

# Celebrate Green Day with action

**W**ELCOME to the annual Gazette Environmental Supplement. The Gazette tries to carry articles of environmental interest on a regular basis, and of course, responsible citizens of the earth should be educating themselves about their environment every day.

With this supplement, though, we hope we can provide a broad range of articles and opinion pieces for the avid reader. For those who usually ignore green headlines, perhaps this supplement can jump-start you into action and into caring for this planet.

The occasion for this issue is "Green Day." Next Tuesday, March 17, is St. Patrick's Day. The Campus Environmental Action Group (CEAG) has decided to take advantage of this occasion when everyone wears green anyway, so we have co-opted it into a day for the promotion of environmental awareness and things green (did you know that old St. Pat was a very ecologically-minded guy?). So show your concern for Mother Earth and wear all your green clothes.

For the occasion of Green Day, CEAG has planned: "have fun with cloth napkins" day (i.e. paint and tie-dye your very own cloth napkin); and environmental face painting.

We are also encouraging you to "curb your car." If you are going to take just one action on Environment / St. Patrick's day, keep your car at home.

The one small decision to walk, ride your bike, take the bus, or carpool can make a world of difference when you consider the automobile is the



single largest source of atmospheric pollution and global warming. Our beloved car is also responsible for serious health problems (and deaths) in our society.

Although the problems facing us seem huge and insurmountable, don't forget it is only through small concerted efforts, and chipping away at established habits that we will make progress. Rome wasn't built in a day and the ozone layer can't be patched up with a big band-aid. So do your little thing (and join a group for bigger things) and slowly, slowly you will be helping to create change.

CEAG wants to keep track of the energy savings and pollution prevention. So if you choose an alternative mode of transportation on Green Day let us know by phoning 429-9563 and recording your environmental progress.

Also on Green Day, CEAG is running a contest. We know there are lots of closet environmentalists out there, and we want to hear from you! We are soliciting your environmentally sound practices and habits. The best one will be the proud recipient of 500 sheets of recycled looseleaf and a box of Rainforest Crunch (yum, yum), and lots of publicity.

Send in any ideas, mentions, suggestions for things to do around the house, at school, work, outdoors, or anywhere. We welcome any kind of suggestion, and will print them in upcoming editions of the Gazette (to help provide you with a constant stream of environmental information).

## Making environmentalism a way of life

BY LISA ROBERTS

Argh! I could scream, hit, pull my hair out, pull your hair out, get violent! Being, however, a non-confrontational and nonviolent person by nature I will, instead, write.

A wonderful, fun, sympathetic friend just told me I shouldn't eat Rainforest Crunch because they kill

brazil nut plants. Now, I am not a biologist, I'm not even a science student, and I haven't a single clue what brazil nuts grow on or how one harvests them. I am, however, quite certain that buying Rainforest Crunch is good, not bad, for the rainforest.

I explained to this wonderful, fun, sympathetic friend that profits from

this product go to rainforest preservation groups and environment groups and it enables farmers in Brazil to make five times more income than by clear-cutting the forest to raise cattle. She then countered that the trees will be cut down anyhow to make the paper bags that are supposed to replace plastic bags.

"Use fabric bags!" I practically screamed. "Then you have to make fabric." At that inane comment I said, "I hate people who argue," and walked out. Obviously, only one of us was arguing in earnest.

She is the latest in a line of similarly frustrating friends. There was the one who said I used more dishwasher and sent more detergent into the ocean by using plastic lunch containers. (Substitute in washwater and you have the argument of another friend against my cloth napkin.)

There was the very cool guidance counsellor who, after listening to one of my speeches on the awful state of the environment, asked me in all seriousness, "Are you going to be like this for the rest of your life?" (That I found funny, to be truthful. You'd think concern for the environment was a chronic disease!)

Finally, there is my very good friend who has repeatedly assured me she doesn't mind my being concerned about the environment since I don't preach at her, or anyone else, about it. Well, it's been a long time in coming, but I'm ready to preach.

First, let me correct my earlier statement. I do not hate people who argue. I enjoy debates. But it seriously does make me crazy to listen to people waste perfectly good energy, time and oxygen trying to tell me, and other environmentally concerned people, that our efforts are futile or, even worse, damaging to the environment. Almost inevitably, these same people will not spend the same energy, time and oxygen trying to improve the situation.

Do you my friends, and people I have never met, have any idea how incredibly easy it is to carry a coffee mug, use a cloth napkin, conserve energy, compost your kitchen scraps, carry a bag, choose enviro-friendly products, make fabric bags to wrap presents in, live without a car to drive you around the block, and consider the effect **your** lifestyle has on **your** environment? I didn't either until two years ago. But I've changed

—probably not enough, I can admit that. But I do do all those little, yet important, things I have listed above. If everyone of us did, maybe it would be enough.

Secondly, let me ask you another question. Don't you realize how important this all is? It is our planet, our home, we are cutting, burning, polluting, and consuming, and it can't take it anymore. Don't you know how crazy and destructive our lifestyles are? Let me quote from Gyorgy Faludy, a Canadian citizen and poet, originally from Hungary. In 1978 he described the members of "consumer societies" as "those who seem obsessed with producing and consuming an ever-growing mountain of things to ensure comfort and survival; who have addicted themselves to energy as if to morphine until they are ready to destroy all nature to increase the dosage..." We consume too much and we protect too little—only 3.4% of the wilderness space in Canada for example.

But this is not an article full of information. This is me taking advantage of some space to preach. What a relief! My friends, you are safe again.

Please take the time to peruse  
To listen and learn how to reuse  
It is the nineties the world is in trouble  
Time to clean up some of our rubble  
Time to Rethink, Reduce and Reuse  
To save our last environmental fuse  
So it these tips you do take  
A better world will help make  
When you go out for the night  
Remember to shut off the kitchen light.  
Use cloth napkins without haste  
To help eliminate paper waste  
Pick up papers in the street

Before they rip under your feet  
And if you happen to use a tin  
Think of it as no big sin  
Just remember the 90's deal  
Save the tin, rip off the peel.  
When out for social tea  
Take home your cup and think of me  
If we all do our best  
To teach, persuade and all the rest  
The final result can only be  
A better world for you and me.

J. Meades & T. Williams