

GIFTS GIVING

Value Experiences over Stuff

Our consumerist society is undermining the planet's environmental resource base and exacerbating local and global inequalities. It's time to rethink our consumption habits and stop chasing after the Joneses.

- Refuse to buy more than is necessary
- Reduce the packaging and wrapping
- Re-use items – find new uses for old objects
- Re-gift unsuitable gifts
- Repair or up-cycle objects to make great new gifts

Or be like the New Jones: value experiences over "stuff". Wonderful experiences, great memories, photos to share and no ill-fitting undies or wasted wrapping paper in sight.

Give a subscription or membership to

- Geelong Sustainability
- Surf Coast Energy Group
- Barwon Heads Sustainability Group
- Geelong Organic Gardeners
- Diggers Seed Club
- Permaculture Melbourne's Geelong branch
- The My Green Home Project via ecoMaster
- The Wilderness Society
- Friends of the Earth
- A magazine such as Treadlie (cycling,) Sanctuary (housing), Green (housing), ReNew (energy), The Ecologist (environment), Living Green (lifestyle).
- A local toy library
- A seed saving group, rare fruits association, or some other specialist area of interest

Give an experience rather than stuff

- Enrolment in a course they'd love
- Tickets to a movie or show
- An eco-tour
- A tent and small, efficient camping equipment – to encourage clean bush walking and adventure
- Volunteer at your child's or grandchild's school or at a local school in need
- Surf education lessons for Nippers at a local Surf Life Saving Club
- Swimming lessons for children or adults
- Learn to ride a bike with Maree Burn at Wilcare Services
- Driver training for sons, daughters, grandkids, nieces, nephews
- Spoil a Thomas fan with tickets for a 'Day out with Thomas' on the Bellarine Railway
- Learn to cook at Jamie's Ministry of Food – for ages 12 to whatever

- Learn to make bread or grow mushrooms at Magic Meadow
- Learn to make cheese and yoghurt at Cheeselinks

Wrap gifts in re-usable materials

- Green shopping bags
- Calico shopping bags
- Tea towels
- A handtowel
- Biodegradable tablecloths
- Bamboo placemats
- Microfibre cleaning cloths

Home-made gifts

- Make jam, pickles, chutney, dukka or preserves for giving
- Give a voucher for a service you are happy to provide – babysitting, gardening, cleaning or maintenance
- Build someone a compost bay
- Strike plant cuttings or grow-on seeds for gifts
- Build someone a worm farm using polystyrene boxes or an old bath or trough
- Offer labour to clear an area for a new garden and break up the soil
- Make a Christmas wreath from grapevine and other home-grown materials
- Turn an old steering wheel and gearstick into an exciting racing machine for a little one
- Fashion left over pieces of rope and hose into essential "fireman" gear

Encourage gardening and growing food

- A potted Christmas tree that can be planted out after Christmas – could be a fruit tree or a native
- A pot of organic, edible plant seedlings
- A bottle of worm wee
- A container of compost worms
- A bag of homemade compost
- A packet of organic seeds
- Gardening tools – a good spade or fork
- A yard cart, secateurs or gardening gloves
- A compost bin
- A delivery of garden mulch
- Books on organic gardening, composting, herbs and flowers, native plants
- Potted kitchen herbs in organic medium
- A gift voucher for nursery plants or environmental products.

Gifts for green living

- A non-disposable lunch kit – thermos or drink bottle, lunch box for nude food, cloth serviettes.
- A real razor – not a disposable one

- Underarm deodorising rock salt crystal
- A keep-cup – to carry everywhere
- New green nappies
- A yoghurt maker
- Rechargeable batteries with a re-charger
- Handkerchiefs or cloth serviettes
- Canvas, string or cane shopping bag
- A selection of 'use with water only' microfibre cleaning cloths
- Cosmetics and toiletries made from natural ingredients and not tested on animals.
- A laundry bucket of ecologically sound cleaning products
- A garden pond – with optional solar powered fountain
- A field guide on birds and local reptiles
- A bokashi bin
- Lovely Onya reusable shopping bags – made from plastic bottles – great colours:
www.onyainnovations.com.au
- Mesh produce bags – no more thin plastic:
www.freshmesh.com.au

For children

- Recycled toys – a repainted bicycle, trike, scooter, rocking horse
- Homemade cushions and beanbags – with environmentally friendly, safe stuffing
- A wooden loom and natural yarns for weaving
- A doll's or action figure's tent made of recycled fabrics and stakes
- Science books by David Suzuki
- A homemade backyard swing, tree house or rope climbing apparatus
- A small gardening kit, tools and organic seed
- Wooden or cane furniture
- Roller skates or a bicycle to encourage energy efficient travel
- Recycled or re-used paper, fastened into a book
- Craft books
- Weatherproof boots
- Pets such as ducklings or chickens, guinea pigs or rabbit – to mow the lawn – please check with mum and dad first
- Recycled clothing, shoes and toys from Geelong Baby and Children's Market, Vines Road, every three months

Gifts that support a greater good

- **The Climate Council** and Professor Tim Flannery – since the Abbott Government sacked the Climate Commission they rely 100% on the generosity of individuals. Help them to turn things around here at home: www.climatecouncil.org.au/donate
- **Offset your holiday travel through C3** – with Christmas holidays fast approaching, you can offset your travel through ATA's social enterprise the Community Climate Chest, C3:
www.climatechest.org.au

- **Who Gives a Crap** – flush poverty down the loo with the world's most impactful toilet paper – it builds toilets and improves sanitation in the developing world: au.whogivesacrap.org
- **KIVA – Loans that change lives.** Empower people around the world with a micro-loan of as little as \$25: www.kiva.org
- **One Girl** – Sierra Leone, West Africa is one of the worst places on earth to be born a girl. But when a girl is educated, everything changes:
www.onegirl.org.au
- **Oxfam Unwrapped** – offering a range of totally unexpected gift ideas that will help transform the life of a person living in poverty:
unwrapped.oxfam.org.au
- **Médecins Sans Frontières Australia** – at Christmas or in memorial for a friend or loved one:
www.msf.org.au
- **Shout for Good!** – Change the World – one small change at a time! Download the app and choose your local environmental or humanitarian cause. Make small change donations to your giftee's favourite cause – encourage them to match you:
www.shoutforgood.com

Christmas cards:

If you still feel the need to send Christmas cards and wish to support Geelong charities, purchase from Geelong Combined Charities Christmas Card Shop at rear of Wesley Church, off Ryrie Street, Geelong where 100% goes to 20 Geelong charities.
www.geelongcardshop.com

Choice magazine recommends purchasing directly from your chosen charity to maximise the funds going to the cause.

- **UNICEF (50% to the charity):**
www.unicef.org.au/Landing-pages/UNICEF-Christmas-Cards.aspx
 - **Oxfam:**
www.oxfamshop.org.au/bookscardswrap/christmascards
 - **The Smith Family:**
www.thesmithfamily.com.au/shop-with-us/christmas-cards
 - **St Vincent de Paul:**
www.christiansupplies.com.au/Christmas
 - **Frontier Services – Uniting Church:**
www.frontierservices.com.au/frontier-shop/christmas-cards
 - **RSPCA:**
www.worldforpets.com.au/categories/RSPCA/Christmas-Cards
 - **Amnesty International:**
shop.amnesty.org.au/collections/greeting-cards
 - **Cancer Council:** www.cancerciv.org.au/store/cards07
- Hallmark boxed greeting cards – 10% of wholesale (not retail) cost goes to National Breast Cancer Foundation