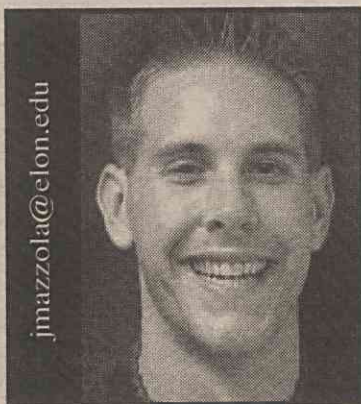


Buy yourself a jacket and sunscreen, now get back to your life

Justin Mazzola
Sports Editor



Last summer people complained about global warming. Last winter people complained about the inevitable ice age.

So which is it, folks?

Apparently people think they can stave off global warming by driving electric cars and listening to Al Gore. Of course, this belief is utterly false.

The Heartland Institute claims a small amount of global warming would benefit the world. According to Heartland Institute representative Dr. Patrick Michaels, the Earth's natural carbon dioxide greenhouse effect increased more than 50 percent during the 20th century. But Michaels has a simple explanation for the increase in average temperatures.

"The small amount of warming that occurred during the past century consisted primarily of increased minimum temperatures at night and during winters. This means higher average temperatures, should they occur, would not result in more daytime evaporation, which some claim would lead to droughts and desertification."

So that means global warming is simply propaganda used by environmentalists to continually scare people. The impending ice age, however, holds even less water. I mean ice.

Maybe we should ask the experts, but they tend to agree as often as shots of vodka in a belly of beer.

The constant argument is Earth endures an ice age every 100 thousand years. The last ice age occurred (surprise) about 100 thousand years ago. That sound you hear is the falling prices on Wal-mart's selection of snowmobiles.

Did anyone catch last month's First International Conference on

Global Warming and The Next Ice Age? If you happened to be in Halifax, Canada, I hope you found time to at least stop in for a drink.

I'm sure the British were paying attention, because apparently global warming is fighting off the next unavoidable ice age. Instead of freezing over Scotland, Wales and Northern England in less than 55 thousand years, the supposed greenhouse effect is giving Great Britain an extra 50 thousand years of humanity. In celebration, Brits have left their car engines running while tearing down soccer stadiums. Oh, the humanity.

In the southern hemisphere, Antarctica is melting quickly because of the dreaded hole in the Ozone layer. In fact, recent satellite studies have determined in the past eight years, only 7.5 cubic miles have melted away from one of the continent's glaciers.

That means by the time we celebrate the turn of the century, the aforementioned glacier will have lost more than 90 cubic miles. What are your plans for December 31, 2099?

Parents are constantly telling their children to avoid wasting water. But if Antarctica is continually melting, shouldn't we worry about too much water? From now on, I want you all to leave the faucet on while brushing your teeth. Take longer showers, too, because they make you feel better, which will lead to a more positive outlook when you

US government should not have bailed out the airline industry

Cameron DeJong
Columnist

The recent \$15 billion of authorized aid to bail out the airline industry is an ill-advised decision made by President Bush and the United States Congress. While the intentions of this bail out are most definitely reasonable, we should consider other factors when it comes to areas affected by the terrorist attacks and even current policy by the U.S. Government when it comes to corporate welfare.

Airlines say they need the money because the federal government grounded all flights for two days following the terrorist attacks, and because there has been a 50-75 percent drop-off in air travel since then.

That double whammy, they say, cost the industry billions, forced tens of thousands of layoffs, and will bankrupt a number of airlines.

We must ask, however, if the government so easily has given funds to the airline industry, who will receive funding next? Other industries that took a hard hit after the September 11 tragedies include:

Boeing Corporation, which manufactures commercial jets, says it faces a 40 percent fall-off in production, and has already announced it may lay off as many as 30,000 workers by next year.

The hotel industry—which is suffering from a dramatic slump in vacation and busi-

ness travel—says it expects "an unprecedented wave of layoffs."

The major television networks lost an estimated \$500 million in advertising revenue during the week following the terrorist attack, when they ran commercial-free, around-the-clock news coverage.

Insurance companies will have to pay out at least \$20 billion to \$30 billion to victims of the terrorist attack.

Investors lost an estimated \$1.4 trillion when the stock market went into a historic free-fall in the week following the attack.

We all know that every American individual and corporation felt the hard-hitting impact of the events that occurred. We should not allow our government to decide who gets our tax money to deal with their impact.

There are ways in which Congress can help the airline industry and have an immediate impact without spending taxpayers' money. For example, Congress could declare the airline industry a "tax-free" zone, and remove federal taxes from every aspect of the business—jet fuel, workers' salaries, airline tickets, corporate profits, passenger facilities charges, and so on.

"According to a study from Americans for Tax Reform, 60 percent of the price of a typical airline ticket goes to pay the cost of taxes," says Steve Dasbach, National Director of the Libertarian Party. He con-

tinues, "Instead of taxing the airlines so heavily and then using that same money to bail them out, Congress should simply remove those burdensome taxes. Airlines would find it much easier to make a profit, even in these troubled times, and the price of airline tickets would fall, encouraging more people to fly again."

According to the Cato Institute, the federal government spends about \$90 billion a year in direct aid to corporations. "If the airlines are facing a genuine crisis, why not take away the \$4.9 million Congress gives in a typical year to Ernest & Julio Gallo; the \$308,000 it gives to Ocean Spray; the \$3 million it gives to the California Raisin Board; or the \$500,000 it gives to Pillsbury Corporation—and redirect it to the airlines?" asks Dasbach.

"The power to save the airline industry is within every American's wallet or purse. Airlines aren't hurting just because of the two-day shutdown; they're hurting because of the huge drop-off in air travel that followed."

The good news is that Americans can solve that problem by traveling again. Reschedule a canceled trip. Visit relatives across the country. Don't just sit around and bemoan the plight of the airlines—book an airline ticket.

Note—Much of the above information was derived from Steve Dasbach in a press release by the Libertarian Party.

wake up one morning to find your home buried in nine feet of snow. Or maybe you'll awaken to the sound of your skin spontaneously combusting due to global warming.

Either way, the world won't be this way forever. So just relax and enjoy the ride in the greatest vehicle of all — Earth.

Have an idea or topic you'd like to express your opinion on?

Call or email and let us know:

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