



YOUR ISLAND



vol. 1, issue 1

www.loveyourisland.com

summer 2007

beginning June 1, 2007

KEEPING KEY WEST CLEAN AND GREEN

On Saturday, April 28, 2007, over 200 people took part in the Key West Chamber of Commerce and city of Key West Citywide Clean up. Led by co-chairs Chris Belland, Annalise Mannix and Danny Toppino, civic groups, the military, city officials and concerned citizens, rolled up their sleeves and cleaned medians, mangroves, beaches and parks in the first step to making Key West Clean and Green.

The event began with donuts and coffee donated by Dunkin Donuts and water from Historic Tours of America. The city of Key West provided gloves, bags and pickers. Each volunteer also received a *Love Your Island* t-shirt, complements of the Key West Chamber of Commerce. After Chris Belland administered the Clean and Green pledge, "I promise to love my island and encourage others to do the same."

Groups then dispersed to their areas to begin the task at hand. The Navy had over 50 volunteers along with the Chief Petty Officer Association and JIATFF. Boys and Girls Club, Old Island Restoration, Sunrise Rotary, MARC House, Florida Keys Outreach Coalition, 801 Complex, Southernmost Motel, Southernmost Parrotheads, Marine Bank, First State Bank and HOB



Mayor McPherson, Virginia Panico, Co-Chair Chris Belland, Greg Sullivan of Waste Management, Co-Chair Annalise Mannix and Co-Chair Danny Toppino.



Hail, hail the gang's all here. Over 200 volunteers helped clean up Key West.

school all had groups cleaning up areas. Mayor Morgan McPherson, and commissioners Bill Verge and Danny Kohlage also participated and could be seen collecting trash out by the salt ponds.

Chamber of Commerce President Greg Sullivan of Waste Management was there along with his trucks to pick up the bags of debris that were

This is just the first of many clean ups planned for the city this year. In addition regular cleanups, there will be a reinstatement of the Adopt-An-Area by the various Key West organizations. The city has pledged signage to designate the group adopting particular areas. There will also be regular recognition awards by both the city and the Key West Chamber of Commerce to recognize individual and group efforts in this regard. There is also a plan to appoint interested

residents to become block captains and promote the Clean and Green philosophy in their respective neighborhoods.

If you would like to get involved, and you should since this is your island, please contact either Annalise Mannix, at 797-0463 or amannix@keywestcity.com or Chris Belland at 292-8920 or cbelland@historictours.com.

Ten Things You Should Never Buy Again

1. STYROFOAM CUPS

Styrofoam is forever. It's not biodegradable. **Alternative: Buy recyclable and compostable paper cups.** *Best option: Invest in some reusable mugs that you can take with you.*

2. PAPER TOWELS

Paper towels waste forest resources, landfill space, and your money. **Alternative: When you do buy paper towels, look for recycled, non-bleached products. Search the National Green Pages™ for recycled paper products.** *Best option: Buy dishtowels or rags to wash and reuse.*

3. BLEACHED COFFEE FILTERS

Dioxins, chemicals formed during the chlorine bleaching process, contaminate groundwater and air and are linked to cancer in humans and animals. **Alternative: Look for unbleached paper filters.** *Best Option: Use reusable filters such as washable cloth or metal filters.*

4. OVERPACKAGED FOODS AND OTHER PRODUCTS

Excess packaging wastes resources and costs you much more. Around thirty three percent of trash in the average American household comes from packaging. **Alternative: Buy products with minimal or reusable packaging.** *Best Option: Buy in bulk and use your own containers when shopping.*

5. TEAK AND MAHOGANY

Every year, 27 million acres of tropical rainforest (an area the size of Ohio) are destroyed. Rainforests cover 6% of Earth's surface and are home to over half of the world's wild plant, animal, and insect species. The Amazon rainforest produces 40 percent of the world's oxygen. **Alternative: Look for Forest Stewardship Council certified wood.** *Best Option: Reuse wood, and buy furniture and other products made from used or salvaged wood.*

6. CHEMICAL PESTICIDES & HERBICIDES

American households use 80 million pounds of pesticides each year. The EPA found at least one pesticide in almost every water and fish sample from streams and in more than one-half of shallow wells sampled in agricultural and urban areas. These chemicals pose threats to animals and people, especially children. **Alternatives: Buy organic**

pest controllers such as diatomaceous earth. *Best Option: Plant native plants and practice integrated pest management. Plant flowers and herbs that act as natural pesticides.*

7. CONVENTIONAL HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS

Household products can contain hazardous ingredients such as organic solvents and petroleum-based chemicals that can release volatile organic compounds (VOCs) into your indoor environment, posing a particular danger for children. The average American household has three to ten of hazardous matter in the home. **Alternative: Look for nontoxic, vegetable-based, biodegradeable cleaners.** *Best Option: Try making your own green cleaner using vinegar, water, and castile soap.*

8. HIGHER OCTANE GAS THAN YOU NEED

Only one car in ten manufactured since 1982 requires high-octane gasoline. High-octane gas releases more hazardous pollutants into the air, and may be bad for your car. **Alternative: Buy the lowest-octane gas your car requires as listed in your owner's manual.** *Best option: Make your next car purchase a hybrid. Or ditch the car and take public transportation, ride a bike, or walk.*

9. TOYS MADE WITH PVC PLASTIC

70% of PVC is used in construction, but it is also found in everyday plastics, including some children's toys. Vinyl chloride, the chemical used to make PVC, is a known human carcinogen. Also, additives, such as lead and cadmium, are sometimes added to PVC to keep it from breaking down; these additives can be particularly dangerous in children's toys. PVC is also the least recycled plastic. **Alternative: Avoid plastics that are labeled as "PVC" or "#3." Look for #1 and #2 plastics, which are easier to recycle and don't produce as many toxins. Use sustainable construction materials.** *Best option: Take action to tell manufacturers to stop using PVC plastics, especially in children's toys.*

10. PLASTIC FORKS AND SPOONS

Disposable plastic utensils are not biodegradable and not recyclable in most areas. **Alternative: Use compostable food service items. Companies such as Biocorp make cutlery from plant materials such as corn starch and cellulose.** *Best option: Carry your own utensils and food containers.*

Kids Corner

Going green is not just for grown ups. Being kind to the environment and the earth is everyone's responsibility no matter how old you are. Beginning this fall, ♥ Your Island will sponsor and two contests for kids in Key West. The first is an essay contest for kids in grades 6, 7 and 8. The essays should be 500 words or less and the topic is, *The one thing that I am going to implement in my home to make it more clean and green is...* Three winners will be selected. First place will received a \$250 savings bond, second place a \$150 savings bond. All of the essays will appear in this newsletter, on our website, www.loveyourisland.com and in the *Conch Color*. For the younger set an art contest. The theme of the piece using bugs for

organic pest control. Again, three winners will be selected. First place will received a \$250 savings bond, second place a \$150 savings bond and third place will receive \$100 savings bond. All of the essays will appear in this newsletter, on our website, www.loveyourisland.com and in the *Conch Color*.

Entries must include your name, address and phone number and be submitted to ♥ YOUR ISLAND, P.O. Box 1237, Key West, FL 33041 by Children's Day 2007. All entries become property of Love Your Island.

For additional information visit our website at www.loveyourisland.com.

Organic Pest Control 101

Protect Your Garden Naturally

Your garden center offers lots of safe, nontoxic products for use in repelling and eradicating insects, pests and disease that threaten your gardens. Barriers such as netting and row covers protect plants from flying insects as well as from deer and other hungry mammals. Copper tape can be used to protect trees and plants from slugs and snails. *Bacillus thuringiensis*, or B.t., is a bacterium that kills leaf-eating caterpillars by invading their digestive system. *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) is one of the oldest bacteria used for natural insect control. It consists of a spore, which gives it persistence, and a protein crystal within the spore, which is toxic. B.t. is sold in both powder and liquid forms under a number of trade names including **Dipel**, **Condor** and **Biotrol**. Other bacterial controls available include Milky Spore Disease (*Bacillus popilliae*) for use against Japanese Beetle grubs.

homeharvest.com, planetnatural.com

Good Bugs vs Bad Bugs

Releasing large numbers of Lady Bugs or Praying Mantis into areas of your garden infested with insect pests is lots of fun and can be a very effective means of controlling aphids, mealy bugs, leaf worms, and many other pests. Lady Bugs should be released at night near the base of infested plants where they will seek out and devour insect pests. Praying mantids are voracious predators that will feed on many of the larger insect pests including grubs, beetles, leafhoppers and caterpillars. These beneficial insects are available for sale online at thebeneficialinsectco.com, www.growquest.com, homeharvest.com, www.planetnatural.com

Practice Organic Weed Control

Weeds are simply plants growing in places you don't want them to -- plants that you consider undesirable, but insist on growing in your garden anyway. Weed seeds exist in the soil of all gardens and can be spread by wind, water, animals and even by the soil amendments we use to help our gardens grow. Here are some ideas to consider for organic weed control:

- Prevention is the best medicine. In the fight against weeds, the most important element is to provide the best conditions possible for the growth of desirable plants. Improper watering, soil compaction, insect damage and disease all contribute to weed development. All of these conditions can be easily avoided by proper mulching.

- After fostering a nurturing environment, the second step is to remove any existing offenders by hand weeding. *Think of the calories you will burn!*

- Without harming your crops, you can turn the weeds into the soil with a weeding hoe or any version of this time-tested tool.

- An excellent alternative to plastic is ordinary newspaper. It is organic, it can be turned into the soil the following Spring and is a lot cheaper than rolls of black plastic. Use a layer about 1/4- inch thick and wet it down as soon as you lay it to stop it from blowing away. Then cover the newspaper with a layer of straw.

- Live mulches are gaining a lot of respect in the garden. The idea is simple; using a fast growing and short plant to cover the surface of the soil around the garden plants. Thyme is a perfect choice for this method, plus you can eat it too!

Five things you can do to Your Island now

1. Change a light bulb.

Replace a regular incandescent light bulb with a compact fluorescent light bulb (cfl) CFLs use 60% less energy than a regular bulb. This simple switch will save about 300 pounds of carbon dioxide a year. If every family in the U.S. made the switch, we'd reduce carbon dioxide by more than 90 billion pounds!

2. Clean or replace filters on your air conditioner

Cleaning a dirty air filter can save 350 pounds of carbon dioxide a year.

3. Turn off electronic devices you're not using

Simply turning off your television, DVD player, stereo, and computer when you're not using them will save you thousands of pounds of carbon dioxide a year.

4. Observe The Three Rs.

Refuse, Reuse, and Recycle. Whatever you buy, wherever you live, the Three Rs are the most important rules to live by, at least as far as the environment is concerned. The next time you go shopping--whether by yourself or with your parents or friends--think about the Three Rs every time you pull a potential purchase off the shelf. Is it something that is overpackaged or wasteful? If so, Refuse it. Is it something that is made of or packaged in recycled material, or which you can reuse in some way? If so, Reuse it. Is it something that can be recycled easily? If so, Recycle it.

5. Leave your car at home.

Folks, we live on an island. You've learned by now that automobiles are one of the single biggest sources of pollution. Most driving trips are under five miles, and you'd be surprised how many are under one mile. Try walking, biking, skateboarding, roller-skating, or taking the bus.

6. Share these tips with your friends and family.

Did you know that of the earth's water 97% is salt, 2% frozen and 1% potable?

Coming in the Fall issue...

...*Spotlight on area businesses making a difference*

...*Composting: It's a lot easier than you think*

...*Fish: The good, the bad and ugly*

...*Meet the Block Captains*

...*Recycling and the big bucks it can mean for our kids*

What exactly is organic?

Organic food is produced according to certain production standards. For crops, it means they were grown without the use of conventional pesticides, artificial fertilizers, human waste, or sewage sludge, and that they were processed without ionizing radiation or food additives. For animals, it means they were reared without the routine use of antibiotics and without the use of growth hormones.

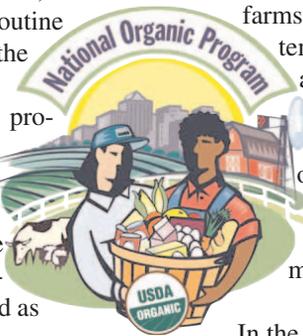
Increasingly, organic food production is legally regulated. Currently, the US, the European Union, Japan and many other countries require producers to obtain organic certification in order to market food as organic.

Historically, organic farms have been small family-run farms which is why organic food was once only available in small stores or farmers' markets. Now, organic foods are becoming much more widely available – organic food sales within the United States have enjoyed 17 to 20 percent growth for the past few years while sales of conventional food have grown at only about 2 to 3 percent a year.

There is evidence that organic farms are more sustainable and environmentally

sound, among other benefits. It has also been found that:

- Organic farms do not release synthetic pesticides into the environment—some of which have the potential to harm local wildlife.
- Organic farms are better than conventional farms at sustaining diverse ecosystems, i.e., populations of plants and insects, as well as animals.
- When calculated either per unit area or per unit of yield, organic farms use less energy and produce less waste, e.g., waste such as packaging materials for chemicals.



In the United States, the Organic Food Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C.A. § 6501-22) required that the USDA develop national standards for organic products. The regulations (7 C.F.R. Part 205) are enforced by the USDA through the National Organic Program under this act. These laws essentially require that any product that claims to be organic must have been manufactured and handled according to specific NOP requirements. A USDA Organic seal identifies products with at least 95% organic ingredients.

Where can I find organic food in Key West?

Waterfront Market

201 William Street • 296-0778
Vegetables, meat, fish, dairy

Faustos Food Palace

522 Fleming Street • 296-5663
105 White Street • 294-5221
organic meat, fruits and vegetables

Sugar Apple

917 Simonton Street • 292-0043
fruits, vegetables, dairy, dry goods, cafe

Albertsons

1112 Keys Plaza • 292-2013
organic vegetables

The Cafe

509 Southard Street • 296-5515
vegetarian restaurant

Island Joe's Gourmet Coffee Roasting Company

425 Southard Street • 294-1190
organic coffee

If you know of others, please let us know at editor@lovemyisland.com

What is Community Supported Agriculture and How Does It Work?

Many farms offer produce subscriptions, where buyers receive a weekly or monthly basket of produce, flowers, fruits, eggs, milk, coffee, or any sort of different farm products.

A CSA, (for Community Supported Agriculture) is a way for the food buying public to create a relationship with a farm and to receive a weekly basket of produce. By making a financial commitment to a farm, people become "members" (or "shareholders," or "subscribers") of the CSA. Most CSA farmers prefer that members pay for the season up-front, but some farmers will accept weekly or monthly payments. Some CSAs also require that members work a small number of hours on the farm during the growing season. A CSA season typically runs from late spring through early fall. The number of CSAs in the United States was estimated at 50 in 1990, and has since grown to over 1000.

CSA reflects an innovative and resourceful strategy to connect local farmers with local consumers; develop a regional food supply and strong local economy; maintain a sense of community; encourage land stewardship; and honor the knowledge and experience of growers and producers working with small to medium farms. As of January 2005, there are over 1500 CSA farms across the US and Canada.

This mutually supportive relationship between local farmers, growers and community members helps create an economically stable farm operation in which members are assured the highest

quality produce, often at below retail prices. In return, farmers and growers are guaranteed a reliable market for a diverse selection of crops.

We are fortunate in the Keys to have a CSA, Pikarco Bee The Bee Heaven CSA "season" runs

from November to April. CSA members receive locally-grown, certified organic produce during the South Florida winter growing season, with a weekly newsletter containing tips and recipes. We specialize in heirloom varieties. Egg shares are available separately. Every week is a surprise! For more information on how you can participate in the next season, visit them online at:

www.pikarco.com/VeggieBox.htm
305-247-8650



*A typical weekly CSA Share from
Bee Heaven farm*



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