

Green Friends

Pacific Northwest Litter Pick-up Project

"The life force that pulsates in the trees, plants and animals is the same life force that pulsates within us. The same life energy that gives us the power to speak and to sing is the power behind the song of the bird and the roar of the lion. A sincere seeker or a true believer cannot harm nature because he or she sees nature as God. He doesn't experience nature as separate from himself. He the real lover of nature. The earth, trees, plants and animals are all manifestations of God. We should love them as we love our own self."
Amma



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May Greetings

Amma will be here on May 31! I am so excited that the Litter Project members will be singing for her on the second night of the retreat. I'm remembering a time last month when I scared myself by thinking that perhaps no one would be interested in singing, so I decided I'd better find out. I am thrilled that more than 80 members have said they are planning to participate!

We will have a Green Friends table and a Litter Project table at the programs. I wonder how many new people will sign up by the end of Amma's visit.

Pat Burt is making some beautiful posters for the tables. Be sure to check them out.

We could use your help in staffing all of the Greening aspects of the tour. Please sign up for shifts of Recycling/Compost/Garbage and/or Water Project Table at www.sevatour.org.

Karuna

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

Green Friends 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 Green Friends Litter Project write Karuna at pnwgreenfriendslitterproject@gmail.com

Email from the Mayor

(regarding our International District cigarette butt pick up work party!)

Dear Karuna,

Thank you for letting me know about your great work in the International District. Please pass on my thanks to everyone who was involved - it's passionate, generous volunteers like your group that make Seattle such a special place.

Sincerely,

Mike McGinn
Mayor of Seattle



Litter Project members will be singing for Amma at the retreat. At this point we have about 80 people participating!

If you would like to participate write:
karunap108@comcast.net

The songs are available on YouTube links so you can learn them in the comfort of your home!

Litter Project Membership

As April 30, 2012, we had 220 members.
2 new members joined in April

("Members" are individuals who signed up for the project or who have participated in work parties.)

Litter Project Hours

In April, 53 members reported picking up
155.26 hours of litter.

(The statistics below relate to members who report having picked up litter. They do not include those who do not report or who reported 0.)

Members Average: 2.93 hours
Range 2 minutes to 16 hours
Median: 1.5 hours

The group has picked up 1694 hours of litter since the project began in July 2011!

Aluminum Can Report

Washington State Litter Project members collect and sell aluminum cans gathered from the litter they pick up and from friends, family and colleagues.

In the last six months of 2011 they sold 323 pounds of aluminum cans for \$151.04.

During March and April 2012 they sold 97 pounds of aluminum for \$ 44.82 which makes 182 pounds and \$90.54 for 2012 to date.

All funds were donated to the Pacific Northwest Amma Center.

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Earth Day April 22, 2012

From Geoff in Pt. Townsend:

Well, it was promising to be a beautiful Earth Day, April 22, 2012. So.....

My good friend Eswar and I decided to embark on an epic trash picking adventure. We set out in search of a mountain that would remind us of Mt Kailash, a sacred place to connect with the Shiva - Shakti, the Daughter of the Mountain, our divine mama Amma, and Mother Earth. We wanted to show our gratitude and pay our respects by picking up litter on this day.

After 3 1/2 hours of driving and a ferry ride we arrived at Mt Baker ski area, a perfect place, with spectacular and awe inspiring 360 degree views of high peaks, to pick up beer cans and power bar wrappers in the wake of thrill seeking powder hounds.

By Amma's grace we had perfect spring skiing conditions and the melting snow was revealing cans and bottles everywhere making our seva as fun as an easter egg hunt for a 5 year old.



From Seattle Satsang:

Twelve Litter Project members joined together on Earth Day, April 22, to clean up Cal Anderson Park which is located on Capitol Hill in Seattle.

This was the site of our first cigarette butt work party. What a difference our experience was from the first time we were there. In October 2011 there were leaves covering the ground and it was bitterly cold and windy. This time it was the warmest day of the year and completely sunny! We worked for 1 1/2- 2 hours and accomplished a lot.

The lack of leaves in the park was notable. There is little doubt that the leaf blowers used by park workers picked up many toxic cigarette butts along with the leaves, so they are almost certainly now part of the compost we buy.

Stories and Reflections

From Visala in Seattle:

Students at Bailey Gatzert Elem. (a Seattle Public School) located in the Central Area have helped to clean up not only the school yard but also the surrounding community. They say they want to "Protect Nature" "If you care about Nature, pick up litter when you see it," says 9 year old Azariah. The all-girls poetry/community service class meets 2x a week and dreams up way they can act as "Agents of Good" They have made beautiful posters encouraging people to keep the neighborhood clean. The girls are proud of their efforts and feel like they are making the world a better place!

From Surabi in Pt. Angeles:

I am teaching Environmental Science 100 this quarter at the college where I work. I chose to have students work on a "Lifestyle Project" where they can choose among 5 categories over a three week period. We have the categories heat, electricity/water, eat efficiently, leave the car at home, and Litter pick-up!! Anyway, a few students chose the litter pick up as part of the project and will be doing progressively more litter pick up for a 3 week period. I can let you know the class hours when we are done.

From Paige in Seattle:

Shayla (5) and I started picking up litter on our dog walks. We did 30 minutes the other day and had fun doing it :) A little "eye spy" made it fun.

From Achala in Tacoma:

On Earth Day I took a 3 hour walk on the beach looking very hard for litter, yet finding Not One Piece! There had been several groups before me that had scoured it! So my litter day turned out to be a simple walk on the beach! What joy!

Since I was there at low tide, I got to walk further down the beach than I ever had and saw some pretty cool stuff. It was such a pleasant day on the beach and to me it was as if Amma gave me a gift that day.....

From Divya in Bellingham:

We will never be out of work in this line of business!

From Anagha in Chennai:

My school (The American International School of Chennai) started a two week Paper Recycling Drive last Friday (Earth Day). All the classes in the Elementary school are collecting their paper recycling and we will have a "paper man" come to school this Friday to collect and weigh all of the paper we recycled. We will then be given a certificate that lets us know how many trees we saved as a school! It is our sincere hope that this two week drive is just the beginning of a continuous recycling program at our school that will eventually also include plastic recycling as well.

Also since the last time I wrote I have noticed a lot of improvement in trash collection around the city. All of the old rotten trash cans have been replaced with brand new metal ones, trash collectors have been given new trolleys and garbage trucks as well as uniforms and can be seen cleaning up the streets every morning. It seems like the new CM of Chennai has placed some importance on keeping the city clean and it is nice to see that the trash collectors are being taken care of. I certainly recognize and value all of their hard work!

Hope all is well with you and the Litter Team in Seattle!

GreenFriends Plant Sales

May 5 OlyPen Satsang

Port Townsend Corner of Lawrence and Pierce
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Benefits Amma's Embracing the World projects

May 19 Seattle Satsang

Annual Plant and Garage sale
8201 Greenwood Avenue North, Seattle
7:00 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Benefits: PNW Amma Center
To help contact Donna donnachatel@gmail.com