



RECYCLING ADVOCATES

Involving people in creating a sustainable future through local efforts to reduce, reuse, and recycle

OCTOBER 2010

WWW.RECYCLINGADVOCATES.ORG

Exciting New Program for Portland “Cartivores”

Katy Daily

If you are like me, you love the downtown Portland food cart scene but you can't help but cringe at the amount of single use packaging waste it generates. The food carts in downtown Portland generate roughly 60,000 disposable containers every month. Nearly all end up in the landfill – even the compostable ones. The environmental implications are huge – barrels of oil are used to create and ship the plastic and tons of non-biodegradable material is hauled hundreds of miles to a landfill. Even compostable and biodegradable containers break down when thrown away, creating methane gas, a greenhouse gas 20 times more potent than carbon dioxide, significantly contributing to global warming.

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**Don't miss RA's
Annual Meeting at
Lucky Lab—Oct 18!
Details page 2**

RECYCLING ADVOCATES ANNUAL MEETING

See you at the Lucky Lab. . .

October 18, 7 pm at the Lucky Lab on Hawthorne is the location of the annual meeting of Recycling Advocates. EnviroMedia is going to present advertisements that will explain the Greenwashing Index. The Index is a promotion from EnviroMedia and the University of Oregon. The Greenwashing Index has three goals: 1. Help consumers be more savvy about evaluating marketing claims of advertisers; 2. Hold businesses accountable to their environmental marketing claims; 3. Stimulate the market and demand for sustainable business practices that truly reduce the impact on the environment.

The Oregonian has just this week implemented a local PolitiFact check.com. This is where the staff checks on the validity of political comments made by local politicians and gives one of five verifications. The Greenwashing Index goes beyond this political check, and tries to stimulate the market for the truly sustainable practices.

Come to hear EnviroMedia's entertaining presentation of advertisements and the critique of those ads. You will come away a smarter person when evaluating the media and how you are to be made to buy products and ideas.

See you at the Lucky Lab on October 18, 7 pm. Election of officers will occur, so showing up by 6:45 will allow the program to get started by 7.



Please attend RA's annual meeting and help show your support for our leading role in recycling and sustainability in the Northwest.

**Recycling Advocates
Annual Membership Meeting
Monday, October 18th, 2010, 7-9pm
Lucky Labrador Brew Pub
915 SE Hawthorne Blvd, Portland
503-236-3555
www.luckylab.com**

FROM THE BOARD

Can you see through this plastic bag?

Part 2

Last month I reported on a survey sponsored and implemented by the American Chemistry Council in Brownsville, Texas. This month, ACC is again my subject. The Oregonian printed a syndicated article on the Council's paid study on reusable bags and the bacteria found in them.

The bottom line is that we don't clean our bags often enough to keep various kinds of cooties from growing in them. But that doesn't seem to hurt us. Having some benign bacteria in a bag with cans of green beans, bags of potato chips and apples has no impact on our health and well-being. However, the headlines tell us that they found strains of e. coli in our bags. The science used to determine this information did not go far enough to define the type of e. coli. Some of that bacteria is quite harmful to humans while other strains are not.

I need to remind readers that the ACC is the organization that spent \$1.4M in Seattle to defeat their plastic bag ban. Now they are fueling the fear system so we will doubt the decision to reuse bags.

Some of the media outlets that reported the results of this study, such as NPR, also mentioned that the American Chemistry Council represents companies that make the material for reusable bags. But disposable products apparently generate considerably more income for their member companies than durable goods, as we would expect. So targeting durable bags as a harmful product will ultimately help their bottom line.

Here is one quick reality check on this topic: we wash our fruits and vegetables prior to eating and that removes any contaminant that could have been picked up in the field or during transportation or storage. The remainder of our consumables are packaged, for the most part.

So please grab those reusable bags anytime you are going to the grocery, hardware, drug, department, clothing or shoe store. And let's remember to pay attention to the source of our information, the sponsor of our show, and the ax they have to grind.

Betty Patton



Vote for the Recycling Advocates 2010-2011 Board of Directors at this year's Annual Meeting

The Recycling Advocates Annual Meeting is our membership's opportunity to participate along with the Board of Directors and other active members regarding RA's plans and policy for the future. It is also your chance to elect the 2010-2011 Board of Directors. You can select from the candidates below or nominate someone from the floor.

BE THERE OCTOBER 18, 2010—7-9 PM
The Lucky Labrador Brew Pub

Please see Annual Meeting details on page 2.

Board Candidates . . .

- **Elizabeth Goodman**

Elizabeth (Betsy) Goodman is a paralegal in litigation at Tonkon Torp LLP with substantial environmental credentials: A founding member of the Tonkon Torp Sustainability Committee, member of the Oregon Lawyers for a Sustainable Future, a Master Recycler and a one-time Eco-team Coach. Elizabeth is currently the Vice Chair of the board of SCRAP.

Elizabeth believes that joining the Recycling Advocates board would be a wonderful opportunity to contribute to an organization that is one of the most effective and respected in Oregon. RA has an impressive history of leadership in raising awareness of the impact of consumption and effecting genuine change toward a more sustainable society, through efforts as diverse as the low-key, comfortable home Eco-Parties program and the heavy-hitting, challenging legislative work and battles. Collaborating with RA's dedicated team of board, staff and other stakeholders to achieve its mission and goals would be great inspiration to focus my experience and gain new capabilities in protecting the environment through existing and new programs and efforts.

- **Rhett Lawrence** incumbent

Rhett Lawrence is a Policy Analyst with Save Our Wild Salmon and has been a member of Recycling Advocates' Board of Directors since 2004. He became involved in recycling in the late 80's in trying to expand his college's recycling program beyond just newspapers and aluminum cans. Rhett practiced law in Georgia for 7 years before moving to Oregon in 2000 to become a full-time environmental advocate. After 5 1/2 years doing policy work and lobbying in the Oregon Legislature for OSPIRG, he took his current position with Save Our Wild Salmon in 2006. Rhett was a Co-President of Recycling Advocates from 2007-2009 and now serves as the Board's Vice-President

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Vote!

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Board Candidates . . . *continued*

- **Betty Patton** *incumbent*

Betty became a member of RA one month after moving to the Portland Metro area in 1992. It wasn't long before she was recruited to be on the board, head up a campaign (Bottoms Up, Threes Down anti-pvc program), and then become Chair of the Board. She has been engaged in this organization from the moment she joined.

Her 18 year old consulting firm focuses on recycling issues, as well. She manages one of the plans authorized to implement the Oregon eCycles Program. She also is resource consultant for the Oregon Chapter of the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA). Her math degree gives her the foundation for a lot of the solid waste analyses that she performs.

Betty's volunteer hours have also been spent expanding Oregon's Bottle Bill. This subject and the single use bag campaign have engaged her passions and given her an outlet for her volunteer energies.

- **Rick Paul** *incumbent*

Rick's family recycled everything and as an adult it was just natural to continue that practice. As a teacher Rick recycled cardboard and helped with the BRING recycling center. Professionally he started by helping a friend turning it into a full time position in recycling. Presently Rick works for Far West Fibers as a Project Manager. His primary project is E-scrap. He believes the most important issue of Sustainability is Global Warming. There are so many issues revolving around this important issue that relate to our occupation of this globe.

Cartivores

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What is a cartivore like me to do? For years now I've been able to assuage my own guilt by bringing my own container, something you see more and more frequently at the downtown carts. The problem is that federal laws actually prohibit food vendors from serving food in a customer's personal container – so both the carts and I have unwittingly (or not so unwittingly) been carrying out acts of civil disobedience in order to save the planet.

The exciting news is that my law-breaking days are over because for the past three weeks I have been piloting an innovative new program called GO Box – Doing Away with Throwing Away! (www.goboxpdx.com) The concept behind GO Box is simple but brilliant – it provides reusable to-go containers to Portland downtown Food Carts and their customers. With GO Box, food cart customers get their meal handed to them in snazzy BPA-free, dishwasher-safe, #5 plastic containers that will be recycled at the end of their life. Once you are done with the container, you just return it to a convenient drop box and you receive a token that can be used the next time you visit a participating cart. The used containers are taken each night by bicycle to a commercial dishwasher to be washed and sanitized and returned the next day to the food carts. For the price of a single reusable container (\$8.50) I get an unlimited use of GO Box containers – and I no longer have to do the dishes. Additionally, the cost to vendors is actually less than the cost of providing the single-use container.

GO Box is the brainchild of Laura Weiss, who many of you may know from her years as the Program Director at Oregon Environmental Council. GO Box will be officially launching in the next few weeks. At this time the program is limited to three carts at the SW 5th and Stark cart area, but Laura hopes to expand to more carts and more downtown locations very soon. Sign up at www.goboxpdx.com/cartivores if you are interested in becoming a GO Box subscriber or www.goboxpdx.com/vendors if you would like your food cart to become a GO Box vendor.

Now we can enjoy all the pleasures the food carts have to offer with none of the guilt!



MEMBER OF EARTHSHARE OREGON

Contribute to EarthShare at your workplace: it's so easy

As fall begins, we all think back on the beautiful places we had the chance to enjoy during the summer season – the beaches, high desert, crystal-clear rivers and craggy mountains. And now as the sunny months leave us, we can do more than just enjoy the environment.

We can do something to protect the treasures of this state for future generations.

Recycling Advocates is a proud member of EarthShare Oregon. What does this mean to you? You and your fellow employees can choose to have contributions sent automatically to your favorite Oregon conservation groups, including Recycling Advocates. Since your contribution is spread out over the course of a year, the amount deducted from your paycheck is minimal, and all gifts are tax-deductible.

If your workplace is not currently involved in an EarthShare giving campaign, establishing one is easy. EarthShare will work with your employer to set up a program that meets your company's needs.

Oregon's natural beauty and livability is legendary. With your contribution to EarthShare, you can share in the responsibility for protecting these gifts. For more information, please contact Meghan Humphreys at EarthShare: 503-223-9015 or meghan@earthshare-oregon.org; or visit www.earthshare-oregon.org.



ADVOCACY CALENDAR

Portland GoGreen '10, Portland October 5

This event features over 50 speakers who are cutting edge visionaries, sustainability experts, and forward thinking individuals that will provide you with the knowledge and tools needed to make your business more sustainable.

www.portland.gogreenconference.net

Recycling Advocates Annual Membership Meeting October 18, 7-9 pm

See Annual Meeting details on page 2.



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www.recyclingadvocates.org • info@recyclingadvocates.org

P.O. Box 6736
Portland
Oregon, 97228
503-777-0909

Become a member now. . .



- \$25 Advocate \$50 Friend \$100 Supporter \$250 Sustainer
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- Contact me about volunteering for RA Don't sign me up for Action Alerts

Please enclose a check and mail to: PO Box 6736, Portland OR 97228-6736 or visit www.RecyclingAdvocates.org/join.htm and pay by credit card or PayPal.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone, Day _____ Evening _____

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*Your name, if this is a gift membership _____

Your membership contribution to RA is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law