

UCR Palm Desert Living Green Lecture Series

2014-2015

Updated November 12, 2014

Overview

This series is a partnership between **UC Riverside, US Green Building Council, Friends of the Desert Mountains, Coachella Valley Association of Governments, and Share Kitchen**, with the purpose of educating, informing, and inspiring our community to improve our environment, health, and overall quality of life. This is the fourth year for this series. This year's series is focused on food sustainability. All talks take place in the UCR Palm Desert Center Auditorium, begin at 6 p.m., run approximately 45 minutes long, and are followed by a 30 to 45 minute panel discussion and Q&A. Documentary films will kick off and close the series. Series dates are:

November 6, 2014-Film Screening: DIRT (83 minutes):

DIRT! The Movie—directed and produced by Bill Benenson and Gene Rosow—takes you inside the wonders of the soil. It tells the story of Earth's most valuable and underappreciated source of fertility—from its miraculous beginning to its crippling degradation.

The opening scenes of the film dive into the wonderment of the soil. Made from the same elements as the stars, plants and animals, and us, "dirt is very much alive." Though, in modern industrial pursuits and clamor for both profit and natural resources, our human connection to and respect for soil has been disrupted. "Drought, climate change, even war are all directly related to the way we are treating dirt."

DIRT! the Movie—narrated by Jaime Lee Curtis—brings to life the environmental, economic, social and political impact that the soil has. It shares the stories of experts from all over the world who study and are able to harness the beauty and power of a respectful and mutually beneficial relationship with soil.

DIRT! the Movie is simply a movie about dirt. The real change lies in our notion of what dirt is. The movie teaches us: "When humans arrived 2 million years ago, everything changed for dirt. And from that moment on, the fate of dirt and humans has been intimately linked." But more than the film and the lessons that it teaches, *DIRT the Movie* is a call to action.

"The only remedy for disconnecting people from the natural world is connecting them to it again."

What we've destroyed, we can heal.

No speaker, but a welcome and overview of the series line-up, purpose, partnerships, passport program and acknowledgement of sponsors. Cameron Barrows will do the introduction.

January 21, 2015: Food Production/Waste/Environmental Impact Featured Speaker: Milt McGiffen, PhD., Vice Chair for Extension, Department of Botany and Plant Sciences, University of California Riverside

Dr. McGiffen is the Vegetable Crops Specialist and Vice Chair for Cooperative Extension at UCR's Department of Botany and Plant Sciences. Milt has spent the last 30 years working on organic and desert agriculture and weed management. Much of his research has been here in the Coachella Valley, especially the impact of adding organic amendments to our low carbon soils. Milt's talk will discuss how we went from the land of plenty to worrying about a food crisis. He will present some of his research on turning organic waste into products that enhance the soil, save water, and sequester carbon.

Panel

Klaus Mager, Food with Thought

(Katie Barrows working on someone from restaurant waste committee)

XXXX

February 18, 2015: Buy, Eat, LIVE Local – Environmental and Economic Impacts of “Local”

Reducing food miles, water consumption and our carbon footprint and how having strong local food systems (policies and physical infrastructure) can help build healthy communities. Learn about what we are doing locally, our regional collaborations, and the positive impacts happening in other communities.

Featured Speaker: Angela Janus, Executive Director, Share Kitchen

Panel

Christy Porter, Executive Director, Hidden Harvest, Inc.

Fortino Morales, UCR Botanical Garden/Arboretum Manager

Lorraine Ornelas, Luscious Lorraine's

March 18, 2015: Growing Healthy Communities (Health Impacts, Solutions, Best Practices, Our Collective Future)

Featured Speaker: Joseph Cummins, UCR Assistant Professor, Economics

Child Under-Nutrition Locally and Globally: Discussing Causes, Consequences, and Policy Options for California and the World.

Globally, 150 million plus children suffer from long-term, chronic malnutrition. In California, almost 2 million families receive food assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps). Though the contexts are radically different, children who face early life nutritional shortcomings in any setting are likely to face significant hurdles later in life: lower educational attainment, lower earnings, and worse health. Dr.

Cummins will discuss lessons learned and ongoing research in labor economics on the impacts of early life under-nutrition and on policies aimed at improving child nutrition in California and around the world.

Panel

Lenea Pollet, HSP Manager, Alliance for a Healthier Generation (tentative)

Dak Kopec, Director, Masters of Design Studies in Design for Human Health, The Boston Architectural College | School of Design Studies

Sylvia Paz, Building Healthy Communities (tentative)

Tom Kirk (tentative...pending J. Cummins topic)

April 22, 2015 (Earth Day): Film Screening: A PLACE AT THE TABLE (84 minutes):

50 Million Americans—1 in 4 children—don't know where their next meal is coming from. A Place at the Table tells the powerful stories of three such Americans, who maintain their dignity even as they struggle just to eat. In a riveting journey that will change forever how you think about the hungry, A Place at the Table shows how the issue could be solved forever, once the American public decides—as they have in the past—that ending hunger is in the best interests of us all.

Invite local organizations and businesses to participate with tables in the lobby area. Event will begin at 5:00 with refreshments (healthy foods and smoothie or cooking demonstration). Film at 6.

Awards for passport program presented.

Passport Program: Kick off at the January 21 lecture and run through April 22. (Maggie and Jacqueline to further develop)

Concept:

A *Passport to Green Living* that people can pick up at our first lecture or at various spots around town and at partner offices. This would be similar to the summer reading program charts that kids get at the library -- except instead of getting a stamp for reading a book, folks of all ages can receive a stamp on the passport for accomplishing green things. After collecting a certain number of stamps, they win a prize (solicit sponsors for prizes for completing the passport, and for a grand prize winner).

The idea is that it will provide an incentive to come to all the lectures. The action steps will also inspire and educate, and introduce the public to some of our green initiatives throughout the valley.