

# WASTE BYTES!

*Newsletter of the Maine State Planning Office, Waste Management and Recycling Program*

## ***Highmoor Farm Celebrates Its 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday in Research!***

One Hundred years of agricultural research! You may ask how it pertains to waste reduction, if you are not in the know. When the State purchased Highmoor Farm in 1909, it did so as an agricultural experimental station with primarily apple orchard management in mind. Today, it also hosts the Maine Compost School. Education and research in large scale composting has become world renown thanks to the collaborative efforts of the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, the Maine Department of Agriculture, the Maine State Planning Office, and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection.

Programs at the farm are planned and conducted by a devoted faculty core of Dr. William Seekins, Maine Dept. of Agriculture; Mark King, Maine DEP; George MacDonald, SPO; and Mark Hutchinson, Cooperative Extension. These individuals working together have also developed the actual facilities to move beyond the farm buildings where classes are delivered to the post and beam building and new composting pad that is shared with the Town of Monmouth.

The Maine Compost School is conducted twice a year with special programs having been conducted at least once a year. Quite often studies and tests have involved large carcass composting such as with beached sea mammals or quantities such as might be anticipated with epidemics with birds or chickens. In the meantime the performance of different materials is being tested and analyzed for their characteristics.

As food waste composting is being considered for municipal facilities, it may be worthwhile to look at attending the Maine Compost School and earn a Certificate of Technical Ability for composting. For more information on the school, visit its website at <http://www.composting.org/>

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## ***UNE SWANA Meeting***

The University of New England's Biddeford campus was the site for the June meeting of the Northern New England Chapter of Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA). Maine's only medical school was actually being favored for the Marine Mammal Rehabilitation Center that has a pilot project in process.

A balanced program of composting activities and updates was offered by the SWANA program committee, culminating with a presentation of municipal composting in the Canadian Province of Nova Scotia.

The luncheon introduction by UNE's Alethea Cariddi, Sustainability Coordinator, framed the event in terms of her university's two campuses – Portland and Biddeford. Her description of UNE's efforts to measure their carbon footprint and move toward becoming a greener school helped to bring the group into still more of a collegial environment.



## *Reuse – (another name for yard sale?)*

Some recognize and identify the seasons by insects - for mosquitoes, black Flies, or gnats; however close to our hearts is the arrival of the lawn sales – or perhaps garage sales in inclement weather. After a long winter of shopping “Uncle Henry’s” for the perfect leaders for the home interest, the locals are ready to go.

Some would say that the swap shop at the transfer stations are simply garage sales which were stolen from the community - developing an impersonal ‘love it or leave it’ corner of the facility. True devotees would draw attention to the fact that our snowbirds transplanted the enterprise to the South, so that they could seek bargains and outfit the second home for a song.

When it comes to the ‘Grand of the Grand’ though, we only have to look at our colleges and universities. Just about the same time of year as the mud season faces a draught and the sun is actually seen long enough to set in the west, fleeing students open their dorm rooms for their own exodus and the release of stuffing for hundreds of Fibber Magee’s Closets. Many colleges and universities become large scale yard sales, as interested seekers comb through the unwanted remains of the prior college year. The end result for many college communities is a fantastic fund raiser. (not to mention the decrease in materials being disposed of and those savings as well.)

As is often the case, money (or absence of it) is the driving force. In one place, the swap shop is run under contract. In another, items are carried in and out and accounted for on the scales. A more traditional way is found less often when if you can get the discarded away from the attendant you can have it. There is objection to the perpetual yard sale that looks an awful lot like a collection of items left at the swap shop in near history. The signs still appear “No Picking” for liability, and yet there are the other signs that proclaim –“One man’s trash is another man’s treasure”. In a few cases, swaps are limited to books – until the library finds out, and there are fewer that collect the skis at the end of season. In every case, a purpose is served.



### *Skidmore College’s Sadie at SPO*

As soon as the birds start heading north, so we see the students returning to their home states. This is not migration or spring break but rather the intern arrival on state government. This year the winds were kind and the Waste Management and Recycling Program at the Maine State Planning Office has found a temporary home for an energetic and self-motivated Skidmore Senior, Sadie Kitchen.

Sadie is a Political Science major, who has volunteered on many campaigns on and off campus. In case you are wondering, Sadie does have roots here in Maine and grew up in Yarmouth. Even now, Sam and Sadie are trading war stories over their misadventures on climbing Katahdin here or the New York mountain ranges.

Sometimes it does a body good to get a little bit of different perspective on things – especially after an exciting beginning. That in one sense is what Sadie Kitchen, our intern, is doing this summer. Among other things, Sadie is looking at a sample of single sort communities and learning about such things as: the decision-making process followed by the community; the residents’ education process; and, finally how effective and affective the adoption of the revised recycling system. Please welcome Sadie if the winds blow her your way.

## *Green Campus Consortium of Maine*

Maine is crisscrossed with campuses from the historic institutions of Colby, Bates, and Bowdoin to Maine's agricultural school – the “Flagship Campus” of the University System at Orono. The creation of the University System itself from the local normal school campuses blanketed the state. The newest environmental schools – Unity College and College of the Atlantic – serve as young models in a way. Don't forget the non-traditional campus of the University of Maine Augusta and the contributions of St. Joseph's College, Thomas College, and the University of New England. The colleges and universities in our state have seen many changes over time while providing valuable leadership.

There is a new face on the post-secondary landscape of Maine as well. The Maine Green Campus Consortium has found its niche in today's Green Times. With an honest and sincere philosophy from the past and new energy from the present, the Maine Green Campus Consortium (GCCM) has come to life. Between each campus doing its homework for the President's Carbon Challenge and on-going discussions of activities on individual campuses, the campus participation is a great indicator of our times. (Noteworthy is the fact that the Maine Community College System is also exploring the environmental message that each campus contributes in its responsibility to the system mission and its location in the state.)

The GCCM's mission is to develop an effective, state-wide network of colleges, universities and partners working to improve environmental sustainability on campuses throughout Maine through communication and education. This sentiment is being caught by many in all grades in the public and private schools of Maine, as well. Students in environmental clubs, science clubs, recycling clubs and their classmates look up to the model efforts that exist all around them – no matter where in Maine they are located.

Bates College, Lewiston, Julie Rosenbach, Environmental Coordinator

Julie Rosenbach serves as the current President of the Green Campus Consortium as well as maintaining the web site. Bates has long stood out with its environmental efforts. The food service collection and processing of food waste was so well-documented on savings from power and water use that it has been used by many across the state for decision-making in that area. Activities on campus do support local non-profit organizations and reinforce its position as part of the L/A Community. Their web site touts the following accomplishments as well. <http://www.bates.edu/sustainable-bates.xml>

The GCCM active campuses work with the tools of Clean Air Cool Planet. Identifying the emissions in the areas of: on-campus energy production; purchased electricity; transportation; waste; and agriculture and refrigerants, the campuses will move on to their plans and strategies to reduce emission levels. The measurement process is an education itself. The plans and strategies are a part of a commitment that is a reality check on sustainability efforts.

Each meeting, whether in person or by the video link of Maine's higher education campuses, often includes a report of activities on campuses. At the end of the meeting there is a feeling of genuine rejuvenation and belief that these educational communities are moving ahead with more than plans to make a difference – contributing to saving the environment. One strategy common to each campus is a well-organized recycling effort. In recent years, food waste composting has found a place on many campuses.

Check out the web site and look to support your Alma mater or closest campus remembering that the Maine Green Campus Consortium is working and has been for some time. On the web site <http://gccmaine.org/>

Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Keisha Payson, Sustainable Bowdoin

Keisha Payson is a former President of the Maine Green Campus Consortium and has been a longtime leader and participant in the Green Campus activities. Bowdoin has hosted regional meetings of the Green Campuses and was an early member committed to adopting sustainable strategies. Among the major accomplishments is perhaps the first LEED certified hockey arena. <http://www.bowdoin.edu/sustainability/>

Colby College, Waterville, Beth Kopp, Environmental Studies Coordinator

Colby literally is in the center of Waterville; however with the MGCC schools it constantly demonstrates a contribution to the community with its environmental efforts. The private food service embraces every effort of the campus as well as making its own contribution. The campus has its own LEED certified buildings and has its own popular environmental program. <http://www.colby.edu/environ/initiatives/sustainability.html>

College of the Atlantic, Bar Harbor, Millard Dority, Director of Campus Planning and Buildings

COA is recognized as an environmental school and received notoriety with a zero waste graduation planned by the students. Some of the oldest and historically significant buildings in Bar Harbor make up the COA campus; however LEED certified dorms have recently been proposed. The greatest contribution is however the complete educational environment that has been sculpted for the student population. <http://www.coa.edu/html/sustainability.htm>

The Maine Maritime Academy, Castine, Terry McGovern, Student Environmental Activists Association President

MMA has become active in the MGCC by virtue of a highly motivated group of students. Organized to help provide recycling to the Castine community, the students were a natural for the MGCC. Their grass roots participation has brought attention to such things as the ocean wind research, the Tidal Energy Project being conducted in the bay.. <http://www.mma.edu/>

St. Joseph's College, Standish, Jeanne Gulnick, Sustainability Coordinator

Located on the shores of Sebago Lake, it is no accident that environmental studies have found a place in programs at St. Joseph's College. The spring cleaning or recycling has been posted on the web site and marks a practice as common as the swap shops to a community recycling facility. According to their web site, Dr. Joseph Lee signed the American College & University Climate Commitment on April 6, 2009; however the environmental presences of St. Joseph's College and Dr. Gulnick's efforts have been respected for some time. <http://www.sjcme.edu/>

Thomas College, Waterville, John Joseph, Professor of Economics

Thomas College is one of the newest schools to take an active part in the MGCC and appears with the attendance of their students adding a fresh perspective to discussions. In recent meetings, another fresh view is the early cooperation of Colby volunteering their voice of experience to move things along on the neighboring campus. <http://www.thomas.edu/>

Unity College, Unity, Jesse Pyles, Sustainability Coordinator

Unity College is an environmental institution in every respect. Located in Unity where the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association finally found a home, Unity College has moved forward in recent years with solid leadership and several planned advances to serve as models and examples for the curriculum – as well as establishing the Center for Environmental Education. <http://www.unity.edu/EnvResources/Sustainability.aspx>

University of Maine at Augusta, Sheila Bennett, Professor of Natural Science

From its beginning, UMA has been charged with education for the non-traditional student, delivering programs to the communities, and providing what was almost viewed as community college needs to the towns of rural Maine. With emphasis on commuters and technical strategies for teaching, UMA wrestles with unusual strategies that present themselves in the absence of a residential campus. <http://www.uma.edu/pces.html>

University of Maine at Farmington, Drew Barton, Professor of Biology

Of all of the campuses of the University of Maine System that have evolved from the teachers' college beginnings, UMF has come to the forefront with the environment and environmental education. The small campus has three LEED certified buildings – two dorms and the new Education Center. The Education Center also is the new home of Everyone's Resource Depot. Under their current leadership, UMF has been certified to teach aspiring environmental education teachers. <http://sustainablecampus.umf.maine.edu/>

University of Maine at Fort Kent, Fort Kent

The northern most campus of the University System maintains a low profile in the MGCC. By virtue of being a part of the system, each campus has the support of the Department of Facilities Management as well. In the last few years and with the exposure of students to green activities and several environmental curriculums before college, positive activities may happen on the student level with the help of Facilities Management. <http://www.umfk.maine.edu/studserv/orientation/default.cfm>

University of Maine at Machias, Machias, Washington County, could easily be the setting for a leading environmental campus, which is a thought that is shared by many students and faculty. Food service has been exploring composting and their part in helping the programs. There exists an energy at UMM that is occasionally shared with the MGCC and yet very evident in Machias and the surrounding communities. <http://www.umm.maine.edu/>

University of Maine at Presque Isle, Presque Isle,

UMPI has moved ahead with a wind turbine for their campus. With such a visible display of alternative energy, the motivation is there for the campus to play a more active role in the MGCC which appears to be happening. <http://www.umpi.edu/wind>

University of Maine, Orono, Misa Saros

The larger the campus is, the more complex the measure of involvement. After a long time of support by a few committed faculty, the Orono Campus has jumped in with both feet, so to speak, - student services and campus facilities. With research leading in several areas for some time, the MGCC now are seeing LEED certified buildings appearing as several strategies come into play on the Orono campus. At the same time, student facilities and activities are being devised to constructively support the overall American College & University Climate Commitment. <http://www.umaine.edu/ofm/sustainability/>

University of Southern Maine, Portland/Gorham, Dudley Greeley, Environmental and Economic Sustainability Officer

Before actually getting into the era of the Clean Planet/Cool Climate, USM assumed a role of leading discussion through those formative years. Retired USM Professor Fred Padula has been a longtime contributor of education or information items to the MGCC list serve. Following a workshop a few years ago, a number of different disciplines began efforts to incorporate environmental concerns into their teaching. With the size of USM, there has been much done lately incorporating strategies from LEED buildings to many energy saving improvements and even cafeteria procedures and policies. <http://www.usm.maine.edu/sustain/>

University of New England, Biddeford and Westbrook, Althea Cariddi, Sustainability Coordinator

UNE has taken on the challenge and Althea is working diligently on the inventory and plan. As the state's only medical school, UNE is also setting standards high for the future such as with the proposal for a dental school. The food service for the campus is working with an ambitious committee to make a solid Green commitment to both campuses. As could be expected, transportation figures in to the UNE Green strategies. <http://www.une.edu/ur/news/sustainability.asp>