

College Bound with Sweet Smelling Biodiesel Local HS Student Uses Healthy Oil from the Himalayan Institute

HONESDALE, PA (December 27, 2010) – High-school senior Rebecca Harvey fuels her 1991 Volkswagen Jetta with refined oil donated by the Total Health Center (THC) located at the Himalayan Institute just north of Honesdale. She and her father, Dave Harvey, converted the engine to run on waste vegetable oil (WVO) after some careful research. They purchased an older, mechanical diesel vehicle and had to restore it prior to the conversion. “They’re happier running veggie oil than the newer cars with computers,” says Mr. Harvey. The gas mileage ranges from 40 miles per gallon in town and 50 on the highway.

In the northeastern Pennsylvania winter, vehicles with converted engines use both diesel and WVO. They must be started with diesel and rely on the heat from the engine to warm the oil before it will flow well. Converted cars must purge the WVO from the injection system after reaching their destination so it does not gel in the lines while parked. Whereas WVO from restaurants requires substantial refinement to be car-ready, oil from the THC’s shirodhara program need only be filtered.

Shirodhara is an ancient ayurvedic healing therapy for clearing and calming the mind. The highlight of the treatment is the steady streaming of warm oil on the forehead for up to 15-20 minutes preceded by a 20-30 minute massage of the feet, neck, and shoulders and followed by a scalp massage.

“Shirodhara is amazingly soothing to the nervous system,” says Mick Grady a licensed massage therapist at the Himalayan Institute’s THC. “It is directed at that part of the brain involved in engaging with the world, being alert and decisive. That steady, warm flow helps us let go of our random thoughts and mental chatter.” Himalayan Institute shirodhara oil is a proprietary blend of nut and flower oils and other botanical extracts known for their adaptogenic properties. Adaptogenic herbs are known to be balancing and restorative.

“Rebecca’s been very dedicated to make our trips to go look at colleges as green as possible even taking fuel with us,” says her father. They were surprised to find actual vegetable oil pumps at Oberlin College in Ohio had actual pumps. She’s looking at majoring in environmental concerns related to the social aspects of getting people to take action to reduce, reuse, recycle. “Even if people don’t do the same thing, maybe there’s something else they can take and do to make a difference.”

Asked about the odor of combustion with shirodhara oil, Mr. Harvey says, “It’s wonderful. It smells fragrant and pleasant in the car and out in the street, kind of like burnt lavender. Used restaurant oil smells more like fatted french fries.”

To learn more about waste vegetable oil and biodiesel engines, you can visit <http://www.homebiodieselkits.com/oilguide>. To learn more about shirodhara and other therapeutic techniques offered at the Total Health Center or to schedule an appointment, you can call (570)647-1500 or click <http://www.himalayaninstitute.org/Health/AboutTheCenter.aspx>.