

# GO GREEN



A snapshot of an eco-friendly environment  
HOME • WORK • TRANSPORTATION  
COMMUNITY

Thursday, April 21, 2011

New Jersey Herald



## INSIDE:

- Community gardens bloom
- Wind power industry grows
- Earth Day festivities
- Groups to help you go green
- Recycling days planned

David Oberstein, above, demonstrates how to measure the distance between planting tomatoes at the Roseville Community Garden workshop at Hudson Farm in Byram.

## RECYCLING

# Earth Day event promotes recycling

Most of us have gone green by recycling. We separate cans, plastic and glass, cardboard, magazines, newspapers out of the garbage stream and either place them curbside for pickup or take them to the recycling center.

### Recyclables include:

Newsprint  
Corrugated Cardboard  
Chipboard, (cereal boxes, etc.)  
Magazines and Junk Mail,  
Office Paper  
Containers: #1 Plastic, #2 Plastic, Tin and Bimetal Cans, glass (including colored)  
Aluminum pans, cans & pie plates  
Old clothing  
Tires  
Motor Oil

Waste motor oil should be dropped off in plastic containers no larger than 5 gallons, and should not be mixed with antifreeze, degreasers, gasoline, etc.

Waste antifreeze should be

dropped off in plastic containers no larger than 5 gallons, and should not be mixed with motor oil, gasoline, degreasers, etc.

Household batteries including all A, AA, AAA, C and D sizes, flashlight type batteries, hearing aid, watch, calculator and other button type batteries may be recycled. Lead acid car and hobby batteries should not be included.

On Friday, May 6, recycling and energy conservation will leap to the forefront at the SCMUA Earth-Energy Educational Forum.

The Sussex County Municipal Utilities Authority and the Wallkill River Watershed Management Group will host its sixth Annual Earth Day event on May 6, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the SCMUA Solid Waste/Recycling Facility, located at 34 South Route 94, Lafayette.

The event, called Earth Energy Day, promotes renewable energy and encourages energy conservation.

In addition to providing opportunities to participate in different environmentally focused, hands-on interactive learning activities, the SCMUA Earth Energy Day will look to help participants become more aware of, and interested in, such topics as proper solid waste disposal, recycling, watershed management, composting, solar power, and individual energy conservation practices.

As a way to promote environmental stewardship and spread valuable environmentally focused information and educational material, an interactive display and activity center will be set up on the lawn areas adjacent to the residents recycling center. The activity center will consist of numerous exhibitors and partners who will all be working with students from schools as well as residents who are visiting the SCMUA on this given day.

Other event features include:

- Learn about composting with AG Choice. Pot a free tree to take home and plant.
- Learn about hazards to the environment from the Sussex County HAZMAT Team.
- Interactive displays by Sussex County Mosquito Control and Clean Communities.
- Find out about the newest craze "Geocaching".
- Hands on activities by Friends of the Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge.
- Learn about new Alternative Energy technologies. Including solar, propane and Landfill-Gas-To-Energy.

Admission is free to the event. A food drive is being conducted to collect non-perishable food items for NOREWESCAP. Also used, clean jeans are being collected for Operation Quiet Comfort.



Stacks of newspapers collected for recycling are seen in the recycling area at the SCMUA facility in Lafayette.

Earth Day events being held in area. Page 10

## Recycling Schedule

The Sussex County Municipal Utilities Authority in Lafayette 2011 Spring Schedule of Recycling Events:

### March 31 to June 30

Boat Shrink Wrap Plus Recycling Program; In its fourth year, this state-wide recycling effort aims to reduce the amount of shrink wrap and other non-biodegradable boating-related waste material in the waste stream. Approximately 500,000 pounds of shrink wrap material is used annually in New Jersey for shrink-wrapping boats for winter storage. The program includes two drop-off locations in Sussex County:

- Danforth's Inc., located at 60 Main St. (Route 517) Ogdensburg, Tuesday - Saturday, 9 a.m. to noon 973-827-5456.
- SCMUA, located at 34 South Route 94, Lafayette, Monday - Saturday, 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.. 973-579-6998.

For more information about the Shrink Wrap Plus Recycling Program, contact the Sussex County Municipal Utilities Authority or visit [www.scmua.org](http://www.scmua.org).

### May 20 and June 17 (third Friday of each month)

Monthly Shredding Services for Sussex County residents and businesses. SK Paper Shred, a Branchville-based mobile

document destruction company provides affordable, safe, and secure shredding of your sensitive documents on the third Friday of every month from 9 a.m. to noon, at the SCMUA Solid Waste/Recycling Facility Entrance. The cost is \$6 per legal/letter-sized box, no limit. At the end of each event all residual shredded paper is processed at the SCMUA for recycling.

### Don't leave your TV by the curb!

Recycle it Saturday, May 14. 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.

E-Waste Recycling Event; The state Department of Environmental Protection enacted new regulations under The New Jersey Electronic Waste Management Act (N.J.A.C. 7:26a-13) effective Jan. 1 that bans landfilling of certain electronics as solid waste. These electronic items called "Covered Electronics, include televisions, desktop or personal computers, monitors and portable/laptop computers that must be recycled. Covered electronics are not picked up at the curb by your garbage hauler.

All other electronics are considered "Non-Covered Electronics," and are not required to be diverted for recycling.

The SCMUA has partnered with Sims

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



**connect • collect • conserve**

## 2011 Schedule

Information  
973-579-6998  
[www.scmua.org](http://www.scmua.org)

**DID YOU KNOW?** The Sussex County MUA provides the following **FREE** Recycling Services to residents and businesses:

**Household Hazardous Waste Days – 6/4/11 & 11/5/11**  
Dispose of lead & oil base paints, stains, thinners, pool chemicals, mercury, lubricants, chlorine, driveway sealer, fluorescent bulbs, household batteries and more. **Limits:** 100 lbs dry, 10 gal liquid waste, 25 fluorescent bulbs per vehicle  
Scale charge for larger quantities

**Electronic Waste\* Recycling Days – 3/19, 5/14, 7/30 & 9/17/11**  
*\*Landfill disposal ban on certain electronics - See Informational Pamphlet or website*  
E-Waste examples include: computers, printers, cell phones, televisions, VCR's, DVD & CD's, fax & copiers, radio & stereos, etc. **Limits:** Up to 5 items per vehicle  
Scale charge for larger quantities

**Monthly Medical Waste Collection**  
1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of every month  
10:00 am - 12:00 pm  
Fee charged by vendor

**Monthly Shredding Service**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of every month  
9:00 am - 12:00 pm  
\$6.00 per 40 lb box - no limit

**Recycling Center – Open Monday through Saturday**  
Commingled Containers (glass, plastic & aluminum)  
Chipboard (food, cereal & tissue boxes and other gray paperboard)  
Cardboard Office Paper & Junk Mail  
Newsprint Motor Oil/Antifreeze  
Clothing American Flags  
*\*Household Batteries - New sorting requirements  
See Informational Pamphlet or website*

**Vegetation – Mulch & Compost\***  
Sussex County residents can hand load Regular Mulch and Compost for free!  
*(\*The SCMUA will load Colorized Mulch & Compost for a nominal fee)*

34 South Route 94, Lafayette, NJ 07848

Hours of Operation: Monday-Saturday 7:00 am – 2:00 pm

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**INSTALL** We procure the necessary materials to install your system, prepare the site, execute the installation and complete the electrical interconnection to the utility grid.

**MONITOR & MAINTAIN** There are many benefits to owning a system that performs at its peak – We can help!

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**[www.EastCoastAlternativeEnergy.com](http://www.EastCoastAlternativeEnergy.com)**

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# 20 EASY WAYS TO GO GREENER AT HOME



Switch all your light bulbs to CFLs.  
(or at least switch a few)

Stop using disposable bags – order some reusable bags.

Use cloth napkins daily instead of paper.



Fix leaky faucets to conserve water.

Reuse scrap paper. Print on two sides, or let your kids color on the back side of used paper.

Drive the speed limit, and combine all your errands for the week in one trip.



Wash laundry in cold water instead of hot.

Don't turn on lights at all for as long as you can – open your curtains and enjoy natural light.

Turn off your computer completely at night.



Walk or ride a bike to your errands that are two miles or closer.



Pay as many bills as possible online.

Buy an inexpensive reusable water bottle, and stop buying plastic disposable bottles.

Support local restaurants that use food derived less than 100 miles away.



Before buying anything new, first check your local [craigslist.org](http://craigslist.org) or [www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org).

Install a low-flow shower head. Many models are now designed to provide high pressure, while using less water.

Opt for old age. When choosing hardwood flooring, consider using reclaimed wood.



Lower the temperature on your hot water heater.

Put a stop to unsolicited mail – sign up on [www.optoutprescreen.com](http://www.optoutprescreen.com).

Buy a laptop computer. They use considerably less energy than a desktop.



Switch one appliance to an energy efficient model.

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KG Companies has been in business in the Sussex County area for over 20 years. KG has a long list of both residential and commercial projects in Sparta and around the county. Dedication to quality and integrity makes KG the number one choice for quality conscious individuals. Extensive experience in structural, roof and electrical systems separates KG from the competition and makes them the only choice in Sussex County for quality solar installations. Don't trust your home or business to a company with limited knowledge and experience. Trust the professionals at KG Solar and Renewable Energy.



# EASY WAYS TO GO GREENER AT WORK

*Pam Sammarco of Green Training Associates in Union Township (www.greentrainingassociates.com, recently spoke in Andover at a meeting of the New Jersey Association of Women Business Owners, Sussex-Warren Chapter, about "Going Green with your Business." Here are some of her green tips for business:*

## Reduce waste.

Find ways to reuse or repair materials, tools, products. Recycle or donate everything possible including electronics, paper, plastics, soft and hard cans, clothes, etc.

Make your business and home more energy efficient. For example, use Energy Star equipment, turn lights off, install light timers and motion detectors. Plan driving routes carefully, teleconference or telecommuting or use mass transit to avoid driving, install or purchase alternative energy sources: solar, wind power and vehicles: hybrid, or electric cars. Drive 60 mph or less to maximize gas efficiency.

## Conserve Resources:

Make process, product and service improvements that conserve natural resources, and increase operational efficiencies.

Green your workforce through recruiting employees who value sustainability, embed sustainability in your mission, vision, values, and develop sustainability competencies, training, and human resource strategies.

## Seek Innovation:

Regularly research your industry and benchmark other companies for leading edge best practices in sustainability.

Take an interdisciplinary, collaborative and systems approach to your company's strategy. All sectors, industries and job functions can contribute to interacting with your company. For example, consider greening your supply chain, and manufacturing processes.

Use local companies to supply raw materials for your product line to support the state and national economy and reduce transportation costs and carbon footprint.

Connect with your employees and engage them in what motivates them to act more sustainably and what ideas they can contribute to preserve the environment and reduce use of natural resources. Take up a green cause relevant to your business-conserving water, cleaning up the parks or beaches, donating time to build homes.

## Develop a Sustainability Progress Report for your company:

Create organizational goals or targets, metrics, tracking, monitoring and reporting of your sustainability priorities.

## DO GAS PRICES HAVE YOU "OVER A BARREL?"

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# Recycling Schedule

CONTINUED FROM  
PAGE 2

Recycling Solutions to provide the E-Waste collection and recycling service at the Solid Waste/Recycling Facility. SRS transports the electronic material to their Edison, New Jersey facility for proper demanufacturing and recycling.

Used consumer electronics could harm the environment if disposed of improperly. E-Waste contains lead, mercury, nickel, cadmium and other hazardous materials. In planning for E-Waste Recycling in Sussex County, the SCMUA has worked with local municipalities,

businesses, schools and residents to increase awareness of the program. The ever-increasing development of new electronic devices being matched by the escalating demand of consumers, needs to be offset by providing opportunities for safe collection and recycling.

## Saturday, June 4

Household Hazardous Waste Event; the first of two free events held annually at the SCMUA Solid Waste/Recycling Facility from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. The SCMUA contracts with a specialized hazardous waste vendor to service



Latex paint can be brought to the SCMUA at any time. However, oil-based paints and stains are hazardous waste and can be brought to the landfill only on certain days.

the collection event. Many jobs around the home require the use of products containing hazardous components such as oil-based paints,

stains and varnishes, paint thinners and solvents, pesticides and herbicides, pool chemicals, household cleaners, aerosol spray products,

rechargeable batteries, mercury-containing products such as thermometers, thermostats, and fluorescent bulbs. These products that require disposal are known as "household hazardous Waste."

Materials that constitute household hazardous waste range from more obvious ones like those mentioned above, as well as old gasoline and pool chemicals, to lesser-known ones like mercury.

To discourage residents from disposing of household hazardous waste in the garbage or

other improper disposal, The SCMUA hosts these free household hazardous waste days in the spring and fall at its Solid Waste/Recycling facility, in Lafayette.

The second event will be held Nov. 5.

Latex paint, motor oil, alkaline or mixed household batteries, asbestos, regulated medical waste and certain other materials are not accepted during the household hazardous waste events, as they can be brought to the SCMUA any day. Contact the SCMUA directly for more information, 973-579-6998.

For more information, visit [www.scmua.org](http://www.scmua.org).



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# Community gardens bloom around county

BY LYNDASAY CAYETANA BOUCHAL  
lbouchal@njherald.com

The late afternoon sun warms the summer-kissed necks of children and their parents as they leisurely chit-chat and work their gardens, collecting ripe red tomatoes and watering the remaining flowers, herbs and vegetables.

The Roseville Community Garden is one of few community supported gardens in Sussex County. A community garden is a single piece of land cultivated collectively by a group of people. Sometimes the gardens are open to the public, other times they are dependent upon lease agreements and memberships.

"Last year, everybody came out and gardened at the same time and spent time with the other families," said former vice president of the Roseville Community Garden David Oberstein. "It's a nice community meeting place and a really natural one."

The Roseville Community Garden, which was donated by Hudson Farm owner Peter Kellogg last spring, is made up of 66, 15-by-15-foot plots and an irrigation system.

Oberstein, one of Roseville's garden consultants and workshop instructors, said Kellogg became interested in the effects of the recession and how it affected people's decisions. Kellogg began doing more research and drew many parallels between the Great Depression and today's economic malaise, including findings that more people choose to grow their own food in order to conserve money.

To assist in this effort, Kellogg donated the one-acre garden to Forest Lakes residents in Byram, a community that cannot grow vegetation because of its rocky soil. All 66 plots have been leased for the 2011 growing season, which will begin next month. Annual dues are \$35 to help pay for communal gardening tools and an end-of-the-season harvest dinner. Families are limited to one plot.

"In terms of being able to provide for themselves, it's good for people to be less dependent on the food system with the rising costs of gasoline and food," Oberstein said. "(Community gardens) make people a little more independent."

## New garden in Hopatcong

Hopatcong resident Alice King presented the idea of a community garden to the Borough Council at the beginning of April. She said the average vegetable travels 1,500 miles to local supermarkets.

"We're the garden state," King said. "There's no reason why we should be getting vegetables from out of state."

From a health standpoint, a community garden would offer fresh, chemical-free produce.

"Why buy the potato that has been sprayed with an anti-sprouting chemical (or genetically altered food) so it can stay fresh in the supermarket or in transit for months at a time when you can grow it?" King asked.

King's hope is to create a community

garden that promotes organic gardening through free workshops and a true sense of community, where children enjoy being with adults. The number of plots and annual dues have yet to be determined as a potential spot for the garden is currently being scoped out. King would also like to include a picnic area for tables and barbecues.

King would also like to include low-income plots that would be free or offered at a reduced cost to families who could otherwise not afford a plot and raised beds to make the garden wheelchair accessible. The garden is open to anyone interested, King said.

King said the mayor and council are enthusiastic about a community garden in Hopatcong and 15 residents have approached her, interested in volunteering and hoping to have a plot reserved for their families.

## Sunset View Farm

A similar community-supported garden, open to the public, sprouted up three years ago at Sunset View Farm in Andover Township. Thirty of the 100 15-by-30-foot plots are occupied at \$400 per year, \$300 for seniors, or 20 hours of volunteer farm work. The dues also include professional workshops and gardening assistance.

"Everyone is so concerned with their children's future, financially especially," King said. "A lot of these things are out of our control, but the thing we can control is what they are eating today."

Byram Lakes resident and Roseville Community Garden member Karen Lauridsen said, "(The community garden) even got my kids to eat better because they are growing it themselves."

"My daughter, who does not eat vegetables, eats them now because she grew them," Lauridsen said.

The mother of three, who spent \$75 a week on produce, reaped the benefits of her own edible garden "several times over" within weeks. The initial start up cost was about \$225 to purchase seeds and fertilizer, but it was a cheaper alternative, she said. This year, the garden will be less expensive because her family will buy supplies in bulk.

"I cooked better, I ate better and it tastes so much better when you grow it," she said.

Last year, Lauridsen's family grew corn, watermelon, green beans, peppers, basil, and squash. Their raspberries weren't quite a success, but they had an overabundance of tomatoes. So they shared vegetables with their garden neighbors and they did the same with their extra produce.

"The garden gets the family involved and the kids involved. It taught them to share and it also taught them to be a part of the community."

Lauridsen was also thankful that "if you didn't know what to do, someone else helped you".

"It was such a great experience we're doing it again this year," she said.



Photo by Lyndsay Cayetana Bouchal/New Jersey Herald

David Oberstein, right, explains how to properly harvest basil leaves at the Roseville Community Garden workshop at Hudson Farm in Byram.

Information on becoming a community garden member or shareholders at Sunset View Farm is available at [www.sunsetviewfarm.com](http://www.sunsetviewfarm.com) or by calling 201-377-8147.

Information on becoming a shareholder at Genesis Farm can be found at [www.genesisfarm.org](http://www.genesisfarm.org) or by calling 908-362-7486.

Or, if you would like to become a member or volunteer at the potential Hopatcong community garden, contact Alice King at [hopatconggarden@gmail.com](mailto:hopatconggarden@gmail.com).

County residents who'd like to participate in a community supported garden but don't have the time, have another option: Community supported agriculture. Community supported agriculture represents groups that will grow produce and sell shares. Sunset View Farm offers 50 year-round shares for \$735 or half-shares for \$485; Genesis Farm in Blirstown offers 300 shares, the most popular options being \$657 for three seasons or \$933 for the full year.

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## Junior Solar Sprints

# Environmental education in action as students build solar powered cars

For the eleventh consecutive year, TransOptions will be hosting the Junior Solar Sprints Model Solar Car Competition. On May 18, the competition will be held at the hockey rink in Newton; a rain date is scheduled for May 25. The race begins at 10 a.m. and is scheduled to run until approximately 1 p.m., followed immediately by the awards ceremony. The best time to stop by and watch Environmental Education in action is from 10 a.m. to noon.

TransOptions incorporated the competition into its environmental education curriculum as a collaborative, environmental education activity. The competition is a way to inspire future drivers to explore an alternative fuel by participating in a fun, learning project.

“The students are putting creativity, collaboration and science into action by building model racing cars and harnessing solar energy to power them. As future drivers, they are learning first-hand about an alternative fuel source and the environment,” comments TransOptions President, John F. Ciaffone.

Solar Sprint student teams start on a level playing field; they each receive basic components including a solar panel, a motor, wheels and axles along with rules for the competition. They spend weeks applying creativity, teamwork and science skills to design and build their unique model racing cars.

Entries are judged in the categories of speed, craftsmanship, innovation and technical merit. Each team is

also required to submit a documentation portfolio providing a record of their concept, design, development and comments.

A panel of four volunteer judges, drawn from local businesses and communities, volunteer their time and scientific expertise to evaluate student entries. Awards are presented to the first, second and third place winners during a ceremony immediately following the culmination of the races.

TransOptions will also be conducting a variety of environmental activities available to students in between their races. Environmental educators, non-formal educators and representatives from local nature centers will be on-hand during the activities.



Photo by Amy Paterson/New Jersey Herald -

Students hold folders over the solar panels that will power their cars as they prepare to race in a recent Division 2 Junior Solar Sprints in Newton.

## Join us for an Earth Day Celebration!

A day FULL of demos, samples, sales,  
give-aways, and great tips on how to make  
things better for us and our planet!

Saturday, April 23  
10am-5pm



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## Time to consider carpooling?

The advent of spring has brought more than longer days and milder temperatures. Just as spring beckons us to get out more, gas prices are soaring again. Commuters may be flashing back to 2009 when gasoline prices hit \$4 per gallon. As Yogi Berra once said, “it’s déjà vu all over again.”

According to AAA, the average household will spend approximately \$4,000 this year on gasoline at \$3 per gallon. That annual expenditure would increase to more than \$5,300 if gasoline prices rise to \$4 per gallon.

While driving to work appears to be the only option for many, TransOptions is encouraging commuters to consider carpooling. It’s an alternative to “pain at the pump” that can cut your fuel cost up to 50 percent.

Carpooling is the most expedient, popular and flexible commute option. Contrary to several widely-held misconceptions, only two people are required to form a carpool and they can decide how many days per week to share a ride. Carpooling, even one day per week, saves 20 percent on your weekly commute costs. Additionally, carpooling helps the environment since reducing traffic congestion improves air quality.

*According to AAA, the average household will spend approximately \$4,000 this year on gasoline at \$3 per gallon.*

Many commuters are reluctant to carpool because they may have to leave work unexpectedly. TransOptions addresses that concern by providing a free Emergency Ride Home up to two times per year to registered carpoolers if there’s an emergency or unplanned need to work late.

If you’re still not convinced it’s worth your while to carpool, TransOptions has an added additional incentive. The company just launched the GO Smart! commuter rewards club offering discounts from participating local merchants to commuters who share a ride at least one day per week. Look for details on at [transoptions.org](http://transoptions.org).

If you’re ready to consider carpooling, TransOptions free “Ridesharing” program can help you find someone with a similar commute who would like to share a ride. An application takes just minutes to complete and is available at [transoptions.org](http://transoptions.org) or by calling 973-267-7600.



# Are YOU Greener Than a 5th Grader?

1. What do you call the rain that contains chemical waste and causes damage to plants and animals?

- A. Acid Rain B. Smog C. Monsoon Rain D. Seasonal Rain

2. Most of the oil that we use is imported into our country from other nations. The oil is carried in huge sea-going tankers. Sometimes these tankers get damaged and the oil leaks into the oceans and seas. What is such an accidental discharge of oil into water bodies called?

- A. Water Pollution B. Oil Spill C. Oil Leak D. Tanker Leak

3. Which uses less water?

- A. Hand washing a load of dishes B. Running a dishwasher

4. In the two minutes it takes for you to brush your teeth, how much water goes down the drain?

- A. 1/2 Gallon B. 1 Gallon C. 2 Gallons D. 4 Gallons

5. To manufacture 85 million tons of paper, how many trees must be cut down and processed?

- A. 1.4 Billion B. 3 Billion C. 5.2 Billion D. 6 Billion

6. Which item does not belong in the recycling bin?

- A. Milk Jug B. Soda Bottle C. Detergent Bottle D. Styrofoam Cup

7. Each person in the United States generates less than 2 pounds of garbage everyday.

True False

8. What is the most common type of debris that litters our oceans?

- A. Bags B. Plastic Beverage Bottles C. Cigarettes D. Food Packaging

9. How big is the giant plastic patch in the Pacific Ocean?

- A. Twice the size of Texas. B. There is no such thing. C. As big as Africa. D. Twice the size of Rhode Island.

10. If coal is a fossil fuel, what does that mean?

- A. It can't be renewed. B. It's found at the bottom of the sea. C. It comes from dinosaur fossils. D. It comes from decomposed fossils.



## Check Your Answers!

1. A - Acid Rain  
2. B - Oil Spill  
3. B - Running a Dishwasher  
4. C - 2 Gallons  
5. A - 1.4 Billion  
6. D - Styrofoam Cup  
7. False - Every person in the United States generates 5 pounds of garbage daily!  
8. C - Cigarettes  
9. A - Twice the size of Texas.  
10. D - It comes from decomposed fossils.

## How Did You Do?

**10 Correct Answers?** - Congratulations! You're as green as green can be!

**7-9 Correct Answers?** - Good for you! You keep yourself well informed!

**4-6 Correct Answers?** - You're aware of green issues, but need to learn a little bit more.

**1-3 Correct Answers?** - Grab your nearest newspaper and get reading! There's lots of information out there about what is going on with our environment!

# Local Earth Day festivals honor 'Mother Nature'

By PHILLIP MOLNAR  
pmolnar@njherald.com

In the spirit of the county's "people and nature together" mantra, three upcoming festivals highlight Mother Nature's presence in northwest New Jersey.

The award-winning Vernon Earthfest enters its 11th year this May and organizers say the event to "celebrate and raise awareness" of the township's environment will be the best year yet.

"I think the location is ideal," said Melody Duffy, the administrator of the Vernon Chamber of Commerce.

Earthfest has taken place at the Vernon Police Athletic League building and Mountain Creek's South Peak in the past, but will now grace Heaven Hill Farms on Route 94, May 1, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The chamber is organizing the event along with Vernon Township Environmental Commission.

Duffy anticipates more than 60 vendors, as well as a handful of special exhibits. Some confirmed vendors are AmeriCorps, Girl Scouts of the USA, the Vernon PAL, bear and water environmental groups, and many others.

Events include Wolf Visions, an educational program featuring wolves, Shark's eye view, featuring a tank with an actual shark, a "Birds of Prey" event featuring birds from the Delaware River Raptor Center, a reptile exhibit featuring lizards, frogs, turtles, insects, and a baby alligator, and several others.

Activities include a hay maze, hay rides, petting zoo, sand art, and face painting.

Duffy said having the



Herald file photo

An attendee at a recent Vernon Earthfest is given an evergreen sapling.

Appalachian Trail going through Heaven Hill Farms was an added plus. The chamber is sponsoring a hike they call "Stairway to Heaven" to experience the view of the township from the trail.

Earthfest won a New Jersey Recreation and Parks Association award in the association's "special

events" category in March. For information, visit [www.vernonearthfest.com](http://www.vernonearthfest.com).

\*\*\*\*\*

Two other area environmentally themed events will compete for the hearts of nature lovers on April 30: The Blairstown Environmental Commission's Earth Day celebration and the Green & Lean Family Fest

at Sussex County Community College.

The Blairstown event will take place at Footbridge Park off Route 94 in Blairstown from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The commission will sponsor foot races down the Paulinskill Trail, guided canoe trips down the river, and other events.

"We know it is going to be a fun day for all and perhaps the start of a new township tradition," said environmental commission Vice-Chair Roger Gutzwiller in a press release. "Who will be the fastest runner? What will the kids learn about their own river? We invite the community to come out and see."

AmeriCorps and Blair Academy students will be conducting a "Project Wet" activity to teach kids about the importance of the watershed and the Paulinskill

River.

The canoe trips down the Paulinskill will be guided by naturalists highlighting the river's features and the flora and fauna along its banks. For information, visit [sustainableblairstown.org](http://sustainableblairstown.org).

\*\*\*\*\*

Also on April 30, the Green & Lean Family Fest at Sussex County Community College will be promoting a healthier lifestyle for environmentally-minded residents, from 1 to 5 p.m. The festival will feature health screenings, healthy food vendors, educational displays, environmentally-friendly products, green exhibits for home, garden, construction, business, energy, and conservation, as well as family entertainment. Information can be found at [sussexcounty-chamber.org](http://sussexcounty-chamber.org).



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# Wind power industry experiences steady growth

BY JEFF SISTRUNK

jsistrunk@njherald.com

While the sun's rays are grabbing all the attention on the green energy front, another natural phenomenon is slowly creeping up on the national radar.

Although wind power still makes up only a small fraction of the United States' electricity generating capacity, about 3 percent as of 2010, the option has been growing rapidly in recent years, according to figures from the American Wind Energy Association. The country's wind power industry grew by 15 percent in 2010 and, at the start of 2011, U.S. wind installations have a capacity of more than 40,000 megawatts, or enough to power 10 million homes. Only China, with a wind energy generating potential of 41.8 gigawatts, has a higher capacity.

As with solar power, wind power has been experiencing growth in the small-scale market as well as the large-scale commercial market, albeit at a slower rate.

Frank DeWitt, owner of Augusta-based Alternative Energy Solutions, which installs green energy systems, has a 120-foot wind turbine stationed in the back yard of his Augusta home alongside a 50-piece solar panel array. Both installations are 10 kilowatt appliances that transmit AC power into DeWitt's home that must be converted to DC by a bank of special inverters. After the energy is converted, it is fed into the main power supply via a sub-panel.

Since the turbine was installed, DeWitt said, it has generated more than 8,500 kilowatt hours of electricity. Together, DeWitt's wind and solar systems have reduced his energy costs by about 95 percent, he said. DeWitt added that modifications being made by the manufacturer to the wind system's control unit could boost its output by 20 percent.

The start-up cost to purchase the components for and install a small-scale wind system can be expensive, as much as \$100,000, but several incentives from state and federal agencies are available that can help defray that cost.

"With all the possible funding

## How a wind turbine works:

A turbine is made up of three parts: the rotor blades, the shaft and the generator. When the wind blows at a minimum speed of 8 to 10 m.p.h., it causes the blades to rotate. The blades in turn rotate the shaft, which transfers mechanical energy into the generator. This causes magnets in the generator to revolve around a conductor, which produces electricity. For more information, visit the American Wind Energy Association's website at [www.awea.org](http://www.awea.org) or the New Jersey Clean Energy Program's website at [www.njcleanenergy.com](http://www.njcleanenergy.com).

routes and energy savings, you'll usually end up paying off three-quarters of a wind system within the first year," DeWitt said.

Consumers and small businesses can apply for a federal tax credit that will cover 30 percent of the cost of the installed wind turbine. Another incentive from the United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Energy for America program can cover up to 25 percent of the total project cost for wind systems run by farms, small businesses, schools and municipal governments. Performance-based rebates for wind systems through the New Jersey Renewable Energy Incentive Program have been placed on hold, but should be re-opened within a couple of months, DeWitt said.

## Local rules and regs

Rules and regulations on wind power systems vary by municipality. Frankford is currently the only municipality in Sussex County with an ordinance on the books relating specifically to wind turbines. According to the ordinance, township residents must have at least 10 acres of property to put a turbine up. Blades included, the turbine can't be higher than 145 feet and must be set back from all property lines at a distance equal to 100 percent of the height of the structure plus 10 feet. All wind energy systems within the township must be designed solely for personal use, residents can't run commercial-

scale operations on their property.

## Big projects in the works

Inland sources of wind power have been in use in the United States for years, but homegrown energy companies are just now looking into another potentially high-yield option – offshore wind farms that funnel power produced by chains of offshore wind turbines to consumers through underwater transmission lines. In February, the U.S. Department of Energy released a document detailing a national strategy for implementing offshore wind power. According to the document, the department's long-term goal is to have 54 gigawatts of deployed offshore wind generating capacity by the year 2030.

At present, there are no offshore wind farms in U.S. waters, but several projects are in the works along the Atlantic coast. PSE&G has partnered with NRG Bluewater Wind to construct a 96-turbine wind farm about 20 miles off the coast of Ocean City. Before the two companies can begin construction, they must submit an application to and receive approvals from several state and federal agencies, including the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, said PSE&G spokesman Mike Jennings. The BPU is expected to begin accepting applications this summer, and the companies plan to make a submission, Jennings said. After BPU officials receive the application, it will take about six months for them to rule on it, he said, and, if approval is granted, installation of the wind farm will take from four to six years.

In early April, a company planning to build what could be the nation's first offshore wind farm said it had received some needed permits for the project from New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection. Fishermen's Energy of Cape May wants to build the wind farm about 2.5 miles off Atlantic City. It plans to erect six wind turbines that would produce up to 25 megawatts, capable of powering about 10,000 homes. The company said it has received three state permits for water quality and coastal development. But it still needs approval from the U.S.

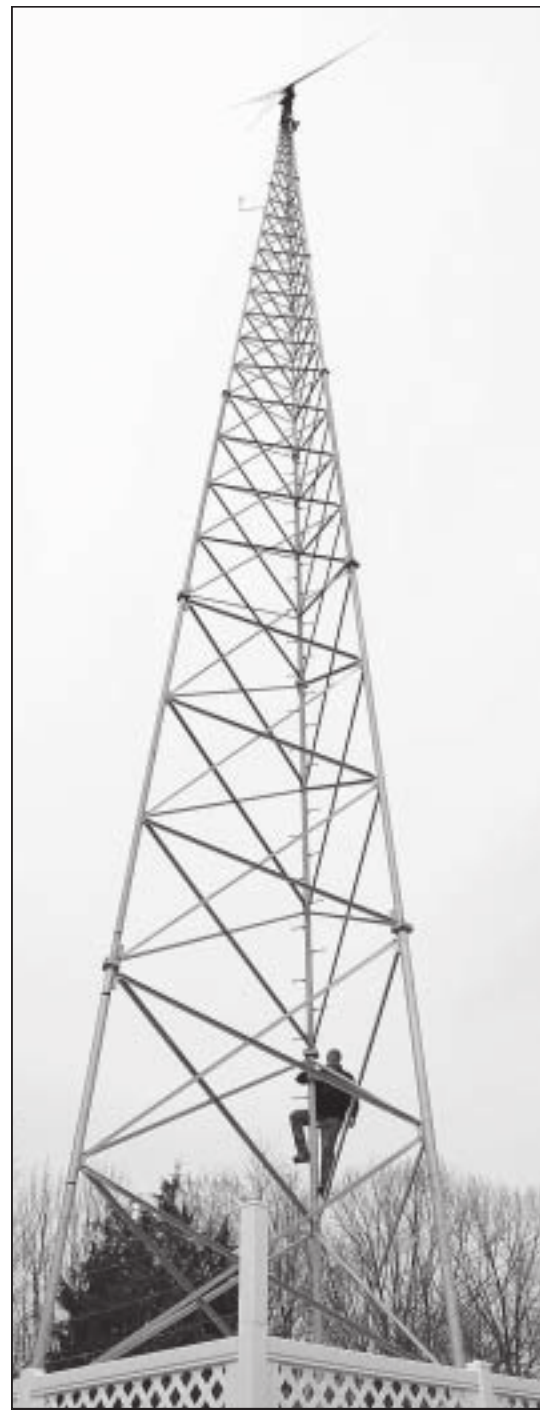


Photo by Sarah Hudock-Cole/New Jersey Herald

Frank DeWitt climbs the 120 foot wind turbine tower in his Frankford yard. The turbine, which DeWitt installed approximately 18 months ago, has the capacity to generate 10 kilowatts of electricity.

Army Corps of Engineers and the launch of a renewable-energy program in which polluters can buy offshore-wind credits.

If it gets all the needed approvals, the company hopes to start construction sometime in 2012.



# Shedding light on solar energy

KG Builders was formed in 1988 and in 2009 saw the emergence of the solar market and decided to get trained in the design and installation of solar systems. In 2010, the company started a Renewable Energy Division of KG Builders which is now an independent company called KG Solar and Renewable Energy. KG Solar is a licensed electrical contractor that handles everything from design through final approvals with its own crews.

The New Jersey Herald recently interviewed company owner, Kurt Gewecke, to get some answers to common questions for anyone who may be considering an alternative energy method.

*For the novice who would like to pursue possible energy solutions for their home, what would be the first things to consider?*

Roof orientation and shade are key elements of the viability of a solar system on any site. A solar system should face south or nearly so, although up to 90 degrees east or west of south is acceptable, and have full sun from the hours of 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the very least. The system can be ground mounted as long as the same parameters with regard to roof orientation exist.

*Are there any incentives in 2011 for consumers as far as tax credits, etc. goes?*

Residential clients can get a 30 percent investment tax credit. This is a tax credit not a deduction.

Commercial clients can get either a 30 percent investment tax credit or take a 30 percent treasury grant in lieu of the tax credit. In addition the system is eligible to be put on a MACRS depreciation schedule. In 2011 the federal government is offering a 100 percent bonus depreciation on various renewable energy installation including solar.

Everyone interested in taking advantage of tax credits and depreciation should contact a tax professional to assess the implication of any credits on their own tax situation.

*What motivates persons to pursue the installation of solar panels?*

The idea of being "green" at any cost motivates some, however the vast majority of our clients are motivated by the dual advantage of going "green" while making a smart financial investment. We are showing clients a pre-tax return on investment (ROI) of 4-5 year with rates of return of 20 to 25 percent. After tax analysis changes the numbers depending upon your tax bracket, but when a client compares current investments or IRA returns of 6 to 10 percent against 20 to 25 percent on a solar system the case for going green with solar is very compelling.

*Do you foresee even more schools and businesses installing solar units?*

Yes, the increase in the interest of solar energy is increasing every year. 2010 showed the fastest growth in the solar industry ever and, although the growth in 2011 is not as fast, it is still increasing.

*Have you seen your business grow as the popularity of solar energy has increased in Sussex County and the surrounding area?*

Yes, in 2011 we have already sold more solar projects in terms of volume than we did in 2009 and 2010 combined and expect to install over 3 mega watts (3000 kW) of solar energy products this year.

*The initial costs of installing solar energy systems can be costly, but offset by incentives. As time runs out on some of these incentives and funding for incentives gets used up as popularity increases, do you foresee even more affordable types of solar panels and systems being manufactured to make them more accessible to the average homeowner?*

The cost of a solar installation has come down 15 to 20 percent over the last year and a half. We do see module prices coming down and racking systems becoming more efficiently designed, which is reducing labor cost. The incentives have also seen a decline over the last year and a half so the out-of-pocket expense to anyone interested in solar has not really decreased. And the ROI has remained about the same.

For commercial clients, 2011 will be the ideal year to take advantage of the most incentives possible as we do not expect the 100 percent bonus depreciation or the grant to be extended to 2012.

*For those who qualify for incentives etc., what kind of savings can be expected?*

Residential 30 percent, commercial 55 to 65 percent depending upon your tax bracket.

*Some believe that the sun needs to be shining brightly for a solar panel system to generate any kind of power. Is that true?*

No, they work as soon as the sun comes up. That said, they only produce significant energy from about 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the summer and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the winter.

New Jersey gets an average of 4.2 sun hours per day. It is interesting to note that Arizona gets about 6.4 sun hours a day and Germany, which is the number one PV market in the world, only gets 3.6 sun hours a day. So New Jersey really is a great place for solar.

*For someone who cannot afford a solar panel system, are there other solutions that carry a smaller price tag or may be less invasive on home or property?*

Energy-efficient measures are always the most cost-effective way to save money, even when considering a solar system. For every \$1 you spend on energy efficiency you can reduce the cost of your solar system by \$4. Things like insulation, air sealing, identifying phantom electric load, etc. can all help reduce the cost of energy and your effect on the environment. You're going to ask what a phantom load is right? Phantom loads are things like cell phone chargers being left plugged in, clock radios, TV sets or other appliances equipped with instant on buttons are really never off and draw almost as much power when "off" as they are when they are in the obviously on position. Digital thermostats and time of day regulation of home heat, installation of on-demand hot water systems... there are literally thousands of ways for anyone to get on the energy band wagon.

*In your opinion, are we, as a country, headed in the right direction with our efforts to go green and use alternative energies?*

My view is not so much driven by saving the earth, although I do believe we are to be good stewards of this magnificent planet and beautiful country we have been entrusted with, but by what I believe to be one of the most important issues of our day, that being national security.

I do not believe we can continue down this road of ever increasing reliance on foreign energy sources. I am not under the illusion that solar energy is going to save America, but it is an integral part of an overall

plan to reduce energy consumption, not by sacrificing the luxuries we and our forefathers have worked so hard to establish, but by creating low cost-efficient and renewable domestically generated energy.

Energy policy is extremely complex and highly political, however, I think we all find common ground in our aspiration to use technology to think outside the box to create a brighter future for the next generation. What form that ultimately takes will be market driven.

Right now, the government is attempting to drive solar technology to a point that it makes economic sense and withstands normal market forces. I hope that point will come in the next 5 to 10 years. The interesting thing is, and what I tell our clients, regardless of where the technology goes and when normal market forces will sustain energy initiatives like solar, the forces that are in play today make the investment in solar a sound decision regardless of what happens in the future.

*Are there any new technologies on the forefront that you are particularly excited about and feel will impact the ability for Sussex County to continue moving forward with alternative energy solutions for homes and businesses?*

I see the development of efficient batteries and fuel cells as the future of energy. These technologies are in their infancy but will allow us to not only use but also store energy, making solar more efficient as a global energy source. I see the use of alternate fuels like natural gas and propane to power automobiles as very interesting and having a lot of promise in reducing our dependence on foreign oil.

*What do you believe will be the role of solar energy in this county over the long term? Do you see a day when the everyday use of solar energy is more commonplace than fossil fuels?*

I don't think solar energy is the entire answer by any means, yet it is, and will continue to be, a key ingredient in the overall reduction of fossil fuel use.



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Spring is the ideal time to enjoy the free, "green" and healthy benefits of walking. As we're out and about more during longer days, it's important to be alert, savvy and safe.

Whether crossing the street in town, walking recreationally or traversing a shopping center parking lot, pedestrians face a growing challenge to their safety from "distracted drivers." Increasing numbers of motorists are "distracted" especially by illegally texting or using a handheld cell phone while driving.

In New Jersey, more than 3,000 pedestrians were injured and 24 killed by motorists illegally using cell phones from 2006 to 2009.

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TransOptions, in partnership with Cycle Craft is announcing registration for the 2011 Northwest New Jersey Bike to Work Challenge! Throughout the month of May, commuters who live or work in Morris, Sussex, Warren, suburban Essex, Passaic or Union counties are encouraged to participate in this free, friendly challenge in celebration of National Bike to Work Month. The grand prize

winner will receive an electric bicycle worth \$2,310.

TransOptions has been hosting Bike to Work events for six years. Last year's participation by 150 plus registered bicyclists, reduced traffic congestion by 3,300 commuter miles and kept 3,023 pounds of pollutants from the atmosphere.

"Giving up a solo ride to work, even for one day, is a healthy, alternative commute which also reduces traffic congestion and air pollution," comments John F. Ciaffone, TransOptions president. "It's gratifying to see the event grow each year as more and more commuters realize the multiple benefits of bicycling," he adds.

The 2011 NWNJ Bike to Work Challenge runs from May 1 to May 31. Bicycle commuters can participate in teams of up to five people or as an individual. Participants must register at <http://www.transoptions.org/biketowork/register.php> to create a commuter profile where they will log their bicycle commuting trips and miles traveled each week. Weekly prizes will be awarded May to individuals who log the greatest number of miles and the most trips taken. Team prizes, additional prizes and the grand-prize winner will be awarded at the end of the challenge. Registration prior to May 1 is encouraged to increase your chances to win.

Employers can also participate in the challenge by encouraging their employees to enroll. At the end of the month, the company with the highest percentage of bike commuters per total number of staff during the month of May will be awarded the Bike Right Company Trophy.

Additionally, TransOptions will host several breakfast stops where bicycle commuters can enjoy complementary refreshments and receive challenge giveaways as they mingle with other riders and cycling professionals. Dates and locations for the breakfast stops will be announced soon.



••••• Bike Right Newsletter •••••

TransOptions publishes a free, monthly, online Bike Right newsletter for bicyclists which includes safety information, training classes, links to cycling articles and upcoming events. To enroll visit [TransOptions.org](http://TransOptions.org) or call 973-267-7600.

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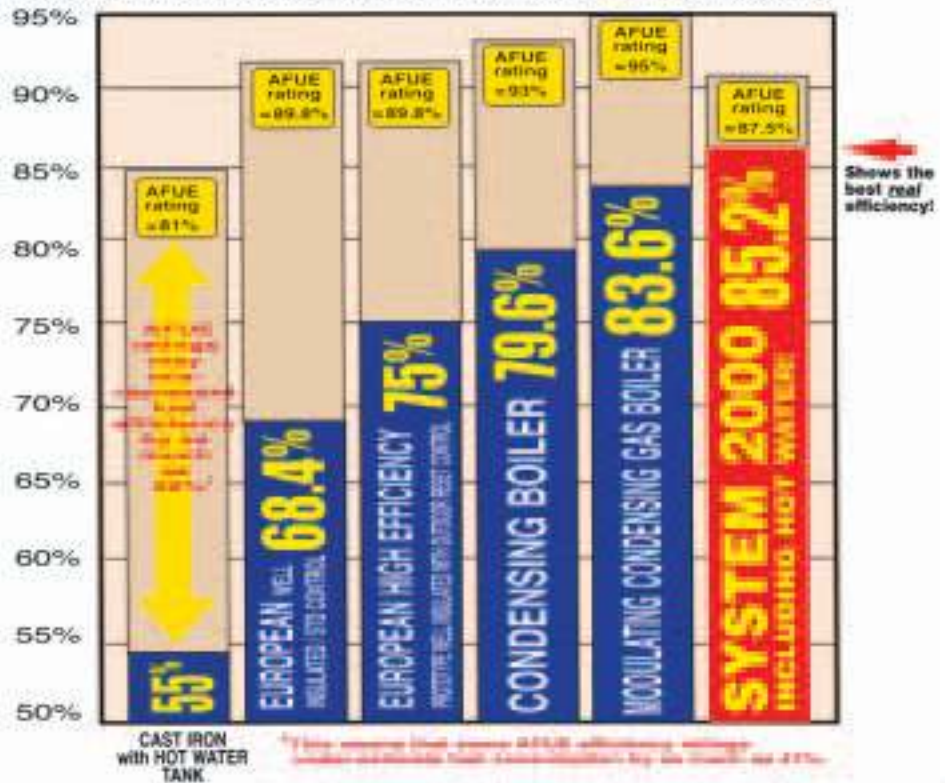
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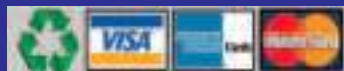
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# Groups that can help you go green

## Sustainable Jersey

Sustainable Jersey is a green certification program that “strives for a better tomorrow, one community at a time” and encourages towns to support local economies, practice responsible environmental conservation and embrace social equity and fairness, according to the program’s website.

In 2010, Sparta became the first municipality in Sussex County to be certified “bronze” – the first tier in the certification program – by Sustainable Jersey, and nine other county municipalities have registered with the program.

In order to become “certified,” participating municipalities must complete a certain number of tasks that promote the aforementioned initiatives. Priority areas include performing energy audits on municipal facilities, quantifying the town’s carbon footprint, making a pledge to exercise sustainable land use and taking stock of emissions and miles per gallon for all vehicles in the town’s fleet.

Since its launch in February 2009, Sustainable Jersey has certified 74 municipalities in the state, while another 260 have registered to start

the process. Those figures mean that more than half the towns in New Jersey are involved in the sustainability program in one stage or another.

According to its website, Sustainable Jersey identifies concrete actions that municipalities can implement to become certified and be considered leaders on the path to a sustainable community; provides clear “how to” guidance and tools to enable communities to make progress on each action; provides access to grants and identifies existing and new funding opportunities for municipalities to make progress toward the actions.

For more information, visit [www.sustainablejersey.com](http://www.sustainablejersey.com), or check the Facebook page of the Sparta Green Team.

## Transition Newton

Transition Newton is a grassroots organization based in Newton. The group, formed of residents from

Newton and surrounding areas, has started a transition initiative in the community because of its concern about climate change, peak oil and

Club, is hosting an evening May 4 with award-winning New Jersey filmmaker Jared Flesher and view the film “The Farmer and the Horse,” followed by



Photo by Daniel Freel/New Jersey Herald

**Guests of the New Jersey Electric Auto Association learn about Tesla Roadster electric vehicle during the association’s informational get-together held at the Chatterbox Restaurant, in Frankford.**

economic instability. “Transition” rebuilds communities so they can thrive. The group supports local businesses such as local food, transportation, energy conservation and clean energy. It shows films, hold discussions and workshops and distributes educational materials about enhancing food and water systems, economic security, energy and transportation.

The group, together with the SCCC Biology

discussion.

The event will take place at Sussex County Community College, Student Center Theatre, One College Hill Road, Newton. The film digs into difficult questions about sustainability, self sufficiency, and why we do the work we do.

The evening will begin with recognition of Edible Jersey’s Local Heroes and proceeds will benefit the Foodshed Alliance. Donation is \$10; \$5 for students.

For information on Transition Newton, contact Kevin Maher at [kmaher@post.com](mailto:kmaher@post.com); Kim Latham: [kimm-latham@gmail.com](mailto:kimm-latham@gmail.com) or Eric Derby: [derby.eric@gmail.com](mailto:derby.eric@gmail.com), or visit the website, <http://transitionnewton.wordpress.com>.

## New Jersey Electric Auto Association

Want to learn about electric cars? The New Jersey ElectricAuto-Association meets the third Tuesday of every month at the Morris County Library, from 7-8 p.m. For information, call 973-875-6276. The website is (<http://autos.groups.yahoo.com/group/NJElectricAutoAssociation>).

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# Composting tips for the backyard gardener

By **KATHY STEVENS**  
kstevens@njherald.com

My own foray into composting took place a few years ago at a composting workshop hosted by the Penn State Cooperative Extension, where I spent a few hours learning tips from experts on how to compost leaves, grass clippings and kitchen waste to enrich my garden. The bonus was a free, black plastic composting bin to tote home.

It took me a while to put the bin together, which came in halves with a door to be attached at the bottom to scoop out the compost that was ready for use. But after a bit of a struggle, I got the bin into one piece and staked it down to protect it from tipping in the wind. My bin stood ready to collect leaves, eggshells, banana peels and other compostable matter. I

envisioned my compost would enrich the soil in my garden to the point where seeds would be so happy to be in it, that they would grow despite my lack of a green thumb.

My thrill with the composter was dampened a bit when family members commented that the compost bin, which directly faced the back of the house, resembled Darth Vader of "Star Wars." After hearing several jokes about the eyes of the Evil Empire being right in our back yard, I moved the bin to a far corner and frequently took the short walk to bring out kitchen waste and fill it with leaves.

Then came the bear. He or she ripped out the compost bin by its stakes, and tunneled around in the leaves for every apple core and every old lettuce leaf. I fixed it. The bear came back.



Photo by Sara Hudock-Cole/New Jersey Herald

**Residential leaf waste ready for composting sits adjacent to the waste-to-energy plant, right, awaiting completion at the SCMUA in Lafayette. The plant will convert the methane collected from the capped trash disposal area, rear, to electricity that will be sold back to the utility provider.**

More than once I came out in the yard to find the bin in three pieces and leaves scattered everywhere.

After a few weeks, I gave up. Visions of rich compost dashed, I offered my bin to

anyone who wanted it on freecycle.org, where it was snapped up quickly by a free-cycler.

Brian Oleksak, horticultural program associate of the Rutgers Cooperative

Extension of Sussex County, said kitchen waste in compost can attract a bear. The best way to avoid that is to simply compost using grass and leaves, leaving out the vegetable matter, he said.

Some other tips on composting from Oleksak:

Black bags, small, fenced-in areas (many people use wood pallets for this), or a trench in the ground can contain compost. If you use a bag, don't close the top because composting is an aerobic process and needs air.

"Greens" (grass) and "browns" (leaves) in the compost must be the correct percentages. Too many greens slow the process and the compost becomes heavy and smelly. "A lot of it is intuitive" Oleksak said. The ratio should be about 25 parts leaves to one part grass, he

said.

The compost pile needs to be at least three feet deep and dense. It has to build up heat in order to work.

If you do want to compost food scraps, use vegetable matter only. No meat products, bone or grease.

The time it takes for your compost to form depends on heat and moisture. But once the compost is ready, it can be used in the flower and vegetable garden. It's essentially free fertilizer for your garden.

The Sussex County Municipal Utilities Authority also has piles of compost available for county residents. If you load it yourself, it's free. If the SCMUA loads the compost for you, the cost is \$18 per yard, said Reenee Casapulla recycling coordinator and safety officer.

## Freecycle your stuff!

Keeping items out of landfills is one of the goals of The Freecycle Network, an online network that connects those who are getting rid of stuff with those who need stuff. According to its web site, the freecycle network is made up of 4,937 groups with more than 8 million members.

To join the network, log on to freecycle.org and register. Registration is free. Then sign up for your local groups. Local groups in the Sussex County area include Newton, Franklin, Vernon, Hackettstown, Stanhope, and West Milford.

Once you are on the network, you can simply peruse the offers at your leisure, be e-mailed with updates of posts, or you can post messages for items that you are

offering up for grabs, or of items that you are seeking.

From tomato plants to furniture, to children's toys and clothing, it's all on Freecycle. If you spot something that you want, you simply e-mail the recipient. The key is to be the first to ask for that item.

If you are successful at obtaining it, you arrange to pick up the item, usually within the next day.

"Quick pick up" is preferred.



## Shopping with your own bags

Whether you carry Ecobags, cloth shopping bags, or just plain bags, there is one key to being more environmentally conscious when you go to the grocery store.

You have to remember to bring the bags in with you.

Seems easy enough. But apparently, not always. An unofficial survey of New Jersey Herald coworkers found that several have been in line at the store with a cart full of groceries, while their environmentally-friendly shopping bags were nestled back in the car.

What can we do to remember the bags?

We posted this question to Reenee Casapulla, recycling coordinator and safety officer at the Sussex County Municipal Utilities Authority in Lafayette.

"Have your kids bug you," she advised for those with families.

Or perhaps, make it the job of one of the kids to remember to bring the bags into the store.

Otherwise, we'll just have to remember.

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