

# green news

NEWSLETTER OF THE GREEN DECADE COALITION / NEWTON



VOL.17 - NO. 2

MARCH/APRIL 2007

## Environmental Speaker Series

Cosponsored with the Newton Free Library at the library Mondays, 7pm

### Mar. 26: Jill Stein, MD, Citizen/scientist "Rebuilding Democracy for a Healthy Tomorrow"



Jill Stein is a physician, a musician and a celebrated health and environmental advocate. She was the 2006 Green Party Candidate for Secretary of State and 2002 candidate for Governor. Stein is the founder of the Massachusetts Coalition for Healthy Communities, a non-profit organization that helps inform

and empower citizens to build towards healthy communities, sustainable prosperity, and real democracy. Her talk will explain the intimate connection between human health, behavior and the quality of our environment. She will discuss what citizens and elected officials need to do to promote health and long term sustainability. Her talk will be the highlight of Newton's annual Alternatives to Pesticides Month.

### Apr. 23: Ed Wilson, Earthwatch CEO & President "Global Citizenship"



What does it mean to be a Global Citizen? How does one become engaged to promote the understanding and action necessary for a sustainable environment? Ed Wilson will speak about the mission of Earthwatch and its efforts to create global citizens. Earthwatch is an international non-profit organization that brings science to life for people concerned

about the Earth's future. Earth-watch supports scientific field research by offering volunteers the opportunity to join research teams around the world. This unique model is creating systemic change in how the public views science and its role in environmental sustainability. Earthwatch recruits close to 4,000 volunteers every year to collect data in the areas of rainforest ecology, wildlife conservation, marine science, and more. *Save May 21 - the next speaker!*

## Berwick joins Patrick Administration

**A**nn Berwick, a member of the board of directors of the Green Decade Coalition and a long-time Newton resident, has been appointed as the first-ever Undersecretary of Energy in the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

In an exclusive interview with Green News, Ann notes that the creation of this office represents two trends that the Patrick administration is emphasizing—the elevation of the importance of energy as an issue, and the integration of energy and environmental solutions. She and her team will be focusing their efforts on three major areas: energy efficiency, renewable energy, and distributed generation. In the distributed generation area, emphasis will be placed on combined heat and power plants, in which electricity and the heat that is created at the same time, are both put to good use—effectively doubling the efficiency of the use of resources.

The first step for the administration has been to sign on to the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)—a multi-state program to address global warming. "I believe we have to move towards a different vision of how we power the economy, and we don't have long to do it," Ann said. Moving forward, she notes, the administration's efforts will cover all energy sectors and constituents.

An environmental consultant and a lawyer, Ann brings a wealth of experience that will help move the state forward on these issues. She spent the last eight years working with all the stakeholders on energy issues, including electric utilities and environmental groups. She also does not flinch from controversy, as evidenced by her years on the Newton School Committee in the late 1970s and early 1980s—an era when the closing of local schools was generating a lot of heat of a different kind.

*by Ira Krepchin  
In March, Ann Berwick will be interviewed on New TV. See sp.pg.*

## Workshop reminder

**R**ecycle, Restore and Renovate workshops coming soon! Each Sunday in March from 3-5 PM the Newton History Museum will be holding these informative workshops, under the overall title: Recycle, Restore, Renovate: A Newton Homeowner's Guide to Design, Preservation & Sustainability, as described in the last issue of Green News online. Call 617-796-1450 or register online at [www.greendecade.org](http://www.greendecade.org) *by Michele Davis*

## What is your carbon footprint?

**M**y eighth grader was asked to calculate his carbon footprint. This is a good exercise for everyone to do and very quick and easy on climatecrisis.org. Just click on "take action" and "calculate your personal impact." You need to average your energy bills, which is fast with a checkbook or Quicken. The national average is 7.5 tons per year. Are you above or below the average?

by Michele Davis

## Kyoto Project update

**T**hanks to everyone who has called about the Kyoto Project! Three full days of audits (6 houses per day) were held in October, November and January and plans are to work at the same pace in March, October and November of this year. We have volunteers for the March date but have openings for the fall dates. If your house is drafty and uninsulated, 2007 is the year to address it!

Word about the Kyoto Project is also spreading to other communities! We've had Cambridge and Somerville residents along for our diagnostic tests and they are eager to start the same program in their communities.

Don't hesitate to email if you have questions about the process of insulating your home: ReuseRecycle@rcn.com. In addition, let us know if you can recommend good insulation contractors.

by Michele Davis

## Thanks for donations go to:

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### 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.*

## How Green Is My Addition

**I**t would have been easier if I lived in Seattle when trying to make my 200 square foot addition and remodel as green as possible, particularly last Spring when I was doing most of the research. Seattle boasts an Environmental Home Center where you can see samples of all the green choices in one place. Instead I drove all over to get one thing from one store and one thing from another.

Now that it is done, I am very pleased with the results. Here are the highlights. We used recycled glass tiles on the floor of the bathroom, recycled glass cabinet pulls, and shower tiles made from recycled car windshields. The kitchen floor is made from salvaged wood from old warehouse beams. The kitchen counter is made from recycled paper and resin.

We reused medicine cabinets, sinks, porch balusters and a window. All the appliances are energy efficient models, including the Toto toilets—a very low flow, dual flush device that lets you use 0.9 gallons of water per flush, or 1.6 gallons per flush. Almost every light has a compact florescent bulb, even the recessed lights. All the new and remodeled interior spaces are insulated with spray foam insulation, and the exterior siding is planks made from concrete and wood ash. Lastly, the extended deck is made from recycled plastic (Trex plastic lumber).

I wanted to reuse my old doors but my contractor said they required too much adjustment to fit into an old doorway, so it would take him 3 or 4 times as long to install. In general he was hesitant about the green materials I chose because they were unfamiliar, but he ended up liking most of them by the time they were installed. I will take the doors to Olde Bostonian where they will dip them to remove lead paint and then sell them. I tried to give away my old kitchen cabinets but places like Habitat for Humanity and Building Materials Resource Center had a glut of materials. I am stockpiling kitchen extras for our Trade and Recycle Day at the Rumford Depot (April 29th).

I would recommend these materials to anyone. If you would like more specifics, please contact me at Reuse Recycle@rcn.com or go to Rate-It-Green.com for more information. *by Michele Davis, Kyoto Project Coordinator*

### Thanks ! and . . next deadline

For the next newsletter, please send submissions or requests by email to Ira Krepchin, irapk@alum.mit.edu by Friday, March 9, 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, and their team for the last issue: Marcia Cooper, Jacqui & Amanda Gross, Nancy Lester, Naomi Oster, and Edie & Frank Propp.



## GDC Newton Website sends an offshoot to Cambridge

Three years ago this spring, when a group of Cambridge residents started Green Decade/ Cambridge, we were impressed by the successes of the Green Decade Coalition/Newton, so much so that we took our name from your organization. Beverly Droz of GDC Newton attended an early meeting, and gave us an overview of the Newton group's history and early growth stages. Since that early meeting, we have grown to a contact list of over 300 and just started charging membership dues this year. We are a chapter of the Massachusetts Climate Action Network, and our primary focus has been to



Green Webmasters of the World:  
L-R Green Decade Cambridge's Kathy Reine & Michele Sprengnether with GDC webmaster Tom Boyd.

support the Cambridge climate action plan. Cambridge is different from Newton in that we have about 100,000 residents, yet twice that number of people work in Cambridge each day. Our city's community development office offers a climate leader program and May is the GoGreen Award month for recognizing Cambridge businesses taking significant actions toward a sustainable Cambridge.

## David Korten, YES! Magazine publisher to speak

David Korten is currently traveling the US and Canada engaging local civic, business and academic groups in the ideas forwarded in his new book, *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community*.

Referred to as Earth Community Dialogues, his presentations provide an opportunity for people to take an important step in sharing authentic narratives that reflect the cultural values of Earth Community—compassion, cooperation, partnership—within a framework of responsibility to and for the whole.

David will be speaking at the First Unitarian Society in Newton, 1326 Washington Street in West Newton at 7:30 pm on Saturday, March 24, 2007. The event is free and open to the public.

*by Peter Smith*

## Urgent deadline: Every Green Decade member should take this action!

You can help earn a 2kW solar array worth \$22,000 for a Newton school with your New England Wind donation. We need 150 households to enroll at \$5 per month, or make a one time donation of \$100 by March 31, 2007. Call (weekdays 9-5pm) 617 524-3950, or donate online: [www.NewEnglandWind.org](http://www.NewEnglandWind.org). 60 of us have signed up. There are 300+ Green Decade members. We only need 90 more by March 31. So sign up today!

*by Peter Smith*

The Green Decade/Cambridge organization has focused on outreach to residents, tabling at public venues, promoting compact fluorescent lighting, home energy efficiency, and the New England Wind Fund. This past year especially, we have seen an increase in interest among residents to contribute toward climate stabilization efforts.

Our web site went live two years ago, and we have found it woefully inadequate to our growing needs. Once again, we have admired the beautifully designed web site of Green Decade Coalition Newton, so we contacted GDC webmaster Tom Boyd for possible advice and

tutelage. He and Margaret Ford very generously spent an evening answering questions and showing us how the web site is structured. We also gained invaluable information about how to streamline the office operations that make a non-profit organization effective for its volunteers.

"Copying is the ultimate compliment," so please take our compliments for your terrific ongoing work, and thank you for allowing us to copy mercilessly in creating our updated website this spring. You can visit our site at [www.greencambridge.org](http://www.greencambridge.org), and stay tuned for sustainable works across the river.

## CALENDAR

- Mar 3-5pm**  
Sundays **RECYCLE, RESTORE, RENOVATE: A Newton Homeowner's Guide to Design, Preservation & Sustainability** - Jackson Homestead. 617 965-1995. See article p.1
- Mar 10 (Sat)**  
1pm **"An Inconvenient Truth" film w/Al Gore** Newton Free Library, See page 4 -FREE
- Mar 16-24**  
**"Interfaith Walk for Climate Rescue"** Register 617 233-6071. See article p. 4.
- Mar 24 (Sat)**  
10am-noon **'Urban Ark' Seminar & Tour, \$20; GD members, seniors, students-\$15.** Register 617 969--5927.
- Mar 24 (Sat)**  
7:30pm **"The Great Turning" David Korten, Free** First Unitarian Society, Article p. 3
- Mar 26 (Mon)**  
7pm **"Rebuilding Democracy for a Healthy Tomorrow"** Jill Stein, Environmental Speakers Series, Newton Free Library, See box page 1 - FREE
- Apr 14 (Sat)**  
time TBD **"Step It Up 2007"** Tell Congress to take action on Global Warming, See p. 4
- Apr 23 (Mon)**  
7pm **"Global Citizenship"** Ed Wilson, Environmental Speakers Series, Newton Free Library, See box page 1 - FREE
- Apr 29 (Sun)**  
**Newton Serves - Info: 617 796-1284**  
**Trade & Recycle Day - Info: 617 796-1487, 617 964-7463, Rumford Ave Depot.**

Send environmental events to *GREEN NEWS*. email to Ira Krepchin by Friday, Mar. 9, 2007 [irapk@alum.mit.edu](mailto:irapk@alum.mit.edu). We will list as space permits.



# Interfaith Walk for Climate Rescue

*Two ways to make a difference !*

## 1. Interfaith Walk for Climate Rescue

*Northampton to Boston, Mar 16-24, '07*

Some of us in the Green Decade are going to join this major way to show our concern about the problem of

Climate Change. **Bill McKibben**, environmental author, has issued the call: "...to take one spring day and use it to reshape the future."

There are two days that people from Newton logically would be involved (though some may want to start in Northampton): • Friday, March 23 Newton to Cambridge walk •

Saturday, March 24, we will walk from the Episcopal Divinity School to Old South Church, 645 Boylston St., Boston, for a 2 to 3 pm interfaith service. We will then go across the street for a public rally from 3 to 5pm (speakers, music, and recommendations for political actions).

We would love maximum participation as this is an historic opportunity to call for swift, bold, and comprehensive political action to address global warming! Check out the Walk website at [www.climatewalk.org](http://www.climatewalk.org). We want to work with all the religious organizations in Newton to form an interfaith team.

2006 was the turning point for public awareness of global warming. 2007 must be the turning point for action. Author and activist Bill McKibben invites you to join the Interfaith Walk for Climate Rescue, Northampton to Boston. To read his letter, click on <http://climatewalk.org/mckibben.htm> You can walk for an hour, an afternoon, a weekend, or a week. You can walk as an individual, a family, or a team from your community, school, or congregation. You can be of any faith or none.

By the time we get to Boston on Saturday, March 24, we expect the largest global warming demonstration in the history of the United States. Last year Bill McKibben did this in Vermont. There were 1,000 marchers!

Don't miss this opportunity to make climate change history. Call Peter Smith & sign up 617 233-6071 !



*Bill McKibben*

## 2. "Step It Up 2007"

*Newton tells Congress - "Cut Carbon by 80% by 2050" on Saturday, April 14, '07*

Some of us at Green Decade are also going to join this national event in our own home town to show our concern about Climate Change. We will gather with other Newton groups, holding signs calling on Congress to act now on measures to slow global warming. Photos will be broadcast by web and TV from across the country. Already hundreds of cities and towns from virtually every state are stepping up. Go to the web site: [www.stepitup2007](http://www.stepitup2007) to see how many cities and towns are committed today. Then call us at 617 233-6071 and

add yourself or your group to the list of participants. We will contact you with the time and place for the photo. Start making your global warming protest signs now.



By popular request: 3rd showing of Al Gore film

### An Inconvenient Truth

Mayor Cohen, special guest !

**Sat., Mar. 10th at 1 pm**



followed by discussion led by Eric Olson,  
Chairperson of Green Decade Coalition Energy Committee  
(N.E. Wind offsets available)

**Free Admission** Druker Aud. Newton Free Library

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COALITION/NEWTON

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## An act for a healthy Massachusetts: safer alternatives for toxic chemicals

**A**mong the many bills filed for consideration by our State legislators this year is the most progressive toxics use reduction legislation in America – An Act for a Healthy Massachusetts: Safer Alternatives for Toxic Chemicals (Senate Bill 553).

If passed, this bill will establish a pragmatic, gradual approach to reducing the use of toxic chemicals that can be replaced with feasible, safer alternatives. It begins with ten of the worst toxic chemicals used in Massachusetts as identified by the Toxics Use Reduction Institute at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. These chemicals have been linked to health issues including infertility, developmental disabilities, cancer, and asthma. The first ten are: lead; formaldehyde; trichloroethylene (TCE); perchloroethylene (Perc); dioxins and furans, hexavalent chromium; organophosphate pesticides, polybrominated phenyl ethers (PBDEs); di-(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate (DEHP); 2,4 dichlorophenoxyacetic acid (2,4,D).

An Act for a Healthy Massachusetts will stimulate research and development in green chemistry by mandating a process to evaluate alternatives and replace toxic chemicals where feasible. And it will propose programs, funded through a fee on toxic chemicals, to assist workers

and businesses in making the transition to safer alternatives.

An Act for a Healthy Massachusetts will not only help improve our health by reducing our exposure to toxic chemicals, it will reduce the burden on our economy of avoidable high health care and special education costs and as well as lost productivity.

This progressive bill has been co-sponsored by our progressive Newton legislators. Thank you, Senator Creem, Representative Balser, Representative Koutoujian and Representative Khan for taking the lead on this important health and economic issue. *by Lucia Dolan, GreenCAP*

## Thanks

**T**here is strength in numbers and a number of volunteers were key to the success of GDC's annual membership appeal, mailed out in early January. We would like to thank Membership Chair, Marcia Cooper, and her outstanding team of volunteers: Sarah Barnett, Jean Bartholomew, Ruth Harris, Margaret Ford, Ronda Jacobson, Chris Kjelson, Nancy Lester, Sharona Mizrahi, Naomi Osher, Edie and Frank Propp, Pat and Will Rand, Lisa Sazer and Ana Zarina Asuaje Solon.

## Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce forms new environmental committee

The Green Decade, as a member of the Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce, recently initiated the idea of forming a new committee to look at how member businesses

can save money and help the environment. At our first meeting, several companies expressed interest in participating in NStar's lighting energy rebate program. *by Peter Smith*



*Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce Environmental Committee Meeting: Front row(L-R): Annabelle Ship (Green Planet Kids), Tom O'Rourke (President, N-N Chamber of Commerce), Bill Frary (DMJM Harris), Ana Zarina Asuaje Solon and Peter Smith of the Green Decade Coalition/Newton. Back row: Liz Kirsch (The Second Step), Nick Hill (Hill Energy Services), Max Greenberg (Coldwell Banker), Dean Schulte (Muzi Motors) and Julia Wong (Shanghai Pier Imports).*

## NEW: Energy conservation contests for students & households!

**T**wo great opportunities for students AND households to create awareness of need for energy efficient products and the reduction of Newton's energy consumption! The contests are sponsored by the

Green Decade, the Newton Schools Foundation and GreenEnergyNewton, with prizes provided by NSTAR and Whole Foods Market. For details and contest rules go to

[www.greendecade.org/energycontest.html](http://www.greendecade.org/energycontest.html)

Student Essay Contest:

### "Protect the Climate – Start at Home"

Open to all elementary, middle school and high school students who live or go to school in Newton.

**Purpose:** to increase awareness of the issue among Newton residents and to encourage them to choose more energy efficient products and to waste less. Cash prizes for 1st, 2nd, 3rd place winners and four additional distinction prize winners at each school level.

**Deadline:** March 15.

**Household Contest:** While the students are working on their conservation essays, it is your turn to do the actual conserving! Win a \$200 gift certificate from Whole Foods Market by reducing your electric and/or heating bill by the greatest percentage of any Newton household by the April 15 deadline.



## Environment TV looks back

*March Green Decade show:  
an interview with Ann Berwick*

**A**fter more than two years on the air, it's time for a brief look at where we've come with the Green Decade-produced NewTV Environment Show. Energy topped all topics covered in the past 2-1/2 years. Starting with the first show in September 2004, which introduced the concept of "Green Building" technology as it pertained to a new or retrofitted NNHS, the Green Decade has been consistent in its effort to highlight the subject.

In November 2004 the show demonstrated how small businesses and individuals, with help from the Green Decade Energy Committee, could reduce their electricity use. Next, in January 2005 David Tannozzini, electrical engineer for the Newton Building Department, informed viewers of the substantial savings Newton had been able to attain in this area.

In the same year, energy was again covered in November with a show on Municipal Electric Utilities companies (hint: if your city has one, your rates are lower). Two more shows in 2006 were related to energy: One, a program offered to the elementary schools by the GD Energy Committee, the other a description of the different incentives available to home owners to lower their energy use.

Other issues have also been discussed: How a preservative was positively linked to a 40-fold rise in autism in the 1990's, how pesticides affect our health and that of our pets, how body-care and cleaning products can contain dangerous chemicals, and how the Charles River is losing its flow due to over pumping of the aquifers that feed it.

So that viewers are not overwhelmed by the problems presented, they are also given tools to empower them to be part of the solution should they be motivated to react.

The Environment Show is produced alternatively by the Green Decade and the Newton Conservators and is broadcast on the NewTV blue channel. Shows are aired eight times a week for a month. The two organizations are also cooperating in making all their shows available on DVD at the library media department.

The March Green Decade show will be an interview with Ann Berwick, the state Undersecretary of Energy. (See article page one) **Schedule:** Sat: 10:00am; Mon: 3:00pm; Tues: 1:30am & 11:30pm; Wed: 11:30am; Thurs: 12:00pm, 4:00pm, & 7:30pm.

*by Francoise LaMonica*

## Faith and the environment

**G**reen Decade is looking to start a committee on "Faith and the Environment." We need your help. If you would like to head up this effort or work on the committee, please let us know (617-965-1995 [info@greendecade.org](mailto:info@greendecade.org)). The committee will work with the faith-based community in Newton to promote environmentally sound practices such as energy efficiency and recycling.

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