



AQ SUSTAINABILITY NEWS

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*Brought to you by the interns at The Center for Sustainability:
Kaitlyn Aholt, Ben Lilly, and Alina Dhaseleer*

RecycleMania Coming Soon!!

Mark your calendars, because **February 5th** is the official start of the nationwide recycling competition, RecycleMania, which lasts until **March 31!**

Developed by the College and University Recycling Council (CURC) in 2001, RecycleMania is an 8-week competition between university recycling programs in North America and Canada that promotes reducing waste, increasing recycling efforts, and heightening awareness of campus conservation issues. The RecycleMania competition is going beyond traditional recycling and composting this year, to include E-Waste recycling.

Aquinas participates in a variety of categories, including per capita recycling, per capita waste minimization, per capita food waste, and cumulative grand champion competition. In 2011, Aquinas consistently ranked second in the state to Kalamazoo College in each of these categories.

[Click here](#) for the 2011 RecycleMania results.

[Click here](#) to check out the RecycleMania website!

Let's get in it to win it this year! Try to use the green composting bins & blue recycling bins as much as possible; there are posters above each bin with information about what can be composted and recycled. Also, be sure to bring all your E-waste to the media center or the ITS Department (3rd floor AB).

[Click here](#) for more information on composting and recycling.

Questions?

Contact Jessica Eimer @ X1994 or eimerjes@aquinas.edu

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Update: Students Striving for Sustainability (S3)

As mentioned in the previous issue, Apartment D was the champion of the composting competition, and as promised, S3 helped celebrate their victory with a pizza party. S3 also raffled off a Meijer Gift Card to Apartment D residents, which went to the lucky Alisha Magoon!

Composting efforts aside, S3 wants to zero in on the general issue of campus waste. The group hopes to present a plan to Dr. Olivarez that will help Aquinas transition to being a zero-waste campus.

S3 is also considering the idea of continuing composting education focused on the residence halls. Ideally, these students will know how to properly compost and recycle their kitchen waste next year in the apartments.

Apart from efforts to regulate waste and compost, S3 is in the process of devising a fun way to be involved in Spring Fest.

For more information...contact the club president, Stephanie Krajnik (sak001@aquinas.edu).

[Click here](#) to check out S3 on Facebook & post your comments/ideas!!

President: Stephanie Krajnik; Vice President: John DeAngelis; Treasurer: Barbara Groves;

Secretary: Kaitlyn Aholt; Senate Rep: Betsy Davis



<http://www.bigfoto.com/themes/nature/landscapes/spring-time-trees-x.jpg>

Are environmental issues getting you down? Let Jim Carey cheer you up with his take on saving the planet.

[Click here](#) to enjoy the skit.

“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”—Martin Luther King Jr.

Update:

Student Sustainability Committee

- **Bike registration system**

The committee is planning to collaborate with Campus Safety's bike registration efforts to develop a system of incentives that will encourage the campus community to engage in more bike-riding. The committee hopes to have the incentive system proposal ready by Earth Day.

- **Bus Fare Subsidy**

The committee is currently brainstorming ways to fully subsidize the Rapid bus fare for AQ students. (currently \$0.40 with an Aquinas ID)

- **125 Mile Lunch**

In celebration of Aquinas' 125th Anniversary and in an effort to promote local food, the Committee is planning to do a special Earth Day Lunch, in which all the food is sourced within a 125-mile radius of campus.

Got Any Ideas to Promote Campus Sustainability???

To submit a proposal, follow these steps:

1. Fill out the [online submission form](#) OR submit your proposal in person at the **Center for Sustainability**.
2. One of three sustainability committees (faculty, student, or staff) will review your proposal.
3. Then, the Joint Sustainability Committee (composed of faculty, students, and staff) will review your proposal and give it a sustainability value rating (from 1 to 5).
4. If your proposal earns a 4 or 5 rating: it will be sent back to its respective assembly for a vote.
5. If it wins the vote: it will go to the Provost for final approval.
6. If your proposal is rejected at any stage, it can be revised and resubmitted.

Link to: [sustainability initiative process flow-chart](#)

“Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul.” –John Muir

Update: Staff Sustainability Committee

- **AQ Community Garden— soil testing**

The Staff Sustainability Committee recently met with the Hillcrest Garden Coordinator, Mary Ellen McNaughten, to discuss future plans for the AQ community garden. McNaughten gave the committee some helpful ideas for protecting the garden from pests and helped to spur conversation about trying to work the garden into the college curriculum.

One soil test has been completed with plans for another, more detailed test this spring. Mike Deboer, a member of the grounds crew, took a soil sample and Kari Zeller, the chemistry lab coordinator, tested the soil's pH. The soil was found to have a pH of 7.76, which is too acidic for most vegetables. Depending on the vegetable, the optimal soil pH typically falls between 5 and 7. Following McNaughten's advice, the committee contacted the MSU extension office and plans to purchase a soil-testing kit this spring.

- **Update on Recent Waste Reduction Proposal**

As mentioned in the previous issue, a sustainability proposal was recently submitted by Cindy Chapman, calling for reduction of paper waste at campus information stations. The staff sustainability committee has reviewed the proposal and made some suggestions for refining it. Cindy Chapman accepted the recommended changes to the guidelines, so the proposal will go the next step of evaluation: the joint sustainability committee (with representatives from the student, staff and faculty sustainability committees). Check out the [staff sustainability committee recommendations](#) for this proposal.

- **New Garbage Can Proposal**

The Staff Sustainability Committee is currently working on a proposal to replace our current outdoor trash cans with a new, more intelligent model that will provide clear environmental, social, and financial value to our campus.

The staff is considering two different ideas or a combination of the two. The first is to replace the current trash cans with solar trash compactors that have an attached recycling station. The other proposed option is to simply replace the cans with a better designed model that will keep the rain and squirrels out! In order to promote cost effectiveness, the staff is also considering the option of replacing the trash cans with a combination of the solar compactors and the better designed cans. The Staff Sustainability Committee hopes to send this proposal through the initiative process in February or March.

Monthly Student Feature:**Frank Blackman****Working with WMEAC**

Working as a policy intern for WMEAC, Frank Blackman has had the opportunity to get involved in environmental policy issues that directly affect Grand Rapids. Frank was drawn to the organization because of its clear commitment to affecting long-term positive change in West Michigan, as evidenced by the positive things that other interns had to say about their experiences. Frank is interested in the way sustainability draws on various disciplines “...to find innovative and comprehensive solutions to problems that challenge conventional thinking”; this interest has made the internship at WMEAC a perfect opportunity to sink his teeth into organizing environmental action.

Apart from daily research and writing, Frank has been challenged to organize a grassroots response to the Gerald R. Ford International Airport’s decision to divert storm water runoff directly to the Thornapple River. He has worked hard with a group of concerned citizens to advocate for “a more comprehensive solution to their storm water discharges.” Through his involvement with this project, Frank was challenged to become familiar with the regulatory environment of Propylene Glycol as it is used as an aircraft deicer and adds to the runoff trickling into the Thornapple River. He applied sustainable business principles at various points in the project as he strived to push solutions that would move beyond a “less bad” mentality to provide social, environmental, and financial value.

Frank thoroughly enjoyed the open atmosphere at WMEAC; he was able to satisfy his curiosity in a variety of research projects and he was able to engage in open dialogue about his projects with the other interns at WMEAC. He discovered and strengthened his analytical skill by researching issues like investor analysis of energy efficiency and Coal Plant closures by Consumer’s Energy, sand dune mining, and mineral rights.

Frank will continue interning with WMEAC in an informal way by writing articles for the WMEAC blog and working at WMEAC on policy-related issues.



GOT ART?

Sustainability Initiative at Aquinas

Got Art is an AQ program that seeks to increase the amount of student, staff, and faculty art displayed around campus.

You can post your artwork onto the webpage, or request an art piece that you find on the page.



RIDESHARE

Sustainability Initiative at Aquinas

Use AQ's Rideshare program to coordinate carpooling with others on campus.

You can make carpooling plans by making a post or commenting on a rideshare post that interests you.



ONE SAINT'S JUNK

Sustainability Initiative at Aquinas

Do you have something you'd like to get rid of? You can either donate it on AQ's very own "One Saint's Junk" website.

Just make a post for the object that you wish to part with, and others can comment on the post if they are interested in it.

To find these cool programs online:

Go to the resources section on the Moose and click on "sustainability initiative"...OR...click these links!

[Got Art?](#)

[One Saint's Junk](#)

[Rideshare](#)

Questions/Feedback? Contact the Center for Sustainability:

Jessica Eimer (eimerjes@aquinas.edu) or Alina Dhaseleer (ahd001@aquinas.edu)

Upcoming Sustainability Events on Campus

Feb 6: “Dr. Ocean” @ the PAC, 6 - 7:15 pm

Come listen to Dr. Guggenheim—explorer, submarine pilot, and oceanographer—discuss his work on protecting coral reefs and sharks in Cuba and his efforts to advance sustainable aquaculture and environmental education.

[Click here](#) for more information on his work.

March 15: Business Plan Competition

You could win money by competing against fellow students with a creative business plan! The application deadline is **Thursday, February 16th**. If you are interested, the first information meeting is **February 7th @ 3:30** in AB 229.

For more information, contact Cindy VanGelderren: vangebyn@aquinas.edu

March 21: “Not Just a Pretty Face” in Wege Ballroom, 7-9 pm

Join Tracy Malkan, co-founder of the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics and author of *Not Just a Pretty Face: The Ugly Side of the Beauty Industry*, for a discussion about what’s in today's beauty products as well as policies and actions the industry is now taking to make their products safer for you and your family. The public lecture from 7-9 pm is free. The proceeds from this event will benefit the Jane Hibbard Idema Women's Studies Center and the Center for Sustainability at Aquinas College.

[Click here](#) to view the "Save the Date."

Center for Sustainability at AQ

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We're on the Web!

Find all AQ sustainability information at:

aquinas.edu/sustainability

Campus Sustainability Groups

Faculty Sustainability Committee
Staff Sustainability Committee
Student Senate Sust. Committee
Joint Sustainability Committee
S3
Center for Sustainability

Want to Submit News?

If your group or committee has any news or upcoming events that you would like to have posted in next month's newsletter, please contact Alina Dhaseleer at ahd001@aquinas.edu