

EEVC NEWSLETTER

Published by the Eastern Electric Vehicle Club

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THE EEVC PARTICIPATES IN 2011 JUNIOR SOLAR SPRINT AT THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE AND PRESENTS THE OVER-ALL BEST SPRINT CAR AWARD IN MEMORY OF RON GROENING

More than 350 Junior Solar Sprint students with 152 solar paneled cars showed up Saturday May 14th to compete in the annual regional Junior Sprint competition. There were eight cars in the open division and one entry from the Philadelphia Police Department. Unfortunately the sun didn't

shine sufficiently for the 10.5 inch X 5 inch solar panels to work, so the students had to run their cars on battery power. (The panel's listed output is 2.6 -2.8 volts at 1100 mA.) The rules of the competition require that cars be engineered and constructed to run on either solar panel or batteries.

The Junior Solar Sprint is a middle school sponsored event. Competitors come from grades 5 through 8 and usually are accompa-



l to r: Kyle Thomas and Aaron Yeiser winners of the Overall EEVC Best Sprint Car Award; Dan Monroe, Mike Manning and Oliver Perry look the car over during the technical judging session.

nied to the competition by a school representative. Competitors usually receive word of the competition through their science teacher. Some middle school programs run a very visible local school competition in order to prepare their students for the first step regional event, which in our region is annu-

ally run by the Philadelphia Solar Energy Association (PSEA), under the direction of Mr. Joseph Bruno. PSEA members have worked very hard over the past few decades to make this event available for Middle School students in the Delaware Valley. Setting up a track with proper wire guides is not easy. Winners in the Philadelphia region become eligible to continue on to the Northeastern United States Final, held in Spring-



At the starting line

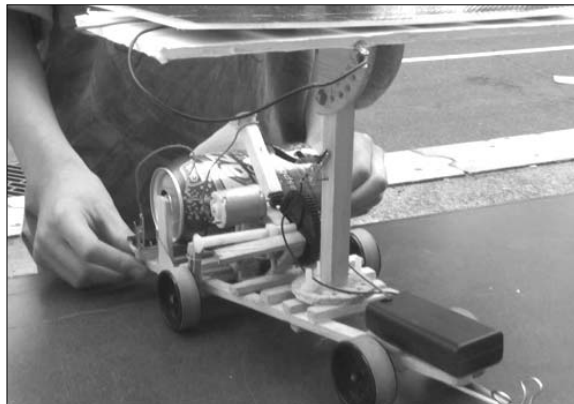
field, MA, June 12th. (Sponsorship and location of the Northeast Regional Final will be changed next year.)

The threatening rain held off until after the awards ceremony. Awards were presented by PSEA for first, second, and third place racing results; first, second, and third place technical merit (design and engineering), and first, second, and third place creativity. The creativity award is primarily one for artistic design, but does include other types of creativity.

In addition to the nine awards given above, the EEVC presented the distinguished “Over-all-Best” Sprint Car in memory of Ron Groening, one of our past EEVC officers. Ron was an engineer who along with his wife Peg frequently served as a Technical Merit Judge for Jr. Solar Sprint competitions in the past.

Helping to pick out the top three Technical Merit Jr. Solar Sprint Cars and our EEVC Best Car Award were EEVC officers Mike Manning, Mr. and Mrs. Dan Monroe, and yours truly, Oliver Perry, EEVC president.

Results



A close look at the winning vehicle, showing the solar panel mounting arrangement.



EEVC president Oliver Perry presents Kyle Thomas and Aaron Yeiser from Perkiomen Valley Middle School East, the EEVC Best Overall Jr. Solar Sprint Car Award given in memory of Ron Groening a former EEVC officer who served as a judge for the Jr. Solar Sprint competition. Award presented in front of the North end of the Franklin Institute.=

Winning the EEVC “Over-All-Best” Sprint Car Award was a duo, Aaron Yeiser and Kyle Thomas from Middle School East, Perkiomen Valley School District, Collegeville, Pennsylvania. Teachers associated with the Jr. Solar Sprint project were Ms. Raspen and Ms. Kashey.



Accompanying the students to the racing track on the north side of the Franklin Institute May 14th were their respective parents Charles and Ruth Yeiser, and Sheldon and Linette Thomas. The parents provided their boys transportation, moral support, and enthusiastic cheering at the event.

According to the Perkiomen team, the boys learned about the event from their middle school teacher and were provided access to the solar panel and specified electric motor. Pitsco Education Company is a well known firm that specializes in providing educational equipment for middle and high school science, math and technology. All of the components for building a successful Jr. Solar Sprint car can be purchased through the Pitsco catalog. However, in the case of this particular EEVC winning project, some of the components were purchased via the internet in stores like Amazon, and AP Morris.

The boys built their car totally independent from the aid of the school program and teachers. Their parents provided workspace, tools, some hard to get parts, advice, and encouragement. When asked how the boys selected such things as effective gear size and made wise selective engineering decisions they indicated that much of what they accomplished was through trial and error. They learned the hard way that hot glue is not a reliable fastener for items left in a parked car sitting in the sun. By varying the size of their motor and wheel axle gears they were able to determine the combinations that gave their car favorable off the line acceleration as well as finish line speed.

All cars were inspected by the EEVC judges and given a rating for strength, aerodynamics, transmission, photovoltaic configuration, innovation, creativity, craftsmanship, and aesthetics.

Unique motor to wheel transmission and method of setting the solar panel



Dan Monroe and Oliver Perry examine the transmission of the winning car.

The automatic two-speed transmission that the boys designed into their sprint car and their photovoltaic technology easily set this vehicle apart from the other entries.

The photovoltaic panel was positioned on a single vertical support which allowed the panel to swivel in two planes. To keep the panel in its selected position, with the sun's rays perpendicular to the panel, the boys used pins that inserted into selected holes. This prevented the panel from shifting during the race. The boys also devised a solar chart that showed the position that the sun's rays were shining relative to the direction that the car would race down the track. To set the solar

panel they placed the chart on the ground oriented with its center-line parallel to the guide wire on the track. The shadow of a vertical pin pointed to a number on the circular chart corresponding to a setting on the panel swivel of the car.

As for the automatic transmission, Aaron Yeiser told us that they initially considered using an electromagnet to shift gears but decided upon using an actuated spring instead. The spring, which the boys used to slide one gear to mesh with another, reminded me of the type that is used in a ball-point pen. The spring was activated after a reel wound string pulled a pin device free, similar to how a fishing reel pulls in a hook. This elaborate hand-made transmission allowed for a more favorable drive to driven gear ratio for starting torque at the starting line and a more favorable drive to driven ratio for speed further down the track.

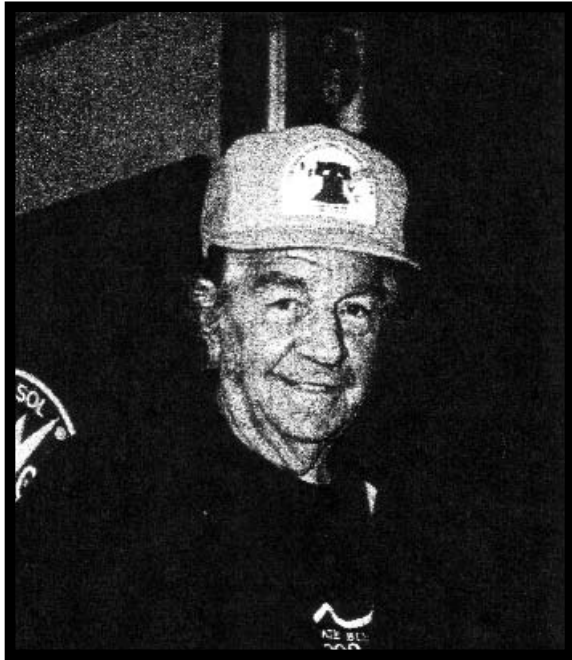
The EEVC Over-All-Best Sprint Car was not necessarily the fastest. The winners in race time sometimes are lucky. The cars with the best times are frequently lightweight and their strength questionable. All the winning cars had to do was remain strong enough to be competitive for a few races. Since the race this year was conducted without sun, solar arrays didn't factor into the speed times. Cars with poorly designed solar panel configurations could have won their heats.

We based our selection upon overall engineering, design, creativity, strength and craftsmanship as well as performance. Our winner demonstrated that it raced well and that it was designed to win races, not to just look good. Both boys, especially Aaron Yeiser, proved themselves to be technically literate and well versed in explaining the intricate engineering characteristics of their project solar Sprint car.

We would also like to commend the parents of these two outstanding students for providing them with the environment and parenting that are associated with success. Mr. Charles Yeiser is a mechanical engineer and his wife Ruth an environmental educator working with a non-profit organization. Mr. Sheldon Thomas is a training manager for a propane company and his wife Linette an accountant. Congratulations to this 2011 winning team, from the Perkiomen Valley School District, Colleagueville, PA.

Picture credits: Ann Monroe.

LONGTIME EEVC MEMBER EUGENE LEMIEUX, SPONSOR AND SUPPORTER OF THE OLYMPIAN FORD ESCORT, DIES AT 87



Older members of the EEVC remember Eugene Lemieux as the cheerful gentleman who owned and operated a luxury RV bus with an electric CitiCar stored in the lower luggage compartment. Eugene told the story about picking two of the CitiCars up in South Jersey and having one of them accidentally go out the back of the truck he used to pick them up when he accelerated from a stop light on route 130 in Cinnaminson. He said the car was undamaged but he tied up traffic for about an hour before everything was restored to normal. Little did Eugene know at the time that he would become one of the sponsors of the electric car team from Cinnaminson High School which was just down the road from where his CitiCar landed. Eugene became a participating team member of the Cinnaminson team in the American Tour de Sol about ten years later.

Jerry Asher, an NESEA volunteer who served for many years on the Tour de Sol volunteer staff, remembers Eugene as a cheerful helpful person who humbly offered his services to help out wherever he could. Eugene helped park cars, directed traffic, and passed out TdS brochures with the energy of a

teenager.

Those of us on the Ford Escort "Olympian" team remember Eugene's bus. We had team meetings on the bus in New York City, Baltimore, Washington, Boston, Saratoga, Albany, and everywhere in between. Competitors in the Tour de Sol as well as NESEA volunteers became familiar with the bus and welcomed opportunities to spend a little time on it... after taking off their shoes to board. Ed Kriebick and I slept on the bus on a number of occasions. It became our home on the Tour. We became the envy of other teams and were known as the team that had the extravagant support bus.

Much has been written about Eugene and his contributions to the Cinnaminson Electric Car team and the EEVC. Our June 1999 newsletter featured Eugene as member of the month. We appreciated that Eugene took the time to write a full two-page autobiography for that particular publication. In the June 2002 EEVC Newsletter Eugene was featured as an outstanding member of the Olympian Team. January 2003 Eugene was honored as our 2002 Club Member of the Year.

Eugene lived an adventuresome life. From beginning to end he had stories to tell, stories that kept your attention, and stories that you never forgot.

Eugene loved to treat us all to dinner. One night in Washington he took a group of us on the electric car team to a restaurant at 10:30 PM. He told me that it was okay to park in a "customer zone only" parking spot since the store closed at 10:30 P.M. On the way back to the car Eugene ran up ahead and yelled back to the rest of us that the car was gone. Then he laughed... only to a minute later to gasp.."Oh my gosh, it really is gone!" The astonished look on his face was almost worth the 90 dollars to get the van back. To make matters worse Eugene had worn shorts and a tee shirt that evening, not expecting a sudden plunge in temperatures that fell with a wicked wind. I remember seeing him huddled up against a building trying to keep warm while we waited for help to arrive. It was the coldest night in May that I ever remember experiencing.

My wife Dottie and I last visited Eugene at his apartment complex in Virginia and wrote



Gene (r) and Bill Visher at the door of the Boyertown Museum, May, 2005.

a brief review of that visit in the December 09 issue of the EEVC Newsletter. At that time Eugene was in the recovery stage of mouth and throat cancer. His family said that he did eventually beat the cancer but had lost a lot of weight in the process. Eugene was planning to move back to the Eastern Shore to be with one of his daughters but an unexpected fall down a staircase prevented that move from taking place.

Learning from Eugene's life

Eugene's life offers some tips for successful navigation to those of us still living. He was always cheerful. He often received the wrong end of a deal as he worked his way up the economic ladder. But Eugene had a way of cheerfully addressing every bad situation. He never lost his cool or tongue under stress. He knew the evil that existed in the minds and hearts of some people but never let that overcome his tendency to see the best in everyone. His favorite song according to his daughters was "High Hopes." Eugene met all challenges in life with that spirit.

Concerning faith, Eugene was born and raised in the Catholic tradition. He made sure

his children attended regular services as he did. I remember Eugene finding a Catholic Church and attending it once when we were on the Tour in Lake George, New York. He had a reverential respect and fear of God that governed his life. Toward the end he experienced several irreversible setbacks which caused him to question the reasons why? He reminded me somewhat of Job in that regard.

God Bless Eugene Lemieux. May he rest in peace. He will be greatly missed. The old times will not be forgotten. We are presenting our annual EEVC member Best Performance in the 21st CAC in memory of Eugene.

The following is the published obituary of Eugene. It is noteworthy that he was never boastful about his achievements in the EEVC. For the past half dozen years or so Eugene stepped back from EEVC involvement. He lived for most of the years we knew him in Middletown, New York, where he owned and operated a large apartment complex.

Obituary from Newspaper

Eugene R. Lemieux COLLINSVILLE, VA - Eugene R. Lemieux, 87, of Collinsville, VA, passed away peacefully on May 21, 2011, in Fairfax, VA. Born in New York City, Mr. Lemieux was raised in New Bedford, MA, and schooled in the vocation of machinery engineering. Mr. Lemieux was a World War II veteran serving in the U.S. Merchant Marines who remained committed to the U.S.A. and his fellow veterans. After his discharge from military service, Mr. Lemieux worked as a bus driver in New York City, where he met his wife, Margaret McGovern. They moved to Hightstown, NJ, where they raised their eight children and built the TV Motel and Leopard Lounge. An ambitious entrepreneur, Mr. Lemieux's many business enterprises over the years of his life also included the Trenton Telephone Answering Service, the Cozy Cab and Limousine Service, Hightstown Camper Sales, and Saxony Manor Apartments in Middletown, NY. At the time of his death, Mr. Lemieux owned and operated three apartment complexes in Collinsville, VA. Mr. Lemieux held a private pilot's license and was a member of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association. For many years, he involved himself in bus con-

versions and was a member of the Family Coach Association, where he received several awards for his extraordinary bus design and construction. A motorcycle enthusiast, he obtained his motorcycle license at the age of 80. Mr. Lemieux was predeceased by his daughter, Jeanne Marie Bryan. Surviving are his wife, Margaret M. Lemieux; his son, Raymond E. Lemieux of Plumsted, NJ; his daughter, Margaret L. Michalchuk of Cranbury, NJ; his daughter and son-in-law, Dolores and George Colonna of Onley, VA; his daughter, Marian Lemieux-DeVito of Levittown, PA; his daughter and son-in-law, Catherine and Richard Troger of Point Pleasant, NJ; his son and daughter-in-law, Thomas and Patricia Lemieux of Belle Haven, VA; his son and daughter-in-law, Ret Col Robert and Amy Lemieux of Fairfax, VA; 15 grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren. Calling hours will be from 5 to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, May 24, at the Barlow & Zimmer Funeral Home, 202 Stockton St., Hightstown, NJ. A Funeral Mass will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, May 25, at St. Anthony of Padua Roman Catholic Church, Franklin Street, Hightstown, NJ. Cremation will be private. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Boys Town, 200 Flanagan Blvd., Boys Town, NE 68010.

MINUTES OF APRIL MEETING Don Zimmerman, April 21, 2011

April 13, 2011 EEVC meeting @ 7:00 PM
Chaired by Oliver Perry. new attendees Bruce & Carter Hohne

Ollie discussed the news item on page 7 of the March/April Newsletter about Paul Braun and associates. He and his associates changed the internal structure of a battery using nanoscale and honeycomb design to significantly increase the capacity and lower the charging times.

Ollie also discussed and presented information about advanced electronics in electric vehicles:

1. the Power Pack Factor by densely using capacitors
2. using inductors (coils) and capacitors to store an electric charge
3. discuss inductive reactance and capacitive reactance called opposing AC current

and Back EMF

4. Impedance - resistance to current flow

5. energy is stored in a magnetic field and electrostatic field . . . when the field collapses the energy returns to its source and there is no consumption of energy.

Ollie discussed the early competition between Thomas Edison, an advocate of DC and Nikola Tesla, an advocate of AC. The winner was based upon which electrical system can distribute needed current over wide areas. It is apparent that AC won.

Greg Witmer discussed an analog voltage meter. It is a "hall effect" sensor, an amphoter meter from Australia. Greg was then presented the "outstanding EEVC Member of Year 2010" award.

Ken Barbour needs your vote.. He is trying to buy a Nissan Leaf and went to Washington, DC for a test drive. While there he and his wife entered the Nissan contest "why do you want a electric vehicle Leaf?" Go to the Nissan website and vote for Ken and his wife.

Paul Kydd discussed the problem of electric motors at high rpm. A 20 year old motor can take 9 to 12,000 rpm but a newer motor will only advance to 5-7,000 rpm. The older motors have steel commutators and the newer ones are plastic.

Subject: 21st CAC Updates by Ollie and email from Joel Anstrom. The dates are May 21, 22 and 23 at State College, PA. Itinerary includes Tour of Wind Farm has been moved from Sunday Morning to Saturday afternoon during the Highway

Errands. This was due to scheduling with the tour guide. If anyone wants to stand under a 300' turning wind generator we will arranged for extra rides out there. The farm is located on Sandy Ridge at Cresson.

Route 22 climbs the mountain following the part of the famous Horseshoe Curve.

Reminder Wednesday April 20 is the last day for early registration. So far I've only heard from Ed Kriebick.

Remind everyone there will be a tailgating competition and cookoff for Saturday at lunch. We will supply PSU Italian sausage to participants. Tim is close to updating the website,

CLUBMEMBER FEATURED IN TIME VIDEO

Clubmember Brandon Hollinger has been getting quite a bit of publicity lately, ever since he and his project car, a converted 1996 Saab 96, were featured in a video on the Time magazine Web site. Check it out at http://www.time.com/time/video/player/0,32068,990054967001_2077261,00.html



Brian, a musician by trade, began the project knowing next to nothing about the mechanical aspects of cars, and probably less about electricity and electric cars, yet he came up with a very nicely done conversion. In fact, he has since gone into business doing conversions for other people; check out his work at www.amprevolt.com

Brandon reports that he has other news as well:

“I’ve entered a global contest to win \$20k in lithium batteries and electric vehicle components. Out of about 1000 entrees, the sponsors have selected me to be one of 10 finalists. The winner will be selected by a majority vote that is open to the general public. So this has effectively boiled down to a popularity contest. With your help, I plan on converting this little beauty to run on electricity (see below) that would then be available to the local community as a shuttle service and for private events.” You can vote and/or read about the project at :

www.projectooc.com/evtv/finalist_review.php?finalist=finalist4.

NEWS UPDATE

Solar cheaper than coal?

A May 26 Bloomberg story by Brian

Wingfield reported that Mark Little, GE’s director of global research, has predicted that within three to five years innovations will drive the price of solar energy below that from fossil fuel or nuclear. The article noted that the price of solar cells has decreased by 21 percent so far this year, “and the cost of solar power is now about the same as the rate utilities charge for conventional power in the sunniest parts of California, Italy and Turkey.”

Federal driving tax on the way?

CNN Money reported on May 18 that the federal government is starting to consider replacing per-gallon fuel taxes with a national driving tax based on miles driven, rather than fuel used. As cars get more and more miles to the gallon, fuel tax revenues are falling, and some lawmakers see this as a good way to raise funds. There are objections, of course: how do you determine miles driven and protect privacy? (A GPS unit in your car reporting your movements to the government? But since when did the feds care about individual privacy?) Won’t this punish rural drivers, who tend to drive longer distances?

Yet there is still interest in it. Estimates, says CNN, are for about one cent per mile to maintain current revenues, and could easily be double or triple that.

CNN thinks the idea is a long shot, but who knows, as the government gets more and more desperate for revenue?

Are you paying your EV fuel tax?

Are you paying the state of Pennsylvania’s Alternate Fuels Tax for your EV? If you drive any kind of alt-fuel vehicle (including an EV), you’re supposed to pay a state tax on the energy you use, and file a Form DMF 101. Don’t believe me? Check out www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/alternate_fuels_tax/14435.

NYT likes the Think City and the iMEV

New York Times writer Bradley Berman recently tried out several urban EVs around the Bay Area, and reported on his impressions. Cars tested with the Think City, the Smart fourtwo ED, and the Mitsubishi iMEV, and of the three it looks like he liked the Think City the best, having “a blast” driving

it despite its overall hand-assembled feel. Not so nice was the price, which apparently is difficult to figure out.

The favorite was the iMEV, which he found drove well and had enough room for him. It also had a better price: just a bit more than \$16,000 in California, after all rebates are figured in.

The Smart came in a definite third; with an uncomfortable driving position, “ineffectual” performance and high price, although the car had the best interior appointments of the three.

Tesla stock offering

AP reported on May 25 the Tesla Motors plans a stock offering that would, the company hopes, raise \$214.3 million to help pay for development of a new crossover vehicle. On June 3 the company announced the offering would be priced at \$28.76 per share. A private placement would be done simultaneously.

Taking out the CO₂ won't work

On May 9 Princeton University announced that researchers led by Princeton engineer Robert Socolow had determined that “[t]echnologies for removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere are unlikely to offer an economically feasible way to slow human-driven climate change for several decades.”

“The report, issued by a committee of 13 experts, was co-chaired by Socolow and Michael Desmond, a chemist at BP. The group looked at technologies known as ‘Direct Air Capture,’ or DAC, which would involve using chemicals to absorb carbon dioxide from the open air, concentrating the carbon dioxide, and then storing it safely underground.”

High-performance electric motorcycle

A group of engineers at Carlos III University of Madrid (UC3M) has developed a prototype of a high-performance electric motorcycle, which has recently participated in the first electric motorcycle world championship.

This project, known as e-Moto, was created and developed by LGN Tech Design, a spin-off company that has its origins in a line of research begun in the Laboratorio de Máquinas (MAQLAB – Machine Laboratory) of UC3M and receives support from the University’s Vice-Chancellor’s Office of

Research through the Business Incubator UC3M Science Park. “The technology that we have developed is a result of the design of a platform for the modeling, analysis and evolution of racing motorcycles, which was then applied to the development of the e-Moto”, comments the head of the MAQLAB, Professor Juan Carlos García Prada, of the Mechanical Engineering Department at UC3M.

The prototype of the e-Moto recently participated in the first FIM E-Power electric motorcycle world championship (100% electric), organized by the International Motorcycling Federation. The model came in third, a position of merit according to its creators, who point out that, although there were only three contestants on the track at the Magny-Cours circuit in France, the motorcycle managed to finish the race with no mechanical problems whatsoever.

This is a vehicle that was conceived as an electric motorcycle from the very beginning, with battery recharging systems that offer quite remarkable results, and which are similar to those of an automobile. Among the technical features of the prototype, its light weight (145 Kg.) in comparison with other existing models stands out, as does its alternating current motor, which boasts a maximum 95 horsepower. It also features a system for recharging its batteries when braking and an innovative front suspension based on a system that has already been tested in other research projects.

GM hiring for Volt plant

A May 25 AP story reports that General Motors has announced that it will add 2500 jobs at a Detroit-area plant that makes the Chevrolet Volt. “The company plans to invest \$69 million in the Detroit-Hamtramck factory and add two shifts of workers so the plant can make the new Chevrolet Malibu midsize car and the Impala large sedan.”

Hydrogen from the pipeline

On May 10 Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. (TMS) celebrated the opening of the first hydrogen fueling station in the U.S. fed directly from an active industrial hydrogen pipeline. The station is a collaborative effort between Toyota, Air Products, Shell, South

Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and the Department of Energy (DOE). The facility will provide hydrogen for the Toyota fuel cell hybrid demonstration program vehicles as well as other manufacturers' fuel cell vehicle fleets in the Los Angeles area.

Toyota has announced that it plans to bring a fuel cell vehicle to market in 2015, or sooner.

\$1.4 billion for EVs on Autobahn

A May 16 AP story reports that the German government has announced a desire to commit another 1 billion (\$1.4 billion) in tax breaks and incentives to help fulfill its goal of having 1 million electric cars on the road by 2020.

"The money is meant to encourage research and development over the next two years and would come in addition to funds already committed to the goal."

Obama wants chargers

A May 25 AP story by Matthew Daly reports that "the Obama administration is installing charging stations for government vehicles in five cities, including Washington and Detroit. The General Services Administration plans to buy 116 plug-in electric vehicles, including 101 Chevrolet Volts, and will assign them to government agencies in five cities: Washington, Detroit, Los Angeles, San Diego and San Francisco."

And in Oakland, too

On May 18 Oakland International Airport announced that eight ChargePoint Network charging stations for EVs have been installed in the Premier Parking Lot. This makes it the first Northern California airport to offer EV charging services as part of the ChargePoint Network, providing drivers EV services including real-time charging station status and reservations.

Charging is free, but parking in the lot costs \$36 a day.

BMW chooses charging partner

The New York Times reported on May 18 that BMW has reached an agreement with Aeroviorment to provide charging units for the 700 ActiveE electric cars that the company plans to begin leasing this year.

FIRE AND WATER **By California Pete**



This past winter was snowier than usual in the Sierra, and subsequent cool weather kept the snowpack from melting as early as usual. While this has meant that some ski areas have been able to remain open later than usual, it also

means there's a lot of snow up there waiting for the first good hot spell to melt and come rushing down to flood parts of Yosemite.

It has also rained more, and later than usual at lower elevations, which means that there's a good supply of fuel for this year's fire season, which has just begun. We've had no significant fires yet (unlike Arizona), but it's still early. Stay tuned.

And as if fire wasn't enough to worry about, the California Geological Survey has published a map showing the locations with the greatest danger of landslides. Not surprisingly, it's worst in hilly areas like parts of Marin county (which is where much of the money is, as well). Kind of makes me happy that I live in flat country, and nowhere near flammable bush. Earthquakes are still a worry.

Google moves more into solar

Mountain View-based Google and San Mateo-based SolarCity have announced the creation of a \$280 million fund to finance residential solar projects. The Google-backed fund is the first collaboration between the Internet giant and the nation's leading solar power and energy efficiency service provider, and represents Google's largest investment to date in the clean energy sector. The fund is SolarCity's largest project financing fund and the largest residential solar fund created in the U.S.

A scandal in Alameda

Alameda, a city that occupies an island just off the edge of Oakland (and a million miles away from it in income, education level, and a few other things) has just recieved a very public black eye. One May 30 a suicidal man went to a local beach and walked about 150 yards into the chilly waters of San Francisco

Bay until he was neck deep. He stood there for more than an hour, despite entreaties from at least one kite boarder, until he died, at which point a woman swam out and pulled his body to shore. All this while the Alameda fire department and police stood on the shore watching him and refusing to attempt a rescue. Some cited a city policy forbidding water rescues (kind of odd for an island city), due to lack of money for training, but this was later shown to be false. The policy was later changed, but the damage to Alameda emergency responders' reputation was done.

New bans in SF

San Francisco, the city that tried to ban Happy Meals and the telephone book, is now attempting to ban the sale of tropical fish, because they may be raised in inhumane conditions.

Not to be outdone, the State Assembly has passed a bill that would ban Chinese shark fin soup. The brutal killing of sharks for their fins and tails is terrible, but it seems kind of difficult to ban something that's considered an important part of the cultural heritage of about a third of the San Francisco's population.

But if you want to ban part of someone's heritage, why stop at shark fins? There's a move afoot in the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to make circumcision illegal. San Francisco's Jewish and Muslim populations are not amused.

What rapture?

The fun just keeps coming. May 21 came and went, and the end of the world did not begin. The 89 year old Oakland-based radio preacher who made the prediction was not deterred, saying that the real thing would happen on October 21. We're not holding our breath.

Also in Oakland, a court fight has ended with approval being given for the installation of a plaque at a local cemetery commemorating the deaths of Jim Jones's followers by mass suicide (drinking the Kool-Aid) in Guyana in 1978. Jones, like the more recent apocalypse preacher, was from Oakland, as were many of his followers.

COMING EVENTS

Hands-on EV Conversion Workshop

July 25-30, at the Middle Bucks Institute of Technology, Jamison PA. For info go to <http://sites.google.com/site/wwwbuckscountyrenewables/newhome/ev-conversion-workshops-2011/July>. For registration info email info@buckscountyrenewables.com

DoE Solar Decathlon 2011

Sept 23-Oct 2, Washington, DC. Go to www.solardecathlon.gov/

MEETING SCHEDULE

Meetings are held in Room 49, Plymouth-Whitemarsh High School, 201 East Germantown Pike in Plymouth Meeting, PA, and begin at 7:00 p.m. There will be no meetings in July or August.

September 14

October 12

November 9

December 14



This month's puzzle: Can you identify this car? And the venue?

How about this one?

