

BRUCE PENINSULA ENVIRONMENT GROUP

www.bpeg.ca

Annual Report 2010

From the Chair

Last year we were 20: at 21 we're supposed to have reached adulthood. Can't say I've noticed because the list of BPEG activities continues to respond to needs and to grow in new directions with apparently youthful enthusiasm.

Our monthly meetings (GMs) continue to draw satisfyingly large audiences in the 50 to 80 range: we have experienced remarkably little trouble finding interesting speakers (see the Media Committee report), and are grateful to them for their willingness to come to us. A big thank you too to all those members who continue to contribute to these evenings by providing book reviews, energy anecdotes, progress reports, gifts for speakers and, of course, refreshments.

In August we again partnered with the Peninsula Bird Observatory to pull together a very successful 4th Environmental Film Festival, this year entitled Waterfest. With his usual flair, U of T prof. Stephen Scharper assembled the program and shepherded audiences through a telling selection of documentary and classical films on the theme, dividing the six showings between Christ Church and the Park Visitor Centre. The growing fresh water global crisis was further brought home to an audience of nearly 200 in September when, largely thanks to the drive of organiser Linda Thorn, BPEG was able to bring Council of Canadians National Chair and renowned Water Warrior Maude Barlow to the Peninsula Shores District school for an unforgettable afternoon. As a bonus, Maude was able to carry her message to almost 200 area students attending the Footprints conference at the Celtic Camp.

During the year our reformed Garden Committee (renamed the BGS Committee - ask Chair Tim Spencer) has increased its activities dramatically. After last year's disappointing potato harvest, soil improvement at the Westover plot has remained a priority though exciting ideas are being considered for its future. However, John Baker's offer of a more isolated piece of land has given us the opportunity to build a local seed development program in 2011. The importance of doing so was enhanced by the well received visit of well known advocates Brewster and Cathleen Kneen to talk to the first joint BPEG/Peninsula Transition Group meeting recently at BPDS on local food production issues. Our September GM, a tour of local gardens, showed that other interesting initiatives are already happening around us. Unfortunately these exciting advances have not been matched this year by the Energy Committee, which has been thwarted in its various promising plans on every front (see Chair Glen Estill's report). Consequently, this Committee has been terminated until such time as new opportunities materialise.

Other highlights of the year: Waste management has remained a strong focus of the municipal Waste Diversion Committee with, among many other tasks, a 2012 'Zero Waste' outreach calendar project bringing together local schools and the Peninsula Transition Community. The BPEG library has now become a substantial and popular resource with an inventory of some 80 books, 4 magazine subscriptions and a loaded free-bee table. Our link with BPDS continues to strengthen, with BPEG members assisting the school's remarkably successful first year garden effort, helping judge the Ideas Fair and again sponsoring a student Environmental award.

The LH Farmers Market has become a major Saturday morning

attraction complete with great musical entertainment, thanks to the efforts of Tina and the Myles family. An inappropriate development plan at Borchard Rd on the Niagara Escarpment has been denied by the Minister following a protracted appeal led by BPEG members Elaine and Uwe Wassermann.

Our Constitution requires that in this, an even numbered year, I retire to the position of Past President leaving Chair and Vice Chair open for election. Jim Kuellmer has also had two years as Director at Large and Tim Spencer will depart the Treasury. Nominations have been received for all vacant positions but others will be accepted at the AGM .

This means that the Board will be losing current Past Chair Glen Estill to whom BPEG owes a huge debt for the part he has played over the past eight years. It is no exaggeration to say that his renewable energy initiatives, knowledge and thoughtful guidance have been outstanding. I am assured that he has not finished contributing to our endeavours when asked.

To Tim and Jim too, my grateful thanks for their staunch and valued roles with the Board.

In leaving the position of Chair, I have so many others to thank. Yes, my fellow Board members who have made the past two years at once productive, pleasant and fun even when our meetings have run overtime. Yes, our Media Committee under the leadership of dynamic duo Loretta and Jan for your creative hard work in publicising and reporting on events. Yes, BGS Chair Tim and Energy Chair Glen for your inspiring leadership, and our dedicated Waste Management team of Jim, Jacqui, Judi and Mike. Yes: Bob, list-serve manager: Rick, web-master: Tina, membership secretary: Ruth and Joan, librarians. Yes, Press editor John Francis and Councillor Tom Boyle for your ongoing support of our work. Yes, BPDS principal Matt Pickett and your amazing staff. Yes, Joan and Don McIlraith for your help and wisdom, expressed in so many ways, Judy Appleton for your 10 years of so cheerfully organising the Rd 9 clean-up crew and, finally, Yes, our general membership for your willingness to answer calls for help and to be such a friendly and responsive audience at General Meetings. Thank you all.

Tony Barton, November 2010

Waste Diversion Group Committee Report - November 2009 to Oct 2010

Discussions with Representatives of “Key Sectors”

Nov. 3, 2009 - The committee interviewed Mike Campbell as a representative of rental cottage owners and made the point that the renters are distressed that there is no recycling pickup. Cottages should have clear directions and opening times for the landfill sites and recycling sites posted for the occupants. Requested extending Sunday landfill hours to accommodate weekenders and others returning to work in other parts of the province.

April 16, 2010 – One of the WDG members had met informally with a local contractor. There was a discussion noting that currently there is little incentive to builders bringing waste for disposal to recycle. (Construction debris typically consumes 40% of our landfill.)

Waste Diversion Proposal to MNBP Council

Nov. 16, 2009 - A presentation was made to a special meeting of Council to request money in the upcoming budget (1) for preparation of a waste diversion plan by an external consultant and (2) for production of a waste & recycling calendar for residents of the MNBP.

April 16, 2010 – The results of the budget did not include a waste diversion strategy. The County Status Report notes the desirability of moving to standardized recycling programs across Bruce County, so the County wanting to standardize the municipalities in an as yet unknown manner was possibly one factor. NBP will be preparing 3 waste management reports required by the province, covering each of the three waste sites. The budget did allot \$8000 for the production of a municipal calendar.

Calendar “Towards Zero Waste”

June 29, 2010 – At this meeting it was decided to work towards having the calendar ready for production by Aug. 2011 and to work together with the Transition Community and District School to use the calendar to promote zero waste. A new subcommittee has been formed and work is underway. Printing costs will limit the calendar to 12 months (rather than previously proposed 16 months). Target is the year 2012.

E-Waste

Nov 16, 2009 - The Municipality’s application to become a steward/collector for e-waste was accepted, pending provision of suitable storage at each landfill site.

October 2010 - St. Edmonds, Eastnor, and Lindsay sites are now accepting e-waste.

Waste Recycling Strategy

Oct. 8 2010 – This was maybe the last meeting of the current WDG. The municipality had obtained a special grant to begin preparing a waste recycling strategy, and the committee met with 2 individuals from Gamsby & Manneroe (the recipient of the municipal contract) to put together a so-called waste diversion strategy. Much of the time was spent discussing changes to a draft recycling survey and educating the consultants about what the group had already done. One unfortunate aspect is that the grant only covers blue box material and not the entire waste stream. If successful, this may satisfy some provincial requirements to help the MNBP gain access to more provincial money for diversion.

There is a possibility of some changes to WDG after the election in October.

BGS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2010

The Bees, Garden and Seeds group is the newest committee within BPEG and was formed in the late winter of 2009. It became apparent to several of us and your Board that direction was needed to focus our increasing participation in local food issues including the Westover garden plot.

The members listed alphabetically are: John Baker, Tony Barton, Stuart Burgess, Alain Charest, Christine Ellis, Bob McKay, Tim Spencer, co-ordinator. Joining us this year are Terry Munn of the Transition Community and Jacquie Wakefield.

This group to date has made two garden plots both in Lion's Head; one at Helen Westover's and another at John and Donna Baker's. Successful soil improvement remedies primarily using green manure techniques have been undertaken. It is envisioned that the Westover plot will be an education centre for gardening issues and the Baker plot will be a site for a seed growing project.

Tony Barton is involved in exploring the opportunities to raise bees both for pollination and honey production in North Bruce. We have sought out advice from knowledgeable people in the bee keeping business and Tony has completed a season with bees using top bar hives at his home.

Several other members are engaged in sourcing out open pollinated varieties of primarily vegetable seeds which will be reproduced and offered within our community. Seeds and markets have, in recent years, moved increasingly toward control by large private corporations, in our view, a poor situation at best.

The BGS Committee will move toward "developing a sustainable local food system" to coin a phrase by Jacquie Wakefield.

We are encouraging cooperation with the Transition Community and other groups. We hope to stage several events in 2011 such as our recent seminar on October 22, 2010, with Brewster and Cathleen Kneen, our Fall Garden Tour, support for BPDS garden projects and bringing BPEG's presence to the Guelph Organic Conference in January 2011.

We are looking for members to assist in seed gathering and to man the table for a day or less at the Guelph Conference which runs from January 28th to the 30th inclusive. This will be an experiment for BPEG in staging a multi-day event.

Please see any committee member, a Board member or Tim Spencer, if you have something which interests you regarding the BGS Committee.

Thank you.

Tim Spencer

Energy Committee Report 2010

The Energy Committee started the year with 3 main projects.

Bruce Peninsula Bird Observatory off grid project. The Bird Observatory wants to go off grid. The line to the facility (shared with the Cabot Head Lighthouse) is old, fails frequently, and is expensive to maintain. The Bird Observatory sits on Ministry of Natural Resources land, so they need to approve any modifications to the

property. During the year, BPEG and BPBO assessed requirements, and determined that going off grid, which requires battery storage, was indeed a difficult challenge. The demand for electricity is high (water pumping and UV, refrigeration) relative to what is required to go off grid. So the first step is aggressive conservation. The facility received a \$25,000 grant during the year, but it was deemed that this amount was insufficient, but could perhaps be used to start on some of the conservation initiatives. The project had good discussions, but is currently stalled.

Cabot Head Lighthouse off grid project. The Cabot Head lighthouse is owned by the Federal government, but there is much speculation on their desire to continue owning it. Assistance in maintenance is done by Friends of Cabot Head, a volunteer organization. The facility uses even more electricity than the Bird Observatory, and the murky ownership status makes it difficult to move the facility off grid. There have been good discussions, but the project is stalled.

Solar Roof at Bruce Peninsula District School. Ryan Matheson, a student, supported by BPEG, approached the Board to see if it could install photovoltaic panels on the roof. After a lengthy review, the facilities staff at the Board Office turned down the idea. They are concerned with the structural integrity and prospective challenges in repairing the roof. We note that the school board has installed PV at least one new build school – there is support to a certain extent for the idea at least.

A fourth prospective project began in June, when a group met to discuss how to foster the development of photovoltaic installations under province's Feed in Tariff program. A decision was made to form a company to develop 3-6 small projects, using funds raised locally, and installed on local properties. \$165,000 of informal commitments were made to the initiative. The company would be a private for profit company, and would allow those who had funds but no solar pathway to help fund projects, and those who were short of funds (or who didn't want to deal with the bureaucracy) to host projects on their properties. The company was to run solely with volunteers – it was basically a group of friends and neighbours pooling resources to build some projects. Shortly after this meeting, the Ontario Power Authority, in their wisdom, decreed a lower price for ground mounted projects, and banned aggregation of projects – only the property owner can apply for and receive a contract. This effectively killed the idea, although the change is under review, and the project may restart. Members of the Energy committee continue to promote the installation of solar, and there has been some progress. Several BPEGers and other community members have solar projects underway.

During the year, a talk was given by Gideon Forman, of Canadian Association of Physicians, about the environmental and health impacts of electricity generation, including wind energy. Kris Stevens of the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association presented on the Green Energy Act.

Glen Estill

Media Committee Report – October, 2010

Committee Members

Loretta Plomley (co-chair), Jan MacKie (co-chair), Donna Dilschneider (great backup chair & archivist), Stuart Burgess, Barbara Bobo, Robert Patrick, Rick Roman (webmaster), Don McIlraith (new as of Spetember)

The committee has met twice in the past year and throughout the year committee members (rotating reporters) have submitted interesting articles on the monthly meeting speakers as well as the special event with Maude Barlow to both the Peninsula Press and the Wiarnton Echo.

Committee members worked hard with the Film Festival group to promote and facilitate BPEG's participation and to round up the necessary support from BPEG for the Lion's Head screenings. A bookmark was produced by the Media Committee with pertinent water information as tickets for "Waterfest". Perhaps in future there could be a separate committee to do the Film Festival as it somewhat overloaded a few folks in Media.

The reporting & poster protocols have been updated and reporters scheduled for the next segment of meetings. Donna is the keeper the archives.

Speakers and Topics in the past year

Rod Steinacer - BP Bird Observatory

Anne Findlay-Stewart -Around The Sound Food Store

"What Will We Eat?" Re-Localizing Our Food and Our Future"

Jody Sheifley - MNR Biologist, Wildlife Specialist

"Coyotes: their habits & the situation on the Peninsula"

Kelly Rogers - Chatsworth Honey Beekeeper – "All About Bees"

Dave Munro – MNR – "Aggregates and the Bruce Peninsula"

Jarmo Yarbola – Ecologist – "Peninsula Geology and Ecology"

Gideon Forman - Canadian Assoc. for Physician for the Environment rep.

"Renewable Energy & Our Health"

Kenneth Merchant – Guelph Arboritum – "What Lies Beneath the Forest Floor?"

Garden Tour – Visits to three local organic gardens

Keith Martin – A&E Media & Rotary Club – Video: "Take It Back"

Special Events

Maude Barlow – Water Issues, Locally & Globally

Brewster & Cathleen Kneen – "Developing A Sustainable Local Food System"

Website: Rick has begun a process to revamp the website and is making it more user friendly so that mediacommittee members and other committee chairs will be better able to update information as needed. – Thank you Rick!

BPEG ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT 2010

Our books were reviewed by Mr. Paul Conway, M.B.A., on February 15, 2010 and were satisfactory and in balance at that time.

Our fiscal year runs from January 1 until December 31 each year.

An annual report is given at the BPEG AGM and is available to any member. The treasurer is available to discuss the financial transactions of BPEG with members upon request.

Entries following are from January 1, 2010 until October 23, 2010 inclusive.

INCOME

Memberships	1200.00
N.B. about 70 % (\$930.00) are delinquent	
Film festival	842.45
Maude Barlow gate	4474.55
Maude Barlow event (profit)	220.93
Jarmo concert	305.00
Garden project grant B.P.D.S.	400.00
Grocery tapes	161.20
Lottery	36.45
Donations: CNWMA	5000.00
Rotary Club	1000.00
Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Foundation	46.03
Don McIlraith	20.00
Organic Meadow	48.00
Bank interest	.20

The above entries are not a complete list of all 2010 income to date. They are shown to indicate items of major interest only.

Total income from all items in 2010 to date is \$14, 692.01.

EXPENSES

Donations: Bluewater Education Foundation (Astronomy Observatory)	1000.00
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Emma Thompson Ontario Youth Diversity Conference	125.00
University of Guelph Arboretum	200.00
B.P.DS. Outers – Jarmo concert	300.00
Memberships and Periodicals:	
Alternative Journal	59.90
CFRE	25.00
Great Lakes United	65.00
CONE	120.00
CAPE	50.00
EFAO –Farmers Association 3 years	135.00
Seeds of Diversity 3 years	110.00
Canadian Organic Growers (COG) 3 years and books	157.90
Garden Projects (seed)	41.50
Guelph Organic Conference – table	255.66
Website – Rick Roman	109.40
Maude Barlow Event	11,648.79
Speakers' mugs	244.08
Book purchases	107.94
Supplies/membership	103.69
Bank fees	13.50
P.O. box	128.10
Postage	54.00
Misc.	47.84

The above entries are not a complete list of all 2010 expenses to date.
They are shown to indicate items of major interest only.

Total expenses from all items in 2010 to date are \$15,102.30

The 2010 balance to date is (- \$410.29)

In 2010 to date, BPEG spent \$410.29 more than it took in. This is probably not significant given a book balance of \$ 3,971.78. If this trend were to continue, it will significantly reduce BPEG's opportunities to perform as it wishes and larger project donations as well as ongoing endeavours will be curtailed. Therefore, income needs to improve if we spend at our present level.

Our memberships, without getting picky, are the foundation to date of our income and are at present in arrears to the tune of about \$930.00.

Therefore, when members are asked to pay their dues, keep in mind what your organization does for your community, and help those who work hard for BPEG by paying your dues on time when requested. There are some families who also are paying one individual membership rather than a family membership. We don't want our club to become the B.P. Entertainment Group, do we? Sending out further reminders and telephone calls to delinquent members is expensive and very time consuming to the membership committee. So, we encourage you to be a member in good standing and contribute to your club with your efforts, thoughts, and your money. Raising dues should not be necessary.

I have served BPEG as Treasurer since December 2007, succeeding Danielle Griebisch and now it is time to move on to other things. I think our group is in sound shape financially and that we are reasonably well poised to continue on our environmental path. We are an important body in our community due to all our efforts. I'm certain this will be enlarged in time as new projects pop up.

I wish your new Treasurer and Board my very best and will act as a back-up to the new Treasurer for a year and will serve on your board. I have sincerely appreciated the opportunity you have given me in trust and support through the last three years. I wish particularly to mention my gratitude to Tony Barton who has always been there to answer a question on policy or otherwise and for his wonderful energy and ideas contributed selflessly; to Carol Longworth who has been there for us all when I could not be, and to Paul Conway who has annually reviewed our books with a very business like eye and for no fee.

Thank you all,

Tim Spencer