

# Historic Performing Theater – The Brown Grand Theatre

by Jerry Moran

Once hailed as the most elegant theater between Kansas City and Denver, the 1907 Brown Grand Theatre was restored in a community effort in 1980. Since then the theater has reigned as a cherished community center and performing arts theater, admired by tourists, performers and patrons.

Colonel Napoleon Bonaparte Brown arrived in Concordia in 1876 with a suitcase rumored full of money and a plan to become rich. He set up a loan company, and quickly profited from the Midwest's high interest rates. His family built and moved into the grandest house in town. Then in 1905, Brown announced plans to build an opera house, which would be the crowning jewel of Concordia, using local labor and native limestone. The famous Kansas City theater architect, Carl Boller, prepared blueprints for the French Renaissance-style 650-seat theater, and Brown's son, Earl V.D. Brown, oversaw its construction. When the \$40,000 structure was completed, it stood 60 feet tall and 120 feet long.

The theater's gala opening featured a New York touring company, which presented the play, "The Vanderbilt Cup." Tickets started at \$1 for gallery seats to \$10 for the best seats. The theater's interior gleamed in the brilliance of 535 electric bulbs; its white, green, and gold color scheme complemented the delicately frescoed moldings of the arch over the stage and box seats. Earl Brown had secretly ordered a magnificent drop curtain, which was painted with a reproduction of the Horace Vernet painting, "Napoleon at Wagram," as homage to his father.

During the next four years, the theater prospered; booking agreements with the Shuberts and Erlanger brought Concordia the nation's best entertainment. In 1915 Ray Green took over theater management, bringing in the best in live entertainment, including dancers Ruth St. Denis and Martha Graham and wrestling and boxing matches. In 1925, the theater was sold to the Concordia Amusement Company, and became a motion picture theater until 1974.

As Concordia prepared for its centennial celebration in 1971, townspeople began to talk of restoring the theater. After funds were raised to purchase the theater from owners Jack and Hanalea Roney, it was given to the city, then leased back to the newly formed Brown Grand

Opera House, Inc., which worked to restore and operate the theater. Soon the community was donating money and securing grants for the restoration. In 1973, the theater building was recognized as a National Historic Site and chosen as a National Bicentennial project, receiving \$10,000 in matching funds. More grants and funds were secured and, after six years, the \$500,000 restoration project was completed in 1980.

On September 17, 1980, the theater's grand re-opening took place. Among the audience, sitting on the front row, were three Concordian women who had attended the first opening night exactly 73 years earlier. Other patrons and dignitaries wore period costume to the production, which was a restaging of the original opening night play.

## What's Your Goal?

What's important to you? Good grades? Enough energy for in-line skating? Looking your best? You can reach your goals. It just takes a little thinking, some planning, and a commitment to face a challenge.

**Here are six steps to help you reach your goals.**

- 1. Set a realistic goal.** This is the most important step. Be honest with yourself. Set a goal that is within your abilities but that will also challenge you.
- 2. Make a plan.** Think of all the small steps you can take to meet your bigger goal. When you take things slowly — step by step — you'll see progress faster. And that will feel great.
- 3. Prepare for challenges.** Lack of time or energy are common challenges for many teens. Think of creative ways to deal with them.
- 4. Ask for help.** There's no need to go it alone. A little support and encouragement from people who care about you can go a long way.
- 5. Give yourself a break.** It's okay to stray from your plan now and then. Nobody's perfect.
- 6. Pat yourself on the back.** Check your success. Whether you take only a few small steps, or get to your final destination, enjoy the rewards of being your best.

**NAME:** Janine

**AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITY:** Basketball

**HER STORY:** At every lunch, Janine spends so much time visiting with friends, she barely eats. When school is over and basketball practice begins, she's starved and buys something from a vending machine. It's the same food everyday. In the first half of practice she feels pooped — and she's still hungry.

**Set a realistic goal.** Janine decided to take charge of her food choices so she wouldn't be hungry at basketball practice.

**Make a plan.** Janine's 2-step plan: 1) Eat more at lunch so she's not so hungry after school. 2) Plan snacks ahead, to eat before practice.

**Prepare for challenges.** Janine goes right from class to practice, so her snack choices are limited. She must remember to buy a piece of fruit or juice at lunch to save for a pre-practice snack. As another option, she can take a few minutes at night to pack crackers and cheese, pretzels, or baby carrots for snacks the next afternoon.

**Ask for help.** Janine knew the whole team was hungry before and after practice. So they made a deal and started a lunch-time training table so they'd all eat together. She also added her list of snacks to the family shopping list.

**Give yourself a break.** Once in a while, Janine forgets to plan ahead. Whatever she finds in the vending machine is an okay snack.

**Pat yourself on the back.** Janine knew she was giving her active, growing body nutrients needed for best performance — in class and on the court. For fun, she rewarded herself for smart eating, but not with food. She bought a new CD.

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**NAME:** Derek, alias Mouse Potato

**AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITY:** Surfing the 'net

**HIS STORY:** Unknowingly, Derek linked to a nutrition website and discovered that his meals and snacks are coming up short on fruits and vegetables. As he surfs the 'net, he mindlessly nibbles away until dinner — but fruit or vegetables rarely cross his lips. He also realized his in-line skates (that he saved six months to buy) are somewhere under his bed.

**Set a realistic goal.** Derek has two goals: 1) Eat at least two servings of fruit each day and three of vegetables. 2) Spend 30 minutes each day away from the computer, getting some exercise.

**Make a plan.** Derek's steps: 1) Ask his family to have fruit and vegetables in the kitchen to snack on. 2) Have fruit juice at breakfast. 3) Eat a salad with dinner. 4) Make a point of using his in-line skates at least three times a week, for at least 30 minutes each time. Added bonus: he hopes his plan will get him a new nickname!

**Prepare for challenges.** Derek doesn't want to spend time making after-school snacks. So he decided to make a list of quick-to-fix snacks. The kitchen is loaded with all kinds of foods. For starters, he prepares a bowl of cereal with sliced fruit, cleans up, and pours a glass of milk. It takes him only 2 minutes 15 seconds.

**Ask for help.** Derek searched the Web for a snack site and downloaded a bunch of easy ideas. He even participated in a snack chat with other hungry teens. His parents were thrilled when he contributed his ideas to the family grocery list. His best friend found his skates, too, and joined him.

**Give yourself a break.** It's okay for Derek to come up short on fruits and vegetables every so often. He knows that it's what he eats over a few days that counts.

**Pat yourself on the back.** Derek's proud of eating more fruits and vegetables; he's up to a combined five a day. For exercise, skating is great, especially with his friend. And his new nickname: Skatestar.

# What You Can Do to Help Wildlife and Plants

When most people hear the term endangered species, they think of manatees, grizzly bears, whales, and other charismatic species. If these creatures don't live in your area, you might think there is nothing you can do to help endangered species. However, the current endangered species list contains almost 1,300 plants, birds, fish, mammals and other species that might live or migrate through your area. Private citizens can play a critical role in protecting our country's wildlife and plants. Pulling invasive weeds that are forcing out native plants, rebuilding crumbling river banks, planting native trees — these are things we all can do to help improve our lands so that they are a better place to live for wildlife and humans. All endangered and threatened species need your help, from the familiar and famous species, like the gray wolf, to the lesser-known but equally important species, such as the Karner blue butterfly and western lily. Here's how you can make a difference:

## In your community

- To learn about ways you can assist native wildlife in your area, contact your local U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) office or your local natural heritage program or conservation data center.
- Volunteer at your local wildlife refuge.
- Join a local or national conservation association.
- Support natural areas and nature centers near you; work with other community members to maintain and restore local habitat. Contact your state or local fish and game office to learn how you can become involved in local community wildlife preservation efforts.
- Walk, ride your bike, carpool or use public transportation when possible.
- Don't litter.

## At home

- Don't put hazardous substances down your drain or in the trash. Things like paint thinner, furniture polish, and antifreeze can pollute our water or land, impacting people as well as wildlife.
- Keep litter, pet wastes, and leaves out of street gutters and storm drains. These outlets drain directly into lakes, streams, rivers and wetlands. Pet wastes contain bacteria and viruses that can threaten fish, wildlife, and people.
- Take unwanted, reusable items to a charitable organization or thrift shop.
- Recycle everything you can: newspapers, scrap papers, cans, glass, motor oil, plastics, appliances, etc.
- Don't leave water running. Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth or washing your face. Install water-saving devices such as low-flow showerheads, which will save water and save you money.
- Turn the lights and TV off when you're out of the room.
- Use cloth, not paper, napkins.
- Write to companies that send unwanted junk mail and ask them to take you off their list.

## **In your yard or neighborhood park**

- To get more information on how you can collaborate with the FWS to restore wetlands and other important fish and wildlife habitats on your own property, check out the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program.
- Plant native trees and bushes with berries or nuts that provide birds and other creatures with both places to live and something to eat. To learn how you can make your backyard wildlife-friendly, check out the National Wildlife Federation's Backyard Wildlife Habitat program. Contact your County Cooperative Extension Service or local native plant society for help in identifying native plants. Native species adapted to local climate conditions require less water and care to flourish.
- Put bird feeders and other wildlife attractants, such as birdhouses and baths, in your yard. (Birds can usually find enough food, but adequate water is hard to find.)
- Learn about natural insect controls as alternatives to pesticides.
- Pull weeds instead of using herbicides.
- Grow plants that are natural insect repellents, such as lemon balm, among your flowers and vegetables to help keep unwanted insects away.
- Buy or make your own backyard composter for your food waste products like coffee grounds, vegetables, fruit or other non-animal products. Compost is a natural fertilizer that enriches your soil. It is especially good for vegetable gardens.
- Plant a butterfly garden.

## **On vacation**

- Turn the heat down and turn off the water heater before you leave your home.
- Don't pick flowers or collect wild creatures for pets. Leave animals and plants where you find them.
- When possible, use bug spray that does not contain DEET, which is extremely harmful to amphibians like frogs and salamanders.

## **In your classroom**

- Ask your teachers to help you organize clean up days. Remove trash or invasive weeds from vacant lots or streams. Replant eroding riverbanks with native trees that will stabilize the soil and reduce the amount of dirt going into the river. This will not only improve the quality of water for fish and humans, it will provide habitat for birds and mammals.
- Plant a garden on your school grounds to attract wildlife, birds, and butterflies. Build homes for bats and birds.
- Hold a school Arbor Day native tree planting. Invite local officials.
- Explore nature in your neighborhood by celebrating National Wildlife Week at your school.

## Safety Alert: Beware of the Yo-Yo Ball

From ConsumerReports.org



A widely sold toy introduced last year poses significant concerns. Yo-yo balls, a.k.a. water balls, are soft, rubbery objects that are filled with fluid and have an elastic cord. At the end of the cord is a loop that fits over a finger and lets the user toss, whip around, and retrieve the ball. We tested more than a dozen of these toys and investigated potential hazards.

- Most risky: The swinging cord could wrap around a child's neck and restrict or cut off circulation.
- The elastic finger loop could stretch enough to fit over a child's head and around his or her neck.
- Every ball burned aggressively when held over a candle flame. (The liquid inside, however, is not flammable. In some balls, it's labeled as distilled water.)

Because yo-yo balls could injure a child and because they present needless risks, we've judged them *Not Acceptable*.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, there have been 186 reports of incidents in which the cord wrapped around a child's neck, but none yielded lasting injuries. In seven cases, children suffered broken blood vessels in the eyes, neck, cheek, or scalp. Still, the CPSC, after conducting its own probe, concluded in late September 2003 that the potential dangers didn't warrant a recall. It also found that the products did not present a fire hazard.

"We certainly understand and sympathize that this must be a very scary experience for families," said Ken Giles, a CPSC public affairs specialist. "But we don't think it's going to cause strangulation. It's a low risk."

The CPSC is advising parents to supervise use of the toy, cut its cord, or toss it. We think the CPSC should do more.

Few yo-yo balls, which sell for \$1 or \$2, are identifiable by brand, but all we've seen say "Made in China." Several retailers, including Walgreens and Toys "R" Us, have stopped selling the balls. They've been banned in some foreign countries, and several states' consumer-protection officials have asked for a recall.

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Brockingham is run by people who are more interested in tourists than its residents. The problem is that the people running the government, and nearly everything else in Brockingham, refuse to accept new ideas. By banning all fast-food restaurants and discount stores, they take away all the places a kid can afford to shop.

These people forget that when they were young, they could go to the South Street Soda Fountain and get an ice-cream soda for 25 cents. Today you can't find an ice-cream soda anywhere in Brockingham for less than \$2! Why? Because the only places selling ice cream in Brockingham are Danker & Phillips, de Chambord, and The Emporium Restaurant. Have you tried buying a hamburger in one of those places? You can get an Emporium Deluxe with lettuce, tomato, cheese, and a pickle for a mere \$6.98! Where can kids go for a snack?

There is not a single restaurant in Brockingham where a family of four can eat dinner for less than \$100. Add a 15% tip and sales tax and you have spent nearly \$125 to eat a meal you could prepare at home for about \$12. Have you noticed that Brockingham families never dine in Brockingham? But take a look at Parkersburg on a Friday night. It seems as if you're walking down a Brockingham High corridor when you walk down South Main Street in Parkersburg.

Fast-food restaurants are also a good place for school kids to get an after-school job. Fast-food restaurants are busiest during the supper hours when students are able to work, whereas the fancy food restaurants cater to late-night diners. Working in one of these establishments requires working shifts that are too late for most students.

The City Council claims that local merchants, rather than national chains, should benefit from the tourist business. I agree that it is important to support local businesses, but I think the fast-food restaurants would encourage more people to shop in Brockingham. As it is now, most tourists who come to Brockingham stop to eat a low-cost, convenient places in Southport or Regis Landing. How does that help Brockingham food establishments? Many people who stay overnight in Brockingham drive 25 miles to Parkersburg for breakfast at Jiffy Burger. That place is packed every weekend morning. Those profits could be kept in Brockingham.

Another thing that disturbs me is that we must travel 25 miles to the nearest discount store. If I need a tire for my bike, I have a choice of buying one at Surf

and Peddle Sport Shop for \$15 or driving to Parkersburg Discount Center where I can buy the same kind of tire for \$9. When I am in Parkersburg, Dad always fills up the tank of the car, since the same brand of gas is at least 8 cents cheaper there than in Brockingham. Again, I think the ban on all food chains and discount houses is counterproductive for our city.

Wes Woodrow

*Wes Woodrow*

9<sup>th</sup> Grade Student at Brockingham High School

## Raising Royal Treasure

### ***Bit by bit, divers are recovering pieces of Cleopatra's lost palace.***

*It's a tale full of romance, sneaky tricks, tragedy, and most of all, girl power. On top of that, it's true. The real-life story of Cleopatra, who was a beautiful 17-year-old girl when she became the powerful ruler of ancient Egypt, has fascinated people for thousands of years. Dozens of plays, books, and movies have told of her quest for power and love. Now new information about Cleopatra's life is coming to the surface. Parts of her ancient royal court have been found near Alexandria, Egypt—under water!*

### **Finding a Lost Island**

Ancient Egyptian writings and drawings show that Cleopatra owned a royal palace on an island named Antirrhodos (An-ter-uh-dose). The island was near Alexandria, the capital city of Egypt during Cleopatra's reign in the first century B.C.

Although the city of Alexandria still exists today, floods and earthquakes buried Antirrhodos under water more than 1,600 years ago. But it wasn't lost for good. In 1996, undersea explorer Franck Goddio found it beneath just 18 feet of water, off the shore of Alexandria. The ruins of what appears to be Cleopatra's palace lay buried in layers of mud, seaweed, and garbage.

Goddio and his team of divers have spent two years uncovering statues, columns, pavement, and pottery that may have belonged to the young queen. Their work is sponsored in part by the Discovery Channel, which will broadcast a television special on the new findings.

Among the most sensational finds are two statues of sphinxes, imaginary creatures with the head of a human and the body of a lion. The faces of the sphinxes are in surprisingly good shape—so good that experts have been able to identify one face as that of King Ptolemy (Tall-uh-mee) XII, Cleopatra's father.

How does it feel to come face to face underwater with an ancient sphinx? "It's fascinating!" Goddio told *Time For Kids*. "You see the sphinx, and it's looking at you. You know that it's the father of Cleopatra and that Cleopatra once saw it. It's like a dream."

### **One Queen, Two Love Stories**

Cleopatra and her brother, Ptolemy XIII, began to rule Egypt together in 51 B.C. In keeping with royal custom, the brother and sister were married! But Ptolemy did not want to share the throne, and he forced Cleopatra out of the palace.

During this time, another great civilization was rising to power in Rome. Its main leader, Julius Caesar (See-zer), traveled to Egypt. In order to meet with him, Cleopatra is said to have sneaked into the palace rolled up in a carpet! Caesar soon fell in love with Cleopatra. He helped her push Ptolemy aside and take control of Egypt.

Romans were angered by Caesar's ties with Egypt's queen. Some feared that he had grown too powerful. Four years after meeting Cleopatra, Caesar was murdered by his enemies.

Three years passed before a new Roman leader, Mark Antony, met Cleopatra. Just like Caesar before him, Antony fell in love with her. He moved into Cleopatra's palace at Antirrhodos.

Soon people back in Rome feared that Antony was more interested in Egypt than in his own empire. They turned against him and Egypt. In despair, Cleopatra and Antony took their own lives. Ancient Egypt's last queen died at the age of 39. Soon after her death, the Romans took control of Egypt.

Though her reign ended 2,000 years ago, Cleopatra continues to enchant people everywhere. For that reason, Goddio hopes to set up an underwater museum at the palace site. Visitors would be able to explore and experience Cleopatra's world up close. "To be there, underwater where she reigned and died," says Goddio, "is unbelievable."

**Factoids about Egypt:  
Did You Know?**

- Egypt began as two kingdoms, Upper and Lower Egypt. They were united in 3100 B.C.
- Egypt's kings were called pharaohs (fair-ohs).
- Ancient Egyptians loved games! Kids played leapfrog and tug-of-war. Grown-ups played a board game called senet. Players threw sticks to determine which way to move on the board.
- Egyptians invented a written alphabet called hieroglyphics. It used pictures to represent words.
- Egyptians worshipped hundreds of gods and goddesses. Ra (Rah), the sun god, was the most important, but there was even a cat goddess named Bastet!

## Dolphins of Destruction?

*At dusk, the giant steel submarine surfaces from deep under the sea. Racing ahead of the vessel are three bottle-nosed dolphins ready to fly through the water on top-secret missions.*

*Two dolphins turn north. Strapped to their snouts are sophisticated listening and tracking devices. The dolphins come up under the belly of an enemy ship and clamp the strongly magnetized bugs onto its hull. Now the submarine will be able to track that ship wherever it goes—and actually hear what is taking place inside the ship.*

*Meanwhile, the other dolphin veers south with a mine loaded on its back. Silently, the animal enters a river inlet. Bouncing sounds off each pier, it locates the wharf the enemy uses to store ammo and attaches the mine to an underwater piling. Soon the wharf will erupt in a mammoth explosion.*

### Top Secret

At this point you might be saying, "Come on. Is this true?" Well, for the past 30 years, the U.S. Navy has indeed trained dolphins for a variety of undersea jobs. Although we have dramatized the missions above, they are all based firmly on reports by researchers who once worked in Navy dolphin programs. Have fleets of Flippers really been taught to kill and destroy? The answer you get depends on which side you talk to.

Side 1 is represented by animal-rights groups and former researchers. These people say, "We know that dolphins were used during the Vietnam War to locate and plant mines in the Mekong River. And we know that they were trained for combat duty in the Persian Gulf in 1987."

One animal defender is Rick O'Barry, who trained dolphins used in the famous *FlipperTV* series and now heads the protective Dolphin Project. Mr. O'Barry states, "The military itself refers to these creatures as 'advanced biological weapons systems.' But, of course, it classifies much of this dangerous work as top secret."

Side 2 is the Navy. Spokesman Tom LaPuzza says, "We have about 110 dolphins today in special programs based in California and Hawaii. All we can say about these programs is that basically, our dolphins are trained to find things. We can't go into details, however, because national security is involved."

### Right for the Job

Why would anyone want to train such friendly creatures to be spies or soldiers of the sea?

Several reasons. They're fast, they maneuver skillfully, and they're incredibly bright. Dolphins seem to have an inborn desire to please humans. They're natural imitators.

"I was standing by an observation window having a cigarette," says a trainer. "A young dolphin cruised by the glass, and I blew cigarette smoke toward it. The baby swam quickly to its mother, took a drink of milk, then returned and spit the milk like a puff of smoke

right back at me!”

Dolphins have a skill that puts them in a special class. They can echolocate, or bounce sounds off objects and find things by interpreting the echoes. This ability is so sensitive that dolphins can tell the difference between steel and copper and can detect thicknesses to 3/1000 inch.

This supersonar is far superior to any device humans have developed. A maker of sonar equipment who studied dolphins for the Navy comments, “Dolphins are self-propelled vehicles with on-board computers. All you have to do is program them.”

Everyone agrees that dolphins are extraordinary. There is strong disagreement about whether the military should use or program them.

### **“Keep them in the Wild”**

Animal welfare organizations, such as the Humane Society of the U.S., oppose using dolphins in military activities. Spokespeople for these groups give a number of reasons.

“In the first place, humans should leave dolphins where they belong. Dolphins are social, free-roaming animals. It’s wrong to remove them from their families and hold them in pens. A huge percentage die from capture-stress syndrome. Survivors lose their wildness, some forever.”

“In the second place, when the military transports dolphins from one environment to another, the animals may be exposed to infections or killing temperatures. Nalu, a Navy dolphin taken from the Gulf of Mexico and shipped to the frigid waters of Puget Sound, died within 11 days.”

There are other problems. Government counts show that one-fourth of all dolphins the Navy has died. The number of dolphins in the Gulf of Mexico is shrinking, and this is where the Navy has captured most of the dolphins it uses. Rick Trout, a civilian researcher who once worked for the Navy, testified that dolphins were abused— “kicked, poked with boat hooks, and kept hungry,” he said.

“Humans have no right to exploit animals,” defenders say. “They’re not here to become our servants. They are worked so hard that the stress makes them sick. With the cold war over, why do we need to train dolphins for combat and spy duty?”

### **“Better Off With Us”**

What do the Navy people say?

“Dolphins are really better off in the Navy,” says its spokesman. “Our records show that those with us have had a better survival rate for the past 10 years than dolphins in the wild have had. They get regular veterinary care and never have to hunt for food. The training actually stimulates the dolphins’ minds. They enjoy the challenge.

“We keep our dolphins in seaside pools with nets beneath them. The nets aren’t there to keep the dolphins in; they keep sharks and other sea life out. As a matter of fact, surrounding the pools are narrow boardwalks the dolphins can easily jump over if they want to

escape. On most days they are released into the open sea, but they always come back.

“Because of our research, we’ve contributed more knowledge about dolphins to science than has any other institution. Dolphins save money by finding lost equipment. They save time by doing certain things much faster than humans do. Because they dive deeper than we can, they easily accomplish tasks that would be very dangerous for humans.”

As far as claims of abuse go, Mr. LaPuzza says, “We’re doing as well as anybody else. There were a few incidents of mistreatment, but those trainers were fired. Later, our handling was found to be ‘exemplary.’ “Let’s be clear: Dolphins have never killed people or blown up subs.”

### **What Next?**

Where do things stand now? The National Fisheries Service has recommended that the Navy stop capturing dolphins, and the Navy has complied. After 15 animal-welfare groups together sued the Navy, it scrapped plans to send dolphins armed with nose-cone guns to guard a sub base in Washington State.

The Navy met with experts recently to discuss *how* to return dolphins to the wild, but it stresses that it has *no* plans to actually release them. “The 110 dolphins we have now is the number we need,” says Mr. LaPuzza. “When we develop equipment to match the dolphins’ location ability, then we’ll be willing to let them go.” However, Mr. O’Barry doesn’t believe that. “The Navy will *never release all* of the dolphins,” he says. “They know too much. They’re very highly trained, and their sonar ability makes them just too valuable to let go.”

What do you think the next step should be? Should the Navy continue to maintain the “Dolphin Fleet,” or should dolphins be returned to the wild?

One dolphin seemed to express its own opinion about Navy work. “While training in the Persian Gulf,” Mr. Trout says, “it was sent to track down a diver posing as an enemy. Instead of attacking the ‘enemy’ as taught, the dolphin swam up and nuzzled the diver’s neck.”

What do you suppose it was trying to say?

# The Heat Is On!

From *Time For Kids: World Report*

By David Bjerklie

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita packed such a powerful one-two punch that many people have wondered, Is this just bad luck or is global warming to blame? Warm ocean water, after all, is what fuels a hurricane's ferocious winds.

The question comes up nearly every time people are hit with an unusual flood, drought or heatwave. Just last week, researchers reported that the cap of ice that covers most of the Arctic Ocean is 20% smaller than usual for this time of year. Is global warming at work here too?

Climate scientists agree that our world is getting warmer. Nine of the 10 warmest years on record have been in the past decade. Of course, nature has brought about dramatic changes in the earth's climate in the past, such as the Ice Age. But scientists are convinced that this warming trend is being pushed by humans.

**Manmade Climate?** The atmosphere naturally traps heat from the sun, much like a glass greenhouse warms the air inside even when temperatures outside are cool. This "greenhouse effect" makes life possible on our planet.

But people are intensifying the natural greenhouse effect. Enormous amounts of polluting gases are produced when we burn fossil fuels such as coal and oil to produce power for our cities, factories and cars and to heat our homes.

By pumping more and more of these gases into the atmosphere, humans are turning up the thermostat. And the effects have clearly started, according Kevin Trenberth of the National Center for Atmospheric Research. "We are already seeing fewer frost days, heavier rains and more droughts and heatwaves," Trenberth told TFK.

Scientists fear that the situation could get much worse. Higher temperatures could affect where important crops such as wheat and corn can be grown. Countless species of plants and animals could face big disturbances of their habitat, and that could mean extinction for polar bears and other animals. Scientists also worry that if mountaintop glaciers and the ice sheets in the Arctic and Antarctic continue to melt, sea levels around the globe will rise. Water would swallow coasts and low-lying islands, where hundreds of millions of people live.

**What can be done?** The best chance to slow global warming is to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases that are put into the atmosphere. Most of the world's countries have signed a treaty called the Kyoto Protocol, which requires them to pledge to reduce their greenhouse emissions. But the U.S. has not. President George W. Bush has been sharply criticized for this, but he says it would be too costly for U.S. companies to meet the emission limits.

One thing is certain. Efforts to turn down the heat will have to involve the entire world if they are to succeed. "Climate change is truly a global issue," says Trenberth, "and one that may prove to be humanity's greatest challenge."

# Pressure at the Pump

**From *Time for Kids: World Report Edition*  
By David Bjerklie**

Millions of families across the U.S. took car trips this summer. But whether they went to the beach, the mountains or Grandmother's house, one sight surely caught everyone's eye: the signs advertising high-priced gasoline. In many places in the country, the price of a gallon of gas reached a record \$3 or higher.

The reason for the sky-high prices is the rising cost of oil. Crude oil is a black, sticky liquid pumped from deep beneath the earth's surface. It is one of our most important natural resources. Oil is used to heat homes and make plastics and other common materials. But most of it—some 13 million barrels a day—is turned into transportation fuel. Gasoline, diesel fuel and jet fuel come from oil.

## They Call It Black Gold

The price of this precious raw material affects anyone who goes anywhere. The airline industry must spend an extra \$180 million each year for every penny increase in the price of a gallon of jet fuel. The cost of delivering any package—a birthday present, a pizza or frozen food to a store—can go up when gas gets more expensive. Farmers spend more to fuel their tractors. Schools feel the crunch too. They have to pay more to keep their buses running. Some are even shortening school-bus routes.

With the summer vacation season over, oil-market experts say that the price of gas should go down. But many people are already trying to beat the high price of gas by driving less, carpooling or traveling by train or bus.

Will U.S. drivers decide it's smart to trade in big gas-guzzling sport-utility vehicles for gas-sipping smaller cars that get better mileage? It's probably too soon to tell. Even if gas prices go down, says Mark Cooper of the Consumer Federation of America, we should worry about our consumption.

"The pain at the pump is only one of the reasons that people should care," says Cooper. Burning less fossil fuel would also produce less pollution. If we cut back on driving, we will need to buy less oil from other countries. We need to remember, says Cooper, that the real cost of gas is even higher than the price tag at the pump.

### By the Numbers

**8 billion:** Number of trips that school buses make to and from U.S. schools each year

**65:** Number of gallons it takes to fill a school bus fuel tank. Mileage? About seven miles per gallon.

**8.3%:** Amount world oil production has risen since November 2001

**8.6%:** Amount world oil demand has increased since November 2001

**32%:** Amount U.S. oil consumption is expected to rise by 2025

**41%:** Amount world oil consumption is expected to increase by 2025

**New York Times**  
**November 9, 2005**

## **Kansas Board Approves Challenges to Evolution**

By **JODI WILGOREN**

TOPEKA, Kan., Nov. 8 - The fiercely split [Kansas](#) Board of Education voted 6 to 4 on Tuesday to adopt new science standards that are the most far-reaching in the nation in challenging Darwin's theory of evolution in the classroom.

The standards move beyond the broad mandate for critical analysis of evolution that four other states have established in recent years, by recommending that schools teach specific points that doubters of evolution use to undermine its primacy in science education.

Among the most controversial changes was a redefinition of science itself, so that it would not be explicitly limited to natural explanations.

The vote was a watershed victory for the emerging movement of intelligent design, which posits that nature alone cannot explain life's complexity. John G. West of the Discovery Institute, a conservative research organization that promotes intelligent design, said Kansas now had "the best science standards in the nation."

A leading defender of evolution, Eugenie C. Scott of the National Center for Science Education, said she feared that the standards would become a "playbook for creationism."

The vote came six years after Kansas shocked the scientific and political world by stripping its curriculum standards of virtually any mention of evolution, a move reversed in 2001 after voters ousted several conservative members of the education board.

A new conservative majority took hold in 2004 and promptly revived arguments over the teaching of evolution. The ugly and highly personal nature of the debate was on display at the Tuesday meeting, where board members accused one other of dishonesty and disingenuousness.

"This is a sad day, not just for Kansas kids, but for Kansas," Janet Waugh of Kansas City, Kan., one of four dissenting board members, said before the vote. "We're becoming a laughingstock not only of the nation but of the world."

Ms. Waugh and her allies contended that the board's majority was improperly injecting religion into biology classrooms. But supporters of the new standards said they were simply trying to open the curriculum, and students' minds, to alternative viewpoints.

There is little debate among mainstream scientists over evolution's status as the bedrock of biology, but a small group of academics who support intelligent design have fervently pushed new critiques of Darwin's theory in recent years.

Kenneth Willard, a board member from Hutchinson, said, "I'm very pleased to be maybe on the front edge of trying to bring some intellectual honesty and integrity to the science classroom rather than asking students to check their questions at the door because it is a challenge to the sanctity of evolution."

Steve E. Abrams of Arkansas City, the board chairman and chief sponsor of the new standards, said that requiring consideration of evolution's critics "absolutely teaches more about science."

The board approved the standards pending editing to comply with a demand from two national science groups that their copyrighted material be removed from the standards document because of its approach to evolution.

When Sue Gamble, a board member opposed to the standards, questioned the wisdom of voting on an unfinished document, calling it "a pig in a poke," Mr. Abrams dismissed the concern, saying, "It's immaterial because you're not going to vote for it anyway."

Indeed, when it was time to raise hands, the four self-described moderate board members cast nay ballots in unison.

Their protest was echoed by Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, a Democrat, who called the vote "the latest in a series of troubling decisions" by the board.

"If we're going to continue to bring high-tech jobs to Kansas and move our state forward," Ms. Sebelius said in a statement, "we need to strengthen science standards, not weaken them. Stronger public schools ought to be the mission of the Board of Education, and it's time they got down to the real business of strengthening Kansas schools."

Kansas' move comes a week after the conclusion of a trial in which parents sued the school board in Dover, Pa., over the district's inclusion of intelligent design in the ninth-grade biology curriculum. The two debates have led a swell of evolution skirmishes in 20 states this year.

Local school districts in Kansas, as in most states, choose textbooks and set the curriculum, but the standards provide a blueprint by outlining what will be covered on state science tests, given every other year in grades 4, 7 and 10. The new standards emerged as part of a routine review and would take effect in 2007, presuming next year's elections do not shift the balance on the board and result in another reversal.

Though the standards do not specifically require or prohibit discussion of intelligent design, they adopt much of the movement's language, mentioning gaps in the fossil record and a lack of evidence for the "primordial soup" as ideas that students should consider.

The other states that call for critical analysis of evolution - [Minnesota](#), [New Mexico](#), [Ohio](#) and [Pennsylvania](#) - do so only in broad strokes, in some cases as part of a standard scientific process.

"They've given a green light to any creationist throughout the state to bring these issues into the classroom," said Jack Krebs, a Kansas science teacher and dissenting member of the standards-writing committee. "Science teachers are not prepared for that discussion and don't want it, because they've got plenty of science to teach."

John Calvert, a lawyer who runs the Intelligent Design Network, based in Kansas, praised the board as "taking a very courageous step" that would "make science education interesting to students rather than boring."

In the standing-room-only crowd in the small board room for Tuesday's session were two dozen high school students fulfilling an assignment for government class by attending the public meeting. They shook their heads at the decision.

"We're glad we're seniors," said Hannah Teeter, 17, from Shawnee Mission West, a high school in Overland Park, a suburb of Kansas City. "I feel bad for all the kids that are younger than us that they have to be taught things that aren't science in science class."