

Get Green on @ Your Library
Friday, April 03, 2009

Green websites

Presented by Ralph Tomlinson, from the Olathe Public Library, in Second Life

Note: Only the first 15 were presented during the session, additional sites are included in this handout.

1) The Green Guide, <http://www.thegreenguide.com/>

Originally a four-page newsletter, The Green Guide was purchased by National Geographic about a year ago and has blossomed into a website offering articles, buying guides, local green guides and a blog. Recent buying guides looked at blankets and comforters, refrigerators and plastic containers and included recommended products by brand name. Among the best sites around for living green and a great tool for reference librarians.

2) Grist: Environmental News and Humor, <http://www.grist.org/>

Lots of news, mostly culled from other sources, but a few original pieces of note. Columnists offer seasonal recipes, ways to make your food choices greener, tips for living more sustainably every day and a weekly list of hot environmental topics. I especially like the food column, Victual Reality, mostly because the writer is an old college friend of mine.

3) Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life,
<http://www.animalvegetablemiracle.com>

A website that continues the project Barbara Kingsolver wrote about in the book of the same title. Her family made a choice to live for a year only on food purchased within a hundred miles. The site has a great page of links for the food conscious; links to find local produce, photos of Kingsolver and family on the farm and one missing element from the book – an index!

4) Ecolibrarian, <http://www.ecolibrarian.org/index.html>

Started by a librarian, the site has a number of annotated bibliographies and booklists on a variety of environmental topics, including climate change, environmental justice, green building, green transportation, permaculture and children's books. Many of the lists are linked to WorldCat, so anyone can find a nearby library that owns the title.

5) Rocky Mountain Institute, <http://www.rmi.org/>

RMI, a “think and do tank,” founded by Amory Lovins, works with businesses, communities, individuals and governments to become more efficient, more sustainable and more competitive. Rolling Stone magazine recently named Lovins one of the “100 People Who Are Changing America.” The institute offers a number of free publications with policy recommendations and solutions for a variety of environmental dilemmas.

6) MapCruzin.com, <http://www.mapcruzin.com/>

Not only maps, maps and more maps, including maps based on the Toxic Release Inventory, but lists of links to other sites that explain greenwashing, environmental justice, climate change, sustainable economics, environmental book lists and wireless dangers.

7) The Cycle, <http://www.explorethecycle.com/>

Winner of the 12th Annual SXSW Web Award for an Educational Resource this year, the site describes single-stream recycling. Also includes information on the Recycle Bank, which grants points to households that recycle. Those points can be redeemed for special offers from various companies. Schools or individuals can download the video for later viewing or watch it on the site.

8) Going Green @ Your Library, <http://greeningyourlibrary.wordpress.com/>

This blog, created by Beth Filar Williams, Distance Education Librarian and Supervisor of the Interlibrary Loan Department at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, has loads of ideas on how to green your library, activities for all types of libraries, booklists and links galore. Williams presented "Going Green @ Your Library" at the Colorado Association of Libraries Conference in 2005, and offers suggestions to libraries as part of her work as a consultant. Williams started her blog to give librarians one place to search for green materials related to libraries.

9) School and Community Assistance for Recycling & Composting Education, SCARCE <http://www.bookrescue.org/>

Go here for inspiration about just how green you can be. Based in Glen Ellyn, IL, SCARCE travels to schools to teach children everything from composting to recycling to building rain barrels. The group also recycles books to children in need, melts down broken crayons to mold into "super crayons" for children with disabilities, and disseminates news and information about the environment throughout the state of Illinois.

10) Oikos, <http://oikos.com>

A source of green building news, methods and products, including the latest books on the subject, especially for those in the building trades or those who know how to use power tools.

11) 350.org, <http://www.350.org/>

Started by Bill McKibben, this site advocates and educates about climate change internationally. The number 350 was put forth in a recent paper by NASA's James Hansen and other scientists. According to Hansen, we must reduce the amount of carbon in our atmosphere from the current level of 387 parts per million to 350 parts per million if we wish to "maintain a planet similar to that on which civilization developed." Currently, the site also serves as a clearinghouse for an upcoming global action on Oct. 24, six weeks before world leaders gather to draft a new treaty to combat climate change.

12) We Can Solve It, <http://www.wecansolveit.org/>

Associated with former Vice President and Nobel Laureate Al Gore, this site offers solutions to the climate crisis and lists upcoming actions to raise awareness.

13) Organic Consumers Association, <http://www.organicconsumers.org/>
News and campaigns for those who eat organic, including news on energy-related issues. Pulls articles from a number of other sources, including trade magazines.

14) Mother Earth News, <http://www.motherearthnews.com/>
Part of the “going-up-the-country” movement of the ‘60s and ‘70s, Mother Earth News continues to provide articles on building inexpensive housing, growing your own food and other items of interest to urban and country homesteaders, as well as the new, green movement. The current editors live near Topeka, Kansas.

15) Organic Gardening, <http://www.organicgardening.com/>
In addition to the expected how-to-grow fruits, vegetables and plants, this site offers an “OG Living” section with ideas on green lifestyle.

16) Sourcewatch, <http://www.sourcewatch.org/>
A project of the Center for Media and Democracy, this wiki monitors the activities of public relations campaigns and firms and other corporate efforts to influence public opinion. Often features a number of environmental stories, and their page on greenwashing is among the most popular on the site.

17) Healthy House Institute, <http://www.healthyhouseinstitute.com/>
Main focus is indoor air quality, but also has great resources for energy-efficiency and other green topics. Founded by John and Lynn Bower, two pioneers in the area of how homes and indoor air quality affect health. Bower has moved on to other pursuits and an institute was formed to maintain the site. The site has a number of RSS feeds and lots of advertising.

18) American Council for an Energy-Efficiency Economy, <http://www.aceee.org/>
Works on energy policies, the group’s Consumer Guide to Home Energy Savings is now in its 9th edition and is accessible online. Provides reviews of many home products based on energy consumption.

19) United States Green Building Council, <http://www.usgbc.org/>
The Green Building Council developed and trademarked the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System. The council continues to refine the rating system and add new categories for various types of construction, from commercial to residential.

20) Green for All, <http://www.greenforall.org/>
Green for All advocates for a green economy to combat poverty and provide more jobs. Van Jones, founder of Green for All, was recently appointed Special Advisor for Green Jobs by President Obama.

21) Seed Savers Exchange, <http://www.seedsavers.org/>

Based in Decorah, Iowa, this group works to preserve heirloom varieties of fruits, flowers, vegetables and herbs.

22) Not So Big Houses, <http://www.ntsobighouse.com/>

Sarah Susanka, author and architect, believes in building better, not bigger. Her book, *The Not So Big House*, started a movement that forced many people to reevaluate just what's important in a house. While not strictly green, her designs fit easily into any green lifestyle.

23) Kansas City Food Circle, <http://www.kcfoodcircle.org>

Disclaimer: I'm a member of the coordinating committee of the KC Food Circle. For more than a decade, the KC Food Circle has connected organic growers and consumers in the Greater Kansas City area. Most of the growers live within a 100-mile radius of the city. In addition to the Food Circle's grower's directory, the website has a link to the newly created Kansas City Community-Supported Agriculture Coalition, which connect those interested in joining a "subscription" farm with growers.

24) Escape from Affluenza,

<http://www.pbs.org/kcts/affluenza/escape/action/index.html>

A companion site for a PBS documentary on living the simple life, offers suggests for reducing consumerism and simplifying life, including a crash course in escaping affluenza.

25) Natural Home Magazine, <http://www.naturalhomemagazine.com/>

Another great site for those seeking to make their current home greener, or to build green, this site includes a list of green product manufacturers and suppliers.

26) The Natural Step, <http://www.naturalstep.org/>

The Natural Step offers courses "that provide practical sustainability education." The training was developed by a Swedish oncologist, and assists in strategic planning that moves organizations toward sustainable practices.

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