

One hour is not enough to save the environment

Taylor Mesojednik
A&E Editor

Click. The lights went off. Click. The lights went on, and as our eyes opened we were greeted by a world exactly the same as it was an hour beforehand.

On Saturday, March 29, millions of people in developed nations around the world partook in an "hour of darkness" to raise awareness about global warming. Supposedly, we demonstrated how serious we are about fighting climate change.

While there is no doubt that the intentions of the organizers were genuine, the hour of darkness is not going to alleviate any of the problems our planet is facing. An hour is a trivial amount of energy usage compared to the amount used the other 8,759 hours in a year. The only thing this event has proved is our ability to sooth our conscience.

The hour of darkness and similar one-time fights against major global issues are merely a way for the developed world to feel good about

itself. If we don't buy gas today, pat ourselves on the back and buy 10 gallons tomorrow, we haven't really done much, have we? If anything, these fad campaigns are distracting people from developing long term solutions to our problems.

When we want to see real solutions we are going to have to face some harsh realities. What the earth needs is a long term commitment by humanity to reduce our consumption and environmental impact. That means we are going to have to start making sacrifices, which means more than getting a Facebook application that certifies your page as "green." We need to write to our leaders and demand that they sign the Kyoto Protocol on climate change; we need to demand that money is put into alternative energy sources; we need to demand environmental consciousness from every other citizen of this nation. We don't need to shun the next global salvation fad, but we do need to remember that if saving the earth was as easy as turning off your lights for an hour, we wouldn't be in the predicament we are in now.

Environment Myths

Pauline Wood
Business Manager

Myth: Climate change and loss of the ozone layer are the same thing.

Fact: They are two different problems that are not very closely connected. The gases responsible for our disappearing ozone layer, CFCs, only play a small role in the climate change we are experiencing.

Myth: Aerosol spray cans are a major contributor to climate change.

Fact: Using aerosol spray cans, whether for deodorizing or spray painting, has a minimal effect on climate change. Many aerosol cans, however, contain chemicals, so it is better to use air pressurized ones.

"WE" can solve it

Maheen Sahoo
Opinion Editor

Earthbound evokes awareness

As our environment becomes more and more polluted due to a lack of human responsibility, there are people out there who have brought it upon themselves to take action.

Earthbound, a pro-environment club dedicated to saving the planet, is making a difference by starting small and close to home.

The recycling cans that are seen throughout the school, in teachers' classrooms and in the hallways were placed there because of Earthbound's efforts. The club is trying to place even more recycling bins around the school, especially near the cafeteria.

The club also hosted its second annual "Who Turned Up the Heat" event at the beginning of the school year. The night was dedicated to promoting awareness to global warming and to inform students and adults alike how they could reduce their impact.

Chemistry teacher Jeannine Sieler is an avid supporter of Earthbound's efforts.

"I think that [Earthbound] is very effective... they need more support in order to work. I don't think they get enough," Sieler said.

Earthbound has also been exploring the possibility of using reusable lunch trays in the cafeteria. Though reusable lunch trays are each three to four cents more expensive, they are better for the environment compared to their disposable counterparts.

"Earthbound needs support from the whole school in order to get things done. We can put out recycling bins or compost bins, but everyone needs to use them," senior co-president Eric Spishak said.

The other co-president of Earthbound is senior Gracie Johnson.

The efforts of Earthbound are an example that everyone at our school can follow. Whether it means recycling your pop can or picking up a piece of litter, anyone can do their part to save the environment.

The Environment