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Herbster, WI, December 21<sup>st</sup> – Volume 3: Number 51 [Back Issues](#)

***“No one can possibly achieve any real and lasting success or get rich in business by being a conformist.”***

**-J.Paul Getty-**

**MEETINGS and EVENTS:**

Links will provide additional information. Dates for recent additions are in **bold**.

<i>What</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Where</i>
<a href="#">Biodiesel Study Group</a>	Mondays (all)	7:00-8:30 PM	Washburn Library
Inventors & Entrepreneurs Club	Jan 3 <sup>rd</sup>	5:30 PM	Iron River Community Center
<a href="#">Superior Days Planning</a>	Jan. 8 <sup>th</sup>	Noon	WITC - Superior
BCEDC Board Meeting	Jan. 14 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 AM -noon	Washburn Library
<a href="#">Conservation Lobby Day</a>	<b>Jan. 30<sup>th</sup></b>	9:00 am & On	Madison
<a href="#">Superior Days</a>	Feb. 26-27	All Day	Madison
<a href="#">Great Lakes Day</a>	Feb. 28 <sup>th</sup>	All Day	Washington DC
<a href="#">Fusion 2008</a>	March 5-6	All Day	Madison, Fluno Center
<a href="#">Sustainable Business Conference</a>	April 24-25	All Day	Ashland
<a href="#">Green By Design Conference</a>	June 12-13	All Day	Washington DC area

## The BLOGOSPHERE

The blogosphere is part of a phenomenon called *social media*, a network of professional and wannabe writers, artists, photographers, video producers, animators, musicians and a whole host of others, all made possible by the Internet. [MySpace](#), [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), [Second Life](#), [Flickr](#), and, of course the grand daddy of all social media, the search engine [Google](#), are

examples. Internet forums, wikis, message boards, podcasts, voice over the Internet and video conferencing are other components of social media.

Keeping track of all the content on the Internet is impossible. Not even Google covers everything and [Wikipedia](#) still has lots of room for new articles. Blogs (or more formally and now almost never used “Web Logs”) are so ubiquitous that special search tools are needed. Tracking of the myriad interconnections in the blogosphere is the province of sites like [Technorati](#), [BlogPulse](#), [Tailrank](#), and [BlogScope](#). The later claims to be tracking over 17 million blogs with 170.58 million posts. Fortune 1000 companies that have strong brand identity to protect, take great pain to track what is being said in the blogosphere about their brand. A company communications unit may be assigned a core task of mitigating negative, or capitalizing on positive, comments. The blogosphere has emerged as a significant way for companies, small, medium and large, to promote a product or service. **RSS** has enabled one avenue for keeping up. You can subscribe to a tracking site and receive up to date feeds of new postings. The RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication and functions a bit like a live bookmark.

Getting into something new like blogging is often aided by a glossary of terms. Wikipedia has such a glossary in its [List of Blogging Terms](#). Reading through the list can be entertaining with some clever play on body parts that should not offend any but the most prudish reader. Another glossary from [Quick Online Tips](#) places the terminology in helpful categories like *Blogging Forms*, *Types of Blogs* and *Blogging Habits*. Check out ***Moblogging***.

The blogosphere is hundreds, maybe thousands, of times larger than it was just six or seven years ago. The doubling rate for the blogosphere was estimated in 2004 to be about five months according to Technorati. One has to wonder if the *rate* is accelerating. That I would even be writing about blogs is a bit unusual. One study found that the bulk of blogs are created by the under 30 set and blog creators in my age cohort are almost, by comparison, non-existent. Blogs created by folks over forty amounted to less than 2% of the total in 2004. Of course, today that 2% may be over 300,000 blogs. The over forty crowd may think they run the world but don't bet on it.

Political blogs are big. Presidential candidate Representative **Ron Paul** raised money by the minute the other day with the Internet playing a prominent role. As a soapbox, a Web site and blog stand about as tall in the village square as you can get. Shouting all manner of ideas, great and grotesque, is not limited. Even totalitarian regimes have problems suppressing people with Internet connections.

Some time after the new year, I may begin a migration of **TGIF** to embrace a blog-like format. TGIF has been pretty much a one-way street for the two plus years of its existence. An avenue for easier feedback is needed. **Larry MacDonald**, Bayfield Mayor, once said; “I may not agree always, but at least I know it's Friday.” Perhaps, I'm wondering, should TGIF foster more feedback? I'm very intrigued by the notion of online dialog in the sense of **Peter Senge** that dialog should embrace a spirit of inquiry, a suspension of assumptions and collegiality.

Blogs are just one tool in what **Mitch Kapor** has labeled **Massively Distributed Collaboration**. Broadband communication has now enabled technology that I was only able to dream about in 2000. Seven years have propelled NW Wisconsin from modems(I almost forgot how to spell that) to high speed Internet configurations that are relatively inexpensive and rival

the technologies that were available only to major universities and a few schools just a few years ago. Our rural area is on the edge of becoming the **Digital Village** a few of us began dreaming about. Isolation is no longer destiny. Not only can we easily and efficiently begin communicating with one another locally, we can create a *collaboratory* that is global. Are we all a virtual center of a universe?

I remember a heated argument in 1995 about the capacities of CD poised against Web enabled communications. I could not then envision a Web environment in which animation and video were ubiquitous and argued that the CD (and the then barely glimpsed DVD) would be *the* great educational technology, perhaps obviating textbooks. Sales and distribution of CD and DVD enabled information and entertainment have not gone away by any means, but Internet streaming makes integration of animation and video so much more common.

Now I'm tempted to say: *Flash technology rules the Web.*

Of course it doesn't yet.

But – confession time – I lost the argument.

With a face made for radio, I will not likely make TGIF a video blog.

## **LIGHTER SIDE:**

As with most jokes the original author is unknown. Whoever you are; “Thanks!” Names, when added, are intended to tease the innocent. **Lissa Radke** sent this “favorite” along.

An angel suddenly appears at a faculty meeting and tells the dean of the college that, in return for his unselfish and exemplary behavior, he will be given his choice of infinite wealth, wisdom, or beauty. Without hesitating, the dean selects infinite wisdom.

"Done!" says the angel, and disappears in a cloud of smoke and a bolt of lightning.

Now, all heads turn toward the dean, who sits surrounded by a faint halo of light. At length, one of his colleagues whispers, "Say something."

The dean looks at them and says, "I should have taken the money."

Take care and warm regards for a Happy Holiday!

/BRUCE

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*In addition Bruce maintains the following affiliations:*

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[Inland Sea Society](#), (ISS) Director

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[Raindrop Garden Gallery](#), (RGG) Co-owner

[IDEA Consortium LLC](#), Owner

[Chequamegon Institute, Inc.](#) Initial Registered Agent

[Coalition for Eco-Industrial Development](#), (CEID) Work Group Member

[Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board](#), (WIB) Member

*The encircled fractal triangle represents an integrated cluster of seven ideas – economics, ecology, equity, ethics, experience, education and energy – that may be considered a core for sustainability studies. Bruce is available to present illustrated lectures and facilitate discussions about role of education in Industrial Ecology, Sustainable Development and the Sustainability Revolution.*