

[A Different Attitude for Black Friday](#)

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This year, Fashion Place Mall will open at midnight on Nov. 24, all the better to squeeze every minute out of the biggest shopping day of the year. While you could join the frenzy for a new wii or Tickle Me Elmo, members of the Desert Green Party would like to offer an alternative -- buy nothing.

"We want to combat all the consumerism and stress that comes with the holidays and realize what's really important," said group leader Deanna Taylor.

But, perhaps you've waited all year to hit the Gap at 3 a.m. For the unpersuaded, the Greens offer these stats:

- Americans spend about \$1,042 on holiday gifts; on average, a Vietnamese citizen makes \$280 in a year.
- 5 million tons of trash are produced in the United States each year between Thanksgiving and Christmas
- It takes an average of four months to pay off holiday credit card bills.

Interestingly, research has also shown that the satisfaction of acquiring something new rarely lasts long.** Before you know it, you're craving something else. In other words, one pair of Manolo Blahniks is never enough. Once you have the kittenheeled slingbacks, you can't live without the new equestrian boots. Why not put a stop to the whole cycle with a little holiday selflessness?

Taylor and nine other Greens are providing that opportunity at their first coat exchange. On Nov. 24, anyone can stop by the Free Speech Zone to donate a gently used coat or to take one for herself.

In keeping with the reduce, reuse, recycle ethic, group member Tom King encouraged the well-off to come get a coat. "There are no financial checks for taking a coat," he said. "People who could afford a new coat should come and get a used one a used one instead." Leftovers will go to the Crossroads Urban Center, a local anti-poverty organization.

Don't have the guts to sport someone's cast-offs this year? The Greens plan on holding the exchange annually, so you can work up to it.

Of the decision, group leader Deanna Taylor said, "We want to do something significant on Buy Nothing Day. In the past, we would gather in a shopping mall and sing anti-consumerism carols that have alternate lyrics to the tune of familiar Christmas carols. That had gotten stagnant. People were too frenzied to hear us. Talking to a fellow Green Party member in Rhode Island, we learned they'd been doing a coat exchange for 10 years in an

effort to provide a community service while at the same time educating the public on the important of community needs rather than consumer."

Here are some photos of the 2006 event:



