

Every month since February 1987 the Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation has produced one-hour TV programs on issues related to peace, social justice, economics, the environment, and nonviolence.

The Olympia FOR's program airs several times every week for the entire month on Thurston Community Television (TCTV), channel 22 for Thurston County's cable TV subscribers. You can see TCTV's schedule at www.tctv.net.

You can also watch the program described below (and more than 90 of our previous interview programs and special programs) at the Olympia FOR's website, www.olympiafor.org. Simply click the TV programs link to reach www.olympiafor.org/tv_programs.htm, scroll down, and click the program you want to watch.

Many of our website's TV program listings also include a .pdf document describing the program.

FEBRUARY 2012

“CLIMATE: UPDATES AND NEXT STRATEGIES”

by GLEN ANDERSON, PRODUCER AND HOST OF THIS TV SERIES

The climate crisis is increasingly serious, even though most politicians don't want to deal with it, and mainstream media fail to report on it adequately. But while politicians and mainstream media negligently fail to act, the problems get worse. The Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation's February 2012 TV program brings us up to date and explores strategies for making progress.

Our guests – Doug Howell from the Sierra Club and KC Golden from Climate Solutions – are exceptionally well informed.

Doug and KC help us understand what the climate crisis is and the scientific causes. They debunk the claims of the “climate deniers” and discuss shifts in public opinion.

They give an overview of the important global climate conferences at Kyoto, Copenhagen and Durban. They explain the “cap and trade” proposal, ethanol, a carbon tax, and the special interests that prevent our political system from dealing effectively with the problems.

They discuss the bright spots in Washington State's efforts. For example, our statewide voters passed Initiative 937, which has made great progress but is at risk in the current legislative session. Canada's tar sands are horribly problematic. They'll explain the recent successful lawsuit that is forcing Washington State's Department of Ecology to devise rules to limit climate pollution from our state's five oil refineries.

Both guests and their organizations are especially well informed and active in opposing coal, which is burned in Montana to provide a huge portion of Puget Sound Energy's electricity for customers in many parts of Washington, including Thurston County. As we make progress in limiting coal burning here, the coal companies are trying to ship coal to China and other Asian markets through export terminals in Washington, Oregon and British Columbia. Besides reducing coal burning here, we must also limit coal burning in Asia and elsewhere.

The guests argue against the “geo-engineering” proposals to radically experiment with far-fetched schemes to manipulate the

atmosphere. Instead they recommend the simple process of protecting existing forests worldwide, which effectively capture carbon and prevent it from harming our climate.

So what should we do? People often say we should “think globally and act locally.” While ordinary people can take some practical actions in our own lives, we must also interact with the larger economic and political systems to make systemic changes. While the federal government is especially controlled by giant oil and coal companies, people seem to be making more progress at local and state levels.

We encourage people to work with the Sierra Club and Climate Solutions and other organizations that are working thoughtfully and effectively. The Sierra Club at (206) 378-0114 www.sierraclub.org has an excellent **Beyond Coal** campaign, www.beyondcoal.org.

And Climate Solutions, whose roots are in Olympia’s “Atmosphere Alliance,” and has a Seattle office, (206) 443-9570 www.climatesolutions.org, and runs its excellent **Power Past Coal** campaign at www.PowerPastCoal.org

Since before the dawn of civilization the earth’s climate has allowed life to prosper and diversify. Plant and animal species evolved and adapted to the climate. Human civilizations emerged and thrived. Now – in a very short time – humans are wrecking the climate, and many people around the world are horrified at the very disruptive and destructive future that lies ahead.

Scientists are in practical consensus about this reality. But in the U.S. and a few other nations that have caused this climate crisis, the dominant political and economic systems have refused to accept reality. Many politicians deny that the problem even exists, and many of the politicians who do acknowledge the problem refuse to solve it. Their negligence is condemning many species to extinction and condemning countless millions of human beings to misery and death.

This is a damning indictment of our political and economic systems. Survival and civilization require radical changes to these suicidal political and economic systems. This sound like a science fiction movie plot, but it is really happening to us. Scientists, nonprofit organizations, and grassroots organizers around the world are trying desperately to shake our political and economic systems to recognize reality. Either we must deal with reality, or reality will deal with us! Solutions do exist, but there is no time to waste.

For more information about problems and solutions, contact the organizations mentioned above and some other excellent sources we mention in the program: www.350.org, Friends of the Earth at www.foe.org, Ross Gelbspan’s powerful article “Beyond the Point of No Return” at www.heatisonline.org, and the Northwest Energy Coalition at www.nwenergy.org