

In Memoriam



Al Rutan *"The Methane Man"*

The renewable energy community lost a true pioneer on 9 January 2005, and those who knew Al Rutan lost a true friend. Al passed on while staying at the home of a friend and doing what he loved. Designing and fabricating a methane digester plant. Al's dedication to our movement of renewable energy and energy self sufficiency was technically astute, and tempered with a true concern for the animals involved in the production process. Al knew instinctively and believed deeply that we must always consider the well-being of all the creatures of Mother Earth in our quest for energy independence. His concern for the animals who walk the Earth with us is only part of Al's legacy.

A former schoolteacher, Al never lost his love and desire for sharing his knowledge and experience with others who wanted to learn about methane and energy self sufficiency. Through his website and his writings, most recently in this publication, Al Rutan shared the message of energy self sufficiency with all who sought his knowledge.

I will always regret that I never met Al personally, but I will always be grateful that I had the opportunity to know him through our emails, and to work with him, albeit for much too short a time, in the pages of this magazine. Al, for your knowledge and skill, your dedication and compassion, your love of renewable energy, your willingness to share and, most of all, your friendship. We thank you. You will be eternally missed. Rest In Peace, my friend. ldb

By His Friends

Farewells From The Renewable Energy Family

My dear friend Al,
 Today I received an email from you. But it was written by your friend. The email informed that you already left the earth and now you are in heaven. I am really sorry to have not written to you frequently. I have never thought that you left us so suddenly. You always said that you would visit South Korea to complete your energy recycling project in South Korea and to meet your friends (including me) in South Korea. But sadly you passed away before coming back to South Korea. I read in your website that your friends and colleagues will keep your site. I am happy to see that your friends and colleagues continue the mission of making the earth better by energy recycling. I believe that the priceless effort will make a wonderful and great result some day. But all your friends (including myself) and colleagues will miss you. You were so good a friend and a man who had a great ideal for the earth. I pray for you to sleep in everlasting peace in heaven. I love you, my dear friend Al.

Kyung-ihl

Al was a good friend to me as well as to many other people. We used to go to lunch frequently at the Chinese Buffet, and afterwards, I would help him with various computer problems, or we would just discuss life and anything and everything. He was a sweet, kind, gentle man, and the world is a lesser place at the loss of him. Also, extremely intelligent man, and I will miss our many long conversations. I counted him as one of my best friends. Oddly, just few days ago I had a premonition about Al passing. Although, since I am often prone to negative thinking, I didn't give much thought to it. Just as the world is a lesser place because of his passing, I too am a lesser person from the loss of his presents in my life. He will truly be missed. I also want to thank Woody and his family for the kindness they have shown Al.

With the deepest sense of loss.

Steve

There are few people in this world, who have earned the label, "the best." Al Rutan was one of them. He was one of a small handful of researchers, and teachers, who inspired me to get so involved in alternative energy, and self reliance, to become professional, and take up the cause myself. I know that I am only one of thousands, who have been so inspired by this man. If you have only recently discovered him, through his writing in the first issue of ESSN, you may not know what a great man he was, and how fortunate we were to be associated with him. I was looking forward to the opportunity to get to know him personally, through our shared venture. I guess you could say that he was the George Washington of small scale methane production. In his field, he was truly 'The Man.' At least for me, it was, and always will be, literally impossible to think of methane production, without thinking of Al Rutan, The Methane Man.

-Laren Corie-

Integral Solar Building Design Since 1975

I am really sorry to hear this news! I traveled around the country this fall talking with people about biofuels, and in this traveling, I heard quite a few different people mention Al as a pioneer in his field. So I was really excited to hear that he was contributing to the ESSN e-zine. He really rounded out the do-it-yourself biofuels picture with the important work he was doing.

Girl Mark

I was saddened by this news, and at the same time heartened to remember Al's ever-friendly willingness to share information, and the way he was supportive of even the smaller projects and more innovative schemes. Makes me think about whether I'm living a worthy life.

Alex DePillis

By His Friends

Farewells From The Renewable Energy Family

I knew and worked with Al for many years. I believe we meet in about 1968 I was blessed to work near him for many of the following years. He was a pillar of integrity a pioneer, a leader and a teacher. He was the most kind, friend of the world, and lead and inspired many people in his concern for the environment, energy and human kind. In his gentle quiet approach he could be heard above the screaming of zealots. He always had an ear to hear, encouragement in the downturns, and a pat on the back to say we will overcome. He influenced many and remains in there memories, I know he remains in mine. I am relieved to know he was with friends, and in peace when he journeyed on. God and Gia blessed him, and may God and Gia bless all those who knew and loved him.

Darryl Thayer

Sorry to hear this. I just read his article in ESSN the day before I heard. Recumbent cycling also lost one of its great pioneers in Gardner Martin a few months ago. He was also a close friend of mine so I can sympathize with you.

Bryan J. Ball, Managing Editor
BentRiderOnline

Goodbye Al. We will miss you. You brought humanity a great gift of knowledge, experience, and love. Your passing has left a great hole in the fabric of our existence, one we will attempt to fill, with great difficulty. Your efforts in bringing clean, renewable power and food to the masses will not go unrecognized, unrewarded, or forgotten. We will miss you, but we will carry on. We will carry on your message, and your work, and make sure that your efforts were not in vain. Sleep well my friend, you did good.

Steve Spence, Director
Green-Trust

I am so sorry to hear of the loss of such a kind soul. Though I never knew him, I do believe that I would have been proud to shake hands with him, and become a friend. Life can be so unfair, as it seems that only the most decent people are subject to the greatest losses. Perhaps we can all name a year that was our worst. 2004 was mine, as four of my beloved companions left this earth, to venture towards their final destiny. My feelings are with you, Steve. Be well, and know that your friend looks upon you from his new home in heaven.

Best wishes,
Steve, creator of the Amptramp.

Al Rutan

The Methane Man

Rest In Peace