



# ENVIRONMENTAL PARTNERS

Winter 2016 - 2017

A Newsletter of the Center for the Environment at Catawba College

## Salisbury Academy Receives NC Green School Award

**T**he Center for the Environment's Katie Cavert Ferrell and Dr. John Wear presented the NC Green School of Promise award to Salisbury Academy



*Katie Cavert Ferrell (left) and Dr. Wear following presentation of award with Head of School Beverly Fowler. Also pictured are Dr. Wear's grandsons, students at Salisbury Academy.*

November 17. The award is given to schools which demonstrate that they have taken initial steps to implement sus-

tainable practices and a robust environmental education curriculum.

Cavert Ferrell encouraged the assembly of students and teachers to be "stewards of the earth by getting outdoors, being curious and discovering the wonders of nature." All students at Salisbury Academy participate in a host of green school initiatives, including gardening, recycling, composting and conserving energy and water as well as participating in Discovery Labs, eco-art projects and nature-themed music activities.

The school is transforming its campus to a more natural playscape with outdoor learning spaces, a greenhouse, gardens and loose-parts playground through collaboration with N.C. State University's Natural Learning initiative. ■

## Center Accepting Applications for 2017 National Environmental Summit for High School Students

**T**he Center for the Environment is now accepting applications for its seventh annual National Environmental Summit for High School Students, scheduled for July 11-15, 2017.

The summit is open to students from across the country who will be 14-17 years old by the time of the summit. Those who complete the application process before May 1 will receive a discount of \$90 from the student portion of the tuition cost. A limited amount of financial aid is also available.

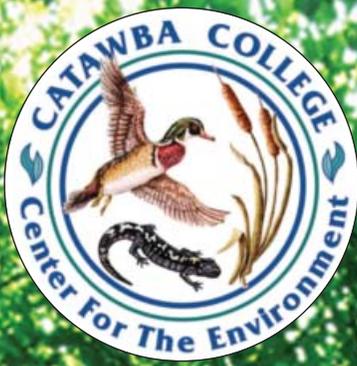
The experience, intended to help students explore how they can use their interests and talents to make a difference in the world, is a partnership of the Center for the Environment, Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), Environmental Working Group (EWG) and Yellowstone Forever. With the guidance of Catawba professors and Center, RMI, EWG and Yellowstone Forever staff, students discover how their interest in diverse areas – everything from writing to chemistry, from history to



*Summit students in Dr. Joe Poston's "Backbone for Conservation" focus group study on the Stanback Ecological Preserve.*

biology, from philosophy to economics – can be used to address today's environmental challenges.

For more information or to apply, individuals may call 704.637.4791 or visit [www.CenterForTheEnvironment.org](http://www.CenterForTheEnvironment.org). ■



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## Center Hosts Renowned Environmental Advocates

**Dr. Paul Erlich ■ Dr. Pete Myers ■ Erin Brockovich**

These are just a few of the stellar speakers the Center for the Environment hosted this fall. Crowds that numbered in the hundreds – and nearly 1,000 for Brockovich – gathered to hear the thought leaders.

Here are a few quotes from those events and interviews with the speakers:

### Pollution and Overpopulation Causing Sixth Extinction Event

*Dr. Paul Ehrlich*  
*Bing Professor of Population Studies Emeritus*  
*President of the Center for Conservation Biology*  
*Stanford University*

“There have been five catastrophic events. The one 66 million years ago, sometimes called the K-T extinction, is when the dinosaurs bit the dust along with a lot of other organisms. The thing that is stunning today is that we’re now well into a sixth mass extinction in which basically we have lost about half the wildlife on the planet already.

[The ramifications of this are far-reaching.]

It isn’t just a matter of people having a smaller and smaller chance of ever seeing an elephant or a lion in the wild. It’s hurting our life support systems. We’re now, for example, setting ourselves up for agriculture to collapse because we’re wiping out the organisms that pollinate crops, the organisms that eat the pests of crops and the organisms that keep our climate in the kind of shape necessary for agriculture.”

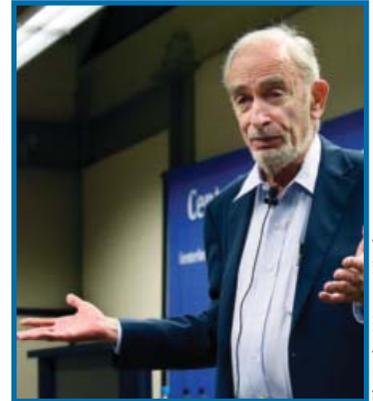


Photo by Wayne Hinshaw

*Dr. Paul Ehrlich is renowned for his 1968 book, The Population Bomb, which asserted that the world's human overpopulation would result in mass starvation.*

### Multplier Effect of Biogeochemical Forces

*Dr. Pete Myers*  
*Founder and CEO of Environmental Health Science*

“Biogeochemical forces interact both with themselves and with the  
*(For more on Sustainable Uses of Coal Ash, go to page 3.)*”



*Dr. Pete Myers is actively involved in work to anticipate the interactions among biogeochemical forces set in motion by humans.*

## Sustainable Uses of Coal Ash

*(Continued from page 2)*

international financial system in ways that make them force multipliers, likely to hit harder and faster than any one of them by itself. A good example is a fishery in the East China Sea that has fed people in North Korea, South Korea, Japan and China for a long, long time. It's changing from a fish-based system to a jellyfish- and algal-based system, heightening tensions between those four countries."

## Become Advocates for Change

*Erin Brockovich  
Consumer Advocate*

[Perseverance and empowerment to make a change come from what Brockovich calls her "4 L's.]" "Logic: going with your common sense and trusting it to lead you in the right direction. Leverage: bringing people together in the hope of fighting for change through unity. Loyalty: respecting each other and keeping to your stick-to-itiveness. And finally, Love: because it is what gets you up in the morning and what keeps you going and it is the only thing that conquers hate."



*Erin Brockovich and John Wear*

## Refuse Single-Use Plastic

*Dianna Cohen  
Co-founder, Plastic Pollution Coalition*

"The chemicals used to make plastic have been linked to breast cancer, prostate cancer and brain cancer. And they have also been linked to obesity and diabetes, which are epidemic in the United States. So it's really important to come full circle and think about how we can reduce our exposure to environmental toxins and become more aware so we begin to look at plastic packaging on our food as a potential toxicant."



"In schools today, students are taught "the 3 R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle," but at Plastic Pollution Coalition we like to add a fourth R: Refuse single-use plastic."



*John Wear and Dianna Cohen (second from right) with Catawba students*

## The Plight of the Red Wolf

*Christian Hunt  
Program Associate for Defenders of  
Wildlife's Southeast Region*



*Christian Hunt*

"[The red wolf population] has contracted to about 1.7 acres out in eastern North Carolina. There are no more than 60 remaining today in the wild."



"It is important to note that despite the small number of red wolves, they play a vital role in the ecosystem that they inhabit. For instance, [they] cause deer to move around more because deer are scared of red wolves. So deer consequently eat less and congregate less in one area which gives trees and shrubbery a chance to recover. Red wolves eat coyotes, raccoons and opossums, so as a result the turkey and the quail and songbird populations have flourished because raccoons and opossums eat those eggs. The invasive nutria also eat farmers' crops, but with the red wolves there, they have pushed the nutria out of the agricultural fields, which has been a huge benefit for farmers."

## Sustainable Uses of Coal Ash

*Dr. John Daniels  
Chair of the Duke Energy National Ash Management  
Advisory Board  
Chair of the Department of Civil and Environmental  
Engineering at UNC Charlotte*

"[There are] 150 million tons of coal ash in North Carolina alone [and 2.5 million tons are added each year.] One of the biggest uses for coal ash is mixing

*(For more on Sustainable Uses of Coal Ash, go to page 4.)*



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*The Environmental Stewards went on retreat this fall to begin building a cohesive team and to brainstorm ideas for projects to be completed during the 2016-2017 academic year. The Environmental Stewards Program is designed for students who are eager to get involved in campus sustainability projects or the Center for the Environment's outreach efforts. Those who are selected for the program receive annual scholarships.*

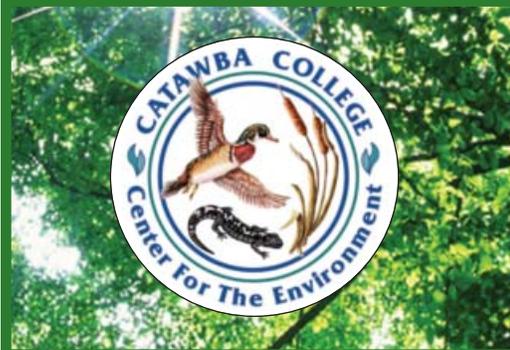


**Sustainable Uses of Coal Ash**

*(Continued from page 3)*

it with concrete. Ash actually improves concrete performance... One of my colleagues at UNC-Charlotte, Dr. Ahmed El-Ghannam, is using glass prepared with coal ash for stronger solar panel prototypes.”

*Dr. John Daniels speaks of opportunities and advancements in the uses of coal ash.*



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