



Creating a culture of sentinel lions: the legacy of Rachel Carson (1907 – 2007)

Dr. Jill Stein was the perfect choice as speaker for the Green Decade Coalition's Rachel Carson Centennial Celebration and Newton's 11th annual Alternative to Pesticides Month. The Green Decade Coalition is a group of people in an extended community that highly values environmental responsibility and advocacy at the local and the global level. Dr. Stein is a physician, a citizen/scientist, a musician and a celebrated health and environmental advocate.

It was Rachel Carson's reverence for life and sense of responsibility that motivated her to write *Silent Spring*

(1962). Al Gore stated in his introduction to the 40th anniversary printing of *Silent Spring*, "...without this book, the environmental movement might have been long delayed or never have developed at all..."

The Natural Resources Defense Council calls *Silent Spring* one of the landmark books of the 20th century and points out how Rachel Carson faced overwhelming difficulties, illness and adversity, and in spite of an orchestrated chemical industry campaign to discredit her work, "rose like a gladiator...motivated by her unabashed love of nature and sense of responsibility."

Then a combination of an enlightened public and their elected leaders led to the creation of the US EPA, the ban on the pesticide DDT, and regulations such as the Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Act.

Rachel Carson inspires us to think of ourselves, not as whistleblowers, troublemakers, or canaries in the mine, but as guardians, steadfast sentries, and defenders of our community against the decisions that allow pollution to contaminate our air, water and food. We can picture ourselves as the sentinel or guardian lion, the universal symbol of protection, alone or in pairs, at the entrances of cities, buildings, gates, bridges, museums -- working to inform and engage citizens in the work of aligning local practices with the Precautionary Principle and sustainability standards.

Based on Carson's ethic of human rights, we can build bridges across generations and join new allies on a wide range of life-cycle health and environmental assaults, fostering greater citizen engagement at all levels working for government and corporate transparency and accountability.

The British government's Environment Agency's panel of experts has named the scientists, campaigners, writers, economists and naturalists who have done the most to save the planet. Rachel Carson is at the top of its list of eco-heroes. Barbara Young, the Environment Agency's chief executive, said: "She started many of us off on the road to environmental protection."

To promote Rachel Carson's legacy, to keep track of events going on around the world, and to share ideas for more programs and activities, I have started a web blog/calendar <http://journal.rcn.net/RachelCarson2007>.

by Ellie Goldberg

Environmental Speaker Series

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

May. 21: Heather Rogers, Author "The Conquest of Garbage"



Learn about the history and politics of household garbage in the US from Heather Rogers, a journalist and filmmaker based in Brooklyn, New York. She will address the issue of why the US, with just 4 percent of the global population, consumes almost a third of the planet's resources and generates a third of all wastes

created by the world's most developed nations. Looking at the environmental issue of trash through the lens of the market, the talk will point out that in today's prosperous economy, escalating piles of castoffs are no accident. Indeed an economic system that requires ongoing, intensifying growth is one that relies on garbage.

June 25: Annual meeting & Awards, "Newton's students show us how"



Come see what Newton students are learning and doing to be environmentally aware global citizens.



Host Elva Del Porto (right) welcomes Mayor David Cohen and Undersecretary of Energy Ann Berwick to the New England Wind fundraiser at the Del Porto house.



Lisle Baker signs up for New England Wind; Zachary Rosenof, Day Schl, & Avital Percher, Newton North, staff information table at Inconvenient Truth showing.



New England Wind effort achieves goal! . . . now more!

After many fundraising activities including speaker series events, three showings of the film: "An Inconvenient Truth" and a party at the Del Porto's with newly appointed State Undersecretary of Energy Ann Berwick and Mayor David Cohen, the Green Decade team was successful in getting 150 residents to donate to New England Wind and thereby get a \$25,000 solar array donated to a Newton school. Now the same team is working on the next 150!

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Rain barrels for water conservation, anyone ?

Newton residents can conserve water, save money and reduce storm water run-off by purchasing and using rain barrels.

The average homeowner uses approximately 40% of water for outdoor use. A one inch rainfall on a 1,200 square foot roof will yield over 700 gallons of water. Using a rain barrel is an excellent way to conserve some of this water. Rain barrel use reduces the stress on municipal water systems during the summer months and improves storm water management.

To order a rain barrel (\$66.50) and for further information call The New England Rain Barrel Company at 877-977-3135 or order online at www.nerainbarrel.com or a reused barrel (\$58 or \$50 for members) from Boston Building Materials Coop at 617 442-2262 www.bbmc.com.

by Louise Bruyn and Courtney Forrester

Mother's Day Lobby Day for Safer Alternatives to Toxic Chemicals

Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow is hosting a major lobby day to urge our elected officials to approve legislation, like the Safer Alternatives Bill, to replace toxic chemicals in products and production processes with safer alternatives. The event will take place on Thursday, May 10th, from 11:00 am-1:00 pm at the Great Hall in the State House.

The lobby day is not for parents only! Everyone is invited to participate in the event and help deliver thousands of Mother's Day cards to legislators and Governor Patrick urging them to take swift action on toxic chemicals. For carpooling or more information contact Lucia at 617 332-1893 or info@greendecade.org. Not able to attend the lobby? Show your support by signing and sending a virtual card at http://www.healthytomorrow.org/MDLD_Card.htm.

by Lucia Dolan

Thanks ! and . . . next deadline

For the next newsletter, please send submissions or requests by email to Ira Krepchin, irapk@alum.mit.edu by Friday, May 18, 2007.

Thanks for making this newsletter possible to Managing Editor Ira Krepchin, Co-editors Peter Smith / Louise Bruyn, and those who wrote articles. Many thanks to our Newsletter Collator Chairs Marcia Cooper and Frank Propp, and their team for the last issue: Arlene Bander, Sara Barnett, Penny Caponigro, Linda Christian-Herot, Marcia Cooper, Irene Howard, Ellie Nickerson, Edie and Frank Propp.

New street lights will mean big savings

The City will save almost \$700,000 per year in energy costs, at current electricity prices, when it completes an upgrade to its street lighting system. The existing system features a lighting technology known as mercury vapor lighting in about three-quarters of the fixtures. Mercury vapor is an old, inefficient way to produce light that will effectively be banned by federal regulations as of January 1, 2008. The old mercury vapor fixtures will be replaced with a technology known as high pressure sodium (HPS) lighting, or an alternative. HPS lighting is already used in about one-fourth of the City's street lights—mostly on the major arteries. The mercury vapor fixtures will have to be replaced at some point, and the greatest savings accrue if replacements are done all at once.

The new system will cost about \$1.5 million to install, but savings from both reduced energy use, and reduced maintenance costs, will enable it to pay for itself in less than three years. In addition, there is a good chance that a rebate from NSTAR will help defray a significant portion of the cost and speed up the payback. This step is a major recommendation of Newton's Energy Action Plan, which can be downloaded from the web at www.ci.newton.ma.us/sunergy/EAP021005.pdf or GREENenergynewton.org.)

The new system will also feature a new fixture design that directs most of the light in a downwards direction, where it is most useful. Residents can see the first installation of the new fixtures on Morton Street - between Mill and Commonwealth Ave. This design will provide the added benefits of reduced light pollution, which obscures the night sky; and less light trespass, which can annoy neighbors and passers-by. (If you want to learn more about light pollution, visit the web site of the International Dark Sky Association, www.darksky.org).

Earlier, the City tested a different lighting technology, known as induction lighting. Still operating along Bullough Park, Commonwealth Park, and Commonwealth Park West, these lights provide a whiter light, and offer longer life than HPS lighting, but cost more and are slightly less efficient.

The City of Newton purchased its streetlights from Boston Edison (now NSTAR) in March 2000. The lights are not individually metered like residential homes; instead the City is billed on its installed streetlight bulbs, each at various wattages, under the assumption that they operate for 4,200 hours per year.

The streetlight demonstration represents just one of many efforts by the City to cut energy costs and to help combat global warming. In recent years, LED traffic signals were installed; energy-efficient lighting has been installed in most public buildings; and a number of efficiency measures have been installed in the remodeled Newton South High School.

by Ira Krepchin

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CALENDAR

May 7 (Mon) 7-9pm	"Raise your citizen IQ" Rep. Ruth Balser , Free, Newton Senior Center, 345 Walnut register: www.greendecade.org/events
May 10 (Thur) 11-1pm	"Mother's Day Lobby for Child Health" State House - Great Hall, Boston, see article page 1, to carpool call Lucia at 617 332-1893, RSVP: tcarlson@cleanwateraction.org
May 21 (Mon) 7pm	"The Conquest of Garbage" Heather Rogers , Author, Environmental Speakers Series, Newton Free Library, See box p. 1
May 31 (Thur) 8am	"Smart paper business workshop" Free See article spec p, call Tom O'Rourke, NN Chamber of Commerce, 617 244-5300
June 2 (Sat) 1-4pm	Rachel Carson's Centennial, JFK Library RSVP: 617 514-1643 or www.jfklibrary.org/Education+and+Public+Programs/Kennedy+Library+Forums/
June 5 (Tues) 10-11:30am	Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring" Film & Discussion. Meryl Streep as voice of Rachel Carson. Newton Senior Center, 345 Walnut Street, Newtonville, RSVP: 617 796-1660
June 25 (Mon) 7pm	Annual meeting & Awards, "Newton's students show us how" See what Newton students are learning about environment Newton Free Library, See box p. 1
Send environmental events to <i>GREEN NEWS</i> . email to Ira Krepchin by Friday, May 18, 2007 irapk@alum.mit.edu . We will list as space permits.	

Yard waste & hazardous waste

The Environmental Affairs Division notes yard waste pickup began the week of March 26th and will run through the week of December 17th. Simply place your yard waste in a designated paper bag, or in a barrel clearly marked "Yard Waste" and set it out on your regular trash day by 7:00 am for pickup. More details can be found in the More than Just Recycling: A Comprehensive Guide to Reducing our Waste brochure, or by visiting www.ci.newton.ma.us/dpw/recycling.

The Environmental Affairs Division reminds you that every Wednesday and Thursday from 7:30 am – 12:30 pm from May 16th – October 18th, the City will begin accepting hazardous waste drop-offs. Household cleaners, chemicals, floor and furniture polishes, insecticides and the like will be collected at the Rumford Ave. Resource Recovery Center for free with proof of residency. For more information visit www.ci.newton.ma.us/dpw/recycling/hazardous_waste/hhw_days.htm.

Interested residents are also encouraged to sign up for the quarterly newsletter, The Green Bin. The newsletter is produced by the Environmental Affairs Division, and contains interesting features such as frequently asked questions, energy saving tips, and links to environmentally related websites. To view the latest Green Bin, or to subscribe, visit www.ci.newton.ma.us/recycling/greenbin.htm.

by Ira Krepchin and Barbara Herson



See Bike raffle! on the special page

"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. Percentage of greenhouse gases the world's air traffic was responsible for in 1992: 3.5% ...estimated today: 10%" *The page that counts (YES! a journal of positive futures, p. 16 Spring 2007.)*



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

I bought a Newton (Neuton)!

Excitement over a new lawn mower was an experience I never anticipated, but I finally found a machine that makes mowing the lawn positively pleasant.

My history with mowers had not been encouraging. The first one I used when I moved to Newton was an electric. I liked it, relatively speaking, because it didn't require keeping gasoline and creating the attendant fumes, but it had a long unwieldy electric cord, which always had to be rearranged and avoided when mowing for fear of a shocking electrical event.

Briefly, I tried using an excellent reel mower ordered from a catalogue. It really wasn't any harder to push than the electric and it produced a pleasing sound as the reel went around. Unfortunately, though, reel mowers seem to work best on a nice even lawn, which mine is not, so I reluctantly gave up on that idea.

After hearing a couple of friends sing the praises of their cordless electric mowers, I finally got one, a Neuton, for myself, and to my surprise, I actually love it. It can run for about an hour on one charge, which is more than enough time to cover my whole yard. It is light, has no cord and produces no polluting exhaust.

The best thing, though, from my point of view, is that this mower cuts down on another kind of pollution that ratchets up as spring gets into swing – noise pollution. The cordless mower is much quieter than any other I have ever heard, making it pleasanter to use for both the mower and the neighbors.

For me, it is sufficient just to get my lawn cut, but those who have greater ambitions can get a mulching attachment or a trimmer. All come with a bag to catch grass clippings.

If any members of the Green Decade Coalition are interested in buying a new mower and would like to try out the Neuton, I'd be happy to show it to you and maybe even let you mow a little of my lawn, just so you can experience it for yourself.

by Jean MacRae

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Turn off your screensaver

A new study publicized by Microsoft says that if you want to conserve the energy consumed by your PC, you should shut off your screen saver. The ugly truth? "A PC running a screensaver consumes more energy than an idling PC in sleep or hibernating mode." How much energy does it waste? A "screensaver-running PC consumes the same amount of electricity as a 100-watt light bulb left on around the clock for one year," costing you \$80 in power and releasing 1,350 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere. OK, so this is a no-brainer. Turn off your screen saver.

Microsoft is touting it because Vista has improved sleep options: "In Windows Vista you'll experience better handling of all your PC's transitions between On and Off states. You can quickly put your PC in Sleep mode using the power button on the Windows Start menu or, if configured, using the computer's external power button. Sleep is a new power state that combines the quick-resume benefits of Standby with the data protection benefits of Hibernation."

Here's the harder question. Do you switch to Vista for this? Macs already have it, I believe. *Business Filter compiled by the Boston Globe — a blog of author Maura Welch*

Bike raffle!



1st Prize: 2007 Computerized Cruise Control Raleigh Bicycle

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

2nd Prize: \$300 Whole Foods Gift Certificate

3rd Prize: \$50 Skipjacks Seafood Emporium Gift Certificate

Tickets only \$10 or 3 for \$20

Buy your tickets on-line at

www.greendecade.org

or at any GDC event or info booth

Net proceeds will go towards the general operating expenses of the Green Decade Coalition/Newton, a 501 c (3) environmental non-profit. Winners will be listed on the GDC website. We reserve the right to add additional prizes. Date of the drawing to be announced. For more information contact us at 617-965-1995 or info@greendecade.org

Fat is good for you !

– *Omega 3s and the brain*

At last month's speaker series, Dr. Jill Stein discussed research on the environmental factors behind our increasing rates of Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and similar diseases in our aging population. Dr. Stein, a member of the Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility, was one of the principal authors of 'In Harm's Way' the ground breaking 2000 report that linked chemicals widely used by industry and commonly found in our homes to learning, behavioral, and developmental disabilities in children. In her current research, she was surprised to find Omega 3 levels kept popping out of the literature. Again and again Omega 3 appeared protective against dementia and cognitive decline.

Omega 3 is a fat with a short shelf life. It requires sunshine for its creation. Fish, green plants, and canola oil have high levels of Omega 3. Omega 3's benefits to the heart are why the American Heart Association recommends a minimum of one serving of fish a week.

New research is finding Omega 3's benefits are even more widespread. A 2003 University of Maryland Medical Center study on Alzheimer Disease found participants who consumed a serving of fish a week had 60% less risk of Alzheimer disease compared with those who rarely or never ate fish. Research is also connecting Omega 3 levels to diabetes, asthma, arthritis, learning disabilities, and, even, obesity. A recent study of 200 mostly middle class children in Sweden found the fattest children were not the ones consuming the most fat. Instead they were the ones with the least amount of Omega 3s in their diet.

Changes in our modern lives have reduced the amount of Omega 3s in our diet. In processed foods Omega 3 fats are often replaced with other fats with longer shelf lives. Factory farmed animals fed on corn products have lower levels of Omega 3 than free range animals allowed to eat green plants. The high cost of fresh fruits and vegetables relative to packaged or fast food discourage their purchase.

The good news is, with awareness, it is easy to increase your Omega 3 consumption and protect yourself against dementia and cognitive decline. The Massachusetts Coalition for Healthy Communities provides these guidelines:

1. Eat lots of fresh fruits and vegetables. Especially green vegetables rich in Omega 3s.
2. Use oils rich in Omega 3s, like canola and olive oil.
3. Eat fish at least once a week (taking care to avoid high mercury fish like tuna and shark).
4. Switch to Omega 3-enriched eggs.
5. Consume products of free-ranging beef, poultry, and dairy cows. For more information go to: www.masschc.org or catch a repeat of Dr. Stein's presentation on NewTV Blue Channel.

by Lucia Dolan



Here Mayor David Cohen, aldermen, kids and concerned citizens point to the solar panels, installed in 2003, on the Newton Community Service Center to urge Congress to cut CO₂ 80% by 2050.

Newton Step It Up sends a message to Congress: we want a strong bill!

Some of us at Green Decade joined this national event in our own home town to show our concern about Climate Change. We gathered other Newton groups, holding signs calling on Congress to act now on measures to slow global warming. Photos have been broadcast by web and TV.

Over 150 kids, bicyclists, carpoolers, hybrid drivers, our mayor and aldermen gathered to hear music and to sing "Step It Up Congress! Cut CO₂ 80% by 2080" at the Newton Community Service Center building where we raised \$20,000 to put up photovoltaic solar panels in 2003. The speakers, including Mayor Cohen and our own Eric Olson, energized the crowd to shout "hello" to distant Step It Up groups in Massachusetts and around our country, connecting us all to work for change. Over 1500



cities and towns in every state from Maine to Hawaii and Alaska to Florida stepped up. Go to the web site: www.stepitup2007 to see how cities and towns participated. *by Peter Smith*

Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce Environment Committee offers smart paper workshop on May 31

On Thursday morning, May 31, the Chamber's Environment Committee will be hosting a free workshop on "Developing a Smart Paper Plan." Many offices use several hundred pounds of paper every year. By one estimate an average office employee creates approximately 350 pounds of wastepaper a year. But by carefully marshaling our resources, you can reduce that amount significantly, helping the environment while helping your own bottom line.

The workshop will provide a guidebook that will help your company develop a plan that is tailored to your needs. You can save money and add this "Smart Paper" step toward greening your company. This can pay off as you

establish your firm in the eyes of your customers as socially responsible. Companies who have used this plan have found that it offers important employee morale and public relations benefits as well.

Contact Tom O'Rourke at the Chamber today at 617 244-5300 to let him know that you want to come to the workshop. We will notify you about the location a few weeks before the date.

The Green Decade, as a member of the Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce, recently initiated the idea of forming a new committee to look at how member businesses can save money and help the environment.

by Peter Smith, Chair, N-N Chamber Environment Committee