

FROM THE EDITOR

See the light and believe in your cause

This January I was lucky enough to see a stunning exhibition of artwork by French Impressionist painter Claude Monet at the Gallery of NSW in Sydney. And to make the evening even more memorable was to hear special guest speakers Greens Senator Bob Brown and Gardening Australia guru Peter Cundall, both of whom spoke about the beauty to be found and treasured in our natural world.



By not conforming to the artistic conventions of the time, Monet captured something new and magical in his paintings. Monet was ostracized from his contemporaries and his artwork seen as “not finished”. But Impressionist painters like Monet could see the energy, the raw beauty and light in nature and wanted to share this with the world. Artists can lift us into the light and help us to remember that we are part of nature too. This is an important message for us in modern times, as it is all too easy to be overpowered by the shadows – bad financial times, bureaucratic red tape, political power plays, etc. Bob Brown commented that “We come from nature and Monet takes us back to it”. The Greens Leader also spoke with admiration of Monet’s determination to stick to his beliefs, an inspiring thought that gives me faith that one day soon more people on our beautiful planet will also see the light shining around us.

This edition of the PR CAN newsletter features many items aimed at helping the next generation to connect with our planet, and to see the potential for us to work with nature, not against it.

Yours as we work together towards a more sustainable future,

Kirsten Kennedy

Editor and Co-Chair,
Pine Rivers Climate Action Network

Renewable is Do-Able!
Sustainable is Attainable!

Pine Rivers Goes Solar

Reduce your power bill, increase the value of your property and do the right thing by the environment.

Householders in the Pine Rivers area have another opportunity to be a part of the Samford Solar Neighbourhood. The new offer is a repeat of the very low cost program provided over the past year through the Pine Rivers Climate Action Network and solar panel provider Beyond Building Energy.

A very successful Round One of the offer has household installations underway, with many connected and generating power already. “Round Two had a great response in February this year and we are pleased to open up Round Three,” said Co-ordinator of the Samford Solar Neighbourhood, Howard Nielsen.

People participating in the Solar Neighbourhood realize that the solar panels reduce the use of power from coal-fired power grids and they are now seeing their household power costs beginning an annual reduction of up to \$300.

The new offer closes on 28 March so people wishing to take up the offer will need to either apply on-line www.beyondbuildingenergy.com (quoting application code 0777) or call 1300 852 025.

The net cost to householders will be \$499, subject to eligible government rebate under standard installation conditions.

For more information about the next round, please go to the Question and Answer section of the website or call Howard on 0407 190162.



Drew, Patrick & Hannah Vayro
and their new solar panels

Solar Feed in Tariff

Lend your voice in petitioning the Australian government for the introduction of a gross solar feed in tariff.

Currently, the government is considering a tariff program that won't really encourage the uptake of home solar power systems. With your support, we may be able to get them to change their minds!

You can sign the petition and learn more about feed in tariffs here:
<http://www.feedintariff.com.au>

Did you know...?

Across Australia, primary schools are taking part in Stephanie Alexander's Kitchen Garden Program. The creation and care of a Kitchen Garden teaches children about the natural world, about its beauty and how to care for it, how best to use the resources we have, and an appreciation for how easy it is to bring joy and wellbeing into one's life through **growing, harvesting, preparing** and **sharing** fresh, seasonal produce.

Read about how the first Kitchen Garden Program was established at Collingwood College, plus 120 recipes in *Kitchen Garden Cooking with Kids*, available for order through the [Online Shop](#). See www.kitchengardenfoundation.org.au for more info.

You could also visit www.edibleschoolyard.org to learn more about the Edible Schoolyard Project in the U.S. which teaches students to eat with the seasons, to eat what is local, and to eat sustainably.

National Solar Schools Program

Why limit your retrofits to just your home? The National Solar Schools Program offers grants of up to \$50,000 to install solar and other renewable power systems, solar hot water systems, rainwater tanks and other energy efficiency measures.

Sustainable Schools Network – Is Your School Registered Yet?

Pine Rivers CAN is collecting contact details for schools wishing to be part of a new program which helps students and their families learn more about sustainable living and caring for the planet.

To begin the project, schools will receive a series of green hints for their weekly/regular school newsletter. Please contact Kirsten Kennedy to register your school or if you would like to contribute your time or a skill to the program. Phone (07) 3889 1634 or pineriversCAN@gmail.com

Planet Patrol

Visit this website today... www.planetpatrol.info

A website **for** kids created **by** kids. Loads of useful, informative and entertaining information, activities and games for kids of all ages.

Contributions from PR CAN supporters are always welcome for our monthly newsletter. Send your book/movie reviews, seasonal recipes, stories from the community, hints and tips for saving energy/living more sustainably to Kirsten Kennedy pineriversCAN@gmail.com.

Recommended Reading



“Save the Planet – The Aussie Kid’s Guide” by **Helen Chapman**. This book will appeal to both primary and high school students. Using humour and great cartoon illustrations, this great guide will get any kid motivated to go green.

“The Lorax” by **Dr Suess** and *“Uno’s Garden”* by **Graeme Base** – two wonderful storybooks for children about the importance of looking after our planet, and the perils if we neglect and abuse it.

At MY Place...

When my daughter found out this edition of the newsletter was aimed at families and kids, she was keen to offer some of her own hints. So here are some ideas to save the planet, by Megan, aged 6.

1. Refill cordial bottles with water to save money and plastic.
2. Turn things off when you are not using them to save electricity.
3. Only flush the toilet when you really need to!
4. If we don't have plants we won't be able to breathe, so always plant a tree on tree day.

Well done Megan!

What are you doing in your home, workplace, school or neighbourhood to make a difference? Please write in and tell us! Email your piece to pineriversCAN@gmail.com by the first of each month.

Green Hints for the Month

1. Throwing out kitchen scraps makes greenhouse gas and pollutes underground water. **Start a worm farm** and you can reduce your household waste by up to a half. You can buy worm farms, or make your own. To see how easy and fun it is, go to www.abc.net.au/creaturefeatures/make/wormfarm.htm
2. Reduce the waste from kids' lunches by packing food in re-useable containers instead of plastic wrap. Once a week, try to have a **“nude food”** day where kids don't have any packaging to throw out.
3. Set up a **kilometre café** at playgroup or your school fete. You can start a competition among parents who make food products for the cake and jam stalls to see who used the ingredients that travelled the shortest distance to the fete.
4. Be a **green detective** and see if your school uses recycled paper, water tanks, and solar power. Make a checklist and raise the issue at a student council or P&F meeting.

In the news...

Understanding Emissions Trading

World Wildlife Fund (WWF) recently released a statement on the emissions trading draft legislation put forward by the Rudd government urging all sides of Australian politics to work together to deliver a bipartisan and effective carbon emissions reduction policy before the Copenhagen conference in December. But what is emissions trading?

To find out more visit <http://www.earthhourau.org/post-2903831710365582080>

Insulation news

Rudd Government Fast-tracks Free Ceiling Insulation

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has announced a new fast track process so that homeowners can start applying for free ceiling insulation immediately. Through the Government's \$3.9 billion Energy Efficient Homes Packages, households can now apply for on of the following upgrades from today:

- The Homeowner Insulation Program: free ceiling insulation up to \$1600
- The Low Emission Assistance Plan for Renters: free ceiling insulation up to \$1000
- The Solar Hot Water Rebate: up to \$1600 for installation of solar hot water systems.

By visiting the website people can check immediately whether they are eligible, arrange for a skilled tradesperson to do the work and send in their receipts for the rebate. Check http://www.pm.gov.au/media/Release/2009/media_release_0838.cfm

Climate Change Catastrophe

U.N. says food production may fall 25 percent by 2050.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/environmentNews/idUSTRE51G46W20090217>

Daniel Wallis, Reuters, 17 February 2009. Up to a quarter of global food production could be lost by 2050 due to the combined impact of climate change, land degradation and loss, water scarcity and species infestation, the United Nations said on Tuesday.

Organic Farming Can Feed the World

Source: The Truefood Network

A major study by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has concluded organic farming offers Africa the best chance of breaking the long inherent cycle of poverty and malnutrition. An analysis of 114 projects in 24 African countries found that yields more than doubled where organic, or near-organic practices had been used. That yield increase jumped to 128 per cent in east Africa.

http://123campaign.com/link.php?ml=49828b3a9e212&lk=498246223ce77&lf=2009_01

Be part of a University Study

A student at Deakin University studying a Masters in Industrial/Organisational Psychology will be completing a thesis aiming to examine the role of psychological contracts in volunteer workers, looking at the unwritten expectations which volunteer workers form with their organisations, and to what extent these expectations are met. As supporters of PR CAN, you are invited to participate in this study, which will take place in April & May of this year. If you are interested in being part of the study, or want to find out more, contact Rebecca Accadia on mobile 0422 531 541 or email racc@deakin.edu.au

Local Food Co-Operative for Samford

Reduce your food miles and swap, buy and trade garden produce grown in your backyard. The Samford Local Food Group meets every second Sunday 9-11am. For details on venue contact Peter Kearney on (07) 3289 3602 or peter@cityfoodgrowers.com.au or visit the Co-op's Google Group page <http://groups.google.com/group/samford-local-food-group?lnk=>

While you're online, also check out how we can all grow more of our own food to reduce "food miles" and associated greenhouse gas emissions. Visit www.cityfoodgrowers.com.au to connect with others on reducing your eco footprint through gardening.

Next meeting March 29th

PINE RIVERS CAN MARCH MEETING

Time: 7pm start

Tuesday 17th March 2009

Bring along a plate of food to share for a light supper and hear about the LET'S concept - Local Energy Trading System.

Old Catholic Church Hall,
Corner Samford Road & Camp Mountain Road, Samford

RSVP appreciated to Kirsten on 0418 870 060 or pineriversCAN@gmail.com

Gold coin donation encouraged to cover venue hire

Upcoming Events for March

Queensland State Election – Saturday 21st March

Ensure you are enrolled to vote and your electoral roll details are up to date. Check out the candidates in your electorate and make an informed choice for Qld.

Sustainability Workshop - Saturday 21st March (yes, election day!)

9-11am, Kumbartcho Sanctuary, 15 Bunya Pine Court, Eatons Hill. Learn how to reduce the running costs at your place – it's easy! For more info, visit. <http://kumbartcho.org.au/?p=119>

EARTH HOUR – Switch off your lights for the planet at 8.30pm Saturday 28th March



Tell your friends about Earth Hour to make this year's switch off the biggest yet!

Tell your family, friends, workmates and neighbours about Earth Hour. Go to <http://www.earthhour.org/downloads/> for "Ten Things a Company Can Do To Support Earth Hour", "To Local Government", "To Law and Policy Makers", and even download packs for bloggers.

Vote simply by switching off your lights for one hour, and join the world for Earth Hour. Saturday 28 March 8.30 – 9.30 pm.



The Ideas Festival – 25th to 29th March

Sat 28 March 4.30 - 5.30pm FREE "Good Enough to Eat? Ethical Eating" State Library Auditorium 2 Level 2: "Food that's ethical, organic and won't cost the earth - author Angela Croscombe, Shane Heaton of Fresh Organics and fair trade leader Cameron Neil talk about how to feel good about your food."

Sun 29 March 2-3 pm FREE "Sustainable Urban Futures" Qld Terrace, State Library "Careful design is needed to ensure positive environmental, social, economic and cultural outcomes. Chair Helen Abrahams speaks with urban-planning leaders Wendy Sarkissian, Brendan Gleeson and Jim McKnoulty about what makes a city sustainable.

Loads more events – check out: www.ideasfestival.com.au

Can anyone help us out?

Pine Rivers CAN is looking for businesses to donate small items for lucky door prizes and raffles at our monthly meetings. Previous prizes have included energy efficient light bulbs, shower timers, energy efficiency guides, books and magazines on environmental issues, organic garden produce, and gardening equipment. Please contact Kirsten on 0418 870 060 or pineriversCAN@gmail.com if you are able to support our endeavours.

LOW CARBON LENT

St William's Social Justice Group - Lenten Project

St William's in Grovely, Brisbane, is taking action at a spiritual and environmental level. The Carbon Fast for Lent 2009 encourages parishioners to reduce their own carbon footprint and consider the plight of poor communities around the world who are already suffering because of climate change.

The project suggests removing one light bulb in a prominent place in your home for 40 days, giving the dishwasher a rest one day a week, turning off appliances on standby mode, avoiding plastic bags, re-thinking the use of your air conditioner, planting more trees and much more. What a great way to show you care! For more details about the Carbon Fast for Lent, contact Mike Pitman on 3351 8891 or mcpitman@tpg.com.au.

"Pine Rivers CAN!" is a Climate Action Network started by a group of concerned local residents who are passionate about taking real and effective action on climate change. Pine Rivers CAN acts locally with residents, schools and businesses to raise awareness of climate change and create a sustainable future for the world, starting at home.

Helping residents to live more sustainably is what the network is about, especially by promoting energy efficiency and supporting renewable green power options, as well as promoting material efficiency through reducing, reusing and recycling.

Pine Rivers Climate Action Network

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E-mail pineriversCAN@gmail.com

Website www.pineriversCAN.org

PR CAN CORE WORKING GROUP:

KIRSTEN KENNEDY

Co-Chair, Communications & Publicity Officer, Fundraising Co-coordinator (Temp)

REBECCA STOWE

Co-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary

HOWARD NIELSEN

Solar Neighbourhoods Co-coordinator

IT SUPPORT

Lesley Hughes, Jason Spotswood, Ross Gibbons

PR CAN meets on the third **Tuesday** of every month at the Old Catholic Church, corner of Samford Road and Camp Mountain Road, Samford. 7pm start.