

Columbia River Gorge Master Recyclers

APRIL 2012 EDITION

TRI-COUNTY HAZARDOUS WASTE AND RECYCLING PROGRAM

Upcoming Events:

- **Green Drinks**—a monthly networking event for professionals, community leaders and residents interested in sustainability issues.
Thursday, April 12th 6-7:30 PM, Skyline Hospital in White Salmon. Hear John Longfellow, Recycling Coordinator for Klickitat County Solid Waste Department discuss recycling options, programs and future plans.
- “Saving the Bees” Documentary,
Sunday, April 22nd, 6:00 PM. The Center for the Arts, Cascade Avenue in Hood River.

SAVE THE DATES BELOW-HELP NEEDED. For more specifics, see page 2. Sign-Up on [MasterRecyclers' Login Site](#)

- **Document Shred Events**
Friday, April 20th, Hood River;
Saturday, April 21st, The Dalles. Master Recyclers needed 9:30am-2:30pm
- **Earth Day, Sunday, April 22nd.** Master Recyclers needed to help at Hood River's Celebration.
- **The Dalles Cherry Festival, Saturday, April 28th.** Master Recyclers needed throughout the day. (Shifts are available)
- **Drug Take-Back Events**
Saturday May 5th, 10 AM-2 PM in Cascade Locks, Hood River, and The Dalles.
- **The Dalles Community Clean-up Day, Saturday, May 5th, 10 AM-2 PM.**



Tri-County Hazardous Waste and Recycling Program is part of the North Central Public Health District.

Budget Challenges Result in Cuts for Tri-County Program by Heather Alexander

Tri-County Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program will experience changes this summer, as we adapt to financial constraints we are facing. Most significant to our program will be the loss of our Master Recycler Coordinator position, held by Karen, and trimming down the number of hazardous waste collection events from monthly to quarterly events, after this summer.

When it started, the Tri-County program held a handful of events, collecting hazardous waste several years ago. By 2010, the program was holding 37 events a year, with monthly collections in Hood River and The Dalles.

Now, there needs to be cuts in the outreach and marketing budget, suspension of all grant funding, cuts to program supplies and staff training, and eliminating the Master Recycler course for 2012, among others. David and Heather will be liaisons to our current Master Recyclers. We will rely on your support and outreach efforts and ideas even more, now.

How did we get here? It has been a perfect storm of both good and challenging situations.

- We are collecting increasing amounts of hazardous waste, so costs are increasing. We held the same number of events in 2010 and 2011, however, in 2011, we collected almost 30,000 pounds more hazardous materials than we collected in 2010.
- Garbage volumes are decreasing, for three reasons: 1) the recession (people are buying less, so have less garbage),

2) people are recycling and reusing more and wasting less, 3) increased composting. Since 2009, we have seen a steady 1% decline in the amount of local material being sent to the Wasco County landfill. In the big picture, that is a good thing. However, the Tri-County Program is funded through a small surcharge on garbage. So, as garbage decreases, so does our funding base.

- Increased costs and decreased revenue have eroded our funding cushion. Annual program expenses have outpaced revenue since 2009, mostly due to several large one-time costs, including more than \$60,000 for necessary improvements to our two permanent hazardous waste collection facilities, \$50,000 for an organics management study which is helping guide organics management in the Gorge, and \$110,000 in large grants and close to *continued. on page 2*

**WE
NEED
YOU!!!**

Take a look at the long list of activities in the “Upcoming Events” to the left, with more detail on page 2. We will need Master Recycler help starting April 20th!! [Please sign up on our website](#) or send Karen an e-mail.

Master Recycler Impact Opportunities

- **Document Shred Events:** We need Master Recyclers to help share information about recycling and answer questions for the public at these events. **Friday, April 20th, Hood River Garbage**, 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM; **Saturday, April 21st, The Dalles. Disposal**, 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM.
- **Hood River Earth Day Celebration Sunday, April 22nd.**
1:00 PM: Horse and Hound Parking Lot, 403 Oak Street in Hood River. Master Recyclers Table/booth. Red Wigglers? Wormbins for Classrooms? Got Bag Stickers? Other ideas? E-mail Karen, if interested
2:00 PM: Costume Making for the Parade of Species
3:00 PM: Parade, starting at the Hood River Library
- **The Dalles Cherry Festival Events Saturday, April 28th**
 Master Recyclers needed throughout the day (**shifts available**) from **8:00am-4:30pm** to help Karen and Heather with scheduled activities:
1) Tri-County Master Recycler Parade Entry, 9:30 AM to 1pm:
 We want 5-10 Master Recyclers and your family members and friends to walk in the Parade in your t-shirts, help carry the banner, hand out Got Bag? Stickers. We'll have the Prius. Decoration ideas?
2) Recycling Education Activity/ Craft Booth in the Family Fair area on 4th Street. Set up at 8:00 AM. Open 10 AM to 4:00 PM. Help educate people about composting, recycling, share reuse and craft ideas, and encourage the kids recycling craft area. 3 people for set-up from 8-9:30. Four 2-hour shifts, 2 volunteers per shift, 10 AM to 4 PM.
3) Supervising the recycling/ composting of food in the Concessions Area near the Civic Auditorium. Stand at the Compost/ClearStream/Garbage containers and answer questions. **Noon—4 PM.** (4 people, 2 hour shifts)
- **Gorge Community Drug Take-Back Events: Saturday May 5th, 10:00 AM-2:00 PM, multiple sites:** Cascade Locks — Fire Station, Hood River — Hood River County Courthouse, The Dalles — Mid-Columbia Senior Center
 Volunteers may work a 2 or 4 hour shift. 1 volunteer per shift per site.
- **The Dalles Community Clean-up Day Saturday, May 5th, 10 AM-2 PM.** Master Recyclers have historically helped with the Re-Use Table/Area at the Armory.



Jodi and Rilan TePoel getting ready for the Cherry Festival Parade

Cuts for Tri-County Program *continued*

\$20,000 in small grants, all of which have resulted in new jobs and increased income for agencies in the Gorge.

It is challenging to explain such a big picture in a nutshell. But, the basic situation is that decreasing revenue has not kept pace with program expenses. David Skakel and Heather Alexander spent two months pouring over data and expenses, and making projections for the program based on trends, and working with the Budget Committee to develop solutions. Even with the cuts being made across the program, we still face tight times until we find more sustainable funding

solutions that are not reliant on garbage. David, Heather, and steering committee members are looking at funding models, and having candid conversations with similar agencies that are facing the same challenges Tri-County is facing.

This is a challenging time, but it is also a time of great opportunity for creative thinking, learning to trim waste and reuse, rethink how we do things, and develop better connections and more efficiency to engage and educate our community in impactful ways.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact David, Heather, or Karen.

REFUSE
 RETHINK
 REDUCE
 REUSE
 RECYCLE



AND A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL!

Good food, good company, great sharing of ideas and information: the Thursday night, March 22nd Master Recycler Gathering at the Mosier Grange was a success. Some of the topics covered included hearing from our “repurposing expert”, Cynthia Caudill and her monthly challenge to the community to repurpose a different material each month and save landfill space, seeing and feeling Sandy Bisset’s vintage clothing bargains that may soon be re-purposed into cloth napkins, being updated on the Tri-County Hazardous Waste and Recycling Program’s budget woes, hearing about/seeing pictures of Yvonne Huskey’s educational Costa Rica trip and their amazing recycled art, seeing pictures of our last Master Recycler field trip to Waste Connection’s West Vancouver Material Recovery Facility, the Bottle Drop and the Metal Recovery facility....all of it was enlightening!



What a great group for our Gathering!! Spouses, daughters, and Master Recyclers shared projects, ideas, budgets, good food and pictures of adventures.



Cynthia Caudill wove this hat from the Hood River Library’s discarded cassettes. David Skakel and Cathie Kelter compete for “fashion statements.” Cynthia is amazing! Join [her repurposing challenge!](#)



Sandy Bisset shares material with the group while Karen gives her “bunny ears” and Heather looks on. Who is having more fun?



Karen helps Peggy Dills Kelter show off her class project made from repurposed used billboard.



Congratulations to Cathie Kelter for completing her 30 payback hours!

If you had a chance to attend our gathering in March, THANK YOU!! If you weren’t able to be there, you were missed and we hope you can attend in the future.

BIG TIME HELP IS NEEDED FROM EVERYONE IN APRIL!!!! [SIGN UP](#) TODAY.



Still having trouble with Volunteer2? E-mail Karen!

The whole thing can get confusing!! Our Master Recycler Login site is officially called, "Volunteer Impact." You can log your payback hours and sign-up to volunteer at the different Master Recycler activities on this site. You will need your correct username and password. Once you practice with it, it isn't so confusing.

- Did you know that attending a Master Recycler Gathering is worth at least 2 hours of payback?
- Did you know you can count your preparation and travel time for a volunteer activity?
- Did you know that logging your time is super important because it "validates" our program and helps our steering committee see its' value?



- Did you know there is a [Users Guide to the Volunteer Impact Website](#) that could help you?

Karen Murray is also willing to help. All you have to do is ask. But, please do "log in" those hours. Estimate, if need be!! Plus, Volunteer Impact is now on Facebook!

School Sustainability: Start with the "Low-Hanging Fruit"

I have been able to attend a School Sustainability Workshop Series at Gladstone High School recently. We have one more session on Saturday, May 12th. It is being co-taught by a high school teacher at Gladstone High School who is teaching an Environmental Leadership Class to high school students and Lori Stole, School Sustainability Coordinator for the Sustainable Schools Initiative, part of the Zero Waste Alliance. About 20 of us meet to learn about ways to make our schools more sustainable. Great ideas are shared!

One thing: Start with a "Waste Audit" at the school so you have some baseline data. The Tri-County Hazardous Waste and Recycling Program can loan you the tarps, and a scale if you need them. Get as many students involved as possible, even if they are helping for only a few minutes each. We also have directions.

Get students involved in what can be done to decrease the waste in the school. Start with the easy things, first. An idea that came up recently was to simply eliminate the use of plastic drinking

straws since the kids did not really need them and they tended to cause certain behavioral problems, as well. Maybe you will save paper that has not been used on both sides for scratch paper. Perhaps teaching the students that they only need to use one paper towel to dry their hands. The "low-hanging fruit" idea recommends starting small and keeping things manageable. The best ideas can come from the students and the more you get them involved, the more "ownership" will be with the overall program.

The formation of a "Green Team" was strongly suggested where different facets of the school are represented: custodian, principal, teachers, parents, students, instructional assistants, cooks...the members then decide what should be the focus of the action.

If you can get your high school to start an Environmental Leadership Class, that can provide opportunities for older students to get involved, too. There is no limit to the ideas. Remember: Every day can be Earth Day!

KUDOS TO YOU

Thank you for all you do to help change minds and lifestyles in our community! You are reaching out to businesses, individuals, schools, friends, neighbors, and organizations to help them "walk more softly" on the earth. Keep up the good work and keep us posted on how we might help!

IN THE WORKS: We (Sandy Bisset, Marilyn Richardson, Karen Murray, Heather Alexander and Cynthia Caudill) are scheming a little work party where we make cloth napkins for ourselves from scrap or repurposed material. Be on the look-out for reusable, absorbent cloth **that could work for napkins. Stay tuned.....**

How to get in touch with us:

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Do you have ideas for our next Master Recycler Newsletter? We need your input and your creativity. Please contact Karen Murray.