

The Green Times

Mission Statement: Working to save the day the green way!



Green Holidays in December By Matt, Marlowe, and Anna

Have you ever realized how much waste you create in December, the most decorated month of the year? There are four holidays in December, and each and every one of them help to create the 25,000,000 tons of garbage U.S. citizens make each December.

Christmas is probably the most popular holiday in December; therefore it creates a very high level of waste. Here are some good ideas to decrease the amount of waste you make. The first idea that you could do is recycle your gift wrap. If everyone in the world recycled their gift wrap the world would become a lot better; you could also not wrap your presents at all. Some presents don't need wrapping and some you can't wrap at all like the gifts that can be experienced.

A great way to reduce waste on Hanukkah is to use bees wax candles. They are organic and eco-friendly. You could also make Dreidels out of cardboard or create menorahs out of pipes or glass. Also, if you get presents on Hanukkah make sure to recycle your wrapping paper.

On New Year's Eve you should not light fireworks. If you want to save money and help the environment, you could watch the fireworks at the Space Needle or see it on T.V. Also try to stay home for dinner, and not go out for dinner, so you can save gas.

On Kwanzaa you can weave an eco-friendly Kwanzaa mat, here are the instructions:

Materials: Ruler, scissors, clear tape, black, red and green recycled construction paper, 8 inches wide and 10 inches long.

Step 1: Measure and cut out a piece of black construction paper leaving a one inch border all the way around the mat.

Step 2: Cut four red and four green construction paper strips 1 in. wide and 8 in. long

Step 3: Weave a red strip and then a green strip alternately, going over and under the black mat frame. Secure the ends to the black border with clear tape

Step 4: Place your mat on the table and decorate with corn and other harvest food. Enjoy!

We hope you can use some of these tips to help you and your family celebrate the holidays and stay green at the same time!
Happy Holidays!

The Green Team By Clare, Taylor, Sebastian

Mrs. Bloom is starting a Green Team at Montlake Elementary. The Green Team is a group of Team 3 students and adults that will take on the responsibility of getting Montlake certified as a "Green School" through the WAGS (Washington Green Schools Program). There are five categories of certification: Energy Efficiency, Recycling & Waste Reduction, Toxics Reduction & Indoor Air Quality, Transportation & Outdoor Air Quality and Water Quality & Conservation. We will be working on all of those categories over the next few years. The Green Team meetings will take place during lunch recess on Wednesdays. All students at Montlake will be involved and helping to achieve certification for our school. Last week's classes began to gather information for "Recycling and Waste Reduction." Even if you're not in the Green Team, please help us by staying green!

Who Bought Organic or Local Food for Thanksgiving

By Diallo, Rachel, and Beau

We did a survey about whether the teachers of Team 3 and Team 2 bought organic or local food for Thanksgiving. We found out that every single teacher surveyed bought organic or local food for Thanksgiving. Some examples of local or organic foods that teachers bought are: turkey, fruit and vegetables. Buying local and organic food is good for the environment because it doesn't have to be shipped so far. We should care about eating organic and local food because it is healthier.

New Locavore App

By Luke

Have you heard of the iPhone and Facebook app called Locavore? With it you can find out what's in season right now in your state. For example, in Washington now some of the things it might say are potatoes, squash, and pears. The iPhone app can tell where you are located and what's currently in season. It will also tell you where the nearest farmers market is! According to Locavore it is a lot easier to be a locavore in Florida; there are 34 things local there and only 10 things here. I think you should check it out!

Green Gift Ideas

By Nate, Tiona, and Kayla

The December holidays are coming up. Normally this is a horrible time of year for the environment. We don't expect you to stop celebrating but there are some eco-friendly gift ideas. You could shop at Goodwill, Value Village or any other places that sell used items. If you don't rip up the wrapping paper on gifts, you can reuse it. You can also reuse the ribbons.

We interviewed one teacher from each team about where they shop for the holidays and if they reuse wrapping paper. One of the Team 3 teachers said that they shop at Value Village and Goodwill. They also said that they re-use wrapping paper. Another teacher from Team 2 said that they do the same thing. One Team 1 teacher said they only re-used wrapping paper. We are not asking for anything too big, just try.

How to be Green on the Road this Winter

By Liv, Lee, and Alex

The environment needs our help! You can help by not putting salt on the road this winter. When you put salt on the road, after the snow melts the salt will flow into the side of the road and kill plants and animals. It can also flow into rivers and kill fish and underwater plants.

So this winter, stop and think. Are you going to put salt on the roads? No, of course not! You could simply put chains on your tires and then there would be no impact on the environment. You can also use sand because that doesn't hurt plants or animals, or you could walk and then you wouldn't have to worry about polluting and you can save money on gas. Don't use salt; help our environment!

How to be Warm and Green in Winter

By Doug, Josephine, and Cooper

Here is some advice on keeping your home warm during the winter. First open blinds and curtains to get heating from the sun. Next if you have drafts around your doors or windows you can put towels, draft guards or plastic around them to keep warm air from escaping. If someone is home all day keep your thermostat at the same temperature to save energy and money. Turning the thermostat down at night is healthier for sleeping. Cover your floors with thick rugs or old carpets, it makes a huge difference. Finally, close off certain areas that aren't used as often to save electricity., for example, if you have a spare bedroom or office that you don't use as much. We hope you enjoy your winter holidays and have a warm winter!

Green New Years Eve Party

By Hannah, Eli, and Corinne

Here are some tips to have a green New Year's Eve party.

1. Use glass cups not paper. Try environmentally friendly brands like Treecycle. Treecycle makes biodegradable dishes and cups made of sugarcane fiber.
2. Serve green food. Have a spread of easy appetizers. Put out vegetables grown within a 100 mile radius if you can. For dinner you can use leftovers or have friends and neighbors bring food over. Out of recycled paper you can make your own goody bags and fill them with candy or chocolates that were saved from Christmas or used gifts.
3. Decorate. For example you can make soda can lanterns. Also, for noisemakers, you can put dried beans in a can. Another idea is you can try tying popcorn to a long string and hanging it. Draw pictures and hang them on the wall. Put pretty leaves in a bowl. You can make confetti by getting colored paper from the recycling and have your kids cut it up into little pieces.

We hope these tips help you have a happy, green New Year!

Organic Chocolate Chip Shortbread

By Eli, Helen, Patrick, and Emily

We found this organic cookie recipe and we decided to give it a try. After we made and devoured it, we thought it tasted wonderful--crispy, chocolaty, and orangey. They had a crispy texture and made a crunchy sound when we tasted them. They were chocolaty because there were chocolate chips that really brought out the sweetness. We also thought they were orangey because there was orange zest in them. After we all tasted the shortbread cookies we thought they tasted great! So we recommend it for those of you who are looking for a new holiday cookie recipe. We hope you like it!

Chocolate Chip Shortbread Cookies

- 3/4 cup organic white whole wheat flour, such as King Arthur
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup unsalted organic butter
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 2 tsp. orange zest
- 1/2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 1 large organic egg yolk
- 2 Tbsp. organic half and half
- 1 Tbsp. organic nonfat buttermilk
- 4 oz. dark chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray two cookie sheets with nonstick spray. Combine flours, baking powder and salt in a medium bowl. Using an electric mixer, beat butter, sugar, orange zest and vanilla in a large bowl until well combined. Beat in next three ingredients. Add dry ingredients and beat until dough comes together in moist clumps. Stir in chocolate chips. Drop generous tablespoons of dough onto prepared cookie sheets. Flatten each cookie with your fingertips. Bake until just golden, about 18 minutes. Cool on a wire rack. Makes 20 cookies.