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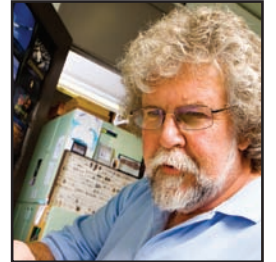
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The New Southwest Tucson Green Times

Live Green. Live Healthy. Live Wise. It's a lifestyle.

August 15 - September 15, 2010

We're changing our name ... see our publisher's letter on page 2.

Greening up the local MLS



By Elizabeth R. Elstien

The New Southwest (Tucson Green Times) – August 2010

Local homes that are green are now easier to search for and easier to verify - thanks to MLS database changes.

More than 50 Multiple Listing Services (MLS) around the country have added green data fields to their databases of new and existing homes for sale to better inform homebuyers why certain properties are considered green. The Tucson MLS (tarmls.com) recently rolled out its own green listing features.

The Green Committee of the Tucson Association of Realtors (TAR), co-chaired by realtor Nicole Brulé-Fisher of Keller Williams Realty, was the catalyst behind the addition of several energy-efficient, sustainable and clean-air categories in November 2009. Brulé-Fisher notes that the Green Committee was "instrumental in making this happen."

These changes didn't just happen overnight, but took some serious thought. Realtor and vice-chair of the TAR Green

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Gulf Update:

Hoping to Divert Migratory Birds



If only birds could read, wildlife experts could flash signs at them saying: "New all-you-can-eat buffet. Stop here."

As the fall migratory season begins, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and its conservation partners are trying the next best thing. In an extraordinary move, they're

flooding hundreds of acres in Louisiana, east Texas and Mississippi and cultivating additional tons of rice and grains, in hopes of diverting migratory birds from oiled beaches and waters in the Gulf of Mexico. Much of the augmented bird habitat is on National Wildlife Refuges.

PHOTO: Gary Kramer, USFWS

Unearthing evidence of climate change



PHOTO: James Patrick

The Union of Concerned Scientists launched a series of ads in July showing how climate scientists, including UofA's Dr. Julia Cole, first became interested in science.

By Gretel Hakanson

The New Southwest

(Tucson Green Times) – August 2010

Julia Cole studies stalagmites in southern Arizona caves. She's not spelunking - she's following her passion.

"I was definitely a kid who got dirty when I was young," she says. "I climbed trees, played in the mud, picked up stones and I really like being outside and figuring out things in the natural world."

Cole earned her doctorate in geological science from Columbia University in 1992, and has been with the University of Arizona since 1999. As associate professor in the geosciences and atmospheric sciences departments she heads a research team which includes graduate and undergraduate students and technical specialists. Much of her current research involves learning about climate change patterns.

"I have been watching Julia Cole's work for many years," says Brenda Ekwurzel, climate scientist with the nationally prominent non-profit, Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS). "She's very highly respected within the scientific community. Her work is thorough: she leaves no stone unturned, no cave stalagmite unturned, no coral unturned. She, along with her students and all of the people within her research group, are doing a lot of hard work and I think the world has a lot to learn from what they're discovering."

The world may have a lot to learn from her work, but Cole's findings are particularly enlightening for our geographical region.

"What's interesting is that she's finding out something that really is important for people who live in the Southwest," Ekwurzel says. "The jet stream and the position of the jet stream is shifting and that has very

important implications for how arid and how dry Arizona may get."

Ekwurzel believes Cole's work may have implications for how we plan for the future, how we protect the water supply of the Southwest and, in particular, what choices we have, given this knowledge.

Cole's research takes her to the caves of southern Arizona. Akin to tree-ring science, Cole and her team analyze stalagmites to identify climate patterns from thousands of years ago. These patterns are unveiled through the subtle changes in the composition of stalagmites as they form.

As rainwater percolates down through the soil above a cave, it loses carbon dioxide and drips to the cave floor leaving behind mineral formations of calcium carbonate. These lumps of calcium carbonate - stalagmites - reveal records of precipitation that show long-term patterns of

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Unearthing evidence of climate change

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climate change as opposed to year-to-year patterns.

Cole acknowledges that the oscillations of wet and dry conditions that occurred here between 15,000 and 55,000 thousand years ago are relevant to today's climate conditions in the Southwest.

"What they tell is, when large parts of the northern hemisphere are very warm, our part of the world is dry," Cole says. "And when large parts of the northern hemisphere are colder, our part of the world gets wetter. That points to an atmospheric response to warming and cooling that is relevant to what's going on now."

Cole's observations suggest the path of storms that comes into the Southwest is sensitive to large-scale background climate conditions. When conditions in the northern hemisphere are warm, like they're becoming more and more, that storm track tends to shift northward, out of our area, bringing drier conditions here.

Winter storms travel along a general path governed by the jet stream, which brings

rainfall to our area. This is important for the Southwest because wintertime precipitation is what puts moisture into our groundwater.

"[Our work] is to understand the processes of climate change that happened naturally," Cole says. "The paleo-climate records – records of past climate – help us understand the processes that have been important in the past. If we can figure out how those processes behaved in the past, then we have some inkling to how sensitive they might be in the future. So a warmer world being linked to dryness in the Southwest in the past doesn't bode very well for the future in the Southwest. A warmer world will probably be a drier Southwest."

Cole's work was recently published in a respected scientific journal and received positive responses. But she says, "for some reason the idea of global warming is still very hard for some people to accept because once they accept it, it implies a set of actions or judgments that are political in nature. I think it's fair to say global warming is a fact, but what we do about it requires a judgment call."

She continues, "We can observe that the world has warmed over the 20th century and it's pretty hard to get around that. I try to make my work relevant to that because I think it's the big environmental challenge of our lifetime. I would be remiss to ignore it."

In fact, Cole's dedication is one of the reasons why UCS chose to feature her in a current ad campaign they ran in July.

UCS, a national nonprofit that combines independent scientific research and citizen action, works to develop innovative, practical solutions for responsible changes in government policy, corporate practices, and consumer choices.

In light of the highly publicized attacks on climate scientists ("Climategate") over the past few years, the campaign aims to educate the public about climate science in a new way.

"What we wanted to do was show that there are scientists in federal agencies, state agencies, city governments, in our colleges and universities, all around our nation and a lot of them are doing work that touches on climate science and solutions," Ekwurzel says.

The ads represent part of UCS's effort to educate the public about the work scientists

undertake in their efforts to document and understand human-caused global warming. The campaign is part of a broader effort to showcase the dedication and personal histories of scientists studying climate change. The advertisements, titled "Curious for Life," depicts various scientists - as kids - exhibiting enthusiasm for discovering the natural world.

"[Julia has] a passion for science and I want people to learn about that," Ekwurzel says.

The ad featuring Cole shows a young girl (which is actually a model and not Cole) in the middle of a soggy wash, covered head-to-toe in mud. The headline reads: "I turned my passion for mud into an impassioned career."

"I looked at the photo and laughed," says Cole. "So that message resonated with me - that little girl grubbing around in the dirt that could have been me."

Even though she was surprised to be chosen for the ad, Cole says, "I like the idea of participating in a campaign that helps get the word out that what motivates us is curiosity and the search for explanations about what's going on in the natural world."

Author: Gretel Hakanson is a local freelance writer.

ADVERTISER NEWS

Southern Arizona Rain Gutters, Inc.

Tucson's newest community garden is now open. Southern Arizona Rain Gutters, Inc. has set aside a portion of their Stone Ave. business lot for a joint effort with Community Gardens of Tucson.

"The garden was developed as an educational project to incorporate rain water harvesting with the City water supply. The living classroom will train participants in responsible water usage and urban food production, as well as give those in the neighborhood a ready plot for their personal food gardening," says Matthew McHolm, one of the business owners.

The soil has been amended with compost. A complete rainwater harvest system is

installed on site. Four of the 16 beds have been planted and are now producing vegetables. The remaining beds are available for planting and care by interested persons.

Southern Arizona Rain Gutters, Inc. sells and installs rain water harvesting products, and can answer questions about laws and regulations concerning city standards for rain harvesting. They carry a complete selection of tanks, gutters and all the supplies needed by the do-it-yourselfer.

To volunteer in the garden, contact Gene Zonge at 520-795-8823.

For more information about Southern Arizona Rain Gutters, contact Matthew McHolm at 520-299-7246 or visit online: www.southernarizonaraingutters.com.

See Southern Arizona Rain Gutters ad on page 6 and page 22.

BELOW: In July, print ads featuring Dr. Julia Cole appeared in national, regional and local publications, including the New York Times Magazine, Los Angeles Times and Portland Press Herald. Online ads will run on the websites of a number of newspapers, including the Chicago Tribune, Indianapolis Star and St. Louis Post-Dispatch. The campaign also ran in the Washington, D.C. subway system.



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Arizona's Greenest Workplace Challenge

Do you work for (or know of) a company that saves energy, reduces waste and provides a nontoxic environment? Mrs. Green's World is taking submissions for green workplaces during August and September.

Starting September 7th, you can vote daily for the workplace you think is the greenest.



mrsgreensworld.com