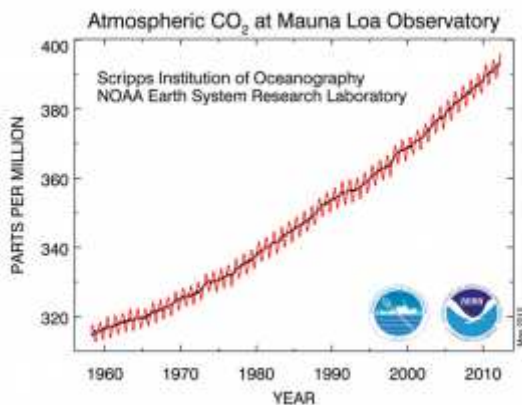




**AP: Arctic air hits a CO<sub>2</sub> milestone (the rest of use will catch up soon). Al Gore gets a comment, ditto two contrarians.**



Just a shorty here to mark a no-news story, if one defines news as surprises that depart from the norm. But it's news because it has a big round and previously unseen number in its context: 400. The AP's [Seth Borenstein reports on data gathered at the Nat'l Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Boulder, Colo labs](#)(and elsewhere) that show, over the Arctic, ambient CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations are now running at more than 400 parts per million. It goes up every year, it's been globally in the high 390s for awhile, so this was almost on the calendar.

This is a sound story and Borenstein wrings the most one could from it. It gives him a chance to describe how CO<sub>2</sub> levels, even in the Arctic, will temporarily back off a bit as the Northern Hemisphere's spring and summer explosion of vegetation growth "sucks" the gas in. While he doesn't get into it, that's why the famed Keeling plot from the Mauna Loa Observatory has its dramatic sawtooth pattern, one tooth per year.

Of some note is that science writer Borenstein, perhaps due to knowing climate change is as much a topic of politically-driven opinion as it is scientific consensus, calls a few partisan political sources. After he tends to some of the science, he gives Al Gore a shot at its meaning. Thus we learn from him that this marker highlights that the world's nations are "failing catastrophically" to deal with planetary emergency. After that along come a few of different stripe, one from the Competitive Enterprise Institute and another from the Cato Institute. The CEI man is satisfied to see that rising CO<sub>2</sub> has, confounding models (in his opinion), kept on rising but temperatures lately have flattened out.

Science reporters like to say they – we – have given up on false balance in climate stories. This story is not an outlier. It starts with the science, has Al Gore, and then a couple of men who are to my mind self-deluded (in the parlance of denialism, as seen by us lefties, people afflicted with a cultural cognition that favors lunkheadedness on environmental matters), and closes it with a pretty sturdy fact that torpedoes one opinion just expressed by

the just-referenced self-deluded wing of climate discussion. That is skewed about right. Or am I the deluded one?  
Not if you ask me.

- Charlie Petit