

A Quarterly Newsletter of



**Solid Waste District of
La Porte County**

(219) 326-0014
(800) 483-7700

www.solidwastedistrict.com

Summer 2014



Making La Porte County a more beautiful place to live

La Porte County Community Cleanup Day was a huge success again this year! In Michigan City alone, 10 pickup loads of trash were collected. Litter was also removed from La Porte's beaches, parks, and neighborhoods, as well as county roads in surrounding areas.

The La Porte County Solid Waste District wants to recognize everyone who helped make the event a success:

- Michigan City volunteers: The Greater Michigan City GOP Club, Michigan City High School, Evergreen Baptist Church's youth group, the Elston Grove Neighborhood Association, Lisa Smiertelny's Boy Scout troop, Amie Methner's Campfire Club, the PNC Ecology Club, Tracey Pollock and family, Nora Schultz and family, Francine Kalita and family, Pam Wickham and family, Chad Trobaugh with Central States Manufacturing, Mark Dever, and Phil Liverman.
- Commissioner Willie Milsap's City/County Resource Center, which provided volunteers who cleaned up around the Fifth Ward and also hosted Michigan City's thank-you luncheon again this year.
- The Michigan City Parks and Recreation Department, which has hosted an Adopt a Beach cleanup as part of this event for three years in a row.
- The Michigan City Refuse Department for working hard year after year to pick up all of the litter collected in Michigan City.
- La Porte and surrounding area volunteers: The La Porte County Libertarians, La Porte Service League, Herr Loff, Bethany Lutheran Church, Northwest Chapter of the Indiana Environmental Health Association, Debra LeRoy's Girl Scout troop, Sean McKiel and family, Carey Hayward and family, Sacha Burns and family, Tim Vaughan, Connie Justice, and Nina Rogowski.
- La Porte Fire Station #1, which hosted La

Porte's thank-you luncheon again this year.

- The Community Work Program, under the guidance of La Porte County Sheriff's Deputy Bob Blair, which picks up all litter collected in La Porte and surrounding areas each year.
- The La Porte Parks and Recreation Department for picking up litter, leaves, and other items collected from La Porte's beaches.
- The local businesses whose donations made all of this possible: John Avila, DDS of Coolspring Dental Clinic, Hearthside Food Solutions, Lewis Bakeries, Family Express, and Burnham Glove Company. We couldn't do this without you!

Our county cleanup day is part of Keep America Beautiful's Great American Cleanup, and trash bags are donated by Glad.

Cleaning up litter not only makes our communities look better, but it also helps protect wildlife and the ecosystems in which we live. We hope the popularity of La Porte County Community Cleanup Day continues to grow—we can all make La Porte County a beautiful place to live!



Members of Amie Kennedy Methner's Campfire Club pose with the trash picked up at the Washington Park beach cleanup.



Commissioner Willie Milsap poses with volunteers who helped him clean up litter in the Fifth Ward. (Photo by Kevin Harmon)

Volunteers from Bethany Lutheran Church cleaned up in their La Porte neighborhood.



Turner Talks Trash from the Executive Director's Desk

Ah, summertime! Parties, picnics, barbecues, festivals, fairs, and parades. Long afternoons along Lake Michigan and quiet evenings on the porch. The weather draws us outdoors. While you're enjoying warm weather and summertime festivities, don't forget the three R's.

When it comes to picnics and parties, plan ahead so that you don't have too much food. Pitch-ins, in particular, often lead to a lot of food waste (which translates to wasted money and time on food purchases and preparation). Rather than asking everyone to bring food, consider assigning other tasks.

Reduce your picnic waste by selecting washable plates, cups, and silverware. For outdoor use, especially around swimming pools, rivers, and lakes, use plastic and metal rather than glass. Instead of paper napkins, which can easily blow away and become

litter, take along washable napkins, small hand towels, or washcloths.

And, of course, don't forget to collect bottles and cans for recycling. You can put empties back into your cooler or use a bag or box. Or, for a larger event, consider borrowing the District's ClearStream recycling bins. We have 38 ClearStream recycling stands for groups to use at events countywide. Any group in La Porte County may use the bins for any event. Groups must designate a contact person to pick up and return the bins, and all materials gathered using the bins must be recycled either at your home or at one of the District's drop-off sites: La Porte County Highway Barn, Highway 30 and 400 W, Hanna; Kingsbury Fish & Wildlife, Hupp Road; and Marquette Mall parking lot, behind Sears. To reserve the use of these portable containers, please call us at 326-0014.

Remember to look for us at the La Porte County Fair! We'll have a booth full of helpful information in the Conservation Council Building, near the fish pond. Plus, we'll be providing recycling throughout the fair grounds, so be sure to recycle your drink cans and bottles in the ClearStream bins.

Clay

SUMMER AFTERNOON—SUMMER AFTERNOON; TO ME THOSE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE TWO MOST BEAUTIFUL WORDS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. ~ Henry James



Photo Courtesy of Indiana Recycling Coalition

New recycling legislation in Indiana

Indiana has a new 50% recycling goal and new recycling data reporting requirements which lay the groundwork for significant job creation, energy conservation, and natural resource protection.

During the 2014 legislative session, State Representative David Wolkins brought these ideas to the table with strong support from Governor Mike Pence, the Indiana Recycling Coalition (IRC), the Association of Indiana Solid Waste Management Districts, and several Indiana manufacturers and other recycling industry stakeholders. Senator Ed Charbonneau co-authored the bill and facilitated the passage of HB 1183 through the Senate.

In 2012, the IRC convened a recycling industry stakeholder group that worked for two years to find common ground on ways to recover more resources from Indiana's waste stream. That group discussed the need for data collection and a new state goal as a starting place for more substantive recycling policies.

Several members of that group, namely major manufacturers that use recycled material as feedstock, were particularly strong proponents of HB 1183.

"It is an exciting time for recycling in Indiana, as the economic benefits of increased recycling become more clear. The IRC's landmark 2013 study, *The Untapped Jobs Potential of Indiana's Recycling Industry*, brought the economic message to the fore," said Carey Hamilton, executive director of IRC.

The environmental benefits of increased recycling, namely resource and energy conservation, are already well documented. With this new economic data, there is a strong case to be made to support recycling investments. Most notably, the study concludes that recycling 25% of what Hoosiers dispose of today would result in the creation of 10,000 new in-state jobs.



New crates are one of the many products that can be made from recycled rigid plastics.

According to a study prepared by Moore Recycling Associates, recycling for non-bottle, rigid plastics rose to 1.016 billion pounds in 2012, triple the amount recycled in 2007 when tracking of rigid plastics recycling began. Rigid plastics include containers and packaging, such as cups, trays, lids, and food tubs, as well as bulky items, such as crates, buckets, baskets, toys, and lawn furniture. About three-quarters of these items are made from either polypropylene (PP, #5) or polyethylene (PE/PET, #1).

Almost all recycling programs nationwide have long accepted plastic bottles and jugs, such as soft drink bottles, water bottles, milk jugs, and detergent jugs. However, non-bottle rigid plastics are new to the mix. About 60% of U.S. residents now have access to non-bottle rigid plastic recycling, either at curbside or drop-off centers.

In 2012, 57% of the rigid plastics were processed in the United States and Canada, while the rest was exported, mainly to China. End uses for non-bottle rigid plastics include crates, buckets, pipes, automotive products, lawn and garden products, and industrial drums.

Not sure what plastics you can recycle? Find out by calling us or visiting our website.

Help keep roadsides clean on recycling day

Litter left behind on roadsides is an obvious eyesore, but there is something we can do about it! Here are some tips for preventing litter:

- Although it is not required, you may bag your recyclables before putting them into your recycling cart. Simply place your recyclables into a clean trash bag and tie it shut. This past winter, many carts were knocked over and their contents scattered by wind and snow. Especially in open areas, bagging recyclables will keep that from happening on windy days.
- Please don't overfill your recycling cart so that the lid is ajar. Wind can catch the lid and flip it open, allowing recyclables to become litter. If you have more recycling than will fit into your cart, bag those items, tie the bag shut, and set it next to your cart.

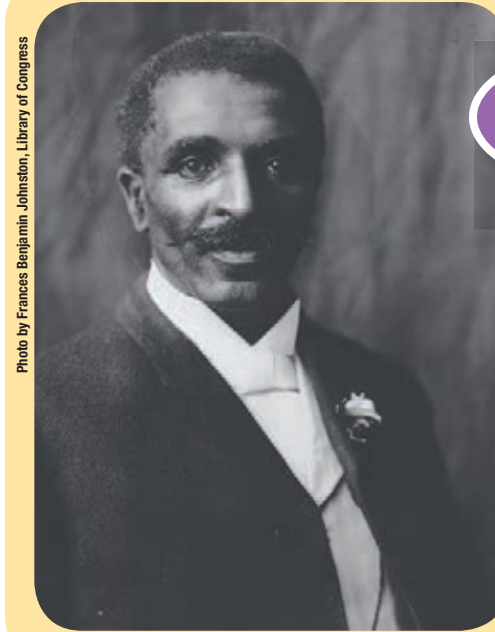


Photo by Frances Benjamin Johnston, Library of Congress

QUOTES REQUOTED

When you do the common things in life in an uncommon way, you will command the attention of the world.

George Washington Carver,
1864-1943
Scientist and Inventor

Waste in Focus



The Griffin family of Atlanta, Georgia, agreed to collect their waste for a week. They ended up with 31 pounds of trash for the landfill and 10.1 pounds of recyclables.

Peter Menzel, whose previous photo-essays include *Material World: A Global Family Portrait* and *Hungry Planet: What the World Eats*, teamed up with frequent collaborator, Faith De'Aluisio, to create the Waste in Focus Project, a look at eight American families and their trash. Families were chosen from around the country. Each family collected all garbage, recyclables, and compostables for one week. At the end, everything was weighed and displayed for a family portrait.

In an interview with Isabelle Raphael in *Parade* magazine in April, Peter Menzel said, "This was not really an exercise to compare the families one to another. It was more of an exercise for each to learn what they could do better—both to lessen their total household waste and to properly manage their recycling. For instance, while many of our families were already fairly adept at following their municipality's waste collection rules, nearly every family had put some amount of recyclables in their trash bin."

To see the photos, read the families' stories, take the waste quiz, or find answers to some of your frequently asked questions, go to www.WasteinFocus.com.

The project was funded by the Glad Products Company, in partnership with Keep America Beautiful.

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In praise of junkyards

Adam Minter is a journalist from a family of “scrappers,” so it isn’t surprising that his debut book, *Junkyard Planet: Travels in the Billion-Dollar Trash Trade* (Bloomsbury Press, 2013), explores the vast expanse of the global recycling economy. The result is an unexpectedly interesting tale that aims “to explain why the hidden world of globalized recycling and reclamation is the most logical (and greenest) endpoint in a long chain that begins with the harvest in your home recycling bin, or down at the local junkyard.”

Minter knows that the numbers can be astonishing—American consumers produce 251 million tons of trash annually, of which almost 87 million tons are recycled and composted. But he gives life to the recycling and scrap industry by introducing people who handle scrap—sorting, buying, selling, and remanufacturing—in the U.S. and China. As he introduces these people and businesses, Minter takes the reader on a journey from scrap men of the early 20th century to the boom of the 1960s American recycling industry and around the world, showing us the growth of the global recycling industry. Along the way, he explains what happens to the plastics, papers, and metals thrown into recycling bins and carts.

Minter is uniquely qualified to offer this perspective. Minter’s family owns a scrap yard in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Founded by his late great-grandfather during the Great Depression, the junkyard was a business born of poverty-driven ingenuity and a desire to find a way to earn a living for himself and his family. This entrepreneurship was passed down through the generations. Minter grew up in the junkyard, run by his father and grandmother, and the yard holds many special

memories from his childhood. He notes that, like many of China’s growing recycling companies, “the world’s largest recycling industry—the U.S. one—was also born from self-interested motives.” Today, Minter is a journalist for *Bloomberg World View*, based in Shanghai, China.

The book begins with a trip to Texas to visit one of the largest sorting facilities for household recyclables in the United States. Minter describes the recycling facility as a “Walmart-sized space.” He likens it to “Willy Wonka’s chocolate factory: conveyors of trash

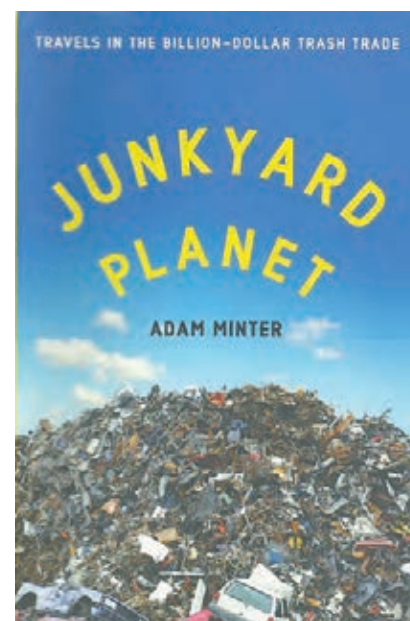
rush upward and release their cargo into spinning stars that toss it about in a manner that I can only describe as joyful, like popcorn jumping in a frying pan.” This plant accepts mixed recyclables, also called “single-stream recycling,” meaning the consumers don’t separate their recyclables. Instead, machines and workers along the system of conveyor belts separate materials by type, which are then baled or packaged for shipment to processors and manufacturers.

Reuse and recycling require, as Minter notes, ingenuity and entrepreneurship. Most scrap and recycling businesses begin in “backpacks, pickup trucks, and perhaps a discrete backyard or two.” For instance, in Shanghai, where peddlers scrounge for cans and other recyclable items, Minter sees a migrant woman with a fanny pack filled with scrap money, “presiding over a system that harvests recyclables from the trash.” Worldwide, the industry has grown, not for altruistic or environmental reasons, but because “somebody was short a resource, and somebody else with some ingenuity and entrepreneurship had an idea for how to provide it.”

Minter explores the stories of some of these entrepreneurs who have made recycling more efficient and feasible. Leonard Fritz began “grubbing,” or scrapping for metals, in 1931 in order to make money for school clothes. Fritz now owns one of the largest scrap companies in the United States, the Huron Valley Steel Corporation, which, in 2007, received over 1 billion pounds of scrap. Similarly, Alpert & Alpert in Los Angeles started in the 1950s when the company bought scrap from peddlers and sold to only three steel mills. They now ship billions of dollars worth of scrap to Asia. Minter also visits OmniSource in Fort Wayne, Indiana, which has some of the most expensive and high-tech metal separating equipment in the world, and Scott Newell in El Paso, Texas. Newell created the auto shredder and is now the supplier of more than 30% of the world’s metal shredders.

While explaining the vast expanse of the recycling world, Minter also relates how cyclical the industry is, mirroring the larger economy. “The global recycling business, no matter how sustainable or green, is 100 percent dependent upon consumers consuming goods

According to Adam Minter, “the world’s most recycled product (by weight) isn’t a newspaper, a notebook computer, or a plastic water bottle—it’s an American automobile, most of which is metal. In 2012, the United States recycled nearly 11.9 million cars..., generating millions of tons of metal that was quickly and efficiently recycled into a range of new products (mostly parts for new automobiles) around the world.”



made from other goods,” writes Minter.

According to Minter, “U.S. manufacturers (second only to China in total output) still use roughly two-thirds of the recycled materials that are generated within the U.S. borders.” The next largest user of American recyclables is China, where manufacturers use these raw materials

to serve their own growing economy, much as the U.S. recycling industry boomed in the 1960s as the middle-class grew in this country.

Minter travels through China, following various recyclables as they are sorted, processed, and reused or remanufactured. In Foshan, China, migrant workers separate metals used to build the numerous buildings in China’s cities. This process is mainly done by hand labor, which provides a better living for the migrant workers than subsistence farming in their villages. This metal separation is also, environmentally, a better alternative than mining for new metals. In Taizhou, China, old automobiles are taken apart, parts are sorted by hand, and then reused to repair cars in China. If a part cannot be reused, it is recycled and sent to Japan. Wen’an County in northern China is the heart of the global scrap-plastics trade, and, unfortunately, one of the most polluted areas in the country. However, the plastics sorted there are used, as Minter notes, to “make everything from cell phones to coffee cups.” In Guiyu, China, old iPhones and other electronics are refurbished and used by people who cannot afford to buy a new phone. However, some products prove difficult to recycle. For instance, many touchscreens are made in such a way that it is not profitable to extract the valuable rare earth minerals found in them.

In describing this vast journey of recycling and the immense volume of resources that come from it, Minter shows that, while recycling is good, it is important to reduce and reuse first. He cites several studies that have found when recycling bins are present, we actually use more. “Above all, though, I encourage people to think about what it means to recycle, and make smart choices as a consumer before you buy that thing you’ll eventually toss out,” he writes.

As Minter notes, consumers play an important role—and not only by recycling. He suggests that consumers ask companies to design products for repair, reuse, and recycling. For instance, in electronics, companies could make it easier to replace batteries or disassemble components for recycling. He recommends that the U.S. dedicate more research and development money to recycling technologies, something that is already occurring in China and other Asian countries on a larger scale. Finally, he supports policies that encourage recyclable materials to move around the country and around the globe to businesses that can most efficiently extract and reuse the resources.

For Minter, and for all of us, junkyards are a good thing—places where what might have become waste is re-imagined. This book will leave you contemplating where that plastic bottle and cereal box you throw into the recycling bin will go, and the numerous lives they may change along the way.

“The world is a better, cleaner, and more interesting place for its junkyards. I wouldn’t want to live on a planet without them.”



Workers pull recyclables off a moving conveyor belt in a recycling sorting facility. Materials coming into this facility come in as mixed recyclables from “single-stream” carts and bins.

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Greening La Porte County Award Goes to Sunkissed Organics

Sacha Burns' passion for sustainability started on her grandparents' small farm. Now she operates Sunkissed Organics on those same five acres, planting heirloom seeds and raising endangered breeds of chickens and ducks.

"I basically grew up outdoors, and I really believe in preserving diversity," Burns said. "Being here is like therapy for me."

Her dedication to reuse and recycling led us to award her organic farm the Solid Waste District's Greening La Porte County Award. The award is meant to recognize businesses and organizations whose recycling and waste reduction efforts make our county more sustainable.

Burns has been running Sunkissed Organics for the past two years at her family's property, 1066 South 400 W, just one mile west of La Porte.

She's been able to garner attention for her varied produce at Chicago farmers markets and local eateries alike. Her biggest crop, and her most popular, is heirloom tomatoes. Heirloom tomatoes have a much better flavor than hybrids sold in stores, Burns said. "Hybrid tomatoes are bred to have thicker skins to accommodate shipping, and they also have a core. Heirloom tomatoes are all meat on the inside," she said.

She also grows other produce, including squash, beans, potatoes, eggplant, currants, and raspberries—all without the use of pesticides. Instead, she uses her flock of chickens and other naturally occurring wildlife in the area to cut down on bugs that might eat her plants. "Pesticides are an easy fix for infestations, which is the biggest temptation to use them. There are years where flea beetles get on my eggplant and it reduces yields," Burns said. "But when you use them, they also kill all of the beneficial insects that would control pests for you, like praying mantis and butterflies. It really throws off the natural balance of things."

Reuse is a way of life on the farm.

Nursery pots are used until they break and can be recycled. Overripe produce and other food scraps are fed to the chickens, and what they don't eat is composted along with weeds that haven't gone to seed. "The chicken manure is also used in the off season to build up my soil, so it truly goes full circle," Burns said. "Plants grow, chickens eat produce, chickens produce manure, which then goes to feed my plants."

She sells her produce regularly at the Chicago Botanic Garden Farmers' Market and the 61st Street Farmers Market, and it is featured at restaurants like Spire Farm to Fork Cuisine in La Porte and Bentwood Tavern in New Buffalo. "I found more success in Chicago because the trend toward thinking about how your food is grown started earlier out there, but the awareness is growing here, too. I'm considering going to one of our local farmers markets on Saturdays next year," Burns said.

Burns is involved in several community projects, such as the Growing Up Green curriculum at Michigan City Area Schools that teaches students about horticulture and

the planned La Porte Community Garden. "I've always loved teaching people how to grow their own food from seed. It's so easy, you can even do it in a pot on your patio," she said. "It's a great life skill. If a drought happens elsewhere, you can still feed your family with what you've grown." She is also helping organize the Farm to Table dinner scheduled for downtown La Porte on September 13, where her produce will be part of the meal.

Sunkissed Organics is open by appointment; call (219) 363-5176. Burns is also usually at the farm in the evenings after 6 p.m.



Burns' daughters help with the harvest in the fall. Her older daughter, Alexis, holds some recently harvested potatoes.



Burns' daughters help her plant each year at Sunkissed Organics. Her younger daughter, Mia, is planting tomatoes.

Curbside Recycling Schedule

- A** City of La Porte – South of Hwy. 2 and West of Monroe (Hwy. 4); North of Hwy. 2 and West of 35
- B** City of La Porte – East of Hwy. 4 and South of Hwy. 2, including Kankakee Township; East of Hwy. 35 and North of Hwy. 2 to Brighton Street
- C** City of La Porte – East of Hwy. 35 and North of Brighton Street; Town of Westville; New Durham Estates Mobile Home Community; Cass Township; Dewey Township; Hanna Township; Prairie Township
- D** Clinton Township; Noble Township; Scipio Township; Town of Wanatah
- E** Johnson Township; Lincoln Township; Pleasant Township; Union Township; Washington Township
- F** Michigan City – West of Karwick Road; Sheridan Beach; Pottawattamie Park
- G** Michigan City – East of Karwick Road; Springfield Township; Long Beach; Michiana Shores; Shoreland Hills
- H** Coolspring Township; New Durham Township (excluding the Town of Westville and New Durham Estates)
- I** Center Township
- J** Galena Township; Hudson Township; Wills Township; Trail Creek (Michigan City)

NOTE: Township is outside of City limits. Never remove toter from assigned address.

July						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		B	C	D	Holiday No Service	E
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	F	G	H	I	J	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	A	B	C	D	E	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	F	G	H	I	J	
27	28	29	30	31		
	A	B	C	D		

August						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					E	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	F	G	H	I	J	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	A	B	C	D	E	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	F	G	H	I	J	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	A	B	C	D	E	
31						

September						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
	Holiday No Service	F	G	H	I	J
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	A	B	C	D	E	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	F	G	H	I	J	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	A	B	C	D	E	
28	29	30				
	F	G				

Mark your calendar

Saturday, July 19, 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
Household Hazardous Waste Collection
Kabelin Ace Hardware, Marquette Mall, Michigan City

Saturday, August 23, 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
Household Hazardous Waste Collection
La Porte County Fair Grounds, 2581 West State Road 2, La Porte

Saturday, September 27, 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
6-in-1 Collection (Household Hazardous Waste, Tires, Appliances, Electronics, Textiles, and Confidential Document Shredding)
La Porte County Fair Grounds, 2581 West State Road 2, La Porte

Saturday, October 18, 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
Household Hazardous Waste Collection
Kabelin Ace Hardware, Marquette Mall, Michigan City

www.facebook.com/LPCoRecycling
www.twitter.com/LPCoRecycling
www.youtube.com/LPCoRecycling
Green E-Club: <http://eepurl.com/eiyHs>



We want your suggestions, questions and comments!

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