

The Sustainable Energy and Environmental Network Executive Summary of 2016 Activities

The Sustainable Energy & Environmental Network (SEEnet) is a non-profit organization dedicated to community education about environmental stewardship and sustainable use of energy resources and technologies.

Executive Summary Highlights

Highlights for 2016 include the support and the growth of the Delta Engineering Club where students from all Tri-Cities High School are invited to build and race electric derby cars; coordination and support of the 13th annual local Electrathon with nearly 25 derby entries from all over the Pacific Northwest; coordination of Earth Hour and promotion of Mid-Columbia Earth Month events and activities including a kids' contest; and maintaining the Go Green Tri-Cities.org website that features local Green Businesses, a How-To Directory and a 12 month calendar chock full of eco-events.

Delta Engineering Club

The Delta Engineering Club (initially formed at Delta HS) is coordinated by Peter Rieke, a community volunteer and staff scientist at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. Team members from the regional high schools, with the help of enthusiastic parents, and dedicated mentors, apply their science classroom learning to hands-on, practical engineering tasks.

Our main activity has been building and racing go-cart sized vehicles powered entirely by two automotive batteries. Competitive events are held throughout the Pacific Northwest allowing the team to test their ideas and skills in real make or break events. As the designs are unique and cars are built from scratch, the students are often challenged to find quick fixes for unexpected car problems.

Last year the team raced three cars at three events throughout the Pacific Northwest, rebuilt one go-cart from the ground up and made major modifications to the others. The primary focus last year was on improving the aerodynamic efficiency, reducing weight and driving efficiently.

Six of the team members graduated in 2016 and went on to various universities to study medicine, science and engineering. This loss has put a dent in the experience level of our team, so this year's focus will be on recruiting freshman and sophomores. This year the team will focus on upgrading motor control electronics and instrumenting the cars to monitor performance in real time. If you would like to participate as a mentor or if you would like to have the team members visit your business or organization, please contact the program director, Peter Rieke, 509-438-6126 or petyr_me@charter.net.

2016 Electrathon at Columbia Basin College

SEEnet, with your help, has, since its inception, sponsored the local Electrathon America race at Columbia Basin College (CBC) and again the Tri-Cities were able to enter two cars in our hometown race. Unlike the previous year the cars all finished with the best car, #965 pictured below, placing in the top third.

25 cars from the Pacific Northwest entered the Pasco Electrathon Race this past April, a well-established event that is considered to be the nucleus of an inland northwest racing circuit. Keeping the CBC race is important to promoting the sport in the inland northwest.



With “project based learning” becoming a focus of high school education, establishing an Electrathon race circuit is a key resource for Inland Northwest high schools and will be instrumental in their decision to start new Electrathon programs. In five years’ time, we hope to establish teams in Ellensburg, Walla Walla, Yakima, Moses Lake as well as Eastern Oregon and Northern Idaho. For that grand vision we will need dedicated sponsors.

Mid-Columbia Earth Month and Earth Hour

Mid-Columbia Earth Month includes the coordination and/or promotion of many activities and events beginning late March (National Earth Hour) through early May, emphasizing Earth Day in April. Through community donations, SEEnet provides support for many of these events. This past year, the Earth Month/Go Green Tri-Cities Committee coordinated a large family Earth Hour event at the REACH museum which included planting native plants, acoustic music, energy efficiency exhibits, sustainable food for purchase, candle making for lights out, star and moon gazing, and a sustainable kids photo contest. About \$500 was awarded to contest winners. This effort included the help of local organizations, businesses, teachers, group leaders and parents.

Other coordinated events include classroom outreach and the publicity of eco-activities held in our community. The Mid-Columbia Earth Month Committee has been a vital tool in the coordination and promotion of environmental activities in the Mid-Columbia.

Go Green Tri-Cities

Go Green Tri-Cities continues to provide environmental education and to promote 'green living' events and activities in our community. Early in 2014, the long-standing Earth Month website merged with Go Green Tri-Cities, which now provides this service year-round. The GGTC website has strived to be the central place for the community to learn about environmental issues and events, find local environmental groups and other

community resources, and provide a wealth of information on how to live in a more eco-friendly way. It also includes the Green Pages directory, a listing of eco-friendly products and services available in this area.

The GGTC committee promotes the website and provides environmental education by tabling at events, and by handing out lists of upcoming Green events in various locations. This year GGTC and the REACH Museum have worked together on several events. This collaboration helps both groups expand their scope of educating the community. In January, GGTC hosted a fair to educate the community about local environmental groups, which was held in the planetarium at CBC, prior to a showing of Earth. It was well attended, and they hope to hold it again this year. A class on composting was planned as part of the Confluent Space garden day, but it was canceled due to weather. GGTC plans to partner with them in the future. GGTC is currently working on a solar energy workshop to be held at Franklin PUD.

GGTC also posts several times a week to their Facebook page. The number of hits it has been receiving, as well as the number of hits on the calendar and other pages on the website, shows that this website and committee are a great community resource. The directory and website are maintained by volunteers, as is all of the work of this committee. The committee members have many ideas for ways to expand environmental education but are limited as a volunteer organization. Funding a part-time position to keep the website current and provide outreach to the community could include establishing Green clubs in high schools and so much more.

As supporters of SEEnet, as well as the Tri-Cities business environment, our sponsors are helping to provide environmental education - maintaining and improving the quality of life we enjoy here.

The Sustainable Energy and Environmental Network
2015 Executive Summary
For more information, contact:
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Lora Rathbone, 509-375-1954





ECO-ACTIVITIES IN APRIL
Visit www.gogreentricities.org



- April 1-30 All month cell phone recycling campaign, visit www.gogreentricities.org for all drop off locations.
- April 1-10 Kids Earth Month poster contest continues. What sustainable energy would you use? Take to The REACH.
- April 1 Hike Little Badger, 10am-2pm, 6 miles, 700 ft elev., be prepared, dtrimble6435@gmail.com.
- April 1 Lecture: *What Plants Talk About*, 7pm, Columbia Basin College Rm TD 439.
- April 1 & 2 Go Wild for Reading, Earth Month activities, 12:30-4:30pm, area libraries.
- April 2 Cowiche Canyon Hike, Yakima, Fun Fit & Over Fifty, 375-0860 or donbjhl@charter.net.
- April 3 Bike Ride, Kenn. to W. Richland, Fun Fit & Over Fifty, 22 miles, 947-8543 or lindandoug@charter.net.
- April 3 & 4 Richland Library Spring Book Sale, (reuse), 10am-4pm, visit www.richland.lib.wa.us.
- April 3 & 4 Benton County Household Haz. Waste Collection, BF Fairgrounds, 9am-3pm.
- April 4 Washington State Parks, Free Entry Day!
- April 4 Bateman Island Bird Walk, 8am, meet at Wye Park, bring binoculars.
- April 4 Amon Creek Habitat Work Day, 9am-2pm, more info at <http://taptal.org/calendar>.
- April 4 Prosser Winter Farmer's Market, 9am-noon, Prosser City Park, 7th and Sommers St.
- April 4 Wildflower Walks & Education, 10am-11am, see www.friendsofbadger.org.
- April 4 Basic Paddle Sports Introduction, Fun Fit & Over Fifty, Two Rivers Park, 628-9156 or wakinner@yahoo.com.
- April 4 Chiawana Park Spring Opening: Party in the Park - family games, food and fun.
- April 7 Story time/nature activity, Howard Amon Park, 10am-10:45am, meet in lobby of Richland Community Center.
- April 8 Bike Maintenance Drive Train Class, \$\$, 6pm-7:30pm. Register at <http://www.rei.com/stores/kennewick.html>.
- April 9 Food Swap at the Mid-Columbia Market at the Hub, 7pm, 603 Goethals Drive, Richland.
- April 10&11 Children's Consignment Sale, Columbia Community Church, 9am-4pm on Fri. & 9am-noon on Sat.
- April 11 Hike Richland's 4-mile Urban Greenbelt Trail, 9am, meet in lobby of Richland Comm. Center, bring water.
- April 11 Native Garden Planting Event, 9am-2pm, listen, learn & plant, WSU Wine Science Center.
- April 11 Shred Fest, 9am-noon, destroy sensitive papers & recycle, Free! GESA, 51 Gage Blvd.
- April 13 Cleanup & Pizza Feed, 9am-10am, Brick House Pizza on Van Giesen, dress for conditions.
- April 14 Make recycled greeting cards, 9:30am-11:30am, Meet at Richland Community Center, Free!
- April 14 InterMountain Alpine Club Mountaineering School, 6:30pm-8:30pm, Rich. Library, Call 509-619-2390.
- April 14 Preparing for a Cycling Charity Ride, 7:15pm-8:30pm. Free! <http://www.rei.com/stores/kennewick.html>.
- April 15 Wildflower Walks & Education, 10am-11am, meet at Dallas Trail Head. www.friendsofbadger.org.
- April 16 Bicycle Safety Basics, Kamiakin HS Rm 525, 6:30pm-8pm. \$12, www.communityed.ksd.org.
- April 18 Geology & Wildflower Tour, presentation & hike, Sign up at <http://visitthereach.org/2015-tours>.
- April 18 Geology of the Columbia Gorge Field Trip, 7:30am-5pm, Ice Age Flood Inst., \$75, RSVP, 713-542-4359.
- April 18 Trail North Hike, 9am-11:30am, easy hike on new trail, see <http://taptal.org/calendar>.
- April 18 Wildflower Hike on Badger Mountain, 10am, Dallas Rd Trailhead, erest_crediford@live.org.
- April 18 Winter Farmers Market, Prosser City Park, 9am-12pm, Produce, coffee, wine, and more!
- April 18 CI Shred's Annual Shred Event, 10am-2pm, in Target parking lots, Free!
- April 18 Let's Fish! Class, Southridge HS Rm B110, 3pm-4:30pm, \$12, www.communityed.ksd.org.
- April 21 InterMountain Alpine Club Mountaineering School, 6:30pm-8:30pm, Rich. Library, RSVP, 509-619-2390.
- April 21 Backpacking Basics, Kennewick REI, 7:15-8:30pm, <http://www.rei.com/stores/kennewick.html>.
- April 22 Washington State Parks, Free Entry Day!
- April 22 The Basics to Successful Yards, 6pm-8pm, RSVP, \$10 fee, Jobs Nursery, www.jobsnursery.com.
- April 22 Water-Wise Landscaping Seminar, 6pm, RSVP, Free! www.gesa.com/learn/seminars.
- April 22 Electric Vehicle Show & Presentation, 6pm, 505 McMurray, Rich., See a Tesla, BMW, Volt, Leaf & more.
- April 22 Vegetable Gardening, Southridge HS Rm B104, 7-8pm, \$12 www.communityed.ksd.org.
- April 23 Junior Audubon, Learn more and join at: <http://www.lowercolumbiabasin.audubon.org/JrAudubon.html>.
- April 23 Spring Bicycle Basics Maintenance, Kamiakin HS Rm 525, \$12 www.communityed.ksd.org.
- April 23 Bike Maintenance Drive Train Class, \$\$, 6pm-7:30pm. Register at <http://www.rei.com/stores/kennewick.html>.
- April 24 Arbor Day Tree Planting, Goethals Park, noon, demo's, plantings and more, 942-7529.
- April 25 Snake River Island Hop 50 or 100k relay, 6am, Ice Harbor Dam, <http://www.rei.com/stores/kennewick.html>.
- April 25 Benton County Household Haz. Waste Collection, 9am-3pm, Uptown Parking Lot, SW corner, Richland.
- April 25 Electrathon Derby & Expo, 10am-2pm, Columbia Basin College, Pasco, northwest parking lot.
- April 25 Heritage Garden Tour, Free! 9am - noon, meet at Kenn. Library, RSVP, www.bentoncd.org.
- April 25 Paddle & Earth Day Cleanup, 9:30am - 2:30pm, Wye Park Boat launch, call Ted, 783-7789.
- April 25 Landscaping with Native Plants, Walla Walla, 9am-11am, Contact: 509-524-5218.
- April 25 Wildflowers and Ice-Age Erratics Hike, 9am-4pm, \$60, <http://visitthereach.org/2015-tours>.
- April 25 Wildflower Hike, 3 miles, 10am, meet at CBC parking lot, bring lunch & H2O, www.wnps.org/cbasin/.
- April 25 Farm Store & Gift Boutique Event, Benton City, 11am-4pm, Contact: Mary 509-295-7771
- April 26 Wildflower Walks and Education, 10am, www.friendsofbadger.org.
- April 28 2017 Hanford Budget and Cleanup Priorities Public Meeting, Richland Library, 5:50pm.
- April 29 Bike Maintenance Basics, Kennewick REI, 7:15-8:30pm, <http://www.rei.com/stores/kennewick.html>.