

*In this issue:*

**Klamath Food Policy**

**Cell Phone Health Impacts**

**Call for Ban on GM Foods**

**How to Reduce Toxins in Your Home**

**Inaugural Message from Our New KSC President**

**New KSC Committee on Sustainable Local Economics**

**A Green Living 'Wiki'**

**Sustainable Food Tour**

**Downtown Community Garden in 2010**

**Sustainability – One Definition**

**Pesticide Information**

**Conserve - Watering Your Lawn**

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## **Klamath Food Policy**

Across the nation, local governments are launching food policy councils based on the theory that just as they develop strategies for securing sufficient water and regulating growth, they also need to think about nurturing their foodshed.

Klamath County is blessed with abundant geothermal energy and lots of sunshine. These resources are being used by a growing number of businesses which supply locally grown vegetables throughout the year. We have the potential to be a year around regional supplier of produce. The economic development potential is significant.

The following link has information about councils and policies:

<http://aphg.jhsph.edu/?event=browse.subject&subjectID=48> . It contains details about what other communities across the U.S. have done. Local food production and distribution have become more important for many reasons. Increasing costs of energy inputs for production and transportation, tainted food causing illness/deaths with massive recalls and the better quality of food that has not been shipped thousands of miles are just a few.

Here is the link to a very interesting story about a predicted collapse of the industrial food system <http://www.grist.org/article/2009-05-22-financial-collapse-food/> . It also has some information about efforts to develop local food networks including "Food Policy Councils".

Spring, last year Klamath Sustainable Communities started a Local Food Network (LFN) committee. It has been meeting monthly and twenty or so people have attended one or another of the meetings. The main focus of the group is to increase the amount of locally grown food available to Klamath residents and for distribution of Klamath produce in southern Oregon and northern California.

County Commissioners have been asked to pass an ordinance to create a Klamath Food Policy Council. Time will tell the result of the LFN request.

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## **Cell Phone Health Impacts**

The World Health Organization has been compiling data on the health risks of electromagnetic fields emitted by cell phones, but the release of the report has been delayed for over two years. In the meantime, many nations have sought to protect

their citizens by issuing their own recommendations for cell phone use, including an announcement in Canada last week. Here in the U.S., the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute recently posted a useful list of tips to limit harmful health impacts of cell phones:

1. Do not allow children to use a cell phone, except for emergencies.
2. Use hands-free ear pieces or speakerphone.
3. Make sure the back of the phone is pointing away from your body so that the transmitted electromagnetic fields move away from you rather than through you.
4. Switch sides regularly while communicating on your cell phone to spread out your exposure.
5. Don't sleep near your phone unless it is off, particularly if you are pregnant.

See full list of tips here:

[http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_14065.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_14065.cfm)

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## **Call for Ban on GM Foods**

On May 19, 2009 the American Academy of Environmental Medicine (AAEM) released a landmark position paper signed by physicians across the U.S. calling for a moratorium on GE foods:

*"Avoid GM (genetically modified) foods when possible... Several animal studies indicate serious health risks associated with GM food... There is more than a casual association between GM foods and adverse health effects. There is causation...The strength of association and consistency between GM foods and disease is confirmed in several animal studies."*

Learn more at: [http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_18080.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_18080.cfm)

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## How to Reduce Toxins in Your Home

There are more than 80,000 chemicals used in consumer products and manufacturing in the US and more than 2,000 new chemicals are introduced each year. Only about 200 have been tested for safety.

The government DOES NOT REQUIRE testing or health studies for chemicals including those found in household cleaners, pesticides, paints/stains, skin and hair care products, and the hormones used in the meat and dairy industries.

**Get rid of conventional cleaners:** Most conventional cleaners contain dangerous ingredients including volatile organic compounds (VOCs), formaldehyde, harsh acids, and hormone disrupters linked to cancer, reproductive toxicity, and eye and respiratory irritation.

**The solution:** use nontoxic, biodegradable cleaners free of synthetic fragrances. Most cleaning jobs can also be done with baking soda and vinegar.

**Filter your water:** The public water supplies in 19 of America's largest cities delivered drinking water that contained contaminant levels exceeding EPA limits, including rocket fuel, arsenic, lead, fecal waste, and chemical byproducts created during water treatment.

**The solution:** Get a water filter and read the annual water quality report the City of Klamath Falls sends to all customers each year. But, avoid bottled water – most brands and not much better than tap water and the bottles contribute to mountains of waste. Carry and refill your own reusable water bottle instead, preferably a long life metal container.

**Use care with paints/stains:** Conventional paints contain three dangerous chemicals: VOCs, fungicides and biocides.

**The solution:** use super-low or even zero-VOC paints and stains. Look for “biocide-free” paints and stains and those that use natural pigments. If your home was built before 1970, consider having your home and your children's blood lead levels tested. Paint over lead-based paint to minimize dust and chipping.

Adapted from a Co-op America promo.

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## Inaugural Message from Our New KSC President

As many of you know, Leslie Lowe has been the president of Klamath Sustainable Communities since she and several other members of the League of Women Voters and Audubon Society founded the organization 14 years ago. Wanting more time to spend on other activities within and beyond KSC, understandably Leslie implored the newly-elected KSC Board to pick a new president. With the understanding that Leslie would be available to help, I (Art Martin) volunteered. Leslie will be a hard act to follow (check out the many KSC accomplishments and projects on our website), but she's still here, now serving as treasurer. Our newsletter editor Dwight Long moves from treasurer to Vice President and Allan Lowe continues as secretary.

With the continuing help of Leslie and the handful of other devoted people who have made KSC happen all these years (Dwight, Ralph, Juanita, and Allen come to mind), combined with that of our many newer members, we can make KSC even more relevant as our core value – fostering sustainable communities – becomes a more widespread concern and, indeed, necessity.

We are getting to a point where issues of sustainability can no longer be ignored. We are using the earth's resources at a much faster rate than the earth produces them – the supply of natural resources is declining rapidly. Meanwhile, the demand for the resources required to maintain our modern First World way of life is growing as the economies of huge countries like China and India modernize. So we are faced with growing demand for shrinking resources – a situation that cannot be sustained. Whether or not the global community can shift priorities fast enough to avoid the looming catastrophe is an open question.

But no matter what happens at the global scale, the fact is that people in local communities, such as the Klamath Basin, have the power to educate and organize themselves to develop more sustainable ways of life. And that's what Klamath Sustainable Communities is all about as we pursue education and projects aimed at waste reduction, green building, living within environmental limits, meeting energy needs, growing food locally, and creating a vibrant, localized economy.

And of course, an important part of creating sustainable communities is staying connected, finding ways to get involved, and learning about and sharing ideas.

Besides reading this newsletter, please check out our website –

[www.klamathsustainablecommunities.org](http://www.klamathsustainablecommunities.org) – and especially the brand new Klamath Green Welcome Wagon website

[www.greenwelcomewagon.com/index.php](http://www.greenwelcomewagon.com/index.php), which includes a calendar of events,

discussion forums, a green business directory, and other resources. It is just getting started, and we need your participation to make it a successful tool in our quest for a sustainable Klamath. We hope to see and talk to you at future KSC meetings! -- Art Martin

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## **New KSC Committee on Sustainable Local Economics**

KSC is forming a committee on economic democracy and sustainable local economics. The committee will get going as a study group or think tank exploring the nature of our economy and the possibilities of sustainable, small-scale, local economic development. Once we have a handle on some realistic possibilities, we can consider initiating projects aimed at making it happen here in the Klamath Basin. For instance, we could come up with ways to create value locally (what resources do we have, what kinds of services could community members provide for each other?) and seek funds to start a non-profit micro-lending bank that would help individuals or groups start small local businesses. In the long run, such lending could be coordinated with a local currency to help protect parts of our local economy from the vicissitudes of the global financial superstructure.

If you are interested in getting together to discuss economic democracy and sustainable local economics, please email Art at [arthurbmartin@gmail.com](mailto:arthurbmartin@gmail.com) or connect through the "forum" discussion on grassroots economic development on the Green Welcome Wagon website ([www.greenwelcomewagon.com/index.php](http://www.greenwelcomewagon.com/index.php)).

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## **A Green Living 'Wiki'**

Appropedia is a collaborative Wikipedia-style website concerned with sustainability, poverty reduction, and international development through the use of appropriate technology. The Green Living Portal has many interesting articles and links to explore. You can find it at: [www.appropedia.org/Portal:Green\\_living](http://www.appropedia.org/Portal:Green_living)

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## **Sustainable Food Tour**

The KSC Local Food Network committee has organized a tour of vegetable producers on August 23. At this time seven stops are planned. Three are home gardeners and four stops grow produce to sell.

This is being done so people can see a variety of gardening techniques, options to purchase locally grown produce and to educate about growing your own food. In the last few years more and more people have taken up growing some of their veggies. Goodies you grow in your own yard are much more vital than stuff from the supermarket which is many days in processing and on the road.

To take the tour, go to the OSU Extension office on Vandenberg Road to pick up a guide. Someone will be at the parking lot on the north side of the building (in the shade) from 1PM to 3PM.

This is a self guided tour. We hope at least some folks will car pool from the Extension.

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## **Downtown Community Garden in 2010**

Rotary First Harvest is bringing together the resources to create a community garden in downtown Klamath Falls. It will be operating next spring.

They are planning work sessions this September to prepare the beds, soil, fencing and such. Many hands are needed to develop this community resource.

If interested in reserving a plot or to help get the garden going, contact Jennifer Scanlan, 880-7100 or [jennifer.scanlan@sterlingsavings.com](mailto:jennifer.scanlan@sterlingsavings.com) .

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## **Sustainability – One Definition**

Sustainability is part of a trend to ... consider the whole instead of the specific. Sustainability emphasizes relationships rather than pieces in isolation ... sustainability is not at all about regressing to primitive living conditions. It is about understanding our situation and developing as communities in ways that are equitable, and that make sense ecologically and economically.

*Center for Sustainability*

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## Pesticide Information

- The average child gets 5+ servings of pesticides in their food and water each day.
- The pesticide Atrazine is so toxic it is banned in Europe, but it is used so widely in the U.S., that it is found in 71% of the U.S. drinking water.
- Currently, over 400 pesticides can be legally used in the U.S. For example, apples can be sprayed up to 16 times with 36 different pesticides. None of these chemicals are present in organic foods.
- According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, organophosphate pesticides (OP) are now found in the blood of 95% of Americans tested, and the levels are twice as high in blood samples taken from children. Exposure to OPs is linked to hyperactivity, behavior disorders, learning disabilities, developmental delays and motor dysfunction.

6-24-09 organic bytes #179; more information

<http://organicconsumers.org/organic/wic-faq.pdf>

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## Conserve - Watering Your Lawn

For those who have been brainwashed into a desert green lawn competition;

**Don't over water** – as a general rule, lawns only need water every 5 to 7 days in the summer.

**Water early** – when temperatures and wind are lowest. This reduces loss to evaporation and lets the water penetrate more deeply.

**Cut to three inches** – a lawn cut to this height encourages roots to grow deeper, shades roots and holds soil moisture better.

**Plant native and/or drought tolerant grasses and ground covers** – once established, they do not need to be watered as frequently.

**Don't water your driveway, street or sidewalk** – position your sprinkler so that your water lands on the lawn ... not paved areas.

**Regularly check sprinkling systems** – to be sure they are operating properly. If using an automated system, install a rain sensor device to override the irrigation cycle when adequate rainfall has occurred.