

AFFEW NEWSLETTER

October 2005

Once again you're being asked to think about the earth. Currently, it's popular to think selfishly, and short-term. That's because we're people, and we haven't many good examples of leaders who are thinking long-term. And THAT may be because the leaders are taking on so much stuff that it's not humanly possible to do it all well. They're forced into putting out the current fires, and leaving the future fires to chance, or to somebody else who will be silly enough to run for office in the future. Anyway, when we talk about saving the earth, we're just hoping that it won't change so much that it will be unliveable for humans. We really don't care if it becomes toxic to cockroaches, as long as we, the people, are okay.



HAPPENINGS

Remember that AFFEW still is doing battery recycling, and that's something different from Household Hazardous Waste. Batteries go to Holland, Batteries Plus, who seems to be really recycling them. Pat reports that we've got to deliver batteries to the recycler in 5 gallon plastic pails. So we need pails. If you're drywalling, or plaster-coating a mummy, save those pails. Anyone who wants to carry a load down there, call Pat at 843-8273, and if she's out of town, or just not answering, call Julia at 845-0053.

Please remember that if you're going to or past Holland for any reason, we really really need people to carry dead batteries down there. It's amazing how many we collect. PLEASE volunteer.

We signed on to the Great Lakes Initiative. It is an alliance for the great lakes, consisting of a number of environmental groups. The objective is preservation of the lakes, which fits our objectives very well.

Did we say that Jeff Wrisley has quit the board for a job in Iraq? And Sidney Shaw has taken Jeff's place on the board? Although we worry a bit about Jeff, we wish him well, and welcome Sidney aboard. He will be an asset to our organization. Trivia fact: By some, Sidney is called Peace Man.

The International Beach Sweep happened, and our group worked it in cooperation with the Zen Sanga group. Much trash was collected, same as past years. Will we ever quit trashing?

UPCOMING EVENTS

The next AFFEW board meeting will be Annual meeting is to be held Nov 3 at the Ludington Library, probably at 7 PM, for election of officers, setting of goals for later, and any other pertinent business that may come up. Dave, Pat, Rebecca, Julia are up for election.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Rebecca Fox's magic rain garden is installed and growing, thanks to much work by a few volunteers. And it got its first test, well before the plants had a chance to take root in a meaningful way. It rained a lot, and the garden is still there. Many thanks are due to Rebecca, Barry Matthews, Wayne Fox, who did lots of the work, and the college for having the initiative to do something about runoff.

There was a hazardous waste collection day Oct 8, 9AM-12 noon in Baldwin. Notice was given by word of mouth, but next year it should be better publicized in advance, at least for AFFEW members. Since Dow had to quit sponsoring that event locally, it's a bit more tenuous. Rumor has it that Julia took enough old paint over there to cover a battleship.

Landfills are designed for waste which isn't toxic. This is a way to help save those aquifers.

As predicted, several of us did walk in the July 4th parade in Ludington. We dressed up as trash, and carried trashy signs. Julia and Laura got into their teacher roles, and cornered spectators to tell them how awful trashing the world is. The crowd was receptive, but didn't exactly throw money at them. Sid was carrying a peace banner, and it got many rounds of applause. Or maybe Sid did.

As a reminder, here is where some things can be recycled locally.

Computer printer cartridges can be taken to Jackpine business center in Ludington

Household Batteries Briggs True-Value Hardware (Ludington), Ludington and Scottville Libraries, Nichols Drug Store, Scottville.

Car Batteries Padnos Iron and Metal will pay \$.50 for a used car battery. NAPA, Wal Mart and Meijers allow \$5 toward a new battery, Auto Value allows \$4 to \$6, Car Quest allows various amounts toward a new battery. Auto Zone, Advance Auto, James Tire, Tractor Supply and Urka Auto Center will accept used auto batteries without trade-in

Ni-Cad (nickel-cadmium), nickel-metal hydride, and Lead Gel batteries can be taken to Radio Shack.

Steel, Brass, Copper and Aluminum scrap can be taken to Padnos Iron and Metal. (843-4455) They won't take propane tanks or anything with CFCs in it.

Anti-freeze can be taken to James Tire. Bring it in 1 gallon containers (free) or Urka Auto Center \$1.00/gallon

Tires can be taken to Wal-Mart. They charge \$.70 each, which is cheap. James Tire charges \$2 (limit 5)

Old Motor Oil can be taken in 1 gallon containers (5 gallon limit) to James Tire (843-3100) Wal-Mart (845-5787) Bring to automotive department, Urka Auto Center (845-6282), and Advance Auto Parts (843-6699)

Transmission Fluid and Gear Oil can go to Auto Zone (845-9331) or Tractor Supply(843-1932)
Styrofoam peanuts can be taken to the UPS Store, on US 10 near Wal-Mart. The peanuts will be REUSED!
Newspapers and Glossy Magazines Padnos Pere Marquette Div. (843-4455)
Electronics excluding household appliances CompRenew Corp, Belmont MI 616-866-3100). Will take for a fee
Computer monitors, computers, televisions.

E MAIL Give us your e-mail address and let us know whether you'd accept getting your newsletter by e-mail. Just e-mail to the newsletter writer at cdhall@1010internet.com, and ask to be put on the list. Help us save postage and paper.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Oh, man, I've just got to whine about global warming again. The longer we're around, the longer we see more evidence of the old planet warming up. Not much of anyone is debating that any more. People who listened to the latest presenter at the Ludington Visiting Writers series a week or so ago, heard a lady who had hiked to the north pole with a group of other women. She reported that one of their major difficulties was finding their way around open water in the Arctic ice cap. In other words, like many glaciers world wide, the ice covering the Arctic Ocean is melting back. Big deal, you might hear some say. Glaciers and the Arctic ice are notoriously poor places to build condos anyway, who cares if they're frozen?

Changes of global size are famously hard to reverse, once they've started up. As an example, two years ago it was reported that the western Pacific Ocean was showing some of the warmest temperature readings ever. The warmer the water, the more evaporation there is from that part of the ocean. The resulting water vapor is a great greenhouse gas, and it traps solar heat in the area of concern. That increases water temperature some more, and water vapor along with it. See the vicious cycle? And this year, the Carribean is demonstrating what warm water temperatures can do when it comes to generating storms. Who'd have thought it?

Scientists studying the sediments in the north Atlantic Ocean in the 1980s found that, just before the last ice ages began, there was a very sudden drop in water temperature there. The ocean had been quite warm, then in a couple of decades, if I remember right, it became cold. The only thing they could think of to drop the ocean temperature so suddenly would be if the polar ice cap melted. Like frozen lakes do in the spring, the ice disappears suddenly, and that cools the water down deep. These guys hypothesized that the open water in the far north was a sudden source of moisture, which created much more snowfall there. This snow fell on the lands surrounding the Arctic Ocean, causing continental size glaciers to form. Nobody knows if they're right, but it's possible. Global warming causes an ice age. Cool.

So I've begun to think that large climate changes are coming, and maybe quickly. Even if we'd sign the Kyoto Accords and clean up our air, I think we'd be unable to reverse the trend. So what do we do?

No scientist worth his salt will predict coming climate changes, so I'll give it a shot. I think the warming will affect us in a major way in 20 years. Moisture patterns will change worldwide, which will change the places where crops will grow. I think equatorial areas will be too hot to support most food crops, but they will support insect life, which will boom. As the Antarctic ice melts, the ocean levels will rise a bit, which will flood large parts of Florida and the Gulf coast. Don't buy New York theater tickets for late in the century. Oceans will rise slowly, but hurricane activity will increase, and become more intense. So my advice is to stay in Michigan. For the next century or so, after the Arctic Ocean is ice free, we may see much wetter summers. As snow accumulates in the far north, sunlight will be reflected off the earth, and then the planet will start to cool rapidly. Then will be time to move south as glaciers grow again. Note: if the currents in the Atlantic Ocean switch about, all my predictions are off.

Go hug a tree.

Dave Hall

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