Dear Friends of Simplicity,

This is the Simplicity Matters Earth Institute Monthly Announcement for **February 2014**. It is going out to over 1,540 people. If you do not want to receive this once-a-month email in the future, simply hit "reply" and ask to be removed.

Please also remember that if you prefer not to read this announcement in email form, you can always access it on the web at [www.simplicity-matters.org/announcements](http://www.simplicity-matters.org/announcements/) or as a PDF at [http://www.simplicity-matters.org/events/2014/2014-2.pdf](http://www.simplicity-matters.org/events/2014/2014-2.pdf)

In case you are not aware, **SMEi is now on Facebook!** Please “like” us: [https://www.facebook.com/pages/Simplicity-Matters-Earth-Institute/130611396993657](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Simplicity-Matters-Earth-Institute/130611396993657)

Please start posting articles, thoughts, and questions there, to start some online dialogue. Consider it the SMEI “blog”!

We also have a Yahoogroup, called "DCMetroSimplifiers," with about 265 members, if you want to be involved during the month in an "interactive dialogue." You can subscribe from our “Online Convos” tab of our website or directly at [http://www.simplicity-matters.org/online](http://www.simplicity-matters.org/online).

For our friends in Baltimore, there is also a YahooGroup called "Green City Baltimore," with similar interactive opportunities and about 91 members. You also can subscribe from our “Online Convos” tab of our website or directly at [http://www.simplicity-matters.org/online](http://www.simplicity-matters.org/online).

This announcement is organized into seven sections:
- Second Sunday Forum
- Earth Forum of Howard County
- Baltimore Green Forum
- Discussion Circle Update
- Community Events
- March Preview and Beyond
- Action Opportunities & Tidbits

**Urgently needed**: Person(s) proficient in Dreamweaver or similar software to monthly update SMEI website. Candidates should have their own computer and software, ability to convert Word documents into clickable PDFs, and good editing and proofreading skills. Great volunteer opportunity enabling you to showcase your talents if you're starting your career as a webmaster. **Please contact Lena Rotenberg**, LenaRR@gmail.com or 301-432-8721.

Thanks to this month’s editor: **Marjory Donn**

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**SECOND SUNDAY FORUM**

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**We will be going on hiatus but hope to return in March.**

Our events are In a private home in Bethesda, within walking distance of the Medical Center metro and are always free and open to all.

Contact: Marney@simplicity-matters.org
EARTH FORUM OF HOWARD COUNTY

Sunday, February 16, 2:00 p.m.,
First Presbyterian Church
9325 Presbyterian Circle
Columbia, MD

From Farm to Table: The Future of Food for the World

Dr. Robert Thompson, a global agricultural development and food security expert, will address the challenges of having adequate and nutritional food for a future population of 9.7 billion people (est. world population for 2050).

Delegate Liz Bobo will present her Annapolis insights and attendees can enjoy nutritious refreshments and information tables. Three workshops will be held. The Earth Forum is free and open to all.

Details and directions can be found at www.firstpreshc.org or by calling 410-730-3545.

SAVE the Date: Sunday, March 16, 2014 at 2 p.m. This Earth Forum’s theme will be Gardens Galore.

THE BALTIMORE GREEN FORUM

Sunday, February 23,
Presentation: 4 - 5:30 pm;
Breakout Sessions: 5:30 - 6:30pm,
MD Presbyterian Church,
1105 Providence Road, Towson, MD 21286
http://www.mpchurch.org/About.htm

Topic: **Haven’t you heard “You are what you Breathe.”? The importance of Indoor Air Quality told from an Environmental Professionals perspective*
Speaker: Aisha Dorn, Founder and CEO, Lifeline Environmental, LLC*

Aisha Dorn spent all her life living, working, and breathing in all Baltimore City has to offer. After graduating Northwestern High School she attended Baltimore City Community College where she studied Environmental Science. She then participated in The Baltimore Center for Green Careers Brownfield’s certification program. Here she learned the hazards of Asbestos, Lead and Hazardous Chemicals and how they can have lasting effects on not only the environment but the people that live and work in these conditions. In 2012 she and her now husband, Marc Dorn, started Lifeline Environmental, LLC together with a mission to put the customer’s needs first by creating sound solutions to environmental plights that interfere with the health, well-being, and productivity of their everyday life by using our business model of environmental stewardship.

To ask any questions about our programs or to get updated program info: Send email to baltimoregreenforum@gmail.com, call Sam Hopkins at 410-554-0006, or check www.baltimoregreenforum.org
DISCUSSION CIRCLE UPDATE

NEW TOPICS THIS FALL:
Going Green At Home, http://chears.org/gcan/discussion-circles/


IMPORTANT NOTE: Effective Oct 1, 2012 NWEI discussion circle guides went up to $25 plus s/h (except a few rare exceptions). They should be ordered directly from NWEI. For more info, visit http://www.simplicity-matters.org/circles/order.php

From Jan to Dec 2013, we started 13 circles (291 total circles since 2002!). In 2014, two circles have already begun. Most recent topics have included Sacred Economics, The Ethics of Water Security, Hungry for Change, and Peer Support Group. There is one circle starting this month in Howard County and one in College Park accepting new members. Both are marked with an asterisk (*). Many more are in active formation.

Our circles have become so widespread that we are now breaking them down by county. Please scroll down to see what is starting up near where you live. For more info, you may contact Lore at lore@simplicity-matters.org unless otherwise noted.

Frederick & Washington County
UU Church of Frederick (tbd) Contact Marney at marney@simplicity-matters.org for details

Carroll County
Westminster "Regroup" Contact CirclesCarroll@Simplicity-Matters.org to join the group for discussions and to watch videos. CS: Carole Flood

Howard County
*Howard County Conservancy, “Choices for Sustainable Living” (7 sessions), Dates TBD (Feb 1st start date was just cancelled) RSVP to Florence Miller at fam57@verizon.net. More info: http://www.hococlimatechange.org/circles/upcoming-circles-1.
Western Howard County "Change by Degrees: Addressing the Climate Challenge" CS: Liz Feighner/Sue Kunkel, for more info email hococlimatechange.circles@gmail.com
Town Center/Manor House/Oliver Carriage House "Change by Degrees: Addressing the Climate Challenge" CS: Florence Miller, for more info email hococlimatechange.circles@gmail.com

"Is Sustainability Still Possible" Circle, online (from home)
The Transition Movement group on Goodreads.com will engage in discussion circle of the book "State of the World 2013: Is Sustainability Still Possible?", starting on May 19 and continuing (slowly) through the end of the year. They are currently on Chapter 22. You do not need to be available on Sundays, as you can progress at your own pace. For more info see http://www.transitionhoco.org/goodreads-transition-movement.

HoCo Climate Change Circles Committee is actively pursuing other potential venues. Details to follow. Visit http://www.hococlimatechange.org/circles/upcoming-circles-1 or email hococlimatechange.circles@gmail.com

Harford County
None currently scheduled to begin

Baltimore City/County
Baltimore “Matchmaker” Circle (tbd, as soon as we get a critical mass), CS: Lore Rosenthal, lore@simplicity-matters.org

Anne Arundel County
No new circles starting at present.

Prince Georges County
*College Park/Hyattsville, “Sacred Economics” & Gift Circle, The next Gift Circle will occur on Thursday, Feb 13, 7:15-9:15 at Carol's Home (10 min walk from College Park metro station on green line) It is an opportunity to make offers and request needs. Please RSVP to Carol (301-864-5267 or carolnezzo@gmail.com) or just come. The circle is still open to new people. The circle may also discuss another chapter of Sacred Economics, which you can read online. http://sacred-economics.com/read-online/


Greenbelt “Climate Change, from Local to Global”, We are pilot testing a next six-week discussion circle that will include *Climate Science * Life-style Choices * Systemic Change * Policy & Strategic Alternatives * Envisioning a Positive Future * Where Do We Go From Here? CS: Lore Rosenthal (looking for 6 more people) http://chears.org/gcan/discussion-circles/climate-change-local-to-global/

Greenbelt “Peer Support Group”, This six-week circle for people interested in climate and sustainability will teach the basic tools of peer support, give participants the opportunity to benefit from the process and empower participants to provide support to themselves and others on an ongoing basis after the circle. Dr. Jim Driscoll will come out the first session to model the process. The circle will then continue on it's own for 4 sessions. Jim will return the sixth session to lead the wrap up. CS: Lore Rosenthal/Beth Leamond (looking for 5 more people) http://chears.org/gcan/discussion-circles/

Paint Branch UU Church (VS), Will start as soon as there is a critical mass. CS: Raman Pathik

Montgomery County
We are putting together circles for winter now. Topics being considered are HFC and CSL. Interested parties need to contact Marneyb@earthlink.net for more information.

Takoma Park (Peer Support Group) CS: Jerry Governman, email lore@simplicity-matters.org, if interested.
Takoma Park (Common Security Club) CS: Bruce Baker, email lore@simplicity-matters.org, if interested.

Silver Spring (Addressing Climate Change or Peer Support Group) We are working with Marylanders for Climate Coordination and MC-OFA to tailor a circle to the interests of participants. CS: Lore Rosenthal

Washington, DC,
Dupont Circle/Adams Morgan/Citizens Climate Lobby SMEI is teaming up with the National Institute for Peer Support, Ecolicity, and the Citizens Climate Lobby to offer several discussion circles. This summer we studied the various components of the DC Sustainability Plan (http://sustainable-dc.org). Plans are in process for a follow up circle. CS: Jim Driscoll Email lore@simplicity-matters.org, if interested.

Dupont Circle/Columbia Heights (Sacred Economics) CS: Laura Gubisch. Email lore@simplicity-matters.org, if interested.

Tenleytown or on Red Line (All Topics). There is interest but we need more people. If you are interested in joining a discussion group please let me know. Marney@simplicity-matters.org, (301) 652-0492

We have just learned of a new group in DC also starting circles. Visit www.janyocommunity.com or http://thejanyocommunity.wordpress.com/course/ to learn more.

“Circles List”/“Matchmaking”
This fall, SMEI will continue “matching” and/or "pointing" people into circles. In neighborhoods where circles are already forming, we will point you in the direction of a circle nearby. In those areas where there is not a circle already being planned, we will “match” people into home-based groups.
We have transitioned to a regional structure for the state. Please use the emails below for more information about circles starting in your county.

SMEI Regional Coordinators:
Baltimore City/Baltimore Co.: CirclesBalto@simplicity-matters.org (Lore Rosenthal)
Carroll Co.: CirclesCarroll@simplicity-matters.org (Marney Bruce)
Frederick & Washington Co.: CirclesFredWashCo@simplicity-matters.org (Lena Rotenberg)
Howard Co.: CirclesHoCo@simplicity-matters.org (Lore Rosenthal).
See also Climate Change Initiative of Howard County (CCIHC) www.hococlimatechange.org
Montgomery Co.: CirclesMontgomery@simplicity-matters.org (Marney Bruce)
Prince Georges Co.: CirclesPG@simplicity-matters.org (Lore Rosenthal)
Washington DC: CirclesDC@simplicity-matters.org (Marney Bruce)
Elsewhere in Maryland or Jefferson Co., WV: Circles@simplicity-matters.org or 301-432-8721 (Lena Rotenberg)

For a list of our most popular NWEI-published discussion topics, visit http://www.simplicity-matters.org/volunteers/forms/7guides.pdf

If you are starting your own circle and would like to have your blurb posted here and on our website, please email it to Lena@simplicity-matters.org

For more info. about our discussion circles, visit our Discussion Circles page, http://www.simplicitymatters.org/circles, or email Lore at lore@simplicity-matters.org

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COMMUNITY EVENTS
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Sat., Feb. 1, ‘Return of the Elm’ Lecture and Pruning Workshop, 10am – 2pm; Vollmer Center, Cylburn Arboretum (map) Tom Zetterstrom, of Elm Watch, illustrates how this one iconic tree has long connected people to their land and communities. Lecture followed by pruning workshop in Patterson Park. Free, with donations encouraged. Register at www.baltimoretreetrust.org/

Sat., Feb. 1, Real Food Farm Volunteer Day, 12pm – 3pm
Starting in December and continuing through February, Real Food Farm will be hosting only ONE monthly Saturday volunteer day on the first Saturday of each month from 12pm-3pm: Dec. 7th, Jan. 4th and Feb. 1st. Any day’s project may include planting, weeding, invasive species removal, hoophouse construction, compost spreading, bed preparation, fruit tree planting, and lots more. www.realfoodfarm.org/get-involved/volunteer/

Sat., Feb 1, 7th Annual Seed Exchange, 12:30 pm - 4 pm, Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria, VA
Washington Gardener, the publication for DC-area gardening enthusiasts, is co-hosting the seventh annual Washington Seed Exchange at Green Spring Gardens. This event includes lectures, face-to-face seed swap, and more. You bring your extra seeds to swap with other gardeners. Everyone will leave with a bag full of seeds, new garden friends and expert planting advice. Fee includes lectures, goody bag and seed swap. Register by calling 703-642-5173. Fee: $15/person $10 for Washington Gardener subscribers and Friends of Green Spring. For more information, contact Kathy Jentz, Washington Gardener Magazine, 301-588-6894, WGardenermag@aol.com. Directions: http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring/

Sat, Feb 1, 1 pm, “The World According to Monsanto” (108 min).College Park City Hall, Council Chambers, 2nd Floor. 4500 Knox Rd. College Park 20740. RSVP requested but not required: janiso@erols.com or 301-474-5358

Sun., Feb. 2, Groundhog Day
Groundhog Day falls on February 2 in the United States. It is a part of popular culture among many Americans and it centers on the idea of the groundhog coming out of its home to “predict” the weather. www.timeanddate.com/holidays/us/groundhog-day

Sun, Feb 2, Walk the Talk: an interfaith response to polluted runoff 2:00pm – 3:30pm; First Presbyterian Church of Howard County, 9325 Presbyterian Cir, Columbia MD 21044 Come learn about Polluted Runoff and what communities across Maryland are doing about it. · Meet county representatives and get answers to your questions. · Get resources on how to take action to help heal the Bay. · Listen to testimonies from the faith community about their commitment to Creation. God makes the rain, but We make the runoff.
Polluted runoff is the only source of pollution in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed that is still increasing. Be a part of the groundswell of action to address polluted runoff! www.firstpreshc.org/earth-forum

Sun, Feb. 2, 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM, Join us for Superfood Sunday, Heathcote Community, 21300 Heathcote Rd, Freeland, MD
In honor of everyone who is not deeply nourished by the Superbowl, we've created an event to be sure we are nourished on this ever so awaited day.... Superfood Sunday! Come, hang out, make superfoods, learn & teach about them and eat yummy healthy deliciousness! RSVP to Rachel at rkrigs@gmail.com or 410-343-3478.

Mon., Feb. 3, First Day GEF National Green Week
National Green Week is an annual event that empowers schools to engage in sustainability focused lessons, projects or activities between the first full week in February and the end of Earth Month (April). Participating districts, schools, classrooms or youth groups choose a week, then select from GEF's sustainability focused programs to be their 'green theme.' Each theme provides 5 day standards-based lesson sets, activities, recommended reading, sustainability tips, contests, and more! www.greeneeducationfoundation.org/greenweek.html

Mon, Feb 3 at 10:00 AM, at 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, DC Environmental Network.
Come engage Chairman McDuffie and his DC Council Committee on Government Operations. Participants will deliver a letter signed by numerous environmental organizations urging the Council to finish passing this legislation and stop incentivizing dirty forms of energy. All are welcome but you need to sign up here and participate in our pre-action conference call. http://org2.salsalabs.com/o/6642/p/salsa/event/common/public/?event_KEY=69756

Tue., Feb. 4, Design Conversations, 5pm – 7pm; Windup Space ,10 W North Ave, Baltimore MD (map)
The Design Conversations are a monthly series of events loosely curated by a group of volunteers, focusing on rotating topics that are timely and engaging. These events are always free, always at the Windup Space, and now on the first TUESDAY of every month! Design Conversations are encouraged by the generous support of D:center Baltimore and Baltimore Community Foundation. Cash bar, AV hookup available for spontaneous presentations! dcenterbaltimore.tumblr.com; twitter.com/#!/dcenterbmore; facebook.com/groups/dcenterbaltimore; www.dcenterbaltimore.com/

Wed., Feb. 5, 11am – 1pm; EPA’s 2013 Smart Growth Achievement Award Ceremony, Washington, D.C. (map)
Come meet the winners of EPA’s 2013 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement! The award ceremony will feature guest speakers, videos of the winning projects, and copies of the 2013 awards publication. You won’t want to miss it! Email Sarah Dale (dale.sarah@epa.gov) if you have any questions www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/awards.htm

Wed., Feb. 5, Resilient Design for Building Skin and Roof, 5:30pm – 8:30pm; Engineers Club, 11 West Mount Vernon Place, Baltimore, MD, 21201
Architects, contractors, and other design professionals alike will benefit from this two part discussion on ways to design and build our buildings more resiliently. The talk will focus primarily on the building envelope, including aspects of the building skin and roof issues. Reception and networking: 5:30-6:30pm; Presentations: 6:30-8:30pm 2 AIA / HSW CES credits (pending approval) $25 AIA and Allied Members | $15 Associate AIA Members | Free for students | $35 Non-members. Presented by the Disaster Assistance Committee www.aiabalt.com/?page=14_ResilientSkin

Wed., Feb. 5, CBF’s Annual Baltimore Meeting, 6:30pm – 8:30pm; National Aquarium, 501 East Pratt St., Baltimore, MD 21202
Chesapeake Bay Foundation President Will Baker and special guest John Racanelli, CEO of the National Aquarium, will talk about current Baltimore and Chesapeake Bay priorities and issues, including the State of the Bay and other hot topics. Tour the Aquarium following the presentations! www.cbf.org

Wed, Feb 5, Greenbelt Climate Action Network, 7-9:15 pm, Room 114, Greenbelt Community Center, 15 Crescent Drive. Topic “Climate Stabilization Wedge Game”. http://cmi.princeton.edu/wedges/game.php The Stabilization Wedges Game is a team-based exercise that teaches players about the scale of the greenhouse gas problem, plus technologies that already exist to dramatically reduce our carbon emissions and get us off the path toward dramatic and damaging climate change. We will play the game in small groups, to choose 8 out of 15 solutions to climate change. Then each group will report back to explain their choices. For more info, contact Lore, lore@simplicity-matters.org, 301-345-2234, http://cheears.org/gcan/monthly-meetings/

Feb. 6 – 9, MAEOE Annual Conference: Make Connections - Take Action, Princess Royale in Ocean City, MD (map). MAEOE: Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education. www.maeo.org/

Thru., Feb. 6, Baltimore Outdoor Sierra Social, 7:30 pm
Wharf Rat in Fells Point, a cozy bar right in Fells with a big fireplace, pool tables, and Oliver Drafts in mugs. The English style pub has a good beer selection, good crab dip and a very laid back atmosphere. It is one of our favorite places. http://www.thewharfrat.com/ Please RSVP to Cindy for either February event at: cynthia.maddox@gmail.com or on the Facebook page. https://www.facebook.com/BaltimoreOutdoorSierrans?ref=hl

Thu., Feb. 6,13 and 20, Winter Preschool Programs, 10:00-11:30am, Woodstock, MD
Join Conservancy volunteer and former Kindergarten teacher Caroline Kosisky for our Winter Preschool Programs! Each session will include activities, songs, crafts and a story based on the day's theme. For more information, contact Devon Kosisky, info@hcconservancy.org, 410-465-8877. Directions and details at www.hcconservancy.org

Fri., Feb. 7, Baltimore Green Drinks | Baltimore Ecowomen, 6 pm – 8pm, Baltimore MD (map) Baltimore Green Drinks & the new group Baltimore Ecowomen are pleased to present a joint happy hour celebrating the World's Biggest Green Drinks Day! www.facebook.com/events/349717771836163/

Fri, Feb 7, 7 pm, UU Congregation of Rockville, screening of "Nothing Like Chocolate". 100 Welsh Park Drive, Rockville, MD 20850
Narrated by Susan Sarandon, this documentary film tells the story of Mott Green, founder of the Grenada Chocolate Company Cooperative, as he pursues his vision to create the best chocolate in the world, ethically and in terms of taste. In a world of mass-produced chocolate, often made with cocoa harvested by trafficked child labor, this artisanal, “smallest chocolate factory in the world” is fast becoming a serious competitor to the industrial chocolate familiar to most of us. For more info, contact Mary Lanigan, Co-Chair, UUCR Green Sanctuary Team, 240-687-0517, malanigan1@comcast.net. http://www.uucr.org/directions.php

Sat., Feb. 8, Baltimore Outdoor Sierra Hike, 9:30 am
Meeting place - Common Ground or at the trailhead at 10 am. We will be leaving a vehicle at the end point to returning drivers to the starting point as needed. We are heading up to do a 5-mile hike on the Merryman Trail in Loch Raven Reservoir. This is a moderate hike along the South side of the reservoir between Warren and Dulaney Valley Road. Please RSVP to Cindy for either February event at: cynthia.maddox@gmail.com or on the Facebook page. https://www.facebook.com/BaltimoreOutdoorSierrans?ref=hl

Sat., Feb. 8, Seeing Trees: Extraordinary Secrets of Everyday Trees, 7:00pm, Woodstock, MD
Visit the Howard County Conservancy to learn to see backyard trees in entirely new ways at this talk by noted naturalist and tree enthusiast Nancy Ross Hugo. Author of “Seeing Trees: Discover the Extraordinary Secrets of Everyday Trees,” Nancy describes how to view trees in ways that reveal secrets about how they have evolved and why they are engineered the way they are. For more information, contact Devon Kosisky, info@hcconservancy.org, 410-465-8877. Directions and details at www.hcconservancy.org

Sun., Feb. 9, Interfaith Workshop: “Greening Our Sacred Grounds,” 12:30-5:00 pm, Germantown, MD
Join us for our third annual forum which strives to bring congregations together to learn from one another, share praise for our Creator, and discuss projects that we can all do to restore and heal Creation in our local environment. For more information, contact Paul Hlavinka at phlavinka@gmail.com or visit www.muddybranch.org/event/interfaith-workshop.

This year’s Conference is focused on repairing the systems Americans rely on every day, whether getting us back and forth to work, supplying our power, keeping us safe from storms and floods, communicating with police and fire during emergencies, or ensuring the institutions where our children learn are safe and healthy. It's time to repair these systems today to create quality, family-sustaining jobs, to address the threat of climate change, and to ensure the health and safety of our workplaces and our communities. www.greenjobsconference.org/about

Feb. 10-20, Permaculture Design Certification, 6pm Tues - 4:30pm Thurs, Harpers Ferry, WV
A 10 Day Intensive Permaculture Design Certification Course at Rolling Ridge Retreat Center. Taught by the Rewilding School, this unique PDC will include skills & technologies useful for sustainable winter living, including the patterns, principles, and theory for transitioning towards ecologically balanced living all year round. Dynamic Tuition Structure of $794 - $1220 includes meals and lodging. For more details go to Events at www.RollingRidge.net or email Josh at jsbevans@gmail.com.

Tue., Feb 11, Bike Maryland’s Annual Bicycle Symposium, 8 am - 2:30 pm, Annapolis, MD
This free event is your chance to learn from bicycle leaders, transportation planners, community leaders and legislative officials who will present on current topics with the goal of increasing bicycle safety, connectivity and accessibility at this free premier event that includes lunch. The symposium draws over 300 experts, decision-makers, and enthusiasts, from the MD, DC, PA, DE and VA area, who share an interest in bicycling safety, legislation and infrastructure. Learn more...
Tue Feb 11, Rally for the 28th Amendment: Free & Fair Elections, 11 am, Lawyer’s Mall, Annapolis.
Street theater, legislative leaders and a teach-in on the new Resolution for the Democracy Amendment. Per Article V of the Constitution, the PEOPLE, through their state legislatures, can propose this amendment directly, without waiting for Congress. After the rally, at noon, join one of several brief guided “tours” to meet your legislators as a group, no special knowledge needed. Ridesharing available. RSVP: https://www.facebook.com/events/227327800768497/ Sponsored by www.GetMoneyOutMD.org admin@GetMoneyOutMD.org, 410-849-0670

Tue., Feb. 11, 5:30pm – 7:00pm; 20th Annual Citizens’ Campaign for the Environment Summit (Rescheduled), Annapolis, MD
The Citizens’ Campaign for the Environment invites you to the 20th Annual CCE Legislative Summit in Annapolis to hear from top legislative leaders and advocates about the environmental priorities for the 2014 General Assembly Session. 2014 will be a critical year for clean air and water so we need you there. Do your part for the environment and our communities! Join us to support strong environmental policy. www.mdcv.org/

Tue., Feb. 11, Montgomery County Green Party Monthly Meeting, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m., Takoma Park, MD
Work with Green Party local candidates on protecting 10 Mile Creek, privacy, single payer health care, climate change, social justice, empowering economics, and other progressive issues to create a just, sustainable society in Montgomery County and Maryland. For more information, contact Mary Rooker, greentyrtle@gmail.com, 301-891-1288. Directions and details at montgomerycountygreenparty.org.

Tues, Feb 11, 6-9 pm, Green Drinks DC at Meridian Pint, Featuring Laine Cidlowski of Sustainable DC
Meridian Pint 3400 11th St NW, Washington, DC 20010. RSVP: This is a free event please register here https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dc-green-drinks-february-happy-hour-tickets-10375390071

Thu., Feb 13, Bluebirds & Blue Martinis at Irvine Nature Center, 6:30-9 pm, Owings Mills, MD
Join your friends at Irvine Nature Center for some cerulean-colored fun and frivolity! Learn about bluebirds, their ecology and behaviors, and find out what will encourage these plump – yet active – little thrushes to visit your home and garden. And in their honor, we'll raise our blue martinis high! Presentation by Katharine Patterson. Drinks and dinner included. 21+ only. $20 for members; $30 for non-members. For more information, contact Clare, NaldrettC@ExploreNature.org, 443-738-9220. Directions and details at www.ExploreNature.org

Thurs, Feb 13, 6:00-7:30pm, Washington Gardener Magazine Garden Book Club, Takoma DC Library, 416 Cedar Street, NW, WDC
We will be discussing Flower Confidential: The Good, the Bad, and the Beautiful in the Business of Flowers by Amy Stewart. The room allows food and drink and you may bring your dinner and/or snacks to share. The book club meetings are FREE and open to anyone who would like to attend. Please RSVP to "WG Book Club" at WashingtonGardener@rcn.com. Details: http://washingtongardener.blogspot.com/2014/01/washington-gardener-magazine-book-club.html.

Fri., Feb. 14, Audubon’s Urban Bird Watching Walk, 8:00am – 9:30am; Meet at the fountain in Patterson Park, closest to the intersection of E. Lombard St. and S. Patterson Park Ave. (map)
Free • Bring the family to learn about birds that visit Maryland in winter! Audubon experts will lead us in search of feathered friends. If you would like to borrow binoculars, drop us an email – we have plenty to share! There is no need to RSVP for this event, just arrive ready to explore. 410.558.2473 or ppaudubon@gmail.com, pattersonpark.audubon.org/ 410.558.2473 or ppaudubon@gmail.com, pattersonpark.audubon.org/

Sat., Feb. 15, Asian Cultural Traditions: Celebrating Nature, 10:00am, Woodstock, MD
During this weekend program at the Howard County Conservancy, Wendy Ng and Kyong Parker will explore how many Lunar New Year practices in the Chinese and Korean cultures are rooted in nature – cycle of life, flowers, animals, respect and love as well as sharing the significance of some individual practices. For more information, contact Devon Kosisky, info@hccconservancy.org, 410-465-8877. Directions and details at www.hccconservancy.org

Tues, Feb 18, 12 noon, Univ of MD, Stamp Student Union, Margaret Brent Room B (Room 2112) Solar bulk purchase. University of Maryland faculty, staff, family and friends are working with Community Power Network (CPN) to install solar energy systems as a group. Open to community residents, not just staff and students. With a bulk purchase, for example a 5kW system could cost ~ $8,000 instead of $22,500. Please email UMDBulkPurchase@CommunityPowerNetwork.com with any questions. http://www.communitypowernetwork.com/umd

Tue., Feb. 18, 25, LEED BD&C Exam Prep Sessions, 1pm – 3pm
LEED AP Exam Prep: Building Design and Construction (BD+C). Prepare your entire team over the course of four weeks
for the LEED Building Design and Construction exam — at one low price! Included are four 2-hour training sessions (eight hours total) plus preparation materials: Session 1 — February 18: Introduction/Sustainable Sites Session 2 — February 25: Water Efficiency/Energy & Atmosphere Session 3 — March 4: Materials & Resources Session 4 — March 11: Indoor Environmental Quality/ Innovation and Regional Priority The LEED Building Design and Construction (BD+C) exam tests a candidate's detailed knowledge of the suite of BD+C rating systems, including LEED for New Construction and Major Renovations, LEED Core & Shell Development, and LEED for Schools. This requires mastery of the requirements, key strategies, implementation and documentation contained within.

**Tue., Feb. 18, 2014 EPA National Building Competition, 1pm – 2pm**
Get Ready for the 2014 EPA National Building Competition! EPA is announcing the 2014 EPA National Building Competition! Come to learn about this year’s competition, what it entails, how you can enter, and what kind of EPA recognition you can earn. This webinar is appropriate for every ENERGY STAR commercial buildings stakeholder.

**Tue., Feb. 18, Baltimore City Sustainability Commission Meetings, 4pm – 5pm;** Department of Planning, 8th Fl, 417 E. Fayette St. Baltimore MD (map)
The Baltimore Commission on Sustainability holds regular monthly meetings usually on the fourth Tuesday of every month. All meetings are open to the public. The Commission is made up of 21 members representing environmental groups, community organizations, labor unions, public health and environmental justice interests, and private industry. [www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/AgenciesDepartments/Planning/OfficeofSustainability.aspx](http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/AgenciesDepartments/Planning/OfficeofSustainability.aspx)

**Wed, Feb 19, VIDEO: “Symphony of the Soil”, 7:00-9:30pm, Takoma Historic Society, 7328 Carroll Ave., Takoma Park, MD**
Hosted by the Takoma Horticultural Club, this award-winning documentary will be followed by a brief discussion. Doors Open at 7:00 pm ~ Film begins promptly at 7:15. Please be considerate of others by being in your seat by 7:15 pm. Symphony of the Soil is an intriguing presentation that highlights possibilities of healthy soil creating healthy plants creating healthy humans living on a healthy planet. Length: 104 minutes. This event is free and open to the public. No reservations required. You are invited to wear your own (recycled) name tag and to bring snacks to share (finger food is best). For details, see: [www.TakomaHort.org](http://www.TakomaHort.org).

**Thu., Feb. 20, Cove Point Rally in Baltimore, 12:00-1:30 pm,** Meet at War Memorial Plaza, corner of N Gay St & E Fayette St., Baltimore, MD. Hundreds of people -- from the fracking fields of Pennsylvania to the Western mountains of MD to the DC suburbs and the Eastern Shore -- will hold one of the largest environmental rallies ever organized in downtown Baltimore to draw a region-wide line in the sand against Cove Point. February 20th is a crucial date to get loud: That's when the Maryland Public Service Commission will begin reviewing an essential permit before Dominion can build its $3.8 billion fracked gas export facility on the Chesapeake Bay. Join the Chesapeake Climate Action Network for a lunch time rally at the War Memorial Plaza, and then march around the Public Service Commission headquarters, calling on them to deny Dominion’s “dirty air” permit. RSVP at [http://tinyurl.com/mlzatjl](http://tinyurl.com/mlzatjl)

**Thu., Feb. 20, Webinar: Community Power Program for Organizations**
We invite congregations or other institutions in DC or MD to participate in this next round of the Community Power Program. If your religious community pays its electric bill in DC or in Maryland, you may have an opportunity for your congregation to both save thousands of dollars on energy bills and also support clean power. For more information on how to save your congregation money and support wind power at the same time, please join our webinar. To register: email your name, the name of your congregation, and the date of the webinar for which you are registering to karen@gwipl.org, with "CPP" in the subject line.

**Thu., Feb. 20, USGBC MD WinterGreen Awards, 5:30pm – 9:30pm;** Morgan State University Center for Built Environment 1700 East Cold Spring Lane Baltimore, MD 21251 (map) 9th Annual Wintergreen Awards for Excellence in Green Building. Every year the USGBC Maryland recognizes exceptional green building projects and outstanding green building leaders. For any questions or to request additional information please contact, Karen Evans, Wintergreen Awards Chair at 410-337-6903, karen.evans@whiting-turner.com, or Mary Pulcinella, Executive Director at 443-416-5848, mpulcinella@usgbcmd.org, [www.usgbcmd.org/wintergreen](http://www.usgbcmd.org/wintergreen)

**Thu., Feb. 20, Still Life in Hibernation, 7pm – 9pm;** The Natural History Society of Maryland 6908 Belair Road, Baltimore, MD
This program is for people who have an interest in sketching natural objects. We meet on the third Thursday of each month from 7-9pm to sketch specimens from our natural history collections as well as natural objects found by our volunteers and naturalists. There is one still life display to work from, and many objects built around a theme. The cost is FREE for members and $5 for non-members. You may want to bring a hand lens or magnifying glass along with the art supplies you'll use for sketching. Adults are welcome to bring refreshments to enjoy while sketching. Please join us to practice your sketching skills and spend an enjoyable evening with other nature and art lovers.
Sat., Feb. 22, Audubon’s Urban Bird Watching Walk, 8:00am – 9:30am; Meet at the fountain in Patterson Park, closest to the intersection of E. Lombard St. and S. Patterson Park Ave., Baltimore, MD
Free • Bring the family to learn about birds that visit Maryland in winter! Audubon experts will lead us in search of feathered friends. If you would like to borrow binoculars, drop us an email – we have plenty to share! There is no need to RSVP for this event, just arrive ready to explore. 410.558.2473 or ppaudubon@gmail.com, pattersonpark.audubon.org/

Sat., Feb. 22, Audubon’s Wildlife Gardening Workshop, 1pm – 3pm; Meet at Enoch Pratt Library Patterson Park Branch, 158 N. Linwood Ave., Baltimore, MD
Join Audubon for a Wildlife Gardening Workshop • Free • Open to the public • Registration required • Welcome gardeners! Come learn how to transform your urban dwelling into a native wildlife paradise! Audubon experts will be on hand to share practical tips and scientific support for gardening with native plants outside urban homes. Leave with resources you need to beautify your outdoor space and attract birds, butterflies, and other beneficial wildlife! Free simultaneous kids’ activities provided by Banner Neighborhoods. 410.558.2473 or ppaudubon@gmail.com, pattersonpark.audubon.org/

Sun., Feb. 23, Sermon: Climate Change: Vulnerability & Promise, Services at 9 and 11 a.m, Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church, Bethesda. As part of the national preach-in on climate change being organized by Interfaith Power and Light, the service will engage with the moral and ethical imperative of learning more about climate change, and acting decisively and appropriately. Cedar Lane is at 9601 Cedar Lane, Bethesda 20814. For directions go to www.cederlane.org or call (301) 493-8300.

Sun., Feb. 23, Forum: The Human Cost of Climate Change, 10:10 am- 11:10 am, Washington, DC.
This forum welcomes leading experts on climate change and displacement to discuss how this issue is impacting poor and vulnerable communities at home and abroad, and how people of faith can take action. For more information: http://tinyurl.com/ob5j2pm.

Thurs, Feb 27, Watershed Stewards Academy of Howard County, "Water Words that Work" 9am-3pm. Howard County Conservancy. For more info, visit http://howardwsa.org/events/water-words-that-work

Fri., Feb. 28, Baltimore Bike Party, 7:00pm – 9:30pm
Come ride and party through the great streets of Baltimore City with all your friends the last Friday of every month! We stay together as a group and follow a pre-determined route through the city. The wheels hit the road at 7:30. We usually ride until ~9:30 with 1 or 2 stops along the way. The ride is a slow pace (~6-10mph) designed to keep everyone of all biking abilities together! We are all here to have a good time. Have a friend(s) with a bike? Bring them along! Don’t have any friends? Come make some! baltimorebikeparty.com/

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MARCH PREVIEW & BEYOND
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Tuesday, March 11-April 22, Dynamic Governance (Sociocracy) Training, 7:00 - 9:00 pm, Greenbelt, MD Training in a powerful new consent-based approach to governing groups. Cost: $185 for all 6 sessions, workbooks, learning aids and support. For the first 5 people to register or if 2 or more people from the same group/organization register together, the cost is reduced to $165. Have services to barter in exchange for registration? joan@chears.org; www.chears.org (Latest News Section) or www.sociocracy.com.

Tuesday, Mar. 13 - Social at Los Amigos, Baltimore Outdoor Sierra

Sunday, Mar. 16- Hike at Gun Powder State Park, Baltimore Outdoor Sierra

March 18-30, 22nd DC Environmental Film Festival, http://www.dcenvironmentalfilmfestival.org/
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**ACTION OPPORTUNITIES, DEADLINES, & TIDBITS**

Check out the latest 3-minute video from Lori Hill of Sister Eden which shares tips about how to get rid of junk mail, why going green doesn’t have to cost more money and the importance of buying fair trade. [http://sistereden.com/ask-sister-eden-saving-money-buying-sweaters/](http://sistereden.com/ask-sister-eden-saving-money-buying-sweaters/) For more tips and videos about living the green life, visit [www.SisterEden.com](http://www.sistereden.com).

Want an entertaining and clear speaker on climate change to motivate your discussion circle or green team? As a professor of ecology and a member of the Climate Reality Leadership Corps, Sara Via presents in simple terms the latest evidence that climate change is real, that it is affecting Marylanders now, and that it is caused by human activities. Sara’s talk illustrates the increasing effects of climate change on weather, human health, agriculture and water security, using regional, national and global examples. There is still time to prevent the worst effects of climate change. Sara can help you energize your team and get them ready to take action. **Contact** Dr. Sara Via, svia@umd.edu, to discuss a talk (references available).

Got a film for Interfaith Power & Light's Film Library? Interfaith Power & Light (DC.MD.NoVA) is requesting films for our Film Library. Do you have an environmental film that you've already screened and would like to make available to hundreds of congregations? If so, contact Karen Leu, karen@gwipl.org, 202-709-7641. We'd especially love Bidder 70, Chasing Ice, Gasland 2, Food Inc, or King Corn. Check out our existing film library here: [http://gwipl.org/learn/film-library/](http://gwipl.org/learn/film-library/).

Join the Keystone XL Pledge of Resistance/Civil Disobedience Training: Looking to fight the good fight? Then consider joining a group of activists who are currently preparing to participate in 2 local Sit-Ins, all part of the Pledge of Resistance to the Keystone XL Pipeline. If President Obama approves the KXL pipeline, we will commit planned and peaceful acts of civil disobedience at a target in downtown Silver Spring and another in Ellicott City. If you are interested in learning more, please email Kristin Cook at kristingamzoncook@gmail.com or Carla Tevelow at perlpubl@gmail.com. We are planning more trainings over the next three months. Read more about the Pledge of Resistance and sign up for a specific sit-in location here: [http://nokxl.org/](http://nokxl.org/).

Write a letter opposing Fast Track Authority for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP): Congress is about to sign off on a massive pro-corporate trade deal that would invalidate our environmental protection laws, as well as health and worker protections. It would empower corporations to directly sue governments over laws and policies that they claim reduce their profits. We should know the details of what's in this pact and our national legislators should know. Write to your senators and their representative to ask them to oppose the Fast Track Authority that would turn it over to President Obama with no Congressional - or citizen - input. And, from what's been leaked about the TPP, you can also ask them to oppose the TPP itself. **For possible statements to include in a letter**, email: marjmdonn@verizon.net. More info from 350.org is here: [http://campaigns.350.org/petitions/say-no-to-corporate-power-grabs-reject-the-trans-pacific-partnership](http://campaigns.350.org/petitions/say-no-to-corporate-power-grabs-reject-the-trans-pacific-partnership).

Follow all of the bills in the Maryland Legislature through the LCV “Hot Lists” From January to April is the time of the Maryland General Assembly. There are many bills that may be of interest to us, such as Fracking, Renewable Portfolio Standard, Bag Bills, Community Renewable Energy. Maryland LCV (League of Conservation Voters) staff tracks environmental legislation as it quickly moves through the legislative session, and we want to pass that timely information on to you. You can access this weekly list here: [http://www.mdlcv.org/](http://www.mdlcv.org/) If you want to receive an electronic copy of the weekly hotlist, please email info@mdlcv.org to start receiving emails. You can also look up particular bills at [http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/](http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/).

**Support Renewable Integration:** Balance Power Systems is a company of engineers addressing needs instead of return on investment. We are non-profit and develop enabling products to make renewables more cost competitive and achieve economies of scale. Our goals are to create awareness of electricity cost drivers and motivate investment in load shifting technologies that will better accommodate variable generation. We are electricity suppliers in the MD BGE/PEPCO service territories. Your enrollment will enable us to develop the products needed to achieve a sustainable future and your feedback will enable us to coordinate our effort with other sustainability initiatives. See [www.BalancePowerSystems.com](http://www.BalancePowerSystems.com) or contact Joe Criscione at jcriscione@BalancePowerSystems.com or 301 801 8932

**Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns Program Deadline: Fri., February 14, 5pm – 5pm** The Chesapeake Bay Trust, U.S. EPA, and MD Department of Natural Resources Green Streets collaborative effort supports the implementation of the President’s Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration Executive Order. It serves as a key component of the Chesapeake Bay Green Street-Green Jobs-Green Towns Initiative which supports local,
grassroots-level greening efforts by towns and communities in urbanized watersheds that reduce stormwater run-off, through creation of “green streets”, the increase in tree canopy, and the reduction of impervious surfaces. 

www.cbtrust.org/site/c.miJPKXPCJnH/b.7735695/k.5E92/Green_streets_Green_jobs_Green_Towns.htm

**PowerSavers Challenge Registration Deadline; Saturday, Feb 15, 2014**

PowerSavers Challenge - February 16th - March 31st, 2014. Register before February 15th 5 Maryland Schools will win $1,000. (plus an Energy Diagnostic Toolkit & a full day Student Energy Audit Training) Schools across Maryland are eligible to compete to reduce their energy use for a chance to win $1,000, an energy diagnostic toolkit and a full day student energy audit training. Students in grades 6 -12 will receive access to flipped lessons on how to perform an energy audit at their school. Schools have two ways to win, either by collecting energy saving pledges or by creating a winning energy efficiency outreach video. Schools that do both double their chances of winning. www.powersaverschallenge.org/