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## GreenTown Los Altos Newsletter – June 2010

Your source for news and updates about adopting environmentally sustainable practices in our homes, schools, businesses and governments.

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**Please Note:** We will not be having a community meeting in June.

### Springer School Community Has Success With WOW!

The Springer Elementary School community has on average over 36 percent of eligible students walking, riding or rolling to school as part of the WOW (Walk or Wheel) program. WOW is a GreenTown Los Altos program to reduce car trips to school (aka "Freiker Program" at Almond School and "Boltage" at Santa Rita School). Springer leads the nation in kid-powered commutes among schools using the [Freiker](#) technology.

According to PTA co-president Kelly Toshach, as of mid-May, Springer students had logged 6,055 round trips, averaging .66 miles each way, representing almost 16,000 vehicle miles avoided.

Springer Principal Wade Spenader says, "The effectiveness of this program at getting kids walking or biking to school and taking cars off the streets has significantly improved the sense of safety on our streets."

Toshach says, "This program is a great investment in our community and in our kids' future. And it gives me chills to see dads walking or riding with their kids to school, who never did that before. We're having a great impact!"

Laurie Pasmooj, whose children ride 1.4 miles each way, said, "The kids love viewing their biking and walking to school totals on the WOW website and can't believe how the miles add up! Their greatest excitement is having so many mates traveling with them by foot and bike; and the "Zap" each day is a special treat."

Karen Rado, a Springer mom, says, "The traffic is noticeably lower and there is always parking in front of school now!"

Congratulations to all the students in Los Altos who are now biking, walking or rolling, and to their parents who are supporting this new behavior. And thanks to the parents leading this program at Springer, Almond, Egan and Santa Rita! And thanks to everyone else who slows down for a biker or walker!

## GreenTown Los Altos Co-Op – Help us Spread the Word

The GreenTown Co-Op is the GreenTown Los Altos solution to the problem of styrofoam: we're bringing together a buying group that, through volume, can obtain a 25 percent discount on compostable take-out containers and help transform our community to reduce waste and reduce our environmental impact.

We hope to get all Los Altos restaurants to switch to compostables. We're also getting interest from other communities. In fact, Kacey Fitzpatrick recently was asked to present to the Santa Clara County Source Reduction and Recycling Committee about the Co-op, and the attendees, representing many of the cities, were excited and interested in how they could get their communities to participate!

More information on how it works is on our [website](#). Please take this information to your local favorite restaurants and let them know that you would appreciate them using compostable take-out containers, and that the GreenTown Co-Op makes it affordable. We'll work with them directly to help them get started.

Thanks to the volunteers who are working so hard on this program: Mary Clark Bartlett, Mike Barnes, Maddy McBirney, Linda Ziff, and Marc Benchimol. And thanks to the rest of the community for helping spread the word and letting restaurants know you care and you appreciate this! Los Altos is a leader on the environment!

## Sustainable Foods Event: Flavors of the Garden

Come experience a unique open-air marketplace geared towards fresh, sustainable living nestled in the heart of the Allied Arts Guild in Menlo Park.

**When:** Saturday, June 19, 11:00am – 3:30pm

**Where:** Allied Arts Guild, 75 Arbor Road, Menlo Park

This family-friendly event is a benefit for the Lucille Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford and will feature wine tasting, gourmet food, local produce and herbs, organic clothing, and live music.

## Why the McBirneys support GreenTown Los Altos

Editor's Note: Starting in this issue of our monthly newsletter, we'll be highlighting supporters of GreenTown Los Altos. If you'd like to be featured in one of our monthly newsletters, please send an email to [marketing@greentownlosaltos.org](mailto:marketing@greentownlosaltos.org) with a short message about why you support GreenTown.

Maddy and John McBirney are longtime Los Altos residents. John grew up here, attending Almond School beginning in 1960. Together, they have lived here for 20 years and raised two daughters, Amelia and Mo. As avid cyclists, they appreciate the ease of getting around town on their bikes. Their personal concern about the environmental effects of energy consumption prompted them to install solar panels on their home.

"We support GreenTown Los Altos because we are really concerned about environmental issues. We think that our town should be more concerned and involved with safeguarding the environment for our children's future." Maddy says she strongly believes that starting in your own community ripples outward to the larger world. Not only does Maddy volunteer her time with GreenTown, but the McBirneys also donate to GreenTown. "We give money because no volunteer organization can exist without funding," added Maddy. The McBirneys like that GreenTown is a small, energetic organization. "It's a take-action kind of group. They don't just sit around and talk about things."

If you'd like to volunteer, please send an email to [volunteer@greentownlosaltos.org](mailto:volunteer@greentownlosaltos.org). If you'd like to donate to GreenTown, visit our [website](#) for information or to donate online.