



Angela Vincent sitting with her mother, Marisa Vincent



Save Queen Green:

Earth Day book release for CalRecycle worker

“Row, row, row your boat, gently down the stream ...”

You know the rest, right?

That catchy nursery rhyme melody has likely been ingrained in your head since childhood, and that's the concept behind Angela Vincent's new children's book and sing-along project, "Save Queen Green! Mother Nature's Eco-Rhymes." The CalRecycle employee's idea was to take the cadence of the classics and update the lyrics with an environmental twist. So, instead of "Row, row, row your boat ..." future generations of kids will be singing, "See, see, see the trash, floating down the stream. Pick it up, pick it up, Mother Nature's dream." By the end of the 12 eco-rhymes, children also will have learned that Wasteful Winnie leaves the water running while brushing her teeth and that Responsible Regis never goes shopping without a reusable bag.

"I think it's really important that we educate the next generation and teach our children to protect our resources," says Vincent, who currently works in the Division of Recycling (DOR) Riverside Office under the Investigations and Inspections Section of the Recycling Program Enforcement Branch. While her knowledge of environmental issues has grown during her past two years with CalRecycle, the idea for the eco-rhymes children's book originated back in 2010 while Vincent was studying abroad in Germany. She says the country's environmentally progressive atmosphere got her thinking about how to instill environmental values in kids back home.

"I didn't grow up with environmental values," Vincent says, but she notes that she did grow up with a love of music and a family that thrived on creativity in her hometown of Las Vegas. Coming of age in California helped Vincent find her true calling; "I enjoy singing, but my first passion is the environment." A new take on nursery rhymes seemed to be the perfect solution, especially considering how well children learn through rhyme and repetition.

Vincent shopped the idea to publishers following her 2011 graduation from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. After multiple rejections, she eventually got the nod from an independent East Coast publisher with a history in children's books. From there, "Save Queen Green! Mother Nature's Eco-Rhymes" quickly turned into a family project with Vincent's mother, Marisa Vincent, using her experience as a poet and writer to assist Angela with the song lyrics. Serene Temple, the daughter of Marisa's fiancé, made use of her talents as a tattoo artist to create the illustrations for the book, which is set for an Earth Day 2015 release on www.savequeengreen.com. The book is accompanied by a compact disc recording of the eco-rhymes, sung by Angela herself. All 12 songs are currently for sale on iTunes (search "Save Queen Green").

While Vincent can't help but be intrigued by the prospect of becoming a childhood music star (think "The Wiggles"), she says she's more excited to use her singing talent to spread awareness about the issues for which she cares deeply. In light of California's historic drought, "The Water Drips All Through the Night" could be Vincent's breakout hit – set to the melody of "The Ants Go Marching One by One." She says it has received great feedback so far, and sections of the song have already made it into a public service announcement on the drought.

Vincent eventually hopes to translate "Save Queen Green" into an e-book but, like Turnaround Tucker (who walks or rides his bike when going short distances), she's happy to take things one step at a time.

— Lance Klug