

Conservation Committee Meetings September and October Reports

Conservation Committee Meeting September 21, 2023 • 9:30 AM

Sewickley Public Library • 1st Floor Conference Room

Martha D. Smith, Chairperson – Meeting Leader 6 members in attendance

Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much. — Helen Keller

During our first meeting of the conservation committee we started to plan for what we would like to learn and accomplish this year.

My goal as your chairperson is to facilitate an increased awareness of the climate crisis and our options to do our part. I believe the more aware we are of the situation and solutions, the better off we all are. That does not mean we have to adopt every option rather be aware of what they are. - Martha

Conservation **protects the environment through the responsible use of natural resources.**

AGENDA ITEMS:

What inspires us to act responsibly?

- What inspired you to take small steps to act responsibly?
- committee members shared their "inspiration"

Where are we now?

- What are some of the things we already do to impact the environment positively?
 - committee members shared some of what they already do.
- Existing projects we will continue
 - Improve the path from Fern Hollow Nature Center to Waterworks Rd.
 - Increase the use our Used Tennis Ball Recycling with Recycleballs.org
- What local services do we already use e.g. Waste Mgmt., Michael Brothers, Zero Waste Wrangler

- Where are we headed?

- Start developing a list of local resources we wish to learn more about.
- Start developing a list of products and alternative practices we wish to learn more about in support of Zone V initiative "Use This Not That"

October 19th 9:30 AM Sewickley Public Library 2nd Floor Conference Rm.

8 members plus 3 guest attended

FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD? was our topic and we approached this topic with the following general agenda:

1. * The little known facts about food as a polluter. The following was a great source for charts and information:

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-wasted-food-turns-into-huge-amounts-of-greenhouse-gas/>

* 1/3 human-generated green house gas emissions come from the global food system

* 1/3 of food lost during harvest, storage and transport =
9.3 Billion metric tons of CO₂ (half of total emissions – 2017)

- Charts showing the food loss and waste by country and Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Food Type as well as the impact of each step of the food chain

2. Where we get our food, the amounts and what we purchase, and how we store it.

Buy Local – Farmers Markets, grocery stores

Delivery Services that either sell imperfect or food that would normally not be sold, may be broken, or blemished but still viable.

- [Misfit Market/Imperfect Foods](#) (\$60 Minimum free shipping – accepts returns of bubble wrap from eggs, ice packs and foil padded bags from refrigerated/frozen foods
- Seafood/ Meat delivery services

Delivery Services that offer food from local farms, bakeries etc.

- [Harvie.farm](#)

We didn't really discuss how to cut down on what we purchase and consume but acknowledged that those amounts have an impact. Using leftovers may

seem old fashioned but helps cut down on waste. There are online sites for how to use certain leftovers.

Great source for planning how much you buy as well as how to plan when entertaining:

SAVETHEFOOD.COM - this site's planners are great and GUESTIMATER for entertaining.

Buy and eat more veggies, BUY organic, read labels for sources e.g. sources of seafood and how processed:

seafoodwatch.org

STORAGE options – the group discussed the ways everyone repurposes plastic containers, bins, bread bags, soup mix plastic bags, take out containers etc. – to use at least one time more before discarding.

Options- Waxed fabric (not too popular with group)

Silicone bowl lids • locking casserole dishes with lids

“Tupperware/Rubbermaid” • compostable “zip locks”

Silicone “zip locks” •

3. How we dispose of our excess food and food waste.

NOTE: As of September 30 – 23% of students at Quaker Valley School District qualify for free or reduced lunch – based on the family self-reporting; many families are embarrassed to report so the percentage does not reflect the true need.

a. Share with a neighbor/friend, take to work

b. Donate to the food bank Sewickley Community Center Food Pantry – donations are taken the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month from 11 Am-1:30 PM. Martha provided a list of suggested donations which included non-perishable items.

sewickleycommunitycenter.com

Regarding composting - I invited three people to speak about their personal experience and process for composting. Only 2 were able to attend.

Margie Gilfillan (from Grapevine Garden Club) talked about how she uses the Zero Waste Wrangler drop off at Sweetwater Center for the Arts and all the items you can drop off there (including pizza boxes/soiled) – there is an annual fee.

zerowastewrangler.com : This company also provides curbside pickup to residents of Edgeworth and Sewickley along the Rt. 65 corridor.

Cindy Kaye spoke about her home composting techniques, processes and her progress along the journey. She brought some of the containers she uses for composting, including the bucket with dehydrated compost from her electric composting machine and a book she finds to be the best for the beginner:

ORGANIC BOOK OF COMPOSTING by Pauline Pear

Cindy also explained how she mixes the dehydrated compost with her regular compost and soil for her garden.

RECYCLING UPDATE:

As a club we will be increasing our effort to recycle through the following initiatives:

VGC member Emilie Szakach has volunteered to collect, store and deliver caps collected to repurpose into a bench through Green Tree Plastics ABC Promise. The list of “lids and caps” they accept is extensive and can be accessed through:

[greentreeplastics](http://greentreeplastics.com)

<https://www.greentreeplastics.com> › [abc-program](#) › [caps](#)

Members were encouraged to find a product they use that is recycled through Terracycle; Martha is going to collect Dunkin Donuts coffee bags.

www.terracycle.com

This site has many free programs that members can join where they collect the item and then get a free pre-paid label to send them to the sponsoring company.

SUBARU – Recycling through [terracycle](http://www.terracycle.com) – Moon twp Subaru participates in this program – they accept plastic cups and lids, Styrofoam cups, snack bags, candy wrappers, coffee capsules, creamer capsules, plastic straws and coffee cup plastic lids.

<https://www.terracycle.com/en-US/brigades/subaru#@40.77027075200147:-95.93705549677736zoom:4>

Martha is collecting items to take to Subaru,
Peg Baycer volunteered to collect coffee capsules (including K-cup capsules) to be dropped off at Subaru.

This collection will be announced to the general membership as well as the Green Tree Plastics ABC Promise Program.

Following the meeting VGC president Lynn Sopp asked Martha to post the meeting

reports on the club website so members can access information and corresponding resources.