

# ETHICAL ENERGY



WI Interfaith Climate &  
Energy Campaign

People of all faiths working toward a just and sustainable future.

## New and Improved Interfaith Campaign

With a major grant from the Bradshaw-Knight Foundation of Madison, the Wisconsin Climate and Energy Campaign (WICEC) has re-organized as an independent entity.

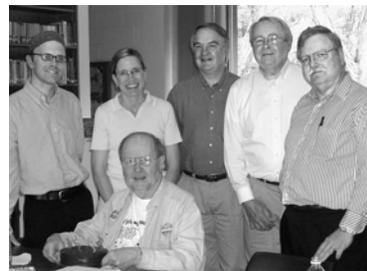
Sarah Streed, former Steering Committee Chair, has been chosen as the new Executive Director, and the office has been relocated to Stoughton, WI. Dave Steffenson continues as the Education Coordinator and new officers will be elected at the next Board of Directors meeting in the fall.

We are now a nonprofit Wisconsin corporation and are in the process of seeking

IRS 501c3 tax exempt status which will enable us to receive grants and gifts from donors, expressly to use for climate change action.

Our goals for 2004 include a statewide conference (which occurred in February), the second round of the Interfaith Energy Stewardship Collaborative (which is now recruiting participants for an October launch), and capacity and outreach building activities.

WICEC will now function as a membership organization. All are welcome on our information and alert mailing list; however, we do urge our supporters to join our efforts as members.



**Founder's Day: WICEC steering committee members celebrate with founder Dave Steffenson and cake.**

Annual memberships are \$35 for individuals; \$20 for seniors, students, or low income; and a lifetime family membership is \$100. We also have organizational memberships available for \$100 - \$500, depending upon the size of the organization. Congregational memberships are \$100.

Summer, 2004  
Vol. 3, Issue 1

Special points of interest:

\*Testimony Before the Governor's Task Force.

\*Is We Energies' latest plan efficient enough?

\*The latest on the mercury rules.

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## Wisconsin Faith Leaders Urge Action on McCain-Lieberman Climate Stewardship Act

Thirty-one Wisconsin religious leaders signed a letter to Senators Herb Kohl and Russ Feingold July 6 urging them to seize "this moment of great moral urgency" and press the Senate leadership to open up the Senate floor for debate on a bipartisan bill, co-sponsored by Senators John McCain

and Joe Lieberman, that would set limits on greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming.

More recently, 100 Christian leaders chastised President Bush's air pollution policy, and, in an unprecedented alliance, prominent religious leaders, from a broad range of religious beliefs, joined forces

with eminent scientists to issue a call for action on global warming. In addition, a June 30 conference of conservative evangelical leaders resulted in a call to action to confront the problem of global warming.

"Global warming is harming God's creation," said Sarah Streed, Executive Di-

rector of WICEC. "It's one of the most important issues of our time and the Senate leadership will not even allow a thoughtful debate about it. We are urging our Senators to help bring the Climate Stewardship Act to the Senate floor for meaningful discussion."

The religious leaders acknowledged that they come from "many distinct faith perspectives," but are united behind the belief that God's peo-

*(Continued on page 4)*

# Diesel School Buses: A Major Success

## By Wayne Stroessner

As early as March, 2003, WICEC sent a letter to Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction State Superintendent, Elizabeth Burmaster, asking her to contact all school districts throughout the State of Wisconsin regarding the clean-up of dirty diesel school buses. WICEC received the following reply from WDNR Jessica Lawent, Vehicle and Voluntary Air Quality Program:

"I was informed that the Wisconsin Interfaith Climate and Energy Campaign is encouraging the Department of Public Instruction to ask school districts to reduce emissions from their buses. Thank you for your interest in improving Wisconsin's air quality. The Department of Natural Resources is also very concerned about the impacts of diesel exhaust. We are excited to have recently received a grant in the amount of approximately \$1 million to retrofit about 400 diesel school buses in southeastern Wisconsin.

"The grant we received can be used to retrofit buses in the ozone non-attainment counties of Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Washington and Waukesha. Once we fulfill our grant obligation in these six counties, we may be able to then target buses in the non-attainment counties of Door, Kewaunee,

Manitowoc, and Sheboygan. The retrofitting will involve the installation of diesel oxidation catalysts. These devices use a chemical process to break down pollutants in the exhaust stream into less harmful components. They can reduce emissions of particle pollution by 20%, hydrocarbons by 50% and carbon monoxide by approximately 40%. Oxidation catalysts have little or no impact on fuel consumption or power and are virtually maintenance-free. The grant will cover

**"We are excited to have recently received a grant in the amount of approximately \$1 million to retrofit about 400 diesel school buses in southeastern Wisconsin."**

the cost of the catalysts (\$1,500 to \$2,500), which can be installed on any new or used bus run on regular diesel fuel.

The grant requires a 20% match and we are looking to the Wisconsin Partners for

Clean Air, and other businesses/organizations, DNR employees, schools, community groups for the financial support needed to match these grant funds. We would like to work with your organization in soliciting sponsorship with [faith group] members.

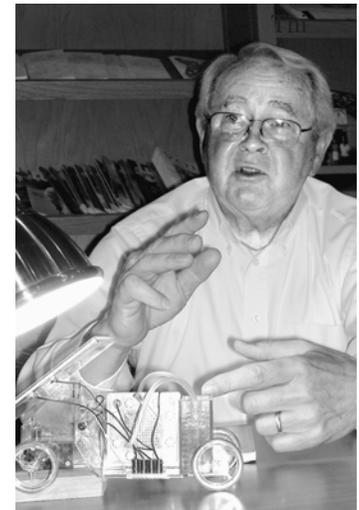
A tax-deductible donation of \$300-500 provides the 20% match

needed to retrofit one school bus.

Donations can be made payable to the WDNR Diesel School Bus Retrofit Project and sent to:

**Wisconsin DNR  
Diesel Bus Retrofit Project AM/7  
101 S. Webster St.  
P.O. Box 7921  
Madison, WI, 53707-7921**

WICEC encourages readers to respond with a donation.



**WICEC Steering Committee member Wayne Stroessner demonstrates a working model of a hydrogen fuel cell car.**

# Wisconsin DNR Asks for Weaker Mercury Rule

## By Sarah Streed

The Wisconsin DNR recently recommended much lower mercury emissions reductions be required in Wisconsin. This follows the lead of national leadership who has put corporate polluters ahead of the health of millions of Americans by allowing utilities to release more mercury over a longer period of time. The Bush administration's "Clear Skies" initiative has long been accused of saving big polluters billions in pollution related costs and allowing more harmful mercury emissions into the air.

In 2001 in Wisconsin a Mercury Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) was set up to address mercury regulation at the request of then-DNR secretary Darrel Bazzell. In 2002 the CAC recommended a 90% reduction of mercury air emissions in Wisconsin by 2015. It is this rule which the DNR has recommended modifying, backed by Wisconsin utilities who clearly do not want Wisconsin's mercury rule to be more stringent than the federal EPA rule. WICEC supports stronger mercury rules, waging a campaign against coal-fired power plants which spew tons of mercury into the air each year. Executive director Sarah Streed was asked by Representative Tammy Baldwin to speak at the Mother's

Day press conference on mercury at the Capitol. Streed, along with two other mothers, spoke on how mercury affects young children and fetuses most of all, damaging the brain and nervous system.

Wayne Stroessner, a member of both WICEC and CAC Steering Committees, spoke on the WDNR's position: "The amount [of mercury reduction] agreed upon by the CAC was far better [than the proposed DNR modification] and the utilities could meet it if they wanted to. ...The DNR caved in and agreed to consider modifications to the mercury rule. Is the DNR protecting Wisconsin's citizens or Wisconsin's corporate industries?"

## Governor Signs Hybrid Law

Three WICEC steering committee members testified in favor of a bill by Senator Rob Cowles (R-Green Bay). The bill authorizes the state to purchase or lease hybrid-electric vehicles when feasible.

The bill passed both houses of the legislature and was signed into law by Governor Jim Doyle at a special ceremony.

The bill also encourages the use of gasohol and alternative fuels in state vehicles.

WICEC hopes this bill will increase the use of hybrids as one answer to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other toxins.

Senator Cowles himself owns and drives a hybrid-electric car, and has recommended this step to his constituents.

Testifying in favor of the bill were the Rev. Sue Moline Larson, the Rev. Dave Steffenson and Ms. Kim Herb. Steffenson also drives a hybrid and Herb and her family have chosen to live without a car. Four WICEC steering committee members drive hybrids at this time.

The Rev. Sue Moline Larson represented WICEC at the bill signing, specifically at the invitation of Senator Cowles and Governor Doyle. (See opposite photo.)



**The Rev. Sue Moline Larson looks on as Gov. Doyle signs hybrid bill into law.**

## Wind Harvest Coming to

**By Dennis Briley**

Clean, renewable energy has become a player in the strategy to address global warming and reduce pollution. Wind power is no longer a marginal resource.

Large-scale wind electric generation development has reached the point where it is economically competitive with fossil fuel. There has been media coverage of Wisconsin's wind farm developments and utility plans to purchase additional wind generated electric power.

There is also locally-owned wind. Ed Ritger of Ritger Law Office, Random Lake, Wisconsin has become a locally based wind power developer utilizing large-scale turbines. These installations require an enormous capital commitment. Because of the capital required, large wind farms are usually developed by very large, even international businesses; however, Ritger plans to install these same highly efficient turbines with local ownership. He has five turbines currently in the design/permitting process.

The economic competitiveness of wind generation is dependent upon a Federal Production Tax Credit. This credit expired at the end of 2003 and now awaits renewal by the House of Representatives. The whole wind industry is currently on hold, including three of Ritger's turbines. There is bipartisan support for the Production Tax Credit, but the political challenge is to craft a legislative package to include other issues on which there is a lack of consensus.

Wind development is not without opposition. Some people don't want wind turbines within their view. Others feel a tax subsidy is wrong. Some don't feel the farm landowners receive enough compensation. WICEC feels that our goal is to not let the perfect become the enemy of the good. Wind power has begun to replace increasingly scarce and costly natural gas. The creative application of local ownership has begun to allow farmers to share in the investment in order to harvest from the wind as well as from the soil.

## Is We Energies' Efficiency Plan Efficient Enough?

On May 1, 2004, the Public Service Commission (PSC) approved an Energy Efficiency Procurement Plan that had been presented to them by We Energies in March. The plan proposed a goal of 55.8 Megawatts (MW) of verified gross savings by 2008.

WICEC and other environmental organizations felt that We Energies could do far better than this. As a result, WICEC executive director Sarah Streed sent the following letter to the PSC:

"...While the additional 55 MW of cost-effective energy savings the required Order Point 19 We Energies' plan is a good thing, we feel that We Energies should be able to capture far more than this amount. Consider that every dollar spent on energy efficiency is a dollar far better spent than another dollar exported from our state to buy fuel.

*(Continued on page 4)*

# Climate Stewardship Act 2004

*(Continued from page 1)*

ple share a collective “moral obligation and urgency to protect human life, human health, and all of creation.” For this reason, they said, the Climate Stewardship Act (S. 139), which 43 Senators have supported in the past, deserves a hearing on the Senate floor.

“We urgently call on the U.S. Senate to act by significantly reducing the high

level of U.S. greenhouse gas pollution,” reads the strongly worded letter representing many faiths.

“Environmental isolationism is neither morally acceptable, nor faithful to God’s law.”



“Our scriptures teach us that we have a covenant with God and an obligation to future generations to protect the well-being of all life on Earth,” said the Rev. Dave Steffenson. “This is the kind of moral principle that should be guiding public policy. But to fulfill our end of the covenant, we need our elected officials to at least allow debate on the merits of possible solutions to the global warming threat.”

## Testimony before the Governor’s Task Force

### By Warren C. Gaskill

... The impact of this generation has been profound in a score of ways, some of which we are only just starting to comprehend today. Amid the fervor for an ever-increasing GNP -- or a GWP for Gross World Product -- we are hitting the walls of our very finite planet earth. We are running out of fossil fuels, and not a moment too soon since the planet as we have known it can’t absorb the impact any more. So, please, before your deliberations are complete, make certain you address key driving forces of behavior:

What is Wisconsin really trying to achieve? Is it 20% renewable energy by 2010? Is that all? Will our children be out of the woods if we hit that mark? What about goals of energy consumption in terms of products produced in the state or per worker? What about “green” job creation, or advancement of an economic sector -- call it maybe environmental leadership -- that can serve as focus for industry growth in Wisconsin and a world export?

Does the price we pay for energy reflect the full cost of that energy to our citizens and to our environment? Does the consumer know when he or she pulls out the charge card that the costs of coal-produced electricity cover the cost of mercury in the lakes, asthma in our children, ozone in our cities, or the

investment subsidies that bring that coal to Wisconsin? Does the price of nuclear energy today reflect the cost of the safe storage of its waste forever? Does the price of gasoline reflect the costs of war? If the consumer has full information in the price he or she pays, then we can better make intelligent decisions about what we consume.

Is there clear, simple, regular reporting of a few leading energy indicators -- and pictures are better than words -- of the measures of improvement that the average person can see and quickly understand? In our work, we have found that such simple awareness -- such as a run chart over time of energy use and the associated costs -- can go a very long way in starting to change behavior.

Will Wisconsin regularly look around the world to make certain we are learning from and adopting to our own unique circumstances some of the best energy generation and management methods and processes? This is a constantly evolving process of learning and modifying, and not just the work of one task force. One of the outcomes of your work must be to set a process in place to be able to well exceed what appears to be now just adjustment of the minimal standards in our codes and requirements.

In summary, I want to communicate a sense of urgency for your work -- or our work -- or more accu-

rately for your leadership on behalf of our children. Be bold, be clear, and help position Wisconsin as a true leader throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There is much to gain, and a lot to lose if we are not successful.



*(Continued from page 3)*

“Furthermore, what you term ‘cost-effective’ must include the cost of all externalities, e.g., the cost of production of electricity from coal must include the cost for health, death, environmental damage, natural resource depletion, and so forth. Using this standard, coal fired power plants do not meet the criteria of cost-effective.

“As we are a group committed to working toward a sustainable future, we feel that Wisconsin could and should be doing much more than this. The Public Service Commission is de-emphasizing efficiencies that are best for our state’s economy while encouraging export of dollars to pay for fossil fuels. This, in turn, is a severe burden to Wisconsin’s economy.

# Statewide Conference Exceeded Goal

## By Chris Herb

As WICEC put together this year's conference, we set a goal of attracting 100 attendees. Well, we are pleased to say, we exceeded that goal! 125 individuals (and 7 hybrid vehicles) came to Oshkosh for "At the Tipping Point: From Global Warming to Global Sustainability." This number nearly doubled the number of the first statewide conference.

Thank you to all those who sent us feedback on the conference. The comments were overwhelmingly positive and the suggestions very helpful.

We're on the Web!  
[www.wicec.org](http://www.wicec.org)



**Rabbi Arthur Waskow of the Shalom Center in Philadelphia addresses the WICEC 2004 statewide conference.**

The opening session highlighted the conference. Rabbi Arthur Waskow of the Shalom Center in Philadelphia was the keynote speaker who spoke very powerfully on the spiritual importance of Sabbath and its significance within the context of environmental justice. Four panelists then responded to Rabbi Waskow from their faith perspective: The Rev. Tonen O'Connor of the Milwaukee Zen Center, Dr. Peter Bakken of the Au Sable Institute, Salman Aziz, a Muslim leader from the Fox Valley, and The Rev. Penny Andrews. It was a moving and inspiring session that set the tone for the next two days.

## A Meditation on Climate Change, Global Scorching and Pharaoh

### By Rabbi Arthur Waskow

One of the key moments of the Biblical story of the Exodus is when, after seven eco-disasters, Pharaoh's own advisers shriek at him: "Do you not know that Egypt is destroyed?" (Exodus 10:7). In case you thought this was a sardonic elaboration on a mythic tale, much the same story actually took place in Washington recently, and President Bush responded much like Pharaoh.

First, you recall, came the "plagues" — environmental disasters. ...

On June 3, the New York Times reported that the United States had submitted to the United Nations, as required by treaty, a report on the expected impact of global scorching on the United States. The report was written not by radical outsiders, but by the President's own advisers. "The report says the United States will be substantially changed in the next few decades — 'very likely' seeing the disruption of snow-fed water

A special thanks to all of our wonderful speakers; we were truly blessed to have gathered such a highly qualified group of speakers to the conference. To take a look at this year's conference brochure with a complete list of speakers, please visit our website: [www.wicec.org](http://www.wicec.org)

One thing we did learn: it is in some ways more effective to take a conference "on the road." After our first statewide conference attracted 70-80 individuals, WICEC tried traveling to six locations throughout the state. 70-130 persons attended in each location - a total of nearly 500 persons! Next year, WICEC will hold 6-7 more localized mini-conferences.

supplies, more stifling heat waves and the permanent disappearance of Rocky Mountain meadows and coastal marshes, for example."...

And how did our Pharaonic President respond? The usually staid British press agency, Reuters, put this headline on its report: BUSH: GLOBAL CLIMATE REPORT IS BUREAUCRATIC HOT AIR.

Welcome to Egypt, friends.

Time to rethink ourselves — What should we be doing? Does this century of human and planetary history need to be different from every other century? ...

I think we need to look beyond only the specific issues of policy to the question of DECISION-MAKING POWER. Until we recognize the "Pharaoh's Alliance" made up of governments like the Bush Administration, institutions like the World Bank and WTO, and global corporations like Big Oil, and until we invent ways to control that kind of power, we will always be losing ground to them. Losing Earth to them.

# THE WICEC WATT AWARDS

## WATT a Winner!

To MGE (Madison Gas & Electric) for collaborating in advance with the university, neighbors, and several green groups (including WICEC) to build a cleaner, scaled-down co-generation *gas* utility plant on the UW campus!

## WATT a Loser!

To WE Energies for stubbornly pushing ahead for two coal-fired utility plants in Oak Creek to add to the toxic and micro-soot load for SE Wisconsin which will sicken and prematurely kill a significant number of people; and two "Dishonorable Mentions" to Wisconsin Public Service and Dairyland Power for planning to build coal plants in northern Wisconsin!

## Clean Energy Saves Lives, Jobs, Money— The Wisconsin Clean Energy Plan

High energy bills, blackouts, air pollution. There is a better way--clean energy, not polluted power. With energy efficiency and cleaner fuels, we can create a brighter future and:

- Reduce carbon and air pollution by 70 billion pounds a year reducing the risks of asthma, cancer and other air pollution-caused health problems. Every year, coal power plant pollution causes approximately 448 premature deaths in the state and 163 a year in Milwaukee, according to a Clean Air Task Force study.
- Save Wisconsin residents at least \$490 million a year by 2010 with lower energy bills, according to a UW study. Wouldn't you like an extra \$100 bill right now?
- Create at least 8,500 new jobs by 2010.
- Reduce the risk of power blackouts and the need for new power plants and transmission lines by reducing the electric load.
- Reduce our reliance on risky nuclear plants, foreign oil and dirty coal.

The Department of Natural Resources in cooperation with other agencies, UW, the Sierra Club and many organizations completed the Wisconsin Climate Change Action Plan in 1998 and Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Cost Study in 1999. These plans show that by using more energy efficiency measures alone, Wisconsin can reduce greenhouse air pollution by at least 25 billion pounds per year. By switching to cleaner fuels like natural gas and more efficient vehicles, we can reduce greenhouse air pollution by up to 70 billion pounds per year by 2010.

### To promote clean air and clean energy, you can:

- ☑ Buy more efficient light bulbs, Energy Star appliances, and setback thermostats.
- ☑ Carpool, take a bus, bike, and tune up your car.
- ☑ Buy a hybrid car or more efficient vehicle when you can.
- ☑ Call Governor Doyle at 608-266-1212. Urge him to adopt the Wisconsin Climate Change Action Plan to protect Wisconsin's health, safety, clean air and water, and jobs. Ask him to support the Focus on Energy Program to keep the state's commitment to clean energy moving forward.

# Collaborative Helps Congregations Reduce Ecological Footprint

## 2004 Enrollment Now Open!

In 2003 a pilot tryout by six churches of WICEC's innovative collaborative process for coaching and teaching local religious congregations to conserve energy resulted in savings for participants.

St. Therese Catholic Church, Appleton, WI, a large congregation with four buildings, reduced its energy use 20% and developed an ongoing plan for further savings through simple or no-cost adjustments.

Another example was actually carried out before the pilot Collaborative, but used the same methods and measurement instruments. Madison Christian Community—housing a Lutheran and a UCC congregation in one building—planted a prairie to replace an energy-consuming lawn, installed a 2.5 KW photovoltaic array, upgraded their lighting and HVAC system, and used an innovative energy monitoring system to substantially reduce their energy use and ecological footprint.

The other groups in the pilot process either reduced their energy use

5% or more, or created a plan to do so beyond the nine-month process.

### **40+ congregations sought for 2004 Collaborative**

After WICEC revised and improved the program, congregations of all faiths are invited to enroll *now* for the 2004-05 Collaborative beginning Oct. 10., 2004.

Each congregation will send a team of three to four persons who will be helped to devise their plan and oversee the retrofitting of their physical facilities. Each congregation will also organize one or more groups of about eight families each to work together for two months to study their own family's environmental impact and find ways to reduce it.

energy monitoring system will be available to track system information and find further savings.

Cost of the program is \$200 to \$400 per team depending on the size of the congregation. We expect that each congregation will save much more than that amount within the first year by implementing the program.



However, the real pay-off is the witness of each participating congregation for energy stewardship, commitment to reducing global warming, and showing others concretely how they can live up to their faith values.

"St. Therese Catholic Church in Appleton reduced its energy use 20% and developed an ongoing plan for further savings."

The teams will meet together for a full day on Oct. 10 for training followed by two update days two more times over eight months. Further help will be available through periodic conference calls and e-mails by the consultant leaders.

In addition, an optional computer

### **To register or get more info:**

Call or e-mail for a brochure and registration form. A \$100 deposit enrolls you in the program.

Contact: Rev. Dave Steffenson, PO Box 21, Columbus, WI 53925; 920-623-4360; dsteffe@powerweb.net or web: www.wicec.org.

## Is Your Church Being Taxed?

### By Dennis Briley

If your electric service provider is a public utility in Wisconsin, you will find a deduction set aside for the "Public Benefits Fund," sometimes termed a "Non-taxable Customer Charge." This fund is intended to fund programs for weatherization, emergency heating assistance, energy efficiency and renewable energy for low-income customers. The state-wide organization, Focus on Energy, provides renewable energy measures,

incentives and education. WICEC has expressed support for these programs in the past. (See Spring 2003 newsletter.)

However, in order to balance the state budget last year, the Governor and the Legislature diverted some \$47 million dollars out of an estimated \$124 million from this special use fund and put it into the general fund. (Because of a complicated distribution formula it is difficult to calculate exactly how much was diverted.) The Public Benefits Fund deduction is now being used in the manner of a general tax revenue. Meanwhile, energy efficiency and renewable energy programs

have been cut back to adjust for this loss of funding. Since this deduction applies to faith congregations' energy bills as well as residential bills, this recent development has large implications for churches and their tax-exempt status. In short, churches are now helping to fund the State of Wisconsin operating budget. Even though a church's payment to the state may be a small amount, the "shell game" policy implications of this recent strategy should not be ignored.

What can you do? For starters, you can review your church's electric bill, and follow up with a phone call to your elected representative.

WI Interfaith Climate & Energy Campaign

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*People of all faiths  
working toward  
a just and sustainable future.*

We're on the Web!  
[www.wicec.org](http://www.wicec.org)

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## WICEC Membership Information — Join Now!

Beginning this year, the Wisconsin Interfaith Climate and Energy Campaign (WICEC) is not just a movement — it's an ongoing organization. So, we need the support of our constituents and friends to now join as members of WICEC. To become a member, fill out the coupon and send it with your dues payment to the WICEC office address listed below.

### Membership Dues

Annual Membership	\$ 35.00
Students, Low Income & Seniors 65+	\$ 20.00
Family Lifetime Membership	\$100.00
Corporate Membership:	
0 - 50 employees	\$100.00
50 - 100 employees	\$200.00
More than 100 employees	\$500.00
minimum	
Congregational Membership	\$100.00
Commercial Membership	\$100.00
minimum	

WICEC office address:  
525 Lincoln Ave., Stoughton, WI 53589  
Additional donations are always welcome!

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