

Meet Winnipeg's Most Climate-Friendly Courier Service!

By Anne Lindsey

An increasingly familiar sight around the downtown this past winter was a yellow-clad, often ice-encrusted individual with goggles, riding a bike and carrying a mail-bag. This hardy person was either Dave Geisel, Susanne Klueppel, or Jonah Clark—the three employee-owners of Natural Cycle Courier—delivering small packages and urgent documents in a speedy, efficient and moreover, environmentally-friendly way for their 21 satisfied Winnipeg customers!

Dave Giesel had the idea for Natural Cycle in the Spring of 1999 after a bad experience working for another courier company. His discussions with other local couriers convinced him that the industry generally is not worker-friendly. This combined with a passion for bicycles and the knowledge that the average car courier releases 191kg of airborne pollutants into the Winnipeg air every year, led him to incorporate Natural Cycle as a worker-owned co-operative with Susanne Klueppel and Tom Jasiakiewics.

Sky's the limit

Natural Cycle's office in the basement of 91 Albert Street is also home to the other aspect of the co-op: a full-service bicycle repair shop, which offers fast and economical repairs as well as bike-building, incorporating used and refurbished material whenever possible. The two enterprises balance each other well. According to Susanne, the courier business tends to flourish in the winter, with bike repairs providing the bulk of activity in the summer months.



From left: Natural Cycle's Jonah Clark, Dave Geisel and Susanne Klueppel.

While business may not be booming, it is growing. And with what David and Co. hope will be a growing consciousness about the dangers of greenhouse gas emissions in Manitoba—the sky should be the limit.

Besides speed of service (essential for a courier business—Ontario statistics show that in cities, cycling is the fastest mode of transportation for distances up to 5km), Natural Cycle cites a

range of environmental benefits including clean air, reduced CO2 emissions, and resource efficiency: one hundred bicycles can be manufactured with the energy it takes to manufacture 1 medium-sized car. In addition, the company boasts a simplified billing system which utilizes 45 times less paper than most courier companies.

Writing in the most recent edition of *Alternatives* journal, the David Suzuki Foundation's Jim Fulton notes that 16,000 Canadians die prematurely from smog related health problems every year—and much of that smog derives from the same sources driving climate change: the burning of fossil

fuels. This statistic in itself should convince us of the need to switch to alternative ways of doing things. Bicycles for couriers make sense.

Ethical

In the highly competitive world of high speed deliveries, where many couriers are poorly treated, an employee-owned co-operative also makes sense ethically, providing for "personal responsibility, initiative and fulfillment" according to Natural Cycle's personnel. Their goal? To provide the highest quality courier service without sacrificing the ecosystem which supports us all.

To find out more, or to set up your account, call Natural Cycle at: 952-5762.

This article is the first in a series profiling environmentally-friendly businesses in Winnipeg.

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own and do not represent the views of the
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Volunteers Needed!

1. The Climate Change Hub seeks an individual willing to examine new books and resources on Climate Change and provide a short abstract suitable for web site posting and other distribution. Good writing skills obviously required. Contact Jen Duggan, Hub Manager at 943-4836.

2. Alice Chambers Memorial Library seeks an individual to view and provide

abstracts for the videos in our collection. Good writing skills required. Contact Larry Laliberte, Librarian at 947-6511.

3. Would you be interested in distributing a petition from the Climate Action Network urging the federal government to ratify the Kyoto Protocol? Distributors would also be responsible for collecting petitions. Call Anne or Liz at 947-6511.

Why not GROW A ROW for Winnipeg Harvest?

As a warmer season approaches, thoughts turn to gardens, and for many, visions of crisp fresh veggies and herbs get us through those last cold days. For a growing number of Winnipeggers, however, the change of season does not make a big difference for the availability of nutritious and adequate food. These are the people in the 16,000 households who rely on the food bank at Winnipeg Harvest—a shocking 40% of whom are children.

If you are a vegetable gardener of any description, why not consider "Growing a Row" for Winnipeg Harvest this year. The Grow a Row program began in 1986, when Winnipeg residents Ron and Eunice O'Donovan produced more potatoes in their backyard garden than they could consume. They donated the surplus to Winnipeg Harvest, where it was enthusiastically received.

They encouraged their friends and neighbours to do the same, and since then, Grow A Row has yielded 1.5 million pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables.

It's simple—when planting your garden, just add a row or two to designate for Winnipeg Harvest. Root crops such as potatoes, carrots and beets store the best, but any fresh veggies are welcomed and will be redistributed.

Free packages of seeds for Grow A Row are donated by local garden company, T and T Seeds, and are available at the front desk at Winnipeg Harvest, 1085 Winnipeg Avenue.

Growing a Row can be an excellent educational and community-building opportunity: a school class or community club group can be encouraged to plant and tend some veggies and then deliver the crop to Winnipeg Harvest in the fall, get an on-site tour and a chance to sort food. A Winnipeg Harvest speaker will come out to a class, on request. As well, Harvest can always use volunteers. For more information, contact Harvest at 982-FOOD, or check their website: www.winnipegharvest.com

Help Make Manitoba Hunger Free!

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Eco-Network Steering Committee, 2001-2002

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Goldeneye Field Station Begins Third Year

by David Kattenburg, Mixedwood Forest Research and Advisory Committee

The Goldeneye Field Station and Education Centre, on the shores of Wellman Lake, in Duck Mountain Provincial Park, will celebrate the debut of its third season this coming May 24–26 with a weekend of guided field tours and nature talks.

Operated by the Mixedwood Forest Research and Advisory Committee (MFRAC), Goldeneye offers inexpensive accommodation to forest researchers and a home base for educational activities throughout Manitoba's forested western escarpment.

Goldeneye may only be three years old, but it has lived its life to the fullest. It began as the brainchild of a core of MFRAC members who realized that forest researchers might well be prepared to forsake their tents in exchange for more commodious, albeit rustic accommodation.

Such was the case. Before the purchase of Goldeneye had even been finalized, a handful of scientists came knocking. Their user fees contributed to rent-to-purchase payments. Backed by a considerable quantity of generous grants and no-interest loans, MFRAC managed to close the purchase deal. The property was theirs.

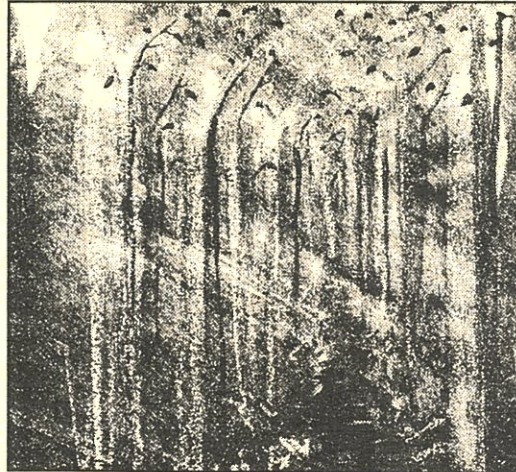
And what a property it is! Nestled between forest and lake, Goldeneye consists of a rustic cabin, a handful of trailer-bunk houses, a kitchen and dining room, a spacious assembly hall and assorted outhouses. It demands lots of work, over the short, medium and long term, but volunteer support and creative energy have been enormous.

New project possibilities

In its first two seasons of operation, Goldeneye has hosted forest researchers and their staff from Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, engaged in work on forest fire history, conifer regeneration, forest succession and disturbance dynamics, the effects of forestry on understory species diversity, and arthropod (insect) diversity. MFRAC hired a high school student to manage the Goldeneye station last summer, and it has high hopes of engaging someone this coming season. Among the projects he or she might tackle are the establishment of Goldeneye as an

elders hostel stop, developing a demonstration eco-village (with a cabin built out of donated, salvaged cedar telegraph poles), and the launching of a summer interpretive program for high school students and other interested locals.

With MFRAC's second publication near completion—an ecotourism guide of the region—the idea has been put forward to develop Goldeneye as a launch pad for guided tours up and down the Duck and Porcupine Mountains.



The May 24–26 event will be a debut. People will begin to gather on the evening of Friday, May 24, but activities will start in earnest on Saturday morning, with a bird outing (neotropical migrants will hopefully be present in large numbers). In the course of the weekend, a half-dozen tour leaders will lead groups through nearby wetlands and old growth stands. Graduate student Jeff Shaddock will lead tours to insect traps established as part of a Goldeneye-based research study directed by Richard Westwood. Manitoba botanists Elizabeth and David Punter will accompany participants on plant identification outings along nearby paths.

For further information about the Goldeneye Field Station and Education Centre, and about its May 24–26 event, contact Dave Kattenburg at 725-3308, or at kattenbu@westman.wave.ca.

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The Mixedwood Forest Research & Advisory Committee (MFRAC) is pleased to announce:

AN OUTSTANDING WEEKEND EVENT

Friday, May 24 - Sunday, May 26, 2002
Goldeneye Field Station and Education Centre
Wellman Lake, Duck Mountain Provincial Park

Interpretative walks by forest researchers

Slide show talks

Fabulous lakeside camping

Fine food and company

MFRAC Annual General Meeting

Full weekend registration: \$125 / Students: \$80

Registration includes two breakfasts and two lunches (Saturday and Sunday), Saturday dinner, forest tours, rustic bunk accommodation or tenting space and a Mixedwood Forest Research & Advisory Committee (MFRAC) annual membership.

Registrations are limited.

Send a cheque, payable to MFRAC, to:

MFRAC

Box 22021

Brandon, MB R7A 6Y9

For further information, contact:

Dave Kattenburg

kattenbu@westman.wave.ca

(204) 725-3308

Job Opportunity: Eco-Journal Editor

The Eco-Network wishes to contract out the editing of Eco-Journal for the next several issues, and invites candidates to send a letter of interest by May 3 to 2-70 Albert St. R3B 1E7, or to mbeconet@mts.net.

The ideal candidate will have experience in writing and editing, excellent communications skills and both knowledge of and interest in environmental issues, especially in Manitoba. The assignment will include both soliciting and writing articles, seeking advertisers, and working closely with Eco-Network staff.

What's Happening

Saturday, April 20 —Project Peacemakers Eco-Friendly Dinner at Crossways in Common, Adults \$10, Children 5 and under \$5. Speaker: Megan McKenzie, Project Peacemakers staff on: Caspian Basin Oil and Natural Gas Pipelines, An Examination of US Interests in the Policies towards Afghanistan. Call 775-8178 for info. and tickets.

Sunday, April 21 —Fort Whyte Centre Third Annual Eco-Adventure to kick off Earth Day celebrations at Fort Whyte. This is a paddling, running, blading and cycling race through the City of Winnipeg. Pre-registration necessary - call 204 989-8364 or visit www.fortwhyte.org.

Monday, April 22 —Consumers Assoc. of Canada presents "Walking Softly on the Earth", presentations on how to lessen our impact on the environment, speakers include Randall McQuaker of Resource Conservation Manitoba. Environmental Displays, raffle and more! \$3 at the door. 7:00pm Franco-Manitobain Cultural Centre. For more info. call 452-2572 or 1-888-596-0900

Wed. April 24, 7 pm —Save Our Seine River Environment Inc. Park Proposal for "Bois des Esprit" Morrow Gospel Church 755 St. Anne's Rd. Hear about a proposal to save 80 acres of forest south of John Bruce Road, under threat from the proposed Southglen bridge. Call Jules Legal 255-6800 or Marcel Ritchot 792-3154 for more info.

April 27 10:00 am —Manitoba Naturalist Society Urban Naturalist Workshops—Early Birders: an introduction to birdwatching at Kildonan Park

April 30, May 1, May 4, May 7, May 9, May 14 —Resource Conservation Manitoba, Free Composting Workshops at various City locations. Call 925-3777 for more information and to register.

May 9-11 —Open and Controlled Society: Access to Government and Corporate Information. An examination of the state of access to information in Canada. Speakers include: Ken Rubin, Access to Information Activist and Consultant (Ottawa) Hugh Segal; President, Institute for Research on Public Policy (Montreal) Mme. Andree Delagrave, Chair, Federal Access to Information Review Task Force, John Reid, Information Commissioner of Canada. Phone: (204) 474-8116 or e-mail: pgthomas@cc.umanitoba.ca for more information

Fri. May 10 and Sat. May 11 —Evergreen Foundation Conference on Schoolyard Greening, Fort Whyte Centre. Registration is \$30. Call Barb at 284-6776 for information.

May 15th, 7:30 pm —Project Peacemakers Annual General Meeting "Video Game Violence: How Should Adults Respond?" Panel Discussion with an educator, a student and a child psychologist. Bethel Mennonite Church, 870 Carter. Call Project Peacemakers 775-8178

May 24-26 —Mixedwood Forest Research & Advisory Committee (MFRAC) Weekend Event at Goldeneye Field Station and Education Centre, Wellman Lake, Duck Mountain Provincial Park. Includes interpretative walks by forest researchers, slide show talks, lakeside camping, MFRAC Annual General Meeting. Registration is \$125, \$80 for students. Contact Dave Kattenburg for details (204) 725-3308

May 26 1:00 pm —Manitoba's Wild Flower Wealth: an introduction to common wild flowers at Assiniboine Park \$15, \$10 for MNS members. In depth courses are also being offered on Birdwatching, Nature and Landscape Photography, Wild Flowers, Trees and Shrubs, and Exploring Nature in Winnipeg. Call (204) 338-4590, Email urbanat@hotmail.com, Website www.wilds.mb.ca/urbanat

Sat. June 1 —Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society's "Run & Walk for Wilderness" in Assiniboine Park featuring a 10K & 5K fun run and 3K walk. Great draw prizes, t-shirts plus refreshments from Tall Grass and Organza. Raise pledges and earn Mountain Equipment Co-op gift certificates. For a registration brochure, call CPAWS Manitoba at 339-0247 or visit www.cpaws.org

June 3-7 —Take the Commuter Challenge - for information, contact RCM at 925-3773

Friday, June 14, 2002 —Manitoba Forestry Association Bus Tour: Nursery Stock, Mushroom Talk & Arboretum Walk A one-day wide-range learning experience for landowners interested in nursery propagation, mushroom cultivation, and tree shrub identification. Non-members \$25, Members \$20. Call (204) 453-3182 or see www.mbforestryassoc.ca or www.woodlot.mb.ca. **ECO**

The Evergreen Foundation will be hosting a conference,

"From Ideas to Implementation"

When: Friday, May 10 (evening) &
Saturday, May 11, 2002

Cost: \$30.00

Where: Fort Whyte Nature Center, Winnipeg, Mb.

This conference will be geared toward school and community based groups that are interested in planning and designing greening projects on school grounds or community spaces. The theme of the conference is to provide strategies to the delegates to help them see their project through to completion and beyond.

For registration and/or further information please call Barb Haffner at 284-6776 or email bhaffner@UMAlumni.mb.ca

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Going Green, Getting Fit, and Having Fun!

by Andrea Lamboo Miln, Resource Conservation Manitoba

Are You Up for the Challenge?

It's that time again! Time to gear up for the Winnipeg Commuter Challenge. This year the Challenge takes place during Environment Week from June 3rd-7th. The Commuter Challenge is a Canada wide alternative transportation event targeted at workplaces and schools. It's a friendly five-day competition to see how many individuals can adopt alternative forms of transportation to get where they are going!

Last year's Challenge was a huge success! Resource Conservation Manitoba (RCM) along with its Challenge Planning Partners, engaged over 70 workplaces and schools, doubling the number of participating organizations from the previous year. Twenty-three hundred people walked, rolled, cycled, rode the bus and/or carpooled during Challenge week. Through their efforts, Winnipeggers along with their respective workplaces/schools, avoided 34 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions by choosing healthier, less polluting alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle commuting. The results point to a tremendous potential for emissions reductions if green methods of commuting were adopted year round.

It will be tough to beat such great results but RCM's Green Commuting Initiatives is working hard to build on last year's



success. This year we are working closely with our Workplace/School Coordinators to bump up participation, we are assisting larger workplaces in getting organized, and we are expanding school involvement in the Challenge. Stay tuned for Challenge 2002 results!

Active Transportation Work in Schools!

This year marks a first for RCM. We are bringing our active transportation work to Manitoba schools! RCM is very excited to be working with 4 schools in Winnipeg to pilot our brand new SAGE Program. SAGE, standing for safe, active, green and easy ways to school!, is a program designed for elementary schools in Winnipeg and provides parents, caregivers, and teachers with a healthy, fun way of getting kids to and from school. The Program aims to form "Walking School Buses" along safe routes where volunteer "Bus Drivers" (usually parents or caregivers) take turns walking children to and from school.



Go For Green

That's not all! RCM is also partnering with Go for Green, a national non-profit organization which encourages active living and the environment, and the Manitoba Product Stewardship Corporation to promote International Walk to School Day in Manitoba.

For more information on the Winnipeg Commuter Challenge and our active transportation programs for schools visit our website www.resourceconservation.mb.ca, call us at 925-3773 or drop us a line at andrea@resourceconservation.mb.ca.

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Your turn: Winnipeg Water Woes

By Bruce Maclean

When a tap is turned in Winnipeg few pause to wonder about the source of this precious liquid. Shoal Lake, its origin, was once one of the best quality bodies of water in North America. It has since deteriorated due to cottage development, commercial and sport fishing, mining, logging and the needs of a few native communities to the point where a water treatment plant is now slated to be built here in Winnipeg. The plant is needed to combat two culprits- giardia and cryptosporidium, which can cause serious illness and are not killed by the current treatment that Shoal Lake water undergoes.

To date, the only additions to Winnipeg water are chlorine (for disinfection against bacteria and viruses) and fluoride (supposedly to strengthen teeth and bones), both of which pose health risks. The chlorination can lead to the formation of carcinogenic ihalomethanes to our water and the addition of fluoride (a compound used frequently to make pesticides) has harmful effects on human health. Add to this the intolerably high levels of lead in some connection pipes of the distribution system and the untold amounts of asbestos leaching from disturbed cement pipes, and it makes drinking Winnipeg water a questionable proposition for health (1). Perhaps not as questionable as when turning the tap in Calcutta, Sao Paulo or Cairo, but nonetheless questionable.

Even with a new treatment plant we will still be sending clean water through dirty pipes. Mismanagement, apathy and igno-

rance have allowed a pure source of drinking water to reach such a deplorable state.

Tap Water Vs. Bottled Water

The alternative appears to be bottled water. A rough estimate is that half of Winnipeggers drink the stuff. Many do so for aesthetic purposes, due to a general dislike of the chlorine taste, or are simply following a growing consumer trend. Yet, in many instances bottled water is no better than tap water and although it must follow guidelines set by Canadian law, there are no formal consequences if the bottler fails to meet them. As such, quality varies immensely.

As well, few consumers are aware of how label values compare with their local tap water (2). Advertising further confuses the issue. Bear in mind that the world market for 89 billion liters of bottled water is estimated at 22 billion USD. One bottled water; 'Crystal Clean' with the label boasting mountains and crystal clear springs was in fact bottled in an industrial parking lot next to a hazardous waste site (3).

Exacerbating an already grave problem

We sit at a balance point here and I would like to make this very clear. Do we, as a society, upon recognition that our water supply is potentially unsafe, ignore it and turn to alternate, corporately controlled supplies of bottled water, or do we organize to fix the problem at its source.



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MIXES: 7 Grain Cereal, 7 Grain Flour, 8 Bean Soup.*

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Tap water, if we could ensure a clean, safe supply, produces virtually no waste. The water moves directly from the lake to the mouths of the 600,000 customers in Winnipeg through 270 km of pipe. The bottled water industry though, has untold environmental consequences.

Plastic is the most important packaging material of this industry—1.5 million tons per year, and has staggering pollution associated with it (4). The bottles are either made from PVC plastic or PET plastic, which is made from fractions of natural gas or crude oil changed chemically into solid form (5). One gallon of oil can contaminate 1,000,000 gallons of water and often does so in the extraction and transport of the crude, either intentionally or accidentally. In the manufacture of the bottles, benzene, cadmium compounds, carbon tetrachloride, chromium oxide, diazomethane, lead compounds, styrene and vinyl chloride are released, some of which are known carcinogens. Transportation of the filled bottles releases greenhouse gases and contributes to global warming. Even the most benign of the industry, the 5-gallon re-fillable jugs, still require manufacture, transportation and consumption of water to rinse and clean the jugs.

Furthermore, plastics are a significant component of the waste stream. In 1998 they comprised 10.2% by weight and 24% by volume in the United States. They also comprise 6% of all litter. In some jurisdictions plastic bottles are incinerated to produce energy but this releases heavy metals like cadmium and lead into the air. Also released is hydrochloric acid—a major contributor to acid rain. The energy value of PET plastic bottles is around 11,000 BTU's per pound, but it takes 49,000 BTU's to produce one pound of PET. This 38,000 BTU's per pound comes from the burning of fossil fuels, hydro power, nuclear power or other non renewable forms of energy (5).

The combined impacts of this industry through air and water pollution seem only to exacerbate the deterioration in quality of the drinking water that they are intending to replace.

Looking forward

No simple solution appears to present itself. If tap water is potentially dangerous and bottled water, albeit sometimes cleaner, is in the long run leading us towards greater dangers, then where do we go?

Manitobans are among the highest water users in the world: Much of the existing water legislation is medieval and some areas still charge a flat rate per use. Those who pay a flat rate use an average of 403 liter per day. Those who pay by volume use 261 liters per day. Industrial consumption works on a three-tiered system whereby the more water you use the less you pay per 100 cubic feet. These are strong disincentives for water conservation.(6).

Winnipeg consumption is growing at 1% per year and although the level of water that we draw from Shoal Lake is nearly at capacity (300 million liters/day), the capacity of the pipe is less than what we can legally take (454 million liters/day)(6). The pipe itself is 84 years old and in serious decay.

Proposals from the city do not include rebuilding a new pipeline alongside the old one with increased capacity and intro-

ducing strong conservation legislation, but do include two projects that would disturb provincial parks. One proposal is to tap the Sandilands at an 85 million dollar price tag and the other proposal is to build a pipeline to Natalie Lake at about 350 million. Some proponents have even suggested taking Assiniboine river water as a source!(7)

The financial commitment for conservation, (technological innovation and education) coupled with realistic legislation to curb a ONE PERCENT increase in water use will cost much less than any of the other proposals and is the only sustainable option.

Denial

The biggest obstacle in this water debate is denial. First we must recognize that we face a serious problem. The events in Dauphin and Walkerton should be wake-up calls. We need to build the water treatment

plant. We need to systematically remove the old poisoned pipes. Legislation at a local, federal and international level needs to protect our watershed from any further development. Strong conservation measures are needed to curb our use.

The creation of a water tax on bottled water could pay for these things as the average user of bottled water is paying as much as 1000 times more than a person who drinks tap water anyway (4). Also needed is mandatory labeling of bottled water that can be easily comparable to the free tests of tap water that should be available to every citizen. We have a long way to go.

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6. City of Winnipeg. (1991) Maintaining a quality water supply for Winnipeg. Winnipeg:35pp.
7. Water Watch. (2002) A Primer on Manitoban Water Issues.

Bruce Maclean is an unaffiliated environmental activist in Winnipeg.

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New Climate Change Material Added to Alice Chambers Memorial Library

Thanks to the Manitoba Climate Change Hub for the following books that are now housed in the Alice Chambers Memorial Library. A complete listing of books, articles and guides can be found at: <http://www.web.net/men/cchl.htm>

Beating the Heat: Why and How We Must Combat Global Warming

A lively, concise, and rigorously-researched exploration of this imminent crisis. Shows the causes and consequences of climate change, rebuts the deceptive arguments of climate change skeptics, and presents practical and affordable solutions that will assure a climate-safe future.

Author: John J. Berger. Berkeley Hills Books, Berkeley, CA., 2000. 135 p.

The Carbon War: Global Warming and the End of the Oil Era

This book relates events from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's 1988 set up through to the summit in Kyoto, Japan in 1997. As the Guardian claimed, "The Carbon War is a must for anyone interested in observing how a few global oil corporations hijacked governments over the climate change negotiations."

Author: Jeremy Leggett. Penguin Books, Toronto, 1999. 342 p.

The Change in the Weather: People, Weather, and the Science of Climate

New York Times's science reporter offers a look at the science of climate change and introduces readers to the international community of scientists consensus—the earth is indeed getting warmer, and human activity is partially at fault—which remains a topic of fierce debate.

Author: William K. Stevens. Dell Publishing, New York, 1999. 359 p.

The Coming Storm: Extreme Weather and Our Terrifying Future

Journalist Bob Reiss takes readers to the front lines of some of the decade's most destructive storms and describes global warming through the eyes of those most involved—researchers, meteorologists, and the families that have been affected. Interviews with top scientists around the globe provide predictions which include rising seas, a surge in tropical diseases, extreme heat waves, severe storms, and mass migration from destabilized countries.

Author: Bob Reiss. Hyperion, New York, 2001. 323 p.

Greenhouse: The 200-Year Story of Global Warming

This book takes an in depth look at global warming and how it has been perceived over-time. It also looks at individuals who have had an impact on amount of greenhouse gases put into the environment, namely Henry Ford for the automobile, Harry Newcomen who in-

vented the steam engine and a host of other contributors.
Author: Gale E. Christianson. Greystone Books, Toronto, 2000. 305 p.

The No-Nonsense guide to Climate Change

Sifts scientific theory from scientific fact and presents the impacts on health, farming, and wildlife, along with an analysis of political negotiations on the issue and the potential solutions.

Author: Dinyar Godrej. New Internationalist Publications, Toronto, 2001. 143 p.

Power: Journeys Across an Energy Nation

Toronto journalist Gordon Laird's book is part travelogue and part oral history. Power describes a country addicted to energy through visits to Saskatchewan's nearly derelict Uranium City, Fort McMurray (epicentre of one of the world's biggest potential sources of greenhouse gases), the Alberta oil sands, Sable Island, Kemano, the Sydney tar ponds, and ripped-up boreal forest. Laird shows some of the legacy of energy gluttony—leaky radioactive waste dumps and destroyed salmon rivers while at the same time discussing energy production, export, climate change and environmental degradation.

Author: Gordon Laird. Penguin Books, Toronto, 2002. 347 p.

State of the World 2002: Special World Summit Edition

Evaluates what has been achieved since the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio. The authors shed light on possibilities for change and how existing technologies and resources can solve many of our most pressing problems. Spells out priorities for the Johannesburg Summit in seven key areas: agriculture, energy policy and climate change, chemicals, international tourism, population growth, resource-based conflicts and global governance. There is a 26-page chapter "Moving the Climate Change Agenda Forward" that deals with evolving science, technology, policy, business and politics, ending with world summit priorities on climate change.

Author: Worldwatch Institute. W.W. Norton & Co. Inc., New York, 2002. 265 p.

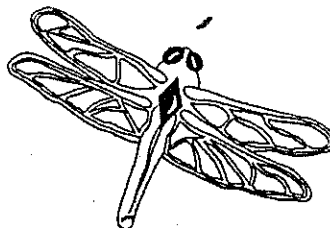
Storm Warning: Gambling with the Climate of Our Planet

Canada's premier science writer shows the strong evidence that our climate is changing due to human interference, and that the events of recent years are just a dress rehearsal for dramatic changes in the earth's climate. Climate conferences like those held in Rio in 1992 and Kyoto in 1997 were supposed to set the world on a course for change. Instead, they have led to political squabbles, watered-down resolutions and a disturbing failure to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that have been targeted as the main culprit in creating the global warming trend.

Author: Lydia Dotto. Doubleday Canada, Toronto, 2000. 332 p.

DRAGONFLY

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BODYWORK and
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Robin Faye

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Reforming Pesticide Regulations

By Liz Dykman

Bill C-53 "An Act to protect human health and safety and the environment by regulating products used for the control of pests" passed first reading in the House of Commons March 20, 2002. This is an amended version of the Pest Control Products Act (PCPA), the federal law governing the importation, sale, manufacture and use of pesticides in Canada.

The current Act is 33 years old and in need of some changes. Reforms have been in the works since at least 1994 and in May 2000 the House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development produced recommendations on changes to the regulations. These recommendations called for implementation of the precautionary principle, given the links between pesticide exposure and diseases such as cancer. The Committee called for evaluations of toxicity based on the effects on children, rather than adult males who have higher resistance, re-evaluation of pesticides approved before 1995, and a phase-out of pesticides for cosmetic purposes over a five-year period.

The goals of the amendments include:

- Putting children's health first,
- Taking into consideration aggregate exposures and cumulative effects,
- Allowing the refusal of registration applications or de-registration of products if information on risk and value are not supplied by the registrant,
- Making mandatory the reporting of adverse effects of registered pesticides,
- Providing opportunities for public participation,
- Strengthening compliance measures,
- Requiring the review of pesticides registered before 1995 and again after 15 years.

Tracking of pesticide use

The law will require reporting of sales, which until now has been done voluntarily by only some manufacturers. This will allow some tracking of the levels of use of pesticides. Canada has been one of the few industrialised countries without some system of tracking and therefore no reliable data on the levels of sales or use of pesticides.

The goal of the legislation is not to reduce pesticide use necessarily, but to reduce the risks to health and environment asso-

ciated with pesticide use. The legislation also includes the concept of value - a pesticide must serve a useful purpose bearing in mind other available pest management strategies.

No ban on cosmetic use

Many people concerned about the impacts of pesticides on health and the environment had hoped that the federal government would implement a ban on the cosmetic use of pesticides on lawn, parks and golf courses, as was recommended by the House of Commons Committee. On February 14, 2001 Marlene Jennings, Liberal MP for Notre-Dame-de-Groce-Lachine introduced a private member's bill to prohibit the use of chemical pesticides for non-essential purposes. The federal government has not taken this step in the amended PCPA, saying it is outside their jurisdiction to do so. This responsibility has been deemed municipal jurisdiction. It may be that recent Supreme Court rulings, such as that involving the right of Hudson, PQ to enact a pesticide ban have entrenched this trend to move responsibility for pesticides down to the provincial or municipal level. Thirty-seven municipalities have enacted bans on cosmetic pesticide use in the absence of federal action over the last few years.

Besides not including a ban on cosmetic use, other shortcomings highlighted by environmental groups are the fact that the act does not aim to reduce use of pesticides and that there is insufficient government support for a transition to organic practices in agriculture. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) called for a moratorium on approvals for products for which effective non-chemical alternatives are available.

Progress on reducing pesticides

The amendments introduced by the federal government are definitely an improvement over existing legislation. And there are other signs of progress. Along with municipal by-laws banning cosmetic use of pesticides, another encouraging development is the decision by Loblaws announced March 12, 2002, not to sell chemical pesticides in its 440 garden centres in Canada. This will take effect by spring 2003. The stores are focussing on safer, organic alternatives and will provide educational handouts to consumers on reducing chemical pesticide dependency.

ECO

Say No to Pesticides Around Your Home: Send These in Today!

INSECT CONTROL BRANCH

3 Grey Street
Winnipeg, MB R2L 1V2 Fax: 986-4868

Please register my residence against all City of Winnipeg pesticide applications, including all insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____

WEED CONTROL BRANCH

2000 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3J 0K1 Fax: 986-3860

Please register my residence against all City of Winnipeg pesticide applications, including all insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____

Spring into Compost!

By Susan Kennedy, RCM's Compost Action Project

Whether you love herbs, flowers, or vegetable gardens, planting time is upon us! Have you considered adding compost to all your garden beds and plants this year? It's a great soil amendment. Haven't got around to it "just yet", maybe this spring is the time to start! Considering that compost is free and gives you many benefits over store bought fertilizers, maybe it's time to get to it!

Taking into account that any garden's foundation lies in the soil, what do you do each year to improve it's fertility? Growing plants take up the nitrogen, phosphorus and other elements they need out of the soil. That means that the humus content gets depleted: the very habitat of helpful micro and macro-organisms that feed on "bad" bacteria and fungi. Without the addition of new organic matter, the soil will become sterile and barren.

A Better Fertilizer

Commercial liquid fertilizers address this problem by giving plants mega doses of nitrogen and other nutrients to make plants grow. Unfortunately, fertilizers are generally water-soluble, so much of what is applied is washed away by the next rain. Compost has a natural time release system that will not burn your plants, and continues to feed them for months and even years to come. This great habitat makes certain that the helpful organ-

isms stick around, making your garden a great success.

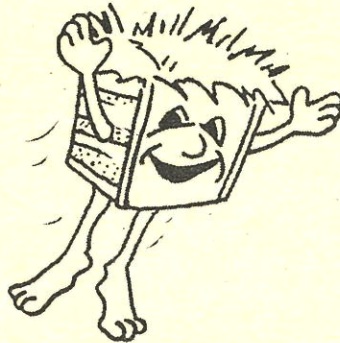
Don't forget that soil is quite different from the potting soil that you find at the garden store! It's a jungle of micro and macro-organisms, (eg. bacteria, fungi and worms) who live in a world of sand, clay, humus, minerals and nutrients. By adding finished or partially finished compost to your garden every year, you are ensuring the plants grown are better equipped to handle drought and disease, while building the soil's long term fertility.

Sounds good? If you are already composting, harvest any finished compost and apply on garden beds four inches deep one month before planting. A layer of 1/2-3 inches is plenty, but if you don't have enough try spot composting exactly where the plants are going. Remember finished compost should be dark brown, crumbly and sweet smelling. If it's not ready yet, use it as mulch around plants after you put your garden in.

New to composting or still have questions? Want bin plans, pest proofing tips, or all the details about how you and your garden can benefit from the "black gold"? Call the Compost Infoline toll free in Manitoba at 1-866-394-8880 or 925-3777 in Winnipeg. We are here to answer all your composting questions.

Note: This article will also appear in the next issue of Manitoba Gardener

ECO



Still doing Community Publishing Services ...

Still booked solid for months in advance, and still offering low prices, high quality and quick service (pick any two). Again, thanks everyone for making this a busy year.

David Henry
943-4316

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Quick Facts:

Linking Transportation to Climate Change

The transportation sector is the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada, and emissions from vehicles are growing faster than any other sector.¹

Passenger transportation is responsible for 18% of Canada's total greenhouse gas emissions (GHG).² It also represents 45% of the GHG emissions produced by the average Canadian family.³ Reducing transportation-related GHG emissions is clearly central to any efforts by individuals and families to protect the climate.

1—From p.13, Canada's Perspective on Climate Change, Government of Canada, 1999.

2—National Air Issues Coordinating Committee. 1996. Review of Canada's National Action Program on Climate Change. November 1996, p.14.

3—Kranjc and Hengeveld. 1993. Greenhouse Gas Miser Handbook. Greenhouse Gas Committee, Canadian Climate Center. p.9.

Atmospheric pollution

In addition to releasing GHG emissions into the atmosphere, fossil fuel combustion produces highly toxic air emissions, as well as carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide, volatile organic compounds and small airborne particulate matter. These emissions contribute to acid rain, smog and other forms of environmental degradation.

Facts About Human Health

• Motor vehicles are the single largest source of harmful air emissions that contribute to human health problems like can-

cer, premature death, impaired lung function, shortness of breath, wheezing, asthma attacks and many bronchial and respiratory illnesses. <http://www.climatechangesolutions.com/english/individuals/opportunities/transport/chart1.htm>

• By cutting GHG emissions, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide, particulate matter (microscopic particles of dust and gases) and other pollutants would also be reduced, improving air quality and saving lives. According to the report—co-authored by Dr. Quentin Chiotti of Pollution Probe and Natty Urquiza of Rainmakers Environmental Group—air pollution accounts for an estimated 16,000 premature deaths every year in Canada.

• How many lives could be saved by reducing GHG emissions resulting from human activities? One study found that a reduction of 15% of GHG emissions in developed countries and 10% in developing countries would result in 700,000 fewer premature deaths globally each year just from lower lev-

els of particulate matter. http://www.msc.ec.gc.ca/cd/climate/newsbytes/story1_e.cfm

Facts About Climate Change

• Automobiles produce about 25% of the world's carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. <http://www.climatechangesolutions.com/english/individuals/opportunities/transport/chart1.htm>

• Every tonne of carbon burned produces 3.7 tonnes of carbon dioxide. The global consumption of fossil fuels is estimated to release 22 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere every year. Can Pers on CC: Science Impacts & Adaptation, 1999.

• Emission from the transportation sector constituted 31% of Manitoba's emission in 1999. MCCTF Report—Manitoba and Climate Change: Investing in our Future, 2001.

• Commuting by car is the largest single source of GHGs in Manitoba. MCCTF Report 2001.

• An unpublished research report of IISD referenced in Manitoba and Climate Change: A Primer, 2001 states that nearly 80% of Manitobans rely on automobiles to get to work.

• Trucking is the most significant form of moving freight within the province [Manitoba] and between the province and other locations. Manitoba and Climate Change: A Primer, 2001.

• Ten seconds of idling uses more fuel than restarting your engine. <http://www.climatechange.gc.ca>

• One busload of passengers takes 40 vehicles off the road during rush hour, saves 70,000 litres of fuel and avoids over 175 tonnes of emissions a year. <http://www.climatechange.gc.ca>

• For every \$241 million invested in public transit, 21.4 full-time jobs are created. <http://www.davidsuzuki.org/> "Did you know".

• "In the United States, there's something like 30 billion dollars a year goes into subsidizing oil... Well, if that's the real cost of oil, all of the renewable resources are economic right now." Donald W. Aitken, Senior Staff Scientist, Union of Concerned Scientists.

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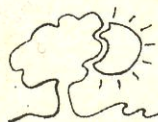


It's Time for Action!

We don't have to look far in our communities to see the need for environmental action.

Clean air, clean water, a clean environment and the preservation of our natural heritage is important to us, our children and future generations.

EcoAction 2000 is leading the way. Dynamic partnership and funding opportunities are open to non-profit groups in your community.



ecoACTION2000

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<http://www.ec.gc.ca/ecoaction>

Take action for a healthy environment



Canada

New Member: IMC Winnipeg

Independent Media Centre (IMC) Winnipeg has just become the newest member of the Manitoba Eco-Network. Just recently formed, this collective of activists/journalists will be providing Winnipeg with alternative news, using the "open publishing" model shared by over 70 IMCs now operating world-wide.

Independent Media?

IMCs became popular after the success of Indymedia.org during "The Battle of Seattle", the event which brought anti-globalization demonstrations to the attention of the general public. As an umbrella organization for all subsequent IMCs, Indymedia.org requires each local centre to maintain the ideals of its original mandate.

The rapid growth of IMCs around the world clearly marks where dissenting and alternative views do not receive adequate (or any) mainstream news coverage. Rejecting the requirement for 'objectivity' which corporate-owned media outlets consider the creed of journalism, the activists/journalists of IMCs argue that editorial control and the influence of owners has made objectivity impossible, particularly when covering stories related to world economics. Without apology, the 'bias' of activists/journalists is seen as more clearly honest about showing a broader perspective when reporting news.

Relying entirely on volunteer labour, individual membership in an IMC is determined simply by making an ongoing sweat-contribution, and is open to all who accept the IMC's Mission Statement.

Become the Media

A more significant feature of IMCs is the "open publishing" model, where anyone visiting the website can contribute an ar-

ticle, or comment on something already posted. This model provides both a more accessible venue for reporting news, and its own form of editorial control—criticism by whomever reads it and holds a differing view.

In a slight twist on the usual IMC activities, the Winnipeg collective will be inviting a wide variety of organizations to participate, going so far as to make presentations at meetings of NGOs, Environmental groups, Unions, community-based organizations, Native groups, etc.. The goal is to get the widest possible representation of progressive organizations and media-savvy types involved, fully participating, and making sure that their own voice is heard.

Just Starting Out

IMC Winnipeg does not have an office—it is an online 'space', organized through discussion lists and regular meetings at a favoured downtown cafe. IMC Winnipeg's website (<http://winnipeg.indymedia.org>) is nearing completion, just entering a testing phase. The site will be open to the general public by mid-April.

If you are interested in joining the IMC Winnipeg collective, or have questions about how your organization can use the website to full advantage, please feel free to contact Geoffrey Young at downitgoes@antisocial.com, or David Henry at dh56@mb.sympatico.ca. You may also make a direct request to join the IMC Winnipeg discussion list by visiting <http://lists.indymedia.org/mailman/listinfo/imc-winnipeg>. Please provide a short introduction to yourself and your organization when using the online sign-up form.

You too can now become the media!

ECO



The Manitoba Eco-Network

2-70 Albert Street, Winnipeg, MB R3B 1E7

Sign me up as a member of the Manitoba Eco-Network

Enclosed is a cheque for:

- \$25 Supporting member (individuals)
- \$40 Group membership
- \$50 Other organizations (businesses, government departments and corporations that do not otherwise qualify for group membership)

I'm also enclosing a donation of _____ to help with your public education activities.

[Charitable tax receipts available]

Total Amount enclosed _____

I'm interested in volunteering for the Eco-Network. Please call me!

Name(s) _____ Group (if applicable) _____
Telephone # () _____ E-Mail _____
Mailing address _____ Postal Code _____
Area(s) of interest _____ Volunteer skills _____

Group members are entitled to nominate representatives for a position on the Eco-Network Steering Committee. Group membership is open to any non-governmental, non-profit group which has as one of its objectives the enhancing or furthering of environmental quality, protecting the environment or environmental education.

A supporting membership includes a subscription to **Eco-Journal** as well as notice of events and regular updates on issues and is open to any individual.

