

THE VILLAGE GREEN

Number Twenty-six, September 29, 2020

Do you want to know what local environmental ecological and climate events (on-line and in person) have been scheduled for Grey, Bruce and environs?

They're listed and described at Grey Bruce Climate Action's event listing:
<https://greybruceclimateaction.ca/events>,
where you can also add your own organization's upcoming events.

LOCAL AND PROVINCIAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHAMPION DIES: HIS LEGACY REMAINS

We would do well to celebrate our heroes, local and beyond, in the climate and environmental movements. One such hero, dear to many in Grey and Bruce Counties and beyond, died on July 4 in Hamilton in his 91st year. His name is Siegfried (Ziggy) Kleinau. Anyone who knew him would agree with this description in his obituary:

"For more than 30 years Ziggy has worked tirelessly advocating for the safety and health of our environment and has been warning society about our careless and thoughtless custodianship. His mandate was always the same, 'we have to care for the environment because we owe it to our grandchildren'... The environment has lost a champion".

Trained in Germany in horticulture, Ziggy Kleinau arrived in Canada in 1953 and worked initially here as a farmhand and nurseryman. He quickly fell in love with Canada's wilderness, leading church groups on excursions into Ontario's forests. He then found his way to a patch of land near Lion's Head in the Bruce Peninsula where he established his small organic farm.

Recognizing the importance of group action, he co-founded the Bruce Peninsula Environmental Group that still meets monthly. Through and with this group, Ziggy used his interest in others and his considerable communication talents to explore and promote renewable energy, recycling and conservation.

In 1995 he founded Citizens for Renewable Energy (CFRE). It was initially a Bruce Peninsula group but it spread to much of Bruce, Grey and Huron Counties and thereafter across Ontario. CFRE took issue with nuclear energy and Ziggy spoke in communities across the province on the perils of the nuclear industry and nuclear waste and on the virtues of renewable energy.

His own plot of Bruce County land was his laboratory where he introduced organic farming and on-site wind energy generation. He believed in bringing food and energy together, and he was a popular speaker at house tours and other events across Ontario, sharing information and inspiring people to embrace renewable energy.

Ziggy had a thirst for the truth and a hunger for data. No worshipper of academic degrees, he nevertheless pursued scientists to learn from them and enlist them as allies, all the while stressing that we must act on the best interests of our children and grandchildren. He very much enjoyed communicating with young people and spoke often to students across the province.

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Over the years he enriched other environmental groups, serving on the boards of Great Lakes United and the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association and participating in the Ontario Environmental Network. He also represented Ontario on the World Council for Renewable Energy. He enjoyed visits to Germany and bringing back environmental ideas from his homeland.

While material possessions interested him little, he was proud of his used Prius, prizing it in part because it was quiet.

By the first decade of this century he began to lose his eyesight, but not his environmental vision. He remained an active advocate, enlisting the help of students as he prepared submissions for change. He eventually moved to a seniors' apartment complex in Hamilton, the city where his daughter lived, then into a nursing home in that city.

Ziggy had set aside funds whose interest was used every year to provide a bursary to a student from the Bruce Peninsula or environs who was enrolled in an environmental course of study – a sum marched each year by a contribution from the Bruce Peninsula Environment Group. Despite his failing health, he returned to this area in 2018 to personally present the bursary to its recipient.

Vitold Kreutzer, climate and environmental activist from Chatsworth and Ziggy's friend from the 1990s until his death, provided much of the information in this tribute to Ziggy Kleinau. Vitold remembers Ziggy as a high-energy, determined and thoughtful man. To some he seemed crusty on first meeting, but that crustiness was a mere initial façade, quickly replaced by Ziggy's warmth and his interest in the stories and the knowledge of others. Ziggy used the terminology of climate change and climate action long before these terms were widely used.

A celebration of Ziggy Kleinau's life and work will be held this fall at a place and time determined by his family.

In Grey, Bruce and Simcoe we need to celebrate our seminal thinkers and activists. If you know of someone whose contributions should be celebrated in the pages of ***The Village Green***, please let us know.

IN MY HUMBLE OPINION: A YEAR GOES BY

June 18 was the anniversary of the first edition of ***The Village Green***. I started it as a one-year experiment – my idiosyncratic personal reaction to the spate of Green New Deal community meetings that were held last year.

Now is a good time to reflect on a few things I've seen and learned over a bit more than the past twelve months. Future editions of ***The Village Green*** will extend these reflections.

A whole lot of local climate action groups have been established in Grey, Bruce and Simcoe over the year. Some are autonomous. Some were created as formal advisory processes to local municipalities. They've been a godsend as a way for concerned local folks to learn and act, and to spread learning and action to their broader communities. Much of the impetus to create and nurture these groups came from last year's Green New Deal community meetings, and much came from the tireless work of Liz Zetlin and John Anderson as they facilitated local discussion groups that reflected on the duo's film ***Resilience***.

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In tandem, a number of municipalities here and elsewhere have declared climate crises or emergencies. The towns that took these actions demonstrate that both bravery and foresight can find a home at the municipal level. In contrast, the majority of members of the Owen Sound Council displayed a remarkable combination of inconsistency, duplicity and cowardice over past year, relieved only by the fact that some of its councillors have shown both integrity and breadth of vision. May we have more of the latter kind.

In my humble opinion, each autonomous local group faces four innate tensions that will probably heighten over the coming year, given that each group is still in its developmental phase and has finite resources with which to do good.

BUILDING INTERNAL CAPACITY  **INFLUENCING EXTERNALITIES**

The first is the tension between doing things to build internal capacity (member recruitment or member education for example) and acting to influence the world beyond the group (lobbying politicians or hosting lectures for the public, for example). If a group focuses only on building internal capacity, it develops a reputation for being a well-educated large group that changes nothing outside its organization borders – and so, it shrinks. If it focuses exclusively on acting externally at the expense of internal capacity, it becomes an increasingly smaller group of elitists with a loud voice but precious few demonstrable or actionable roots in its community.

ACTING AUTONOMOUSLY  **ACTING WITH OTHERS**

The second is the tension between acting autonomously and acting in concert with other like-minded organizations. Acting only autonomously robs a group of the benefits of strength in numbers. Acting only in concert with others robs the group of the ability to respond to issues unique to its community or in ways uniquely appropriate to the community.

TALK  **ACT**

At times, groups face the frustrated member or faction who says, “*Enough talk. Let’s actually do something.*” If this admirable desire to do something is used to stifle forethought, a group’s actions become simplistic, ineffective or dangerous. If on the other hand a group never invokes closure to move from talk to action, or requires absolute unanimity always on everything before it acts, it falls prey to analysis paralysis.

TALK LOUD  **COO SOFTLY**

At times a group might achieve its goals best by taking strong positions and expressing them strongly. At other times, quiet persuasion may work best. Knowing when and how to use which level of sharpness on the advocacy scale is not self-evident: it must be decided, issue by issue. If it is not discussed and decided, temperament rather than tactics can shape a group’s volume, and temperament off as not is a poor schoolmaster.

These tensions are not “either/or” options, since both sides of each tension are valid. Dealing with the tensions shouldn’t involve one side of the tension beating up the other side, nor should it involve denying the tension exists. One art of organizational success lies in managing the tensions, starting with recognizing that they exist, and discussing how to balance them.

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But in my humble experience, groups often fail because they refuse to acknowledge and manage tensions, or they allow endless civil war to go on within themselves between equally valid sides of each tension.

My list of tensions is merely one person's starter kit. I welcome thoughts from readers on other tensions that need to be managed within climate action groups in Grey, Bruce and Simcoe.

FACTS THAT HELP US CHANGE THE WORLD

Between 2013 and 2017, a Black person in Toronto was nearly 20 times more likely than a White person to be involved in a fatal shooting by the Toronto Police Service (TPS). Despite making up only 8.8% of Toronto's population, data obtained by the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) from the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) shows that Black people were over-represented in use of force cases (28.8%), shootings (36%), deadly encounters (61.5%) and fatal shootings (70%)... SIU Director's Reports reveal a lack of legal basis for police stopping or detaining Black civilians in the first place; inappropriate or unjustified searches during encounters; and unnecessary charges or arrests.

source: *A Collective Impact: Interim report on the inquiry into racial profiling and racial discrimination of Black persons by the Toronto Police Service*,
Ontario Human Rights Commission, November 2018

SHE SAID / HE SAID

"You would think it's common sense to prioritize the health of the planet we all rely on, since there are no jobs on a dead planet, but that idea doesn't hold weight for those who prefer short-term gain over long-term sustainability."

Samantha Panchèvre, *Better Safe Than Sorry*, EarthBeat newsletter, June 15, 2020

"When we see the world as one body, it's obvious that we heal everyone at the same time that we heal ourselves, for there are no 'others'."

Bernie Glassman, Co-founder of Zen Peacemakers

"We need a new theology of the cosmos, one that is grounded in the best science of our day so that all the world turns sacred again."

Beatrice Bruteau, *God's Ecstasy: The Creation of a Self-Creating World*, 1997

"Who made the world? Who made this hand traveling across the page in the slanting light of an August afternoon? I look and I wonder and I sit back and I gasp as I realize that I do not know what a single thing is. What this is before me that is known as a table and who this is that sits breathing softly by my side, her legs crossed and her eyes down? It is a wonder we are here at all and a greater wonder still that I can wonder at it, and yet the more I wonder the closer I feel, the more intimate I feel, to this throbbing wild and passionate world. I wonder, and I come alive as the world comes alive before my eyes. Can we wonder the world alive, in spite of all that we think we know about it already? In spite of everything?"

Roger Housden, *The Power of Not Knowing*, Huffpost blog, May 22, 2014

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“The Government will immediately bring forward a plan to exceed Canada’s 2030 climate goal. The Government will also legislate Canada’s goal of net-zero emissions by 2050. As part of its plan, the Government will:

- ***Create thousands of jobs retrofitting homes and buildings, cutting energy costs for Canadian families and businesses;***
- ***Invest in reducing the impact of climate-related disasters, like floods and wildfires, to make communities safer and more resilient;***
- ***Help deliver more transit and active transit options;***
- ***And make zero-emissions vehicles more affordable while investing in more charging stations across the country.***

A good example of adapting to a carbon-neutral future is building zero-emissions vehicles and batteries. Canada has the resources – from nickel to copper – needed for these clean technologies. This – combined with Canadian expertise – is Canada’s competitive edge.

The Government will launch a new fund to attract investments in making zero-emissions products and cut the corporate tax rate in half for these companies to create jobs and make Canada a world leader in clean technology. The Government will ensure Canada is the most competitive jurisdiction in the world for clean technology companies.

Canada cannot reach net zero without the know-how of the energy sector, and the innovative ideas of all Canadians, including people in places like British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Government will:

- ***Support manufacturing, natural resource, and energy sectors as they work to transform to meet a net zero future, creating good-paying and long-lasting jobs;***
- ***And recognize farmers, foresters, and ranchers as key partners in the fight against climate change, supporting their efforts to reduce emissions and build resilience.***

The Government will continue its policy of putting a price on pollution, while putting that money back in the pockets of Canadians. It cannot be free to pollute.

This pandemic has reminded Canadians of the importance of nature. The Government will work with municipalities as part of a new commitment to expand urban parks, so that everyone has access to green space. This will be done while protecting a quarter of Canada’s land and a quarter of Canada’s oceans in five years, and using nature-based solutions to fight climate change, including by planting two billion trees.

The Government will ban harmful single-use plastics next year and ensure more plastic is recycled. And the Government will also modernize the Canadian Environmental Protection Act.

When the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration was closed by a previous government, Canada lost an important tool to manage its waters. The Government will create a new Canada Water Agency to keep our water safe, clean, and well-managed. The Government will also identify opportunities to build more resilient water and irrigation infrastructure.

At the same time, the Government will look at continuing to grow Canada’s ocean economy to create opportunities for fishers and coastal communities, while advancing

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reconciliation and conservation objectives. Investing in the Blue Economy will help Canada prosper.”

***A stronger and more resilient Canada, Speech from The Throne,
Government of Canada, September 2020***

**autumn deepens -
the man next door
how is he doing?**

Matsuo Bashō (1644-1694)

**For information about *The Village Green*, or to subscribe to it (free), please
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