

“ZACH... WILL BLOW YOU AWAY with his clear-headed respect for the Earth and its creatures, and his understanding of the need to think globally and act locally and personally.”

70 percent of us know it's a bad idea to dump our waste straight into the ocean, it took a lot of work by “second superpower” organizations like Sierra Legal Defense Fund – who measured contaminants and dead fish at the outfall sites – to help sway the politicians. The good news is that the holistic approach being advocated by citizen leaders will result in additional benefits such as the ability to generate heat for buildings and biogas for buses.

In our people section, Jason Found of the Fruit Tree Project, along with 12-year-old Zachary Borkovic, show that entrepreneurs are also



Zachary Borkovic

adapting a whole systems approach (as do our two “landcare” specialists in our Bizbuzz this month). Zach, who has created a line of organic personal and home care products, will blow you away with his clear-headed respect for the Earth and its creatures, and his understanding of the need to think globally and act locally and personally.

Then, of course, there are all the artists in *Focus*, whose creative explorations inspire us to apply our own creativity to the challenges we face around such seemingly diverse issues as homelessness, indigenous rights, climate change, and species extinction – but which, as Hawken and others show, are really just different facets of the same inadequate respect for human and Earth rights.

A few days before press, at the grand opening of the One Moon Gallery on the Esquimalt Reserve, I was again struck by a growing vision of unity at the core of the diversity. Locating a public gallery on the reserve is an unusual and creative step that in itself helps build bridges between cultures.

In welcoming this gallery, which features the work of First Nations artist Darlene Gait, to his territory, Chief Andy Thomas spoke of the inspiration the gallery would bring to young Esquimalt Nations people and how it signalled to both his people and those in the wider community that there is work and beauty to create together. Graham Hill, mayor of View Royal, noted that Darlene's beautiful art, which speaks to the rich traditions and heritage of native peoples, was part of a conversation that we need to engage in.

It's a privilege to bring you the voices (and art) that can add important notes to the conversations we all need to have so that we can find a way of living sustainably on this planet we call home.



When she was active in the women's movement back in the 1970s, Leslie believed she was part of the most important movement in humanity's history (up to that point). It was exciting – and so is this even more encompassing movement.

Zachary Borkovic ~ eco-warrior

STORY BY ADRIENNE DYER



I'm standing over a display of soaps inside Earth Spirit Natural Home™ in Cowichan Bay, discussing my order of aroma preference with 12-year-old Zachary Borkovic. As the founder of this thriving father-son business, Zach sells only 100 percent certified organic and sustainable personal care and home products.

"Lavender's my favourite," Zach says, handing me a bar. "Then vanilla-almond, rose geranium, and bergamot-macadamia." After waving each in front of my nose, I have to agree.

Every Earth Spirit product is hand-picked by Zach, and must adhere to his "Model of the Hidden Thirteenth Spider for Eco-Business."

"A spider has four legs on either side of its body," Zach explains. "Pretend that the body is the earth. The left legs are the good things you put into your company like good people, know-how, goodwill and the right resources. The right legs are the good that comes from what you put in, those who benefit: all the people inside and outside of the company, the community and indigenous peoples, the Earth and the eco-company itself. There is one rule, that all must be considered with equal integrity in business."

Zach's business model reflects the code by which he lives. He is keenly aware of his connection with nature and the footprint each of us leaves on the Earth.

Zach goes to school, plays soccer, eats popcorn and shoots hoops just like other children his age. Despite being 90 percent hearing impaired, he is a straight A French Immersion student, and loves to paint and draw. But have a conversation with him and you'll quickly realize he's no ordinary boy. Intelligence, the ability to truly *listen*, and a profound respect for every creature are apparent in his eyes and words.

Zach's concern for the environment began at age three when he asked: "Dad, do the things we put in the water hurt the fish and other animals?" After several trips to the library, Zach and his father, Joseph, learned that chemical residues from every day products – shampoo, toothpaste and household cleaners – wash down the drain and into rivers, lakes, and oceans, where they damage the health of dolphins and other animals. Zach resolved to do something to help.

But Zach's dolphin-rescue efforts were put on hold when, soon thereafter, the Borkovics lost their farm. Suddenly homeless, they lived

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in an old Dodge van, until a particularly devastating day when Zach offered comfort with seven words that changed their future: "It's okay, Dad, just pretend we're camping."

From that moment, father and son became "adventure guys." They began collecting pop cans and tucked 15 percent of the proceeds into a new bank account.

Their savings grew, and at age four, Zach bought his first book on homeopathy. Already a proficient reader, Zach visited the library daily to satisfy his desire to learn. By kindergarten he had penned the *Zajo-Knight Training Book of The Zao Way*, as a life-guide for other children. In it he wrote: "Always have your own thinking even when someone tries to ignore your thinking and force their thinking onto yours or instead of yours."

Eventually, the Borkovics repurchased their farm, and Zach continued to build his pop can nest egg. In 2005 he created his first business, Earth Spirit Publishing, and helped his father publish his autobiographical book, *100 Days of Love*.

Earth Spirit Natural Home™ has just reached its first anniversary, but already counts New York Rangers tough guy Dale Purinton, the advisor to Hillary Clinton, and the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society as devoted customers. With every sale, Zach says, "That's one less bottle of chemicals going in the water to the dolphins, right, Dad?"

For other children who'd like to become entrepreneurs, Zach offers this advice: "Just do it! Anything is possible if you want it to be possible. Don't cast yourself into the chaos of quitting."

What does Zach want to be when he grows up?

"I'm thinking of becoming a robotics expert. Robots always amaze me! I like to see how things work."

For now, Zach is focusing on school, soccer, art, and expanding Earth Spirit Natural Home.™ Says Zach, "We are all soul, just Spirit...the rest of us and our bodies belong to the Earth." AD

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