

ASK A MASTER RECYCLER



Put your heart into recycling this Valentine's Day

SUSY LACER, MASTER RECYCLER
A MONTHLY COLUMN OF RECYCLING INFORMATION
PROVIDED BY FLORENCE MASTER RECYCLERS
For the Siuslaw News

Q. Valentine's Day is this week. I love the earth and want to shrink my garbage footprint, but I work full time, have a family and am busy with my kids' activities. What can I do to in less than 5 minutes a day?

A. While it's terrific to reuse, repurpose and recycle, the most effective way to reduce what you add to the landfill is limit what you bring home in the first place. Lane County residents generate an average of 3.4 pounds of garbage per day (2012). Here are five simple ideas to help lower your average:

- Keep a reusable, lidded mug in your car for that daily latte habit; many coffee shops even offer a discount if you bring your own cup.

- Still collecting plastic bags with every visit to the store? Carry a stash of reusable bags in the car so you always have them on hand. Or consider a bag that stuffs into its own

pouch and clips to a purse or pack; kids can participate by re-stuffing the bag after use.

- Use cloth napkins and towels instead of disposable paper ones; 17 percent of material disposed as trash in Oregon is paper and cardboard.

- Bring your own water bottle; there are myriad choices for reusable water bottles now, for all members of the family.

- Make recycling convenient. Keep a small container next to the trash can to hold all recyclables; sort as needed for curbside recycling.

The most recent Lane County waste study shows 68 percent of waste going to the landfill is recoverable (recyclable, compostable or for energy/fuel).

Q. What do I do with yard trimmings? Do they go in the trash? How hard is it to compost in Florence?

A. We are fortunate in the Florence

area to have a temperate climate conducive to composting. We do have black bears, however, and other animals, so it's important to be aware of local pests and compost accordingly.

For the least bear attraction, compost only yard trimmings; or use an enclosed bin in a well protected area and manage the pile actively. With a few precautions, it's easy to recycle organic material, produce a valuable soil amendment, and reduce waste going to the landfill.

How to get started? Composting is an adaptable activity. If you have plenty of time and energy, an active compost pile can produce black gold in just 6-12 weeks.

With a much smaller time commitment, slow composting can create usable compost in 6-12 months. You may also compost in place and amend the soil one patch at a time.

Finally, you can take yard trimmings to the City of Florence for disposal monthly, for a nominal fee, from May to October.

What goes in the compost pile?

For hot, or active, composting, most materials may be composted,

including meat and bread. Pet waste should be avoided. Hot compost is made in batches, with no new material added (except water) while it is cooking.

The recommended mix of ingredients for hot composting is 2:1:1:1/2. That is, 2 parts nitrogen (kitchen scraps, grains, teabags, eggshells) + 1 part hi-nitrogen (coffee grounds, manure, fresh grass clippings) + 1 part carbon (dry leaves, paper towels, cardboard, shredded paper) + 1/2 part structure (wood chips, non-rotted straw)..

For hot composting, the materials are mixed well, turned frequently, and begin to break down immediately, usually avoiding pest attraction; pile size needs to be at least three cubic feet.

For easy, or slow, composting, avoid adding meat, dairy, oils, invasive weeds or diseased plants.

Try to add about half carbon and half nitrogen materials at the same time. If your garden is plagued with bears or other pests, avoid adding fruit, bread or other attractants.

Cold composting can be added to

on an ongoing basis, or made in batches.

For spot composting (soil incorporation), food waste is simply buried in a hole; no need to maintain a pile, the material decomposes in place. If buried at least 12 inches deep, pests will not usually bother the material. A similar option is to cut the bottom off of a garbage can and sink the can into the dirt, then add compostable material to the can.

More composting methods to consider include worm bins or Bokashi.

For more composting information, visit www.LaneCounty.org/Compost.

Florence Master Recyclers are part of the Lane County Master Recycler Program, a service of the County's Public Works Waste Management Division since 2002.

For more recycling information, visit www.ci.florence.or.us/building/recycling or www.lanecounty.org/Departments/PW/WMD/Recycle or follow Master Recyclers of Florence on Facebook.

FRAA Membership drive continues

Florence Regional Arts Alliance (FRAA) invites artists in all mediums, including photography and 3-D art, to join its membership.

Benefits include the opportunity for you to participate in several upcoming art exhibits.

During the months of March and April, FRAA members have been invited to exhibit at Peace Health Medical Center. This is an open-ended exhibit, without a designated theme.

Also, on March 2, a new exhibit will be hung at the FRAA Art Center. The theme of this exhibit will be "Still Life/Portraits."

FRAA will also be exhibiting at the FEC during the month of April.

Membership in FRAA provides many other benefits, including an active website and monthly newsletter of activities and opportunities for artists; an art center offering opportunities to take and/or teach classes; discounts on classes, workshops, and art festivals; your art work being featured on the FRAA website; an opportunity to hang your work at different locations in the area, such as the monthly changing exhibit at Oregon Pacific Bank; the opportunity to support and collaborate with different art groups in the community, such as participation in demARTS at the Siuslaw Library; the chance to network with other artists; speakers and presentations impacting the art community of Florence and surrounding areas, and more.

Currently, FRAA's Public Art Committee is working with the Port of Siuslaw researching public art opportunities and, in May, plans are being made for an FRAA Rhody Arts Festival at the FEC.

To become a member of FRAA, visit the FRAA Art Center, 4969 Highway 101, Munsel Lake Plaza No. 4, or call the art center at 541-999-0859.

For more information, contact Meg Spencer, membership chair, at florenceartsalliance@gmail.com.

Business and individual sponsorships for the FRAA organization also are welcome.

Local group to attend health care rally in Salem today

The Florence chapter of Health Care for All Oregon seeks concerned citizens to join hundreds from across the state to make a powerful statement about our current system.

"The goal is for 2,500 of us to show up today, letting our representatives know we want change in a system that leaves so many people out and diverts so much health care money into

wasteful overhead," said organizer Stuart Henderson.

Health Care for All Oregon is a grassroots coalition of over 100 organizations determined to create a better way of financ-

ing health care in Oregon. Its mission is to provide publicly funded, privately delivered, high quality, affordable, universal health care to everyone. For rally transportation

information, contact SK Lindsey at 541-999-5875, or come to the Kenneth B Gallery, 1458 First Street in Old Town Florence, or call Stu Henderson at 541-997-2997.

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