

# THE OKRA NEWS

OKLAHOMA RECYCLING ASSOCIATION

JULY 2012

Welcome to the OKRA online newsletter. Please feel free to share our newsletter with anyone who might enjoy reading it. To receive electronic notification of newsletter availability and general recycling announcements, sign-up for the OKRA list server on our website:  
[www.recycleok.org](http://www.recycleok.org)

## 4-H and Enid KEG Join Efforts



KEG Curbside Recycling and the Major County 4-H Club have joined forces to promote recycling awareness and application in Fairview and Major County.

At one time Fairview tried a recycling program by providing bins for citizens to dump recycled materials. The bins did not work. KEG Recycling realized this and organized a means that fits households on a more personal basis.



The Major County 4-H Club, with KEG's help, will fulfill their "Keep Oklahoma Beautiful" Project this year. They will be collecting phonebooks and plastics that KEG will dispose of for the group. The 4-H will also visit local organizations, such as Lions, to educate the community to the need for an extensive recycling program. On April 21<sup>st</sup>, 4-H provided a community wide trash pickup for ODOT Trash-Off Day. Once again, KEG helped the 4-H'ers in their efforts.

In April of 2011, KEG started their work in Enid as "Keepin' Enid Green" educating Enid and citizens to recycling possibilities. Since then, they have grown and are serving twelve surrounding towns. They started serving Fairview two months ago. The materials they collect help to employ 212 people with developmental disabilities in Enid. KEG contin-

ues to grow and is constantly adding new materials to their list of recyclable items.

Why recycle? America is the world's largest producer of trash. With five percent of the world's population, the USA produces 42 percent of the world's trash. Each American wastes 1609 pounds of trash a year. To haul it, dispose of it, and hide it in a landfill uses more fuel than to recycle and produce a new product.

When 75% of what is thrown away is recyclable, every American should realize his or her responsibility to lessen landfills, reduce petroleum use, and save trees for future generations.

To know more about the company, its recycling facts, and its items possible for recycling, check out [www.kegrecycling.com](http://www.kegrecycling.com) or call 580-603-2252. Anyone interested in the service may also use the same contacts to sign up for the service.

With education and awareness by such groups as Major County 4-H Club and companies such as KEG Curbside Recycling, Northwest Oklahoma can make a dent in the trash "dumped" on Oklahoma while improving the economy at the same time; definitely a win-win situation.

## Yukon Holds E-cycling Event to Help Relight the Mill

Yukon's Relight the Mill Committee in conjunction with United Electronic Recycling, LLC held an electronics recycling event on June 9, 2012 at the Yukon Middle School to benefit the Relight the Mill project.



The e-cycling event allowed residents to properly dispose of their electronic waste while raising funds to relight the sign on top of Yukon's historic Route 66 flour mill. Approximately 20,000 pounds

of computers, printers, monitors, and other electronic devices were collected at the event. The items will be sold for scrap to a recycling center, and a percentage of the proceeds donated to the Relight the Mill project.

The Relight the Mill project is anticipated to cost over \$200,000 and will include updating the lighting with LED lights ensuring the mill sign stays bright for generations to come.

# Recycling and Responsible Disposal Events a Success in McAlester

Every household in America has items that are tricky to dispose of. Sometimes those items are difficult to haul and some have mandated restrictions on how they can be discarded.



Televisions are bundled for proper recycling/disposal

Items such as refrigerators, televisions, tires and chemicals should be or are required to be diverted from landfills. To accommodate the disposal of such items, Pride In McAlester (PIM) hosted Household Hazardous Waste Disposal, Electronics Recycling, Metal Recycling, Prescription Drug Disposal, Bulk Waste Disposal, Tire Recycling, and Paper Shredding as part of our annual Great American

Cleanup™ in Oklahoma events in the month of April.

Pride In McAlester, an affiliate of Keep Oklahoma Beautiful, is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to making the community of McAlester, Oklahoma, a cleaner, safer, and more beautiful place to live and work. As part of the core programs, two cleanups are offered during the year free of charge to citizens of the city. In April, 508 tires (12,192 pounds), 10,840 pounds of paper, 36,660 pounds of metal, and 28,889 pounds of electronics were collected for recycling. In addition, 15 pounds of prescription drugs and 5,000 pounds of household hazardous



Junior high students recycle during a locker cleanup

waste were sent off for proper disposal. Locker cleanouts were conducted at two area schools resulting in 850 pounds of paper and 50 pounds of plastic collected for recycling through the local McAlester Recycling Center.

On May 4, 2012, Pride In McAlester members participated in the McAlester Public School's Outdoor Classroom. Area second graders were asked to help pickup "litter." They were shown a model landfill, discussed recycling options in the McAlester community, and were encouraged to think about reusable items. The children then had to decide if their "litter" was destined to be recycled, reused, or sent to the landfill.



Second graders enjoy an outdoor classroom lesson on recycling

When citizens are given the choice of recycling or disposing of items responsibly they happily take that opportunity. Pride In McAlester is in its fourth year of promoting a cleaner and greener McAlester. Each year we strive to add to our services for the community and reduce the amount of bulk waste sent to the landfill through the bi-annual cleanups. We are always available to help communities start similar projects and love suggestions of programs to add to our existing goals. You can reach Pride In McAlester at pim@prideinmcalester.com or 918-426-4444.

by **Stephanie Shafer,**  
Executive Director, Pride In McAlester

## Recycling Increases at Memorial Marathon

Recycling for the 2012 Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon was the most successful ever. Several volunteers, many from the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), collected a record amount of recyclable materials. The amount collected increased significantly in just one year, due in part to the increase in volunteers.

The OKC Marathon has grown in size and reputation over the years. This year, the marathon had more than 28,000 runners and



was rated one of the "Top 12 Marathons to run in the World." DEQ is proud to be part of such an important event in Oklahoma City and to continue to spread the positive message of recycling. The chart below reflects the increase in the amount of recycling in just one year.

Material	2011	2012
Plastic	220 lbs.	1350 lbs.
Cans	50 lbs.	25 lbs.
Cardboard	40 lbs.	260 lbs.

By Kelly Dixon, DEQ

## Featured School Recycling Program

# Northwestern Oklahoma State University's CORE Organization Wins OKRA Recycling Award

OKRA is pleased to recognize the efforts of CORE (Conserving Our Ranger Environment), a student organization at Northwestern Oklahoma State University. CORE was selected as winner of the OKRA recycling award for their efforts to promote recycling and other green initiatives at NWOSU.



**Core Volunteers at the Big Event**

The CORE student volunteers helped set up boxes on pallets, unloaded the donated electronics out of vehicles and placed them in containers, and helped clean up the area. Items collected included computers, monitors, cell phones, and much more. Many pallet loads of materials were collected and then recycled in an environmentally responsible manner.

CORE has also participated in Keep Oklahoma Beautiful, Arbor



Each year CORE participates in a cooperative project called the Big Event. The Big

Day, paper recycling on the NWOSU campus, Campus Clean up days, Tree Campus USA and many other green initiatives. In recognition of CORE's accomplishments, OKRA was pleased to award them with a \$100 donation.



Event is a joint effort between NWOSU and the residents of Alva, and serves to strengthen the bond between the school and the community.



This year's Big Event was an e-cycling collection event held Saturday, March 31 at the Alva Market.

To keep up to date on CORE, check out their website at [www.nwosu.edu/core](http://www.nwosu.edu/core).



## KOB Announces 2012 Fresh Paint Days

**Oklahoma City - Tired of looking at the empty, old worn-down building...transform it with the help of a 2012 Fresh Paint Days in Oklahoma Grant!**

Keep Oklahoma Beautiful is now accepting applications for its Fresh Paint Days program. Selected participants will restore the exterior of a structure in their community during the month of September with the use of paint, donated by H.I.S. Coatings of Oklahoma City, a \$75 stipend, funded by Public Service Company of Oklahoma and a lot of elbow grease by willing volunteers. KOB will even deliver the paint within a reasonable driving distance from your location.



This exciting and unique program not only challenges groups to transform a building or structure with the donated paint, but it also creates an excitement that is contagious throughout the community. Often, this leads to other community improvement projects throughout the year.

Each completed project will be entered into KOB's "Community Primed for Change" contest. This social media contest will highlight the before and after photos of each project by posting them to KOB's Facebook contest page. The public will have an opportunity to vote for their favorite transformation that took place during Fresh Paint Days and in doing so name the winner of the Best Visual Impact Award. The finalists and winner will be honored at KOB's annual Environmental Excellence Awards Celebration November 1st at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City.

Applications are accepted only online and the deadline is July 31, 2012. You can find the application, project requirements, a tentative event calendar and much more at [keepoklahomabeautiful.com/fresh-paint-days](http://keepoklahomabeautiful.com/fresh-paint-days).

Keep Oklahoma Beautiful is a statewide nonprofit with a mission to encourage, facilitate and recognize efforts that will improve the aesthetic, environmental and sustainable quality of life in Oklahoma. *(KOB press release)*

# OKLAHOMANS WISE UP TO WASTE

by Bryce C. Hulsey

*Oklahomans are burying themselves in trash, producing over 5 pounds of waste per person per day. We don't "Reduce, Reuse and Recycle (the 3 Rs)" enough. So we need to learn to Re-Think about what we do and buy.*



**Mountains of waste, such as this one at the North Tulsa Landfill, can be reduced if we all take action to reduce, reuse, recycle, and rethink about we do and buy.**

One out of every ten dollars that consumers spend for most products, pays for the packaging (waste), and more than 90 percent of those materials ultimately end up on the roadside or in a landfill.

While recycling is only part of an answer to this problem, the most important goal is to increase the daily practice of the 3 R's; which is to prevent as much waste as possible! We need to eliminate the amount of materials that is thrown away. An increased focus on these daily habits is critically needed along with more participation in recycling, which currently has disappointing compliance: nationally only 32 percent of municipalities' solid waste is recycled and an even lower percentage here in our state is recovered. Of the remaining 68 percent, 54 percent is land filled and 14 percent is burned at combustion facilities.

Using a 3 R's approach saves natural resources, creates jobs, cuts energy use and emissions. Thus, it reduces transportation costs and pollution, and results in fewer materials dumped in landfills and on roadsides too. Reuse and reduce practices also save money for consumers, schools, businesses, and communities.

Each and every day, you can choose to Use Less Stuff, curbing the amount of waste and materials that you personally contribute to landfills. I hope you don't contribute to the litter problem we have as that costs us MILLIONS!

## How to make a difference!

### Reduce bag use at the checkout counter:

Bring your own canvas shopping bags, reuse bags from previous shopping trips, and decline a bag if offered for a single or small item that you can carry easily or put in your pocket or purse.



**Purchase items from the bulk food department at the grocery store whenever possible.** You may even go in with family and neighbors to make this cost effective! Wash and reuse the containers that the store provides, or bring your own if they allow.

**Buy the largest packages of items that you use frequently** (e.g., cat litter, laundry detergent, pet foods, shampoo). If the quantity is too much for you, divide the purchase with a relative, friend or neighbor, you will both save money.

**At restaurants, take only the number of items that you need:** for example, one napkin, one sugar packet, one packet of ketchup. Take your own **to go** containers for leftovers and dessert, this will eliminate those wasteful poly-foam boxes!



**Reduce the need to replace light bulbs often by switching to compact fluorescent bulbs or the newer LED,** which can last about ten times longer than incandescent bulbs and use 75% less energy, which saves money.

**When choosing between two similar items, select the one that has the least unnecessary packaging.** One dollar out of every 10 is usually packaging or trash!

**Reduce the number of printed newspapers and magazines you get:** read some or all of them online, get them at a library, or share a subscription with a relative or friend. I take old magazines to donate at the doctor or dentist office whenever I visit.

**If you work for a private or public institution then introduce them to free information on how they can reduce waste and save money.**

### Help eliminate paper consumption

**at home and office and save money and resources:** Use both sides of copy paper and stationery, make scratch pads from paper used on one side, make two-sided copies, and send email memos and letters whenever possible.



*(Continued on Page 5)*

## How to Make A difference (Continued from Page 4)

Avoid printing out emails and web pages, but if you must, use the back side of used paper.

**Reduce household paper use by switching from paper to cloth napkins and from paper towels to sponges or old but usable small cloth towels.**

Cloth napkins and towels can be washed; sponges can be cleaned in the microwave or dishwasher.



**Rent, borrow, or share infrequently used items** (e.g., party supplies, ladders, and lawn or power tools, folding chairs) instead of buying them.

**Ranch or farm landowners might consider a cooperative purchase of equipment** like a MIG welder, auger, log splitter or power washer that can be shared with a neighbor.

**Buy used instead of new.** Buying from secondhand stores offers several benefits: it reduces the use of virgin resources, saves the energy that would have been used to create a new product, saves money, and fre-

quently helps support a cause, as secondhand facilities are often run by charities.

**Reduce the amount of junk mail you receive at home and at the office** by contacting [thedonotmail.org](http://thedonotmail.org) or [National Do Not Mail List](http://NationalDoNotMailList.com) and other free services to have your name removed from mailing lists. It may take some time and you may have to do this several times as your name is in three credit agencies and who knows how many lists?

**Call and/or write the many Phonebook Companies to have your name removed from their distribution list.** You can use this link <https://www.yellowpagesoptout.com/> to opt out of the yellow pages.

**Be creative and look for new ways to save!**

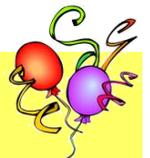
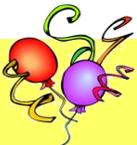


*By reducing, reusing, recycling and rethinking, we can all make a difference.*

**OKRA Loves Green Schools ...**



**See page 6 for Green Schools info!**



## A Reason to Celebrate Tulsa's Recycled Medication Program Hits \$10 Million!

Tulsa County Recycled Medication Program (TCRMP) will be celebrating a major milestone on July 13, 2012. They have hit the \$10 million mark! This means that they have dispensed over \$10 million in donated medications, which were then made available at no charge to people who could not otherwise afford them.

To celebrate, the TCRMP will be having a party, along with the community partners that helped make the program such a success.

The Recycled Medication Program serves as a model for the public-private volunteer physician partnership. The program is accomplished through the cooperation of the Tulsa County Social Services, Tulsa County Medical Society, 27 retired volunteer physicians and the Tulsa County Pharmacy.

While nursing homes have traditionally destroyed unused prescription drugs, the Recycled Medication Program reroutes those medicines to a local charity pharmacy, where they are used to fill prescriptions of county residents who could not oth-



erwise afford them. Collected psychotropic medications are also provided to a local community mental health center.

Tulsa was the first county in the nation to legally "recycle" unused prescription drugs. The program was started in 2004, and since that time over 110,000 prescriptions have been filled for individuals in need.

Tulsa's program has been replicated in whole, or in part, by about 40 other states.



Social Services Director, Linda Johnston, calls the program a win-win-win. "We lessen the impact on the environment by preventing disposal of the medicines, we get the needed medications to people who really need them, and we save Tulsa area non-profits from using their scarce resources on prescriptions or vouchers...all at almost no cost to the taxpayers of Tulsa County."



## YOU ARE INVITED TO THE OKLAHOMA GREEN SCHOOLS PROGRAM 2012 WORKSHOPS

Are you interested in learning more about the Oklahoma Green Schools Program? Please register for one of our five free Oklahoma Green Schools Training sessions (link below). Join us for one of these events to learn how the Oklahoma Green Schools Program works, review the Project Learning Tree (PLT) GreenSchools! Investigations and peruse the toolkit (see photo below). All sessions will be 9:00-11:00 am (except the one in Weatherford that is 4:00-6:00 pm). Additional directions will be emailed to registrants before each event. Refreshments are sponsored by Greenstar Recycling.

### **Dates & Locations:**

- July 19—Weatherford: Southwestern OK State (SWOSU )
- July 24—Oklahoma City: Metro Career Academy (+optional tour)
- July 31—Ada: East Central University (ECU)
- Aug 2—Bartlesville: OSU Extension Office (Dewey-suburb)
- Aug 9 —Stillwater: Skyline Elementary (+optional tour)



You may register online here: <http://www.okgreenschools.org/okgs-training/> We hope you will share this announcement with educators in your realm of influence who might be interested in the Oklahoma Green Schools Program. Anyone interested in learning about the program is invited to attend. Questions? Email [info@oklahomagreenschools.org](mailto:info@oklahomagreenschools.org) or see more information about the program online: <http://www.okgreenschools.org/>.

## Promoting Southern SARE in Oklahoma

In May, Candace Pollock, Southern Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SSARE) Public Relations Coordinator visited Oklahoma to meet with state level constituents, seek opportunities for collaboration and to promote SSARE grants and resources. The visit was coordinated by SSARE Administrative Council Member, Kathy Moore. Ms. Pollock hopes her visit will lay the foundation for collaboration and communication that SARE representatives can continue to foster. The trip was so successful that she hopes to replicate the trip in other Southern Region states. While attending a workshop at NWOSU, Ms. Pollock gave an excellent presentation on the SSARE program resources and grants. Some highlights of her trip are shown below. For more info on SSARE, check out their website at [www.southernsare.org](http://www.southernsare.org).

### *Snapshops from SSARE Trip*



*(Left) Sunrise Acres is a 10-acre USDA-certified organic vegetable farm in Blanchard. Owners Robert and Barbara Stell start many crops from seed in the greenhouse. They have been selling at local farmers markets for over 30 years and recently started selling on-site.*



*(Left) Kam's Kookery is a catering service owned by Kamala Gamble. Kamala also manages a 2-acre urban farm in OKC, Guilford Gardens, that produces local vegetables offered in the spring, summer and fall.*



*(Above) Eric Lyons, President of the Oklahoma Food Cooperative. The Coop works with 165 local producers to provide fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy and more to over 4000 members across the state.*

*(Right) The Composting and Rainwater Harvesting Workshop at NWOSU is part of a series of workshops being offered across Oklahoma over a four-month period to promote composting and rainwater harvesting techniques to provide strategies and tools for farmers and the public to manage drought. The workshops are funded by a USDA grant and collaborations with OSU Extension, Langston, the OCC and many local farm-*



## ARC's Annual Phonebook Contest Results

The Ada Recycling Coalition congratulates Roff Elementary and Mrs. Wellington for collecting the most unwanted phone books in the ARC's 2012 Phonebook Collection Contest. Roff won the competition by collecting 1,486 phone books. Latta Elementary came in at a close second with 1,079. This is a repeat win for Roff Elementary who also collected the most phone books in 2011!

Seven schools participated this year, collecting a total of **4,836** phone books for recycling.

Roff Elementary was awarded \$150 and each of the winning classrooms received a cash prize for pizza parties, as follows:

- Mrs. Claudette Wellington (Roff) / 1,486
- Ms. Valerie Johnson (Latta)
- Ms. Sherri Hayes (Willard)
- Ms. Teena Henry (Tupelo)
- Ms. Judy Beebe (Ada Early Childhood Dev. Center)
- Ms. Brenda Roberts (Homer)
- Ms. Tara Neighbors (Hayes)



Mrs. Wellington's class with ARC Board Member, Steve Timmons

**Roff Elementary Repeat Winner!**

**Save the Date!**

**2012 OKRA  
Annual Recycling  
Conference  
Oct. 12—Stillwater**

## RESOURCE RECYCLING CONFERENCE

**August 28-29, 2012—Austin, Texas**

The publisher of Resource Recycling magazine invites you to attend the third annual Resource Recycling Conference <<http://www.rrconference.com>>. The 2011 conference brought together more than 500 people from all aspects of the recycling industry and the trade show bustled with 50+ exhibitors. Join us in Austin, Texas on August 28-29 for expert analyses of current trends and issues in the wide world of recycling and ensure that you

stay abreast of the current landscape in municipal recycling. Don't miss out on critical discussions of product stewardship, recycled paper markets, the shift to materials management, global perspectives on recycling, plastics recycling and so much more. The Resource Recycling Conference is provided in association with the National Recycling Coalition (NRC), the Recycling Organizations of North America (RONA), Keep America Beautiful (KAB) and the Product Stewardship Institute (PSI). Check out the full agenda online here:

<<http://www.rrconference.com>>, including information about pre-conference activities and meetings.

## PSA CONTEST FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

**REALLY?  
DON'T TRASH IT,  
RECYCLE IT!**



Oklahoma High School students are invited to create audio-video public service announcements to promote recycling awareness. This contest is a part of OKRA's America Recycles Day campaign and is sponsored by Greenstar Recycling and OG&E. The deadline for entry is October 31, 2012.

The theme for this year's contest is "Really? Don't Trash It, Recycle It!" Cash prizes will be awarded to all correctly submitted entries with larger amounts given to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winning entries.

Winning Entries will be announced on America Recycles Day, Thursday, November 15th, 2012.

**For rules and entry forms, go to:**  
**<http://recycleok.org/psa-contest.php>. For more  
information contact: Chris Feeney, OKRA  
Education Chair, at [Chris.Feeney@okdhs.org](mailto:Chris.Feeney@okdhs.org).**

## Tulsa's Natural Evolution Receives e-Stewards Certification

OKRA Congratulates Natural Evolution, a Native American, woman-owned electronics recycling company based in Tulsa, for becoming Oklahoma's first recycler certified to the e-Stewards Standard for Responsible Recycling and Reuse of Electronics.



"It is our belief that the e-Stewards Standard is by far the most rigorous and responsible standard that exists today for the electronics recycling industry," Ms. Phillips said. "It provides for the continuous monitoring and auditing of downstream recyclers and material flow, ensures the proper handling of e-waste, and prevents the illicit export of hazardous waste to developing countries."

The award of the e-Stewards certification was the result of passing a rigorous audit to ensure globally responsible handling of electronic waste, and also included an ISO 14001 environmental management system certification, as well as an R2 Certification, a secondary certification for the electronics recycling industry. E-Stewards is considered the gold standard for responsible electronics recycling, being the most rigorous and comprehensive.

Natural Evolution has a culturally diverse team of employees that is dedicated to responsible recycling of hazardous electronic waste within the United States.



According to Traci Phillips, CEO of Natural Evolution (and President of OKRA), her decision to undergo certification confirms the company's decade-long commitment to recycling electronics without causing environmental, economic or social harm anywhere in the world.

"We're thrilled to have Natural Evolution as a member of our growing community of responsible Certified e-Stewards Recyclers," said Jim Puckett, Executive Director of the Basel Action Network. "They bring truly responsible electronics recycling services to companies and communities throughout the Southwest & Midwest regions of the United States."

(from press release, Tulsa, Oklahoma, June 19, 2012)

## JOIN US IN STILLWATER ON OCTOBER 12

The OKRA Conference Planning Committee is hard at work developing the program for this year's Oklahoma Recycling Conference. The one-day event will be held on the campus of Oklahoma State University in Stillwater on Friday, October 12. Some of the topics being considered include: Updates & Economic Outlook, Multi-Sort, Dual-Stream & Single-Stream Collections; Rechargeable Battery Recycling; Pay-As-You-Throw Pro-



The Oklahoma Recycling Conference returns to the Conoco-Phillips OSU Alumni Center in 2012.

grams; Products made from Oklahoma Recyclables; What Happens after the E-Waste Event; Successful Municipal Recycling; and more!

Stay tuned for the final program and registration info. If you are interested in sponsoring this year's conference or exhibiting, please send a message to [info@recycleok.org](mailto:info@recycleok.org).

## GROW OKRA! Renew Your Membership or Join for the First Time!

Please renew your membership now for 2012 if you haven't already done so. OKRA membership runs on the calendar year.

If you are not an OKRA member, please consider joining. To learn about membership levels and member benefit details, such as discounts to OKRA events, download our membership brochure:

[www.recycleok.org/pdf/BrochureWebsite.pdf](http://www.recycleok.org/pdf/BrochureWebsite.pdf)

How to join or renew your membership in 2012:

- ◆ Via mail - send a completed membership brochure and your check to:  
OKRA  
PO Box 521154

Tulsa, OK 74152-1154.

- ◆ Via Internet - go to [www.recycleok.org/join-us.php](http://www.recycleok.org/join-us.php) and access the online membership form toward the bottom of the page. You then have a choice of paying online via PayPal or by mail (send your check to the PO Box above).

Please email questions to: [info@recycleok.org](mailto:info@recycleok.org)

**Current OKRA members will be eligible for discounted rates to the next Oklahoma Recycling Conference, October 12th in Stillwater!**