

SEJ Journal

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In this issue

SEJ NEWS

- SEJ President Jim Detjen addresses coverage of "good news" and announces search for SEJ's first full-time executive directorpage 2
- Details on SEJ's new online computer bulletin boardpage 3
- A broadcast reporters guide to environmental reporting on 15 key issues is publishedpage 4
- Advocacy group study finds media need help on TRIpage 13
- List of new memberspage 13

COVER STORY PACKAGE

- Society of Professional Journalists and SEJ co-sponsor environmental reporting panels at SPJ's National Conventionpage 7

REPORTERS' TOOLBOX

- Patricia Rice on covering environmental issues along the U.S.-Mexican borderpage 9

FEATURES

- Michael Mansur, a member of the Kansas City Star reporting team that wrote the expose of waste and mismanagement by the USDA, tells how they did itpage 10

CALENDAR

- Meetings, symposia and conventions through Septemberpage 14

THE GREEN BEAT

- Contact list of Green Beat correspondents, by state 15
- A state-by-state roundup of dominant issues, exceptional reporting, and developments in academic programs and newsrooms 16

Political season

Best clue to a candidate's environmental politics is watching for the flip-flops, gaffes and fine print

By JOEL CONNELLY

When nearly 900,000 acres of federal land in Oregon were preserved as wilderness in 1984, Sen. Bob Packwood, R-Ore., sounded like John Muir.

He wished twice as much land could have been set aside, said Packwood, because once wild places are lost they can never be reclaimed.

Eight years later, the same politician is appearing in a plaid shirt at loggers' rallies to denounce those who would "lock up" Oregon's old growth forests. Packwood has drawn applause in conservative rural areas by equating 1990's preservationists with 1960's anti-war protesters.

The senator's 180-degree turn

prompts a question: What does Bob Packwood stand for? The answer may be re-election.

Sen. Everett Dirksen of Illinois once described consistency as the hobgoblin of small minds. Dirksen would be amused at today's flip-flops, particularly on environmental preservation.

The environment is a tricky subject for officeholders, and reporters who cover them.

In 1988, and through the summer of 1990, it seemed a preeminent issue. George Bush seized on environmentalism in 1988 to signal he would be a different kind of president than Ronald Reagan. Bush came out against oil and gas drilling off the

(Continued on page 5)

Terrors of the Earth Summit as experienced by one reporter

By RANDY LEE LOFTIS

The first sign of trouble was that TV repair place.

I knew nearly nothing about the geography of Rio, but I was fairly sure that even a city of 12 million people wouldn't have two absolutely identical TV repair shops. The only logical conclusion: The bus driver was going in big circles. We were lost.

About two dozen delegates, observers, journalists and others in town for the Earth Summit were trapped on a Rio bus. We had figured on an hour-long trip from Rio's international airport to our hotels, which were strung along the beach far to

(Continued on page 6)

Celebrities, scientists and lots of journalists to gather in Ann Arbor

By EMILIA ASKARI

Rub shoulders with Cable News Network founder Ted Turner, Worldwatch Institute director Lester Brown and two-time Pulitzer Prize winner Tom Knudson of the Sacramento Bee at SEJ's second annual conference Nov. 6-8 in Ann Arbor, Mich.

Jeremy Rifkin, author of a new book, *Beyond Beef*, and William Rosenberg, the Environmental Protec-

(Continued on page 7)

Sometimes the good news is just as important

In northwestern Costa Rica, biologist Dan Janzen is trying to rebuild a tropical forest on 250 square miles of former grazing land. He has raised tens of millions of dollars to buy property from cattle ranchers and is working 18-hour days to create Guanacaste National Park.

Janzen, a University of Pennsylvania professor, is a prime example of a committed individual who is attempting to halt environmental degradation through positive action.

There are thousands, possibly millions of other people worldwide, who are taking similar steps — large and small — to improve the environment.

The problem is that too often the public doesn't know about them. Why? Because too few journalists write about positive actions taken by people like Janzen. Journalists often tend to focus on the negative side of things.

Don't get me wrong. It's vital that journalists report about polluting companies, depleted fisheries, malfunctioning nuclear plants and other environmental problems.

But they should also write about the success stories, the positive steps that individuals are taking. People are hungry for specific information about things they can do.

I know that many editors put negative stories on the front page and relegate positive stories to the back pages. Crime and political scandals win out much of the time.

That's one reason I am a strong supporter of science and environment pages in daily newspapers and magazine-type shows on television. These sections and programs give reporters an opportunity to explain complicated topics and a chance to showcase stories about alternative approaches.

A number of publications — such as the *Boulder (CO) Daily Camera* — have launched weekly environment pages. Gregg Todd, an environmental reporter for the paper, says the public's response to the environment page launched in August

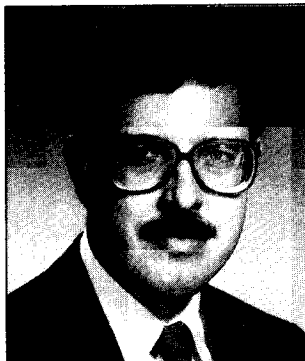
1991 has been unbelievably positive.

SEJ NEWS — Sara Thurin, a reporter at *Chemical Regulation Reporter* in Washington, D.C., was elected to SEJ's board of directors at our July 23 board meeting. Sara will complete the one-year term of Bob Engelman, who resigned after accepting a job with the Population Crisis Committee.

Bob, who reported about science and the environment for Scripps Howard Newspapers' Washington bureau for many

Report from the society's president

By Jim Detjen



years, was one of the driving forces in the creation of SEJ. His intelligence, energy, integrity and vision have contributed greatly to SEJ's successful start.

In recognition of his many contributions to SEJ, the board elected him an honorary member. Replacing Bob as SEJ's secretary is Kevin Carmody, a founding board member and co-editor of the *SEJournal*.

nicate with other SEJ members who subscribe to the service — sending messages, documents and stories, 24 hours a day.

Don Rittner, a SEJ member and author of "EcoLinking," has agreed to operate the bulletin board at no cost to SEJ. Don hopes to have the system up and running by early fall. The cost to SEJ members is \$7.95 a month for users of IBM or IBM-clone computers; \$5.95 a month for Macintosh users.

I'll be candid; this is an experiment. We hope it will prove valuable to the society's members but know that it may take some time to work out all the kinks. SEJ members can obtain free software to try out the system by calling 800-827-6364.

Some technical details: To use the bulletin board, you'll need a personal computer with a minimum of 512K memory and a hard drive (IBM PC-compatible, Macintosh or Apple II), a Hayes or Hayes-compatible modem and a DOS 2.0 (or later) operating system.

If you have questions, suggestions or complaints call Don at 518-374-1088. And consider buying his new book, "EcoLinking," (Peachpit Press, Berkeley, CA, \$18.95), the definitive book on using computers to obtain environmental information.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR — The W. Alton Jones Foundation has granted SEJ \$50,000 to assist us in our programs. We also have received a \$2,500 grant from the Hearst Corporation and are seeking additional support from other foundations. If all goes well, we hope to hire SEJ's first executive director in 1993. If you know of someone with a commitment to environmental journalism, experience in running a small nonprofit organization and a desire to be a part of a dynamic organization, please ask that person to

send me a resume.

And, oh yes, please come to our national conference at Ann Arbor Nov. 6 to 8. Emilia Askari and Julie Edelson are putting together a tremendous program; we hope you'll be able to attend.

Reminder: SEJ office has new address

The Washington office of SEJ has moved. The new address is P.O. Box 65493, Washington, D.C. 20035-5493. Inquiries about membership and services should be directed to Amy Gahrn, SEJ Records Manager, 370-D Willowbrook Dr., Jeffersonville, PA 19403, (215) 630-9147. Send membership applications to Rae Tyson, USA Today, 1000 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22209.

COMPUTER BULLETIN BOARD — The board of directors has decided to set up a computer bulletin board for our members through America Online. If this bulletin board works the way we hope it will, SEJ members will be able to commu-

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Bowman Cox and Kevin Carmody

Cover story and features editor

Adam Glenn

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Sean Everhart

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Send address changes and all correspondence regarding membership problems to SEJ Records Manager — Amy Gahrn, 370-D Willowbrook Dr., Jeffersonville, PA 19403; (215) 630-9147.

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SEJ computer forum to offer online communication - soon

By DON RITTNER

Would you like to correspond with fellow SEJ members without worrying what time it is, or whether they're in the office, or what day it is? Would you like to bring up an issue for all members to discuss in an open forum, or be able to read fellow members' stories without having to subscribe to their publications?

Well, you can if you have access to a personal computer, a modem and your phone line. SEJ is going online in August!

SEJ is getting its own forum on America Online, the Virginia based 'user friendly' service that currently has more than 175,000 members across the country.

As a member of the SEJ Forum, you will be able to send private mail to fellow SEJ members (or anyone else on line) at any time of the day or night. You will be able to join in public discussions on all SEJ issues. You can even download a story or two, submit an article for the SEJournal, read the latest environmental news as it comes off the wire, search an online encyclopedia, book your airline tickets, check your stocks, even buy books, all at your convenience.

The forum will be hosted by SEJ members Don Rittner (author of "EcoLinking") and Rich Santalesa, among others.

Forum arrangement

The forum will be arranged in six areas:

— Private mail. Each member will have a private mailbox for sending and receiving electronic mail. You create your own screen name.

— Public messages. America Online uses a graphical interface, making it completely user friendly. Information is stored in folders. In the public message area, you can post issues of interest to SEJ members — be it a folder for job offers, story ideas, discussion of a particular environmental issue that is making the rounds, or even a folder for member biographies.

— File library. A file library for you to upload (send) or download (receive) reports, stories, utilities, software and other files of interest directly from your computer. The library is a good place to find reports, statistics and other useful information for your own research.

— Public conference. In the chat room, hundreds of SEJ members can carry on a discussion in real time, as if they were all sitting at a round table. This chat room will be a great place to interview live special guests.

— Private conferences. America Online allows the creation of private conferences. You invite people into the conference using a special keyword. This is useful for board meetings, or for special events where the public is not invited.

— Special notices. This is where meeting dates, conferences and other special items are posted for members of the SEJ.

How do you get online?

To get online, you need the America Online software for your IBM-compatible personal computer, Macintosh or Apple II. The software is free and can be obtained by calling America Online at: 800-827-6364.

Along with your personal computer, the America Online software and your phone line, you need a modem, an inexpensive peripheral device that takes the data from your computer, breaks it down into sound signals and sends it across the phone lines.

Modems cost as little as \$100 for 2400 bits per second (bps). Do not buy one that transmits data at slower speeds, such as 1200 or 300 bps, since it makes getting information really slow. If you are computer-phobic or not sure if you have the right equipment, call Don at 518-374-1088. REMEMBER, you do not need to be a computer techie to get online. This service is user-friendly and it is simply a matter of pushing buttons and clicking on icons to get information. You will be a pro in less than an hour.

America Online is one of the least expensive online services (CompuServe,

GENie and Prodigy are others). The forum itself is free to the SEJ. You pay a fee of \$5.95 per month for access and one free hour of connect time.

Online time after peak hours (evenings and weekends) is only \$5 an hour. Peak time (daytime) is \$10 per hour. There is access is through Sprintnet and Tymnet, so you can dial in with a local call. Signing on is simple — the software does it for you.

If you use the forum for only sending e-mail you can keep your costs to nearly nothing. You are charged by the minute, which means if you compose all your mail off line, then call up and send it all within a minute, you will be charged nothing. That's because charges are only for each full minute used. If you want to use all of America Online's other features, you simply are billed for the \$5 per hour (WARNING: America Online may be habit-forming).

Internet access

Another great new feature of America Online is access to Internet. Now you can send private e-mail to SEJ members around the world if they have an Internet ID. Anyone with Internet access can send you mail on America Online simply by using your ID with the "@" sign followed by AOL.COM.

For example, to send me mail you would address it as "afldonr@aol.com" (afldonr is my screen name). The Internet is used by more than 40 million people in more than 100 countries. You now have access to some of the best scientists and environmental leaders in the world.

This is a unique opportunity for SEJ members. By participating in the SEJ Forum, you will have the most accurate and up to date information about SEJ activities. You will now be able to correspond with all SEJ members and officers online. So hurry and join this exciting online community. The forum will be up and running in August.

See you online.

Don Rittner, a SEJ member and author of "EcoLinking," has agreed to operate the bulletin board. The book, considered the definitive source on using computers to obtain environmental information, is available from Peachpit Press at \$18.95.

Broadcasters enviro handbook puts issues in plain English

By AMY PORTER

For broadcasters who are unclear, say, how to explain the difference between ground-level and stratospheric ozone, there is relief in sight.

If you can make it through the summer, a resource guide scheduled for publication this fall can answer all your questions about 15 major environmental issues.

A non-partisan environmental primer for broadcast journalists will be published by the Media Institute, which will give broadcast journalists and others an easy-to-understand explanation of issues ranging from acid rain to energy policy.

Robert Logan, a professor at the University of Missouri and director of its Science Journalism Center, is a primary author of the as-yet untitled handbook. The resource guide explains in plain English the following environmental issues for radio and television reporters: hazardous waste, human population growth, nuclear energy, air and water pollution, endangered species, the greenhouse effect and global warming, garbage, energy policy, electromagnetic fields, acid rain, biodiversity, pesticides, wetlands and the ozone layer.

The handbook is project No. 2 for the Environmental Reporting Forum, a group of representatives of the Media Institute and the Radio and Television News Directors Association. Last year, the forum commissioned Lou Prato to write a book called "Covering the Environmental Beat: An Overview for Radio and TV Journalists." The book aired some weaknesses broadcasters have in covering environmental issues.

Logan's handbook is intended to serve as a resource for broadcasters to better understand the issues and give them con-

tacts to major organizations involved in environmental issues, according to Logan. The forum gave Logan strict orders to explain the issues succinctly. The second mandate was to keep politics out of the handbook, and give an objective overview of the issues with little analysis, Logan said.

The association is "well aware of the criticism of broadcast coverage in science and the environment," Logan said. The handbook "is an effort to raise the consciousness of news directors, trying to convince them they really should and could do a better job." Logan said he applauded the industry for accepting the criticism and moving toward self-improvement and reform.

Logan cited CBS's coverage in 1989 of an environmental group's report on the pesticide Alar as a classic example of why it's important to get it right on the air.

The CBS story, which Logan said was fraught with mistakes, helped precipitate a nationwide "Alar scare" in which consumers let Alar-treated apples rot in supermarkets. A slander lawsuit brought by the apple grower industry against CBS and the environmental group, the Natural Resources Defense Council, still is pending in court.

The handbook, while aimed for broadcast journalists, could prove useful to all journalists, Logan said.

The forum will offer the book free to members of the association and will sell it to others. For more information, or to get a copy, contact the Media Institute at 202-298-7512.

Amy Porter is staff editor for the Chemical Regulation Reporter, published by the Bureau of National Affairs, Washington, D.C.

Institute lists legal experts by area

Do you know all the environmental law experts in your area, or specific areas of specialty?

One way to find them is to check in the associates directory of the Environmental Law Institute, which lists hun-

dreds of environmental lawyers alphabetically by state.

Contact the institute by phone at 202-328-5150, by fax at 202-328-5002, or by mail at 1616 P St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Politics ... (from page 1)

northern California coast, decried Michael Dukakis for Boston Harbor pollution, and pledged protection of oceans and wetlands in speeches from Washington to New Jersey.

But the environmental tide seemed to ebb as recession gripped the country in 1990. A multi-million-dollar campaign, keyed to job loss, persuaded California voters to reject the "Big Green" initiative.

The Bush administration has tacked to take advantage of an anti-environmental whirlwind, particularly in the West. It has seemed to many all along that the president's true moorings were in the pro-development camp.

The Interior Department has presented Congress with a plan that would preserve mill jobs by permitting the spotted owl to go extinct over much of its habitat. And the White House Council on Competitiveness has come up with such a restrictive definition of wetlands that it would exclude much of the Everglades.

Steve Goldstein, press secretary to Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan, privately boasts that he rewrites press releases to put the word "jobs" in the lead.

In such a climate, reporters face the challenge of keeping track of politicians' flip-flops, and promises that their makers may never have intended to keep in the first place.

Brock Evans called it

A few guideposts are worth looking for. The first: Pay attention to *who* is making policy. The author recalls an analysis heard after Bush's election from Brock Evans, vice president of the national Audubon Society.

Evans predicted that Bush would put the Environmental Protection Agency in the hands of Ivy League-educated, moderate, eastern Republicans — but with a veto mechanism over their actions concealed somewhere in the White House.

By contrast, the U.S. Interior Department would keep its ultra-conservative coloration, dictated by Republican senators from the mountain west. Watch for a mediocre but non-controversial secretary backed by Watt-Hodel holdovers, Evans added.

Everything Evans said in December of 1988 was borne out. EPA Administrator William Reilly finds his initiatives squelched by the Competitiveness Council, chaired by Vice President Dan Quayle. The description of who rules the roost at Interior can be seen every time Sen. Ted Stevens exiles Alaska's National Park Service director, or in the sudden transfer to Philadelphia of the Park Service's Rocky Mountain chief after a Yellowstone ecosystem study angered Wyoming Sen. Alan Simpson.

A stealth campaign

A second lesson is that what seems to be a gaffe may be a signal.

Manuel Lujan appeared to stumble over his tongue when, three years ago, the interior secretary answered a reporter's question about spotted owls in Northwest forests by saying the Endangered Species Act should be revised to add emphasis on economic costs of preservation.

Steve Goldstein shifted uneasily in a sure sign of upcoming damage control, an art at which Goldstein has received much practice.

But Lujan's off-the-cuff remark was a tipoff to the Bush administration's policy on preserving species.

The administration waited three years to propose an owl recovery plan as required under the Endangered Species Act. Its foot-dragging forced federal courts to step in and enforce the law. In turn, Lujan used court rulings to warn of human hardships caused by the law.

A third guidepost is always to look down at the fine print and not be distracted even if the president is using the Grand Teton or Grand Canyon as a photo backdrop.

A classic example is the Council on Economic Competitiveness' effort to ease enforcement burdens of the Clean Air Act. But numerous politicians have mastered the art.

For instance, Sen. Slade Gorton, R-Wash., has mounted a stealth campaign against the National Park Service. The senator has sought to make political allies of park-hating small towns in Washington while not provoking thousands of his

state's urban residents who appreciate that lands were put beyond the reach of loggers and developers.

The senator's vehicle is a pending appropriations bill. Gorton has quietly sought a rider that would block the North Cascades National Park complex from acquiring more privately owned land in the scenic Stehekin River valley at the head of Lake Chelan. He has also sought wording that would require the Park Service to sell back some of the land it has bought.

Policy doesn't just spring out of law. It is also made by money. The author was working late in Washington, D.C., a few years back when he received a call from a perplexed Sierra Club lobbyist.

The call concerned Rep. Norm Dicks, D-Wash., a power on the House Appropriations Committee. The Interior appropriations bill had been marked up that day.

Dicks had secured money to buy a grove of thousand-year-old red cedar trees on Long Island in Washington's Willapa Bay. Weyerhaeuser was threatening to log the land, home to a herd of Roosevelt elk.

The timber exports

While doing environmentalists' bidding on one front, however, Dicks put millions of additional dollars into the U.S. Forest Service's road construction budget. The money facilitated money-losing timber sales that fractured proposed wilderness areas in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming.

"I got you Long Island, didn't I?" snapped Dicks when questioned the next day. He anticipated — rightly so — that attention to the cedar grove would far surpass reporting of the road budget.

The final rule is don't look just where the politicians tell you. An incident in Port Angeles, Wash., comes to mind.

Sen. Gorton was speaking to the Washington Commercial Forest Action League. If the state's old-growth forests were locked up as owl habitat, he warned, thousands of mill workers would join the unemployment lines.

After the speech, the author, along

with Tim Egan, Northwest correspondent for the New York Times, took a walk along the waterfront. We suddenly found ourselves in the midst of an ancient forest. It was, however, horizontal. The logs were not going to any mill, but about to be loaded aboard ships bound for Japan and China.

Look beyond statements

The senator hadn't spoken a word about log exports. But exporting of timber cut from private and state-owned land is far more to blame for the Northwest's wood shortage than any endangered-owl set-asides.

It is, of course, essential to look at voting records and past statements, at evaluating politicians' environmental performance. But additional questions must be researched in depth.

Who has an officeholder put in charge of environmental policy, and who has he or she tried to move out?

Has the politician sought, behind the scenes, to block or starve protection of public lands and the environment?

Has the politician tried to distract public attention from true causes of environmental degradation?

And finally, has the candidate cut the cloth of his or her conscience to fit what is

fast-changing on environmental issues? Witness Bob Packwood.

The 1992 campaign in the West cannot be reported without looking at environmental issues and asking these questions.

Bush, Packwood and Gorton have run past campaigns as spiritual heirs to Teddy Roosevelt. Republicans committed to protecting a nation's natural heritage.

Their agendas in 1992 are far different.

Joel Connelly is the national correspondent for the Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

Rio ... (from page 1)

the south. We had not figured on four hours. The driver and the military police officer assigned to protect us from terrorists got off the bus every few blocks and asked another cop, a lunch-counter clerk or merely the nearest idle lounge where a certain hotel was. Everybody knew, and they pointed confidently. Nobody was right. The strategy, finally, was to drive around aimlessly until somebody happened to spot the right hotel. The only good part was that we got an unguided tour of the city for a \$4 bus ticket. The driver liked some places so much that he drove past them five or six times.

Bronze medal in complications

When my hotel finally slid into sight, I got off, kissed the ground, grabbed my bags and went in. Ten minutes later, with the bus gone back to its endless trolling for correct addresses, I realized that my most important suitcase, the one with all my papers and reference books, was still on the bus. If I didn't reclaim it, how would I be able to include in my stories the gross domestic product of Cameroon or the chief exports of Singapore and give my boss the impression that I knew something about economics?

By thousands of such stories was launched history's biggest summit. For the first few days, people fought for bragging rights over the longest bus ride, the most confused driver, the most lost luggage. I wound up as a bronze medalist.

One advance story on the Earth Sum-

mit had described Rio, with its astounding murder rate, as a city known more for sex than for security. Once or twice, I probably had reason to worry. This was when the late-night shuttle bus driver returning from the summit insisted on dumping me six blocks from my hotel because he didn't feel like going the extra distance. It didn't seem to matter that my hotel was on the officially published route for this bus.

Security included artillery

The Rio guidebooks advise people not to walk around alone at night and not to look like tourists. Several books singled out the canal that separates Leblon from Ipanema as a particularly dangerous place at night. But there I was at 10:30 p.m., wearing a business suit and carrying a laptop computer. If anyone had commanded, "Your Texas Instruments TravelMate LT286/12 or your life!" I would have complied.

But there were no security problems. This was because the Rio civil and military police and the regular military had swept the streets of most undesirable elements (except for the 60-year-old fat guys in Speedos). They also set up sniper stations, bivouacs, foxholes, sandbag walls and radar just about everywhere. Near the summit site, 20 miles or so from the center of town, the military set up light artillery, just in case the Greenpeace special forces attacked, we figured. Most major corners and virtually every overpass were guarded by Brazilian marines in full combat gear,

with bayonets affixed. They appeared to be about 17. Several of us worried more about being shot by a trigger-happy teenager with a machine gun than about having our pockets picked by a 10-year-old.

Phone service was a crapshoot. For me, the computer lines worked fine by the second day, as reporters figured out the best programs, baud rates, etc. (Always transmit stories from overseas at 300 baud, not the faster and more tempting 1200, which almost never works. And even with a direct line, manual dialing is a good idea.) For others, each evening meant another round of frustrating malfunctions and screaming editors back home.

Castro sighting: 10 points

The summit location was known way more than a year in advance, but the conference center's phone system was still being installed as the first plane loads of diplomats arrived. But the people from Telerj, the Rio phone company, worked very hard to get it right, and in the main they pulled it off.

Of course, most reporters would never admit this, but we weren't really there to chronicle the dawn of a new age of world politics or the humiliations of William Reilly or the public lynching of President Bush. We were really there to see celebrities. I figure a Fidel Castro sighting was worth 10 points, since he's such an odd duck, and perhaps a lame one these days. (The biggest summit news: Castro spoke for just seven minutes.) The Washington

regulars — Reilly, the Environmental Defense Fund people, Fred Smith of the Competitive Enterprise Institute — were just two points each, since they're everywhere all the time. Sens. Al Gore and Tim Wirth ended up as just one point, since for days and days, it was impossible for a reporter to turn around without stepping on one of them. Bush was worth three, only because he had the tightest security (unlike the prime minister of Tuvalu, who

most days could be found strolling around the halls or lunching on pizza and a Coke).

But one day, while writing in the print-media workroom, I glanced out the window into the hall to see a huge throng of security people, photographers and sound people, reporters, dignitaries and curious onlookers moving like a tsunami. Who was it? Bush? John Major? Helmut Kohl? The Dalai Lama?

Heck, no. It was a couple of really

important people. Yep, I went to Rio, covered the biggest political meeting in history, spent about 12 million cruzeiros, got lots of front-page stories — and got to see Ted Turner and Jane Fonda.

Randy Lee Loftis covers the environment for The Dallas Morning News. While in Rio, he also saw Raffi, the famed children's singer, which impressed Loftis' kids much more than seeing Dad on TV did.

SEJ conference ... (from page 1)

tion Agency's Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation, are also among the dozens of journalists and newsmakers confirmed to speak at the conference.

Meet Roberta Nichols, the car-racing engineer who oversaw development of Ford Motor Co.'s alternative fuel vehicles. Take notes from Valerie Taliman, a member of the Navajo nation who has recently completed a series printed in several Native American newspapers about toxics on Indian reservations.

Drive an electric car

Watch Michael Dorsey, a University of Michigan graduate, recount the moment when United Nations guards dragged him from the Rio Centro convention center as he screamed that he was an official member of the U.S. delegation to the Earth Summit. Dorsey, the youngest member of the delegation, made a name for himself protesting his country's policies.

Between speeches, you can take a spin in a car that runs on electricity or an alcohol blend. Or tour an auto factory or an innovative hazardous waste landfill.

Or ruminate with an estimated 300 fellow conferees about ethics and the environmental journalist. That's the subject of a seminar led by former reporter and SEJ board member Bob Engelman, who now works for a group that studies population issues.

Other seminars will examine reporting about the environment for a business audience; for television and radio; for newsletter; and for small newspapers.

A panel of editors and producers will talk candidly about what managers want from environment reporters. A panel of people who have been on the environment

beat for more than a decade — including Paul MacClennan of the Buffalo News and Casey Bukro of the Chicago Tribune — will share insights that only years of experience can bring.

Faculty from the nation's top journalism schools will tell you how to teach what you practice. Computer whizzes will demonstrate environmental databases while journalistic whizzes and real experts spew wisdom about wetlands, toxics in the Great Lakes, opinion polls, environmental politics, energy, emerging environmental issues, risk, the future of the environment beat and the environmental implications of nuclear disarmament.

Free video crews

Be sure to bring tips to share on how to get, judge and present environmental news during a "tip-off" session run by SEJournal co-editor Bowman Cox.

And bring more suggestions to share during SEJournal's annual meeting, where an election will be held for several seats on the board of directors.

A limited number of free video crews will be available for television journalists covering the conference. Organizers also are attempting to gather tip sheets from each speaker into a book.

So watch your mail for that conference registration form or use the early registration form on page 8. And remember: the University of Michigan is reserving a spiffy ceramic mug for everyone who attends.

Amelia Askari, environment writer of the Detroit Free Press, is coordinating plans for the SEJ National Conference with Julie Edelson, editor of Inside EPA.

SPJ convention offers 9 panels on environment

The Society of Professional Journalists, in conjunction with SEJ, will offer a special continuing education course in environmental reporting at its 1992 National Convention in Baltimore this November.

The panels, excluding a keynote session on emerging environmental issues, are divided into advanced and beginning tracks. The program runs Nov. 19 through 21.

Co-sponsored by SEJ, the program now includes as confirmed panelists: Mike Mansur, who shared a Pulitzer this year for the Kansas City Star's Agriculture Department expose; Tom Lovejoy of The Smithsonian Institution on biodiversity; Louis Slesin of Microwave News on electromagnetic fields; Michael Weisskopf and Victor Cohn of The Washington Post; and Virginia State Climatologist Pat Michaels, a leading skeptic of global warming scenarios.

Designed by Kevin Carmody, who covered the beat for eight years before becoming metro editor at The Daily Progress of Charlottesville, Va., the program might be an alternative for those whose schedules preclude them from attending the more in-depth SEJ conference two weeks earlier.

Cost of SPJ convention registration begins at \$140, plus a small administrative fee for the continuing education credits through Ohio University. If you have not received a registration form from SPJ, you may call (317) 653-3333 to request one.

Registration Form

For the Second Annual Conference of The Society of Environmental Journalists



November 6-8 1992
The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan
Phone: (313) 764-5305 Fax: (313) 764-2990

Complete this form and return before October 23 to assure acknowledgment. **Please Print or type.**

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Title: _____

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Experiencing border pollution firsthand

Tips for unraveling the Mexican border's environmental mysteries

By PATRICIA RICE

Covering the 2,000-mile border between the U.S. and Mexico can be daunting. Each region, from California to Texas and from Baja California to Tamaulipas, has different problems and different ways of looking at them — and two languages for talking about them.

I cover the border at Imperial County, an agricultural region in extreme south-eastern California. Across the border is the bustling Baja California city of Mexicali, with 600,000 to 700,000 inhabitants. This is an area that is ignored by most newspapers, but it is a rich trove of multi-cultural stories, especially for environmental journalists.

Here are two pieces of advice for anyone who wants to cover the border environment:

1. Get out from behind a desk and look at the environment, on both sides. The New River, called "one of the dirtiest rivers in the world" by the Bush Administration, flows from Mexico into Imperial County. My stories on the river have been enriched by first-hand knowledge of what the river looks like, what it smells like and what flows into it — untreated sewage, industrial chemicals, slaughterhouse waste, and garbage from Mexicali; agricultural chemicals and salt-laden farm drainage from the U.S.

2. Learn at least a few phrases in Spanish. Even without an interpreter, a few well-chosen phrases may open some doors. When telephoning a Mexican source, use "Con (source's name), por favor," meaning "I would like to speak with (source's name)." You may find that the source speaks English. Many Mexicans dealing with border issues do.

Seek activist sources

The border has suffered from overwhelming pollution problems for decades. In Mexico, maquiladoras (foreign-owned industries operating in Mexico) and Mexican industries have contributed to chemi-

cal pollution, while lax laws allow cars and buses to belch smoke and smog-forming chemicals. In the case of Imperial County, agricultural practices on this side of the international line also contribute to pollution. But remember, there are 2,000 miles of border and each place has a different set of problems.

After years of ignoring border pollution, the U.S. and Mexican governments have now written a plan to deal with it. The plan came about because President Bush is trying to win support for the North

Reporters' Toolbox is a regular feature of SEJournal, in which experienced reporters provide tips on gathering news about environmental issues.

American Free Trade Agreement, which would reduce or eliminate tariffs on trade between Mexico and the U.S. Environmentalists say the trade agreement would worsen border pollution by encouraging more industry in Mexico.

Activists in both countries have criticized the border pollution plan too, saying it is inaccurate, poorly conceived and too vague. And the plan does contain erroneous information. But this is not an unusual problem for reporters who cover the border. Digging out good, specific information about border pollution problems from government agencies is often next to impossible.

"Independent environmentalists are almost better sources for what is happening on the border," said David Sheppard of the El Paso Times.

The following list of contacts for border stories includes not just government agencies but also universities, environmentalists and others who can help provide information that the agencies may be unwilling to yield:

In the U.S., the Environmental Protection Agency can provide a copy of the border plan as well as the list of people on the Border Plan Public Advisory Committee. The 24-person committee advises the U.S. government on ways to solve border environmental problems. In the EPA's office of international activities,

call Loren Fondehl, 202-382-4890. At EPA headquarters in Washington, call Luke Hester, 202-260-1383. Two EPA regional offices cover the border. In region 9 in San Francisco, which covers California and Arizona, call Lois Grunwald 415-744-1588. In Region 6 in Dallas, covering New Mexico and Texas, call Dave Bary or Roger Meacham, 214-655-6760.

The International Boundary and Water Commission is a binational agency that administers treaties and other agreements between the U.S. and Mexico. Its Mexican section is in Ciudad Juarez, where Arturo Herrera Solis is the commissioner. His direct-dial number is 011-52-16-13-73-63. The U.S. section is across the Rio Grande in El Paso, at 915-534-6677, where Narendra N. Gunaji is the commissioner. While the IBWC is the principal negotiating agency in the border pollution talks, officials there tend to stay in the background, saying the issues are too sensitive to be talked about in public.

New agencies abound

Mexican government agencies dealing with the environment are rapidly changing, as the government reorganizes its former environmental agency, SEDUE (Secretaria de Desarrollo Urbano y Ecologia).

Some SEDUE functions have been incorporated into a new agency, SEDESOL (Secretaria de Desarrollo Social). Others have been moved to SSA (Secretaria de Salud.) Both of these agencies will now cover border environmental issues, but many SEDUE functions are being transferred to states and municipalities, which are now expected to take a more active role in border environmental problems.

For now, the following phone numbers are valid for SEDUE/SEDESOL representatives, but that may change in the future.

In Mexico City: 011-52-52-86-93-92 and 011-52-52-71-82-17.

In Mexicali: 011-52-65-61-78-84.

In Ciudad Juarez: 011-52-51-61-37-638.

(Continued on page 12)

Ag expose

Pulitzer-winning effort showed USDA's environmental stamp

By MICHAEL MANSUR

Early on, the decision had been made. No exhaustive look at the U.S. Department of Agriculture could ignore a probe of the department's impact on the environment.

The reason was simple. Farming may be man's most destructive environmental act.

Quickly, we also discovered other reasons to be excited about adding this angle to The Kansas City Star's "Ag project," which eventually became a seven-part series, "Failing the Grade: Betrayals and Blunders in the Agriculture Department." In April, the project won the Pulitzer Prize for national reporting.

First, few people had looked at the overall impacts of the USDA's policies on the environment. Certainly, the press had covered in detail the White House's broken promises on wetland protection and the furor over the spotted owl. But not the bigger picture.

Congress had enacted — with great fanfare among mainstream environmental groups — a giant set of new laws in 1985, known as the Conservation Title of the Farm Bill. With those laws, Congress aimed at two of the great problems caused by agriculture — soil erosion and wetland losses. The media, however, had not done a good job in following up on how well those laws had been implemented.

And that fit right in with the Ag Project. Conceived by Jeff Taylor, a special projects reporter, and Mark Ziemann, projects editor, the Ag Project would focus on how the federal government works, by looking in great detail at one department. Naturally, the department that made sense for this Heartland newspaper was the USDA.

The USDA touches so many people, usually in ways they never think about. We all know about USDA-inspected poultry. And now most of us know of the problems with it. But few of us think about the department's other far-reaching impacts. The massive system of farm subsidies that go to farmers, the discrimination against black farmers, the label that is



Photo by Tammy Ljungblad, Kansas City Star

Mike Mansur (left) interviews one of scores of farmers he questioned about the U.S. Department of Agriculture's environmental policy regarding farm land.

supposed to tell what's inside your pepperoni pizza.

And the growth of the giant bureaucracy was typical. Telling this story would tell us much about the federal government as a whole.

This project was not aimed at examining the country's agriculture policy. And it's not a farm story. It focused on how the agriculture department — dubbed by Lincoln as the "people's department" — managed, how well it did its job of carrying out the policy and whether it really deserved and kept the people's trust.

Groundwork laid in 1980s

For me, this was a story long in the making. In the early 1980s, I was the science writer for The Memphis Press-Scimitar, Ed Meeman's old newspaper. Before Scripps-Howard decided to close the paper in 1983, I spent much of my time learning and writing about soil conservation and the environmental impacts of agriculture.

A representative of the Wildlife Management Institute, Chester McConnell, had travelled for days with me throughout western Tennessee and northern Missis-

sippi. That area ranks among the nation's worst in soil erosion.

We travelled the back roads, looking at how farmers farmed and the soil erosion problems that resulted. At how the government had attacked those problems in the 1970s, straightening rivers and digging out streams. Bad decisions and wasted money. It seemed absurd.

A revelation in China

So often, though, our jobs frustrate. We report the pieces of a giant story we never really tell. The pieces never get put together. The context is never set. The absurdity of it all never gets explained, hamstrung by deadlines, space and time.

And the big picture is so hard to see. Even in Memphis I didn't really see it. In 1985, I quit my job to go to China, to teach English to doctors coming to the United States. There, it came to me.

I remember quite vividly riding down a blacktop road in northwestern China. On a high plateau, dry and windy, farmers tilled light brown soil that looked all used up. The farmers, working by hand, were shrouded in clouds of dust, tiny figures in a giant field stretched out for miles in

front of me. Farming. It hit me. What a vast environmental impact on our world it must wreak.

When I returned to the United States in 1986, I wasn't on a mission to report about it. I was out of work, as was my wife. I was just looking for a job. The Star hired me to cover the school beat and a vast desegregation effort going on in Kansas City's public school system.

When The Star and The Times merged in 1990, the environment slot opened. I was anxious to get away from the troubled school system and back to my old beat — especially since it was on the newspaper's special projects desk.

Taylor and I sat next to each other. He was developing a giant Ag Project proposal. And I was trying to help him shape it. Don't forget environment, I told Taylor. And I recounted some of my Tennessee experience.

New documents and sources

After Taylor and Mike McGraw, the other special projects reporter assigned early on to the project, had worked for a few months on their stories, they were worried. The story was big. And no one expected the newspaper to wait for a year or more for them to complete it.

By April, Zieman had asked me to join the project. I could report and write the series day on the environment. But I would have to keep up with the major stories on my beat. Maybe, when it was time to write, he said, I would be broken off for a few weeks.

The main focus would be the department's management of the Conservation Title, we quickly decided. But this story — much like the racism day, which explored how black farmers had been all but eliminated — would have to be broader in scope. It had to show the vast impacts of agriculture.

I set off to the library. That is where I begin almost every project. Meanwhile, the newspaper's library did a data base search of newspapers, looking for stories on the Swampbuster, Sodbuster and conservation compliance programs created by the 1985 Farm Bill.

At the public library, I found reams of documents from Congress, most of them hearings on the Conservation Title. The reports on the shaping of the bill gave me

the background on how environmental groups had convinced Congress to enact this new set of laws. But most of what followed its enactment focused on the burden the Farm Bill had heaped on farmers. Not on the USDA's performance.

Testimony revealed that the Agriculture Department's Soil Conservation Service was clearly uncomfortable in its new role of regulator. Naturally so. Up till 1985, the SCS had done well in being the farmer's technical adviser. SCS staff now were faced with reporting as violators the same guys they had worked for years to help.

I was beginning to get excited. I had been back on the environment beat for a year and I found myself focusing too much on the same stories. Going back to the same sources. When I talked with my colleagues, many seemed to be in the same rut. Now, I was looking at something that seemed new and untouched.

Too often, I think, we focus on the state regulatory agencies and the EPA. What about what the rest of government is doing? The environment, after all, is vast. Any of man's actions potentially affect it. And few had looked at the USDA.

I wanted to start with Swampbuster. It had been scrutinized most by environment groups and its compliance provisions had been longer in place.

Next, I began talking to the experts. Each major environmental group has an agriculture policy person. With their help and the historical background from my document search, the next place to go was logical. I had to get out in the field.

Prairie pothole plugger

One Saturday morning, I rented a car and headed for North Dakota. It had been in the heart of the wetlands dispute involving Swampbuster. I wanted to spend time with Tony Turinni at the National Wildlife Federation's office in Bismark. He had already been in several legal battles with the USDA over Swampbuster's poor enforcement.

Over several days, Turinni laid out the newest angles of the battle between him and the USDA. He had big stacks of internal documents and the latest USDA reports on compliance. And he pointed me to the hottest current battles.

And I talked to farmers — on both

sides of the battle. Near the Canadian border, I found America's most famous Swampbuster violator — or so he had been labelled. He was in the midst of fighting the USDA over a drainage project that would enable him to farm hundreds of once wet acres. And, of course, I spent hours with his opponents, who wanted to see the dwindling number of "prairie potholes" preserved. The project to destroy them, they said, just put money in a few wealthy farmers' pockets.

Back in Kansas City, I used my discoveries to frame several Freedom of Information requests to the USDA. After weeks of waiting, I would receive a stack of documents several feet high, detailing every Conservation Title violation in the nation. Also, they would show how the top enforcer appeared to give special attention to farmers from his own state.

Uneven enforcement

Next, I headed to western Kansas. Swampbuster had divided farmers there too. I had found the story in a new journal that covered wetlands. The discovery really helped. We wanted to make the environment day more regional than some of the other days in the series.

With the help of Kansas Wildlife and Parks staff, I spent several days out in the field, learning about soil erosion programs and touring wetland sites that were being exempted from Swampbuster, even though other arms of the federal bureaucracy had determined they were wetlands.

Western Kansas was the perfect place to report the conservation compliance angles of the story. That program required farmers to take steps to check soil losses from their fields. Farmers were incensed in one county near the Colorado border because their neighbors across the county line had been exempted from the program. But they had not.

Two other stories were clear. The environment day had to cover aspects of non-point pollution and the nation's forests. The Forest Service is the largest agency in the USDA. But it had attracted the most press attention because of the battles in the Northwest over clear-cutting in ancient forests.

Because of that, we wanted to make the lesser known angles more prominent. And we wanted to bring the controversy

over the forest service closer to home. In Arkansas, we found a way to do that.

Clear-cutting had long been fighting words there, too. But a new angle had developed. More cutting was going on in an area that spawned the Buffalo River, protected by the federal government as a scenic river.

The deadline looms

Up to the highest point of the Ozarks on a nine-mile road that took 45 minutes to negotiate, we headed for the story. The photographer, Tammy Ljungblad, fortunately had a four-wheel drive Bronco. Otherwise, we wouldn't have made it.

From the beginning, I had wanted to tell one story through a farmer. Many were perplexed and confused, not only by the new rules but by the USDA's enforcement. The agriculture chemical angle seemed the perfect place to use this technique. Tell how one farmer gets by without the chemicals.

I found the perfect farmer, who I happened to meet by chance at a Kansas environmental conference and just happened to strike up a conversation, hoping for some help on the project. Once he opened up, I knew I had found my farmer. He called agriculture chemicals that farmers used the "devil's pantry."

By now, summer was coming to an end and a deadline was looming. Editor Joe McGuff had decided the project had to come to some sort of conclusion. He set a September deadline.

Night and day for weeks, we wrote. Many FOI requests still were outstanding. Sources still were pointing to us new angles. But we had to begin putting the stories together.

The newspaper now had committed two reporters to more than a year of reporting, myself to more than six months and Greg Reeves, the computer-assisted reporting expert, to several weeks of work.

They stuck with the project so long because they had a good idea of where it was going. Zieman squeezed detailed memos and story outlines out of us. The editors were anxious for the end, but pleased about how it seemed to be going.

Editing word by word

Those outlines helped tremendously in putting the stories together. I had a clear idea before I sat down to write a final draft of where I was going.

In September, with the deadline met, a team of editors gathered in McGuff's office, going over each day's story drafts word for word. Several had interesting perspectives. One had grown up on a

farm. Another had no idea the Forest Service cut down trees. Both helped make the stories clearer, easier to understand, yet informed.

Taking the public's perspective

Now that it's passed, I'm often asked about lessons that should be drawn from it all. I think they are fairly obvious and simple.

The series worked because we took a complex, strange world — federal bureaucracy — and figured it out. We learned how it works well enough to explain it. And we constantly viewed it from the public's perspective.

Too often the reporters who report on the day to day rules, decisions and action of government spend too much time talking to their sources — the government bureaucrats. Not the people they affect.

If you would like a reprint of the series, call or write me at The Star, 1729 Grand Ave., Kansas City, MO 64108. Phone: 816-234-4433.

Michael Mansur is the environment writer for The Kansas City Star. The Agriculture Department project he contributed to has since won other prestigious awards including the Sigma Delta Chi Award for Non-Deadline Reporting from the Society of Professional Journalists.

Toolbox ... (from page 9)

The state of Baja California has a new environmental agency. In Tijuana, the contact is Dr. Jorge Barroso Aranda, 011-52-66-84-05-26.

Each border county and state has its own experts on border politics and the environment. Don't ignore the regulatory agencies — water commissions, air districts, etc. — along the border. In addition, many border area colleges and universities have environment experts. Senators and representatives from border areas can also be helpful.

Other sources include:

* The Border Ecology Project in Naco, Ariz., 602-432-7456. Dick Kamp, the project's director, has information on environmental groups on both sides of the border. He also sits on the Border Plan Public Advisory Committee.

* Comite Civica de Divulgacion

Ecologica, in Mexicali, 011-52-65-52-20-80. Its director, Fernando Medina, is knowledgeable about environment and occupational health issues and is in contact with other organizations. Medina's son, Enrique Medina, is in San Diego at 619-234-1649.

* Environmental Health Coalition, San Diego. Diane Takvarian and Jose Bravo, 619-235-0281.

* Center for U.S.-Mexico studies, University of California, San Diego, 619-534-4503.

* Arizona Toxics Information, Bisbee, Ariz. Michael Gregory, 602-432-7340. Environmental policy and advocacy organization.

* Enlace Ecologico, in Agua Prieta, Sonora. Gilardo Acosta Ruiz, 011-52-63-38-06-76.

* Canon del Padre, in Tijuana, a con-

cerned citizens group. Maurillo Sanchez, 011-52-66-23-97-16.

* Foro Ecologista, in Tijuana. 011-52-66-81-21-42.

* Proyecto Fronteriza Education Ambiental, in Tijuana. Laura Durazo, 011-52-66-30-05-90; Roberto Sanchez, 011-52-66-30-04-11.

* Colegio de Sonora, in Hermosillo. Catalina Denman, Jose Luis Moreno, 011-52-62-12-50-21.

* Juarez Binational Environmental Committee, Rene Franco Barreno, president, 011-52-16-15-19-48.

SEJ member Patricia Rice covers the environment for the Imperial Valley Press in Brawley, Calif. Steve LaRue and Diane Lindquist of the San Diego Union-Tribune and David Sheppard of the El Paso Times were interviewed for this article.

New Members

The following list represents new SEJ members recorded from May 14, 1992 to July 25, 1992. Memberships recorded after July 25 will appear in the Spring issue of SEJournal.

CALIFORNIA

- Janet Else Basu, San Francisco
- Peter M. Cohen (Academic), San Clemente
- Penelope Dunham, KGO-TV News Naturalist Unit, San Francisco
- Tammy Hanson (Associate), California Certified Organic Farmers, Santa Cruz
- Susan Haymer, Home Show, ABC — Reeves TV, Los Angeles
- Mike Pulley, Sacramento Business Journal
- J. A. Savage, Oakland

COLORADO

- Sarah F. Bates (Academic), Natural Resources Law Center, Univ. Colorado School of Law, Boulder
- Susan D. Lanier-Graham, Craig

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

- Peter Montague, Rachel's Hazardous Waste News, Environmental Research Foundation
- Keith Schneider, New York Times, Washington Bureau
- Steve Zavestoski (Academic)

FLORIDA

- Dane Eastlake (Associate), Gainesville
- James D. Snyder, Environment Today, Enterprise Communications, Boca Raton

GEORGIA

- Peter Dykstra, Network Earth, Turner Broadcasting, Atlanta

KENTUCKY

- Andrew Melynkovich, Louisville Courier-Journal, Louisville

MARYLAND

- Howard Bray (Academic), Knight Center for Specialized Journalism, University of Maryland, College Park
- Roger W. Gilroy, HazMat Transport News, Business Publications Inc., Silver Spring
- Howard J. Lewis, Science Writers, National Assn. of Science Writers, Bethesda
- Pat Tanaka, Cable News 21, Rockville

MICHIGAN

- Dave Poulson, Booth Newspapers, Lansing

MISSISSIPPI

- Sharon Stallworth, Clarion-Ledger, Jackson

NEW MEXICO

- Keith Easthouse, New Mexican, Santa Fe

NEW YORK

- Mary Beth Pfeiffer, Poughkeepsie Journal, Poughkeepsie
- Peter Wehrwein, Albany Times Union, Albany

OHIO

- Jonathan Brinckman, Dayton Daily

News, Dayton

- Sarah Snyder (Academic), Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware

PENNSYLVANIA

- Russ Crenshaw, York Daily Record, York
- Katharine McKee, Morning Call, Lehighon Bureau, Lehighon

PUERTO RICO

- Karl Ross, San Juan Star, San Juan

TENNESSEE

- Melanie Patterson (Academic), Memphis State, Arlington
- Jerry Grisham, E&P Environment, Pasha Publications, Houston

WASHINGTON

- Kathleen O'Brien (Associate), Kirkland

WISCONSIN

- Ellen A. Maurer (Academic), Enviro/Natural Resources Policy & Training Project, University of Wisconsin, Madison

International Members

ARGENTINA

- Laura Silvina Rozenberg, La Nacion/Pagina 12/Descubrir, Capital Federal

BRAZIL

- Bill Hinchberger, Financial Times of London, Sao Paulo

SRI LANKA

- Dharman Wickremaratne, Diyadama, Kotte

SEJ News

Press needs more TRI context and plume mapping capability

The press needs more context to make sense of annual toxics release reports, a right-to-know advocacy group said.

Further, the news media need to know more about techniques such as plume mapping, which can help identify communities at risk, said the Working Group of Community Right to Know.

In its analysis, the Washington, D.C., based group found that most news stories based on toxics release inventory (TRI) data fall into two groups: those that examine specific places or companies, and those that provide yearly overviews. The typical format is to lead with a political con-

trovery or human drama, then present views of activists, regulators and industry.

The group said a preliminary review of 100 TRI-based stories, all from large urban papers, found that less than 20 percent were based on data reporters accessed directly. In most cases, reporters got the information from advocacy reports compiled by citizen groups.

The best investigative work puts the TRI statistics into perspective for readers, said the working group in a report on the Community Right-to-Know Law.

The working group, which is very concerned about what it calls "phantom

reductions" of toxics emissions, applauded those in the press who distinguished between actual pollution prevention and achievements that only exist on paper.

The working group is an affiliation of more than 20 environmental groups hosted by the U.S. Public Interest Research Group's education fund.

A summary of the report appeared in the group's newsletter, "Working Notes," edited by Paul Orum (202-546-9707). The full text of the 26-page report is available from the working group. It can be had online as well through the OMB Watch/Unison Institute at 202-234-8494.

Calendar

SEPTEMBER

20-24. **1st Int'l Specialized Conf. on Diffuse (Nonpoint) Pollution: Sources, Prevention, Impact and Abatement** (sponsored by the Int'l Assn. for Water Pollution Res. and Control). Chicago, IL. Contact: Vladimir Novotny, Conf. chair, Dept. of Civil and Env'l Eng., Marquette Univ., 1515 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53233. Ph:414/288-3524 FAX:414/288-7082

21-23. **Emerging Technologies for Hazardous Waste Management** (sponsored by American Chemical Society). Atlanta. Contact D.W. Tedder, Georgia Tech. Ph:404/894-2856

22-24. **Nat'l Conf. on Minimization & Recycling of Industrial and Hazardous Waste** (sponsored by Hazardous Mat's Control Resources Inst.). Arlington, VA. Stouffer Concourse Hotel. Contact: Tanya Hill, HMCRI, 7237 Hanover Pkwy, Greenbelt, MD 20770-3602 Ph:301/982-9500 FAX:301/220-3870

22-25. **Radon and Reduction Technology Conference**. Minneapolis, MN. Contact: T.M. Dyess, US EPA, MD-54, Research Triangle Park, NC 27111

23-25. **9th Int'l Symposium on Epidemiology in Occupational Health** (with sessions on cancer, heart, neurotoxic, behavioral, and reproductive effects associated with workplace exposures to chemicals, metals and electromagnetic radiation). Cincinnati, OH. Contact: Ms. Pam Milan, MayaTech Corp., Ste 300, 11510 Georgia Ave., Silver Spg. MD 20902 Ph:301/929-6800 FAX: 301/578-1686

23-25. **Genetic Considerations of Biodiversity in Pacific Northwest Forests** (sponsored by College of Forestry, Oregon State Univ). Corvallis, OR. Contact: Conf. Asst., OSU, College of Forestry, Peavy Hall 202, Corvallis, OR 97331-5707 Ph:503/737-2329

23-28. **American Chemical Society Fall National Meeting** (featured sessions will focus on lead poisoning in children and lead abatement; pesticide use, residues and safety; biomarkers of human exposure to pesticides; new environmental initiatives in the pulp and paper industry; respiratory exposures to hazardous chemicals; cancer risk assessments; global climate change; and safety of the next generation nuclear plants). Washington, D.C. Contact: Marvin Coyner, ACS news

office, 1155 16th St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 Ph:202/872-4451 FAX:202/872-4370

29-Oct. 1. **Int'l CFC and Halon Alternatives Conference** (sponsored by Alliance for Responsible CFC Policy, in cooperation with US EPA and United Nations Environment Programme). Washington, D.C. Washington Hilton Hotel. Contact: Heather Tardel, P.O. 236, Frederick, Md. 21701 Ph: 301/695-3762

OCTOBER

2-3. **Environmental Writers Conference at Yale** (on "environmental writing and its place in exploring the relationship between humans and nature"). Participation is at no cost. Contact: Peter Colavito, at P.O. Box 4663 Yale Station, New Haven, CT 06520 Ph:203/432-7222

7-9. **Nat'l Assn. of Professional Communicators Annual Conference**, with keynote session titled: Ethics in Environmental Communications. (Other "interactive" sessions will focus on resolving environmental conflict, "green" marketing: corporate vs. environmental agenda, and evaluation and design of environmental communication). Chicago. Fee is \$350, with special rates for members of NAPEC and nonprofit organizations. Contact: Stephanie Reith, Pres., NAPEC, Ph: 312/661-1721

14-16. **Watershed Resources: Balancing Environmental, Social, Political and Economic Factors** (sponsored by Oregon State University and Univ. of Washington). Portland, OR. Contact: Conf. Asst., OSU, College of Forestry, Peavy Hall 202, Corvallis, OR 97331-5707 Ph:503/737-2329

28-30. **Tropospheric Ozone, Non-attainment & Design Value Issues** (sponsored by Air & Waste Mgmt Assn., this smog conference will cover health and ecological effects, modeling and monitoring studies and air-quality analyses). Boston. Contact: Martha Swiss, A&WMA, P.O. Box 2861, Pittsburgh, PA 15230 Ph: 412/232-3444

NOVEMBER

1-5. **Managing Water Resources During Global Change** (sponsored by American Water Resources Assn.) Reno, NV. Contact Michael C. Fink, AWRA, 5410 Grosvenor La., Ste 220, Bethesda,

MD 20814-2192. Ph: 301/493-8600

8-11. **Soc. of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry Annual Meeting** (with sessions on global climate change, biodiversity and global extinctions, sustainable development, and product life-cycle assessments in resource mgmt). Cincinnati, Oh. Cincinnati Convention Center. Contact: SETAC Exec. Dir. Rod Parrish, 1010 N. 12th Ave., Pensacola, FL 32501 Ph: 904/469-1500 FAX:904/469-9778

9-11. **4th Int'l. Seminar on Battery Waste Management**. Deerfield Beach, Fla. Ocean Resort Hotel and Conf. Ctr. Contact: S.P. Wolsky Ph:407/391-3544 FAX:407/750-1367

17-19. **Forum on Innovative Hazardous Waste Treatment Technologies** (sponsored by US EPA). San Francisco. Westin-St. Francis Hotel. Contact: Thomas R. De Kay Ph:703/308-8798

19-21. **Reporting on the Environment**. (a special two and a half day session at the Soc. of Prof. Journalists' annual meeting that qualifies for continuing education credit. Other sessions will focus on such topics as Freedom of Information Act use; privacy and politics—what's fair; computer-assisted reporting; and disaster crime-scene access). Baltimore, MD. SEJ members qualify for SPJ member rate of \$155 if they register by Oct. 30, and on-site rate of \$205. Contact: Jane Rulon, SPJ, P.O. Box 77, Greencastle, IN 46135 Ph:317/653-3333

FELLOWSHIPS

Sept. 1. Deadline for application to **Knight Center for Specialized Journalism** program, Oct. 11-23, 1992, at the University of Maryland, College Park. This year's session, *The Environmental Story*, will offer field trips and news briefings on topics from water quality and ecology to military-base cleanups and computer access of environmental data bases. Contact: Howard Bray, director. Ph:301/405-2411.

Oct. 1. Deadline for application for **Alicia Patterson Foundation Fellowship**. The 12-month in-depth research and writing program offers a \$30,000 stipend. Interested applicants should contact Margaret Engel at the foundation: 1001 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Ste. 1250, Washington, D.C. 20004 Ph: 202/393-5995.

Green Beat Correspondents

Contribute to Green Beat

The Green Beat is designed as an idea exchange for environmental journalists and educators. It relies on information submitted by reporters about important issues, outstanding coverage, and developments in environmental education and the communications profession — on a state-by-state basis. To submit ideas, or copies of series for possible mention in The Green Beat, contact the SEJ correspondent for the appropriate state(s). They are:

Alabama and Mississippi — Sharon Ebner at the Sun Herald, P.O. Box 4567, Biloxi, MS 39535-4567, (601) 896-2355.

Alaska — Richard Mauer at the Anchorage Daily News, Box 149001, Anchorage, AK 99514, (907) 257-4200.

Arizona and New Mexico — Tony Davis at the Albuquerque Tribune, P.O. Drawer T, Albuquerque, NM 87103, (505) 823-3625, fax (505) 823-3689.

Arkansas — Bobbi Ridlehoover at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Capitol & Scott Sts., Little Rock, AK 72201, (501) 378-3596.

California:

Northern California — Tom Harris at the Sacramento Bee, 2100 Q St., Sacramento, CA 95852, (916) 321-1001.

Bay Area/San Jose — Jane Kay at the San Francisco Examiner, Box 7260, San Francisco, CA 94120, (415) 777-8704.

Southern California — Susan Sullivan at Riverside Press-Enterprise, P.O. Box 792, Riverside, CA 92501, (714) 782-7541, fax (714) 782-7572.

Colorado — Jan Knight, at the Fort Collins Coloradoan, P.O. Box 1577, Fort Collins, CO 80522, (303) 224-7757, fax (303) 224-7726.

Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts — Bob Wyss at the Providence Journal, 75 Fountain St., Providence, RI 02902, (401) 277-5176.

District of Columbia — Gwen Moulton, Bureau of National Affairs, 1231 25th St., N.W., Room 361-S, Wash., DC 20037, (202) 452-4583, fax (202) 452-4150.

Florida:

North Florida — Beverly Keneagy at the Florida Times-Union, P.O. Box 1949, Jacksonville, FL 32231, (904) 359-4316.

South Florida — Mary Beth Regan at the Orlando Sentinel, 633 N. Orange Ave., Orlando, FL 32801, (407) 420-5787.

Georgia and South Carolina — Charles Pope at The (Columbia, S.C.) State, P.O. Box 1333, Columbia, SC 29202, (803) 771-8413.

Idaho and Montana — Stephen Stuebner at 1010 E. Washington St., Boise, ID 83712, (208) 345-4802.

Iowa — Cynthia Hubert at the Des Moines Register, P.O. Box 957, Des Moines, IA 50304, (515) 284-8000.

Hawaii — Peter Wagner at the Honolulu Star-Bulletin, P.O. Box 3080, Honolulu, HI 96802, (808) 525-8699.

Louisiana — Bob Anderson at The Morning Advocate, Box 588, Baton Rouge, LA 70821, (504) 383-1111.

Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont — Kathryn Clark at the Dartmouth News Service, 38 North Main St., Hanover, NH 03755, (603) 646-2117, fax (603) 646-2850.

Maryland and Delaware — Tim Wheeler, the Evening Sun., 501 N. Calvert St., Baltimore, MD 21278, (301) 332-6564.

Michigan — Karl Bates at the Ann Arbor News, P.O. Box 1147, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1147, (313) 994-6701.

Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota — Tom Meersman at Minnesota Public Radio, 45 E. 7th Street, St. Paul, MN 55101, (612) 290-1474.

Missouri and Kansas — Mike Mansur at the Kansas City Star, 1729 Grand Ave., Kansas City, MO 64108, (816) 234-4433

Nebraska — Al J. Laukaitis at the Lincoln Journal, 926 P Street, Lincoln, NE 68501, (402) 473-7257.

New Jersey — Eric Greenberg at The News Tribune, 1 Hoover Way, Woodbridge, N.J. 07095, (908) 442-0400, fax (908) 442-1205.

New York — Tom Andersen at Gannett Newspapers, 1 Gannett Drive, White Plains, NY 10604, (914) 694-5060 or Daniel Markham at Worldwide Television News, 1995 Broadway, New York, NY 10023, (212) 362-4440.

Nevada — Mary Manning at the Las Vegas Sun, 800 S. Valley View Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89107, (702) 259-4065.

Ohio and Indiana — Vacant. Anyone interested in serving as correspondent, contact Kevin Carmody at (804) 978-7268.

Oregon — Kathie Durbin at The Oregonian, (503) 221-8548 or Dan Postrel at the Salem Statesman-Journal, 280 Church St., NE, Salem, OR 97309, (503) 399-6737.

Pennsylvania — Ralph Haurwitz at The Pittsburgh Press, P.O. Box 566, Pittsburgh, PA 15230, (412) 263-1986, fax (412) 263-2014.

Puerto Rico/Caribbean Islands — Albi Ferre at El Nuevo Dia, Box 297, San Juan, PR 00902, (809) 793-7070, ext. 2165.

Tennessee and Kentucky — Tom Charlier at The Commercial Appeal, 495 Union Ave., Memphis, TN 38103, (901) 529-2381.

Texas and Oklahoma:

North Texas and Oklahoma — Randy Loftis at The Dallas Morning News, Communications Center, Dallas, TX 75265, (800) 431-0010.

Central and West Texas — Robert Michael Bryce at the The Austin Chronicle, P.O. Box 49066, Austin, TX 78765, (512) 473-8995.

East and Coastal Texas — Bill Dawson at The Houston Chronicle, Box 4260, Houston, TX 77210, (713) 220-7171.

Utah and Wyoming — Jim Woolf at the Salt Lake Tribune, P.O. Box 867, Salt Lake City, UT 84110, (801) 237-2045.

Virginia and North Carolina — Vacant. Anyone interested in serving as Virginia and North Carolina correspondent, contact Kevin Carmody at (804) 978-7268.

Washington State — Julie Titone at the Spokesman Review & Chronicle, Box 2160, Spokane, WA 99210-1615, (509) 459-5431.

West Virginia — Vacant. Anyone interested in serving as West Virginia correspondent, contact Kevin Carmody at (804) 978-7268.

Wisconsin and Illinois — Chuck Quirnbach of Wisconsin Public Radio, 111 E. Kilbourn Ave., #1060, Milwaukee, WI 53202, (414) 271-8686 or (608) 263-7985.

ALABAMA

► David Mattingly, environmental reporter for Birmingham's WVTM, Channel 13 the past four years, left the station in late July to be a correspondent and producer with TBS' "Network Earth" in Atlanta. A replacement has not yet been named. Some of Mattingly's recent projects:

- A series on environmental racism that aired earlier this year "sparked a great deal of conversation and community dialogue," Mattingly said. Results include the Jefferson County Health Department's decision to reevaluate the location of air pollution monitoring equipment — none of which was in the neighborhoods closest to big polluters. Mattingly said the series did not suggest "anything sinister," but that residents of such neighborhoods were more likely to want the jobs and less likely to complain. Mattingly approached the series by using information from Citizen Action in Washington, D.C., which breaks down Toxic Release Inventory information by zip code. Citizen's Action number is (202) 775-1580.

- "The Brink of Extinction," a one-hour documentary on endangered species. Alabama ranks fifth in the nation in the number of endangered species. Mattingly explored why this is happening and found it is an indication of lost and degraded habitat.

- A March 1991 documentary called "Amazon Rainforest" was awarded a National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Southern Regional Emmy Award on June 20. For information or to get copies of WVTM's documentaries, call (205) 933-1313.

► Justin Fox became the environment writer for the *Birmingham News* in mid-June. Fox had been a state government reporter for two years in the paper's Montgomery bureau.

► A small group of landowners in northeast Alabama are fighting the federal government's plans to create a Little River Canyon national preserve. Currently a state park sits along the canyon, one of the deepest east of the Mississippi River. The group won its first battle to reduce the preserve's size to 14,000 acres from 34,000

acres. A U.S. House of Representatives bill passed in April forbids the National Park Service from condemning land or buying land outside of the 14,000 acres. Much of the land is owned by Alabama Power Co. and has been managed by the state. Call Justin Fox at the *Birmingham News*, (205) 325-2453.

► Environment writer Steve Kipp has left the *Birmingham Post-Herald* for a position at the *Morning News Tribune* in Tacoma, Wash. Reporter Nick Patterson will be covering environmental issues for the *Post-Herald*.

► Legislators will likely try to come up with a new hazardous waste law since the U.S. Supreme Court in June struck down an Alabama law that would charge a disposal fee on out-of-state waste but not on in-state companies. For information, call Sue Robertson, the State Department of Environmental Management's land division chief, at (205) 271-7730; Taylor Harper, D-Grand Bay, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, at (205) 865-4663; or David White, *Birmingham News*' Montgomery reporter, (205) 264-2773.

ARIZONA

► The *New Times*, an alternative Phoenix weekly, recently reported extensively on problems, issues and implications stemming from immense groundwater pollution linked to Motorola, a high-tech electronics manufacturing firm with two Phoenix plants, and the state's largest employer. The paper reported that the company is linked to two plumes of groundwater pollution, including one plume so vast that officials have been unable to map it all since the plume was discovered a decade ago. The paper reported that the company knew as long ago as 1966 that its practice of dumping solvents into unlined lagoons could cause environmental problems. Both state and federal regulators have aggravated the pollution problems by their handling of the situation, the paper reported. Finally, the paper reported that federal, state, local and Motorola officials, as well as the local media (including *New Times*), failed to inform the public for several years that the pollution

might never be able to be totally cleaned from the aquifer. For six years until 1991, the state turned over its responsibilities for informing the public of this contamination to Motorola. For more information, call *New Times* reporter Terry Greene at (602) 271-0040 or write her at 1201 E. Jefferson, Phoenix 85034.

► The *Arizona Daily Star* in Tucson recently reported that Arizona Portland Cement Co. near Tucson was under investigation by the state and Pima County governments for illegally and improperly burning hazardous wastes in kilns in the cement plant. The company had been burning tires and used oil for several years, and early this year started burning metal spent catalysts from an Eastern oil refinery that were contaminated with cancer-causing benzene. For more information, call *Star* reporter Keith Bagwell at (602) 573-4195 or write him at the *Star* at Box 26807, Tucson 85726.

► The *Arizona Daily Star* and the *Tucson Weekly* published stories on the Tucson city government's failure to clean contamination from city-owned, underground tanks that had been leaking gasoline and diesel fuel since 1989. A local fire captain who reported the problem to the state was demoted to fireman, but when the City Council got wind of the situation, it fired City Manager Tom Wilson. Call or write Keith Bagwell at the *Star* or managing editor Angela Sommers of the *Weekly* at (602) 792-3630 or c/o *Tucson Weekly*, Box 2429, Tucson 85702.

► The *Weekly* also reported on how the collapse of cotton farming in Central Arizona and Arizona's real estate slump have drastically slashed demand for water from the \$4 billion Central Arizona Project, one of the biggest, most controversial and expensive federal reclamation projects in the West. For years, CAP was a sacred cow in Arizona, winning support from both political parties, businessmen, farmers, developers and labor unions who believed the CAP 330-mile aqueduct from the Colorado River to Tucson would mean unmitigated boom. The story looks at how the CAP's 40-year promise of making the desert bloom has failed to pay off so far, because only a third of the available water

The Green Beat

is being used. For more information, call Tony Davis, a staff reporter for the *Albuquerque Tribune* who wrote a freelance piece on CAP, at (505) 823-3625, or write him c/o the *Tribune*, P.O. Drawer T, Albuquerque, N.M. 87103.

CALIFORNIA

► *San Francisco Chronicle* Outdoors Writer Glen Martin took a 400-mile kayak trip down the Sacramento River, encountering pollution, a disappearing salmon run and riparian forest loss. "A Reporters's Journey" ran in 18 installments over five weeks. Copies are available by calling (415) 777-7100.

► A 30-minute videotape, "Green for Life," tracks three generations of activists — David Brower, Juliette Majot and Michael Dorsey — at the Earth Summit. The show aired Aug. 13 on KRON, a San Francisco NBC affiliate, and is available for rebroadcast by calling (415) 331-3717.

CONNECTICUT

► One of the biggest stories in the Northeast in recent years has been the difficulty some communities have had in finding places to dispose of their garbage. It was such a problem in Connecticut several years ago that enforcement officers acted like trash police to stop haulers from sneaking into plants and dumping unauthorized trash. But the construction of five waste-to-energy plants, a poor economy which has cut consumption of consumer goods (as well as trash), and new recycling programs have changed all that. Connecticut's trash incinerators now have a shortage of waste and they are desperately looking for new sources. Contact the Connecticut Resource Recovery Authority (203) 549-6390.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

► WJLA-TV in Washington, D.C. is considering launching a 26-week series of environmental programs that would appear on Saturday mornings for children ages 16 years and younger. The project would be based on the well-received local environmental reports, called "Project Earth Watch" that the station has been

producing since February 1991, Vice President for Audience Development Bob Casazza said. A pilot show was recently completed that included pieces on solar energy and the Potomac River. The show's concept stemmed in part from research indicating that the environment was the number one concern of children, according to Casazza. Regular environmental reporter for the station, Brad Bell, whose reports appear three to five times weekly on the five o'clock newscast, would host the program. The show may also include a kids' club that would offer certificates, patches and number to call the station to report environmental stories. While the program would be customized to the local market, it is possible that four other stations affiliated with WJLA-TV would use portions of the series. More information can be obtained from WJLA Public Affairs officer Carla Holbacker, 3007 Tilden St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008; (202) 364-7777.

► *Daily Environment Report*, published by The Bureau of National Affairs, Inc., in June sent four reporters to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro. They were among an estimated 9,000 reporters at the conference, dubbed the Earth Summit. Daily coverage over a two-week period appeared in a special section of the multi-section newsletter, launched in January 1992. The reporters, supplied with cellular phones and portable lap-top computers, filed between seven and twelve stories daily. Coverage also was coordinated with beat reporters at the White House and with foreign correspondents. Speeches, interviews with key players, and the progress of the biodiversity treaty negotiations were primary story topics, along with a range of issues such as global warming, desertification, forestry, financing, and non-governmental organizations. More information about the publication can be obtained from Emily Pilk, BNA, (202) 452-4985.

► The *Germantown Express*, a paper in the Washington, D.C. suburb of Germantown, Md., reported that 10 years after a local landfill closed, exposed trash and plastics were appearing on the dump's hillsides and smelly ooze was leaking

through eroding layers of dirt. Environmental protection officials were reported as saying that the solid waste was not polluting area water supplies. But a university professor/environmental consultant told the paper that adverse environmental effects were likely to be occurring. The professor said two deer carcasses had been found and that birds also were at risk from drinking at the dump's leachate puddles. The article, "Landfill Leaks Smelly Ooze," appeared in the May 20, 1992, edition. More information can be obtained from the paper at (301) 258-7434.

► One of the nation's toughest local pesticide laws will take effect in Prince George's County, Maryland, a suburb of Washington, D.C. the *Washington Post* reported June 22, 1992. "Under New Pesticide Law, P.G. Lawns to Sprout Signs," p. D-1, D-5, reports that new warning signs will be required to be posted by homeowners and lawn service companies when they apply pesticides.

► *Washington Post* writer Terri Shaw found in a Washington Home section report that undertaking a home remodeling or renovation project has changed over the last ten years because of an increasing awareness of environmental contaminants in the home. The article, "Green Remodeling, Understanding the Value of Tampering Safely with the House" appeared in the May 21, 1992 issue, p. 24, Home Section.

FLORIDA

► The *Florida Times-Union* has done a series of stories concerning lead paint found in Jacksonville's public housing units. The stories revealed that officials knew about the problems years ago, but never corrected it. The health department is now testing children for high levels of lead in their blood. For more information, contact *Florida Times-Union* reporter Jim Saunders, (904) 359-4281.

► The state has purchased for preservation 42,000 acres of environmentally sensitive land in Florida's Big Bend area. The \$64 million purchase is the most expensive acquisition the state has ever under-

taken under its land-buying program. The property is home to the threatened black bear and the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker and other significant species.

ILLINOIS

► The New Consumer Institute, based in Wauconda, Ill., has published a "Green Company Resource Guide" which explores the pitfalls and promises of green marketing. John F. Wasik, the Institute's managing director, says the book in part offers employees and businesses a guide to what is "truly green" and what marketing approaches are alienating consumers because claims don't live up to reality. Wasik says proceeds from the book will be donated to charity, including some environmental organizations. For a review copy, call Wasik at (708) 526-0522.

INDIANA

► Marion County public school districts have spent more than \$10 million removing asbestos from their buildings, according to a report in *The Indianapolis News*. Indianapolis Public Schools, the largest district in the county, alone has paid more than \$4.3 million for major removal projects since 1987. The June 2 article by environmental reporter Marcy Mermel looked at the debate over whether the money was well spent and how serious a risk asbestos poses to students and school staff. Although most of the counties have reduced the cost by including asbestos removals in construction projects, the administrators see asbestos as just another area where the government has mandated action by school districts without providing the funds. Some added, however, they feel they did the right thing to assuage the fears of parents and workers. The federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986 mandates inspection and management of asbestos, but not necessarily removal.

► Indiana Gov. Evan Bayh asked Indiana industries to reduce the amount of toxic chemicals they release to the environment by half before 1995. The reduction will be based on the 1987 toxic release inventory data. State officials pledged to help smaller companies and

others not required to submit the TRI forms to conduct their own inventories. The program is supposed to include grants and technical assistance for companies and training for Indiana Department of Environmental Management staff. Based on 1990 reports, Indiana was the fourth highest state in the amount of toxic chemicals released to the environment. Bayh announced the program at an environmental conference sponsored by the governor's office. Contact Bettie Cadou, IDEM, (317) 232-8560.

IOWA

► Women in 18 Iowa counties served by a regional water association whose supplies have been contaminated by agricultural herbicides are having babies with birth defects at a rate twice as high as in similar Iowa counties, University of Iowa researchers have discovered. The researchers said further study is needed to determine whether the defects are related to the water's quality, however. The study follows research that suggested a link between low birth weights and herbicide contamination in 15 Iowa counties served by the same water association. For further information, contact Keith Cherryholmes of the University of Iowa's hygienic laboratory at (319) 335-4500.

► The tiny town of Wapello (population 2,000) has found an inexpensive and environmentally responsible way to treat its municipal effluent: wetlands. The town has created a 40-acre wetland that serves a secondary treatment system for wastewater. Town officials have built an observation and recreation area around the wetland, which has attracted a wide variety of wildlife to the area. And the wetland-treated water has been passing state monitoring tests with flying colors.

► More prudent farming practices appear to be paying off in Iowa. Researchers from the state Department of Natural Resources have documented a steady drop in contamination from pesticides such as atrazine and alachlor in rural water wells in recent years, and attribute the decrease to better chemical management by farmers. For a copy of the study, contact Deborah Quade at the DNR, (319) 335-1575.

KANSAS

► The Kansas Department of Health and Environment combined forces with Kansas City, Kan., city officials to kick a 41-car train loaded with New York City garbage out of the state. It sent the train wandering East, eventually prompting officials in two other cities — one in Illinois and another in northeast Missouri to obtain court orders to boot the smelly cargo out of town. Like the Islip barge in 1987, the train could find no friendly dump. It ended up back on the East Coast and was set to be dumped in Fresh Kills landfill on Staten Island. For more information, contact Mike Mansur, *The Kansas City Star*, (816) 234-4433.

► Kansas Gov. Joan Finney in April killed an effort to bring a nuclear waste dump to southeast Kansas. Finney said she objected to Labette County's pursuit of a facility to store high-level radioactive fuel from nuclear power plants. The county had considered applying to the U.S. Department of Energy for a \$100,000 grant, and it had hired a Washington, D.C., area consultant to help it study the idea. But Finney's letter quashed the process, officials in the U.S. Nuclear Waste Negotiator's office said. For more information on Kansas' actions, contact Bob Eye, general counsel at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (913) 296-1291.

MARYLAND

► Allied-Signal Inc. is spending \$80 million to dismantle and clean up a nearly 150-year-old chrome ore processing plant in Baltimore that is leaking more than 60 pounds of toxic chromium daily into the city's harbor, *The Baltimore Sun* reported. Hexavalent chromium is a carcinogen, and also is toxic to some fish and wildlife. Allied-Signal, based in Morristown, N.J., hopes to recoup its cleanup bill by selling the 20-acre waterfront site for development. If successful, the project would represent a rare success in rehabilitating a toxic waste site. Some environmentalists question the safety of building homes or offices there because the company is only "capping" the chrome-contaminated soil, not removing it. Even hazardous waste

The Green Beat

experts disagree, citing past instances where such "caps" have failed to contain toxic chemicals. Maryland officials support Allied's plan, but the Environmental Protection Agency remains noncommittal.

► Meanwhile, the state of Maryland plans to spend up to \$22 million just down the Patapsco River from the old Allied chrome plant to stop toxic hexavalent chromium from leaking into the water from the Dundalk Marine Terminal, the state's largest cargo-handling complex. Allied dumped about 3 million tons of chromeladen waste there over two decades until 1975. State officials have said the taxpayers, not Allied, must pay for this cleanup since the state unwittingly accepted the toxic waste as harmless fill dirt at the time. For more information, call Tim Wheeler at 410-332-6564.

MASSACHUSETTS

► Fire, long viewed as a natural enemy of man, may be an asset to the environment, some New England environmental groups are discovering. The Nature Conservancy and the Massachusetts Audubon Society this year set up to a dozen fires on land they owned on Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. The object is to preserve open areas for wildlife and plant species. The concept is increasingly being embraced nationally, officials say. For more information, contact Peter Dunwiddie, Massachusetts Audubon. (617) 259-9500.

► For four years now the *Worcester Telegram* has been examining the EPA's Toxic Release Inventory records and reporting on emission levels from local companies using ozone-depleting chemicals. For the first three years those levels steadily increased. But the most recent reports reviewed this spring show that emissions for ozone-depletion chemicals has finally begun to drop. The stories have strong reader interest, according to reporter John Monahan. In fact, some local corporate CEO's have responded personally to letters coming from nearby elementary school classes alarmed by what the newspaper has reported. Contact Monahan at (508) 793-9172.

MICHIGAN

► The International Joint Commission, a cooperative U.S.-Canadian effort to govern the Great Lakes, issued a report calling for "zero discharge" of persistent toxic pollutants from the 1,678 incinerators in southeastern Michigan and nine in neighboring parts of Ontario. The incinerator emissions along the Detroit River, Lake St. Clair and the St. Clair River include dioxins, furans, PCBs, hydrochloric acid, mercury and other metals. The group's report also calls for uniform emissions standards on both sides of the border. Nineteen recommendations in the report include a call for Ontario and Michigan to develop a strategy to control low-level ozone, which can cause lung irritation. Ontario has banned the construction of incinerators in the province and begun a study of air pollution in Windsor since Detroit built one of the world's largest garbage incinerators in 1988. For more information, contact IJC in Detroit at (313) 226-2170.

► Hospitals are joining in the recycling movement, but at what cost to their low-paid workers? In the process of sorting through 60 tons of hospital waste per year to recover cardboard for recycling, a small group of workers at the University of Michigan's Hospitals are being exposed to needle sticks and splashes of unknown fluids. The single-cart system used to convey the co-mingled recyclable, infectious and hazardous trash down to the sorting area is putting these dozen workers at significant risk for injury and disease. The plastics, chemicals and body substances that remain after cardboard is recovered are incinerated, resulting in air emissions of heavy metals and chlorine compounds. Something to look into at your hospital.

► Here's a graphic guaranteed to make the telephone ring. With the help of researchers at a non-profit environmental group and a powerful MacIntosh, Karl Bates of the *Ann Arbor News* used the CAMEO computer model to show how a plume of toxic fumes would spread over town after a hazardous materials truck crash on the beltway. CAMEO is a program written by NOAA that will accept a map of your city and draw the plume to

scale. The story was done to show how a proposed hazardous waste incinerator and landfill 10 miles south of town could be more than just a local concern. The substance and the amount spilled were taken from a consultant's worst-case scenario for the facility. Local Emergency Planning Committees, fire departments and emergency preparedness officials may have a copy of CAMEO for you to look at.

► A follow-up meeting for U.S. citizens groups who attended the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro will be held September 25, 26 and 27 in East Lansing at Michigan State University. The Earth Summit and Beyond" will be to chart the course for citizen groups to take action on the principles of the Rio Declaration. Reporters wanting more information about the program can contact Mark Valentine at the U.S. Citizens Network/UNCED in San Francisco. (415) 956-6162.

MINNESOTA

► An estimated 50,000 people evacuated their homes and businesses in Duluth on June 30 after a railroad tanker car derailed and ruptured. The car spilled benzene and other substances into a river and created a hugh cloud that hung over the city and surrounding communities for several hours. The accident will be under investigation for several months, but also provoked immediate calls for greater railroad safety and a number of lawsuits. Some state lawmakers have proposed a toxic disclosure bill that would require businesses covered by the federal "right-to-know" law to report the volumes of chemicals they use and transport each year. Manufacturers respond that they already must report chemical emissions, and that providing more data would be costly and might jeopardize company trade secrets. Contact: Chuck Laszewski, *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, (612) 228-5464.

► The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission has given Northern States Power Company permission to expand its radioactive waste storage at the utility's Prairie Island Nuclear Power Plant. Pending final federal approval, the utility will store some of its spent fuel outdoors in large steel canisters during the next 15 years. N.S.P.

argued that without additional storage, it would be forced to shut down its two nuclear units by 1995 because federal officials have not designated a permanent repository for nuclear wastes. A coalition of environmental, Native American and citizens groups opposed the expansion, arguing that it might increase radiation exposure for residents of the adjacent Indian reservation. They also claimed that the utility could afford to shut down its nuclear units if it would spearhead a more aggressive energy conservation program. Environmentalists say they'll appeal the state's decision. Contact: Tom Meersman, Minnesota Public Radio, (612) 290-1474.

MISSISSIPPI

► Sharon Stallworth, environment writer for *The Clarion-Ledger* in Jackson, is now splitting her time between the environment and business.

► The State Department of Environmental Quality said July 7 that no hazardous waste disposal or treatment permit decisions will be made until late this year or early 1993. There are four such sites proposed in Mississippi. There is no commercial hazardous waste disposal plant in Mississippi. Most wastes are stored or treated on industrial sites where they're generated. A small amount is shipped to out-of-state disposal sites, such as the landfill in nearby Emelle, Ala. The committee has spent the past two years searching for suitable sites to build a state-owned hazardous waste treatment or disposal facility. The 1990 Legislature authorized the site-selection process to provide a public alternative in case private enterprise can't build a waste facility. State officials say Mississippi must expand its capacity to dispose industrial refuse by building a private or public facility to treat, incinerate, bury or otherwise manage hazardous waste. The Legislature set a 1993 deadline to start building the plant, but that obviously won't be met because of the site-selection delays. For information, call Environmental Protection Council staffer Don Christy at (601) 961-5069.

► Civil rights groups say "environmental racism" played a part in Pascagoula's

placement of a garbage incinerator in Moss Point a decade ago. Controversy erupted recently when the Pascagoula announced that the incinerator would burn more medical waste, from other states, to pay off the incinerator. The incinerator has lost money because the price of steam it sells to a chemical plant is tied to the cost of natural gas, which plummeted shortly after the incinerator was built. Most Pascagoula residents are white; most Moss Point residents are minorities. However, most of the people who live within a half-mile radius of the incinerator are white. For information, call Deirdre S. Janney, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union in Jackson, (601) 355-6464; George Barlow, environmental justice organizer for the Gulf Coast Tenants Organization, (601) 868-8380; or Pascagoula Mayor Tom Hewlett, (601) 762-1020.

MISSOURI

► A new national study documents how poorly the U.S. Department of Agriculture has implemented its new soil and water conservation programs. It's cracked down on only a few farmers who violated the new rules, according to the Soil and Water Conservation Society's 76-page report. The study is based on three years of field work. Last year, the national conservation group, whose members include USDA officials, issued an interim report, detailing "significant problems" in the department's conservation programs. For a copy of the report and more information, possibly on how a county in your state has complied, contact the report's editor, Max Schnepf, in Ankeny, Iowa (515) 289-1227.

► The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, an arm of the U.S. Public Health Service, is going door to door around an secondary lead smelter in north Missouri. Residents there have complained for years about air pollution and health problems. The ATSDR agreed finally to study the situation after the Missouri Department of Health conducted a study that found emissions from the plant may be causing respiratory problems. EPA officials say the study may be used to set standards nationally for emissions from such plants. For more information, con-

tact ASDR officials in Kansas City, Kan., at (913) 551-7692.

► Kansas City is officially the largest metropolitan area in the nation to comply with priority air pollutants under the Clean Air Act. EPA Administrator William K. Reilly made the announcement in May. Two recent developments, however, threatened the new prize. A Kansas City monitor recorded a high ozone reading, although it didn't constitute a violation. Also, St. Louis appeared to have achieved compliance. A day later, a monitor did record a violation. For more information, contact EPA spokesman in Kansas City, Kan., Rowena Michaels, at (901) 551-7003.

NEVADA

► After major earthquakes shook Southern California in mid-June, the area near the Nevada Test Site, where scientists conduct experiments on the nation's nuclear weapons arsenal, and Yucca Mountain, the lone site under study as the nation's high-level nuclear repository, joined the tremors. As late as July 6, geologists reported quakes unrelated to the California desert quake near Palm Springs on Little Skull fault near Yucca Mountain and a smaller tremor at the Test Site, about 35 miles east of Yucca Mountain. The DOE's Yucca Mountain Project Manager Carl Gertz quickly reassured scientists who are members of the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board that a high-level nuclear repository could be designed to withstand a 6.5 quake on the Richter scale. However, Gertz said that the Southern California quakes had left \$1 million in damages to buildings, broken glass and cracks in ceilings and walls. But scientists working for Nevada said the federal government should be seeking alternate sites for the nation's nuclear repository that is expected to keep high-level nuclear waste safe from the environment for at least 10,000 years. The Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board urged the DOE to concentrate on seismic studies and the geology of Yucca Mountain in its fifth report to Energy Secretary James Watkins. Contact Mary Manning Las Vegas Sun, 800 S. Valley View Blvd. Las Vegas, NV 89120.

The Green Beat

NEW JERSEY

► A congressional investigation has determined that land contaminated by buried military explosives does not have to be certified by any federal agency as clean or safe for future development, Eric Greenberg of the *News Tribune* discovered. The unreleased draft report by the General Accounting Office would impact on military ordnance contamination cleanups across the United States — a potential billion dollar enterprise as the Defense Department prepares to close and clean dozens of military bases, ostensibly returning the land to civilian use. Millions of acres are involved, including land at formerly used defense sites already in private hands. The draft report by GAO, Congress's investigative arm, states that ordnance — including bombs, shells, grenades, and other unexploded munitions — is not legally considered hazardous material and thus is not subject to the same rules that govern cleanups of hazardous waste sites. The test case used in the GAO probe is the former Raritan Arsenal in Edison, N.J., where private developers are seeking to build a 4,000 unit \$1 billion residential development on the ordnance-contaminated former arsenal. The report was commissioned by a New Jersey congressman after an investigative series by Greenberg revealed that no federal or state government agency was willing to take responsibility for ensuring that the property is safe for development. To date, over 100,000 pieces of ordnance — including 37 millimeter shells, french grenades, and 75 millimeter projectiles, have been unearthed at the former arsenal since a cleanup project was initiated in May 1991. Call Eric Greenberg at (908) 324-7364.

NEW MEXICO

► The *New Mexican* in Santa Fe reported on University of Nevada wildlife researcher Peter Stacey, who was barred from doing research on spotted owls in southwest New Mexico by the U.S. Forest Service. The Forest Service said Stacey lacked the proper permits; Stacey said he tried to get a permit but felt the Forest Service was imposing unacceptable terms on the permit because of the controversial

nature of his research. For more information, write *New Mexican* reporter Keith Easthouse at P.O. Box 2048, Santa Fe, N.M. 87501.

► The *Albuquerque Journal* and *Tribune* continue to chronicle the adventures and misadventures of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, the long-delayed nuclear waste dump in Carlsbad, N.M. for hosting plutonium-tainted wastes from weapons plants. In the latest installment of this never-ending saga, the U.S. Department of Energy's plans for opening WIPP to test nuclear wastes received a sharp setback when Sandia National Laboratories, a DOE contractor, and the National Academy of Sciences, long sympathetic to WIPP, wrote reports sharply critical of the DOE test programs. Legislation to turn over WIPP's land from the U.S. Interior Department to DOE, a crucial step in allowing WIPP to open, was close to passage after four years of fighting in Congress, however. For more information, write or call Tony Davis of the *Tribune* or Chuck McCutcheon of the *Journal* at P.O. Drawer J, Albuquerque 87103 or (505) 823-7777.

NEW YORK

► When tens of thousands of visitors a year descend on a small island for swimming, tennis and general relaxation, the effect can be ecological devastation. Ron Bernthal of the *Middletown Sunday Record* covered the subject — specifically, environmental tourism in the Caribbean — in a recent 3-part series. The articles concentrate on St. Thomas, Nevis and Belize (site of the Eco-Tourism Conference). Bernthal can be reached at (914) 434-1529.

► Two writers have compiled a book of 3,700 quotations of wise and witty observations about the natural environment. "The Dictionary of Environmental Quotations," 288 pages, was assembled by Barbara Rodes, director of library services at the World Wildlife Fund, and Rice O'Dell, former editor of the Conservation Foundation Letter. The sources of the quotes range from an ancient philosopher to a contemporary economist. The book, published by Simon & Schuster's

Academic Reference Division, is available by direct order at \$30, a \$5 discount, through Nov. 1. Call (212) 373-7350.

NORTH CAROLINA

► In the May 24 edition of the *Charlotte Observer*, environment writer Jack Horan reported on the discovery that the moist black dirt of the Congaree Swamp — and other wetlands — contains bacteria that consume CFCs. "It's too soon to call it the muck that saved the world," Horan's lede announced. But the discovery that wetlands are natural consumers of ozone-destroying chlorofluorocarbons could further change how wetlands are viewed, valued and managed. The U.S. Geological Survey scientists who discovered the CFC sink at the Congaree Swamp say more study is needed to determine just how fast the bacteria consume the chemical. Contact Horan at (704) 358-5000.

OHIO

► Except where wetlands regulations apply, federal and Ohio law provide little protection for urban forests, leaving preservation almost entirely dependent on the environmental conscience of owners. At the *Columbus Dispatch*, environment reporter Scott Powers, development reporter Jonathan Riskind and graphic artist Kathy Dlabek teamed up to document the clearing of privately controlled natural areas in rapidly developing metro-Columbus. Drawing from several all-but-forgotten studies done in the late 1960s and early 1970s, geodesic maps, aerial photographs, property records, site visits and interviews, the trio created a 1975 baseline that mapped more than 80 significant wooded areas and other natural features in Franklin County. They then determined the subsequent fate of those features. The six-story package, "Nature's Last Stands," ran April 19 and reported that about 20 percent of the forests and natural features had vanished completely in the past 17 years. Another 45 percent were substantially cleared or developed and many more face development because they lie in the path of city growth. Contact: Scott Powers, *The Columbus Dispatch*, 34 S. Third Street, PO Box 1289, Columbus, Ohio, 43216.

The Green Beat

► Where legislation is, the lawyers will follow. And so it is with the environmental law field, according to a *Dayton Daily News* story. Environmental reporter Jonathan Brinckman found that environmental law is the fastest-growing area in the legal profession. The increase is reflected in the growing number of environmental courses and concentrations at law schools, expanded environmental sections at law firms and membership in the American Bar Association's natural resources, energy and environment section, according to the June 28 story. Brinckman can be contacted at the *Dayton Daily News*, 45 S. Ludlow St., Dayton, Ohio, 45402.

► School systems are finding they can save money while teaching environmentalism if they recycle. This is especially true in states such as Ohio, where disposal fees are increasing. According to a *Dayton Daily News* story, Montgomery County schools are reducing their waste by up to 50 percent at a time when disposal fees have increased 38 percent. School children tackle the work of separating their white paper with more enthusiasm than office workers, the story said. One elementary school has linked recycling to lessons in paper making, plant growing and terrarium building.

OREGON

► Another inhabitant of the Northwest's old growth forests appears likely to join the northern spotted owl on the list of threatened species. It's the marbled murrelet, a robin-sized sea bird that flies inland to nest in the tops of large evergreen trees. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, under prodding from environmental groups, is reportedly preparing to list the bird. Such action could further reduce Northwest federal timber harvests, already slashed by owl protection and other environmental considerations. For more information: Fish and Wildlife Service (503) 231-6121.

► Oregon has not escaped the effects of years of mismanagement of nuclear waste across the Columbia River at the federal nuclear weapons installation at Hanford, Washington. A new report by Batelle Pacific Laboratories confirms that the Co-

lumbia carried Hanford contamination to the Pacific Ocean and south along the Oregon coast. Scientists estimate that as many as 2,000 people, mostly subsistence fishermen, received potentially harmful radiation doses between 1944 and 1972. Environmentalists maintain that the number is far higher. For more information: Hanford Education Action League (509) 326-3370.

PENNSYLVANIA

► A report issued by a select committee of the state House recommends that the state, counties and municipalities take a much more aggressive role in shaping land use and growth. A lack of proper planning in some areas has overtaxed water and sewer resources, created traffic congestion and eliminated essential open space and prime farmland, said Rep. Robert Freeman, D-Northampton County, chairman of the committee. For more information or a copy of the report, contact Freeman's office at House P.O. Box 132, Room 330, South Office Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; or phone (717) 783-3815.

► Pennsylvania's new Clean Air Act could prove to be a gold mine for news stories. Signed into law July 9, the legislation will have a broad range of environmental and economic ramifications. Among other things, it will force some companies to convert vehicle fleets to cleaner-burning fuels, and it will raise electric rates as utilities reduce emissions of gases that produce acid rain. State Sen. David J. Brightbill, R-Lebanon County, chairman of the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, called the measure "the most sweeping environmental law enacted by this state in the last 10 years."

► The *Philadelphia Inquirer* published a six-part series on international environmental problems in May as a prelude to the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Dispatches from reporters in Africa, Eastern Europe, Asia, the Mediterranean and South America dealt with air pollution, biodiversity, rain forests, water resources, population, politics and finances. For information or a copy, contact Mark

Jaffe, The *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 400 N. Broad St., Philadelphia, PA 19101; (215) 854-2430.

► The *Philadelphia Business Journal* has been exploring the issue of "jobs versus the environment," and in some cases finding that chemical companies with plants in the Philadelphia area see tougher environmental regulations as offering big economic benefits. In the June 8-14 issue, staff writers William L. Roberts and Michael Fabey reported that, among other companies, ARCO Chemical Co. sees good profit potential in an environmentally friendly antifreeze and in MTBE, a gasoline additive it plans to market. Meanwhile Quaker Chemical stands to make \$20 million for the rights to a scrubber it developed that removes sulfides from refinery emissions. A companion article noted, however, that an aging chemical plant identified as one of the area's worst polluters is moving some operations to a rural site outside Paris, France, even after the company spent more than \$100 million in capital improvements, including pollution control. For information about copies of the *Business Journal's* coverage, contact Roberts at (215) 238-1450.

PUERTO RICO

► The EPA and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry are taking a close look at the municipality of Cataño due to the fact that the town (just east of San Juan) has the highest cancer rate on the island. In recent months representatives of EPA's Region II (NY, NJ, PR and USVI) and personnel from ATSDR's Atlanta office were in Puerto Rico conducting a series of interviews with state government agencies, public health officials and grassroots organizations as the first part of a multimedia investigation. The Cataño Air Basin is a six square mile area where close to 300,000 people live and has been designated as a non-attainment area for pm10 (particulates smaller than 10 microns) by the EPA. Levels for that type particulate have been over the state and federal limit more than once. Last May, *El Nueva Dia* newspaper published a series of articles that showed that sulfur oxide and pm10 levels have been on the rise for the past five years.

The Green Beat

Two state-owned power plants (that burn fossil fuel); heavy traffic; grain packing companies and other emissions sources are suspected for the pollution. Grassroots organizations want the federal agencies to do an epidemiological study and want the power plants to submit to stricter air quality controls. So far, the EPA and ATSDR have not compromised in doing such study. For more information contact: Luis Ferré, *El Nuevo Dia*, (809) 793-7070, ext. 2165.

RHODE ISLAND

► The state legislature passed a new law this summer scrapping plans to build up to three waste incinerators in Rhode Island. The law requires the state instead to build a series of recycling and composting facilities that will process a minimum of 70 percent of Rhode Island's solid waste. The legislation was pushed through by a coalition of anti-incinerator forces. The Rhode Island Solid Waste Management Corporation, which manages waste disposal, says the recycling figure cannot be met. Contact Thomas E. Wright, director, RISWMC, (401) 831-4440.

TENNESSEE

► Public hearings were held July 31 and Aug. 1 in southern Tennessee on the three companies' proposals to build wood chip mills on the Tennessee River. Residents fear that the mills will open the relatively undisturbed forests to widespread logging. Two mills would be in Tennessee and one in Alabama. For a copy of the Tennessee Valley Authority's environmental impact statement, contact M. Paul Schmierbach, the TVA's manager for environmental quality, at (615) 632-6578.

UTAH

► Concerns about PM10 air pollution in the Salt Lake metropolitan area were heightened by publication of a scientific study showing increased death rates in a suburban county whenever levels of this pollutant climb. PM10 is the shorthand name for particulate matter measuring less than 10 microns in diameter — usually tiny pieces of dust and soot suspended in the air. The Salt Lake area experiences

high PM10 levels in the winter when temperature inversions trap emissions from industry, automobiles, and wood-burning stoves near the valley floor. A study in the May/June 1992 edition of *Archives of Environmental Health* entitled "Daily Mortality and PM10 Pollution in Utah Valley" found that death rates increased by 16 percent for every 100 micrograms per cubic meter increase in PM10. The death rate began to climb at PM10 levels considered acceptable to the EPA.

► Soil samples are being collected around 15 former metal smelters in Salt Lake County to search for lead and arsenic. The smelters, which operated in the late 1800s and early 1900s, spewed large quantities of heavy metals from their smokestacks. These rained down on surrounding fields. This land is covered now with homes and businesses. Preliminary testing in a residential area near one of the smelters revealed lead levels as high as 3,000 parts per million. The topsoil in contaminated yards and gardens probably will be dug up and hauled to a disposal site. For more information, contact Sonya Pennock, EPA in Denver, 1-800-227-8917, #1137.

VERMONT

► Vermont's Agency of Natural Resources has abandoned a controversial offset program that would have allowed industries to exceed state air quality standards in some instances, if the businesses developed plans to reduce pollution elsewhere. In one instance, Vermont Integrated Waste Solutions in Rutland, Vt., had proposed paying other polluters to reduce their dioxin emissions and thereby offset VIWS emissions. The offset program was dropped after the state Superior Court ruled in July that the agency could not make exceptions to its own rules in order to issue air quality permits. The decision is under appeal before Vermont's Supreme Court. For more information, contact Nancy Bazilchuk at the *Burlington Free Press*, (802) 660-1873.

WASHINGTON

► In a three-day series on "Rivers at Risk" (July 1-3), *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*

reporters Rob Taylor and Greg Johnston looked at how logging practices have seriously harmed salmon spawning streams in the Northwest. The lead story includes a catchy Page 1 graphic by Ben Garrison, explaining how clearcuts and road-building fill pools with silt, raise water temperatures and smother fish nests. Another graphic illustrates the final piece, an explanation of what can be done to protect stream habitat. One promising change: new Washington regulations include "physical exams" to determine the health of the state's major rivers.

► Despite being on a year-long leave, *Spokesman-Review* reporter Karen Dorn Steele produced four stories for the Spokane newspaper in July. They dealt with Chelyabinsk, the former Soviet Union's equivalent to Washington's Hanford Nuclear Reservation. Forty years of plutonium production were conducted there in total secrecy with no regard for the environment. What remains in western Siberia is a lake so dangerous that you can't stand next to it for more than an hour and live, a radiation-polluted river where cows still graze and kids swim, a people who have to contribute money towards the clean-up of Chernobyl while they live — and die — in obscurity in the world's most dangerous nuclear site. Steele is writing a book on Hanford, funded with a research grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

WISCONSIN

► Construction has resumed on what would be Wisconsin's first metallic mine in ten years. In June, a Wisconsin judge threw out a Sierra Club lawsuit aimed at halting the Kennecott Corporation Mine near Ladysmith. The environmental group continues to claim the operation would harm local endangered species. In a recent supplement to an environmental impact statement, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources downplayed any harm to such species. However, the agency has agreed to look at tightening the permits Kennecott must have to discharge wastewater into a nearby river.

► Wisconsin may clamp down on the discharge of phosphorus into waters out-

The Green Beat

side of the Great Lakes Basin. There are already state phosphorus limits for waters that do flow into lakes Michigan and Superior. But in June, the Department of Natural Resources added restrictions for other waterways. Wisconsin cheesemakers claim the new rules will knock some of their members out of business. But the state has tentatively agreed to grant some exemptions to the discharge levels.

► The *Milwaukee Journal* highlighted the likely importance of alternative fuels. In a special section in June, *Journal* environment reporter Don Behm looked at

ethanol, methanol and other fuels, as southeastern Wisconsin faces air pollution clean-up deadlines under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. For more information on the *Journal* stories, contact Behm at (414) 324-2000.

WEST VIRGINIA

► In an April 27 article, *Charleston Gazette* reporter Paul Nyden chronicled a Division of Environmental Protection argument that it did not have to treat a stream for acid mine drainage because all life in it had already been killed by the

AMO. Local groups disagree and are suing OEP to start chemical treatment program.

► The judge in a case where thousands of local residents are suing Ashland Oil over emissions from its oil refinery in eastern Kentucky threatened to leave the case unless company attorneys dropped their demand for individual trials for each plaintiff. Ashland Oil abruptly gave in, clearing the way for one of the largest toxic tort lawsuits in U.S. history. Contact Monty Fowler, formerly of the *Herald-Dispatch*, at (304) 733-1632.

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