

RESOURCE C E N T E R

October 2008

Dear Friend:

Chicago is a city rich with resources – human, environmental, infrastructural, cultural. For more than three decades, the Resource Center has put unrecognized and under-utilized resources – those that may otherwise have been considered waste – to good use.

In the past year alone through our various recycling programs, we've helped keep nearly 7,000 tons of paper, cardboard, glass, metal, and plastic out of landfills.

Through innovative initiatives like the Perishable Food Recovery program, we serve as a critical link between the resource-rich and the resource-poor. In partnership with area hotels, we are helping to redirect surpluses of essential hygiene products like shampoo and toilet paper to city residents in need.

To the delight of chefs and local food enthusiasts alike, City Farm continues to supply produce to numerous area restaurants while teaching job skills to local students.

The Resource Center created and promoted successful sustainability initiatives like Recycling Collections, Perishable Food Recovery, and City Farm long before they were popular. It takes hard work, persistence, and the creative vision of a dedicated staff and volunteers to move projects like these forward.

It also takes dollars. We need your help. We are making every effort to decrease our costs without affecting staff and programs, but we face the tough reality that, without your financial support, some programs may have to be scaled back.

We are encouraged today to see more and more Chicagoans making 'greener' choices in their own lives. Help us keep the Resource Center a sustainable institution of innovation and service by donating today. As ever, we will continue to work toward responsible stewardship of both our environment and your generous gifts.

In continued appreciation,



Ken Dunn
President



Kevin Pierce
Board Chairman

P.S. You can also support the Resource Center as a volunteer. For more information on ways to get involved, please contact our office at 773.821.1351.

Annual Meeting Information *INSIDE!*

Program Developments and Areas of Need

Food & Organics Composting

Those of you who have known the Resource Center for many years probably remember the high-quality, nitrogen-rich compost we produced from restaurant trimmings and landscape waste. Resource Center compost was a mainstay of both community gardens and our own urban agriculture programs. Unfortunately, we had to stop processing compost, as the regulatory environment changed and our "grandfathered" status was no longer upheld. Our collected materials are now shipped to out-of-state composting facilities at great cost. We are looking for a site and financial support to create a large-scale, fully permitted composting facility close to Chicago. We envision a ten- to twenty-acre facility capable of accepting materials from throughout the area. We own much of the necessary equipment, as well as more than forty years of expertise. This is an area of high priority for us where you can help.

Perishable Food Recovery

Our Perishable Food Recovery program does what its name implies: recovers healthy food from sources such as grocery stores and farmer's markets, and then redistributes it to food pantries and shelters. By taking the material directly from source to destination, we are able to cut down handling time and prevent spoilage. With your support, the Resource Center will be able to continue providing this important bridge from those with plenty to those with less.

Featured partner: Vital Bridges

Vital Bridges serves people living with HIV and AIDS at four Chicago sites, providing nutrition, case management, housing, and educational services. Our program manager, Vicki Fowler, drops off donated produce, bread, and other nutritious food at Vital Bridges, helping to provide a healthy diet to people who really need it.

City Farm (1204 N. Clybourn Ave.)

There have been many exciting developments at City Farm this year, including the expansion of our Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. Under the CSA program, members buy shares of the upcoming season's produce and are entitled to receive a portion of the farm's bounty. For information about joining the CSA program in 2009, please send an email to: cityfarm@resourcecenterchicago.org

New crops this year included a number of varieties of hot peppers, potatoes, and black beans. We successfully began selling these and other City Farm vegetables at the Logan Square Farmer's Market this summer. Our educational efforts expanded, with a larger After School Matters summer program serving students from Cabrini-Green. This was also our first growing season on the new plot at Kendall College, where we grow vegetables to supply the chefs-in-training in Kendall's culinary programs. With City Farm, the journey from farm to table is a short one. Your support is critical to our ongoing efforts to help Chicagoans rethink the meaning of a local food system.

Featured partner: Vie Restaurant

When we sell City Farm produce to Vie in Western Springs, we know that our delicious vegetables are entering very capable hands. Chef Paul Virant of Vie says that his "cuisine reflects the seasons [and] local harvests." From pickling City Farm garlic to preparing fresh heirloom tomatoes, Chef Virant's enthusiasm for great food extends to his support for our model of urban agriculture.

Recycling Collections

We have been hard at work establishing new customers for our Recycling Collections program, with the help of a 2007 grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity, under the Illinois Recycling Grants Program (IRGP). The IRGP grant allowed us to purchase a side-loader collection truck, which allows us to collect recyclables in separate containers within the truck.

Featured Partner: Misericordia Heart of Mercy

One of our newest customers is the Misericordia Heart of Mercy, a non-profit organization based in Chicago's Edgewater neighborhood. Misericordia serves "550 children and adults with mild to profound developmental disabilities from all racial, religious and socio-economic backgrounds." We are proud to have worked with Misericordia to develop a recycling program that offers meaningful work for some of the very individuals the organization serves. Misericordia residents help to collect, sort, and condense materials from their operations, and Resource Center trucks collect the materials for recycling.



Drop-off Recycling

Wrightwood (2600 N. Lincoln Ave.) and North Park Village (5801 N. Pulaski Rd.)

In late 2007 we improved signage and created an informational flyer for the Wrightwood drop-off station. This year we hope to undertake a similar effort for North Park Village, to help residents understand our sorting guidelines. We are looking for financial support to underwrite this public education effort.

Creative Reuse Warehouse (222 E 135th Place)

The Creative Reuse Warehouse continues to operate out of our main office at 222 E. 135th Place. We are in preliminary discussions about creating an artist residency at the site, to regenerate interest in the program. Longer-term, we plan to find a more central location to facilitate a real rebirth for this great reuse program.

For more information about these and our other program offerings, please visit our website:

www.resourcecenterchicago.org

Resource Center in the News

Ken Dunn named greenest Chicagoan by the Chicago Tribune

The Chicago Tribune polled environmental and civic groups across the city looking for the Chicagoan with the smallest personal carbon footprint. They compared contestants on personal consumption choices, and when the tallying was done, the Tribune selected Resource Center founder and president Ken Dunn as the greenest Chicagoan. Ken "whittled down his carbon footprint the old-fashioned way: by riding a beat-up old bike, air-drying his clothes [and] eating the vegetables he grows in his backyard," according to the Tribune (9/23/08).

CBS Sunday Morning to feature City Farm

Following on last year's appearance on NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams (7/31/07), the Resource Center will again enjoy national media attention this fall. On November 23rd, at 8 a.m. on CBS 2, CBS Sunday Morning plans to air a profile of City Farm. CBS shot footage and interviewed farm staff during the summer, and we expect the piece to spread the word about our work and the importance of returning to a local food system that includes urban agriculture.

Annual Meeting

The Resource Center will hold its annual meeting on Thursday, December 4, 2008, at 5:30 p.m. This year's meeting will be held at the office of Shaw Environmental & Infrastructure. As in past years, there will be a business portion of the meeting and the opportunity to socialize and meet new friends. Please join us to find out more about what the Resource Center is up to today and has planned for 2009. **Please RSVP.**

Annual Meeting of the Resource Center
Thursday, December 4, 2008 5:30PM
Shaw Environmental & Infrastructure
444 N Wells St., Suite 602, Chicago, IL 60654
(Close to Merchandise Mart el stop)



All are welcome.

A donation of \$25 is requested, making you a member of the Resource Center for 2009.



Donate Online

You can now donate to the Resource Center electronically through a secure online payment service. Credit cards are accepted through this service. All donations are fully tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Visit our website, www.resourcecenterchicago.org, and look for the "Donate" button to use this service.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Here are some specific ways you can support the Resource Center in our efforts to make a more sustainable Chicago:

Help operate the Perishable Food Recovery van for a day \$200

You can allow us to keep sending nutritious produce to programs like Vital Bridges.

Haul a load of glass to market \$300

Because of commodity prices, we can't sell most glass – we have to give it away. We do it because it is the right thing to do. You can help us cover the cost of hauling a load of glass to the processor.

Public informational signage for North Park Village \$500

You can help us get the word out to help residents use this drop-off site effectively.

Donation and RSVP Options

Paper: Fill out and send attached form.

Web: Go to www.resourcecenterchicago.org and follow instructions.

Phone (RSVP Only): Call 773.821.1351 M-F 8:30am-4:00pm.

Please print and mail to:

RESOURCE

C E N T E R

222 E 135th Place

Chicago, IL 60827

Yes! I/We want to support the Resource Center.

Please make checks payable to Resource Center.

- \$25 membership \$100 Other \$ _____
- I'm giving \$200 to sponsor the Perishable Food Recovery van for a day.
- I'm giving \$300 to haul a load of glass to market.
- I'm giving \$500 to sponsor public informational signage for North Park Village.
- I'm giving \$1000 to help propel the vision of the Resource Center.

Annual Meeting Response

- I will be attending the Annual Meeting on December 4th, 2008
- Sorry, I can't make it.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Home/Cell Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Email _____

- I prefer electronic-only newsletter delivery in the future (email address required).

*The Resource Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.*