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GreenTown Los Altos Newsletter – May 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 May.

GreenTown Los Altos Celebrates Earth Day with Climate Change Lecture

More than 80 guests filled the Los Altos Library Program Room to hear “Global Climate Change in the Decades Ahead: Fact vs. Fiction,” part of GreenTown Los Altos’ educational lecture series. Appropriately scheduled on the eve of Earth Day, Stanford University Professor Robert Dunbar gave an informative presentation featuring animation and film clips that helped to detail the current and future state of global climate change.

Director of the Earth Systems Program at Stanford University, Prof. Dunbar provided a scientific perspective based on his research in the Antarctic, the Pacific Ocean, and the Americas. He showcased the ways scientists differentiate between manmade and natural climate change effects, using ice and sediment drilling and prehistoric research.

Professor Dunbar also addressed some commonly held climate change misconceptions, as well as the knowledge gap that exists between scientific and public understanding. For example, many non-scientists assume that the issue of greatest concern is warming temperatures. Prof. Dunbar explained that, in fact, changes in rainfall, ocean acidity, and sea level rise are more serious threats due to increasing levels of CO₂ in the atmosphere.

Dunbar noted that globally, the first 3 months of 2010 make this year the second warmest winter on record, with 2005 being the warmest ever. Rebutting those who point to this winter’s extensive snowfall on the East Coast he said, “A cold winter does not end global warming!”

But there is hope. The good news, according to Dunbar, is that it is not too late to act. Studies show that efficiency measures account for two thirds of the emission reductions we need to achieve in the next several years. “Through personal action, each of us can impact global climate change. Individual acts offer the greatest opportunity for positive change: for example, the car you drive, your home energy use, and support of good policy.”

GreenTown Co-op Off to a Great Start

In April, The GreenTown Co-op completed the first full month of calling on Los Altos restaurants. Getting off to a fast start, we already have signed up 7 restaurants to buy compostable take-out containers through our partner, World Centric.

The participating restaurants are Chef Chu's, Brian's Restaurant in Rancho, Rick's Café, Sumo Japanese Restaurant, Matlby's, Tom's Depot at Loyola Corners, and Spicy Leaves. We hope GreenTown members will patronize these early leaders in eliminating Styrofoam containers in Los Altos, and if you do, please thank them for their participation.

For more information about the co-op, including how restaurants can order compostable take-out containers, please visit [our website](#).

Bike to Work Day, Thursday, May 13th

We invite you to join fellow Los Altans in commuting to work – and everywhere else, for that matter – by bicycle on May 13th. Part of National Bike Month and promoted here in Santa Clara County by the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition, it is an area-event with all nine Bay Area counties participating in the celebration.

There will be two Energizer stations in Los Altos for bike commuters: one at the Rancho Shopping Center and the other at the intersection of Main Street and Foothill Expressway. These stations will be staffed by volunteers from the Los Altos Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and will provide food, goodies, and good cheer to encourage cyclists on Bike to Work Day.

For more information visit these websites:

Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition: <http://bikesiliconvalley.org/btwd>

The Bike to Work Day Pledge: <http://www.youcanbikethere.com/user/register>

Plan your Route at 511.org: <http://bicycling.511.org/>

Bubbles & Bivalves – A Benefit to Support The Watershed Project's Native Oyster Restoration Program

Date: Thursday, May 13, 2010, 7:00-9:30pm

Location: Aquarium of the Bay, Pier 39, San Francisco

Join The Watershed Project, CBS 5 news anchor Wendy Tokuda, and special guests for an evening of oysters, live music, hors d'oeuvres, champagne and libations from the region's finest sustainable restaurants, wineries, and breweries.

Learn about native oysters while helping to support the Oysters on the Half Shell program and efforts to restore the critical underwater ecosystem of our magnificent San Francisco Bay!

Speakers include:

- Brian Allen, Ecologist, Puget Sound Restoration Fund
- Maria Brown, Superintendent, Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary
- Luc Chamberland, Aquaculturist
- Wallace J Nichols, Founder/Co-Director of Ocean Revolution

A Sustainable Feast – featuring the following local wineries and restaurants:

Prospect, Farallon, CleanFish, Tacolicious, Hog Island Oyster Company, Drakes Bay Oyster Company, Tomales Bay Oyster Company, TCHO, J.Lohr Vineyards and Wines, Handley Cellars, Cakebread Cellars, Porter-Bass, and Anchor Brewing Company

Tickets are \$50.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit the Events page of the [Watershed Project website](#) or call 510-665-3643.

Farmer's Market Opens May 6th

The Village comes alive every Thursday night from 4:00 to 8:00pm with the Los Altos Farmer's Market. Come meet the farmers and see your neighbors when our downtown is at its best. Sponsored by the Los Altos Village Association. For more info visit [their website](#).

Sincerely,

Kacey Fitzpatrick
Executive Director
kacey@greentownlosaltos.org