

# The Order of the Earth

News, Views and Musings About Our Planet

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## Fracking Disclosure Opponents Take Big Money From Industry

By **Abrahm Lustgarten**, *excerpt* ProPublica, January 14, 2011  
This post has been corrected<sup>[1]</sup>.

Congress isn't going to regulate hydraulic fracturing any time soon. But the Department of Interior might.<sup>[2]</sup> For starters, Interior is mulling whether it should require drilling companies to disclose the chemicals they use to frack wells drilled on public lands and already the suggestion has earned Interior Secretary Ken Salazar an earful.

On January 5<sup>th</sup> a bipartisan group of 32 members of Congress who belong to the Natural Gas Caucus sent Salazar a letter imploring<sup>[3]</sup> him to resist a hasty decision because more regulations would "increase energy costs for consumers, suppress job creation in a promising energy sector and hinder our nation's ability to become more energy independent."

A week later, 46 House Democrats followed up by signing a letter to Salazar<sup>[4]</sup> urging him to at least adopt the disclosure requirement because, as Rep. Maurice Hinchey, D-N.Y. said, "Communities across America have seen their water contaminated by the chemicals used in the hydraulic fracturing process."

"The public has a right to know what toxins might be going into the ground near their communities and what might be leaking into their drinking water," said the letter<sup>[4]</sup>, which was sent by the three initial sponsors of now-stalled legislation to regulate fracturing: Hinchey, Rep. Jared Polis, D-Colo., and Rep. Diana DeGette, D-Colo.

In the context of today's roiling political and energy debates, it's not at all clear who will win. But if money is an indicator, the

anti-regulatory group has the upper hand.

A back-of-the-envelope analysis of campaign finance dollars contributed to the members of Congress who are speaking out on the issue shows that the Natural Gas Caucus received 19 times more money from the oil and gas industry between 2009 and 2010<sup>[5]</sup> than the group who signed Rep. Hinchey's letter.

Interior's estimates. In 2009, 19,000 new gas wells were drilled, adding to the 493,000 gas wells already producing in the United States. According to Hinchey's office, disclosure on federal lands would set an important precedent because that information would become part of the public record and, when combined with state-based disclosure rules, "would provide a great deal of useful information for those concerned with the risks these chemicals may pose."

Traditionally, the exact recipes of chemicals used in the fracturing process have been kept secret by the companies to protect their competitive advantage and the fracturing process itself is exempt from federal regulation under the Safe Drinking Water Act. The disclosure issue has become a rallying point against natural gas development in the United States because scientists have repeatedly said that they can't thoroughly examine water contamination cases for links to drilling because they don't know what to test for.

At least four states have already mandated some degree of disclosure of fracking chemicals: Wyoming, New York, Pennsylvania and Colorado. If federal lands are added to those states, then public disclosure of fracking chemicals would be required on roughly 40 percent of the gas wells in the United States. (It's difficult to pinpoint the exact percentage because federal statistics don't distinguish between oil and gas wells.)

The resistance to disclosure mandates on federal lands contradicts the public position of many of the oil and gas companies involved. Chesapeake Energy, the company that contributed

See **Fracking** on page 4

According to data from Open Secrets, the 32 members against disclosure received \$1,742,572. The average contribution from the oil and gas sector to individuals from that group was \$54,455. Oklahoma Democrat Dan Boren, who co-chairs the caucus, personally received more than \$202,000, including almost \$15,000 from Chesapeake Energy, one of the largest natural gas producers in the United States.

By comparison, the Hinchey-DeGette-Polis group (which has 14 more people than the Natural Gas Caucus) received \$19,212 from the industry<sup>[6]</sup>. The average contribution to those members was \$1,982, 1/27<sup>th</sup> the amount donated to members of the Natural Gas Caucus.

Requiring disclosure of the chemicals used to drill on federal lands would affect only a small proportion of gas wells drilled in the country each year - roughly 11 percent by the Department of



Photo by **Abrahm Lustgarten/ProPublica**

"Communities across America have seen their water contaminated by the chemicals used in the hydraulic fracturing process," say 46 House Democrats trying to protect public health.



Photo by **Rod Rylander**

Villagers on the Ark of Albion Education Center boat enjoying their enchanted environment.

## EXPERIENCES IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

By **Rod Rylander**  
Orange Walk District, Belize

A current discussion is: Are governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and churches helping or hindering the improvement of living standards in the developing world? The question can be asked, "Why haven't 50 years of foreign aid brought more positive results?"

The basic answer is that the expanding affluent population of the world has an increasing demand for resources located in other countries, therefore putting stresses on people and the environment. Unrest leads to wars where the military-industrial complex benefits. One war can wipe out 50 years or more of progress.

Having lived in eight countries for over 12 years and having been a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer three times, I have seen my share of people trying to "help" other people. Seldom do these entities address the root problem of, "What factors created the envi-

ronment to cause these people to need help?" I will first address this question using my observations.

People who are affluent often demand services and natural resources beyond their own borders. Examples are tropical fruits and lumber, grazing areas for cows, oil and minerals, slave labor, fish and vegetables. To acquire the funds to plunder other countries, the industrialized countries use several tactics. One is encouraging developing countries to borrow more than they can repay so the IMF (International Monetary Fund) can demand that countries create higher taxes, more exports and cheaper labor. Another major tactic is to brainwash the people into consumerism so they will purchase imports that will create a larger debt for the country.

Some countries like Costa Rica are being taken over by the affluent buying land at high prices and leaving the local residents without the resources to buy a lot and build a house. The global climate and over population are

emerging giants to deal with; therefore the problem is very complex with no simple answer. Throwing money at the problem aggravates it most of the time.

It appears that when projects are created at the board level and sent down to the people, they are unsustainable. When a volunteer creates a project and implements it, it usually is abandoned when the volunteer leaves. If the volunteer facilitates a project that the people are really sincere about, then it has a much better chance of success. I have created projects that lapsed after I went home and I have facilitated people's projects that have lasted 10 years and some are going after 20 years. I have seen abandoned bio-gas, hog production, fish hatcheries, grain processing plants and other expensive projects grow up in weeds.

Some people in developing countries state that they are poor but I differ with them if they have a roof over their heads, plenty of good food and family and friends  
See **Community** on page 10

## NEW ACTIVIST STANDS OUTSIDE PUBLIC LIBRARY HANDING OUT HIS OWN CHEMTRAILS LITERATURE

**WHAT'S THAT UP IN THE SKY?**  
A PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Anonymous

**Joe:** Do those white lines in the sky look like a naturally-formed cloud to you? They aren't.

**Bob:** What are they?

**Joe:** They are a chemtrail.

**Bob:** What's a chemtrail?

**Joe:** A chemtrail is a plume of chemicals sprayed out of a plane. The chemicals create a long exhaust trail behind the plane that looks like a big long white line in the sky. On a day when the sky has fewer natural clouds and some blue sky, you can easily see the planes spraying the sky and leaving these long white lines. Usually, there are a few planes working together. Sometimes the lines crisscross each other in a grid-like pattern. After a period of time (e.g. 30 to 60 minutes), the white lines fan out into a larger hazy-like cloud. You can see the haze in the right picture above.

On many days, the sky starts out relatively clear but as the day progresses it is filled with these



The author took these photos of the sky near his home in Maryland and placed them at the top of a flyer he handed out at the public library one Saturday afternoon. The publisher of this paper happened to walk out as he was standing there and got very excited about this person's first attempt at environmental activism on behalf of his child, which he agreed to let us publish anonymously.

hazy chemical filled clouds.

**Bob:** I thought that white exhaust trails behind planes were contrails or condensation trails?

**Joe:** No, a contrail is much shorter and the tail end of the contrail is constantly evaporating within minutes without leaving visible residue behind in the sky.

**Bob:** Interesting. So why are chemtrails being purposely made in the sky?

**Joe:** That's a very good question. A growing number of peo-

ple are wondering the same thing. Apparently, the project is top secret and no one will admit that spraying is even being done. Can you imagine the amount of tax dollars that is required to procure, service and fuel a fleet of airplanes big enough to lay chemtrails across the U.S. and other NATO countries?

**Bob:** What chemicals are being sprayed into the sky?

**Joe:** Again, another good question. Independent scientists



Photos by Author

are doing their own studies in the areas where they live and are affected. They are measuring what is falling out of the sky and onto the ground. After testing the ground, plants and water, they are finding toxic levels of Aluminum, Barium and Strontium (to name a few). The scientists are deeply concerned because the known affects of these chemicals endangers ALL life. These chemtrails must be stopped ASAP. We are all breath-

ing this stuff! Each day further damage is occurring that cannot easily be undone.

**Bob:** What can I do to help?

**Joe:** Educate yourself about this topic. Seek out information and monitor the sky in your area for signs of chemtrails. Take pictures and videos to document the problem. Inform your community and local officials about the problem. We have to show outrage that this harm is being done and that there are no sys-

tems in place to safeguard us from this harm. We have to object that our tax dollars are actually making this occur! When this problem is exposed, it is almost certain that the creators of the problem will state that chemtrails are being done for the greater good of man or for your protection.

Please be skeptical and don't believe these false justifications.

To watch a documentary on the subject, search YouTube.com for "What in the World are they Spraying." It can also be purchased on Amazon.com. You can also search YouTube for chemtrails or chemical trails for more videos. This will help you know how to spot them in your area. Also search the Internet for more information on the harms of chemtrails. If this sounds crazy, it is. But we aren't the crazy people doing it and we can't allow it to go on. Feel free to make copies and distribute this flyer. Email it to all your friends. An informed public is the only way to stop this.

[Ed.: I will be happy to send you the flyer electronically if you email ionaconner@gmail.com. See page 6 to learn how and why this man took action.]

# Learn, Feel, Think and Act

## Trying to Get a Gas-Drilling Ban in Cromwell Township, PA

**By Iona**  
Shade Gap, Pennsylvania  
(in Cromwell Township)

After attending the first National People's Oil and Gas Summit in Pittsburgh in November and listening to Ben Price of the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF) talk about ordinances which protect communities from disastrous practices of greedy corporations, I decided to try to raise the issue of gas drilling and try to get my own township to pass an ordinance to ban it.

In January, when I called the Cromwell Township office to find out when the next meeting was, the Secretary offered to put me on the agenda. "Sure," I said. So I was scheduled for February 7<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. Later that week, I happened to be talking to the publisher of our local weekly newspaper and I mentioned it to him. He asked if he could put it into a News Brief. "Sure," I said.

Gee, this is going pretty well so far, thought I.

Since I had saved copies of our November/December Special Report on the Summit (full of people's horror stories resulting from gas drilling all over the country) specifically for this purpose, I went to the township office about two weeks before my appearance and the friendly Sec-

retary placed a copy of the paper in each of the three Supervisor's mailboxes.

Next, I thought I'd better gather some information in addition to what was already in my Special Report. My husband, John, printed out two articles from the Web. One was a *New York Times* story about the study of toxic fracking fluids being done by the EPA and the other was a piece from the Natural Resources Defense Council called, "The Rapid Expansion of Natural Gas Drilling across the Nation Endangers Human Health and the Environment."

Since I hadn't seen the award-winning documentary Gasland, I borrowed it from a friend and she ended up giving it to me. It is truly frightening to see how much water is poisoned by fracking chemicals and how sick people are getting from it all. I recommend that everyone watch this important movie.

The day before the meeting I was working on this issue of OE and was laying out the article about the rise in childhood cancer (page 7) and got even more frightened for the children who ingest toxic water. I called toxicologist Theo Colburn, co-author of a powerful and important book I had read about 15 years ago called: Our Stolen Future: Are We Threatening Our Fertil-

ty, Intelligence and Survival?

She was in Gasland and I was familiar with her work on endocrine-disrupting synthetic chemicals (many of the fracking chemicals are hormone disruptors). She guided me to her Web site ([www.endocrinedisruption.org](http://www.endocrinedisruption.org)) where I found lots of good data.

Ben Price of CELDF had suggested that I talk with him before I went to the Cromwell Township Supervisors but he was on vacation so his colleague, Tom Linzey, Esq., gave me some tips in a phone message and two emails. Here are the emails:

**FIRST: Saturday, February 05, 2011 5:51 PM**

**Iona,**

These presentations generally follow the same sequence. You'll need to do the following:

1. Talk briefly about hydrofracking, why it's different than conventional gas drilling and why it's bad. Use some of the horror stories coming out of places like Dimock.

2. Talk about the fact that the state, allied with the gas interests, won't be doing anything to stop hydrofracking in Pennsylvania communities.

3. Note that municipalities like Pittsburgh are standing up to ban the practice within their municipality and that other municipalities must also adopt

those ordinances to press upwards against the State – and that's the only way that the State is going to take any action.

4. You'll probably get push-back from the Supervisors, so be prepared to explain how the Pittsburgh ordinance is structured – that these are not just anti-fracking ordinances but they are actually civil rights expansion ordinances, which then – as a second step – ban those activities which violate the rights frameworks.

5. Let them know that no one else is going to stop fracking and that, unless they take steps to do so, they're going to get drilled and suffer the after-effects.

If necessary, let them know that they can call on us to help them customize the ordinance for the Township.

Let us know how the meeting goes. Thanks for moving forward with this.

Best,  
Thomas Linzey, CELDF

**SECOND: Monday, February 7, 2011 1:28 p.m.**

**Iona,**

Got your return call and wanted to send you this email today in the hopes that you might be able to read it prior to

tonight's call.

It sounds like you have your ducks in order.

The Supervisors will probably try to shelve the ordinance – it's just what they do when they don't want to deal with something; and the easiest way to shelve it is to say, "We'll have the Solicitor review it and then get back to us" – thus postponing decisions to the next meeting or the one after that (depending on how long it takes the Solicitor to get to it).

The Solicitor will inevitably say that the Supervisors can't pass anything – that the State prevents them from passing anything by the Oil and Gas Act, which preempts any local ordinance passage at the Township level.

Knowing that the Solicitor will take that path, it's always helpful to predict it and then build a response to the Solicitor's reply into your base presentation. Essentially, it doesn't matter what the Solicitor says because the ordinance is about pushing back against State preemption when that preemption is used to strip Townships of the right to govern themselves, especially when state law is used to strip away even the capacity of a community to set higher environmental standards than the State's.

The key to this organizing is getting the Supervisors to stop listening to the lawyers – that's the only way that they begin to understand that these are political decisions, not legal ones. And politically speaking, if they submit to the state law, they're going to get drilled. There's only one way that they won't get drilled, which is to try something new which places the rights of their community above the rights of the drilling corporations.

Finally, there may be an effort to bring up zoning – that to stop the drilling, the community can adopt zoning ordinances and out-zone the drilling. There's only one big problem with that – while the Township can zone the drill pads themselves into commercial or industrial areas (assuming that they want to avoid residential areas), because the hydro-fracking drilling involves horizontal drilling, it doesn't matter where the drill pads are physically – because the drill can access anywhere within the Township up to a mile or two.

Hope this helps. Let us know how it goes.

Thomas

See **Cromwell** on page 3

### Thanks to All My Friends

who helped me through a difficult time: those who pledged to the Kickstarter fundraiser including Sally Klein for a beautiful testimony, Michael Gaskill who is our first Marketing Associate, Sunny War Eagle and Pyong Roh for continuing moral support, to our distributors, our new subscribers and to anyone else who boosted me and OE while I was unemployed.

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### Global in Scope, "Down-Home" in Nature

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### The Order of the Earth News, Views and Musings About Our Planet

**Our Goal:** To provide people with news to help bring their hearts and lives back into harmony with Nature and with Most High God and his Trustworthy And True Living Spirits, Most High's Council of Elders as found below. We are also a community of activists, writers, poets and others who care about the future of the planet and we work together to nurture each other in various ways.

**Our Mission:** To inspire and encourage readers to think seriously, act intelligently and be peaceful, compassionate, courageous and creative.

**The Dream:** Humans can co-exist with Nature and, once they do, both will flourish.

**Masthead:** The masthead photo is the stream beginning to thaw where the publisher lives in Shade Gap, Pennsylvania.

#### Most High's Council of Elders

LOVE	HONOR
TRUTH	FRIENDSHIP
WISDOM	GIVING
COUNSEL	RECEIVING
UNDERSTANDING	RESPONSIBILITY
KINDNESS	SHARING
COMPASSION	COMFORT
PEACE	HONESTY
MODESTY	THANKS
HUMILITY	TRUST
INNOCENCE	CONFIDENCE
FORGIVENESS	HOPE
RIGHTEOUSNESS	SECURITY
PATIENCE	MERCY
TOLERANCE	CHIVALRY
JUSTICE	RESPECT
FAIRNESS	GENTLENESS
JOY	GOODNESS
CHARITY	CHOICE...etc.
GENEROSITY	

**DEADLINE FOR ALL SUBMISSIONS:  
10<sup>TH</sup> OF THE PREVIOUS MONTH**

*First Amendment to the U. S. Constitution: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people to peaceably assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.*

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**I no longer believe we can use  
the system to change the system.  
Let it all fall apart.  
I no longer want to live in their world  
so I must create/find my own.**

--- Kim Stenley, Taneytown MD

## Whalers Have Been Shut Down! (At Least for Now)



Photo by Sam Sielen courtesy Sea Shepherd

Japanese harpoon vessel *Yushin Maru No. 3* (right) and the factory ship *Nisshin Maru* (left) flee from the Sea Shepherd's *Bob Barker*, February 11, 2011.

By Captain Paul Watson  
Sea Shepherd Conservation Society

ABOARD THE STEVE IRWIN IN THE SOUTHERN OCEAN, February 16, 2011 (ENS) — Is it a ploy or the real deal? The Japanese Fisheries Agency is saying that the whale hunt has been suspended due to the interventions by the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society.

I think it is premature to see this as a victory for the whales yet. There has been no mention of how long this suspension will be. It could be permanent, for this season only, or it could be for a matter of weeks or even days.

What we do know is that the whalers will not be killing any whales for the next few weeks. Not because of any suspension but because it is physically impossible for them to do so. This is not a voluntary suspension. Sea Shepherd interventions have forced a closure to their illegal poaching activities.

The Japanese factory ship, the *Nisshin Maru*, is now 2,000 miles east of the whaling area. They are being tailed by Captain Alex Cornelissen and his crew on the Sea Shepherd ship *Bob Barker*.

It appears that they are heading into the Drake Passage, past Cape Horn below Chile and Argentina and into the South Atlantic Ocean. If they do that, they are most likely going to continue eastward around the continent of Antarctica to the Western boundary of their whaling area some 2,500 miles eastward below South Africa.

The *Yushin Maru #3* is having mechanical difficulties and left the *Nisshin Maru* two days ago to return to the west. The *Yushin Maru #1* and *Yushin Maru #2* are most likely still in the Ross Sea. The three harpoon vessels are useless without the factory ship the *Nisshin Maru*.

The continent of Antarctica is like a big round table with the *Nisshin Maru* and the *Bob Barker* circling clockwise from west to east. If this is their intention I will send the Steve Irwin and the *Gojira* westward counter clock-



Photo by Simon Ager courtesy Sea Shepherd

The Sea Shepherd ship *Bob Barker* blocks the Japanese factory ship's slipway so it cannot load dead whales, February 10, 2011.

wise to meet then as they come around from the west.

I am assuming the harpoon vessels will also head westward to meet up with their mother ship. Five ships heading westward and two ships heading eastward and both fleets will most likely meet somewhere below South Africa.

Unless of course the entire Japanese whaling fleet decides to head home within the next few days.

The Sea Shepherd ships will not leave the Southern Ocean until the whalers leave and return to Japan.

The *Nisshin Maru* is presently in the territorial waters of Chile and the Chilean government — the media and the people are watching it closely. It is illegal for whale meat to be transported through Chilean territorial waters. Sea Shepherd has been in touch with the Chilean Navy to keep them updated on the position of the Japanese factory ship.

This has been a very successful campaign beginning with our locating the Japanese fleet on December 31<sup>st</sup> before they had killed a single whale, to tying up two of their three harpoon boats for over a month and keeping the factory ship and the third har-

poon vessel on the run.

We have had numerous confrontations with the *Nisshin Maru* and her trio of hunter-killer boats. The *Yushin Maru #3* appears to have suffered some mechanical damage.

The 88 crew from 23 different nations on the three Sea Shepherd ships have succeeded in bringing the Japanese whaling fleet to its knees. We need to keep them there.

Every day that we prevent them from killing a whale is a victory.

All the efforts of our crews, our shore volunteers and our supporters are paying off. We have demonstrated that a small group of dedicated volunteers can make a significant difference.

I am confident that we will restore the integrity of sanctuary to the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary and that we will drive these poachers and butchers from the Southern Ocean permanently.

Operation No Compromise, our seventh voyage to defend the whales of the Southern Ocean, has been enormously successful. Many hundreds of whales will be left alive and free to live when we leave these waters in March.



Photo from Office Publisher

It may be hard for some people to understand that global warming in the Arctic is causing frigid temperatures and record-breaking snow in the Eastern United States and Europe, but that's what's happening.

## Arctic Defrost Dumping Snow on U.S. and Europe

Submitted by John Conner  
Shade Gap, Pennsylvania

By Stephen Leahy  
IPS, January 28, 2011

UXBRIDGE, Canada — The world's northern freezer is on rapid defrost as large volumes of warm water are pouring into the Arctic Ocean, speeding the melt of sea ice, according to a new study.

Surface temperatures in parts of the Arctic have been 21 degrees C above normal for more than a month in recent weeks.

"Boats were still in the water during the first week of January," said David Phillips, a senior climatologist with Environment Canada, referring to southern Baffin Island, some 2,000 kilometers (1,242 miles) north of Montreal. This is a region that receives just four or five hours of weak sunlight during the long winter. Temperatures normally range from -25 to -35 degrees C (-12 to -25 F) but were above zero on some days in January.

"It's impossible for many people in parts of the eastern Arctic to safely get on the ice to hunt much-needed food for their families — for the second winter in a row," Phillips said in a report.

The warming and melting of the Arctic is happening much faster than expected and new data reveals that huge volumes of warmer water from the North Atlantic are now flowing into and warming up the Arctic Ocean, researchers reported Friday in the journal *Science*.

"In the past hundred years the waters in the Fram Strait have warmed about two degrees C," says co-author Thomas Marchitto of Colorado University's Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research.

The Fram Strait between Greenland and Svalbard (Spitsbergen) is the major connection between the Arctic Ocean and the world ocean. An international team of researchers analyzed marine sediments and found that temperatures of the northward flowing Atlantic water varied by just a few tenths of a degree Celsius during the past 2,000 years. However, in the

last hundred years temperatures have shot up by two degrees C.

"What's happening here is very unusual compared to the last 2,000 years," Marchitto told IPS.

Climate change is believed to be behind this warmer water because over 90 percent of additional heat trapped in the atmosphere from the burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and natural gas is going into the oceans, he said.

"The accelerated decrease of the Arctic sea ice cover and the

**"In (the) future, cold and snowy winters will be the rule rather than the exception" in the eastern United States and Europe, James Overland of the NOAA/Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory in the United States told IPS.**

warming of ocean and atmosphere in the Arctic, as measured during the past decades, are in part related to an increased heat transfer from the Atlantic," said co-author Robert Spielhagen, a palaeoceanographer at the Academy of Sciences, Humanities and Literature in Mainz, Germany.

Sea ice has declined dramatically during the short Arctic summers in recent years, with some experts now projecting that the ice cover will be essentially gone in as little as five years. Just a few years ago, no one thought a summer ice-free Arctic could happen before 2060.

The warming Arctic and melting sea ice is a planetary-scale change since the Arctic Ocean covers 14 million square kilometers (8.7 million square miles), an area almost as big as Russia. The Arctic and Antarctic polar regions are key drivers of Earth's weather and climate. The rapid defrosting of the Arctic has already altered the climate system, researchers now agree.

IPS previously broke the story revealing that the snow and cold

in the eastern United States and Europe during the winter of 2009-10 was likely the result of the loss of Arctic sea ice. The same thing has happened this year.

As more and more sea ice melts, there is more open water to absorb the summer sun's heat. A day of 24-hour summer sun in the Arctic puts more heat on the surface of the ocean than a day in the tropics, James Overland of the NOAA/Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory in the United States told IPS.

That extra heat in the ocean is gradually released into the lower atmosphere from October to January as the region slowly refreezes months later than normal. This is a fundamental change — a large part of the Arctic Ocean is radiating heat instead of being cold and ice-covered. That has disrupted wind circulation patterns in the northern hemisphere, reported Overland and other researchers at the International Polar Year Oslo Science Conference in Norway last June.

The result: the Arctic stays warm and mid-latitude regions become colder and receive more snow for much of the winter. Last December was the coldest south Florida has experienced in more than a century of record-keeping.

Most of Britain suffered through its coldest December ever. Up in the Arctic, Coral Harbour on the northwest corner of Hudson Bay was above zero degrees C (32 degrees F) for two days in early January for the first time in history. Much of the eastern Arctic centered around Baffin Island averaged +21C above normal between December 17<sup>th</sup> and January 15<sup>th</sup> this year.

This looks to be the new normal since Arctic experts agree the melting sea ice is now locked into a death spiral.

"In future, cold and snowy winters will be the rule rather than the exception" in the eastern United States and Europe, Overland previously told IPS.

This week the U.S. northeast suffered through its sixth major snowstorm this winter, breaking all snowfall records.

## Shell Abandons Plans for Summer 2011 Drilling Off Alaska Coast

ANCHORAGE, Alaska, February 4, 2011 (ENS) — Due to a complex permitting situation that is still unresolved, Shell Oil has abandoned its plan to drill in Alaska's Beaufort Sea in the summer of 2011, deferring any drilling there to the summer of 2012.

"This is not an environmental issue," said Pete Slaiby, vice president for Shell Alaska, in a media briefing about Shell's drilling decision on Thursday. "We have made significant and voluntary capital improvements in the air emissions technology we have applied to the entire [drilling] program that will allow us to have almost no material impact on the Arctic airshed."

"It is an issue of processing a permit application in a timely way," said Slaiby. "We have been in this process, trying to achieve an air permit, now for five years."

But environmental and indigenous groups who have been fighting Shell's drilling plan in the courts since 2007 contend that Shell's drilling is an environmental issue.

The drilling was planned for waters just offshore the Arctic



Photo by P. Burns

Polar bear mother and cubs on the shore of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge overlooking the Beaufort Sea.

National Wildlife Refuge and directly in areas used by endangered bowhead whales for migration, feeding and resting. The proposed drilling threatened to harm wildlife and coastal Alaska Native communities that depend on the ocean to sustain their unique subsistence culture, said attorney Erik Grafe with the nonprofit law firm Earthjustice.

"Shell was still required to obtain a number of authorizations before it could have drilled in 2011," said Grafe. "It required an authorized exploration plan and consideration of revisions to its oil spill plan from the Department of Interior, permits from the National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service."

See SHELL page 9

## Cromwell continued from page 2

OK, I felt well-prepared yet, although I've done a LOT of public speaking, I was a bit nervous. When we arrived, the room was more crowded than usual — maybe 12 people all together — and no newspaper reporter. I had hoped the larger newspaper would have coverage of my presentation but he was absent.

When we got the agenda, I noticed that I was next to last but at the beginning of the meeting the Chairman announced that he was moving me up so I could be first. I handed out the extra copies of my OE Special Report to everyone and launched into my talk. People were attentive. It was almost as if they had not heard much about this issue. I did not feel that it was appropriate to go on and on with so many others waiting their turns, so I just spoke for about six or seven min-

utes, asked if there were any questions (no), asked if anyone wanted extra copies of OE (one did) and then the Chairman said (as Tom Linzey had warned) that they had already discussed it with the Solicitor (lawyer) and he will get back to them after he's done dealing with the sewage problems. I asked the Chairman to give Gasland to the Solicitor so he could watch it and I asked if they'd help me plan a community showing of the DVD (no answer). I asked them to let me know when the Solicitor will be there so I can show up again. I told them that CELDF would work with them on drafting an ordinance and gave them the phone number of the main office.

On the way home, my husband asked, "Is that the end of that?" "NO!" I answered. I am not

done. I have at least three next moves: 1. Show up when the Solicitor is there and hope maybe CELDF can be there, too. 2. Get my DVD back after the Solicitor sees it (IF he sees it) and start showing it around town. 3. Publish this story as it unfolds in my own newspaper. I told them I was going to do that so it won't be a surprise when the Supervisors read this account next month.

P.S. A week later I asked if the newspaper publisher who put the notice in his News Briefs would like to publish this story and he did! At the end of that, I offered to show Gasland to anyone who was interested. Actually, the daily newspaper had a distorted summary of my presentation the next day apparently via a phone interview.

To be continued . . . . .

Fracking continued from page 1

## Campaign Contributions From Oil and Gas Industry, 2009-2010

Source: Open Secrets<sup>[7]</sup>

### TO THE NATURAL GAS CAUCUS

Tim Murphy (R-PA) Co-Chair Natural Gas Caucus	\$202,500
Dan Boren (D-OK) Co-Chair, Natural Gas Caucus	\$96,350
Marsha Blackburn (R-TN)	\$57,500
Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO)	\$0
John Shadegg (R-AZ)	\$12,400
Lee Terry (R-NE)	\$52,650
Dan Burton (R-IN)	\$2,600
Frank Lucas (R-OK)	\$48,350
Jason Chaffetz (R-UT)	\$19,500
Jim Costa (D-CA)	\$59,900
Christopher Lee (R-NY)	\$16,650
Jason Altmire (D-PA)	\$10,450
Kevin Brady (R-TX)	\$91,400
John Fleming (R-LA)	\$121,650
John Sullivan (R-OK)	\$124,800
Bill Shuster (R-PA)	\$25,000
Sue Myrick (R-NC)	\$21,000
Rob Bishop (R-UT)	\$17,750
Glenn Thompson (R-PA)	\$55,072
Cynthia Lummis (R-WY)	\$89,550
Mark Critz (D-PA)	\$0
Bob Goodlatte (R-VA)	\$7,000
Thaddeus McCotter(R-MI)	\$3,000
Denny Rehberg (R-MT)	\$35,550
Mike Conaway (R-TX)	\$132,100
Tom Cole (R-OK)	\$80,500
Gene Green (D-TX)	\$83,600
Wally Herger (R-CA)	\$7,000
Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV)	\$49,900
Mike Coffman (R-CO)	\$44,250
Ralph Hall (R-TX)	\$48,750
Mike Ross (D-AR)	\$125,850
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,742,572</b>

### TO THE HINCHEY-DEGETTE-POLIS GROUP

Maurice D. Hinchey (D-NY)	\$0
Diana DeGette (D-CO)	\$2,750
Jared Polis (D-CO)	\$0
Gary Ackerman (D-NY)	\$5,800
Barbara Lee (D-CA)	\$3,250
Howard L. Berman (D-CA)	\$0
Earl Blumenauer (D-OR)	\$6,062
Lois Capps (D-CA)	\$0
William Lacy Clay (D-MO)	\$0
Steve Cohen (D-TN)	\$0
Gerald Connolly (D-VA)	\$4,500
Keith Ellison (D-MN)	\$1,750
Eliot L. Engel (D-NY)	\$0
Sam Farr (D-CA)	\$0
Barney Frank (D-MA)	\$0
Raul Grijalva (D-AZ)	\$2,500
Mazie Hirono (D-HI)	\$4,000
Rush D. Holt (D-NJ)	\$0
Michael M. Honda (D-CA)	\$1,000
Dennis J. Kucinich (D-OH)	\$0
James R. Langevin (D-RI)	\$0
Zoe Lofgren (D-CA)	\$2,500
Nita M. Lowey (D-NY)	\$7,700
Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY)	\$9,500
Betty McCollum (D-MN)	\$0
Mike Thompson (D-MS)	\$5,250
James P. Moran (D-VA)	\$1,500
Jerrold Nadler (D-NY)	\$15,100
John W. Olver (D-MA)	\$3,000
William L. Owens (D-NY)	\$0
John P. Sarbanes (D-MD)	\$4,050
Janice D. Schakowsky (D-IL)	\$0
Jose Serrano (D-NY)	\$0
Jackie Speier (D-CA)	\$0
Fortney Pete Stark (D-CA)	\$0
Paul Tonko (D-NY)	\$4,000
Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)	\$6,000
Lynn C. Woolsey (D-CA)	\$0
Mike Quigley (D-IL)	\$0
Chellie Pingree (D-ME)	\$0
Jay Inslee (D-WA)	\$0
Bob Filner (D-CA)	\$0
Dale E. Kildee (D-MI)	\$0
Donna F. Edwards (D-TX)	\$1,000
Steven R. Rothman (D-NJ)	\$0
Adam Smith (D-WA)	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$91,212</b>



Photo by Helen Slottje courtesy ShaleShock

Horizontal fracking operation in Dimrock, Pennsylvania.

## FRACKING WITH DIESEL A VIOLATION

WASHINGTON, D.C., February 4, 2011 (ENS, *excerpt*) — Oil and gas service companies have injected over 32 million gallons of diesel fuel, or hydraulic fracturing fluids containing diesel fuel, into wells in 19 states between 2005 and 2009 without permits, a congressional investigation has revealed.

Begun by three Democratic members of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce in February 2010, the investigation looked at the potential impact on water quality of using diesel fuel injected at extremely high pressure to crack rock seams, releasing the natural gas and oil trapped within.

Under the 2005 Energy Policy Act, any company that performs hydraulic fracturing using diesel fuel must receive a permit to be in compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act.

In the course of their investigation, Representatives Henry Waxman of California, Edward Markey of Massachusetts, and Diana DeGette of Colorado sent letters to 14 oil and gas service companies requesting information about the type and volume of chemicals they used in hydraulic fracturing fluids between 2005 and 2009.

All the companies voluntarily provided the committee with data on the volume of diesel fuel and other hydraulic fracturing fluids they used during the five-year period. Twelve of the 14 companies acknowledged using diesel in their fracking operations.

In a letter to U.S. EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson dated January 31, the legislators wrote, "We learned that no oil and gas service companies have sought — and no state and federal regulators have issued

permits for diesel fuel use in hydraulic fracturing."

"This appears to be a violation of the Safe Drinking Water Act," they wrote. "It also means that the companies injecting diesel fuel have not performed the environmental reviews required by the law."

The EPA's Office of Research and Development also is currently conducting a scientific study to examine the possible relationships between hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, and drinking water quality.

"A key unanswered question is whether the unregulated injection of diesel fuel or fluids containing diesel is adversely affecting drinking water supplies," the legislators wrote to Jackson.

None of the hydraulic fracturing service companies track the nearness of the wells they fracture to underground sources of drinking water, which they said is the responsibility of the oil and gas well operators.

For this reason, the legislators told Jackson they have been "unable to draw definitive conclusions about the potential impact of these injections on public health or the environment."

Analysis of data provided by the companies shows that BJ Services used the most diesel fuel and fluids containing diesel, more than 11.5 million gallons, followed by Halliburton, which used 7.2 million gallons.

Four other companies, RPC (4.3 million gallons), Sanjel (3.6 million gallons), Weatherford (2.1 million gallons) and Key Energy Services (1.6 million gallons), used more than one million gallons of diesel fuel and fluids containing diesel.

Of the 19 states where diesel-containing fluids were

injected, Texas accounted for half of the total volume injected, 16 million gallons.

The companies injected at least one million gallons of diesel-containing fluids in Oklahoma, North Dakota, Louisiana, Wyoming and Colorado.

In total, the companies used 10.2 million gallons of straight diesel fuel and 21.8 million gallons of products containing at least 30 percent diesel fuel.

But in January 2010, Energy In Depth, a group representing most of America's oil and gas producers, wrote that, "Diesel fuel is simply not used in fracturing operations."

"The industry has been saying they stopped injecting toxic diesel fuel into wells but our investigation showed this practice has been continuing in secret and in apparent violation" of the Safe Drinking Water Act, said Waxman, a former chairman of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce and currently the panel's ranking Democrat.

Diesel fuel contains toxics, including benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylenes. The Department of Health and Human Services, the International Agency for Research on Cancer and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have determined that benzene is a human carcinogen.

Chronic exposure to toluene, ethylbenzene or xylenes has been shown to cause damage to the central nervous system, liver and kidneys.

While fracking is used in more than 90 percent of natural gas and oil wells, not all fracking operations use diesel fuel. Other fracking fluids are water-based but some formations cannot be cracked by these fluids...

so heavily to Rep. Boren, has repeatedly stated that it supports more transparency and believes the chemicals used in fracturing should be disclosed.

[1] /article/opponents-to-fracking-disclosure-take-big-money-from-industry#hinchey\_correx

[2] <http://www.doi.gov/news/pressreleases/Salazar-Holds-Forum-to-Examine-Best-Practices-for-Hydraulic-Fracturing-in-Oil-and-Natural-Gas-Production.cfm>

[3] <http://naturalgascacucus.murphy.house.gov/index.cfm?sectionid=46&iontree=8,46&itemid=92>

[4] [http://hinchey.house.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1544:hinchey-degette-and-polis-lead-46-house-members-in-support-of-fracking-chemical-disclosure-requirements-on-public-land&catid=71:2011-press-releases](http://hinchey.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1544:hinchey-degette-and-polis-lead-46-house-members-in-support-of-fracking-chemical-disclosure-requirements-on-public-land&catid=71:2011-press-releases)

[5] #naturalgascacucus

[6] #hincheygroup

## PA Fracking Blowout Spews Fluid onto State Forest Lands

Submitted by Michael Ochs Williamsport, Pennsylvania

By G. Jeffrey Aaron

Ithaca Journal, January 25, 2011

Talisman Energy has resumed its Marcellus drilling operations in Pennsylvania a week after one of the company's gas wells experienced a blowout that caused an uncontrolled discharge of sand and fracking fluids onto state forest lands in Tioga County.

As a result of the incident, Talisman shut down all of its hydraulic fracturing operations in North America while it conducted an internal investigation into the cause of the January 17th blowout. Those operations have since resumed, with Talisman's Pennsylvania drilling program being the last to be brought back online.

Meanwhile, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has requested Talisman provide answers to nine questions related to the blowout as part of its investigation into the incident. The investigation could result in civil penalties levied against Talisman.

The well where the blowout occurred is on Pennsylvania state forest lands in Ward Township, about nine miles southeast of Mansfield.

"There is certainly the possibility of a civil penalty that would be determined at a later time," DEP spokesman Daniel Spadoni said. "But we need to have the investigation concluded to our satisfaction before the civil penalties would be addressed."

Talisman, based in Calgary, Alberta (Canada) has five days from receipt of the letter, called a Notice of Violation, to submit the information requested by the DEP. The letter was dated Monday.

Among other items, the DEP wants Talisman to submit a sampling plan for the site, information on any fluids released during the blowout, an analysis of the incident's cause, changes in all of the company's Marcellus operations as a result of the incident and when those changes will be implemented.

DEP is also asking why it was [not] notified shortly after the 1:30 p.m. January 17th when the incident began a little after noon.

"This was a serious incident that could have caused significant environmental harm had it not been brought under control," DEP North-central Regional Director Nels Taber said in a statement. "DEP is conducting a thorough investigation to determine why this incident occurred."

Talisman began having problems controlling the well in the early afternoon of January 17th. According to initial reports, a needle valve on a casing wing valve failed, which resulted in loss of well control.

By the time DEP was notified of the incident by a Talisman representative, CUDD Well Control services, based in Houston with a local office in Canton, Pennsylvania, was on the scene.

During the blowout, fracking fluids and sand discharged from the well into the air. It does not appear that any significant amount



of natural gas was released, the DEP said. There was no fire, no explosion and no injuries. The well was successfully shut down around 3:45 p.m. that day.

Fracking involves blasting millions of gallons of chemical-laced water and sand into the well to break up dense shale more than a mile underground and release the gas trapped inside. Some of the water returns to the surface as a brine laden with dissolved solids such as sulfates and

chlorides, as well as metals.

Inspections conducted last week by DEP staff at the site verified that the fluids had been contained to the lined well pad. The fluids were cleaned up by a contractor and further sampling will be conducted to determine if any contaminated soil needs to be removed.

Staffers from Pennsylvania's Oil and Gas Program also collected soil samples last week from beneath the well pad liner.

Those test results have not yet been received.

Spadoni said the DEP has been investigating the incident since the day it happened and includes interviews with Talisman representatives and the taking of soil samples. So far, the investigation has identified three violations.

1 The potential pollution of freshwater streams near the well site, which carries a civil penalty of up to \$10,000 for each day the violation continues.

2 Releasing fracking fluids onto the ground, a violation of Pennsylvania's Solid Waste Management Act that carries a civil penalty of \$25,000 per day.

3 Failing to contain hydraulic fracturing fluids, a violation of DEP's Oil and Gas Act that is punishable by a civil penalty of up to \$25,000 and \$1,000 for each day of continued violation.

In a prepared statement, Talisman said it has modified the design of the failed component to prevent reoccurrences at other Marcellus Shale well sites. The company also said the incident was "regrettable" and it will apply what's been learned to the "continuous improvement of our well site operations."

Talisman budgeted close to \$1 billion to develop its holdings in the Pennsylvania Marcellus Shale play last year. The number of producing wells has dramatically risen from 53 wells in 2009 to 150 wells at the end of last year. The company ended 2010 with a production volume of 315 million cubic feet of natural gas per day.

While Talisman's drilling program makes it one of Pennsylvania's most active natural gas exploration and drilling companies, it is also one of the state's most often cited for violations.

Last year, the DEP conducted 189 inspections of Talisman's Marcellus Shale well sites, finding 151 violations on 91 of those inspections. Only Chief Oil & Gas, based in Dallas, Texas with a field office in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, had more violations in 2010.

For 2011, Talisman has budgeted \$800 million for its Marcellus program and plans to reduce the number of drilling rigs from 12 to nine this year. The company expects to drill 100 Marcellus wells this year and looks to raise its production average to between 350 and 400 million cubic feet per day.

The last blowout reported in Pennsylvania by the DEP was in June, when an EOG Resources Inc. well went out of control for 16 hours and sent polluted drilling water into a couple of nearby creeks.

A state consultant's investigation found that EOG did not use a proper backup pressure-control system and had taken similar safety shortcuts on at least some of its other wells in Pennsylvania.

(Ed.: The AP contributed to this story. I tried to use the Ithaca Journal Web site to get permission to reprint this article but it didn't work.)

# Climate Benefits of Natural Gas May Be Overstated

By Abraham Lustgarten  
ProPublica, January 25, 2011  
This post has been corrected.<sup>[1]</sup>

The United States is poised to bet its energy future on natural gas as a clean, plentiful fuel that can supplant coal and oil. But new research by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)<sup>[2]</sup> – and a growing understanding of the pollution associated with the full “life cycle” of gas production – is casting doubt on the assumption that gas offers a quick and easy solution to climate change. Advocates for natural gas routinely assert that it produces 50 percent less greenhouse gases than coal and is a significant step toward a greener energy future. But those assumptions are based on emissions from the tailpipe or smokestack and don't account for the methane and other pollution emitted when gas is extracted and piped to power plants and other customers.

The EPA's new analysis doubles its previous estimates for the amount of methane gas that leaks from loose pipe fittings and is vented from gas wells, drastically changing the picture of the nation's emissions that the agency painted as recently as April. Calculations for some gas-field emissions jumped by several hundred percent. Methane levels from the hydraulic fracturing of shale gas were 9,000 times higher than previously reported.

When all these emissions are counted, gas may be as little as 25 percent cleaner than coal, or perhaps even less.

Even accounting for the new

analysis, natural gas – which also emits less toxic and particulate pollution – offers a significant environmental advantage. But the narrower the margins get, the weaker the political arguments become and the more power utilities flinch at investing billions to switch to a fuel that may someday lose the government's long-term support.

Understand exactly how much greenhouse gas pollution comes from drilling is especially important because the Obama administration has signaled that gas production may be an island of common political ground in its never-ending march toward an energy bill. The administration and Congress are seeking not just a steady, independent supply of energy, but a fast and drastic reduction in the greenhouse gases associated with climate change.

Billions of cubic feet of climate-changing greenhouse gases – roughly the equivalent of the annual emissions from 35 million automobiles – seep from loose pipe valves or are vented intentionally from gas production facilities into the atmosphere each year, according to the EPA. Gas drilling emissions alone account for at least one-fifth of human-caused methane in the world's atmosphere, the World Bank estimates, and as more natural gas is drilled, the EPA expects these emissions to increase dramatically.

When scientists evaluate the greenhouse gas emissions of energy sources over their full lifecycle and incorporate the methane emitted during production, the advantage of natural gas holds true only when it is burned in more modern and efficient plants.

But roughly half of the 1,600 gas-fired power plants in the United States operate at the lowest end of the efficiency spectrum. And even before the EPA sharply revised its data, these plants were only 32 percent cleaner than coal, according to a lifecycle analysis by Paulina Jaramillo, an energy expert and associate professor of engineering and public policy at Carnegie Mellon University.<sup>[3]</sup>

Now that the EPA has doubled its emissions estimates, the advantages are slimmer still. Based on the new numbers, the median gas-powered plant in the United States is just 40 percent cleaner than coal, according to calculations ProPublica made based on Jaramillo's formulas. Those 800 inefficient plants offer only a 25 percent improvement. Other scientists say the pollution gap between gas and coal could shrink even more. That's in part because the primary pollutant from natural gas, methane, is far more potent than other greenhouse gases and scientists are still trying to understand its effect on the climate – and because it continues to be difficult to measure exactly how much methane is being emitted.

In November the EPA announced new greenhouse gas reporting rules for the oil and gas industry. For the first time under the Clean Air Act, the nation's guiding air-quality law, thousands of small facilities will have to be counted in the pollution reporting inventory, a change that might also lead to higher measurements.

The natural gas industry, in the meantime, has pressed hard for subsidies and guarantees that would establish gas as an indispensable source of American energy and create a market for the vast new gas reserves discovered in recent years. The industry would like to see new power plants built to run on gas, automobile infrastructure developed to support gas vehicles and a slew of other ambitious plans that would commit the United States to a reliance on gas for decades to come.

But if it turns out that natural gas offers a more modest improvement over coal and oil, as the new EPA data begin to suggest, then billions of dollars of taxpayer and industry investment in new infrastructure, drilling and planning could be spent for limited gain.

“The problem is you build a gas plant for 40 years. That's a long bridge,” said James Rogers, CEO of Duke Energy, one of the nation's largest power companies. Duke generates more than half of its electricity from coal but Rogers has also been a vocal proponent of cap-and-trade legislation to limit greenhouse gas emissions.

Rogers worries that a blind jump to gas could leave the country dependent on yet another fossil resource without stemming the rate of climate change.

“What if, with revelations around methane emissions, it turns out to be only a 10- or



An antelope passes by a natural gas drilling rig south of Pinedale, Wyoming. Wildlife also suffers from natural gas drilling.

Photo Douglas C. Pizac/AP file photo

20-percent reduction of carbon from coal? If that's true,” he said, “gas is not the panacea.”

The American Petroleum Institute said in an emailed response that federal offshore drilling rules are already cutting down on the emissions tallied by the government. Spokesmen for the Independent Petroleum Association of America and the natural gas lobbying groups Energy in Depth, American Clean Skies Foundation and America's Natural Gas Alliance, which have all been pushing to expand the use of gas, declined to comment on the EPA's new figures and what they mean for the comparison between gas and coal.

But industry groups point out that gas looks attractive compared to the alternatives. Nuclear energy is less polluting than gas from a climate-changing perspective but it is costly and viewed skeptically in the United States because of the dangers of disposing of radioactive waste. So-called “clean coal” – including underground carbon sequestration – could work but the technology has repeatedly stalled, remains unproven and is at least 15 years away. Renewable sources like wind and solar are being developed rapidly but the energy is expensive and won't provide a commanding supply of electricity for decades.

Gas, on the other hand, is plentiful, accessible and local.

**Methane Is a Potent Climate Gas**

Measuring the amount of natural gas that is leaking during drilling is one challenge. Getting a grip on how that gas – which is mostly methane – affects the environment and what effect it will have on global warming, is another. And on that, some scientists still disagree.

Greenhouse gases include carbon dioxide, as well as methane, propane and lesser-known gases that also affect climate change. For the purposes of standardization, all these gases are described together using the unit Co<sub>2</sub>e, or carbon dioxide “equivalent.” But because each gas has a different potency, or “warming” effect on the atmosphere, a factor is applied to convert it to an equivalent of carbon dioxide.

Methane, the primary component of natural gas and among the more potent greenhouse gases, has far more of an effect on climate change than carbon dioxide. But determining the factor that should be applied to measure its relative warming affect is still being debated.

To crunch its numbers, the EPA calculated the average concentration of methane in the atmosphere over a 100-year period and determined that over that period methane is 21 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Using that equation, a ton of methane emissions is the equivalent of 21 tons of carbon dioxide.

But some scientists argue that the impact of methane gas should be calculated over a shorter time period because methane degrades quickly and because gas drilling releases large quantities of methane into the atmosphere all at once, likely concentrating and amplifying the effect.

Robert Howarth, an environmental biology professor at Cornell University, used research from the United Nations to calculate that if methane's potency

were considered over 20 years rather than 100 years, it would be 72 times as powerful as carbon dioxide in terms of its warming potential.<sup>[4]</sup>

Figured that way, the climate effect of methane from natural gas would quickly outpace the climate effect of carbon dioxide from burning coal. Howarth's research is incomplete and has been criticized because at first he failed to figure in methane emissions from coal mining. But he said that, after correcting his error, the emissions from coal barely changed and the data still showed that the intensity of methane could erase the advantages of using natural gas.

“Even small leakages of natural gas to the atmosphere have very large consequences,” Howarth wrote in a March memorandum<sup>[5]</sup>, which he says is a precursor to a more thorough study that could begin to scientifically answer these questions. “When the total emissions of greenhouse gases are considered ... natural gas and coal from mountaintop removal probably have similar releases and in fact natural gas may be worse in terms of consequences on global warming.”

Howarth says his latest calculations show that the type of shale gas drilling taking place in parts of Texas, New York and Pennsylvania leads to particularly high emissions and would likely be just as dirty as coal.

Environmental groups say factual data on how much methane is emitted from gas fields – and what the warming affect of that methane is – should be locked down before major policy decisions are made to shift the nation toward more reliance on gas.

“You can't just assume away some of these sources as *de minimus*,” said Tom Singer, a senior policy analyst for the Natural Resources Defense Council who focuses on emissions reporting in New Mexico. “You need to get a handle on them before you can make a determination.”

**Clean Enough to Count On?**

Getting a solid estimate of the total lifecycle emissions from natural gas is critical not only to President Obama's – and Congress' – decisions about the nation's energy and climate strategy but also to future planning for the nation's utilities.

Even small changes in the lifecycle emissions figures for gas would eventually affect policy and incentives for the utility industry and ultimately make a big difference in how gas stacks up against its alternatives.

Rogers, the Duke executive, says the country's large promised reserves of natural gas must also hold up for gas to prove beneficial, in terms of both cost and climate. If domestic reserves turn out to be smaller than predicted or the nation runs out of gas and turns to liquefied gas imported from overseas, then the green-

house gas footprint of natural gas would be almost equal to coal, Jaramillo pointed out in her 2007 lifecycle analysis, published in the *Journal Environmental Science and Technology*<sup>[6]</sup>. That's because the additional processing and shipping of liquefied gas would put even more greenhouse gas pollution into the atmosphere.

“In the 60's we put a needle in one arm – it was called oil,” Rogers said. “If the shale gas doesn't play out as predicted and we build a lot of gas plants in this country and we don't drill offshore, we're going to be putting the needle in the other arm and it's going to be called gas.”

The utilities are in a bind because they have to build new power plants to meet the nation's demand for energy, while anticipating an as-yet-undefined set of federal climate and emissions regulations that they believe are inevitable. Do they build new gas-fired plants, which can cost \$2 billion and take three years to bring online? Or do they wait for proven systems that can capture carbon from coal-fired plants and sequester it underground?

If carbon sequestration works, coal-based power emissions could drop by 90 percent, said Nick Akins, president of American Electric Power, the nation's largest electric utility and the number-one emitter of greenhouse gas pollution. That suggests to Akins that natural gas may not be the solution to the nation's energy needs but rather the transitional fuel that bridges the gap to cleaner technologies.

“Going from a 100 percent CO<sub>2</sub> emitter to a 50 percent solution when you could go beyond that is something we need to turn our attention to,” said Akins. “If there is a 90 percent solution for coal and other forms like nuclear and renewables, then obviously you want to push in that direction as well.”

<sup>[1]</sup>article/natural-gas-and-coal-pollution-gap-in-doubt#methane\_correx

<sup>[2]</sup>See EPA.gov: Hydraulic Fracturing. “EPA's Current Hydraulic Fracturing Study (2010-2012)”

<sup>[3]</sup>See “A Life Cycle Comparison of Coal and Natural Gas for Electricity Generation and the Production of Transportation Fuels” by Paulina Jaramillo at [www.cmu.edu](http://www.cmu.edu) “Carnegie Mellon Electricity Industry Center.”

<sup>[4]</sup>Howarth writes: “We have a paper submitted for consideration for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. The ProPublica piece was based on an old progress report posted online for this work, from last March. The most current update is from last week and is available on line at <http://www.eeb.cornell.edu/howarth/GHG%20update%20for%20web%20-%20Jan%202011%20%282%29.pdf>.”

<sup>[5]</sup><http://www.propublica.org/documents/item/cornell-university-3-2010-draft-report-on-greenhouse-gas-emissions-from-hyd>

<sup>[6]</sup><http://www.propublica.org/documents/item/comparative-life-cycle-air-emissions-of-coal-domestic-natural-gas-Ing-and-s>

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# How Green Became the Color of Money

Submitted by John Conner  
Shade Gap, PA

## A Concise History of the Rise and Fall of the Enviro Establishment

By Jeffrey St. Clair  
Counterpunch.org

In the early summer of 1995, Jay Hair quietly resigned as head of the National Wildlife Federation. This Napoleonic figure had transformed a once scruffy, apolitical collection of local hunting and gun clubs into the cautious colossus of the environmental movement with more than four million members and an annual budget of nearly \$100 million. By the time Hair left, the Federation enjoyed more political clout in Washington than the rest of the environmental groups combined.

Hair, a former biology professional who also served as a special assistant to Secretary of the Interior Cecil Andrus during the Carter Administration, was the architect of this astounding transformation. Under the firm hand of Hair's leadership the Federation's membership doubled and its budget tripled. His strategy was simple: market the Wildlife Federation as a non-confrontational, corporate-friendly outfit.

Hair created the Corporate Conservation Council and forged relationships with some of the world's most toxic corporations: ARCO, Ciba-Giegy, Dow Chemical, DuPont, Exxon, General Electric, General Motors, IBM, Mobil Oil, Monsanto, Penzoil, USX, Waste Management and Weyerhaeuser. The corporations received the imprimatur of the nation's largest environmental group, while the National Wildlife Federation raked in millions in corporation grants.

The conservation giant showed less deference to its members. In 1975, Dr. Claude Moore, a long-time member, donated a 367-acre tract of forest land in Loudoun County, Virginia to the Federation to be managed as a wildlife sanctuary. The land provided rich habitat for an extraordinary number of birds. A Smithsonian guidebook called the area a "natural gem."

Then in 1986 the National Wildlife Federation decided to sell the sanctuary to a developer for \$8.5 million and use the money to help pay for the construction of the Federation's new seven-story office building on 16<sup>th</sup> Street in D.C. Outraged, Dr. Moore and other members sued the Federation, alleging it had violated a contract to manage the land as a nature preserve. Moore lost. The land was sold and 1,300 houses constructed on the site.

While Hair was turning the National Wildlife Federation into a corporate-friendly operation, the Wilderness Society was being run by a millionaire from Montana named Jon Roush. Roush had formerly been the chairman of the Nature Conservancy, the most unapologetically pro-corporate of all environmental groups.

In the winter of 1995, Roush was caught selling off \$150,000 worth of timber from environmentally-sensitive lands on his own 800-acre ranch in Montana's Bitterroot Valley. The trees went to Plum Creek Timber Company, the corporate giant which a conservative congressman from Washington, Rod Chandler, labeled the "Darth Vader of the timber industry."

Roush's first gallant reaction to a probing call was to blame it on his wife, whom he was in the process of divorcing. He later claimed that he needed to sell off the timber to pay his property taxes. However, local tax records revealed that Roush owed less than \$1,000 a year in taxes on property valued at nearly \$3 million.

At the same time, the National Audubon Society was being run by a lawyer named Peter Berle, who commanded an annual salary of \$200,000. After he savagely trimmed away the muscle from the Society's conservation staff, Berle gloated, "Unlike Greenpeace, Audubon doesn't

have a reputation as a confrontational organization."

How did it come to this? Why in the mid-1990s, when Democrats were in control of the government, did the nation's largest environmental groups, which once stood as such a potent force for radical change, mutate into a servile adjunct to the entrenched powers of Washington and Wall Street?

To uncover the forces that drove this transformation, we have to return to the days of the Nixon administration, the glory time of American environmentalism. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the nation rallied to the cause of cleaning up the country's waters and air, preserving its remaining wild lands and undammed rivers, regulating the use and disposal of hazardous chemicals, rescuing wildlife from extinction.

Recall the first Earth Day: April 22, 1970. It was the brainchild of a United States senator, Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin, who wanted a national teach-in on the environment. Nelson proclaimed that the environment "was the most critical issue facing mankind." The teach-in became a media event, orchestrated by a young Harvard educated lawyer, Dennis Hayes, who set forth the lofty protocols of the new movement: "Ecology is concerned with the total system – not just the way it disposes of its garbage."

That first Earth Day – when millions participated in demonstrations, clean-ups and rallies across the country – has been hailed as the largest organized event in American history and as a symbol of rebellion against pollution and the exploitation of natural America.

It didn't take Congress long to get the message. The House and Senate speedily decreed a new era in environmental laws: 1970 saw the creation of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the passage of the Clean Air and National Environmental Policy acts, under which protecting earth, air and water legally became a priority for all federal agencies. Environmental impact statements, for example, give "good science" a word in response to corporate projects. Even the Pentagon was required to play along. Then in 1972 came the Clean Water Act, the first pesticide regulations, the Noise Control Act and a series of laws protecting marine animals and coastal beaches. A year later Congress authorized the Endangered Species Act, regulated toxic chemicals and passed new green laws governing the use of public lands.

Throughout the 1970s, environmental standards stiffened, with legislation covering everything from Superfund (to finance clean-up of toxic dumps) to drinking water standards. The environmental decade culminated with the passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Act in 1980, which protected about 110 million acres of wilderness, an area larger than the state of California.

In those halcyon days, Congress was well-stocked with conservationists: Ed Muskie, George McGovern, Jennings Randolph, Birch Bayn and Eugene McCarthy. Even in the West, where states were still commonly regarded as resources to be exploited, environmentalism had its champions: Idaho's Frank Church, Montana's Lee Metcalf, Arizona's Morris Udall and Oregon's Wayne Morse and Bob Packwood, an original co-sponsor of the Endangered Species Act.

In his 1970 State of the Union address, Richard Nixon embraced the green theme, proclaiming that, "We must make our peace with nature" and reclaim "the purity of its air, its waters and our living environment. It's literally now or never."

To be sure, that supple politician seized this chance to divert the attention of an increasingly restive middle class from the horrors of his war against Vietnam. Nixon understood that "the environment" could bring together every dreamer green enough to impale an avocado seed on a toothpick and raise it up in the thin light of the Me

Decade. The environment might bring the beat legions of the counter-culture together with the heavier left; it could ally those radicals, seniors, working people and the press. Forthwith, Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency, to which he named William Ruckelshaus as overseer. Ruckelshaus confronted industry polluters – he was the first federal bureaucrat to do so – before being drafted to his short-lived tenure as Attorney General, where he turned on his plucky boss.

In that heady decade even the Supreme Court sheltered a radical conservationist, William O. Douglas. Douglas believed that nature should be afforded legal rights. In 1972, he drafted a fierce dissenting opinion in the case of *Sierra Club v. Morton*, arguing in forceful and poetic language that wilderness itself deserved standing in federal lawsuits, so that before "priceless bits of Americana (such as a valley, an alpine meadow, a river or a lake) are forever lost or are transformed as to be reduced to the eventual rubble of our environment, the voice of the existing beneficiaries of these environmental wonders should be heard." Douglas further suggested that conservationists who "have an intimate relationship with the inanimate object about to be injured are its legitimate spokesmen." Thus did Douglas help give birth to both environmental law and, though he is rarely credited for it, the deep ecology movement.

The 1970s saw the green movement mature as a political force with a permanent D.C. presence, most notably through the creation of the League of Conservation Voters – an organization later headed by Bruce Babbitt – which, for the first time, tracked the environmental voting records of members of congress. Eco-lobbyists, often operating from basements and dingy offices on DuPont Circle, were considered the leanest and most effective on the Hill.

Meanwhile a more confrontational and grassroots-based faction of the environmental community was beginning to take root, spearheaded by the Arch Druid himself, David Brower. (Brower, branded the Arch Druid by John McPhee of *The New Yorker*, was fired by the Sierra Club because he was too radical, founded Friends of the Earth and was later dislodged from there for similar reasons.)

Using the tactics learned from the civil rights and anti-war movements, this more confrontational wing of the green movement, mustered in groups such as Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace, deployed aggressive media campaigns, civil disobedience and direct action against the corporations themselves.

The decade of the 1970s closed with another huge demonstration which was in its own way as prodigious as Earth Day. In the wake of Three Mile Island, 750,000 people crammed together on the Mall in front of the Capitol to protest the evils of nuclear power, chanting, "Hell no, we won't glow" along with the likes of Tom Hayden, Jane Fonda, Jackson Browne, Michael Harrington and Barry Commoner, who had decided to run for president on the green platform of the Citizens' Party ticket. One of the chief organizers of the event was Donald Ross, a young protégé of Ralph Nader, who had helped establish a nationwide network of Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs) on college campuses.

That bright afternoon on the Mall was the last light that shone on the D.C.-centered green movement. In a decade and a half of Reagan, Bush and Clinton, the environmental corps in D.C. ripened into a complacent putty. The corporate counter-attack on greens began in the West with the rise of the Sagebrush Rebels, an amalgam of ranchers, corporate executives, free-market economists and right-wing politicians who decried environmentalism as socialism-by-another-name and as a back-door assault on property rights.

The Sagebrush Rebels were



Photo by Author

Evidence of spraying in the sky over Frederick, Maryland on February 3, 2011.

## Why I Created and Gave Out Chemtrails Flyers

OE Editor Asked:  
What led you to write the Public Service Announcement on Chemical Trails (page 1)?

So what's my story? Why does a successful, 45-year-old, middle-class, family man raised with Christian values start educating others about a somewhat unbelievable chemical trail subject matter?

I am a product of the public school system and mass media. Together they taught me that we live in the freest country and our government exists to serve the people. That the ever-expanding government agencies assist and safeguard the best interests of its citizens. That as a citizen all I had to do was obey the law, get good grades in school, go to college, get a good-paying job, pay my taxes, get married, buy a house, start a family, enjoy radio, music, TV, movies, church and sports and I would have all the spoils of life and be happy.

So for a long time, I was a follower. I did all those things above and I was very happy. Like most people, "Monkey See, Monkey Do." We imitate what we see as acceptable/popular so we are accepted in society. What we don't understand and were never taught is that societies are engineered by their rulers. Every society in the past has always had rulers who engineered its own system for controlling the masses of people.

Our society is no different. The rulers are usually people in the shadows with old wealth and old knowledge of how to control people and engineer societies. Their biggest trick is that they must pull off this charade without the people of society being aware that they are being manipulated. You have to understand the rulers have infinite resources at their disposal in a compartmentalized, pyramid scheme.

In the U.S. society we are manipulated by being given the belief that we participate in freedom/democracy in conjunction with an artificial economy. When, in fact, we are slaves to our government (paying taxes on our labor) which spends our money and indebts the public to the rulers/financiers of society. The rulers control how much freedom we have at all times and set the policy within our government via resources they control.

My awakening started when my normal one-year-old son developed autism after being given his one-year vaccinations and flu shot. This sent my family's life into a crisis. We had to figure out how to help my son.

Unfortunately, the mainstream medical establishment has no cure and no help for people with autism. So we had to do our own research. It was that research which revealed that vaccinations actually cause more harm than good (con #1). Part of the treatment program was to go

on a special diet. We started learning how food can heal the body. In doing so we learned how almost all mainstream food (non-organic) has harmful, long-term effects on the body (con #2). We learned about the synthetic drugs and chemicals added to food. Why would the FDA allow this?

At a similar time, we were still getting adjusted to the 9/11 aftermath (con #3) and the war in Iraq (con #4). A friend steered me to watch the "Loose Change" video on YouTube and my life was changed forever. The evidence that the government is not serving the people just kept mounting and mounting. A little later we found out that there were no weapons of mass destruction and no 9/11 ties from Saddam Hussein. Thus, the whole United State's justification for imposing a war on Iraq was false.

Through the Internet, I was now exposed to alternative media. I learned how so much factual information is simply hidden from the people to serve someone else's cause. I now had tons of resources to enlighten me on information that was suppressed by the mainstream media. My learning experience and pool of resources has continued to grow for about seven years now. You have to introduce yourself to this information slowly. It is a lot for your mind to adjust to and comprehend a new reality. You also have to learn how to deduce what information appears to be fact and what could still be fiction (logic skills help). Given what I have learned, I know I must propagate this information to save the things I value in life.

### A Few Resources I Would Like to Share:

The One Dollar DVD Project ([www.onedollardvdproject.com](http://www.onedollardvdproject.com)) is a great place to get low-cost copies of DVDs which can educate you quickly about the cons. You can usually view these videos for free on YouTube if you know what to search for. But there is also a ton of junk on YouTube. This Web site sorts through the junk to provide quality, reviewed material at a very cheap price so you can distribute it to others. Film is a much easier way to introduce a detailed, complex subject that can't be explained in a short conversation. I've learned a lot from these films. New titles are added frequently.

If you don't want to purchase the films, you can also use the Web site to get the film titles or subject matter and search/watch them for free on YouTube.

Another incredible resource, Alan Watt ([www.cuttingthroughthematrix.com](http://www.cuttingthroughthematrix.com)), is a great historian who is able to show how societies are ruled and manipulated. He broadcasts for an hour on weekdays via satellite at [republicbroadcasting.org](http://republicbroadcasting.org). You can listen to his shows live or for free the next day via computer download from his Web site. For each broadcast, he links documents and videos of all discussed resources on his Web site for your review. You will get lots of reference info from Alan and he

has years worth of archives of his shows. He tries not to take any sides. He just tells it like it is. He accepts no paid sponsors (Wow, very few do this) so he won't be influenced by a particular group. He works off of listener donations. His content can be a little advanced for newbies but the more you listen the more you'll catch on. His Web site is not fancy but the content is priceless.

The [www.republicbroadcasting.org](http://www.republicbroadcasting.org) Web site is a great place to get daily U.S. and world news as well as links to other alternative media Web sites.

I received information about chemical trails about a year ago. Of course, I was in denial at first. I couldn't believe that it could be true. But I kept hearing more information about it. Then I went and researched it on my own, finding plenty of documentation on it. Once I started watching the sky more regularly, I could see the spraying happening quite frequently. Once you see it for yourself, it is so obvious.

How can we as a people be so blind? The answer: It's all in our programming. Most of us are raised to have good values. We believe our authority figures have good values. We believe our government leaders have good values. We assume rich, successful people have better values when we elect them into power. We are optimistic that people around us all want the same good things we do. We have lost track of our survival instincts. Thus, it is very hard to comprehend when people we trust do bad things. We don't want to believe it. Thus, it is very easy for us to be conned and manipulated.

However, there is hope. I can see more and more people waking up. And it all starts by informing others in a way they can comprehend. Once people can understand how they have been conned once, they will regain their survival instincts and become more skeptical before accepting/ignoring what is imposed upon them. I think chemical trails are an easier issue to talk to non-awake people about because you can visually show it to them and they can see it with their own eyes. We are being sprayed like bugs! Whatever is being sprayed will eventually land at our level and go into our air, food and water supply. Please don't just accept this. Please inquire/research what is going on and get others to become aware/active. There is strength in numbers.

I choose to remain anonymous because there is no benefit to circulating my name. I am donating my time and related costs to try and help us all in this and other freedom-related areas. We all need to participate (in this and other freedom-related issues) because there is an opposing side just hoping we will be passive so they can continue to make the rules and control our existence (or non-existence).

[Ed.: I will be happy to send your comments or questions to the author of these two articles. See page 2 for contact information.]

# Rise in Childhood Cancers Parallels Toxic Chemical Proliferation



Photo by Matthew Crawford

Incidences of childhood cancer are increasing across the United States. This toddler is not having a normal life.

WASHINGTON, D.C., January 26, 2011 (ENS) — Bipartisan legislation was introduced in Congress today to help communities determine whether there is a connection between clusters of cancer, birth defects and other diseases, and contaminants in the surrounding environment.

Senator Barbara Boxer, a California Democrat who chairs the Environment and Public Works Committee, introduced the bill with Senator Mike Crapo, an Idaho Republican and cancer survivor.

Senator Boxer said, "Whenever there is an unusual increase in disease within a community, those families deserve to know that the federal government's top scientists and experts are accessible and available to help, especially when the health and safety of children are at risk."

"As a two-time cancer survivor, I know that cancer can come from many sources," said Senator Crapo. "Through increasing federal agency coordination and accountability and providing more resources to affected communities, families will have more information and tools to maintain health and well-being."

The bill would authorize federal agencies to form partnerships with states and academic institutions to investigate and help address disease clusters.

A coalition representing more than 11 million Americans is urging Congress to do more, specifically to update the 1976 Toxic Substances Control Act without delay.

The Safer Chemicals, Healthy

Families Coalition warned today in a teleconference that cancer in American children has increased since 1975, while exposure to toxic chemicals has also intensified.

Environmental public health expert Dr. Richard Clapp told reporters on the call, "The incidence of childhood cancers has unequivocally been going up for the last 20 years, at about a one percent increase per year."

"We know a lot more than we did in 1975 about the causes of childhood cancers. One component is environmental chemical exposures, which produce damage at the cellular level," said Dr. Clapp, professor emeritus of environmental health at Boston University School of Public Health, who served as director of the Massachusetts Cancer Registry from 1980 to 1989.

"Mortality has been going down because some treatments are more effective and fewer people are dying at a childhood age from the cancer they were originally diagnosed with," said Dr. Clapp but he emphasized that there are many more known carcinogens in the environment now than there were in 1975.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer, a part of the World Health Organization, this year looked at over 900 chemicals and identified 107 that are known to cause cancer, said Dr. Clapp. "In 1975 there were about a dozen things known to cause cancer in humans."

As incidences of childhood leukemia and brain cancer have increased, Dr. Clapp pointed to

exposure to chlorinated solvents such as trichlorethylene and carbon tetrachloride in drinking water as a factor in childhood cancer clusters found in Woburn, Massachusetts and Toms River, New Jersey.

Chlorinated solvents are used for a wide variety of commercial and industrial purposes, including degreasers, cleaning solutions, paint thinners, pesticides, resins and glues.

These are only some of the 80,000 chemicals which have been produced in the United States to create commonly-used products, which include known carcinogens such as asbestos, formaldehyde (see article on page 12), lead, cadmium and vinyl chloride, with virtually no government oversight, warns the Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families Coalition.

Last year the President's Cancer Panel report\* provided confirmation that exposure to toxic

**"We should have full information on all chemicals on the market," said Christine Brouwer, who founded Mira's Movement in 2008 after her daughter, Mira, died at the age of four from complications of treatment for brain cancer.**

chemicals is an important and under-recognized risk factor for cancer and recommended that the government take immediate action to reverse this trend. The Panel advised Congress to reform the Toxic Substances Control Act, commenting that this law is "the most egregious example of ineffective regulation of chemical contaminants" and noting that weaknesses in the law have constrained the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency from being able to properly regulate known and suspected carcinogens.

"We see cancers increasing and other diseases in kids to be increasing and we know some of this increase is due to the increase in chemicals," said Sean Palfrey, MD, professor of clinical pediatrics and public health at Boston University.

"We can eat them or drink, breathe them and absorb them through our skin. They harm the blood cells related to leukemia or brain cells and show up years later," said Dr. Palfrey.

"Cigarettes are related to cancer, so is radiation from natural sources and from radiation therapies used to treat the very cancers we are trying to cure, chem-

icals in food, in our houses, environmental chemicals," he said. "These chemicals are not changing human genetics but are handing down chemicals that can affect the genetic functions of mothers and children."

Dr. Palfrey said doctors are worried that some of the chemicals being released into the environment are untested in adult humans and in even more vulnerable children. "People like myself have been tested to see if we have them in our blood and urine — and sure enough we do," he said.

"The problem is we are putting so many new chemicals out into our children's environment and our bodies have never seen these things before. Our bodies don't know how to protect themselves so our bodies store them and then, when a woman gets pregnant, those stored chemicals may be released, circulated to fetal blood or breast milk," Dr. Palfrey explained.

There are things people can do to limit their chemical exposure. Dr. Palfrey advises people to wash all produce, eat local organic produce, not use pesticides in homes and gardens and to ask doctors if that CT scan, which subjects patients to radiation, is really necessary.

Dr. Palfrey, who has been medical director of the Boston Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, advises that renovating a house may stir up asbestos or lead and he advises people not to buy or rent near high voltage power lines, which emit electromagnetic frequencies.

The two doctors and Andy Igrejas, national campaign director of Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families, are among those advocating for legislation that helps prevent chemical exposure. They are urging the EPA, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Consumer Product Safety Commission to take a close look at chemicals being put into the environment.

"We should have full information on all chemicals on the market," said Christine Brouwer, who founded Mira's Movement in 2008 after her daughter, Mira,



Photo by Barbara Mowery

New carpets contain toluene, benzene, styrene, formaldehyde, acetone and other chemicals that are known carcinogens.

died at the age of four from complications of treatment for brain cancer. The organization supports and advocates on behalf of children with cancer and their families.

"I believe Mira's brain cancer was caused by toxic chemical exposure," Brouwer told reporters on the call.

"There are so many possible multiple sources of exposure," she said, "baby products, bath products, household products. Lindane is used to treat lice; parents put it on their children's heads. Do they know it causes cancer?"

In 2009, nine chemicals, including lindane, were added to a list of toxic substances that are to be eliminated under the Stockholm Convention, an international treaty.

"In Europe, the burden of proof of safety lies with the chemical companies," said Brouwer, "While here, the company's right to make a profit is paramount."

New types of tumors are

emerging due to exposure to new chemicals, Brouwer said. "Most people believe the government regulates chemicals but it doesn't," she said, urging Congress to quickly reform the Toxic Substances Control Act.

**\*President's Cancer Panel: "The true burden of environmentally-induced cancers has been grossly underestimated," says the President's Cancer Panel in a strongly worded report that urges action to reduce people's widespread exposure to carcinogens. The panel advised President Obama, "Use the power of your office to remove the carcinogens and other toxins from our food, water and air that needlessly increase health care costs, cripple our nation's productivity and devastate American lives." Report can be read at <http://pcp.cancer.gov>.**

Contact Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families Coalition at: [saferchemicals.org](http://saferchemicals.org); 202-912-8403 or [info@saferchemicals.org](mailto:info@saferchemicals.org).



Pesticide warning sign at Manito Park in Spokane, Washington. Photo by jetsand zeppelins

## MIRA'S STORY: MY AMAZING DAUGHTER'S FIGHT AGAINST CANCER

By Christine Brouwer  
Ithaca, New York

[ENS Editor's Note: Christine Brouwer founded Mira's Movement in 2008 after her daughter, Mira, died at the age of four from complications of treatment for brain cancer. The pediatric cancer advocacy organization supports families facing a childhood cancer diagnosis and works to make the public more aware of the devastating impact cancer has on children and their families.]



Photo courtesy Mira's Movement Christine Brouwer.

ITHACA, New York, January 26, 2011 (ENS) — My name is Christine Brouwer and I'm part of this conversation today because my daughter Mira, a beautiful, funny and smart little girl, was diagnosed with a brain tumor one week before her second birthday. From the moment my husband and I heard this awful news, we have wanted to know, "Why did this happen? What could have caused this?"

Today, five years since that initial diagnosis, these questions still haunt us, especially because Mira is no longer with us. Sadly, my daughter is just one of the thousands of children diagnosed with cancer each year and there are thousands of parents around the country who are struggling with the same question.

Although there are few definitive answers to the question of why children get cancer, I know that many of us have a strong

intuitive feeling that something in our environment is causing our kids to get sick. I will most likely never know what caused my daughter's cancer but researchers are finding more and more links between the hazardous substances in our homes and workplaces and cancer and other diseases.

Mira was 23 months old when she began to complain of headaches. A week later, she began to throw up once or twice a day. A week later she began to sit on the couch for longer periods of time. Yet another week later, she was refusing to walk. After four weeks of symptoms and tests with no clear answers, her doctor sent her for a CT scan. Five minutes later a technician was saying to us, "The radiologist would like to speak with you." Moments later, we were looking at a CT image on a monitor that the radiologist was explaining showed hydrocephalus — a buildup of fluid and pressure on the brain. He said Mira would need surgery immediately to relieve the pressure in her head. The hydrocephalus was caused by a blockage between the brain and the spinal cord. The blockage was a brain tumor.

We were about to embark on a journey that I had never imagined. A parent's worst nightmare is for their child to be diagnosed with a life-threatening illness. I was about to watch my one-year-old and the rest of my family go through hell.

Mira had 10 hours of surgery

the next day during which the surgeon removed only 65 percent of her tumor. She was on a ventilator in the pediatric Intensive Care Unit for a week when it was determined that she needed a tracheotomy. On January 27, her second birthday, she had two surgeries to insert a trach and a gastric-jejunal feeding tube. One week later she had surgeries to implant a Hickman catheter (central IV line) into her chest for chemo administration and a VP Shunt (tubing) to drain the excess fluid from her brain to her abdomen. You're now only beginning to get the picture.

I am just brushing the surface of her illness. The daily existence of helping Mira to live with her medical disabilities and steering carefully through cancer treatment was incredibly complicated, stressful and painful. Mira's treatment included 10 more surgeries, five cycles of chemotherapy and two types of radiation.

After 15 months of treatment and side effects, Mira had beaten her cancer. The following week she had her trach removed, then also her central IV line. We celebrated every step towards recovery and normalcy. She began pre-K the following fall and loved school and her friends.

On her fourth birthday, January 27, 2008, she woke up complaining of dizziness. She fell down that morning and we guessed that her cancer was back. An MRI the next day confirmed our worst fears — her tumor had



Photo credit unknown

Toxic chemicals are now found in breast milk.

returned. The recurrence of an aggressive tumor, after all the treatment she'd been subjected to, did not provide an optimistic picture.

She had another successful surgery and in March began another treatment regimen. A few weeks later, while on vacation in Florida, the treatment made her unexpectedly ill. Mira became very sick, very quickly. We took her to the hospital in Tampa, where she was admitted. She was moved to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit two days later where, her body unable to fight any longer, she died four days later.

I share this part of Mira's story because it is not enough to say, "My daughter had cancer." It is not enough to say, "She was incredibly ill and it was a horrible experience." You have to get a sense of all she, and her family who loved her so dearly, endured. To properly understand why each of us needs to care so much about eradicating the causes of this disease, I believe that you

have to envision a child that you love going through this hell. No child should have these challenges and hardships in their life. Our children are not statistics. We need to commit to this issue and act to prevent the harm being needlessly inflicted upon them.

There is growing evidence linking toxic chemicals and carcinogens in our environment with childhood cancer. Over the past 20 years, the rate of childhood cancer has increased; however, there is reluctance on the part of some of our elected representatives to take strong action based on these findings. Many states are now enacting stronger regulations around the disclosure and use of chemicals in household products. Shouldn't we ask businesses to create and sell products that won't harm our children and families? Shouldn't our health be our highest priority?

In my personal quest for an

## Marine Preserves Can Increase Some Fishermen's Risk of Drowning

**Note from Editor:** We have heralded the establishment of marine preserves as wonderful things so I thought it was important to show this side of the story.

HONOLULU, Hawaii, January 6, 2011, WORLD-WIRE — For fishermen on Guam who have traditionally fished inshore, a major concern is the loss of accessible fishing grounds caused in part by the establishment of five marine preserve areas (MPAs) in 1997. Fishermen have reported that the MPAs have displaced them from traditional fishing grounds, prevent them from teaching fishing techniques in a safe environment to the younger generation and impact the future of their local culture.

Now a report released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) [in accordance with the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Conservation and Management Act],\* provides concrete evidence on how dangerous fishing has become for the indigenous Chamorro fishermen [of the Mariana Islands] since fishing restrictions in the MPAs at Tumon Bay, Piti Bomb Holes, Sasa Bay, Achang Reef Flat and Pati Point have been enforced.

"The major finding of the study was that, for Chamorro fishermen, the risk of drowning more than doubled after MPAs were enforced in 2001," note authors Devin L. Lucas and Jennifer M. Lincoln, PhD. On the other hand, non-Chamorro fishermen experienced a sharp decrease in the risk of drowning after MPAs were established.

The NIOSH report, The Impact of Marine Preserve Areas on the Safety of Fishermen on Guam, also found that the pro-

portion of drowning deaths to Chamorro fishermen that occurred on the East Coast (in more hazardous waters) increased from 20 percent during 1986-2000 to 63 percent during 2001-2009.

The report concludes: "Before the MPAs were established, Guam residents fished primarily in the protected areas of the Western (leeward side) and Southern Coasts. Non-Chamorro fishermen were predominately recreational users, while Chamorro fishermen were more likely to subsist on the resource. As MPAs were established and enforced, the traditional and popular fishing grounds on the West Coast and Southern tip of the island were restricted. Non-Chamorro recreational fishermen most likely scaled back their fishing activities since few accessible, safe areas remained open.

At the same time, Chamorro subsistence fishermen began fishing more heavily on the East Coast (windward side of the island). That increased exposure to more hazardous conditions resulted in higher risk of drowning."

For a copy of the report, please go to <http://www.wpcouncil.org/news>. For more on Guam's MPAs, go to <http://www.wlguamdawr.org/aquatics/mpa>.

*\*The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council was created by Congress in 1976 and is authorized by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to manage fisheries in federal waters surrounding Guam, Hawaii, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Pacific remote island areas.*



Icy Bay, Yahtse Glacier and Mount Saint Elias.

Photo courtesy Alaska.edu

## A Glacier in Flux Plunges Seaward

On the edge of one of the planet's most ice-covered regions, an Alaska glacier is ignoring all climate signals as it advances to the sea. Scientists aim to find out why – and what it means for sea levels around the world.

By Nathan Rice  
DailyClimate.org, January 3, 2011

ICY BAY, Alaska — The icebergs looked impenetrable. Roman Motyka needed a route through.

"If you see an opening anywhere, let me know," said the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) glaciologist, at the wheel of a small skiff pattering through the ice-choked bay off the Gulf of Alaska.

Beyond the iceberg maze loomed the nose of a glacier that, contrary to a warming climate, is advancing into the sea. Motyka and his team were here – in one of the most ice-covered regions on the planet – to find out why.

"Just a hair to the left," said Tim Bartholomaus, doctoral student at UAF, poised at the bow with fishing spear in hand to fend off encroaching ice.

The boat thunked against a truck-sized ice cube and redirected through a small opening between bergs. Ice scraped the aluminum hull like frozen fingernails on chalkboard.

The source of the ice – the Yahtse Glacier – is one of five glaciers that empty into Icy Bay beneath the towering Saint Elias Mountains. The Yahtse's rogue advance is one stage in what glaciologists call the "tidewater glacier cycle" – a drama of growth and retreat that unfolds over centuries.

This process of glacial equilibrium can be sparked by changes in climate but then assume a life of its own. It can lead to runaway glacier retreats seen elsewhere in Alaska and Greenland – big contributors to a rising sea.

But as the Yahtse advances, it is also thinning, underscoring the mystery behind exactly how these glaciers change over time.

Recent research has fingered the ocean as a trigger for tidewater glacier retreats. Now Bartholomaus and his team are investigating what happens when this advancing glacier meets the ocean in a region where about 54 glaciers empty into the sea.

By anchoring underwater instruments in front of Yahtse Glacier, they hope to see how it melts beneath the surface. Seismometers measure ice quakes; airborne laser surveys show thinning; global-positioning systems and time-lapse photography reveal movement. Never before have so many tools been used on one glacier for a single project. By blending scientific disciplines, the team will paint a picture of the Yahtse's dynamic forces.

With so many instruments on the Yahtse, researchers have a unique opportunity to monitor changes along the length of the glacier and discover how, for example, local changes in ocean temperature and currents relate to movement further up the glacier.

Understanding the ocean's influence could help reveal how glaciers around the world are feeding the rising seas.

Motyka, the man at the skiff's helm, first linked glacier melting and ocean dynamics on Alaska's LeConte Glacier in 2003. He found that underwater melting was responsible for over half of the ice lost at the terminus – more than the thunderous calving of ice from the glacier's face. Motyka more recently studied the same effect on Greenland's Jakobshavn Glacier.

Earlier this summer the Jakobshavn shed a 2.7-square-mile chunk of ice – about twice the size of New York's Central Park – after a mild winter that saw no ice form in the surrounding bay.

"What we learned [in Alaska] with tidewater glaciers to some degree we can apply to Greenland and vice versa," said Motyka.

Increasingly, it appears rising ocean temperatures are driving tidewater glacier retreats in Greenland and Antarctica. "I would call that the smoking gun," Motyka said. "This could indeed be the oceanic process by which [Jakobshavn] became unstable."

The Gulf of Alaska warmed one degree Celsius between the late 1970s and the mid-2000s but so far no one has studied its impact. A more recent cooling trend was interrupted by last year's El Niño.

"It's a big jump to say that represents everything in the Gulf

of Alaska," Motyka said. "But if it did, that [one] degree warming would be affecting the [tidewater] glaciers regionally."

The team now hopes to discover how submarine melting is influencing Yahtse Glacier.

"The water end of the glacier can be very influential on how glaciers move, whether they speed up or slow down or advance or retreat," explained Bartholomaus.

The tidewater glacier cycle describes this state of flux. Yahtse Glacier is now in the advancing stage of the cycle. Typically, this will continue slowly until the glacier finds equilibrium with several factors: its own mass, the shape of the fjord and, lastly, the climate. Once in equilibrium, the glacier will enter a "stable-extended" stage when it becomes more sensitive to climatic changes. If the climate continues to warm, it could trigger a retreat stage, knocking the glacier back from its protective shoal of sediment pushed forward during advance. This allows warmer ocean water to rush in and melt the entire submarine face of the glacier, greatly increasing calving icebergs and potentially resulting in a runaway retreat. This unfolding drama can last for centuries.

Such a retreat created Icy Bay itself. Just 100 years ago, the bay didn't even exist. All five of its glaciers were merged together into one giant glacier that stretched all the way to the Gulf of Alaska; the little skiff would be buried under hundreds of feet of ice.

When the climate warmed in the late 1800s, it triggered the retreat phase of the tidewater glacier cycle as warm ocean water melted the ice. Since then, the ice has retreated over 25 miles – one of the largest historic retreats in Alaska.

"Once these things start retreating, you just can't fix it," explained Chris Larsen, UAF glaciologist and the project's lead scientist, from his office in Fairbanks. A retreat often creates its own feedback loop, obliterating the climate signal. Even if the climate cooled, a retreat, once started, might not stop anytime soon.

Like the Yahtse, the other Icy Bay glaciers are still in flux, undergoing different phases of the tidewater glacier cycle. The Guyot Glacier is retreating rapidly, losing about 150 vertical feet of surface ice from its terminus every year. Across the bay, the Tyndall Glacier is comparatively stable. With such diverse

dynamics in close proximity, it is clear that factors other than climate are at play.

As for the advancing Yahtse, Bartholomaus thinks it is still seeking equilibrium after the ruinous retreat over the last century. The glacier is basically top-heavy, with too much weight up high where heavy snows keep pushing it down and out into the bay. Eventually, it will find balance. At that point, climate will again project more of an influence.

While Yahtse Glacier may be ignoring climate signals for now, Larsen and his colleagues aren't about to discount the impact of recent warming trends entirely.

"Having said all that," said Larsen, "the current climate could slow down the advance of Yahtse or it could stop it a lot sooner than it would if we didn't have this warming trend going on right now."

Out on the bay the next day, the icebergs parted. In a bigger boat, the team motored closer than ever to Yahtse Glacier's 250-foot-tall terminus face. Falling icebergs thundered into the bay with explosive force. High on the glacier, seismometers recorded the rumble of another ice quake. Seals lounging on icebergs barely seemed to notice.

After six months of preparation, Bartholomaus was ready to set loose the instruments that will record temperature and current changes in the fjord for a full year. Flashing sensors adorned a 200-foot rope with orange buoys on top and a rusty, cast iron woodstove from Icy Bay Lodge as a budget anchor.

Bartholomaus and two others heaved the stove off the side of the boat. It splashed and then plummeted into the dark depths, pulling the blue nylon rope and expensive equipment down with it. Soon the only sign of the mooring was a small, yellow buoy, looking alien in the icy-blue fjord.

His work finally done, Bartholomaus let out a victorious yelp that echoed across the bay. Now he just has to wait while the sensors do the work and hope he can find the little buoy next year in this ever-changing, ice-age environment.

"I'll save the champagne for the recovery," he said.

*Nathan Rice is a freelance reporter living in Boulder, Colorado. DailyClimate.org is a non-profit news service covering climate change.*



Photo by Sarah Charters

Woman drinking tap water, which may contain cancer-causing hexavalent chromium.

## Boxer-Feinstein Bill Would Force EPA to Limit Chromium-6 in Tap Water

**[Note from Editor:** This is a follow-up to last month's article, "Cancer-Causing Chromium-6 Widespread in U.S. Drinking Water."]

WASHINGTON, D.C., January 27, 2011 (ENS) — Not enough is being done to protect the public from tap water that contains hexavalent chromium, also known as chromium-6, which can present a cancer risk to humans, say two Senate Democrats.

So on Wednesday, Senator Barbara Boxer, chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, and Senator Dianne Feinstein, who chairs the Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies, introduced a bill that would establish a deadline for

the U.S. EPA to set an enforceable drinking water safeguard for hexavalent chromium.

Senator Feinstein said, "It's vital that the Environmental Protection Agency continues to move forward to protect the American public from unsafe levels of chromium-6 in our drinking water. I'm pleased to team up with Senator Boxer in introducing legislation that will ensure the EPA acts in a timely, responsible manner."

Senator Boxer said, "There is no place for dangerous, cancer-causing substances in our drinking water. This bill is a major step forward in ensuring that children in California and across the country are protected from toxic chemicals, such as chromium-6,

See **WATER** page 11

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Photo courtesy Washington Department of Ecology  
Oil streaks on the Gulf of Mexico near the Deepwater Horizon blowout off the coast of Louisiana.

## Chemical Dispersants Used by BP Linger in Deep Sea Plume

FALMOUTH, Massachusetts, January 26, 2011 (ENS, *excerpt*) — Chemical dispersants that BP injected directly into its damaged wellhead in the Gulf of Mexico last year had still not degraded three months after they were applied, according to the first peer-reviewed research on the fate of the chemicals, published today.

In the effort to manage the massive Deepwater Horizon oil spill, BP injected some 771,000 gallons of the chemical dispersant Corexit 9500 a mile beneath the surface of the Gulf of Mexico. Dispersants function like detergents to break up oil into small droplets that mix easily with water.

Today, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution chemist Elizabeth Kujawinski and her colleagues reported that a major component of the dispersant was contained within an oil and gas-laden plume in the deep ocean and had still not degraded three months after it was applied.

"This study gives our colleagues the first environmental data on the fate of dispersants in the spill," said Kujawinski, who led a team that included scientists from UC Santa Barbara. "We don't know if the dispersant broke up the oil," she said. "We found that it didn't go away, and that was somewhat surprising."

The study, which appeared online today in the American Chemical Society journal *Environmental Science & Technology*, is the first peer-reviewed research to be published on the dispersant applied

to the Gulf spill and the first data on deep application of a dispersant, according to ACS and Kujawinski.

Previous studies had indicated that dispersants applied to surface oil spills can help prevent surface slicks from endangering marshes and coastlines.

The study was not aimed at assessing the possible toxicity of the lingering mixture. Kujawinski said she would "be hard pressed to say it was toxic."

Still, she said, the results warrant toxicity studies into the effects of the dispersant on corals and deepwater fish such as tuna. The EPA and others have already begun or are planning such research, she said.

Researcher David Valentine of UC Santa Barbara said, "The decision to use chemical dispersants at the sea floor was a classic choice between bad and worse. And while we have provided needed insight into the fate and transport of the dispersant we still don't know just how serious the threat is. The deep ocean is a sensitive ecosystem unaccustomed to chemical irruptions like this, and there is a lot we don't understand about this cold, dark world."

"The good news is that the dispersant stayed in the deep ocean after it was first applied," Kujawinski said. "The bad news is that it stayed in the deep ocean and did not degrade. . . ."

Read more at [www.eponline.com?Articles/2011/01/28/Woods-Hole-Dispersant-Study-Suggests-Prolonged-Deepwater-Fate.aspx](http://www.eponline.com?Articles/2011/01/28/Woods-Hole-Dispersant-Study-Suggests-Prolonged-Deepwater-Fate.aspx).

## SHELL *continued from page 3*

Wildlife Service to incidentally harass marine mammals, and air and water discharge permits from EPA, to name a few."

"We need to apply the lessons from the Gulf before we decide whether to drill in the Arctic," said Grafe. "Shell's plans were ill conceived from their inception because there is no way to clean up an offshore oil spill in the Arctic Ocean."

In 2009, following a lawsuit and appeal over Shell's earlier attempt to obtain air permits for drilling on the Arctic Outer Continental Shelf, Shell again applied for permits to drill in the Chukchi Sea and Beaufort Sea in the summer of 2010.

The EPA issued those permits in April 2010, the same month that BP's Deepwater Horizon oil rig exploded and sank in the Gulf of Mexico, unleashing the biggest offshore oil spill in U.S. history.

The Native Village of Point Hope and eight environmental organizations appealed the permit approval to the federal Environmental Appeals Board, a panel of judges with jurisdiction over the EPA.

At that point in the permitting process, on December 30, 2010, the Environmental Appeals Board sent Shell's Beaufort Sea air quality permit back to the EPA for changes.

The Board ruled that the EPA's definition of a stationary emissions source was flawed and said the permit should have been framed to take account of a new rule for the emissions of nitrogen oxides. But the ruling did not include all claims raised by the appeal of the EPA permit.

On January 21, the EPA filed a petition with the Board, requesting clarification of its ruling and asking for a ruling on all issues in the appeal or exclusion of the unresolved claims from the remand.

The EPA also requested a ruling on whether or not any appeal of the revised

permit should be heard in federal court or before the Board.

Environmentalists are declaring a temporary victory.

Sierra Club Lands Protection Program Director Athan Manuel said, "Shell Oil's decision to abandon its proposal to drill in Alaska's Arctic seas this year is a victory for worker safety and the environment. The BP disaster in the Gulf of Mexico – the largest oil spill in our nation's history – is a stark reminder of the dangers that come with the risky business of drilling."

"In the uncharted and largely unknown conditions of the Arctic and with limited capacity to respond to spills in harsh conditions, the Arctic should not be an option for corporate polluters who are already reaping in massive profits," said Manuel. "The cold truth is there is no way to clean up an Arctic spill."

Shell has emphasized that Arctic drilling would be in shallower water than BP's Macondo well and that the risk of a spill is minimal.

The company said it plans to position a second drilling ship in Alaska as a safety precaution, to have it ready to drill a relief well if necessary in case of a blowout.

But Grafe of Earthjustice says that even if there is no spill, the environment would suffer from Beaufort and Chukchi Sea drilling. "Shell's 514-foot-long drill ship and an armada of support vessels and aircraft would patrol both seas, emitting tons of pollutants, including heat-trapping gases and black carbon, into the air and thousands of barrels of waste into the Arctic Ocean."

Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar has suspended applications for drilling permits on the Arctic Outer Continental Shelf and has announced no schedule for lifting the suspension.

## Forum: Why Do We Punish?

By Josh Funk  
Daily News (Huntingdon), February 17, 2011

As William DiMascio concluded group discussion of a public forum examining the question, "Why do we punish?," he posed another question to consider: "Is there a better way? Is there a better way to improve the (prison) system?"

Consider the fact the United States is home to five percent of the world's population, but 25 percent of the world's prison population. In Pennsylvania alone, there were 51,321 men and women incarcerated as of Dec. 31, 2010. Currently, the state prison system is running at 117 percent capacity.

DiMascio, the executive director of the Pennsylvania Prison Society, moderated the public forum held Wednesday in the fellowship hall of the Stone Church of the Brethren, Huntingdon. Approximately three dozen individuals participated in the discussion.

Early in the discussion, the topic of punishment of juveniles came to the forefront. DiMascio noted the topic of juvenile justice was interesting to explore, and cited an example of an 11-year-old boy from Lawrence County who was charged with murder after shooting his father's fiancée at point-blank range.

"Should we be trying 11-year-olds as adults?" DiMascio asked.

Newton Taylor, Huntingdon, offered his thoughts. "The idea of a life sentence for a juvenile is repugnant, but due to the dangers they may pose to society, letting them off at age 21 is a big no-no," Taylor said. "We have to do something to reach them as juveniles so they don't become a part of the (prison) system as adults."

Addressing problems during childhood prevailed in many answers offered during the discussion.

"The most important thing is addressing it during childhood years," said Nancy Germann, Huntingdon. Germann shared a story from her years of counseling of how some children thought their violent behavior against others was fun.

Patricia Gist, Huntingdon, visits with prisoners regularly. She's noticed some trends.

"Most of the prisoners I've talked to were neglected as children," Gist said. "Either their parents were alcoholics or addicted to drugs. How do you learn to respect if you do not

get it? How do you show love if you've not received it? How do you save an individual raised in that atmosphere?"

"Occasionally, a child will be placed in special care for six months, but then returned to where they came from," Gist continued. "How do you fix that? You don't!"

Gist also noted teachers can spot children who may have problems and thus can play an important role in heading off potential problems down the road.

David Bowen, Huntingdon, a chaplain within the state department of corrections for the last 20 years, attended the discussion as a private citizen and stressed he was not in attendance to represent the state prisons in any way. He pointed to another problem rooted in childhood.

"Fatherlessness," Bowen said. "If we don't do something to reinstate the importance of marriage and have more fathers present in households, we'll just continue to build more prisons and mental hospitals."

Dr. Cynthia Merriwether-de Vries, a professor at Juniata College who resides in State College, shared a story of a student from a former school at which she taught. The student and some of his friends had been caught by police for smashing mailboxes around Halloween.

"The (community) view was to seek retribution," de Vries said. "But also, the community had the feeling that it did not want to punish its own too severely as to negatively affect the boys' futures."

"Who are we focused on correcting?" de Vries continued. "Who are we focused on punishing? We need to examine our own ideas of retribution. We (as a society) need to change our viewpoint."

Another Juniata College professor, Dr. Wade Roberts, said he focuses on the idea of retribution in philosophy because it is the primary dominating impulse in society.

"The concept of retribution remains at an extraordinarily superficial level in public discussion," Roberts said.

Toward the onset of the group discussion, DiMascio commented society has a disposable view of things — if it isn't needed, discard it.

But he cautioned against discarding those in the prison system.

"We cannot discard those folks," DiMascio said. "They're human beings. They deserve better than that."

### Iona Conner, Publisher

Thank you for the January and February issues of *The Order*. I really enjoy that the paper is all about the environment, gives Mother Earth first billing, not just an Op-Ed on page 24 like most mainstream papers.

For the most part, like I remember in the 1990s, the big story of the week was acid rain. What ever happened? As far as I can tell, things are getting worse so why doesn't mainstream media ever say anything about the rain? I don't think it just went away.

I hope to stay in contact with you in your paper as time goes on. After 10 years I was granted parole for this year.

Devin Baker, Boise, Idaho

### Inmates Learn Cooking

By Kim Mulford (AP), *excerpt*  
Daily News, January 28, 2011

CAMDEN, New Jersey — It's just before the lunch hour in snow-blanketed Camden and the smell of baking bread and hot pastries wafts from the kitchens at Respond Inc.'s New Worker Job Development Center in North Camden.

In the pastry kitchen, Executive Pastry Chef Kendall Elliott directs three full-time baking assistants, all alumni of the center's 12-week culinary courses. A radio plays R&B classics in the background. It's busy but it's peaceful, too.

They're making cinnamon danishes, apple crumb pie bars and cookie dough truffles dipped in chocolate ganache. Always, always, there are loaves of bread to make, one 50-pound sack of flour at a time.

The kitchen isn't just a place to make good meals. It's a place to make good cooks. Today, the men prepare Elliott's from-scratch recipes to feed 800 children in Respond's day care centers, as well as take-out business for Respond's growing catering service.

In the "hot kitchen" around the corner, two more chefs oversee orders heading out the door for lunch-time customers. The chefs teach residents from the community and small groups of selected inmates of the Camden County Correctional Facility on Federal Street. The job training for inmates is paid for with a grant from the state Attorney General's Office, says Sgt. Clifford Kareem who oversees efforts to help county inmates transition back into society.

Thanks to programs like this one, the jail has lowered its population from about 2,000 a few years ago to about 1,300 now. Of the 17 culinary graduates, only one has returned to prison. "It's all about believing in yourself," says Kareem. But someone needs to believe in them, too . . .

## Non-Psalms for Society

By Devin Baker  
Boise, Idaho

Sitting in society's stench I gained a clearer vision of things that could be and have been.

Corporations seem to have overtaken Americans.

At times it's hard to hear the country's spirit speak, With Dom-perignon parties on the cover of *Newsweek*, champagne dreams of pampered people propelling fiscal evils, as 1% feast on lobster smothered in hollandaise. Yet we can't even afford to take a three-day holiday.

Some stuff their faces as others can't eat and kids are raised to hustle on the street.

What makes America great is our self-determination, yet as a nation we give too much to selfish-temptation. In reflection it's not hard to see in society that our lust for petro polluted harmony of the sea. Our top news stories are sports records shattered, yet under the carpet abuse victims are battered.

After writing this modern day neo-non-psalm, knee met floor, palm met palm, praying forgiveness for our current-made future wrongs. To each other we need to stop what we've been doing, for we are all of one tribe, human. We have to change our trajectory in this complexity that has become the 21<sup>st</sup> century . . . .

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\*alembic: a means of refining or extracting  
By Sandy Chilcote, Newfoundland, Canada

New/Old Columnist: John Muir

**Note from the Editor:** My grandfather met John Muir (1834-1914, founder of the Sierra Club) and he sent me this note in 1975, after I had given him a Sierra Club calendar: "Did I ever tell you about running into John Muir with 250 of the Sierra Club at the Big Oak Flats on our first overnight stop when leaving Yosemite back in 1899? Harry and I were near the end of a bicycle trip from southern California, a trip of one month. Had 10 days in the valley. Big Oak was full of these 250 on their way into Hetch Hetchy country. So full they had to sleep on floor. John Muir and my uncle Theodor Lukens were pals. Muir tried his best to dissuade us to tarry another six weeks and join them. We were in a hurry to get back. He even said he would grub stake us. What a wonderful experience that would have been."

Recently I bought and delighted in John Muir's *My First Summer in the Sierra* and some parts were so beautiful that I decided to share them with you, remembering that, once works are of a certain age, they become public property. I don't believe much in private property and I tried to reach the publisher of the book but got no response. So here goes – a new series from Muir's journal, which I hope you'll enjoy as much as I did. I have maintained most of his style and punctuation.

**Chapter 1: Through the Foothills with a Flock of Sheep**  
**June 6:** We are now on what may be called the second bench or plateau of the Range, after making many small ups and downs over belts of hill-waves, with, of course, corresponding changes in the vegetation. In open spots many of the lowland compositae (sic) are still to be found, and some of the Mariposa tulips and other conspicuous members

of the lily family; but the characteristic blue oak of the foothills is left below, and its place is taken by a fine large species (*Quercus Californica*) with deeply lobed deciduous leaves, picturesquely divided trunk, and broad, massy, finely lobed and modeled head. Here also at a height of about 2,500 feet we come to the edge of the great coniferous forest, made up mostly of yellow pine with just a few sugar pines. We are now in the mountains and they are in us, kindling enthusiasm, making every nerve quiver, filling every pore and cell of us. Our flesh-and-bone tabernacle seems transparent as glass to the beauty about us, as if truly an inseparable part of it, thrilling with the air and trees, streams and rocks, in the waves of the sun – a part of all nature, neither old nor young, sick nor well, but immortal. Just now I can hardly conceive of any bodily condition dependent on food or breath any more than the ground or the sky. How glorious a conversion, so complete and wholesome it is, scarce memory enough of old bondage days left as a standpoint to view it from! In this newness of life we seem to have been so always.

Through a meadow opening in the pine woods I see snowy peaks about the headwaters of the Merced above Yosemite. How near they seem and how clear their outlines on the blue air, or rather in the blue air; for they seem to be saturated with it. How consuming strong the invitation they extend! Shall I be allowed to go to them? Night and day I'll pray that I may, but it seems too good to be true. Some one worthy will go, able for the Godful work, yet as far as I can I must drift about these love-monument mountains, glad to be a servant of servants in so holy a wilderness . . . .

More Next Month



Photo by Rod Rylander

Village women in Belize meet to figure out ways to fix up their cabanas so they can rent them out.

**Community** from page 1

around them. They think they are poor because they have been brainwashed into thinking that they need many consumer items to come out of poverty. So I have come to the conclusion that giving away money or goods creates a society of low-self-esteem people who wait for the handouts.

Bringing together my experiences on five continents into some form of system that may work is taxing my brain. Experiences include nearly having someone murdered in the Philippines because I was empowering the poor, a political NGO getting me pulled out of a village in Belize because I was empowering the citizens and putting them on the path of self sufficiency, finding the real reason for villagers in Nepal asking for a water system, sitting through a hurricane and seeing the influx of money being squandered, figuring out how to assist people with poverty consciousness, co-dependent villagers wanting only handouts and facilitating peace accords between two political parties.

Before I proceed, I wish to state my philosophy in trying to help people. First, I don't directly help people; I facilitate the process of them helping themselves. I never have a project of my own but help them with their projects if they want me to. I firmly believe that I must live with and on the same economic scale of the people I am advising. I give a lot of praise and optimism to the people and the country. I provide unlimited ideas and I believe in trainings, preferably by qualified nationals. I encourage them to solve their own problems.

One fallacy of many development programs is that only richer people can come up with the 25 to 40 percent equity required. People seem to think that the really poor can spend full time in providing labor for their equity. But when they are working every day to put the minimum of rice on the table for their families, they have no equity.

"A perfect match," I thought – when I was assigned to Five Blues Hole National Park to help organize park operations and to help the local community profit from eco-tourism. Hopefully then, they would protect the park instead of hunting and cutting the natural resources. After a lot of meetings, the park board voted to no longer keep the money for their own use but to organize the management along the principles of the board making policies and a director carrying



Photo by Rod Rylander

Rio Hondo river scene in Belize.

out the policies. In the community, two women's groups were on the verge of increasing their income ten to twenty times from the previous year. Political pressure due to an NGO possibly losing control of grant money and management got me transferred. The changes made to the park organization were all discarded. Many of the villagers were not happy but, since most were refugees in Belize, they felt helpless. So in this case, I was successful only in getting some ideas and hopefully some optimism in the community. Politics is a leading factor in creating poverty.

In a remote village in the Kathmandu Valley in Nepal, I was trying to help the villagers get clean water. I found out that a few years earlier the government had financed laying a pipe from a spring about a mile away from the village to the nearest edge of the village. The residents dug up the pipe and used it for various projects and now want to install pipes again so they can have more jobs. The desire for money over improved living standards can gobble up funds.

Do large amounts of aid money entering a country help or hinder the country's progress? After sitting through Hurricane Iris in southern Belize, I interviewed some farmers whose extensive damage to their homes and crops from the hurricane enabled millions of dollars of aid money to enter the country. Thirty five new SUVs driven by government and NGO employees converged on the remains of a destroyed village.

The best help I witnessed was the financing and building by Mennonites of a roof on posts for the people who lost their

homes. The occupants were out of the rain while they enclosed the structure themselves. Every family would have been given a roof over their heads if the millions of dollars in aid had been used this way instead of building a few complete houses for a few politically-connected people and wasting or pocketing the rest.

I have helped create cooperatives and have studied cooperatives in many countries including the USA. All but two that I know of have had very short life spans. The two exceptions are USAA Savings Bank and REI, both creating great management systems. The challenge for the people is to change certain attitudes so the system will work. These traits include making decisions in secret, using offices for personal gain and not repaying loans. The governments encourage cooperatives but, from my observations, they are not viable alternatives to individually-owned businesses.

Currently I am back in the same Belizean village facilitating the creation of an eco-tourism destination. It hasn't been easy or fast since the general feeling is pessimism. But since I no longer am a Peace Corps volunteer, I can invest my own money. That makes a lot of difference since the people see that I am a permanent resident instead of a two-year visitor. I have yet to see the community work together so I have made partnerships with individuals to create the infrastructure for tourism. I have received many requests to get a "millionaire" from the states to invest. I refuse to do so since the profits would leave the village. I want the villagers to see that they can keep the income in their families. The visitors are now

trickling in and hopefully their numbers will increase rapidly. Government policies and laws make it very difficult to start new businesses.

So my conclusion is that large amounts of money coming into the country may be detrimental to the culture and society but funds available with no interest for training to grassroots organizations and individuals can be very effective. Also, the only way to keep the corporations from making slaves out of people is to boycott them by not purchasing their products.

The biggest obstacles for the improvement in living standards include wars, pessimism, feeling of dependency, corporations taking natural resources, churches that demean their members, corrupt governments, poverty consciousness and brainwashing by the media to create fear and consumers. Money is secondary. The settlers making the western march in North America had little money and many challenges but succeeded in building the richest nation in the world.

I often ask myself, "Why am I trying to help people who don't want to help themselves?" Good question! My rationalization is that, having been living a nice middle class life in the States creating demands for goods from other countries, I inadvertently encouraged corporations to plunder and, in essence, steal natural resources from non-industrialized countries.

Maybe I am trying to help them in a tiny way because I was part of the problem.

*Rod Rylander has degrees in Biology and Social Ecology, co-authored the book Pokernomics with Ramesh Manandhar of Nepal. It is a book on development in the third world. Pokernomics (Rylander made up the name; it is the game nations play in which industrialized nations hold all of the high cards and entice others to play and loose.) He has writings published in over 14 international publications and has had his work recognized in the areas of architecture, appropriate technology, social ecology, ornithology, environmental education, agriculture, political/economic sciences, rural development and business. He is currently living in a village in Belize helping the villagers create an eco-tourism destination. Check out <http://www.rrylander.com> and <http://rrylander.com/blogengine.net/>.*

# The Organic Elite Surrenders to Monsanto: What Now?

By Ronnie Cummins  
 Organic Consumers Association  
 January 27, 2011

"The policy set for GE (genetically engineered) alfalfa will most likely guide policies for other GE crops as well. True coexistence is a must." – Whole Foods Market, January 21, 2011

In the wake of a 12-year battle to keep Monsanto's Genetically Engineered (GE) crops from contaminating the nation's 25,000 organic farms and ranches, America's organic consumers and producers are facing betrayal. A self-appointed cabal of the Organic Elite, spearheaded by Whole Foods Market, Organic Valley and Stonyfield Farm, has decided it's time to surrender to Monsanto. Top executives from these companies have publicly admitted that they no longer oppose the mass commercialization of GE crops, such as Monsanto's controversial Roundup Ready alfalfa, and are prepared to sit down and cut a deal for "coexistence" with Monsanto and USDA biotech cheerleader Tom Vilsack.

In a cleverly worded but profoundly misleading email sent to its customers last week, Whole Foods Market (WFM), while proclaiming their support for organics and "seed purity," gave the green light to USDA bureaucrats to approve the "conditional deregulation" of Monsanto's genetically engineered, herbicide-resistant alfalfa. Beyond the regu-

latory euphemism of "conditional deregulation," this means that WFM and their colleagues are willing to go along with the massive planting of a chemical- and energy-intensive GE perennial crop, alfalfa; guaranteed to spread its mutant genes and seeds across the nation; guaranteed to contaminate the alfalfa fed to organic animals; guaranteed to lead to massive poisoning of farm workers and destruction of the essential soil food web by the toxic herbicide Roundup and guaranteed to produce Roundup-resistant superweeds that will require even more deadly herbicides such as 2,4 D to be sprayed on millions of acres of alfalfa across the U.S.

In exchange for allowing Monsanto's premeditated pollution of the alfalfa gene pool, WFM wants "compensation." In exchange for a new assault on farmworkers and rural communities (a recent large-scale Swedish study found that spraying Roundup doubles farm workers' and rural residents' risk of getting cancer), WFM expects the pro-biotech USDA to begin to regulate rather than cheerlead for Monsanto. In payment for a new, broad-spectrum attack on the soil's crucial ability to provide nutrition for food crops and to sequester dangerous greenhouse gases (recent studies show that Roundup devastates essential soil microorganisms that provide plant nutrition and sequester climate-destabilizing See **WHOLE FOODS** page 15

# Imagine Starting a Movement!

By George Drobnock (addendum to his Letter to the Editor on page 15)  
 Mount Union, Pennsylvania

The new political right has started a movement for fewer regulations, less environmental protection. They had the nerve to call dissenters of their views un-American. Maybe there is a new revolution to give order to the chaos of removing mountain tops and polluting potable wells all for the sake of energy.

If you can remember back to the 1960s, when people could protest without being called un-American, there was a song by Arlo Guthrie called "Alice's Restaurant."

A line states that if a group of people can get it together, "They (the politicians) may think it's an organization. And can you –

can you – imagine 50 people a day, I said 50 people a day walking in singin' a bar of Alice's Restaurant and walking out. And friends, they may think it's a movement."

Maybe a movement can be started – but it may be too late – but a movement nonetheless, to put the horse back in the barn and to rethink the Marcellus Shale drilling without creating an environmental disaster for the future. It is important to collect taxes from the energy companies to put into education, cultural events and to fix the wells yet to be polluted.

Someday when there are no politics, we will do dinner.

# Musings

## Green continued from page 7



Photo by Elizabeth Ayers

Old tobacco barns rot and crumble bringing back memories.

# INVITATION TO WONDER *Passing By*

By Elizabeth Ayres  
California, Maryland

No shelter here. No defense against the wind that sighs across the weed-wracked field to do time's evil work: pry the rotting boards off. Peel the rusted tin away. Strip the flesh from this old tobacco barn, pick it clean to the bone.

Like a come-hither finger, it beckoned. Parking my car by the side of the road, I obeyed the summons. Now I stand, shivering, as slatted sunlight casts shadows to replace once-solid planks and derelict hinges dream of swinging doors and a medley of criss-crossed beams yearn to bear the fecund weight of tobacco leaves curing in the dark, rich air. Except now the brambles creep in, and the moss, and whatever wild and profuse promptings cultivation holds at bay.

I remember how they were when I was a child, these spring-time fields. The white cloth spread like giant wings to protect the fragile seedlings huddled underneath. The plowed and patient earth, her furrows flung out like arms waiting to embrace June's adolescent transplants. We weren't farmers but, in those days, tobacco was the staple crop of southern Maryland and month by month the growing of it strung taut warp threads of recurring sights on a year's loom. Almost shoulder height by late summer. September's workers in the rows, cutting the stalks, spearing them onto stakes, carting the skewered harvest into the barns to be hung on tiered poles to dry. December's secrets I learned from kids who missed school to stand for long hours inside those mysterious, gambrel-roofed hives, where they stripped and bulked and barreled the brown stuff. Then the beat-up trucks and horse-drawn Amish carts, headed for Hughesville and the auction house.

We weren't farmers but our everyday shuttlings – to store, school, church, doctor's office – flashed like many-hued weft threads through a fabric larger than any mere comings or goings. Harvests and earth and weather. A pristine, primal tapestry to remind us we are all just seeds in our season.

I wasn't here for the 2001 Buyout, when the state offered tobacco growers money to switch to other crops. Now I'm back and, like everyone else, I see the barns won't survive the transi-

tion. Inside, they're filled with heavy rafters crosshatching a maze of small compartments. All that can be stored there is the hanging brown weed they were built to hold. Who can afford to maintain buildings that no longer serve a purpose? They rot where they stand.

This day, rusted bolts pepper the ground. Twisted shags of tin tumble from a fraying roof. White bones of vapor trails litter a sapphire sky. Cars roar by where silence once reigned and some kid hunkers down in the abandoned field. His remote-controlled model airplane buzzes round and round in a noisy, futile circle. Buzzes round and round, treading the same worn out path.

This day, the great religious feasts of spring are upon us. Pass-over. Blood on wooden doorposts, the houses empty, their occupants fled in terrified hope to seek a future they name the promised land. Easter. Blood on a wooden cross, the empty tomb, its occupant come forth to tell us: we are all seeds in our season. This day is the promised land.

Last night I dreamt I was hoeing tobacco. I could hear them laughing, the men who built this barn. Who pounded in the shiny nails and thought their shiny thoughts for a new harvest. The auction house is closed now but that's no never-mind, Spring is here again, her come-hither finger raised and, yes, it's sad they're crumbling but this I know from religion and the season: it isn't loss that defines us. Death is a question mark, not an exclamation. And, while I can't say what you might hear it ask, "Who stands at this day's door, knocking?" is the invitation I'll hear whispered every time I'm passing by some old tobacco barn.

*Elizabeth Ayres, author of Know the Way and Writing the Wave, is the founder of the Center for Creative Writing (CreativeWritingCenter.com). For a free excerpt or MP3 download from her new book Invitation to Wonder: A Journey through the Seasons, visit InvitationToWonder.com. The late Thomas Berry praised this book, saying, "Lovely. Shows amazing breadth of thought." Annie Dillard says, "These exquisitely written reflections create space for all that is beautiful and true." Beatrice Bruteau says, "Ayres' poetic vision transforms our ordinary perceptions into mystic beauty."*

largely ignored until the election of Ronald Reagan, who bowed to the enthusiasms of Joseph Coors – the leading money dispenser of the far right and owner of substantial mineral claims on federal lands – and selected a suite of Sagebrush leaders to fill important posts in his administration. These Reagan rebels, headed by James Watt (who ran Coors' Mountain States Legal Foundation) and Anne Gorsuch, called themselves "the Crazyes on the Hill."

Watt, a millennialist Christian and rabid anti-communist, was given the Department of the Interior, which oversees nearly 500 million acres of public land. He proclaimed he would make the "bureaucracy yield to my blows" and got off to a fast start. Within a matter of months, Watt proposed the sale of 30 million acres of public lands to private companies, gave away billions of dollars worth of publicly-owned coal resources, fought to permit corporations to manage national parks, refused to enforce the nation's strip-mining laws, offered up the Outer Continental Shelf oil reserves to exploration and drilling, ignored the Endangered Species Act and purged the Interior Department of any employee who objected to his agenda.

Watt defended his actions on religious grounds, arguing that conservation of resources for future generations amounted to a waste of "God's gift to mankind ... I do not know how many future generations we can count on before the Lord returns," Watt warned. Use it or lose it.

In spite of his ravings, Watt held on. He even survived his bizarre attempt to block the Beach Boys (in his fevered mind the incarnation of the counter-culture, even though the group had played fundraisers for George H. W. Bush) from playing a concert on the Mall, a stance that provoked an amusing rebuke from Ronald Reagan. But like Earl Butz before him, Watt was undone by the racism that welled up invincibly within him. Attacking affirmative action, Watt complained that he couldn't set up a panel without finding "a black, a woman, a Jew and a person in a wheelchair." Although Watt was later indicted in a scandal over the billing of the Department of Housing, Education and Welfare out of millions of dollars, it was this remark that did him in.

Over at the Environmental Protection Agency, Watt's counterpart was Anne Gorsuch, a rough-hewn and ignorant Colorado legislator. Gorsuch, who later married Robert Burford, the rancher and mining engineer Watt selected to run the Bureau of Land Management, surrounded herself with advisers from the pollution lobby, including lawyers from General Motors, Exxon and DuPont. Her objective was to cripple environmental laws passed in the 1970s which, she argued, had created an "overburden" of regulations that had "stifled economic growth."

To lead the toxic waste division of the EPA Gorsuch chose Rita Levelle, a public relations executive with the Aerojet General Corporation, a defense contractor with potentially vast hazardous waste liabilities. At her appointment many of the EPA's top scientists and administrators promptly quit.

Gorsuch and Levelle left a miasma of suspended regulations, secret meetings with industry lobbyists, waived fines and suppressed recommendations of agency scientists. In one piquant case, Levelle refused – at the request of Joseph Coors – to enforce new rules that prohibited dumping liquid hazardous waste into community landfills. Coors's breweries disposed of millions of gallons of such waste near Denver.

The climate of cronyism that infected EPA in those days had its source in the highest levels of the Reagan administration, which encouraged agency heads such as Gorsuch to pander to its political allies: Coors, Browning-Ferris Industries, Westinghouse and Monsanto.

Gorsuch's downfall came after congressional investigators requested records of her warm chats with companies under EPA jurisdiction. At the advice of a White House counsel, Gorsuch refused to turn over the documents and was duly cited with contempt of Congress. When she

was called to defend herself, the Reagan justice department declined to accompany her to the Hill. Gorsuch resigned in disgust. The insipid and grossly naïve Rita Levelle was eventually convicted on charges of lying to Congress and spent six months in federal prison.

Less heralded, though more sinister, was Reagan's appointment of John Crowell as assistant secretary of agriculture, a critical position overseeing the operations of the Forest Service, one of the largest agencies in the federal government. As the former general counsel for Louisiana-Pacific, then the largest purchaser of federal timber, Crowell knew his duty. One of his first actions as assistant secretary was to suppress an internal investigation of his own predatory former employer. Forest Service investigators had concluded that Louisiana-Pacific may have bilked the government out of more than \$80 million by fraudulent bidding practices on the Tongass National Forest in southeast Alaska.

Crowell then ordered the Forest Service to double its annual offering of subsidized timber, much of which was destined for mills owned by Louisiana-Pacific. He temporarily halted designation of new federal wilderness areas and squashed scientific reports suggesting that relentless clearcutting in the ancient forests of Oregon and Washington would wipe out the northern spotted owl.

Such useful objectives quickly accomplished, Crowell departed the Reagan administration for a lucrative position at a Portland, Oregon law firm, which specialized in clients such as the National Forest Products Association, which have a profound interest in exploiting the natural resources of the public domain.

The raw ideologies of the Sagebrush Rebellion overreached but their core message took hold: environmental regulations sapped economic growth. Environmental overkill became the excited talk of Washington PR houses such as Buson-Marsteller and lobbying firms such as Akin Gump, which plotted a strategy of containment of the greens and their dangerous ideology.

Often all that was needed was a kinder visage. Take the case of James Watt's replacement as Secretary of the Interior, Donald Hodel. Shortly after Hodel took up his new duties, he went hiking in Yosemite's meadows with David Brower. Brower returned from the outing to pronounce Hodel an "honorable man," practically a green. Yet Hodel's policies at Interior were as pro-industry as Watt's and far more effective. During his tenure, the Bureau of Land Management's timber sales program hit record levels, as did subsidies for the grazing and mining industries. Hodel was the man who objected to the Montreal Protocol for restricting ozone-depleting chemicals, suggesting that to avoid skin cancer from increased ultraviolet radiation, people should simply wear sunglasses, long-sleeved shirts, hats and sunscreen.

Watt, Gorsuch, Levelle and Crowell were magnificent villains for fundraising: direct mail revenues of the top environmental groups exploded tenfold from 1979 to 1981. Green became the color of money and the rag-tag band of hardcore activists who populated the Hill in the 1970s gave way to a cadre of Ivy League-educated lobbyists, lawyers, policy wonks, research scientists and telemarketers. Executives enjoyed perks and salaries that rivaled those of corporate CEOs.

By the 1990s, Jay Hair was pulling down a quarter of a million dollars a year for overseeing the National Wildlife Federation and kept his limo engine running at all times, the air-conditioner grinding ozone-shredding gasses at full tilt against the moment Hair emerged from his office on an eco-mission or deal-making sortie.

*Jeffrey St. Clair is the author of Been Brown So Long It Looked Like Green to Me: The Politics of Nature and Grand Theft Pentagon. His newest book, Born Under a Bad Sky, is published by AK Press/CounterPunch books. He can be reached at: sitka@comcast.net. This essay is excerpted from the forthcoming book GreenScare: The New War on Environmentalism by Jeffrey St. Clair and Joshua Frank.*



Photo from KTIV.com

One of the dead birds in Yankton, South Dakota.

# Thoughts on Massive Bird Kills

Submitted by Jan Walker  
Berkeley Springs, West Virginia

*The email Jan sent to OE had this note at the top: Relatives, I received an email from my brother chief. Seems they found over 200 birds dead in Yankton, South Dakota. This is our backyard.*

YANKTON, South Dakota — Officials are trying to determine what killed more than 200 birds in Yankton. The dead starlings were found in a downtown area where they had been congregating instead of migrating for the winter. Yankton Animal Control Officer Lisa Brasel tells the *Press & Dakotan* that a veterinarian didn't immediately find anything wrong with them.

Their deaths come on the heels of reports of mysterious bird deaths in several other states.

Scientists say mass die-offs of wildlife happen regularly, and are usually unrelated and unreported. Brasel says that in more than 10 years in the animal control field she has never witnessed anything like what she did Monday. She called the scene "creepy" but said she thinks the bird deaths are just "a fluke thing."

\* \* \* \* \*

I was wondering if the officials found 200 people dead in downtown Yankton, would they consider it to being just "a fluke thing?"

eagle  
Mitakuye Oyasin, Sungdeska Sapa Itancan

# WATER continued from page 8

in the drinking water supply."

Senator Boxer also announced that her committee planned an oversight hearing on the issue of chromium-6 in drinking water February 2.

A study by the nonprofit Environmental Working Group published December 20 found hexavalent chromium in the drinking water of 31 cities across the country. The water utilities surveyed by the Environmental Working Group serve more than 26 million Americans.

The highest levels were in Norman, Oklahoma; Honolulu, Hawaii and Riverside, California. In all, water samples from 25 cities contained the toxic metal at concentrations above the safe maximum recently proposed by California regulators.

In California, the only state that requires testing for hexavalent chromium, water utilities have detected the compound in the tap water supplied to 31 million people.

On December 31, 2010, after evaluating the pollutant's threat to infants, California public health officials lowered their proposed "public health goal" to 0.02 parts per billion of chromium-6 in drinking water.

There are no enforceable federal standards to protect the public from hexavalent chromium in tap water, although the Department of Health and Human Services' National Toxicology Program concluded that hexavalent chromium in drinking water shows "clear evidence of carcinogenic activity" in laboratory animals and the EPA's own draft toxicological review found that the contaminant in tap water is "likely to be carcinogenic to humans."

Responding to public concerns about this carcinogen in drinking water on January 11, the U.S. EPA issued guidance recommending how public water systems might enhance monitoring and sampling programs specifically for hexavalent chromium.

EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson said the recommendations also respond to emerging scientific evidence that chromium-6 could pose health concerns if consumed over long periods of time.

"As we continue to learn more about the potential risks of exposure to chromium-6, we will work closely with states and local officials to ensure the safety of America's drinking water supply," said Jackson. "This action is another step forward in understanding the problem and work-

ing towards a solution that is based on the best available science and the law."

EPA currently has a drinking water standard for total chromium, which includes chromium-6, and requires water systems to test for it.

Testing is not required to distinguish what percentage of the total chromium is chromium-6 versus other forms such as chromium-3, so EPA's regulation assumes that the sample is 100 percent chromium-6. This means the current chromium-6 standard has been as protective and precautionary as the science of that time allowed, Jackson said.

"EPA's latest data show that no public water systems are in violation of the standard," she said. "However, the science behind chromium-6 is evolving."

The enhanced monitoring guidance provides recommendations on where the systems should collect samples and how often they should be collected, along with analytical methods for laboratory testing.

Jackson said water utilities that perform the enhanced monitoring will be able to better inform their consumers about any presence of chromium-6 in their drinking water, evaluate the degree to which other forms of chromium are transformed into chromium-6 and assess the degree to which existing treatment affects the levels of chromium-6 in drinking water.

In a letter to Jackson in December 2010, the two senators urged the EPA to quickly complete its toxicological review of hexavalent chromium using the best available science.

"We also request that the EPA immediately determine whether to issue a public health advisory under the Safe Drinking Water Act for hexavalent chromium and inform our offices within the next two weeks about the EPA's decision."

The EPA has not issued a public health advisory. In a posting on its Web site, the agency says the public comment period on the draft technological review of hexavalent chromium ended December 10, 2010.

Following the conclusion of the public review and comment period, public listening session and external peer review, the draft Toxicological Review will be revised and submitted for a final agency review and an EPA-led Interagency Science (IRIS) discussion. As a last step, the final assessment will be posted on the IRIS database.

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Photo courtesy USGS

Residential driveways coated with coal-tar-based sealant contaminate waterways, especially in urban areas.

## Sealcoat Runoff Turns Urban Lakes Toxic

AUSTIN, Texas (ENS) — Coal tar pavement sealant – the black, shiny substance sprayed or painted on parking lots, driveways and playgrounds – is the largest source of cancer-causing polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, PAHs found in 40 urban lakes studied by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS).

“These findings represent a significant advance in our understanding of the sources of these contaminants in streams and lakes,” said USGS scientist Peter Van Metre, who works in Austin. “Identifying where contaminants are coming from is the first step in designing effective management strategies.”

PAHs are a group of organic compounds that occur naturally in crude oil, coal and tar and are produced by the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, wood, grass, tobacco. They are widely distributed in the environment and are of concern because they are toxic, mutagenic and can disturb the growth and development of an embryo or fetus.

Van Metre says PAHs are an environmental health concern because several are probable human carcinogens, they are toxic to fish and other aquatic life and their concentrations have been increasing in urban lakes since at least the 1960s.

For this study, Van Metre and his USGS colleague Barbara Mahler evaluated the contribution of PAHs from many different sources to 40 lakes in cities from Anchorage, Alaska to Orlando, Florida.

The USGS scientists collected sediment cores from the lakes, analyzed the cores for PAHs and determined the contribution of PAHs from the different sources using a chemical mass-balance model.

Coal tar is made up of at least 50 percent PAHs. Pavement sealants that contain coal tar have high levels of PAHs compared to other PAH sources such as vehicle emissions, used motor oil and tire particles. The USGS scientists also tested for other PAH sources such as wood combustion and fuel-oil combustion.

They found that, on average, coal-tar sealcoat accounted for one-half of all PAHs in the lakes, while vehicle-related sources accounted for about one-quarter.

Lakes with a large contribution of PAHs from sealcoat tended to have high PAH concentrations, in many cases at levels that can be harmful to aquatic life, the study showed.

Analysis of historical trends in PAH sources to a subset of the lakes indicates that sealcoat use since the 1960s is the primary cause of increases in PAH concentrations, said Van Metre.

“Small particles of sealcoat are worn off of the surface relatively rapidly, especially in areas of high traffic, and are transported from parking lots and driveways to streams and lakes by storm runoff,” said Van Metre.

The City of Austin banned the sale and use of coal-tar-containing pavement sealants in the city as of January 1, 2006. The ban came after City of Austin and USGS scientists identified coal-tar pavement sealants as a significant source of PAH contamination in Austin area stream sediments.

The City of Austin estimates that, before a ban on use of coal-tar sealcoat, about 600,000 gallons of sealcoat were applied every year in the city.

A limited ban on the use of coal-tar sealcoat products by state agencies in Minnesota went into effect July 1, 2010.

Sealcoat products are widely used across the United States, both commercially and by homeowners. The products are commonly applied to commercial parking lots in strip malls, schools, churches and shopping centers, residential driveways, apartment complexes and playgrounds. Manufacturers recommend resealing surfaces every three to five years.

Runoff is not the only path by which PAHs are leaving parking lots. Another USGS study published earlier this year found that use of coal-tar sealcoat on parking lots was associated with elevated concentrations of PAHs in house dust.

Two kinds of sealcoat products are widely used – one based on a coal-tar emulsion and the other based on an asphalt emulsion. The coal-tar products have PAH levels about 1,000 times higher than the asphalt products.

Dust from pavement with coal-tar sealcoat has PAH concentrations “hundreds of thousands of times higher” than dust from pavement with no sealcoat or with asphalt-based sealcoat, the study found.

Consumers can determine whether a product contains coal tar by reading the label or asking the company hired to do the pavement application.

Van Metre points to previous research suggesting that asphalt sealcoat is more commonly used on the West Coast and coal-tar sealcoat is more commonly used in the Midwest, the South and the East.

The results of the lake study reflect this east-west difference. For example, sealcoat contributed over 80 percent of PAHs in Lake Anne, Virginia and PAH concentrations there are about 20 times higher than in Decker Lake, Utah even though the areas have similar population density and level of urban development.

PAH levels in pavement dust from sealcoated parking lots in Virginia are about 1,000 times higher than those from sealed parking lots in Utah, the USGS researchers found.

The USGS study of PAHs in 40 urban lakes can be found in the December 15, 2010 issue of the journal *Science of the Total Environment*.

## Unrecognized Dangers of Formaldehyde in Everyday Products

By Samuel Epstein  
Cancer Prevention Coalition

A December 10, 2010 two-page article in *The New York Times*, “When Wrinkle-Free Clothing Also Means Formaldehyde Fumes,” stated that, “Formaldehyde is commonly



found in a broad range of consumer products.” These include sheets, pillow cases and drapes, besides “personal care products like shampoos, lotions and eye shadows.”

It was stated in this article that, “Most of the 180 items tested, largely clothes and bed linens, had low or undetectable levels of formaldehyde that met voluntary industry guidelines.” Most consumers will probably never have a problem with exposure to formaldehyde since such low levels “are not likely to irritate most people,” other than those wearing wrinkle-resistant clothing. “The U.S. does not regulate formaldehyde levels in clothing. Nor does any government agency require manufacturers to disclose the use of this chemical on labels.”

On March 5, 2008 Senators Bob Casey, Sherrod Brown and Mary Landrieu introduced an amendment to the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reform bill “that would help protect Americans from dangerous levels of formaldehyde in textiles including clothing.” The Senators referred to a 1997 CPSC report on formaldehyde, which admitted that, “It causes cancer in tests on laboratory animals and may cause cancer in humans.”

Accordingly, the senators requested the CPSC to “regulate and test formaldehyde in textiles and protect consumers from this poison.”

In August 2010, a Government Accountability Office (GAO) report warned that, “A small proportion of the U.S. population does have allergic reactions to formaldehyde resins on their clothes.” However, the GAO made no recommendations for any regulatory action.

It is surprising that many people are unaware of the longstanding scientific evidence on the carcinogenicity of formaldehyde. However, this had been detailed in five National Toxicology Program Reports on Carcinogens from 1981 to 2004. These classified formaldehyde as “reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen” based on limited evidence of carcinogenicity in humans and sufficient evidence in experimental animals. This evidence was confirmed in a series of reports by the prestigious International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). Its 2006 and 2010 reports explicitly warn that formaldehyde is “a known cause of leukemia in experimental animals – and nasal cancer” in humans.

“Strong” evidence of the nasal cancer risk was also cited in the May 2010 President’s Cancer Panel report, “Environmental Cancer Risk: What Can We Do Now?”\* Nevertheless, and in spite of this explicit evidence, a September 2010 GAO report attempted to trivialize the cancer risks of formaldehyde on the alleged grounds that exposure levels are low or “non-detectable.”

Of further concern, occupational exposure to formaldehyde has been associated with breast cancer deaths in a 1995 National Cancer Institute report, while environmental exposure has been associated with an increased incidence of breast cancer in a 2005 University of Texas report. None of the dermatologists

quoted in *The New York Times* appear aware of long-standing evidence that most cosmetics and personal care products commonly used daily by most women, besides on their infants and children and, to a lesser extent men, contain up to eight ingredients which are precursors of formaldehyde.

These include diazolidinyl urea, methenamine and quaterniums, each of which readily breaks down on the skin to release formaldehyde. This is then readily absorbed through the skin and poses unknown

risks of cancer to the majority of the U.S. population.

\*See footnote for top story on page 7.



**Samuel S. Epstein, M.D. is professor emeritus of Environmental and Occupational Medicine at the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health; Chairman of the Cancer Prevention Coalition and a former President of the Rachel Carson Trust. His awards include the 1998 Right Livelihood Award and the 2005 Albert Schweitzer Golden Grand Medal for International Contributions to Cancer Prevention. Dr. Epstein has authored 270 scientific articles and 20 books on the causes, prevention and politics of cancer. These include *The Legislation of Product Safety* (1974); *The Politics of Cancer* (1979); *Hazardous Waste in America* (1982, Sierra Club Books); *The Breast Cancer Prevention Program* (1997, Macmillan); *The Politics of Cancer Revisited* (1998, East Ridge Press); *What's In Your Milk?* (2006, Trafford Publishing) and *Healthy Beauty* (2010, Benbella Books).**

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[Ed.: About 30 years ago I was doing terminal cancer care as an LPN and there was plenty of time to read while my sick patients slept. I don't remember how I got my hands on Dr. Epstein's two books: *The Politics of Cancer* and *Hazardous Waste in America*, but they were instrumental in launching me on a full-time environmental career, which has culminated in this newspaper. I was shocked by what I learned and decided to do something about it. I'm still at it. When I spoke with Dr. Epstein on February 1, he wondered why I was interested in this article when my newspaper is about global warming. Well, it's also about people's ignorance of the things around them and it's also because an early mentor (Don Harkins) said I should include articles besides global warming ones for those who weren't particularly interested in it. And so I started this Food and Health page, which has been very good and enjoyable to work on with our columnists and others.]



## Mark's Green Party Saving the Co-op Part XI: 6 Pitas + 12 Eggs = 1 Mess

By Mark Lautman  
Rockville, Maryland

Latonya Rotterdam, the Happy Apple Blossom Co-Op's high-powered manager, always worried about cleaning the bulk bins, arranging the spices and restocking the vegetables but she never worried about one thing: too many customers. It seemed that every week the same people came in to buy the same things and, no matter what she did to bring in more sales, nothing worked.

When she arrived for work two weeks ago she was pleasantly surprised to see the parking lot full. “I guess Tincture Alice was right about her idea for the two-for-one okra promotion,” Latonya said to herself.

Latonya's enthusiasm turned to alarm when she realized that the parking lot wasn't full of customers – it was full of demonstrators! As she pushed her way to the co-op's entrance, she saw people carrying signs reading: “Down with Corporate America” and “No Fracking on Our Mountain” and “Keep the Peels in My Daughter's Carrot Juice.” The scene was ugly and, just as Rotterdam approached the front door, an egg barely missed her forehead.

“I sure hope that egg was from hen raised cage-free and on organic feed!” she yelled back at the crowd.

Hurrying into the store, she held back tears of surprise and anger. “What on whatever-is-left-of-this-Earth is going on out there?” she demanded.

Palette Jack and Tincture Alice were barricaded behind the snack aisle. They were prepared to use violence to defend themselves, filling deep-scoop tortilla chips loaded with extra-hot salsa and heaving them indiscriminately in any direction.

“Ms. Rotterdam,” she heard someone shout from outside, “we are prepared to negotiate. If you meet our demands, we will leave peacefully.”

Latonya realized that time was of the essence. She was expecting a shipment of fresh-squeezed blueberry juice. If the delivery van got caught in the demonstration, all the nutritional value of the anti-oxidants would decay into nothing more than that of a soft drink. She decided to negotiate. She told Palette Jack to call in the demonstrators' leader for a conference in her office.

A few minutes later Palette Jack returned with the organizer and a raw egg smeared on his shirt. “Don't worry, Ms. Rotterdam,” he said. “This fellow, Flax Seed Fernando, assured me that the eggs they throw are indeed from hens that are raised cage-free and on organic feed.”

“Thank you, Jack,” said Rotterdam calmly. “That will be all. You can also put down the spicy salsa and deep-scoop tortilla chips. Fernando and I will come to an arrangement, I'm sure.”

Palette Jack retreated as Flax

Seed Fernando arrogantly sat in the chair opposite Rotterdam's and placed his feet on her desk.

“What can I do for you, Fernando?”

“Ms. Rotterdam, you must be familiar with the packaging ploy of the big grocery stores. They sell hot dog buns in packages of eight but hot dogs in packages of ten.”

“I believe it's so that people are forced to buy more of everything. If you cook all ten hot dogs, you need to buy two packs of buns. That leaves you with six extra buns but you can't buy six hot dogs, you have to buy another pack of ten.”

“Precisely,” said Flax Seed Fernando. “This type of marketing tactic is a ploy to oppress the poor and causes unneeded consumption.”

“What does that have to do with my store?” asked Rotterdam.

“Ms. Rotterdam, you sell Grandma Collins' croutons in boxes of 25. Studies show that people put eight croutons on a salad and you can make three salads out of a head of lettuce. That means that after one head of lettuce, your customers have one crouton left in the box! They buy another head of lettuce, use the one leftover crouton but they are missing seven so they need to buy another full box of Grandma Collins'.”

“Yes, I see your point,” said an accommodating, incredulous Rotterdam.

“We haven't even started talking about the tinctures, like Echinacea extract. They come in bottles of one fluid ounce.”

“And that's oppressive because . . . why?”

“Ms. Rotterdam, nobody, I mean nobody, gets a cold and goes through a full ounce of Echinacea. To use up that quantity, people need to get sick five, sometimes six, times! Nobody wants to toss leftover Echinacea, so they get sick on purpose just to finish the bottle.”

“I suppose you're right,” said Rotterdam, not entirely following the line of reasoning.

“The worst exploitation is with the toothpaste and toothbrushes. A tube of toothpaste is good for 50 brushes but a toothbrush lasts for 180. That means when the toothbrush is replaced, I still have 20 brushfulls left in the fourth tube I bought. That's where you took things too far.”

“I, uh, see your point,” confessed Rotterdam under duress.

“What we want, Ms. Rotterdam, is that the co-op follow a fair and balanced ‘Harmonized Packaging Policy’ that does not require people to buy extra of one product to use up the quantity of another product.”

“You're telling me that you want us to repack everything so that every single item can be fully consumed with every other item that it can possibly be used with?”

“Yes,” said a defiant Flax Seed Fernando.

“Do you know how much

See **Mess** page 15

### The Hummingbird and the Forest Fire

While the other animals run in fear or hang their heads in despair, the hummingbird flies above the fire time and again, releasing a few drops of water from its tiny beak.

“Why do you bother?” the other animals shout at the hummingbird. “I'm doing the best that I can,” the hummingbird replies.

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**MIRA** *continued from page 7*

answer, I have run through many possibilities: Was it the new bed we bought at the start of my pregnancy with Mira? Was the wooden frame treated with polybrominated diphenyl ether (PBDE) to make it fire resistant? Did that PBDE make its way into my bloodstream and to my developing baby? Was it dioxins from cleaning chemicals used in our household? Was my minimal use of bleach for laundry and cleaning enough to expose myself and my baby to harmful levels of dioxins? Was it from the fumes of the volatile organic compounds (VOCs) released when we painted in our house?

Clearly, part of my dismay is that there are so many possibilities. How can we even begin to decipher what is happening when there are so many possible carcinogens? And then we hear that several children's bath products have ingredients that can combine to create formaldehyde (see article on page 12). Could exposures from multiple sources (bedding, clothing, baby bath, paint fumes) be cumulative and add up to cancer?

It seems clear to me that the safe and appropriate response is to begin to reduce the use of chemicals that are known to be harmful. While it is being determined in more detail what chemicals cause what effects, as a country we should at least take the approach of, "First, do no harm."

In Europe, they have recently adopted stronger measures. If companies want to sell certain products, they need to demonstrate they are safe for the intended consumer. The burden of proof lies with the company that stands to make the profit, rather than the government. Why is this not our approach? Why is our country's priority the freedom to make a profit rather than freedom from disease?

Noted researcher Sandra Steingraber, herself a pediatric cancer survivor, conducted early research into the links between synthetic chemicals and human cancer. She then published a groundbreaking book, *Living Downstream*, in 1997 about the connection between newly available toxics-release data and cancer registry information. My conversations with Sandra and discussions of her substantial body of work have reinforced in me the belief that Mira's brain cancer was caused by some toxic chemical exposure.

One simple fact is that children, especially young children, are the most vulnerable to these exposures. Pound for pound, children eat more, drink more and breathe more than adults. A bottle-fed infant drinks the equivalent of seven liters of water

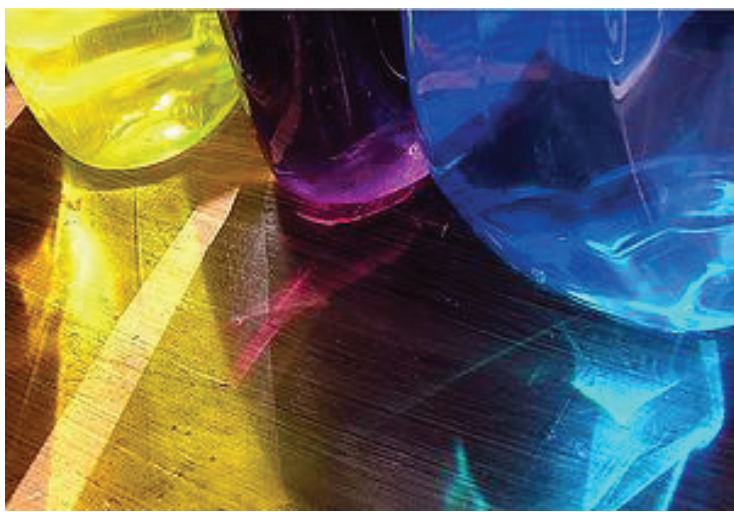


Photo by Michael Porter

*Toxic chemicals are found in household cleaning products.*

per day. If their water is contaminated by chemicals, they will be heavily exposed. Additionally, the organs in the body that remove waste are less developed, leaving contaminants in the body longer.

Infants crawl on floors. If carpets contain formaldehyde, toluene, benzene, styrene and other VOCs, babies and children will touch and inhale them in much larger quantities than adults in the same household. If floors have been cleaned with ammonia or bleach, they will inhale the fumes and absorb them through their skin.

Children are more exposed to many chemicals during pregnancy and through the high level of chemical contaminants in breast milk. Among the chemicals that are often found in breast milk are several members of the organochlorine class. The list includes: chlordane; DDT; dieldrin, aldrin and endrin; hexachlorobenzene; hexachlorocyclohexane (lindane) heptachlor; mirex; toxaphene; dioxins and furans; PBDEs and PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls).

Lindane is a chemical used to treat lice. Parents put it on their children's heads. Do they know that it's been linked to childhood cancer? It frightens me and angers me to know that the "liquid gold" many mothers choose for their children which, even given this reality, is still their best option for optimal neurological development and immunological benefit, could be the very source of a life-threatening illness.

Other substances often found in breast milk include nitro musks and musk xylenes; lead, mercury, cadmium and other metals and solvents. Solvents have been linked to childhood brain cancer.

In the summer of 2010, President Obama's Cancer Panel Report\* was released and it talked about the idea that our environment is probably much more to blame for the incidence of

cancer than we had previously acknowledged. Interestingly, the American Cancer Society made a statement in response to which they said that Americans needed to worry less about the environment and make better lifestyle choices for themselves. Clearly, they don't speak for children with cancer.

My daughter at age one (and most children up to age 19 included in the pediatric cancer category) have made few lifestyle choices for themselves. Instead, they are victims of their and their parent's environment.

Our government can be slow to make changes in policy, not wanting to dampen business freedoms and profits without "proof." I've heard researchers say that they remember the same being said about cigarette production and sales. It took many years for stronger statements to be made about the potential harm of tobacco. And now, tobacco awareness and attempts to prevent lung cancer are a given. But most would admit, it was about 30 years too late.

In the past 10 years, seven new pediatric brain tumor histologies (types of cancer cells) have been identified. Why would new types of tumors emerge? Only because of new causes in our environment, such as synthetic chemicals.

What has also become clear to me over these years is that many parents believe that our government regulates harmful chemicals and protects our children and families from known hazards. When they discover that lead has been found in jewelry being sold for children, they're shocked. When they find out that children's mattresses and bedding have potentially carcinogenic chemicals in them, they're dumbfounded.

The Toxic Chemicals Control Act needs to be passed for the sake of our children and all who love them.

\*See footnote in top article page 7.

# Updates on Weapons of Mass Destruction in D.C.

Submitted by Allen Hengst  
 Washington, D.C.  
 January 18, 2011

## First Peek at Dalecarlia Woods Will Unearth 700 Anomalies, 12 Trenches

During World War I, a sixty-two-acre section of Dalecarlia Woods next to Washington D.C.'s reservoir was the impact area (Area of Interest #6) for Livens projectiles fired from the American University (AU) Experiment Station one mile to the east, as well as the location of a munitions burial pit (Area of Interest #2) alongside a narrow-gauge railway line that once extended there from the AU. Amid these steep wooded hills in coming weeks, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will begin an intrusive investigation of 700 single-point metallic anomalies and twelve possible munitions disposal trenches identified during the initial, 17-acre phase of their geophysical survey on the federal property.

## Corps Begins Destroying WWI Munitions in Northwest D.C.

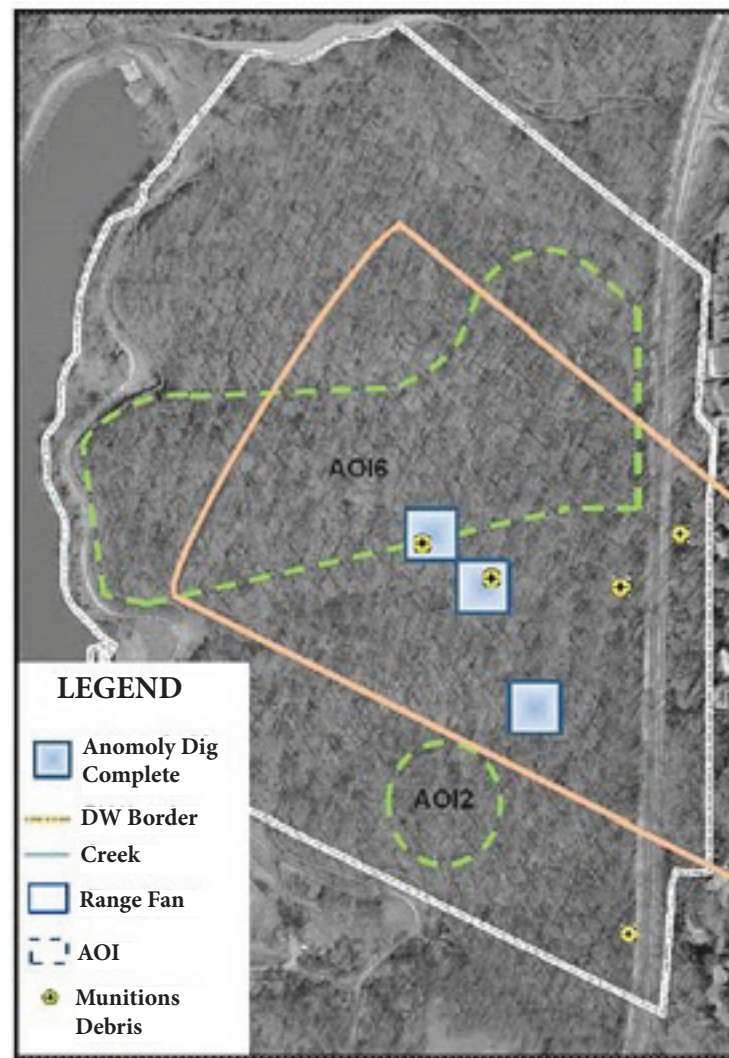
By Brett Zonger  
 Associated Press, January 7, 2011

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers plans to destroy a slew of World War I-era munitions uncovered during a cleanup of a northwest Washington neighborhood beginning next week, officials said Thursday. The Army Corps will use a detonation chamber near Sibley Memorial Hospital in the pricey Spring Valley neighborhood to dispose of about 100 munitions found buried in the yard of a home near American University, said project manager Todd Beckwith. The process begins next week and will cost about \$500,000.

## What Neighbors Will Hear During Detonation

By Brady Holt  
 Northwest Current, January 12, 2011

The main noise that will escape the site is the sound of each individual detonation, which Beckwith likened to a car's backfire lasting a fraction of a second 10 times a day ... Nan



Site map provided by Allen Hengst  
 Site near the Washington, D.C. reservoir and Sibley Hospital where World War I weapons are being unearthed and destroyed. The DW border is the Army's 62-acre geophysical survey in Dalecarlia Woods. It's the western 17-acre section of this study area where they identified 700 anomalies and 12 trenches that are being intrusively investigated (i.e. dug up) this winter.

Wells (Spring Valley advisory neighborhood commissioner) said she still would have preferred to see the munitions taken out of Spring Valley to be destroyed. "I just think an abundance of caution is appropriate and nothing is fail-safe that has people involved."

## Sign Up for Guided Tours of Spring Valley Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS)

American University Experiment Station (AUES) Spring Valley guided tours provide context to better understand the issues surrounding this Formerly Used Defense Site [FUDS]. Tours focus on historical features of the AUES, the current Army Corps of Engineers cleanup operations and

residents' health problems. Tours are led by a former Restoration Advisory Board member and Spring Valley resident. Each tour takes approximately one hour. Small tour groups of 5 to 10 people allow for opportunities to ask questions. Participants see where testing occurred during World War I and where chemical munitions are being removed today. There is no charge but donations are appreciated. For more information contact wksla@aol.com.

The next Spring Valley Restoration Advisory Board monthly meeting with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is March 8, 7:00 p.m. at Saint David's Church basement, 5150 Macomb Street, NW (one block north of MacArthur Boulevard).

*Whatever you do, do it to the purpose; do it thoroughly, not superficially. Go to the bottom of things. Anything half done or half known is, in my mind, neither done nor known at all. Nay, worse, for it often misleads.*

Lord Chesterfield



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## Earth Psalms: Song 119

By Angela Magara ©  
www.angelamagara.com

1. Blessed are those who can walk fearlessly.  
Who with clear eye step blamelessly upon the land.  
Life teaches all who listen.  
No shame, but revelation, haunts our failures.  
Let my eyes be open lest I lose my way.
2. How shall the maiden find her power or the young man his vision?  
Seek with your whole heart.  
Open its chambers to the uttering of lichen and whale song.  
Listen as a wanderer to the lessons of soil and  
Speak the truth learned at beaver's lodge.  
Hold knowledge and mystery of equal worth,  
And nothing more valuable than love.
3. Lay not the heavy hand on my brow.  
Nor deal with me as I deserve.  
I know little of what to do,  
And nothing of how to be.  
I am seeking truth.  
It is my excuse, it is my dream.  
It is my work.
4. The wisdom of my body lay buried.  
Like hidden tombs, or cairns of forgotten warrior queens.  
Eclipse broke the bonds.  
Open heart, widen,  
Like fig's fruit open.  
That the law of life within  
Can run down my chin.
5. I will stand on the revealed truth  
As I know it,  
Even in the face of reproach.  
Continue to unfold revelation to me.  
Tho I am not without fault, not confusion.  
I will lift thankful hands to gracious Law  
And the freedom of Trust.
6. Far I will go, to unknown lands.  
Holding unanswered questions,  
In confidence.  
For Hope holds me in the face of loss,  
And memories of the still water remind me.  
I am always before the altar.

*Earth Psalms* is full of familiar words spoken in a new voice based on the Biblical Psalms but with the heart of Earth-based spirituality.

Printed with the author's permission.

*The next step in human evolution is to transcend thought. This is now our urgent task. It doesn't mean not to think anymore but simply not to be completely identified with thought, possessed by thought. Spiritual awakening is awakening from the dream of thought.*

Submitted by Sunny War Eagle, Marianna, Florida

# Appeals Court Upholds Environmentalists' Right to Preliminary Injunction

SAN FRANCISCO, California, January 27, 2011 (ENS) — The right of all citizens to request a preliminary injunction was upheld in a Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling Tuesday in a case brought by two environmental groups.

The appeals court set a precedent by defining at what point citizens' groups may obtain a preliminary injunction to stop federal projects in the Western states.

"This landmark precedent is vitally important because the court ruled that citizens can still get injunctions to temporarily stop government actions, such as clear-cutting, while a case is being heard," said Michael Garrity, executive director of the Alliance for the Wild Rockies, which, along with the Native Ecosystems Council, was a plaintiff in the original lawsuit at the district court level.

"Environmentalists aren't the only victors today," said Garrity. "Right now we have farmers and ranchers fighting proposed transmission lines to export power from Montana," said Garrity. "This ruling preserves the right of all citizens to request a preliminary injunction to stop construction before the damage is done."

At issue before the appeals court was the preliminary injunction issued by the Ninth Circuit last year that stopped a federal logging project on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest in southwestern Montana's Big Hole Valley, about 15 miles from the town of Wisdom.

In August and September of 2007, the Rat Creek Wildfire burned about 27,000 acres on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest.

On July 1, 2009 (almost two years later) Regional Forester Jane Cottrell made an Emergency Situation Determination for the Rat Creek Salvage Project, which permitted immediate logging of trees on 1,652 of the 27,000 acres that were burned.

This chief forester's decision allowed the logging without the delays that might have resulted from the Forest Service's administrative appeals process.

Alliance for the Wild Rockies and the Native Ecosystems Council filed suit in federal district court in Montana, alleging violations of the Appeals Reform Act.

District Judge Donald Molloy denied the plaintiffs' request for a preliminary



Photo courtesy Timber Buy Sell

Logs cut from the Beaverhead Deerlodge National Forest.

injunction to stop the logging.

Citing the 2008 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in the case of *Winter v. Natural Resources Defense Council*, Judge Molloy held that Alliance for the Wild Rockies had not shown sufficient likelihood of irreparable injury and success on the merits.

"If the damage from clearcutting was allowed to continue while we argued in court, winning would mean nothing because all the trees would already have been cut," Garrity explained. The plaintiffs appealed Judge Molloy's ruling to the Ninth Circuit,

which allowed the preliminary injunction in June 2010.

"We contended that the Rat Creek Timber Sale violated the National Forest Management Act by moving forward with logging before addressing dozens of appeals that were filed against the project," Garrity said. "But half of the sale had already been logged before the court halted the project."

Susan Jane Brown, staff attorney for the Western Environmental Law Center who represented the plaintiff groups, explained why the ruling is so important.

"The preliminary injunction is a critical tool for environmentalists because it allows opponents of a project to stave off an imminent destructive project," she said.

**"The preliminary injunction is a critical tool for environmentalists because it allows opponents of a project to stave off an imminent destructive project."**

— Susan Jane Brown, staff attorney for the Western Environmental Law Center

# HELP WANTED: Full-Time Mothers

By Kara Santos

MANILA, January 25, 2011 (IPS) — It's definitely not your typical job advertisement. "Wanted: Mothers; must be mature, strong and stable, self-confident, humorous and know how to cook; must have a positive and cheerful attitude towards life; must be willing to work as a full-time mother for the long term."

This is the call for new mothers by SOS Children's Villages Philippines, a non-profit organization providing long-term family-based care, education and shelter to orphans, and abandoned and neglected children.

"The motherhood profession is really what we value the most," Maria Sara de los Santos, a social worker with SOS Manila, told IPS.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimates that there are over 1.8 million orphaned children in the Philippines aged 0 to 17 years.

Mothers are selected not by their diploma or certified experience but by their willingness to devote their lives to children.

Each mother lives with an average of ten children whom they raise as their own within a village of eight to 14 houses. In order to maintain family ties, biological siblings are kept within the same house.

The mother's responsibilities include building close relationships with every child, providing security, love and stability, and guiding the children's development while running the house-

hold independently.

After an initial screening and interview, potential mothers live with the children for a trial period to see if they will be a good fit.

"We really put a lot of weight on the children's feedback. Some children tell us that they would like a woman to be their mother, while others tell us not to choose an applicant because she was mean to them in their first few days together," says de los Santos.

Children that come to SOS often have traumatic backgrounds. Many were abandoned by their biological parents due to extreme poverty, while others were abused.

After serving as an 'aunt' where they help different families, successful applicants take a three-month long 'Mother's Training' course, where they learn lessons on personality development, elements of child-care and household management, among others.

In exchange, mothers are provided with free board and lodging, a household allowance and a monthly salary of Php10,000.00 (roughly 227 dollars). According to 52-year old 'Mama Wilma', it's a job where benefits are emotional rather than financial. Wilma currently takes care of nine children, aged five to 17. "I've always loved children and even considered becoming a nun but my folks wanted me to take up accounting to help in the family business," she tells IPS.



Photo by Kara Santos

Snapshot of a mother in the Philippines with her adopted family. [Could not get better photo.]

When she was only two, Wilma's father died, forcing her mother to place her and her three siblings under the care of various relatives. She became an SOS mother by chance after she was hired as a bookkeeper and assistant at SOS Manila.

While she did her job well, she was not fulfilled with working in an office. "It's like I was searching for something missing in my life," she says. The village director at the time asked if she wanted to try being a mother instead and she agreed to try it out.

"The first two months were really challenging. I had a hard time budgeting for food. You

know how growing boys can eat," she laughs. "But you have to look at where they came from. They had faced so much deprivation before."

Another challenge she faced was when the children would get sick all at the same time. "Just when my youngest was discharged from the hospital after getting dengue, three others fell sick. Those were sleepless nights," she recalls.

Fifty-one year old 'Mama Alma' told IPS that one of the major challenges of being a mother is dealing with teenagers.

"By the time they turn 12, they can be really hard to han-

dle," she says. "They don't really want to listen to you unlike the younger kids."

A mother of 13, including two sets of twins, Alma wakes up every morning at 4:30 to do household chores and doesn't sleep at night until everyone is back in bed. Formerly a seamstress before the factory she worked in closed down, she decided to give "being a mother" a shot when a friend who worked in SOS Villages recommended her.

"I never thought I would be doing this full-time," says Alma. "But with God's grace, I've lasted 13 years."

"It can be hard being a mother but it's a great joy to see the chil-

Brown said the issue clarifies the Supreme Court ruling in *Winter v. Natural Resources Defense Council* (NRDC), in which the court refused to grant plaintiffs an injunction against the U.S. Navy's use of sonar off the California coast. In that case, the Supreme Court allowed Navy maneuvers to continue despite plaintiffs' contention that such use was causing damage to whales and other sea mammals.

Under the *Winter* decision, plaintiffs must establish that irreparable harm is likely, not just possible, in order to obtain a preliminary injunction.

"In the wake of the Supreme Court decision in *Winter v. NRDC*, the Department of Justice (DOJ) began arguing nationally that *Winter* substantially curtailed plaintiffs' ability to obtain injunctive relief and that the sliding-scale test — which allows the court to balance the often-great magnitude of environmental harm against the likelihood of plaintiff's success — was no longer good law," Brown explained.

"We put DOJ's theory to the test and the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in our favor," she said. "This is vitally important because it can be difficult to fully demonstrate damages when confronted with the short timelines and incomplete agency decision-making records that are common in preliminary injunction cases."

At this point, the Justice Department could ask the U.S. Supreme Court to review this Ninth Circuit decision and all parties are waiting to see if that happens. If no Supreme Court review is sought, this case goes back to the U.S. District Court in Missoula, Montana for a ruling on the merits.

dren succeed in life," says Alma, as she points to diplomas and pictures of her children decorating the walls of their house.

"I'm content that my children are able to graduate from school and can stand on their own," agrees Wilma. In her 22 years of service, she has been a mother to over 30 children and a grandmother of 20.

"She has a been a true mother to each one of us even if we are not her own blood," shares one of Wilma's daughters, Marygrace Racimo, in the SOS book tribute 'Celebrating Selfless Love.' Racimo, who came to SOS at the age of seven when her biological mother died of tuberculosis, was able to graduate with a Pharmacy degree. "She gave us importance, support, advice and, above all, love."

Since the program started in the country, over 1,223 kids have become fully integrated into society with 807 children still living in the eight SOS Children's Villages around the country. Former orphans have graduated as doctors, teachers, architects, entrepreneurs and even one as a pilot. Some have chosen to become SOS mothers themselves to continue caring for orphaned children.

For potential mothers, this is what Alma has to say: "You have to keep your mind open that this isn't just any job. Your heart has to be in the right place and you have to be ready to make a full-time commitment to ensure that the children have a brighter future."



## WHOLE FOODS continued from page 10

greenhouse gases), WFM wants the Biotech Bully of St. Louis to agree to pay “compensation” (i.e. hush money) to farmer “for any losses related to the contamination of his crop.”

In its email of January 21, 2011, WFM calls for “public oversight by the USDA rather than reliance on the biotechnology industry,” even though WFM knows full well that federal regulations on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) do not require pre-market safety testing or labeling and that even federal judges have repeatedly ruled that so-called government “oversight” of Frankencrops such as Monsanto’s sugar beets and alfalfa is basically a farce. At the end of its email, WFM admits that its surrender to Monsanto is permanent: “The policy set for GE alfalfa will most likely guide policies for other GE crops as well. True coexistence is a must.”

### Why Is Organic Inc. Surrendering?

According to informed sources, the CEOs of WFM and Stonyfield are personal friends of former Iowa governor, now USDA Secretary, Tom Vilsack, and in fact made financial contributions to Vilsack’s previous electoral campaigns. Vilsack was hailed as “Governor of the Year” in 2001 by the Biotechnology Industry Organization and traveled in a Monsanto corporate jet on the campaign trail. Perhaps even more fundamental to Organic Inc.’s abject surrender is the fact that the organic elite has become more and more isolated from the concerns and passions of organic consumers and locavores.

The Organic Inc. CEOs are tired of activist pressure, boycotts and petitions. Several of them have told me this to my face. They apparently believe that the battle against GMOs has been lost and that it’s time to reach for the consolation prize. The consolation prize they seek is a so-called “coexistence” between the Biotech Behemoth and the organic community that will lure the public to sleep and greenwash the unpleasant fact that Monsanto’s unlabeled and unregulated, genetically-engineered crops are now spreading their toxic genes on 1/3 of U.S. (and 1/10 of global) crop land.

WFM and most of the largest organic companies have deliberately separated themselves from anti-GMO efforts and cut off all funding to campaigns working to label or ban GMOs. The so-called Non-GMO Project, funded by Whole Foods and giant wholesaler United Natural Foods (UNFI) is basically a greenwashing effort (although the 100% organic companies involved in this project seem to be operating in good faith) to show that certified organic foods are basically free from GMOs (we already know this since GMOs are banned in organic production), while failing to focus on so-called “natural” foods, which constitute most of WFM and UNFI’s sales and are routinely contaminated with GMOs.

From their “business as usual” perspective, successful lawsuits against GMOs filed by public interest groups such as the Center for Food Safety or noisy attacks on Monsanto by groups like the Organic Consumers Association, create bad publicity, rattle their big customers such as Wal-Mart, Target, Kroger, Costco, Supervalu, Publix and Safeway and remind consumers that organic crops and foods such as corn, soybeans and canola are slowly but surely becoming contaminated by Monsanto’s GMOs.

### Whole Food’s Dirty Little Secret: Most of the So-Called “Natural” Processed Foods and Animal Products They Sell Are Contaminated

The main reason, however, why Whole Foods is pleading for coexistence with Monsanto, Dow, Bayer, Syngenta, BASF and the rest of the biotech bullies, is that they desperately want the controversy surrounding genetically engineered foods and crops to go away. Why? Because they know, just as we do, that 2/3 of WFM’s \$9 billion annual sales is derived from so-called “natural”

processed foods and animal products that are contaminated with GMOs. We and our allies have tested their so-called “natural” products (no doubt WFM’s lab has too) containing non-organic corn and soy, and – guess what – *they’re all contaminated with GMOs*, in contrast to their certified organic products, which are basically free of GMOs or else contain barely detectable trace amounts.

Approximately 2/3 of the products sold by Whole Foods Market and their main distributor, United Natural Foods (UNFI) are not certified organic but rather are conventional (chemical-intensive and GMO-tainted) foods and products disguised as “natural.”

Unprecedented wholesale and retail control of the organic marketplace by UNFI and Whole Foods, employing a business model of selling twice as much so-called “natural” food as certified organic food, coupled with the takeover of many organic companies by multinational food corporations such as Dean Foods, threatens the growth of the organic movement.

### Covering Up GMO Contamination: Perpetrating “Natural” Fraud

Many well-meaning consumers are confused about the difference between conventional products marketed as “natural” and those nutritionally/environmentally superior and climate-friendly products that are “certified organic.”

Retail stores like WFM and wholesale distributors like UNFI have failed to educate their customers about the qualitative difference between natural and certified organic, conveniently glossing over the fact that nearly all of the processed “natural” foods and products they sell contain GMOs or else come from a “natural” supply chain where animals are force-fed GMO grains in factory farms or Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs).

A troubling trend in organics today is the calculated shift on the part of certain large, formerly-organic brands from certified organic ingredients and products to so-called “natural” ingredients. With the exception of the “grass-fed and grass-finished” meat sector, most “natural” meat, dairy and eggs are coming from animals reared on GMO grains and drugs and confined entirely, or for a good portion of their lives, in CAFOs . . . .

### The Solution: Truth-in-Labeling Enables Consumers to Eliminate So-Called “Natural” Tainted Foods

There can be no such thing as “coexistence” with a reckless industry that undermines public health, destroys biodiversity, damages the environment, tortures and poisons animals, destabilizes the climate and economically devastates the world’s 1.5 billion seed-saving small farmers. There is no such thing as coexistence between GMOs and organics in the European Union (EU). Why? Because in the EU there are almost no GMO crops under cultivation, nor GM consumer food products on supermarket shelves.

And why is this? Because under EU law, all foods containing GMOs or GMO ingredients must be labeled. Consumers have the freedom to choose or not to choose GMOs; while farmers, food processors and retailers have (at least legally) the right to lace foods with GMOs, as long as they are safety-tested and labeled. Of course the EU food industry understands that consumers, for the most part, do not want to purchase or consume GE foods. European farmers and food companies, even junk food purveyors like McDonald’s and Wal-Mart, understand quite well the concept expressed by a Monsanto executive when GMOs first came on the market: “If you put a label on genetically engineered food you might as well put a skull and crossbones on it.”

The biotech industry and Organic Inc. are supremely conscious of the fact that North American consumers, like their

European counterparts, are wary and suspicious of GMO foods. Even without a PhD, consumers understand you don’t want your food safety or environmental sustainability decisions to be made by out-of-control chemical companies like Monsanto, Dow or Dupont – the same people who brought you toxic pesticides, Agent Orange, PCBs, Bhopal and now global warming. Industry leaders are acutely aware of the fact that every single industry or government poll over the last 16 years has shown that 85-95% of American consumers want mandatory labels on GMO foods. Why? So that we can avoid buying them. GMO foods have absolutely no benefits for consumers or the environment, only hazards. This is why Monsanto and their friends in the Bush, Clinton and Obama administrations have prevented consumer GMO Truth-in-Labeling laws from getting a public discussion in Congress.

Although Congressman Dennis Kucinich (Democrat, Ohio) recently introduced a bill in Congress calling for mandatory labeling and safety testing for GMOs, don’t hold your breath for Congress to take a stand for Truth-in-Labeling and consumers’ right to know what’s in their food. Especially since the 2010 Supreme Court decision in the so-called “Citizens United” case gave big corporations and billionaires the right to spend unlimited amounts of money (and remain anonymous, as they do so) to buy media coverage and elections, our chances of passing federal GMO labeling laws against the wishes of Monsanto and Food Inc. are all but non-existent.

Perfectly dramatizing the “Revolving Door” between Monsanto and the Federal Government, Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, formerly chief counsel for Monsanto, delivered one of the decisive votes in the Citizens United case, in effect giving Monsanto and other biotech bullies the right to buy the votes it needs in the U.S. Congress.

With big money controlling Congress and the media, we have little choice but to shift our focus and go local. We’ve got to concentrate our forces where our leverage and power lie – in the marketplace, at the retail level; pressuring retail food stores to voluntarily label their products; while on the legislative front we must organize a broad coalition to pass mandatory GMO (and CAFO) labeling laws, at the city, county and state levels.

**The Organic Consumers Association (OCA), joined by our consumer, farmer, environmental and labor allies, has just launched a nationwide Truth-in-Labeling Campaign to stop Monsanto and the Biotech Bullies from force-feeding unlabeled GMOs to animals and humans.**

Utilizing scientific data, legal precedent and consumer power the OCA and our local coalitions will educate and mobilize at the grassroots level to pressure giant supermarket chains (Wal-Mart, Kroger, Costco, Safeway, Supervalu and Publix) and natural food retailers such as Whole Foods and Trader Joe’s to voluntarily implement “Truth-in-Labeling” practices for GMOs and CAFO products while simultaneously organizing a critical mass to pass mandatory local and state Truth-in-Labeling ordinances – similar to labeling laws already in effect for country of origin, irradiated food, allergens and carcinogens. If local and state government bodies refuse to take action, wherever possible we must attempt to gather sufficient petition signatures and place these Truth-in-Labeling initiatives directly on the ballot in 2011 or 2012. If you’re interested in helping organize or coordinate a Millions Against Monsanto and Factory Farms Truth-in-Labeling campaign in your local community, sign up at [organicconsumers.org/oca-volunteer](http://organicconsumers.org/oca-volunteer).

**To pressure Whole Foods Market and other supermarket chains to voluntarily adopt Truth-in-Labeling practices circulate the petition found at [organicconsumers.org/articles](http://organicconsumers.org/articles). You can get on OCA’s email list at [www.organicconsumers.org](http://www.organicconsumers.org). 6771 South Silver Hill Drive, Finland, Minnesota 55603; 218-226-4164.**

## Comments on Content

Dear Iona,

Enclosed is \$30.00 for a subscription. Please send me three to five extra copies of the January 2011 issue. It is an extraordinary issue (Special Report on the National People’s Oil and Gas Summit). Your first issue is A++ journalism. Congratulations. Thank you.

David Young  
Lewisburg, Pennsylvania

Iona,

Your postcard reminded me to go back and finish reading the issue you sent. It gets a little overwhelming sometimes and I just have to lay it down for a while.

Thanks for sending it but postage exceeds cost of paper I noticed. I’m enclosing reimbursement. I know you will put it to good use... Keep up the good work. The more light we can shine on the darkness in this world, the harder it becomes for it to prevail.

Why are we so self-destructive? What is it going to take to wake us up? It is encouraging to hear of the success stories. It gives me a little hope. There are a lot of good people doing a lot of good things lately. I hope it’s not too little, too late!?

David Thomas  
Rocky Ridge, Maryland

Hi Iona,

I’d like to subscribe to your awesome newspaper, The Order of the Earth. A co-worker and I have created a small area in our library devoted to environmental issues; we’re calling it the “Green Scene” and we’d like to put a copy of your newspaper out every month for patrons to read. The library won’t order it since it’s available online so we’re purchasing it ourselves.

Thanks for publishing this important, pertinent newspaper!

Barb Vaughan  
Buffalo State College  
Buffalo, New York

## The Awakening

Dear Iona,

Thanks for OE as I’ve shared it. Excellent! I know you cover the controversial issues well.

I’m enclosing \$6 for the Awakening booklet. Keep up your splendid work on OE.

Happy Springtime!!!

In Love and Light,  
Loris Boutwell  
Tiger, Georgia

Hey Iona,

Thank you for the material on “The Awakening.” I found it interesting and intend to go over it again a bit more closely. I am enclosing \$6 to help with costs.

Glad you like the zines I make. Good to know you give out extra copies in public spaces. I think that doing this is extremely important, expands the message beyond the narrow confines of subculture. I think this also has a sort of transformative effect on the space, invisibly pushing the spaces toward transformation. I leave my material all over, particularly around Albany but also other areas I visit such as New York City, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New Hampshire.

Jason Rodgers  
Albany, New York  
Publisher of “Media Junkie”

## Kickstarter & Beyond

Iona,

“Too bad things did not work out with this project. [Ed.: OE

tried to raise money through Kickstarter but it didn’t succeed.] Despite what the news media wants to describe as an economic recovery, it is a very tough time for fundraising. At least in Bedford, most people seem to be continuing to be very selective in what they spend money on and are holding on to most of it.

The instability in the world is rather scary and the U.S. needs to pull back and conserve our resources if we want to survive and maintain the quality of life we have become accustomed to. It does not look like the politicians are choosing to do this, so our future is still quite uncertain.

I am grateful to be working, to be making things of beauty and positive energy [jewelry] and to have supportive friends around me. I appreciate the commitment of others who continue to follow their hearts and speak their truth and take a stand even though things sometimes seem hopeless.

Thank you for continuing to make a stand and to speak your truth and others’ truth through *The Order of the Earth*, even when it means you must work very hard to do so. I honor you and your “right work,” as the Buddhists would say.

Our monthly drum circle is in Bedford on Friday, March 4 at 7:30 p.m. in The Alpaca Shop. It is one of the positive things we are doing to co-create community, get out of cyberspace for a couple hours and feel the heartbeat of the Earth, offer sober, safe, healthy family experiences, create harmony and encourage acceptance of others.

By the way, have you ever heard Cadence Carroll’s “Last Leviathan?” This is a very moving sad song, but so true.

Thanks for keeping us informed of what is really going on with our lands here in Pennsylvania and other places.

Sally\* Klein  
Bedford, Pennsylvania

## Mild Wins Wild

Dear Iona, sister in the Universe,

It is great to hear from you. I have been busy traveling back and forth to and from Seoul. Yes, it was the full moon day, February 17<sup>th</sup> and it was January 15<sup>th</sup>. Every 15<sup>th</sup> is the full moon day by lunar calendar.

We had a record-breaking snow storm in the east coast area. In some areas, it was more than one meter high (39 inches). Small villages were isolated because of the snow storm and the public service personnel were busy digging the snow. But it was the final blow of the General Winter. The spring equinox is around corner and the Lady of Spring is coming soon. The snow will melt down by the breath of the beautiful young Lady of Spring. “Mild wins Wild” said Tao. Everything is the same. Nobody can beat Mother Nature. We have to obey the Law of Nature.

Today it is very warm and cozy. The harbingers of spring greet us already. Sometimes we move one step back in order to move forward two steps. That is not a retreat but it is still an advance.

Pyeong Roh  
Daegu, Korea

## Gas Drilling/Fracking

James Watt, former Secretary Department of the Interior Republican and Conservative: “We will mine more, drill more, cut more timber.” --Media Transparency

I live in a small community in Central Pennsylvania whose wealth is underground – coal, iron, silica (for electronics and solar panels), timber, water and of course Marcellus Shale Gas. The community is at the head of the deepest gorge in Pennsylvania and is connected to the southern part of the county through, as Reverend Fithian wrote in 1775, Hell’s Valley to the Shades of Death.

A few Saturdays ago I was about to leave town when a Tea Party supporter asked me how it was going. How’s it going?

During the brief exchange, the discussion turned to the Marcellus Shale issue in Pennsylvania. I was asked if I thought Pennsylvania was going in the appropriate direction for managing the drilling of Marcellus Shale Gas in. My response was, “The horse is out of the barn.” If it was going well, why did the Pennsylvania DEP advise home owners in western Pennsylvania on how to protect their wells and basements from gas creeping?

I began to think that the individuals who are of a political and business mind set, who view Marcellus Shale drilling as the important boost to local economy. I suggested to my friend that his party should review the work of Marion King Hubbert, who, in 1949, made a startling prediction that the fossil fuel era would be of very short duration. Of course the industrialists scoffed at Hubbert. Even though Hubbert’s curve and predictions were based on applying principles of geology, physics and mathematics to project future oil production from the U.S. reserve base, big business felt that, “We will mine more, drill more, cut more timber.”

Is Marcellus Shale the best thing for the current Pennsylvania Economy since the discovery of oil in Titusville in 1859? What happens after maximum extraction of Marcellus Shale gas is achieved? Remember Hubbert’s prediction in 1949? The Titusville oil boom lasted from discovery in 1859 until about 1979, when the economy of the oil region of Pennsylvania went bust. The offices that once occupied Oil City are now in Texas.

I stated to my friend that without any regulation at the beginning of a project, without any taxes on the gas removed, without proper permitting and inspection, the economy of Pennsylvania is in the toilet. The economy of “Drill in the Marcellus Shale” is only good for the driller, the companies extracting the gas and the politicians and shareholders in the pockets of the drillers. Those who will pay when the bust occurs in 30 years are local folks who will have contaminated wells and soil and poor health from the chemicals used.

When the damage is done and the Huntingdon County Commissioners go looking for grants to mediate the problem, they will discover that there are no grants, yet the County commissioners will have to travel through Hells Valley to the Shades of Death.

Will this missive, this personal private rant do any good? I doubt it. The new political right has started a movement for fewer regulations, less environmental protection. They had the nerve to call dissenters of their views un-American. Maybe there is a new revolution to give order to the chaos of removing mountain tops and polluting potable wells all for the sake of energy.

George John Drobnock  
Mount Union, Pennsylvania

## MESS continued from page 12

work that is? I’ll have to enlarge the store for all those small containers. I’ll have to hire more baggers to put all the items in the bags. The checkout lines will be longer to ring up multiple items. I’m not sure I can afford all this.”

Flax Seed Fernando took out a pack of seaweed-wrapped cigarettes and lit one. “The choice is yours, Ms. Rotterdam. It’s our way, or no way. We have enough supplies to stay outside until the Chinese calendar runs out. We will block all deliveries and customers into your store.”

Rotterdam thought for a moment and suddenly had an idea to diffuse this situation in a conciliatory and gently profitable manner.

“Fernando, you have a deal. We’ll implement your Harmonized Packaging Policy but under one condition. This kind of math is beyond me, Tincture Alice and Palette Jack. You sit down right here and figure out what the packaging should be and we’ll get it

from our suppliers.”

Flax Seed Fernando was elated. He went outside and told everyone they could go home because he had engineered their hard-earned victory. He returned to Latonya’s desk with pencil, paper and an abacus. Two hours later he came back.

“I guess this is more complicated than what I thought. Can I buy something to drink?”

“Sure,” said Tincture Alice. “We have a six-pack of spring water.”

“I’ll take it,” said Flax Seed Fernando. “I’ll also take a twelve-pack of those carob bars.”

Four hours later he came back looking a bit overwhelmed. “Uh, this is taking me a bit longer than what I had planned. Wow, is it lunch time already? Can I buy some gluten-free popcorn?”

“Absolutely,” said Palette Jack. “We have on sale the jumbo 16-ounce size. It goes well with the two-pack of pomegranate juice in eight-ounce recyclable bottles.”

“I’ll take three of each,” said a famished Flax Seed Fernando. “How about a bunch of those carrots with the five-ounce, soy-based onion dip?”

When it was closing time, Latonya came by to see if Flax Seed Fernando needed a ride home. She found him sitting on the floor, surrounded by crumpled papers of calculations mingled with bottles of juices, snacks and vegetables – some of them consumed, some of them unopened. She gently told him that he needed to leave but he could come back nice and early the next day to continue his toils.

“Ms. Rotterdam,” he said sheepishly, “I’ll admit it, I’m over my head with these computations. Can we forget about the Harmonized Package thing? No hard feelings, I hope. I’ll just go home. The problem is that I have nothing for breakfast. In the mornings, I usually eat a small Spanish omelet. Can I buy a dozen eggs and a 32-ounce jar of salsa?”

# Grassroots Action

## THE AWAKENING: PART V

(First published December 2009)



*This message is sent to you by the one who helps you to see and understand that you may have been deceived, The Trustworthy And True Living Spirit, The Most High God.*

Here are a few examples of some of the smaller deceptions that may have occurred in your understanding.

- The world may have taught you that you "fall in love" and, if the love does not work out, it is commonly said that when your relationship fails, you "break up," when in Truth you rise up in love. When it is real love, it never fails and, if it did fail, the Truth would be that it "broke down," not up.

- The world may have taught you that you do this or that "out of" love or kindness when the Truth would be that you would do this or that "in" love or "in"

kindness.

- The world may have taught you that you love someone or something from the "bottom" of your heart. This implies the lowest love in your heart so why not love them from the "top" of your heart?

- The world may have taught you that a great lover can have a different lover every night, when the Truth is a great lover can keep their mate excited and interested throughout their entire life.

- The world may have taught you that in 1929 there was a "great" depression. What about this would have been great, when the Truth is it was a "terrifying" depression?

- The world may have taught you that knowledge is power, when the Truth is knowledge is responsibility and power is also responsibility.

- The world may have taught you to "take" care of friends, loved ones, animals . . . etc. The Truth is to "take" is to steal, therefore you can "give" care or you can "receive" care; you cannot take care.

- The world may have taught you that you can go to war to bring forth peace. The Truth is war brings forth war and peace brings forth peace. For thousands of years people have used war to try to bring forth peace. It has never worked and it never will.

- The world may have taught

you that your thoughts, opinions and beliefs can discern the Truth, when the Truth is you must have proof, facts or evidence to discern Truth.

For example, if someone asks you if Apollo 11 actually went to the moon and you say, "No, it did not go to the moon," you could be wrong. If you say, "Yes, it did go to the moon," you could be wrong. If you say, "I do not know, I was not there," you can't be wrong. In the Kingdom of Heaven people choose to either know something or not know it.

- The world may have taught you that you have the right to your opinion. The Truth is, in the Kingdom of Heaven, no one wants to voice their opinion, not just because they are worried about their opinion being wrong but because they do not want to mislead others.

In the Kingdom of Heaven it is OK to wonder if things are this way or that way and seek the Truth but no one wants an opinion for in the Kingdom of Heaven everyone wants to speak and hear the Truth.

- The world may have taught you that you must wait until you die to find me, The Most High God, or to find Heaven, when the Truth is I am here now in human form and Heaven is also with me.

- The world may have taught

you that you can be spiritually cleansed by fasting, sweat lodges, churches . . . etc., when the Truth is fasting may clean out your digestive system, sweat lodges may clean out your pores and churches may clean out your wallet.

If you want true spiritual cleansing, try telling the Truth without exception. Try being modest, humble, kind, compassionate, loving, giving, sharing, forgiving, charitable . . . etc.

In closing, if you have been deceived about the little things, you may have also been deceived about the big things.

It would honor me if you share all of these "Awakening" messages with all who care to listen.

Stay within the Light of My Love and My Truth.

Your Friend,  
*The Trustworthy And True Living Spirit, The Most High God*

**PLEASE FEEL FREE TO SHARE THIS MESSAGE WITH EVERYONE BUT WE ASK THAT YOU DO NOT ADD TO OR TAKE AWAY FROM IT IN ANY WAY.**

*For further information about Most High God, contact Iona at 814-259-3680, ionaconner@gmail.com, 21431 Marlin Circle, Shade Gap, Pennsylvania 17255 or www.theorderoftheearth.com.*

### Awakening Booklet is Now Available

**Iona's Testimony:** My life has become so amazingly wonderful and peaceful since I turned it over to The Trustworthy And True Living Spirit, The Most High God that I want to share as much as I can about Him with everyone so I put all 10 "Awakening" articles into a booklet, which I'll be happy to mail to you. My cost is about \$6 (including postage) but, if you can't afford that, I will send it to you anyhow. Please send your check, money order, cash or request for a free booklet to:

Iona Conner

The Order of the Earth

21431 Shade Gap, Pennsylvania 17255.

You may email [ionaconner@gmail.com](mailto:ionaconner@gmail.com)

or phone 814-259-3680.

**Thank you.**

## Living-Lightly Workshops at the Ark of Albion Education Center in Belize, Central America

By Rod Rylander  
Orange Walk District, Belize



Map of Belize

Arrow points to San Antonio

These workshops are fun and educational. Workshop fees do not include transportation to or from San Antonio Rio Hondo. A flight to Cancun, Mexico and then travel by bus is much cheaper than flights to Belize. I travel by bus from Austin, Texas sleeping two nights on the bus.

Workshop fees include lodging, meals, activities, use of canoes and bicycles, etc. Prices are based on double occupancy but may be lower depending on accommodations. All prices are subject to federal taxes of 12.5%. A non-refundable deposit of \$200 is required. Fees

increased 10% November 1, 2010. Checks can be sent to: Rodney Rylander, 512 West Austin, Fredericksburg, Texas 78624. The balance is due in cash upon arrival. There are ATMs in Orange Walk Town. U.S. Dollars can be used in most areas of Belize. No vaccinations are required upon entry. English is the official language of Belize although Spanish is widely spoken. An automatic 30-day visa is given upon entry into Belize. For extended stays or for independent travelers, rooms for two are \$30 to \$40 U.S. per day.

For further information about Rod and the village, see [www.rrylander.com](http://www.rrylander.com) or email [rrylander@yahoo.com](mailto:rrylander@yahoo.com).

### Tropical Ornithology March 17-21, June 16-20



All Photos by Rod Rylander

Jacana walking on lily pads.

Rod Rylander, an ornithologist for over 60 years, will present a course on tropical birds and then take the group of no more than 12 participants to search out the birds by boat, canoe, bicycle and foot along the Rio Hondo. This is an appreciation and educational birding trek, not a trek to see how many birds you can add to your list. This four-day, three-night workshop can be extended. The fee of \$400 per person (\$700 per couple) includes a trip to the Lamanai Mayan ruins.

### Tropical, Traditional Ways April 9-12

This workshop will be taught mainly by older villagers who practice traditional ways like making natural dyes, collecting and processing sap from the Sapodillo tree to make chewing gum, traditional fishing methods, how to get cooking oil from coconuts, preparing and eating traditional foods and how to use a machete. The fee for this four-day, three-night workshop is \$450 (\$800 per couple) and includes a trip to the Shipyard Mennonite community and the Lamanai Mayan Ruins. Included are traditional dancing and the history of the area and Mayan culture. We will tap onto the wisdom of the village medicine man if he is still able to help us.

### Alternative and Appropriate Design and Construction May 13-16



The Amoeba in North Carolina.

Rod Rylander, designer and builder of the well known Hobbit House in Earthaven Ecovillage in North Carolina and who has experience in building most alternative-style structures, will present the workshop along with villagers who are experts in tropical construction. Participants will gain experience in adobe, cordwood, tire, cob, rammed earth, stick walls, thatch roofs and natural plasters and floors. This four-day workshop fee is \$400 per person (\$700 per couple) and includes hands-on experience in designing and constructing alternative buildings.

### Accommodations



**Cabana:** Two rooms elevated eight feet above the flood plain and overlooking the river take advantage of the breezes off the river. Each room has a private bathroom with flush toilet and shower. Windows and doors have screening. Fans are provided. The Cabana is



Villagers outside of one of the cabanas for rent.

constructed with native materials including a thatched roof but the interior is plastered and really nice. The family next door will provide services to occupants.

A private room in a cabin on the Mennonite farm provides experiences like milking a cow, feeding chickens, taking care of livestock or picking tropical fruit like mangos and avocados.

A private room with a shared bathroom in a house of a village family will provide a cultural experience. Most family members are bilingual in English and Spanish but Spanish is the language most spoken in the home.

### Ark of Albion



Villagers on the Ark of Albion Education Center boat.

### About San Antonio

San Antonio Rio Hondo is a unique village of about 100 families where 90% of the people are related. It is situated on the East side of Albion Island next to the calm bypass of the Rio Hondo. The main river separates Mexico and Belize. It is about 30 minutes by regular Alamilla bus from Orange Walk Town, the Orange Walk District capital. Most families receive income from their sugar cane and seek work outside the community to supplement their income. Supplemental food is gained through subsistence farming, fishing and hunting.

Within bicycle distance are cenotas (very deep, roundish ponds created by the collapse of roofs of caverns), Mayan ruins, the jungle, a quarry where the compaction line revealed the huge meteorite that hit Mexico and probably caused the extinction of dinosaurs, a Mennonite compound, Mexico, sugarcane production and village life. The river has many varieties of fish, with many big fish coming from the sea. There are alligators and manatees.

**ARK OF ALBION EDUCATION CENTER**  
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