

# Transitioning to Renewable Energy

## Part 2 of 2

BY LISE GODDARD

Looking back over eight years, one outcome of this endeavor becomes clear - we have achieved institutional momentum. Everyone, from our 10th grade students, to faculty, to administration, to the trustees are on board. The data sets show that 30% of our dining hall, kitchen, library, and administrative building, plus 50% of our water pumping needs are met by student-installed solar arrays. But more than that, the campus mindset is that we will install an array next year, and another the year after that, and wouldn't it be cool to pair the next several arrays with a shade structure for our horses or our vehicles? We will keep doing it because... this is what we do. Just like brushing our teeth or doing our laundry or taking final exams. This is what we do. The community benefits are clear - the next cohort of 10th graders will help build their energy infrastructure while learning the science.

Admittedly, the hardest part was getting the first few years of the PV installations under our belts. We had to figure out which electricity meter to target, where to put the arrays, who to hire to do the work (and how do you find someone who is both good with electricity and good with teenagers?), and most importantly, how to pay for it. In the early years, we were awarded two \$10,000 "A+ for Energy" grants from BP, and we purchased four-arrays worth

of used modules to help our funds stretch further. Though the installations with used modules required out-of-the-box thinking and engineering, they were well worth it, since these arrays are performing beautifully, and modules last for decades. We will continue to seek grant and donor support.

It took a bit of tenacity to get started, but as with all worthy movements, this one found allies. A generous alumnus of the school funded a couple installations. Our local solar contractor from Santa Ynez Valley Solar donated his time to help out the school and its students. In 2011, Midland alumnus Mathias Craig '96, founder of blue Energy, installer of community-supported wind turbines and water filtration systems in Nicaragua, led a two-day wind workshop with our 10th graders. Midland students carved turbine blades from four-foot-long boards and learned how to assemble a small wind generator from powerful magnets and copper coils. This Midland student who "got it" returned to his alma mater to help us add wind to our renewable energy knowledge base and our annual plan for community-installed renewable energy systems.

Midland is a model that can be replicated elsewhere. Students are an ideal labor force for installing groundmounted systems. On the one hand, it may seem like more work, and thus harder to involve and train them than it would to just bring in the team of professionals to do the installation, but that is precisely the point. It does take work to train people, but the outcome

is a group of students who feel stoked by doing meaningful work. The value of a \$12-\$20K investment in a household-sized grid-tied PV array is amplified by the number of students who get to experience it as part of their education. In fact, given the educational impact, the upfront price tag starts to seem like a bargain when compared to expenses for consumable classroom items or for technology that will become obsolete within years. This is a class project that will actually pay for itself and shrink a school's electricity bills for years and years to come.

Annual incremental action towards a clear goal of carbon neutrality starts to make sense when one realizes it will reach students across many years. Moreover, it is more affordable to do a large-scale renewable energy project in incremental installments than all at once, upfront. It provides a medium for schools to simultaneously teach intentional values and real-world science. It is an antidote to procrastination. And it can gather momentum over the years.

We owe it to ourselves and to our kids to think about the cascade of impacts set into place when one flips a switch to turn on the lights, appliances, and electronics. Allowing students to help build their own renewable energy infrastructure as part of their education demystifies that switch and it makes renewable energy technologies accessible to the people who need it most.

*Lise Goddard is Director of Environmental Programs at Midland School*

# The Legacy of Yamaguchi Tsutomu

## Twice Bombed

BY DEREK PADULA  
EPOCH TIMES STAFF

Have you ever had one of those days where it feels like the whole world is against you and you're not sure if you'll make it through?

Chin up kiddo, because it's nothing compared to the life of Yamaguchi Tsutomu, who was hit by two atomic bombs!

Directed by Hidetaka Inazuka, "Twice Bombed: The Legacy of Yamaguchi Tsutomu" documents the tale of a rare individual who managed to survive both bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki on Aug 6, and Aug 9. More than 200,000 people died in the bombings and their aftermath, but Yamaguchi survived.

As the movie reveals, Yamaguchi was a naval engineer on duty in Hiroshima on Aug 6, 1945. While walking through a potato field three miles from ground zero he saw a flash of light, a giant fireball, and was soon afterward knocked down by the blast. He suffered immediate radiation burns on his limbs, lost his hearing, and then experienced the living hell that followed.

Seeking an escape with his five month old son, Yamaguchi decided to board a train back to his home town. But to get to the train at Koi Station, he had to cross a wide river, and the bridge was out.

The river was so full of floating corpses that Yamaguchi was forced to use them as a human raft. He finally arrived at the train, rode it all the way to his home town of Nagasaki, and was then hit by the second atomic bomb.

This was an unprecedented situation in the history of the world. No one had ever been hit by two atomic bombs. Yamaguchi told his boss at the time, "I thought the mushroom cloud had followed me."

After the blasts, Yamaguchi had his gallbladder removed, endured yearly hair loss in the summers, and would occasionally lose his strength. But the suffering amidst the silence that followed was perhaps even worse.

The survivors had to keep a secret. There was a stigma in Japan toward victims of the nuclear bombs as being radioactive. They were avoided as potential spouses because of their early deaths and the fear that their children would be born with birth defects. They were not able to share their painful stories with anyone outside their family. For the most part there was no solace, no acceptance, and no relief.

Yamaguchi kept his secret for 60 years. As his friends gradually passed away like the falling leaves of autumn, Yamaguchi wondered, "Why am I allowed to live?" His son passed away at the age of 60 due to cancer, and this was a wakeup call. In his late 80s Yamaguchi made a decision. He understood that sharing this important message "was my destiny," as he expressed in the film. He felt it was his duty.

Filmed in Japanese with English subtitles, "Twice Bombed" reveals Mr. Yamaguchi's remaining years as an anti-nuclear activist. During the documentary he returns to Hiroshima to tearfully recall the experience, prays at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Shrine, and delivers speeches throughout Japan to relay his message of nuclear disarmament and the value of human life.

Heartfelt and genuine, Yamaguchi chokes back tears and agony as he recalls the pain and suffering of the dual bombings. "I only tell people what I saw. This is not fiction."



**DOUBLE SURVIVOR:** (L-R) Charles Pellegrino and James Cameron visit with Yamaguchi Tsutomu, a survivor of both atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Pellegrino has written a book about Tsutomu's experience, and Cameron is reported to be developing a film on the subject.



James Cameron holds the hand of Yamaguchi Tsutomu, double survivor of both atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The entire audience was crying and sniffing at the emotional and altruistic message of perseverance, hope, and goodwill.

Despite the suffering in his life, Yamaguchi held no contempt or resentment. A steadfast Buddhist and believer in fate, Yamaguchi said, "It couldn't be helped, it was war. But the bombs are extremely inhuman... Life is finite." He went on to advocate the importance of human life, regardless of skin color, language spoken, or beliefs.

Yamaguchi spoke at high schools, the United Nations, and elsewhere in Japan. Through his advocacy efforts he became known as a living icon. At the age of 92, in 2009, Yamaguchi was officially recognized by the Japanese government as the first "double survivor" of both bombs.

This amazing story caught the attention of James Cameron, award winning director of "Avatar" and "Titanic." Around this same time Yamaguchi was diagnosed with stomach cancer and entered the hospital. Cameron visited Yamaguchi in the hospital, held his hand, and promised to deliver his message and personal story on film.

Cameron told director Hidetaka that he will develop this movie after he completes his work on the "Avatar," hopefully in time for the 70th anniversary of the twin bombings in 2015.

As they held hands, Yamaguchi summoned his last ounce of strength to say, "I have done my duty." He died a few days later.

Cameron said that "he was symbolic of the need to remember."

"Twice Bombed" was screened at the Starplex Cinema 5 Theaters in Irvine during the third day of the seventh Annual Japan Film Festival. All proceeds of the festival went to the Red Cross Japan to help with relief efforts after the March 11, earthquake.

The film first premiered in New York on March 12, and then in Irvine on April 16, rather than in

Japan. Hidetaka said it was Yamaguchi's dying wish for an American audience to receive his message, especially the next generation. "All for one, one for all," as he would say at the end of his speeches.

Hidetaka told The Epoch Times in an interview after the screening, "It has been 66 years, and those who experienced it are passing away. So it is our mission to pass this on to future generations." This personal retelling of historical events would be excellent for students to watch as a humane reminder of the horrors and long term ramifications of nuclear war.

Given the timing of its release, the film brings to mind the recent nuclear crisis in Fukushima. While there is no relationship between the nuclear bombs and the nuclear leak, Hidetaka emphasized that it does give us pause to notice. Particularly to question whether or not human beings can safely harness such an awesome power; Yamaguchi's argument was that we cannot, and that accidents are inevitable. He felt that all forms of nuclear energy should be abolished.

Yamaguchi delivered a speech at the United Nations headquarters where he said, "There is a Japanese proverb: 'What happens twice will happen thrice.' But there should never be a third atomic bombing." Hidetaka believed the most important point of the film was this: "Nothing comes from hate. The bombs were so in-human, but future generations of Japanese and Americans can walk hand in hand."

With such vivid depictions fresh in the mind, it is easier to maintain compassion and wish for the cessation of suffering in others. It is now the responsibility of the next generation to stay stalwart and avoid such catastrophes.

Before his death Yamaguchi gave a speech to high school students where he tearfully said, "I pass the baton to you. I wish you good luck."

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