

# SEJ Journal

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# Dirty business?

## Examining if your paper is a polluter

By EMILIA ASKARI

Scouting for a way to localize the Superfund reauthorization story?

Try looking into your own company's Superfund liabilities, but beware. You could uncover the most problematic and ethically challenging story of your career.

I know. Last fall, I wrote a package about the environmental record of my employer, the Detroit Free Press. It was a worthwhile experience, but it's one I hope never to repeat.

For these stories, the Free Press spent several thousand dollars to commission an environmental audit by the Newspaper Association of America. The idea was to ask ourselves the same poten

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## E exposes secrets of newsstand biz

By WILL NIXON

Once a year by order of the U.S. Post Office, every magazine that wants to use second class postage rates must print the cold truth about its ownership and sale figures. This information usually appears in a small box near the end of the magazine in tiny legal-notice type in hopes that few readers will notice. Yet, these boxes hold some fascinating information.

In 1992, *Mad* magazine printed an average of 1,594,178 copies an issue and watched 1,008,829 come back unsold. Although *Time* sells most of its 4.8 million copies via subscription, in 1993 about 374,000 of the 559,000 copies it sent to newsstands

*(Continued on page 7)*

## 'Old' nuke story earns Pulitzer for Albuquerque Trib reporter

Eileen Welsome's Pulitzer-winning series about the U.S. Government's use of 18 citizens as nuclear guinea pigs seems to have captivated fellow journalists to the extent few stories do.

A tale of Americans being injected with plutonium without their consent is a weighty one. But it was not just the quality writing that caught the profession's attention, leading to national coverage that prompted the Energy Department to set up a victims hotline.

What was special was that Welsome dogged the story for six years — ini-

tially against the wishes of her city editor — and did much on her own time. Also, other publications had reported as early as 1976 on the existence of the tests but, unlike Welsome, never followed through to dig out the identities of the test subjects and tell their stories in a way that brought the issue to life.

Much has been written about Welsome's series and the aftermath, but in this issue of SEJournal, Welsome shares some reflections on her reporting odyssey and its lessons. **The Q&A-style report starts on page 8.**

# SEJ president to enter academia

In January 1995 after 20 years as a newspaper journalist I will leave the newsroom and enter academia.

There are many reasons for this change but it boils down to this: I wanted a new professional challenge and a remarkable opportunity came along.

In January I will assume the position of the Knight Chair of Journalism at Michigan State University. As far as I know, the \$1 million chair is the only endowed chair in environmental journalism in the country.

In this new position I will teach courses in environmental and science journalism, develop programs for professional journalists and organize workshops and conferences.

I will also continue to report and write on an occasional basis about scientific and environmental topics for *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. I hope to write articles for other newspapers and magazines. I also hope to write books.

In an era of declining resources the Knight Chair offers a sizeable budget to build a program in environmental journalism. It also gives me a great deal of freedom since I will walk in the door as a full professor with tenure.

The Knight Foundation is planning to give \$1 million grants to 20 universities over a 20-year period to set up endowed professorships in journalism. The goal is to lure journalists back to journalism schools to teach and develop specialized programs.

Among the other journalists who have accepted Knight Chairs are David Broder, the political columnist and reporter at the *Washington Post*, who will teach at Duke University; Philip Meyer, the author of "Precision Journalism" and a 20-year veteran of Knight-Ridder's *Washington Bureau*, who is teaching at the University of North Carolina; Joe Richie, the former national and foreign editor of the *Detroit Free Press*, who is teaching at Florida A & M; and John Ginn, a former president and publisher of a South Carolina newspaper who is teaching at the University of Kansas.

The University of Texas has been awarded the sixth Knight Chair and is

searching for a journalist to direct a program in international reporting.

For the past nine years I've taught courses in science and environmental journalism at Drexel University in Philadelphia. I've enjoyed the opportunity to nurture students and I look forward to working with a new group in Michigan.

I'm excited about the new position because it gives me a chance to grow

and new challenges, the Knight Chair offers me a chance to grow. I look forward to the opportunity.



**SEJ RETREAT** — On April 30 and May 1 the SEJ board of directors, staff and SEJournal editor met in Philadelphia to discuss the future direction of the organization. We charted some goals for the next three to five years.

High on the list is the continued expansion of regional workshops and programs for environmental journalists at various sites around the country. This may include on-site newsroom seminars and an expansion of programs done in conjunction with other organizations, such as IRE and the American Society of Newspaper Editors. Two of the other groups we expect to work with are the National Conference of Editorial Writers and the Radio & Television News Directors Foundation.

We also hope to expand the programs in environmental journalism offered in universities and high schools. We would like to draw in many more students and teachers as members.

We are also exploring the possibility of offering more support to freelance writers. One of the ideas being discussed is modifying the structure of the SEJ board to include representation from both associate and academic members.

Another goal is to expand the SEJournal and possibly increase its frequency to six issues a year. We also hope to expand the information available to environmental reporters on computer bulletin boards, such as the SEJ Forum.

Other ideas being discussed are increased programs for international journalists. We would like to work with the International Federation of Environmental Journalists to publish a worldwide directory of environmental writers.

In time, we would also like to see the creation of SEJ awards for outstanding reporting on TV, radio and possibly other media. And handbooks or other environmental journalism guides are also being considered.

*(Continued on page 16)*

## Report from the society's president

By Jim Detjen



personally and professionally while letting me develop programs in environmental journalism — a field I care deeply about. I look forward to reading and thinking more deeply about many journalism and environmental issues.

One of the areas I'd like to explore more deeply are the experiments going on around the country to design and build an ecologically sustainable society. I recently read David Orr's book, "Ecological Literacy," and it further whetted my interest in the topic. There are also some wonderful magazines — such as "In Context" — that are being published, which describe many of these efforts around the country.

I will continue to remain active in the society from my position in Michigan although it is not clear yet exactly what my role will be. I expect to remain involved in fundraising, developing stronger ties to universities, planning international programs and helping to organize conferences.

As someone who thrives on adven-

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#### Co-editors

Adam Glenn and Kevin Carmody

#### Features Editor

Jeff Erlich

#### Section Editors

Viewpoints	Craig LaMay
Toolbox; On-line Bits & Bytes	Russ Clemings
New members list	Chris Rigel
Calendar	Janet Raloff
Greenbeat	Kevin Carmody
Books	Kathy Sagan
Science Survey	Rich Stone

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For inquiries regarding the SEJ, please contact Executive Director Beth Parke at the SEJ office, 9425 Stenton Ave., Suite 209, Philadelphia, Pa. 19118 Ph: 215-247-9710. SEJ Office Internet address: SEJOffice@AOL.COM



The Society of Environmental Journalists (SEJ) is a non-profit, tax exempt, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to enhancing the quality and accuracy of environmental reporting. SEJ works through a variety of programs and services to encourage information sharing and discussion among journalists, scientists, educators, government officials, industry representatives, environmental advocacy groups and concerned citizens regarding important environmental issues. SEJ's purpose is to enable journalists to better inform the public about critical issues concerning the environment. SEJ's membership of nearly 900 includes journalists working for newspapers, television and radio stations, broadcast and cable networks, magazines, newsletters, wire services and photo agencies, as well as educators and students. Non-members are welcome to attend SEJ's conferences and to subscribe to this quarterly publication.

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## Editor unhappy with story

To the editors:

I have to take issue with the short shrift that I feel was given to *E Magazine* in your story, "Fading mags: Environmental publications fall on hard times, reassess market" (Summer 1994) and in the Associated Press story which was spun off of it.

*E* has lived "hand-to-mouth" since it began and, if anything, we are in a better financial position in 1994 than we have ever been. We were undercapitalized from the start (we began with \$123,000 in loans, period — while the other eco-mags started with either a few million or the backing of a well-endowed environment organization). So, *E*'s "hand-to-mouth" situation is nothing new, not a trend.

Our circulation cut from 75,000 to 50,000 recently, as I explained to David Kalish, the writer, is attributable to two things: First, private foundations, unwilling to provide general funding to help adequately capitalize this project, were only willing to supply funds to provide free subscriptions to libraries. The grants expired at the end of 1992 and 13,000 free library subscriptions got lopped off of the press run (actually, 3,000 did stay on as paying subscribers — not a bad showing considering that all 13,000 had received *E* initially without requesting it).

Secondly, we did, once and for all, decide to get out of the newsstand business because of the inherent waste in this corrupt and inefficient industry (we are still in bookstores and we sell very well in the health food store market). We wrote about this issue in our Nov./Dec. 1993 issue (See story page 1).

Our paid subscriber circulation has remained constant since our inception — and would have grown, I believe, had foundations in the environmental arena demonstrated more vision in recognizing the need for these issues to compete strongly out there in the marketplace of ideas along with all the Lorena Bobbit, Tonya Harding fluff. The right wing sees the value of media and funds it strongly; progressive foundations don't tend to get it. As such, we've literally had no money with which to promote circulation.

Whatever dire predictions one might like to make about the fate of eco-mags, it remains that, in a country of 250 million that is buried in magazines about every other topic on the face of the planet, independent environmental journalists are needed to raise the issues (indeed, we syndicate a great deal of our articles to newspapers, the ones that your writer infers are covering the environment enough so that we're not needed).

If I were an anti-apartheid publisher in South Africa, I would not have, at the height of white-on-black violence, concluded that the "mood" had changed and my publication was therefore no longer relevant. Indeed, while there may be a lull in environmental interest right now, it only gives me the resolve to press on.

Sincerely,

Doug Moss  
Editor/Publisher/Founder, *E Magazine*

# 1994 conference taking shape

By MARLA CONE

A trio of top Clinton administration officials, issue-oriented tours and a roundtable discussion about the media's handling of serious topics will highlight the Society of Environmental Journalists' 1994 National Conference in Utah this fall.

Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt and Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol Browner have all agreed to attend the Oct. 6-9 event.

Following last year's debate on the state of environmental journalism, this year's opening roundtable, Friday, Oct. 7, will expand the subject with discussion of whether mainstream news media are losing their commitment to substance, along with possible repercussions of such a trend for environmental reporting.

Confirmed as participants in the roundtable are Gregory Favre, president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors and executive editor of the Sacramento Bee, Tom Winship, former executive editor of the Boston Globe and chairman of the Center for Foreign Journalists; F. Sherwood Rowland, the University of California scientist renowned for discovering the link between chlorofluorocarbons and ozone depletion; former EPA administrator Lee Thomas, now a vice president of Georgia Pacific; and Native American author and activist Winona LaDuke.

Also invited for the roundtable are Elizabeth Dowdeswell, under secretary general of the United Nations and executive director of the U.N. Environment Program; Shelby Coffey III, editor of the Los Angeles Times; Gene Roberts, managing editor of the New York Times; Kathleen Hall Jamieson, dean of the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School for Communication; and Jeff Greenfield, media analyst and commentator for ABC News.

All-day tours on Saturday, Oct. 8, promise to be much more than just field trips. Reporters will mix with academics and activists, industry reps and government officials on road trips to review the "new West" and its myriad environ-

mental concerns.

From a massive open-pit copper mine and a military incinerator that burns nerve gas, to impacts on public land from recreation and ubiquitous grazing concerns, each tour offers a unique slice of the West.

Friday afternoon will feature two sets of seven concurrent panels on diverse topics. Eileen Welsome, 1994 Pulitzer Prize winner from the Albuquerque Tribune, will speak on the radiation safety panel, and Keith Schneider of the New York Times will moderate a panel on property rights vs endangered species and habitat protection. Also on

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***Rooms at Sundance are going quickly. Hotline for lodging and discount airfare is (800)990-4146***

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the platter: a demonstration of geographical information systems being used in the new National Biological Survey; a two-part panel on chlorine and environmental estrogens; and panels addressing the changing face of the West; bioprospecting in the rainforest with BYU ethnobotanist Paul Cox and representatives from Costa Rica; and new frontiers in pollution control, including L.A.'s new "smog market."

Sunday morning will be time to relax at an informal writer's workshop, which features a session with writing coach Don Fry and talks by a handful of well-known nature writers, including Terry Tempest-Williams, Timothy Egan and William Least Heat Moon. Fry directed writing programs at the Poynter Institute for nine years and edited several editions of the ASNE's Best Newspaper Writing books.

SEJ members are asked to volunteer some examples of their own writing that Fry can use in the workshop. Please send them to Mike Mansur, The Kansas City Star, 1729 Grand Ave., Kansas City, MO 64108. Mark the envelope "SEJ Writing Forum." Mansur, who is coordinating the workshop, says "Don't just send your favorite lede. Dig out that story that you struggled with and thought

you never got quite right. Any comments along with clips are welcome. Keep them short, though."

Print journalists should bring several copies of clips to share with other SEJ members in the reading room. TV journalists are invited to send tapes to be compiled for conference viewers to Melissa Ballard, Earth Matters, CNN, 1 CNN Center, Atlanta, GA 30348. Send radio stories to Beth Parke at the SEJ office.

Vice President Al Gore has been invited to give a keynote address at Friday's lunch, but he will be unable to confirm until a few days before the event.

Bruce Babbitt plans to meet with several small groups of reporters to talk about specific topics, such as the Endangered Species Act and the National Biological Survey. SEJ will take names and hold a lottery to determine which members will attend, as space will be limited. Journalists should write the SEJ office by August 15 to register for the lottery.

U.S. Forest Service chief Jack Ward Thomas and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Mollie Beattie are also expected to attend.

The conference, set at Brigham Young University's conference center in Provo and Robert Redford's nearby Sundance resort, will begin Thursday evening with a reception and end early Sunday afternoon.

Rooms are going quickly at Sundance, which can accommodate only 150 people, so call soon. Provo Park Hotel is the other main lodging option.

The hotline for reserving rooms is (800) 990-4146. Roommate matching services are available. Extra bus trips to Yellowstone and Zion national parks will also be available after the conference, and depart Sunday afternoon.

Call the hotline for information. Registrations postmarked by August 5 are \$95 for SEJ members and \$275 for non-members. After that date, the fee jumps to \$125 for members and \$350 for non-members.

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*Marla Cone is environment writer at the Los Angeles Times and chair of the 1994 National Conference.*

# Detroit ... (from page 1)

tially embarrassing questions that we ask other companies. Then publish the answers.

We expected to find some infractions of environmental regulations but no huge crimes. That's pretty much the way it turned out. Not surprisingly, the auditor concluded that the Free Press — the ninth largest newspaper in the country — is a better environmental citizen than many similar newspapers.

Perhaps to prove that point, the people who run our printing plant happened to hire an environmental compliance expert on the very day that the auditor was touring our operations. The timing was strictly coincidental, managers asserted.

Still, much unflattering information about the Free Press made it into my stories — including the tale of several company-owned underground storage tanks that were oozing gasoline into the earth. In addition, the auditor's complete, 80-page report was offered for sale to interested readers.

As is often the case, several tantalizing and somewhat tangential details were cut from the final draft of my stories. Among them, this: that the Free Press's parent company, Knight-Ridder Inc., has been identified as a potentially responsible party at several Superfund sites.

Knight-Ridder's top environmental compliance officer, Ernest King, assured me that the Detroit Free Press is not linked to the Superfund sites. That's why my editors argued that the information was not relevant to my stories and should be axed.

These editors advised me to store a paragraph or two about Knight-Ridder's Superfund liabilities for some future story. I did. I'm happy to share them with other SEJ members, along with this challenge:

If you'd like to exercise your ethics by covering your employer's environmental record, the Superfund story may

be an easy, timely and interesting way to start.

If, like many of us, you work for a major media conglomerate, all you have to do is check your company's 10-K. That's a standard document that all public companies must file with the Securi-

## Some reporters get tough assignments

A number of other journalists have attempted to cover their own company's environmental problems or industry wide environmental issues, such as the toxic nature of some inks and darkroom chemicals. For example:

A recent issue of Sierra magazine carried the headline "Mea Pulpa" for a cover story that thoroughly examined the difficulty with recycling slick paper and the extra expenses involved with trying to print an environmentally correct magazine.

Dan Jones, environment reporter at the Hartford Courant, has written about the recycled content of the newsprint his paper uses.

Several years ago, when she was working for the Orlando Sentinel, Businessweek's Mary Beth Regan tackled the story of groundwater pollution near a Sentinel-owned plant. During a panel discussion at last year's SEJ national conference, Regan reported that Sentinel managers acted like managers at any other firm that might be linked to pollution: initially, they were reluctant to talk about it.

ties and Exchange Commission in New York. Several on-line databases offer 10-K reports. You can get hard copies by requesting them from your company's headquarters.

On page 53 of Knight-Ridder's 1992 10-K, under the heading "Note I - Commitments and Contingencies" I found this passage:

"The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (Superfund) establishes a fund to clean up deposits and spills of hazardous substances. The Company has been identified by certain regulatory agencies as one of several potentially responsible parties in connection with the generation of allegedly hazardous substances

which may have been disposed of or reclaimed by third-party contractors at sites in New Jersey, Maryland, South Carolina, North Carolina and Pennsylvania.

"The Company, certain other potentially responsible parties and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have entered into consent orders relating to the sites in New Jersey, South Carolina and North Carolina providing for remedial investigations and feasibility studies or remediation to be performed.

"The Company does not believe that it was a substantial contributor to the hazardous waste contamination at any of these sites. The Company does not anticipate that any liability arising from ultimate relief secured by regulatory agencies or other persons will have a material effect on the Company's business or financial condition. The Company is cooperating with the appropriate regulatory agencies with respect to compliance with environmental laws."

Very interesting, I thought when I ran across this passage last year. I called King at Knight-Ridder headquarters in Miami, where executives oversee several wire services and 30-odd news-

papers including the Free Press, the Philadelphia Inquirer and the Miami Herald.

"To which sites is Knight-Ridder linked?" I asked. "What's the extent of the liability? How did Knight-Ridder become involved?"

King responded: "Why do you want to know?"

I explained that I needed the information for some stories I was writing about the Free Press's environmental record. King disagreed, insisting that the Free Press was not involved so I didn't need to know more.

I tried to persuade King that he had a moral obligation to release the site names since he works for a news organi-

zation.

It didn't work.

Now, if I worked for a Knight-Ridder property in Pennsylvania or South Carolina or any of the other states where the Superfund sites were located, that would be different, King said last year. In that case, he would have happily told me all the details.

After King refused to tell me about Superfund sites where Knight-Ridder had potential liabilities, I turned to other sources. The Environmental Protection Agency was little help in tracking down the details of Knight-Ridder's Superfund involvement. I did not have the names of the sites, so could not call bureaucrats responsible for them. And since Knight-Ridder does business under many names, it was impossible to conduct a thorough search of EPA's electronic database of potentially responsible parties.

Under the name "Knight-Ridder," I found only one entry in that database. It linked my company with an old dump in South Carolina. I guessed that Knight-Ridder, like many large businesses in this country, once shipped some waste to a dump that turned into a Superfund site. I didn't check out this hunch, however, because by the time I learned the name of the South Carolina site I had already lost my battle to include the Superfund reference in my story.

If you decide to pursue such a story, be advised that you could spend considerable personal capital reporting about your company's environmental affairs. It's likely that editors who support you will have to argue long and hard on your behalf — which means you could owe them a week of Sunday shifts by the time it's all over.

I am grateful to editors at the Free Press who fought for my stories, arguing that newspapers have an obligation to be as open as we want other companies to be. These editors ranged from my immediate boss, Assistant City Editor Kathy O'Gorman, to Executive Editor Heath Meriwether.

Two years passed between the time I first floated the idea of doing a story about an environmental audit of the Free

Press and the time the story was printed. Getting permission to do the audit was vastly complicated by the fact that the Free Press is in a joint operating agreement with the Detroit News.

Such agreements allow two competing newspapers in one city to combine their business operations to keep one of the newspapers from closing. In Detroit, the JOA meant that officials of both Knight-Ridder and Gannett, the News' parent company, had to allow an auditor to tour our joint production and

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***If you're looking for further tips on pursuing such a story, or just some moral support, Askari invites you to contact her via telephone or e-mail. She can be reached at 800-678-6400 ext. 4536 or 313-223-4525. Her internet address is askari@det-freepress.com and America On-line address is emiliaa.***

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distribution facilities.

Selection of the auditor also was problematic. I had hoped for a complete outsider. Knight-Ridder executives in Miami wanted a less expensive auditor with the Newspaper Association of America, a trade group to which Knight-Ridder belongs. They won.

In my stories, I quoted a leader of the local newspaper union saying that hiring an NAA auditor to evaluate the Free Press was like asking a tobacco industry consultant to evaluate the health effects of smoking. The man who oversees the Free Press business operations countered that the union wouldn't have been pleased with the audit if it had been performed by Jesus Christ.

On the plus side, the NAA auditor was very familiar with the newspaper business, knew what he was looking for, and seemed to be an ethical person. He swore he would not be influenced by King, who accompanied the NAA auditor wherever he went, offering helpful comments. When the auditor noted that our black ink is petroleum-based, King exclaimed, "So is baby oil!"

Editing the audit stories was excruciating and time-consuming. Every word was challenged. No unfavorable information from the audit report was hidden from readers, yet the company's re-

sponses to that information were phrased with extraordinary care.

At times, some of the many editors reading the stories questioned my motives, suggesting that perhaps I was out to get the company. They acted as if I had been co-opted by Greenpeace or the newspaper union, to which all Free Press reporters and many editors must belong.

Other editors found the stories boring and full of regulatory details. Some questioned whether the audit stories were worth the time and attention we were spending on them.

I think the answer is yes. Although the stories did not get a flood of response from readers, they generated more calls than most packages played on the cover of our Monday business tab. They also were recognized by many sources and potential sources as unusual, risky journalism. That has increased my credibility and introduced me to several new and valuable contacts.

In addition, the stories may have encouraged the Free Press to clean up those leaking tanks more rapidly and recycle that office waste more enthusiastically.

Still, I don't think I want to write this kind of story again. That may explain why I haven't found occasion to use those Superfund paragraphs.

Today, almost a year after the audit stories ran, the newspaper union still is tussling with Knight-Ridder management over another piece of information that King withheld from me: the results of an environmental audit of the Free Press and Detroit News that King conducted months before the NAA auditor was allowed to tour the buildings.

Union leaders asked for my help with that fight, and I quickly declined. I've moved on to other stories, thank you. And I leave the battle to report openly and ethically about the environmental impacts of the media business to my capable colleagues.

---

*Emilia Askari covers the environment for the Detroit Free Press. She previously worked for the Los Angeles Herald Examiner and the Miami Herald. She is second vice president of SEJ.*

# Magazines ... (from page 1)

were returned unsold. And *E* magazine, where I work, printed an average of 69,166 copies in 1993, sold 48,317 and had 10,104 returned from newsstands.

You've probably spotted the glitch in the sales and distribution system — the large number of copies that never leave the newsstand, wasting paper, labor and money. Each year, magazines use four million tons of coated paper, according to the Magazine Publishers of America, but 600,000 tons of it returns as unread waste. The industry can try to recycle as much as possible, but why create such a problem in the first place?

*E* magazine was launched in 1989 with hopes of reaching general readers who may not belong to environmental groups, i.e. people who might well discover it at newsstands. *E* also followed its own environmental principles, from using recycled paper to screening advertisers. But these hopes and principles collided at the newsstand.

At some outlets, such as college bookstores and health food groceries, *E* sold well. But at the major newsstands, the ones quilted with the national news, sports and women's magazines, it landed on a downhill slope. For the inaugural issue, *E* produced 25,000 copies for newsstands and sold 40 percent of them, a respectable start. But the sales percentage began dropping with subsequent issues, and publisher Doug Moss found himself tangling with his national magazine distributors to reduce the oversupply of copies at many outlets.

In a particularly bad example, a ship-

ment of 900 copies to one city sold about 60 copies, hardly better than the 50 sold from a previous shipment of 150. The extra copies may never have left their boxes.

"I found out the hard way how corrupt, inefficient and environmentally wasteful the newsstand distribution business is," Moss says. "And I realized that the major magazines, who are part of the problem, were not likely to write about this self-incriminating issue."

*E* hired a freelance writer, Diane Cyr, who often covers the industry for *Folio*, a leading trade magazine. In her investigation, she found that yes, there is tremendous waste and it's getting worse. But Cyr also found that what may look like lunacy from an environmental perspective makes some financial sense.

"The best of the single-copy sellers, like checkout standards *Cosmopolitan* and *TV Guide*, once sold eight or nine of every 10 copies on the newsstand. They now sell just six to eight. As for the rest of the 3,000 or so titles on 180,000 newsstands nationwide, sell-through is three to five out of 10 copies," she wrote. And she found that many magazines besides *E* complained about the problem, "but they see this system as being out of their hands," she says.

Many national magazine distributors make their commissions on total sales, not on the percentages of sell-through. And publishers often find newsstand sales to be more profitable than subscriptions, since advertisers consider newsstand buyers to be more discrimi-

nating and the publishers have often discounted subscription rates so low. And the number of magazine titles has grown from 1,700 in the 1980s to 3,300 today, creating a glut on the shelves that forces everyone to display more copies just to get noticed. "Our culture has created this morass," Cyr says. "There is no easy answer."

In "The Magazine Racket" which appeared in the November/December 1993 issue of *E*, Cyr finds that the answer is for newsstands to try to limit the number of copies they receive, and not simply let the wholesalers run the show. And publishers can also be selective about distributors, dropping those that waste far more than they sell.

*E* has now reduced its print run for newsstands to a rock bottom 2,000 copies. It has lost some sales, but it has lost even more waste. *E* now relies on some alternative networks to distribute 20,000 copies an issue, with much better results. It ships small bundles of copies directly to health food stores and other shops that draw environmental people; it also works with smaller Mom and Pop wholesalers who specialize in alternative magazines.

Moss says that he made this decision independent of the article, but he was glad to bring the issue to the public eye. Besides, he got to run one of his favorite cover lines of the year: "Buy This Magazine Or We'll Shred It."

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*Will Nixon is Associate Editor of E magazine and a SEJ member.*

## FACS offering three courses on enviro issues

The following are scheduled courses developed by the Foundation for American Communications. Most last three days and are open to the first 40 qualified applicants.

With meals and lodging subsidized, the cost to attendees is \$75 per session, although travel costs are the responsibility of each attendee. If you're interested, contact: FACS, 3800 Barham Blvd, Ste. 409, Los Angeles, CA 90068. (213) 851-7372; FAX:(213) 851-9186.

The upcoming programs are:

- Sept. 9-11. Urban Poverty (dates still tentative), in Los Angeles
- Oct. 7-9. Solid Wastes, site—Chicago or Virginia—still undecided
- Nov. 11-13. Public Lands, Reno, Nevada.

Those who hurry still get in under the wire in applying for week long Institute on Economics for Journalists, also sponsored by FACS and funded by the Ford Foundation. It's slated for July 9-15 at

the Marconi Conf. Center in Tomales Bay, CA, and will explore how market economics and other issues play into such things as trade, competitiveness, urban congestion, and pollution. The role of taxes and regulation also will be discussed. The 25 attendees will focus not on news, organizers say, but on "the concepts you'll use for stacks of stories to come." Subsidized cost to each participant—\$500—covers meals and lodging.



# Hot Topic: Inside the plutonium story with author Eileen Welsome

**SEJournal:** Several times since 1976, newsletters, newspapers and magazines have reported on these plutonium experiments and other cases, and that includes coverage of the report by U.S. Rep. Ed Markey in 1986 in which he identified 31 radiation experiments affecting 700 people from the mid-1940s to the early 1970s. Why do you think the reaction to your series has been so high-profile, considering how the earlier stories were virtually ignored or quickly forgotten by the national media? Did other reporters miss the boat in not pursuing this story?

**Welsome:** I don't think that other reporters missed the boat. I think that our story was published at the right time. In other words, the Secretary of Energy, Hazel O'Leary, gave this story a momentum that certainly we, at a 35,000 circulation newspaper in New Mexico, could have never hoped to achieve. I would like to think that the stories of these victims were so compelling that it would have percolated up to the national consciousness and into the headlines without the statements that were made by the Secretary of Energy. But I don't know that for a fact. One thing I do know is that even before the Secretary of Energy held her Dec. 7 press conference where she acknowledged that this experiment had, in fact, occurred and that there was some wrongdoing, NBC Now was already in New Mexico working on this story. So this story would have made it to an audience of millions, regardless of that press conference.

**SEJournal:** With the benefit of hindsight, what, if anything, might you have done differently, either in the reporting or writing process.

**Welsome:** I think if I had to do it all over again, I would have put my foot down, and insisted that the paper give me the time to research this story back in 1987. The reason I feel some sadness about it taking so long, is because there were a number of people who were still living that were very involved in the experiment, including, but not limited to Elmer Allen. He was the last person injected with plutonium, and he died in 1991. Also, the father of the 4-year-old patient was still living then. A number of scientists, I believe, were still living then. So, had I been able to pursue this in 1987 when I first discovered it, I would have had the opportunity to talk to one of the patients, perhaps some of the key doctors and scientists and other relatives who were involved or affected by the experiment.

**SEJournal:** Some colleagues have commented that if your series had been published two or three years earlier, certainly six or eight years earlier during the Reagan Administration, that the prior secretaries of Energy and the agency probably would have ignored the series and the issue would have died

again. Would you agree with that assessment and what would that say about the political system in Washington?

**Welsome:** The Tribune has had its differences with the Energy Secretary. But I was amazed and pleased by her direct response to this series. She broke with 50 years of history when she acknowledged that wrongdoing had occurred. And in fact, her predecessors were individuals who not only gave the green light to this experiment, but condoned it. So, she did



Welsome

180 degree turn from what her predecessors had done. I think that, that's why her courage and her forthrightness is something to be applauded, and I think that's why she's become such a popular figure in the Clinton Administration. To answer the question however, certainly the basic facts of this and many other experiments were described in late 1986 (in the Markey report), but the Reagan Administration at that time chose to pooh-pooh it. So, had a Republican Administration been in there again, would the same thing have happened? It's quite possible. But I don't know the answer to that. I would like to think that the acknowledgment of this whole era of Cold War history would have occurred regardless of who was in office, but that's

perhaps a naive hope.

**SEJournal:** In the months following publication of the series, you and other journalists have been able to identify all but two of the 18 subjects of the plutonium experiment. Did publication of the series help in the identification process and, if so, how?

**Welsome:** I think publication of the series put pressure on the Department of Energy to speed up release of the medical records. This spring we got two boxes of documents including one box of medical files on all 18 patients. The names were redacted and other identifying factors were removed from the records. But the files still contained clues that I and other reporters were able to use, just like the clues that we used to identify the first five patients — things like a reference to a cemetery or funeral home or hometown.

**SEJournal:** To what extent is the Department of Energy and Hazel O'Leary continuing to stonewall regarding the names?

**Welsome:** The Department of Energy is still clinging to the position that they do not have to release the names of these patients because it would violate the privacy of surviving family members. We believe that dead people have no privacy and that in a court of law the Tribune will prevail and DOE will be forced to release the remaining names.

**SEJournal:** Is the Tribune still pursuing the case or is it moot



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## Plutonium Package

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*considering that you probably have identified the last identifiable test subject?*

**Welsome:** I would like to see the Tribune continue to pursue it as a matter of principle and because it would be an opportunity to get back the legal fees that we've paid out. I would like to see those legal fees come directly from the pockets of the bureaucrats who've stonewalled our efforts and not from the taxpayers.

**SEJournal:** *Considering that those responsible for the experiments are either dead or retired, what do you think is behind the stonewalling by the DOE at this point? Could it be fear of lawsuits?*

**Welsome:** Other than what Secretary of Energy Hazel O'Leary has said publicly about believing that the release those names would violate the privacy rights of the surviving family members, I can't really think of any other reason. Certainly I think lawsuits are one thing they're considering. But O'Leary also has publicly acknowledged, when asked about fear of lawsuits, that lawsuits could happen. But she's also said, 'Well, the chips have to fall where they may.' You know, she has not in any way discouraged those lawsuits from going forward from what I can tell. And she and the Department are cognizant of the legal fallout.

**SEJournal:** *Do you believe that the DOE's stated concerns*

*about privacy rights of survivors might be legitimate, even if that position is legally dubious?*

**Welsome:** What I discovered in contacting individuals and surviving family members was that they were not inundated with media requests, and they have not felt that their privacy has been violated. In fact, it's been just the opposite. They have welcomed, for the most part, the press inquiries, and have been more than willing to talk about their feelings about this experiment and the patients who were injected with plutonium. There have been some people who have shunned publicity. And, we've respected that. We've identified them, asked them for interviews, and if they've said no, or they've gone to a certain point, and then declined to participate further, we've turned around and walked away. That's their right. And I think all the media, at least as far as this experiment is concerned, has done the same thing. If somebody doesn't want to talk to you, what are you going to do? You're going to say thank you, good-bye.

**SEJournal:** *What would be the two or three key lessons about using FOIA, or other reporting techniques, you might have learned in the process of preparing the series?*

**Welsome:** The main thing I've learned is that a reporter needs to keep accurate records of their communications with the agency officials that they're dealing with. And by accurate

## More about the series and its author

New to the Albuquerque Tribune, reporter Eileen Welsome was looking over a declassified report about animal experimentation at Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M., when she spotted a footnote about human plutonium experiments.

Welsome immediately started searching libraries for additional references. "But the following week when I told the then-city editor about it, he said, 'Well, that's a great story, Eileen, but we hired you to be the neighborhood reporter.'"

"So, I started a file and continued researching it in my spare time." It was 1987.

Welsome filed FOIA requests and, in-between some other major reporting projects, tried unsuccessfully for several years to identify the 18 test subjects. She got no help from the DOE.

In July 1992 — the very week she returned from a year-long Knight Fellowship at Stanford — Welsome got her first big break and was able to identify one of the test subjects, the late Elmer Allen of Italy, Texas. She met with his family and they agreed to cooperate.

Nonetheless, she was subsequently assigned to a variety of other stories, including local and national elections and a developmental scandal about sexual abuse by Catho-

lic priests. She didn't get to work on the project full-time until May 1993. "I never let go of the file and I never let go of the story," Welsome says. "People ask me why. It's a hard question to answer."

By the time the series was published on Nov. 15-17, Welsome had identified five of the test subjects. Government-affiliated doctors had secretly picked them — in an effort to determine the health effects of plutonium on scientists working on the A-bomb — because the patients supposedly had terminal diseases. Several, however, lived for more than 20 years after being injected with plutonium between 1945 and 1947.

Three weeks after Welsome's series ran, Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary mentioned it during a news conference about the declassification of certain DOE records. O'Leary acknowledged there had been abuses in radiation experiments and, when a Tribune reporter asked some follow-up questions, other reporters present took notice, according to a piece in *American Journalism Review*. The story was on its way into the national spotlight and DOE would set up a national hotline to answer questions from the families or victims of other government radiation programs.

As of early June, when Welsome started

a leave of absence to write a book on these and other nuclear program abuses, she or other journalists had identified 16 of the 18 patients — despite DOE's continued refusal to release any names. Most of the patients were identified by Welsome and colleagues at the Tribune, but one was confirmed by WFAA-TV in Dallas, one by NBC Now, and one simultaneously by the Associated Press, the (Rochester, N.Y.) Register and Chronicle and the Albuquerque Tribune. Tribune reporters had tentatively identified the 17th patient, but the identity of the 18th might no longer be known to anyone due to incomplete government records, Welsome says.

Welsome joined the Tribune in 1987 after stints with daily newspapers in Beaumont and San Antonio, Texas. In addition to the plutonium series, while at the Tribune she co-wrote a series about the exploitation of wildlife in the Western U.S. that won a National Headliner's Award. Also, Welsome's six-part expose on an unsuccessful real estate gamble by the Public Service Company of New Mexico won the national Associated Press Managing Editors Award for public service.

—Kevin Carmody

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## Plutonium Package

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records, I would advise reporters to keep not only the date but the time of their contacts. The second thing I've learned is that we, as journalists, can never let up on the pressure to get these kinds of documents. The moment that the pressure is lifted, the requests seem to evaporate into thin air or get buried underneath a pile of paperwork.

**SEJournal:** *Did you find that some officials and offices within the Department of Energy were more receptive than others to your FOIA requests and were you able to exploit that?*

**Welsome:** Sure, there are many pressure points, as any reporter knows, to getting these documents because in an agency such as the Department of Energy, there's not only headquarters, but there're field offices. So there are many avenues to getting these documents. And, it's important for a reporter to walk down all those avenues. Within the Department of Energy, the various FOIA officials behave differently. In other words, and this is something that our lawyer found out, the DOE officials at headquarters in Washington, D.C., might be cooperative, but that did not necessarily mean that DOE officials in Chicago, or New Mexico, or San Francisco were equally cooperative. They all had different opinions about what should be made public, how it should be made public, and under what time frame.

**SEJournal:** *What is your assessment of the DOE's response to the victims and families of those injured by this and other radiation experiments? Is the much ballyhooed hotline helping anyone find their files and get just compensation?*

**Welsome:** Well, I think that the hotline is a nice idea. Practically speaking, however, how would you know whether or not to call the hotline unless you had some idea that you or one of your relatives had been used in the experiment. And how would you know that since all the names are being redacted from documents that the Department of Energy is going to release? So it's a catch-22. Emery Whitfield, the daughter of Elmer Allen, said she would never have known to call the hotline unless she'd been contacted by the Tribune and told about what happened to her father. Also, we've gotten a number of calls from people who couldn't even get through to that hotline when it was set up. I think that it's better than nothing, but I also think that it could create a sense of false hope in people who think that the Department of Energy is going to help them track down their documents. The important thing that either radiation victims or relatives of radiation victims need to know, is that they have got to do their own digging, and their own sleuthing. They are the ones that have to dig up their family records. The DOE is a bureaucracy, and I just don't think it's capable of doing that kind of work. And a lot of these records, by the way, have been destroyed.

**SEJournal:** *How do you determine what sources to consult in*

*dealing with a technical, scientific aspects of radiation health effects?*

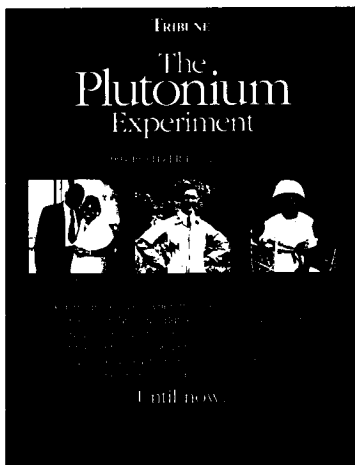
**Welsome:** I'm not a science reporter. I would describe myself as sort of a just a generalist. So, early on, what I decided was that I needed a health physicist to help me interpret the data and translate these doses into something meaningful. And I wanted somebody that did not work in New Mexico, simply because I wanted someone that was more independent and neutral. I didn't want somebody that was really a pro, a weapons lab physicist. Nor, did I want somebody that was at the opposite end of the spectrum. What I wanted I found in Roland Finstan, who's just retired from Stanford University.

He would, he helped me calculate doses. He helped me in countless ways in putting the story together. And he's very neutral. He seemed to be a middle of the road expert. And he also works with science writers. I was talking about the story with Bart Bernstein, who's a Stanford professor of history, and he mentioned Roland Finstan, and so I called him and asked him if he would help me on this project. And he agreed to help me.

**SEJournal:** *There seemed to be extensive effort in the series to explore the ethical standards of the late-1940s, especially in light of the Nazi atrocities and Nuremberg Code, and to describe the circumstances that might allow reputable scientists and doctors to engage in an experiment so ethically questionable. How important were such questions in the preparation of the series and how did you tackle it?*

**Welsome:** One of the first questions that I felt

I had to answer in the reporting of this experiment was: what did those responsible for the experiment know about the dangers of plutonium and when did they know it. One of the last questions we tried to answer concerned the issue of informed consent: what were the rules the doctors were operating under? What they knew about plutonium's health effects would tell me a lot about their mindset when they actually plunged these needles into the hospital patients. If they knew that it was toxic, then they had to have had some ethical qualms, medical concerns about what they were doing. And in fact, what we found out was that the scientific community did indeed know that plutonium was potentially one of the most carcinogenic substances on earth when the experiment began because they knew that it behaved much like radium. And they had a long a long history with the radium dial painters. We also found in the records that as early as 1947, and even before they injected Elmer Allen with plutonium, they had issued orders within the Atomic Energy Commission (predecessor of the DOE) that radioactive isotopes would not be used in medical treatments unless there was some anticipation that there would be a therapeutic benefit. And, at that time, they also ordered that any records involving human experiments should be upgraded to secret in order to avoid the possibility of legal



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suits and adverse public opinion. But it was in the last few weeks before publication that the issue of informed consent and the Nuremberg standards regarding human experimentation were raised in some editorial meetings and then addressed.

**SEJournal:** *What was it like to become a news subject and face being interviewed by other journalists?*

**Welsome:** I think it's been an invaluable experience to have the tables turned and become the interviewee for the first time in my life. It's an experience that all reporters should have. I think that it would encourage them to be better prepared when they interview people, and it would also give them a more

sympathetic attitude toward people who either decline to be interviewed, or who set out ground rules about how they will be interviewed. My experiences were mostly good. But I, I found that there were often times errors of fact in stories and sometimes, some slight misquoting. What it taught me was that we're in the communication business, and that when one person communicates to another, there's always going to be some slight miscommunication.

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*Kevin Carmody, who conducted this interview for SEJournal, is secretary of SEJ. He and Welsome worked together at the Beaumont (TX) Enterprise in the early 1980s.*

# Major journalism awards announced

This year's journalism prizes saw Eileen Welsome's reporting series on human plutonium testing take not only the prestigious Pulitzer Prize, but at least seven other major journalism awards.

Among them were a Society of Professional Journalists' Sigma Delta Chi award, an Investigative Reporters and Editors' investigative reporting award, a George Polk Award, a Scripps Howard award, the Selden Ring Award from the University of Southern California, the Newspaper Guild's Heywood Broun Award and the Press Club of Atlantic City's National Headliner Award.

Disaster reporting also took its share of awards this year, with reports on the Flood of '93 and Hurricane Andrew winning some of the top honors in print, broadcast and photography contests.

Reporting on pesticides also picked up some honors. A PBS Frontline investigation won IRE's network TV award and a Society of Professional Journalists' Sigma Delta Chi award, while coverage of Dupont's fungicide Benlate gained a Sigma Delta Chi honor for the Ledger in Lakeland, Fla.

The full roundup of major journalism competitions awarding environmental reporting were:

### PULITZER PRIZES

•**National Reporting** — Eileen Welsome, The Albuquerque (New Mexico) Tribune for coverage of plutonium experiments on humans.

### SOCIETY OF PROF. JOURNALISTS SIGMA DELTA CHI AWARDS

•**Investigative Reporting** — Eileen Welsome, plutonium story.  
•**Public Service (under 100,000 circulation)** — The Ledger, Lakeland, Fla., for coverage of the Dupont fungicide Benlate.  
•**Non-Deadline Reporting** — Jeff Taylor, Jake

Thomson, The Kansas City Star for reporting on the decline of U.S. national parks.

•**Informational Graphics** — The Des Moines (Iowa) Register for coverage of the Flood of '93

•**Television Investigative Reporting** — Martin Koughan, MQN Productions for the effect of pesticides on children in the PBS Frontline special, "In Our Children's Food."

### INVESTIGATIVE REPORTERS AND EDITORS AWARDS

•**Newspapers (under 75,000 circulation)** — Eileen Welsome, plutonium story.

•**Newspapers (over 75,000 circulation)** — Charles Seabrook, Richard Whitt, Atlanta Journal and Constitution for reporting on Georgia's Kaolin mining industry.

•**Network Television** — Bill Moyers, Martin Koughan, Jan von Mehren and Mairrie Campbell, for the effect of pesticides on children in the PBS Frontline special, "In Our Children's Food."

•**Small Market Television** — Stephen Clark, J.W. August and Rett Lawrence, KGTV (TV), San Diego, for reporting on illegal dumping.

### GEORGE POLK AWARDS

•**National reporting** — Eileen Welsome, plutonium story.

•**Regional reporting** — Isabel Wilkerson, The New York Times, for reporting on Flood of '93.

•**Business Reporting** — Paul Nyden, Charleston (W. Va.) Gazette, for coverage of coal company abuses, such as failure to pay environmental fines and workers' compensation.

### SCRIPPS HOWARD AWARDS

•**Public Service Reporting (under 100,000 circulation)** — Eileen Welsome, plutonium testing.

•**Environmental Reporting - Meeman Award (Over 100,000 circulation)** — Craig Flournoy and Randy Lee Loftis of The Dallas Morning News for "Race and Risk," a series covering low-income housing on a Superfund site.

•**Environmental Reporting - Meeman Award (Under 100,000 circulation)** — The Mobile (Ala.) Register for reporting on local pollution.  
•**Excellence in Broadcast-Cable Journalism**

(Small Market) — WBOC-TV, Salisbury, MD, for reporting on the chicken industry's unsanitary disposal methods.

### THOMAS STOKES AWARD

•**Best environmental reporting in North American Newspapers** — Paul Nyden, Charleston Gazette, for coal stories.

### DUPONT-COLUMBIA AWARDS

•**Silver Baton—Medium market television** — WTVJ-TV Miami for Hurricane Andrew coverage.

### OVERSEAS PRESS CLUB

•**Environmental Reporting** — Joe Kane, New Yorker magazine, for "With Spears From All Sides," on oil interests and Indians in Ecuador

### WORTH BINGHAM PRIZE

•**Flournoy and Loftis, The Dallas Morning News, for "Race and Risk."**

### SELDEN RING AWARD

•Eileen Welsome, plutonium story.

### NATIONAL HEADLINER AWARDS

•**Investigative reporting** — Eileen Welsome, plutonium testing.

•**Television stations - Coverage of a spot news event, all markets** — WGEM (TV), Quincy, Ill., for "Levee Break."

•**Television and Cable Networks and Syndicators—Documentary** — CNN Presents for "The Killing Tide."

### HEYWOOD BROUN AWARD

•Eileen Welsome, plutonium testing.

### GREEN EYESHADE AWARD

•**Radio feature reporting (markets 1-100)** — Kevin Marks, Suzanne Stevens of WFAE-FM, Charlotte, N.C., for "Recycling."

### NATIONAL PRESS PHOTOGRAPHERS PICTURES OF THE YEAR

•**Best use of photographs/magazine** — National Geographic

•**Magazine picture editing awards** — Pete Howe, Outtakes/Audubon

•**Multiple page news story/magazine** — Larry Nighswander, National Geographic, for "Andrew Aftermath."

# Battling twin enemies

## Chinese writer fights a mega-dam and censorship

By JEFF ERLICH

Dai Qing is not a dissident, she says. Nor an environmentalist. Nor a criminal, though she spent seven months in solitary confinement.

She is, in her own words, a "run-of-the-mill" journalist who got hold of a pretty straightforward story about a Yangtze River dam that probably won't work, but definitely will displace more than a million people, cost at least 15 billion dollars, and flood 71,000 acres.

Dai's sources on the Three Gorges Dam project have been mainly aging engineers and scientists who, like she once was, are very much a part of China's establishment. She herself was a member of the Communist Party until shortly before her arrest.

But after her newspaper spiked her stories because of a Party edict against negative reporting on Three Gorges, she went to a book publisher to print "Yangtze! Yangtze!," a collection of interviews conducted by her and other journalists about the project.

Government officials may have been squirming, but they remained silent, as the reforms of the 1980s included a freer press. But just months after her book was published, the Tiananmen protest gave the government a cover to crack down on its critics, and Dai landed in jail.

### A daughter of the Party

In the United States this spring for a Freedom Forum fellowship, Dai Qing (pronounced Dye Ching) had the kind of celebrity among New York Chinese that other print reporters might envy. Strangers greet her by name, waiters linger at her table.

During an interview in May, she pleaded uneasiness at her loss of privacy, and said she was eager to return to Beijing, which she did June 1, just days before the fifth anniversary of the

Tiananmen massacre.

But she said she wasn't going to be with the protesters, of whom she has been highly critical. Instead, she is spending the one month she has with her family before flying off to Australia to begin her third consecutive fellowship.

Born in 1941, Dai grew up in the hearth of Chinese Communist society.



com-munists since the 1920s; her father later became a martyr to the Japanese. Later she was adopted by Ye Jianying, one of the Ten Great Marshals of the People's Republic.

Dai says her disenchantment with the Chinese system began early on, in the 1966 Cultural Revolution, and later at cadre school doing hard labor. Meant to weed out bourgeois tendencies, her indoctrination worked well. After seeing how badly the government took care of people outside her circle of friends and family, she began to become critical of the government.

"Without the Cultural Revolution, many people like me would not have had an awakening," she said.

Still, she stayed in the Party, hold-

ing jobs befitting an espionage tale. In the 1970s, she worked in a factory making surveillance cameras. And from 1980 to 1982, a time when China saw the Soviet Union as its greatest enemy, she was an undercover intelligence agent for a writers association, making contact with Eastern European writers. When her name turned up on a list of agents obtained by the CIA, she picked up an enduring reputation as a spy, writes Geremie Barme, an Australian researcher who has studied her career.

Then in 1982, during a period of "reform and openness," she took a reporting job at *Guangming* (Enlightenment) *Daily*.

She began what she describes as historical investigative journalism on those who led and those who suffered under the Communist Party. "My aim has been to help heal the sores, not to show them off in order to discredit the Party," she says. And she began a column called "Conversations with Scholars," for which she traveled the country interviewing intellectuals.

This reporting, perhaps more so than the Three Gorges project, incensed many Party officials, including the mayor of Beijing. After Tiananmen he accused her of "whipping up the turmoil."

Dai was thrown in jail, where she remained in solitary confinement, even exercising in a walled-off individual yard.

There, she wrote "My Imprisonment," a memoir flavored with an irony that marks much of her writing. She wrote of her isolation and her weighing long-term imprisonment against suicide. But she also wrote of her relatively comfortable accommodations — "although I have never made an official post, they put me in a prison for bureau chiefs" — and of the humaneness of her guards.

Since she was never charged, Dai doesn't know what landed her in jail. It

could have been her explorations of the Communist Party's past. Or her brief stint as an intermediary between the government and the students at Tiananmen. She says now it was her reporting on the dam, and it is the dam against which she is still fighting.

### 1.3 million would be displaced

By any measure, the Three Gorges Dam will be an incredible feat of engineering, not to mention financing: it will most likely cost more than \$15 billion. Construction on the Three Gorges Dam is scheduled to begin in 1997 and last 18 years. If and when completed, it will stand 175 meters high, yet will pass river traffic through a staircase of five locks. Its 26 turbines will produce 17 million kilowatts, the most of any hydroelectric plant in the world. Its 84 billion kilowatt-hours a year equals one-eighth of China's annual output; even Dai Qing says her country needs the power. And the dam will knock the top off devastating floods.

But beyond the benefits are the costs of social and environmental upheaval: 1.3 million people displaced, 71,000 farm acres lost, 600 kilometers of reservoir likely to become a cesspool of non-point and factory pollution.

Dai began reporting on the dam in 1985, when a close family friend attending a conference of scientists and engineers critical of the project urged her to cover it.

From what they said, and from information gathered later, the project bordered on being a boondoggle, even without considering the social impact of displacing 1.3 million people. And some of the scientists estimated that within a few decades, silt in the reservoir could destroy a major river port and limit the dam's flood control benefit.

Siltation is a common problem at dams as silt drops out of rivers in slackwater, such as is found behind dams. The Yangtze River carries 500 million tons of silt a year, and is the world's fourth siltiest. And the scientists estimated that within decades, silt deposits could clog shipping channels upstream.

Plus, there's the nasty problem of discharges from upstream factories

which could turn the reservoir into a 360-mile long cesspool. The dam also may endanger Yangtze silver carps and Chinese dolphins. It may intensify deforestation, as the displaced people carve out more terraced farmland to replace what will be lost.

But despite the evidence, the Party has prevented reporting on the dam's costs. And after covering the 1985 conference, Dai stopped pushing for publication of stories on Three Gorges.

Then in 1988, she found out that the People's Congress would be voting the following March on the dam.

She assembled a group of reporters

### Editors' Note

This story leads off a package of three loosely related pieces about environmental reporting and other issues in Asia and the Pacific Rim.

who hurriedly interviewed scientists and engineers on the dam. From these interviews, she assembled "Yangtze! Yangtze!"

After being turned down by larger publishers, she found a small book publisher willing to print 5,000 copies of the book. She distributed it throughout Beijing, making sure to leave copies with the stores of hotels where congressional delegates were staying.

Later, another publisher in Sichuan Province, where the dam is planned, smelled a hot seller, and printed another 50,000 copies, selling 20,000 right away.

The 1989 People's Congress decided not to vote on the dam.

Though the dam's opponents gained the delay, the Tiananmen Square protest in June of that year gave the government a chance to wipe out public opposition. In October, it banned "Yangtze! Yangtze!" and ordered the Sichuan publisher to destroy his remaining inventory.

Then in 1992, the project again came before the People's Congress. With public criticism long since quelled, the Congress approved the project. But nearly one-third of the body voted no or abstained, a small victory that Dai attributes to her book.

This year, she edited an

English-language version of "Yangtze! Yangtze!" conducting the interviews herself, after she found none of her colleagues were willing to take the chance of opposing the project now.

She also tried to hold her own conference on the dam, only to find that the Party officials were calling the hotels where she had booked rooms to tell them to cancel her reservations.

But though the Chinese government has signed off on the project, the work of Dai and others has led to the collapse of support by foreign governments.

President Clinton's commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, Dan Beard, withdrew his agency's participation as a consultant shortly after taking office. Beard visited China May 8 to May 17, with a copy of "Yangtze! Yangtze!" in his suitcase, to talk about U.S.-China cooperation on other water resources management

projects. Though Beard did not go to China to protest the Three Gorges Dam, he was to meet with some of the scientists who opposed the project, he said shortly before leaving.

"I have a lot of respect for people who voice their disagreement and really go out on a limb based on principle," Beard said. "Besides, I happen to agree with them."

And with Western governments pulling out, the World Bank also dropped the project.

Now, the Chinese government is taking its case to Wall Street, where Merrill Lynch in January began managing the sale of \$1 billion in bonds a few months ago to support infrastructure.

### Economic freedom first

To Dai, the Three Gorges Dam represents much of what is wrong in China today, and her opposition to it is tied up with her fight to win freedom of the press.

"Neither I nor my colleagues thought of ourselves as environmentalists when we were compiling "Yangtze! Yangtze!," she says. "Our goal was to push China a little bit further toward freedom of speech on the issue of government decision making."

(Continued on page 14)

# A Far-East time warp

By **RUSSELL CLEMINGS**  
and **SCOTT THURM**

Our first clue that all was not well environmentally in Hong Kong came when our 747 threaded its way, at low altitude, through a maze of public housing towers and landed abruptly at congested Kai Tak airport.

As the cabin depressurized and outdoor air flooded in, we caught the unmistakable scent of sewage. The airport's runway, we learned, extends into Kowloon Bay. And the towers, we were later told, discharge wastes directly into the one of the world's most famous harbors.

This was only the first of many eye-opening experiences we had during a recent 10-day tour of Hong Kong and Indonesia, during which we met with environmental journalists and offered them what advice we could.

Our trip, sponsored by The Freedom Forum, taught us two things. First, that we take for granted much of the environmental progress that the United States has made — sewage treatment being only the most obvious example. And second, that as environmental journalists, we're lucky to work in a country with a strong tradition of press freedom.

Reporters for Indonesia's largest daily, Kompas, can't always write what they want; if they do, their paper risks being shut down by government order. Meanwhile, in Hong Kong, reporters nervously await 1997, when China assumes sovereignty in the 413-square-mile territory, now a British crown colony. Hopes for a smooth transition

were dampened recently when a Hong Kong-based reporter, Xi Yang, was sentenced to 12 years in a Chinese prison for "espionage."

In light of that, we were worried that some of our tips about aggressive environmental reporting might land our audience in prison too. But in spite of the obvious obstacles, the need for

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*We concluded that what we were seeing in Asia's present was our own past. There was a time, only a couple of decades ago, when raw sewage flowed into harbors throughout the United States and when environmental reporters were few and far between.*

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such reporting was clear in both places.

Besides its sewage problems, Hong Kong suffers from heavy air pollution and rampant development. Far more densely populated than any U.S. city, even New York, Hong Kong's land squeeze is such that large parts of the harbor are being filled to make room for more towers, highways, and a replacement for Kai Tak airport.

Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, is meanwhile gripped by the grinding poverty and skyrocketing population growth of many major cities in the developing world. The airport is clean and modern, and our hotel sat on a street that could have been in almost any American city. But a block away from us, open sewers lined the streets. Shanties sprawled for miles around. By 9 a.m., the air was opaque, yet locals remarked on how clear it was, compared to most of the year.

Our advice to reporters in both cities was simple: Focus on the problems you see around you, because that's what readers care about. Don't get bogged down in the intricacies of such distant threats as ozone depletion or global warming, and don't bore your readers with too many details of international politics, like the Earth Summit. Keep your coverage local, because that's where you can have an impact.

The message was well received. But we had less success in addressing other concerns of the local reporters. In Jakarta, the main problem was obvious — the press is licensed by the nation's military-backed dictatorship. Under those circumstances, we were surprised — and heartened — to see local journalists at least trying to cover the environment aggressively.

At Kompas, for example, we learned that the newspaper has campaigned against a planned nuclear power plant that the government supports. Also, editors there assured us that their dreaded phone calls from the Information Ministry were becoming fewer — the last one, they said, came in 1991. Meanwhile, we saw satellite dishes all over Jakarta's better neighborhoods — a sure sign that information was flowing infropm abroad.

In Hong Kong, it was a different story. Reporters there told us of their constant struggles to get the time and space for serious environmental journalism. Partly, we gathered, this was a result of the specter of 1997. But beyond

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## Qing ... (from page 13)

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But unlike the students in Tiananmen Square, she would never erect a Statue of Liberty replica to make her point, and she criticizes Western media for making the student leaders into heroes. Rather, she is trying to work within the system, frequently citing the law and her country's leaders, such as Deng Xiaoping "Only when we realize democracy in

our nation's political life with a readiness to welcome and accept different views from the public, can we avoid serious mistakes" and Mao, who said "we need an opposing opinion," when the dam was first considered in the 1950s.

And unlike some Western human rights activists, she believes China's political independence will follow from

economic prosperity, which will empower individuals.

"If you don't think you are free, you don't need a free media," she says, "of course, I need it badly."

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*Jeff Erlich is editor of The Corps Report, a newsletter on the Army Corps of Engineers.*

that, and possibly more to the point, it seemed to be a product of the colony's laissez-faire attitude toward business and its headlong rush to turn tropical mangrove forests into freeway foundations.

"The environmental reporter is really the only one on the paper who's aware of the environmental implications of a lot of these things," said Kathy Griffin, who covers the environment for Hong Kong's largest English-language paper, the South China Morning Post. Other reporters, especially those who work for Chinese-language publications, complained of their difficulty in getting enough time and money from their editors to do good environmental stories. "Every day, we have one or two assignments. We haven't any time to investigate an issue," said So Mei Yi, environmental reporter for Sing Tao, the largest Chinese daily.

When we trotted out our showcase reporting projects — elaborate packages of stories and full-page graphics, complete with distant datelines and evidence of heavy computer use, we could almost sense eyeballs turning toward the ceiling. For all our complaints about editors in the United States — their ham-handed copyediting, their stinginess with the newsroom travel budget — we were forced to admit that our counterparts abroad had it far worse.

Yet the complaints we heard in Hong Kong — and for that matter, in Jakarta, government restrictions aside — also sounded familiar. We concluded that what we were seeing in Asia's present was our own past. There was a time, only a couple of decades ago, when raw sewage flowed into harbors throughout the United States. And there was a time when environmental reporters were few and far between. That changed. And maybe, given the interest we saw among rank-and-file reporters in these two cities, change will come there too.

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*Russell Clemings covers the environment for the Fresno Bee and Scott Thurm does the same for the San Jose Mercury News, both in California. They toured Hong Kong and Jakarta with Diana Stover Tillinghas of at San Jose State, and John Schidlovsky, director of The Freedom Forum Asian Center.*

## Ecosystem management gives rare Philippine eagle a chance

By **JIM McMAHON**

Ecosystem management is the current buzzword of choice at federal and state land management agencies. But what does it mean?

For the most part, the notion of managing entire ecosystems is resulting in actions such as cooperation between intergovernmental agencies, management of predator species, providing wildlife corridors, or modifying logging practices.

But what does ecosystem management mean for the interaction between human and natural communities?

At the core of the issue of environmental degradation are the needs of human communities. It is largely human requirements which drive the intrusions into natural environments, whether in pursuit of food, minerals, or timber products. And so ecosystem management must ultimately address the balance in the interactions between human communities and the environment that surrounds them.

Numerous examples exist of the attempts to resolve the conflicts between man and his environment. Management of the grizzly bear in the Yellowstone ecosystem affects logging and road building, Northwest logging communities depend on federal timber harvests, recovery of endangered fish in the Colorado river affects water diversion projects. Increasingly, man's activities are limited by our growing impact on natural systems.

Yet little has been done to forestall these conflicts by manipulating human economies to function more harmoniously with natural systems. A marvelous example of such a project was success-

fully completed by the Philippine Eagle Foundation, Inc. in Davao City, the Philippines.

The Philippine Eagle, *Pithecophaga jefferyi*, is one of the largest eagles on earth. Some sixty-three individuals are estimated to remain. The eagle depends upon the undisturbed cover of the old growth dipterocarp forest and relative isolation from human communities.

Past efforts by the Philippine government to save the eagles have failed due to the pressing economic needs of the Filipino people. Seventeen million Filipinos inhabit the uplands where their need to survive comes into direct conflict with the old growth forest. They depend upon the sale of

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***"It is hard to justify recovering an endangered species, such as the Philippine Eagle, in the midst of overwhelming human poverty (in the Philippine Islands and neighboring nations). The obvious failure of past programs led us to consider a holistic approach."***

**Dennis Salvador**  
**PEFI Executive Director**

forest products and income from slash-and-burn agricultural practices to survive. Because the forest soils are very thin, the lowland agricultural methods used by the Filipino people rapidly deplete the soil of nutrients. This forces these agricultural communities to continually invade the forest in pursuit of suitable soils. At current logging rates, the entire old growth forest will be destroyed within seven years.

Recognizing that the Philippine eagle could never be saved without addressing the economic needs of the Filipino people, the privately funded Philippine Eagle Foundation initiated a unique program to save the eagle.

"It is hard to justify recovering an endangered species, such as the Philippine Eagle, in the midst of overwhelming human poverty," said PEFI Executive Director Dennis Salvador. "The obvious failure of past programs led us to consider a holistic approach," he added.



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## Asia Package

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According to Salvador, the indigenous human populations knew that the forest was good for them in the long term, but their overwhelming economic condition forced them into slash-and-burn agriculture. Working with a pilot community in Salaysay, Marilog District of Davao City, PEFI developed a program which harbors hope for both the people and the few remaining eagles. The intent is to provide uplands communities with sustainable livelihood alternatives.

The program has increased the average monthly income of participants from \$14 to \$56 per month. This was accomplished through research, education, and a loan program that enabled participants to change their agricultural methods. Each participating family was provided with the resources they needed. This included tools, seeds, draught animals, and food from the point of inception until the first crop was harvested. These subsidies were all provided on loan.

During the first growing season families grew corn because of its short growing season and familiarity to participants. During the second season, cropping became mixed and inorganic fertilizers and pesticides were replaced

with organic substitutes and biological pest control. This approach proved successful in increasing community income and allowing the farmed soils to remain nutrient rich.

In order to receive the loans, the community agreed to a reforestation project. A tree nursery was established, with native trees replanted in formerly cleared areas and fruit trees planted along the edge of farm plots. Community members regularly patrol the forest area for signs of disturbance by individuals from outside the community.

The pilot community has driven off individuals whose intent was to clear the forest. As a result of these efforts, all forest clearing in the area of the pilot has stopped. The community is now rooted in place and economically self-sustaining. PEFI has pulled out and initiated four new pilots based upon these same concepts.

According to Salvador, the success of the pilot lay within the knowledge and traditions of the people themselves.

"The indigenous peoples were aware that their practices were not in harmony with the environment but they had resigned themselves to the plight of continual poverty," said Salvador. PEFI provided the tools to stop this cycle of

poverty.

In the Philippine uplands, it is this sense of place which stands to serve both the eagles and the communities of man. As the human communities take their stand and learn to sustain themselves, the pressure to rely on the decimation of the Philippine rain forest is alleviated.

Can PEFI save the rainforest in less than seven years? Clearly they cannot. More drastic measures are needed to stop the magnitude of the destruction. Still, PEFI has provided the only glimmer of light in a situation which otherwise promises to destroy the resources upon which both man and eagle depend.

This successful example can also serve as a model for human communities around the world as we seek to find new ways to live sustainably within the context of the natural system which supports us.

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*Jim McMahon is an ecologist and writer from Denver, Colo. He writes on natural resource issues throughout the world and can be reached at (303) 733-4230. PEFI can be reached at: 2FUCPB Building, Magsaysay Street, 8000 Davao City, The Philippines. Tel: 011-63-82-2212030, Fax: 82-63860.*

## SEJ will be at UNITY

SEJ will be conducting two 90-minute workshops at the UNITY '94 conference in Atlanta this summer. The July 27-30 conference will bring together 5,000 Asian, black, Hispanic and Native American journalists and has been in the planning for six years..

According to SEJ Board Member Rae Tyson of USA TODAY, who helped spearhead the organization's involvement in the UNITY conference, "it's very important that we show support for the conference and help them in any way we can, sharing resources that we have [so that] the conferees will come away with new resources, new story ideas and new understanding."

One workshop will be a panel discussion on environmental justice chaired by Tyson. The panel, "Envi-

ronmental Justice—The Next Generation," will look at issues that have not received as much publicity related to the siting of industrial facilities and the health effects that research suggests may be disproportionately affecting minority communities.

Among the panelists are Valerie Taliman, a Native American journalist in Bishop, Calif., and an SEJ member; Paty Bryant of the Gulf Coast Tenants Association in New Orleans, and Dr. Rosaline Rolland of the World Wildlife Fund in Washington.

The second workshop, conducted by Russ Clemings of the Fresno Bee, will focus on computer-assisted environmental journalism. The hands-on program will be similar to those conducted at the last annual SEJ conference.

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## Prez ... (from page 2)

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It will take time, money and energy to carry out these plans. If you'd like to help, call the SEJ office, (215)247-9710.

**FUNDING** — Good news from the W. Alton Jones Foundation, one of SEJ's principle funders. The foundation announced it May that it will give the society \$63,000 in the coming year to help support a variety of programs.

**1994 CONFERENCE** — An impressive line up of speakers has already agreed to participate in SEJ's national conference Oct. 6 to 9 in Utah. Among the confirmed speakers are U.S. Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, EPA Administrator Carol Browner, former Boston Globe Editor Tom Winship, F. Sherwood Rowland, who first suggested that CFCs are eroding the ozone layer, and many others. Registration form is on page 25.

# Keys to exploring FedWorld

## Federal agency access via internet or modem

By DAN WENDLING and J. SCOTT CHRISTIANSON

FedWorld is a computer bulletin board run by the National Technical Information Service in Springfield, Va. It is available on the Internet through the telnet address [fedworld.gov](http://fedworld.gov), and through a regular modem dial-up at (703) 321-8020.

Following a "Government Information Locator System" model, FedWorld provides a gateway to about

### Online Bits & Bytes

is a regular feature of SEJournal, offering tips on computer resources for journalists covering science and the environment

120 other computer bulletin boards run by or for federal agencies. Twenty-four of those boards are described below.

From the top menu of Fedworld, you can reach the bulletin board of your choice by typing a series of "stacked" commands. To reach ALF, for example, you could type dd2 and press ENTER. This tells the software to go to the Gateway menu (option "d" on the first menu), dial-out to a BBS, (option "d" on the second menu), and that you want #2, ALF BBS. Alternately, you can let the menus guide you one step at a time.

Because these bulletin boards are useful for transferring private electronic mail and files among government workers and contractors, you'll find that there are areas you won't be allowed to use. But the public areas offer lots of useful info for environmental journalists.

For more information about the mission of FedWorld, read "FEDLINE: A Feasibility Study of the Establishment and Operation of FedWorld, A Government-Wide Information Locator System at NTIS," published by the Commerce Department's National Technical Information Service.

*This column is adapted from "Guide to Online Resources for the Conservationist," copyright 1993, by Dan Wendling and J. Scott Christianson, and is reprinted with permission from the authors and of GreenDisk, the paperless environmental journal. To reach the authors, contact them at their e-mail addresses (Christianson is [jchristi@bigcat.missouri.edu](mailto:jchristi@bigcat.missouri.edu) and Wendling's is [danw@access.digex.net](mailto:danw@access.digex.net)). The authors will send an electronic copy of the guide to anyone who sends a request to either of the two addresses. To subscribe to GreenDisk, call (800) 484-7616 (DISK).*

### Here are some of the computer bulletin boards that can be reached via Fedworld:

BB NAME	TYPE OF INFORMATION	DEPARTMENT / AGENCY
ALF	National Agricultural Library bulletin board	Agriculture
BOM-BBN	Bureau of Mines Bulletin Board Network	Interior
CLU-IN	Superfund Data and Information	EPA
EPUB	Energy Information and Data	DOE
FERC-CIPS	FREC's Commission Issuance Posting System	DOE
Megawatt 1	Information on Energy and DOE	DOE
WTIE-BBS	Wastewater Treatment Information Exchange	EPA
QED-BBS	Quick Epicenter Determination/Earthquake Data	NEIC (1)
TELENEWS	Data and Information on Fossil Fuels	DOE
USGS-BBS	BBS/CD-ROM Information	Geological Survey
PPIC-BBS	Pollution Prevention Clearinghouse and Info Exchange	EPA
STIS	Science & Technology Information System	NSF(2)
NOAA-ESDD	Earth System Data Directory	NOAA
Offshore-BBS	Off-Shore Oil & Gas Data	Interior
ATTIC	Alternative Treatment Technical Information Center	EPA
DRIPSS	Drinking Water Information Processing Support (3)	EPA
PIM BBS	Pesticide Information Network	EPA
NPS-BBS	Nonpoint Source Program BBS	EPA
OEA BBS	Office of Environmental Affairs	Interior
ORDBBS	Office of Research & Development BBS	EPA
AEE BBS	Office of Env't & Energy	FAA
OMEI-BBS	Minority Energy Information Clearinghouse(4)	DOE
Marine Data BBS	Marine Databases & Files	NOAA(5)
Call-ERS BBS	Agriculture Economic Research Service BBS	Agriculture
PerManNet	Clearinghouse on Development Communication	AID(6)

(1) National Earthquake Information Center, Geological Survey. (2) National Science Foundation. (3) Use requires registration with SysOp Barry Gates, (703) 339-0420. (4) Information on minority business in the energy fields. (5) Coast and Geodetic Survey, National Ocean Service, part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. (6) Agency for International Development, State Department.

## Green Beat being upgraded; correspondents needed

The Green Beat section of SEJournal is seeking new correspondents for a variety of states in an effort to upgrade the popular feature.

The volunteer positions require two to three hours of work per issue, with deadlines approximately three months apart. Correspondents must be SEJ mem-

bers and should work or have worked in mainstream news. They contact environment reporters at other publications and broadcast outlets to identify exceptional series or coverage trends in their state, then write a three to four sentence summary of item each so colleagues can keep track of what's being reported.

Large states with many SEJ members, such as California, Florida, New York and Texas, can use several correspondents. If you're interested, and especially if you've noticed gaps in what's being included from your state or region, contact Kevin Carmody at (312) 871-8911.

# Engineering flood stories

## *Post-Dispatch* did own study of flood's causes

By **ROBERT L. KOENIG**

After the Missouri and Mississippi rivers converged at record flood stages above St. Louis last summer, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* editors wanted to find out whether levees and other aspects of river management had exacerbated the Flood of 1993.

But reporters soon found out that both sides in the river-management debate — environmentalists and the Army Corps of Engineers — were arguing based on disparate interpretations of disputed hydrologic data and river modeling.

For example, environmental groups contended that levees had raised flood levels in some areas, and that establishing wetlands along the rivers would have helped mitigate the flood. But Corps officials said wetlands would have made scant difference in last summer's flooding, and that levees in general had a beneficial effect.

After spending weeks trying to sort out the varying arguments about the effects of levees, floodplain development and wetlands, I recommended in September that editors commission an independent engineer to study some of the impacts of river management in the St. Louis region.

After getting the green light, I contacted several respected hydrologic engineers about doing such a study, but most of them had projects under way, and could not have started work for six months or more. Because readers in St. Louis wanted more data and analysis while the river-management debate was still a policy priority, my newspaper's editors wanted to complete the river analysis by the end of 1993.

In early October, Douglas T. Shaw, an assistant professor of civil engineering at the University of Illinois' Hydrosystems Lab in Champaign-Urbana, agreed to try to do the river analysis using a computer-based math-

ematical model developed by the National Weather Service to help analyze complex, dynamic situations such as levee breaks. He holds a doctorate in water resources engineering, and has won awards for previous studies.

The newspaper's and Shaw's original goal was to use the complex computer model to estimate the impact of alternate river-management scenarios,

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***"The thing that surprised me most was how little data was available for the river, and how difficult it was to get some of that information."***

**Douglas T. Shaw**  
University of Illinois civil engineering

including levee setbacks, higher levees, no levees, and more wetlands along a wide region of the rivers above and below St. Louis.

But Shaw soon encountered difficulty getting timely data on the rivers. "I was astounded at how fragmented the river data is," says Shaw. "You have to work hard to get it from the various Corps district offices, from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and from other sources."

When Shaw ran into problems getting the Corps' full-valley cross-sectional data for the Mississippi River in the St. Louis region, I negotiated with hydrologic engineers at the Corps' St. Louis District and was able to obtain the data on a computer disk. The USGS offices in St. Louis and Rolla, Mo., also sent their river-stage and flow data for the flood. And the Corps' Kansas City District, after a delay and a \$100 charge, supplied its flood-plain data for the Missouri River above St. Louis.

Shaw was surprised to find out that the Corps' Kansas City and St. Louis districts used incompatible formats for their data. And he did not have time to

translate the differing formats. Also, busted flood-stage gauges and other measurement problems made it impossible to tell exactly how much water came from each river at their confluence.

"The thing that surprised me most was how little data was available for the river, and how difficult it was to get some of that information," observes Shaw. Because of the data problems and time constraints, Shaw decided against using the Weather Service model and turned to a more traditional computer model, the Corps' HEC 2. He also limited the study's focus to a reach of the Mississippi for which he had reliable data: the 34-mile stretch from downtown St. Louis to Prairie du Rocher, Ill.

When Shaw's computer runs began printing data in early December, *Post-Dispatch* graphic artist Tom Borgman and I drove to Champaign-Urbana to discuss the results with Shaw and to come up with ideas for graphic presentation.

Meanwhile in St. Louis, Virgil Tipton, the lead reporter for much of the *Post-Dispatch's* coverage of the flood that summer, interpreted the impact of Shaw's results on the neighborhoods in St. Louis and the region in Illinois that would have been most affected.

For example, Shaw found that the Mississippi would have crested about two feet higher at the River Des Peres, a stormwater tributary that runs through south St. Louis, if a crucial levee across the Mississippi near Columbia, Ill., had been a couple feet higher. As it happened, the river overtopped that levee Aug. 1, the day the flood peaked at St. Louis.

While Shaw declined to predict the exact impact of that higher water level on flooding, Tipton — analyzing detailed contour maps and interviewing local disaster-response officials — found that a thousand more homes and busi-

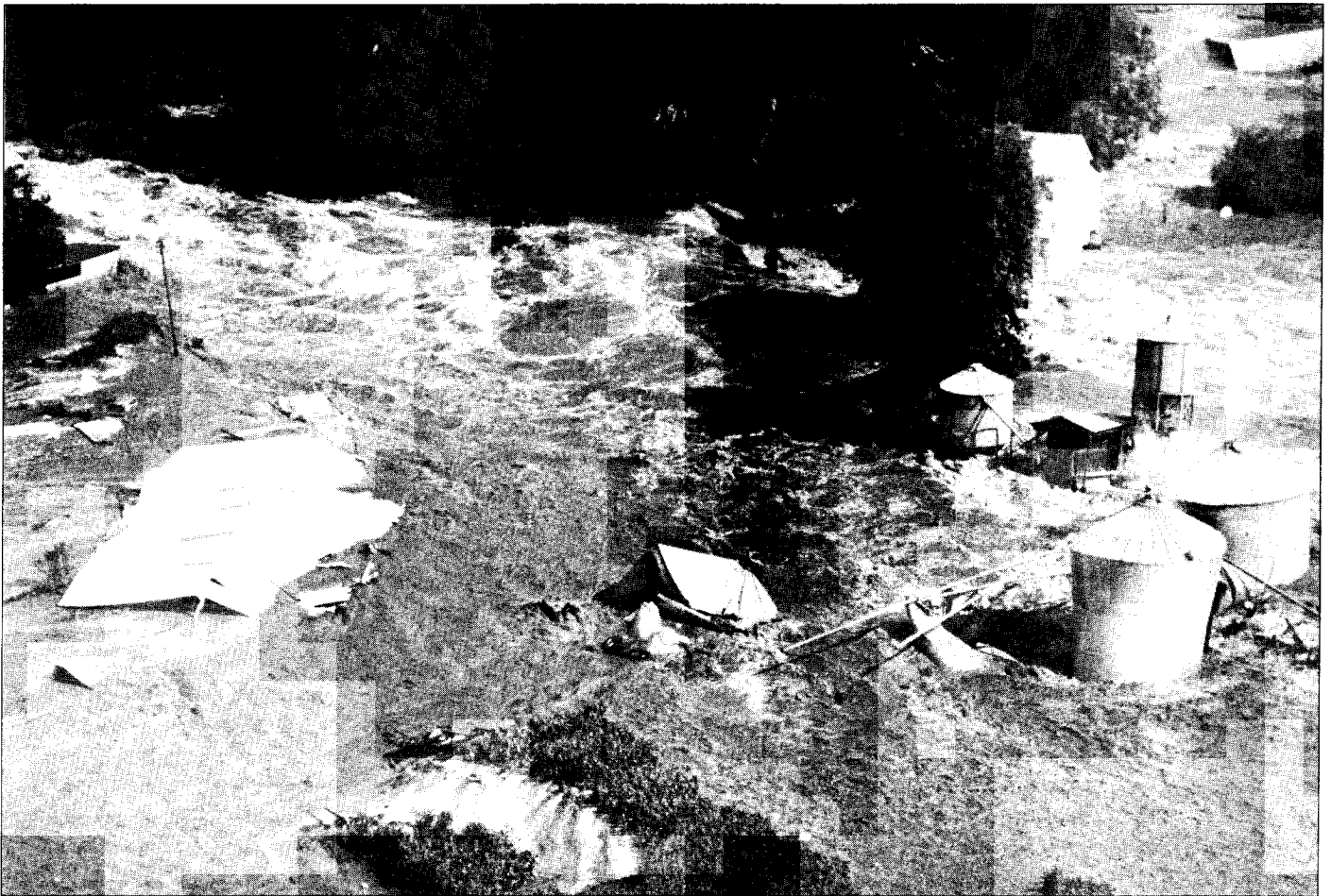


Photo by & courtesy of Jim Rackwitz, St. Louis Post-Dispatch

## The Mississippi River roars through a levee, demolishing a farm near Columbia, Ill. in 1993 floods

nesses in south St. Louis and nearby Lemay would have been flooded if the Columbia, Ill., levee had held.

Shaw also estimated that the flood's crest at St. Louis could have been lowered by two feet — even with the Illinois levees holding back the river — if 15 percent of last summer's floodwater had been stored in the watershed above St. Louis. But storing that much additional water in wetlands would have been a major task: Shaw estimated it would require covering about 2 million acres of the upper Mississippi basin with an additional foot of water.

While Tipton concentrated on the local impact of flood scenarios, I focused on analyzing Shaw's findings and placing them in the context of the national debate over river management. I interviewed dozens of hydraulic engineers, environmental experts and Corps officials, including briefings by the Corps river-modeling experts at the Waterways Experiment Station in

Vicksburg, Miss., and presented the debate in a main story and two sidebars.

I also interviewed the Corps' chief hydrologic engineer in St. Louis, Gary Dyhouse, who said Shaw's river-level predictions were a bit higher than his, but were "in the ballpark." And I talked with a nationally-known river modeler, Robert Barkau, who gave a similar assessment. The White House-appointed Inter-Agency Floodplain Management Review Committee later hired Barkau to do a similar computer analysis.

The *Post-Dispatch* published the full text of Shaw's report, along with Tipton's and my analysis on the local and policy implications, in a special section Dec. 26. Local officials praised the newspaper for doing an independent analysis, and requests for copies of the section poured in from congressional committees, the White House floodplain management panel, environmental groups and hydrologic engineers.

In February, a television crew from

BBC-TV in London interviewed, Shaw, Tipton and me about the newspaper's analysis as part of a 50-minute documentary on river engineering, called "After the Flood." The documentary aired in the United Kingdom April 18, and is expected to be shown on U.S. television stations this fall.

Gilbert F. White, a noted geographer who is known as the father of floodplain management, wrote a letter to Shaw commending him and the newspaper for doing an independent analysis of river management options. White runs the National Hazards Research and Applications Information Center in Boulder, Colo.

White wrote: "The *Post-Dispatch* seems to be continuing and extending its remarkable effort at genuinely scientific reporting of a major public issue."

*Robert L. Koenig is a Washington correspondent for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.*

# Gaps in ozone coverage

By ANDREW BRENGLE

Just where are the mainstream news media going with environmental journalism? Try to sort out the claims and accusations tossed about by the multitude of observers and you are likely to finish more confused than when you started.

"Mainstream news is too timid and beholden to its corporate owners," one camp says. "The liberal press wants to bash business and scare us all to death," another camp proclaims. "We never get the fish's perspective," adds another.

Struggling to make sense of this cacophony during graduate research, I embarked on a case study tracking 18 years (1974-1992) of stratospheric ozone depletion coverage. I chose to pick on the thoroughly indexed New York Times, Time magazine and Scientific American.

Why condemn myself to months poring over indexes and squinting in front of microfilm machines? One reason was to find those biases alleged by the debaters. Did one of the camps have it right? Were all of them wrong? Were they all right?

Another reason was to create data. Adding a little hard data to the body of anecdotal information we have on environmental journalism can't hurt. Economists and scientists debate with data, why not journalists?

What turned up were a number of brow-raisers mixed with findings that were not so surprising. The study certainly didn't clear everything up for me. But then, I never intended to deliver the final diagnosis on environmental journalism using just three media examples covering one topic.

Here are some examples of what I found.

All media involved showed lapses in the continuity of their coverage — a major complaint about mass media's treatment of environmental issues. We can expect this with any long term story, but some of the lapses here were serious. Months and years sometime passed during which no stories ran.

The New York Times Index and Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature show spikes of higher volume in the mid-1970s. Coverage dropped dramatically during the late 1970s and early 1980s, but revived during the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Evidence of an Antarctic ozone "hole" drove up volume after 1985, yet all three publications targeted here missed reporting on the Vienna Convention in March of that year.

Culminating three years of work, "the Vienna Convention was itself a considerable accomplishment," wrote diplomat Richard E. Benedick in his 1991 book on ozone diplomacy. "It represented the first effort of the international community formally to deal with an environmental danger before it erupted."

Scientific American did not publish an article treating ozone depletion exclusively until 1987. Time ran one story between 1978 and 1986. Even the Times — the most consistent of the three — published only one ozone story in 1985.

As for sources, the three publications used scientists and government officials most frequently. Industry sources followed behind them. Third World sources, environmentalists and private citizens saw the least exposure.

All three media cited and quoted a mixture of scientists involved in the ozone debate. The only bias discernible was a dearth of scientists who seriously doubted any threat from CFC-engineered ozone depletion. I distinguished between scientists working for independent institutions and those working under government auspices, but evidence of any bias here was clouded by the fact that many of the scientists worked for both.

Independent scientists (NYT: 21%, T: 22%; SA: 32%) accounted for a larger percentage of all sources than did governmental scientists (NYT: 15%; T: 13%; SA: 30%).

Critics of mainstream environmental journalism have noted an over-reliance on government sources. Federal officials enjoyed generous exposure making up 21% of all sources used in the

Times, 16.7% in Time and 20% in Scientific American. Ozone depletion has commanded the attention of the EPA, Congress and presidential administrations throughout its history as a policy matter.

Industry sources saw hefty exposure in the Times at 19%. Time and Scientific American were less generous, looking to industry 10% and 14% of the time, respectively. Time not only used industry sources little, but referred to them in generalizations where the other media quoted and cited a variety of individual sources.

More clear-cut was paltry use of Third World sources, environmentalists and private citizens. Their small percentages separate them from the other groups by a large margin. In the Times, Third World representatives, environmentalists and private citizens comprised 2.3%, 7.7% and 1.3% of all sources used, respectively. The same groups in Time rated 5.4%, 2.7% and 8.6% of all citations, and in Scientific American, 2%, 0.6% and 2%.

Apart from the quantity, the difference in quality of citation was also noticeable. Whereas individual scientists, U.S. government officials or business representatives were quoted, Third World nations, environmentalists and private citizens often were cited as homogeneous groups.

One telling instance of this neglect came during coverage of the 1990 protocol talks in London. The Times profiled a British environmental minister presiding over the talks, but never profiled Mustafa Tolba, the Egyptian director of the United Nations Environmental Program, who was responsible for organizing and sustaining the international phase-out effort throughout the 1980s.

Pertinent to low citation of environmentalists during the early and middle years of the debate, was their belated involvement in the issue. With a few exceptions, environmentalists from the national groups and at the grassroots level appeared disinterested, according to Benedick. Sharon Roan, a journalist

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## Features

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who wrote a 1989 book on the history of the ozone debate also noted this.

A check of the Alternative Press index shows that writings about ozone depletion from a pro-environmental, anti-establishment perspective did not start to appear until the second half of the 1980s. It took the ozone hole to activate environmentalists along with the scientific and political communities.

An analysis of the different angles used in reporting the ozone story showed that the three publications unsurprisingly play the science and technology angle heavily. The Times and Time treated ozone depletion as first and foremost a science and technology story.

To measure how often and intensively the three put the issue into cultural context, I identified an angle called "cultural attitudes." This angle included any explicit discussion about lifestyles and fundamental assumptions related to the ozone depletion issue: for instance, our need for aerosols or our attitudes about environmental risk.

The science and technology angle far outpaced the cultural attitudes angle in the Times. The gap between the two in Time magazine was smaller, but science and technology remained the primary angle on average. Time did the best of the three to link lifestyles to ozone depletion threats by running photographs of sunbathers and listing safety tips. The magazine mused about the "fragile environment" and "man's place" in it.

For The New York Times, ozone depletion was a major business story, and the business angle at times vied with the science angle for preeminence. The business angle was much weaker in the two magazines, and there is an argument to be made that Time did not report on the business side as heavily as possible.

All three media failed to comment on or investigate the ethics of the industrial community producing and using ozone-depleting chemicals. While harshly criticizing the Reagan and Bush administrations for not acting more decisively on chlorofluorocarbon phase-outs, Time editorials said nothing about industry's delay tactics or recalcitrance.

When the Times reported DuPont's March 1988 decision to stop production of CFCs, the most scrutiny given the company's attitude toward the ozone issue was a sentence saying, "after years of criticizing the company for dragging its heels, many politicians and environmentalists hailed the decision."

I had to look for more explicit criti-

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***All media involved showed lapses in the continuity of their coverage of ozone and CFCs. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to conclude that the three publications did not do a good job reporting the story. Despite their faults, they expended an effort never given to many other environmental issues.***

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cism of industry in publications such as Mother Jones and Multinational Monitor, among others. Time did criticize DuPont eventually, but in a 1993 essay that ran after my case study's time period. Scientific American ran an essay with a paragraph criticizing government and industry for "strongly opposing regulations," but only in general terms.

Rather than bash industry, the three publications here appeared to tread lightly on it.

The Times and Time magazine carried the flag of environmentalism editorially. Both acknowledged the threat of ozone depletion and pushed for international agreements. Time columnist Tom Wicker devoted several pieces to the issue over the years, emphasizing its importance and permanence.

Time magazine displayed an advocacy that permeated its story texts. Ozone depletion rated its own page in the Jan. 2, 1989 "Planet of the Year" issue with the headline "Ozone-destroying CFCs should be banned."

Time's environmental leanings irked a reviewer for Jude Wanniski's 1990 MediaGuide, who wrote, "the idea is worthy enough, but this time the magazine simply put forward the environmental agenda as its own, as if it was now beyond debate."

Interestingly, this environmental stand coincided with a less-than-flattering treatment of environmentalists. Aside from citing them infrequently, the Times

often buried them or condescended to them: "Friends of the Earth...is at it again in its role as guardian of the earth's ozone layer."

Time also gave little play to individual environmental organizations and environmentalists, preferring to let then Sen. Al Gore speak on their behalf or citing "environmentalists" in general. Scientific American featured articles by scientists urging action, but cited only one environmentalist during the 18 years.

This list of observations suggests coverage that was full of holes. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to conclude that the three publications did not do a good job reporting the story. Despite their faults, they expended an effort never given to many other environmental issues.

In terms of high profile and in-depth coverage, ozone depletion was a success story. Polls taken during the 1970s and 1980s showed that a majority of those sampled had some familiarity with the issue, even if uncertain about the details.

Benedick wrote that by bringing the issue before the public and stimulating political interest," the media played a role in motivating the diplomats participating in international negotiations.

After picking over more than 200 stories, long and short, I had only one overriding complaint. On average, we received too much discussion of the technological and economic aspects of the issue and too little comment or investigation into its cultural underpinnings. I would have preferred more balance.

Coverage catered primarily to science and technology buffs and market analysts while offering little detail on how Third World nations fit into the issue or on how ordinary citizens both contributed to and were threatened by ozone depletion. This is probably symptomatic of a technocentric society that treats ozone depletion as more a glitch in our technological creativity than a challenge to our basic assumptions and lifestyles.

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*Now a freelance reporter in Manchester, N.H., Andrew Brengle received a masters degree in environmental policy from Tufts in 1993.*



# Separate trade & environment

By WILLIAM H. LASH, III

Recently, the debate on international trade has begun to focus on many non-trade related issues, the most potentially damaging of them environmentalism. Advocates promoting the "greening" of world trade are encouraging U.S. officials to cloak protectionist barriers in the clothing of environmental policy.

Journalists beware: There are several flaws with the attempt to legislate global environmental standards. First, many of the attempts would require the imposition of trade sanctions.

For example, House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-MO) recently announced his "Green and Blue" 301 bill. The bill treats the failure to adopt effective environmental safeguards as an unfair trading practice that yields a competitive advantage to the polluter, and so seeks trade sanctions against global polluters. Gephardt feels that the failure of other countries to enforce their environmental laws places them at a competitive advantage over U.S. producers.

Supporters of such legislation argue that polluting producers externalize the costs of pollution, and that such distortions impact the global economy. What these critics fail to acknowledge is that these unilateral trade sanctions, in the form of increased tariffs or embargoes, are themselves trade distorting — probably more so than the distortions they are supposed to remedy.

Additionally, the extraterritorial applications of U.S. environmental values raise sticky enforcement problems. For example, what agency would be charged with investigating and sanctioning offshore polluters? The Environmental Protection Agency, the body best qualified to evaluate environmental compliance, clearly has a non-trade agenda. The Commerce Department is charged with investigating trade disputes, yet lacks environmental expertise and has always been viewed by our trading partners as protectionist. Neither institution could responsibly impose sanctions or

deny trade benefits to another country without reliable compliance data, and gathering that data would involve tremendous monitoring costs and reporting problems.

But that's the least of it. Any trade sanctions imposed unilaterally for environmental reasons violate the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and undermine the multilateral trading

## Viewpoints

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

system.

We know that because the GATT has been the site of environmental trade disputes before. In 1990 the United States imposed an embargo on tuna exported from Mexico because Mexican fishing practices were not "dolphin-safe" and violated the U.S. Marine Mammals Protection Act. Although Mexican fleets did not follow U.S. fishing practices, the tuna they exported were in compliance with Mexican law and international requirements and posed no health threat.

## TOPIC: Trade, tariffs & the environment

Mexico challenged the embargo before a GATT dispute panel, which ruled that the embargo breached the principle of non-discrimination, or "national treatment." This principle dictates that a nation cannot treat imports differently than it does domestic products, and while GATT Article XX allows for exemptions to the principle if they do not arbitrarily discriminate or act as disguised trade restrictions, in this case the panel determined that dolphins, as a natural resource, were out of U.S. jurisdiction and that the embargo was not primarily aimed at conservation.

Despite Mexico's victory in this dispute, the United States remained deter-

mined to impose its environmental will and standards on its trading partners. Mexican dependence on the United States as an export market and the fragility of the pending NAFTA negotiations forced Mexico to adopt dolphin-safe fishing measures that would assuage environmental activists. But the cost of compliance was high: an estimated 30,000 Mexican fisherman might lose their jobs.

This story illustrates still another problem of injecting environmentalism into the international trade debate: it turns the United States into the world's unelected environmental policeman. Neither we nor any other developed nation should serve as the moral guardian for our lesser developed partners. Such paternalism is unnecessary. The GATT signatories have declared their intention to balance the competing demands of trade liberalization and environmental protection, and the GATT recently established the Committee on Trade and the Environment under the auspices of the new World Trade Organization. The committee will evaluate the multilateral trading system and international production methods, judge their compatibility with environmental goals, and impose trade restrictions or import barriers as necessary.

The current climate of international "eco-pressure" not only strains the GATT system, but threatens to undo it. The GATT was created to remove barriers to trade, not to erect additional restraints on global markets.

According to Indian Ambassador Balrishnan K. Zutshi, "trade liberalization coupled with financial and technological transfers is essential for promoting sustainable development, particularly in the developing countries." To overlook that fact and instead focus the trade and environment debate on polemics about greening the GATT would reduce the debate to an irrelevance for the great number of contracting parties. Worse than that, it would be viewed as a serious protectionist threat to their trade

(Continued on page 23)



# When protectionism is good

By HERMAN E. DALY

Most journalistic discussions of free trade treat "protectionism" as a dirty word. Recent debates on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and current debates on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) are a case in point.

There are many reasons for this, not least, as commentator Mark Shields reportedly said, "There are no \$35-a-week Tijuana bureau chiefs." But let's assume for a moment that there is more to press coverage of free trade than self-interest. Let's assume that legitimate questions of public interest are at stake here, too, and ask what sorts of economic principles should apply.

To economists, protectionism usually means protecting an inefficient, lazy and often monopolistic national industry against really efficient foreign competition to the detriment of consumers. This is usually what journalists mean when they talk about protectionism, too, and in that context their negative use of the word is correct. This kind of protectionism is economically inefficient and should be resisted.

This does not mean, however, that protectionism is always bad. To the contrary, there are important instances in which protectionism is an essential precondition even to economic efficiency. The most fundamental rule of economic efficiency in a market economy is that the full costs of producing a product must be included in its price. There must be no subsidies.

When the environmental costs of producing a product are passed on to the larger society, this constitutes a form of subsidy by the society to the producer. Then a country requires that environmental costs be internalized in prices;

This is a step toward greater economic efficiency. However, when a country with policies that support this form of economic discipline engages in free trade with one that does not, the tendency will be for more and more production to shift to the latter. This reduces economic efficiency and should be resisted as vigorously as the protection of inefficient national monopolies.

Free trade also has enormous consequences for the standards a society chooses for itself that must be treated separately from questions of pure economic efficiency. Standards regarding the distribution of income exemplify the issue. Whether intended or not, free trade between the countries of North America under NAFTA represents an active commitment to a low-wage policy. While NAFTA was often presented as a generous act by Canada and the United States to share their great wealth with Mexico, proponents made little mention of who was to do the sharing. In fact, it is the laboring class, which in the United States has already suffered a 17 percent decline in real wages since 1973. Lower wages mean that returns to those who own capital in all three countries will go up. In reality, the workers in the United States and Canada will not be sharing their declining wages with underpaid Mexican workers so much as with the owners of capital.

We have come to speak of global competition as a major value. Are we competing for a good standard of living for most of our people? Eighty percent of the U.S. labor force is classed as non-supervisory employees. What is the value of competing to lower the incomes of 80 percent of U.S. working people? We could do many unwise things to make ourselves more internationally

competitive, such as moving back to child labor. That doesn't mean we should.

There are two ways to make products cheaper for the consumer. One is to increase efficiency. Everyone favors that. The other is to reduce environmental and employment standards. Reducing the wages paid for a given amount of productive work represents a lowering of standards, not an increase in efficiency.

Free trade encourages a standards lowering competition as much as it motivates increases in real efficiency. It is important to distinguish between the two. There are real gains from trade, but there are also benefits in maintaining a degree of local self-sufficiency -- which is very different from autarky.

Let me close with a quote from John Maynard Keynes, who in 1933 wrote an overlooked essay on national self-sufficiency. I've heard this quote referred to as the aberration of a great mind, but I disagree. Keynes said: "I sympathize therefore, with those who would minimize, rather than those who would maximize, economic entanglement between nations. Ideas, knowledge, art, hospitality, travel, these are the things which should of their nature be international. But let goods be homespun whenever it is reasonably and conveniently possible. And above all, let finance be primarily national."

*Herman E. Daley is a professor of economics at the University of Maryland's School of Public Affairs. Most recently he is the author, with John Cobb, of For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy Toward Community, the Environment, and a Sustainable Future.*

## Lash ... (from page 22)

interests." Ultimately, if environmental issues become a barrier to trade they will be self-defeating. The economic benefits of trade liberalization under the GATT are conservatively estimated at more than \$200 billion annually.

Therein lies the key to global environmental quality. Economic development, promoted by free trade, generates the ability and willingness of nations to devote more resources to protecting the environment.

*William H. Lash, III is an associate professor at George Mason University School of Law and an Adjunct Fellow at the Center for the Study of American Business at Washington University.*

# The Book Shelf



Kathy Sagan offers thumbnail reviews of books of use to science and environmental journalists

manicured dirt around our homes before this) to the 50's emblem of a well-kept lawn as symbol of civic pride and responsibility. Out of this context has come our ongoing urge to declare war on nature in our back (and front) yards, and Jenkins catalogues that battle in detail, with all its chemical aggression. The second half of the book focuses on the history of the lawn care industry and details Americans' ongoing and accelerated use of lawn care chemicals.

traditional almanac does, this almanac focuses on the ecological systems that affect man's life on earth: Body ecology: food; sex, birth, death and the health connection; what we wear. Home ecology: our homes; appliances and toys; yards. Community ecology: our garbage; our office buildings; transportation, recreation and tourism. Land and ocean lands; wildlife; marine life. And finally cultural and media; business and money; art and spirit. It highlights the environmental issues of our times and elaborates on certain aspects of them (for instance, it provides a checklist of questions to ask about a community's solid waste program) and provides a basic guide to the current issues facing our planet and how they impact on individual lives.

## SALVAGING THE LAND OF PLENTY...

Garbage and the American Dream by Jennifer Seymour Whitaker (Morrow, May 1994). Whitaker explores the separate elements that make up the story of America's waste, delving into the historical and cultural reasons behind our current crisis. From the growth of the leisure class in the second half of the 19th century and the push to buy more products from the 1920s on, to the rise in use of plastics over steel in the 60s and even more recent explosion of landfills, the nation has only of late come to a seriousness in the move to reduce waste. The book ultimately focuses on whether science can sort the issues of waste and waste management out and whether business and government can then tackle them in an effective manner.

## THE CAPACITY FOR WONDER:

Preserving National Parks by William Lowry (The Brookings Institute, June 1994). Lowry, who worked for the National Park Service in the 70s, delves into the problems facing the American park system today, from the obvious ones of overcrowding, pollution, rising crime and shrinking funding, to its more subtle vulnerability to political pressures and interagency disputed. He explores the 1980's pressure to expand private use of parkland through development, logging, grazing and mining and juxtaposes it with how environmental groups have pushed the service in the other direction. Finally he also looks at several proposals currently being put forth to manage the parks, such as privatizing them, though he personally concludes that preserving nature should be the explicit goal of the National Park Service.

## TAMOXIFEN & BREAST CANCER:

What Everyone Should Know About the Treatment of Breast Cancer by Michael W. DeGregorio and Valerie J. Wiebe (Yale University Press, April 1994). Tamoxifen is one of the most successful drugs in treating breast cancer in postmenopausal women. It is also one of the most controversial. This book lays out the facts and controversies about breast cancer treatments in general and tamoxifen in particular, especially the issues surrounding the National Cancer Institute studies involving taking the drug as a preventative measure.

## THE LAWN: A HISTORY OF AN AMERICAN OBSESSION...

by Virginia Scott Jenkins (Smithsonian, May 1994). Another cultural history of a distinctly American phenomenon, this time — lawn mania. Jenkins traces the American craze with lawns from turn-of-the-century golfers trying to surround their homes with green turf (apparently we were more content to have well-

## THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY ALMANAC OF THE ENVIRONMENT...

by Valerie Harms and other Audubon writers; foreword by Paul and Anne Erhlich (Putnam's, March 1994). Instead of presenting seasonal information as a

This issue of SEJournal offers a brief roundup of a few books of environmental interest published this spring. If anyone is interested in reviewing for SEJ, please contact Kathy Sagan at (212) 463-1240. Send galley or books for review to her attention at Family Circle, 110 Fifth Avenue, NY, NY 10011.

# SEJ '94 Conference Registration Form

Please print legibly or attach a business card.

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## SATURDAY TOURS

Please indicate your preference.

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(Discount rates apply until 8/5/94.)

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Check if you plan to attend the Thursday p.m. Reception.  
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Journalists, educators and students in the process of joining SEJ are eligible for the member rate. Office clearance must be obtained prior to registering. Call Christine Rigel at (215) 247-9710.

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SEJ's 1994 educational programs are made possible in part by grants from the following sources:

- Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
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- George Gund Foundation
- Town Creek Foundation
- Hearst Corporation
- Salt Lake Tribune

# EPA discovers population

By **ROY BECK**

Throughout most of its history, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency was of little help to journalists when it came to population questions

That appears to be changing, however, with the formation of an EPA Future Studies Unit charged with looking at underlying pervasive changes in the society that will have a major effect on the EPA's task in the future.

One trend has jumped out at the new unit: U.S. population growth is a profound factor in the EPA's ability to protect the environmental quality of life.

"The unfortunate thing is that this place has a very high level of demographic ignorance and bliss," says David Rejeski, head of the Future Studies Unit. The EPA has no demographers, he says. He plans to focus 80 percent of the unit's attention during the coming year on rapid U.S. population growth and how it will affect attainment of environmental goals.

Cheering this development are those environmental leaders and groups who for years have urged the EPA to treat demographic change as an integral factor in environmental quality — not only as something that helps predict but as a factor that can be changed through government action.

The new unit's work also should be good news for environmental reporters. In the past, if we sought data or opinions related to demographic change, we were out of luck. Two years ago, for example, I wondered how many air-non-attainment metropolitan areas would instead have "clean" ambient air if they still had their 1970 population. For weeks, I was bounced by telephone from one EPA office to another in several cities, never finding an official or researcher who had any idea of anybody in EPA who could even talk about population factors.

Rejeski points out that population and environment were tied closely together in the 1969 National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and in the startup governmental activity. But the EPA soon concentrated on reducing per capita environmental impact with-

out evaluating how much population growth was eroding those gains. Today, essential questions related to population never get asked by government officials, environmental journalists or even by most environmental groups, Rejeski says. Without the population questions, he says, "you can't have an

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## Reporters' Toolbox

is a regular feature of SEJournal, in which reporters and others provide tips on gathering news about environmental issues

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enlightened environmental policy."

During the next half-century, U.S. population will rise from 258 million to 392 million, if current fertility, mortality and immigration rates continue, and immigration is reduced somewhat, states the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

The projection would mean that more than 130 million additional Americans will be contributing emissions to the air, tossing out solid waste, flushing toilets and putting pressure on ecosystems to provide material and space for additional housing, roads, shopping malls, recreational facilities and workplaces. The annual increases — larger than in all but a handful of underdeveloped countries today — likely would be a significant component of future environmental pressures and conflicts.

Rejeski notes that the 2050 population projection is some 80 million higher than the previous projection and "probably was one of the most critical documents ever put out by the government. Every agency in Washington should have been meeting immediately to discuss how their plans would have to change because of the extra 80 million people." Instead, the government, environmental activists and journalists barely blinked an eye, he says.

Rejeski says the EPA now is developing a comprehensive survey of the "state of our knowledge" on population-environmental links. It will discuss potential environmental implica-

tions of U.S. population trends and components and undertake two or three case studies to examine issues in greater detail. Rejeski also hopes to develop a long-range research agenda and a set of policy recommendations.

Rejeski, an EPA outsider, came to his job after a few years in Germany as an environmental planner and public policy analyst. He says NEPA's opening "declaration" has given solid justification for his unit's new work:

"The Congress, recognizing the profound impact of man's activity on the interrelations of all components of the natural environment, particularly the profound influences of population growth, high density urbanization, industrial expansion, resource exploitation ... declares that it is the continuing policy of the Federal government...to create and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony.(emphasis added)."

NEPA set up the Council on Environmental Quality, which was supposed to provide an annual report of the adequacy of natural resources "in the light of expected population pressures."

But those population-impact statements never were provided, according to leaders of the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, Negative Population Growth and Carrying Capacity Network which have lobbied for adherence to NEPA.

For a brief period, however, the population focus of NEPA was center stage in the modern environmental ethos. The president and Congress appointed a joint commission to study the country's population needs. In 1972, the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future released a gargantuan report. Its chairman, John D. Rockefeller summarized the finding in one paragraph: "After two years of concentrated effort, we have concluded that, in the long run, no substantial benefits will result from the further growth of the nation's population, rather that the gradual stabilization of our population would contribute significantly to the nation's ability to solve its problems."

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## Reporters' Toolbox

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The commission concluded that from the standpoint of environment and resources it was possible for the United States to cope with rapid population growth until the year 2000 or 2020:

"But doing so will become an increasingly unpleasant and risky business — unpleasant because 'coping' with growth means adopting solutions we don't like; risky because it means adopting solutions before we understand them."

Rejeski recently took the so-called Rockefeller Commission report off the shelf in EPA's library.

At the librarian's desk, we made a remarkable finding: he was the first person at the EPA ever to check it out. "I thought, this can't be true," he says.

(The report is difficult to find today, even in libraries.. The Social Contract, a

quarterly journal, published a 20th anniversary review of it in its Summer 1992 issue. Journalists can get a copy by writing to The Social Contract, 316 1/2 E.

**Rejeski can be reached at (202) 260-6523, or the EPA, 401 M. St. SW, Washington, DC 20460. Access Future Studies Unit data via E-mail: (rejeski.dave@wic.epa.gov);**

**For a briefing kit for the U.N. population conference in Cairo Sept. 5-13, call the conference secretariat at (212)297-5244**

Mitchell St., Petoskey, MI 49770.)

Soon after the 1972 release of the population report, Americans achieved the report's goal of a below-replacement level fertility that eventually could lead to a stabilized population. But U.S.

population today is 55 million higher than in 1970, primarily because of immigration changes.

Whether the federal government — or local communities — should continue to encourage major population growth may be the key environmental question of our day, according to Michael Murphy of the Carrying Capacity Network. Environmental journalists will have an easier time of covering that part of the story if the EPA follows through on Rejeski's beginning work trying to ascertain the effects of population change.

*Roy Beck, who started his first environmental beat in 1969, is Washington editor of The Social Contract, a quarterly journal.*

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## New Members

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The following list represents new SEJ members recorded from March 4 through May 13. Memberships recorded after May 13 will appear in the SEJournal Volume 4 No. 3.

### CALIFORNIA

- Carolyn Chase (Associate), San Diego Earth Times/Earth Day Times, Earth Media, Inc., San Diego
- Robert Evangelista, Environmental Awareness Radio, Nevada City
- Dennis Farrier, "What On Earth," KCAL-TV News, Hollywood
- Richard Kahlenberg, LA Times, Suburban Edition, North Hollywood
- Alba Liani (Academic), Newport Beach
- Lina Sagara Reyes, Women's Feature Service, University of California, Berkeley
- Carolyn Whetzel, California Environment Reporter, Bureau of National Affairs, Redlands

### CONNECTICUT

- Joan L. Faust, The New York Times, Riverside

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

- Sybille Fleischmann (Academic), American University
- Alan R. Newman, Enviro. Science & Technology, American Chemical Society, Washington

### FLORIDA

- Patty A. Bond (Academic), University of Florida, Gainesville
- Jay Humphreys (Academic), Fathom, University of Florida Sea Grant, Gainesville,

### GEORGIA

- Marc Pickard, Channel 11 News, WXIA-TV, Atlanta

### MARYLAND

- Roger D. Marino (Associate), Agribusiness Tech/Delmarva's Environment, Marino Enterprises, Ltd., Salisbury
- Rebecca N. Staebler (Associate), Journal of Forestry, Society of American Foresters, Bethesda

### MAINE

- Ned Porter, Bangor Daily News, Bangor

### MICHIGAN

- Michael A. Kamrin (Academic), Institute for Enviro Toxicology, Michigan State University, East Lansing

### MINNESOTA

- Susan Dreiband (Associate), Public Affairs Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Minneapolis

### MISSOURI

- Conger Beasley, Jr., Kansas City

### NEW HAMPSHIRE

- Robert Braile, The Boston Globe, Exeter

### NEW MEXICO

- James D. Gollin (Associate), Santa Fe

### NEW YORK

- Harold Crooks, New York

- Jean Sica-Lieber (Academic), Empire State College of SUNY, Fairport

### OHIO

- Larry L. Levin (Academic), EW Scripps School of Journalism, Ohio University, Athens

### OREGON

- Kellyn Betts, Portland

### PENNSYLVANIA

- Peter Argentine, Pittsburgh
- Herb Drill (Associate), Philadelphia Inquirer, Langhorne
- Cheryl Ann Lambert, Hardware Age Magazine, Chilton Company, Radnor

### TEXAS

- Shelley Kofler, News Department, WFAA-TV, Dallas

### VIRGINIA

- Jeff Erlich, The Corps Report, Arlington
- Jason Rylander, Land Letter, Conservation Fund, Arlington
- Liz Skinner, Washington Technology, Tech News, Arlington

### WISCONSIN

- Steve Pomplun, Earthwatch Radio, University of Wisconsin, Madison

### International Members

#### SRI LANKA

- Anura Siriwardena, Vidusara Science Journal, Upali Newspapers, Ltd., Colombo

# Studies up ante in Estrogens debate

By now you've probably heard about "environmental estrogens" and their possible legacy: infertility, micropenises, and breast cancer, to name a few of the scarier outcomes. But is this the stuff of science — or science fiction? That's a question scientists are grappling with now, and it's a question worth pursuing for environmental journalists.

Dozens of chemicals mimic the female hormone estrogen. Some, like PCBs and the pesticide DDT, have sinister track records. Others such as coumestrol, a "phytoestrogen" found in plants, are virtual unknowns.

These chemicals share one thing in common: They are suspects in genetic sex crimes whose victims include gulls with extra ovaries and male alligators with underdeveloped sexual organs.

But the case against environmental estrogens is not open-and-shut, particularly when scientists and environmentalists attempt to implicate these compounds as players in a growing number of human reproductive dysfunctions. And the case has grown weaker, at least for the time being. Two health studies, touted as evidence that environmental estrogens affect people, are now under fire in the scientific community.

The tenuous link between environmental estrogens and human health is something for journalists to bear in mind when writing about the issue. "What makes this an interesting story is the human effects, but there's almost no data" to support the connection, says Janet Raloff of *Science News*. Raloff should know — she and Bette Hileman of *Chemical and Engineering News* have been at the vanguard, publishing stories before many major newspapers and magazines caught up with the topic earlier this year.

Although new to many journalists, environmental estrogens have captivated a growing band of scientists since 1971, when the pregnancy aid diethylstilbestrol (DES), a synthetic estrogen, was linked to a rare form of vaginal cancer in the daughters of women who took it. The discovery prompted scientists to scout out other compounds that might pose a

similar threat.

Sure enough, chemical after chemical was shown to bind to the estrogen receptor. But the harder scientists searched for human health effects, the more DES struck them as an anomaly. In July 1991, 20 years after DES was banned from pharmacy shelves, a multi-disciplinary group of experts at the "Wingspread" conference in Wisconsin could conclude only that some chemicals had "the potential" to alter human hormonal function.

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## Science Survey

Rich Stone of *Science* magazine offers a review of selected environmental science and policy issues in the news

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The stakes rose last year, however, when two scientific papers appeared to bolster an environmental estrogen-human disease link. In one study, Mary Wolff and colleagues at Mt. Sinai School of Medicine analyzed 58 cases of women diagnosed with breast cancer between 1985 and 1992. Estrogen is thought to play a crucial role in the development of many breast cancers. Wolff found that women with high levels of DDE, a breakdown product of the estrogenic DDT, were more likely to develop breast cancer.

But Wolff's intriguing conclusions have for now failed the test of time. Last April, Nancy Krieger of the Kaiser Foundation Research Institute, along with Wolff and several other colleagues, published results of a 150-case breast-cancer study that did not confirm an association between DDE levels and breast cancer.

Wolff's study isn't the only high-profile environmental estrogen paper to have hit rough sledding. Last year, Danish endocrinologist Niels Skakkebaek hypothesized in the *Lancet* that maternal exposure to environmental estrogens might be linked to a rise in abnormalities in the human male reproductive system. One of Skakkebaek's key pieces of evidence was an analysis he and colleagues had done in 1992 that

showed that men are producing 50% less sperm now than men were producing 50 years ago. The culprit, he posited, could be increasing levels of PCBs and other estrogenic pollutants.

But sperm counts haven't declined continuously over the last 20 years, two scientists asserted in the *British Medical Journal* last year. Therefore, argued Anna Brake and Walter Krause of Philipps University in Germany, "care should be taken when discussing a causal relation with environmental factors."

In addition, at a toxicology conference in Washington, D.C. last February, scientists at Dow Chemical Company — which has a financial stake in the matter — criticized Skakkebaek's paper more forcefully. They claimed that their own analysis shows that sperm counts have not declined much at all in the past two decades. Dow intends to publish its findings later this year.

The bottom line is that journalists must exercise restraint in extrapolating results from animal studies to people — particularly when the human data are so scant. Linda Birnbaum, a toxicologist at the Environmental Protection Agency, says: "I think we should be looking at the wildlife studies as indicators of a potential problem in people."

Nevertheless, other toxicologists argue that any attempt to link environmental estrogens to human health problems is simply scaring the public. "This has been blown way out of proportion," says Texas A&M's Steve Safe.

The environmental estrogen issue provides a good lesson for covering other scientific debates, says Alan Marcus, a history professor at Iowa State University. Marcus, who recently wrote a book on the DES controversy, says it's important for journalists to press their scientific sources to lay out exactly what they know and don't know. "You have to get scientists to admit when they're speculating about something," he says.

For now, the effects of environmental estrogens on human health can be chalked up as speculation not a causal link that's rooted in some ominous signs in wildlife.



# Application for Membership

## Society of Environmental Journalists

### Instructions:

1. Fill out application as completely as possible. Attach additional pages if necessary.
2. If available, attach a current resume or brief biography.

3. Mail to: **Society of Environmental Journalists**  
**9425 Stenton Avenue, Suite 209**  
**Philadelphia, PA 19118**

Please include \$30 with your application. Payment options are noted on the back.

### A. To be completed by all applicants.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Publication/Show/Dept.: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street City State Zip

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street City State Zip

**VERY IMPORTANT: SEJ mail should be sent to your  Home  Work address.**  
 (Note: Students should provide address and phone during school year and date of graduation.)

Primary Area of Employment (Check only one):  
 Magazine  Television  Radio  Freelancer  Newspaper  Educator  News Service  Student  Newsletter  Photographer

Describe duties (students may describe goals): \_\_\_\_\_

When did you start current position (date)? If less than two years, summarize work history: \_\_\_\_\_

If you own or have access to a computer, is it:  Apple/Macintosh  PC-compatible  Windows  
 Disk drive size:  3.5-inch  5.25-inch Does it accept high-density disks?  Yes  No

Check the category of membership (as defined by 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 part-time 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 the SEJ. (See section "C" of application.) Applicants must be substantially engaged in journalistic pursuits.

Applicants will be notified in writing of the membership status granted.



**A.** (continued)

Have you done any freelance or similar work during the past year, either paid or as a volunteer, for any organization, business or movement not primarily engaged in journalistic or academic pursuits as described in the "Active" and "Academic membership categories described above?  Yes  No

If yes, provide details and dates: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you done any lobbying or public relations work in the past two years?  Yes  No

If yes, for whom? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**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  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 and 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

<b>E. Payment Information:</b>			
Please make your check or money order out to the <i>Society of Environmental Journalists</i>			
VISA <input type="checkbox"/>		Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/>	
Account Number: _____		Expiration 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

# Calendar

## JUNE

16-18. **Amer. Chemical Soc. NW Regional Meeting** (with sessions on global change in polar regions, bioremediation and marine toxins). University of Alaska, Anchorage. Contact: G.L. Trigiano, Univ. of Alaska, 3211 Providence, ESB207, Anchorage, AK 99508. Ph:907/786-1351

19-24. **Air & Waste Mgmt. Assn's annual meeting** (with sessions on everything from indoor-air pollution and noise pollution, to soiling and damage to cars by pollutants). Albert. B. Sabin Cincinnati Convention Ctr. Contact: A&WMA, 1 Gateway Ctr, Third Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. FAX:412/232-3450

20-24. **Int'l Symposium on Charge and Field Effects in Biosystems** (with some 60 sessions on such topics as effects of ultraviolet light on gene expression, the basis of "healing" energies from electromagnetic fields (EMFs), the stimulation of cell metabolism by low-frequency EMFs, and human sensitivity to low-frequency EMFs). Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond. Contact: Kelly S. Roach, coordinator, VCU., P.O. Box 842019, Richmond, VA 23284-2019. Ph:804/828-1674; FAX:804/828-2171

21-22. **National Energy Summit II: The U.S. Energy Future**. National Press Club, Washington, DC. Contact: Energy Summit, 919 18th St., NW, Ste. 450, Washington, DC 20006. Ph:202/857-4781; FAX:202/457-0001

24-27. **Oxidants and Oxidation in the Earth's Atmosphere** (on stratospheric ozone, smog ozone, and chemical transformation of other air pollutants). Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA. Contact: American Chemical Society, 1155 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036. Ph:202/872-4450

26-30. **Health Physics Soc. annual meeting** (focusing on radiation effects—from the decommissioning of power plants to radon, to a session on early radiation experiments on human subjects). San Francisco. Contact: HPS, 8000 Westpark Dr., Ste. 130, McLean, VA 22102. Ph:703/790-1745; FAX:703/790-9063

26-July 1. **Conf. on Radiation &**

**Health** (sponsored by Amer. Statistical Assn., sessions will focus on radon and lung cancer, atomic-bomb-survivor analyses, effects of in utero or parental exposures, and risks from nonionizing radiation). Harbor House Hotel and Conf. Ctr., Nantucket, MA. Contact: Marilyn Humm, ASA, 1429 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314-3402. Ph:703/684-1221; FAX:703/684-2037

## JULY

4-9. **Int'l Congress of Pesticide Chemistry** (sponsored by the Am. Chem. Soc. and Int'l Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry, concurrent sessions will focus on a broad range of topics, from trends in cancer risk assessments and exposures through the diet and workplace, to residues on crops and understanding environmental factors that influence health risks). Sheraton Washington, Washington, DC. Contact: ACS new office, 1155 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036. Ph:202/872-4450

11-15. **Annual Summer Toxicology Forum** (with sessions focusing on such topics as food pathogens and pesticides, radon, and effects of ethylene). Given Inst. of Pathobiology, Aspen, CO. Contact: The Toxicology Forum, Ste. 800, 1575 Eye St., NW, Washington, DC 20005. Ph:202/659-0030; FAX:202/789-7594

12-15. **Sustaining Ecological Integrity of Large Floodplain Rivers** (sponsored by Interior Dept.'s Nat'l Biological Survey, this meeting will try to define ecol. integrity—and how to restore it—for floodplain rivers, among the world's most disturbed biological communities). La Crosse (Wisc.) Center and Radisson Hotel. Contact: Ken Lubinski, NBS, Env'l Mgmt. Tech'l Center, 575 Lester Ave., Onalaska, WI 54560. Ph:608/783-7550 (ext. 61)

18-19. **Applying Ecol'l Integrity Principles to the Mgmt of the Upper Mississippi** (companion workshop to above meeting, it will deal with issues such as effects of last year's flood on ecosystems and how previous mgmt decisions aggravated flood's effects). Radisson Hotel, La Crosse, Wisc. Contact: Lubinski (see above).

25-27. **Int'l Low-Level Waste Conf.**

(on radioactive wastes, sponsored by the Electric Power Research Inst.). Waterside Marriott, Norfolk, VA. Contact: Linda Nelson, EPRI, 3412 Hillview Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94303. Ph:415/855-2127; FAX:415/855-2041

## AUGUST

1-4. **Managing the Solid Wastes of the Americas** (with sessions on composting and recycling municipal wastes; managing landfill gases; incinerating trash for energy, and weighing the economic and policy tradeoffs in deciding whether to landfill, burn or recycle wastes). Contact: Solid Waste Assn. of North Amer., P.O. Box 7219, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Ph:301/585-2898; FAX:301/585-0297

20-26. **Ecological Progress to Meet the Challenge of Environmental Change** (a meeting of the Int'l Cong. of Ecology). Manchester, England. Contact: Secretary, VI Int'l Cong. of Ecology, Manchester Conf. Centre, UMIST, PO Box 88, Manchester M60 1QD, United Kingdom

## SEPTEMBER

18-22. **Managing Forests to Meet Peoples' Needs** (a joint meeting of the Soc. of Amer. Foresters and Canadian Inst. of Forestry, sessions tackle such diverse topics as population pressures and political considerations to environmental/ecological relationships between the forests and rest of the planet). Anchorage, AK. Contact: Richard Reid, SAF, 5400 Grosvenor La., Bethesda, MD 20814. Ph:301/897-8720

25-28. **Int'l Radon Symposium** (focusing on health concerns). Trump Registry, Atlantic City, NJ. Contact: Amer. Assn. of Radon Scientists and Technologists, P.O. Box 70, Park Ridge, NJ 07656. Ph:201/391-6445; FAX:201/391-0670

## OCTOBER

6-9. **SEJ 4th National Conference** with skills-development workshops; regional, thematic tours; and panel discussions. Sundance - Provo, Utah.(see p.4 of this publication for details).

## Green Beat Correspondents

### Contribute to Green Beat

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

**Alabama and Mississippi** — Vacant.

**Alaska** — Vacant.

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

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

### California:

Northern California — Laura Mahoney, BNA, 770 L St., Suite 910, Sacramento, CA 95814, (916) 552-6502.

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

Southern California — Vacant.

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

**Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts** — Bob Wyss at the Providence Journal, 75 Fountain St., Providence, RI 02902, (401) 737-3000.

**District of Columbia** — Cheryl Hogue, BNA, Daily Environment Report, 1231 25th St., N.W., Room 361-S, Wash., DC 20037, (202) 452-4625, fax (202) 452-4150.

### Florida:

North Florida — Bruce Ritchie at the Gainesville Sun, P.O. Box 147147, Gainesville, FL 32614, (904) 374-5087.

South Florida — Denise O'Toole at the Daytona Beach News Journal, P.O. Box 2831, Daytona, FL 32120, (904) 252-1511.

**Georgia and South Carolina** — Ron Chepsuk, 782 Wofford St., Rock Hill, SC 29730, (803) 366-5440.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Michigan** — John A. Palen, at Central Michigan University, Journalism Dept, Anspach 36, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859, (517) 774-7110.

**Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota** — Tom Meersman at the Minneapolis Star Tribune, 425 Portland Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55488, (612) 673-4414.

**Missouri and Kansas** — Bill Allen, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 900 N. Tucker Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63101, (314) 340-8127.

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

**New Jersey** — Todd Bates at the Asbury Park Press, 3601 Hwy 66, Neptune, NJ 07754, (908) 922-6000, ext. 4361, fax (908) 922-4818.

**New York** — Tom Andersen at Gannett Newspapers, 1 Gannett Drive, White Plains, NY 10604, (914) 694-5060.

**Nevada** — Mary Manning at the Las Vegas Sun, 800 S. Valley View Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89107, (702) 259-4065 or Jon Christiansen of High Country News, (702) 885-2023.

**Ohio and Indiana** — Dan Trevas at Gongwer News Service, Inc, 175 South

Third St., Ste. 230, Columbus, OH 43215, (614) 221-1992, fax (614) 221-7844.

**Oregon** — Terry Novak at the Salem Statesman-Journal, 280 Church St., NE, Salem, OR 97309, (503) 399-6737.

**Pennsylvania** — Vacant.

**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, 508 Young St., Dallas, TX 75202, (800) 431-0010.

Central and West Texas — Robert 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** — Rod C. Jackson, KTVX-TV, 1760 S. Fremont Dr., Salt Lake City, UT 84103, (801) 975-4418.

**Virginia and North Carolina** — Mark Divincenzo at The Daily Press, 7505 Warwick Blvd., Newport News, VA 23607, (804) 247-4719.

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

**West Virginia** — Ken Ward at the Charleston Gazette, 1001 Virginia St. East, Charleston, WV 25301, (304) 348-1702.

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

*Please note correspondent openings for several states. If you are interested in filling one of these volunteer positions, please see article on page 17 of this issue and contact Kevin Carmody at (312) 871-8911.*

**Thanks to Peter Lord of the Providence Journal for fill-in duty.**

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

► The District of Columbia boasts the nation's first taxicab fleet to qualify for an environmental label. In March, Green Seal, a Washington, D.C.-based labeling organization, gave its stamp of approval to Clean Air Cab. This D.C. company's taxis run on compressed natural gas and emit fewer pollutants — especially those that cause smog — than gasoline-fueled vehicles. Both the Clean Air Act amendments of 1990 and the Energy Policy Act of 1992 require federal fleets in many urban areas to convert to alternative fuels, which include natural gas, propane, ethanol, methanol, and electricity. Contact Amy Kostant at Green Seal 202-331-7337 and Clean Air Cab at 202-667-7000.

► The Episcopal Diocese of Washington, owners of one of last stretches of old-growth forest in the metropolitan area, is under attack from environmentalists. The diocese wants to put up as many as 649 houses on the property and use the money to beef up a trust fund that supports aging members of the clergy, programs for the elderly, and education. But environmentalists say the church has a moral obligation to maintain the virgin forest, known as Belt Woods, in Prince George's County, MD. The Washington Post ran a story March 28 on an environmentalists' protest at the Washington National Cathedral. Contact the Episcopal Diocese of Washington at 202-537-6560; Sierra Club Vice President Brent Blackwelder (an Episcopalian) at 202-547-1141; and Dan Boone, a leader of local opposition to the proposed development, at 301-464-5199.

## HAWAII - PACIFIC

► The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is worried about a recent \$508 million cut in the military base closure budget that could affect the cleanup of Midway Island, a breeding place for endangered Hawaiian seals, turtles, and seabirds. Toxic sediments in a lagoon and other contamination from past dumping or leaching from porous landfills on the tiny island could already be harming native monk seals, agency biologists say.

The money was cut from the \$1 billion military Base Realignment and Closure program, to help pay for earthquake damage in California and for military peace keeping overseas. According to a spokeswoman in the House Armed Services Committee, efforts are under way to restore the funds. Meanwhile, the Defense Department is looking to borrow money from long-term projects to pay for most pressing cleanups. The federal wildlife agency is eyeing Midway — closed last year as a naval air base — as an addition to its National Wildlife Refuge system in the Pacific. There are now six refuges in the Pacific. The remote island, part of the Northwestern Hawaiian Island chain, has no constituency and could be overlooked, agency officials say. The Navy, whose cleanup budget was cut from \$789 million to \$400 million, was planning field studies at Midway this year to assess contamination. Navy officials say they don't know how the cut will affect Midway, or other planned base closures.

► Conservationists in Hawaii say a Japanese proposal to expand minke whaling into the northern Pacific could dismantle a global ban on commercial whaling. "At stake is the potential resumption of commercial whaling," said Don White, president of Earthtrust. "It could be open season on whales again." The request came in May at a meeting of the International Whaling Commission in Mexico. Japan, which now catches about 300 minke whales a year in Antarctic waters, wants to take an additional 100 in the Pacific. It would be the first sanctioned hunting in the northern Pacific since an international ban went into effect in 1986. Less than 30 feet long, minke whales are among the few whale species not pushed to near extinction by past commercial whaling. While whalers once sought oil, whale meat is considered a delicacy in Japan. While Japan says its whaling is for scientific purposes, to gauge a sustainable yield for commercial minke whaling, opponents say the whales are being sold in Japanese markets. Japan contends it could hunt 2,000 to 4,000 minke whales a year without threatening populations. Bolstered by Norway's recent defiance of the ban, Japan's move into the Pacific

would greatly undermine the loosely-bound agreement, Earthtrust says.

## LOUISIANA

► The Baton Rouge Advocate produced a special section on endangered species in Louisiana, linking it with a series of stories examining inadequacies in the state's endangered species law and program and with the national leadership of U.S. Rep. Billy Tauzin, D-La., in the fight to weaken the federal Endangered Species Act. Copies can be obtained by calling Environmental Editor Bob Anderson at 504-383-1111.

► The New Orleans Times-Picayune did a package of stories entitled "Saving the Coast," which looked at proposals to save Louisiana's rapidly deteriorating coastal wetlands. Those proposals would cost billions of dollars. Contact Picayune staff writer Mark Schleifstein at 504-826-3300.

## MASSACHUSETTS

► A major investigation by WCVB-TV, Channel 5, found that air quality inside of ice arenas throughout Massachusetts can be extremely dangerous. Ice resurfacing machines, which are used repeatedly during the day, in many cases have virtually no air pollution control equipment. Experts hired by the television station measured carbon monoxide levels at five local arenas. The readings were so high that they were above the level at which Massachusetts health rules require that a building needs to be evacuated. The highest was at Nancy Kerrigan's home rink, in Stoneham, Mass. The television series drew immediate and strong interest not only from viewers but from public officials. Some rinks are considering buying new equipment with the proper controls. For details, call David Ropeik, WCVB-TV Boston, 617-449-0400.

## MINNESOTA

► The Minnesota Legislature has given a boost to renewable energy in the Upper Midwest. As part of a compromise that allows Northern States Power

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## The Green Beat

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Company to store radioactive spent fuel in large casks at its Prairie Island plant, the utility must also build or purchase 425 megawatts' worth of electricity from wind machines and 125 megawatts from biomass-fueled plants by 2002. Environmentalists and Dakota leaders were unhappy with the part of the state's decision that allowed casks to be located at the plant site near the Mississippi River and adjacent to an Indian community. Utility officials argued that refusal to allow casks would shut the plant down in the next few years, and would both raise electric prices and cost jobs. For additional information, contact Tom Meersman at the Star-Tribune, 612-673-7388.

► Minnesota pollution officials have banned all small incinerators in the state, and have imposed stricter air pollution standards on most of the remaining burners. The state's new "waste combustor rules" took five years to develop and apply to all incinerators that burn garbage, including medical wastes, and to power plants fueled by refuse-derived fuel (shredded garbage). Contact Charles Laszewski, St. Paul Pioneer Press, 612-228-5464.

► As of May 7, Minnesota law bans the sale of "toxic tennies," two models of athletic shoes with flashing lights in their soles and poisonous mercury in their electric switches. The new law is intended to prevent the shoes from ending up in garbage incinerators or landfills, where the mercury could leak into the environment. Mercury in Minnesota lakes and fish has become an important concern for both environmental health officials and tourism leaders. The sales ban, the first of its kind in the nation, covers any item of clothing that contains electric switches with mercury. So far it apparently applies to only two models of shoes made by L.A. Gear Inc. Contact Dean Rebuffoni, Star-Tribune, 612-673-1742.

### MISSOURI

► More accurate and timely river predictions by the National Weather Service for the Flood of 1993 could have

saved hundreds of millions of dollars and "dramatically reduced" human suffering, according to a report by a 16-person study panel commissioned by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The report, obtained by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, found that flawed computer processing, inadequate communications and problems in assessing the effects of levee breaks on river levels hampered the weather service in some of its flood predictions last summer. The team interviewed 120 local, state and federal officials and disaster experts in the flooded states to come up with the report's 106 findings and recommendations. Contact reporter Robert Koenig in the Post-Dispatch Washington bureau, at 202-298-6880. (See related story, Page 18).

► Two controversies in Missouri covered extensively by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reached the conclusions that environmentalists had wanted this spring. The U.S. Forest Service was considering creating 308 miles of trails for all-terrain vehicles in the Mark Twain National Forest, and plans were in the works to locate a medical waste incinerator in the middle of St. Louis. Newspaper stories showed that the proposals were opposed by nearby residents, and both projects were dropped. For information, contact reporter Tom Uhlenbrock at 314-340-8128.

### NEW YORK

► New York City-based Consumer Reports magazine published a special section on "Public Interest Pretenders" in its May 1994 issue. The package looked at organizations that, by virtue of name or other factors, suggest to the public they are one thing — say a consumer rights group — but actually represent opposite interests. The package included a full page on the American Council on Science and Health, which describes itself as a New York-based consumer education consortium dealing with health issues. ACHS tends to dismiss human health threats from pesticides, petroleum products and other chemicals including synthetic bovine growth hormone. The Consumer Re-

ports piece — headlined "Forefront of Science, or Just a Front?" — disclosed the contents of an internal ACSH memo that would seem to link some of the organization's funding sources — such as Monsanto and G.D. Searle — to specific ACSH projects to tout the safety of controversial chemicals or products sold by those firms.

### NORTH CAROLINA

► The Fayetteville Observer-Times in March published a five-day series called, "Pesticides: Policies for Poison," which details how the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the North Carolina Department of Agriculture's Pesticide Section and Pesticide Board fail to protect people from misused and dangerous pesticides. The series, written by Michael Fabey, states that the EPA tells farmers and others to use pesticides it knows may be more harmful than other pest-control measures. The state Pesticide Section lacks the workers and money it needs to do its job right and closes most pesticide abuse cases without penalizing anyone. And when it recommends fining someone, the Pesticide Board many times reduces the fines. For more information, call Fabey at 910-323-4848.

### RHODE ISLAND

► It began with parents wondering why workers from a hazardous waste cleanup company each night were inside the school their children attended during the day. School officials, belatedly, told the parents in Warwick, R.I. that asbestos had been found during a small renovation project but that it was being cleaned up. When tests found asbestos fibers in the air at levels above permissible standards, tests were undertaken throughout the district and the results were so shocking that every school in the district closed down. A \$3 million cleanup ensued. Records reviewed by reporters found that school officials had ignored reports that asbestos insulation was deteriorating in some schools. For more information, contact Peter Lord, Providence Journal-Bulletin, 401-737-3070.

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# The Green Beat

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## UTAH

► The National Park Service is proposing strict limits on overflights of Canyonlands and Arches National Parks by helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft. Park officials are trying to beat a series of studies by Congress and the Clinton Administration to come up with a voluntary compliance plan for local air tour operators. Officials say their greatest fear is that of "migrating air tour operators" should even tougher restrictions be implemented at Grand Canyon National Park. For further information: Rod Jackson, KTVX-TV, Salt Lake City, 801-975-4418.

► Utah Governor Mike Leavitt has made it clear the state will fight any efforts by the U.S. Army to transport chemical weapon stockpiles to Tooele Army Depot from out-of-state storage sites. Utah not only has the largest stockpile of such weapons — 42 percent — it also has the only operational incinerator for demilitarization of stockpiles in the continental United States. Additionally, Canyonlands and Arches are both developing "Back-country Management Plans" which will severely restrict where visitors go, how they get there, and what they can do once they arrive. For further information: Lauri Sullivan, Salt Lake Tribune, 801-237-2045.

► The transition from rural west to urban west was the topic of a detailed series of reports by KSL-TV Environmental Specialist John Hollenhorst. Among other tidbits, John discovered that the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance now has a larger membership roster than the Utah's Cattlemen's Association. The change from rural to urban means significant changes in both public policy and politics in Utah and the West. For further information: John Hollenhorst, KSL-TV, 801-575-5500.

## VIRGINIA

► The (Newport News) Daily Press in April published a lengthy profile of Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary, who in the past year has been called everything from an American hero to a savvy

politician to an incompetent bureaucrat. O'Leary is perhaps best known for vowing to open up DOE, traditionally one of the government's most secretive agencies. She also serves at the chief spokeswoman for her Administration's energy policy, which de-emphasizes nuclear energy. While environmental activists tend to praise her, others question whether she has the will to carry out her promise to reveal DOE's secrets. And Cold Warriors criticize her for "denuclearizing" the Nation. For a copy of the profile, call Mark DiVincenzo at 804-247-4719.

## WASHINGTON

► The Glines Canyon Dam within Olympic National Park may be the highest dam ever considered for demolition. A federal study starts this year to determine the best way to remove both it and another dam downstream on the Elwha River. The plan is attracting attention because the Elwha is the only river in the Lower 48 states that produced every kind of Pacific coast salmon. Its restoration would be a real boost to a region desperate to save its wild fish. The Clinton administration sees removal as a way to show its green stripes, reported Julie Titone of The Spokesman-Review in Spokane. Details are available from restoration coordinator Brian Winter, 206-452-0302.

► Also on the Olympic Peninsula: Eric Pryne of the Seattle Times reported that the U.S. Forest Service will move a major research project to the North Cascade Mountains after it was denounced by peninsula residents who've lost jobs to logging cutbacks. Scientists wanted to erect a crane to study life in the rainforest treetops. "It just shows the depth of the rage and frustration and anger that this issue has caused," says Pryne.

► Rob Taylor of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer asked whether dredging is "a crime or a public service" after Jefferson County bulldozed the bed of the Quilcene River to reduce flooding. It also destroyed more than half the spawning beds of a nearly extinct salmon popu-

lation. Biologists argue that diking and dredging have taken a serious and little-noticed toll on the Northwest's native fish.

## WEST VIRGINIA

► A dozen Kanawha Valley chemical plants agreed to release "worst-case" scenarios of accidents that could occur at their facilities. The June 3 release is being watched by the chemical industry nationwide as a model for new EPA worst-case scenarios regulations. Call Ken Ward Jr. of The Charleston Gazette at 304-348-1702 for information or clips.

► West Virginia Public Radio fired Andrew Maier, a commentator from the state Environmental Council. David Callaghan, director of the state Division of Environmental Protection, complained Maier was overly critical of him. Call Paul Nyden of The Charleston Gazette for information. Nyden's number is 304-348-5163.

► A federal judge issued a temporary restraining order that prohibits the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from buying land for the proposed Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Call Rick Steelhammer of The Charleston Gazette for information at 304-348-5100.

## WISCONSIN

► Preliminary findings of a study of air pollution over lower Lake Michigan have touched off more debate over Clean Air Act amendments. The results show more ozone-producing pollutants than previously thought travel to the region from the eastern U.S. Some Wisconsin officials seek better national efforts to reduce ozone pollution, while environmental groups want Wisconsin to move ahead with its plans to boost ride-sharing and mass transit.

► A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposal to expand the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge has angered some local farmers and township officials. The service wants to create a five-thousand acre buffer zone to reduce soil erosion and chemical pollution that threaten to spoil

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## The Green Beat

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Horicon Marsh. But farmers fear they'll be pressured to give up land, and local officials worry about property being taken off the tax rolls.

► The spring run-off brought a flood of stories about water pollution in the state. The Milwaukee Journal and Wisconsin Public Radio were among the media outlets featuring series on cryptosporidium problems. Other issues probed included water pollution caused by pesticides, nitrates and leaking fuel tanks.

► A proposed zinc and copper mine planned for northeastern Wisconsin is continuing to make headlines. Two lawmakers asked for a special session of the state legislature to pass several anti-

mining bills. One measure would deny mining permits to companies that have consistently violated mining laws in other states or Canada. Exxon Minerals and Rio Algam Ltd. are seeking to construct the Wisconsin mine near Crandon. A public meeting on the venture brought testimony from dozens of local residents.

### WYOMING

► The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, after 14 years, finally released its final Environmental Impact Statement on Gray Wolf Recovery in Yellowstone National Park and central Idaho. The plan calls for the introduction of 30-pairs of wild Canadian wolves starting in December of 1994 within park boundaries. Bitterly opposed by livestockmen,

environmental groups are also angry at agency plans to let livestockmen "take" or kill wolves if they can prove cattle and sheep depredation. Contact Michael Milstein, Cody Bureau-Billings Gazette, 307-527-7250.

► Six environmental groups, lead by the Sierra Club Defense Fund, are suing the state of Montana over alleged "closed-door, backroom" deals to issue permits to Crown Butte Mines, which wants to mine gold near Yellowstone National Park. The groups claim the meetings resulted in terms far more favorable to the mining company than it would be if the public had been involved in the process. For further information, contact Hugh Jackson of the Casper Star Tribune, 307-266-0500.

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## SEJournal

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9425 Stenton Ave., Suite 209,  
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