



# The Village of Briarcliff Manor Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC)

- and -

## Environmental Advisory Council (EAC)

*October 2025 Newsletter*

### Welcome to our Fall Newsletter!

Westchester County is one of the most spectacular places to enjoy fall colors- but with autumn comes a ton (60,000 tons to be precise) of leaves blanketing the ground, followed by the inevitable deafening sound of the gas-powered leaf blowers. Did you know that **leaves constitute 90% of the County's organic waste** between October and December?

**Love 'em and Leave 'em (LELE)** is a Westchester County initiative that encourages smarter, eco-friendly leaf cleanup. Switching to sustainable leaf management can help you support pollinators while maintaining a tidy yard aesthetic.

- For a small yard, **rake your leaves** into garden beds or around tree bases
- **Mulch mowing** is a simple and affordable alternative to gas-powered leaf blowers; switch to **mulching blades on your regular mower** or use your **electric lawnmower** to shred your fallen leaves in place; ask if your landscaper will do this for your yard
- Switch to an **electric leaf blower**; they are cleaner and quieter than the gas-powered leaf blowers

Mulched leaves are great for soil quality; they suppress weeds, retain moisture, boost nutrition, and provide insulation through the winter.

#### Inside:

- SAC Activities Recap
- Electric Car Reviews
- Sustainable Parenting
- Sustainable Grocery Shopping
- Hudson Valley Heroes-Part 1
- Native Plant Spotlight
- Scenes from the Village Pollinator Garden Tour
- Upcoming Events

#### Upcoming Events (Details on page 12):

**Halloween Costume Swap** - October 4, 12-4pm, Youth Center

**Movie Night** - October 24, 6.30 pm, Community Center

**Holiday Swap** - December 6, Youth Center



## SAC Activities Recap (Community Day)



Another successful Community Day in the books! SAC is grateful to the **Village** and the **Recreation Department** for supporting our outreach and community engagement initiatives, not just on Community Day, but throughout the year.

On Community Day 2025, visitors to the Sustainability booth learned about composting (**stay tuned for some exciting news about a food scraps collection program in Briarcliff Manor** very soon), clean energy, and sustainable landscaping. We also answered questions about recycling common household items. **Shoutout to our awesome high school volunteers, Sinduja Narayanan and Grace Freeman**, who played Sustainability trivia and trash/recycling sorting games with the younger sustainability enthusiasts, helped recruit volunteers, and answered questions about our upcoming events.





## Electric Car Reviews *By Briarcliff Manor Residents*

### **2025 Audi Q6 Quattro Compact EV: Great for hauling (native) plants, compost and a large dog**

By Melissa Rinzler



As empty nesters, we needed an EV that could comfortably fit 4 adults for a night out, my dog (most frequent passenger), and supplies for gardening and volunteering.

**How we chose the Audi Q6 EV:** We wanted an EV to replace our gas-powered 2015 car. The Audi Q6 EV was a brand new offering, with AWD and expanded range.

**Why we like it:** We love its smooth, quiet ride and exceptional range, getting 280 miles @ 80% charge; 300 mile range at 100% charge. We can comfortably fit 5 adults with lots of room in trunk as well. I love its fast charging – it goes from 10% to 90% in 35 minutes.

**What could be improved:** The controls are a little confusing, it can feel like tech overload! It does not have any physical buttons, everything is on a touchscreen.

## Electric Car Reviews *By Briarcliff Manor Residents*

### **Lucid Air Touring: Sporty yet spacious for the whole family**

By Samir Shukurov



When we started looking for a second car, we wanted something that was fun and function. The Lucid Air Touring is quick and sporty when you're behind the wheel, but also calm, roomy, and practical enough for family life.

**How we chose the Lucid Air Touring:** We wanted an EV as our second vehicle, something that could be both exciting to drive and comfortable for the family. The Air Touring is not just a luxury sedan—it's also family-friendly. The rear seat has plenty of legroom, so fitting a car seat is easy, and it has lots of storage.

**Why we like it:** It blends fun and practicality. The 400+ mile range makes road trips feel effortless, and the interior is spacious enough that everyone rides comfortably, even with the car seat installed. With both a trunk and frunk, we have plenty of room for groceries, gear, or our child's bike and scooter. On top of that, it's a joy to drive—smooth and quiet for passengers but sporty and responsive when you want it to be.

**What could be improved:** Charging away from home still requires more planning. Now that Lucid drivers can use Tesla Superchargers, it's easier to find stations on the go, but the charging speeds are slower than Tesla vehicles. The infotainment system, while sleek, can occasionally be a little glitchy. The Lucid is excellent for local driving and shorter road trips, we would not take it on longer road trips or adventurous roads.



## Electric Car Reviews *By Briarcliff Manor Residents*

### **Kia EV9:** **Great for a family of 5** By Julie Mayville



As a family with three girls under six, we needed an EV with enough space to hold 3 car seats and still fit a stroller in the trunk. The Kia EV9 delivers that!

**How we chose the Kia EV9:** We had a Tesla Model 3, but we needed more space. We chose the Kia EV9 because it has three rows: two car seats fit in the second row (captains chairs) and our oldest kid has a car seat in the third row. There's still enough trunk space for a stroller and everything else.

**Why we like it:** It's big without feeling massive to drive. We already loved driving EVs and charging at home is easy. Most of our driving is local, so range isn't an issue for us. (Though the EV9 can get 230-300 miles on a single charge). The tech is not as polished as the Tesla software, but it's intuitive. Apple CarPlay works well. The climate controls are physical buttons, which I prefer.

**What could be improved:** Tesla's Supercharger network is superior to other charging grids at the moment, but with planning it's easy to charge on the go. (Pro-tip: charge at home & overnight for better electric rates and to be gentler on the power grid).

# Raising Sustainable Kids and Making Family Events More Eco-Friendly

Julie Mayville, Briarcliff Manor resident

Sustainability with kids can be simple and fun. Here are a few easy ways to channel their curiosity into everyday habits, building lifelong values around sustainability.



## Try these small steps at home:

**Waste Warriors:** Teach kids to sort recycling, reduce food waste, and compost scraps. Help them understand why each item goes in each place.

**Water Watchers:** Show them how turning off the tap while brushing teeth saves gallons of water. Set family goals for shorter showers and mindful water use.

**Toy Swaps & Hand-Me-Downs:** Instead of buying new, embrace trading toys, hand-me-downs or shopping secondhand. This helps reduce waste—and adds a sense of adventure!

**Make It Hands-On:** if you have the space, plant a garden and compost at home to show where food comes from, how it grows, and how compost is part of the life cycle.



**Focus on Making Family Parties More Eco-Friendly:** With a little planning, you can celebrate with the planet in mind. Here are some kid-approved ways to keep the fun high and the carbon footprint low.



## Decorations: Less Waste, More Wonder

**Use paper, cardboard and fabric:** Try adding color to your space with bunting, fabric garlands, cardboard castles or paper lanterns/streamers. (Balloons are not biodegradable.)

**Use what you have:** buy or borrow cloth tablecloths, repurpose mason jars for vases, buy neutral party banners that can be re-used for many themes and use chalkboards for signs.

**Let kids create decorations as a pre-party activity—**think painted cardboard signs, paper flowers, and DIY characters.





# Raising Sustainable Kids and Making Family Events More Eco-Friendly

Julie Mayville, Briarcliff Manor resident

## Plates, Cups & Utensils: Reuse or Compost

Use **reusable dishware** if possible, or if using one-time use products, **choose paper** over plastic and look for **compostable plates** and utensils made from bamboo or cornstarch.

**Set up clearly labeled recycling and compost bins** to help guests dispose of waste properly.

**Skip plastic straws** or choose fun reusable ones as a party favor.



## Food & Drink: Mindful Choices

Avoid single-serve snack packs. Serve water, lemonade, or juice in pitchers.

**Offer seasonal snacks** and reduce food waste by portioning realistically and donating leftovers if possible.

## After the Party: Recycle, Donate, Reuse

Take a few minutes post-party to recycle wrapping paper (avoid foil or glitter varieties that aren't recyclable), compost food scraps, and save decorations or supplies for the next event. Donate unopened food or leftover party items to a local shelter or community center.

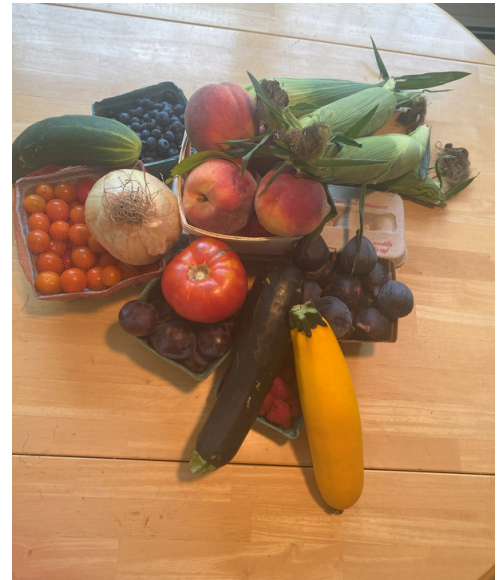
How do you promote being planet-friendly in your family? We'd love to feature your story or photos in an upcoming article. Let's celebrate sustainably—together. 🌍🌱

# How to be sustainable when you go grocery shopping

Christine Kopec, Briarcliff Manor resident

## SHOP SMART

- Choose Bulk Bins: Bring reusable or compostable bags
- Support Local & Seasonal: Buy fresh produce at farmers markets
- Choose supermarket produce with no plastic overwrap



## STORE SUSTAINABLY

- Use glass jars: Store bulk items and avoid plastic waste
- Use compostable bags: Temporary storage bags that return to earth or use reusable silicone bags for smaller quantities or packed lunches



## CHOOSE BETTER PACKAGING

- Choose butcher paper wrapping instead of Styrofoam or plastic
- Airtight sealers and jars mean less food waste and longer-lasting ingredients





## Hudson Valley Heroes Series

### Spotlight on Gareth Hougham, Ph.D. (HVSC)

Sinduja Narayanan (10<sup>th</sup> grade, BHS)

This is a new series on local organizations that are helping to better our environment!

Gareth is an environmental scientist and president of the **Hudson Valley Stream Conservancy (HVSC)**. He has spent years working to protect the Hudson River and its tributary streams. His original interest in water was inspired by the TV show The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau, Ossining's strong science classes, and family friends who were scientists.

Gareth and HVSC lead water testing programs, stream clean-ups, and projects with local government to fix pollution problems. One of their biggest accomplishments was removing a dam that blocked fish from migrating upstream—the only dam removal in New York State reported by American Rivers in 2024. They have also reduced sewage in local streams and are working to make the Ossining beach safe for swimming.



Follow HVSC on Instagram  
**@streamconservancy**

Although the beach water is cleaner due to the HVSC's work, it will not yet pass regulations. And, there are still other problems that HVSC is working to solve including fertilizer runoff and steroidal medicines that are flushed down the drains. Microplastics and PFAS also harm wildlife in the river.

People can help by volunteering with HVSC ([www.streamconservancy.org](http://www.streamconservancy.org)) and by following better home habits like not dumping chemicals or old medicines down the drains. Gareth also wants people to speak up for better local sewage management because when people show they care, the state provides funding to clean the river.

# Native Plant Spotlight

## Woody Plant

### *Liquidambar styraciflua* (Sweet gum)



Image Credit: [gardenersworld.com](http://gardenersworld.com)

Sweetgum is a tall deciduous tree native to the northeastern US. In the fall, its leaves turn into a flourish of rainbow-colored stars! It prefers full sun with medium moisture soils. Sweet gum is great as a low maintenance shade tree, but is best in areas with low foot traffic due to its distinctive spiky “gum balls” that fall to the ground over winter and spring. The gum from this species has been used in chewing gum, incense, and perfume.

## Herbaceous Plant

### *Eutrochium purpureum* (Joe Pye weed)

Hardly a “weed,” Joe Pye weed is named after an herbalist who used this plant as a fever cure. It can grow 5-8' tall in sunny to partly sunny meadows, forest edges, and gardens. Its late summer to early fall blooms are favored by pollinators, and are especially beneficial for supporting honey production. Given its height, Joe Pye weed is an excellent choice for planting in the center of circular gardens or in the rear of perimeter gardens. Best in soils that remain moist.



Image Credit: [mayernikkitchen.com](http://mayernikkitchen.com)



# Scenes from the Village Pollinator Garden Tour

On Saturday morning, September 13, Horticulturist Dawn Orza led a tour for residents of the Village's recent plantings of pollinator gardens. Dawn is a member of the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC), and she has designed, at the Village's request, pollinator gardens full of northeastern native plants at Village Hall, the Library, next to Chase Bank, the Pocket Park, and the bus stop. She was accompanied by Brooke Beebe, also a member of the EAC. Village resident and Board of Trustees member Malcom Netburn joined the tour.



Dawn led Village residents around the plants at Village Hall, pointing out the ways some of the native plants had seeded in and amongst other plants, creating a rich, visual tapestry that provides food and shelter for bees, birds and other pollinators. Because of these plantings, the Village of Briarcliff Manor is now on the national Pollinator Pathway.



Ossining and Briarcliff Manor have recently developed a website explaining the Pollinator Pathway and including a map of the local pollinator gardens on the pathway. To access the website, go to [local-pollinator-gardens.org](http://local-pollinator-gardens.org). To include your garden on the Ossining/Briarcliff pollinator pathway map, send an email with your address and garden information to [BeeAndBirdFriend@gmail.com](mailto:BeeAndBirdFriend@gmail.com).

## Upcoming Events

### Halloween Costume Swap

Drop off your gently used Halloween costumes at the Briarcliff Manor Recreation Department, or in the lobbies of Todd school, BMS, or BHS until

**October 3**

Come over and pick up a **FREE** costume on **Saturday, October 4th**  
**(Noon-4 pm) at Atria Field**

### Movie Night

Join us on **Friday, October 24th at 6.30 pm** to watch **“Buy Now! The Shopping Conspiracy”** at the **Briarcliff Manor Public Library**. This documentary unpacks the tricks brands use to keep their customers consuming-and the real impact they have on our lives and the world

### Holiday Swap

Drop off your extra holiday cards, gift wrap, ornaments, and holiday decorations at the Youth Center between November 17-December 5.  
Come over to the Youth Center on **December 6 for “free shopping”**

**Join us** at our meetings to learn what we are working on, and to see how you can contribute to making Briarcliff cleaner and greener!

**SAC** meetings: First Thursday of every month. 7:00 pm, Village Hall Court Room

**EAC** meetings: Fourth Thursday of every month. 7:00 pm, Village Hall Court Room

For more information, email us at

[SAC@briarcliffmanor.gov](mailto:SAC@briarcliffmanor.gov) or [EAC@briarcliffmanor.gov](mailto:EAC@briarcliffmanor.gov). Visit us at

**[Sustainability-advisory-committee](#)** and **[Environmental-advisory-council](#)**

#### **SAC**

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