

Salt Spring Energy Update November, 2006

From the Editor:

This is the second issue of a newsletter produced by the Salt Spring Energy Strategy Task Force for interested people on Salt Spring and beyond. Pass it on and let us know if there are others who would like to be a part of the list serve. E-mail marionpape@telus.net to add names or if you wish to be removed. And check out our website at www.saltspringenergystrategy.org to find out more about wonderful rebates that are available for people living on Salt Spring, a pilot in the Community Action on Energy Efficiency (CAEE) program.

I-SEA and Salt Spring Energy Strategy Task Force move to heart of Ganges

The Institute for Sustainability Education & Action (I-SEA) is moving into new office space in the heart of Ganges, directly across from the Chamber of Commerce. **And, the Energy Strategy Task Force** will be first to come on-board by renting space in the new center. Two more offices are available for organizations that share the vision and goals of sustainability, research, learning and action.

I-SEA founders, Margery Moore and Mark Starik plan to offer a broader mix of education programs and join forces and resources with the Salt Spring Energy Strategy on energy and climate change initiatives.

Contact: Margery Moore, President of I-SEA 537-4400 or sustain@saltspring.com

Editors Note: Would you have any time to help with painting and setting up our new digs over the next few days /weeks? Call Margery to volunteer. You will be amazed what we can do in this new centre. Be one of those innovators who wants to get in at the beginning and make it work well. And we'll announce the opening once it is ready and you will be one of the first to know.

Youth Energy Strategy

Fiona and Heather Munro, Youth Coordinators for the Energy Strategy, have designed and will be launching a Student Pledge Sheet that is a subset of the Salt Spring One Tonne Challenge kit for students and their families. They hope to facilitate students to feel empowered to make a difference in their homes and at school as well as in the community. Fiona and Heather will be receiving key assistance from GISS including the Drama Dept, Student Government, and GISS Principal Mr. Bell. Teachers are being contacted and a schedule and lesson plan designed to present climate change issues and the pledge forms to elementary, middle and high school classes.

Who Killed the Electric Car? Excerpted from Ellen Taylor's notes

On Sunday, October 29, the Energy Strategy co-sponsored with Fritz Cinema (formerly Cinema Central) a special showing of "Who Killed the Electric Car?" followed by a panel discussion. The Fritz Cinema was packed and viewers were shocked, angered and even saddened by the missed opportunity and wanton waste symbolized by the heaps of crushed cars.

Gordon English shared that a truck or car can be switched over to electric by a BC company, Canadian Electric Vehicles, for about \$15,000.

Ellen Taylor talked about the Dynasty Electric Car Company, in Delta, BC which manufactures electric cars which might become a Salt Spring alternative to the popular "Smart Car" if we can reduce the speed limit on our island to 60kph.

Gary Holman of the CRD identified public transportation and improved infrastructure for walking and cycling as a priority. The sorry situation exists today that the funding source for start-up grants for new public transit initiatives has dried up. A new Transportation Commission will address the liability issues that have stymied the launching of planned projects such as rideshare schemes.

Jean Gelwicks talked about the need and desire for a system connecting the entire island with trails that connect with other neighborhood trails and circuits that could access every part of the island. Island Pathways is creating a path from Brinkworthy to GVM that will provide a safe alternative to walking on the roadway shoulder. A CRD wide vision is that Salt Springs' trails will link Fulford, Ganges and Vesuvius with the regions Vancouver Island circuit.

Elizabeth White had some hard figures from an updated baseline study of transportation statistics. In order to maintain our vehicle emissions at 2002 levels, 23 heavy commercial vehicles and over 600 cars would have to disappear from the Island. A bright spot is that 12% of new car registrations on Salt Spring have

been Hybrids (37) or "Smartcars" (22).

Dorothy Cutting warned that a 90% emission reduction is needed or the future will look radically different. She read a paragraph by Bill Michelson who stressed that community effort, neighborliness and "local solidarity" will be required to save the planet-all of which are in abundant supply on Salt Spring.

Jan Steinhem, driver of the "Veggie Van Gogh" truck spoke about the tradeoffs (Food/Fuel) posed by increasing ethanol production, touting the use of waste vegetable oil, and waste biomass. He also mentioned that Pretzel Motors provides biofuels from their location on Rainbow Road.

"Who Killed the Electric Car?" drew a capacity audience who came specifically to hear the panel and contributed to the spirited discussion. There were a lot of suggestions, a lot of energy (pun intended) and a sense that the Island is aware of the need to get serious about the climate crisis, and is looking at ways to do so. It was noted several times during the discussion that the OCP revision and other ongoing planning processes will provide an opportunity for us to address the energy challenge. Thanks to Fritz Cinema, Panel Moderator, Bob Weeden and panel presenters as well as all the audience participants for making this a successful afternoon.

Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change The most comprehensive review ever carried out on the economics of climate change. Sir Nicholas Stern of the UK said:

"The conclusion of the Review is essentially optimistic. There is still time to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, if we act now and act internationally. Governments, businesses and individuals all need to work together to respond to the challenge. Strong, deliberate policy choices by governments are essential to motivate change. But the task is urgent. Delaying action, even by a decade or two, will take us into dangerous territory. We must not let this window of opportunity close." Check out the report at:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_review/stern_review_economics_climate_change/stern_review_report.cfm

Heat: How To Stop the Planet From Burning: Excerpt from Book Review by Dorothy Cutting

George Monbiot's new book is certain to have an emotional impact on anyone who reads it. More than any author, with the exception of James Lovelock, he honestly faces the global catastrophe that the impending climate crisis will bring, and he forces us to recognize the terrible fate that awaits the millions of people in the poorer countries of the World who have had the least to do with the making of this crisis. He shows us that most of the rhetoric we hear about greenhouse gas reduction is way off the mark. Two degrees Celsius is the temperature level beyond which major ecosystems begin to collapse, and in order to prevent this from happening, rich nations must cut their greenhouse gasses by 90 percent or more by the year 2030. Greenhouse gasses should be stabilized at or below the *equivalent* of 440 parts per million of carbon dioxide, or 400 ppm CO₂. By 2030, the average carbon emissions per person should weigh no more than .8 tonnes, or the equivalent of one cross-Atlantic trip on a jet airliner.

Given this challenge, it's hard to believe that there is any hope at all of saving our Planet. And yet, Monbiot's book is brimming with hope - healthy, practical, achievable hope, not wistful and unrealistic dreams. He cuts the problem into "chunks:" electricity generation, home heating, transportation, cement manufacturing and air travel. In each case, with the exception of the latter, he shows how sufficient cuts in emissions can be achieved without bringing the world economy to its knees.

This book is almost fun to read. With each chapter, Monbiot poses a problem and we read on in suspense to see how he will solve it. We may find ourselves even laughing at times at his brilliant flashes of sardonic humour. But we never lose sight of this author's humanism and sense of justice. He takes the climate crisis personally: He typed Chapter 10 with his new-born baby daughter Hanna on his knee, concerned that the threatened people of the world could become just "data."