



Nature on its own is indeed beautiful and clean. The hills and rivers do not need us to clean them. In fact it is nature's water which cleans us; it is trees which purify air for us. Because we have littered, we have spoilt its pristine beauty.

Amma

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GreenFriends is a global grassroots environmental movement which promotes environmental awareness and local participation in conservation efforts throughout the world.

GreenFriends is one of the projects of Embracing the World, a not-for-profit international collective of charities founded by internationally known spiritual and humanitarian leader, Mata Amritanandamayi (Amma)

To join the Pacific Northwest GreenFriends Litter Project, write Karuna at [karunap108@comcast.net](mailto:karunap108@comcast.net)

For Organic Gardening and Permaculture write Maheswari at: [PNWGreenFriends@google.com](mailto:PNWGreenFriends@google.com)

For The Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration Project write:

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# Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration Project November Work-Party Update

by Kalavathi

On November 10, Seattle GreenFriends Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration Project had their first work party at Freeway Estates, the community permaculture food forest in the Ravenna neighborhood. It was quite a success! We were joined by one of Freeway Estates community leaders (and permaculture genius!) "Ruth" as well as four or five other friendly neighborhood "sevites".

We planted a few flower bulbs, but mostly focused on digging up the earth and preparing soil for trees and grapes to be put in. That was lots of heavy duty shoveling! We all left feeling uplifted by the day's work and by Ruth having told us how happy she was to have us there. We are so glad that we will be returning. Come join us in January as we continue to help get the garden ready for Spring!



## December Work Party Invitation

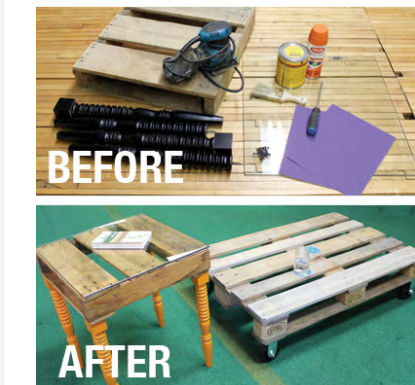
Please join GreenFriends Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration Project for a Winter Solstice native habitat restoration work party. We will be at the forest remnant at Magnuson Park on Saturday, December 21, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Please e-mail [ammasananya@comcast.net](mailto:ammasananya@comcast.net) for details.



# Recycling

## TerraCycle News

The TerraCycle community blog shares pictures and directions for making recycled items. Here are some of the possibilities.



For more information go to: <http://terracyclecommunity.com>

### Reminder!

We have been waitlisted on several TerraCycle brigades for over a year. We collected the items anyway thinking we would be on the active list soon. We now realize there is no way to know how long it will take. Due to lack of storage space, we will no longer be saving candy wrappers, snack bags, or writing instruments.

We will let you know when that changes!

## Recycling Story

### From Rose in New York City:

I am happy to report that our Amma's Downtown Satsang is now using all sustainable, reusable eating ware. I found a company whose products are made 100% from recycled plastic and the eating ware itself (BPA free) is recyclable as well! Our satsang group embraced the use of these new utensils immediately and love that we are not creating trash as a result of our shared community meal. I actually love my seva of washing the dishes after the dinner, knowing that we are no longer creating a fair amount of trash. Such a great feeling.

# Interesting Information from Our Members

## From Dayamrita Swami in response to our last PNW GreenFriends newsletter:

Good one again, thanks for the wonderful job and the positive news.

Namah Sivaya,  
Dayamrita



## From Grace in Victoria:

Cigarette butts are actually the largest form of litter in the world. Vancouver, BC has started a pilot program to address the problem. 110 cigarette butt receptacles will be attached to posts in the downtown area. The receptacles will be emptied by city employees and then taken to United We Can recycling depot. The butts ultimately will be given to TerraCycle Canada who will then turn them into industrial products such as plastic pallets.

To learn more go to: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/cigarette-butt-recycling-launched-in-vancouver-1.2423913>

## From Lin in Bellevue:

OK, perma-girls... start planning a sculpture for your garden next summer!

These are quite beautiful and amazing. I especially liked the horses, sheep and grassy dog.

The sculptures, known as "mosaiculture", are part of an international competition that is held every three years.

Great horticulturists from 20 countries submitted their plans a year in advance for the 2013 competition being held in Montreal. Now there are 50 sculptures spread over a two mile area.



See sculptures at: <http://myvirtualgarden2.blogspot.com/2013/09/mosaiculture-exhibition.html>

# Interesting Information from Our Members-cont

## From Achala in Tacoma:

Plastic water bottles are being used in Nigeria to build houses. "The bottles are stacked into layers and bonded together by mud and cement, with an intricate network of strings holding each bottle by its neck, providing extra support to the structure. Bottle caps of various colors protrude from the cement-plastered walls, giving them a unique look. Those behind the project claim the sand-filled bottles are stronger than ordinary cinder blocks. "The structure has the added advantage of being fire proof, bullet proof and earthquake resistant, with the interior maintaining a constant temperature of 18 degrees C (64 degrees F) which is good for tropical climate," Yahaya Ahmad, the project coordinator said. Read more at: <http://phys.org/news/2011-11-plastic-bottles-nigeria-housing-problem.html#jCp>



## From Karuna in Seattle:

Before I left for India I took five orange electrical cords and a variety of curtain rods to the recycler. I was paid \$17.70 for those items. Sometime in the not too distant future we will be having a metal and electronics drive as a fundraiser for the Center.

Please save your metals and electronics! More information will become available as plans for the fundraiser are made.

# PNW Litter Project Report

## Litter Story

### From AI in Seattle:

I was walking thru my neighborhood (International District) last Saturday, feeling disappointed that litter was beginning to accumulate in the streets once again. I reached the end of the block, saddened that efforts to inspire others by example just were not working! But then as I turned the corner, I saw at least 15 young men with grabbers and trash bags preparing to fan out and clean up the neighborhood. I can't express the overwhelming joy I felt as I watched them en-



thusiastically prepare to clean up the area.

Moreover, they were extremely friendly and even invited me to join in. As I am still challenged using my Galaxy 4, I asked if they would take a picture for me, explaining that it would go in our litter newsletter. They not only agreed, they called over 6-7 additional members of their group to join in! I left them feeling that our future is in good hands.



## Stats

As of November 30, 2013, we had **346** members.

Thirty-six members reported picking up **103.6** hours of litter during December 2013. Those members average pick up was: 2.9 hours; the range was 2 minutes to 30 hours and the median was 1 hour.

Members of the project have picked up litter for **4501.7** hours since the project began in July 2011.

TerraCycle has credited us with turning in **132,834** cigarette butts in 2013.

## Sabarimala Clean Up



Sabarimala Ayyappa Temple is one of the most ancient and prominent temples in India. Located in Sannidhanam, Sabarimala, Kerala, it is one of the few Hindu temples in India that is open to people of all faiths. While it is very remote, it still draws three to four million pilgrims each year. The pilgrimage begins in November and ends January.

At the request of the Kerala government, Amma has sponsored five work parties to clean up Sabarimala. The latest work party, held November 9 and 10, focused on Sannidhanam and the Pampa river areas.

3,400 sanitation volunteers of the Amala Bharatham project of Mata Amritanandamayi Math participated in the project. They came from different parts of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. This figure includes 800 women volunteers from the educational institutions of the Math. In addition, 65 foreign nationals participated in the clean up.

The volunteers removed approximately 5,000 bags of solid waste from river Pampa and surroundings areas, plus 10,000 bags of recyclable waste from the Sannidhanam.



**Before**

## Sabarimala Clean Up-cont



During



After