

Actor, activist encourages 'green' movement

Written by Megan Maginity, Daily Vidette Staff Writer
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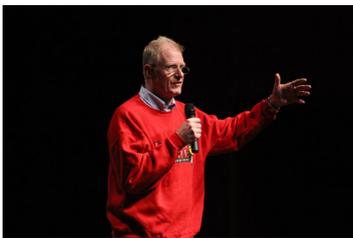
"We can all have a happier and more productive life, if we can all live simply so we can simply live," Actor and Activist Ed Begley Jr. said.

Wednesday night, Begley spoke in the Braden Auditorium in honor of ISU's Science and Technology Week. His main topics consisted primarily of activism and environmentalism.

Begley, who drove his Hybrid from L.A. to Normal, described his 40 year journey from the first Earth Day.

"I have been involved from the first Earth Day in 1970. I learned a lot about the environment from my dad, who was also an actor and activist. Some other things that impacted me were the choking smog in L.A. where I grew up, being a boy scout and just liking nature. I felt like it was something I was saving," Begley said.

While Begley started recycling in 1970, he also bought an electric car for many reasons.



"The car cost \$950 to buy and I drove it around L.A. and also used public transportation and recycled. I actually saved money from this. It was much cheaper to plug the car into the wall than buy gasoline and this is true still today.

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"Everyone will see more hybrids and electric cars soon. In the end, it is cheaper to go on electricity than gas and also cheaper to maintain and operate," he said.

Due to the bad economy, there is a list of things that a person cannot afford to do, but one thing someone can do is go out and buy an energy efficient light bulb. The cheap and easy stuff is good for the environment and for a pocketbook, according to Begley.

Still filled with hope, Begley has personally seen changes in the environment. There is four times the amount of cars in L.A. than there was when he started becoming an activist. Yet there is half the smog.

"We cleaned up L.A. with science and technology. Southern California became the model of information for the state of California and the U.S. It is proven that if we can go that far then we can clean everything up," he said.

Additionally, processes such as recycling and then actually buying recycled products can help save the earth, according to Begley.

"His talk fit very well into the overall mission of Science and Technology Week. He routinely addresses issues such as clean energy and other applied technologies that can help to reduce greenhouse gases, smart design and good urban/suburban planning to build more sustainable communities," Eric Jome, coordinator of media relations, said.

Begley serves on the following boards: the Thoreau Institute, the Earth Communications Office, Tree People and Friends of the Earth. He is also the costar of the Planet Green series "Living with Ed," and appeared in movies and television shows such as "Arrested Development," "Veronica Mars," "CSI: Miami," "Pineapple Express" and "Whatever Works."