

“Clean and Green”: A Business Blockbuster

Hollywood has been churning out a slew of environmental disaster movies lately that threaten our defenseless planet with every climate horror imaginable until some heroic scientist miraculously saves us all from extinction with seconds to spare.

Not since “Soylent Green,” the 1973 sci-fi classic set in 2022 that foretold dire consequences of global warming, pollution and overpopulation, have we seen the likes of these latest doomsday flicks, “An Inconvenient Truth” notwithstanding.

If it’s true, however, that reel life imitates real life, the studios may be letting us off easy. While the film industry brought us “The Day After Tomorrow,” “Sunshine,” “Twister,” “Armageddon,” “Volcano” and “Earthquake,” it certainly did not create Katrina, the Indonesia tsunami, Mt. St. Helens, melting ice caps, crippling drought, raging wildfires, oppressive heat waves or widespread blackouts.

A storm of opinions and research still clouds today’s nonfiction script about global warming and climate change. No one knows for sure what catastrophic threat this drama truly poses in the long term. But we do know this: a rapidly growing segment of the world community is working fervently to produce a happy ending while we still can. If we succeed, you can look for Silicon Valley prominently in the credits.

Silicon Valley has long set the bar high for major innovation among the tech centers of our country and the world. Yet rarely over the past thirty years has our business community seen –

and responded so positively to – a collective challenge of the scope we currently face.

For its part, our region in particular is taking major steps to slow global warming, impact climate change, reduce dependence on foreign oil and promote environmental stewardship, all under the umbrella of a new business imperative: “Clean and Green.”

At the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, we work together with 210 member companies to improve the economic vitality and quality of life in our valley. This year, our comprehensive, 10-point Clean and Green Alternative Energy Action Plan became the foundation for a new platform of programs and projects to help employers, workers and communities in Silicon Valley address climate change and its impact on our region.

Our goal in 2007 was to raise awareness and engage those groups in as many elements of the plan as possible, from reducing fossil fuel dependency and energy consumption, to speeding up mass transit and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, to scrubbing our environment by introducing cleaner products and green building standards.

Not surprisingly, they have responded with gusto across every sector where

we focus our policy efforts – in housing, transportation and land use, in energy and the environment, in education and workforce development. Many were already well on their way to addressing the impact of climate change; others are coming aboard daily.

Once again, our valley is embracing a challenge and an opportunity to lead the nation and world. Fresh minds dedicated to this task have led to new companies, new developments and new best practices in cleantech, solar energy, fossil fuel alternatives, green building, biotechnology and life sciences.

For now, Silicon Valley is the standard-bearer for the other top tech regions across the U.S. in the commitment and efforts needed to mitigate the impact of climate change, notably in technology, energy efficiency and greenhouse gas reduction. The results have been encouraging and in some cases dramatic, but we have a long way to go – as a community, a region, a state, a nation, a world. We lag behind other regions of the country in sustainability, affordable homes, educating a more skilled workforce, land use, transportation infrastructure and tax incentives.

Our goal in 2008 is to extend this clarion call beyond Silicon Valley to the greater Bay Area, to be the pebble in the pond that spreads an ever-widening circle of involvement. While we continue to engage our own members and Silicon Valley even further in the coming year, we will be reaching out beyond our valley to businesses, elected

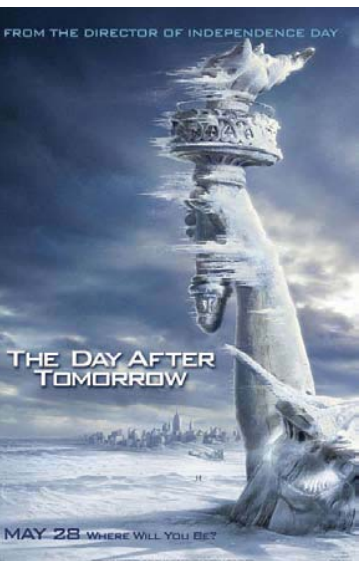
representatives, government officials, public leaders, community organizations and our neighbors elsewhere in the nine-county region with a challenge to join us.

We are confident they will because they recognize that Clean and Green is not simply a tag line but a vital strategy to ensure both economic vitality and a better quality of life for everyone. This true story of challenge, determination, struggle and triumph has great potential. It features a cast of business, government and community leaders teaming up with everyday heroes in our community to save the planet, one day at a time. (And it never hurts to have a governor with some big screen experience in world-saving.)

So dim the lights, grab some popcorn, sit back and join us as we load our own projector with a modern day blockbuster for your review. Welcome to “Projections 2008.”



Hurricane Katrina was among a series of devastating natural catastrophes in recent years that included the Indonesia tsunami, major earthquakes, widespread drought and raging wildfires.



A recent surge of apocalyptic disaster movies like “The Day After Tomorrow” represent Hollywood’s exaggerated view of the dire consequences of global warming.