

# 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.

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**“Since a politician never believes what he says, he is quite surprised to be taken at his word.”**

**-Charles de Gaulle-**

## 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>
<b>B CEDC Board Meetings are now the first Tuesday of each month and will begin at 9:30 AM. Locations will vary but most meetings are at the Washburn Library. The January meeting was last Tuesday, January 6<sup>th</sup>. Check the <a href="#">BCEDC Web site</a> for more information about BCEDC.</b>			
<a href="#">Lake Superior Binational Forum</a>	Jan. 30-31	All Day	Superior, WI
Lake Superior Binational Forum <b>Public Input Session</b>	<b>Jan 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>1:00 – 5:00 PM</b>	<b>Barkers Island Inn Superior</b>
<a href="#">Inventors &amp; Entrepreneur's Club</a>	Feb. 5 <sup>th</sup>	6:00 pm	Cassablanca Coffee House – Ashland Hwy 2 & 63
<b>Living Green Conference</b>	Feb. 7 <sup>th</sup>	12:00 – 4:30 PM	Lake Superior College, Duluth
<b>BCEDC Board Meeting</b>	Feb. 3 <sup>rd</sup>	9:30 – noon	Washburn Library
<a href="#">Focus on Midwest Energy</a>	Feb. 23 <sup>rd</sup>	8:00am-1:00pm	Madison's Monona Terrace
<a href="#">Great Lakes Days</a>	Feb. 23 – 25	All Day	Washington DC
<a href="#">Superior Days</a>	Feb. 24 – 25	All Day	Madison
<a href="#">Conservation Lobby Day</a> Note: <b>New Link!</b>	Feb. 25 <sup>th</sup>	All Day	Madison
<a href="#">Building Green Conference</a>	<b>Feb. 26<sup>th</sup></b>	8:00am-5:30pm	Duluth
<a href="#">Leadership from the Bottom Up</a>	<b>Feb. 27, 28, 29</b>	Times vary	Three different locations
<a href="#">Business Development Conference</a>	<b>May 6 &amp; 7</b>	All Day	Cable, Lakewoods Resort and Conference Center

## Science Education

STEM is a watchword for science education these days calling forth a focus among K-16 educators on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. A [Web-site](#) promoting STEM in Minnesota catches attention by reciting a few stereotypes: *Science is for nerds. Math is*

*boring. Technology classes are a waste of time.* Building a base for helping students think critically, creatively and seriously about career opportunities in the sciences is a central aim of the emphasis on STEM. Coupled with this important goal is moving to authentic learning experiences that enable students to see possibilities difficult to imagine in a traditional classroom. There is considerable concern for continuing the United States' dominance in science and engineering, which is emphasized by the sponsorship of STEM initiatives by the Chambers of Commerce, Departments of Education, Business Partnerships, School Associations, Manufacturer's Organizations, and Institutions of Higher Education.

The **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation** has been enthusiastic in support of STEM programs in several states. Bill Gates is putting up money to be taken at his words: "*Never before in history has innovation offered promise of so much to so many in so short a period of time.*" A [STEM Education Coalition](#) lists no fewer than 100 participating businesses, organizations and universities. The **American Chemical Society** and the **National Science Teachers Association** are deeply involved with the expectation of "enabling the U.S. to remain the economic and technological leader of the global marketplace of the 21st century."

A related strategy, **Project Based Learning** has achieved cachet by ratcheting more active student involvement in authentic learning experiences. An immediate benefit is to shift students from short-term sharply focused, teacher-centered lessons to learning opportunities that are open-ended and multi-disciplinary ventures that demand engagement. Learning becomes a joint experience not only among participating students but embraces learning as a co-creative experience with faculty, parents and community involvement. Establishing connections outside the classroom fosters a path toward relevance that can be highly motivating for students who may have been unable to find their way successfully through more traditional instructional strategies.

The **South Shore School District** has embraced Project Based Learning and will begin in the second semester of 2009 with a multi-phase outline that includes; hydroponics (growing plants in artificial media), greenhouse analysis, design and construction, a community centered garden on school property, and an exciting look at a "school forest" that will link with a state supported network. With direction by **Rich Marincel** and support from fellow faculty members, **John Tribys** and **Dan Madison**, an Advisory Council will provide essential community involvement.

Building science education into the four phases is inevitable given the subjects. **Tom Gerstenberger** retired from teaching in the district several years ago with a well deserved reputation for excellence and rigor, based on his use of projects in his biology classes. An outstanding naturalist, Gerstenberger rarely missed an opportunity for his students to engage in deep learning experiences outdoors.

Science education will be greatly aided by embracing a notion of [\*No Child Left Indoors\*](#).

## **LIGHTER SIDE:**

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

### **Bill at the Gates**

Former President Clinton died and knocked at the Pearly Gates. "Who goes there?" inquired St. Peter.

"It's me, Bill Clinton."

"What bad things did you do on earth?"

Clinton thought a bit and answered, "Well, I smoked marijuana but you shouldn't hold that against me because I didn't inhale. I guess I had extra-marital sex, but you couldn't hold that against me because I didn't really have 'sexual relations.' And I lied, but I didn't commit perjury."

After several moments of deliberation St. Peter replied, "OK, here's the deal. We'll send you someplace where it is very hot, but we won't call it 'Hell.' You'll be there for an indefinite period of time, but we won't call it 'eternity.' And don't 'abandon all hope' upon entering, just don't hold your breath waiting for it to freeze over."

Take care, stay warm, 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 many affiliations including: [Bayfield County Economic Development Corporation](#), (BCEDC) Director, [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.*