

Reduce your carbon footprint on the Houstonian's treadmill. **J4**



BRETT COOMER : STAFF

J4 HOUSTON CHRONICLE

THE GOOD L

FITNESS

SPOTLIGHT: ECOFRIENDLY WORKOUTS

Trim your waistline without leaving a carbon footprint

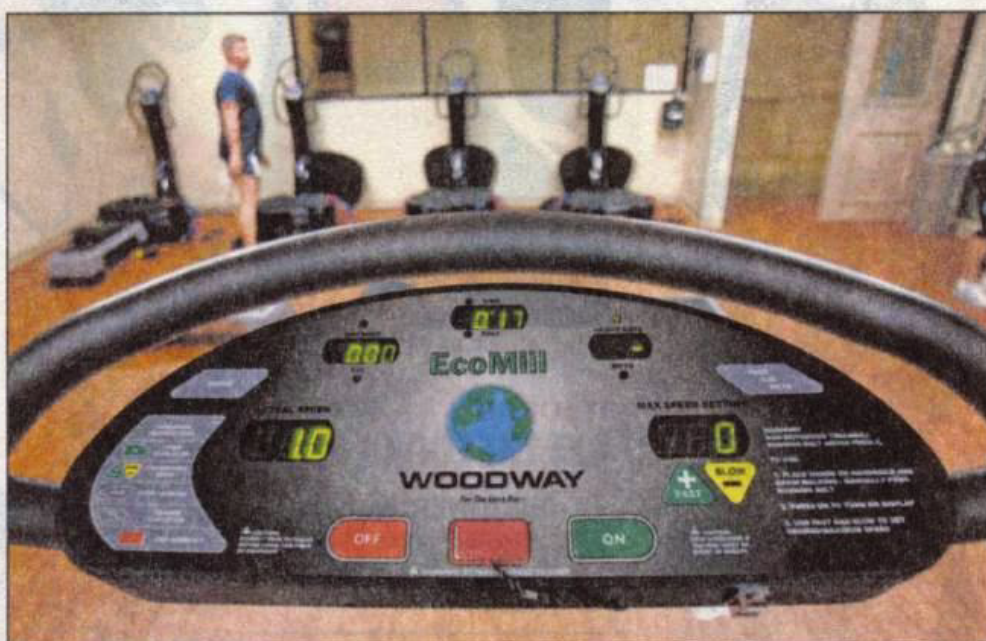
By TAMMY PORTNOY

LAST month was the 40th anniversary of Earth Day. It's ever too late to celebrate, so here's a look at how it is becoming increasingly more convenient to reduce your carbon footprint along with your waistline in Houston.

Sure, you could fill two non-recyclable containers with rain-water for weights and use them at home in the dark to create — presto — your own green gym. Or, you could become a Trail Trekker at the Houston Arboretum and Nature Center. For \$20 (\$10 for members), you get a pedometer and can log your mileage in the Trail Trekkers Log Book. After trekking 50 miles, you get a T-shirt.

For a cooler approach, try the Woodway Ecomill, a human-powered treadmill at the forefront of green technology. The Houstonian Club & Spa recently became the first health club in the world to acquire the treadmill in its exclusive Studio 360.

"Clients like the idea that it is not using electricity and that it is different," said Gary Ehlers, the Houstonian's assistant fitness manager. "It has a slight curve to it,



BRETT COOMER : STAFF

YOU'RE THE DRIVER: Right now the Houstonian Club and Spa is the only place in town you can find the Woodway Ecomill, a self-powered treadmill.

unlike flat, motorized treadmills, because ergonomically the way you walk helps power the treadmill."

This treadmill not only reduces energy, but the individual planks provide so much cushiness that it feels more like you're walking on grass than on a machine. Although it comes with a rechargeable battery for the display functions, it is entirely human-powered. With the slight incline and human powering, the Ecomill works more parts of your body, like your glutes and your core, and helps burn more calories.

For an overall green routine, Devanand Yoga Center has 100 percent green power. In addition to yoga classes, this non-profit, which has been around for 19 years, has a recycling program, a community garden and teaches vegetarian cooking classes.

"We want yoga to create awareness, not only of the physical body, but of the environment where you are," said instructor Rafael Sarango.

For a conceptually unique, yet green, routine, catch up with the Playground Fit Camp.

"My philosophy is that programs are for computers," said chief "fun officer" Jared Maiden-berg. "I am more of a coach to get people outside and moving again."

Two years ago, Maiden-berg was competing on the monkey bars with some kindergartners when he came up with Playground Fit

Camp, which aims to remind adults that working out can be fun.

At Playground Fit Camp, taking your shoes off is encouraged to tackle hills, do squats and utilize the playground equipment. The camp also focuses on natural movements, like how to pick your child up without hurting yourself.

Tammy Portnoy is a freelance writer living in Houston.

TRY THESE ON GEAR

Want ecofriendly gear? Here are a few recommendations from Dave Fausnight of Whole Earth Provision Company (2934 S. Shepherd, www.wholeearthprovision.com).

Shoes: Brooks Green Silence
Made entirely with sustainable elements, this shoe has the world's first biodegradable midsole for running shoes and also features

biodegradable insole and collar foams. About 75 percent of the shoe's materials are post-consumer recycled. \$105

Shorts: Patagonia Baggies Swim trunk/running short that is 100-percent recyclable. \$45

Shirt: Patagonia Capilane 2 T-Shirt

This functional shirt is made with 54-percent recycled polyester and is fully recyclable. \$39

EXERCISE YOUR OPTIONS GET INVOLVED

Want to try an ecofriendly workout? Here are some options.

Houston Arboretum and Nature Center: Sign up to be a Trail Trekker online, by mail or in person. www.houstonarboretum.org

Houstonian Health Club: Join the Houstonian Club & Spa to experience the unique aspects of Studio 360, including the human-powered treadmill.

www.houstonian.com

Devanand Yoga Center: Pay for your classes by donation, and don't miss the biannual yoga in the park. www.houstonyoga.org

Playground Fit Camp: Classes offered in Spotts and Tanglewood parks. <http://playgroundfitcamp.blogspot.com>

— T.P.

— T.P.