

# WEST ENERGY NEWS

March 2009

"to educate and advocate for a clean, sustainable energy future  
for the Macatawa area" [www.westmichiganenergy.org](http://www.westmichiganenergy.org)

## WEST says YES to:

- Renewable Energy
- Energy Conservation
- Energy Efficiency
- Significant Lowering of all  
Pollution for Energy Production
- Making a Difference in our  
Community, with Seven Future  
Generations in Mind



WEST meets on the  
first Tuesday of each month  
8 - 9:30 a.m. Check place at  
[www.westmichiganenergy.org](http://www.westmichiganenergy.org)  
Co-chairs  
Chris Byrnes & Dave Trudell  
Committees  
Policy: Mark Rich  
Education: Don Triezenberg  
Research: David Trudell  
John Fulenwider  
Energy Week: Marty Dugan  
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## Get Green and Energized -- March 14-21!

Energy Week starts Saturday, March 14 with free MAX bus rides all day, Green Crafts for kids at the Holland Arts Council at 10 am, a noon parade on 8<sup>th</sup> St., then 'Save Some Green' tips for saving energy at the Knickerbocker.

On Monday the 16<sup>th</sup>, the Holland's League of Women Voters holds a City Hall forum at 7 pm: "*Holland Responds to Climate Change*". Tuesday has a double-hit: Dr. Tom Boogart speaks on "*Caring for the Creation that Cares for Us*" (Hope Church, 77 W. 11<sup>th</sup> St., 7 pm; and HCHS physics students lead a discussion on coal in our energy future (Holland Christian HS, 950 Ottawa, 7pm). "It is exciting to explore the possibilities of changing the forms of energy that people will use in the future," says HCSC student Andrew..

Wednesday March 18 features the film "Reinventing the World" at Herrick Library, sponsored by the 3-E Initiative, 7 pm. At Ridge Point Church, the film *Kilowatt Ours* will show from 7:30p.m. Thursday you can join in a discussion of *Hot, Flat and Crowded*, Tom Friedman's take on climate change.

Think with some ethics folk on Friday, March 20, 7 pm, at City Hall. Wrap it up with *Cool Congregation Workshop* at Western Theological Seminary, 101 E 13<sup>th</sup> St. on Saturday (pre-registration at 616-392-7947).

To see what has transpired since the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Energy Week in Holland is terrific," states WEST co-Founder and Energy Week organizer Martin Dugan. "The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual is an educational effort to bring more local citizens into an environmental / sustainability mode. Our focus is engaging more people in using less energy in many ways ASAP!!"



## DEQ Asks Holland BPW for More Information

The need for alternative scenarios for Holland's energy future was stressed by citizens in testimony at the January Dept. of Environmental Quality hearings. Many also asked that HBPW show 'need' for a plant seven times the size of the one it replaces. Citing such questions and the governor's call for showing need, the DEQ on February 25<sup>th</sup> requested that HBPW provide alternative scenarios to the proposed coal plant. HBPW has 90 days to respond with alternative scenarios.

A second factor was that, after a suit by Sierra Club, EPA has asked Northern Michigan University (given a permit by DEQ) to also provide such alternative scenarios. EPA is expected to soon announce a new carbon-requirement for approving coal-plant permits, a third issue delaying the DEQ permit.

Holland and service-area citizens can share their ideas about Holland's energy future in public-comment periods of City Council meetings (dates at [www.cityofholland.com](http://www.cityofholland.com)) or those of the HBPW board ([www.hollandbpw.com](http://www.hollandbpw.com)).

## Energy Report Cards -- and TV Competitions

Imagine Holland BPW sending out bills marked with smiley-or-frowny faces! Last April, randomly Sacramento customers were rated according to their energy use compared with neighbors in 100 homes of roughly the same size. Folks who got the smileys loved it, but complaints led the utility to drop frowns.



In Massachusetts, the BrainShift Foundation has towns competing in "Energy Smackdown," a TV game featuring competition between towns to lower their carbon footprint on Earth.



Even eating hamburgs, 'the hummers of the food world', counted.

Imagine smiley's on your HBPW bill? Frowns? Imagine carbon competitions between Holland Wards, featured in MAC TV?

Go to Europe. Eurostar rail (engines pictured below) says it's going to run a 'carbon neutral' railway. Trains produce only 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the emissions of going to the same place by plane, Eurostar says. Amtrak, anyone?

Hey, Holland Sustainability Committee -- interested in any of these ideas?



## Holland City Council Names Citizens to New Sustainability Committee

On Feb. 24<sup>th</sup>, Holland City Council named five members of the new sustainability committee: Carl VanFaasen, chemistry teacher at Holland High; Diane Haworth, Sustainability Manager at Haworth's; Jeff Nienhuis; Michael Short, chemistry professor at Hope College; and Donald Triezenberg, physics and math teacher (ret.) and a former VP at American University. Their terms expire Dec. 31, 2010. Holland BPW will appoint four more members. Notably, Don Triezenberg is Coordinator of Education for WEST, facilitator at the January WEST WEDNESDAYs at Herrick Library.



## Signs of Climate Change

- The Arctic Ocean is 5 degrees centigrade warmer than it was in the 1960s, said Mead Treadwell, chair of the U.S. Arctic Research Commission, speaking to a Herrick Library audience on Feb. 10. A new Northwest Passage for shipping is indeed opening and nations contiguous to the sea are meeting to negotiate zones of control. The passage is likely to be ice-free sometime between 2013 and 2040, said Treadwell.
- Birds are already moving northward, according to the Audubon Society's recent report. The 2008 Christmas Bird Count shows that the boreal chickadee has moved 280 miles north; the wild turkey has gone about 400. That doesn't mean perfect adaptation to changing climate, says Audubon. In fact, their food and other needs may not be met in new northern places, since plants and worms, for example, aren't moving northward at the same pace. (NY Times, 2-16-09)
- Eco-migration is also under way as a result of early climate changes. In Bangladesh, upwards of 12 million people have already fled flooding in low-lying regions. The small island nation of Kiribati in the tropical Pacific Ocean is the first nation to ask for international aid in buying a higher ground home for its people. (Washington Post, 2-23-09)

