

# Watt's Happening

Peace Energy Co-operative Newsletter

Summer, 2015

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**In this issue:** *new employees; new PEC solar installations; electric bikes and scooters; Co-operatives: the quiet revolution.*

## Feature Story



**I intend to develop a thriving and profitable business that extols the virtues of a co-operative – people first! ...**

## New employee will build sales



*Jennifer Eichelberger is now your co-operative's new Renewable Energy Consultant in charge of sales and client services.*

***Hello Co-op Members!***

My name is Jennifer Eichelberger and I'm pleased to say that I'm part of the Peace Energy Co-operative team. I recently accepted a position here for many reasons, some personal, some professional, but it was the people that ultimately persuaded me.

Over the years of work in various sectors, I've learned many things, again, some personal and others professional, but one thing always seems to be guiding my decisions: the culture of a workplace. I thoroughly enjoy working with passionate and dedicated visionaries and what better place to find such people than at a co-op that works toward an honourable endeavour: *Renewable Energy!*

Though my background is not specific to renewables, I am educated

in, and have always been passionate about, the environment. Solar is another wonderful avenue for me to pursue.

I intend to work with you, through the board, to develop a thriving and profitable business that extols the virtues of a co-operative – people first! – and continues to provide benefits to its members.

I hope when you are in Dawson Creek you'll stop by the Peace Energy office for a visit; I'd be very pleased to meet you.

Thank you for this opportunity and I look forward to building Peace Energy Co-operative with your best interests at heart. //

Sincerely,  
*Jennifer Eichelberger*

***"You must be the change you wish to see in the world."***

Mahatma Gandhi



Like us on Facebook and share this newsletter.

# Watt's Been Happening

Peace Energy Co-operative has focused on designing and supplying as many solar power systems as possible over the last year, and we have been having good success. Here are a few of the solar arrays we have installed for our customers, all feeding green electrons

into the BC grid. They were all designed and supplied by Peace Energy and installed by Moch Electric Ltd. *The solar revolution has begun, and Peace Energy Co-op is helping to make it happen!*



Laurie Embree, Mile 108, BC

## 10 kilowatt Micro Inverter Grid-Tie ▲

This state-of-the-art 10 kw micro inverter solar power system was recently completed for long-time Peace Energy Co-op member Laurie Embree at Mile 108 in central BC.

Laurie's situation was unusual in that her roof faces east and west, rather than south, with the best sun to the west and south. So most of the solar modules were mounted on the west side of the roof, and the remainder on the east side. East/west roofs are fine for solar as long as the roof is low-slope or flat.

Rather than one large inverter for the whole array, each module has its own independent micro inverter, reducing the effects of uneven lighting and shading.

Laurie is monitoring the performance of her solar array using the web-based Envoy Communications Gateway system, which gives real-time output from each module, and analysis of the array performance over time.

An attractive modern home that looks even better with its shiny new solar array. Congrats Laurie!





**Trevor and Trish Reeves, Briar Ridge, near Dawson Creek**

**5 kilowatt grid-tie with battery backup for critical household systems**

“We have had a lot of power outages here, so we needed an ‘insurance policy’ for our house – the furnace and freezers, that sort of thing – so if we are away in the winter, the house and food would survive. We made a conscious decision to go non-fossil fuel, and we like the idea that with grid-tie we offset some of our electrical

expenses every month, and so the system pays for itself. Meanwhile we have the security of knowing that our house can continue to run off-grid if it needs to, and every day we are pumping the greenest possible electrons into the grid. That’s a good feeling! ”

**Charles and Heidi Kux-Kardos, Dawson Creek, BC**

**Garage roof 5 kilowatt grid-tie**



“Travelling extensively in Europe I have driven by miles and miles of solar panels, so I know how mainstream it really is. For myself I went solar mostly for economic reasons: it reduces my power bills right away, it adds value to my property and certainly solar power makes ecological sense too. ”

**Ashley Pereira, Charlie Lake, BC**

**Garage roof micro inverter 5 kilowatt grid-tie**



“Growing up in India, I have always been into conservation, recycling and efficiency. It was quite a shock to move to North America and see how much we waste here, energy and materials, without even thinking about it. Solar power fits well into my views about the world, and it powers my house up too, so that’s great. ”

# New directions for PEC

## Greetings Everyone!

Your Board of Directors would like to thank you for your continued support and wish you all the best as we enter the second half of a very busy year.

Our prime effort during this time has been to design and install many quality solar energy systems on homes and business in the Peace. As this includes considerable client and public education, improving our online presence has been integral. The Peace Energy web site has had some upgrading.

As well, Don Pettit's *Watt's Happening* renewable energy blog/column continues to be distributed widely on Facebook, Friends of Wind, and local news outlets, and its readership continues to grow. Hope you're able to check out the latest words of wisdom from Don!



## Announcements and Staff Changes

At the end of 2014, Fred Feddema retired as our Executive Director.

In his stead, the board decided to hire an Office Administrator. Wendie Demyen has stepped aboard and is embracing the steep learning curve with energy and grace.

We are also pleased to announce that early in July, Jennifer Eichelberger was hired as our project manager for energy systems. She has been working closely with Don Pettit and Ernie Freeman (our Fort St. John energy consultant) to learn the ropes. An additional aspect of her role will be to formalize the way we bring solar and other energy systems from conception to installation and production for our clients and members.

At this time, Steve Rison has taken on the servicing and marketing of our Motorino electric bikes and scooters. He has been devoted to learning the finer details of assembly, regular maintenance, and features of the many models available. Please see page 7 for information about a current special offer for members only.

We are very much looking forward to all of these new roles and expectations. Please, call the office or drop by to say hello and find out what is new.

## And finally . . .

We have started this year on a positive note and thanks to our retail sales of clean energy products, your Co-operative currently is in a financially secure state.

It cannot be said enough that this is a working Board of Directors, and working is what they have been doing!

Also, there are ways for members to contribute time and services as best suited. We have various committees (Marketing, Business, Research and Development) and special events and office tasks from time to time. This is your Co-operative and we are stronger through the active support of our members. Please, make your suggestions, wishes and offers to help known to our staff and directors and we will do our best to engage you.

And finally, it is the passing of an era with Rupert Kirk's resignation from Peace Energy's Board of Directors. We all would like to recognize and thank him for years of helping and supporting Peace Energy's work. He has been a tremendous asset to our organization and we welcome his continued interest and involvement. All the best in your retirement, Rupert!

And all the best to all of our members for the second half of 2015!

Sincerely,  
*Joanne Dueck, President*

**“It cannot be said enough that this is a working Board of Directors, and working is what they have been doing!”**

# Keen interest in solar power at open house



Peace Energy's yearly Solar Open House was held at our offices in Dawson Creek again this year, complete with solar power system tours, electric bike/scooter test drives, and barbecue. The City supplied their portable "Free Water" system again (bring your own bottle and fill 'er up), and lots of discussion and interest in solar power. Left to right are PEC members Ernie Freeman, Joanne and Greg Duek, and David Mossing.

## The Pouce Coupe parade: *electrifying!*

Several thousand folks attending the Pouce Coupe Parade this year were invited to "Buy Me" as three intrepid electric vehicle pioneers (left to right, Ernie Freeman, Don Pettit, Steve Rison) zoomed along on carbon-free electrons. Carbon-free, because the bikes and scooters were all-electric, and were charged using the 5,000 watt solar array at Peace Energy headquarters. Very cool, and lots of oohs and wows from the audience.



# Test driving my electric scooter

by Steve Rison

**The scooter performed perfectly, and gave me an increased sense of confidence in the practicality of using such an inexpensive, nimble, and just plain fun vehicle . . .**



**When I took on the role of sales representative for electric bicycles and scooters for Peace Energy Co-op,** about two months ago, I had never ridden one. I am a firm believer in the utility and efficiency of electric-powered scooters and bikes, but I had no practical experience with them. Now I do.

One of the first things I did was organize PEC's participation in the July 1st Pouce Coupe parade. Don Pettit, Ernie Freeman and I each rode an electric bike or scooter, with PEC signs attached. It was tricky trying to go as slow as the parade moved, so we created a gap in which we could go forward and back within the parade. This gave all three of us some good experience with slow-speed handling of these two-wheelers. But this wasn't the same as riding a scooter over some distance and in traffic.

So today I made my first foray from Pouce Coupe to Dawson Creek. I rode a sporty red scooter model called a Motorino XMa (the same one I rode in the Pouce parade, if you saw me there). I took the back roads all the way to Finnigan's Corner at Walmart, and continued on straight across the highway and behind Canadian Tire to the farm equipment dealer. Then I ventured onto Eighth Street, to make my way downtown, in total about 10 kilometers one way.

It was just about 10:00 in the morning, and traffic was surprisingly light. I even picked up a loaf of Rustic Rye bread at the Swiss Bakery, which fit neatly into the storage space under the seat, before leaving town for home.

I was careful to use the scooter's turn signals and drive to the right side of my lane, so others could easily pass me. My top speed was 32km per hour. I never felt intimidated or that I was invisible to the other drivers, maybe because the traffic was not as busy as it seems to be so often now. Even the fierce winds today didn't blow me off course.

The scooter performed perfectly, and gave me an increased sense of confidence in the practicality of using such an inexpensive, nimble, and just plain fun vehicle for getting around town and doing errands.

If you'd like to have a closer look at Peace Energy's electric-powered bikes and scooters, drop by the PEC office, or call me if you'd like to go for a test ride. Remember, no license is required for these slick, solid and fun electric scooters and bikes.

**Call Steve at 250-784-4103 for a test drive!**



# Summer Sales Event

## Greetings Members!

I have an exciting summer sale event *exclusively for Peace Energy Co-op members*. I have *one each* of our 2014 model Motorino electric scooters and electric bikes in stock, and I am offering them directly to our members *at significant discounts!*

## Call me (Steve) at 250-784-4103 today!

to arrange a test drive, or drop by the Peace Energy office to see them up close . . . before they're all gone!



### Motorino CTr electric bike

Features lithium-ion battery, Shimano 7-speed gear shift, electric pedal-assist, wide tires and rugged construction.

Was \$1,795

Now \$1,595. **You save \$200!**



### Motorino Biria electric bike

Features easy step-through design, lithium-ion battery, Shimano 7-speed gear shift, electric pedal-assist, wide tires and rugged construction.

Was \$2,195

Now \$1,995. **You save \$200!**



### Motorino XPe electric scooter

Can carry two people. Regenerative braking and hydraulic ABS disk brakes, alarm system, and much more . . . No license required!

Was \$2,195

Now \$1,895. **You save \$300!**



### Motorino XPd electric scooter

Low-slung for stability and comfort, regenerative braking with hydraulic ABS disk brakes. Includes all-leather saddle bags. No license required!

Was \$2,695

Now \$2,195. **You save \$500!**



# Co-operatives: *the quiet revolution*



***Co-operatives are different!*** Co-ops are profit-making but they are not profit-maximizing. In other words, co-ops are designed to serve customers and workers, not take as much profit and work from them as possible. And it does not funnel wealth up to the few at the top, but rather distributes it more evenly among its many members.



***The co-op movement is big.*** The numbers are impressive: 2.6 million co-operatives worldwide with over one billion members, employing 250 million people, accounting for 12 percent of all jobs within the G20 nations, with annual revenues of US \$3 trillion.



***Co-ops make sense for clean energy.*** Renewable energies like wind and solar are distributed across the landscape, lending themselves to widespread, group ownership. Like the distributed clean energy they produce, the profits from renewable energy co-ops are distributed to local members and their communities, while providing long-term local jobs in the clean energy sector.



***Like Germany, so Denmark.*** There are now 1.4 million solar power installations and 25,000 wind turbines owned locally in Germany, creating over 400,000 jobs. Denmark provides a level playing field for small renewable producers and a long-term national energy plan focused on clean energy. Denmark now provides 40 percent (aiming for 100 percent) of its electricity from renewables (mostly wind), 85 percent owned by small players like farmers and co-operatives.



***In the United States,*** more than 130 million people are members of a co-op or credit union, more than Americans holding shares in the stock market. The U.S. is home to some 30,000 co-operatives that provide 2 million jobs, \$75 billion in wages and benefits, and \$500 billion in annual revenue. These diverse enterprises, if grouped together into a single nation, would be the 9th largest in the world.

