“We Are Family...”

On June 10, Charleen Heidt and Nancy Kotmel, two members of the Peggy R. Williams Center “Green Team”, arranged for a Hawk Talk by local raptor expert, Dr. Tim Gallagher, falconer with the Cornell University Lab of Ornithology and editor of “Living Bird” magazine. Dr. Gallagher explained to the overflow lunchtime crowd about the hunting, mating and nesting habits of red-tailed hawks, the same species as the birds nesting on the north ledge of the Williams Center. The family of two adults and two chicks have enthralled building occupants and campus visitors alike for several months. Dr. Gallagher told the audience what to expect in the next few weeks as the two fledgling hawks take to flight and begin to hunt on their own.

This learning event was organized as a response to some of the feedback received from occupants of the PR Williams Center during focus groups conducted by two students as a Spring semester class project in the Sustainable Communities course in Environmental Studies and Sciences. A number of Williams Center office workers expressed concern about the lack of a feeling of “community” among departments and divisions that share residency in the Williams Center. This Hawk Talk certainly worked nicely to draw participants together from departments throughout the building!

The two students, Vanessa Bedford ’12 and Colin Campbell ’13, worked during the Spring semester with PRWC Green Team representatives Jaimie Voorhees and Duane Corbin to identify opportunities and perceived barriers to sustainable behaviors that are more supportive of the goals of the LEED Platinum-level Williams Center. The students presented their findings to building occupants in two public sessions in early May. Vanessa and Colin offered a number of recommendations for more sustainable practices to which building occupants could commit to adopting. The complete list of their recommendations can be found on the Peggy R. Williams Center Green Team website, which the students worked with Jaimie to create as a permanent resource. For more information, visit: www.ithaca.edu/prwcgreenteam

“We’re WAAAY down... (but in this case, that’s a GOOD thing!)

Student researcher Jonathan Thompson ’11, working with Biology professor Susan Swensen, finished his compilation of the College’s annual greenhouse gas emissions inventory for fiscal year 2008-09. The great news is that our emissions in all three emissions categories have gone down substantially, far exceeding our annual overall GHG emissions reduction goal of 2.5%. We have begun implementing our Climate Action Plan and are already seeing big reductions in climate change-inducing greenhouse gas emissions. Our overall net decrease between 2007-08 and 2007-09 was 5.7%!
Ithaca College Faculty are Sustainability Stars

Dr. Michael Smith, assistant professor of History and Environmental Studies, co-edited a recently published book on community-based learning titled “Citizenship Across the Curriculum”. A chapter in the book highlights the local environmental history project that Smith’s History of American Environmental Thought classes have undertaken in conjunction with staff at the History Center of Tompkins County.

Dr. Lauren O’Connell, associate professor and chair of the department of Art History, convened a sustainability roundtable at the annual meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians in April. Inspired by O’Connell’s redesign of her course titled “Architecture Across Cultures”, the conference session called “Greening the Survey” focused on strategies for integrating sustainability content in undergraduate architectural history courses.

In June, Dr. Tom Pfaff, associate professor of Mathematics, was invited to be the keynote speaker for a Math and Sustainability Institute held at Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire. This conference offered math teachers the opportunity to learn how to incorporate sustainability concepts into existing math curriculum; Pfaff has become nationally renowned for doing exactly that in his calculus classes. Read more at: http://www.ithaca.edu/tpfaff/sustainability.htm

Dr. Sandra Steingraber, Distinguished Visiting Scholar in Residence with the Division of Interdisciplinary and International Studies, was invited to speak at a Congressional staff briefing on May 21st in Washington D.C. and to discuss President’s Obama’s recently released Cancer Panel Report: Reducing Environmental Cancer Risk: What We Can Do Now. As a renowned speaker on the causes of environmental cancer, Dr. Steingraber also met with White House staff following the Congressional briefing. Read Dr. Steingraber’s most recently published article, “Shale Game” in Orion magazine; visit www.orionmagazine.org.

IC students really dig local farming!

A number of Ithaca College students are participating in an eight-week Summer Practicum in Sustainable Farming and Local Food Systems, offered by the Groundswell Center for Local Food and Farming, in cooperation with the Environmental Studies Program at Tompkins Cortland Community College. Most class sessions meet at West Haven Farm in Ithaca, with occasional sessions at Northland Sheep Dairy, Kingbird Farm and other local farms, food businesses and organizations. The Summer Practicum explores the issues affecting sustainability of agriculture and food systems through readings, discussion, lectures, field trips, labs, and immersion in the actual work of operating a successful and sustainable small farm. For more about Groundswell, visit http://www.groundswellcenter.org/

Students Fly Their Sustainable Strategies for Regional Airport

Students in two School of Business classes that worked on the Sustainable Master Plan for the Ithaca-Tompkins Regional Airport presented their final reports in May. Teams of undergraduate students in Dr. Scott Erickson’s "Social and Non-Profit Marketing" class and MBA students in Dr. Joe Sprangel’s "Sustainability Practices in Operations and Technology" class presented their recommendations for more sustainable airport operations. The teams worked closely throughout the semester with representatives from the Ithaca-Tompkins Regional Airport and consultants from C&S Engineers in Syracuse to explore Phase II Implementation Strategies for this master planning process. Ithaca-Tompkins Regional Airport's Sustainable Master Plan is the first such plan to be undertaken by a U.S. airport. The Federal Aviation Administration is closely monitoring this planning effort in hopes that this plan will become a template for other domestic airports to follow to become more sustainable. For more info, visit www.sustainable-ITH.com

Get “Spotted”! Reuse your beverage mug or bag, compost and/or recycle properly, and go “trayless” and you may be handed a “Spotted” card to reward you for your support with a free beverage refill.
More Sustainable Decisions

The Bookstore now carries IC-logged Chicobags, made of machine-washable, durable polyester fabric. Chicobags weigh only 1.5 ounces and stuff down into a 3”x4” pouch and have a twenty-five pound carrying capacity. "Taste of the Nation", the annual fine dining event held at Ithaca College that raises funds for local hunger programs, was a “zero waste” event with all foods served on compostable tableware and REMP summer interns “personing” the CRT (Compost-Recycling-Trash) stations to help patrons separate their waste. The Office of the Provost announced that they have drastically reduced the number of printed college catalogs. New students and faculty advisors will receive a copy, of printed college catalogs. New students and faculty advisors will receive a copy.

On June 1, the Office of Human Resources rolled out on-line recording of Paid Time Away (vacation, personal and sick time), eliminating the need for employees to maintain separate paper forms. Facilities Electricians completed a complete replacement of the lighting in the Tower Dining Hall seating area with LED fixtures, drastically reducing the energy consumption in that space. This year’s “Take It Or Leave It” move-out collection of residence hall goods collected more than 50 bags of reusable items. Clothing collected goes to reuse entities like the Salvation Army; some material went to Finger Lakes Reuse for resale. Many reusable items will be available for sale at the start of the Fall semester at the TIOJI Sale at Clarke Hall.

IC Grants Conservation Easements

In March, Ithaca College signed an agreement to preserve 4.5 acres of wetlands created to compensate for the 2.77 acres of former wetland area developed as part of the site for our new Athletics and Events Center. The agreement with the Town of Ithaca and the Finger Lakes Land Trust states that the land will remain in its natural state and not be used for future development. The college also made a separate agreement to place almost 75 acres of property that it owns in the Town of Newfield into a conservation easement with the Finger Lakes Land Trust. Part of the Ithaca College Natural Resource Reserve, this Newfield property is managed by the Ithaca College Natural Lands Committee.

South Hill Natural Area Kiosk Dedicated

In April, the Ithaca College Natural Lands committee dedicated a new informational kiosk for the South Hill Natural Area — 365 acres of multiple-use, College-owned property atop South Hill. The College owns nearly 500 acres of undeveloped land in Tompkins County that are overseen by the Natural Lands Committee, which seeks to maintain the educational value and ecosystem services of these properties, to support co-curricular activities and to guide compatible economic and recreational development.

New Energy Manager Hired

Michelle Jones Ham has accepted the position of Facilities Energy Manager, starting June 28th. In this brand new position, Michelle will be responsible for developing, implementing, and maintaining an Energy Management Plan for Ithaca College to ensure environmental conditions are coordinated with cost-effective energy utilization. Michelle comes to Ithaca College with a strong background overseeing energy conservation programs having previously worked for IBM and New York State Electric and Gas. Naming an Energy Manager was one of the first key steps in our Climate Action Plan.

News Briefs

Watch for “Green Thumbs-Up” citations in the Kudos section of Intercom. Make sure we know about YOUR new innovations or activities that support campus sustainability. You could earn a “Green Thumbs-Up!” Read archived versions of each citation on our webpage under Community Outreach.

Check out FUSE for articles on campus sustainability from student points of view: http://fuse.ithaca.edu/tags/sustainability/

ICView also tags sustainability stories: www.ithaca.edu/icview/tags/sustainability/

View campus building energy use: www.ithaca.edu/metering

IC maintains an institutional membership in the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. All members of our community can access to AASHEs helpful resources for curriculum, operations and student organizations. To register, go to www.aashe.org

Watch for Installments, sustainability information flyers posted on the inside of bathroom stall doors, to begin appearing in academic and administrative buildings.

Sign up for the Ithaca College team in the Cortaca Climate Challenge. Go to http://climateculture.com/, create an account using your Ithaca.edu email, and commit to carbon emission reductions.


Our two Energy Star-certified residence halls were the subject of a story in the New York Times, titled “At Upstate Campus, Saving Energy Is Part of Dorm Life.”
FLEFF 2010 Open Space Continues

“Make Open Space,” the second of three social media contests to be rolled out by the Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival 2009–10, is seeking entries. Judged by three prominent, international experts, “Make Open Space” will award $500 to the top project in each contest, with additional awards of $100 for two honorable mentions. In submitting entries to “Make Open Space,” contestants are invited to remix the 2010 FLEFF artwork into a short trailer that explores Open Space, the program stream of FLEFF 2009–10. The submission deadline is July 31. Submission is free, but entrants are required to register online. The registration form, along with detailed submission instructions, is available at http://www.ithaca.edu/fleff/make/.

The first social media contest, “Define Open Space,” began on May 17 with a submission deadline of July 17. Anyone interested in entering that contest may submit one image and one sentence to the collaborative Open Space Dictionary. For detailed information on registering and submitting, visit www.ithaca.edu/fleff10/define.

The third contest, “Compose Open Space,” will be rolled out June 15. FLEFF Open Space 2009–10 began in September 2009 and will continue through August 2010. To keep current with the FLEFF blogs, screenings, readings and user-generated events, visit www.ithaca.edu/fleff.

Join Up! Sustainability Organizations

Here are a few of the student organizations working to advance campus sustainability:

Ithaca College Environmental Society
Business Sustainability Ambassadors
Park Sustainability Club
Ithaca College Organic Growers
Ithaca College Slow Food

More info: http://www.ithaca.edu/sacl/osema/studentorg/

Sustainable Community Challenge

New students may apply to take part in this specially designed Jump Start program that helps them transition into the Ithaca College experience. Applications for August 2010 will be available during Summer Orientation in 2010. Sustainable Community Challenge (SCC) participants travel by bus throughout the Cayuga Lake area, exploring our regional “foodshed.” Stops include large and small agribusinesses, a Native American farm, Taughannock Falls State Park, and EcoVillage Ithaca. Sustainability guides will lead discussions and exercises about participants’ observations and sites they have explored. SCC will help new students learn about being a part of a connected community and understand the impact they have on a local level, regional, and global level. For more information, visit: http://www.ithaca.edu/sacl/osema/newstudents/jumpstart/

Ithaca Carshare offers special student rates. Semester plans are good through May 31! There is a $15 one-time application fee, and two membership levels: “Just In Case” plan: $20 membership; $15 in free driving credit; $7.95/hour charge; 20¢/mile

“It’s My Car” plan: $70 membership; $75 in free driving credit; $4.95/hour charge; 20¢/mile

Faculty and staff members receive $50 in free driving credit.

For more information: www.ithacacarshare.org

TCAT bus unlimited ride semester passes - sold direct by TCAT - cost $110. TCAT works with our ID office to encode the semester pass permission right on your student ID card. Monthly bus passes cost $30 and 15-ride passes cost $15; both of these separate bus ride passes are sold at our Bookstore. For info on TCAT routes and schedules: www.tcatbus.com

Check out Becky Webster’s blog called EcoDump, for her unique take on campus and community sustainability efforts. http://theithacan.org/blogs/ecdump/

We maintain an active sustainability list-serve to advise members about campus and community events and activities of interest, and to facilitate discussion among members about sustainability topics. Our listserv is open to any and all members of the Ithaca College community. To join our “sustainability friends” listserv, simply send an email to: majordomo@lists.ithaca.edu with the following text in the body of the message: subscribe sustainability

To commemorate the First Year Reading Initiative book, watch for the Walden House to be constructed on campus this summer. This structure will be made from reclaimed materials and framing members sustainably harvested from College lands.

Alumni Profile: Amy Hebard ’73

Following Amy Hebard’s graduation from Ithaca with a degree in Philosophy, she worked at AT&T for 17 years in consumer market research. Hebard joined forces with marketing consultant Wendy Cobrda to found a unique business they call Earthsense, which recently won the US SBA Small Business Excellence Award for its work building a national platform as an applied research company examining green consumer trends, attitudes, lifestyles and purchasing decisions. Earthsense is widely known in sustainability circles for its Eco-Insights national survey. In April, Earthsense announced a new initiative to track the environmental and investment performance of the 100 largest companies traded on the Nasdaq.

News Brief

Paul Warrender, Dining Services operations manager, and Marian Brown, special assistant to the provost for sustainability, co-presented a workshop titled “Feeding Innovation in Sustainability: Ithaca’s Comprehensive Dining Energy Plan” at the American College Personnel Association Institute on Sustainability in Seattle.

Roger Casterline, director of Grounds and Transportation and sustainability advocate, retired after 37 years of service! Farewell!

We’re on the Web!

A pdf version of this newsletter can be downloaded from the Sustainability at Ithaca website at www.ithaca.edu/sustainability

This newsletter has been produced on recycled paper.