

“The Story of Plastic” Watch Party Challenge Packet

This packet contains:

- Overview
- Organizing In-person or Virtual watch parties
- Promotional Ideas & Resources
- Sample Discussion Group Questions
- 2 Case Studies of Rotary Club Projects



Overview - Watch and Discuss

“The Story of Plastic” is a full-length documentary film that won an Emmy Award for best documentary film writing in September 2021. Nonprofits can apply to show it at no cost (see below) and it is also available for Discover Channel subscribers, and for \$2 from Amazon Prime.

ESRAG’s Plastic Solution Task Force is challenging ESRAG members to organize a Watch Party for their Club members to see this important film, and then have a discussion on what their Club can do to reduce disposable plastics in their meetings, fundraisers and communities.

With subtitles available in 28 languages, the goal is to inspire Rotary Clubs all over the world to take action to reduce plastic waste.

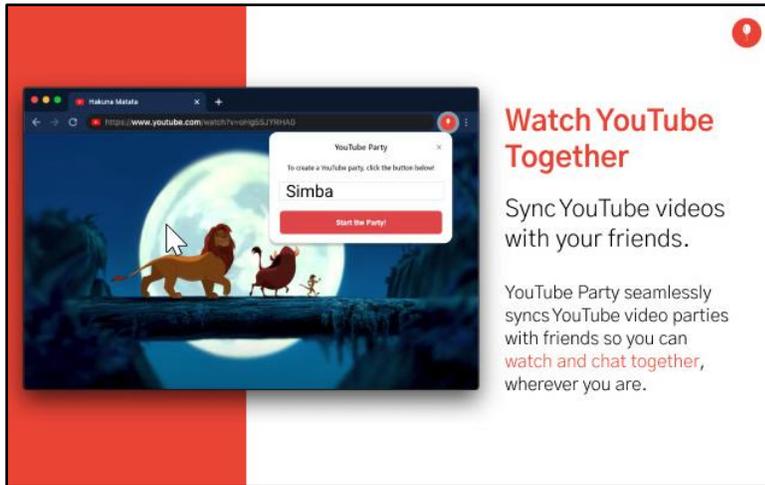
Please register your Club’s participation by sending an email with your Club name and any details you care to share to Lori.Cloutier@ESRAG.org .

Organizing In-Person or Virtual Watch Parties

Decide format and set date and time

In-person: Choose a home or anywhere with seating that will be comfortable for an 85-minute documentary. In-person Watch Parties are good for smaller groups, can incorporate food and drinks during an intermission, and have a strong social component.

Virtual: Using technology, a group can pick a time to all watch together via a free Chrome Extension that all attendees install prior to the viewing date. This method can allow members to



chat and communicate during the movie. (Zoom is easy, but is subject to glitches and band-width issues when playing videos) To learn about and install YouTubeParty: [Link](#)

View Separately, Discuss Together:

Schedule a group discussion, and ask members to watch the movie on their own, prior to that date.

Plan on a Discussion after the movie

“The Story of Plastic” is a serious and important movie, loaded with a lot of information. Although it does not show a lot of upsetting photos of animals suffering, the human problems and the sheer size of the problem can be emotional for some people.

Plan on 30-minutes to discuss the movie afterwards, to help change angst into action! One way is to ask people to share what they learned, and then brainstorm ideas on how the Club can reduce its plastic footprint. Be sure to define the next step and assign a person to take the lead.

Sample Discussion Questions:

- What did you learn that you didn't know before?
- What was the most impactful part of the movie?
- The Story of Plastic illustrates how we can't recycle our way out of the plastic pollution crisis. What steps can we take to address the problem at the source? Does the film make you question your own (or your school's, or your company's) plastic use/recycling methods? What can you do to address the problem? (From The Story of Plastic [Action Guide](#))
- How might we reimagine a future without single-use plastics? What kinds of policies and systems might we implement (both in our communities and on a wider scale) to help us get there? (From The Story of Plastic [Action Guide](#))

Promotional Ideas and Resources

- Get on your Club's activity calendar and announcement schedule. Verbal announcements can be enhanced by showing the Trailer, available here: "Story of Stuff Trailer" - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=37PDwW0c1so&t=25s>
- Use your personal or your Club's social media accounts to spread the word! The following graphics have been created for your use here: <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1UICfaD3vWzygKwZgunx3qlAQTpgovx8m>
(You will need to have a Google account to access this folder: [Click here to set up a free account](#))
- Let Club members know that this is a serious film about an important and growing problem in our world, and that it just won an Emmy Award!
- Let them know the length - it is an 85 minute film, with a discussion to follow.
- Consider having an intermission and serving simple food or snack.
- Promote the idea that a discussion will follow the film to share reactions and talk about follow-up action the Club can take to reduce plastic in their homes, clubs and communities.
- The thought provoking art from TheStoryofStuff.org below is available for you to share to promote SOF Watch parties, and can help generate interest in learning more:

**WHEN YOUR BATHTUB IS
OVERFLOWING, YOU DON'T
JUST REACH FOR A MOP –
YOU TURN OFF THE TAP**





**WHEN YOU THROW
YOUR PLASTIC 'AWAY'
WHERE DOES IT
REALLY END UP?**

Two Case Studies of Rotary Club Plastic Reduction

How Poulsbo Rotary Did a Zero Waste Fundraiser

In 2019, Poulsbo Rotary aimed for a Zero Waste at our Viking Tour event, a community bike ride and annual fundraiser. Trash was reduced from a 4-cubic yard dumpster to 9 pounds of trash in a single bag. Here are the main steps we took, the resources we used, and the breakdown of the Waste Streams.



1. Looked at each department and asked, “**what can we do without?**” This single step created most of our reductions! (Registration, Beer Garden, Rest Stops, Lunch Station, etc.)
2. Replaced plastic bottles with **water dispensers** and compostable cups. (Note: due to emerging concerns about toxic additives in compostable plastics, Poulsbo has changed to reusable aluminum cups when the fundraiser resumed in 2022)
3. Coordinated with Olympic Organics to choose the **compostable tableware** compatible with their composting system. (2022 – borrowed “real” silverware from a local tableware lending library, washed it and returned it to the library)
4. **Replaced all trash cans** with complete recycle/trash stations.
5. Purchased tall flags to make recycle-stations **easy to spot** in the crowd.
6. Provided large route maps for photographing, instead of individual printed maps.
7. Created clear signage using pictures for each type of recycling and MOST IMPORTANTLY – staffed each recycle station with **a human**. (Trained Recycle Educators to assist customers.) Recycling is confusing if not frustrating, and people need more than signs to avoid contamination of the recycle streams.

8. Flags and Trashy Task Force Tee-shirts were made available to loan to other community organizations after the event.
9. Invited students from Olympic College to serve as Recycle Educators, and quantify results.
10. Set-up crew used their own travel mugs for early-am setup. (A few ceramic mugs were available on loan for anyone who forgot. Coffee is necessary, and we aren't savages.)

Beyond the Curbside Bin – Super Recycling!

By researching unusual local recycling opportunities, Poulsbo Rotary's Trashy Taskforce was able to recycle 7 waste streams:

Cans and Bottles

Compostables

Cardboard and Paper

Snack Wrappers

Non-compostable Cups and Lids (brought in from outside event by customers)

Plastic Film – including racing bibs

Gloves (food handling)

Resources

Bainbridge Zero Waste – Excellent and essential guidelines

<https://www.sustainablebainbridge.org/programs/zero-waste/zero-waste-event-assistance/>

Terracycle – International Recycling Company specializing in hard to recycle items. <https://www.terracycle.com/en-US/>

Trex – Composite deck manufacturer that conducts school and community challenges and rewards the collection of clean plastic film (bread bags, grocery bags, plastic shipping envelopes, etc.

[School & Community Recycling Programs | NexTrex](#)

Subaru Loves the Earth – Recycled coffee cups lids and straws, K-cups and creamer cups, and snack wrappers at participating dealerships. Partners with Terracycle.

Kitsap County Public Works, Solid Waste Division – Loans Clear Stream waste containers to groups trying to increase recycling at events. Contact Eirik O’Neal Kitsap County Public Works, Solid Waste Division honeal@co.kitsap.wa.us

Waste Stream Collection Totals

Waste Type	Amount	Where It Was Recycled
Compost	66.2 lbs.	Olympic Organics
Bottles and Cans	9.7 lbs.	County Transfer Station
Non-Compostable Cups and Lids	4 lbs. 10 oz	Terracycle (via Peninsula Subaru)
Snack Wrappers	2 lbs. 10 oz	Terracycle (via Peninsula Subaru)
Plastic Film	2 lbs. 13 oz	Trex Decks (via Trex Community Challenge)
Cardboard	8.8 lbs	County Transfer Station
Paper	1.3 lbs.	County Transfer Station
Kitchen Gloves	15.9 oz	Terracycle
Tyvek Bibs	12.5 oz	Trex Decks
Landfill	9	

Poulsbo Rotary Club
Trash Talk Taskforce
For more information contact:
Lori Cloutier
rotarytrashtalk@gmail.com

Australian Club Creates Plastic Policy

When Rotarian Barb Sheehan traveled to Cambodia with her fellow District 9780 members for a Global Grant visit, she was saddened by the trail of plastic water bottles she was forced to leave behind. With unsafe drinking water and no available recycling, she could see that the single-use bottles and other trash was either burned, or left as litter that would eventually make its way into rivers and oceans.

Like many people who have participated in Global Grants and Rotary travel, Barb's life was changed by the experience. She realized how lucky she was to live in Australia where it was easier to choose alternatives to plastic products, and she doubled down on her efforts to reduce waste in all aspects of her life.



When ESRAG developed the [“I Fix The Planet Video Challenge”](#) to create a short video about a Club environmental project, Barb stepped up. [“My Small Step to Fix the Planet”](#) is a simple but important account of how one person can make simple changes -- and how those changes can be contagious.

Barb's club now has a Plastic Policy that discourages single-use plastic at club activities and events. Plastic Solutions caught up with Barb to see if she would share the policy with other Clubs. She has shared her club's Environment and Sustainability Policy, which contains the following section on plastic:

- That at Rotary Club of Highton events and activities the Club encourages single-use plastic free practices, with the aim not to use single-use plastic disposable plates, cups, straws, bottles, and disposable coffee cups, nor use plastic balloons.
- That at Rotary Club of Highton events and activities every effort is made to sort rubbish and recycle. This includes paper and cardboard, hard and soft plastics, glass bottles, cans, and organic food waste.

. That at Rotary Club of Highton events and activities, recyclable drink containers are encouraged, including refillable water bottles and reusable coffee cups.

In an email to Plastic Solutions, Barb said that the policy has helped spread the word to neighboring clubs. In one example, another club invited Highton to jointly host a BBQ lunch. They offered to provide things like plastic plates, cups and cutlery.

Barb responded “by gently explaining our policy of not using those items, and they welcomed my options for alternatives, and have since taken a different approach themselves. They host a monthly Rotary market and are currently investigating making the market ‘zero waste.’”

With more than 48,239 Rotary, Rotaract, and Satellite Clubs in the world, Barb’s “small step” could become a large step indeed.