

PHCRI Newsletter

Poplar Hill/Coldstream Resiliency Initiative

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Poplar Hill / Coldstream Official Transition Town

We are excited to announce that Poplar Hill and Coldstream have been formally recognized as a "Transition Town." The Transition Network is made up of a number of Transition Initiatives around the world, all representing areas that want to pro-actively prepare for the future outcomes of Climate Change and Peak Oil in a positive way.

Most people have heard about Climate Change, and despite some controversy, the scientific consensus surrounding Climate Change is sound. An overwhelming majority of climatologists agree that the climate is warming and human activities are the cause. Scientists expect consequences to be unprecedented and dire.

Peak Oil, a less frequently heard term, refers to the point when global oil production reaches its maximum, and then goes into terminal decline. The consequence of decreasing supply in the face of increasing demand means an end to the model of growth in our current economic system, based on cheaply available oil. Consequences will be far-reaching, affecting trade, agriculture, banking, transportation and home heating. Experts agree that Peak Oil will likely occur in the next few years.

Here's where Transition Towns come in. Founded in the UK in 2005, the Transition Network assists groups in planning community solutions that address both Climate Change and Peak Oil. They recognize that each community is unique, and must have solutions developed from within. There are now over 290 official Transition Towns around the world, with 14 of those being in Canada.

Transition Towns are all about local people working from general guidelines that



Rob Girard introduces *In Transition* film at Valleyview Public School.

Movie Night a Success

PHCRI hosted a free movie night on Friday, February 5th, at Valleyview Public School in Coldstream, about community, sustainability, and facing the challenges of peak oil and climate change with a positive attitude.

In Transition, is about the growing number of communities around the world involved with the Transition Network. It spends a small amount of time establishing background information about peak oil and climate change, mostly focusing on what villages, towns and cities around the world are doing to prepare for a time when there will be less cheap oil available.

Ideas in the movie include growing food locally, operating nurseries focusing specifically on edible and useful trees and plants, getting kids involved with planting community orchards, converting local pubs and restaurants to zero-carbon venues, and even issuing local currency to encourage

people to support local businesses.

Over 25 people attended the event, including a mix of local citizens, local politicians, and some visitors from further afield.

We were very happy to see Albert Bannister (Deputy Mayor, Middlesex Centre), and Brian Ritchie (Councilor for Ward 4) attending the movie. It means a lot to us that they took the time to come to the event, and see what our group is working towards.



Upcoming Events:

PHCRI will be hosting and participating in many events this year, see the listing on the back of this page for details.

Official Transition Town (continued from front)

have worked for other municipalities, and adapting them to help towns like Poplar Hill and Coldstream prepare for a time with less cheap oil available, while at the same time, building community.

What's a Transition Town?

From <http://www.transitiontowns.org>:

A Transition Initiative starts when a small collection of motivated individuals within a community come together with a shared concern: how can our community respond to the challenges, and opportunities, of Peak Oil and Climate Change?

They begin by forming an initiating group and then adopt the Transition Model with the intention of engaging a significant proportion of the people in their community to kick off a Transition Initiative.

A Transition Initiative is a community working together to look Peak Oil and Climate Change squarely in the eye and address this BIG question:

“For all those aspects of life that this community needs in order to sustain itself and thrive, how do we significantly increase resilience (to mitigate the effects of Peak Oil) and drastically reduce carbon emissions (to mitigate the effects of Climate Change)?”

Some of the ongoing projects we're working on are:

- Awareness: Screenings of documentaries, presentations, flyers, etc.
- Local food production and distribution: Community Garden, Farmer's Market
- Local business: Completing a Skills Inventory showcasing skills our neighbours have and use this information to encourage business in the community whenever possible
- Energy: Help organize meetings for local energy producers to share their ideas about how electricity and transportation will work with less cheap oil.
- Local Government: Work with council to encourage 'top-down' planning to complement community led 'bottom-up' planning
- Re-skilling Workshops: Learn about traditional skills used in the past, as well as new techniques that are less dependant on cheap oil for fuel.
- Draft an 'Energy Descent Plan'

We hope families and businesses of our already vibrant community will join us in this journey, to make a smooth transition into a world much different than what we are accustomed to. We are excited about the opportunity our community's transition presents and welcome your ideas, feedback and participation.

Upcoming Events

Skills Inventory - Spring/Summer
Members of PHCRI will be visiting households in Coldstream and Poplar Hill to ask citizens to fill out a survey about their skills. This data will be compiled so we know more about what our neighbours do. This will help generate local business, and allow us to learn valuable skills from each other.

Coldstream Farmer's Market - Saturdays 9:00am - 11:30am starting in late May or early June through September (with Coldstream Enviro-Friends)
Come buy local produce, eggs, baked goods, crafts, and plants or set-up a table and sell your own locally produced goods. Contact Janice Dolliver at 666-0461 for more information.

Poplar Hill Picnic Display - Saturday, June 12, Poplar Hill Park
PHCRI will have a display at the annual Poplar Hill Picnic including a Rocket Stove, an amazingly simple and fast burning stove that's easy to make yourself, and can boil water quickly using only thin sticks as fuel.

Delicious Local Weeds - Sunday, June 20th, 2:00pm, meet at 9995 Ilderton Rd
Spend a bit of time on Father's day discovering some local plants that are not only edible, but delicious. Learn how local citizen Rob Read turns weeding the garden into making salad.

Harvest Dance - October
A chance for us to celebrate our local harvest with a dance. More details to come.



The audience chats before *In Transition* screening at Valleyview Public School.

*Join us at one of our meetings or events. Meetings are held the third Thursday of each month. Contact Rob Girard at phcri08@gmail.com or 666-2930 for location details, or to be added to the e-mail list. To arrange to borrow the *In Transition* DVD for home-viewing, contact Rob Read at 666-0168 or readrob@gmail.com.*