

Photo by Chris Vondruska - Triangulum Galaxy

vortex

C-Dar Biodynamic Society Newsletter



C-DAR
BIODYNAMIC
SOCIETY

Winter 2011/2012

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vortex

C-Dar Biodynamic Society Newsletter

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EDITORIAL NOTE

The information provided in this magazine is for educational and informational purposes only.

The views expressed here are not necessarily those held by the C-Dar Biodynamic Society.

Free classifieds should be sent to Eva Lorena Perez at elorenaperez@gmail.com.

FROM THE EDITOR

Winter solstice will soon be upon us and it marks a wonderfully reflective time of the year. Occurring precisely when the axial tilt of the Earth's polar hemisphere is farthest away from the star that it orbits, the Sun, winter solstice transpires on the shortest day and longest night of the year, when the sun's daily maximum elevation in the sky is the lowest.

The seasonal significance of the winter solstice is in the reversal of the lengthening of nights and shortening of days. Depending on the shift of the calendar, the winter solstice usually occurs on December

21 or 22 each year in the Northern Hemisphere.

Worldwide interpretation of the event has varied from culture to culture, but most have held a recognition of rebirth, involving festivals, rituals and other celebrations around winter solstice.

Whatever your religious beliefs, may your winter solstice be one of renewal and reflection on the past year and fresh perspectives towards another enchanting new year ahead.

DAWN GREEN
EDITOR

Events Calendar

Free Biodynamic Talks

C-Dar Farm, Paradise Valley
5071 Paradise Valley Road, Squamish

MONDAYS

Lead instructor Ferdinand Vondruska has more than 30 years experience studying, teaching and practicing biodynamics. Ferdinand studied Biodynamic Farming and Waldorf Education at Emerson College with Dr. Herbert Koepf, a world renowned leader in the biodynamic field. He has instructed courses in Mexico, USA, Finland and other countries worldwide. His extensive work with communities in Mexico led to an invitation to teach a credit course at the University of Mexico in October 2009. Through his experiences around the globe he has learned how biodynamic methods can restore polluted and exhausted soils in almost any geographical region.

10 – 11:30 am

Agriculture Study Group

WEDNESDAYS

This group, consisting of farmers, gardeners, foresters and people interested in the biodynamic farming and gardening methods is meeting on a weekly basis. Many topics will be discussed based on Dr. Rudolf Steiner's Agriculture Course. Anybody may join. Free of charge. Contact: Ferdinand Vondruska to RSVP.

7 – 8:30 pm

New Space for Philip's initiative

by Ferdinand Vondruska
CEO, C-Dar Biodynamic Society

While Philip Harmon was participating in the Fall Biodynamic Course, he indicated that he would be visiting us more often if we had a space from where he, spiritually, could work from. Many years ago a chapel was established in the basement of C-Dar Lodge which, to a certain extent, had some similarity with the catacombs of the first Christians in Rome. For several years wonderful studies were held there such as the SEVEN I AMs (Christ: I am the path, I am the gate, I am the good shepherd, etc.) to which Dr. Rudolf Steiner referred to

in his lectures.

However, Philip felt that this new initiative needed its own space. In a recent discussion, we looked at the possibility of establishing a chapel dedicated to any creed (Buddhism, Christianity, Shinto, Zoroastrian and so forth) serving people visiting C-Dar Lodge. Philip indicated that a number of people he knows would be interested in joining him, further attracting those who are interested in the reviving process of nature.

The area under consideration is close to the Forest Field and easily accessible

from the road to the Gatehouse. A parking area already exists. Philip made it clear that the chapel would certainly not be fancy and would, at most, have a wooden stove but no hydro nor running water. Two small rooms may be available for those who wanted to stay there for a longer period of time. Such a small chapel would be built with local material (cedar, hemlock, etc.) and will, quite naturally, involve a dialogue with the First Nations with whom Philip has close contacts in Hawaii and B.C. ☸

Reverberations from the Biodynamic Fall Course at C-Dar Lodge

Compiled by: Dawn Green

The Fall course of 2011 occurred during the week of October 3 to 9 under a dramatic mix of rainy and clear skies, with course participants hailing from Hawaii, Italy, Switzerland, the U.S., Mexico and from within Canada - Toronto, Vancouver Island and also from Paradise Valley - making up a total of 25 participants.

Instructor Lloyd Nelson offered his views on the course:

"It's an incredible inspiration to be here, to be a part of this biodynamic course, and making preparations," he said. "To be at a place like this where, biodynamics have been practiced for so long and the biodynamic energies are extremely strong and vital. I've been to many, many biodynamic farms and I feel that here, there's an intense connection with the biodynamic work. The preparation work alone here has really permeated the landscape - in the trees, in the forest, in the wind and the earth, you can feel that it's incredibly alive. It's really an honour to be here."

Nelson said one of the highlights of the course was the amazing community and the people. "Everybody brings knowledge from

a different aspect - it's incredible to feel all of our paths uniting for this short period of time," he said.

What are people taking from this course? "I think people are taking an inspiration to continue the biodynamic work in a renewed way and the message is clear - the Earth needs this now more than ever and we are very few souls who are doing this work, so we have many challenges to face once we leave this biodynamic bubble."

Nelson was delighted to have the opportunity to work with Ferdinand, saying that he brings an immense enthusiasm to the teachings.

"It is so incredible to experience his farm and his life that he has created here and all the people who come here," Nelson said.

Instructor Philip Harmon has been a presenter for more than 20 years and said he loves teaching at the biodynamic courses at C-Dar Lodge.

"There are so many wonderful friends here," Harmon said. "I get to meet young women and men who are starting their lives with great gusto for biodynamic farming and with a deep appreciation for the Earth." ☸



Photo by SIMON GREEN
(Left) Instructor Lloyd Nelson prepares the cow intestines alongside Ferdinand Vondruska (right) - a component of the preparation making process in the fall course.



Chamomile, Yarrow and Dandelion Preparations

by Ferdinand Vondruska
CEO, C-Dar Biodynamic Society

Photos by DAWN GREEN

Glimpses of the assembly stages for creating the chamomile, yarrow and dandelion preparations

Although Dr. Steiner did not explicitly mention that the dandelion and chamomile preparations ought to be hung up before they go into the ground, he pointed out that yarrow must be suspended for a good time until it can be interred.

Now, many a controversy has arisen since then. Upon some research into his handwritten lecture notes, it was realized that dandelion and chamomile must be exposed to the light and air as well.

I've been making these preparations for tens of years and I am, still, confronted by a variety of questions - not so much by myself but by people who may not have looked into the background of preparation-making.

The time of slaughtering farm animals occurs, in all the hundred year traditions I have studied and for the past 50 to 60 years have personally observed, in the fall months (September to early November). Never does a farmer slaughter animals in the spring or in the summer, for a variety of reasons:

In the fall, the farmer decides how many animals he can carry through the winter by the amount of hay, grain and other feed he has collected during the summer/fall months. It would be a rather unwise farmer who keeps animals throughout the winter to have them slaughtered in the spring. In the spring, he takes his animals to the fields and the mother animals will give birth to the young. Calves and heifers go through a fattening process and will be slaughtered in the fall.

A farmer who has to slaughter animals in the spring must have run into feed challenges or animal illness. Summer is the worst time to slaughter as there are far too many bacteria and flies to infest the meat. Only in modern times have we started to kill animals throughout the year in slaughterhouses where 180,000 cows are being killed on a daily basis.

Only fall slaughtering provides us with the bacteria (for the preparations) that we need for the rejuvenation of the soil. The fall animal produces the very best

milk and other bacteria as they've been grazing outside. Spring animals are often weak and in need of good fodder.

Now, hanging our Preparations (503 - Chamomile and 506 - Dandelion) in the sun (September to November) can be readily understood. The sun is mild, the process inside the long intestine and mesentery is not disturbed by high temperatures or flies. If the small intestine (with the chamomile inside) and the mesentery (with the dandelion inside) is done in the fall, you have the proper environment where the very best fungi and enzymes can develop.

Remember: Mushrooms and fungi as for: darkness, humidity and warmth.

And that is exactly what we must provide. Anybody who has checked his preparation-making processes has observed the wonderful colours that envelop the various intestines (deer bladder, mesentery, long intestine). If you expose the intestines to the hot summer sun, you will physically cook their content. ☀

A letter from course participant Francesco Bruzzone

What I think of the course is that it is just fantastic. There's a great atmosphere, a great spirituality and everybody has big interest and lots of joy for every activity or lecture.

I am here as a WWOOFer, I am only 19 and just came out of an Italian scientific high school, even though I have strong connections with Waldorf schools and with Steiner's philosophy. All this means I had no expectations from the course, no idea of what was going to happen.

Before reading the program, I expected it to be a lot more practical - it's always hard to imagine a group of well-aged

farmers sitting in a circle listening to teachers for hours.

But then it turned out to be much better! We don't only have farmers here, but also scientists and other personalities that really helped me understand the "soul" of biodynamics, its principles and rules, its origins, its actual diffusion around the world.

I also realized why all these talks and presentations are necessary: you need to know exactly what you're doing on the field, but not only that - you also need to know why you are doing it.

I figured out that my troubles in fully and deeply understanding all the connections with the divine,

with the spiritual world, are probably caused by my young age and most likely also by the scientific and rational aspects that have always been prevailing in me. I'm sure that time and reasoning will help understanding more, but for now I'm already happy and grateful that Ferdinand, Dr. Jorge Rodriguez, Lloyd Nelson, Ulrich Wittorf and all the other teachers could explain the relationship between agriculture and the cosmos, between the cosmos and our food, between our food and our body, between us and the world. ☼

Francesco Bruzzone
Turin, Italy



Photo by SIMON GREEN
Turning over the compost pile – participants embracing the hands-on aspects to the biodynamic course

Winter Seeding at C-Dar Farm

by Ferdinand Vondruska
CEO, C-Dar Biodynamic Society

Dr. Steiner indicated in many of his lectures that the time between December 24 until January 6 is very special and he made clear that then 'the cosmos passes through a time of deep calm and inward silence'. For that reason, our very own meditative activities can influence, shape and heal what surrounds us and, of course, bring about great changes in ourselves. He further pointed out that seeds, when touching the soil, go into chaos, into which cosmic forces enter and organize the seed with new impulses. However, with the time from December 24 to January 6 being a quiet cosmic time, he asks that 'we step forward' and 'send organizing impulses' to the seed (in chaos).

Cosmic messages that organize the seed(s) have to do with the archetypal plant that 'resides' high above us. Each and every plant is connected with its 'mother plant' from where it will receive, receives and received guidance in its growth and collaboration with other plants.

Chemically-treated soil makes it increasingly difficult for plants to receive such cosmic guidance, therefore resulting in deformations, weaknesses and a loss in fertility.

Crop research companies know quite well that our seeds are no longer the same as even a few years back. Monsanto, as an example, is concerned that seeds may stop reproducing

altogether and is spending millions in order to develop seeds that are healthy, in a rather materialistic way. Gene manipulation, therefore, comes to mind yet will not be a solution in the long run. If one takes a materialistic approach, it is quite natural that one looks for all causes of plant illnesses and diseases inside the plant, i.e. the seed. If, however, one expands one's vision somewhat, one will understand rather quickly, that the solution cannot lie in the seed itself but rather outside our planet: Earth. Stars, planets and the moon have influenced our earthly life for millions of years. The influence of our moon onto the water is well known; high and low tides are only small signals that reach each and every seed. Incidentally, the moon is the grantor of soil, plant, animal and human fertility.

Neglecting the moon may cause food shortages of enormous consequences. Not a single fertilizer nor any gene or crop manipulation can change this fact. There are often short term gains (with certain fertilizers and other seed manipulations) that may make some of us believe that all is well. Yet, a few years later, the same problems (seed degenerations, plant diseases) are back with a vengeance caused by misguided materialistic approaches.

If we are prepared to follow Steiner's indications, we can redesign our entire plant world, in such a way that it comes about in a dialogue with the archetypal plant.

During the 12 holy nights, as we may also call them (December 24 to January 6), the gardener, the farmer and the forester may 'sit down' with his crops (the seeds that he/she has laid aside for the coming year) and enter a wonderful discussion of what she would like them to become. And, in return, she will listen to the seeds of what they wish to become and what they have to say.

Plants that we eat are not only foodstuff to fill our stomach but, much more, our medicine. So, if the seed that we have a conversation with has an important message to convey, the 12 holy nights are ideal for such listening.

We have spoken to chestnut tree seedlings on several such occasions and we've greeted them by listening to Lao-Tse while reciting to them Ralph Waldo Emerson, a spiritual light house for the American continent. This procedure has nothing to do with increasing crop quantities but with helping the new tree seedlings to arrive well on this continent. In future years we hope to speak to the off-springs of these trees and we will ask them for their suggestions of what we may do for them, so that they can produce the best and the most wholesome food.

Such are the dialogues during Christmas, New Year and Three Kings at C-Dar Farm. A wonderful website for further information is: <http://www.hera-ev.de/>.





by Dawn Green

Photo by DAWN GREEN
(Left) Rob Meaney and (right) Francesco Bruzzone with the exuberant Icicle, one of the dogs at C-Dar Farm

Interview with C-Dar Lodge WWOOFers (World Wide Opportunities

on Organic Farms)

C-Dar Lodge has been a proud host of WWOOFers for more than 15 years and these working visitors hail from all parts of the globe. Francesco Bruzzone and Rob Meaney entered the WWOOFing community on the farm at the end of September 2011. We asked them to share their perspectives on WWOOFing on C-Dar Farm.

Vortex – Where are you from?

Francesco – I am from the north west of Italy, from Turin, the site of previous Winter Olympic Games.

Vortex - What was your reason for coming to C Dar Farm, how did it all happen?

Francesco – I was attending the Vancouver Waldorf School for six months and while there, I asked about WWOOFing and they recommended that I come here.

Vortex – Have you been a WWOOFer before?

Francesco – No, this is my first time.

Vortex - What do you like about being at C-Dar farm as a WWOOFer?

Francesco – It's a great place and the learning is important. You learn about daily farm life and also biodynamics. It's a bigger look at the outdoors and nature – it's an untouched environment here in the valley.

Rob Meaney

Vortex – How did you end up WWOOFing

here at C-Dar Farm?

Rob – I heard about the program through a friend. I am originally from Toronto, Canada and I told her I was travelling and looking for something to do and she suggested I consider WWOOFing.

Vortex – What does it mean to you to be a WWOOFer here on the farm?

Rob – I think it's a great opportunity not only to experience life on the farm, but to get something to sustain me while travelling. WWOOFing is great for people who are travelling.

Vortex – What do you think about biodynamics?

Rob – When I first wrote a letter to Ferdinand, asking about the WWOOFing program, I did some research and read a couple of books on biodynamics before coming here. I find it all very interesting. I have my own spiritual beliefs which may not necessarily line up with biodynamics, yet it's awesome how it can all be incorporated into farming. I love the way preparations restore and revitalise the soil. It's definitely going to be important in maintaining our planet's health – that's what biodynamics is so interesting.

Vortex – What else do you like about living here?

Rob – I like the way Ferdinand looks at us as students, not just as workers. It makes it more personal. 🌱

Star chart

by Ferdinand Vondruska
Chief Executive Director

In a quiet corner of my office you will find the JAHRES SIGNATUR KARTE (Star Signature chart of the year or Planet Chart) displaying a wonderful array of colours: peach blossom, red, blue and yellow. On somewhat interwoven circles you can recognize the paths of the planets such as Uranus, Pluto, Neptune, Earth, the Sun, Moon, Venus, Saturn, Mercury, Jupiter and Mars.

The four colours indicate: red = warmth (ether), yellow = light (ether), blue = tone (ether) and peach blossom = life (ether). Each colour, therefore, represents specific ether, streaming in, from the far reaches of the cosmos. Each colour includes three zodiac signs. For red: Lion, Sagittarius, Aries. For blue: Libra, Pisces and, of course Cancer. For Yellow: Gemini, Scorpio and Aquarius, and for the colour peach: Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn.

Now, what does this all mean?

Lately, we had all the planets in

houses such as: red and peach blossom. Few could be found in any blue signs or yellow (light). Well, what comes to mind with the light/air? Storms.

And with red? To a certain extent: heat. But when heat is prevalent, we have a lot of condensation which is followed by enormous monsoon rains. Of course, red and heat go together - it could also mean drought.

And blue? Water. At the same time, water can cool down or drown the crops or cause the growth of fungi, mushrooms and the like. Peach blossom, in general, is a helpful, but also emotional cosmic 'area'.

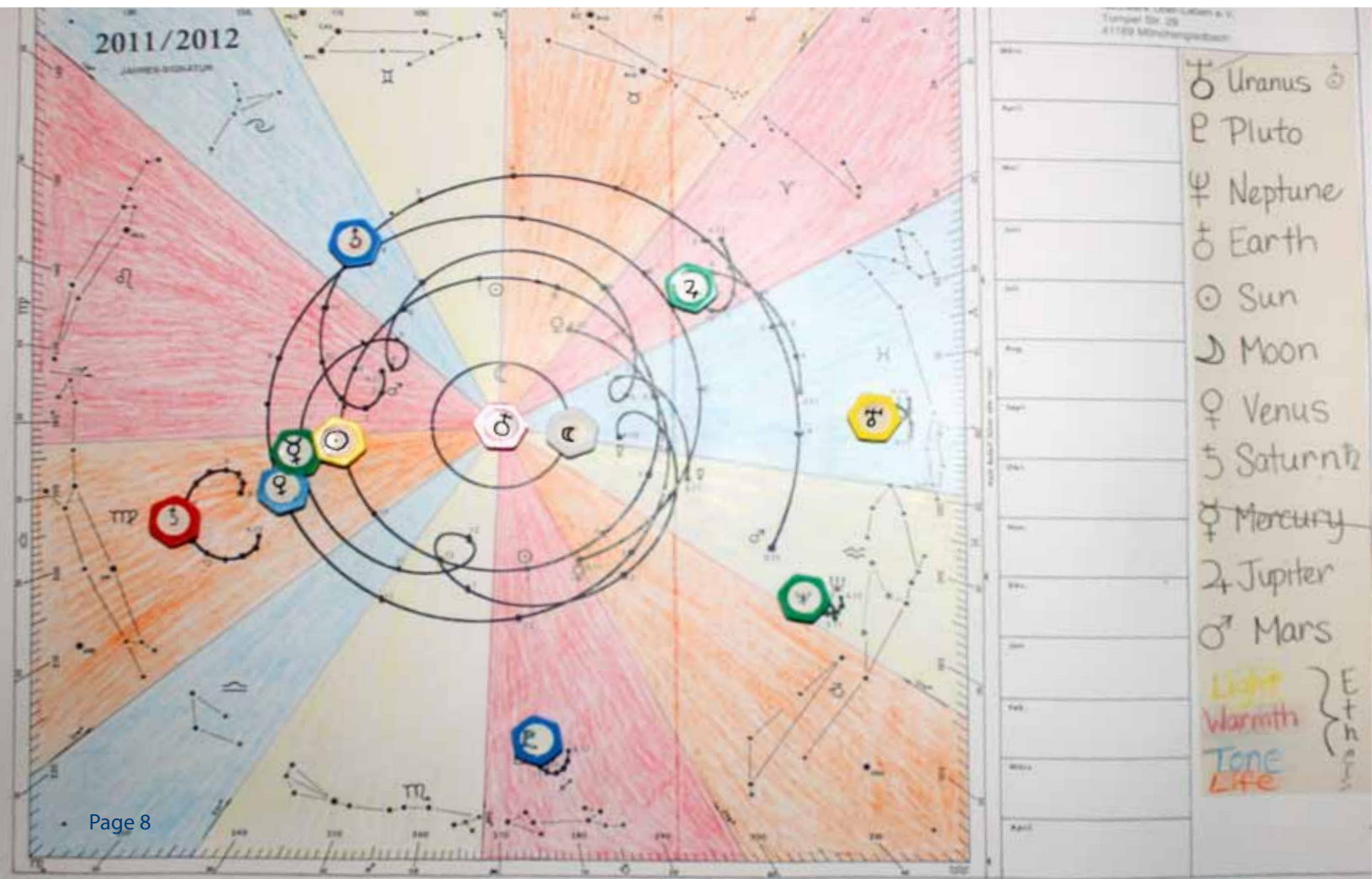
As an example: Venus in Taurus = a very much transformed and soothing feeling streaming in from the cosmos. Whereas Mars in Taurus can greatly engage the emotions and cause havoc with the weather for longer periods of time.

Mind you, we can only indicate certain trends in this short introduction. Visit us here at C-Dar or, if you have

studied this chart (issued by Netzwerk Ueber-Leben e.V. Tomper Str. 29, 41169 Moenchengladbach), come and let us know what you have figured out. We are, at present, at the threshold of a new science; a science that works with daily observations of the cosmos, the stars and the Earth.

It was only 100 years ago that most scientists laughed about the influence of the moon onto the Earth. Well, haven't we learned a lot since? The moon influences the surface of the Earth by shifting billions of gallons of water into high and low tides. Well, what do you think that Mars may do? Or Venus? Take a guess! They all influence the plants and our life. Since about 1925 we are able to say (with the help of Dr. Rudolf Steiner), that each and every planet influences the growth of each and every plant (and is thoroughly connected with it).

For further information, please contact Netzwerk or email bioman@telus.net. ☼



Smart meters' health effects questioned

Paradise Valley resident part of backlash against B.C. Hydro plan for new technology

by Dawn Green
Special to The Chief

Published in The Chief newspaper on September 23, 2011

Umbrella in hand, clad in a big jacket and rain boots, Paradise Valley resident Ferdinand Vondruska leads the way to the side of his sprawling home, unlatches a wooden door and opens it. Inside, quietly humming away, are five hydro meters. Four others are situated at his stable and hall. But Vondruska is adamant that B.C. Hydro's plan to install smart meters is not such a smart idea.

"My secretary is working here, and the smart meters will be exactly behind her work place," he said, gesturing toward the wall. "She's going to be affected by the power bursts at least every hour."

Similarly, a kindergarten student's or a baby's room could be located in close proximity to smart meters, he added.

According to B.C. Hydro's website, "smart meters are digital meters that can capture and record the amount of power that is consumed or produced and when."

But advocacy groups across North America are up in arms, claiming that smart meter radiation is a Class 2B carcinogen, that they are responsible for a number of structure fires, and that they record every detail of your power usage — data that can be shared with law enforcement officials and other corporations in violation of citizens' right to privacy.

Vondruska says his main gripe is with what the smart meters release. "It releases 100 times stronger energy jolt than the cell phone," he said.

He is troubled by the effects of these "jolts" on human health.

"We have reached, in my opinion, a saturation point of electrical interference — it's from everywhere," Vondruska said, "from radio stations, radar stations, from the cars we drive."

Gary Murphy, B.C. Hydro's chief project officer for the smart meter program, says there's a lot of misinformation being spread about the program.

"Our meters are less than 0.5 per cent... of the Health Canada safety standard relative to exposure to radio frequency," Murphy said. "In other words, if you stood

next to your smart meter for 20 years, you'd receive the same exposure as you would from a single 30-minute cell phone call."

As for the claim of constant transmitting of radio frequency, Murphy said, "Our meters only transmit less than one minute a day, to transmit usage data back to B.C. Hydro."

Smart meters are part of a system that will make the electricity grid more efficient, said Murphy, adding that the information will help customers monitor and manage their energy use.

"When people have that information, it's been proven over and over again, they begin to conserve energy because electrical energy is no longer a cheap commodity. It is, in fact, a precious natural resource and needs to be treated as such."

Nothing has changed with the smart meter program with regard to B.C. Hydro's obligation relative to the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act, Murphy said.

"The Act does not allow us to share any information without the customer's personal consent, unless it's governed by law," he said.

When asked about customers who do not wish to have a smart meter installed on their property, Murphy replied, "There is no opt-out policy for smart meters. At the end of the day, every customer in the province is going to get a smart meter."

"They can move that meter base to another part of their property if they feel for some reason that there is some concern... and that can be done at the customer's cost."

Squamish Coun. Patricia Heintzman, who also lives in the Paradise Valley, said that even though current scientific evidence on the potential health effects of electromagnetic fields is inconclusive, she has some sympathy with Vondruska's position.

"In theory, smart meters sound like a good idea," she said. "I personally would love to know more about my own consumption and be able to make decisions about when I consume energy

to save money, etc.

"Where I think the biggest concern is the apparent conflicting analysis of the possible health repercussions of radio/electromagnetic fields. Based on what I've read, the information is not conclusive and until it is, people should be given a choice to whether they have a smart meter attached to their house or not."

Vondruska, who runs a biodynamic farm, is in the business of making soil fungi, enzymes and micro-organisms. In addition to his concerns about the meters' effects on human health, he worries about the effects of the radio frequency exposure on the plants.

"I cannot make all this area secure against this interference, [from smart meters]," Vondruska said. "It's been at least a year since I heard about smart meters and I pay attention to this for obvious reasons because of our research with our soil life."

His concern extends to the microscopic bacteria that help the root growth of plants.

"When this bacteria is destroyed," he said, "it's serious. You have unhealthy people. Smart meters destroy such bacteria which are the sense organs of the Earth." 🌱



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May 10 to 13, 2012
Spring
Course

During this practical, hands-on course, with an emphasis on compost-making and the application of compost, we will unearth preparation 500 horn manure, 502 yarrow, 503 chamomile, 505 oak bark, 506 dandelion and B.C. barrel compost.

