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A Practical Journal for Friends of the Environment

## BEYOND GREENWASHING:



**Good  
or  
Bad?**

**Eco-luminaries  
sound off**

**JEFFREY HOLLENDER**

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## Publisher's Page

### An Inconvenient Frontier

by Gary Munkhoff

Space. The Final Frontier. Gene Roddenberry and William Shatner could very well be right, but between the comfortable and convenient way of life that we have today and that idealistic final frontier in the distant future we face challenges as life changing as any of those that the pioneers of yesterday faced. Today our addiction to oil has brought us to the edge of a new frontier - an energy frontier - which holds the promise of not just new sources of clean energy, but also of energy independence. Imagine being able to charge the batteries of your electric vehicle (EV) using solar panels on the roof of your house; freeing you forever from big oil and electric monopolies. Far fetched? Check out <http://sealbeach.org>. The downside? We will have to make some inconvenient lifestyle changes which will no doubt disrupt our daily routines.

The good news is that Oregon is once again home to a growing band of hardy pioneers that are, and have been for some time, busy blazing the way for the rest of us. The results of their efforts are all around

us: Powells.com is harnessing 25% of their electrical needs from a newly installed, enormous photovoltaic array on their roof; LEED certified buildings are springing up everywhere; Portland leads the country in per capita ownership of the Toyota Prius; and if you look carefully you will see that homeowners as well as small business owners are installing, in neighborhood after neighborhood, solar collectors to heat water and generate electricity.

The bad news is that even in Oregon there is considerable resistance to making changes, especially when it comes to our personal transportation. Here again the pioneers are out there. EV dealerships such as Ecomotion and MC Electric Vehicles offer alternatives to our gas burning cars. The members of the Portland chapter of the Oregon Electric Vehicle Association (OEVA) are an enthusiastic and knowledgeable group so dedicated to getting people to switch to electric cars that they actually build their own. TriMet has invested heavily in MAX trains and modern buses enticing us to leave the gas burner at home. And then there are the 40 or so bicycle shops scattered throughout the metro area all promoting a healthier way to get around. Yet our streets and freeways are still choked with gas burners of all sizes and shapes.

Let's face it folks, if we choose to walk, bike, ride the bus or MAX, or drive an EV we will sacrifice some of the conveniences that we enjoy when we drive our gas powered cars. We will spend more time commuting or running errands, we will be limited in how far we can drive our EVs between charges, or we will actually have to exert ourselves physically while getting from place to place.

So the question is: have we, the decedents of those who faced so many unimaginable hardships, become so spoiled that we are unable to face our frontier simply because it puts upon us a few annoying inconveniences?

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## National Editor's Page

### Deep Thoughts on Greenwashing

by Stephen Morris

*Warning: This is a subject that can arouse great passions on both sides of the arousement. We've asked a wide variety of "friends of the environment" to share their thoughts on the subject.*

'Greenwashing' needs to become yesterday as of today. Tomorrow we need to be speaking about 'outgreening,' that is the drive to be greener than the next person/company for real, in order to achieve the highest levels of personal and corporate success. Greenwashing has become valueless, outgreening will build value for the long term.

Jeff Wolfe, CEO, groSolar. White River Junction, Vermont

Greenwashing is the attempt by lazy, greedy, or otherwise "Patriotic Uhmerkins" to make themselves and their products appear to be green by painting them over, but without any thought for the actual greenness of their content, process, message, packaging, distribution, etc. Greenwashing is NOT a good thing. It is (at best) deceptive and confusing, and muddies the waters of the marketplace so you need doctorates in environmental science and organic chemistry to buy cleanser and toilet paper. At worst, I think we should call it what it is: a lie, a damned lie, and an evil attempt by lazy profiteers to profit from distress.

Michael Potts, author of *The Independent Home*, co-founder of The Public Press, and webster and designer of *Green Living Journal*. Caspar, California

Greenwashing, all in all, is positive for our business. It separates the real from the charlatans and 'fake green' generally doesn't pass the smell test. It's actually quite encouraging to see the WalMarts and British Petroleums of the world try to be green and shed their toxic legacies. And some of the greenwashers actually make it across the authenticity threshold, and these days we have to embrace the small victories when we can get them. Sometimes it's a case of the perfect being the enemy of the good.

John Schaeffer, Founder of Real Goods Trading Corporation, Hopland, California

Corporations must play a central role in helping to solve our world's environmental challenges by ending their destructive policies and waking up to the economic benefits of environmentally sustainable practices and products but greenwashing is not helping anyone. Yes, green is the new black, but the top Greenwashers

(i.e. Exxon, DuPont, Bechtel, Chevron) are using a slogan as a green curtain to conceal their dark motives, undermining the work of some businesses that are genuinely committed to making the world a greener place. If companies spent as much time and money improving their business practices as they did making themselves look green, they might actually make a real difference.

Ashley Schaeffer, Greenpeace  
Organizing Term Coordinator,  
San Francisco, California

Green's the latest fad and everyone's scrambling to get on the green bandwagon. The current interest in all things green could be a good thing -- if the fad turns into a deep-seated trend. I have my doubts about that occurring though. Call me cynical, but in America, we're quick to pawn our dreams and lofty goals for a drink when times are flush.

Daniel D. Chiras, Ph.D., Author of  
Green Home Improvement, and  
many other books on green building,  
Colorado.

My concern about "Greenwashing" is that it really reflects the "Arm's Length" relationship that our modern culture has with natural biological systems. As a marketing strategy, GW may give a brief nod to concepts of sustainability, but more significantly just invigorates consumerism, which in the long-run defeats the purpose. I think that sustainability has to be about understanding and embracing natural limits, not about developing clever marketing strategies disguised as public education campaigns.

Carl Russell, Forester  
Earthwise Farm & Forest, Bethel,  
Vermont

The National Association of Homebuilders (NAHB) has been heavily promoting their national green building program. They want buy-in from everyone in the building trades.

At a recent meeting of the International Code Council meeting, there was a vote to increase the stringency of the national building energy code by 30%, called "the 30% solution". That means 30% better energy performance from our buildings (which incidentally are responsible for 40% of US CO2 emissions), 30% less energy use, and 30% lower energy bills. This has the potential to be a great innovation engine that would have meant job creation in a slow building industry.

But the standard was voted down, another positive effort defeated by narrow minds and short vision. Who could possibly vote against such a thing? NAHB. Apparently it's too hard for the tradespeople they represent to build anything other than what's comfortable and familiar.

A big fat raspberry to NAHB for painting green black. If they want to promote green buildings, they

need to start with energy efficiency, not bamboo floors. I'm going to send them bagfuls of carbon they can choke on. (Another thhhhhbbllllltttt to Icynene Insulation who also voted against the 30% solution - a company so fearful of losing market share to companies that make better insulation products that they are willing to sacrifice my son's health by voting "no" on a clean energy future supported by good energy codes.)

Paul Scheckel, author of Home  
Energy Diet, Vermont

With greater transparency in the corporate board rooms and behind doors in our nation's Capitol, we the people are wise enough to understand the difference between "energy independence" based on fossil fuels and controlled by big corporations, for example, and energy independence based on renewable energy sources that are local, built with American ingenuity and hard work, and deployed in a way that most Americans can afford.

John Ivanko, co-author,  
ECOpreneuring and innkeeper of  
Inn Serendipity, completely  
powered by the wind and sun.  
Wisconsin.

If going green is to maintain and increase its momentum, it won't always be for the best reasons, but future generations will bless us, none the less.

Paul Freundlich, Founder and  
President Emeritus, Co-op (Green)  
America, Connecticut

Greenwashing makes it confusing for consumers to choose wisely, but it shows the power of the movement that people are trying to fake being green. Fortunately, some of the greenest choices can't be faked...buy local! Certifications such as fair trade, LEED, and SFI have accountability to counter the greenwashers, and should be encouraged by consumer choice.

Nicholas Moser, Natural Builder  
and Vice-President of The SHIRE Institute,  
Houston, Texas



## Local Notes

### Powell's Books Invests in Solar Energy

Powell's Books, Oregon's beloved institution and one of the nation's largest booksellers now has another "largest" claim to add to its list. In December 2008, the company began harnessing the sun's power with one of the largest solar electric installations in the State of Oregon. During the month of January the system produced more power than expected.

#### Project Overview:

- **Who:** Powell's Books and Energy Design
- **What:** Roof-mounted 100-kilowatt photovoltaic system
- **When:** Operational in December 2008
- **Where:** Powell's Books NW Warehouse, 2720 NW 29th Avenue, Portland, OR
- **Generation:** Approximately 110,900 kWh per year
- **Benefits:** Clean, renewable power that will replace about 1/4 of the building's annual electricity consumption
- **Photos:** available on-line at <http://www.powells.com/green/solar.html>
- **Media Visits:** Powell's welcomes reporters and news crews to visit the job site and see the PV installation as work is being completed. Please contact Kim Sutton at [kim@powells.com](mailto:kim@powells.com) to make arrangements.



This row of panels is one of nine

Construction is completed on a 100-kilowatt photovoltaic system positioned on the spacious roof of Powell's 60,000 square foot warehouse in NW Portland, a building that is home to Powells.com. The solar electric system,

developed and installed by contractor Energy Design, includes 540 solar panels (Mitsubishi UD5 series) that will provide about one-fourth of the building's electricity. Powell's confidence in proceeding with a solar installation is largely due to the help of architect Ernest R. Munch, whose firm has been involved with some of the largest solar installations in the West, and through project development guidance provided by Doug Boleyn, P.E. from Cascade Solar Consulting.

Vince McClellan, Energy Design's owner, is enthusiastic about the project. "It has been exciting

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to work with Powell's to design a system customized for their specific needs. We collaborated with the engineering firm Nishkian Dean to create a custom design that will optimize the electricity produced by the solar electric system and last the 40-year life span of the solar panels. It's a great way to reduce business costs and help reduce our dependence on coal power."

The decision to invest in solar power is a natural fit with the company's commitment to environmental responsibility, a focus that is currently led by a "green" committee at Powell's. According to Michael Powell, "It made perfect sense for our business financially, and it supports our values as a company."

To see what else Powell's is doing to reduce their impact on the environment visit <http://www.powells.com/green/>

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### Clean Air Lawn Care Decreased air pollution in Portland during the 2008 mowing season.

A new local business that planned to make a difference in our air quality this summer has made it a reality.

We are very excited about the reduction in air pollution that our customers have helped us to achieve. We have reduced the amount of pollution put into the air this year by 8,195 pounds which is the equivalent of 250,925 vehicle miles. In short we have taken 20 SUVs off the road for a year. Clean Air Lawn Care uses all electric mowers, edgers and blowers. The vehicles that haul this electric equipment stand out in a crowd due to the mounted solar panels, which are used to charge the equipment during the workday.

All additional electricity not generated by the solar panels is purchased from a renewable energy broker, qualifying the entire organization as carbon neutral.

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“There is a lot of talk about global warming and decreasing our dependency on oil and this is a simple way to positively affect both issues. Our primary mowers use no oil; create no air pollution, and less noise pollution. It is an easy change for a consumer to make to do their part for the environment.” says Todd Hepp, Owner of Clean Air of Portland, LLC.

### There are many reasons why people should consider their service or to switch to electric equipment:

- **Small engines** contribute 5-12% of the nation's air pollution.
- **17 million gallons** of gasoline are spilled each year by people filling up there gas mowers.
- **Gas lawn mowers** consume 580 million gallons of gasoline annually and 25-35% of this fuel escapes unburned.

Clean Air Lawn Care now offers Organic Lawn Treatments. Safe for pets, children and the rivers.

For further information, please contact Todd Hepp, Owner and partner of Clean Air of Portland, LLC at (503) 679-7418 or email: [thepp@cleanairlawncare.com](mailto:thepp@cleanairlawncare.com).

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## New Venture For Lifelong, Lifestyle Bicycling

Announcing the opening of BIKEmpowered – dedicated to fulfilling the wishes of all who want to bicycle free of pain, worry or crashes – lifelong, lifestyle cycling. Launching now in the Portland metro area, expanding in 2010 to serve the USA via web learning, BIKEmpowered is poised to revolutionize the skill and interest level in cycling.

### Features include:

- **No-jargon** / hands on learning,
- **Crash-Free Forever Rodeos** – hazard awareness + handling skills =no crashes
- **Zip code bike buddy search engine** – find someone

to ride with - anywhere.

- **Individual and small group coaching**, either at the BIKEmpowered offices, or in the homes, community centers and schools throughout the Portland metro area.

Come visit [www.BIKEmpowered.com](http://www.BIKEmpowered.com) to take a look at this new venture.

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## Green Microgym Members Are Helping Themselves and Their Community

An Alberta Arts neighborhood gym has a mission to help its members create a healthy environment and community.

Green Microgym provides incentives for members through the “Burn and Earn” program, where members earn \$1 per hour of electricity they generate that can be used at partnering businesses like The Black Cat Café, Fuel Café, and Vinideus Wine Bar.

In addition, for each hour of electricity generated, the gym will donate \$5 toward a gym membership for local low-income business people who are affiliated with the Microenterprise Services of Oregon, or MESO.

“In these tough times, we have the ability to help people stay healthy, and we’re going to do whatever possible to keep our community thriving.” says Adam Boesel, owner and founder.

The facility currently uses a combination of solar and human powered electricity. The environmentally-friendly concept is inspired by Boesel’s interest in helping solve two of America’s greatest problems: obesity and global warming.

Some of the exercise equipment has been configured so that human effort generates electricity that can power some of the facility’s needs. Boesel found a 250

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Watt Grid Tie Inverter from Europe and got approval from the power company and the city to use it with his machines on a test basis. The inverter, intended for use with solar panels and small wind turbines is unique in that it plugs into a normal household wall outlet to feed electricity back to the grid. This is much more affordable and simple than the traditional method of hardwiring an inverter into a building's circuit box.

As word spreads, its owner has been receiving inquiries from university students as far away as Scotland and Korea who are seeking to use the new facility as a model for renewable energy and entrepreneurial projects.

The Green Microgym provides a full range of equipment and training services. It is one of the only gyms worldwide that uses human power and is designed with the goal of being self-powered, environmentally friendly, and energy efficient.

For more information you can visit [www.thegreenmicrogym.com](http://www.thegreenmicrogym.com) or call 888-300-4015 or email [adam@thegreenmicrogym.com](mailto:adam@thegreenmicrogym.com)

## GreenStreet Lending Available for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Projects

Umpqua Bank a subsidiary of Umpqua Holdings Corp. (NASDAQ: UMPQ), and Energy Trust of Oregon

Inc., an independent nonprofit organization, unveiled low-interest financing for energy-saving improvements and solar energy systems. Their program, GreenStreet Lending, offers financing options designed to help small businesses and homeowners manage rising energy costs by making it easier to invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

All GreenStreet Lending products offer low-interest rate financing, have no loan origination fees or closing costs, and have flexible terms. GreenStreet loan options are now available to qualified borrowers on approved credit who are Oregon customers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural or Cascade Natural Gas:

"Umpqua Bank and Energy Trust launched GreenStreet Lending through a shared commitment to help Oregonians create long-term energy savings through an investment in their home or business now," said Lani Hayward, executive vice president of creative strategies, Umpqua Bank. "GreenStreet's financing options make it easy and affordable for qualified borrowers to get the assistance they need to make environmentally-responsible home and business improvements."

"This winter, Oregonians are facing increased energy costs. Fortunately, there are ways to help keep those costs at bay by changing the way we use energy at home and work," said Margie Harris, executive director, Energy Trust. "GreenStreet Lending products are unlike any other available in the state. They are specifically designed to remove a financial barrier for Oregonians seeking energy-saving and solar solutions for their homes and businesses."

GreenStreet products can be paired with Energy Trust's cash incentives and State of Oregon energy tax credits, making home and business

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## Tualatin Company Introduces Easy-to-install Wireless Sensors

Save nearly two months of electric bills for your building each year.

Simply failing to “flick the switch” and turn off the lights in an unoccupied room is one of the largest wastes of precious energy resources. For a large commercial building, this frequent oversight can equal up to thousands of dollars of “energy waste” each year.

Traditional occupancy sensors are a proven solution for shutting off unused lights, and have been shown to save up to 80 percent of the energy used for commercial interior lighting. But upfront costs associated with retrofit installations convince many to stick with their old style switches.

Lighting Management Systems division of Leviton in Tualatin has introduced an exclusive line of wireless, self-powered occupancy sensors and wall-switch receivers that are easily installed in virtually any room or building and will turn off the lights and turn down installation expenses at the same time.

Their wireless functionality requires no additional wiring. Instead, the occupancy sensors use integrated solar cells to convert ambient room light to energy. And a remote switch draws on kinetic energy for recharging each time the buttons are pushed. The components integrate technologies developed by and licensed from EnOcean ([www.enocean.com](http://www.enocean.com)), a worldwide leader in wireless control technology.

“These unique wireless, self-energizing components provide a reliable and trouble-free lighting-control solution,” said Bob Freshman, Marketing Manager, Leviton. “Installation is quick and easy, with no drilling, no wires to run and no conduit to pull. Just replace the existing wall switch with the new receiver switch, then attach the occupancy sensor, and the install is complete.”

“There’s no damage to walls or ceilings, which means it’s perfect for historical or older buildings where retrofitting with wires can be especially costly or even impossible to do,”

Leviton research shows that labor and material costs can be reduced by as much as 50 percent when compared to conventional hardwire systems, while installation time can be trimmed by as much as 75 percent.

Industry estimates show that lighting accounts for nearly 50 percent of electricity use in commercial buildings. “Expect a 20-80% savings in lighting costs depending on how they are used which could equal big bucks for building owners and tenants,” said Bob.

For more information, go to [www.leviton.com/wirelessOS](http://www.leviton.com/wirelessOS), or call Leviton Lighting Management Systems

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## Local Business “Rescues” Urban Trees from The Landfill



Anthony Roskovich, founder and owner of Rose City Lumber, was inspired to action as he watched crews cutting and hauling to the landfill, trees blown over during a large windstorm in the winter of 2006 –

2007. He could see the potential for milling them into lumber for woodworkers, artisans and homeowners who desire an eco-friendly alternative to the mass produced products found in corporate “big box” stores.

That spring he began rescuing urban trees being removed and destined for the landfill to make way for new homes. He purchased a Woodmizer portable sawmill to turn the rescued trees into usable lumber, and since then he has recovered a 5 foot diameter black walnut, a 100 year old elm, an 8 foot diameter redwood, a 3 foot diameter maple as well as many others.

He launched a website and an Ebay store to market his lumber and soon wood was being shipped around the U.S. Then in May of 2008 he opened a 10,000 square foot milling, storage and drying yard and retail store. Now RCL can serve their local customers as well as the growing internet sales which now include shipments to Canada and Europe. RCL can also transform these beautiful urban trees into amazing furniture, hardwood flooring, trim moldings, butcher blocks, cabinets, decks, sheds & the list goes on.

He works with local arbor companies & landowners to rescue as many trees as he can. He offers free tree removal if you have had a tree blown over in a windstorm. He takes care of the dismantling of the hazardous tree plus the moving and transport of the logs.

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## Sustainable Technologies Emphasis Now Offered At OIT

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. – The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Outlook Handbook 2008-09 predicts a 25 percent increase in the need for environmental scientists in the next 10 years. Oregon Institute of Technology's response to that prediction is to now offer a new interdisciplinary emphasis area in Sustainable Technologies under the Environmental Sciences bachelor's degree program.

Environmental Sciences/Sustainable Technologies students will take courses from Renewable Energy Engineering, Mechanical Engineering Technology, Civil Engineering, and Business Management departments for exposure to a wide range of technological and engineering solutions to environmental problems. Students can take courses with such timely course titles as "Introduction to Renewable Energy," "The Built Environment," "Fuel Cells," and "Principles of Environmental Engineering."

The Environmental Sciences program at OIT integrates hands-on skills and knowledge. Field and laboratory work are important components of many major courses. Graduates are highly skilled in the methodology and practice of environmental assessment and have been actively recruited by a diverse group of firms and government agencies. OIT's bachelor's degree program in Environmental Sciences inclusive of the multi-dimensional Sustainable Technologies emphasis will make OIT graduates highly competitive for a wide variety of careers.

"This generation of students, more than any other, will graduate to a world of increasingly complex environmental challenges," said OIT's Environmental Science Program Director Carrie Wittmer. "OIT graduates in this program will not only be able identify key elements of complex problems, they will have exposure to new sustainable technologies to help

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For more information about the environmental sciences major and the sustainable technologies emphasis, contact Carrie Wittmer at (541) 885-1349, [carrie.wittmer@oit.edu](mailto:carrie.wittmer@oit.edu) or visit [www.oit.edu/programs/enviro](http://www.oit.edu/programs/enviro).

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## Portland Store Fixtures Joins PGE's "Save More Matter More" Campaign

Kat Schon and her business partner, Penney Stephenson, always look for ways — big and small — to improve the energy efficiency and sustainability of their company, Portland Store Fixtures.



Roughly half of their 16,000-square-foot building underwent a lighting upgrade about five years ago. They also installed a programmable thermostat, replaced an old, inefficient refrigerator and installed energy-efficient windows.

This past fall, as part of the PGE "Save more, matter more™" campaign, Kat pledged to switch to more efficient lighting in parts of their building not included in the first upgrade. Now, they are making good on the pledge.

Based on a technical review from Energy Trust of Oregon, Kat contracted with Oregon Electric Group to replace "horrible, flickering" T12 fluorescent tube fixtures and metal halide lights with high-efficiency T8s. New occupancy sensors in a low-use area of the warehouse will further reduce wasted watts.

The upgrades qualify for an Energy Trust cash incentive and a Oregon Business Energy Tax Credit, making it easier for the company to tackle the project



during a tight economy.

Energy improvements are just part of the company's overall commitment to sustainability. A significant part of their business involves reclaiming and reselling used store fixtures, which reduces landfill waste. They pay their bills online, and Portland Store Fixtures is a PGE renewable power customer.

"It's time we live in the environment and not on it. Small businesses are the foundation and backbone of the community, and if we don't take these steps, nobody will," Kat says. "The cool thing is, most of the things we do for the environment are really smart business moves in the first place."

### Benefits of the project:

- **Projected to save** 5,342 kWh annually, or about \$374 each year
- **\$801 estimated** Energy Trust Incentive
- **\$1,089 estimated** Oregon Business Energy Tax Credit

*Courtesy of Portland General Electric Company. Reprinted with permission.*

## Building

### Rock Solid

by Misty McNally

Long valued for its strength and longevity, stone is a beautiful natural resource. But with stone countertops, floor tiles, sink basins and even walls surging in popularity, it's important to consider just how eco-friendly this natural material really is.

Recent technology makes acquiring stone less stressful on the earth and more readily available across the nation. In the past, only a few places in the country could fabricate certain types of stone, which meant raw stone was shipped from the quarry to a fabricator, then shipped again to retailers. Today, most stone is locally fabricated, which means raw stone is sent directly to retail locations, where it is cut and sold to local consumers. Because shipping stone requires so much energy, make sure any stone you buy is fabricated locally. "There is now technology available on the local level to fabricate hard stone," said Chuck Muehlbauer, technical director for the Marble Institute of America. "Years ago, if you wanted granite countertops, there were only a few places in the country that could do it."

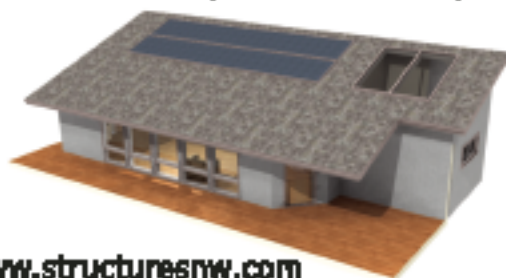
Unlike carpet or synthetics, stone doesn't collect allergens or offgas volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and it requires no harsh cleansers. Though most stone products for residential applications require a sealant, you can choose water-based, nontoxic options.

Rock is certainly natural, but are granite countertops and limestone tub surrounds as green as they seem? Before choosing stone, factor the environmental costs and the potential assets. If you make careful choices, you can have eco-friendly stone that will last for decades.

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### Measure the environmental cost

Stone is almost always quarried, meaning it's cut in large slabs from the earth. Although quarrying usually produces less waste rock than metal mining does, the process permanently alters the landscape and changes the ecosystem. Quarried areas can negatively affect rain runoff, soil composition and slope, possibly even causing landslides, toppled trees or flooding. Dust from quarrying pollutes surrounding water, soil and air, and the population nearby may have to deal with noise pollution.

Quarry workers can be exposed to hazards such as poor air quality, especially in countries where labor standards are inadequate. To reduce dust inhalation, fabricators — and homeowners cutting stone tiles — need to wear appropriate safety gear, including goggles, hearing protection and a dust mask.

Heavy stone is energy-intensive to transport. Very little stone is quarried in the United States; finding locally quarried stone near you greatly improves its environmental profile. But in general, transporting rock from the quarry to your home requires vast amounts of energy. Although travertine, for example, may be a luxurious choice, the environmental (as well as the pocketbook) price is often high.

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### Weigh the eco-assets

Stone has no odor and doesn't offgas VOCs, although sealants or adhesives are often necessary during installation. Request that your contractor use low-VOC adhesives and sealants or use an application that requires neither, such as setting floor tiles in Portland cement. Unlike wood or drywall, most stone surfaces won't need refinishing; dusting, sealing or simply cleaning is all that is needed.

Well-placed stone can help lower energy costs. Dark-colored stone works well with under-floor radiant heat or passive solar applications because it absorbs and releases heat slowly. Conversely, a light-colored stone surface in a shaded area is naturally cool to the touch, making it ideal for hot climates.

Stone's long lifecycle is one of its greatest selling points. Unlike less hardy materials, stone is not going to end up in the landfill after a few years' use. "It will be there until the house is demolished or the owner gets tired of it," Muehlbauer said.

### Tip the scales

Salvaged or reclaimed stone is quite eco-friendly. Because it eliminates further quarrying, using salvaged stone in your home drastically reduces its embodied energy.

Brent Kroh, vice president of sales at Elmwood Reclaimed Timber in Kansas City, Missouri, ([www.elmwoodreclaimedtimber.com](http://www.elmwoodreclaimedtimber.com)), sells reclaimed limestone and granite blocks from old buildings, and said the selection would vary by region. Antique stone may have beautiful, mellowed colors; interesting fossils; or best of all, a fascinating history. The price is usually just a bit more than new stone, Kroh said.

To find salvaged stone, check with a reclaimed lumber specialist or an architectural salvage shop. Fabricators may also offer reclaimed options. Design studios in major metropolitan areas sometimes carry stone from demolished historical buildings—but authenticity may be difficult or impossible to verify.

### Recycle your rocks

If you have stone in your home that is cracked, stained or otherwise permanently damaged, you can usually reuse it. Consider converting it into smaller countertops, tiles, windowsills or a fireplace hearth. If you can't reuse it, check with a local construction exchange such as Habitat ReStore ([www.habitat.org/env/restores.aspx](http://www.habitat.org/env/restores.aspx)) or stone fabricators for recycling information.

Otherwise, use stone scraps in landscaping; it can be crushed or used as decorative slabs.

Excerpted from Natural Home, a national magazine that provides practical ideas, inspiring examples and expert opinions about healthy, ecologically sound, beautiful homes. For more visit [www.NaturalHomeMagazine.com](http://www.NaturalHomeMagazine.com) or call 800-340-5846 to subscribe. Copyright 2008 by Ogden Publications Inc.

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## Solar Energy Today

By John Patterson

Everybody's talking about solar energy these days, and thanks to scientists, environmentalists, and forward thinking companies, we're seeing a surge in solar technology.

Solar energy research has come a long way since the first solar companies sprang up in the Pacific Northwest in the 1970's. Most of those companies were installing solar water heating, and though the principles behind the technology were good, many companies didn't make it because of expensive warranty repairs from solar panels freezing in the winter.

The few companies that survived were instrumental in developing better systems. For instance, today's simple glycol solar water heating systems can't freeze and require little or no maintenance. And they look a lot better on the roof, too, because many can be flat-mounted and still receive substantial solar gain.

Concern about global warming has motivated big companies to diversify into solar. Recognizable names like Sharp and Mitsubishi manufacture photovoltaic equipment, and can barely keep up with the demand. Other companies like SolarWorld, a German company with a photovoltaic manufacturing plant in Hillsboro, are developing new technologies and bringing jobs into the area. That's good news for consumers, because it means more competition and better products.

Solar is thriving in the Pacific Northwest, which seems ironic

since we're not known for sunshine. Surprisingly, it doesn't have to be sunny all the time to harness energy from the sun. Even on cloudy days, photovoltaic modules still convert the sun's rays into electricity, and solar thermal panels will help raise the temperature of water. On sunny days, a grid-tied photovoltaic system will sometimes produce more electricity than is needed, so that the electric meter spins backwards and the customer receives a credit from the power company. In larger systems, these credits are enough to cover the cost of electricity during the cloudier days, for a "zero net" energy use. The heating element in the water heater may not come on at all during a sunny day so that, spread over a one year period, a solar water heating system can save customers 60 to 70% of their water heating bills, adding up to hundreds of dollars saved each year. Homeowners with swimming pools can completely heat their pools with solar energy during the summer. Solar attic fans provide summer cooling, and solar skylights bring bright light to rooms.

An investment in solar energy has a big environmental payoff as well. A solar water heating system can save 1/2 ton of greenhouse gases for a family of four. And it's never been easier to go solar. Oregon and Washington have some of the best tax credits in the country. Energy Trust of Oregon, a non-profit organization promoting renewable energy, gives a substantial business and residential incentive, and the federal government recently extended their tax credit as well.

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to evolve, perhaps having a solar system will become a status symbol here, like it is in other parts of the world. Whether the motivation is status, concern for the environment, or just a desire to save money, the more people embrace solar power, the less we'll rely on fossil fuels. And that's good for all of us.

To learn more about solar energy, visit these sites: Solar Oregon ([www.solaroregon.org](http://www.solaroregon.org)), Energy Trust of Oregon ([www.energytrust.org](http://www.energytrust.org)), American Solar energy Society ([www.ases.org](http://www.ases.org)), Oregon Department of Energy ([www.oregon.gov/ENERGY/](http://www.oregon.gov/ENERGY/)), and for science buffs, visit the University of Oregon's Solar Radiation Monitoring Laboratory ([www.solardata.oregon.edu](http://www.solardata.oregon.edu)).

John Patterson is the President and Founder of Mr. Sun Solar, Oregon's oldest solar company. He is a frequent speaker at solar energy conferences, community meetings, and high schools, and he teaches solar classes through Portland Community College. He is the President of the Oregon Solar Energy Industries Association (OSEIA), and lobbies heavily for solar energy legislation. Reach him at 503 222-2468.

## Gardening

### Best Seeds for a Bigger, Better Garden

by Barbara Pleasant

It's that time of year again. Garden and seed catalogs are arriving in the mail every day, and it's time for gardeners to start thinking about what to plant next year.

Last winter, Territorial Seeds in Cottage Grove, Ore., surveyed its customers to see when they wanted their new seed catalog to arrive in the mail. The results: Gardeners want new catalogs as soon as holiday fever breaks in the last week of December.

Is it that we can't wait to dive into a new season of gardening, or that it takes that long to figure out what we want? Perhaps a bunch of both.

As I made late-season check-in calls to a dozen seed companies, I discovered that gardeners' desires are changing, and changing fast. Today's gardeners have a long list of plans and dreams that begin with seeds. Here are some of the hottest trends for 2009, including many you might want to try in your own garden.

#### 1. Fresh Food For Any Season

Instead of short lists of mainstream vegetable seeds such as tomatoes and squash, seed company customers are placing larger, more complicated orders that include gourmet goodies such as corn salad and bulb fennel. In addition, gardeners are planting gardens that start early and end late with the help of more cold-hardy vegetables.

#### 2. More Local Seeds



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The best gardens include great-tasting favorites that grow well in your region. The search for varieties should start close to home, because a variety that performs beautifully in South Dakota may be a dud in the warm, moist soils of Louisiana. For a directory of seed companies that you can sort by region, visit [www.MotherEarthNews.com/directories](http://www.MotherEarthNews.com/directories). You can also search for hard-to-find seed varieties at [www.MotherEarthNews.com/find-seeds-plants.aspx](http://www.MotherEarthNews.com/find-seeds-plants.aspx).

#### 3. Seeds to Share

If you want truly local seeds, be on the lookout for events such as the Gardener's Seed Swap hosted by the Toledo (Ohio) Botanical Gardens. Begun several years ago by community gardens coordinator Michael Szuberla as a way to clear out his office storage closet, the swap has expanded into a two-day event that attracts more than 500 gardeners. In Canada, Seeds of Diversity ([www.seeds.ca](http://www.seeds.ca)) holds "Seedy Saturday" seed swaps at more than 50 locations throughout the provinces.

#### 4. Single Serving Sizes

A growing number of gardeners want space-saving varieties that produce personal-size squash, broccoli or even chard. Scaled-down versions of chard ('Pot-o-Gold'), lettuce ('Little Gem' and 'Garden Babies'), broccoli ('Small Miracle') and other vegetables perform as well in containers as in beds, so they're real problem solvers if the only place you have to grow food





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is your deck or balcony.

### 5. A Rainbow of Colors

Just one look at Burpee's purplish-red 'Razzle Dazzle' tomato will make your eyes pop. 'Redventure' celery blushes crimson where the ribs are touched by the sun, 'Purple Plum' radishes really look like plums, and you can't miss the pink pods of 'Tanya' pole beans when you're filling your picking basket. Be bold — try that 'Cheddar' cauliflower that's haunting your dreams.

### 6. Herbs From Seed

The idea of an instant herb garden has inspired many products that look good but don't work very well, because new gardeners have trouble working with tiny herb seeds. A new solution from Johnny's Selected Seeds ([www.johnnyseeds.com](http://www.johnnyseeds.com)) — properly spaced herb seeds embedded in a paper disk — was so wildly successful last year that more are planned for 2009 including basil, cilantro, chives, marjoram, parsley and thyme. Each disk plants a 6-inch pot, and requires nothing more than a pot, a bit of potting soil, and some water to get it started.

### 7. Simple Storage

The easiest way to eat from your garden all winter is to grow plenty of vegetables that store well just as they are — garlic, potatoes, grain corn, sweet potatoes, onions and winter squash, for example. Varieties of garlic, onions, potatoes and sweet potatoes grow better in some climates than others, so it's a good idea to look to regional seed companies to see which varieties they recommend.

### 8. Creative Collections

Why buy a packet of one type of lettuce seeds when you can have six varieties for the same price? Most seed companies sell pre-blended lettuce mixtures; rainbow mixtures of beets, carrots, radishes and chard are easy to find, too. The seeds in many of the mixtures created by Renee Shepherd ([www.reneesgarden.com](http://www.reneesgarden.com)) are color-coded to help you tell the varieties apart.

Excerpted from Mother Earth News magazine, the Original Guide to Living Wisely. More at [www.MotherEarthNews.com](http://www.MotherEarthNews.com) or call 800-234-3368 to subscribe. Copyright 2008 by Ogden Publications Inc

## Lifestyles

### My Twenty Part-Time Jobs

by Jim Schley

Like millions of other Americans, I recently found myself laid-off. My erstwhile employer wasn't a giant, downsizing corporation but a small book publisher. Two years previously I'd had my photo in color in the business section of the New York Times, in a lead article lauding our company for exemplary "niche" publishing. Even so, after more than a decade in various management positions I was told, "You're a fixed cost that needs to be a variable cost."

I wasn't expecting the difficulties of finding a new job, nor the jolt to my self-respect, ordinarily rather sturdy. I missed my colleagues, most of them also fired. I missed seeing my name on a masthead and business card.

I signed up for unemployment compensation, six months of weekly checks at a portion of my previous income, and came to feel an odd warmth for the synthesized voice on the automated claims line — a fatherly baritone, intoning seven questions which I'd answer by pressing 1 for yes or 9 for no.

Meanwhile I scoured the job listings. I inventoried my abilities, stretched my imagination, and threw myself wholeheartedly into applications for nineteen jobs — nineteen carefully worded cover letters and fine-tuned resumes and references from former employers or advisors. Nineteen neatly printed packets addressed and mailed. Each time, you believe you'll be called for an interview, have a complete meeting of minds, and be offered a great position.

The usual result is much different: You run as fast as you can and leap — into a cinderblock wall.

One evening when our family sat down to dinner, as my wife and our daughter recounted the day's highlights, I realized that I had almost nothing to say. I was basically retired. I'd done the laundry, made soup, planted another garden bed . . . but so what? I felt boring, not having talked with anyone all day. That night I decided there



was no way I was going to let myself be one of those laid-off men who flounder, squandering hours watching TV and feeling sorry for themselves. Anyway, we don't have a TV.

What I could see all around me were part-time jobs. This is the epoch of the adjunct and out-sourced. In addition to more than 8 million people unemployed in the U.S., at least 5 million people are working part-time, unable to find full-time positions. Without benefits or a contract, paid hourly instead by salary, but work to be done.

So I resolved to take as many part-time jobs as I could find and ended up juggling as many as eleven at a time. The experience has been fantastic.

In the past year I've found gainful employment by: writing (reviews for a metropolitan newspaper and essays for feature magazines); teaching (book-discussion series in public libraries, poetry programs for high-school students, and presentations for ElderHostel and writers' conferences); performing (with a dance troupe and a stage company, in a documentary film, and on stilts with a brass band); editing (a poetry column for a forestry magazine, a special issue of a literary journal, and a book about the history of bridges); house painting; snowplowing; research (for a family history and a firm documenting biomedical expertise); carpentry, demolition, and landscaping; house-sitting; and playing the role of patient for medical students practicing interviews.

Knowing that I was trying to see how many part-time jobs I could manage, my sister called one day to suggest sperm donation as a (quite lucrative) possibility.

Instead of feeling crazed, keeping track of all those responsibilities, this experiment has yielded countless benefits. To have so many jobs you need to be supremely well organized, in the right place at the right time with the right equipment and clothes. A friend peered into my car one morning and exclaimed, "You've got more bags than a mailman!" Some days I had four different jobs over the course of twelve hours.

As our ten-year-old daughter was listening with an impish expression to the radio news, she said "Hey, Dad,

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no wonder there's high unemployment — you have all the jobs.”

Admittedly, I was better prepared than most people for such a predicament. A college graduate who has made my living for twenty years in the arts, I've worked in editorial offices but also in restaurants, on construction crews, as a camera salesman, touring puppeteer, community-college teacher, and model for art classes. My wife and I live “off-the-grid” in a solar-electric house we built ourselves — no mortgage, no power line, and a big vegetable garden — with health insurance from her teaching job. Through thirteen years of marriage we've carefully avoided debt, clearing our one credit card every month, paying off our cars quickly and keeping them running beyond 150,000 miles.

This balance feels precarious, but heartbroken at the loss of my old job, with no savings and no offers, I was nonetheless ready to take drastic action.

And though I wasn't looking for this lesson, in the past year I've discovered how valuable humility can be. Humble turns out to be quite different from humiliated, and the difference is largely up to you.

Who knows? Maybe I'll never take another full-time job. As a regular employee, you're ultimately at the mercy of someone else's decisions, which might well be impetuous or idiotic.

In the meantime my short-term plan has me busy and upbeat, with plenty to recount over our dinner table.

v

*Biographical note: Jim Schley is the Managing Editor of Tupelo Press. (It is not, however, a full-time job.) He is the author of a book of poems, One Another (Chapiteau).*

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## Money Matters

### And They All Fall Down

by Richard Torgerson

Financial institutions are dropping like flies. The systemic financial and credit crisis triggered by the sub prime mortgage meltdown is claiming more and more victims, reshaping Wall Street and the financial structure of society.

For years we have, in Paul Krugman's words, “[made] a living by selling each other houses, paid for with money borrowed from China.”<sup>1</sup> First, sub prime lenders went belly up (like First Century) or taken over (Countrywide).

Then Bear Stearns and IndyMac failed. Then the Federal government sent Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac into receivership. Then Lehman Bros., the fourth largest U.S. investment bank, declared bankruptcy. Merrill Lynch was absorbed by Bank of America in a shotgun wedding. AIG, our largest insurer, just became a majority controlled subsidiary of the Federal government.

Robert Reich recently explained that the heart of the economic mess “...isn't the collapse in housing prices or even the frenetic rise in oil and food prices. These

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are contributing to the mess but they are not creating it directly. The basic reality is this: for most Americans, earnings have not kept up with the cost of living. This is not a new phenomenon but it has finally caught up with the pocketbooks of average people.” Virtually all of the productivity gains in the past three decades have gone to the top. The rest of Americans have been treading water or worse ever since. This is bad for a U.S. economy dependent upon ever increasing middle class consumer spending to keep it afloat.

We consumers have tried our best to keep that spending up to expectations, first by transforming the family into twoearner households, then by increasing



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the number of hours we work (which now are higher per week than even the Japanese), and finally by borrowing money, lots of it, from home equity, credit cards, wherever it could be found. However, with declining house prices and tightening credit we can no longer borrow to keep up spending. In Reich's analysis, “We're finally reaping the whirlwind of widening inequality and ever more concentrated wealth.” Socially responsible investors have been concerned with widening inequality and victimization of the poor for years. The entire financial crisis can in fact be laid directly upon the feet of greed taking precedence over social responsibility, concentration on short term profits versus concern for longer term sustainability.

Speaking of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac's demise, economist Dean Baker of the Center for Economic and Policy Research summed it up: “Fannie and Freddie's eagerness to keep market share, even at the cost of acquiring riskier mortgages, was the main cause of their bankruptcy.”<sup>2</sup> The mistake of pursuing short term profits, Baker asserts, “is likely to cost taxpayers tens of billions of dollars in this bailout, in addition to the much greater harm they caused to the economy by extending the housing bubble.” SRI Investors can also be proud of the fact that activists in the shareholder action movement have been sounding the alarm for years. The Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility recently noted that “as early as 1993, ICCR members were filing resolutions — six just that year — to more closely regulate subprime mortgages ... Having met with lending institutions for years as one of the only voices of caution, ICCR members asked tough questions about the depth of banks' exposure to risky financial practices.”<sup>3</sup> Had those warnings been heeded by Fannie and Freddie, not to mention the growing list of failed banks and brokerage firms, they might have avoided the disaster they find themselves in today.

This realization is a vindication of the philosophy of socially responsible investing.

But what may be a vindication for socially responsible investing might also be a rude wake up call for socially responsible investors.

Both Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac were mainstays in SRI portfolios, as their purpose to expand homeownership opportunities is a proactive positive one. But given both companies demise, it's easy to be skeptical of the common SRI marketing promise that you can do well while doing good.

The problem is that unsustainable business strategies can slip by traditional ES G (environmental, social and governance) analysis because those flaws are not easily measured. While it's fairly easy to measure minority representation of board members or tonnage of toxic emissions, it's not so easy to think through the logical consequences of corporate decision making. This is why





Enron was among major holdings of many SRI funds before their famous collapse.

Most environmental screening models showed that Enron's toxic emissions per dollar earned was far below that of other fossil fuel companies. Those models failed to take into account that Enron made most of it's dollars by trading other companies' energy, not producing their own.

Our challenge as social investors is to improve our social analysis by going beyond hard data mining or digital metrics to the subjective long term thinking to discover each industry's direction and degree of social responsibility and long term sustainability.

Our portfolios will be stronger for it and better prepared for the remainder of the current financial crisis and other crises lurking in the wings.

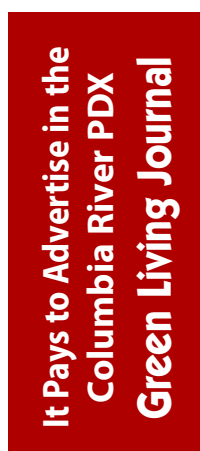
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## Building

### Magical Mushroom 'Greensulation'

by Katie Cordrey

When the economy gets tough, the tough get insulation. In both retro-fitting and new construction, sealing air gaps and upgrading insulation are often the most bang-for-the-buck-investments a homeowner or builder can make

to prevent energy waste and save money over time. Because energy costs are bound to rise in the future, investing in insulation will pay an ever increasing return in lower heating and cooling bills

Up until now, there were only a few eco-friendly alternatives to expanded polystyrene foam: newspaper, denim, and batt sheep's wool are among the top contenders. That has a great potential to change in a big way thanks to Ecovative Design's Greensulate™.

Greensulate™ is a sustainable insulating building material composed of rice hulls, recycled paper, and most important, oyster mushroom fibers. It has the ability to resist temperature change, repel water, and almost certainly meets the fire-resistance requirements of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) International Standards. Ecovative Design is also testing the material's resistance to mold-growth when water-saturated. The Greensulate™ bio-insulation may be available in the marketplace as early as 2010.



### P2H Or Prius To House Power

During lengthy power outages such as those caused by the recent ice storms back east, Prius owners utilized their vehicles for more than transportation. Seems that the Synergy Drive system of this hybrid can produce at least 3 kilowatts of continuous power so as long as the car has fuel. This is enough electricity to run the basics: lights, fridge, TV, and a fan on a wood stove.

Don't wait until the power goes out and then think you can run an extension cord from your car to a wall socket and be good to go. Taking advantage of your P2H capabilities requires some specialized equipment and knowledge, so check into the how to long before you need to.

**Industry experts say annual insulation sales in the United States could reach \$10-billion by 2010. "Green" products account for about 2 percent of the construction-materials market, a proportion that is predicted to rise to as high as 10 percent by 2010.**

*Source: The Chronicle of Higher Education  
Money & Management*

<http://chronicle.com/weekly/v53/i45/45a02402.htm>

*From the issue dated July 13, 2007*

## what to do in cascade locks



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College classmates, Gavin McIntyre and Eben Bayer created the insulation from oyster mushrooms by growing it on perlite, a type of volcanic glass used in potting soil. Because mushroom spores colonize easily and attach themselves to the perlite, the foam-like insulation isn't tough to grow. Once thrown together in correct proportions, the spores feed on starch provided by organic materials like rice hulls, coffee grounds, corn cobs, or paper bits. As the spores grow, they bind all of the perlite particles together. Hydrogen peroxide arrests the process just before mushroom caps are recognizable. It may be possible to incorporate other fungi into the material that will repel insects or perform additional functions.

Bayer came up with the idea in response to a sustainable-housing contest during his sophomore year at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York. Having hunted forest mushrooms on the family farm, he had taken note of the fungi's strong, prolific root systems. He began to look for ways to direct that process of interconnectivity to bond materials together. McIntyre supported the experiments by raising test samples under his dorm room bed.

The experiments continued after graduation leading the pair to patent the 2-inch-thick panels they named, Greensulate. They forecast manufacturing costs low enough to be highly competitive in the marketplace. Not only can the material be used for structural insulation, but in applications currently made of Styrofoam, like ice chests and coolers. The material is a natural fire-retardant. No need for chemicals to make it fire-resistant.

Learn more by visiting the Ecovative Design website at: <http://www.ecovatedesign.com/greensulate.html>



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## Health

### Cooking with Cast Iron

by Susan Clotfelter

*The hottest trend in cookware goes back thousands of years.*

When Food Network stars Mario Batali and Paula Deen, genius Mexican restaurateur Rick Bayless and domestic diva Martha Stewart are all pitching lines of cast iron, you know it has to be scorching.

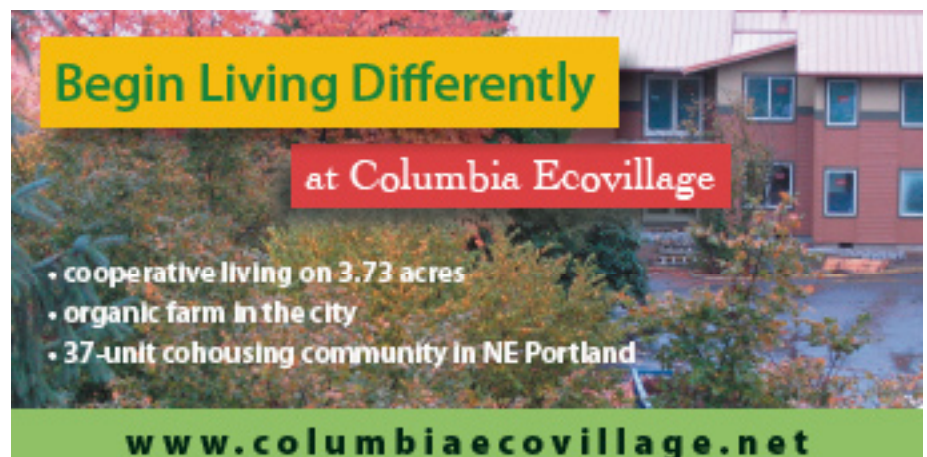
When French stalwart Le Creuset, longtime makers of Dutch ovens for the gourmet class, serves up its old faithful designs in colors like Kiwi and Caribbean Blue, there's got to be some serious luring of youthful tastes going on.

If you talk to kitchen connoisseurs – from cowboy cook-off champs to trendy chefs – one pan rules them all. There's one pan you want if you were stranded on a desert island, or had to move into a new home with hungry mouths to feed and no luggage but what you can fit in the trunk of a Prius.

And that would be the cast-iron skillet.

The conductive quality of cast iron smoothes out the uneven heat of the crankiest electric burners,

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gently sweats onions, brings frying oil to just the right temperature and keeps it there. The skillet leaps into service to flatten a chicken breast, crush cookie crumbs or, in a pinch, hammer a nail or clobber a mouse. Iron puts the perfect crust on corn bread, releases frittatas without regrets. You can sear a sesame-crust salmon fillet one moment, rinse the pan, wipe it clean with a paper towel and then poach pears for dessert. Fire it up dry to toast nuts or spices. Plop it on a wooden cutting board at the table to keep a gratin warm. Exploit its willingness to go from stovetop to oven to table. Use it. Use it again.

Cast iron sees frequent use as proof of your love.

Perry and Rosalind Wells of Loveland, Colorado, surely love theirs. They do most of their everyday cooking in pans that bear on their bottoms the mark of Griswold, a foundry in Erie, Pennsylvania, that began operating in 1865 and sold its operations to Wagner in 1952. Griswold and Wagner pans are collectibles that can sell for hundreds of dollars, especially the rarer sizes and cast-iron muffin, or “gem,” pans.

But the Wellses found most of theirs at relatives’ estate sales or at flea markets for as little as \$30. They’re especially fond of a pan they call their “chicken cooker” – a deep, Griswold skillet that came with a second,

shallower skillet that fits onto it and can be used as a lid. “The versatility of that set is just wonderful,” says Perry Wells, who believes the pan belonged to his father’s second wife.

His advice to pan scavengers? “If you’re looking at a pan to cook with, the finish is all-important. Rosalind’s mom’s pan has no name on it, and it has a beautiful finish.”

They also own a Griswold waffle maker, which they’ve tried to adapt to home use, but gave up on. “It’s a gorgeous little tool,” says Wells, a passionate collector of old tools -- “but the waffles still stick to it.”


The smooth-as-glass finish inside the Wellses’ skillets makes them virtually nonstick when kept properly seasoned. That willingness to let go is one of the sterling qualities of cast iron, and it’s supremely important for releasing eggs, the universal measure of a pan’s seasoning. In fact, when *Cooks Illustrated* magazine tested cast-iron skillets in 2007, the ability to release scrambled eggs was one of the first tests – and one of the last.

*Cooks* found most of the skillets held on to way too much egg until the second egg test, which came at the end of a barrage of other cooking hurdles. In just those few uses, the releasing ability of most of the pans had markedly improved.

But most of those tests were done on new pans. Is buying old any better?

Sometimes yes, sometimes no, says David G. Smith, “The Pan Man,” who has spent decades cooking in, collecting and writing about cast-iron cookware and collectibles. With partner Chuck Wafford, he authored *The Book of Griswold & Wagner* and *The Book of Wagner & Griswold*, known to collectors as the “blue book” and the “red book” respectively.

Though it was collectors who first got him interested in antique cast-iron cookware, 75 percent of his sales is now of items that’ll be put to the ultimate tests – eggs,



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bacon, grilled cheese sandwiches and whatever else home cooks have a yen for.

"People are paying collector prices for pieces for home use," he says.

Smith has been tracking the trend for years on his Web site, [www.PanMan.com](http://www.PanMan.com), and says interest has been on the upswing for at least 20 years and began with fears that aluminum cookware contributed to Alzheimer's disease, he says. Plus, "the Teflon issue has come and gone several times."

But still you want the nonstick, you say? Would you settle for the next best thing? Go for enameled cast iron. It's available in almost any price range, at stores from Kmart to Williams-Sonoma and everything in between. You can get just about any shape, size and color.

And a whole realm of recipes opens up when you consider the enameled cast-iron covered oven. Braising. Searing and then braising. Stews. Chowders. Roasts. Ragouts. At The Cupboard, an independent kitchen store in Fort Collins, Colorado, cookware buyer Polly Erickson carries multiple lines of enameled cast iron and preseasoned, unfinished cast iron.

"Everybody is on the cast-iron bandwagon because it's such great stuff," she says. She steers most buyers toward enameled pans for their ease of cleanup. "Even with burned-on food, you just soak it in warm water, and you can take everything off with your finger."

But that ease inflicts premium costs. Le Creuset, made in France, can run around \$200 for a medium-sized Dutch oven. Batali's 5-quarts cost about \$100. Plain, pre-seasoned cast-iron pans are significantly cheaper. Another distinguishing characteristic: country of origin. Le Creuset is made in France; most other less-expensive enameled cast-iron cookware is made in China.

If customers can only buy one piece of enameled cast iron, Erickson steers them toward a 5-quart oval covered oven.

"It's very versatile; you can do a bird, a roast, a casserole, a gratin. ... Any smaller, and you won't get several meals out of it, and you're not getting your money's worth. I like to have leftovers, and I like to make enough to last more than one meal."

v

*Excerpted from GRIT magazine, Celebrating rural America since 1882. Read the full story at [www.Grit.com](http://www.Grit.com) or call (866) 624-9388 to subscribe. Copyright 2008 by Ogden Publications Inc.*

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## Education

### Ask A Master Recycler

By Dana Jeffries

**Is there a way to recycle clothing or just fabric when the clothing is no longer usable?**

If the clothing is really worn out, stained in many places, or torn and just generally looking like good dust rag material, it is just that---a dust rag. Donation drop-off sights and social service agencies don't want or need your old rags of clothing. Unfortunately, there is currently no drop off site for used up old rags of clothing. Your garbage can is the only home for it after you've cut up or saved enough for your own dust rag pile.

Fabric, preferably in remnants at least 1/2 yard or more in size, can be donated to agencies such as Goodwill and Salvation Army, but there are other possible homes for unused fabric.

Sometimes SCRAP, a resource store for Portland-area schools, can use fabric yardage...but call them first and describe what you have. They will let you know if they're



interested in your donation of 1/2 yard or more fabric remnants. Find out more at [www.scrapaction.org](http://www.scrapaction.org) or call 503-294-0769.

I have had lots of luck photographing my leftover fabric and posting it on Craigslist in the 'free' section. And if you know anyone who helps make quilts for charity, they can often use your 100% cotton remnants. Churches and quilting stores can be a source for groups that can use free fabric.

A unique fabric thrift shop in NE Portland might be interested in your fabric remnants also. Knitt'n Kitten has been a useful place for me to unload fabric yardage I didn't need. Check them out at [www.knittnkitten.com](http://www.knittnkitten.com).

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### **I am trying to limit my plastic consumption and using bio plastics or PLA when I can but if it goes in the land fill anyway will it decompose?**

Bad news...according to the group 'Master Recyclers', bioplastics are not recyclable with regular plastics at this time. And because they look so much like regular plastics, the new corn-based bioplastics cause expensive problems for plastics recycling.

You can only tell if the plastic is a bioplastic if it is marked with PLA, usually on the bottom. Keep bioplastic containers OUT of curbside recycling and yard debris roll carts and other plastics recycling programs..

Most bioplastics are coming from take out food places, and unless you dispose of it at one of their restaurants in the proper bin, the bioplastics containers have to be thrown away in the garbage.

*Master Recycler- Dana Jeffries  
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of 2 girls. You can try to keep up with  
Dana on her web page: [www.k103.com/pages/talent\\_dana.html](http://www.k103.com/pages/talent_dana.html)*

## Business

### **Lessons From the Chief Inspired Protagonist**

by Stephen Morris

Jeffrey Hollender is about to make a mad dash to the airport. Dressed casually in jeans and an untucked green and white striped shirt which might be described as "vintage Beach Boys," he does not look like the president of a company whose annual sales have now passed the \$100 million mark. He does, however, look like the other half of his title as "Chief Inspired Protagonist" of Seventh Generation, the nation's leading seller of environmental household products and a pacesetter in the realm of socially responsible business.

The company derives its name from the Great Law of the Iroquois that states, "In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations." According to the company website "every time you use a Seventh Generation product you are making a difference by saving natural resources, reducing pollution, keeping toxic chemicals out of the environment and making the world a safer place for this and the next seven generations."

Hollender, a trim 54 with only suggestions of gray hair around the temples, was never a Beach Boy, but he is, in fact, a surfer. One of his passions is to ride the waves in an exotic tropical location with his son, Alexander (18) now a student at NYU. His daughter Meika (20), with whom he co-authored a book (*Naturally Clean: The Seventh Generation Guide to Safe & Healthy, Non-Toxic Cleaning*, New Society Publishers, 2006) is also at NYU. Daughter Chiara (13) lives with Hollender and his wife, Sheila, in their environmental showcase home overlooking Lake Champlain in Charlotte, VT. Sheila, a non-practicing attorney, oversees



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the charitable donations program at Seventh Generation in addition to managing the household.

Seventh Generation is the most recent in a line of companies Hollender has started. The common theme is education. After graduating from Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts he began the not-for-profit organization Skills Exchange of Toronto, a learning exchange that offered practical and professional development classes. Next came Network for Learning an adult education and audio-publishing company based in New York City.

Both ventures were successful and resulted in an offer to become president of Warner Audio Publishing in Manhattan. That's when he learned one of his most important life lessons, that entrepreneurs do not make the world's best, or happiest, employees. Shortly thereafter Hollender partnered up with Alan Newman, subsequently of Magic Hat fame, to operate mail order catalog of energy conservation products called Renew America, which eventually blossomed into Seventh Generation. This Newman/Hollender relationship was characterized by meteoric successes and interpersonal fireworks that kept business observers in Vermont entertained for several years. Eventually, Newman left to brew beer, while Hollender focused on growing the wholesale products side of the Seventh Generation business.

"From the beginning our challenge has been to educate people about using products that they may not know they even need," says Hollender. While Mr. Whipple may urge the customer not to squeeze the Charmin, the marketers at Seventh Generation have to explain via their packaging, blogs, and website that their toilet paper is not white because it is not made with the toxic bleaches and chlorine that make their competitors so irresistibly squeezable.

It's not always an easy sell.

"We're a challenger brand," explains Hollender. "We

take a negative position against the established order, but always try to do so in a positive way." He speaks from one of the small conference rooms spread around the Seventh Generation work space in the Main Street Landing Building on Burlington's waterfront. The lake is sparkling this day. This would be a prime spot for the Boss's corner office, but private offices are eschewed at Seventh Generation in favor of shared spaces. Even president Hollender has no private office, only a desk in a space shared with his assistant.

Only recently has the company been successful from a financial perspective. "We didn't make money in thirteen of our first twenty years in business," acknowledges Hollender. Luckily, the profitable years are the ones that have occurred most recently. Fueled by the growing acceptance of "green" products, Seventh Generation has been growing at a rate of over 38% a year for the last five years. Perhaps more significantly, Hollender has become the crossover business executive, where the Wal-Marts of the world turn to learn about becoming green and socially responsible.

Ben Cohen, founder of Ben & Jerry's, might have the right credentials for this role, but his celebrity status as the crazy hippie will never play well in corporate America. Cohen has this to say about Hollender: "Jeffrey was among that first band of pioneers to demonstrate that companies can be responsible as well as profitable. Now that the notion of 'doing well by doing good' has entered the mainstream of business thinking, Jeffrey is helping to show how companies can embed sustainability into their very DNA."

Hollender outlined his current view of the state of business in a recent book *What Matters Most: How a Small Group of Pioneers Is Teaching Social Responsibility to Big Business, and Why Big Business Is Listening* (Basic Books, 2006). In it Hollender presents a balanced view of the distance that business has yet to travel to achieve meaningful social responsibility while pointing out the

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double standards that are sometimes invoked. Is it fair, he asks, to criticize McDonald's for the unhealthy aspects of their menu while Ben & Jerry's seems to get a free pass on the ultra high fat content of their product? Publisher's Weekly characterizes the book as an "honest assessment of the difficulties corporations large and small face in fostering social change that adds a welcome tone of moderate optimism to the globalization debate."

Over time the student has become the teacher. Hollender finds himself in high demand as a public speaker, and he often has to choose if his time is best spent in front of an audience of green festival attendees, taking care of Seventh Generation business in Burlington, writing on his blog, or maybe sneaking off to Rincon, Puerto Rico with son Alexander to ride the waves. On this day, even with the minutes to take-off at the airport ticking away, Hollender finds a few moments to reflect on the personal

lessons he has learned:

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### *Lessons on Starting a Business*

He fields this one easily. On the speaking circuit, one of his most popular presentations focuses on the "ten biggest mistakes I ever made."

"Make sure you are doing something you love. Raise twice as much money as your need. Surround yourself with people smarter than yourself. Focus on what you don't know (as opposed to what you do)."

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### *Lessons About Family*

"I'm trying to make up for lost time." As he was preoccupied with building his business, his wife, Sheila, bore the brunt of the family obligations. While an entrepreneur does have to have the mind set of being unwilling to quit, Hollender wishes he had been more conscious about how he spent his time, achieving a better balance between family life and work obligations.

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### *Lessons About Money*

"Money is as addictive as drugs," he says. "Too much is never enough." He cites the relationship that Americans have with money and consumption s as being "as great a danger as global warming."

Although he describes his own attitude towards money as "cavalier," he admits that his self-imposed goal to go a month without buying anything (except food and, of course, "newspapers, I have to have newspapers") is elusive and has been often postponed. "I just can't quite get to it," he admits with a shake of the head.

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### *Lessons About Vermont*

"The longer I'm here, and the more time I have to spend away, the more I appreciate Vermont. After growing up endlessly anonymous in New York City, I understand the profound significance of the scale of



this state."

It's apparent from the way he gazes at the lake, that this will be a tough day to leave Vermont.

v

### *Lessons About Consumers*

"I'm still in the process of learning, and still trying to engage them so that I can help them on their journey. I know ... how can someone selling toilet paper make this statement?" he says with a laugh." We put information on our packaging; we have a newsletter, and a blog. Our business is all about teaching people about products they're not even sure they need. You can't sell a product that eliminates indoor air pollution if people don't know that their indoor air is polluted"



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Increasingly, Hollender is finding cyberspace to be the arena where he can most effectively reach people. His weblog (blog), The Inspired Protagonist (InspiredProtagonist.com) is billed as a “resource and guide for spotlighting socially responsible business practices and principles on the global stage.” It gives Hollender what he describes as a “fantastic opportunity to share our perspectives about sustainability with the business community at large, and to influence corporate decision-making on critically important issues.”

It also provides a platform for banging the Seventh Generation drum, whether it is describing a small cooperative of cleaning women in San Francisco who are using the company’s non-toxic products or citing the company’s recent Pinnacle Award for Environmental Sustainability, presented by Microsoft (even though Hollender makes no secret of the fact that he is a diehard Apple advocate). With so much recognition, success, and positive achievement in his life, Jeffrey Hollender must be the happiest guy in the world, right? The truth, however, is as startling as it is forthright.

“I have struggled with depression my entire life,” says Hollender. “For years ...years! ... I resisted any form of therapy or medication, because of the stigma attached to any thing even remotely connected to mental illness. I finally had a breakthrough when I met a therapist who pointed out that there is no single absolute reality. Your reality and mine might be completely different, but one is not right and the other wrong. They both have validity. This was a turning point in helping me to understand that my depression is just something that I need to cope with.”

It’s an astonishing revelation from someone who could just as easily, more easily, in fact, hide behind the accolades and trappings of business success. “One of my missions is to be candid on the subject. There’s no reason for others to suffer needlessly, as I did for so many years.”

The buzzword du jour in the socially responsible business world is “transparency.” Companies seek to make their policies and practices transparent, or visible, to customer, employees, and shareholders alike. Jeffrey Hollender has chosen to apply the policy of transparency to his personal life, too.

It’s time to go. There’s still a mad dash to the airport and security to go through. The next time the Chief Inspired Protagonist sees the lake, it will be from 10,000 feet.

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corporate America to a kinder, gentler, more socially responsible place? Or has the company adopted a smart business strategy that has paid off handsomely for companies like Tom’s of Maine, Stonyfield Yogurt, and Ben & Jerry’s all of whom eventually sold out for big bucks to deep-pocketed international corporations? And which outcome will have the greater impact in seven generations? The future is not clear, but at least at Seventh Generation, it will be transparent. That, according to Jeffrey Hollender, is as close as you can come to an absolute reality.

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# Events & Classifieds

## Energy Trust Better Living Show

March 27-29, 2009 Portland Expo Center

## Northwest Solar Expo & Clean Technology Showcase 2009

April 28-May 1, 2009 Oregon Convention Center  
Professional Solar Training April 28 - May 1, 2009  
Manufacturer & Dealer Training May 1 - May 2, 2009  
Solar Expo Open to all May 1-3, 2009  
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<http://www.nwsolarexpo.com>

## Goal Net Zero Home Tour


Sunday, May 17, 2009 in Portland  
<http://www.solaroregon.org/tours/goal-net-zero-home-tour>  
For more info: [michael@solaroregon.org](mailto:michael@solaroregon.org)

## Goldendale Energy Exposition

June 27 & 28 Klickitat County (Wash)  
Fairground Arena Building  
[http://goldendalechamber.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=56&Itemid=122](http://goldendalechamber.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=56&Itemid=122)

## North American Organic Brewers Festival

June 26 - 28, 2009 Overlook Park  
<http://www.naobf.org>



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## Renewable Energy Technology Program Open House

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College  
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The Dalles Campus Lecture Hall  
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