

# Going Green: Global and local measures designed to save the Earth

By Garik Niffenegger

Millions of homes and businesses around the world turned off their lights and celebrated one of the largest global movements in history on Mar. 29, 2008.

Earth hour began in 2007 in the city of Sydney, Australia. By

turning out the lights for just one hour in an entire city, it greatly decreased the amount of coal that is used for that hour.

The use of coal fired electricity is the greatest contributor to global warming.

This year, Earth hour was par-

ticipated in by many people around the world and in major U.S. cities such as Chicago, Atlanta, and San Francisco.

Earth hour is not only a statement about energy conservation, but it shows the entire world's ability to unite for one common cause,

preserving it.

"It's a great thing to be able to see consumers unite like that," said Elliot Hoffeditz, ACHS science teacher.

Swing State, a Lake County Hoo-kah bar and lounge, participated in Earth Hour this year, even during a

band's performance.

Owner Ian Meyer explained that while Swing State has its wasteful flaws, it still promotes environmental awareness.

"The world really sends a message to corporations by standing up like that and uniting," said Meyer.

The World Wildlife Fund is largely responsible for raising awareness about Earth Hour and making the global movement that it has become. Their goal is to make people aware of simple things that they can do to decrease their own emissions.

By turning off lights and household appliances, households and individuals can greatly decrease coal emissions, according the Earth Hour's official website. The WWF's goal for this year is to decrease annual emissions by 5%.

"It feels really good to be a part

of something that is so big when it's happening," said Anthony Alaniz, Antioch resident and ACHS graduate, who participated in Earth hour.

"I was happy to be able to participate and make a difference," said Alaniz, "I hope next year even more people will participate."

## Global Observance Fair at ACHS

By Julie Fine

The global observance most people are familiar with is held on April 22<sup>nd</sup> of every year. Earth day, founded by Gaylord Nelson, has been held since 1970.

Earth day has its own organizations, board members, and flags.

Most schools use this day as an opportunity to teach students about taking care of the environment that surrounds them.

Antioch Community High School (ACHS) also gets into the spirit of the holiday.

For more than ten years, ACHS has filled the school with exhibits, animals, employees from

different preserves, and more.

"Exhibitors come from a variety of areas. Some are local wildlife advocates. For example, Orphans of the Storm sometimes comes with animals in need of adoption," said Stephen Rose, Social Studies teacher and Environmental Club co-sponsor at ACHS. "We also had Lake County Forest Preserve come with tree saplings that could be planted at home." They also have U.S. dogs that bring greyhounds that cannot race anymore. This way the students can see that many animals need to be rescued.

With all this education on Earth Day packed into one day,

who comes to learn about it all?

"As for visitors, we typically have some elementary students visit and learn about the Earth.

Also, Advisories like to come visit, as it gives our freshman class a chance to be exposed to Environmentalism," said Rose. "Other students like to come during their lunch periods to see the animals and learn more about the environment as well. [ACHS] faculty enjoys this, too! All are welcome to attend."

MaryEllen Johnson, Science teacher and sponsor of the Environmental Club at ACHS has been in charge of Earth Day at ACHS for ten years.

"It started small, with only four exhibits in the gym foyer, and it has grown to 20 in the auxiliary gym," said Johnson. "We used to have a ceremony in the auditorium, with a guest speaker, and cake afterwards. The kids wanted more of a fair environment, so that's what we established."

Students ranging in all ages enjoyed the event. It was held in the auxiliary gym at ACHS, during fourth, fifth, and sixth periods.

Sarah Schwarz, sophomore at ACHS said "I went last year, and I really had a blast. This year was a lot of fun too; I really learned a lot that I didn't know."

## So, how can I Help?

- Letting sunlight in through windows facing the sun helps keep your home warm and reduces heating needs. At night or when the sky is overcast, keeping drapes closed will help keep the warmth indoors.
- Fans can make your air conditioner's job easier while saving you money. Pedestal and ceiling fans improve the air circulation in your home, allowing you to raise the air conditioner's thermostat. Ceiling fans use only about one tenth the electricity of a typical home air conditioner.
- Like other appliances that heat and cool, refrigerators are big energy users. If your refrigerator door does not shut tightly, check the door seal to see if it needs to be cleaned or replaced. A door leak allows cool air to escape, forcing your refrigerator to use more energy to keep food cold.
- If you have more than one load of clothes to dry, do each load immediately after the one before to use the heat left over from the previous cycle and increase the efficiency of the dryer.
- Drying heavy and light fabrics separately will also keep drying time to a minimum. Mixing different weight fabrics causes the dryer to run longer than necessary.
- Washing dishes by hand may not save energy or money. In fact, you can probably save energy using the dishwasher since hand-washing usually requires more hot water.
- A microwave oven is an energy efficient alternative to a conventional oven. It cooks food more quickly and it uses 70-80% less electricity than a regular oven.
- If you do use a conventional oven, try to avoid "peeking" by opening the oven door. Each "peek" can lower the oven temperature by 25 degrees. Use a toaster oven to cook small items.
- Although often recommended, it's not really necessary to preheat the oven for foods with a cooking time of over one hour. Using glass pans allows you to set the oven 25 degrees lower because glass retains heat.
- When preparing a meal in your oven, try to use foods that are cooked at about the same temperature. That way your oven can cook several dishes at the same time.
- A lot of energy can be saved by matching as closely as possible light bulb wattage to lighting needs. For example, a high wattage reading light in a hallway or alcove is not energy efficient.
- Lighting controls or "timers" can help save energy dollars, too. Timers can be set to turn lights on or off at predetermined times while photocell controls are sensitive to light and turn lamps on and off at sundown and sunrise. Dimmers can vary the level of illumination according to how much light you may want in a given situation.
- Keeping lights and fixtures clean can improve efficiency as much as 20%. Take advantage of reflected light by keeping portable fixtures as close as possible to light colored walls or other surfaces. These easy steps may reduce the number and wattage of bulbs you need and help you save on your energy bills.

