

# DCEC Newsletter

Environmental News for Door County



published by:  
the door county environmental council, inc.  
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SUMMER 2007

## Coming Events

Wednesday — July 25th

*Nitrates: The New Threat to  
Your Drinking Water?*

Dr. Roger Kuhns

Crossroads at Big Creek—7pm

Monday—August 6th

*The Climate Project*

Sarah Utley

New Firehouse, Sister Bay 7pm

Wednesday—August 8th

*The Climate Project*

Sarah Utley

Crossroads at Big Creek—7 pm

Wednesday—August 15th

*A War for Great Lakes Water?*

Cameron Davis

Baileys Harbor Town Hall

7 pm

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## DCEC Events Going Full Force! Annual Program to Climax Summer Seminars

EVERYONE IN DOOR COUNTY IS in for a treat over the next few weeks, as our **Annual Summer Program** caps off a very busy and informative series of summer events.

After two highly successful events on *The Sustainable Home* and *The Hines Emerald Dragonfly*, [see related stories on page 4] DCEC's continuing with three more programs for your enrichment and education.

To top off a great summer of events, comes our **Annual Summer Program!** This year our topic will be *Is a War for Great Lakes Water Coming?* We are lucky enough to have secured **Cameron Davis**, executive director of the *Alliance for the Great Lakes*, from Chicago, as our keynote speaker.

Prior to starting at the Alliance, Davis was a litigating attorney and served as an adjunct clinical professor at the University of Michigan Law School. He also served with the United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi, Kenya, and U.S. EPA's Office of Regional Counsel in Chicago. He graduated from Boston University in 1986, and received his J.D. and certification in environmental law from the Chicago-Kent College of Law in 1992.

Our **Annual Summer Program** will be on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 P.M. at the Baileys Harbor Town Hall. Refreshments will be served after the program.



Roger Kuhns

Earlier, on July 25<sup>th</sup>, we'll be joined by **Dr. Roger Kuhns**, geologist and raconteur, who will be presenting the third in our series of summer seminars at Crossroads at Big Creek. Dr. Kuhns is well known in the county as an actor, musician and performer, but he is also a renowned geologist and environmentalist. At 7:00 P.M., he will present a program called *Nitrates: the New Threat to Your Ground Water*.

Last month DCEC was presented with the opportunity to add a pro-

Please see "Programs"—page three



Cameron Davis



DCEC Incorporated in 1971 under the laws of Wisconsin as a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation

# Cities?... States?... Who Gives Off More Carbon Emmissions?

AMERICA MAY SPEW MORE GREENHOUSE GASSES than any other country, but some states are astonishingly more prolific polluters than others. It's not always the ones you might expect. The *Associated Press* analyzed state-by-state emissions of carbon dioxide from 2003, the latest year for which U.S. Energy Department numbers available. Their review shows startling differences in states' contributions to climate change. The biggest reason? ***Burning high-sulfur coal to produce cheap electricity.***

Wyoming's coal-fired power plants produce more carbon dioxide in eight hours than the power generators of populous Vermont do *in a year*.

Texas, the leader in emitting this greenhouse gas, gives out more than the next two biggest producers combined California and Pennsylvania, which have twice the population of Texas.

In Alaska the carbon dioxide produced per person by all the flying and driving is six times the *per capita* amount generated by travelers in New York State.

Some experts say this disparity in carbon dioxide emissions is one of the reasons there is no strong national effort to reduce global warming gases. According to the Energy Department, national emissions dipped very slightly last year, 2006, but that was mostly due to mild weather.

Coal-fired generation is the most economical, least expensive way to produce power almost anywhere in the world. So,

outlawing coal plants in U.S. would have little impact globally even though this country continues to be the leading global source of carbon emissions.

Instead of trying to lessen the use of coal, Texas government officials ***encouraged*** the state's biggest utility, TXU Corporation, to plan for *eleven* (11!) new coal-burning power plants that would have severely increased the output of carbon dioxide!

That plan collapsed when an investor group buying TXU cut a deal with environmentalists to drop the plans for most of those coal plants. DCEC can relate. We faced a similar challenge having been involved in successful litigation to ensure our local WPS Corporation began to comply with emission requirements that had been exceeded quarterly since 1999 at the Pulliam Green Bay facility.

Emissions from generating electricity account for the largest chunk, nearly 40 percent, of U.S. greenhouse

gasses. Transportation emissions are close behind, contributing about one-third of the total. States with mass transit and cities, such as New York, emerge cleaner than states with wide-open spaces that have to rely solely on cars, trucks and airplanes for transportation.

For more information visit <http://www.eia.doe.gov/environment.html> on the web.



***A Coal-fired Power Plant Spewing Forth***

## ***Contaminated Wells in Door County***

Events of the last several weeks surrounding a new restaurant at Plum Bottom once again focus our attention on the fragility of our ground water supply.

This *on-going problem* has been affecting lives here for decades and, quite often, forcibly manifests itself back into the public arena. In the years prior to small municipal water and waste disposal systems being established, there were stories of similar afflictions in communities throughout the county.

As possible contamination sources affecting well water are being investigated, a high percentage of local tested wells have been designated as not suitable for use, making this a major health issue that must be addressed *immediately*.

If failed, non-functioning or mismanaged private wastewater systems are found to be the ultimate cause of these problems, *they should be replaced or closed immediately*.

Whether the source is failed wastewater systems or improper animal waste utilization, the ultimate responsibility for inspection and enforcement remains with the *County*.

To resolve this problem it may be necessary to ***increase*** County inspection and supervision capabilities to provide the degree of compliance necessary to ensure groundwater remains wholesome throughout the entire County.

***Tell your County Board supervisor that a solution is urgently needed.***

# Look Hard at the Ethanol Picture

RAISING CORN AND OTHER CROPS for use in ethanol production may provide new revenue needed to keep our historically productive American agriculture viable and in control of families who have farmed for generations. Current high prices for these common commodities, due to their demand in producing ethanol, are a boon to local farmers subsisting on meager income for decades.

Corn and soybean crops are bringing prices that the current generation of farmers has never seen before; with the result that vacant or idle farmland being put back into production. Lands laying fallow, that were enrolled in government programs are in some instances being “bought out” of their contracts and revitalized as active farmland.

The adverse effect of the “acceptable” farm commodity prices is the pass-down effect on feed needed by beef farmers for their cattle, food prices in the markets, and a general upsurge of related and dependent prices throughout the entire economy. Some argue that the use/cost of corn and other commodities along with the cost of producing ethanol is far in excess of the final selling price of the ethanol.

While the cost/profit margin may be close, an often over looked cost/benefit factor is that this

resource is *renewable*. It will never run out or be depleted, there will be no nation holding our economy hostage with petroleum resources, and the farm economy will be given a long term boost for survival of family-owned enterprises.

Still others will argue that “their vehicle doesn’t run right” or “the mileage is way down” with the ethanol blends available presently. This can be disputed in either direction and will be far into the future, even after it has been proven that ethanol has lowered our national dependence on foreign petroleum.

Most Americans and most nations abroad have come to the realization that our world economy is increasingly dependent on fossil fuel, whether it is coal, oil or other non-renewable resource. We need to take the necessary action *now* to ensure

that scarce fossil fuels are extended as much as possible for future generations.

Use of ethanol has many benefits, one is the extension of the existing non-renewable resources that are being depleted in sources all around the world. Look past the minor problems with alternative fuel(s) now. Anticipate the needs of your grandchildren. They will thank you for the foresight.



*Fuel For As Far As The Eye Can See*

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## Programs—from page one

gram. We were approached to sponsor two presentations of *The Climate Project*, a **non-political version** of Al Gore’s climate change slide show made famous in the documentary movie *An Inconvenient Truth*.

**Sarah Utley**, daughter of Sturgeon Bay’s Bill Utley, was one of only 1000 people chosen and trained by Gore himself to make these presentations throughout America. Sarah Utley holds a BS in Plant Biology and a MST in Biology from the University of Illinois. She currently teaches Environmental Science at Beverly Hills High School in California, where she serves as Science

Department Chair.

*The Climate Project* will be presented twice. The first date, under the sponsorship of DCEC’s *Renewable Energy Task Force* will be Monday, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 P.M. at the New Sister Bay Fire House. Her second presentation, sponsored by DCEC, will take place on Wednesday, August 8<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 P.M. at Crossroads at Big Creek.

All of these programs are free and open to the public. For further information contact DCEC at (920) 743-6003 or at [info@dcec-wi.org](mailto:info@dcec-wi.org) by email.



*Sarah Utley*

# DCEC's Summer Seminars Off To Good Start!

## Virge Temme's *The Renewable Home* Jump Starts Series

THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF "Crossroads at Big Creek" seminars sponsored by DCEC was on May 30<sup>th</sup> with an audience of more than 80 people interested in learning how to make their homes "green and sustainable," presented by Sturgeon Bay architect Virge Temme.

Temme's answer to the question, "Why be sustainable?" was two-fold: "to save consumer costs by lowering your energy bills, adding value to your home, and to preserve the environment by using fewer resources."

To give background Temme presented some alarming statistics:

- world population has doubled since 1960,
- American homes have doubled in size per person since 1950,
- average European homes are 938 square feet compared with 2,340 square feet here in America.

As a result, carbon emissions have quadrupled in 50 years, a direct cause of global warming and its consequences.

The *United States and China* lead all other nations in carbon emissions. For various needs, rainforests are being leveled, with an area as big as Wisconsin lost every year. Drastic changes need to be made in the way we live, here in America, to bring about the sustainable planet needed for our survival. We can't place



**A Nice Turnout at Crossroads**

the blame on other nations— we are the leaders in destruction.

Things to remember when planning a home expansion or a new home:

- Don't build or remodel without first examining your needs and the existing housing stock.
- Building new or remodeling adds to the environmental demands.
- The most sustainable house may already exist.

*The three important components* of a sustainable building are; design, materials, and systems to operate the building. Each of these combined with the others will give the best ecologically acceptable and efficient home or business place.

**Design:** Plan for solar gain, with east/west orientation. Plant deciduous trees to the south and coniferous trees to the north. Select flattest roof pitch with large overhangs. Build smaller using multi-purpose rooms, open floor plan, few hallways and natural day lighting. Use new-trend recyclable building materials: for roofs use metal, recycled rubber or some types of asphalt. Consider a 'green roof.' For siding choose cedar (cool, local and natural), stucco, metal, fiber-cement, and please avoid vinyl.

**Insulation** is critical and new innovations are available: spray foam, Icynene, and rigid foam along with

traditional batt insulation properly installed. Windows and doors are critical with new multi-pane types, shaded glass, and low heat emissive glass.

Plan for **natural ventilation** and efficient heating systems using passive solar, heat pumps and any of the new technologies to cut heating and cooling costs.

**Lighting** should be functional with every need assessed for energy use and proper positioning. Compact fluorescent lights and light emitting diodes added to motion detectors to turn off lights automatically will supplement the gains of natural day-lighting.

**Appliances:** Energy Star appliances, bottom freezer refrigerators, manual defrosting, and chest freezers all contribute energy savings to homeowners. Front-load laundry appliances, and a clothes-line out back also save energy.

**Outside,** minimize demand on water and synthetic materials: use indigenous plantings, natural prairie yards, rock gardens made from salvaged materials. Try accepting the natural state of your yard.

To eliminate run off water from your home site: increase the pervious surface, smaller footprints (more green = less heat) and natural shade trees. Cisterns, ponds and rain gardens naturally redistribute water to groundwater and help storm water management.

We are proud to have Virge Temme as a leader in the green building movement here in our county. Others will follow, and we will make a difference.

Contact Midwest Renewable Energy Association and AIA architect Virge Temme at 746-8422 or [virge@virgetemme.com](mailto:virge@virgetemme.com) by email.

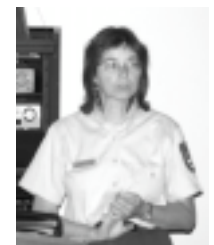


**Virge Temme**

## US Fish & Wildlife Invades DCEC Seminar

People who braved thunderstorms, high-wind and hail were rewarded with an entire team of experts from the US Fish & Wildlife Service for our June 20th seminar on *The Importance of the Hines Emerald Dragonfly*.

Cathy Carnes, Endangered Species Specialist for the USFWS Wisconsin Region, brought along another formidable expert in Dan Soluk from the University of South Dakota at Vermillion. Soluk is considered the leading authority on the Hines Emerald in the world.



**Cathy Carnes**

*Please see "Hines"—page six*

# What You Can Do for Our Earth

BY NOW I'M SURE WE'RE ALL RECYCLING as much as possible, but this month I'd like to talk about re-use. That is, reusing things for some other purpose not only to keep it out of the landfill, but also to find function from would-be waste.

As I look around my house, I see lots of things I've "repurposed!" I'm not sure what Sigmund Freud or an anthropologist would say about me, but I think fellow environmentalists would approve.

Glass Baby Food Jars: It's THE time-honored classic example of "repurposing" for holding nails and screws.

Plastic One-gallon Vinegar Jugs: Cut off the bottom on an angle and you have a great scoop to use for gardening, spreading sand on icy walkways, or mixing ingredients in a large bowl of pasta salads or Chex-mix.

Used Envelopes: Use the backsides for shopping lists or phone messages.

One-sided Paper: Use the blank side of junk mail for casual correspondence or scrap paper.

Hard Plastic Shells: It seems that nearly everything

these days comes packaged in those very hard to open plastic shells. Try turning these empty shells upside down and trim with scissors to use for holding hair clips, make-up, scrap paper next to the phone, bits and pieces from scrap-

booking, art supplies and such. Styrofoam: not the noodles that can be reused for packing material, but those big chunks that are wrapped around appliances, furniture and other things. You can use a steak knife to cut them into various sizes and put them into the bottom of big flowerpots to displace some of the soil. Often you don't really need all of that soil for your summer flowers and, with less soil, the pot is lighter to move around on the patio.

Giant Political Signs: My friend, Dave, came up with the idea of collecting those highway-sized signs after the elections to use as

insulation in the garage he turned into workshop.

There are just a few ideas to get you thinking before you throw something away. Ask yourself: "Can I use this for something useful?"

Next time, I'll have ideas of "repurposing" for craft projects.

Eileen Andera ~ DCEC President



A Purse Woven From Plastic Bags!

## Ephraim Foundation Presents *Global Water Issues*

A FREE PUBLIC PRESENTATION, part of the Ephraim Foundation's "History Speaks" series, *The Most Important Resource: Local, Regional and Global Water Issues*, will be held at the Ephraim Village Hall, 7:30 P.M., Tuesday July 10<sup>th</sup>.



Dr. Stieglitz

Outstanding presenters are: **Ron Stieglitz**, professor emeritus Earth Science and **Laurel L. Phoenix**, Associate Professor of Public and Environmental Affairs, both from the University of

Wisconsin, Green Bay.

They will be addressing issues of water resource management, environmental geology, environmental planning as a tool for water resource protection and sustainable drinking water quality protections. Important for Door County residents and visitors alike!



Dr. Phoenix

Stieglitz, a *Gibraltar graduate*, holds a B.S. from University of Wisconsin, and an M.S. and Ph.D. from the University of Illinois. Phoenix received her B.A. and M.A. University of Colorado, and Ph.D. from the State University of New York in Syracuse.

# More Public Hearings for NR 115

A 1997 STUDY BY THE Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) found that the current minimum standards in Chapter NR 115 are only providing minimal protection of water quality and wildlife habitat, and that improved minimum standards are needed for shore land zoning ordinances.

As a result of concerns raised, a 28 member advisory committee was formed in November of 2002 to guide proposed changes to the rule. That revision process has dragged on for almost five years, including eight listening sessions in 2003 and eleven public hearings in 2005.

You may have participated in the local hearing at the Landmark Resort and listened to the testimony presented challenging further regulation of shore land owners and limitation of their ownership rights. There was strong support shown for the increased control proposals, but the end result of that hearing appeared to be a stalemate.

Over 1,400 people attended the public hearings and over 50,000 comments from 12,000 individuals were received throughout the public comment period. A complete and thorough public participation process is critical to a successful revision of Wisconsin's Shore Land Management Program. Public hearings provide a means for

letting public values become a part of the decision making process and should produce a workable code that protects water resources and balances ecological protection with the responsibility of property ownership.

The Department has requested authorization from the Natural Resources Board to conduct a second round of NR 115 hearings this summer. If this second round is approved, they will be held in July and August, again at locations throughout the State.

Let's hope that after these hearings are completed Wisconsin can successfully modify the shore land regulations to furnish the protection our waters and habitat need into the future.

In view of the many problems we now face with new demands on our water resources, and difficulties present and future in maintaining our water quality, new regulations are essential.

More information on the new draft and possible hearings can be found at: [www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/dsfm/shore/news.htm](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/dsfm/shore/news.htm) or contact Toni Herkert at (608) 266-0161 or [toni.herkert@wisconsin.gov](mailto:toni.herkert@wisconsin.gov) via email.

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## Hines (con't from page four)

They brought along some other fascinating guests: *living* Hines Emerald Dragonfly nymphs at various stages of their 4 year development. [note: possession of the Hines, at any stage of development, is a federal crime for regular citizens.]



**Dan Soluk**

It's in this stage of development that the Hines feeds ravenously on mosquito nymphs, making the Hines a friend of many of us.

Carnes and Soluk brought much new information to the program. Additional locations for the Hines have been found in Missouri and Indiana. Sadly, what remained of the Hines in Ohio is now extinct. The Hines' demise is usually caused by loss of habitat.

The Hines requires very clean wetlands situated over dolomite limestone, and these wetlands must go dry for a period each summer. Door County is the crown jewel for this kind of habitat, which is why DCEC is so commit-

ted to its preservation. Additional good news was that the Kellner Fen, just north of the Sturgeon Bay canal has been identified as a new critical habitat for the Hines.

One interesting item they brought up was the relationship the Hines shares with the crayfish. During annual periods of drought, the Hines "moves in" to crayfish burrows and, if lucky enough not to be eaten by the crayfish, lives to swim or fly another year.

DCEC thanks both of our presenters and the US Fish & Wildlife Service for their efforts on behalf of the Hines Emerald Dragonfly.

You can visit the Hines Dragonfly at one its best habitats by visiting the Ridges Sanctuary. For more information: [www.hinesemeraldgallery.org](http://www.hinesemeraldgallery.org) on the web.

visit the DCEC's new website at:  
***www.dcec-wi.org***  
***(still under construction)***

# My Door County Water in 10 years?



## Not If You Can Help It!

*If you're not already a member, please consider joining DCEC today. Help preserve the quality of the peninsula we love for now and for generations to come. Thank You.*

# dcec membership application

- \$25 Individual      \$35 Family      \$50 Sustaining  
 \$100 Donor      \$\_\_\_\_\_ Other      \$15 Student/Limited

*This amount would really help! Thanks!*

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Door County voter? ( ) yes ( ) no

Township or Municipality: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*Summer mailing address, if different:*

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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## DCEC'S Leadership

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#### **Outreach Coordinator & Newsletter Editor**

Ralph Valatka, Sturgeon Bay



## Your Elected Officials

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## **PROGRAMS, PROGRAMS, PROGRAMS!**

See Page One

### **Annual Summer Program IS A WAR FOR GREAT LAKES WATER HEADED OUR WAY?**

THIS YEAR'S DCEC ANNUAL SUMMER PROGRAM will bring a most distinguished speaker to Door County.

**Cameron Davis**, executive director of the *Alliance for the Great Lakes*, Chicago, will be our featured speaker this year.

What's going to happen when the looming water shortages hit in the west and southwest of the US?

Will the Great Lakes be diverted?

It has been tried before, several times, without success.... but what about now?

**Wednesday Evening  
 August 15th — 7:00 P.M.  
 Baileys Harbor Town Hall  
 FREE with Refreshments Following  
 Come Early! Public is Welcome!**

### **The DCEC Endowment Fund**

THE *DCEC ENDOWMENT FUND* exists to fund the activities of the Door County Environmental Council far into the future.

Every year, the fund grows is one year sooner that DCEC can devote our efforts exclusively to protecting our county's beautiful environment.

You can help this important fund to grow even faster by remembering DCEC in your estate. This has become easier with the recent federal law allowing donors to transfer IRA balances *without first paying federal income taxes* on those amounts. (Consult your financial advisor, please)

So, whether you can contribute now or later, please make a point of supporting *DCEC Endowment Fund*.

Legacies, memorials and direct gifts are all deeply appreciated. Please call, or have your advisor call, Jerry Viste at (920) 743-6003 for further information

***...and, after you read this newsletter, please pass it along to a friend.***