The Solutionville Inquirer

Things Are Heating Up in Solutionville

By Keely Ng
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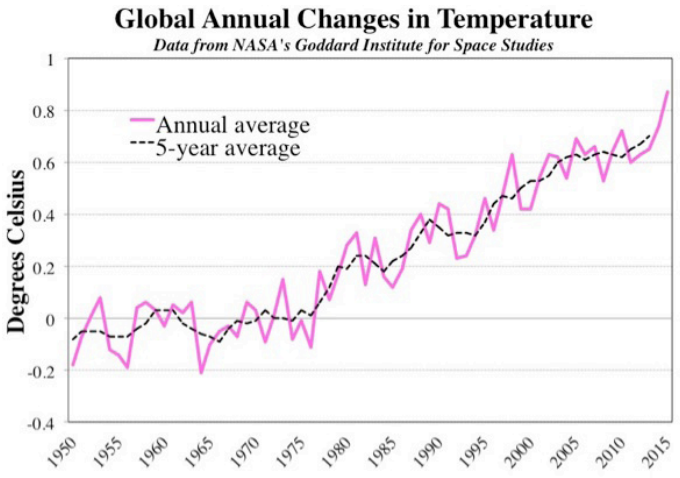
For over 60 years now, thermometers on land-based weather stations and buoys floating in the ocean have been measuring the air and water temperatures around Solutionville. And what do they show? Like a playoffs match-up between the Solutionville Suns and the Smog City Oilers, things are definitely heating up. And it turns out this isn't just happening in Solutionville, but is a trend being measured around the globe. Not only have temperatures been steadily increasing, but over the past fifteen years, the Earth has experienced record high temperatures. In fact, 15 of the warmest years on record have occurred since 2001!



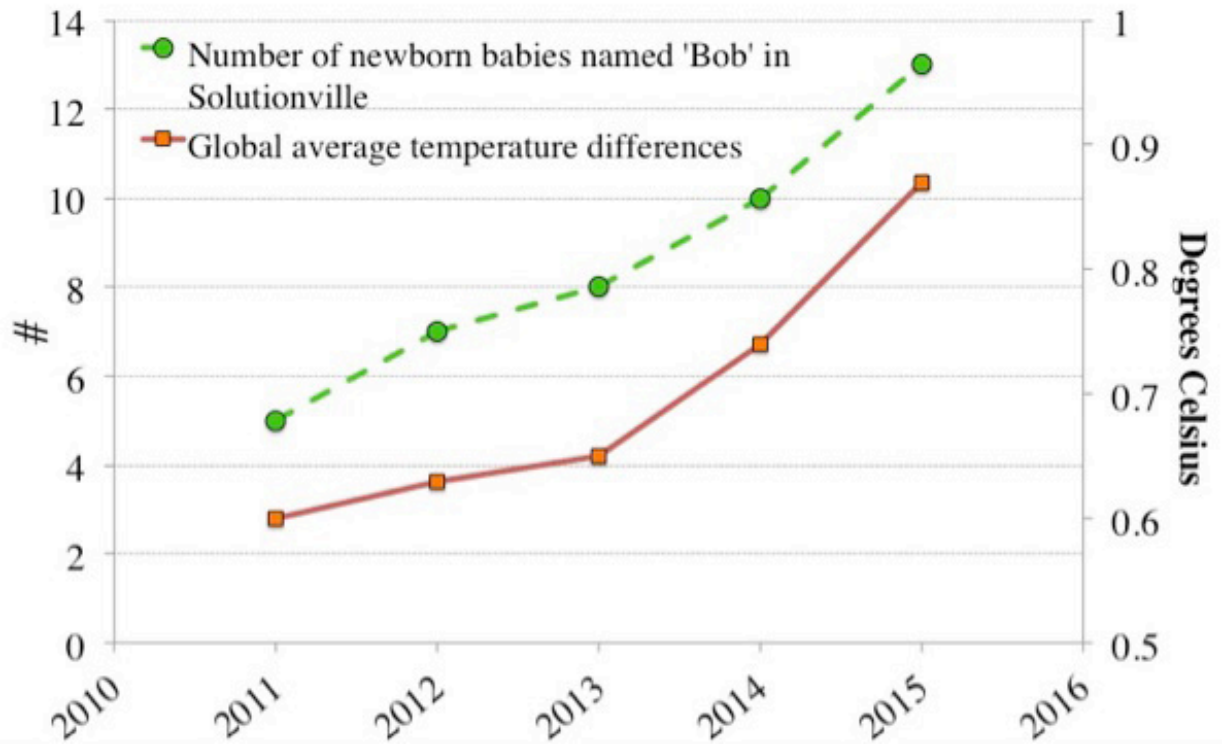
"The heat is really doing a number on things," says farmer Barry Patch. "My corn is popping, my blueberries are turning into brownberries, and my chickens are laying hard-boiled eggs!"

Residents Propose Causes and Solutions

At a recent town hall meeting at the Solutionville Community Center, residents expressed not only their growing concerns, but also brought their own hypotheses about what might be causing the warming temperatures. Three residents in particular presented data they believe support their claims. Residents of Solutionville are encouraged to voice their opinions on the credibility of each of these three hypotheses. *(continued on pages A2-A4)*

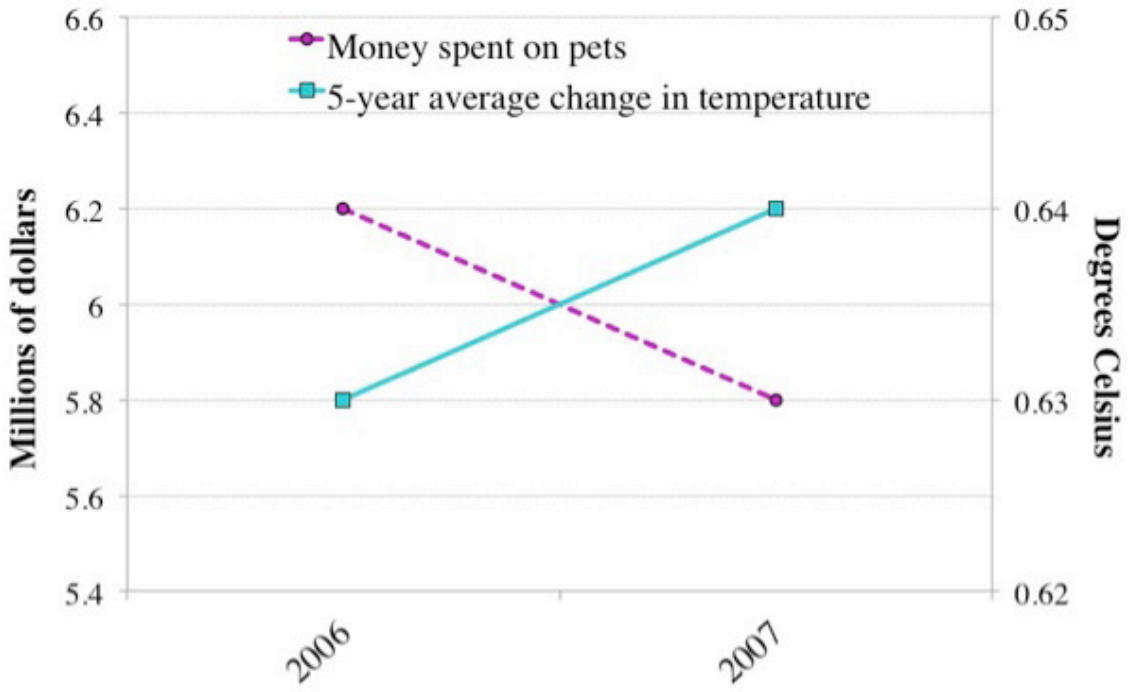
Hypothesis #1: It's All About Bob

Howie Many, a government employee in charge of the annual census in Solutionville, discovered that an increase in the number of newborn babies named 'Bob' in Solutionville since 2011 almost exactly matches the increasing temperatures. A census is an annual survey of the people living in a region to learn more about them. Howie recalls that the two Bobs he knows often complain about being too hot and are pretty sweaty guys, so it makes sense that they might heat up the environment around them. He argues that if people named 'Bob' changed their name to 'Mike' or 'Pat', or new parents stopped naming their newborns 'Bob', temperatures in Solutionville--and around the globe--would stop increasing.



Hypothesis #2: Cool Cats

Kat Zendoggs, the local pet store owner, argues that according to her store's records, between 2006-2007 the amount of money people spent on their pets in Solutionville decreased in a way that almost exactly mirrors the increasing temperatures. Kat's theory is that hamsters and parrots are happier and less stressed out when they have lots of toys, food, and other fun pet accessories. Stressed and upset animals generate heat, which can be transferred to their surroundings.
Kat believes this is what is causing temperatures to increase in Solutionville, and encourages residents to come to her store and spend lots of money on diamond-studded dog collars, lizard hammocks, and catnip caviar.



Hypothesis #3: Frozen in Time

Climate scientist Dr. Brie Search and her team at the University of Solutionville reconstructed a history of carbon dioxide concentrations in the Earth's atmosphere and global temperature variations for the past 420,000 years from air bubbles preserved in Antarctic ice cores. Dr. Search explains that in places like Antarctica, thick layers of ice have been forming for hundreds of thousands to millions of years, and that bubbles frozen in the ice captured how much carbon dioxide and other gases were in the atmosphere at the time they formed. There are also ways we can deduce from the bubbles how temperatures hundreds of thousands of years ago compare to today.

The CO_2 and temperature trends over the last 420,000 years are remarkably similar to one another. Dr. Search conducted a scientific experiment based on her hypothesis that carbon dioxide in the Earth's atmosphere can raise the temperature of the Earth's surface. The results of her experiment, which she repeated several times, show that carbon dioxide acts like a blanket that can trap heat underneath it. To learn more about using ice cores to reconstruct past climate, Dr. Search recommends checking out **this article** from NASA's Earth Observatory.