

PHOENIX Business Journal

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SOCIAL CONSCIENCE:
Steve Lopez goes green with
Clean Air Cabs' hybrid fleet. **41**

HEALTH KICK: Chef Michael DeMaria
offers healthy menu alternatives. **3**

LADY LUCK: Design Works Gaming
unveiling new slots in Las Vegas. **8**



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APS submits three proposals to reach its renewable goals

BY PATRICK O'GRADY
Phoenix Business Journal

Arizona Public Service Co. is proposing three plans to meet its renewable energy goals next year, some of which could end incentives for commercial solar systems and drastically reduce those offered for residential systems.

All of its plans will come at a cost to consumers — both business and residential — regardless of whether solar incentives are offered.

INSIDE: Solar incentives for the year have nearly run dry. **6**



Patrick O'Grady

APS already has enough solar power being developed through 2012 to meet its state-mandated goals. The plans it filed with the Arizona Corporation Commission earlier this month are an attempt to get the ACC to define how the utility should structure its renewable energy program going forward, through rooftop solar systems or large-scale solar power plants, said Erin



Living the high life

Condos-turned-apartments draw interest

BY JAN BUCHHOLZ
Phoenix Business Journal

Michael Chen traded life in suburbia for the urban vibe of downtown Phoenix. He was living in a leased house in Peoria when he learned through an apartment website that the high-

end condos at 44 Monroe were being rented instead of sold.

"It looked like such a neat place to live," Chen said. "I can walk to work, I can walk to school."

A legal assistant for the law offices of Benjamin Taylor, Chen also is a student at the Phoenix School of Law. The school is opening a new campus this fall in the

SEE HIGH-RISE | 51



Law student Michael Chen and girlfriend Julie Sheehy rent an apartment in downtown Phoenix's 44 Monroe, pictured at left.

JIM POULIN PHOTOS |
PHOENIX BUSINESS
JOURNAL

Steve Lopez

Owner and founder | Clean Air Cab

Former race car driver Steve Lopez has taken his love of cars and performance to a greener level.

Lopez is the founder and owner of Clean Air Cab, which uses Toyota Prius hybrids to ferry people around the Valley.

Cars have been in his blood since he was a youngster.

"I have always been around automobiles," he said. "As a youngster, some of my relatives owned a Cadillac dealership, where I saw sale to service. As a teenager I worked for an antique car museum, where I detailed them and watched them being maintained. In my mid-20s and into my 30s I raced cars professionally, where I learned about their physics and their mechanics."

His goal now is to infuse his automotive affinity with a more sustainable business model, creating a company with a social conscience. Toward that end, the company has been involved in global efforts such as replanting trees in the Brazilian rain forest, as well as local endeavors such as donating to Susan G. Komen for the Cure, Phoenix Children's Hospital and the Mesa United Way.

Up close

AGE: 41

FAMILY: Wife, Ginger Marie Lopez; children, Morgan, 4; Matteo, 2; and Boden, 6 months

RESIDENCE: Ahwatukee

EDUCATION: Associate degree in science from Kellogg Community College, Battle Creek, Mich.

AWARD: *New Times* Best of Phoenix 2010: "Best Cab Company If You Wanna Be Clean"

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JIM POULIN | PHOENIX BUSINESS JOURNAL

Driving green

WHAT WAS THE TIPPING POINT THAT MADE YOU DECIDE ON A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS?

I grew up in the farmland of the Midwest; I have always had a conservative nature and believed that our planet should be put into consideration when doing business. I believed that I, as well as the American people, have had enough of business taking advantage of them with subpar products and services, tied together with little to no value after the sale.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST SURPRISE SO FAR?

My biggest surprise is our success. Starting up during the recession, I knew it was risky; but I also felt the time was right to make a change in this industry, and when I packaged it correctly maybe they would choose us.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR GROWTH? Luckily, we have grown already. I started with 19 cabs in 2009, and 19 months later we are running 42.

Personal

HOW HAVE YOU BECOME MORE SUSTAINABLE? My wife and I have always gone to our farmers' markets and locally owned groceries whenever possible. We try to shop at locally owned shops to support local merchants. We have a 10-kilowatt solar unit on the house. We have imitation grass made from old tires that uses no water to upkeep. We invest in sustainable companies and companies that use alternative energy.

WHO WAS YOUR MENTOR? My mentor is my grandmother. As a boy, I watched her own her own companies and run projects differently from others. She always puts her customer and their needs before her own. She has always been philanthropic and gives to causes close to her heart and bigger than herself.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU? People motivate me. I think like my grandmother, and have always had a high degree of empathy for my fellow man. We are all here for a reason. Our struggles are individual, and the pressure never stops.

Favorites

TECHNOLOGY: GPS

HOBBIES: Auto racing, water sports and jet skiing. (I own a Kawasaki 800 stand-up. I just love it.)

CONVERSATION PIECE: My wife is a very good photographer and her favorite subject is her family, so we always find ourselves talking about our family photos.
LAST BOOK READ: "Elegant Universe," by Brian Greene
MUSICAL GROUP: KISS
DINING OUT: Eddie V's
ARIZONA VACATION SPOT: Sedona
EVENTS: The entire Moto GP Championship season, and the entire "American Idol" season

— Patrick O'Grady