

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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“The only thing we know about the future is that it will be different.”

-Peter Drucker-

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>
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
BCEDC Board Meeting	Sept. 8 th	10:00 – Noon	Washburn Library
Sustainable Communities & Farms	Sept 11 & 12	All day	Oconomowoc, WI
Northshore In-line Half Marathon	Sept 13 th	7:30 AM	Two Harbors to Duluth
Ideas To Profits (Conference)	October 1-2	All Day	Appleton WI
Bioneers Conference 2008	Oct. 17-19	All Day	San Rafael, California
SOLEC State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conference	Oct. 22-23	All Day	Niagara Falls, ON
Synergy 2008	Nov. 11 & 12	All Day	UW River Falls

The Tease

“The most news in the morning.” **John Roberts & Kiran Chetry.**

“Best political team on television.” **Wolf Blitzer.**

“Doesn't anybody deserve a government that works?” **Lou Dobbs.**

CNN hopes to create the impression that it is somehow the best or most responsive, amplifying these messages by repetition *ad nauseum*. CNN and other media outlets probably should come up with another term for what they label as “news.” Stories are crafted to stimulate viewership, conveying stories of events that only narrowly fit journalistic definitions of “news.”

The late NBC newscaster **David Brinkley** said it breezily: "*The one function that TV news performs very well is that when there is no news we give it to you with the same emphasis as if there were.*"

But, then, CNN must adjust to the regimenting realities of Nielsen Ratings. Nielson claims:

Hundreds of channels, thousands of programs, millions of viewers. Our job is to decipher and deliver this data every day. How does a program become ranked #1 in the Nielsen TV ratings and what does it mean? Our ratings aren't qualitative evaluations of how much a program is "liked." Instead, they're the simplest, most democratic measurements: how many people watched.

"Simplest" certainly fits but it probably should remain for other commentary to take up the "most democratic measurements" link. Somehow "voting" with a clicker seems to miss some of the deeper philosophical considerations for democracy.

Watergate reporter Carl Bernstein said; "*The greatest felony in the news business today is to be behind, or to miss a big story. So speed and quantity substitute for thoroughness and quality, for accuracy and context. The pressure to compete, the fear somebody else will make the splash first, creates a frenzied environment in which a blizzard of information is presented and serious questions may not be raised.*"

Broadcast news organizations have recruited an amazing array of talented people; bright, articulate people, with pearly teeth and big eyes, who are paid well, or aspire to be paid well, and who fully understand how their current and future paychecks are dependent upon the Nielsen ratings that drive advertising revenue. Almost none are willing or able to buck a system that empowers producers and corporate owners. There are few that are able to stand above the commercial pressures and clever mechanics of TV news production.

Unfortunately the rare combinations of brains and good looks that dominate the talking heads of TV news personalities are even more rarely matched by people who refuse to play the game of loyal viewers.

Who is to blame?

The irony of my criticism is that I would not know about any of this if I did not watch CNN.

Click. Click. Change the channel or click the off button.

... joins us live. Next! On this *American Morning*.

LIGHTER SIDE:

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

Signs technology took over your life.

- You have never sat through an entire movie without having at least one device on your body beep or buzz.

- You become upset when a person calls you on the phone to sell you something, but you think it's okay for a computer to call and demand that you start pushing buttons on your telephone to receive more information about the product it is selling.
- You think of the gadgets in your office as "friends," but you forget to send your father a birthday card.
- You need to fill out a form that must be typewritten, but you can't because there isn't one typewriter in your house, only computers with laser printers.
- The thought that a CD could refer to finance or music rarely enters your mind.

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.