

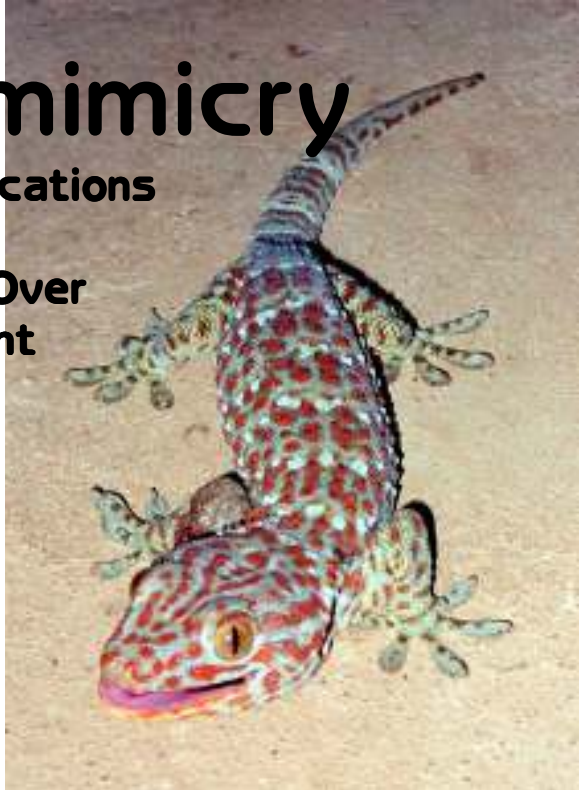
# LSI Journal

The Lutheran Science Institute

January-February, 2009

## Biomimicry

It's Implications  
in the  
Debate Over  
Intelligent  
Design



**Glow worms and Backswimmers**

**Still Searching for the Fountain of Youth**

**The Multiverse Theory and Controversy  
Over a Richard Dawkins' Book**

## LUTHERAN SCIENCE INSTITUTE, INC.

4130 Harvest Lane  
Racine, Wisconsin 53402-9562  
<http://www.lutheranscience.org/>  
<http://lsiblog.blogspot.com/>

The mission of the Lutheran Science Institute is to learn, share, and promote the glory of God as revealed in His holy Word and demonstrated in His created world, beginning with the pastors, teachers, and laity of the WELS (Wis. Ev. Lutheran Synod) and the ELS (Ev. Lutheran Synod).

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**THE LSI Journal** is published six times a year by the Lutheran Science Institute. [Views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Institute.](#)

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The Annual Meeting of the Institute is held the Saturday *after* Thanksgiving. At least three other meetings are held during the year at locations selected by the president. Meetings are open to the public and announced in the LSI JOURNAL and/or on our web site.

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## MEETING SCHEDULE\*

- ◆ 4th Saturday in January, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ 2nd Saturday in June, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ Last Saturday in October, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ Saturday *after* Thanksgiving in November, 1:00 p.m.

\*Dates, times, and locations subject to change. Additional meetings may be scheduled. Check with the president, secretary, or editor or see our web site for verification.

## **4 Biomimicry: The Implications in the Debate over Intelligent Design**

**By Warren Krug**

How do evolutionists who believe everything is the product of blind chance explain why there is so much apparent intelligent design in nature, so intelligent that modern day researchers and engineers using their own intelligence copy the designs into modern products?

## **9 Glow Worms and Backswimmers**

Both animals possess a number of unique features which suggest they were designed by a wise, intelligent Creator.

**11 Book Review:** *Persuaded by the Evidence*

**12 Nuggets:** 6 Food Myths that will not Die

**14 Best of the Blog:** Man's Suicide Linked to Darwin's Book  
The Multiverse Theory: the Latest Attempt to Explain  
Away God

**17 LSI News:** Ballots in the Mail / Next Meeting-January 24 / Fees Schedule  
Readjusted / Proposed By-Law Change

**17 E-Mail:** Shootings in Finland

**18 News**

**20 Kids' Page:** Ivory

**22 My View:** Scientists Still Hope to Find the Fountain of Youth

### **Coming**

#### **A Universe Built for Us**

Some mainstream scientists now admit that the universe appears designed with living creatures in mind.

#### **Review of the documentary *Expelled***

What this movie also reveals is that evolutionists would be wise to not appear on camera in a movie that is willing to ask whether evolution is really true.

# Biomimicry

## It's Implications in the Debate Over Intelligent Design

by Warren Krug



In 1958 a researcher with the United States Air Force by the name of Jack Steele coined a new word—*bionics*, which means the process of drawing inspiration from nature for manmade designs.<sup>1</sup> Now also known by several other names including *biomimicry* and *biomimetics*, this concept has led to many inventions that have benefited mankind. The implications of bionics or biomimicry are important in the debate over intelligent design.

Here are just some biomimicry examples:



**Velcro**--In 1948 Swiss engineer George de Mestral had gone on a hunting trip with his dog. Upon returning, he took a close look at the burs (seeds) of burdock (left) that were sticking to his clothes and his dog's fur.

Under a microscope, de Mestral noted the hundreds of hooks on the burs that caught on anything with a loop, such as clothing or animal fur. This inspired him to invent manmade materials that would stick together based on the same pattern of hooks (right, top) and loops (right, bottom). He named his invention Velcro, a registered trademark in most countries.<sup>2</sup>



**Gecko tape**--A gecko (picture, left) is a small to average-sized lizard belonging to the family *Gekkonidae*. Many species of gecko are known for their specialized toe pads that allow them to climb smooth and vertical surfaces and even walk on ceilings with ease. Without the use of surface tension or liquids of any kind, the gecko footpads (right) achieve adhesive forces by means of structures called setae. There are about 14,000 setae in each square millimeter of a gecko's toe pads which accomplish their work by means of the principles of electrostaticism, the science of what seems to be stationary electric charges. Scientists are now working on a special tape that achieves adhesion in a similar way. And a robot gecko invented at Stanford University and called "stickybot" can turn this adhesive property on and off at will.<sup>3</sup>



**Bullet train**--The Japanese have invented a train that can travel over 200 miles an hour, the fastest train in the world. They call it the Shinkansen bullet train (left). There was one problem with the train that had to be overcome. Every time a bullet train would exit a tunnel, it would produce a very loud bang because of the change in air pressure. The train's engineers noticed that a kingfisher (right), a small, brightly-colored bird, can dive into the water with little splashing. This inspired them to redesign the bullet train so that its front end looks like a kingfisher's beak. The result is not only a quieter train but a train that could go even faster and use less energy.<sup>4</sup>



**Eastgate Centre Harare, Zimbabwe**--This modern office building in the South African city was designed so that it could be heated and cooled efficiently. In examining African termite mounds, its architects



were intrigued by the ability of the mounds to self-cool. As their primary food source, the termites farm a fungus inside the gigantic mounds (left) that must be kept at a temperature of exactly 87 degrees F despite outside temperatures that can range from 35 degrees F to 104 degrees F. To do this, the termites constantly open and

close a series of heating and cooling vents throughout the mound over the course of the day. Convection currents help keep the temperature stable. The Eastgate Centre (right) has a ventilation system that operates in a similar way and does not need conventional air-conditioning or heating. <sup>5</sup>



**Better Solar Power--** Progress in the use of solar power has been held back by the lack of a low-cost, effective way of storing it when the sun is not shining. Two MIT chemists have helped solve this problem by studying common plants. During photosynthesis, plants change solar energy into a chemical form. A key aspect of this conversion involves splitting water into oxygen and hydrogen. The hydrogen is then converted into sugars the plants store as fuel. The chemists developed a similar procedure to store solar power, using cobalt to split the water molecules. The hydrogen is stored as a gas and later turned into electricity in a fuel cell. <sup>6</sup>

**Fan Blades--** Engineers have long thought that smooth surfaces were the best design for propeller blades. Studies of whales though are changing this way of thinking. A whale flipper has a bumpy edge. Studies have shown that these bumps help reduce drag, increase lift and fluid flow efficiency, and decrease the risk of stalling. Dr. Frank Fish of West Chester University has picked up on this feature, de-



signing experimental fan blades with bumpy, irregular features. "This design has been shown to be more efficient and also quieter, but defies traditional engineering theories," he says. <sup>7</sup>

**Body armor**-- Engineers are looking to an African fish called *Polypterus senegalus* (left) for ideas on creating better body armor. They have measured the properties of a single fish scale and its four layer materials which includes bones and dentine. The chemical properties of each material, the shapes and thicknesses of the layers, and the junctions between layers help achieve the remarkable strength of the fish's



"armor." The lessons learned from this fish have great potential for eventually leading to improved structural materials for soldiers and military armor applications. <sup>8</sup>



**Smart Clothing**-- Julian Vincent wanted a nonliving system for a new type of clothing fabric which would respond to changes in moisture by changing shape. He got his inspiration by studying pinecones (right). Pinecones and some other plants respond to higher humidity by opening their scales to disperse their seeds. The "smart" fabric does the same thing,



opening up when the wearer is warm and sweating and shutting tight when cold. <sup>9</sup>

**Other examples:** Cat's eye reflectors from the study of cats eyes; self-cleaning paints and roof tile from the study of lotus leaves; a modular carpet system copied from designs seen in the randomness of colors and patterns of forest floors; new ideas for cooling fans, impellers, and aerators inspired by mollusk shells; "morphing aircraft wings" that change shape according to speed and duration of flight from the study of bird wings; and the harvesting of water from fog similar to



how a beetle does it. There are many more examples, the best 100 of which are included in *Nature's 100 Best* as compiled by the Biomimicry Institute.

The implications of biomimicry for the debate over Intelligent Design are obvious. How do evolutionists who believe everything is the product of blind chance explain why there is so much apparent intelligent design in nature, so intelligent that modern day researchers and engineers using their own intelligence copy the designs into modern products? The simple answer: time. This is why Darwinists need so much time, millions and billions of years. Given enough time, the improbable becomes probable. So time is an evolutionist god. It can do anything.



The fact of the matter is that the amount of time available even in a world 4.5 billion years old is far, far from being enough. Computer studies by Dr. William Dembski have shown that the creation of even a simple body protein from amino-acid components is next to impossible, even in a universe billions of years old. We would hope and pray that those secular scientists would come to their senses who for some reason feel they must hold onto a godless theory that is fast becoming even more and more untenable. Then they might be led by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God to eventually accept their Savior and the real hope of a future heavenly world which the Creator God is now designing for all of us. LSI

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# Glow Worms and Backswimmers

## Glow Worms

**H**ave you ever been outside in the evening after dark and spotted the soft, green light of a glow-worm hanging like a fairy light on a bush or blades of grass? Actually, glow-worms are not worms at all; they are beetles, and it is only the female that has the lighted tail, which she uses to attract a male glow-worm to be her mate.



Glow-worms make their light by mixing a chemical called *luciferin* with air.

The light made by glow-worms is “cold” light, and for many, many years people tried to find a way to copy what glow-worms do. Normal electric light bulbs make a lot of heat as well as light, which is very wasteful. It is only within the last 40 years or so that scientists have discovered how to design and make lights which don’t produce waste heat. Yet glow-worms have been doing it all along.

**Evolution can’t explain how glow-worms came to be. They could never have discovered how to create luciferin, and**

Reprinted from a publication of the Creation Resources Trust, England.

then how to mix it with air to produce light. It has taken scientists many years, using their brains, to copy the glow-worm, so these tiny insects could not have done it by accident over thousands or millions of years. Glow-worms reflect the glory of God, their Creator.

## Backswimmers

**B**ackswimmers are the scuba divers of the insect world. They carry a bubble of air attached to their abdomen, and swim upside-down below the water, using a pair of extra-long legs as oars. They can remain below water for up to 6 hours, but can also come to the surface and fly away. Like human scuba divers they also have a “buoyancy vest” which they use to regulate their depth, unlike other diving insects, which can only stay underwater by clinging to submerged objects. Backswimmers aren’t the only creatures which use an air bubble to breathe underwater



(water spiders do also), but they are unique in that they carry oxygen in their haemoglobin (also spelled *hemoglobin* ed.), just as we do. Very few insects have haemoglobin, and backswimmers are the only ones known to possess it throughout their whole lives. As the air in the bubble shrinks, and they sink deeper in the water, they release oxygen carried in their haemoglobin into the bubble to maintain buoyancy. This special ability was only discovered in 2006, and reported in the science journal *Nature* (Vol. 441, p. 171).

Another unusual thing about backswimmers — which are only 12 mm (½ inch) long — is that their body colouring is opposite to most other animals. Instead of being dark-coloured on top and light-coloured underneath, they are darker on the bottom than on the top. Since they swim upside-down this provides a camouflage to protect them from underwater predators like water scorpions, giant water bugs and diving beetles.

**Backswimmers possess a number of unique features which suggest they were designed by a wise, intelligent Creator, rather than having evolved over a long period of time through chance mutations. LSI**

## ► Book Review

Sharp, Doug, and Bergman, Dr. Jerry, compilation editors, *Persuaded by the Evidence*, Green Forest, AR: Master Books, © 2008, 288 pages.

### Persuasive Evidence



We often hear mainstream, secular scientists claim that few real scientists today doubt the theory of evolution. Of course, they will then turn around and say that anybody who doubts the theory of evolution can't be considered a real scientist.

This book is just the latest of several on the market today that show the claim that genuine scientists must be evolutionists is totally false.

Around three dozen scientists and other highly-educated individuals here present mini-biographies and testimonials showing why they gave up on Darwin's theory and became creationism converts. Also, other chapters trace the conversion of a few scientists now deceased.

The writers generally focus on the scientific evidence, or lack of it in the case of evolutionism, that was so powerful in causing their change of hearts. Some of the writers also mention the biblical evidence.

We are proud of the fact that two of the authors have LSI links. Jeffrey Stueber is a member of the LSI Board of Directors, and Eric Bliedernicht has also written for the LSI Journal.

Each of the accounts is unique and comes from a diverse group of people who come together on the truth that authentic science does not invalidate a literal reading of Genesis. A few of the authors do let their Reformed, decision-theology views come out, but for readers firmly grounded in the scriptural, Lutheran faith, that shouldn't be a problem.

This could be a valuable book to have on hand for any acquaintance who believes creationists have their heads in the sand on the issue of origins. We have included it in our library.

—Warren Krug



# NUGGETS

## 6 FOOD MYTHS THAT WILL NOT DIE

> *All Tea is the same.* Bottled and instant tea are low in antioxidants. Brewed green tea, however, has enough to fight diseases.

> *Bagels are a health food.* Nope. They are made of processed white flour, are low in fiber, and are tied to weight gains, diabetes and heart disease.

> *Raw is more nutritious.* Not always. Cooking vegetables can release nutrients such as beta carotene. Flash-freezing fruits and vegetables can lock in nutrients.

> *Caffeine in coffee is harmful.* Moderate amounts can actually be helpful in possibly cutting the risks of type 2 diabetes, colon cancer, Parkinson's disease, gallstones, liver damage, and cognitive problems.

> *Use no-fat salad dressing.* Without fat your body can't absorb the nutrients from toppings such as tomatoes or carrots.

> *Eggs are dangerous.* Egg yolks don't raise blood cholesterol, and they contain choline, which is vital for brain development.

—USA Weekend (5/9-11/08)

“Just as politicians rewrite human history, so geologists rewrite earth history. For a century and a half the geological world has been dominated, one might even say brain-washed, by the gradualistic uniformitarianism of Charles Lyell. Any suggestion of ‘catastrophic’ events has been rejected as old-fashioned, unscientific and even laughable.”

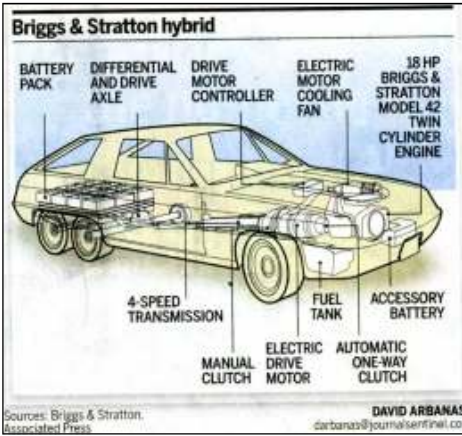
—Derek Age, British geologist and anti-creationist, quoted in *Creation magazine* (Vol 31:1)



**Why were Adam and Eve the world's happiest married couple?**

Adam never had to listen to Eve talk about the men she could have married, and Eve never had to hear Adam yearn for his mother's cooking?

# 1979—The Year of the Auto Hybrid



If you think the gasoline-electric hybrid automobile is a recent invention, think again. In 1979 the Briggs and Stratton Co. developed a hybrid, not to sell, but to demonstrate that the technology, even then, was capable of the task. The car could go up to 70 mph, had a fiberglass body, a third set of wheels to support the battery

pack and was powered by an 18-horsepower garden tractor engine and a small electric motor.

—Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (3/10/08)



**MORE YOGI WISDOM**—quotes attributed to Yogi Berra, famous ex-Major League catcher.

"You can observe a lot just by watching."

"Nobody goes there anymore because it's too crowded."

"If people don't want to come out to the ballpark, how are you going to stop them?"

"You've got to be very careful if you don't know where you are going because you might not get there."

**"So I'm ugly. I never saw any-one hit with his face."**

**"You should always go to other people's funerals, otherwise, they won't come to yours."**

"Little League baseball is a very good thing because it keeps the parents off the streets."

"When you come to a fork in the road, take it."



—<http://www.baseball-almanac.com/quotes/quoberra.shtml>



Monday, December 22, 2008

## Man's Suicide Linked to Dawkins' Book

Father believes son lost his faith after being pressured to read *The God Delusion*.

**Web Page:** <http://www.wnd.com/index.php?fa=PAGE.view&pageId=81459>

**SUMMARY:** A New York man thinks his 22-year-old son committed suicide because of what he read in Richard Dawkins' book, *The God Delusion*. A military veteran who had bright prospects in college, Jesse Kilgore shot himself to death in a woods near his New York home last October.



The father, Keith Kilgore, believes Jesse was assigned or pressured to read the Dawkins book by a biology professor at Jefferson Community College in Watertown, New York. He also believes that Jesse was not well liked by the professor and some other students because of his conservative, Christian beliefs.

Two friends of Jesse told Keith that the book had upset the student, and an uncle who had talked with Jesse believes the young man had lost his previously strong faith and at the time of his death didn't believe in God, an afterlife or even the concept of right and wrong.

A school spokeswoman said *The God Delusion* was not part of the biology curriculum, but she could not say if any of the science professors had pressured Jesse to read the book. However, the father is now suggesting that Christians might consider abandoning public schools entirely.

Keith Kilgore, a retired military chaplain, explains he is still angry over the incident. "I'm all for academic freedom," he said, but he added there must also be academic balance. He wonders about a situation in which a professor challenges a gay student to read a book on preventing homosexuality. If the homosexual student then kills himself, would not the outcry be much larger than what his son's suicide has caused?

**COMMENT:** England's Richard Dawkins (picture) is well known as one of the most militant anti-Christian evolutionists on the face of this planet. Even some evolutionists have criticized him because of the intolerant views he has expressed toward religion. In *The God Delusion* Dawkins tries to argue that religion is not only irrational but also

harmful to society. He thinks he can prove the improbability of a supreme being. He points out various cases where he believes religion has led to war, bigotry, child abuse, etc. He apparently has some unflattering things to say in his book about God such as a "sex-obsessed tyrant." I have not read the book but did read a review of the book on Dawkins' Web site.

Dawkins is wrong, of course, on two counts. First, as creationists have long claimed and the Intelligent Design movement has more recently shown beyond any reasonable doubt, the universe has been designed and built by an Intelligence, whom we Christians know is the Creator God. It could never have come about by blind chance. Even some secular scientists now admit the universe looks like it has been designed for life. It is the atheists who are completely illogical.

Secondly, one only has to look at the vile deeds of such anti-religionists as Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, and Adolf Hitler to see that atheists have far more blood on their hands than Christians, who we confess don't always act in God-pleasing ways. Don't forget the two recent school massacres and suicides in Finland committed by two young atheists, at least one of whom thought he was acting in the interests of Darwinism.

According to evolution theory, we were born without a purpose, live a life without purpose, and die without purpose or hope. Evolution is a hopeless philosophy, in contrast to Christianity which gives life a cause and a purpose and also faith in a future wonderful existence in heaven. No wonder people such as Jesse Kilgore and the Finnish murderers seem to have seen no value in living.

Stories like the Kilgore case should be a wake-up call to those Christians who appear totally uninterested in taking a firm stand against Darwin's theory. Just as the devil in the Garden of Eden tricked Eve with his smooth talk, today secularists like Richard Dawkins have done immeasurable damage to the faith of many with their tongues and pens. Every Christian needs to arm himself with the Word of God and reasonable arguments in order to counter the often-impressive sounding but invalid speculations of the atheistic evolutionists. There wouldn't be so many former-evolutionists who are converting to Christianity these days if the truth was on Darwin's or Dawkins' side.

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Monday, December 8, 2008

## **The Multiverse Theory: the Latest Attempt to Explain Away God**

The idea of an infinite number of universes is meant to avoid having to admit there is an Intelligent Designer.

**Web Page:** <http://www.icr.org/article/4295/>



**SUMMARY:** Many secular scientists are now admitting that the physical laws of the universe appear to be finely-tuned to allow life to exist. The force of gravity, the specific masses of subatomic particles, the distance of the earth from the sun and other galaxies are among these finely-tuned characteristics that permit life to exist. However, rather than admit the existence of an Intelligent Designer for the universe, these scientists are looking for naturalistic explanations. The latest of these inventions is something called "multiverses."



The multiverse hypothesis holds that our universe is just one of an infinite number of universes. It just so happens that our universe coincidentally is the one where all the life-friendly forces happen to line up correctly. "If there is only one universe, you might have to have a fine-tuner. If you don't want God, you'd better have a multiverse," a cosmologist in London was quoted as saying.

There is, of course, no evidence for the existence of alternate universes and thus this theory cannot be proved or disproved. However, physicist Andrew Linde of Stanford U. is a believer because "even though this theory is not scientific, it must be true because it is logically necessary." "Nothing else fits the data," he says.

**COMMENT:** This article highlights another example showing how desperate secular scientists are becoming in an attempt to explain the existence of this universe without a Creator. While the idea of a parallel universe has been around for a while, the idea of infinite universes as a way to explain away God appears to be something new.

As the ICR article explains, the data strongly favors the idea of an Intelligent Designer, a Creator. "Even tiny variations in planetary distances, any more or less gravity, or any other differences in the current structure of the universe would make it hostile to life," the author of this article points out.

It is good that at least some scientists are now admitting that the universe appears to be designed for life. Possibly at least some of them will come to realize how foolish they look inventing silly ideas like multiverses in order to explain away what is so obvious. Then their hearts may be more receptive to the Word of God and the Holy Spirit who is offering them faith and full forgiveness of their sins through faith in Jesus Christ, the Savior.

There is only one other world outside the universe in which we live. That is eternity where all believers in Christ will experience wonderful things beyond anything we can imagine now. May we pray for the conversion of these secular scientists that they too will be able to look forward to the day when supreme heavenly joy will reign for the faithful whom Jesus takes with Him to heaven.

## ► LSI News

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### **Ballots in the Mail**

Members, by the time you read this you will, God willing, have already received your ballots or will soon do so. Please return the ballots so they reach us by the 23rd.

You will be voting for a president, vice-president, secretary, and three members of the Board of Directors. On the ballot you will also be given the opportunity to volunteer to run for an office next year. Please consider it.

### **Next Meeting-January 24**

The next meeting of the Board is set for 1 p.m. on January 24 at St. Marcus Lutheran Church, 2215 N. Palmer Street, Milwaukee.

### **Fees Schedule Readjusted**

The Board of Directors at its last meeting voted to clear up some inconsistency in our fee schedule. However, there will be no change in the fees for voting (WELS, ELS) members.

For associate (non-WELS, ELS) members, groups such as churches and schools, and foreign memberships, the following fee schedule will be in effect beginning March 1: one year (\$25); three years (\$60); ten years (\$165) and lifetime (\$275).

### **Proposed By-Law Change**

The Board has voted on a proposed change in our By-laws. In order to eliminate the need to revise our By-Laws every time there is a change in the fee schedule, the proposed change to **Section 2-Dues** reads:

“Dues shall be set by action of the Board of Directors.”

Comments are welcomed.

## ► E-Mail

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### **Shootings in Finland**

For several years I have been sending the monthly edition of "FIC" to a Finnish Lutheran pastor, Petri Hiltunen, I met on the internet when I lived in Idaho. We don't really correspond except on special occasions. I heard about the school shootings on the radio but didn't say anything to Petri about them. Then along came your editorial (*"Is Evolution to Blame for Two Attacks in Finland?" Nov-Dec, 1008 issue*). I mentioned the incidents to Petri and sent along a copy of your editorial. He responded almost immediately and said that they were pretty shook up at the shootings. He said that the schools and the nation were no longer the peaceful bastions that they had been. This from a nation that has only 5.1 million people. Petri said that both shooters were avowed atheists. I just thought I'd mention this to you.

Milton R. Gibbs, Washington

## Half-Million Visitors for Creation Museum

The Creation Museum in Kentucky reached the half-million mark in attendance in October, museum officials say. A dream of Answer in Genesis' Ken Ham, the museum opened in May, 2007. The museum teaches a literal view of the Genesis account of creation, and some evolutionists are expressing fear of what the museum will do to their vision of science education.—*FoxNews.com* (10/14/08)

## Humans Stop Evolving

Humans have stopped evolving, a geneticist at University College London says. J. Steve Jones believes humans no longer face challenges to their survival in our technologically-advanced societies, making "survival of the fittest" unnecessary. Also, Jones thinks the rate of mutations is declining because men are having children at younger ages reducing the chance of random genetic mutations.—*blogs/abcnews.com* (10/08/08)

## Abortion Rates Decline Among Whites, Teens

An analysis of abortion trends by the Alan Guttmacher research arm of Planned Parenthood reveals some significant shifts. Abortion is declining faster among whites and teens than it is among minorities and older women. The study was the first comprehensive study done by Alan Guttmacher since 1974.—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (9/19/08)—quoted in *Clearly Caring* (November/December, 2008)

## Believers are Happier

Believers in God are happier than agnostics or atheists, according to researchers in the United Kingdom. They found that believers are better able to deal with disappointments, divorce, and even death. In fact, the more they pray and attend church, the happier they are. These conclusions were presented recently to the Royal Economic Society.—*The Telegraph* (6/30/08)—quoted in *Creation* (September-November, 2008)



## Human Cloning OK

An Australian research firm has received permission to begin clone human embryos. The country's first licenses to allow human cloning was issued to Sydney IVF Limited by the Embryo Research Licensing Committee in September.—*www.6minutes.com.au* (9/17/08)—quoted in *Clearly Caring* (November-December, 2008)

## English Woman Gets New Windpipe

A woman in England has received a new windpipe with tissue grown from her own stem cells without the need for anti-rejection drugs. If it proves successful, the technique could become a new standard for treatment. The core of the new windpipe was a tube of connective tissue from a donor windpipe. This tube was stripped of its cells and then covered with stem cells from bone marrow taken from her hip.—*cnn.com* (11/19/08)

## Christianity Dying in Great Britain

Christianity is becoming a minority religion in Britain according to *Religious Trends*, a recently published statistical analysis of UK religious practices. The report says active Muslims will outnumber regular Christian churchgoers within a generation with Hindus not far behind. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams, suggested that aspects of "sharia" (Islamic regulations) would inevitably become part of British law.—*The Times Online* (5/8/08)—quoted in *Creation* (September-November, 2008)

## Box Canyon Formed by 'Megaflood'

A new study of Idaho's Box Canyon suggests it was formed rapidly by a "megaflood" and not slowly, as previously believed. The standard story is that seeping groundwater slowly eroded the canyon over a long time. A research team, however, concluded that large boulders found downstream couldn't have been transported by slow-moving water and now think a very large flood from nearby lakes carved out the canyon in a relatively short period.—*Answers* (Oct.-Dec., 2008)

## African Chimps Decline

In less than 20 years the population of West African chimpanzees in Ivory Coast has declined 90%, a study indicates. Increased levels of deforestation and poaching were considered the main factors in the decline. Ivory Coast is thought to be one of the last strongholds for the endangered species.—*bbc news* (10/17/08)

## Owning a Cat is Good For Your Health

Owing a cat may be good for your heart. Studies have previously shown a link between cat ownership and improved blood pressure, stress reduction, lower cholesterol, and a reduced risk of depression. Now a report to the American Stroke Association indicates that owning a cat may also lower the risk of cardiovascular diseases. None of the 4,435 participants in the 10-year study, who ranged in age from 30 to 75, showed any evidence of cardiovascular disease at the beginning of the study. Those who haven't ever owned a cat had a 40% higher risk of a heart attack.—*Mayo Clinic Health Letter* (November, 2008)



## Dogs Can Get Jealous

Dogs are known to be compassionate, to be able to sense human emotions and to experience both fear and anger. Now a new study published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* says they also can feel a simple form of envy. Previously only primates were thought to have this capability. In a test, two dogs were asked to perform a task. When one received a reward but the other didn't for being equally obedient, the unrewarded dog stopped obeying commands.—*www.time.com* (12/11/08)

## Vitamin D Helps Arteries

Vitamin D may help keep one's arteries healthy according to a study published in June. Researchers discovered that of 4,839 patients surveyed, those with the lowest levels of vitamin D were more likely to have peripheral artery disease than others in the survey. Many scientists suggest raising the recommended daily intake of vitamin D for adults over 52 from 400-600 IU to 800-1,000, but it is too early to recommend supplements.—*Mayo Clinic Health Letter* (September, 2008)

## And it Helps Children

The American Academy of Pediatrics, the nation's leading pediatricians group, is recommending that children from newborns to teens should double the recommended intake of vitamin D. To meet the new target of 400 units daily, millions of children will need to take vitamin D supplements. Vitamin D has been linked to strong bones and possible reduced risks for cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. Vitamin D can be found in fortified foods such as milk and baby formula, in oily fish, and in exposure to the sunshine.—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (10/13/08)

## Particle Collider Shut Down

The world's biggest particle collider in Switzerland has been grounded until spring nine days after it began operations. An electrical failure released a large amount of liquid helium into the tunnel. Repairs will take at least two months and run into the facility's planned winter break.—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (9/24/08)

## Depression is Bad for Your Heart

Depression is bad for the heart, just like smoking, inactivity, and obesity. Recent evidence suggests mental health has a powerful impact on heart health, but why? Now a paper published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* may have the answer. According to lead author, Mary Whooley of San Francisco, the answer is simple. Depressed people are less likely to exercise and more likely to smoke.—*www.time.com* (11/26/08)

## Newlyweds at Increased Risk of Depression

Newly married couples will attest to the reality of a newly talked about condition—postnuptial depression. Although not yet a clinical diagnosis, the after-wedding blues is now being discussed more and more by psychiatrists. Possible reasons for the depression include having to lower their expectations of their spouses and having to get back to the real world after the spotlight of the wedding ceremony. An estimated 5 to 10% of newlyweds suffer so much remorse or frustration that they seek professional counseling.—*www.time.com* (11/24/08)



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## Ivory

**“All your robes are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia; from palaces adorned with *ivory* the music of the strings makes you glad.”**  
**Psalm 45:8**

These words are from the Old Testament. Yet, they are talking about our Savior. Even though Jesus lived a simple life on earth, in our eyes He is our wonderful King, and we will see Him in His fully glory when He rules us in heaven.

In this passage, his royal robes are scented with a perfume made from expensive spices and His palace is covered with precious ivory.

**What is ivory?** Ivory is a material formed from the dentine (hard tissue) found in the tusks of animals such as elephants, hippopotami, walruses, mammoths and

narwhals.



**What is ivory used for?** Before the invention of plastic, ivory was used for such things as piano keys, billiard balls, bagpipes, buttons and decorations. Today, plastic has replaced ivory for many purposes.



**How are tusks similar to teeth?** They are practically the same except for their purpose. Teeth are designed to chew food. Tusks are used by various animals as weapons or tools. Both

teeth and tusks though are made of the same material including pulp (the inner part containing blood vessels and nerves), dentine, and enamel (the hard, shiny outside surface of the tooth or tusk).

**Why are some people against the use of ivory?**

Much of the ivory has come from elephant tusks. However, both the Asian and the Africa elephants are considered endangered species. Their numbers are dropping so much they soon could go extinct (meaning, disappear completely). Because many elephants have been killed for their valuable tusks, some people want to stop the killing of elephants.

**What is scrimshaw?**

Sailors on whale-catching ships called whalers often had time on their hands. To pass away the time, many sailors would carve pictures and designs on walrus tusks or on whale bones. This type of art is called

scrimshaw.

As beautiful a picture as the Psalm passage paints of a palace for our King Jesus, we believers will see something even more wonderful—his real “palace” in heaven. We don’t know when that day will come, but until it does, we will continue serving and obeying the Lord.

**Activity:** Find the answers to these questions by visiting the Web sites shown:

1. Do pianos made today still have ivory keys? (<http://www.pianoworld.com/facts.htm>) — Fact #18.

2. How many elephants are left in the wild? (<http://www.blurtit.com/q428801.html>)

3. How much do elephant tusks weigh? (<http://www.pbs.org/edens/etosha/elephant.htm>)

4. Is it legal to buy real elephant ivory today? (<http://www.belleaircoins.com/coins-and-things/ivory.htm>)





## Scientists Still Hope to Find the Fountain of Youth

A new Brad Pitt movie, based on a short story by F. Scott Fitzgerald, called *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* opened in theaters Christmas Day with an interesting plot. A baby is born with the body of a blind, decrepit old man. As he grows and matures mentally, his body develops in reverse, becoming younger with the years.

His first serious love affair occurs when physically he is 50. When he has acquired the body of a boy, he is beset with dementia. As an infant, he ends up back where he started, where, as Fitzgerald wrote, “there were only the white, safe walls of his crib.”

Although this film which focuses on death and aging is only a fable, geneticists, gerontologists, and biologists are working to make the goal of slowing the processes of aging a reality.

British-based Aubrey de Grey is chairman of the Methuselah Foundation which is looking to defeat age-related disease and extend the healthy human life

span. He imagines a future where people submit to periodic stem cell implants to refurbish older cells and gene therapies that would restore mutated DNA. But his critics explain that many discoveries have to be made before his dream can come true.

Other researchers are more modest in their goals. A Dr. William Orr is tackling “oxidative stress,” the “free radical” theory that the oxygen we breathe damages our cells. One Cynthia Kenyon is studying caloric restriction or CR, a low calorie diet shown to extend the lives of worms, flies, mice and rats. However, neither approach has proven to be suitable or effective for humans.

This striving for a Fountain of Youth is nothing new, of course. Spanish explorer Ponce de León was said to have traveled through Florida in 1513 searching for it.

Medical science has made great strides in extending our life spans, but hasn’t most of the progress come from preventing diseases such as polio and smallpox that prematurely end lives?

Some medical researchers have said there appears to be a built-in limit to how long humans can live. Yet, for Christian believers, there indeed is no limit. In heaven we will find our Fountain of Youth where we will live a 100% healthful eternity in communion with our Savior, **LSI**

—Warren Krug, editor



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