

## TAPPING THE SKIES

Adapted from "This Old House" Apr, 2006

Old-fashioned rain barrels conserve water. A 2,000 square-foot roof can save you 55,000 gallons of water each year.

The water can be used to irrigate the lawn and garden without the chlorine and fluoride from your tap water, which can be tough on plants. The water can also be used for washing the car or the dog, filling the swimming pool, even bathing and drinking, if properly filtered.

In addition to conserving an increasingly scarce resource, rainwater collection helps reduce storm runoff.



You need little more than a large container placed below your downspout, a childproof screen to keep out bugs and debris, a spigot to access the water (can attach the spigot to a hose or whatever), and an overflow valve.

There are a barrelful of choices: from a standard 55-75 gallon plastic barrel for \$55 to a high-end wooden wine or whiskey barrel for \$149.

For more information, go to [thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts](http://thisoldhouse.com/shortcuts). Their illustrations are very persuasive.

## DOWNSIDES OF ALUMINUM USE

by Doris Anthony

We all know that discarding used aluminum cans is a thoughtless waste of the planet's natural resources. The "down-stream" effects are faster-filling landfills and costly roadside, beach and park litter.

What are the "up-stream" effects of strip-mining the ore of aluminum called bauxite? Bauxite is mined in the United States, Jamaica, Guinea, Russia, Brazil, and Ghana.

- x Strip-mining takes more and more agricultural land from the farmers.
- x Vegetation is hard to reestablish.
- x Streams and lakes are silted in.
- x Fish cannot live in the silted streams.
- x Native wildlife is displaced.
- x The mining tailings, i.e., the refuse material discarded in refining ores, are an eye-sore and of no value.

What are the effects of refining the bauxite? (The United States has some refineries)

- x Red mud wastes pollute waterways. **Four to five tons of red mud and tailings are produced in the making of one ton of aluminum ingot.**
- x The factories produce a host of air-borne pollutants.
- x The electricity demand is high. New hydroelectric facilities have to be built just for aluminum refining.
- x Workers and families are exposed to pollutants



Wasted aluminum cans are costly to our earth!

**ACTION SUGGESTION:** Urge your national and state legislators to sponsor and work for Bottle Bills!  
Bottle Bills require:

1. a 10 cent refundable deposit
2. that beverage companies become responsible for recycling facilities and transportation
3. that containers must be made from a high percentage of recycled material.



#### TURNING A CORNER ON DALE CARLIA CORNER Adapted from "The Narragansett Times", March 1. 06

Architect Troy West has some great ideas for improving Dale Carla Corner. His suggestions for slowing down drivers include: a roundabout, instead of street lights, a planting strip in the middle of Old Tower Hill Road with a tree canopy hanging over the street, and three and a half story buildings lining the road which would have first floor commercial, second floor offices, and upper level affordable housing. West would design the sidewalks to incorporate lots of plantings; he considers sidewalks linear parks.

The roundabout would have a ramp and four pedestrian lanes, with an open green space in the middle. His plans include installing **wind turbines** in front of Starbucks "to send the message that Wakefield is a sustainable town". West is looking to Critiba in Brazil for inspirations; he calls Critiba "the most sustainable city in the world."

For more information on West's vision for Dale Carla, contact Bob Votava of DOT Watch Inc. at 783-8886. There are wonderful before and after drawings on page 8A of the paper. I think you will like the "after" drawing so much that you will all get behind West and attempt to help him realize the dream.

The symbols of sustainability may inspire Wakefield's residents to move toward LIVING MORE SIMPLY. For a report on the city of Critiba, watch for the Fall Newsletter.

#### A PAN FOR ALL REASONS

Adapted from "Real Simple", May 2006

A Cast-Iron Skillet is a low-maintenance pan for anything from meaty main dishes to fruity desserts. And it only improves with age. It has a durable non-stick surface (with no added chemicals); it diffuses heat evenly; it also has remarkable heat retention. Everything from Dutch ovens to cactus-shaped cornbread pans comes in cast iron, but the most versatile is a 10-12 inch basic skillet.

The iron content of eggs can triple in the short time it takes to scramble them in an iron pan. Dried peaches or raisins contain more iron than fresh fruits do, because they have been dried in iron pans. A dried fig provides more than twice as much iron as a fresh fig. (It is recommended that women of childbearing age obtain 18 mg of iron per day; they would have to take in too many calories to reach 18 mg and usually get only 12 -13 mg or iron per day.)

Iron pans have to be seasoned to become non-stick – seasoning involves coating the skillet with cooking oil and

#### GREEN CHEMISTRY from WGBH Marketplace

Several years ago Cargill opened a plastics plant in Blair, Nebraska under the brand name NatureWorks. It is one of the biggest corporate investments in green chemistry so far. The "green" in Cargill's plastic is threefold: One — it's made with a renewable resource, corn, as opposed to a non-renewable, petroleum. Two — the resulting plastic, called PLA or polylactic acid, is biodegradable. Three — making PLA is cleaner than making conventional plastic. These processes, from corn kernel to finished PLA, consume about 68 percent less fossil fuel than comparable hydrocarbon-based plastic processes.

baking it in a 350 degree oven for an hour. Once the pan is dried with paper towels, it will be ready to use. Every time oil is heated in the skillet, the non-stick coating is reinforced.

You can't soak them for cleaning. It is best to rinse the pan with hot water immediately after cooking. If you need to remove burned-on food, scrub with a mild abrasive and a nonmetal brush to preserve the nonstick surface.

Editor's note. I have had my cast iron pans (3 skillet sizes, a griddle, a dutch oven) for over 30 years, and I highly recommend them.

## PRECYCLING - Reducing Potential Trash Before You Bring it Home From The Store by Doris Anthony

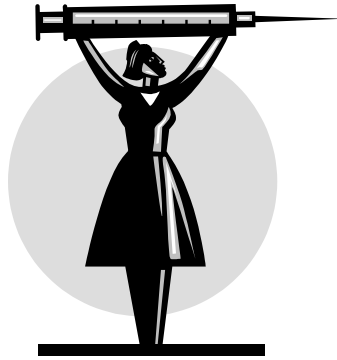
- x Avoid wasteful packaging. Buy food in bulk or large-size packages. Avoid single-serving food and beverage items. Containers and packaging waste account for almost half of all garbage. The production of packaging and decoration of consumer products exhausts 50% of the nation's paper, 8% of its steel, 75% of its glass, 40% of its aluminum, and 30% of its plastic.
- x Choose reusable containers for packing lunches and beverages, and for storing leftovers. Invest in well-made containers that won't break and require replacement.
- x Take reusable cups, plates, and utensils on picnics and boat rides.
- x Take a reusable mug to CHURCH, to the office or coffee shop.
- x Ask the waitress/waiter for a non-plastic "Doggy Bag". Insist!
- x Shop with your own bags at the Alternative Food Co-op.
- x Use sponges and cloth towels and napkins that can be washed and reused, rather than single-use, throwaway paper towels and napkins.
- x Avoid single-use, disposable products like diapers, batteries, razors, and Styrofoam cups. Americans throw away 18 billion disposable diapers a year – enough to stretch to the moon and back seven times.
- x Buy recycled products or products in recycled packaging. Marcal (from Staples) and 7<sup>th</sup> Generation (from the Coop) are producers of recycled paper napkins both ? and non-chlorine-bleached "whitish" paper napkins.
- x Use aluminum foil which can be recycled, instead of plastic film which cannot. (Be sure to recycle the aluminum) Use waxed paper whenever possible. The Alternative Food Coop has waxed paper sandwich bags.
- x Take your beverage containers from parks and beaches to recycle them.



## THE HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE TO ENERGY INDEPENDENCE By Christine Woodside

This book talks about alternative power sources for the average American. If you are not ready for major changes, the author points out all sorts of affordable, convenient ways to free yourself from the grip of high-cost energy without going completely 'off the grid'. For example:

- x Starting at \$10, one of the most inexpensive and sensible ways to light the paths around your home is the solar-powered driveway light.
- x If your area tends to flood, a solar-powered sump pump can drain excess water even if your electricity shuts off during a storm
- x Try small solar-powered appliances which don't require a connection to the household power supply.



### A WAY OUT OF EARTH'S CO2 DEBACLE

from the ProJo 2/22/06 by Froma Harrop

We know that, if we don't stop loading the atmosphere with carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels, the ice sheets will melt, and much of our coastline will disappear under the waves.

The ultimate solution has to be technology that can actually extract carbon dioxide from the air and power plants, and bury it, according to Wallace Broecker, who is Newberry Professor at Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory. He won the Vetlesen Prize, considered the Nobel equivalent for geology, and holds the Presidential Medal of Science.

Backing him is hard-nosed businessman Gary Comer. His company, Global Research

Technologies in Tucson, is building a prototype device that can take carbon dioxide out of the air for storage or eventual burial in salty aquifers. Sucking out carbon dioxide is no big deal, says Broecker.

The promising technologies of solar, wind, vegetation and other energy sources can't be developed in time to confront the rapid accumulations of CO2 now heating the planet..

Iceland, is built on basaltic lava, which would be a good place to store CO2.

Froma Harrop may be reached at [fharrop@projo.com](mailto:fharrop@projo.com)

### BEE BETTER TO OUR BEES by Doris Anthony

We rely on bees to pollinate at least 150 crops, and we delight in the honey some bees produce.

Over the centuries, however, as homesites replaced farmland, and as dairy and horse farms decreased, there has been a slow erosion of the bees' sources of nectar and pollen – buckwheat, corn clover, alfalfa, timothy, and vegetables.

There are also few and fewer apiaries. There were 324 apiaries in 1984 and only 181 in 1990.

Another negative development for the bees has been the growth of turf farming in the state, from 8 in 1980 to 14 in 1990. Unlike the potato farms they replaced, turf farms provide no forage for the bees..

On the positive side, there has been an increase in the numbers of pick-your-own fruits and berries farms, roadside stands, and farmers' markets.

When we plant our gardens, here are some ways to help out the bees.

1. Buy plants with fragrant flowers and/or blue or yellow flowers – these attract bees. Bees cannot see red.
2. Let the following grow in your lawn: dandelions, violets, Robin's plantain, Star of Bethlehem, bluets, wild strawberry, white clover, pussy toes, and blue-eyed grass.
3. Buy Winterberry or Black Alder, *Ilex verticillata*. Make sure you purchase both male and female plants.
4. Plant many herbs which are a great attraction for bees.



The above plantings will serve your honeybees, your garden's pollination, your enjoyment, the butterflies, hummingbirds, moths, skippers, and even the aesthetic enjoyment of your neighbors! (See Lynda for more ideas and more complete listings of plants.)



A low level of stomach acid production occurs in 47% of the general population, the highest incidence being found in older people. Millions of dollars are erroneously spent on drugs that decrease the amount of acid in the stomach - antacids like Alkaseltzer, or drugs like the Zantac family, or the Prevacid, Nexium, etc. family. The opposite problem is often the case - too little acid.

Bloating, belching, upset stomach, heartburn, and constipation are common symptoms of poor stomach acid output, because food isn't getting digested and moving through the stomach. Food is thus prone to reflux up.

Some people may experience no gastrointestinal symptoms whatsoever, but, years later, wind up with serious consequences which are never related to the original unrecognized low

stomach acid. A comprehensive stool analysis and a hair analysis can help ascertain the level of your stomach acid.

Without enough acid, the body has a difficult time digesting foods, absorbing minerals, and absorbing vitamin B12. The result is

**PRO- ACID OR ANTI-ACID; WHAT IS THE ANSWER?**

level

undernutrition, even with an excellent diet. Before looking to hormone replacement therapy for prevention of osteoporosis, have your stomach acid checked. Before looking to vitamin B12 shots for pernicious anemia, ditto.

Without a potent amount of hydrochloric acid, the three pounds of bacteria that live in the colon can move up into the small intestines; undesirable strains of bacteria and yeast can take hold there and multiply. Besides interfering with digestion and absorption, these microbes can inflame the small intestine, causing them to become permeable to undigested foods. The individual, thus, becomes allergic to healthful foods. Do you know that the total absorptive area of the inside wall of the small intestine of an average person is about the same as a standard football field, and every square inch of this surface can be covered with mucus in which bacteria are imbedded and growing? Imagine the negative impact from undesirable strains of bacteria and yeast!

If allowed to continue for many years without treatment, a variety of diseases can ensue, such as: asthma, celiac disease, chronic autoimmune disorders, diabetes, eczema, food

Lynda J. Wells, PhD,CNS allergies, gall bladder disease, gastric cancer, gastritis, lupus, osteoporosis, pernicious anemia, psoriasis, and acne rosacea.

KEEP IT SIMPLE, and first try a tablespoon of organic apple cider vinegar in a glass of water with each meal. If that doesn't work, try 1300 mg of betaine hydrochloride with each meal. The right dose can be estimated (ask your favorite nutritionist how), but has to be adjusted finally by trial and error. Pepsin and gentian are often added to the hydrochloride supplements to further promote protein digestion. Why support the big corporations that invest in.....

Over time, the stomach cells that secrete acid may be repaired by supplements of licorice, glutamine, and gentian. Sometimes acupuncture helps restore the cells. If a subluxation is creating weakened stimulation of nerves to the stomach, chiropractic will help.

Next time you think of taking an antacid, STOP. Try taking vinegar or betaine hydrochloride first to see if that relieves the symptoms. If your problem is too little acid, an antacid may relieve heartburn, but if taken regularly, will just worsen the above scenario.

If you have severe gastrointestinal reflux, I would

be happy to email you a complete protocol.

Symptoms of poor stomach acid output  
stomach bloating  
burping  
upset stomach  
burning  
flatulence  
diarrhea  
constipation, difficult movements  
nausea after taking supplements  
rectal itching  
weak, peeling, cracked fingernails

dilated capillaries in the cheeks and nose (in non-alcoholics)  
post adolescent acne  
iron deficiency  
other mineral deficiencies  
chronic intestinal infections  
undigested food in stool  
vitiligo  
ulcerative colitis  
hair loss  
and many more

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### GREEN SURFACES

Adapted from "This Old House" May, 2006

"Counterfeit" is the name of a sturdy countertop material made with actual shredded cash, straight from the Federal Reserve. The paper fibers are mixed with a nontoxic adhesive, and then pressed into a scratchproof, waterproof, and stain-resistant slab. It's great for countertops, sink surrounds, or tables. \$45-\$65 per square foot; shetkastone.com

Panel your walls with boards made from compressed sorghum stalks or toasted bamboo; design a backsplash with tiles made from industrial porcelain waste, and cover your mudroom floor with recycled rubber tires.

- x Sorghum stalks (from heat-pressed discarded stalks of harvested northern Chinese sorghum plants, a cereal crop) comes in 3 thicknesses – 1/8, 3/4, or 1 and 1/4 inch. About \$9 per square foot; kireiusa.com
- x Bamboo (compressed so it is twice as hard as red oak, can grow to maturity in just four years, so sustainable) \$190 per 2.5 by 6 foot sheet; plyboo.com
- x Born-again porcelain (as strong as granite thanks to a binder backing) About \$16 per square foot, sold in 39 by sheets. About \$500 per sheet; coveringsetc.com
- x Recycled rubber tiles (If one tile gets worn out, you can and slap down a new one.) \$6-9 per square foot;



fiberglass-  
118 inch

just peel it up  
ecosurfaces.com

**BRIBERY WORKS BEST ON SQUIRRELS THAT ARE EATING FLOWER BUDS, AND DIGGING UP BULB PLANTINGS. PUT EARS OF DRIED CORN OR SAVED ACORNS IN A LITTLE USED PORTION OF THE YARD IN THE SPRING AND IN THE FALL. THE SQUIRRELS WILL BE LESS HUNGRY FOR THE FLOWERING BULBS. DON'T USE DRIED BLOOD OR BONE MEAL AS FERTILIZER – THESE ARE LIKE CATNIP FOR SQUIRRELS.**

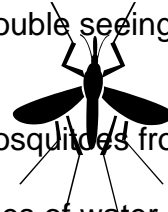
### CAPE WIND PROPOSAL IN NANTUCKET SOUND From ProJo

Alternative energy production will be necessary to protect our shorelines and our overall environment from global warming and global-warming pollution. But opponents of the wind farm are making Cape Wind Associates jump through compliance hoops. They are also spreading lies and using closed-door political maneuvering in Congress to take the voting power away from the people and give it to a select few who officially oppose the project.

## BACK OFF, BLOODSUCKERS

Because of the unusually warm winter, scientists predict that mosquitoes, especially those that spread the West Nile virus, will attack in record numbers. Here are some non-gimmicky, non-chemical suggestions for protection:

- x Crush marigold leaves and petals between your fingers, or rub the oil extract on your skin for a mild repellent. (Obtain the oil at natural food or herb stores.)
- x Toss rosemary or sage onto the burning coals in your grill to act as a repellent (and add flavor to your foods)
- x Replace out door bulbs with yellow bug lights. Insects have trouble seeing them and don't swarm to them.
- x Mow tall grasses and clear weedy patches where bugs linger.
- x Change water in bird baths at least twice a week to prevent mosquitoes from laying eggs. (North Carolina Dept. of Health and Human Services)
- x Repair leaky outdoor faucets to keep drips from creating puddles of water
- x Check the plastic tarps over your firewood and boat covers for collected rainwater.
- x Irrigate grass and garden beds early in the morning so leftover water can evaporate instead of pooling in your lawn.



## WHAT ABOUT POPULATION? From State of the World, 2004

When population growth and high levels of consumption mix, as they do in the United States, the significance of population growth balloons. For example, although the U.S. population increases by roughly 3 million a year, whereas India's increases by nearly 16 million, the additional Americans have greater environmental impact. They are responsible for 15.7 million tons of additional carbon to the atmosphere, compared with only 4.9 million tons in India. Wealthy countries with expanding populations need to look at the impact of both their consumption and their population policies.

## CREATING TV-FREE FAMILY RITUALS

By ritual-making expert Meg Cox

In my household if there is a vacuum of time with nothing to do, my son Max will rush to fill it with TV or video games. It helps to have TV-free and game-free zones and times: no television during meals. No television during homework period, which happens right after Max gets home from school. Still, if there is nothing else going on, he will say to his dad, "Let's watch The Simpsons," and once the television is on, it's hard to get it off!

One of my solutions is to map out certain days of the week for certain activities. One night a week is "game night," during which we can choose from a wide range of games; one is a "reading night" in which we can read aloud or silently, but we all read. Another possibility is "sports night": play tag outside if the weather is mild, or invent an indoor game. We play indoor soccer with a small, soft ball in our front

hallway. Also, when possible, we plan outdoor family activities.

My son really dislikes going for hikes and long walks, but we try to make the walks fun in several ways. One is to tell stories that are based on books or movies we love, but we add characters or go off on a tangent. A favorite is retelling The Lord of the Rings, but we each get to add three more characters. Frodo goes on his quest with the other hobbits and Aragorn and Gimli and all the rest, but they might have to interact with Homer Simpson, Harry Potter, Spiderman, or even made-up characters like Wyatt Burp. At other times, we do a version of Toy Story and talk about Max's toys having an adventure when we aren't there. When making up rituals, start with the activities, foods, music, and places that your kids love. If they love sports, try making up a new sports ritual. If they love music, have a family dance party once a week. If they love to cook or bake, have a weekly

family bake-a-thon. If they have a favorite park, go for a nature walk and take special treats; stop mid-way and throw a picnic blanket on the grass to eat your snack.

Another thing kids love is to turn the regular rules upside down for a change, so once a week or once a month, schedule an “indoor

picnic” and eat finger foods while sitting on a blanket on the family room floor.

Meg Cox is the author of The Book of New Family Traditions as well as a monthly email newsletter on creating family rituals. To join her email list, send a request to FamilyRituals@aol.com.

**DID YOU KNOW?** One cubic yard (3' by 3' by 3') of yard waste will produce 8 cubic feet (2' by 2' by 2') of compost in less than one year without an ounce of effort. Some people put the yard waste with their kitchen waste in bins. Each time they add kitchen waste, they cover it with leaves or with a wheelbarrow of loam.

+++Label a box “Household hazardous Waste” to collect all year.+++

### ORGANIC COTTON - THE FAR BETTER CHOICE

By choosing organically grown cotton, you can reap all the benefits of cotton’s beauty, comfort, and strength, while minimizing harm to people and the planet. Organic cotton growers in Texas, California, New Mexico, Arizona, and Missouri are preserving and revitalizing the cherished American tradition of the family farm.

Let’s look at the differences in corporate agribusiness vs. organic farming with regard to seed preparation, weed control, pest control, harvesting techniques, soil and water use. The OR is for Organic.

1. Seed Preparation. Do you prefer GMO seeds treated with fungicides and insecticides OR Non-GMO, untreated seeds?
2. Weed Control. Do you prefer repeatedly applying toxic herbicides to the soil OR controlling weeds with mulch and hand hoeing?
3. Pest Control. Do you prefer the aerial spraying of insecticides and pesticides (the 9 most common are highly toxic; five are probably carcinogens) OR maintaining a balance between “pests” and their natural predators, using beneficial insects to control pests, using trap crops, planted to lure insects away from the cotton?
4. Harvesting. Do you prefer the cotton being defoliated with toxic chemicals OR relying on the seasonal freeze for defoliation?
5. Soil and Water. Do you prefer applying synthetic fertilizers OR building strong soil through crop rotation?

Organic cotton growers help preserve our air, water, our soil, and the bountiful biodiversity of our plant.

<http://www.AboutOrganicCotton.org>

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