

TGIF Taking Great Ideas Forward



Improving Northern Capital - Sustainable Development in the Northern Tier

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author and do not reflect positions of organizations with which he is affiliated.

Superior, WI September 26th – Volume 4: Number 39

[Back Issues](#)

“Two roads diverged in a wood, and I— / I took the one less traveled by, / And that has made all the difference.”

-Robert Frost-

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>
Ideas To Profits (Conference)	October 1-2	All Day	Appleton WI
Inventors & Entrepreneurs Club	Oct. 2nd	5:30 – 8:00 PM	Cassablanca Coffee House Ashland (Hwy 2 & 63)
E-Business Best Practices	Oct. 9th	8:30 AM - 5:00 PM	Madison
BCEDC Board Meeting	October 13th	10:00 AM – Noon	TBA
Bioneers Conference 2008	Oct. 17-19	All Day	San Rafael, California
Wisconsin Biotechnology and Medical Device Association	Oct. 22nd	All Day	Waukesha WI
SOLEC State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conference	Oct. 22-23	All Day	Niagara Falls, ON
Inventors & Entrepreneurs Club	Nov. 6th	5:30 – 8:00 PM	Cassablanca Coffee House Ashland (Hwy 2 & 63)
Lake Superior Binational Forum	Nov. 7 & 8	All Day Fri. , 8-12 Sat.	Thunder Bay, ON
Synergy 2008	Nov. 11 & 12	All Day	UW River Falls
Northland Bioneers Conference	Nov. 14 - 16	All Day	Twin Cities

The Way Ahead

Risk is sometimes not obvious. Ideas can be like a wet, steep and rocky path. Philosopher **Daniel Dennett** titled one of his many books “Darwin's Dangerous Idea.” **Charles Darwin** struggled for 20 years before publishing his ideas about organic evolution. “**On the Origin of Species**” was greeted with strong reactions, many severely negative and critical. Darwin's life of ill health may have been from complications of Chagas disease acquired from an insect bite in South America, but that his poor health was exacerbated by the stress of his struggle to work out

details of his evolution theory is very likely. Darwin was troubled by his ideas; doubting and debating as he walked the pathways of his homestead; the “thinking paths” of his Down House. That Darwin's “Origin of Species” changed the world of biology is no longer debated by any competent biologists. Darwin's idea jolted forever our thinking that the human species is separate from nature.

Prescient; looking ahead with confidence, and *nescient*; without schooling, unlearned, incapable of seeing complex issues, are not polar opposites but illuminate interesting differences in human capacity. Sharing the lexical root with science, prescient and nescient are states of knowing while science is a way of knowing. Methods of science provide a high level of confidence enabling prediction. Conjecture yields to accumulated evidence. Ignorance gives way to knowledge.

I've often written that ignorance should be celebrated; not dismissed, marginalized or ostracized. As the late physician and gifted medical researcher **Lewis Thomas** said, “In this most scientifically productive of all centuries, what we have learned is that we are profoundly ignorant.” It is looking into the future and asking critical questions that we discover gaps in knowledge. Those gaps – the spaces between where we are now and where we desire to be – provide a tension that energizes creativity. Creative energy may be every bit as much, perhaps more, emotional than rational.

Sometime, most time, there are simply no means, no tools, to rationally know or understand an emotion. Reading **Robert Frost's** famous poem “The Road Not Taken” on Tuesday morning, I reached the last line and experienced a powerful wave of emotion that left my cheeks wet. Why? I don't think I can know, now or perhaps ever. The spontaneous and powerful emotion, though, was unusual and took me by enough surprise to command attention. Now I have to pause and wonder; was this just about me and my life paths or was it somehow more about thoughts and reflections, now an unexpected and sometimes uncomfortable part of my life, about all life and the future of our delicate planet. Thinking about energy, climate, sustainability has taken over my thinking about so many things lately. We have clearly chosen a path of monstrous use of non-renewable resources and are at a point in time that demands a cluster of complex and important decisions.

We could all use more time on our own “thinking paths,” sorting out our relationships; physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual relationships; relationships that are too often transitory. The challenges that lie ahead are daunting and sometimes seem overwhelming. Through the looming specter of peak oil and climate change it seemed that our economy was stable. Now global events, starting with sub-prime mortgage defaults, are leaving us all with serious doubts about economic stability going forward. Perhaps more than ever we need to be thinking together; collaborating by sharing information, seeking cooperation and calling for coordination. Making sense of where we are now and where we want to be will require that we share the thinking path with others by suspending assumptions and asking questions.

Where is our plan? Where are we now and where do we want to be economically, environmentally and socially in 20, 50, 150 years? What do we value? How will we make a difference if we continue traveling ahead on our familiar paths?

LIGHTER SIDE:

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

Some Jokes Need to be Recycled.

Lawrence Livermore Laboratories has discovered the heaviest element yet known to science.

The new element, Governmentium (Gv), has one neutron, 25 assistant neutrons, 88 deputy neutrons and 198 assistant deputy neutrons, giving it an atomic mass of 312. These 312 particles are held together by forces called morons, which are surrounded by vast quantities of lepton-like particles called peons.

Since Governmentium has no electrons, it is inert; however, it can be detected, because it impedes every reaction with which it comes into contact. A tiny amount of Governmentium can cause a reaction that would normally take less than a second, to take from four days to four years to complete.

Governmentium has a normal half-life of two to six years; It does not decay, but instead undergoes a reorganization in which a portion of the assistant neutrons and deputy neutrons exchange places. In fact, Governmentium's mass will actually increase over time, since each reorganization will cause more morons to become neutrons, forming isodopes.

This characteristic of moron promotion leads some scientists to believe that Governmentium is formed whenever morons reach a critical concentration. This hypothetical quantity is referred to as critical morass.

When catalyzed with money, Governmentium becomes Administratium, an element that radiates just as much energy as Governmentium since it has half as many peons but twice as many morons.

Take care and enjoy a great weekend!

/Bruce

© Bruce Lindgren 2008.

TGIF is distributed as both HTML and TEXT versions. The HTML version has graphics, formatted text and clickable hyperlinks. To receive the HTML version, your e-mail client must be set to accept HTML. [PDF versions are now available.](#)

TGIF is distributed each Friday. Subscriptions for TGIF are free and may be obtained by contacting Bruce Lindgren at bflind@cheqnet.net. You may UNSUBSCRIBE by sending an email to bflind@cheqnet.net with “UNSUBSCRIBE” in the subject line.

*IF you have not subscribed and YOU ARE RECEIVING TGIF FOR THE **FIRST TIME**, your address has been placed in a temporary distribution list to receive a few issues without subscription.*

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*

[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.