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Taking the Green Way Home

Two Canadians hit the eco-road to raise global warming awareness and set a world record

by [Anthony Broos](#)
January 10, 2009

These days you can't turn on the television, radio or open a newspaper without seeing something about the dismal state of our planet. Global warming this, landfill that and throw a mass oil shortage in for good measure. It's true, our planet is in serious trouble.



We have been a society of consumption for far too long. We have been consuming all the earth's natural resources and destroying millions of acres of natural habitats without the slightest concern for how future generations are going to clean up our mess. Oh sure, for the last several years this issue has increasingly become a political hot topic. [As far as I can tell, though, they are spending millions (maybe even billions) of taxpayers' dollars just talking about things and using the subject as a way to win elections, but very little is actually getting done about it.]

Well, things are actually starting to change and leave it to a couple of young Canadians to get the truck, or van in this case, rolling. Tyson Jerry and Cloe Whittaker have embarked on a massive road trip to spread their environmental word. How, you may ask, is a road trip going to get the kind of attention required to change the world?

Well, the answer comes in two parts, and it may surprise you. First, Tyson and Cloe have converted their Mitsubishi Delica to burn waste vegetable oil and second, at the end of their journey they plan to have travelled over 45,000 kilometres thus setting a new world record for the furthest distance travelled using a vehicle powered by an alternative fuel source.

Tyson, 25, and Cloe, 23, met in 2007 through a mutual friend and immediately realised their shared love of travel, a strong desire to explore North America and a commitment to sustainable living. From this was born the Driven to Sustain campaign.

The major goal of Driven to Sustain is a relatively simple one: "To create awareness and inspire individuals to realise their personal power in forming individualised choice and a respectful role in nature."

Tyson and Cloe's journey began on October 1, 2008 in Victoria, British Columbia and their plan is to drive across each province, territory and state in Canada and the United States and then travel down into Mexico. They have been sleeping in their van and speaking at schools along the way to pass along their Driven to Sustain message. They are fuelling their van on waste vegetable oil (WVO), which they get inexpensively or free from various fast food restaurants along the way, with only the odd tank of Biodiesel when there is no WVO available.

Across the country Cloe and Tyson have been meeting with some likeminded people and learning about how others are trying to improve the global situation.

"Our new friends Thomas and Manda Porter contacted us because they wanted to show us the job site for the earth home they will be building in Northern Saskatchewan," Cloe recalled while discussing some of the high points they've experienced so far. "We visited them and saw their collection of tires that they'd use for the frame and the other collected materials that would make the walls. They taught us about the design of the house and how it lived by harnessing the natural systems around them like the sun's energy and the wind's power. I was very excited for them and was inspired to build my own!"

This trip is a great way to spread their message and draw attention for their cause, but neither Tyson nor Cloe suggests that everyone start driving a WVO powered vehicle because, in Cloe's words, "it still creates emissions, and we know our country has to move away from emissions completely. So



ie it as a solution.”

Tyson and Cloe back in December of last year, they had been Midland Ontario for a couple of weeks, that happened to be on has been used as a base while they visit key locations

m. Those kilometres have been tracked from Victoria, BC northwards into the Yukon and Alaska, down into Alberta, then into the Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario. We plan to return to the Maritimes after escaping the snow for a while and following spring northwards from the southern states,” responded Cloe when asked about where they’ve been so far and what they have planned for the next leg of their journey.

By the end of their adventure, they hope to have driven over 45,000 kilometres thus setting a new world record for the longest journey in a car using alternative fuel. The record is presently held by Rainer Zietlow, Florian Hilpert, Falk Gunold and Franz Janusiewicz; four Germans who travelled 38,137 kilometres in 2006, driving a Volkswagen Caddy Ecofuel using natural gas.

The challenges of being on the road for an extended time are taken in stride: “It’s constantly expected that things will happen which are out of our control. When they do, we deal with it and move on; it’s all part of the game” says Tyson. “The challenges in the hard road ahead make our trip interesting and it’s vital to me that I interpret these challenges as positive. We intend on making the next six months exactly like our first two: extremely rewarding and nothing but highs.”

Setting a new world record will be the smaller of their victories; their major win will truly be for the planet. They are proving once and for all that there are inexpensive and environmentally friendly alternatives to fossil fuels.

For more info on the Driven to Sustain, visit www.driventosustain.ca

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