



## What is Green Drinks Cape Cod?

by Jen Villa

Community, uniting, energy, like-minded people, connecting, educating, inspiring awareness... these are just a few of the words I was rambling off to the editor of CapeWomenOnline when the idea for this article came to be.

The atmosphere was a bustling warehouse-turned-dynamic-consignment shop, filled with those aforementioned like-minded people, mingling and connecting all for the sake of "Green Drinks."

No, there were no green-colored beverages being served, but there was a group of over 50 Cape Cod residents networking and chatting, brought together through their affiliation, or mere appreciation of all things environmental, a.k.a. green.

Green Drinks is an international environmental networking group, currently active in over 700 cities worldwide. According to the official Green Drinks administration, the group was founded in 1989 at a pub in London and has been growing ever since.

The Green Drinks International website states:

*"Every month people who work in the environmental field meet up at informal sessions known as Green Drinks. We have a lively mixture of people from NGOs, academia, government and business. Come along and you'll be made welcome. Just say, "are you green?" and we will look after you and introduce you to whoever is there.*

*"It's a great way of catching up with people you know and also for making new contacts. Everyone invites someone else along, so there's always a different crowd, making Green Drinks an organic, self-organizing network."*

These events are very simple and unstructured, but many people have found employment, made friends, developed new ideas, done deals and had moments of serendipity. It's a force for the good and we'd like to help it spread to other cities. Contact your local node to get the latest info about coming along.



Green Drinks was started locally by Laura Caton and had its first meeting on Cape Cod on January 28th, 2009 at the Island Merchant in Hyannis. Initially, the first few monthly meetings were held at The Island Merchant, hosting a variety of speakers and ranging topics.

After about six months, the meetings started changing location and were hosted by local businesses including: The Wine List, The Little Beach Gallery, Cape Cod Beer Brewery (all in Hyannis) as well as a few other locations.

In December of 2009, the group went through some leadership transitions and was close to dismantling. That's when I stepped in and took a look into the reality of leading the group.

Being relatively new to the area and the network group, I reached out to Amanda Converse, owner of eco-conscious clothing store, Shift Boutique, and her business partner, Amy DuFault, who brought a more experienced background both locally and specifically with Green Drinks on Cape Cod.

With new "owners" and a rejuvenated energy, the three of us hosted our first meeting in January 2010 at 586 Bistro & Bar in Hyannis.

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Since the change in leadership, Green Drinks has flourished and become a monthly occasion that brings a variety of different people and topics together in fascinating locations throughout the Cape.

A gathering in Woods Hole was hosted by John Todd Ecological Design. On a trip to North Eastham at Laura Kelley's, home of Littlefield Landscapes, members feasted on snacks from her gorgeous garden and toured her vast property including several beehives.

We've also dedicated evenings to great causes including an evening at The Island Merchant honoring The Cape's local Fisherman and Fisherwoman. The event brought in nearly 100 guests and proceeds benefited Women of Fishing Families.

Now, back to that bustling warehouse...where Green Drinks and CapeWomenOnline collided. Limelights in Dennis hosted this October meeting, which was full of new people and faithful Green Drinks attendees. Local oysters, wine, beer and food were available for guests.

The air was buzzing with people admiring the space, which essentially turns trash into incredible treasures. Stephanie Shea, owner of Limelights addressed the large crowd and discussed the importance of recycling and the pleasure she gets from "upcycling" the items that come through her space which is part of S & J Exco, an environmentally conscious wood waste recycling facility.

This was the last meeting of 2010 due to holiday schedule conflicts, but Green Drinks is back in January with more enthusiasm and interest than ever!

Green Drinks Cape Cod meets the last Wednesday of every month from 6 to 8 p.m. These events are free and open to everyone who has an interest in a "green" lifestyle for work or play. Hope to see you there!



For more information about *Green Drinks Cape Cod* and to find upcoming event locations please visit:  
[www.greendrinks.org/MA/CapeCod](http://www.greendrinks.org/MA/CapeCod).

Visit *Green Drinks Cape Cod* on [Facebook](#).



Jen Villa is one of the organizers of Green Drinks Cape Cod. She also owns The Little Beach Gallery on South Street in Hyannis. A photographer and collage artist, she currently lives on the street she grew up on, in West Hyannisport on "The Aves."

She insists on taking a moment with the ocean every day...feeding her creative inspiration and enthusiasm.

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Enjoying an evening with Green Drinks Cape Cod at Horsley Witten Environmental in Sandwich is (L-R) Stacy Hedman, Amanda Converse, Jen Villa, Amanda Crouch-Smith and Amy DuFault