



GREENING THE CONFERENCE / WALKING OUR TALK

BOOKLET NO. 2  
California Association of Museums  
2008 Conference Fresno

# WELCOME

Innovations and new perspectives burst forth each year on what is green, how to be sustainable, and what is the most environmentally sound solution.

At each CAM Annual Conference, we are blessed with an opportunity to test these ideas. And to then share them with you.

A truly green conference isn't necessarily something you can readily see so we work to make these ideas and our process visible, both at the conference and on the pages of this booklet.

We see the *Greening the Conference* booklets as a series of publications that, when complete, will not only be an overview of what CAM has accomplished but also a road map of ideas for you to use back home for the greening of your museum. And perhaps even your life.

Welcome to the greening of the 2008 CAM Conference, Fresno!

# THINKING GREEN

Start at the beginning. Ecology is really about relationships in nature. Everything is connected. As Fritjof Capra says about the organisms found in nature, "they are not a collection, they are a community." Although museums generally think in collection terms, this is a concept easily translated to the museum field, because we also have lots of relationships.

Museums are communities within communities, like nature. We have relationships with our boards, staff, donors, artists, suppliers, the bank, a child, the teacher, the visitor and of course the outside local community and the wider community called the earth. We're all connected. And to "Think Green" we always have to keep in mind these relationships.

Next, we ask questions. Where did this come from (community, forest, factory)? How did it get here (workers, transport, over the ocean)? What was the true cost (to the community, health of workers and the planet)?

Research. Something museums are also very good at.

Weigh the true cost to the price tag and perceived need. Are there alternatives? Can we accomplish our task in a simpler way?

A light bulb costing 2 cents more from a store that supports your community and is a good global citizen is worth the money.

Thinking green is the first step and it is free!

# 10 WAYS TO TRAVEL LIGHTLY

- **At Home:** Before you leave your home, turn down the thermostat; most have a vacation setting. Use a timer for your lights instead of leaving them on. Put your newspaper delivery on hold. Pack light.
- **Getting there:** Use shared transportation, it reduces the amount of greenhouse gasses created by your travel. Plane, train, bus, carpool.
- **At the Hotel:** Many hotels provide a towel and sheet reuse program, it saves energy and water. When checking in, let the front desk know that you would prefer this system and ask if it is a policy at the hotel or by request. Towels on the floor are replaced; those on the rack are left to dry. You can also request that the hotel refrain from using chemical air fresheners and cleaning products in your room.
- **Amenities:** A newspaper is often delivered to your door. Pass along your newspaper to someone else or make sure it's recycled. Take your soap home.
- **Carry a reusable drink container,** for take out coffee or soda and in place of plastic throwaway bottles as a way to reduce waste and conserve resources.
- **Say “no” to Styrofoam.** When purchasing meals during your trip, avoid Styrofoam packaging. Ask restaurants to switch to another container. Styrofoam cannot be recycled, and it never biodegrades.
- **Leaving the room:** Turn off your hotel lights, heat/air and television when you leave the room.
- **Out and about:** Walk or make use of public transportation. Plan to stay at a centrally located hotel when possible.
- **Recycle:** Whether at a conference or out on the town, recycle. If available, recycle your materials in appropriate bins.
- **Upon return:** Make a charitable donation of carbon offsets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions produced by your travel.

# T H E C A M M Y C O A C H

Carpooling was an early ecological step towards reducing traffic congestion and pollution. At CAM, it was decided to offer conference attendees the option of group travel to the conference from the key cities of Los Angeles and San Francisco.

According to the American Bus Association (ABA), motorcoaches are the most fuel-efficient transportation mode in the United States (according to a study released March 20, 2007 by Nathan Associates). The motorcoach industry provided 148.4 passenger miles per gallon of fuel in 2004, the study reported, more than double the second most fuel-efficient sector, inter-city (i.e. Amtrak) trains at 74.1 passenger miles per gallon. Airlines achieved 40.9 passenger miles per gallon, and automobiles achieved 35.4 passenger miles per gallon.

In another study, the ABA reports that motorcoaches cover 32.5 miles per gallon, while passenger automobiles only deliver (on average) 27.7 miles per gallon. In addition, motorcoaches produce carbon emissions of only 56 grams per passenger, compared to 371 grams for a passenger car.

CAM acknowledges inherent biases in any carbon-impact study and based conclusions on a broader research base than presented here. CAM believes motorcoaches to be an eco-friendly way to transport conference delegates.

Eco-friendly as you will read later also includes the chance to relax, slow down, and have a little fun on the CAMMY Coach!

## ECO – TOTE

Our eco-tote is 100% organic cotton and a fair trade product.

We continue to provide the tote because conferences are about information that is collected from sessions, colleagues and exhibitors. By providing an ecologically sound tote bag that provides fair wages and living conditions for those that produce it, we feel we have taken a positive step in providing something useful as well as green.

Note: The eco-tote lists ways we greened the CAM Conference.

It is our hope that you will re-use the tote in your everyday life at work and at home, in place of plastic bags. By using the eco-tote, you will save natural resources, conserve energy and reduce pollution.

**Fair Trade:** Fair trade promotes fair wages, community development, environmental protection and good working conditions.

**Organic Cotton:** Cultivated without pesticides, herbicides or fumigants, organic cotton protects the environment and workers health while cultivating healthy soil for future generations. Cotton is one of the most toxic crops grown (see booklet 1)

# E C O - C A T E R I N G

Our first sustainable cuisine guidelines were created for the conference to give to the chefs and catering staff in order to plan for the conference and event meals:

- Sustainable Cuisine (see list below)
- Real linen, silverware, glasses and dinnerware
- Box Lunches: Brown recycled paper boxes or bags for box lunch, silverware wrapped in linen napkins on tray next to boxes where they can be returned after the meal
- Minimal trash. Recycle trash.
- Water served in pitchers or urns with real glasses
- Coffee/Tea service: real coffee cups, spoons
- Cream and sugar provided in servers *not* pre-packaged individual servings

## *Sustainable Cuisine*

Locally, organic, and/or sustainably grown and raised food

- Fair Trade/Shade Grown Coffee and Tea
- Organic or Biodynamic wine at closing reception.
- Organic sugar, dairy (butter, cream, milk, eggs)
- Organic and/or locally grown salad greens, vegetables, fruits
- Sustainably raised meats: poultry, beef
- Sustainable Seafood per Seafood Watch guide

# S U S T A I N A B L E   C U I S I N E

Our conference meals are becoming more sustainable. A goal for this year's conference was to keep pushing the envelope to attain a completely sustainable meal. We didn't attain the goal completely yet, but we accomplished much of our list.

Being in Fresno offered us the perfect chance to focus on 'locally grown'. Eating Local has come to the forefront in the sustainable food movement as an important tenet that redirects our money and energy to preserve the planet (see more about Eating Local below).

We also served Fair Trade coffee & tea along with organic sugar and cream provided in a bulk serving in real serving pieces: coffee, tea and water urns, real cups & saucers, real spoons and real sugar/creamers. Using real sugar and creamers and serving in bulk not packets, tremendously benefits the environment by reducing waste and conserving resources.

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Thinking Green: Avoiding the individual sugar packet

*Saved by serving in bulk:* Trees in the paper. Oil in the ink. Carbon emissions from producing packets. Energy from production. Coal or Oil used for providing energy. Water used in producing the paper. Dioxins in the river or ocean from producing *white* paper. Health of communities downstream from the dioxin. Lost man hours from illness. Loss of plants and animals from toxins in river. Recreational use of river.

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Event sites were encouraged to use real serving pieces as well but could also use corn plastic plates/cups and recycled napkins if necessary. Throwaways are always easy and seem cheaper, making vegetable based plastic a great alternative. However, the true cost is the significant waste of energy and resources taken to produce them for a very short lifespan. When we can, we choose to go renewable.

And finally, at the closing event we served bio-dynamic organic wine.

# E A T L O C A L

“When the young boy was asked where does your milk come from he answered knowingly: The refrigerator!” – Utne Reader

Be a locavore!

Eat Local asks that we begin to eat foods grown within a 100 mile radius of where we live, putting us more in touch with the source of our food and our community.

Our food choices have a great impact on the planet and our hometowns. Eating local has numerous benefits. For instance, the pine nuts in your salad may be from China or the grapes on that fruit plate may be from Chile, so eating local reduces your ecological footprint on the planet (energy, waste, pollution).

*Note: The average American dinner travels 1500 miles from farm to table –The Leopold Center*

Eating foods grown within 100 miles also supports the local economy, the American family farm and important farmland. Local foods are fresher, tastier, and more nutritious as well.

California is blessed that farms still exist within 100 miles of any given city. Fresh, locally produced foods are obtainable. In fact, Northern California is considered a mecca of sustainable, local, artisanal foods.

And Fresno is in the heartland. Fresno provided us with the opportunity to take ‘eat local’ to heart. The fresh salad ingredients for the CAMMY Luncheon for instance were all locally grown.

*Note: A regional diet consumed 17 times less oil and gas than a typical diet based on food shipped across the country. –State of Iowa study*

Eating local helps us connect more deeply to our communities and to our food sources while conserving energy and cutting back pollution.

Dedication to sustainable practices brings about change by supporting businesses we believe in. Putting our money behind our beliefs changes the world. It is called 'voting with your pocketbook'.

Other useful definitions:

**Locavore:** A person who eats locally grown food. A trend in using locally grown ingredients, taking advantage of seasonally available foodstuffs that can be bought and prepared without the need for extra preservatives –The 2007 Word of the Year/ Oxford American Dictionary

**Sustainable Cuisine:** Food from local growers that strengthens communities, artisanal producers that preserve food traditions, farms that practice sustainable agriculture and aquaculture, humane animal husbandry and managed fisheries. Food producers that practice conservation that nurtures and protects the land in ways that are healthy for the farmer, the chef and buyer. –chef's collaborative

**Pollution:** The presence of a substance in the environment that because of its chemical or biological composition or quantity prevents the functioning of natural processes and produces undesirable environmental and health effects –seaturtle.org

**Bio-dynamic:** a method of organic farming that treats farms as unified and individual organisms, emphasizing balancing the holistic development and interrelationship of the soil, plants, animals as a closed, self-nourishing system. –wikipedia

## A LITTLE 'SLOW'

Today's world encourages us to go fast. However, at the conference we wanted to be conscious of 'slow' moments as well. CAM luncheons for instance provide an opportunity to sit with friends and share ideas along with a good meal. Taking this time to enjoy our food and each other is an important element of sustainability. In fact a whole movement was created around this idea called **Slow Food**.

At the conference, we savor the chance to have the time to pursue knowledge away from our hectic schedules. A conference by nature, it seems, has Slow Food elements in that we gather with colleagues in conversation and conviviality at events and in the hallways.

**Slow Food:** *Slow Food began in Italy and quickly spread to the United States uniting food lovers, environmentalists, chefs and farmers to envision "a future food system that is based on the principles of high quality and taste, environmental sustainability and social justice." Slow food is about "coming together, connecting to the farmer, and at the table." It is about taking the time to slow down and enjoy life with family and friends.*

Consciously, we added The Watercooler this year to provide space in which to relax and connect with colleagues... a space to go 'a little slower'.

# T H E W A T E R C O O L E R

CAM added 'The Watercooler' as an opportunity to be 'a little slow' and offer a place to gather together with friends and colleagues to share ideas, news and challenges.

Although it would have been perhaps more environmentally sound to have the hotel provide urns of water and real glasses, we looked at The Watercooler as a lesson in sustainability.

True ecology, like Slow Food, takes in the whole life. In our case, the whole life of the conference as well as the whole life of museums. What sustains us? Knowledge. Ideas. Good food, friends and sharing stories. Basics.

We brought in a real watercooler for a little bit of theatre which provided us with the opportunity to show off Slow Food principles *and* non-plastic disposable ware opening up the chance to talk here a little more about plastic and water.

Our cups are biodegradable 100% vegetable based plastic and are recyclable. We researched sources and found the monetary cost was similar to plastic cups. Corn plastic cups vs. real cups, much like green print vs. the internet, makes thinking green more complicated.

The plastic not only litters the beach, it is—like fine bits of sand—becoming the beach. —National Geographic

## **THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTIC**

Everyday plastic is made from petroleum, i.e. oil. In thinking about the true cost of something, we can see that plastic comes at a high cost socially and environmentally. So there are consequences that we may not realize hidden in our plastic cup. The unfortunate outcome of our use of plastic bags, bottle, packaging and Styrofoam is that there is a mass of microscopic bits of plastic floating in the ocean the size of Texas. Plastic bits are mistaken by marine animals like sea turtles as food. Eating these bits eventually kills marine life and the oceans.

"Then I'll tell them how people pulled together and made smart changes to clean up our planet. I'll tell them how scientists and engineers figured out how to make the same containers out of materials that turn into soil when we are done using them."

- Wallace J. Nichols PHD.,  
senior scientist at Ocean Conservancy /  
research associate at the California Academy of Sciences.

### ***Solutions to plastic:***

At CAM our goal is to not buy or use disposable plastic or Styrofoam. Corn or vegetable based plastics are becoming more available. This new vegetable based plastic is recyclable and biodegradable, however, most community recycling programs are not set up yet to handle this product. It is still better to buy a product made of corn plastic because it creates a demand for recycling that will eventually keep plastic out of the ocean and the dump, because once corn plastic is recycled it biodegrades back into the soil. However choosing a product that can be re-used is always a better course of action.

## **T H E L A N Y A R D**

2008 introduces the recycled soda pop bottle lanyard! Your name badge lanyard this year supports taking plastic out of the environment. Eventually it is our hope that all plastic will be petroleum free, vegetable based.

# C A R B O N   N E U T R A L

Global warming news is everywhere. Global warming in brief is caused by trapped carbon dioxide in the atmosphere that comes from emissions caused by the human activity of traveling, using electricity, and producing goods.

In planning, the conference CAM looked for ways to minimize carbon emissions at the beginning. The most centrally located Hotel was selected so that attendees could easily walk to cafes, shops and other sights. The Hotel is just blocks away from the Amtrak station and local rapid transit. Fresno also offers pedi-cabs (people powered) for getting around town. Conferences require travel so CAM offered The CAMMY COACH as group transportation to Fresno and provided Amtrak information.

At the end of each conference, we calculate our conference *footprint* and purchase climate credits to offset the conference energy use as well as offsets for shipping and attendee travel.

We continue to research carbon offset credits, to be sure that we aren't supporting the right for big corporations to pollute by buying the credits. At this time, we feel the most sound credits are investments in alternative energy projects.

Note: The GMI booth provided further education on climate change & credits, as well as helped attendees calculate their conference footprint.

***Ecological footprint:*** *An Ecological footprint is a tool that measures our resource consumption and impact on the environment.*

***Climate Credits/Carbon Offsets:*** *Carbon Offsets were developed as a way to support alternative energy projects in order to fight global warming.*

# C A M I N P R I N T

An ongoing debate is taking place at CAM on the GMI committee about whether to print conference programs and the *Greening the Conference* booklet or provide them on-line. Which is most sustainable? "Thinking Green" certainly becomes more complex.

One idea is that everything should be on-line to conserve energy and resources. But do people print the booklet out in their offices? How much energy is used on the computer?

Another idea is that as early adopters, although printing uses energy, we are supporting the growth of green services and products by using a certified green printer and sustainable business and utilizing post-consumer and tree-free paper with vegetable inks. We are helping businesspeople who want to be green create a market for their goods so that large corporations can follow suit and dramatically benefit the environment.

Our debate over print or on-line will continue and we will take a deeper look in the coming year.

Note: All conference programs and flyers were printed by a certified green business on 100% post-consumer waste paper with vegetable inks. The Go Green Session Resource Guide is printed on tree-free 100% post-consumer waste paper.

So what to do about the booklet? This year we decided to use the opportunity to think green and printed a list of green steps we took on the side of the eco-tote, put up Sustainable Notes around the conference and printed the booklet on-line. Will we print a booklet next year?

Maybe. Some of us think there is something to be said for sitting in your favorite place, relaxing and reading a book.

# S U S T A I N A B L E   N O T E S

Sustainable Steps notes were put up around the conference to inform attendees on-site about what was green. The Sustainable Steps notes summarize the detailed steps CAM took to make the Fresno 2008 a Green Conference:

## ***Registration Desk***

- online registration
- recycling badge holders and lanyards for re-use
- programs printed on 100% post-consumer waste paper, with vegetable inks
- tote bags made of 100% organic cotton & Fair Trade produced
- *Greening The Conference: Walking the Talk* booklet on line this year with details printed on tote and Sustainable Steps Cards
- lanyards are 100% post-consumer recycled P.E.T (soda bottle plastics)
- 100% post-consumer waste paper used for all registration receipts, exhibitor confirmations
- registrant/speaker confirmations and reminders sent via email to reduce waste
- Recycled Post-Its conference gift in tote bags

## ***Conference Sessions & Programming***

- post-conference access to speaker presentations online – reduces need for handouts and paper waste at conference
- identification of sessions that address green practices
- list of ways to “green” travel listed in preliminary program and on website
- session evaluations will be small, and available in the back of each room will reduce waste created by handing out evaluation forms to everyone
- post-conference survey/evaluation is conducted online

### ***Exhibit Hall***

CAM encouraged exhibitors to think sustainably:

- for handouts and giveaways, try to use consumables or items made from recycled or reclaimed material
- avoid plastics and one-time-use objects
- use recycled paper printed double-sided, preferably with vegetable ink, and limit paper handouts to the most likely prospects
- please avoid goldenrod, fluorescent, and glossy paper, as these are especially hard to recycle
- use local companies to reduce shipping and packaging impacts
- make every effort to recycle or reuse all packaging and leftover material

### ***Evening Events***

- Sustainable Cuisine Standards provided in advance
- information provided to attendees on the organic, sustainable, and/or local cuisine provided by each host museum
- bio-dynamic, organic wine served at closing reception
- group transportation via bus – reduces emissions from individuals driving cars

### ***Hotel***

- Sustainable Cuisine Standards provided in advance
- recycling provided by the hotel
- real plates, silverware, glasses, and cups provided at meals
- organic chocolate bar table favors at luncheons
- close to Amtrak, airport, and Fresno's rapid transit center

### ***Transportation***

- the CAMMY Coach was offered as group transportation to the conference
- Amtrak information was provided in the pre-conference program and on-line

***CAM Office***

- printer paper is 100% post-consumer waste, processed chlorine-free
- letterhead is 100% post-consumer waste, processed chlorine-free; printed by a Certified Green Business that is 100% wind-powered
- use email notifications for membership renewals – reduces paper waste
- paper is recycled

Think Globally, Act Locally

# GREEN MUSEUMS INITIATIVE

In 2006, CAM took the forward thinking step to develop a Green Museums Initiative.

## **Statement of Purpose**

The Green Museums Initiative will inspire California museums to develop green business practices, eco-friendly facility management, and sustainable programming.

## **Our Values**

As museum professionals we have been entrusted with our cultures' most precious art, artifacts and ideas.

We have been given the duty to preserve, protect and understand the natural and human world. Our roles in education, civic life, family time and social interplay are unparalleled in society. We therefore have the responsibility, the challenge, and the honor to set an example for our colleagues and the public to respect and preserve the most important artifact of all: the natural environment.

To be sensitive to the realities of museum resources, we will value the knowledge, expertise and perspectives of all museum professionals – the true natural capital found within our field. We will also invite the participation and the exchange of ideas with leaders in sustainability in order to provide the most current, scientifically accurate and socially just information available.

If we succeed in our goals, there will no longer be a need for a Green Museums Initiative; museums of the future will be sustainable.

## WHAT IS ON YOUR MIND? FEEDBACK

Going green is becoming a tidal wave of action around the world. For museums, the number of institutions that are building green has increased dramatically including those seeking high LEED ratings.

Our *new* Green Museums Initiative website will initially feature essays by 'green' experts, 'how-to' information designed for basic and advanced levels of engagement and 10 Tips on a variety of green topics.

Part of the website will be devoted to *sustainable stories: the greening of museums*. We want to hear from you! What is your museum doing to be green, what has been accomplished, or what you are contemplating? We especially want to hear about your challenges.

Help us create an extraordinary resource and provide you with the information you need for the everyday work of greening the museum.

Contact us at: [GMI@calmuseums.org](mailto:GMI@calmuseums.org)

'Wherever we are, we can make a contribution.  
Just imagine the power of what we can do!'

-Wangari Maathai,  
Nobel Peace Prize 2004

## A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

We would like to thank our sponsors for making the important work of greening California's diverse museums possible. Sustainability includes strong supportive partnerships and we are pleased and grateful for the support of our Green Leader Sponsors:

Bon Appétit Management Co.  
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3M  
[www.3m.com](http://www.3m.com)

Atthowe Fine Arts Services  
[www.atthowe.com](http://www.atthowe.com)

Bonterra Vineyards  
[www.bonterra.com](http://www.bonterra.com)

Downey Museum of Art  
[www.thedmoa.org](http://www.thedmoa.org)

Newman's Own Organics  
[www.newmansownorganics.com](http://www.newmansownorganics.com)

Whole Foods  
[www.wholefoodsmarket.com](http://www.wholefoodsmarket.com)

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## *GREEN MUSEUMS INITIATIVE COMMITTEE*

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