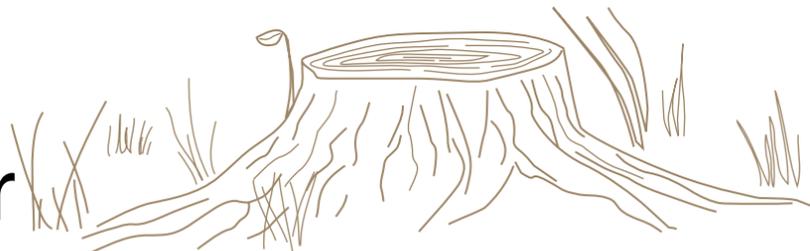


# recycling a-fair



IN THE DOG DAYS OF AUGUST, as the mercury in thermometers rises and parents look forward to sending their children back to the confines of the classroom, many New Yorkers will flock to the New York State Fair. They can amuse themselves with thrilling rides, games of chance, (sometimes) adorable livestock, and pound after pound of deep-fried goodness (because ordinary Oreos just aren't sweet enough) amidst a variety of shopping and entertainment.

Each year, people use and discard countless glass bottles, paper plates, and plastic forks over the 12-day period. If they are responsible, the waste is deposited into one of various recycling bins located throughout the fairgrounds. Of the roughly one million visitors, many can be too careless or lazy to seek out a recycling bin and throw the refuse away in a nearby garbage can. By the end of the fair, the total tonnage of waste, recycled and trash, is in the hundreds. And don't forget about the thousands of cars and buses that get people to and from the fair, spewing exhaust into the atmosphere.

If that doesn't send a shiver down your spine, look east of the never-ending fun at the fairgrounds toward Onondaga Lake, which holds the accolade of one of the most polluted bodies of water in the United States. The

lake serves as a staunch reminder to everyone in charge of making the fair run smoothly of the pertinence of not only keeping the fairgrounds clean, but also promoting eco-friendly ideals.

Dan O'Hara, the fair's 2007 first-time director, is committed, with Governor Eliot Spitzer, to keeping the fair clean and green. Among the plans for 2007 and beyond are composting leftover food, holding concessionaires responsible for their waste, taking away their booths if they don't comply, and educating patrons about environmentally sound technology at the New York Power Authority (NYPA) exhibit.

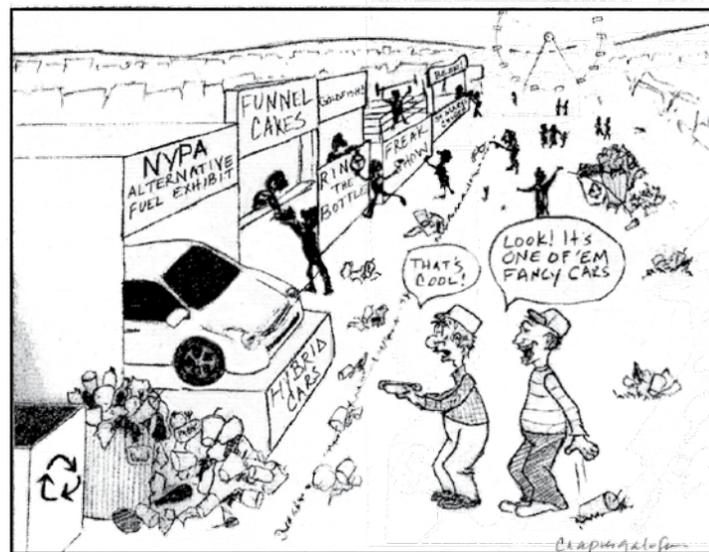
It's becoming an increasingly arduous task to find people who don't believe climate change is real (even President Bush admitted the threat exists), but not everyone has climbed aboard the Al Gore hybrid-engine, bio-diesel, reduced-emissions Express. People may not come to the State Fair for lessons on how to save the environment. What better time than a humid, sun-drenched weekend in late August and better locale than a wide-open fairground to persuade people that — indeed — there is something screwy with the weather, and present them with some info about how they can do their part.

Eco-education is just the first part of the equation.

People must be willing to take both big and small steps to protect the environment. Separate recycling bins won't have any benefit if people throw their water bottles and soda cans in regular trash cans. Many may see NYPA's exhibition about hybrid cars and clean-burning fuel, but how many will seriously consider buying a hybrid as their next car?

Whether you're tired of hearing it or still don't want to believe it, the fact is the same: Everyone needs to do their part to protect the planet. Actively recycling, turning off the lights, gassing up with cleaner fuel, whatever you can do. Every little step helps, and all the little steps combine to leaps forward. It's the truth, and it's really not that inconvenient.

« JASON LEVY »



CLAIRE NAPIER-GALOFARO

it's not so much that this  
is the lost world  
i think it just doesn't  
want to be found

...-- mark synnott ...--

5°11' S 68°46' W



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