

# Newsletter, Autumn 2001

**This and the other back issues of newsletters are archived here so that interested parties can learn about the kinds of activities in which World Population Balance is involved and learn about the importance of our growing population problem. To receive timely information in our free newsletter, please subscribe to our newsletter.**

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## Prepare for World Population Awareness Week, Oct. 21-27

Last year, thirty-two U.S. governors and 315 mayors joined leaders around the world in proclaiming World Population Awareness Week. Will your elected officials do the same this year? That may depend on you!

In our last issue, we emphasized the facts about worldwide population growth: our current population of over 6.1 billion is not environmentally sustainable; any additional growth will make the situation worse; stabilizing population will help us address many environmental and social problems; and the United States has a huge impact due to unsustainably high resource consumption.

With all the issues facing local government, it can be difficult to address widespread, slow-moving issues like population growth. But the fact is, **population growth contributes to many of the problems that your local government faces every day.**

Do you live in a metropolitan area with sprawling suburbs? A recent study (at <http://sprawlcity.org>) shows that **half of all suburban sprawl in the largest U.S. cities is due to population growth.** The percentage varies for each city, but in Minneapolis-St. Paul, it's 51%. Does your local "smart growth" plan include population stabilization, or just building more houses?

If you live near a city, you've probably seen an increase in traffic congestion and an accompanying increase in road construction. Is the construction keeping pace? Probably not, according to a study by Texas A&M University (at <http://mobility.tamu.edu>). For example, in Minneapolis-St. Paul, **there is a 99% correlation between population**

**growth and traffic congestion -- in spite of all the road construction.** Does your local department of transportation concern itself with population stabilization, or just with building more roads?

If you live in a small town, you may be seeing a population decrease rather than an increase. That effect may also be tied to population growth, as large-scale agriculture and industry squeeze out smaller farms and businesses in an effort to serve more people more cheaply. **Some small towns find themselves being absorbed by growing cities.**

Many of the environmental, social, and economic problems we face are exacerbated by population growth. Is your area short on water? Electricity? Affordable housing? Schools? Jobs? Prisons? **Will any of these problems be *helped* by increasing the population?**

World Population Awareness Week is primarily about the situation we face worldwide. But, the only way to stabilize population globally is to act locally. It may also be the best way to get local media coverage!

In this newsletter, you'll find some tips and sample materials for writing to your governor, mayor, and news media. **Please take a few minutes to do your part for World Population Awareness Week!**

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## **Help Make World Population Balance Self-Sustaining**

World population isn't the only thing we must work to balance. Like most nonprofit organizations, we must maintain a balance among grant funding and donations.

We have accomplished great things in 2001. We've reached tens of thousands of adults and students. We've rebuilt and expanded our Web site to make it more user friendly, and we are producing a persuasive population video. Plans for next year are even more exciting!

Most of our funding for 2001 has come from a very generous grant from the World Population Fund of the Minneapolis Foundation. However, it is very unusual for them to supply such a large percentage of an organization's funding. They have made it clear that they will not repeat their generosity at such a high percentage of our budget, so we must diversify our funding sources.

Now, more than ever before, we need your financial support to help us continue and expand all our many exciting population education activities. We hope that you value the work that we do and will help us continue in 2002!

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## **From the President**

By David Paxson

### **0.1% Per Month**

To say once more that our lives have all changed as a result of the events of September 11th is a great understatement, to be sure. Thousands of Americans died, tens of thousands more were injured, millions were traumatized, and tens of millions of us are affected in our outlooks and economically by the horrific events of that day. Certainly, it is important that we take steps to prevent such barbaric acts from happening again.



Let us turn our focus upon the population growth/stabilization issue stalking the world. In the month since those most inconceivable and horrifying events, the population of the world has increased by more than 6,000,000 human beings - net gain!

The numbers are staggering. To better visualize this, realize that on the very same day that our country sustained that

terrible death toll of about 7,000 people, world population actually increased by over 190,000 people, net gain. That is about a tenth of a percent gain per month.

Simply put, this means the amount of many vital resources per person in the world has dropped by a tenth of a percent. Many people understand that the planet's resources are finite. We -- the global community -- can not continue destroying our life-giving resource base and still provide for the needs of the world's people, let alone *improve* conditions for the world's poorest couple of billion!

Ten months ago, the National Intelligence Agency (an arm of the CIA) issued a report entitled "Global Trends 2015" (available at <http://www.cia.gov/nic/pubs/index.htm>) In that report, CIA analysts warn: "A key driver for the Middle East over the next 15 years will be demographic pressures, specifically how to provide jobs, housing, public services, and subsidies for rapidly growing and increasingly urban populations. By 2015, in much of the Middle East, populations will be significantly larger, poorer, more urban, and more disillusioned."

"In nearly all Middle Eastern countries, more than half the population is now under 20 years of age. These populations will continue to have very large youth cohorts through 2015, with the labor force growing at an average rate of 3.1 percent per year. The problem of job placement is compounded by weak educational systems producing a generation lacking the technical and problem-solving skills required for economic growth."

I find the above analysis to be tremendously sobering. In light of the tragedy of September 11th, the need to stabilize population growth -- in every part of the world -- is clearer than ever before.

Several years ago David Pimentel, our Keynote speaker at last fall's conference, startled many of us when he noted that it was unfortunate someone wrote a book using the title, *The Population Bomb*. He explained that population growth is not like a bomb, where destruction happens rapidly, and where people then realize the problem and take necessary action. "Population growth is more like soil erosion. It nickels and dimes us to death."

As we take a stand against terrorism, let us also stand against that slow, certain threat of population growth. Let's keep reminding the world that our quality of life is being eroded as long as population is allowed to increase. Let's be a part of the solution -- to stop population growth and create a viable, sustainable, peaceful, biologically healthy planet. Let's leave this legacy to all the generations yet unborn.

I hope you will join us in this critical effort. More than ever, we need your prayers, your active help, and your financial support. Please help us move the world toward sustainability through stabilization.

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## **Bradley Joins Advisory Board**

We welcome another excellent member to our Board of Advisors, Nina Leopold Bradley. She is a director of the Aldo Leopold Foundation, a leading conservation organization. We are tremendously pleased and honored that she has joined us.

### **In Memoriam: Bill Nord**

In our last issue, we acknowledged the longtime commitment of Bill Nord. Shortly after publication, Bill was killed in a bicycle accident while riding to his research lab at the University of Minnesota.

He had worked with us since his first year of marriage to Pat in 1991. We sorely miss Bill and his steadfast contributions to our educational efforts.

# Spread the Word about World Population Awareness Week

We've put a number of [sample letters](#), along with a sample [proclamation](#), on our Web site. Please follow these steps whether or not you have Internet access:

**Step 1:** If you live in CO, CT, ID, IN, KY, ME, MD, MA, MN, NE, NC, OK, OR, PA, SC, VT, WA, or WV, your governor has already agreed to proclaim WPAW. Call or write to express your appreciation!

**Step 2:** If not, and if the Week is still a few days off, contact your governor to encourage him or her to proclaim WPAW. Consider adding some local tie-ins like those in the cover article.

**Step 3:** Contact your mayor and ask him or her to proclaim the event.

**Step 4:** Contact your local news media asking them to report on it. Use the yellow pages to find their contact information. Use [our sample letter](#) as a guide, customizing it to local issues as you see fit!

## Our Mission

World Population Balance is a non-profit, educational organization dedicated to raising awareness about the benefits of population stabilization.

We present our message through public presentations and conferences, appointments with elected officials, written articles, our newsletter, and TV, radio and newspaper interviews.

## Web Site to Feature Teaching Aids

World Population Balance speakers have been praised for their use of visuals and auditory aids when giving presentations to all ages. Soon the [worldpopulationbalance.org](http://worldpopulationbalance.org) Web site will include these and more for use by school teachers and other educators.

You'll find an early example of one of these demonstrations if you go to the Questions & Answers page and click the link that says, "Any rate of growth is unsustainable."

If you have ideas about how population concepts can be made more accessible to a diverse audience please [Contact Us](#).

## Become a Public Speaker

Would you be interested in teaching students about population growth and the benefits of stabilization? We need more speakers and would be pleased to train you. Also, we already have several excellent, successful lessons that are fun and easy to teach.

### MEMBERSHIP AND CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN with your tax-deductible contribution to:

WORLD POPULATION BALANCE  
P.O. Box 23472,  
Minneapolis, MN 55423 U.S.A.

Sign up your friends or relatives for a free year's subscription! Please include telephone number(s) and e-mail address, if you have them. Thank you.

We will not share your contact information with any organization.

Please print clearly.  
Your Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone(s)

E-mail

- \$35 (Supporting Member)
- \$100 (Sustaining Member)
- \$500 (Sponsoring Member)
- \$\_\_\_\_\_ (Other)

We welcome your membership and contribution at any level.

Please contact David Paxson at our office (612-869-1640) and join our team of enthusiastic population speakers!

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## Help Spread the Word

Would you like to help distribute our newsletter to additional people? Just call our office at 612-869-1640 or write to [our office](#), and tell us your name, address, and how many copies you would like.

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