

2008 Green Awards

RESIDENTS

Fred Curiel. Fred works daily to reduce his family's carbon footprint to where their 9-member household is nearly carbon-neutral. He has given up driving, and rides his bike 5-1/2 miles to and from BART five days a week. He has reduced the household waste to less than 20 gallons per week. Fred has also installed a gray water system, planted a vegetable garden, replaced all lights to CFLs, cooked with their solar oven, and has a goat that is a big part of their compost and waste system. Fred's neighbors are inspired by his example, and more are riding their bikes – despite the long, tough hill coming home.

LOCAL BUSINESS

Lafayette Health Club. Owner Debbie Swigert has created a good model for environmental stewardship in encouraging limited resource use and sustainable nutrition. The Club has introduced sustainable cleaning supplies, installed low flow plumbing and double-pane windows, posted signs throughout encouraging members to limit water use and turn off lights when not in use, encouraged reuse of water bottles and selling metal bottles, became a drop off spot for a local Community Sustainable Agriculture provider, and continued to model health living, encouraging good nutrition and outdoor exercise. Instructors and members agree that the Club has made a dramatic change in the past two years to reduce its environmental footprint and develop a culture of sustainability.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Temple Isaiah. Temple Isaiah earned the certification as a Bay Area Green Business in 2008 through significant energy conservation, waste reduction, recycling, and water conservation measures. Some of the accomplishments include: replaced all light bulbs with CFLs, installed programmable thermostats, motion sensors for lighting, and low-flow faucets and toilets, replaced plastic cups with compostable, biodegradable cups, setting printers and copiers to double-sided, monitoring of landscaping water, and distributed reusable shopping bags to every family in the congregation. Temple Isaiah is a model for other congregations for green initiatives.

Lafayette City Office – with special recognition to Janneke Petersen. After the City Council approved green practices for the City Office, the City hired Janneke as a summer intern to implement the practices. Janneke went beyond that task, and became determined to make the Office a certified green business. She switched cleaning products, and instituted an office supply reuse station. She worked with staff to purchase more sustainable office products, and worked with the Office's landlord to reduce water usage and other energy-saving measures. On the last day of Janneke's internship, the Office became a certified Contra Costa Green Business thanks to her efforts.

SCHOOLS

Kevin Feinstein - Merriewood Children's Center. Kevin is a very green educator who has introduced children ages 3 through 10 to permaculture. He converted the Center's garden to a nearly self-sustaining, permaculture, edible garden. He has thrilled children with the joy of finding their food on nature walks. Kevin's ideas about low-maintenance green gardening have been inspirational to the Merriewood families, nearby neighbors, and visitors to the Center.

Kim Brast – Springhill Elementary School. Kim is Springhill's Science Instructor who has daily contact with 460 students. Kim has been instrumental in the school's recycling, composting, sustainable garden, solar energy programs and daily science and health lessons focusing on a sustainable environment. Under her guidance, Springhill has received the Contra Costa County Wastebusters Award for the past three years. Kim's contributions to the Springhill community over the last ten years have enhanced the greening of the Lafayette community.

Happy Valley Elementary School. In 2008, the school started an eco-friendly hot lunch program, a kid-run recycling team, and planned the first ever "Green Week" to be held at a Lafayette school. The lunch program vendor uses almost 100% compostable products. The recycling team is run by students to monitor lunch recycling and educate other students about recycling lunch waste. The team's efforts have resulted in a 25-30% reduction in lunch waste. Green Week was a great success. There was a special theme each day, such as Reuse Day on Thursday. Donations, including 500 books, three garbage bags of athletic shoes, two tubs of art supplies, 36 pairs of eyeglasses, and 36 cell phones, were collected and distributed to a number of nonprofit organizations. Happy Valley Elementary is a great example of what a school can do to be green.