

Coordinator's Corner by Peter Polubiatko

On April 24, 2003, at the Chowder Pot Summit, the first meeting was held of all four Connecticut Clean Cities coordinators, boards and major stakeholders. Kudos to the *Capitol Clean Cities*, sponsor of our kick-off rendezvous. The purpose of the get-together was to kick off quarterly meetings of the group to discuss efforts that would take advantage of synergies that may occur on projects that would be beneficial to everyone by sharing talents and overhead.

In addition to enjoying a great lunch and camaraderie, discussions covered legislative issues, funding for refueling infrastructure and vehicles, new thrusts in heavy duty AFVs, and Advance the Choice events. A separate ad hoc committee was formed to discuss strategies and will report back at the next quarterly meeting.

It was agreed by all attending that the group would meet quarterly, each Clean City hosting once a year:

- * June 24, 2003 Norwich Clean Cities
- * September 18, 2003 Greater New Haven Clean Cities
- * December 18, 2003 Energy Alternatives of Southwestern Connecticut

On May 1st I was honored to represent Connecticut Clean Cities at the State Capitol in announcing the American Lung Association's Annual State of the Air Report. This provided an excellent opportunity to make the connection between clean air and clean transportation! (See story on page 2).

DOT Expanding Use of Alternative Fuels

The Connecticut DOT has been using alternative fuels, bio-diesel and to a limited extent CNG, in dual fuel vehicles at their maintenance facilities for a number of years. An expansion of DOT's alt fuel use to include E-85 in existing and new vehicles is underway with the installation of an E-85 fueling station in Newington. Look for more on this initiative in the next issue of this newsletter.

The Connecticut Clean Cities Connection is a publication of the Norwich Clean Cities, in cooperation with the Capitol Clean Cities of Connecticut, the Greater New Haven Clean Cities Coalition, Energy Alternatives of Southwestern Connecticut, and the Boston Region of the Department of Energy.

Connecticut Junior Solar Sprints

The Connecticut State competition for the Junior Solar Sprints was held in Berlin this year. There was a field of approximately forty contestants. The Norwich competitors, led by their Kelly Middle School science teacher, coach and compassionate motivator Mr. Peter Popinchalk, had another good showing. Special thanks go to Pat Grondin, Science Coordinator for the Norwich Public Schools and Clean Cities representative, who did the legwork to obtain the kits and supporting material. Norwich Public Utilities, a Clean Cities stakeholder, sponsored the team. All the students who participated in the program received Junior Solar Sprints T-shirts for their spirit and enthusiasm. One only has to watch a project session, see the students try different approaches, discuss design merits, cut, shape and assemble their models, to see how this program builds upon the talents, creativity and natural inquisitiveness of these students.



Each team of two students designed and built their models using the required solar panel and electric motor plus their own creative abilities. Volunteers Mr. John Kennedy and Mr. Michael Tucchio, both practicing engineers, talked to the students at the kick-off session about energy, friction, and various design concepts such as wheel size and gear selection.

The names of the Norwich students who won awards in the State Junior Solar Sprints Competition this year are:

- ◆ Katelyn Ritacco and Jessica Sullivan - 1st place Speed
- ◆ Katelyn Ritacco and Jessica Sullivan - 3rd place Craftsmanship

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Connecticut Air Quality Fails to Make the Grade

The American Lung Association released their National 2003 State of the Air Report on May 1, 2003 and it was no surprise that Connecticut was awarded a "F" for the fourth consecutive year. Jane Reardon, Volunteer Chair of the Board of Directors of the American Lung Association of Connecticut summed up the challenge very well when she said,

"What would you do if your child came home four years in a row with a report card full of F's?"

It was very fortunate indeed that

the Air Report press release coincided with the vote by the Connecticut State Senate that, in an overwhelmingly bipartisan majority made history by protecting workers and the people in the state from the ill effects of second hand smoke. In addition to Jane Reardon, some of the 14 speakers at the press release included:

- ◆ Attorney General Richard Blumenthal
- ◆ Moira Lyons, Speaker of the House
- ◆ Jane K. Stahl, Deputy Commissioner, Air, Waste, Water Bureau, CT DEP
- ◆ Senator Christopher Murphy, Co-Chair, Public Health Committee and Peter Polubiatko, Coordinator, Norwich Clean Cities

Each speaker showed their support for the smoke-free measure and it was comforting to note that most of the speakers also referred to Alternatively Fueled Vehicles as part of the solution for cleaner air and energy independence.

What a great segway for Peter Polubiatko to come to the podium and say that the Clean Cities Program is part of the solution. He also invited everyone to take a minute look at the AFVs parked outside the Legislative Office Building.

Now it's up to all of the people involved Connecticut Clean Cities to take advantage of the political capital that has accrued from this wonderful event.

The National 2003 State of the Air report can be viewed on the American Lung Association's web site: www.lungusa.org/reports/stateoftheair2003.html.

UPDATE: New Haven Trolleys Reach Milestone! The electric trolleys operating in downtown New Haven have just completed their first year of successful operation! Each trolley traveled an average of 10,000 miles while carrying nearly 5,000 passengers per month. Use of these trolleys has displaced nearly 2,000 gallons of diesel fuel that would have been used by equivalent diesel-powered shuttle buses. New Haven residents can be thankful for the improvement in air quality resulting from the use of the electric trolleys!

Model Fuel Cell Car Demonstrated at Fairfield Earth Day Celebration

Torrential rains didn't stop students from Sacred Heart University as they demonstrated their model car powered by a hydrogen fuel cell in the gym at the Osborn Hill School. Students from Fairfield Woods Middle School displayed recycling projects and bird and bat houses for the Smith Richardson Golf Course. The Osborn Hill School had three exhibits. First, second and fourth graders created sculptures from recycled materials, and poems depicting Earth Day themes and second graders created imaginary journeys to natural habitats.

Other displays from Tomlinson included Earth Day messages and posters in numerous languages and Earth Day poetry.

Five alternate fuel vehicles were available for inspection, including a Honda Civic dedicated CNG sedan, a Ford Contour bi-fuel sedan, a converted bi-fuel GMC maintenance vehicle, a City of Norwich full size CNG school bus and a five ton, diesel dump truck reworked to meet 2008 standards. Also on display was a Honda Civic Gasoline/Electric Hybrid. UTC International Fuel Cell exhibited the new fuel cell that will power a 2004 Hyundai recreational vehicle.

CTTRANSIT Hybrid Diesel – Electric Bus Evaluation Program

On June 16th, ConnDOT showed off two new transit buses. CTTRANSIT will operate two New Flyer 40-foot, 2003 model, low floor Allison Hybrid Diesel – Electric Transit Buses in normal revenue service in the Hartford area. The operating characteristics of these new buses will be compared to a virtually identical New Flyer 2002 standard low floor 40-foot heavy duty clean diesel bus. The vehicles will be operated for scheduled and controlled periods of time in local, slow average speed, high stop and go service, and higher speed commuter express operations. They will also be evaluated under light and heavy loads and for their reliability to climb and descend steep roads.

According to the manufacturer's fact sheet, a 25% to 35% improvement in fuel economy, and a 50% to 90% reduction in emissions can be expected.

Arthur Rocque, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection cited transportation responsible for 70% of Connecticut's air pollution. These new hybrid buses are a great step in trying to decrease emissions and improve our air quality.

Natural Gas Cruisers at the State Capitol

The Connecticut State Capitol Police, a stakeholder in the Capitol Clean Cities of Connecticut, currently have two marked Ford Crown Victoria cruisers powered by Compressed Natural Gas. The cruisers are fully equipped police cars with lights, sirens, prisoner cages, Mobile Data Terminals (MDT) and other emergency equipment.

The Department of Administrative Services, the purchasing agent for the State, provided the opportunity for the Connecticut State Capitol Police to procure a vehicle that was more environmentally friendly and healthier for the Officers. The first of the CNG vehicles was purchased in 1997. They are now in their second generation of AFVs for the 2002 model year. The Officers are satisfied with the performance and believe the 2002s are comparable to gasoline.

William "Bill" Morgan, Chief of the Connecticut State Capitol Police said, "It's exciting to see the AFV program develop in the City of Hartford and surrounding communities and is glad the department can contribute to a cleaner environment with the use of these CNG vehicles." Chief Morgan is

currently serving as the Chairman of the Technology Committee of the National Legislative Services and Security Association.



The Mission of the Office of the State Capitol Police is to support the State Legislature by creating a secure environment in which to conduct the legislative process. The Officers are responsible for meeting the law enforcement and public safety needs of the General Assembly. The unit also patrols the seventeen-acre complex that includes the Connecticut State Capitol, the Legislative Office Building and a parking garage.

The vehicles are refueled at the Brainard Road Texaco station located a couple of miles from the State Capitol. Thanks to their friends in Newington and Rocky Hill they also have a backup-refueling source.

For more information on the Connecticut State Capitol Police go to: www.cga.state.ct.us/cop.

Projects in the "Pipeline"

Look for these stories in upcoming issues:

◆ CT Natural Gas Upgrades Texaco CNG Fueling Station

◆ New England Coordinators' Meeting - November 2003

Junior Solar Sprints, Continued from page 1

- ◆ Serling Dumas and Victoria Perkins - 3rd place Innovation
- ◆ Edward Gionet and Trever Burgess - 3rd place Speed
- ◆ Zigmond Korenkiewicz and Kalie Buchman - 3rd place Technical Merit

Edward Gionet and Trever Burgess also competed in the Regional Junior Solar Sprint races held in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Norwich Clean Cities congratulates the teams and wish them well in their future goals. Maybe one or more of them will continue their science careers and be a part of the Freedom Car team to design and build hydrogen powered clean vehicles of the very near future!



Safety Training Provided for CNG School Bus Drivers

A special safety training class was conducted in May for the CNG school bus drivers. The class was an extension of the Alternative Fuel Vehicle Operator and Emergency Response Training Program conducted by Norwich Clean Cities in 2002. The two-hour training session was held in Norwich at the bus operation facility of First Student. A classroom period covered (1) properties of compressed natural gas, (2) comparison of CNG with other fuels, (3) storage of CNG and tank design and testing and (4) air quality advantages resulting from the use of CNG vs. diesel fuel in the school buses.



The instructor of the class was Alex Bell, V.P. of Bell Power Systems, local distributor of the John Deere CNG engine that powers the Norwich Blue Bird buses. The classroom session was followed by an on-site description by Alex of the CNG system on one of the three CNG buses as well as procedures to be followed in the event the system is compromised by an accident or other incident. John Kennedy of Kennedy Technical Services also offered general comments on certain safety aspects of CNG bus operation. The class was attended by First Student bus drivers Carol Ewen, Charles McLaughlin, Pat McDonougle, Stacey Strong and Sharon Scarpa, who are the principal CNG bus operators. One of the drivers commented that she now felt much more comfortable with the buses with her added understanding about the fuel and the CNG system.

2003 National Clean Cities Conference Highlights

Clean Cities Connection is a publication of
the Connecticut Clean Cities Coalition

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The theme of the 2003 National Clean Cities Conference in Palm Springs was *Turn up the Heat for Alternative Fuels* and it turned out to be just that! With over 800 pre-registrants and many walk-ins, the total was estimated to have exceeded 1,000 participants, the largest attendance for this conference in history. Also, the daytime high temperature for the three-days exceeded 100 degrees, peaking at 108 on Wednesday! There were many “hot” new products discussed and exhibited including those



powered by fuel cells (Sunline transit buses and Honda and Ford (pictured) prototype passenger cars), a hydrogen powered Shelby Cobra, a number of CNG, LNG, biodiesel and hybrid-system powered heavy duty vehicles and a propane-powered Type C school bus. Many new components were displayed including Fuelmaker’s CNG homefuel *Phill*, expected to enter service in California very soon. One of the highlights in Palm Springs is Sunline Transit’s impressive operating and research facility that supports its dedicated fleet of CNG and fuel cell transit buses as well as development of equipment and techniques for handling and dispensing a variety of alternative fuels including hydrogen.

Over the three-day period, a number of excellent presentations and workshops were held on a variety of subjects relating to operation and implementation of AFVs, legislative initiatives and funding sources, and cultural and economic issues relating to the expansion of AFV use. A thought-provoking talk was given by Jeremy Rifkin, CEO of the Foundation on Economic

Trends, and author of *The Hydrogen Economy* who predicted that renewable hydrogen could be the next “industrial revolution” and cautioned that Europe may lead it unless the U.S. increases its effort in this field. We were also treated to appearances by celebrities Dennis Weaver and Suzanne Summers, operators and proponents of AFVs whose enthusiasm for the efforts of Clean Cities was heartening.

One of the key points made by one of the general session presenters was the importance of incremental efforts by small coalitions who might have a tendency to get discouraged by the failure to add substantial numbers of AFVs and support facilities each year. In the aggregate the incremental contributions are very important to the whole of the Clean Cities Program and to its goal of improving air quality and less dependence on foreign sources of energy.

Connecticut was well represented at the Conference with Peter Polubiatko, Mike Tuccio, John Kennedy and Alex Bell from the Norwich Coalition, Marco Henry and Craig Peters from the Hartford Coalition, Lee Grannis from the New Haven Coalition and Ed Boman from the Southwestern CT Coalition. Mike Scarpino, DOE’s Northeastern District leader can be very proud of his Coalitions as awards were won by Massachusetts (Most New Stakeholders Added- 52), New Hampshire (Most Comprehensive Program Plan, spearheaded by Becky Ohler, NH Clean State Coordinator) and Vermont (Erin Russell-Story designated the Outstanding Coordinator of the Year).

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