



FREE

A Reader-Supported Weekly Newspaper

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Serving Albion ★ Benton ★ China ★ Palermo ★ Unity ★ Vassalboro ★ Windsor ★ Winslow ★ Fairfield ★ Somerville ★ Whitefield ★ Liberty ★ Sidney  
Chelsea ★ Jefferson ★ Washington ★ Oakland ★ Freedom ★ Skowhegan ★ Other Somerset County towns ★ and the Waterville-Augusta market

## Town meetings

### Palermo

Elections, Friday, March 9  
Palermo Consolidated School Meeting, Sat., March 10  
9 a.m.

### Benton

Elections, Friday, March 9  
Benton Town Office  
9 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
Meeting, Sat., March 10, 10 a.m.  
Benton Grange

### China

China Middle School  
Sat., March 24  
Time TBA

### Fairfield

Monday, May 14  
Time & location TBA

### Vassalboro

Vassalboro Community School  
Monday, June 11  
6:30 p.m.  
Elections: Tues., June 12  
8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

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# SMMC encourages volunteerism and awareness to environment

by Lyn Rowden

On January 7, approximately 50 Sustain Mid Maine Coalition (SMMC) volunteers met in the Waterville City Council Chambers.

Winslow Town Manager Mike Heavener, president of SMMC, opened the third annual meeting. He said when hearing the word sustainability, "People think they'll have to give up something, it becomes a struggle to get the message across."

He shared the World Commission on Environment and Development's concept that sustainability should be viewed as forms of progress that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It should make the economy grow, keep it local, and get a better and healthier lifestyle. "This is a noble goal to strive for," Mike added.

He finds that most people are satisfied with the status quo, even if it's not working, and that change seems risky. He said, "SMMC needs to be the change agent – out front educating people, looking for new technologies and helping make them happen. We need to be diligent, consistent and persistent."

"I found the meeting to be fascinating," said Linda Woods, SMMC coordinator. "Reports from each team focused on our many accomplishments during 2011. After each team's report, there was time for the audience to offer suggestions and comments. The meeting ended with a brainstorming session about ways to increase fund raising, volunteer recruitment, and

usable grocery bags, participated in 350.org Climate Awareness Day, held the Green Bean Movie Scene at KVCC, hosted Paul Kando from the Climate Project, sponsored a popular bike clinic, and co-sponsored Waterville Earth Day with Barrels at Colby. Grants came in from Johnny's Selected Seeds, Starbucks, Maine State Planning Office, and NE Grassroots Environmental Fund, among others.

Jim Wood, chairman of the transportation team, discussed how his 11-member group along with three Colby students have worked on routes and promotion of the Kennebec Explorer Bus. The team has also worked with KMTrails to interconnect 30 miles of trails for walking, biking and skiing, including some wheelchair accessible routes. Get involved with this group if you would like to see a bike friendly route map, passenger rail connection with public transportation, and \$25,000 raised to get another bus.

Inland Hospital, and sponsoring a Green Expo poster contest for area school children with Starbucks. They will be present at Winter Carnival on Saturday, February 4, in Waterville, and are looking for volunteers, noon - 2 p.m.



Over 25 volunteers came to help Sustain Mid-Maine Coalition at the Taste of Greater Waterville last summer to collect and compost food waste. SMMC invites everyone to get involved in their activities to promote sustainability in central Maine. Internet photo

## New Opportunity to Save on Energy Costs

The new year arrives with a fresh opportunity for Maine residents to save energy, save money and receive a \$50 rebate for recycling their outdated refrigerators and freezers.

Efficiency Maine's new program encourages Mainers using older, extra refrigerators or freezers to consider the many benefits of recycling them. The program offers to pick up the old units at homes, at no cost, in addition to paying the \$50 incentive.

The extra refrigerator or freezer in the garage or basement may be convenient, but it comes at a surprisingly high cost. Older refrigerators and freezers can require as much as four times more electricity to operate than newer models built to higher energy efficiency standards. That inefficiency results in as much as \$250 a year in unnecessary electricity costs for the customer, and also drives up the price that all Mainer's pay to operate the grid. This is money that can be saved if customers have that older unit picked up and recycled.

Participation is as easy as calling 1-866-376-2463 or visiting Efficiency Maine online at [www.energymaine.com](http://www.energymaine.com), to schedule a free pick-up while funding for this program lasts.

Taking advantage of the Efficiency Maine offer does not require buying a new refrigerator or freezer. Appliances scheduled for pick-up must be in working order, clean and empty, with an inside measurement of between 10-30 cubic feet— standard size for refrigerators and freezers. Dorm or "mini" sized refrigerators will not be accepted.

public awareness."

Highlights from 2011 include earning 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization status, and winning a \$150,000 Efficiency Maine grant which helped 47 local residents obtain energy audits, resulting in a projected savings of \$169,000. SMMC also earned the Hastings Award from Efficiency Maine.

Ninety-two volunteers gave over 1,700 hours. They established four community gardens in three towns, assisted KVCC in obtaining a wind turbine, and through the education team, passed out hundreds of re-

One interesting project of SMMC's Rethink, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle Team involved 24 volunteers, a number of students, the city of Waterville and the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce assisting in collecting and composting food waste from the Taste Of Greater Waterville last summer. Several 100-pound bags of scraps were delivered to the Bragg Farm in Sidney; and the team hopes to be able to compost even more this year. This 10 member team put in over 400 hours also promoting its message at Albion Field Day, Harvest Fest in Waterville, Wellness Day at

They were also instrumental in getting a grant, and with help from Skills, Inc., created signage for both outside and inside the public recycling center in Waterville's Industrial Park. For more information on this facility see [www.skillsrecycling.com](http://www.skillsrecycling.com).

Tom Davis, CEO of Skills, Inc., encouraging people to get involved in recycling and promoting sustainability, said, "We really are the mechanism for change. We are the ones who are going to speak up."

Waterville mayor Karen Heck urges citizens to become part of the process by letting their state and local representatives, town council and school board members know what environmental issues are important to them.

Everyone from all our communities is welcome to attend SMMC events, learn more and get involved in SMMC's various projects. A power point from the meeting is now posted on the SMMC website, [www.waterville-me.gov/departments/mmsc](http://www.waterville-me.gov/departments/mmsc). Please join them on Facebook as well. Their meetings are open to all and volunteers are welcome at every level. The board, which gave over 230 hours in 2011, has two openings, one for a fundraiser.

Donations are tax-deductible and may be sent, c/o City of Waterville, One Common Street, Waterville, ME 04901. Or go to SMMC's website, at and click on the donate button to use a credit card.

SMMC is now Forum on the Future at UMA. Upcoming events include Yellow Light Breen, Vice President, Bangor Savings Banks and Chair of the Maine Coalition for Excellence in Education, on Friday, February 3; Paul Kando speaking on Homes, Cities and Sustainable Energy on Sunday, March 4; and a conference, Creative Economy, featuring UMA's architectural program, April 2. To learn more, contact [UMASC@maine.edu](mailto:UMASC@maine.edu) or 621-3551.

Donations of \$362.10 were collected at the meeting. This will be used to fund future SMMC projects.

Visit our website: [www.townline.org](http://www.townline.org)