



green light

The quasi-quarterly newsletter of Georgia Interfaith Power & Light

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Executive Director's Note

I wonder whether we can even claim that this newsletter is "quasi-quarterly" anymore, given that this is only our third issue of 2007, but perhaps I can make that a New Year's Resolution for 2008. It's been a busy fall for GIPL, but we've had lots of fun. We welcome a new Environmental Ministry Intern to our offices, Cathie Crawford. We awarded the Second Annual Georgia Interfaith Power & Light Awards (the GIPPYs). And we've been keeping all kinds of busy with educational programs, energy audits, conferences and the like. As we enter the holiday season, I am so thankful for the support we receive from friends and members around the state. If you'd like to get more involved, we'd love to have you! Just contact us at info@gipl.org or 404-588-9978

PowerShift Youth Conference

The weekend of November 2-4, over 5000 high school and college students gathered in College Park, Maryland for PowerShift 2007, a national youth conference on tackling the climate crisis. Georgia was fortunate enough to send three fantastic youth to this conference: Egan Short, from Decatur High School, and Lincoln Kupke and John R. Seydel from the Lovett School. They were even featured in an article on Grist.org about the conference (see <http://www.grist.org/news/muck/2007/11/08/>).

Not only did these three great students get a chance to learn about the climate crisis and what's being done about it, but they also brought back information and experience with which they are going to help kick off the **GIPL Youth Advisory Committee**. If you know of any youth that may be interested in serving on the advisory committee as well, drop us an e-mail at info@gipl.org!

Green Consumerism – by Dan May



Reducing our individual and collective carbon footprint has been a major emphasis of GIPL's education and activities. Energy use in the home (electricity, natural gas) and transportation are the major sources of our carbon dioxide emissions; in fact, it is estimated that about 20% of emissions in the U.S. come from residences and 34% arise from transportation – sources over which we have much control. The other major contributors to our collective greenhouse gas emissions are industry (29%) and commerce (17%). But we can't do anything about these... or can we?

Sure we can! We have control over the products we buy and the services we use. Emissions are created when materials are mined, grown, harvested, manufactured, packaged, transported, and marketed, and when services use electricity, natural gas, and motor fuel. A big category of consumer products is food. It is estimated that about one-sixth of fossil fuel use in the U.S. is associated with the production and consumption of food. (This spans all four of the major emissions categories above.) Of the energy used in the food system, one-third is for the manufacture of inorganic fertilizer and pesticides – so, we can shrink our footprints by selecting organic food. Another sixth of fossil fuel use in the food system is for transportation (so we can have cherries from Chile, lettuce from California, lamb from New Zealand, etc.) – so, we can also shrink our footprints by eating locally-grown and produced food. Eating local also means fresher food with higher nutritional value, and the support of local communities. (To find local farmers and markets that sell local food, see Georgia Organic's excellent Local Food Guide at www.georgiaorganics.org)

Since fertilizer, pesticides, and transportation account for half of food-related energy consumption we can choose to reduce our footprint by choosing organic, seasonal, and local food. And since additional energy is used in the processing and packaging of food, we should also make judicious choices by consuming food which is less-processed and minimally-packaged. There is a lot to think about in the food market! And don't forget to take your reusable bags!

GIPL Welcomes our New Intern!

Cathie M. Crawford is a Senior in the Master of Divinity Program at Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, GA. She joined GIPL as our new Environmental Ministry Intern in September 2007.

Cathie writes: Good tidings of great joy can come in giving the gift of clean fresh air, good healthy food, and nice clean rivers to spend quality time fishing with our children and grandchildren. One of the gifts that our Creator endowed us with was the beauty of the earth that would bring us happiness and joy and we could be in harmony with nature. What a wonderful gift! We too can give great gifts to our coming generations. If anyone should do it, we should. It is all about love!

Greening your Thanksgiving Holiday

Thanksgiving is a celebration of the fall harvest—a time to give thanks for the bounty of food our land provides. We know that this bounty cannot be enjoyed without a healthy environment. So, how might we use this celebration to become more aware of our earth, less wasteful and perhaps a little more ‘green’? We have several suggestions for you!



During the holiday season, between Thanksgiving and the New Year, American’s throw away 1 million extra tons of garbage each week. This means that the first step each of us should take is to **practice the three R’s: Reduce, Reuse and Recycle**. We can ‘Reduce’ by using canvas bags for grocery shopping, running the dishwasher only when it’s full and using cloth napkins and ceramic dinnerware instead of paper products. We can ‘Reuse’ holiday decorations and compost our dinner scraps. And we can make a commitment to ‘Recycle’ all that is left over—the plastic, aluminum, glass and paper that cannot be reused.

Remembering that the Thanksgiving holiday was initiated to celebrate the fall bounty, take this opportunity to **scout out ingredients for the meal at local farms and farmers markets**. To find local farms and produce, check out the Georgia Organics website at www.georgiaorganics.org and to find a pastured turkey, check out www.localharvest.org. By cooking locally and with organic ingredients, you reduce the amount of miles your food travels to get to your plate and the amount of pesticides that are used on the land that grows your food. Both are better for the earth AND for your body. Many of the foods we associate with Thanksgiving are grown locally in Georgia such as winter squash, sweet potatoes, hearty greens like kale and collards, and apples.

If you are traveling for the holidays, make sure your vehicle is well tuned and the tires are inflated properly. This will increase your gas mileage and reduce your carbon dioxide output. When it’s possible, make sure to carpool. And if you have to fly, consider purchasing carbon credits to offset carbon dioxide emissions from the flight.

And last but not least, make sure you **remember to say “thank you” to our earth**, and to all the life that surrounds and sustains us. **Being grateful is the first step towards conservation**. Once we realize how well the earth provides for us, we will begin to care for the earth in a new way. This is our prayer for the holiday season.

How About Making a Gift to GIPL this Year?



Donations are tax deductible and if you make a donation in honor of a friend or family member, we will send them a notification card made out of seeded paper that can be planted in the garden. Simply fill out this form and send it with a check made out to GIPL to PO Box 5866, Atlanta, GA 31107

Name _____

Gift in Honor Of:

Address _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone _____

Phone: _____

E-mail _____

E-mail: _____

Congregation _____

Gift Amount: \$500 ____ \$100 ____ \$50 ____ \$25 ____ Other _____

Holiday Green Gift Guide

We know that the Thanksgiving holiday is just the beginning of the celebration. To help you enjoy the entire holiday season, we have put together a short guide to **help you simplify and 'green' the season** so that you will be present, joyous and full of light—ready to take on the new year.

- ❖ In preparing for the holidays, there are lots of ways to reduce our negative impact on the earth. **To conserve energy**, use energy-efficient LED holiday lights, which use 80% less energy (you can find them at www.shopipl.org), and select gift wrapping alternatives like reusable bags, boxes, tins and jars. When you buy and use wrapping paper, choose recycled papers and save wrappings for reuse.
- When it comes to **'green' gift giving**, the possibilities are endless! A part of being more earth-friendly means thinking about ways to reduce the amount of goods and resources we consume. To help you do this, we have some suggestions to help you find the perfect gift—fantastic for your loved ones, and the earth.
- ❖ **Give the gift of local and/or organic food!** Buy organic chocolate, or fair trade, shade grown coffee. You can find these items at your neighborhood natural foods market or at Sevananda in Little 5 Points. And don't forget to include local produce in your family's stockings! Check out Georgia Organics website for local farms. www.georgiaorganics.org.
 - ❖ **Keep an eye open for products made from recycled materials...** from recycled wrapping paper to bags and clothing made from recycled stuff.
 - ❖ **Give the gift of an experience.** Whether it's tickets to a show or sporting event or a museum or park membership, giving experiences rather than stuff not only saves precious resources but will give you a chance to spend time with a friend or family member. Check out <http://store.usgs.gov/pass/> to purchase an annual pass for all National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands or look at local newspapers for performances and sporting events.
 - ❖ **Plant a tree!** Give a tree to plant or donate a tree to be planted in someone's name through organizations like Trees Atlanta (www.treesatlanta.org).
 - ❖ **Give the gift of green energy.** Purchase renewable energy certificates for friends and family to spread the word about global warming and keep carbon dioxide out of the air at the same time. See www.nativeenergy.com/cards.html for holiday gift cards that support clean, renewable energy.
 - ❖ **Make a donation to Georgia Interfaith Power & Light.** When you make a donation to GIPL in a friend or family member's name, we will send them a seeded-paper card that can be planted. See our donation form on page 2 of this issue or visit www.gipl.org/join for more details.
 - ❖ **Give the gift of education.** Buy and/or show films that educate people on the issues surrounding climate change and global warming. Give *An Inconvenient Truth*, the book or the film, as a gift or host a holiday screening party at your home. Or donate and get a copy of *Kilowatt Ours: A Plan to Re-energize America* (www.kilowattours.org). Sharing such important information will be gift that keeps on giving as these films encourages us to make conserving energy a priority in our lives.
 - ❖ **Remember to shop early and avoid overnight shipping** when you order off the internet. Ground shipping uses less fuel than air shipping.
 - ❖ **Rethink holiday cards.** Make your own, send greeting cards made from post-consumer recycled paper or send email greetings.
 - ❖ **Give handmade gifts.**
 - ❖ **Give a book you have loved**—your copy! Or purchase it again at a local bookstore to support the local community.
 - ❖ **Give Compact Fluorescent Light bulbs.** They use ¼ the energy of incandescent bulbs and last years longer, thus saving you bundles of money! A win-win!
 - ❖ **Shop thrift stores.**
 - ❖ **Encourage your friends and family to take public transportation.** Give the gift of a MARTA pass. And encourage folks to check MARTA's website for any special holiday shuttles and routes at <http://itsmarta.com>. Also, don't forget that MARTA's North/South rail line takes you to directly to Lenox, Phipps and Perimeter Malls, and there is a shuttle to Atlantic Station from the Arts Center MARTA rail station.
 - ❖ **Follow these links for more great GREEN gift ideas.**
 - <http://www.newdream.org>
 - <http://nationalwildlife.stores.yahoo.net/holidayandornaments.html>
 - <http://www.wilderness.org.au/shops/>
 - <http://coopamerica.org/pubs/greengifts/>





The Second Annual GIPPYs!

On October 18, we celebrated the presentation of the Georgia Interfaith Power & Light Awards at our second annual People of Faith, People of Action event. Dr. Michael Battle, president of the Interdenominational Theological Center, gave an inspiring keynote presentation about the call of the faith community to care for the environment and some of the ways that the ITC is incorporating Theo-Ecology into its curriculum and operations.

We were pleased and proud to be able to honor seven congregations and six individuals with GIPPYs this year. Antioch North Baptist Church and Decatur Presbyterian Church were honored for their prophetic leadership and participation in our light bulb swap program, which distributes CFL bulbs to low income communities. Sacred Heart Catholic Church was recognized for their quick start in beginning programs and their innovative fundraising ideas utilizing the Power Switch program. Peachtree Baptist Church was honored for its commitment to becoming an environmental leader in their community through preaching, education, and outreach.

We also recognized several individuals during our awards ceremony. We were pleased to honor Rabbi Frederick Reeves and Rev. Dr. Gerald Durley for their leadership as clergy in spreading the word about creation care. We were also excited to have the chance to honor four GIPL volunteers who have gone above and beyond the call of duty. Kat Stratton has been instrumental in getting our North Georgia regional group started and is acting as our first regional coordinator. Shane Totten has lent his time, talent, and teaching expertise to educating our audit committee and helping congregations get energy assessments. Dan May has served as GIPL's treasurer and steering committee member extraordinaire, teaching educational classes, developing outreach materials and resources, and training volunteers. Renee Kastanakis, GIPL's legal counsel, has tirelessly represented GIPL time and again in front of the Georgia Public Service Commission and was instrumental in making sure that Green-e certification was part of Georgia Power's Integrated Resource Plan.

Of course, the highlight of the evening was the presentation of the named GIPPY awards. Winners of these awards not only receive a framed certificate and a tree planted in their honor by Trees Atlanta, but they also receive one of the highly coveted GIPPY trophies. These trophies, lovingly recycled, signify an extraordinary commitment to creation care.

The 2007 Power Award went to Northside United Methodist Church. Northside's Creation Care team has undertaken several educational programs, including an Earth Sunday celebration, monthly bulletin boards and newsletter ads about environmental issues, and Sunday school classes for children and youth, empowering their congregation to take action toward more sustainable living. They were recipients of a GIPL Energy Improvement Grant to get professional consultation for incorporating green features into their new building project.

The 2007 Light Award went to All Souls Fellowship. All Souls is committed to engaging their congregation on environmental issues, hosting a four week discussion on creation stewardship. Even though they rent their space, they have had an energy audit in preparation for retrofitting their building with more energy efficient lighting and appliances. They serve fair trade shade grown coffee and use recycled paper products.

The 2007 Congregation of the Year Award was awarded to the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany. Epiphany has been intentional about incorporating environmental stewardship into all aspects of their congregational life including buildings and grounds, worship, outreach, administration, education, and parish life. They encouraged members to measure and reduce their carbon footprints and even held a "blessing of the bags" for the reusable shopping bags they distributed to congregants.

Congratulations to all our winners!! Visit www.gipl.org/events.html to see photos from the evening.