

## ECONEWS #227

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](http://www.earthfuture.com/econews)

Many thanks to Ian Barclay, Monks at Royal Oak (for great printing services), the Pinch Group at Raymond James, Duncan and Marilee Goheen, Leslie Kenny, C. Davies, Susan Draper, Johanna Poll, Marg Simons, Andrew Pringle, Tonia Rushall, Mel McDonald, Focus Magazine, Joyce Buxcey, Daphne Sidaway-Wolf, Kildara Farms, Elisabeth Haythorne, A. Maurenbrecher, Jan Nelson, Marilyn Kan, Paul Wise, Bob Willard, Myna Lee Johnstone, John and Marnie Phillips, Mac Dubé, Ray Travers.

<i>The Money</i>	June	July	Sept
Copies printed	1400	1400	1300
Sent by email	3050	3040	3040
Print, postage	\$738	\$678	\$750
Editorial	\$450	\$450	\$450
Donations	\$835	\$1500	You?
Advertising	\$65	\$0	
Balance	-\$149	\$223	

### THIS IS THE LAST PRINTED VERSION OF ECONEWS

To continue receiving EcoNews regularly every month by email, go to [www.earthfuture.com/econews](http://www.earthfuture.com/econews) and subscribe in the box on the left

### THE ECO-PERSONALS

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

\* Nature-based counseling and healing [RaineyHopewell.ca](http://RaineyHopewell.ca) 250-380-5055

\* Register now - Gaia College classroom and online courses. Organic Master Gardener, Growing Food, Ecological Landscape Design, Native Plant Knowledge, Sketchup Pro for Landscape Designers. [www.gaiacollege.ca](http://www.gaiacollege.ca)

### GULF ISLANDS GET TOGETHER

In spring 2010 an invitation from Galiano Island to the Gabriola Commons farm team resulted in a boat trip with ten Gabriolans travelling to Galiano to share ideas about food security and community gardens. Then they joined another and sailed to Pender for similar sharing, including the need for more collaboration on sustainable living.

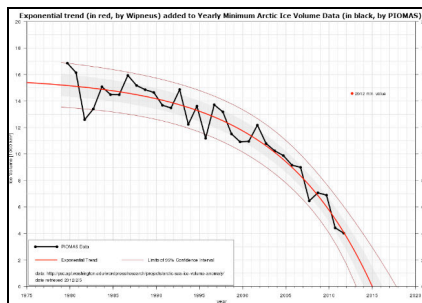
Out of this Island Futures was born, and this August there was a grand gathering from all the Gulf Islands at Montague Harbour on Galiano to discuss rebuilding the kind of inter-island communication, sharing and trade that existed historically,

and to help our communities become more sustainable and resilient.

Among the initiatives being brewed are more involvement with the newly formed Economic Development Advisory Commission; pursuing a heat pump social enterprise, as on Gabriola, becoming a dealer with the ability to buy heat pumps at cost; developing a bike kitchen where people can learn how to fix their bikes; increasing inter-island; exploring the Galiano approach to affordable housing; and artistic performers travelling by boat as a tour from island to island. A flotilla of islanders may be traveling to Victoria for the Enbridge pipeline hearings, picking up boats along the way. See [www.islandfutures.ca](http://www.islandfutures.ca)

### LABELLING THE GMOs

This November brings the big US Presidential election, and a public referendum in California on the labeling of genetically engineered foods, as already happens in 40 countries around the world. Under Proposition 37 food labeling would include whether food had been genetically engineered using genes from viruses, bacteria or other plants or animals. The food industry is fighting back, led by Monsanto, DuPont and the Grocery Manufacturers Association, who are spending \$25 million to convince Californians to vote no. There were a million signatures on the petition, and groups are being set up all over the state. [www.labelgm0s.org](http://www.labelgm0s.org)



### THE ARCTIC ICE

The Arctic sea ice is melting faster than at any time on record; it passed the record for the least extent on August 26th, with several weeks to go before the seasonal turnaround in September, when solar exposure begins to wane. By extrapolation from the graph we could be seeing a totally ice-free summer Arctic by 2015, and even an ice-free winter by 2040. To track the data see [www.nsidc.org/arcticseaicenews](http://www.nsidc.org/arcticseaicenews). The warming in the Arctic is far greater than elsewhere on the planet, and brings up three major concerns. The first is that as the ice melts the reflectivity (albedo) of

the surface falls dramatically and the sun's heat is absorbed by the water instead of reflected away. The second is the release of methane from under the ice and permafrost, since over 20 years each molecule of methane traps 72 times more heat than CO<sub>2</sub>. See [www.arcticclimateemergency.com](http://www.arcticclimateemergency.com)

The third concern is that the reflective albedo of the Arctic ice acts as a global air conditioner, stabilizing the climate of the entire planet. Take it away and all sorts of things begin to go haywire including the jet stream, resulting in climate instability, drought and heat waves, impacting our ability to grow food, as this summer has just demonstrated. The Antarctic may also hide huge reserves of methane, as much as ten times more than that which lurks in the northern permafrost, and this too may be released as the ice Antarctic melts.

### SAVING THE ARCTIC

Greenpeace, meanwhile, is acting on all our behalf with its campaign to stop all drilling and extraction for oil and gas in the Arctic. Exxon, Shell, BP, GasProm, Rosneft and others are mobilizing to get their ships up there, and get their hands on the potential 90 billion barrels of oil that lies at the bottom of the ocean. That's just three more years of energy bingeing, for which the oil companies would risk the ecological integrity of the Arctic marine ecosystem. Dealing with oil spills in the freezing waters is almost impossible, and to drill in the Arctic oil companies would have to drag icebergs out the way of their rigs and use giant hoses to melt floating ice with warm water, making a catastrophic oil spill just a matter of time. Greenpeace activists are up in the Arctic as I write these words, putting their bodies on the line to stop a Russian ship from constructing a drilling platform. Please sign the petition to save the Arctic – 1.5 million of us have signed so far. See [www.savethearctic.org](http://www.savethearctic.org)

### THE TERRIFYING MATH

This summer, Bill McKibben wrote a very powerful piece for Rolling Stone Magazine on *Global Warming's Terrifying New Math*. In a nutshell, he looked at the climate emergency, and laid out the three critical numbers. The first – 2° Celsius – is the level of warming beyond which things become far too dangerous for our planet. All of our existing climate impacts come from just 0.8° C of warming.

The second number – 565 gigatonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> (154 Gt of carbon) – is how much fossil fuel we can afford to burn before we pass the critical 450 parts per million of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere which will carry the planet past the critical +2° threshold. We are currently releasing 10 Gt of carbon a year, 85% from burning fossil fuels and 15% from destroying forests, half of which is being absorbed by Earth's oceans, soils and forests, leaving a 5 Gt annual carbon increase in the atmosphere.

The third number – 2,795 gigatonnes – is the amount of proven fossil fuel reserves held by fossil fuel companies and countries like China, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela. That is five times more than we can afford to burn, so 80% will have to remain in the ground if we are to avoid a climate catastrophe. Bill's article has gone viral, which is good news for climate emergency awareness. He reckons we need to really ramp-up the activism, including a fossil fuel company divestment campaign similar to the one that helped bring down apartheid in South Africa. There is \$7 trillion invested in the top 200 fossil fuel companies, so that's a lot of money that needs to see divested, starting with university endowment and union pension funds. To read Bill's article, see [www.bit.ly/PpPTfv](http://www.bit.ly/PpPTfv).

In response, I have mapped out a scenario for rapid fossil fuel reduction combined with a worldwide campaign of carbon eco-sequestration in sustainably managed forests, farm and ranchlands which would see the atmospheric carbon leveling off at 425 ppm and falling to 300 ppm by the middle of the next century. It is not published, but available on request.

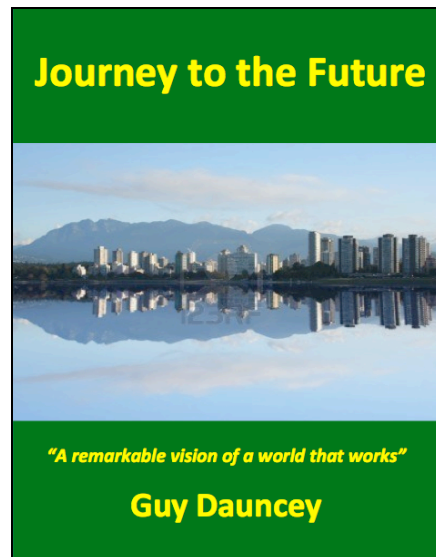
### JOURNEY TO THE FUTURE

What is the greatest obstacle that stands between where we are and a peaceful, green, sustainable future? Over the years I have come to the conclusion that it is our own lack of a clear compelling vision of what that future might look like. Every successful campaign - to win the vote for women, to stop slavery, to win civil rights, to defeat fascism – had a clear and compelling vision of success. Today, by contrast, far too many people are adopting a fatalistic view of the future that predicates failure, not success.

To address the problem I have been immersed for the past year in writing a fictional account of a visit to the future, to the year 2032, when Vancouver has become the greenest city in the world. My fictional character spends four days in this greenest of green cities, traveling around, talking to people, visiting a farm, and finding out what it's like and how they did

it - everything from phasing out the use of fossil fuels for heat, electricity and transportation to growing their own food, and rebuilding their neighbourhoods and economies on a foundation of social justice and the restoration of nature. The book also covers global issues such as how the world closed down the tax havens, brought in fair trade, and started clearing government debts.

The book is not finished yet, so you can't go out and buy it - it will hopefully be ready as an e-book in time for Christmas. To help me polish the script, I am seeking ten people to form a regular Friday Night Book Club here in Victoria, starting in October. Would you like to join the Club, to read the manuscript and give me feedback over ten weeks? I'm also seeking volunteers in Vancouver for a similar process, using Skype or similar. If you are interested, please email me with a short bio at [guydauncey@earthfuture.com](mailto:guydauncey@earthfuture.com).



### BUSINESS AND BANKING

As the EcoNews Green Diary shows, we are really privileged here in Victoria to have so many organizations putting on great events where we can meet, learn, and become inspired. During September, two that stand out are the visit by Bob Willard to UVic and his public lecture on Sept 12<sup>th</sup> on The Business Case for Sustainability, where he will be talking about transformative changes underway in the world of business. Six days later on Sept 18<sup>th</sup> Tamara Vrooman, the CEO of Vancity, is talking about the same kind of changes in the world of banking, and their journey to redefine wealth. PS Congratulations to Zoe Blunt and the Forest Action Network who led a successful campaign this summer to

persuade Vancity to divest from its \$143 million Enbridge shareholding.

Also to be noted is the Sooke Slow Food Cycle Tour and Sustainability Expo on Sept 23<sup>rd</sup> – a great opportunity to get inspired, fit and passionate. And the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Chef's Survival Challenge at Madrona Farm on Sept 30<sup>th</sup>, raising funds for farmland conservation. See Diary.

### Fairfield Home for Sale

Half block to ocean, organic raised garden beds, herb garden, fruit trees. Self-contained in-law suite, large workshop. City 2012 tax assessment \$748,00. Offered at \$698,000. Courtesy to realtors. Contact [raypine@uvic.ca](mailto:raypine@uvic.ca)

### ACTION OF THE MONTH

#### THE BC NEW DEMOCRATS ELECTION PLATFORM

The BC NDP is currently developing its Party Election Platform under a committee co-chaired by MLAs Carole James and Bruce Ralston.

*What do you want to see in the NDP's Platform?* On current indications, and unless the BC Liberals and BC Conservatives cease sniping and form a newly merged political party (which is possible), the NDP will form the government next May.

Whether or not you are an NDP member, you are a citizen and a voter, and you are entitled to tell the NDP what's important to you.

What policies would you like the NDP to adopt on climate action, farmland preservation, green job creation, cycling, transit, proportional voting, affordable housing, poverty and homelessness? And how would you like to see them pay for them? What new taxes or sources of government income would you recommend?

Personally, I would like to see a firm commitment to chart a roadmap that would show how BC could achieve full ecological sustainability for farming, food, energy, transport, wildlife and ecosystems, and a BC economy that restores nature, instead of undermining it.

**Action:** Send your thoughts to Carole James [carole.james.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:carole.james.mla@leg.bc.ca) or Parliament Bldgs, Victoria V8V 1X4.

*To everyone who has enjoyed reading the paper version of EcoNews for 21 years – it is continuing online. Go to [www.earthfuture.com/econews](http://www.earthfuture.com/econews) to make sure you are signed up.*