

The greener you make your life, the rosier it gets

Always ready to do my bit to save the world, I bought a light bulb for \$19.99. It uses so little electricity that it will extend global energy resources into eternity.

It seemed like a lot to pay for a light bulb, \$19.99, but it doesn't seem like too much to pay to save the world.

The reason behind its meagre energy consumption is ingenious and represents a radical departure from old, energy-inefficient light bulbs. It doesn't give off light. I jest. It gives off some. If you were sealed in a barrel at midnight at the bottom of Lake Ontario and somebody in Calgary took a drag on a cigarette and you were trying to read a book out there in your barrel by the glow of that cigarette, it would be the same as trying to read a book when you have this



Slinger

world-saving light bulb in your bedside lamp.

But it shines brightly in my heart. Once I got over the anxiety that came with thinking I'd been struck blind, I lay there feeling my book and wondering what it was about, and wondering whether robbing a bank would bring me enough to afford to install world-saving light bulbs throughout the house. It costs a fair whack to keep yourself in the dark, but it would be worth it.

I managed quite a saving on

the heating bill this past winter. Didn't need the furnace. What did the trick was getting the car fixed. Got the oil changed, the engine tuned, the air filter replaced, put on four new tires. The bill came to \$805. That seemed like a lot until I looked closely and saw that the bill was only \$700. The other \$105 was tax.

Sometimes we feel that we're maybe not participating fully in the life of our country, of our community, that we're not genuinely involved. And then we discover that by doing the barest minimum to keep the family clunker on the road we are more deeply involved than we imagined. Three figures involved in this case. It left me feeling warm all over.

When the blizzard wailed and the ice creaked on the goldfish bowl and my clouded breath

hung in the kitchen air, I would get out the bill and bask in the proof of my good citizenship and my temperature would skyrocket. Many was the night I wakened and, though it was 20 below in the bedroom, just thinking about my contribution to the greater good caused me to break into a sweat.

As more people realize the benefits of all these taxes on goods and services, our demand for fossil fuels will decline immeasurably.

My demand for food has declined completely since I realized the diet I was brought up to believe was proper and nourishing places such demands on the medical system that the system is about to collapse. What you get from what used to be a well-rounded diet is a short life rounded off by an expensive stay in intensive care.

Meat is the worst thing you can eat, except for dairy products, which are the worst thing you can eat except for everything but roots and berries.

Soon the bad news will come out about roots and berries.

The costs of doing anything as irresponsible as eating will be more than society can afford. The same as smoking. It will be illegal in public and on domestic flights, and restaurants will post non-eating sections where the health-conscious can sit and drink distilled water and listen to their stomachs rumble.

It is exactly this sort of public consciousness government bureaucrats look forward to. If everyone gives up eating, the health care system and the education system and every other vital system will end up in the black since there won't be any future generations to place

demands on them. Our energy resources will last beyond eternity.

Eliminating food from my diet has eliminated the guilt I felt about the amount of garbage I was producing. I produced it by the bagful. I had tried everything I could to avoid polluting our lands and waterways with the unconscionable amounts of household waste I collected in the profligate days when I ate, composted it, what I couldn't compost I hoarded, when I ran out of space for hoarding I threw it over the fence into my neighbor's yard.

Now garbage is a memory. The planet breathes a sigh of relief. When you do your bit, life turns rosy, which, apart from the fainting spells caused by hunger, mine has.

'Earth Day' grows into full week

Environmentalists scorn glitz but know it's drawing public

By Peter Gorrie
TORONTO STAR

Donna Passmore will try to walk a fine line when she visits Ashbridge's Bay next week. Passmore is project director of Global ReLeaf, an Ottawa-based group focused on protecting and increasing forests.



EARTH DAY

Corporate involvement in Earth Day, now in its 21st year, is growing. Among events this year:

□ **Eaton's** has opened Earth Day boutiques selling \$25 T-shirts and other souvenirs as well as "environmentally friendly" cosmetics and household goods.

□ **Sporting Life**, a sports equipment retailer, is holding an Earth Day festival in North Toronto's Sherwood Ravine, featuring Robin Hood, Maid Marian, clowns, jugglers, fire-eaters and a Druid choir.

□ **McDonald's Restaurants** and **Delta Chelsea Hotels** are main backers of Earth Day Canada, the event's main organizing group. Among other things, they're distributing kits that let customers do environmental audits of their homes.

□ **Consumers Distributing** is selling \$2.88 tree-planting kits, with 50 cents going to the World Wildlife Fund for each one sold. The fund will also get money from sales of special T-shirts at Fairweather stores.

□ **Harbourfront** activities include an environmental fair with displays of "ecologically safe" products.

□ **The Canadian Printing Industries Association** has sponsored a mural painting project that involves thousands of students across Metro.

□ **Brita Water Systems** is providing posters for tomorrow's Earth Day parade, and **Sam the Record Man** will give out coupons worth \$2 off an environmental recording sold at its stores.

And she'll be participating in Metro's first Tree Day — an event that's been created as the annual April 22 celebration of Earth Day expands into Earth Week. The main attraction will be the planting of the last of 12 large trees at the waterfront park, at the west end of Toronto's Beaches neighborhood next Thursday.

It seems to be an event Global ReLeaf can support without reservation.

But the group is in a dilemma about Earth Day — one it shares with other environmental organizations. They like the idea of an event focused on the environment, and are enthusiastic about parts of it. But they worry about its commercialization and the message it sends out.

Tree Day, April 25, is the brainchild of a year-old non-profit group called the Evergreen Foundation. And the foundation has accepted a \$1,000 donation from Noranda Forest Inc., a company that's *persona non grata* with environmentalists, who complain it clear-cuts forests and spews pollution from its pulp mills.

Global ReLeaf thinks community tree planting is a good idea, and believes the event will attract too many people to be ignored. But it doesn't want to be linked to Noranda or some of Evergreen's other backers.

The foundation doesn't let corporate donors dictate its policies, founder Geoff Cape says. In fact, the 60-page kit on forest management it's distributed to Metro schools is critical of Noranda, he said.

And the company insists its forest management practices are improving.

There's a wide range of corporate involvement in Earth Day, which, in its 21st year, is becoming a spring ritual far more popular than the government-sanctioned Environment Week held each June.

Dozens of banks, large manufacturers, industry associations and crown corporations are backing events or running ads that promote their environmental accomplishments, frequently urging that "every day be Earth Day."

Canada's Earth Day activities aren't as commercial or glitzy as those in the United States, where one company is even promoting Earth Day greeting cards.

And environmentalists agree it's hard to be negative about a week of activities that will have hundreds of thousands of Metro residents thinking, at least fleetingly, about water pollution, global warming, garbage and other problems.



TAKING ROOT: Arnold Rigg, 5, of Cherokee Public School in North York, plants a tree yesterday in Roding Park. Children from three schools planted 250 trees.

But some complain that corporate sponsors use Earth Day to promote consumerism; telling people it's possible to protect the environment by buying things.

The focus is too narrow, these critics add. Protecting the environment is far more than recycling garbage and planting trees. It also involves jobs, the economy, urban planning and many other issues.

Critics fear the event might persuade people there's really no

need to worry: the environment can be protected in a few easy steps, without anyone having to make major changes.

"This is an amazing planet we live on; we've treated it badly ... and we've got to take care of it," said David McRobert of Pollution Probe.

"I don't think that message has gotten through very effectively."

"The consumer-oriented aspect of Earth Day is so fundamentally

anti-environment," said Michael Manolson, executive director of Greenpeace Canada.

But "it's a hard one. You don't want to say to the individuals who are involving themselves that this is a bad thing," he said.

Greenpeace tries to present an alternative message, Manolson said. Last year, for example, it handed out leaflets describing "10 no-so-simple steps to save the planet."

Dream sparked native festival

By Darcy Henton
TORONTO STAR

Mother Earth called out to Danny Beaton in a dream and he has rallied fellow aboriginals to fight in her defence ever since.

Haunted by visions of whales crying in the deep, the Ontario Mohawk came back from the West Coast to begin a tradition of native celebrations of life and the environment — the third of which begins at Queen's Park tomorrow.

"People need to listen to indigenous people," says Beaton; 36, who has gathered 50 chiefs and elders from North and South America for an extravagant three-day celebration of Earth Day. "It would be very beautiful if we could work together in solidarity for Mother Earth."

Beaton started his first project three years ago with no budget, working primarily with school boards to spread the wisdom of native elders to Metro's young people.

This year, with \$180,000 in his pocket, he has gathered aboriginal spiritual leaders and entertainers from Ecuador to the High Arctic to try to put a stop to environmental insanity.

Beginning tomorrow with a traditional sunrise ceremony, at Queen's Park, Project Indigenous Restoration will provide day-long free aboriginal presentations, dances and drumming.

An evening concert at the Royal Alexandra Theatre will feature entertainers such as producer, singer and songwriter Daniel Lanois, West Coast native Tantaq Cardinal, actor Gary Farmer, singer Lorraine Segato and actor Tom Jackson, who is currently featured in the Tomson Highway play *Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing*.

Also taking part in the event will be Highway, *Dances with Wolves* actor Graham Greene and folksinger Murray McLaughlan.

Beaton and historian Esther Thomas Berry are to address a day-long workshop at the Ontario Science Centre Monday while elders, chiefs and traditional teachers will lecture to student assemblies at schools around Metro.

Speakers such as Gabriel Gentile, a shaman with the Tukanio Nation in the northwest Amazon area, will address sold-out workshops at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education about the destruction of the rain forests.

Boy, 11, wins council award for apartment recycling plan

By Michael Tenzon
TORONTO STAR

It was a "green tie" affair, and 11-year-old B.J. was one of the night's stars.

Bryan (B.J.) Frid of St. Catharines is a hero of the environment. He was one of dozens of Ontarians commended this week by Environment Minister Ruth Grier at the Recycling Council of Ontario awards night held at the Royal York Hotel.

"It's time you all started blowing your own horns," Grier said Thursday.

B.J. won his award because, according to the non-profit council, he single-handedly started a recycling program in his grandparents' 10-storey apartment complex. His operation was so successful, it persuaded a local hauler to start regular service to

the building.

The University of Guelph won its award because it reduced its solid waste by 35 per cent.

Among the other winners were:

□ The London Free Press, of London, Ont., whose 800 employees take part in waste reduction programs.

□ John's Cartage Ltd. of Lindsay, which operates recycling programs.

□ The Town of Lindsay.

□ The Bluewater Recycling Association.

□ The Regional Municipality of Halton.

□ Jeanette Anbinder of Markham, "a true pioneer of environmental efforts in her communi-

ty." The first recycling vehicle in Unionville was her 1967 station wagon.

□ St. Mary's School in Trenton, which has helped five other schools set up recycling programs.

□ Truso Ltd. of Oakville, which introduced bulk packaging for its hair care products.

□ Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario.

□ Procter and Gamble Ltd.

□ Sam Hambly of Haliburton Highlands, for efforts in developing a new composting unit.

□ Quaker Oats of Canada in Peterborough.

□ First Brands Canada.

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