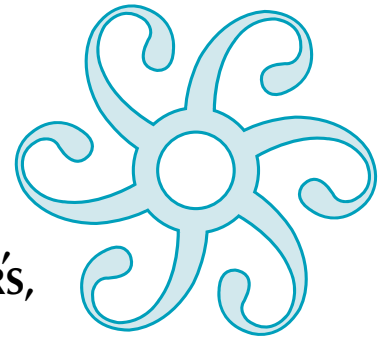


ETHICAL ENERGY

Wisconsin Interfaith Climate & Energy Campaign

Winter, 2006 / Volume 4, Issue 1



EVANGELICALS GET ON BOARD

By Sarah Streed

After years of insisting that human activities do not cause global warming, evangelical Christians are finally seeing the light. A recent New York Times article noted that the National Association of Evangelicals, 45,000 churches and 30 million people, has released a policy statement calling for mandatory controls on carbon emissions.

In contrast to the retrograde environmental stand of some prominent evangelicals, UW-Madison Professor Calvin B. DeWitt, known as the nation's "leading evangelical scientist", has been on board for many years.

"Anyone who takes seriously the scriptural affirmation of God as creator and Jesus Christ as the one through whom God creates and sustains all things, is left with no recourse but to work on this important aspect of preserving God's creation," says DeWitt.

The strongest opposition could conceivably come from one of its own. Senator James M. Inhofe, Oklahoma Republican and evangelical Christian, says human-induced climate change is "the greatest hoax ever perpetrated upon the American public." DeWitt responds, "James Inhofe is a preservationist-dedicated to preserving ignorance. There is now high confidence in the scientific evidence of human influence on climate as detailed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and endorsed by 18 of the world's leading Academies of Science." Traditionally, evangelicals have separated themselves from environmentalists, seeing them as part of the "secular" world, such as the Sierra Club. To DeWitt, this is unfortunate: "The evangelical world has allowed secular leaders to take the lead in caring for creation. Now, ironically, since [secular groups] are in the lead, we [evangelicals] don't want to care for creation because we don't want to be associated with people whose motives are not like ours. It's like Christians saying, 'We can't do any relief work because the Red Cross is doing it.'"

The question of where evangelicals are going to side politically on the issue of the environment is crucial as the world's nations discuss the Kyoto Protocol. If evangelicals, among President Bush's strongest supporters, pressure the Republican Party, things could change.

ORDINARY PEOPLE, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, BREAK WITH OFFICIAL U.S. STANCE AT CLIMATE TALKS

By Sarah Streed

The United Nations Conference on Climate Change held in Montreal this last December was the latest in an effort began over a decade ago with an international treaty to reduce global warming and cope with the inevitable changes it will bring. The Kyoto Protocol, an international agreement linked to the existing treaty but standing on its own, was adopted unanimously in 1997 and entered into force last February.

Although the Bush administration chief negotiator walked out on the last day of the talks, other Americans in attendance—committed citizens, mayors, legislators, scientists, business and religious leaders—showed disagreement with official U.S. stance.

Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels led a contingent of Mayors, representing 195 U.S. cities, that pledged to meet the goals of the international treaty. Bill Stallworth, city councilman from Biloxi, spoke about climate solutions. Dean Eggert, an attorney who traveled to Biloxi with Mercy Ships International to help with reconstruction, said, "Bill is hardly compensated as a City Councilor, yet he worked tirelessly to improve the efficiency of the relief efforts. Bill and his family had been flooded out of their home by Katrina but he never submitted his own home for reconstruction. Mercy Ships found out about Bill's humble deference to his constituents, so we worked on his home while he was at the Conference on Climate Change."



Religious leaders also presented a different side of America. The World Council of Churches held an inter-spiritual earth celebration at St-Joseph's Oratory (Montreal's most visible religious landmark) to highlight the importance of religion responding to climate change. 2,000 people attended the ceremony and signed a Spiritual Declaration on Climate Change which was submitted to the conference by Canadian Environment Minister Stéphane Dion.

These "ordinary Americans" and religious leaders presented a marked contrast to the U.S. federal government's unwillingness to cooperate in the global effort. They illustrate that in many parts of the U.S., people are already working to reduce emissions and build a new American energy economy with less dependence on fossil fuels.



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NUNS IN RACINE LIVE AND WORK TOWARD ECO-JUSTICE

By Sister Janet Weyker, OP

WICEC Board member, Janet Weyker, OP, is the Director of "Rooted in Hope," the Racine Dominican Eco-Justice Center located on a 15 acre-site in Racine County. The Center is dedicated to care of Earth in the context of Community, Contemplation, Creativity and Cultivation. Three Dominican sisters live at the Center, raising auracana chickens, alpacas and gardening organically. The animals contribute eggs, fiber, manure to be composted, and produce; extra goes to a food pantry. Fleece from the alpacas is used for yarn.

Because the Eco-Justice Center is located under the shadow of the Oak Creek Power Plant, it was a natural fit for the Sisters to join other Racine citizens in opposing the building of additional coal-burning units. Out of this arose a grassroots group, Bright Public Power, Inc., (www.brightpublicpower.org) working towards a community-owned electric utility providing safe, reliable and environmentally responsible energy to the Greater Racine area at a lower cost. One of the first steps toward realizing a public utility is a feasibility study—costly but necessary—the Center offered to host "Barbecue in the Barn".



Future plans for the Eco-Justice Center include a house addition and environmental education space. The sisters welcome visitors and encourage all to live more simply, protect the Earth, and to cherish it as the home for all species far into the future.

Volunteer Board Members Needed

Volunteers are needed to serve on the WICEC Board of Directors. Affiliation with a faith group is desirable, and a strong concern about global climate change is necessary. We especially need a Financial Officer—being a board member is optional. Contact Wayne Stroessner, Board President: wstroessner@wi.rr.com or 920-994-2471.

TESTIMONY EXCERPT FROM MG&E COAL PLANT PUBLIC HEARING

By the Rev. Dave Steffenson,

"Speaking as a specialist in Ecological Ethics and the authorized spokesperson for the Wisconsin Interfaith Climate & Energy Campaign, which consists of people from Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Unitarian-Universalist, Christian Science, and Buddhist faiths working together on issues of global warming, air quality and energy, I have two preliminary points to make: **1.** What is legal is not what is moral. Even if the current three Madison coal plants (MG&E Blount Station, Charter Street Station, and State Capitol Station) technically meet the letter of current laws and rules, that does not make them moral or ethical from the point of view of individual health and the common good. **2.** Our faith-based campaign condemns the actions of the Bush Administration for waiving clean air and energy laws for already existing coal utilities. New utility plants are required to meet stringent air quality standards, and to waive those requirements for already existing facilities is an immoral act.

WICEC believes that no more coal-utility facilities should be built in Wisconsin given the current state of the technology, and that existing coal facilities such as the three plants in Madison (which are the worst in the state) must be either required to make maximum mitigating pollution controls immediately or must be scheduled for closing at a specific and early time frame."

THE GREEN TEAM

By Julie Prouty,

Green Team Representative for Wisconsin

During the first week of April, 2006, women of all ages and ethnicities met in Stamford, Connecticut, to discuss the environment. This group represented a new initiative by the Women's Division of the United Methodist Church called the Green Team.

Sung-Ok Lee, Executive Secretary for Community Action in Women's Division, stated, "The Green Team has a goal of realizing environmental justice—fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people—regardless of race, ethnicity, income, or educational level ..."

Advocacy is "speaking on behalf of someone" and in this case, the women are speaking on behalf of the earth. The Green Team is joining with WICEC to form a partnership toward bettering the environment. Green Team members will organize environmental action groups within their own churches, districts or conferences, to discuss ways to conserve water and energy, reduce waste, and take action on issues of environmental justice and racism. If you are interested in joining the Green Team, contact Julie Prouty at 608-986-2507.

The WICEC WATT A WINNER! Award

On Oct. 23, Madison Christian Community (Advent Lutheran ELCA & Community of Hope UCC congregations who share one building and program together), was named one of four congregations in the entire nation to receive the **Energy Star Congregations Network Award**. The congregation has upgraded its lighting, replaced and added insulation, added air tight windows, monitored electrical use, and installed a photovoltaic panel on their roof to generate 4,200 kWh of their own electricity. They are now saving \$1,700 and preventing the addition of 22,400 pounds (11+ Tons) of CO2 into the air annually.



In Brief...

A CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE FOR WISCONSIN

By Bruce Speight, WISPIRG Field Director

For too long Wisconsin has relied on dirty and dangerous fuels to meet our energy needs; over 90% of our energy is currently generated from coal and nuclear sources. The most recent data shows that Wisconsin power plants emit 50 million tons of global warming emissions and 2,200 pounds of mercury yearly. Wisconsin's nuclear facilities are projected to store 1,327 metric tons of radioactive spent fuel on site by 2011. After several years of study, the state is now considering legislation, Senate Bill 459, that would increase Wisconsin's investment in energy efficiency, conservation, and renewable energy sources.

The intention of this bill is a good first step; however, there are four embedded provisions, or "poison pills," which would tie Wisconsin to fossil fuel dependence in the future. They are:

1. Closing the door on future energy efficiency and renewables by letting the state off the hook on these issues for the next decade,
2. Capping the amount of money for the Public Benefits Fund at levels that are less than half its potential,
3. Leaving the Public Benefits Funds susceptible to future budget raids,
4. Allowing utilities to count renewable energy purchased by the state towards their own renewable goals, (thereby reducing our state's investment in renewable energy.)

With increasing energy insecurity coupled with rising energy costs, Wisconsin needs a good energy policy right now. Call your elected officials and urge them to support a substitute bill that excludes the four "poison pills" and will help move Wisconsin towards a clean energy future! For more information, please email bspeight@wispirg.org or visit www.wispirg.org

KATRINA CAUSED BY GLOBAL WARMING?

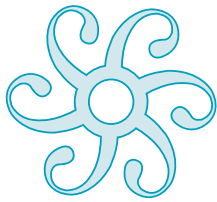
By Sarah Streed

After the huge devastation and cleanup costs from recent hurricanes (Andrew \$43.7 billion, Ivan \$14.2 billion and Katrina \$125 billion projected) many are wondering if hurricanes have gotten worse and could be connected with global warming. The scientific evidence says yes, there is a link. A 2004 Journal of Climate study ran nine global climate models that showed storms generated under increasing CO2 conditions were consistently more intense. A 2005 Science article showed that while the total number of tropical storms has remained similar, the percentage of category 4 and 5 hurricanes has increased.

CO2 acts like insulation in the lower atmosphere, warming land and ocean surface temperatures. As oceans warm and glaciers melt, the sea level is rising. This means higher storm surges, even from minor storms, causing coastal flooding. Because CO2 can stay in the atmosphere for 100 years or more, it is essential that we not only reduce CO2 emissions, but that we increase measures to protect coasts, including the restoration of wetlands, dunes and barrier islands. See: http://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/science/hurricanes-and-climate-change.html



House left tilted after Katrina. Photo taken by Dean Eggert, volunteer with "Mercy Ships, International."



WICEC

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THE WISCONSIN OF THE FUTURE

By Chris Deisinger

Agriculture is one of the prime economic engines for Wisconsin and the entire Great Lakes region. Crops depend on climatic conditions that provide enough—not too much or too little—rainfall—sun and heat. What will be the effect of global warming on our vital agricultural resources? The Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) partnered with Michelle Wander (University of Illinois) to provide a forecast:

Wisconsin already suffers from wetter spring and fall weather; the intensity of rainstorms has increased. If current trends continue, Wisconsin summers in 2030 may resemble those of Illinois and by the end of the century, those in Arkansas. Daily temperatures could rise 5 to 12 degrees in winter and 5 to 20 degrees in summer. Droughts will increase due to higher summer temperatures, evaporation, runoff from intense rainfall and a decline in summer precipitation. Climate change will cause agricultural production patterns to shift. Soybean yields will be more variable. (Wisconsin soybean yields are already reduced 25 percent from ozone damage.) Ranges for crop pests, corn borers and bean leaf beetles, have already expanded northward. Higher temperatures will accelerate the generation of pests such as aphids, leafhoppers and mites.

Global warming is indeed a threat and a challenge to Wisconsin farmers; however, farmers can adopt soil management practices that enhance carbon storage as well as growing energy crops that replace fossil fuels. See:

<http://www.ucsusa.org/greatlakes/glchallengereport.html>

Deisinger lives in Wisconsin and is a consultant to the UCS.