

## Go Green! ;Viva Verde! Committee Meeting Minutes

Sept. 3, 2009, 2 p.m.

FA 110

Attendees: Kim Corbin, Fine and Performing Arts/Speech; Irene Dennis, Corporate and Community Education; Anna CohenMiller and Russ Wagner, ESOL; Mary-Ellen Jacobs, English; Thomas Murguia, Learning Labs; Irene Scharf and Camille Fiorillo, Library; and Denise Barkis Richter, Communications.

Denise opened the meeting shortly after 2 p.m., welcomed those in attendance, and asked for the May minutes to be approved. The minutes were approved.

Irene Dennis (Environmental Citizenship Subcommittee) reported that the college's student ambassadors are including information about the college's recycling program in their tours of the campus. Irene said that she, Irene S. and Russ will meet before the October meeting (in person or via e-mail) to plan what they would like to accomplish during this academic year.

Kim (Recycling and Solid Waste Subcommittee) reported that the college has collected 25,969 pounds of recyclables since the beginning of the year. (Summer numbers: May: 2,600; June: 2,505, July: 2,500) She has not yet received August's total from Greenstar. Because of the recent building closures/shifts, Kim will update the recycling volunteer list and plug any holes we have. Palo Alto College's Student Government Association leadership has agreed to help with recycling in the Student Center. In addition, a work-study has been hired to help with recycling throughout campus, but especially the portables. In other big news, Palo Alto now owns a chipper, which is used to chop up tree limbs/branches so that they can be used for compost rather than being placed in waste containers and sent to the landfill. Last but not least, a cement pad has been poured near the library which will house Palo Alto's own recyclables compacter. Arrival TBD.

Natural Habitat and Indigenous Wildlife Subcommittee members were not present. Denise reported that Greg Pasztor sent an e-mail to Yolanda Jimenez, the college's development/fund-raising coordinator, about a National Audubon Society grant that could help fund Palo Alto's wetlands project. Via conversation, Greg reported that to his knowledge the Texas Parks and Wildlife Wildscape designation has not yet been secured for the college.

Anna CohenMiller (Air Quality and Energy Reduction) reported that Palo Alto College was one of 10 finalists for a Green Effect grant sponsored by "National Geographic" and Sun Chips. She and Greg Pasztor created two videos that explained how the \$20,000 would be used to create a bike-sharing initiative at Palo Alto College. Unfortunately, Palo Alto's proposal did not make it into the top five. However, Anna said that Yolanda Jimenez is going to submit the grant proposal to the San Antonio Area Foundation for funding. Anna is also interested in starting a community garden on campus.

Brad Chandler has resigned from the committee to work on his dissertation. We need someone to chair the Water Conservation Subcommittee to work on the campus' graywater and rain catchment issues.

Camille Fiorillo of the Green Purchasing Subcommittee will send an e-mail to the college's administrative assistants to remind them to reduce, reuse and recycle...and to buy recycled/Earth friendly products when possible.

Thomas Murguia of the Green Building/Renovation Subcommittee was present but had nothing new to report.

Denise asked committee members to think of others we could invite to become members of this committee. She also asked committee members to set goals they would like to accomplish during this academic year by the next meeting. Our accomplishments will be showcased on Earth Day (April 22, 2010). Also, the committee's previous accomplishments will be showcased during the October Alamo Colleges Board of Trustees meeting. Committee members are encouraged to attend the meeting and wear his/her VIVA VERDE t-shirts.

The committee had previously discussed the possibility of asking faculty to "green" Palo Alto's curriculum by offering a green component in his/her courses. Denise asked if this wasn't something we could set up this fall to inaugurate in the spring semester. The committee thought this would be possible. Denise will work on setting this up.

Denise sent a memo to President Cha Guzman on April 9 with a list of 23 employees who have had cancer or tumors during the college's 20-year history to find out whether or not this number was unusual for the size of our population. Denise followed up with another memo on May 8. She has not received a response from the president, so Denise said she would ask for a face-to-face meeting to discuss this issue.

It seems like there's a lack of time/interest to attend the Renewable Energy Roundup in Fredericksburg on Saturday, Sept. 26, as a group. However, individuals are encouraged to attend and bring back information to the committee.

Denise called the meeting to a close shortly after 2:30 p.m. and thanked the committee members for their on-going work. The committee's next meeting will be on Thursday, Oct. 1, 2 p.m., FA 110.

Respectfully submitted by Denise Barkis Richter, Ph.D.