



Suwannee-St. Johns Group

Sierra Club

Newsletter

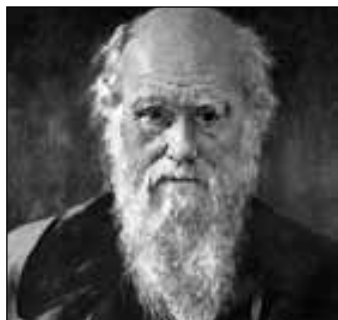
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Darwin, Darwinism, and Creative & Intelligent Science

BY JON REISKIND

A scientific theory, according to Wikipedia, is a logically self-consistent model or framework for describing the behavior of a related set of natural or social phenomena. It originates from and/or is supported by experimental evidence. In this sense, a theory is a systematic and formalized expression of all previous observations that is predictive, logical and testable.



Darwin proposed two such theories—his theory of evolution and his theory of natural selection. The process of their formulation was the result of experience, observation, and genius and was a product of the social environment in which Charles Darwin found himself in the first half of the 19th century in England.

While conceived in the late 1830s, writ-

ten out in the early 1840s, they were not published until he was spurred by a letter from Alfred Russel Wallace, who independently came up with the concept of natural selection, in the late 1850s.

Since then, the two theories have been successfully tested repeatedly with new discoveries and observations from genetics to plate tectonics to cladistics to recently found fossils from China.

And yet a vast majority of Americans, who have taken great pleasure and convenience in the products of the scientific (and medical) advances of the last two centuries, reject these well-established theories.

There are many reasons for this apparent contradiction in our “advanced” and “civilized” society. Both the theories and the resistance of the public to them will be

GENERAL MEETING
 Thursday, Dec. 7, 7:30 PM
 Entomology/Nematology Building on the UF campus
 (Just east of the Performing Arts Center. Turn south off Hull Road on to Natural Areas Road.)

DARWINISM AND INTELLIGENT SCIENCE

JON REISKIND
 ARACHNOLOGIST, UF



discussed at this month’s program.
Jon Reiskind is an arachnologist who has studied the systematics, ecology and behavior of spiders in the tropics and temperate zones. He received his education from Amherst College and Harvard University and was a member of the Department of Zoology at UF for 36 years, until his retirement in 2003. Since then he has been even busier.

AMERICANS VOTE FOR BIG CHANGE, NOT BIG OIL

BY SIERRA CLUB STAFF

The Sierra Club today praised voters across the country for electing new local, state and national leaders who are ready to move America’s energy future in a dramatically different direction.

“Voters clearly voted for big change, not Big Oil. They want new leadership to

move America in a dramatically different direction,” said Carl Pope, Sierra Club Executive Director. “And a big part of that change concerns energy security and enacting smart energy solutions that decrease our oil dependence, clean up our environment, curb global warming and create jobs.”

“Voters elected a greener Congress and several greener governors. Now America can move forward in a new direction,” said Cathy Duvall, Sierra Club Political Director. “That means ending subsidies to big oil and coal companies and instead reducing our oil addiction, reducing pollution, and taking meaningful steps to curb

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Conference Report

BY ROB BRINKMAN

I attended the Florida Chapter Conservation Conference in the Leesburg area. It was one of the best conferences in my limited experience with the chapter's annual conservation conference. There were two separate tracks—issues and trainings—and I attended some of both.

The most beneficial presentations were on water and wetland issues and the recent interpretations of the Clean Water Act. The most dynamic speaker was Maggy Hurchalla, from Martin County, who spoke about wetlands protection strategies. She advocated placing wetlands preservation policies in the local government comprehensive plans and making sure that any exceptions to wetland preservation are very specific and limited in scope.

Non-functioning or sick wetlands need to be restored to health rather than get euthanized. We shouldn't trade damaged wetlands for other natural resources that should be preserved anyway.

Hurchalla also discussed the Burt Harris Takings Act and the misconception that it requires governments to compensate property owners for any regulations that diminish a property's value. In fact, she

said, compensation is only required when no reasonable use of the land in question—as it exists in its present undeveloped state—is allowed. In other words, building condos is not a reasonable use for a swamp, and no compensation is required.

However, the practice of some developers is to file lawsuits against local governments and then enter into settlement negotiations. Thus, the slide down the slippery slope of wetland destruction continues.

Larry Brand provided a good presentation on the causes of red tide. He made a compelling point that there is too much focus on phosphorus as a nutrient, when there is an interrelationship between phosphorus and nitrogen. Ecosystems tend to be either phosphorus-limited or nitrogen-limited. Algal blooms explode when there is a 16-to-1 ratio of nitrogen to phosphorus. While red tide blooms frequently start offshore, it explodes near shore where sufficient nutrients from coastal run-off are encountered.

There is also evidence that lower levels of the red tide organism can kill marine mammals, such as dolphins and manatees, than was previously thought. Previously inhalation had been presumed as the mech-

anism of exposure to the toxin from these algal blooms, it now appears that ingestion of low levels of the neurotoxin bio-accumulate in fatty tissues leading to sickness and death.

Navis Bermudez, a national Sierra Club staff person from Washington, D.C., spoke in the training sessions about recent court cases and the resulting lack of clear guidance to the EPA staff in how to interpret the Clean Water Act's isolated wetlands provisions. Recent court cases have seen the Sierra Club and other environmental organizations allied with hunting and angling groups in opposition to the petroleum industry, which desperately wants to gut the CWA's restrictions on their polluting production activities.

Bermudez also spoke of strategies to curtail the largest source of coastal pollution—stormwater run-off. Sprawl is a major factor in stormwater generation. For example, while the population increased 15 percent from 1982-1997, developed land area nationally has increased by 34 percent.

Individually everyone can do their part by reducing or eliminating their use of fertilizer and other chemicals and diverting your roof run-off into unpaved areas, or employing rain barrels to prevent your

CHAIR'S



CORNER

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Visit the National and Local Sierra Club Websites!

National: <http://www.sierraclub.org> • Local: <http://www.gatorsierra.org>

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FOLDING PARTY

Interested in hosting a newsletter folding party? Contact Scott Camil at 375-2563

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Get Out Before It Gets Cold

DEC. 2—Everglades National Park Day Hike. Introductory hiking for beginners and a refresher for veterans. We will walk the Anhinga Boardwalk Trail and the Gumbo Limbo trail and then drive to the Pinelands area and have a gourmet lunch and walk a trail there. Each trail is less than one mile long. We'll see gators, birds, turtles, fish, insects and maybe a snake or two. Leisure. Limit 10. Cost: \$20 members, \$25 non-members. Leader: Kaatje Bernabei, 305-223-6551, cbernabei@braddock.dadeschools.net. Assistant: Alan Nowell, 305-270-5262 (days), alan.nowell@sfcu.org.

DEC. 2—Withlacoochee State Forest Day Hike: A moderate hike of four miles on rolling forest trails. We will be visiting the beautiful sandhill ecosystem and the intriguing karst formations of the forest. From 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Space is limited. For more information, contact Steve &

Julie Royer at venturing415@hotmail.com, or 1-352-465-5233.

DEC. 2-3—Overnight Backpack trip to Hidden Pond in the Ocala National Forest. We will explore the Juniper Wilderness Area trail and discover our national forests. A moderate hike of about nine miles over two days. Learn about national forest issues. Co-Leaders: Mike Pici, 727-798-9227, revmp777@earthlink.net, and Ben Berauer, 727-392-2821, bfberauer@aol.com.

DEC. 8—Women's Little Manatee River kayak trip. Before the holidays get too hectic, come relax and paddle

this beautiful river. Learn about the development issues that threaten the native wildlife in this area.

Sue Brandon, brandon11@earthlink.net, 813-622-1800.



news¬es

A GIFT TO WILDLIFE

The nesting season for wood ducks and screech-owls will be in full swing in a couple of months.

You have a timely window of opportunity to assist these cavity nesters and make a handsome addition to your yard or local park.

Habitat destruction has resulted in a serious reduction in good cavity nesting sites. The Memorial Nesting Box project sponsored by the Polk Group helps to address this need.

The boxes are beautifully constructed from rough cut inch-thick cypress and are easy to put up. All donations in excess of the actual material costs are donated to Richard Coleman's Scholarship Fund at New College. Richard was Sierra's Kissimmee Restoration Issue Chair for close to 34 years.

The boxes can be obtained by making a minimum donation of \$50; shipping costs vary depending upon distance but average \$15 for most Florida locations.

Contact Bob Taylor at 863 439-2251 or RTa33851@aol.com.

By Frances Howell-Coleman

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stormwater from reaching the street. Stormwater quickly flows into local creeks, often without any treatment, after it reaches the street. Low impact development techniques reduce stormwater impacts by mimicking the natural flow by incorporating native plants and retaining the natural land contours where possible. The underlying principle is to avoid generating stormwater as much as possible, rather than building expensive infrastructure to treat stormwater.

Sarasota and other counties are developing regulations on the use and sale of fertilizers to protect their coastal waters and help reduce the nutrients available for red tide blooms. There is a sense of urgency because the Florida Legislature is likely to prevent local governments from enacting such regulations to protect their water quality during the next session. Locally, our rivers and springs are increas-

ingly degraded by nitrate pollution, which feeds algal mats and cloud the water and choke natural aquatic vegetation.

FLEXCOM ELECTIONS

Following the annual conservation conference there was a Florida Executive Committee meeting, at which the annual election of officers took place. Betsy Roberts, the chapter conservation chair, was elected chapter chair. John Glenn moved from administrative chair to replace Roberts as conservation chair. Newly elected Flexcom at-large member Cathy Harrelson was elected chapter secretary, and Pedro Montero will be the alternate in case she can not make a meeting. Bruce Deterding was elected chapter treasurer. Dan Hendrickson remains as the Florida chapter Council of Club Leaders representative, and former chapter chair Bob Sullivan was elected the alternate CCL representative.

Meanwhile the SSJ Sierra Club

Executive Committee will meet with several new members and elect officers for the next year at our December meeting.

GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

The recent local and national elections have certainly brought some changes. Chapter lobbyist Susie Caplowe was optimistic that the new legislature will have several new representatives who will be willing to work with the Sierra Club to improve the future for Floridians. I am hopeful that Governor-elect Charlie Crist will also be willing to work with the Sierra Club for a safer and healthier environment in Florida.

I hope everyone had a good year, may the next year increase your commitment to enjoy, explore and protect our planet. Please consider joining us for our annual folding party/holiday social. See the back of this newsletter for date, time and location. Happy Holidays.

Conserve Energy to Save the Planet

BY DWIGHT ADAMS

Al Gore's movie, *An Inconvenient Truth*, makes a convincing case that man-made global warming is a reality. An equally inconvenient truth is that we are rapidly exhausting fossil fuels. Even if you are not convinced of these "truths," then conserve energy to save money or to save some resources for your grandkids.

In any case, we should take all reasonable measures to conserve energy and reduce greenhouse gases while we develop alternative energy sources. The most effective way to do this would be through a federal energy policy with the dual objectives of conservation and development of alternative energy sources.

Until this happens there are lots of steps that you can take, primarily in transportation and housing.

DRIVE LESS

You can reduce the distance that you drive by consolidating trips and arranging stops to minimize driving distances. On average, each household generates 10 automobile trips and uses four gallons of gas every day. With changes in life style and a little thought before beginning your day (or week), you can reduce the number and length of trips significantly.

Many people can make the maximum possible use of carpooling, whether driving kids to various activities or driving to work. There are probably neighbors nearby who have kids going to the same activities as yours with whom you could arrange carpooling. Carpooling to work was down from 20 percent of workers in 1980 to only

11 percent in 2000.

Another way to reduce the impact of driving is to use alternative modes of transportation, such as walking, bicycling, or taking the bus, whenever possible. Walking will have a double benefit—you will be healthier and may not need an expensive health club membership. In other cultures, where people walk more, there are fewer overweight people and fewer heart attacks.

If you are planning on moving any time soon, consider a location to reduce driving needs. Look for a mixed-use, higher-density development (not on a cul-de-sac) that is served by mass transit and is near activities in which you will take part.

SLOW DOWN

Gasoline consumption increases dramatically with speed. You can verify for yourself that driving 80-plus miles an hour consumes about 20 percent more than driving 65 miles an hour, which is also safer. The 50 percent of drivers in SUVs going 80 miles an hour or higher are using way more than their share.

Even in city driving, where high speeds are not involved, aggressive driving with rapid acceleration and breaking uses more gas. Slow down a little, avoid road rage, and save some petroleum for your grandkids. Keep your tires properly inflated and your air filter cleaned.

GET RID OF THE SUV

Some cite safety as a reason for driving an SUV. However, with their tendency to roll over in crashes, SUVs are not safer than

other light vehicles. Because they are almost never driven in situations like those depicted in the ads, the popularity is image-driven (roomier minivans have declined in popularity). An even cooler image, however, is to drive a hybrid 5-passenger hatchback that gets twice the mileage of the SUV.

ENERGY EFFICIENT HOUSING

Recently, The Gainesville Sun published the "red dot" map showing GRU residential customers who used over 1.14 kilowatt hours per square foot, which is at least twice what it should be. The main sources of high electric bills are air leaks from outside, leaking ducts, inefficient windows, and inefficient heating and air-conditioning equipment.

Good information on how to make improvements, some of which you can undertake yourself, is available at www.energystar.gov/ia/home_improvements. However, for some of these it may be wise to obtain the advice of a professional (such as Ken Fonorow, 352-472-5661, who I can personally recommend).

Importantly, tax credits are available for






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a wide array of home improvements if made in 2006 and 2007 that will reduce energy consumption.

If your house faces east or west, provide shading for windows in these directions from the morning and the hot afternoon sun. Shading can take many forms: awnings, Bahama shutters or shade screens (like small mini-blinds) on the outside, trellises with deciduous vines, or small trees such as redbuds that will grow to the height of a house in just a few years. Banana trees

that will grow to 10 feet in summer and get killed back in winter are a good choice for shading windows.

Also, you can add film to windows to reduce transmitted radiation.

If you have less than eight inches of insulation in the attic, add more. Spray the underside of your roof decking with "silver" paint to reduce the emissivity (the amount of heat radiating from it). In Gainesville, ECS Solar Energy Systems can do this.

The next time you need a new roof, consider metal (tax credit of 10 percent up to \$500), which, if shiny instead of painted, will be highly reflective. At that time, add a continuous ridge vent. Increasing wall insulation may be difficult, but if there is none, you can easily add blown-in cellulose or equivalent.

If your appliances are 10 years old or

more, replacement with energy-star rated ones will pay for itself in a few years. The same is true for your heating and air-conditioning system. If you really want a high efficiency system, install a geothermal system that makes use of the earth as the heat sink or source. You might consider redoing the whole system and going to two or more zones that can be conditioned separately. Also, adding a solar hot water heater (tax credit of 30 percent up to \$2000) or even a photovoltaic generating system (GRU will buy your excess power) will help greatly.

Simple things you can do:

- Set your water heater to 120 degrees or lower and take shorter showers.
- In the summer set the thermostat to 78 degrees (or even 80 with a fan, which is run only if the room is occupied), and in winter set it at 65 degrees (wear a sweater). Add a programmable thermostat so that you can turn the system off when no one is there. Do not run it during the hottest part of the day when it is less efficient. Shade the outside condenser unit (but do not block the air flow).
- Change your light bulbs to fluorescent ones and turn them off when no one is in the room.
- Wash your clothes in warm water, rinse in cold. Let them air dry outside in a "solar" dryer, i.e. a clothes line. (Note: state law forbids homeowners associations from restricting outside clothes drying.)
- Use as few throwaway plastic items as possible, including grocery bags (cloth works fine).
- Recycle everything possible and compost kitchen and yard wastes.

More information can be found by visiting one of the 111 million websites that you can find by searching Google.com for

"energy conservation." Audubon magazine's September-October 2006 issue has a useful table of 21 items along with their costs, the annual savings, and payback period. A definitive guide, *Reducing Energy Costs*, has been published by Consumer Reports.

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

Politicians talk about our becoming "energy independent." However, it cannot happen as long as oil is the primary source of energy. The Alaska National Wildlife Refuge has about a six-month supply; coastal Florida maybe a couple of years' worth. If we are willing to destroy western states for the oil shale, we could get a few decades worth of very expensive oil. There is sufficient coal in West Virginia, western states and the northwest slope of Alaska to meet our energy needs for a few 100 years—but at what environmental costs?

Action by Congress to raise gas mileage standards sharply over the next few years and to increase the gas tax to finance development of alternative energy sources would reduce consumption and encourage conservation of energy (which would also reduce greenhouse emissions).

There is sufficient energy to meet our needs in wind, solar, and ocean currents that can be used to produce hydrogen to power highly-efficient fuel cells. A "Manhattan-type" project financed by a gas tax (with low-income subsidies) is needed. However, politicians are not making such suggestions and to do so might be a disaster for anyone running for public office.

Getting such changes will take a sea change in how we do business in this country. Vote for politicians who will enact meaningful energy policy, and lobby ones currently in office to do so.



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global warming. Americans want an energy plan that invests in wind and solar and other clean renewable energy sources; makes our cars go farther on a gallon of gas and uses American technological know how to make better, more efficient products and create better jobs.”

Never have more candidates—of both parties—run on energy and environmental issues. Voter concerns earlier this year over high gas prices deepened over the course of the election cycle into doubts about our current energy policy, about the lack of responsible leadership, the shortage of forward-looking solutions the corrupting influence of the oil and gas interests, and finally to widespread voter concern about our energy security—the fact that our dependence on oil ties our fate to the most unstable parts of the world and increases the threat of global warming.

“This year, the Sierra Club ran one of the largest grassroots organizing effort in competitive House, Senate and Governor’s races,” said Duvall. “Sierra Club took our message of a new direction on energy door to door, neighbor to neighbor in hundreds of communities across America. We had thousands of members from our 450 groups working on the ground to educate voters and to get out the vote.”

Sierra Club and Sierra Club Political Committee’s activities included:

- Actively working in more than 30 races including 7 Senate, 19 House and five Governor races, and a handful of state legislative races
- Micro-targeting 310,000 environmental-first voters in seven states.
- Recruiting more than 2,600 Sierra Club volunteers.
- Organizing close to 2,400 final weekend get-out-the-vote canvass and phone shifts manned by approximately 1,400 staff and volunteers
- Making 2,246,000 voter impressions including mail, phone and door knocks.
- Mail = 1,150,000 (54 different pieces on 31 different races); Phone calls = 974,000; Doors = 122,000.
- Educating our 750,000 members through the magazine and chapter newsletters.
- Contacting 294,000 members directly

through phone calls, mail, and e-mail.

- Gathering signatures, organized coalitions and educated voters about renewable energy initiatives in Washington and California, and educated voters about the hazards of takings initiatives in those two states as well as in Idaho, Arizona and Montana.

- Barnstorming of Minnesota, Ohio, and Pennsylvania by Sierra Club Executive Director Carl Pope and the head of the Steelworkers union, Leo Gerard.

Following the election, Sierra Club volunteers will now help federal and state lawmakers act quickly and wisely on this call for a new direction in our energy policies. The group will be identifying and recommending smart, safe, clean, cheaper energy solutions that can be adopted quickly to break our oil addiction and curb global warming. This will include solutions like increasing fuel economy for cars and trucks, energy-efficient buildings, and stopping the rush to build coal-fired power plants.

“We are looking forward to working with newly elected officials in statehouses

and in Washington to enact policies that create a new energy economy that cuts pollution and creates jobs,” said Pope.

In terms of 2008, this year’s Election Day was also a kick-off of our 2008 strategy to make energy security and curbing global warming priorities in the next Administration.

On election day In New Hampshire 250 volunteers fanned out across the state to collect the 8,000 signatures needed to put a Climate Change Resolution on the ballot of 200 New Hampshire town meetings.

The resolution calls on President Bush and Congress to address global warming and empowers each town’s governing body to appoint an energy committee to recommend local smart energy solutions.

In addition to assisting local communities to do their part in curbing global warming, the goal of the NH Climate Change Resolution Project is to make global warming a priority issue among NH citizens and consequently, a major issue for presidential candidates in both parties.

SIERRA CLUB DECLARES VICTORY AS POMBO GOES DOWN

BY CARL POPE

Sierra Club Executive Director

“The Sierra Club congratulates Jerry McNerney on his important victory over Richard Pombo. We salute McNerney for fighting the good fight, for defying the odds and taking on Pombo when almost no one else would.

“Jerry McNerney’s win is testament to the values of courage and persistence. The hope he has given to millions of Californians and Americans will not go away any time soon.

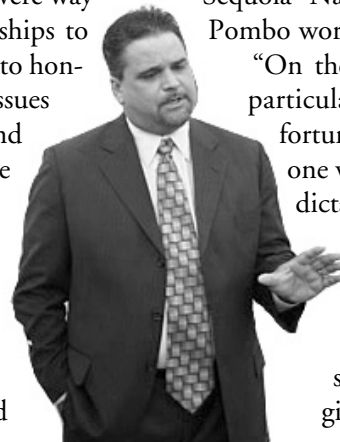
“It has been clear to us for a long time that Richard Pombo’s views were way too extreme and his relationships to special interests way too cozy to honestly serve the public on issues like clean air, clean water, and protecting wild lands. We are very pleased to see that the voters in the 11th District agreed with us.

“The hundreds of Sierra Club volunteers and staff who worked tirelessly this past year to hold Richard

Pombo accountable deserve a ton of credit for turning what many pundits thought would be a cakewalk for the incumbent into a win. They, along with fellow environmental organizations, sent an important message that any candidate who allows him or herself to be recklessly out of touch with mainstream environmental values is vulnerable.

“Pombo’s defeat is not just a victory for the people of California’s 11th District. This is a moment to be savored by anyone who loves Yosemite National Park or the California coast or Giant Sequoia National Monument, places Pombo worked to mine, drill, or log.

“On the issue of energy policy in particular, America is extremely fortunate to be replacing someone whose energy priorities were dictated by Big Oil with a man who is an expert on renewable wind power and who has the vision to help our nation develop smart new energy technologies and jobs.”



On May 4, Planet Senior Editor Tom Valtin spoke with comedian Bill Maher about his views on the environment. Maher, who appeared at the Sierra Summit 2005, drives a Toyota Prius hybrid.

PLANET: I assume from the fact that you were the featured entertainer at the Sierra Summit that you take more than a passing interest in the environment.

MAHER: Sure. I can't think of anything I worry about more. It's that little "wanting to live" clause in my contract, you know? All you have to do is read the paper and every day there's some bad news. It's either that the tuna are disappearing, or the ice caps are melting, or there's no snow on Mt. Kilimanjaro. It's just getting to a point where you can't ignore it. I asked Bobby Kennedy when he was on my show on Earth Day, when they put history on the clock of the day, how late in the day is it? Is it eleven at night? Is it two minutes to midnight? I don't know what has to happen to get people to wake up, but obviously something more than you or I are doing.

PLANET: One problem seems to be that people are ill-informed, even though they're bombarded with so much information every day. You're an entertainer, but you're also an outspoken progressive. Is educating the public is part of your role?

MAHER: Yeah, and I bring up the environment as often as I possibly can without being such a bore that people turn it off, because then that doesn't serve anybody's purposes.

PLANET: In speaking with Charles Schumer last Friday, you said there are some very important issues—and the environment was the first example you cited—that the Average Joe just finds too byzantine and boring to latch onto. How do we get people to pay attention?

MAHER: If you ask Robert Kennedy, he'd tell you that the big villain in this is the media. And I tend to think he's got a good point. The media's job is to make what's important interesting, and they have abdicated that responsibility. They fill their pages and their programs with tales of runaway brides and molesting pop stars, the sexy stuff that's easily graspable. That was part of my point to Schumer. People read and care about the things that are easily graspable. The tsunami's an example.

BILL MAHER'S New Rules FOR THE Environment



Americans loved that story. Not the tsunami itself, obviously, but there was a sense that, "Oh, here's one that we can understand. Underwater earthquake makes big wave. I can get my head around that one." It was sufficiently far away, and of course, there was a super model involved, so it was the perfect storm of perfect storms.

PLANET: You probably recall that in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, one of the things President Bush urged people to do was to get out and go shopping, to demonstrate that we weren't going to let the terrorists disrupt our daily lives. But unlike during WWII, say, it seems that Americans aren't being asked to make any sacrifices so far as our use of natural resources or reining in our consumption. We seem to be such a freedom-loving country that we almost don't want to take responsibility. What do we do about that?

MAHER: That's a question that I've not found an answer for. I wrote a whole book about it after 9/11, called "When you

Ride Alone, You Ride with Bin Laden," and that was the theme of that book. It's a grafting of the idea of those WWII patriotic posters that got people to help out and get involved in the war effort. We created new ones for the war on terror, but some of them were just redo's of the old posters. There was one WWII poster that was imploring people to save gasoline, and it said "When you ride alone, you ride with Hitler." So riding with Bin Laden was just an updating of that. We got into that subject—sacrifice, asking people to make sacrifices—quite a bit in the book, and that was the whole idea: if your government isn't going to ask and inform you, then I'll do it.

But obviously people need the call from the top. There's no substitute for a president making something an issue. And the sad thing about this president is that he's actually good at making something an issue. He's a very willful person. Nobody was asking for tax cuts when he ran for president. Nobody was thinking that we should invade Iraq when he proposed that. Nobody was asking that social security be put on the table right now. These are all issues that came out of this president's singular mind, and his willful mindset. If he turned that willful mindset toward the environment, toward conservation, toward asking people to make a sacrifice, the momentum that would bring to the table would be incalculable. But obviously it's not what he feels is important.

PLANET: The Sierra Club is opposed to Bush's environmental policies, but when we criticize Bush personally, people aren't as receptive.

MAHER: You're falling into the Al Gore-John Kerry trap, which is "Don't attack the president too much because it will offend his supporters." Who gives a **** if it offends his supporters? This man needs to be attacked. You can't separate the man from the policy. He is the policy, OK? People need to know that he's a corrupt person, that he's selling his country and his countrymen down the river to pay back his friends in the energy industry. I would not hesitate to make this case at all. If people can't accept that, then I don't know what to tell you. The problem with the left, and the Democrats, and environmentalists, is not that they're too hard on this president, it's that they're too easy on him.

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DECEMBER 2006 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DEC. 7—SSJ Sierra Club Group general meeting, in the Entomology/Nematology Building on the UF campus (see page 1 for details).

DEC. 14—SSJ Sierra Club Executive Committee meeting, 7 p.m., at the Santa Fe Community College Downtown Gainesville campus. Board meeting room.

DEC. 21—Annual Veterans for Peace Winter Solstice concert, 8 p.m., at the Thomas Center. Look for the Sierra Club event table. Great music and people.

DEC. 22—Folding Party for the January 2007 newsletter and annual holiday social, 7:30 p.m., at Barbara Reid's home, 11 S.W. 43rd Terr. Call 372-0046 for directions.

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