

## ECONEWS #186

A monthly newsletter funded by your donations that 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.

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### THE ECO-PERSONALS

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

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\* **Pacific Gardens Cohousing** – a sustainable community under construction in Nanaimo 250-754-3060 [www.pacificgardens.ca](http://www.pacificgardens.ca)

\* **Swift Kick Computers**. Eco-friendly, servicing local business and personal computers at your location. All on-site transport fueled by used veggie oil. Peter, 514-4815.

\* **Accommodation** needed ASAP. Retired professional with clean, well behaved small adult dog. Fairfield or ? \$600- \$700. Call 250-480-8839.

\* **EcoNews** enjoys new volunteers at our dessert potluck mail-out parties, last Friday of month. Call Guy, 881-1304

### FEDERAL ELECTION WRAP-UP

What a mess. 62% of Canadian voters cast their vote for a party other than the Conservatives, and yet that is who we end up being governed by. 940,000 Canadians who voted Green got no MPs at all, yet 813,000 Albertans who voted Conservative got 27 MPs. As Ed Broadbent, the NDP's old battle-horse put it, "When, oh Lord, will we wake

up?" 51.2% of Canadians voted for the Liberal, NDP, or Green Party, all of which have strong environmental platforms. In any rational democracy, they would now be forming a coalition government, laying out the strongest agenda ever to help Canada tackle global warming, and start the shift to a post-carbon society.

If we had proportional voting, as 40 other nations do, the new House of Commons would look like this:

|               | %     | MPs | Not |
|---------------|-------|-----|-----|
| Conservatives | 37.6% | 117 | 143 |
| Liberals      | 26.2% | 81  | 76  |
| NDP           | 18.2% | 57  | 37  |
| Bloc          | 10%   | 28  | 50  |
| Greens        | 6.8%  | 23  | 0   |

With proportional voting, with no "hold your nose" strategic voting, the Greens might have got 10% of the vote, not 6.8%, giving them 30 MPs. Under the current system, strategic voting is needed, but it creates horrible tensions between people who share very similar hopes and dreams. When I pleaded for people not to vote Green, I received 10:1 messages of support, but those who were opposed were *very* opposed.

So what next? There is a possibility even now that the Liberals, NDP, and Bloc combine to pass a vote of no confidence in the new government, but instead of calling another election, which nobody wants, the Governor General might invite those parties to form a coalition government. If the Bloc did not say "Yes, on condition of independence for Quebec", that could work. The coalition could then legislate electoral reform, to be used at the next election – except that the Bloc would lose seats by this, so they'd be unlikely to support it. What a mess. For a rational response, see Action of the Month, and join Fair Vote Canada, which is campaigning for a reform to the system. See [www.fairvote.ca](http://www.fairvote.ca)

Locally, Briony Penn lost Saanich-Gulf Islands by 2621 seats. Yes, we split the vote. The Greens received 6,732 votes; the NDP with no candidate got 3,667 votes, thanks in part to dirty tricks by someone who apparently used an offshore company to spoof the NDP and steal their phone system to send a "robocall" to all voters the evening before the election, urging them to vote for the non-existent NDP candidate. The Saanich police are maybe investigating – they certainly should.

### MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

To the vote - again!! On November 15<sup>th</sup>, we have a crucial opportunity to vote for green-minded people standing for election to local municipal councils. This is hugely important, since local communities are crucibles of change where new ideas can be put into action – but only if there is leadership, and urgency that transcends the "business as usual" approach.

These are the candidates I am urging people to vote for, based on my knowledge of their experience and commitment. My apologies to all other great green candidates whom I do not yet know. I hope you get elected!

**Victoria.** For Mayor: Dean Fortin.

For council: Sonya Chandler, Philip Lucas, John Luton, Lynn Hunter, Chris Coleman, Pam Madoff, Tim van Alstine, & Charlayne Thornton-Joe.

For Mayor, Dean has the commitment to what's needed and the experience to deliver. Sonya and Philip represent the Green Party, and bring the commitment and values we need most. John Luton has been a tireless advocate for better cycling and sustainable transport.

**Saanich.** For Mayor: Harald Wolf.

For council: Rob Wickson, Judy Brownoff, Vic Derman, Dean Murdoch, Vicki Sanders, Paul Gerrard.

Harald Wolf is a green builder and ecoforestry champion who has a driving vision to help Saanich become a role model for a more sustainable world. Rob Wickson brings green business experience, and has been persistent with green transport initiatives on the Chamber of Commerce for many years. Dean Murdoch has been showing great leadership with the Sierra Club Victoria group, and understands the urgency of global warming. Judy, Vic, and Vicki are incumbents who have been doing good work on council for the past several years. Paul Gerrard is recommended for his sound approach to community building.

**Central Saanich.** For council: Sue Stroud, Zeb King, Robert Thompson.

**Colwood.** For Mayor: Dave Saunders. For council: Judith Cullington.

For "all in one place" information, see [www.victoriavision.blogspot.com](http://www.victoriavision.blogspot.com), but read the host's thoughts as her own. And encourage all your friends to vote – these elections are important!!!

## GREEN RIDER, CORTES ISLAND

The folks on Cortes Island have come up with a brilliant idea. Green Rider makes people feel comfortable about asking drivers for a ride on the Cortes Island ferries. Any driver can pick up a free Green Rider decal to put in their car window as a sign of "ask me for a ride". To learn more, call 250-935-0087

Elect

**Rob Wickson**  
to Saanich Council  
& CRD Director  
[www.RobWickson.ca](http://www.RobWickson.ca)

### SMART CITY TRANSPORT

First Paris introduces 26,000 VELIB bikes, using a smart card to cover the payments – and discovers that they are hugely popular. Then Berlin says it will do the same with 100 electric Mercedes Smart Cars, installing 500 recharging posts all over the city, using carsharing smart cards to access them (starts fall 2009). Then the German city of Stuttgart announces plans to put 1,200 electric scooter/bikes on its streets, along with recharging posts, and 12,000 e-bikes in Phase 2. Meanwhile, Better Place is establishing electric vehicle systems for the entire countries of Israel, Denmark, and now Australia, starting in Melbourne and Sydney. Here in BC, the government has passed legislation allowing Neighbourhood Electric Vehicles (NEVs) on any street limited to 40 kph, with the hope that municipalities will allow them on local streets up to 50 kph. Vancouver, Oak Bay, Esquimalt, and Colwood have obliged, and the CRD has passed a model bylaw making it easy for others to follow. As soon as we get CRD-wide approval (except on fast highways), maybe the Victoria Car Share Coop will buy NEVs, and to 1,000 members? If you know where to look on a global level, the changes are rolling along at a wonderful pace. The Car Share Coop has James Glave as its speaker on November 24<sup>th</sup> – see Green Diary.

### REYNOLDS GREEN SPACES

Reynolds Secondary School, next to the Lochside Trail just south of Mackenzie near Quadra, is developing an ambitious multi-year Green Spaces Project, involving students and staff. When complete, it will see a rain garden and restored Garry Oak meadow in front of the school, the redevelopment of an

inner courtyard to include native species plantings, food beds, artwork, and sitting areas, and a new learning environment for a sustainability curriculum. There's a huge amount of community support going into this. For the full green story, see [www.greenspacesproject.org](http://www.greenspacesproject.org), and their Facebook page. Way to go, you folks!



### THE ONE MONTH CHALLENGE

The Victoria International Development Education Association (VIDEA) is urging everyone to participate in the One Month Challenge during November, in which we pledge to *only* purchase Fair Trade chocolate, coffee and tea. If you're willing to sign up for the Challenge or would like to learn more about Fair Trade products, please visit [www.vida.ca](http://www.vida.ca) or email Michelle Spencer at [m Spencer@vida.ca](mailto:m Spencer@vida.ca).

A new voice for true  
sustainability in Saanich  
and at the CRD  
**Vote Harald Wolf for Mayor**  
[www.wolfweb.ca](http://www.wolfweb.ca)  
250-479-9489

### A MILLION ACTS OF GREEN

You may have seen the CBC's George Strombolopolopolis, and his late night show The Hour. George has embarked on a project called A Million Acts of Green, inviting Canadians to sign up for personal acts that will reduce their carbon footprints. There's a huge list of acts linked to the reduction you'll achieve. So far, 135,996 Acts of Green have been listed, reducing 8,426 tonnes of emissions. Can we get to a million by Christmas? See <http://green.cbc.ca>

### TOP TEN CLIMATE SOLUTIONS #10 - SUCK IT OUT

Let's say we manage to reduce 100% of our greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, as growing numbers of people believe we must because of the urgency of the danger we face. This would still leave atmospheric CO2 at a dangerous 420 ppm, however, far above the safe pre-industrial level of 280 ppm. This raises the urgent question – how can we suck this huge surplus of CO2 out of the atmosphere? The oceans are already

becoming dangerously acidified due to excess CO2. Do we need giant CO2 sucking machines, and geo-engineering projects? The UK businessman Richard Branson has offered \$25 million to whoever can crack the problem.

We don't need fancy tricks, however. Our current emissions from burning forests and fossil fuels are 10 billion tonnes of carbon a year, surplus to the natural carbon cycle. If we change half of the forested area in the US, Canada, Russia, and China to holistic management, mimicking old growth processes on a 160 year cycle, the forests could absorb an additional 1 billion tonnes of carbon a year. If we do the same on the world's agricultural and ranchlands, changing to organic growing, zero-till, mulching, and rotational grazing, those lands could absorb an additional 5.5 billion tonnes of carbon a year, reducing the burden by 6.5 billion tonnes a year. The atmosphere's carbon overburden is around 200 billion tonnes, so if this could be achieved, the CO2 level could *in theory* return to normal after 31 years. In conclusion – we do have an escape route out of the approaching disaster, but we have to act immediately, on every front.

PS I'm repeating my all-day course *A Post Carbon World by 2030: Practical Solutions to Global Warming & Peak Oil* at Royal Roads on Thursday November 13<sup>th</sup> – see Green Diary.

**ETHICAL INVESTING**  
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### ACTION OF THE MONTH ELECTORAL REFORM

Now is the time for all good Canadians to pick up their pens and write to the leaders of the Liberal Party, urging that the party embrace electoral reform. The Greens and NDP have done so – the Liberals have not. Across the country, there is a huge surge of frustration that our electoral system delivers such undemocratic results.

Stéphane Dion MP: [Dion.S@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Dion.S@parl.gc.ca)  
Bob Rae MP: [RaeB1@parl.gc.ca](mailto:RaeB1@parl.gc.ca)  
Michael Ignatieff MP:  
[Ignatieff.M@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Ignatieff.M@parl.gc.ca)  
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