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WOMEN'S POST

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Under the nuclear volcano

GEORGE PATRICK

As prices are soaring at the pumps. As usual, motorists complain, politicians huff and puff, and conspiracy theorists mutter darkly about the sinister manipulations of the oil oligopoly. But it looks like expensive gas is just something we're going to have to get used to. Today's high prices are only a harbinger of much worse to come, for one thing is clear – the world is heading into a

humungous energy crisis.

Unless you've been living in a cave for the last few years you must have noticed that the energy problem is rarely out of the headlines. Unfortunately, energy seems to be one of those issues where the more you learn the less you understand. So much of the discussion is about science and technology most of us know little about, and the scientists, whom we look to for objectivity, all seem to have their own axes to grind. What is one to think?

One thing seems reasonably sure – the world is running out of recoverable oil and natural gas, and, to a lesser extent, coal. Humans have been gobbling up these finite deposits of fossil fuels at an ever increasing rate since the Industrial Revolution began some two hundred years ago, and now the end is nigh.

It's difficult to get any precise agreement, but there seems to be a broad general consensus among experts. World oil reserves will effectively be

gone by 2040 or 2050, perhaps even as early as 2025. Long before that day arrives, as the global pool of oil dwindles, oil-thirsty nations are likely to resort to extreme measures to safeguard their supplies. Is it, for example, too much a stretch of the imagination to see some powerful country cooking up a phony excuse to invade and control an oil-rich Middle Eastern country?

If you want to think of the original untouched deposits of VOLCANO Please see page 7



Ann Kaplan is the founder and CEO of Medicard. Profile page 6.

Working to live or living to work?

BRAD HILL

As we get ready to take time off, it's worth noting that a new North American study says one-quarter of vacationers intend to work this year while they're on holidays.

That's a harrowing number. And when you consider that many vacationers don't actually

have a workplace – they're spouses without careers – that's one truly harrowing number. It means many families – actually, almost half of them – will be on the road with a cell phone, a laptop, a Blackberry, paperwork, or all four, in their luggage.

The hotel will be an office, with room service bringing you faxes instead of food. The beach will be tested for good cell

reception, and tempers will flare when sand gets into the keyboard of the computer. The art gallery will be a good place to field e-mail, but it'll be a short visit because you can't use the phone. And when the meal is on its way at the restaurant, it'll be a good time to dash off a memo back to home base, as long as no one spills a drink on your notes.

No matter how you add up

the numbers of families on working holidays, the cup is more than one-quarter empty. And in losing the sense of disconnection from the office, we are losing the sense of connection with ourselves. We are giving over our true privacy – the limited time we have earned to be away, the limited time our loved ones can love and be WORKING Please see page 17

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A GREAT DEALERSHIP MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE

Ann Kaplan, founder and CEO of Medicard

PROFILE BY
WENDY BROAD

Ann Kaplan is the founder and CEO of Medicard. She is a Canadian Woman Entrepreneur Award winner (2000) who has developed a multi-million DASH dollar business serving thousands of physicians and tens of thousands of patients across the country.

After spending two hours in her downtown office talking about her family, husband and childhood, I discovered that Kaplan is both sentimental and funny. She has an entire drawer in her office full of files dedicated to people who have influenced her life. When she sees an article on someone she knows or finds some-

thing that may interest that particular person, she cuts it out and puts it in her file.

Born in Winnipeg, Kaplan has lived in New Zealand and Victoria, B.C. Her father was a radiologist and an internist and her mother is a psychologist. She laughs when she describes herself as a mix of Scottish, Hawaiian and Botox.

Kaplan has always been very independent. She moved out on her own at the age of 15 and left on good terms with her family. Even though she describes her father as the most irritating person she's ever known, she says he was extremely eccentric and caring. "Everything he did came from his heart but it was misunderstood." Kaplan's love for her father

hasn't diminished since his death and tears fill her eyes when she talks of that terrible day. He was sick for 17 years, his body filled with various forms of cancer.

Kaplan spent most of those years caring for her father. She describes the worst and greatest moment in her life as the moment when he finally passed away in her arms. She believes that he was hanging on for her, suffering because he didn't think she could deal with his death. She was glad to be with him when he died. It was both a tragedy and a gift — the end to his suffering came and yet a great person was gone.

Kaplan describes her mother as a woman who wears rose-coloured glasses. She isn't jaded by life

and can always find something positive in the world around her. Kaplan wishes she could be more like her mother.

Now living in Toronto, Kaplan moved Medicard's head office when she married. Since nearly half of her business comes from Ontario, it made sense for her to open an office here. There is still an office in Vancouver (where she started the company) and another in Montreal.

Kaplan first got her idea for Medicard in 1995 when the government cut back its funding on elective surgeries. Upset about the government's decision, she decided to start a company that financed medical surgeries. In less than two years she generated three million dollars worth of business.

Before starting Medicard, Kaplan operated an interior design store. She handed in her store keys to the landlord on her way to the hospital to deliver her first baby. But her children didn't keep her from the business world for

long. She is now going into her ninth year at Medicard and has six children at home.

Kaplan's first marriage lasted for about five years. The couple had two children, then discovered that they were incompatible. She jokes that he followed his money offshore and she hasn't seen him since. Kaplan takes her losses well, and estimates that her ex-husband is worth about 25 million dollars, and he still has her share from the marriage so she's offering a finder's fee to anyone who knows where he is. She doesn't wish him any harm, although if he does turn up dead, she'd like to collect what is owing to her.

She is now married to Dr. Stephen Mulholland, who also has two children from a previous relationship.

Kaplan explains that they had two mergers, two acquisitions and two start-ups totalling six children, ranging from six months to 15 years old.

Kaplan organises her life at home on the same

sort of format that she does her life in the office. She says they have a computer in the kitchen that prints off the children's agendas. They also have signed contracts with the children which she uses to keep them on track and committed.

She is proud of her children's accomplishments. Two of her boys scored third in their age categories in the world in tap-dance this year. One of her sons is gifted in guitar and she has a daughter with a personality that would knock anyone over.

Kaplan is passionate. She believes the world will be a better place if she invests her time and energy into her family and business. She protects what is close to her and believes in simplicity. For her, basics like health and nutrition are the most important elements for leading a successful life.

Ann Kaplan lives a strong, healthy lifestyle, busy but full, she balances everything with sleep, nutrition and a lot of love.

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