

Living Green Quarterly

March 2024



Sentinel believes that sustainability – or living “green” – is at the heart of protecting our future. Working together we can find the fun in being Green.

GREEN VS. GREEN

Which fun fact will you show off at the next dinner party?

The White House’s “Green Room” started when Thomas Jefferson added a canvas floor cloth that was painted green to the space. John Quincy Adams expanded upon it by adding green draperies and upholstered pieces.

In 1769, Nicolas-Joseph Cugnot of France invented the world’s first self-propelled vehicle. A steam-powered tricycle built to move artillery during the Seven Years’ War.

SOURCE:
The New York Times

Alarming Speed of Fast Fashion

By David Rodríguez Sanchez



Fast fashion is thought of as a relatively new phenomenon. Coined in 1989 by the New York Times, many believe it to be something that has only happened for the past 30 years or so. However, the origins of fast fashion can be traced back to when textile mills in developing countries began opening in the late 1960’s. These mills helped the fashion industry utilize a new business model that would emphasize speed and efficiency at the expense of sustainability and ethical work practices. A business model that would eventually lead to either discarding or incinerating unsold clothes from their stores to keep up with trends.

The fashion industry made “keeping up with the latest fad” exciting and easy for consumers. With an array of sizes and styles to choose from, suddenly, people with different body types and economic backgrounds found it convenient and inexpensive to express themselves as quickly as the cycle of fast fashion allowed. All at a cost so low, it is sometimes easier to toss clothes and buy new ones rather than wash and reuse “old” garments. To keep prices low, clothing companies outsource their warehouses to countries with weak labor laws, low wages and distressing working conditions; exposing workers to harmful chemicals, code violations and risking the possibility of building collapse or fire.

From the start in the 60’s, to public acknowledgment of it in the 90’s to now, the manufacturing of mostly unsustainable clothing has only had one trajectory. Clothing that used to be in-stores throughout a season, is now in-stores for just a few weeks. This rapid cycle involving the production of synthetic fibers, shipment from foreign countries and unpurchased or unwanted non-biodegradable

garments leaching methane into our landfills, contributes to negative effects on the environment. According to the UNEP and a MacArthur Foundation study, it has emerged as the second largest polluter of our planet and is responsible for up to 10% of global carbon dioxide emissions annually. That is more than Germany, France and the United Kingdom’s annual emissions combined. Even more precarious is the fact that fast fashion is currently outpacing itself, with online fashion newcomers that have new “looks” daily, and solely use international shipping to move their products.

As a consumer, you can break this cycle and reduce the impact that our clothes have on the environment and others. Helpful tips include:

Shop your closet – Don’t forget about items you own that are similar to what you are looking to purchase.

Avoid cheap, chemically made materials – Synthetic materials like polyester, polyurethane, rayon, spandex and nylon are harmful and degrade quicker than organic materials.

Shop second hand – Thrift stores provide quality clothing for lower prices.

Organize a clothing swap – This allows you to grow your wardrobe, experiment with different styles and reduce waste all around.

Do your research – Lastly, if you must buy new clothes, do a bit of research to ensure that you are buying a quality item from a manufacturer who is doing their best to reduce harm. See where the clothes are manufactured, (locally manufactured being the best practice) and ask if their clothes are ethically made.

Sustainability Spotlight

By Karen O'Brien



Annette Davis
District Manager

How have you adapted a more sustainable lifestyle (please provide examples)?

I believe I have adapted well to a more sustainable lifestyle by investing in Energy Star appliances, recycling the correct way and eating local whenever possible.

What are the objectives of your sustainability efforts and what progress has been made in meeting your goals?

There are no true objectives - it's a lifestyle change, so it is something that we incorporate into our daily routines.

In your opinion, what is the most pressing environmental issue currently?

Water usage. We need water for almost everything we do, and it's important to conserve it. Our clean water supply is not unlimited. Food cannot grow without water.

What steps have you taken to ensure that sustainability concerns, such as environmental impact, are considered in new projects?

At Colony at Deerwood, we use energy efficient appliances, as well as using cleaning products that help to conserve the environment.

How are you engaging your staff in your sustainability efforts?

We have meetings to discuss how we can be greener and how we can encourage residents to use less energy and recycle.

What made you decide to get more involved with your community's sustainability efforts?

To save the environment and to help to save money, because in the long run that is what I feel we are doing!



Is it Time to Slow Down Faster?

By Skye Randazzo

In 1986 Carlo Petrini, with like-minded friends, held a "Slow Food Movement" protest of the first McDonalds opening in Italy with a big pasta feed on the legendary Spanish Steps in Rome. What would eventually spark the idea for the slow living movement, Petrini wanted to acknowledge local food traditions as well as 'a world in which all people can access and enjoy food that is good for them, good for those who grow it and good for the planet.'

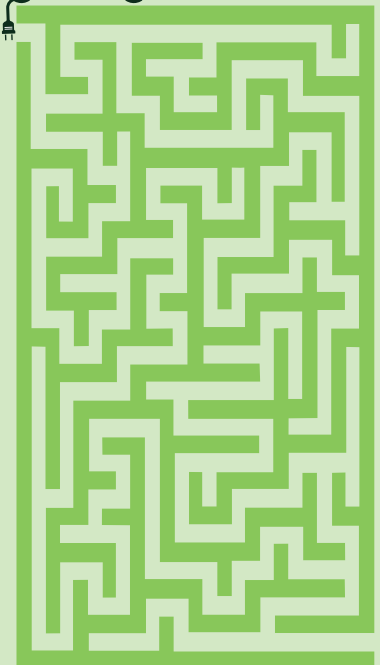
Supported in over 150 countries, the slow food movement continues to protect cooking traditions, promotes fair wages for producers as well as encourages a mindful, more sustainable, approach when having a meal. It wasn't long before people already engaged in the slow food movement started to savor the moments — not just the food. They took on the mindset of a more meaningful and conscious lifestyle. A life lived better, not faster.

Taking on a life of its own, slow living offers a counterbalance to the hectic pace we often keep. This doesn't mean that one should become lax, put things off to the last minute or even "quiet quit" at work or in your relationships. On the contrary, it simply means removing distractions and doing things right, by prioritizing quality and intention over quantity; taking the time to ensure meaningful connections with loved ones, friends, your work, your culture and with nature; as well as being present in the tasks you have prioritized. This outlook encourages you to live in both situational and self-awareness and make purposeful decisions, allowing you to find enjoyment in the process with all its ups and downs.

Embracing slow living may feel difficult when we are always trying to keep up with the world around us, but there is no rush! Incorporate some of the main slow living tenets and go from there. These principles include: Carving out time for yourself and taking a moment to breathe, connecting with nature and soaking in the entire experience,

create a tech-free space or time of day, balancing your commitments by setting boundaries and figuring out where you can allocate your energy the most efficiently and effectively. All small changes that might help you to appreciate all of the little moments!

WHERE IS THE CHARGING STATION?





Lodge at Cypresswood Got Sneakers

By David Rodriguez Sanchez

In a collaboration with Ladies of Vision – Chapter 4, The Lodge at Cypresswood Apartments held a sneaker recycling drive to donate to Got Sneakers?, a Sneaker Recycling Organization. Once donated to Got Sneakers, the gently used sporting shoes are evaluated and sorted from the pile to donate to charities and secondhand markets helping the less fortunate. While the sneakers that cannot be donated are recycled to create materials such as, but not limited to, playground equipment. Recycling your sneakers in any condition helps create a circular economy for your shoes, while also preventing the non-biodegradable material from entering the landfills and simultaneously reducing the toxic chemicals being released into the air and soil.



Lodge at Cypresswood is teaming with the Ladies of Vision Chapter No. 4 in collecting old sneakers. The sneakers will be donated to Got Sneakers, a sneaker recycling organization. Sneakers from the drive may be recirculated to people to want quality, reusable footwear at affordable prices or repurposed into new surfaces such as playgrounds and tracks.

Drop off old sneakers of all sizes to the leasing office.

October 9th–October 30th

*This is a sneaker only donation drive. We kindly ask participants NOT TO DONATE any non-athletic footwear included but not limited to dress shoes, heels, rain boots, sandals, slip-ons, water socks, wedges, and work boots of any kind.



Fast Food Done Right

By Amber Grell



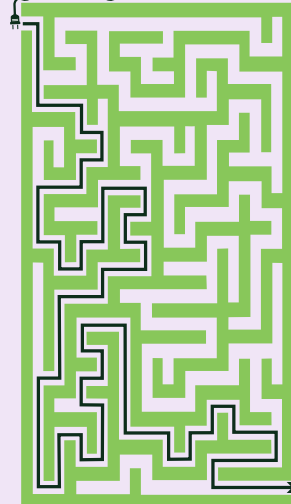
When it comes to at-home delivery meal kits, “fast food” isn’t what naturally springs to mind. Especially knowing that for most of them – you still need to cook it. But in the context of not having to devote time on shopping lists, spend time and energy getting to a grocery store, nor having to plan out weekly dinners and then prep them – at-home meal kits may just be a new twist to the words fast food.

Though generally easy and convenient, meal kits use a shocking amount of plastic, cardboard, paper wrappings, recipe cards and freezer packs in every box that is sent out. The unboxing process has many wondering if they are making a larger contribution to their carbon footprint with these purchases. However, we are finding that they are not as bad as they seem. In fact, a study led by the Center for Sustainable Systems at the University of Michigan found that meal kits can actually reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 33%, compared to similar meals purchased from the grocery store – with the packaging factored in. The findings report that a grocery store meal, on average, produces 8.1 kg of carbon dioxide, while cooking a comparable meal in a meal kit produced just 6.1 kg.

One of the biggest reasons for the drop in carbon dioxide is food waste. At least a third of food sold in the US is wasted every year. Meal kits can circumvent the waste at grocery stores and in homes easily with their pre-portioned servings. No longer having to buy the standard package of spinach for a recipe that calls for only a cup, means you are not discarding what you likely don’t use. The other factor is simply, there are fewer miles of transportation used from the provider to your door. For grocery stores, food goes from the farm to the packaging plant to a retailer to a grocery store to your home. The “miles” on your food lessen when getting it directly from the provider.

There are, of course, some caveats to the findings. For example the study was premised on the assumption that meal kits are bought in place of a grocery store visits. Basically, if a subscriber receives their meals, and still over shops at the grocery store for more wares, it does not have the same carbon emissions being offset, as stated in the study. Another caveat is meat-heavy meal kits. Of all the meals analyzed in the Michigan study, the cheeseburger kit offered no reduction in greenhouse gas emissions compared to its grocery counterpart. Keeping that in mind - businesses are working to improve their practices, including some farm-to-table meal kits that work to provide locally sourced produce. Couple this with consumers making wise selections, meal kits may be a conscientious way to have home cooked meals.

FOUND THE CHARGING STATION!
MAZE ANSWER



Ingredients

- 1 tbs of butter
- 3 cippolini onions – diced (1 large yellow onion if unable to find cippolini)
- 4 cloves of minced garlic
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 carrots – diced
- 3 stalks of celery – diced
- 6 cups chicken broth (pro tip – homemade broth is always the best)
- 2 tbs tomato paste
- 3 sprigs of thyme
- 2 cup plum tomatoes - diced
- 1 can cannellini beans - rinsed
- 1 zucchini – diced
- 1 cup green beans – trimmed and halved
- Parmesan rind – 1 inch
- Salt and Pepper to taste

For Garnish

- Parmesan - grated
- Your choice of basil or parsley

Slow Cooker Spring Minestrone



Local and Seasonal Eating

By Skye Randazzo

Today, supermarkets provide a diverse array of food at any time of the year. Unfortunately, sourcing food from all over the world that is neither local nor seasonal can have a negative environmental impact; transportation alone is a large contributor of pollution to our air and waterways and adds to our dependency on fossil fuels.

The food provided has diminished nutritional value because it is picked prematurely and produced with chemicals to survive the long journey from overseas. To help lower our carbon footprint, support your nearest farmers markets that offer fresh, local and seasonal produce. Our Spring Minestrone recipe showcases a way to create a dish with many ingredients found at your local green market; garlic, onions, carrots, celery, thyme, plum tomatoes, zucchini, green beans, basil and parsley are just a portion of spring's amazingly delicious flavor profile.

Directions

- 1) In a medium pan, add the tablespoon of butter then add and sauté onions on low heat until it is translucent, about 8 minutes. Add the garlic to the pan and cook until fragrant.
- 2) Empty the pan of garlic and onions into the slow cooker, and add the bay leaves, diced carrots, celery, chicken broth, parmesan rind, tomato paste, sprigs of thyme and 1½ cup (not all) of the diced tomatoes. Add some salt and pepper to taste, but not too much, you can always add more.
- 3) Set the slow cooker on low and let it go for 6-8 hours. Or on high for 3-4.
- 4) Add in cannellini bean, ½ cup of tomatoes, zucchini and pasta and cook on high heat for an additional 25 minutes.
- 5) Add green beans and let cook for an additional 5 to 10 minutes until warmed through.
- 6) Serve in a bowl, and add some grated parmesan, and herb garnish of your choosing. Enjoy with a loaf of bread and a glass of wine.

Source: Skye Randazzo's recipes

