



RECYCLING ADVOCATES

January 2002

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

One Person's Trash is...

– Betty Patton and Lori Stole

Oregon's treasures. The day after WEPSI's multi-stakeholder meeting in December, we invited the participants to tour some of the Portland metropolitan area's treasures. These businesses and organizations see the value of electronic equipment at the end of its first life.

We began our day at High Tech Now, Inc. This company in Northwest Portland accepts office electronic equipment from both residential and commercial contributors for asset recovery, dismantling, recycling, and/or re-marketing.

Ryan Kell is the President and CEO of High Tech Now. Just over two years ago the company was in the concept stage. His motivation and energy helped him to open for business on November 1, 1999. This industry seems to experience rapid growth and his company is no exception. It moved into its current location in northwest Portland in April 2001. This facility has 10,000 square feet of warehouse space and is located near Metro's Central transfer station, providing a minimal cost alternative to landfilling this equipment.

High Tech Now takes in tons of inventory daily. This surplus is weighed, catalogued, sorted, and then distributed to areas within the warehouse: refurbishment, resale,

scrap, recovery, and continued use. High Tech Now charges a modest fee for monitors and televisions, but accepts the remainder of the electronic equipment for free. They will pick up any amount above a certain volume at no charge. The staff dismantles and sorts equipment at the NW Portland site, then the material is shipped off to various metal, plastic, and glass recyclers. When the company began they resold about 80% of their incoming material and recycled the rest. As the volume has increased, those numbers have reversed to about 70% recycled and 30% resold. Over half of their monitors 15 inches and above have a resale market. They are able to sell some of their components and equipment on eBay.

The first half of 2002 holds a lot of change for this company. Their first shredder was expected to be installed and running by the end of 2001. The electronic waste fed into the shredder and the very small resulting chunks will then be separated automatically by material type. This process allows the plastics and metals to be recycled. In this case, "plastics recycling" usually involves incineration for energy recovery. The shredder cannot be used to process CRTs.

They expect to order a self-contained CRT crushing system this year. This system separates the CRT from its monitor and television surroundings and granulates the glass, which can then be sent to a leaded glass-to-glass recycler. Until the crusher arrives and *Continued, page 3, col. 1*

WEPSI Happenings

– Tanya Schaefer

On December 12, the Western Electronic Product Stewardship Initiative held its third Northwest multi-stakeholder meeting in Portland. Participants, representing a broad range of stakeholder groups, are tackling the meat of the issues involved in electronic product stewardship. As reported earlier, WEPSI has formed four subgroups (reuse and recycling, policy and regulatory issues, product design and market drivers), and all reported to the stakeholder group at this meeting.

The reuse and recycling subgroup hosted an open source expert from the Multnomah Education Service District, who demonstrated Linux and talked about its benefits in a network environment. Much of the reuse and refurbishing industry, including Portland WEPSI participants Free Geek and StRUT, relies on open source operating systems and software in order to provide cost-effective services.

This discussion was followed by a panel presentation on reuse and recycling in foreign markets, especially those in Asia. Representatives from NxtCycle; Recycle America, a division of Waste Management, Inc.; and Sony Microelectronics Corp. answered questions and generally agreed that countries such as China and Vietnam do not come close to matching U.S. environmental standards. U.S. *Continued, page 2, col. 1*

WEPSI Happenings, cont.

markets are very limited, and not economically inviting for West Coast entities, so some feel driven to go to Asian markets, while others make the best of U.S. markets. Read *CRT Recycling in the Pacific Northwest* at www.recyclingadvocates.org/wepsi/about/recycling.htm.

The policy and regulations subgroup reviewed the current status of hazardous waste regulations as they relate to electronics. Representatives from Oregon DEQ and Washington DOE discussed RCRA and universal waste rules, and a representative from California's Department of Toxic Substances Control analyzed its CRT regulations. California differs from Washington and Oregon in that it bans CRTs and monitors from landfills, and it does not exempt residential solid waste from its hazardous waste regulations. The subgroup also provided information about environmentally preferable purchasing (EPP), and market/business development initiatives around recycling. *RCRA and How it Applies to Electronics* and *U.S. EPA's Proposed CRT Rule* are available at www.recyclingadvocates.org/wepsi/about/polreg.htm. More information about EPP can be found at www.productstewardship.net.

The design subgroup and market drivers subgroup gave brief updates on their progress, and will provide in-depth presentations with subject matter experts at the next multi-stakeholder meeting on February 6. A complete summary of the December 12 meeting is available at www.recyclingadvocates.org/wepsi/about/meetings.htm.

Overall, many stakeholder groups have been well-represented at the meetings. Industry participants

include Epson Portland, Inc., Intel Oregon, LSI Logic, Philips Electronics, Sharp Microelectronics Corp., Sony Electronics Inc., and Xerox Office Printing Business. Refurbisher and recycler participants include Free Geek, Gless IIC, Hallmark Refining Corp., NxtCycle, Recycle America, Total Reclaim/EcoLights NW and StRUT. The December meeting marked the first time a plastics manufacturer attended. State, county and city governments from Oregon and Washington are active participants, along with several non-profits concerned with environmental and health issues. As yet, WEPSI has been unable to garner retailer participation, but that likely is due to the regional (as opposed to national nature) of its dialogue and the lack of retail headquarter presence in the area. A complete list of participants is available at www.recyclingadvocates.org/wepsi/about/projects.htm.

There will be three more Northwest meetings, February 6 in Seattle, March 27 in Portland, and May 22 in Seattle. The sixth meeting will culminate in consensus around an action plan for electronics product stewardship, containing steps for implementation. The WEPSI project team will spend the early summer finalizing and publishing the action plan, and will continue to provide representation to NEPSI through its anticipated conclusion in September 2002.

A Special Thank You: RA is grateful to Jane Rosenstein, RA member, for her invaluable assistance in arranging the no-host social, which followed the WEPSI business meeting.



a member of **Earth Share**
OF OREGON

Position Announcement

Newberg Garbage and Recycling Full Time Recycling Coordinator wanted, position available late February 2002.

Compensation: Experience Rated

Responsibilities: Recycling Coordinator for small solid waste and recycling company. Hands on full time position for self motivated individual. Duties include working with residential customers, public/private schools, businesses and civic organizations. Responsible for reporting all recycling to governmental agencies and assuring program compliance. Skills required include excellent verbal and written communication, proven organizational abilities for planning, implementing and tracking recycling programs and managing all recycling information and statistics. Spread sheet, word processing, Microsoft Access, and presentation graphic computer skills highly desirable.

To Apply: Send resume with handwritten letter of introduction to Newberg Garbage and Recycling, Human Resources, P.O. Box 1000, Newberg, OR 97132. EOE.

For more information call Paul de Block at 503-538-1388 or e-mail fourares@hotmail.com.

Quart Jars Wanted

Recycling-minded beekeeper is in need of **quart** (and **pint**) mayonnaise jars, but not just any mayo jar. I can reuse quart jars that have metal lids because I can buy new lids to fit them. But please, **no plastic-lidded** mayo jars. I am willing to pick up jars from your house in the Portland area. Please call or e-mail me if you have any questions (or jars to pick up!). Glen Andresen, 503-282-8844, glen@pacifier.com.

One Person's Trash, cont.

is installed, High Tech Now will continue to store CRTs, rather than sending them off to an uncertain fate in Asia.

The new equipment will increase material throughput, and they expect to increase the number of staff from the current six employees to eight in January and 10 by March.

High Tech Now, Inc. is located at 2328 NW Reed Street in Portland where they accept equipment drop-offs. Call them at 503-497-9400 for hours and directions, or visit www.hightechnow.com.

Next, our tour took us east to the non-profit organization, StRUT, Students Recycling Used Technology. This program was founded in 1995 by the Intel Corporation and the Northwest Regional Education Service District, and continues to be highly supported with equipment donations from Intel. Its primary goal is to get electronic equipment into classrooms, the recycling aspect of the program comes along as a needed partner to refurbishment.

Students involved in the program, almost all at the high school level, evaluate, repair and refurbish the

donated computers and equipment. The students gain valuable technical and marketable business skills, while public K-12 schools throughout the state receive the refurbished computers. Oregon schools registered with StRUT are the only recipients of equipment processed at StRUT. If equipment can't be used at a school, it is taken apart and the various materials are recycled.

Donated equipment from both business and residential sources comes in to their 24,000-square-foot space near the Portland airport. It is processed by students as well as community volunteers. Items are organized and stored by type so that schools can easily select the items they need for their instructional programs. At these schools the equipment is evaluated, repaired if necessary and possible, perhaps taken apart to see how it works, and combined to make working systems, which are then placed in the K-12 system. They use both Microsoft and Linux software.

Equipment that can't be used in the schools, or in some cases that comes from participating schools but is no longer useful, is broken down to some extent and recycled. Monitors are sent to markets in Asia. Circuit boards go to Hallmark Refining in northern Washington State.

StRUT's warehouse facility also serves as a classroom. They have a computer lab for workshops, and it is the permanent home for the Intel CAD van, where students can access its engineering work stations.

The program has been very successful, and is being examined by other states for duplication. Greg Sampson, StRUT's director, has helped to set up similar programs in several other states already, including Arizona, New Mexico, California, Georgia and Texas.

StRUT accepts a large variety of electronic equipment. To make a donation call them at 503-251-3771. Visit their website at www.strut.org.

Our tours ended at Free Geek. We reviewed this facility in our July 2001 newsletter (www.recyclingadvocates.org/july2001.htm). They continue to refurbish donated equipment using volunteers, who then earn computers to take home. They now are selling a small portion of their extra equipment. Also, they have gained warehouse space in an adjacent office, and are establishing a for-hire service group. Contact them at 503-232-9350 or visit their Web site at www.freegeek.org.

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RECYCLING ADVOCATES

Membership Application

\$25 Regular \$10-24 Living Lightly \$50 Sustainer \$_____ Other
 Please enclose a check and mail to: PO Box 6736, Portland, OR 97228-6736

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Day _____ Evening _____

E-mail _____

**Your membership contribution to RA is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.*

Upcoming Events

January 4 and 5, drop-offs will be set up in the Portland area for the recycling of polystyrene foam blocks and peanuts. Blocks must be clean, dry, white and embossed with #6 and the recycling logo. Clean, dry peanuts of all colors will be accepted. For times and locations, call Metro Recycling Information at 503-234-3000.

January 11, 7:00 p.m. *The Great Turning - A Vision of Hope for the Earth*, An Evening with Joanna Macy. First Unitarian Church, 1011 SW 12th Ave., Portland. Suggested donation \$5-15. For advance tickets, or more information, call the Northwest Earth Institute at 503-227-2807.

January 13-16, National Recycling Coalition Annual Conference, Seattle, Washington. For more information, call 703-683-9025 or visit www.nrc-recycle.org.

January 15, 7:30-9:30 a.m., The Oregon Natural Step Network presents a breakfast meeting, "Responding to Global Warming: Practical Steps to Reduce our Carbon Footprint and Improve the Bottom Line." To assure your

place, prior registration is required. For more information, contact Steve Radtke at 503-241-1140 or steve@nwei.org, or visit www.ortns.org/events.

January 28, 7:30 p.m. Recycling Advocates Board meeting. For location and information, call 503-777-0909.

January 31 & February 1, Making the Case for Sustainability Using the Natural Step Framework, a practical one-and-a-half-day workshop hosted by The Oregon Natural Step Network. Advance registration required. For more information, contact Steve Radtke at 503-241-1140 or steve@nwei.org, or visit www.ortns.org/events.

February 12, 7-9 a.m. "Product Stewardship and Electronics." Speakers Catherine Wilt and George Lundberg are a part of the Oregon Environmental Council's Forum for Business and the Environment. Multnomah Athletic Club, Portland. Advance registration required (breakfast included). For more information, visit www.orcouncil.org or call 503-222-1963 x106.

One Planet: Past, Present and Future

Institute for the Northwest, a forum for environmental innovators, brings the nation's top environmental scientists to Portland for the third season of its Environment Matters Evening Lecture Series.

The six-lecture series begins with Dr. Lynn Margulis, "Gaia: Earth's Past as Prologue," on January 14 at 7:30 p.m. All lectures will be followed by a catered reception, and will be held at the First Congregational Church, 1126 SW Park, Portland.

Recycling Advocates, along with other environmental organizations, will be displaying educational materials before and after each lecture. In order to do this, **we need volunteers** to set up and staff our table. Members who volunteer will receive up to two free tickets to that evening's lecture. To volunteer, please call Tanya Schaefer at 503-777-0909.

For more information about the series and the Institute for the Northwest, please visit www.inorthwest.org or call 503-222-2357.

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