



Environmental  
Speaker Series

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## May 19: Dr. Kenneth Geiser "Making Materials Matter"



Are chemicals in our products putting our health at risk? Is municipal recycling actually saving materials for the future? Could we make our products out of agricultural products or wastes? Professor Ken Geiser, Director of the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, will talk about the importance of focusing on materials—materi-

als science, resource conservation, hazardous chemicals, green chemistry and toxics use reduction—as a way to advance sustainable forms of production and consumption. He will outline new directions in chemical and materials policy in Europe, Canada and China and present examples of communities and corporations that are working to implement more effective chemicals policies. The Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Program and the proposed Safer Alternatives Bill offer local examples.

Dr. Kenneth Geiser is Professor of Work Environment and Co-director of the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production at the UMass Lowell. He is one of the authors of the Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Act and served as founding Director of the Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Institute from its formation in 1990 to 2003. His research and writing focus on pollution prevention and cleaner production, toxic chemicals management, international chemicals policy, safer technologies, and green chemistry and, in 2001, he completed a book, *Materials Matter: Towards a Sustainable Materials Policy* published by MIT Press.

## A sense of urgency: Lester Brown on Climate Change

Some members of the Green Decade Board and Advisory Board were honored with an invitation to meet Lester Brown and hear him speak at the Hamel House at Lasell College. Lester Brown has been described as "one of the world's most influential thinkers" by the Washington Post. Many of our readers know him as the founder of the Earth Policy Institute, a research organization based in Washington, DC. Before that, he was the Founder and President of the Worldwatch Institute during its first 26 years. He has authored or co-authored over 50 books and has received prestigious international honors for his work.

Speaking to the assembled guests about what we needed to do to save civilization he listed some of the known projections — glacier melt, sea level rise, increasing droughts, food scarcity, and population increase. He led us to the need for immediate action and what some solutions could be. His most compelling example of how quickly the U.S. could address this impending disaster was the mobilization that happened here in 1941-42. Quoting from his book, *Plan B 3.0* "We must move at wartime speed, restructuring the world energy economy at a pace reminiscent of the restructuring of the U.S. industrial economy in 1942 following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The shift from producing cars to planes, tanks, and guns was accomplished within a matter of months. One of the keys to this extraordinarily rapid restructuring was a ban on the sale of cars, a ban that lasted nearly three years."

Brown connects the need for population control with that of restructuring the world energy economy, saying one won't work without the other. When asked what it would take to light that kind of fire under politicians today similar to that of 1941-42, without a similar Pearl Harbor, Brown pointed to the rising sea level perhaps flooding a city. [Katrina? That one didn't do it.] The loss of the glaciers? The question still hangs.

His book, *Plan B 3.0* is full of the details, some of which he gave at the talk, about what we must do to save civilization. Some of us would like to study this book together with others to look at what people have done around the world to deal with this threat. It may help us to understand better what else we can do locally. If you are interested, please contact Louise Bruyn at 617-332-1764. We'd like to set a time in early May, so please contact us right away. We hope to hear from you.

by Louise Bruyn and Ana Zarina Asuaje Solon

## Promoting Newton bicycling “Know your milk” Campaign

**B**icycling can be a key component in Newton’s environmental efforts. More bicycling means fewer motor vehicle trips—especially the short trips that make up most of the traffic on Newton’s streets. Bicycling is also healthy exercise for young and old, and a proven strategy for addressing childhood obesity.

To get more people riding bikes requires a boost in safety and convenience. That’s what Bike Newton, a grassroots effort to promote safe bicycling in our city, is all about. On May 18, a rally will be held to demonstrate substantial grassroots support for improved bicycle safety. The program includes entertainment, food, safety instructions and merchandise, speakers and a 2.5 mile Friends and Family Ride. Events include: a bike clinic, safety demonstrations by Newton Police officers, and a talk by Anne Lusk of the Harvard School of Public Health. The Green Decade and the Newton Conservators are co-sponsors of the event.

There are many things we can do right now to make bicycling safer that will not require new funding. The city already has the facility and mandate to fill potholes and fix sunken storm drains. Paint and pruning shears are sometimes all it takes. And volunteers. Grants, subsidies and private funding are available for projects such as linking existing trails and paths.

Volunteers are needed for the day-of-the-event to help with registering riders, organizing the crowd, setting up: eg. barricades, tables, staffing snack tables, monitoring litter and recycling, answering questions, and generally supporting the event. To volunteer or for more information, visit [www.bikenewton.org](http://www.bikenewton.org), or contact Lois Levin at [loislevin@comcast.net](mailto:loislevin@comcast.net), (617) 527-1237. *by Lois Levin*

## When is a sneaker not a sneaker ?

The answer to that age-old riddle depends on what you do with your old sneakers. If they’re still wearable, you can donate them to a number of places including the Pine Street Inn and the Red Cross—and they’re still sneakers. But what can you do if the tread has worn out and there are holes in the toes? Today’s athletic shoes present a recycling challenge because they’re made of composite materials.

The good news is that Nike has met the challenge through its Reuse-a-Shoe program in which old athletic shoes (any brand not just Nike) can be dropped off at collection points around the globe or even sent directly to Nike in Oregon. The shoes are ground up to make soft surfaces for tracks, playgrounds, tennis courts, etc. So the answer to the riddle—when it is part of a tennis court! Anyway, there is a local drop-off point at City Sports, 37 Boylston St., Chestnut Hill, MA 02167, 617.566.0220. Or send the shoes directly to Nike: Nike Recycling Center, c/o Reuse-A-Shoe 26755 SW 95th Ave, Wilsonville, OR 97070 *by Ira Krepchin, adapted from GreenLightbite newsletter, 3/19/08*

A new coalition of local health and food safety advocates has started a campaign to raise awareness about the use of rBGH (recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone) in dairy products in Massachusetts. Inspired by the Physicians for Social Responsibility’s successful “Know your milk” campaign to stop the use of rBGH by major milk suppliers in Oregon, the goals of the Massachusetts’ Know Your Milk campaign are to educate the public about the health risks of rBGH, to urge producers to label dairy products, and to urge schools, hospitals, and other institutions to eliminate rBGH from the dairy products they serve.

**Background:** In 1993, Monsanto, the chemical company, introduced rBGH, a genetically modified hormone that is injected into cows to increase milk production by 5-15%. **The Problems:** rBGH is harmful to cows. The warning label for rBGH lists sixteen harmful side effects. There are dangers to people as well -- such as cancer and anti-biotic resistant infections. rBGH causes elevated levels of a powerful insulin-like growth factor-1 (IGF-1) in milk, increasing the risk of breast, prostate, colon, lung, and other cancers. rBGH also increases udder infections in cows so dairy products from rBGH-treated cows contribute to antibiotic resistance in humans. According to a survey funded by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), 95 percent of Americans said milk from cows injected with rBGH should be labeled, and 74 percent said they had concerns about the long-term safety of milk produced using rBGH. However, millions of people in the United States are unknowingly consuming rBGH dairy products. After pressure from Monsanto the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) ruled that dairy products from rBGH treated cows do not require a label. Increasingly, consumers around the country are saying “no” to rBGH and causing changes: • As of January 1st 2008, Starbuck’s milk is rBGH free. • As of February 2008, Kroger, a giant supermarket chain in the mid West will not carry rBGH products. • Publix, a Florida supermarket chain, is moving in the same direction. • Health Care Without Harm’s Healthy Food in Hospitals project is working with hospitals around the country to eliminate rBGH dairy products from their facilities.

*by Ellie Goldberg*

### Thanks ! and . . . next deadline

For the next newsletter, please send submissions or request by email to Ira Krepchin, [irapk@alum.mit.edu](mailto:irapk@alum.mit.edu) by Friday, May 16, 2008.

Thanks for making this newsletter possible to Managing Editor Ira Krepchin, Co-editors Peter Smith and 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: Lauren Berman, her son Nate and his sixth grade friends Omri Cohen, Ben Miller, George Sangiolo and Jarrett Gorin from Brown Middle School, and Alex Shames from Day Middle School.

## 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.*

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## Contaminated without consent

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Clean Water Action will send you, [Contaminated Without Consent](#), a 20-minute DVD. The film brings experts into your living room. Once your family, friends, and community know more about this issue they will want to take action and help to pass laws to protect health.

To get a free copy, call or e-mail Jennifer at 617-338-8131, ext. 204 or at [jbonkowski@cleanwater.org](mailto:jbonkowski@cleanwater.org). Preview the DVD online <<http://salsa.democracyinaction.org/dia/track.jsp?v=2&pc=jh3eb8Pt5jIWK4GsB92qbmd13jxrORgM>> at <http://contaminatedwithoutconsent.org>

Clean Water Action will also send you a kit to host a Party for Healthy Products. Learn how to work with leaders in your state to make products safer. Contact Jennifer at [jbonkowski@cleanwater.org](mailto:jbonkowski@cleanwater.org) or 617-338-8131, ext. 204.

## Green Decade launches "Project Welcome Wagon"

Newton Mayor, David Cohen, announced Green Decade Coalition Newton's return of "the welcome wagon" at his weekly press conference.

In the 1920's, Welcome Wagon "hostesses" would visit new homeowner families in their new home with a basket of small gifts and coupons from contributing businesses. These home visits continued for over 50 years until the early 1980s, but ultimately, as more women entered the workforce, no one was at home during the day to answer the door when the Welcome Wagon lady knocked.

Through Project Welcome Wagon, Green Decade Coalition hopes to bring back this tradition in a way that gives new homeowners a "green" start to their Newton life. A collaborative effort between the City of Newton's Mayor's office, Green Decade Coalition, the Barry Price Center, Newton merchants, and the Newton real estate community, Project Welcome Wagon welcomes new families in an innovative, environmentally friendly way. Instead of a basket, Project Welcome Wagon will gift each new family a Newton recycling bin containing many of the following items: Energy efficient light bulbs, Non-toxic laundry detergent, Non-toxic all purpose cleaner, Not-toxic moisturizing cleanser, Recycled paper products, Two reusable grocery bags, An information packet on the Green Decade, Energy Saver Book, Low Flow Shower Head, Faucet Aerator, A Power Strip, Weather Sealing Putty, Outlet Insulators, a person to call about questions on energy efficiency / sustainability, and a Green Decade membership.

*by Laura Katleman-Prue*

# Green Decade and Chamber Environmental Expo in June

**M**ark your calendars for Tuesday, June 3, 10:30am-6:30pm, to attend environmental workshops and visit displays at the Newton Marriott Hotel. The Green Decade Coalition/Newton is partnering with the Newton Needham Chamber of Commerce in a special event that day called "Environmental Business Solutions." The workshops and exhibits are free. At noon there will be a luncheon with entertainment, speakers and environmental awards to businesses. Gary Hirshberg, CEO of Stonyfield Farm yogurt is the keynote speaker; Ann Berwick, Undersecretary of Energy will give an overview of state energy programs and tax incentives. The lunch costs \$35 and tickets are available through the Chamber of Commerce, call 617 244-5300. The goal of this all day and

evening event is to give attendees access to a variety of environmentally sustainable innovations that also save money. Examples of workshops highlighting sustainable practices while improving the bottom line include: NStar's energy saving business lighting audit and subsidy program; "smart paper" programs that save money and recycle; smart transportation solutions; water recharge and conservation innovations and green building materials and designs. *by Peter Smith*

**green decade**  
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## CALENDAR

- May 18 (Sun)** 1pm "Bike Newton" rally and demonstration Newton City Hall War Memorial, See article January green news - FREE
- May 19 (Mon)** 7pm "Making Materials Matter" Dr. Kenneth Geiser, Environmental Speakers Series, Newton Free Library. Box page 1 - FREE
- June 3 (Tues)** 10:30am-7pm "Environmental Business Solutions" expo Newton Marriott Hotel, FREE exhibits & workshops, Awards luncheon with speakers \$35 in advance, sponsored by the Green Decade with the Newton/Needham Chamber of Commerce. Call 617 233-6071.
- June 5-7 (Thur-Sat)** "BALLE Conf" celebrating the pioneers of the local green economy, at BU, for info & to register see: [www.livingeconomies.org](http://www.livingeconomies.org)
- June 9 (Mon)** 7pm **Green Decade Annual Meeting**, New Arts Center, 61 Washington Park in Newtonville.

Send environmental events to GREEN NEWS. email to Ira Krepchin by Friday, Mar. 7, 2008 [irapk@alum.mit.edu](mailto:irapk@alum.mit.edu). We will list as space permits.

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*by Marcia Cooper*

***"We are free to act assuming that our action—no matter how 'small' it appears to us—could be the tipping point setting off tectonic shifts of consciousness and creativity."***

*p. 317 — Frances Moore Lappe, from Democracy's Edge: Choosing to Save Our Country by Bringing Democracy to Life*



Seen at Newton North's Earth Day on April 16. L-R: Speakers Louise Bruyn & Michele Davis; NNHS students Alison Denn & Danny Picirillo, NNHS Environmental Club & Green Decade's Margaret Ford



Printed with soy-based ink on 100% post-consumer waste unbleached recycled paper that is made without a chemical separation process.

## The Soilmeister

Greg Maslowe grew up in Colorado, but he has a deep respect for Newton's soil, especially one acre of farmland on the corner of Winchester and Nahanton Streets. The work he has done since he became the farmer at Newton Community Farm (NCF) - known as Angino Farm - in March 2006, not long after the city acquired the property, has revived a vital piece of Newton's history that had been at risk of being extinguished.

Greg and Jessica, his wife, an anthropologist, their 7 year-old son Jasper and 4 year-old daughter Rhea live at the farm in a home that has been continuously occupied since it was built in the mid-19th century. The farm's stated mission is "to nurture a community that teaches and models sustainable agricultural and environmental practices on the historic Angino Farm."

Before he came to NCF, Greg worked for an organic gardening company. He earned a masters degree from BU in environmental ethics, examining the issue of genetically modified crops in agriculture. While putting himself through school working as a gardener, he hankered to get involved with farming. When the opportunity in Newton came along, he took the leap.

On the farm, Greg uses his skills as both a businessman and an ecologist. To maximize the farm's income, he needs to grow as much as he can on the farm's one acre. He also wants to grow fruits and vegetables in a manner that increases the soil fertility without relying on synthetic chemicals to control weeds and insects or using water-soluble fertilizers.

### Methods

Greg looks at the farm as a complete system, and devotes much thought and energy to keeping the system healthy. "If I have healthy plants and healthy soil I won't have fertility problems, weed pressure or insect problems." Conventional farmers resort to spraying with poisons to clear the ground, and then they spray again, with poisons, to kill insects. If they have soil fertility problems they apply highly water-soluble fertilizers, which get into the groundwater. The resulting pollution is often indirect, because these fertilizers upset the ecological balance by causing eutrophication, which promotes excessive algal growth in our waterways. "Soil is not just a medium in which you happen to plant things; it is living, dynamic. It's the most important thing on my farm," says Greg. So he does things that are good for the soil, like adding compost and green manures, and planting cover crops in winter. Most important, he tries to avoid damaging the soil, by tilling as little as possible. Most farms use a tractor in the field. Greg's riding tractor is used for making compost, not for tillage or cultivating. For tillage he uses a two-wheeled "walking tractor." It is much smaller and more gentle on the soil than a conventional 4-wheeled tractor, which typically creates a "plow pan", an impenetrable deep layer of compacted soil.

When common tillers invert the soil they remove topsoil--



Greg Maslowe at the farm

--the top three inches where most of the microbial life resides---from where it can be most beneficial. Greg's tiller, a high end "reciprocating spader", from Earth Tools in Kentucky, is slower--and harder on the operator--than most tillers of comparable size, because it is heavier. Very few farmers use this implement, but Greg says: "I love it! It does a phenomenal job." It allows him to get nice loose soil, without burying

the living soil, which holds moisture and does not erode. It has wonderful crumbly texture, what is called "good tilth".

Greg knows that the good results he has achieved with his produce are about more than the implement he uses; they "have a lot to do with how my predecessors treated the land. The quality of the soil here is excellent." And on that land Greg is able to grow 33% more crop per square foot that he would if he used tractor cultivation. That's because he only has to leave two and a half feet---compared with the usual 10 to 12 feet required by a conventional tractor--- to turn his tiller around at the end of the field, and also because he is able to plant his rows tightly. In a 4-foot bed, he can plant 4 or 5 rows of some vegetables, instead of the usual 3 rows, because he plants in a hexagonal pattern.

This biointensive agricultural system means more hand labor, particularly for weeding. But the farm is small, and there are many volunteers who want to work in the field, so more hand cultivation at NCF is not a disadvantage.

Greg is also establishing a multilayered fruit orchard along the south and west periphery. Underneath pear and Asian pear trees are blueberry, strawberry and other fruit. In five years these trees will surround the fields. Planting three different types of plants in one space has created a complex permaculture as biointensive as the fields.

Permaculture means one never tills. Nature decomposes, and orchards, like most forests, can make loose and very fertile soil without the need to compost in piles. Composting happens, but to encourage it, the farm uses newspaper, then a layer of organic matter. These biologically active beds contain dark rich soil. They are moist and fertile, with lots of worms and microorganisms.

### Results

Greg measures soil health and soil fertility annually, by sending soil samples to the University of Massachusetts laboratory. They report back the nutrient levels for major-, minor- and micro-nutrients, as well as information that tells him when the percentage of organic matter in the soil increases or decreases.

Greg has done soil testing once, and he has test results

*(continued on other side)*

## The Soilmeister (cont.)

(continued from other side) from 2 years ago (when the farm was purchased). The sampling areas were not identical, but levels of organic matter have remained constant. If future test results suggest problems at any point, he will reevaluate his tillage methods and composting. Tillage can cause microbes to become very active and therefore very destructive to organic matter. Also, the hexagonal planting arrangement creates a higher than usual demand on soil nutrients. The reason is simple: if you have more plants, you need more nutrients.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the farming methods is about more than soil testing. If the soil is being depleted, plants do not get what they need to grow and they will show signs of stress. A stressed plant releases chemicals that are attractive to insects, which, Greg analogized "attack weakened plants like a wolf that will preferentially hunt a sick deer".

If soil is not healthy, plants develop physiological problems. A plant pathologist will identify the problems, and sometimes recommend fertilizers or soil amendments to rectify them. Greg uses the organic program as a resource and adheres to its standards. Fertilizers have three numbers indicating the amounts of Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P), and Potassium (K), in that order. Phosphorus is stable in soil, and a deficiency needs to be addressed with a long-term solution. Triple super-phosphate is available commercially, but Greg would use rock phosphate, a slow release natural phosphate. Potassium is also a long-term issue, and Greg would remediate using mined green sand, from Utah,

Sometimes a short-term solution is needed to save a crop, short of plowing it over and planting something else. Greg would use a bagged fertilizer that does not dissolve as easily as conventional fertilizer. He would use a product approved for organic use, ordering it from a specialized local manufacturer [johnnyseed.com](http://johnnyseed.com), [fedco.com](http://fedco.com).

### Is it organic?

Greg does not claim that NCF is an organic farm, or even imply that its produce is organic, because the farm is not certified as organic. There are fees involved in becoming certified, and extensive paperwork to be filled out every year. Rebates are available, and the net cost of certifying is not huge, but Greg has done a rough cost-benefit analysis and he is not convinced it would be worth the cost. As a businessman, he would want to certify only when he was confident that customers would be willing to pay more for his produce. He has already had to raise prices, because seed costs and other costs are going up each year. He knows that many of the farm's neighbors, and its customers at the Newton's farmers market, are on fixed incomes, and they are feeling squeezed by costs. Greg is able to keep prices low by selling all the produce within a 5-mile radius of the farm and by using very little fuel for farming operations. He does not want to change this equation.

## Climate and energy

Greg has not yet had to change his farming practices because of climate change. But as the seasons are advancing, tomatoes are being planted earlier than 5-10 yrs ago in southern New England. The last frost date is earlier each Spring, and the first frost date is later each Fall. Summers are getting hotter. Lettuce is now grown throughout the summer and before long it may be too hot to grow it during parts of the summer. Unusual seasonal weather patterns have affected the farm. Due to a phenomenally wet Spring in 2006, parts of the field could not be planted until July. And 2007 brought drought for part of the year, so Greg had to irrigate more, drawing down ground water from the farm's shallow well. When he tested the water, he found that it had a higher salt content than usual. Because water in the well recharges only when it rains or snows, a prolonged drought would interfere with the farm's ability to irrigate. Now the ground water underneath the farm has been recharged.

The farm is very energy efficient. It relies heavily on human energy but uses very little fossil fuel energy. The tractor runs on biodiesel manufactured in Harvard, Massachusetts from waste oil. Last season Greg used about 10 gallons of this oil, which would have cost about \$35 if he had not bartered produce for it. The truck is used to travel short distances, such as to the Newton farmers market.

The Newton Community Farm, Inc. (NCF) is incorporated as a 501C3 organization. It's board oversees the work on the farm and the condition of the buildings, as well as serving as core volunteers along with others. An education committee is planning educational programs for adults and schoolchildren. This year they will be working with children at Mason-Rice and Underwood elementary schools and Oak Hill middle school.

NCF ([www.newtoncommunityfarm.org](http://www.newtoncommunityfarm.org)) has offered courses for homeowners emphasizing activities that involve low energy use. Others have been gardening, composting and vermiculture, bread baking, canning and fermenting. Greg noted that there are also practical skills workshops offered by the Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA) on environmentally-relevant topics, such as how to make maple syrup, or stone walls. Many of these are based on traditional knowledge we once all shared that is getting lost as we become more and more of a consumer society.

## Conclusion

The farm has surpassed the city's and the farm's expectations regarding produce sales, and for two years running, expenses have been lower than anticipated. The farm makes more money on one acre than many larger farms in the state. Greg acknowledges, "We have accomplished an incredible amount in two years." He sees this success as a credit to the amount of support from the community, and to the many people who have volunteered their services. "They made what we have done possible." *by Lois A Levin*

## Getting a grip: our food and our small planet



Frances Moore Lappé, Author

*Frances Moore Lappé, author of seventeen books and involved in founding the Institute for Food and Development Policy (Food First) and the Small Planet Institute, educational and advocacy groups focused on food production and nutrition.*

*Her talk at the Newton Library reminded us that we all know that you are what you eat. But do you know how your food is produced and how this process affects:*

- Land use?
- Oil consumption?
- Air and water quality?
- Nutrition and food safety?

**F**rances Moore Lappé, author of “A Diet for a Small Planet” and other books (including her last one, Getting a Grip: Clarity, Creativity, & Courage in a World Gone Mad) recently told an overflowing spellbound crowd at the Newton Free Library just how to get a grip.

This was one of the Spring Speaker Series organized by Barbara Herson and the Green Decade Coalition/Newton and co-sponsored with the Newton Free Library. This special presentation was also co-sponsored with The Newton Community Farm, The Newton Farmer’s Market, Cheshire Garden, and Newton Conservators.

Ms. Lappé’s speech in part reiterated her thesis in a just published article in “The Nation.” She asks, “Why hunger in a world of plenty?” “...as long as food is merely a commodity in societies that don’t protect people’s right to participate in the market,” she continues, “and as long as farming is left vulnerable to consolidated power off the farm, many will go hungry, farmers among them—no matter how big the harvests.”

She refers to President Roosevelt’s “Second Bill of Rights” centered on economic opportunity and security—assurance of “useful” and decent-paying jobs for everyone including farmers. “In emphasizing rights, Roosevelt . . . did not view the New Deal (as it became known) as a giant safety net; rather he saw it as a way to advance freedom.

“Freedom rests as much on economic as political rights,” he argued. Later . . . after basic economic protections for citizens (had become) law, Roosevelt still warned that “the liberty of a democracy is not safe if the people tolerate the

growth of private power to the point where it becomes stronger than their democratic state itself.” The Nation, “The Only Fitting Tribute,” Frances Moore Lappé, [www.thenation.com/doc/2008040/lappe](http://www.thenation.com/doc/2008040/lappe), April 7, 2008)

During her eloquent lecture, Lappé, who had also been recently interviewed by the Boston Globe, suggested action steps. Such as joining a food coop.

She detailed her personal experience with such a venture. She also addressed the climate change issue. “Which makes more sense: buying locally grown conventional grown food or organically grown sustenance produced hundreds of miles away?” “or raising crops dependent upon synthetic chemicals (from fertilizer to pest control methods) which affects air quality?” (and the nutritional value).

“But transporting food over many miles creates harmful emissions” (and uses up petroleum). In addition she pointed out how economically disadvantaged people cannot afford quality sustenance nor are sources of such located near where they live.

Note: Local attempts to help solve some of these problems include the Food Project (in Lincoln and Boston); the urban gardening movement (both here and in town); and, in season, the farmers’ markets (including one in this City).

*by L. Maeve Ward*

## The City wants you for the new Solid Waste Commission

**T**he focus of the Solid Waste Commission (SWC) will shift more towards evaluating the City’s recycling program, developing ideas and assisting with implementation for improvements in the next two years, and crafting the proposal for the next recycling contract. The SWC will also help the City evaluate the pilot automated collection program and then develop the next trash collection and disposal contract.

The Commission hopes to get input from the community on these topics as they move forward. The SWC usually meets twice a month on Thursday mornings from 7:30-9 a.m. at City Hall. Alderwoman Sydra Schnipper is the chair. Interested citizens can contact Sydra for more information and/or fill out an application (from Mayor’s office) requesting consideration for appointment to the SWC. Citizens are also welcome to attend meetings to get a sense of how the Commission functions and to hear about the topics under discussion.

# NewtonSERVES '08 Green Decade environmental projects!

**O**n Sunday, April 13 from 9 am-3 pm Green Decade members and other volunteers joined to participate in one or more of our three NewtonSERVES environmental projects. These were included among the other 55 projects all over the city of Newton on this Annual Day of Community Service.

• **Enviro-Quilt 2008:**

**V**olunteers were asked to bring colored paper which is blank on one side (to reuse) for writing environmental tips, fun facts or drawings, to be joined into a large recycled paper quilt with recycled twist ties! We plan to display the quilt at City Hall with the Energy Contest Award Ceremony, among other sites. People ages 8 and up were encouraged to join in.

• **Newton Centre Business Recycling Project:**

**S**tudents for a Greener World (SGW) invited Newton Centre businesses to participate in a one-day pick-up of recyclable paper and cardboard. Volunteers went to participating businesses to pick up the recyclables. Volunteers brought wagons, carts, wheelbarrows, etc., to help carry it to the collection site. The City provided a dumpster at the site, then transported it to the Rumford Avenue Recycling Depot. SGW students managed this event with the hope that the City's new recycling contract will include businesses, non-profits, religious organizations, etc. People ages 11 and up were encouraged to join in.

• **Newton's 5th Annual Trade and Recycle Day:**

**S**wap 'til you drop! Back by popular demand. Newton residents brought useful but unwanted belongings for swapping, donating, recycling or reusing. Residents brought their stuff or just came to pick up something for free. People visited the City recycling web site for a list of acceptable items [www.ci.newton.ma.us/dpw/recycling](http://www.ci.newton.ma.us/dpw/recycling). They were also encouraged to visit a free web site to swap and trade stuff [www.WasteNotNewton.com](http://www.WasteNotNewton.com). People ages 11 and up were encouraged to join in.



Students (above) and adult participants display their artwork for the recycled quilt project



Students (right) assemble the art for the recycled quilt project



Here's the quilt — it's about 9 feet long by 5 feet tall & will be on display in the rotunda of City Hall during the last 3 weeks in May, along with the artwork from the Newton Student Energy Art & Essay Contest!



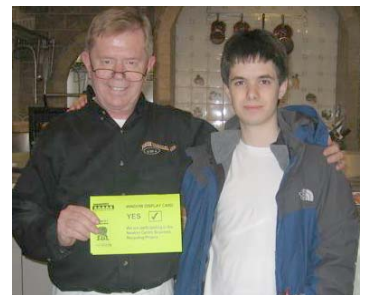
NNHS students of the Students for a Greener World Committee get right into the recycling action to help Newton Centre businesses with the cardboard recycling project



Stuffing the final cardboard into the recycling dumpster



Carolyn & Danylko help with the recycling



NNHS student Trevor Romich signs up the first Newton Centre business John Dewar & Co. for the cardboard recycling project