

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 way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.”

-Walt Disney-

If you use [Wikipedia](#), please consider [making a contribution](#).

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>
Inventors & Entrepreneur's Club	Jan. 8 th	6:00 pm	Cassablanca Coffee House – Ashland Hwy 2 & 63
B CEDC Board Meeting	Jan. 12 th	10:00 – noon	Washburn Library
Engineering Professional Development	Jan. 21 – 22	All Day	Madison
Lake Superior Binational Forum	Jan. 30-31	All Day	Superior, WI
Lake Superior Binational Forum Public Input Session	Jan 30th	1:00 – 5:00 PM	Barkers Island Inn Superior
Inventors & Entrepreneur's Club	Feb. 5 th	6:00 pm	Cassablanca Coffee House – Ashland Hwy 2 & 63
BCEDC Board Meeting	Feb. 9 th	10:00 – noon	Washburn Library
Great Lakes Days	Feb. 23 – 25	All Day	Washington DC
Superior Days	Feb. 24 – 25	All Day	Madison
Conservation Lobby Day	Feb. 25 th	All Day	Madison
Business Development Conference	May 2009	Two Days	Cable, Lakewoods Resort and Conference Center

Why not?

Lake Superior has been brewing and stewing for a long time. November winds raise spectacular waves. December starts an icy interlude. The South Shore coastal towns in Bayfield County accept the lake, winds, cold and snow and get about the business of daily life. Unfortunately for most residents, economic viability means a commute. South Shore is a bedroom community for Washburn, Ashland, Superior and Duluth. Too few residents work at home or near home. Too much of our life energy and economic vitality goes elsewhere. It is time

to keep our resources for local living and build a fantastic and functional prospect for future generations.

I have been observing and participating here, there and elsewhere over the past decade with increasingly critical thoughts and frustrations borne of concerned feelings. Thoughts and feelings need to be addressed and now is the time to address the issues, challenges, problems of development across our little part of the world. I have participated in the Chequamegon Bay-side efforts to address economic development through the green eyes of the **Alliance for Sustainability**, the power of inventing the future supported by the **Wisconsin Innovation Network**, the **Dream Catchers Entrepreneur Club**, and the **University of Wisconsin**, and the wonderfully well-meaning but too often fixed focus lens of the **Bayfield County Economic Development Corporation (BCEDC)**. My involvement over nearly two years with **Eco-Industrial Development** in the Twin Ports area has been enlightening, rewarding and a great generator of new perspectives about organizational structure and function.

We are all part of a big system called the biosphere and we urgently need to enlarge our ability to think about details, directions and development as a part of interlocking systems. It is time to “*think globally, interact regionally, and learn locally.*” The time has come for asking tough and penetrating questions that will open doors to address South Shore Ideas, Issues and Opportunities directly; to quit talking and begin doing.

Accordingly I intend to begin a new year with a resolution to more directly share my resources with resident and non-resident land owners of the Towns of **Bell, Clover, Port Wing, Orienta, Tripp** and **Oulu**, the community of the South Shore School District. A virtual sign goes up January 12th, 2009. **Cardinal Development Associates** will meet by invitation only at 6:30 PM at our transformational building space, our “**Venture Center**,” on Spruce Tree Drive in Herbster.

The page is turning on world history and the current era is going to give way to a new framework based on realities of a world that journalist **Thomas Friedman** describes elegantly in his books and articles. His most recent book “**Hot, Flat and Crowded**” is scary in its depiction of how the flattening of the world through contemporary digital communication exacerbates the growing global demand for social equity and economic development. He argues that 1.) the American lifestyle, the American Dream can be replicated only by destabilizing the life sustaining support systems provided by natural capital – the ecosystems that collectively support the biosphere; the source of sustainable systems that have over billions of years created the clean air and water, stable climate, and productive soils that support all life, yes indeed, human life, on planet earth; and, 2.) Americans must lead the way to a sustainable future and we must act NOW!

Others with a global perspective, like **Peter Senge, Van Jones, Paul Hawkin, Karl-Henrik Robert', Don Tapscott**, and **Amory Lovins** write with persuasive evidence that global solutions are within reach if civil society acts locally. Our local champion for local action, **Dorothy Lageroos**, has reached across regional boundaries to leverage a collection of important ideas for locally sustainable living in her book, “**The New Science of Sustainability.**” Another wonderful person and local author, **Jane Silberstein**, (“**Land Use Planning for Sustainable Development**”) abandoned the Chequamegon region to live with less snow and new opportunities. Now an administrator at the **Bainbridge Graduate Institute** near Seattle, Jane

supports students seeking the MBA in Sustainable Business. Opportunities for these graduates will emerge when they engage local realities (like cold, snow, and diseases like hardening of the attitudes) and build local businesses that sustain local living. This may be, or should be, one of the last times you see *sustainability* and *global business* used in the same sentence. Ask around the executive suite at GM. Or check with the workers leaving the GM assembly plant in Janesville for the last time. If those executives intend to reform GM by importing the **Daewoo**, they better get a \$9 billion give-back check ready and huddle up with their bankruptcy lawyers.

Cultivating great ideas and sharing them will be my contribution; reading and writing is what I will do. I will not do this for a living; I will do it for life. It is about time I heed without arrogance the admonishment of **Richard Bach** through the fable *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*; “It is great to be a seeker, but sooner or later you have to be a finder and give to the world that which you have found.” Time marches on and though most of my good health is intact, I don't have a lot of a lifetime left. Leaving a great job at **Normandale Community College** 11½ years ago was an adventure in seeking something different. Returning to school for an additional degree may have been a better choice but another advanced degree has always been beyond my time and treasure. Impatience and impertinence have supported imprudence and, sometimes, an unproductive arrogance. Proceeding with all the confidence that goes with ignorance, I have ventured with ventures in small business. Rewards have not been financial. Frustrations have been reverberant. Perhaps now is just the right time for the audacity of hope.

The great natural resource of the South Shore region was squandered more than a century ago by the lumber barons. The exploited lumber jacks mostly left for other opportunity but a few stayed to farm and fish. **Billy Herbster's** camp cooking provided nourishment for the bodies of lumber jacks and his ability to read and write nourished a few minds in ways past that we can only imagine. Now is the time to imagine a new future for this region. Perhaps our imagination can be stimulated by asking questions, fostering our curiosity about how the future will unfold and making sure we quit talking and begin doing. **Samuel Johnson**, the eighteenth century English author and lexicographer, said; “Curiosity is one of the permanent and certain characteristics of a vigorous mind.” Our mind-tools will make all the difference.

The late Senator **Robert F. Kennedy** made famous the quotation from **George Bernard Shaw**: “You see things; and you say, 'Why?' But I dream things that never were; and I say, 'Why not?' ”

LIGHTER SIDE:

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

Politician in Action

A Senator in the USA was once asked about his attitude toward whiskey.

“If you mean the demon drink that poisons the mind, pollutes the body, desecrates family life, and inflames sinners, then I'm against it. But if you mean the elixir of a New Year toast, the shield against winter chill, the taxable potion that puts needed funds into public coffers to comfort little afflicted children, then I'm for it. This is my position, and I will not compromise.”

Take care and enjoy a great weekend! **Happy New Year!**

/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.