Each Tuesday I carry the recycling to the curb and look out over a city bristling with light rail, streetcars, bicycles, eco-roofs, and little yellow bins like mine. The greenest of the green, my city (Portland, OR) styles itself, filled with good citizens leading the way to Earth’s salvation.

"With resources declining – overpopulation is stealing our future."

Once we all understand this crisis, we’ll find positive ways to address it. World Population Balance.”

We invite you to view this compelling ad on our homepage (worldpopulationbalance.org). Our good friend, filmmaker Dave Gardner, produced this great ad. (Also see WPB Partnering to Co-Produce Hooked on Growth Film on page 8.)

Turn Ripples into Waves: Renew Your Membership

For twenty years we have been spreading ripples of awareness and concern to hundreds of thousands through our live presentations, ads, interviews, and website. But there are millions who still don’t realize the world is overpopulated relative to many finite and declining vital resources. We need your financial support to create waves of awareness and action to help humanity change course toward a truly sustainable population.

We find that the sputtering economy is causing many people to question the unending growth story. As a result they are much more open to our messages about overpopulation, resource depletion, and the crucial importance of population reduction.

With your ongoing support we will create waves that will change the world. Please renew your membership now to help us remain a strong, clear voice for sustainable population on the planet.

Your generous support will help us make bigger and bigger waves. Thank you. (See page 7 for membership form.)

New: Population Potlucks

We invite you to join us for some winter evenings of food, film and conversation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Saturdays, 6-8 pm, January 15</th>
<th>February 19, and March 19</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woodlake Nature Center</td>
<td>6710 Lakeshore Drive, Richfield</td>
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Warm up three of your winter Saturday evenings with us at Woodlake Nature Center for a potluck followed by a film and discussion. We have (...to page 6)
Balanced View

Addressing the Big Issue
In addition to reaching tens of thousands of people each year through our many activities at World Population Balance, we’re always working on several other activities, as well. For instance, Frank Babka, our Public Educator who personally educates thousand of school students every year, also contributes great amounts of time and resources to CARE International and other humanitarian groups and causes.

For over a decade I have been involved with humanitarian work through the Rotary International organization, including two trips to South America to work on specific humanitarian projects. I have also given about 100 population presentations at Rotary Clubs.

Most recently, the June 2010 issue of Rotarian, Rotary’s magazine, published the following letter that I wrote as a call to Rotary to increase their focus on humanely reducing population.

Tackle the big issue
Rotary International President John Kenny’s appeal to promote the End Polio Now campaign [November] is one more reminder of why I am thrilled to be a Rotarian. We have no peer when it comes to our worldwide membership, our grassroots involvement, and our global impact for humanitarian good.

At the same time, I do not understand why an organization that does such incredible humanitarian work in every corner of the world is not even touching the core, mega-issue of our time on the planet. If we really do envision a world where all species thrive and where consumption and population are in balance with the earth’s resources. We humans cannot keep over-consuming topsoil and farmland, fresh water, rainforests, ocean fish stocks, and many other vital resources.

It is crucial that wealthier nations reduce consumption. However, the poorest two billion people are in desperate need of increasing their consumption. Of course, that will cause already-declining resources to drop even faster. A vital part of the answer is reducing birthrates in all countries so the total population can decline to a sustainable range. The longer we overconsume, the more disastrous will be the eventual decline. If you wish to learn more, visit www.worldpopulationbalance.org.

David Paxson
Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

This letter to the editor inspired the following response from a Hawaiian Rotary member in the October issue:

Addressing population
I want to thank David Paxson for his letter in June, “Tackle the big issue.” I made my donation to The Rotary Foundation two weeks ago. But, as I was viewing the Foundation video presented at our meeting, I could not help but think that these funds are being thrown into a black hole unless Rotary also addresses overpopulation.

We know that nations in which contraception is widely available are generally healthier and more prosperous than those without. We also know that over 200 million women worldwide would like to delay or end child-bearing but have no access to contraception. Family planning improves maternal and infant health and allows women to be more active in society. Improving infant health reduces the need for families to have many, many children. The poorest countries – the countries where our Foundation dollars go – are also those with the highest fertility rates. Rapidly increasing birthrates hinder progress on the Foundation’s goals.

Voluntary family planning improves chances of success, improves the quality of everyone’s life, and eases pressure on the environment. My next dollars to The Rotary Foundation will follow a commitment from the Foundation to address rising birthrates through education and [the] supplies that families need. This costs very little and is probably the most critical issue we can address.

Stone Wolfsong
Kailua-Kona, Hawaii, USA

During the past nineteen years of speaking at Rotary clubs, I have seen an encouraging increase in the numbers of members who realize the importance of reducing human numbers to a truly sustainable level – and to promote small, happy, prosperous families.

If you are a member of an organization or know a group that would like a live presentation, please call our office – 612-869-1640. We always appreciate your help to spread our message. Thank you.

David Paxson
Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA
Treading on a Taboo (from page 1)
and a deadly smorgasbord of other environmental problems. In this supposedly plain-speaking era, a former presidential candidate will tell us how Viagra cured his ED, but hardly anybody will talk about what’s trashing the Earth. Erectile dysfunction’s a bummer. But the fate of our planet is a little more worrisome.

The taboo afflicts most media, including this newspaper. The Oregonian’s Earth Day editorial urged support for politicians who back energy-efficient buildings, wind power, public transportation and so on. Everything but population control.

Leaving out the key ingredient can be downright misleading. A March 29 headline read, “Portland lessens its ‘carbon footprint.’” But Portland did no such thing. Portlanders may have indeed reduced their per-capita driving by 5 percent over five years, as the story reported, but the metro area’s population grew by 8 percent over the same period. The number of vehicles registered in Multnomah County has increased 45 percent since 1990. You do the math.

When it comes to global warming, we’re ignoring one simple truth: The Earth doesn’t care about per-capita greenhouse-gas production. It’s the total amount of CO2 in the air that matters.

But just try to find numbers for the total amount of CO2 produced by Multnomah County, Oregon or the United States. After extensive research, the best ones I could come up with are 9.7 million tons, 12 million tons, and 7.08 billion tons. When those go up or down, you’ll know whether we’re actually gaining or losing.

If anybody will tell you.

Of course, what we do locally won’t really have much impact on what happens globally. Portland may have double the per-capita recycling rate, but when I was a kid, typical families had a 1,500-square-foot house, a few basic appliances and one car. Nobody dreamed about air conditioning, power mowers, trash compactors or microwaves. We weren’t very environmentally conscious, but we bodies and increased the average amount each one pollutes. China’s now pouring out more than 2 tons of CO2 per person annually, and the United States cooks along at nearly 20. Experts predict that by 2050 global energy use could increase fourfold.

CO2 is just part of the problem. We fixate on global warming, while our rampaging population mows down the rest of the planet’s inhabitants behind our backs. When Oregon’s offshore salmon stocks collapsed this spring, the blame fell on the Sacramento Delta, where many of the fish originate. A former oceanography professor who works in the area said, “If you want to blame something, it’s the increasing population of California. You’re putting more pressure on water and everything else.”

It’s not just fish. The World Wildlife Fund just issued a report announcing that “human activities are causing the most rapid decline in species since the extinction of the dinosaurs.” Over the past 35 years, we’ve crowded out a quarter of all animal species.

The impact of population growth reaches way beyond obvious environmental problems. I’ll bet my vasectomy that half the items on Page One and the local-news front in today’s newspaper are population related. The paper that arrived the morning I wrote this led with a battle over Willamette Valley development but neglected to mention that population growth fuels 94 percent of Portland’s suburban sprawl. The front-page story on soaring gas prices overlooked the soaring population that drives up demand. A political story focused on health care, which has become a problem in part because population growth is overwhelming the existing system. The lead Metro story raised the possibility of Columbia River bridge tolls as a solution for crippling congestion caused by... you guessed it.

Housing. Education. Health care. Transportation. Nearly 40 years ago, Richard Nixon asked, “How will we house the next hundred million Americans? Will we educate and employ such a large number of people? Will our transportation systems move them about as quickly and
economically as necessary? How will we provide adequate health care when our population reaches 300 million?"

Well, we’ve reached it. Conservative estimates put the total at nearly 400 million by 2050, and we’re already feeling just the pinch old Tricky Dick predicted.

Population threatens political stability, too. Countries that grow too fast just can’t get ahead of their problems, and eventually everything comes crashing down. An annual population growth rate of 21/2 percent to 3 percent can produce a 20-fold increase in a century. Of the twenty countries now suffering that kind of growth, seventeen are classed as “failed states,” countries where political and social systems have disintegrated, fueling famine, civil unrest, and war.

Population drives immigration, too. Consider Mexico, which quadrupled in population between 1933 and 1980. The only way it could avoid collapse was by flooding the United States with the excess. Projections call for countries such as El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua to double their populations every 20 years, and many of those people will inevitably find their way to the United States. Ninety-one percent of our population growth over the next 40 years will come from post-2000 immigrants and their descendants.

The non-Anglo nature of that immigration may explain why some Americans think it’s racist to mention it. But a sane discussion of immigration’s impact on the environment has nothing to do with race. The quality of American life will be forever damaged by the arrival of 100 million immigrants, whether they’re Mexican or English.

None of which is to say that we should give up on technological fixes for our most pressing environmental problems. Wind power, fuel-efficient cars, and solar energy will delay the Armageddon chickens headed home to our roost. So by all means keep toting those little yellow bins out to the curb. But let’s quit deluding ourselves by thinking that technology alone can save the world.

If you want to help, don’t waste your time on inconsequential environmental work that treats the symptoms while ignoring the disease. A Portland carpooling project saved – according to its own chest-thumping claims – 3,000 tons of CO2 over five years. That’s pathetic – we could have accomplished the same thing by slowing metro-area population growth by 30 people a year.

The laminated cards you see in hotel bathrooms are the perfect expression of our preoccupation with distracting trivia. “Save Our Planet,” they say. How? By picking up your towels so that the maid doesn’t send them out for washing. A fine idea, I suppose, although it will do a lot more for the hotel’s bottom line than the planet’s.

I grabbed one of those cards on a recent trip, and I’m staring at it as I write this. I don’t know whether to laugh or cry.

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**Five ways to help the planet**

1. Eliminate the taboo that keeps us from talking about the root cause of our environmental -- and many other -- problems. Concern about overpopulation is not racist, communist, sexist, or biased against the Third World. We all have a stake in this.

2. Quit mistaking per-capita pollution numbers as a sign of progress. Let’s track the totals, of carbon dioxide and every other human pollutant.

3. Reward politicians who support sustainable population with your votes. Focus foreign aid on sustainable population programs.

4. Keep your own family small. World population will eventually level off only if we hold average births per woman to 2.06. We’ll reduce the world population to a sustainable size only if women average no more than 1.7 children.

5. Stop treating growth as both positive and inevitable. It’s neither. Despite recent reports, a slowdown in metro-area housing starts is not bad news.

Jack Hart is a former managing editor of The Oregonian. This article first appeared in The Oregonian.
national level, growth doesn’t pay for itself. The more you grow the greater your debt load. Colorado has had decades of wild and largely uncontrolled growth and is now practically bankrupt. People become fed up with the constant increases in taxes needed to pay the costs of growth, and they vote for tax limitation measures. Unfortunately, the growth promoters seem to find ways around these limitations, so the growth continues and the consequent problems escalate rapidly. We can see this happening in California, and we have a similar situation brewing in Colorado.

Your book titled, “The Essential Exponential for the Future of our Planet,” contains a chapter called, “Democracy Cannot Survive Overpopulation.” In there you argue convincingly that overpopulation, by raising the number of constituents per elected official, makes it harder for individuals to gain access to representatives and have a voice in politics.

In the decade of the 1990’s the US population grew by 13.1%, while the number of members in the House of Representatives didn’t grow at all. So we can say that at the national level, democracy declined by 13.1%. Furthermore, the Constitution requires that the government perform what is called redistricting. This happens after every census.

Redistricting ensures that the populations of districts are equal across the country. In our example, the average district needed to have 13.1% more constituents after the 2000 census than after the 1990 census. This means that every district went from approximately 600,000 constituents to approximately 700,000 constituents.

Compare that with the first Congress where the makeup was 30,000 constituents per member of Congress. It’s true that women didn’t vote, and thus the electorate makeup was different. But you can imagine one person in Congress representing 30,000. It’s much harder to imagine one person representing 700,000 people.

There’s no way one person can represent that many people. So it’s much easier as a politician to take your ideas from the lobbyist who has plenty of money. As a result we now often get one-dollar/one-vote versus what used to be one-person/one-vote.

Bartlett’s thoughts ...

... on “smart growth”
Remember that politicians will try to claim that there isn’t a conflict between saving the environment and smart growth. Unfortunately, both smart growth and dumb growth destroy the environment. The only difference is that smart growth destroys the environment with good taste. It’s like buying a ticket on the Titanic. If you’re smart, you go first class. But the outcome is the same ... the boat still sinks.

... on Al Gore and the “silent lie”
It’s so discouraging when you see Al Gore’s book and film, An Inconvenient Truth. Early in his book he says population growth has changed our whole way of life. With those words it sounds like he is saying that he understands that population growth is the cause of the problem. Unfortunately, at the end of his book when outlining the things you can do to avoid environmental problems (changing bulbs, etc.), Gore never mentions curbing population growth. This behavior is what Mark Twain would call a “silent lie” – where you have information that would help other people if you shared it, but you keep it hidden. Then you are guilty of what Mark Twain would call a silent lie.

... on the “political incorrectness” of talking about population growth among politicians
The last US president highly concerned about population was Richard Nixon. He chartered a major study called The Rockefeller Commission Report. This study was put together by some very talented people. Their conclusion was simple. They didn't see any benefit to further population growth in the US, and they saw many benefits to no further increase. That was when we had 200 million Americans. We now have 50% more than that – over 300 million! Unfortunately, the study was put on the shelf and forgotten.

... on science and technology
I think there is a widespread feeling among scientists and certainly among many people that science and technology will save us. So why worry about it?
Here’s a story... I once met with a state senator. He said to me, “I’m not worried about running out of petroleum. You (pointing to me) scientists will figure out whatever we need.” So I asked him, “What was the last new major source of energy scientists found?
He didn’t have an answer, so I suggested nuclear power. The process was discovered in Germany in 1939. Enrico Fermi had a reactor operating in 1942. By 1956 we had our first commercial nuclear power reactor in this country. Since then, we have spent billions of public and private dollars, and we only receive 20% of our electricity from nuclear power.
Innovation on the huge scale required by our overpopulated society will take a long time and cost trillions of dollars.

... on retirement spending in the aging, developed world

Social Security and such projects are Ponzi schemes. They depend on having more and more people paying every year or they collapse. In effect, Social Security will collapse when there aren’t enough young workers.

But a growing population isn’t a long term or viable answer, because it makes all the other problems more difficult, and many impossible to solve. So what you have to do is refinance social security – by raising taxes, reducing benefits, or altering the retirement age.

It’s so sad to see European politicians offering bonuses to couples to have more children because they are afraid of slowing growth rates. What people don’t realize is that declining growth rates are the way to true sustainability.

... on economists

Economists think of infinite substitutability. They cite the example of shifting out of whale oil to petroleum or from wood to coal. Economists suggest that similar shifts from one resource to another can continue indefinitely. Unfortunately there are no close substitutes for petroleum. Furthermore, we already know which substitutes exist, and they are very costly to access. Quantities of many of our core resources have declined with alarming speed. The age of major resource substitution is coming to an end.

... on good books to read

I recommend reading Richard Heinberg’s books, The Party’s Over and Peak Everything. He clearly understands the issues.

Key Points to Remember
by Al Bartlett

When applied to material things, the term “sustainable growth” is an oxymoron.
1. One has to ask if it is possible to have an increase in economic activity (growth) without having increases in the rates of consumption of non-renewable resources. If so, under what conditions can this happen? Are we moving toward those conditions today?
2. What courses of action could we take to meet our present needs without limiting the ability of generations throughout the distant future to meet their own needs?
3. The size of population that can be sustained (the carrying capacity) and the sustainable average standards of living of the population are inversely related to one another. This runs counter to most traditional entrepreneurial myths of sustainable growth and rising standards of living.

Population Potlucks
(from page 1) several excellent videos about global overpopulation and the need to reduce human numbers to a truly sustainable level. We would like your feedback and input about these films.

We have reserved the Nature Center from 6-8 pm on January 15, February 19, and March 19. All we need is you to make it an enjoyable and inspirational evening! Mark your calendars now for any or all of these great events.

WPB Advisory Board member and Woodlake manager, Karen Shragg, will be our host. She will provide plates and silverware and hot water for drinks, and asks us to bring food to share for a veggie potluck. (And if you don’t want to cook, just bring something from the store and join us.)

This is a unique opportunity for like-minded, concerned people to gather and discuss the overpopulation issue.

For details and driving directions, click on “Upcoming Events” at <www.worldpopulationbalance.org>

Join us for our Population Potlucks
Saturdays, 6-8 pm
January 15
February 19
March 19
Woodlake Nature Center
6710 Lakeshore Drive
Richfield

Special thanks
... to the following information-technology professionals for their donations of time, energy, and equipment in helping us meet our computer challenges.
John Wahl – our PC expert
Bob Grant – our Macintosh guru
KC Sukumar of TAJ Technologies Inc. for PC donations
Also, thanks to Fred Waltz for his masterful layout and editing of Balanced View. Your help is essential to keep us going. Thank you.
Win $1,000,000 and Help Save the World

In August, the Australian entrepreneur and electronics retailer Dick Smith, held an attention-grabbing press conference. Standing next to a Chihuahua sitting on a suitcase full of cash, Smith announced his intention to give a $1,000,000 award to a young person under age 30 who can help find sustainable alternatives to our growth-obsessed world. Following is part of his inspiring announcement:

Until about six months ago, I had never thought about population. It simply wasn’t in my realm of thinking. However, one thing which gives me a little bit of solace is that most of my friends were the same.

In September 2009, my youngest daughter, Jenny, phoned and said, “Dad, they are all talking about human-induced climate change, and they’re all going off to Copenhagen. Why don’t they talk about the elephant in the room?” I said, “Jenny, what’s that?” She said, “Population!”

The instant she said the word, it was almost as if a light was turned on in my head. Within seconds I realized how stupid I had been. Here we were talking about problems which are facing our planet, but people weren’t talking about the most obvious problem – too many people. I knew that we had something like 6.7 billion people in the world, and this was predicted to go to over 9 billion by 2050. But I’d never actually linked that with a great many of the problems we have in our world.

It has become obvious to me that my generation has over-exploited our wonderful world – and it’s younger people who will pay the price. Like many people my age, I’ve benefited from a long period of constant economic and population growth. We are addicted to it. But sooner or later this consumption growth will have an end. We appear to be already bumping against the limits of what our planet can sustain, and the evidence is everywhere to see.

Right now I believe we could be sleepwalking to catastrophe because we are failing to both acknowledge that there are limits to growth in a finite world and to prepare for a more sustainable way of organizing our economy.

In the 19th Century, empires were built on the labor of slaves, and it was believed economies would collapse if slavery was abolished. But brave people like William Wilberforce fought to end the slave trade – and economies still flourished. We need brave people like Wilberforce today, and I want to encourage a new generation of clear-thinking and inspiring young leaders.

So today I am announcing Dick Smith’s Wilberforce Award – $1 million to go to a young person under 30 who can impress me by becoming famous through his or her ability to show leadership in communicating an alternative to our population and consumption growth obsessed economy. I will be looking for candidates whose actions over the next year show that they have what it takes to be among the next generation of leaders our incredible planet so badly needs.

Dick Smith 11 August 2010

Along with the cash prize, Smith has also produced a documentary, Dick Smith’s Population Puzzle, in which he explores how rapid population growth is putting Australia and the world on an unsustainable course of resource depletion and environmental degradation. Let’s hope that Smith’s wise and courageous advocacy of sustainable population serves as inspiration for more the world’s wealthy.

Jenny Smith shows us that the message of sustainable population is a powerful one. In one conversation with one person, she inspired her father to have an “aha” moment. For the first time in his life he saw the elephant in the room – overpopulation. And he realized the urgency of stopping growth to avoid future catastrophe.

Through our conversations with loved ones and others we can imitate the example of Jenny Smith. You never know who might be listening.

Please print clearly.

Name(s):

Address:

City, State, ZIP:

Phone(s):

E-mail:

$1,000 Stabilization Sponsor  $35 Member
$100 Supporting Member  $______ Other

We welcome your contribution at any level.

Thank you.
WPB Partnering to Co-Produce *Hooked on Growth* Film

**World Population Balance** is partnering with filmmaker Dave Gardner to produce *Hooked on Growth*, a documentary that questions our long-standing addiction to growth in America. Dave has worked as a professional director for over 30 years. During his career he’s directed documentaries and other award-winning projects for a long list of Fortune 500 corporate clients and PBS. He eventually realized that a successful career serving big business and pursuing the American Dream were not his Holy Grail.

His concern about our society’s growth addiction began when he noticed that his city of Colorado Springs and other rapidly growing population centers in the American West are in denial about the limits of water available to feed their continuing growth frenzy. Dave became a voice of reason in Colorado Springs when he ran for city council in 2009. He contended that true community prosperity could only be achieved by increasing efficiency and localization, not by continuing to chase the mythical pot of gold at the end of the everlasting growth rainbow. As in most cities, growth boosters dominate Colorado Springs politics and policy. As a result, their population is projected to double from half a million to a million between 2000 and 2040. Although Dave lost the race to a well-funded, pro-growth incumbent, he garnered an impressive 43% of the vote.

As a result, Dave decided to make *Hooked on Growth*. It illuminates the follies of growth boosters in Colorado Springs, the nation, and the world. And it educates the public about the true meaning of sustainability.

Dave prefers staying behind the camera. But he has reluctantly agreed to be a major on-screen character in *Hooked on Growth* because he has been one of the most active “Growth Busters” he knows!

**As Gardner states on his website ...**

The news today makes it clear that the scale of the human enterprise has outgrown our planet. We survive today only by borrowing vital resources from future generations. Yet we persist on a business-as-usual course. Why?

Three powerful forces prevent us from making the progress required:
- The cultural myth that growth is necessary for prosperity
- Propaganda and undue influence from growth profiteers
- Our inability to appropriately assess dangers that don’t appear to be immediate. *Hooked on Growth* will help us understand these obstacles, taking away their power.

If you would like to make an additional tax-deductible contribution to help produce *Hooked on Growth*, please indicate that on your check. We appreciate your support.