



SUSTAINABLE
SPRINGFIELD

Newsletter

Summer 2013

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PRESIDENT'S NOTE

from Melody LaMar

With summer in full swing it's great to see the community out and about enjoying what this time of year has to offer. SSI typically uses this time to plan for the coming year's public meetings and strategize for new and fresh ideas to fulfill our mission. However, we couldn't pass up the chance to get involved in the city's first Paint the Street Fest in July. I hope many of you were able to get downtown and see the sustainable street mural and the other wonderful and creative works of art painted right on the pavement. Are you aware of the community gardens sprouting up throughout the city? People are making the connection between supporting local businesses and buying into our local food system through their purchases at the farmers market and community supported agriculture (CSA). I believe our community is in the throes of a revival – an awakening that needs consistent nurturing and reminders to ensure that a sustainable future becomes our renewed way of life.



SSI members work on the Sustainable Springfield mural at Paint the Street Fest



This September marks my 5th anniversary in Springfield, and it seems that every season has been different than the prior; extreme temperatures from one summer to the next as well as wider variations in snowfall from winter to winter. These inconsistencies seem obvious to me, and indicate to folks who have lived here for much longer than I, that something is up. Climate change is making itself known. These changing times are a signal that we must begin to look through a different set of lens. Our decisions as a society, locally and globally, politically and economically, personally and at the community level, will

have lasting impacts on every aspect of our world.

In as much as I wish that you all will become members of SSI, I would also encourage you to join or participate in the variety of Springfield's organizations focused on preserving local businesses, building a local and sustainable food system and encouraging the health of our children through providing their families with better nutritional instruction. We have the power to make the changes for the betterment of humankind and the planet.

In Peace and Solidarity,
Mel LaMar

FIND US ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER!



Find us at Sustainable Springfield, Inc



@sustainableSI

Remember to check out our website at sustainable.springfield.org

LESSONS FROM PORTLAND, OREGON

This June, I had the wonderful opportunity to visit Portland, OR, where I attended the Interdisciplinary Environmental Association Conference. I learned so much not only from the conference but from exploring Portland as well. I wanted to share some of the lessons I learned from this amazing experience with the SSI community.



Portland is surrounded by nature. City-dwellers take great pride in their environment and have set aside greenspace within and around the city. They work with nature and strive to be one of the world's most sustainable cities. Within the city limits, their Washington Park sits on the west side of the city. From an enchanting rose garden to 27 miles worth of trails, this park instills and provides nature to the city.

Applying this appreciation for nature continues within the city as well. Next to every single trashcan sits a recycle bin with different compartments for different materials. At each of the mini parks in the City, where many people gather on a regular basis, a large-sized recycle bin and compost bin make it easy for citizens to make the right choices.

Portland leads by example in its transportation options available to Portlandians. Bike lanes line every street in the downtown area, some of which go smack down the middle of the roads. In the morning rush hour, there are more

SSI Student Board Member Katelynn Essig

bikers biking to work than there were cars on the road. Portland also has an excellent metro system that goes around the city. Enough metro stops exist that the wait is never too long. In case that option does not work, Portland has e-cars as well, or essentially electric trolleys. If those can't get you where you are going, the bus can. Simply put, nobody drives.

This city has grown with the nature that surrounds it, working their best to preserve and use less waste. And, so I ask all of you, can we do this as well? As long

as we continue forward with sustainability on our minds, we can.

The Green Man of Portland statue says it all: "If struck by the Archer's arrow your vision will change."

An aura of flowers grows from the heads of passerby. Suddenly a building called "the greenwood" is visible where there was no building before. A giant tree larger than any building in town towers over the city. His arrows pierce the secret history of Portland.



USGBC CHAPTER AT UIS

Bianca Colmenares, Student Board Member

U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is a group that works to promote sustainability and energy savings through green building practices and various other sustainable activities. Its most popular program is LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), which encourages new and existing buildings to be designed and renovated more sustainably than in the past.

USGBC has a web of Student Chapters at universities and colleges across the country. Through these Student Chapters, USGBC hopes to promote more sustainable campuses. USGBC helps students “integrate sustainability themes into their coursework and advocate for sustainable university practices and policies.” The Illinois Chapter of USGBC recently started a subcommittee to create dozens of new chapters across the state. They will provide a regional mentor to serve as a resource and aide with sustainability issues, green economy and other sustainable activities, events and programs that we hope to bring to Springfield.

As a second year graduate student at UIS, I am working to bring a USGBC Student Chapter to UIS to work in conjunction with the established environmental group, SAGE (Students Allied for a Greener Earth). It is my hope that the more widely known names of USGBC and LEED will help bring awareness and interest to our efforts to make UIS a more sustainable campus. We hope to have many events both on campus and in the community to raise awareness and to shed light on the importance of sustainable practices.

These events will be added to the calendar as they come up, please join us when you can and show your support!



i-TREE PROGRAM

Anne Logue, SSI Board Member

Why do trees matter? They cool the city, save on energy consumption, filter and replenish ground water, as well as eat carbon, the carbon that is changing our climate and ramping up the global temperatures.

Springfield now has the capacity to assess its overall tree canopy cover using the software program i-tree. Not only does it assess the tree cover, it calculates permeable surface and impermeable surface cover percentages. So our city council and our county planning team can measure their progress or lack thereof in protecting and maintaining tree cover and impermeable surfaces. The lack of permeable surface space in Springfield has been a source of embarrassment for the city especially in the year when a life was lost due to our downtown’s inability to handle heavy rains.

A healthy tree cover is set at approximated 30 percent by the US Mayors report on Protecting and Developing Urban Tree Canopy. According to the i-tree program, Springfield’s city boundaries are at about 24 percent tree canopy cover.

This year, Sustainable Springfield, in coordination with Springfield Green and University of Illinois Springfield will calculate how many trees it will take to be planted to reach a 30 percent tree cover for a healthy tree canopy. Stay tuned.

SUSTAINABLE SPRINGFIELD MEMBERSHIP FORM

Complete and mail to:
Sustainable Springfield Inc.
P.O. Box 9896
Springfield, IL 62791

Please support us as we promote a culture of sustainability in Springfield!

Name _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Phone _____

I am willing to serve on a committee.

Yes No

Please remit check to Sustainable Springfield, Inc. for membership dues:

\$25/year General \$10/year Student

Thank you!!