

Profile: Molly Shea

In the more than three years that Senior Environmental Geography major Molly Shea has been a student at Ohio University, she believes she has seen a shift in campus culture toward environmental awareness. "Students care more," she said, "as we saw with their involvement in Power Vote" - the 2008 campaign in which over 4,000 Ohio U. students pledged to vote in support of sustainable energy. Shea recognizes that faculty and staff are part of this movement, and contributes this collective shift to the incorporation of sustainability into the curriculum and overall educational experience at Ohio U. She also recognizes that she has been affected by this mindset. "I considered myself to be into the environment from a fairly young age, but being in Athens has definitely increased my awareness of environmental issues," she said.

As a member of the President's Advisory Council for Sustainability Planning, Shea is poised to represent the student body's views on what makes a sustainable campus community. However, Shea hopes that many students will choose to speak for themselves. "We are giving them an outlet to say what *they* think the plan should be," she said. Students will be given the opportunity to participate through forums and working groups.

When asked what she would most like to see the Sustainability Council work toward achieving, Shea replied without hesitation: "to stop using coal as a power source." She sees it as a hopeful goal because the university is already working on foundational infrastructure that would need to be in place to make it effective, such as improved insulation.

Shea's passion for new energy solutions goes well beyond her ambitions for the Sustainability Council. Over winter break, she will be volunteering in West Virginia with Mountain Justice, an advocacy group working against and raising awareness about mountain top removal. She admits that like so many Americans she did not know where electricity comes from; then she read Erik Reece's *Lost Mountain* in Dr. Buckley's Appalachia class and an activist was born. Shea is also very active with the Ohio Student Environmental Coalition, through which she is helping to organize the PowerShift '09 Summit at Oberlin College coming up November 6th-8th.

A resident of the OHIO Ecohouse, Shea also works as the Greenhouse Project Assistant for the Office of Sustainability. When she is not advocating for the defense of mountains and the use of renewable energy, Shea enjoys biking, hiking, and cooking. Understanding the importance of eating seasonably, she is enjoying the fruits of her first efforts at canning salsa and jam this past summer.

When asked what she would like to do after graduation, Shea said that she may apply for a job as a community organizer. She is obviously well qualified.

By Kim Criner



Make a green plan, Stan

New advisory council needs you

You may know a thing or two about sustainability at Ohio University. You look forward to RecycleMania and the Residence Challenge; you have heard of, and maybe visited, the Ecohouse; and you have seen the new compost bins around campus, perhaps even spied the Office of Sustainability staff weighing your food waste in the dining hall.

But have you heard of the new President's Advisory Council for Sustainability Planning? Whether you consider yourself an environmental Bobcat or just an informed student citizen, you have to check this out.

In July 2009, President McDavis appointed the Sustainability Council, comprised of faculty, staff, and students, to advise university administration on a comprehensive strategic plan for implementing action on pressing sustainability issues.

And why should you be excited?

You have already seen Ohio University become a leader in sustainability by signing the Presidents' Climate Commitment and pledging climate neutrality, and by accepting the goals of House Bill 251 to reduce energy intensity by 20% by 2014. Now you are going to watch someone do something about it. Now you will witness, and have the ability to take part in, paving a path to achieve these ends. The Sustainability Council is already at work on both a sustainability plan and a climate action plan. Both are scheduled to be finalized by Spring 2011.

As the creator of the university's recycling program, Sustainability Council Member Ed Newman knows that Ohio University has already been blazing a trail for sustainability in higher education for the state of Ohio and beyond. He sees the Sustainability Council as a chance to augment the efforts already happening on campus, and to lead by example. You just have to "make some good stuff happen and get people feeling good about it," said Newman.

Sustainability Goals: Brainstorming

Tuesday, November 3rd
5-7pm, Grover E304

All members of the university and Athens community are invited to participate. Refreshments will be served.



Oberlin College | Nov. 6 - Nov. 8
www.ohio.powershift09.org

When co-chair Ben Stuart, Engineering professor and director of the Institute for Sustainable Energy and the Environment, heard of his appointment to the Sustainability Council, he knew that the committee had particular purpose and meaning. "Every once in a while an assignment comes along where you are confident that you can make a difference," he said.

Ben Stuart's philosophy is that the passion of the people needs to be there in order to implement recommendations on sustainability, but it can only happen by educating people on the various choices of how to live more consciously. If you have passionate, educated people, "that's pretty much a winning combination," said Stuart. "We do live in a great community of people who care," he acknowledges. "The first step is to have people who are engaged and we have that."

Senior Journalism major and Sustainability Council Member Amy Nordrum recognizes the value of having equal representation of faculty, staff, and students on the council to provide the broadest possible perspective. However, she also feels that involving the student body in this capacity speaks to how involved they already are, and how invested they are in advancing sustainability goals. The Sustainability Council

did a stakeholder exercise in order to brainstorm groups that they would want to be involved in the planning process, she explained. "Students came up again and again, as organizations, individuals, and as a student body." Nordrum sees a unique opportunity for students "to be part of a regular effort that will result in a long term movement" and to make practical changes in how the university functions. "I hope they take the chance to get involved," she said, "I look forward to seeing it."

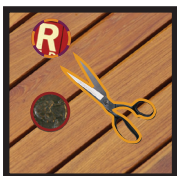
She may not have to wait that long, and neither do you. The Sustainability Council will soon be inviting candidates to get involved in each of eight working groups: Academics & Curriculum, Low and No Cost Energy Conservation, Dining, Transportation, Procurement, Energy Infrastructure/Utilities, Fundraising & Endowment, Buildings & Grounds. Furthermore, on November 3rd, the council will be holding an open forum and they want you there to share your input about sustainability goals for the campus.

That is your cue, Ohio U. You are part of this equation. Big change is happening right here at home, it is happening right now, and you have a say in it. Stay tuned, take part, and see for yourself.

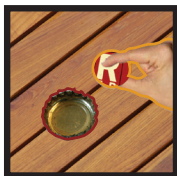
By Kim Criner and Annah Korpi

For a full list of Sustainability Council members, as well as meeting agendas, minutes, and more visit www.ohio.edu/pacs.

DIY bottle cap magnets



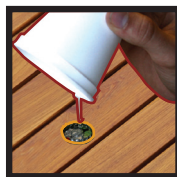
Use a quarter to size your image.



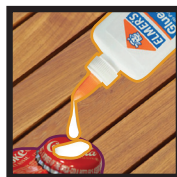
Place image inside bottle cap.



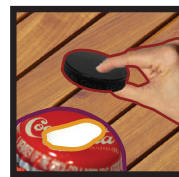
Mix up EnviroTex Lite Pour-on high gloss finish.



Pour finish in cap. Blow bubbles off surface. Let stand overnight.



Apply glue to back of bottle cap.



Affix magnet.



RecycleMania

January 17 - March 27, 2010

Home sustainable home

Last spring, Hudson Health Center physician Susan Righi placed the winning bid on a home sustainability package at the Rural Action benefit auction, which included a solar site assessment by Third Sun and a consultation by the Office of Sustainability. Having already been consciously at work greening her home, Righi instead invited sustainability staff members to come and take a look.

First stop, the basement, where a clothesline hung from the ceiling, and broom corn, which was grown in the backyard, was laid out to dry for a fall project. Righi pointed out their DC motor furnace, which heats their home by providing a constant air flow, preventing the energy spikes of turning on and off. Their hot water, she explained, is heated by gas instead of electricity, which is more efficient.

Energy efficiency goes beyond improved appliances, and the Righis have taken great effort to insulate their home against bitter winters and humid summers. They have applied foam insulation in the basement and cellulose insulation in the attic, as well as having the latter blown inside their walls.

The Righis have also found creative ways to recycle water. In fact, while they are waiting for water to heat for the shower, they collect it and use it to flush the toilet, and they empty water from the dehumidifier into the washing machine. These seem like "tiny things," said Righi, "but the principle is conservation."

Migrating to the backyard - stopping first at their tumbler compost bin to drop off food scraps - staff were happy to linger outside admiring the Righis several vegetable plots, which boasted beautiful beets and chard, lima beans, blueberries, and much more. They manage to cut energy use even in maintaining their yard - they use an old-fashioned reel mower, much to their teenaged son's chagrin.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions drives Righi's motivation for these home improvements. "There are many things I caution my son about, instructing him to weigh the possible consequences of a contemplated action," she said. "I tell him some consequences just aren't worth the risks, and I think global warming is one of these."

By Kim Criner

Charging children's knowledge on energy use

More than 1,000 students in grades three through six from five of Athens' elementary schools received an "electric" experience on October 20th and 21st at the eighth annual Energy Days in Baker Center. The program, organized by Ohio University's Office of Sustainability, teaches children how their use of energy can impact the world around them and how energy use impacts them.

Each grade level spent about two hours divided between four separate stations, each with an individual topic. Some of this year's topics included static electricity, forests and the carbon cycle, circuits, solar, and chemical energy. All of the stations are designed to engage the children with hands on interaction, according to event organizer Erin Sykes.

The static electricity station proved to be particularly exciting. Featuring a Tesla coil, it provided a hair-raising experience for students. "It's fun to watch students get involved in experiments. I really love watching their hair stand up and their reactions to it," Sykes said.

Another compelling station was facilitated by Annie Warmke, creator of Blue Rock Station, who was returning to Energy Days for her fourth year. This year, Warmke conducted a virtual tour of Blue Rock Station, which is a sustainable living complex located in the hills of Muskingum County. The complex includes a house called the "Earthship" that is constructed entirely from tires, reclaimed wood, straw bale, and glass bottles. Nearby, the Straw Bale "Chicken Chalet" houses heritage breeds of chickens and is also built from sustainable materials including a mud plaster finish. Warmke's workshop also explained solar and thermal energies to the children

and got them talking about conservation in their own homes.

Tom Parsons, Director of Curriculum for Athens City Schools sees middle school as a "critical time to expose students" to a variety of ideas and issues, including those surrounding energy. Parsons worked closely with Office of Sustainability staff to ensure that "the activities that were planned for Energy Days were carefully crafted to address academic indicators set by the state. Initial feedback from the teachers was that activities were right on target," he said.

This year, students from Ohio University's College of Education were given the opportunity to lend a hand in instructing the children on alternative energy. Senior Kaitlyn Shrake, a student facilitator, realizes the importance of capturing the interest of future scientists in order for new generations to see the benefits of sustainable energy. "Most of all," she said, "I hope the kids are inspired to learn more, and that they start asking questions."

And thanks to Shrake and other enthusiastic facilitators there was no shortage of curiosity at this year's Energy Days.

"It's a chance to reach children in the [greater] Athens area outside of the university, and I love every minute of it!" Sykes said.

By Caitlin Whitehurst

FROM THE COORDINATOR: If you can't stand the heat

Ohio University's Lausche Heating Plant has been getting quite a bit of attention lately. As the movement to address climate change has gained momentum, more and more students have caught a glimpse of the red brick smokestack rising above our athletic fields and wondered, "Is this part of the problem, and if so, what are we doing about it?"

There's no question that Lausche is part of the problem. The facility, which supplies steam, hot water and chilled water throughout the Athens campus, makes use of three coal-fired boilers and one natural gas boiler. The fuel mix fluctuates every year, but coal represents about 90% of the mix at present because it is about four times less expensive than natural gas per unit of steam delivered.

While we do control for fly ash and particulate matter, as required by the EPA, regulations do not currently mandate control of Sulfur Oxide (SOx) or Carbon Dioxide (CO2).

Those are the facts. Now, what can you do about it?

Students, staff and faculty members currently have an unprecedented opportunity to be part of the solution. The President's Advisory Council for Sustainability Planning is now in the process of developing overarching goals for our campus, as well as the near-term objectives that will focus and strengthen our sustainability initiatives, including those that deal with on-campus power generation.

Be a part of the solution. Visit www.ohio.edu/pacsp to learn more about how you can get involved in this historic effort.

Planet OHIO News is a publication of Ohio University's Office of Sustainability

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Printed on 100% post-consumer recycled content paper

Established in May 2006, the Office of Sustainability is committed to improving the efficiency of our facilities, greening our practices and processes and strengthening our campus-wide culture of environmental mindfulness. For campus and community sustainability initiatives, research, projects, organizations, and many other topics, please visit www.ohio.edu/PlanetOHIO.

If you have contributions or questions for Planet OHIO News, please contact sustainability@ohio.edu.