

Environmental Issues Committee News

Environmental Issues Committee: Earlier this year, the BSVCA Environmental Issues Committee was created. The Committee will strive to keep BSVCA members apprised of environmental developments in the City and will provide tips on how we can all help contribute to make the Brookville-Seminary Valley area a more environmentally friendly place. If you would like to join the Committee, please contact Mary Zoeter at mary.zoeter@bsvca.net.

Eco-City Charter: If you wish to remain informed on what the City of Alexandria is doing on behalf of the environment through its Eco-City Charter, please go to: <http://ecocity.ncr.vt.edu/>. You will find information on the Eco-City Charter, which was unanimously approved by the City Council on June 14, 2008, and what the City in partnership with Virginia Tech's Department of Urban Affairs and Planning intends to do in terms of developing an Environmental Action Plan. If you have questions regarding the Eco-City Charter or the Environmental Action Plan, please contact Danielle Fidler, the Chair of the Environmental Policy Commission, at dcfidler1@hotmail.com.

Bottled Water Resolution. In 2008, the U.S. Conference of Mayors passed a resolution calling for a phasing out of bottled water by municipalities and promoting the importance of public water supplies. This resolution reflects the fact that many people have come to realize that the huge amount of plastic involved in bottled water is not beneficial for the environment. If you agree that it would be good for the City to sign-on to this resolution, please contact Mayor Euille at william.euille@alexandriava.gov.

Gardening: If you enjoy gardening, perhaps you already know about the advantages of putting native plants in your garden. Native plants are hardier and, in general, require less water than non-natives. For more information on native plants of Virginia, please visit the website of the Virginia Native Plant Society at <http://www.vnps.org/>. We also have a very good source of native plants here in Alexandria: Nature by Design (703-683-4769), which is located at 300 Calvert Street has a large selection of native flowers and shrubs.

Backyard Havens: The National Wildlife Federation has a wealth of information for people who wish to turn their backyards into havens for wildlife. They also offer a fascinating factsheet on lawn reduction. Did you know that a gas-power push mower emits as much hourly pollution as 11 cars? To access factsheets on Lawn Reduction, Create a Bird-Friendly Habitat, Attract Butterflies, and more, go to <http://www.nwf.org/backyard/tipsheets.cfm>.

Wildlife Rescue League: As we humans gobble up more and more wildlife habitat, conflicts between wildlife and humans become more common. If you have a "problem" such as squirrels in your attic or raccoons under your deck, an experienced wildlife rehabilitator at the Wildlife Rescue League of Northern Virginia (703-391-8625) can help you solve the situation humanely. The League also runs a Hotline at 703-440-0800 where you can report injured wildlife or other pressing wildlife-related problems.

Where to Recycle. (1) Did you know that unlike plastic bottles, the bottle caps are often not recycled? These caps can be recycled at My Organic Market, whose telephone number is (703) 535-5980 and which is located at 3831 Mount Vernon Avenue in Alexandria. (2) Most recycling centers accept only No. 1 and No. 2 plastic even though most plastic seems to be No 3 or higher, but the recycling center at Columbia Road and S. Walter Reed Drive in Arlington accepts 1 through 7.

Sustain Lane. There is a wealth of information on just about every subject pertaining to the environment on the Sustain Lane website, which can be accessed at <http://www.sustainlane.com>. You also can elect to subscribe to Sustain Lane's e- newsletter which comes once a week. For more information about Sustain Lane, please feel free to call 1-866-455-7533, or send an e-mail to community@sustainlane.com.