

Nuclear Responsibility Emphasized in Meeting with Driftwood

Dr. Gordon Edwards, president and co-founder of Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, travelled to Ignace last Saturday to meet with Driftwood staff. He had given presentations the previous day at Lakehead University on Ontario's Nuclear Legacy and to high schools via web stream on nuclear technology and the nuclear industry in Canada.

He was accompanied by fellow scientist Robert Del Tredici and Kerstin Muth. Both men are from Montreal, while Kerstin is from Thunder Bay.

(The Lakehead University presentation by Gordon and Robert can be viewed at

<http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/6231044>)

Dr. Edwards first contacted Driftwood last fall following coverage of the participation of Ignace representatives in the "Learn More" program sponsored by the Nuclear Waste Management Organization which entailed visits to the organization's Toronto offices, nuclear generation and nuclear waste facilities.

In the two hour meeting, Dr. Edwards talked about a number of things including types of radiation and the difficulties of their detection, the current and future storage of nuclear waste, and the idea of not storing nuclear waste immediately but reprocessing it to obtain the small amounts of plutonium which - once uranium supplies are depleted - will be used for nuclear generation. He noted that there currently no nuclear waste depositories anywhere in the world. He also stated that nuclear generation is a dangerous technology but is touted by the nuclear industry as being safe.

(At last week's breakfast get-together of business people and Council, Editor Dennis Smyk extended an invitation for Municipal representation at this meeting. There was no interest.)

Nuclear Waste Disposal: Guaranteed jobs for 250,000 years

The following Commentary by Julie Boan, President of Environment North in Thunder Bay, appeared in The Chronicle Journal of April 15th and is reprinted with her permission.

Most people can appreciate why the Town of Ignace is investigating the economic opportunity associated with becoming a repository for nuclear waste. Times are tough in northern Ontario. The forest industry decline and subsequent mill closures and job losses have left many forestry-dependent communities looking for economic alternatives. And the fact is Canada has nowhere to put the 35,000 tons (2 million used uranium fuel bundles) of nuclear waste we have generated. For more than 30 years, the Federal Government has been eyeing the relatively stable geology of the Canadian Shield as a prime candidate. And for 30 years, the debate has ebbed and flowed.

One might feel that the resolution of the nuclear waste disposal issue has been delayed by design. For seniors, Baby Boomers and Gen X-ers, the disasters at Chernobyl and Three Mile Island are ingrained in our collective memory. When it comes to nuclear, we are cautious and skeptical. However, younger generations, confronted with the reality of carbon emissions and climate change, are facing different and increasingly complicated challenges. It seems that apprehension regarding nuclear fuel and its waste is being lost.

Federal spending has played a significant role in building tolerance and resignation in public opinion. According to Dr. Gordon Edwards, President of the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, the Government of Canada has spent 17 billion

taxpayer's dollars promoting nuclear power. Essentially, Canadians have been paying to have ourselves "educated" to support one perspective - a perspective advanced by those who economically benefit from nuclear power generation and a government that has found it nearly impossible to backtrack on short-sighted decisions that have already cost billions of dollars, with billions more in public spending earmarked. However, in spite of attempts to reinvent itself, the facts haven't changed. Nuclear power remains neither environmentally nor financially responsible.

Increased cancer incidence and genetic disorders are among the risks to human health associated with exposure to radiation. In addition, despite Nuclear Waste Management Organization's (NWMO) claims to the contrary, critics, such as Dr. Edwards, argue that the physical, chemical and radiological characteristics of hazards associated with used nuclear fuel are not well-understood. There are 211 radioactive poisons found in a 10-year-old bundle of irradiated nuclear fuel. Only slightly younger than the vintage of waste that northerners could expect to have shipped through our backyard should it be deposited in northwestern Ontario.

The waste is stored in copper and steel containers designed to last more than 100,000 years, on the nuclear industry's assumption that the metal will not fatigue. Based on humanity's poor track record of building things that last, the claim seems irresponsibly arrogant. In addition, penetrating radiation continues to emit from undamaged containers. Based on the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's exposure limits, a person would receive the equivalent of one chest x-ray for each hour of exposure to an undamaged cask

while in transport. Obviously, there is substantial legislation overseeing the transportation of nuclear waste, both through the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act and the Nuclear Safety Control Act. Fortunately, there has never been an accident associated with the shipment of used fuel resulting in significant radiological impact; in Canada, there have been over 500 shipments, thousands globally. So far, so good.

However, without a plan to actually phase out nuclear power generation, the wasted fuel shipments will be unrelenting. Based on a projected fuel inventory of 3.6 million fuel bundles, northern communities could expect 53 shipments per month for 30 years. The deep geologic facility will not be sealed until the final shipment has been stowed, a process which could take decades... or longer if Ontario and Canada do not actually phase out nuclear energy. Some advocate that keeping the waste on or near existing nuclear facilities is more responsible in terms of long-term monitoring and transportation costs, including potential environmental and security risks.

Northern communities will be making decisions for generations far into the future, so far into the future it is beyond our comprehension. Nuclear waste remains dangerous for more than 250,000 years. It must be guarded in perpetuity, as there is no known method to

destroy it or make it harmless. Do we have the right to burden future generations with this responsibility? Do we have the right to continue the development of an industry that mass-produces persistent, indestructible, highly toxic, carcinogenic materials? Dr. Edwards says no.

It is time for a public process to determine the future role of nuclear energy. A careful examination is required of the full life-cycle of nuclear energy from mining to managing all the waste and comparing the cost and benefits, environmentally, socially and financially, to other energy mix options.

(<http://www.environmentnorth.ca>)

About Nuclear Waste Management Organization

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) was established in 2002 in accordance with the Nuclear Fuel Waste Act to assume responsibility for long-term management of Canada's used nuclear fuel. The selected approach for the long-term management of used fuel is Adaptive Phased Management. Another major project for the NWMO is seeking regulatory approval, on behalf of Ontario Power Generation, for the construction of a Deep Geologic Repository (DGR) for the long-term management of its low and intermediate level waste.

(http://www.nwmo.ca/home?language=en_CA)

About Dr. Edwards
Gordon Edwards was born in Canada in 1940, and graduated from the University of Toronto in 1961 with a gold medal in Mathematics and Physics and a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship. In 1972, he obtained a Ph.D. in Mathematics from Queen's University. From 1970 to 1974, he was the editor of Survival magazine and in 1975 he co-founded the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, and has been its president since 1978. Edwards has worked widely as a consultant on nuclear issues and has been qualified as a nuclear expert by courts in Canada and elsewhere.

Dr. Edwards has written articles and reports on radiation standards, radioactive wastes, uranium mining, nuclear proliferation, the economics of nuclear power, non-nuclear energy strategies. He has been featured on radio and television programs including David Suzuki's *The Nature of Things*, Pierre Berton's *The Great Debate*, and many others. He has worked as consultant for governmental bodies such as the Auditor General of Canada, the Select Committee on Ontario Hydro Affairs, and the Ontario Royal Commission on Electric Power Planning. In 2006, Edwards received the Nuclear-Free Future Award. He is a teacher of mathematics at Vanier College in Montreal.

O.P.P. March Briefs

On the 4th of March 2010, at approximately 11:15 a.m., members of the Ignace Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) located drug paraphernalia used to smoke marijuana in the trails located directly across from the Ignace School.

This was the second incident of this nature in less than a week in the same location. The youths involved were dealt with by the school.

On the 5th of March 2010, Ignace OPP received a complaint about a dangerous driver. Officers located the vehicle on Highway

17 traveling 168 km/hr in a posted 90 km/hr zone.

Police also located a quantity of MDMA ecstasy and steroids.

The driver, 23 year old Jerry McGuire of Kingsville, ON was subsequently charged with Possession of a Controlled Substance contrary to Section 4(1) of the Controlled Drugs and Substance Act. Mr. McGuire was further charged with Racing a Motor Vehicle and Speeding contrary to the Highway Traffic Act.

On the 18th of March 2010, Police received a call from an Ignace resident

about a possible phone scam. The resident had received a call from someone claiming to be from Bell Canada advising that they would be sent a new cellular phone with an affordable plan and all they had to provide was their name, date of birth and Social Insurance Number. After never having received a new phone, Bell Canada was contacted and the resident was advised that this was a scam.

The public should be reminded not to give out personal information over the phone and if you do suspect a phone scam, call Phone Busters at 1-888-495-8501.



Following his presentation, Matt speaks with guests.

Hitchhiking Author and Photographer Visits Ignace

Matt Jackson is a magazine writer, photojournalist and professional speaker specializing in travel, adventure, science, conservation, and human interest stories. The Friends of Ignace Public Library brought him to Ignace last week where he did a multi-media presentation.

In April 1997, Matt Jackson quit his job, strode to the edge of the Trans-Canada Highway near Lake Louise, Alberta, and began the journey of a lifetime. His plan? To spend several months hitchhiking across Canada, meeting Canadians from every walk of life and experiencing firsthand our country's breathtaking landscape. The trip was supposed to take three months - maybe four, tops. It ended three-and-a-half years later! In Ignace he spoke about many of his adventures from this journey, and the resulting book, "The Canada Chronicles" is an extremely interesting read. Look for it in bookstores or borrow it from Ignace Public Library, which also has other books he has published.