

WHY we vigil every Monday here: We work on behalf of a peaceful, just world and seek a world where people and the planet are respected and valued. We ask you to think about each topic we write about, **different each week**. Some individuals here have been present on this corner for over 30 years to bring messages of peace, justice and equality. Join us any Monday or talk with us today.

Summertime lunch update: OUR WAR ON MOTHER EARTH



THROWAWAY CUPS, STRAWS and PACKAGING: There is NO "AWAY"

"Plastic packaging from leading brands is endangering wildlife and the health of the oceans, and poisoning the water we drink and the food we eat." Says the **#breakfreefromplastic** alliance after conducting 'brand audits' of beach garbage.

The Environmental Protection Agency reports Americans throw out **70 million polystyrene foam cups** every day, and scientists estimate that by 2050, there will be more

plastic in the oceans than fish. Polystyrene foam and plastics are by far the largest contributor to this metric. The **As You Sow blog** states that on June 5th, the UN released its first ever **Global Plastics Report**, detailing the myriad ways plastic harms humans and our environment, showing how toxic chemicals from plastic find their way into human and animal tissue. Polystyrene foam is the most hazardous of any plastic variety for both the producer and consumer because foam workers are regularly exposed to carcinogenic chemicals such as styrene and benzene during foam production, and these same chemicals have the potential to leach into our food, also posing a carcinogenic threat. Polystyrene foam is most commonly used in packaging in the fast food industry. In order to keep chemicals out of our food and oceans, major fast food companies have to lead the way on foam bans.

FINALLY, some faint praise of corporate responsibility for McDonald's and Dunkin' Donuts (Starbucks, take note)

When you make a food franchise purchase, you can vote for the earth in a small but significant way. Always ask if there is a more earth friendly container, skip the straws, recycle the sack, and choose to use your own cloth bags for purchases-even for 'fast food'. Because foam packaging decomposes slowly, ends up in oceans and can harm marine life and other animals that ingest it, there has been push to ban its use. Leaders like Dunkin' Donuts and McDonald's pledged to get rid of foam packaging entirely and set the bar high for the rest of the industry. McDonald's said last month that it would use only recycled or other environmentally friendly materials for its soda cups, Happy Meal boxes and other packaging by 2025. Foam cups at Dunkin' Donuts will soon be history, **removing what the company estimates will be a billion of them** each year from the waste stream. Dunkin' Donuts says that the polystyrene foam cups will be completely phased out from its stores globally by 2020. Tell them you want to support their efforts by buying coffee there **ONLY** if they become responsible earth stewards. The fast food industry has yet to make ambitious moves as a whole to dispose of polystyrene foam, despite its detrimental impacts on humans and the environment.. In both cases, these progressive measures are the result of years' worth of shareholder advocacy that managed to change company practices from within. **READ MORE: <https://www.asyousow.org/blog/2018/7/3/no-home-for-foam>**

Working toward JUSTICE will help us to create a lasting PEACE. Talk to neighbors, family and elected officials at every level about how you will work towards a peaceful future for our children and that you value the gifts from our MOTHER EARTH, giver of all life: drinkable water, soil, food, clean air, sea life, beauty of nature and creatures we consider our brothers and sisters.