

ECO-JOURNAL

Volume 6, Number 3

June/July 1996

At Play in the Boreal Forest

by Lindy Clubb

Earth gives orders as casual and full of mystery as an animal trail. The point is to get down on your hands and knees to see it and feel it. Climb trees, sing out loud, get wet and cold, warm and dry. Collect thorns and leaves in your clothes, seeds in your socks, mud on your face, sweat under your arms. Ski or skate across moonlit rivers. Sit under rocks and willows and pine boughs and the setting sun colours of the forest in fall. Smell balsam willow and damp, black earth in the spring. See the difference between water bugs and

tadpoles, meadow larks and kestrels, red necked grebes and mallards. Pick up antlers and fox skulls and the pelvis of a pelican, tear apart coyote scat, pull shelf fungi from the stems of birch, take home the wide toothed shavings left by beaver, hear bull elk call from the camouflage of a dark forest, separate the whirring wings of common snipe from the exotic screech of bitterns at dusk.



The Manitoba escarpment

Photo by Shawn Baker

Western Canada Wilderness Committee board members and volunteers are doing all of these things in as much time as work and families allow.

We make good teams and always share our food and water. We move at different speeds, though. Joe tends to sing out loud from exuberance and break into a run, leaving the rest of us behind. But he slowed down long enough to show Dave and I where to hunt for morel mushrooms in Birds Hill park this spring. Sautéed over slow heat in butter all their juices run, and if you can get past their odd appearance and add some cream, you'll have a feast. Jean and Joe gently tapped birch trees for their sap and Joe described it as "nectar of the Gods." We regularly gather cedar, juniper and sage for medicine in and out of the sweat lodges we attend at Sagkeeng First Nation.

We've also made a couple of trips to the Duck and Porcupine Hills. Barry has rabbits and porcupines, hospitality and a self sufficient lifestyle in Duck River on the way up. Michael and his son Jesse let us watch while they hand-build a cedar strip kayak after we

get there. Both are seasoned canoeists in the Birch River area.

Dave's into practising survival skills from Tom Brown's course. He knows what wood makes the best bow drills, how to start a fire without matches, how to make cordage, and how to spot seven different kinds of flowers on the edge of an old gravel pit.

Dave and Joe and Layton and I can be found bent over looking at animal tracks and identifying plants at any time, but it took Layton and I to find cougar tracks in Riding Mountain on our way to Swan

River. Dave buried himself in an alfalfa bale in the middle of winter to see the deer coming to feed while we stayed in a log cabin on one of our field trips. Joe and Dave and I recognized the fertilized fronds of ostrich ferns (the edible fiddlehead kind) stretching up above a frozen stream that was a deer and elk highway through the woods.

Dan showed us the difference between spotted and plain alder,

browse lines for elk and moose, and the colouring of migratory songbirds when we snowmobiled together. We played bird tapes in the truck and learned their songs all the way back from Swan river. I know my hawks, my frogs, and my ducks now. Layton, Dave, Dan, Tracy and Josef know even more.

We're into playing in the woods, knowing what's around us, and learning as much as possible while we have fun. We wouldn't be caught without our field guides. Women and children are quite welcome to join us on our spontaneous tours of areas around and well away from Winnipeg. We feel that to fight effectively for the environment, you need the tonic of the out of doors, including mint tea at night, and bruised plantain leaves on your blisters. I have the luxury of a farmhouse by Sandy Lake, to escape from the meetings, the assignments, the endless phone calls and activism. I'm going there for two months to tend my garden so we won't make as many trips during July and August as we will in September and October. But feel free to call 475-9608 and find out when we're going to the woods again.

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Compost Education Project 1996: Constructive Composting

by Cal Schultz

*News alert! A fantastic biological process in which the
active agents are microorganisms (ie bacteria, fungi, etc.) sweeps into
the Province of Manitoba...*

Truth be told, over the past few years there's been enough written about composting to construct a fairly extensive heap. When it comes down to actually implementing what we are preaching, however, we find that only 16%-18% of Manitobans compost, thus leaving plenty of room for improvement. To get on top of the situation, we should be looking at composting as something that is woven into our daily routines. Composting is a simple yet effective way to return organic material to the soil.

Although composting is just one piece in the waste management puzzle, it is a fairly important piece. Between 30%-38% of our household waste is organic thus compostable. That 38%, in conjunction with proper household recycling techniques can lead to a reduction of half of the household wastes going to our landfills. While most of us won't win any environmental awards for composting, local landfills and surrounding environments will thank us.

In keeping with the RCM's (Resource Conservation Manitoba, formally the Recycling Council of Manitoba) direction toward waste minimization throughout the province of Manitoba, the RCM's Compost Education Project (CEP) was born. After a very successful inaugural year in 1995, the CEP staff look forward to building on last years success. This year's objective is to promote and expand local residential backyard composting as a resource conservation practice through interactive education. The project is being undertaken with funding from the Winnipeg Foundation and the provincial Urban Green Team Program, from May through August.

To achieve increased rates of local residential composting, the RCM's 1996 Compost Education Project conducted a Master Composter Short Course held in May. It was designed for citizens interested in becoming composting experts and educators within their communities. We have also begun to conduct various hands-on workshops throughout the community, along with workshops at our Compost Demonstration site (on Westminster and Maryland). Informative displays will also be set up throughout the community. These activities in conjunction with our extensive resource library and info-line create a well-rounded approach to promote backyard composting. Any questions or to register for a workshop, please call the creative, productive, CEP staff at 925-3777.



1995-1996

Eco-Network Steering Committee

Lyle Barkman - Organic Producers Association of Manitoba

Dennis Bayomi - Winnipeg Vegetarian Association

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Val Klassen - Concerned Citizens of Manitoba

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Harry Mesman - Manitoba Federation of Labour

Karen Turner - Sierra Club, Agassiz Group

Harvey Williams - Time to Respect Earth's Ecosystems

Alive and kicking!

by Anne Lindsey

The Eco-Network is still alive! That's the good news, and something which our readers may have been wondering about after the last issue of the Journal. We were quite worried about the possibility of losing funding from Environment Canada (which comes our way via the Canadian Environmental Network). Fortunately for us and for the entire Network, the funding was maintained at the same level for the coming year. The Manitoba Network receives \$18,000, not an enormous amount by most standards, but certainly an appreciable chunk of our "core" funding.

We are also hugely grateful for the donations we received from many Eco-Network supporters, and the new contributors to our Pre-Authorized Chequing Program. Thanks one and all for the votes of confidence.

The other piece of good news is that our move is turning out to be a great bonus. We have larger (but less expensive) premises in a wonderfully historic part of town - the Exchange District. We seem to have a good match with our new roommates, Resource Conservation Manitoba, and our combined Resource Centre is bigger and better than ever! (Yes, we do miss our terrific neighbours on Westminster Avenue: Harvest, Green Earth, Prairie Sky, Tall Grass Prairie Bakery and all the rest, but we have equally good folks close by in the Exchange: Naturalists Society, Endangered Species Campaign, Emma Goldman Centre, Greenpeace, NECA...) We hope you'll come by for a visit.

In other news: our Eco-Alternative video series has now aired twice on Videon Cable 11 and has generated a number of very positive responses. A fifth video, on the work of the Manitoba Wildlife Rehabilitation Organization is in progress, being produced, entirely on a voluntary basis by Rick Freeman, in partnership with Videon. Look for it on Cable 11 soon! We hope to start work on a number of other videos during the coming year, but much will depend on securing some financial support for

scriptwriting and editing.

This summer, we'll be making a start on a pilot Rural Outreach Project, aimed at improving the information flow between environmental groups in rural and urban communities, and funded by Manitoba Hydro.

We'll also be helping to organize the North American Forest Forum just prior to the

World Commission on Forests hearings which will take place at the end of September in Winnipeg.

Eco-Journal will continue, but please bear

with us as Anne Lindsey tries to fill the very big shoes left by Toby Maloney. You have probably noticed that this Journal is arriving later than usual. That's because we took the liberty of changing our publishing schedule to accommodate the extra work of our move, and editorial changes. Instead of a June 1/ August 1/October 1 schedule, we changed to July 1/October 1, and will extend subscriptions/memberships by one issue.

That's all for now folks. Hope you enjoy this issue!

Computers seeking homes

The U of M Medical School's computer department is seeking new homes for some admittedly somewhat obsolete computer equipment for which it doesn't have any further need. This would include some XT's and 286 computers, complete with keyboards and monitors. There is also an opportunity for some volunteer set-up and software support to go with the computers. Only charitable or non-profit organizations are eligible to apply. Please contact the Eco-Network if you are interested in this opportunity.

Nominations Open for EcoNetwork Annual Awards

Each year, the MEN presents awards "in recognition of significant contributions to the awareness and protection of Manitoba's environment". The awards are in four categories: female individual, male individual, group, and "special". This year's awards will be presented at our Fall dinner (date and location to be announced). Please forward letters of nomination to Awards Committee, MEN, 2-70 Albert St. R3B 1E7. Letters should give some background information about the nominee, and why you think this person or group deserves to be recognized.

Quality of life.

The Winnipeg Foundation works in partnership with non-profit organizations to benefit the people of Winnipeg. Providing grants to charitable, educational and cultural organizations, like the Manitoba Eco-Network, the Foundation helps to ensure that all can enjoy a better quality of life.

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Wednesday, July 10
Crossroads Resource
Group Water Conservation
 Workshop, guest speaker:
 Lisbeth Leibgott. R.A. Steen
 C.C. 980 Palmerston, (west
 entrance) 7:30pm. 947-0590
 for info.

Saturday, July 13 **Riding**
Mountain Park Plus People
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 Making Use of Medicinal Plants", day
 session, \$35, call (204)848-7284 for info.

Saturday, July 27 **Riding Mountain Park Plus**
People summer program: "Taste of the Wild -
 Exploring Edible Plants" day session, \$35, call
 (204)848-7248 for info.

Tuesday, August 6, **Project Peacemakers**
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What's happenin' ???

Thursday, August 15 to 18 **Manitoba**
Naturalists Society hosts the 1996
 conference of the Canadian Nature
 Federation. Robert Bateman is special
 guest speaker. Includes some excellent
 field trips. Call Wes Tretiak at 261-
 1966 for a registration package.

Saturday, August 24 **Riding**
Mountain Park Plus People summer
 program: "Attracting Wildlife to your
 Backyard - Backyard Biodiversity",
 day session, \$35, call (204)848-7248
 for info.

September 13, 14, and 15 **Riding Mountain Park**
Plus People summer program: "The Beasts of Riding
 Mountain - Elk, Moose, Bison" Instructor: Dr. Val Geist.
 Weekend retreat, includes outdoor field experiences, \$200
 (includes food and accomodation)

Monday, September 23 **Canadian Environmental**
Assessment Agency Public Hearings on AECL's Nuclear
 Waste Disposal Concept. Centennial Library, 2nd floor, 1-
 10pm. For registration information, contact CEAA at
 (819)953-0179 (collect) or write CEAA at 200 Sacre-
 Coeur Blvd, Hull, Quebec, K1A 0H3, email
 Kerryg@fox.nstn.ca

Tuesday, September 24 **CEAA Nuclear Waste Disposal**
 Public Hearings continue at the Centennial Library, 9am to
 5pm.

Thursday, September 26, and 27 **North American**
Forest Forum Crossways in Common. For info, call Don
 or Sacha at 947-3081, email glekor10@freenet.mb.ca

Sunday, September 29 to October 5, **International**
Institute for Sustainable Development hosts the World
 Commission on Forest and Sustainable Development North
 American Public Hearings in Winnipeg. For info, contact
 Victoria Kellett 958-7732, or e-mail
 vkellett@iisdpost.iisd.ca



Nuclear Waste: Coming Soon (and Secretly) to a Hole Near You?

by Dave Plummer and Anne Lindsey

Rumours and rumblings about AECL closing its Whiteshell Research Establishment in Pinawa have been making the rounds for some time now (see **Eco-Journal**, Jan-Feb, 1996). Understandably, the people of Pinawa and the surrounding area are alarmed at the possibility of losing hundreds of highly paid jobs and the impact that this would have on the local economy. Local, provincial and federal politicians are scrambling to find a politically viable solution to the problem.

An alarming possibility which has been raised by a group calling itself the Pinawa Support Group is to use the Underground Research Laboratory (URL) near Lac du Bonnet as a so-called "Demonstration Vault" for nuclear waste. This would involve burying highly radioactive nuclear waste in the vault in order to test whether or not the containers and barriers designed to keep the radioactivity from reaching the biosphere will actually work. And according to an article in the May 28 issue of the **Lac du Bonnet Leader**, it would also simulate "the experience of an actual facility and the piece (sic) of mind it would give any communities considering the idea of hosting an underground facility in the future".

Putting nuclear waste in the URL means altering the Crown Land Lease which governs the URL site.

When the URL was originally created, local citizens were

concerned that this would be the first step in developing an eventual nuclear waste dump in the area. The lease was written to specifically exclude the possibility of using the URL for nuclear waste, with the only exception being the use of minute amounts of radioactive tracers.

The Pinawa Support Group is actively soliciting the support of surrounding municipalities to have the lease amended by Natural Resources Minister, Albert Driedger. Concerned Citizens of Manitoba has written to the Minister, reminding him of the commitments made to Manitobans when the lease was created, and stating our unequivocal opposition to amendments which will make it possible to bury nuclear waste in this province, even if it is for "research" purposes. Why should Manitobans be the guinea pigs for this unproven technology?

To make matters worse, as of May, 1996, information about nuclear waste shipments into Manitoba is now considered confidential. Unless this is changed, we will no longer have the right to know how much and what kind of nuclear waste is being brought into the

province, or for that matter, if it is being placed in the "demonstration vault".

The Pinawa Support Group proposal is being made with the aim of saving jobs at the Whiteshell site. However, the Task Force in place to review Pinawa's future has received many submissions for creative

See **HEARINGS** page 12



THANKS FOR DONATING YOUR TIME!

Eco-network volunteers have brought a variety of skills to a number of different tasks. Heartfelt thanks to **Jennifer Faubert** for her skilled desktop publishing of this **Eco-Journal**; to **Bryan Johnson** for designing our Homepage to launch us onto the Internet; to **Tricia Olson** for her weekly efforts in the office; to **Lisa Schaldemose** who's read her way through almost every periodical in the library in an heroic cataloguing project; and to **Bernice Snowden** for staying on top of a daunting amount of filing!

MEN MEMBER GROUPS NEED VOLUNTEERS TO HELP WITH THEIR IMPORTANT WORK ... SHORT OR LONG TERM ... CALL JAN TODAY AT 947-6511 TO ACT ON BEHALF OF THE ENVIRONMENT!

Certified Green: Repackaging the Forest Industry's Image

by Don Sullivan

The spin doctors for the Canadian forest industry, with support from the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers, have been burning the midnight oil in the last eighteen months to find solutions to a growing problem facing the industry at home and abroad around their corporate collective image. Campaigns launched by environmental groups over the last 10 years have painted a disturbing portrait (and rightfully so) of the environmental degradation resulting from poorly managed forest practices that has forced the industry on the defense. These internationally high profile campaigns have played a key role in reducing the overall dominance of Canada's forest products in the global marketplace.

To counter this image, the industry has collectively formed the Sustainable Forestry Certification Coalition that includes representation from the pulp and paper industry, lumber producers, and the strand board companies. The aim of this industry coalition is to develop an industry-funded certification program through the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) - a private sector agency that certifies products as market worthy - which will help to restore international consumer confidence in Canada's forest products.

The outcome of this need to repackage "a new and improved image" is a draft document entitled "A Sustainable Forest Management System: Guidance Document" circulated by the CSA in early February of 1996. The CSA document outlines a voluntary certification process the forest industry in Canada would need to go through before receiving the CSA stamp of approval. In broad terms, there are six "essential elements" that are at the core of the CSA Sustainable Forestry Management (SFM) Certification System.

Industry and governments are banking that the initial reaction from the public on this certification system will be a favourable one. However, this program operates much like a scratch and win ticket. Once you have rubbed off the surface in anticipation of a big payoff what is revealed underneath is more

often a big disappointment.

Many in the environmental and other non-governmental communities are highly critical of this scheme, and for good reasons. The fundamental deficiency of the

The fundamental deficiency of the CSA process is that it certifies a management structure that is based on paper and not on the state of the existing forest.

CSA process is that it certifies a management structure that is based on paper and not on the state of the existing forest. A Forest Management Area - that for all intents and purposes is owned by a large multinational - can be certified as sustainable if the right steps are being followed, regardless of the prior condition of the ecosystem, wildlife, and the indigenous communities that inhabit the particular area under review for certification.

The program also establishes no mandatory measurable indicators of sustainable forest management. Forest companies need to consider

criteria and indicators listed in the document, but need not apply them.

Along with these shortfalls, the CSA system has a built-in bias in favour of larger corporations who can afford the cost associated with this program. Smaller operations who exercise alternative logging methods, and as a result have less environmental impact, will not be in a position to finance the process of certification. The CSA program has failed to make recognition of Aboriginal Treaty Rights a mandatory

requirement for certification. And as for public participation, anyone who has attempted to participate in consultations with industry at the helm usually walks away more frustrated than consulted. While the CSA process makes public participation a principle, it does not make provisions for the forest industry to address public concerns. Public participation in this process can be best summed up as the ultimate expression of what is really wrong with the entire CSA scheme: it is a facade for the continuation of current forest management practices by the industry.

Most of those who have been highly critical of the CSA scheme have responded by throwing their support behind an alternative certification program led by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), a non-profit association founded in 1993 in Toronto, and based in Mexico. This association draws its



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See CERTIFICATION page 7

Certification optional

From page 6

membership from the social, environmental and economic sectors of both developed and developing countries. The general assembly of FSC members are divided into two voting chambers, the first consists of "economic interests" and holds 25% of the voting power, the second consists of social and environmental organizations and represents 75% of the voting power, with power shared equally between organizations from the developed and developing countries.

Like the CSA process, FSC certification is voluntary in nature but this is where the similarity ends.

The FSC principles and

criteria recognize the need for compliance with laws and FSC principles; tenure and use rights and responsibilities; indigenous peoples' rights; community relations and workers rights; full beneficial activities from the forest; environmental impacts; management plans; monitoring and assessments; and maintenance of the natural forests. This process can certainly be viewed as more inclusive and democratic when compared to the CSA scheme, and no doubt as somewhat of a threat to those in government and the forest industry who may see it as an obstacle to their economic self interest. If this certification system were to be adopted as the standard, industry would have to fundamentally alter its present practices.

The underlying purpose for government and industry support of the CSA exercise becomes evident when viewed in the global context. With the dawning of the global economy, international capital is ready to accumulate like never before. The OECD Nations, home to most of the world's largest resource extraction companies, have made continued deregulation a top priority. The reason for this is simple: large multinationals need to break down national regulatory barriers to accumulate the capital required to compete in the global economy. Canada as an OECD member, is one of the world's leading exporters of natural resources, and has a vested interest in protecting this comparative advantage. By supporting the development of a certification scheme through the CSA the forest industry along with the Canadian government hope to pre-empt any attempts to accept standards derived by groups who have broader interests than simply the accumulation of capital.



ECOLOGY REQUIRES COMMON CENTS!

That's the name of our new fundraising campaign: penny recycling. The logic is straightforward: pennies can be a nuisance jiggling around in pockets and weighing down wallets...so most of us have a "penny jar" at home into which all those coppers are tossed. Meanwhile, commerce needs pennies, so as we stash them, the mint keeps making them, using up more resources than necessary.

We have the answer! (thanks to former Board member Sue Proctor). Bring your pennies to us, and we'll make sure they get back into circulation, providing the Eco-Network with cold, hard cash en route.

Sue says this project has raised a surprisingly large amount of money for at least one school she knows of, and why shouldn't it do the same for the cause of environmental education? Bring your pennies to the Eco-Network office (2-70 Albert St), and tell your friends!

P.S. Anyone looking for a novel and easy project to support the environment in the office or classroom, this might be the one for you. Call us (947-6511) if you're interested!



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International Forest Hearings Coming to Winnipeg

The World Commission on Forests and Sustainable Development (WCFSD) is a panel of former heads of state created to hold public hearings concerning the state of the forests in each of the five global regions. Its final report will be presented to the United Nations and National Governments at the fifth Session of the UN Commission for Sustainable Development in Spring of 1997. The North American Hearings (Canada, US, Mexico) will be held in Winnipeg September 29 to October

for Sustainable Development. The attracting participants from all perspectives, including industry

NGO's to organize parallel forum

3, 1996, hosted by the International Institute. Hearings promise to be a high-profile event, three countries, and from a wide variety of and government.

A consortium of environmental organizations in Manitoba including the Manitoba Eco-Network, all having affiliations to national groups, are planning a "parallel" forum, just prior to the WCFSD Hearings. Dubbed the North American Forest Forum or NAFF, the event will be specifically for environmental and social justice groups, and for indigenous people: people at the "front lines" of action to protect forests and their many inhabitants. The aim is to bring in delegates from across North America for 2 days of conferencing, and 2 days of field trips to forest locations in Manitoba. It is our hope that hosting NAFF will result in more non-government and non-industry people participating in the Commission Hearings as well as providing an excellent opportunity for strategizing and sharing amongst the activist community.

Billets Needed!

The organizing committee for NAFF (see above) is looking for people who can provide between 2 and 5 days of accommodation for delegates to the Forum (begins September 26). This is a great opportunity to meet and get to know a social justice/environment/indigenous activist from somewhere in Canada, the US or Mexico. Call Sacha at 947-3081 if you can help out!

Forest Learnings

The Silva Forest Foundation in Slocan Park, BC is offering a series of training sessions in ecologically responsible forest use, from August 12 through November 22. Billed as "Practical training for the public and professionals in ecosystem based alternatives to conventional timber management", topics include Practical Forest Hydrology, Landscape Analysis and Planning for Large Forest Areas, and Overview of Ecologically Responsible Forest Use. Each session includes an extensive syllabus and most include practical field exercises.

Silva is directed by Herb and Susan Hammond. Herb is a member of the Eco-Network's Advisory Council.

For a copy of the course information form, contact the Eco-Network office at 947-6511. Silva can be contacted at P.O. Box 9, Slocan Park, BC V0G 2E0, Ph: (604)226-7222, email: silvafor@web.net.

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Eating Sustainably

by Anne Lindsey

After a somewhat slow start, the gardening season is underway in Manitoba, and we can finally chow down on local, organically-grown and deliciously fresh salads and other veggies. Whether it be from your own backyard or community garden plot, from a "CSA" (stands for Community Shared Agriculture) operation, or from one of the local food stores or markets stocking Manitoba grown organics, the seasonal abundance of veggies means there's just no excuse for eating limp, imported green stuff at this time of the year. Eat organic for your health and a healthy environment, and support the local economy while you're at it!

Where to get local organic food in and around Winnipeg:

***Harvest Collective:** now at 2 locations, 877 Westminister Ave, call 772-4359, and 664 Corydon Ave, 475-1459 Local produce in season, and a good selection of chemical-free and bulk natural foods all year round. Inquire about the discount program for working members and seniors.

***Corydon Ave. Farmers Market,** Wed. 4 - 7pm and Sat. 10 - 1pm.

***St. Norbert Farmers Market,** every Saturday till Thanksgiving from 8am to 4pm. Phil Veldhuis 489-1564

***Neechi Foods Community Store,** 325 Dufferin Ave. 586-5597 (sells organic blueberries and wild rice from producer co-ops in Northwest Ontario, and a selection of local organic produce).

***Tall Grass Prairie Bakery,** 859 Westminister Ave. 7783-5097 (baked goods made with organically-grown Prairie grains, ground right at the bakery).

***Stone Ground Daily Bread,** 1399 Pembina Hwy. 474-5900. (baked goods from organic grains, also ground on-site).

Community Shared Farms:

...most operate through consumer "subscriptions": a contract is made between consumer and producer, the consumer pays an agreed-upon amount in exchange for regular deliveries (usually to a central drop-off point) of freshly harvested garden delights. Know your farmer and exactly where your food is coming from...there's still time to sign up to become a CSA customer!

***Grange sur Seine,** Gerry and Kelly

Dube, La Broquerie. (204)424-5566. Delivers St. Boniface and St. Vital

***Wolseley Community Garden,** Sandra Conway, Gardenton (204)425-3627. Delivers Wolseley.

***Twin Creeks Shared Farm,** 255-7027

***RAE Gardens,** Lockport, Robert Fryatt, 757-4513. Delivers anywhere in Winnipeg.

***Gregoire Gardens and Greenhouse,** St. Jean, Rolland and Brenda Gregoire, (204)758-3455. Delivers St. Norbert.

***Jason Falk Organic Vegetable Farm,** Landmark, Jason Falk (204)388-4876. Individual home delivery in Winnipeg.

***Earthshare** (Agricultural Cooperative of Central America) Gerardo Aguilar, 943-9158.

An alternative Grocery Bag arrangement can be made with **Garway Organic Farms,** Marc and Dawne Summersfield, Stuartburn (204)425-3522. Delivers Lindenwoods.

***The Organic Producers Association of Manitoba** has info galore about organic farming and producers in this province. You can call Yvonne at their Virden office (204)748-1315, and be sure to drop by and visit the OPAM organic garden display at the Red River Exhibition.

Try WWOOFing This Summer!

Willing Workers on Organic Farms (WWOOF) is an exchange: in return for work on organic farms and homesteads, volunteers receive wholesome meals, accommodation and most importantly "an enjoyable and enriching experience".

WWOOF - Canada

lists farms across the country who will host "working volunteers". It's aims are to help people get firsthand experience of organic growing, and to help the organic movement which is labour intensive, as well as to provide a great experience of Canada and Canadians. Upon receipt of your membership contribution (\$25 for a single person, or \$35 for a couple travelling together), WWOOF will send you their farm address and description booklet. You contact the farm of your choice and make arrangements.

Contact WWOOF Canada, c/o John Vanden Heuvel, RR2, S18 C 9, Nelson, BC V1L 5P5, or obtain a copy of the application form at the Eco-Network office.



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In Search of the Healthy, Sustainable Home

by Sharon Ackerman

Are there ways in which we can make our homes more healthy, sustainable environments? People have become increasingly aware of how personal lifestyle choices can benefit the environment. There is a growing consciousness in the areas of personal care products, household cleaners, recycled paper products, even the kinds of garments purchased. However, there remains a real lack of knowledge regarding our most immediate environment, the homes where we live, eat and sleep. Most people remain ignorant of the environmental impact their homes have, or feel helpless with regards to influencing that impact positively.

Consider the following facts, gathered from a variety of sources and outlined in Wayne Grady's book, "Green Home":

-The typical home generates 2 1/2 tonnes of waste in its construction.

-Construction waste is responsible for 15% of all waste to be found in landfill sites.

-Brand new homes have concentrations of organic gases and vapours which can be as much as 100 times higher than standards for outdoor air.

-20% of adults are allergic to formaldehyde - found in virtually all construction products.

-The manufacture and construction of buildings is responsible for approximately 8% of all our energy usage, with homes comprising 40% of all construction.

-Once operational, buildings are responsible for 1/3 of total energy consumption.

The statistics outlined above make obvious the need to reassess the ways in which we build and operate our homes. Our home's environmental impact can be broadly categorized into four areas; the energy requirements of operating a home, including electrical, heating and cooling, the water requirements, waste generation, both in the initial construction and day to day living, and the environmental impact from material used in construction.

Various measures can be taken to ameliorate each of the above areas. The R2000 housing program stresses energy efficiency through added insulation and sealing the house against air leakage.

Estimates indicate that 60% of the energy utilized in a home goes to heating air which is literally sucked out through the cracks. PowerSmart programs aim to educate the public on simple ways in which they can save on their electrical bills without affecting lifestyles. These include the use of timers on thermostats to provide lower temperatures at night or when the house is unoccupied, low energy lightbulbs, and greater awareness of energy efficient appliances through the Energuide labelling system. The City of Winnipeg has recently embarked on water conservation promotion in a bid to avert the replacement of the existing aqueduct. Again, measures which do not affect lifestyle choices are emphasized, for example low flush toilets, or aerated showerheads. According to research done through Canada's "Advanced House" program, "typical" lifestyles can be maintained while using approximately 1/4 of energy resources simply by building with conservation as a priority. Many of the practices we take for granted are simply wasteful. Consider our lawns; we waste millions of gallons watering grass rather than choosing low maintenance lawn cover which requires little watering.

The materials which go into our homes are of particular concern, given that home construction consumes so much of the world's

See MASH page 15

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New Resources at the Manitoba Eco-Network Resource Centre

The Citizens Guide to Biotechnology, a Project of the Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy.

According to a recent **Optima** poll, 84% of Canadians think Ottawa should

get tough and regulate all biotechnology products. But what exactly is biotechnology anyway? While many of us have joined the battle against the use of bovine growth hormone to promote milk production in cows, its not as widely known that biotechnology applications are beginning to affect every area of our lives. This

excellent new publication from one of Canada's foremost environmental law organizations, will provide answers to your questions about this emerging technology in a no-nonsense easy to read format.

It outlines the basic science issues, including the difference between traditional biotechnology and genetic engineering, the various applications

of biotech. in health, agriculture and industry, and the ethical, environmental and economic dilemmas which need to be addressed. At the back, there's a good section on what you can do (eg who you can write to,

the Toxics Caucus of the Canadian Environmental Network. Despite the excellent report of the Federal Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development which reviewed CEPA, the government has

tabled a weak response, one which raises serious questions about the will of government to adequately protect the health and environment of Canadians. This report outlines the key areas of concern in the government's response. New Environmental Protection Legislation is

in the drafting stages with the introduction of a bill in the House of Commons scheduled for the Fall. The Eco-Network has copies of postcards to various federal ministers calling for a strong CEPA, let us know if you'd like some!

See NEW page 13

ECO-NETWORK RESOURCE CENTRE

how to find out about food products you buy).

It is **Still About Our Health**, a response to the Government Proposal to reform the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, a submission to the Minister of Environment, and the Prime Minister sponsored by the member groups of

Hearings in Winnipeg in September

From page 5

alternative economic development, ones which do not require that Eastern Manitoba become a nuclear waste sacrifice zone.

In addition to requiring changes in provincial policy, the proponents of a demonstration vault at Lac du Bonnet are clearly putting the cart before the horse in relation to the federal government decision-making process on nuclear waste management. A Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency review panel is currently holding Public Hearings about AECL's proposal to bury nuclear waste in the Canadian Shield. Phase 2 of the hearings has just wrapped up, and Phase 3 does not even begin until September. Already the Panel has heard resounding criticisms of the disposal concept, from citizens groups,

environmentalists, and even the Atomic Energy Control Board. A Panel recommendation to Cabinet on whether to proceed to siting a dump is not expected until some time in the New Year.

Phase 3 of the Public Hearings kicks off in Winnipeg, September 23 from 1pm to 9pm and September 24 from 9am to 5pm, both days at the Centennial Library, 2nd Floor Auditorium, 251 Donald St. The Panel will also be spending a day at Sagkeeng First Nation on October 24.

For more information about Concerned Citizens of Manitoba and the nuclear waste issue, please contact Dave Plummer at 775-4409, Anne Lindsey at 452-2352, or Dave Taylor at 284-4400, or email ccc@web.net
To register to appear at the CEAA hearings

in the Fall, please contact Ghislaine Kerry, Information Officer, Panel Secretariat, Nuclear Fuel Waste Management and Disposal Concept Review, Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, 200 Sacre Coeur Blvd. Hull, Quebec, K1A 0H3. Telephone: (819)953-0179 (collect), Fax: (819)994-1469, internet: Kerryg@fox.nstn.ca

Please consider writing to the provincial Minister of Natural Resources, The Hon. Albert Driedger, Legislative Building, Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8 to express your concerns about the URL lease, and to the Minister of Natural Resources Canada, the Hon. Anne McLellan, House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6 to express concerns about the confidentiality of nuclear waste shipments into Manitoba.



**84%
of Canadians
think Ottawa
should get tough
and regulate all
biotechnology products***

* Optima, Optima, "Study Findings: Understanding the consumer interest"

New Resources

From page 12

Current Issues in Forest Certification in Canada, by Chris Elliot and Arlin Hackman, World Wildlife Fund Canada. Outlines "current stumbling blocks to an effective certification process for forest management". This report gives an overview of a variety of certification programs, including that of the Canadian Standards Association and the Forest Stewardship Council, and discusses what is necessary for effective certification. In addition, it explores some of the impacts which certification may have on government jurisdiction in forests, the forest industry and international trade, and the conservation and social development agenda.

Nexus: A Journal About Health and the Environment, edited by Meaghan Moon and David Kattenburg of the Community Animation Project. A collection of articles explicitly linking public health concerns with several current environmental issues, including hog farms, forestry, and the use of pesticides in agricultural production.

Group Promotes Grey Water Recovery

The goal of Crossroads Resource group is to eliminate waste using current technology and resources, and to advocate for a sustainable society. One of the group's projects is to reduce water waste by implementing a greywater recovery system and a 1 pint flush toilet.

Ryan Davidson, a student in environmental engineering, is continuing the work on the water efficiency program, started last year. Financial assistance is provided by the Manitoba Urban Green Team.

Crossroads will be holding a workshop at Robert A. Steen Community Centre, 980 Palmerston Ave. on July 4 at 7:30pm (west side entrance). Guest speaker Lisbeth Leibgott, Water Conservation Officer at Manitoba Environment, will discuss the province's current and long term goals concerning grey water. Please consider attending the workshop to support the project. For further information, call Ryan or Bill at 947-0590.

Crossroads Resource Group Fundraising Event

Are ecologically self-sustaining services feasible? Dr. William Goddard will present a model of an ecological economy. He will show how you can benefit from supporting specific applications of the model (eg. personal transportation). July 18, 7pm, Centennial Library Assembly Room.

Moneys raised will support the Water Efficiency Project this summer. The goal is to raise \$1,000, and contributions of \$25 or more are requested. If you cannot attend, please send contributions to CRG, P.O. Box 1061, Winnipeg, R3C 2X4 or call 947-0590.

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From Garlic to Golf -- A "Fore-ward" looking example of Organic Golf Course Management

by Anne Lindsey

When Greg Holden called me from Onanole, Manitoba four years ago, and said he and some colleagues were planning to put in a bid to manage the Clear Lake Golf Course and convert it to an organic course, I was excited by the idea, but I have to admit it sounded like a long shot. Parks Canada was looking to contract out management of the course, and a number of bids were being prepared, some of them by large management firms. Greg and his family were (and still are) organic garlic producers on their farm at Onanole, near Riding Mountain Park. (Harvest Collective shoppers may have sampled their delicious product). Moving to golf course conversion doesn't sound like the most logical next step, but as Greg explains it, COGnition Magazine (the journal of the Canadian Organic Growers) had carried some articles about the truly disturbing practices of some golf courses, and how some managers were making efforts to become more environmentally responsible. A friend of Greg's was thinking about creating a golf course, and Greg was encouraging him to go organic, when the contract for Clear Lake was advertised. They decided to prepare a bid.

It turns out that golf is quite a global scourge, with more and more environmentally-destructive courses being created every year. Golf courses often take over productive agricultural land, and soak up more than their fair share of water in many regions where freshwater is a scarce commodity. Equally important concerns are the replacement of native habitat with grass monoculture and the massive use of chemicals required to keep the greens lush and weed-free, chemicals which eventually leach into rivers and groundwater. Earth Island Journal often reports information about golf course development around the world, for example the fact that Japanese resort builders are expected to build an estimated 600 golf courses in Thailand by the year 2000, while Malaysia may be host to some 200 more by that time.

Greg called me in 1992 because he wanted to know if there would be support for the idea of converting the Clear Lake course. There was. And he credits the eventual success of their bid with their plans to create a holistic green management program for the course, including all aspects of waste management, and the fact that they proposed to manage the course as a non-profit entity, the Clear Lake Golf Foundation.

Four years later, the conversion efforts

are "coming along well". Greg estimates that they are now about 70% organic. High maintenance Kentucky Bluegrass is being replaced with hardier disease-resistant grasses including some native species, in low-play areas. And tee-boxes are being re-designed to incorporate a variety of native species. As in organic gardening, an integrated colony of diverse plants helps with disease and pest resistance. The Sustainable Development Innovations Fund provided some start up funds for the installation of Clivus Multrum composting toilets, which are now in operation, fully solar-powered, with the finished product being used for fertilizer.

The Foundation is also putting into practice the Audobon Co-operative Sanctuary program which emphasizes creating an environment on the golf course which attracts wild birds and other species. They are in the process of setting up a Steering Committee to oversee aspects of water quality and management, habitat restoration and education. Greg is hopeful that local groups, schools and businesses will become involved in the Co-operative program, and that eventually everyone who uses or visits the course will come

See GOLF page 15

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"MASH" project showcases homes

From page 11

resources. Here the issues become increasingly complex as we realize that each material carries with it separate and often contradictory aspects of embodied energy, renewable production, and health risks associated with synthetic products.

Often materials which are "natural" (ie) without the harmful toxins found in synthetics) are both costly and non-sustainably produced. Thus "natural" timber construction, while averting health problems associated with synthetic building materials, contributes to deforestation. "Recycled" building materials may contain toxic residues which are harmful in the off-gassing process. Other materials embody massive amounts of energy in their production. Thus concrete, while widely available and without formaldehyde content, requires 10 times the energy in its manufacturing compared to wood. Others such as cork products, appear positive on all counts, until one considers the energy embodied in their transportation from remote sources.

Perhaps the simplest means to affect change rests in the re-evaluating of our lifestyle choices. The North American home as a living system is incredibly inefficient. Most

of this is due to our desire for convenience without consideration for the cost to the environment. We live in houses which are extremely generous in the space they afford us. Every square foot of unused space or inefficiently used space is an energy consumer. The most efficient clothes dryer available is no match in the summer months to the traditional clothesline. Treating our homes as fashion statements which can be remodelled every few years is another example

Perhaps the simplest means to affect change rests in the re-evaluating of our lifestyle choices.

of lifestyles interfering with sound environmental choices. In addition, given the massive amounts of energy and waste and materials involved in new home construction, we should perhaps reconsider our desire for a "new" home in favour of the more labour intensive task of retrofitting existing housing stock.

While the issues are complex, more and more information is becoming available as public and private organizations recognize the need to address the problems. The Canadian Government, through CMHC

(Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corp.) has been consistent in promoting the construction of environmentally friendly, energy efficient homes. In addition, private initiatives are gaining ground. Locally, work on the "MASH" house, (Manitoba Autonomous Sustainable Home) is underway. Tim Yusishen, President of Solar Solutions, and a design consortium of local experts have initiated the "MASH" project to showcase a home which will combine the best of solar power, high efficiency mechanical systems, alternative building technologies, and environmentally friendly building products. The knowledge they gain enroute will be made publicly available to assist others in achieving their own sustainable home solutions.

For further information on Healthy Homes, see

"GreenHome" by Wayne Grady, Camden House Publishing,

"The Natural House Book" by David Pearson, Simon and Schuster/Fireside

"Green Guide to Winnipeg" by Lindor Reynolds, Manitoba Eco-Network

"The Integral Urban House" by the Farallones Institute

"Canadian Green Consumer Guide" by the Pollution Probe Foundation

"The Non-Toxic Home" by Debra Lynn Dadd, Tarcher.

Look for more details on the MASH project in progress, in the next edition of Eco-Journal.

Sharon Ackerman is a Winnipeg graduate architect with an interest in sustainable approaches to design.

From garlic to golf . . .

From page 14

away with information about the organic conversion efforts.

There are hurdles, of course. Greg says they had problems with damage to the course this year as a result of the long and hard winter, and experienced some snow mould for which small amounts of fungicide have been applied. However, every obstacle creates a challenge, and Greg is experimenting with some interesting organic alternatives on his farm, and hopes to be able to do a test strip at the golf course in time.

A long-term goal is to address the widespread perception that everything at a golf course has to be "perfect". The Clear Lake Golf Foundation wants to encourage golfers and others to recognize that golf courses can be restored into habitats which welcome and accommodate all species, not just the two-legged club-toting variety!

A Green Tip from Environment Canada



Do your bit to conserve biodiversity by planting heritage plants in your garden. You'll help save them from extinction.

When the public expression of environmental concern starts to look like this:

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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.

