

## Squashed By A Carbon Footprint

This may come as quite a shock to those of you who know me and consider me a pleasant, somewhat funny guy without an angry bone in his body. But here it is: I hate polar bears!

Polar bears? What is wrong with this man and what has a cute, fluffy little polar bear ever done to him? They have ruined my running, that's what!

How can a polar bear ruin my running, you may ask? Hear me out. I have allergy-induced asthma and for years have relied on an albuterol inhaler before each run to keep my windpipe open. Without it, I might as well be breathing through a straw. Not fun.

Of course, Al Gore started all this nonsense by turning drowning polar bears into movie stars in his 2006 film *An Inconvenient Truth* with an animated sequence depicting a small patch of floating ice disintegrating under a struggling polar bear until it was left swimming alone in a vast expanse of open ocean. Anyone not left a bit teary-eyed at that notion simply had no heart.

But the real inconvenient truth is that it wasn't true. There are no polar bears drowning as a result of disintegrating sea ice. Recently a ship carrying passengers on a global warming tour of the arctic even got stuck in thick sea ice that was supposedly non-existent. And despite sensational news of recent ice break-ups in the antarctic, the extent and concentration of sea ice at the southern end of the globe is greater now than at any time since 1980.

However, global warming zealots have convinced Official Washington that the CFC propellants long-used in inhalers are depleting the ozone and resulting in increased concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere which is adversely affecting the earth's climate. Therefore, the CFC propellants have been banned and replaced with others, none of which seem to work very well for me. They just don't get the medicine down into my lungs where it needs to be in order to work. This has turned my running more and more into walking as I can only last a few hundred yards at best on the small amount of air that squeezes into my lungs at a time.

Therefore, polar bears are the reason my inhalers don't work any more. And because of this, running isn't very much fun right now.

No matter that my college years in the early 1970s were marked by hysteria over global **cooling**. Considerable research exists to indicate that the earth's patterns of climate change are more likely related to solar activity than anything else and that carbon dioxide may actually have nothing at all to do with either warming or cooling since it has been found to be present in the atmosphere in much greater concentrations than today in times both warmer and cooler than today. And depending on where and how temperature is measured, the earth may well still be in a cooling cycle. Remember, there was still a ten-foot snow pack in parts of Northern New Mexico as late as this past Memorial Day.

But you would think that nothing could be more environmentally friendly than heading out on a leisurely run, right? Well, all of that could be about the change. There are those who want the Environmental Protection Agency to regulate carbon dioxide emissions under the guise of

protecting us from “climate change.” Heaven help us if it does.

Carbon dioxide is a natural by-product of human respiration and plants need it for photosynthesis. But can you imagine the wild-eyed feeding frenzy that might be tipped off when some bureaucrat realizes that a runner can exhale 25 times the amount of carbon dioxide produced by a sedentary couch potato? It won't be pretty, that's for sure.

Taken to its illogical extreme (this is a governmental agency, remember), the EPA could wind up regulating not only running, but all physical activity. And all I want is an inhaler that works.