

green news

NEWSLETTER OF THE GREEN DECADE COALITION / NEWTON



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Carbon Offsets: Dealing with those Bali blues

Going to Bali soon and feeling guilty about the carbon dioxide your jet will spew on the way? One solution is to “carbon offset” your emissions. Your ticket takes you to an amazing land 19,100 miles roundtrip from Logan, while your purchase of a carbon offset is used to fund a wind turbine somewhere, or replant a forest. The goal is to exactly balance out new pollution, emitted as a result of your decision to pay for a seat on a giant airplane, with an equal reduction in carbon somewhere else. The market for these offsets is exploding right now, with the UK-based company Climate Care reporting ten-fold growth from 2005 to 2006. Over 80% of this growth is for people offsetting their travel. It appears that many suffer from those Bali blues.

If only this new market were easier to negotiate! Using the classic “Green Tags” program from the Bonneville Environmental Foundation website, Bali-bound passengers will learn that their personal emissions come to a breathtaking 26,000 pounds, and cost \$380 to fully offset. But using the calculator of the highly-ranked Climate Care we will find that this same roundtrip flight results in just 11,000 pounds of gases and costs just \$81 to offset. Confused? There are reasons for these discrepancies but the fact that this market is riddled with uncertainties will inevitably discourage some consumers from participating. That is a

shame, because there’s no question that carbon offsets must be part of the equation as we strive to leave the Oil Age behind.

The Green Decade Coalition and other groups are sorting through this mess, trying to come up with some “best practice” guidelines. In the meanwhile we use the catchy rule of thumb: “matching grant programs are mighty smart.”

That brings us to the New England Wind Fund. When you support this Fund, your money is tripled: a \$100 donation helps get wind turbines financed somewhere in New England, plus the City of Newton gets a dollar-for-dollar match to put solar panels on schools, plus a low-income community gets an equivalent match, also for solar panels on public buildings. Plus it’s tax-deductible because the supporting organization is a non-profit!

Go to www.newenglandwind.org, pay whatever you can afford, and enjoy your travels.

by Eric Olson

Buy your green raffle tickets this summer!

Green Decade is running a raffle this year to support all the great work we do. Besides our previous successful campaign to install solar panels on the Newton Community Service Center, our Energy Committee recently led the effort to raise enough money for New England Wind Fund to install solar panels on all four of Newton’s middle schools. Also, our High Performance Building Coalition successfully lobbied the city to have the new Newton North High School design evaluated using life cycle costs and meet LEED’s standards.

We’ve collected some great prizes:

- **\$300 Whole Foods gift certificate**
- **\$450 Raleigh Coasting Bike** - No more fiddling to switch gears, this bike changes gears automatically like a car. Comfortable upright position. Wide padded seat. Leather trim. The perfect easy rider. These bikes just came in last week and are already almost sold-out on the East Coast. But we got ours before they disappeared!
- **1 month’s mowing from Clean Air Lawn Care.** Clean Air Lawn Care uses electric mowers powered by solar panels on their truck. Quiet, clean, and green.
- **More prizes on-line** at our website (over \$1,100 in value total). Help us make this fundraiser a success and keep Green Decade going strong. Tickets are available at www.greendecade.org

by Peter Smith, Jean Bartholomew, Lucia Dolan — Fundraising Committee

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Care to car pool?



One way to reduce the emission of green house gases is to make cars that get better mileage, but a more immediate solution is to encourage fewer car trips through the practice of car-pooling. The 2000 Census reported that 75 percent of commuters drive to work alone. We identified five web sites that promise to connect drivers looking to share rides to and from similar destinations. We haven't tried any of these services, so we can't endorse any of them, but they look promising and appear to be free-of-charge. Here's the list:

www.icarpool.com; www.carpoolconnect.com; www.erideshare.com; www.carpoolworld.com; www.wedrivethere.com. If you do try them, please let us know how it goes.

We also noted a recent article in the Boston Globe about a new service that began this past Earth Day. Started by Robin Hess, the founder of Zipcar Inc., the online service brokers trips between friends, neighbors, and strangers, then automatically divvies up the cost, the seats in the car, and the carbon dioxide emissions. Check it out at www.GoLoco.org.

by Ira Krepchin

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.

Choose tap water over bottled water

A recent study by Food & Water Watch reports that choosing tap water over bottled water is better for consumers' health, their pocketbooks, and the environment. In 2005, Americans, bombarded with heavy advertising that implied bottled water is safer than tap water, spent \$8.8 billion for almost 7.2 billion gallons of non-sparkling bottled water. However, the study notes that bottled water generally is no healthier than tap water, and that the federal government requires far more rigorous safety testing and monitoring of municipal drinking water than bottled water.

In addition, producing bottles requires significant amounts of energy, and the bottles may be trucked or flown thousands of miles adding CO2 to the atmosphere and ultimately becoming a municipal solid waste problem. The conclusion—consumers should drink from the tap. Food & Water Watch is also urging Congress to establish a clean water trust fund that would give communities the financial help they need to invest in healthy and safe drinking water.

The full report is available on the web at www.foodandwaterwatch.org/water/pubs/reports/take-back-the-tap.

In Newton, our drinking comes from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) which recently opened a new state-of-the-art water treatment facility to serve MWRA's 41 communities. Located in Marlborough, the plant uses ozonation in combination with chlorination to treat 270 million gallons of water a day. This method of disinfecting drinking water dramatically reduces the amount of chlorine in our drinking water, and improves its overall quality. For more information about Newton's water supply, see www.ci.newton.ma.us/Exec/pr/2005/07192005PRESS.htm.

by Ira Krepchin

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!

Amount	Person/Family	Business
\$ 20	Basic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a
50	Friend	Basic
100	Donor	Friend
250	Patron	Donor
500	Benefactor	Patron
1000	Really Green	Benefactor

Please circle your category

For Friend or higher contribution, we acknowledge your donation in green news unless you check here

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



Fran Seasholes, Betsy Leavitt and Rohna Shoul all were honored with flowers and certificates of appreciation for their exceptional service to the Green Decade at a ceremony on June 25, 2007 at the Newton Public Library.

Green Decade honors volunteers at annual meeting

We honored Fran Seasholes for her outstanding service for sixteen years as coordinator for all registrants to the "Urban Ark" Seminars at the home of the Del Porto's in Newton Centre. Using her wonderful skills and amazing energy she has shepherded 50 "Urban Ark" seminars since 1991 with more than 1,054 attendees; all contacted, insured payment and scheduled by Fran. We estimate more than \$8,500 has been raised by this program for the Green Decade. We honored Betsy Leavitt, landscape designer,

who for years has hosted our annual plant sale at her home. She has organized the volunteers to identify the donated plants, labeled the plants and arranged them by their shade and sun tolerance. The sales took over her driveway for a number of days and always culminated in success, contributing additional funds to the Green Decade. We also honored outgoing board members Rohna Shoul, Karen Albert and Amelia Ravin all of whom are now on our advisory board. Dan Ruben was honored for his years as Vice President.

1st Prize:



2007 Raleigh Cruise Control Bicycle

You saw it in the Boston Globe Magazine 4/8/07 "A three speed bike that changes gears for you? Revolutionary!"

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COALITION/NEWTON 

2nd

Prize: \$300 Whole Foods Gift Certificate

Raffle!

Other Prizes Include:

- 1 month of mowing from Clean Air Lawn Care
- \$110 Direct Tire Services Gift Certificate
- \$50 Skipjack's Restaurant Gift Certificate

Tickets only \$10 — 3 for \$20 Buy on-line at www.greendecade.org or at any GDC event or info booth

Net proceeds for general operating expenses of Green Decade, 501c(3) environmental non-profit. Drawing planned Sept, 2007. Winners listed on GDC website. We reserve the right to add additional prizes and extend the date of the drawing. For more info: 617-965-1995 or info@greendecade.org

Come to Green Decade/Mass. Climate Action Network's booth at AltWheels festival (Sat., Sept. 28 — free kid's activities)

This year AltWheels Energy Freedom Festival is coming to Boston City Hall Plaza! It's all free! We will be there to share our message of sustainability with our model "How to be green house." We need volunteers on Friday and Saturday! Call 617 233-6071 to sign up.

- **Children's Museum** - The Children's Museum will bring their interactive children's colorful and fun exhibit that will engage children of all ages in the creative quest for successful solutions through games and activities.
- **Museum of Science Energy Rocket** - Visitors to this area

will learn about the benefits, challenges, and tradeoffs of various technologies. Organizers will lead visitors in engineering design challenges in which they'll attempt to generate sufficient energy using various alternative sources (examples include solar and even "kid power") to power a hydrogen-fueled rocket, or make biodiesel fuel from vegetable oil.

• **New England Aquarium Van** - The Animal Ambassador Program is part of the Aquarium's mission to "present, promote and protect the world of water." This informal science program features a live African penguin and presents a lively conservation education program. Using live animals, exhibits and creative drama, they bring a slice of the New England Aquarium to kids!

• **Solar Car Race Competition** - Students will race their solar cars on a track at the festival. Students design their own vehicles and try them out on the race course.

• **Entertainment** - Come and see jugglers, clowns, magicians, stilt walkers and unicyclists! There will be musicians playing drums, jazz and rock & roll. We expect to have Asian dragon dancers, balloon artists, mimes, and face painters as well as chances for kids to do their own art and enjoy other activities all day. Come make your own flag! There will be prizes, old fashion cars, and all kinds of food and drinks for sale. Come meet celebrities and get them to give you their signatures.

by Peter Smith

! We need you at the farmers' markets -it's fun!

One hour (or more) - Join another volunteer at the Green Decade information table during Farmers' Markets, Tuesdays, 1:30 to 6pm at Cold Spring Park or Fridays, 1:30 to 6pm at Post 440 on California Street in Nonantum through September.

Help us tell people about Green Decade's work!

We ask people to work for at least an hour.
Please contact **Maeve Ward**:
617 527-5331 or info@greendecade.org

What is important?

"Amount of money spent per year worldwide on bottled water:

\$100 billion.

Amount per year needed to meet the United Nations' goal of giving everyone access to drinkable water by 2015:

\$11.3 billion"

The page that counts (YES! a journal of positive futures, p. 16 Spring 2007.)



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CALENDAR

July to October	Green Decade Table @ Farmers' Market volunteers needed, call for more information, 617 965-1995.
Sept 28-29 Fri - Sat	AltWheels Energy Freedom Festival on Boston City Hall Plaza , all day, lots of kids activities —Green Decade table needs volunteers. call: 617 965-1995.
Send environmental events to <i>GREEN NEWS</i> . email to Ira Krepchin by Friday, Sept. 14, 2007 irapk@alum.mit.edu . We will list as space permits.	

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Annual Green Decade environmental leadership awards to an organization, individuals, and a business

(continued on other side)

Community Group



Jon Rogosin, Gene Rubin, Sam Fogel, Peter Barrer, Rohna Shoul (Commission), Rebecca Smilley, President, representatives of the board of directors for the Angino farm and representatives from the Newton Farm Commission accepted their awards.

The Green Decade Coalition/Newton presented its 2007 Community Organization Environmental Leadership Award to the Newton Community Farm and the Newton Farm Commission at a ceremony June 25 at the Newton Free Library during the 2007 annual meeting. Newton Community Farm, Inc. is the non-profit operator of Newton Angino Community Farm. They operate the city-owned farm, the last farm in the City of Newton, for the benefit of the public.

Their mission is to preserve and improve this historic open space site and building for the benefit of the community, to provide local, sustainably grown produce, and to educate the public about environmental practices, sustainable use of land and other natural resources.

A portion of the food grown on site is donated to people in need through the Newton Food Pantry. Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) subscribers receive a weekly

or bi-weekly allotment of delicious, sustainably and locally grown produce throughout the growing season from June 13th to late October.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) subscriptions are sold out for the 2007 season. However, farm-grown produce is available to non CSA participants at the on-site farm stand Tuesday through Saturday, at the Cold Spring Farmers' Market on Tuesday afternoons, and the California Street Farmers' Market (American Legion Post 440) on Friday afternoons.

This community project involves many residents on "volunteer teams." In addition to farm work, the farm asks volunteers to help with building projects, bookkeeping, website development, graphic design, fundraising, and editing their e-newsletter.

Since the City owns the farm property, the Mayor and Aldermen appointed individual residents and aldermen to the Farm Commission to oversee the Farm program. We honor them as well for supporting this successful program.

by Peter Smith

Thanks for donations go to:



BENEFACTOR: Anonymous

DONORS: Mark R. Dyen, Newton Highlands Congregational Church (kids Sunday collection 5/20/07)

FRIENDS:

Mr. & Mrs. Lalor Burdick, Jim & Carole Slattery



The City of Newton's Angino Farm & buildings

Annual Green Decade environmental leadership awards to an organization, individuals, and a business (continued on other side)

Business

The Cambridge Savings Bank received the Green Decade Coalition/Newton 2007 Environmental Leadership Award for their Newton branch and their area-wide policies.

The Cambridge Savings Bank, with 15 branches in Cambridge, Newton Centre and surrounding towns, has received many awards for its environmental programs.

We honored this business with this award not only for the two kilowatt photovoltaic solar array it has installed on the Newton Centre branch, but for its clear commitment to the environment as a business for many years.



Cambridge Savings Bank Senior Vice President Nelson Goddard accepted the 2007 Business Environmental Leadership Award from Green Decade Coalition/Newton Past President Peter Smith.

Cambridge Savings was the first bank in the nation to be recognized by the Environmental Protection Agency as an Energy Star Leader.

Their program includes energy conservation that started in 2001, making its facilities more efficient through equipment upgrades and an employee training and incentive programs.

They reduced the per square foot energy usage in their facilities by 25% and total energy use by 13% between 2001 and 2004 while increasing building area by 16%. They reduced CO₂ emissions associated with the bank's energy

Individual

Sally Rosen, Newton South High School Environment Club Advisor and science teacher was honored with the Green Decade Coalition/Newton 2007 Environmental Leadership Award for an individual.

Under Sally's guidance, the Newton South High School Environment Club has brought back school-wide paper recycling for the first time since the recent school renovations and increased the tons of paper collected substantially. She also worked with the club to successfully reactivate a program to recycle cans and bottles. The club is also starting a program to collect "returnables" for Project Plenty which is a United Nations affiliated organization that supports a myriad of projects worldwide.

In September, Sally and the club are implementing, an initiative to collect 2000 cans and bottles per month. The money they collect will go to support a school garden in rural Belize. They hope to move further with this relationship to involve the globalization program at the high school — maybe taking a trip to Belize in 2009.

Sally and the club have also started to work on a landscaping program, which will involve planting native species around the high school. They have received donations of \$3000 so far to support this program. The club is working with a parent on this project who is a landscape architect. They also have sponsored an "Earth Day" at the high school for the past 2 years. Next year, Sally reports, her focus will be on getting the staff at the high school not only to recycle, but more importantly, to reuse their materials.

by Peter Smith

use by more than 500,000 pounds. Their goal is to have all of their branch offices attain EnergyStar designation. An electric heating system in the Newton office was recently disconnected and timers were removed from the office lighting system toward the EnergyStar goal.

The bank's paper use reduction and recycling program which includes paper shredding and recycling for customer information security has saved the equivalent of 1900 trees since May 2002.

The bank is working with the Mass Technology Collaborative (MTC), investigating further opportunities to use renewable energy systems in bank buildings.

The bank worked with MTC to establish a loan program for people interested in purchasing solar technology for residences and has purchased wind generation credits. The bank's commuter Program allows employees to purchase Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority passes at reduced rates.

by Ed Cunningham, Peter Smith