**Have Yourself an Eco-Friendly Holiday Season**

**Gift Buying Tips**
- Make a list of the gifts you need to purchase before you hit the shops. This will help you avoid impulse buys, and instead make thoughtful choices.
- Look for gifts that will help the recipient eliminate plastic waste: keep-cups, stainless steel water bottles, warm-farm kits, etc.
- Gift an experience: event tickets (concerts, sporting events, museum passes), a massage, or a donation to a charity the recipient believes in.
- Consider making gifts for the natural environment: bee hotels, owl nest boxes and bird houses, and native plants are all enjoyable ways to encourage nature.
- When possible, avoid buying online to avoid wasteful packaging.
- Consider whether the recipients will treasure their gifts or end up throwing them away.

**Gift Wrapping Ideas**
- Ditch the sticky tape and synthetic ribbons. Instead, use recycled or repurposed paper (such as the Sunday paper comics) and tie up with fabric ribbons, cotton, or hemp twine.
- Try Japanese fabric wrapping (Furoshiki). The big advantage: two gifts in one!
- Choose gifts that do not need wrapping at all, such as experiences, event tickets or charitable donations.

**More Gift Ideas**
- Make a plastics-alternative gift box
  - Travel bamboo utensil set
  - Beeswax wrap
  - Toilet paper, paper towels, tissue

- It takes more than a few reusable bags to make a change. Consider gifting one or two dozen to really incorporate this into one's shopping routine.
  - Re-usable bags for snacks
  - Re-usable produce bags
  - Mixed size Produce bags

- Give the gift of Bees

- Gifts to help Wild Birds

- And for your Pets
  - 12 sustainable dog toys for under $20 that your pup and the planet will appreciate

- Make a commitment to get involved in a local organization over the holidays or throughout the year. (click each for details)
  - LJCC Cares – Adopt-a-Street, Kids Triathlon, Ronald McDonald House, and more
  - Shalom Park Joint Social Action Programs
  - Jewish Family Services
  - Abraham’s Tent – Room in the Inn
  - Bright Blessings
  - Leaves and Fishes
  - Friendship Trays
  - Ronald McDonald House
  - Restore Habitat for Humanity
  - READ Charlotte – Active Reader Training
  - Heart Tutoring
  - Urban Ministry
  - Julie’s Café

- Maybe you don’t have time to give, but you still want to make a contribution…
  - Dress for Success – donate gently used women’s business attire.
  - Donate Frequent Flier Miles – donate miles through HIAS and Millicent-Migrant

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**Buy Local:** Shop at your local farmers market or pop-up holiday markets for honey, candles, soaps, flowers, wooden pieces, birdhouses, jewelry, local beers, gifts, and more. Click below for some great local suggestions:
- Local, organic spices from Flavor Seed
- Ethically made + sustainably-sourced women’s apparel, accessories & gifts, from Siela Boutique, a local shop for the global good. Located in historic downtown Waxhaw.

**If you have to shop online… choose eco-friendly and upcycled gifts (but, plan ahead so you don’t have to use next day shipping).** Click below for suggested sites:

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"While online shopping is definitely convenient, and there are many positive things that come with it, there’s a price to the environment,” says Miguel Jaller, assistant professor in the civil and environmental engineering department at the University of California, Davis, who writes frequently about sustainable transportation systems. (read more here)

Alternatively decide this is the year to consume less and give more! Consider donating to an organization that speaks to your heart.