



Feb 2020 - issue 3

FROM THE CHAIR



A day doesn't go by that we don't hear more bad news about the effects of global warming on our environment. Whether it is the fires in Australia or accelerated melting of the Antarctic ice shelf, the climate news is a constant drip of pending apocalypse. Actually, we do have a

few choices: we can turn off the TV and deny the obvious, or succumb to climate-related depression and withdraw, or we can accept that this crisis is our own doing, and thus we can manage it and hold it to an acceptable level. Key to this effort is dealing with what we can control: we can make positive changes in our lives, and we can encourage and enable others to do the same.

We find it helpful to think of these changes as four tiers of action. The first and most obvious is what we can do in our personal lives. To start, we can replace our conventional light bulbs with LED bulbs and weatherize our homes. Second, we can involve our friends and family. People are amazingly receptive to discussions about climate change; we all want to do "the right thing." Education and modeling can go a long way toward encouraging change in those closest to us.

The third tier is involvement in our town and community. How can we encourage our local government to take the steps needed to dramatically decrease (and someday, possibly, eliminate) fossil fuel use?

The final tier is the government at state and federal levels. Since current federal officials have abdicated all responsibility in the area of climate change, states have had to fill the void. Fortunately, Maine now has responsible state leadership around this issue, and we can base our November preferences on candidates' records on climate action.

York Ready for 100% is deeply involved in each of these areas. In the community we are working on a composting program for residents and have been involved in starting the new high school food composting program. A Web-based tool, the "Green Challenge" initiative, can help us move toward a more sustainable, energy-efficient lifestyle. It is now being evaluated for user satisfaction and will soon go public. The program could become team-based so that friends and family could easily collaborate.

We are looking at other areas as well, such as how climate change is being taught in York schools, and how we can help with changes to homes that may not have adequate insulation. Our Americorps Energy Efficiency Coordinator, Molly Agrimson, has just finished an insulation project for which community volunteers built and inserted "weatherized" window frames in homes without window insulation.

Regarding the third tier, we attend Select Board and Budget Committee meetings to be a voice on behalf of our environment. Finally, two weeks ago we hosted a well-attended discussion on happenings in Augusta at the legislative and executive levels regarding energy policy. Participants included legislators as well as government technocrats.

This is a frightening but also incredibly exciting time in the fields of energy and sustainability. There is so much work to be done. Would you like to get involved?? Just let us know: see yorkreadyfor100.org for contact information.

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IN THE NEWS

New incentives build on Governor Mills' 100,000 heat pump goal to help create jobs, save Maine people money, and fight climate change Author: Erin Keller (NewsCenterMaine), January 13, 2020



Governor Janet Mills visited F.W. Webb Company in Augusta to announce new financial incentives designed to expand the use of high-performance, energy-efficient heat pumps in Maine. **The incentives will advance the Governor's initiative to install 100,000 heat pumps in Maine homes by 2025. The initiative was signed into law last year.**

According to Efficiency Maine Trust, a high-performance heat pump can help an average Maine home reduce its oil consumption by 270-540 gallons per year; reduce its carbon emissions by an estimated 3,600-7,250 pounds per year per home per high-performance heat pump; and, when the initiative is fully realized, can save Maine people between a total of \$30-\$60 million annually, providing an important boost to the local economy.

Growing the heat pump business in Maine will replace high-carbon fossil fuels with cleaner electricity while lowering heating bills and creating jobs.

MAINE PARTNER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

A Successful Window Insulation Program



Since September 2019 Americorps Energy Efficiency Coordinator Molly Agrimson has been coordinating a project to help reduce heating needs, and thus CO₂ emissions in York County, by providing insulating window inserts to area residents. Through funding from Window Dressers, York Energy Steering Committee, York Community Services Associations and Efficiency Maine, Molly has been able to focus 75% of the program on providing window inserts at no cost to residents with low income. The other 25% effort has gone to other customers at full price. Altogether, volunteers built 180 window inserts for 21 York County homes.

In planning for the window build event, Molly recruited volunteers through Facebook and other social media postings, flyers around town and mass emails to local organizations. [Read more](#)



WASTE REDUCTION AND DIVERSION (WRAD)

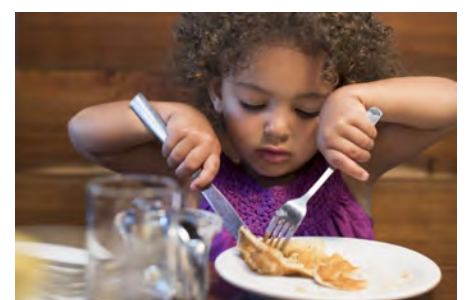
WRAD Has Been Awarded a \$500 Grant



WRAD (Waste Reduction and Diversion) has been awarded a \$500 grant from the **Natural Resources Council of Maine** to be used to purchase reusable silverware for the York School District.

At the direction of Whitney Thornton, York School Department Food Services Director, the funds will be divided between York High School and Village Elementary. Whitney's belief is that early education and practice at properly depositing used silverware should increase cooperation and reduce silverware loss as students progress through the grades. Parents are encouraged to support the transition from single-use plastic utensils to silverware as well as the overall effort to reduce waste by packing lunches in reusable containers.

Whitney continues to explore alternatives to plastic and to adhere to the waste hierarchy of reduce, reuse, recycle and compost while maintaining the strict rules and guidelines of the health department that keeps cafeteria food safe. We salute Whitney Thornton, the York High School Eco-club and all the students and staff committed to making our public schools increasingly zero waste settings.



Composting

Sign up with Mr. Fox Composting and receive a free kitchen counter compost bin. A dozen York households have signed up since the promotion began. Those new to composting have reported being surprised at how much of their trash is made up of food scraps. Contact mrfoxcomposting.com to sign up and composting@yorkreadyfor100.org for your free counter bin or with any questions about our program.



Meeting With Hannaford's Sustainability Director



Have you noticed an increase in “convenient” pre-packaged produce at Hannaford's York store? Do you find yourself astonished at the amount of plastic on the shelves? WRAD will be meeting with Hannaford's sustainability director and York store manager to discuss their goals and timeline for reducing plastic packaging.

Please email your observations and concerns to Victoria Simon vsimon@maine.rr.com.

Best Ways to Reduce Waste – Refillable Containers

Every time a new product is made it takes a lot of resources - raw materials, energy to manufacture and fuel to transport to the store. Reducing and reusing is one of the most effective ways to conserve natural resources. And there are actually a few easy ways to start and make an impact!

It turns out that there have always been places where we can shop and avoid single use containers. Below are a few ideas but once you start to look you'll find other ways to reduce unnecessary packaging. [Read more](#)



Hilary Clark
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Let us know your ideas and tips on how to reduce plastic waste and lower your carbon footprint. We will share them with our members.

Bob Brisebois
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GREEN CHALLENGE

Green Challenge Trials

On January 30, 11 York residents representing 7 households gathered to kick off the trial of the **York Green Challenge**. Three additional households are participating in the trial as well.



The York Green Challenge is all about answering the very common question, “What can I, as an individual, personally do to help stop Climate Change”? This Challenge is centered around a web-based tool that gives you 67 different answers to this question. Sixty-seven different actions, explained in simple terms, that you and your family can take to reduce your personal and your home's carbon footprint.

At this initial meeting, we all signed up for the challenge on the website. We then completed each of our own carbon footprint calculations. As individual actions are taken and completed, this web-based tool will track the drop in our carbon footprint....as a household and as a team. We then moved on to exploring the different actions. We chose to focus the next couple weeks on the 6 actions related to Food and Waste.

Once we roll this out Town-wide, it will also track the sum total footprint reduction of all residents who take the Challenge.

Many thanks to this York First Team for your willingness to trial the York Green Challenge. We look forward to great results.

Fred Weston
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YORK ENERGY STEERING COMMITTEE - UPDATE

York's Climate Action Plan: What it Means for You!



When you think of York 10, 20 or even 50 years from now, what do you envision? What would a healthy, vibrant York look like to you? This question has been on the minds of many lately, particularly with regard to climate change.

How can we create a community with a healthy economy, good jobs and prepared for the impacts of changing climate? These are the kinds of questions we will be asking as we prepare for a climate action plan in York. [Read more](#)

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EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

Interested in helping up plan our educational events? Join us on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 4:30 PM for our monthly Educational Team Meeting at the York Public Library.

➤ Ongoing

- **Climate Change Conversation - The third Friday of every month, 3:30 - 5:00 PM, Community Room, York Public Library.** Everyone is welcome to join round-table talks with Debby Ronnquist and community members on the third Friday of every month, 3:30-5:00, in the Community Room at York Public Library. Topics range from composting to heating your home to gardening, soil health, and everyday steps we can take to reduce the effects of climate change on people, vegetation and wildlife. Bring your own topic suggestions, questions, ideas and friends. Debby is affiliated with York Ready for 100% Clean Renewable Energy.

➤ February

- **Friday, February 21, 7:00 PM - "Should Mainers Take Over CMP?" , South Portland High School, 637 Highland Ave. South Portland.**
State Representative Seth Berry (D-Bowdoinham), Vaugh Woodruff, Insource Renewables, CEO and Saron Staz, Kennebunk Light & Power, Former General Manager will participate in a panel to discuss LD1646, presented by Representative Berry.
- **Sunday, February 23, 2:00 PM - "People Power: Consumer-Owned Utility Forum", Kittery Community Center, 120 Rogers Road, Kittery.**
State Representative Seth Berry (D-Bowdoinham) will discuss his proposal to establish a Maine Power Delivery Authority. "Maine Power" or MDPA would replace Central Maine Power Company and Emera Maine, instead operating much like Maine's existing consumer-owned utilities such as Kennebunk Light and Power, Madison Electric Works, or Eastern Maine Electric Cooperative.

➤ March

- **Friday, March 20, 7:00 PM - "Maine State Bicentennial Celebration: Two Centuries of Environmental Change," Community Room, York Public Library.**
James Kences will be presenting two narratives--the first for Maine, which will embrace two centuries of change--the second for York since the first Earth Day in 1970. The March 20 program will acknowledge the two anniversaries together.

➤ April

- **Earth Day, Wednesday, April 22, 8:30 AM -12:00 PM "Earth Day Beach Cleanup" Long Sands Beach, York, (meeting at the Bath House) - Hosted by Mayo Designs.**
Want to take a break from your crazy schedule and daily tasks to help make a positive impact on the community? Can't stand the fact that 14 billion pounds of trash is dumped into the world's oceans every year? Join us for our community beach clean up and help us celebrate Earth Day... the right way!
- **More Earth Day Events Being Planned - Check out the March Newsletter for upcoming events.**

◆ SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

- ◆ YRF100 Educational Team Meeting: Third Wednesday of the month. (3/18)
- ◆ Town of York, Energy Steering Committee: Third Thursday of the month. (2/20)
- ◆ YRF100 Core Group Meeting: Fourth Wednesday of the month. (2/26)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- ★ **Newsletter Designer** - Help us with improvement of our newsletter design and social media outreach process. Contact briseboisb@gmail.com
- ★ **Writing and Editing** - We need individuals to edit articles that are submitted to us for publication in the York Weekly, Newsletter and multimedia, also to occasionally write articles and “letters to the editor”.
Contact sglick@maine.rr.com
- ★ **Youth Initiative Outreach** - We need individuals who would like to help us engage the youth of our community as environmental citizens. If you are a parent, teacher or individual interested in working with our youth, YRF100 would like to talk with you. Contact macmcabee5@gmail.com



HONORABLE MENTION

We like to call attention to our fellow travelers and collaborators.

We are grateful to **York Community Service Association** for their help with the successful project to construct and install insulating window inserts for York County homes. By reducing cold drafts the window inserts also reduced the need for heat and thus the use and expense of home heating fuel. YCSA helped to connect to clients in need, provided a van to transport construction materials for window inserts for families with low income, and access to office supplies for our AmeriCorp Coordinator..



Thank you, YCSA!

The project was organized and managed by Molly Agrimson, AmeriCorps Efficiency Coordinator and YRF100% volunteers.

PERSONAL ACTION

The Foolish Idler



It is estimated that 6 billion gallons of fuel are consumed by idling vehicles in the U.S. each year. Encounters with idling vehicles have become all too commonplace in this town. A walk through the Village at any moment of the day is likely to result in observations of parked cars with engines running outside businesses, restaurants, or in parking lots.

As a stark point of reference, if these same persons in those cars were in a closed space, say a garage, they would be overcome and lose consciousness within only seven minutes. Indeed, this has proved an effective form... [Read more](#)

James Kences

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Becoming a Climate Healer: Ripples of Good



This is a story about ripples. Ripples as culprits, and ripples as cures. It's about a positive future that we can all start creating today and start experiencing now.

First, Ripples as Culprits. You've already heard about your carbon footprint, and the problems the planet faces because of our collective carbon footprints. Where do these carbon footprints come from?

It's simple, and actually beautiful. We are all connected by the amazing economy that we've created. Of course, our electricity, gasoline, car, clothing and much of our food... [Read more](#)



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BOOK REVIEW

We Are the Weather, Saving the Planet Begins at Breakfast

By Jonathan Safran Foer, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 2019

Before reading this book I thought the most significant action to combat climate change would be to reduce/eliminate our use of carbon-based energy – coal, oil, gas, etc. Foer's book has shown me that there is something else we need to address that is an even higher priority.

Some people reject the fact, overwhelmingly supported by scientists, that our planet is warming because of human activity. But do those of us who accept the reality of human-caused climate change truly believe it? If we did, surely we would be roused to act on what we know. Will future generations distinguish between those who didn't believe in the science of global warming and those who said they accepted the science but failed to change their lives in response?

In ***We Are the Weather***, Jonathan Safran Foer explores the central global dilemma of our time in a surprising, deeply personal, and urgent new way. The task of saving the planet will involve a great reckoning with ourselves -- with our all-too-human reluctance to sacrifice immediate comfort and change our habits for the sake of the future. We have, he reveals, turned our planet into a farm for growing animal products, and the consequences are catastrophic. Only collective action will save our home and way of life. And it all starts with what we eat -- and don't eat -- for breakfast.

Some quotes from this book:

- *Our Planet is an Animal Farm. The current climate change is the first caused by an animal and not by a natural event.*
- *Globally, humans use 59 percent of all the land capable of growing crops to grow food for livestock.*
- *Sixty percent of all mammals on Earth are animals raised for food.*
- *In 2018, more than 99 percent of the animals eaten in America were raised on factory farms.*
- *About 80 percent of deforestation occurs to clear land for crops for livestock and grazing.*
- *We know for sure that we cannot address climate change without addressing animal agriculture.*
- *And here is the bottom line: Changing how and what we eat will NOT be enough, on its own, to save the planet, BUT we CANNOT save the planet without changing how and what we eat.*
- *Everyone will eat a meal relatively soon and can immediately participate in the reversal of climate change by changing what you eat! You can start today. We have already!*

This book's bibliography contains over 300 references lists 232 sources. I think it's a "must read."

About the author:

Jonathan Safran Foer is a New York Times bestselling author of fiction and nonfiction books. His work has received numerous awards and has been translated into thirty-six languages. He lives in Brooklyn, NY.

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We are interested in your feedback. Let us know what your views are of the information, the format and how we can make the newsletter more meaningful. Feel free to contribute articles and make comments on what you have read. We value your participation and support. Bob Brisebois briseboisb@gmail.com

