

On the Air

Schools Save Energy and Cut Traffic and Pollution Care for our Earth Grants Awarded to 15 Teachers in 9 County School Districts

In February the Santa Barbara County Education Office recognized fifteen teachers from nine county school districts with “Care for our Earth” grants as part of a cooperative initiative sponsored by the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District and the Southern California Gas Company. The program provides mini-grants of \$200 each to 4th-12th grade teachers who design a project for their students to save energy or reduce traffic and pollution at the school.

At Pine Grove Elementary School in Orcutt, Teacher Kelly VanAllen helped her fifth graders form a “Power Down Patrol,” which inspects classrooms at breaks to be sure lights and equipment are turned off. The classroom with the best energy-conserving performance gets to pick a prize from the special “Power Down Patrol” box. The prizes, funded by the grant, are colored markers or other special classroom items.

VanAllen reported that the school’s electricity bill was \$300 lower for the first month the patrol was in operation. Students in the class calculated that the school could save from \$800 to \$1900 through the rest of the year. They will be tracking



Fifth grade students and the “Power Down Patrol” prize box at Pine Grove Elementary School in Orcutt with (from left) Teacher Kelly VanAllen, Petti Pfau of the Santa Barbara County Education Office, and Mary Byrd of the District.

the electricity bills as part of the project. Said one student, “I think we can try to beat our record and save more on the bill each month.”

Students reported some of the worst offenses: heaters left on when doors or windows were open; lights and computers on when no one was in the classroom; and televisions or projectors running with no one there.

Students are also taking their energy-conserving habits home. Said one, “My parents leave the kitchen light on at night a lot.

So I get up and turn it off.” Said another, “I’ve noticed the heater is on sometimes when we’re leaving in the morning. I turn it off before we leave the house.”

VanAllen said school district administrators are interested in expanding the program to classrooms at other schools to capitalize on the energy savings. She noted, “It’s been phenomenal. The kids take care of the whole program. I gave them a task and they ran with it. And I love the empowerment this has given them.”

Petti Pfau, Director of Teacher Programs at Santa Barbara County Education Office, expressed appreciation for the success of the Care for Our Earth grants program in its first year: “I particularly love the teachers’

enthusiasm. Many are already planning to do innovative projects in the classroom, and this grants program gives them the support they need. They so appreciate it.”

Tim Mahoney, Southern California Gas Company Public Affairs Manager for Santa Barbara County, remarked, “So Cal Gas is excited

(continued on page two)

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Inside...

-  **Cutting Emissions from School Buses**
-  **Mike Broughton Leaves for Colorado**
-  **Rules Update**
-  **Bobbie Bratz Retires**
-  **40th Birthdays in '10**

Care for our Earth Grants (cont'd)

to partner with schools and classrooms on programs like this that promote energy efficiency and conservation. Gas Company funding provides an opportunity for students to have a 'hands-on experience' being green and

for students to meet eight bicycle riders and outdoor educators on the Sustainable Living Bike Tour from San Francisco to San Diego, and attend workshops on renewable energy, protecting the coastline, and human-powered transportation.



Kelly VanAllen encourages students to calculate energy bill savings as students prepare to answer.



making a positive change to improve the environment. It feels good to assist these students who are tomorrow's leaders."

Other teachers and projects honored with grants are described below.

Jose Caballero at Santa Barbara High School received a grant for the "Green Rides" project in which students develop a carpool system at the school.

The "Saving our Oceans: One Bicycle Rider at Time" grant project by Lori Lee at the Carpinteria Family School and Jamie Persoon at the Canalino School provided an opportunity

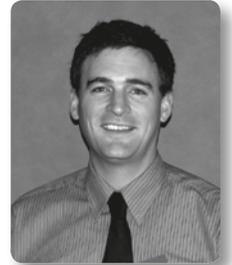
As part of Heather Anderson's "School Energy Conservation" grant project at Miguelito School in Lompoc, students survey teachers and staff on energy usage, make a school plan for energy conservation, and make classroom presentations.

Marna Ford's "Walk or Carpool to School Day" project at Miguelito School in Lompoc involves students sponsoring a once a month walk or carpool to school day.

Mona Gros received a grant for "Recycling with Dignity," a recycling project with Special Education students at Santa Maria High School.



David Yale (left), a physics teacher with the Green Academy at Santa Barbara High School, received a grant to pursue a project with students to manufacture biodiesel fuel from used cooking oil.



Chris Scott with Santa Ynez Elementary School received a grant to help fund a field trip with students to a green building at the University of California at Santa Barbara, and a follow-up project to create a movie about saving energy to be shown to the entire school district.



Riccardo Magni (left), Science Department Head at Pioneer Valley High School in Santa Maria, received a grant for the "Energetic Panthers" project. Students in his Advanced Placement Environmental Science class will use "Kill-a-Watt" devices to measure the amount of electricity used by any piece of equipment.

Cheri Spencer's project "Get a Green Life" teaches Special Education students at Cabrillo High School in Lompoc about the economic and environmental benefits of using public transportation.



The District has sponsored teacher grants through the County Education Office for several years; this is the first year for the Care for Our Earth program.

Students of Linda Edwards of Cold Springs School in Montecito will write speeches and produce a video about how to make a difference in cutting traffic and pollution in the community, as part of the "The Healthy School Challenge" project, which received a grant. The speeches and video will be shared at the school, at Westmont College, and at the Montecito Association.

For more information on District school programs, see www.OurAir.org/learning.htm.

Deanne Rosing (left) and Catherine Ulrich with the Home School Program at Santa Maria Joint Union High School District received a grant for a project with Santa Maria Area Transit (SMAT) to help high school students use public transit to get to school on the days when they need to come in.



Sally Ann Nunes, SMAT Transit Coordinator, said students will be picked up by bus and taken to the transit center for a presentation on how to ride the bus, how to choose the type of bus fare or bus pass to purchase, how to read the bus map and schedule, and more. "Even kids who have already used the system don't always know how it all works - for example, that a second bus may be coming right away if the first bus is too full to board, or how to call us at SMAT to get information when they miss a connection," she said.

Bobbie Bratz Retires after 26 Years

APCD Board Roundup

Following are the highlights of the January Board meeting (there was no December meeting).

January

- ▶ Elected Doreen Farr Chair, and Cecilia Martner Vice-Chair for 2010; selected Doreen Farr, Janet Wolf, and Victoria Pointer to serve on the District Executive Committee; selected Doreen Farr, Larry Lavagnino, Cecilia Martner, Ed Easton, and Kathleen Reddington to serve on the District Hearing Board Nominating Committee; appointed Ed Easton representative to the South Central Coast Basinwide Control Council.
- ▶ Received and filed a report regarding renewal of employee insurance plans and programs.
- ▶ Adopted and presented Resolutions of Appreciation to Marty Blum, Eric Onnen, and Russ Hicks for their service on the Board.
- ▶ Received and filed the Fiscal Year 2008-09 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.
- ▶ Adopted Rule 345, Control of Fugitive Dust from Construction and Demolition.
- ▶ Adopted amended Regulation XI - Rules 1101-1105, Public Notification.
- ▶ Received a report from the Director on the status of county air quality and District programs, and a preview of upcoming issues.

Bobbie Bratz, the District's Public Information and Community Programs Supervisor, retired in February after more than 26 years at the agency. "I think I had more variety in my job than anyone else at the District – I wouldn't have stayed 26 years if I didn't love it," said Bratz.

She excelled at multiple positions, and wore many hats at the District, developing the first air toxics inventory, establishing the Board procedures after the agency became an independent special district in 1995, founding the public outreach and business assistance programs, writing the land use and environmental review guidelines, improving the District's air monitoring network, and functioning at various times as budget developer, photographer, award-winning video producer, conference coordinator, and more.

Bratz, a Santa Barbara County native, is pleased to be able to look back on a trend towards cleaner air. She remarked, "When asked what I was going to do with a degree in Environmental Studies from UCSB I used to reply, 'Save the world.' I didn't save the world, but I hope I've helped to improve the air quality of Santa Barbara County." During her tenure at the District the air quality in the county improved significantly, from the First Stage Smog Alerts of the late 1980s to attainment of the federal ozone standard in 2000. Bratz is proud of the advances in the air monitoring program she supervised for many years, and of the achievement of providing air monitoring data to the public in real time on the agency's website.

Bratz also led the District's land use and California Environmental



Quality Act programs and organized the successful "Building Stronger Communities" Conference in 2002.

She was instrumental in the District winning numerous awards, including awards for energy, air monitoring and outreach initiatives, and for two videos she produced. Her commitment to community outreach and education transformed the public conversation about air quality issues, and she was a leader in establishing cutting-edge communications programs at the agency, making it one of the first districts in the state to produce a newsletter and website. She noted, "When I first started, the general public didn't know much about air pollution or who we were, and today people are much more aware. It feels good to have played a part in that process."

Bratz was an effective and articulate spokesperson for the District over the past two decades. One particular challenge of recent years has been addressing the air quality impacts

on the county of six significant wildfires in the last three years. Bratz worked with the county Public Health Department to coordinate air quality advisory notifications. "Our goal has been to educate people so they can use common sense to protect themselves and their families from the effects of air pollution. Hopefully we've given people the tools to be able to make good

decisions about when it's not a good idea to hold a sports practice outdoors, or to go for a run or a bike ride."

When Bratz started at the District, the agency was a division of the county's Health Care Services Department, and was housed at the health care campus on San Antonio Road. The agency moved to offices in Goleta in 1987 and then in 2003 moved to the new Casa Nueva building – located on the health care campus just a few hundred yards from where she started.

Bratz remarked, "It's been a great ride. I'm going to miss the people that I grew up with here. But I'm really looking forward to traveling and spending more time IN the air – paragliding."

Said Tom Murphy, Manager of the District's Technology and Environmental Assessment Division, "Bobbie was truly committed to the clean air mission of our agency. I can't thank her enough for everything she did for us and the community. I wish her the best!"



APCD Board Calendar

Board of Directors

- Supervisor Salud Carbajal
First District
Santa Barbara County
- Supervisor Janet Wolf
Second District
Santa Barbara County
- Supervisor Doreen Farr, Chair
Third District
Santa Barbara County
- Supervisor Joni Gray
Fourth District
Santa Barbara County
- Supervisor Joe Centeno
Fifth District
Santa Barbara County
- Mayor Victoria Pointer
City of Buellton
- Vice Mayor Al Clark
City of Carpinteria
- Mayor Lupe Alvarez
City of Guadalupe
- Councilmember Cecilia Martner
Vice Chair, City of Lompoc
- Mayor Helene Schneider
City of Santa Barbara
- Mayor Larry Lavagnino
City of Santa Maria
- Councilmember Ed Skytt
City of Solvang
- Councilmember Ed Easton
City of Goleta

All meetings start at 1:30 p.m.
For final meeting agendas, call the
APCD Board Clerk, 961-8800.

- May 20**
Board of Supervisors'
Hearing Room
511 East Lakeside Parkway
Santa Maria, CA 93455
- June 17**
Board of Supervisors'
Hearing Room
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, California 93101
- August 19**
Board of Supervisors'
Hearing Room
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, California 93101
- October 21**
Board of Supervisors'
Hearing Room
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, California 93101

Community Advisory Council

The APCD Community Advisory Council meets monthly at the Days Motor Inn in Buellton. The public is welcome. For more information, call 961-8800.

Come to
EARTH DAY
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WIN!

40th Birthdays in 2010

The District – and many other organizations and initiatives, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Federal Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970 (which for the first time established nationwide air quality standards), the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and Earth Day – will celebrate their 40th anniversaries in 2010.

Earth Day is celebrated nationally on April 22 every year; local celebrations are held on different dates and at different locations around the county. This year the South Coast Earth Day Festival, organized by the Community Environmental Council (also celebrating its 40th anniversary) will be a two-day event: Saturday April 17 and Sunday April 18 at Alameda Park in Santa Barbara. Once again, anyone coming to the Festival car free (arriving by bus or shuttle, on foot, or by bike, train, or other car free means) can stop by the District/Santa Barbara Car Free booth and enter to win prizes including Amtrak Pacific Surfliner® tickets.

The Green Shorts video contest is back for Earth Day 2010 as well. Videos shorter than two minutes on the Festival theme “Bringing it Home” can be entered for prizes including the grand prize, a MacBook computer. Winners will be featured at a special screening at the Lobero Theater, aired on Channel 17, and screened at the Festival. Green Shorts is sponsored by Traffic Solutions, the Community Environmental Council, Samy’s Camera, the District, the Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition, Channel 17, COAST (Coalition for Sustainable Transportation), and ASERT (Alliance for Sustainable and Equitable Regional Transportation).

For more information and links see www.SantaBarbaraCarFree.org.



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- Complaints/Public Information**
(805) 961-8800
- Air Quality Advisory Information**
(805) 961-8802
- World Wide Web**
www.OurAir.org
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apcd@sbcapcd.org

On the Air is a quarterly newsletter written by Mary Byrd, published by the Community Programs Section of the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District.



Printed on 100% recycled paper.

Our Vision Clean Air

Cutting Pollution from School Buses

Studies show the exhaust from older diesel school bus engines not only pollutes the air outside the bus, it impacts air quality inside the bus as well. And this pollution most affects a group that is particularly vulnerable to the effects of air pollution – children.

Diesel exhaust particulate is considered the number one airborne carcinogen in the state, and California has made cleaning up school buses a priority, establishing a funding program. The District has used several funding sources to help local school districts replace older polluting school buses with new, lower-emission buses, and fit other buses with particulate filters.

Most recently, the District helped fund replacement of four older Goleta Union School District (GUSD) school buses (model years ranging from 1977 to 1985) with new lower-emissions school



Lead Mechanic Martin Tejada proudly shows the new 2009 International MaxxForce diesel engine underneath the tailgate.

buses. The new school buses run on lower sulfur diesel fuel with emission controls, resulting in less pollution from the exhaust. The bus design also reduces the pollution that reaches the air inside the bus.

Jay Sullivan, GUSD Director of Maintenance and Operations for

Transportation, notes, “Goleta children are transported as far away as Painted Cave and out north to El Capitan Ranch; they can spend two hours a day on the bus. In addition to the clean-air benefits, the buses come with many new features for comfort and safety: better mirrors, better positioned and more comfortable seats to increase visibility, air conditioning, and better heating.

He adds, “We met recently with the City of Goleta and discussed green initiatives. Creating safe routes for walking and biking to school, along with transporting as many children as possible by bus, will greatly reduce our carbon footprint. The bright new buses make an important statement to the community about our commitment to the education and safety of Goleta school children. Parents, teachers on field trips, and children are delighted.”

The new 79-passenger school buses are also equipped with an air assist system, which helps the motor slow the bus down. Notes GUSD Lead Mechanic Tejada, “The brakes last longer, there’s less wear and tear, more control for the driver, and it’s much safer.” He adds that the improved suspension also creates a smoother, safer ride for the students.

Tejada reports the new buses are easier to work on: “They made the engine much more accessible in the new buses. In a lot of the older buses the plate in back doesn’t open and you have to go in through the sides to work on it. This one opens up in back, and

(continued on back)



Driver Abimael Carmona appreciates the improved handling and safety features of the new buses.

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www.OurAir.org/funding

School Buses (cont'd)

there are lights. It's a mechanic's dream."

GUSD School Bus Driver Abimael Carmona picked up one of the buses in Chino Hills and drove it back to Goleta. He notes, "There's a big difference in the way it drives. The suspension is much better, it handles better, it's just a more comfortable drive."

Since 2001, the District has funded the replacement of sixteen school buses in the county with cleaner buses at the Blochman, Cuyama, Goleta, Guadalupe, Santa Maria, and



Jim Fredrickson of the District inspects one of the new buses. Over the next five years, the District will monitor the performance of each school bus and track mileage

Orcutt school districts. An additional twenty-one buses operated by the Student Transportation of America, and by Carpinteria, Cuyama, and Goleta School Districts, have been fitted with particulate traps. Taken together, over the life of the projects, these school bus projects will cut more than 30 tons of nitrogen oxides and particulate matter from diesel school bus exhaust. Funds used

have come from motor vehicle registration fees, the state's Lower Emission School Bus Program, the California Energy Commission, and Guadalupe Dunes Mitigation funds.

Additional projects under consideration for funding in the coming year include replacement of a 1976 school bus at the Cuyama Joint Unified School District, plus two 1985 bus replacements at the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District.

For more information, see www.OurAir.org/funding.

Mike Broughton Leaves for Position in Smoke Management

Mike Broughton, District Air Pollution Inspection Supervisor, left the agency in early January to take a position in Denver, CO, as a Smoke Management Specialist in the Air Quality branch of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Broughton has a B.S. in Meteorology from Pennsylvania State University and has been with the District since 1987. In addition to supervising District inspectors, Broughton coordinated the District's agricultural and prescribed burn program. He also served as Chair of the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association's Enforcement Committee.

Said Broughton, "I am so excited to get a chance to focus entirely on meteorology, my first love." He will be coordinating the prescribed burn program for the more than 500 national wildlife refuges across the country,



working with the Forest Service, Parks Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and local governments on prescribed burn and smoke management policy.

Broughton remarked, "One of my primary goals while with the District was to effectively balance the needs of the business community with the restrictions of the air quality regulations,

creating win-win relationships. Along the same lines, my new goals involve balancing necessary prescribed burning with the need to maintain healthy air quality. I look forward to this challenge,

to being a bridge between 'fire' and 'air!'"

He added, "I will miss the District and all my friends and colleagues very much." We will miss him too.

Rules update

In January the District Board adopted new Rule 345, Control of Fugitive Dust from Construction and Demolition, which will become effective July 21. The rule was developed after the District conducted a review of cost-effective measures that could be used to control particle pollution, as required under 2003 State Senate Bill 656.

The rule gives the District the ability to enforce dust mitigation measures that apply to construction and demolition

sources by enabling District Inspectors to write Notices of Violation when on regular source inspections and when responding to complaint calls, if they determine dust measures are not being followed.

In February the District Board also adopted amended Regulation XI (Public Notification) to correct outdated information.

For more information on rules, see www.OurAir.org/rules/rules.htm.