## Connect with your environment

Learn about environmental issues, in your community and how you can get involved.



ANNA McCARTNEY/Contributed photo

Beginners and experienced fly-fishers can learn more

### Learn how to fly-fish at Presque Isle event

Want to get rid of your ing the dry fly. cabin fever? Don't miss an afternoon of fly-fishing instruction at the Presque Isle State Park Rotary Pavilion on Saturday, March 21, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This free event is open to the public and is for both beginners and experienced fly-fishers.

- Beginners will learn the basics of fly-fishing, how to choose the right equipment, hands on flycasting instruction and fly-tying basics.
- Experienced fly-fishers will learn tips on improving steelhead fishing, nymph fishing and master-

<u>vourspace</u>

Tristian Harris, left, Nathan Martinez and Nizjanna Bryant

are members of the Neighborhood Art House Green Team.

Neighborhood Art House

adds new green practices

inventory at the Neighbor-

notes on actions needed

to improve green practices

for a healthy environment.

We also made a list of

green actions that people

We need to do the fol-

lowing things to make the

Art House greener: Put our

plastic cups into recycling

instead of the garbage;

save energy by turning off

the lights when no one is in

the room; make sure that

all cardboard and paper

is put into recycling bins;

always use scrap paper for

tutoring; reuse plastic bags

The current green ac-

tions now used at the

Art House are: We reuse

for our art projects.

were already doing.

■ Door prizes and raffles will be held to sponsor a youth to attend the Trout Unlimited summer camp.

The Caldwell Creek Chapter of Trout Unlimited and educational staff from Pennsylvania Sea Grant and Presque Isle State Park will provide instructions.

Thanks to Fish USA for sponsoring this event. Food and beverages will be available for purchase at the pavilion.

Reservations are appreciated and should be sent to eco1@psu.edu.

– Anna McCartney



Many products once made with reusable materials such as metal, tin, wood or glass have been replaced with plastic. Since then, single-use and disposable plastics have become the greatest source of plastic pollution on land and in the ocean because plastic does not decompose and the majority of plastic is not recycled.

# Ready for 4 Rs?

## Sustainability practices help environment

By ANNA McCARTNEY Contributing writer

We have created a class of products that defeats even the most creative

and menacing bacteria

that might break it down. Over the past 60 years materials that break down in the environment have been replaced with synthetic plastic. From a tiny seed after World War II, plastic is now like an invasive species taking over the world. And because plastic debris does not biodegrade, it can remain for centuries, causing havoc in

ecosystems More and more of it is making its way onto the land, into rivers, lakes and eventually the ocean, which has become inundated with plastic floating on its surface or coating the reefs and seafloors. Even thousands of miles from the nearest civilization, the landscape and oceans are littered with discarded plastic products of human society: water and beverage bottles, cigarette butts, straws, food containers, bags, forks, spoons and knives and disposable razors ... the list is

endless. Fish, seabirds, turtles, coral and other animals are mistaking all that plastic for food and dying from choking, intestinal blockage and starvation. Furthermore, fragments absorb manufactured poisons because they act like sponges for DDT and other oily toxins in the water. And because these pollutants accumulate and magnify up the food chain, they are finding their way into the foods

Perhaps we have ignored the problem because of the seeming vastness of the ocean and the fact most people never see the continually growing amount of plastic debris and the serious threat it poses. But studies by a growing number of concerned organizations, including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Ocean Conservancy and others, demonstrate that the impact and quantity are sig-



WATERSHEDMEDIA.ORG

Throwaway cups, single-serve coffee pods, straws and plastic bottles and bags make life a little easier — at the expense of the environment. Use glass, ceramic, cloth and steel instead!



PLASTIC POLLUTION COALITION

REFUSE is a Plastic Pollution Coalition global initiative to encourage people to end their dependence on single use and disposable plastics and to reduce their overall plastic



FRAN SKELLIE/Contributed photo

While cleanups like the International Coastal Cleanup shed light on the problems caused by plastic pollution, they are not the solution.

nificant and increasing. people on the planet, a With almost 7 billion throwaway culture ad-

dicted to disposable plastics can only make matters worse. We must therefore rethink our habits and our uses for plastic. Do you really need single-use plastic products like bags, straws or plates? Past generations did fine without them and so can we.

We can solve this problem today. The simplest solution to less plastic pollution is to replace single-use items with reusable ones!

Follow the 4 Rs of sustainable living: Refuse, Reuse, Reduce, Recycle.

#### Refuse and reuse

Say NO to disposable plastics. Embracing durable and reusable products such as glass and stainless steel will reduce the amount of plastic used.

#### Reduce

Reduce your plastic footprint: Buy in bulk and avoid plastic packaging

#### Recycle

Recycling is a last option because unlike aluminum and glass, which can be recycled indefinitely, plastics will not be converted into new, similar objects. They will be turned into other products such as doormats, textiles, plastic lumber, etc. This is not recycling, but down-cycling. These products will still end in the landfill or as debris in waterways.

Another action you can take is to participate in a community cleanup. A few hours of your time can make a big difference in keeping plastic debris from reaching your local waterways and the ocean. Participate in the 2015 Great Pennsylvania Cleanup from March 1 to May 31. Visit http://gacofpa.org or contact Michelle Dunn, program coordinator, at (877) 772-3673, extension 113 or e-mail mdunn@keep pabeautiful.org.

#### ANNA McCARTNEY, a

communications and education specialist for Pennsylvania Sea Grant, can be reached by e-mail at axm40@psu.edu.

foam pieces, cardboard and pieces of cloth. We recycle in all of our classrooms and the kitchen. The director has two monitors to use with her computer and therefore

green plants to help our

air and for people to enjoy.

books, recycled paper, Bubble Wrap, file folders, envelopes, water bottles, prints less paper. We have

The Green Team did an Two of our new plants are the amaryllis and pitcher hood Art House and took plant. We also have a set of grow lights so we can start plants all year round. This month we started avocado plants.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

We will use the information from our inventory to make posters to remind the people at the Art House to always use green practices that save energy and improve recycling. We will make a presentation to everyone in our gathering space before classes start, and we wrote this article for the NIE page.

Schools, businesses, factories, government offices, the YMCAs, the Boys and Girls Club and churches should all have green teams. If everyone participates in green teams, we will all have a healthier environment and work space. Everyone should use the 4 Rs: refuse, reuse, reduce and recycle, and should also save energy and conserve water.

– The Green Team at Neighborhood Art House: Nathan Martinez, Tristian Harris & Nizjanna Bryant, with Anna McCartney

This page brought to you by:









Check out these websites

Plastic beverage bottles, food wrappers, cigarette butts and cigar tips, toys, and straws are all made of plastic and eventually make their way to the ocean. Learn more about plastics in the environment by visiting today's Web sites. Write a letter for "your space" encouraging your fellow students, parents and neighbors to refuse disposable plastic to keep it out of the environment. E-mail it with your photo

to axm40@psu.edu.



