



**ACTION FOR A
HEALTHY PLANET**

EcoAdvocate

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER TO CREATE
LOCAL SOLUTIONS FOR A HEALTHY PLANET.

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ON ACTERRA.ORG



**Green@Home Completed Their
1,000th Housecall in July 2011!**
Read more about it at www.acterra.org.

How a Visit by Acterra Changed My Life

**A Firsthand Account of How Two Hours with
an Acterra Program Made a Real Difference**

Acterra's Green@Home program recently celebrated its 1,000th in-home energy assessment. By preventing over 1.5 million pounds of carbon emissions from entering the atmosphere, Green@Home is having a significant positive effect on our environment. But it's also about the changes made in individual lives. Nothing illustrates this better than an email we recently received from a Green@Home participant...

The City of Palo Alto Utility Department was rating my utility usage at the 89th percentile. This meant that of 100 homes similar to mine, 88 families were using less electricity and gas than I was!

And I thought I was "green" because I drove a Prius, biked to and from work, used reusable shopping bags, had nine CFL light bulbs in my home, turned off lights as I left rooms, and used power strips on all "vampire" appliances. I was horrified, and very much wanted to know "What was wrong?"

I couldn't think of anything more that I could do to reduce my utility usage without negatively affecting my lifestyle. So I called Acterra.

Well, their Green@Home team came, and my percentile ratings in the following three months were 39, 21, and 38! This is a reduction of 50 to 78 points. WOW, am I impressed. Acterra's suggestions, ideas, and facts have changed my life and my utility usage.

The things I changed due to their visit have not radically changed my lifestyle, meaning that I am not suffering at all due to the changes, but they have made a MAJOR change to my impact on the Earth, the atmosphere, and my environment.

THANK YOU ACTERRA!

[Here's some of what the Acterra volunteers recommended I change] to accomplish this huge reduction: ...got rid of the freezer appliance completely... reduced hours of the fish-pond pump... converted the garden water fountain to a still-water feature (no pump)... replaced 14 additional light bulbs with CFLs. Of these changes, the one that has made the biggest impact on my life is using the clothes line; it takes more time than throwing the items into the drier; but I LOVE the smell of sun/air dried clothes.

Overall, this effort to reduce my "carbon footprint" has been one of the most inspiring, hope producing, positive experiences in the last 10 years. And most of the credit goes to Acterra's Green@Home program. I hope Acterra continues to exist for many years so that other residents can have this wonderful experience.

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2012 BUSINESS ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS – CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Calling all green business champions! Does your company or organization have an outstanding environmental record, program, building, or product? If so, you may be eligible to apply for a 2012 Business Environmental Award and receive public recognition for your leadership. The 2012 categories are: Environmental Project, Environmental Innovation, Sustainable Built Environment and the Acterra Award for Sustainability.

Please note our new application deadlines. **November 15, 2011** is the early-bird deadline to complete the online registration form, and all applications are due on **Friday, December 9, 2011** at 11:59 pm.

Also new this year: Contra Costa county businesses are now eligible to apply.

Applications are available at www.acterra.org/bea. We look forward to learning about your exemplary environmental achievements!



YOUR MEMBERSHIP AT WORK

Do you know how important you are to Acterra? You are everything! We couldn't inspire our Silicon Valley community to live sustainably without you. Here are just a few of the recent accomplishments your membership has made possible...

- Acterra is leveraging technology to inspire residents—especially those in houses with energy use above average—to tackle their energy bills, reducing wasted energy with little impact on household operations. Launched in Spring 2011, Acterra's **High Energy Homes** program serves five towns using innovative software and data from the resident's SmartMeter to provide a quick, online home energy analysis and customized recommendations for cutting wasted energy. So far, the participants are reducing their energy use by an average of 20%.



On September 23, Equinox 2011, Acterra had a wonderful Volunteer Appreciation celebration. Everyone had fun, sharing a meal, dancing to the rhythm of live music, hiking, and connecting with each other at the beautiful grounds of Foothills Park.

- Acterra **Stewardship** is expanding its work in Palo Alto with students from Gunn High School and Barron Park neighborhood residents through a new creekside restoration in the Matadero Creek Watershed.
- The **Stewardship** program is further developing its expansion into "urban ecology"—building sustainable habitats in urban spaces and homes—through recently installed native gardens at Lucie Stern Community Center and the Palo Alto School District's Science Resource Center. These gardens will be an education tool for local youth from Herbert Hoover Elementary School and J.L. Stanford Middle Schools.
- Acterra's **Be the Change** Environmental Leadership training will reach new audiences when it is offered through UCSC Extension Silicon Valley during the Spring 2012 session.
- A new crew of **Green@Home** volunteers are lining up to serve their neighbors in the Winchester area of San Jose, thanks to a grant from the City of San Jose's Silicon Valley Energy Watch program. Acterra's first foray with Green@Home into the nation's 10th largest city is part of a pilot program that aims to use behavior change approaches to save energy. Since our Green@Home program has been using social marketing and behavioral approaches for the past four years, we fit easily into the grant guidelines, and we are looking forward to building new relationships in San Jose.

Acterra members like you make it happen. **THANK YOU!**

NOW IS THE BEST TIME TO GIVE

Your gift could be doubled!

Angel Circle Challenge Grant

With your help, \$50,000 is within reach to help inspire new people put the environment first.

New gifts of \$1,000 and above will be matched dollar-for-dollar through December 31.

Will you take the challenge? Acterra Board Treasurer Bart Westcott and his wife Nancy Westcott have bet \$25,000 that you will. At stake, with their challenge plus your gifts, is a total of \$50,000—and Acterra’s ability to improve the environmental health of Silicon Valley.

Increasing our level of community involvement is a top priority at Acterra. We need to ramp up our capacity to meet the needs of our Silicon Valley community. And recent reductions in government budgets only compound the problem.

This challenge grant from the Westcotts aims to spur current members to increase their giving, by offering people who care about the mission of Acterra a chance to double the impact of their gift.

Established Programs Burdened by Demand

The need for Acterra’s services is red-hot. Our habitat restoration workdays are full, numbers are way up on requests for energy-saving services, and we receive calls every day from schools and community groups who are clamoring to participate in our most popular programs. We’re having difficulty meeting the demand.

The Acterra Stewardship Program receives a record 3-4 requests per week from groups who want to volunteer and learn. Last year more than 2,500 youth and adults participated in this one program alone—our most ever.

Acterra is one of the only Silicon Valley organizations consistently offering active, outdoor learning opportunities for schoolchildren and youth groups. With your support, we can be sure to meet the needs of students and community groups in our area.

Innovative New Programs Address Emerging Issues

Acterra’s hallmark is inspiring people to live green through thoughtfully-crafted programs that meet the region’s emerging environmental needs. But we need more resources to serve more people.

Consider Acterra’s newest program, High Energy Homes. We are reducing residential greenhouse gas emissions through an innovative online program for homes where energy use is three times above average. Participating residents are saving as much as \$500 per month—and thousands of pounds of CO₂ emissions each year. Yet we need to increase participation in the program. That requires greater staff and volunteer capacity.

Why? Getting people to take the time to adopt sustainable practices is hard work. And we know you believe that it’s work worth doing. We need your support to make it happen! Will you help us?

Acterra gratefully acknowledges Bart and Nancy Westcott for their generous \$25,000 Angel Circle Challenge grant.



Harvest Brunch speaker and Palo Alto High School student, Jessica Tam and her family enjoying the event.

ACTERRA NOTABLES

Thank-yous, hurrahs, and other notable Acterra News

Acterra thrives with the leadership of our exceptional Board of Directors. In recent months, we have been delighted to welcome three new members.

Edith Eddy was, until recently, the executive director of the Compton Foundation for 21 years. She also serves on the board of the National Wildlife Refuge Association, as well as PRBO Conservation Science, based in Petaluma, CA. Edith has previously served as chair of the Management Committee of the Environmental Grant-makers Association.



She was also lead founder of the Funders Network on Population, Reproductive Health and Rights, and one of the founders of the Peace and Security Funders Group.

Mark Ostrau is a partner at Fenwick & West LLP and co-chair of the firm’s Cleantech Group and Antitrust and Unfair Competition Group. Mark was an economics major at Yale, where he founded a student group promoting energy efficiency. He received his law degree from Stanford in 1985. He has served on the board of the Eichler Swim & Tennis Club, TheatreWorks and Congregation Beth Am.



Gerald Patrick has served on many non-profit boards including the VMC Foundation (founder and President Emeritus) and the Elkhorn Slough Foundation (Chairman). He graduated with honors and distinction, Phi Beta Kappa, from Wesleyan University, and has pursued a varied career in the corporate and non-profit sectors, including a private consulting practice with Patrick & Associates. Outside interests include creative writing, sculpting, and sailing.



ALL GIFTS INSPIRE OTHERS TO PUT THE PLANET FIRST

And New Gifts of \$1,000 and Up
Are Matched Dollar for Dollar

Make your most generous gift TODAY!
Use the enclosed envelope or visit
www.acterra.org/donate.

CHECK OUT OUR NEWLY RELEASED ANNUAL REPORT ON OUR WEBSITE!



THE LEGALESE

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ENTER TO WIN A FREE COPY OF SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA NATIVE PLANTS FOR THE GARDEN

Acterra Publishes First-of-its-Kind Bay Area Native Plant Guide



Calling all native plant lovers! Acterra has published the region's first-ever guide to native plants, *San Francisco Bay Area Native Plants for the Garden*. Featuring beautiful, full color photos and vivid descriptions, plus landscape and plant list suggestions, this guide is a beautiful resource. It also makes a thoughtful gift.

Guides are \$12 each. To get your copy, visit Acterra's Environmental Library and Resource Center, in the Peninsula Conservation Center at 3921 E. Bayshore Road in Palo Alto, Monday through Thursday between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm.

Enter online to win one of five free copies!

This contest is available exclusively to Acterra members like you—just one of the many ways we want to say thanks.

Visit www.acterra.org/ecoadvocate_contest/ by November 30 to sign up. Winners will be selected at random on December 1.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit www.acterra.org for information on these upcoming events in your community.

Green@Home Events:

Energy Efficiency Do-It-Yourself Workshop, *October 27*

Volunteer Training in San Jose, *November 9 and 16*

Stewardship Events:

Arastradero Night Hike, *October 29*

Science Resource Center Planting Day, *October 29 & December 3*

Matadero Creek Restoration, *November 5*

Rain Barrel Building Workshop, *November 5*

Los Altos Redwood Grove Workday, *November 12 & December 10*

Arastradero Workdays, *November 12, November 19, December 10, December 17*

Ethnobotany Workshop with Dr. Richard Baugh, *November 13*

"Late Fall Sampler" Educational Hike, *December 11*

Community Build of Daniel McCormick's Watershed Sculpture at Adobe Creek, *January 13-16*

"Weed Warriors" at Arastradero Preserve, *every Wednesday, 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm*