

Living Green is making choices in our day-to-day lives that reduce our impact on the environment and move us in the direction of a sustainable lifestyle – one that is healthy, ecologically sound, economically viable and socially just.

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### CORRECTION:

If you have been to a Living Green or Energy Conservation class lately you may have heard that Compact Fluorescent Light bulbs can be recycled in the blue bins. This is not true. Please drop them off for free at the Waste To Energy facility, one of it's transfer stations, or to Home Depot. For a map of WTE locations see [solidwaste.org](http://solidwaste.org).

From Thanksgiving to New Years Day, household waste increases more than 25% from food waste, shopping bags, packaging and wrapping paper. In the US, annual trash from gift-wrap equals 4 million tons. (Use Less Stuff, 1998)

But it's not just the garbage that is wasteful – producing gift-wrap consumes virgin resources of timber, water and fuel. Pulp and paper manufacturing uses the most water per ton of product than any other industry.

**Recycle It:** Most conventional gift-wrap is not recyclable. In some areas paper that doesn't contain foil can be recycled, but not in the Spokane area.

**Reuse It:** Reusing paper, ribbons and bows is a great solution. Remember to use minimal tape on paper to keep it in good condition, or learn to wrap without tape at all! A step by step guide to one woman's

## Wrapping Up Waste



Wrapping without tape or glue.



Furoshiki—traditional Japanese gift wrapping.



Wrapsacks can be found in gift stores and online at [www.wrapsacks.com](http://www.wrapsacks.com)

be wrapped with care by folding the end flaps one at a time, clockwise. The bottom flap can be held in place by tucking it into the right flap. If it won't stay, tie the paper with a ribbon or string.

**Reduce It:** Don't use paper! Either go without, or wrap in a beautiful cloth and make the wrapping part of the gift! The Japanese method of Furoshiki wrapping has become popular over the years. A square cloth can wrap anything with class.

An easy way is to place a gift on a corner at one end and roll it diagonally in the cloth. Fold down that corner. Two outlying corners remain on the left and right, tie them together.

And finally, one option comes straight from a local Spokane entrepreneur who makes Wrapsacks. Reusable and decorative, the cloth bags can be passed along from one person to another and tracked

strategy can be found on her blog at [Fake Plastic Fish](#) titled "[Wrapping presents without tape or glue](#)". Basically gifts can

*Continued on p.4*

## Living Christmas Trees by Jim Blake



### ENERGY TIP:

To maximize holiday lighting savings, use timers to limit light displays to no more than six evening hours a day. Leaving lights on 24 hours a day will quadruple your energy costs – and create four times the pollution.

This year we are going to do something a little different at Christmas. We are going to have a living tree to decorate. We like having natural trees for Christmas but it just doesn't seem right to cut down a living tree and throw it away after the season, even if it is tree farm grown. So we are going to buy an already potted tree, or a burlap balled tree that we can then put in a container. With a potted tree we can keep it in our landscape and enjoy it year round.

There are a number of trees that make good potted Christmas trees but I am partial to Douglas Firs. They have dark green, dense foli-

age and are native to the Northwest. Douglas Firs though can grow a couple of feet per year and soon grow too big for a container. It may be better to get a tree that will stay fairly small so it can be enjoyed for a number of years.

An Alberta Spruce would be a good choice because they grow only about six feet at maturity and have a tight conical growth. They are very suitable for year-round container growing.

A Noble Fir is another good choice. It has a pyramidal shape with dark green foliage, and silvery-green underneath. It is very popular as a pruned and

shaped farm grown Christmas tree. This is one of the finest living trees for use during the holiday season.

A draw back to a living tree is that it can only be inside 7 to 10 days or it will break dormancy from the warmth. If this happens, when placed back outside in freezing temperatures, it will die. A potted tree grown in this area will be dormant when you buy it this time of the year.

You can ease it inside by first putting it in a garage for a few days before moving it inside the home. Decorate and enjoy it for about seven days then ease it back outside by once again putting it in a garage

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## Some Thoughts About Germs

### Get Rid of Plastic Bags



If you have too many, you can donate them to SNAP's food banks. Please drop them off at the East Central—500 S. Stone, or the North East center—4001 N Cook.

At this time of year people come down with colds and flus more easily and are told to frequently wash their hands and surfaces with antibacterial products. But colds and flus are viruses – antibacterials don't necessarily kill viruses, they kill bacteria. Disinfectants, such as Lysol™ or chlorine bleach, are considered pesticides and are regulated by the EPA.

Some very nasty diseases are caused by

bacteria and viruses, but most of the microbes around us are harmless and beneficial or even necessary. Beneficial microbes in the soil release nutrients for plants, and in our digestive tract provide the vitamin K that is needed for our blood to clot. And there is considerable evidence that exposure to bacteria helps the immune system to develop.

Avoid household products containing tri-

clozan, the common ingredient in products labeled "antibacterial". There is little evidence they are effective in homes and have raised concerns about bacterial resistance. Wash your hands with hot water and soap, especially before eating, after using the bathroom, and after contacting surfaces that might harbor a lot of germs.

Some tips from [Washington Toxics Coalition](#):

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## Maintenance Tips for Conservation

The best way to make sure that mechanical equipment lasts longer and runs best is to be proactive with maintenance and repairs. This is common when it comes to vehicles but sometimes other major appliances are ignored. Perhaps the most important appliance is the furnace, or Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning system known as HVAC.

For those who aren't technically inclined, it's best to call a professional HVAC service person for proper maintenance to prevent future repair costs. But it's possible to learn some adjustments and regular maintenance to avoid serious damage from neglect.

A good way to start is to pick up a do-it-yourself

book at a local library. Some of the simple steps that can help are:

### Change the filter monthly

– disposable ones work fine, but many models will fit a reusable/washable filter that lasts. (Living Green supports reusable over disposable whenever costs allow.) Next, ensure that outside vents and chimneys are clear of debris and don't become blocked by leaves, bird nests, or snow.

Finally, run the furnace through a normal cycle and after 10 minutes, test the temperature differences at the nearest return air vent (sucking cool air in) and the supply air vent (blowing warm air out). The recommended range in temperatures should be listed on a label plate for the furnace.

Installing programmable thermostats will save between 5-15% or more on heating bills and can be paid off in energy savings within a few months.

Further maintenance: be sure to shut off power at least 15 minutes before opening the unit, and know how to relight the pilot light if it's a gas unit. Once inside, clean away dirt and rust as necessary. Older furnaces may require oiling of the blower motors, but newer ones do not.

To maintain oil furnaces, check for any leaks from the tank and fuel lines and have the fuel filter replaced at the beginning and middle of the heating season. It's recommended to schedule maintenance with a professional service person annually.

[Click Here for the Living Green Gift Giving Guide at www.livinggreensnap.org!](http://www.livinggreensnap.org)

### LIVING GREEN TIP:

Instead of buying new decorations, throwing away old ones, and making unnecessary purchases, **try organizing a décor swap with your friends.**

Like a clothing swap, a group of neighbors can have a fun time getting to know one another and collecting new holiday displays at no extra cost. Make a party out of it and help initiate greener living in your community.

## LED Lights for the Holidays

We all know how popular the little LED flashlights and bicycle lights have become, how the bulbs don't burn out and how little energy they use. They are now available to light up your holiday season and save on your electricity bill.

LEDs come in a variety of colors and shapes, from mini lights to regular sized tree lights. They also come in icicles, nets, garlands, and even for your car or boat.

How do LEDs compare to

incandescent lights? Consumer Reports found that LEDs cost a bit more to purchase but are far more durable with all bulbs working after a 4,000 hour test. The incandescent bulbs had a number of bulbs burn out before 2,000 hours. LEDs are plastic and far less likely to break. The incandescents won when it came to brightness though.

LEDs won when it comes to energy use and costs. They used 1 to 3 kilowatt hours of energy, com-

pared with 12 to 105 kWh for the incandescents, saving \$1 to \$11.

LED lights are better for the environment. They use far less energy, run much cooler reducing fire risk, and should be long lasting. But it will take more than one holiday season to realize the energy and money savings.

*Lowes 150 count mini lights, white. Cost: \$15 (not pictured)*



## Community Profile: One World Café

The organic Community Kitchen is open and getting busier everyday. But this hot lunch spot serves more than a hot meal. Their goals are threefold: reduce food waste, end hunger, and provide organic and affordable food with vegetarian and vegan options. The concept started in Salt Lake City with the famous guidelines that anybody is welcome to have a fresh, organic meal no matter how much money is in their pocket. The customers not only choose their own portions to limit food waste but also pay the amount they feel is right.

Sustainability is a cornerstone at One World Café ([oneworldspokane.com](http://oneworldspokane.com)). The employees are paid

living wages and the many volunteers are supplied with training in the service industry, a meal, and/or produce from the garden. The food is sourced locally and organically and the new garden will continue to provide more food as it expands.

Kitchen scraps are also composted for the garden. The One World Everybody Eats foundation is meant to be a community contributor as well. While the volunteers will help with neighborhood cleanup, revenue from the restaurant will be used to serve the community.

Visit or call them at 1804 E Sprague Ave, 509-270-1608.



A chef at One World Café.



Keystone Community Garden at One World Café.

### Wrapping Up Waste, cont'd from p.1

online at [www.wrapsacks.com](http://www.wrapsacks.com).

**Other Alternatives:** There are also recycled paper, organic cotton, and hemp paper options that can be found online. Many people still like the traditional look of non-bleached brown wrapping paper which doesn't contain any of the toxic dyes like conventional giftwrap and tying it with raffia or string.

### Living Christmas Trees cont'd from p.2

for a couple of days. You can keep it in the container year-round and enjoy it next season, or you can plant it in the spring.

We plan on keeping our potted tree outside in front of a sliding glass door in the living room. From there we can still enjoy the decorations and maybe add some bird seed ornaments and watch birds feed.

### Some Thoughts Germs cont'd from p.2

- Keep your house clean using cleaning products without antimicrobials. Don't try to maintain a germ-free environment unless there is a particular medical reason to do so in your family. If so, consult your physician.
- Handle meat, fish, or poultry with care. Avoid cross-contaminating utensils, cutting boards, sponges, towels, or hands. Use one cutting board just for meat, fish, or poultry. Use only clean implements on food that will not be cooked before eating.
- Replace kitchen sponges frequently. Disinfect them weekly by boiling in water for at least three minutes or microwave for a minute or two (or both!). Launder dishrags in hot water every week. Keep sponges and rags as dry as possible.
- Don't use aerosol disinfectants as air fresheners. You can't disinfect the air. Find the source of an unpleasant odor and deal with it appropriately. See [www.watoxics.org](http://www.watoxics.org).

## Green Recipe Corner: Maple Glazed Root Veggies and Pumpkin Cake

### Maple Glazed Root Veggies

1/4 cup maple syrup  
2 tbsp dijon mustard  
1/2 tsp garlic powder  
2 tbsp olive oil  
1/2 tsp salt  
1/4 tsp pepper  
2 sweet potatoes, chopped  
approx. 1 1/2 cups chopped carrots  
approx. 1 1/2 cups chopped parsnips



### Preparation:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Coat parsnips, potatoes and carrots with the olive oil, salt and pepper on a baking pan. Roast in oven for 15 minutes, then remove and re-toss on baking sheet. Cook 15 minutes more, until all the veggies and potatoes are soft. Combine maple syrup, dijon mustard and garlic powder in a small bowl. Drizzle the maple mixture over potatoes and veggies and mix to coat well.

### Pumpkin Cake (Bars) *from King Arthur Flour Whole Grain Baking Cook Book*

Yield: One 9x13 inch sheet cake or 9 inch round 2-layer cake, 16 servings

Baking Time 30-35 minutes for layers, 35-40 minutes for sheet cake

### Cake

1 1/2 cups (6 oz) whole wheat flour  
1 cup (4 oz) whole barley flour  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
3/4 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1 teaspoon ground ginger  
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg  
1/4 teaspoon ground allspice  
1 3/4 cups (13 1/8 oz) packed brown sugar  
1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened  
1/2 cup (3 1/2 oz) vegetable oil  
4 large eggs  
1 can (15 oz) pumpkin purée

### Ginger cream cheese frosting

6 tablespoons (3/4 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature  
1 package (8 oz) cream cheese, at room temperature  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
4 cups (1 pound) confectioners' sugar, sifted  
1 cup (4 oz) chopped nuts (optional)  
1/2 cup (3 1/4 oz) minced crystallized ginger  
2 to 4 Tablespoons (1 to 2 oz) milk, if needed, to make frosting spreadable

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour the pan or pans or line with parchment paper.

Wisk together the flours, baking powder, baking soda, salt and spices in a medium bowl. Mix together the brown sugar, butter and oil in a large bowl until thick and smooth. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, stir until evenly combined. Stir in the pumpkin, then the dry ingredients. Mix until evenly moistened. Transfer the batter to the prepared pan(s).

Bake until the top springs back when lightly touched and the edges of the cake pull back from the pan, 30 to 35 minutes for layers, 35 to 40 minutes for the sheet cake. Remove from oven and cool on a rack before frosting.

To make the frosting: Combine butter, cream cheese and vanilla in a medium bowl, and beat until they are light and fluffy. Add sugar gradually, beating well. Stir in the nuts, if desired and/or ginger, then add the milk a little at a time until the frosting is a spreadable consistency.

# Upcoming Events

**11/11, 12/9 Green Drinks A** social meeting at 5:30 pm for people interested in protecting the environment. Free. Brooklyn Nights, 122 S. Monroe St. (835-4177)

**11/12 Riverpoint Holiday Fair** Come enjoy complimentary hot cider and shop for hand made items from local craftspeople. At the Riverpoint Campus, 600 N Riverpoint Blvd. For more information call 358-2234.

**11/15 Holiday Arts & Crafts** Buy handmade wares from 9 am-5 pm and Nov. 16 from 10 am-4 pm. Cost: \$1. Mead High School, 302 W. Hastings Rd. 220-4399

**11/15 SARS Ski Swap** at the Bonner County Fairgrounds. 9am - 2pm. Admission is \$2/person \$5/family.

**11/17 Spokane River Workshop** Celp is holding a FREE workshop on the Spokane River and all the changes that are going on. Come see how this affects you. At Lake-Side Middle School 6:30pm - 8:30pm. Info: (509) 209-2899, [www.celp.org](http://www.celp.org).

**11/18 Master Bike Plan Open House** at Salem Lutheran Church, 1428 W. Broadway; from 6-8pm. See [www.spokaneplanning.org/master\\_bike\\_plan.htm](http://www.spokaneplanning.org/master_bike_plan.htm).

**11/21, 22, 23 Banff Film Festival** at the Bing Crosby Theater, 901 W Sprague. 7pm Friday and Saturday, 6pm Sunday. Shows sell out so buy tickets soon. Info: (509) 325-900, or [www.mgear.com](http://www.mgear.com).

**11/24 Spokane River Workshop** Celp's event (see

above) at the Community Building, 35 W Main. Info 209-2899, [www.celp.org](http://www.celp.org).

**11/27 One World Thanksgiving Feast** at the Community Kitchen from 2-5pm. Reservations required, call 270-1608, or go to [oneworldspokane.com](http://oneworldspokane.com).

**11/28,29,30 Festival of Fair Trade** with sweat-shop free handcrafts, clothing, jewelry and pottery from around the world. At the Community Building 35 W. Main; 10-6pm. For more information, contact 509-464-7677.

**1/17 2009 Deer Park Winterfest** Frostbite 5K fun run, Vendor Fair, Children's crafts, snow softball, Fireworks, and more. Please contact 276-9502.



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We're on the Web!  
[www.LivingGreenSnap.org](http://www.LivingGreenSnap.org)

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