Clean Cities Honors Outstanding Coalition Coordinators

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) honored and celebrated the work of a dozen Clean Cities’ coordinators and a Clean Cities’ subcontractor at the 2010 Clean Cities Coordinator Leadership Retreat in Rapid City, S.D.

Kevin Herdler of St. Louis was named Clean Cities Coordinator of the Year. Herdler’s work with St. Louis Clean Cities has reduced the region’s 2009 petroleum use by 3.3 million gasoline gallon equivalents and reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 28,600 tons.

Tucson Clean Cities Manager Colleen Crowninshield was once again nominated for Coordinator of the Year for her work promoting electric vehicle infrastructure, energy conservation and ongoing coalition support.

The retreat also provided coordinators with the opportunity to learn about new funding opportunities and outreach efforts, developing coalition-level strategies, project planning, and reporting. Other highlights include the rollout of the National Petroleum Reduction Partnership Program and a Plug-in Vehicle update.

Tucson Clean Cities Coordinator attends U.S. Department of Energy’s Plug-in Vehicle and Infrastructure Workshop

Rising oil prices and environmental concerns are accelerating the need for vehicles and infrastructure capable of reducing the need for the United States to import petroleum. Electric vehicles are widely recognized as a key emerging technology capable of helping secure U.S. energy independence.

On July 22, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) hosted the Plug-In Vehicle & Infrastructure Workshop in Washington, D.C., to highlight electric vehicles and their potential. The event was intended to raise awareness and advance preparations for electric vehicles at the community level. DOE invited stakeholders currently working to develop and deploy electric vehicles and infrastructure in their communities to share experiences and discuss challenges and successes.

Three panels were asked to provide strategies for broadening the electric vehicle market. A panel of local government officials, including Colleen Crowninshield, Tucson Clean Cities Coordinator, discussed critical first steps such as public partnerships, incentives and infrastructure planning. Mrs. Crowninshield indicated the important role local Clean Cities’ coalitions have in bringing public and private partners to the table.

A second panel of automotive dealers discussed the importance of public education and buyer influence at the point of sale. The final panel consisted of utility providers who focused on the importance of securing power supply for the vehicle charging infrastructure, and the potential for customer communication through utility bills.

At the conclusion of the workshop, four major themes were identified to act as guidepost for communities looking to expand electric vehicle infrastructure. The themes included the primacy of community-level action, the importance of collective learning and information sharing, the critical need for partnerships, and the re-emphasis that replacing petroleum is the overarching goal.

For more information about the Plug-in Vehicle and Infrastructure workshop, please visit DOE’s Web site at: www1.eere.energy.gov/cleancities/plugin_vehicle_infrastructure.html
Tucson Clean Cities hosts Alternative Fuels Education Workshop

The Tucson Clean Cities Coalition partnered with The Alternative Fuel Trade Alliance to host an Alternative Fuels Education Workshop on July 23 in Casa Grande.

The workshop was the fifth in a series of 14 cross-country seminars funded by a $1.6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy. The themes covered fuel quality, current and emerging infrastructure, alternative fuel vehicle availability, environmental issues and safety.

Dave Clement, Vice Chair of the Tucson Clean Cities Coalition, represented the Coalition and moderated the event. Clement emphasized how beneficial it is to have experts on hand to demonstrate the versatility of alternative fuels, and to talk to fleet managers about which fuel is the right choice for them.

Industry experts presented informational seminars on propane, ethanol, biodiesel and compressed natural gas. Danny Johnson, Fleet Manager for the City of Scottsdale, gave a presentation on the challenges and successes of implementing alternative fuels in the city’s fleet.

The best aspect of the workshop was how “it really got people excited about fuel options,” Clement said, “it gave people that ‘aha’ moment” when they realized the feasibility and environmental benefits of alternative fuels.”

The workshop concluded with a ride-and-drive event that gave fleet managers a chance to drive vehicles that run on alternative fuels. A Roush-equipped propane-fueled Ford F-250 truck owned by Ferrellgas and a Chevrolet Compressed Natural Gas conversion were available for demonstration.

Vehicle options for people with disabilities have always been limited. Drivers needing wheelchair access have traditionally been forced to pay for post-production modifications.

Sound familiar? Motorists seeking alternative fuel vehicles are often acquainted with the aftermarket conversion process. Paying for two costly post-production modifications presented a daunting barrier for drivers with disabilities wanting a cleaner vehicle.

On Thursday, Sept. 2, Tucson got a sneak peek of a vehicle that promises to end the aftermarket woes. With the support of Tucson Clean Cities and Clean Energy, the Vehicle Production Group LLC debuted its new paratransit vehicle, the MV-1, on the grounds of the Clean Energy CNG fueling facility.

The MV-1 is the only production vehicle built from the ground up to provide full wheelchair accessibility and meet all of the requirements of the American’s with Disabilities Act. The MV-1 is also the only vehicle in its class to provide an available Original Equipment Manufacturer-engineered and assembled compressed natural gas fueling system option. Because these unique features are factory installed, the MV-1 is also the safest paratransit vehicle available, avoiding the structural integrity compromises inherent with aftermarket modification.

Colleen Crowninshield, Tucson Clean Cities Manager, Ken Johnson, VPG Autos Regional Vice President, and Doug Cameron, Clean Energy Business Development Manager, presented the MV-1 and discussed its significance both as a production paratransit and CNG vehicle. Members of the public were invited to view the vehicle and try out its ramp functionality.

For more information about the MV-1, please visit VPG’s Web site at: www.vpgautos.com

2011 Coalition meetings:

Please mark your calendars for the Clean Cities Coalition meetings for 2011:

- **Wednesday, January 19**
- **Wednesday, March 16**
- **Wednesday, May 18**
- **Wednesday, July 20**
- **Wednesday, September 21**
- **Wednesday, November 16**

All meetings are from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. in PAG’s main conference room: 177 N. Church Ave., Suite 501, Tucson, Arizona 85701

Agendas, minutes and presentations can be found on the PAG Web site at www.PAGnet.org under “Clean Fuels/Clean Cities.”
EPA and DOT Announce New Fuel Efficiency Standards

One year ago, the Obama Administration introduced new fuel efficiency standards for cars and light trucks sold in the United States. On May 21, the President initiated a new directive for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) with the goal to develop national fuel standards for heavy-duty trucks and buses. On Oct. 25, the EPA and DOT announced new standards for three categories of heavy trucks: heavy-duty pickups and vans, combination tractors, and vocational vehicles.

The new standards will phase in beginning in 2014, with a goal to achieve a 10 percent fuel reduction for gasoline vehicles and an 18 percent reduction for diesel by 2018. Individual and fleet vehicle owners are expected to net considerable savings over the lifespan of newly updated vehicles due to reduced fuel consumption. In addition, the fuel savings will help drive down direct costs such as shipping, and indirect costs associated with environmental impacts.

Heavy-duty trucks currently are the second largest contributor to oil consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. EPA and DOT analysis indicates that the proposed standards could potentially save approximately 500 million barrels of oil and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 250 million metric tons over the life of vehicles sold between 2014 and 2018.

New Clean Cities Members

We are excited to welcome our new members to the coalition.

**Saguaro:**
- Pima County Joint Technical Education District
- U-Haul International
- Golden Eagle Distributors
- Thoroughbred Nissan
- Pioneer Distributing Co.

**Cholla:**
- Norman Soifer

Pima Association of Governments highlights urban alternatives at Park(ing) Day

On Friday, Sept. 17, Pima Association of Governments participated in the third annual Tucson Park(ing) Day – an event to promote new ideas about urban habitat. Participants reserve their own parking site to create their own park and help to re-imagine the way we use and plan public space.

Visitors learned about a variety of environmental and alternative transportation options available for their morning commute, generating discussion with hundreds of visitors. PAG demonstrated how bus ridership helps improve air quality, how biking to work can save people money, and what alternative fuels are available to diversify traditional petroleum sources. Participants also were quizzed on how pollutants on the streets end up in our fragile desert washes.

Parkwise coordinated the event by providing spaces throughout historic downtown, Main Gate and the 4th Avenue entertainment districts. PAG’s temporary “parks” sat on Congress Street downtown by the Fox Tucson Theatre alongside groups such as the Tucson Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, Tucson Clean and Beautiful, BICAS, Sustainable Tucson and the Habistore.

Coalition Spotlight: Mrs. Green’s World

Mrs. Green’s World, Murphy-Darling’s “environmental social media platform,” is a watershed of sustainable lifestyle information, thought-provoking discussion, green social events and, above all, a demonstration that small actions can lead to big changes.

Starting with the radio show, Mrs. Green Goes Mainstream, on Newstalk 790 in 2008, Mrs. Murphy-Darling quickly branched out to include a Web site and a bi-monthly newsletter. Currently, Murphy-Darling appears every Tuesday morning on Green Tuesday with Jennie and Chris on 92.9 the Mountain. She also hosts a segment called Smart Living with Mrs. Green that provides weekly energy tips on KOLD News 13 and is sponsored by Tucson Electric Power. Mrs. Green’s World has an additional strong presence on Facebook and Twitter, taking the sustainable world to an even larger audience.

Of her accomplishments, Murphy-Darling highlights support from her sponsors and their belief in her mission. She is proud of reader response to Web site contests, being featured in BizTucson, her growing fan base and the work her team does to make Mrs. Green’s World a reality.

Murphy-Darling said she feels strongly about the connection between Mrs. Green’s World and the Tucson Clean Cities Coalition. “I believe that alternative fuels . . . should be [a top priority] for government leaders and the population in general,” she said, “and I believe we have to speed up the process. Partnering with organizations like Tucson Clean Cities is the new way of making things happen exponentially and avoiding duplication of effort.” If you would like to learn more about Mrs. Green’s World, please visit her Web site at www.mrsgreensworld.com.