

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)

## Shawnee Kicks off Curbside Recycling!

On Monday, March 3rd, Shawnee became the most recent Oklahoma city to offer curbside recycling services.

Central Disposal, the company that has the Shawnee waste service contract, is collecting the recyclable materials along with residential solid waste. Over 10,000 18-gallon recycling

totes were delivered to area residents, along with inserts describing what items are acceptable for recycling and what items should go into trash. Residents can fill the tote with plastics #1 and #2, paper, and certain metals (including aluminum).

The recyclables will be sorted at the curb. Items unacceptable for recycling will be left in the recycling tote to help increase customer awareness about what items are acceptable for the curbside program. Shawnee's curbside recycling will occur on the



**Citizen volunteers of Sustainable Shawnee educate citizens about curbside recycling**

same day as the normal trash pick up making it extra convenient for residents to recycle.

Citizens of Shawnee will be charged \$3.50 per

month for the weekly curbside recycling service. However, this fee may be fully offset for citizens who choose to downsize the polycart used for their normal trash collection. An option that will become more and more feasible as more items are recycled, and fewer items go into the trash.



**Central Disposal employee sorts recyclables into recycling trailer**

## Spotlight on Owasso 7th Grade Center OKRA Recognizes GreenTeam and Recycling Efforts

Later this month, OKRA Treasurer, Michael Patton, will award a \$100 check to the Owasso 7th Grade Center, in Owasso, Oklahoma. OKRA is recognizing the school for their comprehensive recycling program. The Center is an Oklahoma certified Green School, and in 2012 was awarded the Recycling School Award. Every classroom at the center has a paper recycling bin, and they have additional bins for recycling water bottles from the cafeteria.

The school has a compost site for food scraps and students can bring leaves and grass clippings from their homes to add to the compost pile.

Each class at the center studies recycling, and the students are taught the importance of reuse, reduce and recycling. The center's motto is "Creating Responsible Citizens" and when it comes to recycling and sustainability they appear to be doing just that!

*Continued on pg. 2*

The center has an active GreenTeam open to interested students that averages over 30 kids per year. Those students volunteer to take on extra recycling duties, such as emptying the classroom recycling bins into the recycling container in the parking lot. The GreenTeam consists of separate groups that focus on recycling, site improvement and energy. In February 2014, the Green Team participated in a paper recycling lab, where they made paper from recycling shredded paper.



*Snapshots from the  
Owasso 7th Grade Center  
GreenTeam Paper Recycling  
Lab  
(additional pictures on pg. 6)*



## Oklahoma State Pushes Recycling Efforts

Oklahoma State University has started a recycling campaign aimed at saving money and the world.

OSU has been recycling paper since 1991 and added plastic bottles and aluminum cans in 2010, but the OSU Recycling Department wasn't created until 2013.

Ilda Hershey, sustainability coordinator for OSU, said the university hopes to see the recycling rate increase from 8 percent. "The overall goal is to reduce our impact on the environment and to recover as many resources as we can," Hershey said. "Ideally, we want to reduce waste and reuse what we have."

The program helps OSU save money. "We can save money by putting less material into the landfill because it costs quite a bit to dispose of materials in the landfill," Hershey said.

Paper and cardboard materials are sorted and baled at the OSU Recycling Center, north of campus, while bottles and cans are sent to a facility in Oklahoma City. The university sells the paper materials to the highest bidder, and part of the proceeds from bottles and cans are donated to the Entrepreneurship Boot Camp for Veterans with Disabilities.



Chad Tucker, recycling foreman, said the recycling facility was owned by OSU prior to it becoming the center for recycled materials. "They were using it for storage of mulch and sand for the grounds department," Tucker said.

The department has seven dumpsters, primarily near dining halls across the campus that accept cardboard. Tucker said the department is attempting to purchase more dumpsters.

"We are getting more material everyday," Tucker said.

"Once we get it here we separate it and bale the cardboard."

Tucker has four full time employees and two student employees working with him at the facility. Tucker said he is excited about the direction the recycling program is headed.

"We are building the program," Tucker said.



A video of this story is available at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFDI8sY3vxQ&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFDI8sY3vxQ&feature=youtu.be)

**Justin Tate**  
**Stillwater News Press**  
**February 20, 2014**



# Calling All Volunteers

## Lake Overholser Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge Cleanup April 12th

Volunteers are needed for the 9th Annual Lake Overholser/Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge Clean-up on April 12, 2014. The volunteers will meet at the Lake Overholser Pavillion at 8:30am, and will then move out in teams to clean up the different areas.

This event takes many types of volunteers to make it possible. Hopefully one of these tasks is just right for you!

### ***Soliciting raffle prizes***

One of the best things about the clean-up (except for the great lunch), is the raffle where they give away some great prizes. In order to have a lot of good prizes, volunteers are needed to approach businesses to ask if they can donate gift cards or other raffle items.

### ***Rovers***

Another five volunteers are needed who have pick-up trucks who would be willing to be a Rover on April 12th. Rovers are assigned to specific teams. They pick up the trash and recyclables that the teams have picked up and take them to the drop-off point. They also deliver more bags and cold beverages to all team members.

bles that the teams have picked up and take them to the drop-off point. They also deliver more bags and cold beverages to all team members.

### ***Pavilion staff (less physical)***

If you would you like to volunteer, but you feel you aren't able to do some of

the physical work of the clean-up, there is still a job for you! Volunteers are needed to staff the pavilion during the cleanup. That involves checking people in, helping to get signs up, do the logistics of lunch, and sort recyclables.

The recyclables are sorted for several reasons. One is that sometimes trash gets thrown in the

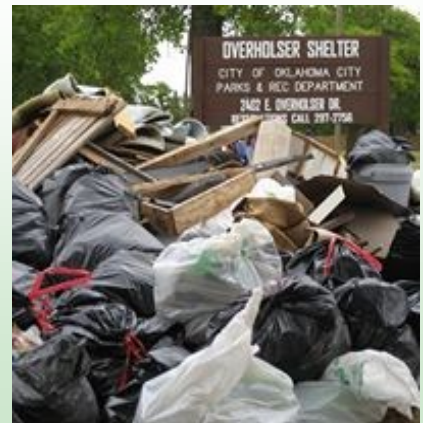
recyclables bag. The second is that the aluminum is sold, so that needs to be removed and put in its own bag. Also, many fishermen use liver as bait that comes in plastic containers that look like they are recyclable, but they don't have a recyclable number on them.

### ***Post clean-up workers:***

Volunteers are also needed to help with clean up after the event. This is

a good roll for people who don't do mornings! Most of the volunteers leave after the raffle, but there is still a lot of work to do. For example, all the supplies must be packed up and returned to storage. Special t-shirts will be provided to volunteers who will be helping out with items like this. On the front is a "Recycle, Reduce, Reuse" graphic with "Lake Overholser and the Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge" around it. Since maintaining the Overholser cat colonies is one of the duties of Friends of Lake Overholser, the graphic on the back includes a cat.

If you are interested in volunteering to help out in any capacity with the April 12th clean-up, Please e-mail [FriendsOfLakeOverholser@cox.net](mailto:FriendsOfLakeOverholser@cox.net).



## CELEBRATE EARTH DAY 2014

Each year on April 22, over a billion people in 190 countries take action for Earth Day. These individuals plant trees, clean up communities and contact elected officials all on behalf of the environment.

Like Earth Days of the past, Earth Day 2014 will focus on the unique environmental challenges of our time. As the world's population migrates to cities, the need to create sustainable communities is more important than ever. Earth Day 2014 seeks to do just that through its global theme: Green Cities.

With smart investments in sustainable technology, forward-thinking public policy, and an educated and active public, we can

transform our cities and forge a sustainable future. Nothing is more powerful than the collective action of a billion people!

To see how you can participate, check out [www.earthday.org](http://www.earthday.org).

### ***YOUR AD HERE***

**Consider an ad in the OKRA News!**

**Cost is \$75.00 per issue.**

**For more information contact**

**Trudi Logan**

**([trudi.logan@us.af.mil](mailto:trudi.logan@us.af.mil))**

*Actual size shown 2" x 3 1/2"*

## DEVON JOINS IN AS THOUSANDS UNITE TO CLEAN UP OKLAHOMA

### American Cleanup™ in Oklahoma Registration Now Open

An estimated 60,000 Oklahomans will join millions nationwide to participate in the Great American Cleanup™ (GAC) beginning March 1. This national program of Keep America Beautiful will be coordinated by Keep Oklahoma Beautiful (KOB) and is sponsored by Devon Energy.

The GAC is about more than just picking up trash around the state. It provides opportunities for beautification projects that might not be done otherwise. With support from sponsor Devon Energy, KOB is able to expand program reach and reward environmental excellence. Devon joined forces with KOB as the first GAC statewide sponsor in 2012, again in 2013, and Devon has come back for more in 2014.

Devon's sponsorship helps KOB offer registered groups across the state free supplies and support materials for their cleanup projects. Last year's GAC effort resulted in more than five million pounds of litter being collected and 370,000 pounds of various materials recycled, saving Oklahoma an estimated \$6 million.

"At Devon, we have a strong commitment to our environment and to our neighbors," said Wendi Schuur, Director of Community Relations. "We see the Great American Cleanup as a great opportunity to encourage a sense of community – people working side-by-side to improve the quality of life in their own hometowns."

One outstanding effort during the 2014 GAC will be recognized with the Devon GAC Achievement Award, including a \$1,000 cash prize.

Businesses, groups or organizations wishing to participate in the GAC in Oklahoma must register with KOB. By doing so, groups will receive supplies, program materials and grant opportunities. A limited number of safety vests and gloves were donated by Warren CAT and have already been claimed. However, KOB will have additional vests and gloves for sale on the registration page at a hugely discounted price.

To register for the GAC and find more information regarding the grants, supplies and Devon's award, please visit [www.keepoklahomabeautiful.com](http://www.keepoklahomabeautiful.com) or call (405) 286-9141.

At Keep Oklahoma Beautiful we recognize it's good to walk the road ways and keep them clear. It's good to take the dirty and make it clean. It's good to take the water and make it sparkle, to take foul air and make it sweet, to take barren and wasted land and make it flourish. It's good to take disconnected people and make them a community joining hands for a cause. We are doing good things at KOB, join us and be a part of the communities and good corporate citizens like Devon, who keep Oklahoma beautiful.

*Devon (NYSE: DVN), based in Oklahoma City, is a leading independent oil and gas producer and is included in the S&P 500 index. The company is committed to supporting communities where it operates by investing in youth and education, the arts, civic initiatives, the environment and emergency response agencies. Devon is the only independent oil and gas producer included in the Civic 50 list, which recognizes America's most community-minded companies. For additional information, visit [www.devonenergy.com](http://www.devonenergy.com).*

## Recycling "Booms" in Oklahoma City

The Oklahoma City Council passed an ordinance on February 25, 2014 to restrict operating times at local recycling plants after receiving noise complaints from area residents. According to the ordinance, recyclers must restrict their business operations to the hours of 7am to 7pm, and it also requires the recyclers to report any booms.

Residents in northeast Oklahoma City JFK neighborhood say that the "booms," resemble earthquakes, and occur two or three times a month. The booms are explosions caused when propane tanks or other gas cylinders are accidentally run through metal shredders.



Some residents claim that the booms have caused damage to their homes by putting cracks in windows or walls.

Although there are stringent rules for prohibiting these tanks from being accepted for recycling, they are often very hard to detect and may be hidden inside cars or other metal items that make it very difficult for the recycler to detect.

The ordinance will take effect May 2014. Residents say it is a good start to restore the peace in their neighborhood. Recycling companies protest that they stand to lose a substantial amount of business by having their hours of operation restricted.

## ARC Promotes Recycling



**Ambrie Johnson, Ada Recycling Coalition Board Member, spreads the word about recycling and composting at a meeting of the Ada Kiwanis Diamond-K Club, January 2014**

## Replace Kitty Litter with Reusable Mats

### Recycle waste oil and improve your work area

One of the most widely used oil absorbents is Oil Dri, also known as Floor Dry or kitty litter. This is a clay-based product used to spread around machines to absorb leaked oil. Used Oil Dry cannot be recycled and is usually landfilled.

Many companies choose kitty litter over other absorbent solutions (such as disposable pig mats) because it is very inexpensive. When there's a leak, it is easy just to sprinkle some kitty litter on top of the oil and sweep it up afterwards.

Recently, OKRA corporate member, Closed Loop Recycling (CLR) per-

formed a case study at an OKC industrial facility to compare the costs/benefits of Oil Dri versus reusable oil absorbent mats.

Results of the study were a little surprising. Although it was expected that the oil mats would provide for a cleaner work environment, the costs of the kitty litter was actually slightly more expensive. This is because the kitty litter solution has hidden costs that aren't usually considered, such as the labor to sweep up the material and fill the drum and the costs of the drum and the actual disposal. By contrast, the oil mats are reusable, and the oil collected on them can be

reused or recycled and the drums cleaned for reuse. Companies, such as CLR, pick up the filled drums, extract the oil from the mats, launder and return the mats for reuse and even clean the drum for reuse also.

Oil absorbent pads provide a much cleaner and greener solution to kitty litter type absorbents, and are cost effective. They can make your company one step closer to ISO 14001 certification.

For more information about oil mats, you can email CLR at [customerservice@recyclemats.com](mailto:customerservice@recyclemats.com).



Leaking machine with kitty litter solution



Leaking machine after replacing kitty litter with reusable oil mats

## SOLES 4 SOULS

### recycle your old shoes for good

Americans throw away approximately 760,000 tons of shoes and clothing each year, according to the U.S. EPA.

But Nashville-based nonprofit [Soles4Souls](http://Soles4Souls.org) gives a second life for unwanted footwear, distributing millions of pairs of shoes to people in need in over 127 countries.

Soles4Souls collects all types of shoes – sandals, sneakers and boots from children's to adult sizes. New and gently worn shoes are refurbished and delivered to low-income school districts and domestic violence and homeless shelters in the U.S., as well as shipped overseas to countries like Honduras, Costa Rica, Tanzania and India.

The charity also benefits survivors of natural disasters, supplying 1.3 million pairs of shoes to Haitians after the country's devastating earthquake in 2010.

Secondhand shoes not only provide protection against parasitic diseases in countries with poor sanitation, but they also give children access to education, as footwear is an attendance requirement at many schools.

Older shoes that can't be used in their current condition are allocated to Soles4Souls' micro-enterprise program, which helps impoverished people in developing countries earn money to support their families. Participants in the micro-enterprise program receive the unwanted footwear and clean and repair them for re-sale or harvest the shoe's materials to make other products to sell.

To donate your old shoes or host a shoe collection drive, check out all the info at [www.soles4souls.org](http://www.soles4souls.org).



**Oklahoma Indian Nations Chapter—Solid Waste Assoc. of North America (SWANA)**  
**2014 Annual Conference**  
**DISASTER DEBRIS MANAGEMENT**  
**March 24-26, 2014**  
**Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, Catoosa, OK**

Register now to attend the upcoming 2014 Annual Conference. Created for solid waste professionals by solid waste professionals, this conference strives to advance the practice of environmentally and economically sound municipal solid waste management in Oklahoma.

**Event Description:** This year conference will focus on the challenges of managing the debris and wastes resulting from natural disasters. Invited speakers will share their experiences and insights on topics including: Central Oklahoma Tornado Response, Managing C & D Wastes at Transfer Stations, Green Redevelopment, Preparing for Disaster Response, Procurement of Contracted Services for Disaster Response, and much more!

**Event Cost:** Cost for the full conference is \$125 for SWANA members and \$175 for non-members, and cost for one day of the conference is \$75 for SWANA members and \$125 for nonmembers.

**Who Should Attend:** State, tribal, county and municipal

government solid waste directors, managers, policy makers and operators. Conference offerings are equally valuable to private sector solid waste managers, consulting engineers and suppliers of materials and equipment used in the management of solid waste.

**Continuing Education Units:** Attendees can earn 15 CEUs toward their SWANA recertification or other continuing education requirements.

**SWANA Certified Training:** For those looking to build professional knowledge by attending a SWANA certified training course, the SWANA course "Managing Construction-Demolition C & D Wastes" will be offered this year as a concurrent event. Look for the training room next to the main conference hall. The course will be conducted Mon. -Wed., March 24-26, with testing on Thursday, March 27. Cost is \$725 and includes breakfast and lunch daily.

To register for the conference, call the Oklahoma SWANA office at 918-456-0116.



**Owasso 7th  
Grade  
Center's  
GreenTeam  
Makes  
Recycled  
Paper**



# Pauls Valley recycling effort takes hit with glass

A growing recycling program in Pauls Valley has finally been forced to face facts when it came to one item in particular. That item is glass, which up to last December had been a part of a program that got a big boost in early 2013 with the construction of a new recycling center. The realities of attempting to recycle glass have finally led officials to announce their decision to stop accepting the item at the new center as of Dec. 31, 2013.

The reasons are simple — glass has a low value in the recycling world and it's just too expensive to transport to recycling centers typically located in larger metro areas.

Chip Pearson, program director at the Garvin County Living Center, which oversees the recycling program, says they knew early on that recycling glass might run into problems. "There was the likelihood we'd run into issues with glass and we knew that going in," Pearson said. "We believed the odds were against us recycling glass, but we were hoping to maybe join up with another community," he said. "We thought maybe we can do it at the break even point. I want the people to know the Garvin County Living Center, the recycling committee and the city (of Pauls Valley) all regret it comes to this. As far as the sustainability (of glass) it's just not possible."

Up to now the recycling center has accepted a variety of items, including

glass containers of all kinds and colors. The way the process is supposed to work is the glass is pulverized, stored and if properly recycled then shipped in a covered truck to a recycling plant specializing in glass.

The real problem is with the value of recycled glass and the cost to transport the material on a regular basis. These are the two factors ultimately leading to the decision to drop glass from the list of materials accepted at the local recycling center.

"There are getting to be fewer and fewer people who can ship it," Pearson said. "The big thing is the value of glass is less than the cost of shipping it to a distant area," he said. "That is why you, for the most part, don't see glass recycling in rural areas — the proximity to the plant where the glass has to be shipped to. The glass is a low value commodity in the recycling business. It's simply logistics. There's not a great way to approach it."

With the glass too expensive to take to a recycling plant the materials at the Pauls Valley recycling center have instead been crushed and taken to the landfill used by the city. Pearson stresses the positive here is the crushed glass takes up far less space than one might think.

"Although we can't keep the glass out of the landfill we are crushing it

down and reducing the volume that goes in there," he said.

Since the recycling center opened in Pauls Valley, the materials collected in the largest quantities have been paper and plastic; maybe four times the amounts expected.

"By removing the glass option it does give us a little room for paper and plastic storage."

Items now accepted at the recycling center include plastics, numbers 1 - 4, steel cans, aluminum cans, paper, cardboard, newspaper and office copy paper.

Items dropped off at the center should be relatively clean, and empty. Plastics should have the lids removed and items should be smashed if possible.

Despite dropping glass, the center is looking at the possibility of expanding the recycling program in other ways.

Pearson says he is looking into possible markets for recycled electronic items, power cords and cell phones.

**Barry Porterfield**  
**Pauls Valley Democrat**  
**December 20, 2013**

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES IN 2014

**Resource Recycling Conference**  
**September 16-17, New Orleans, LA**

**Texas Recycling & Sustainability Summit**  
**October 6-8, Arlington, TX**

**Oklahoma Municipal League Annual Conference**  
**September 23-25, Oklahoma City, OK**

**OKRA 2014 Recycling Conference**  
**October, Edmond, OK (Date TBD)**

**Arkansas Recycling Coalition Conference**  
**September 29-October 1, Eureka Springs, AR**

**Association for the Advancement of Sustainability  
in Higher Education**  
**October 26-29, 2014, Portland, OR**

# Help OKRA Grow!

Please renew your membership now for 2014 if you haven't already done so. OKRA membership runs on the calendar year. If you are not an OKRA member, consider joining!

To learn about membership levels and member benefits, such as discounts to OKRA events, download our membership brochure: <http://www.recycleok.org/okra/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/BrochureWebsite.pdf>

How to join or renew your membership in 2014:

\* Via mail - send a completed membership brochure and your check by mail 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).

Any questions, please email [info@recycleok.org](mailto:info@recycleok.org).

Thank you for supporting OKRA!

## 2014 OKRA MEMBERS

### Silver Corporate Member

Republic Services

### Bronze Corporate Member

Natural Evolution, Inc.

### Corporate Members

Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town  
American Sanitation, Inc.  
American Textiles Recycling Services  
Closed Loop Recycling  
Ripple Glass, LLC  
United Electronic Recycling, LLC

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Ardmore Beautification Council, Inc.  
Arkansas Recycling Coalition  
Call2Recycle/RBRC  
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City of Norman  
City of Tulsa  
Keep Oklahoma Beautiful  
Oklahoma City Zoo & Botanical Garden  
Pride in McAlester  
Seneca-Cayuga Tribe  
Solid Waste Institute of NE Oklahoma  
The Metropolitan Environmental Trust  
The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation  
Tulsa Master Recyclers  
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Garmon Smith  
Sean White  
JT Winters  
Larry Wright



### K-12 Recycling Coordinator

Jill Jacobson Bittle

## Join OKRA Today!

**If you renewed or joined OKRA in 2014, but are not listed here, please email [info@recycleok.org](mailto:info@recycleok.org)**