

Living Green Quarterly

September 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?

Emeralds get their distinct green from the chromium and vanadium chemicals in the beryl crystals.

SOURCE:
<https://www.americanscientist.org/article/gemstones>

Though oft conflated, sustainable products and practices have a higher standard than products and services called “green” or eco-friendly. Eco-friendly practices focus on minimizing harm, while sustainability ensures that our actions today don’t compromise the future.

SOURCE:
<https://www.greenhive.io/blog/sustainable-living>

Fall Activities We *Autumn* Try This Season

By Carrie Sitterley



As we say our goodbyes to the long days, scorching weather, and waterside gatherings we all associate with summer, we can take heart that we are entering a much more nostalgic time of year. Autumn is the season where we get to slow down and reflect on the year passing us by oh so quickly, while enjoying a hot cup of apple cider, the bright golds, oranges and reds of the changing leaves, and the sweet smell of pumpkin spice everywhere. Whether you enjoy the gorgeous crisp mornings with a cup of coffee, relish in a laughter-filled evening by the community fire pit with friends and family or delight in the local hiking trails for a cool mid-day walk – autumn brings so much for us to appreciate. Being my favorite season, I would like to share some of my favorite ideas and activities that may just brush away the end of summer blues.

With the cooling temperature and changing scenery, autumn is the best time of year for nature enthusiasts. Depending on where you live, there are a myriad of options to explore and enjoy. If you live on the coast, take a walk on the beach at sunrise and breathe in the beauty. For those near the mountains and deserts, pack your favorite snacks, lots of water, unplug from life and enjoy the hiking trail you have been wanting to trek. If you are

a city dweller, most cities offer beautiful botanical gardens, parks or green spaces. But if you need something grander, America’s national parks are found in many parts of the country, including in and around cities near you.

Autumn is the season of nature’s harvest and is the perfect time for our inner foodie to enjoy the bounty. Visit nearby pick-your-own farms, vineyards or even your local farmers’ market to get out of the rut of going to the supermarket. Local vineyards often have harvest parties to celebrate their yearly bounty and many farms celebrate their autumn crops with fun activities like pumpkin and apple picking, games, hayrides, corn mazes and sometimes even petting zoos.

For the adventurous souls, plan a camping trip, white water rafting excursion or schedule a day of ziplining over the glorious colors of a nearby forest. Fall offers a reprieve from the extreme temperatures, making your experiences so much more enjoyable.

Hopefully you get out and experience the joy and beauty that this season offers. Whether enjoying quiet time in nature or quality time out with your loved ones, autumn is the perfect time to discover more and appreciate new experiences.

Sustainability Spotlight

By Karen O'Brien



Laura Lewis
General Manager
The Drift at Town Center East

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

Trash is the biggest challenge we have. Also people use excessive amounts of electricity and water.

How have you become a more environmentally conscious individual?

We've adopted a no-paper rule at home, moving all of our bills to an electronic format. We've increased our alternative protein consumption, introducing more bean-based meals.

What steps have you taken to ensure that sustainability concerns, such as environmental impact, have been addressed at the property?

We changed all of the clubhouse and office lighting to LED, we have a water bottle station with filtered water, we have added bins at the recycle station for batteries, e-waste and light bulbs, and we have a monthly recycle pick up at the property! We have resident events where we incorporate sustainable practices that include informational cards.

How do you plan to innovate and offer greener products and services?

We provide a nice coffee cup as a move in gift and encourage residents to bring their favorite reusable mug when enjoying our coffee station. In addition, we supply the residents with a reusable grocery bag. We also include tips on their energy saving appliances.



WORLD ANIMAL DAY OCTOBER 4TH

Paws-ing for World Animal Day

By Eirene Tsakales & Skye Randazzo

Falling on October 4th annually to align with The Feast of St. Francis of Assisi – the patron saint of animals and the environment - World Animal Day is an international day of action for animal welfare. What better time to learn more about our favorite furry, gilled and feathered friends, both in the wild and at home. Let's dig in to see how some eco-friendly animals play a vital role in our ecosystem, and how we can lessen our environmental impact with our own pets.

The Pollinators: At least ¾ of the world's flowering plants and nearly 35% of the world's food crops depend on animal pollinators to reproduce. That is one out of every three bites of food you eat, according to the USDA. Without bees, butterflies, hummingbirds and bats - food items such as apples, almonds, avocados, onions, squashes, cucumbers, a variety of berries and more would be scarce and extremely expensive.

The Soil Attendants: Healthy soil benefits us in so many ways as it is the foundation for sustainable agriculture, it also filters and purifies our water and reduces floodings and erosion. Both earthworms and ants are crucial in supporting soil health. While earthworms help to enrich the soil with nutrients, ants aerate the soil, and further mix the nutrients. The tunnels that both the earthworms and ants create improve soil structure - promoting water infiltration and root growth for plants.

The Cleaning Crew: We all know our scavenger friends on clean-up duty, including vultures, hyenas, jackals, foxes, crows, insects and even bears. But did you know that there are certain fish species such as parrotfish and surgeon fish that serve as nature's custodians in the water? They spend most of their day cleaning the reef of algae, which allows coral to thrive. This supports

one of the most diverse ecosystems in the world and protects coastal areas from erosion.

The Gardeners: Whether a landscape specialist, like the bison, who creates safe nesting grounds for birds with their grazing and wallows that provide drinking water for all surrounding animals; or a seed disperser such as elephants, birds, turtles, tortoises, squirrels and chipmunks that help regenerate new flora. Animals aid in planting and pruning new vegetation, which helps to protect soil and produces oxygen.

The Companions: In our Spring 2022 newsletter, we spoke about the carbon "paw-print" that our fur babies create. In fact, according to a UCLA researcher named Gregory Okin, dogs and cats create the equivalent of around 64 million tons of carbon dioxide in the US each year, mostly from their high consumption of meat. But there are a few more ways to help lower their carbon emissions including choosing the right pet. The slogan "adopt don't shop", isn't only to save the animal from the precarious situation they have lived in, but adopting a dog or cat discourages breeding of unwanted litters that end up in those very shelters, which impacts carbon emissions. As for the things we buy our pets, it is best practice to do research on what you are purchasing, and try to choose items that are compostable, such as waste bags; toxin-free toys and health care products, such as shampoo; and environmentally friendly items such as dog beds. You can also start incorporating veggies into their diet like sweet potatoes and peas.





Hefty ReNew™ Program at The Gardens At Polaris Apartments

By Skye Randazzo

In an effort to help collect and divert otherwise hard-to-recycle plastics from landfills, Hefty has initiated a program in select cities - in only a handful of states - that will do just that. Being in Columbus, Ohio, The Gardens at Polaris is both able and willing to participate.

To get the ball rolling, The Gardens at Polaris has purchased several orange bags, specific to the program that will be handed out to new residents. They will also be emailing flyers as well as marketing the details via Facebook and at mailing stations, that will inform residents of the opportunity to participate in this trailblazing project. Each resident will be able to sign up for a free kit to start their advanced recycling endeavors.



Some of the hard-to-recycle plastics residents will be able to recycle include: A variety of food storage bags and wrappings, foam egg cartons, plastic grocery bags, plastic wraps for items such as paper towels and toilet paper, foam packing peanuts, plastic straws, stirrers, plastic utensils and much more. Once residents receive the starter kit, they can fill it with such plastics. The orange bags can then be dropped off at the local recycling center to be picked up, sorted and sent to a facility that will convert the items into valued resources.



Preparing for the Cold Weather

By Matthew Nannis

Autumn is here! And though it is the season of cider donuts, sweater weather and giving thanks, it is also the time to prepare for the inevitable cold weather ahead. There are things we can do to both stay warm, while conserving energy, and our clothes. Below are some easy and ecofriendly tips to prepare and keep cozy as the weather cools.

Set Yourself Up: The most sustainable way to brave the cooler months is to use warm clothing from previous years. Go through your winter wardrobe and refresh those gently used clothes by taking a fabric shaver to items in need. If you still need a new item or two, look into sustainable clothing made to last.

Layer Up: Wearing a few thin layers rather than one thick layer allows your body heat to get trapped between each piece of fabric, making it harder for the warm air to escape. Layering under quality items such as a cashmere sweater can also help keep your sweaters clean and extend their life.

Keep Warm: Heat your living space throughout the day using the warmth of the sun instead of turning on the heat right before bed. While it may seem counterintuitive, keeping the temperature consistent throughout the day helps reduce energy consumption, as you won't be tempted to crank it once you're ready for bed. Remember to keep the temperature at a normal level as the space will have lots of time to reach your desired temperature.

Prepare For Next Year: Three steps to storing and keeping your clothes for years to come:

- 1) The dirt and smells left behind on your clothing attract bacteria and bugs. Avoid these disasters of fashion by reading the label and clean your clothing appropriately with scent-free detergents if necessary.
- 2) Hanging your clothes for extended periods can cause stretching, worn collars and dimples in your favorite tops as gravity puts unnecessary stress on the fabric. Folding your clothes will help your clothes fit better and last longer.
- 3) Find the perfect place to store your clothes when they are ready to be put away. Fluctuations in temperature can cause moisture, allowing for mold, and the musty smell associated with it. Stowing your cloths under the bed or in the closet and not an outside storage area, will help keep your winter clothes like new for years to come.

While it might seem a little early to worry about the cold weather, we hope you find this guide helpful whether you're at home or out in the elements.



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 Spiced Pumpkin Bundt Cake recipe showcases a way to create a dessert with ingredients found at your local green market; pumpkin and eggs are just a portion of fall's amazingly delicious flavor profile.

Spiced Pumpkin Bundt Cake



Food and Toy Drive



As the holiday season approaches each community will be participating in local food and toy drive collections. Donations will be collected at our clubhouses to make drop-offs easy for our residents.



Please look out for donation boxes in your management office this fall. Details on how to participate will be emailed to you soon. We look forward to working together to help those in need in our communities this holiday season.

Ingredients

2 ½	cups of sugar	1	tsp of ground nutmeg
1	cup of canola oil	½	tsp of salt
3	large eggs, room temperature	¼	tsp of ground cloves
3	cups all-purpose flour	1	can of pumpkin, or 15 ounces
2	tsp of baking soda		homemade pumpkin puree
1	tsp of ground cinnamon	•	Powdered sugar

Directions

- 1) Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl combine sugar and oil until blended. Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each one.
- 2) In a separate bowl combine the flour, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt and cloves.
- 3) Gradually add the flour and spice mixture to the egg and oil mixture alternatively with the pumpkin, beating well after each addition, until completely combined. Make sure to scrape the sides of the bowl.
- 4) Transfer to a greased 10-inch fluted tube pan or bundt pan. Bake for 60-65 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Remove from oven and cool for at least 10 minutes before inverting onto a wire rack. Remove pan and let cool completely. Dust with powdered sugar as desired and enjoy!

Source: Kayla Noll's recipe