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Turning Trash Into Treasures (Published for Encinitas Living Magazine)

Climate Change remains a hot topic in our conversations. Now more than ever, people are being conscious about their habits and how it affects our shared environment. Unfortunately, at this very moment our air, water, and land are all still being polluted with non-degrading trash and micro plastics. Fortunately, people are stepping up and making change happen on the personal, local, national and international levels. It all starts with Being the ECO Change, however you can.

In North County San Diego, Be Creative Zone (BCZ) is actively working on bringing artists, science-loving, environmentally-friendly initiatives together. Founded by Kristi Stone, Be Creative Zone's mission is to inspire communities to be eco-friendlier and more creative. As an ECO ART and S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) loving organization, BCZ's goal is to bring ECO STEAM minded creatives and the public together to make an even bigger environmental difference. By deconstructing, cleaning, sorting and storing various found items for re-use they encourage creatives of all ages (and skill levels) to turn this saved trash into funky art pieces or useful items.

Be Creative Zone is a 501c3 non-profit that runs on the support of the people. Their immediate goal is to find a permanent space to reuse their trash for creative funky art, upcycling and fix it classes for the community. This will allow more people of all ages to bring art and science into their lives and help them live a more sustainable lifestyle. "Today, we are focusing on creating partnerships with like-minded companies, organizations and educators to create more eco STEAM classes for the community. We are also actively looking for a larger space for our organization so we can clean, sort, and store more items for workshops and creatives in one location", says Kristi. "In addition, we are actively looking to find more funding sources for our initiatives. We don't ever want to turn anyone away for lack of money."

They are always actively seeking volunteers, creatives, makers, crafters and artists to collaborate with. Throughout the year they put on community events, such as beach sorting/clean-ups, art workshops, and educational classes for people to learn more ways about saving the environment. To get involved, donate \$ or for more information contact Kristi Stone, (executive director) kristi@BeCreative.Zone 760-633-3012

Title: "DIY Self watering planters" Collect Them All
(Published for EPIC Magazine)

People now more than ever are starting to be more conscious about the environment. Becoming a hot topic in our national (and international) debate, climate change is affecting the way we live, breathe, eat in our daily lives. People today consume, on average, 4 pounds of trash per day, and only 30 % is actually recycled. This means that most of our trash goes up into landfills, polluting our water, air, and our planet. Since the industrial revolution, Americans have been widely consuming our natural resources, which has generated lots of trash. However, new developments and ideas have been emerging in the mainstream, and more consumers are becoming much more aware about our carbon footprint. Millennials and Gen-Z are popularizing both the Zero-Waste and Minimalist movement, both aimed to challenge and channel a new way to live a more eco-conscious lifestyle. This means getting creative, and finding new, unconventional ways to use our trash and waste. Today, many organizations are teaching us ways to live a more sustainable lifestyle.

Right here in San Diego, Kristi Stone is the founder and executive director of BeCreative.Zone, a 501c3 non-profit organization that helps foster the arts and creativity while cleaning up the environment. The organization's mission is to educate people about everyday stuff we can save from the landfill for upcycling, repurposing, and funky art projects.

As a kid, Kristi was always curious about the world around her. In 3rd grade she won a city-wide Environmental Poster contest to help her spread awareness about cleaning up her community lake. She then went on to study art and business in college, was part owner & director of creative services for Inset Systems makers of Hijaak (sold in 1995) and founded her own marketing company in 1996. She would then go on to run for State Assembly in 2004 and State Senate in 2010.

While having the non-profit since 2003, Kristi upcycled the NPO and changed its name to BeCreative.Zone in 2017, along with its mission to clean up the environment through creativity and the arts. She hopes to continue to bring awareness about the massive amounts of still usable materials that get thrown away every day. The DIY (do-it-yourself) movement teaches people how to live more sustainably by reducing, reusing, repurposing used stuff into art and other useful upcycled materials.

Kristi gives us an idea on how to turn our water bottles into your next pot planter!

This project was inspired by BeCreative Zone's new S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Math) initiative. It includes collecting everyday trash (plastic water bottles) and turning it into a piece of artwork that saves waste from landfills. It also connects science (the wick that draws water from the bottom) and art (having fun being expressive with paint and found items), which is what BeCreative Zone is all about.

For Krisiti, this project has become the signature repurposing project for the organization and was one of the first projects the organization launched and taught in the community. It is an easy and fun way for people of all ages to experience for themselves what STEAM based DIY eco upcycling looks like. Today, Be Creative Zone is actively seeking volunteers, creatives, makers, crafters, sustainable minded companies and artists to collaborate with. By the end of this year, they hope to find space large enough to store equipment and items for the organization. Throughout the year they put on community events, such as beach sorting/clean-ups, art workshops, and educational classes for people to learn more ways about saving the environment. To get involved, donate \$ or for more information contact Kristi Stone, (executive director) kristi@BeCreative.Zone , 760-633-3012. You can also check out their Facebook page and website for more info. BeCreative.Zone

Below are the steps to create your own plant pot using recyclable water bottles:

1. Take Label off the water bottle.
2. $\frac{1}{3}$ Top $\frac{2}{3}$ Bottom (approx)
3. Decorate bottom with paint or found items
4. Put hole in twist off top, Pull

string $\frac{1}{2}$ way thru hole

Screw top with string onto the bottle, (half string is out, half is in the bottle)

5. Put dirt in top of bottle with string. Be sure to make the string stays at the top of the dirt. The string acts like a wick to bring water from the bottom. Add a little water to bottom. Place together and add plants to dirt.

6. Enjoy - Have fun creating and collecting them all!

Experiment with different found items to decorate. Imagine "Herbs" with their name on front. Or seeds you want to transplant. Or Succulents.....



**COLLECT
THEM
ALL**

