



JECO
The Jewish Ecological Coalition

Upcoming event

Sunday 12th February – 10:30am

In honour of Tu Bishvat (New Year of the Trees)

Permaculture for Everyone!

Presented by Julian Waksberg

1 Cranham St, Caulfield

Gold coin donation requested

**Please let us know if you are thinking of coming
so we can organise enough seating.**



Recent activities

Our AGM at G-Store – by Tamara Taylor



He may not be selling Kosher food or Jewish books, but Dion Epstein considers his G-Store to be equally important for those wishing to maintain a Jewish way of life. His business, now ten years old, was born from the conviction that it is incumbent upon us as Jews to live sustainably to ensure our children and grandchildren inherit a clean and healthy environment so they can enjoy a world full of wonderful and fascinating ecosystems and biodiversity. As a way of responding to this environmental challenge, Dion created the G-Store - a one-stop shop providing technological solutions for reducing energy, water and waste consumption.

As guest speaker at our AGM in November, held at the G-Store itself, Dion was certainly well-received by his audience. Through his demonstration of products for lighting, heating, cooling and water storage he quickly dispelled the oft-held myth that reducing one's carbon footprint means a less comfortable existence. He compared the pros and cons of different products such as evaporative cooling and refrigerated air-conditioning, emphasising that the final decision has to be based on individual needs - something his salespeople are well qualified to give advice on.

Unsurprisingly, the Israeli innovations were of particular interest to this audience, especially a window film originally developed to prevent windows shattering during scud missile attacks in the 1991 Iraq war that has the added benefit of keeping your house cooler in summer, and a WiFi-controlled watering system that responds to the current weather data and individual plant requirements.

The G-Store is not just for the environmentally conscious, but also for those keen to cut down on rising fuel costs. With the right combination of products it's possible to live almost entirely off-grid

and slash up to 80% of energy bills, and simple measures such as installing underfloor insulation can reduce energy costs by one-third.

If you still need reassuring that going green doesn't mean going without, see for yourself at the G-Store, 1095 Dandenong Road, East Malvern.

Mitzvah day recycling

Our 'reverse garage sale' on Mitzvah Day sparked a great deal of community interest, and the garage in which we were collecting bicycles, computer equipment, clothing, mobile phones, and much more was almost filled to capacity. It was gratifying to see that, given the opportunity, so many people were more than happy to bring along things for reuse, repurposing and recycling.



An important part of this activity was the educational aspect – to let people know what can be done with the items we were collecting, so that we can all work towards reducing landfill and making more responsible use of the earth's limited resources.

Please note: Some of the collection points listed on the flyer we produced for this activity have already changed. We have now uploaded the amended list to a special page on our website www.jeco.org.au, and will try to keep it updated as new information comes to hand.

One story from Mitzvah Day

When we took the 10 or so bicycles we collected to Bicycles for Humanity, we found out more about what happens to them:

- Some of the bikes collected are refurbished in Melbourne, providing work and training. These bikes are then sold in Australia, and the money goes towards covering the shipping costs of the other bikes that are sent to Africa.
- Volunteers prepare bicycles for shipping by removing pedals and handlebars. This enables the most bicycles possible to be sent in each shipping container.
- When a shipping container is full, it's sent to its destination in Africa. There it becomes a bike workshop, providing employment, skills, training, business, opportunity and economic development for the community in which it's placed.
- The sustainable transport provided by the bicycles enables better access to health care, education, economic opportunity and wider community – a bike means you can travel twice as far, twice as fast, and carry four times the load.

If you have an adult-size bike in reasonable condition that you would like to donate, take it to any Bicycle Superstore (like the one in Dandenong Rd, Carnegie).

For more information see <http://www.bicyclesforhumanity.com/>



Are these activities of interest to you?

Koala Clancy Foundation



The [Koala Clancy Foundation](#) is a not for profit incorporated association set up to support the wild koalas of the Western Plains of Victoria, particularly around the You Yangs and Brisbane Ranges west of Melbourne.

The Foundation began in July 2015 in response to a 46% decline in koalas in the You Yangs over the seven years from 2007 to 2014. The foundation takes over and supports the conservation and research work of Echidna Walkabout Nature Tours, a social enterprise nature tour operator.

The Foundation runs Koala Conservation days twice a month at which participants search for koalas, monitor their behaviour, make a home for wild koalas by removing weeds from their habitat and maybe even plant and nurture new trees, etc - all in the company of a highly experienced Koala Researcher. Cost is \$20 per person.

If you would be interested in joining a JECO activity day at the Foundation please email info@jeco.org.au.

Visit to a recycling plant

What happens to all that 'stuff' that you put in your recycling bin?

If there's enough interest, we will organise an excursion to recycling facility so you can find out! Unfortunately this would need to be on a weekday, but if there is sufficient interest we can even arrange for a mini-bus to take us all there with reduced environmental impact. To register your interest, email info@jeco.org.au. Please include phone contact details.



Snippets

A green start-up technology company has surprised scientists by producing a biofuel from old rubber tyres that can run turbo-charged diesel engines while reducing emissions by 30 per cent. Read more at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-11-28/new-life-for-old-tyres-as-biofuel/8064350>

Sweden runs out of garbage and is forced to import from neighbours to run its waste-to-energy incineration program that heats and provide electricity to hundreds of thousands of homes. Read more at <http://www.mnn.com/lifestyle/recycling/blogs/sweden-runs-out-of-garbage-forced-to-import-from-norway>

Israel's drive for energy independence is creating a wave of sustainable start-ups, like the Arava Power Company that's planning the Middle East's first commercial solar farm. Read more at <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/israel-energy-sustainable-start-ups>

Israel will soon be harnessing sunshine with the world's tallest solar tower. Read more at <http://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-harnessing-sunshine-with-worlds-tallest-solar-tower/>

22 ways to cut your energy bill – see <http://www.domain.com.au/advice/22-ways-to-cut-your-energy-bills-before-spending-on-solar-panels-20160718-gq6tew/>

What's the Victorian Government doing to tackle climate change? See <http://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/>

Read a Jewish Australian commentary on all things related to climate change and sustainability at The Common Tree <https://thecommontree.com/>

How a common chemical in sunscreen is damaging our coral reefs – see <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/greatmomentsinscience/how-a-common-chemical-in-sunscreen-is-damaging-our-coral-reefs/7810090>

If you have any relevant activities you would like to promote through JECO eNews, please email details to info@jeco.org.au.

You can now make an online tax deductible donation to JECO at <http://www.givenow.com.au/jeco>.

JECO is on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/JECO.AUS>.

JECO works to deepen the Jewish community's commitment to caring for the earth. We believe there is a religious as well as a moral obligation to protect the environment. To this end we work with Jewish, secular and multi-faith groups in supporting activities that promote sustainability. We are not affiliated to, nor promote or endorse any political stance or organisation.