

Minnesota in the Crosshairs

The Heat is On!

By Paul Diegnau, CGCS, Keller Golf Course



Have you heard about this thing called Global Warming? How could you not? The subject has infected every crevice of our society, from newspapers and magazines to television and radio programs. Apparently this is pretty serious stuff and we all should be concerned. In fact, by one account, the climate of Minnesota will resemble that of Missouri within 30 years! A statement like that surely grabs your attention, but how credible is it?

Al Gore currently leads the charge concerning global warming and its negative effects upon the world we live in. Several months ago I experienced, first hand, the movie "An Inconvenient Truth," at the local theater. When the movie finished and the credits began to roll, the entire audience, except me, broke into a standing ovation. I had never experienced a reaction to a movie like that before. I was intrigued by the response I had witnessed and decided to further explore the

topic. What I discovered was that the issue of global warming is not as cut and dried as Al Gore portrayed it to be in his movie. There exists another side to the story that one rarely hears about - the side that says global warming is not the threat that it has been made out to be. Let's examine what we think we know and what we don't.

It is generally accepted among the scientific community that in the last century the mean global temperature has increased approximately .6 degrees C. There is also general consensus that atmospheric CO2 levels have increased approximately 30% over the same time period. And it is an accepted fact that greenhouse gases such as CO2, N2O and CH4 trap heat emitted by the earth's surface and increase atmospheric temperatures. Beyond these facts and contrary to what the mainstream media would have you believe, there are several very different

and contradicting views on global warming held by high-level members of the scientific community. The primary stumbling block centers on the actual effect of man's addition of heat trapping greenhouse gases to the atmosphere through the combustion of carbon-based fuel sources. So the \$10,000 question becomes: Is man's contribution of greenhouse gases causing global temperatures to rise, and if so, how much?

Recently, the U.N.-based Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) issued a summary of its fourth report on climate change since 1990. The panel claims to be 90% sure that the rise in

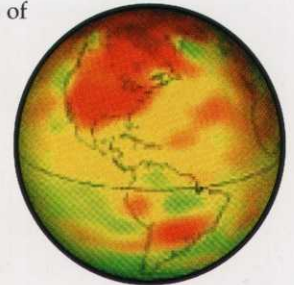
temperatures since the mid-20th century is due to man-made greenhouse gases. The fact of the matter is the IPCC relies on computer models to forecast climate change. Predictive computer modeling is only as accurate as the parameters and algorithms fed into them. Currently, scientists know very little about the effects of

particles (aerosols) on cooling or the role that water vapor and clouds have on temperature when interacting with greenhouse gases.

These are very complex mechanisms and, consequently, significant amounts of data used in the climate simulation models are nothing more than best guesses. Remember that computers crunch numbers. They do not have a mystical eye into the future. In comparison, today's modern meteorologist uses computer models to predict weather in the short term. Need I say more?

During the past one million years the earth has experienced eight glacial / interglacial cycles. Approximately 10,000 years ago the earth entered its most recent post-glacial period. Using ice core data from the past 400,000 years, paleoclimatologists believe that the last 10,000 years have been, by far, the warmest and most stable period. Keeping this in mind, there was a period in recent history from approximately 1400-1900 known as the "Little Ice Age." During this period, glaciers advanced rapidly in Iceland, Greenland, Scandinavia and the Alps. Europe experienced cold, wet growing seasons that translated into reoccurring famines. Early settlers in North America experienced very severe winters. In contrast, the period from the 9th to the 13th centuries is known as the "Medieval Warm period." During this period the otherwise inhospitable Greenland and Newfoundland were colonized by

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163 Yard Par 3 eighth hole at the Refuge Golf Club in Oak Grove, Minnesota.

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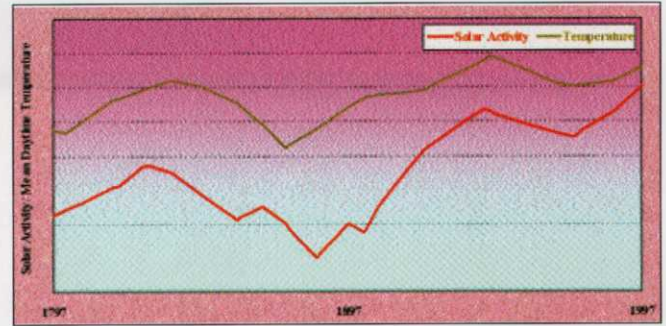
Vikings, the population of China doubled as the country prospered, and the snow line in the Rocky Mountains was 500 feet higher than today. In recent history, two periods in the 20th century exhibited significant temperature increases. The periods from 1910-1945 and 1975 to the present have shown significant temperature increases; the latter correlates with increased man-made greenhouse gas emissions but the earlier period does not as human emission of these gases at this time was slight. As indicated by ice core data, geologic records and tree ring data, global climate is anything but stable.

Another example of research generally not found in the mainstream media involves indirect sampling of CO2 levels in ice samples from 9,000 to 420,000 years ago. Multiple studies from 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2003 have shown that increases in past atmospheric CO2 levels did not precede temperature increases but they actually followed it. Such observations totally contradict the premise upon which today's global warming concerns are based.

What role does our sun play in cli-

mate change on planet earth? Some scientists believe the sun is the principle driver of climate change. The sun, through time, has been a variable source of energy. There does exist a direct correlation between solar activity and temperature. A 1997 study showed that the direct increase in solar irradiation over the past 30 years is responsible for 40% of the observed global warming. Once again, the mainstream media fails to explore these alternate explanations.

Why then has the topic of global warming turned into such a politically charged, divisive topic, consuming today's media and ultimately causing scientists with dissenting views to lose their jobs? Global warming has become big business. Current federal spending on global warming research is 1.7 billion dollars! Research grants continue to flow to those researchers producing results that agree with the popular greenhouse gas theory. Scientists that produce evidence to the contrary are finding their funding sources drying up. There is also increased spending on alternative energy sources such as



**Solar Activity vs. Mean Daytime Temperature
Armagh Observatory 1797 to 1997**

solar, wind, hydrogen, ethanol and clean coal technologies. Follow the money!

Here are a few more interesting points to ponder:

+ American weather satellites have confirmed that since 1999 average global air temperatures are flat or exhibit no overall change.

+ Last year's hurricane season was predicted to be the worst in recorded history by the American global warming science crowd. It, in fact, was one of the mildest.

+ 2% of the area of Antarctica has above normal temperatures and is losing ice. In the remaining 98% of Antarctica temperatures are falling and ice shelf mass is building up at the rate of 27 billion tons per year.

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Grand Champion of Healthy Snacks Takes a Whipping

By PHIL CAMPBELL, M.S., M.A.

Almonds provide a rich source of dietary protein. But occasionally, they get bad press for high fat content.

Because nuts are high in fat, individuals with cholesterol problems are frequently told to avoid nuts. Since nuts are so high in fat, they're to be avoided, right? Wrong, say researchers in a recent study.

A team of nutrition researchers investigated the issue of whether or not nuts make good snacks because of their fat content. The results are surprising.

Rocky Balboa vs. Apollo Creed

Just like in the movie, where Rocky is the underdog and no one believes he has a prayer against Apollo Creed; researchers staged a competition with an underdog against the champion of healthy snacks, the bran muffin.

In one corner, you have the world champion of healthy snacks, and never defeated...WHOLE...wheat... bran muffins - in the other corner, with a record of high fat ... almonds.

Research Discovery

After a month long study, the almonds won. They beat the daylight out of bran muffins.

Researchers reported, "Almonds used as snacks in the diets of hyperlipidemic (high cholesterol) subjects significantly reduce coronary heart disease risk factors, probably in part because of the nonfat (protein and fiber) and monounsaturated fatty acid components of the nut."

Almonds actually outperformed bran muffins in the ability to reduce fat circulating in the blood.

The Take Home

Don't throw out the bran muffins, they're still great snacks. Consider trying almonds. They're rich in protein and helpful in lowering cholesterol.

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+ Does anyone remember the mid-1970's media proclamation that the earth was entering a global cool down? (See *Newsweek*, April 28, 1975)

I believe we all can agree that global climate change is a very complex subject and man's understanding of this subject is limited. It would also be safe to assume that all humans want what is best for the planet we inhabit. The problem as it exists today is that the media, politicians and policymakers have hijacked science in favor of sensationalism, alarmism, and the almighty dollar. I appeal to you, the reader, to don your thinking caps and educate yourselves on the facts as they pertain to global warming. Do not assume that the mainstream media's goal is to present a fair and balanced account on this topic. The truth is out there but you must find it!

(Editor's Note: For additional information check out the following sources: *The Skeptical Environmentalist - Measuring the Real State of the World*, by Bjorn Lomborg, 2001; "Gore Gored" - A science-based rebuttal to the movie "An Inconvenient Truth" (http://fff.org/centers/csspp/pdf/20061121_gore.pdf), and *Climate Change Truths* (http://www.abd.org.uk/climate_change_truths.htm)

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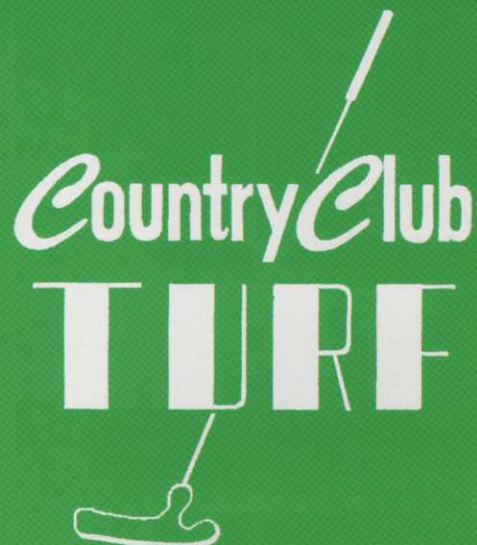
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