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**Bill's
Bulletin
Board**

By Bill Rea

An Inconvenient Truth, the Academy Award winning film featuring former American vice-president Al Gore, was shown twice in King over the last couple of weeks, accompanied by panel discussions.

I missed the first showing in King City, but caught the Schomberg presentation, and was somewhat amazed at the number of people they were able to cram into the meeting room of the local library. The place was packed.

That was the good news. The bad news, if there was any, was this was a case of what is commonly known as "preaching to the converted." Even panel member Phil Chadwick observed toward the end that they really didn't have to do much of a selling job. "It sort of strikes me that the people who are here really don't have to be here, because you're pretty knowledgeable already," he remarked.

That's a pity. I don't say that because I believe more people have to hear the warnings about global warming (which is what the film is mainly about), because I think they do. I was hoping the panel discussion would have provided more debate, as opposed to the swapping of ideas between people who basi-

cally agreed with each other.

That concept was touched upon by one of the men in the audience, who had raised the concept that people in the media will give voice to people who say they disagree with the global warming warnings raised by Gore in the film just so they can appear to be balanced.

Getting the "other side" is one of the lessons they drill into you in journalism school.

Besides, guys like me need to hear from both sides, if possible, because I am not a scientist. I have no way to judge the validity of what Gore had to say, apart from the fact he said it.

True, I can see and feel the obvious evidence that we have these days, a green Christmas, next to no snow in these parts and even up north until well into January. But I have also heard the point made many times that climates are always changing, so are we seeing what is naturally meant to be, coinciding with certain human activities?

When I first heard of the existence of this film, and the fact that Gore was behind it, I naturally thought of politics. I am not a big fan of Al Gore, I was reasonably pleased that

George W. Bush became president after the 2000 election, although I am troubled by the fact that more people voted for Gore, and that it required a judicial gavel smack to get Bush the job.

Then I actually watched the film.

Thanks to a borrowed DVD, I was able to see it a couple of days before the Schomberg showing, and was able to prepare myself a bit.

Politics entered into the film a little, with a few shots being taken at Bush. I think we could have done without that, considering the point of the exercise was global warming, as opposed to political belly-aching and sour grapes. But in fairness, we have to bear in mind that the Bush bashing was played down. After all, this was not a Michael Moore film, which has brought Bush bashing for the sake of Bush bashing almost to the level of an art form.

On the other hand, we can't leave the political aspects out of this completely. A renowned scientist with a ton of initials and accolades after his or her name could get up and talk about global warming, and very few would care. People are interested in An Inconvenient Truth because it involves a former American vice-president who almost became president.

After the showing and discussion, one woman asked me if I thought Gore was going to run for president again. Like I indicated before, I had suspicions at first that Gore was using this as a vote-getting vehi-

cle. I stopped thinking that when I saw the film. I think the issue was sealed for me when Gore spoke about the foreign car manufacturers that are doing better than Ford or General Motors.

"If you look at who's doing well in the world, it's the companies that building more efficient cars," he said, pointing to Toyota and Honda, "and our companies are in deep trouble."

From what I understand about politics, knocking big American corporations is a great way to kill American presidential aspirations.

So I can accept that Gore is sincere in his efforts. But there is the question of how right he is. Like I stated before, I'm not a scientist, and neither is Gore, and neither are a lot of people who call themselves environmentalists.

I've said it and written it many times; that there are very few people in our society who are anti-environment. There are some who maybe give it a different priority than others and some who may seek to find ways to work environmental protection into the mix without disrupting our lives too much. There are also a few who are dumb enough not to care.

There are some who trumpet the needs of the environment in order to promote their own causes and agendas; sometimes personal, sometimes political, sometimes both. I have seen people, over some 20 years in this business, vehemently oppose proposals in their communities, charging they would damage the environment, when they really just didn't want

whatever was in the works in their neighbourhood.

And there are far too many people out who believe their concern for the environment gives them licence to be sanctimonious, ala, "I care deeply about the environment, so agree with me on everything or I will say all sorts of nasty things to and about you."

I often wonder who I should believe in situations like this.

I grant that Gore makes a compelling case, and if his scenarios come true (and it is possible they might), we could be in for a lot of trouble.

But his message also included elements of a pep talk, as he tried to rouse the fighting Yankee spirit at the end. We have to remember this is a prominent American statesman, presumably addressing an American audience, although it is also true that global warming and the components that lead to it do not carry passports.

Although his notoriety could cause some people to be cynical about what he's trying to do (I've already confessed to having had some thoughts like that), it also gives him enough of an audience to be credible. And a big following like his is something that people holding differing views can't ignore.

Gore can have his scientific data to back him up, and if he's really off the mark on this, presumably there are a lot of eminent scientists and other experts who could straighten him out in a big hurry.

Have you heard from any of these people?

Editorial

Forget the Leafs: A season of good local hockey has come to an end

As local hockey fans lament that the annual Stanley Cup playoffs are going to take place with the Toronto Maple Leafs conspicuously absent, there is some comfort in the fact that there's been plenty of good hockey played around here over the last couple of months.

True, it's mainly kids' hockey, meaning it's mainly of interest to the youngsters who are playing it, while they carry dreams of being the next Wayne Gretzky, and to their parents, who possibly permit themselves similar dreams.

But this should not be sold short. It is hockey at its best because it is hockey played strictly for fun.

Any adult who ever laced up a pair of skates when they were a kid can harken back to games they played many years ago, when it sometimes took a couple of seconds to figure out where they really were supposed to be for a face-off, with one of the guys in the stripe shirts often having to gently guide them; or when it took several seconds to determine who won a draw.

There's a nostalgic feeling to watching little kids

who have barely learned to handle a hockey stick trying to manage a puck, or make their first serious attempts at skating backwards, usually ending up sprawled on the ice.

Then there was more serious hockey, at the rep level, etc.; serious, but still with an undercurrent of fun built in.

And there were the more advanced levels of junior hockey for King fans this year.

There was the junior C play of the Schomberg Cougars. True, this was something of a rebuilding

year for the club, with a number of younger and inexperienced players who have some learning to do. Every team must endure seasons like that, as the Leafs and the Habs found out the hard way this past weekend.

Then there was the King Wild, a new team playing in a new league, and both of them clearly required some ironing out. The games were entertaining, but players have to learn a little bit about discipline, and grasping that it's not necessary to throw a punch every time an opponent does something

that makes them angry. There are better places than the penalty box for self assertion.

It's also true that some of the adults in the league could have set better examples for the young men in their charge. But we have to temper such thoughts with the understanding that it's the adults who are willing to step up and get involved who make it all possible, and that's at all levels of minor hockey.

There's some learning for all these young players to do, but isn't that really the idea behind all the fun?