

Dear Friends of Simplicity,

This is the Simplicity Matters Earth Institute Monthly Announcement for **December 2013**. It is going out to over **1,560 people**. If you do not want to receive this once-a-month email in the future, simply hit "reply" and ask to be removed.

Please also remember that if you prefer not to read this announcement in email form, you can always access it on the web at www.simplicity-matters.org/announcements/ or as a PDF at <http://www.simplicity-matters.org/events/2013/2013-12.pdf>

In case you are not aware, **SMEI is now on Facebook! Please "like" us:**

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Simplicity-Matters-Earth-Institute/130611396993657>

Please start posting articles, thoughts, and questions there, to start some online dialogue. Consider it the SMEI "blog"!

We also have a Yahooogroup, called "DCMetroSimplifiers," with about 270 members, if you want to be involved during the month in an "interactive dialogue." You can subscribe from our "Online Convos" tab of our website or directly at <http://www.simplicity-matters.org/online>.

For our friends in Baltimore, there is also a YahooGroup called "Green City Baltimore," with similar interactive opportunities and about 95 members. You also can subscribe from our "Online Convos" tab of our website or directly at <http://www.simplicity-matters.org/online>.

This announcement is organized into six sections:

- Second Sunday Forum - no forum again until Jan 2014
- Earth Forum of Howard County – no forum again until Jan 2014
- Baltimore Green Forum – early this month!
- Discussion Circle Update
- Community Events
- Action Opportunities & Tidbits

Urgently needed: Person(s) proficient in Dreamweaver or similar software to monthly update SMEI website. Candidates should have their own computer and software, ability to convert Word documents into clickable PDFs, and good editing and proofreading skills. Great volunteer opportunity enabling you to showcase your talents if you're starting your career as a webmaster. **Please contact Lena Rotenberg, LenaRR@gmail.com or [301-432-8721](tel:301-432-8721).**

Thanks to this month's editor, **Betty Wells**.

SECOND SUNDAY FORUM

We will not be gathering in December but will regroup in January.

THE BALTIMORE GREEN FORUM

Sunday, December 8

Presentation: 4 - 5:30 pm; Breakout Sessions: 5:30 - 6:30pm

MD Presbyterian Church,

1105 Providence Road, Towson, MD 21286

www.mpchurch.org/About.htm

**Topic: My Experience as an Environmental Consultant and Researcher in Sweden
And How It Led to My Book, "Too Smart for Our Own Good"**

Speaker: Dr. Craig Dilworth, Stockholm, Sweden

Craig Dilworth was born in Canada and received his PhD at Uppsala University, Sweden, where he is presently Reader in Theoretical Philosophy. His work has included creating and running various environmental projects, as well as purely academic studies in metaphysics, philosophy of science, human ecology, theoretical physics, theoretical biology and the social sciences. He is the author of two major works in the philosophy of science, *Scientific Progress* (4th ed. 2008) and *The Metaphysics of Science* (2nd ed. 2007), as well as a book in human ecology entitled *Too Smart for Our Own Good* (2009). His latest work is *Simplicity* (2012), which is in meta-metaphysics, and constitutes a lifelong effort.

To ask any questions about our programs or to get updated program info:

- * Send email to baltimoregreenforum@gmail.com,
- * Call Sam Hopkins at [410-554-0006](tel:410-554-0006),
- * or check www.baltimoregreenforum.org .

EARTH FORUM OF HOWARD COUNTY

No Forum in December 2013,

The Earth Forum will return in January, 2014.

For further information, contact earthforum@firstpreshc.org or call [410-730-3545](tel:410-730-3545).

DISCUSSION CIRCLE UPDATE

NEW TOPICS THIS FALL:

Change By Degrees, <http://www.nwei.org/discussion-courses/addressing-climate-challenge/>

Peer Support Group, http://nipspeersupport.org/?page_id=108

Going Green At Home, <http://chears.org/gcan/discussion-circles/>

NWEI Discussion Guides: (CbyD) Change by Degrees: Addressing the Climate Challenge (HFC) Hungry for Change, (WOH) World of Health, (SSW) Sustainable Systems at Work; (RE) Reconnecting with Earth; (CSL) Choices for Sustainable Living; (DSOP) Discovering a Sense of Place; (HCHP) Healthy Children-Healthy Planet; (MF) Menu for the Future; (VS) Voluntary Simplicity. **Other guides:** (LBP) "Simplicity Lessons" by Linda Breen Pierce; (LCD) "Low Carbon Diet" by David Gershon; (YMOYL) Your Money or Your Life, (CSC) Common Security Club/Resilience Circle, (WOE) World on the Edge by Lester Brown, (SE) Sacred Economics by Charles Eisenstein (PSG) Peer Support Group from National Institute on Peer Support

IMPORTANT NOTE: Effective Oct 1, 2012 NWEI discussion circle guides **went up to \$25 plus s/h** (except a few rare exceptions). They should be ordered directly from NWEI. For more info, visit <http://www.simplicity-matters.org/circles/order.php>

So far this year, we have started 13 circles (291 total circles since 2002!). Most recent topics have included Sacred Economics, Voluntary Simplicity, Moneyless Manifesto, Powering a Bright Future, and Peer Support Group **There is 3 circles starting this month in College Park/Hyattsville, Severna Park, and Bethesda marked with an asterisk (*). Many more are in active formation.**

Our circles have become so widespread that **we are now breaking them down by county**. Please scroll down to see what is starting up near where you live. **For more info**, you may contact Lore at lore@simplicity-matters.org unless otherwise noted.

Frederick & Washington County

UU Church of Frederick (tbd) Contact Marney at marney@simplicity-matters.org for details

Carroll County

Westminster "Regroup" Contact CirclesCarroll@Simplicity-Matters.org to join the group for discussions and to watch videos. CS: Carole Flood

Howard County

Western Howard County "Change by Degrees: Addressing the Climate Challenge" CS: Liz Feighner/Sue Kunkel, for more info email hococlimatechange.circles@gmail.com

Town Center/Manor House/Oliver Carriage House "Change by Degrees: Addressing the Climate Challenge" CS: Florence Miller, for more info email hococlimatechange.circles@gmail.com

Columbia "World of Health" For more info email hococlimatechange.circles@gmail.com

"Is Sustainability Still Possible" Circle, online (from home)

The Transition Movement group on Goodreads.com will engage in discussion circle of the book "State of the World 2013: Is Sustainability Still Possible?", starting on May 19 and continuing (slowly) through the end of the year. **They are currently on Chapter 22.** You do not need to be available on Sundays, as you can progress at your own pace. For more info see <http://www.transitionhoco.org/goodreads-transition-movement>.

HoCo Climate Change Circles Committee is actively pursuing other potential venues. Details to follow. Visit www.hococlimatechange.org or email hococlimatechange.circles@gmail.com

Harford County

None currently scheduled to begin

Baltimore City/County

Baltimore "Matchmaker" Circle (tbd, as soon as we get a critical mass), CS: Lore Rosenthal, lore@simplicity-matters.org

Anne Arundel County

*Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church, Severna Park, MD **First Monday in January**, CS: Retta Barkley. Email lore@simplicity-matters.org, if interested.

Prince Georges County

*College Park/Hyattsville, "Sacred Economics", **Wed, Dec 4, 7-9 pm, private home in College Park.** We will discuss Chapter 1 & Chapter 2 of Sacred Economics. Read it here- <http://sacred-economics.com/read-online/> Email lore@simplicity-matters.org, if interested in finding out the schedule for future chapters.

Greenbelt, "Going Green at Home", A new discussion circle topic for residents of Springhill Lake/Franklin Park. Topics will include: * Use less energy * Food: eating lower on the food chain * Reduce Consumption *Reduce Your Garbage * Green Products in Your Home * Why Bother? Can One Individual Really Make a Difference? CS: Carolyn Lambright-Davis/Lore Rosenthal (looking for 6 more people)

Greenbelt "Climate Change, from Local to Global", We are pilot testing a next six-week discussion circle that will include *Climate Science * Life-style Choices * Systemic Change * Policy & Strategic Alternatives * Envisioning a Positive Future * Where Do We Go From Here? CS: Lore Rosenthal (looking for 6 more people)

*Greenbelt "Peer Support Group", This six-week circle for people interested in climate and sustainability will teach the basic tools of peer support, give participants the opportunity to benefit from the process and empower participants to provide support to themselves and others on an ongoing basis after the circle. Dr. Jim Driscoll will come out the first session to model the process. The circle will then continue on it's own for 4 sessions. Jim will return the sixth session to lead the wrap up. CS: Lore Rosenthal (looking for 5 more people)

Paint Branch UU Church (VS), Will start as soon as there is a critical mass. CS: Raman Pathik

Montgomery County

We are putting together circles for winter now. Topics being considered are HFC and CSL. Interested parties need to contact Marneyb@earthlink.net for more information.

*River Road UU Church, Bethesda The environmental task force at RRUUC has put together a discussion curriculum on Dying of Thirst: The Ethics of Water Security is an original discussion course coordinated by RRUUC Environmental Task Force. Readings and discussion will explore the world's diminishing supply of clean water, its usage and equitable distribution, privileged consumption, laws governing water, and its use in energy production. The class will be from

Monday January 13 thru to March 10, 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm at River Road UU Congregation in Bethesda meeting alternate weeks. Registration and a \$10 reading workbook is required by Monday, Jan. 6 a week prior to the first class. For information go to <http://www.ruuuc.org/lifelong-learning/adult-religious-education-contemporary-issues/take-a-class.html>

Takoma Park (CSC) CS: Bruce Baker, email lore@simplicity-matters.org, if interested.

Silver Spring (Addressing Climate Change or Peer Support Group) We are working with Marylanders for Climate Coordination and MC-OFA to tailor a circle to the interests of participants. CS: Lore Rosenthal

Washington, DC.

Dupont Circle/Adams Morgan/Citizens Climate Lobby SMEI is teaming up with the National Institute for Peer Support, Ecology, and the Citizens Climate Lobby to offer several discussion circles. This summer we studied the various components of the DC Sustainability Plan (<http://sustainable-dc.org/>). Plans are in process for a follow up circle. CS: Jim Driscoll Email lore@simplicity-matters.org, if interested.

Dupont Circle/Columbia Heights (Sacred Economics) CS: Laura Gubisch. Email lore@simplicity-matters.org, if interested.

Tenleytown or on Red Line (All Topics). There is interest but we need more people. If you are interested in joining a discussion group please let me know. Marney@simplicity-matters.org, (301) 652-0492

We have just learned of a new group in DC also starting circles. Visit www.janyocommunity.com or <http://thejanyocommunity.wordpress.com/course/> to learn more.

"Circles List"/"Matchmaking"

This fall, SMEI will continue "matching" and/or "pointing" people into circles. In neighborhoods where circles are already forming, we will point you in the direction of a circle nearby. In those areas where there is not a circle already being planned, we will "match" people into home-based groups.

We have transitioned to a regional structure for the state. Please use the emails below for more information about circles starting in your county.

SMEI Regional Coordinators:

Baltimore City/Baltimore Co.: CirclesBalto@simplicity-matters.org (Lore Rosenthal)

Carroll Co.: CirclesCarroll@simplicity-matters.org (Marney Bruce)

Frederick & Washington Co.: CirclesFredWashCo@simplicity-matters.org (Lena Rotenberg)

Howard Co.: CirclesHoCo@simplicity-matters.org (Lore Rosenthal).

See also **Climate Change Initiative of Howard County** (CCIHC) www.hococlimatechange.org

Montgomery Co.: CirclesMontgomery@simplicity-matters.org (Marney Bruce)

Prince Georges Co.: CirclesPG@simplicity-matters.org (Lore Rosenthal)

Washington DC: CirclesDC@simplicity-matters.org (Marney Bruce)

Elsewhere in Maryland or Jefferson Co., WV: Circles@simplicity-matters.org or 301-432-8721 (Lena Rotenberg)

For a list of our **most popular NWEI-published discussion topics**, visit <http://www.simplicity-matters.org/volunteers/forms/7guides.pdf>

If you are **starting your own circle** and would like to have your blurb posted here and on our website, please email it to Lena@simplicity-matters.org

For more info. about our discussion circles, visit our Discussion Circles page, <http://www.simplicitymatters.org/circles>, or email Lore at lore@simplicity-matters.org

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Tue, Dec 3, Baltimore Green Week RFP Q&A Session, 6pm – 8pm, Baltimore, MD

Interested in participating in the 11th Annual Baltimore Green Week but you're not sure how or what to do? Do you share our vision for a greener Baltimore? Community members (students, teachers, gov't, business and organizational leaders, activists, et al) are encouraged to join us as we explore past project successes and brainstorm projects for 2014! Register online or call 410-657-2BGW (2249). baltimoregreenworks.com/events/

Wed, Dec 4, Wake Up Wednesday 6pm – 9pm, Reginald F. Lewis Museum 830 East Pratt Street Baltimore, MD 21202

The Baltimore Wake Up (BWU) presents Wake Up Wednesdays- A Film Screening of the Award-Winning Community Organizing documentary, "Gaining Ground," and Community Dialogue moderated by Jamal Mubdi-Bey Featured Panelists - Lt. Col Melvin Russell, Paulo Gregory Harris, Devon Wilford - Said, Adam Jackson Hosted by Sonja Sohn - Founder/CEO, ReWired for Change baltimorewakeup.org/

Wed, Dec 4, Chasing Ice Documentary, 7pm – 9pm, Greenbelt Community Center 15 Crescent Road, Room 114, Greenbelt, MD

National Geographic Award Winning Documentary - Presented one time only by Greenbelt Climate Action Network and Prince George's County Chapter of Organizing for Action. Climate change is real, and the devastating effects it's had on our environment are clear. This award-winning documentary follows a photographer into the Arctic as he witnesses first-hand, the undeniable evidence of climate change. Join local supporters for a free screening of the film and learn how you can act to combat climate change in your community. <https://my.barackobama.com/page/event/detail/gS8hd5>

Thu, Dec 5, Human Impacts DC, 6pm – 9:30pm, Goethe Institute Washington, DC 812 Seventh Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001

A spy, a lawyer, and a diplomat walk into a room, ready to change the world. What happens? Find out when you join us for the "hottest" event of the year, where we'll explore the political climate on climate in ways never been done before. Envision a climate community in the U.S. that includes left, right and center views and get inspired to make a difference through performance and in-depth dialogue. humanimpactsdc.bpt.me/

Thu, Dec 5, First Happy Hour at Parva, 5pm - 8pm, Bethesda, MD

Lighting the Way to a Greener Community! Kick off the holiday season with an evening of casual conversation and networking with Bethesda Green and representatives from the faith-based community. Congregations associated with Interfaith Power & Light (MD.DC.NoVA) will share their extraordinary work to save energy and go green. Enjoy complimentary appetizers in the restaurant's beautiful second floor lounge. Donation requested at the door. The Parva Restaurant Bar & Lounge is located two blocks from Bethesda Green.

Fri, Dec 6, Film Screening: Chasing Ice, 7pm- 8:30pm, Rockville, MD

Join the UUC of Rockville's screening of the documentary: Chasing Ice. The film tells the story of photographer James Balog, and his use of time-lapse cameras to document the dramatic disappearance of Arctic ice that is happening now as a result of Earth's rapidly changing climate. A map and directions to UUCR can be found at <http://uucr.org/directions.php>. For more information, contact Catherine Higgins-Bisnett at chbisnett@gmail.com or catzrule40@yahoo.com

Sat, Dec 7, Natural Holiday Sale and Crafts, 10am - 3pm, Woodstock, MD

Visit the Howard County Conservancy this holiday season and find an assortment of unique and locally crafted items for sale including natural holiday decorations from the woods, gardens and local farms and markets. Children and adults can make whimsical critters from cones, pods and seed heads. For more information, contact Devon Kosisky, info@hconservancy.org, 410-465-8877. Directions and details at www.hconservancy.org

Sat, Dec 7, Winter Tree ID Nature Walk, 1pm - 3:30pm, Carderock, MD

Learn to identify trees and other woody plants along the Potomac River with naturalist & wild edible foods instructor Matt Cohen. For more info and to sign up go to www.mattshabitats.com/naturewalks. Fee is \$25

Sat, Dec 7, Tree Planting Volunteer Event, 9am – 1pm, DeSoto Park, 1500 and 1600 blocks of Desoto Rd. off of Washington Blvd, Baltimore, MD 21230

Please bring a reusable water bottle, wear long pants and sleeves, shoes with closed toes. Most importantly, get ready to plant some trees and get dirty as you volunteer with Parks & People! Street parking is available. Volunteers should meet on the paved area near the playground. Email Valerie Rupp to RSVP or for more information. www.parksandpeople.org/events/calendar/details/951/2013-12-07/

Sun, Dec 8, Soiree to Benefit Interfaith Youth for Climate Justice, 6pm -8pm, Washington D.C.

Meet and welcome the new class of Interfaith Youth for Climate Justice program students, explore how climate change is affecting real people around the world and the U.S., and visit over delicious food from India, the Southwest, and Middle East. There will be an interactive game and climate trivia contest for adults and youth, and some inspiring entertainment. The event will take place at First Congregational UCC, 945 G St NW DC. To register visit <http://tinyurl.com/kuz8n98>.

Mon, Dec 9, Presentation: "Is Fracking Worth Its Weight in Gas: Weighing the Moral Consequences of Fracking in Maryland and Beyond", 6:30pm - 7:30pm, Mt. Airy, MD

Join Lisa Bardack, an environmental educator, as she talks about the consequences and moral dilemma of fracking in Maryland. Visit <http://www.stjamesmtairy.org/directions.htm> for directions.

Mon, Dec 9, Film Screening: No Impact Man. 8pm - 10pm, Silver Spring, MD

Join the Kayamut Community as they watch No Impact Man and host a discussion of the movie, how it relates to Jewish teachings, and what experiments we might like to try in our own lives. For direction visit http://ssjc.info/?page_id=5. RSVP to Ellen Haber (ellenhaber@aol.com) or to Evonne Marzouk (evonne.marzouk@verizon.net) by Thursday, December 5.

Wed, Dec 11, Holiday Centerpiece Workshop with Takoma Horticultural Club, 7:30pm - 9pm, Heffner Park Community Center, 42 Oswego Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912

The club will provide a presentation on the principles of arrangements using live greens and floral foam, as well as the materials and tools needed for your pieces. Our experienced team will provide assistance through out the workshop to help with your design and answer your questions. This event is FREE but we need RSVPs to ensure we can provide sufficient supplies. We will donate the finished centerpieces to a local organization such as a nursing home or medical facility to provide some holiday cheer. You can also make one or two to take home with you to show off your arranging skills! If you have special gardening gloves that you like or a name tag, please bring them along. If you have a special holiday treat that you would like to share, you can bring that too.

Please RSVP by email by December 6 to becky58a@yahoo.com. Details at TakomaHort.org.

Mon, Dec 16, "Reel and Meal at the New Deal", 6:30pm Optional \$13 Vegan Buffet, 7pm – 9pm Program, 113 Centerway Road, Greenbelt, MD.

Film show in Greenbelt will be *"War on Whistleblowers: Free Press and the National Security State"*. Optional \$13.00 Vegan Buffet starts at 6:30 pm. The free program starts 7:00 pm at the New Deal Cafe, 113 Centerway in Roosevelt Center. This 2013 Brave New Films documentary highlights the stories of four individuals who felt compelled to disclose grave, evidently illegal acts by government during the post-9/11 "war on terror. Discussion after the screening will be led by one of the award-winning journalists interviewed in the film - Lucy Dalglish, Dean of the Philip Merrill College of Journalism at the University of Maryland. Contact for event sponsor Prince George's County Peace & Justice Coalition: Lucy Duff, justpeacepg@earthlink.net 301-577-2350 or visit <http://www.waronwhistleblowers.com>.

Tues, Dec 17, Greenbelt Climate Action Network, 7-9:15 pm, Room 114, Greenbelt Community Center, 15 Crescent Drive.

Guest speakers will be Sara Via and Barbara Sollner-Webb from the "Climate Reality Project". In addition to a climate change update, we will discuss the recent Typhoon in the Philippines, the Climate Change Conference in Warsaw, and the international fast that resulted from both., . For more info, contact Lore, lore@simplicity-matters.org, 301-345-2234, <http://chears.org/gcan/monthly-meetings/>

Mon, Dec 30, Day Off Camp at Irvine Nature Center, 8am - 3pm, Owings Mills, MD

Don't spend a day off school at home being bored! Instead, join the Irvine crew for special animal encounters, strolls through the woods, green games and environmentally friendly crafts. Kids should wear nature-friendly clothing and bring a lunch. \$65 members, \$75 non-members. For more information, contact Clare, NaldrettC@ExploreNature.org, [443-738-9220](tel:443-738-9220). Directions and details at www.ExploreNature.org

JANUARY PREVIEW & BEYOND

Fri, Jan 3, DUE: Baltimore Green Week Proposals by COB

Community members (students, teachers, gov't, business and organizational leaders, activists, et al) are encouraged to participate during the 11th Annual Baltimore Green Week but submitting an environmentally focused activity, lecture, workshops, etc... that aims to inform and engage the community. For more information, go to <http://baltimoregreenworks.com/events/baltimore-green-week/>

Mon. Jan 6, Registration for 'The Ethics of Water Security' course, Bethesda, MD

The environmental task force at RRUUC has put together a discussion curriculum on Dying of Thirst: The Ethics of Water Security is an original discussion course coordinated by RRUUC Environmental Task Force. Readings and discussion will explore the world's diminishing supply of clean water, its usage and equitable distribution, privileged consumption, laws governing water, and its use in energy production. The class will be from Monday January 13 thru to March 10, 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm at River Road UU Congregation in Bethesda meeting alternate weeks. Registration and a \$10 reading workbook is required by Monday, Jan. 6 a week prior to the first class. For more information go to <http://www.rruuc.org/lifelong-learning/adult-religious-education-contemporary-issues/take-a-class.html>

Sun, Jan 12, Nature Preschool Open House at Irvine Nature Center, 12pm - 2 pm, Owings Mills, MD

Looking for an eco-friendly preschool? Then come out to play! Join us for a casual, drop-in Open House to discover our nature-based approach to learning. Little ones are always welcome! Free! For more information, contact Monica, Monica@ExploreNature.org, [443-738-9213](tel:443-738-9213). Directions and details at www.ExploreNature.org

Wed, Jan 15, Deer & Drambuie at Irvine Nature Center, 6:30pm - 9pm, Owings Mills, MD

Join us to examine Maryland's rising white-tailed deer population and its impact on surrounding ecosystems. Topics such as recent population trends, deer resistant plants, Lyme disease and alternatives to hunting will be useful for homeowners, farmers, gardeners, hunters and nature enthusiasts. Presentation by Jim Bennett from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Drinks and dinner included. 21+ only. \$20 for members; \$30 for non-members. For more information, contact Clare, NaldrettC@ExploreNature.org, [443-738-9220](tel:443-738-9220). Directions and details at www.ExploreNature.org

ACTION OPPORTUNITIES & TIDBITS

Join the Keystone XL Pledge of Resistance/Civil Disobedience Training: Looking to fight the good fight? Then consider joining a group of activists who are currently preparing to participate in 2 local Sit-Ins, all part of the Pledge of Resistance to the Keystone XL Pipeline. If President Obama approves the KXL pipeline, we will commit planned and peaceful acts of civil disobedience at a target in downtown Silver Spring and another in Ellicott City. If you are interested in learning more, please email Kristin Cook at kristingamzoncook@gmail.com or Carla Tevelow at perlpubl@gmail.com. We are planning more trainings over the next three months. Read more about the Pledge of Resistance and sign up for a specific sit-in location here: <http://nokxl.org/>

Support Renewable Integration: Balance Power Systems is a company of engineers addressing needs instead of return on investment. We are non-profit and develop enabling products to make renewables more cost competitive and achieve economies of scale. Our goals are to create awareness of electricity cost drivers and motivate investment in load shifting technologies that will better accommodate variable generation. We are electricity suppliers in the MD BGE/PEPCO service territories. Your enrollment will enable us to develop the products needed to achieve a sustainable future and your feedback will enable us to coordinate our effort with other sustainability initiatives. See www.BalancePowerSystems.com or contact Joe Criscione at jcriscione@BalancePowerSystems.com or [301 801 8932](tel:301-801-8932).