

Go Green! ;Viva Verde! Committee Meeting Minutes

Jan. 8, 2009, 1:30 p.m.

AS 103C

Attendees: Esther Rodriguez, Facilities; Irene Scharf, Library; Kirk Williams, Horticulture; Thomas Murguia, Writing Lab; Russ Wagner, ESOL; Kim Corbin, Fine and Performing Arts/Speech; Camille Fiorillo, Library; and Denise Barkis Richter, Communications.

Denise opened the meeting shortly after 1:30 p.m., and she asked the committee members to report on one green item from 2008 that they were proud of accomplishing, and one green item they would like to accomplish in 2009.

Russ reported that he was proud of his ESOL/IEP students' recycling posters that are displayed around the campus. His students used the recyclable items list to visually teach those who aren't aware of our campus' recycling program what's acceptable and not acceptable. For 2009, Russ would like to see more student involvement and host more educational activities.

Thomas said that he was proud of his and Karen's work to get green building practices incorporated into Palo Alto College's construction and renovation. The architects and contractors have been made aware of our green building/renovation concerns, and they have been given a handout/flier that Thomas and Karen developed. For 2009, Thomas would like to have a dynamic green building proponent offer a lecture on campus.

Kirk said that he's proud that his students planted at least 12 trees on campus and created the wildscape oasis in between the GE and LL buildings. For 2009, he will make sure that Palo Alto College receives the Texas Parks and Wildlife's Wildscape Certification.

Kim reported that she's proud Palo Alto College has made so much progress with recycling empty metal, empty plastic, empty glass and paper. For 2009, she would like more education related to recycling, and she would like to get composting going with the cafeteria, REFC, Horticulture, and Groundskeeping.

Irene Scharf said that she was proud of her recycling testimonial. For 2009, she would like to for the Educational Citizenship Subcommittee to schedule/host educational workshops and activities.

Esther said that she was proud of learning how many things can be recycled. "I did not know how many things can be recycled. It did not bother me before. I was not aware. I didn't care. I am happy to see how everything is going, and how it is going to do good for all of us, young and old alike, and how much we all have done." For 2009, Esther will continue to act as a liaison between Facilities and the Go Green! Committee.

Camille said that she was most proud of our green booth at PACfest, which she organized. She said that a lot of information was disseminated to students, faculty, staff and the general community. For 2009, she would like for PACfest to be bigger and better. Camille has already come up with an idea for decorating the booth: clothes lines with bright, colorful clothes to draw attention. Air drying clothes is one of the ways citizens can reduce their energy consumption and help to reduce global warming.

Denise said that she was most proud of the launch of our campus-wide recycling program. It is something that has bugged her since she started working here in August of 1998. She also said that she assembled a Go Green! ¡Viva Verde! Committee notebook just before Christmas break. In organizing it, she was very proud to review all of the work the committee has accomplished since January of 2008. She thanked the committee members for their continued commitment and effort.

An information table will be set up in the Student Center during the first week of classes to promote our recycling program and to hand out information and freebies, like "We recycle here!" pens, "Don't be trashy, recycle" pins, and reusable bags. Denise asked for volunteers. It was decided that the best route was to e-mail the request to the committee so that everyone would have their calendars handy. The following volunteers stepped forward:

Mon., Jan. 12:	9-10 a.m. Valerie Weaver and Denise Richter 10-11 a.m. Kim Corbin
Tues., Jan. 13:	9-10 a.m. Yvonne Richardson 10-11 a.m. Ruth Ann Gambino 9-noon Leandro Esparza 1-2 p.m. Joaquin Sandoval
Wed., Jan. 14	9-10 a.m. Denise Richter and Yvonne Richardson 10 a.m. to noon Irene Dennis and Bonnie Aguilar Noon-2 p.m. Rob Hines 1-2 p.m. Sandra Gonzalez-Lamb
Thurs., Jan. 15	9-10 a.m. Diane Lerma 11:15 a.m. to 1 p.m. Denise Richter

Denise brought the article "Slow to recycle" (Colin McDonald, *San Antonio Express-News*, Dec. 28, 2008, pg. A1) to the committee's attention. She later sent a URL to the committee and the campus' Recycling Volunteers with the complete article. Here are the article's highlights:

- "In 1995, San Antonio was the first city in Texas to offer citywide curbside recycling. The city began an automated system two years ago and now is halfway through switching from 18-gallon green recycling bins to 96-gallon blue carts. The move has doubled the amount of household trash city residents recycle, from 6 percent to 12 percent."
- "But that's less than half the national average of 32 percent, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. And it's a fraction of San Francisco's 70 percent recycling rate, the highest in the country."
- "San Antonio has earned more than \$3.8 million this year [from selling recyclables]."
- "Recycling reduces the need for more landfills and protects natural resources. A ton of recycled paper saves 17 trees, 7,000 gallons of water and the equivalent of 185 gallons of gas, according to the EPA."
- "Recycling a ton of aluminum cans saves the equivalent of 1,655 gallons of gasoline." [One ton equals 2,240 pounds.]
- "Austin, with a recycling rate of 18 percent, which includes the yard waste that it composts, is following San Francisco's lead. It is considering a zero-waste plan and already charges residents based on the amount of garbage they put on the curb."
- "Haney [Stephen Haney, the city's assistant solid-waste manager] estimates that residents could recycle 50 percent to 80 percent of what they now throw away."
- "...Greenstar is building the largest recycling sorting plant in Texas near Northeast Loop 410 and Interstate 10 on the East Side...the plant will be able to process 20,000 tons a month. San Antonio now collects about 5,000 tons a month of recyclable trash."
- "The ability to make money from trash is bringing more local businesses into the fold and ultimately could increase San Antonio's recycling rates."

Denise called the meeting to a close shortly after 2:30 p.m. and thanked the committee members for their continued work. The committee's next meeting will be on Thursday, Feb. 5, at 1:30 p.m., in AS103C. Meetings for the spring semester will always be on the first Thursday of the month at 1:30 p.m. in AS103 C. Please put Feb. 5, March 5, April 2, and May 7 on your calendars.

Respectfully submitted by Denise Barkis Richter, Ph.D.