



Newspapers again being recycled at Barnstable reclamation center

Bring in those bundles of newspapers you've been saving because you couldn't bear to see them filling up the dump.

There's another empty van waiting to receive them just inside the gate to the town disposal area. Grocery store paper bags filled with stacked newspapers make easily handled bundles for piling into the van.

Unless the price of paper goes up as fast as it came down, we won't be paid for what we collect, but at least we'll save precious dump space it would otherwise occupy.

While you're making the trip, load up all the clean bottles and glass jars -- metal caps and rings removed, and the clean crushed cans you've collected, and bring them along, too.

One trip a month is about right for a small family; if yours is a large one, you'll probably want to unload your recyclables more often.

Something you'll notice after a couple of weeks of participation in the reclamation program is how little trash you're accumulating for the rubbish man to cart away.

Keeping a quart plastic container next to your kitchen sink encourages saving potato peels, carrot scrapings, orange and banana skins, salad wastes, squash seeds -- any vegetable trash -- for your compost heap. A winter's compost, spread on your garden come spring, will make your plants flourish.

Add to it juices left after cooking vegetables -- those you don't save for soup or gravy, that is -- and you add to the soil in your own garden vitamins and nutrients otherwise lost when you flush them down the drain.

Cleaning out your attic or basement? Something you've no longer any use for may be just the ticket to meet a need of someone else. Leave it at the Bizarre Bazaar at the Barnstable Dump.

While you're there, look over what your neighbor added to the discard pile. Maybe you'll find something of value or something you can fix up and use.

Times are changing; whether for better or worse is not yet determined, and we may never agree on it. We will agree, certainly that changes are occurring rapidly and they take some getting used to.

What our grandparents took for granted, it now seems, is a lesson we must relearn for ourselves. "Waste not, want not" is more of a truism today than it's been in a quarter of a century.

What's thrown away while there's still some value left in it is costly; it's too costly for us who must now try to make ends meet in this economy of inflation and recession.

The old folks used to preach, "Use it up, make it do, make it over -- or do without". It seems we're to learn the quality of that advice over the next few years.

Conspicuous consumption no longer induces envious or admiring glances; people are looking with disdain and annoyance at those who display wasteful practices.

Keeping up with the Joneses is going out of fashion, and it's about time. The Joneses always were profligate -- at least, that particular branch of the family -- and now they'll get their come-uppance.

Not long ago, if you weren't zipping along the Mid-Cape at 65 or 70

H, people are passing you as though you were driving a one-lunger. Now, if your foot gets too heavy, you're lucky if you're not arrested and people in cars you pass sneer at your immoral behavior.

These days when you visit neighbors you wear the same warm sweater or suit you need for comfort in your own home with the heat turned back to 65 degrees.

The "layered look" is what's stylish; the "bared look" turns you blue and goose-pimpley and that's downright unattractive.

The Sunday-afternoon-drive-for-pleasure is on its way out for the duration. It used to be "the duration" referred to the coming of peacetime. Now it's the duration of America's dependence on foreign energy sources, and the Sunday-afternoon-walk is recommended as a substitute.

Time was when Americans drew their shades at night and closed the curtains to keep drafts from seeping in around the windows. That was before modern storm windows provided efficient insulation.

The time's come again to practice this same old-fashioned economy. Drawing the shades and closing the curtains still helps conserve heat and keep out the cold.

Chambers -- that's what bedrooms were called a couple of generations ago -- weren't heated in winter. Today's heating bills can be reduced by keeping bedroom doors closed and radiation turned off in sleeping rooms.

Modern insulation, particularly of ceilings, is far more effective than piling pineneedles against the foundation of the house. A foundation banked with pineneedles is still a good way to prevent some heat loss at that point, however.

Electricity comes to light our rooms or cook our food at the flip of a switch. Producing it uses oil, coal or some other energy resource, however. Two people can read or work by one properly placed light source. With planning, a meal can be as well-prepared in the oven as over four top burners.

Leaving most of the house in semi-darkness can even feel rather cozy. Mankind existed for centuries without streetlights, without any light at all after the sun set, except the flicker of fire on the hearth or a lantern to light a path on a moonless night.

There are dozens of ways America can save energy and other resources. Taking the necessary steps now can shorten considerably the duration of our economic problems.

Taking the necessary steps now can also reduce considerably the environmental degradation that will accompany our crash program to become independent again of foreign energy resources.

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Getting ourselves together, making the full effort to lick the problems, everyone doing his individual part -- whether it's cooperating in recycling effort, turning off lights we're not using, wearing warmer clothing to be comfortable in cooler houses, driving less and more slowly when we must drive, or whatever -- is a simple matter of recognizing the need and taking personal responsibility for filling that need.

See you at the Bizarre Bazaar! See you at the paper recycling van!
See you at the glass bin!

See you -- doing your part!