

The Northern Standard

Circulating in Counties Monaghan, Cavan, Armagh, Louth and Fermanagh



Sustainability Matters

Transition Monaghan initiative

Compiled by Liam Murtagh & Mícheál Callaghan

National Organic Award for Monaghan Couple

Marty and Joanne Brennan, of Clontibret, have won the Best Fresh Product Award in this year's National Organic Awards. The couple, who have been growing organic vegetables at Mulberry Meadow Farm for the last 10 years, won the prize for their new venture 'My Organics'.

My Organics, is a range of living organic micro greens and salads. They currently have a range of eight micro greens, including the highly nutritious wheatgrass. These are grown in pots, in organic soil, with the idea being that you buy them as a living product in the pot, and pick or harvest them as you need them. Their new venture was on display at the recent Taste of Monaghan Festival, along with a pedal powered juicer, which allowed members of the public to make their own juice via a few seconds on a bike, which created the electricity to power the juicer. Transition Monaghan Member, Mícheál Callaghan pedalled up some delicious wheatgrass and apple juice.

Marty and Joanne have been supplying a number of restaurants, as well as the Monaghan Farmer's Market over the last number of years. They hope that the micro greens will help to make healthy eating easy. The 'My Organic' micro salads can be purchased online or from a number of local retail outlets. Visit www.myorganicsfarm.ie or look up My Organics on Facebook for more details.

NOTICEBOARD

Training for new Residents Associations: This evening Thursday, 23 October, 6.30pm-8pm in the Iontas Centre Castleblayney. Booking Tel 047 30500. Email amackle@monaghancoco.ie.

Organic Centre Courses: Rossinver, Co Leitrim. Saturday, 25 October: Reebed systems. Saturday - Sunday, 26-27 October: Willow basketry. Sunday, 26 October: Cooking without gluten, dairy, yeast and sugar. Saturday, November 1: Grow your own fruit - winter workshop. Saturday, 1 - Sunday, 2 November: Cheese making - an introduction. Sunday, 2 November: Dyeing wool. See www.theorganiccentre.ie.

Sonairte Courses / Events (Laytown): Pumpkin Carving on Saturday, 25 October, 12pm - 2pm. See www.sonairte.ie

Nocturnal Nature Tour on Crom Estate, Co Fermanagh: Friday, 24 October, 7 - 10pm. Booking essential. Contact 048 6773 8118. Email crom@nationaltrust.org.uk. See www.fermanagh.gov.uk/community/nocturnal-tour-crom-estate.html.

Richhill Apple Harvest Festival: Saturday, 25 October, 10am - 7pm. Richhill Village Square, Co Armagh. See www.armagh.co.uk/richhillharvestfestival

Hallowe'en Fest and Craft Fair: Sunday, 26 October, 12 - 4pm at Florence Court, Co Fermanagh. See 'events' at www.fermanagh.lakelands.com

Virginia Pumpkin Festival: Friday, 24 - Monday, 27 October, in Virginia, Co Cavan. Includes artisan food and craft fair on Saturday 26 October. See www.pumkinfestival.ie

Love My Tree: The charity Just Forests has organised a National 'Tree Huggers' contest to encourage people to look around them and appreciate the fabulous trees in their locality. The contest focuses on people and trees with interesting stories from all over Ireland. The tree/story with the most votes will be Ireland's nomination in the European Tree of the Year 2015 Contest. You can vote up until end of October at www.lovemymytree.ie. Also see www.justforests.org.

Willow Weaving - decorative & intricate work (course): Thursday, 6 November at 7.30pm (for 4 nights), Orchard Acre Farm, Irvinestown, Co Fermanagh. See www.orchardacrefarm.co.uk/courses-events

Newtownstewart Time Trade Workshop: Torn - paper card making, led by John Harding, Saturday, 8 November, 10am - 12 noon. Greystone Farm, Newtownstewart, Co. Tyrone. Contact john@greystonefarmni.org

Rebuilding Communities through Sustainable Jobs (Conference): Saturday, 15 November in DIT Bolton St. Dublin. SERIND Seminar 2014 hosted by Green European Foundation, with the support of Green Foundation Ireland. While admission is free, pre booking is required. See 'Events' at www.greenfoundation.ie

Irish Seedsavers Winter Workshops Scarriff, Co Clare: Saturday & Sunday, 15 - 16 November. Half day workshops includes topics such

as cider making and creating an orchard. See www.irishseedsavers.ie.
Young Environmentalist Awards (ECO-UNESCO): Closing date for registration is 28 November but participants (aged 10-19) have until 28 February 2015 to complete their group project in one of ten categories. Once registered, groups can avail of ECO-UNESCO's training, advice and on-going support. See www.ecounesco.ie.

EVENTS FOR BUSINESSES AND PUBLIC BODIES

Future in Food Ireland 2014 - Driven by Sustainability (Conference): Wednesday, 5 November in Aviva Stadium, Lansdowne Road, Dublin. See www.futureinfood.ie.

Winter Resource Efficiency Seminars - 'Resource Efficiency in the Food Industry.'

1. The Gibson Hotel, Dublin, on Tuesday, 18 November. 2. The Killeslin Hotel, Portlaoise, on Wednesday, 19 November. See events at www.greenbusiness.ie.

Showcase on Water Efficiency (STEM Networks): Friday, 7 November, 9am - 1pm at Fofanny Dam, Bryansford, Newcastle. See 'events' at www.stemproject.ie.

Environmental design of non-residential buildings (workshop): Thursday, 20 November at Dublin Chamber of Commerce venue. Early bird fee applies up to 31 October. See 'events' at www.igbc.ie.

SUSTAINABILITY SNIPPETS

Ideas and energy generated at Ballybay Wetlands

On Saturday last, members & friends of Transition Monaghan gathered at Ballybay Wetlands Centre, to share ideas and brainstorm ways in which we in Co. Monaghan can take practical steps to influence our future, positively, in the face of the global challenges of the 21st century. The gathering, which took place began with a serious yet humorous presentation from Michael Connolly on the ways in which we can leverage the challenges and changes facing us to secure a prosperous and balanced way of life in our community.

The attendees, representing a diverse range of backgrounds, groups and ages discussed ways in which global issues can be practically addressed at local level. Many excellent and worthwhile ideas were presented, including: promoting sustainable sewage and grey water treatment systems, seminars on low energy housing, skills workshops, social enterprise promotion and boosting biodiversity and food security through fruit and nut tree plantations. These ideas, will serve to generate an action plan for Transition Monaghan over the coming years, to work towards, in collaboration with other groups and individuals in our community. The ability and speed at which the ideas can be translated into reality, of course, depends on the time and energy of those involved, as well as resources available. It is hoped that we will be working soon on a low energy housing seminar, as well as fruit & nut tree planting.

Transition Monaghan is an open and collaborative community group, and therefore we always welcome new members and ideas from individuals and groups in the community. Therefore, if you feel particularly passionate about one of the above ideas (or any other project you are involved in), we would be delighted to hear from you and discuss ways to move these forward. Please feel free to contact Mícheál on 086 865 2724 or e-mail transitionmonaghan@gmail.com

Morgan Freeman Narrates 'The Greatest Story of our Generation'
The acclaimed actor Morgan Freeman has used his iconic voice to narrate a short film which tells the story of the Earth up until today. With some beautiful scenes of earth's wonders and some harrowing ones of the destruction we have caused, Freeman highlights the huge impact that humans have had on the planet in a relatively short period of time.

Freeman starkly states that we are in danger of extinction if we do not change our ways, and calls for urgent collective action to halt this demise. Despite the huge challenges facing us, Freeman believes that we can apply our ingenuity to build a better future, in harmony with the planet. He calls on each and one of us to do what we can to reduce our impact on the planet, without waiting for leadership on the national or international stage. He says that progress is underway and that "the more we do the more it will help the earth rebuild itself", and it "will take all of us through actions large and small." The video,

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which is worth watching and sharing, can be viewed at www.filmsforaction.org by searching "Morgan Freeman Narrates the Greatest Story of our Generation." The video concludes with an uplifting call to action: "This is our only home, you can choose today to make a world of difference."

Transition Monaghan is a voluntary community initiative promoting local and global sustainability.

For more information see www.transitionmonaghan.org or email transitionmonaghan@gmail.com.

Anyone interested in assisting in the compilation of this column including noticeboard, please email a message to the same address.



Marty & Joanne Brennan of My Organics, who were awarded 'Best Fresh Product Award' at the National Organic Awards.



Some of the participants pictured at the Transition Monaghan workshop. From left: Michael Connolly, Raymond Palmer, Dearbhla Lenehan, Charlotte Herron, Chrissie Walker, Anja Nolan, Margaret Palmer, Mícheál Callaghan. Missing from pic: Emer Brennan, Noel Clinton. Photographer Liam Murtagh.