



Vicki Greendot Goes to Camp Beaubien

Written by Andrea Kronshage

Illustrated by Jason MacKay



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Inspired by Lucie Brisebois, Laurent Joly, Dave Keddy,
Alexia Krepiavich, Anthony Kronshage, Tara Kronshage,
James McPeake, Tara Peretz, Allyssa Rodrigues,
Kyle Sartorius and Trevor Shum

Dedication: for all of the little Vicki's and Billy's on our
little green planet

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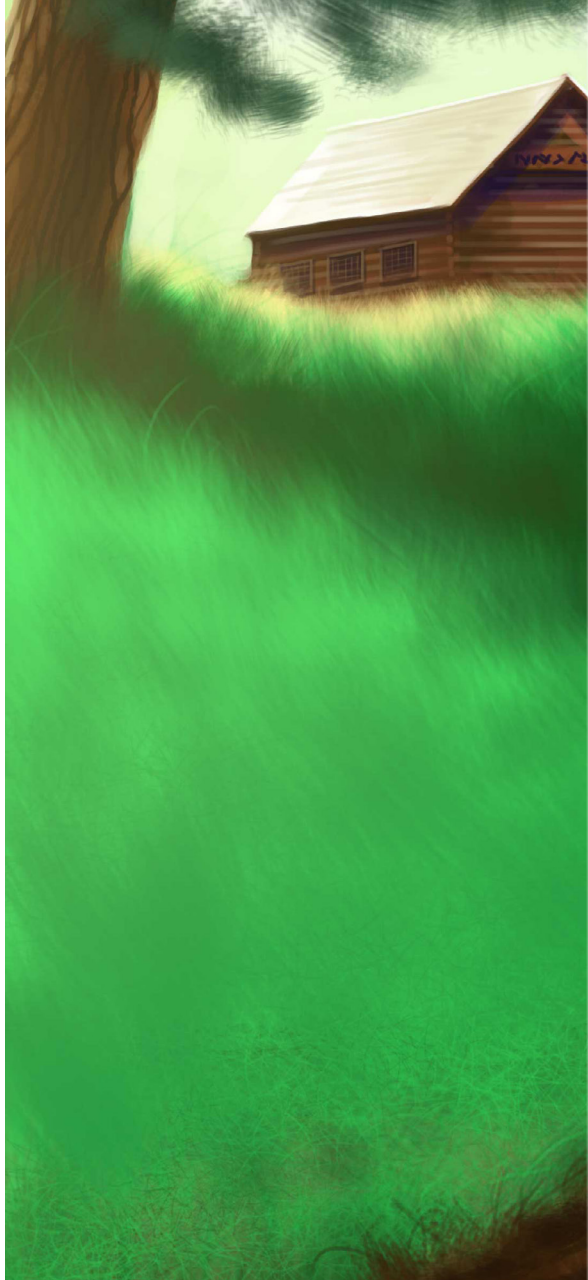


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ICKI WAS SO EXCITED

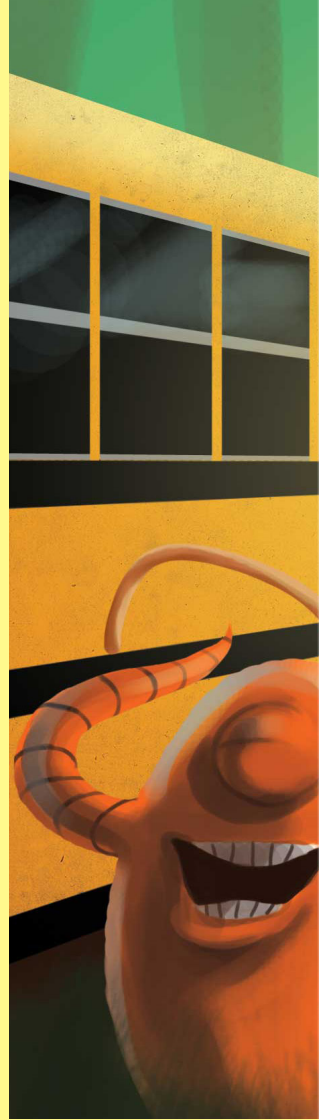
that her fuzzy pink bow was vibrating on top of her head and her green velveteen skin was pulsing! She and her new friend from Montreal, Lucie Jolie, were going to Camp Beaubien just north of Chicoutimi, Quebec, for one whole month!!!

They chattered happily on the long bus ride from Montreal, past crystal lakes and through endless towering pine groves until, just as the sun was setting, the bus pulled up in front of a wonderful old farmhouse with a big “Camp Beaubien” sign over the huge covered front porch.





Vicki, Lucie, and all of the other little campers jumped off the bus excitedly to be greeted by the wonderfully warm M. and Mme Beaubien. Monsieur Beaubien had a big booming voice and jolly whiskers and started laughing and speaking in French and English, directing his sons to take the little campers' luggage to their cabins and Mme. Beaubien laughingly ticked off every little camper's name on her checklist and welcomed them in English and French with a big hug!









Telling them to follow her, rosy-cheeked Mme Beaubien took them in to the oversized dining room where her daughters were waiting to serve the hungry children a hearty stew and homemade bread.....but for the first time in days, a little frown crossed Vicki's wonderful velvety green face. The meal was served on paper plates with plastic knives, forks and Styrofoam glasses and everything was thrown into a gigantic garbage pail after dinner.





“Qu’est-ce qu’il y a, Chérie?” Lucie asked, concerned about the little frown she saw on her friend’s face.

“Lucie, it’s just that at home we use china plates and real flatware and real glasses and we sort the waste into recyclables and compost because we care so much about the environment - so I’m kind of disappointed that our camp doesn’t do that, too”....

“Moi, aussi, et chez moi c’est la même chose, Chérie,” said Lucie, “but what can we do? We are so little?!?!”

Vicki just said, “Let’s think on it tonight.” and off they went to their little cabin, ablaze in many bright lights.

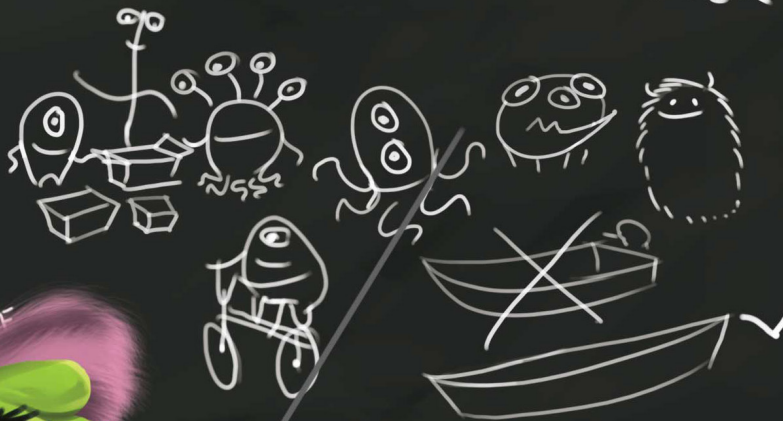
As Vicki wandered through the little cabin introducing herself and Lucie to their cabin mates, she systematically turned off almost all of the lights, explaining as she did so that not only would less light use less energy, but also it would attract less mosquitoes and moths! And for the one little camper afraid of the dark, Jacques, Vicki handed over her special flashlight that didn't use batteries but was powered by shaking – so it shone really brightly for Jacques!!!




MAKING CAMP BEAUBIEN GREENER



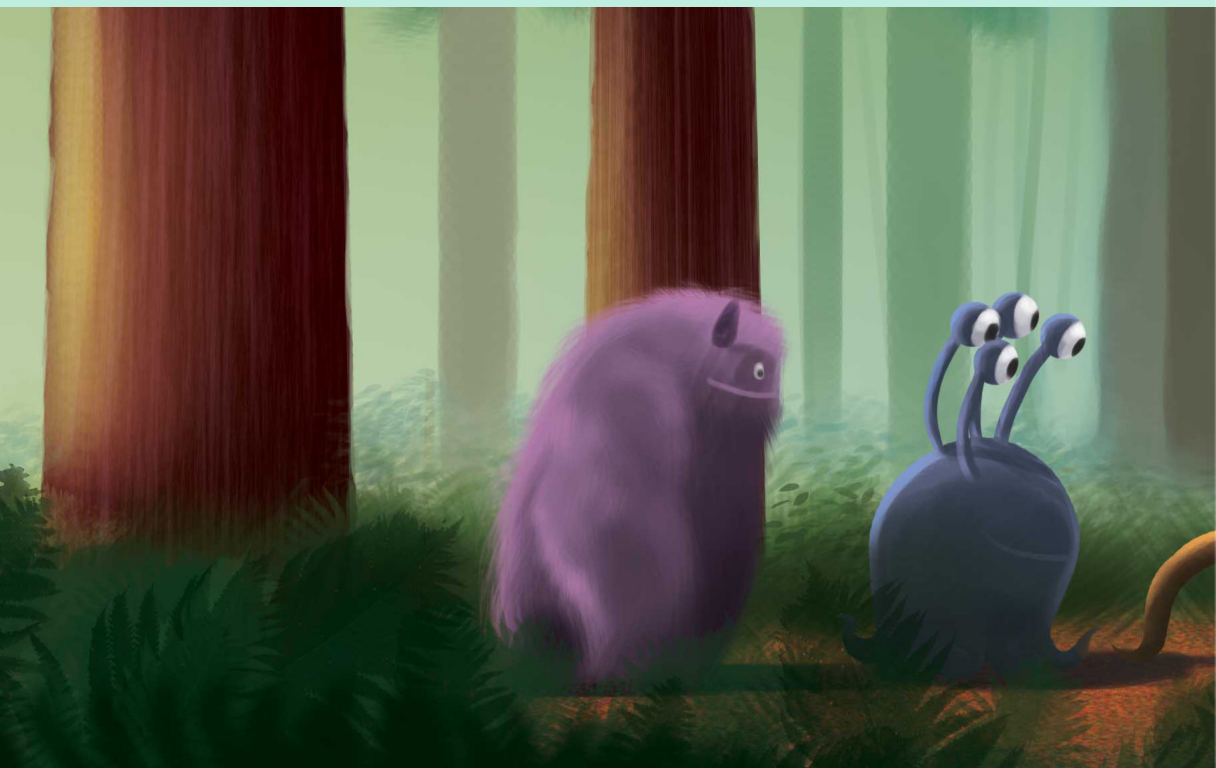
REDUCE
REUSE
RECYCLE



The image shows a vertical section of a wooden wall on the left side. A dark green chalkboard is mounted on the wall, with a white checkmark drawn on it. The rest of the image is a white background with blue text.

The next morning, before everyone else was awake, Vicki used the chalkboard on the wall of the cabin (it was reusable and she didn't want to waste paper) to come up with a list of ideas for making Camp Beaubien greener.....and when all of the campers woke up, she sat them all down in front of the chalkboard to discuss why it is important to reduce, reuse and recycle no matter where you are so we can leave a cleaner, healthier Earth for all future generations – and then started assigning tasks among them. James, Alexia and Kyle would all build boxes for recycling, Allyssa, Trevor and Michelle would go down to the dock and encourage people not to use the powerboat but rather to go canoeing and swimming, and their counsellors, Tara and Anthony, would ride their bicycles into town and use their tuck money to buy each of them a plate, a cup and a knife and fork so that no-one in their cabin would use paper plates and Styrofoam glasses as long as they were at camp.

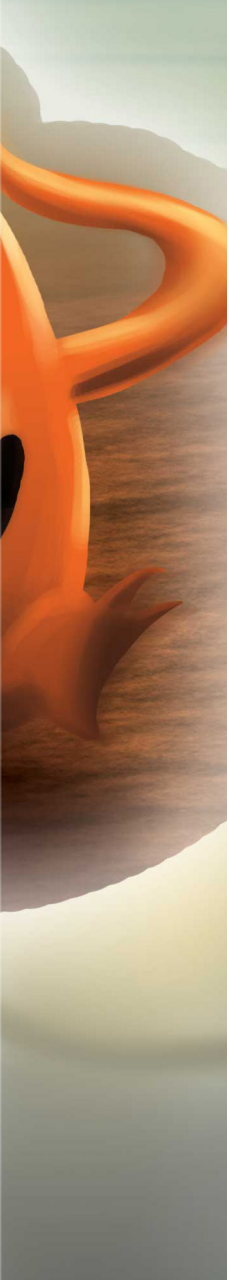
Vicki also organized a shower and laundry schedule so that the campers in her cabin would use as little water as possible during their time at Camp Beaubien, swimming instead of showering and sharing laundry loads whenever they could – always using biodegradable soaps.



Finally, Vicki, Lucie and their new friends, marched up to the main dining room for breakfast but not before they went to discuss with M. and Mme Beaubien a compost pail, a slop pail for the camp mascot, Petunia Pig – the camp pet NOT for eating! - and making home baked goodies for the tuck shop rather than selling store bought candies with too much sugar and packaging.







After Vicki, Lucie and their little Green Troop (as they had named themselves) explained what they wanted to do, M. and Mme Beaubien got as excited as they were and told them they wanted the whole camp to go green, not just the Green Troop's cabin.....there was just one tiny little snag: Petunia Pig was quite ferocious and the Beaubiens didn't know how she would respond to having slop mixed in with her grain every day – she had been known to chase campers all the way back to their cabins snorting and woofing when they tried to feed her! Vicki nodded thoughtfully and said that she would take the first slop pail to Petunia after dinner that night to see how it would be received by the grouchy pig.

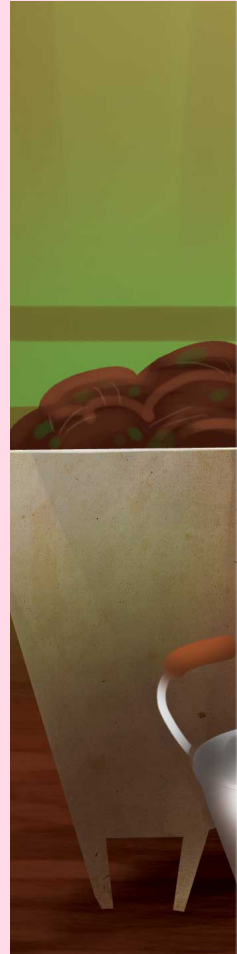
And so after breakfast, the Beaubiens explained to all of the campers the plan to make Camp Beaubien green and then Vicki, Lucie and the Green Troop showed them how to separate their recycling from their meals as well as what to put into Petunia's slop pail and what should go in the compost pail after every meal. In no time, the whole camp was excited about their greening activities as well as what they could teach their families at home after their holidays were over.

The star-bright, sizzling day at Camp Beaubien passed with some of the campers baking treats for the tuck shop, and others finding new ways to use the mooring ropes for the power boats as water swings, some campers decided to plant a vegetable garden and still others were making macaroni art to take home to their families.





Finally, after dinner and just before dusk, it was time for Vicki to take the slop pail into Petunia's pen and mix it with her grain food. Vicki struggled up the little hill with the slop pail almost as big as her, and slowly opened the gate to Petunia's pen. Petunia came charging at Vicki snorting and woofing but Vicki stood her ground and kept talking quietly to Petunia as she walked slowly over to the food trough and dumped the slop into it. Much to Vicki's surprise, Petunia immediately started eating and making contented snuffling sounds, and even leaned up against Vicki (Petunia was almost as big as Vicki!) and let Vicki scratch behind her ears! That's when Vicki realized that Petunia had been grouchy before because all she ever got was plain old grain and now that she was getting a little healthy variety in her food, she was happy!







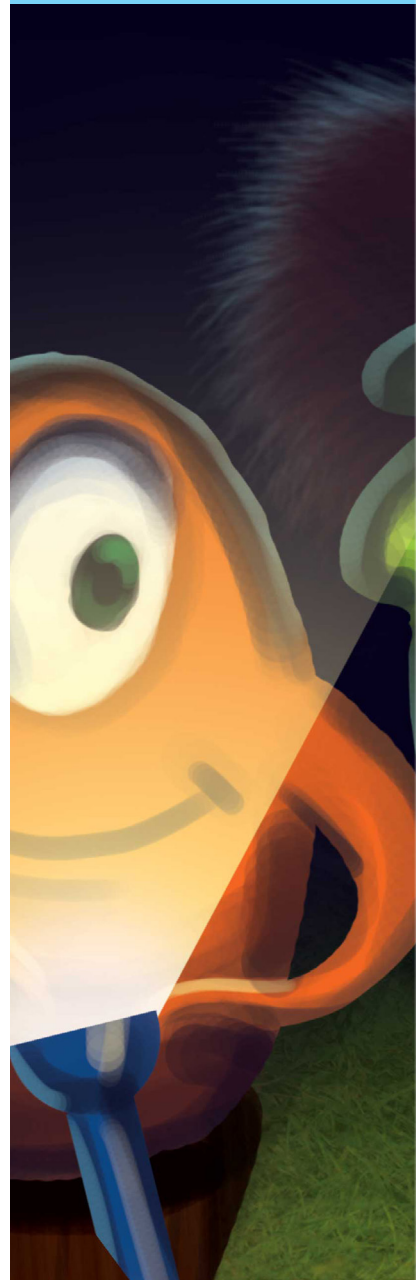


That month at Camp Beaubien passed quickly for Vicki and Lucie and their friends.

The night before they were all to return to Montreal a campfire had been planned – but the forests were very dry because it had been such a hot summer with no rain, so all of the campers decided instead to use their shaker flashlights (they had all bought them while they were at Camp Beaubien as part of their commitment to greening) and sit around telling stories of what they had learned during their time at camp. They all spoke about learning to reduce and reuse and recycle as well as the new friends they had made and the wonderful experiences in the forest.

Finally it was Vicki's turn to speak about what she had learned, and she smiled at everyone around the shimmering light circle and said: I learned that even a little person like me can make a difference!

And after that everyone started chattering and said that they had had a wonderful holiday and would do their part to make a difference back at their homes – and they did just that!





The end.



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