

# Celebrate Earth Week

## April 21 thru April 28

### Get Yourself Involved!

Twenty years ago millions of Americans took part in the first Earth Day — the largest grass roots rally in history. People flocked to marches, teach-ins, and concerts in the park. Together they pledged to attack pollution and clean up the environment.

The 1990s have brought a new awareness that institutions alone cannot solve the environmental problems caused by the actions of millions of individuals. One person's trash, another's inefficient car, someone else's water waste — all make this planet less livable for the children of tomorrow. But although individuals are the root of the problem, they are also the key to its solution.

Every concerned person and organization is encouraged to get involved in some way — large or small. The cumulative impact will be enormous and positive. In honor of Earth Day 1990, *The Lion's Eye* offers these tips to help preserve and protect the water we drink, the air we breathe, and our other precious natural resources. They're simple and effective. Together we can make the twentieth anniversary of Earth Day the celebration of a better future.

## 10 Tips to Save the Earth

- 1 Use a low-phosphate or phosphate-free detergent.
- 2 Carpool whenever possible.
- 3 Always recycle used motor oil.
- 4 Rinse your clothes in cold water.
- 5 Support recycling programs for paper, plastic, glass and metal.
- 6 Plant a tree.
- 7 Install a low-flow shower head in your bathroom.
- 8 Clean or replace air conditioner filters once a month.
- 9 Don't leave the water running while you brush your teeth.
- 10 Keep your car tires properly inflated at all times.

Don't do it just for Earth Day —  
Do it every day!



## The Glass Marble

### A Slow But Sure Death for Mother Earth

by Bey Devlin

*"The Earth reminded us of a Christmas tree ornament hanging in the blackness of space. As we got farther and farther away, it diminished in size. Finally it shrank to the size of a marble, the most beautiful marble you can im-*

*agine. That beautiful, warm, living object looked so fragile, so delicate that if you touched it with a finger, it would crumble and fall apart."*

—James Irwin  
Apollo 15, July 1971

As strong and solid as our Earth may seem, it has the fragility of a glass marble in the unsteady hands of today's people. Many forces within the Earth, such as earthquakes, cause turmoil and destruction, but humans are probably Earth's greatest foe as well as friend. One specific way we are destroying our home planet is by the depletion of the ozone layer by human-made and natural processes.

"Ozone is a compound in which three oxygen atoms are bound together. It is formed in the stratosphere when intense ultraviolet radiation from the sun splits ordinary oxygen molecules, consisting of two oxygen atoms, into their highly reactive individual atoms" (Browne C11).

Over the years, many articles have been published dealing with the large holes in the ozone layer that appear and disappear over the Arctic. A recent *New York Times* article informed the public of what is actually happening to the barrier and why. Each year, a hole develops over the Arctic for approximately two months; the hole's appearance and disappearance is due to varying wind currents. The ozone layer exists in what is called the stratosphere, the upper portion of the atmosphere fifteen miles above Earth's surface. The ozone layer is a natural shield that protects the Earth from the sun's dangerous ultraviolet rays. These rays cause many hazardous health problems to humans, plants, and animals. Already, the rays are affecting the Arctic marine life, which is essential to the existence of many civilizations.

The depletion of the ozone layer is a result of human-made and natural processes. In the latest findings, the major factors in the eroding of this shield are chlorine based chemicals, such as those found in air conditioners, refrigerators, aerosol sprays, foam plastics, and cleaning agents. The common chemical formulation within these materials is chlorofluorocarbon or CFC. "The chlorine involved in the reaction could react over and over again, so that a single CFC molecule could destroy tens or hundreds of thousands of molecules of ozone" (Browne C11).

Chlorine is not the sole enemy of the ozone layer. Natural forces, specifically vortices, are also the culprits. The stratospheric vortice is a large-scale cyclone-like wind system, which forms above the poles. The temperatures in these vortices have been recorded as low

as 117 degrees below zero. The vortices produce microscopic ice crystals which "may speed up the chemical destruction of ozone" (Browne C11).

Fear has risen among scientists who study these vortices. The Arctic vortices affect the Arctic regions of Canada, Scandinavia, and the Soviet Union — all populated areas. Scientists believe that living beings may soon face "grave health hazards" (Browne C11) as a result of the vortice working on the ozone layer. Although no immediate danger exists, from 1969 to 1986 the ozone layer has decreased as much as three percent. At that rate, the percentage of erosion for the next twenty years is only a guess.

We will not be the ones who feel the effect of our mistakes; the people who feel the full effect of our mistakes will be our future children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. In the years to come, future generations face an uncertain future in terms of our ozone layer. It may be centuries, decades, or years until the greenhouse effect is felt, but one thing for certain is that it will be felt.

The radiation is already affecting sealife; what will life on Earth be like in 2989? Let's take a look at November 4, 2989. Picture Main Campus, PSU, for our homecoming game against West Virginia. The band is on the field warming the crowd up for the game, while the vendors push through the aisles selling everything from food to miniature Nittany Lions. Everything seems normal so far. Yet there is something that doesn't seem quite right about the surroundings.

The game is being held in a huge building; in fact, the entire Main Campus is in a protective shelter. The students and alumni are garbed from head to toe in what seem to be astronauts' garb. Everyone is talking, frolicking, and socializing in these bulky, silver suits as if there is nothing weird about it. No dogs are romping around playing frisbee in the yard before the game because the dogs have all died. All the animals have died, the scientists first thoughts were to save the people . . . so the animals had to face their fate unarmed and vulnerable.

No grass grows within this confinement; it is all artificial turf. The strange thing is that none of the people seem to realize what has happened; this is how they've always known the world to be. They cannot even imagine the world any other way. The stories of how their ancestors lived in a wide open, beautiful, free world is just that, a story.

#### Works Cited

Browne, Malcolm W. "The Ozone Layer Is Eroding at North Pole." *New York Times*, 11 October 1989: C1, C11.

— CREATION —  
(See Genesis 1)

— DE-CREATION —

*In the beginning was the earth, and the earth was beautiful. But the people living on the earth said, "Let us build skyscrapers and expressways." So they paved the earth with concrete and said, "It is good!"*

*On the second day, the people looked at the rivers and said, "Let us dump our sewage into the waters."*

*So they filled the waters with sludge and said, "It is good!"*

*On the third day, the people looked at the forests and said, "Let us cut down the trees and build things." So they leveled the forests and said, "It is good!"*

*On the fourth day, the people saw the animals and said, "Let us kill them for sport and money." So they destroyed the animals and said, "It is good!"*

*On the fifth day, the people felt the cool breeze and said, "Let us burn our garbage*

*and let the breeze blow it away." So they filled the air with carbon and said, "It is good!"*

*On the sixth day, the people saw other nations on earth and said, "Let us build missiles in case misunderstandings arise. So they filled the land with missile sites, and said, "It is good."*

*On the seventh day, the earth was quiet and deathly silent, for the people were no more. And it was good.*

— RE-CREATION —

*In the end, the earth was desolate and scarred so the people repaired the earth and said, "It is good!"*

*On the second day, the rivers were filled with sewage so the people cleared the streams and said, "It is good."*

*On the third day, the trees were gone so the people planted new forests, and said, "It is good!"*

*On the fourth day, the animals were almost gone so the people saved the few and said, "It is good!"*

*On the fifth day, the air was foul so the people made the air pure again and said, "It is good!"*

*On the sixth day, the people saw the missiles and were sore afraid, so they talked peace and said, "It is good!"*

*On the seventh day, in the evening, a dove came . . . with an olive leaf in its bill and a bow appeared in the sky and the people said, "It is good!"*

