

## Talk heats up on hot issue

### Dems Club, students host forum on global warming at Barnegat school

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BARNEGAT — Kyle Kampo is concerned that we are already seeing effects of global warming, such as melting ice caps.

And Billy Gross would like you to know that global warming is not necessarily real, but just a theory.

The conversations were heated at times during a global warming presentation and discussion held at Barnegat High School Monday night.

The event, co-sponsored by the school and the Barnegat Township Democratic Club, sought to discuss "An Inconvenient Truth" — the documentary film narrated former Vice President Al Gore — through presentations made by local experts on global warming.

Rose Jackson, president of the Democratic Club, said the club's sponsorship had nothing to do with making global warming a partisan issue, though the subject fit one of the Democratic Club's goals of helping to educate the community.

"We thought it was a good thing for everyone to discuss; we felt it was a critical issue," she said.

Many of the approximately 50 audience members came because they were concerned about global warming and wanted more facts, but several audience members were vocal in their concerns with the issue.

"I believe that some people from the Democratic Party have tried to make it a political issue," said Gross, 15. A freshman at Barnegat High School, Gross describes himself as a conservative Republican and said his political views shaped his feelings on global warming.

Kampo, also a freshman, said he has good debates with Gross because he feels global warming is a real issue and is worried about its long-term effects.

"I found it interesting, especially after I saw (the movie) "Day After Tomorrow," " said Kampo, who said his family has cut down on electricity bills and is looking at hybrid vehicles.

Ben Ackerman, 17, said he was concerned people are letting political views and preconceived notions get in the way of listening to the facts. (Ackerman's father, Peter, is chief photographer for the Asbury Park Press.)

"I decided to come out today because I am concerned about the global warming issue and our town's role and what we're going to do about it," said Ackerman, who said he feels there are many facts that show global warming is having an effect on our environment.

Dayna Angelozzi, a biology teacher at Barnegat High School who coordinated the student involvement at the event, said her classes often have healthy debates regarding global warming.

She said her classes are split fairly evenly on whether or not the issue is relevant.

Angelozzi said she tries to stay out of the political side of things. "I just thought it would be good for my students to see science in the real world," she said.

#### Just the facts

Six panelists presented facts about global warming as well as ways to reduce human impact on the environment.

According to Michael Kennish, research professor at the Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences at Rutgers University, the effects of global warming are already showing up in our waters, such as the increase of jellyfish in Barnegat Bay. Jellyfish are more typical of warmer waters.

"Statistically, it bears out the fact that global warming is real — and not just real, but attributed to human factors," said Kennish during his presentation.

Kennish said there have already been sea level changes tracked in areas such as Atlantic City and said projects such as beach restoration on Long Beach Island are part of a sinking shoreline and rising sea level.

Jeff Brown from Green Schools New Jersey talked about energy and conservation programs in the Toms River and Brick school systems, which not only help the environment but save the schools money, he said.


Energy costs are often the biggest budget item for schools, said Brown.

Marianne Clemente, one of the organizers of the event from the Democratic Club, said one of her goals was to see energy conservation in the Barnegat schools, which could save money in energy costs.

Jeanne Walz, a meteorology teacher at Brick Memorial High School, said global warming has been a topic in her classroom. She said her own research backed up facts presented in "An Inconvenient Truth."

"I wanted to see if there was someone here to talk against global warming so I could make sure there was someone to counteract that," said Walz.

**STORYCHAT** 

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