

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.

YEAR IN REVIEW

This past year many topics have appeared in the Living Green newsletters. We've talked about national news, the climate conference in Copenhagen, given tips for energy slashing upgrades and many ways to lighten the impact of our lifestyles on the planet. So from a year's worth of research, here are some of the top messages from 2009:

Holiday Waste

Last holiday season we discovered how to wrap gifts with alternatives such as recycled or non-bleached paper and cloth like the Japanese method of using Furoshiki fabric.

Phosphate Ban

One big topic this past summer was the difficulty in using phosphate free dishwasher detergent. Even though the perfect soap hasn't come to grocery store shelves yet, there are several

that work and we gathered some tips that help, like using vinegar as an aid to improve spotty dishes. Not only did we dig up those tips, we also learned that after only one year the phosphate ban has been working – levels of phosphates in the Spokane River dropped 14%.

Greenwash Watch

A lot of us are feeling overwhelmed by the persistent media focus on so-called "green" products. Many claims are actually about products that don't help the environment at all and it eventually creates enviro awareness overkill. But the Terra Choice website (www.terrachoice.com) put out a guide to the Seven Sins of Greenwashing to help us evaluate those claims and steer clear of products that actually cover up their environmentally damag-



Spokane River in Riverfront Park.

ing track record.

Natural Burials

Talking about Natural Burials this year stirred a lot of comments from readers. A natural approach in burials has been on a lot of folks' minds. Rather than the common embalming practice and massive coffins, many are turning to biodegradable caskets and skipping the preservative treatments.

Reducing Transportation

Learn about development issues in your neighborhood at www.EnvironmentalPriorities.org with a fact

Contents

- Year of Living Green
- Cap and Trade
- Book Review: Not a Drop for Sale
- What Happened in Copenhagen?
- Community Radio Act
- Calendar of Events

Continued on page 4

CAP AND TRADE, EXPLAINED



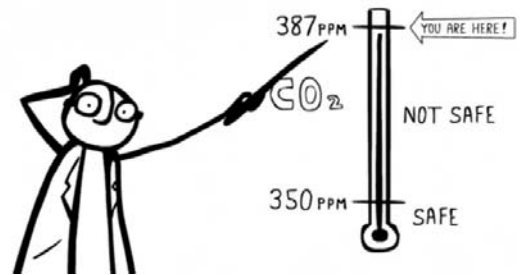
"The Story of Stuff" became a beyond-viral internet film phenomenon, making Annie Leonard well known in the environmental community. She spent her adult life learning about, studying, and tracking waste across the globe. She then put her thoughts into a film to raise awareness of the waste our society creates, hides, and ignores. Her most recent film is the Story of Cap and Trade. All films can be found at www.storyofstuff.com.

Cap and Trade, or emissions trading, would mean getting countries around the world to limit emissions to a set maximum, which would be the cap. Governments set the cap and give emissions permits to polluters. Each year the cap will be reduced and fewer permits given to reign in the real carbon emissions. Innovative companies will change their practices to clean up emissions and pollution; those who have extra credits can

sell them to the companies who are polluting above the allowed amount.

In the first year this policy will immediately cut 147 million tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and is supposed to cut more every year. The goal is 17% reduction by 2020 and 83% reduction by 2050.

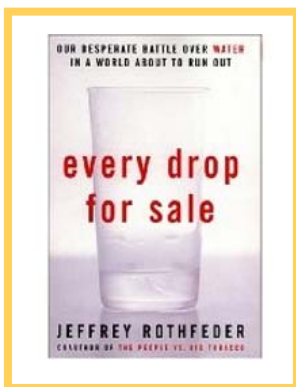
In the online film, *The Story of Cap and Trade*, Annie Leonard takes a critical look at Cap and Trade. She discusses the Cap and Trade as the next big financial trading scheme. It is shaped like other market bubbles by wall street financiers hoping to stimulate a market boom. Leonard points



out that there are major flaws and loopholes that allow power plants to get away with not complying with the legal limits. Those flaws include free permits for polluters and giving them the option to invest in other "offsets" without reducing emissions at all.

Many see this strategy as a good first step to reducing carbon emissions, but it's important to not let the cap and trade program distract us from the real solution—moving away from fossil fuels.

BOOK REVIEW: EVERY DROP FOR SALE



Recent news headlines reflect a serious crisis concerning the world's water supply: "Mexico City Battles Water Crisis" (Reuters 1/10), "One Killed in Mumbai Water Shortage Protest" (Reuters 12/09), and so many more. Reportedly, 80 countries now have water shortages that

threaten health and economies, while 40 percent of the world — more than 2.5 billion people — have no access to clean water.

Published in 2001, *Every Drop for Sale* is a quick read on the topic of decreasing water supply and the dangers behind corpo-

rate takeover. The book asks very important questions, such as whether water is a basic right or need, and discloses ugly truths concerning water distribution.

You can find *Every Drop for Sale* in our lending library.

WHAT HAPPENED IN COPENHAGEN?

Bike to Work Spokane Committee Meetings Start Jan. 5, 2010



It's that time of year again! The Bike to Work Planning committee will be meeting weekly to organize another outstanding set of activities for Bike to Work Spokane. Volunteers will be welcome to contact Barb Chamberlain, Chair, 509-869-2949, or email info@biketoworkspokane.org.

Mark your calendar for the big event: Bike to Work Week runs Sunday, May 16-Saturday, May 22. It's a little later this year so we should have beautiful biking weather!

"Cash for Clunkers" For Bikes: Donate your used bike by Feb. 15, 2010, get credit at Two Wheel Transit toward purchase of a new bike, and help folks get a working bike through Pedals2People or Union Gospel Mission. Visit the store at 1405 w 1st, or call 509-747-2465.

There were critical developments in 2009 regarding climate change in politics, news, and science. The landmark Waxman-Markey bill was passed in the US House of Representatives. The Obama Administration made truly remarkable strides. And the Copenhagen Conference, while not what many hoped for, should open up pathways for green energy efforts internationally.

Even in the face of a global downturn, renewable energy and energy efficiency increased and the sci-

ence continues to deepen our understanding of and concern about the climate crisis.

The Copenhagen Conference was supposed to be the successor to the Kyoto Protocol. The talks ended in December without any agreement of any sort. When President Obama addressed the meetings he spoke in favor of some agreement to be made in the future, but pointed to the US Senate's lack of action on tackling climate legislation at home. The meeting in Copenhagen ended

with a written letter of intent. The countries' leaders agreed to prevent global temperatures from exceeding 2 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial times and to give money to third world countries to help pay for aid for environmental damages. Another round of climate talks is scheduled for November 2010 in Mexico. Negotiators are hoping to nail down then what they failed to achieve in Copenhagen -- a new treaty to replace the Kyoto Protocol. But there are no guarantees.

COMMUNITY RADIO ACT PASSED

Washington, DC - The Local Community Radio Act passed the House of Representatives this December and now moves to the Senate. The bill will open the airwaves for hundreds of new non-commercial stations across the country, bringing low power radio to urban areas for the first time.

The House vote allows the Federal Communications

Commission (FCC), to drop technical restrictions Congress placed on low power radio in 2000 at the request of commercial broadcasters. These restrictions have kept low power radio out of the top 50 radio markets, which reach over 160 million Americans.

This act is good news for groups like Thin Air Community Radio, Spokane's local community radio station. Other stations like Thin

Air found help from the Philadelphia-based non-profit Prometheus Radio Project, to organize community based and volunteer run radio stations. Prometheus Radio is an organization that advocates for greater citizen access to the airwaves through the licensing of low power radio stations. Read more at: www.expandlpfm.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

1/28-2/7 Spokane International Film Festival, Films will be shown at AMC Theaters at Riverpark Square and the Magic Lantern Theater. Single film tickets, \$10 each. 5-film passes, \$45. For film listings, see their site at spokanefilmfestival.org.

2/7 Souper Bowl 5th annual women's only cross-country and snow shoe event at Mt. Spokane Nordic Ski Area, 10am. For more information, visit www.souperbowlspokane.org.

2/10 Green Drinks at Northern Lights/Dry Fly featuring Inland Northwest Land Trust, 1003 E. Trent, Suite 200, 5:30pm.

2/12 Envirokids Day! You are invited to make recycled paper valentines and learn about wind. Mobius, 808 W Main Ave,

Cost: \$5.75, 11am-3pm. www.mobiusspokane.org

2/12 Winter Waters 2010- A Valentine for the Spokane River, sponsored by Sierra Club and CELP, Patsy Clark Mansion, \$40 a person/ \$70 a couple. For more info contact Shellan Dawson, 209-2899

2/13 Erik Anderson Memorial Community Run, Plantes Ferry Sports Stadium, 12308 E Upriver Dr, 9am, Cost: \$15.

2/21 P.E.A.C.H workshop on Permaculture, How to make yards, cities and farms more productive and livable. 2015 N Division, 9am. See website for details: www.peachlocal.com.

2/20 P.E.A.C.H workshops on seed saving, free seed exchange, and a worm bin workshop. 2015 N Division,

10am-4pm, cost: \$15 advance, \$20 at the door. See website for details: www.peachlocal.com.

2/25 Land Use and Environmental Law Primer Learn about laws impacting land use and environmental protection in WA and ID. Magic Lantern Theater, 35 W Main, from 3-5pm. For more information, call 877-264-7220, or email rick@bnd-law.com.

2/28 Full Moon Fiasco, A relaxed bike ride through Spokane during the full moon. Any and all bike levels welcome. Starts at The Swamp, 1904 West 5th, 8pm. More info: fbcspo-kane.blogspot.com.

3/6 2nd Chance Kitchen and Garden Sale, Peter's & Sons Flowers and Gifts, 512 E Pacific.

YEAR IN REVIEW *continued from p. 1*

sheet for Transit Oriented Communities, and the Spokane Regional Transportation Council (srtc.org) has a new website for SmartRoutes.org. Participate by walking

and biking and assess the walkability of your neighborhood at www.walkscore.com

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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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