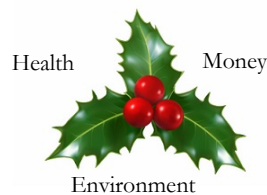


## Master Recycler's *Favorite Waste-Free Things* to Give and Receive

As the WasteWise Holiday campaign progresses through the season, Master Recyclers are sometimes asked by those we come in contact with “Why is it important to consider waste-free options for gift giving and celebrating?” Master Recyclers are motivated by the conservation ethic and for us the answer is simple. We want to preserve natural resources as much as possible for ourselves and for future generations. Giving and receiving gifts that have a lighter impact is one important way to do this. But concern for the environment is just one good reason to practice waste-free giving. The impact of gift-giving on finances and on personal well being are important factors to consider also. Is it possible to address all these concerns at once and still enjoying the season of giving? We believe so.

Consider the framework of Ernest Callenbach's “Green Triangle”. According to Callenbach, living a sane and ecologically responsible life doesn't mean self-sacrifice and austerity; on the contrary, it should mean a richer, more interesting, fuller, longer, and healthier life. In his **article**, subtitled “Environment, health and money - help one, help them all” Callenbach posits that when we make a positive change related to one point of the triangle, environment say, the other points (health and money) benefit also.



For example, let's suppose you decide to take a step toward maintaining your personal well being at the holidays, like avoiding the unnecessary stress of shopping for brand new gifts for each and every person on your holiday gift list. Instead you decide, like Jill, to renew the children's membership to the local zoo in the cities where her nieces and nephews live. Jill started this tradition a few years ago and now she is known as the Zoo Auntie. These children in different cities look forward to this special gift every year, *the gift of an experience* rather than a physical object.

Jill's personal stress of choosing, shopping and shipping is greatly reduced. Each zoo reminds her when it is time to renew the children's memberships. No packaging to discard, no time spent waiting in line at the post office, no risk of hard-earned purchases being the wrong size, **a duplicate gift**, breaking or getting lost after just a few uses. The well being of the children is positively impacted. They get to enjoy going on special outings and experience nature education. As members of the zoo the children receive periodic updates about new exhibits and new zoo babies. This cannot help but create a strong connection to the community and to nature, in addition to the special connection with their Zoo Auntie.

A gift membership to the Oregon Zoo is \$98 for a year and the value is even greater when purchasing memberships for two or more. Members enjoy free, unlimited admission as well as reciprocal admission benefits to other zoos. across the country. This gift benefits the environment because zoos are critical institutions for maintaining animal and plant diversity. Many zoos conserve endangered species. In the case of the **California Condor**, zoos have brought this species back from the brink of extinction and reintroduced it into the wild. There are only four zoo or wildlife facilities in the world saving condors and Oregon Zoo is one of them. Another award-winning recovery program at the Oregon Zoo is raising and releasing **Oregon Silverspot Butterflies** to locations from which they have disappeared.

According to Jill “Fostering this conservation ethic in the next generation is also a motivator for me to give this gift that gives all year. To top it off, I always sign the card, “Merry Christmas and a Happy Zoo Year!” The pun gets a nice chuckle even though it is an old joke.” For the young relative that lives close by, Jill gives the gift of a membership to the **Eugene Science Center**.

Personal wellbeing preserved, check. Excellent value for money, check. Benefit to the environment, check.

Continue reading for a list of *Master Recycler's Favorite Things...*

# Master Recycler's *Favorite Waste-Free Things* to Give and Receive

## *Handed Down*

My favorite gift of this nature (waste free) was from my dad. He "re-gave" me my first violin a few years ago. He had completely fixed it up and re-varnished it and also re-haired the bow! I will always have something special from him.

*Sarah Fields*

Why should the old jewelry wait til I'm gone? I send a piece to each niece and my daughter at Christmas and birthdays.

*Jean Cottel*

## *Hand Made*

I am partial to home-made gifts. This year I picked up some fabric swatches, a pretty sheet and some pillow cases from St. Vinnie's and am sewing place mats, coasters, and hot packs filled with grain and fragrant herbs for folks this year.

*Sarah Vito*

For the holidays, rather than buy each person in my family a gift, I make a treasure box for them all to divvy up. It consists of homemade foods, items that I've made over the year out of recycled materials, items I've traded for, and things I own but can't use. The family members divide up the loot and take what they like and leaves the rest. It's so much easier than trying to find the right gift for each person and it's fun to see who ends up with what. This year I have jams and jellies and pickles I learned to make as a Master Food Preserver, my famous Rosemary Shortbread, purses made from neck ties, lap blankets made from old cashmere sweaters, bags from used t-shirts whose logos I like, bags crocheted from plastic bags, and ornaments I made from used materials. *Ruby Colette*

Everyone loves my homemade fire starters made with egg cartons stuffed with dryer lint, drizzled with used candle wax.

*Amanda Eriksen*

Home made jam/apple butter - even better when it's home grown too! Dry ingredients for soup, cookie or brownie mix layered in a reused glass jar. *Kristi Bokody*

I have adhered drawings or other paper art onto old wood framed window glass. Light coming through is a nice effect.

*Nina Whitney*

I'm wrapping jars of homemade sauces in cloth with a ribbon tied around the top. I have also used newspapers and magazines in foreign languages for gift wrap. *Risa Dotson Eicke*

Our favorite thing over the past few years is to find hand-made cloth gift wrap bags at local bazaars and craft shows and use those to give gifts. The best part is when you get them back the next time gifts are exchanged. *Wendy Cecil*

## *Hand in Hand*

My siblings and I planted a row of trees on my parents property in honor of my dad who recently passed. I wrote a song for my boyfriend and played it for him. *Nina Whitney*

I purchase airline tickets so my brothers can come visit me. *Sarah Vito*



# Master Recycler's *Favorite Waste-Free Things* to Give and Receive

## *A Hand Up*

One of my favorite gifts was a gift certificate to SARA's (**Shelter Animal Resource Alliance**). I love to shop (and donate) there all the time because I can help many more kitties (in addition to the ten I own), in addition to finding great gently used items for myself, my family and my friends! *Sharon Mulford*

My favorite gift is a certificate for **Kiva.org**, an organization where the \$\$ goes to fund microenterprise loans all over the world. You choose who your \$\$ is loaned to and when they pay it back you can lend it to someone else. It's a great way to give a hand-up rather than a hand-out. Minimum amount is \$25. *Deborah McGlaulin*

## *These Two Hands*

I actually love "window washing, wood splitting, day of yard work" type gift certificates from my adult children. *Corolene Corriea*

A great waste free present I've received was a personalized coupon book. Coupons were for things like a massage, being cooked a favorite meal, trip to the movies, washing/waxing my car. *Kristi Bokody*

Dog sitting! *Nina Whitney*

## *Second Hand*

This year I assembled a reusable dishware kit for my friend Annie. The kit consists of cloth napkins, metal utensils, hard plastic plates and bowls, cold and hot cups. Many items were collected from garage sales and thrift stores. Some were newly purchased items made with recycled materials. Napkins were made using scrap fabric. *Kelly Bell*

Opposite of white elephant gift ... give away something of yours that you like (but can part with). Like a good book, favorite t-shirt, DVD etc *Kristi Bokody*

We really love great thrift store finds like books or photo frames that we can fill in for people. Another favorite is to reduce transportation waste by trying to find things produced either locally for us (to exchange here) or produced within the community where we want gifts delivered. *Wendy Cecil*

I put together craft kits for my nieces and filled them with tools from reuse stores such as **St. Vincent de Paul** and art supplies from **MECCA**. *Sarah Grimm*

## *On the Other Hand...*

I was really proud and excited to give my nephew a **Recycle Truck** made in the USA by Green Toys. I have given the toy airplane they make too! Amazing company! Elephant's Trunk and Eugene Toy and Hobby downtown sell these. This toy is made with 100% recycled milk jugs. Recycled content is one of my purchasing decision criteria. *Sarah Vito*

I love to give durable items such as bags that can be personalized to a person's tastes. For instance, stylish bags for the fashion conscience or personalized bags for family members (crafted by our family). One of the best gifts I received was a set of bamboo reusable eating utensils to use at work. *Wendy Cecil*