

Wellspring

Your source for sustainability news.

Summer 2015

Volume I No. 4

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

The New President Speaks:



I don't think you're going to find people more knowledgeable and energized about the environment than young people. And I don't think you'll find a time when it's more necessary for all of us to start to live a more responsible lifestyle. I think it's one of the most important things we do today is talk about preserving our planet... everybody should be concerned.

- excerpted from a summer interview with President Jon Gibraltar published in the *Citizen* newspaper.

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Exciting, diverse line-up of sustainability events planned for the Fall semester

We spent much of the summer planning this Fall's sustainability events. More events may be added, so check the campus Events calendar.

The **Sustainability Perspectives** series has moved into its own timeslot, on Mondays at 12:20PM in Stratton Hall Hostetter Lecture Room 209. There are ten speakers this Fall:



Sept. 14 - "A Return to Meaningful Work as a Strategy for Achieving Sustainability." Dr. Kent Klitgaard, economics professor, Wells College

With the application of fossil fuels to large scale machinery, we got more stuff, but workers lost control of the transformation of the products of nature into what we consume. In the future, we will not have the cheap energy to conspicuously consume our way into happiness. What will take its place?



Sept. 21 - "Restoration and Reciprocity: Finding Common Ground between Scientific and Traditional Ecological Knowledge", Robin Wall Kimmerer, director, *Center for Native Peoples and the Environment*, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. Dr. Kimmerer will discuss her programs that draw on the wisdom of both indigenous and scientific knowledge in support of our shared goals of environmental sustainability. This activity is a *Peachtown Native American Festival* event. (see more, pg. 4)



Sept. 28 - "Impact of Climate Change on Agriculture", Peter Wright, State Conservation Engineer, *Natural Resources Conservation Service*, US Department of Agriculture. What changes to agriculture in New York State are likely to occur over time? Precipitation, temperature, and politics will all influence the food, fiber and energy production from our land.



Oct. 5 - "Does a River Still Run Through It? Water and Culture Along the Upper Missouri", Ernie Olson, professor of anthropology and religion, *Wells College*. Fed by snowmelt from the Rockies, the Missouri River meanders

through the dry plains and badlands of Eastern Montana. The 21st century brings great challenges to the vitality of the Missouri's ecosystem; this presentation will offer some ways to ensure the future health of the river.



Oct. 19 - "Informed Consumer and Active Citizen - Essential Paths to Toxics Protections", Rebecca Ruggles, director, *Maryland Environmental Health Network*. How can you make more informed choices about the cleaning and personal care products you bring into your home? US policy on toxics is more favorable toward industry than toward protecting the average citizen. What can you do to protect yourself and your family while also demanding safer regulations?



Oct. 26 - "You, Your Brain and the World All Around", David Mumm, founder, *Aurora Institute for Accelerating Human Development*. Upgrading your brain and its operating software, the "mind," can result in a happier, healthier life by increasing intelligence and performance. Learn about the benefits and supporting science for people to more quickly adapt to a rapidly changing environment by using applied neuroscience and accelerated learning strategies.



Nov. 2 - "Farming the Woods: An Integrated Permaculture Approach to Growing Food and Medicinals in Temperate Forests", Steve Gabriel, co-founder, *Finger Lakes Permaculture Institute* and agroforestry specialist, *Cornell Small Farms Program*. Many daily indulgences we take for granted, such as coffee, chocolate, and many tropical fruits, all originate in forest ecosystems. Few know that such abundance is also available in the cool temperate forests of North America; learn about growing high-value non-timber forest crops such as American ginseng, shiitake mushrooms, wild leeks, maple syrup, and more.



Nov. 9 - "Invasive Threats to Water Quality", Bruce Natale, P.E., Environmental Engineer, *Cayuga County Planning and Economic Development*. Learn how the quality of our drinking water can be negatively impacted by non-native plants and animals that out-compete native species and disrupt normal ecological balances.



Nov. 16 - "Learning how to mourn environmental losses", Nancy Menning, assistant professor of philosophy and religion, *Ithaca College*. Just as with human deaths, environmental losses of all types can plunge us into despair. How eastern, western, and indigenous cultures structure mourning rituals for human deaths can offer insights into adequate mourning rituals for environmental losses. A ritual focus might move us from despair to hope and motivate action.



Nov. 30 - "Sustainable Burial? Way to Go!", Jennifer Johnson, co-director and Burial Coordinator, *Greensprings Natural Cemetery Preserve*. How and why is natural or green burial sustainable? What happens in a natural burial and how does it differ from conventional burials? What can you do now to educate yourself about end-of-life preparedness?

We again collaborated with the *Sullivan Center for Business and Entrepreneurship* to program the **Sustainable Business** series:



Sept. 23 - "Sustainability at Wegmans", Jason Wadsworth, Sustainability Manager, *Wegmans Food Markets, Inc.* Mr. Wadsworth is responsible for leading the development and implementation of chain-wide sustainability programs that are good for the environment, people and *Wegmans*. 7:00PM Stratton Hall Hostetter Lecture Room 209

see page 4 for more Fall events

Spring Internships

At the Fair where students present their spring internships, we noted a number related to sustainability:

Jessica Jasewicz '18 discusses what she learned about more sustainable farming practices at Glebe Farm with her internship sponsor, Dr. Linda Schwab.

Teresa Fico '15 and **Rachel Nichols** '16 co-presented their idea to create a digital herbarium, safely making the exceedingly fragile specimens in the college's dried plant collection available for botanical study and research.

Ronneisha Butler '15 discusses the work she did during her spring internship with Alicin Welch, director of the Center for Experiential Learning and Career Services. Neisha worked with the Sustainability Center, collecting data for our STARS sustainability assessment and helping promote our events.

Kailin Kucewicz '16 explains her internship to Dr. Milene Morfe. Kailin worked with *Skillet & Embers* to incorporate more sustainable practices into dining services, including post-consumer compost collection.

Kaitlyn Jahn '17 spoke on her work at Trinity Farm, professor emeritus Margaret Flowers' sheep operation.

Katherine Taylor '16, interned with professor emeritus Linda Schwab, learning about the design and planting of more sustainable forage systems on Dr. Schwab's Glebe Farm.

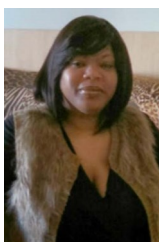
Our first sustainability minors graduate

Our two Sustainability minors have only been available to students since Fall 2015. At Commencement, **Ronneisha Butler** and **Kathryn Sweeney** were our first two students to graduate with a Sustainability minor and **Mikayla Kravetz** was the first to graduate with a minor in Sustainable Food Systems. Mikayla won the Koch Prize for Best Senior Research Paper for her

thesis "A Biochemistry of Radical Justice," a multi-disciplinary melding of biological data in support of a

social justice framework. President Tom de Witt announced that the Frances Tarlton Farenthold Leadership Award was

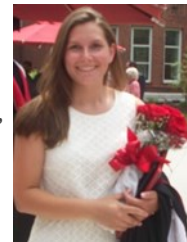
given to Mikayla for her demonstrated qualities of commitment and activism in the Wells community and the wider world. Ronneisha (Neisha, to us), an adult learner, served as our spring semester Sustainability Programs intern. Congratulations, all three of you!!



Neisha Butler



Mikayla Kravetz



Katie Sweeney

Students learn by doing...

During a Social Sciences senior thesis poster presentation session, **Brad**

Murray '15 explained his project to Professor Niamh O'Leary. Brad studied "The Multiple Uses and Aspects of New York State Parks: The Expected, the Unexpected, and Why It's Important".

Heather Hiltbrand presented her senior thesis on "Project Engage", her program to incorporate more environmental education into a second grade science class in the nearby Moravia school district.



Two Environmental Studies majors each presented impressive senior theses to a large audience during the Science Colloquium in late April. **Katie Sweeney** (left)

discussed her research measuring the water quality of the Tioughnioga River near Cortland.



Tyler Fischetti (above) explained the many challenges involved in restoring the polluted waters of Chesapeake Bay. Much of the damage has been created by overdevelopment of wetlands and poor agricultural practices.

Best in Class Sustainability

Professor **Wayne Brewer** brought in several guest speakers for his "Environmental Law and Policy" class, among them Mark Benjamin, Community Relations Director, and Martin Miller, environmental engineer for Seneca Meadows, New York's largest landfill, to discuss state and local laws impacting operations.

During Earth Week, our Center hosted a Re-Fashioning Workshop, led by students in professor **Christina Limpert's** "Sustainability, Gender and the Environment" class, who "upcycled" used T-shirts and fabric pieces into new items.

**What we did during your summer vacation**

Many Wells students undertake internships during the summer

months; it is a requirement that all Wells graduates take advantage of at least two experiential learning opportunities: student teaching, study abroad, and/or internships. Three students didn't travel far from campus to do their internships this summer.

Kailin Kucewicz '16 served as the intern for the Aurora Farmers Market, which operates on Saturday mornings in the parking lot at the

college's softball field.

Kailin helped with market operations and promoting the market to both patrons and potential vendors. At left, Kailin answered questions about the market at Aurorafest.

Camille McNally '17 undertook a Campus Gardens internship, creating and maintaining campus gardens through the summer. Camille got the McGordon House organic "languages garden" into better condition, even producing and



harvesting vegetables for sale at the Farmers Market under the "McGarden" label. She also established an herb bed in front of Zabriskie Hall and developed a Three Sisters planting demonstration in the Main courtyard.

Justin Zywo '16 interned for the Solarize CNY campaign, helping educate area homeowners and businesses about the financial benefits of and incentives for installing solar photovoltaic (PV) systems.



Sustainable Office Products

During *Earth Week*, the Center for Sustainability hosted an opportunity for faculty and staff to come over and view some of the sustainable office products available from a special



Wells Sustainable Products list we helped create through the online *Staples-Link* ordering system. *Staples* and the Center offered free product samples and munchies for all attendees. *Staples* donated a Cava Urth desk chair, largely made from recycled materials, as a door prize. Winner **Dan Wenworth**, our IT director, happily rolled away his prize.



Hail[ey] the Upcycling Queen

Hailey Uribe, assistant director of Student Activities and Leadership, did a really terrific job repurposing containers and artificial flowers used for and left over from past student activities events to create the very attractive table centerpieces for the Honors Dinner.

photo credit: Emily Burt



We'll all drink to that...

Over the summer, the Center collaborated with *Wells Dining* and the Office of Student Activities and Leadership on a plan to issue all campus community members with a reusable beverage mug. The impetus behind this move was to enable us to phase out disposable hot beverage cups in the dining hall. The improper disposal of those cups (partly trash, partly recyclable, half-full of liquid) was wreaking havoc in our waste separation stations across campus, not to mention that many opted to use disposable cups within the dining hall instead of reusable cups and glasses, creating additional waste disposal costs. First year students (class of 2019) were issued a yellow and purple mug, while returning students and all campus employees received a Wells red and white mug.



Ahhh, the sweet smell of spring...

During the late spring, the Grounds crew spread new triple-ground 100% hardwood bark mulch around all the trees and flowerbeds on campus. This aged bark mulch, produced by a regional supplier, wafted a



unique, sweet smell into the air for several days after application. Bark mulch, in addition to holding moisture and reducing weeds, breaks down into an enriching soil additive more quickly and uniformly than traditional wood mulches.

Notebook paper made of what..???

Campus Store manager Rich Kloster made us aware of a brand-new line of notebooks he will be stocking in the store this fall. The *Onyx+Green* line of notebooks feature papers made of bamboo (left) and stone dust (right). Yes, really! Check them out, as well as all the other more sustainable school supplies on the store shelves.



"Gotcha" cards will return this fall, but with a new partner. Changes in the dining program necessitated us to reach out to student management of *The Grind Café* about redemption of these reward cards, given to folks spotted using their reusable beverage mug. *The Grind* will redeem each *Gotcha* card for a free coffee refill dispensed into a recipient's reusable mug.

Now you see them, now you don't...

In late April, Librarian Lisa Hoff reported that the *Seed Exchange* cabinet had been almost completely emptied. There were still some flower varieties left, but only a few lonely packets of radish, lettuce, and squash seeds waiting to be relocated to a nice, warm, dirty home. About 70 folks signed the "guest book" when they took seeds from the exchange. But we know the 60+ students participating in the March Seed Planting Party in the Library are not included in that count, nor are a number of community folks spotted taking advantage of the free seeds who didn't realize we wanted them to sign in. We

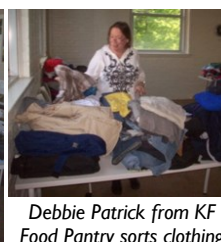


"guesstimate" that upwards of 150 people used our Seed Exchange this first season. Good growing, everybody!

Trash2TREASURE

a major recycling success

Our first end-of-the-year student move-out collection and diversion program, *Trash2Treasure*, was an enormous amount of work but an equally enormous success. Special T2T collection bins were set up in each residence hall, so students could dispose of clothing, room furnishings, food, even books they didn't want to take home, keeping these reusable items out of the trash bins. The collected goods were brought to the Center for sorting and evaluation. Textbooks went to the Campus Store for return to book resellers; usable food went to the *King Ferry Food Pantry*, as did many housewares and clothing, to support their local migrant farmworker program. A couple more tons of used clothing were donated to the *Loc-Mor Thrift Store*, and some equipment went to *Finger Lakes ReUse*. But we also diverted a lot of reusable items to restock the shelves in our own *Bargain Basement* and *RUMPUS Room* office/school supplies free reuse/exchange programs.



Debbie Patrick from KF Food Pantry sorts clothing





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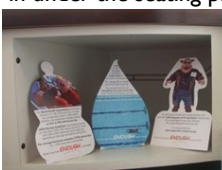
The Center for Sustainability hosted an Open House for returning alumni during Reunion Week-end. **Anne Parker Taylor** '55, who was the very first



speaker in our *Sustainability Perspectives* series last Fall, returned to offer a reprise presentation to a packed house on her work incorporating sustainability considerations into architectural design for educational facilities.

Marian Brown, Center director, offered an update on Wells' many sustainability efforts.

Professor **Siouxie Easter** curated a fascinating "pop-up", interactive visual and performance event titled "**Enough**". The Center was invited to participate; we designed a small-but-mighty educational display on personal consumption to fit inside one 18"x18" storage "cubby" built in under the seating platforms in the Reading Room on the second floor of Zabriskie Hall.



Sustainability is a decision-making framework for continuous improvement that mindfully takes into account the social, environmental, and economic impacts of our choices.

Fall Sustainability-related Events Schedule, *continued from page 1*

Sustainable Business series, *continued*:



Oct. 28—"Role of Business in Designing a Sustainable Economy", Laura Ornstein, coordinator, NYS Sustainable Business Council, an alliance of business organizations and businesses committed to advancing a vibrant, just, and sustainable economy in the state.
7:00PM Zabriskie Hall Room 106

Watch for a *Sustainable Entrepreneurs Panel* being scheduled for early November.

Sustainability Film Series

Oct. 7—Learn about the unsustainability of Big Agriculture.

7:00PM Stratton Hall Hostetter Lecture Room 209



Sustainability Speaker series

Oct. 21—"Turning the Tide: How Young Leaders are Winning a Just and Livable Future." Dominic Frongillo made history at age 22 by becoming the youngest person to serve on the Town Council in Caroline, NY. He founded *Elected Officials to Protect New York*, a campaign of now over 800 elected officials across the state opposing fracking. Frongillo was profiled as one of America's 16 most notable young elected officials in Jeff Thigpen's new book *Young Politics*.

7:00PM Stratton Hall Hostetter Lecture Room 209

Peachtown Native American Festival

This annual festival celebrates the culture of the Haudenosaunee, the indigenous people of this region. Sustainability-themed festival events:



Sept. 21—*Sustainability Perspectives* series: "Restoration and Reciprocity..." (see page 1)

Sept. 22—"Countering the Idealized Indian Image in Sports Mascots: The Rising Public Image of Native Americans in Sports", Michael Taylor, visiting assistant professor, Center for the Study of Culture, Race, and Ethnicity, Ithaca College

12:30PM Stratton Hall Hostetter Lecture Rm 209

Sept 23—"The Paradox of Productivity: Lessons from an Indigenous Agriculture", Jane Mt. Pleasant, associate professor, School of Integrative Plant Science, Cornell University.

12:30PM Stratton Hall Hostetter Lecture Rm 209

Sept. 24—"Voices from the Western Door: Anti-Indianism, Land Dispossession, and Seneca Resilience", Meghan McCune '03, assistant professor of Anthropology and Sociology, and director of Social Sciences, Jamestown Community College.

12:30PM Stratton Hall Hostetter Lecture Rm 209

Sept. 25—Peachtown Festival feast, Social Dancing led by Cayuga Singers, annual peach tree planting.
3:00PM Sommer Center Lawn

"And the award goes to..."

At the annual Honors dinner, several active sustainability club members were lauded.

Natalie Jay '17 and **Ana Toumpas** '17, co-leaders this year of Wells Campus Greens, and **Ally Martin** '15, leader of the Greenhouse Club, will all be listed in "Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities". Environmental science senior **Katie Sweeney**, also named to Who's Who, was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa, the oldest and most distinguished academic honorary society. Katie has been active in both Wells Campus Greens and F.O.R.C.E.S. (Friends of Recreation, Conservation and Environmental Stewardship), as well as a valued intern with the Cayuga Lake Floating Classroom program. Katie won the Cayuga Basin Prize in Environmental Studies for her engagement in significant professional activities during her undergraduate years. Senior **Cody Primmer** won the Wood Prize in Physics & Its Application for his keen interest environmental engineering and renewable energy. Dr. **Laura McClusky**, professor of sociology and coordinator of the Sustainability academic program this year, was awarded the Anne J. Russ Prize for Social Responsibility. **Marian Brown**, Sustainability Center director, was awarded the Outstanding Student Organization Advisor for supporting Wells Campus Greens.



Wells Campus Greens deferred their campus cleanup from Earth Week to April 29th, to take advantage of better weather. They collected a lot of trash and recyclables. Good job, folks!



The NYSAR3 College Council summer newsletter issue included a *Member Spotlight* feature on Wells College and the various strategies we employed to implement a comprehensive recycling program on campus, including our "carry in—carry out" classrooms and offices and our standardized, "recycling is right, landfill what's left" waste separation stations.

The Center for Sustainability hosted the annual meeting of the New York Coalition of Sustainability in Higher Education (NYCSHE). Half the meeting attendees came to campus and the rest teleconferenced in. **Marian Brown**, Center director, was elected to the organization's steering committee

