



RIVERTOWN COALITION

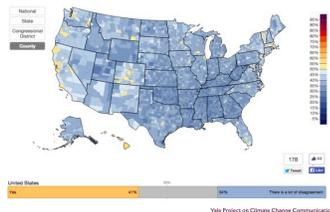
FOR CLEAN AIR AND CLEAN WATER

Slowly I turned, inch by inch...

If you are old enough, you may be able to hear this famous line of Red Skelton and visualize his delightful pantomime. This seems a fitting image to show movement of the beliefs and understandings about Climate Change/Global Warming. It's real (or not). It's now (or not). It's man-made (or not). I can do something (or not). In your daily life, it depends on who you talk with. Once in awhile it is helpful to check out current polls and see an overall picture.

While a majority now believe global warming is real, and are scattered in every county of the US. It is still only 63%, with 18% saying no, the others undecided.

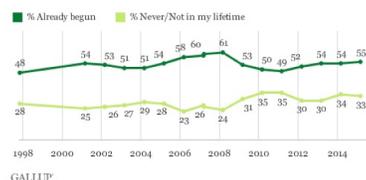
A serious disconnect is that while 97% of scientists agree that global warming is real and is man made, only 41% of citizens *think* that scientists agree and a whopping 34% believe there is a lot of disagreement while 25% don't know.



http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_slatest/2015/04/06/new_climate_change_poll_show_s_americans_believe_in_global_warming.html

Much of this can be attributed to the disinformation efforts financed for decades by the fossil fuel companies. Between 1998-2005 ExxonMobile spent \$16 million to fund groups that spread disinformation about climate science. Recently they have changed their website to acknowledge "rising greenhouse gas emissions pose significant risks to society and ecosystems." It is similar with Shell and BP. This does not mean they have joined conservationists. Instead they fund PAC's and political candidates that carry on the political battles. <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/mar/25/fossil-fuel-firms-are-still-bankrolling-climate-denial-lobby-groups>

American's global warming views have been in a holding pattern for the past few years. This graph covers the Gallup poll results on global warming questions from 1998-2014. This winter, much of the country experienced unusually hot, cold or snowy weather, theoretically providing cause for people to reflect on whether they were witnessing normal variation in weather or the effect of global warming. However, most Americans believe the strange weather reflects natural variations.



Volume 4 Issue 4

Save the Date
 April 23, 2016

"A New Day is Dawning"
 RTC Workshop on Renewables
 from 8:30am to 12:30pm
 at St. Paul's UCC Church
 in Selinsgrove
 Also in April the Linn
 Conservancy will have
 events all month to
 celebrate the Earth

The scientists continue to work and have determined that human activity is causing the Earth to get hotter primarily by burning fossil fuels and a smaller contribution from clear cutting forests. <https://www.edf.org/climate/human-activity-is-causing-global-warming>

On September 23, 2014, the *New York Times* had a Science Times Section on this topic. These are some of the comments included. **Alan I Leshner** Chief Executive, *American Association for the Advancement of Science*- Ideology and intuition sometimes appear to be trumping science. So people deny the evidence even as it increases. I fear that the pace at which the public understand that the climate is changing, and puts pressure on the political system, will be too slow

We are seeing that communicating scientific knowledge has had an effect, and that makes me happy! The deniers have less and less credibility, as the public understands the scientific consequences more and more.

Barbara Kingslover *Novelist: author of the memoir "Animal, Vegetable, Miracle"* -My Fear: Catastrophic extinction. We don't get to make natural laws. Natural law made us, and it ultimately will unmake us. What makes me very sad is that we're going to take so many species down with us.

My Hope: We in the United States finally seem to be coming to the table after decades of either denial or argument. It seems as if denial as a political strategy has run its course and that we are stepping up to our responsibilities. I hope that's true.

Neil deGrasse Tyson, Director Hayden Planetarium- I find that to worry about things is to invest emotional energy in ways that do not lead to change. Always better to do something about a problem than to worry about it. What I expect will happen in the coming decades is that beachfront real estate, some of the most expensive in the housing market place will become overrun by storm surges with enough frequency that it will force the wealthiest class (who might have previously been in denial of the phenomenon) to recognize the problem and take actions, actions they can take since they are typically captains of industry and are in power and control.

An excellent Video on Development Justice

The Loretto Community NGO at the United Nations consistently advocates for policies that put people and the planet before corporate profits. This video from the [Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development](#) succinctly captures many of the justice issues under the umbrella of the currently unjust global financial system. It shows why we need a new development model to address the double crises of inequality and environmental collapse. The information is clear and includes suggestions for change. <http://www.lorettocommunity.org/from-loretto-at-the-un-an-excellent-video-on-development-justice/>

A very few of the information highlights they note about global inequality:

- The richest 85 people in the world own the same as poorest 3.5 billion people
- 80% of the world's population lives on less than \$10 per day.
- The difference between rich and poor is growing.
- Bangladesh creates 0.3% of the emissions that contribute to global warming but tides are rising there 10x faster than the global average.
- Women are 70% of the worlds poor. They consume the least, are paid the least and own the least.
- A woman laborer in Bangaledesh earns less in one year than Christi Walton (of the Walton family that owns Walmart) does in one second.



Clean Energy is Good for Business

According to a 2014 report issued by Ceres, the World Wildlife Fund, Calvert Investments, and David Gardiner and Associates, more than 40 percent of Fortune 500 companies have set business targets aimed at reducing greenhouse gas, improving energy efficiency, or procuring more renewable energy.

"For the largest corporations in the United States, clean energy is now becoming mainstream," the report states. It notes that 60 percent of Fortune 100 companies have set targets for renewable energy and greenhouse gas reduction.

Myriad examples of the trend exist.

Collectively, this has saved the corporations \$1.1 billion annually, and has decreased annual CO2 emissions by 58.3 million metric tons, "comparable to retiring 15 coal plants," the report says.

As a result, annually, UPS is now saving more than \$200 million, Cisco Systems is saving \$151 million, Pepsi-Co \$120 million, United Continental \$104 million, and General Motors \$73 million, according to the report.

<http://ncronline.org/blogs/eco-catholic/business-pentagon->

News from the AMA

In an article in POWERSOURCE, just after the AMA's annual meeting this year, the organization adopted a policy stating that in addition to requiring the chemical disclosures, monitoring "should focus on human exposure in well water and surface water and government agencies should share this information with physicians and the public." Most of the 25 states in the



U.S. where shale gas drilling and development is occurring — including Pennsylvania, where drilling in the Marcellus and Utica shale formations is booming — either don't know or don't publicly disclose all the chemicals used in fracking. Keeping the names of the chemicals secret places an unreasonable burden on physicians who are treating people in and near the fracking sites. He noted that 8.4 million people in the U.S. now live within one mile of a shale gas drilling and fracking site, and that the EPA found that at least one chemical used in fracking was concealed from regulators because of proprietary claims at 70 percent of the thousands of shale gas wells drilled in the US. <http://powersource.post-gazette.com/local/2015/06/12/AMA-blasts-secret-shale-records/stories/201506120147>

The
Weather
Channel

Bringing weather to life

The Weather Channel has gather 25 influential voices on climate change, security, energy and peace.. There are 25 video recordings, about 2 minutes each, that include four retired generals or admirals, a former senior Pentagon official, and former CIA director James Woolsey. It includes former GOP Congressman Bob Inglis, former VP of the Heartland Institute (!) Eli Lehrer, and two GOP EPA chiefs — William K. Reilly and Christine Todd Whitman. What they have to say might surprise some.

Neil Katz, Editor in Chief says. "We feel that the opinions expressed here are worth listening to and engaging with. They come from business and military leaders, from people who have seen firsthand the power of severe weather, and even from some perhaps-unexpected voices in American politics. We feel that the opinions featured here are from people who are worth listening to." <http://weather.climate25.com/voices/>

World View



Dr. Stefan Cramer, a hydro geologist working in South Africa visited the U. S. recently to learn how fracking issues are handled here. He is a German citizen who has spent his career in development work with countries throughout the world. You can visit his website at

[www.http://frackingsa.org](http://frackingsa.org)

He became interested in fracking about 5 years ago, and found that conventional fracking had been going on in Germany for about 20 years and already included several cover-ups of accidents. In Germany, as here, the industry exaggerated the amount of gas to expect, feeding into the political atmosphere that led Poland and Ukraine to be centers for gas extraction and the political implications of wanting freedom from Russia for energy needs. In South Africa, Shell has leasing privileges in the Karoo, a desert area, for an area the size of Pennsylvania. This worldwide glimpse of the industry, the politics and the disregard for the environment only magnifies the fracking problems in our world.

He was impressed the environmental movement in Pennsylvania had been active and noticed throughout the world, when there seems to be such a small band of activists. Others look to us as trailblazers and a place to view the impact of the industry. Too often the lesson to learn is what NOT to do.

Because of Dr. Cramer's expertise as a groundwater specialist, I asked him some questions concerning water in Pennsylvania .

Q. What is the result of all the water drawn from the Susquehanna River?

A. Depending on the quantities removed, the river flow can be reduced and as the level of the river lowers, there is less recharge of the groundwater. There is common ground and interrelationship between all river water and groundwater. The flow of the river is more than the water we see, it is also in the stones, sand etc. below the bed. Lowering the water table then changes the vegetation in the area. All of these things are in balance.

Q. What is the result of disposing fracking water?

A. While (1) some can be treated and cleaned, that is a very expensive process. (2) The water that is put into the evaporation ponds is taken out of the hydrological process of the area. The water evaporates and will return to earth (but not here). The evaporation process causes air contamination from the lighter volatile hydrocarbons that end in the air, while the heavier metals remain in the pond. (3) The reinjection process *in theory* says the water will stay down. However, the same ingredients that make it

"slick" for fracking remain in the water and *in practice* the water goes into perforations below ground and follows preferential pathways that exist underground. Reinjection is a gamble because it cannot be predicted or controlled. The fracking process itself opens preferential pathways and to inject the fluid remobilizes the areas causing slips and new pathways.

Q. What about putting the fracking water into abandoned coalmines?

A. The fracking water will seep throughout the mines. The fracking chemicals interact with the coal creating sulfuric acid; this remobilizes the heavy metals in the fluid and mine. Filling mines with water also is a reconfiguration of weight underground causing additional stress on the plates and fissures that exist. Eventually the mines overflow and cause more environmental damage.

Q. How important are rivers to an area?

A. Rivers are like our bloodlines. Just as the doctor takes a blood sample to test what might be a health problem for us, rivers carry whatever is happening to the ecosystem in the area. Also, the number and speed of flash floods reflect the amount of water retention of the vegetation of the area - less vegetation, worse floods.

Q. What do you see happening to our world in the future?

A. By the end of the century we WILL have a meter of sea level rise. Even if we stopped doing everything damaging TODAY, there is a 50-year time lapse for the changes to take effect. That is why it is so important to change now. The effect of the sea level rise will be coastal flooding. Deeper water means higher waves causing more coastal erosion. All of these impacts are moving faster than the scientists had predicted.

Q. What would you like people to know?

A. We need to learn humility, to find compassion for the rest of creation and let that lead us to a path of reduced impact. This does not need to mean sacrifice, but to develop a new view of quality of life with different values and a smaller footprint. A "Caring and Sharing" economy can lead to social innovation. America has been a leader at that in the past and could do it again.

Losing sight of the stars

As an astronomer, Tyler Nordgren is very concerned that light pollution is disconnecting humanity from our natural connection with the stars. In 2007, he used his sabbatical to go to national parks to give talks on the night sky. Once he convinced the park rangers it was worth a try, all were surprised at the immediate response. The night programs now get more attendance than all other programs put together. The connection with stars is inside all of us, but it has been sequestered away. Full article is in THE WEEK magazine October 2, 2015, *The last word*, page 36.



Scott the Printer at Inkspot Printing, 6821 Park Rd, Selinsgrove, PA 17870, has been talking with us about his decision to change the lighting in his shop. Some of the reasons for making the change now are (1) energy savings (good for the planet and good for the pocket book), (2) the previous ballast had a higher voltage, (3) safety factors- because the previous ballast can get very hot and even melt, (4) if the lights are on at night with no one in attendance, there was a real fire hazard. While the replacement was going on, he noticed that even 10 minutes after removal, these 1980-81 ballasts were very, very warm to the touch. The differences he notices now are that the new lights are brighter and are closer to natural sunlight as well as saving energy.



Because Scott has many powerful machines that he needs daily, he has looked for the Energy Star approval on his equipment. This assures built in features such as powering down when idle and the peace of mind knowing they are down overnight.

Why does he care? It's about health. Each of us is affected by the air we breathe and the water we drink. Scott thinks it is important that we each do our part to help. Just as we have had a change of behaviors in the past 20 years from burning everything to recycling which helps improve our air quality; if a million people do a part to save a bit of energy, we will make a difference here too.

In The News

*Vermont's largest city (Burlington) is now using 100% Renewable Energy.

<https://www.dailykos.com/story/2014/09/15/1329920/-Vermont-s-largest-city->

*Eminent Domain Abuse Survival Guide <http://castlecoalition.org/survivalguide>

*For *Everything you need to know before you sign a pipeline lease* view Dory Hippauf's presentation on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uvU7u-LpqB0&feature=share>

*Fracking Boom Gives Banks Mortgage Headaches http://www.americanbanker.com/issues/178_218/fracking-boom-gives-banks-mortgage-headaches-1063561-1.html?zkPrintable=1&nopagination=1

*Local Ohio Officials Strike Back Against 'Audacity' of Fossil Fuel Industry

<http://www.commondreams.org/news/2015/07/10/local-ohio-officials-strike-back-against-audacity-fossil-fuel-industry>

*'Big Win' for Divestment Movement as California Public Pensions Dump Coal-New law affecting nation's two largest publicly-held funds championed as demonstration of strength of global efforts to defund dirty fuels By Jon Queally, staff writer

<http://www.commondreams.org/news/2015/07/10/local-ohio-officials-strike-back-against-audacity-fossil-fuel-industry>

*With Renewables on the Rise, Dirty Fuels Losing Competitive Edge by Deirdre Fulton, staff writer

<http://www.commondreams.org/news/2015/10/06/renewables-rise-dirty-fuels-losing-competitive-edge>

*Two public drinking water systems have been impacted and at least five private water supplies contaminated due to ongoing pollution being caused by a natural gas fracking operation of JKLM Energy in Potter County, Pennsylvania

<http://publicherald.org>

*A spiritual acoustics of the heart and Earth By Alex Mikulich <http://ncronline.org/blogs/eco-catholic/spiritual-acoustics-heart-and-earth>



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