



# Nebraska Report

*There is no Peace without Justice*

JULY/AUGUST 2019 VOLUME 47, NO. 4

## On the Cusp of NFP's 50th Anniversary

# A Vision Statement for the Future

For all of Nebraskans for Peace's history, the world has lived under the cloud of nuclear catastrophe, aware that in the blink of an eye civilization as we know it could be lost forever. Active opposition to this global peril has accordingly been at the heart of NFP's mission since our founding 50 years ago. As we are now daily discovering, however, nuclear catastrophe is not the only existential threat we face. Climate change—while less instantaneous and dramatic—already poses an unprecedented danger to life on earth. Hotter temperatures, melting icecaps, rising sea levels, more extreme weather events (droughts, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes), species

extinctions, increased diseases and pests, soil depletion, crop failure, water and food shortages, conflicts and war over scarce resources and climate refugees in the millions: we're already seeing the destruction and chaos these impacts are wreaking around the globe... And the impacts are only going to worsen with time, with much of the damage from our previous fossil fuel consumption still 'in the pipeline' and unavoidable.

We are facing, in the words of world-famous climate scientist James Hansen, a "planetary emergency." By 2030, according to the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change—just ten years

from now—the entire world must reduce carbon emissions by 45 percent or we face 'runaway' climate change with no chance of containing it. It's already too late to reverse what's happening. (Nebraska, for instance, is projected to see an average 4-degree Fahrenheit rise in temperature by mid-century, making it too hot and dry to grow commodity corn.) Climate-wise, we're now in 'damage-control' mode. The only question before us now is how much worse do we let it become? Time is of the essence. And the longer we delay across-the-board action, the greater the devastation for both ourselves and the ecosystem as a whole.

Just as we have repeatedly risen to challenges throughout our 50-year history, Nebraskans for Peace—as it looks to the future—is gearing up to meet the threat of climate change. And our leadership in this struggle will be vital. Humans as a group are averse to hearing 'bad news' or information that conflicts with their world view. NFP's willingness to step out front and communicate the hard facts and unpopular truths about the perils climate change poses (just as we did about the Vietnam War, the nuclear arms race, military spending, the "War on Terror", Whiteclay alcohol sales, LGBTQIA rights and the death

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## Nebraska Report

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NFP is a statewide grassroots advocacy organization working nonviolently for peace with justice through community-building, education and political action.

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# 50th, conclusion

penalty) will be indispensable to our collective ability to prepare for what's coming. We will need to dispel the false hopes of the U.S. being able economically to 'grow' our way out of this climate crisis by 'going green', or that there will be some geo-engineering fix that will enable us to carry on 'business as usual.'

To cut global carbon emissions by half over the next decade, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change stated in its October 2018 "Special Report", will "require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society." Americans in particular will face dramatic declines in their consumption levels and personal expectations, including reduced energy usage, car and plane travel, meat and dairy consumption and health care spending (particularly for elaborate procedures). In place of non-stop consumption and go-it-alone individualism, we will need to once again invoke an ethic of cooperation and community-building: building peace, in short. These messages will not be well-received by the public, and we can expect our political and business leaders to shy away from addressing them, perhaps even denounce them. But if we are to prepare as a people and as a state for the hard times ahead, the sooner we can persuade our leadership to act, the better will be our chances to limit the worst effects.

The list of things to be done to transition to a reduced-carbon world is almost endless, but in addition to practicing conservation and reducing consumption, we will need to collaborate with our organizational allies in ramping up renewable energy development, regenerative agriculture and local food production; in promoting divestment from businesses investing in carbon fuels; and in pursuing federal adoption of a 'fee-and-dividend' tax on carbon. Without abandoning our commitments to the host of Peace & Justice issues that have defined the organization for the past half a century (including abolishing nuclear weapons), fighting climate change will be an NFP hallmark issue in the period to come... Indeed, we believe that, by curbing climate disruption, we will enhance the possibility of our having a more peaceful world—as many of our recent wars have derived from drought and environmental instability created by climate change. The worldwide concern about immigrants and refugees largely relates to crises created by climate disruption. As it proceeds to devastate our existing ecosystem, its importance as a Peace & Justice issue will only grow.

Spreading the 'bad news' about the impact of climate change and the need to curtail our lifestyles drastically just to survive is not the future any Nebraskans for Peace member (past or present) would ordinarily have hoped for for what is now the oldest statewide Peace & Justice organization in the country. But this work is unquestionably 'peacemaking'— and of the highest order. And as there currently is no 'good news' about the reality of climate change, with the very conditions for life itself hanging in the balance, who better than a peace organization like NFP to start creating some?

# Curbing Climate Change Will Require Austerity and Sacrifice

*The following “Local View” by former NFP President Paul Olson and NFP State Coordinator Tim Rinne appeared in the July 16, 2019, Lincoln Journal Star under the headline “Austerity awaits with no climate action.”*

On a global, planetary level, it was like hearing we have the C-word: Cancer.

“‘Life-or-death’ warning: Major study says world has just 11 years to avoid climate change catastrophe” blared the *Lincoln Journal Star* headline on the *Associated Press* story (Oct. 8, 2018).

scientists, ecologists, geologists, public health experts, economists and many other scientists have worked up a course of treatment.

But it won't be pleasant. The IPCC minces no words in stating that “rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society” will be required. For Americans, who have the highest carbon emissions per person of any country in the world, cutting global emissions in half by 2030 will mean draconian alterations in our consumer lifestyles.

To mitigate the worst climate effects

mobility as right up there with “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” But, if we are to halve our carbon footprint in time to leave our children and grandchildren a habitable planet, we'll have to learn to stay put and make our communities our world as in great-grandma's and great-grandpa's days. Walking, biking and public transportation will be our modes of mobility. The days of driving all over the map and hopping onto a jet to see Husker away games will be over.

Then there's food. To feed a projected 10 billion people by 2050 (as well as cut carbon emissions), meat is pretty much going to disappear from the menu. The World Resources Institute calculates that global per person meat consumption will have to decline to the equivalent of one-and-a-half hamburgers a week.

Pasture-raised livestock that eat grasses and are key to maintaining soil fertility will be our primary meat sources. But, to produce food to feed 10 billion hungry stomachs, arable land will need to be reserved for edible grains and legumes.

Instinctively, we're going to be resistant to these changes in our lifestyles. We like things just the way they are. But the status quo is unsustainable. We have been living beyond our planetary means, and we either start changing the way we live or doom ourselves (and our kids) to an unspeakable future.

To survive, we will of necessity have to return to our roots and live in real community. Our neighborhoods and social networks will be our lifeline and cooperation and mutual aid our watchwords.

But to have any chance of avoiding the worst that climate disruption holds in store, we're going to have to first face the facts of what scientists from multiple disciplines are telling us about this planetary emergency and then start preparing for what's ahead.

## **To mitigate the worst climate effects as well as adapt to the harsher conditions, we will have to adopt a way of life similar to that of “The Greatest Generation” during World War II.**

According to the top scientific body studying the earth's climate—the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change—our ecosystem is dangerously ill, and there's no time to lose if we're to have a chance of beating this thing.

The equally prestigious Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services sounded its own alarm in May, reporting that 1 million species face near-term extinction without urgent action.

By 2030, the IPCC special report states the world must cut global carbon emissions 45 percent if we're to avert runaway climate change. We have just 10 years to cut half of the carbon we're now emitting globally or face worsening climate disruption—with ever hotter temperatures and rising sea levels, more extreme hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, droughts and wildfires, not to mention droves of climate refugees.

In the past nine months, climate

as well as adapt to the harsher conditions, we will have to adopt a way of life similar to that of “The Greatest Generation” during World War II, when all responsible citizens lived with reduced expectations, austerity and personal sacrifice.

Given that we've all grown up with the promise of ever-greater consumption, we're in for culture shock. We will have to do with less, from energy to transportation to food.

Take energy. Ramping up renewable energy development is vital. But fossil fuels are so embedded in our consumer lifestyles that it will take years to wean ourselves off the carbon economy. We rely on carbon for lighting, heating, cooling and transportation and for manufacturing things including steel, cement and plastic. We will either curtail our consumption voluntarily or have reductions forced on us by scarcity.

Or take transportation. For a century now, Americans have regarded travel and



# The Annual Citizens' Climate Lobby June Conference in D.C. Was A Great Success

by Mark Welsch

There was a record-breaking number of CCL volunteers from Nebraska at the conference in Washington, D.C. this past June. Nineteen of us learned a lot about climate change, good ways to have conversations with people with different points of view—including how we should try to understand and appreciate what other people are thinking and talk with them about those things. On Tuesday, June 11, we broke into teams and went to pre-scheduled meetings with all of Nebraska's members of Congress. Some meetings were with the Members themselves and others with their staff who work on our issue.

A key to the success of Citizens' Climate lobby is for us to develop good, respectful relationships with our members of Congress and their staff. Some of their points of view have change drastically over the years. I believe that after every one of our meetings we all understand each other's points of view better and better.

I hope you will consider joining us next year in Washington. Will you help us reach 30 activists from Nebraska? Please let me know if you want more information. Mark Welsch, NFP Omaha coordinator and group leader of Omaha's



*Citizens' Climate Lobby Founder Marshall Saunders addressing the 2019 Conference.*

chapter of CCL, NFPOma-ha1970@gmail.com or call 402-453-0776.

Here is a story about the guest speaker during our June CCL monthly meeting. It helps us when prominent economists agree that we need a price on carbon. Please join us for our next meeting. We have different speakers every month.

## **Dr. Shi-Ling Hsu on the economic landscape of climate policy**

*by Sara Wanous, Membership Coordinator at Citizens' Climate Lobby*

Each month, Citizens' Climate Lobby hosts an online

meeting featuring a guest speaker to educate listeners on topics related to climate change, carbon fee and dividend, and the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act. Check out recaps of past speakers here. <https://citizensclimatelobby.org/category/monthly-meetings/>

For CCL's June 2019 monthly meeting, we welcomed Advisory Board Dr. Shi-Ling Hsu as our guest speaker. Dr. Hsu is the Associate Dean for Environmental Programs at Florida State University College of Law and was an EPA Star Fellow (1996-98). With an academic background in electrical engineering, ecology, agricultural and resource econom-

ics, and law, he has become an expert in environmental policy. Dr. Hsu's expertise shines through in his book, *The Case for a Carbon Tax: Getting Past our Hang-ups to Effective Climate Policy*. Because it is a comprehensive yet accessible climate policy resource, Citizens' Climate Lobby's Executive Director, Mark Reynolds, says, "If there is only one book you're going to read on climate policy, his book is the one I'd recommend." Dr. Shi-Ling Hsu shared his expertise and his thoughts on CCL during this month's meeting.

## **The CCL approach**

Beyond his academic

# Going Fossil Free

## with your personal investments

by Loyal Park, President  
Nebraska Peace Foundation

Do you have any money invested in the fossil fuel industry? If you have a retirement plan, or an IRA or a 401K, you had better check to see what is in those plans or other savings you might have. It is easier if you own individual stocks and can steer clear of the likes of Exxon-Mobil, Chevron, Occidental, ConocoPhillips or Royal Dutch Shell. But if you own mutual funds you may own these and not know it.

Since 401K plans have almost replaced defined-benefit retirement plans these days, check over your monthly statements to see what is in there. You may have a managed plan or a self-directed plan. Either way you should be in the driver's seat to determine what is included in the investments. Let the manager know your wish to be fossil free. And if you make the decisions on what is included in your 401K or IRA, be careful that not only the big oil companies are excluded but also those companies that explore for oil, or maximize the oil or gas that can be extracted from a well such as fracking and the many companies that drill and maintain wells and pumping equipment. Pipelines, too, are part of the fossil fuel business.

If there is any question if a company or a mutual fund is in the fossil fuel business you can put the

name or stock symbol of the fund into the website: [www.fossilfreefunds.org](http://www.fossilfreefunds.org). Also [www.beyondcarbon.org](http://www.beyondcarbon.org) may help. Funds that are fossil free will show as 0%. Popular funds such as Fidelity (7.6%), Vanguard (9.12%) and American Funds (10%) contain fossil fuel stocks in those amounts. But these aren't the only ones, it is well to check anything you own.



Beware of index funds and ETFs (Exchange Traded Funds) since these contain many stocks with no limitation on fossil fuels.

Of socially-responsible investments, the Calvert family of funds are popular with those who want to avoid tobacco, gambling, war material and other 'bad' investments. However only

Calvert's Equity Fund is fossil free. If you have other Calvert funds you can trade them for the Equity Fund with no transfer fee.

Also avoid electric power companies still relying largely on coal-fired plants. American Electric Power, one of the largest power companies in the U.S., is still 47% coal-powered. If you like a utility investment, consider some of the renewable energy companies. Most are doing well with long-term power purchase agreements for the power they produce and should be good investments for the future.

Also there are other mutual funds that advertise being fossil free and you may want to explore what these have to offer. Be vigilant and check to see what the track record has been for anything you consider. Has the fund appreciated in value in the past and does it pay a dividend? Annual Return figures should be available for anything you consider.

While going fossil free may not enhance the return you are getting on your retirement fund or other investments, at least you know you are not supporting or making money off those businesses that are polluting the air we breathe and pumping CO2 into the atmosphere. Do what you can to help reduce the effects of climate change and fulfill the claim "I went fossil free."

# VOICES of CONSCIENCE

## Peace Witness in the Great War



**WORLD WAR I**  
**“Voices of Conscience” traveling**  
**exhibit on display at the**  
**Henderson Mennonite Heritage**  
**Park from July 13 - September 14.**

*“War will exist until that distant day when the conscientious objector enjoys the same reputation and prestige that the warrior does today” -John F. Kennedy*

Come learn about conscientious objectors during World War I and the wide variety of people who opposed U.S. entry into that war. “Voices of Conscience: Peace Witness in the Great War”, a traveling exhibit by Kauffman Museum in North Newton, Kansas, will be on display at the Henderson Mennonite Heritage Museum and Park this summer through September 14. The park is located 1 mile south of the I-80 Henderson Exit (exit 342) and is open Tuesday through Saturday 1–4 p.m. or by appointment.

The exhibit remembers the witness of peace-minded people against the First World War 1914–1918. This witness included men and women, religious believers and secular humanitarians, political protesters and sectarian separatists. They resisted U.S. involvement in the war, the enactment of military conscription, the war bond drives, and the denial of freedom of speech under the Espionage and Sedition Acts. For this resistance, many suffered community humiliation, federal imprisonment and mob violence at the hands of a war-crusading American public. This exhibit lifts up the prophetic insights and the personal courage of

World War I peace protesters and suggests parallels to the culture of war and violence in our world today.

The exhibit is organized in ten themes that encourage exploration and reflection. The theme modules surround a recreation of an Alcatraz Prison cell, the site where Hutterite conscientious objectors were punished for refusing military participation. Text and quotes provide interpretation and raise provocative questions for viewers while large-scale graphics and photomurals immerse visitors in the historical experience of witnessing for peace during “total war.”

A collaborative team of historians and museum professionals developed Voices of Conscience at Kauffman Museum. The exhibit is based on Kauffman Museum’s 30 years of experience in designing and building award-winning projects with a specific focus on innovative approaches to traveling exhibits.

Additionally, “Local Voices of Pacifism”, a developing permanent display featuring local stories of conscientious objectors beginning with World War I and continuing through the present will be available for viewing. The Henderson

area still maintains a large number of residents who are descendants of the 1874 immigration of 35 Mennonite families who came to the area as Mennonite Dutch, then Germans from Russia. Those families left Russia due to increased threat of conscription to that army. Little did they know that some 40 years later they would face conscription here in the U.S.

The developing permanent display will have photos, letters, and other artifacts from local families who kept their loved one’s items from World Wars I and II. Some men served as non-combatant medics and have stories similar to the movie “Hacksaw Ridge”. Others suffered mistreatment for refusal to participate in all military camp activities. Their stories and also stories of service during the Korean and Vietnam wars as well as post-draft service stories are being collected to share in this permanent display. Alternative service during the 1950s–60s included work at mental hospitals that led to a national reform of patient treatment; soil conservation and firefighting work; “guinea pig” nutritional research and more.

— Compiled by Cathy Wismer



# Managing Savagery

## The University of Nebraska's Disreputable Role in America's Longest War

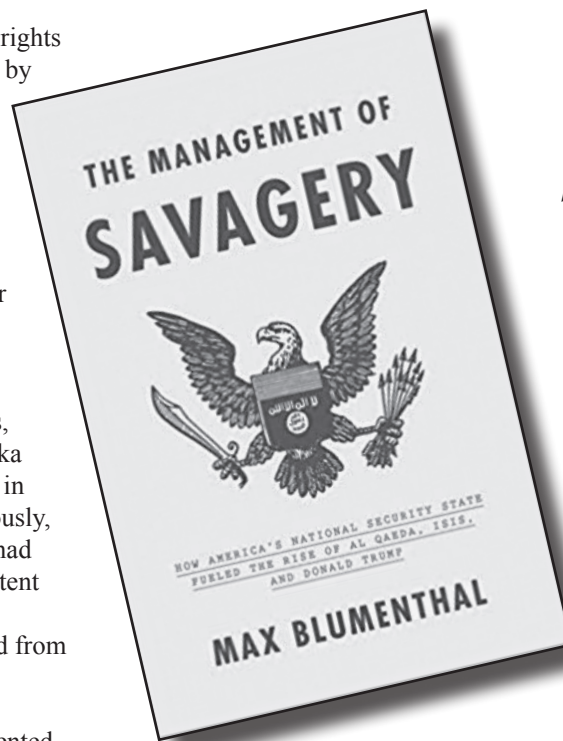
by Paul A. Olson, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Foundation Professor Emeritus

Author Max Blumenthal's *The Management of Savagery* (Verso, 2019)—an account of the recent history of Afghanistan—chronicles the brazen advocacy for human rights violations in the texts published by the “University of Nebraska Education Press” located near Afghanistan. Though Nebraskans for Peace publicly protested the publication of the texts before the Board of Regents, the Regents have never apologized for them, nor can the textbooks now be located in the depositories of any of the University of Nebraska libraries, though all University of Nebraska publications are to be deposited in the institution's libraries. Previously, Nebraskans for Peace has only had vague accounts of the gross content of the texts. Reprinted below is Blumenthal's account, excerpted from pages 16-17 of his book:

“The rapid improvement in weapons to the rebels complemented a CIA-built complex of tunnels and mujahedin training camps near the border city of Khost in Afghanistan's mountainous Paktiya province. To complete the job on time, the agency tapped an experienced contractor named Osama bin Laden, who dutifully carted in his family's earthmoving equipment. “My job was to raise the alarm and if there was an opportunity to do it, and I failed to do it, it would be my failure,” Vincent Cannistraro [a CIA counterterrorism officer who

served as director of intelligence for the Reagan Administration's National Security Council and monitored intelligence operation from Nicaragua to Afghanistan] said.

“And none of us knew who bin Laden was at the time.”



Weapons were not all that flowed into Afghanistan courtesy of the U.S. government. A \$51 million grant from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to the University of Nebraska's Center for Afghanistan Studies and a former Peace Corps volunteer who directed the center, Thomas Gouttierre, produced some 4 million third-grade textbooks that helped transform Afghan schools into jihadist indoctrination centers. Introduced in 1986, the books

encouraged Afghan children to gouge the eyes and amputate the legs of Soviet soldiers.

“One group of mujahedin attacks 50 Russian soldiers. In that attack 20 Russians are killed. How many

***The University of Nebraska's Center for Afghanistan Studies produced some 4 million 3rd-grade textbooks that helped transform Afghan schools into Jihadist indoctrination centers.***

Russians fled?” read one arithmetic question in the textbook. An aid worker counted 43 violent images in just 100 pages of one of the books. The Taliban later adopted the books as their own, blotting out the faces of soldiers to comport with religious restrictions on depicting the human form while maintaining the language that described the mujahedin as holy warriors fighting in the service of God. (In a 1989 briefing report to his funders at USAID, Gouttierre argued that educating women would anger the men whom the U.S. depended upon as anti-Soviet proxies. “This type of reform must be left to the Afghans to be solved at their own pace,” the University of Nebraska academic wrote.)”

# What's HOT in Global Warming?

by Professor Bruce E. Johansen

## Borrowed Time, Borrowed Money: Who's Concerned about Future Generations?

The late Carl Sagan, one of our most insightful scientific public intellectuals, had an interesting theory about highly developed civilizations. Given the number of stars and planets in the vast reaches of the universe, he said, there must be other highly developed forms of life. Distance



may keep us from making physical contact, but Sagan said that another reason we may never be on speaking terms with another intelligent race (judging from our own example) could be their penchant for destroying themselves after reaching technological complexity.

On Earth, the damaging side-effects of our own ingenuity may finish us off barely two centuries after we have developed the wonders of fossil fuels, electricity, atomic energy, plastics, and deficit financing. That's less than one percent of human beings' tenure on

Earth. Only in the last half-century have we discovered that our civilization may not be sustainable without major changes in our way of life.

We are living on borrowed ecological time and borrowed federal money.

The federal debt is growing faster than at any time in U.S. history. Witness the battle over President Trump's

racing upward at about 17 percent per year), first passed \$1 trillion in Ronald Reagan's first term. In theory, at least, future generations will pay these bills, just as they will face a planet ruined by climate change.

In a world living on borrowed time and money, who is concerned about future generations? Trump and Mitch

***On Earth, the damaging side-effects of our own ingenuity may finish us off barely two centuries after we have developed the wonders of fossil fuels, electricity, atomic energy, plastics, and deficit financing.***

cherished Wall. Congress refuses funds, so he declares a national emergency and pledges to pilfer Defense Department construction funds for billions of dollars. Problem is the military needs the money for necessary repairs after such disasters as this year's Midwest floods. Offutt Air Force Base south of Omaha, for example, needs runway repairs—it's going to be difficult to safeguard the Free World with tarmacs full of major-league potholes.

The annual national deficit, even in a time of general prosperity, soon will reach more than \$1 trillion per year. The entire debt (now about \$22 trillion,

McConnell laugh at efforts to restrict growth in greenhouse gases' attendant wild weather. President Trump tells the Republican Congressional Committee that noise from wind turbines causes cancer. In the meantime, a pregnant whale is found near Sardinia, Italy with 48 pounds of plastic jamming two-thirds of its stomach, unable to eat calamari, its natural food.

Even as Trump lies about wind power, its capacity and that of solar are exploding in capacity, having reached market prices in some cases nearly equal to those of oil and coal for electricity

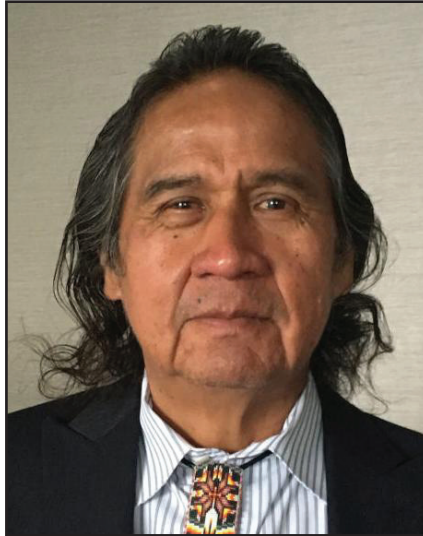


# Frank LaMere... Rest in Peace

by *Tim Rinne*

Barely a month after receiving an honorary doctorate from Nebraska Wesleyan University for his lifelong work for civil and human rights, Winnebago Tribe member Frank LaMere was diagnosed with and died from a rare, aggressive cancer. Nebraskans for Peace's most celebrated member and greatest champion, Frank was an NFP State Board Advisory Committee member and a "Peacemaker of the Year Award" recipient. For 25 years, he was intimately involved in shaping the policy direction and organizing activities of NFP—most famously around the issue of Whiteclay alcohol sales to the dry Pine Ridge Reservation. The impact of his moral influence on this state is almost unfathomable, as is the loss of his unparalleled voice. We have lost a moral giant, and we will wait a long time for his kind to appear again.

I had the personal luxury of working with Frank for over three decades. We met while working on Jesse Jackson's 1988 presidential campaign. We traveled together to Chiapas, Mexico during the Zapatista Uprising in 1994. We worked together on tribal sovereignty matters in the late '90s. For 18 years we collaborated on working to shut down Whiteclay's beer stores. I trotted behind as he fearlessly took on unjust governmental practices toward Native families under the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) in his annually organized "Memorial March to Honor Our Lost Children." With our shared love for the "National Pastime", I was a bleacher supporter of his all-Indian "North Americans" fast-pitch softball team that promoted sobriety to Native youth. In his online 'alter ego' of "Redbone", he used his gift for eloquence to regularly bemoan (and rant about) the gridiron struggles of his "Beloved Huskers" to those of us equally obsessed. Today, ten years later, I



still recall his impassioned remarks at the international "Speak Out at StratCom" conference NFP organized in Omaha, where Frank reviled a nuclear deterrence policy—conducted from a command center on Indian land bestowed by the Creator—that imperiled all life on earth. And I remember looking on in awe as he addressed Warren Buffett at a Berkshire Hathaway Shareholder Meeting over the company's investment in the Dakota Access Pipeline, warning the "Oracle of Omaha" that we are risking poisoning the very water we need to live.

Never once in 30 years did Frank refuse a request for help when I asked. Whatever the request, whatever he could do, he did. And never once in all those years did Frank treat me (though I am white and male and privileged) with anything other than friendship and respect. You see, Frank didn't care about the color of your skin, who you slept with, whether you been raised in a privileged environment. All he cared about was whether you had a good heart, meant well, and would 'show up'. If you wanted to help and were willing to work, you were a member of Frank's 'Tribe'. I'm not aware

that Frank ever held an honorary office in the Winnebago Tribe—that he was anything like a 'chief'. But through the power of his own charisma and gifts, he built a following of people from every walk of life who wanted and sought the same things he did: fairness, sufficiency for all, a place to feel safe and grow. He was OUR 'chief'—the leader who would always lead by example, never asking of us what he wasn't willing to do himself. And the hole in our hearts that we're feeling now—the sense of loss—is because OUR chief is now gone.

In the last decade of his life, Frank had to literally battle back from a stroke that had partially paralyzed him—and from the untimely death from leukemia of his daughter Lexie—to complete the work of shutting down Whiteclay. Throughout this long struggle, he had the unwavering support of his wife Cynthia, who made so much of what Frank was able to do possible. Our hearts go out to her, their children (daughter Jennifer, sons Haven and Manape), and other extended members of the family.

In his later years, drawing from his own experience, Frank began to include in his comments whenever he spoke to an audience that, "Nothing changes unless someone is made to feel uncomfortable! Nothing changes unless we make ourselves uncomfortable!" Such was Frank's makeup that he himself could not rest so long as someone else was in torment. And because he could not rest—and regularly pulled himself out of his 'comfort zone'—Nebraska is a better state than it would otherwise be.

Almost every speech by Frank began with the word "Pinagigi": the word for 'thank you' in the Ho-Chunk language. After all this peacemaker did on our behalf, we will never be able to thank him enough.

# Citizens' Climate Lobby

## *Building Relationships...*



by Jennifer Glazer, State Coordinator  
Citizens Climate Lobby

For me, it is all about relationships. Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL), a nonpartisan, grassroots organization of volunteers is a place where my personal and professional relationships have blossomed. As the State Coordinator for Nebraska, I have the privilege of getting to know and keeping in touch with people in all four of the Nebraska chapters: Omaha; Bellevue; Lincoln and Chadron. I have thoroughly enjoyed relating to, working with and getting to know folks in all these chapters. Some are young such as high school or college-aged, some are my peers and some are my senior. They all are my people! I was recently awe-inspired to be in a room with 1,500 other like-minded climate solutions advocates of various ages and political affiliations at the Citizens' Climate Lobby International Conference and Lobby Day in Washington, D.C in June. It was such a wonderful experience to learn with and learn from my fellow conference attendees. As climate affects everyone, the attendees were a diverse group. There was the gentleman who had been mass

incarcerated, telling about his day on the Hill. Young parents had the perspective of doing whatever they could to protect the planet for their children. College-aged and young adults came with such knowledge of the science, social issues and great ideas for innovation. I was truly amazed at the unique perspectives, special skills and talents each person contributed to the discussions.

Not only did I build relationships with other conference attendees, but this experience has taught me how to build relationships with our members of Congress. It is such a feeling of empowerment to be able to participate in democracy by walking into our nation's Capitol and meet with elected lawmakers to advocate for a climate change solution policy (H.R. 763 The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividends Act). As a registered and active Democrat, this experience allowed me to function outside my Democrat bubble and have meaningful conversations with our Republican members of Congress and their staff. Through CCL we are taught to have interactions that are professional and respectful. We work to find a shared value and go from there when advocating for support for climate change

solution policy.

Lastly, I feel tremendous joy and satisfaction having had these shared experiences with my children. I have now attended the D.C. conference four times. Two of the times my high school daughter came with me and the last two conferences I was accompanied by my recent college-graduate son. My relationship with my children has expanded from parent/child to teammates and co-workers. I watched my young daughter confidently express appreciation to our representative for participating on the Climate Solutions Caucus and then proceed to explain her concerns for the warming planet. When my son was asked to lead a talk on renewables and clean energy innovation, I was so proud to see many people attend his talk and then line up to ask him questions. This experience truly empowered my children and watching them find their voice is one of the greatest joys a parent can know.

If you are interested in joining CCL, but do not live near a current chapter, consider starting a chapter! I would be happy to guide you through the simple process of getting a chapter started: [jennifer.glazer@citizensclimatelobby.org](mailto:jennifer.glazer@citizensclimatelobby.org)

**Contact the Dialing Congress Campaign coordinator closest to you, to join us or if you have any questions.**

- Bellevue:** Mary Spurgeon, [marspur2@aol.com](mailto:marspur2@aol.com)
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# Getting Engaged...



by Cheryl, Greta & Steve Welch

The 2019 International CCL Conference was a family affair for the Welch family from Chadron. Steve and Cheryl, co-leaders of the Chadron chapter, were both returning to D.C. for the second time. It was the first conference for their 19-year-old daughter, Greta. Coming from a rural, conservative region where most people prefer not to engage in discussion or think about climate change at all, it was refreshing to be surrounded by passionate people committed to addressing this crucial issue.

The keynote speakers were inspiring and we each benefitted from the wide variety of breakout sessions. Greta loved meeting other college students and after learning of the organizing they are doing at their schools, she is motivated to start a CCL group on her campus at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. She even expressed an interest in being an intern at the 2020 June conference.

As for myself (Cheryl), the invigoration I felt from the CCL conference was tempered by the reality I experienced in our lobbying sessions. The continued reluctance of our elected officials to take action on climate

change was disheartening and frustrating. Why won't our state's political leaders acknowledge and tackle climate change? But are they so different from most people of Nebraska?

I, like many of you, have family members and colleagues who aren't concerned about or who dismiss the science of climate change. It is uncomfortable and discouraging and most of the time, it's easier to avoid the topic. Who wants to add tension or controversy to their lives? But is this avoidance getting us any closer to creating a livable world? Obviously not.

We need more people to start talking and listening respectfully to one another about climate change. We need more calls to the offices of our Members of Congress (MOC), expressing support for action. We need more voices to join our choir of concern, because until our MOCs are convinced that acting on climate change won't jeopardize their job, they will not act.

But inaction is not an option, so please join us: WE NEED YOU. Talk to your friends and family and join the Dialing Congress campaign. Invest ten minutes a month to help us move our state towards action on climate change and create a livable world.

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# ...Creating Change



by Bob Kraft  
*Omaha's Dialing Congress  
Campaign Coordinator*

The many issues involved in the climate crisis can become overwhelming. Just look at the *Omaha World Herald* on any day and you can find one if not up to three articles related to the disastrous effects of climate change. The distress of thinking about the magnitude of the problem has shown up in children all the way up to the elderly. And often, people feeling there is nothing they can do about it and that makes them feel even worse.

One of the difficulties we have as an individual is understanding how I, in the midst of billions, can effect change. Often we lose sight of how we, as a large group, making individual choices, have made much of the world what it is, both in good and bad ways. We got ourselves here, into a climate crisis, so now let's get out of it. There are many ways to do so. And doing something, psychologists tell us, is one of the best ways to deal with this type of distress.

Specifically, you can do individual actions (recycle, reuse, get an electric car, eat less carbon-intensive-foods, etc.) and when we join together in doing these actions, we

make a difference. The small act of calling your congressional representatives can be an act, when you are the only one doing it, that doesn't feel significant. It is significant to call, but of only small significance. But when we join together and call regularly? And what if someone helped you to know what to say and where to call? And what if your joining in the calling pushed the number of calls about the climate crisis to being the most calls that the representative got each month? Well, you would then be a part of democracy and change on a national scale.

Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) is a national organization that is specifically focused on one large-scale change: to lobby Congress to pass legislation that will reduce the carbon being pumped into the atmosphere in a bipartisan way that is revenue-neutral. What that means is that we need everyone from all sides to join in, and we don't want taxes to burden anyone in doing so. This is done by taxing the carbon (fossil fuels) as it comes out of the ground and giving all the money from those taxes back to every citizen and their family to pay for the increased costs. This shifts everyone away from fossil fuels.

All four Nebraska Chapters of CCL have a program, the "Dialing Congress Campaign," where you can help to make change by calling your members of Congress. We will remind you when to call and help you know what to say. We'll direct you to where you can easily record your calls with CCL. It takes only a few minutes, a couple times a month to go here and make three calls <http://www.cclusa.org/call>. We know we are close to having the climate crisis receiving the most calls every month for Representative Don Bacon. Will you help us to make it the most important thing on your representative's and senators' lists?

## What's HOT, conclusion

generation. Even so, such changes are not occurring fast enough to turn the corner on greenhouse-gas emissions that have increased nearly non-stop since the steam engine was invented.

Our ecological clock is ticking faster than most of us realize. Mind the natural laws of thermal inertia, which indicate that we are now harvesting the climatic consequences of fossil fuels emitted into the air 50 years ago, and the oceans about 150 years ago. Can human beings who react to nationalistic and religious stimuli much more viscerally than environmental challenges come to understand what will really be important 100 years from now?

At a time when cooperation across borders on climate change and trade has become more necessary than ever, desperation seems to spawn spasms of nationalistic greed and orgies of fear-driven ugliness, as the rich get richer and the poorest become climate refugees, feeding a political frenzy that ranges from Trump, with his border wall and trade tariffs to Brexit (against immigration from Africa and the Muslim Middle East), to nationalistic regimes in the Philippines, China, India, Brazil, and elsewhere, all characterized by what Jon Lee Anderson in the *New Yorker* (April 1, 2019, p. 18) calls "a vocabulary of intolerance, insult, and menace." Ugliness is in season.

Carbon dioxide has no political party and no religion. It merely does a very efficient job of sequestering heat in the atmosphere. With the certainty of a ticking clock, its atmospheric level rises each year, as our politicians spout and squabble, ignoring the intensifying plight of coming generations who will wonder where we were when their dye was being cast.

*Bruce E. Johansen, Frederick W. Kayser Professor at the University of Nebraska-Omaha, is author of Climate Change: An Encyclopedia of Science, Society, and Solutions (2017).*



# Rep. Fortenberry Co-Sponsors Bipartisan “Kids Eat Local Act”

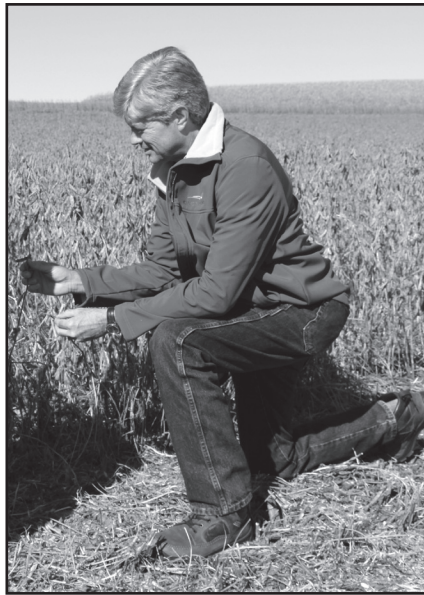
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition and National Farm to School Network welcome the introduction of this legislation, which will make it easier for schools to make institutional purchases from local farmers and ranchers

Washington, D.C., June 13, 2019—Institutional markets represent some of the most lucrative and dependable options for America’s family farmers and ranchers—unfortunately, they can also be among the most challenging to break into. The Kids Eat Local Act (H.R. 3220, S. 1817), introduced today by Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Susan Collins (R-ME) and Representatives Chellie Pingree (D-ME), Josh Harder (D-CA), and Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE), would help to break down barriers between school food purchasers and family farmers by simplifying local purchasing guidelines for school meal programs.

“Purchasing locally is a natural choice for our public schools, many of which already celebrate local and regional foods through farm to school, school gardens, and other similar programming,” said National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) Senior Policy Specialist Wes King. “The Kids Eat Local Act will help to facilitate connections between schools and local producers by clarifying existing procurement rules and adding ‘locale’ as an allowed product specification. This legislation will be welcome news to farmers across the country, many of whom are struggling to make ends meet during these challenging economic times.”

Although the 2002 Farm Bill included a provision, that was later strengthened in the 2008 Farm Bill, to encourage institutions participating in child nutrition programs to purchase “locally produced foods for school meal programs, to the maximum extent practicable and appropriate,” current law does not allow

schools to explicitly require “local” or “regional” as a product specification in a food procurement request. Presently, the primary means by which schools can currently purchase and/or preference locally



produced foods is the geographic preference option, through which they can give extra ranking points to vendors using locally procured product. Many school food service providers, however, have found the geographic preference option burdensome and confusing to implement.

By including the Kids Eat Local Act in the next Child Nutrition Act Reauthorization, schools would be given a new, easier-to-use local product specification option through which they could specify “locally grown,” “locally raised” or

“locally caught” in their procurement language, and then make the award to the lowest bidder who can meet that product specification.

The addition of local product specification would substantially improve opportunities for local producers by providing more flexibility for school districts. The Kids Eat Local Act would also allow schools flexibility in determining the definition of “local” that best suits their needs.

“We consistently hear from schools that they’re eager and ready to serve more local foods on students’ meal trays. The Kids Eat Local Act directly responds to what these schools have been asking for: greater flexibility to purchase local foods from the farmers right in their own communities,” said National Farm to School Network (NFSN) Policy Specialist Chloe Marshall.

“It’s a win-win-win approach to feeding our kids fresh, healthy food, supporting our local farmers and food producers, and strengthening local economies.”

NSAC and NFSN thank the bill sponsors in both the Senate and House for introducing the Kids Eat Local Act and paving the way for increased healthy food in schools and new economic opportunities for local farmers. We urge all members of Congress to support this simple, yet significant change and look forward to continue working with our partners and allies as this bill and the Child Nutrition Reauthorization move forward.

# Citizens' Climate Lobby, conclusion

work, Dr. Shi-Ling Hsu works to advance climate policy by lobbying alongside Citizens' Climate Lobby volunteers. He is enthusiastic about working with CCL not only because of our policy goals that are based in economics and science, but because of our approach to working with Congress. CCL emphasizes approaching members of congress with respect and politeness. While reflecting on his experience lobbying alongside other Citizens' Climate Lobby members, he said, "That was just really special. I think especially these days when we feel like people are at each other's throats if there's disagreement, I felt like the Citizens' Climate Lobby approach was just the best thing."

## Economists support carbon pricing

Earlier this year, 45 top economists, including former White House economic advisers, former Chairs of the Federal Reserve, Nobel laureates, and both Republicans and Democrats, signed a letter stating, "A carbon tax offers the most cost-effective lever to reduce carbon emissions at the scale and speed necessary." This letter further recommended that the revenue from the tax be given back as a dividend to American households.

Dr. Hsu explained that economists have supported a carbon tax for some time, but have only recently

agreed on what to do with the revenue. He believes that economists have landed on carbon dividends for two primary reasons: weakening arguments for popular

situation is that "unless you do something to reverse the effects on the poorest people, the people hit hardest by a carbon tax with high energy prices, then that's a

death. Focusing on the concrete and current effects that fossil fuels have on Americans can help make the economics of climate change more clear. Dr. Hsu said,



*Dr. Shi-Ling Hsu, Advisory Board Member of Citizens' Climate Lobby*

alternatives and politics of carbon taxation. Before they supported carbon dividends, many economists liked the idea of putting carbon tax revenue toward reducing capital taxes to provide more money for investment to grow the economy. Dr. Hsu described that confidence in this strategy has weakened as "economists are starting to recognize that money in the hands of people to invest isn't necessarily the best way to use that money, that corporations don't necessarily use it to create jobs." Dr. Shi-Ling Hsu also believes that economists are starting to see the politics of a carbon price. He observed the reality of the political

political non-starter."

## Communicating the economics of climate change

The economic costs of climate change are complex and can be difficult to grasp. Economists cite abstract figures like predicted changes in GDP, and while an increase in frequency and severity of storms can be tied to climate change, specific events cannot. Dr. Shi-Ling Hsu says, "The way to talk about the economic costs of climate change is to do the yeoman's work of focusing on the invisible things that happen." One example he offered to bring the conversation to more visible topics is that coal-fired power plants cause premature

"What if you could actually make that real for them? I think this is the job of thinking about economic impacts, trying to make things that seem abstract seem real."

To hear more from Dr. Shi-Ling Hsu including some Q&A with CCL volunteers, watch the entire June meeting at the link at the beginning of this story.

*Sara Wanous has been the Membership Coordinator at Citizens' Climate Lobby since January 2018. She has a B.A. in Economics and B.S. in Environmental Science and Policy from Chapman University and is pursuing a masters in Climate Science and Policy at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography.*

# Hard Truth, conclusion

could take a couple of generations, to let Memory go stale, but we ought to be able to manage the matter by, o say, the Millennium? We can be patient. Like rust.”

And it came to pass. Over the past seven decades two thirds of U.S. agrarian families have been pushed off the ranches and farms, leaving small town mainstreets derelict across the land. The plan worked beautifully. Still does.

Americans were sold on a diet of processed commodities. Actual ag producers, unlike almost every other industry, cannot set the price for what they produce and cannot count on even cost-of-production. U.S. ag policy has been held hostage by the grain and meat trade so long, nobody but the writers of the Netflix series “Damnation” seem to know which way is up.

I wrote last year of the mystery of the Republican farmer who remains loyal to a party that has betrayed ag producers from here to Sunday, and ultimately to great and lasting effect in the 1996 Farm Bill, which finally DECOUPLED price from benefits, replacing market power for producers with welfare, insurance and bailouts.

Ag journalist Alan Guebert recently wrote of his “marvel at how tone deaf and superior-sounding rural politics has become to much of the non-farming nation.” Guebert cited a *Washington Post* interview with a farmer, a self-styled deserving patriot taking the brunt of Trump’s trade negotiations. Guebert noted that the piece got 5,000 comments, most “soaked with contempt and sarcasm for the featured farmers, who farm 15,000 acres in South Dakota, and by association, rural America in general...”

“They [farmers] disdain the coastal elites who pay their bills. They hate socialism that they rely on. They complain about taxes they barely pay. The sheer ignorance of thinking they feed us (when) it’s us feeding them.” Reader comment on the *WP* website cited in *Farm and Food File*, June 30, 2019.

So here, O Beloved, is my Humble Gift, my take on the top Big Lies surrounding ag policy today.

**Corn is high.** Corn is not high. Corn is \$4.24 as I write. Cost of production is \$3.90/

bushel. Anything over \$3.00 is considered a high price by farmers, as corn historically lingered around \$2.00 for long stretches between 1918 and 1998. These numbers are NOT adjusted for inflation. Think about it.

**Corn is high because Trump is a good negotiator.** Trump has lost a big share of our overseas markets for ag commodities, and those markets are lost to U.S. producers forevermore. Any price uptick this year reflects environmental disaster, especially flooding through the corn belt. Crop losses for 2019 are compounded by stored 2018 crop loss—also ruined by flooding. Wet grain and beans swelled and burst bins, and turned moldy—a total loss.

***“They [farmers] disdain the coastal elites who pay their bills. They hate socialism that they rely on. They complain about taxes they barely pay. The sheer ignorance of thinking they feed us (when) it’s us feeding them.”***

**Trump and the GOP are on the side of country people.** The GOP has championed farm policies that strip market power from farmers/ranchers and turned farm programs into welfare programs, easy to make unpopular. Trump has made a policy of defunding USDA, as with the EPA—what the administration calls cutting D.C. red tape is really a stripping away of vital services, like the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). Without NASS, ag producers would have precious little access to critical crop and market data—while the grain trade and meat packers know pretty much everything in real time.

Over decades, farmers have been groomed, used and abused by the political right like vulnerable children, and now by Trump.

**Farmers can just quit feeding cattle on corn and diversify their operations.** Less water use, less atmospheric carbon. Ah, would that not be love’s young dream? I will see your sustainable farming, and raise you regenerative agriculture. As with the trend to smaller dwellings, I take encouragement. HOWEVER, the market for such product remains a niche and not a structural solution for today’s rank-and-file producers who are incredibly leveraged and find themselves trapped in the belly of the industrial agriculture beast. To the degree that you change the way you source food and what you eat, you can help, but this kind of change takes time. And new wave farmers aren’t making a real living either, many of them, and have side hustles driving trucks, dressing hair and delivering mail.

**Farm policy is boring.** It’s complicated and too hard to understand. Too complicated? Really. You can suffer through YEARS of “Game of Thrones,” but you find ARGUABLY the single most important industry in the world—food production for human beings—too arcane and boring to follow as you follow sexier issues like hemp, immigration or guns? Carbon sequestration is just one issue that needs your support badly, and like country-of-origin labeling gives rural and urban folks alike common ground.

**Only people of color are poor.** The truth is most poor people in the U.S. are actually white. And rural poverty comes with its own issues, even when folks want to help. Sociologists report that the rural poor resist signing up children for free lunch, because they don’t want the people at the school to know their business. Everything costs more in the country, and health care and internet access are still not available to all.

America loves cowboy culture—the music, the fashion, the myths. But actual ag producers, not so much. Farm and ranch households number fewer than two million today, but these folks have big families and big TVs where they watch *FOX and Friends*, as well as out-size electoral college clout.

Trump gets this. Do you?

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# HARD TRUTH

*by Sally Herrin*

## The Mystery of the GOP Farmer Deepens

I will tell you a story, O Best Beloved, about a Land and her People, in a place and time not so far away nor very long ago, where the workers in the towns and the farmers across the country had one another's backs.

Sick of the excesses of the most recent Gilded Ages and ever larger and more brutal wars, together workers and farmers brought to power a government wise and humane in many ways, to create jobs, secure food for the people and pensions for the aged and to build roads and schools and spread the blessings

of power and light, and to put rational limits on the Money Class and the Corporations which capture that Money. Much of that Money and Wealth was generated by farmer-raised crops planted, grown and marketed each year.

"This won't do," the Money Class agreed. "Rational limits be damned. How will we ever gather all the wealth of the Earth to ourselves and our families forever?" To everlasting shame, the University of Chicago School of Economics, with the blessing of the American Farm Bureau (may Demons attend

the names) and the Money Class together hatched an ingenious plan.

"Let us squeeze the excess People off the Land, like toothpaste from a tube. They will move to the towns and and compete with the workers to depress wages. Fewer farmers mean machine and petroleum sales. Farmers' market tools must be stripped away too—price floors and on-farm storage—and all efforts to market farm product in the aggregate, like farmer cooperatives and grain pools, must be stamped out like bugs. This