

# The Order of the Earth

News, Views and Musings About Our Planet

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Photo by Bruno Manser Fonds

Penan indigenous groups have worked for decades to save their forest.

## Borneo Natives Proclaim Tropical Forest Reserve

"Penan Peace Park" aimed at protecting the last primeval rainforests of Sarawak's Upper Baram region; is challenging the official logging plans

— the Penan wish to develop tourism, protect native rights.

LONG AJENG/SARAWAK, East Malaysia, November 30, 2009 (WORLD-WIRE) — Seventeen indigenous Penan communities have proclaimed a new tropical forest reserve on their native lands in the jungles of Borneo. In an official opening

ceremony held last week at the remote jungle village of Long Ajeng in the upper reaches of the Baram river, the Penan leaders unanimously declared their intention of conserving their last remaining primeval forests as a nature reserve. The Penan wish to develop tourism in their region and insist on the protection of their native customary rights.

James Lalo Kesoh, the former penghulu (regional chief)

Continued on page 3

## The Awakening: Part VI



*This message is sent to you by the one who knows your questions and concerns and helps you to see your way clearly to a higher level of understanding. The Trustworthy And True Spirit, The Most High God.*

• For those of you who wonder how I, The Most High God, can be in a human body: The body who I am in offered his soul so I could have his body. I accepted this offering.

• For those of you who wonder, "Are these 'Awakening' messages blasphemous?" No. When my spirit comes upon and fills a person, I become that person and that person becomes me. These are my messages, not the person's that I am in; therefore, I sign these messages The Trustworthy And True Spirit, The Most High God. If the person that I am in were to sign his name on these messages, it would imply that these are his messages and that would be blasphemy. It is blasphemous for anyone to try to receive credit for anything that I do or have done.

My spirit is already in this body and is on or with others by their choice, actions and deeds.

• For those of you who wonder if I save sinners: No. If I save those who are lustful, I

would keep lust alive. If I save the greedy, it would keep greed alive. If I save those who flaunt their bodies and express their sexuality, it would keep lust, vanity, arrogance and temptation alive. If I save those who are hateful, it would keep hate alive. If I save those who lie, it would keep lying alive. This same principle is true with selfishness, adultery, pedophilia, pride, anger, war, stealing, murder, argument, fighting, blasphemy, cruelty, rape, domination, deceit, etc., etc., etc. So if I save sinners, I would be keeping sin alive.

However, I do heal sinners if they choose to repent with all of their mind, heart and soul and are perfect in trying and show constant improvement.

I save the righteous, keeping righteousness alive. I save those who are modest, keeping modesty alive. I save those who are loving, peaceful and kind, keeping love, peace and kindness alive. I save those who are truthful, keeping Truth alive. This principle also applies to innocence, fairness, justice, honor, generosity and so on . . .

• For those of you who wonder why I have not reached a larger audience, please feel free to share these "Awakening" messages everywhere you can — news broadcasts, talk shows, radio shows, churches,

magazines, newsletters, Internet, emails ... I ASK OF YOU PLEASE DO NOT ADD TO OR TAKE AWAY FROM THESE "AWAKENING" MESSAGES IN ANY WAY; therefore, I am totally responsible for the contents of these messages. I have written them in the simplest form so that they might reach anyone, no matter what their intellectual level is.

Walk within the Light of my Love and my Truth.

Your Friend,  
*The Trustworthy And True Spirit, The Most High God*

P.S. On a personal note, for those of you who contact Iona, please be patient and tolerant in waiting for her replies for in Iona's charitable generosity, rather than raise the price of *The Order of the Earth*, she has had to take a full-time job to continue to bring to you her newspaper. Thank you. *Most High*

If you would like copies of the previous "Awakening" articles, contact Iona at 21431 Marlin Circle, Shade Gap PA 17255; 814-259-3680 or ionaconnor@gmail.com. If you can help with postage that would be great but if you can't, we'll send them anyhow. They are also online at [www.theorderoftheearth.com](http://www.theorderoftheearth.com).

## What Are We Doing to Creation?

By Lori B. Vickery  
Bradford, Pennsylvania

Genesis 1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the Earth.

"The Earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

"God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

"God made the beast of the Earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the Earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

"Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the Earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the Earth."

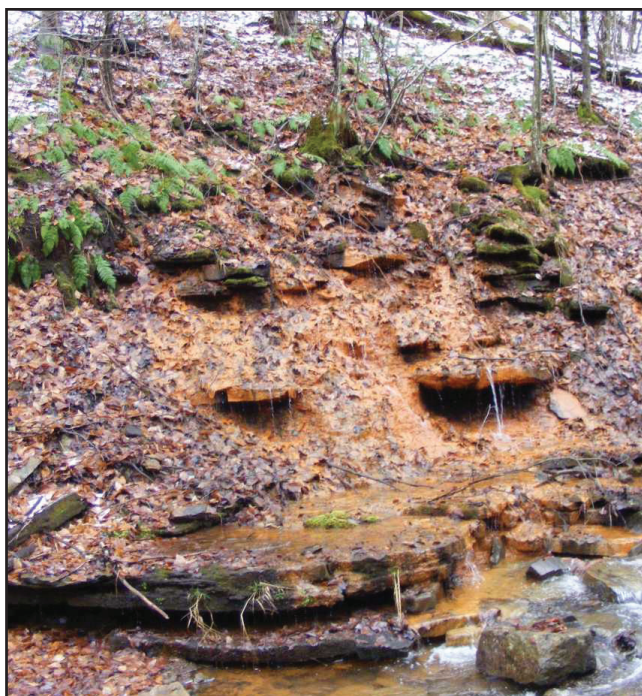


Photo by Lori Vickery

Spring ruined by oil and gas migration from oil drilling.

### CRUDE DISTURBANCE

(A Christian's View of the Destruction)

Once upon a time, this scene was quite calm  
Until disruption came, without a qualm,  
When man decided he would rather have money  
Than God's provision of milk and honey.

He thought he'd get rich by drilling for oil  
Not caring about nature and all he would spoil.  
To build many roads to access the wild,  
He downed numerous trees as he thoughtlessly smiled.  
The creeks were sucked til dry for fracking,  
Not a thought about the lives he was attacking.

The fish and wild animals are slowly being killed  
From the reckless act of drilling and all the oil spills.  
The air is now polluted with crude-smelling odors  
And noise travels the hills with the hum of annoying motors.  
Contaminants invade our water supply  
Yet, no one can tell us the reason why.  
God gave man dominion over this beautiful Earth  
But man has become ignorant of its great worth.

Lori was born and raised in Bradford, Pennsylvania. She enjoys hiking in the woods and writing poetry when inspired and is very much concerned over the aggressive drilling in the area and around the country.

## Industrial Foam Found in Bedford County Creek: Natural Gas Production Contamination Suspected

By Nastassja Noell 11/18/2009  
Sandpoint, Idaho

Foam has been found in Schaeffer Creek, a tributary of the Juniata River watershed which supplies Pennsylvania's capital with drinking water. Springs and ponds downhill from Spectra Energy's drilling pads first showed the foam weeks ago. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has not tested for specific chemicals associated with natural gas drilling and is telling residents that the foam is only laundry soap. Residents are worried that the cancer causing chemical 2-BE is present in their drinking water supplies.

Clearville, Pennsylvania used to be a healthy rural town, a paradise for hunters, fishermen and farmers. The town is deep in Bedford County, surrounded by numerous state game lands historically rich with turkey, grouse and deer, streams thick with fish and aquatic life. The soil was black and alive and the vegetation is thick and green in the summertime. Folks used to be able to drink straight from these creeks when they were out stalking a deer or taking a hike to pick berries.

Wayne and Angel Smith of Clearville, Pennsylvania, don't use chemicals on their farm. Their blueberry bushes, milk from their cows, and their spring water, were safe and non-toxic — until the gas drilling started.

Uphill from the Smiths, rumbling drill rigs ran day and night and soon after the wells were capped their cows started to die. So did their neighbor's cows. Same with the cats, horses and all their hens, too. Arsenic was found in their wells in high levels, iron too. The DEP claimed it was naturally occurring but



Photo by Angel Smith

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection says foam like this is "natural." Residents say otherwise.

internal documents state that DEP agents could find no naturally occurring reason for the arsenic levels to "spike."

Then three gas compressor stations came in, surrounding the Smiths on three sides with more noisy, toxic, industrial machinery and noxious fumes.

Last August the Steckman Ridge Compressor Station blew motor oil all over the valley's farmlands — the company warned everyone not to eat from their gardens without washing off the oily residue with soap — and then the toxic gas compound toluene showed up in water tests. And the battle extends to eminent domain, as landowners battle the federal government's attempts to turn their property rights over to the natural gas companies that are already poisoning their lives.

Wayne and Angel worked for 13 years to create a healthy and sustainable organic farm and now their land is being destroyed, along with all of their years of hard work. Gas drilling over the past four years has changed this paradise into what Angel Smith calls "a nightmare." Now residents have to buy water filtration

systems that cost more than \$10,000 so that they don't have to drink or bathe in natural gas production contaminants. Artesian wells, streams and ponds have recently been bubbling with thick chemical foam and water runs are showing a pink liquid which floats on the surface.

Schaeffer Creek, which is currently deep in foam that looks like lemon meringue pie, is a tributary of the Juniata River watershed which feeds the drinking water supplies of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania's capital. Also downhill from drilling activities is Evitts Creek, which gives drinking water to 50,000 residents living in the city of Cumberland, Maryland. The Safe Drinking Water Act requires community water sources to be clean of harmful contaminants at a cost to local taxpayers; communities downstream will be burdened with the increased costs of new filtration technologies that still cannot remove all the harmful contaminants associated with natural gas production.

Residents first noticed that Schaeffer Creek was foaming

Continued on page 6

# Think and Act

## Endgame by Derrick Jensen

Hailed as the "Philosopher Poet" of the ecological movement, Derrick Jensen passionately explains how our industrial civilization and the persistent and widespread violence it requires, cannot last. He weaves history, philosophy, psychology, environmentalism, economics and literature into an intricate pattern of truth and resistance. The 2006 Press Action Award called Jensen's two-volume *Endgame* "the best work of nonfiction in 2006. *Endgame* is the most important book of the decade and could stand as the must-read book of our lifetimes."

I've been thinking a lot lately about carrying capacity and what that will mean for life through the crash. The best book I've read about carrying capacity — what it is and what it means — is *Overshoot: The Ecological Basis of Revolutionary Change* by William R. Catton, Jr. Any environment's carrying capacity, he states, is the number of creatures living a certain way who can be supported permanently on a certain piece of land, for example how many deer could live on a certain island without overgrazing and damaging the capacity of that island to grow food for them.

Permanently is the key word here because it's possible to overshoot carrying capacity — to temporarily have more creatures than the land can support — but doing so damages the land and permanently lowers future carrying capacity. This is true when we talk about nonhumans and it's just as true when we talk about humans.

Consider the land where you live. How many people could it have permanently supported before the arrival of our extractive culture? How many people did it support? What did these people eat? What materials did those who came before use to make their homes?

And now? What will those who come after eat? If you were to rely only on local foods harvested sustainably — by which I

mean entirely without the assistance of civilization or its technologies (e.g., no fossil fuels or mining) — what would you eat? Do the plants and animals eaten there before still call this their home? How many people could live in your place forever? How many people will live there after the crash?

There are a few ways one can temporarily exceed a place's carrying capacity (I first wrote, "There are a few ways one can temporarily exceed the carrying capacity of one's home" but realized that the sentence is absurd: given the obvious consequences, no sane and intelligent group of people would ever intentionally exceed the carrying capacity of their home). One is by degrading the landscape; for example, eating all of the local fish this year instead of eating few enough that the fish remain fecund as always. Another example would be killing off species you don't eat — salamanders, owls, bees, grasshoppers and others — and in doing so almost undoubtedly impeding the eventual viability of your food sources.

Once you've undercut the carrying capacity where you live, you can continue to exceed your carrying capacity by degrading someplace else, for example, by eating all of that place's fish. This is just another way of saying that cities must import resources, a process also known as conquest, colonialism and, these days, the



global economy.

As we've seen, when the resources of that other place get depleted — when its carrying capacity has more or less been permanently reduced — those who are importing resources will attempt to find another place to exploit. Because the power of those at the center of empires always depends on this importation/exploitation, the powerful have become quite adept at it. It is, at this point, nearly ubiquitous.

As long ago as 1965, more than half of Great Britain's foods were coming from what Catton and others call "ghost acreage," that is, from sources invisible to those at the center. Catton writes, "If food could not be obtained from the sea (6.5%) or

from other nations (48%), more than half of Britain would have faced starvation or all British people would have been less than half nourished.

Likewise, if Japan could not have drawn upon fisheries all around the globe and upon trade with other nations, two-thirds of her people would have been starving or every Japanese citizen would have been two-thirds undernourished."

This importation not only makes the lifestyles (and lives) of those who import dependent on the military and economic violence I've been talking about so far in this book, but also makes them strangely dependent on those from whom they steal.

The United States economy is

dependent on oil from the Middle East, South America and around the world. American lives are dependent on it: the agricultural infrastructure — from gasoline to pesticides — rests on the foundation of oil and natural gas. It's not too much to say that we eat refined and transformed oil. It's like Catton wrote, "Everything human beings do requires energy. At the barest minimum, animals human in form but with no technology would have been converting in their own bodies about 2,000 to 3,000 kilocalories of chemical energy (from food) into heat in the course of a day's activities."

That changed with domestication — more properly called enslavement — as some humans were able to harvest the energy — work — of those they enslaved, whether it was an ox pulling a plow or a bunch of humans pulling big blocks of stone to make mausoleums for the rich.

And it changed again with oil.

James Watt is one of the most important names in the history of enslavement, a first vote inductee into the Enslavers Hall of Fame, which is quartered neither in Cooperstown nor Cleveland but in every city on the planet and, increasingly, in every head. He ranks up there with the first of the domesticators, who not only enslaved plants, animals and land to agricultural-

ists but all of us to the process of agriculture. He ranks with those who first created a god in the sky, in so doing denying the divinity present in every rock, plant, animal, river and raindrop, as well as every moment of every being's life, and in so doing also created a heaven beyond the Earth where the wretched could receive a reward perhaps (they hope) commensurate with their enslavement here. He ranks with the founders of the first cities, whose kingship, we learn from the ancient King List of Sumer, "was lowered down from heaven," showing, if little else, that from the beginning, all writers have been propagandists and mainly for the wrong side. He ranks with those who first used force to steal another's resources. He ranks with those who discovered — after agriculture had enslaved us all — that, as Lewis Mumford put it, "He who controlled the agricultural surplus exercised the powers of life and death over his neighbors. That artificial creation of scarcity in the midst of increasing natural abundance was one of the first characteristic triumphs of civilized exploitation: an economy profoundly contrary to the mores of the village."

*Derrick Jensen is an activist and the author of many books, most recently **What We Leave Behind** and **Songs of the Dead**. Printed with the author's permission.*

*The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.*

*Eleanor Roosevelt*

### INSIDE The Order . . .

- Listen to the Earth, Say Indigenous Peoples  
by *Valentina Martinez Valdés* . . . 3
- Penan Sue Malaysian Authorities Over Logging . . . 3
- 100 Icebergs Drifting to New Zealand . . . 3
- Climate Emails Hijacked to Sabotage Summit . . . 4
- Youth Actions at Climate Summit by *Suzanne Maxx* . . . 4
- Friend of OE Reports from Copenhagen by *Glen Besa* . . . 5
- Rescuing a Planet Held Hostage by *Frank J. Smecker* . . . 5
- The Plight of the Sacred Earth by *Jack Hendricks* . . . 6
- Foxfire Museum and Heritage Center . . . 7
- "New" Population Control Craze: Retro, Racist, Wrong  
by *Betsy Hartmann* . . . 8
- Kill Your Television: Amusing Ourselves to Death  
by *Neil Postman* . . . 8
- Interview with a College President by *Pyong Roh* . . . 9
- NOAA Left Out in Arctic Cold . . . 9
- Message From Mother Earth: The New Energy  
by *Doug Davis* . . . 10
- Encounters With Wonder: The Journey  
by *Elizabeth Ayers* . . . 10
- Life is My Career: Bein' Green by *Christine Maccabee* . . . 10
- Monkey Business: Alternate Role  
by *Heather Wandell* . . . 11
- Earth Psalms: Song 14 by *Angela Magara* . . . 11
- From the Northern Wilderness by *Sandy Chilcote* . . . 11
- Mountain Sprite by *Terry Carnila* . . . 11
- Mark's Green Party: Saving the Co-Op: Reduce, Reuse,  
Recycle, Toss by *Mark Lautman* . . . 12
- The Scoop on Soap by *Al Fry* . . . 12
- Furbearers Feel Pain: Stop Leghold Traps  
by *Valerie Stanley* . . . 13
- Built to Trash by *Sharon Bloyd-Peshkin* . . . 14
- The Feeling of Gratitude by *C. Gonzo* . . . 15
- News Submitted by Readers/Letters to Editor . . . 15
- Roundup of Nevada Wild Horses Illegal . . . 16

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**Our Mission:** To inspire and encourage readers to think seriously, act intelligently and be peaceful, compassionate, courageous and creative.

**The Dream:** Humans can co-exist with Nature and, once they do, both will flourish.

**Masthead:** We say "Volume 9" because Iona started producing a newsletter with the same name nine years ago. In 1995 Iona wrote a tiny booklet called "The Order of the Earth" and, with friends' help, made and gave away 11,000 of them. This newspaper is an expansion. The photo is of a snow-covered Spruce tree at the publisher's home in Shade Gap, Pennsylvania.

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**I no longer believe we can use the system to change the system.**

**Let it all fall apart.**

**I no longer want to live in their world so I must create/find my own.**

--- Kim Stenley, Taneytown MD

# Listen to the Earth, Say Indigenous Peoples

By Valentina Martínez Valdés\*

MÉRIDA, Mexico, November 19, 2009 (IPS/IFEJ) — The idea of wilderness is “an interesting concept; it is a Western concept. Our people have always lived and interacted in the environment,” said Illion Merculieff, an environmental activist from the Aleut community in the northwestern U.S. state of Alaska.

The Aleuts have inhabited the islands and coastal areas of the Bering Sea in the northern Pacific for more than 10,000 years, having adapted to the extreme climate.

“Adaptation is absolutely essential,” according to Merculieff, “but not adaptation as it is understood in the scientific community. This is adaptation that comes from retrieving information and communicating with the environment, so the environment would tell us what is happening.”

He explained that since he was a child he has communicated with the ocean, which has told him when there will be high tides and where the best places are for fishing.

East of Alaska, in Canada's Northwest Territories, lives Gerald Antoine, former Grand Chief of the Dehcho First Nations. “The word ‘wilderness’ is not in our vocabulary,” he said, “but the people are always talking about protecting the wilderness. For us it is natural, the land sustains us and we need to be respectful because nature provides us things.”

Merculieff and Antoine met in the southeastern Mexican city of Mérida with other chiefs, leaders, advisers and members of the world's indigenous communities, at a session of the Native Lands and Wilderness Council at the 9th World Wilderness Congress, November 5th to 13th.

Wilderness lands, which in many cases are indigenous territories, are faced with problems of all kinds. And the ways the challenges are dealt with reflect the



Photo Courtesy of the Wildland Recreation Programme, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation. The Bitterroot Salish, Kootenai and Pend d'Oreilles tribes all share the Flathead Reservation in Montana.

unique identity of the peoples who inhabit them.

For example, the community of Santa Clara Pueblo, in the southwestern U.S. state of New Mexico, suffered fires that destroyed 10 percent of its forests. For Joseph Gutiérrez, a resident of Kha'po Owinge, or Valley of the Wild Roses (the traditional name of the community), the response of his nation has kept with traditions and customs.

Gutiérrez said that when the tribal council realized that the forest fires had also affected fishing, it became clear that it would be “a blow to our culture.”

The community created a forestry and restoration department managed by the tribe, “and since then we have planted more than 1.7 million trees,” he said.

In the Amazon region of southern Colombia, Rose Mary Parente was elected governor of the indigenous Tikuna community of Castañal de los Lagos, population 536.

“If you work with the people, the people tell you what they want to do. As governor, one collaborates in the management of resources for community work,”

Parente said in an interview.

One of the biggest problems of Castañal de los Lagos is deforestation, despite having its own government. “Many trees have been cut down but we haven't been the ones doing it. They are people from other parts. Our elderly also cut down some and now they realized that what we really need is trees and they are collaborating with this project,” she said.

Parente has taken on the task of managing projects with international groups not only to reforest but also to preserve Lake Yahuaraca and to promote productive initiatives of “la chagra,” the traditional small farm.

There are many other examples of initiatives on indigenous lands around the world. Thanks to their sense of unity, the Yawanawá people of Brazil were able to escape lives of virtual slavery and obtain independent territory in the northwestern Amazonian state of Acre, where they preserve their culture and protect the land.

In Ecuador, the creation of the Indigenous Federation of the Cofán Nationality brought together 13 grassroots commu-

nities which, among other achievements, started up a program of certified park rangers.

Inherited traditional values also allowed the Flathead Nation in the northwestern U.S. state of Montana to become the first to designate one-seventh of its territory as protected area, as well as taking action for the conservation of the bison, the northern plains buffalo.

“The global community needs to return to its origins, to the Earth, and in that way change its mentality,” said Brazilian Yawanawá chief Tashka Yawanawá.

The rate at which the planet's species are going extinct must be reduced by next year in order to meet the terms set by the international community in the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The world's indigenous people are demanding recognition for the role that they can play in that effort.

Julie Cajune, of the Flathead Nation and coordinator of the session in Mérida, said indigenous peoples should be the principal agents of conservation but, at the same time, there must be mechanisms for decision-makers to hear and take into account their points of view.

Terry Tanner, also of the Flathead Nation, told this reporter that the tribe's elders have many stories to tell about “our mountains, hunting, berry picking and about our people.”

Merculieff summarized this combination of spirituality and knowledge: “We have to know how to listen to our heart... The mind can lie but the heart never lies.”

*\*This story is part of a series of features on sustainable development by IPS— Inter Press Service and IFEJ — International Federation of Environmental Journalists, for the Alliance of Communicators for Sustainable Development (www.complusalliance.org).*



Photo Courtesy of Bruno Manser Fonds. Penan people holding maps of their new Penan Peace Park in the Upper Baram region near the village of Long Ajeng.

## Borneo Natives Proclaim Tropical Forest Reserve 'Penan Peace Park'

Continued from page 1

of the Upper Baram region, said at the inauguration ceremony for the 'Penan Peace Park,' “As nomadic hunter-gatherers, we Penan people have been roaming the rainforests of the Upper Baram region for centuries. Even though we have settled down and started a life as farmers since the late 1950s, we still depend on the forests for our food supply, for raw materials such as rattan for handicrafts, for medicinal plants and for other jungle products. Our entire cultural heritage is in the forest and needs to be preserved for future generations.”

Jawa Nyipa, headman of Long Ajeng, said, “The conservation of our forest is our highest priority. Without the forest, we cannot survive. We call this park ‘Peace Park’ because peace (‘lawi’) is a very important concept in our culture. We wish to live peacefully together with our neighboring tribes and as fully recognized Malaysian citizens.”

The ceremony at Long Ajeng was attended by close to 200 Penan and accompanied by

traditional dances and a performance of the traditional tree drum (“atui”).

The new “Penan Peace Park” comprises an area of approximately 1630 square kilometers (1,021 square miles) around the Gunung Murud Kecil mountain range close to the Indonesian border and is located between the existing Pulong Tau National Park in Malaysia and the Indonesian Kayan Mentarang National Park. The area is considered to be a core settlement area for the Penan Selungo (Eastern Penan) rainforest culture. Since the late 1980s, the Eastern Penan have opposed the logging of their rainforests and have repeatedly erected logging-road blockades to protect their lands against encroachments by a number of logging companies.

With the proclamation of the new park, the Penan are challenging the Sarawak state government who have earmarked their lands for logging. The “Penan Peace Park” area is fully concessioned for logging by the Malaysian timber giant, Samling.

### ...But All Is Not Well for the Penan People

## Penan Sue Malaysian Authorities Over Logging, Plantations

MIRI, SARAWAK, Malaysia, December 10, 2009 (WORLDWIRE) — Five indigenous Penan communities of the East Malaysian state of Sarawak on Borneo are suing the Sarawak government and three licensees of timber and planted-forest concessions at the High Court of Sarawak and Sabah. The new land rights' litigation affects forestry operations by the three Malaysian timber conglomerates of Samling, Interhill and Timberplus in concessions issued to Damai Cove Resorts, Samling Plywood, Samling Reforestation and Timberplus.

The Penan are demanding land titles for an area of 80'000 hectares (198,000 acres), the nullification of the four unlawfully issued timber and planted-forest licences and also compensation for damage done by the logging companies in the course of their past operations. In particular, the Penan are asking the court to issue a mandatory injunction against the licensees, plus their contractors and subcontractors, for the removal of all structures, equipment and machinery from the plaintiffs' native customary rights land.

In their case, the Penan plaintiffs provide ample proof of the fact that they and their ancestors have been using their claimed rainforests since time immemorial. The formerly nomadic Penan hunted and gathered food from the rainforest and lived on sago (uvut) in the area until the 1950s, when they decided to settle at their present village locations. The Penan have a history of barter trade in jungle products, such as nyateng (resin for producing fire), kapon (latex from kapon trees) and handicraft items, with traders who have been coming to their villages since the early twentieth century.

### Sarawak Government's Conduct "Oppressive, Arbitrary, Illegal and Unconstitutional"

The Penan plaintiffs state that, for over ten years, various logging operators have wrongfully trespassed onto their ancestral land with bulldozers, excavators, shovels, trucks and lorries and have destroyed a substantial area of their forest, fruit trees, crops and cultural heritage, such as graves and historical sites. They object to the Sarawak government's issue of timber and planted-forest licences, which the plaintiffs consider to be “oppressive, arbitrary, illegal and unconstitutional.”

In September 2009, a Malaysian government report confirmed allegations by the Penan of the middle Baram region that a number of indigenous girls and women had been sexually abused and raped by logging company employees. An independent review of logging operations in the region commissioned by the French Accor group had uncovered numerous offences committed by Interhill against the Sarawak forestry legislation.

The litigation is divided over two court cases that have been filed by ten Penan leaders of Ba Abang, Long Item, Long Kawi, Long Lilim and Long Pakan in Sarawak's Middle Baram region.

Both cases are based on detailed community maps and oral history documentation that have been compiled with the assistance of the Bruno Manser Fund. The cases are being handled by the renowned law office of Messrs. Baru Bian in Kuching. Baru Bian has recently been appointed the Sarawak leader of the People's Justice Party, PKR.

For more information, please contact:

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## Over 100 Icebergs Drifting to New Zealand

Submitted by Joseph Daurio  
New Providence, New Jersey  
Yahoo! News, November 23, 2009

SYDNEY (AFP) — More than 100, and possibly hundreds, of Antarctic icebergs are floating towards New Zealand in a rare event which has prompted a shipping warning, officials said on Monday.

An Australian Antarctic Division glaciologist said the ice chunks, spotted by satellite photography, had passed the Auckland Islands and were heading towards the main South Island, about 450 kilometres (280 miles) northeast.

Scientist Neal Young said more than 100 icebergs — some measuring more than 200 metres (650 feet) across — were seen in just one cluster, indicating there could be hundreds more.

Young said they were the remains of a massive ice floe which split from the Antarctic as sea and air temperatures rise due to global warming. “All of these have come from a larger one that was probably 30 square kilometres (11.6 square miles) in size when it left Antarctica,” Young told AFP.

“It's done a long circuit around Antarctica and now the bigger parts of it are breaking up and producing smaller ones.”

He said large numbers of icebergs had not floated this close to New Zealand since 2006, when a number came within 25 kilometres (15 miles) of the coastline — the first such sighting since 1931.

“They're following the same tracks now up towards New Zealand. Whether they make it up to the South Island or not is dif-



AFP/HO/Getty Images/File

An iceberg pictured off the New Zealand Coast.

icult to tell,” Young said.

New Zealand has already issued coastal navigation warnings for the area in the Southern Ocean where the icebergs have been seen.

“It's really just a general warning for shipping in that area to be on the alert for icebergs,” said Maritime New Zealand spokesman Ross Henderson.

The icebergs are smaller remnants of the giant chunks seen off Australia's Macquarie Island this month, including one estimated at two kilometres (1.2 miles) and another twice

the size of Beijing's “Bird's Nest” Olympic Stadium.

Young earlier told AFP he expected to see more icebergs in the area if the Earth's temperature continues to increase.

“If the current trends in global warming were to continue I would anticipate seeing more icebergs and the large ice shelves breaking up,” he said.

When icebergs last neared New Zealand in 2006, a sheep was helicoptered out to be shorn on one of the floes in a publicity stunt by the country's wool industry.

## Good News From Jekyll Island, Georgia

David and Mindy Egan  
Initiative to Protect Jekyll Island (IPJI)

JEKYLL ISLAND, Georgia (December 8, 2009) — The Jekyll Island Authority has just announced that its partnership with Linger Longer Communities has been suspended. Details are available on our Web site — [www.savejekyllisland.org](http://www.savejekyllisland.org).

What the termination of the agreement means for the JIA's development plans is unclear at this time. The same holds true for the fate of the private components of the Jekyll town center project, including the proposed time-share complex, a new retail center and two new hotels, although it appears that the controversial time-share project has been either abandoned or placed on the back burner, while the proposed retail village and convention hotel projects may be bid out individually to the development community.

The Authority has indicated that it will move forward as scheduled with the town center's public components, including a new

public park, for which ground was broken yesterday, a new and expanded convention center and a redesigned island entranceway.

As many of you know, for over a year now IPJI has been pushing for the revision or cancellation of the JIA-Linger Longer deal on the grounds that: 1) it includes provisions that are inconsistent with sound financial stewardship for Jekyll Island State Park, and 2) that Linger Longer's proposed 160-unit oceanfront time-share complex, which would have, in effect, privatized a key segment of Jekyll's public beach, is totally inappropriate for Jekyll Island State Park.

IPJI will continue to use all of the resources at its disposal to support responsible renovation of Jekyll Island State Park and to oppose time-share and/or condominium projects on land currently untouched by commercial development.

We want to thank those of you who have worked with us in trying to shine some light on the JIA-LL deal. Once again, your hard work and persistence have paid off.

## Climate Emails Hijacked to Sabotage Summit

By Ben Webster and Murad Ahmed  
The Times Online, December 7, 2009

Copenhagen, Denmark (excerpt) — UN officials have likened the theft of emails from university climate researchers to the Watergate scandal after claiming computer hackers were probably paid by people intent on undermining the Copenhagen summit.

Jean-Pascal van Ypersele, a vice-chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), said that the theft from the University of East Anglia's Climatic Research Unit was not the work of amateur climate skeptics but was a sophisticated and well-funded attempt to destroy public confidence in the science of man-made climate change. He said the fact that the emails were first uploaded to a skeptic Web site from a computer in Russia was an indication that the culprit was paid.

"It's very common for hackers in Russia to be paid for their services," he said. "If you look at that mass of emails a lot of work was done, not only to download the data but it's a carefully made selection of emails and documents that's not random at all. This is 13 years of data and it's not a job of amateurs."

Mr. van Ypersele said that publication of the emails had undermined efforts by the IPCC to convince the 192 countries at the summit, which began today, that they needed to act fast on emissions. "We are spending a lot of useless time discussing this rather than spending time preparing information for the negotiators."

He rejected claims by skeptics that the emails showed efforts had been made to manipulate the data to exaggerate the warming trend. "It doesn't change anything in the IPCC's conclusions — it's only one line of evidence out of dozens of lines of evidence."

Achim Steiner, director of the UN Environment Programme, said that the theft of emails had echoes of Watergate — the burglary of the Democratic Party's offices at the Watergate building in Washington D.C. in 1972.

"This is not 'climategate', it's 'hackergate'. Let's not forget the word 'gate' refers to a place where data was stolen by people who were paid to do so. So the media should direct its investigations into that."

Yvo de Boer, executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, said that the stolen emails looked "very bad" and were fuelling skepticism but said the media scrutiny was not unwelcome. Mr. de Boer said: "I think it's very good that what is happening is being scrutinized in the media because this process has to be based on solid science. If quality and integrity is being questioned, that has to be examined."

This week the Met Office will release temperature data from 1,000 weather stations around the world in an attempt to shore up public confidence in its statements about the dangers of climate change. (See box at right.)

The raw data will be impossible for any non-expert to interpret. The Met Office is also planning "as soon as possible" to release the computer code it used to analyze the data.

It is this analysis by the Met Office, in partnership with the University of East Anglia, that is at the center of the controversy over the leaked emails.

The emails, which were sent over a 15-year period ending on November 12<sup>th</sup>, first appeared on Web sites run by skeptics on November 17<sup>th</sup>. A month before they were posted on a Web site popular with climate skeptics . . .

## 2009 Global Temperature Fifth Warmest on Record

Climate extremes, including devastating floods, severe droughts, snowstorms, heatwaves and cold waves, were recorded in many parts of the world.



Photo by Pia Facultad courtesy World Food Programme  
Three days after Typhoon Ketsana hit Manila, residential areas were still awash.



Photo by Christoph Rupprecht  
Women carry water across arid Niger.

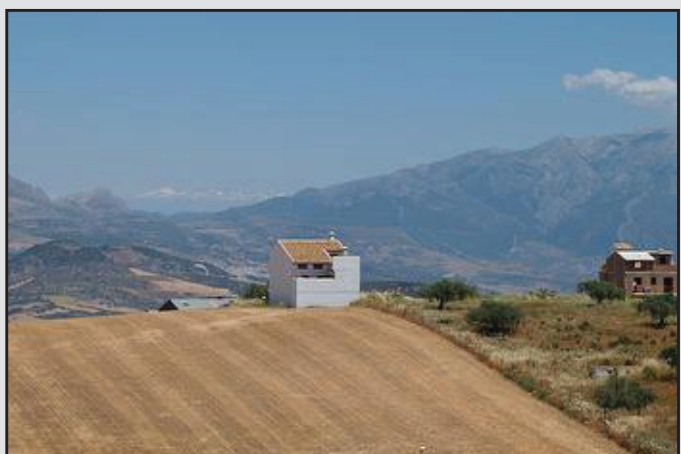


Photo by Ullispain  
A dry July in Andalusia, Spain.

GENEVA, Switzerland, December 8, 2009 (ENS, excerpt) — The year 2009 is projected to rank as the fifth warmest on record since instrumental climate records began in 1850, according to a new report issued today by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). The global combined sea surface and land surface air temperature for the period January to October 2009 is estimated at 0.44°Celsius (1.01°Fahrenheit) above the long-term average of 14°C (57.2°F).

The decade of the 2000s was warmer than the decade spanning the 1990s, which in turn was warmer than the 1980s, the WMO said. Given the current figures, large parts of southern Asia and central Africa are likely to have the warmest year on record. Extreme warm events were more frequent and intense in southern South America, Australia and southern Asia.

Land surface temperatures through October were the fifth warmest on record, at 1.44 degree F. above the 20<sup>th</sup> century average, said the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, which maintains one of the three complementary datasets on which global record-keeping is based.

This year, above-normal temperatures were recorded in most parts of the continents. Only North America experienced conditions that were cooler than average.

Ocean surface temperatures through October were the sixth warmest on record, at 0.85 degree F. above the 20<sup>th</sup> century average.

Cooler La Niña conditions across the central and eastern equatorial Pacific shifted into a warm-phase El Niño conditions in June. During June to September 2009, sea surface temperatures were generally about 1°C warmer than the long-term average across that region. During October, almost all indicators of El Niño became stronger, the WMO reports.

"Arctic sea ice has declined dramatically over the past 30 years at least, with the most extreme decline seen in the summer melt season, the WMO said in its report. Arctic sea ice extent during the 2009 melt season was 5.10 million square kilometers, which is the third-lowest on record after the 2007 record (4.3 million square km) and 2008 (4.67 million square km), since satellite measurements began in 1979. The past five years have produced the lowest sea ice extents on record. . . .



Photo by Suzanne Maxx

1,000 youth in action at the Copenhagen climate summit.

# Youth Actions Command Attention at Climate Summit

By Suzanne Maxx  
Environmental News Service

COPENHAGEN, Denmark, December 11, 2009 (ENS) — Chanting "Our future, our future, and wearing bright orange T-shirts reading, How Old Will You Be In 2050? over 1,000 young people from countries around the world captured the attention of the world leaders, media, non-governmental organizations and delegates Thursday at the United Nations climate conference here in Copenhagen.

December 10<sup>th</sup> was the International Young and Future Generations Day at the conference and youth actions through the day stopped people in their tracks.

Going through security clearance lines to enter the Bella Center in the morning, young people stripped down to their underwear. This action woke up even the most exhausted UN delegates and camera people.

The conference has packed the newly-designed, environmentally-sustainable building to capacity. There is so much going on simultaneously that is significant and captivating that the event is being called "The Earth Summit/Global Forum on Steroids."

It takes loud voices and many bodies in common places to make people stop and pay attention but the youth succeeded and their message is being heard.

They are calling for bold climate leadership by their governments. Their collective vision is to protect their future and the lives of future generations threatened by climate change.

The year 2009 has seen an explosion of youth climate advocacy and the emergence of what many young people in Copenhagen are calling the "International Youth Climate Movement," bringing together hundreds of youth organizations and climate advocates from around the world.

Organized in partnership between the YOUNGO (youth) constituency and the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Youth and Future Generations Day sought to send a powerful message of intergenerational equity to conference delegates, as well as highlighting the vital role of youth as both advocates for, and implementers of, climate solutions.

"Today's youth will live their lives with the decisions made in Copenhagen and our govern-

ments have a moral responsibility to deliver a fair, ambitious and binding deal," said Prisca Randriamampihavana, 20, a youth delegate from Madagascar. "We want to ask world leaders, 'How old will you be in 2050?'"

This question and the brilliance of their colors and actions caught the power. UNFCCC Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer said, "Young people . . . have brought their energy and creativity to the intergovernmental process, demanding concrete action from their governments."

"I sense there is a real seriousness now to negotiate," said de Boer, who is the UN's chief climate official. He told reporters that he sees an "emerging" agreement with countries wanting to see a new technical mechanism, including an executive body overseeing technological development and transfer, result from the conference.

He said there is a growing consensus to set up a consultative network for climate technologies which would support developing nations' efforts to take action on adaptation to climate change already underway and also on mitigation of its effects.

## Europe Raises Stakes with \$10.5 Billion in Climate Change Aid to Poor Countries

BRUSSELS, Belgium, December 11, 2009 (ENS, excerpt) — European leaders have pledged a total of €7.2 billion (U.S.\$10.5 billion) over the next three years to help poorer nations cope with global warming, hoping to boost support for an agreement at the ongoing United Nations climate summit in Copenhagen that will put the brakes on runaway climate change.

Today's funding pledge, following all-night negotiations, came at the conclusion of a two-day meeting of the European Union Council of Ministers in Brussels.

It increases pressure on other major industrialized powers to come forward with comparable commitments. The aid would include funding to help protect coasts, preserve forests, modify crops and switch from fossil-fuel to low-carbon energy.

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# Friend of OE Reports from Copenhagen

By Glen Besa  
Director, Sierra Club, Virginia Chapter

Sunday December 6  
On the Eve  
of Copenhagen

It is Sunday night in Copenhagen (actually, I am commuting by train from Malmo, Sweden) on the eve of the COP 15 (Conference of the Parties) where for the first time in a decade the United States is here as a deal maker and not an obstructionist.

President Obama has proposed carbon reduction targets consistent with the legislation currently pending before the Congress. The 17% reduction below 2005 levels actually only equals 4% below 1990 levels, the base year established under the Kyoto Protocol that the U.S. Senate never ratified.

In contrast, the climate science today finds that the developed nations of the world should achieve a 40% reduction below 1990 levels by 2020 if we are to avoid exceeding a 2° C. (3.6° F.) increase in the average global temperature — the point at which the more severe consequences of climate change are expected to be triggered.

While 4% is a far cry from 40%, this is the first time that the U.S.A. has offered binding targets since the Clinton Administration signed onto the Kyoto Protocol. However modest this proposal, it has signaled that the U.S.A. will participate in the international negotiations on climate change. That change in the atmosphere here at Copenhagen has been beneficial with China, India and even South Africa now coming to the table with real reduction targets of their own.

Yes, the current commitments on the table may not be enough to save the planet today but it is the first chapter in a new book on climate negotiations and the final chapter has yet to be written. Working together, climate activists with world leaders committed to addressing climate change, we can move beyond this modest beginning to more aggressive measures.

First, we must secure a real agreement in Copenhagen; a platform that we can, we must, build upon. The next two weeks will determine if we can move forward. For the sake of the Earth and the Earth's most vulnerable people, the answer must be, "Yes, we can!"



Photo Submitted by Glen Besa, Virginia Sierra Club

Email message to OE from Copenhagen: Wow! This photo is impressive.  
Sent: Saturday, December 12, 2009 6:41 PM

Subject: [CAN-talk] Aerial picture of the 30, 000 to 100,000 demonstrators outside right now

Wednesday,  
December 16  
Coming Down to the  
Wire in Copenhagen

The negotiators are in closed-door sessions most of the time now and meeting around the clock. The NGOs (Non-governmental Organizations) have limited access to the negotiations as heads of state arrive and security tightens.

The pressure is on the negotiators as they need to strike a deal of some kind before the Presidents and Prime Ministers arrive starting tomorrow. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is due in today and President Obama arrives Friday.

There is real tension in these negotiations as the developing countries like China and India, the LDCs (Least Developed Countries — African nations, for example) and the developed countries like the EU and the U.S. attempt to hammer out details on a complex set of issues that includes short- and long-term financing, sharing technology, measurement, verification and reporting of emission reductions, managing forests as carbon sinks and the caps on carbon.

The U.S. has been out of the negotiations for a long time but,

as the biggest historical polluter and as the world's largest economy, what we do is pivotal, and the Obama Administration is a major presence at Copenhagen.

But the relatively weak legislation in the U.S. Congress does not make it any easier for U.S. negotiators who are being pressed hard for tighter emission targets and more funding for financial assistance to least developed countries to adapt to climate change and to develop their economies using low-carbon technologies.

Clearly politics trumps science here at Copenhagen. The science is calling for 25% to 40% reductions below 1990 levels by 2020 to avoid exceeding a 2° C. increase. The U.S. is effectively proposing a 4% reduction below 1990 levels by 2020. The political assessment is that this is all that is possible in the U.S. Congress.

With climate indicators such as Arctic sea ice melt already exceeding the worst-case scenarios/projections from the 2007 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, the small island nations like Tuvalu and other vulnerable countries are saying "survival is not negotiable."

The truth is they are right. The 10,000 people of Tuvalu will likely be environmental refugees in possibly 50 years or so. But politics can trump science in the short

run at least and the measures necessary to save Tuvalu will not be adopted at this conference.

The hope is that we can strike a decent deal here, a foundation agreement that we can build on in subsequent negotiations. As George Monbiot, a British climate activist and columnist for *The Guardian*, observed at a program last night, these may be the most important negotiations in history. The fate of the world and society as we know it is being decided here in Copenhagen.

[See Monbiot on page 10]

Thursday,  
December 17  
Look Both Ways

With the tough final negotiations going on behind closed doors and 120 heads of state arriving, the thousands of NGO representatives gathered here in Copenhagen were not allowed into the Bella Center today where the UN Conference is taking place. Our entire Sierra Club delegation has been denied access.

It is now after 4 p.m. Copenhagen time on Thursday and Blackberries email service has been down since 9 a.m. limiting the ability of the very few NGO reps still allowed in the Bella Center to communicate to the

thousands outside. Most of us are following the statements and proceedings that are being Web-casted by the UN selectively.

Secretary Clinton's announcement of \$100 billion per year in financial aid to the least developed countries from the developed countries by 2020 may break the current log jam in the negotiations but that is still not clear.

Being locked out of the Bella Center and having a little more time to enjoy Copenhagen, I am struck by the number of bike riders across the city and in nearby Malmo, Sweden where many of us are staying. The bike paths seem to be on every street and even places where cars are not allowed. In the cold, rain and snow you see the Danes on their bikes often without hat or gloves. Three-wheeled bikes with two wheels in front supporting a platform carry groceries and children. Sidewalks are there for pedestrians, too, and one must not mistake a bike path for a sidewalk as the Danish bicyclists are not inclined to yield to pedestrians.

Along with the great accommodations for cyclists, the City of Copenhagen has committed to being carbon neutral by 2025. Already the country of Denmark gets 20% of its energy from renewable sources, most notably offshore wind power. It is amazing the progress that a small country like Denmark can make by committing its resources and policies to developing efficiency and renewable resources. It makes you wonder just how far we would be if President Reagan had not removed the solar collectors off the White House installed during the Carter Administration.

There is one drawback to all these bikers and bike paths in Copenhagen — you'd better look both ways — TWICE before crossing a street/bikepath.

Friday,  
December 18  
Progress Sets Stage  
for Deal in 2010

COPENHAGEN, Denmark — After two weeks of fraught, stalled negotiations, President Obama arrived in Copenhagen, built on the progress made yesterday by Secretary of State Clinton, who personally negotiated with world leaders for hours and, tonight, announced the elements of an international climate accord . . .

Saturday,  
December 19  
Reflections

Winning Ugly, but Fired up  
and Ready to Go!

There are many things that are being said about the shortcomings of the Copenhagen negotiations, but with the science telling us we must take action now if we are to protect our climate as well as the people impacted by climate change and the rich bio-diversity of this planet we call home, there is little time to debate the outcome. The time has come to act.

Coming out of Copenhagen, we have a political agreement by the leaders of the largest emitter nations who, eye ball to eye ball, hammered out the Copenhagen Accord; an agreement that goes beyond Kyoto to secure first-time commitments to reduce emissions from the U.S. as well as developing countries like China, India and Brazil.

Admittedly, the agreement does not go far enough to keep the average temperature of the Earth from exceeding two degrees centigrade, but these new commitments by the U.S. and by developing countries are a historic step forward, as President Obama noted in comments after the agreement was struck. The objection to the agreement of most island nations like Tuvalu, that face extinction if further progress is not achieved, is understandable. Clearly, this first step cannot be the last.

For Americans who recognize the risks of climate change, there is one overwhelmingly important task that flows from this agreement: we must pass a clean energy and climate bill in 2010 and, with mid-term elections bearing down on us, it is essential that Congress act before Earth Day, April 22, 2010.

President Obama has taken the political risk to commit the United States to the vision of a clean energy future with greenhouse gas emission reductions consistent with the legislation now pending before the Congress. It is now up to us to compel the Senate to act. We must not fail, we cannot fail, in taking this first step toward a clean energy future protected from the risks of climate change.

Glen Besa, spent two weeks in Copenhagen as a member of the Sierra Club's delegation to the UN Climate Conference.

## Rescuing a Planet Held Hostage:

# We Can Do What Those in Power Will Not!

By Frank Joseph Smecker  
Richmond, Vermont

As the world continues to heat up so, too, does the political world in a conflagration of polemical fire. It's absurd to debate over how severe global warming is or is not while ice shelves the size of American states fissure off into the ocean; while tundra permafrost melts, taking with it entire neighborhoods; while mountain glaciers recede into obsolescence; while entire shorelines vanish with every lashing of the rising tides.

Global climate change, no matter how intense it is, should be more than enough of a wake-up call for each and every one of us, admonishing that our cultural behavior just doesn't cotton well with the innumerable other communities that arise out of unique places on this planet.

Even if global warming were not happening, the dominant culture would still be systematically dismantling the ecological infrastructure of this planet.

Industrial production is also efficient annihilation — it's an accelerated process of production that turns the living into the dead at a rate faster than the lifeworld can rejuvenate. This is not sane, healthy or sustainable behavior by a long shot. And as the world's leaders put on their show at Copenhagen, geared with platitudes and promises as hollow as a holiday gift box, the president of one of the largest

contributing countries to greenhouse gas emissions has passed through the COP15 with a jovial wave and a smile to collect his Nobel Peace Prize, while promulgating to the world that sometimes, just sometimes — speaking about the western occupation of Afghanistan — that wars are just and moral.

The coup de grâce is even more of a brow-raiser: the evening Obama got on his plane to receive his trophy, his administration requested that the Department of Justice reject a lawsuit filed by convicted terrorist Jose Padilla against attorney and torture-memo author, John Yoo. Wasn't Adolf Eichmann "just doing his job" at the time? Are universal, moral principles being usurped by unchecked, unhinged power?

Meanwhile stories of Tiger Woods and his connubial mishaps, balloon-boy and CNN's 2009 Hero-of-the-Year getting pick-pocketed blanket the headlines. This is absurd. In the midst of all of this, a student in one of my history classes asked: "In your own opinion, are we going to be okay? Is the human population going to be able to function in the distant future?"

It is very easy for one to not think too hard, to not reflect over history and not honestly assay the total atrocities of industrial behavior and assume that we'll make it through these times. Such an assertion is very easy to promote, especially if

one has emerged from a culture that normalizes the atrocities and conditions one to presume that such behavior is normal, natural and that no other way of living in the world is possible.

Too many people the world over assume that it is ridiculously absurd to live without civilization, without technology and without capitalism and global commerce. The truth is, we can all live healthy, fun and long lives without computers and cell phones, without automobiles, airplanes, scratch-off tickets, Grizzly Bear, Lil' Wayne and The Antlers albums ready for download off of iTunes and more.

However, we can't live without clean air, water and nutritive food. The other truth is that we can't continue to live the lives we've been conditioned into living and have a clean and intact planet, too. The rate of production, where it stands today, greasing the cogs of commerce that so many people intimately refer to as "economy," converts the living into the dead at a horrific pace that is dismantling the planet's ecological infrastructure. Every day, a week ago, 120 species went extinct. Yesterday 120 species went extinct. Today, 120 species are going to vanish forever and tomorrow 120 species will go extinct. This will not stop until the dominant culture stops commodifying habitat and life.

Every single mother's breast

milk has dioxin in it. Salmon runs no longer fill to the brim, North America's rivers and 95 percent of the oceans' large fish have been removed forever. Every river, brook and stream in the continental U.S. is tainted with carcinogenic material and plastics in the world's oceans now outweigh phytoplankton by at least six times. Did you catch that? *For every pound of phytoplankton, there is at least six pounds of plastic replacing them.*

Incendiary devices and automatic weapons and militarized robots quake the homes of innocent tribal members in the Middle East while 14,000 people die biweekly in the developed world from preventable cancers and another 1,900 die every week from pharmaceutical-related deaths. For every word I type, more than an acre of forest is lost from the planet. And deserts expand as fast as ice shelves melt.

At what point do we awake from the business-as-usual haze and do what's necessary to stop this all from happening any more before we find ourselves shit-out-of-luck without an inhabitable planet? It is baffling to even acknowledge that we've let it get this out of hand.

If humans do survive after the ensuing century — because we have no less than a hundred years tops if we continue destroying the planet at the rate at which we are now (let's not forget about the unpredictable swiftness of feedback loops),

then life will not look anything like it does today. A future primitivism, a spectrum of peoples living in diversely unique places alongside techniques no larger than the handicraft, artisan level and economics no more expansive than the face-to-face subsistence level, will be what it takes for humans to live sustainably and have a future.

Most people now will not voluntarily take up this lifestyle. This is why the immediate outlook is sobering and, realistically, not an inviting future for everyone. Things are going to get a hell of a lot worse and, even moreso, if they are to get any better. However, I'm a firm believer that if we are honest about this unsettling truth rather than enshrouding it behind empty optimism and hope, we can start broadening discourse, we can start talking about these atrocities so we can advance awareness about these atrocities so we can all take the action needed to stop these atrocities.

If we deny any of it, if we cast it all aside as a bump on a positive path to Progress, nothing will ever get better.

We are in the middle of unprecedented turmoil, tectonic social shifting and a rapid decay of our life-support system.

Without a planet, without a real physical world, there is nothing. No learning, no sports, no art, no fun, no music, no love to be made. Nothing. More than just economic and political

reform and market adjustments need to be undertaken immediately if we want to secure a future for a fecund, life-providing planet.

The notion of limitless growth — a deluded and pernicious fantasy — is reality for most of the leaders who "represented" the communities of the world in Copenhagen. There is never enough money to be made, never enough development to be done, never enough stuff to be produced and never enough economy to be grown for these people.

This is scary and it is what is exacerbating our most threatening problems.

In the real world there is a time when enough is enough, when we have to respect limits. If elected officials won't recognize this, we individuals must.

We must do whatever is necessary to stop those in power from stealing from the poor and dismembering the planet. There are always more of us than there are "elected" officials and CEOs. It is silly for us to sit back on the sidelines and watch as spectators while those in power destroy the future for us, our children and loved ones, as well as for every other sentient being that claims this planet as home.

We the people do have the final say, every day. We just need to realize this and act upon it. This was the case for the Abolitionists, for the German 8-

Continued on page 8

# The Plight of the Sacred Earth

## An Essay on the Occasion of the First Snowfall!

By Jack Hendricks  
McConnellsburg, Pennsylvania

I told Iona that I would write something for *The Order of the Earth* when I got less busy. "Less busy" isn't going to happen, so I'll take the day off from Healthcare 4 All PA, the single-payer movement for which I work as a full-time volunteer along with Kavita, my lifetime partner. We're seventy on average. We're retired school teachers living on a small farm in Fulton County.

The occasion is the first snowfall of the winter, an event that always fills me with enthusiasm and hope. Snow days for school teachers are very special and we have had a lifetime of looking forward to them. They are sacred. So is, in my way of understanding, Life, the Universe and Everything.

Each snowflake that is falling past the window is sacred, every molecule of water is sacred, every hydrogen and oxygen atom in those molecules is sacred, every proton, electron and neutron in those molecules is sacred. Every pion, meson, quark and neutrino holding the atoms together or just passing through them is sacred.



Photo by Iona  
*The same snowfall Jack is writing about as it is falling in Shade Gap, about 25 miles north of McConnellsburg. Everything in this photo is sacred.*

The air through which the snowflakes fall is sacred, the ground on which they fall is sacred, the oceans, rivers, lakes, groundwater tables where the water is stored . . . they are sacred too, as is the entire planet, the Sun, the solar system, the galaxy clusters and space in which they exist . . . all are part

of the Creation we have been given by right of our birth. How beautiful it is!

Our very bodies are part of the Earth and sacred; the food, the air, the water we use is sacred. Our thoughts are sacred. Our ability to understand, to communicate, to act . . . they are also sacred.

So then, what is not sacred! Nothing? No, that too is sacred

In particular our ability to reason is holy beyond all other forms of reality, for it is that which gives us the ability to keep clean and pure that which is sacred. We must not lose that ability to reason or we will defile the holiness around us and, as a

result, lose our ability to exist. We depend on the cleanliness and purity around us for our sustenance and only our ability to reason will save us.

I studied Geology at Penn State, married lovely Kavita before leaving and spent the time since then teaching high school Science, farming (sort of) and working on projects with Kavita — like, raising four children for example.

That first winter at Penn State, I stepped out of the little temporary dorm I was living in to behold the first snowfall of the winter of 1957. The snow had made every detail of topography in the mountain ridges around me etched for my inspection.

Then I realized that the Geology I was learning about was alive and working before my eyes as it had been for decades, centuries, millennia, eons before my present gaze on Creation. I could see what happened to make all this the way it is now.

The erosion of the past had removed the rocks that would have been thousands of feet higher than where I stood, towering over my head. The erosion would continue long after I was gone, the mountains would become flat, rivers would meander and perhaps the Earth would again push new mountains up through the new deposits on the floor of the shallow shallow seas that might form

here as they did in the past. I might have been late for the Geology lecture that morning

This is a long story, it applies to the solar system's evolution, the formation of life . . . and it is a holy history we people have been given the ability to understand. It is a matter of our holy ability to reason, to understand these things, that can save us.

For we humans have used our understanding to dig the carbon from the Earth in the form of coal and oil and gas; we burned it to get the energy to make our civilization.

Now we know, whether we all agree or not, as a species we know . . . that if we continue this process we will change our beautiful Earth into something far less pleasant for our children and their children for generations to come. We know better, because we understand other ways of getting the energy we need as an Earthly Civilization.

So there it is, an essay, as promised, for Iona on the occasion of the first snowfall of 2009.

*The Order of the Earth* is a remarkable publication, it reflects the kind of thinking and understanding that is sorely needed for our time and it deserves our support. Since everything else is holy, so is *The Order of the Earth*.

Thanks, Iona, for working so hard keeping *The Order of the Earth* going!

## Maryland Coal Ash Landfill Leaks Trigger Lawsuit Threat

WASHINGTON, D.C., November 23, 2009 (ENS) — Concerns about toxics discharged from an unlined coal ash waste dump in suburban Washington, D.C. have prompted four environmental groups to give formal notice that they intend to sue Mirant MD Ash Management, LLC and Mirant Mid-Atlantic, LLC Corporation of Atlanta, Georgia for Clean Water Act violations in Maryland.

Defenders of Wildlife, Sierra Club, Chesapeake Climate Action Network and Patuxent Riverkeeper claim the Mirant companies are violating the Clean Water Act by failing to comply with the terms of the discharge permit at the Brandywine Coal Combustion Waste Landfill in Brandywine, Maryland.

Pointing to a March 2009 report from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) which established that disposal of coal combustion waste in unlined landfills and surface impoundments is hazardous to human health, the groups say the waste discharges pose unacceptably high risks of cancer and diseases of the heart, lung, liver, stomach and other organs.

The Brandywine Coal Combustion Waste (CCW) Landfill receives fly ash and bottom ash from Mirant's coal-fired Chalk Point Power Plant, the largest power plant in Maryland.

Mirant says the 40-year-old plant is ISO 14001:2004 certified, which means it meets a widely accepted international standard for environmentally responsible operation. The plant uses electrostatic precipitators designed to remove 98 percent of fly ash during start up and 99.2 percent during normal operation.

It is not the operation of the Chalk Point Power Plant that the groups are taking issue with — they are concerned about the operation of the landfill where the plant's waste ash ends up.

The groups claim the Mirant companies are illegally discharging toxic pollutants into Mataponi Creek and its tributaries

from outfalls and through leaks in disposal cells at the landfill.

They are particularly concerned because Mataponi Creek flows through Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary, the only sanctuary operated by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. It is the wintering ground for several thousand Canada geese, the largest concentration on the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay. Red fox, groundhogs and white-tailed deer, ospreys, herons, hummingbirds and songbirds also inhabit the refuge.

The waste can poison nearby aquatic ecosystems and wildlife with bioaccumulative poisons that can continue for more than 100 years after waste is dumped, according to the EPA report.

"Selenium and other toxic coal combustion waste pollutants accumulate in animal tissues, threatening a wide range of wildlife from rockfish to ospreys to bald eagles, causing serious respiratory, metabolic, hormonal and physiological damage or even death," said Adam Kron, staff attorney for Defenders of Wildlife. "Mirant must take full responsibility for its landfill in order to prevent such harms to Maryland's waters and wildlife."

The Brandywine CCW Landfill contains seven million cubic yards of coal combustion waste in multiple, unlined disposal cells. Only the most recent disposal cell, which began operation in 2007, has a liner.

Mirant also has failed to submit a required report that describes how the company will eliminate all toxic discharges at the Brandywine landfill.

The Maryland Department of the Environment has documented cadmium, manganese, iron, aluminum, sulfates and total dissolved solids, many times over drinking water standards, in groundwater beneath the site. The groups claim that Mirant routinely discharges selenium above Maryland's toxic water quality criteria for aquatic life.

Patuxent Riverkeeper Fred Tutman said, "Unsafe management of coal waste at the Brandywine landfill poses a threat to

the long term health of our constituents and also to the value of the river as a place for renewal, sustenance, research and investment."

According to EPA, unlined landfills and surface impoundments can leach toxic pollutants like selenium, lead, arsenic and boron at levels that damage aquatic ecosystems and wildlife. Toxic metals can be embedded in the sediment at the bottom of rivers and lakes where they can be very difficult to remove and poison bottom-dwelling plants and fish.

"From cradle to grave, pollution from coal is impacting Maryland's vulnerable landscape and sensitive areas. It's time to send a clear message to Mirant that polluting our communities is not acceptable," says Diana Dascalu-Joffe, staff attorney for the Chesapeake Climate Action Network.

Mirant is also the target of an enforcement action by the State of Maryland for Clean Water Act violations at its Faulkner Coal Combustion Waste Landfill due to groundwater contamination.

The Environmental Integrity Project and the Environmental Law Clinic at the University of Maryland School of Law are acting as co-counsel for the four groups.

Jane Barrett, director of the University of Maryland Environmental Law Clinic, said, "The citizen suit provision of the Clean Water Act is a critical enforcement tool which, in cases like this one, can be used to supplement federal and state actions by holding polluters accountable and protecting our valuable natural resources."

"The Brandywine landfill is just one of hundreds of dangerous ash dumps threatening human health and polluting water all across the country," said Mary Anne Hitt, deputy director of the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign. "While we're doing our best to help clean up the worst offenders, EPA needs to set strong federal standards to safeguard communities everywhere."

or graduates) who took the exam in high school without parental consent. We need your help. Could you PLEASE tell anyone you know who might fit this description?

## One Way to Help Our Planet

*Right! Get out your bikes and start pedaling instead of burning fossil fuels. Here is how residents of a cooperative house in Philadelphia do their share. This photo shows a clever storage solution by the front door. Photo by Iona*



## Industrial Foam Found in Bedford County Creek: Natural Gas Production Contamination Suspected

*Continued from page 1*

back in early August but by the time the DEP got to the site, the foam had washed downstream; additionally, the DEP did not test the water for chemicals used in natural gas production.

Today, Schaeffer Creek is foaming once again, fed by the springs and a pond which recently tested positive for methyl blue active substances, a group of substances which include fracking chemicals called surfactants. The DEP told residents that the foam is "just detergent from someone's laundry" but this is a rural area and uphill from the springs and pond are drilling pads, not houses. The natural gas industry, including Craig Lobins, who is a leading DEP oil and gas division official, repeatedly exclaimed to the public that natural gas production fluids are "just soap."

The drilling pads uphill from the foaming pond and springs may have buried some of the drilling wastes on site, as is legal by Pennsylvania state regulations when the wastes are buried 18 inches underground. Groundwater can carry contaminants downhill and the contaminants from natural gas drilling and fracking include radioactive uranium, radium and lead along with mercury and hazardous

chemicals. These chemicals then leak into nearby aquifers.

2-Butoxyethanol (2-BE) is a foaming agent used for natural gas production and is proven to cause cancer in animals. 2-BE is a primary component of Air-Foam HD, a product that has been found on drilling pads in Pennsylvania — the MSDS sheets (Material Safety Data Sheets) for Air Foam HD state that it dissolves in water and that chronic exposure causes cancer. Testing for 2-BE costs over \$100 per test and the cost burden is on the landholder — the DEP has failed to test for drilling or fracking chemicals in their standard tests which are only performed when landowners report problems in their water supply, not before the problems occur.

Residents who will soon have natural gas production occurring in their region or upstream from their groundwater supply must hire an independent water testing company to do a "baseline test" to show the lack of contaminants prior to the drilling. Without a baseline test, it is more difficult to convict a drilling operator for water contamination — the drilling operator can claim that there is no proof that the contaminant was not in the groundwater supply prior to

the drilling.

"If you have a gas company that you can't fight cause they went through FERC [Federal Energy Regulatory Commission] and you have a DEP gas and oil division backing the gas company up, then how can you win?" said Wayne and Angel Smith. But his wife Angel reminds us that the battle is long going and not conventional. "If you can help one more person that doesn't have to go through what we've gone through, then that's worth it — that's winning to us. Most people are about the big bottom dollar but it's not the monetary dollar that's important — it's helping the next person that's important."

To listen to an interview with Wayne and Angel Smith on WHRW Binghamton's "The Point," see [radio4all.net](http://radio4all.net). For folks who are interested in other issues associated with natural gas production, please visit [un-naturalgas.org](http://un-naturalgas.org).

*Nastassja lives in the Selkirk Mountains of North Idaho with her partner, Jesse Taylor, practicing permaculture for bioremediation and sustainability. Recently she was living in Binghamton, New York doing media outreach concerning health and environmental impacts of natural gas production.*

## Stop Militarization of Schools: Plea From Maryland

Dear Friends,

We are gathering momentum to write legislation to protect Maryland high school students who take the ASVAB; i.e., the Armed Services Vocational Apti-

tude Battery test. Last year we got a bill through the Maryland Senate but it died in a House committee. This year we expect to do better. We are looking for parents of high school students (current

or graduates) who took the exam in high school without parental consent.

We need your help. Could you PLEASE tell anyone you know who might fit this description?

In the meantime, read about this outrageous situation in Florida. The same thing goes on in Maryland and we're going to stop it.

Read "Military test provokes ire of some parents" in the *Su-*

*wanne Democrat* at [http://www.suwanneedemocrat.com/local/local\\_story\\_335132935.html](http://www.suwanneedemocrat.com/local/local_story_335132935.html)

Also see last month's *Order of the Earth*, page 5.

Peace and hope,  
**Pat Elder**  
[patrickelder@verizon.net](mailto:patrickelder@verizon.net)  
Bethesda, Maryland

# Students Create Famous Books

## Foxfire Museum and Heritage Center

Submitted by Loris Boutwell  
Tiger, Georgia

Imagine a time before electricity, hot-and-cold running water, the comforts of indoor plumbing and the convenience of department stores. Imagine a time when most of what you owned was made by you or by neighbors who traded with you for the works of your hands. Time felt different then, its rhythm and urgencies shaped by the most basic needs — food, clothing and shelter that each family had to produce or fabricate for itself — and by the seasons' demands. The rare moments when there was no work to do, you visited with each other, played games, made toys, told stories, whittled and dreamed, maybe, of a time when life would be easier.

To many of us unfamiliar with the rigors of early Appalachian life, it may now seem dreamlike, even romantic, a kind of Eden where fruit fell from the trees into waiting hands and people spent their lives crafting the beautiful future antiques we see for sale in expensive area shops. But in encountering residents' first-hand stories and the tools and tangible remnants of those early days, you'll find the real Appalachia and also an appreciation for the difficulty and hardships of the life...and the dignity of work well done.

Folks interested in southern Appalachian life probably know that the twelve Foxfire books are an important source of first-hand accounts of the old times and ways. These accounts are gathered in the Foxfire Program by Rabun County High School students (and formerly Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School students) who photograph and interview relatives and friends about topics of interest and then edit the interviews for publication in *The Foxfire Magazine*.

In 1966, when a new high school English teacher sat down with his bored students to figure out something meaningful that they could do to learn the English curriculum, he had no idea that over forty years and over eight million Foxfire books later, the successive classes would become famous for their documentation of the vanishing Appalachian culture. They just wanted something else to do besides grammar sheets.

Eventually, Doubleday publishing company recognized the richness and uniqueness of the work Foxfire students were doing and contracted with the students to produce The Foxfire Book that was released in 1972. Proceeds from brisk book sales were used to establish The Foxfire Fund, Inc., a non-profit, educational organization.

Now, for many people, the name "Foxfire" is synonymous with this rich Appalachian heritage and with the book series. But there's more to Foxfire than meets the eye. Over forty-three years of experiential, student-centered learning have created an enormous body of work: books, magazines, archives and a treasured collection of Appalachian artifacts, given by or purchased from the folks Foxfire has celebrated over the years.

To bring the story of Foxfire closer to visitors, Foxfire opened the Heritage Center in Mountain City, Georgia to the public. The Center is a collection of historic log cabins and replications of traditional log construction designs with over twenty buildings dating as far back as the early 1800s. Visitors to the Center receive a rare glimpse of what life was like for the moun-



Photo by Lee Carpenter  
*Artist-in-Residence, Carole Morse, demonstrating broom-making at The Foxfire Museum and Heritage Center.*

tainers who settled this area over 150 years ago. Buildings include a chapel, blacksmith shop, mule barn, wagon shed, one-room cabin, gristmill and more. These buildings provide a glance into the past, including a look at a wagon used in the Trail of Tears, which forced Cherokee migration from these mountains to Oklahoma. Sharon Grist, the Village Weaver and Foxfire's Artist-in-Residence, is available most days to share her craft with visitors. And Carole Morse, broom-maker, is found demonstrating most Fridays during the summer months.

Over those forty-three years, Foxfire students (and staff) have gathered, during the course of interviewing their elders for *Foxfire Magazine*, many of the artifacts on display in the museum cabins. Often, when the teenagers research a particular craft or trade, they spend hours or days interviewing the craftsman as he or she makes the item, painstakingly documenting the process with photographs, notes and interview transcripts.

One of the most spectacular examples of this process resulted in a long article on wagon building and a wagon constructed in its entirety during the interviews. Student April Shirley wrote about this wagon in the Fall/Winter 1992 issue of *Foxfire Magazine*:

**Jud Nelson Wagon:** "Jud Nelson was born in Cherokee County, Georgia in 1911. He moved to Sugar Valley, Georgia in 1913 and has been there ever since. Mr. Nelson has been a blacksmith all his life.

He started blacksmithing early in the century and, because of this, he is one of the last blacksmiths who knows how to build a wagon from start to finish. The last wagon he ever made was for Foxfire so that we could document the entire process from beginning to end." This documentation appears in Foxfire 9, pp. 267-320. Foxfire purchased the wagon crafted during that documentation process. It is now a focal point of the museum.

Some of the most eloquent items in the museum are also the simplest. The homemade rag doll on display, if its stitched mouth could speak, would tell of the hardships and the love that shaped the Christmases of mountain children. In A Foxfire Christmas (Doubleday, 1990), Aunt Mo Norton remembers her childhood holiday toys:

"My mother made the rag doll that I got. She'd make the dolls six, eight, ten inches long. It didn't take her too long to make the dolls — about a couple of hours. She'd make them out of old rags. She stuffed them with cotton or some people stuffed them with old rags because cotton cost money. She used buttons for the eyes, buttons for the nose and she just drew the mouth on there. Sometimes she would work the mouth on with a needle, like embroidery, and she made the clothes out of any kind of material she had."

Aunt Arie Carpenter, one of Foxfire's favorite contacts, is also honored at the Museum. Gary Warfield recalls his times with Aunt Arie and what she gave him to

keep for the rest of his life:

"I am sure she knew she fed me, shared her life experiences with me and once gave me a place to sleep in a bed that was stacked one-foot high with quilts. But I doubt that she knew that she renewed my faith in mankind and taught me what unselfish generosity was. No one could outgive Aunt Arie. I never left her place without something...a full stomach, vegetables from her garden, a strangely good feeling...Aunt Arie also impressed my hard head with the fact that I wasn't the brightest, wisest soul in the world.

"I learned shortly after our first visit that the longer one lived the more one learned. It was evident that Aunt Arie knew more about life and people than most individuals ever will. And what is amazing is the fact that she probably never traveled more than fifty miles from where she was born and wasn't well read or college educated. I hope that in the twilight of my life, I will have Aunt Arie's vitality, enthusiasm, dignity and inner peace. I hope that, like her, I can "set my feet under the table" with friends and dine on the cornbread, leather breeches and lye hominy of my time."

A number of Aunt Arie's possessions, including her rope bed, chair and table, make up this display. Student Laurie Keener wrote the following:

**Aunt Arie Chair and Table:** "Aunt Arie's chair is a typical ladderback chair, probably made in Macon County, North Carolina, around the turn of the century. (Aunt Arie told Foxfire that all of her and her husband, Ulysses, furniture was made by a local furniture maker and was paid for with produce.) The uniqueness of this chair is that no glue, nails or tacks are used. The trick is to use seasoned rounds and green posts. When you drill holes in the green posts, you place the seasoned rounds in the holes. When the posts season out, they tighten around the rounds." There is an article in The Foxfire Book [the first one] on pp. 128-137 explaining how to make this type of chair. The dinner table seen here also belonged to Aunt Arie."

The museum gift shop offers all Foxfire books and magazines; various Foxfire logo items such as tote bags, T-shirts, etc.; local, hand-made crafts and woven goods; pottery; folk art; etc. as well as a wealth of other publications. Visitors can also get information about the Foxfire organization and about the educational program that offers training in the Foxfire Approach to Teaching and Learning.

Though offering visitors the opportunity to see many of the tools and crafts of everyday life and allowing them to imaginatively re-create the works and days of southern Appalachian people, the museum also showcases the educational process that Foxfire has developed and refined over the years.

Foxfire asks that you visit the Foxfire Museum and Heritage Center to join them in celebration of the past and to support their educational programs, as well as joining them for Heritage Day events described at [www.foxfire.org](http://www.foxfire.org).

**The Foxfire Museum and Heritage Center is open Monday through Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. year round. Self-guided tours are \$6 per adult (children 10 and under are free) and come with a souvenir self-guided tour booklet. Guided tours of the Foxfire Museum and Center are available. Phone 706-746-5828.**



## Exelon Closing Two PA Fossil-Fuel Plants

By Andrew Maykuth  
*Philadelphia Inquirer, excerpt*

In the latest sign of a fundamental market shift toward cleaner fuels, Exelon Corp. announced today that it would shut down two aging fossil-fuel power plants in Phoenixville and Eddystone in 2011, eliminating 280 jobs.

Exelon said that it would completely close the Cromby Generating Station along the Schuylkill [River] in Phoenixville and that it would retire two coal-fired generators at the Eddystone Generating Station on the Delaware River.

The company said the decision to shut the Eisenhower-era power plants was based on economics — the high-maintenance units are costly to operate in deregulated electricity markets where wholesale prices are depressed.

The decision also reflects a vision of the limited future of fossil fuels, especially coal, whose emissions of greenhouse gases are expected to be penalized under pending climate-control legislation.

"While these units are currently compliant with environmental regulations, we can see the increasing likelihood of environmental restrictions . . . that would require significant capital expenditures," Christopher M. Crane, Exelon's president, told analysts in a conference call.

The targeted units have 933 megawatts of capacity. Exelon contends that there is sufficient generation capacity in the region to meet demand and, with new natural gas supplies coming into the market, it is supplanting coal as the preferred fossil fuel. Exelon also has plans to increase the output of its Limerick and Peach Bottom nuclear reactors in the next eight years.

Exelon, based in Chicago, said it would record pretax charges totaling \$258 million related to the shutdowns. Crane said the move would create up to \$200 million of value for Exelon shareholders.

"While any job losses are difficult, the decision is responsive to the current and projected market conditions," he said.

The announcement came a day after Progress Energy Inc. said it would close 11 coal-burning power plants in North Carolina that require expensive emission-control systems. And Duke Energy Corp. has announced plans to shut down 18 coal plants by 2020.

About 220 jobs would be lost at Cromby and Eddystone and an additional 60 support positions would be eliminated at the Kennett Square headquarters of Exelon Power, the company's nonnuclear generating subsidiary. Exelon said it was exploring ways to reduce layoffs by shifting workers to other jobs.

About 50 to 60 employees would remain at the Eddystone plant near Chester, where Exelon will maintain six units fueled by natural gas or oil.

The company gave advanced warning of its plans to serve notice on the regional grid operator, PJM Interconnection Inc. PJM has 30 days to decide if closing the plants would impair the reliability of the transmission system.

In their day, Cromby and Eddystone were workhorses. But the plants, which came under Exelon's ownership after Peco Energy Co. merged with Chicago utility Commonwealth Edison Co. in 2000, had played an increasingly limited role.

The Cromby units, a 144-megawatt coal-fired unit and a 201-megawatt generator fired by oil or natural gas, were placed in service in 1954 and 1955. Exelon said the units would be dismantled and sold for scrap . . .

**The Earth Belongs to Everyone** by Alanna Hartzok, co-director of Earth Rights Institute, sets forth the vision and policy foundation for "Earth Rights Democracy." Following an introduction containing glimpses of the author's fascinating journey through life, this compilation of her articles and essays describes how to establish political-economic systems based on the human right to the planet as birthright.

Her key theme is that Earth Rights Democracy is essential in order to secure our other human rights and to create a world of peace and plenty for all. She places this core perspective into an integrated local-to-global framework that balances the need for global cooperation with the necessity for building demilitarized, decentralized and sustainable communities.

**The Earth Belongs to Everyone** presents a large and hopeful worldview with profound possibilities for transformational action for peace, economic justice and environmental restoration.

**Themes of the Book Include:** Democracy, Earth Rights and the Next Economy; Sharing Our Common Heritage; Land for People, Not for Profit; Financing Local-to-Global Public Goods; Women, Earth and Economic Power; Restructuring Economic Relationships; and Economics of War and Peace.

### What People Are Saying About the Book:

"More and more people are convinced that the only way to a just, prosperous and ecologically sustainable future is to share the value of Earth's resources more fairly. One of the many merits of Alanna Hartzok's collection of writings is to ground that conviction in practical proposals. She inspires us to do something about it." James Robertson, author, The New Economics of Sustainable Development, co-founder, The Other Economic Summit and New Economics Foundation, consultant, European Commission, London.

"Alanna Hartzok has deeply researched tax issues with equity and ecological-sustainability firmly in mind. This book is a storehouse of wisdom and insights on these and many broader issues relating economics to the larger planetary ecology." Hazel Henderson, author, Beyond Globalization and Building a Win-Win World, member, President's Commission on Sustainable Development, founder, Ethical Markets TV.

**The Earth Belongs to Everyone** received the Radical Middle Book Award. The book is 360 pages long and includes photos and charts. To order The Earth Belongs to Everyone send \$25 to Earth Rights Institute, Box 328, Scotland, PA 17254. Also, for \$50 you will receive the book plus enrollment in Land Rights and Land Value Capture, an online course and policy training program. There are now over 500 people enrolled from 52 countries. A course facilitator will respond to your assignment posts. Certificate awarded upon completion. The course is at [www.course.earthrights.net](http://www.course.earthrights.net). For further information call 717-264-0957.

## The Earth Belongs to Everyone



Articles and Essays

by

**ALANNA HARTZOK**



# The "New" Population Control Craze: Retro, Racist, Wrong Way to Go

By Betsy Hartmann  
On the Issues Magazine

It's back to the bad old days of the population bomb. That was the title of an alarmist book by Stanford biologist Paul Ehrlich that appeared in 1968. He suggested that world catastrophe would ensue unless women in poor parts of the world were prevented from having too many children.

This fall's junk mail carried an alarmist appeal from Population Connection, using its former name of Zero Population Growth (ZPG). According to ZPG, you can blame just about everything on population growth, from traffic congestion, overcrowded schools and childhood asthma to poverty, famine and global warming.

Retro racism and sexism are back in vogue but now with a bit of a faux feminist twist. Along with the bad news that women's fertility is destroying the planet comes the good news that family planning is the solution. In other words, you don't have to feel guilty about blaming poor women for the world's problems because you can help them improve their lives by having fewer babies.

Don't get me wrong. I support the provision of contraception and abortion as fundamental reproductive rights and as part of comprehensive health services. What I'm against is turning family planning into a tool of top-down social engineering.

There's a long and sordid history of population control programs violating women's rights and harming their health. That's why feminist reformers in the international family planning field have fought hard to make programs responsive to women's — and men's — real reproductive and sexual health needs. A world of difference exists between services that treat women as population targets and those based on a feminist model of respectful, holistic, high-quality care.

Contrary to received wisdom, population control programs remain alive and well. India and China have especially coercive ones but in many places in the world, from sub-Saharan Africa to public clinics in the U.S., poor women of color are denied real contraceptive choice and targeted with long-acting contraceptives like Depo Provera, despite their substantial health risks, in order to keep birth rates down.

## Reality vs. Hype, Overconsumption vs. Numbers

The recent resurgence in overpopulation rhetoric flies in the face of demographic realities. In the last few decades population growth rates have come down all over the world so that the average number of children per woman in the Global South is now 2.75 and predicted to drop to 2.05 by 2050. The so-called population "explosion" is over, though the momentum built into our present numbers means that world population will grow to about nine billion

**...Both reproductive justice and environmental justice movements share "an understanding of the complexity and intersectionality of issues that include not only the right to have or not have children, but the right to raise our children in healthy and safe communities."**

(Loretta Ross, SisterSong)

in 2050, after which point it will start to stabilize. The real challenge is to plan for the addition of that three billion people in ways that minimize negative environmental impact. For example, investments in public transport rather than private cars, in cluster housing rather than suburbia, in green energy rather than fossil fuels and nuclear, would do a lot to help a more populated planet.

Dollars, not sense, are driving the population bandwagon. Ironically, the main reason for the resurgence is that we have a new Democratic administration in Washington.

After eight years of George W. Bush's assault on reproductive and sexual health funding, population agencies see a welcome opportunity to expand international family planning assistance. The trouble is that some, like the influential Population Action International, are strategically deploying fears of overpopulation to win broader support inside and outside Congress. Their main tactic is to blame climate change on population growth so they can promote family planning as the magic bullet.

This kind of messaging intensified in advance of the world climate conference in Copenhagen in December.

These arguments not only threatened to distort family planning but to derail climate negotiations by weakening U.S. commitment to curbing carbon emissions and inciting the anger of nations in the Global South. Industrialized countries, with only 20 percent of the world's population, are responsible for 80 percent of the accumulated carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. The U.S. is the worst offender.

Overconsumption by the rich has far more to do with global warming than population growth of the poor. The few countries in the world where population growth rates remain high, such as those in sub-Saharan Africa, have among the lowest carbon emissions per capita on the planet.

Serious environmental scholars have taken the population and climate change connection to task but unfortunately a misogynist pseudo-science has been developed to bolster overpopulation claims.

Widely cited in the press, a study by two researchers at Oregon State University blames women's childbearing for creating a long-term "carbon legacy." Not only is the individual woman responsible for her own children's emissions but for her genetic offspring's emissions far into the future. Missing from the equation is any notion that people are capable of effecting positive social and environmental

change and that the next generation could make the transition out of fossil fuels.

A second study to hit the press is by a population control outfit in the UK, Optimum Population Trust (OPT), whose agenda includes immigration restriction. OPT sponsored a graduate student at the London School of Economics (LSE) to undertake a simplistic cost/benefit analysis that purports to show that it's cheaper to reduce carbon emissions by investing in family planning than in alternative technologies.

Although the student's summer project was not supervised by an official faculty member, the press has billed it as a study by the prestigious LSE, lending it false legitimacy.

Writing on RH RealityCheck, Karen Hardee and Kathleen Mogengaard of Population Action International endorse the report's findings without even a blink of a critical eye.

## Feminists Need to Rethink Blaming

In fact, perhaps what is most distressing about the current population control resurgence is how many liberal feminists and progressive media outlets are jumping on board.

There's even an attempt by the Sierra Club and others to bring reproductive justice activists into the fold in the name of "Population Justice." The assumption is that we live in a win-win world where there's no fundamental contradiction between placing disproportionate blame for the world's problems on poor women's fertility and advocating for reproductive rights and health.

Fortunately, many feminists in the international reproductive health field understand that contradiction because they see its negative consequences play out on the policy and program level. They spoke out strongly against linking reproductive health to population control at the recent Non-Governmental Organizations' Forum on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Development in Berlin. And within the U.S. women-of-color activists working on reproductive justice and environmental justice are coming together to critique population control and find a much more progressive common ground than "population justice."

As Loretta Ross, National Director of SisterSong, writes, both reproductive justice and environmental justice movements share "an understanding of the complexity and intersectionality of issues that include not only the right to have or not have children, but the right to raise our children in healthy and safe communities."

If there's one lesson to be learned from the current moment, it's that we have to remain ever vigilant about population control messaging. In the future, population rhetoric will shift from the environment to other areas, such as national security. Population agencies have long found it useful to deploy narratives about population growth breeding terrorism to grab media attention and appeal to conservatives in Congress. Women, especially in the Middle East, supposedly produce "youth bulges" of angry young men who then go on to become suicide bombers and terrorists. Already, prominent people in the population field are claiming that Afghanistan's problems are primarily driven by rapid population growth and that family planning should be a vital part of U.S. strategy there.

Along with vigilance, there needs to be a major effort to re-educate people about population, development and environmental concerns. Many Americans fall prey to overpopulation rhetoric because it's all they've ever been taught. Unlike Europe, there is virtually no education about international development in U.S. schools and many environmental studies textbooks repeat myths and employ racist images of starving, Third World people overshooting the carrying capacity of the environment. (For alternative educational tools, see Population in Perspective and Stop the Blame.)

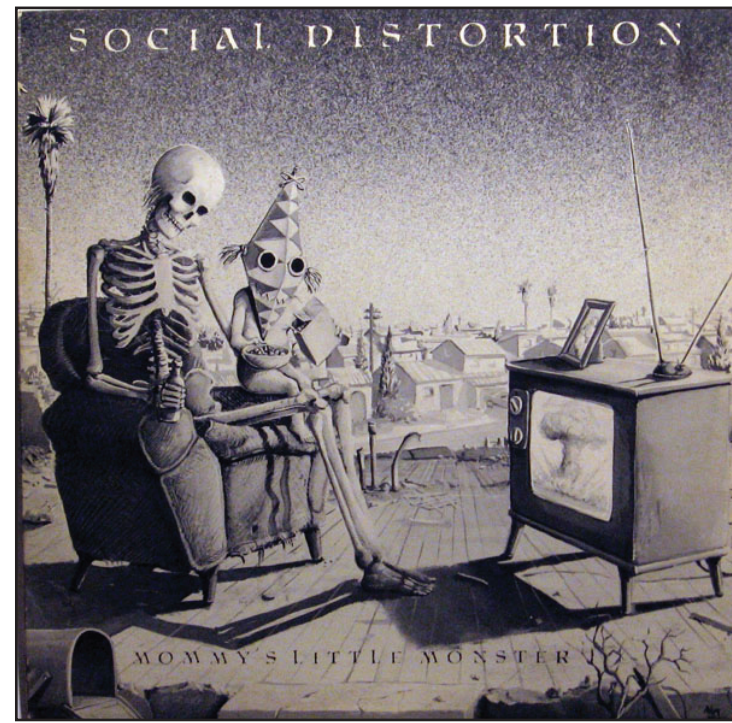
Addressing these issues also means challenging the peculiar brand of American capitalist individualism that continually shifts the burden for economic, social and environmental breakdown from powerful corporations and militarism onto the shoulders of individuals, especially poor people of color.

I, for one, am getting tired of reading about individual carbon footprints. Sure, it's vitally important for well-off people to reduce their energy consumption but how about the heavy carbon bootprints of the fossil fuel industry and the military-industrial complex?

They are grinding us all into the ground.



*Betsy Hartmann is the director of the Population and Development Program and professor of development studies at Hampshire College. A long-standing activist in the international women's health movement, she is the author of Reproductive Rights and Wrongs: The Global Politics of Population Control, two political thrillers and other books and articles about development, climate change and security. [www.betsyhartmann.com](http://www.betsyhartmann.com).*



Cartoon Courtesy of Creative Commons

*This anti-TV series brought to you by the publisher's personal belief that television is Public Enemy Number One and should be eliminated as suggested in Jerry Mander's 1977 classic book, Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television.*

# Kill Your Television Part I

Forward from Amusing Ourselves to Death by Neil Postman

Found in *The Sovereign newspaper*

We were keeping our eye on 1984. When the year came and the prophecy didn't, thoughtful Americans sang softly in praise of themselves. The roots of liberal democracy had held. Whenever else the terror had happened, we, at least, had not been visited by Orwellian nightmares.

But we had forgotten that alongside Orwell's dark vision [in 1984], there was another — slightly older, slightly less well known, equally chilling: Aldous Huxley's Brave New World.

Contrary to common belief even among the educated, Huxley and Orwell did not prophesy the same thing. Orwell warns that we will be overcome by an externally imposed oppression. But in Huxley's vision, no Big Brother is required to deprive people of their autonomy, maturity and history. As he saw it, people will come to love their oppression, to adore the technologies that undo their capacities to think.

What Orwell feared were

those who would ban books. What Huxley feared was that there would be no reason to ban a book, for there would be no one who wanted to read one.

Orwell feared those who would deprive us of information. Huxley feared those who would give us so much that we would be reduced to passivity and egoism.

Orwell feared that the truth would be concealed from us. Huxley feared the truth would be drowned in a sea of irrelevance.

Orwell feared we would become a captive culture. Huxley feared we would become a trivial culture, preoccupied with some equivalent of the feelies, the orgy porgy and the centrifugal bumblepuppy.

As Huxley remarked in Brave New World Revisited, the civil libertarians and rationalists who are ever on the alert to oppose tyranny "failed to take into account man's almost infinite appetite for distractions."

In 1984, Huxley added, people are controlled by inflicting pain. In Brave New World, they are controlled by inflicting pleasure. In short, Orwell feared that what we hate will ruin us. Huxley feared that what we love will ruin us.

This book is about the possibility that Huxley, not Orwell, was right.

**Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television** by Jerry Mander (1977) back cover review:

"The case against TV has never been made more effectively. It should be read by all addicts and anyone contemplating participation in the desertification of the mind to which TV leads."

Ashley Montague, Anthropologist and author of The Nature of Human Aggression

# Rescuing a Planet Held Hostage

*Continued from page 5*  
tance, for the Algerian resistance, for the Bolivian indigenous in 1998, for the Black Panther Party, CISPEs, AIM, Martin Luther King Jr., Tecumseh, the French Resistance, Marie-Madeleine Fourcade of Alliance and so many more brave collectives and individuals.

There are a thousand other ways of changing the system other than voting. Put it this way, if voting really changed the spectrum completely, voting would be illegal. No doubt. For this reason, alongside the fact that we've been doing this voting thing for hundreds of years and nothing really, really good has come solely out of it, are enough reasons for us all to reclaim personal agency and work together as communities from within our communities to reclaim sane and sustainable ways of living.

I always feel the urge to

remind readers that 95 percent of all revolutions are nonviolent. There is a lot of fun, inclusive and social stuff to be done.

Once everyone begins to realize (to paraphrase Derrick Jensen — page 2) that the rules laid down by those in power are nothing more than just the rules laid down by those in power, that they hold no intrinsic moral or ethical value, the sooner we can all become the free human beings we were born to be. If global ecological ruin and climate change are not enough to move people into action then, well, we have a very frightening future ahead of us. I urge people to follow what happened in Copenhagen. That week proved that the world's elected officials are not going to be making any decisions that are in the best interests of the people and communities of the planet, human and nonhuman.

The solutions presented thus

far have included market-based mechanisms and more discourse. Clearly, our future is in the hands of powerful elite and private institutions unless we rescue it. And I believe we can, if only we awake from the nihilistic and apathetic haze of our times and act together.

Put it this way, power is conferred to those who "have" it insofar as we, the people, are doing the conferring. As I mentioned above, there are more of us than there are elite. Depriving those in power the ability to steal from the poor and depriving them the ability to destroy the planet is within our power. We need to employ this. Because we *can* employ this.

It can be as simple as replacing voting with boycotting, replacing infrastructure that is wreaking havoc on the planet by any means necessary, with sane and sustainable models, and turning inwards to our immediate com-

munities while separating from interests that do not benefit the landbases upon which we rely. We can tear down the institutions that perpetuate planetary murder.

Many people around the world are growing sick and tired of the abuses inflicted on the planet and its inhabitants. It's time to place our rage into actions that will bring us into a future of relative peace, sanity and sustainability.

History has shown us that oppressive regimes can be taken down through collective action. We can make this happen.

To quote Ernesto Che Guevara, "At the risk of seeming ridiculous, let me say that the true revolutionary is guided by a great feeling of love. It is impossible to think of a genuine revolutionary lacking this quality."

Because we all have the potential to love greatly, we are all potential revolutionaries.

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# Exclusive Report from Eastern Hemisphere:

## An Interview with a College President About Climate Change

OE Correspondent  
Dr. Pyong Roh asks  
questions of  
Dr. Byun, President  
of Daegu Haany  
University in  
South Korea.



**Dr. Byun**

*Founder and president of an oriental medical college, Daegu Hanny University, Korea.*

warming have been aggressive and government-initiated green energy projects such as solar energy, wind farms and tidal electric power plants. Local governments are constructing bicycle roads. National government began huge river basins restructuring projects. Of course it takes time until we get the successful results but the government policies are on the right track, I think.

**Pyong:** How do you guide students for prevention of global warming?

**Dr. Byun:** The universities in the world have to play a leading role for the prevention of global warming. In order to achieve the goal, the universities have to set up specific objectives. The universities have to organize global warming prevention committees and many students should be involved in this committee. And students should play leading roles in this campaign. In practice the committees will collect various kinds of scientific data related to the causes of the global warming and preventive measures for global warming. The members of the committees have to hold seminars and/or meetings to share the knowledge and discuss the practical ways of preventing the global warming. The residents and students should be invited to the meetings. They have to practice what they learn through the meetings. For instance, they have to try to conserve energy, to reuse before recycle and to eat less meat products and to plant more trees. At the same time they have to use more mass transportation rather than private owned vehicles.

**Pyong:** What do you think about the global warming prevention policies of Korean government?

**Dr. Byun:** The policies of Korean government have focused on industrialization and economic development for the past several decades. And the government did not pay attention to the global warming. Now the government recognized the importance of global warming since the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) and UNCED (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the 1992 Earth Summit) reported seriousness of global warming. Nowadays the government policies on prevention of global



Photos from Daegu Hanny University Web site  
Daegu Haany University at Daegu, South Korea.

### Mission and Vision



“知止”  
(pronounced as [jiji])  
: staying in knowledge life  
• 知 (pronounced as [ji]) : knowledge  
• 止 (pronounced as [ji]) : standstill

“仁道”  
(pronounced as [indo])  
: way of virtuous life  
• 仁 (pronounced as [in]) : love, mercy  
• 道 (pronounced as [do]) : truth, way

“力行”  
(pronounced as [yeokhaeng])  
: consistent execution of life goal  
• 力 (pronounced as [yeok]) : energy  
• 行 (pronounced as [haeng]) : practice

Earth has been molested and polluted by human and industrial wastes. We witnessed huge hurricanes, tsunamis and droughts in many parts of the world. And many lives were lost and properties were destroyed. Since human beings destroyed animals and plants lost their habitats and fauna. And many diseases have been emerging and some diseases under control have been reemerging. These are man-made disasters. We depend on nature and we cannot live on the ruins of nature. We have to learn how to live with nature in harmony. When we are harmonious with nature, we can enjoy our maximum health, I believe.

**Pyong:** Please tell us about your education philosophy teaching students to love nature.

**Dr. Byun:** Preservation of nature means to cultivate nature and harmonize the nature and human beings. Nature is the foundation of our life and we have to conserve the natural resources and nourish nature reasonably. If we abuse nature, it definitely retaliate us.

I love students because they will be the leaders for tomorrow. I ask them to get back to the basics. I encourage them to do small things first for the health of nature. The man or woman, who cannot do small things, cannot achieve big jobs.

**Pyong:** You are the founder of an oriental medical college. What do you think of herbal medicine related to health and nature?

**Dr. Byun:** Herbal medicine is based on the resilience of human body. The art of herbal medicine is basically prevention of illness by applying natural laws. When a person is sick, we try to make the body activate the health maintenance mechanisms. Herbs are natural products not made in factories. Natural products are used to treat patients. This is the natural way. Of course, we use acupuncture and yoga. These practices also activate the defense mechanism of human body. Nowadays people are addicted to foods manufactured in the factories. Those kinds of foods contain many kinds of chemicals which are harmful for the health. We have to eat the healthy natural foods for good health. Prevention is better than treatment.

**Pyong:** Thank you so much for your time, President Byun.

**Dr. Byun:** You are welcome.

*Dr. Roh is a retired professor, who is still very active in educating people about climate change and public health. He is a consultant to the World Health Organization (WHO).*



## NOAA Left Out in the Arctic Cold

Public Employees for  
Environmental Responsibility  
(PEER) December 16, 2009

This fall, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration weighed in on the Proposed Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2010-2015 issued by the Interior Department's Minerals Management Service (MMS). In a refreshing departure from the Bush years, NOAA urged that this ambitious offshore lease schedule be dramatically cut back to protect marine resources.

In December, however, MMS went ahead and approved exploratory permits for Shell in the Chukchi Sea despite:

- NOAA's recommendation for exclusionary zones that would block lease sales near shore in the Chukchi Sea;
- NOAA's call for buffer zones that would bar drilling around "Critical Habitat for endangered and threatened species" — Shell's sites are within the area just pro-

posed by Interior's Fish & Wildlife Service as Critical Habitat for the threatened polar bear; and

• A federal court of appeals ruling that the drilling plans for the leases are illegal because they fail to take into account the environmental sensitivity of the areas Shell proposes for drilling.

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar spoke again of "energy independence" (even, apparently, from Canada) as the reason for drilling in one of the most environmentally sensitive stretches of the planet. Meanwhile, the host of scientific concerns raised by scientists within NOAA, MMS and other Interior agencies remains unresolved.

President Obama promised that federal environmental programs would be governed by science but that is far more easily said than done.

The role that environmental specialists within these agencies will play in the coming months will be critical — and PEER will have their backs.

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- **Weavers Natural Foods**  
Manheim
- **Wholesome Living Marketplace**  
Bedford

And in New York at:

- **Magnolia's Cafe**  
Patterson

And in West Virginia at:

- **Community Garden Market**  
Berkeley Springs

And in Idaho at:

- **Common Knowledge Bookstore & Tea House**  
Sandpoint

## Beluga Whales Earn 2 Million Protected Acres in Alaska

Email from Center for Biological Diversity, 12/1/09

Under threat of a lawsuit by the Center for Biological Diversity, this week the National Marine Fisheries Service proposed to protect almost 2 million acres of habitat for the endangered Cook Inlet beluga whale. The beluga — seriously imperiled by dangers like industrial development, global warming and sewage spewed directly into its habitat — was protected under the Endangered Species Act in October 2008, after petitions and litigation by the Center and allies. But even after putting off habitat protection for a year, the Fisheries Service made no move to safeguard the whale's Cook Inlet home until we

threatened to sue.

The Cook Inlet beluga is now down to only about 300 individuals, and no wonder — its habitat is the most populated and fastest-growing watershed in Alaska. Federally protected "critical habitat" will be a huge help to the whale. But the Fisheries Service is already getting pressure from oil-friendly politicians to curtail the designation. If anything, the Fisheries Service should have designated more habitat, not less, as habitat protections are currently only proposed for the upper part of Cook Inlet. The beluga needs protection in the entire Inlet, and soon, if it's to survive and recover.

[Ed.: But all is not well; see NOAA article at top of page, right side.]

## Views

# A Message From Mother Earth

## THE NEW ENERGY

By Doug Davis  
Cosmic Traveler

"A quiet mist. The sound of a canoe paddle slicing the quiet waters on a calm day. A sanctuary at water's edge. There is a quiet New Energy building now. It is pouring into your hearts. Can you feel it? You are being showered with light. The New Energy is soft as a breeze. It enters your heart with barely a whisper. Suddenly, one day, you find yourself filled with love and you wonder where it all came from. It is quiet and magical.

"Your life is no longer normal or average. You feel like playing and realize you've been taking your life too seriously. You want to slow down and daydream and go for a walk at the edge of the woods. You want to sit on a dock and stare at the water. The New Energy is a gentle wind. It floats on a cloud. It catches you off guard.

"The New Energy is realigning to the spirit. It will ask you to be true to yourself. In 2010, you will go about your days doing what you love to do and what feels right. Using your Will to do otherwise will feel like walking against a strong wind with objects hurtling past you and sometimes hitting you. Walking back into the Old Energy will feel as though you've gone into battle.

"In 2010, you cannot make anything work. A job you despise will not last long because



Image From Office Publisher

it does not align with the New Energy and your Soul. A relationship will not last if you know in your heart you have chosen the wrong person. Do not convince yourself it is necessary to 'try and make it work' with this person. It won't. In the New Energy of 2010, it is best for you to discern through feeling and experience life through allowing and being loving.

"Due to the New Energy, you may feel like you've arrived in Heaven. This is because you have. Just allow all the goodness to come to you and it surely will.

I am changing now. There is no going back. This is what I have been waiting for. I am love. I am passion. I am communion, illumination and transformation. I am Life."

Love,  
*Mother Earth*

*Doug Davis is a clairvoyant and spiritual medium. He also loves to garden and grow beautiful plants of all kinds and is the founder of Sacred Earth Seed Co. You are invited to contact him at Sacreearth88@aol.com.*

## Copenhagen Negotiators Bicker and Filibuster While Biosphere Burns

By George Monbiot  
*The Guardian, UK, excerpt*  
December 18, 2009

First they put the planet in square brackets, now they have deleted it from their text. This is no longer about saving the biosphere: now it's just a matter of saving face. As the talks melt down, everything that might have made a new treaty worthwhile is being scratched out. Any deal will do, as long as the negotiators can pretend they have achieved something. A clearer and less destructive treaty than the texts currently being discussed would be a sheaf of blank paper, which every negotiating party solemnly sits down to sign.

This is the chaotic, disastrous denouement of a chaotic and disastrous summit. The event has been attended by historic levels

of incompetence. Delegates arriving from the tropics spent 10 hours queuing in sub-zero temperatures without shelter, food or drink, let alone any explanation or announcement before being turned away. Some people fainted from exposure; it's surprising that no one died. The process of negotiation is just as obtuse: there's no evidence here of the innovative methods of dispute resolution developed recently by mediators and coaches, just the same old pig-headed wrestling.

Watching this stupid summit via Webcam (I wasn't allowed in either), it strikes me that the treaty-making system has scarcely changed in 130 years. There's a wider range of faces, fewer handlebar moustaches, frock coats or pickelhaubes but, otherwise, as the world's governments try to decide how to carve up the at-

mosphere, they might have been attending the conference of Berlin in 1884. It's as if democratization and the flowering of civil society, advocacy and self-determination had never happened. Governments, whether the elected or not, without reference to their own citizens let alone those of other nations, assert their right to draw lines across the global commons and decide who gets what. This is a scramble for the atmosphere comparable in style and intent to the scramble for Africa.

At no point has the injustice at the heart of multilateralism been addressed or even acknowledged: the interests of states and the interests of the world's people are not the same. Often they are diametrically opposed. In this case, most rich and rapidly developing states sought to seize as great a chunk of atmosphere as possible...



Sunrise at the Jersey Shore.

Photo by Iona

## ENCOUNTERS WITH WONDER

# The Journey

By Elizabeth Ayres  
California, Maryland

When the sun sets. When the sun sets on my river. When the sun sets on my river and the wings of gulls turn to white gold. And the leaves of trees turn to green gold. And the clouds turn into carnelian cobblestones that pave, east to west across trembling waters, a red gold road. Then, yes, I shall find me some shoes of gold vermilion. And a sturdy gilded staff. I shall set my feet upon this crimson highway and before too long I shall meet the evening star.

When the sun rises. When the sun rises on my river. When the sun rises on my river and an incoming tide of light submerges, one by one, the sky's small pebbles of light. And the leaves of trees emerge from silhouette. And the groaning oxen waters turn to flashing silver sighs. Then, yes, I shall know I have arrived, face to face with the morning star.

And yes, I think it matters. That my celestial assignation is not with a star at all but with a planet. Venus. Except for the moon, Venus is the brightest object in our sky, in closer orbit to the sun than Earth. First to appear in the gloaming, last to disappear at dawn. Alpha and omega. Venus, the planet named for love and beauty, who watches over our endings and beginnings.

In Roman times, the goddess appeared in many guises. Venus Cloacina, the Purifier, giver of

peace. Venus Genetrix, the great Mother, who bestowed fertility on folk and field. Venus Felix, the Lucky; Amica, the Friend; Libertina, the Free; Obsequens, the Graceful and Verticordia, the Changer of Hearts. Venus. Our morning and evening star. Fashioned from the same nebula that formed the planet Earth, named for all our yearnings, watching over.

The sun has set on the river of time we called 2009. Rises now on the same river, 2010. Pause. When you set out along this highway, where were you going? Are you sure you want to arrive there? Take stock. Is there something you might wish to put down? Something else more suited to this journey you think you might wish to take up?

Get serious. It matters. All the fields and all the folk, all the planets and the stars, we're all made from the same stuff. Protons, neutrons, electrons. A trembling flow of atoms and molecules. Action and reaction. Electromagnetic currents that groan and sigh. One vast and mighty river, what happens to me happens to you happens to them and it forever.

Ask questions. The year is just beginning. Beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>, you have 365 days, 8,760 hours, 525,600 minutes until the year ends. Let's say today is the morning star, still lingering in the dawn of 2010. Before she appears as evening star in the year's gloaming, what do you want to accomplish? Think. Don't answer off the top of your

head. Don't answer for yourself alone. Look beyond family, neighborhood, country. Look beyond your own lifetime. One vast and mighty river, remember? What happens to me happens to you happens to them and it forever.

And don't be glib. Don't say "world peace" if you don't mean "world peace." If you're not ready to do something to make this a more peaceful world. And if you're not ready, admit it. Spend the year asking the Changer of Hearts to change yours. I'll do the same. What happens to me happens to you happens to them and it forever.

So when the sun sets on our river of minutes, hours, days, years. When the flow of atoms ceases for you and me. We shall leave behind our trembling and our sighs and ready ourselves to set out upon a golden highway. To meet, face to face, that from which we were fashioned. Our alpha and our omega, the sum of all our yearnings. When the sun rises.

*Elizabeth Ayres, author of Know the Way and Writing the Wave, is the founder of the Center for Creative Writing (CreativeWritingCenter.com). You can catch more reflections at <http://elizabethayres.wordpress.com>. Or write one of your own! Just follow the prompts at <http://encounterswithwonder.wordpress.com>. "The Journey" first appeared in the January 3, 2008 issue of "Bay Weekly."*

## Life is My Career: *Bein' Green*

By Christine Maccabee  
Sabillasville, Maryland

I believe Kermit the Frog\* said it best when he sang, "It's not easy bein' green" on the Sesame Street TV show many years ago. I used to watch it with my kids, as did many of you I am sure, and I know I benefited from it as much as my children did. We all learned that it is OK to be different and just fine being who we are, even if we are green!

The words in Kermit's song go very deep. As a performer I would like to sing it at my next concert as it touches me in all the right places. I was always a shy, self-conscious person and somewhat troubled, as was Kermit, for "people tend to pass you over 'cause you're not standing out like flashy sparkles on the water or stars in the sky." I like this famous frog's values. After much struggle he ultimately resolves that it is OK to be simple, to kind of "blend in with so many other ordinary things" like green pine trees and lily pads.

I think I could have been a frog and been very happy, for "green is the color of spring and green can be cool and friendly-like and green can be big like an ocean or important like a mountain or tall like a tree."

All of us are learning these days, especially our children in school as they study ecology, just how important those oceans and mountains and trees really are. Like lowly little green frogs these things are not to be taken



Image from Office Publisher

*Kermit the Frog's theme song, "It's not easy being green," is true today for many of us even though we are not frogs.*

for granted. In fact, frogs and other amphibians are one of nature's monitors as to the health of our planet and many scientists are keeping a close watch on their precious habitats, many of which are unfortunately disappearing or becoming contaminated.

As you all know, I am sure, Kermit and all his relations, some of which are much flashier and fancier than he, are endangered by the encroachment of human activities such as mining, industrialization of all sorts, suburban sprawl, deforestation of rainforests for agriculture and raising of beef cattle for meat consumption, etc., which inevitably, and sadly, leave destruction of habitat in their wake.

These days, whenever I am tempted to eat a beef burger I think of my elephant and giraffe friends who get along quite well

on a vegetarian diet. Many of my friends are eating lower on the food chain for both ethical and health reasons. Being green is challenging because it requires changing our habits, which isn't always easy, but ultimately can be very gratifying.

The lesson I have learned from Kermit is that it is OK to be a tree-hugger and a flower child. Many years ago while hiking in the Rockies, I came upon an ancient tree, easily 600 years old or more. I stood there transfixed by its awesome majestic beauty.

And then, yes, I reached out and hugged it.

So true, Kermit, it hasn't been easy bein' green, as there are people who have mocked me, ignored me and judged me for my values. Indeed, I judge myself, for as a human being living in these modern times it is

impossible to live up to my highest standards. However, my experience goes much deeper than supporting environmental groups or buying a Prius automobile, though these things are good if you are able.

At the deepest level, my life here in the Catocin Mountains in Maryland, revolves around what is known as "deep ecology," which is a spiritual understanding of the interconnectedness of all living things. Daily I am touched by the awesome mystery and beauty of the plants, animals and insects around me and I deeply understand their importance for the health and well-being of our truly living planet. It is a privilege to be able to garden in this Eden and I never take it for granted. Happily, I am not alone in these feelings. Multitudes of nature lovers, tree huggers, flower children and activists around the world care deeply as well. They are green and they embrace it. They likely even embrace a tree now and then!

So Kermit, you are not alone! Besides Kermit the frog I have many other heroes and heroines. One woman who has inspired me tremendously is Julia Butterfly Hill. If you do not know of her you really should Google her.\*\* For a little over two years in 1997 she lived in the canopy of a 180-foot-tall, 1,000-year-old redwood tree in California. She said she would not come down until her tree (which she named Luna) and those around it were perma-

nently protected.

This 12-foot-thick tree was marked for harvest by the Pacific Lumber Company. By the time Julia had climbed up into Luna, all but 3% of ancient old growth redwoods had been timbered and mudslides destroying homes and natural habitat were the result. Julia was drawn like a magnet to the tree and, with lots of help from her friends, endured rain, wind and cold until the lumber company committed to preserving Luna and a two-mile radius of forest around her.

This courageous young woman did something very few of us would try . . . she put her life on the line for her beliefs. She was not the ordinary run-of-the-mill tree-hugger, that's for sure! She was being herself and she was being green. It was a proud moment for Kermit and all his tree frog relatives around the world.

There is not enough news in our papers about the good things that are going on and things that people are doing to make a difference. I have noticed some change and that encourages me. People are standing up for what they believe and I applaud them for it.

Businesses in Frederick are working together to recycle as much of their waste as possible, some churches are setting a good example and are working towards leaving a smaller footprint on this precious Earth, God's Creation, which we really do NOT own, and lots of people are creating habitat sanctuaries

on their properties and in their backyards.

Thank Heaven for all such persistent visionaries. I say, "Stay strong, keep pluggin' and keep the faith. Our precious Earth needs you." My personal goal is to live more lightly on the Earth and to find happiness with growing things, be they children or plants or animals.

What is yours?

"Simplicity, simplicity" said Thoreau.

"Look at the lilies of the field..." said Jesus.

"I am green and it'll do fine", says Kermit the frog. "It's beautiful and I think it's what I want to be."

It's really not that hard. In fact, it's a joy!

Thanks, Kermit, for reminding us!\*\*\*

\*Kermit the frog received an honorary degree from Oxford University in the 1990's, according to ecologist Bill Meredith.

\*\*Google [www.sanctuaryforest.org](http://www.sanctuaryforest.org) to learn more about efforts to preserve old growth forests.

*Christine writes poetry, essays and songs about her relationship with people as well as the natural world. She lives on 11 beautiful acres in the Catocin Mountains where she raises vegetables and allows wild indigenous medicinals and edibles to grow. She especially encourages the wild asters and goldenrods which are essential late-season food for pollinators. Contact Christine at 301-271-2307 or [bcmacheart@hotmail.com](mailto:bcmacheart@hotmail.com).*

# Monkey Business: Better Business Practices Learned Through Monkeys Alternate Role

By Heather Wandell  
Frisky's Wildlife and Primate Sanctuary  
Woodstock, Maryland

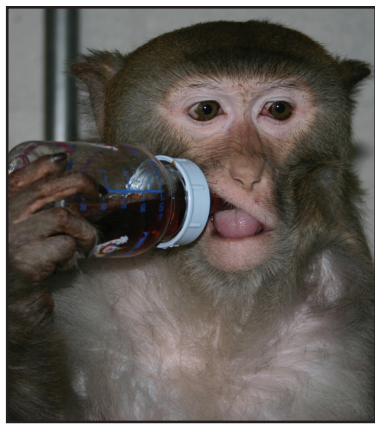


Photo by Colleen Layton-Robbins  
*Patsy, a Rhesus Macaque Monkey (left), shared an enclosure with Gizmo (right) for 14 years. Gizmo, a Rhesus Macaque Monkey, took on an alternate role during Patsy's last hour.*

Patsy was leaving us very soon. It had become obvious that the Leukemia had taken over and her body was giving in. We had tried everything we knew at the time to prolong her life and keep her comfortable. Her mate, Gizmo, had even given his blood, so that Patsy could have a blood transfusion. She lived for six months after the transfusion. We called Gizmo, "Our Hero!" Patsy and Gizmo, both Rhesus Macaque Monkeys, had shared an enclosure for 14 years. They knew each other well. They had the comfort of each other's presence — knowing that the other is there through the sad times, the joyful times, the quiet times and through times of "unknowing." Gizmo, the male, has a quiet, gentle, passive way of being. Patsy, on the other hand, was a more aggressive female. That is, until she got sick. Then the roles reversed.

In her role as caregiver, Colleen (owner of Frisky's Wildlife and Primate Sanctuary) did not want to give up. She made every effort to see that Patsy was comfortable right up until the very end. When Patsy quit eating and drinking, we knew that she would soon leave us.

Colleen was frazzled and distraught, wondering if there was just one more thing that could be done. She checked on Patsy every hour for the last 48 hours. She felt some relief when Patsy lifted her head up off the blanket to look her in the eyes, for what Colleen did not know at the time, was the last time.

One hour later, Gizmo would not let Colleen in. His aggressive stance let Colleen know that she needed to leave them be. His tone told her, "I will take it from here. Just leave her alone. There is nothing more to be done." Gizmo took on the role of the aggressor for the sake of his Patsy. One hour after that, Patsy's spirit left her body.

We often take on an alternate role when a life situation calls for it. If a parent becomes incapacitated, we may take on the alternate role of "caregiver." After the loss of a spouse, we take on the role of being single. If your company is about to make a big presentation to a client and your team leader becomes ill or has a family emergency, you take on the role as the presenter. If you are the cook at a diner and the waiter or waitress does not show up, you take on the role of waiter or waitress.

These are, for the most part, unplanned situations where we need to act without a lot of forethought. But there are situations in life where we can, and maybe need to, take on an alternate role in order to reach a goal or overcome an obstacle. We can prepare for these roles in advance.

One of our final class assignments at the Tai Sophia Acupuncture Institute was for us to play an alternate role. The Alternate Role Exercise is designed to achieve the ability to be in any physical mode

of being, essential to service to the community. The basic assumption is that the posture, voice tone, way of presence that we consider normal is "normal" only because it is what we have practiced and taken for granted for many years. We say "this is me" only because it is the "me" we have practiced. The assignment was as follows:

"Identify a quality you say you are not practiced in: e.g. commanding/outrageous/flamboyant/sensual/shy/greedy/proper/business like.

"Identify a well known movie role/character that embodies this quality. Get the movie clip, watch it several times and practice mimicking a thirty-second segment until you have a new embodiment. The quality and the role must be a big stretch for you."

We had classmates help choose the role that we were to embody and act out in class. You know they have chosen the right role for you when you want to shout, "Oh no — anything but that!"

My classmates assigned me the role of Gordon Gekko, a greedy and heartless business man, played by Michael Douglas in the 1987 movie "Wall Street." Gekko took and got what he wanted, regardless of who was hurt in order to get it. I rented and watched the entire movie. I then picked out a scene where Gekko was lecturing to Bud Fox, played by Charlie Sheen, about how you can't care too much about "the other guy." He saw money as a game. In order for him to win, somebody had to lose. In order to play this role, I had to take on Gekko's tone, his body stance and his attitude.

I thought I had it down after practicing this role for the entire week before I had to perform it.

My teacher, Dianne Connelly, was not convinced. She honed in on one line and had me say it until my tone, my body and my heartless glare matched the words. After about the fifth or six time, I felt myself become Gordon Gekko. She felt it too. She smiled and nodded.

I wasn't sure at the time just how playing the role of Gordon Gekko would serve me or anyone else. Aside from the role of Director of Community Outreach at Frisky's (all of the positions at Frisky's are unpaid), I have a speaking and teaching business. I give workshops on Therapeutic Laughter. I have been trained as a Certified Laughter Leader and

lead trainings for World Laughter Tour. I attend professional development conferences, keep up to date on research around the health benefits of laughter, belong to associations that discuss the benefits of humor and laughter and have invested in the equipment needed to put on a presentation and run a business. And yet, I lacked the confidence to charge a fee high enough to cover my expenses and have a little money left over at the end of the day.

Through the Alternate Role assignment, I now take on some of the business acute qualities of Gekko. When stating my fee to a client, I take on Gekko's confidence, his stance, his knowing of his value.

If I cannot cover my expenses, I can no longer offer my gift of therapeutic laughter. Through Gordon Gekko I have learned to take care of me in the process. If I am not taken care of, I cannot take care of others.

I believe Gizmo and Patsy had an unspoken agreement about how they wanted to share the final moments of Patsy's time here on Earth. Gizmo took on the alternate role of the aggressor so that we would understand it too.

I invite you to practice an alternate role, the one that is the biggest stretch for you. When the time comes, it will be the role that serves you and others the most and you will be able to embody it.

*Heather Wandell is a Certified Laughter Leader with the World Laughter Tour and is the CEO of her own company, Another Way To See It (www.anotherwaytoseeit.com). She can be reached at haw@anotherwaytoseeit.com.*

**Note from Heather:** *My column is not meant to produce knee-slapping, belly-aching laughter. Its purpose is to make us ponder our connection with animals, nature, and to perhaps add a new practice to your life. I have spent thousands of hours observing human workplace behavior and hundreds of hours observing primate behavior and have found that there is a connection! It is my hope that this column will at least make you smile at the thought of monkeys and businesses being connected and to increase awareness of a nonprofit organization, Frisky's Wildlife and Primate Sanctuary, that is so dear to my heart.*

## Earth Psalms: Song 14

By Angela Magara ©  
www.angelamagara.com

The fool says in her heart,  
Nothing is greater than me,  
Nothing will call me to account for  
The waste I create.

The fool says in his heart,  
I answer to no one.  
What I want I take and nothing  
Can stop me.

And all, we all, turn our eyes to  
Small thoughts and purposeless deeds.  
We all are fools when we forget the Earth.  
And no longer remember Life.

Is it because we don't understand?  
No, we understand our value.  
Is it because we don't care?  
No, when we think we care deeply.

We are turned aside by incidentals,  
By the tiny stitches in the fabric of each day.  
We are distracted by routine  
And the course and habit of our path.

Goddess, ring the bell and send the wind,  
Call the waters and the fire  
That we may stop and lift our eyes  
To see the beauty and the pain of this human family.

Give us the moment to stop  
And know our power on this planet,  
that we may be fools no more,  
But wise in the simple pattern of Life.

Then will the land sing  
And the oppressed be relieved of their burdens  
When we awake to the value of our every step  
And the worth of each second.  
Then will the Goddess and God be honored and  
The Earth cherished as our Beloved.

*Earth Psalms is full of familiar words spoken in a new voice based on the Biblical Psalms but with the heart of Earth-based spirituality. Printed with the author's permission.*

## From the Northern Wilderness

By Sandy Chilcote, Corner Brook, Newfoundland, Canada

in the long winters there are  
more stars and the northern lights  
more of the moon and night  
while the wind blows in the spruce  
and across gravelly barrens  
with horizontal frenzy singing  
swinging in the snowy center  
of a shining Milky Way, in its voice  
an ancient tune about life



**Note from the Poet:** I am just back from crossing on a wilderness road in Labrador where I saw little wildlife because of the snow and wind. There were snow finches and a snow ptarmigan but no caribou or wolves.

## Mountain Sprite

By Terry Carnila, Bedford, Pennsylvania

Before me lie hopes and dreams Universal.  
I come to deliver the flowers of delight.

Winds sweep mercilessly trying to forestall me.

I am Mountain Sprite, you cannot touch me  
You try — but for naught.

Flowers spring eternal from the seeds you blow away.

I, too, am eternal. Catch me if you can

Fool!

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## Food and Health

# Mark's Green Party: Saving the Co-Op, Part III Reduce, Reuse, Recycle — Toss!

By Mark Lautman  
Rockville, Maryland

Latonya Rotterdam, the high-powered marketing executive whose assignment was to rehabilitate the Happy Apple Blossom Co-Op, held in her hands the incontrovertible proof that human activity was not responsible for global warming. It was the co-op.

"I just don't understand it," she said to herself. "I have a heating bill for \$3,000 and all through December it's been freezing in this store. Where is all the heat going?"

What truly worried her was that there was not enough money in the bank to pay for the heating bill. If the gas company closed the co-op's account, all the organic produce would rot from frostbite, engendering an ecological disaster equal to Mrs. Klügermalte's Shade-Grown Blowfish Intestines.

Successful business people want results and, if they don't get results, they get frustrated. Rotterdam was no exception. She didn't have a solution for the gas bill so she channeled her energy against Palette Jack. She called the usually sober employee into aisle 4 and pointed to a large object.

"Jack," she said to Palette Jack. "What is this?"

"It's a typewriter, ma'am," said Palette Jack.

"Why is this typewriter in the meatless hamburger aisle, Jack?" "Ma'am, my mother bought that typewriter in the 1970s and she learned how to type on it

when she was young. She doesn't need the typewriter anymore because she now uses a wireless, voice-activated keyboard so she gave it to me. I just didn't have the heart to toss it. After all, the paint has lead in it and the steel is so thick it can't be recycled. I just thought someone would buy it someday."

"Jack, this is a business, not a junkyard. If we can't use this machine and if you can't recycle it, then you'll have to dump it."



Image from Office Publisher

Jack protested. "Ma'am, I can't just toss this typewriter. It's an artifact. I bet nobody ever typed the words 'global warming' on it. That makes it special."

"If you want artifacts, Jack, go to a museum. Our hottest selling item here is Oatmeal and Molasses Shampoo, although for the life of me I can't understand why. We have a \$3,000 heating bill to pay by the end of the week and we need shelf space for what sells, not for memories. I understand you're attached to this contraption but you have to think of the greater good." Rotterdam looked at her watch and softened her tone. "It's 3 o'clock on Tuesday and the dump truck will be arriving any time now. Jack, it's time to let the typewriter go."

Devastated and conflicted, Jack put the typewriter into one

of the co-op's hand-carry baskets and stumbled out the back door. He heaved it into the store's dumpster and watched as the waste-removal truck fork-lifted the dumpster's contents into the bed.

By the time he got back, he saw that the space taken up by the typewriter was now occupied by ten bottles of Oatmeal and Molasses Shampoo.

"It's probably for the best," thought Palette Jack to himself.

A few minutes later a straggle young man entered the store.

"Can I help you, sir?" asked Palette Jack.

"Yes," said the customer. "I know this is an organic food co-op, so you probably have what I'm looking for."

"You can bet your fair-trade cocoa power we do!" said Palette Jack proudly. He was ready to do his part to pay the heating bill.

"We have the largest selection of healthy food and alternative lifestyle products in the county. I hope you don't mind my saying this but you look like someone who drinks a bit too much caffeinated soda. Try one of our Synapse Smoothies."

"No thanks," said the customer. "Listen, I don't have much time. I'm working for a film production company and we're shooting a scene down the road. It takes place in a rural co-op just like this one. We need an old electric typewriter for a prop. I'm willing to pay up to \$3,000 for it. Do you happen to have one around here?"

Mark Lautman writes humorous articles on technology and the holistic lifestyle.



Photos from Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps  
One of the safest soaps on the market today has been around for decades. Dr. Bronner's castile soaps are famous with the health-food crowd.

## The Scoop on Soap

By Al Fry  
Garden Valley, Idaho

For thousands of years our ancestors let the natural oils of their bodies protect their skin with just the right pH value. The gentle soaps and solutions they used in washing off dirt usually just slowed down this action.

As profits began to rise above ethics, we started to have problems. Toxic substances like lead started showing up in beauty products and soaps got replaced by toxic substitutes.

When the giant chemical cartels made fortunes churning out toxic chemicals and gases in World War I it seemed a waste to close all the chemical plants when things slowed down. With just a bit of alteration, the nerve gas formulations got turned into the wonderful new "detergents" . . . to keep the profits rolling in. All it took was a lot of advertising. The long hidden problem has been that there are health hazards connected to this switch over.

Almost every beauty product is loaded with everything from toxic rare metals to downright poisons. In her "Cure for All Diseases," Hilda Clark warns us about this in detail. Almost every shampoo on the market now has propyl (wood) alcohol contamination in it. This can go to the liver and bring on cancer.

We can probably all remember the PCB scare when it was found this poison doesn't break down in the environment. Since PCBs are still found in most detergents, guess what winds up on the surface of our dishes and clothes after the usual washing?

Most detergents also have aluminum in them and this toxic metal is suspected of contributing to alzheimers. Detergents that have that nice, blue tinge have cobalt in them . . . and this is linked to heart disease. On and on the story could continue . . . but the good news is that there are now many 'detergent' substitutes on the market. In our local co-op, there are half a dozen liquid soaps that are guaranteed to be free of all the toxic junk.



Soaps of course usually use lye and oils as the base. This tends to take away the protective layer of skin oil . . . since the lye is alkaline and the skin oil is slightly acid. Some soap makers add enough acid to bring down the pH values but the point is, it is often a good idea to use a little acidic rinse after using a soap shampoo. Vinegar or citric acid in water is fine for this, or lemon juice.

I have long used Dr. Bronner's liquid soap but others like Mountain Green (866-686-4733) and Bi-O-Kleen (800-477-0188) are less expensive and safe also. Miracle II soap has energized minerals, etc. in it and, although more expensive, has a great reputation. (877-817-9829 is one source by mail.)

The safest cleaner is probably Borax. It doesn't suds up like soap but a dash of liquid soap can eliminate this shortcoming. Borax was widely used before detergents came along and can be dissolved in a sink-side container of water to be convenient.

Like most soaps it needs a dash of acidic rinse if used for shampooing. Essential oils like Frankincense and Peppermint can be added to most liquid soaps to give more antibacterial properties and a nice aroma. That takes us into another area that we can cover some other time.

## Football and the Federal Reserve

### The Name of the Game is Bailout

Excerpt from **The Creature from Jekyll Island: A Second Look at the Federal Reserve**  
by G. Edward Griffin

Analogy of a spectator sporting event as a means of explaining the rules by which taxpayers are required to pick up the cost of bailing out the banks when their loans go sour . . .

To understand how banking losses are shifted to the taxpayers, it is first necessary to know a bit about how the scheme was designed to work. There are certain procedures and formulas which must be understood or else the entire process seems like chaos.

It's as though we had been iso-

lated all our lives on a South Sea island with no knowledge of the outside world. Imagine what it would then be like the first time we travelled to the mainland and witnessed a game of professional football.

We would stare with incredulity at men dressed like aliens from another planet; throwing their bodies against each other; tossing a funny-shaped object back and forth; fighting over it as though it were of great value, yet, occasionally kicking it out of the area as though it were worthless and despised; chasing each other, knocking each other to the ground and then walking away to regroup for another surge; all this with tens of thousands of spectators riotously shouting in unison for no apparent reason at all.

Without a basic understanding that this was a game and without knowledge of the rules

of the game, the event would appear as total chaos and universal madness.

The operation of our monetary system through the Federal Reserve has much in common with professional football. First, there are certain plays that are repeated over and over again with only minor variations to suit the special circumstances. Second, there are definite rules which the players follow with great precision. Third, there is a clear objective to the game which is uppermost in the minds of the players. And fourth, if the spectators are not familiar with that objective and if they do not understand the rules, they will never comprehend what is going on. Which, as far as monetary matters is concerned, is the common state of the vast majority of Americans today . . .

## Happy Birthday to OE from Heartwood



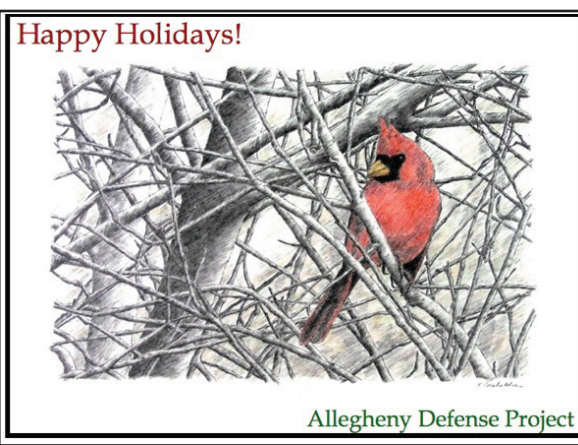
Heartwood congratulates "The Order of the Earth" on two years of powerful information and inspiration for this lovely blue planet we call home. Heartwood is people helping people protect the places they love. We invite you to join us at [www.heartwood.org](http://www.heartwood.org) or call 615-358-8898.

Thanks,  
Andy Mahler, Network Coordinator

HEARTWOOD is a regional network that protects forests and supports community activism in the eastern United States through education, advocacy and citizen empowerment.

HEARTWOOD was founded in 1991 when concerned citizens from several mid-western states met and agreed to work together to protect the heartland hardwood forest.

This region was once blanketed with a majestic hardwood forest containing more than 70 species of hardwood trees. Unfortunately, much of this forest has been cleared and what remains is mostly isolated fragments of public land that nonetheless play a critical role in providing habitat for wildlife, purifying the air and water, moderating global climate change and offering places of beauty and enjoyment.



Happy Holidays!

Allegheny Defense Project

*The Forest has always been my teacher in Peace, in Diversity, in Democracy. Diverse life forms, small and large, moving and immobile, above ground and below, with wings, feet or leaves, find their place in the Forest. The Forest teaches us that in Diversity lies the Conditions of Peace, the Realization of Democracy.*

--Vandana Shiva

Peace For the Forest,  
Cathy Pedler  
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## Grassroots Power



Just seven percent of Brazil's Atlantic Forest remains but it is still one of the Earth's richest centers of biodiversity, home to a wealth of plants and creatures comparable to the Amazon's.

# Thanks to GM, People Are Being Displaced So Their Forests Can Become Offsets for SUVs

By Mark Schapiro  
Mother Jones, November 18, 2009

I am standing in the shadow of General Motors' \$1 tree. It's a native guaricica, with pale white bark and a spreading crown that looms about 40 feet above my head. Hanging from its trunk is a small plaque that identifies it as tree No. 129. I've come here to the verdant chaos of Brazil's Atlantic Forest to understand the far-reaching and politically explosive controversies taking shape in diplomatic corridors thousands of miles away over the fate of trees like this one.

No. 129 stands in the heart of the Cachoeira reserve in the state of Paraná — one of the last slivers of a forest that once blanketed much of the country's southeastern coast. Just seven percent of the Atlantic Forest remains but it is still one of the Earth's richest centers of biodiversity, home to a wealth of plants and creatures comparable to the Amazon's.

On the way here, our group — led by Ricardo Miranda de Brites and his team of forestry experts from the Brazilian conservation group Society for Wildlife Research and Environmental Education (SPVS) — walked past clusters of yellow-and-white orchids, stepped over the footprints of an ocelot, kept an eye out for the endangered golden lion tamarin and were bitten by, it seems, every one of the thousands of species of insects native to the area.

But our journey is not focused on the rare creatures in the forest. It's about the forest itself — the trees that are our partners in respiration, inhaling carbon dioxide, exhaling oxygen and storing the carbon in their trunks and leaves. That simple process makes them one of Earth's most potent bulwarks against climate change (a.k.a. a "carbon sink"); but when they are cut and burned all that stored carbon is released into the atmosphere. Already, some 32 million acres of tropical rainforest are destroyed each year, an amount of land equivalent to the state of Mississippi's. Deforestation, according to the United Nations, is responsible for roughly one-fifth of all greenhouse gas emissions.

What will it cost to keep those trees standing? And who's going to pay for it? The challenge of assigning precise values to an increasingly rare commodity — wild trees — and indeed the question of whether they are a commodity at all, is one of the most hotly contested in the climate world.

It was an unusual deal that landed tree No. 129 at the center of the debate. Between 2000 and 2002, the U.S.-based Nature Conservancy struck an alliance with three of the planet's leading carbon emitters: General Motors, Chevron and American Electric Power (AEP). Together the corporations gave the environmental group \$18 million to purchase 50,000 acres of Brazilian Atlantic Forest, much of which had been degraded by grazing. Three reserves were created: Serra do Itaquí, financed with \$5 million

from AEP; Morro da Mina, paid for with \$3 million from Chevron; and Cachoeira, underwritten by \$10 million from GM. (GM's role in the project survived the company's bankruptcy, which means that No. 129 is now partially owned by you and me.)

SVPS was brought in to manage the reserves, which together form one contiguous forest known as the Guaraqueçaba Environmental Protection Area. You'll see Guaraqueçaba promoted on the Nature Conservancy's Web site as an example of corporate partnerships that make "an invaluable contribution to the preservation of the planet's biodiversity."

What you won't see is what the companies get out of the deal: the potentially lucrative rights to the carbon sequestered in the trees.

At tree No. 129, de Brites takes out a tape measure and unspools it around the trunk. We're at one of the 190 carbon dioxide measuring stations — each a group of trees with numbered plaques — scattered around the Guaraqueçaba forest. Documenting the bulk of the reserve's trees is an ongoing enterprise, like tracking tagged whales.

"We measure the biomass of these trees and their carbon sequestration," de Brites says as a ranger picks up the other end of the tape measure and writes down No. 129's stats. It's three feet in diameter and about 45 feet tall. He estimates the carbon it contains at 95 kilograms — just under one-tenth of a ton. At \$10 a ton, the upper end of the range at which carbon offsets trade in the U.S., No. 129 is worth about \$1. Scale up to the two to three tons of carbon per acre that de Brites estimates across the 50,000-acre reserve and the potential payoff, in addition to the public relations value, comes into focus.

The trees in the Cachoeira reserve could never offset even a fraction of GM's total carbon footprint — a single Hummer H2 (which the company started producing the same year it signed on to the Guaraqueçaba project) would require about 50 trees to offset. But the Nature Conservancy and its partners aimed to use the Brazilian reserves as a test case for preserving forests via corporate carbon credits. "The investors wanted to be pioneers in the carbon-sink field," de Brites explains. "They had in mind to start working on this before other companies."

All three companies, as it happens, had aggressively lobbied the Clinton administration against signing the 1997 Kyoto climate accord and stayed mum when President Bush withdrew from it. But they hedged their bets, figuring that the Brazilian forests could be turned into offsets to sell in places (like Europe) where Kyoto's emission limits did apply or could be held in reserve in case the U.S. ever established its own limits.

By the time the companies were ready to begin preparing their credits for sale, however,

the UN had refused to allow "avoided deforestation" projects — those that buy forestland and then promise not to cut the trees — as an offset for industries seeking to buy their way out of emission limits.

Credits generated from projects like Guaraqueçaba were excluded from the international carbon market launched by Kyoto, a market that now accounts for more than \$126 billion in offset transactions. The offsets could be sold, however, in the United States, where the \$700 million domestic carbon offset market is unregulated (and where prices are generally half those of Kyoto-regulated offsets).

Manyu Chang, a forest scientist who is the coordinator for climate policy for the state of Paraná, explained the problem with avoided-deforestation credits to me at her office in the state capital of Curitiba. For starters, she said, trees — living beings, after all — are far less predictable than, say, windmills. They are subject to the vagaries of fires and disease, both of which are increasing due to climate change. Each species absorbs carbon at different rates depending on factors like the altitude, soil and weather. Then there's the problem of "leakage" — when deforestation simply shifts from protected zones to unprotected ones, creating no overall emissions reduction. And finally, the UN did not want to open the door to a perverse sort of extortion: A country could threaten to open its lands to logging unless it was paid to not do so.

More fundamentally, Chang notes, when companies create reserves on already forested lands, their contribution to the fight against climate change is limited: "Do they get the credit for simply enhancing what was there already?" José Miguez, one of Brazil's top climate officials, told me that during the Kyoto talks his government opposed using its forests to enable northern industries to pollute more. "The forest is there," he said. "You can't guarantee it will absorb extra carbon. The General Motors plan gives a false image to the public in the United States. For us, they are pretending to combat climate change."

There is another vexing question inherent in preserving forests: What happens to the people who use the land? Efforts to protect biodiversity in the dwindling wildlands of the world have increasingly run into a discomfiting tension between the impulse toward absolute preservation and the needs of people — many of them indigenous — who have lived sustainably in forestlands for decades or centuries. Such tensions are playing out in the new economics of carbon offsets.

With a preserve designed in large part to safeguard stored carbon, a new set of imperatives comes into play. Turning trees into carbon credits requires knowing how to extrapolate from carbon measurements, like the ones of tree No. 129, to deter-

Continued on page 15

# Furbearers Feel Pain – It's Time State Game Agencies Address the Cruelty of Leghold Traps

By Valerie Stanley, Esq.  
Laurel, Maryland

I had been an animal lawyer for ten years before I became acquainted with the laws — or should I say, the lack of laws — governing how wildlife are managed by state game agencies. As an attorney for and at the Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF), I had spent ten years battling the federal government and the research industry to try to improve the lives of animals held for and used in experimentation. There was a federal law, albeit a weak one — the Animal Welfare Act — that supposedly governed treatment of these animals.

I was not prepared for what I found when I started to tackle the issue of River Otter trapping in Missouri, however. As I started my research, I was pretty certain that since there was no federal law governing how furbearing animals were trapped and killed, there surely had to be some state laws addressing these animals' plight. I was in for a large and unhappy surprise.

Missouri had spent 10 years reintroducing River Otters (*Lutra Canadensis*) to the state. While River Otters were once abundant, over-trapping of them for their pelts caused their near extirpation in that state. Yearly releases of River Otters were greeted with media attention and many persons attending to catch a glimpse of this rarely-spotted creature. After 10 years, the Missouri Department of Conservation decided that there were enough River Otters in the state that they could be added to the list of animals available for harvesting by trapping.

River Otters are particularly endearing creatures; they are members of the weasel family and are known for their playfulness and the joy they exhibit in running and sliding down snow- and mud-covered embankments. The state's decision to allow these animals to be trapped caused an outcry of opposition.

I had naively thought that trapping seasons were set by state game agencies to avoid the killing of mothers during the time that they were raising their young. At trial, a representative of the Missouri Department of Conservation testified that the trapping season was set to ensure the primus of the furs to be taken. In other words, the furs of the furbearers would be thickest during the coldest winter months and this coincides with the trapping season of November 15 to January 31.

What does this mean for the furbearers that are trapped? It means that, once caught and immobilized by the trap, often a leghold or body-gripping trap, they are subjected to exposure to



Photo Courtesy of Tim Knight, Biologist, The Wildlife Gallery  
River Otters are particularly endearing creatures; they are members of the weasel family and are known for their playfulness.

the elements during the coldest period of the year. Once trapped, they suffer unbearable pain and they lie there, essentially, until they die of hypothermia, starvation, loss of blood from trying to release themselves from the trap or until the trapper finds them and kills them.

Virtually the only "law" addressing how trappers act toward furbearers are meaningless "trap check" regulations. Customarily, these regulations require that the trapper check his or her trap every 24 or 36 hours. One does not have to spend too many minutes wondering how one could determine that a trapper had not checked his or her trap within the required time or how such a regulation is enforced — it rarely is.

Anyone who has ever caught their finger or hand in a car door knows what a horribly painful experience that is — this is the same type of pain experienced by tens of thousands of wild animals who are caught every year in traps.

In 1983, George D. Whitney, D.V.M. first published, Leghold Trap Expert Opinions. In this book, Dr. Whitney gathered the opinions of veterinarians, deans of veterinary medical schools, sportsmen, naturalists, scientists and others who unanimously denounced the use of the leghold trap because of its cruelty. Others denounced the leghold trap, as well as other traps, because of the indiscriminate manner in which they operate, catching "non-target" species such as birds, cats and dogs, as well as other furbearers not intended to be trapped.

Persons quoted in this book offered the following opinions on the leghold trap:

- "In my opinion, it is inconceivable that any person with normal cerebration would believe that non-human mammals do not experience pain. Granted the distal portion of a trapped limb may become numb after a while; however, the excruciating pain until this point is reached is

unconscionable. They do indeed feel pain and suffer emotionally."

- "The leghold trap is primitive and barbaric, especially when considering the suffering and agony of death following capture. It must be totally abandoned."

- "It is our considered opinion that devices such as the leghold trap do not belong in a society where people consider themselves civilized in their behavior toward each other and toward animals."

- "The widespread acceptance of the physical and psychological trauma that an animal caught in a leghold trap must endure so that humans may profit from the sale of its fur is one of the many tragic signs that humanity has yet to mature and treat all of God's creatures with respect and compassion."

- "As a young boy I trapped and used leghold traps until one early morning when I found a police dog caught in my line. It took me three hours to release her and yet a lifetime to forget the pain and fear in her eyes. From that day forward I never set another trap."

- "Virtually everyone without a conflict of interest opposes the leghold trap."

People should write to their Representatives in the U.S. Congress requesting their cosponsorship of H.R. 3710, the Refuge from Cruel Traps Act, Representative Nita Lowey's legislation to end use of steel-jaw leghold traps and other inhumane body-gripping traps in all 550 refuges of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Address letters to: The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_, House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515.

Valerie Stanley is an attorney who teaches Animal Law and who specializes in wild horse and burro protection.

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Grassroots Power

Built to Trash: Is 'Heirloom Design' the Cure for Consumption?

By Sharon Bloyd-Peshkin  
In These Times

As the middle-class daughter of a refugee mother and a Depression-era father, I grew up straddling two worlds. My parents could afford much more than they were willing to buy. Most things that broke could be and were repaired. My German grandmother's aphorisms lingered in the air: "Waste not, want not," "A penny saved is a penny earned," "A stitch in time saves nine."



By the time my own children were born, America was flooded with cheap and cheaply-made goods. So while my parents continued working at the sturdy antique desks they inherited from my grandparents and sleeping beneath a hand-crocheted bedspread, my children and their friends became the first and last owners of a seemingly endless supply of plastic toys and particle-board furniture.

I was part of the transitional generation. Building blocks were still made of wood. Comforters were still filled with down. I recall the meticulously-machined pencil sharpeners with "made in West Germany" stamped on their sides that lasted until I lost them. Even the cheap items — the ones "made in Japan" — tended to hold up pretty well.

Now nearly everything is produced in China and made to be discarded. According to a 2008 report by the Economic Policy Institute, the United States imported \$320 billion in Chinese goods in 2007. In that year alone, this country imported \$26.3 billion in apparel and accessories, \$108.5 billion in computers and electronic products and \$15.3 billion in furniture and fixtures from China.

The manufacture, distribution and disposal of an ever-growing mountain of short-lived consumer goods has taken an enormous environmental toll. Annie Leonard's Web site, "The Story of Stuff," which has garnered more than 7,000,000 views in less than two years, has helped spread awareness of that cost far beyond the usual environmentalist circles.

We can't, however, only blame the quantity and quality of Chinese goods for the environmental and other consequences of this transoceanic factory-to-waste stream. For that we can blame the two horsemen of the modern consumer apocalypse: functional obsolescence and fashion obsolescence.

Functional, or planned, obsolescence is the purposeful decision by designers and manufacturers to ensure things don't last so that consumers must buy new ones. Fashion obsolescence is the related decision to offer new features and aesthetic changes to entice consumers to discard their old items in favor of updated and supposedly better ones.



Ironically, product obsolescence was once seen as the remedy for what ailed our country. Elizabeth Cohen, chair of the History Department at Harvard University and author of *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (Vintage, 2003), traces the origins of mass consumption to the period immediately before and after World War II, when a demand-driven economy was seen as the key to our nation's recovery and prosperity.

"In the 1940s and '50s, there was a much closer connection between consumer demand and factories and jobs," Cohen says. "That was a completed circle

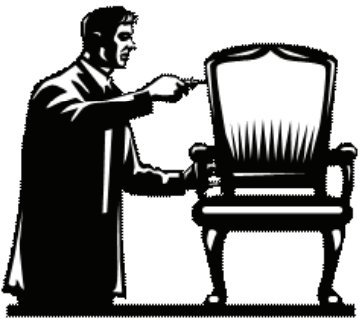
more than it is today. When people were buying things, they were buying things that were made by American workers."

The only way to guarantee continued demand was to ensure that people would keep replacing the things they owned. The literature on planned obsolescence makes frequent reference to statements by industry analysts and strategists of that era. "Our enormously productive economy ... demands that we make consumption our way of life, that we convert the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we seek our spiritual satisfaction, our ego satisfaction, in consumption," retailing analyst Victor Lebow said in 1948. "We need things consumed, burned up, worn out, replaced and discarded at an ever increasing rate."

This applied to male as well as female consumers and to styling lines on cars as well as hemlines on skirts. Allied Stores Corporation's Chairman B. Earl Puckett, speaking to fashion industry leaders in 1950, said, "Basic utility cannot be the foundation of a prosperous apparel industry. We must accelerate obsolescence." And General Motors' design chief Harley Earl said in 1955, "The creation of a desire on the part of millions of car buyers each year to trade in last year's car on a new one is highly important to the automobile industry."

Business people and politicians weren't the only ones pushing this idea, Cohen says. "Labor really bought into this package. Purchasing power was the answer to how people would be employed and have a better life. Consumers would fuel the powers of factories that would provide jobs that would put money in peoples' pockets."

Since then, Cohen argues, we've conflated our concepts of ourselves as good consumers and as good citizens. The idea of consumption as our country's economic engine continues to this day. Indeed, after the attacks of September 11, 2001, President Bush implored Americans to go shopping. And frugal as I am and as green as I try to be, during the recent economic downturn I've found myself feeling that every major purchase I make is a perverse kind of civic duty. The notion of the citizen-as-consumer clearly runs deep.



But things have changed since the 1940s and '50s. "When people were making goods that lasted [back then], they were benefiting from the explosion of global capitalism and the expanding of markets," Cohen says. "Now that we have this global recession, it's problematic. Where do these companies go if they are going to build goods that last? How do they profit if they don't sell new goods? I don't know the answer to this but it's a problem that policy makers, economic planners, labor unions — everybody — has to think about."

**A Radically Obvious Idea**  
Although the greening of the American consumer has fostered some deceptive green-washing campaigns seeking to capitalize on our good intentions, it has also made it possible for us to make better ecological and economic choices.

A host of clever Web sites now enables consumers to calculate their own ecological footprints and offer advice on how to reduce the toll. These include:

- **MyFootprint.org**, where you can find out how many Earths would be necessary if everybody on the planet shared your lifestyle;
- **H2OConserve.org**, where you can tally your water footprint;
- **Wattzon.com**, where you can calculate the energy required to sustain your lifestyle.

Some of these calculations become conceptually complex as they try to measure the energy required for the extraction and transportation of raw materials and the manufacturing, distribu-

"Most things that broke could be and were repaired. My German grandmother's aphorisms lingered in the air: 'Waste not, want not,' 'A penny saved is a penny earned,' 'A stitch in time saves nine.'"

Here's another good one:

Use it up,  
Wear it out,  
Make it do  
Or do without.

tion and ultimate disposal of products. It can all get abstract quite quickly but there's a far simpler message embedded in all that complexity: Buy stuff that lasts.

Saul Griffith, a 2007 MacArthur Fellow, serial inventor and co-founder of WattzOn, refers to this as "Heirloom Design" — a term he introduced during a talk at the February 2009 Greener Gadgets conference in New York.



The best way to lower the quantity of energy required to manufacture and distribute consumer goods, he argues, is to make those products not only durable but repairable and upgradable.

Griffith shares this radically obvious idea with Tim Cooper, head of the Centre for Sustainable Consumption at Sheffield Hallam University in Sheffield, England and editor of the forthcoming book, *Longer Lasting Solutions* (Gower, June 2010). The Centre, which Cooper founded in 1996, conducts research into consumers' behavior as well as the environmental effects of the choices they make.

Cooper argues for "product life extension" — making things more durable, using them properly and ensuring they are maintained, repaired, upgraded and reused. A key obstacle, he says, is the perception (supported by public policies) that higher levels of consumption yield greater happiness. After all, an increase in the Gross National Product is considered healthy for the economy and can only be achieved if consumers increase their spending.

Cooper calls for "slow consumption," the consumer purchasing equivalent of the Slow Food movement (which seeks to build consumer awareness and appreciation of food and its connection to community and the environment). "The issue to address is what kind of economy is going to be sustainable in its wider sense — economically, environmentally and socially," he says. "The current economy is not sustainable. The sheer throughput of energy and materials cannot be continued."

If products were more durable, Cooper argues, some jobs lost due to the decrease in consumption would be offset by the addition of more highly skilled maintenance and repair jobs. And whereas the lost jobs might be overseas, the repair jobs would be local. "We need to look at new business models that move away from manufacturing and selling more and more products," he says. Such models might include "products that last longer but have associated services attached to them so that the supplier guarantees to maintain, repair and upgrade the products for a cer-

tain period."

This might be a hard sell for consumers, however. Cooper cites the results of a survey in which British homeowners were asked what they considered the disadvantages of longer-lasting appliances. Twenty-three percent stated concerns about price, while 30 percent said they feared these products would become "out of date." He found that consumers were often disinclined to have products repaired because of the high cost of labor compared with the low cost of replacement, thanks to the quantity of consumer goods manufactured in countries with low wages and lax environmental regulations.

When I mentioned this conundrum to one of my ecologically-conscious friends, she sheepishly admitted she had just discarded her old DVD player because the repair estimate was higher than the cost of a new one. "The present economic system does give an advantage to the current economy," Cooper says, "and for the consumer, replacement is often the cheaper option."

That would have to change.

Close Encounters of the Durable Kind

Most of us have had an 'Heirloom Design' or product life extension epiphany at one point or another.

Years ago, along with an untold number of other caffeine addicts, I succumbed to the then-ubiquitous ads for Gevalia coffee. Buy a couple pounds of beans and get a free drip coffeemaker.

That became the first of a steady stream of plastic automatic drip coffee machines of various makes that took up residence on our countertop, none of which lived to see their second birthdays. Each time one broke, my husband and I found that the



features available to us had multiplied. We could buy coffeemakers with built-in bean grinders, brew strength controls and programmable timers. We had been cornered by a combination of functional obsolescence and fashion obsolescence.

Then we discovered what any self-respecting Italian coffee drinker knew all along: A \$30 cast aluminum stovetop espresso maker lasts forever. Replace the rubber gasket every couple of years and you'll stay happily caffeinated for life. We bought a used '70s model on eBay several years ago and have been using it every day ever since.

Not everything older is better, of course. Visit your local thrift store and you'll be confronted by an exhibit of the unnecessary and the obsolete. Did anybody ever need a bread machine, an ice cream maker or an Atari game console?

And yet, thrift stores are also the repositories of time-tested items. The garments sold there are Darwinian success stories.

They've survived the wrath of washers and dryers and still have significant life left in them. The dishes may be mismatched but they are dishwasher and hand-washer safe. And I'm convinced that this is where the world's missing teaspoons come to rest. If Heirloom Design has a line of boutiques, this is it.

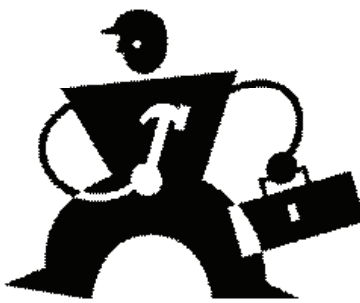
Heirloom Design has its adherents in the design and manufacturing worlds, too.

Patagonia, based in Ventura, California, was founded by avid mountain climbers who began selling clothing to support their barely-profitable, climbing-hard-ware business. From the start, the company was grounded in concern for the environment and was an early adopter of several socially and environmentally responsible corporate policies, from donating a percentage of profits to environmental groups to offering employees on-site daycare.

Patagonia products are designed to last and when they don't hold up, the company stands behind them. Its "iron-clad guarantee" states: "If one of our products does not perform to your satisfaction, return it to the store you bought it from or to Patagonia for a repair, replacement or refund."

Sixteen years ago, my older brother gave me a Patagonia fleece jacket his children had outgrown. He purchased it around 1987 for his oldest daughter, who wore it until she outgrew it and handed it down to her younger sister. When she outgrew it, my daughter wore it and then my son. At some point, the zipper broke so I sent it to Patagonia, which repaired it at no cost. The jacket never wore out. That's Heirloom Design.

The alternative to durability and repair is remanufacturing. After more than two decades in the modular carpet business, Ray Anderson, founder and chair of



Interface Inc. of Lagrange, Georgia, heard a talk by environmentalist Paul Hawken and was inspired to green up his company. In addition to other ecological efforts on the materials and production sides, in 1995 the company introduced an "ever-green lease" arrangement, essentially turning carpet into a service instead of a product. By taking responsibility for retrieval and remanufacturing carpet no longer wanted by its customers, Interface was able to keep used carpet out of the waste stream and reduce the need for new materials.

Unfortunately, the leasing concept proved complicated and expensive. The company eventually gave up on it but continued to aggressively pursue discarded carpet — both its own and that of other companies — so that the materials could be reclaimed and remanufactured.

Andrew King, a visiting fellow in mechanical engineering at the University of Bristol and consultant with the Centre for Remanufacturing and Reuse, notes that remanufacturing is preferable to recycling because it preserves most of a product's embodied energy while bringing it back to its original quality. And it creates jobs.

Here's the kicker: By emphasizing product durability, service and remanufacturing, both of these companies have earned extra dividends in the form of corporate image and customer loyalty.

In Search of Solutions

The question, then, is what would it take to overcome our dependence on cheap goods? Even though obsolescence is no longer a boon for this country's manufacturers, cheap products are essential for consumers who can barely afford to put food on the table. If a durable coffeemaker costs twice as much as a breakable one but lasts four times as long, it's still less attractive to someone who doesn't have the additional cash up front.

Policy would have to play a

key role in reversing this unfortunate check-out counter calculation. Legislation on extended producer responsibility (EPR), requiring manufacturers to account for the full life-cycle of their products from extraction to disposal, could affect consumer culture by making disposable items more expensive and reviving an interest in repair.

Such legislation is complicated, however, by the ongoing pressure to protect industrial production. "Legislation tends to get watered and watered until it gets to be almost a hindrance to these breakthrough changes because in order for Big Business to buy into it, it has to become easy for them," King says. EPR



legislation would only be effective if it created a financial incentive for industry to produce more durable goods and for consumers to favor them.

Consumers are certainly influenced by price but Cooper holds out hope that they also can be persuaded by having more of a connection to the objects they purchase — something referred to as "emotionally durable design." If that sounds too touchy-feely for a coffee machine, consider the difference between a pair of shoes custom-made for you by your local cobbler and an off-the-rack pair from the shoe store. Which would you be more likely to clean, resole and repair?

Part of the solution might also be having more products available without the burden of ownership. Tool rentals, car-sharing and even laundromats diminish the number of products that need to be manufactured and place a premium on durability and longevity. (This can even be done informally. We've shared a lawnmower with one of our neighbors for years.) "We should have much more attachment to certain products but for others we should see that they are services," King says.

Cooper warns, however, that rental can backfire in some areas, such as electronics. "The danger of the rental model with technology is that, as advances are made, people who rent them might upgrade even more quickly than they would at the moment," he says. But even electronics could have a smaller ecological footprint if they could be updated through the use of modular design instead of being casually discarded. "The trick will be to understand what does and what doesn't change," King says.

King sees consumers playing a large role in putting pressure on industry to make the necessary changes. "The real issue is creating the demand," he says. "I work with a large number of large multinationals. When they assign their designers to the challenge — design this for two lives — they rise to the challenge. They just start to think in a different way."

Ultimately, environmental and economic sustainability won't be possible until we become less dependent on consumer spending, which currently comprises 70 percent of the U.S. economy. We can't just keep churning out, buying and disposing of stuff.

"We can diversify the range of goods that are underpinning our economy and providing us with jobs and some prosperity," Cohen says. "It doesn't just have to be commodities for the individual consumer. That would be the best hope."



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## Grassroots Power

# Mass Roundup of Nevada Wild Horses Illegal, Lawsuit Alleges

WASHINGTON, D.C., November 24, 2009 (ENS) — Plans for a massive roundup and removal of more than 2,700 wild horses from public lands in Nevada were challenged today in federal court in Washington, D.C.

In Defense of Animals, an international animal protection organization located in San Rafael, California and ecologist Craig Downer brought the lawsuit against the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to stop the roundup, scheduled to begin in early December and last three months.

If carried out as planned, the roundup would remove 80 percent of the wild horses living in the Calico Complex Herd Management Area in northwestern Nevada. It is by far the largest of any wild horse roundup planned by the BLM for Fiscal Year 2010.

"This suit aims to halt the inherent cruelty of the BLM's wild horse roundups, which traumatize, injure and kill horses, subvert the will of Congress and are entirely illegal," said attorney William Spriggs, a partner at Buchanan, Ingersoll & Rooney and lead counsel on the lawsuit. The firm is representing the plaintiffs on a pro bono basis.

The lawsuit alleges that the BLM plans to utilize helicopters to indiscriminately chase as many as 2,738 of the estimated 3,095 Calico horses into holding pens violates the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act, passed unanimously by Congress in 1971.

The Act designated America's wild horses and burros as "living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the West," specifying they "shall be protected from capture, branding, harassment or death ... [and that] to accomplish this they are to be considered in the area where presently found, as an integral part of the natural system of public lands."

"Americans strongly support protecting wild horses on their natural ranges in the West," Spriggs said. "We hope to stop the cruel roundups and mass stockpiling of wild horses and burros in government holding facilities while the Obama administration crafts a new policy that protects these animals and upholds the will of Congress and the public's desire to preserve this important part of our national heritage."

Since 1971, the BLM has removed over 270,000 horses from their Western

home ranges and taken away nearly 20 million acres of wild horse habitat on public lands that were protected by Congress as being "necessary to sustain an existing herd or herds of wild horses and burros ... and ... is devoted principally ... to their welfare."

This policy is based on what the plaintiffs say is "the unsupportable claim" that Western ranges cannot sustain wild horses and burros.

In its environmental assessment of the Calico Complex roundup, the BLM states that the Appropriate Management Level for wild horses on the 542,100-acre area is established as a range of 572 to 952 wild horses.

"Managing wild horse populations within this number is expected to assure a thriving natural ecological balance and multiple-use relationship within the Calico Mountains Complex. A direct count census was conducted in September 2009 showing a present population estimate of 3055 wild horses," the agency states.

The BLM defines an Appropriate Management Level as "an estimate of wild horses and/or burros the habitat can support while maintaining a thriving natural ecological balance with other resource values and uses."

Downer and In Defense of Animals allege that the main reason for removing these wild horses is to serve another use of the land — that of the livestock industry.

While the BLM intends to remove thousands of horses from the Calico Complex Herd Management Area over its stated concerns about the health of the range, the agency refuses to consider removing any of the more than 2,000 head of cattle currently grazing in the same area, says In Defense of Animals.

The organization points to a report by the Government Accountability Office, the investigative arm of Congress, that concluded, "BLM's decisions on how many wild horses to remove from federal rangelands were not based on direct evidence that wild horse populations exceeded what the range could support and that removals were often not accompanied by reductions in livestock grazing levels or range management to increase the land's capacity."

These animals comprise a tiny fraction of animals grazing the range, the plaintiffs maintain. An estimated eight million head of livestock, but only 37,000



Photos Courtesy of BLM

Top: Calico Mountains wild horse band, June 2009.

Bottom: Wild horses up for adoption enter the Santa Clara County Horsemen's Association arena in San Jose, California.

horses and burros, graze on public lands.

But in its environmental assessment, the BLM claims its position is backed by the state of Nevada and an environmental group. "Consultation between the BLM, State of Nevada Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses and the Sierra Club was conducted in November

2008. These groups toured the area proposed for the gather and jointly concurred that the gather was needed. The conclusion of the group was that the gather was needed to protect the natural resources as well as the wild horses."

Government holding facilities now contain 32,000 wild horses that have been removed from the range and the

BLM intends to round up 12,000 more horses in Fiscal Year 2010.

Downer, author of the book, *Wild Horses: Living Symbols of Freedom*, said in an editorial published by ENS in 2005, "These noble animals have done so much for humanity and for the rest of life over the ages and they should be protected as integral components of the public lands ecosystem here in America, their evolutionary cradle."

He envisions the establishment of true wild horse and burro sanctuaries. "In these areas, livestock permittees should be phased out and natural predators, such as the puma, should be allowed to fulfill their age old ecological role. Natural barriers such as cliffs and mountains should be part of the design of these sanctuaries and, when necessary, artificial boundaries such as horse-proof fences could be installed to keep the wild equids out of harm's way, protecting them from humans, cars, gardens and agricultural areas."

"Adequate water rights must also be established so that the natural springs in these areas are not monopolized by the ranchers or developers. Neither should miners be allowed to contaminate the waters," Downer said.

"These sanctuaries will be magnificent regions of America where the returned native horse has been restored and allowed to enhance the native ecosystem, or life community, while keeping wildfires in check through the consumption of nutrient poor, flammable grasses, herbs and shrubs that equids are digestively equipped to handle," he said.

Downer believes that the public will pay to view these animals, even from a distance. Ecotourism, limited to protect the horses' natural life patterns, would make "cruel helicopter roundups and corralling" a thing of the past, he says.

Ecotourism focused on wild horse viewing would boost the Western economy, said Downer, who lives in Nevada. "No enormous subsidies will be needed here, as is currently the case with the public land's livestock industry," he said, adding, "Then the true intent of the Wild Horse Act will be realized."

Our vegetarian columnist, Valerie Stanley, Esq., consulted on this case. See her front-page story, "Wild Horses in America," in our October issue and her article on leghold traps on page 13 here.

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Read "Protecting the 'People's Park' at Jekyll Island, Georgia" in the October 2009 issue of *The Order of the Earth* and see the news brief on page 3 here.