

## The Green Corner

Henry MacLean , April 2008

As energy prices continue their upward spiral, homeowners in Milton (and across the planet) are coming to terms with the need for collective stewardship and action in response to the climate crisis at hand.

A critical step towards this action is untangling the decisions about our **economy** (literally the governance of the home) and our **ecology** (the theory & science of our homes) and viewing them as if they were connected and not working at cross purposes. This dynamic of integrating good economic thinking with good ecological planning is unfolding at all levels, from individual households to Town, City, National and Global think tanks all now engaged in a process to transition our world from a carbon producing to a post carbon producing world.

In this country buildings produce somewhere around 45 percent of greenhouse gasses, and the residential sector here in Massachusetts is close to 55% of the building sector. Homeowners therefore represent an important untapped resource. We know that it is always cheaper and easier to save energy than create it. This is the first step in teaching responsible stewardship. We need to become lean and efficient in our current energy usage, while we begin to integrate the renewable technologies of wind, solar, geothermal and bio-fuels, technologies that will help us get off of carbon altogether.

Certainly, in a historic town like Milton, there will be many issues in the struggle to preserve the heritage of buildings and also make them green. After all, we know that 95% of the buildings that are here today will be with us in 40 years when scientists are telling us we need to bring carbon down by 75%. As with anything new in life , the big challenge is taking the first steps.

Earlier this month Gov. Deval Patrick, Milton's very own, announced the establishment of a Task Force on net zero energy buildings at the annual Northeast Sustainable Energy Association's Building Energy Conference. "Buildings that reduce their energy use by 40 percent are great, but that is simply not enough," the governor said. "We need to set our sights lower."

The process of integrating the governance of the home with good science is now truly unfolding at all levels, with action and commitment from all of us at the grassroots as well as government action and leadership. Visit any of the following websites to find out more.

Sustainable Milton

<http://www.sustainablemilton.org/>

Mass Climate Action Network

<http://www.massclimateaction.org/>

Mass Energy Consumer Alliance

<http://www.massenergy.com/Index.html>

Northeast Sustainable Energy Assoc.

<http://www.nesea.org/>

The Empowerment Institute

<http://www.empowermentinstitute.net/>

## GREEN CORNER March 2008

### Upcoming Calendar:

**February 21-March 2** , Museum of Fine Arts

***Renewal*** is the first feature-length documentary to bring to light the significant contributions being made by America's religious institutions, and the Mass ReLeaf Ministry supports the showing of this film. This compelling film, by Marty Ostrow and Terry Kay Rockefeller's, explores eight diverse faith-based initiatives that exemplify the range and vitality of America's religious-environmental movement, from Evangelical Christians protesting mountaintop removal coal mining in Kentucky to Buddhists working to save trees through paper conservation. To purchase tickets, call the box office at 617-369-3687 or go online at [www.mfa.org/film](http://www.mfa.org/film).

### **March 6**

7:00 PM, Fuller Village Brush Hill Activities Room, Free admission.

***Blue Vinyl*** sponsored by Sustainable Milton. Documentary filmmaker Judith Helfand, upset that her parents are re-siding their house with blue vinyl, sets out (with co-director Daniel B. Gold) to discover how vinyl is made and why, according to some scientists, it is the most hazardous of synthetic materials. Q&A after with GreenSource Supply and Design of Braintree. See: <http://sustainablemilton.org/Events.html>

### **March 11, Public Forum. *The Boston Green Tea Party: Join the Energy Revolution***

6:00 p.m. in the Amphitheater at the Seaport World Trade Center, Boston. Free admission. Jim Braude, Host, NECN's NewsNight will chair this Forum at the site of the 1774 Boston Tea Party where the *new* Energy Revolution movers and shakers are gathering. As Americans did 234 years ago, we will be inspired to join or create our own piece of the Energy Revolution. Learn about the bold actions of our panelists, join an energy activist organization at tables set up in the lobby and expect a few surprises.

**March 11-13, *Building Energy 08, The Practice of Sustainability: Tools, Actions and Solutions*** sponsored by the Northeast Sustainable Energy Assoc will take place at the World Trade Center. ( see: <http://www.buildingenergy.nesea.org/>)

**March 29**, at the First Congregational Church, Milton (working with Sustainable Milton : <http://www.sustainablemilton.org/>) ***A Low Carbon Diet Presentation and Discussion*** with Chris Forest, Henry MacLean and Daryl Warner of Milton. Efforts to monitor and reduce our own Carbon Footprints and Energy Utilization Rates will be presented, along with practical steps an average Milton family can take at home and work towards becoming Carbon Neutral. The brief presentations from the group will be interwoven with group discussion and video clips from two entertaining, humorous and provocative films, *Everything's Cool* and the *Story of Stuff*.

## GREEN CORNER    January-February 2008    Henry P. MacLean

As we observe the coming changes due to Global Warming, we are beginning to rethink the way in which we power our homes and cars, and the impact our behavior has on everything we do from eating to washing up. Addressing all of this in the context of a recession now engulfing our economy, spurred in large part by the rising cost of energy, compounds the difficulty by further stressing our time and resources to this end.

However, hopeful steps are emerging from all quarters and action is being taken to address Climate Change, one home and one business at a time. One such step on the Community level is a new program called the *Milton Solar Challenge*. The Town of Milton is now in a position to become the 6<sup>th</sup> Town in the Commonwealth to take advantage of a special opportunity developed by the New England Wind Fund. (see: <http://www.newenglandwind.org/wind/challenge.milton.php>)

**Step 1.** The challenge is to get 300 Milton households or businesses to make qualifying contributions (either \$5 a month for a year, or \$60, or a 1 time \$100 donation) to the New England Wind Fund by April 30, 2008. All of this money will go towards clean energy wind turbine projects in New England.

**Step 2.** The Mass Technology Collaborative pays for buying and installing a 4 kilowatt solar array for an Milton municipal or school building. The result is a The Town of Milton saves money on electricity costs, creates fewer greenhouse gases, and helps New England take steps towards energy independence and away from global warming!

There are a number of exciting trade shows and conferences coming to the New England region in the coming months that are all focusing on how folks can make their homes and businesses Greener and more responsive to the climate changes coming.

### Upcoming Calendar:

February 2-3 at the bayside Expo Center, "*Taking Green to the Mainstream*" is the theme of the first annual Boston Going Green Energy, Green Building and & Living Exposition. ( see: <http://www.goinggreenexpos.com/>)

March 11-13, Building Energy 08, The Practice of Sustainability: Tools, Actions and Solutions sponsored by the Northeast Sustainable Energy Assoc will take place at the World Trade Center. ( see: <http://www.buildingenergy.nesea.org/>)

And on March 29, at the First Congregational Church, Milton (working with Sustainable Milton : <http://www.sustainablemilton.org/>) come join a *Low Carbon Diet Presentation and Discussion* with Chris Forest, Henry MacLean and Daryl Warner of Milton. We will present efforts to monitor and reduce our own Carbon Footprints and Energy Utilization Rates, along with practical steps an average Milton family can take at home and work towards becoming Carbon Neutral. The brief presentation and group discussion will also include video clips from two entertaining, humorous and provocative films, "Everything's Cool" and the "Story of Stuff".