



RECYCLING ADVOCATES

MARCH 2011

WWW.RECYCLINGADVOCATES.ORG

We Bagged It!

Betty Patton

Recycling Advocates teamed with other supporting organizations to host a week-long showing of the film *Bag It* at the Hollywood Theater. This Michael-Moore style documentary, whose story started with plastic bags and expanded into the plastics industry in general, reached a large audience during that week. RA was the official host on Tuesday evening, March 8th. We filled the theater with 75 people that night! Thank you to those who came and to those who spread the word. This event helped our organization earn money to support the plastic bag ban being considered in the Oregon Legislature. However, the best result of this event was to inform and inspire our members and neighbors towards reducing unnecessary plastic consumption.

We would also like to thank Felicita Monteblanco and Rachel Zarfes, two volunteers that helped us prepare and staff the RA table on opening night, March 4th. Thank you both for your contribution of time and intelligence and for engaging the attendees in the conversation of a plastic bag free state.

If you have not seen the movie, there may be another opportunity as there may be a second run in April. Pay attention to our website and the Hollywood Theater marquee and listings.

My idea of a movie review does not tell you the ending; I want to give you an idea of what it covers and either encourage you to see it, or be glad you missed it. Hopefully, this will encourage! The creation of the movie was inspired by the ubiquitous plastic bag; its abundance and its impacts. But that product cannot be analyzed in isolation. The story teller led us to view all of our plastic products, their creation, use, disposal, and environmental impact. We were given enough science to understand the material and were given enough information to make our own decisions. Hopefully, this movie will leave you questioning your definition or the definition you have been given of "convenience".

Thank you again to those who attended. Now call or write your state Representatives and Senators to encourage the passage of SB 536. This legislation is a promising step towards cleaning up our state and coastline.



SPEAK UP: It's your turn to have a say. Join RA for OCN's Lobby Day

On April 7th, RA Board members and volunteers are headed to Salem for OCN's Lobby Day—come help us pack the Bottle Bill hearing and meet your elected officials!

Recycling Advocates is proud to be a member of the Oregon Conservation Network (OCN), a fifty-group coalition that works to pass pro-environment laws in the Legislature. Each year OCN hosts a free Lobby Day, to train citizens in activism and to remind the Legislature that we are a force to be reckoned with.

OCN will have presentations on important environmental bills that are being considered, followed by lessons and tips on making your points with your own representatives. Then we will put that newly gained information to use as we meet with our House and Senate members to encourage their support.

This year Lobby Day happens to fall on the day of a key hearing before the Energy, Environment and Water Committee on one of RA's two top legislative priorities: expanding Oregon's landmark Bottle Bill (*see article on next page*). Come pack the room and watch the RA Board in action, as we testify and lobby for improvements.

This is a free event.

>> Johnny Leuthold



Attendees need to RSVP

Do so by going to the News & Events page of www.OLCV.org or by calling **Meredith Shield** at **503-224-4011**. Car-pooling opportunities are available—just ask!

Thursday, April 7th, 2011 9:00am-4:00pm

Meet At the Mission Mill Museum at the Dye House, located at Willamette University 1313 Mill Street SE Salem, OR

Bottle Bill Modernization Act Hearing Next Thursday

Next Thursday, April 7th at 3pm, the House Energy, Environment and Water Committee will hold the first hearing on House Bill 3145, the modernization of Oregon's Bottle Bill. April 7th is also the day of the Oregon Conservation Network's Environmental Lobby Day in Salem so we are hoping that a number of Recycling Advocates' members can come to Lobby Day and also pack the hearing room with bottle bill supporters.

HB 3145, sponsored by the bi-partisan team of Representatives Vicki Berger and Ben Cannon, is still undergoing intense negotiations and we are expecting significant changes between now and the hearing.

At this point, HB 3145 has four main parts:

1. It expands the types of containers that are covered by the bottle bill to include sports drinks, energy drinks, coffee, tea, juice and similar non-carbonated drinks in 2014 (although we expect this date to be pushed back to a later date).
2. It includes the language from HB 3704 (from the 2010 special session) that defines and codifies "distributor cooperatives" and requires them to report annually to OLCC.
3. It increases the deposit to ten cents in 2015 (again, we expect changes to this section of the bill).
4. It redefines the land use designation for redemption centers from heavy industrial to commercial use to make them easier to site in convenient locations.

We also expect an amendment to be introduced that includes a section that allows for an additional redemption center "pilot project."

Recycling Advocates has been advocating tirelessly for bottle bill modernization for years, and we are very encouraged that HB 3145 includes the expansion of the types of covered containers and the increase of the deposit to ten cents, but until the final bill and amendments have been printed we are cautiously optimistic that we will support the final bill.

We are encouraging all members who support expansion of Oregon's Bottle Bill and who would like to attend and possibly testify at the hearing on April 7th to contact Katy Daily at katydaily1@gmail.com, to be kept up to date on the latest details and talking points prior to Thursday's hearing. We also will be providing talking points for those who cannot attend and who want to send a letter to the committee. So stay tuned for information in the week to come.

>> **Katy Daily**

A funny little experiment

Life without any new plastic? Really? In this day and age? In this country? Well, Recycling Advocates member **Rick Craycraft** and his partner **Jan Underwood** decided to try this experiment for a full year. This is a couple with a modern life in a city, not living in a cave.

They did not approach it lightly; prior to implementation they created guidelines or parameters for this lifestyle change. And Jan has created a blog about it to “*write about the practical challenges, inspirations, frustrations, workarounds and insights we have as we try to navigate daily life without modern life's most ubiquitous synthetic polymers.*”

Some quotes from her blog:

We are finding daily life not much changed. We are not inconvenienced by our new regimen. However clear our dependence is, it's also obvious to us that our society goes through much, much, much more plastic than is necessary and it's this wantonness that bothers us.

We're pretty good at avoiding the plastics we know about. But plastics are everywhere, and sometimes they sneak into our lives without our being aware of them. The straw that comes with the drink you order. The tiny spout under the metal lid on a glass jar of olive oil.



And my favorite:

They multiply in the night of their own accord. Plastic bags need to be spayed and neutered.

This lifestyle changed was implemented in their household beginning September 15, 2010. You are invited to follow their stories at Funnylittleexperiment.blogspot.com.

We will hear more from Rick and Jan's blog in future newsletters.

MEMBER OF EARTH SHARE OREGON

Expanding our reach through EarthShare's new website



Recycling Advocates is a member of EarthShare Oregon. EarthShare Oregon is Oregon's only nonprofit federation connecting Oregon businesses and their employees with environmental nonprofits. It partners with 100+ businesses statewide to offer the convenience of workplace giving and connections to nature and sustainability resources. EarthShare Oregon has raised more than \$11 million for its list of 70 Oregon and national conservation nonprofits over 21 years of operation.

EarthShare Oregon's new website at earthshare-oregon.org offers useful information for a variety of visitors. If you are a Recycling Advocates member, you'll want to see more about how we and other members of EarthShare invest your contributions. If you want to get outdoors or attend an event, you can visit the site to see upcoming activities and events happening at Recycling Advocates in the environmental community. Is it about time to volunteer? EarthShare includes volunteer opportunities with its 30+ member groups all over the State of Oregon.

Do you just want to make a donation? You can do that at the ESOR website too. Or read about how to lead a giving campaign at your place of work and get it started. The ESOR website has all kinds of helpful tools for workplace giving campaign managers and enthusiastic employees.

Need to catch up on environmental news? Get up-to-date news about environmental issues, subscribe to EarthShare's electronic newsletter or just peruse the list of conservation groups and see all of the amazing work they are doing to keep people healthy, preserve places for wildlife and reduce global warming. Go to www.earthshare-oregon.org.

SAVE THE DATE

Burgerville Percent Day - April 20, 2011



For every purchase at Burgerville's 39 Oregon and Southwest Washington locations on April 20, Burgerville will make a donation to EarthShare.

FROM THE BOARD

My Answer to Plastic Bags

For years retail customers have received purchased goods in plastic bags. On occasion, we have been given a choice of paper or plastic. But now it comes down to making a real decision. I say no to plastic bags. We don't need them. Judging from the negative impact that they make on our environment, it is easy to just say no.

If these lightweight single use bags were collected curbside for recycling, they would be scattered throughout the neighborhood with just a slight puff of wind. Once they arrive at a regional sorting facility, they will block the sorting machines just as they currently do, even though these materials are not supposed to be in the collected mix.

Film plastic that is collected from a residential generator is often sent overseas for further cleaning, sorting and processing. Because of the variety of resin mixes in plastic bags, the coloring, the printing, and the contamination, this process results in a low diversion rate.

Often the American Chemistry Council as well as resin recyclers will advertise the high value of film plastic. I agree that there is a type of this category that does have high value; the clean, clear film that is used for shrink wrap from commercial generators. That material can be recycled over and over again because it is clean and source separated.

My original point about banning these bags is based on the fact that I don't need them. I do not individually wrap my garbage, so they are not needed as can liners. I can collect pet waste in paper. I have a nice collection of reusable shopping bags (some that are 20 years old) that I take with me for every retail transaction.

There are lots of great uses for plastics; creating single use shopping bags is not one of them.

Please encourage your legislator to support SB 536. We don't need more garbage in Oregon.

Betty Patton



ADVOCACY CALENDAR

Lobby Day, Salem April 7, 9am –4pm

Join RA Board members and meet your representatives at the OCN sponsored Lobby Day event. Free but RSVP required (www.OLCV.org). See details on page 2.

Bottle Bill Modernization Act Hearing, Salem April 7, 3pm

House Energy, Environment and Water Committee will hold the first hearing on House Bill 3145, the modernization of Oregon’s Bottle Bill. See details on page 3

SWANA 2011 Northwest Symposium, Everett, WA April 13-15

The symposium offers a lineup of technical sessions, classes in topics of interest to solid waste managers and recyclers, and tours of nearby solid waste management facilities. www.swananw.org/nwsymposium.html

Recycling Advocates Board Meeting April 25, 7-9 pm

Call 503-777-0909 for details.



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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.

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

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