

ECONEWS #218

EcoNews is a free monthly newsletter, funded by your kind donations. It dreams of a world blessed by the harmony of nature, the pleasures of community, and the joys of personal fulfillment, guided and protected by our active citizenship.

To receive EcoNews by email, sign up at www.earthfuture.com/econews. To receive it by mail send your address to Guy Dauncey, EcoNews, 395 Conway Rd, Victoria V9E 2B9.

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THE ECO-PERSONALS

\$5 a line. Max 5 lines, non-profits, low-income free. 1" box ad \$50

* **Seeking eco-smart**, considerate folks to share character house South Oak Bay. Garden. \$425 + utilities. Jan 1st. ravensprog@gmail.com.

* **Organic Gardener's Pantry** - local source for fabulous organic gardening products. Probiotics, mycorrhizae, compost tea, and more. Christina 250-216-3733 www.gardenerspantry.ca

* **Abandoned Shopping Carts: Personal & Spiritual Responsibility** by William Bezanson. Sustainability, Evolution, Spirituality. amazon.ca or trafford.com (search Bezanson).

* **For sale:** 5 acres with 1500 sq ft cob-strawbale home in sustainable rural land share at Dove Creek near Courtenay. Greenhouse, horses, community. \$169,000 Susan cvec17@hotmail.com cobstudio4sale.blogspot.com

* **For sale:** Spectacular west coast house-site. Kayaker's dream - wolves, bears, otters, whales. Part of 12 household community on island near Nuchatlitz Provincial Park, Nootka Island, 45 min by water from Tahsis. \$89,000 www.nuchatlitz.ca cvec17@hotmail.com

SHARK FIN SOUP

This is a horror story, so if you are eating I suggest that you delay reading it. There are over 450 species of shark in the oceans, and they have been there for millions of years, way before the dinosaurs. Traditional Chinese culture

makes a very big thing of shark's fin soup - a wedding banquet serving 300 guests can require up to 30 sharks to be killed. To meet the demand, a shark is caught on a long line and dragged onto the boat, where its fins are cut off. It is then thrown back into the ocean. But since it now can't swim, it sinks to the bottom where it is eaten alive by other fish. How many sharks are being killed like this? Around 73 million a year; 200,000 a day; more than two a second.

Claudia Li grew up eating shark fin soup at weddings as a child in Vancouver, before she saw the movie *Sharkwater* and realized how wasteful and ecologically destructive shark finning was. "I knew at that moment that we had to take action to protect the sharks." So Claudia set up Shark Truth, and started building a campaign to wean the Chinese off their delicacy. "The fin itself has no taste", she writes. "The soup's lip-smacking effect is thanks to the condensed chicken and ham broth, and like a sprinkle of MSG." The soup's status comes from its enormous cost. The dorsal fin of a whale shark can sell for up to \$50,000, and a serving the soup says 'we are fortunate - let us share our fortune with you.'

Claudia's Shark Truth movement had a huge success in October, when Toronto City Council voted by a 38-4 majority to ban the sale of shark fin soup in the city. Brantford, Oakville and Mississauga have passed similar bans, and Calgary is next in line.

Fin Donnelly, the NDP MP for New Westminster-Coquitlam, is going to introduce legislation that would ban the importation of shark fins into Canada. In a poll that his office commissioned, 83.4% of British Columbians opposed the importation, including 76.8% of Chinese ancestry. In a similar survey in Hong Kong, 85% expressed moderate to strong support for a ban on shark fin imports to Hong Kong.

Is there someone who will step forward to push for similar bans in Victoria and Saanich? See sharktruth.com, sharkwater.com and facebook.com/sharktruth

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

On November 19th, every adult in BC can choose their civic leaders for a new three year term. So what are the issues that candidates should be championing as we continue to work for a green and sustainable Vancouver Island?

#1. Integrated Transport Planning. It's essential that we integrate our planning for walking, cycling, transit,

LRT, rail, ride-sharing, car-sharing and electric vehicles. How can we tell if its wise to spend \$800 million on LRT if we don't know the comparative cost of a large-scale network of safe bike routes? The CRD needs a single sustainable transport authority than can think holistically and make the decisions that are needed.

#2. Food Security. We only have three days food supply on the Island, and we import 95% of our food so a firm commitment to urban farming, community gardens and helping our farmers grow more food is essential.

#3. Persistent Climate Action. Since we are still burning fossil fuels, eating meat and cutting down the forests as if there was no tomorrow our planet is still on track to a 4-7°C increase in temperature within the lives of our grandchildren, and the last time the temperature was 3°C warmer the sea-level was 25 metres higher - the height of a six storey building. So we need continued action on energy efficiency, green heat, district heating, zero energy developments, local food, green transport and climate adaptation.

#4. Affordable Housing. With the average price of a starter home being \$400,000, how can young people ever buy a place of their own? That's a \$2,000 a month mortgage. There are plenty of smart ideas around, from grow-homes to cohousing to allowing more secondary suites and rural ecovillages, as long as we elect the mayors and councillors who will champion them.

#5. Green Space. From the Gulf Islands to Port Renfrew we are going to face challenges from landowners who want to maximize their chance to profit by developing their land, and who will put pressure on local politicians to allow it to happen. We need politicians who will work hard to protect our green spaces at the same time as they encourage smart growth and compact urban development to cater to the growing population, and prevent the price of housing from rising even higher.

#The Sleeper - Sewage Treatment. Expect this to come back onto the municipal agenda, as the argument that there are no scientific reasons to spend as much as \$1.2 billion (\$210 to \$500 per household per year in water and sewage charges) on treating Victoria's sewage dukes it out with the political and ecological consensus that it must be done.

THE CANDIDATES

These are the candidates who have been recommended by EcoNews readers, and who I am endorsing by virtue of my knowledge and research. If there are eight vacancies but you only want to vote for three, there's no need to cast eight votes. There are some significant newcomers, which is good news for local democracy. The big ones to work hard for? Change in Saanich, with David Cubberley running for Mayor and Harald Wolf and Rob Wickson running for council; in Victoria with four fresh new faces; and in Oak Bay, with Nils Jensen running for Mayor.

Outside Victoria:

Gabriola Island Trustee: Maggie Mooney
RD Nanaimo Area A: Laurie Gourlay
CVRD Area D: Lori Iannidardo
Duncan: Phil Kent (Mayor), Judy Stafford, Michelle Staples
North Pender Islands Trust: Gary Steeves, Ken Hancock
Salt Spring CRD: Leslie Wallace

Victoria: There are at least twelve good candidates for eight places - what is one to do? So it's thumbs up to four incumbents and four newcomers. Dean Fortin (Mayor), Philippe Lucas, John Luton, Chris Coleman, Geoff Young, Lisa Helps, Shellie Gudgeon, Ben Issit, Rose Henry.

Saanich: David Cubberley (Mayor), Judy Brownoff, Vic Derman, Harald Wolf, Dean Murdock, Vicki Sanders, Rob Wickson, Paul Gerrard.

Oak Bay: Nils Jensen (Mayor), Michelle Kirby, Tara Ney, Pam Copley, Cairine Green.

Central Saanich: Christopher Graham (Mayor), Zeb King, Sue Stroud, Adam Olsen, Robert Thompson.

North Saanich: Jack Thornburgh, Elsie McMurphy.

Sooke: David Bennett (Mayor), Maja Tait, Sheila Beech, Ron Dumont, Shauna Salsman, Moonfist-Myke Colbert.

Colwood: Judith Cullington.

Langford: Lillian Szpak.

Highlands: The existing council is being re-elected by acclamation, which is considered very good green news.

SD #61: Bev Horsman, Catherine Alpha, Peg Orcherton, John Young.

RIGHT LIVELIHOOD AWARD

From the local to the global! The Right Livelihood Award were established in 1980 to honour individuals who offer practical and exemplary answers to the most urgent challenges we face, and for outstanding vision and work on behalf of our planet and its people. It has become known as the Alternative Nobel Prize, and

is presented every year at a ceremony in the Swedish Parliament in Stockholm, with the 150,000 Euros prize money going to the winners' ongoing work. So who are this year's the Award Winners? They are the Nobel Prize winners of the global sustainability movement...



Huang Ming is a visionary entrepreneur who set up the Solar Valley in Dezhou in northwest Shandong as a realistic alternative to fossil fuels and nuclear energy. He was instrumental in getting China's Feed-In Tariff passed in 2005, opening the door to a massive acceleration of renewable energy, and he established and runs Himin Solar (above) in Dezhou's Solar Valley, one of the world's largest solar city development projects, which receives 1500-4000 visitors a day - and yet he worries that we are just not substituting fossil fuels with renewables fast enough. See www.himinsun.com

Jacqueline Moudeina is a lawyer who works fearlessly to bring the former Chadian dictator Hissène Habré to justice, and to ensure that those who committed crimes do not go unpunished. She works on a wide range of human rights issues in Chad, with a commitment to justice as prerequisite for reconciliation. In 2001, she narrowly escaped with her life when the police threw a grenade and shot at her. See www.bit.ly/Moudeina

GRAIN works to help small farmers in their struggle for community-controlled, biodiversity-based food systems. They are a key player in the global movement to challenge corporate power and promote food sovereignty, and have been at the centre of denouncing the rapidly accelerating land grabs, such as the proposed 325,000 hectare land grab in Tanzania by AgriSol, an Iowa investor which wants to develop industrial-style agriculture using Monsanto's biotechnology, which will cause the eviction of the current residents and threatens the livelihoods of 160,000 people, all in the name of turning Tanzania into a clone of Iowa. www.grain.org www.farmlandgrab.org

Ina May Gaskin is a role model for midwives all over the world who want to do more humane obstetrics, giving women the chance to choose how they give birth and feed their babies in the way that feels right to them. Among many other things, she founded the Safe Motherhood Quilt Project. www.rememberthemothers.net and www.inamay.com

*** See www.rightlivelihood.org ***

OUR SOLAR FUTURE

I recently gave a detailed talk on Our Solar Future at Camosun College, and you can view my whole presentation at www.slideshare.net/GuyDauncey.

ELECTRIC BIKES

More enthralling data about the world-changing impact of electric bikes from ETRA, which lobbies for European cycling friendly transport policies:

* Dutch bike commuters travel an average 6.3 km to work. With an electric bike, that increases to 9.8 km.

* For trips up to 4 km, 50% of Dutch people use a bike. With an electric bike, that increases to 6 km.

* 25% of Dutch commuters go to work by bike. 33% of commuters live 5 to 15 km from their work, so electric bikes could increase bike-commuting.

* A Swiss Ministry of Public Health study found that each electric bike sold saved \$2,500 in medical costs due to the health benefits of cycling.

* The German Post Office uses 8,000 electric bikes; Britain's Royal Mail is buying 14,000. Canada Post...??

ACTION OF THE MONTH

THE ROBIN HOOD TAX

The Robin Hood Tax, also known as the Financial Transactions Tax.... oh, why bother explaining when you can learn in a hilarious three minutes by watching The Bankers Tax video at www.robinhoodtax.org? At the G20 Summit this November 3-4th in Cannes, France, world leaders have a chance do something good for the world by introducing a Robin Hood Tax. It would give billions to the needy and help slow down the casino banking that got us into this mess. Dozens of governments are already on board. Tell Canada's Finance Minister Jim Flaherty to take a stand that will be admired worldwide. Tell him *now* (before Nov 3-4th) to put the people before the banks, and vote for the tax.

Write to: The Hon. Jim Flaherty MP
jjim.flaherty@parl.gc.ca 613-992-6344
House of Commons, Ottawa K1A 0A6