



RECYCLING ADVOCATES

www.RecyclingAdvocates.org

May 2009

Involving people in creating a sustainable future through local efforts to reduce, reuse, and recycle

Information Exchange – What comes after Master Recycler Graduation?

By Betty Patton

Another Master Recycler class will graduate this month, giving the Metro region another 30 or so well informed, motivated and sustainably driven citizens. So now what is next for them? What do they want? What do they need? How can we help them maintain that level of motivation that comes from this excellent series of classes?

These graduates have a head full of ideas; all they need is someone to share them with to pursue implementation. So networking with like-minded people will help to fuel the fires.

Green Drinks events are offered throughout the state: Ashland, Bend, Eugene, Hood River, Lincoln City, Medford, Newport, Portland, and The Dalles. The Portland event is held the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Ecotrust Building.

The Association of Oregon Recyclers, one of the oldest state recycling organizations in the nation, is holding its annual conference at Eagle Crest Resort in Redmond, Oregon, June 11 – 13. This 31st annual conference and trade show will attract a broad spectrum of attendees from industry, government, non-profits, consultants, and individuals. The goal of the conference is to offer an opportunity to learn and to share and to network with people pursuing a sustainable business model and lifestyle. The attendees include government planners, business green team leaders, solid waste and recycling

service providers, manufacturers of recycled content goods, waste prevention leaders, green builders and suppliers, and the list goes on. One keynote speaker, Cylvia Hayes of 3 E Strategies in Bend will present some opportunities in Oregon for stimulus money in green industries. Meredith Sorensen will give us a world tour of recycling, based on her multi-continent research.

Sessions and workshops present the latest on Oregon's Bottle Bill, international markets insight update by Jerry Powell, exploration of sustainable behavior, climate change, multi-cultural outreach, and many others. Plan to arrive early on Thursday to attend DEQ's workshop, "Message in a Bottle – what delivery of drinking water tells us about waste prevention, reuse and recycling". Or sign up for the tour of Knott Landfill and transfer station. This site utilizes the latest in technology and design for traffic flow, material recovery, efficiency of record keeping, and landfill management. AOR conferences are also known for the fun and games included. Putt putt golf, awards banquet and entertainment, and a Deschutes Brewery tour are all a part of the offerings at the conference. For more information, check out www.aORr.org.

The Recycling Advocates newsletter contains a monthly calendar of events, listing forums, conferences, classes, webinars, and other presentations of interest for those of us involved in sustainable pursuits. Submissions to this list should be sent to info@RecyclingAdvocates.org.

Olympic-sized Sustainability Award In Our Own Backyard!

Sustainability planning has certainly become a hot topic with the Olympic Games. Some major sustainability initiatives are planned for the upcoming 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics, and the interesting environmental concerns, challenges, and successes of the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics are now behind us. The fact that environmental considerations are even a part of the planning of these major international events is something to celebrate (ok, we have a ways to go, but it's a step in the right direction). And here's a local Olympic story to celebrate: The International Olympic Committee "Award

for Sport and the Environment" was awarded to the Local Organizing Committee for the Eugene 2008 U.S. Olympic Team Trials.

According to the IOC, the Sport and the Environment Award "will be awarded every two years, and will acknowledge and further encourage the implementation of good environmental practices by the Olympic family in the field of sport. One Award will be given to each of the continents: Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania."

Continued: See **Award** on page 2

From the Board with Rob Guttridge

Let's change the way we measure recycling



If we want better results in recycling than we have been getting, perhaps we should set different goals from the ones we have been using. Rather than striving to recycle more pounds, more cubic yards, more stuff – perhaps we should strive to create less waste, less demand on our planet's resources, less carbon dioxide. We have lately become more conscious of our “carbon footprint” as a measure of our real impact on the planet, and it is not a case of “bigger is better”. We have talked for years about living lightly on the Earth, but nearly always in terms of our individual actions, not of our measurable cumulative impact. We have made a priority hierarchy of “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle”, but we have not, as a state or a nation, yet attempted to measure waste reduction.

Perhaps if we had a statewide goal for waste reduction . . . but how would we measure it? To usefully measure waste reduction we would need to account for stuff not wasted, stuff not used unnecessarily – or waste not actually made in the first place. We would need to distinguish between wasting stuff that is inherently costly and waste-creating to produce (such as microchips or aluminum cans) and stuff that is merely heavy, or a byproduct of some other activity (such as rubble or logging slash). We'd want to account for the energy costs and water consumption and toxic byproducts of activities like mining and refining. We would, ideally, have a life-cycle analysis of the true environmental cost of producing, transporting, using, and disposing of all the stuff we use.

That sounds like an awful lot of figuring, an awful lot of “data-crunching”. But in the 25-plus years since we first set recycling goals, we have gotten a lot more efficient at crunching data (we now use software programs running on computers, rather than sliderules. . .). A lot of life-cycle analysis computations have already been made and are ready to be applied. And (in Oregon, at least) we are already doing a lot of figuring and double-checking to try to compute rates of recycling and energy recovery from waste for all the different “wastesheds” within the state, going to a lot of trouble to report wasteshed-specific figures of tons recycled and tons landfilled and tons burned for energy. Why not be material-specific, instead of wasteshed-specific? It would be far more useful, and no more difficult.

And how would we set our waste-reduction goal? Well, we sort of have one already, without calling it that, or even recognizing it – it's a greenhouse-gas (GHG) reduction goal. Reducing waste reduces GHG production. Reducing the landfilling of organic matter reduces GHG production. Using recycled feedstocks rather than virgin resources reduces GHG production. So does using less stuff, buying recycled, driving less - nearly all the simple, prudent things we do reduce the production of greenhouse gasses. Let's formally recognize the contribution that waste reduction and recycling make toward reducing our carbon footprint, and clarify its importance. Let's measure the environmental impact of recycling, not just the tonnage.

- Rob Guttridge

Award Continued from page 1

The Oregon Track Club was selected as the first winner from the Americas.

The criteria for the award included:

- Design and/or construction of sport facilities;
- Protection and enhancement of biodiversity or cultural heritage through sport;
- Environmental education or raising sports community awareness on environmental and sustainability issues;
- Management of sport events, facilities or clubs;
- Media coverage and production of material to promote sustainability in sport;
- Initiatives incorporating sustainable sport practices.

One of the major components of the sustainability efforts for the Eugene '08 event was their recycling and composting efforts. Members of the City of Eugene, Lane County, various service providers, over 100 green-minded volunteers, and a commitment from the University of Oregon and its producers, worked together to reduce the event's environmental footprint through waste reduction, ultimately reaching a 67% landfill diversion rate. While the event did not reach its 75% goal, the result is truly outstanding, especially in comparison to most events of this size and scope, making these efforts a national standard to replicate.

As one of the managers of these efforts in the Eugene '08 event, I was inspired by the commitment of the University of Oregon, event producers, businesses and especially the hundreds volunteers that were needed to achieve these results.

- Lindsey Newkirk



**Legislative Corner
with Katy Daily**

The April 28 deadline, which marked the date by which all bills introduced this legislative session had to be out of their committee of origin, left in its wake almost all of the bills that Recycling Advocates was working on this session. Although Recycling Advocates will still be pushing for revival of these bills, they are most likely dead for now.

The two bills that survived and are still moving through the legislative process are the bottle bill expansion legislation and the standalone paint product stewardship legislation, although the future of the bottle bill expansion legislation is now also in question.

After following a very convoluted path through the House, HB 2184-B, which expands Oregon's Bottle Bill, was amended once again, passed the House Environment and Energy committee, but was then sent back to the House Revenue committee by the full House, where its future is uncertain.

As a result of this latest round of amendments, HB 2184 represents a very slow, minor expansion of the bottle bill. In summary, the bill still does the following:

1. Expands the list of covered beverages to include most single serving beverages available today (excluding milk, wine, liquor, cartons and drink pouches). This expansion won't take place until 2013, giving the grocers and distributors almost four years to prepare for the change. These containers are now recycled at a rate of about 37% and adding them to the bottle bill will help keep an estimated 100 million containers out of the landfill.
2. Sets a very modest recovery goal for these containers of 80%, and ties a raise in the deposit to 10 cents only if we fail to meet that goal, in 2016 at the earliest. Currently containers covered by the bottle bill

have a recycling rate of over 80% (though this is expected to go down since the addition of water bottles), while non-bottle bill containers are recycled at a rate of 37%.

Unfortunately, the committee removed its previous amendment that would have closed a loophole in the original bottle bill that threatens the convenience of being able to bring your containers back to stores if a redemption center is established in a particular area. Redemption centers have been allowed since 1971, but none have been established to date. However, there is a high likelihood that at least one redemption center will be proposed this year. Without this amendment, some stores covered by the redemption center won't be required to take back containers, which Recycling Advocates believes will compromise the convenience and effectiveness of the bottle bill.

Although we had hoped it would be stronger, Recycling Advocates supports HB 2184 and will be working to try to get it out of the Revenue committee and eventually out of the legislature.

Of all the product stewardship bills introduced this session, the only one to survive thus far is HB 3037-A, which creates a very similar program to the E-cycles program for household paint. This bill requires that manufacturers of paint sold in Oregon finance (through a fee on each can of paint sold) a free, convenient statewide collection program for paint after it is used.

Used paint represents the biggest volume and cost of municipal household hazardous waste collection programs, so this bill will allow local governments to spend their scarce resources on collecting and handling more problematic hazardous waste.

Although it is unlikely that we will emerge from the 2009 session with comprehensive Product Stewardship legislation, this session was a good first step in educating our legislators about the concept. We all need to work hard to press the issue of Product Stewardship with our legislators every opportunity we get, and be ready to come back in 2011 prepared to work hard once again.

- Katy Daily

Expanding our reach through EarthShare's website

EarthShare Oregon's (ESOR's) website offers useful information for a variety of visitors. If you are a Recycling Advocates donor, you may want to see more about how we and other members of EarthShare invest your contributions. If you want to get outdoors or attend an event, you can visit the site to see upcoming activities and events happening in the environmental community. Is it about time to volunteer? EarthShare includes volunteer opportunities with its 30+ member groups all over the State of Oregon.

Do you just want to make a donation? You can do that at

the ESOR website too. Or maybe you want to read about how to lead a giving campaign at your place of work and get it started. The ESOR website has all kinds of helpful tools for workplace giving campaign managers and enthusiastic employees.

Need to catch up on environmental news? Get up-to-date news about environmental issues, subscribe to EarthShare's electronic newsletter, or just peruse the list of conservation groups and see all of the amazing work they are doing to keep people healthy, preserve places for wildlife and reduce global warming. For all this and more, visit www.earthshare-oregon.org.

Recycling Advocacy Calendar for May 2009

◆ **Association of Oregon Recyclers
Annual Conference & Trade Show,
Redmond**

Thursday–Saturday, June 11-13

“Get on Track” at AOR’s 31st Annual Conference and Trade Show in Redmond, Oregon.

See details and register at

www.aorr.org/2009_annual_conference.htm

◆ **Recycling Advocates board meeting**

Date and time to be determined.

For location and information call 503-777-0909



Join us as a Member of
RECYCLING ADVOCATES

- \$25 Advocate \$50 Friend \$100 Supporter \$250 Sustainer
 Other _____ *I'm giving a gift membership to the recipient below**
 Contact me about volunteering for RA *Don't sign me up for Action Alerts*

Please enclose a check and mail to: PO Box 6736, Portland OR 97228-6736 or visit www.RecyclingAdvocates.org/join.htm and pay by credit card or PayPal.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone, Day _____ Evening _____

Email _____ Send my newsletter by Email

*Your name, if this is a gift membership _____



RECYCLING ADVOCATES

PO Box 6736, Portland, OR 97228
503-777-0909 www.recyclingadvocates.org
info@recyclingadvocates.org

The Board

Rhett Lawrence • *Co-Pres.*
Katy Daily • *Co-Pres.*
Rob Guttridge • *Vice-Pres.*
Betty Patton • *Secretary*

Rick Paul • *Treasurer*
Wayne Rifer • *At Large*
Lindsey Newkirk • *At Large*
Johnny Leuthold • *At Large*

Staff

Richard Lee-Berman
*Administrator, Editor,
Webmaster*



RECYCLING ADVOCATES

PO Box 6736
Portland OR 97228-6736

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

