

## **GAINESVILLE SUN**

### **Pamela Mincey: Biomass is closed-cycle carbon neutral**

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All science regarding Earth's atmosphere and climate change (greenhouse gases and CO<sub>2</sub>) is gathered in two U.S. science organizations: NASA's Goddard Institute of Science, and Carbon Dioxide Information Center (CDAIC), at Oak Ridge National Laboratory. This is the data that respected environmental organizations refer to.

In 2011 CDAIC converted 70 percent of its facility to forest debris-based biomass energy. The world's leading CO<sub>2</sub> scientists have endorsed sustainable forest-debris biomass as CO<sub>2</sub> neutral energy. Dr. James Hansen, of NASA's GISS, climatologist and grandfather of global warming, stated unequivocal support for Gainesville's GREC as means to reduce FFCO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

The science is complete: Biomass is closed cycle carbon neutral, sustainable, renewable energy.

Gainesville's community encourages excellence, awards academic achievements, and is the home of a major state university. We believe in science. Perhaps now The Sun news department can treat our local advances in renewable energy with the serious respect it merits. Of course, fringe groups unable to distinguish science fact from fiction will create their own headlines by harassing GRU customers and fostering improvable conspiracies of contract malfeasance. That is not real news.

Governments worldwide recognize that climate change will soon eclipse all other issues affecting society. Extreme weather includes heavy northeast snows in mid-October, no winter snow out west, record drought depleting southeastern rivers and savaging the agricultural breadbasket of the midwest. This crisis is here to stay, but Gainesville has made impressive progress to reduce further extremes. This is real news.

I visited the Energy Landscape Center, in Morbach, Germany, where all of GRU's energy solutions are on display: Solar and biomass, including R&D for bioenergy, geothermal and Petra Terra. Located on a 145-acre Cold War-era munitions site, 89 world leaders have visited ELC seeking CO2 neutral energy solutions. As Morbach has gone from bombs to roses, Gainesville is now 5th in the world with per capita solar development. That is news.

[\(www.cleanenergygainesville.org/\)](http://www.cleanenergygainesville.org/)

In upcoming elections it is critical that voters support candidates that endorse the science of renewable, carbon neutral energy for our community. Gainesville can remain a world leader by voting to support energy projects that mitigate extreme weather disasters, reduce potential for oil wars and circumvent the expensive consequences of oil, coal and natural gas consumption.

Now that is great news for Gainesville Sun headlines.

Pamela Mincey,

Union of Concerned Scientists,

Citizens Climate Lobby

Gainesville