

Not a spectator sport: 10 years of RecycleMania

It began as an experiment in the residence halls, an attempt to excite students about recycling. RecycleMania, the brainchild of Ohio U.'s own Recycling and Refuse Manager, Ed Newman and Stacey Edmonds Wheeler at Miami University, has in ten years time become a continental phenomenon. This year, over 600 colleges and universities in North America are competing to see who will be crowned the Kings and Queens of their waste streams.

Newman has been inspired toward competitive recycling since his youth. He recalls a contest in his junior high school to recycle the most newspapers. Even then, Newman wanted to have the biggest pile.

When it comes to waste, however, Newman has always aimed low, with a whopping zero being the ultimate goal. But his aspirations for RecycleMania keep getting grander and his enthusiasm more contagious. Last fall, Newman helped to launch a pilot program for K-12 level schools called Ohio School Recycling Challenge. Over 60 schools statewide entered the competition in its first year, including Athens County's own Plains Elementary. Other states are already look-



ing to copy this model, which could mean state school systems competing against each other in the near future.

Now the Greeks want a piece of the action, too. This spring, under Newman's leadership, sororities at Ohio U. will compete against each other in the first Greek Life RecycleMania.

Senior and Wellness/Environmental Chair of Sigma Kappa, Jamie Smith, is proud her sorority is working with Newman to spearhead this project. Recycling is a priority in their house year round, and she hopes that by holding their own competition Greek Life can set an example for the student body that these important lifestyle changes can fit into everyday life.

Newman, a member of the Association of Ohio Recyclers, views RecycleMania as a vehicle to reduce waste and increase recycling and hopes its success is making a case to improve the way society as a whole manages its resources. He is already thinking beyond educational institutions and wants to see businesses get involved as part of their efforts toward corporate social responsibility and for municipalities to compete against each other, all as a means to keep waste from entering

the landfill.

But in the meantime, there is a 10-year anniversary to celebrate by bringing that lovable, rust-covered trophy home to Ohio U. Just remember Ed Newman's mantra: "RecycleMania is not a spectator sport. Everyone is on the OU Recycling Team."

By Kim Criner

Visit facebook.com/recyclemania.ohio for scores and contests.

RESIDENCE 20
CHALLENGE 10 
January 18 - March 7

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IS NOW CARRYING
REMOTE CONTROLLED SMART STRIPS
AVAILABLE AT THE BAKER TECH DEPOT

