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## June 2007 Newsletter



### Environmental Stewardship with the Massachusetts Faith Community

# June, 2007 Newsletter

*Vol. 6, Issue 5*

*Welcome to our newest MIP&L members: Edwards Church, Northampton & Christ Church United, Lowell*

Greetings, everyone! Happy (almost) Summer!

As we put together this June newsletter, the sun is shining brightly (oh, for an affordable residential solar energy kit ), it's 85 degrees in the shade and we have shifted from concern over burning oil and keeping the cold air out- to the challenge of keeping it comfortable inside while the sun is blazing outside! (Awnings, anyone?)

This month we spotlight our exciting new partnership with the environmentally-friendly, Cambridge-based GoLoco! (Not just ride sharing- but community building and creation-saving!)

We'll recap our successful 'Global Warming Cafe' at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Natick & get you started with hosting a 'Global Warming Cafe' of your own!

...and we'll continue down the road to redemption with MIP&L's Communications Manager Mary Downes, who has discovered through the 'Global Warming Cafe' that she's a "Carbon BigFoot," but is putting her faith into action by embarking on a greener & more creation-honoring lifestyle!

But first....

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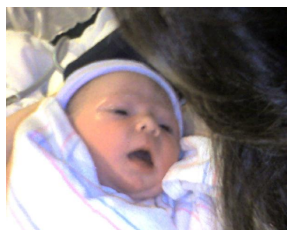
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### Introducing Carly Bennett Larson!

MIP&L's Energy and Environmental Stewardship Analyst, Mark Larson, & wife Meghan welcomed beautiful Carly into the world on June 5, at 8:23 pm. 7 lbs 14 ounces, 21 inches!! She joins big brother David, who is 3. Congratulations to all!

Welcome back to world of the sleep-deprived, Mark!

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### Welcome, too, to our new intern, Andrew Siliski



Andrew will be working with MIP&L this summer to develop a new series of Everyday Environmental Stewardship (EES) opportunities...and will assist MIP&L on site visits to faith communities throughout Massachusetts. Andrew lives with his family in Waban- when he's home from college in Wisconsin- and attends Our Saviour Episcopal Church. (MIP&L staff: clockwise from left: Andrew Siliski, Mark Larson, Mary Downes)

\*\*Check out these [EES examples on our website!](#)

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### Global Warming Cafe a HIT in Natick!

MIP&L and St. Paul's Green Team empowers faith community to be a part of the global warming solution!



More than 50 faithful turned out for the MIP&L Global Warming Cafe, June 10 at St. Paul's. Here's what they did:

- Gathered with people like you, who understand that each individual has a role in minimizing human impact on the earth's climate- and are ready to do something about it!
- Followed the user-friendly workbook, "The Low-Carbon Diet," which guided the group through the process of calculating each individual's carbon footprint.
  - Committed to significantly reducing their household's carbon emissions NOW, by taking specific actions. Simple, clear, do-able.

Interested in attending and/or hosting a Global warming Cafe in your faith community? Contact MIPL's Mark Larson: [Email Mark](#).

Check out the Empowerment Institute website, and learn more! [www.empowermentinstitute.net](http://www.empowermentinstitute.net)

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Another great way to put your faith into action!



announces an exciting new partnership  
with...



...to bring Boston area auto emissions down!

Have you heard of GoLoco yet? It's a new service that helps friends, neighbors and colleagues connect and share rides. GoLoco was started by the same folks who brought you the ZipCar! Read this article about GoLoco in the May 07 issue of [Wired Magazine!](#)

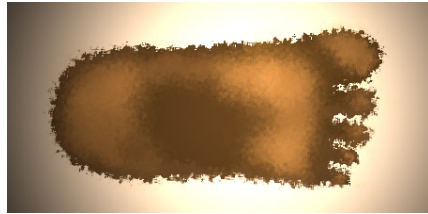
We think GoLoco is a GREAT idea! So MIP&L and GoLoco are teaming up to bring people together,

share rides, and cut CO2!! After all, if we share just one car trip a week (or eliminate one a week), we commuters can reduce our consumption of fossil fuel by 5%!!!

The process is simple:

Go to the GoLoco website ([www.goloco.com](http://www.goloco.com)) to find out how you can sign up. MIP&L's contact at GoLoco is Stephen Oakley. Email Stephen at [spoakley@gmail.com](mailto:spoakley@gmail.com)....he'd love to hear from you and help you set up a ride-share group at your church! (tell him MIP&L sent you!)

So spread the word about GoLoco in your faith community. There's probably someone there who is headed in the same direction as you. Let's get going and GoLoco!!



## Confessions of a Carbon BigFoot

by Mary Downes

The Carbon Calculator in the Global Warming Cafe' program has spoken.

Suffice it to say, my results were not stellar.

OK. So it's time to face facts and get serious about making some changes. I've known for a long time that my faith and belief in the sanctity of creation didn't really match up all that well with my lifestyle choices. It's kind of like St. Paul says: I know the right thing to do, but do the wrong thing. As it turns out, getting involved with MIP&L was just the kick in the pants I needed.

So, here I sit, typing away at my (electric, of course) laptop, under the light of the CFL from the table beside the sofa. Listening to my (electric, of course) clothes dryer go round and round, with the umpteenth load of laundry I've done this week (my UMASS freshman is home from college). I just heard the (oil fired) boiler downstairs in the basement kick in- someone's upstairs taking a shower, and our hot water runs off the boiler. As soon as I finish typing, I need to go out and mow the lawn before it rains.

Oil, electricity, water, gasoline, CO2 galore....and lots of waste and pollution. Just another day in the life of my seemingly feeble attempt at everyday environmental stewardship.

And I think I'm probably pretty typical. Someone who is TRYING to pay attention to my responsibility for God's creation, TRYING to do the right thing as a person of faith, but finding it hard, given my dependency on things that seem to be doing the most damage to our environment.

But my work with MIP&L has shown me that I CAN make a difference.

So I'm doing what I can do- starting with what MIP&L calls the "low hanging fruit." Things done easily, NOW. Like light bulbs. And I'm making good progress on that front. I've switched out maybe half of our lights with CFLs. I found the ones that have a kind of incandecant-ish glow, so you can hardly tell they're CFLs. And as other bulbs burn out in the house, I'm going to replace them with CFLs. (I don't have everybody in my house convinced, however. They take some getting used to!)

But what about my electric dryer and top loading washer that run non-stop? What options do I have? Switch to gas? No. We don't have it in our house. And I really can't afford to buy a new washer & dryer anyhow.

Can I?

Just for the heck of it, I decide to look into what it would cost to replace my washer/dryer with more energy efficient ones. And how much water & electricity would I actually save? From MIP&L I learned that the EPA website features a product comparison, so you can research the efficiency of specific models of appliances. [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).

Next month, I take a hard- and specific- look at my water and electricity usage. (MIP&L recommends contacting the electric company and getting the past 3 year's bills, then using their Utility Cost and Use Form ([find it here](#)) to input the data and make the calculations. ) And as for energy efficient appliances, what is the retail cost, how quickly will they pay for themselves? And how to convince the reluctant spouse that it's worth it? (Hint: hard, cold DATA !!)

Why don't you take this journey with me? Let's see what options we have and how to make a solid difference in our homes. And give glory to God in the process.

See you next month!  
-Mary

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We hope you enjoy this issue of the MIP&L newsletter. Contact us with your questions, ideas, success stories...boiler room horror stories/photos...and/or calls for help! Remember: Wherever you are in your environmental stewardship journey, we've been there- and can help light the way (with CFLs, of course!).

[Begin that journey today, here.](#)

Most importantly, thank you for everything you and your faith community are doing- and will do- to care for creation.

Because... IF WE DON'T, WHO WILL?

In faith, and with hope,

Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light

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