



RECYCLING ADVOCATES

August 2005

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

Annual Meeting Re-Cap, July 20, 2005

By Betty McArdle

The Recycling Advocates (RA) 2005 Annual Members' meeting was held on July 20 at PSU. The well-attended evening started with a welcome from out-going board President Rob Guttridge, and introductions. Members came to find out what RA has been doing, meet fellow members and participate in the board election.

The nominee slate for open seats and offices was elected unanimously. Welcome to our new officers and board member!

Betty Patton, President
Rhett Lawrence, Secretary
Katy Daily, At Large

The new RA President, Betty Patton summarized the board retreat held in June, beginning with a look back at some key accomplishments since RA was formed in 1987:

- Advocated for Metro area curbside recycling
- Stopped polystyrene foam use in Portland restaurants
- Published *Ten Ways to Stop Junk Mail*
- Conducted home Eco-Parties
- Led PVC boycott
- Published *Events Recycling Guide*
- Led WEPSI (Western Electronic Product Stewardship Initiative)
- Introduced SB867 (Last session's bill that created the multi-stakeholder task force)
- Assisted with SB740 (This session's legislation that would have created an advance recycling fee for some electronic products)

The board reviewed who RA's target audience is — and is not:

- Public
- Conservation-minded individuals
- Workplace recyclers
- Not governmental agencies
- Not professional recyclers

And, where our funding comes from:

- Membership dues and donations
- Earth Share of Oregon

The board looked at what has worked well:

- Working on a single, dominant issue
- On-going support of projects, such as the:
 - Smart shopping display
 - Event Recycling Guide
 - PVC Boycott
 - E-waste/WEPSI/EPEAT

And problems such as time limitations of board members — volunteer desire is bigger than the volunteer time available.

The following issues were identified for further consideration:

- Should we update the "Recycling Advocates" name? We've moved beyond just recycling to reduce, reuse, zero waste and product stewardship — and more.
- Should we create a Recycling 101 workshop?

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The Demise of SB 740, Electronic Waste Legislation

by Wayne Rifer

Recycling Advocates was instrumental in having SB 740 introduced this session by Representative Jackie Dingfelder (D-Portland). Thank you immensely, Jackie. This bill would have created and funded a statewide computer and TV recycling program. We got lots of good support and made surprisingly good progress (considering), but came up short in the end.

The E-Waste bill was built on the activities of the Advisory Committee on Electronic Product Stewardship, established under SB 867 in 2002, also a Recycling Advocates initiative. Though the Advisory Committee did not recommend the approach taken in this bill, the majority of the members favored the advanced recovery fee approach that SB 740 advocated.

Why did we fail? Initially, the American Electronics Association opposed the bill. We convinced several of their members to demand that they go neutral, and they did, explicitly anyway. The retail association and others opposed. Meanwhile we had not only several environmental groups supporting it but also a group of manufacturers spent a lot of money hiring a lobbyist to fight FOR the bill. The efforts of Panasonic, Sharp, Sony, Philips, JVC, Hitachi and others are hugely appreciated. But in the end, it appears that Hewlett Packard convinced legislators to sit on their thumbs.

If you are interested in the fascinating dynamics behind the competing positions on e-waste legislation, reference back issues of this Newsletter on the RA website. In summary, there are several electronics manufacturers that are trying to convince state legislatures to give us citizens a recycling program, but in opposing ways. And the battles are bloody — Oregon was just the latest.

So, should we take no for an answer? Well, no. At least we don't think so. But we will need to organize much more effectively. Whatever we do next session, we can expect the road to be bumpy. **Anyone interested in participating in that effort, please contact us!** We will be organizing activities in the interim.

Recycling, Where Does It Go

The recent annual meeting was followed with an event titled, "Recycling, Where Does It Go?" There were two main components: a showing of the video, *Point of Return*, and a panel discussion with three experts in the field of recycling: a collector, David McMahon, of Cloudburst Recycling, a MRF (where the commingled recyclables are separated); Rick Paul of Farwest Fibers; and a user of a recycled commodity—paper—Les Joel, of Blue Heron Paper. The panelists shared what their role is in the recycling process and how their work has been impacted by the advent of commingled collection of curbside materials..

Much of the discussion centered on what the panelists concurred is the biggest problem with curbside-collected recyclable materials – *Contamination*.

During the Q&A questioners asked whether all the materials put out at the curb are truly recycled pointing out that it's been rumored that sometimes the materials are just thrown in with the garbage and taken to the landfill. Panelists assured us that is highly unlikely because: (1) it's illegal, and (2) it costs money to take materials to the landfill, whereas recyclable materials can be sold.

Point of Return, produced by the Northern California Recycling Association (NCRA), was made to encourage everyone concerned about sustainable resource management and economic development to become more involved in policy development and the decisions that affect our world. There is a wealth of information, and yes, call to action, in this 12 minute video.

NCRA says that, "Today we have remarkable collection infrastructure and material recovery facilities that allow the masses to toss away their scrap material. We're

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Welcome new board member Katy Daily By Rhett Lawrence

The Recycling Advocates Board of Directors would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest Board member, Katy Daily.

Katy has been the Conservation Organizer at Friends of the Columbia Gorge since 2004 and worked with the National Environmental Trust and Oregon League of Conservation Voters before. Katy is also a 2004 graduate of the Master Recycler program.

I have worked with Katy on a number of environmental issues over the last few years and I thought her energy and creativity would be a real asset to the board. She has been a force in the environmental community and, given her background as a Master Recycler, I knew she would have a lot to offer as a Board member. But she's also tremendously busy and has her hands in all kinds of volunteer efforts, so I wasn't sure she'd have time for one more commitment.

Luckily, Katy was interested when I inquired, so I persuaded her to submit her name for this year's Board election. She was elected a board member at the annual Member Meeting. We're excited to have her coming aboard and look forward to working with Katy in the coming years.

Welcome, Katy!

From the President with Betty Patton



For eight years Rob Guttridge has been President of our RA. Thank you, Rob, for your years of dedication and service. This year Rob decided to step aside. Don't worry; he is still serving on the board! But at the annual meeting held in July, I was voted in as President. Some of you may remember that I served in that position for a few years before Rob. I returned to the Board last year and am now repeating my earlier responsibilities.

My 13 years of membership with Recycling Advocates has given me the opportunity to work at a grass roots level. I am not a member of this organization so I can further a business endeavor or increase sales of a particular product. I am a member to advocate for recycling.

Through the 18 years that this organization has been in existence, we have grown from a recycling focus to a waste prevention and sustainable lifestyle perspective. Thank you, Recycling Advocates, for educating, informing, and motivating me.

The beauty in working with the Recycling Advocates' members is the high level of motivation from all of our members. Our enthusiasm knows no boundaries. However, our time does.

That is the biggest challenge that we have – matching the desires with the availability of all of us volunteers. At our annual planning meeting in June and at the member meeting in July we discussed a broad range of ideas and projects for our organization. We have found that our best success comes by focusing on one large project while keeping the on-going interests active. We will continue with that plan.

We have spent the past few years getting interested and involved in the issue of computer waste and e-scrap issues. We now have a knowledge and perspective on this issue that is valuable. Even though SB740 was not successful in this year's legislature, I hope to continue our work on a statewide solution.

I am very excited about expanding our board. Our newest member, Katy Daily, is a welcome asset to this organization.

I look forward to hearing from you with comments and ideas for our organization's growth. Thank you for being part of this wonderful organization that involves people in creating a sustainable future through local efforts to reduce, reuse, and recycle.

Recycling
Advocates
is proud to
be a
member of



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Rob Guttridge, At Large
Wayne Rifer, At Large
Katy Daily, At Large

Betty McArdle, Administrator and
Newsletter Editor

(“Meeting” continued from front page)

- Connect better to Master Recycler graduates
- Consider projects to promote pre-cycling, waste reduction and zero waste.
- Continued work with e-waste
- Revisiting the Bottle Bill
- Identifying new funding sources for projects

This was followed with comments and suggestions from the members in attendance, some of which included:

- RA and the Association of Oregon Recyclers (AOR) should partner to carry the E-waste issue forward for the next legislative session.
- The Board members would welcome more input from members, which would perhaps be facilitated by establishing a Volunteer Coordinator.
- Consider opportunities for the membership to network. One might be to hold a Zero-Waste member picnic.
- Offer training on Recycling 101: How recycling is done today.
- Establish members corner in news letter – featuring a member each month:

Thanks to all members who attended!

Please – let us know your ideas or concerns considering the above issues, or other issues related to Recycling Advocates. You may either write or phone:

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Thanks to Dana Gantz for helping to make this meeting a big success.

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diverting more waste, but still landfilling more than 10 years ago. So have we achieved better efficiency?

Point of Return is available for loan from RA. Or, order a copy from NCRA by visiting their website at: <http://www.ncrarecycles.org/video/video.html>.

Many thanks to Community Environmental Services (CES) for co-sponsoring this event. To learn more about this PSU-based group visit the CES web site at www.ces.pdx.edu/home.

Re-Use Opportunity

Chickens, Chickens! Tour de Coops 2005

By Jeffrey White

In Portland, residents may raise up to three chickens on their residential property without permit requirements. The idea of adding chickens to our household is intriguing. We have been talking about raising two or three chickens for over a year. On July 17 my daughter, my wife and I took the Second Annual Portland Urban Chicken Coop Tour, a.k.a. Tour de Coops. We were delighted to see the variety of chicken coops, some of which were made from reused materials. We visited Buffalo Gardens' chicken coop in northeast Portland, as well as a half dozen coops at homes in northeast and southeast neighborhoods.

Each household approached urban chickens differently. Some had built elaborate coops; others opted for smaller and simpler structures. Many had chicken runs that extended from the coops several feet out along the perimeter of the yards. This gave the chickens plenty of room for moving about and kept them protected from any predators.

The benefits seem to be many. We can use the straw and chicken manure as compost for our garden. We can collect the chicken eggs. Everyone in our family can learn about caring for chickens. The birds also eat insects and can help keep down weeds.

The owners that we met had not experienced many problems raising chickens. I was concerned about rats and odors, but none of the households we visited had ever had such problems. Owners also assured us that our cats would keep a respectful distance from any chickens that we would own.

Since taking the tour, my preference for coop is the walk-in type. It seems easier to clean out than the smaller coops. One owner incorporated re-used windows that she could open to control the temperature for the chickens.

My wife and I discussed our chicken coop plans the next day after the tour. I mentioned that we could model a coop after a historic building. “Something like the House of the Secession in Vienna?” “No, I was thinking of the Viennese State Opera House meets the ReBuilding Center.”

For more information on Portland’s regulations regarding urban chickens, go to <http://www.portlandonline.com/index.cfm?c=28228>. Growing Gardens, a co-sponsor of the Portland Urban Chicken Tour also has useful links for anyone interested in learning more about raising chickens in an urban setting. Go to <http://growing-gardens.org/pages/resources.shtml> to find the links.



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Back to School — Educate someone about Recycling

'Zero waste' is Seattle's new garbage mantra

From the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, July 18, 2005

The city of Seattle is talking trash. Moving beyond recycling to preventing garbage itself as the next generation of social and civic responsibility, Seattle Public Utilities is launching an initiative called Wasteless in Seattle.

With the long-term goal of "zero waste," the city hopes to drastically reduce the need for landfills and to lower disposal, transportation and energy costs.

Through various programs, including mandatory recycling and fines for violators beginning in January (2006), the city is urging its employees, residents and businesses to rethink how they dispose of everything from egg shells to electronics....

....Garbage prevention is far more

than recycling, city officials say. It is a comprehensive strategy that includes a "triple bottom line" -- environmental and public-health considerations as well as economic ones.

"...waste prevention means not making the waste in the first place," said Chris Luboff, solid-waste planning supervisor for Seattle Public Utilities. "We're trying to broaden that concept."

The city wants more electronic documents and presentations and fewer multiple copies of large reports.

Then there is "product stewardship," which is an effort to encourage manufacturers to take more environmental responsibility for their products and to create materials that cause fewer disposal problems. The effort includes "take-back" programs being developed for computer monitors, furniture and possibly even prescription drugs....

Seattle, which became a national recycling leader 15 years ago, is also embarking on an aggressive program

to reach a goal of diverting 60 percent of garbage from landfills by recycling. Currently that percentage is less than 40 percent....

Use-It-Again Seattle, a program featuring community "garage sales" throughout the city, allows residents to drop off and pick up items free. The effort recycled 60 tons of metal last year, and an estimated 221 tons of materials were reused and diverted from landfills.

Another initiative, the Take-It-Back Network, saw about 600 tons of computer monitors and other components returned in 2004 to participating retail stores.

A city "green building" program, aimed at recycling, water and energy conservation and waste prevention, is also reaping results, city officials say. In 11 city projects last year, nearly 57,000 tons -- or \$560,000 worth -- of salvaged or reused materials were kept out of landfills.

More information at www.seattle.gov/html/CITIZEN/utility.htm

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