

Commission on Social Action to help our URJ Environment

- PENNYPACK ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION TRUST**, presentation by Robin Warshaw
www.pennypacktrust.org

Founded in 1970, the Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust is a nonprofit land trust headquartered in Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania. The Trust is staffed by professionals and volunteers dedicated to the stewardship of the lands that are protected by the Trust in its Pennypack Preserve natural area. Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust, which restores and protects that land and water in the Pennypack Watershed (Upper Moreland, Bryn Athyn, Lower Moreland, Abington, and Philadelphia) has an annual creek clean-up in the spring. This year, it will be held on **Sat. April 18, from 10 am to noon**. The Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust is a beautiful, free 725-acre swath of natural land in our own communities. It has 8 miles of trails, which are open, free of charge, dawn to dusk, 365 days a year. There are trails for people only and some trails open to dogs on leashes, horseback riding and bike riding. Groups and individuals from around the area come and pull debris and trash from the creek. Work gloves and waterproof footwear are needed—you will get messy. Teams from numerous business and religious institutions take part. By noon, there's a real sense of accomplishment—plus a free lunch at the Trust's visitor center (off Edge Hill Rd.—across from where Abington Memorial Hospital holds the June Fete). In just two hours, it's amazing how much progress can be made. We are hoping to participate as a group on this project.

Group Workshop Activity • Community Building

- FRIENDS OF THE ARAVA INSTITUTE**, presentation by Jack Platt, www.friendsofarava.org

The Institute is located in Southern Israel at Kibbutz Ketura, about 25 miles north of Eilat along the Jordanian border. The Institute is going into its 11th year and has a curriculum focused on a wide variety of environmental studies. Water management, solar energy, biofuels, sustainable agriculture are a few of the courses offered. The students are undergraduate and graduate students working toward a master's degree through the Ben Gurion University of the Negev. What makes the program unique is that the students are a mix of Israeli's, both Jewish and Arab, Jordanians and Palestinians with some North Americans. It is amazing to see the students address the cultural issues and pursue their goals for careers. The topics that the students address at the Institute are the same issues that we will address domestically.

There are three scheduled bike rides, which are fundraisers in which we can participate as sponsors or riders. The dates are: In Israel - **Spring - April 28 - May 5 / Fall- -November 3 - 10, In New York Sept. 4-7**

We also discussed the possibility of having students from Arava as speakers here at Beth Am. This was done a few years ago and was very well received.

Group Workshop Activity • Fundraising Opportunity • Congregational Education

- CLEAN WATER ACTION**, presentation by Bob Gurmankin, www.cleanwateraction.org

For those task force members who want to flood legislators with letters and faxes urging them to support various water and stream protection in Pennsylvania. This is a grassroots environmental activist group, with 30+ years experience in promoting legislation and other protections for our environment. From recycling to mercury emissions to hazardous site clean-up, they work towards all environmental issues.

Community Building • Group Workshop Activity • Congregational Education

- THE CLIMATE PROJECT**, presentation by Bob Brodsky, www.theclimateproject.org

Bob Brodsky spoke about an idea that he and Gerry Sapers have been formulating where our group can become more educated and technologically oriented so that we can go out into the congregation and the community and spread the word about "Climate Change". "Climate Change", being our groups preferred term for "Global Warming". Another idea was to host a viewing of Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth". The Climate Project, a nonprofit organization based in Nashville, TN, began operations in June 2006 with the mission of increasing public awareness of the climate crisis at a grassroots level in the United States and abroad. By April 2007, a diverse group of 1,200 volunteers from throughout the U.S. had been trained by Al Gore himself to present a version of the slide show featured in the Academy Award-winning film An Inconvenient Truth. As of October 2008, they had delivered nearly 20,000 presentations and reached a combined audience of 2 million people.

Congregational Education • Community Education Building • Group Workshop Activity

- GREENING OYRTBA**, presentation by Gary Rubin

Gary Rubin discussed the things that Beth Am is already doing to be "Green". All the cleaning supplies used in the building are green. He also spoke about what it means to be Green, which is a rather vague notion. For example, having doormats when entering the building is considered green since it keeps the interior cleaner. He then explained that Styrofoam cups aren't as bad as people think they are. Not only do they out perform paper, but also they cost less and take less energy to produce. Styrofoam is actually recyclable, where as waxed paper cups are not. However, they cannot be recycled because they have been in contact with bodily fluids. Gary's point was that instead of concentrating on recycling, we should be thinking more about reducing and reusing. For instance, bring your own cups and mugs to meetings. Also, laminating the page of Shabbat Topics that doesn't change, and putting it in the holder behind each seat, leaving the need to print only a single page each week. We need a change in mind set in the Temple and at home, as reducing and reusing takes more effort and is less convenient to what we are doing now.

Currently the trash at Beth Am is picked up and sorted off site. This method is a rather poor way of recycling, but with today's economic climate, it is more economical than segregated recycling. Recycled cardboard brings only a 1/4 of what it did two years ago. This may change in the future and make full scale recycling a reality at Beth Am.

Saul Katzman has requested **immediate** representation from our Task Force Group to work with the synagogue electrical contractors as they upgrade the light bulbs and fixtures in the synagogue school building.

Congregational Education • Congregation Cost Savings

- COMMUNITY RECYCLING PROGRAM**, presentation by Sandie Buller, www.earthecycle.us/

Sandie Buller spoke about a fundraising project in which trucks would park at the Temple and congregants and people from the community could bring computers and electronics to be recycled. We can run a Computer and Electronics Recycling Event Fundraiser. Each event earns \$5,000 for each 100,000 lbs. Beth Am would then receive money depending on the amount donated. We even discussed the idea of holding a Green Fair where this and other activities would be offered to the community. She will be researching more details. Acceptable items: ac adaptors, all in one devices, Automated home assistance devices, Batteries of all kinds, Battery back up systems, Cameras, CD/DVD duplicators, cd/dvd players, Cell phones, Computer components and parts Computers, Electric lawn mowers, Electric pianos, Electric wheelchairs, Fax machines, Game consoles, Generators, Keyboards, Laptops and notebook computers, Microwave ovens, Monitors, Mouses, Networking hardware (hubs, switches, routers, wiring, fiber, cables, etc.), Organs, PDA, Power supplies, Printers, Projectors, Radios, Remote controls, Scanners, Servers, Speakers, Stereos (home and automobile), Telephone equipment, Televisions (\$15 charge), Uninterrupted power supplies, Video cameras, Wireless devices.

Group Workshop Activity • Fundraising Opportunity • Congregational Education

- PRODUCE AND MARKET BETH AM GREEN PRODUCTS**, presentation by Lily Rothman

Lily Rothman had another wonderful fundraising idea where the school and the congregation would sell reusable bags and thermal mugs. This would help to reduce the above mentioned styro cups and could build a marketing identity and brand Beth Am with Going Green. To get the school children involved further, we could hold a contest where the children could submit designs to be printed on the bags and mugs. These designs could be posted in the lobby and on the website for all to see and cast a vote.

Fundraising Opportunity • Congregational Education

- LOCAL FARM TO TABLE PRODUCE CO-OP**, www.hazon.org/CSA

If you've ever wanted to join a "Local Farm to Table Produce Co-Op" now is your chance. Shares are still available through Kol Ami's Tuv Ha'Aretz program. For a registration form go to www.hazon.org/CSA

Doing Green • Eating Healty

Next meeting dates:

- Monday 3/30 PM Thursday 4/16 PM Wednesday 4/22 PM

YOUR NAME _____