

TGIF Taking Great Ideas Forward



Improving Northern Capital - Sustainable Development in the Northern Tier

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“We are continuously faced by great opportunities brilliantly disguised as insoluble problems.”

-Lee Iacocca-

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>
Executive Education Seminar	July 10th	9:00 AM – 3:00 PM	Edgewood College, Madison
BCEDC Board Meeting	July 14 th	10:00 – Noon	Washburn Library
Opening Reception for Science Symposium	July 16 th	6 – 9 PM	UW-Stout
Science Symposium	July 17 – 18	All Day	UW - Stout
Lake Superior Day	July 20th	All Day	Everywhere! Especially in the Lake Superior Basin
WIN Technology Conference	August 7 th	8:00 am – 3:00 pm	WITC Ashland
Inventors & Entrepreneurs Club	August 7th	5:30 PM	Coffee Shop US 2 & 63
BCEDC Board Meeting	August 11 th	10:00 – Noon	Washburn Library
2008 Resource Rendezvous	August 28	9:00 AM – 3:00 PM	Marshfield Clinic
Lake Superior Binational Forum	Sept 5-6	All Day Fri. 8-12 Sat.	Houghton, MI
Sustainable Communities & Farms	Sept 11 & 12	All day	Oconomowoc, WI
Bioneers Conference 2008	Oct. 17-19	All Day	San Rafael, California

Have a Great 4th of July!

Revolutions are underway on many fronts and convergence will generate a big bang that will change forever the way humans live on our planet earth. Independence will take on new – and certainly yet-to-be-charted – meaning. The fundamental truths of our Declaration of Independence will definitely include women. Three revolutions that particularly attract my attention are the sustainability revolution, the software revolution and the school revolution. The

outcome of these and other revolutions could determine our future independence or perhaps better said, the state of our dependence and interdependence.

Sustainability is difficult to define but any attempt to define it or characterize it includes consideration for future generations. I continue to muse over tidy definitions and keep returning to the notion that sustainability is a measure of how our contemporary decisions will impact future generations. **Chris Maser** has emphasized a couple of ideas worthy of consideration. It is our children who may – depending on the decisions we make – have limited choices and they are not present to discuss what we are doing to the air, water, soil and ecosystems of that support life on our little blue orb. When Native American stories are told, a seven generation framework is emphasized, a time frame certainly not less than 100 years. Century-thinking or multi-century-thinking is surely wise and a part of sustainability thinking. When our species can collectively acknowledge that our – often contentious and exploitive – local, regional and global relationships are tempered by concern for choices our seventh-generation of children will have, we will revolutionize the way we live and the way we live certainly will be very different from the way we live today. **Peter Senge** and his co-authors recently published “**The Necessary Revolution**” emphasizing that to be sustainable our organizations have little choice but to learn and to change.

Software has developed within an industrial model that celebrates and rewards “intellectual property” rights without useful distinctions among copyrights, patent rights, and trademark rights. Proprietary ownership of software code by corporations is very different from the model of ownership of a newly created piece of rap music or a short story, a recently invented gadget to open cans or a clever symbolic name or logo to identify that you are buying oats processed to look like donuts by General Mills. Useful software is rarely the product of a single mind. More commonly great software emerges from the minds of many through collaboration. The management of that collaboration has produced corporations that are financially awesome. **Bill Gates** and **Larry Ellison** are iconic reminders of the huge wealth that proprietary software has generated. The software revolution is in opening the code to the world, creating collaboration on a massive scale beyond the walls of any single corporation. Already the code that runs over 70% of Internet servers is not “owned” by anyone. Microsoft is clearly threatened by the openness on which Google, GNU/Linux or Wikipedia are based. Probably a few, not many, still remember *Encarta*. **Richard Stallman** pointed software development in a new direction with the revolutionary free software movement and “copyleft.” New business models have been emerging ever since.

Schools emerged in their current form to serve a pre-industrial age and evolved to meet the demands of the industrial revolution. Grandchildren are enjoying a break from school – a legacy of labor-intensive agriculture – but with activity supervised by grandparents (or other caregivers) while their parents are driving off to do the work of their lives. The model of home-schooling through the primary years is, in some situations, well worth a close look. Really caring teachers may well try to treat their pupils as they would their own children. But, find a parent with 15 to 40 children all the same age. Our model for those critical years is pretty bad for at least some of our children. *No Child Left Behind*, we can hope, started something that was missing – a national dialog looking at our schools. That NCLB, in part or in whole, has been politicized and misguided is certainly a distraction. However, a dialog about the personal and social function of learning is long overdue. The dialog, an unassuming and respectfully questioning dialog with all stakeholders involved, will revolutionize our schools. Learning is

life-long and schools support learning for just a short part of a life. Unfortunately our conversations about schools have yet to embrace fully the insights of **John Dewey** and **Jean Piaget**. Admittedly, the school revolution is, as yet, hard to recognize. The connectors, mavens and salesmen of **Malcolm Gladwell's** “**Tipping Point**” are not at all obvious. Schools could definitely use a **Paul Revere** to rally the conversation.

Revolutions are occurring in medicine and medical care delivery, transportation, media and communications, global agriculture, trade and manufacturing, and on many other fronts. All the revolutions underway emphasize our interdependence. Perhaps that is what the fireworks tonight should really celebrate.

LIGHTER SIDE:

As with most jokes the original author is unknown. Whoever you are; “Thanks!” Names, when added, are intended to tease the innocent.

Gentle Thoughts

There's always a lot to be thankful for if you take time to look for it. For example I am sitting here thinking how nice it is that wrinkles don't hurt.

Did you ever notice: When you put the 2 words 'The' and 'IRS' together it spells 'Theirs?'

Aging: Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.

Take care and enjoy a great weekend!

/BRUCE

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Bruce Lindgren is Principal of [B.Lindgren CONSULTING](#). The consulting practice serves small business, local government, school districts and non-profits providing support for research, grant development, technical writing, marketing support and project management. Bruce brings his background in biological sciences, education, small business and media technology to generate and implement ideas contributing solutions to mission critical challenges.

In addition Bruce maintains the following affiliations:

[Bayfield County Economic Development Corporation](#), (BCEDC) Director

Bayfield CountyLakes Forum, *Board Secretary*

Chequamegon Institute, Inc. *Initial Registered Agent*

Coalition for Eco-Industrial Development, (CEID) *Acting President & CEO*

IDEA Consortium LLC, *Owner*

Inland Sea Society, (ISS) *Director*

Lake Superior Binational Forum, (LSBF) *US Co-Chair*

Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board, (WIB) *Member*

Raindrop Garden Gallery, (RGG) *Co-owner*

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.