

## Get Green!

### Group encourages sustainable communities

By SHARON LONGMAN  
Special to The Oakland Press

The Green Team of Huron Valley is focused on people working together to keep their community clean and green and growing a greener future.

Founder of the team Linda Crawford remembers how it started and how far it has come.

MILFORD

What began as an Earth Day event in 2007 led to successful fundraisers at Five Lakes Grill in Milford to finance the 2008 and 2009 Earth Day events and a partnership with Carl's Family YMCA in Milford. They moved from just an Earth Day event to focusing on the greening of Huron Valley.

Crawford, 56, a resident of Highland Township, said right now they are focused on the Transition Towns presentations that team member Jennifer Kovach is making quarterly at the YMCA. The team sent Kovach to a Transition Towns seminar in Ann Arbor, and she has been sharing what she learned there about building a sustainable green community.

Kovach, 36, a resident of White Lake Township and environmental dancer, described Transition Towns as sustainable communities that can learn to meet their own needs and overcome the combined challenges of energy, environment and economy. The idea is for these communities to thrive on their own resources, growing



Photo courtesy of Linda Crawford

The Green Team of Huron Valley founders Linda and Charlie Crawford at the Earth Day 2008 event in Milford's Central Park.

their own food, using their own building materials and training their youths for jobs they can find in their own community.

"They had a lot of good examples of communities that are so successful with reinvesting their industrial dependence into the community itself to help support each other," Kovach said. "It was amazing, not only to see that it's possible, but that communities that make an effort together to do this are very successful, and it really lifts the well-being of all the community members."

Crawford has had her own business, Crawford Wellness Associates, for more than 20

years and she markets environmentally safe cleaning products.

It's always been important to her to educate and let people know about using safer things for the environment — their own personal environment and once it goes down the drain, safe for the planet too.

"It's so easy to point our fingers at big industry and say they polluted the water," Crawford said. "We know for a fact that 70 percent of the pollution in the Huron River comes from us through residential cleaners that are dumped into septic and then into the rivers and lakes. What if everyone used a cleaner that breaks down

#### FYI

For more information about the Green Team of Huron Valley, call Linda Crawford (248) 889-2734. Green team e-mail is hurongreen@yahoo.com.

To learn more, visit www.localharvest.org, www.transitionoaklandcounty.org and www.landchoices.org.

Jennifer Kovach invites people interested in environmental dancing and musicians to e-mail her at jenlorakova@aol.com.

Nobel Peace Prize winner for the Environment Professor Wangari Maathai of Kenya, and California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Plans for the group include sharing their library of environmental movies with the community at the YMCA. Crawford said offering these movies that show environmentally different ways and views can make a difference.

"We're very happy to have a partnership with the YMCA. They have the space, they're willing and they want to become a green building. We can help them. We've walked the building and given them tips on the greening of their building," Crawford said.

Crawford said Green Team hopes to get a neighborhood on board as a models for a sustainable community, and have a community garden.

Other tips for improving the environment include the use of energy-efficient light bulbs and bringing your own bag to the grocery store.

"Being part of the Green Team means greener possibilities for our beautiful Huron Valley community through community education and awareness by bringing together all the pockets of people and groups working toward the same result," Crawford said.

The Green Team of Huron Valley is looking for new team members.

#### AROUND OAKLAND

##### WEST BLOOMFIELD TWP.

###### Road project begins

Resurfacing of Orchard Lake Road between 14 Mile Road and Maple Road will begin Monday, Aug. 3. The project — a partnership between the Road Commission for Oakland County and West Bloomfield Township — is expected to be completed near Oct. 2. The cost is just more than \$1 million. During construction, to be performed by Ajax Paving Industries of Troy, one lane will remain open in each direction, and three lanes will be closed at all times. Access will be provided at virtually all times to all businesses, homes and side streets. Motorists should expect delays during construction, especially during rush-hour periods, said road commission officials. The project will include repairing some joints in the existing road and some minor drainage improvements. Then, 3 1/2 inches of new asphalt will be applied to the entire road.

##### WATERFORD TWP.

###### Alumni invited to reunion

Waterford Township High School's All-Classes Reunion will be at the Waterford Elks from 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. Aug. 22. All alumni are welcome. The event costs \$20 a person in advance, \$25 at the door. Dress is "snappy casual." The fee includes light hors d'oeuvres about 9 p.m. and music. Cash bar is available. Attendees are asked to bring photos of their children and grandchildren. The club is at 2100 Scott Lake Road in Waterford. Space is limited. Call (248) 698-9030 or e-mail [tmcallister@juno.com](mailto:tmcallister@juno.com).

— Compiled by staff writer Carol Hopkins

##### WATERFORD TWP.

###### Company plans reunion

Alumni of the Warren-based F. Joseph Lamb Co. will have a reunion at noon Wednesday, Aug. 19, at Wing Lauk Chinese Restaurant, 5664 Dixie Hwy. For more information, e-mail [wkozlowski06@comcast.net](mailto:wkozlowski06@comcast.net) or call (586) 601-6465.

— From staff reports

##### BLOOMFIELD HILLS

###### PR agency adds official

Jim Meloche has joined AutoCom Associates, a Bloomfield Hills public relations agency providing communications support for automotive and high-technology businesses. Meloche has won many awards and brings 25 years experience, which include president of French & Rogers and senior vice president of Smith-Winchester. As senior vice president of marketing at AutoCom Associates, he will develop and manage the agency's nonautomotive public relations business, as well as offer marketing communications services beyond public relations to both automotive and nonautomotive clients.

— Special writer Jennifer Galbraith

#### CORRECTION

It is the policy of The Oakland Press to correct or clarify stories. We urge readers to call the news desk at (248) 745-4632 if they have personal knowledge of errors.

## Water workshops focus on self-confidence

By STEPHANIE STEINBERG  
Special to The Oakland Press

Amanda Butler transforms lives by taking people to swim with dolphins.

Butler, a Southfield resident, started the empowerment organization Keenawah & Associates LLC to inspire people to lead happy lives.

"The organization is all about helping people discover who they truly are," Butler said.

After being a corporate executive for 20 years, Butler dreamed of starting a new career, but she didn't know which direction to take.

SOUTHFIELD

"I think a lot of people are in that situation," she said. "When I left corporate, I felt I didn't know who I was. I only identified myself as a vice president of marketing of sales. I didn't know what I wanted to do next."

Butler said she felt there wasn't a system available to help people make life transitions involving careers or relationships, so she decided to form an organization herself.

Ten years later, Butler has redirected the lives of hundreds people ages 35 to 70. She teaches workshops and classes that entail healing mental and physical states and building confidence.

"Now they're controlling their life versus life controlling them," said Butler of her clients. "They walk away feeling focused, energized and successful — like they can accomplish anything they want to do."

From Sunday, Aug. 9, to Sunday, Aug.

#### FYI

Classes are at the Life Learning Center 3121 Rochester Road, Royal Oak. E-mail Amanda Butler at [Amanda@keenawah.com](mailto:Amanda@keenawah.com) or visit [www.keenawah.com](http://www.keenawah.com) for a schedule of events.

16, Butler will take six people to Bimini in the Bahamas where they will swim with dolphins and undergo emotional, physical and spiritual healing.

Butler said she uses the energy of swimming with dolphins to encourage people to get in touch with their feelings. "The dolphins help someone open up their heart because dolphins are all about pure love, acceptance, joy, play and being in the present moment," she said.

Butler added she loves watching the transformations that occur in people after the experience, citing a man who completely changed his negative attitude. "Everything was doomsday to him," she said. "When he came out of the water, he was totally a different man. His verbiage, his expression, everything about him was different."

Ferdale resident Margaret Zalac went on Butler's trip to Hawaii about four years ago. After swimming with the dolphins, Zalac said she felt "more aligned" in her own body.

"I became more self-aware, especially swimming with the dolphins in the ocean, I gained more freedom and self-confidence," she said.

Zalac said she also enjoyed walking



Amanda Butler leads a group swim with dolphins during a past trip to Bimini.

in lava fields, where the group watched lava flow into the ocean while Butler led emotional releasing ceremonies intended to eliminate fears.

"It helped us center ourselves," Zalac said, adding that the experience influenced her to get in touch with the fears holding her back in life.

That year, 13 women traveled on the trip. Although she didn't know everyone, Zalac said she became close with all the ladies by the end of the week and still keeps in contact with them today.

This will be Butler's sixth trip taking clients to tropical locations to swim with dolphins.

She calls the getaway "the big journey of unification" and leads workshops on

the trips focused on unifying people with themselves.

"When people can fall in love with themselves and be compassionate about themselves, they can be compassionate and loving with others," she said.

Butler's next workshop in Michigan — titled S.O.S. for Success of Self — will be 7 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 15. The free workshop is geared toward individuals who have lost their jobs, have suffering businesses or are making career changes. Butler will present ways to deal with fears surrounding these issues.

"It's about how you can be empowered during this time and seeing it as an opportunity rather than a detriment," she said.

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