



SUSTAINABLE
SPRINGFIELD

Newsletter

Winter 2013-14

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PRESIDENT'S NOTE

from Melody LaMar

This year finds us in the grips of a Polar Vortex – a new term for me and one that I suspect is new for many of you. We could argue climate change or just another 100 year cycle, but nevertheless, this year's frigid winter no doubt emphasizes our dependency on the built environment and our need to stay warm.

I just received an email from Chad Wallace of Oak Tree Organics, letting all his CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) supporters know that the extreme winter weather has delayed several projects that he had hoped to have accomplished by now such as germinating various varieties of greens including kale, spinach, and lettuce. I reviewed my orders from last year, and at this time a year ago his farming operation was producing plenty of winter varieties; radishes, turnips and various greens. He too has had to adapt to the conditions facing us all.

From the drought in California, the arctic grip across the southeast, tornadoes in central Illinois and the "most destructive" typhoon on record that hit the Philippines, this past twelve months have showed us once again that we're at the mercy of a changing climate whose

effects are enduring. In that vein, our role as an information gateway led SSI to provide our community information about the options available to make our built environment as comfortable and sustainable as possible. Our first public meeting of the year began with a panel discussion on solar energy in Springfield. As an information agency, we will continue to schedule discussions on sustainability; while some topics are obvious, others may be more abstract, but we'll do our best to make the connections.

Another exciting bit of news is that we are hosting our second UIS Environmental Studies graduate student internship. Our organization offers students the opportunity to fulfill the requirements of the department's Capstone project. We are hoping that SSI will be able to offer a scholarship program in the near future as well.

I'd like to take this chance to let members know how much we appreciate your support as we strive to serve this community by providing information, resources and encouragement for the advancement of sustainability.

Sincerely,
Melody LaMar

UPCOMING EVENT

Is Fair Trade Sustainable?

FEBRUARY 25, 6:30PM – 8:00PM @ THE LINCOLN LIBRARY

What is Fair Trade? Sustainable Springfield Inc and the Sierra Club figure it's a good question to ask and thought partners Charlyn Fargo Ware and Laura Camp of Simply Fair are the "go to" entrepreneurs to let us know. They dreamed of a business venture positively impacting the lives of women around the globe and close to home. Come listen to them, see what they're offering, hear the stories about their suppliers and discover how fair trade is a link to sustainability.



FIND US ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER!



Find us at [Sustainable Springfield, Inc](#)



@[sustainableSI](#)

Remember to check out our website at [sustainable.springfield.org](#)

SSI VISITS ECOLOGY ACTION CENTER IN BLOOMINGTON

If you haven't made the trip to Normal to visit the Ecology Action Center, it's worth your time. SSI board members set out on a field trip to the center this month (a refresher trip for some of us) and what a fantastic place to visit, learn and be inspired.

Formed in the early 1970s, this non-profit has served their community as an education and resource agency while facilitating the advancement of sustainability in measurable ways. Not

only do they serve as an educational facility (you can see SSI members learning about recycling in the picture below), but they serve as the solid waste agency for Bloomington and Normal. They also help individuals with radon testing and will be conducting energy audits for residents in the area in order to educate the community about energy.

Check out their website below and view their upcoming events!

www.ecologyactioncenter.org



SOLAR ENERGY IN SPRINGFIELD! PANEL EVENT RECAP



Sustainable Springfield, along with the Sangamon Valley Sierra Club, hosted a panel discussion on solar panel installations in Springfield on January 28th. Panel members (pictured here from left to right) included Michelle Knox, owner of WindSolar USA, Chef Michael Higgins of Maldaner's Restaurant, Robert LaBonte of the Springfield Bike Doctor Shop, Julie Rourke of Lincoln Land's Workforce Development Center, and Bob Croteau of CWLP's Solar Rewards Program. The biggest theme of the night is that solar panels are affordable in Springfield if you know where to look!

Ms. Knox gave a fantastic overview of

the possible incentives that lower the up-front cost of solar panels, and Mr. Higgins and LaBonte discussed their recent impressive solar installations using WindSolarUSA. With the help of Ms. Rourke and the rebate program that Mr. Croteau runs, these solar installations were affordable and a sound business decision. Not to mention the fact that it reduces their environmental footprints!

Thank you to all of our panel members and to all who attended the meeting. For more information, visit the [Illinois Green Economy Network](#) or the CWLP's [Solar Rewards Program](#). You can find WindSolar USA's [site here](#).

STUDENT INTERN AT SSI!

SSI is hosting a graduate intern as a part of the Environmental Studies program at the University of Illinois at Springfield. Please welcome Sarah Lentz!

Thank you Sustainable Springfield for the opportunity to introduce myself to the SSI community. My name is Sarah Lentz and I will be taking part in SSI's new internship program this Spring. This internship will enable me to fulfill my dream of completing my Master's degree program in Environmental Studies at the University of Illinois at Springfield. I started my graduate journey 11 years ago, in Fall of 2002, taking classes at night while I worked full time during the day as an Environmental Scientist for an environmental engineering consulting firm in Springfield.

In December 2004, I completed my course requirements and, that same month, I got engaged to be married. From that point on, my goal of finishing my master's degree was put on hold, so I could enjoy some of the other wonderful life events that I hold dear, including getting married, moving to a wonderful community in Southern Illinois, and having two adorable little boys. My life has evolved into a whirlwind of caring for and nurturing a toddler and a baby, while teaching night classes in environmental biology at a community college and making all natural body care products for a local day spa.

As each year went by, I told myself I would find time to finish my master degree, but it seems that each new year is busier than the last. Recently, SSI presented me with this opportunity to take part in their new internship program and I'm going for it. I look forward to getting back into my master's degree program and getting involved with an organization that does meaningful work that I am passionate about. I couldn't be happier interning with such an committed environmental organization that is working towards making my hometown a better place to live.

My responsibilities will include assisting with evaluating green businesses in Springfield, drafting blog entries and informative website content, and evaluating the functioning of a local environmental not-for-profit organization.

Thank you so much SSI for this opportunity!

STUDENT BOARD MEMBERS

SSI's student board members are completing their graduate capstone projects this Spring and we wanted to highlight all of the great work they are doing!

Bianca Colmenares:

Bianca is working with the Illinois Green Business Association (IGBA) to begin to bring green business certification to Springfield.

IGBA is a state recognized certification that started in Champaign, IL and is quickly gaining national recognition. Almost 80 Central and Northern Illinois businesses are working with IGBA and

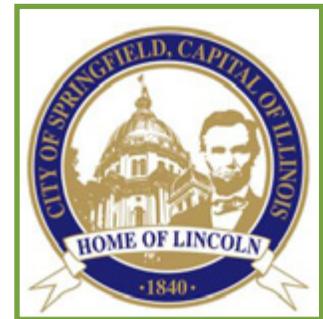


have already made changes that are making them more environmentally friendly and

helping to save them money at the same time. Bianca will be performing a survey of local Springfield businesses to determine interest in this type of certification program as well as determining programs and fundraising options available in our area. Hopefully the next step will be for IGBA to start a successful pilot program in Springfield.

Katelynn Essig:

Katelynn Essig is interning at the City of Springfield. While working under the community program's coordinator, she has several different projects she will be working on over the course of the semester, including recycling initiatives for the City. She is developing outreach strategies for both businesses and schools. Katelynn is also working on Earth Fair activities for the city, including a kid's tent for this year. Finally, a project that will



take her most of the semester is updating the room-to-room recycling guide for Springfield residents. This booklet contains great information on things like what can be recycled and locations to donate unwanted items. She is going to revamp the booklet, making it available online as well!

SSI BOARD MEMBER APPOINTED TO NOBEL PRIZE COMMITTEE

SSI Secretary, Sr. Sharon Zayac, Executive Director of Jubilee Farm, has been appointed to an international committee promoting the candidacy of President Anote Tong of Kiribati for the Nobel Peace Prize. The Committee to Promote the Candidacy of Anote Tong is comprised of “prominent individuals drawn from the international community with diverse commitments to social justice, north-south equity and human rights.” President Tong has led efforts to draw international attention to global climate change and recognized as an advocate on the effects of climate change on the most vulnerable. A press release can be found at www.tongnpp.info. Congratulations, Sister Sharon!

NEW WAY TO INVEST IN SSI

Want to become a member of Sustainable Springfield? Great! You can now head over to sustainable.springfield.org/invest to submit your membership dues. If you click the “Donate” button, you’ll find a secure web page to safely submit your investment online.

As always, thank you for supporting our organization as we help foster a more sustainable Springfield. Your contribution helps us continue our important work!

SUSTAINABLE SPRINGFIELD MEMBERSHIP FORM

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

Name _____

I am willing to serve on a committee.

Address _____

___ Yes ___ No

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

E-mail _____

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

Phone _____

Thank you!!