

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



Solid Waste District of  
LaPorte County

(219) 326-0014  
(800) 483-7700

www.solidwastedistrict.com

Summer 2008



# Is it a boy? Is it a girl?: Birth in the Mulch

## New Arrivals at District Compost Facility in Westville

Our Solid Waste District Compost Facility Project Coordinator, Joe Jokantas, recently reported that for the second year, a Canadian goose built her nest on top of a 10-foot pile of mulch.

In mid-March, Coordinator Jokantas noticed the long black neck of Mama Goose extending from the top of a pile of mulch. Joe wasn't sure if it was the same goose returning for her second year of nesting or a different one. He made a quick call to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. Joe was told that as long as the nest was not bothered, the eggs would hatch and Mama Goose would take her little guys away when they were ready.

Just imagine the noise that poor goose-lady had to endure throughout the day! Joe reported that even when all machines were running, Mama Goose never left her nest.

Business went on as usual, but the workers were careful to stay away from the nesting area in the mulch. Because there are so many mulch piles, the workers never had to go near the goose nursery.

Joe reported that one day in late April, he saw two large geese and five little babies walking the grounds. The adult geese and their goslings were never approached, but their presence was always monitored while work went on as usual.

Joe relayed the "Mother Goose Tale" to many folks who came out to the site to purchase mulch and compost. Everyone



was interested and hoped to catch a glimpse of the new family!

Of course, the ladies here in our office had to name the baby goslings. Not knowing goose gender, we came up with Zeb, Zack, Hector, Wydia, and Woody. We did not, however, inform the geese, so the names were never confirmed by the goose parents.

Your Solid Waste District is mindful

of every creature on the earth. We believe that all forms of environmental friendliness are necessary in reaching our goals. In watching and protecting the little goose family, Coordinator Jokantas and his crew prove, once again, that we do care!

Joe has informed us that yet another goose has been checking out the old nest, so perhaps he may have another family moving into Mulch Manor.

## Turner Talks Trash

from the Executive Director's Desk



Earth Day has come and gone. We hope you had the opportunity to pick up some of our flower seed packets and are now seeing the plants grow. We have had a busy time since the last issue. We are now halfway through our special collections, and we hope you have found them helpful during your spring cleaning.

If you didn't get things done in the spring, you can still utilize our special programs to help rid your home of unwanted items. Just turn to the back page or check our website, [www.solidwastedistrict.com](http://www.solidwastedistrict.com), for times and dates. Don't put off that cleaning too long, as some of our special programs end in October.

We are proud that our programs help rid many areas of dangerous roadside dumping. Believe me when I say how hard those cleaning tasks can be, as I have done them myself. As you clean, remember that unwanted items can always go to resale shops, church-sponsored thrift stores, etc.

Think before you throw! Just remember those words. Often we are all too quick to rid our spaces of things we might be able to use. Empty baby food jars are great in a recycling bin, but they are also good to reuse as containers to hold small screws and nails. They are handy and have lids.

Yogurt cups make great containers for plant starts and can be reused or recycled when you have used them once. Buy a \$2 blender at a garage sale and make your own vermiculite by grinding up old Styrofoam cups. Mixed with your potting soil and compost, it helps aerate your soil and holds moisture to save water.

Wow...I do ramble on. Get out there and enjoy your summer in one of LaPorte County's great zoos, parks, waterfronts, or other attractions. Remember to recycle when you are there. Never leave a mess to spoil the natural beauty of what we have.

Until next time—enjoy summer!

Clay

## District educators receive high praise

The first week of May had Education Coordinator Nancy Gibson and her education assistants really scurrying. Our friends at the Soil and Water District once again asked the Solid Waste District to participate in the Field Days at Luhr Park. Of course, the answer was a resounding YES!

During the Field Days, 35 classes of 5th grade students (780 registered students in all!) from schools around the county participated in educational events offered by several groups.

The children were bright and eager

to learn about making seedling/start pots from common newspaper and then taking them home in time for Mother's Day. Plus, they received additional information about recycling, composting, and Household Hazardous Waste from our in-house experts.

We'd like to share some of the written comments received from teachers and assistants after the event:

- Ms. Munoz of Mullen School, Michigan City: "We love the idea of planting and having something to

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**Have your recycling bin at the curb, where it is clearly visible to the driver, by 6 a.m. Trouble getting up that early? Set it out the night before!**

The FREE recycling bin provided to you by the District is the driver's marker to stop and pick up recycling at your curb. If you have more recyclables than will fit into your bin, you may use additional plastic containers (30-gallon maximum) with RECYCLING clearly marked on the side or front (we offer free stickers for your extra bins).

Remember—NO RED/BLUE BIN, NO PICKUP! So, fill your FREE recycling bin first and be sure to set all of your recycling at the curb on your recycling day! Please remember, containers on wheels are too heavy for the driver to empty. Be considerate!

### Something to think about:

Throwing away a single aluminum can versus recycling it is like pouring out six ounces of gasoline. Last year, Americans recycled enough aluminum cans to conserve the energy equivalent of more than 15 million barrels of oil.





*True or False: One of the problems with recycling waste is that it costs more than putting it in a landfill.*

False: An equal amount of trash costs approximately \$30 to recycle, \$50 to put in a landfill, and \$70 to incinerate.



*The junk mail that Americans receive in one day could produce enough energy to heat how many homes?*

250,000 homes



*True or False: Everything on earth is biodegradable.*

True: Everything will biodegrade eventually, even plutonium, if you wait a few million years.

*What event in 1990 was celebrated worldwide by 200 million people?*

Earth Day



*In which room of your house is 75% of the water used?*

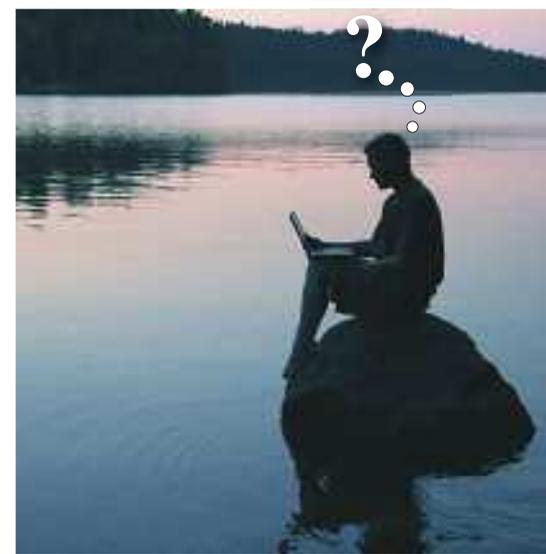
The bathroom



*The United States established its first wildlife refuge in which year:*

A. 1831 B. 1903 C. 1932

B. 1903 — Pelican Island, Florida was set up to protect the brown pelican.



The second Tire and White Goods Recycling Collection of 2008 will be held on Saturday, October 18. Mark your calendar now! Residents will be able to drop off tires and white goods (large appliances) for recycling on Saturday, October 18 at the LaPorte County Fairgrounds from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Gates close at 2 p.m. and rules are strictly enforced.

This drop-off event is for residents ONLY. No businesses or industries may drop off items.

To help offset the costs of recycling these items, some fees will apply. For details about the fees, please visit our website, [www.solidwastedistrict.com](http://www.solidwastedistrict.com), or call our office at 1-800-483-7700 or 219-326-0014.



**We want your suggestions, questions and comments!**

We are also available to speak to your club or organization about solid waste, waste reduction, recycling and composting.

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 70% POST-CONSUMER NEWS CONTENT, USING SOY INKS

## Which refillable bottles are better?

You can reuse #1 PET or #2 HDPE bottles, as long as you remember to wash them thoroughly with hot, soapy water to remove any germs and bacteria from their previous use. You can also purchase sturdy, reusable stainless steel or HDPE (high density polyethylene) plastic water bottles. If you can't find HDPE bottles, low density polyethylene (LDPE #4) and polypropylene (PP #5) are also safe choices. Remember the old thermos? That's a great option, too. Plus, it keeps your cold drink cold!

If you opt for the brightly colored, clear plastic bottles, be sure to look for "non-BPA" or "no BPA" on the label. This will ensure that the container was made without Bisphenol-A, a chemical that may be linked to many different kinds of health problems with long-term use.



## Safely dispose of your household hazardous chemicals

The Lake Michigan Districts Household Hazardous Waste Mobile Collection Program accepts lawn and garden chemicals, automotive fluids, oil-based paint and related products, and mercury-containing items, such as fluorescent tubes and bulbs and thermostats, for proper disposal.

Here in LaPorte County, our remaining collections will be held as follows:

- Friday, July 18, 1 to 6 p.m., Michigan City, Kabelin Ace Hardware, Marquette Mall
- Saturday, August 2, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Michigan City, Kabelin Ace Hardware, Marquette Mall
- Saturday, September 27, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., LaPorte County Fair Grounds, 2581 W. State Road 2, LaPorte



- Saturday, October 25, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., LaPorte County Fair Grounds, 2581 W. State Road 2, LaPorte  
 For more information, call 219-326-1425 or 1-800-483-7700. Or, visit our website, [www.solidwastedistrict.com](http://www.solidwastedistrict.com), and click on "Household Hazardous Waste."

### District educators...

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take home for Mother's Day. Also, blue jean pencils...how cool!"

- Mrs. Babia, Prairie View Intermediate School: "Great information...fun activity...well done."
- Dan Howard, Edgewood School: "It is so important for children to hear about recycling [and reuse] outside the school environment. We talk about it quite often..."
- Nancy Hansen, Edgewood School: "Always love this station!"
- Thomas Lasky, Edgewood School: "Great information that students didn't know. The hands-on project was great!"
- Mrs. Kathy Leliter, Crichfield School: "Very well done - lots of good information for kids to think about"
- Pam Jones, Joy Elementary School: "You balance the lecture part with the kids' project well. It's obvious you're all kid-lovers!"
- Ms. Jean Ewing, Joy School: "'Make it, take it' is always a hit! Hands on is always the best!"
- Mrs. Mack, Crichfield School: "This has been a favorite station each year! Parents also enjoy learning about the local recycling. Thank you!"
- Gracie Romine, St. Paul School, Michigan City: "Your presentation is very well done. The students learned a lot. I can't think of anything to improve on."
- Jamie Cipares, South Central Elementary: "We found the program very interesting, and we enjoyed the hands-on activity. Thanks!"
- Mark McBride, Olive Elementary: "This activity is always one of the most informative and fun. It shows the students how to make newspaper pots and motivates them."
- Tim Marler, Wanatah School: "We enjoy this station very much. The presenters are caring and helpful."
- Bill Bennett, South Central: "Great session. I am really glad you shared with the kids."
- John Slater, Rolling Prairie Elementary: "Great program!"
- Sarah Huff, Rolling Prairie: "Fantastic!"
- Brenda Moffit, Olive Township School: "I like the pots you have the students make and have shared this technique with my neighbor! Thanks!"
- Kelly Jarka, Rolling Prairie Elementary: "Thank you for the flower! I like that this station is hands-on and that there are plenty of helpers. Great job!!"