Opinion
EarthBeat



(Pixabay/Creative Commons)



by Mary Ann McGivern

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

June 7, 2018

Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

The sister I live with, Loretto Sr. Roberta Hudlow, and I have gotten used to bringing cloth bags into the grocery store. What few bags we do accumulate by error we return to the grocery. But a few months ago, Roberta became Loretto's representative to St. Louis's Intercommunity Ecological Council. Her eyes were opened to the omnipresence of plastic.

Plastic is filling the oceans and cluttering the beaches, killing fish and fowl and reptiles and mammals who ingest the plastic, thinking it is food. Those sturdy big plastic straws get into the noses of the big sea turtles. I've seen a photo of a sea horse with his tail wrapped around a pink plastic Q-tip. In 1967, a family friend advised Dustin Hoffman to go into plastics in the movie "The Graduate." Wrong.

So Roberta and I began to try to rid our house of plastic. We buy fair trade coffee, a high-end item. This morning I discovered the "paper" bag's insides are laminated with plastic. Pie, nuts, batteries, mayonnaise, bourbon — all delivered in plastic. I remember when I thought plastic was a much better idea than glass because it's lighter. Alas.

Advertisement

Our Missouri Botanical Gardens has a restaurant that provides cups, plates and utensils made from corn and readily biodegradable. But biodegradable freezer bags would be useless. Even our freezer paper left from olden days turns out to be plastic-coated.

"Some say the world will end in fire. Some say in ice." So says Robert Frost. Choked in plastic is yet another route.