



**Green Goderich
General Meeting Recap
January 15, 2019**

Welcome: Betty welcomed all and thanked everyone for coming. She read the words used by Lakeshore United to acknowledge the First Nations of this area.

Inspirational Story or Quote: Betty shared a wonderful quote by George Monbiot: “We don’t have to look far to see where meaning and purpose might lie. The highest purpose of everyone alive today is to bequeath a habitable world to our descendants. This is easily stated, less easily done. It means questioning every assumption about our lives, challenging every practice, every industry, every dream and desire. Nothing from now on is easy. We must step up as we have never done before. This is the age of the everyday hero.”

EAC (Environmental Action Committee) Update from Beth Ross

The following are only the key points from her recap:

- The Town of Goderich has passed and signed a Climate Emergency Declaration
- The decision means Goderich joins more than 1000 other municipalities around the world that have declared a climate emergency
- Under the declaration, the town will work with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI Canada) to create and set goals to tackle climate change over the next few years
- The EAC provides recommendations, advice and information to the Town regarding climate change and other environmental issues and aid in the decision-making process
- For more information visit the Town of Goderich website, under the Environment tab

First Guest Speaker: Brian McCulloch

Brian grew up in Ireland on his family farm. He received a Mechanical Engineering degree in 1983 and worked in many areas in that field. Currently he is on the board for the Maitland Trail Association and is also a Trail Ranger Coordinator for that association.

The following are only some of the key points from his presentation:

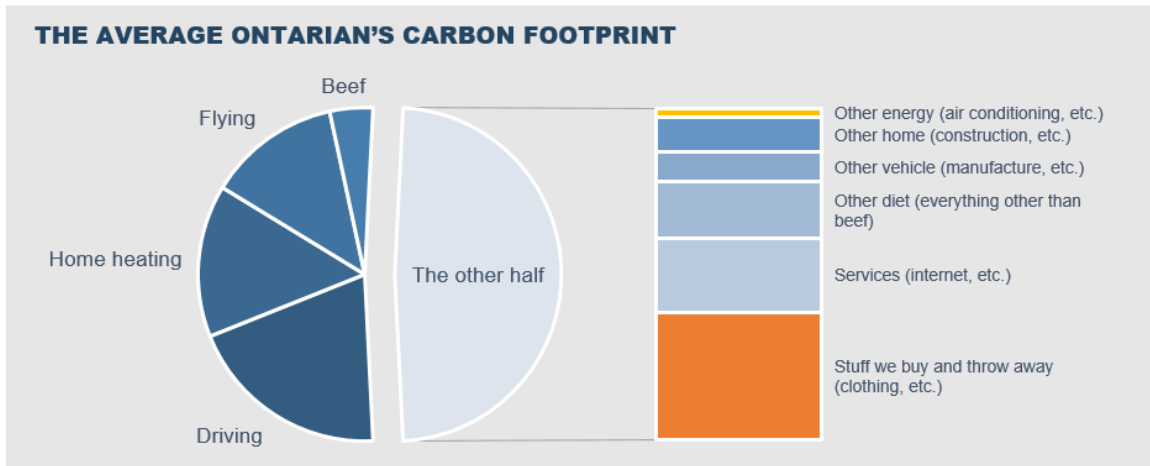
CO₂ is Essential but with Limits!

- We cannot exist without CO₂, plants and all life need it to exist, the planet would be -18 degrees without it. However, the levels we are experiencing now we have not seen in 3 million years. UN estimate an increase of 3.2 degrees by 2100. The collapse of civilization is on the horizon. Sir David Attenborough states “the world is facing it’s greatest threat in thousands of years”.
- CO₂ affects our oceans ... oceans are like sponges for CO₂. The oceans’ acidity has increased by 26%. We are destroying the coral reefs and shellfish!

Greenhouse Gases (GHG)

- More than just carbon dioxide – (fossil fuel and industrial processes) (65%) is warming the universe
- Methane: 16% (cattle have 4 stomachs and release methane gas, permafrost is another source of methane gas)

- Carbon Dioxide: 11% (forestry and other land use)
- Nitrous Oxide: 6%



Sweden's climate is similar to Canada. Canada's emissions have increased 26% from 1996 – 2016. Sweden's emissions were reduced by 72% during the same time period! We MUST reduce our carbon emissions by 7% annually until 2050!

What Can We Do – The Road to Reduce Our Carbon Foot Print

- Track your utility bills – be aware and strive to reduce your carbon footprint
- Purchase modest homes
- Types of energy have varying levels of carbon content (natural gas is a good alternative with coal being the worst, nuclear, wind power and hydro are best as far as emissions)
- A closer distance from our home to our work can decrease our travel emissions
- Replace appliances with new high efficiency models
- Change lights to LED
- Purchase electric or hybrid vehicles (electric bill may increase but less carbon emissions for travel)
- Purchase smaller vehicles (car versus truck)
- Fly less (also note: Choosing newer models of planes, flying in warmer months and taking shorter flights will lower your carbon footprint)
- Eat less meat and more vegetables
- Drive less – walk and bike more
- Change our habits
 - a) Power off devices/equipment/lights etc when not using them
 - b) Make good material choices when purchasing clothing
 - c) Buy used versus new
 - d) Donate used items
 - e) Fix rather than replace
 - f) Purchase only what you need

Brian illustrated how we can measure and determine our own carbon footprint by using a manual worksheet. He has also provided an Excel version. Both will be posted on our website. The attendees were encouraged to calculate now and a year from now. Brian's is under 7Mt. Note there are online calculators on various websites, i.e. treecanada.ca and nature.org.

Notes from Questions:

When questioned about methane and its effects? Brian stated that methane was a small fraction of the total emissions compared to fossil fuel usage. Dr. G. Dawson stated that methane remains in the air for 30 years while CO₂ lasts for over 300 years.

Second Guest Speaker: Con Melady

Con is a Goderich resident with long-standing interest in lowering barriers to cycling as transportation and recreation. He has served in an advisory role to the Ontario by Bike industry panel and as a founder of the Huron County Cycling Advisory Committee. He is a supporter of the Share the Road Cycling Coalition, the G2G Trail and the Maitland Trail Association.

The following are only some of the key points from his presentation:

Ways to Reduce our Carbon Footprint and the Magnitude of the Benefits (Small to Large)

- **When We Eat** – (small) buy local and seasonal, (medium) avoid food waste, and (large) avoid beef consumption
- **When We Fly** – (small) reduce weight of luggage and (large) avoid first class and business travel, avoid night-time flights when possible and fly in warmer months
- **When We Heat** – (medium) insulate home, seal leaks, upgrade to higher efficiency furnace and lower thermostat and (large) downsize or share home and switch to renewable, natural gas, wood or electric heating
- **If We Choose to Drive** – (small) park vehicle in shade in hot weather and stop idling, (medium) avoid speeding, properly inflate tires, reduce use of air conditioner, choose high efficiency vehicle and (large) choose zero emission vehicle, walk/bike/take public transit and move closer to workplace. Con stressed that before you get into your car stop and ask yourself “could I walk there?” Con also pointed out that the town is basically 4km from one of end of town to the other end – that is bikeable in twenty minutes!

Cycling is a Great Option!

- a) **Be Prepared**
 - Have your bike “handy”, not in the back of your shed
 - Ensure your gear and equipment are in good condition (i.e. LED lights, rack and properly inflated tires)
- b) **Be Able** (physical strength and mental alertness)
- c) **Be Confident** (know the rules and best practices – Con suggested one simple practice that should be mastered is being able to look over your shoulder while keeping your bike straight (without turning))

We Need a Safe Place to Cycle

We are not alone ... we have partners!

The Town of Goderich

- The Courthouse Square is a great intermodal space
- We have a newly formed EAC whose terms of reference are consistent with the Goderich Active Transportation Committee (2015-2018)
- The Town of Goderich just signed a Climate Emergency Declaration!
- Wish list items: A cycling route and “complete streets”

County Level – the county has a Huron County Cycling Committee

Provincial Level – the province has the Share the Road Cycling Coalition and Ontario by Bike

Con encouraged all of us to lead by example ... we are the agents for change! He also encouraged us to view Mark Carney's speech from 2015 which can be found online.

Con certainly walks the talk or in this case “bikes” the talk!

Mark on your calendars for March 12th – there will be a Share the Road Cycling Symposium in Blyth!

Next Green Goderich Meeting: March 10 @ 7:00 pm – Lakeshore United Church