journey continued through Japan, the DMZ, China, Turkmenistan, Turkey, Greece, Spain, and Portugal, before finally crossing back across the US. Along the way, the Carles found many familiar water issues.

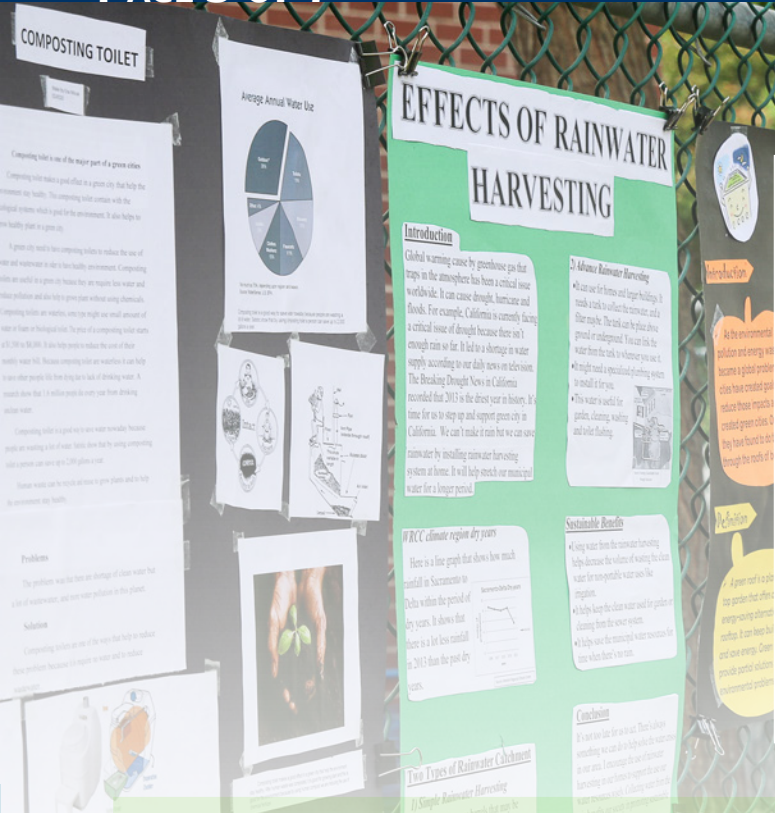
“The Yellow River is a lot like the Colorado River in this country, and both are named for their silt,” David said. “Both have a lot of problems in terms of how they've been used.”

Kathie Griley, the Culinary Academic Department Director at the Art Institute in Sacramento, after attending the lecture with her students, expressed her desire “to be more active in doing my part.”

Her response fit exactly with the Carles' mission: to inform us about water issues in the rest of the world so that we can help in the future.

“All you young people in the room give us hope,” Janet said. ♦





Andy Parrey, a student in Lisa Marchand's ESL 320 class, explains his poster project about wastewater management. For this project, students were required to find and read articles about the international Green Cities Movement. They then researched one of six topics: architecture; agriculture; emerging technologies; food and water; transportation; and waste management. They wrote 5-10 page papers on the topic, as well as making posters to summarize what they had learned. Parrey enjoyed the project and said that using pictures is a good way to get his Earth Day message to people.

# EARTH DAY SUSTAINABLE FOOD FESTIVAL



David Baker is the Director and Co-founder of GRAS (Green Restaurant Alliance of Sacramento), a coalition dedicated to greening the restaurant industry. Some of GRAS's programs include recycling cork, helping restaurants with better bicycle access, and facilitating restaurant composting. Learn more at [www.digitalinevitable.net/GRAS/](http://www.digitalinevitable.net/GRAS/)



Insight Coffee Roasters sells fair-trade organic coffee in Sacramento, and supporting sustainable, responsible coffee growers is part of their mission statement.



Architecture student Jeremiah Sanderson crouches under a shelter made from corrugated cardboard by students from John Ellis's Architecture Modeling course, Design Fundamentals (ARCH330). The shelter was one entry in Cal Poly SLO's Annual Design Village Contest, which challenges students to build a transportable shelter that they will physically carry one mile into Poly Canyon (in the hills at the edge of Cal Poly's campus), where they will then sleep in it for two nights. One group from CRC won the Fingerprint Award for the most creative structure.



Diana Bieniek and Claudia Johnson, from Labeling GMO's Sacramento, answer questions about genetically modified organisms (GMO's). Johnson's T-shirt reads "GMO shirts are easy to spot. GMO foods aren't."



Faculty from the Careers and Technology Division describe to passers-by the GreenForce Initiative programs and courses available at CRC.



Members of the Celtic band Stepping Stone, including ESL professor James Wilson (left), played outside the Science Building near the Native Plants Garden, while students and other participants perused vendor booths, student projects, and informational displays.



César Aquirre, along with geography professor Debra Sharkey and several students from the Students for a Sustainable Future Club, took on a five-day challenge to carry with him at all times all non-compostable, non-recyclable, non-reusable waste—everything that would end up in the land fill. Prof. Sharkey said “the majority of contents in our bags was soft plastic wrappers (e.g. from energy bars, candy bars, and chips) or tear-off plastic lids for things like yogurt containers. I also had a light bulb in my bag. Everyone agreed it made us more aware of the waste we generate.” The Zero Waste Tree pictured here shows the results—bags of land-fill-bound garbage—and asks the question “How big would your bag be?”



Students from Prof. Colette Harris-Mathews’ communications classes (left to right) Kathryn Villagrana, Bethany Mulligan, and Ramiro Madrigal display portable garden boxes, designed by horticulture professor Dave Andrews to show the possibilities for a future CRC campus community garden. The students also did a food drive.



Students from Colette Harris-Mathews’ Group Discussion class worked with Julie Elliott from Duplicating to “encourage CRC to go green.” Pictured here surrounding a one-ton pallet of paper are (left to right) Joey Bray, Julie Elliott, Leeza Balanay, Justin Ly, and Ariel Hevesi. This year the CRC Printing Department ran 6 million copies from July 2013 to April 2014, which represents 30 pallets of paper, or 504 trees.



Classified staff sponsored the Backwards Hanger sale, where gently-used clothing was sold for just \$1 per item. Funds were used for a \$500 student scholarship—and at the close of the sale, a sizable donation of clothing was made to the Salvation Army.



## CRC's Building Dashboard Reveals Energy Use Across Campus

*Christina Ocrant reports...*

Cosumnes River College is the first campus in the district to unveil the Lucid Building Dashboard, which will gather energy usage data from every building on campus and translate it into a graphical web interface for easy consumption.

On a campus as large as CRC's, reducing overall energy use may seem a daunting goal. To foster communication and dialogue about conserving energy, and possibly even some friendly competition between buildings, colleges across the country are using building dashboards to track and display energy use—and hopefully inspire building inhabitants to reduce their individual and collective consumption.

According to Mike Goodrich, LRCCD Director of Energy and Utility Resources, “there has been a real interest by District faculty and staff to actively participate in energy conservation efforts.” This led him to include a user-friendly energy-information-sharing platform in a 2009 technical proposal for a Smart Grid Investment Grant. One of the grant's goals was to encourage “informed participation,” including energy-information-

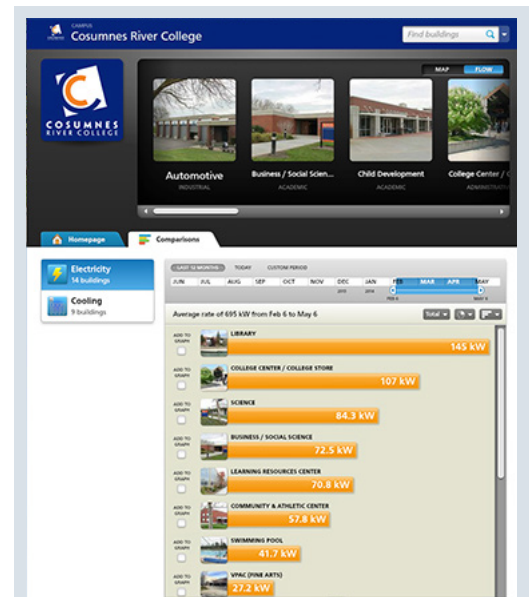
sharing and building occupant participation.

In the past, the District Energy Management System has not been intuitive for casual users. The Lucid Building Dashboard, chosen by committee from several proposals, promises a far better user interface and experience. The energy use data is collected by mechanical data loggers that have been assigned IP addresses. Lucid then retrieves this data without the need for any direct interface with the Energy Management System. This innovative way of collecting the raw energy data saves the District money.

**Visit our dashboard at [buildingdashboard.net/crc](http://buildingdashboard.net/crc)**

When you visit CRC's dashboard at [buildingdashboard.net/crc](http://buildingdashboard.net/crc), you are greeted by a photo of each building. You can select a building to view detailed electricity usage over the span of a day, week, month, or year. The interface shows kWh by default but can also show the equivalent carbon emissions (in lbs of CO<sub>2</sub>) or expenditure (in dollars/hour).

Perhaps the most interesting view comes from the comparison of all buildings on campus. When you click the blue “Comparisons” tab, you will see all buildings



*The dashboard shows energy consumption of kWh and kBtu.*

side by side. You can then select buildings (via checkbox) to compare on a graph—or simply browse the consumption levels of all buildings.

An added section of the dashboard is the “Commit to Conserve” feature. Connecting through Facebook, students, staff, and faculty can make a commitment to act sustainably in their own lives. By clicking a “commit” button, you can promise to take the stairs rather than the elevator, unplug unused appliances, or conserve in a variety of other ways.

We hope to see every campus in the district get its building dashboard up and running soon—and to find energy-use reductions at CRC and across the district. ♦

## Delivering the Gift Of Light

*Student Jaime Gonzalez reports...*

Reliable electricity is something we often taken for granted: we flip a switch and expect everything to work whenever we need it to. However, in most less-developed countries this is not the case. Close to 1.6 billion people on Earth live with little or no electricity. This lack of electricity becomes a serious problem in places like hospitals, where light is critical for surgical procedures.

CRC recently played host to a community service project to build portable solar systems designed to

bring the gift of light and electricity to those in need. During this one-day solar suitcase workshop, volunteers learned enough about the basics of electricity and solar technology to assemble a system from start to finish. They then put their training to work, producing a total of seven solar suitcase systems to be delivered to hospitals and orphanages in Haiti later this year.

Six CRC Environmental Studies students participated, including sisters Meghan and Ashley Scurti. Asked what they most enjoyed about the experience, they said, "The solar

suitcase workshop was really cool because it brought a group of students together for something bigger than us. Our favorite part was meeting all the passionate people who genuinely wanted their efforts to help others." ♦



*Students (left to right) Victor Mendoza, Meghan Scurti, Ashley Scurti, Jaime Gonzalez, Nick Jackson, and Tonya Rhodes display their finished solar suitcase, ready to be delivered to a Haitian community in need.*

### Cosumnes River College Sustainability Committee

#### Members:

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Julie Elliott  
John Ellis  
Cindy Erickson  
Cath Hooper  
Bob Johnson  
Christina Ocrant  
Julie Oliver  
Andrea Salmi  
Debra Sharkey  
Thomasina Turner  
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#### Student Members:

Cesar Aguirre  
Katelynn Rodriguez

#### Newsletter:

Cindy Erickson  
Cath Hooper  
Christina Ocrant



*We're on the web!*

*Look for archived issues of the*

**GREEN SCENE**

*on the CRC Homepage*



## News In Brief

In April, CRC's Academic Senate and Classified Senate both passed resolutions to support conserving resources by cutting back on paper and multi-copy forms used in campus offices, in particular those used for flex, release of liability, and the like.

The Academic Senate resolution also requested that the administration investigate software and systems to reduce the use of paper forms and then report its findings. Read the complete resolutions on the Sustainability Committee website.