

Hemp — a super natural resource

by Greg Tilson

Is hemp the "New Billion Dollar Crop"?

Robert Smith, owner of the Hemp Shack, seems to think so. The Hemp Shack set up a display at the Dal SUB last week, selling a wide range of products; from t-shirts to hacky-sacks, all made from cannabis hemp.

The literature that Mr. Smith provided, described cannabis hemp as being overall the strongest, most durable, longest-lasting natural fibre on the planet.

Botanically, hemp is a member of the most advanced plant family on Earth. It is a dioecious (i.e., being male, female or sometimes hermaphroditic) woody, herbaceous annual

that uses the sun more efficiently than virtually any other plant on our planet, reaching a robust 12-20 feet on one growing season.

Cannabis hemp can be grown in virtually any climate or soil condition on Earth, even marginal ones. Hemp is arguably the earth's premiere renewable natural resource. Yet despite efforts to legalize the cultivation of hemp, such as Bill C-420, and Bill C-7, both proposed by the NDP in the House of Commons, hemp is still illegal to grow in Canada.

1993 marks the year when hemp was planted in England for paper. It is also the year that demand for hemp products exceeded their supply.

"It can only be a matter of time now, before hemp will be grown once

more in this country," says Smith, who attributes most of his sales as a form of protest that his customers feel towards the Earth's current environmental situation.

"...people just want to be part of a drug movement..."

Stickers that read "pulp hemp not paper" sold out the very first day. Hemp paper and t-shirt were also very big sellers.

When asked what role the use of hemp (also known as marijuana) for

smoking played in the sales of Smith's products, he stated: "There's definitely a sense of novelty amongst many of the customers. A lot of people just want to be part of a drug movement, and wear t-shirts with the hemp plant emblem for reasons other than environmental ones."

However, the primary incentive to make hemp legal remains to be for industrial purposes.

Whether or not hemp is the "new billion dollar crop," will continue to be misunderstood until it can be legally industrialized. Yet, for people like Robert Smith, who are already well aware of the potential of this amazing plant, they present one challenge to the rest of the world: try to prove us wrong.

The Hemp Shack provides an excellent summary of the uses of hemp in a book by Jack Herer, entitled *The Emperor Wears No Clothes*.

In it, Herer states, "if all fossil fuels and their derivatives as well as the deforestation of trees for paper and agriculture, are banned from use in order to save the planet and reverse the greenhouse effect: There is only one known renewable, natural resource able to provide the overall majority of our paper, textiles, and food, meet all the world's transportation, home and industrial energy needs, reduce pollution, rebuild the soil and clean the atmosphere — all at the same time — out old standby that did it all before: Cannabis Hemp!"

Food services

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other bidders; their reasons remain unclear.

According to Martin, "Overall, past experiences with Beaver and Major have been pretty positive."

"It is just a matter of the contracts being up. We are looking for financial proposals from any food service companies and we will take the best," added McKee.

The committee has made it clear that both companies will be allowed to participate in the bidding.

The committee is hoping to

extend franchise concepts on campus. However, this doesn't mean that residence food will be left to franchise companies.

As Jay pointed out: "(Students) can't function and sustain themselves on that sort of food. However, some areas on campus will be franchises but this way the University will be in direct competition with downtown. The object is to try and provide something different that you can't get within a six-block radius of the University."

At this point in time, nothing is definite and will remain so until the results of the survey come out.

Willy not free

by Barbara Müller

The movie *Free Willy* (a box-office smash in 1993) was about a boy who befriended a killer whale in a marine park such as Sea World. The whale was sad, being caged up and away from his family. The boy helped to save Willy (whose real name is Keiko) by helping to let him go free.

Ironically, Keiko is now in a holding tank in Mexico, suffering from a skin disease and is losing weight. Many people concerned about this Orca have written letters to "El Nuevo Reino Aventura" (who 'owns' Keiko) asking to set him free, and some have sent donations to help Keiko.

Mr. Oscar Porter, General Director of "Reino Aventura" has responded: "It is very sad for us to know that people think that we don't care about Keiko's life; we do care, and love him very much."

"We are trying to do the best for him, and that's why we are looking for a bigger place and for a female whale to be with." He states that

Keiko would die were he put back in the sea because he does not know how to fend for himself, nor can he survive alone.

"We assure you that we love Keiko," he continues. "He has been here in Reino Aventura so long and that's why we want the best for him..."

Earth Island Institute is trying to get Keiko, the seven meter, 3.5 ton killer whale, into a new home in the U.S. This will be in form of a 7.5 million liter tank at the Oregon Coast Aquarium. So far, \$5 million (US) has been collected.

Some people are concerned about

so much money going into a project to put one whale into a new tank. Richard Connor, member of MARMAM (marine mammals internet), thinks that this money could be put to better use: "So, \$5 million for Willy. That's great but I can't help thinking about what kind of conservation-oriented basic research could fund. Fifty \$100,000 projects, one hundred \$50,000 projects. Studies on behavior, ecology, life history, habitat..." While others believe the money should go to a rehabilitation center and to rehabilitate Keiko to freedom.

Enviro meet

by Wayne Groszko

This year, Moncton will be the centre of the environment for students.

Each year, there is an Atlantic regional conference of CUSEN (Ca-

nadian Unified Student Environmental Network). This year, the regional conference, "Rising to the Challenge '95," will be held at the Université de Moncton, hosted by the ecological group "Ecoversité."

CUSEN is a network of students from high schools and post-secondary institutions across Canada. CUSEN provides a means to share ideas, offer support and information, and spread awareness to students and anyone else interested in learning more about student environmental action.

The conference will take place from February 24 to 26, 1995, and will include two speakers, a choice of workshops, regional problem discussion, a concert and outdoor activities.

Also, renowned environmental lawyer and activist, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. will be a guest speaker.

Workshop topics are sociology and the environmental movement, waste management, environmental law, student activism, aboriginal culture and ecology, economics and ecology, forest management, vegetarian cooking, and animal rights and ecology.

Registration for "Rising to the Challenge '95" costs \$15, which includes three meals, two nights accommodation, and participation in all conference activities.

If you are interested in going to this conference or you want more information, contact NSPIRG at 494-6662, or email (aa033@cfm.cs.dal.ca).

Wednesday on **CBC**

"If I don't fall apart this week, I'll be O.K."

(Mack)

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