



Guest columnist

Warmed-over environmentalism

By Ron Ewart

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To see anything clearly, you must have a sufficiently broad perspective, accompanied by hard data, repeatable long-term observations and verifiable facts. If you are standing and look at the ground, your perspective and your field of view are quite limited. If, however, you are standing on the top of a mountain, your perspective broadens exponentially. And thus it is with the subject of global warming. Without a broader view, it is almost impossible to know whom or what to believe. So, a short history of the Earth is in order.

The Earth has endured sunspots, reversing poles, shifting magnetic fields, drifting continents, asteroid and comet collisions, and ice ages in its 4.5 billion-year history. It has experienced the wondrous 165 million-year dinosaur experiment. Six hundred million years ago, the "Cambrian explosion" occurred, when life almost magically erupted, emerged and evolved at a pace never before seen.

Over its lifetime, the Earth spun, tilted, heaved, shifted, rose and shrunk, drastically changed, expelled gases and molten lava, grew hot and then cold. Continents drifted first toward each other (Pangea) and then away. Polar ice caps and glaciers melted and sea levels rose and then lowered.

About 12,000 years ago, one-third of the Earth's surface was covered in a layer of ice more than one mile thick. During that ice age, which lasted longer than civilized man has lived on Earth, there were no animals, plants, insects or habitat that could survive in this harsh environment. But life on Earth still survived in other places less-hostile. The ultimate thaw and the rushing torrent carved deep gouges and massive channels in the Earth's surface. It created riverbeds and dry falls and lakes and inland seas and other features in the Earth's crust, not there before. Now that was global warming on a grand scale.

Whole forests grew and then died out. Mountains rose out of the bowels of the Earth, pushed up by continents in collision and then flattened back into the crust. Rivers changed direction. Monster lakes were formed. Giant meteors struck the Earth at galactic speeds, carving massive holes in the crust and sending continent-size clouds of sunlight-dimming dust into the atmosphere. The atmosphere became opaque and cut off the life-giving sunlight, rendering lifeless enormous parts of the planet. Millions of species of plants and animals evolved,

survived, reproduced and then died out, to be replaced by entirely different species of plants and animals.

However, major changes seldom occurred in cataclysmic events. They almost always took place agonizingly slowly, over eons of time, through the tedious, grinding, random, chaotic, disorganized process of natural evolution. The variables were almost infinite and still are.

And today, those same agonizingly slow processes are at work. We are an integral part of those processes but we will have little or no effect on any final outcome. We will but only tickle the grander elements such as the sun, the moon and the Earth itself, none of which is predictable, much less measurable to the degree necessary for accurate predictions.

A few spewing volcanoes or an episode of sunspots can totally invalidate any computer models. Just look at weather predictions. Any prediction is good for about two hours and that is why the environmentalists' models were predicting an ice age 20 years ago and now they are predicting global warming. It's an insult to true science.

The universe, our solar system and even our Earth are violent, dangerous places to humans and other life forms and always have been. Just ask the dinosaurs. So far, we have just been lucky. A close-by (in galactic terms) supernova in the spiral arm of the Milky Way, in which our solar system resides, could flood the sun and planets with massive amounts of deadly radiation and render Earth lifeless and barren. If the sun changed its energy output by a significant fraction, all life on Earth could cease. An errant asteroid or comet could cross the Earth's orbit and the resulting collision could dramatically change the pattern of life, or terminate it altogether.

Environmentalists cry "wolf" on very little data and way-too-short time periods to come up with meaningful predictions, as they have with global warming. Unfortunately, environmentalism has become a cult of mindless followers with a distorted vision of how humans and the Earth should relate to each other. Earth gets the highest priorities — over people — in spite of true science. In reality, humans are but a part of the evolutionary and natural processes of Earth and those processes, not environmentalists or governments, will determine the final outcome. This is why their global-warming theory is an unmitigated farce.

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