

Business Connection

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July 2016

Business Spotlight

Pleasanton-based Charity Helps Schools Around the World "Go Green"



The Go Green Initiative (GGI) is a 501(c)3 charity that uses its funding to help schools conserve natural resources and protect children's health. Thanks to the generosity of its donors, all of their services are free to schools, which means that no school is ever left out. The GGI started in Pleasanton schools in 2002, and as their success stories spread online, the program has grown to serve schools in all 50 U.S. states and in 73 countries around the world. The founder of the GGI, Jill Buck, is a former Navy Lieutenant who learned about



Jill Buck

the importance of conservation and stewardship while on active duty in San Diego during the drought in the early '90's. It has always been her contention that if you can teach 18 year-old sailors to recycle and not waste energy or water, then you can teach K-12 students, as well. The GGI is the nation's only fully comprehensive environmental education program with a wide variety of services, helping schools with: recycling, composting, green purchasing, green event planning, sustainable food sourcing, water & energy efficiency, renewable

energy projects, integrated pest management, green cleaning methods, and other ways of improving indoor air quality. There are more than 2.5 million children in registered GGI schools, and the GGI is providing training for principals, teachers, custodians, parents and school district staff. Schools in the GGI network save money on their utility bills and are able to use the savings in the classroom.

"I'm so proud to tell people across the world that this program started in Pleasanton, CA," says Buck. "We have worked with PUSD, the City, Pleasanton Garbage Service, and PG&E over the years to create the template that thousands of communities are now replicating to get the whole community's support for their schools' sustainability efforts."

Since January, Buck has worked with students at Amador to pilot a new GGI program for high school students called, Local Leaders of the 21st Century. The Mayor, City Manager, Executive Director for the Alameda County Waste Management Authority, and Bob Molinaro, owner of Pleasanton Garbage Service, have worked with the kids to help them understand how the waste system in Pleasanton works. In subsequent



Amador Valley High School students on a field trip to the Pleasanton Garbage Service Recycling Center.

semesters, students will learn how Pleasanton's energy, water and food systems work.

To learn more about the GGI,

visit their website: www.GoGreenInitiative.org; stop by their office at 4307 Valley Ave.; or call their office at 925-289-0145.