

THE OKRA NEWS

OKLAHOMA RECYCLING ASSOCIATION

December 2014

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

Oklahoma Recycler of the Year - OKRA's own Fenton Rood



OKRA congratulates Fenton Rood on being named the Oklahoma Recycler of the Year at the America Recycles Day banquet in Tulsa on November 16th. An environmentalist who "walks the talk," Fenton caught the environmentalism bug during a high school field trip to a local landfill. He says he couldn't help but

notice all the "useful stuff" that had been thrown away. By the time he started college, Fenton had set up a network of recycling centers. He later established a Sierra Club chapter at the University of Oklahoma and helped organize countless recycling efforts on campus.

Fenton has been with the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality since 1975 and currently serves as the Director of Waste Systems Planning. He helped develop the Superfund program in Oklahoma, regulating the clean-up of abandoned hazardous waste facilities. He was the "go-to" guy on the largest public works project ever pursued in the U.S.-- the Tar Creek Superfund site. Fenton pioneered

bringing organic food to Oklahoma City restaurants and guided Oklahoma City's Festival of the Arts to becoming a sustainable, zero-landfill event. Fenton is an active member of OKRA and serves on the OKRA Advisory Council as an expert in solid waste/recycling.



AMERICA RECYCLES DAY
BANQUET 2014

Congratulations to the other Oklahoma ARD Award Winners!

Recycling Volunteer: Don Comstock

Recycling Non-Profit: Earth Rebirth

Recycling Facility: NCED Hotel and Conference Center

Recycling Community: Elk City

Recycling Professional: Robert Pickens (OKRA Executive Committee Board Member)

OKRA Announces Winners of 2014 PSA Contest

We are pleased to announce these winners of the OKRA Public Service Announcement Video Contest in honor of America Recycles Day:



1st Place: "The Amazing Race to Zero Waste" by Plainview High School.

2nd Place: "Recycle Man" by Wilburton High School.

3rd Place: "Points for Recycling" by Plainview High School.

These videos will be uploaded soon to www.recycleok.org/okra/oklahoma-events-activities/psa-contest so stay tuned!

Many thanks to our PSA contest sponsors who contributed to cash awards for the winning schools and video production teams: Keep Oklahoma Beautiful, Northern Oklahoma Metals, and OGE Energy Corp.



Increasing Diversion: Events, Offices, Rural Areas

OKRA Hosts 2014 Recycling Conference

Recycling enthusiasts and exhibitors from across Oklahoma joined together in Edmond on October 9th at the 2014 Oklahoma Recycling Conference. The day began with a welcome by OKRA Board Member, Ellen Bussert who gave a brief rundown on OKRA's mission and goals and how they tie into the conference theme "Increasing Diversion: Events, Offices, Rural Areas."

The first presenter of the day was Michael Patton, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Environmental Trust in Tulsa. Michael's topic was *Oklahoma's 50 Shades of Green*. Michael stressed the importance of using volunteers to make recycling happen. Michael also provided a quick status of recyclables. He said that paper is one of the cleanest, easiest items to recycle and 40% of the trash generated per person each day is paper. Buying recycled paper is the key to closing the loop. Michael emphasized that recycling in Oklahoma creates jobs for Oklahomans. He pointed out that recycling glass is still a challenge, due to high shipping costs associated with the weight. However, we are fortunate to have three glass plants in Oklahoma that recycle glass, and glass is one commodity that can be recycled again and again.

To illustrate the magnitude of the recycling industry on the Oklahoma economy, Michael gave the example of the Sapulpa glass factory whose employees equal the number of students in the local high school. Michael said we have shown substantial gains in recycling in our homes, and that two-thirds of Oklahomans have access to drop-off or curbside recycling with 11 communities having the added convenience of single stream recycling. Michael gave kudos to Oklahoma Tribal Communities which have implemented

recycling or reuse centers. In summary, Michael said that recycling is all about jobs in Oklahoma, and about schools and using kids for volunteering and getting others involved in recycling.

The next speaker was Mark Lichtenstein, President of the National Recycling Coalition. Mark said that in order to increase waste diversion rates we need to em-

brace sustainable materials management (SMM) as a culture shift. SMM's focus is on being part of a supply chain/value chain, where material is collected to send to someone else, and about sharing responsibility for the lifecycle of the

product. Mark pointed out that for every ton of waste we deal with, there is an additional 70 tons that has been generated upstream that we need to start addressing. Part of SSM is designing products to be better for recycling, such as making products that don't combine organics with man-made materials. Mark said that companies need to look at

prioritizing waste reduction and eliminating discards from management systems, as well as focusing on the product package as a revenue center. He said some barriers to recycling are insufficient collection infrastructure, the China green fence, insufficient recycling technology, lack of customer awareness, and lack of supportive policies/economic frameworks. Mark stressed that to increase waste diversion through SMM, we need to spread the risk and cost throughout the product lifecycle, focus on low-hanging fruits (such as C&D waste and organics), and make commodity specific "highest and best-use choices." For instance, he said to determine the best use for an empty aluminum can in Oklahoma, because the answer may very well be different than it would in New York or California.

After a mid-morning break, participants had their choice of attending a session on Office and Large-Scale Recycling or a session on Organics and Composting.

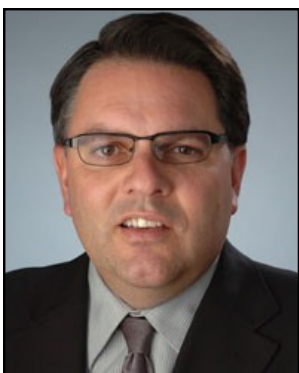
The office recycling session featured three presentations. The first was from Nicolas Warren with the Oklahoma Office of Management and Enterprise Services (OMES), the organization responsible for implementing recycling for all state agencies. OMES has set recycling goals and guidelines and has placed recycling bins at all state agencies. The second presentation was from T.O. Bowman, Interim Director of the City of Oklahoma City Office of Sus-



Participants at OKRA Recycling Conference



T.O. Bowman speaks on OKC's office recycling



Mark Lichtenstein

tainability. T.O. spoke on OKC's multi-faceted recycling program. OKC has taken many efforts to reduce paper generation, and has recycled metals, wood pallets, tires, motor oil and batteries. The last presentation was from Carrie Stewart and David Ellsworth who spoke on recycling at the Cox Convention Center and Chesapeake Arena. See page 5 for the Journal Record article with additional details.

The organics/compost session presented conference participants the opportunity to listen to and ask questions of a range of presenters on composting, ranging from an EPA official (Stephen Sturdivant), to a small composter beginning a new business (Terry



Jason speaks on Minick Materials' composting efforts



**Organics/ Composting Panel
Jason, Stephen, and Terry**

Craghead with Fertile Ground) to the largest permitted composter in the state (Jason Huffaker with Minick Materials).

During lunch, Rachel Hering, from Cooperative Teamwork and Recycling Assistance (CTRA) gave a presentation

on CTRA, a non-profit organization that helps small communities implement recycling programs. CTRA is located in Texas, and has about 60 members, which include military bases, school districts, non-profits, state agencies, municipalities and private industries. The CTRA helps provide local recycling program development, community/staff training, data collection and recordkeeping, contract negotiation/administration, access to information networks and to new technologies. Through the CTRA, small communities are able to partner with larger neighboring communities to share resources, allowing the small community to have a much more robust recycling program than it would be able to sustain on its own.



Rachel Hering, lunch speaker

After lunch, the program featured an event recycling panel. The first speaker was Jeanette Nance with Keep Oklahoma Beautiful (KOB). Jeanette said that KOB has collapsible recycling bins, which are light and easy to transport, that can be loaned for recycling events.

Next, Matt Albright with Tulsa Master Recyclers gave tips on managing volunteers to optimize participation. He stressed providing volunteers the essentials such as water, sunscreen, gloves and hand sanitizer; and said all volunteers should be easily identifiable (ex. custom t-shirts). The last speaker was Kelly Dillow with the ODEQ's Land Protection Division. Kelly spoke on ODEQ-sponsored recycling events including the OKC Memorial Marathon, the OKC Festival of the Arts, Woody Guthrie Festival and the Redman Triathlon. Kelly said some lessons learned from these events are to know your markets beforehand and know what items to collect, have a good base camp where recyclables can be sorted/stored, have an adequate number of recycling and trash bins, and ensure signs are visible and easy to understand.

The wrap-up session was a panel discussion featuring six experts who answered questions relating to their focus areas: Melissa Adler-McKibben (e-waste), Mark Lichtenstein (national trends), Rachel Hering (rural challenges), Jason



**Wrap up Q&A panel:
Tim, Fenton, Jason, Melissa, Rachel and Mark**

Huffaker (composting), Fenton Rood (integrated SWM), and Tim Tillman (college campuses). The concept of green electronics was discussed, as was the importance of having a corporate advocate to support electronics recycling, and the advantages of using social media to champion recycling efforts.

The Panel of Experts Answer the Question:

What is most important to overcome barriers to recycling?

Mark Lichtenstein - "It's important to make economic linkages, such as the jobs created at the Sapulpa glass plant."

Rachel Hering - "Constant education"

Melissa Adler-McKibben - "Education is vital, and it's important not to wait until collection events to start the process."

Jason Huffaker - "We all need to work together to push recycling and composting efforts."

Fenton Rood - "Even when markets don't exist, small towns can start with organics. Everyone can do something."

Tim - "Frame the message for the community, such as locally focus on land reuse because Oklahomans care about that."

Speaker PowerPoint presentations may be downloaded from www.recycleok.org/okra/oklahoma-events-activities

OKRA moves into the 21st Century

The Oklahoma Recycling Association strives to educate Oklahomans about the importance of recycling. We do this through a variety of sources including this newsletter, our website www.recycleok.org and through social media such as Facebook. The OKRA website has not been very user friendly for mobile device users, so OKRA is working hard to change this. In the near future you will be able to access all of the valuable resources OKRA has to offer no matter where you are or what device you are using. So stay tuned! In the meantime, "Like" OKRA on Facebook and invite your friends to as well.



THE JOURNAL RECORD

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Carrie Stewart, SMG director of events, and David Ellsworth, SMG director of operations, at the Oklahoma Recycling Association's annual conference at the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond Thursday. PHOTO BY SAMUEL PERRY

Slam dunk | Recycling program saves arena operator thousands a year

BY SARAH TERRY-COBO
THE JOURNAL RECORD

EDMOND – Carrie Stewart makes sure the Cox Convention Center is clean. She also ensures that the Chesapeake Energy Arena is stocked with supplies and has the lighting and temperatures that the NBA requires.

As the local director of events for SMG, which manages those city-owned buildings, she wanted to make operations more cost-effective and cut down on waste. She wanted to implement recycling programs similar to those at other SMG facilities.

In 2009, she began a recycling and waste reduction program. She purchased reusable water bottles for employees to eliminate the single-use Dasani bottle each staff member receives before an event. Though the reusable bottles cost \$3 each, she saved thousands of dollars each year. In three years, she eliminated more than 15,000 single-use plastic bottles.

She also added plastic and aluminum recycling for customers, and the facilities began recycling corrugated cardboard. She struggled with how to motivate employees, however. SMG's full-time staff works long hours during the nine-month basketball and hockey seasons.

"Trying to convince staff members who work 60 to 80 hours per week to add more time and energy in recycling is hard to do," Stewart said.

On Thursday at the Oklahoma Recycling Association conference at the University of Central Oklahoma, Stewart discussed the challenges she faced in creating a sustainability plan for the building that she helps control.

Stewart got help in 2012 when David Ellsworth joined the company. The director of operations helped create manuals to streamline training processes, and he tracked benchmarks for progress. Exhibitors are often interested in those metrics, and the NBA aims to work in facilities that have sustainability plans, he said.

Running successful recycling and waste-reduction programs can be a challenge, regardless of the size of the business or how many buildings it has. Nationally, recycling rates have remained at about 34 percent for the last decade, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Local companies, including the Pepsi bottling plant in Tulsa, the Georgia-Pacific paper products manufacturing center in Muskogee and glass recyclers in northeastern Oklahoma, depend on the feedstock of used bottles, paper and glass,

said Mark Lichtenstein, president and CEO of the National Recycling Coalition.

In order to stay in business, those companies need materials, he said. Other businesses can save money by recycling more.

Yet one reason it's difficult to encourage more recycling is because the message is framed incorrectly, Lichtenstein said.

"We can't lead with the environmental argument," he said. "It's the business case we've got to make."

Local manufacturers that recycle are part of the supply chain, he said. The feedstock on which they depend isn't waste; it's a valuable material. Stewart said SMG recycles about 225 tons of cardboard and paper each year. She cuts costs on garbage disposal and also earns about \$3,000 in rebates.

Not all businesses see the value in recycling or reducing waste, but it's a crucial component to keeping local manufacturers viable, Lichtenstein said. Reframing the conversation isn't easy, and there are two possible ways to solve that, he said.

"One way is to have a visionary leader that says, 'We shall do this,'" he said. "The other way is from the ground up, which is led by the younger generation and by women."

Conference Tours



Tim Tillman shows UCO's Bio-diesel processing equipment

The OKRA conference was followed by two concurrent tours. One was a tour of the University of Central Oklahoma's campus recycling program led by Tim Tillman, UCO Sustainability Coordinator. Tim showed the group the equipment used to convert used cooking oil into biodiesel. The used oil is collected from UCO dining halls and from Francis Tuttle Culinary Academy, converted into biodiesel and used to run all campus diesel vehicles. Tim explained that UCO has recycling containers placed at the major intersections across campus, and that some of the newer LEED-constructed buildings have recycling bins built into the walls. The campus collects paper, cardboard, plastics and metals for recycling.

The Minick Materials compost facility tour was led by Jason Huffaker, Operations Manager for Minick. Jason explained the various steps that the business had gone through since its inception and the necessity of being willing to change with fluctuations in markets, consumer expectations, and economic conditions. Minick Materials



Jason Huffaker shows the group Minick Materials' large compost facility

owns a large composting facility licensed by the state, which ensures better control and techniques in the decomposition process. Ingredients used in their compost are fruits, vegetables, carbon sources and manure from stockyards. The combination of ingredients, timing and aeration provide an organic matter that's great for topdressing, gardens, and landscaping.

Choctaw Nation's Going Green Team Recycles at Labor Day Festival

by Lynn Malley



Labor Day Festival Recycling Bins

Over Labor Day weekend, OKRA Council Member and OSU Extension SWM Specialist Lynn Malley supported the Choctaw Nation's Going Green Team at the Choctaw Nation's annual Labor Day festival

which drew about 75,000. The Going Green team collected nearly 4 tons of recyclables at this year's festival, nearly double the amount collected in 2013.

Lynn helped with a waste audit of the "trash" generated at the event and made a presentation about water conservation to visitors of the Choctaw Green Team tent. She came away so impressed with what the Choctaw were doing to protect the earth that she



Tracy Horst Directs Organics Assessment

If you are interested in having training on waste audits or recycling in your area, contact Lynn at lynn.malley@okstate.edu. Additional information is on the OSU Extension Solid Waste Management Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/OkstateSolid-WasteManagement>.

OKRA Congratulates

Tracy Horst and Choctaw Nation's Going Green Team for winning the Environmental Excellence Award for Tribal Government Programs at the Keep Oklahoma Beautiful Awards Banquet on November 20th!



The Going Green Tent



Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service (OCES) Booth

Highland Park Elementary to Receive Recycling Award for Schools

**GREAT
JOB!!**

Highland Park Elementary School in Stillwater has been selected by OKRA to receive a Recycling Award for Schools. Recognized for LEED certification, the new school building includes many conservation features such as two 1000-gallon storage tanks used to collect rain water for irrigation. It also uses natural lighting from solar tubes, automatic



Rain water collection behind the school

Highland Park has a great recycling program and garden club, which allow students to learn how to recycle and reuse products. The students plant and grow things in the school's vegetable and flower gardens and learn about nature in its numerous outdoor classrooms.



A sign on the school wall shows the "dos and don'ts" of composting

dimming lights and geo-thermal ground source heat pumps. And the school cafeteria opted to reduce waste generation by using good old-fashioned reusable trays and silverware, doing away with plastic utensils and Styrofoam trays.

They compost waste food from the school cafeteria for use in the school gardens. As winner of the Recycling Award, Highland Park will receive a \$100 check courtesy of OKRA!



Highland Park Garden

Past featured schools are listed at: www.recycleok.org/okra/oklahoma-events-activities/k-12-school-recognition/.

Make Plans to Attend Oklahoma's First Compost Conference May 15-16, 2015

The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality and Oklahoma State University Extension are partnering together to plan Oklahoma's very first compost conference. The conference will be May 15-16, 2015 at the Cleveland County Extension Office, and will explore the benefits and use of compost. Compost is the next big hurdle in recycling and waste reduction and diversion. It is often associated with backyard gardens, but it has many other applications including slope stabilization, water conservation, and storm water filtration. Attendees at the Oklahoma Compost Con-

ference can learn about sustainable and cost effective functions of compost that can be applied to storm water management, landscape design, construction, agriculture, and city planning. Oklahoma is taking a step forward to join national conversation about valuing waste as a resource. We ask you to join us in this discussion and explore the benefits of compost this coming May at the inaugural Oklahoma Compost Conference. Anyone interested in more information about the conference may contact Lynn Malley (lynn.malley@okstate.edu) or Kelly Dillow (kelly.dillow@deq.ok.gov).



**CONGRATS
KOB
WINNERS!**

Congratulations to all finalist and winners of the Keep Oklahoma Beautiful (KOB) Annual Environmental Excellence Competition. Winners were announced at the KOB Banquet on November 20th. For a full list of award winners, please see www.keepoklahomabeautiful.com/2014-environmental-excellence-winners-announced.

Ada Recycling Coalition (ARC) Gives Away Mulching Mower

Congratulations to Kelly Bronnenberg. Kelly, third from the left, won a mulching mower from the Ada Recycling Coalition's "America Recycles Day" contest.

Composting is nature's way of recycling natural materials, and the Ada Recycling Coalition encourages all citizens to "mulch" not bag their lawn clippings and leaves.

Pictured with Kelly at Home Depot in Ada are ARC representatives: Dana Clifton, Marilyn Ellis, Trudy Nevland, Ambrie Johnson, Katelyn Holmes and Home Depot Manager, Brad Stafford.
(Photo by Richard Barron)



Winners of ARC's America Recycles Day Poster Contest



First place \$25 winners of the Ada Recycling Coalition's recent America Recycles Day poster contest entitled "What Can I Put in the Blue Bin?" are Dyson Palmer, Kady Russell, Maddyson Spechte, Ollie Miller, Brody Russell, Faith Stout, and Raygan Hogue. Pictured with them are ARC representatives Katelyn Holmes, Marilyn Ellis and Trudy Nevland.

(Photo by Richard R. Barron)

"I'm still here" - Update on One-Man Recycling Operation

About a year and a half ago, I wrote an article on what one person could do to recycle electronic items. Well, since then the effort has really taken off. So I thought I would give you a re-cap on how I did it, and what you would need to start a similar recycling effort of your own.

First you will need a place to disassemble the items. I have a 2-car garage in my backyard that is perfect.

Second, I suggest that you locate vendors that will buy your scrap. After all, if you can't get rid of it, then why do it. You will need to locate a place that will buy the metal, (steel, aluminum, brass), as well as a place that will take the boards, hard drives, processors, etc. Go to these vendors and find out how they want the material so you can get the best price. I have a couple of places here in Oklahoma City that I use and I average two trips a month.

Third, (and most important), you need product. I started by word of mouth. I told a friend, they told their friends and pretty soon the stuff started coming in. Print up a flyer that has a list of what you are recycling and some business cards to pass out. Then go to business-

es in your area and pass them out. There has been several times that I have walked in cold and come out with stuff. I take just about anything that plugs into the wall. There is some value in just about everything and I usually don't turn anything away except CRT Televisions. Last week I did a treadmill and I have a really nice defibrillator if anyone needs one. I also have coordinated with a local trash service to provide my phone number to their customers when they have something to toss out.

COMPLETE ELECTRONICS RECYCLING

WE ARE CURRENTLY ACCEPTING THESE ITEMS FOR RECYCLING:

COMPUTERS	PHONES, HOME/OFFICE/CELL
PRINTERS, COPIERS	LAP TOPS
COFFEE MAKERS	MICROWAVE OVENS
FLAT SCREEN TVS	FLAT SCREEN MONITORS
OLD CHRISTMAS LIGHTS	KEY BOARDS/MICE
SMALL APPLIANCES	AC UNITS (NO FREON)
FANS	STORM DOORS/WINDOWS
INK CARTRIDGES/TONER	FLOURESCENT LIGHT FIXTURES

(NO TVs OR MONITORS WITH CATHODE RAY TUBES)

- ANYTHING ELECTRIC-
WIRE, ALUMINUM, COPPER, BRASS, SCRAP
AUTOMOTIVE BATTERIES - OLD LAWN MOWERS
100% HARD DRIVE DESTRUCTION GUARANTEED!

CONTACT: CHARLIE 630-0595/745-4222

charliehutson@sbcglobal.net MEMBER: OKLA. RECYCLING ASSOCIATION

NOTE: ALL ITEMS WILL BE SCRAPPED!

FREE PICK-UP IN THE OKC METRO!

(REFERENCES ON REQUEST)

In short, the business (and it is a business) has really taken off, and I make enough from it to pay the household utilities. The money is nice, but for me, it's the satisfaction of knowing that everything I recycle gets another chance of being useful. It stays out of the landfill, and it reduces the amount of raw material need to make new products.

Charles Hutson

2014 OKRA MEMBERS!

Platinum Corporate Member

Batliner Recycling

Silver Corporate Members

American Waste Control

OGE Energy Corp

Republic Services

Bronze Corporate Members

Choctaw Nation

Kialegee Tribal Town

Natural Evolution, Inc.

Corporate Members

Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town

Amazon Environmental

American Sanitation, Inc.

American Textiles Recycling Services

City of Muskogee

Closed Loop Recycling

National Waste & Disposal Inc.

Ripple Glass, LLC

United Electronic Recycling, LLC

Non-Profit/Government Partners

Ada Recycling Coalition

Ardmore Beautification Council, Inc.

Arkansas Recycling Coalition

Call2Recycle/RBRC

City of Ada

City of Moore

City of Norman

City of Tulsa

City of Yukon

Keep Oklahoma Beautiful

Oklahoma City Zoo & Botanical Garden

Oklahoma Dept of Environmental Quality

Oklahoma Manufacturers Alliance

Oklahoma State University

Pride in McAlester

Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation

Seneca-Cayuga Tribe

Solid Waste Institute of NE OK
The M.e.t.

Tulsa Master Recyclers

University of Central Oklahoma

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Diana Askins

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Ellen Bussert

Sheila Crow

Sean Eisensmith

Matt Faulkner

Chris Feeney

Curtis Fitzpatrick

Peter Grant

Ian Groshong

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Hayley Holmes

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Luis Martinez

Daniel McCune

Cara Cowan Watts



Not a current member of OKRA? Consider joining today! To learn about membership levels and member benefits, such as discounts to OKRA events, download our membership brochure from www.recycleok.org.

To join or renew your membership in 2015:

- ◆ Send completed membership brochure and check by mail to OKRA, PO Box 521154, Tulsa, OK 74152-1154.
- ◆ Go to www.recycleok.org/join-us.php and access the online membership form toward the bottom of the page. You can pay online via PayPal or by mail (send your check to the PO Box above).

**Thanks to our 2014 OKRA
members who are working to
improve recycling in Oklahoma!**



OKLAHOMA RECYCLING ASSOCIATION