



PlantItGreen

OAK PARK-RIVER FOREST COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



Members of the Environmental Club of Oak Park and River Forest High School with their faculty adviser John Costopoulos (center) at the Earth Day Fest, held April 22 at the Oak Park Public Works building.

School Green Teams take on pesticides

PlantItGreen's School Green Teams group is having a productive spring. In March, it played an integral role in getting local parents to start a discussion surrounding pesticide usage on school property.

As the landscaping bid for Oak Park School District 97 came up for renewal, concerned parents wanted to make sure pesticides would not be broadcast in areas where children play, like school playgrounds. The discussion began in the Google Group managed by SGA's Zero Waste Schools program. Parents then connected via email about pesticide usage on school property.

This discussion grew more in depth at the March School Green Teams meeting, where members discussed their concerns, how to work with D97 administration, and getting educated on pesticides.

Because of the interest in learning more about pesticides, SGA and PlantItGreen hosted an April Lunch and Learn, during which Midwest Pesticide Action Center executive director Ruth Kerzee discussed how pesticides are being used in communities and how to seek safer and more sustainable solutions. Community members and the school green teams group attended, which allowed for an in-depth discussion of best practices for the Oak Park and River Forest schools.

The School Green Teams group, which leads the way to zero waste schools in a collaboration with parents, school/district staff and administration, and Seven Generations Ahead, incorporates all of the public and private schools in Oak Park and River Forest.

River Forest Recycling Extravaganza saves tons of stuff from the landfills



After a hiatus, the River Forest Recycling Extravaganza returned this year on April 21 during the Earth Day weekend. More than 45 volunteers helped unload 365 cars that drove through the pickup site.

Three families of volunteers as well as every member of the River Forest Sustainability Commission, Village President Cathy Aducci, and George Strom from Roy Strom Company were on hand to assist during the four-hour extravaganza.

In all, the event took in everything from 27,460 pounds of electronics, 1,350 pounds of batteries, 40 bikes, 42 pounds of wine corks and 16 dog crates. That's approximately 15 tons of stuff from local residences that didn't go to a landfill.

**Solar team
continues**

outreach efforts

The PIG Solar team continues to do outreach in its efforts to make the renewal energy option available in the Oak Park River Forest communities. Team members are reaching out to nonprofits, congregations and hospitals

inviting them to participate in community solar subscriptions. Letters of interest are being sent out to gauge interest from potential participants, solar consultant Mark Burger reports.



Do you have questions about solar energy - on everything from small home projects to community solar and beyond? For answers and resources, send your questions to solar@sevengenerationsahead.org.

Make your block party a green one



It's that time of year again-to start planning a Green Block Party. This is a chance for you and your neighbors to learn ways to make your community more sustainable and resilient. This year the village is partnering with **West Cook Wild Ones**, **Deep Roots Project** and **Sugar Beet Schoolhouse** on three areas of sustainability practices.

Choose from one of the following topics offered by Green Community Connections and friends or design your own event.

- Mobilizing for monarchs. Stories of the amazing monarch butterfly (West Cook Wild Ones).
- Tips for a beautiful, family-friendly, chemical-free lawn (Deep Roots Project).
- Simple strategies for eating sustainably and reducing waste (Sugar Beet Schoolhouse).

For questions and more information on any of the above topics email sally@greencommunityconnections.org or call 773-315-1109. To add a green event to your block party, sign up [here](#).

West Cook Wild Ones **2018 Native Plant Sale**

The [online pre-order](#) deadline has been extended to Friday, May 25. The sale will again offer plant kits, with a portion of the profits going to local schools. Plant pickup and walk-in sales will be June 2 at the Euclid Methodist Church parking lot in Oak Park, 405 S Euclid, from 10 am - 2 pm.



PlantGreen is a project of the OPRF Community Foundation facilitated by Seven Generations Ahead, which engages multiple community institutions, and is guided by the OPRF Community Foundation's Communityworks Advisory Board and the PlantGreen Core Team.



Communityworks provides a coordinated, systems-based approach toward the achievement of community aspirations.

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