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## WSRA Announces 2020 Recyclers of the Year & Recycling Hall of Fame Inductee

*Recipients were recognized at WSRA Awards Ceremony, November 2 and 3, 2020*

WSRA is excited to announce our 2020 Recycler of the Year Award recipients and Recycling Hall of Fame inductees! On Monday, November 2, we honored 9 organizations, businesses and individuals for outstanding recycling achievements. On Tuesday, November 3, we honored 3 individuals for their incredible long-term recycling achievements. Our Recycler of the Year Awards Ceremonies took place as part of our Virtual [40<sup>th</sup> Annual WSRA Conference & Trade Show](#). Recyclers of the Year and Recycling Hall of Fame inductees are chosen by a panel of WSRA members, board members, and Hall of Fame inductees.

### The 2020 WSRA Recyclers of the Year include these outstanding honorees:



#### **Spokane Indians Baseball Club**

##### **WSRA Business Generator, Recycler of the Year**

We are honored to accept this award and be chosen among the recycling leaders in Washington State. We feel that exhibiting environmental responsibility is an important part of our mission to provide affordable, family friendly entertainment. The introduction of our mascot Recycleman in 2009 solidified our commitment to recycling. Since then, we have challenged ourselves to increase recycling each year. Rolling out our Zero Waste Campaign in 2019 propelled us to make considerable strides in sustainability. Just last year, we increased traditional recycling by 29% and organic recycling by 1,834%. We have been a part of the Spokane community since 1903, and will be here for many years to come. We see recycling as an important way to ensure our resilience in this community.



#### **Recycle Dogs of LSWAA, Lopez Island**

##### **WSRA Community Recycler, Recycler of the Year**

Lopez Solid Waste Disposal District (LSWDD) is a community run drop box facility that is renowned for its commitment to its Zero Waste Mission. LSWDD offers self-separated recycling, bales its own recyclables that have a less than 1% contamination rate, has a free store of reusable goods that diverts an average of 24,000 pounds of donations into reuse and recycling per month, and provides for the safe and efficient disposal of household waste through its drop box facility. LSWDD relies on a vast volunteer network in addition to its very limited staff to help accomplish these tasks.

The Recycle Dogs are a dedicated group of committed volunteers who dismantle and densify metal items for more efficient transport to recycling. The Recycle Dogs take apart old BBQ's, stoves and ranges, motors of various capacities, exercise equipment, and small appliances like lawn mowers, amongst many others. They also help sort valuable metals like copper and brass for shipping and sale to recycle markets. In 2019, LSWDD sales to Skagit River Steel and Recycling

for scrap aluminum, copper, brass, stainless steel and zinc totaled 11,000 pounds that the Dogs had separated out and/or prepared for shipment That figure does not include the thousands of pounds of steel that they also separated as they dismantled items for the more valuable metals. The total revenue for sales of these materials was just over \$4,000, including around 70 propane tanks the Dogs processed for recycling.



## Waste Management

### **WSRA Innovation, Recycler of the Year**

Innovating in the digital landscape: social media as a tool for behavior change. The new digital landscape has revolutionized how people get information. In a single community today, people choose a multitude of different channels to get news and information. Powered by technology and an expanding spectrum of social media platforms, this new landscape enables unprecedented choice for how and when we learn and engage. Conversations are shorter, faster, and 24/7. It's an exciting and dynamic time to educate and activate communities to reduce waste and improve recycling. It's also a time of intense competition for mindshare. A primary challenge is capturing the

attention needed to build understanding and foster behavior change. To this challenge, add a global recycling crisis that upended the economics of recycling and created new pressures to reduce recycling contamination. For communities across Washington, where the recycling culture is vibrant and deeply rooted, the crisis prompted confusion about what could be recycled in curbside carts and about the rising cost of recycling. What a challenge! What an opportunity! Waste Management responded in 2019 with innovative, technology-driven programming that created environmental and economic benefits, demonstrated the company's resolute commitment to recycling and public education, and generated learnings transferable for local governments and the industry. This programming strengthened WM's established education and outreach program by innovating and engaging the public via the digital landscape. It involved utilizing 11 social media channels to educate and engage communities in ways that were fun, compelling, and effective in changing behaviors to reduce waste and clean up recycling.



## Second Cycle Community Bike Shop

### **WSRA Nonprofit, Recycler of the Year**

Second Cycle is a non-profit community bike shop in the Hilltop neighborhood in Tacoma, WA. Second Cycle was formed in May 2008 by a group of cyclists in a tiny garage, and has since grown into staple of the Tacoma community. Second Cycle does more than sell bikes and reuse parts. This shop provides youth programming (including leadership development, summer programming, and juvenile detention alternatives), earn a bike programming, and also provides space for women and minorities to come learn how to work on bikes for free. What is truly noteworthy about this organization is how Second Cycle has focused on waste prevention in tandem with empowering its local community. This empowerment starts with teaching the basics on how to fix and repair bikes, and continues as individuals become more confident with fixing and handling their bikes. By

helping reduce waste and getting folks on bikes, Second Cycle is actively working to reduce our carbon emissions and increase the quality of life of current and future generations.





**Dirt Hugger**

**WSRA Nucor Steel Recycling Business, Recycler of the Year**

Dirt Hugger began in 2010 using four grants to build their first site and purchase a first loader. The Oregon-based facility processed 5,000 tons/year of yard debris and fruit. In 2015 they relocated to Washington State, as a 26K TPY facility using four more grants and Kickstarter campaign. Since then they have grown to a 64K TPY negatively aerated site accepting all of City of Vancouver’s commercial food waste and helping support City of Vancouver’s 2019 roll out of residential yard debris with food waste. Dirt Hugger returns the resulting 25,000+ yards per year of Organic Compost to home gardens, farms, orchards, vineyards, and construction projects. They employ 23 people and are an OMRI Listed facility, member of US Composting Council, Seal of Testing Assurance Program, Washington Organics Recycling Council (WORC) and winner of the 2016 Composting Innovation Award from WORC.



**City of Auburn Solid Waste and Recycling**

**WSRA Public Agency, Recycler of the Year**

The City of Auburn Solid Waste & Recycling division provides education on recycling, waste prevention, food scrap collection and the proper disposal of household hazardous waste to residents through a variety of outreach methods such as newsletters, advertising, website announcements, social media, and a staffed educational table. In addition, the City has a cooking oil collection station, “at home” community yard sale event, Styrofoam collection event, and Christmas tree collection event. The City collaborates with the contracted hauler to provide outreach to multifamily and business properties through on-site visits, phone calls, and trainings. The City works closely with Auburn schools to promote environmental education through classroom presentations to elementary students, waste reduction lunchtime activities to secondary students, and participates in various school sustainability programs to reduce waste and recycling contamination. Many Auburn schools participate in the King County Green Schools and Washington Green Schools Programs. Recent program highlights include a weeklong Summer Camp Workshop “Art, Tech and the Great Pacific Garbage Patch”, a five-week Green Living Program workshop for two Auburn King County Neighborhood Houses and a Commercial Business Food Scrap outreach program.



**City of Tacoma**

**WSRA Public Education, Recycler of the Year**

Tacoma’s residential curbside commingled recycling program was significantly impacted by changes in the global recycling industry, resulting in increased expenses to process, ship, and market these materials. These changes were spurred primarily by problems with the materials becoming contaminated both by non-recyclable materials and by cross-contamination from recyclable materials that cannot be effectively sorted into the proper material streams. After many years of calling for reductions in contamination, China closed their doors to imports of most of the materials that they previously accepted, creating a decrease in global demand that hurt the recycling economy. The total impact is approximately \$1.9M per year in unbudgeted expenses for residential curbside recycling alone, which collects over 16,000 tons of recyclable material, annually. Recycling these materials provides a significant benefit to the environment through

conservation of energy and natural resources, reducing the amount of material that goes into a landfill, and providing a reduction of greenhouse gases. To evaluate how to respond to this challenge, City staff identified a range of possible options, and engaged the community over a three-month long effort to education and solicit input from customers on what to do. This effort reached over 10,000 people in the community, including three targeted focus groups and over 7,400 responses to a survey. In addition to public feedback, staff communicated with other local and regional jurisdictions, the Department of Ecology, and several solid waste industry professional associations to gather information about what steps others were taking in response to this industry issue.



To safely ship 8 Remineralization Liquids would utilize at least 3 ft<sup>3</sup> of bubble wrap. With our new recycled cardboard box, we can eliminate bubblewrap entirely and utilize packing peanuts and kraft paper to cushion the lids.

**Uncle Harry’s Natural Products**

**WSRA Retail, Recycler of the Year**

Uncle Harry’s mission statement was updated in 2018 to incorporate "striving for Zero Waste in all facets of our business." So, recycling to us means more than just a blue bin, it means identifying and finding alternatives for items that can easily end up in landfills. Our biggest achievement in 2019 was eliminating non-recyclable materials from our shipping processes - that means no more plastic tape or bubble wrap, even though the majority of our products are in glass jars and bottles. We replaced them with custom cardboard boxes, biodegradable packing peanuts, recycled kraft paper, recyclable water-activated kraft tape, and biodegradable styrofoam made from spent grain and mushrooms. We also give our shipping staff the time to create hand-made cardboard product protection using upcycled materials, turning Zero Waste shipping into a fun game of construction and tetris!



**Green Genius Partnership; Bellevue School District, City of Bellevue, and Wilder Environmental Consulting**

**WSRA Youth Education, Recycler of the Year**

The Bellevue School District (Nancy Larson and Wendy Weyer), City of Bellevue (Erin Hislop and Jennifer Goodhart) and Wilder Environmental Consulting (Sam Wilder- consultant for the City of Bellevue) have partnered since 2003 to reduce waste at all twenty-nine schools in the district. This partnership has incorporated waste reduction, recycling and composting into the culture of each school through tools, policy, continued assistance, education and recognition. District procedures are consistently updated to reduce waste and then taught to Green Genius teams at each school, so they can promote conservation to their school community. A few of the outstanding 2019 achievements of this partnership include:

- a district-wide program requiring all schools to participate in annual resource conservation goals, including forming a Green Genius team and a waste-free lunch challenge.
- all schools using reusable or compostable lunch trays, beginning to phase out straws, and three schools now using reusable utensils.
- Nutrition Services switching from individually wrapped fruits and veggies to serving with tongs at a salad bar.
- staff and students encouraged to take only what they will eat while still fitting into Federal guidelines with the “Pick 3” campaign that was launched in 2019.
- ten schools donating wrapped and unopened food to a local food bank. Approximately 24,000 pounds of food are donated each school year which includes 35,260 cartons of milk.
- all schools sustaining a recycling rate of 50% or higher, with twelve schools higher than 70%.



### **Pete DuBois**

#### **WSRA Individual, Recycler of the Year**

Pete coordinates the Master Composter Recycler program for Clark County, WA. The program intensively trains 30 volunteers annually and an additional 400 community members through their Spring and Fall workshop series. Pete has constructed hundreds of compost piles, built dozens of lasagna compost gardens, maintains 20 worm bins and oversees a large-scale vermicomposting system. Pete processes over 2 tons annually of urban waste (food scraps, coffee grounds, shred paper) at his close-in Vancouver home.



### **Craig H. Benton**

#### **WSRA Hall of Fame**

As an environmental pioneer, eco-entrepreneur, community educator and sustainable development practitioner, Craig has created plans and policies to address critical environmental issues and has translated them into ongoing programs and critical infrastructure for business, non-profits and government. Craig started his career by creating the City of Seattle's Master Composter program with fellow WSRA Hall of Famers Jeff Gage and Carl Woestwin, a program copied by thousands of communities worldwide. In 1985 and 1986, Craig created the first "Recycle Me" and "Give Garbage New Life: Recycle" program themes and logos for both the City of Seattle and King County respectively. In 1987, Craig created the first waste reduction and recycling plan for a US county with a 50% landfill diversion target for King County. This document became the foundation for subsequent county waste management plans setting 65% waste reduction and recycling diversion targets. In 1989, he coordinated the first

commingled recyclable collection program in the US for multi-family dwellings in Tukwila. In 1990, he developed the first quality control and quality assurance testing program for a major composting facility in North America for the City of Seattle and Cedar Grove Composting. In 1998, he installed the first in-vessel composting facility within a US military base at Whidbey Island Naval Air Station. Since 2003, Craig brought the skills and experience gained in Washington State to assist in creating and growing the composting industry on the island of Ireland. As an advocate, Craig also helped raise the money necessary for Washington Citizens for Recycling to assist it in helping to create and pass the Waste Not Washington Act in 1989. He also was prominent in fighting the incinerators proposed for both Seattle and King County in the 1980s, clearing the way for the recycling industry to thrive in their place. From 1994-7, he served on the Clean Washington Center's policy board representing the interests of the biowaste recycling industry. And finally, as a board member, vice president and president of WSRA from 1991-5, Craig worked to improve the organization's annual conference program and institute corporate sponsorships of individual events to increase financial support for the association allowing it to increase staffing levels to meet the industry's growing needs.





### **Pat Campbell**

#### **WSRA Hall of Fame Inductee**

Pat began her career in solid waste and recycling with the City of Centralia in 1990, designing the "Tri-Agency Recycling" program in conjunction with the City of Chehalis and Lewis County. It was the typical 3-bin source-separated system. After a bit of fulltime stay-at-home mothering, she returned to the recycling world in 1996 as a temporary, then job-share Recycling Coordinator partner with Melanie Case, to whom she is eternally grateful for not only the career opportunity, but also a lifelong friendship. In 2002, she accepted the position of Lewis County's Solid Waste Division Manager, and was just beginning a solid waste management plan update (including the transition to commingled curbside recycling), when she relocated to Kitsap County in mid-2007 for an Education/Outreach position, filling the position vacated by Terry Washburn and working closely with Dave Peters - both fellow WSRA HOF'ers. She was quickly promoted that fall to the Division Manager position, where she had the opportunity to work with "a dedicated group of professionals who consistently display a passion and commitment to sustainability." In her time with Kitsap County, she always encouraged staff to participate in WSRA leadership, serve on committees, and take advantage of all the Association has to offer. Thirty years removed from her first step in to the solid waste industry, Pat retired from Kitsap County in February of 2020. When asked about how the WSRA impacted her career, she said, "I am very grateful to the WSRA for the excellent work that they have done through these many years and challenging situations to continue to support recycling efforts throughout the state.

**Congratulations to all 2020 Recycler of the Year Award Recipients! For more information about the WSRA conference and awards presentation, visit [www.wsra.net](http://www.wsra.net) or call 206-622-8425. Award applications are available each January at [www.wsra.net](http://www.wsra.net).**

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The Washington State Recycling Association (WSRA), formed in 1976, provides leadership, networking, advocacy and education to foster the expansion, diversity and economic vitality of recycling in support of sustainable resource management. Its 280 member organizations and over 700 individual members include private, community and government recycling agencies, generators of recyclables, collectors, processors, transporters, broker, commodity markets, recycled content product manufacturers, and others. Contact Washington State Recycling Association, 206-622-8425, [www.wsra.net](http://www.wsra.net).