



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

Master Recyclers promote green practices at home and at work

By Catha Loomis

Reprinted from the Hollywood Star News with permission from the author; an active Master Recycler and RA member

When Master Recyclers talk trash, it's a good thing! A cadre of volunteers who, through outreach and education projects, promote Earth-friendly living, the program's 730 members hail from all over the Metro region, and as far south as Klamath Falls. A number of them reside in Northeast Portland.

Most visible, perhaps, as organizers of the popular Plastics Round-ups, offered three times yearly in the Portland metro area, many Master Recyclers have also distinguished themselves individually as driving forces for "green" practices in their neighborhoods and workplaces.

Cyd Cannizzaro was delighted when offered a position as Assistant Manager of the deli at New Seasons' Arbor Lodge store. The company takes its environmental citizenship seriously. But Cannizzaro, a West Cully homeowner, Master Recycler, Recycling Advocates member and graduate of PSU's Sustainability Certificate program, "was immediately struck by how much better recycling could be done" behind the deli counter.

She approached company executives with a plan to improve the situation. They were gracious but busy, says Cannizzaro, so "I just decided to just take it on myself." With her store manager's blessing, she worked with the market's garbage hauler and business specialists from Portland's Office of Sustainable Development (OSD) to create what one expert hailed as "one of the most creative grocery store waste reduction programs" in the city.

The deli's single compost bin was supplanted by a bucket at each work station, encouraging employees to compost more food materials, instead of simply dumping them into nearby waste baskets. Large waste cans gave way to smaller ones, another move to tip the balance in favor of recycling.

Cannizzaro went on to chair a "Green Team" for her store, involving co-workers in her quest to improve recycling practices throughout the store. Eventually, she even trained a corporate assistant manager, who was assigned to review sustainability practices company-wide.

"I've never worked with a more talented, enthusiastic and committed group of volunteers," says J Lauren Norris, Master Recycler Program Coordinator of her corps of volunteers. According to Norris, Master Recyclers have contributed more than 12,000 hours organizing neighborhood cleanups, staffing informational tables at community events, and recruiting workplace green teams in the process of educating thousands of people about sustainable practices.

Many, like Craig Clark, also serve as mentors to the 90 yearly graduates of the program's eight-week training class. Clark's expansive back yard, tucked between 82nd Avenue and Rocky Butte, is the laboratory for this Master Recycler's passion: compost. Healthy and prolific without chemicals, Clark's vegetables and flowers flourish under his care.

From kitchen scraps to yard debris to chicken manure, Clark recycles them all. He totes a plastic crate crawling with red wigglers to classes for new Master Recyclers, describing how the worms digest kitchen scraps to produce a rich, dark product called worm castings, which can be applied directly to soil or immersed in water to produce "compost tea" for garden enhancement.

Even Clark's three colorful chickens do their part, providing the manure that he composts between layers of straw. The feathered farmers also lend a "hand" in the wire bin of composting yard debris. "They're the turners of the pile," he says. "If you want [the compost] to cook down, you have to aerate it," which the chickens accomplish as they scratch for seeds and insects in the brush pile.

"Craig offers a great deal of enthusiasm to every project he takes on," says Lauren Norris, calling Clark "a wonderful mentor to new Master Recyclers."

Grant Park's Mary Leverette describes herself as "rabid" and "passionate" about recycling. She calls the Master



MASTER
RECYCLER
PROGRAM

AOR Fall Forum: A Full Day On Plastics

Do you know what plastic resin #3 is? How about #4? Luckily, we did not have to know that prior to the forum last month. But by the end of the day, we not only knew what resins were in our products and packaging, but we knew how they were being collected and recycled, and we learned about new ones being introduced into the market. (By the way, #3 is polyvinyl chloride, or PVC, and #4 is low density polyethylene, or LDPE.)

On October 3, 2007, the Association of Oregon Recyclers held a forum on plastics sponsored by American Chemistry Council. One hundred people gathered at Lane Community College in Eugene to hear local, regional, and national speakers on collection techniques, recycling markets, and processing opportunities for this commodity.

The opening presentation set the stage: are we meeting our minimum recycling rate of 25% for rigid plastic containers? Earlier reports had been released that said 2005's numbers were below that. For Oregon, that meant that additional efforts by packaging and product manufacturers must kick in. But new calculations were released. It turns out that the actual rate squeaked by. And the future looks brighter. More plastics recycling programs are expanding in 2007 and less contamination is happening, resulting in a cleaner stream and more efficient diversion. Jurisdictions throughout the state are moving towards roll cart collection for recyclables, and expanding the acceptable materials. Our projected recycling rate for rigid plastic containers for both 2006 and 2007 exceeds 27%. In other words, only 73% of our plastic tubs and clamshells are going to the landfill.

Rigid plastic isn't the only commodity getting a single life before it is dumped. Oregonians are landfilling over 96,000 tons of film plastic annually. These are the numbers that were the motivation for this full day forum.

Oregonians are generating and collecting plastics. Once they are scooped up curbside, they go to material recovery facilities (MRFs). But some of our MRFs have a contamination level both incoming and outgoing, that reduces the quality of the sorted commodities. These issues are being addressed. EPA has initiated a discussion among stakeholders to talk about MRF standards. So stay tuned.

Speakers at AOR's forum talked about the development of markets for recyclable plastics on our own shores as well as the burgeoning markets in Asia. Since so much manufacturing is done in China, that country is hungry for raw materials. But the pricing to deliver it is chaotic. Backhauling agreements to Hong Kong are very affordable, but the cost of the last leg of the trip are ever-changing. Regional markets are expanding, which is good news. Trex is getting more clean film plastic for processing into their lumber replacement. Other

commercial and industrial plastics are separated and pelletized or flaked here locally and sold to manufacturers for reprocessing. And high tech optical sorting is utilized in the plastics recycling industry, also.

Patty Moore of Moore Recycling Associates put together this panel of experts for the seminar. They represent some of the most knowledgeable people in the industry. The full agenda, list of speakers, and most of their PowerPoint presentations are available at AOR's website, www.aORr.org.

- Betty Patton

Master Recyclers

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Recycler Program a "natural extension" of the conservation ethic modeled by her Depression-bred parents. "I remember [saving] paper and twine," she says. "It was part of the fabric of being."

Leverette, who "loves to organize," has coordinated two Plastics Roundups. But she looked no farther than her own neighborhood to find an ongoing niche for her recycling zeal. One Saturday a month, neighbors on her 18-house block bring plastic items that can't be recycled curbside, distributing them along a tidy row of labeled bins. Leverette dispenses wisdom and literature about recycling, then piles the goods into her station wagon and deposits them at Far West Fibers, one of several materials recycling facilities in the Metro Region.

Founded in 1991, the Master Recycler Program owes its existence to the efforts of environmental icon Jeanne Roy. Then-chair of the Portland-based nonprofit Recycling Advocates, Roy convinced the group's leaders to emulate King County, Washington Master Recyclers by creating a local program. The idea caught on well, leading to grant funding and eventual multi-agency sponsorship.

Jointly supported by Metro, the City of Portland, Washington and Clackamas Counties, Oregon DEQ and Recycling Advocates, the Master Recycler Program offers three yearly training classes, which rotate between Portland and Clackamas and Washington Counties. Master Recyclers complete 30 hours of training and must contribute an additional 30 hours of volunteer service in order to become certified.

Information about the Master Recycler Program, including upcoming training classes and Plastics Roundups, is available online at www.masterrecycler.org, or by calling J Lauren Norris at 503-823-7530.



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Portland's Polystyrene Container Ban - *The person to call*

As of January 1, 1990, restaurants, grocery stores and other retail vendors have been prohibited from using polystyrene foam containers for prepared food. The ban also applies to vendors who renew a lease or initially lease city space and activities that require a city permit (including for use of parks).



If you see a violation of this ban or have questions about compliance then the person in City Government to contact would be Portland, OSD's Laura Haggi. You can contact her at 503-823-6111 or LHaggi@ci.portland.or.us

The complete rules are outlined on Portland OSD's web site at <http://www.portlandonline.com/osd/index.cfm?a=109474&c=41472>.

Junk to Funk "trashion" Show

Don't forget Portland's favorite "trashion show" - *Junk to Funk Recycled Fashion Show* contest:

- Saturday November 17th
- WonderBallroom: 128 NE Russell St.
- Doors open at 7:30, show starts at 8:30
- \$16 in advance/\$20 at the door/\$65 VIP
- VIP Pre-Show Reception held at the Wooley Gallery below the venue from 6:30-8:00
- Hosted by Commissioner Sam Adams and special guest from the Oregon DEQ
- Musical Performances by The Golden Greats and DJ Anjali and the Incredible Kid
- Half time performance by Do Jump Theater Company
- DIY Accessory table provided by SCRAP
- Audience Costumes Encouraged

Junk to Funk is produced by Elysium Events and is in collaboration and benefiting Orlo. For more information and to purchase tickets visit www.junktofunk.org

Recycling efforts for two local outdoor events

No one has ever claimed that Portland has a shortage of festive and entertaining summertime events. Food, drinks, sport, competition, community, and socializing are some of the wonderful aspects of the wide range of events in Portland. Unfortunately what follows with many outdoor festivals and events is huge amounts of trash! Two events hosted annually at the Tom McCall Waterfront Park are making big strides in making sure that their event environmental impacts are kept at a minimum.

Race for the Cure

As a health related event, the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure has, over the past few years, put fourth a tremendous effort in reducing its environmental impact at this annual fundraising event.

Over 48,000 people came down to the Waterfront Park on September 23rd, 2007, to raise significant funds and awareness for the fight against breast cancer.

Unfortunately, as noted above, the nature of many of these outdoor events is that they also generate a lot of waste. However, the good news is that this event produces a terrific force of volunteers called the 'environmental team' to help properly dispose of much of this waste. Through strategic placement and monitoring of the waste, recycling, and composting stations, the tireless sorting and proper disposal of vendor waste, the Race for the Cure boasts a 77% diversion rate at this huge and successful event. Way to go!

Bite of Oregon

Another major fundraising event with major recycling efforts this year was the Bite of Oregon, the fundraiser for the Special Olympics of Oregon. This huge 3 day food and music festival draws more than 30 restaurants, 70 entertainment groups, and over 60,000 people! No wonder this event generated over 24 tons of waste this year.

Good news though! This year, the Bite of Oregon announced its goal to make this a 'Zero Waste' event. Through first time strategic placement and monitoring of waste and recycling containers and signage; implementation of a motivated and tireless volunteer green team; optional vendor composting; composting at the "Chef Stage"; and introduction of a separate plastic cup collection system, this event boasted an increased diversion rate of over 50% in 2007 – up from 22% in 2006. Nice job, Bite of Oregon!

- Lindsey Newkirk



RECYCLING ADVOCATES

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Recycling Advocacy Calendar for November 2007

◆ **America Recycles Day**

Thursday, November 15th, 2007

November 15 is the 10th annual day dedicated to encouraging Americans to recycle and to buy recycled products. For more about this National Recycling Coalition event, go to www.americarecyclesday.org.

◆ **Sustainability Using the Natural Step Framework**

Thursday, November 15th, 2007

One-day workshop introducing business, government, and community leaders to sustainability and The Natural Step framework. Presented by the Oregon Natural Step Network. \$175 - \$195. Registration at www.ortns.org/events.htm or 503-241-1140.

◆ **Junk to Funk fashion show**

Saturday, November 17th, 2007

See details page 3

Second annual high-stakes "trashion" show contest of recycled-content wearable art. Rules, ap-

plication, tickets available at www.junktofunk.org.

◆ **Recycling Advocates board meeting**

Monday, November 26th, 7:00 p.m.

For location and information call 503-777-0909



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