



Wildlife Haven Rehabilitation Centre Looking Forward to New Home

Will continue fundraising efforts

By Sherry Kaniuga



A few young patients of the Wildlife Haven.

PATIENTS AT A TINY HOSPITAL just south of Winnipeg are so happy when their treatment is over, they don't just walk away – they run. Or fly. Or maybe even swim.

More than 1,700 wild animals each year – from rabbits, squirrels and ducklings to foxes, raccoons and beavers – are treated at Wildlife Haven Rehabilitation Centre in Ile des Chenes. When the animals' time is up, the volunteers who have spent weeks or months caring for them are more than happy to see them flee.

"They never say thank you on the way out, they just run," laughs Wildlife Haven's vice-president Judy Robertson, who has been volunteering her time to care for the injured and orphaned wildlife for more than 10 of the non-profit organization's 31 years.

Without volunteers like Robertson, Wildlife Haven simply wouldn't exist. Other than one full-time wildlife rehabilitator and a part-time education program coordinator, the 75-odd others who keep the wheels turning do so in their own spare time.

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Tiffany Lui, Hospital Co-ordinator (Left) and Shauna Hewson Education Co-ordinator pose with R2 the red tail hawk ambassador at Wildlife Haven

PHOTO: DAN DIAWOL WILDLIFE HAVEN

The hospital is housed in a decommissioned dairy barn, but it's not exactly home, sweet home. The space is cold and cramped, not just for the furry, feathered or scaly patients, but also for the people who care for them.

"It's challenging, let's just put it that way," Robertson explained. "The staff used a porta-potty as a washroom."

Near year, the dream of a new home finally come true, thanks to 18 acres of donated land on two 25-year leases from TransCanada Corporation, which also threw in \$500,000. That kick started Wildlife Haven's capital campaign, which aims to raise \$2.5 million to build a brand-new, state-of-the-art rehabilitation hospital and education facility near its current home.

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Executive Director's Message

By Curt Belton, Executive Director, Manitoba Eco-Network

NOW THAT COP21 IN PARIS IS OVER, we all have a lot to think about and all we do can is be hopeful that the world leaders will do their part to aggressively work on climate change while we do the same in our own realms. I have more to say on the topic of climate change in my article about Churchill in this issue (see page 11). Beyond doing the tough work on critical issues, it is important for us to take time to reflect and celebrate and that is just what we intend to do on Thursday, March 10.

Starting at 7 p.m. at the Metropolitan Theatre, we will be hosting our annual Reel Green fundraiser. At the Eco-Network, we are all very excited about having the opportunity to experience inspiring films about nature on the big screen in the beautifully renovated theatre. Last year we were awed by the progress of restoring wolves in Yellowstone and inspired by the story of a nonagenarian canoeist. It was a time to network, enjoy great food, have fun with the auction, and celebrate the work of some dedicated environmentalists with the Protecting Our Earth Awards. This year we will do the same while enjoying the ambiance of this heritage theatre.

Tickets are only \$50 in advance and you can find details on our website. So come on out and celebrate and support the Manitoba Eco-Network in promoting positive environmental action. 🌱



PHOTO: LIANNE BELTON



PHOTO: WILL MILNE

Farmers' Markets

Just because summer is over doesn't mean the harvest is! Markets continue across Manitoba throughout the year. Check out fmam.ca and foodmattersmanitoba.ca to stay connected to your local producers.

Green Drinks

Stay connected for upcoming Green Drinks locations.

Working or volunteering in the environmental sector? Join us for an informal monthly get-together of after-work bevies.

Contact info@mbeconetwork.org for info.

JANUARY

16 Banff Mountain Film Festival

Burton Cummings Theatre, 7 p.m.

The Banff Mountain Film Festival (BMFF) World Tour brings the excitement, the spectacle, and the richness of the mountains and mountain culture to Winnipeg.

Visit accmanitoba.ca for details.

21 AG Days – Organic Solutions that Work

Brandon, MB

Full day workshop of highlights from the *Organic Field Crop Handbook*, 3rd edition. Check out organicfoodcouncil.org for more info.

23 Open Fire Beer Brewing

FortWhyte Alive, 12 p.m.

Craft honey ale over an open fire with a fur trade era recipe.

Visit fortwhyte.org for details.

FEBRUARY

6-12 Jack Frost Challenge - Green Action Centre

Stay active and celebrate the beautiful Manitoba chill! Friends, family, co-workers, and classmates are encouraged to sign up in teams to skate, bike, ski, snowshoe, run or walk across the snow.

Watch greenactioncentre.ca and contact christey@greenactioncentre.ca for more details.

March 10 Celebrating Reel Green - Inspiring People | Celebrating Nature

The Met – 281 Donald Street, 7 p.m.

Join us on March 10 at our historic new location for the Manitoba Eco-Network's 6th annual Reel Green evening. Enjoy inspiring short films, delicious food, live and silent auctions, and the chance to support the Eco-Network through this key fundraising and network-strengthening event. For more info and to purchase tickets, visit mbeconetwork.org/projects/reel-green-film-festival.

Interested in being a Reel Green sponsor or prize donor? Contact Chris at 204-947-6511 or chris@mbeconetwork.org for more details.

March 22 World Water Day - Water and Jobs

Declared in 1993, this globally recognized day provides a chance for nations to implement UN recommendations and promote concrete activities within their countries regarding the world's water resources. MB Eco-Network's Water Program will be planning activities to recognize this important day.

Stay connected to mbwatercaucus.org for more details.

April 27 Miles Macdonnell Youth Conference on Climate Change

Students will gather, share, and learn about climate science and solutions.

For more info, contact Susan at Climate Change Connection: 204-943-4386 or climate.connection@mymts.net.

13 Seedy Saturday

Canadian Mennonite University, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Check out winnipegseedysaturday.wordpress.com for more info.

18-20 Canadian Fair Trade Network Annual Conference

Fort Garry Hotel

This three-day event will bring together delegates from across the movement to create new partnerships and further the impact of fair trade.

For conference details, visit cftn.ca.

23-27 North of 58°: Winter Ecology and Northern Culture

Churchill Northern Studies Centre

Build an igloo, ride on a dog sled, and "rethink the popular misconception that only the largest and hardiest of animals can withstand the brutal Subarctic winter."

Check out churchillscience.ca for details.

MARCH

TBA FREE Composting Workshops with Green Action Centre

Learn how easy it is to recycle your kitchen scraps and yard waste into a rich natural soil amendment. Visit greenactioncentre.ca for more info and upcoming dates.

20 Exchange District Walk and Lunch at Neechi Commons

Nature Manitoba

Check out naturemanitoba.ca for more details.

APRIL

8 Naomi Klein in Winnipeg - hosted by CCPA-MB

6:30 p.m., Knox United Church

Award-winning author and activist Naomi Klein speaks on climate and economic justice. For tickets and info, visit policyalternatives.ca/offices/manitoba.

22 Earth Day

Stay connected to mbeconetwork.org for events and activities celebrating the wonder of our earth.



PHOTO: JAMIE HILLAND

Building Community

A Walking School Bus Story

By Jamie Hilland

AS PART OF THE TEAM here at Green Action Centre in the Active and Safe Routes to School Program, I am often asked if I have any experience with my own three children in getting them to walk to school every day. My answer is that yes, I walk my own kids to school on a daily basis, and since 2009 my wife and I have run a Walking School Bus for many of the children in our neighbourhood.

Back when our first child was finally able to attend our local elementary school, we were excited that we would no longer have to drive every other day. We had lived in our neighbourhood for seven years prior to our son attending the local elementary school, but we knew very few folks outside of the other kids and parents on our local street. Within days of walking to school with our son, we had many familiar faces that we began to recognize, and eventually look forward to seeing.

As time progressed and our other children began to attend the same school as our oldest son, other parents began to notice that we were consistent every day walkers with our kids. Soon we were asked if we could pick up other children along the way, as not all parents had the schedule that could accommodate a morning drop off or afternoon pick up at school. Our little family walking school bus of five soon grew to seven.

This eventually evolved into other parents asking if they could drop off their children at our home in the morning to have us walk their child to school, as they wished for their children be active and walk with their friends to school every day. After this, we received requests for after school pick up and walk home, and after school childcare shortly thereafter. Before we knew it, we had 11 kids on our walking school bus every day!

If you are thinking of starting a walking school bus, here are 11 great benefits for our family that will work for yours too:

- **Exercise.** It allows our children to get at least 30 minutes of exercise every day as we walk to and from school. Often the walk provides inspiration to go and check out the park on the corner, or to go and play at a friend's house along the way.
- **We know our neighbourhood.** Ask me what street has the nicest flowers, what is happening at the community club, what band is playing at the local club, what house is getting renovated, where the nice old lady who is always in her yard is, and what the latest construction zone is, and I am able to tell you right away, as we see this on the daily walk with our kids.
- **We know our neighbours.** Walking with our school bus has allowed us to spend time getting to know other parents and kids who walk to school regularly, and live nearby.
- **We get to spend quiet time** walking with our kids every day. It is part of our family routine and custom that we walk and talk on our way to and from school. We get to talk about what the day ahead holds, and at the end of the day hear how the day went while it is fresh in their minds.
- **We know our children's friends.** We meet and talk with other kids along the way, many of whom often merge into our group and chat freely as we walk. At

school, we can put faces to names as we walk our children to their classrooms and meet their school friends.

- **We know our children's teachers.** Every morning we are able to have a quick check in with our children's teachers, and sort out any issues as they arise. But be warned, this has lead to us volunteering many hours at the school...
- **We save money.** Kids are expensive as is, so not having to spend money on gas to shuttle them back and forth, as well as reducing the wear and tear on our vehicles, means more money saved.
- **We make the streets safer.** Not only are we able to keep the kids on our bus safe from risks such as traffic and bullies, we are able to keep an eye on other kids in the neighbourhood, but also for any suspicious activity. More eyes on the streets makes for safer streets for everyone.
- **We make the school safer.** By not driving our children to school and walking others, we take several vehicles off of the road that would otherwise be driving amongst walking kids.
- **We make the air we breathe cleaner.** By not driving, we don't pollute the air that we and others breathe. With heavier traffic around schools, all of these cars in a small area result in reduced air quality.
- **Life Lessons.** As we walk our kids to school, we are modelling behaviour that the car is not the only mode of transportation. This teaches our kids that the default way to get around is not by hopping in our fossil fuel burning cars and rolling up to the front door of the school.
- **Good friends return favours.** Although we have never asked to be paid to walk our friend's children to school, we have our generosity returned many times over through reciprocal child care, gift cards, and even help with renovations. It pays in so many ways!

So this fall as you plan out how to get your kids to school, consider starting a walking school bus for you and your kids. You won't regret it. 🌱

Jamie Hilland is a Program Manager with the Active and Safe Routes to School Program at Green Action Centre. For more information on walking school buses please call the ASRTS team at 204-925-3773, or go to greenaction-centre.ca/program/asrts/

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Wildlife Haven...



The hospital, education centre and overwintering enclosure will be the first structures to be built. The entire campus will be geo thermal heated.



Judy Robertson (centre) is all smiles during the official sod turning of Wildlife Haven's first permanent home which is now under construction. Left to right, Hon. Thomas Nevakshonoff, Minister of Conservation & Water Stewardship, MP Ted Falk, Judy Robertson, vice president Wildlife Haven, Andrea Jalbert, vice president of Community and Sustainability-TransCanada Corporation, Derek Roth, president Ritchot Chamber of Commerce

PHOTO: TERRY WOWCHUK

They have raised half the required funds, and the facility is being built in stages as the money comes in. Instead of getting loans, they're relying on the generosity of donors and business.

"This facility is going to be just amazing for Manitoba's wildlife. It will be the largest wildlife rehab initiative in central North America," said Robertson. "It will be cleaner, allow us to take more patients, and give our staff better facilities to just hang up their coats."

Along with the hospital and education centre, it will feature enclosures for rehabilitating injured and orphaned wildlife, wetlands and tall grass natural areas, and an outdoor classroom.

A separate area will be specially built for Wildlife Haven's "ambassadors" – a handful of birds of prey including a red-tail hawk, an American kestrel and a great horned owl. Unable to be fully rehabilitated, the birds are trained by volunteers to participate in the more than 150 presentations Wildlife Haven does each year at places like schools, provincial parts, senior care homes, birthday parties and fall migration events.

"Educating the public about how to co-exist with wildlife is critical. We take the ambassadors out for people to learn about them, to see their beauty and to know what they're doing when they find an animal that needs help, and how to do it safely," Robertson said.

Volunteers give the ambassadors a name, but not the patients.

"To name them is to humanize them, and we want them to be afraid of humans, to feel like we're a threat."

That's why when an adorable baby bobcat arrived at Wildlife Haven a year ago after being found shivering, dehydrated and hungry with

her mother nowhere in sight, she was mostly left on her own, other than the basic care needed to nurse her to health until her release in June.

"We're a hospital, not a zoo. It's about giving them quiet time and letting them recover," explained Robertson.

The feline patient was definitely rare for Wildlife Haven, which takes in mostly birds, with mammals, reptiles and amphibians making up the remaining 30 per cent of patients.

"We rely on our volunteers to go pick up the wildlife and look after them, feed them, do setups, build buildings and go out to do the education programming," Robertson added. "We have some amazing volunteers from every walk of life. They're a great mix of people with different skill sets, but all of them have a desire to help wildlife."

Sherry Kaninga is a Creative Communications graduate, writer and member of The Manitoba Editors' Association.

It's Time to Take the Challenge!

By Kevin Freedman

THIS MARCH WILL MARK the eighth annual Water Conservation Challenge, an event initiated in Winnipeg and promoted around the world. The simple premise is: Try to severely reduce the amount of water you use on a daily basis for an entire month to educate and inspire others.

Most campaigners, myself included, strive to keep our daily water use under 25 litres (L) but some opt for a slightly less ambitious amount such as 40 or 50 L. But even this is an extreme drop from the average amount the average Canadian uses, a whopping 330 L per day! This seems like an exaggerated amount but when you factor in a daily shower (80-120 L), several toilets flushes (40-80 L), and a load of laundry (60-200 L!), it isn't hard to see how we get to that amount.

We are looking for others to join the campaign and take the Challenge. Campaigners spend the month of March inspiring others to be more aware of their water use and be better stewards of the environment overall. We do this by promoting the project in the media, presenting to various community groups and at schools, and asking others to sign a pledge to reduce their own water use. To date the Water Conservation Challenge has reached millions through media coverage in at least eight countries, has saved multiple millions of litres of water through the pledging campaign, and more than 10,000 students have seen live presentations on the project in schools around Manitoba.

Are you up for it? The commitment is what you want to make of it and can range from blogging about your experience, encouraging others to sign the pledge, presenting to classrooms and community groups, or just limiting your water use anonymously.

Visit www.howlowflowcanyougo.com for more information and to get involved.

Kevin Freedman is the founder of the Water Conservation Challenge.



Saving a Treasured Wilderness Icon

Doom and gloom
or is there hope?

By Ron Thiessen

WOODLAND CARIBOU, the great wilderness icon on our 25 cent piece dwells within the spectacular boreal forest that covers much of Canada. Over thousands of years they have adapted to their environment in many ways; hollow hair that helps to insulate from the cold and to stay buoyant while swimming and hooves that spread out to the size of dinner plates to act as snowshoes. Over the last one hundred years, landscape changes in much of their range are outpacing their ability to adapt.

The species is in trouble nationwide and Manitoba is no exception. However, with swift action, I believe there is hope for these animals as we realize how much we need the services provided by its boreal habitat when kept healthy.

Why are these elusive creatures in decline? The finger points squarely at human activity in their habitat. Over the last fifty years, fully functioning, suitable woodland caribou habitat has been halved, largely due to industrial activities such as logging, mining, hydro developments, and their associated road networks. Caribou need big tracts of unspoiled lands and waters to find enough food, avoid predators such as wolves and minimize overlap with deer and moose, which carry a contagious and fatal parasite.

I'm often asked "why all the fuss about this one critter?" The answer is pretty simple. The large tracts of intact wild lands that caribou need are what many wildlife and all humans require for survival. It provides habitat for hundreds of other species and the ecosystem services we need like water filtration, oxygen production, and climate mitigation. If we fail to keep the boreal fully functioning, we ultimately fail ourselves and those to come.

So what do we do to prevent this catastrophe from occurring? Right now, we have a great opportunity to be proactive and I am hopeful about the future for caribou in Manitoba. Here's why.

- Through the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement, CPAWS, along with other



PHOTO: RON THIESSEN

Woodland caribou are in trouble nationwide and Manitoba is no exception but with *swift action*, CPAWS believe there is hope for these animals in this province.

ENGOS and Tolko, a forestry company that has a license area that covers about a fifth of Manitoba, are working to achieve a healthy future for caribou and the boreal along with prosperous and sustainable forest-dependent communities.

- On Oct. 15, 2015 Manitoba released the most promising strategy for woodland caribou recovery in the nation. It's the only caribou strategy in Canada that aims to conserve 65 to 80 per cent intact suitable boreal caribou habitat in each of nine caribou management units.

What are the challenges? Manitoba has an outstanding team of smart, passionate provincial caribou biologists. The problem is we don't have enough of them and they don't presently have the funds to gather Indigenous and local knowledge to adequately inform action plans for caribou recovery. Their current timeline will see action plans for caribou ranges finalized between 2018 and 2020. CPAWS believes the completion of these action plans by the end of 2017, as mandated in the federal strategy, is crucial to ensure recovery efforts will be seen on the ground before populations are put at further risk.

The province needs to up its game in terms of capacity and it needs to do it fast.

What is enough in regard to boreal protection? CPAWS, as well as many First Nations, other ENGOs, and businesses have signed on to the goal of

protecting at least half of the boreal from industrial developments, with sustainable management practices on the remaining landscape. Where did this goal come from? A letter from over 1,500 scientists from across the globe stated the need to protect half of the boreal, in an unbroken state, for the forest to remain fully functioning. It's the least we can do for caribou and for ourselves.

Ontario and Quebec have already made this commitment and Manitoba is clearly ready. A Probe Research poll conducted in February 2015 that showed almost nine of ten Manitobans said at least half of the boreal region should remain free from development. Since then, CPAWS delivered a petition of over 10,000 names asking the government to commit to large-scale boreal caribou habitat protection.

If you're inspired to protect caribou and the boreal forest we all need, please go to cpawsmb.org/actions to send your opinion to our political leaders. Leading up to the provincial election, believe me, they are paying attention to the wants of Manitobans. When they come knocking on your door, we encourage you to ask your area's candidates about what they will do about caribou and boreal conservation.

We may have honored woodland caribou on the back of the 25 cent piece but their importance to our future well-being is priceless. 🌿

Ron Thiessen is the executive director of CPAWS Manitoba.

Nopiming Provincial Park: Wilderness for Generations

Nopiming Provincial Park deserves greater protection against development

By Eric Reder

NOPIMING PROVINCIAL PARK has become a generational destination for me. In 1976 when Nopiming was first established, my parents brought me to the park for my first canoe trip. In the years since, canoeing, fishing, exploring and hiking trips in Nopiming occurred regularly with my parents. This park feels a little like my bush backyard.

Right now the Manitoba government is establishing a management plan for Nopiming Park. The government released their draft management plan for Nopiming in October 2015, and will issue a final plan after analyzing public comment on the draft.

Woodland caribou and moose make their homes in Nopiming, and both species are being affected by human developments in the park. The draft management plan rightly mentions that moose and caribou need special consideration.

The largest detriment to woodland caribou population is industrial roads and development in caribou habitat. The government acknowledged this fact in their 2015 *Recovery Strategy for Woodland Caribou*. Currently, sections of Nopiming are protected for woodland caribou. Since 2011, the Wilderness Committee has been calling for the creation of a Nopiming - Owl Lake Caribou Protected Area adjacent to Nopiming. We were pleased to see that the draft plan also calls for adding land to the west of the park for caribou.

Moose have suffered at least a 65 per cent drop in recent years – a deeply troubling trend. This is due, in large part, to an increase in predation as more industrial roads and trails wind into their deep forest sanctuaries. Fire suppression has also stifled the natural regeneration of high quality habitat that would normally arise after a fire.

The plan mentions that fire management options will be investigated, but stronger language than that is needed. Ontario park authorities admitted fire suppression was damaging to their parks in 2006, and national parks are using purposely-lit prescribed burns to properly regenerate habitat for wildlife. Manitoba must limit fire suppression in parks, too.

In 1986, dad and I drove into my first logging clearcut inside a provincial park. This experience left



Nopiming Provincial Park is a generational destination for many families.

PHOTOS: ERIC REDER

an indelible mark on me, and drove me to work hard against park logging. Finally, in 2009, after years of campaigning on the issue, the Wilderness Committee succeeded in getting park logging banned everywhere except Duck Mountain. Unfortunately, logging roads – although no longer used for logging – have become permanent fixtures in Nopiming.

This points to a missing objective in the draft management plan: road removal. Our *Greenprint for Nopiming* document from 2014 called on the government to analyze all trails in the park, and properly decommission old roads. Moose and woodland caribou will both benefit from intact habitat, free of predation.

In the winter of 2011, I discovered a newly bulldozed winter road. This one went down to the lake I was fishing on, and mineral exploration drilling was happening in the headwaters of my fishing hole. The exploration didn't find anything, and the mining claim is now gone. Manitobans received little, if anything, for the destruction of provincial park forest, and it will be close to 50 years before that trail is regenerated to a functioning, older park forest.

On Thanksgiving Sunday this year, I took my seven-year-old – the next generation – out hiking in Nopiming. He's been visiting the park since his first canoe trip when he was just four months old. It was his first visit to this spot, but I had been here many times.

For him, with his fresh eyes, the forest was big and alive. For me, knowing the place, I could see the scars of military training exercises that are run in the park: trees chopped down, new roads opened up and tracked vehicles chewing up the forest floor.

The Department of National Defence acquired a youth camp on Springer Lake in the 1990s. From this base, military personnel are set out on lakeshores in southern Nopiming for survival training. Every site that is utilized is littered with hacked down trees, half burnt fires and, often enough, bits of military kit like ropes, chemical fire starters or just garbage.

More disruptive to wilderness are the all-night exercises with gunfire and flares, conducted through the forest and up and down the roads. Additionally, low-flying military planes buzz around the park, shattering the peace in the woods. In a province with huge sections of public forest, especially forest already allocated for other industrial purposes like logging, there is no need to put this pressure on a provincial park. The *Greenprint for Nopiming* calls for an end to military exercises in the park, while the draft plan only mentions "mitigating" the effects. That is simply not enough to preserve Nopiming's nature.

The park area has changed for the worse since I've been going there. We have an opportunity to ensure that when my son brings his kids to this park in years to come, and the next generation experiences this entrance to the wilderness, they can visit a park that is in better shape than it is today. But we need the government to follow the wishes of Manitobans, and implement a stronger management plan. 🌱

Eric Reder is the Manitoba Campaign Director of the Wilderness Committee. To learn more about the Wilderness Committee's park protection work, visit wildernesscommittee.org/Manitoba.



Green Networks of Cities

Nearest-source purchasing and green transportation

By Kevan Bowkett

BEING NETWORKED APPEARS TO BE an inherent feature of cities. They never exist singly, but in groups. Export from one city to another is an essential part of what makes the settlement a city. So when we consider such post-peak-oil concepts as “our world is about to get a whole lot smaller,” we still cannot dispense with the long-distance trading functions of cities. Cities may trade less with each other, and we will have to devise green methods of long-distance transport. But we cannot, seemingly, exclude city exports and imports from our designs of sustainable communities.

it should start small and increase in increments, being pioneered by the government at each stage. Unions, and even religious congregations, could also take the lead here, gradually requiring that their own purchases be from the nearest source.

Taylor’s idea has merit; but it also seems his “intervening opportunities metric” is not enough. What is important is the “total transport footprint,” which also assesses the type of transport used, as some are more polluting than others. For example, whether the medium of transport damages specific ecologies (ie. ships’ hulls carrying invasive organisms between dif-

an opportunity as much as a difficulty. A bold move like this might fit in, incidentally, with Mayor Bowman’s partly “utopian” vision of Winnipeg’s potential. If it’s true that networks are inherent to cities we will always need long-distance transport: and the urgent need to create green transportation could give Manitoba a great deal of useful and ecologically-friendly work. 🌱

Kevan Bowkett is a Winnipeg writer and has run as a Green Party candidate for Parliament, lectured on the global arms trade at the University of Winnipeg, and promoted an International Convention on the Evaluation of New Technologies.

“What is important is the ‘total transport footprint,’ which also assesses the type of transport used, as some are more polluting than others.

In addition to locally-focused efforts like the Transition Towns Initiative, or even the notion of “green cities,” we will also need to green the networks that inherently connect cities in economically functioning systems. At least, so argues urban scholar Peter Taylor, drawing on urban theorist Jane Jacobs, in the final chapter of his fascinating book *Extraordinary Cities* (2013), as well as in other writings.

How can we green these networks that are going to continue to exist? One way is buying from the nearest source. Taylor suggest the creation of an “intervening opportunities metric,” and enforcing the requirement to ship from the nearest source, thus using the lowest energy and producing the least pollution.

How does this relate to Manitoban cities? One way would be for “buying from nearest source” to be required of purchasers in Winnipeg and other Manitoban cities. This could be an area in which government purchasing can take the lead. It could be piloted by government departments, and gradually be mandated for private purchasers. Winnipeg would need to become a larger market for Manitoba foodstuffs, reducing its imports of food from southern Ontario, BC, or the southern US. Obviously, such a mandate is potentially a difficult interference by government in the operations of business, so

ferent bioregions) and the degree to which the relevant supply chain is fair-trade or not.

Perhaps one of the best ways of getting people to buy from the nearest source—or the source that creates the smallest footprint—is to have accurate pricing that reflects more of the true costs of items. People would naturally tend to buy the ecologically and socially less-harmful item, without government mandates that they buy a nearer but possibly more “expensive” item. Government could pioneer this, requiring that its purchases be priced according to this “cost-price integration” method. The Manitoba government could establish an Internal Bureau of Pricing which would do audits of items and services the government is considering purchasing, to arrive at more accurate costs of the various choices. The government could then buy according to the best value. This could also be done by municipal governments. Similarly, other groups in society—business, unions, NGOs, religious bodies—could gradually increase the percentage of their own purchases that are priced according to this method.

Building fair-trade manufacturing is more complicated than fair-trade food production because the supply chains are so complex, and manufacturing is so focused on ecologically questionable composites and biocomposites, and less focused on biomimicry. Nevertheless, it presents

Further reading:

Jane Jacobs (1969) **The Economy of Cities** and (1984), **Cities and the Wealth of Nations**.

Peter Taylor (2013), **Extraordinary Cities**; also (2012), “**Transition Towns and World Cities: Towards Green Networks of Cities**”: **Local Environment**, 17 (4), (2012), 495-508; also available at: www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/rb/rb376.html.

Transition Towns Initiative:
www.transitionnetwork.org/about.

Y.E.S. Celebration of Schools Conference a Success

By John Perry, Anju Bajaj and Laura Jones

THE FOURTH ANNUAL Youth Encouraging Sustainability (Y.E.S.) Celebration of Sustainable Schools conference was held on May 21, 2015 at the University of Winnipeg. The 2015 event included student presentations, sustainability focused workshops and a Sustainability Expo. Exhibitors such as Manitoba Eco-Network helped to make the event such a huge success.

Participants left events with new connections, new ideas, and a greater appreciation for sustainability. Over 20 schools participated in the day long proceedings.

The morning student presentations provided a great opportunity for youth to lead and learn from each other. Presentations were given by junior high and high schools and included:

- Elmwood Sustainability Initiatives, Elmwood High School
- Leading Young People to a Future of Promise and Possibilities Through Mentorship and Education, Wayfinders Manitoba/Maples Collegiate
- A Sustainable Aeration System for the Town of Altona, W.C. Miller Collegiate
- Kids' New Horizons (Do It Yourself Science for Sustainability), Holy Cross School
- Journey to Become an Eco-Globe School, Met School

The PowerPoint presentations and a listing of the action projects undertaken by the presenting schools are available at www.scmb.mb.ca

Lena Andersson, co-chair of the Y.E.S. Celebration of Sustainable Schools conference was very pleased with the feedback received from the 2015 conference. Watching the students teach and learn from one another is one of the conference highlights for Andersson.

In the morning all students were also treated to a presentational "Caring for our Watersheds" by Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre staff.

After a lunch students were divided into four groups and rotated through three sustainability workshops and the Sustainability Expo. The three workshops were: *World in A Barrel* –FortWhyte Alive, *Composting, the Benefits and Barriers*–Green Action Centre, and *Sustainable Watersheds*–Manitoba Conservation Districts Association. Co-chair Mike Jensen explained that this year's workshops really engaged students and the expo displays showed them the depth of resources available towards sustainability initiatives in Manitoba

Expo exhibitors included Green Action Centre, Holy Cross School, Manitoba Sustainability Network -Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship, Reducing Ecological Footprint Working Group –Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship, Take Pride Winnipeg, W.C. Miller Collegiate, Youth Encouraging Sustainability (Y.E.S.)–Science Council Manitoba, and of course Manitoba Eco-Network.

Y.E.S. has been active with the promotion of sustainability since 1998. Over the years it has offered workshops for students, showcases for student projects, speakers for environmental/sustainable development days, displays at Assiniboine Park and the Forks, sustainability in-services for teachers, field camps (geology, water, forest ecology, Lake Winnipeg sustainability, active citizenship, Geographical Information Systems), and the Celebration of Sustainable Schools.

In January, the Manitoba Round Table for Sustainable Development presented Youth Encouraging Sustainability (Y.E.S.) a Manitoba Excellence in Sustainability Award. Y.E.S. looks forward to participate with students, teachers and groups such as Manitoba Eco-Network to advance sustainability.

Though the event is over, we hope you won't stop celebrating the many solutions you have found which move all of us towards a bright, sustainable future. If students at your school are taking action to promote the pillars of sustainability (social well being, a sound economy, and a healthy environment), or if you'd like to see what other schools are doing to create their sustainable future, contact Y.E.S. at yes.sustainableschools@gmail.com to find out how you can get involved in the 2016 Celebration of Sustainable Schools conference. Y.E.S. wants to work with you to make your school and community more sustainable.

We look forward to celebrating with you next year. 🌱

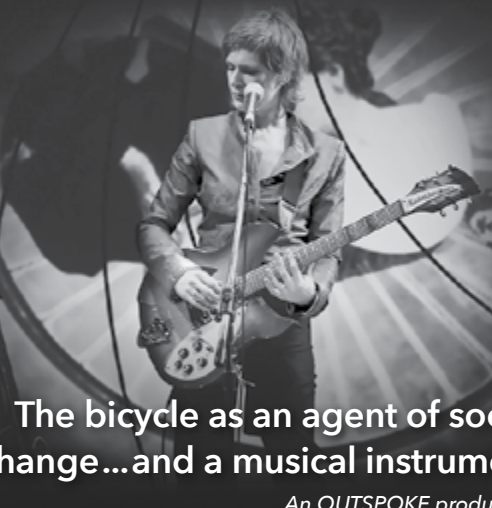
Laura, John and Anju are members of Youth Encouraging Sustainability.

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Journey to Churchill:

Exceptional Beauty and Climate Change

By Curt Belton

WHEN MY WIFE LIANNE AND I first started talking about going to Churchill, we had friends make the comment that we were going there before climate change ruins the North. It seems to be a strange relationship that we have with climate change. Many people recognize that there are dire implications for the natural world, but have a hard time facing the fact that our lifestyle is contributing to it. I love to travel and learn and experience new things. But there is always a little voice in the back of my head that asks do I really need to be putting more carbon into the atmosphere to do so?

Some people say that the North is defined by cold. In Churchill, for example, currently there are about 50 days of -30 degree weather in an average year and that has a profound impact on making the North what it is. Flora and fauna have adapted into an intricately balanced system. According to the University of Winnipeg's Danny Blair, by the end of the century this may be pared down to a mere five days per year. What impacts will that have on the land, animals and the Indigenous people who have lived in this delicately balanced ecosystem for countless generations?

On our first day in Churchill we walked cautiously around the town being wary as we turned every corner not to become a meal for the polar bears that we hoped to see. It was a little unnerving to see signs that stated "Stop Do Not Walk In This Area" emphasized with a symbol of a polar bear. Nonetheless, we ventured on to Eskimo Beach on Hudson Bay and caught our first glimpses of the beluga whales. The rocks, lichen, tiny flowers and view of the bay were all breathtaking.

Seeing the belugas was a priority and on a beautiful, calm, evening, we struck out on the water in our kayaks adjacent to the towering Port of Churchill. It was not long before these very social whales made their presence known by surfacing nearby and diving under our boats. It was nothing short of magical to see the belugas at arm's length.

At one point a pair of curious young whales kept approaching me as they swam in unison like the most disciplined synchronized swimmers. When they surfaced they appeared to be staring right at me making plans in some mirthful conspiracy. All of a sudden they butted their heads against the side of my kayak and started pushing me around. I just had to go with it as I was at their mercy. That little voice in the back of



Polar bear mother and cub basking on the shore of Hudson Bay in August 2015.

PHOTO: CURT BELTON

my mind did ask: is it really OK for us to be out in their estuary?

To get some perspective on what it is like to live in the north I spoke with Alberteen Spence, an Indigenous woman who grew up in Churchill. She recalled that some of her earliest memories are of picking berries with her kokum and running from Polar Bears. In addition to climate change, Alberteen noted the effects that development has had on the traditional lifestyle of the people of the land.

She said her dad is very sad about the many changes he has seen in Churchill over his lifetime in the climate, ecology, and on the Indigenous peoples. Tangible changes like the decline of the once abundant cisco and of the caribou herds. Alberteen pointed out that the people of the north had an intimate relationship with the land; they knew how to read the weather, find potable water, and lived out of doors. She explained that her dad says that his people feel like they are always on the front line in the tensions over how the land is being managed.

Although it wasn't our specific goal to go on a polar bear tour we did have the good fortune of seeing seven of these great bears, at respectful distances, as they ambled about the shore in the hungry days of August. Our best view was from a Zodiac tour and we saw both a male, and a mother with a cub on the shore. I would be lying if I said it was anything less than exhilarating to see these magnificent creatures in their natural habitat.

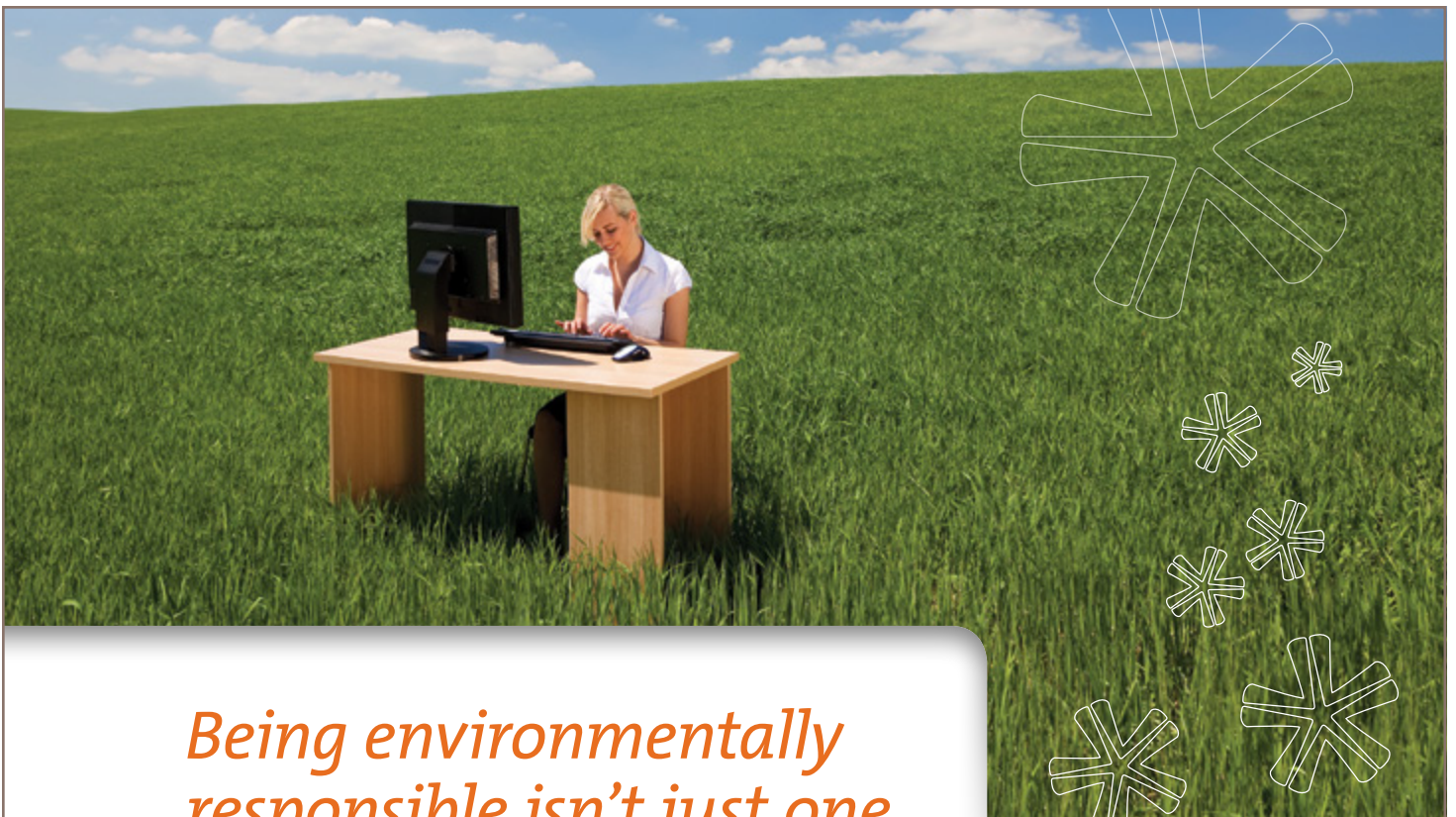
So what of the future for the polar bears with the onset of climate change? Blair noted, "Climate change is underway and, much more so than in the south, the evidence is easy to see in the

north, especially in the profound reduction in the amount of sea ice." This is of course the ice that polar bears depend upon for their existence. The loss of cold days will not only affect bears but also melt the permafrost and have a huge impact on transportation, tradition, and Northern society.

Concern about the effects of climate change and loss of polar bear habitat has prompted the Manitoba government's proposal of a massive polar bear park that would surround Wapusk National Park close to Churchill. The goal would be to protect critical denning sites and additionally raise awareness of the threat to the iconic Polar Bear. Josh Pearlman of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society explained that the area is also an important peat reservoir. Parks Canada claims that the peatlands of the Hudson Bay Lowlands are a global storehouse for carbon and are at great risk from climate change.

There is so much to see and do in Churchill and we felt very reluctant to leave these chilly and enchanting shores. I hope that our leaders nationally and internationally commit to finding and implementing an immediate plan to mitigate our human contributions to climate change. I pray that these first effects of climate change in the North don't snowball into an irreversible tragedy. I need to realize that everything I do in my day-to-day life can be contributing to rapid climate change in the North. I do not want that to be my personal legacy. 🌱

Curt Belton is the executive director of the Manitoba Eco-Network and prior to this role was intensively involved in sustainability education in the public school system.



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