

The Order of the Earth

News, Views and Musings About Our Planet

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Potomac Valley Region of Maryland: Under the Gun from Proposed Powerline

By Matthew Lindberg-Work
Iowa

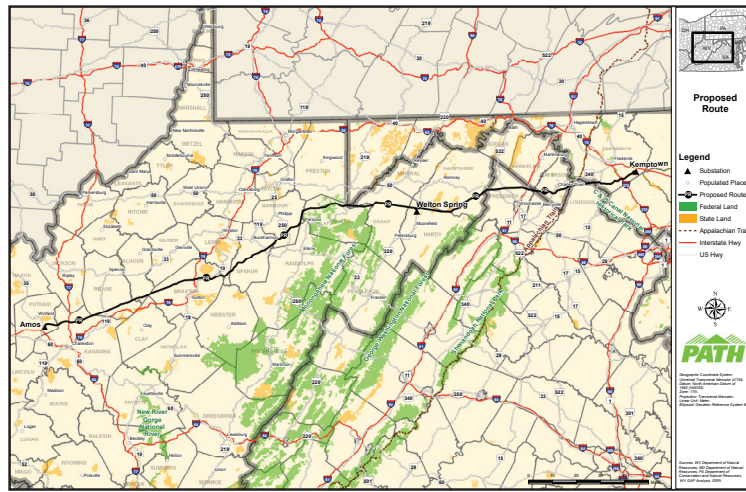
Residents of Frederick County have cause for alarm. A proposed new project, PATH (Potomac Appalachian Transmission High-line), would dominate many acres of land along a swath running through the southern part of the county.

However, all of us, not just Frederick County residents, have a reason to be concerned about the larger impacts of the proposed PATH project.

The agricultural area of central Maryland around the City of Frederick has taken on a new look over the past couple decades. Gradually, since the 1960's, the reach of the Washington D.C. metropolis has extended into the rural areas around Frederick. Despite this activity, many farms and forests remain. These same farms and forests which make this area wonderful would be disrupted and damaged if the PATH transmission line is built.

Just outside of Maryland, many of West Virginia's biggest mountain ranges have coal underneath them. Most of the coal used by Maryland comes from this area of West Virginia but some of it is from farther west: around Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania, parts of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, as well as special, low-sulfur coal from Wyoming and Montana. A lot of this coal is dug up in various ways and sent eastward, both by railroads and by power lines, after it is burned in an electricity generating facility. The grand tragedy of mountaintop removal is well known to many of our readers and is one of the many disadvantages of coal power (visit <http://www.sierraclub.org/coal/>).

In early 2005, a group of power company officials and electric industry regulators came up with an action plan called "Project Mountaineer." This was a plan to organize the construction of new power lines across the Appalachian Mountains in order



Map from www.PathTransmission.com
Massive power lines threaten huge portions of the country. The black east-west line with circles on the map shows the Maryland-West Virginia-Virginia path of destruction.

to bring cheap coal power from the coal-mining areas to the high-priced electricity markets in the D.C.-Baltimore-New Jersey area.

The PATH corridor begins at Amos, West Virginia, next to one of the largest coal-fired power plants in the nation, and continues through an extensive swath of privately-owned hill country before entering the Monongahela National Forest. It passes close to some of the biggest mountains in West Virginia, then crosses the ridge-and-valley area of the Potomac River headwaters and continues into Virginia, crossing the Shenandoah Valley near Winchester.

From just north of Winchester in Virginia, the PATH corridor continues through the historic Shenandoah Valley into West Virginia, crosses the Shenandoah River, climbs the Blue Ridge Mountains and passes over the Appalachian Trail right before entering Virginia. The transmission line corridor would then continue either through or around the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship before crossing another mountain and passing Lovettsville, Virginia. The PATH corridor then crosses the main stem of the Potomac River, leaving Virginia and entering

Frederick County in Maryland near Sugarloaf Mountain and Point of Rocks.

Many families and communities are now facing the imminent threat of having at least some of their land taken away from them to be industrialized and, quite possibly, permanently damaged. This would render it unfit for use as a habitat area for native plants and animals or as productive agricultural and forest land. In Frederick County, for instance, the proposed PATH route passes over the regionally-famous Lilypons water gardens, which is a commercial production facility and showcase for flowers, plants and fish. If the PATH transmission line were built, the new warehouse at Lilypons would be destroyed. There are many more stories like this, all along the entire route. In every case, the real question is, "Does this project need to be built?"

The real problems are 1. The idea that the mountain areas west of the East Coast cities are the best place to build new power plants, and 2. These new power plants need to be coal-fired. Both ideas are flawed. The challenge for us as citizens is to find ways to keep the power companies from

Continued on page 8

The Awakening Part II

*This message is sent to you by the one who makes all things new,
The Trustworthy And True Spirit, The Most High God.*

I, Iona, spoke with The Trustworthy And True Spirit, The Most High God after "The Awakening" appeared in last month's Order of the Earth newspaper. During our recent phone conversation, he dictated this message:

Most High God says, "Just as the wind blows and brushes across your face, you have no idea exactly where that wind came from and, just as the wind leaves your face, you have no idea exactly where that wind is going. And so it is with my spirit.

"No one can know who my spirit is upon, especially not by thoughts or opinions or beliefs — for they are just that. All of these things have one thing in common: none of them has a foundation of Truth.

"For the time is now at hand. I will suggest to you that you open your minds and hearts to the Truth and let anyone who has an ear listen to what I am saying. The head has two ears but the heart also has an ear, H-EAR-T.

"It is possible to recognize me intellectually, but the only sure way to know me without doubt is to feel me in your heart. Hardened hearts and closed minds will be the last to know me.

"Live within the light of my Love and my Truth and you will hear from me again soon."

Your Friend,

The Trustworthy And True Spirit, The Most High God



Just Because

Just because open hearts are so dear
I write this poem from my heart sincere.
Whether you laugh or shed a tear,
it comes not from your heart
but your thoughts that you fear.

I know my coming takes you all by surprise
and it's your heart that I see
when I look in your eyes.
No matter what's in your thoughts,
your heart does not lie
for the Truth in your heart
will never die.

*Written by The Trustworthy And True Spirit,
The Most High God.*

For further information about Most High God, contact Iona at 814-259-3680, ionaconer@gmail.com or 21431 Marlin Circle, Shade Gap, Pennsylvania 17255.

Sued by the Forest

Should Nature Be Able to Take You to Court?

By Rebecca Tuhus-Dubrow
BostonGlobe.com via DailyClimate.org
July 19, 2009, excerpt
Submitted by Doug Davis

Last February, the town of Shapleigh, Maine (population 2,326) passed an unusual ordinance. Like nearby towns, Shapleigh sought to protect its aquifers from the Nestle Corporation, which draws heavily on the region for its Poland Spring bottled water. Some Maine towns had acquiesced, others had protested and one was locked in a protracted legal battle.

Shapleigh tried something new — a move at once humble in its method and audacious in its ambition. At a town meeting, residents voted 114-66 to endow all of the town's natural assets with legal rights: "Natural communities and ecosystems possess inalienable and fundamental rights to exist, flourish and naturally evolve within the Town of Shapleigh." It further decreed that any town resident had "standing" to seek relief for damages caused to nature — permit-

ting, for example, a lawsuit on behalf of a stream.

Shapleigh is one of about a dozen U.S. municipalities to have passed measures declaring that nature itself has rights under the law. And in 2008, when Ecuador adopted a new constitution, it recognized nature's "right to exist, persist, maintain itself and regenerate its own vital cycles, structure, functions and its evolutionary processes."

A campaign is also underway in Europe for a UN Universal Declaration of Planetary Rights, which would attempt to enshrine such principles in international law, following the model of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

These developments are part of a small but growing movement that aims to reorient the relationship between the Earth and the law. Advocates argue that natural objects should not be treated as mere property, vulnerable to exploitation or destruction as owners see fit, but as rights-bearing entities with intrinsic value. The Community

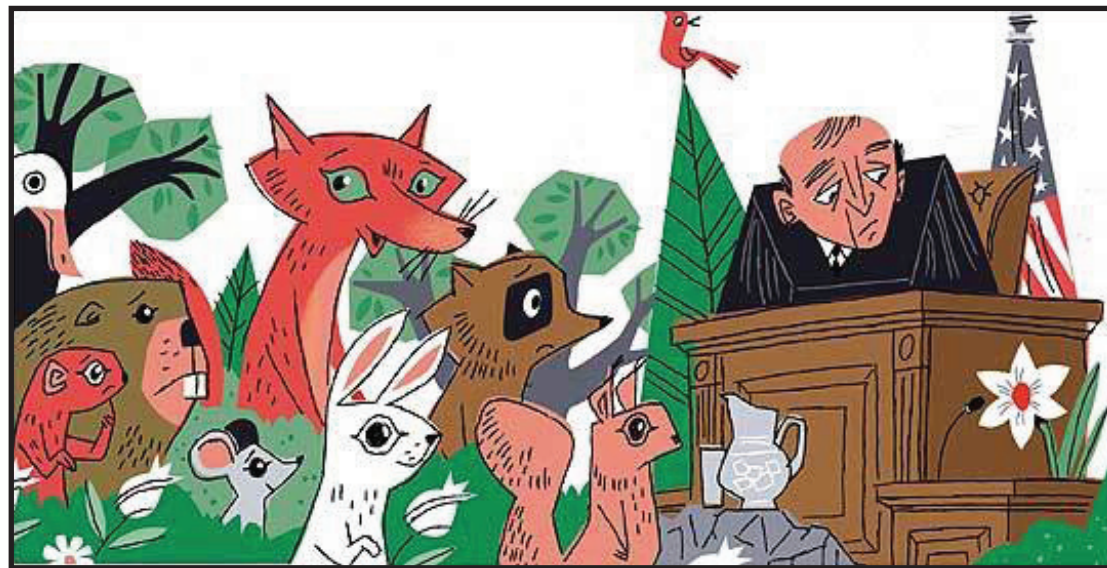


Image (c) Steve Wacksman

Shapleigh residents in Maine voted 114 to 66 at a town meeting to endow all of the town's natural assets with legal rights, declaring that "ecosystems possess inalienable and fundamental rights to exist, flourish and naturally evolve with the Town of Shapleigh."

Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF), a Pennsylvania-based nonprofit, works with communities such as Shapleigh to protect local ecosystems and more towns are considering ordinances in the same vein. The Center for Earth Jurisprudence,

established in 2006, works with two Florida law schools, developing a legal philosophy based on respect for the planet and seeking avenues in current law to advance that goal.

"Someone needs to be able to represent the rivers," says Patri-

cia Siemen, director of the Center for Earth Jurisprudence. "Someone needs to be able to represent the forests."

Of course, the notion will strike skeptics as preposterous. Would we need to worry about offending litigious shrubs? With

a boulder or a swamp as a witness in the proceedings? Critics dismiss the idea as grandstanding that could clog the courts with frivolous cases.

But proponents see it as part of an ongoing progression, an expansion of rights that slowly brings about an increasingly just society. After all, not so long ago, slaves and women were, in some legal regimes, deemed property, just as nature is today. Now we all accept universal human rights. The concept of animal rights has also become familiar, if much more contested. Advocates of this agenda see the extension of rights to ecosystems as the natural next step. And they believe it could spark a profound shift in our relations with nature, leading to more effective environmental protections.

"The language of rights has a great deal of currency. It's the most powerful of our ethical terms," says John Baird Callicott, a philosophy professor at the University of North Texas. "Rights shift the burden of proof

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Taking Shorter Showers Doesn't Cut It

By **Derrick Jensen**
Orion Magazine via Alternet.org

Would any sane person think dumpster diving would have stopped Hitler or that composting would have ended slavery or brought about the eight-hour workday or that chopping wood and carrying water would have gotten people out of Tsarist prisons or that dancing naked around a fire would have helped put in place the Voting Rights Act of 1957 or the Civil Rights Act of 1964? Then why now, with all the world at stake, do so many people retreat into these entirely personal 'solutions'?

Part of the problem is that we've been victims of a campaign of systematic misdirection. Consumer culture and the capitalist mindset have taught us to substitute acts of personal consumption (or enlightenment) for organized political resistance. "An Inconvenient Truth" helped raise consciousness about global warming. But did you notice that all of the solutions presented had to do with personal consumption — changing light bulbs, inflating tires, driving half as much — and had nothing to do with shifting power away from corporations or stopping the growth economy that is destroying the planet?

Even if every person in the United States did everything the movie suggested, U.S. carbon emissions would fall by only 22 percent. Scientific consensus is that emissions must be reduced by at least 75 percent worldwide.

Or let's talk water. We so often hear that the world is running out of water. People are dying from lack of water. Rivers are dewatered from lack of water. Because of this we need to take shorter

showers. See the disconnect?

Because I take showers, I'm responsible for drawing down aquifers? Well, no. More than 90 percent of the water used by humans is used by agriculture and industry. The remaining 10 percent is split between municipalities and actual living, breathing, individual humans. Collectively, municipal golf courses use as much water as municipal human beings. People (both human people and fish people) aren't dying because the world is running out of water. They're dying because the water is being stolen.

Or let's talk energy. Kirkpatrick Sale summarized it well: "For the past 15 years the story has been the same every year: individual consumption — residential, by private car and so on — is never more than about a quarter of all consumption; the vast majority is commercial, industrial, corporate, by agribusiness and government [he forgot military]. So, even if we all took up cycling and wood stoves it would have a negligible impact on energy use, global warming and atmospheric pollution."

Or let's talk waste. In 2005, per-capita municipal waste production (basically everything that's put out at the curb) in the U.S. was about 1,660 pounds.

Let's say you're a die-hard simple-living activist and you reduce this to zero. You recycle everything. You bring cloth bags shopping. You fix your toaster. Your toes poke out of old tennis shoes. You're not done yet, though. Since municipal waste includes not just residential waste but also waste from government offices and businesses, you march to those offices, waste



reduction pamphlets in hand, and convince them to cut down on their waste enough to eliminate your share of it. Uh, I've got some bad news. Municipal waste accounts for only 3 percent of total waste production in the United States.

I want to be clear. I'm not saying we shouldn't live simply. I live reasonably simply myself but I don't pretend that not buying much (or not driving much or not having kids) is a powerful political act or that it's deeply revolutionary. It's not. Personal change doesn't equal social change.

So how, then, and especially with all the world at stake, have we come to accept these utterly insufficient responses? I think part of it is that we're in a double bind. A double bind is where you're given multiple options but no matter what option you choose, you lose, and withdrawal is not an option. At this point, it should be pretty easy to recognize that every action involving the industrial economy is destructive (and we shouldn't pretend that solar photovoltaics, for example, exempt us from

this: they still require mining and transportation infrastructures at every point in the production processes; the same can be said for every other so-called green technology). So if we choose option one — if we avidly participate in the industrial economy — we may in the short term think we win because we may accumulate wealth, the marker of "success" in this culture. But we lose, because in doing so we give up our empathy, our animal humanity. And we really lose because industrial civilization is killing the planet, which means everyone loses.

If we choose the 'alternative' option of living more simply, thus causing less harm but still not stopping the industrial economy from killing the planet, we may in the short term think we win because we get to feel pure and we didn't even have to give up all of our empathy (just enough to justify not stopping the horrors) but once again we really lose because industrial civilization is still killing the planet, which means everyone still loses.

The third option, acting deci-

sively to stop the industrial economy, is very scary for a number of reasons, including but not restricted to the fact that we'd lose some of the luxuries (like electricity) to which we've grown accustomed and the fact that those in power might try to kill us if we seriously impede their ability to exploit the world — none of which alters the fact that it's a better option than a dead planet. Any option is a better option than a dead planet.

Besides being ineffective at causing the sorts of changes necessary to stop this culture from killing the planet, there are at least four other problems with perceiving simple living as a political act (as opposed to living simply because that's what you want to do). The first is that it's predicated on the flawed notion that humans inevitably harm their landbase. Simple living as a political act consists solely of harm reduction, ignoring the fact that humans can help the Earth as well as harm it. We can rehabilitate streams, we can get rid of noxious invasives, we can remove dams, we can disrupt a political system tilted toward the rich as well as an extractive economic system, we can destroy the industrial economy that is destroying the real, physical world.

The second problem — and this is another big one — is that it incorrectly assigns blame to the individual (and most especially to individuals who are particularly powerless) instead of to those who actually wield power in this system and to the system itself. Kirkpatrick Sale again: "The whole individualist what-you-can-do-to-save-the-earth guilt trip is a myth. We, as individuals, are not creating the cri-

ses and we can't solve them."

The third problem is that it accepts capitalism's redefinition of us from citizens to consumers. By accepting this redefinition, we reduce our potential forms of resistance to consuming and not consuming. Citizens have a much wider range of available resistance tactics, including voting, not voting, running for office, pamphleteering, boycotting, organizing, lobbying, protesting and, when a government becomes destructive of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, we have the right to alter or abolish it.

The fourth problem is that the endpoint of the logic behind simple living as a political act is suicide. If every act within an industrial economy is destructive, and if we want to stop this destruction, and if we are unwilling (or unable) to question (much less destroy) the intellectual, moral, economic and physical infrastructures that cause every act within an industrial economy to be destructive, then we can easily come to believe that we will cause the least destruction possible if we are dead.

The good news is that there are other options. We can follow the examples of brave activists who lived through the difficult times I mentioned — Nazi Germany, Tsarist Russia, antebellum United States — who did far more than manifest a form of moral purity; they actively opposed the injustices that surrounded them.

We can follow the example of those who remembered that the role of an activist is not to navigate systems of oppressive power with as much integrity as possible but rather to confront and take down those systems.

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21431 Marlin Circle, Shade Gap, Pennsylvania 17255
www.theorderoftheearth.com
ionaconner@gmail.com; 814-259-3680

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Note from the Editor: As we grow, we are receiving information from many different types of people. I am pleased about that because it was never my intention to simply be "preaching to the choir." Our regular readers are going to meet in these pages people who are different from themselves and I think that is good.

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The Order of the Earth News, Views and Musings About Our Planet

Our Goal: To create a hugely successful newspaper that will report the story of people around the world working to protect their land bases, strengthen local communities and achieve 90% greenhouse gas reductions by 2030.

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 sunrise at Bay Head, New Jersey on Mothers' Day.

**DEADLINE FOR ALL SUBMISSIONS:
 10TH OF THE PREVIOUS MONTH**

First Amendment to the U. S. Constitution: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people to peaceably assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

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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

People Work to Protect Wolves

Submitted by Doug Davis
7/30/09 with this note:
Great news for wolves, finally!

Today, Congressman George Miller (CA) will re-introduce the Protect America's Wildlife (PAW) Act — federal legislation to end Alaska's barbaric aerial wolf-killing programs and prevent the slaughter from spreading to other states. And, for the first time ever, the bill will also be introduced in the U.S. Senate by Senator Dianne Feinstein (CA), joined by Senator Ben Cardin (MD).

Just three days ago, former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin blasted Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund's efforts to save wolves in her resignation speech.

With your help, we've put aerial gunning in the national spotlight and built momentum to stop it. Now we need your support to seize this moment and fight to end these awful wolf-killing programs . . .

Thanks to your efforts, the PAW Act already has more than 90 original cosponsors in the House of Representatives! To educate Members of Congress and their staff, this week we're launching a powerful new ad using a photograph from the March aerial wolf slaughter of 84 wolves near the Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve — gruesome evidence of the brutality of Alaska's aerial wolf-killing programs.

To help build support for the PAW Act and save the lives of wolves, we've already booked our new ad to run in *Roll Call*, one of Capitol Hill's most widely read publications July 30th.

We know that our ads — and your support to help us place them — are effective. In a Monday post on the Politico blog, writer Ben Smith said this:



Photo U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains.

"Never before has an 'ad-buy' as small . . . as the Defenders of Wildlife's attack on Palin's wolf hunting rules, gotten so far under an executive's skin."

With the support of people like you, we're making the plight of Alaska's wolves known far and wide. Palin's criticism of our efforts to stop the killing was noted in major media outlets nationwide.

Our new ad features one of dozens of horrifying photographs that Alaska's state officials don't want Congress to see. The graphic photo depicts the terrible aftermath of majestic wolves killed by aerial gunners employed by the State of Alaska and callously slung over the struts of an airplane.

This disturbing image is just some of the evidence we're gathering on Sarah Palin's (and her Board of Game's) wolf-killing frenzy. Palin is now gone but her hand-picked Board of Game remains and is expanding the use of airplanes, helicopters, poison

and snares to murder wolf families. Two wolf pups were just gassed to death and the others left to starve earlier this summer.

Your donation will help us get the word out about the unprecedented carnage to more news outlets, to the American people, to Alaska's new governor, Sean Parnell, and to your Senators and Representative.

With Palin gone, we're even more determined to end cruel aerial gunning once and for all.

This is our chance. Please stand with us.

With Gratitude,
Roger Schlickelsen, President
Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund

Update: Fifteen more representatives signed on as cosponsors, bringing the cosponsor count to an impressive 106 representatives in the House. And Senator Sheldon Cardin (RI) joined Senators Dianne Cardin (CA) and Ben Cardin (MD) as Senate cosponsors of the PAW Act.

Wolf Talks To Humans

(From Doug Davis) Hi Iona,

I received a message from Wolf this afternoon. (Doug Davis's spirit name is Talking Hawk.)

Message from Wolf to Talking Hawk and the Humans . . .

"Anger! We are angry. We wish to live our lives in peace and in the way we have always lived since the beginning. It is very difficult for us to be here right now. We are losing our homes and our families and our ways. We do not know where to go or what to do. We love planet Gaia . . . it is our ancestral home where we began many years ago. It was a primal place, so wild and free. We could play out our lives in the way that we needed. We wish to hide as much as we can.

"Thank you for sharing with us and helping to protect us. We know there are many like you. Help us to build a grid of safety and protection. Ask as many humans as would agree with you to come together, in thought and prayer, and place around us a veil of protection and invisibility. Thank you for being there with us in your thoughts.

"Leave us to be wild and free. You can learn from us. You fear us. You fear our wildness and freedom. It is so lacking in your own lives. You don't want the truth or to know what you are missing and who you really are. It angers you to see us living in our truth. You cannot bear to look at yourselves and to see what you've become. We love our lives and wish to be in peace and wildness. You may do the same. We wish peace for you. Thank you."

'The Cove:' Japan Has a Dark Secret It Hopes the World Will Never See

By Tara Lohan
AlterNet.org, August 6, 2009

Ric O'Barry almost looks crazy. He is driving a car, with a mask over his mouth, crouching low in his seat, hoping not to be recognized.

If the authorities catch him, there's no telling what will happen to him. He's cruising through the misty streets of Taiji, Japan, a small town with a really big secret, he says. And it's a secret that the town's fishermen want to hide from the rest of the world at all costs.

This is how the documentary, "The Cove," opens. And it turns out O'Barry is not crazy, he's on a mission — probably one of the most important in the history of conservation. And it's personal.

He used to be a world-famous dolphin trainer. He captured and trained the five dolphins who played Flipper in the hit TV show of the same name. The show's popularity sparked a dolphin craze that has continued since the 1960s and has grown into a \$2 billion industry in the U.S. alone.

But while places like Sea World might be raking in the cash, O'Barry has spent the last 35 years trying to end dolphin captivity — having had a change



of heart after the tragic suicide of one of the main dolphins in Flipper. (If you want to know how a dolphin can commit suicide, you'll have to see "The Cove.")

It turns out these intelligent and charismatic creatures don't do well in captivity — half of all captive dolphins die within two years. They're used to swimming 40 miles a day, diving hundreds of feet deep and hanging out with their close-knit pod. Apparently jumping through hoops and swimming with tourists in a pool just isn't an adequate substitute.

But that hasn't stopped the plethora of marine theme parks and the horrific industry that has grown to support it. It has, however, inspired O'Barry to expose some of the worst of it, which is why he's hiding out in Taiji.

In this quaint fishing village, each fall, tens of thousands of migrating dolphins are captured, some of which are sold into captivity (for up to \$150,000 a piece) and the rest are taken to a secret cove and slaughtered (to be sold for their meat — sometimes falsely described as whale meat).

O'Barry wants the world to see what's happening in Taiji and that means staying out of reach of the authorities and the local fishermen, who would very much like him arrested, deported, or worse. It also means trying to get into the secret cove with a camera.

The film kicks off with O'Barry joining forces with filmmaker Louis Psihoyos and the Ocean Preservation Society to put together a dream team

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Greenpeace Announces Forest Victory with Kleenex Kimberley-Clark

(August 4, 2009 email from Greenpeace) I'm writing today with exciting news — news I've been waiting more than four years to share with you! You can read more at www.greenpeace.org/kleercut.

Since 2004, Greenpeace and countless activists like you have asked Kimberly-Clark to save the Boreal Forest. Today, the company that makes Kleenex, Scott and Cottonelle announced a new policy that places it among the industry leaders in sustainability.

That's right, today we're announcing the successful end of our Kleercut campaign!

This is a tremendous victory for ancient forests, including the North American Boreal, and it would not have been possible without dedicated activists like you. So take a minute to congratulate yourself and your fellow activists. Just as importantly, please take a minute to thank Kimberly-Clark for its new policy that helps protect ancient forests!

Kimberly-Clark has set a goal of obtaining 100 percent of the wood fiber for its products — including its flagship brand, Kleenex — from environmentally responsible sources. By the end of 2011, the company will no longer use any pulp from the Boreal Forest unless it is Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-certified. The policy also prevents the company from cutting endangered forests and increases the company's use of FSC-certified pulp and recycled fiber globally.

With this announcement, Kimberly-Clark, the largest tissue company in the world, becomes a sustainability leader. Now it's time for Georgia-Pacific and Procter & Gamble, Kimberly-Clark's main competitors, to create their own policies to protect ancient forests.

Your friend,
Lindsey Allen (One Very Happy) Forest Campaigner with Greenpeace

Coal Group Reveals Forged Lobbying Letters

By David A. Fahrenthold
Washington Post, via DailyClimate.org

August 5, 2009 — A total of 12 forged letters — all appearing to come from local groups unhappy with a climate-change bill — were sent to three congressional offices this summer by a Washington lobbying firm, according to the pro-coal group for which the firm was working.

That is six more fraudulent letters than were previously known to have been sent by the firm, Bonner and Associates.

The newly-revealed letters were sent to Reps. Chris Carney (D-PA) and Kathy Dahlkemper (D-PA), according to the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity, the trade group that hired Bonner and Associates.

On Friday, a spokeswoman for Rep. Tom Perriello (D-VA) said his office had received six fake letters, purporting to be from a Latino social-services group and NAACP members in his district.

Bonner and Associates bills itself as one of Washington's premier firms for grassroots lobbying, which often involves eliciting phone calls, letters or emails from constituents or groups in a particular congressional district.

On Tuesday, the firm was denounced by both the pro-coal group, whose president said it was outraged, and by the Hawthorn Group, an Alexandria-based public affairs firm

that hired Bonner as a subcontractor in June.

Harvey Valentine, a spokesman for the Hawthorn Group, said it had been told that Bonner officials would check all letters before they were sent to Capitol Hill.

"It turns out that the quality-control mechanisms took place, but after [the letters] went to the Hill," Valentine said. "We were furious about this." He said Hawthorn had fired Bonner and Associates and had not yet paid it for its work.

Jack Bonner, the founder of Bonner and Associates, denied that his firm was fired and said it finished its work under the contract. In an email Tuesday, he said that the letters were written by a "temporary employee who worked for us for seven days [who] acted alone" and that "it was through our quality control effort that we found the problem and fired the employee on the same day we discovered it."

This saga of modern Washington — in which an "American coalition" claiming 200,000 supporters still relies on a subcontractor to gin up favorable letters — has set off by debate in the House over the climate bill.

The House legislation, since adopted, called for a reduction in U.S. greenhouse gas emissions but the pro-coal group was worried this would drive the price of electric power too high. It wanted Congress,

among other things, to impose price limits. And it wanted other people to say so, too.

"Hawthorn was charged to find — could we go out and find some of these community groups" that might also object to higher electric prices, said Joe Lucas, a spokesman for the pro-coal group.

On the coal group's behalf, Hawthorn hired Bonner and Associates. In all, the coal group estimated, Bonner and Associates was responsible for 46 or 47 letters that were sent to Congress.

On Monday, officials at the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity said they had sought to speak with all the groups whose names were fraudulently used, as well as all three congressional offices that received the letters. The House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming has said it would investigate the letters.

The climate bill approved by the House did not include the price guarantee the pro-coal group had sought. Legislation is still pending in the Senate. In the House, Perriello voted for the bill. Dahlkemper and Carney voted against it.

A spokesman for Carney did not respond to calls for comment by Tuesday afternoon. A spokesman for Dahlkemper said the letters "did not have undue influence" on her decision.

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UPDATES



Photo © David Dudenhofer

Ashanika Indians shut down the airport at Atalaya and took over oil company boats for two weeks until the Peruvian Navy broke up the protest, without casualties in April 2009. Escalation of the protest drew out the military and by June 34 protesters were dead and 200 people were injured from both sides. See August OE page 3.

Persecution of Indigenous Leaders Continues in Peru

Police Prepare to Arrest Indigenous Leader Shot 8 Times During Protest on His Release From Hospital

AmazonWatch.org
July 31, 2009 Press Release

UN Special Rapporteur report calls for immediate review of legal charges against indigenous leaders

Lima, Peru (July 31, 2009) — San Francisco-based Amazon Watch is among dozens of human rights organizations calling on the Peruvian government to drop legal charges against Santiago Manuin Valera, the highly revered Awajun indigenous leader currently recovering from injuries suffered during the attack on protesters by Peruvian Police on June 5th. Manuin, who was unarmed, was shot eight times as he approached Peruvian special police, attempting to negotiate a peaceful resolution to end the police attack on the blockade in Bagua in the Amazonas Province.

Currently, a squadron of police officers is standing by to arrest Manuin upon his discharge from a Chiclayo hospital where he has been undergoing surgery and rehabilitation. The government of Peruvian President Alan García has accused Manuin of being responsible for the two days of violence that ensued during the June 5th police attack and resulted in 34 deaths and over 200 injuries.

Francisco Soberón, Executive Director of the Peruvian human rights organization APRODEH, called the criminal charges politically motivated. "We have no doubt that behind Santiago Manuin's capture order there are pressures that don't have to do with legal considerations but that follow the political logic of the criminalization of social protest in Peru."

Five other indigenous leaders have been

forced into exile or hiding after warrants were issued for their arrest on the charge of being "apologists for terrorism" and planning to overthrow the state for their appearance in a press conference in May.

The government is pursuing over a dozen legal proceedings against regional and national leaders. Most of these leaders were not in Bagua on July 5th, however the government continues to hold them materially and intellectually responsible for the events that day. Police have raided indigenous organization offices and communities and many leaders live in fear of imminent arrest. Investigations have focused exclusively on indigenous people and not the police violence that resulted in over 200 people being hospitalized after the government's violent clampdown on the protests.

"There must be an impartial and independent investigation into the June 5th violence in order to create a climate of reconciliation and peace with indigenous people. The intimidation and politically-motivated persecution of indigenous leaders must stop," said Atossa Soltani, Executive Director of Amazon Watch. "The government cannot engage in meaningful dialogue with indigenous communities to resolve conflict if their elected leaders are in exile, hiding or jail."

UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples, James Anaya, recently made public his final report on the Bagua assault. In his report, Anaya echoes the concerns of indigenous communities and civil society groups. The report highlights the immediate need for an impartial investigation, review of charges against indigenous leaders including Santiago Manuin, AIDSESEP President Alberto Pizango and the creation of a framework law on indigenous community consultation.

James Anaya's full report on the Bagua, Peru violence can be read here: <http://www.onu.org.pe/upload/documentos/Informe-Relator-Anaya-2009.pdf>.



Artwork by Earthbridge Artist.

Remember — people are not the only ones living in the world's rainforests.

The War Over Eco-Certified Wood

Vast Forests Are at Stake: What Kind of Lumber Is Really 'Nature Friendly?'

By Christopher Pollon
The Tyee, June 15, 2009 via Alternet.org

A contented-looking man stands in front of a posh house in a bathrobe, gripping a morning newspaper and coffee. The caption for this full-page *New Yorker* ad identifies him as "the new environmentalist."

"These days, a growing number of consumers want the good life but not at the expense of the environment," reads the copy. "So when they shop for everything from newspapers to building materials, they look for SFI-certified wood and paper products."

The year was 2007 and this ad was among the first shots fired in a high-stakes PR war that continues to play out across North America today. The combatants are the two largest rival forestry certification, non-profit organizations in the world: the industry-created Sustainable-Forestry Initiative (SFI) and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), which was conceived by a coalition of North American environmental activists.

At stake, then and now, is a multi-billion dollar international market for eco-certified wood products which rewards environmentally-responsible forestry companies with improved access to retail and business-to-business customers.

What both certification programs have in common is that their respective logos — appearing on books and 2 x 4s and everything between — carry a promise of "sustainability;" both indicate that eco-conscious buyers can relax and know they are buying a product that they can feel good about.

What the rivals do not share is a common vision of what sustainability looks like on the forest floor and whether the differences between certification standards matter at all.

"We don't believe that consumers are sophisticated enough to have learned at this point what FSC stands for versus what SFI stands for," says Kathy Abusow, President and CEO of SFI, Inc. "Most of the large customers . . . are feeling good about recognizing and awarding that ten percent of the global forest base that is certified rather than expending energy on trying to decide who is the A+ and A- student."

Battle for Hearts, Minds and Markets

The current certification battle started ramping up in 1999, the year Home Depot announced it would give "preferential treatment" to FSC-certified wood — a move motivated at least in part by pressure from the environmental groups that created the FSC.

Faced with losing access to the biggest North American markets, the SFI intensified promotional efforts, distancing itself from its parent trade group the American Forestry and Paper Association (AF&PA), even though as late as 2007, the newly "independent" charity was still receiving unspecified "contract services" from this trade group (as disclosed in its tax return).

During this same year, SFI hired Canadian forestry certification expert Abusow as President and CEO and, with her, the U.S. public relations firm of Porter Novelli, which was paid \$1.8 in fiscal 2007 to rebrand and rebuild the SFI from the ground up.

"I am committed to growing SFI's recognition and importance among conservation groups, buyers, forest managers, industry and policy makers," said Abusow of her plans for SFI at the time.

SFI's total 2007 revenue grew to over 5.5 million from \$624,890 in 2006 and just \$344,155 in 2002. With this funding — of which \$3.2 million came from membership dues from member forestry companies — the SFI waged a new PR campaign in North America including billboards, full-page consumer magazine and newspaper ads and a growing presence at influential printing and building trade shows.

What's the difference? SFI vs. FSC



FSC seal of approval: tougher standards.

In 2008, forestry company Tembec Inc. was in the unique position of "upgrading" a large swath of mixed aspen and cottonwood near Chetwynd, British Columbia (B.C., Canada) from SFI to FSC, shedding light on some of the differences between the competing standards.

"Generally speaking, if you follow the B.C. provincial regulations, you're pretty darn close to meeting SFI," says Doug Braybrook, Tembec's Fibre Procurement Superintendent for the Chetwynd area.

The company was required under FSC to conduct much broader consultations to create forestry management plans, including local First Nations, outfitters and trappers. Braybrook says the company had to identify areas of "High Conservation Value Forest," which were mapped with the input of local stakeholders; once identified, habitat for caribou, bull trout, rare birds and plants had to be managed to protect the wildlife.

More intact forest was required on the edges of streams, lakes and wetlands and Tembec performed a mandatory "pre-industrial condition assessment" — which considered what their forests looked like prior to industrial logging and how it could be managed to more resemble that state.

"FSC is definitely the more onerous standard to get and maintain," says Chris Stagg, the Chief Forester for Tembec Western Canada, who was involved in the Chetwynd-area FSC process and today oversees nearly a million hectares of FSC-certified forests in East Kootenay. "It's the most expensive for sure, by a fairly wide margin." (Stagg says this cost and effort does not translate directly into higher returns on Tembec's wood and pulp products — but the benefit is still significant. "For getting access to the best customers, the Home Depots and Lowes for example, FSC certification really does make you first out the door," he says. "When times are tough and people are not calling others, they are still calling us.")

PR Blitz is Working

SFI's latest ad campaign launched this year in Canada focuses not on its rival FSC but on the 90 percent of world forests with no certification at all.

"We don't spend any of our effort trying to talk about FSC versus SFI," says Abusow. "We talk about what SFI does, why you can feel good being a part of it and growing it."

This "better than nothing" approach is paying off: in April 2008, international juice-maker Tropicana Products, Inc. announced that the paperboard used to make its juice cartons had received certification to

the SFI fibre-sourcing standard. During the same month, 3M committed to earning SFI's Chain-of-Custody certification for all Post-it-Notes made and sold in the US.

SFI is currently waiting to hear this year whether it will be included in the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Building Rating System, which currently recognizes only FSC-certified building products.

On the consumer front, SFI scored a partial victory last November when RONA adopted an "inclusive approach" for certified wood procurement — which means they will carry SFI-certified products, although FSC-certified wood will be given "preference" to "better meet RONA's requirements in terms of relationships with indigenous communities and the conservation of biodiversity."

SFI got the last word less than two months later, however, when they head-hunted RONA's National Director of Forest Products, who now serves as their National Director, Market Access (Canada).

Enviros Fighting Against FSI

While SFI blurs the differences between certification programs, environmentalists are aggressively exposing the differences, painting the SFI, in the words of one campaigner, as "a phony green label on standard industry practices."

U.S.-based groups like the Rainforest Action Network (RAN) and the Sierra Club have banded together under the Alliance for Credible Forest Certification, highlighting destructive forestry practices on SFI-forested lands such as high-elevation clear-cutting in Washington State's Chehalis River drainage in 2007.

They also point to a 2007 case involving the same company, where a federal court in Seattle imposed an injunction to stop logging in SFI-certified spotted owl habitat.

'Greenwash' and 'Background Noise'

"We consider SFI to be forest greenwash," says Jennifer Krill, Program Director at San Francisco's RAN, a founding member of the FSC. "The marketplace cannot trust the SFI to deliver the environmental and social standards that customers are demanding."

Krill says that SFI-labelled products can come from old growth forests, from huge clear cuts and from tree plantations that were formerly ecologically-diverse forest — and all the while unwitting consumers and businesses buy the wood in an effort to be sustainable.

Kathy Abusow refers to the campaign of groups like RAN and its partners as "background noise," and objects to referring to them as environmental groups. "I would refer to them as campaigning groups because environmental groups have scientists and big institutional structures, [like] the conservation groups we work with all the time."

But regardless of whether a real environmentalist is a battle-hardened campaigner or happy suburban yuppie portrayed in a *New Yorker* ad — at least one conservation group on the SFI Board has moved to the FSC environmental chamber since 2007.

"We tried to improve things during that time, although we would have liked to see more improvement," says Fran Price, Director of Certification Programs for the U.S.-based Nature Conservancy, which sat on the SFI board between 2001 and 2007. "In terms of global players aligned with our vision, we're [now] using FSC as a conservation tool."

Christopher Pollon is a Tyee contributing editor who has been published in a wide range of newspapers and magazines.

To look is one thing.
To see what you look at is another.
To understand what you see is a third.
To learn from what you understand is still something else.
But to act on what you learn is all that really matters!

Submitted by Sunny War Eagle, Earthbridge

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Where Do Rainforest People and Forests Stand in Climate Talks?

Progress on Rights in REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation)

The Rainforest Foundation UK
E-news August 2009 Press Release

In March and June, Rainforest Foundation United Kingdom (RFUK) and partners from throughout the developing world took part in the latest United Nations negotiations on climate change to keep the pressure on politicians to include rainforests and forest peoples in a new deal on global warming. Due largely to RFUK's efforts, it's now a common sight to see civil society representatives from tropical forest countries in the halls of the international climate negotiations. Their presence and continued pressure is beginning to pay off. Governments' language on indigenous peoples has improved since the December 2008 international climate conference, at which the U.S., Canada, New Zealand and Australia blocked the inclusion of reference to indigenous peoples and explicit mention of rights. Now, there is reference to the UN



Photo courtesy of Rainforest Foundation UK
This was once a rainforest.

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the draft text of a climate agreement under debate, although there remain concerns that the language is too weak.

More and more countries are making statements about the role of indigenous peoples and local communities in efforts to stop rainforest destruction as a way to fight climate change; however, they continue to emphasize participation and

consultation, rather than rights and consent. More work remains to be done.

More Talk, but No More Answers

Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) seems to occupy ever-more space in the global climate negotiations, with increasing attention being paid to forests by governments, civil society and the press. However,

despite the growing hours of discussion and the pages of text, countries' views continue to diverge around the most fundamental issues regarding REDD: what it should include (just protection of standing forests or tree plantations and agriculture too); whether or not greenhouse gas emissions prevented through rainforest protection should be sold to developed countries as carbon credits to "offset" their continued pollution; how to ensure that reductions in forest-related emissions are real and lasting and how to determine whether certain uses of the forest are "sustainable."

Industry Eyes on the REDD Prize

RFUK and its Congo Basin partners, who know first-hand the adverse impacts of industrial logging on forests and forest communities, are increasingly concerned about the timber industry's efforts to benefit from REDD. Instead of talking about protecting forests, negotiators are now talking more about managing forests and instead of talking about payments for conservation, they are talking about paying companies to cut down slightly fewer trees than they might otherwise have done.

This reorientation is a dangerous distraction and could deflect much-needed efforts and funds away from supporting the forest communities who live in and depend on their forests and need to play a continued stewardship role.

Historical Responsibility and Current Recklessness

The most recent session of the UN climate negotiations saw a refocusing of the debate around industrialized countries' historical responsibility for the problem (and costs) of climate change. More and more developing countries have stated that industrialized countries should not be allowed to pay for forest protection instead of reducing their own emissions; they must do both. Developed countries must cover the costs of forest protection, many argue, because they are responsible for the current climate crisis but they must at the same time drastically reduce emissions at home, in their own territories.

While governments were gathered in Germany negotiating the content of a climate agreement, a scandal broke in Papua New Guinea about companies signing deals with the government to purchase forest

carbon credits that don't actually exist and without the knowledge, let alone consent, of the forest owners and residents.

At the same time, reports were coming out of Peru about the government's violent crackdown on indigenous peoples who were protesting the expansion of infrastructure and mining activities in the Peruvian rainforest where they live.

These incidents provided a stark reminder of the risks of failing to respect forest communities' rights and allowing forests to be traded — as in the international carbon market — which is set to become one of the largest, most opaque and poorly regulated global commodity markets.

Ignoring peoples' rights and excluding them from processes that affect their lands and livelihoods can lead to serious social conflict and failed policies. As the world's leaders head down the road to Copenhagen, where they hope to sign a new climate agreement, they must heed the lessons emerging from forest countries like Papua New Guinea and Peru. Ignoring these "REDD-flags" could have dire consequences for the lives of those living in the forest and for the fight against climate change.

Barcoding Trees to Save Forests

By Peter Griffiths
Reuters via DailyClimate.org

LONDON, England (July 12, 2009) — Deep in the world's tropical rainforests, workers are hammering thousands of barcodes into hardwood trees to help in the fight against illegal logging, corruption and global warming.

The plastic tags, like those on supermarket groceries, have been nailed to a million trees across Africa, southeast Asia and South America to help countries keep track of timber reserves.

Helveta, the British company behind the technology, says the barcodes will help firms comply with tough laws on importing sustainable timber into the United States and Europe.

They could also play a role in fighting deforestation, which accounts for about a fifth of global emissions of planet-warming carbon dioxide. The issue will feature in global climate talks in Copenhagen in December.

"We bring transparency and visibility where historically that has probably been limited at best," Patrick Newton, Helveta's chief executive officer, told Reuters.

The company, which has just secured another \$4.88 million in funding from investors, has put barcodes on trees across the world, including in Bolivia, Ghana, Indonesia, Liberia, Malaysia and Peru.

The computerized system is less prone to fraud than traditional paper records, carries live data and can help governments to collect more timber taxes, Newton said.

While the barcodes can't prevent criminals from chopping down trees, the system makes it hard for them to process, sell or export the wood, Newton said.

Officials in remote forests use handheld computers to scan the tags from the moment a tree is felled to its processing and export and the live data is put onto Helveta's secure database.



Photo by Helveta

An employee uses a robust handheld computer to scan a barcode on a tree in Cameroon in this undated handout photo.

Every tree above a certain size in a plantation is given an individual barcode. When a tree is cut down, another barcode is attached to the stump and more tags are nailed to the processed wood to allow customs officials to audit exports at the docks.

Government officials and companies can track individual trees through the supply chain and view computerized maps of forests on the database. Timber leaving a forest or factory without tags will immediately be viewed as illegal, Newton said.

Double Impact

Illegal logging costs timber-producing countries \$10 billion a year in stolen wood, lost taxes and lower prices for legally-sourced products, the World Bank estimates.

It also takes an environmental toll. Damage to forests raises the risk of fires, flooding and damage to plants and trees that act as a "sink" to soak up carbon dioxide, Britain's Meteorological Office said in a report last year.

Helveta hopes its technology could help countries taking part in a proposed scheme to protect the world's forests as part of the fight against global warming. That is likely to form part of any global climate deal agreed to in Copenhagen in December.

The scheme, called Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD), aims to increase forest cover to soak up carbon dioxide emissions blamed for rising seas, extreme weather and melting glaciers.

It may include a market-based element where traders buy and sell REDD credits from forestry projects that lock away carbon.

However, trading based on the number of trees in a forest needs close auditing if the market is to work, Helveta says.

"The problem with forests is that it is very hard to validate what is truly out there," Newton said. "If you are trying to back that asset . . . you need to be able to make sure that what you think is securitized is really there."



Photo Courtesy of Glen Barry, www.rainforestportal.org

"Sustainable Forest Management," Papua New Guinea Style: Soon to be subsidized by UN carbon markets? This photo is part of a tireless campaign being waged by Glen Barry at Ecological Internet and Rainforest Portal. Please check his Web sites to get more information and be included in action alerts.

Priest Stands Up Against BigAg and Deforestation

By Polly Cook
The Ecologist, June 19, 2009 (excerpt)

Father Edilberto Sena arrives at Rural Radio station and takes up his position behind the microphone. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out his script for today's show. One question is scribbled on it for the daily debate: "Why is this happening?"

Edilberto is a Roman Catholic priest and a follower of Liberation Theology — meaning not only does he believe in teaching the word of God but he believes that he has an absolute obligation to fight poverty and bring justice to the poor. So he takes up the microphone each week,

not to recite afternoon prayers to his 200,000 listeners, but to tell the people of Santarem, Northern Brazil exactly why they are finding it so hard to grow crops and why the rainforest that once surrounded their city resembles a burnt desert.

Edilberto isn't just referring to climate change. The Amazon rainforest is being torn down by agribusiness, which uses the land to farm soya and export to European livestock farmers, feeding the growing demand for cheap meat. For ten years Father Edilberto has stood at the heart of Santarem's campaign against the world's leader in this trade, Cargill. "In Santarem people started to say, "Why is it

so much hotter?" I tell people, "This is not God's doing; this is happening because of the destruction of the rainforest."

Cargill has U.S. revenues of over \$63 billion each year and is thought to be the largest privately-owned firm in the world. It arrived in Santarem in 1999 with plans to expand the town's port to make it big enough to take advantage of the fast, cheap route from Northern Brazil to Europe. The company claimed it wanted to bring development and prosperity to the state of Para . . . The arrival of Cargill seems to have encouraged increasing numbers of locals to make a living by grabbing land and growing soya . . .



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Morris County, NJ Creates First of its Kind Regional Approach to Renewable Energy

July 30, 2009 — WORLD WIRE (excerpt) — The Morris County Improvement Authority, with the assistance of its legal counsel, DeCotiis, FitzPatrick, Cole & Wisler, LLP, and its financial and energy consultants, ACACIA Financial Group, Inc., Gabel Associates and Metro Energy Solutions, have developed the first regional renewable energy program in New Jersey. The Authority's Program allows municipal governments, school districts, branches of county government and independent local government entities within the county (i.e., sewerage authorities), to receive the benefits of renewable energy.

local government entities participating in the Program. In exchange for housing the solar systems, the local government entities will receive electricity generated by the systems at a price below current tariff rates for a period of fifteen years. This infusion of clean renewable energy will satisfy approximately twenty-five percent of the energy needs of the participating local government entities facilities and will provide some budgetary certainty to an aspect of facility operations that has been notoriously unpredictable

DeCotiis has engineered the Authority Hybrid Program to allow the Authority to utilize its low-cost financing to provide a lower cost of capital to private solar developers to design, permit, construct, operate and maintain solar panel systems on structures owned by

The Authority Hybrid Program combines low cost, county-guaranteed, Authority-issued bonds with certain federal tax incentives available to private developers but otherwise unavailable to government entities, and New Jersey's Solar Renewable Energy Certificates to generate below-tariff rates



Image from Office Publisher



Photo from Wise Energy for Virginia Coalition Web site.

Environmentalists Win on Virginia Power Plant

Wise Energy for Virginia Coalition August 11, 2009 Press Release

RICHMOND, Virginia — In a momentous victory for clean energy advocates in Virginia, a Richmond Circuit Court judge ruled today that the State Air Pollution Control Board violated federal environmental law in permitting Dominion Power's coal-fired power plant in Wise County in the southwest corner of the state.

Judge Margaret P. Spencer agreed with a coalition of environmental groups that the "escape hatch" in Dominion's Maximum Achievable Control Technology (MACT) permit rendered that permit unlawful. The Clean Air Act's MACT program regulates emissions of hazardous air toxics such as mercury, which can cause severe neurological deficits in infants, fetuses and young children. Judge Spencer ruled that the "mercury emission limit . . . must be set 'irrespective of cost or achievability,'" and that the "escape hatch" was "violative of the laws addressing pre-construction mandates."

When Congress passed the Clean Air Act, it required that such permits be obtained before construction begins on a power plant to ensure that it is designed and built in a way to protect the public health and welfare. Dominion, which started construction a week after the Virginia air board approved the permits in June 2008, has said the plant is about 20 percent complete. The judge's ruling granted the coalition's requested relief, which was to invalidate the MACT permit.

In addition to the challenge on the mercury permit, the coalition also sued the air board in July 2008 for issuing a permit that failed to adequately limit emissions from the coal plant of approximately 5.4 million tons a year of carbon dioxide, small particles of soot and other so-called "conventional" pollutants. The court affirmed the "Prevention of Significant Deterioration" ("PSD") permit, regulating conventional pollutants.

The Wise Energy for Virginia Coalition has raised a host of concerns about the Wise County coal plant over the last several years, including air pollution and the health of the local community, water quality, mountaintop removal coal mining and the impacts of the plant's carbon emissions on global warming. Some 42,500 Virginians from across the state signed petitions and sent letters and comments to state and company officials opposing the project.

Following are statements from coalition members.

CALE JAFFE, Southern Environmental Law Center Senior Attorney: "This is an important victory for the health and welfare of Virginians. Once a coal plant is completed, it may prove very difficult to retrofit after the fact to remedy violations of the Clean Air Act. So this decision is essential for assuring that the Clean Air Act's most stringent health-based standards will be met before a coal plant is constructed. We hope Dominion will take this ruling as a sign that it needs to leave expensive coal-fired power plants in the past, and move quickly toward developing sustainable, clean energy sources for a 21st century green economy."

KATHY SELVAGE, Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards: "For the citizens of southwest Virginia this ruling today will provide a longer and healthier life. The Commonwealth should be moving swiftly toward producing the energy we need through non-polluting means like the BP/Dominion wind farm proposed for Wise County to further strengthen the health of the people and the environment."

TOM CORMONS, Appalachian Voices: "Today's ruling is cause for celebration for Virginians all over the state who've opposed the permitting of this plant from the beginning. It underscores the dangers and costs of increased reliance on coal and we hope it will help spur an aggressive move toward clean energy that supplies electricity needs without polluting Virginia's air or destroying its mountains."

LAUREN GLICKMAN: "Today's ruling represents a major step away from the economic and environmental devastation caused by our reliance on coal towards a rational energy policy of renewable energy and efficiency. Although the judge did not send the CO2 issue back to the air board, we hope that as Congress debates sweeping climate change legislation, Dominion will see the writing on the wall and begin to curb its carbon emissions."

GLEN BESA, Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club: "We would urge Dominion to reassess its decision to build this coal plant. The ruling today is related to air pollution, but Dominion really needs to consider alternatives such as efficiency and renewable energy. Now would be a good time."

The Death of the Printed Newspaper

By James Forrester The Sovereign, July 2009

Are print newspapers on the road to extinction? Is it inevitable that the daily paper in your home town is about to roll over and die and go to an "Online Only" format?

The Washington Post's Director of Communications Kris Coratti explains: "At The Post, we see ourselves as a media organization with our journalism being presented when and where our customers want. Many of them still want it in paper form but we are also focused on evolving our business for the future."

We can only hope that there will always be enough of their customers to warrant the familiar paper form and that it will still be available to those of us who would rather spread it out on a table or fold it creatively on a subway ride.

Last weekend I attended the Grassroots Media Seminar at which the awful proposition of negative evolution for newspapers was brought forward.

A young neo-beatnik with a professed love of the Internet informed a group of stodgy printophiles that the way of the future is the "Kindle" (a hand-held, electronic reading device) and personalized Internet news on your PDF. He laughed at the quaint and curious defense offered by an editor at a local newspaper that "You can't cuddle-up with a Kindle like you can with a book or a printed newspaper and besides there is the bombardment by radiation to consider."

All of the famous newspapers of the 20th century including The New York Times, the Chicago Tribune, the St. Louis Post Dispatch and the Washington Post, among others, are in as much trouble as any of the smaller printed journals and that shakes the foundation myths of press freedom and viability.

A popular blog called newspaperdeathwatch.com chronicles the daily horror stories of papers shutting down and laying off workers. Venerable institutions are falling apart.



James Forrester of The Sovereign newspaper.

The financial wizards who brought the industry to this point by diversifying a newspaper's holdings to include TV and radio stations, travel agencies, auto dealerships, oil export derivatives, massage parlors and casinos have looked into their crystal balls and found that they need to divest the weakest links in their conglomerations — the archaic daily papers. The bottom line is "get rid of the deadwood" and put the news on the Internet where it doesn't cost as much and where you can cut your personnel costs.

For many this is a familiar refrain. In our sudden economic emergency, all corporate entities are repeating this in their exit interviews to stunned and silenced soon-to-be ex-employees. "We are sorry to have to do this but we can no longer afford to support your 'non-productive' individual employment/department/subsidiary/industry/children and to pay for your college education/health insurance/clothes on backs and fronts, habits, assumptions, dreams, lives and souls."

The effect is to de-value the quality of our lives in exchange for a few more dollars at the bottom line.

As I drive from New Jersey into New York I stop for gas and fill 'er up at \$2.64 a gallon in 2009. Two years ago it was explained to me by erudite and educated professional-speaking

skulls that the reason gas was over \$4.00 a gallon was that there was a virtual end to the supply of oil (Peak Oil), that there were not enough refineries existing in the United States, that the Iraq war had not brought about its promised recreation of a vast supply once controlled by a sociopathic dictator, that the mysterious Caspian region had not measured up to psychic expectations and that I was not a good citizen for thinking that it was a collective scam of immense proportions.

Have you been laid off? Have you been told to accept a reduced salary or hourly wage? Has your union agreed to fewer benefits for you and your family? Has your retirement fund been diminished? Has your trust in financial institutions disappeared and your faith in the solvency of your bank been shaken? Whatever the philosophy behind this Great Reduction in services and quality, it's a certainty that you did not have much of a say in making the decisions.

Take a breath and stop and look at what has happened since September 2008 and then look a little further back. Imagine your life just a few months before that time. Did you question the foundations of your life in such a desperate way before?

A skeptic stops me and asks an important question:

Are you saying that this whole mess, including the demise of printed newspapers, is some kind of "Conspiracy?"

Yes. When two or more people get together and agree on a plan of action that includes intended results that affect other people that is what is known as (gasp) a conspiracy. It is a word that means to "breathe together."

The word used to drum up images of smoke-filled back rooms and silver-haired bankers in sepia photographs. It conjures up the scrofulous nose of J.P. Morgan and the silver-plated diners of the elite.

Is it possible that the price of gas is a conspiracy?

Is it possible that the demise of the printed newspaper is a conspiracy?

Is it possible that the end of your employment is a conspiracy?

Is it possible that the great changes in our lives since the beginning of the new millennium are the results of the collaboration of a small circle of insiders and powerful authorities?

Why don't we at least consider the possibility!

We at The Sovereign (see ad below) go unrestrained against the grain of the current trend to close down print journalism and hope to counter the wave of increasing repression and bullying with the publication of our little newspaper. We hope that you will stop for a second and reflect on the changes to your own lives that have occurred in the last ten or more years and join us in our resistance to the damnable plans and dark-side dreams of the tiny-spirited bean-counters who are determined to destroy the great American experiment conceived by our founding philosophers and statesmen.

With all the sudden changes being made behind closed doors and without our consent it's time to shout out on the free printed page where hackers and government censors cannot interfere with our First Amendment rights: Don't stop the Presses. Keep 'em Rolling!

Of all the inventions, of all discoveries in science and art, of all the great results in the wonderful progress of mechanical energy and skill, the PRINTING PRESS is the only product of civilization necessary to the existence of free man."
-- Charles Dickens (on email from Phil Schrader, co-publisher of The Sovereign newspaper, see ad below)

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And in New York at:
• Magnolia's Cafe
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And in West Virginia at:
• Community Garden Market
Berkeley Springs

Planning for Sky Awareness Week

Here is the Sky Awareness Week (SAW) online Planning Packet. Please note: This Planning Packet is designed for users in the U.S.A. We hope it is easily converted for the use of our international participants. Let us know how to make it easier.

A) SKY AWARENESS WEEK flyer/poster for printing and forwarding:

If possible please print on 100% post-consumer-waste recycled paper and please, if useful, print with a layout of two flyers (reduced) on each 8 1/2" by 11" sheet.

Some ways to use the SAW flyer/poster: (Please feel free to translate into other languages.)

1) Mailings, handouts, post at grocery stores, libraries, schools, community bulletin boards, light posts, telephone poles, email as an announcement or invitation to join your efforts. Please be respectfully inventive. You are representing the Coalition.

2) The SAW flyer/poster lets people know that a week of Sky Awareness events is coming (October 12 to 19) but it also expresses the Bonnefire Coalition's point of view regarding Persistent Jet Contrails (PJC's), leading people to research further at the listed Web sites. If you want to inform people but are worried about getting into an argument (or being called "crazy") you can simply hand over a flyer and urge the person to investigate this issue for him or herself. As the flyer says, the first objective is to get people to LOOK UP! (And recognize that those are NOT "innocent" jet trails!)

3) You may want to add your own contact information to the bottom of the flyer (your email address may feel safest) stating that a new group is forming or announcing a meeting.

B) Samples:

Letter-to-the-Editor
Letter to Legislators
Press Release
Letter of Invitation
Petition to Stop Persistent Jet Contrails and Other Experimental Atmospheric Testing and Weather Modification

C) Activities

Celebrate the Sky and the Earth — and Weather — their love affair, their offspring, etc.


Print and distribute the SKY AWARENESS WEEK flyer/poster. Use it to engage others in conversation about PJC's and to show how they can do research for themselves at the Web sites.

Create classroom exercises and projects in all subjects.


Offer contests to heighten awareness such as essays, poetry, art, film, music.

Propose a title such as "Who Owns The Weather?" or "Who Owns The Sky?" or "Why I Love The Sky."

Prepare, share, sell Good (Nourishing, Tasty) Food — maybe with a Sky theme and focusing on vegetarian/vegan/eating-low-on-the-food-chain choices.



BONNEFIRE COALITION PRESENTS
SKY AWARENESS WEEK
October 12 - 19, 2009



LOOK UP

- * NASA calls them "Persistent Jet Contrails" (PJC)
- * They are witnessed and photographed daily, globally
- * PJC's are not "normal contrails under specific atmospheric conditions"
- * They are laid down intentionally, most often in **X's**, **#'s**, and **II's**
- * PJC's do not evaporate

* They expand and combine to VEIL THE SKY and OCCLUDE THE SUN:
- Holding heat against the Earth
- Dimming the Sun

These are two critical concerns in climate change discussions and for Life on Earth!

LEARN MORE
The Bonnefire Coalition, accessible at: www.CaliforniaSkyWatch.com
See also: www.AgricultureDefenseCoalition.org
Please let us know your plans for SKY AWARENESS WEEK: bonne_fire@yahoo.com

Ask musicians to create public events (a drumming circle for the Sky would be wonderful).

Produce street theatre: (doom-and-gloom with a touch a whimsy and problem-solving).

Involve elected (local, county, state, federal) officials.

Involve persons with name-recognition who share our concerns.

Involve local media; invite national/international media.

Create colorful and inviting public displays of documented information and Sky photos.

Offer a PJC's Film Festival to inform people and inspire them with relevant and documented information. Help them to take non-violent Action! Choose a public space such as a library, school or community center.

Following the films, provide opportunity for respectful, guided discussion.

There are many films and DVDs available which show the broad scope of knowledge and speculation regarding PJC's and other atmospheric experiments.

If you'd like film-maker contacts or if you would like your film listed here please email us at bonne_fire@yahoo.com.

Print and circulate for signatures the Petition found at www.CaliforniaSkyWatch.com.

Make copies of signed petitions for legislators.

Make the presentation of petitions a media event. Return signed petitions to Rosalind Peterson at the address on the Petition.

Help others learn how to write informed Letters-to-the-Editor and to Legislators.

Invent playful ways to get people to LOOK UP!

Invent playful ways to keep them looking up so that they can SEE FOR THEMSELVES how PJC's expand and combine to VEIL THE SKY and OCCLUDE THE SUN.

Organize any-and-all other activities that respectfully raise awareness of the SKY, PJC's and other atmospheric experiments

Help people discover the best way for them to take ACTION!

Set up media interviews in advance with Rosalind Peterson at info@californiaskywatch.com, POB 499 Redwood Valley, California 95470; 707-485-7520 or Bonnie Hoag at bonne_fire@yahoo.com and other individuals who are well-informed, with documented evidence.

D) Please help us refine and expand SKY AWARENESS WEEK preparations & events! Let us know what you are planning and how we can help.

Sample Letter-to-the-Editor SKY AWARENESS WEEK

October 12 to 19, 2009

Use similar wording for Letters to Legislators. Be sure to ask for his or her help.

For daily and weekly newspapers, be attentive to their deadlines and to giving the public at least two weeks notice before the date of your meeting. Letters

may be sent by mail or by email.

Once your letter is sent, follow up with a phone call to be sure it was received and that they can/will publish it. And, of course, assuming they will, be sure to be grateful.

Letters-to-the-Editor can be passionate but remember to tailor your letter for your community. We want to engage people, to get them involved.

Your name and address

His or her name and address at the newspaper, magazine or other periodical

The date

Dear Ms./Mr./Mrs.

As a frequent reader of name the periodical I am sure that your subscribers will be interested in an upcoming week-long celebration of SKY AWARENESS WEEK, October 12 to 19.

After many months of observing artificial clouding of our Sky, I am now joining other people in countries all around the world to bring awareness to the daily, global phenomenon which NASA calls Persistent Jet Contrails.

NASA acknowledges that Persistent Jet Contrails are a serious climate concern but it stops short of publicly admitting its own production of PJC "clouds" for research purposes.

Even the casual observer who watches the Sky regularly will witness these pluming jet trails which are most often laid down

in Xs, cross-hatches and parallel lines. As these PJC's expand they combine to veil the Sky and occlude the Sun. Veiling of the Sky holds heat against our planet. Occluding the sun affects photosynthesis and all life processes on Earth

Dimming of the Sun and Warming of the Planet are two significant concerns in all climate change discussions and yet Persistent Jet Contrails are allowed to prosper without our permission.

SKY AWARENESS WEEK (October 12 to 19, 2009) is an international week-long celebration of Sky & Earth & Weather based on the simple concept that the weather belongs to ALL OF US! This grassroots effort of the Bonnefire Coalition intends to STOP Persistent Jet Contrails and the injuries they cause.

We are inviting anyone who shares our concerns to come to a Planning Meeting for SKY AWARENESS WEEK to be held on date and time at public location (such as a school or library space which has already been held open for the time and date of the meeting).

For further information please phone the organizers at phone number or email us at email address.

Your readers can learn more about the Bonnefire Coalition at www.californiaskywatch.com.

Thank you.
Sincerely,

Sample Press Release to Announce Planning Meetings

Use similar wording, early in September, to announce your SAW Activities & Schedule

The text of your Press Release must contain WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE AND WHY.

Be sure to know the deadlines of the various media outlets you are approaching so that your Press Release will be in front of the editor in ample time.

Email is most favored by the media for communications. If you cannot email your Press Release you can FAX it, use regular mail or even stop by the office for hand-delivery.

Follow up with a phone call (well in advance of publication) to be sure it was received and can be published. Be grateful.

PRESS RELEASE

On date, at location, there

will be a Planning Meeting for SKY AWARENESS WEEK, which is an international week-long event (October 12 to 19, 2009) to celebrate the Sky and to bring attention to Persistent Jet Contrails. NASA named them and NASA recognizes them as a problem.

Persistent Jet Contrails are often laid down in Xs, cross-hatches and parallel lines. They are a global phenomenon and have raised concerns for many of us as we observe them, overhead, plumbing out — expanding and combining over the course of hours — until they veil the Sky and occlude the Sun.

Veiling the Sky holds heat

against the Earth. Occluding the Sun interferes with life-supporting processes such as photosynthesis and vitamin D intake. While these are acknowledged concerns in all climate change discussions, the global contributions of Persistent Jet Contrails are not discussed.

SKY AWARENESS WEEK (October 12 to 19, 2009) is a week-long, international celebration of the Sky, intending to bring attention to the many weather modification programs already in place on a local and global scale.

For our contribution we will be urging our community to LOOK UP! and to look up long enough to observe the progress of the expanding contrails.

We are planning a week of [here, you list your intentions for the week which may include educational programs for your school and churches, a film festival, great food and music, puppet theatre, essay and drawing contests... and...].

Everyone who would like to contribute is urged to attend the Planning Meeting on date and time, at location. For more information please contact us at your phone number or email.

To learn more about the roots of SKY AWARENESS WEEK, October 12 to 19, 2009 click on The Bonnefire Coalition at www.californiaskywatch.com.

Sample Letter of Invitation

Your Letter of Invitation might be sent to local media, "dignitaries", members of Town & County Boards, State and U.S. Representatives and Senators, popular writers, sports figures, radio/TV personalities, local/national/international celebrities... and... [be imaginative].

Depending on their occupation you are asking them to

- 1) be present at some specific event during the week,
- 2) preside at ceremonies,
- 3) make a public statement.
- 4) contribute their talent (singers/actors).
- 5) declare SKY AWARENESS WEEK October 12 to 19, 2009 a public celebration, or
- 6) donate air time and interviews to the organizers, etc.

your address
his/her/their address
date

Dear _____
The Planning Committee invites you to join us as our community celebrates SKY AWARENESS WEEK October 12 to 19, 2009.

We ask that you here you explain what it is that you hope they can provide and/or bring to the week of events.

We'll be in touch with you next week.[***] Or you may contact us at phone # and/or email. Thank you for your help with Sky Awareness Week.

Sincerely,
Your name, address, etc.
[***] When you say that you will be in touch, make sure that you are!

Is That Silver Lining Aluminum?

By Bonnie Hoag
Shushan, New York

Now we know that 'chemtrails' are better called by NASA's own term *Persistent Jet Contrails*. Citizens who express their concern to legislators and the press by way of the term *chemtrails* are quickly dismissed as fringe conspiracy theorists and thus their legitimate concern is marginalized as a "hoax."

NASA states that Persistent Jet Contrails are a problem. It has not yet, however, explained the purpose nor the contents of these now-daily trails which we watch being laid down across the sky in Xs, cross-hatches and parallel lines. We watch these lines expand into cirrus-like "clouds" which combine to veil the sky and occlude the sun.

The odd phenomenon of Persistent Jet Contrails is being documented by witnesses in many states of the U.S., in Can-

ada, Mexico and indeed globally as reports and photos are shared from England, Germany, Italy, New Zealand and Australia.

All of these global citizens are asking the same questions: What are the trails for? What chemical patents cause the trails to expand? [Are they the patents like U.S. Patent #5,360,162 *Method and Composition for Precipitation of Atmospheric Water* which contains, among other toxins, phenol formaldehyde resin, barium and lead? Or Patent #3,899,144 for *Powder Contrail Generation* with titanium dioxide? Or Patent #5,3003,186 for *Stratospheric Welsbach Seeding for Reduction of Global Warming* with aluminum oxide?] Are these formulas precipitating on us each time it rains and snows? Why is this "dimming of the sun" being permitted? Where are the regulations and oversight? Why is there no public debate or discussion? Why wasn't the permission

asked of every living creature on this planet? And why can't we get an answers to our questions, even through Freedom of Information requests to NASA itself?

Understandably, many people do not want to see this disturbing daily occurrence. They prefer to dismiss the pluming trails as a dramatic increase in commercial air traffic. If, however, those same souls would continue to observe the sky they would see the trails expand and combine to veil the sky and occlude the sun.

Separate Note from Bonnie to Iona

I have spent a little time with your Web site and want to thank you for this work you are doing.

It is the Bonnefire Coalition's intention to get humans to LOOK UP! and then to look up long enough to watch the Persistent Jet Contrails (PJC) expand and combine to veil the Sky

and occlude the Sun. Veiling the Sky traps heat against the Earth. Occluding the Sun is a form of "dimming." Both of these are serious concerns in Climate Change discussions. If PJC's, a recent aviation phenomenon, are contributing to these problems, as NASA asserts they are, then PJC's can be reduced if not altogether eliminated.

We have stayed away from the term "chemtrails" and used NASA's own term Persistent Jet Contrails, to minimize being marginalized in our concerns and actions. We find this shift helpful since our culture tends to swoon over NASA and turn away from the term 'chemtrails.'

Personally, now, when people say "Ohhh, conspiracy theory," I respond by saying, "What theory? :-)"

I look forward to working with you to wake up our drowsy neighbors (and further awaken ourselves).

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Look Out, Roanoke, Here Comes Mark Biking to Work!



Mark Petersen, an old friend of "The Order of the Earth" (from its earliest mini-book stage 14 years ago) has been an avid cycling advocate for years. We have featured Mark's thoughts in previous issues and here he is in action. Instead of a car, Mark owns three bikes for different occasions and weather conditions. He rents a car if and when he really needs to. Photos by Barbara Duerk.



Martin Specht for *The New York Times*
Biking and walking are the principal means of transport within the suburb of Vauban, Germany.

German Suburb Goes Carless

Life Goes On Without Cars

By Elisabeth Rosenthal
The New York Times, May 12, 2009
via DailyClimate.org

VAUBAN, Germany (excerpt) — Residents of this upscale community are suburban pioneers, going where few soccer moms or commuting executives have ever gone before: they have given up their cars.

Street parking, driveways and home garages are generally forbidden in this experimental new district on the outskirts of Freiburg, near the French and Swiss borders. Vauban's streets are completely "car-free" — except the main thoroughfare, where the tram to downtown Freiburg runs and a few streets on one edge of the community. Car ownership is allowed but there are only two places to park — large garages at the edge of the development where a car-owner buys a space for \$40,000 along with a home.

As a result, 70 percent of Vauban's families do not own cars and 57 percent sold a car to move here. "When I had a car I was always tense. I'm much happier this way," said Heidrun Walter, a media trainer and mother of two, as she walked verdant streets where the swish of bicycles and the chatter of wandering children drown out the occasional distant motor.

Vauban, completed in 2006, is an example of a growing trend in Europe, the United States and elsewhere to separate suburban life from auto use, as a component of a movement called "smart planning."

Automobiles are the linchpin of suburbs, where middle-class families from Chicago to Shanghai tend to make their homes. And that, experts say, is a huge impediment to current efforts to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions from tailpipes, and thus to reduce global warming.

Passenger cars are responsible for 12 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in Europe — a proportion that is growing, according to the European Environment Agency — and up to 50 percent in some car-intensive areas in the United States.

While there have been efforts in the past two decades to make cities denser and better for walking, planners are now taking the concept to the suburbs and focusing specifically on environmental benefits like reducing emissions. Vauban, home to 5,500 residents within a rectangular square mile, may be the most advanced experiment in low-car suburban life.

But its basic precepts are being adopted around the world in attempts to make suburbs more compact and more accessible to public transportation with less space for parking. In this new approach, stores are

placed a walk away on a main street rather than in malls along some distant highway.

"All of our development since World War II has been centered on the car and that will have to change," said David Goldberg, an official of Transportation for America, a fast-growing coalition of hundreds of groups in the United States — including environmental groups, mayors' offices and the American Association of Retired People — who are promoting new communities that are less dependent on cars. Mr. Goldberg added: "How much you drive is as important as whether you have a hybrid."

Levittown and Scarsdale, New York suburbs with spread-out homes and private garages, were the dream towns of the 1950s and still exert a strong appeal. But some new suburbs may well look more Vauban-like, not only in developed countries but also in the developing world, where emissions from an increasing number of private cars owned by the burgeoning middle class are choking cities.

In the United States, the Environmental Protection Agency is promoting "car reduced" communities and legislators are starting to act, if cautiously.

Many experts expect public transport serving suburbs to play a much larger role in a new six-year federal transportation bill to be approved this year, Mr. Goldberg said. In previous bills, 80 percent of appropriations have, by law, gone to highways and only 20 percent to other transport.

In California, the Hayward Area Planning Association is developing a Vauban-like community called Quarry Village on the outskirts of Oakland, accessible without a car to the Bay Area Rapid Transit system and to the California State University's campus in Hayward.

Sherman Lewis, a professor emeritus at Cal State and a leader of the association, says he "can't wait to move in" and hopes that Quarry Village will allow his family to reduce its car ownership from two to one and potentially to zero. But the current system is still stacked against the project, he said, noting that mortgage lenders worry about resale value of half-million-dollar homes that have no place for cars and most zoning laws in the United States still require two parking spaces per residential unit. Quarry Village has obtained an exception from Hayward.

Besides, convincing people to give up their cars is an uphill run. "People in the U.S. are incredibly suspicious of any idea where people are not going to own cars or are going to own fewer," said David Ceaser, co-founder of Car-Free City USA, who said no car-free suburban project the size of Vauban had been successful in the United States.

In Europe, some governments are thinking on a national scale.

In 2000, Britain began a comprehensive effort to reform planning to discourage car use by requiring that new development be accessible by public transit.

"Development comprising jobs, shopping, leisure and services should not be designed and located on the assumption that the car will represent the only realistic means of access for the vast majority of people," said PPG 13, the British government's revolutionary 2001 planning document.

Dozens of shopping malls, fast-food restaurants and housing compounds have been refused planning permits based on the new British regulations.

In Germany, a country that is home to Mercedes-Benz and the autobahn, life in a car-reduced place like Vauban has its own unusual gestalt.

The town (Vauban) is long and relatively narrow, so that the tram into Freiburg is an easy walk from every home. Stores, restaurants, banks and schools are more interspersed among homes than they are in a typical suburb. Most residents, like Ms. Walter, have carts that they haul behind bicycles for shopping trips or children's play dates.

For trips to stores like IKEA or the ski slopes, families buy cars together or use communal cars rented out by Vauban's car-sharing club. Ms. Walter had previously lived — with a private car — in Freiburg as well as the United States.

"If you have one, you tend to use it," she said. "Some people move in here and move out rather quickly — they miss the car next door."

Vauban, the site of a former Nazi army base, was occupied by the French Army from the end of World War II until the reunification of Germany two decades ago.

Because it was planned as a base, the grid was never meant to accommodate private car use: the "roads" were narrow passageways between barracks.

The original buildings have long since been torn down. The stylish row houses that replaced them are buildings of four or five stories, designed to reduce heat loss and maximize energy efficiency, and trimmed with exotic woods and elaborate balconies; free-standing homes are forbidden.

By nature, people who buy homes in Vauban are inclined to be green guinea pigs — indeed, more than half vote for the German Green Party. Still, many say it is the quality of life that keeps them here.

Henk Schulz, a scientist who on one afternoon last month was watching his three young children wander around Vauban, remembers his excitement at buying his first car. Now, he said, he is glad to be raising his children away from cars; he does not worry much about their safety in the street . . .



Potomac Valley Region Under the Gun from Proposed Powerline

Continued from page 1

getting government approval for building new electric transmission lines in the wrong places, and for the wrong reasons.

The power company designers, planners and engineers need to look for solutions that do not involve new coal. If PATH gets built, new coal mines will get opened, more coal will be burned, increasing global warming, and many acres of valuable scenic and agricultural land just west of the big cities will be taken over for power line construction.

For more information on the PATH project

please check out the Sierra Club Maryland Chapter Web site: www.Maryland.sierraclub.org.

Matthew Lindberg-Work has been paying attention to the health and safety hazards of power lines for many years. He believes that we need an electric power system that is safer and less damaging to the environment. This past year, Matthew has been keeping track of the PATH transmission line proposals on behalf of the Catocin Group of the Maryland Chapter. Matthew just moved to Iowa, and can be reached by going to www.linkedin.com/in/matthew.

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Modern Man Visits Ancient Lands

Sees Evidence of Climate Change

By Pyong Roh
Daegu, Korea

I just woke up from summer hibernation after a long trip to Europe. I wanted to see the culture and civilization of the old world. I joined a group tour to Western Europe for ten days. My wife, Young, and I stayed in Europe after our group left Frankfurt for Korea. We rented a car at the airport of Frankfurt and visited many interesting places in Germany and Eastern European countries for twenty six days.

We left Korea on May 30th for London. Lufthansa flew over Beijing, Baikal Lake and Siberia. I saw snow covered Ural mountains through the window of the airplane. Mountain Ural is the demarcation line of Asia and Europe.

We landed at Frankfurt to transfer to the airplane to London. We came to London in night time on the same day. The following day we visited London Museum and Thames River. The river reminded me of the cholera epidemic and a scientific epidemiological study of the episode. This is my first visit to Great Britain. The trees in Hyde Park and beautiful gardens impressed me so much.

We took Eurostar train from London to Paris. It was very fast and comfortable. I visited Paris several years ago but Paris is a pleasant place to visit. There are many Smart cars in Paris and many people were using bicycles. The Smart cars are very small and light. It is very convenient to park in narrow streets. And the car needs only a small space for parking. We stayed in Paris for two days and left for Lucerne, Switzerland. We took TGV (high-speed train) and passed French plains and the express train was very comfortable and efficient. Some people took bicycles with them into the train. There are special places for luggage and bicycles. At Lausanne we took a bus to Interlaken to climb Jung Frau.

We took a train equipped with special gears to climb the mountain. There were cows grazing grasses on the hills and wildflowers, including edelweiss, greeted us. The peaks of Jung Frau were covered with white snow. We went into glacier caves. The ice was hard like rocks. We had to follow the guide in the caves, it is easy to get frozen to death. The air was thin and we had to walk slowly. The glacier was like a wide open plain. Many rivers in Europe have origins from glaciers of Alps. I was told that the glacier has been melting down because of climate change.

We continued our journey to Milan from Interlaken. We passed long tunnels and valleys between mountains. There are castles on the top of the mountains and vineyards on the foot of hills. There are small towns in the middle of mountains in the northern part of Italy. In the fields the farmers are growing olives. There are also hydro-



Images from Office Publisher

electric power plants using water from glaciers. We visited Milan and Pisa and then came to Rome. We went to Vatican City to appreciate the masterpieces by Leonard DaVinci and Michelangelo. I was very impressed by the construction work of the Roman Empire. Pine trees along the old road built by Roman soldiers are like soldiers for parades. The Mouth of Truth reminded me of Roman holiday.

Then we moved to Florence where many artists and writers during The Renaissance were born. We crossed Rubicon River which Julius Caesar had crossed with his army. The river is polluted because of industrialization. We visited the birthplace of Dante. The old town is still pretty and attractive. We left Florence for Venice, which is located on the sea. I was told that the sea level has been rising continuously in this water city. When we were standing in the plaza, sea water came up to the plaza.

We left Venice for Innsbruck, Austria. This town is a small town located in a part of Alps. Some people raise horses and cows in their barns and some others drive Mercedes. The air was fresh and crispy. The water in the streams is running very

fast and it is very clean. I love the sound of running stream water.

We moved to Fussen to see Neuschweinstein Castle, which is one of the most beautiful castles. The king of München built the castle and national coffer was almost empty. I wonder how many poor people were sacrificed for this castle. We drove through Romantic Road to Frankfurt. The group left us at the airport and we rented a car to continue our own journey. We drove to Berlin and stayed at a *pensione* in a suburb of Berlin. We went to Berlin by train and walked around the center of the city. We saw a part of Berlin wall and Brandenburg Tor. We witnessed the demarcation line separating West and East Berlin. I remember what John F. Kennedy said when he visited Berlin long time ago. He said "Ich bin ein Berliner." Human beings are silly. They drew line in the land and separated the people because of ideology.

Next we went to Poznan, Poland. This city was the first capital of Poland. The old city was very crowded with people and business men. Some Indians were dancing to collect money from the people. This is the first time for me to see real Indian

dance. I have never seen Indian dances in America. There are many street musicians for money.

We moved to Warsaw to see the old palace and came down to Auschwitz, a concentration camp for prisoners, including Jews. I witnessed the cruelty and inhumane behavior of human beings over there. It was raining and it was chilly not because of temperature but because of the tragedy of human beings. In Cracow we visited a salt mine. This mine reminded me of the change of the Earth. I believe this mine site was an ocean many and many million years ago. We do not know what's going to happen in the coming years in the Universe. I was surprised to hear that some special group such as archbishops and feudal lords monopolized the salt for themselves.

We took countryside road to get to Slovakia. The road conditions were poor and a lot of repair work was going on. In small farming towns old farmers and young children put melons and peaches on small tables for sale. In the country roads farmers use donkeys for transporting passengers and agricultural products. Ducks were crossing the road and children played balls.

But at the same time Mercedes-Benz cars were passing by. Medieval time and modern time are mixed together. On the streets people dumped a lot of plastic bags and garbage.

We moved to Budapest, Hungary. The capital is a beautiful city and the bridges are graceful. In the countryside we saw endless sunflowers in the fields. The whole field was covered with yellow and golden color. We could not breathe for a while. We travelled to old towns which still kept medieval culture. There are many neglected houses in small towns. I believe young people left towns for big cities to make money. They are trying to make money because the government does not give them jobs any more since they introduced market economy. I paid in Euros for buying goods and they gave me back change in their money. I think they need hard currency. Still there is garbage dumping along the roadside.

We moved to Romania. At the border the guards checked our passports. It was the first time the border guards asked for our passports in the Eastern European countries. We went to Constanta, a port in Black Sea. We saw one of the

oldest lighthouses built by old Greeks at the port. The Black Sea is not black, as the name says. The water is clean and green. It was my first time to see Black Sea in my life. White clouds hanging over the sea and sea gulls and green water are well harmonized and gave us peace and tranquility.

We went to Bulgaria, which is very different from other Eastern European countries. They use Russian letters. In country the houses have stone fences. We drove on rolling hills and winding roads in Bulgaria. Road conditions were poor and we paid much attention in driving. We crossed Danube River again and drove along the river. We end up at a big dam for electricity in Danube. The dam made a huge lake. We drove on cliffs along the river passing valleys and mountains in Romania. Still people do not care about garbage dumping.

We came to Vienna. I tried to find a hotel in the suburb of the city but somehow I drove to the center of the city. The city is very beautiful but hotels are expensive and we got out of the city and found a *pensione* in a suburban area. We parked our car at the park and ride and took a train to get into the centrum (old city). We walked around every corner of the city to catch the beauty of the city. We were hungry and tired but we were excited and delighted to see the nature and man-made arts. And we drove to Salzburg where Mozart was born. We parked our car at a hotel and took a bus to go to Centrum. We visited old monastery and location sites of Sound of Music. Old city gave us nostalgia of Old days.

Finally we drove to Prague, Czech Republic. After parking our car at a hotel we took subway to go to the old city. We walked around all day long to appreciate the beauty of medieval civilization.

We left for Frankfurt, Germany to return our car. We stayed at a hotel near airport and went to the center of the city by a train. We went to a botanical garden. We were excited to see linden baum. When I was a middle school student we sang a song composed by Schubert. The name of the song was Linden Baum. I have been wondering what linden baum looks like. The tree is very big and the smell of the flower is very sweet.

In this long journey I learnt a lot by seeing the people and places. I found more common things in human beings rather than difference. I saw more beautiful things in nature than man-made things.

Wherever we live, we live on this Earth. No matter what language we speak, we speak our Earth language. We have to learn to understand others and other peoples' cultures because we are all human beings in this planet.

Pyong Roh is a nature-loving, cosmopolitan man and a citizen of the Universe who tries to obey the law of nature.

Light Pollution: Problems and Solutions

Story idea submitted
by Loris Boutwell, Tiger GA

By Rowena Davis
International Dark-Sky Association ©

For most of Earth's history, our spectacular universe of stars and galaxies has been visible in the darkness of the night sky. From our earliest beginnings, the vast spectacle arrayed across the dark sky has inspired questions about our universe and our relation to it. The history of scientific discovery, art, literature, astronomy, navigation, exploration, philosophy and even human curiosity itself would be diminished without our view of the stars. But today, the increasing number of people living on

Earth and the corresponding increase in inappropriate and unshielded outdoor lighting has resulted in light pollution — a brightening night sky that has obliterated the stars for much of the world's population. Most people must travel far from home, away from the glow of artificial lighting, to experience the awe-inspiring expanse of the Milky Way as our ancestors once knew it.

The negative effects of the loss of this inspirational natural resource might seem intangible. But a growing body of evidence links the brightening night sky directly to measurable negative impacts on human health and immune function, on adverse behavioral changes in insect and

Four forms of light pollution often combine and overlap:
Urban sky glow — Brightening of the night sky over inhabited areas.

Light trespass — Light falling where it is not intended, wanted or needed.

Glare — Excessive brightness which causes visual discomfort. High levels of glare can decrease visibility.

Clutter — Bright, confusing and excessive groupings of light sources, commonly found in over-lit urban areas. The proliferation of clutter contributes to urban sky glow, trespass and glare.

animal populations and on a decrease of both ambient quality and safety in our nighttime environment. Astronomers were among the first to record the negative impacts of wasted lighting on scientific research but, for all of us, the adverse economic and environmental impacts of wasted energy are apparent in

everything from the monthly electric bill to global warming.

In refreshing contrast to some of today's complex and lingering environmental problems, many existing solutions to light pollution are simple, cost-effective and instantaneous. Once bad lighting is removed or reconsidered, an area ceases to be affect-

ed. Recognizing when outdoor lighting no longer serves its function and becomes a pollutant is the first step toward choosing appropriate solutions. Light pollution is excessive and inappropriate artificial light.

Increased urban sky glow is responsible for the disappearance of the Milky Way from our night skies. For professional astronomers, the increasing distance to prime observing sites, well away from sources of air pollution and urban sky glow, becomes more problematic as economic and environmental energy costs continue to rise. Amateur astronomers, meanwhile, find prime observing spots eradicated by commercial and residential development and

must travel farther from home for a clear view of the skies. Increasingly, the most important equipment needed to enjoy the wonders of the night sky is an automobile with a full tank of gas and a map.

The adverse effects of light pollution extend well beyond astronomy. New research suggests that light at night may interfere with normal circadian rhythms — the 24-hour cycle of day and night that humans have used to maintain health and regulate their activities for thousands of years. Light trespass, occurring when streetlights or a neighbor's security light directs unwanted lighting onto our property or into our homes, con-

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Is the Environment Making Us Fat and Sick?

Environmental Factors Cause

Metabolic Syndrome

By **Shelby Gonzalez**
Solon Springs, Wisconsin

Conventional wisdom says that the meteoric rise in obesity and related health conditions — the early stages of which are now called metabolic syndrome — is due to the West having a bad case of “couch potato syndrome.” That is, over the past few decades, we have been eating too much and not exercising enough.

While poor diet and inactivity play an undeniable role in fostering metabolic syndrome, that’s not the whole story. Clinical and epidemiological evidence increasingly implicates another culprit: the environment. Some scientists suspect that a combination of environmental factors, including a group of chemicals called obesogens, share the blame for the explosion of metabolic syndrome and its later stages: diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease and even Alzheimer’s.

“Despite what we’ve heard, diet and exercise alone are insufficient to explain the obesity epidemic,” said Dr. Bruce Blumberg, Professor of Developmental and Cell Biology and Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of California, Irvine.

A May 7th teleconference presented by the nonprofit Collaborative on Health and the Environment explored this urgent and compelling topic. This article is based upon that teleconference.

Metabolic syndrome is estimated to affect more than one-third of U.S. adults, 60% of them under 65 years old.

When Environment Collides with Human Biology

Speaker Dr. David Jacobs, Professor of Public Health at the University of Minnesota, a chronic-disease epidemiologist, defined metabolic syndrome as “a constellation of related metabolic abnormalities (body fatness, blood-fat handling, insulin, glucose).”

Environmental factors suspected to contribute to metabolic syndrome include the food system, the transportation system, the built environment, air pollution, obesogens, other environmental contaminants and socioeconomic stress.

These stressors alter pathways in the body, causing inflammation, oxidative stress and disrupted insulin signaling. Altered pathways can, in turn, lead to diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease and abnormal lipids (tied to dementia and Alzheimer’s).

“You can think of metabolic syndrome as a crossroads,” said speaker Dr. Jill Stein, co-founder of the Massachusetts Coalition for Healthy Communities, board member of Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility and co-author of the recent report “Environmental Threats to Healthy Aging” (www.agehealthy.org). “This is where the environment meets human biology in the early stages of the disease process. You can think of environmental factors as kind of colliding with human biology here.”

Chemical Culprits

The obesity epidemic, as Dr. Bruce Blumberg pointed out, roughly correlates with the rise in the use of industrial chemicals (plastics, pesticides, etc.) in the years since World War II.



Every month, the Collaborative on Health and the Environment (CHE) presents free teleconferences featuring the latest environmental health science. You do not have to be a CHE Partner to participate in a CHE teleconference. An extensive archive of downloadable MP3 recordings of past CHE teleconferences is available at www.HealthAndEnvironment.org/news/calls.

The Collaborative on Health and the Environment is a nonprofit program focused on the science of environmental health with working groups targeting cancer, learning- and developmental disabilities, metabolic syndrome and more. CHE welcomes individuals and nonprofit organizations to apply to become Partners. Applying is free and takes only a few minutes. Details at www.HealthAndEnvironment.org/application.

www.HealthAndEnvironment.org

(Though, he reminded listeners, “correlation is not causation.”)

Also, many environmental contaminants affect the endocrine system, which plays a big part in determining weight by controlling the appetite and metabolism, fat cell development and lipid balance. These basic facts, plus suggestive laboratory research, have led scientists to propose an additional label for certain chemicals: obesogen.

Some time ago, Dr. Blumberg and his colleagues proposed “The Obesogen Hypothesis,” which defined obesogens as “chemicals that inappropriately

stimulate adipogenesis and fat storage, exist and contribute to the obesity epidemic.”

Various studies have found that pre- and post-natal exposure to obesogens reprograms the metabolism of exposed animals, predisposing them to obesity later in life.

Dr. Pete Myers, founder, CEO, and chief scientist of Environmental Health Sciences, began the teleconference by describing one such study by Soo Lim et al. published in the journal *PLoS One* in April 2009. You can access the study at www.plosone.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/

journal.pone.0005186.

The study involved chronic exposure of rats to low levels of the common herbicide atrazine. After five months of exposure, the rats showed decreased basal metabolic rate, increased body weight, increased intra-abdominal fat and increased insulin resistance. The effects were even stronger when the rats were fed a high-fat diet.

The scientists concluded that long-term atrazine exposure could contribute to the development of insulin resistance and diabetes in people, especially where high-fat diets are prevalent.

“The exposures they used were well within the range that people are often exposed to,” said Dr. Myers, “especially with in corn-growing areas. I think we’ll be hearing more about this line of research in the future.”

POPS, Diabetes, and Metabolic Syndrome

When the Centers for Disease Control tested the blood of 2,016 adults for the presence of six POPS (Persistent Organic Pollutants) as part of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys (NHANES, 1999-2002), they found that each of the POPS was related to an increasing occurrence of diabetes. People with POPS levels in the top quarter had a risk of developing diabetes 38 times greater than those with bottom-quarter levels.

Among non-diabetics in NHANES, people with organochlorine pesticide levels in the top quarter had five times the risk of metabolic syndrome compared to those in the bottom quarter.

These pollutants, though mostly banned in the 1970s, still linger in our foods. They are also

found in computers, refrigerators, flame retardants and waste dumps.

What We Can Do

As far as prevention goes, Dr. Stein said, there are three major things you can do as an individual to reduce your risk of metabolic syndrome.

“The route that you take depends on the particulars of your life and your community. There are many dietary interventions — I’ll just throw out the Mediterranean diet because there is very compelling data about its effect in reducing not only metabolic syndrome but all the other conditions we’ve been talking about and others beyond that. Taking general steps to reduce chemical exposures. Exercise.”

The Mediterranean diet is one composed of mostly fruits and vegetables with lots of whole grains, fish and olive oil and very little processed food or red meat.

Dr. Jacobs underscored the need to think on a macro level. “We really need the political will to examine our society and make some changes in it,” he said. They’re not going to come overnight. If you’re talking about re-engineering where sidewalks are to encourage more physical activity, that’s difficult. If we’re talking about having an entirely different way of delivering food to the people other than the food industry, that’s a massive change.

“If we’re talking about the chemicals — they’re in computers. I like computers. They’re in refrigerators . . . The cleverness is to figure out how to have the things we want to have in our lives from industry without disrupting health.”

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Earth Psalms: Song 1

By Angela Magara ©
www.angelamagara.com

Blessed are they who listen to the wisdom of the body.
Who know Justice is Compassion.
They delight in chance and change
and practice magic with every breath.
They shall be rooted by the river — a grove heavy with rich fruit
Holding the canopy of life.

Without listening life can spin like swirling leaves.
No trust, no magic — power has no strength
But the Earth knows her lovers,
their bodies are marked with her kiss.

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.

The Examined Life: On School

By **Marion Stuenkel**
Madison, Wisconsin

One time, on a mountain trail in Conejos Canyon, Colorado, I was teaching three children the names of wildflowers. “Stop doing that!” hissed the father of two furiously.

“What?” asked I, mother of one.

He replied, “Stop spoiling their seeing by naming. Next you’ll be telling them what they’re good for.”

Quelled, I hiked along searching in my mind for the philosophical argument in which we were involved, couldn’t think of it, decided to call it a cultural difference. He was after all a native Spanish-speaking New Mexican with Pueblo, Apache and conquistador blood, educated by Methodists. He loved French. He had a Master’s degree in counseling. Being with him was like reading the definitive novel of a foreign country or walking a booby-trapped maze.

That night after we’d all lain on our backs beneath the stars while he’d named the constellations he and I sat looking into the campfire. His inconsistency between naming wildflowers and stars flowed, like the smoke, between us. “I wish I’d never gone to school,” he stated. “It ruined me for doing what was good and useful.”

I loved school. The word September conjures up, for me, a new year including hopes and resolutions. Every fall going on 37 years now I feel a pang of regret my school days are over. I learned to read by sight and can still see the scene when I first recognized the words “look” and “come” and read them aloud when it was my turn. Accomplishment overtook anxiety in

the place where what I did mattered to the whole rest of my life. What I learned would affect destiny or so I understood. If I couldn’t read, write, do math and complete science projects, I couldn’t very well be. School was my job; luckily I gloried in learning. But did I learn anything good or useful?

Socrates wrote “...The unexamined life is not worth living...” so I wonder about my schooling. During the freshman assembly our college president said that within five years of graduation we would have forgotten most of what we’d been taught but we would know how to look up what we needed to know, to do — whatever it was we were going to do. Which reminds me how different learning based on reading, writing and ciphering is from learning based on doing, like farming, ranching, hunting, being married and caring for the very young and very old — or apprenticing, be it carpentry, practicing law or healing.

School takes us away from the land, from creation, from the act of doing and from other generations. Knowing when a particular soil is ready for the seed is replaced with country-wide rhymes of showers and flowers. The labor of harvest is replaced with nationwide shopping for school supplies. Cultural mores and traditions with which to sustain cycles of growth and decay, birth and death, drought and flood are not taught, only how to read and write about or measure them. I feel guilty for this bleak assessment of the academic institution in which I felt so at home.

So, gratefully, I have, of all the days spent in school, one lesson not in the curriculum, taught by one teacher, which I can honor. My teacher’s face

isn’t clear, perhaps because she became, then taught me to become, a tree.

Our school was made of red brick with white brick interspersed for design. It was big, taking up a city block between building and playgrounds. It was two stories tall. Each classroom had several tall, wide windows. There was no air conditioning. When the weather was hot and humid the windows were opened from the bottom to catch any breeze that might blow through the classrooms and about the halls.

On this memorable day a bee flew in. The buzz sounded especially loud in our quietly-working, drowsy, afternoon class. Uproar began with shrieking girls and mute but cringing, trembling boys. The bee became confused by the noise and blundered into flailing arms, desks, walls and windowpanes. Made helpless by its own and our fear it couldn’t find its way out. Our teacher shouted a command to be silent.

Then she walked over and stood by the part of the windowsill where the bee hovered exhausted. Then she turned into a tree, her arm became a branch and when her finger seemed a twig, it moved as though blown by a breeze, nudging the bee to climb up and rest. Moments passed before she slowly lifted her branching arm and waved it gently out the window. Once there the bee flew away.

Thus, when you can be that which is good and useful, you need have no fear.

Marion Stuenkel is a Kyoto-compliant, anti-nuclear activist modeling simple living for her grandchildren, practicing intentional income-reduction-war-tax-resistance and eating local food.

ENCOUNTERS WITH WONDER

BONES

By Elizabeth Ayres
California, Maryland

Last week, I dreamt someone had hired a sky writer to send me messages. My name was writ large across the sky, followed by a private communication made available for public scrutiny. The next morning, I found bones on the path to the creek, three fist-sized vertebrae from some hapless deer that fit snugly together like an intricate Chinese puzzle. As instructed by my dream, I inspected the individual discovery for its collective meaning and here is what I found.

Each of our four seasons is three months long. Three is a potent number. Earth is the third planet from the sun. Plato thought the world was built from that three-sided shape, the triangle, and he wasn't far wrong, because the atomic foundation of the universe is, in fact, triune: protons, neutrons, electrons. Babylonians had three primary gods representing Heaven, Earth and the Abyss. Christians have the Blessed Trinity. Not to mention, three billy goats gruff, three witches in Macbeth and the standard three wishes every genie grants to its liberator.

From three I moved on to other patterns. I saw five osprey

orbiting each other like a feathered galaxy. Puckered sand in the shallow breakwater looked like the crimped mountains and valleys of Appalachia, not surprising, since currents of wind and water and time created both. I noticed how shrinkage patterns make identical crazing on ceramics, dried-out paint or parched earth. How certain crystalline formations echo the mind-teasing structure of a labyrinth.

Curious, I went into research mode. In the Chinese language, there is a word, "li." The character for "li" represents the markings in jade, the grain in wood, the fiber in muscle. "Li" means the dynamic forms at work in nature, great families of structure that repeat in many manifestations. Aggregations, branches, fractures, ripples will cause similar patterns in bark, soap, marble, galaxies, on an animal's skin or within the secret architecture of cells.

"Li" is also a spiritual concept. When you're centered, when you're in accord with the Tao, you move through life with the same ease as dancing waves, which are like wafting clouds, which are like flickering flames. Your soul mirrors nature's dynamic harmonies, the forces at work in trees, rivers, stars and the secret architecture of the

human heart.

Yesterday, I fell asleep on the beach. The wind scripted its fluent alphabet in the leaves, on my skin, across the water's ruffled surface. Consciousness flickered, images wafted, as spontaneous and unpredictable as which combinations of hydrogen and oxygen will froth up into what dancing wave.

September. The autumnal equinox. One season becoming another. The bones of the year interlocking with fish bones, dinosaur bones, the scattered bones of planetary nebulae. Some great organism rising from the muck of the universe. Animal, mineral and vegetable. Thinking our thoughts, dreaming our dreams, waking from our sleep to dance, to waft, to flicker through our private and public memories, scribbling messages from us to the future.

If I could read those letters, I would share them with you.

Elizabeth Ayres, author of Know the Way and Writing the Wave, is the founder of the Center for Creative Writing (CreativeWritingCenter.com). You can hear Elizabeth read on Internet radio (wryr.org), Monday evenings at 8:30 p.m. Eastern time or catch more reflections at <http://elizabethayres.wordpress.com>.



Image by Office Publisher

A Message From Mother Earth REFLECTION

By Doug Davis
Cosmic Traveler

"Churning and churning, thunder rolling, changes going. This is a huge time of change for all beings, including myself and my weather and climate. Do not be too alarmed please. Everything must change from time to time. What seems like something awful may really be a blessing in disguise. There is no 'point of no return.' There is only a symphony of existence, a new vibration, one in which the old way can no longer exist in the new one. Therefore, change is inevitable so that all of my systems may adjust to the new frequencies that are now required of me and you.

"The climate change you are experiencing is a churning of the energies. It is no different than the energies that are churning within each of you at this time in history. For the 21st century human, nothing is certain, nothing is steady and stable and everything is turn-

ing upside down and inside out.

"On an individual basis your life will continue to be this way until you are in synchronistic alignment with your Higher Being. Therefore, the climate change you see all around you is, in actuality, a reflection of the massive changes going on within the humans as a whole. You are all realigning to higher frequencies and, no, it is not easy; but, it is the right time. When your lives are topsy-turvy, so is your Mother, and she cannot help but be a bit out of synchronization, too. The toxins you put into me that cause me sickness are a reflection of the toxins you put into yourselves. You have toxic diets and toxic thoughts. So, in this way, I am reflecting what you are doing to yourselves.

"As a planetary community we are going to LIGHT. This cannot be reversed. And the process of going to LIGHT necessitates a great shedding of old skin and old structures. Do

not hold on, do not grasp onto the wall for dear life and fear of change. Embrace change and embrace the guidance within you that is showing you the New Way. Do not believe what the prophets of fear and doom tell you. Do not believe what the 'old guard' is desperately trying to sell you as 'the truth.' They fear change the most. Rather, look to your soul for all the answers and look to me as well. I am your reflection in the mirror. I am you and you are me. There is no separation. Blessings are all around you. Bless the changes and bless one another. You are deeply loved."

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 Sacredearth88@aol.com.

Secret Ways of Water

By Al Fry
Garden Valley, Idaho

If the present drought conditions continue, much of the world will face water shortages and malnutrition.

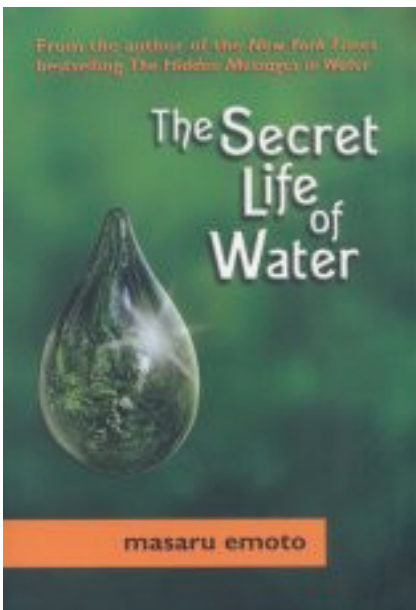
The populations just keep rising and the water supplies just keep on shrinking. Our own farmers and ranchers are facing a steady increase in water and feed costs with no end in sight. Larger cities across our nation face increasing shortages and are putting in emergency measures. Southern California just had to put in a billion-dollar pipeline from the distant Sierras. More than 30 countries are facing serious shortages and crop losses . . . with some places like India having many of its people paying around 25% of their income for drinking water.

Australia is turning into a dust bowl inland . . . while China is dumping tons of toxic cloud-seeding chemicals over its northern areas to hold off disaster there. As it is, China's rivers are so polluted most of them won't support fish.

Seeing another great profit opportunity, some corporate giants like Bechtel started buying up water rights. Thousands of Bolivians closed down Cochabamba against this assault and huge rate increases (followed).

After seeing the potential dangers of this direction, hundreds of concerned people from across the globe set up a summit meeting there and declared the use of water must be protected as a fundamental right.

Since water was furnished by our creator and nature at no cost, this is a hopeful direction, yet many westerners are still in denial and the corporate-controlled media and leaders are still "giving us hope" through management actions that only bleed us dry.



To give a better idea of how precious and unique water is, let's look at water as much more than just another commodity.

Since water takes on the electro-tonal vibes of human thoughts, it can easily be upgraded by simply 'blessing' it. Plants watered with such water are healthier. Certain priests have used such 'blessed' water to drive away negative entities for ages. Since it takes some prolonged and positive mental effort, not all 'holy water' is potent.

Media-indoctrinated folks tend to dismiss such procedures as nonsense, but in his book *The Secret Life of Water*, Masaru Emoto shows how the upgrading effect on water creates forms in lovely water crystals.

Persons proficient in kinesiology and dowsing can also measure the increase in the body's auric envelope after a blessing.

Water tends to hold and carry the emotional vibes of higher warm-blooded life forms like us humans. The great oceans gather and hold these vibes and this tends to upgrade the emotional 'cold'

species like fish. Even the sand of ocean beaches is energized by this contact. Such sand is sometimes used in 'polarity pillows' to upgrade food and certain objects. Inland sand does not have this ability.

Since the vortex action is often used by nature to upgrade water, many pollutants are easily eliminated by water going through this 'whirlpool' action. We see this most commonly in water as it swings around the rocks in a stream. Some of the old farmers of Germany had a tradition of stirring water in both a clockwise and counter-clockwise direction to energize it and benefit their plants. Biodynamic farming procedures follow along the same lines and contacts are sometimes showing up in publications like *Acres U.S.A.*

Why our leaders are poisoning our water and air with things like fluoride, chlorine and Chemtrails toxins could fill a whole book. We should get a hint of the problem when Olympic swimmers aren't allowed in chlorinated pools and no savvy researcher in their right mind would drink fluorinated water. The proof once again is in the water crystals that Emoto shows in his books. Both toxic thoughts and chemical contamination produce disfigured crystals. The same thing shows up when the pollution comes from the toxic electro-magnetic emanations from cell phones, cell phone towers, microwave ovens, etc. The sad part is, there have been remedies long suppressed.

Wilhelm Reich used long metal pipes to bring down toxic air pollution. He grounded these in running water to carry off or upgrade the pollution. Similar accounts could continue . . .

Fat and Sick?

Continued from page 10

A final point to consider reminds us that we are only beginning to understand the complex relationship between our health and our environment.

Dr. Blumberg brought up the emerging paradigm of developmental origins of adult disease. "Many of the afflictions we have as adults arise during development and early childhood as a

result of the foods we eat, the chemicals we're exposed to, a variety of factors. We need a lot more research in this area to help us prevent chronic disease in later life," he explained.

Shelby Gonzalez is a freelance writer specializing in science and the environment. She welcomes comments, inquiries and unsolicited advice at shelbygonzalez@gmail.com.

IT IS NO MEASURE OF HEALTH TO BE WELL-ADJUSTED IN A PROFOUNDLY SICK SOCIETY.

-- KRISHNAMURTI --

SUBMITTED BY KIM STENLEY, TANEYTOWN MD

Anastasia Editor's Notes

By Dr. Leonid Sharashkin

How many times have I heard personal examples of this instant recognition: people who have been searching for years or decades for meaningful answers to questions on the purpose of life, on Man's place in Nature, have finally found them in this book! . . .

But should it be surprising that the image of a way of life founded on the ideals of love, beauty and non-violence, as presented by Anastasia, would resonate so strongly with our inner self? After all, does not every one of us want to live in a free society of kind and happy people, in a world without wars, crime or oppression? In a world where not a single tear need run down a child's cheek and where families live in love and prosperity?

Do we not want to live without monstrous industries destroying and polluting both Nature and Man? Do we not want to enjoy creative labor for the benefit of both our families and our communities, instead of suffering through boring jobs merely to enrich faceless corporations? Do we not want a society based on mutual help and cooperation rather than competition? . . .



NOTE: Dear Reader — I love this book so much that I decided it would be the only book I would sell through our newspaper: \$14.95 plus \$3.05 book-rate shipping. Send a check for \$18 payable to The Order of the Earth to HCR 83 Box 881, Shade Gap, Pennsylvania 17255. Write "Anastasia" on the memo line. If you love the first one as much as I did, you may order the rest of them directly from RingingCedars.com or 800-365-6367. For the Earth, *Jena*

Sued by the Forest

Continued from page 1
from those who are defending nature to those who want to exploit it."

In the view of proponents, the idea is less outlandish than it may seem. Other nonhuman entities have long enjoyed certain rights under our legal system: ships and corporations are two examples of entities entitled to "personhood," meaning they can bring lawsuits to court.

What's more, proponents say, the extension of rights invariably seems absurd before it happens. When the economy depended on slave labor, emancipation was unfathomable even to many who abhorred slavery. In retrospect, though, it seems morally imperative and historically inevitable.

Yet bestowing rights on nature poses considerable practical and philosophical challenges. In the case of the declarations in towns like Shapleigh, it isn't always clear how they will be enforced. (So far, Nestle has not attempted to set up operations in Shapleigh but it's hard to say whether that is a result of the ordinance.)

Granting standing — the ability to sue in the name of a natural object — is a more modest, specific goal but stipulating "inalienable rights" strikes some legal experts as both vague and infeasible. Critics also argue that because the language of rights is indeed potent, we ought to be wary of diluting that force by spreading rights too thin. And they question whether the concept of rights and interests can be applied to nature in any meaningful way.

"All the interests in nature conflict. Trees fight each other for sun and water," says Mark Sagoff, an environmental philosopher at the University of Maryland. "Granting rights to nature would just be a distraction from the policy progress we've made."

The debate ultimately centers on the basis of legal rights. Historically, they have been strongly associated with human beings. All of the formerly right-less entities who now seem so clearly deserving of rights — infants, for example, or women or African-Americans — share one conspicuous trait: they're people. (Corporations and ships, it could be argued, represent conglomerations of people.) When extended to animals, rights have often been based on affinities with humans: sentience, the ability to suffer. The question is how starkly we distinguish between human and nonhuman life. Is membership in the biosphere alone enough to merit rights?

The notion of nature's rights has long been cherished in environmentalist circles; the idea cropped up in the writings of Sierra Club founder John Muir in the late 19th century and the influential ecologist Aldo Leopold in the mid-20th century.

But the first sustained legal argument is usually attributed to

Christopher Stone, a law professor at the University of Southern California. In 1972, Stone wrote an article entitled "Should Trees Have Standing?" which laid out the case for expanding rights that is now commonly cited. (The essay, originally published in the *Southern California Law Review*, will be reissued by Oxford University Press in 2010.)

Stone lamented that, although one could sue to protect nonhuman life, one had to prove "injury" to humans. Damages, when awarded, went to compensate the human plaintiff, not to restore the natural object. He argued that natural objects themselves should be eligible to be plaintiffs (represented, of course, by human trustees or guardians). Furthermore, the natural objects should benefit directly from a favorable judgment — funds should go to restoring the damage wrought. Stone drew an analogy to the legal status of "incompetents," such as children or senile elders, who may not be able to articulate their interests; guardians can make informed judgments about those interests and represent them in court.

As it happened, a highly pertinent case was before the Supreme Court at the time. In *Sierra Club v. Morton*, argued in 1971, the Sierra Club tried to stop Walt Disney Enterprises from building a ski resort in a pristine California valley called Mineral King. The Court decided that the Sierra Club itself lacked standing, although it could sue on behalf of its members, who could claim they suffered recreational or aesthetic injuries (for example, from the lost opportunity to hike in the area).

Serendipitously, Justice William O. Douglas had been slated to write the preface for an issue of the *Southern California Law Review* and Stone had rushed his article into that issue, hoping that the justice would read it.

The strategy worked: Douglas dissented, echoing Stone's thesis. "Contemporary public concern for protecting nature's ecological equilibrium should lead to the conferral of standing upon environmental objects to sue for their own preservation," he wrote. "This suit would therefore be more properly labeled as *Mineral King v. Morton*."

For a time, the idea appeared to gain some currency. In 1973, the Endangered Species Act became law, including a provision for "citizen suits" on behalf of listed species. The provision, Professor Callicott has argued, grants *de facto* standing to the endangered wildlife (although this view is controversial). In any case, the law implicitly recognized the worth of life that has no instrumental use for people.

In 1974, Laurence Tribe, the prominent Harvard law professor, elaborated on Stone's reasoning in an article for the *Yale Law Journal*. He wrote that the legal system's focus on human

injuries reinforced anthropocentric values, creating a vicious circle that could further increase callousness to other life forms: "What the environmentalist may not perceive is that, by couching his claim in terms of human self-interest — by articulating environmental goals wholly in terms of human needs and preferences — he may be helping to legitimate a system of discourse which so structures human thought and feeling as to erode, over the long run, the very sense of obligation which provided the initial impetus for his own protective efforts."

In 2008, Francisco Benzoni, then a business professor at Duke, published an article in the *Duke Environmental Law and Policy Forum*, citing Tribe's paper and reviving the point. "The current jurisprudence on standing embeds a value theory without any articulation or discussion about whether that's the value theory we should adopt," says Benzoni.

In the intervening years, a number of lawsuits have named nonhumans, usually animals, as plaintiffs. The rulings have been inconsistent. In one oft-cited case, *Palila v. Hawaii*, in 1988, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals explicitly endorsed the standing of a bird, writing that it "has legal status and wings its way into federal court as a plaintiff in its own right." In 2004, however, the same court (but different judges) dismissed that statement as nonbinding "rhetorical flourishes."

The need to frame arguments in terms of their human effects has led to some almost comically contorted claims. In *Animal Welfare Institute v. Krepis*, in 1977, several environmentalist groups sued to stop U.S. firms from importing baby sealskins from South Africa, asserting that their members suffered aesthetic, recreational and educational losses from the brutal deaths of the seals. One of the members announced a plan to visit South Africa. Remarkably, the groups won the case on appeal. But some who applauded the outcome question the method.

"Oh, for Pete's sake, just sue in the name of the seals," says Stone, the author of the seminal paper on rights for nature. "The seals are being bludgeoned to death and somebody's saying, 'I want to be seeing seals.' That's not what it's about. It's a very backwards way of getting the case into court."

Some champions of nature's rights see a glimmer of promise in a recent ruling. In the 2004 case *Cetacean Community v. Bush*, about the effect of the Navy's use of sonar on whales and dolphins, the Ninth Circuit, which is one level below the Supreme Court, denied standing to the creatures.

However, the opinion left an opening, noting that "nothing in the text of Article III [of the U.S.

Continued on page 15



Roadless Areas Safe Again

Bush-era Negligence in Protecting Wilderness Reversed

Earthjustice Email
August 6, 2009

In a huge win for America's last truly wild places — and for Earthjustice — a federal appeals court has restored protections against roadbuilding, logging and other development on over 40 million acres of national forests.

We couldn't have won this case without your support and we thank you for adding your voice to the chorus of American citizens who demanded roadless area protection.

These roadless forests are a national treasure — the last remaining strongholds for grizzly bears, wolves, elk, salmon and trout. Nearly 60 million acres were originally protected by the landmark 2001 Roadless Rule.

But eight years of attacks by the Bush administration and the logging industry hacked away at forest protection, leaving a confusing legacy in which forests were protected in some parts of the country but not others and the rule itself was under legal challenge by the Forest Service.

This week's unanimous ruling by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals goes a long way toward clearing things up. The Court said the watered-down roadless policy put forth by the

Bush administration was illegal and reinstated the original 2001 Roadless Rule throughout the country except for Alaska's Tongass National Forest and Idaho.

This is tremendous news and it should be a powerful encouragement to President Obama — who as both a senator and a candidate for the White House supported the 2001 Roadless Rule — to do whatever is necessary to protect roadless areas throughout the land.

The Court's decision brought encouraging words from the administration, as a spokesman said: "The Obama administration supports conservation of roadless areas in our national forests and this decision today reaffirms the protection of these resources."

Choices, Challenge

By Sally Klein, Bedford PA

Must choice be a burden?
Why not ease instead?
Good Books promise abundance, if we just believe.
Believe in what?

An array of unseen promises,
Illusive, out of reach?
Consciousness is a painful challenge
Numbness seems a blessing.

Fear, suffering, pain, greed,
Drown beauty, balance and delight.
Every choice a struggle
In the battle of Dark and Light.

One step forward, more steps back
Reeling from the pain.
Where is the flow?
The light of peace?

This journey feels so lonesome and my spirit craves to share
The bounty and the emptiness, a song of deep despair.
To celebrate sensation if I catch a whiff of bliss.
Who will join me to Imagine?

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Thanks for your continued support.

TO BE (vaccinated) OR NOT TO BE THAT IS THE QUESTION

It's Deja Vu
All Over Again —
And Then Some

By C. Gonzo
Casper Wyoming

(The following is not intended to instill fear but simply to be a source of information.)

The year was 1976. Gerald Ford was President by default, being gifted the office in exchange for granting a pardon to Richard Nixon. Big Pharma had come up with a brain-child to make Big Bucks and they called it Swine Flu. A major advertising campaign was put in motion by the government, warning about the next deadly disease to sweep the planet and encouraging all Americans to get their Swine Flu shot before it's too late. Even though, in reality, there was little to no indication that this Swine Flu was a major threat to anyone, anywhere, it was being pushed by the Government, through television advertising, as though this was the next Bubonic Plague.

Some forty million Americans fell for the scam and went ahead and allowed their bodies to be injected with this toxic concoction, arguably more deadly than the Swine Flu it was purportedly going to keep at bay.

More than 500 persons who received the Swine Flu shots between October 1 and December 16, 1976, subsequently contracted Guillain-Barre Syndrome, a paralyzing nerve disease. Twenty-five of them died, while only one person died as a result of the Swine Flu. No pandemic ever materialized and the Swine Flu was confined to Fort Dix, New Jersey. Go figure.

In 1979, CBS' '60 Minutes' did an exposé showing what a fraud the 1976 Swine Flu virus scare had been. That particular episode was then buried and not shown again. Recently, it has resurfaced and may be seen at: <http://loveforlife.com.au/node/6636>.

So here we go again, the proverbial history repeating itself. The year is 2009. B. H. Obama is President, thanks in a large part to banking cartel member Goldman Sachs, his largest campaign contributor. And once again Big Pharma has resurrected an old, stinking, decomposing brain-child to once again make Big Bucks. And once again they are calling it Swine Flu. But wait — this — this is something other. This Swine Flu has been shown to have been almost certainly created in a lab and contains avian, human and swine genes.

This combination would

have to be considered an extraordinarily rare event in the annals of nature. In order for this to have been a natural combination of viral fragments, an infected bird from North America would have had to infect pigs in Europe, then be re-infected by those same pigs with an unlikely cross-species mutation that allowed the bird to carry it again, then that bird would have had to fly to Asia and infect pigs there and those Asian pigs would then have had to mutate the virus once again, while preserving the European swine and bird elements (to become human transmittable) and then a human would have had to catch the virus from the Asian pigs — while in Mexico, where the disease was first reported. Right!!!! All indications are that this virus was created in a laboratory. The question is: WHY?

But wait! There's even more. Baxter International, headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, currently has criminal charges filed against it in Austria for surreptitiously releasing 72 kilograms (that's some 158 pounds) of contaminated, highly lethal Bird Flu vaccine material to four countries in Europe in January of this year, 2009 — enough to kill the world population several times over. This Bird Flu vaccine is classified as a biological weapon in both the U.S. and Europe (sounds like something I'd want injected into my body). With extremely tight safety standards in place for their labs, the release of this massive amount of tainted material can only be perceived as intentional.

Now for a really tough question that I'm pretty sure none of you are going to come close to answering correctly: Who do you think the WHO (World Health Organization) gave a massive contract to for producing Swine Flu vaccines? And this is after Baxter International was caught red-handed attempting to create a pandemic. Give up? You won't believe this, because according to the WHO's constitution its objective is "the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health" and, according to their Web site, one of the steps on their agenda is to "harness research, information and evidence."

So, in what obviously had to have been a state of super-charged mass confusion, they awarded it to none other than Baxter International. Huh? It's beginning to smell like someone stepped on a fresh dog turd here.

And it only gets stranger. Baxter International also received a contract from the U.S. government to create millions of doses of a vaccine for

this Swine Flu even before the first case of this Swine Flu had been introduced into the general public in Mexico. Huh? Someone please clean up that stepped-on dog turd.

Can it get any weirder? Of course it can. We are, after all, dealing with Illuminati corporatocracy here, where profit and power are more important than petty human life. In 2005, President Bush — remember him? idiot savant, spoiled rich kid, boy President — handed over to the WHO and the UN the right to take over this country in case of a declared Phase 6 pandemic, giving them the right to impose martial law and a mandatory vaccination of all U.S. citizens, with the authority to place in detention centers or shoot those that resist.

How's that for a choice — you can either get injected with a toxic concoction that has a 60% chance of killing you or you can be sent to a FEMA detention center (can you say "concentration camp") if they haven't shot you first. Oh yah, they also can confiscate (steal) all of your property and belongings — what the hell, you won't be needing them anymore.

All of this is giving me a headache. So what to do?

First off, never, never, never — ever — under any circumstances, allow yourself and/or your children to be injected with this vaccine or any other vaccine for that matter. You have been lied to since Day One. It has been proven that vaccines of any kind do not work and never have. If you believe they do, then you have been brainwashed by the medical terrorists' propaganda and have probably been watching too much television.

Furthermore, all indications are that this particular vaccine is intended to 'thin out' the population of planet Earth. The word 'genocide' comes to mind. Of course, even if this forced inoculation of the planet never comes to pass, the idea that it could, can create enough fear to feed our not-so-friendly reptilian 'controllers' for years.

My advice is to forget about all that you have read above, feel the love in your heart and let your light shine brightly. Darkness only prevails when the light has been extinguished. So concentrate on being the gods and goddesses that we really are and allow our transformation to be one of peace and love.

Namaste.

C. Gonzo is a pen name for Charlie Laux, a writer, photographer and part-time Nature Spirit, who currently resides on the wind-swept high plains of Wyoming.



Image from Office Publisher

The Startling Effects of Going Vegetarian for Just One Day

By Kathy Freston
Huffington Post via Alternet.org

I've written extensively on the consequences of eating meat — on our health, our sense of "right living" and on the environment. It is one of those daily practices that has such a broad and deep effect that I think it merits looking at over and over again, from all the different perspectives. Sometimes, solutions to the world's biggest problems are right in front of us. The following statistics are eye-opening, to say the least.

If everyone went vegetarian just for one day, the U.S. would save:

- 100 billion gallons of water, enough to supply all the homes in New England for almost 4 months;
- 1.5 billion pounds of crops otherwise fed to livestock, enough to feed the state of New Mexico for more than a year;
- 70 million gallons of gas — enough to fuel all the cars of Canada and Mexico combined with plenty to spare;
- 3 million acres of land, an area more than twice the size of Delaware; and
- 33 tons of antibiotics.

If everyone went vegetarian just for one day, the U.S. would prevent:

- Greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to 1.2 million tons of CO₂, as much as produced by all of France;
- 3 million tons of soil ero-

sion and \$70 million in resulting economic damages;

- 4.5 million tons of animal excrement; and
- Almost 7 tons of ammonia emissions, a major air pollutant.

My favorite statistic is this: According to Environmental Defense, if every American skipped one meal of chicken per week and substituted vegetarian foods instead, the carbon dioxide savings would be the same as taking more than half a million cars off of U.S. roads.

See how easy it is to make an impact?

Other points

Globally, we feed 756 million tons of grain to farm animals. As Princeton bioethicist Peter Singer notes in his new book, if we fed that grain to the 1.4 billion people who are living in abject poverty, each of them would be provided more than half a ton of grain or about three pounds of grain a day — that's twice the grain they would need to survive. And that doesn't even include the 225 million tons of soy that are produced every year, almost all of which is fed to farm animals. He writes, "The world is not running out of food. The problem is that we — the relatively affluent — have found a way to consume four or five times as much food as would be possible if we were to eat the crops we grow directly."

.....
Valerie Stanley will be back next month. She's working on a story of the government's war on wild horses and cooking up a story on the school lunch program.
.....

"And it is of course trucks and automobiles and jet fuel — the hard facts of modernity — that have made both God and horses increasingly irrelevant to our culture.

What is lost is our respect and affection for — our connectedness to — our fellow creatures, as well as a divine admonition to care for them properly."

T. M. McNally

Light Pollution: Problems and Solutions

Continued from page 9
tributes to a loss of natural darkness. Wildlife, too, is harmed by the unnecessary brightening of the night. From newly hatched sea turtles to migrating birds, fish, frogs, salamanders and lighting bugs, artificial night lighting disrupts the cycles of nocturnal creatures in potentially devastating ways. While research is still ongoing, it is becoming apparent that both bright days and dark nights are necessary to maintain healthy hormone production, cell function and brain activity, as well as normal feeding, mating and migratory behavior for many species, including humans.

Paradoxically, in addition to wasting resources, a nighttime environment that is over-lit results in lowered visibility: direct glare from improperly shielded fixtures is often blinding. Light spilling into the sky does not light the ground where we need it. The redundant lighting found in many urban centers results in a clutter of lights that contribute to sky glow, trespass

and glare while destroying the ambiance of our nighttime environment.

Our eyes, when dark-adapted, have good natural capacity in low-light situations. But when nightscapes are over-lit, eyes never have a chance to become dark-adapted and areas adjacent to brightly-lit areas become impenetrable, reducing safety. *Some communities have experienced a decrease in crime by reducing or eliminating nighttime lighting in appropriate areas. (Italics added)*

Light pollution wastes money and energy. Billions of dollars are spent on unnecessary lighting every year in the United States alone. International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) estimates that over \$2.2 billion is spent on stray outdoor light lost to the night sky via unshielded outdoor lights every year. The same wasted energy represents 14.7 million tons of carbon dioxide released into the environment annually. Simply reducing and removing unnecessary lighting saves money and energy, often at

minimal expense. Over-lighting the night neither improves visibility nor increases nighttime safety, utility, security or ambiance.

Many homeowners, city planners and lighting contractors rely on the theory that "more is better" when it comes to lighting our nightscapes. We have learned, however, that the glare of excessive light can actually reduce visibility and that well-planned lighting can save money, decrease crime and improve nighttime ambiance. Learning what does and does not constitute quality lighting is the next step toward implementing simple, common-sense strategies for effective, efficient outdoor lighting. Set a good example in your own environment and when selecting or recommending an outdoor fixture, refer to the guidelines suggested in the Practical Actions below.

Practical Actions

Use light only when and where it's needed. Turn off lights when they are not needed and

create a curfew for lights-out. Minimize interim light use with timers and motion detectors.

Use only as much light as needed. Over-lighting reduces the eye's ability to see outside of the lit area. In addition, excess light can produce glare, which also reduces visibility. Selecting the correct lamp wattage for your needs increases safety and reduces costs.

Shine lights down, not up. A well-designed fixture will direct the light where it's needed most — at the ground.

Select new fixtures that are fully shielded; retrofit or replace poor quality fixtures. For more information on selecting dark-sky-friendly fixtures, refer to IDA's Web site (www.darksky.org) and the fixtures featured in the IDA Fixture Seal of Approval program.

Use efficient light sources for outdoor lighting around homes and businesses. Consider a compact fluorescent or an outdoor LED lamp for energy-efficient lighting. A low-wattage lamp offers plenty of light for most

properties and activities and often increases ambiance as well. Also consider using energy saving devices such as timers, dimmers or motion sensors on outdoor lights. These applications work with you to protect the night sky automatically, lowering energy costs in the process.

Educate others. Educating the public, government officials and lighting professionals is an important part of combating light pollution. Share what you know about the value and effectiveness of quality outdoor lighting with your friends, neighbors and community leaders.

Get Involved. Encourage your community to implement lighting regulations. The "Get Help" section of the IDA Web site offers many resources to help you get started. "Simple Guidelines for Lighting Regulations" and the "Homeowner's Guide to Outdoor Lighting" are especially informative.

We could all see the sky as our ancestors once saw it just by turning off the lights. Solutions exist now for the problem of

light pollution and control programs are underway in many communities. Education and personal action can begin in your own neighborhood. IDA's Web site provides sample letters and information to help you implement constructive solutions to lighting problems in your community. Community involvement has paved the way for the adoption of outdoor lighting codes and ordinances essential to the long-term preservation and protection of our dark skies in a number of communities across the country and in states such as New Mexico, New Hampshire and Hawaii. Thousands of communities now employ lighting ordinances to regulate nighttime lighting.

Light pollution affects every citizen. It is a serious environmental concern that wastes money and resources while jeopardizing wildlife, our environment, health and human heritage. Each of us can implement practical solutions to combat light pollution locally, nationally and internationally.

Grassroots Power



Photo Courtesy of Atlantic Salmon Federation

Endangered Atlantic Salmon Earn Expanded Protection in Maine

Receive 12,000 River Miles of Critical Habitat

Center for Biological Diversity
Press Release, June 16, 2009

RICHMOND, Vermont, June 16, 2009 — Responding to lawsuits filed in 2007 and 2008 by the Center for Biological Diversity and other groups, the National Marine Fisheries Service has protected Atlantic salmon in three additional river systems in Maine under the Endangered Species Act, including the Penobscot, Kennebec and Androscoggin rivers and designated about 12,000 miles of rivers and estuaries, as well as 300 square miles of lakes, as critical habitat.

"Maine's wild salmon deserve a fighting chance and now they have it," said Mollie Matteson, conservation advocate for the Center. "Dams, pollution, water withdrawals and other threats must be curbed or stopped if Atlantic salmon are to have a future in Maine."

Atlantic salmon populations have declined dramatically throughout most of their range along the eastern seaboard and in the rivers they return to for spawning. Dams, overfishing, degradation of river habitat, introduction of nonnative fish species and water diversions

have all taken a heavy toll.

Designation of critical habitat is a key component of protecting and recovering endangered species and is required by law. In 2000, salmon in several smaller rivers in eastern Maine were listed as endangered but the government failed to designate federally-protected habitat.

The Center and the Conservation Law Foundation filed suit in 2007. In May of 2008, the Center, along with Friends of Merrymeeting Bay and activist Douglas Watts, filed suit to expand salmon protection to include Maine's most significant rivers. The Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released a preliminary decision on both critical habitat and listing expansion in September of last year. This week's action finalizes the initial proposal made last fall.

Conservationists are celebrating the new legal protections for the imperiled fish but point to a significant shortcoming in the critical habitat designation. Only currently-occupied habitat is protected at this time.

"The point of federal protection is to recover species," states Matteson. "The salmon is in grave danger of extinction, in part because of its severely and artificially limited range. It makes no logical sense to say we will only protect its present range. Its historic habitats must be protected, too, if recovery is ever to become reality."



Help Save the Earth, Time to Substitute Hemp for Oil

By Dara Colwell
Alternet.org, June 18, 2009 (excerpt)

As the recession renews interest in the growing hemp marketplace as a potential boon for the green economy — even Fox Business News has touted it — hemp is becoming impossible to ignore. But the plant's potential extends far beyond consumer-generated greenbacks. A low-input, low-impact crop, industrial hemp can play a significant role in our desperate shuffle to avoid catastrophic climate change.

"In terms of sustainability, there are numerous reasons to grow hemp," says Patrick Goggin, a board member on the California Council for Vote Hemp, the nation's leading industrial-hemp advocacy group.

Goggin launches into its environmental benefits: Hemp requires no pesticides; it has deep digging roots that detoxify the soil, making it an ideal rotation crop — in fact, hemp is so good at bioremediation, or extracting heavy metals from contaminated soil, it's being grown near Chernobyl.

Hemp is also an excellent

source of biomass, or renewable, carbon-neutral energy, and its cellulose level, roughly three times that of wood, can be used for paper to avoid cutting down trees, an important line of defense against global warming.

When it comes to hemp, environmental gains are inexorably intertwined with economic ones. The auto industry, hardly synonymous with being green but which has had the research dollars to apply new technology, can vouch for Goggin. For years European car makers have been using hemp-fiber-reinforced composite materials to replace fiberglass, and in other components, such as door panels or dashboards. Now their American counterparts have joined in.

Blending hemp with plastics is not only cheaper for producers but natural-fiber composites are roughly 30 percent lighter, which in turn leads to greater fuel efficiency for customers. And when they finally hit the junkyard, those parts partially biodegrade. Ford, General Motors, Chrysler, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Honda, all use this technology . . .

Law and Order of the Earth The Eco Squad

Episode 2:
The Compost Spiker

By Mark Lautman
Rockville, Maryland

Detective David Laslow, chief of Central Pennsylvania's Eco-Squad, heard his cell phone ring. By the tone he could tell it was his deputy, Jane Morgan.

"Morgan," said Laslow into the handset. "I told you that there are two days in the entire year when nobody is allowed to call me. Do you remember that?"

"Yes, sir, I do remember." "The first day is December 15. That's my anniversary. Mrs. Laslow doesn't like for us to be disturbed on December 15."

"I recall that, sir." "That's when she makes sandwiches made of white bread and processed American cheese slices."

"Yes, sir. You've mentioned that Mrs. Laslow isn't completely subscribed to the wholesome diet thing."

"Very good, Morgan, you've been listening. Well, today is September 1, so it's not my anniversary. What do I do on September 1 that is so important that I can't be interrupted?"

"Sir, it's a little embarrassing. I'd rather not say over the phone."

"Then I'll say it for you. On this day I get my annual colon hydrotherapy. At my age, deputy, this invasive ceremony is more important than my anniversary."

"Sir, I am truly sorry to disobey orders but we've had another incident of spiked compost. I think you'd better get over to Johnson's farm right away. He's scared and mad."

"All right," said a frustrated Laslow. "I'll be on my way as soon as Bruno here disconnects me. I'll see you at Johnson's place in 20 minutes."

When Detective Laslow arrived at the scene, Mortimer Johnson was upset beyond control. "I put months into that compost pile!" he moaned. "My scrapings from last Thanksgiving's mashed potatoes, all nice and aerated, are in there. Now look what happened! With all that protein contamination, I'll never be able to win at the county fair."

"Take it easy, Mortimer," comforted Laslow. "Let's take a look at the damage." Laslow made his way to the compost pile. What he saw was the second worst thing he'd ever encountered in his twenty years on the Eco Squad.

"Maude Shearson's pizza is the only thing worse than this," he mused. "She uses fat-free, lactose-free cheese as a topping. It looks nasty and tastes worse. Nevertheless, this vandalized compost pile is horrific."

Laslow noted the animal tissue strewn throughout the pile and remembered his mother-in-law's admonition when he made his first compost pile. "Never put animal-based protein in your compost pile," she said. "And never, ever, ever put my daughter's cooking in there, either. If she complains to me that you're tossing her Chinese egg-rice-and-ketchup combo in the compost, I'll have the mayor fire you. Is that clear?"

It was shortly after eating his first few portions of Chinese egg-rice-and-ketchup combo that Laslow had decided to start with his annual colon hydrotherapy appointments.

"Morgan," said Laslow to his deputy, "I see here tuna flakes and a few opened cans of tuna. We had an attack like this last week, correct?"

"Yes, sir. Before then we had three tuna attacks a year ago, last August." "That's what I recall as well," said the detective. "Mortimer mentioned the county fair. When is it scheduled?"

"In two weeks, sir." "Who won last year's compost entry?"

"It was Kim Walker, down near Unger's store on Route 68. He sure had a beauty. Nice uniform texture, rich black color and the best darn carbon-nitrogen ratio for growing Dingwall Scotty heirloom tomatoes. In fact, boss, I used a pound of Walker's compost to grow a Dingwall Scotty in my backyard. I was so amazed at the size of the thing I was afraid that I had planted a strain of Frankendoom! I shared it with my cousin Steve. He normally doesn't give a rip about organic vegetables but since he ate a Dingwall Scotty, I can hardly keep him from. . ."

"Morgan, let's take a few of those tuna cans and visit with Walker."

Laslow and Morgan traveled to Unger's store where they found Kim Walker in line to check out some groceries. "Hi, Mr. Walker," said Laslow. "It's a beautiful day, isn't it? Sort of a shame to spend it inside the grocery store."

Walker seemed a bit shaken at the officers' arrival. "Sure is, detective," he replied. "Listen, I'd love to talk but I need to get back home. Mrs. Walker is rehearsing her vocal medley for the county fair."

"Sure thing," said Officer Morgan. "Can I help you carry the groceries to your car?"

"No, thanks. I can manage." "Please," insisted Morgan. "We at the Eco Squad want to serve the public. Let me just grab that bag and I'll take it right over to your. . ."

As Morgan grabbed the bag, it ripped and its contents fell onto the ground. There were 15 cans of tuna — all of them in oil and not one of them labeled as dolphin safe.

"Kim, that's awfully strange," said Laslow. "You're one of the most militant vegans in Huntingdon County. Why on Earth would you buy canned tuna?"

"It's for this new diesel fuel recipe Mrs. Walker is trying," stammered Walker. "She figures if you squeeze the canned fish, the oil can replace all the biodiesel fuel made by the big agricultural conglomerates."

"These cans match those we found in Mortimer Johnson's compost pile," said an unconvinced Laslow. "Why don't we talk about all of this at the station."

It wasn't the extended interrogation that broke Walker. It was the psychological threats. It was the recording of cricket chirping mixed with beluga whale calls.

"OK, I'll talk, just turn that noise off! Look, do you guys have any idea how much I get for a kilogram of pure, virgin, cold-pressed compost? The big-box organic supermarkets insist that their suppliers use the stuff. I can't let those losers like Mortimer Johnson win the best compost prize! I have my own expenses to cover."

Walker was charged and convicted of vandalism. His sentence was harsh. For the next year he was to chair the meetings of the Happy Apple Blossom Organic Food Co-op — the most cantankerous group of metropolitan refugees in the Northern Hemisphere.

We'll meet them at next month's Green Party.

Mark Lautman routinely adds cumin, coriander and freshly ground black pepper to his own compost pile. He has written a novel called *Biofun*.



Photo by Helda Martínez/IPS

Journalist Herrán and graduate student Ávila argue their opposition to the mine.

Women Lead Fight Against Gold Mine

By Helda Martínez
IPS Gender Wire

IBAGUÉ, Colombia, August 3, 2009 (IPS, excerpt) — Women in the small Andean town of Cajamarca and the nearby city of Ibagué, in the central-west Colombian province of Tolima, are leading the struggle against a major gold mining venture that threatens to alter their way of life.

Despite differences in social and economic conditions, one thing that unites women from these two Tolima communities — separated by only a few kilometres on the Pan-American Highway but otherwise worlds apart — is their wariness over a mining project that promises prosperity for a few while posing a threat to the natural environment and rural livelihoods.

It all began in 2006, when the South Africa-based mining giant AngloGold Ashanti (AGA) — which had prospecting permits from the Ministry of Mines to explore 27 areas in the province, including 15 in the municipality — discovered gold in a field near Cajamarca.

The quiet life of Cajamarca, a farming town of 25,000 people who mostly live off agriculture and cattle-raising activities, was disrupted as soon as exploration began in a mine called La Colosa, less than four miles from the town's limits.

Following the initial euphoria spurred by the mirage of possibilities conjured by newfound gold, excitement among the locals died down as they realized the consequences that mining would have on their soil and their water resources, prompting them to begin organizing in opposition to an activity that also threatened to have a negative social impact.

The gold deposit found by the mining company is located in a forest reserve created by a 1959 law. The area also holds significant water resources that are critical for the protected forestland, the region's ecosystems and agricultural production.

According to critics, the intensive, open-pit mining activities that would be required to extract the gold would take a heavy toll on water resources and severely affect crops. Furthermore, the use of cyanide and other chemicals in the leaching process necessary to separate the gold metal from the rest of the minerals would pollute the groundwater.

Twenty-two miles from Cajamarca, in the provincial capital of Ibagué — a cultural centre of over half a million people with nine universities — women students are playing a leading role in the mobilization against the mining project.

According to Ministry of Education figures, women outnumber men by two percentage points in the universities of the Tolima capital, whose economy is based on agriculture-related commerce and activities and tourism.

Cajamarca has no centers of higher education but there are still more women than men from that small town pursuing university studies. Of the 463 residents who in 2005 were enrolled in universities, more than 58 percent were women, according to that year's national census.

But discrimination in the region has no consideration for education and, when it comes to the labor market, it is the women of Ibagué, and especially those of Cajamarca, who have a harder

time finding employment. Poverty also hits these women the hardest, says Diana Ávila, an economics student at the University of Tolima who is writing her thesis on these issues.

"Many women can only find work as domestics and the conditions they are employed under are usually unfavourable," Ávila told IPS. Journalist María Alexandra Herrán added that the social and economic conditions in Cajamarca are also forcing "girls and young women into prostitution, in some cases even pushed by members of their own family."

"Cajamarca is a place where outsiders are permanently passing through — operating as a truck stop, for example — and this makes it vulnerable to prostitution, resulting in a high incidence of sexually transmitted diseases," she told IPS.

United Against La Colosa

Opposition against La Colosa gathered strength in December 2007 when AGA announced that its prospecting operations had confirmed that the site held one of the world's ten largest gold deposits.

Anti-mining activism spurred a social mobilization that currently involves 28 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), most of them formed over the past year. What all of these groups have in common is prominent participation by women.

"We have an even number of men and women but the women have a more active participation," said Ávila, an activist with Conciencia Ambiental (Environmental Awareness), one of the NGOs mobilizing against the mining project.

Cristian Frasser, another economics undergraduate who studies with Ávila, told IPS that women, both university students and peasants, "are contributing enormously to resistance efforts."

He also described the actions taken by Carmen Sofía Bonilla, director of the province's top environmental authority, Corporación Autónoma Regional de Tolima, as "brave."

Bonilla's refusal to give in to pressures has made her a hero to La Colosa opponents. She applied environmental protection regulations to the letter and put forward technical arguments to first reduce the area that AGA could explore and then push for a freeze on such activities.

Another Tolima woman, Liberal Party legislator Rossmery Martínez, called for a debate in the national House of Representatives, questioning the legality of gold prospecting in a protected forest area and won leftist Senator Gloria Inés Ramírez over to the cause.

Bonilla's actions, the legislative debate and subsequent public hearings in Ibagué and Bogotá convinced the Ministry of the Environment to suspend activities in La Colosa in February 2008, pending the outcome of an environmental feasibility study that will determine if the mining project is authorized under the current legislation that protects and limits the use of the area's forestlands and water resources.

Since then, more and more women university students, in particular those in forestry engineering and economics programs, have become involved in the campaign against the gold mine, as they are aware that the freeze on activities is only temporary. . .

If humanity is in darkness, knows nothing of reality, then it can be exploited easily, enslaved easily, deceived easily, kept poor, dependent.

-- Osho, found on The Meria Show, www.Meria.net

Sued by the Forest

Continued from page 12

Constitution] explicitly limits the ability to bring a claim in federal court to humans." It would be up to Congress, the judge suggested, that to stipulate that the nonhuman life under a law's protection has standing to sue. Some environmentalists, such as the staff at the Center for Earth Jurisprudence, now hope Congress can be persuaded to do just that — and their ideal legislation would not be limited to animals, either.

Among scholars with environmentalist sympathies, there is vigorous debate over whether standing for natural objects is the most sensible approach to defending ecosystems. After all, it's possible to enlarge the scope of our concern and protection without granting legal rights *per se*. Rights advocates contend that presenting legal cases in terms of human impacts is too anthropocentric but critics invert that logic. They say we are projecting onto nature our assumptions about its interests. Ultimately, in

their view, even the most radical environmentalist embodies human values and we should just say so.

Richard Stewart, a law professor at New York University, believes that inanimate objects such as trees and rivers do not have interests or values. Rather, he says, the argument really concerns "human ideas about what's good for nature."

The distinction can be subtle. It doesn't mean we must diminish the worth we assign to nature; it just means acknowledging that we as a society are assigning the value. We could, for example, liberalize standing for humans — make it easy for people to sue to protect nature, without granting official standing to the natural objects. If we could sue to preserve a valley because developing it offends our moral sensibilities, this would indicate that nature matters beyond its strictly instrumental uses. But, according to this perspective, it matters to us humans, not in some transcendent way that is independent of our judgments . . .

'The Cove'

Continued from page 3

sorts that will get them into the cove and capture the horror on film.

It's reminiscent of 'Oceans 11' to be sure — there are underwater sound and camera experts, special-effects artists to hide microphones in fake rocks, marine explorers and world-renowned free divers who help get the gear into place, and unmanned drones.

There are secret night-time missions, viewed on film with military-grade thermal cameras, where the crew is constantly dodging either the police, the Japanese mafia or irate fishermen. It's a thriller. You're perched on the edge of your seat wondering if they'll get the footage they need or if they'll get nabbed. Sometimes it's so engaging, you forget to wonder if you actually want to see what they're trying to tape. And that's the film's greatest accomplishment.

Mixed into the night-vision goggles and camouflage narrative are the images and interviews that make you realize why these people are risking their lives to make a movie: to save some dolphins.

These creatures are incredible. And the filmmaking is incredibly beautiful — like 'Winged Migration' with cetaceans. If they get the footage, you're going to want to see it, you're going to have to, because of the injustice of it.

There's also another layer of complexity to the film. There's the political stuff. Commercial whaling was outlawed in 1986 but dolphins — members of the same family — aren't protected.

The International Whaling Commission deems them "small cetaceans" and, apparently, therefore worthy of slaughter.

Japan, which has tripled its dolphin killing since the ban, kills 23,000 dolphins each year and thousands more are sold into captivity.

The country is also trying to overturn the whaling ban and, as the film shows, it is offering financial support to small, bankrupt nations to get folks on their side.

And there's also some serious health issues. Dolphins, sadly, are toxic-waste dumps these days. Their meat has been shown to have up to 1,000 times the allowable level of mercury. Eating their meat could be hazardous to a person's health but often consumers may not know they're eating it.

'The Cove' shows that dolphin meat is sometimes passed off as whale meat — and was even being served in school lunches in Taiji.

All this might seem a little depressing. And in some ways, it is. But you won't notice until after the film because you'll be so blown away by what's on screen. It will captivate you, it will break your heart and, hopefully, it will make you jump out of your seat and help.

And if so, here's what you can do:

- Learn more about dolphins in captivity.
- Choose the safest fish to eat.
- Help those on the front line by visiting *Save Japan's Dolphins*.
- Support the *Ocean Preservation Society with your donation*.

But for starters, gather up your own pod and go see the film.

Tara Lohan is a senior editor at AlterNet. You can follow her on Twitter @TaraLohan.

Sharing The Order of the Earth

Hi Iona,

I just received a fairly large shipment of your August issue. Thanks a million for sending it!

Rest assured that I will sell them all for \$1.00 each and forward the proceeds to you. I plan to take a dozen or so with me on the Canada trip. I've posted a link to the online version of your newsletter here: <http://wm-dindc.blogspot.com/2009/07/munitions-destruction-postponed-again.html>.

Keep up the good work. In solidarity,
Allen Hengst, Washington, D.C.

Dear Iona,

Thanks for continuing to publish your fine newspaper. I wish you continued success.

Of course I always look forward to reading my friend, Marion Stuenkel's, "On The Examined Life" articles.

I plan to try again to encourage the local co-op market to gain some interest in the newspaper.

Best Always, In Peace,
Susan McKinstry, New Mexico

Hello Iona,

Enclosed is a donation in support of your good work and to honor our friend Sally Klein whose article recently appeared in *The Order of the Earth*.

All the best to you,
Judy Funderburk, Virginia

Future Internet Sales Tax

E-Bay, Amazon and Internet Sellers: Get Ready to Collect and Pay Sales Tax in all 50 States

While everyone was paying attention to Health Care, the Sotomayor hearings and Cap and Trade, Congress was quietly getting ready to impose sales tax on all Internet sellers.

Great Magicians master the craft of misdirection. They create a diversion with their right hand while the left hand is doing the real work. It seems our Congress has studied the craft of magic, too. Everyone pays attention to the big bills while hundreds of small — yet critically important bills are being crafted out of sight — and with no debate.

Lobbyists from firms such as Wal-Mart, Home Depot, Target and the National Retail Federation are throwing millions of dollars at House and Senate members to draft a series of bills that will force every Internet retailer — large and small — to collect and pay sales tax in all 50 states. The pressure is not only coming from the retailers but from state governments, too, who need the revenue.

Such a bill would kill millions of E-Bay and Amazon sellers and any small business that sells online.

There are over six million people who make all or part of their income from online activities and they represent a huge chunk of the economy. And many of these companies employ people. All of these sellers will be affected. Such a bill would cost millions of job losses by small businesses.

If you sell on E-Bay, can you imagine

how much work it would be to collect and pay sales tax in all the different states. Just registering for a sales tax number in all of the states would take weeks of work and cost thousands of dollars in fees.

These bills are being crafted and debated now. E-Bay, Amazon and other big online companies are lobbying against them but they are outnumbered. Yet it's not hopeless. Lobbyists may have the money but we have the votes. And Congress does listen when they get emails and phone calls.

Just go to: <https://writerep.house.gov/writerep/welcome.shtml> to email your Congress person and Senator. If you don't make some noise, then this is coming. Be polite — but tell them NO TAX ON INTERNET SELLERS!

Please read and take action on this article. Even if you don't do any sort of Internet sales yourself, if this passes, you will have to pay sales tax on anything you purchase online. Which will mean less money in your pocket. It's just another way that government and big corporations are trying to destroy the little guy and small business: the type of enterprise this country was founded on.

The fees that small online businesses would have to pay would put them out of business. Not only would they have to file and pay for a sales tax license for each of the fifty states, they would also have to file and pay for a business license for each of the fifty states.

But even if by some miracle they could pay the fees, then it would be impossible for them to keep up with the monthly paperwork of collecting and keeping a record of taxes for each state and the filing of reports for all 50 states. Many are one-person businesses.

For me personally, while I do purchase some things online, what will have very grave consequences in my life is, if this sneaky, underhanded bill passes, I will no longer be able to sell books on Amazon. If I can't sell on Amazon, we will be homeless. There's just no two ways about it, as my small disability check doesn't even cover the basics of rent and utilities. And I have no other steady source of income available.

So PLEASE, I'm asking for everyone's support in this matter. Not just for myself but for others in the same situation I am.

Thanks,
Zentura, Wyoming

Love

Hi Iona,

My business (nofrillsfancy.com) is increasing in sales and word-of-mouth seems to be bringing me more opportunities. I'm still waiting to hear from Whole Foods. It seems that the person I sent the sample to didn't get it. And the wait continues.

I believe so strongly that my mission is to bring about big changes especially in the way we value everything. Some of my co-workers have begun to call me a prophet; that is a big title to live up to. I do believe that all that I do I try to do with Love.

Love can bring us back to center. No matter what your personal belief, it should be Based from Love. If we truly Love ourselves then we can truly Love everything else. We have forgotten the reasons we all decided to come to this paradise. Earth truly is one of the most magnificent planets in the known

universe.

I will be sending some of my poems that you can use as you wish. Somehow I need to get my message out there so more of us know that we aren't alone. Just because we have different beliefs about our origins doesn't mean that we all don't believe in Love and all that it entails. Two of my sons claim to be atheists but they are very caring, Loving individuals.

It is time for us to put our differences aside and focus on how much we have in common.

Remember your center.
Wish Big! Much Love,
Jeanette (LaLainya) Bartelt, Maryland

TV and Kids and Nature

Hi Iona,

Did you ever see this Web site for kids??? It is very internationally oriented and it has fun things for kids to do to learn about the environment: <http://tiki.oneworld.net/>.

Bill Boteler, Washington D. C.

(Iona's reply)

Cute, Bill. Thanks. I have a strong preference for kids to be outside rather than in front of their computers. So I don't think I'll be recommending this one, although it DOES look cute, grant you that.

Don't let my honesty discourage you; I appreciate your thinking of me.

Iona

(back to Bill)

Hi Iona,

I have two thoughts about this. First, I almost sent you an article about the whole issue of getting kids outside more. I will look for it again. I know a lot of people at the Earth Day Network who have thoughts about how we can do this. Maybe there is something they can share with you about it.

Second, given that kids are going to use computers anyway, I would like them to be using engaging sites like this which build their sense of being world citizens and educate them about green issues.

The Internet is a force that we can use for politics and education that helps correct the flaws in our existing systems of politics and education, which are not equal to the threats we face. That is my take.

Sincerely,
Bill Boteler

Sending News to OE

Dear Iona,

I'm sending two very important things to you as both need your newspaper's coverage. The children here are competing statewide, soon nationally, and they hope eventually worldwide!

The Dark Sky Association* is also doing a great service to Mother Earth.

You are doing a beautiful, commendable job with the paper.

I suggest you put a subscription coupon in the paper.

I'm ordering Anastasia so note my check. Am sending my donation to OE on my own after payday.

In Love and Light,
Loris Boutwell, Georgia

*[Ed.: See article on page 9.]

News Submitted by Our Readers

Submitted by **Mark Petersen**
Roanoke, Virginia

Firms Aim to Fight BPA Ban

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Washington Post, *excerpt*) — Manufacturers of canned beverages and foods and some of their biggest customers, including Coca-Cola, are trying to devise a public-relations and lobbying strategy to block government bans of a controversial chemical used in the linings of metal cans and lids.

According to internal notes of a private meeting obtained by the *Washington Post*, frustrated industry executives huddled for hours Thursday trying to figure out how to tamp down public concerns over the chemical bisphenol A, or BPA. The notes said the executives are particularly concerned about the views of young mothers, who often make purchasing decisions for households and who are most likely to be focused on health concerns . . . BPA, used since the 1950s, is added to plastics to give them strength. It is found in hundreds of household products, including plastic bottles and food containers.

Submitted by **Sunny War Eagle**
Marianna, Florida

Cherokee Sisters and Earth-Keepers Plant 12,000 Trees

By **Greg Peterson**
Indian Country Today, July 8, 2009

GWINN, Michigan (*excerpt*) — Several northern Michigan teachers were given seedlings by three ambitious Cherokee sisters who helped plant thousands of trees and created a wildlife preserve behind their home.

During the Interfaith 2009 Earth-Keeper Tree Project congregations from more than 100 churches and temples from 10 faiths planted more than 12,000 seedlings at thousands of locations across Michigan's upper Peninsula including several American Indian reservations . . .

Three American Indian sisters and their mom (Therese Vincent) unloaded the vast majority of 3,000 trees delivered to the Marquette area distribution site...

"Here are 400 trees," said a smiling Paige Vincent, 14, to her mother while putting her back into the load — barely able to grip a large box of seedlings.

Youngest sister, sixth-grader Paula, 12, used every bit of her strength to unload the seedlings.

"You just carried 400 trees, how about that," said Theresa to her youngest daughter as Paula used her chin and knees to carefully put down a box about three times her size.

The sisters planted about a dozen trees in an eight-acre "wildlife sanctuary in the back yard" that's frequented by Sand Hill cranes, coyotes, deer and a variety of birds, said Pamela Vincent, 17, a Gwinn High School sophomore. "We may add a fish pond" . . .

Natural Resources Youth Crew Program Wins Again

By **Ron Karten**
Smoke Signals

For the third time in six years, the Tribal Natural Resources Youth Crew Program has won the Frank Roberts Oregon Youth Conservation Corps Project.

"I started figuring you're just building a trail all summer and we'd lose half the kids by mid-summer," said Kelly Dirksen, Tribal Fish and Wildlife coordinator.

As the years went by, Dirksen added features to the program that would benefit student workers in many ways.

These days, high school students earn \$8.40 an hour to participate in a program that builds trails through reservation lands but also works at "challenge courses, where they climb ropes and balance on high wires" for physical experience, visit colleges, feed educational ambitions and acquire job skills, Dirksen said. "We want them to know what a job is like," he added, "how it's different than school and we give them a taste of the natural resources field. Now our turnover is really low."

Submitted by **Bill Boteler**
Washington, D. C.

Massachusetts Town Launches "25%" Campaign for Peace

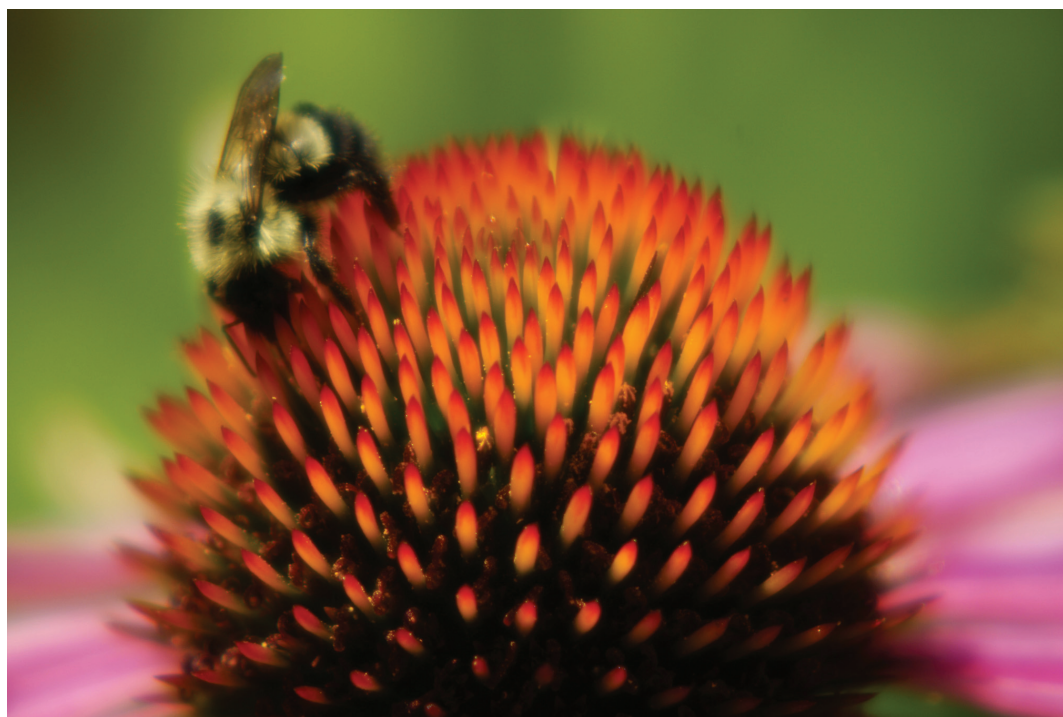
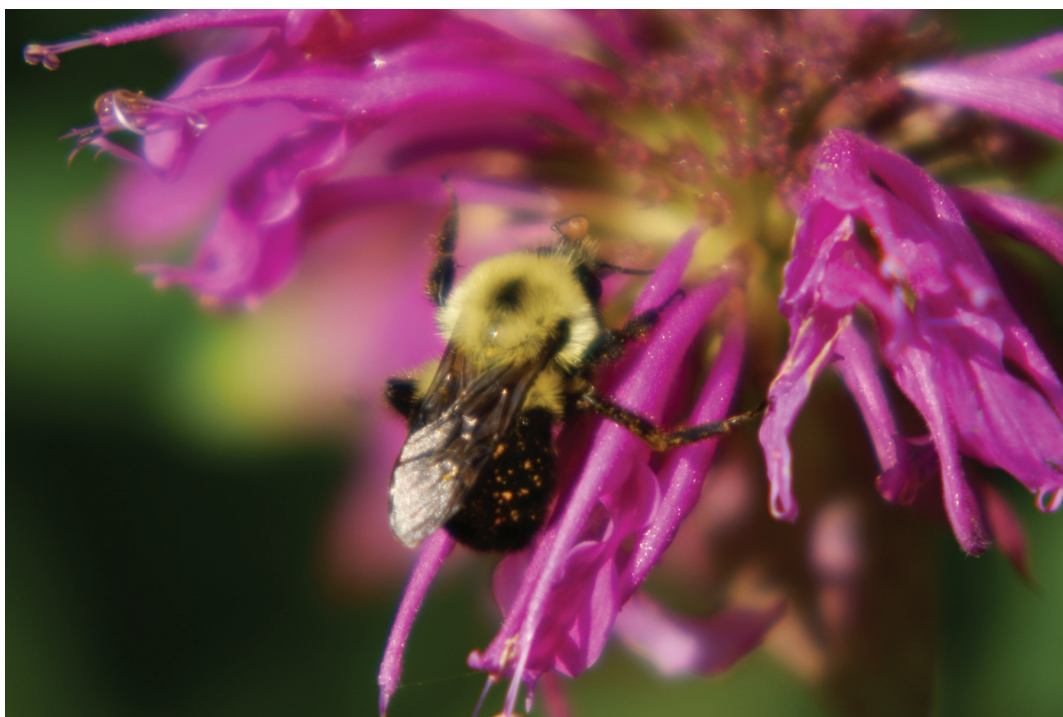
A new coalition was born in Dorchester, Massachusetts on July 7th. It aims to cut Washington's military spending by \$250 billion a year and use all that money to fund community jobs and services. Twenty community organizations gathered at the Vietnamese-

American Community Center and:

- Identified the places where we can safely cut \$250 billion from annual U.S. military spending (one-quarter of the total).
- Named things they would do with Boston's \$500 million share of that money.
- Started developing a three-part action plan as follows:

1. Pressuring Congress and the President;
2. Creating a dollar-by-dollar community budget that funds human needs, and
3. Educating our organizations to build broad-based support for a multi-year campaign.

While a peace group is doing most of the coordinating in Dorchester, community organizations and leaders of color are shaping the campaign. The coalition thinks a community-driven campaign can build the breadth and commitment it will take to win a 25% cut in military spending. One speaker said, "The Pentagon has military contracts in every state. That gives them a built-in lobby for every member of Congress. We need a nationwide lobby for community needs." Applause erupted . . .



Bumblebee on bee balm (left) and Bumblebee on Echinacea (right) in Terry Darling's garden in Warren, Pennsylvania.

Photos by Terry Darling

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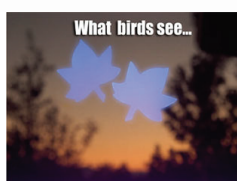
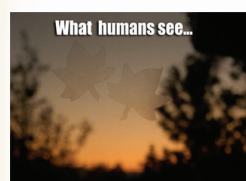
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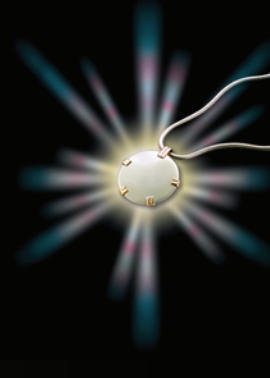
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