

Letters from MRFy - New Year's Dreams

"The Cold Earth Slept below; above the cold sky shone; and all around with a chilling sound, from Caves of ice and fields of snow, The breath of night like death did flow beneath the sinking moon." - Shelley

It's been a quiet week in Lake Wobegon ... No wait, that's the other one. It's been a quiet week in Old La Pointe, where the shovels are busy with wet snow and the MRF is hopping with last year's shredded wrapping paper and Amazon boxes; torn asunder from Christmas morning excitement. The holidays have passed, and the island is excited with a blend of playoff football and cooling lake temps. The bay is littered with what Tony Watts used to call "bergie bits", floating chunks of ice and snow, and giving us the hope that solid ice may arrive in the coming days.

I was baling paper the other day, moving our large grey bins to the compactor and dumping them in and -- in mid lift -- the most wonderful sight fell out and landed square on the floor. I caught my breath and paused long enough to make sure I wasn't dreaming and then slowly picked it. Seed Porn - thick catalogs of vegetable seeds, flowering plants, and farm stories printed on high-gloss paper glistening under the soft hum of MRF industrial lighting. I thumbed through the first few crisp, frozen pages of it. Banner headlines like "NEW FOR THE 2023 Planting Season - 25 new varieties of carrots!" and "BEETS BEETS BEETS!" and the ever popular "When did Aubergine become Eggplant?"

Moments like this cannot be understated. It is both a cause for celebration and panic; planting season is only 100 days away. Is it possible that here, in the dead of our frozen island winter that there are individuals foolhardy enough to be planning for spring already?? I tend to think that's why it was thrown away.

I have been working on "getting ahead." I have completed all numbers for the Annual MRF Self Certification and, in 2022, we processed 134.42 tons of recyclables here in our small community, which averages out to about 625.2 lbs. per island resident. The average for the State of Wisconsin is 693.5 per person, so we are just below average. Given this realization, I am going to work harder to be average this year. 😊

Plans continue for the upcoming busy season. We will post for a new Recycling Specialist in the coming weeks. In the meantime, Evan has been hauling our boxes of demolition and solid waste to Republic. He is a powerhouse of work ethic and enthusiasm, and I am grateful for his assistance. I have been organizing our gray building and consolidating the clutter, everything from aerosol cans to propane cylinders. Every morning, the crows sit in the white pines behind the Island Closet and remind me that it's cold, but the days are getting longer. In the words of my grandfather: "It's a hard life but it's a good life."

We persevere and wait for warmer days.

Be MRftastic.

Martin A. Curry
Recycling Supervisor

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