

SEJ Journal

The Quarterly Publication of the Society of Environmental Journalists

Vol. 1 No. 2

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Does it miss the point?

The advocacy debate

Utne conference yields range of conclusions

By TOM MEERSMAN

Independent editors, publishers and journalists are not shy about expressing what's on their minds. So I expected vigorous and candid discussion when the *Utne Reader*, a bimonthly magazine that reprints articles from the alternative press, convened its 1990 "Early Warnings" conference on media and the environment.

In addition to freelancers and the producers of magazines, journals and newsletters, the gathering attracted a number of well-known environmental activists, from Lester Brown and Hazel Henderson to Amory Lovins and Ralph Nader.

(Continued on page 5)

Journal authors suggest reporters question values

By CRAIG L. LaMAY

"Covering the Environment," the Summer 1990 issue of the Gannett Center Journal, asks whether the advocacy vs. objectivity debate in environmental reporting isn't obscuring more important questions.

Long before journalists took notice of the environment, thinkers from countless other fields—philosophy, economics, political science, biology and others—shaped the way the public thinks about it, and not only in the United States but throughout the world.

If journalists are to make sense of the

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First Annual Conference set for Colorado

The Society of Environmental Journalists' first annual conference is set for the University of Colorado in Boulder the weekend of Oct. 3 to 6, 1991.

While most details about the conference are still in the planning stage, the society's board of directors voted in December to accept the university's offer to host the first annual conference for environmental journalists.

Boulder is one of the world's leading

centers for environmental science. Among the major research centers in this scenic city are the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Solar Energy Research Institute and the university.

The society will draw on these institution's scientists to participate in panels on air and water pollution, toxic

(Continued on page 4)

SEJ co-hosts meeting with East European reporters

The common ground between environmental journalists in America and Eastern Europe will be the focus of a roundtable luncheon at the National Press Club on Jan. 22, as the Society of Environmental Journalists helps welcome nine colleagues from the former Communist Bloc countries.

SEJ, with the Environmental Health Center and the National Press Club, will host the two-hour program, "Reporters Helping Reporters," beginning with lunch at noon. The program is open to journalists, educators, students and others with an inter-

(Continued on page 4)

International Journalists Face Serious Problems

During an environmental reporting workshop in October a group of visiting Asian journalists were asked why most of the stories printed in their newspapers read like government press releases.

Their responses were eye opening.

Many told how their governments routinely intimidate journalists and censor their papers, shutting down the media that are critical of the government and throwing journalists into jail, if they stray too far from the government's official line.

They told how officials in environmental agencies are afraid of speaking freely for fear of losing their jobs. They told how environmental activists are periodically arrested and hauled off to jail where they are sometimes detained for long periods — often for unspecified offenses.

They spoke in moving, sometimes eloquent terms, about how difficult their jobs are in underdeveloped nations and how American journalists take so much for granted.

Theresa Manavalam, a reporter for the *Malay Mail* in Kuala Lumpur, told how public meetings and demonstrations rarely occur in Malaysia since written permission is required from the police before five or more people are allowed to congregate.

She described one particularly Orwellian tactic: Even if a journalist follows all the rules and writes a story based upon available documents, the government can still arrest the journalist if it doesn't like what is written.

How?

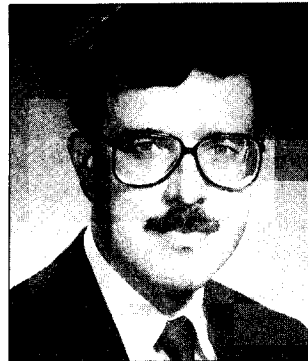
The government stamps on the documents the words "official secrets" — and then backdates the stamp to indicate that the reporter looked at the records when they were officially classified. Then they whisk the offending reporter off to jail.

During the meeting in Reston, Va., Aditya Man Shrestha, chairman of the Asian Forum of Environmental Journalists, asked Phil Shabecoff, of the *New York Times*, and myself if the Society of Environmental Journalists could help Asian reporters.

We invited them to join our society and many said they planned to. They work for newspapers in China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and several other Asian nations.

At the very least SEJ can offer them moral support and assist them in tracking down environmental experts who can provide them with accurate and much needed information. By publicizing their plight we can also make American news organizations, international environmental groups and U.S. officials aware of their difficulties.

Report from the society's president



By Jim Detjen

When I left the session — sponsored by the Center for Foreign Journalists — I realized how unimportant many of our problems seem in comparison to censorship, imprisonment and shutting down the media. I understood far better how serious environmental problems can fester in societies where the media is gagged and bound.

To assist environmental journalists in Asia and many other countries, including the United States, SEJ is working with the Center for Foreign Journalists and the Scientists' Institute for Public Information to create an international directory of environmental experts at universities, research centers, nonprofit organizations, government agencies and elsewhere.

We are at an early stage of the planning. The size and publication date of the directory will depend a great deal on whether we are able to obtain foundation support for this project. We are hopeful that it will be published within the next two years. SEJ members will play a key role in providing the names and phone numbers of important organizations and in ensuring

that the directory meets their needs. We'll keep you posted on further developments.

As of mid-December, our membership had topped 350 and it continues to grow. New York is still our leading state with 35 members. The society has 28 members in Washington, D.C., 27 in California, 22 in Pennsylvania and 18 in Florida and Virginia. The only states where we don't have a single member are Montana, Wyoming, and North and South Dakota. Our foreign members live in Canada, Mexico, Brazil, South Africa, Nepal, Bangladesh and Thailand.

We are grateful to Scripps Howard Newspapers, the Scripps Howard Foundation, Cox Newspapers, the University of Colorado and Don Behm, a reporter for the *Milwaukee Journal*, for their generous support of SEJ activities.

Scripps Howard Newspapers have paid more than \$2,700 for legal expenses incurred in the start-up of SEJ. The Scripps Howard Foundation has awarded SEJ a grant of \$15,000 to be paid over the next three years in support of educational activities.

Cox Newspapers in Atlanta has given SEJ \$5,000 to pay for start-up costs of the organization. The University of Colorado is giving SEJ \$10,000 to help pay for our first national conference Oct. 3 to 6, 1991, in Boulder, Colo. And Behm, an environmental reporter and SEJ member, has donated a \$300 honorarium he earned as a speaker.

To all, we say thank you. We are seeking additional foundation support and encourage individuals and news organizations to contribute to SEJ, a nonprofit, tax-exempt, educational organization.

One of the projects we hope to carry out in 1991 is a directory of SEJ members, addresses, phone numbers and areas of expertise. We envision it as a useful networking tool that will enable a journalist living in San Francisco who is writing about PCBs to check our directory and track down the names of other reporters around the country who have written extensively about the subject. The idea is that

journalists can learn a lot from each other without having to reinvent the wheel each time they tackle a new subject. If you have suggestions, or are willing to help out, please contact Janet Raloff, who is the chairwoman of this effort. Her office number is 202-785-2255.



A number of universities and organizations have offered to assist us by providing us with work space, secretarial help, computer support and office supplies.

These include Boston University, the University of Maryland, West Virginia University, the University of Colorado and the Scientists' Institute for Public Information in New York City.

We are evaluating these offers but probably won't decide to permanently affiliate with any institution at this time. We think such an arrangement is premature. But it is possible we may decide upon some temporary affiliation. We certainly need secretarial support; we have grown

quickly and need help in putting out the newsletter, sending out mailings and other tasks. We need reliable volunteers. So, if you have the time, or know of some university or institution that could help us, please let me or one of the other SEJ officers know.

It is only through your ideas, energy and assistance that SEJ will grow into an effective organization that serves the needs of environmental journalists in the United States and around the world.

SEJournal

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Letters to the Editor

Certain EPA offices restrict press access

To the Editor:

I am writing mainly to say that I enjoyed your first issue a great deal. It is everything one would expect and hope to see from such a publication and more.

I'd just like to add one point. As a nine-year veteran environmental reporter, I think I'd like to note that regarding the story on EPA coverage, I haven't always found it as easy to get information as I'd like because in some EPA regional offices, there are hard and fast rules referring all calls to the public affairs office.

During the Reagan years, EPA San Francisco regional officials had that policy; today, the same policy is true for EPA's Dallas region. Often, the public affairs people will round up the appropriate technical person to get a comment, and you can later establish a relationship with that person, but equally often the "route all calls to public affairs" policy applies across the board.

What I find particularly peculiar about this is that the policy doesn't seem to apply at every EPA office. For instance, Denver EPA has never had this rule, and Washington EPA has had it off and on, at most. Even during the supposedly anti-environment, anti-press Reagan years, I could pick up the phone and call an EPA technical person in Washington, but would have to go through the public affairs office in San Francisco.

I'd be curious to hear if anyone else has had these problems and what they've

done about them, besides bitch to no good end.

Sincerely,
Tony Davis,
Albuquerque Tribune

The more things change, they stay the same

To the Editor:

The article by Tom Harris on the first and last American Press Institute seminar for environment specialists aroused a deep pang of nostalgia, and a feeling that Harris gets off too easily in his account of the 1970 rebellion.

Anyone familiar with Harris and his leprechaun smile knows that if there is any trouble, Harris will surely be in the middle of it.

But his account is right on: The seminar self-destructed from frustration over failing to address the issues in a way that would be helpful to reporters who knew the questions. But what were the answers? The conference speakers were so-called experts who described environmental problems very well, going so far as to quote from stories written by journalists in the audience. They were reading our own stuff to us!

We wanted a "big picture" view of the environment, and a chance to discuss story ideas and better ways to cover the beat. After all, back home, many of us were being asked to report on solutions to environmental dilemmas, not just the problems.

"You are a new breed of cat," Malcolm (Tinkerbell) Mallette told the 31

reporters and editors attending that seminar.

Many of us came to the seminar hoping to rid ourselves of the frustrations and anxieties of being asked daily how to solve Byzantine environmental problems, and how to report them fairly and accurately at a time when the integrity of the press was being challenged.

Here are a few issues that were debated at that seminar 20 years ago:

— Is environmental reporting a fad?

— Are we playing fair in identifying polluters?

— Are we playing up controversy or giving facts?

— Are reporters pressured from naming valued advertisers as polluters?

— Are we giving too little information in environmental coverage or too much?

— Are we oversimplifying the story or complicating it?

— How do environmental reporters keep up with the reading, and translate technical jargon?

Funny how some of those questions are just as pertinent today as they were 20 years ago.

And some of the answers today are no more clear-cut than they were 20 years ago. It still boils down to hard digging as the way for a reporter to reach truth and fair play in environmental coverage. As Harris reported, the upshot was that a delegation of us asked Mallette to cut the speaking time of seminar guests to less than the three

hours allotted to them so we would have more time to compare ideas about environmental problem-solving and techniques in environmental reporting. No dice.

But Mallette was right. We are a new breed of cat, then and now. We have special needs and maybe we learned the hard way that talking to each other is important.

But one of the things that really sticks out in my mind about that seminar 20 years ago is something Harris said during one of those typically frustrating debates in which one expert said the press was scaring the public with environmental news while another expert said there was a greater need for educating the public on environmental issues.

This is what Harris said:

"I'm going to write as much about the environment as I can right now. My readers want to know about it now. Twenty-four months from now they might not be interested. So, while the iron is hot, I'm going to give them as much as they are willing to read."

It was good advice 20 years ago, and it's good advice today.

Sincerely,
Casey Bukro
Chicago Tribune

Letters to the Editor Policy
Send letters to Kevin Carmody, c/o The Daily Progress, P.O. Box 9030, Charlottesville, VA 22906. Please keep letters brief. Letters are subject to editing for space considerations.

Convention...(From page 1)

wastes, global climate change, nuclear energy, endangered species and other environmental topics. Environmental journalists from around the country are also expected to take part in sessions designed to help journalists learn how to do their jobs better.

SEJ will conduct its annual business meeting at the conference and elect a board of directors and officers. NCAR has agreed to host a reception for SEJ's members and other social events are being planned.

"We hope that this conference will be one of the highlights of 1991 for environmental journalists from all media," said SEJ President Jim Detjen. "We expect that some of our speakers will make news dur-

ing the conference."

Journalists will also have a chance to interview numerous experts at research centers nearby. Some SEJ members may want to schedule their vacations in Boulder around the time of the conference. Colorado's aspens should be near their peak of autumn gold and Rocky Mountain National Park is less than one hour's drive away.

The Clarion Harvest House, a hotel adjacent to the college, has agreed to set aside a block of rooms at reduced rates for SEJ members. SEJ also expects to arrange discount airline tickets for SEJ members. Watch for more information in the spring issue of *SEJ Journal*.

East...(From page 1)

est in environmental journalism. Cost of the meal and program is \$25.

The nine reporters — from news organizations in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and the Eastern sector of reunified Germany — arrive in the United States on Jan. 20 for a two-month training visit and tour of the country's environmental hot spots. Their visit is being coordinated by the Environmental Health Center in Washington, and funded by the German Marshall Fund of the U.S.

A panel of American journalists will join the Europeans in a roundtable discussion of their experiences in covering the environment. But the program will allot plenty of time for questions from the audience.

The American eco-scribes on the panel will be:

● Philip Shabecoff, environment reporter, *New York Times* Washington Bureau;

● Betty Mitchell Gray, lead reporter on the trihalomethane contamination stories that won the *Washington (N.C.) Daily News* a 1990 Pulitzer Prize for Meritorious Public Service;

● Roberta Baskin, WJLA-TV consumer affairs reporter, who has extensively covered environmental hazards for her ABC affiliate in Washington; and

● Robert Engelman, national environmental and medical reporter for Scripps Howard News Service in Washington, D.C.

The roundtable discussion will be moderated by Bud Ward, director of the nonprofit Environmental Health Center, a division of the National Safety Council.

The National Press Club is in the National Press Building at 14th & F streets NW in Washington.

The deadline for mail-in reservations has passed, however walk-ins are welcome as space permits the day of the program at the National Press Club. The ticket price for walk-ins remains \$25.

To get on the walk-in reservation list, call Kevin Carmody at *The Daily Progress*, at (804) 978-7240 or Bud Ward at The Environmental Health Center, at (202) 293-2270. The deadline for phoning in wait list reservations is noon Monday, Jan. 21.

Meersman...(From page 1)

What drew me to the Minneapolis conference more than anything else was a question: To what extent should an environmental journalist be an advocate? With 11 years of experience in the field, I had my own ideas on the topic, but wanted to hear what others thought.

The speaker whose views most closely resembled mine was Charles Alexander, a senior editor for *Time* magazine, who told the conference that reporters should find out all the facts and talk to all good sources on all sides of an issue. Once the research is complete, Alexander said he advises his writers not to flinch from drawing conclusions after conflicting arguments have been presented.

"If the writer can't decide who's right and who's wrong, that's OK too," he said. "Any conclusions our articles reach are based on reporting, not on preconceived notions."

Alexander rejected the notion that a reporter's function is merely to serve as a stenographer, and affirmed that readers, viewers and listeners depend on journalists to bring some expertise to their reporting, including analysis and interpretation.

The debate about advocacy in journalism seems to center on this point. When should a reporter simply present opposing arguments, and when should he or she feel confident enough to take the story a step further...to suggest which of the claims seem to have more merit?

This is dangerous territory, as Turner Broadcasting System environmental editor Barbara Pyle conceded.

Environmental reporting "ain't easy," she told the conference. "You have to be part scientist, part anthropologist and part economist if you expect to cover complex issues reasonably and fairly."

Pyle doesn't use those reasons as an excuse to be conservative, however. On the contrary, she abandoned any pretense of being an "objective journalist" years ago and feels that global environmental problems are too enormous and urgent to continue receiving back-page and low-profile treatment.

In many ways the debate about advocacy journalism is missing the point,

however, when it focuses primarily on how stories are presented. Some reports warrant conclusions; others do not. In many cases it takes experience to tell the difference, but even writers with considerable knowledge about environmental issues may disagree about how far to take their stories.

A more important element than how stories are written is what stories are chosen. We are swamped with reports about landfills and trash incinerators and how citizens should recycle, but few writers

"What bothers me about environmental journalism is that it's becoming too predictable. It's not so much what we are covering, but what we are not reporting, that needs attention."

seem to be asking about the excess packaging that is a large part of the solid waste problem.

Editors assign the same old follow-up anniversary stories about Three-Mile Island (with the requisite local angle, of course), but who is reporting about the costs of de-commissioning all of those local nuclear plants within the next decade or two, to say nothing of the long-term disposal problems?

Rather than sending local television anchors to Alaska's Prince William Sound to do their self-promoting stand-ups with handfuls of gooey oil muck, why aren't we showing how pervasive petroleum products have become in our lives, or examining alternatives to them? Instead of revisiting the perennial topics of wetland loss and soil erosion, why aren't we analyzing government farm programs that reward farmers for cultivating marginal croplands?

And in coverage of the spotted owl controversy, why aren't we raising questions about the wisdom of our species-by-species orientation to wildlife management (as apposed to an ecological approach)?

What bothers me about environmental journalism is that it's becoming too predictable. It's not so much what we are covering, but what we are not reporting, that needs attention.

Yes, it's imperative that we jump on stories about pesticide spills, pollution violations, chemical fires and confidence

men in green marketing garb.

But what about those less dramatic but ultimately more important stories that are also out there: pollution prevention initiatives in Massachusetts and Oregon; global warming proposals in Vermont; comprehensive groundwater protection measures in Minnesota and Iowa; new advances in wind turbine technology and photovoltaics; environmental education pilot programs; the promises and pitfalls of biotechnology in agriculture?

Perhaps even more basic, what about the tension between resource development and consumerism, between exploitation and preservation, between long-range transportation policy and future energy supply, between energy use and environmental quality? These are not easy stories to sell an editor, much less to present to the public in compelling fashion. Reporters need to be diligent and creative to blend these questions into their total mix of stories.

Boston Globe environmental reporter and columnist Dianne Dumanoski told the Early Warnings conference that one problem with the environmental beat is that writers are faced with "slow, chronic degradation of natural systems." Earthquakes and oil spills cause much more excitement, she said, than stories about what might happen 30 years into the future.

In a different conference session, Ralph Nader noted that pollution is silent, cumulative destruction and violence, yet he said the media seem interested only when something is loud, visible and immediate. "The mainstream press tells environmentalists that we'll cover you if you break the law," he said, a practice that is driving citizens to more and more flamboyant actions.

Rolling Stone magazine contributing editor Mark Hertsgaard remarked at one point that "people in the press are always looking over their right shoulder for criticism, never over their left." And he argued that mass media in general are more sensitive to big business and big industry than to individual citizens, public interest groups or other minority concerns.

Nowhere was the influence of corpo-

Contributors to Gannett Center Journal try to define environmental journalism

rations more obvious than in what several speakers called the “greenwashing” and the “leveraged buy-out of Earth Day” last April.

Greenpeace media director Peter Dykstra said it was good that Earth Day stories provided information aimed at individual behavior changes, “but it also seemed as if companies have nothing to do with it. It was the biggest guilt trip I’ve ever seen. The public needs to know not just 50 simple things we can do, but 10 more complicated things corporations must do to protect the earth.”

Author and futurist Hazel Henderson said the mass media are simply too dependent on domestic advertising to be fair and balanced. The press, she added, has trouble identifying, let alone writing about, patterns as opposed to events.

“Never have we needed to look further ahead than now,” she warned, “yet journalism schools still teach bean-counting, tedious overload of details, and warn about leaving interpretation to others. The mass media put up their guard against advocacy, but this rubric is part of a mechanical world-view. It is a backward-looking process.”

I don’t accept all of the criticisms expressed at the conference, but I don’t dismiss them cavalierly either.

I agree with Mark Hertsgaard that the alternative press and advocacy journalists provide a major service because “they ventilate issues in ways that force the major press to consider them.”

I don’t believe that polluters should have the right to pollute until proven guilty, but I don’t think they should be tried in the media either — challenged, yes, but not convicted. I don’t believe that pollution control officials or health experts or natural resource managers always know enough or have the time to protect the environment adequately, but I don’t think the alternatives are to fire them all or to shut down the industries and businesses they are charged with regulating.

Whether or not this makes me an environmental advocate in my reporting, I don’t know. But is sure as hell makes for an interesting profession.

Tom Meersman reports on environment, energy and natural resources for Minnesota Public Radio in St. Paul.

Editor’s Note: Below are excerpts from the Gannett Center Journal’s issue on “Covering the Environment.”

Environment is becoming such a predominant issue that it will eventually permeate almost every beat. Every reporter, not just specialists, will occasionally be writing about the environment from some perspective. But while any good reporter can provide the facts, it will be the environmental reporter’s job to provide the context and background that readers and viewers need to understand the issues. If this does not happen, if the majority of environmental reporters continue their present practices, there is a good chance that the beat will once again become absorbed or “institutionalized” as part of what other reporters cover under politics, business or health, as it did in the late 1970s and early ’80s. It is up to environmental journalists to make sure that the beat goes on.

— *Sharon M. Friedman*
Chair, department of journalism,
Lehigh University and director of
its science and environmental
writing program.

But what about making an emotional commitment that calls for news reporters to be advocates?

As citizens of an environmentally besieged world, journalists should be introspective, as *New York Times* reporter Matthew L. Wald was in an Earth Day article this year. He observed that the story, running on two pages of newsprint, used “400 evergreen trees, mostly spruce, that covered about two acres.” There is room for editorials and for the reporter who recently suggested in *Editor & Publisher* that journalists use the backs of press releases as scrap paper and, better yet, complain to PR people when they seem to be wasting paper.

●●●

Put in other terms, environmental issues are too important for journalists not to live up to their pesky skepticism. They have to ask “so what” questions, even when doing so seems rank heresy. Even more than that, though, journalists have to

ask “then what” questions. What are the consequences, the connections, between the environment and the rest of our lives. The two are woven together but the templates that help reporters easily turn a local fire into a news story don’t exist for the global environment. Journalists have a lot of learning and a lot of explaining to do.

We need good science reporters who understand biodiversity and the nature of greenhouse gases. But if connections with everyday life are to be made, everyone should cover the environment. “Educate reporters on all beats, be they national security, finance or local politics to recognize the environmental aspects of their stories,” Mark Hertsgaard has suggested.

Many global environmental dilemmas remain as obscure as nighttime rustling in a tropical forest. In exploring them, journalists shouldn’t look for neat paths. As one learns in the Costa Rican jungle, this is the time to complicate the story.

— *John Maxwell Hamilton*
Former correspondent and
senior World Bank public
affairs official.

Though I go out of my way to present opposing views, I don’t confuse willful ignorance with real uncertainty, and I don’t equate the viewpoint of a perpetrator with that of a victim. The voice of the Plum Creek Timber Company just is not credible when it comes to old-growth forest harvesting rates. The nuclear power industry has earned no points for accuracy and many for deliberate deception. The pesticide industry is not an unbiased observer on pesticide safety. The people who defend the spotted owls, the safety of their neighborhoods and the health of their children are being selfish too, in a way, but theirs is a broader selfishness, speaking for much larger community interests than profit-making. They deserve more than equal media respect, space and time.

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I do my best to remember that the purpose of my writing is to search for truth and to empower others to do the same. It is not to judge, accuse or rob anyone of dignity or self-respect. Every one of my read-

Cover Story

ers, I keep telling myself, can be a key to the workability of the world.

— *Donella H. Meadows*
*Coordinator of International
Network of Resource Information*

Thus we enter the 1990s witnessing the unfolding of two interpretations of environmentalism: a media-framed, technically oriented, behavior-defined set of global issues and individual activities; and a less visible, more contentious grouping of rooted movements, networks and actions. While policy-makers, the media and even industry antagonists have granted semi-official status to the professional environmental groups, and often turn to them for the "environmental" point of view, this primary interpretation of environmentalism has largely ignored the growing, more populist undercurrent of the movement.

At the same time there has been a failure to distinguish among the professional groups, where differences of approach do occur, and even more significantly to see how the dynamism of the less visible movements has affected these groups.

— *Robert Gottlieb*
*Coordinator of environmental
analysis and policy area of UCLA
urban planning program.*

Let me first submit to you that, with respect to the environment, advocacy journalism is a misnomer. Think a minute: Who do you know who is against the environment? We can argue about the degree to which we should protect it, or we can argue about the ways in which to protect it, but we're not likely to find anyone who thinks we shouldn't make any effort to protect it. In a sense, therefore, you can't take an advocacy position on the environment.

●●●
The creed of a "balanced perspective" has been the hallmark of journalism for the past 30 years. But I wonder if it isn't time in the 1990s for a different kind of reporting, a different kind of presentation to the public, one that says simply: "This is what I say as a reporter. This is who I talked to. This is my perspective, and here are my suggestions for change. If you want another point of view, find it from another broadcaster or newspaper."

●●●
Another problem with "balance" is that it is often artificial, a matter of giving equal air time or newshole space to dissenting views of questionable merit. Global warming is perhaps the issue that has been most muddled by this practice. While there is rarely 100 percent certainty in science, an overwhelming majority of scientists

believe that the theory of global warming is essentially correct, some would say irrefutable. Regardless, journalists have felt compelled to seek out contrary points of view, in some cases calling on experts of doubtful expertise and motive. The net result has been confusion among the American public. Who is right? With a "balanced" report the audience is left with more questions than answers.

●●●
Advocacy does not mean Greenpeace is always right and the oil companies are always wrong. To begin with, we — the American public — are industry. I turn my lights on, I use my TV set, I drive my car, I use chemical products. Without "me" there is no industry. Without a sense of our circular responsibility in environmental degradation, advocacy won't work.

●●●
Ten years may come and go, and we may not be the victims of massive environmental disaster. But what if we are? What if "disaster" comes in a form that makes it hard to recognize: more cancers, fewer new medicines, escalating infant-mortality rates? Will we still want to "study the problem" some more? How long can we remain dispassionate?

I suggest taking out a journalistic insurance policy — information with a message, a message with a solution.

— *Teya Ryan*
*Senior producer of Turner
Broadcasting's "Network Earth"*

Journal...(From page 1)

environmental story, the Journal suggests, they must learn to question not only the value systems that guide these other fields, but as well make sense of the values that guide their own.

Such an exercise goes well beyond questions of advocacy and objectivity, and could lead to some of the most dramatic institutional changes in American journalism since the early 20th century.

Among the Journal writers arguing for a new kind of thinking on the environment are syndicated columnist Donella Meadows, World Bank economist Herman Daly, U.S. Senator Timothy Wirth and UCLA policy analyst Robert Gottlieb.

Several experienced environmental reporters contributed essays to "Covering the Environment" as well, among them Jim Detjen of the Philadelphia Inquirer;

John Maxwell Hamilton, formerly with the Christian Science Monitor and now with the World Bank; Teya Ryan of Turner Broadcasting; Amal Naj of the Wall Street Journal; and William Coughlin of the Washington (N.C.) Daily News.

Pulitzer Prize-winner Robert Cahn writes the Journal's book review of classic texts that have shaped the American environmental ethic.

Copies of the Journal can be obtained for \$5 each from: Gannett Center Journal, Columbia University, 2950 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10027.

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*Craig Llewellyn LaMay is editor of
the Gannett Center Journal, published by
the Gannett Center for Media Studies,
located at Columbia University in New
York.*

While I agree that the media's coverage of environmental issues is often sorely lacking, I don't think advocacy journalism is the answer. I believe that advocacy journalism, if it means one-sided and unfair reporting, is misguided and in the long run counterproductive. If major newspapers, magazines and broadcast stations adopt an advocacy philosophy, the media will be treading on dangerous ground that could alienate readers and viewers and cause them to stop trusting the media. Journalists who have spent their careers establishing reputations for fairness and accuracy could suddenly find their credibility evaporating.

●●●
I believe that traditional approaches of the American media — such as investigative reporting, agenda setting and mass

Cover Story

education — can do the job. It is important for the media to maintain their tradition of healthy skepticism, continuing to question government, corporations and even environmental groups.

●●●

I make an effort to tell readers about concrete steps they can take to solve environmental problems. For example, in a *Philadelphia Inquirer* magazine article on global climate change published on April 29, 1990, I listed steps readers could take to protect the ozone layer. These measures included buying fire extinguishers that don't contain halons, an ozone-depleting chemical, and making sure their cars' air conditioners are not leaking CFCs.

Is this advocacy? I don't think so. I am simply presenting readers, who have a hunger to take concrete actions, with practical tips or "news they can use." When I have written stories about scientific research on lightning or tornadoes, I have also included practical tips on how to avoid injury from these severe weather phenomena. Some might call this advocacy; I prefer to think of it as a public service.

— *Jim Detjen*

Philadelphia Inquirer reporter
specializing in science and
environmental issues.

Another problem with advocacy journalism is that it assumes the media's ability to judge scientific evidence. We as journalists simply aren't in a position to know with certainty whether the scientific evidence that forms the basis of many environmental concerns is valid. The scientists themselves don't know.

— *Amal Kumar Naj*

*Technology and environmental
issues writer for Wall Street
Journal.*

The media have an obligation of their own to educate the public on these issues [of toxic waste and minority victims]. In the past year articles by courageous journalists like Phil Shabecoff in the *New York Times* and Paul Ruffins in the *L.A. Times* and the *Washington Post* have begun to appear. Yet the majority of the public discussion of this subject has taken place in regional journals and newsletters or in the publications coming out of the social justice and civil rights communities such as

the *New Age Journal*, the *Utne Reader* or *Race, Poverty and the Environment*. The mainstream media should take a lesson from their more progressive brethren. It is the job of journalists and the media to report on items and issues of importance and concern to all of us, not just those special interests that can afford to pay for the attention. It is also the responsibility of the media to encourage justice in our society regardless of the color of victims. I contend that the American media have failed in this responsibility.

— *Gerry Stover*

*Executive director,
Environmental Consortium for
Minority Outreach in
Washington, D.C.*

My own view is that an environmental story is no different, no more or less important, than any other story a newspaper covers that affects its readers. A corrupt judge, a high infant-mortality rate, a tornado — aren't they all part of a town's environment? Defining the limits of an environmental story is about as easy as distinguishing between so-called investigative reporting and plain old-fashioned, ask-the-awkward-questions reporting that has always been practiced on good newspapers.

●●●

Leave the crusading to the Knights Templar. You'd be better off if you keep in mind that your job is reporting, not crusading. As *Newsweek* said recently in regard to the S&L crisis, "In the end, voters have their own responsibility. The press can lead the horse to water. The horse has to decide whether to drink."

— *William J. Coughlin*

*Editor, Washington (N.C.) Daily
News.*

...[F]urther growth has become destructive of community, the environment and the common good. If the media could help economists and politicians see that, or at least to entertain the possibility that such a thing might be true, they will have rendered a service far greater than all the reporting of statistics on GNP growth, Dow Jones indexes and junk bond prices from now until the end of time.

— *Herman E. Daly*

Senior economist, World Bank.

Science

By
STEVE NASH **Angles**

A review of story ideas and highlights
from scientific journals and symposia.

If all the folks protecting, salvaging, and studying the environment in your state had all the money they needed, they still couldn't do the job. Scientists and engineers with the right expertise are scarce, and getting scarcer.

Item: Environmental engineering enrollments plummeted 30 percent during the last 10 years, despite an uptick last year (*The Atlantic*, 10/90). The EPA has a hard time finding and keeping engineers to monitor Superfund clean-up projects.

Item: A National Science Foundation survey late last year found that taxonomists are scarce and getting scarcer. They are often vital in discovering and distinguishing among rare species. Other specialties — ornithology, for example — are also said to be declining, to the detriment of environmental research and planning. *The Scientist*, 10/16/89, *Environment* 4/89.

Item: According to the 2/1/90 *Los Angeles Times*, "The abysmal state of science education has been chronicled by more than 300 studies in recent years." In one, the NSF predicts a shortfall of 560,000 scientists and engineers by the year 2010. See also *Science*, 5/27/90.

You could check, for a story and for sources: some campuses have new environmental courses/programs in the sciences, in response to new student and faculty interest. The Student Environmental Action Coalition's October meeting drew some 6,500 students to Illinois to talk about boycotts, demonstrations, corporate culpa.

Or you might ask your local academics about what David Orr of Conservation Biology calls "the most fundamental issue facing the biological sciences."

Should we teach and practice science that stresses management and manipulation of Earth, or science that stresses co-evolution—learning to live within natural systems?

The answer will have a direct impact on scientific work on environmental problems.

(Continued on page 14)

Features

Southern Journalism Awards, NNA contest results announced

Major journalism contests announcing winners this fall in environment or energy reporting categories included the Southern Journalism Awards and the National Newspaper Association's Better Newspaper Contest.

In the Southern Journalism Awards, the first place awards for environmental reporting went, by circulation size, to James O'Byrne of the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*; Susan Traylor and Marylin Mitchell of the *Shreveport Times*; and Gary Craig and Kevin Carmody of the *Potomac News*, Woodbridge, Va.

The Southern Journalism Awards are sponsored by the Institute for Southern Studies, a nonprofit research center in Durham, N.C., and judging is coordinated by the University of North Carolina School of Journalism. Awards also are given for investigative and feature reporting.

The winning entries, which come from the 13-state region, will be excerpted in the Winter 1990 issue of *Southern Exposure*.

The National Newspaper Association awarded first place for Best Coverage of Environmental News to Sandra Cline and Laura Novello Miller of the *Zionsville (Ind.) Times Sentinel*, while the Award for Best Coverage of Energy went to Perry Clark of the *Petoskey (Mich.) News-Review*.

The contest sponsored by the 105-year-old NAA is open to weekly and daily newspapers of all circulation size, although the bulk of entries come from weekly and small- to medium-size daily newspapers.

The contest results, with judges comments were available:

SOUTHERN JOURNALISM AWARDS Environmental Reporting

Circulation 100,000-plus

● **First Prize** — James O'Byrne, *New Orleans Times-Picayune*. "For his disturbing and compelling series on the environmental damage unleashed by the lack of regulation of Louisiana's oil industry — and the high cost of regulators looking the other way."

● **Second Prize** — Robert McClure, *Fort Lauderdale News/Sun Sentinel*. "For his in-depth and highly effective coverage of how the Everglades are being ruined by the sugar industry and the state's little known oil industry."

● **Third Prize** — Beverly Keneagy and Michael Nyenhuis of the *Florida Times-Union*. "For their eye-opening series on the alarming

rate of destruction of the nation's wetlands by farmers, timber companies and developers."

Circulation 30,000 to 100,000

● **First Prize** — Susan Traylor and Marylin Mitchell, *Shreveport Times*. "For their probing and perceptive special section exploring how the industries that provide incomes to thousands are the same industries that have made Louisiana's environment the most polluted in the nation."

● **Second Prize** — Bob Anderson, Steve Culpepper and Mike Dunne, *Baton Rouge Morning Advocate*. "For their alarming series on the hidden dangers to public health and the environment that continue to surface from Louisiana's abandoned waste sites."

● **Third Prize** — Janet Olson, *Wililmington (N.C.) Morning Star*. "For giving coastal North Carolina readers a close-up view of the Chesapeake Bay's problems, the plight of the watermen of Maryland's Eastern Shore, and the belated action being taken to reverse the Bay's demise."

Circulation below 30,000

● **First Prize** — Gary Craig and Kevin Carmody, *Potomac News*, Woodbridge, Va. "For their aggressive and detailed look at the dangers of electromagnetic pulse testing in densely populated Prince William County, Virginia, and the U.S. Army's efforts to continue the potentially disastrous experiments."

● **Second Prize** — Brent Childers, *Lenoir (N.C.) News-Topic*. "For his steadfast and informative coverage of the Caldwell Systems Hazardous Waste Incinerator, including following allegations of employee health problems through a maze of litigation and citizen demands for a thorough investigation of the site."

● **Third Prize** — Peter Shinkle, *Baton Rouge States-Item*. "For his insightful portrait of the rural Louisiana town of Reserve, which is under siege from companies wanting to incinerate medical wastes there."

Honorable Mention Citations

● Cyril T. Zaneski, *Virginian Pilot/Ledger Star*. "For his coverage of the environmental crisis facing the plant and animal life of the Chesapeake Bay, as well as the dying breed of people who once made a living harvesting the bay's oysters."

● Don Johnson and Bobbi Ridlehoover, the *Arkansas Democrat*. "For their 'Pollution for Profit' series, which not only examined the pollution of Arkansas' waterways by powerful paper companies, but also detailed the companies' finances and the pro-industry bias apparent in state government."

● Paul J. Nyden, the *Charleston Gazette*. "For his continuous coverage of the power and abuses of the coal mining industry, and its impact on the lives of West Virginians and their communities."

NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ASSOC. BETTER NEWSPAPER CONTEST

Environmental Reporting

● **First Place** — Sandra Cline and Laura Novello Miller, *Zionsville (Ind.) Times Sentinel*. "Top-notch coverage of toxic spill in text, photos, graphics and editorial cartoons...all accomplished with a staff of two reporters." Chemicals from a superfund site storage tank, damaged by vandals, flowed into a stream that is a main water supply for Indianapolis.

● **Second Place** - Barry Drue and Dave Mataczynski, *L'Anse (Mich.) Sentinel*. For "ongoing coverage of the bleach paper plant handled in a professional manner despite threats against the paper."

● **Third Place** — Bob Bjoin, the *Harlan (Iowa) News-Advertiser*. "Complete and comprehensive" coverage of attempts by a medical waste incinerator firm to build an incinerator in Harlan, including stories on the operational history of the firm's first incinerator in Wisconsin.

● **Honorable Mention** — Bob Mercer, *Aberdeen (S.D.) American News*. For overview of threats faced by bald and golden eagles from pesticides and hydro-electric power plant wires. Project began with coverage of a record die-off of eagles, later traced to the eagles' consumption of waterfowl contaminated by the pesticide Thimet.

Energy Reporting

● **First Place** — Perry Clark, *Petoskey (Mich.) News Review*. For his "excellent explanation" of advanced nuclear reactor designs and their viability. The "easy-to-follow" stories also reviewed the feasibility of plans for constructing a modular, gas-cooled reactor at the site of a decommissioned reactor - specifically the aging Big Rock Point nuclear plant in Northwest Michigan.

● **Second Place** — Lisa Griem, the *Greeley (Colo.) Tribune*. For "very readable accounts" of the shut-down of the Fort St. Vrain nuclear power plant, the decommissioning process and the possible consequences for the local economy.

● **Third Place** — Bettina Edelstein, the *Litchfield County Times*, New Milford, Conn. For "well organized, in-depth" coverage of a natural gas pipeline proposed from Canada to

(Continued on page 14)

Ethical dilemmas dogged photographer on wildlife shoot

By PAT DAVISON

As a relative newcomer to the newspaper business, I keep encountering ethical dilemmas. Some of the toughest came while I was working on a project about the commercialization of wildlife.

Because I was on the road for most of the project, the only face-to-face discussions were with the reporter. Part of the time I was alone. Phone conversations with my photo editor were superficial. I felt I was on my own.

In the first part of the project I needed to document game ranchers cutting growing antler from live elk. It's a bloody process, and most ranchers were reluctant to allow me to photograph. I was repeatedly asked, "What kind of story are you doing, anyway?"

In the beginning I wrestled with being objective—and being revolted. As I learned more about the business of game farming I felt more confident in dealing with reluctant farmers. Soon we began telling them we were just doing a story about the business, and I was only going to photograph the truth.

This worked well at first. We found two farmers willing to let us document their operations in Alberta, Canada. I photographed in a very matter-of-fact way. I felt the photos were very graphic and I needed to maintain objectivity if I could.

The second part of the project held another ethical problem. It concerned an area in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico that was predominantly Hispanic and impoverished. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had conducted a two-and-a-half-year undercover poaching sting that produced indictments against 57 people. The service contended they were poaching for profit. The people said they were entrapped.

To illustrate the story I chose to show the people, their lifestyle and culture and evidence seized in the sting. I needed to gain access to both, and all parties concerned suspected me of wanting to slant the story.

I didn't know who was in the right. My first move was to talk to a local priest, a



well-known advocate for the people. I told him I wanted to tell both sides of the story and asked his help with the people. He gave it, though somewhat reluctantly, and I had an in with one of the men indicted in the sting. This did not guarantee success, however. The man agreed to let me photograph him only with his attorney present. This turned out to be workable, as his attorney was scheduled to visit and go over the case with him and his family that weekend.

When he arrived I faced a much more stringent scrutiny of my objectives. At this point, I still felt that I didn't know enough about the story to attempt to judge who was right, the government or the people. I was honest with the attorney and told him basically what I wanted to do. I wanted to show the lifestyle of the people, I said. He was satisfied and became more cooperative than his client. The latter remained suspicious, and continued to try to catch me in lies.

The entire experience was like a game of cat and mouse. All the time I felt I was walking a thin line between honesty and deception. I really didn't know if I was doing the right thing. But I was telling the story. One basic rule I made for myself served me well. I never lied to a subject.

After word got out in the tight-knit community that I had been allowed access by one family, my job became easier. I was able to establish rapport with one man who had pleaded guilty to the charges and had been sentenced to 14 months in federal prison. I spent time with him and his family and photographed them freely, except for

his father.

The old man, who also had been indicted in the sting, felt he could no longer trust anyone. I felt a little guilty even trying to win his trust because I knew there was a good chance he'd view our story negatively. I decided not to press the issue and left.

After leaving the valley where the undercover operation had occurred, I had to try to photograph the evidence seized in the raid. The federal people proved even tougher to deal with than the people they'd indicted.

First I had to obtain permission from the judges and prosecutors. This was time-consuming, but possible. Next I had to convince the Fish and Wildlife people involved in the operation that they should talk to me. They had already been the target of negative press on the issue, and they weren't cooperative.

Again, I felt that I was on the thin line. If told them that we were on their side, I would have been lying to them. If I didn't at least make them feel we were on their side, they wouldn't talk to me.

Ultimately, I just hounded them until they gave in. I repeatedly assured them the story was going to be impartial and that we would only tell the truth. In the back of my mind, however, I knew that photos can be anything but impartial, especially when edited and laid out to reflect a viewpoint.

The third part of the project involved hunting and the lust for record-book trophies. I started out attempting to be impartial, but events soon made that impossible.

Features

We were in the most expensive trophy-elk hunting camp in the United States. The organizer said we were the first journalists ever allowed in, despite many requests. He said he didn't know why he decided to let us come, unless it was just that my phone calls were so persistent.

All the hunters were wealthy and belonged to a social set I don't often mingle with. There was a publisher, a manufacturer, an attorney, an automobile dealer and a brain surgeon, among others. I did my best to fit in.

The second night of camp disgusted me so much it changed the way I saw the story. After dinner the hunters and guides were loafing around the fire, drinking beer and swapping stories. One of the guides caught a rat in the camp kitchen and brought it out in a bag to release it. A hunter asked to see the rat, then promptly tossed it into the fire. The terrified animal ran out of the fire, saw the humans, then ran back into it in a vain attempt to escape. Soon it crawled out again, flesh smoldering.

Most of the hunters found the animal's death by fire uproariously funny. Their killer instincts aroused, the macho tales began. The brain surgeon related some of the more gruesome cases he had encountered. Another hunter bragged about shooting so many groundhogs one long day he had to cool the barrel of his rifle by pouring his beer over it.

I went to bed disgusted. I felt there was no way I could be objective, and decided to shoot the story the way I felt it. With a point of view.

As it turned out, I think this part of the project produced the best photos.

My point in all this is that it is not easy to gain access to sensitive situations without misrepresenting yourself or being unfair to the subjects. In my case, all I could do was know as much about the situation as possible and make sure I didn't lie. This can be a dangerous way to operate.

When working closer to home I talk to colleagues and editors more. If I get confused about how to handle something, I get help. I feel fortunate to have worked with a very tight, cooperative staff.

All of this shows the need for greater communication on ethical issues. There is no comprehensive written guide to photojournalism ethics, and one result of that is that a photographer's ethical decisions are

made solely on the basis of what he or she thinks is right. What is right for one individual may change due to varying working environments and different pressures like contests and deadlines.

As our industry changes, our credibility to our readers will be essential to our survival. Ethical integrity needs to be a top priority for all journalists. Without it, our readership will vanish.

Pat Davison was a staff photographer for the Albuquerque Tribune when he shot the project he describes, which won the 1990 Sigma Delta Chi Award for photography. In August he moved to the Pittsburgh Press. This essay first appeared in longer form in a publication of the National Press Photographers Association.

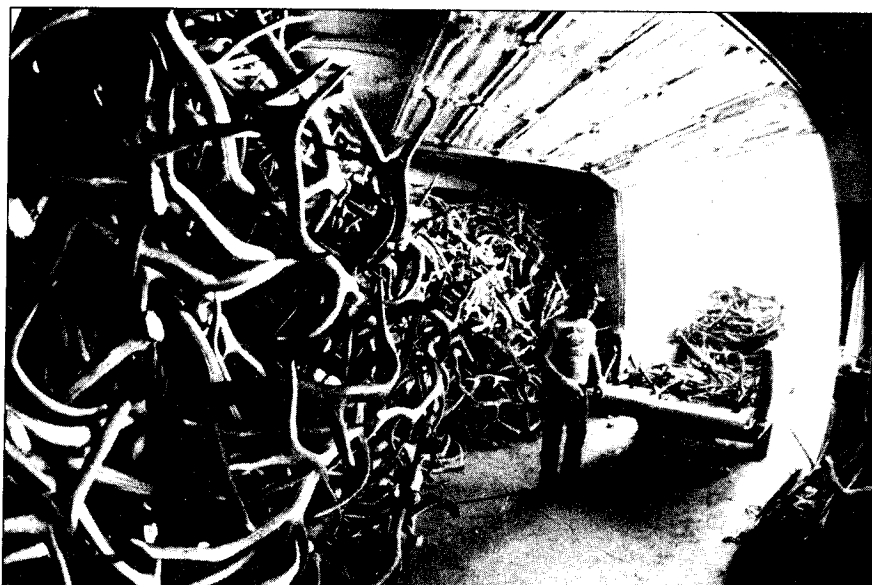


Opposite page: Garth Isbell arrives in the pasture of the Alpine Ranch in Livingston, Mont., where hunters pay thousands of dollars to kill elk like this one.

Above: A frozen bobcat, now in a plastic evidence bag in Denver, is one of many small- and big-game animals hunted or sold illegally in Colorado's San Luis Valley.

Left: Mike Anderson unloads elk antler at a warehouse in Ennis, Mont. Buyers include Asian businessmen who market processed antler for its supposed medicinal qualities.

Photos by Pat Davison



Covering: Assignments that can be hazardous to your health

By RAE TYSON

On a chilly February morning, cameraman Greg Burnett stood outside the Department of Energy's nuclear materials plant in rural Ross, Ohio. Loaded with his usual assortment of electronic paraphernalia, Burnett was there to tape footage for a segment called "Nuclear Towns" to be aired on the syndicated "USA Today on TV."

But Burnett, concerned about radiation exposure, refused to go through the gate. "I don't think any person in his right mind would have gone in," he says now.

Hours earlier, the Environmental Protection Agency had barred its personnel from the weapons plant, claiming it was unhealthy for its staff. A routine urinalysis showed abnormal radiation levels among EPA workers who periodically visited the nuclear complex. A short time later, Cincinnati Bell made a similar announcement: its repair crews would stay away unless there was an emergency.

"When I heard EPA wasn't going in, I had concerns for my own health," says Burnett, now a Chicago-based freelance photographer.

Burnett is one of many reporters and photographers who have begun to question the risks of on-the-job exposure to toxic chemicals and radioactivity. Others say careless, overzealous or uninformed reporters face needless risks because they don't take necessary precautions while covering environmental issues.

"We don't think about this as combat reporting, but, in a way, it is," says Casey Bukro, an environmental reporter for the *Chicago Tribune*. Moreover, many veteran environmental reporters now wonder if past assignments may have led to chemical or radiation exposure that could cause health problems later in life. "It's certainly something I think about a lot," says Jock Ferguson, an investigative reporter at the *Toronto Globe and Mail*.

Despite growing concern, many news organizations lack specific policies for protecting employees or for dealing with staffers who refuse an assignment for health reasons. "I have never known a paper or a newsman exposed to any policy," says

Reporters' Toolbox

Paul MacClennan, veteran environmental reporter for the *Buffalo News*.

"In many cases, it is something media management is totally unaware of," says Ferguson.

Since the first Earth Day 20 years ago, environmental coverage has become a priority beat for many news organizations. From acid rain to Superfund, reporters are routinely asked to tackle a myriad of complex scientific, social and technical environmental issues. Despite precautions, those assignments can sometimes lead to chemical or radiation exposure.

Government-financed evacuations brought scores of reporters to dioxin-tainted neighborhoods in Times Beach, Missouri, and Love Canal, New York. Nuclear accidents at Chernobyl and Three Mile Island saw news organizations competing for the

Reporters' Toolbox

Is a regular feature of SEJournal, in which experienced reporters provide tips on gathering news about environmental issues.

most thorough coverage. More recently a major oil spill brought hundreds of reporters and photographers to remote Valdez, Alaska.

Train derailments and tank truck accidents routinely attract scores of reporters and photographers, many of them unaware or unconcerned about any possible danger. "Most of the time you concentrate on getting close to get good pictures," says Veronica McQuillan, a general assignment reporter at WBNG-TV in Binghamton, New York.

"I think we are all a little naive when it comes to things like this," says Jim Ackerman, a television producer who accompanied Burnett to the Ohio nuclear plant. Horror stories abound among veteran reporters. Chicago's Bukro recalls an assignment on the status of clean-up efforts in the dioxin-laden town of Times Beach. As he trudged through the evacuated town with government soil testing experts, Bukro got mud on his shoes and dust on his clothing. Later the same day, Bukro casually mentioned his experiences to a dioxin expert, who told him to throw away his clothing and shoes before he went home. Dioxin, an unwanted chemical byproduct, is considered one of the most dangerous substances

ever produced. "He told me I had probably done something foolish," Bukro recalls. "He told me I could have tracked that stuff into my house and exposed my wife and children to a very harmful substance."

Ferguson recalls a visit to a nuclear fuels plant near Buffalo. When his portable geiger counter registered abnormal radiation levels Ferguson says, "I got scared out of my mind."

Ferguson had a similar scare while touring an asbestos mine in northern Ontario. Certain forms of asbestos have been conclusively linked with a variety of lung ailments, including cancer. "I knew full well we were breathing substantial amounts of asbestos fibers," says Ferguson.

San Bernardino (Calif.) Sun reporter Sam Atwood was with environmental authorities when they raided an illegal chemical dump site in Fontana, Calif. A dozen barrels of leaking chemicals were located at the site. "When you see guys all dressed up in white suits handling the stuff," recalls Atwood, "and you are standing there in your shirt and tie — well, it gives you pause."

Buffalo's MacClennan has covered the Love Canal controversy in nearby Niagara Falls, N.Y., since it first erupted in 1977. Though he frequently visits chemical dumps in western New York, MacClennan's biggest fears came during a visit to a hazardous chemical dump in Tampa, where he was allowed near a backhoe excavating soil laced with polychlorinated biphenyls. None of the state or federal clean-up experts suggested he leave the area or wear protective clothing.

Despite horror stories from the trenches, some dismiss the dangers facing environmental reporters. "The risk is pretty slim," insists Robert Logan, director of the Science Journalism Center at the University of Missouri.

Last summer Doug Draper, environmental writer at the *St. Catharines (Ontario) Standard*, went on a media tour of a notorious dump site in Smithville, Ontario. Though reporters were offered protective clothing, "most of the media thought it was a joke," Draper says. "I didn't really feel personally that I was at any risk."

At the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, coverage of the Fernald weapons plant is primarily the responsibility of reporter Maryn (M.A.J.) McKenna. Although initially she

Reporters' Toolbox

was routinely administered urine tests (a Department of Energy requirement) McKenna does not consider the assignment particularly dangerous. "I'm much more concerned about going into a bad neighborhood," says McKenna.

For reporters and experts who acknowledge potential hazards, there are clear distinctions about the relative risk.

Covering hazardous materials incidents, including train derailments or truck accidents, can be very dangerous if toxic vapors are released. Hazardous materials specialists warn that a sudden wind shift can endanger nearby spectators.

Experts say overzealous reporters and photographers often exacerbate the risk by getting closer to the scene than they should. "We try to set a perimeter and they often try to wrangle their way in anyway," says Richard Cahill, a public affairs specialist in the EPA's New York regional office.

Fires can be especially risky when the contents of the burning structure are uncertain. In Binghamton, New York, a WBNG-TV cameraman was sent to cover a seemingly minor electrical fire in the basement of a state office building.

Hours later, health experts discovered that the transformer was filled with cancer-causing PCBs.

The smoldering fire had induced a chemical reaction, turning the PCBs into a toxic, dioxin-laden soot that covered every nook of the 18-story building. Nine years later, the building is still closed.

"Everyone just thought it was a simple fire at the time," says WBNG reporter Veronica McQuillan.

Incidents involving radiation are harder to judge, experts say. At many of the Department of Energy's nuclear plants, reporters access is controlled and urine tests regularly required. But other unrestricted sites offer greater risk to reporters.

Radiation "is something you really have to watch out for because you can't see

it, hear it or smell it," says Chicago's Bukro, "but you are going to be irradiated."

For many news veterans, coverage of Pennsylvania's Three Mile Island nuclear accident in 1979 was a turning point in their attitude toward occupational risks, given the uncertainty about the amount of radiation exposure.

Now, a decade after the incident, reporters who covered it are wondering about assurances that radioactivity never reached hazardous levels.

"It makes you wonder," says Chet Czarniak, former Harrisburg bureau chief

there was a connection" between TMI and his cancer, says John Stacks, *Time's* chief of correspondents.

Stoler's widow, Judith, says he was an aggressive reporter who often visited hazardous sites. One time, she recalls his shoes disintegrating after a visit to a toxic chemical dump. "He always had to get the closest; be there the longest," she says.

Stoler also campaigned for stricter policies to protect reporters after he became ill. But Stacks says that neither *Time* nor any other magazine he knows of has adopted a strict policy for staff members.

Some say newspapers and radio and television stations should develop policies for coverage of any potentially risky situation, not just environmental events. "I think there should be a general policy, not just for environmental" issues, says Columbia professor Ross.

Yet others disagree on the need for written guidelines. "Prudence should dic-

tate," says *Buffalo News* Editor Murray Light.

Uniformly, most organizations say they would not discipline a reporter who refused an assignment for safety reasons.

"You can refuse any assignment if there is a demonstrated and manifest hazard," says Eisen, director of research and information for the Newspaper Guild.

In the Ohio case, cameraman Burnett was not disciplined for refusing to enter the nuclear weapons plant. "I had to totally rethink my story, but I didn't fight [Burnett] on it," says producer Ackerman. "I decided it was his prerogative."

Ackerman also says the incident with Burnett forced him to confront the issue for the first time. Months after the assignment in Ohio, Ackerman reaffirmed Burnett's decision, despite the uncertainties over the risks. "Why take a chance for a five-minute news story? It's not worth it."

Rae Tyson covers the environment for USA Today. This article originally appeared in Washington Journalism Review.

Planning for risks on the environmental beat

Experts have plenty of advice for news organizations and reporters who cover environmental issues:

- Consider training programs or seminars for newsroom personnel most likely to be involved in environmental coverage. Local fire departments may be willing to make workshop arrangements.

- Write to the Chemical Manufacturers Association at 2501 M St. NW, Washington, D.C., 20037 for a free brochure entitled "Hazardous Materials Emergency: Your Need to Know." The CMA also has a toll-free number for information on specific chemicals: 1-800-262-8200.

- Carry coveralls, boots, safety glasses and a hard hat in your car. Do not buy a respirator. "People sometimes misunderstand what the gear can do for you and if an editor thinks you are protected he (or she) may push you to the edge of safety," says William Beranek Jr., director of the environmental program at the Indianapolis Center for Advanced Research.

- If you regularly visit nuclear sites, consider buying a dosimeter, which measures radiation exposure. Reporters should ask news organizations to pay for annual physical examination. Some reporters even advocate special insurance coverage. If assigned to cover a fire, never enter a burning building for any reason. If you do cover a hazardous materials incident, find out which way the wind is blowing and stay upwind. "It is not always possible to tell from your senses if you are being harmed," says Beranek.

for Gannett News Service. "We stood there watching these white puffs of white clouds belch out of the reactor buildings. I recall someone saying there was some radioactive material in those clouds. That tended to piss me off," says Czarniak.

Tony Mauro, who helped Czarniak with Gannett's TMI coverage, contracted Hodgkins Disease in 1985. Mauro now wonders if his illness, which is now in remission, was caused by that assignment.

The question has also been raised by two researchers, former TMI residents Norman and Marjorie Aamodt, who recently announced that they are launching a health study of journalists who covered TMI. Since 1985, the Aamodts say three reporters covering TMI — Jack Pollard of the Lancaster, Pennsylvania, *New Era*; Peter Stoler of *Time* magazine; and Paul Cowan of the *Village Voice* — have died of cancer. Though as many as 400 reporters covered TMI, "this incidence [of cancer] appears too high," the Aamodts say.

Prior to Stoler's death in 1988, "he several times voiced to me the suspicion

Nash...(From page 8)

Orr's verdict: "We simply can't know enough to attempt to manage Earth, period." See CB 3/90; upcoming issue to include rebuttals.

Tips for this column should be sent to Steve Nash, 10006 Stonemill Rd., Richmond, VA 23233. Nash is a freelance journalist, and teaches environmental reporting at the University of Richmond.

Awards...(From page 9)

Long Island, N.Y. After stories appeared about the environmental damage likely to pristine areas along the originally proposed path, the pipeline route was changed.

● **Honorable Mention** — Susanna Graham, *Orleans Oracle*, South Yarmouth, Mass. For coverage of a citizen revolt against a rate hike proposed by Commonwealth Edison.

● **Honorable Mention** — Peggy Hale and Margaret A. Ontl, *Hudson (Wis.) Star-Observer*. For their series about the effectiveness of local recycling efforts and technological advances in the field.

Deadlines for major contests rapidly approaching

Here is a list of some of the journalism contests for environmental reporting, or with environment reporting categories:

● **Thomas L. Stokes Award** — \$2,000 for best reporting, analysis or commentary in a daily newspaper on "the development, use, and conservation of energy resources; the protection of the environment, or other conservation and natural-resource issues." \$25 entry fee. Contact: Stokes Award, Washington Journalism Center, 2600 Virginia Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037. Deadline: Feb. 1

● **Edward J. Meeman Awards** — Total of \$4,000 in awards for best newspaper stories about the environment. Contact: Mary Lou Marusin, executive director, Scripps Howard Foundation, 1100 Central Trust Tower, Cincinnati, OH 45202. Phone: 513-977-3035. Deadline: Feb. 4.

● **National Better Newspaper Contest** — Special categories for environmental and energy reporting. Contact: National Newspaper Association, 1627 K St., N.W., Suite 400, Washington, D.C. Phone: 202-466-7200. Deadline: March 31.

● **Science-in-Society Journalism**

Computer data-base provides quick access to environmental articles

The Meeman Archive, a comprehensive collection of award-winning articles on the environment, became available online for the first time in mid-December at all University of Michigan libraries. The new service will provide reporters, and other interested parties, with quick and easy access to environmental articles gathered since 1981.

The system is now accessible by computer modem by researchers affiliated with the University. But a

key-word search service is available by telephone to the general public, providing both abstracts and full copies of articles at 5¢ per page.

The Archive was founded in 1982 with the support of the Scripps-Howard Foundation. The goal envisioned for the Archive was to preserve and make acces-

sible to the public outstanding journalism concerning conservation, natural resources, and the environment. The Archive now houses a file of articles dating back to 1981.

The Meeman Archive obtains the majority of its articles from two separate national journalism contests: the Meeman Awards sponsored by Scripps-Howard, and the Stokes Award sponsored by the Washington Journalism Center. The articles are assigned a series of keywords by the

Archives staff and cataloged by reference number along with an abstract of the report.

A computer search can be done on the bibliographical information, the keywords, and the abstracts of the articles. The Archive can run searches on anywhere from one to three keywords, and the searches can also be done on one specific state or geographic region worldwide.

The Archive is a useful secondary research source. The articles in the Archive are often issue specific and concentrated on one geographic region, therefore, offering real case examples of environmental issues. Article topics range from stories on Greenpeace's actions in the Antarctic to stories on individual farmers and their use of pesticides.

During the past seven years the Archive has expanded and taken on a few more tasks. Besides preserving the articles from the Meeman and Stokes Awards, the Archive has a local file on all Ann Arbor environmental news articles.

The Archive also has organized environmental conferences at the University of Michigan in order to draw people's attention to environmental issues and to increase environmental awareness. The Archive's next conference will take place this Spring, and will be organized jointly with the School of Journalism.

Additional information on the databases can be obtained by contacting The Meeman Archive, School of Natural Resources, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109, (313) 763-5327.

The Meeman Archive
University of Michigan
(313) 763-5327

B. To be completed by applicants for active or associate membership.

IS YOUR EMPLOYER OR ORGANIZATION SUPPORTED BY OR AFFILIATED WITH ANY ORGANIZATION OR MOVEMENT NOT PRINCIPALLY IN THE BUSINESS OF CONVEYING NEWS TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC? YES NO IF YES, WHAT ORGANIZATION OR MOVEMENT? _____

IS YOUR ORGANIZATION SUPPORTED BY ADVERTISING _____, PAID SUBSCRIPTIONS _____, MEMBERSHIP DUES _____, OR OTHER _____? IF OTHER, PLEASE SPECIFY _____

C. To be completed by applicants for associate membership.

HOW WOULD YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN THE SOCIETY OF ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISTS CONTRIBUTE TO ATTAINMENT OF THE SOCIETY'S GOALS (i.e. ENHANCING THE QUALITY & ACCURACY OF ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING)? _____

D. To be completed by all applicants.

I HEREBY APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE SOCIETY OF ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISTS. I UNDERSTAND THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS RETAINS SOLE AUTHORITY IN DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP IN ANY CATEGORY.

Signature

Date

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO SHOULD BE A MEMBER OF SEJ? WE'LL SEND THEM DETAILS AND AN APPLICATION:

NAME _____ ORGANIZATION _____

ADDRESS _____

Street

City

State

Zip

FOR USE ONLY BY SEJ MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE OR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Date received _____ Application complete _____ Form of payment _____

Date reviewed by committee _____ Recommendation _____

Class of membership granted / date of action _____

Effective date of membership: January 1, 19__ April 1, 19__ July 1, 19__ October 1, 19__

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

SEJ

Society of Environmental Journalists

1090 Vermont Ave., N.W., Suite 1000, Washington, D.C. 20005 • Phone: (202) 408-2725

Instructions:

1. Fill out application form as completely as possible. Attach additional pages if necessary.
2. You may attach a current resume or brief biography. Freelance journalists should attach three samples of their work.
3. Do NOT attach payment for dues. If accepted for membership, you will be billed for \$30 annual dues.
4. Mail to: Society of Environmental Journalists, 1090 Vermont Ave., N.W., Suite 1000, Washington, D.C. 20005.
5. Applicants will be notified in writing of the membership status granted.

A. To be completed by all applicants.

NAME _____ HOME PHONE _____

HOME ADDRESS _____
Street City State Zip

EMPLOYER _____ TITLE _____

WORK ADDRESS _____
Street City State Zip

WORK PHONE _____ FAX _____

(Note: Students applying for Academic Membership should provide address and phone during school year, and date of graduation)

DESCRIBE DUTIES (STUDENTS MAY DESCRIBE GOALS): _____

HOW LONG IN CURRENT POSITION? IF LESS THAN 2 YEARS, SUMMARIZE WORK HISTORY & DUTIES FOR THAT PERIOD: _____

AREA OF EMPLOYMENT: Newspaper Magazine Newsletter News Service Television News Radio News
Freelancer Educator Student Other _____

HAVE YOU DONE ANY FREELANCE OR SIMILAR WORK DURING THE PAST YEAR, EITHER ON PAID OR VOLUNTEER BASIS, FOR ANY ORGANIZATION, BUSINESS OR MOVEMENT NOT PRIMARILY ENGAGED IN JOURNALISTIC OR ACADEMIC PURSUITS AS DEFINED BELOW? YES NO IF YES, PROVIDE DETAILS AND DATES: _____

HAVE YOU DONE LOBBYING OR PUBLIC RELATIONS WORK IN THE PAST 2 YEARS? YES NO IF YES, FOR WHOM: _____

CHECK THE CATEGORY OF MEMBERSHIP (as defined in SEJ Bylaws) FOR WHICH YOU BELIEVE YOU ARE ELIGIBLE:

- ACTIVE** Persons primarily engaged in the gathering, reporting, editing, photographing, producing or cartooning of news for dissemination by regularly published, general circulation newspapers, magazines and newsletters, as well as radio and television stations and networks, news services and other media available to the general public.
- ACADEMIC** Persons on the faculty or enrolled as students of an accredited college, university or other school, who have an interest in environmental issues.
- ASSOCIATE** Those individuals, such as freelancers, who do not qualify for ACTIVE or ACADEMIC membership but who, in the majority opinion of the SEJ Board, will contribute to the attainment of the objectives of SEJ. (See section 'C' of application.) Applicants must be substantially engaged in journalistic pursuits.

Ozone: Everything you needed to know, but forgot to ask

By **BILL BECK**

Ozone non-attainment is one of the five major sections of the 1990 amendments to the Clean Air Act (CAA), prompted by frustrations from years of belt tightening regulations and unrealized expectations that attainment was "just over the hill."

Perhaps we are now poised on the threshold of success. I hope so, because we can't afford another disappointment, in our resolve or our pocketbooks.

Of the six criteria pollutants in the Clean Air Act, ozone has been the most elusive. Twenty years following the CAA amendments of 1970, we have been told that over 100 million Americans are breathing unhealthy air and most of our major cities have ozone problems.

Much of this ozone non-attainment dilemma comes from the fact it's not a primary pollutant. It's not emitted directly from industrial vents or auto tail pipes, such as carbon monoxide (CO) or nitrogen

Viewpoints

Is a regular feature of SEJournal, offering a forum to non-journalists who deal with environmental issues and the media.

oxides (NO_x). Rather, it's formed in the atmosphere as a result of complex chemical reactions, many of which are still being studied. Ozone control has been attempted through control/reduction of known precursors of ozone, including hydrocarbons or volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

Another complication of ozone is it contains only oxygen, a critical element for life. In the form of ozone, oxygen plays a protective role in sustaining life by functioning as a screen, or filter, for ultraviolet radiation from the sun. This good, stratospheric ozone is the target of environmental protection efforts to eliminate chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), which have been linked to ozone depleting reactions.

The non-attainment portion of the 1990 CAA amendments could cost the United States \$5 billion to \$15 billion annually, based on preliminary projections, and depending on the extent of regulations flowing from legislation. We need to begin asking questions such as: Is it really this

costly? and, is such an expense justified?

Since these costs will be borne by communities, they will need to begin understanding and asking questions about atmospheric ozone, and how it applies locally.

The term atmospheric ozone is used to make the distinction from stratospheric ozone, the protective shield. Ozone exposure or its potential to become a health hazard depends on the amount of ozone present (usually expressed in parts per million), duration of exposure to a high ozone event, and the frequency of the event in an interval of time (weekly, monthly or annually). The geographical area experiencing high ozone levels and the density of the exposed population is also important.

Ozone has a very short half-life inside a building or vehicle. Unless a person has been outside during a period of high ozone, it is unlikely exposure was significant.

For the U.S., factors limiting exposure work in favor of the public, except in Southern California where ozone levels and frequency during the summer months are quite high and several times greater than the rest of the country's.

It's important to understand the process of regulatory development that will follow the passage of CAA amendments. Both the CAA and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) draw distinctions between areas depending on the severity of individual levels of measured ozone.

Areas are classified as severe or moderate and regulated differently. Unfortunately, the rating system does not take into account the frequency or length of a high ozone event, only the highest levels.

Unless there is refinement in how the precursor control regulations are written, many areas of the country will be excessively regulated. The same concern could apply if the geographical extent of high ozone is not well understood. A small radius hot-spot at a single monitoring station may force excessive control measures to be applied to a large urban, or even larger metropolitan, area.

Another aspect of ozone behavior is the uncertainty of the ozone source and its precursors. Both are transported by weather conditions beyond a source area and into areas with little or no primary sources.

It is important these high ozone areas be monitored, identified and recorded, with appropriate modifications made to control plans. Otherwise, unnecessary and costly measures will be applied to the downwind, not to the source, area.

A final consideration in ozone control is the source and role of ozone precursors.

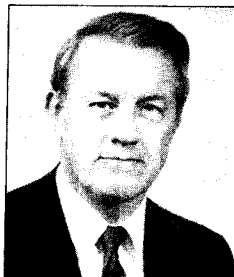
Atmospheric ozone, or photochemical-formed ozone, depends on the presence of NO_x, hydrocarbons (VOCs), UV energy and time. Energy is supplied by the sun and both energy and heat contribute to what is known as a photochemical reaction.

The source, role and importance of NO_x and VOCs has been the subject of significant study. In the '70s the popular beliefs were that industry was the most important source of VOCs and VOCs were the dominate precursor for ozone. Quite naturally, controls were imposed on industry and in some areas auto emissions were also regulated, in addition to the Federal Vehicle Control Program.

In the '80s, as a result of further study, the role of transport, high summertime temperatures, and the importance of the auto emissions all became recognized as significant in causing high ozone. NO_x was given more attention.

Ozone behavior models, once very simple, were no longer trusted to predict how to control ozone. Even sophisticated versions requiring hours of high speed computer time were inadequate. New models using more parameters and capable of treating the robust behavior of NO_x from its many sources were approaching the real world in limited applications.

We now face the '90s and one more attempt to reduce ozone. This still relies on an incomplete understanding of the urban chemistry, transport and transformation of chemical precursors, and assumes that auto exhausts and area sources of precursors (such as household chemical uses, lawn



BECK

New Members

mowers, small paint shops and the like) are important. In areas such as southern California they probably are. However, many parts of the country must pose hard questions to our regulators, public officials, industry large and small, and the public. These include:

— Exactly how serious is the ozone in the area? Number of times (days) per year that the federal safe limit was exceeded?

— How long and how high does the ozone get? How much of an area does it cover at these levels? How much of the population is actually exposed?

— What's the likelihood of transport of ozone or its precursors from upwind?

— Does excessively high ozone occur only on very hot summer days?

— Does high carbon monoxide accompany high ozone? High CO is usually indicative of auto exhausts.

— Is the high ozone related to some weather pattern?

— What is the historic trend for ozone over the past five years? Ten years?

— Have ozone levels been high in neighboring cities at the same time? Is there a widespread regional pattern?

— If a sophisticated model is used to explain past ozone behavior and to predict what and how much of the precursors to control, has this model been tested on both high and low ozone events? Has the model been challenged to look at the effectiveness of alternate control strategies?

— Ozone is basically a hot weather problem. Have seasonal control measures been considered that would have less economic impact on our community?

There are a number of other questions that could be asked of new proposed controls. These would certainly beget additional ones depending on the answers.

As a society, we must ensure that future environmental control measures proposed for the public's good are well thought out, based on good and representative data, and try to consider the overall best values to the community.

Bill Beck is manager of the DuPont Company's Waste and Emissions Reduction Program. He led the first privately funded study of urban ozone behavior and served on the ozone panel of the National Commission on Air Quality in 1980.

The following list represents new SEJ members recorded from Sept. 1 to Dec. 1, 1990. Memberships recorded after Dec. 1 will appear in the Spring issue of SEJournal.

Arizona

- Michael K. Alexieff, The Prescott Courier, Prescott
- Jonathan Sidener, Arizona Republic, Phoenix
- Mark Holman Turner (associate), freelance writer, Tucson
- Clint Williams, Mesa Tribune, Mesa

Arkansas

- Bobbi Riddlehoover, Arkansas Democrat, Little Rock

California

- Donald G. Browne (academic), University of California, Los Angeles
- Laraine Crampton (associate), freelance writer, Santa Monica
- Jim DiPeso, Tahoe Daily Tribune, South Lake Tahoe
- Andrea Hricko, KCBS-TV, Los Angeles
- Berkley Hudson, Los Angeles Times, Monrovia
- Lynnndee A. Kemmet, Desert Sun, Indio
- Susan E. Seager, Los Angeles Daily Journal, Los Angeles
- Alan Snitow, KTVU-TV, Oakland
- Maura Thurman, Marin Independent Journal, San Rafael
- Dr. Jerome Walker (academic), University of Southern California, Los Angeles
- Steven Witt (associate), Center for Science Information, San Francisco
- Prof. Larry Wood (academic), University of California, Oakland

Colorado

- James Balog, photographer, Boulder
- Arlene Campbell (associate), independent TV producer, Denver
- Karen Christensen (associate), freelance writer, Boulder
- Joseph E. Daniel, Buzzworm Magazine, Boulder
- Janet Day, Denver Post, Denver
- Craig Howson, Waste Tech News, Denver

Connecticut

- Hal Gillam, Record-Journal, Meriden
- Faith Gavin Kuhn, Business & Legal Reports, Madison
- Robert G. Miller, Waterbury Republican-American, Litchfield
- Cary Peyton Rich, Folio/Publishing News Magazines, Stamford
- Peter J. Staley, Channel Productions, Fairfield

Delaware

- Merritt Wallick, News Journal, New Castle

District of Columbia

- Edward Felker, Small Newspapers Group
- Edward Flattau, Global Horizons Syndicate
- Joseph C. Goulden (associate), Accuracy in Media

- Noel Grove, National Geographic
- Cheryl Hogue, Bureau of National Affairs
- Wevonneda Minis, Bureau of National Affairs
- John Nielson, National Public Radio
- Lucy Caldwell-Stair, Thompson Publishing Group
- Sara Thurin, Bureau of National Affairs
- Bud Ward (associate), Environmental Health Center

Florida

- Lucy Beebe, Ocala Star Banner, Ocala
- Art Carlson, WPLG-TV, Miami
- Heather Dewar, The Miami Herald, Miami
- Booth Gunter, The Tampa Tribune, Tampa
- Stephen C. Hart, Naples Daily News, Naples
- John Pancake, The Miami Herald, Miami
- Cindy Schreuder, Orlando Sentinel, Orlando
- JoAnn Myer Valenti (academic), University of Florida, Gainesville

Georgia

- Melissa Ballard, Cable News Network, Atlanta
- Stewart Craig, The Augusta Chronicle, Augusta
- Harold Hewell, Augusta Chronicle, Augusta
- Matt Kempner, Gwinnett Daily News, Duluth
- Stuart Leavenworth, Macon Telegraph and News, Macon
- Staffan Sandberg, CNN, Atlanta
- Brad Swope, Savannah News-Press, Savannah
- Teya Ryan, Turner Broadcasting, Atlanta
- Johnny Vardeman, The Times, Gainesville

Hawaii

- Patricia Tummons, Environment Hawai'i, Honolulu

Idaho

- Michael Hofferber, Wood River Journal, Ketchum
- Bill Loftus, Lewiston Morning Tribune, Lewiston
- Niels S. Nokkentved, Times-News, Twin Falls

Illinois

- Isabel S. Abrams (associate), freelance writer, Wilmette
- Casey Bukro, Chicago Tribune, Chicago
- Jeff Cunningham, WILL-TV, Urbana
- Charles W. Lemke (associate), freelance writer, Rockford
- Richard Ransom, WMBD-TV, Peoria
- Jim Schwab (associate), American Planning Association, Chicago
- John F. Wasik, New Consumer Institute, Vernon Hills

Indiana

- Ellen Akins, WANE-TV, Fort Wayne
- Wayne Falda, South Bend Tribune, South Bend
- Marcy L. Mermel, The Indianapolis News, Indianapolis
- Rebecca Vick, The Times Newspaper, Munster

Kansas

- Cecil L. Nygaard, KAKE-TV, Wichita

Kentucky

- Robin Epstein, The Courier-Journal, Louisville

Maine

- Robert Cummings, Maine Sunday Telegram,

Portland

- Joseph N. Rankin, Central Maine Morning Sentinel, Farmington

Maryland

- Karl D. Blankenship (associate), Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Baltimore
- Phillip Davis, The (Baltimore) Sun, Baltimore
- Odom Fanning (associate), freelance writer, Bethesda
- Bruce Reid, The Baltimore Evening Sun, Baltimore

Massachusetts

- Jeff Johnson, Bureau of National Affairs, Cambridge
- Ann B. Parson, (associate), freelance writer, Watertown
- David P. Ropeik, WCVB-TV, Needham
- Peter M. Sandman (academic), Rutgers University, Newton Highlands

Michigan

- Amy S. Hansen (academic), University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
- Roger McCoy, WKBD-TV, Southfield
- John A. Palen (academic), Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant
- Thomas A. Verdin, Times Herald, Port Huron

Minnesota

- Dennis Anderson, St. Paul Pioneer Press, St. Paul
- Jeff Baillon, KMSP-TV, Minneapolis
- Jeff Fox, Mesabi Daily News, Virginia
- Judy A. Hughes (associate), freelance writer, Stillwater
- Tom Meersman, Minnesota Public Radio, St. Paul
- John Welsh, St. Cloud Times, St. Cloud

Missouri

- Tony Fitzpatrick (associate), Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis

New Hampshire

- Kathryn Clark (associate), Dartmouth News Service, Hanover

New Jersey

- William J. Watson, The Press of Atlantic City, Pleasantville

New York

- Elizabeth A. Azar (academic), New York University, New York City
- Sharon Begley, Newsweek, New York City
- Susan Benkelman, Newsday, Melville
- Howard Chapnick, Black Star Publishing, New York City
- Andrea Dorfman, Time Magazine, New York City
- Ellen R. Lane, Gannett Westchester Newspapers, White Plains
- Louise W. Laughton (academic), State University of New York, Syracuse
- Jason Makansi, Power Magazine, New York City
- Jim Metzner, independent radio producer, Yorktown Heights
- Viviane Moos (associate), freelance writer, New

York City

- Rebecca Norris (associate), freelance writer, New York City
- Curtis Rist, New York Newsday, Kew Gardens
- Richard Santalesa, Computer Shopper Magazine, New York City
- Jeri Lynn Smith (associate), State University of New York, Syracuse

North Carolina

- Lawrence S. Earley (associate), N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, Raleigh
- Tana Brackin, WGHPiedmont 8, High Point

Ohio

- Thomas M. Celebrezze, Edgell Communications, Cleveland
- Glenn Hasek, Edgell Communications, Cleveland
- Chad Kister (academic), Ohio University, Athens
- David Smigelski, New Ohio Journal, Athens
- Virginia D. Smith, Penton Publishing, Cleveland
- Scott Turner (associate), Ohio State University, Columbus

Oklahoma

- Sharon L. Burris, The Daily Ardmoreite, Ardmore
- John M. Wylie II, Oologah Lake Leader, Oologah

Oregon

- Harry Esteve, The Register Guard, Eugene

Pennsylvania

- Andrew Compart, York Daily Record, York
- Rosalind J. Corman (associate), freelance writer, Philadelphia
- Kenneth Friedman (academic), Lehigh University, Bethlehem
- Sharon Friedman (academic), Lehigh University, Bethlehem
- Amy Gahrn, Running Press Publishers, Philadelphia
- Mark Jaffe, The Philadelphia Inquirer, Philadelphia
- Sonja L. Meyer, Pocono Record, Stroudsburg
- John J. Murphy, The Scranton Times, Scranton
- Susan Q. Stranahan, Philadelphia Inquirer, Wynnewood
- Robyn A. Suriano (academic), Lehigh University, Bethlehem
- Sharon J. Voas, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Pittsburgh

Rhode Island

- Larry Anderson (associate), freelance writer, Little Compton
- Bill Rappleye, WLNE-TV, Providence

South Carolina

- Prentiss E. Findlay, Charleston Post-Courier, Charleston
- Teresa Hill, The Island Packet, Hilton Head Island
- Charles Pope, The State Newspaper, Columbia

Tennessee

- John DeMott (academic), Memphis State University, Memphis

- Daryl Wayne, WTVC-TV, Chattanooga
- David Smart (associate), freelance writer, Memphis

Texas

- Mark E. Barron, Times Publishing Co., Wichita Falls
- Bill Dawson, Houston Chronicle, Houston
- Joe Diaz, KTRK-TV, Houston
- Edward D. Huber (academic), University of Houston, Houston

Utah

- Alyson Heyrend, KTVX Channel 4, Salt Lake City
- Rod C. Jackson, KTVX-TV, Salt Lake City

Vermont

- Thomas H. Rawls, Harrowsmith Country Life, Charlotte

Virginia

- Robert Eveleth, Inside Washington Publishers, Arlington
- Robert Harrelson, Inside Washington Publishers, Arlington
- Anita Manning, USA Today, Arlington
- Clinton H. Schemmer, Potomac News, Woodbridge
- Mark Di Vincenzo, Daily Press/Times Herald, Newport News

Washington

- Patti Epler, Tacoma News Tribune, Olympia
- Michael Frome (academic), Huxley College, Western Washington University, Bellingham
- Mary Ann Gwinn, Seattle Times, Seattle
- Sarah McCoy (associate), freelance writer, Seattle
- Richard D. Thompson, KIRO-TV, Seattle
- Julie Titone, The Spokesman-Review and Spokane Chronicle, Spokane
- Brian Wood, KIRO-TV, Seattle

West Virginia

- Paul J. Nyden, Charleston Gazette, Charleston

Wisconsin

- Don Behm, The Milwaukee Journal, Milwaukee
- Lewis A. Friedland, Environment: A Weekly Journal, Milwaukee
- Gregg Hoffmann (academic), University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee
- Charles P. Quimbach, Wisconsin Public Radio, Milwaukee

International Members

Canada

- Olivia Scott, The Province Newspaper, Vancouver

Nepal

- Aditya Man Smrestha (associate), freelance writer, Katmandu

South Africa

- Selwyn Tait, photographer, Johannesburg

Thailand

- Denis D. Gray, The Associated Press, Bangkok

Calendar

JANUARY

21-24. **24th Midyear Topical Meeting of Health Physics Society**(will focus on worker radiation exposures, radiation limits to protect embryo/fetus, and low-level radwaste disposal). Raleigh, NC. Radisson Plaza Hotel. Contact: Jewel Morris, EPA, Mail Drop 50, Research Triangle Park, NC 27711 (919) 541-4303.

24-25. **1st Symposium on Naturally Occurring Radionuclides in Agricultural Products**(sponsored by University of Fla.). Gainesville, FL. Contact: IFAS Office of Conf.'s, Univ. of Fla., 551 IFAS, Gainesville, FL 32611 (904) 392-5930.

FEBRUARY

4-14. **Framework Convention on Global Climate: First Negotiating Session.** Washington, D.C. area. Contact: Bob Ford, US State Dept. (202) 647-1511.

5-7. **Research Developments for Improved Municipal Solid Waste Mgmt.** Cincinnati, OH. Contact: Jon Fedorka, Air & Waste Mgmt. Assn, P.O. Box 2861, Pittsburgh, PA 15230 (412) 232-3444.

14-19. **Amer. Assn. for the Advancement of Science annual meeting** (featuring sessions on coastal erosion, global climate change, environmental threats to astronomy, superfund, nuclear wastes, defense-plant cleanups, role of scientists in environmental debates). Washington DC, Sheraton Washington Hotel. Contact: Joan Wrather, AAAS, 1333 H St., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20005 (202) 326-6400.

15-16. **3rd Nat'l Conf. on Organic/Sustainable Agriculture Policies** (sponsored by Ctr. for Science in the Public Interest). Washington DC, Ramada Renaissance Hotel. Contact: Roger Blobaum, CSPI, 1875 Connecticut Ave., N.W. Ste. 300, Washington, D.C. 20009-5728 (202) 332-9110. FAX: (202) 265-4954.

20-22. **Nat'l. Research and Devmt. Conf. on the Control of Hazardous Materials** (sponsored by Haz. Mats. Control Res. Inst.). Anaheim, CA. Contact: HMCRI, 9300 Columbia Blvd., Silver Spring, MD 20910-1702 (301) 587-9390.

27-March 3. **Pollution Prevention Through Waste Minimization, Recycling & Reuse.** Arlington, TX. Contact: Jon Fedorka, Air & Waste Mgmt. Assn, P.O. Box 2861, Pittsburgh, PA 15230 (412) 232-3444.

MARCH

3-6. **The Regions and Global Warming: Impacts and Response Strategies** (cosponsors include United Nations, World Resources Inst. and Ctr. for Growth Studies: focus on phys., soc. and econ. impacts/responses to global change at local, state or nat'l level). The Woodlands, TX. Contact: Jurgen Schmandt, Ctr. for Growth Studies, HARC, 4802 Research Forest Dr., The Woodlands, TX 77381 (713) 367-1348. FAX: (713) 363-7914.

3-8. **Biodiversity of the Rocky Mts.** Ft. Collins, CO. Contact: Biodiversity Symposium Office of Conf. Services, Colorado State University, Ft. Collins, CO 80523.

22-27. **N. Amer. Wildlife and Nat'l Resources Conf.** Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Contact: L.L. Williamson, Wildlife Mgmt. Inst., Ste. 725, 1101 14th St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20005 (202) 371-1808.

25-27. **Health Effects of Air Pollution—Impact of Clean Air Legislation** (annual meeting of Soc. for Occupational and Environmental Health). Crystal City, VA. Contact: SOEHNational Office, 6728 Old McLean Village Dr., McLean, VA 22101 (703) 556-9222.

25-28. **Symposium on Stationary Combustion NOx Control** (sponsored by EPA and Electric Power Res. Inst.). Washington DC, Capital Hilton. Contact: Maureen Barbeau, Conf's and Exhibits, EPRI, 3412 Hillview Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94304 (415) 855-2127.

APRIL

2-5. **International Symposium on Radon and Reduction Technology** (co-sponsored by EPA). Phila., PA. Contact: P. Heightchew, CRCPD, 205 Capital Ave., Frankfort, KY 40601.

3-4. **27th Annual Meeting of National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements** (principal session: Genes, Cancer and Radiation Protection). Washington DC. Mayflower Hotel. Contact: W. Roger Ney, Exec. Dir., NCRP, 7910 Woodmont Ave., Ste. 800, Bethesda, MD 20814 (301) 657-2652. FAX (301) 907-8768

3-5. **Air Toxics Issues in the 1990s: Policies, Strategies & Compliance** (legislative intent in revised Clean Air Act and

initiatives by/for state and local agencies). Phila., PA. Contact: Jon Fedorka, Air & Waste Mgmt. Assn, P.O. Box 2861, Pittsburgh, PA 15230 (412) 232-3444.

14-19. **American Chemical Society nat'l meeting** (with sessions on acid rain mitigation, pollution prevention and biodegradable polymers). Atlanta, GA. Contact: American Chemical Society news service, 1155 16th St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 (202) 872-4450.

16-19. **Municipal Waste Combustion** (including separation of materials for recovery; ash and residues; siting; controls). Tampa, FL. Contact: Jon Fedorka, Air & Waste Mgmt. Assn, P.O. Box 2861, Pittsburgh, PA 15230 (412) 232-3444.

24-26. **HMC Gulf '91 Conf. and Exhibition** (focusing hazardous wastes and materials in areas adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico). Houston, TX. Contact: Haz. Mats. Control Res. Inst., 9300 Columbia Blvd., Silver Spring, MD 20910-1702 (301) 587-9390. FAX: (301) 589-0182.

27. **New Jersey Environmental Reporting Workshop** (sponsored by Scientists' Institute for Public Information). Rutgers Univ., New Brunswick, N.J. (travel fellowships available). Contact: Jay Letto, SIPI, 355 Lexington Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017 (212) 661-9110.

28-May 3. **International Conference on High Level Radioactive Waste Management.** Las Vegas, NV. Contact: W.R. Wells, Univ. of Nev., 4505 S. Maryland Pkwy, Las Vegas, NV 89154.

MAY

7-10. **Measurement of Toxic and Related Air Pollutants** (sessions intended on hazardous waste, municipal-waste incineration, auto emissions, radon and asbestos measurements, indoor air, superfund sites, and health effects). Durham, NC. Contact: Jon Fedorka, Air & Waste Mgmt. Assn, P.O. Box 2861, Pittsburgh, PA 15230 (412) 232-3444.

8-11. **Responsive Energy Technology Symposium & International Exhibition (RETSIE)'91** (co-sponsored by United Nations, US Energy Dept. and public utilities; sessions to include a "global summit"). San Diego, CA, San Diego Marriott Hotel and Marina. Contact: San Diego Gas and Electric. P.O. Box 1831, San Diego, CA 92112 (619) 696-4615.

Green Beat Correspondents

Contribute to The 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 39635-4567, (601) 896-2355.

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

Arizona and New Mexico — Jon Sidener at the Arizona Republic, P.O. Box 1950, Phoenix, AZ 85004, (602) 271-8185.

Arkansas — Bobbi Ridlehoover at the Arkansas Democrat, Capitol & Scott Streets, 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 — Lynn Deihl at KSBY-TV, 467 Hill St., San Luis Obispo, CA. 93405, (805) 544-2224.

Colorado — Joe Verrengia at the Rocky Mountain News, 400 West Colfax Ave., Denver, CO 80204, (303) 892-5346.

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

District of Columbia — Damon Chappie, Bureau of National Affairs, 1231 25th St., N.W., Wash., DC 20037, (202) 452-4408.

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 the Idaho Statesman, Box 40, Boise, ID 83707, (208) 377-6413.

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 — Kevin Ellis at the Burlington Free Press, 191 College St., Burlington, VT 05401, (802) 865-0940

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 — Dennis Anderson at the Pioneer Press-Dispatch, 345 Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55101, (800) 950-9080.

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 — David Vis at the Press of Atlantic City, Devins Lane, Pleasantville, NJ 08232, (609) 272-7254.

New York — Steve Orr at the Democrat & Chronicle, 49 Atkinson St., Rochester, NY 14608, (716) 258-2386

Nevada — Jane Harris at the Las Vegas Sun, 121 S. Martin L. King Blvd., Las Vegas, NV

89106, (702) 383-7125.

Ohio and Indiana — Marcy Mermel at The Indianapolis News, 307 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis, IN 46204, (317) 633-9233.

Oregon — Kathy 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 — Cyril Zaneski at the Virginian Pilot, 150 West Brambleton Ave., Norfolk, VA 23517, (804) 490-7219.

Washington State — Karen Dorn Steele at the Spokesman Review & Chronicle, Box 2160, Spokane, WA 99210-1615, (509) 459-5000

West Virginia — Monty Fowler, The Herald-Dispatch, 946 Fifth Ave., Huntington, WV, 25701, (304) 526-2802.

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

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ALABAMA

► Two Birmingham television stations have begun regular environmental features. WBRC-TV ABC, Channel 6, has developed "Earth Watch," which takes the form of everything from daily environmental facts to story packages. The program "is our commitment to covering environmental stories and keeping the public informed on environmental issues," said Elbert Tucker, 6 O'Clock News producer. For more information, contact Tucker at P.O. Box 6, Birmingham, AL 35201 or call (205) 322-6666.

► And WVTM-TV NBC, Channel 13, produces a regular environmental program called "S.A.V.E." Save Alabama's Valuable Environment. For more information contact Dennis Holt, S.A.V.E. Producer, WVTM-TV, P.O. Box 10502, Birmingham, AL 35202 or call (205) 933-1313.

► A Mobile woman began publishing a monthly tabloid, *Southern Environment*, in October. The newspaper "is regional in focus, but we do have a little bit more on Alabama," said publisher Deveras Trexler. Trexler is a writer and has been active on environmental issues, but said her newspaper will "be as impartial as possible, showing both sides of the issue." For more information, call Trexler at (205) 432-6397. In Alabama, call (800) 452-6397. Or write P.O. Box 1444, Mobile, AL 36633.

ALASKA

► Researchers trying to calculate how many birds died in the Exxon Valdez oil spill deliberately killed hundreds of sea birds, doused them with oil, then set them adrift with radio collars to try to learn where the currents took them. The study, done by scientists under federal contract, was controversial because the birds were killed primarily for litigation purposes (to come up with an estimate about how many bird carcasses were lost at sea, so a cash value could be set for the loss), not science (*Anchorage Daily News*, 10/18/90). The Justice Department later said it wasn't responsible for ordering the study, but couldn't tell who was. The *Anchorage Daily News* also reported in October that state

Fish & Game Department scientists also killed hundreds of seabirds and mammals, including deer, sea lions and mink, to learn about long-term, sub-lethal effects of oil ingestion.

► A letter to state and federal officials from a former Thorpe Technical Services technician from Fairbanks created a scare about the integrity and safety of the trans-Alaska pipeline. The ex-employee alleged that Thorpe workers hired to test the pipeline for corrosion were improperly trained and used alcohol and drugs on the job. His letter has prompted a criminal investigation, which is still on-going, and an order that 15 re-inspections be performed, including five on underground sections of the 800-mile pipeline. The re-inspection was expected to be complete by mid-December. While officials say the pipeline is safe under normal operating conditions, they've put on hold a plan to increase pressure to move more oil to compensate for the loss of oil from the Middle East (*Anchorage Daily News*, 10/15, 10/18, 10/19, 10/24).

ARIZONA

► The *Arizona Republic* in Phoenix ran a six-day series on water use and overuse in an arid environment. The series looked at the problems, politics and economics of the water supply in a rapidly growing, desert metropolis. Topics included destruction of desert habitat, federal subsidies for the thousands of gallons per acre per day diverted to agriculture, and the suburban cravings for swimming pools, lush lawns and man-made lakes. For further details, contact Jonathan Sidener, (602) 271-8185.

► The *Arizona Daily Star* in Tucson published several stories on charges of "redlining" in the mortgage and title insurance industries in a 28-square-mile Superfund area. The EPA required that a cleanup agreement take the form of a court consent order. The court could not issue the consent order without a lawsuit. When the lawsuit was filed, the title companies stopped writing insurance policies for residents and businesses within the impact area listed in the suit. For further information contact Keith Bagwell (602) 573-4195.

ARKANSAS

► The Arkansas Department of Health issued a health advisory for the Ouachita River in September because eating fish caught downstream from the Georgia-Pacific paper mill was found to be associated with an excessively high cancer risk. The *Arkansas Democrat* reported in a series in May that a federal Environmental Protection Agency report recommended an advisory on the Ouachita. For more information, call Bobbi Riddlehoover or Don Johnson, (501) 378-3485.

► Richard Mason, the new chairman of the Arkansas Pollution Control and Ecology Commission, declared war in September on Georgia-Pacific Corp., because of the damage the paper mill has done to Nossy Lake. The paper mill took over the wetland area and used it as part of the plant's treatment system, rendering it almost lifeless. Mason vowed to take the fight to restore the wetland to the paper company's board room, if necessary. For information, call Bobbi Riddlehoover or Don Johnson (501) 378-3485.

► Union County in Southern Arkansas will begin housing its prisoners near one of the nation's largest commercial hazardous waste incinerators next year. Various attorneys said the proximity of Ensco Inc. to the new \$5.7 million jail will invite lawsuits by prisoners, who could allege they were being housed under dangerous conditions. For more information, call Bobbi Riddlehoover or Don Johnson (501) 378-3485.

CALIFORNIA

► "Big Green," the broad environmental initiative defeated in California, proposed protections for redwood forests, the ozone layer, coastal waters, crops and climate. It was opposed by business interests nationwide. Some reporters familiar with the bitterly debated Prop. 128, and reasons for its decisive failure, are Eric Brazil (*San Francisco Examiner*, (415) 777-7876), Elliot Diring (*San Francisco Chronicle*, (415) 465-0514), Steve Green (*Sacramento Bee*, (916) 321-1199), Rich Paddock (*Los Angeles Times*, (916) 445-8860) and Scott

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Thurm (*Mercury News* (408) 920-5000). They also know about "Forests Forever," a far-reaching forest preservation measure, and the industry counter-initiatives dubbed by opponents "Big Brown" and "Big Stump." (See inset for summary and analysis of results.)

► In addition to eco-activists, some environmental reporters came under scrutiny

during "Redwood Summer," a heated campaign to save ancient trees. Veteran reporter Mike Geniella, Mendocino County bureau chief for the *New York Times*-owned *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, was taken off the timber beat five weeks before the November election. The paper's management said in a news story that his impartiality was in question because he discussed the issues (and the paper's coverage of

them) in an informal interview with the *Anderson Valley Advertisers*, a feisty weekly. Environmentalists and loggers rushed to Geniella's defense, saying he was a fair reporter, but the *Press Democrat* didn't relent. Geniella, who has been in the thick of controversial stores on the battling interests and the FBI's investigation of Earth First, has sought help from the Northern California Newspaper Guild. For information, call Geniella at (707) 462-6470 or the Guild's Richard Olive at (415) 421-6833.

A postmortem for California's Big Green initiative

When Californians defeated the sweeping environmental initiative called "Big Green," they were rebelling against public spending, the confusion of opposing measures and high-profile ballot campaigns.

Timing is everything in politics. In 1988, 80 percent of the initiatives passed. In 1990, 80 percent of the 28 initiatives failed.

Voters, caught up in a new fiscal conservatism, gave a "Big No" to the environment, housing, child care, prisons, education, drug prevention and a tax on alcohol — anything that might cost money.

In polls last month, they complained that the state was already in debt and overcommitted to selling bonds. People were worried about expensive government, the recession and the Gulf crisis.

Yet they said "yes" to a measure that prohibits elected officials from holding state office longer than six years; it provides no public campaign financing.

So seven months after Californians excitedly embraced Earth Day, the most far-reaching environmental measure ever to go before voters or a legislature was trounced by 63.7 percent to 36.3 percent. Only in environmentally minded San Francisco County did the measure pass with 62 percent in favor. In some rural counties where timber and agriculture are king, it lost by percents in the high 80s.

The measure called for banning two dozen pesticides that cause cancer or reproductive damage in laboratory animals and, by 1997, chlorofluorocarbons and other ozone depleters. It required that carbon dioxide emissions be cut by 20 percent by 2000 and 40 percent by 2010, adjusted for population growth. Sewage discharges to coastal waters had to get secondary treatment and all effluent had to meet health-based standards for toxic chemicals by 2000. Oil and gas drilling was banned in near-shore state waters, and it set up a \$500 million oil-spill cleanup and prevention fund collected from an oil industry tax. It authorized \$200 million in bonds to buy ancient redwood forests, \$100 million for reforestation and banned clear-cutting; it established an office of environmental advocate.

Mainstream environmental organizers who wrote it and campaigned for it say they were outspent \$16 million to \$6 million by chemical, oil and agribusiness interests, Chevron, Du Pont, Monsanto and Arco among the biggest spenders.

No on 128 forces called it the "Hayden Initiative," linking it to the liberal politics of the Southern California Assemblyman Tom Hayden, who was one of its authors. Saying "It tries to do too much," one of the most effective anti-ads was former U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop's advising the voters it was "bad science" and unnecessary. Adding to the confusion, the opponents had two counter-measures on the ballot.

Losing by 48 to 52 percent was "Forests Forever," a comprehensive measure to stop clear-cutting, authorize a \$710 million bond fund to buy redwoods and other old growth, restructure the Board of Forestry to break up timber industry control, provide a fund to retrain unemployed workers and require growing more trees than are logged.

— Jane Kay, *San Francisco Examiner*

► The University of California at Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism in January is launching a course in environmental journalism, which will be taught by *San Francisco Examiner* environment writer Jane Kay. Call the graduate school at (415) 642-3383.

► Interest in mining in the West and all of its environmental and political impacts is picking up again in the wake of Congress' refusal to reform ancient mining laws that give huge corporations access to rich mineral deposits on public land for less than pennies on the dollar. The *Sacramento Bee* has won plaudits from the eco-freaks but enmity from the American Mining Congress for its recent series on the issue by former *New York Times* staffer, and now Western resources writer for the *Bee*, George Knudson. His series, "Golden Dreams, Shattered Earth," is now available in reprint form. Send \$2 to *Sacramento Bee*, P.O. Box 15779, Sacramento, CA 95852, Attn: Bee Search Dept.

► Interest is increasing on several fronts in giving environmental journalists more serious attention. Nationally, no less an institution than The Smithsonian, with support from Island Press, is probing the possibilities of a series of regional conferences to give journalists some technical help in this complex field. The Smithsonian also is weighing prospects of offering a truly major awards program (the Pulitzer of environmental writing) to encourage better performance in environmental journalism. In California, post-Earth Day '90 interest has already prompted two reporting conferences in Southern California, one by the Smithsonian-Island Press-Los Angeles

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Times team (and coordinated by *Times* environment reporter Larry Stammer), the other by the Extension Service of the University of California. Now, UC Extension is planning a similar session for Northern California reporters sometime early this year.

► Wood-burning stoves and fireplaces may be cozy, but many are inefficient and, collectively, form a major pollution source of air pollution, experts say. Contact the Environmental Protection Agency for guideline information and Air Pollution Control Districts for local regulations. California's San Luis Obispo County is working on a strict rule as part of its Clean Air Plan. The APCD number is (800) 549-5912, or call California's Air Resources Control Board public information office at (916) 322-2990.

COLORADO

► The Adolph Coors Co. agreed on Oct. 23 to pay \$650,000 to settle criminal and civil charges that cancer-causing pollutants from the brewery's can plant were dumped illegally into a nearby creek more than a decade ago. The settlement includes money to fund construction of a public bike path. Environmentalists blasted the settlement as a wrist slap for Coors. State officials said the settlement was an adequate resolution because the discharges did not present an immediate health threat and criminal intent by Coors would be difficult to prove. Coors still faces the possibility of EPA fines of up to \$1.1 million for illegally discharging solvents.

► Colorado public health officials are trying to enforce the nation's first urban air pollution regulations aimed at improving visibility. Officials predict that the addition of the visibility standard will lead to 30 to 50 high-pollution days before April 30. Last winter, only three high-pollution days were declared for carbon monoxide and particulates violations. Visibility violations — based on a citizens panel's perception of how much haze is too much — will be declared if monitors detect that air pollution is blocking more than 7.6% of a light mounted on the downtown Denver federal building. For more information, contact

the Colorado Department of Health air pollution control division at 303-331-8581.

► Radiation in production areas of the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant caused the cancer that killed James R. Downing 12 years ago, a Colorado Department of Labor judge has ruled. The ruling is believed by nuclear experts to be the first time a judge has found occupational exposure to radioactive elements solely responsible for a cancer death. The judge rejected arguments that Downing's history of cigarette smoking and other lifestyle factors contributed to his death. Downing received a radiation dose of 213 rems over 17 years of work at the plant, allowable under earlier limits for nuclear defense workers. An autopsy found very high levels of radioactive plutonium and tritium in Downing's organs.

► The U.S. Army plans to build the region's largest toxic waste incinerator in the northwest corner of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, about a mile from a mobile home park. Army officials said building the incinerator near the old Basin F waste pond would allow 8 million gallons of toxic waste left over from decades of chemical weapon and pesticide production to be piped directly to the incinerator. Neighbors and environmental activists say they're worried about possible toxic air emissions from the incinerator.

► Nearly 200 delegates representing various state and local Green alliances met in Estes Park in September to organize themselves into a national political party and write a platform to be used in elections. This nation's 200 or so Green groups are based loosely on their European counterparts that advocate an environmentally sound, non-violent approach to government, focusing on individual responsibility and grass-roots action. The national platform — three years in the making — includes 11 issues ranging from animal rights to economics, energy, agriculture, peace, social justice and pollution.

► Subtle but significant environmental changes are occurring in some of Colorado's most sensitive landscapes, a decade of scientific observation shows.

Those changes, which include progressively earlier snowpack melting and disrupted animal breeding cycles throughout the 1980s, may be early warning signs of global climate change. The University of Colorado runs the Niwot Ridge site west of Boulder and Colorado State University runs the Central Plains Experimental Range. They are part of the National Science Foundation's network of 17 long-term ecological research stations from Alaska to Puerto Rico. For more information, call CU at (303) 492-6431 or CSU at (303) 491-6432.

CONNECTICUT

► Ten years after Superfund, the *Hartford Courant* took a long look at how the program fared in Connecticut. It found that not a single Superfund site has yet been cleaned up. The examination was spurred after a woman near the first major site began uncovering possible evidence of a cancer cluster in the area. That has spurred a series of news stories and prompted state and federal environmental officials to vow new action on the site. For more information, contact Dan Jones, *Hartford Courant*, (203) 241-6200.

FLORIDA

► The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has agreed to consider putting the Florida black bear on its federal threatened species list. The agency is conducting a 12-month study to determine whether the species warrants protection. The bear is listed as a threatened species in Florida, except in two North Florida counties, where licensed hunting is permitted. If the bear receives special protection from the federal government, hunting would no longer be permitted unless special exceptions are made. The bear has declined in number over the years due to loss of habitat, leading to a record number of road kills last year. For more information, contact Michael Bentzien, biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, (904) 791-2580.

► One of the nation's largest kitty litter producers, accused of poisoning thoroughbred racehorses with lead emissions, has been charged by the Florida Depart-

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ment of Environmental Regulation with 31 air quality violations. Mid-Florida Mining Industries mines clay in a rural area near Ocala and then sells it as a landfill sealer or dries and grinds it into cat litter. The operation is in the heart of the nation's second-largest thoroughbred horse raising industry. Breeders in the Ocala area have attributed health problems such as a rash of miscarriages and deformed foals to contamination from the plant's smokestack. For more information, contact Alex Alexander at the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation, (407) 894-7555.

HAWAII

► A new monthly publication, *Environment Hawaii*, is making waves with aggressive, in-depth reports on major issues here. The eight-page newsletter, written, edited and published by former newspaper editorial writer Patricia Tummons, borders on advocacy but offers minute reporting generally absent in mainstream media. Recent issues have delved into operations and costs of HPOWER, Honolulu's power-generating garbage incinerator; a controversial private housing project in state conservation land; and an EPA audit of a slipshod sewage treatment project on the Big Island. Write *Environment Hawaii*, 733 Bishop St., Suite 170-51, Honolulu, HI 96813, for a \$25 subscription.

► Schofield Barracks on Oahu became Hawaii's first Superfund site in August, five years after high levels of trichloroethylene (TCE) were found in drinking water at the 17,725-acre Army base. TCE, once commonly used in dry-cleaning operations or as a solvent to clean machinery, is carcinogenic. Since 1986, the contaminant has been filtered from Schofield wells with an "air stripping" device now under scrutiny as a possible source of air pollution. The EPA, Army and state have yet to hammer out a timetable for the cleanup, aimed at tracking the TCE to its source.

► A September opinion poll commissioned by the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* and KGMB-TV turned up strong support for geothermal development on the Big Island, despite growing controversy over costs, damage to rainforests, and disregard for

energy conservation. Of 626 voters surveyed, 56 percent said they fully support the project; 14 percent support it with reservation; 11 percent oppose; and 19 percent didn't know. The poll, which came shortly after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, reflected statewide anxiety over Hawaii's tenuous dependence on imported oil for power generation. For more details, contact Peter Wagner, environmental writer, *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, P.O. Box 3080, Honolulu, HI 96802.

IDAHO

► Environmental reporters Rocky Barker, Kevin Rickert and Molly O'Leary of the *Idaho Falls Post-Register* are writing a continuing series on endangered species, such as grizzly bears, Snake River snails and the impending listing of Snake River salmon, among other species. The series will continue for several months. Reprints will be available in January. For more information or copies, contact Barker or Rickert at (208) 522-1800. The *Post Register's* address is P.O. Box 1800, Idaho Falls, ID 83403.

► The *Twin Falls Times-News* ran a two-part series titled "The landfill crisis" on Nov. 4-5, detailing the expected consolidation of landfills, higher cost of dumping and increased environment monitoring required under the long-awaited Subtitle D regulations from the Environmental Protection Agency. For more information or copies, contact reporter Phil Sahn at (208) 733-0931. The newspaper's address is P.O. Box 548, Twin Falls, ID 83303.

ILLINOIS

► The arrival of Zebra Mussels in Lake Michigan waters off Illinois and Indiana has touched off intense debate on how best to control the creatures, which multiply swiftly and clog water intakes for power plants, industries and municipal water systems. After mussels turned up on the Chicago shoreline in July, Indiana authorities gave approval to several steel plants to use a pesticide — a move termed premature by environmental groups. Commonwealth Edison, meanwhile, is planning to redirect the heated water from one of its

power plants to slow-cook the mussels and keep that plant's intakes clear. Biologists believe the mussels, of European origin, entered the Great Lakes system at Lake Erie in 1986 when a Soviet freighter emptied its ballast. *Chicago Tribune* reporter Steve Swanson has provided the most comprehensive coverage, with major pieces appearing July 15 and, most recently, on Oct. 26. The *Chicago Sun-Times* published an update Nov. 2. For information about story copies, contact the *Chicago Tribune's* library at (312) 222-2531.

INDIANA

► The Indiana Department of Environmental Management has completed its first draft of a remedial action plan for Northwestern Indiana under guidelines by the International Joint Commission. The report identifies clean-up targets for the Indiana Harbor Canal, Grand Calumet River and the near shore of Lake Michigan.

The report identified four oil refineries, six crude oil pipelines, 18 refined petroleum companies, five Superfund sites, more than 400 other clean-up sites and 462 registered underground storage tanks, of which 150 reportedly leak. The staff also found major ground water contamination in the Harbor area. IDEM will open its first branch office in Gary before the end of 1990. For additional information or copies of the report, contact Bettie Cadou at Indiana Department of Environmental Management, 105 S. Meridian St., P.O. Box 6015, Indianapolis, IN 46206-6015 or (317) 232-8560. There is a fee for the report. The International Joint Commission can be reached at P.O. Box 32869, Detroit, MI 48232.

► The city of Indianapolis, criticized by local environmentalists and state officials for acting too slowly on recycling, has announced a 20,000-home pilot curbside recycling project. City officials admit their chief motive arose from new regulations proposed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. EPA's rules would tie air permits for trash incinerators to recycling. If adopted, the rules would require the city to recycle 25 percent of its waste before Ogden Martin Inc. could renew air pollution permits for the Indianapolis waste-to-

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energy facility. The pilot project is expected to take about a year.

IOWA

► The Iowa Attorney General's Office has launched a tough new program to enforce laws regulating the use of pesticides. Faced with a growing number of cases involving negligent use of the chemicals, the office earlier this year hired a prosecutor who devotes full time to pursuing criminal and civil penalties against pesticide scofflaws in the state. For more information contact William Roach, Iowa Attorney General's Office, (515) 281-5678.

► The *Des Moines Register* used data submitted to Iowa emergency planning officials under the EPA's Community Right To Know Act to document that startling amounts of potentially deadly chemicals are stored at industrial plants and farm cooperatives around the state. A check of storage practices for dozens of chemicals considered dangerous by hazardous materials experts, toxicologists and environmentalists showed billions of pounds of pesticides, solvents and acids stored in cities and towns throughout Iowa. Reporters can obtain data on volume, type and location of stored hazardous chemicals by contacting their state Emergency Planning Committee and asking for Section 311 and Section 312 data of the Community Right to Know Act.

► The *Cedar Rapids Gazette* recently published a five-part series examining Iowa's progress in protecting the environment over the past 25 years. The series, by reporter Dale Kueter, considered air quality, quality of streams, ground water and soil conservation practices. It painted a good news/bad news picture. For a copy of the series "Iowa's Environment: Better or Worse?" contact Kueter at (319) 398-8314.

KANSAS

► Like their colleagues around the country, Kansas biologists are worried about the dwindling number of reptiles and amphibians and recent reports of more deformities in turtles. One Kansas biolo-

gist reported up to 5 percent of turtles he trapped were deformed, five times what he considered normal. An Emporia State biologist has been commissioned by the state to study the situation. Contact David Edds at (316) 343-5311.

► Farmers exposed to a widely used herbicide in midwestern wheat fields may face an increased risk of cancer. A new study, published in September by the National Cancer Institute, found elevated risks of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma among Nebraska farmers, bolstering an earlier NCI study of Kansas farmers exposed to 2,4-D. The new study will be crucial in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's decision on whether to place 2,4-D in "special review." Contact Sheila Hoar Zahm at NCI at (301) 496-1691.

► At least 30 small farm towns in Kansas, Nebraska and Iowa are polluted from years of spraying pesticide fumigants into grain bins, many of them owned by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Some towns have had to abandon their water systems, using bottled water for a time. The extent of the pollution is just becoming known in small towns. Contact Hattie Thomas at EPA's regional office in Kansas City, KS at (913) 551-7003.

► Wichita's downtown is perched above a toxic waste site, state officials revealed in September. The ground water is polluted with solvents that are slowly spreading toward the Arkansas River. City officials are trying to work out a clean-up before EPA declares Wichita's downtown a Superfund site. For the state's report, contact Greg Crawford at (913) 296-1529.

LOUISIANA

► Oil interests and state regulators are fighting over proposed regulations that would phase out discharges of brine and drilling fluids in the state's coastal zone. The *Times-Picayune* did an extensive series on the problems caused by oil field waste entitled "License to Pollute." Previously the *Baton Rouge Morning Advocate* did a series showing that the discharges contain high levels of radioactive materi-

als as well as toxic chemicals. Contact James O'Byrne at the *Times Picayune* or Bob Anderson at the *Morning Advocate*.

MARYLAND

► A new federal audit of school systems in Maryland and the mid-Atlantic region warns that thousands of children across the country may still be drinking lead-contaminated water at school two years after Congress ordered its removal from fountains in public and private schools. The Environmental Protection Agency inspector general's office found that 70 percent of the schools checked in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia had refrigerated drinking fountains that contained lead parts. Stories appeared in November in the *New York Times* and *Baltimore Sun*. To get the report, call Ruth Podems in the EPA Region III press office in Philadelphia, (215) 597-9825.

MASSACHUSETTS

► A major issue in the western, rural end of the state has become ground level ozone, or smog. The *Springfield Union-News* has run a series of stories about this continuing problem which appears to be at its worst in the northern and most rural part of the state. The ozone is coming chiefly from the New York metropolitan area but seems to center on this area 100 miles away. For more information, contact Stan Freeman, *Springfield Union-News*, (413) 788-1000.

MICHIGAN

► With considerable election-year fanfare, Michigan Gov. James Blanchard signed a polluters-pay bill he called the toughest in the nation on Oct. 8. The signature ended seven years of rancorous argument in the state legislature about giving the State Department of Natural Resources authority to unilaterally order cleanups of the state's 2,700 known toxic sites. Offenders can be fined up to \$25,000 per day for non-compliance. The bill also sets up a scientific advisory committee to review DNR decisions, but firms that reject the panel's ruling could be sued by the state for triple damages. Polluters found guilty of

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discharging hazardous substances could be sentenced to five years in prison and a \$1 million fine. Tips leading to the conviction of a polluter can be rewarded by a bounty of up to \$10,000. A loan program for small business is included in the package, which was sponsored by Sen. Lana Pollack, D-Ann Arbor. Contact Sen. Pollack's office at (517) 373-3543 for a copy of the bill, which takes effect in July 1991.

► Michigan's Water Resources Commission is considering a crack-down on the practice of using ethylene glycol anti-freeze for de-icing planes. Testing of storm sewers and surface water near several major airports turned up evidence that as much as half of the 3 million gallons of de-icing fluid used at Michigan airports each year is entering waterways. Jeff Alexander of the Booth News Service in Lansing reported that contamination has been identified in creeks adjacent to Detroit, and Capitol City Airport in Lansing. A Department of Natural Resources investigation will look at 30 additional airports in coming months. Airport officials say stemming the tide may require costly drainage modifications or centralized de-icing stations which could back up flights. For copies of the initial story about the investigation: Karl Bates, *Ann Arbor News*, P.O. Box 1147, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1147.

MINNESOTA

► For the first time in the Midwest, trees have been spiked to discourage logging. In early October, an anonymous letter had claimed that trees in a 120-acre area of old-growth white pine, birch, aspen and spruces near Ely, Minn., were spiked. But it wasn't until Oct. 21 that state foresters found spikes in five white pines and one aspen. Some Ely area residents, including arctic explorer Paul Schurke, as well as groups such as Earth First! in Minneapolis, have been trying to block the timber cutting, which was let by the state of Minnesota to Hedstrom Lumber Co. of Grand Marais, Minn. A \$15,000 reward has been offered by Minnesota Forest Industries Inc. for information about who spiked the trees. Contact: Charles Laszewski, *Saint Paul Pioneer Press*, (800) 950-9080.

MISSISSIPPI

► A Greene County jury on Oct. 30 awarded a property owner more than \$1 million in a civil suit charging a Georgia-Pacific pulp mill with polluting the Leaf River. Wesley Simmons built his retirement home along the river and claims the pollution has diminished its value. While Simmons had asked for \$102 million, his attorneys called it a precedent-setting case. There are about 700 additional plaintiffs waiting to file suit. The state has closed the river from fishing because of high levels of dioxin. For more information, contact: The *Sun Herald* for newsclips, Biloxi-Gulfport, MS, Librarian Marilyn Pustay, (601) 896-2308; Georgia-Pacific's Leaf River Pulp Operations, New Augusta, Warren Richardson, general manager (601) 964-8411; Attorney John Deakle, Hattiesburg, (601) 544-0631.

► Through a monthly recycling program run by the *Sun Herald* in south Mississippi, and by regularly publishing a list of recycling centers, the Gulfport-Biloxi newspaper has directly encouraged recycling in the area. In the past 18 months, newspaper recycling in the circulation area has grown from 2 percent of the *Sun Herald's* weight to about 40 percent. Nearly one in three readers are now recycling their newspapers. Voluntary recycling of aluminum, glass and plastic has grown astronomically. Patrick Peterson, the *Sun Herald*, Biloxi-Gulfport, (601) 896-2343.

MISSOURI

► A Kansas City public television station, KCPT-TV, and the ABC affiliate KMBC-TV, simulcast a local "town forum" on the city's environment in October. It was the first time two Kansas City television stations had produced a program together. Panels of experts addressed air, water and landfill issues before a studio audience. For more information, contact Pat Patton at KMBC at (816) 221-9999, or Paul Francis at KCPT at (816) 756-3580.

► A sweeping new Missouri solid waste law which among other things will ban yard wastes from landfills by Jan. 1, 1992, has many communities scrambling to de-

sign recycling and composting programs. In addition, it will require newspapers to use recycled newsprint and communities to form solid waste management districts. Contact Anita Randolph of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources at (314) 751-0647.

► The U.S. Department of Energy expects to pay about \$118 million over the next five years to clean up 35 or more toxic waste sites at its Kansas City nuclear weapons plant. Solvents, including TCE, pollute underground water supplies and a nearby river. No nuclear waste problems have been reported. The plant makes plastic and metal parts for nuclear weapons. Contact Scott Ritchey in EPA's Region VII office in Kansas City, KS (913) 551-7641.

MONTANA

► Sherry Devlin, environmental reporter for the *Missoulian* wrote a unique story about following a radio-collared Rocky Mountain gray wolf, an endangered species, for about 10 months in western Montana. The story details the day-to-day plights of the female wolf and shows the animal traveled up to 26 miles of back country in a single day. She eventually mated and had six pups, and then was shot by a hunter. The animal's collar was found in a creek; the hunter has yet to be found. The adult male was later hit by a truck, and now the pups are on their own. For copies, call the *Missoulian* library at (406) 523-5240 or write the *Missoulian*, Box 8029, Missoula, MT 59807.

NEBRASKA

► A five-part series on low-level radioactive waste was recently published by the *Norfolk Daily News*. The newspaper decided to do the series after a chaotic nuclear waste compact commission meeting in Omaha and the cancelation of an information fair in the county designated to host the facility. Copies can be obtained from Managing Editor Kent Warneke, P.O. Box 977, Norfolk, NE 68702.

► The final report of the Burlington Northern Foundation Water Quality Project is

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complete. The report, the result of a five-year effort by a team of researchers, examines chemigation technology and crop production practices and their impact on water quality in Nebraska. (Chemigation is the practice of applying pesticides through a center pivot irrigation system.) Copies of the report can be obtained from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Water Center, 103 Natural Resources Hall, Lincoln NE 68583-0844.

NEVADA

► Keith Rogers is the new environmental reporter for the *Las Vegas Review Journal* after working in Livermore, Calif.

► The *Las Vegas Review Journal* presented an overview series on Yucca Mountain, the site 90 miles northwest of Las Vegas chosen by Congress for the Department of Energy to study as the nation's nuclear repository site. The eight-part series ran from Oct. 21-28. Contact the *Review Journal* at 1111 W. Bonanza Road, Las Vegas, NV 89101 or call (702) 383-0211.

NEW MEXICO

► November election victories by three environmental candidates could add a new obstacle to the opening of the controversial Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, the U.S. Department of Energy's nuclear waste repository near Carlsbad, NM. Governor-elect Bruce King, one of the successful candidates, has said he will try to ban importation of waste into the state. Pro-environmental candidates also landed the attorney general and land commissioner posts. Further information is available from Anthony J. Davis, *Albuquerque Tribune* (505) 823-3600.

► The *New Mexican* in Santa Fe reported on illegal dumping by the septic hauling industry. Ground water in rural northern New Mexico has been polluted by improperly maintained septic tanks and by private waste haulers, who found it cheaper to dump in the river bed than to pay for fees at sewage treatment plants. Further information is available from Cheryl Wittenauer at (505) 986-3045.

NORTH CAROLINA

► Fumes from a chemical waste incinerator in Caldwell County, N.C., caused severe respiratory problems for nearby residents and brain damage in five employees of the company, according to reports released this summer by the state and EPA. Though the Caldwell Systems Inc. incinerator has been closed since 1988, it continues to pose risks to people and the environment, the reports say. EPA is studying whether similar conditions exist at 24 other incinerators around the country. For a summary, contact Don Follmer, public affairs officer for the N.C. Department of Environmental Health at (919) 733-4984. The *Charlotte Observer* published a series of articles on the incinerator; for copies, contact reporter Greg Trevor at (919) 834-8471.

► The *Charlotte Observer* published a three-part investigative series Sept. 16-19 on sewage treatment plants exceeding permitted limits for pollution on the Catawba River, the major source of water for about 400,000 people. For copies, contact projects editor Mary Newsom at (704) 358-5049.

► The *News and Observer* of Raleigh published a series of stories on four consecutive days in late October examining growing air pollution problems in North Carolina. For information about the series, contact environmental reporter Tom Mathers at (919) 829-4520.

NORTH DAKOTA

► A major environmental controversy has erupted near Sawyer, N.D., about 10 miles from Minot, over the proposed dumping of incinerated trash originating in Minneapolis, Minn., reported Steve Trousley, managing editor of the *Minot Daily News*. Municipal Service Corp., a subsidiary of Union Pacific, proposed to line an abandoned open pit coal mine in preparation for dumping the garbage. The community is split 50-50 over whether a permit should be granted, with rural people who are dependent on private wells in opposition. The project would create 18 jobs, and the Minot Chamber of Commerce, in its first political

statement, gives it a green light. Contact: Jill Schramm, (701) 852-3341.

OHIO

► WYTV-TV in Youngstown has been broadcasting weekly environmental reports since June. Called "Environmental Matters," the segment highlights a different issue each Monday, said Stan Boney, weather caster and environmental reporter. Boney said he tries to stay away from daily stories that would be covered by other reporters. He has highlighted issues including Ohio's loss of wetlands (only about 5 percent of the original wetlands remain), the solid waste crisis, the ozone layer and which candidate for governor local environmental groups endorsed. He also has broadcast feature pieces such as an explanation for what's taking place when it's autumn.

► The *Cleveland Plain Dealer* recently added a second environmental reporter with "the realization that there are just so many stories here," said Tom Breckenridge, who has been covering environment for the paper for one-and-a-half years. Breckenridge said one story the paper has been covering for two years appears to have come to a conclusion. Laidlaw Inc. recently closed its hazardous waste treatment facility in Cleveland after numerous environmental actions by the city, state and federal governments and a August shutdown ordered by a county court. Breckenridge said coverage of the facility had taken up as much as one-fourth of his reporting time.

► The *Cincinnati Enquirer* published a package June 24 on the city's odor hot-spots and the unenforceable nuisance laws that prevent neighbors of chemical factories from easing the assault on their noses. According to the package and additional articles by environmental reporter Scott Burgins, health departments, air pollution control agencies and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency claim the state's nuisance law is too difficult to enforce because of the various interpretations of what smells bad. Burgins recommends that reporters contact agencies in their coverage areas to learn if similar barriers stand in

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the way of enforcing local nuisance laws. He can be contacted at (513) 369-1930.

OREGON

► The *Oregonian*, the state's largest newspaper, is in the midst of a major series on the past, present and future of the Northwest's old growth forests. The reporting has intensified public discussion of the old growth issue both in the Northwest and on Capitol Hill. The work has three parts. The first, documenting a history of over-cutting, ran in September. The second, focusing on forests and timber communities in southern Oregon, ran in October. The third, a look at forestry's future, was scheduled for publication in December. The September segment, by reporters Kathie Durbin and Paul Koberstein, can be obtained by sending \$1 to Timber Series, c/o Circulation Dept., the *Oregonian*, 1320 S.W. Broadway, Portland, OR 97201.

► Oregon voters turned down two path-breaking environmental initiatives Nov. 6 after opponents dumped more than \$5 million into defeating them. Measure 4 would have closed the 15-year-old Trojan Nuclear Plant, Oregon's only nuclear power plant, until the U.S. Department of Energy opens a permanent national repository for spent fuel rods. The plant on the Columbia River also would have remained closed until Portland General Electric Co., Trojan's operating utility, proved to the Energy Facility Siting Council that it could withstand a major earthquake without a threat to public safety. PGE mounted a \$3.2 million campaign to sell its message that closing the plant would hasten energy shortages in the region, raise utility rates and require burning of polluting fossil fuels to replace lost nuclear generating capacity. Major national oil, chemical and packaging companies, including Exxon Corp., Union Carbide Co. and Dow Chemical, contributed to a \$2.2 million campaign to defeat Measure 6, a bold recycling initiative sponsored by the Oregon State Public Interest Research Group that would have required most packaging for products sold in Oregon to meet stiff recycling standards over a 12-year phase-in period. Proponents cried foul over allegations by opponents that the measure could threaten public

health. Conservation groups say recyclable packaging is the next big battle in the effort to reduce solid waste and groups in at least seven states plan to introduce measures similar to Oregon's in their state legislatures next year.

PENNSYLVANIA

► The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* has begun devoting its weekly science page to environmental issues once a month. Dubbed "Earth News," the page has carried stories on the decline in the number of amphibians and on whether the time is right for electric vehicles. A review of environmentally related legislation may become a regular feature, said assistant managing editor Mark Roth. A free sample copy of the page is available by calling science editor Byron Spice at (412) 263-1578 or writing to Spice at the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 50 Boulevard of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. The *Pittsburgh Press* has published a special section, entitled "The Household Recycling Guidebook," to coincide with the start-up of mandatory trash recycling in Pennsylvania. The consumer-oriented booklet describes the recycling programs for 85 communities in southwestern Pennsylvania, listing materials that must be recycled, how to prepare them and when to place them at the curb for collection. For a free copy, call environmental writer Ralph Haurwitz at (412) 263-1986 or write to Haurwitz at the *Pittsburgh Press*, P.O. Box 566, Pittsburgh, PA 15230.

► A report questioning the safety of hundreds of roadside springs in Pennsylvania has been issued by the state legislature's Joint Conservation Committee. Many of the springs, which are popular sources of drinking water in rural areas, may be contaminated with bacteria and other pollutants. Free copies of the report, "The Use and Regulation of Roadside Springs in Pennsylvania," can be obtained from the committee by calling (717) 787-7570 or writing to Box 254, main capitol building, Harrisburg, PA 17120.

► WCAU-TV in Philadelphia is making a concerted effort to include one or two environmental reports in its weekly story budget, said news director Paul Gluck.

Science reporter Terry Ruggles and medical correspondent Cherie Bank do most of the environmental stories. One recent report dealt with the need to preserve rain forests, in part because they are storehouses for many plants from which medicines are derived. Another piece described an effort to revegetate a hillside in Palmerton, Carbon County, that was devastated by zinc pollution.

► WTAE-TV in Pittsburgh made the environment a special segment in its news broadcasts for two months. The series, called Project Earth, dealt with a wide variety of land, water, air and energy issues. The chief correspondent was Susan Brozek, a general-assignments reporter who does most of the station's reporting on environmental matters. News director Joe Rovitto said the television station's audience has a high level of interest in environmental news.

RHODE ISLAND

► A group of environmentalists, academics and state officials has launched a new organization called Green Rhode Island designed to spur the state to greater environmental achievements. The group is actually a loose coalition containing members of the state's more than 30 environmental organizations and it is designed to serve as a catalyst for environmental change in the future. It is setting goals and will serve to prod or push officials toward improvements. The goals by the year 2000 are: recycling 50 percent of its waste and 60 percent of its hazardous waste; reduce the consumption of electricity, fossil fuels and water by 20 percent; preserve 15,000 more acres of open space linked to greenways; and eliminate the flow of untreated sewage into Narragansett Bay. A story about the group appeared in the *Providence Journal* Sept. 14, 1990. For further information contact Harold Ward, Brown University, (401) 863-3449.

► All three television stations in Rhode Island now have reporters assigned to cover the environment. WJAR has long had an environmental beat but its competitors, WLNE and WPRI recently established beat reporters.

SOUTH DAKOTA

► Voters in South Dakota split on two environmental initiatives on the November ballot, reported Steve Young of the *Sioux Falls Angus Leader*. The first would require the legislature to approve permits for large-scale solid waste sites in the state. One such site, called Lone Tree, was under development when the vote occurred. Now it's on hold because voters OK'd the initiative 53 percent to 47 percent. The second proposal would have limited surface gold mining in South Dakota to 3,100 acres (after which acre-for-acre reclamation would have been required). It failed, also by 53 percent to 47 percent. Both ideas were pushed by a group called the Surface Mining Initiative Fund of Rapid City, S.D. Phone Steve Young at (605) 331-2200.

TEXAS

► The Energy Department is finishing its environmental impact statement on the Superconducting Supercollider, the 54-mile-long atom-smashing tunnel to be built just southeast of Dallas. In a draft supplemental EIS, the DOE said the world's largest science project will produce more low-level radioactive waste and pose a slightly greater chance of radiation exposure than previous versions of the EIS had indicated. But the DOE insists that the public is not at risk from the \$8-billion project. The DOE currently plans to ship the collider's low-level waste by truck to the DOE reservation in Hanford, Wash., but will consider shipping it to a West Texas repository if one is built. Reporters and local residents have frequently asked DOE officials how the public can expect competent environmental quality control from the same agency that produced Hanford and Rocky Flats. The DOE says it has instituted agency-wide reforms, and notes that the nature of risk from the SSC is fundamentally different from the problems at weapons plants. Copies of the draft supplemental EIS are available from James Abbee at the SSC office, (214) 708-2580. In Washington, contact Jeff Sherwood at the DOE, (202) 586-5806.

► The *Dallas Times-Herald* put a new spin on an old story with a series of reports

on poor conditions for the animals at the International Wildlife Park, an animal attraction in suburban Dallas. The paper noted that the animals' surroundings and care had deteriorated for years, but the park's managers had managed to duck repeated investigations. The series profiled International Animal Exchange, the Ferndale, Mich., company that operates the park, and noted that IAE had grown to be one of the world's biggest traders in exotic and endangered species. The Seattle and Detroit zoos won't do business with IAE any more, contending that the firm's owners "emphasize profit over conservation," the paper said. But nearly every other zoo in the country still trades with IAE, despite continuing federal investigations and a recent suspension (since lifted) of the firm's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service permit. For copies of reporter Allison Young's series, contact the *Dallas Times Herald's* back copies department at (214) 720-6158.

► The country's most expensive nuclear power plant, the \$10-billion Comanche Peak plant, has had a rocky start since beginning commercial operations in August. Frequent shutdowns have drawn criticism from anti-nuclear watchdog and consumer groups, many of which branded TU Electric's plant 80 miles southwest of Dallas as a lemon. TU Electric contended that the start-up was within normal ranges. To verify that claim, the *Dallas Morning News* compared start-up periods for the other commercial reactors that started operations in the past two years. The comparison, using Nuclear Regulatory Commission reports, found that Comanche Park was pretty much average in its early problems. But the paper also reported something TU Electric failed to mention: A 1987 NRC study of new plants showed that operator errors and serious mistakes in response to problems are far more common in new plants. The study, which went nearly unnoticed when published in 1987, also concluded that the NRC and the industry had come to accept an unsatisfactory performance level from new plants. The NRC's own staff found that average wasn't good enough. For copies of the story, contact reporter Randy Loftis at the *Dallas Morning News*, Communications Center, Dallas, TX 75080; phone 1-800-431-0010.

► Bird kills continue. Federal officials believe several hundred thousand migratory birds die every year in the open oil waste pits of Texas and Oklahoma. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began cracking down on companies that operate open waste pits after a year-long voluntary compliance period that ended in October 1989. During the compliance period, federal officials encouraged oil companies to cover their pits with screens or nets to prevent birds from touching the oil. Since the deadline expired, federal agents have compiled more than 40 cases against Texas oil companies for violations of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Texas and Oklahoma still have not required oil companies to cover their waste oil facilities. Call Special Agent Rob Lee at (806) 743-7273.

► In Austin, the fight over Barton Creek continues. At stake is a multi-million dollar development west of the city called the Barton Creek Planned Unit Development (PUD) that will include 4,300 homes, three million square feet of commercial space and three golf courses. A few miles downstream of the planned development is Barton Springs, a large, spring-fed pool in the heart of the city. Many citizens believe the PUD will pollute the pool, a popular swimming hole for more than a century. The corporations behind the project also have come under scrutiny for their pollution history and ties to the University of Texas. Dallas-based Club Corp., and New Orleans-based Freeport/McMoRan are partners in the project. According to Citizen Action, Freeport/McMoRan was the number one water polluter in the country in 1988. Club Corp. chief Robert Dedman and Freeport CEO Jim Bob Moffat have given millions of dollars to the University of Texas. UT president, William Cunningham, sits on Freeport/McMoRan's board. For more information, call Robert Bryce at the *Austin Chronicle*, (512) 473-8995.

► Formosa Plastics continues to expand along the Texas coast. Despite a history as a corporate polluter, Formosa Plastics is going ahead with a multi-billion dollar expansion of its plastic plant near Point Comfort, Texas. State officials lured the plant to the state by offering \$225 million in tax abatements - a fact that angers local

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residents who oppose the project. In July, the Environmental Protection Agency documented 36 violations of the Clean Water Act. On Oct. 10, the EPA proposed an \$8.3 million fine for the violations. Formosa's history also includes: A \$244,000 fine levied against the company last April by the Texas Water Commission for waste water violations. The fine was the largest ever levied in Texas for industrial pollution. In September 1987, the EPA issued a civil complaint against Formosa and proposed a fine of \$223,850 for failure to pay proper attention to hazardous waste, fire, emergency and ground water safety regulations. Opposition to the project is led by the Calhoun County Resource Watch. Call Diane Wilson (512) 785-2364 or Rick Abraham at (713) 529-8356.

UTAH

► The *Salt Lake Tribune* ran a four-part story on Sept. 16 describing the debate over the Glen Canyon Dam and how it affects the Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park. It was written by the *Tribune's* outdoor editor, Tom Wharton. For copies, write Tom at: The *Salt Lake Tribune*, P.O. Box 867, Salt Lake City, Utah 84110, or call him at (801) 237-2070.

VIRGINIA

► Mary Bishop of the *Roanoke Times and World News* has written more than 100 stories over the past year on pollution caused by a sloppy landfill that lures out-of-state garbage into Allegheny County, a rural area near the West Virginia line. Bishop examined the grassroots movement that has arisen to fight the dump and the responses of state officials who have sued to close the landfill. For a package of 25 stories, contact Bishop, (703) 981-3358.

► The *Virginian-Pilot and Ledger-Star* in Norfolk held a seminar to teach reporters and editors about a set of sweeping land-use regulations designed to protect Chesapeake Bay and a federal government push to protect non-tidal wetlands, which predominate on vacant land in southeastern Virginia. A local land-use planning consultant and the papers' environmental reporter conducted the seminar, the first in

a series of workshops designed to acquaint staff members with environmental issues that cross beat lines. For information, contact Cy Zaneski, (804) 446-2293.

WASHINGTON

► Environmental issues in Washington are keeping editors and reporters very busy. They include the spotted owl/forest crisis, problems with leaks and potentially explosive gases in nuclear waste tanks at the Hanford nuclear reservation, high-voltage power line controversies, dioxin pollution from Canadian pulp and paper mills, Puget Sound water quality, a growth-management initiative on the November ballot, and grassroots battles in Eastern Washington against regional long-haul garbage dumps and toxic waste incinerators. Among the highlights:

► Elouise Schumacher of the *Seattle Times* reported on Sept. 30 that a previously undisclosed leak of millions of gallons of radiation-contaminated cooling water had occurred in a nuclear waste storage tank at Hanford.

► An October 1990 General Accounting Office report (GAO/RCED-91-34) concludes that consequences of an explosion in Hanford's underground single-shell tanks have been understated by the U.S. Department of Energy and its contractors. "Not enough is known about the waste in the single-shell tanks to definitely rule out the possibility of a spontaneous explosion," the report concluded.

► Larry Lange, who covers Hanford and energy issues for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, explored a major controversy in the Oct. 29 issue: where to place a 230,000-volt power line from Canada. A grassroots group in Whatcom County called NOPE (Neighbors Opposing Power Encroachment) organized a successful drive to put the issue on the Nov. 6 ballot. The effort has drawn national attention because it is the first time in the country that a power line proposal has been put to a popular vote.

► Julie Titone, who covers forests, wildlife and water quality issues for the *Spokes-*

man-Review in Spokane, had been reporting last fall on dioxin contamination of Lake Roosevelt, the reservoir created by Grand Coulee Dam on the Columbia River. State, federal and tribal environment officials have proposed a \$1.7 million study of the problem. In addition to research, they want action now to stop industrial effluent that has been pouring into the Upper Columbia River from British Columbia for nearly 100 years. Lake Roosevelt receives diluted heavy metals as well as phosphorus from the Cominco Ltd. smelter and fertilizer plant in Trail, and dioxins from the Celgar Pulp Co. mill in Castlegar. Contacts include Sally Marquis of the Environmental Protection Agency, (206) 442-2116; researcher Ed Broch at Washington State University, (509) 335-3808; and Rick Crozier of the B.C. Ministry of Environment, (604) 354-6355.

► Karen Dorn Steele, who covers nuclear issues and toxics for the *Spokesman-Review*, conducted a 10-month investigation into the handling of nuclear workers' compensation claims. The stories were published on Sept. 9. The investigation disclosed a little-known contract between the Atomic Energy Commission and Washington state officials, signed in secret in 1943, that in some cases hindered Hanford nuclear workers who attempted to file claims for occupational radiation exposure. As a result of the stories, the state's Department of Labor & Industries is conducting a review of worker claims and the General Accounting Office is investigating. For a reprint, contact Dorn Steele at (509) 459-5462.

WEST VIRGINIA

► The *Herald-Dispatch* in Huntington has started a new monthly series called Earth-Walks, ecological amblings with a twist—while exploring wetlands, old-growth forests and other sensitive areas, the stories examine the effect man has had on the land, both in the past and currently. Heavy emphasis is placed on pictures, locator maps and graphics. Contact Monty Fowler, environmental reporter, 946 Fifth Ave., Huntington, W.Va. 25701, for a reprint.

► WSAZ-TV has been following the plight

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of rural residents along Flat Fork Creek near Spencer, W.Va. An EPA report done seven years ago showed high levels of polychlorinated biphenyls in the creek from an electric motor repair company. The report was forgotten until some angry residents unearthed it with a Freedom of Information Act request. New tests last summer showed high levels of contamination at the site, but not in the creek. Now the EPA is negotiating with the site's owner to clean it up. Contact Sheila Gray, WSAZ, Charleston, W.Va., (344)-3521.

WISCONSIN

► The EPA is apparently considering

tighter controls on harmful ozone in large cities like Milwaukee. According to a front page article in the Oct. 14, 1990, *Milwaukee Journal*, new EPA studies show humans are at risk of lung damage when ozone levels reach 80 parts per billion. The current federal ozone standard is 120 ppb. For more information, contact David McKee at EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning in North Carolina, or call *Milwaukee Journal* reporter Don Behm at (414) 224-2000.

► Proposed state limits on use of the corn herbicide Atrazine were discussed at a series of Wisconsin hearings this fall. Environmental groups argued the state

agriculture board had recently weakened the proposal, while Atrazine makers such as Ciba-Geigy contended the rules would go too far. For more information on the status of the rules, contact Nick Neher, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, (608) 266-7130.

► Certain large fish from 16 Wisconsin lakes and several rivers were added to the state's sport fish consumption advisory in mid-October. Mercury is the main contaminant of concern. A total of 194 Wisconsin sites are now on the health warning list. For copies of the latest report, contact Jim Amrhein, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, (608) 266-5325.

SEJournal

Society of Environmental Journalists
1090 Vermont Ave. N.W., Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20005

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