

# PBS show 'Curiosity Quest' addresses environmental issues

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The Press-Enterprise

Joel Greene has a tough job.

As host of the PBS show "Curiosity Quest," he answers kids' questions. And, as anyone who has spent time with children knows, kids have a lot of questions.

The show has aired the past seven years on more than 40 PBS stations across the nation. But for 13 current episodes, it's going in a new direction -- it's going green.

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Special to The Press-Enterprise  
Host Joel Greene answers questions submitted by kids in PBS' "Curiosity Quest." A future episode will look at recycling tires.

In the past, the show has gone to places like Krispy Kreme Donuts, Raging Waters in San Dimas and Auto Club Speedway in Fontana. Greene has ridden in police helicopters and

pedaled BMX bikes. These episodes were followed by letters from kids with more questions.

"We usually get anywhere from about five to 40 letters a day," Greene said.

But one recent episode was followed by much more interest than usual. The episode answered the question, "Where do the blue recycling bins go?"

The show went to a Burrtec Waste Recycling plant in Fontana to follow the progress of the plastic bins and their content. Recyclable goods were sorted and, at the end of the show, left in bundled stacks.

"We got a flood of calls," Greene said. Callers wanted to know what happened to the stuff after it was bundled. They wanted to know where all the electronics, cans, bottles, etc., ended up and what they became, he said.

The next episode in the series airs May 12 and will take viewers to Global P.E.T. in Perris and Pinnacle Plastics in Oxnard. P.E.T. stands for polyethylene terephthalate, the plastic bottles are made from.

The show will begin at Global P.E.T., which recycles a lot of plastics in the area, Greene said. The recycling process starts there and then moves to Pinnacle Plastics, where it is completed and the bottles become new, usable products, he said.

Nadim Bahou, owner of Global P.E.T., gave Greene the tour during the show.

"I was his sidekick," said Bahou.

Greene was taken through the whole process, he said. Recyclable bottles are first ground down to flakes and then washed until completely clean.

Those flakes are then sold to companies like Pinnacle Plastics to be transformed into usable products.

Greene is a great guy, Bahou said. "He doesn't script anything. He's very, very funny."

At Pinnacle Plastics in Oxnard, Operations Manager Steve Bartolucci was the company representative.

"It all ends here," Bartolucci said. The cleaned, flaked plastic is made into flat sheets of plastic, which then go through thermo forming to become clamshell containers, he said.

A clamshell container has a top and a bottom connected by one hinged side, allowing it to open and close like a clamshell. The containers usually hold produce, deli sandwiches, herbs and spices.

The target audience for the show is young people, so the plan was to make Greene's visit fun, Bartolucci said.

Greene got up on a forklift and changed a sheet roll, stood on a platform and fed one of the grinders, and even inspected the finished products, he said.

"I hope the fun comes across," Bartolucci said.

Other "green" shows in the series will follow the recycling of green waste, glass, aluminum, tires, cars and more.

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## CONTEST

**Where to enter:** Online at [www.curiosityquest.org/sendus.html](http://www.curiosityquest.org/sendus.html) or at any PFF Bank and Trust.

**The Quest:** Submit ideas that are eye-catching and unique, but also interesting to everyone.

**Deadline:** Contest ends June 1.

**The prize:** Go on a quest with host Joel Greene.

## GREEN SHOW

**When:** Plastic-recycling episode airs 7:30 p.m. May 12; all green episodes air 7:30 p.m. Mondays

**Where:** KVCR-TV, Channel 24

**TV listings:** <http://kvcr.org/cq.htm>

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