

green news

NEWSLETTER OF THE GREEN DECADE COALITION / NEWTON



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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2007

Mass Climate Action Network hires new executive director

The Massachusetts Climate Action Network (MCAN), of which the Green Decade is a member, has hired Rob Garrity as the new executive director. He will replace Marc Breslow who left to take a job as the Director of Transportation and Buildings Policy Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs in the Patrick administration. Rob has held numerous positions in State government and in energy policy, including a stint with the Department of Energy Resources (DOER), and work for the Conservation Law Foundation as the Legislative liaison.

Why is this development important to the Green Decade? The environmental movement in Massachusetts has long been fragmented, unable to pursue a legislative agenda on Beacon Hill in a coordinated fashion. Rob has been active in working on the Massachusetts Climate Coalition to pull together disparate groups around policy. A number of groups now feel that this is the time to work out differences and to push a strong, united legislative agenda. These include Clean Water Action, Mass PIRG, MCAN and others. Rob could help pull things together.

In addition, Rob has worked closely with the Kendall Foundation, which has supported his climate work. Kendall is behind what is perhaps the biggest effort around greenhouse gas reduction in the country. This effort has led

to a coalition of political leaders, banks, engineering firms, and utilities pursuing a common goal of cutting energy use in Massachusetts. Its first project was to found the Cambridge Energy Alliance, with \$100 million funding for low-cost or no-cost loans working through Cambridge City government. This program finances energy reduction in institutions, businesses, and residences. Loan repayment will be included as part of energy bills, and the energy savings to consumers are guaranteed by taking repayment out of actual savings. No savings, no repayment. Thus this program has a quality assurance component that earlier programs have lacked.

Boston has adopted a similar program, funded at \$500 million, and 4 other cities and towns have signed on. The aim is to spread this program model broadly to other cities and towns. MCAN has an interest in promoting this program and doing the grassroots outreach, and Newton could be a participant. Rob's familiarity with program structure and personnel may be helpful here.

Rob is also intensely interested in working with the 36 local groups that make up MCAN's membership. Up until now, Green Decade Coalition/Newton has been fairly peripheral to MCAN. I think that having Rob on board represents a big opportunity for Newton, which is MCAN's biggest member group, to take a more active interest in state policy and in the huge new programs for cutting greenhouse gas.

For further information on MCAN's new director, MCAN as an organization, or the energy savings programs which are now starting up, please contact me at FredGord@gmail.com or 617-964-9914. *by Fred Gordon, Kyoto Committee and Green Decade MCAN representative.*

Workshop on insulating your older home

Insulating your home properly is one of the fastest and most cost-effective ways to minimize your energy waste and maximize your energy dollars. And despite what you may have heard, it is possible to weatherize your older home without compromising its historical character. This workshop will include hands-on demonstration of various energy-saving tools, such as blower doors and infrared cameras.

We'll also take an objective look at the different products and techniques for increasing energy efficiency. Learn how you can stay warm this winter, save money, and reduce your ecological footprint at the same time.

The workshop will be held at The Jackson Homestead (527 Washington St., Newton); Paul Eldrenkamp, Instructor; Saturday, November 10, 1:00 - 4:00 PM; \$30; \$15 for Newton Historical Society members; proceeds benefit the Green Decade Coalition and the Newton Historical Society. Register at 617-965-1995 or www.greendecade.org/events.

by Margaret Ford



Calling all environmental writers

The monthly Environment section of the Newton TAB is seeking writers and photographers to cover a wide range of topics related to environmental science and policy, book and movie reviews, and local environmental stories. Contact the Environment Editor if you are interested in helping with this project sponsored by the Green Decade Coalition: loislevin@comcast.net, 617-527-1237.



Kyoto Project update

The Green Decade's Kyoto Project is gearing up for a full list of weatherization volunteers for October and November, with some spots available for January and beyond. We have applied for a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to partner with the city of Waltham and classify the homes of all Kyoto participants as "Pioneer Homes." Project personnel will also be conducting the annual November workshop on weatherizing older homes and are considering holding the February workshop in Waltham. We are

Our Mission

The Green Decade Coalition/Newton is conducting a campaign to make a significant improvement in resource use by businesses, institutions, and residences in Newton. We establish goals and seek to achieve measurable results in energy and water use, waste disposal practices, and pollution prevention through research, education, and action. Our goal is to make Newton a model of ecological and environmental integrity in a sustainable world community.

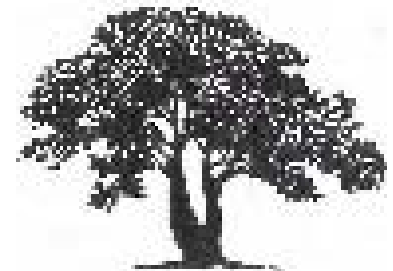
Faith & Environment Committee formed

The Green Decade Coalition/Newton has formed a Faith & Environment Committee (F&E) with the goal of helping to increase the involvement of the religious community in earth stewardship. History shows the faith community rising to leadership in the resolution of large scale problems such as the abolition of slavery, women's right to vote and the civil rights movement. Environmental sustainability and ecological protection is no different. Will YOU join us in this effort?

Our environment needs us and it needs us NOW. It needs our immediate attention and action. Scientists, engineers, architects, non-profit organizations, and concerned citizens all over the world have been stepping up their involvement to resolve our environmental crisis. However, with a few notable exceptions, the religious community has been dormant, but it is quickly rising to the call. Will YOU rise to the call?

As people of faith, we have the tools to create massive change and begin solving the environmental problem NOW. Find out why and how by joining our Faith & Environment team today. All faith traditions are welcome! For further info and meeting calendar, please call or email Cristina Cabrera, F&E Chair: 617-872-8275(cell)/ccabrera@jackconway.com

by Cristina Cabrera



JOIN THE GREEN DECADE

Enclosed is: New member Renewal

(\$20.00 suggested annual individual donation) (additional donation) TOTAL

NAME: _____ (For address labels)

ADDRESS: _____

ZIP _____ PHONE: _____

E-MAIL _____ (Please print clearly !)

Yes! I am joining/renewing for calendar 2007!

Most of our budget comes from memberships. Membership and contributor lists are not given out. You get the bi-monthly GREEN NEWS, discounts at selected local businesses, and more!

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Thank you! Please send your tax deductible check payable to: GDC/N, P.O. Box 590242, Newton, MA 02459 Nov/Dec 2007

Turf issues

The Green Decade Coalition/Newton (GDC/N) urges the Board of Aldermen to require a comprehensive assessment of the environmental impact for the proposed Newton South High School synthetic turf, prior to moving forward with any decision. The GDC/N understands that there are many factors (economics, usage, maintenance, etc.) that must be weighed in determining whether or not to install synthetic turf. However, we feel that the environmental factors have not been weighed adequately to make an informed decision.

Included in an environmental assessment, the City should perform a comprehensive environmental life cycle assessment of the synthetic turf against the best natural alternatives, which would be a grass field using organic fertilizers and the appropriate drainage system to mitigate runoff problems. This life cycle assessment would include the evaluation of installation impact, water use, fertilizers, maintenance, and replacement over a 50-year life period.

A geotechnical analysis must also be conducted. We understand this analysis is part of the proposal to build the Field Turf. The decision should be made separately from one related to synthetic turf, as it could have similar implications for natural turf.

Finally, since the fields ultimately drain into the Charles River, we need to include assessments from the Charles River Watershed Association (CRWA), allowing us to analyze the runoff implications. This assessment should investigate water runoff implications of the installation as well as the impacts of regular use.

We understand that there is an environmental cost to maintaining the natural fields or installing synthetic alternatives, and that there is great pressure to use and enjoy the public lands. However, the environmental factors will ultimately have direct impact on the health and safety of our children and the City, and we feel that it is imperative that we understand these implications before moving forward with the synthetic turf option.

This statement from GDC/N was sent to all members of the Board of Aldermen and published in the Newton TAB newspaper.

Thanks ! and . . next deadline

For the next newsletter, please send submissions or requests by email to Ira Krepchin, irapk@alum.mit.edu by Friday, Nov. 16, 2007.

Thanks for making this newsletter possible to Managing Editor Ira Krepchin, Co-editors Peter Smith/Louise Bruyn, and those who wrote articles. Many thanks to our Newsletter Collator Chairs Marcia Cooper and Frank Propp, with their team for the last issue: Marcia Cooper, Hope Dauwalter, Jacqui Gross, Nancy Lester, Edie and Frank Propp & Lisa Wilson.

Pesticide Q&A

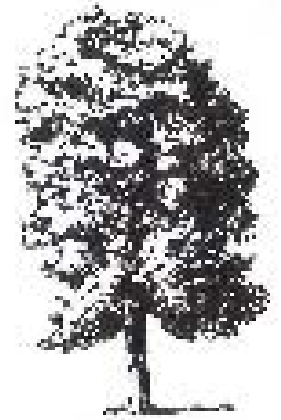
A couple of questions have been asked of the Green Decade and the answers may be of interest to all:

Q: Is the water in Crystal Lake tested for pesticides or herbicides?

A: Newton's Department of Health and Human Services tests Crystal Lake's water twice a week for the E. coli (*Escherichia coli*) bacteria. The water is not regularly tested for pesticides or herbicides.

Q: Are there laws protecting me from pesticide drift?

A: Pesticide drift is when a neighbor's pesticide application drifts over to your property. The short answer is no, unless you are running a school, pre-school, or child care on your property. Then you would fall under the Massachusetts Children's Protection Act which restricts and limits the application of pesticides within 150 feet of where children are expected to be. *by Lucia Dolan*



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Liz Cody was presented with the first prize — the sustainable transportation 2007 Raleigh Cruise Control Bicycle — in Green Decade’s Fundraising Raffle by President Ana Zarina Asuaje Solon

2007 Green Decade raffle winners

Thanks to all for supporting the Green Decade with your sale & purchase of raffle tickets! The winners were announced Saturday, September 15 at the showing of An Inconvenient Truth. The winners are:

- 2007 Raleigh Cruise Control Bicycle: *Liz Cody*
- \$300 Whole Foods Gift Certificate: *Carolyn Arond*
- One Month of Mowing from Clean Air Lawn Care: *Kevin Dutt*
- \$110 Direct Tire Gift Certificate: *Gary Gorczyca*
- \$50 Skipjack’s Gift Certificate: *Alderman Mitch Fischman*
- Organic Gardening Magazine: *Zoe Rubinstein*
- GDC’s Award-Winning Video “Newton Goes Green” DVD & 1-year GDC membership: *Jenny Roudebush*

CALENDAR

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Nov 3 (Sat) time TBD | “Step It Up 2007” Tell Congress to take action on Global Warming, Call 617 233-6071 for info |
| Nov 10 (Sat) 1-4pm | Workshop: Insulating Your Older Home Jackson Homestead, Register 617 965-1995 |
| Nov 19 (Sun) 8:30am-5:30pm | Global Warming Action Conference, MIT MassClimateAction.org - call 781.643.5911 |
| Dec 1 & 2 (Sat 10-noon) | ‘Urban Ark’ Seminar & Tour , \$20; GD members, seniors, students-\$15. Register |

Send environmental events to *GREEN NEWS*. email to Ira Krepchin by Friday, Nov. 16, 2007 irapk@alum.mit.edu. We will list as space permits.

“Universities Waste Not”

“The University of California has become the first U.S. university system to address the growing problem of waste from electronic devices.”



California’s 10-university system will only buy electronic products certified by EPEAT (Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool). EPEAT evaluates computers, laptops and monitors for harmful chemical content, ability to be recycled and product longevity. The new policy also requires producers to take back and either recycle or reuse computer components.

The university system has 200,000 students and buys 10,000 computers each month.” Signs of Life

- SMALL STORIES ABOUT BIG CHANGE ([YES! a journal of](#)

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Farmers' Market wraps up '07

“Watch his feet bunch up the cloth,” biologist Eric Olson pointed out. The feet belonged to a jewel-like caterpillar —Earl -- that turns into a delicately-hued red, black and white cecropia moth. He was crawling on Green Decade’s table covering at the Farmers’ Market at Cold Springs this summer.

Myriads of kids watched this remarkable feat. Earl complemented the bouquet of hot pink zinnias and the handouts featuring information on organic land care, energy issues, eco-teams, and upcoming events.

The kids also enthusiastically took turns pedaling the energy bike set to the side of the table. Quickly they found out how fast an energy-efficient light bulb lights up compared to an incandescent one. Others took turns too: Mayor David Cohen and ninety-one-year-old Leo Levi! Bowls of water nestled beside the table for any dogs that came along. And come, they did!

Huge quantities of multi-colored vegetables and fruit surrounded the kids and grown-ups. Purple bell peppers, luscious red, yellow, even green, tomatoes, fresh-picked dark-blue blueberries -- to name a few. Also one day the kids (and others) ogled and petted the silky-smooth coat of a charming kid goat that came to put on her annual “show.”

And of course the setting in Cold Spring Park added to the ambiance.

Perhaps all this (aided by the ice cream stand!) helped these kids appreciate the beauties and wonders of nature. And helped counter Nature Deficit Disorder which unfortunately has afflicted some kids and teens.

Thanks go to volunteers (who range from kids and teens to grandmothers): Karen Albert, Ana Zarina Asuaje Solon, Jean Bartholomew, Eliza Beth and Eileen Chodos Beth, Marcia Cooper, Lucia and Dorothea Dolan, Amanda Frank, Laura Katleman-Prue, Oleg Kordunsky, Francoise LaMonica, Lois Levin, Andy Martin, Eric Olson, Jane and Zachary Rosenof, Rohna Shoul, Susie Taylor, Anne Verhulst, and Maeve Ward.

Thanks also to our dogs: Venus, Riley, Roa, Chelsea, and Mikala. And to this summer’s caterpillars: Earl, Elvis, and Priscilla.

And special thanks to the Farmers’ Market management team, Judy Dore and Mary Flynn. *by Maeve Ward*

Thanks for donations go to:

DONORS:

Stanley Mescon/New Balance, Karen & Jon Slote

FRIENDS:

Liz Cody, Heather Ross



“I love volunteering at the Green Decade!”

It’s really fun ‘cause everyone is very nice and there are always interesting things to do and see! I love riding Eric’s “Energy Bike” and generating energy. I never knew how much more energy (pedaling) it took to turn on the incandescent bulb compared to the florescent one. My legs felt the difference and so did the bike! Afterwards Eric even gave me a light bulb so I could go on saving energy at home!

Another great thing about volunteering for the Green Decade is that I get to bring my poodle, Chelsea. Whenever she comes everybody gives her attention (which she loves) and she gets to meet the other dogs. Margaret always has treats and fresh water for her and all the other “doggie volunteers.” Besides being kind to the environment, it seems that Green Decade people are kind to animals too. You should volunteer at the Green Decade and see how it feels for yourself!!! *by Eliza Beth, age 11*



From top to bottom: Eileen Chodos Beth, Eliza Beth & Chelsea (the dog) at the 2007 Farmers Market in July.

“Environment . . .important to me since I was young”

I am a Day Middle School student who volunteers with Green Decade as part of my Bar Mitzvah project. Helping the environment has been important to me since I was young. I have always had a natural tendency to openly denounce things that hurt the environment. My dad has taught me a lot about how power plants use resources. He works with coal power plants to make them more efficient and less polluting.

I have helped at Green Decade events such as the showing of the movie “An Inconvenient Truth” at the Newton Public library, the plant sale and at the Farmer’s Market. I would still like to work with Green Decade after my Bar Mitzvah. Hearing people on the radio say “There is no such thing as global warming, I tell you, it is all a hoax,” upsets me. The fact that there are fewer skeptics about global warming makes me happy. Green Decade is a great organization because it doesn’t just tell people to help the environment; it also encourages nature-friendliness with real solutions. I am also writing articles on Green Decade for *The Daytime*, F.A. Day’s award-winning middle school newspaper. In my free time, I like to write stories and play tennis.

by Zachary Rosenof



Oleg Kordunsky (left): a senior at Newton South, volunteered at the farmers market all summer, even bringing his own bike for the Magic Energy Bike, and at the Fall showing of “An Inconvenient Truth.” He is also the coordinator of the upcoming Student Energy Essay Contest. Zachary Rosenof (right): a 7th grader at F.A. Day Middle School also volunteered at the market, the film and the plant sale.



“Watch his feet bunch up the cloth,” biologist Eric Olson pointed out. The feet belonged to a jewel-like caterpillar —Earl -- that turns into a delicately-hued red, black and white cecropia moth. He was crawling on Green Decade’s table covering at the Farmers’ Market at Cold Springs this summer. Myriads of kids watched this remarkable feat.

See story other side of page



Eliza Beth (far left) a 5th grader at Countryside School helps Eric Olson show children “Earl the caterpillar.” Eliza has volunteered at the Farmers’ Market for three years along with her mother.

“ . . .when I grow up”

After taking a civic engagement course and subsequently seeing “An Inconvenient Truth,” I had a pretty definite idea of what I was going to “be when I grow up;” I wanted to do something to combat global warming. I am a student in high school and I want to pursue alternative energy in college. But getting into college requires a lot of work and a background in what you want to do, so what better way of killing two birds with one stone than volunteering for an environmental nonprofit. Volunteering with GDC on the grass-roots level taught me a lot about the general public opinion on climate change, at least in a rich, educated suburb. The experience provided interesting insight into how ordinary citizens felt about climate change (the major opinion being the open-minded, pro-conservation one).

The main reason I care about the environment so deeply, (and I’ll divulge that I’m a rather apathetic person about anything else) is that it affects the entire human race. I was never a big fan of caring about yourself, and in my opinion helping the environment will probably have the greatest effect on the largest number of people. *by Oleg Kordunskiy*