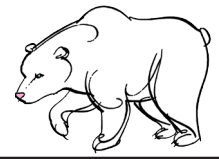




ECO COLUMBIA



"THE SCOOP ON ALL THINGS SUSTAINABLE"

APRIL 2010 VOL. 1, ISSUE 5 A COLUMBIA COLLEGE COLLABORATION



DEAR READERS,

I'd like to send my condolences to the family, friends, and all affected individuals following the Upper Big Branch Mine Disaster. On Monday, April 5th an explosion ripped through the mine killing 29 miners. The mine in Raleigh County, near Beckley, W.Va., was cited for 458 safety violations last year, with 50 of them listed as unwarrantable failures to comply, citations reserved under federal mining regulations for instances of willful or gross negligence. "Violations are unfortunately a normal part of the mining process," said Massey Energy CEO Don Blankenship. Currently, there is a swirling media circus around Massey and Blankenship. But, why do we wait for a body count before it becomes broadcast? It is as if Blankenship and other decision-makers have been sitting at a poker table gambling with human lives for over a century. Each time the odds get worse more money is thrown at the problem temporarily "fixing" it. It is a common practice of companies such as Massey to challenge enough (about 1/3rd) fines in court and draw time out that it effectively prolongs measures to reform the mine or shut it down. Too often, regulations are discussed in the abstract as a "burden" on companies that apply significant sums to resist them instead of necessary steps to save lives.

It's been far too long that we have turned our backs on the brave men and women who risk their lives daily to fill our television with flickering images and our refrigerators cold. Coal mining and slavery went hand-in-hand for decades in this country, stories absent from most American history books. We must face our own coal addiction as a nation before we can move forward. We must stand in solidarity with the miners and their family and demand honesty and integrity from our leaders. We cannot keep harming ourselves and all living beings through coal use and extraction. Albert Einstein once said "Insanity is doing the same thing over and expecting different results." Do you know the true cost of your coal-fired nation?

Peace,
Neale

Please support:
<http://cleanpowerchicago.org>

NO FOAM CHICAGO WORKS WITH ISEC

THE TRUTH ABOUT STYROFOAM

Styrofoam has long been used for trays in school cafeterias and for take-out in restaurants. The used Styrofoam then goes straight to our landfills where they remain for hundreds of years. The Styrofoam that does not make it to the landfills results in environmental litter that finds its way into the oceans. At sea, Styrofoam breaks down into its basic elements, polluting the waters and possibly causing harm to aquatic life.

Each year, Americans use and discard over 25 billion Styrofoam cups. Even at a local level, the Chicago Public Schools lunch program uses 400,000 Styrofoam trays every day. This is alarming because the main ingredient in Styrofoam, styrene, leaks out of the Styrofoam as a toxic chemical when heated (as in a microwave). These toxic chemicals are linked to disruptions in reproductive systems.

The manufacturing of Styrofoam is also cause for great concern. The process produces large amounts of liquid and solid waste, as well as air pollution. Furthermore,

styrene has been linked to increased levels of chromosomal damage, abnormal pulmonary function, and cancer in workers in styrene plants.

These detrimental effects of Styrofoam are unnecessary as biodegradable, competitively priced,



PHOTO CREDIT | ECOGREENTIPS.COM

and toxic-free alternatives are widely available. These alternatives include post-consumer recycled paper, bamboo, and corn plastics. In fact, the benefits of using one ton of these alternatives can save enough energy equivalent to two months of electrical power used by the average US home.

In response to the harmful impacts Styrofoam imposes on our

health and our environment, campuses across Illinois are coordinating their efforts to host a Foam Free Day on Friday, April 16th. This issue is a particular concern to students, whose campuses often either use Styrofoam in their cafeterias or have businesses nearby that use Styrofoam. DePaul University and Columbia College will join eight other schools in participating in this event by setting up informational tables complete with videos, pictures, games, buttons, and fact sheets. Students will raise awareness about the health and environmental hazards caused by Styrofoam, as well as discuss alternatives that can be used to replace Styrofoam.

A petition will be signed by students to help appeal to school administrators, businesses, and elected officials to take a strong stance against the use of Styrofoam. Following the event, the Illinois Student Environmental Coalition (ISEC) will host a Call-In Night where students can call and write to officials to promote the ban on Styrofoam in Chicago. The students are working towards a foam free future – one that has already been realized in over 100 US cities.

Article by Lindsey Dattels, ISEC

FUTURE EPIC DATES

UPCOMING DATES, EVENTS & DEADLINES EPIC WANTS YOU TO KNOW

April 17, 9:00a-12:00p
FREE

Adopt-a-beach cleanup at Montrose Beach: Do you love Lake Michigan? Help do your part this Earth Month by donning some work gloves, a garbage bag and friend to pick up trash on the beach. The site is co-sponsored by Sierra Club, Adopt a Beach and Whole Foods Market.

For more information: <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/Chicago/>

April 17, 9:00a-4:30p
FREE

North Lake Shore Community Earth Day 2010: Join North lake shore communities at an event that will provide informative & fun programming, guest speakers & displays in the interest of educating the community about environmental problems & solutions while highlighting local businesses, organizations & environmental initiatives.

1050 W. Sheridan Rd. Quinlan Life Services Building

April 22, 11:00a-3:00p
FREE

The Eco Fair is an annual Earth Day gathering to connect students to businesses and organizations that strive to make a positive environmental and social impact. It is a time to educate and a time to celebrate. There will be great ways to interact and become involved including crafts, food, local advocacy, a picture station, screen printing, games, and other things. 1104 S. Wabash Columbia College Conaway Center



ARBOR DAY 2010--APRIL 30TH

Plant a tree or care for a tree! A long proud tradition started in Nebraska and now is recognized internationally. Did you know that the state tree of Illinois is the White Oak?



PIONEER PLANT

A GREEN POEM

The day was warm
 And the night sparkled through
 black cities
 Devoid and drifting
 Strands of hair and flaking skin
 Blowing through deserted streets

The animals will come alive
 Waking from starry slumbers
 In the caverns below the sewers
 And call out, they will to their
 families and friends
 Their predators and their prey

Then rolling wagon tumbles into
 the city
 Harboring the pioneer plant.
 Growing under the city grates,
 Stretching branches vine their way
 upward
 Licking the sun through broken
 windows

And so the land of man returns
 To the land of flora and fauna
 Predator and prey, and symbiotic
 friendships
 Where war is primal and not evil
 And love is hard and unconditional

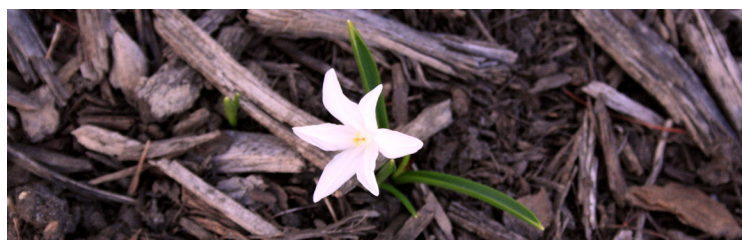
And the wagon tumbles on
 With the pioneer plant.

Poem by Samantha Christmann

SPRING HAS
 Sprung



RIGHT: TINY PURPLE BLOSSOMS BEGIN TO SPROUT, WHILE GREEN BUDS START TO APPEAR ON THE BRANCHES OF TREES JUST OUTSIDE GRANT PARK. **BELOW:** A SMALL WHITE FLOWER PUSHES ITS WAY THROUGH THE MULCH IN A FLOWER BED ON CONGRESS. **PICTURES COURTESY OF:** ALEXA HEINRICH.



contact us

Want to join EPIC, submit something for the newsletter (all mediums accepted) or ask a question? We can be contacted at nbaldyga@colum.edu.

spread the word

Tell your friends about this newsletter and how to be more environmentally-conscious. Every little action helps.

other info

Try these other sites for more eco-info: www.grist.org, www.epa.gov/, earth911.com, & www.colum.edu/recycling.



GREEN INK

BIC RELEASES ECOLUTIONS LINE

As the nation strives to go green, many businesses have begun a paperless trend. Emails have replaced memos, online newsletters have taken the place of their paper predecessors, and almost anything that a potential client would ever want to know about a company can usually be found on their website.

But of course if paper slowly disappears from the office's everyday routine, where does that leave the pens and pencils whose survival relies solely on a pad of paper? BIC, one of the leading pen distributors in the nation, has developed a new line of eco-conscious ball point pens and graphite pencils, along with correction products, sticky notes and labels, to combat the decrease in paper usage. Each of the products in the line, which has been named Ecolutions, is made

of at least fifty percent recycled pre-consumer or post-consumer materials. Additionally, some of the products are also made with water based fluids, which are less harmful for the environment, and all of the ink utensils are refillable, meaning that less plastic pens will need to be made in long run. BIC even boasts that its pencils are wood-free!

All of these products and more can be found on BIC's Ecolutions homepage at <http://www.bicecolutions.com/en/index.php>. They're also located at your local Office Max, Staples, and Office Depot stores. So the next time you need to buy a new pen, pencil or stack of sticky notes, look for BIC's environment-friendly products, because as BIC says on their Ecolutions website "we can be part of the solution."

Article by Alexa Heinrich

BRIGHTIDEA!

Check out our newest installment of the Green Biz Channel as we sit down with No Foam Chicago to talk about a city-wide Styrofoam ban: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2KUendj3Kw>

A reminder: Don't forget to check the Recycling Program's blog for recent green job and internship opportunities for students! You can find the blog at <http://cccrecycling.blogspot.com>

This newsletter designed and created by Alexa Heinrich. *Green Revolution* image designed by Simon Cervania. Thank you to anyone who contributed to the *Eco Columbia* newsletter!

Attention students living in the UC! The UC is seeking students to work on a recycling project until the semester ends. Sign-up applications are in the management office of the UC!

