



The Arlington ENVIRONMENT

www.arlingtonenvironment.org

Green Living Challenge Deadline is October 31

The ten-month Green Living Challenge is reaching a close. The challenge provides residents the opportunity to participate in the Arlington County Fresh AIRE program and contribute to Arlington's local goals to reduce emissions in order to combat global warming.

We invite everyone to participate in order to demonstrate your support for this county-wide effort. Even if you've been doing green actions for years, completing an entry form is still important to support the county effort and to help your neighborhood win the coveted prize of being called "the greenest neighborhood in Arlington."

Participants must submit their entry forms by Wednesday, October 31 to be eligible for the prize drawing. Entries can be mailed or submitted online. All entries received by this deadline will also be tallied for the neighborhood challenge. Participants who demonstrate that they have accumulated one hundred points will receive a green living certificate.

Thanks to these local companies for donating prizes to the Green Living Challenge:

- Busboys and Poets
- Curves of Arlington
- Flexcar
- Great American Restaurants
- Lululemon Athletica
- My Organic Market
- Natural Body Spa and Shoppe
- Nature by Design
- One Good Tern
- Performance Bicycles
- Sangam Indian Restaurant
- Starbucks
- The Westin Arlington Gateway
- Whole Foods Market

Please join us on Wednesday, October 24 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. for a Green Living Challenge Finish Line Party. We'll be at Busboys and Poets in Shirlington with refreshments plus last minute help and inspiration for completing challenge entry forms (see details on p. 8).

Entry forms, descriptions of prizes, neighborhood challenge standings, and updates are available on ACE's web site at www.arlingtonenvironment.org/greenchallenge.^a

Teleworking, a Green Commuting Option

When commuting to and from work each week, the U.S. white-collar workforce burns more than 583.3 million gallons of gasoline. If the average employee teleworked, working outside of the official workplace just one day per week, it would save the environment 1,680 pounds of CO₂ emissions per year. If 12 million employees were telecommuting at least one day per month, it would save 5,040,000,000 pounds of CO₂ emissions per year.

Many employees around the Washington, D.C. area already see the benefits of working from home or an alternate worksite—better worklife balance, flexibility, and increased productivity are a few. What people may not realize is that by teleworking, you can also reduce oil consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, and help protect the environment.

There are currently 16 million teleworkers nationwide and 250,000 in the Washington, D.C. region. The potential for increased involvement and environmental protection is great.

(continued on page 2)



Teleworking Benefits the Environment and Workers

(continued from page 1)

Research conducted by Telework Exchange, a public-private partnership focused on eliminating telework gridlock, found if all eligible employees in the federal government teleworked two days per week, the government would spare the environment 2.7 million tons of pollutants a year.

According to the Office of Personnel Management's 2006 Status of Telework in the Federal Government report, 93.9 percent of eligible employees are not teleworking. Reports also show that many employees would telework if given the option. A clear gap exists between employees who are eligible and interested in telework and those who are actually teleworking.

There are many resources available for employees to explore telework options. Telework Exchange's Online Eligibility Gizmo

(www.teleworkexchange.com/gizmo) is an online quiz that prompts users to select statements that best fits their job profile and personality.

After selecting the statements that apply, a quick click of the "submit" button results in a report on whether or not the employee might be eligible to telework and why it would (or would not) be a good arrangement for both employee and supervisor.

In addition to the Online Eligibility Gizmo, Telework Exchange also offers other value calculators that potential teleworkers can use to uncover their annual commuting costs and the estimated tons of pollutants each employee's car adds to the environment during a regular commute. The Telework Exchange Commuting Costs and Telework Savings Calculators (www.teleworkexchange.com/calcs.asp) serve employees by offering a tangible figure on the benefits to telework.

In Arlington, Arlington Transportation Partners (ATP) offers resources for employers interested in promoting teleworking as part of their commuter benefits program. ATP has organized the Telework Advisory Network to connect Arlington County employers with other companies interested in starting or formalizing a telework program. The free network provides resources and help with organizing programs and technical considerations.^a

More information:

- Arlington Transportation Partners: www.commuterpage.com/atp/
- Federal Government Telework Options: www.telework.gov
- Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Telework Resource Center: www.mwcog.org/commuter/Bdy-Telework.html
- Telework Exchange: www.teleworkexchange.com

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office@arlingtonenvironment.org, 703-228-6427
www.arlingtonenvironment.org

It is intended as an educational and informational resource on environmental issues impacting Arlington County citizens, businesses, and government. Submissions are welcome.

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The Nature of Arlington

Answers to Questions About Annoying, Bizarre, and Fascinating Happenings in Nature

by Lark Wells

Q: What plants in Arlington cause itchy skin rashes?

A: Poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac are the most common cause of allergic reactions in the United States, according to the American Academy of Dermatology. All three can be found in the eastern United States, but poison ivy is the only one found in Arlington. About 85 percent of people will develop an allergic reaction when exposed, so identifying the poison ivy plant and avoiding it are key to protecting yourself against the itchy rash that can develop.

Poison ivy can be found along trails through wooded areas, fields, and even in your back yard. According to Marty Pross, a naturalist at the Gulf Branch Nature Center, the poison ivy this year is lush and widespread, so you can encounter it in almost any woody area. Poison ivy grows as a shrub or a vine with leaves consisting of three leaflets. The leaflets may appear dull or shiny and the leaflet edges may be smooth, wavy, lobed, or toothed. Poison ivy vines have hairy roots that grow up trees and are still poisonous even if there are no leaves.

Every part of the poison ivy plant is poisonous because it contains the oil urushiol. This oil is colorless or slightly yellow and can remain active for months on objects and for years in the dead plant. Urushiol is so potent that it begins to penetrate the skin within minutes of contact.

While we humans usually think of poison ivy as an annoying weed that

can cause a painful rash, it is actually a food source for some birds. However, since most of us are not immune to the urushiol oil, the best way to prevent a rash is to identify the poison ivy plant and avoid it. If you will be outside in areas near poison ivy, wear long pants and socks. Be sure to wash your clothes after wearing them to remove any traces of urushiol oil. There are

commercially available lotions and creams to keep the oil from reaching your skin if applied before exposure.

If you think you might have encountered a poison ivy plant by accident, you may have some time to remove the oil before a rash develops. It is generally accepted that the oil binds to the skin within 30 minutes, but less sensitive people may have up to 4 hours to wash it off. Use running water and a specially prepared cleansing agent that does not contain oils (which can spread the urushiol oil over a larger area) or use rubbing alcohol to wash the affected area. You can also use antibacterial moist towelettes to wipe the area if you are not near running water.

The stinging nettle is another plant that grows in Arlington that can cause a painful reaction when touched. The stinging nettle is dark green with broad leaves and jagged edges and has a mass of downy flowers at the center. It is usually found in very wet environments.



Poison ivy can be identified by its three leaflets.

According to John Burke of Gulf Branch Nature Center, the plant is common on the Potomac Heritage Trail and along Windy Run. Stinging nettles cause an excruciatingly painful sensation, comparable to a jellyfish sting, if you rub against it. You can develop a red rash or hives, as well as itching, at the contact point because the tiny hairs on stinging nettles contain an acid that irritates skin.

A natural treatment from the itch of stinging nettles and poison ivy is another plant called jewelweed, which usually grows close to the nettles. The undersides of the leaves are shiny when you run water over them, giving them a jewel-like appearance. Jewelweed is also known as a “touch-me-not” because its brightly colored flowers burst if you touch them. Jewelweed leaves can be crushed to form a paste and spread over poison ivy and stinging nettle rashes to relieve itching or discomfort.^a



Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment 2006-2007 Annual Report

Welcome

We are pleased to report on another outstanding year for Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment (ACE). In January, we launched a new campaign, the Green Living Challenge. This program promotes household activities that reduce carbon emissions, increase habitat, and improve air and water quality.

ACE continues to promote community sustainability, to reduce litter and pollution, and to preserve our watersheds and natural resources. We emphasize volunteer engagement to protect Arlington's environment, environmental education of Arlington's students and the general community, and advocating for sustainable local policies.

Volunteers Improving the Environment

In the last year, our enthusiastic ACE volunteers provided more than 3,100 hours of service. Special focus was on engaging new community organization partners and expanding involvement by young adults



Alison, Sally, Aidan, Eleanor, and Jamie from Taylor Elementary School marched with ACE in the May 2007 Neighborhood Day Parade to promote the Green Living Challenge.

thanks to a spring internship funded by the Arlington Community Foundation. Through the tireless effort of ACE volunteers, we:

- **Launched seven new water stewardship teams.** The water stewardship program is in its fifth year, with ACE working in partnership with Arlington County and the Cities of Alexandria and Falls Church, with funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. New partners include Fairfax County and the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District. To date, 264 households have taken part in the program, completing 1,229 actions and saving close to three million gallons of water per year.
- **Removed invasive plants from two parks.** Three truckloads of vines and other non-native plants were removed by ACE from Barcroft and Bluemont Parks. This activity helps prevent trees from being strangled and maintains native habitat for the wildlife that depends on it.
- **Marked more than 200 storm drains with "Don't Dump" signs.** These signs make the connection between storm drains, our local streams, and the Chesapeake Bay. Any pollution entering a storm drain travels through local streams and into the bay. The storm drain markers help to prevent illegal dumping and improve Arlington's water quality.
- **Removed 448 bags of garbage from streams, rivers, and highways.** Volunteers rolled up their sleeves to get rid of litter and other debris in the community, creating a healthier habitat for local wildlife and restoring Arlington's natural beauty. ACE cleanup areas included various spots along Four Mile Run, the Potomac River, Route 50, and East Falls Church.





Hank, Regan, and Tammi make a rain barrel during the April 2007 workshops.

Educating the Community

ACE staff continued its environmental outreach efforts in the community, participating in a range of festivals and forums to reach the public. Among the highlights, we:

- **Launched the Green Living Challenge.** ACE's 2007 campaign is engaging Arlington residents in a contest promoting green lifestyle actions to protect the environment. Hundreds of participants registered for the program, which included special seminars such as an alternative transportation expo, a cooking class featuring organic and local foods, and a swap to exchange green cleaning products for toxic cleaners.
- **Hosted make-your-own rain barrel workshops.** ACE organized three workshops attended by 85 people who converted a pickle barrel into a rain barrel. Rain barrels reduce stormwater runoff by collecting rain from the rooftop for use on lawns and in gardens.
- **Organized a Step It Up rally in Gateway Park.** ACE worked in partnership with the Sierra Club to participate in the nationwide day of action

to call for local solutions to global warming. The rally's message was to ask government officials to cut carbon dioxide emissions 80% by 2050.

- **Published the Green Home Building and Remodeling and Resource Directory.** This 45-page online guide contains information on companies selling green products as well as firms with expertise in green construction.
- **Developed a tour of watershed-friendly gardens.** For the fifth annual tour, about 100 people braved the rain to visit 20 sites in Northern Virginia. The tour emphasized landscaping practices that provide habitat for wildlife and protect water quality.
- **Reached more than 375 community members** through educational events including a screening of "On the Edge - The Dyke River Marsh," organic beer and wine tasting programs, a bird walk in Huntley Meadows, and a tour of Teddy Roosevelt Island highlighting its invasive plants.
- **Organized the Living Green in Arlington Annual Meeting.** ACE's 2007 annual meeting was quite successful with more than 100 participants. Wendy Rieger from NBC4 headlined the event which featured panelists from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Center for a New American Dream, and the Stella Group, a local renewable energy company. The program also included 19 exhibits with products and programs for sustainable gifts and food, green landscaping, and home remodeling.
- **Delivered educational programs to 2,060 students.** ACE visited 109 Arlington classrooms covering topics including climate change, recycling, habitat protection, and watersheds.

Thanks to all our friends and supporters! We look forward to continued partnerships within the Arlington community to improve and protect our natural resources.^a



Become an ACE Member

Our environmental outreach work is dependent on donations from individuals and businesses. ACE's current priorities include watershed protection, creating wildlife habitat, and promoting green living.

Please consider becoming an ACE member at one of the following levels:

- Student/Friend of ACE - volunteer five hours per year at ACE events
- Individual/Household - \$35.00
- Sustaining - \$50.00
- Contributing - \$100.00
- Potomac River Club - \$500.00

To join, return a check made out to ACE in the enclosed envelope to 2700 S. Taylor Street, Arlington, VA 22206. Or donate online at www.arlingtonenvironment.org.

Fiscal Year 2007 Financial Report

Revenue Received

Grant Support	\$ 83,083
Contributions	\$ 46,629
Other Income	\$ 6,607

Total: \$136,319

Revenue Spent

Program Services	\$116,541
Support Services	\$ 18,496

Total: \$135,037

Note - ACE fiscal year was July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007



The Challenge of Educating the Public about Global Warming

This program will take place Wednesday, November 14 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Arlington County Parks and Natural Resources Building, 2700 S. Taylor Street, Arlington. It is designed for naturalists, environmental services staff, teachers, commission members, community organization staff, and park administrators to learn about the successes and challenges of educating the public about global warming. The headline speaker is Anja Caldwell, manager of the green schools focus for Montgomery County Public Schools in Maryland. The program will also include group discussions. Bag lunches are available at the event for \$10. For more information and to RSVP, contact Lynn Everly at 703-228-6525 or leverly@arlingtonva.us. The deadline for registering is November 7.^a

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Volunteers this Quarter

Groups: Arlington County Junior Jam Camps, Community Role Models, Georgetown MBA Volunteers

Individuals: Jennifer Abel, Sean Alderman, Tamara Al-Hussaini, Rachel Azanoft, Dick Bauder, Olga Belinskaya, Melissa Bishop, Allison Blackwood, Ashley Breed, Dan Bronson, Kelly Brown, Natasha Chiofalo, Lara Converse, John DeCarlo, Jon Devine, Dominic DiGiorgio, Andy Drumm, Megan Dunn, Erin Edwards, Samantha Fontenelle, Elaine Franklin, Ravija Ghosh, Diana Gibs, Joe Glassman, Fred Grady, Heather Greenwood, Carl Gregory, Louise Guey-Lee, Molly Harper, Caroline Haynes, Sarah Haynes, Dalton Hirshorn, Mike Janssen, Christina Jarvis, Tamara Jovovic, Rick Keller, Sophia Kim, Francois Krodel, Cara Lalley, Nicholas Lambert, Rosemary Leffler, Theresa Miller, Jim Olivetti, Mark Powell, Richard Reed, Lauren Rhue, Suzanne Rice, Jessie Steiger, Richard Stern, Sharon Sundial, Derik Swansen, Barbara Swart, Kyoko Takayama, Meg Taylor, Mandy Warner, Shane Wilkerson, Richard Carlos Worden

ACE is grateful to all of our generous supporters, and we apologize if we overlooked anyone!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mark Your Calendar for Our Upcoming Events

To register, contact the ACE office at volunteer@arlingtonenvironment.org or 703-228-6406.

Growing Native Seed Collection. Saturday, October 20, 10:00 a.m. to noon. Potomac Overlook Regional Park, 2845 N. Marcey Road, Arlington. Help collect seeds to be used for regional stream restoration projects.

Green Living Challenge Finish Line Party. Wednesday, October 24, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Busboys and Poets, 4251 S. Campbell Ave., Arlington. Bring your completed Green Living Challenge entry form (deadline October 31), or drop in for some inspiration to finish. We'll have light refreshments and green living giveaways for everyone who stops by.

Storm Drain Marking. Saturday, November 3, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Mark storm drains with a "Don't Dump" message in Virginia Square and Cherrydale. Register to receive detailed meeting locations.

Arlington's Green Spaces - Photographing Our Wildlife Habitats. November 5-16. Arlington Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy St. Stop by to view the winners of our photo contest.

Four Mile Run Cleanup. Saturday, November 10, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Meet across from Shirlington at the bridge crossing Four Mile Run (at S. Arlington Mill Dr. and S. Randolph St.)

Invasive Plant Removal. Sunday, December 2, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Location to be announced.

Please remember ACE with your end-of-year donations and join or renew your ACE membership today! ACE is the only group working exclusively on Arlington environmental priorities. Return your membership check in the enclosed envelope or join online at www.arlingtonenvironment.org (Paypal and credit card payments accepted).

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