

Exciting Environmental



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Moments of peace are
always disturbed.

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You might not get it, but
trust me, it's funny.

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Off the Grid in Australia My Interview with Drs. Colin and Pam Brown

Drs. Colin and Pam Brown are two long time friends of my grandmother and run an organization called Diversicon Environmental Foundation in Australia. In addition to that, they are almost entirely off of fossil fuels. I got a rare chance to interview them for this newsletter.

Sierra: *So, from what I hear, you're not on any fossil fuels, is that right?*

Colin: I'm not.

Sierra: And so, what steps did you take to get off fossil fuels entirely?

Colin: Well, I don't know if it's possible to get off fossil fuels entirely. We have solar panels on the roof, quite a lot of solar panels on the roof. We have a battery system that stores that energy from the solar panels and we have electric cars. And so that deals with the personal transport, but in Australia, the general emphasis of the government is to encourage coal burning to generate electricity. So in that sense, whenever you plug into a power outlet, you're involved in some coal.

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Your Work!

There are more submissions to *The Exciting Environmental!*

See them on Page 4!

A Climate Change Laugh



Interview from Page 1

And so, in Europe and Finland and Sweden, the movement is towards banning combustion engines from cities within ten years.

Pam: Petrol diesel.

Colin: Particularly diesel. Diesel is an issue because it has nitrogen oxide, which is toxic, and it also has small particles of black smoke you see when a diesel car travels. It has very small particles which go down into your lungs and into your bloodstream. And so they are very harmful.

Sierra: So, I was just wondering, from what my grandma told me, you two have an organization, is that right?

Colin: Correct.

Sierra: And so, what does the organization do?

Colin: It's called Diversicon. It's a small, private, environmental foundation.

The name Diversicon comes from diversity of life, and so, Diversicon. It's the conservation of the diversity of life. That's what it stands for. So we try and protect life on earth. Trees, plants, animals, birds, and insects, bacteria, all the things that go to head. They're inter-related to make an ecological system. We're all interdependent on all these things to make an ecological system, and each one needs the others for the whole thing to work.

Sierra: So when did you start getting interested in this field?

Colin: Well, we both had an interest in biology, and we have a background on doing a lot of camping and being involved on the sea a lot, and so we became interested in biological systems. And so, when my father died, we put some money aside to form a foundation. Initially, it just seemed like a good idea to be doing this.

Read more on Page 4

Q: When do you want to be deaf?

A: *When a Hear-icane strikes!*

Do you have an environmental joke? Send it to us and we will feature it in the next newsletter.



The Other Side

What Makes Denying Global Warming so Attractive?

Alright. In order to explain this rather hard question that everyone wants to know (I mean, it's pretty important), you will have to do something for me. It's not much, if you are strong mentally.

I would like you to put yourself in a young adult's shoes. You are looking for a job

because your future depends on it. You can't find one that pays enough money until you find the fossil fuel industry. It pays you a lot, and so you decide to work there.

Then you remember: Oh, wait, I can't do this, it's bad for the environment. It'll make global warming accelerate. But then you think, "Oh, well, I'll be long gone before the disasters really happen. It's just a threat in the future."

Besides, you're doing so well in life, why stop?

So that is the plain, bold answer: People don't think of global warming happening to them. It's always happening to someone else, so it will never happen to them. In plain, cruel, text, they get selfish.

How horrible they must feel when their house gets destroyed. So much for global warming being in the future!

Secrets of the Sea

Previously, Danielle spotted litter on Sugar beach, along with a lot of dead fish. She does not know what is going on, but she wants her sister and herself to stay out of it.

Chapter 1: A Bad Beach

"Come on, Jenny. Let's get some gloves and continue digging for glass," Danielle said. "Then we can make it into a sculpture for Mom! You know how much she loves those things." They went to retrieve the gloves that their mom always kept with her, just in case she had to pick something nasty up, and then the second pair which her mom brought in case the first one failed. They put them on (Jenny's pair was a bit too big for her), and went back to their hole.

At the end of the day, they had collected fifty shards of glass, not including the entire bottle that they found. The only reason they stopped was because their mother woke up, looked at her watch and said that it was time to go. The girls collected their glass, slipped it inside of one of the food containers, and set off behind their mother. *I don't like this beach, Danielle thought. But I want to come back.*

Chapter 2: Coral?

Danielle was the first to get out of the car and hop into the shower, so the rest of the family had a fight over who would get it next. In the end, Mrs. Simpson won and Mr. Thompson lost badly. That left Jenny in the middle. When Danielle got out of the shower, huddled in her towel, she was surprised to see the rest of the family in single file, pushing each other back and making sure that no one disturbed the order of the line. Danielle ran the rest of the way to her room and buried her face in the pillow, laughing until she cried.

She got on one of her

Stories, Stories, and More Stories



favorite Hawaiian dresses, which she thought was fitting to the occasion—they were going to a Hawaiian restaurant that night.

When the rest of the family finally all came out of the shower, they all told her that they were going to take a nap and that she might as well do it, too. Danielle nodded, but she knew that she wouldn't. She was ten, far too old and far too young to take a nap. So she instead went into her room (which Jenny thankfully wasn't sleeping in) and got out one of her comic books and settled down to read.

She had just gotten to the part where the superhero blasted the wall out of the way when she sighed and put down the book. She had been reading for almost an hour now and there was only so much reading she could do in one day. Besides, she was feeling jumpy and wanted to play a prank on someone. Maybe her mom again...

Her mom was the perfect person to play a prank on because there were so many reasons to not like her that you would never regret doing them. For instance, her mother was way too uptight. She wouldn't recognize a joke if it walked up to her, introduced itself, gave her a business card and pointed out its nametag! And even if she did recognize that it was a joke, she didn't laugh. She hardly ever even smiled. She was like a dark cloud that was cast over the sun of the family. And yet everyone seemed to like her. Maybe it had to

do with the fact that she was such a great scientist. Everyone seemed to like scientists these days. It was like the only good job. Besides a judge and a doctor, that is.

Danielle crept over to her mom's office/lab. She had never gone inside there before, and was curious to see what was in there. She knew that her mother was working on something top secret because there was a KEEP OUT sign posted on the door.

Danielle went in.

To Be Continued...

*in the next
Exciting Environmental Newsletter*

Are you doing something to help the earth?

Tell *The Exciting Environmental* all about it!

Do you have an original environmental joke, drawing, or poem?

Share it with *The Exciting Environmental* and your work could be featured in the next newsletter.

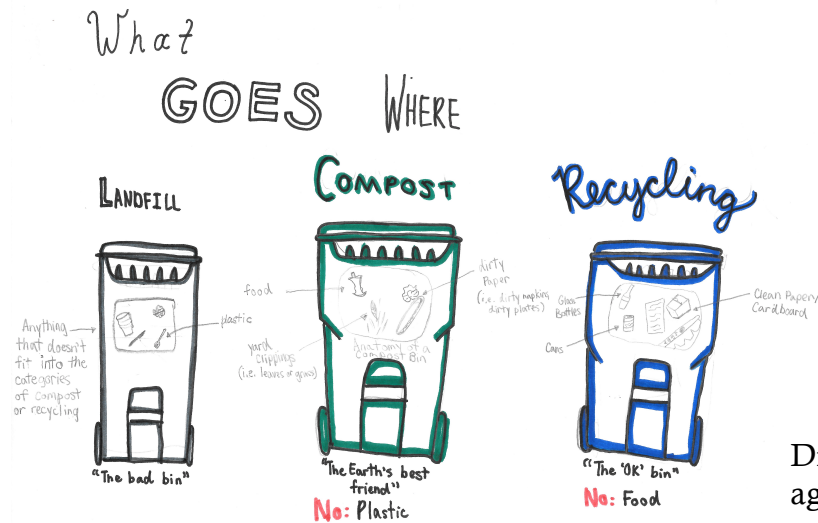
Send submissions to:

HelpSierraNow@gmail.com

Read this newsletter online at www.HelpSierra.com

Your Work!

This is where we show submissions to *The Exciting Environmental*. If you have an original joke, poem, or photo that you would like to share, you can send it to helpsierranow@gmail.com



"If you meet someone you'd like to get to know, start talking about global warming. It's a real icebreaker."

-Debby Shapiro

Drawing by Tenzin,
age 12

Interview from Page 2

Colin: It's been going on now for about twelve years. The issue's become progressively more acute in this time, with climate change moving along. Food production systems have become more acute. So now as time has gone we have become much more dedicated towards trying to do what we can to slow the process down on the sea by collaborating with other organizations to form marine protected areas in Australia. And we have some marine protected areas which cover two hundred miles out from the coastline. And those marine protected areas provide areas where the animals in the sea should be protected, but they're not as protected as we want them to be.

We also do some work on the land, re-vegetating wheat fields and trying to protect some of the animal species that are endangered. And the air, clean air, which is where the generation of electricity comes.

"The name Diversicon comes from the diversity of life."

- Dr. Colin Brown, founder of Diversicon Environmental Foundation

Sierra: So, I don't have very good stories about how I found out about all this, but when did you find out about climate change?

Colin: Well, I think that, being very scientific, I've been reading about it for quite a long time now. The first Al Gore movie was a big wake-up for everybody, and I guess that was fifteen years ago, maybe twelve. But I think if you really read any scientific journals, then you become aware of climate change. Climate change has very large effects, like the acidification of the sea. All life came from the sea, as I'm sure you know. And so we need the sea to be healthy, and the land needs the sea to be healthy.

Sierra: Do you have any advice for future generations?

Colin: I think the future generations are the ones who are going to see the dramatic effects of this. It will manifest in a number of ways. Sea level rise is one

of the important ones. Most of the ice is locked up in the Antarctic and any ice in the sea. When it melts it affects the sea level.

Any ice that's on the land, as it melts, it increases the level of the sea.

But how I want to answer your question is to do what you do and to be active, to write and to try and spread the word so that people realize. Governments have an investment in promoting fossil fuels, because they get a lot of money from the fossil fuel industry. And so the governments are lagging behind in the United States, but not in Europe and not in Scandinavia. In Scandinavia they will have sixty percent of their vehicles electric in less than ten years. So just don't give up hope.



Thanks for reading!