

January 07, 2006 1:00pm
Indiana Energy Conference
Vanity Theater
Crawfordsville, Indiana 47933

Presented by Frank Cicela

Introductory Notes

Good Afternoon! I am truly honored to welcome you to the inaugural Indiana Energy Conference at the Vanity Theater.

My name is Frank Cicela, the principal organizer of the IEC.

Before we begin today I need to offer some thanks.

I wish to extend my sincerest gratitude to:

Sugar Creek Players Board of Directors for use of this theater as a venue.

The Sr. Management at Alcoa CSI who allowed me to attend the 2nd U.S. Conference on Peak Oil and Community Solutions. Attending that conference was the inspiration for this event.

Meagan Quinn, Outreach Director and Pat Murphy, Executive Director of the Community Solution. If you know where to look you can see their fingerprints all over this event.

The staff at Summersault, LLC www.summersault.com for web development and webhosting services of www.indianaenergyconference.org

Barry Silverthorne for performance rights to End of Suburbia

Jeff Barrie for performance rights to Kilowatt Ours

Crawfordsville Mainstreet Association for advertising support

Gratitude to those who have volunteered to speakers and in the set-up of the lobby.

Changes to Conference Agenda from what was originally publicized:

This afternoon I am happy to have a live speaker presentation after the two films. Keni Washington will present a talk on Renewable Energy Strategy for the years 2006 thru 2016. Keni is doing some really exciting things in downtown Indianapolis which you'll hear more about later this afternoon.

On January 21st live speaker presentations include:

Biodiesel: Basics, Benefits, and Brewing -- John Easton, Cory Scanlan and Tim Richmond

Electric Motor Efficiency for Industry and the Home -- Jim Kirkhoff

Biomass Gasification - What is it? It was used way back when, but can it be used now? -- Eric Lynch

Logistical Concerns:

Restrooms are in the lobby area where you entered

Building Exits are Lobby thru which you entered and straight thru the hallway to my left

The Vanity Theater is operated by an entire volunteer staff. Please do your part to help by putting trash where it belongs and picking up around you before leaving.

Though this conference is being offered for free it has cost money to put together. If you feel that this event has been of value to you, there is a donation jar in the lobby that I encourage you to contribute toward. Any money collected that is in excess of the direct costs that have gone into this event will be donated to a fund for the on going building maintenance of the Vanity Theater.

Things to do in the Lobby:

A representative from the Wabash College Bookstore will be in the lobby who can take orders for books you may be interested in and will also have copies of several titles for sale.

Map of Indiana encourage you to take a thumbtack and a numbered tag and insert it where you live... so that you can see conference attendees who are your neighbors.

Flip charts with a half of a dozen categories. If you have interests or skills in these categories encourage you to put down your name and contact information. At the end of the conference I will work to circulate this information so that you can get in touch with one another.

I hope that many of you will be able to return in the coming weeks to participate, share and learn.

The views expressed over the coming days will include those of: attorneys, artists, economists, engineers, energy experts, members of religious communities, farmers along with the voices of concerned citizens. Renowned and expert speakers will be addressing topics including: Peak Oil, Alternative/Renewable Energy, Local Economics and Agriculture, Eco-villages, Bio-diesel and more!

Each individual has a perspective from which they view the terribly complex energy predicament our culture will be facing. I personally don't agree with every viewpoint that is expressed I don't expect that you will either. I encourage you to think and reflect critically and *honestly* about the presentations.

An exercise I use when confronted with diverse viewpoints is to:

Imagine for a moment a circle of people all standing around the vase that is on stage here. No person, from a single vantage point, can completely describe the vase. Yet if each individual were to describe, from their perspective, what they see of the vase -- a rather accurate composite description could be created. If each person were allowed to offer their own perspective a shared vision would eventually emerge....

Remove the vase from the center of the imaginary circle and replace it with "Energy" Mentally repeat the activity I just described and try to get a picture of what our Energy situation is. Each person contributing a piece of perspective.

The vision of our energy future is not one that will be sharp and crystal clear. Rather, the vision will be much like that of a mosaic. Each individual's perspective represented by a

small tile in the mosaic. A mosaic whose image paradoxically becomes clearer the further away one stands from it.

Though many of the details and information that will be presented is dire and dour....

I am hope filled...it is why I have put my life energy into organizing this conference. I do not wish for people's living standards to be diminished. I hope and work for the improvement in the quality of *all* peoples lives.

This conference is my personal effort to reach out and jump-start a conversation in the community of greater west central Indiana.

These intensive few Saturdays are an opportunity to educate, as well as be educated, to inspire and be inspired, to connect with others rather than work alone. It is for us to come together in community to begin building a socially just and sustainable future. To lay claim, in my opinion, our birthright.

This task may at first seem daunting if not impossible. But it is not! Physicist Fritjof Capra the founder of the Center for Ecoliteracy writes:

"We do not need to invent sustainable human communities. We can learn from societies that have lived sustainably for centuries. We can also model communities after nature's ecosystems, which are sustainable communities of plants, animals, and microorganisms. Since the outstanding characteristic of the biosphere is its inherent ability to sustain life, a sustainable human community must be designed in such a manner that its technologies and social institutions honor, support, and cooperate with nature's inherent ability to sustain life."