



OUR ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

2007

YORK REGION ENVIRONMENTAL ALLIANCE

FREE

CANADIANS HAVE BIG FEET

An ecological footprint is the amount of biologically productive land and sea required to sustain one human being.

Globally, there are about 1.89 hectares of productive area per person, but on average, every Canadian uses between 7 and 9 hectares.

Most people in York Region have an average ecological footprint of 8.28 hectares, the fifth largest of 21 Canadian municipalities and regions.

In "Ecological Footprints of Canadian Municipalities and Regions" (updated January 2005), Jeffrey Wilson and Mark Anielski say that the typical Canadian's ecological footprint is 7.25 hectares. According to the organization called Redefining Progress, the typical Canadian's ecological footprint is 8.8 hectares.



WHO, ME?

BY LESLIE ATKINSON

Chit chat about weather has recently changed from being typical common Canadian small talk to conversations where people voice disbelief.

This winter we watch news reports about devastating wind and snow storms in Vancouver, while in Ontario 1300 workers connected with the ski industry are laid off due to lack of snow and crocuses are poking up through the ground in January.

People are sensing that something is not quite right, that something major has changed. Even the government has moved the environment up the agenda.

Most of us are aware that human activities have led to the environmental problems affecting our weather and we are hearing more about how global warming will impact our world, threatening future generations of life on this planet.

For some reason however, we tend not to include ourselves in this group of humans who have contributed to environmental problems. We think it is the fault of others - like big business and government and we wonder why they are not doing something about it.

I must confess it is only in the past few
Please see **Who**, page 3

FACING MY FOOTPRINT:

OH THE HORROR!

BY SUSAN SHEARD

People who know me think of me as a tree hugger. I think of myself as a tree-hugger. At least, I used to...until I visited www.footprintnetwork.org and calculated my Ecological Footprint.

This process revealed the ugly truth that, through my lifestyle choices, I am using a whopping 5 hectares of biologically productive land and sea to sustain myself. That is less than the Canadian average 8.8 hectares, but it's still huge compared to what it should be.

According to the Footprint Network, in order to sustain our planet, the average human being's Ecological Footprint should be no more than 1.89 hectares (4.5 acres).

What accounts for my Sasquatch-sized print? Let's break it down into the categories the Ecological Footprint survey uses.

My Food Score: 2.4 hectares

I eat dairy products daily (some organic, some not), meat about once a week, and generally choose produce that is organic and/or locally grown. However, given my bread and cereal intake, I must confess to eating processed foods about half of the time.

It could be worse: If I ate meat daily and if three quarters of my food was packaged, processed and/or imported, my score would have been 4.2 hectares.

It could be better: If I became a vegan and ate almost no packaged, processed, or imported food, my score would be 0.4 hectares. Doesn't buying organic help? This particular survey doesn't take organic food into consideration.

Organic produce, according to many sources, is produced more efficiently per acre (because pesticides and chemical fertilizers are not used, and water is used more conservatively). However, there's a trade-off in terms of fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions when the organic food isn't produced close to home.

The survey also does not take into account free-range meats and wild meats, which, many would argue, require less land, both for feed production and grazing.

My Goods & Services Score: 1.1 hectares

The makers of the survey point out that our southern Ontario climate, as well as the shared environmental cost of building and maintaining roads, water and sewage treatment facilities and other services account for a significant part of the goods and services portion of the footprint.

They also take garbage into account, since it reflects on both consumption and recycling habits. On average, my partner and I put out one grocery bag of garbage each week.

It could be worse: Even with the same
Please see **Horror**, page 6

Would you like to make a difference?

Read on to see how easy it can be.



2007

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HOME

HOME, TOXIC HOME

We are all aware of the toxic pollutants in our outdoor environment. However, all too often, the inside of our home is more toxic than the outside.

We are inundated with advertising for products to disinfect, deodorize and sanitize. Not only are they over-packaged and generate unnecessary garbage with their disposable components, most of these items are highly toxic. They can trigger allergies and eczema as well as respiratory ailments.

Why purchase these over-priced, over-packaged products to clean your home? All you really need to accomplish your cleaning tasks is cheap, sold in large containers, and non-toxic - VINEGAR! Add some baking soda for tougher jobs and you are ready to clean your house safely while at the same time reducing your ecological footprint.

One of the best websites with tips on how to eliminate exposure to toxic substances in every room of your house is Healthy Home Services. You can also buy safe household items directly from their website:

www.healthyhomeservices.ca

THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY

Think of the resources that you use in your home as "global" resources. When you are wasting water in your home, you are not only wasting your money, but you are wasting the world's water.

The same goes for electricity, paper, and other items that deplete our natural resources.

We must change our mindset and try to always think and behave in a globally responsible manner. It will then effect every decision that we make.

The land that surrounds our homes is also our responsibility. The use of fertilizers, pesticides and over-watering is extremely irresponsible to our health and to the health of all living things on our planet.

Requiring only a light hand, naturalized gardening provides habitat for butterflies, birds and other forms of biodiversity while serving to enhance our lives and our environment.

RENOVATING?

Call Habitat for Humanity to pick up and re-use old kitchen and bathroom cabinets and more: 905-895-7983



ALAN MARSH PHOTOGRAPHY

WATER CONSERVATION TIPS IN THE GARDEN

- water garden in the early morning - 1" of water once a week is all you need
- mow grass to 3" height - this will keep soil cooler and reduce evaporation
- leave clippings on the lawn to further reduce evaporation and add nitrogen to the soil
- use compost, leaves and grass clippings to retain moisture and keep garden beds cool
- select drought tolerant species of trees, perennials and grasses which will require less water
- don't wash your car when a municipal water shortage alert is in effect
- install a rain barrel to catch roof run-off - use this to water garden

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COMPOST

AND REDUCE YOUR ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

BY CATHY NESBITT

Worm Advocate

Composting is a wonderful way to reduce your ecological footprint and produce a natural soil amendment for lawns and gardens.

It is estimated that the average Canadian household produces one tonne of organic waste per year. If every household started composting, the volume of material being landfilled would be reduced by approximately one third.

Composting is a natural process that transforms organic waste into a soil enhancer called humus. Kitchen scraps, leaves, and yard waste are excellent compostable materials. Composting helps maintain a healthy, sustainable environment.

Successful composting is a simple process. It's as easy as combining layers.

Composting requires a carbon:nitrogen mix, moisture and air circulation. Add a layer of brown material (carbon comes from dried leaves, brown grass or even shredded paper), then add a layer of green material (nitrogen comes from fruit/vegetable scraps, plant cuttings).

The pile should be aerated or turned once a week to allow air to circulate.

Water may be required to ensure that the pile remains moist. If the compost pile dries out, all activity stops.

If possible, place composter in a sunny location.

Benefits of Composting:

- Reduces the volume of material going to landfill
- Recovers a valuable resource. An estimated 1/3 of total waste of the total waste stream can be composted!
- Produces a natural soil enhancer - increase crop production!
- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Organics combined with landfill material creates methane gas.
- Reduces necessity for chemical additives - fertilizers and pesticides - saves money
- Returns nutrients back to the soil

To increase the rate of composting:

Consider adding worms such as Red Wigglers to the pile. These wonders of nature not only speed up the process, they aerate the pile, and add valuable nutrients to the finished compost.

Red Wigglers eat half their weight daily in organic matter. Therefore, one pound of worms can consume 3-4 pounds of organic matter weekly.

Worm composting or vermicomposting is an excellent alternative for those that do not have the space to do traditional backyard composting.

As vermicomposting can be practiced indoors, composting continues throughout the year.

Please see **Compost**, page 3

SAFE HOME CLEANING

REMOVING MINERAL DEPOSITS (caused by hard water)

Vinegar is great for removing calcium deposit build up.

1) Soak showerhead in vinegar overnight, then rinse in hot water to remove water deposits and keep it flowing freely. Take a baggy and fill it with vinegar and wrap it around shower nozzle. Leave it overnight.

2) Use full strength on glass shower doors. With a cloth saturated in vinegar wipe down door and let it soak over night. Depending upon amount of build up you may have to do this again.

3) After you use a water distiller, the deposits left in the heating chamber are mineral deposits. Simply soak it overnight with vinegar.

DISINFECTANT

Mix a half-cup of borax (a natural mineral that kills mould and bacteria) with 1 gallon of hot water. Add a few sprigs of fresh thyme. Steep for 10 minutes, strain and cool. Store in a recycled plastic spray bottle or better yet, a glass spray bottle.

OVEN CLEANER

Make a paste of baking soda and hot water. Sponge onto stains and wipe clean.

DRAIN OPENER

Pour a half-cup of baking soda into drain. Then pour 1 cup of vinegar into drain. Wait 15 minutes then flush with boiling water. Repeat this process a few times if it is necessary.

TOILET BOWL CLEANER

Sprinkle some baking soda into the bowl. Drizzle with vinegar; scour with a toilet brush.

This not only cleans, it deodorizes, as well.

MOLD and MILDEW REMOVER

Dissolve half-cup vinegar with half-cup borax in warm water. Mix them fresh for each use.

BASIN, TUB, AND TILE CLEANER

Rub the area to be cleaned with half a lemon dipped in borax. Rinse, and dry with soft cloth.

CERAMIC TILE CLEANER

Mix a quarter-cup of vinegar in a gallon of water. This removes most dirt without scrubbing and doesn't leave a film.

LEATHER SHOE POLISH

Add a shine by polishing it with the inside of a banana peel; then buff.

FURNITURE POLISH - 3 ways!

1) Use a soft cloth and wipe with a bit of mayonnaise.

2) Rub furniture with a cloth dipped in cool tea.

3) Mix 2 parts olive oil with 1 part lemon juice. Apply mixture to furniture with a soft cloth and wipe it dry.

SILVER POLISH

Clean silver with white toothpaste and warm water using an old, soft-bristled toothbrush. To magnetize tarnish away, soak silver in an aluminium container of salted water; then wipe it clean.

WOOD FURNITURE CLEANER

To remove water stains on wood furniture, dab white toothpaste onto stain. Allow the paste to dry and then gently buff off with a soft cloth.

WINDOW & MIRROR CLEANERS - 2 ways!

1) Mix 2 teaspoons of white vinegar with 1 quart warm water. Use a natural linen towel or other soft cloth to clean.

2) Mix half-cup cornstarch with 2 quarts warm water. Apply with sponge then wipe with absorbent cloth or towel. Good for car windows and bathroom mirrors. Do not do windows or glass when sun is on them or if they are warm. This causes the solution to dry too quickly, creating unwanted streaks.

COPPER-PAN CLEANER

Sprinkle surface of pans with coarse salt. Rub salt into stains with the cut half of a fresh lemon.

FLOOR CLEANER

Mix 1 cup white vinegar with 2 gallons hot water. For greasy floors, add 1/4 cup washing soda (a laundry additive sold in the detergent section of your super market) and 1 tablespoon vegetable oil-based liquid soap to the mixture.

CAR BATTERY ACID BUILD-UP

Pour a can of coke on the battery terminal ends. Wait 10 minutes and then clean terminal ends with water and a brush.

For more information visit: www.eartheasy.com/live_nontoxic_solutions.htm

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Material Sourcing

Sari Merson
Co-ordinator, Editorial/Advertising
Gloria Marsh
Administration
Leslie Atkinson
Graphic Designer/Artistic Director
Catherine Marshall
cmarshall@aci.on.ca

Printing

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To become a member of YREA
or for more information contact us at:

T: 905-660-9782

E: info@yrea.org

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ECO TIP

(Compost, from page 2)

Worms turn organic material into nutrient rich castings. Worm castings are recognized as one of nature's finest organic fertilizers. Castings or worm compost is considered "Black Gold" among avid gardeners.

Less dependence on chemical fertilizers will not only save money but will also benefit the environment.

There are three main components to successful worm composting: temperature, air circulation and moisture content.

The optimum temperature is between 16-26°C (60-80°F).

Worm composting is an aerobic process meaning "with oxygen", so air holes in the worm bin are essential.

Worms are approximately 90% moisture so they require a fairly moist environment. The bedding should be the consistency of a wrung out sponge.

Worm composting is an excellent way to get children interested in the environment. Worms are working pets that can help your children understand worm behaviour by seeing organic matter magically converted into soil.

Why not employ these wonderful workers willing to work for food scraps?

For more information on ways to reduce your ecological footprint, visit: www.cathyscomposters.com or call 1-888-775-9495.

Cathy Nesbitt has been worming her way around York Region for years. She owns and operates Cathy's Crawly Composters.

Make your home more energy efficient by using suggestions made on this website:

www.oeenrcan.gc.ca/energystar/english/consumers/index.cfm

(Who, from page 1)

years that I suddenly realized that the 'they' includes me. I had my awakening while stuck in a traffic jam on the Don Valley Parkway looking at the heavy layer of smog. I muttered to myself about pollution, car manufacturers, corporate responsibility and politicians.

It suddenly hit me how hypocritical I was. That it begins with me. I sat in the smog wondering how I could make changes to my lifestyle to reduce pollution and my use of fossil fuel, because if I can't why should I expect anyone else to.

I still drive a car, but less often and I plan to make my next vehicle a hybrid. I am also considering trying life without a car.

I have made other changes to my life to reduce my ecological footprint. Many of the changes are small but significant, some take more effort.

What's in it for me you ask? Well if I can reduce my footprint, then I know I am helping to preserve this world for myself, my children, my grandchildren and all the people on earth. It makes me feel good knowing I can make a little difference in the world.

Leslie Atkinson is a self-taught, amateur environmentalist.

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One Planet, Two Planets, Three Planets, FOUR!

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Refuse!

We are incredibly lucky to live in Canada. We have such a high standard of living and have so many natural resources available to us. But if everyone consumed resources like the average Canadian, we would need *four more planets* like earth to meet the world's consumption habits.

Many of us are trying to be 'global citizens,' believing that everyone deserves a high quality of life and the ability to acquire all their material needs.

Footprint analysts have estimated that a fair share of resources to meet the requirements of each person living on earth would amount to **2 hectares** per person or a footprint that is **75% smaller** than the average Canadian Ecological Footprint of 7.25 hectares. The size of the footprint of the average resident of York Region - 8.28 hectares - is even greater.

To shrink our ecological footprint we need to consider the environment during all our daily activities. We can then begin to make more responsible choices.

As a consumer, we can practice the **3Rs**. **Reduce** consumption by doing more with less. Eliminate unessential purchases and, when necessary, buy durable, locally produced products with little or no packaging.

Reuse items as much as possible and donate items no longer being used to local charitable organizations. When a product is no longer useful in its current form, **Recycle** it. Consider whether or not the material can be recycled in your local recycling program when making purchasing decisions and remember that recycling alone is not enough. Buy products that are made with the materials that are collected in your recycling program and close the loop by **Buying Recycled!**

There is a fourth option - **Refuse** - to accept useless gifts; to buy things you don't need; to buy things with excess packaging.

Following is a website for information about recycling and reusing within the communities of York Region. Here is a virtual trading post for items you no longer require but your neighbour might. An item you think is tacky may be beautiful to someone else. This is a guide to the organizations that want and need your unwanted items: <http://www.myorkregion.com/reuseful/index.php>

For more information visit:
<http://www.ns.ec.gc.ca/udo/reuse.html>

LEAVING FOOTPRINTS IN FORESTS WE'VE NEVER WALKED THROUGH

by Susan Sheard

I've felled a lot of trees in my life—at least indirectly.

I've bought a house, wood veneer for the livingroom floor, some furniture from Ikea, and as a teacher I've probably done enough photocopying and handed out enough pencils to leave an entire herd of woodland caribou homeless.

Does it comfort them to know I feel guilty? No, but they'd probably like it if people like me would think before we consume, so they too could have some place to live.

How can we do that? Read on to find out.

What's the big deal? Trees are renewable and forest products come from trees that are carefully selected, or from tree farms, right?

Not usually. Here are some facts from CPAWS (the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society):

- The Canadian forest industry still does close to 90% of its cutting in forests that have never been industrially harvested.

- In Canada's boreal forest (a region that is "more wild and intact that almost any other forest area left on the face of the Earth") almost all cutting is clearcutting.

In Ontario, 90% of harvesting is clearcutting. When forests are clearcut, old, biologically diverse forests are replaced by more uniform young forests, and forestry operations create roads and trails that fragment the forest and open it up to further human use and impact.

How can I make sure the lumber and wood products I'm buying comes from sustainable sources?

Look for the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) logo. FSC is the only one recognized by the Leadership in Environmental Design (LEED) green building program, WWF, Sierra Club of Canada and Greenpeace.

For a list of distributors and retailers of FSC certified lumber and FSC certified paper, visit: www.fsc.org

For more information on FSC and other certification systems visit: www.markets.initiative.org

Some Paper Facts:

- 71% of the world's paper comes from biologically diverse forests, not tree farms (Markets Initiatives)

- 65% of trees cut in Canada's boreal forests are used for paper. (Markets Initiatives)

- 40% of the trees cut in Canada's ancient rainforests (1,400 years old) are used for paper.

(Cpaws) The paper I bought contains 30% post-consumer fibre; how can I make sure that the other 70% comes from ecologically sound sources?

If the paper you're buying contains 30% post-consumer recycled fibre, the remaining fibre comes from trees or lumber by-products, unless the label specifies other sources. If you want to be sure that the trees came from sustainable logging operations, look for the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) or Ancient Forest Friendly label.

Why isn't all new paper made out of old paper?

One school of thought is that in order to make paper that is strong enough, has the "right brightness" and "feel", and won't jam in copiers, you must use a significant percentage of virgin fibre. Tell that to all of the companies who make 100% post-consumer copy paper. (Just Google "100% post-consumer paper" and you will find a number of suppliers.)

I've
felled
a lot
of
trees
in my
life...

Another problem with 100% post-consumer fibre, I'm told, is that there simply isn't enough of it to meet our demands. Without fresh fibre, "we would run out of fibre for making some [paper] products in a matter of weeks and be completely out of fibre in months", according to Metafore (a non-profit organization whose stated goal is to help businesses "achieve desirable social, environmental and financial results").

According to the Paper Recycling Association, used paper is so scarce in Canada that we must im-

port about 45% of our used paper pulp from the United States. The scarcity is due, in part, to our relatively small population, combined with the fact paper can only be recycled 5 to 7 times before the fibres become too short to use.

But I'm still puzzled. If used paper is so scarce and so valuable, why are we selling 30% of our used paper to China, where it is turned into cardboard packages and sold back to us? Furthermore, if we value used paper so highly, why aren't companies being urged to make all paper recyclable (by getting rid of the polymers and other substances that render it non-recyclable)? And why aren't municipalities asked to keep paper separate from other recyclables, so that less paper gets contaminated and ends up in landfill sites?

Perhaps the reason these initiatives aren't being taken is that—believe it or not—fibre from trees is cheaper than fibre from used paper. The cost of collecting, sorting, de-inking and transporting paper means that it sells for \$600 per ton, compared to \$300-\$500 per ton for "virgin fibre" (Andrew Tremblay, Domtar).

Those of us who think trees should have a higher price tag than old paper are going to have to get that message across by demanding paper that contains as much post-consumer fibre as possible.

Do we have to use trees for paper?

If we really must use virgin fibre to make "high quality" paper, we



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this publication**

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do have options other than trees. In China and India, up to 50% of pulp for paper is made from crops such as wheat straw, rice straw and sugar cane discard.

Every year in Canada 50 million tons of straw is left over after crops such as wheat, flax, rice, rye, corn and grass seed are harvested. Much of this straw is burned, adding to greenhouse gas emissions. (Markets Initiative)

Another viable pulp source is hemp. According to Ontario Nature, "In one year, one hectare of hemp can produce as much paper as two to four hectares of trees."

Right now, hemp accounts for about 0.05 percent of the world's paper. It can be grown without pesticides or herbicides and is recyclable. Furthermore, it can be made into many other things including cloth, rope, skin-care lotions, varnish, detergents, and is a source of omega fatty acids.

The Second Harvest Paper Project is trying to build demand for paper made with agricultural fibres, while also encouraging "pulp mills to invest in non-wood pulp mill infrastructure". According to Markets Initiative, "Agri-pulp" can be combined with post-consumer recycled or with wood pulps to make all kinds of conventional papers.

We're buying the paper—we've got the power

Where to Get Copy/Printer Paper and School Supplies that are 100% P.C. and PCF:

You can order many kinds of paper, including 100% post-consumer fibre, Processed Chlorine-Free copy/printer paper (\$10.00 for 500 sheets) online at , and for lists of retailers and printers who sell paper that is FSC certified and/or Ancient Forest Friendly, visit: www.marketsinitiatives.org

Let's Stop Flushing Trees Down the Toilet!

Laurie David (who produced Al Gore's An Inconvenient Truth) writes: "If every American household changed just one roll of paper made with virgin wood to one recyclable, post-consumer roll, half a million trees would still be standing." (Canoe: Home & Garden) You can buy 100% post-consumer, chlorine-free toilet paper at Zehr's or Loblaws under their "Green" label. For a complete guide to forest-friendly tissue and toilet paper, visit www.greenpeace.ca/tissue.

Save Trees When You Send Greetings:

For a list of gift card and wrapping paper retailers who sell post-consumer recycled or tree-free products, visit: www.conservatree.org

Save Paper in the Workplace:

1) Use less paper.

2) Encourage your employer to purchase paper that contains as much post-consumer recycled fibre content as possible, is FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified and is Totally Chlorine Free or Processed Chlorine Free.

3) Persuade whoever buys the file folders to choose the sand-colored ones that are 85% post-consumer recycled instead of their flashier counterparts—after all, they spend most of their lives in a drawer!

**We're
buying
the
paper—
we've
got the
power**

4) Before you press the START button on the photocopier, think about where the paper came from and ask yourself if there's any other way to get the message out.

5) Let people know that our over-consumption of paper is taking a toll on ancient and endangered forests right now.

6) Label a box "One Side Used" and leave it next to the photocopier. Photocopy paper that still has one good side can go into the box and be used on the other side.

7) Put instructions over the photocopier to show people how to feed paper that has been used on one side into the photocopier so copies can be made on the clean side. It's easy.

8) If hard copies of memos or other communication are a must, make them concise enough to fit on one half of a piece of paper. Then copy and paste so you now have two identical messages on one sheet. Cut the copied memos in half. You've reduced your paper consumption by half! (Hey, maybe you can even make it fit on one quarter of a piece of paper!)

9) Just because there's a market for used paper, that doesn't mean we should use more paper so we can fill up the recycling box faster! Remember that very little used paper goes back into the production of "fine" paper—it comes mostly from virgin fibre (i.e. trees)

10) Paper does get sorted at the "end of the line" and unusable paper goes to landfill sites. We can prevent valuable paper from getting wasted by recycling

correctly. Make sure the paper that goes into the recycling box is free of food, plastics, metals and wax. (For more information, visit the Recycling Association website at www.pppc.org.)

Forest-Friendly Books, Newspapers and Magazines:

In 2003, Raincoast Books printed Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix on 100% post-consumer recycled, chlorine-free paper.

Margaret Atwood, Yann Martel, Alice Munro and David Suzuki are just some of the many Canadian authors who have persuaded their publishers to print their books on Ancient Forest Friendly (AFF), chlorine-free paper.

To find a list of AFF authors, as well as book, magazine and newspaper publishers, and printers visit: www.marketsinitiative.org.

If your favourite authors aren't listed, why not encourage them to sign up?

Teachers: see if your students' favourite authors are listed and, if not, write letters inviting them to sign up.

To learn more about where our paper comes from visit: www.cpaws.org or www.boreal-canada.ca

CONSUMER ECO₂ TIP:

Idling for more than 10 minutes a day can produce a quarter tonne of CO₂ emissions each year and costs you about \$70 in wasted fuel.

SAVE \$\$\$ – SAVE GAS

1. If it's only a block or two... why not walk or ride your bike.

2. If you have lots of errands to do and you have to drive...plan your route carefully so that you do your errands with the lowest gas consumption possible.

3. If it's really cold outside and you just have to go into the store for a minute...turn off your engine anyway! Never let your car idle, except to warm it up for a few seconds if it hasn't been used for several hours.

4. If it's really hot outside and you just have to go into the store for a minute...turn off your engine anyway! Never let your car idle, except to warm it up for a few seconds if it hasn't been used for several hours.

5. The more weight your vehicle is carrying, the more gas it uses, so...Don't carry around more stuff in your car than you need to.

6. When you're driving fast on the highway in the summer, it's more efficient to cool your car with A.C.

than it is to open all of the windows. That's because...all of the air blowing in the windows is creating drag and slowing your car down so the engine has to work harder.

7. When you're driving slowly through town in the summer, it's more efficient to cool your car by keeping the windows open than to use A.C. That's because...at slow speeds, you aren't creating a lot of drag so very little extra gas is used; more gas is used if you turn on the A.C.

8. It's a good idea to use snow tires in the winter, but you will save gas if you take them off in the summer because...they are wider and therefore create more friction, so your engine has to work harder.

9. You can buy gas that contains 10% ethanol, which is a type of alcohol made from grains and which does not create greenhouse gases, at these gas stations.....Sunoco, Suny's, Pioneer Petroleum, Mr. Gas.

For more information visit: www.inontario.ca/Travel/SaveGas/tab-id/139/Default.aspx

Proud to support the YREA and their commitment to ecologically sound and sustainable solutions for York Region



Lui TEMELKOVSKI
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Use less energy when using electricity

Reduce 2 acres of your footprint by implementing these electricity saving tips:

- Air dry laundry on a clothesline instead of a dryer
- Shower 3 minutes less per day
- Get a programmable thermostat for your furnace and set it 5 degrees lower at night and when you leave the house
- Plant deciduous trees on the south side of your property to shade your house in summer
- Close windows, drapes and blinds during hot days in summer to keep hot air out
- Set air conditioner at 26 degrees or higher in summer and use only when necessary
- Use ceiling fans to circulate the air
- Set dishwasher on 'econo wash' and only wash when you have a full load. Turn your dishwasher off after the wash cycle to let dishes air dry
- Cook more than one dish at once in the oven, such as casserole, veggies, baked dessert, or use a toaster oven for only one dish
- Cook your pasta with the lid on and you will get a boil on low heat instead of needing high heat with the lid off
- Change lighting to energy efficient compact fluorescent
- Turn off lights, television, stereo and computer when not in use
- Trade in old, high energy consuming appliances for energy efficient replacements
- Switch to Bullfrog Power for 100% green electricity <http://www.bullfrogpower.com/> to sign up.

Partially sourced as of November, 2006 from: www.tdc.ca/savingelectricity.htm

**ENERGY REDUCTION: TIPS AND FACTS**

BY MEGAN KEITH

Insulate and weatherize your home

Properly insulating your walls and ceilings can save 25% of your home heating bill and 2,000 pounds of carbon dioxide a year. Caulking and weather-stripping can save another 1,700 pounds per year. The Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corp. www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca is a great resource and has more information on how to better insulate your home.

Be sure you are recycling at home

You can save 2,400 pounds of carbon dioxide a year by recycling half of the waste your household generates. Recycling reduces methane emissions from landfills, greenhouse gas emissions from incinerators and the emissions from energy consumption because manufacturing goods from recycled materials typically requires less energy. Call your municipality to find out about recycling centers as well as toxic waste depots.

Plant a tree

A single tree will absorb one ton of carbon dioxide over its lifetime. Shade provided by trees can also reduce your air conditioning bill by 10 - 15%.

Get a home energy audit

Many utilities offer free home energy audits to find where your home is poorly insulated or energy inefficient. You can save up to 30% off your energy bill and 1,000 pounds of carbon dioxide a year. Energy Star, an international system of grading appliances that are the most energy efficient, can also help you find an energy specialist: <http://oeenrncan.gc.ca/energystar/english/consumers/index.cfm> or try Windfall Ecology: www.windfallcentre.com

Keep your car tuned up

Regular maintenance helps improve fuel efficiency and reduces emissions. When just 1% of car owners properly maintain their cars, nearly a billion pounds of carbon dioxide are kept out of the atmosphere.

Check your tires weekly to make sure

they're properly inflated. Proper inflation can improve gas mileage by more than 3%. Since every gallon of gasoline saved keeps 20 pounds of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere, every increase in fuel efficiency makes a difference!

Install a programmable thermostat

Programmable thermostats will automatically lower the heat or air conditioning at night and raise them again in the morning. They can save you \$100 a year on your energy bill.

Choose energy efficient appliances when making new purchases

Look for the Energy Star label on new appliances to choose the most efficient models. If each household in Canada replaced its existing appliances with the most efficient models available, we'd eliminate a million tons of carbon dioxide emissions every year!

Wrap your water heater in an insulation blanket

You'll save 1,000 pounds of carbon dioxide a year with this simple action. You can save another 550 pounds per year by setting the thermostat no higher than 49 degrees Celsius. Use less hot water. It takes a lot of energy to heat water. You can use less hot water by installing a low flow showerhead (350 pounds of carbon dioxide saved per year) and washing your clothes in cold or warm water (500 pounds saved per year) instead of hot.

Use a clothesline,

instead of a dryer whenever possible. You can save 700 pounds of carbon dioxide when you air dry your clothes for 6 months of the year.

For more information visit: www.oeenrncan.gc.ca/energystar/ and www.conserverjoe.com/cnp/tips.htm

**Some websites for the responsible consumer and investor:****Green Consumer Guides:**

www.corporateknights.ca/downloads/CKGCG_PRINT_2003.pdf and www.greenkarat.com

Ethical Investing

Environmental News Network, a web-based publication with articles on ethical investing, and information on 1,000 publicly traded companies with green initiatives.

Ethical Funds, from the Credit Union Central of Canada which offers a family of 12 ethical funds.

Ethical Investor, an Australian online service with news and resources about making ethical investments.

EthicScan Canada Ltd., an ethics consultancy, Canada's first corporate social responsibility research house, and a clearinghouse and resource centre for consumer and corporate ethics. Also offers the Corporate Ethics Monitor and the Ethical Investing Kit.

Social Investment Organization, a non-profit group with 350 individual and corporate members. News about ethical investing and information on fund performance.

SocialFunds.com, from SRI World Group Inc., includes an analyzer for screening ethical funds, shareholder initiatives, etc.

Green Money Journal (The), provides articles on socially responsible investing plus links to environmental and sustainable development organizations.

(Horror, from page 1)

shopping, recycling and composting practices, if I lived in Yellowknife, my score would have been 2.7 hectares: colder weather and greater distances mean more fuel for travel and heating

On the other hand, if I were constantly buying new stuff and throwing out the old in order to "keep up with the Joneses", or if we didn't recycle, compost and avoid over-packaged products, we could easily be gobbling up another 9 hectares!

It could be better: There's always room for improvement in the garbage department: I could be buying more bulk food, and doing more to pressure companies to reduce their packaging.

I could make an even more significant difference, however, by choosing to live in an apartment building (which would slice off 0.1 hectares) or - better yet - a green-design dwelling (which would lop off 0.4 hectares).

According to the survey, I could pare off another 0.1 hectares if I lived in or near Vancouver. Let's keep in mind, however, that the survey was designed back in 2002, when Vancouver was known for its temperate climate!



Richmond Hill Naturalists

Dedicated to enjoying, protecting, promoting and stimulating an interest in the natural history of southern York Region for over 50 years.

Benefits of membership:

- ✚ Monthly meetings from September to April featuring speakers and social
- ✚ Participation in the annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count
- ✚ Activities: nature walks, bird watching outings, wildlife monitoring, habitat restoration, Earth Day community clean-up
- ✚ Receive our monthly bulletin via email

With support from The Ontario Trillium Foundation we are actively involved in advocating for the protection of the Oak Ridges Moraine and its watersheds. We work with partners to protect and enhance natural habitats for wildlife and people.

Enjoy nature at its fullest, become a member of the Richmond Hill Naturalists. Contact Marianne at (905) 883-3047 or visit our website www.rhnaturalists.ca



My Shelter Score: 1 hectare

I have to admit, it would probably be bigger than that if the survey took our large back yard and our old windows into account. My husband and I live in an 800-square-foot (80 square metres), free-standing house (as opposed to semi-detached, or apartment), which amounts to a significant chunk of land occupied by only two people, and more fuel for heating than would be required in a space the same size within an apartment building.

We use energy-saving lightbulbs, have switched to Bullfrog Power, and put plastic on the windows in the winter, but we could be doing a lot better in the insulation department.

It could be worse: If our house were 250 square metres or larger and we made no effort to save energy, this part of our footprint would be at least 3.9 hectares.

It could be better: If we lived in an energy-efficient apartment the same size, our score would have been 0.9 hectares, and if we lived in a "green-design house" the same size, our score would have been only 0.5 hectares! I can only assume that a "green design" apartment would leave an even smaller footprint.

My Mobility Score: 0.5 hectares

I live five kilometres from work. I do ride my bike sometimes, but I have to confess to driving frequently. Then there are the trips to Toronto (about 80 kilometres away) to visit family and friends, etc., which happen once a week, on average. My car burns about 5 litres of gasoline per 100 km.

It could be worse: If I drove a vehicle that burned 9-15 litres of fuel or more per 100 km., the Mobility part of my footprint would be 0.9 hectares.

Surprisingly, it would also be 0.9 hectares if I were to give up my car and travel 100 km or more per week using public transit. This made me wonder if the quiz was in some way biased against public transit.

Perhaps it is simply that the current environmental footprint of public transit has to be weighed against its long-term benefits.

On the other hand, perhaps the point is that we need to be looking at much greener forms of public transit.

It could be better: By driving a car that burned less than 4.5 liters of gas per 100 km, and by carpooling more often, I could reduce my Mobility footprint to 0.3 hectares.

Alternatively, I could find a job in Toronto, and move there, eradicating those weekly trips. Once there, I could walk, bike and use public transit for short distances and ditch the car, or join a car-sharing program.

If I used public transit to travel 25-100 km. per week, my Mobility score would still be 0.4 hectares, but 10 - 25 km. per week would knock it down to 0.2 hectares.

So, Now What?

Confronting my Ecological Footprint has brought to the surface one of those vital facts that my brain keeps shuffling into the "Denial File": Doing things like recycling and buying local produce do make my footprint smaller than it could be, but they don't make up for living in a drafty house and driving 200 km. a week (even if it's a relatively small house and a small car).

Yes, we need to keep doing the things we're already doing right, and keep adding new "green" habits that will shave off an acre here and an acre there, but - considering the many hectares that most of us have to lose - it's time for some weightier life-style changes as well.

I, for one, could get a lot closer to my

CALCULATE YOUR OWN ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT: A DAY IN A LIFE...

How big is your footprint today?

A. Transportation

How did you travel today?

I walked.....	0
I cycled.....	5
I took public transit	10
I carpoled	15
I drove my car.....	20

Score A _____

B. Water Use

How much water did you use?

I washed with a sink full of water..	0
1-2 min. shower.....	5
3-6 min. shower.....	10
10 min. shower	15
I bathed in a full tub	20
I bathed in a 1/2 tub.....	10
I left the water running... while I brushed my teeth	5

Score B _____

C. Clothing

I am wearing the same clothes today that I wore yesterday

most times.....	0
sometimes.....	5
never	10

I am wearing something that has been mended

.....	-5
-------	----

I did the mending

.....	-5
-------	----

50% of my clothes are secondhand

yes.....	0
no.....	20

I still wear clothes that I bought 10 years ago

no	10
yes	-5

Score C _____

D. Recreation

Identify the games, sports and activities you participated in during your spare time today.

How much equipment did you need to participate?

none or little	0
some	10
quite a bit	20

How much land was converted to playing fields, ice rinks, swimming pools, gym space,

1.89 hectare limit by eating less meat and processed foods, moving into or making our house into a green-design home, and driving less, carpooling more, and driving a more fuel-efficient car. Sounds expensive, but certainly not impossible over time.

Looking to the Future

I think we'd be doing our children, and theirs, a great service by teaching them about the Environmental Footprint long before they decide where and how to settle down.

Calculate Your Own Ecological Footprint

The survey I used was designed by the organization called Redefining Progress: www.rprogress.org Both their website and Mountain Equipment Coop's website will lead you to the Ecological Footprint survey.

Or you can just type in www.footprintnetwork.org. The survey only takes a few minutes and does all of the calculations for you.

If you don't have access to the Internet, you can try the Ecological Footprint survey included in this publication instead. It is a slightly modified version of a survey which can be found at www.educ.uvic.ca/faculty.

Send your comments and footprint calculation to us at info@yrea.org and your name will be entered into a draw for 1 of 20 free 1 year memberships to the York Region Environmental Alliance.

Susan Sheard is a Georgina educator and compared to many of us, still qualifies as an inveterate tree hugger.

ski runs, etc. to meet your recreation needs?

none or little	0
some (<1 hectare)	10
quite a bit (> 1 hectare) ..	20

I spent the following amount today on purchases (food, clothing, magazines, sports equipment, etc.)

nothing spent.....	0
\$5.....	5
\$10	10
\$10+	1 point per dollar

Score D _____

E. Food

Today I ate the following proportions of meat:

·none.....	0
one portion	10
two portions	20
three portions.....	30

This much food was left on my plate:

none	0
very little	5
more than a little.....	10

I composted all vegetable and fruit scraps

yes	0
no	10

The food I ate was locally grown:

all	0
some	10
none.....	20

The food I ate was packaged in paper or plastic:

none	0
some	10
all	20

Score E _____

F. Garbage

If I were to take everything I threw into the garbage today and put it all into the same container, I would need this size of container to hold it all:

a crate	30
a shoebox	15
a cup	5
produced no garbage.....	0

Score F _____

G. Living Space

Calculate in square meters the indoor space that you require to live in for the three days. Include all the space in your home, school, workplace etc. (1 sq. meter = 10 sq. feet). Divide the total square meters by the number of people you shared this space with.

Home sq. meters divided by # people = _____

School sq. meters divided by # people = _____

Work sq. meters divided by /# people= _____

Total Square meters = _____

score G _____

Add your scores from A to G for

GRAND TOTAL = _____

Calculate your personal "footprint" for one day by using the conversion formula below:

Grand total number is divided by 100 to equal your environmental footprint in hectares (e.g. you divide your score 690 by 100 which gives you the number of hectares : 6.9)

MY ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

IS _____ HECTARES

(One hectare is equal to 2.471 acres)

This quiz was sourced November 2006 and adapted from this website: www.educ.uvic.ca/faculty.

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FOOD

FOOD, GLORIOUS, ORGANIC, LOCAL FOOD

The Food Footprint includes growing food, catching or raising fish and areas to raise and graze animals as well as the energy to process and transport this food.

We all eat, some more than others. What we eat not only affects our personal health: it can also affect the health of our planet.

In Ontario we are fortunate to have many local Farmers' Markets. See this website to locate the one nearest to you:

www.farmersmarketsontario.com

It is so important to support local farmers, especially organic farmers. A useful web site for finding sources of organic food produce, including meat is:

www.organicadvocates.org

By purchasing products from our local farmers we are ensuring their survival.

Even at the grocery store, by reading the labels showing where produce comes from, we are able to buy potatoes, cabbage, onions, winter squash, turnips, etc., from Ontario all winter long.

Obviously, we will never be able to buy local bananas, oranges or okra, but we can choose local fruits and vegetables for as

long as they are available.

Be an informed consumer by reading the labels and noting the place of origin of what you buy. See the chart here for seasonal availability of local produce.

How do our food choices impact our ecological footprint?

What can you do to reduce your footprint? Increase the amount of organically grown food that you eat by 50% and you will save 0.1 acres. Organic farming is the most sustainable and does not rely on soil depleting chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Increase the amount of locally grown food that you eat by 50% and you will save 0.2 acres. The further your food has to travel, the more energy is required to get it to you and the more greenhouse gas emissions are produced.

Choose unprocessed and unpackaged food by 50% and you will save 0.3 acres. The more processing, the more energy that is required plus more packaging produces more garbage.

Eat a vegetarian dinner instead of meat once a week and you will save 0.5 acres.



Meat production uses from 2 to 20 times the amount of land and water that vegetables require.

These are very easy and healthy choices that can have positive benefits personally and globally.

Partly sourced November 2006 from: www.veg.ca/issues/local_organic.html

Good Reasons to Buy Ontario Wines

BY MEGAN KEITH

Every summer I gather up my friends and their bicycles for a tour of the Niagara wine region.

For the past 10 years we have watched the little wineries grow into large upscale touring destinations, complete with wine tasting, gift boutiques, restaurants and award-winning wines that cannot be bought at LCBO stores.

There are more than 20 wineries in this area, each with a unique array of products.

Often we will find the owners conversing with visitors, sharing their favourite wines and eager to talk about their adventures in wine making.

It is always a pleasant experience of discovery and all of our bicycles are weighted down with several bottles of delightfully unique wine by the end of our trip.

I have always been an Ontario wine snob, and proud of it.

This year I asked at every winery we visited, 'Why should we buy Ontario wine?' Each person I spoke to said 'Ontario wine is world class.'

So why are we still choosing wines from as far afield as Chile, Australia and South Africa?

Dr. Joseph Pohorly, owner of Joseph's Estate Wines, said 'We need to support our local wine economy. We have all worked hard to make our wines top notch.'

Dave, a very friendly and knowledgeable server at Joseph's, pointed out 'If you buy a \$12 bottle of Yellow Tail from Australia, you need to factor in the cost to the environment. It creates 4 tonnes of greenhouse gases to ship one bottle of wine from Australia to Canada.'

That contribution to global warming is a sobering thought and should make us think twice before buying wine from afar.

Even better for the environment, Frog Pond Farm is an organic winery located in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Their wine can only be purchased at the winery or on the internet.

I highly recommend sampling their 4 wines. The taste is very unique and fresh which could be a result of the organic growing method coupled with the choice

of grapes.

Niagara peninsula wineries www.niagarapeninsula.com/listing/ are well promoted by the Wine Council of Ontario.

There are cycling paths, tour groups, B&Bs, maps and lots of parking.

Take a trip, experience the ambiance and taste test for yourself. Support Ontario wineries and become an Ontario wine snob too.

Megan Keith is co-chair of the Green Group of Georgina and can often be seen cycling around York Region and beyond

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Our high quality vendors can satisfy the majority of your household needs and provide you with the following products and services:

Fresh fruits and vegetables

Fresh meats and fish

Poultry and eggs

Delicatessen meats and cheeses

A large selection of teas, coffees and supplements

Fresh breads and baked goods

Fresh squeezed fruit juices and apple cider

Wild bird seed and honey products

Maple syrup and jams

Cut flowers and plants

Cleaning products and soaps

Knitting and various crafts

Antiques and miscellaneous merchandise

Custom drapery and upholstery services & Snack bar

We are open to look after you every week on the following days:

Thursday 12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m.

Friday 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Saturday 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Make us part of your weekly routine: come and visit us and enjoy the friendly atmosphere of the York Farmers Market.

Whether you are either an existing or new customer we look forward to seeing you.

Dates when local fresh fruit and vegetables are generally available in grocery stores:

	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April
apples				●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
asparagus	●	●										
beans		●	●	●	●	●	●					
beets		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
blueberries			●	●								
bok choy		●	●	●	●	●	●					
broccoli		●	●	●	●	●	●					
cabbage		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
carrots		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
cauliflower		●	●	●	●							
celery			●	●	●	●						
cherries		●	●									
corn			●	●	●	●						
cucumber		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
eggplant				●	●							
fiddleheads	●	●										
garlic			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
grapes				●	●	●	●					
lettuce	●	●	●	●	●	●	●					
nectarines				●	●							
onions		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
peaches			●	●								
pears			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
peas			●	●	●	●						
peppers			●	●	●	●						
plums			●	●	●	●						
potatoes		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
radishes	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
raspberries			●	●								
rutabaga			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
squash			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
strawberries		●	●									
sunchokes			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
tomatoes			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Partly sourced November 2006 from: <http://HarvestOntario.com>

RECIPES

adapted by Gloria Marsh, from the kitchen of Toadhall Bed and Breakfast

Spiced Lentil Soup

serves 4 - 6

- 2 tbsps oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 2 tsp coriander, ground
- ½ cup red lentils or yellow split peas
- 3 celery stalks, diced
- 2 carrots, diced
- 4 cups vegetable stock or water
- 1 tsp fenugreek seeds, ground
- 1 tbsps lemon juice
- salt and pepper to taste

Heat oil in saucepan. Add onion and cook until softened. Add cumin seed, turmeric and coriander and cook until fragrant. Add lentils, vegetables, stock and ground fenugreek. Simmer 30 minutes to 2 hours, depending on what type of lentil is being used. Add lemon juice, salt and pepper.

'Egg' Salad

This tasty and versatile dish can also be served at room temperature on its own, as part of a tapas selection or buffet side dish or as a conventional sandwich filling.

- 1lb. block organic, non GMO firm tofu
- 2 stalks celery
- 1 large carrot
- ½ cup real mayonnaise or vegenaïse
- 1 ½ tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp celery seed
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp white pepper

Combine all ingredients in food processor and chop to desired consistency, scraping bowl once or twice (can be left coarse or fine).

This recipe can easily be adapted to a vegan diet.



'Egg' Salad

Roasted Beets with Aniseed

serves 6

Roast these beets while the oven is being used for another dish. They can be served warm or room temperature, as a vegetable accompaniment or salad addition to a tapas or mezzah selection.

- 3 Ontario organic beets, washed and trimmed
- 3 tbsps olive oil
- 2 tbsps balsamic vinegar
- 1 small onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 tsp aniseed, lightly crushed
- salt and pepper

Wrap beets together in heavy foil (aluminium foil is now recyclable in your blue box) and roast along with whatever is in the oven until tender when tested with a thin knife - 45 minutes to 1 ½ hours, depending on oven temperature. Meanwhile mix remaining ingredients in serving bowl. When beets are done (a little crunch is OK for some tastes) remove skins and cut into wedges or fingers. Combine with other ingredients in bowl.

Serve immediately or cool and refrigerate for later use.

Apple or Pear Oatmeal Crisp

Serves 8

Serve for breakfast with yogurt or for dessert with sour cream or vanilla frozen yogurt or ice cream

- Topping:*
- 1 cup (250 mL) Old fashioned large flake oatmeal
 - 1/3 cup (75 mL) unbleached organic flour
 - 1/2 cup (125 mL) lightly packed brown sugar
 - 1/2 tsp cinnamon
 - 1/3 cup (75 mL) butter, softened

- Apple or Pear Mixture:*
- 5 Ontario apples or pears peeled and sliced into wedges
 - 1 tbsps (15 mL) lemon juice
 - 2 tbsps (25 mL) brown sugar

Topping: In bowl, combine oatmeal, flour, spice and brown sugar. Work in butter until crumbly. Set aside.

Apple or Pear Mixture: Place apples or pears in a greased 9-inch (2 L) square baking pan. Sprinkle with lemon juice and brown sugar. Sprinkle crumb mixture evenly over apples or pears. Bake in a 375°F (190°C) 30 to 40 minutes or until apples or pears are tender and topping is golden brown.

Mexican Squash Soup

Serves 4-6

Here is an adaptation of a recipe from Foodland Ontario. Garnishes may also be added directly to soup just before serving. Pass a basket of tortilla chips.

- 2 tbsps (25 mL) vegetable oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups (1 L) peeled and diced Ontario winter squash (Hubbard, Butternut, Buttercup or pie pumpkin)
- 1 tsp (10 mL) each ground cumin and dried oregano
- 1/4 tsp (2 mL) hot pepper flakes
- 4 cups (1.75 L) chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 tin, undrained corn kernels, product of Canada

Optional Garnishes

- Salt and pepper
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) fresh coriander, chopped
- 1 tomato, diced
- 1/2 cup (250 mL) shredded Monterey Jack
- 1 avocado, peeled, pitted and diced

Heat oil in pan; cook onions and garlic for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in squash, cumin, oregano and hot pepper flakes. Cook 1 minute, stirring. Add broth and bring to boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes or until squash is tender when pierced. Stir in corn; cook for 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle each serving with coriander sprigs, tomato, cheese, and avocado if desired or add to soup just before serving.

Sustainable Seafood

Go to Sustainable Seafood www.seachoice.org for handy wallet-size list of fish to buy without contributing to over-fishing and endangering ocean ecosystems.



Chick Pea and Kale Stew

Chick Pea and Kale Stew

serves 6-8

The spicing combination of this recipe harks back to Medieval Sephardic Spain. Serve this satisfying stew in bowls accompanied by warm, buttered, whole wheat or multi grain pita.

- 2 cups water
- 2 onions, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- 1 can chickpeas, undrained
- 1 large can plum tomatoes
- 1/2 cup dehydrated vegetable protein; chunks or slices (optional)
- 1 tsp each mild chili powder, dried thyme, ground coriander, cumin and cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp each ground cloves and black pepper
- 1 tbsps honey
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 bunch kale, trimmed and chopped (OK to use stems)

In a large stew pot sauté the onions and the garlic in the oil over moderate heat until the onions are softened. Add all other ingredients except kale; bring to a boil and simmer, stirring occasionally for 30 minutes. Add kale and simmer for 15 minutes more. If the stew gets too thick, add more water.

Variations - sliced garlic sausage such as chorizo or kielbasa may be added along with kale



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TRANSPORTATION

Charging Down The Road

BY JEFF LAIDLAW

When I first started driving, regular gasoline averaged a price of 39 cents per gallon (8.8 cents a litre).

Diesel fuel averaged 29 cents a gallon or 6.6 cents a litre, a fully loaded compact car with tax, license, pdi and dealer prep came in under \$3,000, unleaded gasoline didn't even exist, and a vehicle that gave high gas mileage was viewed as a bit of an oddity.

Now some of you may say, boy this guy must be old; but that's not the point of my writing today. In 35 years of driving I have only owned one car that got less than an average of 30 miles per gallon; and incredibly enough and hard to believe, in the city this one car only got 8 miles to the gallon.

Gasoline by this point was selling at the pumps for somewhere in the 70 cents a gallon range, and even at that point, I decided I was paying far too much.

Of course, when I first started driving, we didn't concern ourselves with noxious emissions. Quite honestly, the City of Toronto only had about 1.5 million people, so it was easy enough to get around - if you timed it right - without ever ending up in the dreaded stop and go traffic.

Now, well, I drove to my old neighbourhood in Toronto about three weeks ago, and a drive that used to take me between 20 and 30 minutes on average took over an hour. Of course Toronto has grown to over 3 million people and York Region has grown from 165,000 people to over 900,000 in the same time period; so I guess this should come as no surprise.

Things have changed and, to most of us, it isn't for the better. On July 1 of this year, I paid the incredible price for gasoline of \$1.039 a litre (\$4.72 a gallon). A fill-up that in 1974 would have cost me \$4.00 cost me \$65.00. The gasoline was unleaded but strangely enough, the car still only gets 32 miles to the gallon.

I guess I could have looked at diesel en-

gine vehicles a long time ago. Gas mileage tends to be significantly better (by a factor of about 50%) but, as we all know, they are noisy and they smell; and truth be known, if they break down, the repair costs tend to appear staggering to most.

So it's a wonderful thing that we now have the new option of hybrids. Led primarily by a strong effort from Toyota, the "glitches" that existed in early models of electric vehicles - primarily the weight of batteries and the short distance between charges - has been responded to by the creation of a computer controlled blend: a relatively small gasoline powered engine augmented by a relatively small electric motor.

From an environmental standpoint, this is a huge move forward with some vehicles reporting gas mileage as high as 70 miles to the gallon - previously only achievable on a motorcycle. Add to this consideration the realization that the hybrids generally report good gas consumption ratings in city traffic.

The two factors that are of the greatest note and are reliant upon each other are:
i) **A significant reduction in gas consumption:** my 6 year-old vehicle currently has 275,000 kilometres on it and has used about 24,300 litres of gasoline at, let's say, an average of 83 cents a litre = approximately \$20,000 total. By comparison, a hybrid getting 70 mpg, would use about 11,000 litres to achieve this mileage at a total fuel cost of about \$9,200.
ii) **As a corollary, the obvious benefit in reduction of noxious gases is huge.** The positive effects on air quality have been quantified but for simplicity and so you don't need to be an environmental engineer to understand it, let's just say that in my car, 55% less fuel equates to greater than 50% lower emissions.

Yes, I grant you that hybrids are not muscle cars; you will not go from 0 to 100



kilometres per hour in 5 seconds, or from 100 to 130 in 8 seconds; but, if you try these vehicles, you may find them surprisingly peppy, amazingly comfortable and incredibly quiet. Combine that with the cost savings from operation, and the benefit to the environment, and the decision may become relatively easy.

Toyota has led the charge in the field but Honda, and many others, have now joined into the hybrid movement; and, if you feel the need to drive an SUV, there are at least 4 which, through hybrid technology, are now offering competitive gas mileage to sedans.

Jeff Laidlaw is a man about King Township and Ward 2 Councillor.

TOP 10 MOST FUEL EFFICIENT VEHICLES

This mpg (miles per gallon) list is according to Natural Resources Canada as of Nov. 27/2006. They combine all 2006 models with all those currently tested 2007 models: 5 of top 10 are hybrids, 3 of top 10 are diesel.

	City mpg	Highway mpg
1/ Honda Insight	72	86
2/ Toyota Prius	71	67
3/ Mercedes SmartforTwo	61	74
4/ Honda Civic hybrid	60	66
5/ Toyota Camry Hybrid	50	50
6/ VW Golf TDI Diesel	46	61
7/ VW Beetle TDI Diesel	46	61
8/ VW Jetta TDI Diesel	43	54
9/ Toyota Yaris	41	51
10/ Toyota Corolla	40	53

Sourced November 2006:

<http://oe.nrcan.gc.ca/transportation/tools/fuelratings/ratings-search.cfm?attr=8>

Green Transportation Information

To Drive or Not to Drive? That is the Question.

The sad truth is that your car emits as much CO₂ as your entire house. Improving the fuel efficiency of your car will have an enormous impact on climate change. In fact, experts say that paying attention to fuel efficiency in your car may be the single biggest thing you can do to prevent global warming!

Hybrid cars are, of course, the most energy efficient of all cars on the market, but there is another important element to these cars that some consumers disregard. That is the fact that they do not idle! While sitting in traffic or stopped at a red light these cars are not emitting toxic, greenhouse gas emissions.



Used tires make a lasting impression on future generations.

Of course not driving at all also does not release toxic, greenhouse gas emissions and we all know that walking is very healthy for us. If possible WALK or BIKE. Plan your time around walking or biking somewhere instead of just automatically getting into your car. It is better for your health as well as the planet's health. So walk the walk...

Aside from walking, you can reduce the amount you drive by carpooling, taking public transportation and planning multiple errands in one trip.

If and when you must drive and you can't buy a hybrid or a more fuel-efficient car yet, be sure to keep your car tuned up.

Just a simple tune-up often improves fuel efficiency by half. If 100,000 of us went out and got a tune up, we would save 124,000 tonnes of CO₂!

Smart Commute is a collaborative project between Markham and Richmond Hill geared to relieving traffic congestion. This initiative even has a free lunch time shuttle bus between businesses and restaurants in the Hwy 7 and Hwy 404 area. Their website has useful links to a number of transportation/recreation related sites: www.smartcommute404-7.ca

Walks on the Wild Side®



An Outdoor Recreation Program Promoting Environmental Awareness

Walks on the Wild Side is an interpretive program developed through a strategic alliance between the Town of Richmond Hill Parks, Recreation and Culture Department and The Optimist Club of Richmond Hill.

WOWS focuses on the Town's Natural Heritage System and is designed to inspire learning about nature and environmental protection, while providing additional recreational opportunities that promote health and well-being.

The program features a resource manual, interpretive signs, a series of trail guides and related programmed activities. A digital version of the manual can be purchased from the Town's Parks, Recreation and Culture Department for \$15 and hard copies are available for \$30 each.

To order your manual today or for more information about the program, email: naturalheritage@richmondhill.ca or call 905-771-8870.



REVIEWS

RESTAURANTS & BOOKS

Restaurant Reviews

BY GLORIA MARSH

We are fortunate to have an incredible diversity of multi-cultural restaurants in York Region. For the purposes of shrinking our Ecological Footprint where we encourage residents to have a least one vegetarian meal a week, I will touch on a few excellent eateries that offer a wide selection of meatless options.

Two notable Indian Restaurants are The Jaipur, on East Beaver Creek Road, and Taj Odyssey, on Yonge Street, south of Elgin Mills. They both have a large choice of well prepared vegetarian dishes. One of my favourites is saag paneer, which is comprised of homemade cheese and spinach, nicely spiced. Having cooked this dish from scratch myself, starting with litres of whole milk to make the fresh cheese, I appreciate the work involved. The satiny texture is a fine complement to chewier dishes.

An Indian vegetarian meal wouldn't be complete without the addition of a lentil dish. Options include, daal makhni (lentils in a rich mild sauce) or channa masala (chick peas with onion, tomato, ginger and garlic). Aloo gobi (cauliflower & potato) or an eggplant or okra dish together with rice or one of the wonderful Indian breads such as naan or paratha would round out this feast nicely. I always order salty lassi, a yogurt drink, with an Indian meal, but for those of you with a sweeter tooth, the mango lassi is sure to please.

The Jaipur is closed on Monday and offers a buffet lunch Tuesday to Friday. The Taj Odyssey is open 7 days a week for dinner and features a lunch buffet Sunday to Friday. It is in the same plaza as Value Village and the Salvation Army. While in the plaza, make your ecological footprint trip complete with a drop off of articles you no longer wanted or pop in to find just the right recycled item you need.

Restaurants that feature Thai and Pan Asian food have quite a few vegetarian items to offer. I would also not dismiss the many Chinese restaurants. Thankfully, because of our growing Asian population, truly authentic Chinese dishes are readily available, many of them meat free in the Buddhist tradition. Graceful Vegetarian Restaurant at 670 Hwy 7 East, is even on the Markham/Richmond Hill free lunch-time shuttle bus route www.smartcommute404-7.ca/Lunch_Express.htm.

If you visit a Greek or Middle Eastern eatery, you will be in for a treat. There is always a wide selection to choose from on the appetizer menu, enough to make up a whole meal. Tasty delights include falafel, hummus (chick pea dip), baba ghanouj (eggplant spread), dolmades (stuffed grape leaves) and grilled vegetables, to name a few.

Leave any staid, everyday taste buds at home as you embark on a dining adventure good for the planet as well.

Gloria Marsh is avid about travel, food, cooking and the environment. Not necessarily in that order.

The Jaipur,

165 East Beaver Creek Rd. #28
(n. of Hwy 7, w. of Hwy 404)
Richmond Hill, ON
T: 905-709-3773
www.thejaipur.com

Taj Odyssey,

10620 Yonge Street #10
(south of Elgin Mills)
Richmond Hill, ON
T: 905-884-4512

Life, Money & Illusion; Living on Earth as if we want to stay

Mike Nickerson

Seven Generations Publishing
448 pages
ISBN 0-9780973-0-0

BY NATALIE HELFERTY

When we approach the big question in life, "Why am I here?" it is usually a sign that we have arrived at a junction in our life; the paths before us are many. Therefore, what we need to really ask ourselves is, what path do I want to take? That is the essence of our existence on earth as society, as well as individuals. It's our choice.

The book, *Life, Money & Illusion: Living on Earth as if we want to stay*, by Mike Nickerson states this as our 'question of direction' that we, as society, need to address. Our 'me-first' interests need to be replaced as we mature. Mr. Nickerson states that 'the present and future well-being of individuals, communities and ecosystems must be clearly seen as legitimate goals.'

The book is not deeply philosophical, but aims to question our values in the underlying premise of including the word 'illusion' in the title. He compares the ideal of societal function to The Golden Rule: do unto others as you would have them do unto you. The production of goods and services benefits society as a whole if this rule is maintained. However, he states, 'the philosophy of self-interest (the American Dream and its consequences) has inspired and excused manipulation of the system in ways that provide advantage for a few over the many.'

We need to recognize that our society must return to the golden rule in order to fix our global problems and to reduce our ecological footprint. He concludes that ultimately living only for personal self-interest has to end in tragedy. People need to grasp that their own well-being depends on the well-being of those around them and as they begin to identify with their community.

One of the first realizations is that we live in a system with limits. All resources come from the earth and must go back to the earth. The economic system has not recognized these limits of earth's resources and the way economics operates is under an unlimited growth model. This economic model is wrong and needs to be corrected.

This book offers up some solutions to bring the reality of our ecology into the real workings of our economy. Right now we are operating what is really an 'egonomy', by all intents and purposes. We need to recognize that our society as it operates now is based on feeding our ego, not our world. By reducing our ecological footprint, we can take that step to recognize our limitations and realize the values we

must adopt for our mutual provision and the survival of our planet and ourselves as a part of this planet.

Indigo Bookstores in Richmond Hill carries copies in the store or go to www.sustainablewellbeing.net to order directly.

Natalie Helferty is an ecologist who avoided dry economic theories until she discovered that, like rice cakes, they sort of grow on you as your tastes evolve.

The Weather Makers

Tim Flannery
HarperCollins Publishers Ltd.
356 pages, \$34.95 hardcover
ISBN-13: 978-0-00-200751-1

BY SUSAN SHEARD

The Weather Makers is a highly acclaimed book describing the causes and effects of global climate change and offering suggestions on key changes in perspective and lifestyle that are long overdue. Flannery brings his training as a scientist to the topic, presenting irrefutable evidence and clearly worded arguments to convince the sceptic that climate change is happening, and that our consumption of fossil fuels and the greenhouse gases they emit when burned are to blame.

The book offers many glimpses into particular ecosystems, allowing us to see just how specific the requirements of so many plants and animals are, and how vulnerable they are to fluctuations brought about by climate change.

While *The Weather Makers* is no trip to Oz, I think it would be a mistake to label it pessimistic. In fact, one of Flannery's greatest strengths is that he is neither a pessimist nor an optimist; he is a realist. The following is my favourite of Flannery's powerful inducements to wake up and smell the CO₂: 'Earth's average temperature is around 15C, and whether we allow it to rise by a single degree, or 3C, will decide the fate

of hundreds of thousands of species, and most probably billions of people. Never in the history of humanity has there been a cost-benefit analysis that demands greater scrutiny.'

In the end, Flannery does offer hope—hope that is firmly rooted in reality because it is contingent upon action. While he asserts that writing letters to politicians can 'change the world', he also argues that we can't leave change up to our governments. Now, more than ever before, we wield great power as consumers: 'the energy sector is about to experience what the internet brought to the media—an age wherein previously discrete products are in competition with each other, and with the individual. If enough of us buy green power, solar panels, solar hot water systems and hybrid vehicles, the cost of these items will plummet' [which in turn] 'will compel energy-hungry enterprises to maximize efficiency and turn to clean power generation.'

Having himself adopted the lifestyle changes he advocates (including going solar), Flannery is clearly practicing what he preaches. And if a person like Flannery—who spends his days mired in deeply distressing facts—can still muster up enough hope and motivation to make lifestyle changes, surely the rest of us can as well.

Susan Sheard was inspired by Flannery's example to make the switch to Bullfrog Power green hydro.

I PLEDGE TO REDUCE MY ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT



HOME I will:

Change over ALL my lighting to energy efficient light bulbs
Turn off lights, TV, stereo, computer etc., when not in use
Compost, Recycle
I will buy toilet paper and other paper products made from recycled or FSC approved paper
Use plants in the garden that require less water



TRANSPORTATION I will:

Try to walk or ride my bike to where I need to go
Take public transportation whenever possible
Buy a fuel efficient or better still, a hybrid vehicle
Carpool



CONSUMPTION I will:

Buy ONLY what I really NEED
Buy REUSED and RECYCLED products
Buy from ethical companies
Buy products that are the least packaged



FOOD I will:

Eat more locally grown and raised organic foods
Have a vegetarian meal at least once a week
Buy loose or bulk foods

With very little effort, each one of us can make a BIG difference!

Tear off this pledge and place on your fridge as a reminder



ECO-SMART KIDS

Eco Cartoon

Spot and compare 10 ecological differences in these illustrations.

Ask yourself what is wrong and what is right about each difference. Check your answers.

Are your family members eco warriors or globe gobblers?

ANSWERS:

home size the smaller your house, the less energy is needed to keep it warm in winter and cool in summer and the more space is left for nature

garbage bagging all your garbage instead of recycling and composting contributes to landfills

lawn mower the pollution from a gas lawn mower that is run for 2 hours, is the same as driving a car from Toronto to Montreal. Weed whackers and leaf blowers are also bad for the environment

garden a natural garden with very little lawn encourages birds and butterflies and other wee creatures and doesn't need pesticides

cars most SUVs are gas guzzlers, which use up our non-renewable natural resources

idling idling a vehicle contributes to air pollution and global warming

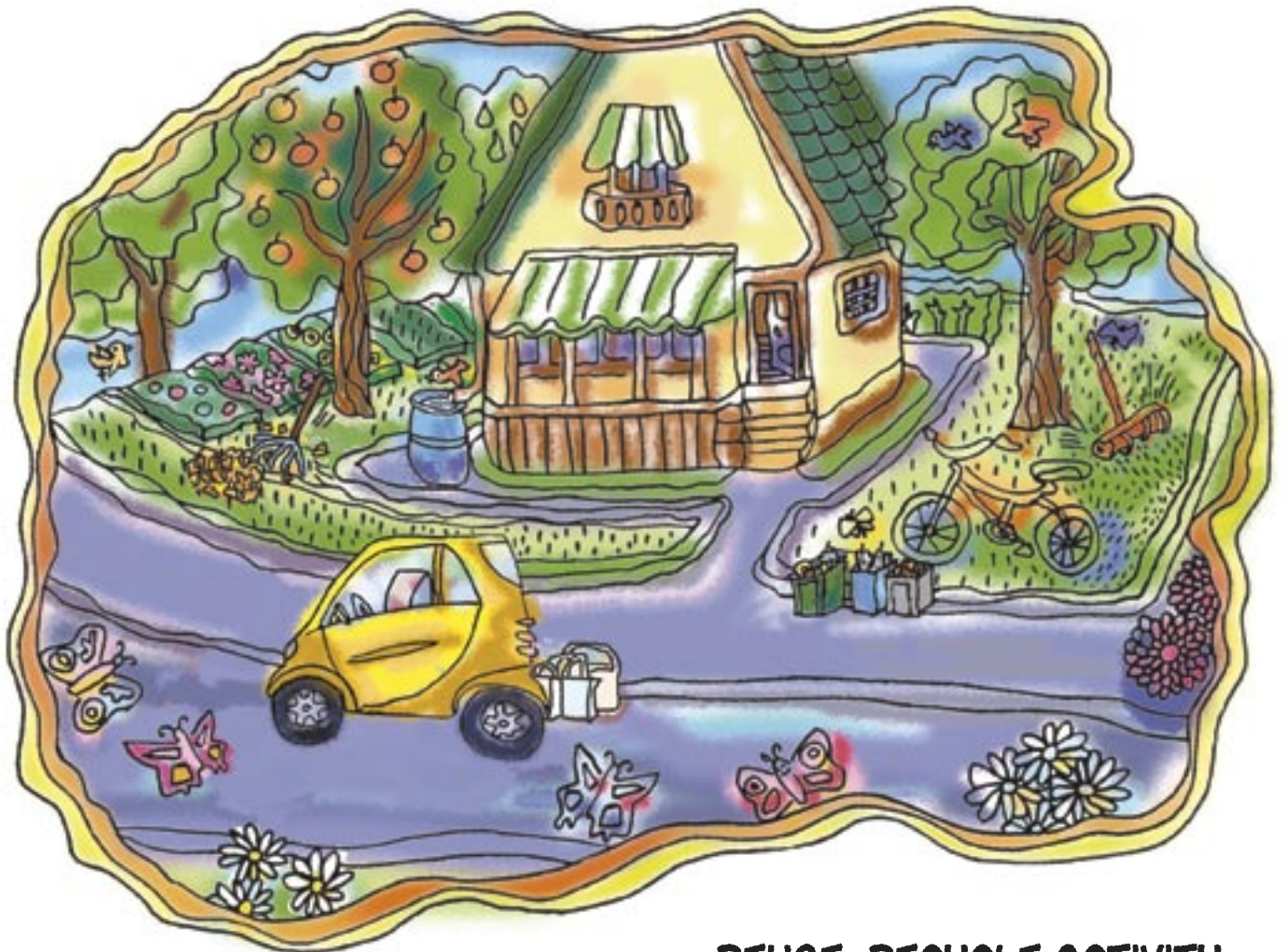
shopping buying stuff we don't really need makes more garbage and wastes our natural resources

air conditioners use lots of electricity. If more nuclear reactors have to be built to fill the need for all this electricity, it will be a further danger to our health and the health of the environment

rain barrel a rain barrel collects run off for the roof which can be used to water the garden

shade tree planting a shade tree on the south side of your house helps keep it cooler in summer

motorcycle motorbikes cause a lot of air pollution. It is healthier for you and the environment to use a bike instead, and is better exercise



REUSE, RECYCLE ACTIVITY

for family fun and nifty school project!

Have you ever felt guilty buying Clementine or Mandarin oranges in those little wooden crates that can't be put into the recycling bin? Here is a fun project for home or school. These decorative crates are handy as storage in a child's room for crayons, pencils, CDs and other odds and ends. It also makes a nice gift-giving receptacle for holding home made loaves, cookies, jams, tea, cheese, crackers etc. Just enclose with clear cellophane and gather cellophane together at the top with ribbon.

1 EMPTY MANDARIN ORANGE CRATE PER PERSON
 ODDS AND ENDS OF LEFTOVER PAINT; ANY KIND, BUT ACRYLIC DRIES FASTEST
 PICTURES SAVED FROM CARDS, CALENDARS, COMICS, MAGAZINES ETC.
 GLUE
 OR
 POTATOES
 GLOSSY ACRYLIC VARNISH
 SPONGE BRUSHES; THE KIND YOU CAN REUSE THE HANDLES

Paint outside of crate with colour of your choice.

While paint is drying, cut out things that catch your fancy from saved cards, calendars, etc. Make sure that they are the right size to fit on the outsides of the crate.

When paint is dry (you can speed this up by using a hairdryer) glue your cut outs in an attractive arrangement on all four sides of the outside of the crate.

OR
 Cut potato in half. Make a simple design on cut side of potato, then carefully remove 1/2" pieces of flesh around the outside of your design so your design protrudes above the rest of the area.

Dip potato cut design in contrasting colour and press randomly onto painted sides of crate.

When everything is dry, coat with glossy varnish. You may need two or three coats to seal paper cut outs to crate.

Use to store anything that fits.