



From the Director's Chair

Jill Buck

It is my distinct pleasure to welcome the Ohio State PTA to the Go Green family. The Ohio state board voted to partner with the Go Green Initiative (GGI) this month, and we've already been contacted by two Ohio schools that are ready to "Go Green." We have experienced such an exhilarating growth trend in the past four months: We've registered 170 schools since October, affecting the lives of 125,000 students in eight states, and the momentum continues to grow. We're honoring that momentum by hosting our first annual **Go Green Earth Summit** this April 10-12 in Pleasanton, California. Our speakers and panelists are the best in the industry. I promise, no other training and networking opportunity exists that so perfectly meets the needs of school communities as this Summit.

Juanita Haugen, past president of the California School Boards Association, had this to say: "The GGI began in my school district, and in my 25 years as a school board member in Pleasanton, I have never seen so much community enthusiasm centered on protecting children's health through environmental stewardship. The GGI has brought parents,

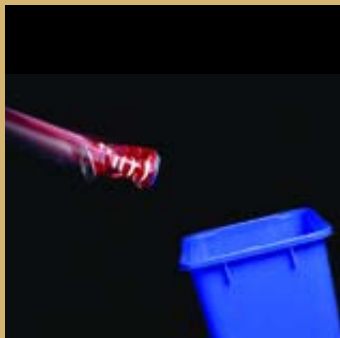
teachers, administrators, custodians, and students together in ways I never thought possible, and our schools are voluntarily achieving record amounts of waste diversion and recycling rates. The GGI is a first-rate program, and I highly recommend that school officials and parent groups send representatives to the Go Green Earth Summit for training and support."

I am so grateful to Ed Piñero, who serves as President Bush's Federal Environmental Executive (OFEE); Fran McPoland, who served as President Clinton's OFEE; David Hockey, the EPA's Director of the Resource Conservation Challenge; Meg Morris, past president of the National Recycling Coalition; Sally Conyne, National Audubon Society Science Division; and the many VIPs of the Go Green movement who have agreed to train our Go Green school communities at the Summit. Please see our Web site (www.gogreeninitiative.org) for all the details, and join us in April. You will come away from the event exhilarated, motivated, and full of great ideas to implement in your hometown. Take advantage of this golden opportunity in the Golden State!

Upcoming Events

Go Green Initiative Earth Summit, April 10-12

NEW online store opening in mid-February (see page 6)



Guest Columnist

Jennifer S.

Jennifer S. is a teenager in rural New York who has been working directly with the Executive Director of the GGI, Jill Buck, to bring recycling opportunities to her community. This is what she has to say about the GGI.

It's funny where a simple school assignment can lead you. Two years ago I needed to write an article for my high school newspaper about recycling. The only problem, it turned out, was that there was nothing to write about. No recycling bins at school, no recycling program in my city or county. I began to question why, how the basic concept of waste reduction could be so totally ignored. What I learned both amazed and disappointed me: The people who represent my community don't consider recycling an important allotment of time or funds.

My region is not unique. It's easy to find examples of thoughtless waste and environmentally destructive behavior throughout our country. It's easy to point these things out and to be discouraged by them. But that attitude does nothing to find solutions to the problems, which should be the ultimate goal.

I was introduced to the GGI about six months ago. Reading about the success of the program inspired me, but I wondered if it was a practical program for a community where recycling was a thing of the distant past. I contacted GGI's Executive Director, Jill Buck, who told me to start small and work towards full implementation of the program. She reinforced my belief that paper should be the starting recyclable in schools. I gave several presentations at board meetings and to school clubs. The response to the program was hesitant among most adult authority figures in my county; they view recycling as an unnecessary expense for a relatively poor area.

However, the town's youth were open to the ideas of Go Green. I spoke at school functions and received positive reactions from students who see recycling as a common-sense action.

Making contacts and asking for help and funding have led me to two people whom I believe will be vital members of the New York State GGI program. Moe Banville represents a Newark paper plant that is interested in adding the county of Schoharie to its paper sponsors. I have also been fortunate to meet Mr. Mark Naef, a New York State Association for Reduction, Reuse and Recycling (NYSAR3) board member. I met with Mr. Naef to discuss the problems faced by my community and similar communities all over New York State, and we are planning ways to modify our current policies to accommodate the ideas supported by the GGI.

While policies have yet to be changed, advances are being made. I am currently working to find a way to transport recyclables from local schools to the local transfer station. Recently, I gave a presentation at a Native American museum to a responsive audience, and I'm very excited to have acquired a grant to produce a recycling education pamphlet for school-aged children. Knowing that there are people who feel waste reduction is an important priority encourages me. I am determined to make sure changes take place.

The GGI is an incredible program. It is a simple formula resulting in real, measurable success. It is a wonderful method of inspiration and guidance for individuals who would like to make a real change, but don't know where to begin. The GGI is the first step in the daily journey towards saving our earth and its resources.

A Look Inside

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Generate
compost
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Tips to Try

Compost in the Classroom

One of the nation's most popular advocates for composting in the classroom is Mary Apelfhof, aka the Worm Woman. She is the author of *Worms Eat My Garbage*, THE resource for setting up and maintaining a worm-composting system at home or in a classroom. She is the co-author of *Worms Eat Our Garbage; Classroom activities for a better environment*, providing dozens of classroom assignments that relate a classroom composting bin to all subject areas and disciplines.

Mary will be a featured speaker at the Go Green Earth Summit, April 10–12, 2005, in Pleasanton, California.

For fascinating lessons and great activities, visit Mary's Web site: www.wormwoman.com.



Recycling at Hearst Elementary Has Its "Rewards"

Kate Jupina, Hearst Elementary

During the 2003/2004 school year, when Hearst Elementary implemented the GGI, we wanted to reward all the children's hard work in recycling. After our Go Green committee met, they decided to design an award, the "Hearst Recycling Trophy," recognizing the class that collected the largest amount of aluminum and plastic during the school year. This trophy has become so popular that it is now awarded monthly.

The children are very excited when they win this trophy, and they save their recyclables all month in hopes that their class will be the award recipient. Michele Clasen's first grade class was the lucky winner in December 2004. When Michele asked the class how they remembered to bring in their recyclables, they all mentioned seeing their principal, Michael Kuhfal, dressed in his aluminum can costume at pickup after school the afternoon before the aluminum can drive. This small act of fun on the part of their principal helped them remember to bring their cans and bottles the next day.

Interviewing the children in Michele's class, I found that some did not know exactly what recycling is, but they all knew it was something important to do. They explained that many of them had special places at home for putting their used aluminum cans and plastic bottles so they could save them for the monthly recycling drive. When they found out that they would only get to keep their trophy for one month unless they won the drive again, they all decided to work hard and save to bring in their cans and bottles the following month.



Recycling has "paid off" at Hearst Elementary; in the first quarter of the 2004-2005 school year, the school has already recycled over 917 pounds of aluminum and 1,683 pounds of plastic. This has netted approximately \$2,300 in recycling monies! Not only is it good for the environment, but those monies go back to the school to help provide services to the kids.

Erin and Kellen Aura created the trophy, with help from Robin Maria-Cui. The trophy is a large monarch butterfly, the Hearst mascot. The butterfly wings are made from crushed aluminum cans, and the base includes many tops from plastic bottles.



Students Have the Power to Influence Their World

Karen Brown, Regional Coordinator for Pleasanton Go Green Schools

Fairlands Elementary School has been a Go Green school for two years, and we've already made a big impact on waste diversion. The most exciting part is the impact the program has made on the students. Three years ago, our in-classroom paper recycling efforts began when fifth grader Alicia Brown wrote and received a Pleasanton Partners in Education (PPIE) grant to purchase containers for each classroom and common room. Alicia organized a group of student council representatives to empty the classroom recycling containers into larger collection bins, and she tracks the progress of the program. This same group of students helped Alicia conduct a two-day study on the quantity of lunch waste that is compostable. The results of the two-day study were impressive, and Alicia presented the data to the Pleasanton PTA Council. Now one and a half years later, Fairlands is piloting a daily food scrap program! Students in the Go Greeners Environmental Club are helping teach other students to sort their lunchtime waste into compostable (food scraps and paper products) and noncompostable (plastic, foil, liquids) trash. Way to lead, Fairlands students!

Speaking of leading the way, current fifth grader Lisa-Marie Mueller has taken her Go Green knowledge beyond the school's doors and into her dad's Pleasanton office. Not only has Lisa-Marie established a plastic-bottle and aluminum-can recycling program at her dad's work, Xign Corporation, but she takes the proceeds from the recyclables and donates them to the Fairlands science lab! So far Lisa-Marie and Xign have recycled 92.8 pounds of plastic bottles and 3.3 pounds of aluminum cans. This amounts to a donation of \$67.16 to the science lab! This type of creative application of a concept shows amazing leadership. Thank you, Lisa-Marie!

Generate
compost
Recycle
Educate
Evaluate
Nationalize

Generate compost. This is nature's way of recycling. Through basic and worm-composting programs, children learn about ecology, biology, and waste reduction.

Recycle everything that cannot be reused, and purchase items that can be recycled. With fast-shrinking landfill space and diminishing natural resources, recycling has never been more important. Recycling items such as paper, plastic, aluminum, and ink cartridges reduces toxic greenhouse gas emissions and conserves energy. Manage e-waste by finding creative solutions to divert obsolete computer parts, cell phones, and other such devices from the waste stream. Schools that recycle provide much-needed materials to manufacturers who produce recycled products.

Educate students, teachers, and parents on environmentally responsible behavior. When students, teachers, and parents work together to make their schools environmentally friendly, they are more likely to take the same behaviors into their off-campus lives. Our goal is to create environmentally responsible school communities throughout the nation and across the globe.

Evaluate the environmental impact of every activity. Identify products and practices that could threaten the health of children and the world around them. Consider improving the campus environment with activities such as eliminating excessive energy consumption; evaluating the toxicity of pesticides used in classrooms and on playgrounds; improving outdoor air quality through increased carpooling efforts; and working to improve indoor air quality.

Nationalize the principles of responsible paper consumption. Consider purchasing post-consumer recycled paper and office products. Use technology to communicate electronically as much as possible. Seek ways to provide Internet access to all school families.

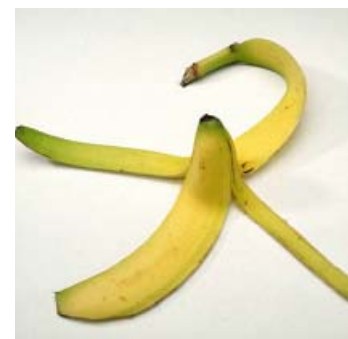
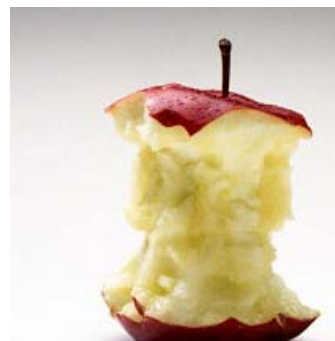
Tips to Try (continued)

The Go Green Team at Fairlands Elementary—which comprises teachers, parents, the custodian, and the principal—developed the following “Go Green Pledge.” It was presented to all the teachers at the school, and was immediately embraced. Every teacher took a copy of the Pledge, explained it to her/his students, and signed it with the students. They posted the Go Green Pledge prominently in each classroom as a daily reminder of the shared classroom commitment to be good environmental stewards. Perhaps you could develop a similar pledge at your school!

The Go Green Pledge 2004-2005

We are environmentally responsible in this classroom:

- We recycle paper daily in our classroom container and regularly take it to the paper gobbler.
- We collect plastic and cans daily in our classroom container and regularly take them to the bins on campus.
- We minimize paper use by writing on both sides, using double-sided copies, and using white boards when possible.
- We use e-mail for classroom newsletters and messages to our families whenever possible.
- We collect aluminum cans and plastic at home for the school recycling program.
- We recycle our cardboard trays and food scraps at lunchtime.
- We discuss ways that we can be environmentally responsible.



Purchasing Recycled-Content Paper: Strategies that Work

As schools pay increasing attention to purchasing recycled-content paper in order to implement the fifth element of the GGI, we know that every school district will approach this topic differently, but there are two common threads.

First, schools must pay close attention to cost. No one wants to be in a position in which the school has to lay off a teacher or put off buying new textbooks because the school is buying recycled-content paper at a higher price than it could be paying for virgin paper. Economics are very important. However, it is possible to find recycled-content paper (at least 30%) that is priced competitively. The bidding process is complicated, but your purchasing officer can put out a bid for recycled-content paper and see what is available. You can also contact the American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) (a Go Green partner) and find out which paper mills in your area are members of the AF&PA, and if they have any paper products that would both meet your specifications and your budget.

The other issue often raised about recycled-content paper is the fear that it will jam copy machines. This was a much larger problem eight to ten years ago, when recycled-content paper was a smaller share of the market. The quality today is far superior. The federal government is the largest consumer of paper in the nation, and it has, in agency after agency, successfully tackled this problem. The key is to work recycled-content paper into the contract with the copy machine salesperson. For instance, if your school district is negotiating a contract with Xerox or another company for machines or service, insist on recycled-content paper as part of the contract, and the vendor will be forced to find the right paper for its machines. The price for the paper is negotiated in the contract and is kept low, and the machine technicians have to service the machines if there are any jams. When several federal agencies employed this tactic, it was remarkable—when the copy machine companies had to find the right paper at the right price to go with the service contract, guess what, no jammed machines!

Sponsor Spotlight

As part of the fourth element of the GGI, "Evaluate the environmental impact of all activities," we ask schools to examine their indoor air quality and work to improve it in order to protect children's health. Our newest partner, JohnsonDiversey, can help all Go Green schools implement this element of the GGI through its healthy, high-performance cleaning program. JohnsonDiversey will be giving a presentation on this topic at our upcoming Earth Summit, and has provided the following summary as a preview. This is very important to our children and a critical component of a superior Go Green plan.

Improve Indoor Environmental Quality for Healthier Schools

Have you had to stay home with a sick child in the past year? Think of all the parents that do in a given year. Now think about the impact that and other illnesses have on lost productivity.

Here's how the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sums it up for the country. The U.S. economy loses \$60 billion a year in lost worker productivity because of poor indoor air quality (IAQ). And poor IAQ is linked to illness, which is linked to staying home from work.

Improved IAQ could increase productivity in education by an estimated \$3.4 billion, which just includes teachers and staff. The impact on students cannot be measured in dollars, but student absenteeism certainly affects their achievement.

One simple answer to improving the indoor environment of schools is green cleaning. *Maintenance Supplies* magazine reported a 42% increase over the past year in demand for green cleaning products. This rising trend is good news for schools, kids, and their parents. A green-cleaned school is a healthy school.

The trend toward green schools is coming none too soon. As one expert discovered, more than 50% of schools in the U.S. may have indoor environmental problems due to water intrusion, inoperable HVAC systems, or ineffective cleaning practices.

Poor indoor environments affect the health and performance of students, as well as their overall attendance. Take asthma, the most common chronic disease among children. Asthma accounts for 14 million lost school days in the U.S. This number doesn't account for the other illnesses, such as flu and colds, that keep kids out of school.

Healthy schools are proven to enhance student achievement, reduce absenteeism, and increase teacher and staff satisfaction and retention. Indoor environmental quality does make a significant difference.

One classic study demonstrated that improved cleaning efforts reduce days absent while improving the overall health of students. A team of researchers introduced a green cleaning process at a daycare run by the Association for Children with Downs Syndrome in Bellmore, New York. Total illnesses declined by 24%, doctor visits decreased by 34%, and antibiotic use decreased by 24%.

This study shows that it is not just about using the right cleaning chemicals. Protocols and practices are just as important. We at JohnsonDiversey call these practices healthy, high-performance cleaning.

And that means that everyone gets involved, not just the custodial team. Custodians can learn techniques that, for instance, lower the release of chemical odors and particulates, or minimize moisture and biological growth in carpeting, or keep dirt from entering the building in the first place.

Teachers, administrators, and students can learn healthy, high-performance cleaning practices too. These techniques lower the impact of dirt, particulates, and germs through such practices as better hand-washing, improved cleanup, and proper disposal of wastes and food.

Creating a healthy indoor environment in schools is everybody's job. Learn how you can get involved.

JohnsonDiversey
Clean is just the beginning



Curriculum Corner

Water and Energy Curriculum for Middle Schools

Julie Saare-Edmonds and Simon Eching

Kay Ice of Educational Development Specialists recently created a water and energy school curriculum for middle schools for the Central Basin Municipal Water District and West Basin Municipal Water District. Funding for the curriculum was provided by the California Department of Water Resources' Office of Water Use Efficiency. Combining water and energy use is a logical step, considering the inter-connection between these resources. Hydropower accounts for nearly a quarter of the electricity produced in California, and much water is used in the generation of steam to produce electricity. Likewise, a large amount of energy is used to pump, treat, heat, and deliver water and wastewater.

The curriculum, entitled "Conservation Connection Water and Energy Use in California," consists of a student book and a teacher's guide. The water section addresses supply and demand, various uses of water, and ways of stretching supplies through conservation measures and new technology. Topics such as how much rain falls in California and the effects of groundwater overdraft are discussed. Uses of energy, sources of energy, and future sources of energy are addressed in the energy section. Both sections of Conservation Connection identify issues associated with meeting demand for water and energy, including supply, economics, environmental issues,

population growth, and increasing per capita use. The curriculum follows a logical progression of identifying sources, identifying users, the challenges facing water and energy producers, and encouraging students to think of ways to overcome those challenges. Maps and graphics are used to illustrate groundwater geology, hydropower generation, water distribution, and other information.

Various master worksheets and survey forms, which can be easily photocopied or made into transparencies, are included in the appendix of the teacher's guide. These teaching tools are used in a majority of the lessons, and as the teacher goes through the lessons, there is opportunity for students to survey and assess water and energy use and to plan and implement measures to reduce water and energy consumption at home and school.

Conservation Connection is easy to follow, interesting, and fulfills numerous teaching goals in science, language arts, and math. Correlations to California State Content Standards are listed at the end of the teacher's guide. This is a positive feature because it allows teachers to use the Conservation Connection knowing it will fulfill parts of other curriculums rather than taking time away from an already busy schedule. Copies of the student book and the teacher's guide are posted at www.owue.water.ca.gov.

For more information, contact Simon Eching at 916-651-9667 or seching@water.ca.gov.

Letter to the Editor

Question: I am a teacher who is passionate about the GGI, but I realize that in order to truly make a difference, I need to get my fellow teachers involved. How can I convince my fellow teachers to "Go Green"?

Answer: This is a very common question. So common, in fact, that we will be doing a special session at the Go Green Earth Summit in April that will teach GGI enthusiasts how to give a first-rate GGI presentation to their community. In a nutshell, you need to do three things:

- Know all the reasons you are personally passionate about the GGI. Write them down and be able to articulate those reasons aloud if anyone asks. Prepare an "elevator speech" that is about 16 seconds long (about the time you'd have to explain the GGI if you were on an elevator with someone) that gives the top two to three reasons you are excited about the GGI. If you're having trouble articulating your passion, read the "Why Go Green" page on our Web site for inspiration.
- Ask your principal if you can give a presentation at your next staff meeting. Be sure to stay within the allotted time frame he/she gives you, and address these three points:

- State the problem—you may find assistance on the "Why Go Green" page, or you may be able to give campus-specific examples of unnecessary waste. Be sure you make this point delicately, so that no one feels embarrassed, harassed, or alienated. But be sure to emphasize that kids learn how to be successful adults by watching what the adults around them do. It's important to their future to create "teaching moments" out of how we handle the natural resources on school campuses and at home.
- Show that the GGI offers simple solutions and ideas to help your campus overcome the problem(s) you discuss in the introduction of your presentation. Demonstrate that the GGI is appropriate for every grade and every subject matter, not just science classrooms. You may find the Go Green Planning Guide helpful while preparing this part of your presentation.
- Answer the WIIFM (pronounced "wiff - um"): **What's In It For Me?** Let your fellow staff members know that some of the activities associated with the GGI can generate funding for the school and their classrooms, and many grants are available for schools that are engaged in waste diver-

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sion activities. There is also the satisfaction of knowing that they are joining thousands of their colleagues across the U.S. to educate the next generation on environmentally responsible behaviors.

- Celebrate successes, large and small! Work with your PTA or PTO to publicize and reward efforts made by teachers to Go Green. Use your school newsletter and Web site to advertise excellence in recycling; hang a banner outside the classroom

that did the best job of reducing its lunchtime litter; ask the PTA if they will provide gift certificates for local bookstores to teachers who implement effective paper-recycling programs in their classrooms; give verbal appreciations at every staff meeting to all staff members who demonstrated a Green behavior during the week; etc. Be creative and be generous with praise and appreciation, and that will keep your campus supercharged to create an environmentally responsible campus!

Announcements

- Don't miss the first annual Go Green Earth Summit, April 10–12, 2005, in Pleasanton, California. See details on our Web site: www.gogreeninitiative.org.
- Our NEW online store is opening in mid-February. Check the Web site by February 20 for a hyperlink to the best Go Green tools and gear. Everything you need to implement and promote the GGI at your school!
- We offer online training on the GGI Web site in the privacy of your own home for FREE! Click on this hyperlink: "Go Green University," or find the hyperlink on our home page!
- Our Go Green promotional DVD can be ordered online for just \$12.50, which includes shipping and handling. It's a high-quality, nine-minute video perfect for explaining the GGI at your next school board, PTA, City Council, or teacher/staff meeting. There are also several bonus interviews with supporters of the GGI from sea to shining sea! Click here for details, or visit our Web site.

Contact Us

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“ All schools prepare our children for the future, but Go Green schools prepare the future for our children. ”



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