



# The Green Door

The Green Door is a monthly newsletter of sustainable living geared to present and future homeowners.

March/April 2006

*"The remarkable thing about television is that it permits several million people to laugh at the same joke and still feel lonely."*

*- T.S. Eliot*

## Television-Greener Choices

No doubt about it- television, interactive video games and the internet can be an excellent source of education. Especially when we search out television programs that reinforce our values or that foster our interests. So we heard about these programs and wanted to share them with you.

### design: e<sup>2</sup>

"A television series that explores new ideas for living on earth", releases on PBS in June 2006, narrated by Brad Pitt.

**e<sup>2</sup>: the economics of being environmentally conscious** is an HD television series that explore the living vitality of the environment. Eight different topics- from sustainable architecture to water culture to alternative energy to organic farming to recycled clothing and more- are presented in depth in thirty-minute episodes, challenging us to live smarter, live greener and live with the future in mind.

**design** launches the e2 series and introduces innovative leaders and technologies driving sustainable practices in the buildings where we live, work and play. Through **design**, and future series- **water, energy, food, transportation, botanicals, textiles** and **health- e<sup>2</sup>** demonstrates that living in harmony with nature is not only a matter of progress; it's a matter of survival [www.design-e2.com/](http://www.design-e2.com/).

## Building Green

Producers Michael Mattioli and Kevin Contreras of Special Finish Films, present "**Building Green**," the PBS home improvement television series about creating gorgeous homes that are healthier, more energy efficient, and better for the environment. Every phase of sustainable construction is presented by host Kevin Contreras, who explores green building from all angles. Segments like "**Saving Green**" and "**Easy Steps**" show viewers what they can do in real world circumstances to make choices to build green.

Kevin Contreras grew up building with his father, in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and spent the past three years building a state-of-the-art straw bale home in Santa Barbara, California. That home is the featured subject of the first 13 episodes of the Building Green TV series. Also a professional actor for nearly a decade, Kevin is articulate and engaging. Kevin brings an authentic passion for building that includes progressive values, products and designs.

"It's in my blood, I just can't stop it," sums up Kevin's drive for the excitement of living life in more environmentally friendly ways. He currently consults residential and commercial builders on their developing projects. Visit [www.buildinggreentv.com](http://www.buildinggreentv.com) for more information and to see the different information each episode will discuss. PBS release Earth Day 2006.

## Natural Heroes

"The first national television series of independent films on the environment. **Watch. Be Inspired. Get Involved**".

All over the world, ordinary citizens are fighting for clean water, protecting endangered species, and cleaning up their communities one abandoned lot at a time. **Natural Heroes** highlights these efforts and shows what is possible when people get personally involved.

The first season of **Natural Heroes** aired on 60 public television stations across the country last year, and the thirteen episodes of Season Two are expected to reach even more viewers when they start airing this spring. Episodes include: **It's not Just Empty Space**, a visually stunning and poetic appeal by Dr. David Suzuki to reconnect humans with the natural world. **A Child's Garden of Peace**, the story of a group of Brazilian street kids transforming a wasteland. **Returning Home**, about the successful restoration of a bird colony after a devastating oil spill off the California coast. PBS release Earth Month 2006. For more information visit [www.greentreks.org/naturalheroes/index.asp](http://www.greentreks.org/naturalheroes/index.asp).

## Let KCTS Know What You Like!!

Thank you for your interest in KCTS, the Public Network. None of the programs you mentioned are scheduled to air anytime in the near future. I will forward a request that they be aired on to our programming department, which relies on **viewer input when making future programming decisions**.

You might be interested in the upcoming program "Global Focus: The New Environmentalists," which will air on our station on Sunday, April 16, at 4 PM. This program features portraits of the recipients of the 2005 Goldman Environmental Prize. Thank you for writing.

Best regards,

**Ariel Burnett**

**Viewer Services Representative**

**KCTS Television**

[ServV@kcts.org](mailto:ServV@kcts.org)

*“Nature does have manure and she does have roots as well as blossoms, and you can't hate the manure and blame the roots for not being blossoms” - Buckminster Fuller*

## Time for Gardening-Let's Start with Soil

Healthy soil is the foundation of a healthy society. Just like a healthy person who rarely, if ever, needs medicine, healthy soil rarely needs synthetic chemical pesticides and fertilizers.

One of the most important things to do to improve your garden is to test then amend your soil to bring it up to the proper pH level. Do-it-yourself pH kits are available at most garden centers. A soil's pH value indicates the acidity or alkalinity and can affect the availability of some nutrients to plants. The ideal pH level for fertile soil is 7.0, which is considered neutral. For most edible plants, a pH range of 5.5 to 7.5 is good. Amendments can be added to bring the soil closer to neutral, but organic matter, especially compost, tends to neutralize soil over time.

How well soil supports plant life determines its fertility. Three basic nutrients are essential to plants: nitrogen (n), phosphorus (p) and potassium (k). There are lots of good natural organic fertilizers available. There is no reason to use something that isn't natural. A slow-release fertilizer such as Milorganite is great. It will add organic matter to your soil instead of depleting it like synthetics.

As the structure of a soil is made more granular and crumbly by decomposing organic matter, the soil absorbs moisture that would otherwise run off, causing erosion and a loss of nutrients in the process. Good soil structure provides channels through which water and air can filter to greater depths. Organic matter in the soil also ensures a continuous food source for soil organisms. As the organisms decompose the organic materials, they help maintain good soil structure, making the soil a more favorable place for root development. One indicator of healthy soil is the number of earthworms it supports. When a lot of organic matter is present, earthworms abound.

To improve the soil structure, or tilth, add organic matter in the form of compost, aged animal manures, green manures (cover crops), mulches or peat moss. Because most soil life and plant roots are located in the top 6 inches of soil, concentrate on this upper layer. Grass clippings, manure, or fertilizer should be incorporated to provide the extra nitrogen required to help break down dry organic materials or yard waste such as shredded leaves, crop residues, straw, and similar materials.

For soil that is primarily clay or sand, or that has a hard surface crust (water runs off), or is compacted, incorporate 2 to 3 inches of organic matter in the top few inches of soil and mulch liberally for several years. Also, plant green manures (cover crops) each winter until the soil is improved. Legumes such as peas, vetches, clovers and beans are often chosen for the added benefit of nitrogen fixation. It is very important to till green manures into the soil BEFORE they go to seed or they become weeds.

In time the reward will be soil that is dark, rich and crumbles in your hand and your plants will love you for it.

**Seattle Tilth “Improve Your Soil”**, <http://www.seattletilth.org/resources/soil>. Also check out the great classes and workshops Seattle Tilth offers.

**Seattle Public Utilities “Growing Healthy Soil”**, [http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/util/static/GROWINGHE\\_200311261701557.pdf](http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/util/static/GROWINGHE_200311261701557.pdf)

On April 13th we were fortunate enough to attend the first Seattle screening of HBO's **TOO HOT NOT TO HANDLE** with Mayor Greg Nichols. This is definitely a film everyone should see. Executive Producer, Laurie David, explained that the driving passion in making this documentary, was to try to reach as many people as possible with the urgency of what's going on, and how we're impacting our climate. This cautionary documentary, **TOO HOT NOT TO HANDLE**, offers a guide to the effects of global warming in the United States and leaves viewers with a renewed sense of empowerment. **Premieres on Earth Day, Saturday, April 22 at 7:00pm ET/PT.** Visit [http://www.hbo.com/docs/programs/toohot/?ntrack\\_para1=leftnav\\_category1](http://www.hbo.com/docs/programs/toohot/?ntrack_para1=leftnav_category1) for more information.

## 2006 Northwest Sustainability Conference

### “Building Community Healing the Planet”

This conference is intended for anyone interested in creating a more ecologically sustainable world.

Sessions will be facilitated by regional experts emphasizing "everyday sustainability" for individuals, as well as best practices for business, government, and industry.

Sessions include:

**"The Eco-Consumer: How to Promote a Balance Between Consuming and Conserving",**  
**"Bioregional Herbalism and Slow Medicine: Relishing Our Medicinal Roots"**

and much, much more.

**Mountaineers Conference Center,**  
**300 Third Avenue West,**  
**Seattle, WA**

**April 22 - 24, 2005, 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.**

**EARTH DAY WEEKEND**  
[http://www.nweec.org/schedule\\_sust-400a\\_04-05.htm](http://www.nweec.org/schedule_sust-400a_04-05.htm)

The Green Door is brought to you by Cally Fulton and Danielle Johnson, both Real Estate Associates with GreenWorks Realty, Seattle and by JR Fulton, Architect and LEED Accredited Professional.

To save trees and expand the opportunity to share information, please provide us with your e-mail address and the addresses of others interested in sustainable living.

Please email ideas and submissions to [danielle@greenworksrealty.com](mailto:danielle@greenworksrealty.com).

If you or someone you know would appreciate our real estate services please call-

**Cally Fulton(206)786-5061 or Danielle Johnson(206)679-0185**

**GreenWorks Realty**  
**7406 Greenwood Ave, Suite A**

**206.283.8181 (office)**

**206.781.0043 (fax)**

**greenworksrealty.com**