



## Welcome!

to the second issue of our newsletter, aimed at serving the Texas business community as a forum for promoting sustainable practices in all aspects of how we do business. We are providing a networking community to share ideas, promote best practices and to develop a rewarding business community for all participants.

# NEWSLETTER

## NEXT MEETING

### To Be Announced

TGN is preparing for a June meeting, time and place to be announced. We want to provide the same level of steam that April enjoyed and we are preparing now for an announcement soon.

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## Volunteers Needed

The Texas Green Network is seeking individuals to get involved and help us grow our community. We will be having a small meeting soon for people that would like to get active. Please email [reed@texasgreennetwork.org](mailto:reed@texasgreennetwork.org) if you would like to get involved. We will then invite you to the discussion. There are a variety of areas to help.

## Local Chapters

We are also seeking leaders in other areas of Texas to develop local chapters of the Texas Green Network. If you or someone you know is outside of the Austin area and possibly interested in a leadership role, please contact Reed at [reed@texasgreennetwork.org](mailto:reed@texasgreennetwork.org).

## Latest TGN Activists

The Texas Green Network is pleased to announce that *Amanda Ogden*, *Sheryl Petiton* and *Lindsay Yeakley* will be helping form the Texas Green Network membership committee. They will join *Steve Harvey* in developing our membership process and rolling it out. Steve, Amanda, Sheryl and Lindsay bring a variety of backgrounds and a culture of objectivity to building our network and membership.

## Texas Green Network on the Radio

Reed Sternberg & Steve Harvey from the Texas Green Network will join host Kevin Hagedorn and the Real Estate Resource Show on **Sunday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 3pm-4pm at Talk Radio 1370am**. Please call in and join the discussion! Join Kevin every Sunday for live, green, Austin radio.

### Real Estate Resource Show

Sunday - Sunday - Sunday

3 to 4 pm

Talk Radio 1370am

Host: Kevin Hagedorn

Please visit [www.realestateresourceaustin.com](http://www.realestateresourceaustin.com)

### ABOUT the TEXAS GREEN NETWORK:

The Texas Green Network is a business-to-business chamber of commerce centered around environmental initiatives and responsibility rather than geography.

Our goal is to accelerate the spread of environmental responsibility in mainstream business practices and thought processes. We recognize that part of bringing "green" business practices to the mainstream is the melding of the concepts of environmental impact and business profitability.

The network brings together Texas-based businesses, providing a forum for sharing best eco-business practices. We seek to reward participation and leadership in a grassroots way, fostering a community of businesses and networking opportunities for our members and associates.



## CALENDAR

### **Sarah Rowland Benefit**

*Thursday, May 29, 7 p.m. Barr Mansion Ballroom 10463 Sprinkle Road*

In early May 2008, local organic farming pioneer Sarah Rowland of Hairston Creek Farm was diagnosed with aggressive breast cancer. In an attempt to ease the financial burden of both Sarah's treatment and the reduced time that can be devoted to their farming business, friends and neighbors have planned a benefit. It will feature outstanding local food and beverages showcasing produce and products from local farms. There will also be a silent auction featuring chef's dinners, gift certificates from area restaurants, products from local food and craft artisans and more.

The minimum suggested donation is \$20 at the door. If you cannot attend the event, but would like to make a donation, go to <http://austinfarm.org/rowland> and make a contribution through Paypal, or mail checks to: Hairston Creek Farm, 4300 Co Road 335, Burnet, Texas 78611.

<http://austinfarm.org/rowland>  
<http://www.edibleaustin.com>  
 512-441-3971

### **Lady Bird Lake Fest**

*May 30, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m. Fiesta Gardens Lagoon 2101 Bergman Ave.*

Bill Oliver's Lady Bird Lake Fest is a kid- and family-friendly arts festival and eco-fair. Experience arts and nature at this highly interactive event with a focus on the ecology of the Colorado River.

The Lady Bird Lake Fest will feature music by Bill Oliver and the Otter Space Band, puppet theater by the Purple Palace Puppets, and songs and stories with Sue Young. Boaters are urged to paddle out and enjoy the festival from the water. Volunteers are welcome and admission is free.

Bill Oliver  
 512-350-4110 [mrhabitat@aol.com](mailto:mrhabitat@aol.com)/350-4110.

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### **World Wellness Weekend: A Health, Wellness & Sustainable Living Festival** *May 30 to June 1, Austin Convention Center*

WWW '08 features Michael Franti in a very special acoustic performance, Marianne Williamson, a Wellness Expo with 150 cutting edge exhibitors, an Eco-Fashion Show, Body Choir, music, classes and more.

Our Eco-Partners, ChicoBag and Klean Kanteen will help Keep Austin Beautiful by promoting re-usable shopping bags and water bottles.

ChicoBag [www.chicobag.com](http://www.chicobag.com) will give away 500 of their unique shopping bags, which fit in the purse or pocket.

Klean Kanteen [www.kleankanteen.com](http://www.kleankanteen.com) will provide FREE purified water so attendees can re-use their water bottles.

The opening celebration will feature bestselling fitness author, Bill Phillips and music from Afrofreque. Other speakers and artists over the weekend include Papa Mali relationship guru John Gray, Austin's own Joe Vitale and Ed Mercer, who will speak about his sustainable development in Costa Rica.

For complete information, an event schedule and to purchase tickets visit

[www.worldwellness.org](http://www.worldwellness.org). Volunteers are needed and can earn a weekend pass by working 8-10 hours.  
[www.worldwellness.org/volunteer](http://www.worldwellness.org/volunteer).

### **Zhi Tea: Organic green tea tasting**

*Saturday, June 7th 1-3pm, 4607 Bolm Rd, \$5.00.*

Join Zhi Tea for their monthly tea tasting at their new location in East Austin. Sample some of the world's finest organic and Fair Trade green teas from Sri Lanka, Japan, China, and India and share in tea knowledge and health benefits with the founders of Zhi.



## Annual Night Crawler Clean Up for National Trails Day

*Friday, June 6, 8:00 to 11:00 p.m. at Duncan Park in Austin.*

Outdoor enthusiasts of all ages will celebrate trails nationwide as part of the American Hiking Society's National Trails Day. To commemorate the day, the Austin Parks Foundation and REI Austin are seeking volunteers to participate in a trail maintenance project. Volunteers will clear out a mountain of dirt on the section of the Shoal Creek Greenbelt near Duncan Park and the Lamar St. Bridge. Participants are encouraged to wear sturdy shoes or boots, a headlamp and work gloves and to bring waders (if you have them). Bring your own refillable water bottle. Tools, REI Tech Tees, and Amy's Ice Cream will be provided for all volunteers. Kids ages 5 and up are invited to join us at Duncan Park for a kid-friendly Leave No Trace Program.

*To volunteer, please sign up at:*

<http://austinparks.org/volunteer.php>. For information about this, or other outdoor, environmental volunteer opportunities, please visit the Austin Parks Foundation's main web page [austinparks.org](http://austinparks.org), (or visit the Austin REI store's event pages online: <http://www.rei.com/>). (512) 482-3357

*Duncan Park is located on the north side of 9th St. and just off of the Shoal Creek Greenbelt (900 N. 9th St., Austin, 78703)*

## Lunch and Learn series: Green Energy Marketing

*Wednesday, June 11, noon to 1 p.m.*

Spoonbend, KAS Consulting and SpryDev will present "Green Energy Marketing" as part of their Lunch and Learn series, which includes a free lunch for those working with emerging green energy technology companies. This event will give green energy leaders in Austin a chance to meet and hear how to leverage branding, marketing, and web technologies to attract green energy investors.

Visit [www.greenenergymarketing.com](http://www.greenenergymarketing.com) for more information or to sign up. For more information about Spoonbend, a design and marketing firm, visit [www.spoonbend.com](http://www.spoonbend.com)

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## News & Announcements

### Kaleidoscope Village receives site plan and building approval

On March 18, Central Austin Cohousing received site plan approval (which includes zoning and subdivision) for the Kaleidoscope Village cohousing community four miles northeast of downtown Austin. On April 4 building approval was granted.

Twenty-six of the 37 units are reserved and the remaining units will not be available for reservation for several more months. Prospective buyers will go through an orientation process to help them make an informed decision about whether they're a good fit

for cohousing. The developers will only accept offers from those who have gone through orientation. Cohousing balances privacy and community in a functional and sustainable way. Cohousing typically consists of 12-48 clustered homes whose residents own individual dwellings but share many common facilities. A "common house" typically provides facilities for group dining, workshops, recreation facilities, childcare and other activities.

For more information, please visit <http://austincohousing.org/calendar.html>  
Selwyn Polit  
Computer Consulting, programming, web sites  
512-696-0410  
[www.AustinProgressiveCalendar.com](http://www.AustinProgressiveCalendar.com)

### Carsharing for Your Business

Austin CarShare offers the convenience of a corporate fleet without the cost of purchasing or the hassle of personal reimbursement. Plus, Austin CarShare's reservation system allows you to track usage by job codes for easy client billing.

For more information, visit <http://www.austincarshare.org>



## Adopt a Cap-Metro Stop

You or your organization can adopt one of the stops along Cap Metro's bus lines. In exchange for helping keep your stop tidy, Cap Metro will let you spruce it up (Keep Austin Beautiful will even provide landscaping tools) to reflect the personality of your neighborhood.

Call 512-369-7759 or email [alissa.schram@capmetro.org](mailto:alissa.schram@capmetro.org) for more information

## Certified Wood from Austin Lumber Company

Austin Lumber Company has announced that it now offers Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Chain of Custody Certified Wood. This international tracking certification assures that wood is tracked back to FSC-certified sources. Austin Lumber also carries Bonded Logic Ultra Touch Cotton Fiber Insulation and Green E-Board to replace gypsum.

Visit Austin Lumber Company on the web at [www.austinlumbercompany.com](http://www.austinlumbercompany.com)

## Green Builders Opens New Homes in Elm Grove

Green Builders recently opened four new eco-furnished model homes in its latest community, Elm Grove. These homes are true to the craftsman style, with box beams, open cornices, exposed rafters and trim details blended with modern green technology.

Green Builders uses Icynene foam insulation in all of their homes. Foam insulation seals better than traditional "pink" fiberglass insulation, so it costs less money to heat and cool the home. It also reduces humidity and lessens the possibility of mold, pollens and other allergens. Elm Grove, a 90-acre community that backs up to the Garlic Creek Greenbelt, is located at the corner of FM 967 and 1626 just south of Austin in Buda. More than 15 acres are dedicated to open space, with many homesites having views of the greenbelt from their backyard. Children can walk to Elm Grove Elementary, part of the Hays Consolidated Independent School District.

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## Green Collar Training:

### East Austin Solar

Austin – The Green Collar Workforce Bill recently passed in Congress has received a lot of attention around the country. In Austin, the concept is nothing new.

American YouthWorks has been doing Green Collar training since 1996. Recent projects include their Casa Verde Builder's low-cost green homes on the East Side and trail building and habitat restoration in the green belts and all over Texas.

During SXSW, Ed Eaton from the International School of Solar Energy gathered 27 students from around the globe to install eight photo-voltaic panels on a new Casa Verde Builders home in East Austin. The array generates 3,000 watts per hour in full sun.

The array generates 3,000 watts per hour in full sun. That means the low-income family who buys the home will save 62% on utilities. On sunny days, the new owners will be selling power back to Austin. Effie Brunson of Austin's Rays of Hope crafted the partnership between Eaton's group and American YouthWorks. Rays of Hope funded the equipment. American YouthWorks' Casa Verde Builders built the affordable, energy efficient home. David Martin of Martin/Ayers Development joined the Solar Installation Class. Martin recently broke ground in Austin for 20 solar powered homes selling in the mid 250's. Martin's new start-up, Solar Solution Systems, will offer apprenticeships to Casa Verde Builders graduates. Like Martin, Brandon Mathis of the Solar Community Network is very interested in the Casa Verde Builders program. He alludes to a "talent war" among eco-friendly builders for workers who know home-building from the ground up, know how to handle Earth-friendly materials and have the kind of interpersonal skills that build sustainable communities.



## **SHARE 350.0: a plan for regional sustainability**

Join 349 of your neighbors to help create a sustainable. Austin SHARE 350.0 is a web-based personal profile with easy forms to check off actions in different categories of sustainable behavior. Cumulative data of the group's actions will be recorded in order to see the results of many acting together.

The second component of the program is a monthly event with food, music, a short educational program and the chance to meet your neighbors in person, discuss progress and invent new sustainable projects. *Learn more at <http://www.share350.com/>*

## **Solar Power for Manor's New Tech High School**

On May 9, Manor New Tech High School celebrated the commissioning of a new 1.5-kilowatt solar electric system. Meridian Energy Systems designed and installed the system, which sits atop the new school's marquee.



Manor New Tech is one of 15 Texas Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (T-STEM) academies opening this year. Instructors use "Project Based Learning" —such as studying actual power production data from the photovoltaic system—to teach skills relevant to students, with the goal of preparing them for college and work in mathematics, science and technology.

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The PV array employs eight Sanyo 190 Watt "bi-facial" or "double" modules. Bi-facial modules have glass fronts and backs and the unique characteristic of harvesting energy from both faces. Meridian recommended these modules so that students and passers-by would notice the PV array from the street. The modules are mounted on a custom top-of-pole rack above the high school's marquee.

The PV system also includes a Fat Spaniel datalogger with a weather station. Students can download data daily in spreadsheet format from the photovoltaic system and weather station for use in science and math projects. Flash Animated View allows the same information to be displayed in the school's lobby or on its web site.

The project received financial support from Applied Materials, who is also a donor to the Manor Independent School District.

*For more information on Meridian Energy Systems, please visit [www.meridiansolar.com](http://www.meridiansolar.com)*

## **Real Estate Resource offers web site and weekly radio show**

Whether you are trying to reduce your carbon footprint or just want to save money, the Go Green section of the Real Estate Resource is designed to be a valuable resource.

For additional information, tune in to the The Real Estate Resource Radio Show Sundays 3-4pm on Talk Radio 1370am. The show features a Go Green Tip of the Week

*For more information, go to <http://realestateresourceaustin.com/green>*



## Features

### Guest Editorial: Upgrade homes at the point of sale

By Chris Lehman

Recent studies, including one which addressed the energy needs of North Carolina in 2030, suggest that upgrading old buildings is the key to meeting future energy requirements. In fact, upgrading old homes to meet modern energy efficiency standards is much more cost effective than any increasing energy capacity, according to the studies.

While upgrading existing homes and buildings may be easier said than done, I am confident that the smart people in Austin real estate, construction, energy utilities and government can make it happen.

We have a real chance of success because upgrading homes will contribute to our region's economic growth. Solar installation companies in Austin can't hire employees fast enough to keep up with demand. This will also be the case for energy efficiency specialists when the city requires these crucial upgrades.

One year ago, the Austin City Council announced the Austin Climate Protection Plan. The Homes and Buildings part of the plan addresses new construction and existing housing and buildings. It sets an excellent standard for all new single-family homes to be zero net-energy capable by 2015 and it sets the target for increasing energy efficiency by 75% in all other new construction by 2015.

The Austin Board of Realtors opposed the plan's proposal for existing homes and buildings. The Austin Climate Protection Plan requires disclosure of historic energy use and the facilitation of energy efficiency improvements at the point of sale of existing houses and buildings. Realtors took a strong line against the point-of-sale provisions even before those measures had been defined. Their concerns include the cost and delays associated with upgrades.

Many realtors see point-of-sale improvements for energy efficiency as a positive move for sellers and buyers. Costs are financed with the mortgage at the best possible interest rate and are offset by reduced utility bills for the buyer.

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Energy-efficient homes and buildings are better homes and buildings. They cost less to operate and save the buyer money in the long run with varying terms of payback – some in as little as two years. The impact of upgrading existing housing and buildings in Austin will reduce costs to the owner and boost Austin's clean-tech economic growth.

The City of Austin charged its Point-of-Sale Task Force with determining the most cost effective measures. A mandatory energy audit and historical energy-use disclosure are obvious choices. They start at \$150.

Other cost effective energy efficiency upgrades include: managing air infiltration through leaky baseboards and windows; sealing duct work; adding

insulation to attics; and installing programmable thermostats. Costs not covered by rebates for more expensive items can be rolled into mortgages through an energy efficiency rider. These items may include solar water heaters, photovoltaic panels, rainwater collection (saves water and electricity used for treatment and pumping) and solar screens.

Banks could serve a whole new market clamoring for these upgrades without provisions even being put in place yet. For Austinites who might otherwise not be able to afford it, HUD has helped home buyers with community block grants administered by the Austin Housing Finance Corporation and should continue to provide affordable housing rated by Austin Energy's Green Builder Program.

We hope the Point-of-Sale Task Force will address the most important provision in the Austin Climate Protection Plan – improving existing homes and buildings by making them energy efficient. The public wants it. Our economy and environment require it.

*Chris Lehman is a realtor and Chair of Austin Sierra Club*



## Big home builders could be greener, study finds

By [BOB KEEFE](#)  
Cox News Service

Americans may be trying to live greener these days, but none of the nation's biggest home builders has fully embraced sustainable design or construction, according to a recent study.

Every major home builder offers

some environmental and efficiency programs with at least some of their new homes, according to the study by investment company Calvert Group and the Boston College Institute for Responsible Investment.

However, "the largest publicly traded home builders are waiting for someone else to take the lead," said David Wood, director of the Boston College institute.

Among the nation's 13 biggest home builders, the study ranked Atlanta-based Beazer Homes No. 7 for attention to environmentally sustainable design and construction. Miami-based Lennar Corp. is No. 5, while D.R. Horton Inc. of Fort Worth, Texas is tied with Michigan builder Pulte Homes Inc. for the No. 2 spot. Dallas-based Centex Corp. ranked No. 4.

The greenest builder in the country is Los Angeles-based KB Home, according to the study. KB Home ranked high partly because of its "myEarth" design program, which lets buyers choose environmental design elements; for offering only energy-efficient appliances, and for its use of alternative building materials.

Still, the study's authors said, KB Home and all big builders have a long way to go toward improving their environmental efforts.

They said builders could have a major impact in helping reduce greenhouse gases and address other environmental problems.

According to the study, houses account for 21 percent of

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[newsletter@texasgreennetwork.org](mailto:newsletter@texasgreennetwork.org)

the nation's energy use, 33 percent of timber use and 45 percent of all new land development. They consume nearly 11 percent of the nation's fresh water.

Like Calvert Group, many big investors have begun to consider environmental issues and sustainability more closely when they look for places to invest their money. At the same time, consumers are paying more attention to their homes' energy costs.

"I think it's hard to imagine a scenario where energy prices don't rise in the future," said Stu Dalheim, director of shareholder advocacy for Calvert Group. "That will be increasingly reflected in consumer interest in more efficient homes."

Led by small niche home builders, the green building industry is growing by as much as 30 percent a year despite the slump in the overall housing market. Surveys show that homeowners are willing to pay a premium of \$18,500 on average for greener and cleaner homes, according to the study.

Wood, the Boston College researcher, said one of the reasons builders didn't pay more attention to environmental issues before was because the housing market was so hot that they didn't need — or have time — to do so.

Now that the housing business has gone cold, that may change, he said.

"In the short to intermediate term, green building may be one of the few bright spots in an otherwise extremely bleak landscape," Wood said.

[bkeefe@coxnews.com](mailto:bkeefe@coxnews.com)



### **In'Flector: A green solution for windows**

A number of studies have shown that people are more productive in schools or buildings where there is more natural light. This leaves architects and building owners to wrestle with a dilemma: How to provide well-lit areas conducive to learning and productivity that don't generate huge cooling and heating costs.

The answer is not "low e" or double pane argon gas filled windows. At best you still have sixty-two per cent of the solar gain plus radiant heat issues. Window tint and solar screens also do not have much impact on radiant heat and do nothing for infiltration.

Drapes, blinds and window coverings nullify the natural light benefits of the window and provide minor long-term benefits.

One solution is In'Flector Window Insulators. They allow most natural light to past through, don't obstruct the view and they also provide a winter solar collector: Every four square feet of insulated window provides as much heat as a 600 watt electric heater.

In'Flector Window Insulators are available in panels, roller blinds, vertical blinds, and sliders and can be installed on skylights as well as vertical-pane windows. Installed on a single pane glass window. They are over twice as effective as low e windows on solar heat gain and ultraviolet rays. Additionally In'Flector window insulators are much more effective at reducing heat transfer, reducing infiltration, and controlling humidity.

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**Contacts at the Texas Green Network:**

Reed Sternberg	Board Chair, Marketing <a href="mailto:reed@texasgreennetwork.org">reed@texasgreennetwork.org</a>
Paul Severin	Director of Operations <a href="mailto:paul@texasgreennetwork.org">paul@texasgreennetwork.org</a>
Steve Harvey	Director of Membership <a href="mailto:steve@texasgreennetwork.org">steve@texasgreennetwork.org</a>
Ken Chambers	Newsletter Editor <a href="mailto:ken@texasgreennetwork.org">ken@texasgreennetwork.org</a>

To find out about opportunities to volunteer with the Texas Green Network and help the network grow, please contact Reed at [reed@texasgreennetwork.org](mailto:reed@texasgreennetwork.org).

**Texas Green Network**

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### *Late Calendar Addition!*



[www.austinseen.googlepages.com](http://www.austinseen.googlepages.com)

### **Meet and discuss opportunities for starting and growing businesses in Central Texas in the Solar Energy Industry**

*With the Solar Energy Entrepreneurs Network*

**Vision:** To establish Central Texas as a leading center of Solar Innovation

**Purpose:** Provide networking opportunities for professionals to generate and attract Solar Energy businesses to Central Texas

- Entrepreneurs who are starting, or looking to start, a solar-based business
- Investors looking to invest in the fast growing solar industry
- Technologists looking to share ideas for new products or services
- Employers in the solar field looking to hire people
- People looking to join solar startups
- Attorneys, Bankers and service providers interested in growing with the solar industry