



# EcoNotes



Volume 9, Issue 3

Claremont McKenna College

February 2003

## Clean Air Issue

In our last issue we discussed how daunting conservation may seem at times. We decided that, instead of trying to save the world in one fell swoop, we would take small steps that are simple enough to accomplish. In that vein, we will use this issue to think only about clean air.

Obviously, we aren't creating as much pollution as large factories. But we have to admit that our habits, including our obsession with owning cars, have a definite impact on the air we breathe. We can reduce air pollution by cutting back how often we use our cars. Walking, biking, skateboarding, carpooling, and mass transit are easily accessible and environmentally responsible. We can also clean the air in our own immediate environment by using non-aerosol products and keeping houseplants around us.

Again, we ask you to take a moment to think about a specific conservation issue – clean air – and evaluate your own habits. And, as always, we encourage you to share this newsletter with someone new. It's another simple way to make a difference.

--*The Environmental Concerns Committee*

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## Clean Air at CMC

Claremont McKenna pays careful attention to clean air and makes a concerted effort to reduce emissions. One way CMC has lessened air pollution is to make use of electric vehicles for transportation on campus. The carts are employed for grounds, housekeeping, and maintenance purposes. They are used mainly to transport supplies and equipment throughout campus. CMC has benefited from electric carts for more than 15 years and currently keeps nine electric carts for these purposes.



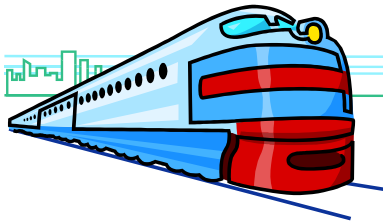
## Rideshare – Meet Your Match

CMC will host its annual "Meet Your Match" Rideshare event and complimentary breakfast on Friday, February 14, 2003 from 8:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m. at The California Grill at the Hub. We will "match" rideshare partners, share information about ridesharing, and draw names for prizes. Prizes include five \$5 Blockbuster Video gift certificates. Participation in rideshare is not required to join in the celebration.

Ridesharing offers several benefits to CMC employees:

- cleaner air
- reduction in the time it takes employees to get to work
- reduction in the cost of getting to work
- reduction in the stress of getting to work
- financial benefit (\$1.50 incentive and up to \$60 per month reimbursement toward cost of public transportation, i.e., bus, Metrolink)

Try it!



*EcoNotes* is published by the Environmental Concerns Committee, a group comprised of faculty, staff, and students. Any submissions or comments can be directed to the Facilities and Campus Services department. We reserve the right to edit all submissions.

## Common Plants Help Reduce Indoor Air Pollution

Common indoor plants may provide a valuable weapon in the fight against rising levels of indoor air pollution. Those plants in your office or home are not only decorative, but NASA scientists are finding them to be surprisingly useful in absorbing potentially harmful gases and cleaning the air inside modern buildings.

NASA and the Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA) have announced the findings of a two-year study that suggest a sophisticated pollution-absorbing device: the common indoor plant may provide a natural way of helping combat "sick building syndrome."

Research into the use of biological processes as a means of solving environmental problems, both on Earth and in space habitats, has been carried out for many years by Dr. Bill Wolverton, formerly a senior research scientist at NASA's John C. Stennis Space Center, Bay St. Louis, Miss.

Based on preliminary evaluations of the use of common indoor plants for indoor air purification and revitalization, ALCA joined NASA to fund a study using about a dozen popular varieties of ornamental plants to determine their effectiveness in removing several key pollutants associated with indoor air pollution. NASA research on indoor plants has found that living plants are so efficient at absorbing contaminants in the air that some will be launched into space as part of the biological life support system aboard future orbiting space stations.

While more research is needed, Wolverton says the study has shown that common indoor landscaping plants can remove certain pollutants from the indoor environment. "We feel that future results will provide an even stronger argument that common indoor landscaping plants can be a very effective part of a system used to provide pollution free homes and work places," he concludes.

*Healthy Household Plants: Bamboo Palm, Chinese evergreen, English ivy, Gerber Daisy, Janet Craig, Marginita, Corn Plant, Mother's-in-Law Tongue, Pot Mum, Peace Lily, Warneckii.*

\*\*Excerpted from [www.zone10.com](http://www.zone10.com).