

Spring 2008

## Go! Green Outreach, Spring 2008

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Division of University Advancement

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# GO! Green Outreach

SHARING THE SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS OF THE CAMPUS AND THE DIVISION OF UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

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## GO! Get 'em

Beautiful, warm weather is finally here! One of the easiest ways to go green is to walk or ride your bike if you are traveling short (or long, if you're up for it!) distances. And, don't forget about the gas money you'll save. You've been cooped up long enough. GO! Get 'em!



### UA Sustainability Council and the Seven Pillars

The University of Arkansas Sustainability Council serves as an advisory group to assist the university in meeting the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment. ([www.presidentsclimate-commitment.org](http://www.presidentsclimate-commitment.org)). In working toward reducing global warming emissions and becoming a carbon neutral institution, seven “pillars” or focus areas were established by the council. Each pillar will have a working group, and each group's members are responsible for recommending changes in their respective areas.

The seven pillars are: 1) academics and research; 2) water resources; 3) energy, transportation and the built environment; 4) land use and development; 5) food, agriculture and forestry; 6) pollution prevention and waste minimization; and 7) social, economic and community.

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## Peer Review

In December 2007, College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor, Maine, became the nation's first "net-zero" campus for carbon emissions.

College of the Atlantic has about 300 students and offers only one major, human ecology. Last month, the college began buying all its electricity through a hydroelectric generator, which will reduce its carbon emissions by 22 percent next year.

The college also has begun improving the energy efficiency of its buildings. Where possible, it has replaced fluorescent light bulbs and encouraged car pools, bicycling and flexible work schedules so that some employees can work at home.

To become carbon neutral, the college is buying carbon offsets for about \$25,000 through The Climate Trust of Oregon. The offsets aim to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions by investing in carbon-reduction programs.

The Bar Harbor college is a founding member of the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment.

## Division Task Force Update

The Division of University Advancement Sustainability Task Force began meeting monthly in early 2008 with a mission to investigate current practices within departments under the advancement umbrella, including university relations, the Arkansas Alumni Association, university development and the physical presence of University House, constituent relations and special events, the main advancement office and the Arkansas World Trade Center. The committee was asked to make wide-ranging recommendations for improvement and change at the departmental level that could potentially be adapted by other departments within the University of Arkansas community and by individuals at home. Following a meeting with the University of Arkansas sustainability coordinator, Nick Brown, the committee compiled an inventory of sustainability practices and sought input from advancement colleagues for areas ripe for improvement.

After much examination and discussion of the Advancement survey results, the committee found that five categories tended to emerge. It's those five categories – individual office, on the road, department, personal (at home), and campuswide – that form the framework for this committee's recommendations. The report was produced by Sally Adams (committee chair), Catherine Baltz, Joe Euculano, Laura Jacobs and Charlotte Taylor. Additional input and review provided by Melissa Blouin, Nick Brown and Roy Cordell.

Generally, there's a wide range of awareness and activity across our division. Some areas are better equipped for recycling than others. People want information and an effective, accessible forum for their ideas for improvement. The committee will henceforth meet regularly to review our progress and to update the paper. Any member of University Advancement is welcome to participate on the committee. If you are interested, then please contact Laura Jacobs at [laura@uark.edu](mailto:laura@uark.edu).

A PDF of the full report is being distributed along with this issue of GO!

**Gotta green tip or story idea? Know an advancement colleague who is making a sustainable difference? Tell Danielle Strickland [dstrick@uark.edu](mailto:dstrick@uark.edu) for future issues of GO! Green Outreach.**

# 10 Ways to Green Your Home

1. Turn down the thermostat. Lowering it by just one degree can reduce heating energy costs by about 4 percent.
2. Use ceiling fans in the summer AND winter. By reversing the direction of the blades, warm air is pushed down, helping to keep rooms warm in winter.
3. Conserve energy by purchasing major appliances with an Energy Star rating. Compared to a 1990 model, an Energy Star-qualified refrigerator would save enough electricity to light a home for more than four and a half months.
4. Repair leaky fixtures: one drop per second from a leaky faucet can waste as much as 10 gallons of water each week.
5. Install low-flow showerheads, faucets, and toilets. Low-flow faucets reduce water consumption and the cost of heating water by as much as 50 percent; using a low-flow toilet can save Americans 2.1 trillion gallons of water and \$11.3 million nationwide every day.
6. Choose carpeting, rugs, window treatments and other textiles made from natural fibers, such as cotton or wool, which are untreated and free of toxins, such as pesticides or chemical cleaners.
7. Ask for flooring products made from rapidly renewable resources, such as bamboo. Bamboo is one of the fastest growing plants in the world, requiring no replanting and little fertilization or pesticides.
8. Select solid woods harvested from sustainably managed forests, when possible, for furniture or cabinetry, rather than pressed woods or composites that may contain formaldehyde or other chemicals that may be toxic and hazardous to your health.
9. Eliminate waste by choosing products that are biodegradable or recyclable. Consider the “lifecycle” of furnishings and accessories before purchasing: Are they made of materials that can be reused or recycled when the item wears out or is no longer needed?
10. Recycle packing and shipping materials from any newly purchased items, and safely dispose of paint cans and other containers with contents that could potentially contaminate the ground or water supply.

*Source: The National Building Museum, Washington, DC*

## Brown Plus Green Equals...

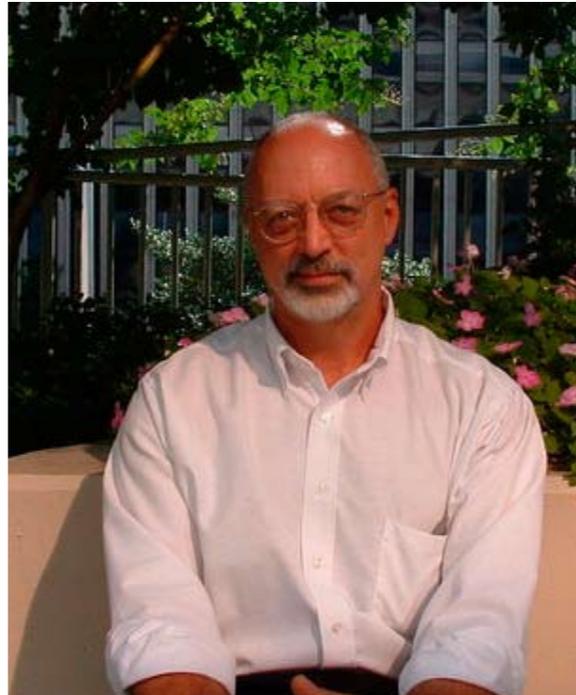
*In December 2007, Nick Brown was hired as the University of Arkansas' first executive assistant for sustainability. He works in the facilities management department and has broad responsibilities across the campus to coordinate sustainability efforts including the campus speaker series (with Jon Johnson of the Applied Sustainability Center) and the recently formed University of Arkansas Sustainability Council. Laura Jacobs recently asked Nick a few questions.*

**LJ:** *As you see it, what is the biggest challenge on the campus sustainability front?*

**NB:** Our campus is a microcosm of society, and the critical sustainability issues are the same. Global warming, which we all know is caused by profligate use of fossil fuels, is the overarching sustainability issue of our time. It's such an overarching issue that it presents itself as a bundle of electrical generation, building energy, transportation, consumer efficiency, recycling, forestry and agricultural issues. If we fail to solve the global warming issue effectively, ecological, economic, and social systems are likely to fail at many spatial scales.

**LJ:** *What has been your biggest surprise since assuming this sustainability role? Have you learned anything new?*

**NB:** Well, I learn new things every day, and that's one of the wonderful aspects of this job. My biggest surprise: how little people participate in conservation events compared to the level of overall interest and excitement throughout our community about sustainability. Our educational and community action events haven't drawn much attention, on campus or off campus.



**LJ:** *Is there an organization or an institution whose sustainability efforts you admire?*

**NB:** Bob Willard has organized a very admirable approach to sustainability consulting. Acutely aware of his personal impacts, he eschews air travel unless the situation shows that his physical presence is significantly more effective than his videos or a webcast. He's discouraged us from hiring him to speak on campus, and his meticulous environmental ethics directly limit his income from consulting.

**LJ:** *It drives me nuts when people who can, don't participate in recycling. What is your sustainability pet peeve?*

**NB:** This is a toss up. May I choose two? First, each of us has many, many friends and colleagues who are highly aware and nominally committed to sustainable living, and who drive a completely unloaded SUV daily. Second, there are entire neighborhoods in Fayetteville and across America throughout which windows are never opened. People are using fossil fuels to heat and cool their homes and offices, even during the temperate paradise we're often blessed with in April, May, October and November, and sometimes in other months, too. If your daily ride is a gas hog and your windows are never open,

you're probably consuming twice as much energy as your grandchildren will think you've had a right to use.

*LJ: If there's one thing we could all do today to make a difference, what would it be?*

**NB:** That's a great question, and I think the answer is "everything that you possibly can do to reduce your carbon footprint." Global warming is an issue that will affect our children and their children profoundly. For us to avoid mass extinctions, coastal flooding, desertification of farmlands, increasingly destructive and widespread storms, and other catastrophes, we'll have to reduce our carbon footprints by 50 – 80%. We'll have to conserve as much energy as possible, as individuals, families, organizations, companies and institutions. Decision makers must meet their responsibility to deploy renewable energy technologies immediately and extensively. All of us must demand environmental responsibility of managers, politicians, landowners and corporate magnates who shape our world.

*LJ: What is your prediction for the sustainability "landscape" at the University of Arkansas 25 years from now?*

**NB:** By 2033, University of Arkansas will be a carbon neutral institution. We'll have solar hot water and photovoltaic installations on campus. UA will receive electricity from a wind farm in the Boston Mountains and a landfill gas-to-electricity generator in our area. We'll purchase only hardware and durable goods that are "cradle to cradle" in design, meaning that the design assures that disposal will be efficient, environmentally responsible, and non-wasteful. We'll be close to zero waste, but

because of research goals that are central to our mission, we will still create small quantities of radiological and chemical waste that will go to disposal facilities. Food waste from campus dining facilities will become compost, fuel and feed. We'll have a system in place for evaluating the carbon footprint of food, other consumables, and durable items, and purchasing will work under a preference for low carbon items. Light rail and electric cars will move people from town to campus and back.

*LJ: Is there anything else you'd like to share with the Division of University Advancement?*

**NB:** Advancement plays a special role for our university; it is the face of the university for thousands of Arkansans and partners. The green values that advancement supports are highly visible to prospective students, staff and faculty as well as financial and research partners. A commitment to green living helps us attract higher quality students, staff, and faculty, and increased financial resources. I applaud advancement for leading the university toward a more sustainable future, and I look forward to continuing work with you.



