

Turn Off Your Car and Breathe Easier

By Katie Fleming

Have you ever left your car running while you waited to pick up your children at school? How about in the drive-through at your bank or while waiting in the ferry line? If so, you're not alone, but consider this: Simply turning off your vehicle every time you're stopped for more than 30 seconds can prevent 1,200 pounds of pollution from entering the air each year.

This pollution contains a nasty mix of small particles and chemicals that are classified as "hazardous air pollutants" under the Clean Air Act. Exposure to the contents of vehicle exhaust increases the risk of cancer, heart and lung disease, asthma and allergies. People of all ages feel the effects of air pollution, but children are among the most vulnerable.

Young people breathe 50 percent more air per pound of body weight than adults, and their lungs are still developing. Air pollutants found in vehicle exhaust have been shown to play a major role in the exponential rise of childhood asthma cases throughout Washington. Ironically, one of the areas where unnecessary idling often occurs is at schools.

To address this issue, RE Sources and the Northwest Clean Air Agency are facilitating the "No Idle Zone – It All Adds Up to Cleaner Air" campaign at schools in Island, Skagit and Whatcom counties.

To this date, five schools in the Anacortes School District along with Ebenezer Christian School in Lynden have implemented the program. 526 parents signed the forms pledging not idle their vehicles while making quick stops, which could prevent 315 tons of pollution from entering the air every year.

"The health of our kids rests on all of our shoulders," said Chris Borgen, Anacortes School District Superintendent. "Just by turning off the ignition, we can make a huge difference in the quality of air we breathe."

The solution is simple – it's as easy as turning a key! Please help create community-wide no-idle zones by turning off your engine whenever you're stopped for more than 30 seconds.

Myths and Facts about Idling Vehicles:

Myth: The engine should be warmed up before driving.

Fact: The best way to warm up your vehicle is to drive it. With today's modern engines, you need no more than 30 seconds of idling on winter days.

Myth: Idling is good for your engine.

Fact: Excessive idling can be hard on your engine, because it isn't working at peak operating temperature. Fuel doesn't undergo complete combustion, leaving spark plugs dirty and contaminating engine oil.

Myth: Turning your vehicle on and off is hard on the engine and uses more gas than leaving it running.

Fact: Frequent restarting has little impact on engine components such as the battery and the starter motor. Wear caused by restarting is estimated to add \$10 per year to the cost of driving, money likely recovered several times over in fuel savings.

Where am I going and why am I in this hand basket?

continued from cover

And the future? Seventy percent of the people on the planet today will be alive in 2050. In 40 short years, sea levels could rise by up to 20 feet, the ice shelves of Greenland and Antarctica will be lost, the arctic sea could be ice free during the summers — which will be getting longer. More than a million plant and animal species will most likely be extinct by then, leaving our world impoverished. If you are under age 40 or 45, you will probably experience these things in your lifetime. If you are a bit older, you might not hear about the death of the very last polar bear, but you will see and feel the impacts of the changes we have wrought on our world and its climate.

What will it take for each of us to park the car, change a light bulb, forgo buying more stuff we don't really need, skip that flight to Hawaii just to get warm in winter? It is no longer about your children or your grand-children. It's no longer about some far distant future. It is about now and I, for one, am scared awake and wondering how to get out of this hand basket my culture has created. It is time to act, to change our lives while perhaps salvaging the things that we say we care about: community, our children, big trees, clean cold oceans, fresh tomatoes.

Really, our actions matter. Be part of the change today. Please.

Did you spout off about the Fountain Plaza?

The Fountain Plaza Design Charette has been taking place this fall. Participants have been developing a new vision for the little city park and fountain across the street from our new Sustainable Living Center in Bellingham. The process has been funded in part through a Small and Simple Grant from the City of Bellingham. Community volunteers and local businesses have been contributing in-kind research and expertise in helping make Fountain Plaza a more welcoming place. View the visioning process under way at www.re-store.org/fountain.htm



for Sustainable Communities

2309 Meridian St. Bellingham, WA 98225 www.re-sources.org 360-733-8307

NONPROFIT ORG. U.S. POSTAGE PAID BELLINGHAM, WA PERMIT NO. 350

Where am I going and why am I in this hand basket?

By Robyn du Pré

I AM NOT generally a big fan of bumper sticker platitudes and am often struck by the irony of conservation massages plastered on the back of an auto. But I recently saw a bumper sticker that captured the conundrum of our culture. The sticker read: "Where am I going and why am I in this hand basket?"

Not only does this amusing statement point out that we are careening down a path that is increasingly untenable, it also speaks to the way in which our culture is engaging with this fact. Here we are, in early 21st century America, just beginning to shake ourselves awake after 60 years of cultural excess.

The air that we breathe is polluted, and an increasing number of our children have asthma and other respiratory problems. Clean water is becoming a scarce commodity. Babies nurse on contaminated breast milk, and even those of us who take care to eat organic foods find that we have a growing body burden of persistent bioaccumulative chemicals. Forests are disappearing, countless species are going extinct, the climate is changing, glaciers are melting, seas are rising, hurricanes lash our shores, and droughts grip the heartland. It's time to wake up and get out of this hand basket.

Yet most of us, caught up in the daily rounds of earning a living, paying the mortgage, driving the kids to soccer, and mowing the lawn, are just beginning to notice that something is not quite right here in paradise. Lately, I have been pondering the state of our culture and its implications for the rest of the planet with growing alarm. What will it take for each of us to be jarred completely awake? How can we slow the juggernaut of "progress?"

Many conservation organizations talk about our leaving a healthy world for our children and grandchildren. Being a grandparent myself, I admit to feeling a great sadness when I think about the world in which my grandson will make his way. But, it seems that even our love for our children is not enough to cause most of us to give up even the smallest thing. This is not because we are callous; it is simply because most of us are not aware of the consequences of our actions. What if I told you that, by doing simple things such as leaving your car at home more often or transitioning your house to compact fluorescent light bulbs, you could create a better future for your children? Would you do it? Still too abstract?

How about this: It's not about your children anymore — it's about you. That's right, it is not about the future anymore. It is about now. It is time to save the world for yourself. Today, the glaciers of Greenland are melting twice as fast as they did just a decade ago. Right now, children are dying of malaria in climates that never before hosted this parasite. As I write, another hurricane gathers force in a year that is noted as extraordinary for the number and strength of tropical storms. This summer the Midwest droughts continued, putting more pressure on our food system.

continued inside

Upcoming Events

Beach Clean-up:

January 21st Check our website for details: www.re-sources.org

Green Drinks:

Every first Wednesday from 5-7pm:

December 5th

January 2nd

February 6th

Check our website for location:

www.re-sources.org

Thanks to the following:

- Northwest Clean Air Agency for a contract to continue classroombased education, focused on air pollution and global warming
- REI for a grant to support our Beach Naturalist program
- The Dudley Foundation for funds to support RE Sources work in the community



Printed on FSC certified 100% post consumer recycled paper, generate with wind power



"Santa Claws"
Ken Carrasco,
red rock crab
carefully in
hand, bears gifts
of interpretation
for naturalist-led
night walks.

Join Beach Naturalists for a guided beach walk by flashlight!

Jan. 19, 8-10 pm, Location TBA

Parks are otherwise closed at dusk, so this will be your chance to get out to the beach after dark!

How to prepare: Rain gear, warm clothes (!), flashlights, rubber boots. Bring family and friends or meet new ones with our volunteers.

See more photos and learn more about Beach Naturalist programs at www.re-sources.org.

Appreciate Gifts from the Beach

Explore beach nightlife in winter, and remember what we're working all year to protect

By Doug Stark

THE HOLIDAY SEASON is a wonderful time to appreciate our health, family, and all that we can so easily take for granted. Which is why we're going to the beach!

Even in winter — particularly in winter — the shoreline offers magic and marvels to give pause for wonder. Unlike summer, when extreme low tides leave creatures vulnerable to predation or drying out under the sun, winter low tides happen at night, so soft-bodied creatures are less likely to seek a hiding place.

By moonlight or, rather, by flashlight, anyone can explore seashore life that is only exposed by the winter low tides, which this year grace the holiday weekends of Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Looking for an extraordinary holiday star? Stars will be out in all shapes and sizes! The velvety sunflower star, with up to 24 legs, is the most mobile of the sea stars and a voracious predator. I've seen more in one winter night than I have over an entire summer!

Fond of festive lights and tinsel? With my flashlight for a magic wand, shrimp eyes will sparkle and dance in pools. A red beaded anemone will glow like a burning ember when lit from behind. The "burrowing anemone," withdrawn and veiled from summer air, will earn its alias "moonglow anemone" with radiant, luminous tentacles dazzling in the damp night.

Enamored by ornaments? Myriad chitin species will come out from under rocks to graze on algae at night, decorator crabs adorn bows of seaweed, and barnacle-eating snails called whelks will converge at the low tide like strands of popcorn as they sow their "sea oats" (caviar anyone?).

Like unwrapping presents, each year's outing surprises me. I have found giant sea cucumbers, kelp crabs, brittle stars, leather stars and nudibranchs. The elusive octopus is always on our wish list. Maybe this year will be the first I find one!

While we at RE Sources and the RE Store are working to safeguard our water-ways, renew homes, and fight warming emissions and water pollution, the most memorable days of the year for me are nights like this. I remember why I work so hard year-round to protect what we have.

Bring your family and friends to Bellingham Bay, Birch Bay and Larrabee State Park this winter. They'll appreciate engaging in something apart from the usual holiday grind, and we'll all appreciate together the presence and richness of life.

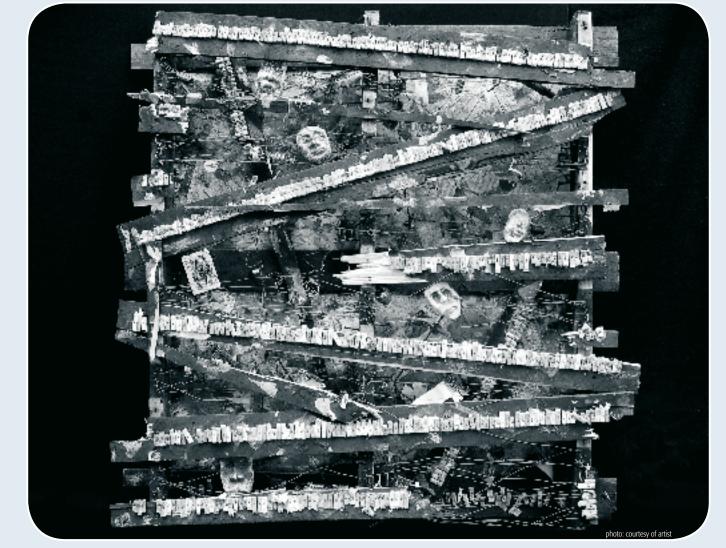
Prefer to cozy up by a fire with a good book?

The Highest Tide by Jim Lynch is a wonderful coming-of-age novel in which young Miles O'Malley uncovers natural wonders and fundamental questions that transform him and his quiet bayside community.



My, what beautiful garbage you have!

By Jason Darling



"Prisoners of the Modern World" by Kuros Zahedi

NOW IN ITS 6th year, the Bellingham REArt show continues to grow. In addition to partnering with Allied Arts, we joined forces this year with Western Washington University's Viking Gallery 507 to show art from all facets of the community, including students. Featuring more than 40 pieces at three locations, this year's show included artists from four states and one province. Painted, collaged, sculpted, and fabricated pieces conveyed a wide array of ideas and feelings that included whimsy, beauty, and potent social commentary.

"A lot of higher-education students are focusing more on sustainability and green practices. We are excited to get the university campus involved," said Heidi Norgaard, the coordinator at Viking Gallery 507. The partnership with W.W.U. gives the RE Store an opportunity to reach out to Western's campus, as the state university steers towards greener policies and practices.

In addition to attracting students to our show, REArt featured pieces from many artists who find working with reused materials rewarding and inspiring. Thor Myhre, a Bellinghamarea professional artist who works almost entirely with used materials, appreciates the show's focus. Thor explained, "Materials that have already been used have a life and story all of their own. I interpret those stories."

The REArt program gives people an opportunity to see reuse and our habits of consumption through the lens of art. Art reflects and informs current issues and concerns about the times we live in. When we give people a chance to express themselves through art and reuse, their voices join with many others to herald the mission of sustainability and reducing our ecological footprint. RE Store's partnerships with arts organizations help to build and inspire a growing web of innovative people moving towards a healthy, green future.

JOIN and GIVE

Name		
Address		Phone
City	StateZip	Email
PAYMENT METHOD		
, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	ble to RE Sources, is enclosed.	
■ I prefer to make mon with a simple phone of		credit/debit card. I understand I can cancel at any time
	callly donation of:	se charge my Visa Mastercard
with a simple phone of Monthly Quarter \$10 \$15 \$25 \$	call. ly donation of: Plea	

'Tis the Season...

By Bernadette Castner

As THE RAINS return and the trees lose their brightly-colored leaves, it's a great time to ponder the past year, count our blessings and consider what we'd like to foster in the coming years.

For those of us at RE Sources, 2007 has been a year of celebrating our 25th anniversary, moving our Bellingham RE Store and education offices and continuing to work on issues such as air and water quality, waste reduction, green building and global warming. As we look to 2008, we're excited to provide Whatcom County with more opportunities through workshops, educational displays and community events at the new Sustainable Living Center, but we can't do it without you.

Our membership is growing and our supporters shape our organization through financial, volunteer and collaborative efforts. When issues of the environment or sustainability arise, it is you, the community member, who can truly make a difference. RE Sources provides a catalyst for action and tools through which you can make your voice heard.

As a grassroots sustainability group, we are striving to be self-sustaining in many ways, including financially. RE Sources relies on earned income, individual memberships, grants and contracts to carry out our mission. Your membership dollars are an important source of support for RE Sources education and advocacy work. In fact, in 2008, fully one-quarter of our education and advocacy budget will come from donations.

One of the best ways you can support the ongoing work of RE Sources is to join our Sustainer's Circle. Sustainer's Circle members make monthly gifts to provide ongoing support to RE Sources programs. It is easy to do. Even \$10-25 per month adds up to a significant annual gift and enables RE Sources to continue its great work to protect the natural and human communities of our northwest Washington home.

You decide how much to give and this is deducted automatically from your checking account or credit card each month. Monthly donations provide us a reliability that is invaluable in planning, making strategic decisions and leveraging matching funds.

To join our Sustainer's Circle, simply fill out the appropriate portion of the form above, or contact Bernadette Castner at 360-733-8307 or bernadettec@re-sources.org or visit our website at www.re-sources.org and click on the "Make a Gift" button.

Thanks for providing your sustaining support!



We hope you like the new look of our newsletter. We plan to focus on different programs each issue so if your favorite segment is missing this quarter, you'll be tickled when it appears in an upcoming issue. Visit our website for more up-to-date information and in-depth articles.