



It's a Prime Time to Go Green Newsletter

DECEMBER 24, 2009

VOLUME 2

Reduce
Reuse
Recycle

ONLINE RESOURCES

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IT'S EASY TO 'GO GREEN' DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Christmas is a holiday noted for conspicuous consumption. Show your respect for future generations by adopting some new holiday traditions this year. Going green is an every-day commitment, but you can make a start during the holidays; it makes good sense for you, your family, and your community. And don't stop once the holidays are over – why not make it a New Year's resolution for 2010?

1. BUY LOCAL WHENEVER POSSIBLE

It is good practice to get into the habit of buying locally. When you buy local seasonal produce or buy from local artisans, you are saving on packaging and transportation costs. In Norwood, Two Candles has an ongoing display of art and gift items made by local artists. Or stop by Jen Dabal's Lone Cone Consignments on Main Street for a great selection of gently used items available for purchase. Make an appointment to drop off some of your unwanted goods and be a part of recycling quality goods locally. Clark's Market features organic and whole foods all year round, and they are sure feature special products during the holidays.

2. REAL, ARTIFICIAL OR LIVE CHRISTMAS TREE?

There is some controversy about which is most environmentally correct, artificial trees or real trees. But it is a sure bet that if you buy a living tree that you can plant later, you have made the best environmental choice for the planet. If you opt for a cut tree, you can visit the USFS office here in Norwood and take advantage of the trees right in our own backyard. Make it a fun day for the entire family – and perhaps a new holiday tradition. If you choose to cut a live tree, consider recycling it for mulch rather than simply hauling it off to the dump.

3. ELECTRONICS SHOPPING

If you are buying electronic gifts to replace items in your home, make sure to dispose of old electronic components and batteries responsibly. Prime Time has a drop-off bin in its front entrance for recycling batteries, cell phones and toner cartridges. Rather than simply throwing that unwanted VCR or television in the trash, why not sell it at Lone Cone Consignments?

4. START CO-MINGLED RECYCLING

San Miguel County makes it easy to recycle! You don't have to sort glass, plastics and aluminum cans. Just put them all into one container and drop it off at the Norwood Waste Transfer Station. They also accept corrugated cardboard and newsprint. Refer to the San Miguel County Recycling Guide for more information on recycling in the region.

5. PRACTICE ENERGY AWARENESS

Switch those old strings of Christmas lights to energy efficient LED lights. Although they cost more up front, you will save up to 90% on your energy costs in the long run. Good energy conservation practices can be used in other parts of your house, as well. In your kitchen monitor your use of the oven and control how long you leave your refrigerator door open. Consider hanging your clothes out on a line instead of using your dryer. These may seem like insignificant changes, but wasted energy adds up!

6. SAVE MONEY, SAVE PAPER, GO ELECTRONIC

It's never easy to get out all your holiday cards, and with the price of postage going up every year, it can be very expensive. Save paper and your pocketbook by uploading a family photo onto an electronic card and emailing it to your friends and loved ones. Many options are out available on the web (including free ones); Smilebox, Picasa, Shutterfly are just a few. For those folks that do not do email, print out a few and send them via snail mail.

GREEN COMMITTEE NEWS:

The Wright Stuff Green Committee made some headway in 2009 toward its goal of greening up the Wright's Mesa Center and its programs. Thanks to a spring bulbs sale by Mandy White, several hundred dollars were raised to help Prime Time teachers green up their classrooms. Preschool teacher Kristen Parrino used this money to repaint her room using no-VOC paint.

Speaking of paint, you may have noticed the center's front hallway has received a fresh coat in a new, cheery shade of yellow. The same paint will be used to brighten up the back hallway on a future date. Little to no fumes could be detected thanks to our use of a low-VOC paint by Glidden (available at Home Depot).

The Green Committee continues to evaluate a healthier alternative to the antibacterial hand soap found throughout the center. The toddler room has been testing out CleanWell brand foaming soap, which contains no triclosan or other chemical antibacterial agents. These chemicals are thought to harm the environment and have been linked to allergies in children. Plain old soap and water is best! See the latest edition of Telluride's Shelter magazine for an article about antibacterial cleaning agents written by Green Committee member and Prime Time parent Jessica Newens.

Jessica has also been spearheading improvements to the food program at Prime Time, specifically the breakfast program. Children are now offered homemade waffles or pancakes and breakfast burritos as part of the weekly breakfast menu. Efforts are being made to provide more nutritious, whole foods across the board, from unsweetened organic apple sauce to pancake syrup that does not contain high-fructose corn syrup. As the breakfast menu is finalized, we will begin focusing on homemade snacks and rely less on processed food from the grocery store. Volunteers are needed to help shop for and prepare food. Please let us know if you'd like to pitch in.



SHORT LIST OF GREEN ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE:

- Center-wide recycling program
- Biodegradable trash bags
- Compact fluorescent light bulbs
- Greener cleaning supplies
- Healthier, whole foods
- Planted two apple trees for Earth Day (thanks Jenn Dinsmore for donating trees)
- Received energy audit of building
- Acquired two used bicycles for staff to use to run errands
- Created lunch-hour exercise option for teachers

FUTURE PLANS:

- Install programmable thermostats throughout center
- Completely revamp food program with help of volunteers
- Switch out antibacterial soap with "real" soap
- Begin educational program focusing on nutrition, health and the environment
- Obtain Green Childcare Center certification
- Host the 2nd annual 5k/10k Walk/Run in spring 2010

GREEN WISH LIST:

- Programmable thermostats
- Waffle iron
- Reams of recycled office paper
- Kids' oriented cookbooks for a new cookbook library
- Your fabulous kid-tested recipes
- Volunteers

NO MORE IDLING PLEASE!

In 2010, The Wright Stuff will begin implementing a no-idling policy. For the safety, health and well being of our kids, the environment and you, please do not leave your vehicle running unattended. We ask that you turn off your vehicle before you enter the school to drop off or pick up your child. Your cooperation is much appreciated!

GREEN COMMITTEE CHRISTMAS TREE

Did you see our fabulous 'Green' Christmas tree at Two Candles during The Wright Stuff's Festival of Trees? Our modest little pinion tree was dressed up with all things recycled and sustainable – a coffee filter angel, recycled holiday card ornaments, spritz cookies, grocery bag gingerbread men, strung popcorn, LED lights, and more. Thank you to all who contributed to the effort: Mandy White, Jennifer Dinsmore, Jen Feeser, Gen Roach and Jessica Newens. Look for an even more creative entry next year!

We welcome your comments and suggestions regarding our Wright Stuff Green program. And we are always looking for new volunteers. Drop an email to Jessica Newens at jessican2@mindspring.com or call her at 327-0338.

Here's to a happy, healthy and green 2010!