

## **MARCH 2013**

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

# Chickasha Recycling Program Breaks State Records for Participation by Jan

by James Bright

CHICKASHA — Chickasha's recycling program has already posted record breaking numbers of participation according to a report from Waste Connections.

The document states that 62.5 percent of possible recyclers are participating in the program.

"There is not another city in the State with those kind of participation rates, so a big congratulations to the citizens of Chickasha," Brenda Merchant, state sales and municipal manager for Waste Connections said.

Not only does Chickasha stand alone among all current recycling programs in the state, but the city has also smashed the record for citizen involvement in a recycling program in the state's history and several others that Waste Connections does business in, Merchant said.

"I am just totally and utterly impressed," she said.

Waste Connections uses a system that identifies when a polycart is used and picked up once a month, said Merchant.

"This means that citizen participation may be higher because some people put out the cart every other month," she said.

This method is so effective that it has drawn the attention of Chickasha's neighbors like Marlow and Duncan, who have both expressed interest in mimicking Chickasha's recycling program, according to Merchant.

Mayor Hank Ross said people being well informed about the program has helped its success and he recycles regularly.

"Personally, I have more recyclables than trash," he said.

The size of the carts may also contribute to the program's success due their large capacity, which aides in people's ability to fit items in the carts more simply, said Ross.

That simple convenience combined with an incentive based program is why the system has spread and thrived so easily, according to Merchant.

Continued on pg 2

## Membership Alert! Don't let OKRA die on the vine! Join or Renew your membership today

All 2012 OKRA memberships expired on March 1st. To join or renew, go to <u>www.recycleok.org/okra/get-involved/join-us</u> 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 checks to OKRA, PO Box 521154, Tulsa, OK 74152-1154). To learn about membership levels and member benefit details, such as discounts to OKRA events, download our membership brochure: <u>www.recycleok.org/okra/wp-content/</u> <u>uploads/2012/03/BrochureWebsite.pdf</u>

Any questions, please email info@recycleok.org

## Chickasha Recycling (continued from front page)

Several Chickasha citizens had positive things to say about the program, citing it as a motivator to participate.

"I recycle more than I throw away thanks to the full size polycarts," Jewels Dewey said. "Norman began giving out these green tubs for recycling, which seemed like a joke at the time because the tubs

blew away along with all that was in it, therefore polluting the environment. Good job Chickasha!"

Others found the initiation of the program as a reason to recycle.

"After we received our green bin, I actually started looking through our home for items that could be recycled," Pamela Pogue said. "I had a number of magazines that I had collected over the years ... recycle. I found boxes that we had kept for electronics (I have no idea why) ... recy-

> cle. We go through water bottles and soda cans ... recycle. Now, I look at everything we are throwing out and to make sure which bin it should go to. I had no idea just how much trash could be recycled!"

And some are so thrilled with the program that they'd like to see it used in greater frequency.

"I would like to see them pick up the recycling once a week," said Lisa Mitchusson "I have more items to recycle than trash."

article reprinted with permission from The Express-Star (Chickasha, Okla.) March 4, 2013, Visit the Express-Star at chickashanews.com.

## **Stillwater Invites Residents to Opt Into Curbside Recycling**

Chickasha

The City of Stillwater is encouraging its residents to sign up for the new "Stillwater Recycles: Curbside Single-Stream Program" which will begin In June.

The Stillwater City Council voted in November 2012 to move forward with citywide recycling, following a successful single-stream pilot program.

Stillwater residents will receive welcome letters and "Select Your Cart" postcards at their front doors. The letters will explain single-stream recycling and how residents will be able to select a second blue polycart for the disposal for recyclables. The residents place recyclables in the one polycart and trash in the other. Then, both the trash and recyclables will be picked up on the normal trash collection day.

Residents need to sign up for the program by June 3, 2013. There are three ways to do so.

1. Complete the electronic form on the City of Stillwater website (http://stillwater.org/governmnet/ stillwater\_utilities\_authority/recycling\_servides.php).

2. Call (405) 742-8269. Provide name, address, telephone, email, and size of recycle polycart desired.

3. Return the postcard (delivered to home)

The curbside single-stream program will accept paper, plastics No. 1-7, cardboard, and cans. Because of additional sorting requirements, glass will not be accepted curbside, but will still be accepted at the Stillwater Convenience Collection Center.

Participation in the program is optional, but a fee of \$1.57 will be assessed to each utility bill, regardless of participation.

Single stream curbside recycling is convenient for citizens. It allows recyclable materials to be collected directly from their home, diverted from landfills, and saves money, energy and natural resources.

#### **OKC Recycles Tires, Ammo, Computers and Pharmaceuticals**



A special household hazardous waste collection will be held for ammunition, tires, computers and pharmaceuticals from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on April 27 at the State Fairgrounds. The collection is open to Oklahoma City residents only. Bring your current Oklahoma City water bill stub to prove residency. The event will be held on the south side of the fairgrounds, east of the arena. Sorry, televisions, tires with rims and off-road tires will not be accepted.



#### **Recycling plant in Watts close to hiring**

#### **By Will Chavez**

WATTS, Okla. – Construction on the Advanced Environmental Recycling Technologies plant is nearly complete,

and the company plans to hire its initial workforce in March.

Diane Kelley, group leader of Cherokee Nation Career Services, is assisting AERT with the hiring process and said the company plans to initially hire 60 to 70 people. She said a list of people interested in working for AERT is located at the CN field office in Stilwell and that people would be contacted when AERT begins hiring.



Work continues on AERT plant in Watts. The plastic reclamation facility will start production in June. (Photo by Will Chavez)

Kelley said the company plans to

use the Stilwell Strawberry Festival in May as the event to let people know of its opening.

"They are going to be in the parade, and they are going to have their open house some time at the end of May," she said.

Kelley said AERT hopes to move most of its plastic reclamation facility from Rogers, Ark., to Watts, which is in northern Adair County. The plant plans to start production in early June.

AERT officials said they eventually plan to hire 265 workers to manufacture a wood and plastic composite material using recycled plastic grocery bags, plastic cartons and wood fiber. The material is used for decking, trim and privacy fencing.

Ground was broken for the 900-acre plant in March 2008, with company officials announcing that jobs would pay \$14-per-hour for the economically impoverished Adair County.

To get those relatively high-paying jobs, state, CN and Adair County officials offered incentives, including taxexempt bond financing to ensure the deal. The U.S. Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration also provided a \$900,000 grant to benefit Watts and Adair County. The grant supported the con-

struction of infrastructure improvements in Watts related to connecting the AERT plant to the Watts wastewater system.

Construction on the plant was delayed last spring because the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality said AERT did not have the permits to connect the facility to the Watts wastewater system. That issue has been resolved.

The state and area environ-

mentalists were also concerned about the plant's storm water runoff going into the nearby Illinois River. State law prohibits any additional pollutant into the Illinois River basin because it is designated as an outstanding water resource.

AERT CEO Joe Brooks said the company has worked hard to alleviate concerns about storm water runoff into the Illinois River and redrew the plant's design so that the water would drain in a direction that is three miles away from the river. He added that the plant would have a containment storage lagoon and more than 1.6 million gallons of water storage.

He said the water used to wash the plastic material would be recycled. It would then be filtered and released into the Watts wastewater treatment plant. He estimates about 25,000 gallons a day would be released.

The total investment for AERT, which is based in Springdale, Ark., for five years is expected to be approximately \$42.85 million. AERT estimates it will have a \$261 million impact on the community based on being in full production within five years.

article reprinted with permission from the Cherokee Phoenix (cherokeephoenix.org) March 4, 2013



Keep an eye out for recycling! If you catch someone in the act, send their photo to trudi.logan@us.af.mil, and they could be featured in the next issue of the OKRA News. OKRA News March 2013 - Page 3

## **Mount Saint Mary's Environmental Club**

In the fall of 2011, the Mount St. Mary Environmental Club partnered with the Department of Sustainability at the University of Central Oklahoma. This partnership involved UCO providing recycling bins to Mount St. Mary and in return the Mount students would take measurements and keep records of the recycling collected and would send this data to UCO. This year alone the club has collected 2,214 pounds of paper, 370 pounds of plastic, and 232 pounds of aluminum. The president of the Environmental Club at Mount St. Mary, Tayler Duclos says "We are thrilled at the partnership with UCO, it will give us the required resources to take our program here to the next level."

Since the club's inception in 2010, the program has grown from two recycling bins and generally theoretical projects, into a program with plenty of recycling bins and projects being implemented on a weekly basis.

A major project that the club does annually is called "Earth Week," which generally includes Earth Day and is a week long celebration of the Earth that we live on. The plans this year include an outdoor nature-oriented scavenger hunt, daily trivia, and the opportunity for every student to plant a flower.

### FREE BUS RIDES ON EARTH DAY

In support of Earth Day, Oklahoma City's METRO Transit is offering free bus rides on Monday, April 22, 2013. By doing so, Metro is providing solutions to reduce Oklahoma citizens' fuel cost and carbon footprint. To learn more about METRO Transit and view bus schedules and routes, visit www.gometro.org or call 235-RIDE (7433) from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. for personal trip plans.

## OKC Earth Fest at Martin Park

The Earth takes center stage during this free annual celebration at Martin Park Nature Center from 1-4 p.m. on Saturday, April 27. The park is bringing together eco-friendly speakers and exhibitions, plus fun kids' activities that focus on nature and conservation. 5000 West Memorial Road.

## April LitterBlitz

Help fight litter in Oklahoma City by registering for Oklahoma City Beautiful's 13th annual LitterBlitz. Teams are needed to clean one site, one time during the month of April and help rid our City of trash. Form a team and register online at www.okcbeautiful.com or call

525-8822 by March 30, 2013.



# **City of Moore 2013 Earth Day Recycling Spectacular**

The first Earth Day was held on April 22, 1970. Over 40 years later, this little holiday gets some big attention, and its mission still holds true – to encourage action for a healthy environment! Help the City of Moore celebrate Earth Day by taking advantage of some great recycling opportunities. On April 20, 2013 the City of Moore will hold recycling opportunities at the Moore Recycle Center located at 400 N. Telephone Rd. Citizens will be able to drive thru and drop off items. This event will include:

- Onsite Electronics Recycling, from 9 am 1 pm
- Onsite Glass Recycling, from 9 am 1pm
- Onsite Paper Shredding and Recycling, from 9 am 1 pm
- Drive-thru Recycling Operations, from 9 am 5 pm. First 100 customers will receive a free personal recycling bin!!
- Rain Barrel Class, starting at 9:30 am (limited to first 50 Moore residents to register)



## **Planet Nichols Hills Sponsors Earth Day Event**



Planet Nichols Hills, a chapter of the Oklahoma Sustainability Network, will host its sixth annual Earth Day Event on Saturday, April 20 from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. The event will be held at the former First Church of Christ Scientist, 1203 Sherwood Lane in Nichols Hills. The event will focus on Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and will feature interactive demonstrations for all ages, local produce, picnic foods and tables. There will be a Pick Up the Pace children's 1-Mile Fun Run, children's art tent and community garden, wildlife, music and much more. For more information call 405/820-2263 or visit our website at www.planetnicholshills.org.

## Ada Recycling Coalition 2013 Essay Contest

" Ways and Reasons to Conserve Water in My Hometown"

#### Attention Students & Teachers:

To celebrate Earth Day, the Ada Recycling Coalition (ARC) is sponsoring an essay contest for High school and Jr. High school students in Pontotoc County and will award the following:

- High School: 1st Place \$200, Runner-up \$50
- Jr. High School: 1st Place \$200, Runner-up \$50

#### Here are the details:

Contestants will be judged on their understanding of the general subject of water conservation, their demonstrated knowledge of key issues, originality and style.

<u>Title</u>: "Ways and Reasons to Conserve Water in My Hometown" <u>Deadline</u>: Friday, April 12, 2012, 5 pm Essays are to be submitted to Trudy Nevland, as follows:

- Mail 231 South Townsend, Ada, OK 74820
- Hand Deliver Public Works (220 West 7<sup>th</sup> Street) or City Hall (231 South Townsend)
- E-mail <u>trudy@adaok.com</u> (electronic submissions are encouraged)
- ◆ Fax (580) 436-8092

500 words or less. Must by typed and double-spaced.

Cover sheet to include: name, grade, school and telephone number.

Winners will be acknowledged at ARC's annual Earth Day meeting in April where they and a guest will be treated to lunch.

## **CELEBRATE EARTH DAY APRIL 22**

Since Earth Day began on April 22, 1970, people across the country have worked together to teach their fellow citizens about the environment. Its founder, Gaylord Nelson, proposed the very first nationwide protest to force the issue of the environment onto the national agenda. Earth Day was born in a time when Americans were living in a world where cities were buried under smog and rivers caught fire because of pollution. Thankfully, Earth Day changed the world's view on the environment. That same year President Richard Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with a mission to protect the environment and public health. Congress also passed the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act. The Earth Day celebration brought together everyone, young and old, as humans trying to reach one specific goal...saving the environment.

In 1990, the Earth Day celebration reached another big milestone; it was



now global, getting the message of the environment to 200 million people in 141 coun-



tries. Now the environment was an issue for the world stage. As a result of this introduction, recycling efforts worldwide were given a huge boost.

As the millennium drew closer another campaign was started in order to focus the world on global warming and to push for clean energy. Earth Day 2000 combined the festivities of the first Earth Day with the activism of Earth Day 1990. By 2000, Earth Day now

had Internet access and helped activists around the world get the link to one another. By the time April 22 rolled around, 5,000 environmental groups from all across the globe were on board, reaching out to people in a record 184 countries.

To try and put in perspective how much people can do when they put their mind to it, here is an example. In 1972, the United States and Canada agreed to clean up the Great Lakes, a source of 95percent of America's fresh water and supply drinking water for about 25 million people. Only 36-percent of the nation's assessed stream miles were safe for uses such as swimming and fishing. Today, 60percent of those stream miles are safe for use. That's how much of a difference people working together can make.

Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, and citizens like you, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment. The fight is ongoing and we want you to be a part of it. Here's your chance to channel your energy into doing something to maintain the Earth's clean and healthy environment and to protect its diversity for those who come after us.



from www.keepoklahomabeautiful.com

## WHAT CAN I DO? An Individual Recycler's Perspective

We throw away millions of recoverable items every day in this country. We have become accustomed to use once and then throw away. I think that by the end of this century we will be mining landfills for the things we have tossed out. I have been an avid recycler for over 30 years. I have picked up a mountain of aluminum cans, and a large amount of glass. Now we all know that you can sell the cans and make some extra money, but the glass items I collect just because they are there and it's cheaper to recycle that bottle than to make a new one.

So what can YOU do? First if your city has a curbside recycling program, join it. Yes there will probably be a fee, but it will be worth it. Next, start a can drive at your work place and ask your friends to save them for you. Almost everyone I have asked has said yes. Since I have involved others in my effort, when I sell the aluminum, I

donate the money to a local food bank. That way others benefit from our efforts.

I work four 10-hour days, so I have Friday, Saturday, and Sunday off. That gives me more time to devote to my recycling efforts. I am currently recycling electronic items: computers, cell phones, ceiling fans, printers, and vacuum cleaners. Basically anything electric that doesn't



contain Freon. I have found places that will buy everything except plastic and CRTs. There are a couple of places that will take CRTs, but for a fee, so you might want to shop around. Prices have been quoted from \$10to-\$25 depending on the size. CRTs contain lead. I have a small device that I use to strip the insulation off wire, because clean wire sells for a much higher price. I would recommend that you contact your local recyclers and find out what they will accept and how they want the materials. The place I sell to wants circuit boards sorted into three grades. I have placed small ads in my local paper and have made business cards and small flyers that I hand out. I have just started this project and so far the response has been positive. And besides, I just love to tear stuff up. So if you would like to start a recycling program, or expand your efforts, I hope these ideas help you. It doesn't take that much time and the rewards (and

the extra cash) are worth it.

by: Charles Hutson OKRA member and local recycler

about the author: Charles Hutson is 64 years old and lives in Mustang, Oklahoma. Charles was a volunteer in the Mustang weekly recycling program until Mustang got its curbside program. Charles is a new member of OKRA and last year he started an electronics recycling program at his home. Oklahoma could use more avid recyclers like Charles!

## Earth Day Festival in Norman

Norman's 2013 Earth Day Festival will take place in Reaves Park, Sunday, April 21st, from noon till 5pm. The Festival will provide hands-on activities and demonstrations that teach the importance of protecting the earth's air, water, soil, forests, wildlife and natural resources. Learn about the wonder and beauty of nature, the value of a healthy community, a backyard wildlife habitat, art made from recycled materials and more. There is no charge for booth space and the entire event is free and open to the public. To reserve a booth space, fill out the registration

form at http:// www.ci.norman.ok.us/content/ earth-day-2013-festival-registration. This fun, free event promotes the importance of respect for our

planet, our wildlife and each other!



# **UCO Earth Day Fair**

The 2013 UCO Earth Day Fair is scheduled for Wednesday April 17 from 9:00-2:00, at Broncho Lake. As in the past, we will have off-campus guests representing many different environmental organizations present to distribute information. Music will be provided by the campus radio station and walking tacos will be served around noon. Your student organization is invited to set up a table to both promote your club and focus attention on an environmental issue of your choice, or possibility raise funds to be donated to an appropriate environmental organization. Please complete the registration form, and return it to Dr. David Bass in the Biology Department by 5:00 Monday April 15.

This event is co-sponsored by the Earth Day Committee and the Student Programming Board-Student Green Committee.

#### Mark Your Calendars! Help With the Lake Overholser and Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge Cleanup

In celebration of Keep America Beautiful's National Day of Action on **Saturday April 6<sup>th</sup>**, citizens will be banding together as part of Keep Oklahoma Beautiful's (KOB) Great American Clean-Up, OKC Beautiful's Litter Blitz, and American Rivers' National River Clean-Up to clean-up **Lake Overholser and the Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge**. Because many of us get our drinking water from water that has gone through the Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge to Lake Overholser (or to Lake Hefner via the canal), it is important to keep these areas clean. Clean water is healthier water so everybody is invited to help us clean the Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge and Lake Overholser.

To continue with the success we have had with this cleanup, there are many staff positions that need to be filled, including:

**Team Leaders**. Due to the large area, volunteers are divided into teams. Team leaders show their team the location of their clean-up area, ensure they have enough supplies (gloves, bags, water, etc.), and serve as the contact person in case of emergencies (injury, bee sting, etc.). They also ensure volunteers properly sort all trash, recyclables, and hazardous materials, and collect them in the proper bags. Then the team leader makes sure the bags are gathered in one place for pick-up. For supplies, the team leader is in contact with a Rover.

**Rovers.** Rovers drive pick-up trucks containing supplies. Rovers cover a particular geographical area and may support several teams. They drop off supplies, and collect the bags of trash/recyclables and transport them to the Overholser Pavilion. The Rovers carry items, such as shovels and rope, in case they are needed. If you volunteer to be a Rover, please indicate whether you own a pick-up that can be used for the event.

**Overholser Pavilion Staff.** These individuals remain at the pavilion during the event to sign in volunteers, direct latearriving volunteers to work areas, contact the event coordinator of media arrivals, sort and weigh recyclables, and help prepare lunch. This is primarily a sedentary job, and works well for individuals who have trouble walking or standing.

**Prize Solicitors.** Much help is needed with prize solicitation between now and the clean-up. One of the best ways to encourage people to volunteer and thank them for participating is a raffle held during lunchtime. Every clean-up volunteer puts their name in a box and there is a drawing for donated prizes.

Prize solicitation takes a lot of time; but if you help, many hands make light work! Prize solicitation involves going to various businesses, explaining what the clean-up is, when it is, and asking them if they can help support this event by donating something for the raffle. The goal is to have as many raffle items as there are volunteers. **Even if you can't** help with the clean-up on April 6<sup>th</sup> or April 20<sup>th</sup>, you can support the effort by helping collect raffle items or donaOn April 6<sup>th</sup>, volunteers will meet at **8:30am at the Overholser Pavilion** which is located near NW 14<sup>th</sup> and East Overholser Drive in Oklahoma City. Every volunteer will need to complete a volunteer form. Volunteers under the age of 18 will need consent from a parent or legal guardian. To have a volunteer form sent to you, send an e-mail to: <u>Friend-</u> <u>sOfLakeOverholser@Cox.net</u>. The volunteer form is available in English and Spanish.

Volunteers should wear sturdy shoes, a hat, sturdy gloves, insect repellant, and sunscreen. The clean-up will be held rain or shine. After cleaning assigned areas, volunteers will meet back at the Overholser Pavilion at 12:30pm for a free lunch. There will be a drawing for free prizes during lunch. Lunch is being provided by Earl's Rib Place (Fairgrounds) with beverages courtesy of Pepsi. If you want to participate in this fun event, either call or e-mail clean-up coordinator, Karen Miles, at 405-702-8192 / FriendsOfLakeOverholser@cox.net, so there will be enough food and supplies.

This clean-up has been made possible with financial support from Chesapeake Energy and the DEQ Green Team. OKC Kayaks will be donating use of their kayaks for the flotilla to clean the waterways in Overholser & Stinchcomb. To clean-up via kayak, volunteers need to contact Rodney Boegel at 405-802-3678. This clean-up also receives in-kind donations from the City of Bethany, the City of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma City Riversport, the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, and Waste Management.

Volunteers are also needed **Saturday April 20<sup>th</sup>** (same time and place) to clean areas that weren't reached on April 6<sup>th</sup>. This clean-up will be part of ODOT's Trash-Off, Oklahoma's single largest one-day clean-up event.

The Friends of Lake Overholser and the Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge formally organized on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. We are adopting Lake Overholser through OKC Beautiful's Adopt-a-Park program. This involves litter clean-up activities at least monthly. So if you can't join us for one of the big clean-ups in April, come join us for one of our litter pick-up days! For those days and to find out about the other goals of our organization, go to our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/ pages/Friends-of-Lake-OverholserStinchcomb-Wildlife-Refuge/105680642809050).

We hope you choose to join us to help rid Lake Overholser and the Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge of trash and restore these areas to their natural beauty!



OKRA News Mar 2013 - Page 8

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