

CARBUSTERS

MAGAZINE #29



In this issue we look at the very foundation of car culture — roads. The first law of traffic engineering is that when you add capacity, it fills up with cars. From this it follows that when roads are removed, traffic “evaporates.” Where does it go? Some say other routes, others say fewer trips. Yet despite this conventional wisdom, transport planning around the globe seems to be in a death spiral where the solution to more cars is more roads, even though all data show that more roads equals more cars.

And it’s not just about traffic. Roads themselves are massive objects with huge environmental impacts, splitting habitats and spoiling watersheds.

We say enough is enough. No new roads. Want to develop another suburban subdivision? Go back to the old streetcar model. Improve quality of life and keep the construction industry busy retrofitting existing routes to accommodate public transport, bikeways, and pedestrian plazas.

In many places old, worn-out, unsightly, and dangerous roadways are falling apart, forcing policymakers to make some difficult decisions. The common response is to build anew, bigger. Highway megaprojects are on drawing boards around the world. But the simplest and best solution might be depaving. Too much productive soil is smothered under asphalt — a substance inimical to life. Precedents for this alternative exist. Where roads have been removed, revitalised communities have flourished.

These pages aim to arouse an interest in what so many take for granted — the highways and byways that shape our lives, sometimes connecting, often times dividing us. From visions of street conversions to reports of carfree celebrations, both looking back at history and forward to the future, we hope you’ll come away from this journey with a stronger desire to choose your own path in a world girdled by roads. - **Robert Zverina**



Carbusters

MAGAZINE

JAN - MAR 2007
No. 29

REGULARS

- 4 Announcements**
- 5 Letters**
- 6 World News**
Higher congestion charge in London, and more
- 7 Studies and Reports**
Beyond the point of no return...
- 8 Car Cult Review**
Woe, wa wa, do-doo run
- 10 Action!**
Shell's oily game
- 25 Cutting Your Car Use: The Column**
Anna answers a lonely hearts letter!
- 26 Book Reviews**
Living Well without a Car by Chris Balish; *A Road Runs Through It*; *Life Between Buildings* revisited



Front cover: Pete Bevis
Road Kill Rabbit, Atomic City Idaho
bronze, lifesize (see page 18 for more)
Photo courtesy of the artist

Back cover: Jacqueline Authier
Street Reclamation Sign, Portland Oregon
paper, magic marker, and chair
Photo by Jonathan Maus,
BikePortland.org

FEATURES

- 10 World Carfree Day Roundup**
September 22 reports from around the globe
- 14 Street Conversion Contest Winners**
Visions of street reclamation
- 18 Two Ways of Looking at Roadkill**
An essay by Derrick Jensen
Bronze sculpture by Pete Bevis
- 19 Unhappy Birthday: Interstate Turns 50**
The US Interstate Highway System's 50th Anniversary was celebrated in the press and corridors of power; this historical analysis of its impacts crashes the party.
- 24 Three Visions of the Future**
Whether dark, whimsical, or optimistic, cars ain't in it.

Editorial Collective:
Anna Domenech, Randy Ghent, Steven Logan, Robert Zverina

Other World Carfree Network Staff:
Christi Brooks, Kamila Blazková,
Roeland Kuijper, Joao Lopes, Radka Tichavská

Contributors:
Pete Bevis, Jane Dickson, Bruce Gray, Steve Hanson, Derrick Jensen,
Sarah Kavage, Nicole Kistler, Tamra Myers, L. Peschong, Anna Semlyen,
Andy Singer, Steve von Pohl and dozens of carfree activists

Reprints welcome with a credit to *Carbusters* and a reference to Carbusters.org.

Deadline for submissions for issue 30 is February 15, 2007.

Please send letters, article proposals, artwork, and photos to:
Carbusters, Krátká 26
100 00 Prague 10, Czech Republic
tel: +(420) 274-810-849
fax: +(420) 274-772-017
Subscription info: page 29 and 30.
ISSN: 1213-7154 / MK ČR: E 100018

editors@carbusters.org
www.carbusters.org

Printed in the Czech Republic on 100% recycled paper by Pematisk, Prague. Distributed by Doormouse (Canada); AK Press, Desert Moon, Small Changes, and Ubiquity (US); Central Books (UK); and many others. See <www.carbusters.org/distribution> for a partial list of distribution outlets.

This publication was funded in part by the European Commission via the European Voluntary Service and other programmes. The contents do not necessarily reflect the position of the European Commission or its national agency.

Carbusters Magazine is a project of:



www.worldcarfree.net

announcements

Pro Walk/Pro Bike Conference: Seattle 2008

The National Center for Bicycling & Walking's Pro Walk/Pro Bike biennial conference series typically attracts an international gathering of more than 600 bicycle and pedestrian programme specialists, advocates, and government leaders committed to improving conditions for bicycling and walking. For more information visit:

<www.bikewalk.org/conference.php>

Call for Submissions: Filmed by Bike

Filmed by Bike is a festival of original bike-themed film shorts eight minutes or under.

Deadline March 1

Mail DVD submissions to:

Filmed by Bike

1158 NE Morton

Portland OR, USA 97211

The Fifth Annual Filmed by Bike festival will run for a three-day weekend at the Clinton Street Theater in Portland, Oregon in April. There is no fee to enter and the festival features films from around the world.

For more information and a submission form, see <www.FilmedByBike.org>.

BicycleFixation.com Launches

September 1 was the Official Grand Opening of the Bicycle Fixation website, which presents articles on urban and everyday cycling in the face of traffic, sprawl, injustice, and a culture of environmental cluelessness, and essays that we hope will help us all find our way back to living sanely in the physical world, lovingly in the social plane, fairly in the economic realm, and passionately in all of them. In other words, total world and personal revolution is facilitated by the bicycle, the most efficient machine ever to come from the hands and minds of our species.

Ecotourism in Poland

Already thinking about your first spring holiday? The Civil Affairs Institute, a non-profit organisation and a member of World Carfree Network, offers eco-tourism holidays in Poland with minimal impact on the land and natural resources, and maximum contact with local culture, history, tradition and customs. They offer hiking tours in the Beskid Mountains and a canoe/hiking trip in north-eastern Poland. All income from the organised expeditions is put towards nature protection campaigns in Poland.

For more information see
<www.ecotourism.org.pl>.

Towards Carfree Cities

After a successful conference in Bogota, Colombia, the series moves on to Istanbul, Turkey. The confirmed dates are August 27-31, 2007. For more information have a look at:

<www.worldcarfree.net/conference>.

Carfree to a T

The World Carfree Network Resource Centre is looking for new t-shirts designs. If you have an idea for a design that you would like to see on t-shirts, which will be worn worldwide, send it to us at <info@worldcarfree.net>. If we choose your design, you will receive a free subscription to *Carbusters* magazine.

**Two Ways You Can Help
Spread the Carfree Message**

Carbusters Microdistribution

Buy 5 issues
for the price of 3!
Keep 1 and sell or
give away the rest.

see page 29 — "Distribution Orders"

Ask Your Library to Subscribe

Most libraries fulfill
patrons' requests.
A great way to
reach new readers.

see page 30

Walk the Walk: WCN Needs YOU!

The network has many projects that you can get involved in, ranging from the annual Ecotopia Biketour to the Carfree Area Pilot Project now under development. See the list of projects at <www.worldcarfree.net/projects> and contact one of the project coordinators. As written under the European Voluntary Service project description, the network is always seeking motivated young people (EU citizens aged 18-25) to join the network's Prague-based team for a 12-month internship.

Support World Carfree Network

Please consider a New Year's donation to help us carry out our projects supporting alternatives to car dependence. Or join us as an individual member, at one of three levels of support. See <www.worldcarfree.net/support> or pages 30-31 of this magazine. Thank you!



<www.worldcarfree.net/wcfd>

World Carfree Day '007 Event Planning Calendar

January-March

Meetings: Get the kindred spirits together to discuss ideas for an event. Volunteer someone to take notes. Putting it in writing reinforces commitment and helps clarify planning. Meet regularly. Rotate from home to home. Make it a potluck. Or meet at a cafe, restaurant, or bar. The ones who show up will assume leadership positions. Make a list of names and tasks. Divide and conquer. Designate key functions: workshop organiser, media contact, permit getter, infrastructure supervisor, tent renter, etc.

April-June

Logistics: Line up permits, entertainment, portable toilets, tents, barricades, signage. Get support from local government. Ask leaders to sign on to a proclamation. Send press releases. Large street closures might require fees and longer lead time. Simplest street closure is a block party, which usually requires signatures of neighbours. Coordinated block parties on a single day form a carfree archipelago.

July-September

Workshops: Find a good work place (garage, art studio, community center, etc.) and supply basic materials — dimensional lumber, signboard, tools, fasteners, paint, brushes, silkscreens, blank t-shirts, etc. Meet on a weekly basis and get busy. Start with basic signage. From there your creativity will guide you. Will you build shelters, vehicles, props? A dunk tank or obstacle course? Ramps and halfpipes? Think of ways to make it fun and inviting for whole families. September 22 2007 is a Saturday. Consider starting the day before and make a weekend of it.

October-December

Post-mortem: Meet one last time and discuss what went right and what could have been better. *Take notes!* What seems obvious today will be forgotten tomorrow. Write it all down, then put the notebook away and relax until January. Recharge your batteries and do what comes naturally.

letters

Consume Less, Live More

Researchers have reported that a large area of Siberia is melting [see page 7], leading to the release of methane (a greenhouse gas) plus additional carbon dioxide. They bear witness to the onset of a "runaway greenhouse effect" in which global warming creates more global warming. Among the people who have been trying to predict the course of global warming, the more optimistic have been proven wrong.

Environmentalists have warned for years that the lifestyles of the world's affluent are unsustainable. The crisis is upon us and should be manifest to all with the eyes to see.

The only way to deal with the situation in time is to bring down consumption. Incremental change will not be enough, because we don't have time for a transition that would take twenty years.

More renewable energy would be beneficial, but a reduction in consumption is the only way to make the transformation quickly enough. The more affluent must rid themselves of the attitude that automobile and airline travel is their birthright.

Milton Takei

Carfree for 35 years

Free at Last

I'd just like to report that after about two years of wanting to go carless (plus a lifetime of hating car pollution with a passion), I've sold sold my car and now happily get around on a bicycle. I've done the motorbike thing and the car thing and I have to say I'm totally over it. Eventually I'll get a recumbent tricycle — The Windcheetah (pictured below). Cars are for the lazy and infirm. I am young and (getting) fit, so I might as well make the most of it now. I know that if I continued getting around in a car, that when I am 70 looking back on my life, I would regret not making more use what God gave me — legs.

Thank you and keep up the good work.

Ryan

Perth, Western Australia



Death Race 2006

A carfree world might seem impossible, but steps to it must be taken, one less car at a time.

Now to tell you about pedestrian hunters: I was in a pedestrian crosswalk when I saw an Audi approaching really fast, so I hurried across, but they accelerated and swerved toward me. They laughed as they passed me. This happened in Cluj, Romania, where even drivers used to have manners and respected pedestrians.

I think auto ads are responsible for this manic behaviour. They promote violence by emphasising the top predator character of their car in a jungle world of cities.

from Romania via email

On the Margin

I would like to express my support for your programme, exactly because I like cars. I have come to the realisation that the cars that arouse the passions of true enthusiasts can only exist if they become socially marginal phenomena, much like sailing boats or hot-air balloons are today.

Dawie Coetzee

Capetown, South Africa

Building Bridges

I found the last issue of Carbusters [#28] the best yet. I believe your organisation has matured admirably to become very effective at presenting a relatively radical philosophy in a non-provocative style that hopefully is accessible to at least some members of the unconverted masses.

Thomas J. DeMarco, MD

Whistler, BC Canada

The Glass is Half Full

I have a slightly renewed belief that automobiles do not entirely rule the roads anymore. As I rode into a beautiful Bavarian town today I passed what first appeared to be a gas station. Upon closer inspection I realised that the gas station had long since closed. The pumps were gone and the gas station office had been converted into a showroom for beautiful road bikes. The garage where cars, belching out toxic fumes, used to come for repairs is now the place to go to get a flat repaired, or get your brakes adjusted on your bike as you ride into town on the well marked network of trails in this region.

Around the corner was the downtown core of this small town, with carfree and car-lite streets where cyclists and pedestrians take priority.

Shanny

On bike tour in Kelheim, Germany

<www.tourdafrique.com/orient/2006/2006_diaries/germany.htm>



Songs in the Key of Car

I just got back from taking our two-year-old Johann to preschool. People just don't realise how car-centric society is. In music time all of the songs have an object attached to it. One song is sung after all the children take a large toy plastic key from a basket. The song is all about not being able to start the ignition key in a car. All of the other children were familiar with this, and had a great time, but it was kind of lost on Johann. He really has never seen that and is not that familiar with cars. It's just weird.

Ruth Oskolkoff

Seattle, USA

The Big Chill

Having lived without a refrigerator for the last month it has become more clear to me how much in Western cities the length of a shopping trip can affect the size of a fridge.

I have heard that a fridge is the biggest single user of electricity in a typical American house. I have no fridge now so I shop a few times a day, and fortunately good shops are steps away. But in car-dependent suburbs there is the "big shopping," which many people feel they have to do in order to make the long trip to the supermarket worthwhile.

So, they use lots of energy (transport) to get the stuff they need, and then more energy to preserve it with a big fridge and freezer until the next trip. And with a bigger car they can fill a bigger fridge. Of course this forms a circle...

Todd Edelman

Prague, Czech Republic

Do you have a story to tell, a theory to expound, an idea to share, or pictures to show? Email editors@carbusters.org or drop us a note via post:

*Carbusters c/o World Carfree Network
Kratka 26, Prague 10
100 00 Czech Republic*



Higher Congestion Charges for Larger Cars in London

LONDON - Drivers in an affluent London suburb could be hit by residents' parking charges which penalise the most polluting cars such as 4x4s.

Local council officials in Richmond, southwest London, say that they plan to give electric car owners free parking permits, while owners of vehicles with high carbon dioxide emissions could be charged three times the current annual price of £100 (EUR 149; US\$188).

London Mayor Ken Livingstone has already tried to tackle traffic paralysis in the heart of the British capital with his £8 daily congestion charge, which is set to expand westwards in February 2007.

Livingstone has also proposed charging owners of 4x4s — nicknamed "Chelsea tractors", as many are seen in the chic west London suburb of the same name — £25 a day for the congestion charge.

- *Yahoo! News*

California Caps Emissions

USA - On September 27, 2006, US California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed the Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32) which sets a statewide cap on global warming pollution and creates incentives for businesses and entrepreneurs to invest in clean energy technological innovations. At the signing ceremony, Schwarzenegger explained: "Using market-based incentives, we will reduce carbon emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2020. That's a 25 percent reduction. And by 2050, we will reduce emissions to 80 percent below 1990

levels. We simply must do everything in our power to slow down global warming before it's too late."

AB 32 requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop regulations and market mechanisms that will ultimately reduce California's greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent by 2020. Mandatory caps will begin in 2012 for significant sources and ratchet down to meet the 2020 goals. Exactly what those regulations and mechanisms will be remains to be seen.

The Act also contains a loophole, a "safety valve" which provides the Governor the ability to suspend the emissions caps for up to one year in the case of an emergency or significant economic harm.

For now, CARB will begin to measure the greenhouse gas emissions of the industries it determines as significant sources of greenhouse gas emissions. Because of California's massive and growing economy, the state is the 12th largest emitter of carbon in the world.

More: <www.gov.ca.gov/index.php?/press-release/4111>

Carfree Olympic Village

CHINA - Beijing is looking at testing totally carfree days for the city in the lead-up to the 2008 Olympics. Following the success of traffic reduction measures during the China-Africa Summit, Beijing is considering going a big step further and banning cars altogether for limited periods. In a city normally plagued by traffic gridlock, it managed the influx of 48 African delegations with a concerted transport strategy. Some roads were closed to private cars and 400,000 Beijing residents signed a pledge not to

drive and public transport increased.

Now the city's leaders say they may impose "total no car days" in the run-up to the Olympics. This will force people onto public transport and clean up the environment.

- *ABC Sports*

Weekly Global Carfree Days

In a speech to UNESCO on October 7, Vietnamese Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh called for weekly "No Car Days": "We do not have to sink into despair about global warming," he said. "We can act. I ask UNESCO and its member nations to mobilise for global No Car Days for the whole planet."

- *World Carfree News #37*

Bad Air in India

INDIA - In the last 10 years, the number of diesel cars on Indian roads has increased by 425 percent. These cars can emit up to three times more NOx (nitrogen oxide) than their petrol counterparts, and have contributed to a rapid increase in pollution on New Delhi streets. Although cars and two-wheelers of all varieties take up 90 percent of Delhi's road space, these options meet only 20 percent of travel demand.

- *Oneworld.net*

Saucy Speed Control

DENMARK - In an effort to slow down aggressive male drivers, the Danish road safety agency has produced a fake news report showing topless women carrying the 50 km/h speed limit signs. "If you want to reach the young people, you have to communicate on their conditions," said Danish road safety council member Julia Pauli.

- *BBC Online*

Breathing the Unclean Air

The European Parliament has voted on new vehicle emissions standards in a compromise deal with ministers that allows makers of gas-guzzling sports utility vehicles (SUVs) an extra three years to comply. "The European Parliament has thrown away the opportunity to fix many of Europe's severe urban air quality problems using technologies that are already available," says Jos Dings, director of T&E.

"With growing awareness in Europe of the environmental and safety dangers of SUVs, the Parliament's decision to give these vehicles the same three-year exemptions as ambulances is a gift to SUV makers, and a kick in the teeth for the rest of society."

- *Transport & Environment, Dec. 13*

Studies & Reports

Chilling Forecast

Researchers have reported that a large area of Siberia is melting, leading to the release of methane (a greenhouse gas) plus additional carbon dioxide. They bear witness to the onset of a "runaway greenhouse effect" in which global warming creates more global warming.

Carbon that has been locked away for thousands of years could escape into the atmosphere if global warming thaws large patches of frozen ground in Alaska and Siberia as expected, warns a new study led by Sergey Zimov from the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Called permafrost, the frozen ground contains large amounts of carbon-rich grass and animal bones. The new study looked at the effects of global warming on permafrost in Siberia, called "yedoma." Scientists calculate that about 500 gigatons (Gt) of carbon is locked away in yedoma permafrost. One gigaton is equal to one billion tons.

The researchers estimate that if global warming continues at its current pace, about 90% of the carbon in yedoma permafrost could be released. Most of it would go into the atmosphere as either CO₂ or methane, the researchers say.

The study notes that about another 500 Gt of carbon is locked away in other permafrost areas around the world, and that global warming could have similar effects on these areas as well.

- [Livescience.com](#)

Point of No Return

In October, the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge concluded that the catastrophic collapse of the Larsen B shelf in 2002 was man-made, not an "act of God." It is thought to have been the first time that a major disaster has been proved to have been caused by global warming. In March 2002, the vast ice shelf suddenly gave way. In just over 30 days this one event dumped more ice into the Southern Ocean that surrounds Antarctica than all the icebergs of the past 50 years combined.

In all, the United Nations Environment Programme says, the extent of Arctic summer ice has shrunk by a quarter in the past half-century, and has lost almost half its thickness.

Some scientists believe Earth is approaching the point of no return, where the process feeds upon itself. For as the white ice — which reflects heat — melts, it will be replaced by dark water, and this absorbs heat. So the ocean will get even warmer, causing even greater melting, until all the ice is gone. As this happens, ocean levels will rise at least 20 metres, flooding all coastal cities.

- [4report.com](#)

The Big Melt

Almost every one of more than 300 large glaciers studied worldwide is in retreat, international glaciologists reported in October in the journal *Geophysical Research Letters*. This is "essentially a response to post-1970 global warming," they said.

The loss of landbased glaciers spells trouble for coastal regions. When floating ice sheets melt, no new water is added to the sea. But when runoff from glaciers races to the ocean, global levels rise.

- *Geophysical Research Letters*

Measuring Happiness

During the summer of 2005, with the support and assistance of the National Center for Bicycling and Walking, Catherine O'Brien launched the "Delightful Places Survey." The survey was distributed electronically to networks around the world and by the time the survey was closed down, just over 200 responses had come in. The survey was a preliminary step toward integrating insights on happiness from positive psychology with urban planning. O'Brien was curious to learn more about what contributes to individual and public happiness in the natural and built environment. You can see the results in her new article, "A Footprint of Delight."

"The new science of happiness indicates that authentic happiness, the enduring happiness that causes us to feel satisfied with our lives, is found through less materialistic pursuits. It is grounded in intrinsic values. It is found in our relationships, meaningful work, and sense of purpose."

See www.bikewalk.org/pdfs/forumarch1006footprint.pdf for the full report.

Americans Commute Longer

Americans are leaving home earlier to get work, fewer are walking, and more are driving alone, according to a new study of commuting trends.

The study, published by the Transportation Research Board, found people also take longer to reach their workplaces, with the number of people with commutes lasting more than 60 minutes growing by almost 50% between 1990 and 2000.

"It's much more a product of the transportation system than the fact that they have an early starting time," says Alan Pisarski, who published similar studies on commuting in 1987 and 1996. Fewer people are walking to work, he says.

After studying census data from 1990-2004, he found the number of Americans walking to work had dropped to 2.9% in 2000 from 3.9% in 1990 and 5.6% in 1980.

More people were driving alone to work,

with an increase of almost 13 million solo drivers in the 1990s. But Pisarski said American commuting trends were about to change, with baby boomers reaching retirement age and more people starting to work from home. The percentage of people working from home had risen to 3.6% from 3.3% in 2000.

He forecast that future trends in commuting would be influenced by the growing number of newly arrived immigrants in the workforce.

"Unlike most native-born Americans or immigrants who have been in the United States for more than five years, many new immigrants either carpool, bike, walk, or use public transportation for their daily commute," Pisarski said.

The Great Bike North

In "Why Canadians Cycle More Than Americans: A Comparative Analysis Of Bicycling Trends And Policies," John Pucher and Ralph Buehler indicate that, despite a colder climate, Canadians cycle about three times more than Americans. Reasons for this difference include Canada's higher urban densities and mixed-use development, shorter trip distances, lower incomes, higher costs of owning, driving and parking a car, safer cycling conditions, and more extensive cycling infrastructure and training programmes. Most of these factors result from differences between Canada and the United States in their transport and land-use.

- www.vtpi.org/pucher_canbike.pdf

City Sleekers

Canadian adults living in rural areas are more likely to be obese than city dwellers, says Statistics Canada.

In 2004, 20% of adults who lived in large Canadian cities were obese, compared to 29% in smaller centres. The national average was 23%.

The size of the city also mattered: as the size of the city grew, the likelihood of being obese fell.

The wider use of cars in rural Canada may be partly to blame, said Dr. David Lau, an endocrinologist in Calgary.

- [Statcan.ca](#)

Railing Against Trucks

According to a German study of truck transport conducted by Wiesbadener Unternehmensberatung Transcare AG, one million tonnes of freight could be easily transferred to rail in the Rhein/Main area (near Frankfurt, Germany) per year. "This would save some 50,000 lorry trips per year," says the Transport Minister of the German federal state of Hesse, Alois Rhiel.

- *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*

"We're normally three guys working, but I'm alone today. My boss is not happy at all."

- Abou Baker, Montreal parking attendant on World Carfree Day



CAR CULT REVIEW



I Walk Alone

The Canadian national used car magazine *Auto Trader* has come up with a great new marketing strategy for getting people off the sidewalks and into cars where they belong: exploiting their emotional vulnerability. For those too poor (in money or judgment)... This billboard was photographed at the corner of Wyandotte and Walker Road in Windsor, Canada. Ironically, it is situated right next to a transit stop. This is *Auto Trader's* first-ever national advertising campaign, with spots on TV, outdoor billboards and online. The campaign has rightly been compared to the brilliantly conceived and derisively offensive GM ads of 1999 which characterised public transport users as creeps and weirdos.

- Voiceofwindsor.org

Parking Lot Life

It's an old-styled college contest updated for the Internet age: Two-student teams at eight campuses, including Boston University, will camp out in Chevrolet Aveo subcompact sedans for five days, allowed to leave only for classes and bathroom breaks.

All their activities, showing how much can be done inside the subcompact, will be shown live on the web, and they'll be vying for online votes.

The Boston University contestants, Allison Lavey and Jamie Williams, both 20-year-old juniors, were giddy with excitement. Lavey said 95% of people would have refused to take part in the challenge.

"But we're that minority 5% that when someone asks us to live in a car for five days, we freak out and think it's the golden opportunity," Lavey said.

Chevy is aiming for the college market with the "Aveo Livin' Large Challenge," but advocates of the homeless in Boston said yesterday that it's

a publicity play that makes light of a serious problem. Some people, they said, have no choice but to live in their cars.

The Homeless Empowerment Project says it plans to add a dose of real life by sending homeless people to talk to the students living in the Boston University car.

Contestants have been told to stage creative and entertaining activities to draw traffic to the website <www.aveoivnlarge.com> and attention to the Aveo, an economy sedan with student-friendly features such as an iPod jack. The team with the most online votes will each win a vehicle, as will their university.

- Boston Globe, Oct. 21

Pump It!

Hot and bothered by rising pump prices? Australian brothels are offering clients discounts based on their petrol bills. Brothel owners claim the system works much the same way as supermarkets that offer shoppers discounted gas prices by presenting their grocery bills when they fill up their "If you come in and spend time with one of our lovely ladies, we'll give you a discount of 20 cents a liter," Kerry, manager of Sydney brothel the Site, told Reuters.

There is no link between brothels, petrol providers or supermarkets, but brothels such as the Site and Madame Kerry's say the system is simple. Once you've filled up your car, bring your receipt to the brothel, and they'll discount the price of your visit.

- Reuters

Sleeper

Narcoleptic driver Gerald Taddonio ran his Hummer onto a sidewalk in Huntington, New York, killing a 15-year-old girl and injuring her sister. However, no charges were filed. "It's not criminal negligence," explained Detective Sgt. Bruce Markgraf. "He doesn't know he's going to fall asleep behind the wheel. He was just tired." The sergeant further explained that Taddonio was only asleep for "three- to four-tenths of a second." Which somehow makes it OK.

"Car Crazy Cutie" (excerpt)

A power shift in second and a-ridin' the clutch
My car crazy cutie, man, she's just too much
I take her to the drags, man, and everyone flips
For her big blue eyes and candle apple lips

Yeah, oh
Car crazy cutie
Car crazy cutie
Car crazy cutie
Car crazy cutie

Wo run a-run a doo run run
Wo oh oh oh (Wo run a-run a doo run run)
Wo yeah (Run a-run a doo run run)

Wo oh oh oh (Wo run a-run a doo run run)
Oh oh oh now cutie (Wo run a-run a doo run run)
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
(Wo run a-run a doo run run)

[Doo doo doo]

Wo yeah (Run a-run a doo run run)
Wo oh oh oh (Wo run a-run a doo run run)
Oh oh oh now cutie (Wo run a-run a doo run run)
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
(Wo run a-run a doo run run)

- The Beach Boys



Photo: www.zverina.com, Jakub, Czech Republic, September 2006



Photo: L. Peschong, New Smyrna Beach, Florida, July 2006



Shell's Wild Lie

Shell is the third largest oil company in the world. It is also the new sponsor of the British Natural History Museum's Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition.

Despite attempts to greenwash its reputation via blanket advertising and cultural sponsorship, Shell is still heavily implicated in producing ever-greater quantities of the oil and gas that are destabilising our climate to such an alarming degree. Climate change is set to wipe out millions of plant and animal species, and to devastate the poorest regions of the planet. Shell's activities also result in oil spills, which are major causes of death and destruction for many varieties of marine life. Lastly, Shell is currently constructing a massive development at Sakhalin Island in Russia, which is threatening the survival of the Western Pacific grey whale.

For all these reasons, Shell should not be sponsoring the Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition. We call on the Natural History Museum to end its sponsorship deal with Shell.

Extra: On October 16, London Action Resource Centre (LARC) hosted a counter-exhibition and public meeting with speakers from Shell-affected communities in the Niger Delta, South Africa and County May, Ireland. The event was part of a Friends of the Earth-organised tour, which continued on to Imperial College in London, Birmingham and Manchester. For details, see <www.foe.co.uk/shell>.

- ShellOiledWildlife.org.uk

How Not to End a Road Protest

After years of frustrating campaigning against motorways in eastern Austria, The Lobau protest camp had reason to celebrate. The city government had plans to cancel completion of the northern half of Vienna's ring road because the tunnel under the Danube and the Lobau National Park is looking less and less feasible. The city wanted to start drilling test holes in the park on November 1; this was the first day of the protest camp, and for seven weeks drilling did not start. Vienna's mayor doubts the financial practicability of the project, and several voices claimed that the company responsible for the work would not start drilling if the protest camp was there. But the two

biggest organisations involved — Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace — held negotiations with the city government, without asking the other four organisations involved in the camp or the people present. In their discussion, they traded the drilling for some high level talks about a traffic concept for the Viennese region.

Regardless if this outcome is a success, the way it was achieved leaves the involved groups deeply divided.

- *Jan Bargaen, Vienna*

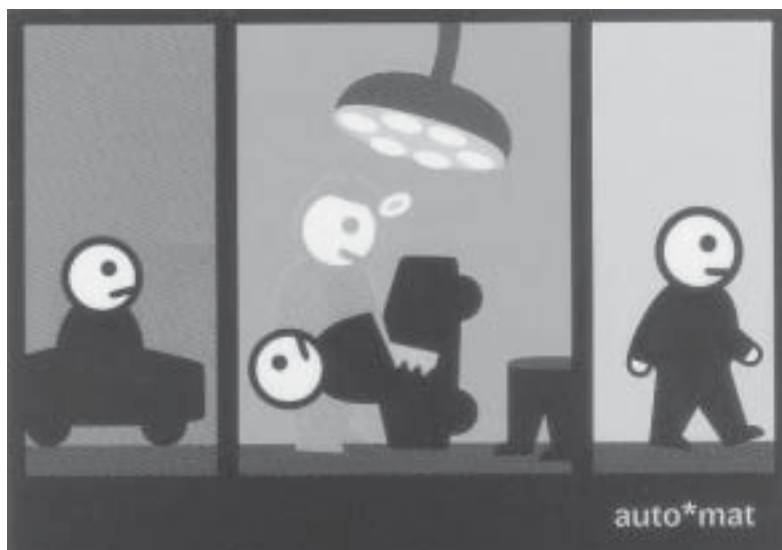
Get Your Offroad Vehicle Off the Road

On October 16, thirty citizens occupied the Bauer Millett car showroom in Manchester, England to protest against the sale of urban 4x4s and their excessive CO₂ emissions. Bauer Millett is the only showroom outside London to sell Hummers, the monster 4x4s that manage only 9.6 mpg. Several people occupied the roof of the showroom holding banners reading "4x4s: 0 to Climate Change in 11 mpg" and "4x4s fuel climate change" while others handed out certificates to showroom customers congratulating them on being champion contributors to climate change.

The action is the latest in a series of actions on climate change in the last few months. "4x4s are by far the most polluting vehicles on our streets and only 5% of them are ever taken off road. In 20 years time, people will look back and wonder why we endangered our children's future to drive around town in totally inappropriate, ridiculously large offroad vehicles. We demand that 4x4s are banned from our cities."

"But it's not just 4x4s that are the problem — we have to radically reduce carbon emissions in every area of our lives," added Emma Marsters.

- Climatecamp.org.uk/hummer.htm



*This full-colour sticker is but the latest in a series of witty graphics produced and disseminated by the carbustin' designers at auto*mat <www.auto-mat.ecn.cz>. Got a sticker? Send it to us!*

Russia

World Carfree Day 2006 came again with barely any recognition from Russian authorities. The biggest cities like Moscow stayed trapped in traffic jams for the whole day as usual. Only in the city of Nizhny Novgorod did officials endorse the day. But despite a lack of official support, carfree activists made a local buzz in many towns by promoting and holding carfree events.

Our organisation, Carfree Russia, focused on media outreach. We wrote and mailed press releases and invited reporters to attend our actions. Towards this end, Carfree Russia launched <www.22september.org.ru>, the most comprehensive carfree day resource in the Russian language and inaugurated a collective daily weblog at <www.carfree.org.ru>. The effort succeeded, with a series of interviews with carfree activists shown on national TV. Several major websites, newspapers and radio stations, including BBC Russia and Radio Free Europe, picked up the story.

The most notable part of the schedule was action in the streets. An open-air press conference was held next to Moscow city hall. After that the activists presented a new bicycle to Mayor Yuri Luzhkov. The attempt to paint a bike lane starting at city hall was thwarted, but the simplicity and low cost of adding bike lanes was noted by attending journalists.

In the evening, 100 cyclists joined a Critical Mass ride through the centre of Moscow. Up to 100 cyclists joined that night, along with friendly media representatives. No conflicts with police were noticed that time. A direct action event was done during the Mass at the British Petroleum (BP) petrol station, which was constructed in violation of local law. The station is making the ecological situation in the neighbourhood significantly worse, while the number of petrol stations nearby is already high. Critical Mass activists occupied the station, gave a couple of interviews to the press, and left "We want to breathe!" slogans on the road.

On September 25, a free party called "Stop, machine" was held at the Moscow club Zhest, including a carfree video screening, discussion and rock concert.

On September 23 in St. Petersburg, a protest action was held to support World Carfree Day and to oppose the city's transport policy, which leads to the environmental deformation due to new road construction and increased automobile infrastructure. The main project of that kind — the construction of so-called ZSD (Western high-speed ring road), the highway which is going to destroy a number of natural landscapes and living areas, and seems not to solve the continuing transport problems in St. Petersburg while spending an astronomical budget.

On September 22, the Green World group held a World Carfree Day "information picket" in the centre of Nizhny Novgorod. They were joined by the children's clubs Zeleny Parus (Green Sail), Krotzy (Moles), Zhavoronok (Skylark) and local representatives of ALF (Animal Liberation Front). Nizhny Novgorod became one of the first cities in Russia where World Carfree Day is officially recognised. The very first one was the city of Belgorod. But still the event is not as known in Russia as it should be — celebrated at the scale of a nationwide holiday. That means that next year we carfree activists are going to rely on ourselves only, and it's now time to start preparing.



photo: L. Kotek

In Prague, Czech Republic, 1,200 riders rode in a Carfree Day Critical Mass, followed by a concert and book release party for Andy Singer's CARtoons, now translated into Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, and Polish (see page 29). One week earlier, a two-day street festival replaced car traffic on an otherwise car-dominated riverfront boulevard.

Portland: Promoting a Permanent Pedestrian Plaza

Sara Stout's prize-winning street redesign (p. 15) provides an alternate vision for SW Ankeny St., a narrow, one-way, little-travelled street in Portland, Oregon.

The Portland Carfree Alliance is working with the downtown community to permanently convert one segment of that street into a public plaza. Business owners hope to raise funds to reveal the cobblestones that still lie under the asphalt, block off the street to automotive traffic, install benches, plant trees, and build a new fountain. This street could become an important part of a new pedestrian corridor linking Portland's waterfront park with its historic downtown.

Portland Carfree Days, from September 22 to 24, was held on this block in honour of World Carfree Day and to promote the permanent conversion of the block. The weekend-long event included live music, carfree art, sofas and tables, free and by-donation food, a "Mocktails in the Street" party, and a doughnut eating contest, joined by everyone from the Bicycle Transportation Alliance <bta4bikes.org> to a bicycle-mounted police officer. (For photo, see page 31.)

The community turnout for the event was incredible. Businesses on the street participated enthusiastically, many local transport luminaries were spotted, kids played in the street, and shoppers at the nearby outdoor market wandered happily down the middle of the road. Many people who live on the streets downtown came to enjoy the free food, entertainment, comfortable couches, and welcoming atmosphere, and to camp with us in our safe zone.

photo: Bruce Gray



Amsterdam: Better Luck Next Year

This year, Amsterdam did not participate in World Carfree Day, according to Joris Wijnhoven of Friends of the Earth, because the municipality was hiding behind excuses.

However, EUR 300,000 has been made available for the September 2007 event, on condition that all districts cooperate.

Only the ZuiderAmstel district is still protesting. In October, GroenLinks proposed a motion calling on the district to join the initiative. Conservative alderman Erik Koldenhof responded that there are already enough cyclists in the city and that people who want fresh air "should go to the beach."

Wijnhoven had anticipated that ZuiderAmstel might pose a problem and asked O+S to carry out a poll among district residents. The report, which has not been published yet, shows that 75% of the residents think that a carfree day should be organised. Among car owners, the percentage is only slightly lower (72%).

Making the entire area within the ring carfree also has the support of a large majority (63%). The alderman's resistance is supported by only 19% of the residents.

Considering the broad support and the fact that the municipality has made funds available, it would take a "pig-headed" district alderman to persevere in blocking the initiative, Wijnhoven says. He therefore expects that the carfree day will take place next year.

South Africa

The Gauteng province Department of Transport called its October 20 Carfree Day a success. The initiative forms part of government's new carfree campaign which declared October Public Transport Month, to be observed annually hereafter.

In the Free State, senior government officials left their vehicles at home and made use of buses. Traffic police pulled over cars with only one occupant to lecture them on the desirability of sharing lifts.

In Johannesburg, public transport bodies like Metro Bus and Putco gave free rides to users.

Johannesburg's deputy director of transport management, Alfred Sam, said, "We certainly don't have the best transport system in the world, but we want to sensitise people to the issues that are prevalent in the system. Hopefully this campaign will assist us in identifying new issues and incorporating those solutions into the City's Transport Plan."

Sarajevo

Ecology Association "Sprofonzo-Bezdan" made an agreement with the city transport company (KJKP GRAS) to observe carfree day on September 22 in order to promote ecologically friendly means of transport.

A special free informational tram toured the city from 9 am to 1 pm. This "press conference on rails" was decorated with posters promoting public transport and provided an open forum for city officials and citizens to exchange ideas.

Seattle: Carfree for Two

I celebrated carfree day by taking the bus to the office where I work in the communications wing of a large public agency that is building a new public transport system for Seattle and central Puget Sound. On September 22 we put on a "media event" celebrating the start of construction on the final leg of a light rail system connecting the city centre with the airport. The new line will serve some of the most transit-dependent neighbourhoods in the city.

I'd been back in the office for only a couple weeks after two months paternity leave to help at home after the arrival of our second child, a baby girl. In an effort to milk every last drop of pleasure from this time off, I spent as little time in my car as possible. Our family is fortunate to live a block from an organic grocery and seven blocks from a bustling commercial district with affordable restaurants, a butcher and a weekly farmers' market in the summer. Five blocks in another direction is Lake Washington, with wonderful parks and swimming beaches offering views of the Cascade Mountains and Mt. Rainier.

My main job for the summer was to take care of our three-year-old daughter Sadie while my wife focused on the baby. Searching my slightly burnt memory recesses, my earliest recollections are not of being shuttled around in cars; they are of tromping through the woods, learning to swim and exploring the world on foot and bicycle around my neighbourhood. I wanted Sadie to have the same opportunities. In the process, I got to know my current neighbourhood — and daughter — in more intimate ways than I ever could have with her lashed into a car seat behind me.

Together we tracked the progress of neighbourhood raspberry plantings, sampled the fruits of various apple, pear and plum trees, and discovered secret ways to get to the lake where we found little-used beaches. We got to know the grocery checkers by name (and vice versa), learned where the beef and pork from the butcher comes from, and got to know our neighbours better than we had in the two previous years we've lived in the neighbourhood. And for the first time I think my daughter could comprehend and appreciate the beauty of a Northwest summer. Hopefully, some vague recollection of picking raspberries (razzzzberries, in her language), swimming in cold lakes and getting to know the world while walking side by side with her dad will stick in her mind more than car seats and traffic when she's my age.

- Bruce Gray



The Bicycle Ballet <www.bicycleballet.co.uk> is a half-hour outdoor performance by a core group of six movement artists and up to 100 volunteers. The show conveys people's cycling stories through synchronised cycling formations inspired by the film choreography of Busby Berkeley. The first performance took place in Brighton, England on September 22, 2006.

Bogota, Colombia: Towards Carfree Cities VI

From September 20-24, 120 people from all over the Americas and abroad descended on Bogotá, Colombia, for this year's lively Towards Carfree Cities conference, held at the Museo de 'El Chico' and the Universidad del Rosario and hosted by World Carfree Network member organisation Fundación Ciudad Humana. The mayor of Bogotá, Luis Eduardo Garzón convened the public day.

The mornings focused on presentations and debates while the afternoons featured workshops, excursions and on-site visits. Attendees had the chance to tour a Transmilenio BRT facility and to ride bikes in Bogotá's weekly Carfree Sunday, in which 120 km of streets are closed to car traffic. Participants also took part in a "Street Conversion Design" workshop and international competition, with the aim of transforming spaces monopolised by transport into spaces designed for community enjoyment. (See pages 14-17 for results.)

Overall, the conference emphasised various successful projects and initiatives in Bogotá and across Latin America that cities elsewhere can learn from and emulate. Just before the start of the conference, Bogotá initiated a street closure programme in the historic La Candelaria district, with the eventual aim of creating a sizable carfree area there.

For more details of the conference see <www.worldcarfree.net/conference/2006/index.php>.

Montreal: Re-dying the Past

About 200 enthusiastic "ecomobilists" staged an accident scene during Die-In 2006 on September 29 in Montreal's Philips Square. The event aimed to raise public awareness about the hidden costs of car use — the most dire of which is death.

The die-in was also a commemoration of the 1976 die-in (below left) by Le Monde à Bicyclette, which worked for years to further the cyclo-environmentalist cause. The event was a first attempt by bike activists from Montreal to organise actions outside of the monthly Critical Mass. It is also the beginning of a new organisation dedicated to gain more access for the "ecomobilists" amidst the car-colonised streets of the city! More photos at <www.die-in-mtl.org>.



photo: Robert Skinner



Winners Announced

What do a Swiss Family Robinson-style tree house, an "Ask the Rabbi" advice booth and a car converted into a flower bed all have in common?

They were the main features of three winning designs in our Street Conversion Design Contest. All of the nine winning submissions reintroduced (on paper, for now) a level of humanity to the streetscape, responding creatively and visually to the question "How can we transform existing areas to create lively people-oriented spaces free of traffic?"

The competition was held on September 22 at the Towards Carfree Cities VI conference in Bogota, Colombia. Participants of World Carfree Network's international exchange "Together to Revitalise our Urban Environment" (TRUE) served as competition judges, with facilitation by Lloyd Wright, a consultant in carfree development based in Quito, Ecuador.

While some of the designs are based on pure imagination, others propose concrete changes to specific real-life places. Either way, the designs are intended to be realisable. The design from Paris, for example, may become an installation at the annual Paris Plage (Paris Beach) event.

THE COMMITTEE FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF PARKING LOTS INTO PARKS AND GARDENS considers that paradise is not to be found on the other side of the world anymore, but has to be replanted here, where we live, everyday.



The Florallye Project's eloquent verbal and visual testimony.

Florallye Project, Miguel Dorado

The winning designs sought to:

- concentrate destinations to reduce travel distances
- design features that contribute to a sense of place and community
- choose innovative, creative uses for space that increase quality of life
- minimise the amount of space devoted solely to transport purposes
- use space efficiently and eliminate wasted or 'dead' space

Parking Space Category

First Prize

Linda Kellner-Miller of Wisconsin Dells (WI), USA

This design features interconnected curving modular benches and circular beds of grass or creeping mother-of-thyme. The artist proposes this design for use along the main street of her town, as a way to help extend pedestrian traffic (of primarily tourists) further along an existing corridor, to what is now a neglected block of businesses.

Second Prize

Vera Szabadkai of Budapest, Hungary

This design offers five alternative uses of a parking space. Four of them are signed booths with an attendant or sales person: (a) an "Ask the Rabbi" advice booth; (b) a "Theatre Programme & Tickets" booth flanked by two castle-like turrets; (c) a "Fortune-Telling" tent; and (d) a "Bike Repairs" business. The fifth alternative is a stage with performers.

Third Prize

Miguel Dorado of Paris, France

This car-as-flower-bed design comes from The Committee for the Transformation of Parking Lots into Parks & Gardens (or Florallye Project), which pre-dates the competition. Although the design isn't strictly carfree, it proposes "good smelling" and truly non-polluting cars (at last!), as well as a practical solution to post-consumer disposal. See

<www.horizonproduction.com/florallyes/> for a Flash animation.



Drawing: Vera Szabadkai

Street Segment Category

First Prize

Brian Smith of San Francisco (CA), USA

A bike path winds gracefully through this street segment, while a large grassy area (including little hills) provides the environment for a picnic area, a playground and a fountain for children to play in. There is also a farmers' market, a performance area and a community garden.

Second Prize

Sara Stout, of Portland (OR), USA

This is a redesign of the existing SW Ankeny Alley — currently used as a shortcut by speeding motorists — in the artist's hometown. The new design would close the street to cars and add features such as planter boxes, benches and outdoor seating for the existing cafes and restaurants. A number of modifications to surrounding areas were also represented in the plan.

Third Prize

Linda Kellner-Miller of Wisconsin Dells (WI), USA

This design includes some of the same features as above in the parking space category, but with varying arrangements, and with the addition of a trolley/tram line, flower pots and water features.

Intersection Category

First Prize

Justin Hyatt of Budapest, Hungary

A number of unusual features can be found in this design: (a) both covered and open *Bächle*, little streams running through gullies, as found in the German city of Freiburg; (b) a circular structure that combines flowing water and elevated seating; (c) an exhibition space with large screening canvas; (d) a pond with a sitting deck and adjacent climbable towers; and (e) a veritable constellation of rectangular chairs and tables.

Second Prize

Members of Zöld Fiatalok (collaborative effort) of Budapest, Hungary

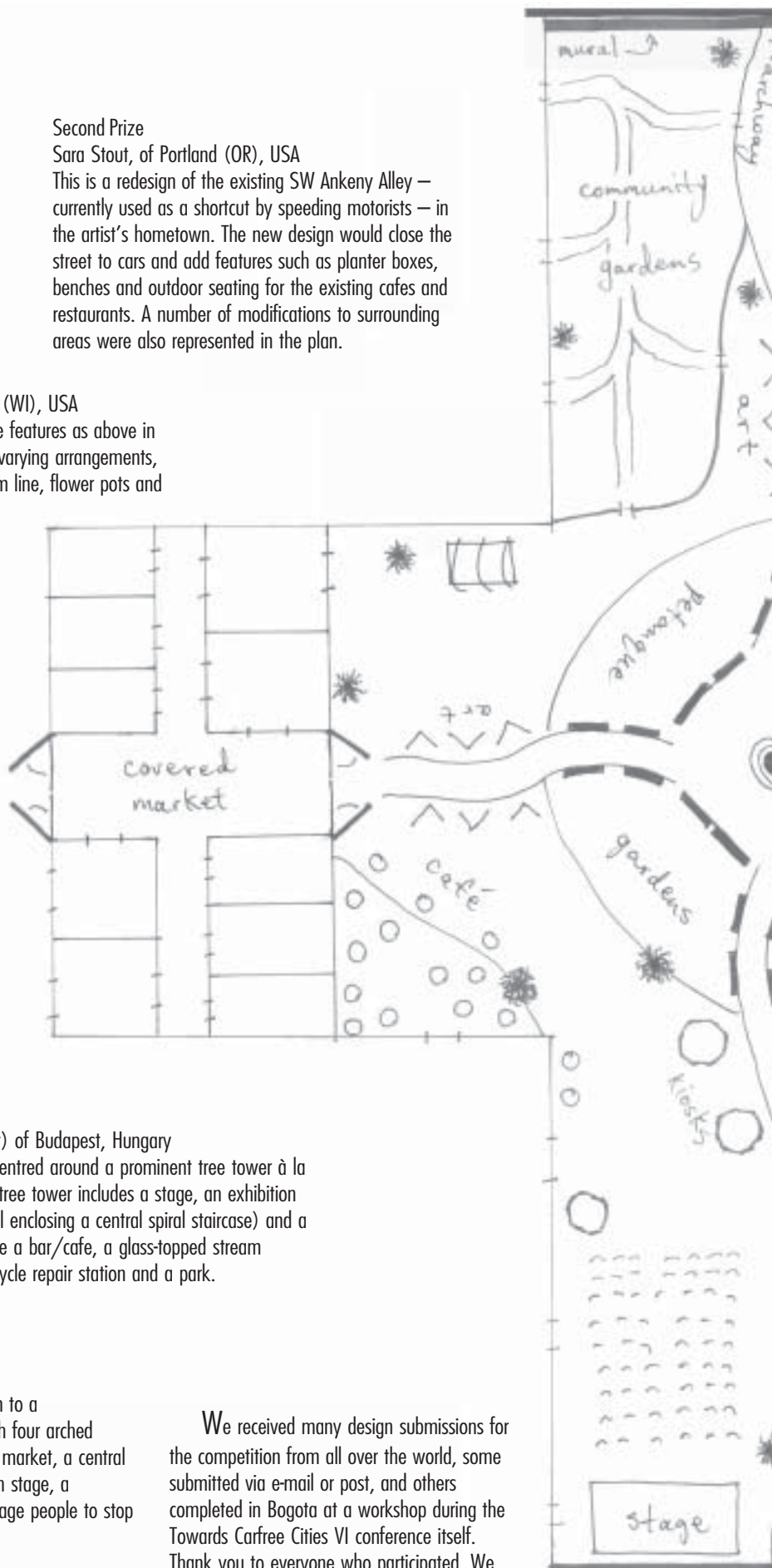
A city-meets-nature park-like transformation, centred around a prominent tree tower à la Swiss Family Robinson (see next page). The tree tower includes a stage, an exhibition space (with a transparent cylinder display wall enclosing a central spiral staircase) and a look-out platform. Surrounding features include a bar/cafe, a glass-topped stream walkway, a playground/children's area, a bicycle repair station and a park.

Third Prize

Randall Ghent of Prague, Czech Republic

This design (right) proposes the conversion of an intersection to a neighbourhood focal point as a walled courtyard/square with four arched gateways as entry points. Design features include a covered market, a central fountain, cafes, gardens, an outdoor entertainment area with stage, a schoolyard, and other community uses. The aim is to encourage people to stop and enjoy the space rather than simply walk through it.

We received many design submissions for the competition from all over the world, some submitted via e-mail or post, and others completed in Bogota at a workshop during the Towards Carfree Cities VI conference itself. Thank you to everyone who participated. We look forward to repeating the contest in 2007 and hope to see at least some of these designs implemented next year.



Drawing: R. Ghent

Street Conversion — From Vision to Reality

One of the most radical carfree street conversions imaginable was completed on Oct. 1, 2005 and has proven wildly popular. The Cheonggyecheon stream in Seoul, South Korea, had been buried beneath an enormous elevated motorway, and the city spent US\$375 million to have the highway removed and replaced with a waterfront lined with greenery, high quality walkways and public space. A hostile stretch of noise, dirt and grey became a peaceful oasis of blue and green.

Now, if *that* can be accomplished, what *can't* be achieved? Surely the carfree conversion of a single intersection and its four adjacent blocks is not out of the question. And once it's done successfully in one place, it becomes a model likely to spread.

Carfree streets need not be corridors for shoppers between The Disney Store and Sunglass Hut. It's possible to make the street the destination itself. It can be a stage, both figuratively and literally — a place for music, dance and cinema; a platform for community interaction. The rush of traffic and hustle-bustle of consumer excess can both be held at bay.

So let us rebuild a habitat from our existing streetscapes, choosing human-scaled and destination-rich instead of oversized and destination-poor. Here are seven design strategies and three practical proposals to bring us closer to that goal:

Design strategies:

1. Concentrate on transforming places that are not strictly shopping areas, as to decentralise activity within a city to the neighbourhood level. People shouldn't have to go to the city centre to find lively, human-scaled places with lots to see and do. Add life to the neighbourhood centres where there are already some attractions.

2. Don't neglect the potential for non-commercial uses of space. Along with pubs and cafes of course, what really creates community are schools, libraries, community centres, sports facilities, groups, events, projects and programmes. How can some of these be incorporated into the carfree space?

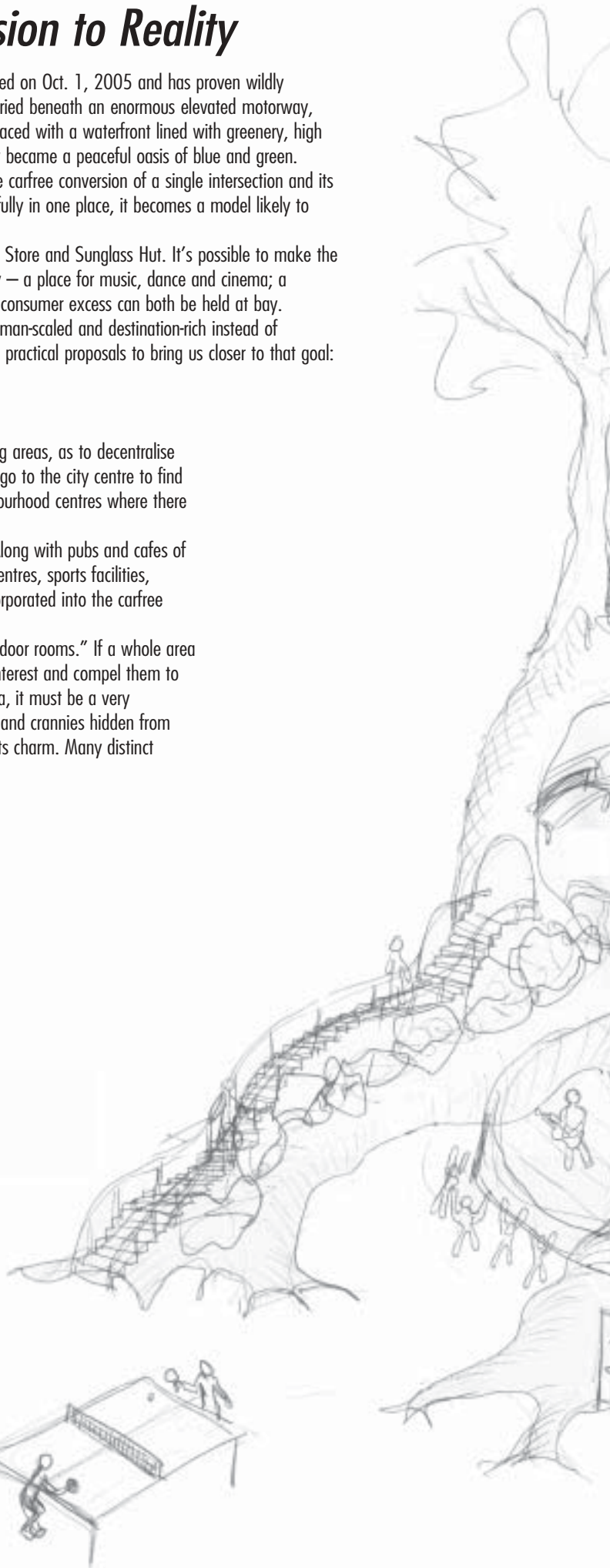
3. Break up oversized spaces into smaller, more comfortable "outdoor rooms." If a whole area can be taken in with a single glance, it probably won't capture people's interest and compel them to linger. But if the word "explore" describes how people experience the area, it must be a very interesting place indeed. It means there's a sense of mystery, with nooks and crannies hidden from immediate view, and where it takes time to discover the place's secrets, its charm. Many distinct "places" can be found within a modest amount of space.

4. To counter an oversized environment, place new buildings in the middle of wide streets, creating a narrower street on each side. Leave spaces for public squares between buildings. Small blocks of buildings (and passageways through them) allow for many narrow streets rather than a few wide streets. This creates a more varied, interesting environment for pedestrians, and leads to more of a sense of place.

5. If pedestrian traffic isn't terribly high, go beyond the obligatory benches, trees and fountains and come up with some imaginative street features that will become destinations in themselves. Don't just leave a "blank slate" where all activity is dependent on the spontaneous actions of passers-by — or else that activity isn't likely to materialise enough to create a sense of liveliness.

6. Small carfree areas can be unified by a specific theme, like Berlin's "Youth Street" or whatever is appropriate for the context. This can also be a way to celebrate local culture or natural heritage.

7. "Carfree" need not be the sole or stated *purpose* of the carfree area; it can be more of a *means* to achieving something else — such as providing the opportunity for children to safely gather and play in front of their school, or providing older people of the neighbourhood with a quiet, peaceful gathering place.





Practical proposals:

1. In areas of high pedestrian traffic where the street would not be made carfree, seek to replace some or all on-street parking with other features. For example, a kiosk-sized business can fit in a parking space, maintain existing pedestrian space on the pavement (sidewalk) and contribute to the life of the street. The kiosk or market stall could be rectangular and even three-sided to allow for more interaction with passers-by. The municipal rent collected for the former parking space would offset the former revenue from the parking meter and fines. The programme could be set up to only allow new start-up businesses to participate, and only those run by people who are disadvantaged in some way. A project similar to the above has been realised in Stoke Newington, London, UK.

2. Parking lots or block-long street segments can be converted to parks or other uses. In Berkeley, California, USA, a parking lot for 28 cars was transformed into a park called Halcyon Commons. Neighbours first held a Solstice party on the site in 1992 and began to imagine it as a park. They formed a neighbourhood association in the same year. After various meetings, hearings, design workshops and volunteer park-building days, Halcyon Commons was completed in July 1996. That's four years from "wouldn't it be nice..." to reality. See the complete timeline at <www.bpfp.org/AdoptAParkGroups/Halcyon/#chronology>.

3. There's no reason why cars need to be able to drive through every intersection in your city. Crelleplatz, at one end of the now traffic-calmed Crellestrasse in the Berlin district of Schöneberg, was once an intersection like any other. Thanks to efforts by local citizens, it's now a carfree public square where children's activities often take place. In Bogota, Colombia, the Zona Rosa T is two blocks forming a "T" intersection in the middle, now a lively carfree area that serves as a hub of restaurants and bars, most with outdoor seating. All that's missing are troupes of street performers who could entertain the captive audience. The process to bring such a project to reality might be similar to the Halcyon Common process above.

Lack of imagination and desire for change can be overcome. Just like that buried Cheonggyecheon stream in Seoul, your community can breathe a new life. - **RG**



Highlights of prize-winning sketch by Zöld Fialalok (collaborative effort) of Budapest, Hungary

Transfixed by the Headlights of the Hurtling Machine

by Derrick Jensen

When I'm on the road, I always carry a baseball bat in the back of my truck to use each time I see a snake. If the snake is sunning herself, I stop the truck and use the bat to shoo her to safety. Sometimes, if the snake is especially sluggish, I loop her over the bat and carry her out of traffic. If she's already dead I don't use the bat at all, but carry her to my truck, then take her to some quiet spot where she can lie to decompose with dignity.

But most often when I stop I have to use the bat not to save the snake but kill her. Too many times I've seen them live and writhing with broken backs, flattened vertebrae, even crushed heads.

I hate cars, and what they do. I do not so much mind killing, if there is a purpose; if, for example, I'm going to eat what I kill. But I despise this incidental killing that comes each time a soft and living body happens to be in our way. Such a killing is without purpose, and often even without awareness. I have driven through swarms of mating mayflies, and have seen a windshield turn red blotch by blotch as it strikes engorged mosquitos. I once saw a migration of salamanders destroyed by heavy traffic in a late evening rain. I leapt from my car and ran to carry as many as I could from one side of the road to the other, but for every one I grabbed there were fifty who made it not much further than the first white line.

A couple of years ago someone dropped off a huge white rabbit near my home. Knowing the cruelty of abandoning pets into the wild and the stupidity of introducing exotics did not lessen my enjoyment of watching him cavort with the local cottontails a third his size. But I often worried. If at one hundred yards I could easily pick him out from among the jumbled rocks that were his home, how much more easily would he be seen by coyotes or hawks? Each time I saw him I was surprised anew at his capacity to live in the wild.

I needn't have worried about predators. One day I walked to get my mail, and saw him dead and stiff in the centre of the road. I was saddened, and as I carried him away to where he could at last be eaten by coyotes, I considered my shock of recognition at his death. I had, as I believe happens constantly in our culture — in our time of the final grinding away at what shreds of ecological integrity still remain intact — been fearing precisely the wrong thing. I had been fearing a natural death. But in one way or another, most of us living today — human and nonhuman alike — will not die the natural death that has been the birthright of every being since life began. Instead we will find ourselves struck down — like the rabbit, like the snakes, like the cat whose skull I had to crush after his spine was severed by the shiny fender of a speeding car — incidental victims of the modern, industrial, mechanical economy. This is no less true for the starving billions of humans than it is for the salmon incidentally ground up in the turbines of dams, and no less true for those who die of chemically-induced cancers than it is for the mayflies I killed by the thousands, blithely driving from one place to another.

All of us today stand as if transfixed by the headlights of the hurtling machine that inevitably will destroy us and all others in its path. Oh, we move slightly to the left or slightly to the right, but I think, as I carefully place the rabbit in a tufted hollow at the base of a tree, that even to the last, most of us have no idea what it is that's killing us.

First published in <www.wildlandscpr.org> The Road-RIPorter, this essay also appears in A Road Runs Through It, reviewed on page 27. Reprinted here by author's permission, all rights reserved.



Pete Bevis, *Spill Kill Otter Heads*, bronze, 1992

Road Kills/Spill Kills

by Pete Bevis



photo courtesy of PeteBevis.com

Our cars cost more than we acknowledge. The money spent is easy to calculate. What's more difficult to assess is what we pay in terms of lost humanity and compassion as we drive blithely on leaving death in our wakes.

I document innocent creatures who have fallen victim to our everyday automotive lifestyle. My bronze sculptures memorialize those moments of casual slaughter which usually go unnoticed or are quickly forgotten.

My crew and I don hard hats and safety vests, place orange cones and signs in the road, then work in traffic, conscious all the time of our own mortality as traffic whizzes by oblivious to our purpose. We do this in order to make a plaster mold at the scene — *in-situ* — where the animal lay.

The corpse decomposes and is lost to earth and time, but the bronze castings remain and remind us of the apparently acceptable losses — call it collateral damage — we are willing to ignore for the mad dash of our oiled wheels.

I undertook this series of sculptures in 1976 using the casting facilities at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. I moved to Seattle, Washington in 1979 and built my own studio and foundry. After establishing the Fremont Fine Arts Foundry by 1987, I recommenced the molding and casting of the Road Kill Series in 1988.

When the oil tanker Exxon Valdez belched her guts in Alaska on Good Friday 1989, I concluded that the innocent animals that perished in the 11 million gallon oil spill died for our automotive appetite as well, and I expanded the Road Kill series to include Spill Kills, again travelling to the sites of the creatures' last moments to create enduring depictions of those avoidable tragedies.

I intend to tour this collection in partnerships with Zoos and Aquariums and exhibit the bronze sculptures as educational and thought provoking realisations of the toll we humans take on the living world around us.



It's the largest engineering feat the world has ever seen. It triggered the greatest migration in US history. It devastated American cities. Although nominally complete, it is falling apart faster than it can be maintained yet continues to expand. It's a mistake of epic proportions — one which the rest of the world is hellbent on repeating....

Unhappy Birthday

The US Interstate Highway System Turns 50

by Tamra Myers and Sarah Kavage

Begun in 1956 and ultimately totalling 47,000 miles of four-lane divided highway, the Dwight D. Eisenhower System of Interstate and Defense Highways — commonly called “the interstate” — remains the largest public works project in US history, and perhaps the world. No other country boasts a network of highways that compares in scale or in traffic carried. The interstate system changed the fundamental economic fabric of the nation and played a major role in changing the face of US cities. It altered how and where Americans live and work, turning them into a nation of drivers with cars for second homes.

In 2006, the interstate system carried far more traffic than its designers ever anticipated, bearing three trillion vehicle miles traveled. In 1956, many Americans owned cars, but most long-distance passenger travel and freight shipping was done by train. The interstate system helped make automobiles and trucks the primary means of personal and freight transportation and continues to be a boon to the many industries — oil, car, tire, construction, trucking — which lobbied to have it built.

When President Dwight David Eisenhower forwarded the funding plan for the interstate system to Congress in 1955, he cited the reasons for building the system as follows: 1) improving highway safety; 2) providing a means of rapidly evacuating American cities in the event of a nuclear attack; 3) fueling economic growth by improving the quality of the nation's highways and reducing traffic congestion.

While there was some merit to the safety rationale, actual results are more dubious.

The argument that the interstate system was critical to national defense was largely a spurious one, manufactured by those allied to highway construction interest groups to capitalise on Cold War paranoia. Although ostensibly built to facilitate troop movements over great distances, the overwhelming majority of interstate users are civilians traveling locally.

Economic growth appears to have been the interstate system's only predicted result to have been borne out, although some measures of economic growth have actually declined over the life of the system, mostly due to the effects of congestion and the loss of tax base land in urban areas. Also, the economic growth stimulated by the interstate system has come at a tremendous societal and environmental cost, the full measure of which is yet to be seen. The heavy reliance on foreign oil to fuel cars — and thus the economy — has had a high social and political cost, and will continue to drain all manner of resources as oil becomes more scarce in the coming years.

Whatever its original intents, the interstate highway system has in fact made the majority of Americans reliant on the automobile for getting just about anywhere, creating a legacy of congestion, pollution, suburban sprawl, environmental degradation, and oil addiction.

The Rhetoric

On June 29, 1956, President Eisenhower signed the *Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956*, the final political action that guaranteed federal funds to build the system which now bears his name.

But the push for the interstate system began well before the *Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956*. In 1937 President Franklin D. Roosevelt commissioned a report from the Bureau of Public Roads on the feasibility and cost of building cross-country highways as toll roads. The report concluded that toll roads would not generate sufficient income to fund their construction and recommended instead a nation-wide system of highways to be funded by fuel taxes. A few years later, Roosevelt commissioned another report on the feasibility of a nationwide network of highways. This report, which was completed and delivered to Congress in 1944, laid out a design for a system of 38,900 miles of new highway that formed the basis for the interstate system we have today. As originally designed, the interstate connected all of the major cities in the country and nearly all of the smaller cities. Intended for long-distance travel, the original plan

did not have the highways entering the cities themselves. This was to change, with devastating effect on American urban life and culture.

When Eisenhower took office in 1953, he was determined to find the necessary funding to build the proposed system. Eisenhower had a lifelong interest in improving the safety and quality of American roads. He also feared a recession, despite the strength of the post-war economy. He considered public works a sure way to stimulate the economy and create new jobs, as had Roosevelt before him. Eisenhower's military experiences with the German *autobahn* during World War II had cemented his conviction that the United States needed a network of high-speed highways for strategic reasons. He believed that improved highways could facilitate the evacuation of cities in the event of a nuclear attack, as well as aid in military mobility.

These three arguments — the economy, safety, and civil defense — formed the basis of a speech given at the 1954 Governor's Conference by then Vice President Richard Nixon. This speech unveiled Eisenhower's \$50 billion Grand Plan to upgrade the nation's road network over a period of ten years. At that time all state highway project funding was matched by the federal government at 50%, with an annual federal appropriation of \$875 million for highway construction. Even though Nixon's speech made no firm commitments, the promise of \$25 billion from the federal government was a windfall for the construction, oil, automotive, trucking, real estate, and concrete interests who stood to gain from building more highways. Highway interest groups and lobbyists immediately converged on Washington to influence the potential legislation in their favor.

Eisenhower appointed his friend and advisor General Lucius Clay to head an advisory committee on the feasibility of building an interstate system. The Clay Committee's mandate was to work with a federal committee and with the state governors to develop a funding plan to submit to Congress.

After a few rounds of wrangling and compromise over how the system would be >>



Illustration: Jed Dunkerley

funded, Congress finally passed the *Federal Highway Aid Act of 1956*, which provided for the construction of the interstate system over 13 years and authorized \$25 billion in federal funding. The states began building new highways almost immediately after Eisenhower signed the bill into law.

Initial recommendations had been that the federal government should foot about 30% of the cost of the interstate system, but the 1956 bill stipulated 90% in federal funding, citing the project as essential to national defense. Despite the fact that evacuating cities quickly by road in the event of a nuclear attack was impractical, and that domestic military mobility in the event of a nuclear attack by the Soviet Union would likely be irrelevant, the fear was so great that those backing the bill in Congress were able to justify the remarkable federal expenditure on the grounds of national security.

In conjunction with the passage of the Highway Act, Congress established the Highway Trust Fund for maintaining revenue from highway use taxes. Unlike most tax revenue, which goes into the general treasury, the gasoline tax revenue that flows into the Highway Trust Fund was, until 1973, earmarked for highway construction only. By designating gas tax revenue for highway construction, Congress created in effect a self-perpetuating building programme — the more people drove, the more revenue was generated for highway building.

The Highway Lobby Is Born

From the time that Eisenhower unveiled his Grand Plan to the day that he signed the 1956 bill into law, groups representing highway interests lobbied Congress to encourage strong federal funding for the interstate. The 90% federal funding that Congress ultimately approved exceeded their wildest hopes.

Both the Clay Committee and the Senate subcommittee held hearings that were heavily attended by representatives for highway interests. The groups represented included the Automobile Manufacturers Association (AMA), the American Road Builders Association (ARBA), the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHO), the American Automobile Association (AAA), the American Trucking Association, the National Parking Association, the Automotive Safety Foundation, the National Association of Motor Bus Operators, Sinclair Oil, the American Petroleum Institute, the Truck-Trailer Manufacturers Association, the Associated General Contractors of America, and the Private Truck Council of America. Robert Moses, New York City's highway czar, also testified in favour of building the interstate system.

Absent were the voices of the public who would be using and paying for the new roads. Not invited were those whose neighbourhoods would be bisected by the urban segments of the interstate system. Left behind were those small towns and businesses, which once bypassed by the interstate, would no longer have any customers.

The highway lobbyists all argued that new highways were necessary to improve ever-worsening congestion even though in truth they understood that building new highways would actually increase traffic. Actually, increasing traffic was their goal. Several of them said as much to the Clay Committee or during the subsequent congressional hearings. Speaking before the Senate subcommittee, Commissioner of Public Roads C.D. Curtiss argued that revenue from the gasoline tax should increase at a rate sufficient to fund the construction of the interstate system because so many more drivers would be enticed onto the new highways: "Congestion on many city streets has resulted in smaller annual increases in urban traffic than would be the case if adequate urban highway facilities were available."

The highway lobbyists also recognised that interstate toll highways would never provide enough revenue to build the interstate system, so

“**Roadbuilding as economic catalyst is the black hole of transport policy, bending political will around it with an attraction few can resist.**”

they lobbied hard against any suggestion that the system be funded by tolls. Since toll roads charge a per-use fee, they tend to discourage local traffic. Toll highways also collect only from users of that highway, while the gas tax is incurred by all drivers, every time they drive, whether or not they ever get on the highway.

The highway lobbyists had served their interest groups well. The 90% federal financing was too great a temptation for the states to resist; they quickly found ways to turn their urban highway projects into interstate projects, which brought the huge swaths of concrete and high traffic volumes into cities, dividing neighbourhoods, disrupting communities, and fueling suburban sprawl. The Highway Trust Fund proved to be a nearly unassailable stream of income for every highway interest group.

The Reality

For the most part, critics at the time were voices in the wilderness. Early critics of prominence included the late senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York State and planner and urbanist Lewis Mumford. The late author Jane Jacobs' watershed book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* was written largely as a

response to the large urban highway and redevelopment projects that Robert Moses was building in New York City at the time.

Overall, there was widespread public support for the highway act. Lewis Mumford explained it this way: "The public, conditioned by pre-war decades of acclaim for road building, accustomed to equating the value of a public work with its size, unaccustomed to critical analysis of public works programs, desperate for action, showed no greater understanding, no comprehension that there might be drawbacks to the biggest road-building plan ever." He added, lamentably, that "no one is against highways."

More subtle warnings also went unheeded. In 1956 geologist Marion Hubbert predicted — and coined the term — peak oil. From a user's standpoint, this would mean massive roadways could not be sustainable and wiser infrastructure investments should be made. But to a corporate commodity culture (Hubbert's landmark paper was delivered to the American Petroleum Institute), 50 years equalled 200 quarters of gross profits. The road may not have been paved with gold, but that's where it led.

As for politicians, highways were assumed to be as good as it gets regardless of party affiliation. The Highway Act brought a lot of money to nearly every state in the country, created union jobs and was great for business. This lure of roadbuilding as economic catalyst continues to be the black hole of transport policy, bending political will around it with an attraction few can resist.

Although there was little pre-emptive opposition, once freeways started being rammed through cities, homes, and neighbourhoods, the freeway revolts began. The first flared up in San Francisco when the *San Francisco Chronicle* in 1955 published a map of proposed routes. Neighbourhood and civic organisations in other cities followed suit, with protests continuing throughout the '60s and '70s in many cities across the US, including Baltimore, Washington, Miami, Nashville, New Orleans, New York, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Detroit, and Atlanta. Although in many cases construction schedules were sped up so as to not have to respond to the protests, a number of routes were modified or canceled.

When examining the outcome, the arguments used to justify the interstate system are questionable. Moreover, it is likely that the system's inability to deliver on its promises of safety and enhanced national defense had been known almost since its beginning. Documentation of corruption, unsafe and careless design practices, and impacts to the environment, to cities, and to poor populations began shortly after the Highway Act was passed.

Civil Defense

Given the highway congestion people experience just getting into and out of a city on a routine

basis, the thought of highways being able to expedite the evacuation of an urban region seems laughable. The parallel examples of evacuations during Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita (in August and September 2005, respectively) make this point abundantly clear.

Evacuation preparations that assumed everyone had access to private cars trapped tens of thousands of people who did not own motor vehicles in New Orleans when Hurricane Katrina hit. Such an approach leaves those without cars without escape — including the sick, children and the elderly, and people who don't want or can't afford cars. In more car-oriented cities, such as Houston, which was evacuated for Hurricane Rita a month after Katrina, highways were certainly no assurance of getting out of town in a reliable fashion. Trapped in traffic jams for two days in the Texas heat, many people ran out of gas and had to rely on emergency aid.

Even without the benefit of hindsight, the first investigation into the highway programme in 1960 revealed that despite the programme's stated goal of national and civil defense, many of

report again relies on the flawed assumption that evacuees have access to cars.

Safety

At first glance, the US Highway System's positive impact on safety seems clear. The FHWA claims that, per mile, the interstates are not only the safest part of the highway system, but that construction of the interstates decreased the number of fatalities substantially. However, the measure of highway safety that the FHWA uses, fatalities per mile, may in fact be misleading. Economists Todd Litman and Steven Fitzroy point out that, because the highway system also facilitated rapid increases in the number of miles traveled, fatalities per capita may be a better measure. It better acknowledges the increased risk associated with highway building, which stimulates sprawl and increases per capita vehicle travel. A per capita measure is also a more standard public health measure of risk.

When measured *per-vehicle-mile*, crash rates appear to have declined to an astounding degree over time. When measured *per capita*, the decline

Helen Leavitt discusses early safety failures early on, suggesting that the safety justification was in practice not enforced. There was a 1969 deadline for meeting new highway safety standards; failure to meet the deadline was to result in a 10% cut in federal dollars. But in 1967 the government announced that it was not planning any harsh penalties against states which failed to meet the standards. As a result, many interstate segments around the country were designed and built well below the lauded safety standards.

Additionally, recent studies document that spending time in cars and living in suburbs increases the likelihood of obesity and has increased childhood asthma rates in a number of urban and suburban areas. Rising rates of largely preventable diseases and associated health care costs due to the car oriented lifestyle indicate that while good roads are safer than bad roads, all roads engender health and safety risks.

The Economy

The great beneficiary of the interstate highway system has been the US economy. Those



Broken Bridge. Jeff Mihalvo, www.mihalvo.com

the highways that had been built in the first four years were not suitable for these purposes. The minimum vertical clearance for overpasses on the interstate system was 14 feet, but important weapons and other materials exceeded this height once loaded on transporters. The vertical minimum was raised to 16 feet in 1960; by that time more than 2,200 bridges had been built to the 14 foot standard and had to be reconstructed. Even though Eisenhower may have seen civil defense as a good reason to build the highway system, it appears as though it was not the motivating factor for local state road departments and their contractors.

Similar scare tactics are still used today to justify highway expansion. On the 50th anniversary of the interstate highway system, the American Highway Users Alliance released a report finding that at least 25 urban areas with populations over one million could face greater evacuation challenges than New Orleans faced with Katrina. Twenty of the 37 urban areas surveyed received a failing score for their evacuation capacity. This

is not nearly as dramatic, especially when one considers the generally pathetic state of American roads in the early part of the 1900s. Further, these statistics do not take into account the large changes in cars since the 1930s. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) itself states that a large deal of credit for decreased vehicle fatalities can be attributed to features that make vehicles safer such as shatterproof glass, padded interiors, air bags, and of course, safety belts. The decline in drunk driving is also a factor.

And although for drivers the interstates may be statistically the safest roads in the country, they pose a clear danger to pedestrians. With only 1% of the total road mileage, over 10% percent of all pedestrian fatalities occur on interstates, with 12% of all interstate fatalities being pedestrians. This figure is especially striking given that pedestrians are generally prohibited from interstate highways; although fatality statistics do not specify, it's likely that in most cases these pedestrians were stranded motorists seeking help.

In her book, *Superhighways — Superhoax*,

Americans who most benefited from the strength of the US economy during the past 50 years experienced additional standard-of-living gains from the construction of the interstate system.

But the interstate system was not the only answer to fueling the rapid post-war growth of the American economy. It did have that effect, but railroads, quality public transport systems, and models for well-planned communities might have been just as successful had the right incentives been in place and the political leadership been more far-sighted and less beholden to special interests. History will be the judge as to whether the economic success brought about by the interstate system is a long-lasting phenomenon or relatively brief, but as the world continues burning through 84 million barrels of oil per day and irrevocably damaging the environment, the sustainability of this success looks ever more doubtful.

The interstate system may have boosted the US economy and the prospects of the middle class, but it was not for their welfare that the

>>

interstate system was built. If it had been, the interstate system would have connected urban centres, but would have avoided encroaching on the cities themselves. It would have integrated with public transport systems and left the integrity of neighbourhoods intact. If the well-being of the average American had been the goal, the public officials managing the funds would have dipped into the rich coffers of the highway trust fund for purposes other than building more highways.

The Costs

Not only did the interstate system fail to deliver on its promises, but it also incurred tremendous social and environmental costs. Because it fostered white flight and suburbanisation, the highway system indirectly resulted in the destruction of countless inner cities. It also created huge swaths of dead space, fragmenting the urban fabric and making pedestrian, bicycle and public transport travel — and city life in general — more difficult and less desirable.

It created environmental impacts that reach far beyond just the paths of the highways themselves, penetrating deep into watersheds and reaching high into the atmosphere to fuel global climate change.

By supporting a lifestyle where US citizens are utterly dependent on and inefficiently consuming one fuel source, it jeopardised the country's future. And although it may not have been possible to anticipate some of these impacts in 1956, a number of cities had already experienced the large scale displacement and decline in central business districts due to highway building. By the time the Highway Act was signed, the phenomenon of the "freeway revolts" had already begun in San Francisco.

The Cost to Cities

Cities sustained deep wounds from the interstate system. Much of the damage occurred in urban areas, which accounted for the majority of property taken. The most visible problem was the issue of displacing massive amounts of people to run highways through cities. University of Alabama historian Raymond Mohl estimates that in the early 1960s, 33,000 housing units per year, mostly in cities, were demolished for highway construction. By 1969 this number had increased to over 62,000 housing units — an estimated 200,000 people — per year. The vast majority of those displaced were poor, dark-skinned, or recent immigrants, with little political power with which to voice their concerns, particularly at the national level.

The mantra of the highway engineers was that they were "above" politics, and were merely making straightforward engineering decisions. In fact, this technical expertise meant that their decisions often went unquestioned,

even when they were conclusively racist in outcome. What is even more disturbing is that there is evidence that these decisions were not merely technical decisions, or decisions made in ignorance of the eventual outcome, but were made explicitly for those reasons. As Mohl puts it, "Highway builders were clearly conscious of the social consequences of interstate route location." Or, put less subtly by a federal highway official, it was "a good opportunity to get rid of the local niggertown." A number of downtown business groups were also supportive of the idea of using highway construction for "slum clearance" to stop the decline of central business districts, increase property values, and move poor, dark-skinned residents to locations further out of the city core.

In cities across the US, entire neighbourhoods were destroyed. Mohl calls the phenomenon of building a highway through a black community "the ubiquitous experience of urban America in the expressway era of 1956 to the early 1970s." The practices spawned the truism "a white man's road

“ ***The environmental impacts of the highway system were every bit as devastating as the social impacts — and it appears the worst is yet to come.*** ”

through a black man's neighbourhood." Highway engineers and Congress resisted providing relocation money or assistance for some time, given that it would undoubtedly increase costs of the interstate programme exponentially. Legislation was passed in 1965 that required replacement housing to be provided in advance of construction — however, this was too little, too late, as most of the urban interstate segments had already been built at this point.

Interstates also facilitated the development of the car-oriented, suburbs-to-downtown commuter lifestyle — the inefficient, sprawling development that generally made public transport service, walking, and bicycling difficult, if not impossible. Transit agencies, once profitable private businesses, went bankrupt and became a social service only used in many places by the indigent and disabled. The interstate system was not wholly responsible — many factors such as the automobile, the backlash against the railroad monopolies at the turn of the century, and the new post-World War II prosperity

all contributed to public transport's decline. Even so, the ability of highways and interstates to fuel suburban development was beyond compare. These suburbs were (and are), of course, notoriously difficult to serve with transit — low density development and winding roads are not welcoming or convenient for the worker walking to the bus stop. As for pedestrians and cyclists, even the most judiciously placed interstate will cut a city in two for those on bike or foot. Crossing points are rare, and often dark and threatening.

It didn't take long for Americans to embrace the suburban lifestyle. The vicious cycle of highway expansion, real estate development and congestion — at the expense of other modes, lifestyles and priorities — began almost immediately, turning the suburbs into a trap which is difficult to escape. Today, truly walkable cities and neighbourhoods in the US are not easy to come by. In most places, living without a car requires determination, creativity, and luck.

The urban interstate segments were close to being eliminated in 1959. In the midst of a recession, General John Bragdon, Eisenhower's Coordinator of Public Works Planning, was told to conduct a broad review of the interstate programme. Bragdon proved to be somewhat of a thorn in the side to the highway builders, recommending things like long-range planning, public transport alternatives for cities, and elimination of the urban interstate segments. He seems to have had some influence, because in a 1960 meeting between Bragdon, Eisenhower, Secretary of Commerce Frederick Mueller, Federal Highway Administrator Bertram Tallamy, and others, Eisenhower claimed that not only did he not know about the urban highway segments, but that they went against his wishes and vision for the interstate programme. However, when given copies of the maps which formed the basis of the Highway Act legislation which showed interstates running through cities, Eisenhower backed down, reiterating his disappointment over the way the program had been developed against his wishes.

One of the key visionaries of the interstate highway himself warned that such highways should not infringe upon cities. Norman Bel Geddes conceived of the limited access divided-highway system and coined the name "interstate." In his 1940 book *Magic Motorways*, he wrote: "[I]f the purpose of the motorway as now conceived is that of being a high-speed, non-stop thoroughfare, the motorway would only bungle the job if it got tangled up with the city... A great motorway has no business cutting a wide swath right through a town or city and destroying the values there; its place is in the country."

So why did the interstates enter the cities? During the Clay Committee hearings, the highway interest groups and officials understood that a highway system funded by drivers would have to serve the areas where the greatest concentrations

of drivers lived and worked, namely the urban centres. The many urban drivers making short local trips would pay for the long distances of highways that would be less traveled. Even at that time, several major cities were building expressways around and through their cities. Robert Moses of New York City, and Russell E. Singer, executive vice president of AAA (American Automobile Association), argued to the Clay Committee that the new interstate highways should run into and through urban cores. But the committee still intended that the interstate system be for intercity traffic only, as the system had been designed.

The Automobile Manufacturers Association (AMA) was vocal about its preferences. In 1961, the AMA commissioned a report called *Future Highways and Urban Growth*, which argued for building interstates in cities. The report noted that not only were urban areas the most rapidly growing parts of the country, but many urban households did not yet own cars — and therefore cities were an important market for automobile

extreme automobility of the US are well-known. Roads themselves fragment animal habitats, replace natural watercourses, and lead to decreased water quality by concentrating toxic runoff from impervious surfaces. Increased levels of driving caused by more roads create noise and air pollution problems in urban areas including smog, ozone, and fine particulate matter. Although cleaner gasolines and tailpipe emissions controls have steadily decreased the total amounts of some pollutants, cars nonetheless generate the major greenhouse gas carbon dioxide (CO₂) which contributes to global warming. In 2004, transport in the US generated 1,860 million metric tonnes of CO₂. This number represents a 27% increase in CO₂ since 1990, and a slight increase in transport-related CO₂ per capita. The US is by far the largest global contributor of greenhouse gases, with 66% of those emissions generated by motor vehicles.

The US has paid a high price in national security as well. Having nearly exhausted its own petroleum resources, it has had no choice but to

Some, like Eisenhower, imagined it as a victory for technology and progress, a fitting testament to the strengths of the fledgling post-war superpower.

Investors saw the interstate system as a safe bet, conveniently bankrolled by the American taxpayer. They capitalised on the Cold War climate of fear to further their short-term interests without regard for the ultimate costs. They were wildly successful in their mission to make American life inextricable from the automobile and profited handsomely by it.

However these men envisioned the future of the nation, they probably didn't anticipate that rapid long-distance freight and "just in time" delivery using 18-wheelers as mobile warehouses would promote the rise of homogenous mega-corporations and franchises, turning the glorious landscape of the nation into a series of strip malls and housing developments. They did not accurately predict the rates at which the population would grow, nor the number of automobiles that population would acquire, nor the number of miles



Broken Road, Jeff Mihalvo, www.mihalvo.com

manufacturers. The report also supported express bus systems on freeways over rail transport. The AMA echoed the civil defense argument, which helped convince Congress that federal dollars should be spent on urban highways.

The Environment

The environmental impacts of the highway system were every bit as devastating as the social impacts — and indications are that the worst is yet to come. Highways were not the only factor that made driving the dominant transport mode, but they certainly cemented it. The interstate network made vast acreage of suburban development accessible, fueling the destruction of exponentially more habitat, farmland, and wetlands than that consumed directly by path of the highways.

The environmental consequences of the

import fuel for its economic survival. The economic dependence on oil-rich countries has led the US to tie its security and military policies to its energy consumption. The current Iraq war is only the most overt consequence of those relationships.

While changes in the highway building process were made to address corruption, public input and participation, environmental impacts, and new sources and mechanisms for public transport, bicycle and pedestrian funding, this may well be a case of too little, too late — particularly since in the end there is a large and powerful constituency still committed to the roadbuilding "mission" at the private, public, and elected levels.

The End of the Road?

The men who envisioned and built the interstate highway system promoted it for different reasons.

that they would drive them. They did not realise that so many other countries would embrace the US's example of highways and cars, spreading the car-dependent lifestyle and its impacts around the world. They could not have foreseen these consequences, but they knew enough.

The interstate highway system was a project born of civic impulse and hijacked by greed. A minority reaped some economic benefits, but the majority was saddled with its many detriments.

Today, despite all indications that building more highways leads to increased traffic and its concomitant social and environmental impacts, national and state governments around the world continue to build them. There is a way out, but for now the United States and those who follow its example are stuck in traffic, crawling along high-speed highways at a snail's pace, living out a carelessly planned future. 🐢

Three Visions of the Future

In response to a proposed new mega-road, a group of artists in Seattle staged a series of public happenings called GrassRoutes. Among them was Nicole Kistler's (Nicolekistler.com) *Tour of the Future* which projected participants 300 years ahead in time and dared to ask to what strange metal gods (right) was civilisation sacrificed during the ill-fated Oil Age.

In a similar vein, the "Passdorfer Autobahn" (1995) by PRINZGAU/podgorschek on the Prague-Vienna Greenway in Austria (below) emulates to perfection a future archaeological dig. Situated beside an intercity bikepath, the permanent installation gives passing cyclists a chance to imagine a future where motorways are mere memory.

And in a vision of a future we might yet live to see, the Bicycle Alliance of Washington (Bicyclealliance.org) created this popular poster (bottom) where cars are relegated to a single lane while cyclists get to hog the road.



Photo: Daniel Mourek



Photo: Bob Peterson <www.bobpeterson.com>

want to cut your car use?

Dear Anna,
I'm single and am only meeting a few new people. I don't get invitations to many parties and don't know enough people to have one. My long commute and driving for work are a problem. Please help.

Yours,
Lonely

Dear Lonely:
I sympathise. Many people feel isolated. After leaving education, people mix with their work colleagues as a natural tribe. But who else? Dating seems to be increasingly by websites and organised speed dating because of lack of time and few social events.

Transport is not a good in itself. It can help with access to possibilities to exchange goods or services. In the past we were out using local shops and facilities. If you walk, cycle or take public transport there are greater opportunities for social glue and community bumping into folk in an unplanned, spontaneous way.

David Engwicht (*Reclaiming our Cities and Towns*, 1993) talks about exchange-friendly transport — usually the sustainable, slower forms. Excessive solo driver mobility reduces probabilities of exchange. Whereas active travel and public transport is sociable. In Germany a service marketed as the FLIRT bus was advertised as somewhere to eye up talent. I've attended the wedding of a couple who met on a coach. Liverpool's bus magazine has a dating page.

Chance meetings plus regular interactions with locals such as shopkeepers weave the fabric of community. Patronize local family businesses and facilities when possible and use your own power to get there. Living nearby at a human scale raises civic belonging. Join local groups or sign up for evening classes. When I separated I began salsa dancing in order to date. It worked and I got fitter. Taking up active travel or a movement hobby cuts the requirement for fitness regimens at a gym.

Cars and commuting eat leisure time. Lynn

Sloman (*Car Sick*, 2006) reckons UK drivers spend three and a half of every 16 waking hours on their car by the time they've paid for it, driven it and done car care. Robert Putnam's US research (*Bowling Alone*, 2000) found that each additional ten minutes in daily commuting cuts involvement in community affairs by 10% — fewer public meetings, church services, volunteering, and so forth. Time diary studies suggest that there is a similarly strong negative effect of commuting time on informal social interaction. Plus increased commuting time among the residents of a community cuts levels of civic involvement even among non-commuters!

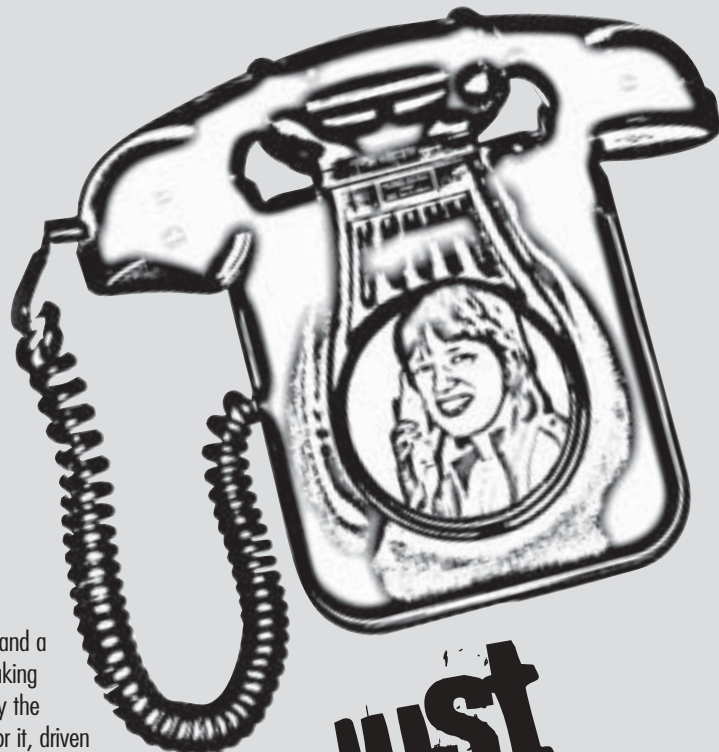
Solutions could include some home working or flexible hours — e.g., compressed working where extra hours are done for full days off. Is going part time affordable or possible? Could you work closer to home or move closer to work?

Research by Donald Appleyard (*Liveable Streets* 1981) proved that residents of heavy traffic areas know fewer neighbours than in light traffic streets. In roads with no or few slow car movements people enjoy the street scene. They chat. It is quieter and not so dangerous or polluted. Children can more safely play out. Perhaps move to a quiet street (ideally a Home Zone). Then you'll know and regularly see and talk to neighbours.

If you could car share regularly you'd have company. Search for web sites (e.g., <www.liftshare.com> in the UK) or you could put up a sign at work asking if colleagues live nearby or en route.

If your aim is to mingle, when taking leisure trips, explore from your door and use nearby leisure facilities such as parks or scenic places.

If you don't know enough people to host a celebration at home but want to party, consider an open invitation street event. This shares your street/car park/back lane as a living room. For ideas, visit



just call ANNA

<www.streetsalive.net>, <www.streetparty.org.uk> or <www.livingstreets.org.uk>.

Women are generally the more sociable gender with more friends and acquaintances. Traditionally, women lived in the village and relied on each other for help with childcare, while men hunted in pairs or small groups. If women are generally better at forming friendships, integrating and introducing then a policy is to meet more females even if you are wanting a relationship with a man.

As to the business mileage, does your employer have a travel plan? Could some business be done more efficiently by web, phone, e-mail, text, letter, delivery firms, video or teleconference? Could you wait and link trips together so that overall mileage is less? Study maps to avoid congested routes or times of day and reduce overall time spent in-car. Maybe e-commerce could make some trips unnecessary?

Good luck at cutting your car use and expanding your social networks. You can save money, be healthy, be green and more popular! 🐾

Anna is the author of *Cutting Your Car Use*. 65,000+ UK copies sold. It has North American and Welsh editions. If you want to write a version for your country, contact john@greenbooks.co.uk or <www.cuttingyourcaruse.co.uk>.

Reviews

How to Live Well Without Owning a Car: Save Money, Breathe Easier, and Get More Mileage out of Life

Chris Balish
Ten Speed Press, 2006
ISBN 1-58008-7574



Let's be clear about this. If you're reading this magazine, then this book is not for you. *How to Live Well without Owning a Car* has a very specific target audience in mind. If you don't need any convincing that you're better off without a car, then this book is not for

you. If you have a car but are thinking of getting rid of it for environmental reasons, then this book is not for you, either. This book was written for the millions of people in America (and this book is for Americans) who have never given a thought to why they own a car, how it affects their life and how much money it actually costs them.

This means that author Chris Balish spends a lot of time making sure he doesn't scare off his intended audience. "I am as mainstream as you can get," he declares about himself. "I eat meat. I don't buy hemp or tofu." Balish is a TV anchorman and former editor for *Reader's Digest* who also happens to live carfree. "I am one of you," Balish seems to be telling Middle America.

So this book is for your friends who own a Suburban. For your relatives from Ohio or upstate New York who have not heard of car-sharing, your parents who don't even realise there is a bus stop a mile from their house.

And how do you convince these people that they don't need a car, that they would be better off without one? By talking to their pocketbook.

Balish is clear about this from the very first chapter: "*How to Live Well without Owning a Car* is a personal finance and lifestyle book," he tells us. And, knowing that money talks, Balish goes straight for the facts. Owning a car costs you around \$5,000 a year — and that's not including depreciation costs. This is money that you could invest, save, spend on better vacations or on a home closer to work. Investing the money (e.g., \$450 a month at 5% interest) would earn you \$30,000 in five years. Even buying a used car will end up costing you twice the car's purchase price within five years.

Balish's financial arguments are neatly spelled out in easy-to-read tables, and for good measure he throws in a three-page worksheet for

calculating your actual car-related costs.

In other chapters, Balish offers reassuring advice to car addicts. In the section on mass transit, he tries to convince people that they should not be "transit snobs" who feel that public transport is only for the poor. He also offers advice on how to find out about transport options. In another chapter he discusses the ins and outs of cycling — the health benefits, the importance of dressing properly, etc. He describes carpooling and ridesharing as acceptable options for those who don't have good transport access. He even offers a whole chapter on walking.

“ *If you don't need to be convinced that you're better off without a car, then this book is not for you.* **”**

On the more radical end of the spectrum, he suggests that people seriously consider moving closer to work. On the less environmental side (remember, this is a financial and lifestyle book), he offers us a whole chapter on motorcycles and scooters.

It's probably this non-environmental approach that turns me off the most. Balish is very focused on the individual, like a cheery self-help coach telling us what we can do to be happier, but without offering the possibility that we might want to drive less because it's better for society at large.

He is also constantly afraid of turning off his audience by seeming too radical. As already mentioned, he felt the need to reassure readers that he is no tofu-muncher. He also makes numerous exceptions for people who might "need" a car — so as not to scare them away, I suppose. Fine, I can understand his statement that certain professions (traveling salesman, construction worker needing to haul heavy tools) may find it hard to continue their work without a car, but what exactly is the logic behind saying that if you have "demanding family responsibilities" you may need a car? Ninety percent of soccer moms will read this and say, "Oh, that's me," before reading any further in order to learn that maybe their kids could ride their bikes to practice. Balish is way too easy on his audience; he is afraid to challenge them and always gives them a way out if the task ahead seems too difficult.

But like I said, I am not the target audience. If this book really does encourage car addicts (even Balish labels his pre-carfree life as "autoholic") to go cold turkey or at least cut back, then it has provided a vital service.

Although at first glance *How to Live Well without Owning a Car* copies *Cutting Your Car Use* (reviewed in the previous issue of *Carbusters*), it is rather complementary to that excellent book. While *Cutting Your Car Use* may appeal more to the readers' social conscience than his or her pocketbook, *How to Live Well without Owning a Car* addresses those people who would never before have considered that driving could be a problem. I'm sure you can think of more than enough people in your family who fit that description. In that case, this book makes an excellent new year's gift for anyone open to changing their driving habits in the new year.

- Steve von Pohl

Subscribe to a Better World

Permaculture Magazine is for enquiring minds and original thinkers everywhere. Published quarterly each issue gives you practical thought provoking articles written by leading experts as well as fantastic permaculture tips from our readers! It offers tried and tested ways of creating flexible, low cost strategies for reducing climate change and can help you to grow and source local organic food, build energy efficiency into your home, make informed ethical choices, get more out of your community, find courses, contacts and opportunities, plus lots more...

Permaculture Magazine helps you live a more natural, healthy and environmentally friendly life.

A year's subscription costs just £12.50, a saving of over 20% on the cover price. Subscribe today and get a FREE back issue, plus a copy of our Green Shopping Catalogue which contains details of more than 500 carefully selected books, tools and products.

Permaculture Magazine CB, The Sustainability Centre, East Meon, Hampshire GU32 1HR. Tel: 01730 823 311 Email: info@permaculture.co.uk

VOTED THE NO.1 RESOURCE FOR PEOPLE WANTING TO LIVE MORE SUSTAINABLY
(UK's greenest general survey)

permaculture magazine
SOLUTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING

Try it before you buy it, log on and check it out at:
www.permaculture.co.uk

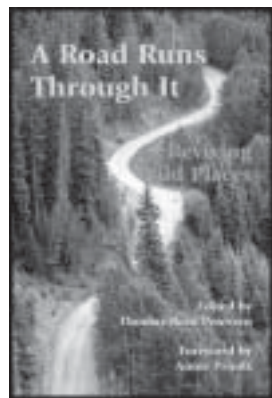
A Road Runs Through It: Reviving Wild Places

Edited by Thomas Reed Petersen

Foreword by Annie Proulx

Johnson Books, 2006

ISBN 1-55566-371-0



The “Road” in the title of this fine collection of essays is really 500,000 miles or more of wilderness service roads built in North America to access (some would say plunder) natural resources such as

timber, minerals, and oil. Once those riches were extracted and hauled away, the remote sites were abandoned but the roads remained, causing continuing damage through runoff and erosion as well as encouraging further degenerative incursions by people in motor vehicles. Featuring affecting writing by such luminaries as Peter Matthiessen, Edward Abbey, Derrick Jensen (see page 18) and 25 other sensitive chroniclers of vanishing wilderness, the common message here, whether plainly stated or simply implied, is that these roads should be removed and the places re-wilded for the benefit of flora, fauna, and humanity as a whole.

A Road Runs Through It is an ambitious and important work which seeks to find solutions for the problems it explores by combining polemic, poetry, and pragmatism.

As polemic, it pits the arguments of conservationists against the interests of business, politics, and bureaucracy. The essays do so by balancing natural science with eyewitness accounts informed by a clarity of vision which comes from undiluted experience vividly recollected.

The poetry is to be found in the power and grace of the essays, most of which take the form of memoirs. These read like metaphysical travelogues as the authors navigate history, nature, and their emotions to share the heartbreaks and triumphs of fighting to preserve and enjoy what’s left of the wild.

Beyond its literary value, the book itself is a double-edged tool for creating change. Proceeds go to Wildlands CPR (Wildlandscpr.org), a non-profit organisation dedicated to protecting and reviving wild places by promoting road removal and re-vegetation. Also, operating under a grant from the Temper of the Times Foundation (Temperfund.org), several hundred copies are being distributed to decision-makers and land managers. It is difficult to imagine those who take the time to read it being unmoved.

The book is neatly organised into six sections which form a journey going from 1) why roads get built in the first place to 2) the impacts roads have on habitats to 3) considerations of the sheer ubiquity of roads to 4) problems caused by

providing motorised access to nature to 5) the successes of road removal and finally returning to 6) an appreciation of the pre-road state of nature. (While this logical presentation makes the book well-suited to classroom use, I enjoyed skipping around — much as if I had departed a road.)

The literal problem addressed by this book is the half million miles of abandoned roads which, although perhaps scarcely travelled, nonetheless continue having huge impacts on their environs by inhibiting them from functioning “as nature intended.” But there are also metaphorical threads running throughout which should be heeded by even the most adamant naturephobe.

Roads are real objects with measurable impacts on the landscapes they trample, divide, and access, but the road also symbolizes a pace of living which is not supportable, as described in Tom Lyon’s brief but eloquent essay “Momentum”:

What we don’t often see is that momentum makes us stupid. It shuts off awareness of the real, related, interdependent world. Keeps us within our metallic shells. Keeps us going straight and fast on the road we have built. This is truly a massive mental and spiritual disorder. We straighten, simplify, and speed up — the classic linear mentality, the classic mistake.

It is this revelatory aspect of *A Road Runs Through It* which is most affecting. Read it and you will never look at roads the same way again.

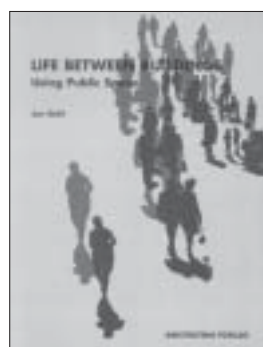
- RZ

Life Between Buildings

(Fourth English Edition)

By Jan Gehl

Danish Architectural Press, 2001



2006 marked the 35th anniversary of the publication of Jan Gehl’s classic *Life Between Buildings*, a landmark text on the psychology of social interaction as influenced by architecture and

urban planning choices.

A central idea is that people require passive contact — that is, just being around, seeing, and hearing others without actually speaking or otherwise interacting with them directly. Places such as public squares, busy sidewalks, and other

common areas are crucial to this function. When people have access to such places, they have more casual acquaintances and ultimately more friends. Contrast this with more car-oriented developments. People may have mobile phones and other means of communication, but these limit interaction to an already known social circle and require effort and planning to make physical contact. Because of this effort, expectations are also high — there has to be a reason for meeting — and thus interaction is less frequent.

Cookie cutter car-dependent housing developments are a form of economic (and often racial) segregation. It’s true that people throughout the ages have “stuck to their own kind,” but in other social arrangements — cities in particular — casual contacts with people from

other socioeconomic strata were inevitable and informed one’s perspective on society as a whole. It is ironic (or perhaps predictable) that in this age of globalisation a new form of technology-induced provincialism should arise.

Life Between Buildings was intended as a manual for architects and urban planners but it is also useful to the layperson. By comparing urban forms and relating those forms to basic psychology, it gives readers new eyes with which to perceive their surroundings. And while architects, engineers, and urban planners are the paid professionals who attend to the details of the built environment, the ultimate fate of any community lies in the hands of its residents. Let this book inform how you view your surroundings and inspire you to greater civic involvement.

“**Let this book inform how you view your surroundings and inspire you to greater civic involvement.**”

RESOURCES



Car Sick

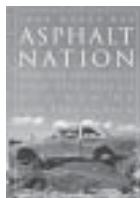
Solutions for our car-addicted culture!



Nonfiction

Asphalt Nation

How the Automobile Took Over America and How We Can Take It Back
Jane Holtz Kay, 1998, 440 pages
EUR 20, £14, US\$23, AU\$32, or CZK 580



Asphalt Nation is a powerful examination of how the car has ravaged America's cities and landscape over the past 100 years, together with a compelling strategy for reversing our dependency. Demonstrating that there are economic, political, personal and architectural solutions to the problem, Kay shows that radical change is possible.

Carfree Cities

J.H. Crawford, 2000, 324 pages
EUR 30, £21, US\$35, AU\$50, or CZK 890

An unapologetic argument for carfree cities combined with a detailed and well thought-out plan, *Carfree Cities* outlines a city structure carefully designed to minimise environmental impact and maximise quality of life.

Car Busters Graphics Book

Carbusters, 1999, 44 pages
EUR 5, £4, US\$6, AU\$9, or CZK 150

Our graphics book brings together all the best graphics on file at *Carbusters* from the artists you see in the magazine. Includes information on how to produce attractive posters and leaflets. The graphics can be reproduced freely (for non-profit purposes) by activist groups for their leaflets, posters, newsletters, etc.

Car Sick



Lynn Sloman, 2006, 192 pages
EUR 19.50, £13, US\$25, AU\$33, or CZK 545

"Cars cause environmental destruction, provoke stress and tear the heart out of communities. *Car Sick* provides a page-turning account of how we got into this mess, and more importantly, charts an attractive way out. If you've got a car, read this book. It will change your views, and could change your life." - T. Juniper, Friends of the Earth

Critical Mass

Bicycling's Defiant Celebration
Chris Carlsson, editor, 2002, 256 pages
EUR 20, £14, US\$23, AU\$32, or CZK 580

An irreverent collection of inkworthy social critique and optimistic celebration. Forty-eight contributors document, define and drive home the beauty of a quiet ride with a thousand friends, the anarchy of grassroots inspiration, the fight for the survival of our cities.

Cutting Your Car Use

Save Money, Be Healthy, Be Green!
Anna Semlyen, 2000 / 2005, 160 pages
EUR 8.50, £7, US\$10, AU\$14, CZK 250
Britain's first ever personal traffic reduction guide. Packed with easy-to-follow, best practice advice. For anyone who wants to cut their car use, or give up the car completely. New updated edition.

Divorce Your Car!

Ending the Love Affair With the Automobile
Katie Alvord, 2000, 320 pages
EUR 17, £12, US\$20, AU\$27, or CZK 500

Earth First! Direct Action Manual

DAM Collective, 1998, 152 pages
EUR 5, £4, US\$6, AU\$9, or CZK 150
A comprehensive guide to nonviolent direct action tactics.

Ecocities: Building Cities in Balance with Nature

Richard Register, 2002, 296 pages
EUR 14.50, £10, US\$17, AU\$23, or CZK 425

The End of the Road

Wolfgang Zuckermann, 1991, 300 pages
EUR 8.50, £7, US\$10, AU\$14, or CZK 250
There are half a billion cars on the planet, and this book takes a long, hard look at the contrast between the image and the reality of this fact. Zuckermann offers 33 "ways out" of our car dependence, including pedestrianisation, alternative transport, restructuring public transport...

For Love of the Automobile

Looking Back Into the History of Our Desires
Wolfgang Sachs, 1992, 227 pages, hardcover
EUR 35, £25, US\$40, AU\$68, or CZK 1,180

Home from Nowhere

Remaking Our Everyday World for the 21st Century
James Howard Kunstler, 1998, 320 pages
EUR 14.50, £10, US\$17, AU\$23, or CZK 425
Kunstler offers a way back from the "tragic sprawlscapes of...junked cities" that he described in *The Geography of Nowhere*. Here he calls for the restoration of traditional architecture, sensible urban design principles, and the development of public spaces for social interaction.

Life Between Buildings

Jan Gehl, 2001, 202 pages, fourth English edition
EUR 17, £12, US\$20, AU\$27, or CZK 500
First published in 1971, this book is still the best source for understanding how people use urban public spaces. *Life Between Buildings* is the undisputed introduction to the interplay between design and social life.

Making Their Own Plans

Brett Bloom and Ava Bromberg, eds., 2004, 128 pages
EUR 11, £8, US\$13, AU\$18, CZK 325
A compilation of articles about concrete projects seeking to reconfigure an undemocratic, polluted, gentrifying city into a more just and livable place.

New City Spaces

Jan Gehl and Lars Gemzøe, 2001, 263 pages
hardcover: EUR 50, £35, US\$60, AU\$80, or CZK 1,500
Through colour photos, descriptive text and diagrams, this informative book highlights 39 public spaces around the world that have been won back from traffic.

Placemaking Guidebook

Jenny Leis & Daniel Lerch, *City Repair*, 2003, 83 pages
EUR 11, £8, US\$13, AU\$18, or CZK 325
Learn how to follow in *City Repair's* footsteps, building places where community can happen, right in the hearts of our neighbourhoods.

Public Spaces - Public Life

Jan Gehl and Lars Gemzøe, 1996, 96 pages
EUR 32, £22, US\$38, AU\$50, or CZK 950
Describes the remarkable improvements in Copenhagen over the past 34 years, and how they were accomplished.

Cutting Your Car Use (North American Version)



Save Money, Be Healthy, Be Green!
Randall Ghent, with Anna Semlyen, 2006, 128 pages
US\$12, CAN\$14.40
A practical car use reduction guide for the United States and Canada in a handy pocket-size format.

Wise Fool Basics

K. Ruby, *Wise Fool*, 1999, 96 pages
EUR 11, £8, US\$13, AU\$18, or CZK 325
Giant puppet building, masks, street theatre tips, stilt making... Full of useful information and inspiration for making direct action imaginative, artistic and endlessly creative.

Fiction/Kids

The Age of the Bicycle

Miriam Webster, 1998, 270 pages
EUR 8.50, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 250
What if one afternoon all the cars in the world slowed down and then stopped in their tracks... soon tea shops burgeoned on the interstates... rush-hour traffic went by on bicycles at an average speed of eight miles an hour...

Alice in Underland

Wolfgang Zuckermann, 1999
EUR 8.50, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 250

Family Mouse Behind the Wheel

Wolfgang Zuckermann, 1992, 30 pages
hardcover: EUR 8.50, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 250
Colourful illustrated book teaches children the problems of car culture through the eyes of a family of mice who decide to buy a car, with all the consequences...

The Little Driver

Martin Wagner, 2003, 56 pages
EUR 8.50, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 250

Carbusters Press

Bulk Discount: Ten or more CARtoons and/or Roadkill Bill books, any combination, for half price.

KarikAUTury, GÉPregény, KarikAUTúry, and AUTOkartki



CARtoons has been published in Czech, Slovak, Hungarian and Polish with a new introduction by the head of the Czech branch of Children of the Earth. The books are part of the Visegrad Resource Centre project. If you are interested in copies contact project coordinator Steven Logan at se_logan@worldcarfree.net.

CARtoons

Andy Singer, 2001, 100 pages, optional CD-ROM contains high-resolution TIF images of all graphics
Book: EUR 8.50, £7, US\$10, AU\$14 or CZK 250
CD-ROM: EUR 4, £3, US\$5, AU\$6.75 or CZK 80
A personal and provocative look at our relationship with the car, from Ford's first assembly lines to today's "drive-through" society. Features seven pithy chapter texts and a compilation of hard-hitting quotations, plus 90 of Singer's infamous graphics.

Roadkill Bill

Ken Avidor, 2001, 108 pages
EUR 8.50, £7, US\$10, AU\$14, or CZK 250
It's the comic strip that looks at cars, technology and philosophy from the viewpoint of a frequently squashed rodent. In *Roadkill Bill*, the wonderful, provocative, amusing and sometimes gruesome cartoons are collected together for the first and only time. Avidor gives voice to the suffering soul of humanity that feels bulldozed and paved over by industrial technology run amok.

Not finding what you're looking for?

Our members/subscribers get a 10% discount at <www.detroitpublications.com> on over 130 books and other resources on transport and urban ecology.

Videos



Source*

2005, 77 min., DVD, region-free PAL (plays on all PCs) - EUR 20, £14, US\$24, AU\$32 or CZK 600

The tale of the Baku-Ceyhan-Tbilisi pipeline is a tale of corruption, greed, and Western money flowing into the oil-soaked shores of the Caspian Sea. This documentary takes you to the source of Western oil dependency and the human results of oil policy.

The City Repair Project: Transforming Space into Place

2004, 13.5 min., DVD

EUR 8.50, £7, US\$10, AU\$14 or CZK 250

Highlights the incredible work of The City Repair Project in Portland, Oregon, USA, as featured in *Carbusters* #21.



Autoschreck / Car-Fright

1994, English or German, PAL only EUR 20, £14, US\$24, AU\$32, CZK 600

Michael Hartmann walks straight over the cars illegally parked on the sidewalk. A documentary about a man discharged from a mental hospital for being perfectly (or at least somewhat) normal.

We Are Traffic! & Return of the Scorcher



1999/1992, 50 min./28 min., NTSC

EUR 17, £12, US\$20, AU\$27 or CZK 500

Two classic biking movies now on one DVD, plus extra footage that didn't make it into the documentaries. *Return of the Scorcher* (1992, 28 min.) chronicles the history of the bicycle renaissance. *We Are Traffic* (1999, 50 min.) follows the grassroots Critical Mass movement, which has brought together complete strangers in an exuberant, commercial-free public space filled with creativity & unpredictability.

Still We Ride!

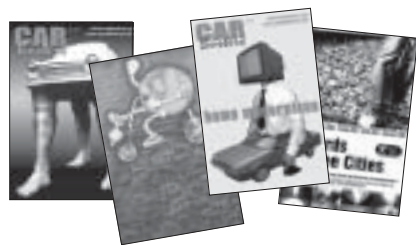
In Tandem Productions, 2005, 37 min., DVD



EUR 17, £12, US\$20, AU\$27 or CZK 500

This action-packed documentary is a glimpse into the shocking showdown between the monthly Critical Mass bike ride and New York City police in the months after the Republican National Convention in August 2004.

Postcards



Our line of Carbusters postcards expand our range of consumer products for the entire family! An assortment of ten postcards costs EUR 5 / US\$6 / £4.

"Freesources"

A growing selection of free texts available at <www.worldcarfree.net/resources/free.php>:

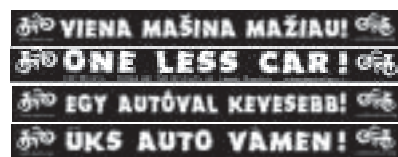
- *Car-Free Development* by Lloyd Wright
- *Energy and Equity* by Ivan Illich
- *Car-Free Housing in European Cities* by Jan Scheurer
- *The Automobile and Décroissance* by Denis Cheynet
- *Time Pollution* by John Whitelegg
- *Depaving the World* by Richard Register, and more!

Stickers

"One Less Car" Bike Stickers

Ten stickers: EUR 2, £1.40, US\$2.50, AU\$3.50, or CZK 50

Available in Catalan, Chinese, Czech, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Lithuanian, Norwegian/Swedish/Danish, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, Turkish and Welsh. Sized for bike frames, water-resistant.



"Cancer Warning" Stickers

15 stickers: EUR 3, £2, US\$3.50, AU\$5, or CZK 90



Big hard-to-remove stickers for cars.

Available in French, German, English, Spanish, Serbo-Croatian and Czech.

Stop-Sign Improvement

One: EUR 0.85, £0.60, US\$1, AU\$1.30 or CZK 25

Ten: EUR 6.25, £4.25, US\$7.50, AU\$10 or CZK 180



Forty-six centimetres long. Bright red. These big glossy vinyl stickers are just the right size to go under the word "STOP" on stop signs.

T-Shirts

Looking for NEW t-shirts!

We would like to offer new unique t-shirts. If you have a new design that asks for being worn all over the planet, please contact us!



"No Cars"

EUR 8.50, £7, US\$10, AU\$14 or CZK 250

White t-shirt with the "cars-forbidden" traffic sign on it. Unisex and woman style, in sizes M, L, XL.



"Carfree" and "Parasites"

EUR 8.50, £7, US\$10, AU\$14 or CZK 250

Black, red, light blue; men: S, M, L, XL; women: S, M, L



Payment Instructions

Mail-Order Resources

Shipping (surface rate outside Europe) is included in all prices. We accept US, British, and Australian cheques made out to Carbusters. Credit card payments can be made online at <www.worldcarfree.net>. We also accept international postal money orders (in CZK or USD), and even cash in the currencies below (at your own risk, but seems OK).

Payments: Car Busters, Krátká 26, 100 00 Prague 10, Czech Rep.

Should you prefer to pay by bank transfer, please contact us.

Magazine Subscriptions

Country	4 Issues	8 Issues
Australia	20 Dollars	32.50 Dollars
Czech Rep.	160 Korun	260 Korun
Eurozone	16 Euro	26 Euro
UK	10 Pounds	16 Pounds
US	16 Dollars	26 Dollars

Memberships

Member: EUR 30, £20, US\$30, AU\$50, CZK 600

Supporter: EUR 50, £35, US\$50, AU\$80, CZK 1000

Saviour: EUR 100, £70, US\$100, AU\$160, CZK 2000

Membership benefits/premiums are described on the next page.

The prices above are calculated for "Over-Developed World" residents, in each of the currencies that we accept. Single copies cost EUR/US\$4 or equivalent. Eastern Europeans and "Global South" residents wanting magazine subscriptions or single copies can pay 1/3 the Western rate.

Distribution Orders (5 or more copies): EUR/US\$2.60 each or equivalent (you sell at EUR/US\$4 and keep the difference). In Eastern Europe and the "Global South," you buy at EUR/US\$1 and sell at EUR/US\$1.50. This is beginning to sound like the stock market...

In a Hurry?

Order from worldcarfree.net/resources.

Carbusters Back Issues



Have an incomplete collection? Looking for a perfect gift? Don't know how to best invest your money for long-term growth? Well, look no further! Get any back issue of Car Busters for a mere EUR 2 / US\$2.50 / £1.75. Or get a complete set for EUR 20 / US\$25 / £17.50 (Western Rate) or EUR 10 / US\$12.50 (Eastern Rate). Or order an assortment of 100 issues for EUR 90 / US\$110 / £62.50.

Shipping included

in all listed prices.

Towards Carfree Cities

EUR 8.50, £7, US\$10, AU\$14 or CZK 250

Orange, red, forest green (sizes S, M); green only (size XS); yellow (size M, L)



[front]

[back]



photo: Aaron Tarfman. <www.innovativetransport.blogspot.com>

WORLD CARFREE NETWORK WORKS TO **BUILD AND MAINTAIN** THE GLOBAL **CARFREE MOVEMENT**. ITS PROJECTS AND PUBLICATIONS **ASSIST** PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD **TAKING ON** CAR CULTURE AND PROMOTING ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF LIFE. WE AIM TO **FACILITATE EXCHANGE** AND **COOPERATION** AMONG ACTIVISTS AND CAMPAIGNERS, REACH OUT TO THE PUBLIC, **INSPIRE** NEW ACTIVISTS AND **CHANGE THE WORLD**.

- *CARBUSTERS* QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
- VISEGRAD PUBLICATIONS PROJECT
- ECOTOPIA BIKETOURL
- PRINT AND ON-LINE RESOURCE CENTRE
- *WORLD CARFREE NEWS* E-BULLETIN
- WORLD CARFREE DAY
- ANNUAL CONFERENCE SERIES
- CARFREE GREEN PAGES DIRECTORY
- AUTOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

JOIN WORLD CARFREE NETWORK

...and get a subscription to *Carbusters* magazine plus a free book!

☐ **Member - US\$30/EUR30/GBP20***
includes a one-year magazine subscription, an assortment of bike stickers and one of these books: Ken Avidor's *Roadkill Bill*, Andy Singer's *CARTOONS*, or Martin Wagner's *The Little Driver*. (circle one)

☐ **Supporter - US\$50/EUR50/GBP35***
includes a one-year magazine subscription and two of these books: *CARTOONS*, *Roadkill Bill*, or *The Little Driver*. (circle two)

☐ **Saviour - US\$100/EUR100/GBP70***
includes a two-year magazine subscription, a copy of *Carfree Cities* by JH Crawford, and one of these books: *CARTOONS*, *Roadkill Bill*, or *The Little Driver*. (circle one)

☐ US\$16/EUR16* - Subscription Only: 4 Issues

☐ US\$26/EUR26* - Subscription Only: 8 Issues

☐ _____ - Donation (much appreciated)

☐ I'm enclosing _____ for the following books or resources: _____

☐ I want to receive your monthly e-mail bulletin, so here's my e-mail address (written clearly): _____



Name: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

* or the equivalent in AUD or CND. Cheques: We accept US, British and Australian cheques made out to Carbusters. Credit card payments: www.worldcarfree.net/resources. Other payment options are listed on p. 29.

**the freeways are a psychological
entanglement of
warped souls,
dying flowers in the dying hour
of the dying day....**

**what you see on the freeway is just what there is,
a funeral procession of the dead,
the greatest horror of our time in motion.**

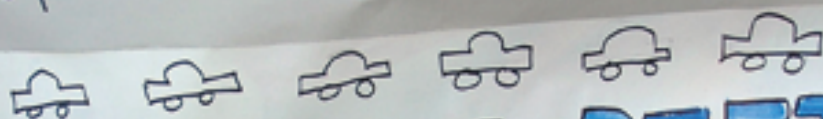
-Charles Bukowski



Jane Dickson, Out of Here, 2000, oil on carpet

THE ROAD

Is Mechanical Movement
Epitomised by The Car



THE STREET

Can Be A Living Place of
Human Movement &
Social Intercourse
of Freedom & Spontaneity



take back the street