



# GLEE's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Green Living Awards

## Individuals Category

*For Cumulative Efforts leading up to January 1<sup>st</sup> 2009*

Name of Applicant: The Gerbracht Family Key West  
City/Island

### *Application Summary*

We have always followed a "a walk gently on our earth" approach to living, and have instilled this philosophy in our children. There is no doubt that we think of the environment in almost everything we do from as simple as reusing envelopes for our shopping lists to tapping solar energy. I can't put stats to our green living, it is our lifestyle. There is still much we want to do - we want a wind turbine (Pacwind) and solar panels for our electric, get another eco friendly car (we're waiting to see what comes in the next few years; ZAP solar trucks are intriguing), use our Preserve earth website better as an educational forum and much, much more. We see the richness Mother Earth offers, we also see the damage man has made and how these actions are causing the Earth to suffer. We strongly believe every little bit helps which is why the Gerbracht family is committed to doing our part. We are honored to be nominated for this award. Did I mention Jim's hero is Ed Begley, Jr.?

### *Detailed Accomplishments*

Be as detailed as possible when summarizing your green achievements. Dates enacted, money saved, waste diverted, emissions saved and other such facts factor heavily in final awards.

<u><b>Renewable Energy</b></u>	Demonstrated use and/or promotion of appropriate solar, wind and bio generated sources of renewable energy.
<p>In 2006 we added 2 solar hot water heating system - one to the house the other for the pool (we also use a pool blanket in the winter). We put in dual flush (low/high flush) toilets in 3 bathrooms. 2009 we got a solar oven.</p>	
<u><b>Clean Transportation</b></u>	Demonstrated use and/or promotion of smart, clean and economically efficient uses of biodiesel, fuel cells, and hybrid vehicles. Or no vehicles at all!
<p>Jim rides his bike to work at least 3 times a week, weather and schedule permitting. Jim had a Prius which was lost in 2005 (Hurricane Wilma). Claudia, our daughter, when home from college, rides the bike to friends' and work about 75% of the time. Adele schedules errands and appointments in one driving trip. When schedule allows we drive the car that uses the least amount of gas as opposed to Jim taking his car or Adele hers.</p>	

<b><u>Clean Boating</u></b>	Demonstrated adherence and/or promotion of eco-friendly actions whilst on the water, including cleaning products, propulsion, water conservation, fisheries conservation, catch and release techniques, and use of <a href="#">Florida Clean Marinas, Boatyards, and Retailers</a> .
<p>We opted to not paint the anti-algae paint on our boat bottom, instead scrape the hull regularly. We pick up trash from the bottom of the ocean or if floating. We are mindful of where we anchor. We do not feed the wildlife - birds, fish, dolphins, manatees, etc.</p>	
<b><u>Energy Conservation</u></b>	Demonstrated use and/or promotion of energy-efficient appliances, energy audits, and retrofits for financial savings and pollution reduction.
<p>We added a solar oven this year. All appliances are energy-efficient (Energy Star). We use the compact fluorescent light bulbs. We do not use any heating systems in the winter, and set the AC at 82 degrees or higher in the summer. We practice simple savings (both energy and dollar) habits such as turning off lights when we leave a room and unplugging adapters/chargers.</p>	
<b><u>Green Building</u></b>	Demonstrated use and/or promotion of green techniques and technologies during retrofits on existing buildings and efficient designs for new buildings.
<p>When repainting rooms in our Wilma restoration we used low toxic paints. We are currently installing double pane, energy efficient windows. We installed dual flush toilets in 3 out of 4 bathrooms (the 4th toilet is in our pool side bathroom which is very low use). Jim installed a low volume, maximum power flush toilet in his office.</p>	
<b><u>Green Financing</u></b>	Demonstrated use and/or promotion of tax credits, rebates, and other incentive programs that help finance, sustainability projects. Also includes Socially Responsible Investing.
<p>Tax credits for solar water installations and new windows. We invested in Spectra Fund IRA (now Alger) which is a mutual fund specifically for environmentally friendly companies. We purchased stocks in First Solar.</p>	
<b><u>Healthy Living</u></b>	Demonstrated adherence and/or promotion of green procurement, green consumerism and healthy choices through buying organic foods and other non-toxic, healthy and sustainable products.
<p>We have a large container veggie garden. It produces about 1/2 of our veggies at this point, it is early in the season. No pesticides are used, only organic fertilizer. Our daughter in college is a member of the Earth Emerson Club. Last year she co-organized a healthy eating awareness fair (Veggie Food Fest). She contacted vegetarian restaurants to donate food &amp; got speakers. Speakers included someone from the Boston Veggie Assoc. as well as others. The event was attended by approx. 100 college students. We buy organic as much as possible, have a booth at the Help Yourself Farmers Market. Use eco friendly cleaning products.</p>	

<u><b>Land Conservation</b></u>	Demonstrated adherence and/or promotion of conservation of natural habitats by using Keys-Friendly landscaping practices and use of <a href="#">GreenThumb Certified Nurseries</a> .
<p>We do not use pesticides. We use native plants that don't require watering.</p>	
<u><b>R4 #1: Reduce</b></u>	Demonstrated reduction of waste through bulk buying, refillable products, double-sided printing, avoiding over-packaged products, closing the loop by purchasing products made of recycled, post consumer content; implementation of policies which encourage and/or mandate waste reduction.
<p>Have virtually eliminated plastic water bottles by refilling glass bottles. Copier and junk mail is reused, including envelopes for scratch paper. We use canvas totes and cotton produce bags (our Preserve earth line) as shopping bags. Gift wrap paper is eliminated, instead we use things like newspaper cartoons and food containers (cracker or tea boxes, etc.) as gift wrap/boxes. We contact catalogues to be removed from mailing lists. In another home we put in a deck using post consumer (plastic) lumber.</p>	
<u><b>R4 #2: Reuse</b></u>	Demonstrated reuse of products, buy second hand, donate unneeded items, and avoid disposables, and share magazines /other publications before recycling them.
<p>Adele has a personal goal/challenge of using as much as possible twice (there are some things we can only use once) - a tea tin used as a gift box, envelopes from mail are used for phone messages or To Do lists, a box can be covered with fabric (even from an old dress) and used as decorative storage. Clothes are donated, no longer wanted items are yard sold, magazines go to the Senior Citizen housing building. Half full water glasses are emptied onto a plant. In turn we love to shop yard sales, consignment shops and charity stores. Adele has lugged home more things from peoples' trash, refurbished with paint and/or cleaning and sold or used.</p>	
<u><b>R4 #3: Rot (Compost)</b></u>	Demonstrated waste diversion through composting of food scraps and yard trimmings
<p>We have a container for kitchen waste by the sink and is emptied daily in the compostor. Eggshells are put on the tomatoes for calcium. Dead leaves from the Buttonwood tree are used for mulch. Pruned tree limbs were recently cut up and given to a friend for firewood.</p>	
<u><b>R4 #4: Recycle</b></u>	Demonstrated recycling of items accepted by local waste hauler and/or other items which may be recycled elsewhere (e.g., electronics, CFL light bulbs, cell phones, printer cartridges); implementation of policies which encourage and/or mandate recycling practices
<p>We recycle as much as possible, have since the 1980's. Our cell phones are sent to a victims of domestic abuse organization. Ink cartridges are refilled or recycled. We have put building parts (windows, toilets, etc.) at the street with a "Free" sign, they are almost always taken.</p>	

<b><u>Water Conservation</u></b>	Demonstrated use and/or promotion of water use reduction through efficient irrigation, xeriscaping, cisterns, rain barrels, water audits and/or use of reclaimed water.
<p>We have 3 rain barrels which are used for our veggie and flower garden. We never water the lawn, however when we wash the cars we move the cars onto the lawn. We practice xeriscaping when planting.</p>	
<b>Water Quality</b>	Demonstrated use and/or promotion of wastewater treatment, storm water retention, phosphorus free products, slow release fertilizers, animal waste reduction, etc.
<p>Animal waste is picked up in recycled bags (bread, newspaper bags) and discarded in the trash. Laundry detergent is phosphorus free, and no fabric softener is put in the washer (dryer sheets are used instead). Cleaning products are biodegradable or earth friendly such as Method, Simple Green and Green Works. We use oxygen bleach in laundry instead of regular bleach. We use organic fertilizers in our container veggie &amp; flower garden.</p>	
<b>Youth Leadership</b>	Involve local students in projects and research for healthy long-term choices in any of the above for the future of all.
<p>While we don't participate in any youth programs, our kids have grown up aware of the need to think of the earth and to be "green" minded. It is a natural way of life for them - Kristina's chores include doing the recycling and composting. When home from college Claudia rides her bike often instead of driving. They both have grown up turning lights off, shopping at consignment stores and farmer's markets and picking up litter or making sure their litter is properly thrown away, just as examples. Both kids are actively involved in making items for our family's table at the Help Yourself Farmer's Market, as well as our Preserve earth business.</p>	
<b>GLEE Participation</b>	Actively involved with GLEE via ideas, time and/or membership to help further GLEE's <a href="#">Mission and Goals</a> .
<p>We had a booth at the Fair at the KWHS showing our Preserve earth line of totes, produce bags, organic towels, soap bags, etc. We have attended the monthly socials.</p>	
<b>Other Factors</b>	Have you done something else not included in the scope of this application? Let us know!
<p>The 5th "R" - Regift. During this holiday season when many people were feeling the economic crunch and the reality that consumerism isn't all its cracked up to be, many found that "regifting", which has enjoyed a growing movement over the past few years, was perfectly fine. Our family regifts, several friends admit to it too. As long as the item fits the guidelines of new or like new, clean and working there is nothing wrong with this new trend. We also give food from our garden (a form of regifting, I suppose). While not regifting, but goes with giving gifts, use a sticky note for your message in a gift card, this enables the card to be reused.</p>	

**Green Pledge**

I certify that the above information is correct to the best of my knowledge.

