

# Wellspring

Your source for sustainability news.

Spring 2015

Volume 1 No. 3

Newsletter of the **Center for Sustainability** and the **Environment** at Wells College.

The eagles have landed... Learning from some of the best...



Wells staffer **Nancy Ayers** snapped this photo of the nesting pair of bald eagles making Aurora their home. Their huge nest is located across the road from the Route 90 / Poplar Ridge Road intersection.

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**Jim Armstrong**, founder of *Good For Business*, gave the first talk in our new *Sustainable Business* series: "How to Build a Purpose-Led Marketing Platform". Jim made several interesting points:

- 86% of the public have a more positive image of a company if they see it is doing something to make the world a better place;
- A business isn't a brand to be built, but a cause to believe in;
- Purpose is not making the business case for sustainability - it's making the sustainable case for business.

Serial social entrepreneur

**Miki Agrawal**, keynoter for the Sullivan Center's Entrepreneur Week, which we co-sponsored, echoed the sentiment that you can find success by linking



your passion with purpose. Miki urged our students to become an "intrapreneur" in any organization that they find themselves, developing skills and abilities while devising ways to add value to the business.



**Terry Cryan** with *Concert Energy Partners* spoke about clean technology investing. "Whether your interest is from the standpoint of someone

who wants to influence policy, contribute to combating global warming, or pursue a career with a Clean Tech company, the first step is get informed! Explore how clean technologies and renewable energy are impacting your life. Make a decision to get involved, as an informed citizen, as a policy advocate, or as someone working in the industry."

**Mark Buckley**, VP for



Environmental Affairs for *Staples*, told about getting a biology degree from a small college. "As I get older, I appreciate even more the benefits of my liberal arts education." Mark said his broad-based education helps him see the connections and systems operating in everyday life and in his work leading *Staples'* global sustainability efforts.

**Sandra Steingraber**, renowned ecologist, activist and author, gave a thought-provoking talk about becoming more informed and engaged citizenry. She spoke about the power of the liberal arts—science, poetry, and the humanities—to create an authentic narrative in order to recruit others in the ongoing fight against global climate change.



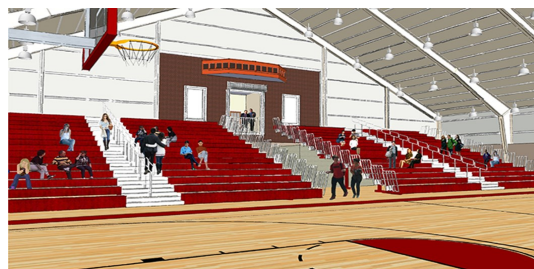
Photo: Greg Mason

Let's give a cheer and raise a glass to more sustainable renovations...

## Athletic Center

This summer, Wells will renovate the Frances Tarlton Farenthold Athletic wing of the Schwartz Athletic Center. The renovations should be complete in time for the 2015-16 academic year. Among the planned upgrades:

- The current portable floor will be replaced with a wall-to-wall maple wood floor; that floor will be covered with a retractable cover allowing the College to hold non-athletic events, like dances, concerts, and other student activities.
- Restroom facilities will be gender-inclusive and will also be fully accessible.
- Energy-efficient LED lighting will include motion sensors and dimmers.
- We plan new recycling stations.



## Pub

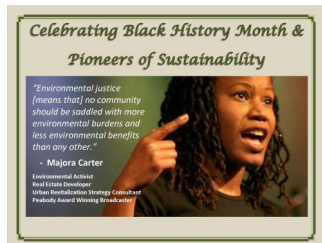
The former Campus Store space in the ground floor of the Smith / Sommer Center is being renovated to become the new college Pub. Among the interesting sustainability features we noticed in a stealth visit to the construction site: use of reclaimed barn boards as wall siding and limbs harvested from a dead tree on our own grounds repurposed as decorative elements around the bar. Old wooden desktops are being repurposed as structural column sur-

rounds. Alumni Relations reached out to alums requesting donations of (recycling?) their old Wells mugs for pub decoration, to bring another historical touch into this brand new space.

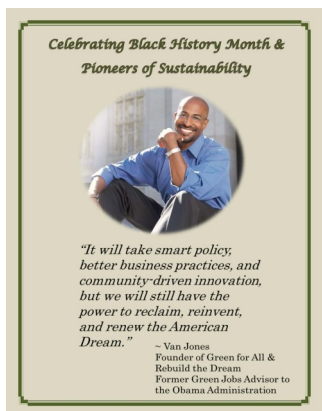


**Raising the pink flag(s)...**

The String Room Gallery presented “*To the Waters and the Wild*”, a solo exhibition by artist Rita Leduc from March 19—April 24. Much of the work shown was created during Leduc’s visits to campus in Fall 2014. In a process she describes as “*integrated painting*”, LeDuc takes landscape photographs and overpaints them in unique ways. We particularly liked this reworked image of the “*pink flags*” in our woods that marked out the study plots for biology professor Jackie Schnurr’s research into the abundance and varieties of herbaceous vegetation on campus.



The Center collaborated with the organizers of Wells’ Black History Month observance to provide content about two important African-American sustainability leaders.

**Learning about sustainability...**

During registration, we noted a couple new courses being offered that have sustainability themes:

**THDA 285**  
*Connecting Body and Earth.*

Professor Jeanne Goddard offers this movement-based course that connects the human bodily experience with the “rest” of the natural world. Students meet in a range of outdoor environments on campus and reflect on that fundamental interaction through writing,



movement, and visual records (maps, drawing, installations, etc.).

**BKRT285** *Intro to Papermaking*  
Professor Jenna Rodriguez will guide students in



the basic techniques, materials, processes and concepts used in the Papermaking Studio. Projects engaging micro-industry, environmental, and community-building models will also be considered. Students will gain skills in harvesting and beating a variety of fibers, including

some plants to be grown in the Morgan Hall greenhouse.

Some other sustainability-related courses being offered this fall:

- SUS 101 Intro to Sustainability
- ENVR 101 Intro to Environmental Science

- ECON 101 Principles of Macroeconomics

- PSY 335 Psychology of Environmental Sustainability

- ECON 325 Ecological Economics and Political Ecology

- BIO 119 Ecology and Evolution

- ENVR 340 Sustainable Agriculture

**Takin’ it to the streets...**

**Erinn Ryen**, lecturer in the Sullivan Center for Business and Entrepreneurship, had an article titled “Consumption-Weighted Life Cycle Assessment of a Consumer Electronic Product Community,” published in the January issue of *Environmental Science and Technology*. In addition, students in her Fall Innovation and Creative Problem Solving Class (BUS 250)



collaborated with a manufacturing company in Auburn, NY and used the design thinking process to develop innovative product designs. In January, the company videotaped brief presentations of the students’ prototypes.

**Niamh O’Leary**, professor of Environmental Studies, submitted a paper to the peer-reviewed *Journal of Plant Registrations*. Co-authored with Margaret Smith and colleagues at Cornell University, the paper is titled *Registration of NY195, NY212, NY215, and NY266 Anthracnose Stalk Rot Resistant Inbred Lines of Maize*.



Economics professor **Kent Klitgaard** was the featured guest on “*The Forecast*”, a monthly radio program about climate change action broadcast on WRFI 88.1FM.

The producers were very interested in learning more from Dr. Klitgaard about his area of expertise: “*ecological economics*”. His archived interview is at: <http://www.theforecast.org/archive>.

Okay, so this one wasn’t technical out “*on the street*”:

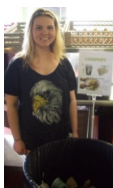
**Marian Brown**, director of the Center for Sustainability and the Environment,



was invited to offer a special noontime talk titled “*Becoming Personally Sustainable*” for the accepted Henry Wells Scholars and their families during the group’s visit on February 27th.

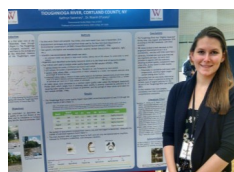
**Wells students learning by doing**

**Kailin Kucewicz** ‘16 interned with Wells Dining, exploring ways to minimize food waste and collect compostables in the dish room.



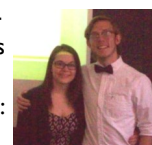
**Amelia Flint** ‘17 organized a collection of 1,830 redeemable bottles and cans to help fund the *Alternative Spring Break* trip. The Center assisted **Abbie George** ‘15 with info for her senior thesis to sustainably renovate “below stage” theatre spaces.

**Katie Sweeney** ‘15 was accepted to present at the *National Council on Undergraduate Research* conference at Eastern Washington University. Her presentation, titled “*Bioassessment of the Water Quality of the Tioughnioga River in Relation to Surrounding Land Use, Cortland County, NY*”, detailed research work done with **Dr. O’Leary**.



Student-led sustainability presentations during the *Activism Symposium* included:

**Stephen Armstrong** ‘16 and **Danielle Williams** ‘15 urging divestment; **Mikayla Kravetz** ‘15 advocating for growing sprouts as a social justice response; and Mikayla, **Catherine Taylor** ‘16 and **Jessica Jasewicz** ‘18, co-presenting a *Farming and Local Foods* session with professor emeritus **Linda Schwab**.





## Recycling flowers

Skillet & Embers staffers did a masterful job continuing the life of the floral arrangements that graced the tables at the President's Dinner for the Henry Wells Scholars and their families. Creatively using sugar bowls and other kitchen crockery as vases, they recycled any still-beautiful blooms into lovely centerpieces for the *Fancy Pants* dinner the following week.



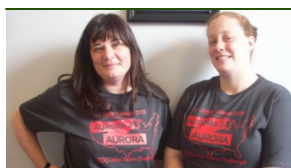
## We'll drink to that!



The Wednesday afternoon Tea Time moved from the Art Exhibit Room (AER) in Macmillan Hall to the Grind Café in Zabriskie Hall for the month of April. Those who used their own mug were rewarded with a free cup of coffee or tea. Thanks to **John O'Connor** and **Hailey Uribe** for this sustainable riff on a favorite Wells tradition.

## We were Maniacal!

Wells participated in **RecycleMania**, in which several hundred institutions competed to see who diverted the most recyclable material from trash. Over 8 competition weeks, we collected nearly 3 tons of commingled recyclables and cardboard; but we still generated over 9 tons of landfill trash. A 23.44% recycling rate is okay, but we can do much better.



Organizers **Lisa Hoff** and **Nicole Pellegrino** sport their 700-mile Ts

## Lightening the Load

We received word from **CarbonFund.org** commending **MacGray**, the company with which we contract for residence hall laundry equipment. **MacGray**, through their *Lighten the Load* initiative, annually purchases carbon offsets equal to 100% of the estimated emissions created by the washer and dryer usage of their clients. Yay, **MAC-GRAY**!

The Center supported Staff Forum to allow them to "step up to" purchasing organic cotton T-shirts for their fun 700-mile Aurora NY-to-Aurora IL employee team walking challenge. (pun fully intended)

## Even better letters...

The new Wells letterhead visibly demonstrates the College's commitment to sustainability in three important ways. First, the College letterhead and envelope printer, **Jacobs Press**, is certified by the *Forest Stewardship Council* for its strict adherence to environmental practices and for maintaining a strict "chain of custody" for its paper products. The letterhead paper itself is also FSC certified; its pulp was sourced from responsibly managed forests. Since both the printer and the imprinted paper are FSC certified, Wells may have the custom imprint on the bottom of each sheet of letterhead stating: "In keeping with the College's commitment to environmentally and socially responsible practices, this paper is certified to the

standards of the *Forest Stewardship Council*." This statement sends a subtle but powerful message to our letters' recipients about Wells' strong sustainability support.

Second, working with the Communication office, the Center proposed that the College's approved Identity Standards Guide for college letters be modified to "outdent" the imprinted logo and address block from their former 1.5" placement from each side to only 1" left and right. This change better corresponds to default WORD document margin settings, plus decreasing the margins allows for 18% more usable "white space" on which to print text. This may mean that more college letters can

print onto a single piece of letterhead paper, instead of requiring a second sheet.

Lastly, except for a very few specific departments, the new College stationery is generic; the imprint lists just the main campus address and website. Offices may add their own specific office and contact information when they print their letters onto the letterhead paper instead of custom printing letterhead and envelopes for each college office. This move reduces wasted stationery, in the event offices shift location or departments change names.



## Sustainability in the Bag...

When we purchased a giveaway item in the Campus Store this spring, we noted that the back side of the shopping bag given to us proudly proclaims its material content as being made from 100% recycled plastic film. YAY!



## A blast from the past...

We finally noticed, late in our loooooong winter season, that Grounds staffers were using an ice melt product containing magnesium chloride instead of sodium salt. This product is more environmentally safe, posing less harm to humans, pets and wildlife, as well as being gentler to the grass in nearby lawns. The product's 'no slip' feature offered greater safety on icy steps and sidewalks but didn't contribute as much to the deterioration of concrete areas.



## Responsible Printing

We were pleased to note that the Wells Notes alumni newsletter was printed on *Forest Stewardship Council* (FSC) certified MIX paper, meaning the pulp was sourced from responsibly managed forests. The newsletter was printed at Cayuga Press, an environmentally conscious facility that uses vegetable inks, recycles paper, plastic, wood and metal, regenerates press chemicals in house to reduce chemical waste by 90%, and is powered by 100% wind power.



Skillet & Embers again partnered with the Center to issue new "Gotcha" cards for Block 2. Anyone spotted using a reusable beverage container may get a card redeemable for a free refill at the *Express Café*. These new cards are good until the end of the Spring semester.

