

# GREEN SCENE

*Eco-News from Rhode Island's Natural News Network*

## GREEN DRINKS

Even in a state as small as Rhode Island, finding connections can be challenging.

“When I first moved here, in 1999, it seemed hard to meet people who were involved in environmental and conservation issues,” says Bill Mott, executive director of The Ocean Project. It’s easier to make those connections today, thanks to Mott’s solution—networking groups that meet once a month, over drinks, in Providence and in Newport. They are affiliated with the international network Green Drinks.

“People have made friends, found jobs, developed new ideas and synergies, helped with each others projects,” says Mott. “And it’s fun!”

Today, monthly mailings go to nearly 500 people, all with a professional or personal interest in helping to build a greener Rhode Island. The venues vary from Nick-A-Nees to the Roger Williams Park Botanical Center to Cuban Revolution at The Plant. Occasionally a guest speaker will visit, and several local groups have acted as host.

“Everyone is welcome, there is no formal membership, no dues and no agenda,” says Mott. “New people come every month. Just show up and introduce yourself.”

About a year ago, two of the new attendees were Kara DiCamillo and Meaghan O’Neill, who both live in Newport and write for Treehugger, an environmental website. They liked the concept, and last September, Green Drinks Newport was born.

“I was so inspired to see how many people turned up who really care about the environment,” says DiCamillo.

Both groups continue to grow, and this summer Newport and Providence will host the first-ever statewide Green Drinks Celebration, Wednesday, July 30, at Narragansett Beach.

Green Drinks is close to the heart of the Natural News staff—it was there that the launch team was put together. If you’d like to join the mailing list, contact Bill Mott at [bmott@theoceanproject.org](mailto:bmott@theoceanproject.org) or Kara DiCamillo at [kara@6square.com](mailto:kara@6square.com), or check [naturalnews.net](http://naturalnews.net) for announcements.



## HEALTHY, CLEAN AND GREEN

As consumers have grown increasingly savvy about their food choices—considering not only nutrition and flavor but also impact on the environment—they also have grown more aware of the products they use to keep their homes clean.

Will your laundry detergent pollute the Bay? Does your kitchen cleanser leave a chemical residue? Do your candles emit toxic fumes?

Candita Clayton, a professional organizer who lives in East Providence, recently published a book, *Clean Your Home Healthy: Green Cleaning Made Easy*, to address these questions and offer simple, safe alternatives.

“The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that household air can be up to 10 times more polluted than outdoor air,” says Clayton. “When you consider the number of chemical compounds we spray, spritz, squirt and pour around our homes every week, exposure times add up quick.”

Clayton’s easy-to-read book includes room-by-room tips for simple changes you can make, from the kitchen to the laundry room to the nursery. She explains how to use cheap, nontoxic products like white vinegar, lemon juice and baking soda to take over many of your cleaning tasks.

“You don’t need chemicals to keep your home spotless and shining,” Clayton says.

For more information, go to [cleanyourhomehealthy.com](http://cleanyourhomehealthy.com).



## COMING UP...

RHODE ISLAND SUSTAINABLE LIVING FESTIVAL & CLEAN ENERGY EXPO. June 7 and 8. If you want to learn how to “green up” your life, your home and your state, this is the place to find all the answers. Two days of workshops, vendor exhibits, great music, organic food and fun activities for the whole family, all in a beautiful sylvan setting at the Apeiron Institute’s green-living campus in western Coventry. Tickets are \$10 and up; [apeiron.org](http://apeiron.org).

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