

SEJ Journal

The Quarterly Publication of the Society of Environmental Journalists

Vol. 2 No. 1

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Is the environment beat expendable?

The tough times

Reporters under assault by critics and economy

By RANDY LEE LOFTIS

To Kelly Richmond, it seemed like a case of getting in trouble because he and his colleagues did their jobs too well.

Richmond was a reporter for the New Mexican, the Santa Fe newspaper that decided to take a hard look at the Los Alamos National Laboratory. LANL is part of the nation's nuclear weapons complex and a major employer in northern New Mexico. For decades, Richmond says, the lab had "gotten a pretty free ride from the local press."

So the assignment from managing editor Dave Mitchell seemed especially exciting and challenging.

(Continued on page 6)

Environment beat hangs tough in big TV markets

By DAVID P. ROPEIK

More people these days get their news from TV than from any other medium, including news about the environment.

And TV news viewers are getting more news about the environment than ever before. Because as the news consumer's appetite for environmental information has increased, so has TV's coverage of the beat, in an effort both to inform and profit.

Though it's difficult to quantify just how many of us there are out there, here are a few statistics. A poll taken this summer of 96 TV and radio newsrooms across the country by the Radio and Television News Directors Foundation found 25 news operations that said they had a full-time envi-

(Continued on page 10)

Environment radio blossoms but struggles

By TOM MEERSMAN

Three years ago there were no regular national programs on public radio that focused on the environment. Today stations can choose among at least four weekly shows, as well as various "enviro-minutes" and other short productions. A handful of stations have also initiated their own local programs on the environment.

It's tempting to report that all of these ventures are financially secure, or that their start-ups prove that environmental topics are not just a passing fad in terms of public interest. But that would be overstating things to a point that Mark Twain used to call "a stretcher."

The reality is that most new radio programs are struggling to hold their own and capture audiences. Like their counterparts in television and in magazines, the shows also have different origins, purposes, styles and technical quality.

National Public Radio (NPR), of course, has been a consistent source of news and information about environmental topics through the years. Its drive-time programs "Morning Edition" and "All Things Considered" attract several million listeners a day on 437 member stations throughout the country.

The programs broadcast reports not only from NPR's own staffers, but also from other reporters and independent producers in the U.S. and abroad.

But NPR faces the same restrictions that bedevil other national networks: too few staffers, tight budgets, fierce competition among beats for limited air time, and

(Continued on page 8)

Member services high priority in SEJ's third year

On Feb. 14, the Society of Environmental Journalists will celebrate its second birthday. It was on Valentine's Day in 1990 that we formally incorporated as a nonprofit organization in Washington, D.C. Since then we've grown into an association with more than 660 members throughout the United States and in 18 countries.

We are still a young organization — perhaps in the toddler stage — but we are growing steadily. One of my goals this year is to increase the number of services we offer our members. Among our plans and projects are the following:

MENTORING PROGRAM — Amy Gahran, SEJ's records manager, has begun setting up a mentor program that seeks to link veteran environmental reporters with journalists new to the field. The idea is to help beginners learn about sources, records, reporting techniques and other aspects of environmental journalism with the help of experienced journalists.

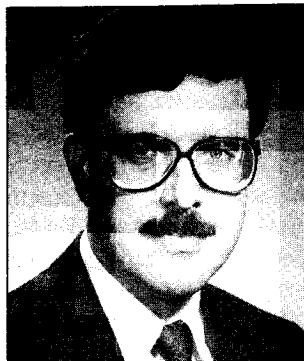
If you are interested in participating, please write or call Amy (215-630-9147) and let her know. You'll probably reach her answering machine but she will get back to you. Amy is preparing a questionnaire that will soon be sent out to all SEJ members asking you for information about your background, areas of expertise and whether you are willing to participate.

EXPANDED MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY — Some of the information Amy receives from the questionnaire will be listed in our 1992 membership directory, which will be published later this year. The updated directory — listing our members' specialties — should enable us to network with other SEJ members who have similar interests.

COMPUTER BULLETIN BOARD — Another goal in the coming year is to set up a computer bulletin board that will enable SEJ members to communicate with other SEJ members around the country on a daily basis. The National Association of Science Writers has created a bulletin board with the assistance of the American Chemical Society and we are studying how that system works. We'd like to set up a bulletin board in which a member in Oregon, for

example, could ask other SEJ members for help in tracking down experts on kepone. Within hours, members in Virginia, Florida and New York might send back listings of their best sources. Already a number of SEJ members communicate informally via Prodigy, an online system set up by Sears and IBM. (My ID is GCDR40A). If you have any suggestions on creating a bulletin board, please give me (215-854-2438) or Amy a call.

Report from the society's president



By Jim Detjen

REGIONAL CONFERENCES — We are still too small an organization to set up regional environmental reporting workshops — a program that many of our members have asked for. Our hands are full planning our national conference this fall.

SEJ Washington office gets new address

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

But we do want to offer more programs around the country and one way to do this is to piggyback onto other conferences. Consequently, we are working with Investigative Reporters & Editors to set up four to six panels on environmental reporting at IRE's national conference in Portland, Ore., from June 11 to 14. The environmental sessions are being planned for Friday, June 12 and will likely include panels on investigative reporting about oil spills, air and water pollution, federal environmental

agencies and other topics. In the spring issue of the SEJournal we'll give you more information on IRE's "How To Do in '92" conference.

CENTRAL EUROPEAN JOURNALISTS' TOUR — The society is co-sponsoring with the Environmental Health Center the visit of six environmental journalists from Central and Eastern Europe in April and May. Bud Ward, executive director of the center, organized a very successful program in 1991 and we are working with him on the 1992 program, which will take European journalists to Washington, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Denver and other parts of the country. SEJ is sponsoring a luncheon for the journalists on May 27 at the National Press Club. If you are interested in finding out more about this program, give Bud a call at 202-293-2270.

MAILING LISTS — One of the ways SEJ earns money is to rent our mailing list to organizations that are interested in reaching environmental reporters. Most of you have already received letters from NASA, Greenwire, Citizens for the Environment and other groups that have rented our list. A few of you have complained about the "junk mail" you receive. If you DON'T want your name and address included in the mailing lists that we rent, please let Amy know. She will happily remove them.

We are exploring a number of other ideas such as setting up a fund that would give environmental reporters modest grants to enable them to participate in training sessions, workshops and other educational programs. Another idea is to establish

environmental reporting awards for television, radio and other media. Our success in these possible ventures depends upon our ability to obtain financial support from foundations.

If you would like to become involved in any of these programs — or have other suggestions — please let me or our other officers know. As we grow from toddlerhood to adulthood, we want to make absolutely sure that we are meeting our members' needs.

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SEJournal will accept unsolicited manuscripts from members and non-members. Send story ideas, articles, news briefs, tips and letters-to-the-editor to Bowman Cox by fax, (505) 474-0083, or by mail at P.O. Box 23013, Santa Fe, NM 87502-3013, phone (505) 474-0375. Send calendar items to Janet Raloff, Science News, 1719 N St. NW, Washington, DC 20036. To help with Greenbeat, contact Kevin Carmody at *The Daily Progress*, P.O. Box 9030, Charlottesville, VA 22906.

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

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SEJournal is printed on recycled paper.

SEJ sets national conference at the University of Michigan

The 1992 national conference of the Society of Environmental Journalists will be held at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Mich., the weekend of Nov. 6 to 8, 1992. The conference will be held in the Rackham Building at the heart of the campus.

On-campus housing — at rates from about \$55 to \$79 a night — will be within walking distance; less expensive off-campus lodging will also be available.

Michigan is the home of the Meeman Archive of environmental journalism, the Ted Scripps fellowships in environmental reporting and the world's oldest school of natural resources. It is not far from important labs that are studying the Great Lakes' environment, automotive

air pollution, global climate change and other issues. It is also centrally located, not far from Detroit, a major airline hub.

While conference planning has just begun we expect to invite many of the United States' and Canada's top environmental experts and journalists. We also hope to offer tours of nearby research labs. But most importantly, we hope to meet and get to know SEJ members from around the country, to learn from each other — and to have fun.

If you have questions, ideas or suggestions call SEJ board members Emilia Askari (800-678-6400), Julie Edelson (313-769-7780) or Jim Detjen (215-854-2438). We'll give you more details in the spring issue of the SEJournal.

Environmental handbooks published by ENSR

An environmental contractor has produced a series of slim handbooks on environmental statutes that cut through the jargon and explain how the laws work in practice.

The handbooks, written by ENSR Corp. of Acton, Mass., and the Washington law firm Sidley & Austin, were written to help industry understand environmental laws.

The latest addresses the revised Clean Air Act, concentrating on air toxics. Previous titles cover Superfund, RCRA and other environmental laws.

The handbooks are priced very reasonably and have been provided free to the media. For more information, call Caren Arnstein of ENSR at 1-800-722-2440.

Letters to the Editor**Follow your own advice**

To the Editor,

In his fall column about environmental reporters coming under fire by their employers, Jim Detjen lists some excellent tips on journalistic survival. Among them: "Make sure you honestly attempt to get both sides — all sides — of the story." I was disappointed to see that he didn't follow his own advice. At least, he didn't indicate that he had sought comment from Idaho Statesman editors who reportedly forced Steve Stuebner off his beat for the crime of being too pro-environment.

I wrote about a similar case involving Dick Manning and the Missoulian awhile back. When I called that newspaper to get a comment, I was surprised by the city editor's expression of gratitude. She said other publications repeating

Manning's story hadn't bothered to call.

Maybe fairness, like charity, should begin at home.

While the Spokane delegation has the floor ... member Karen Dorn Steele calls attention to the story below Detjen's column: "SEJ wins EPA environmental education award." She asks if we'll be in the habit of accepting awards from the agencies we cover.

Doesn't this ethics stuff just wear you out?

Julie Titone, staff writer
The Spokesman-Review and
Spokane Chronicle

Editor's Note: In this issue Steve Stuebner writes a first-person account of his experiences. His former editor was asked to respond and does so on Page 7 of this issue of SEJournal.

Broadcast reporters comprise next largest segment

Who we are: Half of SEJ members work at newspapers

By AMY GAHRAN

So who are the members of the Society of Environmental Journalists?

As of Dec. 22, 1991, 622 people claim this privilege. Following is some of what we know about them so far. Most of this information was derived from membership applications, clips and resumes, as well as frequent notes and phone calls.

What do they do? The SEJ has 435 active members, 113 associate members, 73 academic members, and one honorary member.

Nearly half of the active membership, 262 members, work for newspapers as reporters, editors or in other positions. Fifty-seven members work for magazines, 52 for newsletters, and 17 for news services.

Of those members in broadcast media, 52 work in television and 17 in radio, which accounts for 11 percent of total membership. Eleven photographers also are members, and one picture agency employee.

Freelancers account for eight percent of our membership. The recession, however, has really hit home here.

Of the 55 SEJ members who currently freelance, at least 14 have lost their full-time jobs since I began working for SEJ in April. No doubt there are even more members who no longer work full-time or are out of steady work altogether.

Slightly more than 15 percent of our members are in some way related to academia. We have 34 student members, 36 who are college-level educators, and 25 members who work on university or college publications.

Where do SEJ members live and work? The overwhelming majority are in the United States. We have members from every state except North and South Dakota. We also have two members from Puerto Rico. A quarter of the U.S. members are from northeastern states, 21 percent are from the mid-Atlantic region, 11 percent from the South, 15 percent from the Midwest, six percent from the Southwest, 16 percent from the West, and six percent from the Northwest.

We also have 32 members from 16 foreign countries that include Thailand, Poland, Nigeria, Norway and Spain. Seven

of our newest members are from Brazil and learned of the SEJ at the seminar on international environmental journalism held there in October (see SEJournal, Vol. 1, No. 4, pg. 9).

What else? Well, that's what I'd like to know. Our membership application only asks for the basics to decide whether people are eligible for membership, but in order to fine-tune our projects and help our members help each other I'll need to know a lot more.

In the near future you should receive a detailed questionnaire from me that asks what issues you cover, how often you are published (or aired), and what kind of articles you'd like to see in the SEJournal. Or even better, what kind of articles you'd like to contribute to the SEJournal. I know I'm asking for a lot of information, but please take a few minutes to answer my

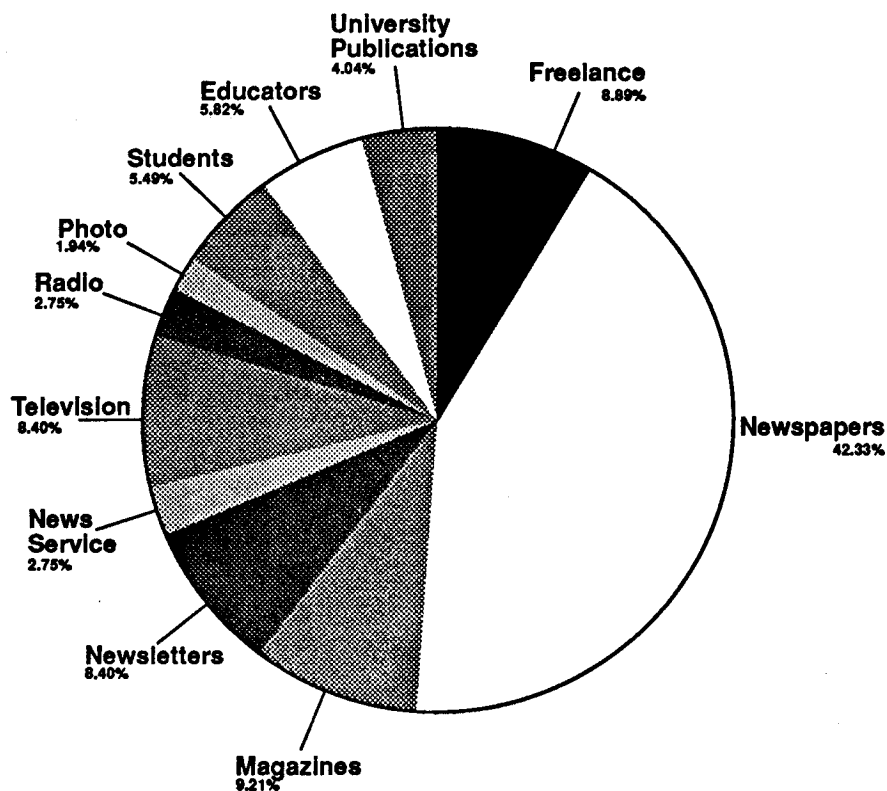
questions. Communication is what we're all about in the first place, and we won't know what you want or what you can do unless you tell us.

All information from the questionnaires is completely confidential and for SEJ use only. I plan to publish a detailed report on the SEJ membership in time to be mailed with the second annual membership directory this summer.

I have more information on the SEJ membership than I have room to write here. More updates will be in future issues of the newsletter. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 215-630-9147.

Amy Gahrn reports on technology for Energy User News out of Radnor, Pa., and is records manager of the Society of Environmental Journalists.

SEJ Membership Breakdown*



*Figures reflect membership census as of December 1991

University of Michigan to offer five fellowships in Fall

The University of Michigan has launched an eight-month mid-career educational program specifically devoted to environmental journalism.

The university's new Ted Scripps Environmental Reporting Fellowship Program will select five experienced reporters each year for a graduate-level course of study at the university's Ann Arbor campus. The first class of environmental reporting fellows will begin their studies this fall.

The Scripps fellows will divide their time equally between courses in the environmental sciences and in advanced reporting techniques, according to Jonathan Friendly, director of the masters program in journalism and of the Ted Scripps Environmental Reporting Fellowship program.

Journalism courses taken through that department will include press law and science and technology writing. Environmental courses, taken through the university's School of Natural Resources, will cover science, issues and policy.

The fellowship program is now considering candidates who have at least three years of newsroom experience, with a preference for those employed full-time with news organizations. The fellows' employers will be expected to continue insurance coverage and at least partial salary, and the fellows will be expected to return to the news organizations from which they came.

The fellowships will provide tuition

and a small stipend to help meet living expenses. Though not in a graduate-degree program, the fellows will each receive a graduate certificate from the Horace Rackham School of Graduate Studies, and the credits may be applicable to a graduate degree, according to the university.

The program is funded chiefly by the Scripps Howard Foundation, a long-time supporter of environmental journalism and a major donor to the Society of Environmental Journalists. The funding comes chiefly from a grant from Nathan Leising and Cindy Scripps Leising. Mrs. Leising's father was the late Edward "Ted" Scripps II, the grandson of Scripps Howard founder E.W. Scripps.

"We are thrilled to support a program that will help young journalists meet the demanding and complex task of reporting on the environment," the Leising said of the project.

"In years to come, responsible environmental journalism will require not only the skills of a communication specialist, but also the knowledge of a natural resource scientist. We believe this program will provide journalists with the education and training needed to accurately and confidently report on the worldwide environmental changes we will all face in the coming decades." The Leising pledged an annual grant of \$100,000 for each of the next five years to the foundation's Ted Scripps Memorial Fund. Mrs. Leising also

will serve on the program's advisory board. The foundation and university pledged an additional \$300,000 for the next five years. Both institutions said they expected that if the fellowship program is successful the grants would be renewed in 1997.

"Environmental issues are often as technically complex as they are deeply emotional," Friendly said. "The public needs reporters who can sort out the reality from the hype, who know how to let the facts moderate the fears.

"We are going to send the Ted Scripps fellows back to their newsrooms ready to make sense about what may be the nation's most urgent and fascinating beat."

Deadline for sending applications for the first fellowship class is Feb. 28. Write to: Jonathan Friendly, Ted Scripps Environmental Reporting Fellowships, 2020 Frieze, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1285. Or call 313-763-1155 or 313-763-5943.

Reminder:

Its time to pay SEJ membership dues

A few SEJ members still owe their first year's membership dues, and many are behind schedule in paying second-year dues.

The society needs this money to provide services such as the newsletter, the member directory and annual meeting.

How do you know if you owe dues? You should have received a letter requesting payment. If you have any doubts, call the society's records manager, Amy Gahrn, at 215-630-9147.

How do you pay dues? Send a check for \$30 made out to SEJ and addressed to: Noel Grove, SEJ Treasurer, c/o National Geographic Society, 1145 17th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.

And remember: some employers will reimburse you for the cost of belonging to professional, educational societies such as SEJ. You might want to check to see if yours is among them.

UNEP, Canon sponsor enviro photo contest

Perhaps a camera lens can go where words fail, capturing in a single shutter click the environmental problems of the globe.

It may be worth a shot, at least. To draw attention to the issues spotlighted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio this June, the UN Environment Program and Canon are sponsoring an "international photographic competition on the environment."

The competition, open to amateur as well as professional photographers, invites submission of photographs from around the world and from photographers of all ages and nationalities. The theme is "Focus on Your World."

Winning entries will be featured in a

traveling photographic exhibition designed to help generate global awareness of environmental problems. Some entries also will be preserved in a UNEP photo library "which will provide a powerful visual presentation of today's most pressing environmental problems," according to UNEP and Canon.

The panel of judges will consist of Takeyoshi Tanuma of the Japan Professional Photographers Society, Jackie Augustine of the International Photographic Council and David Coulson, a photographer and writer, as well as representatives of UNEP and Canon.

Entry deadline is Feb. 29. For further information and entry forms call 1-800-677-6645.

Beats ... (from page 1)

"He told me and Thom (Cole) to go and find out what's going on with the environment, public safety, worker safety and public health," Richmond recalls. Later, they added a look at security.

The resulting 32-article series, which ran earlier this year, has won praise from other reporters and editors, and it apparently survived rebuttals by LANL officials. "To this day, I think the series is excruciatingly well balanced ... to the point of almost being boring," says Richmond.

But when publisher Robert M. McKinney saw the series, there were no more in-house congratulations. Mitchell was fired. Richmond eventually quit and now works for States News Service in Washington, D.C. Cole stayed at the New Mexican, but became a night editor.

Richmond says the fallout stunned him. The New Mexican staff, with just 10 reporters, had been proud of doing something the bigger papers hadn't done. Instead, they found themselves under attack from their own employer.

Backlash feared

Some reporters fear that what happened at the New Mexican is a symptom of a bigger problem: an anti-environmental backlash that's aimed as well at journalists who cover the issue.

Others say it's the newspaper industry's lousy economics — and the push for brighter, quicker stories — that is pushing some reporters off the beat. Some figure it's a combination: A sagging industry is less willing and able to fend off pressure from unhappy politicians or advertisers.

Another possible explanation suggested by some reporters: As more reporters pursue environmental journalism, more special interests, long ignored, are being covered — and in some cases they're fighting back.

Whatever the cause, several reporters have found themselves eased — or dumped — from environmental duties in the past year. The battlefields have ranged from the mighty New York Times to the small New Mexican.

Reports have come in from all over, but the West seems to have more than its

share. In the West, as one reporter put it, nobody but the biggest, meanest adversary can survive a hometown fight over coverage of land use, jobs and nature.

"We're pretty close to some bare-knuckles confrontations" in the West, said Dick Manning, a former environmental reporter for the Missoulian in Missoula, Montana. "The economies here are based on resource extraction. I think (conflicts over coverage) are going to surface here faster."

Also, in many Western states, newspapers tend to be small by national standards. The Missoulian, a Lee Enterprises paper, has about 30,000 subscribers; Montana's biggest paper has 55,000.

"The towns are economic monocultures," Manning said. If you're unhappy with coverage of your group or industry, he said, "you've got a much better lever with a paper such as the Missoulian."

Manning quit the Missoulian in 1989 in the wake of his series about destructive logging practices on private land. The series was first held for six months, and then toned down before publication.

Editors began telling Manning that he was too close to the story — that he had ceased being objective. After the series ran, they bounced Manning from the environmental beat. Manning resigned. He has written a book about his experience called "Last Stand."

Other Western cases include that of Steve Stuebner, the former environmental reporter for the Idaho Statesman. Stuebner describes his experience on Page 7 of this issue.

Another Western reporter who says his editors have stonewalled him into frustration asked to remain anonymous, since he's seeking another job.

That reporter said his paper's owners aren't necessarily anti-environmental; it's just "an outfit that has no use for news."

By far the best-known case is that of Philip Shabecoff, the New York Times veteran who was told in 1990 that after 14 years of environmental coverage, he was being reassigned to cover the Internal Revenue Service.

Shabecoff said his editors had started demanding fewer stories about environ-

mental problems and more stories about the costs of environmental protection. He said they also clashed over his coverage of global warming.

Shabecoff retired. He is now executive publisher of Greenwire, an on-line environmental news service.

A recent restructuring of the Baltimore Sun papers left veteran morning Sun environmental reporter Liz Bowie with a beat on the business desk.

Bowie and Evening Sun environmental reporter Tim Wheeler had proposed to their editors that the new all-day Sun required two environmental reporters to do justice to the beat, with one focusing more on local stories and the other on national and statewide ones.

The editors initially agreed, but when state coverage had to be cut further, the second environmental position went with it. Wheeler is now the sole environmental reporter for the all-day Sun.

"I believe they would have (put two people on the beat) if they could have afforded it," Bowie commented.

"The newspaper will have less environmental coverage than before," she said, but added that since she and Wheeler originally wrote for two separate newspapers "we duplicated each other at times."

Lines in the sand

There are other examples of line-in-the-sand confrontations, as well as the inevitable smaller conflicts over content and tone that don't get publicized. And it should be noted that many smaller and larger papers have maintained a strong commitment to environmental coverage, even when it generates heat.

At the Naples (Fla.) Daily News, a Scripps Howard paper with a circulation of about 50,000, the environment is included in Steve Hart's "quality of life" beat. South Florida's environmental issues involve direct conflicts between nature and wealthy developers who carry a great deal of weight in local politics and society.

Hart says the Daily News has remained steadfast despite "informal" contacts between developers and the paper's senior managers.

"One reason is our readership," said

Hart. "They may be the most informed, environmentally motivated readers in the country."

Many reporters won't have such luxuries. What should they do? Several who have been through the mill offer some answers that may seem pretty simple, but bear repeating:

— Apply the "worst enemy" test to stories. If possible criticisms aren't legitimate, be prepared to prove, without rancor, why they're not.

— Make sure as many legitimate viewpoints are represented as possible. The Dallas Morning News tries to get the comment, rebuttal or denial in a news story

before the jump. We try to avoid giving voice to cranks just to create an artificial "balance." As biologist Paul Ehrlich has noted, there's no need to quote the Flat Earth Society in space shuttle stories. But an extra measure of different legitimate views goes a long way toward disarming critics.

— Stay scrupulously separate from sources and their causes.

— Educate editors well in advance of a conflict. Give them copies of Environment Writer and SEJournal; better yet, get them to join SEJ. Encourage them to go to an environmental seminar once in a while. Expose them to the full range of intellec-

tual debate about the environment.

Finally, a reporter can quit. "When this all did go down, maybe I should have made a bigger deal out of it," says Richmond. "I didn't immediately storm out of the newsroom."

Manning, who did, says he hopes most reporters won't surrender their beats to corporate raiders and displeased politicians. "Go ahead and keep doing your job the best you can," he said.

Randy Lee Loftis is the environmental writer for the Dallas Morning News and a board member of the Society of Environmental Journalists.

A personal account

Reporters watch out: Are you too green for your boss?

By STEPHEN STUEBNER

When top editors accused me of being too pro-environment at the Idaho Statesman, I got mad.

Like most environmental reporters, I saw it as my job to report about environmental destruction or threats to pristine public lands. And I also did my darndest to be fair to the accused. For as we all know, the threats pointed out by environmentalists may be real or imagined. I did my best to clear the smoke and report the issues fairly.

So when the editors accused me of biased reporting after five years on the beat and a string of awards, I wondered why they hadn't brought up this issue at the time, when my stories came to the city desk for editing.

What hurt the most was they were nailing me with what I viewed as a baseless charge after the fact. This was in my personnel review in August 1991. By mid-October, the editors of the Gannett-owned Statesman shuffled the beats in the newsroom, and they moved me off the environment. I gave them my two weeks' notice the next day.

When the allegations surfaced, I tried to force the editors to be specific. They cited no "smoking gun" as an example of biased reporting.

In fact, during my review, the only story they had as an example was a feature piece I had done on an environmental group that waged a successful campaign to pro-

tect a world-class whitewater stream in Idaho. They said I referred to the environmentalists as "nice people," but the opponents received no description at all. Therefore, the piece was too pro-environment. I laughed.

When I asked for more examples, all I got from my two supervisors present were

line pressure, etc.

The personnel director was shocked by this response, but she, like most personnel directors at newspapers, had no clout. The best she could do was serve as an intermediary.

Our meeting revealed that my editors objected to very subtle "pro-environment references" in the stories, such as calling a de facto wilderness area a "wildlife sanctuary." In my view, these editors, who incidentally are new to the Northwest and know very little about environmental issues, succumbed to a level of weak-kneed journalism in which you swap neutral-worded rhetoric from opposing sides and forget about the truth.

I had real trouble stomaching that kind of reporting. I told them we had an obligation to tell the public the truth, instead of allowing industry or environmental groups to obfuscate the issue.

But with our eight-inch story-length rule, it appeared editors weren't interested in the truth. Just a short lead, a few quotes, a nut graf, and that's it. A sure recipe for public confusion.

I'm sure I had a few other factors working against me. Like any aggressive environmental reporter, I ruffled feathers now and then. Idaho is chock-full of wilderness areas, wild and scenic rivers and stunning desert canyons, but it is conservative country politically.

I got skewered on the floor of the

Editor's note: A copy of Stuebner's story was provided to the editors of the Idaho Statesman for their response.

Bill Steinauer, executive editor of the Idaho Statesman, wrote the following statement:

"Mr. Stuebner resigned after he was transferred to the city-county beat in a staff restructuring that saw a majority of our reporters take on new beats. For the record, biased reporting—while sometimes subtle—was discussed with Steve several times over the last four years. His response to this constructive criticism may have been laughter. We were not laughing."

blank stares. They clearly had not come prepared to back up what I viewed as a very serious charge.

Later I asked the personnel director to intervene. We set up a session with my supervisors to go through my stories word for word, line by line, to find the bias. Beforehand, I went through a year's worth of clips (whew!), counted 396 daily stories in the review period, and an average of three front-page Sunday stories per month.

My question was, if these stories were so biased and pro-environment, why didn't someone say something before they ran in the newspaper? My city editor mumbled something about being too busy and dead-

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Idaho Legislature once for an in-depth report on the Bunker Hill Superfund site. I ticked off the Air Force for reporting — accurately — that 90 percent of Idahoans opposed a 2 million acre bombing range in the desert. The Idaho Farm Bureau objected to one of my reports on Snake River snails, and chewed on my editor's ear for writing a feature about the guy who petitioned for protection of the snails under the Endangered Species Act.

Another factor leading to my downfall had nothing to do with journalism. I'm an avid recreationist — about as avid as you can get. Last year, I logged 61 days on whitewater rivers, kayaking or rafting. I skied over 45 days last season in the backcountry and alpine slopes. I ride my mountain bike 4-5 days a week in the

spring and fall. I fly-fish, backpack, climb peaks, bird hunt, and so forth.

My editors apparently decided that since I loved the outdoors, I was too pro-environment to cover the environmental beat.

And last, I think we're all subject to the pro-environment tag after covering the beat for a number of years. Once your editors get it finally etched in their mind that you are too pro-environment, whether it shows up in your work or not, it's a tough rap to beat.

In the end, I could see the writing on the wall. I believed the Statesman was going to pieces anyway in terms of journalistic integrity, so I had no second thoughts about leaving.

Since then, I've focused on writing

more for national environmental magazines — there's gobs of them — stringing for other papers in the state and region, and doing contract work for the governor's office, state agencies and interest groups. I've found, much to my pleasure, that nearly everyone outside the Statesman respects my work. The public respects me for doing "what is right."

Best of all, I feel refreshed after getting away from the "McPaper" style of journalism. Clearly, the public deserves better.

Over the past 12 years, Stephen Stuebner has worked for four Western daily newspapers, most recently the Idaho Statesman. He now freelances for a variety of publications and says he's "loving it."

Radio ... (from page 1)

a marked preference towards today's "hard" news.

Some public radio producers and station managers have concluded their audiences want more information about the environment, and several have initiated either local environmental shows or national programs.

The national shows are distributed by satellite through existing networks or by independents. Individual stations across the country don't have to pay for these shows, and can choose which ones to air and at what time. Listeners in particular cities may therefore be able to hear some of these shows, or none of them.

LIVING ON EARTH (LOE) is a half-hour weekly show produced at WBUR in Boston. After a short week-in-review newscast, each program focuses on a particular theme, and usually includes a combination of three to five reports and host interviews. LOE began regular broadcasts in April 1991.

Executive producer and host Steve Curwood said 200 public stations re-broadcast the show every week. "Our show's not an advocacy show," he said. "I really see this as journalism." Curwood says he's especially concerned with how history, race, poverty and gender relate to questions of the environment. There's much more to the environment than conservation in the wilderness, he said.

"Those of us in cities need those re-

sources, but there are also many environmental issues right in the face of people ... especially people of color and those who are poor," he said. "Traditional media have not always paid a lot of attention to that."

LOE is well produced, with a format so similar to "All Things Considered" that some stations run the programs back-to-back. (617-868-8810)

THE ENVIRONMENT SHOW is also a half-hour weekly program that originates at WAMC in Albany, N.Y. The show began in January of 1990 and is rebroadcast by about 150 stations. Host and producer Bruce Robertson said the program evolved from suggestions that public radio pay more attention to rural affairs in New York. "We asked ourselves 'Why not rural affairs across the country?'" said Robertson, "and later it just turned more to environmental topics."

Robertson said THE ENVIRONMENT SHOW tries to "digest complex environmental issues and develop them more than people are able to get in regular news." He is often the sole contributor to the program, which doesn't have money to hire staff or purchase stories from freelancers. The result is a weekly show with two or three long interviews, either by phone or occasionally in studio.

"What I'd really like to do if we had the money," said Robertson, "is to dip into smaller towns and communities that you don't hear about, but in their own way are

struggling with energy, land use and other problems." (800-323-9262)

E-TOWN takes a different approach to environmental information. It's a radio variety show that describes itself as "an issue-oriented, live-music show with an emphasis on the environment."

The show is recorded weekly at a historic theater in downtown Boulder, Colo., and each show is edited to a one-hour version before it is distributed by satellite a couple weeks later. The program's first national show aired in October, and after 13 weeks took a scheduled break both to raise money and to replenish energy for another round of programs to begin in late spring.

Musician Nick Forster hosts the show, which he said was inspired by a trip he took in mid-1990 to Eastern Europe. Forster said he and others on the concert tour were treated royally, yet the air was so polluted that it was difficult to see more than a few blocks ahead.

"It was a combination of feeling overwhelmed by the attention musicians get, and being reminded of the unbelievable damage done to the planet," said Forster, that caused him to launch a show and invest "tens of thousands of dollars" of his own money during its first season.

E-TOWN is carried by about 60 stations, and each program usually includes three musical performers, a five-minute interview with a special environmental

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guest, an awards segment — “to honor individuals who have done something very positive and effective for the environment, or sometimes harmful and silly,” said Forster — and an environmental newscast.

Forster admitted it’s sometimes difficult to switch from a lively musical number to news items about pesticides and recycling, and that writing “is the area where we have the farthest to go.”

E-TOWN’s strength, he said, is that its blues-country-bluegrass music attracts many listeners beyond those who are professed environmentalists. Compared to other environmental shows, he said, “there’s much less danger of us preaching to the choir.” Forster’s spouse Helen plays a major role as announcer and co-producer of E-TOWN. (303-443-8696)

GOOD DIRT is a one-hour weekly environmental show from WAMU in Washington. It began on Thanksgiving 1990, and was primarily a local program before it was offered for national syndication in July 1991.

Co-host David Morine said about 15 stations now carry GOOD DIRT, which he described as an upbeat and positive approach to the environment that tries to get people involved.

“We try to show people how they should be personally responsible. Forget telling Third World countries that they should be doing this or that. What you can control is your own consumption.”

Morine said he and his co-host Bill Gilbert feel that the national environmental movement has gotten away from issues. “We talk about dioxins, Kuwaiti oil fires, and ozone depletion,” he said, “but we also talk about moles, crows, how to remove ivy, and different types of planting and gardening. It’s a hodgepodge, with the whole thrust being that you have a personal responsibility to interact in a complementary way with nature. We try not to get preachy.”

Morine is a former director of land acquisition for the Nature Conservancy, and Gilbert is the author of nine books and more than 300 magazine articles on natural history and the environment. Together they interview several studio guests each week, take phone calls from listeners, and inject their own humor and opinions.

The result is a lively show that doesn’t shy away from blasting environmentalists

as well as polluters.

“There’s so much crap out there of people just following existing dogma,” said Morine. “I spent 20 years in land conservation and I’ve learned more in the past year (doing this show) than ever before. We have to change our mental attitudes on how we think about things.” (202-885-1057)

In addition to the four weekly national programs, a variety of independent producers are also offering environmental stories for public radio:

EARTH ON THE AIR is produced in Seattle by a “grassroots, volunteer-based radio cooperative,” said executive producer Craig McDonald, and explores environmental and social justice issues. McDonald began producing five-minute weekly shows in 1988, which evolved into a 30-minute show in early 1991.

“We don’t have a staff of reporters that goes out and gets stories,” said McDonald. “We try to persuade people out there in the real world to put together stories for us. We want listeners to be convinced they’re hearing from someone just like themselves.”

Each program therefore becomes a potpourri of items loosely organized around a common theme. EARTH ON THE AIR is distributed by the Pacifica Radio Network to about 50 stations. In 1991 it was produced once every three weeks, but McDonald said he expects to change to a weekly show by mid-1992. (800-800-3145)

TERRA INFIRMA is a series of 3-minute weekly modules that deal with environmental topics and social issues. The program is two and a half years old, and comes from Denver-based independent producer Paul Klite.

“We think of what we do as just art,” said Klite. The segments consist of songs, satires, interviews or mini-dramas.

“Our view is that humans are miracles with a few loose screws,” said Klite, “and we look at the loose screws.” About 90 stations use the modules, he said, as separate art pieces, or within local environmental programs, or as segues out of public affairs programs. (303-832-7558)

PULSE OF THE PLANET is also a collection of short environmental features. Designed to air daily, each is two minutes long. Executive producer Jim Metzner said many of the stories are global and all include sound effects.

“The challenge is to distill the essence of a subject or issue without watering it down,” he said. For complicated subjects, PULSE OF THE PLANET will focus on one aspect, or will explore it in a series of reports.

“It’s not a foregone conclusion that everyone will take the time to listen to a half-hour show,” said Metzner. “Our advantage is that people will take in a two-minute program, and we can make an impression.”

The program is rare, Metzner said, in that it’s suitable for both public and commercial radio stations. It’s also one of the few that’s funded by a corporation — Dupont — rather than by a foundation. (212-619-1475)

POLLUTION SOLUTIONS was more interested in longer-form radio journalism, and provided half-hour environmental documentaries to stations in 1989. After its first 13 shows, however, funding was exhausted and the series was halted.

Independent producer Eric Schwartz has shifted his efforts to political issues, and continues to work in his firm, The Other Americas Radio, in Santa Barbara, Calif. (805-569-5381)

Whatever else might be said about them, environmental programs are an exciting experiment on public radio and their producers have high hopes for the future. Public interest is high, they said, but fundraising is difficult.

“It’s tough to fund anything now,” said LOE’s Curwood, “but so far, so good. It looks like we can see our way clear for at least a year. I’d call that good news.”

But funding is not the only factor that determines which programs may be here to stay. Their future also depends upon individual station programmers who decide what shows they will broadcast, and at what times.

Survival also depends upon feedback from listeners, whose memberships are needed to support public radio across the country.

Tom Meersman is a national board member of SEJ. He reports on environment, energy and natural resource issues for Minnesota Public Radio in St. Paul. He occasionally contributes stories to National Public Radio and to Living On Earth.

Television ... (from page 1)

ronmental reporter.

Twenty-five of 96 might not seem like a lot, but remember, beats are rare in TV news. Seventy-four of those 96 newsrooms reported that they regularly assign environmental stories to their general assignment staff.

The seeds for this trend were sown by Earth Day 1990. The hype around the event not only crystallized the public's concern about the environment, it also helped TV newsrooms across the country recognize the public's appetite for environmental information. Newsrooms finally recognized that a full time environment reporter would be both good journalism and viewership-attracting good business.

Few newsrooms, print or broadcast, ever met a fad they didn't like.

In 1989, Brad Bell was a general assignment reporter at WMAR-TV in Baltimore. Along came Earth Day 1990, and WMAR created an environment beat, and assigned it to Brad.

"It was an honest response to people's interest," he says, "but it was also a successful way to win audience."

Successful enough that his current bosses at WJLA-TV in Washington, D.C., hired him away from Baltimore in early 1991, giving him his own "unit," which means he works full time with his own photographer, is on his own as to which stories he does, and has his own section in the early evening news four days a week. It even has its own name, Project Earth Watch, and it also has its own sponsor.

Selling individual stories or topics within a newscast would make any reporter nervous, including Brad. But he recognizes benefits along with the risks.

"The environment is making money for the station so the bosses say, 'Hey, let him go,'" he says. So Brad, who has no contact with sponsors, gets to do his own thing, and environmental stories get coverage on D.C. TV unlike ever before.

The same goes for Utah, through Rod Jackson at KTVX-TV in Salt Lake City. As with many TV environmental beat reporters, Rod got into the topic because he had covered some environmentally related stories.

As the Earth Day momentum built, his

assignment became a full time beat. Two other Salt Lake City stations also have environmental beat reporters, a level of broadcast coverage of the environment that few other cities in America can match.

Rod says his station remains "committed wholeheartedly" to the beat. Even in these days of tight money in TV newsrooms, he still travels regularly to several other states in his region, covering issues like public lands use, wilderness policy, oil and gas exploration, agriculture and mining.

Paul Day of KCNC in Denver got into the beat in much the same way Rod did. He covered the controversy over the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant and the Two Forks Dam story. Paul got the "E-beat" full time in late 1988.

"Colorado is so outdoors oriented, it's a natural around here," he says. "We were doing it like a lot of other stations, with the weatherman doing light stuff. It just needed more hard news attention than it was getting."

Local TV news rooms aren't the only ones where environmental coverage has grown. At the network level, CNN is clearly the leader, at least in terms of body count.

CNN's 'Earth Matters' unit has a staff of five, producing feature pieces several times a week. When harder news breaks, Deborah Potter, who covered the environment for CBS before coming to CNN, covers the environmental beat in Washington. Correspondents like Greg LeFevre in San Francisco and Ben Blackburn in Los Angeles generate a lot of environmental pieces from their bureaus.

CNN's Future Watch program often airs environmental stories, like the artificial indoor wetlands on Cape Cod built to handle one town's sewage, or the organic farm running on solar power.

Turner Broadcasting's Network Earth is another reflection of network TV's new effort to cover the environment. The program is a Sunday night half hour that mixes in-depth and investigative coverage of environmental issues and softer features in a well produced package that tries to make its content entertaining as well as informative.

In this, its second year, Network

Earth's budget grew by 23 percent.

In terms of straight, hard news coverage, the only network with a dedicated environmental beat staff is ABC. Ned Potter and producer Bob Aglow, based in New York, and Barry Serafin and producer Jane Bruns, based in Washington, do both breaking, daily news pieces, and longer, in-depth pieces to ABC's 'American Agenda' section, a shining example of how TV CAN do things in depth.

"There's definitely been an increased commitment over the past couple years," Aglow says. Serafin says that while it's sometimes a challenge to get Executive Producer Paul Friedman or Agenda producer Sally Holm interested in a particular story, their overall commitment to the beat is strong.

Aglow says anchor Peter Jennings regularly sends him notes or newspaper clippings suggesting story ideas.

As there are few newsrooms that ever met a fad they didn't like, so are there few TV newsrooms that ever met a fad they didn't try to make a buck from.

Not long after the local TV news operations started increasing their environmental coverage, syndicators appeared offering packaged environmental broadcast material, either for stations to use to augment what they were already doing themselves, or, more often, for stations to use in lieu of doing it themselves.

This is a big trend. A lot of what TV news viewers are getting on the environment comes from these packaged products. There are probably more TV news operations offering this kind of material as there are doing environmental news reporting on their own.

Project Earth is one of the more prominent syndicators. Born out of Earth Day, Project Earth sends its stations — there are 35, from Los Angeles to Hartford, Conn.; from Yakima, Wash. to Albany, Ga. — four week-long programs.

Each weekly program centers on one topic: air, water, energy and land. The first piece looks at the overall issue, and the rest are news-you-can-use tips on what individuals can do to help.

The material allows the stations to have their own personality, often a weath-

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erman or anchorperson, introduce and voice the material.

The syndicators appeal to a station's business people more than their newsrooms. Project Earth's package, for example, offers subscriber stations promotional materials, brochures the public can write in for, material the stations can use to run their campaigns in connection with local schools, even T-shirt contests.

Says their advertising material, "Our client stations have received up to a 16 times return on their investment."

Syndicated products like Project Earth also afford corporations a way to shine their environmental image in connection with TV news coverage. Project Earth's sponsors in various markets include Waste Management Inc., McDonald's and United Illuminating Power Company.

"Your sales team will find Project Earth is an excellent vehicle to capture those green marketing dollars," boasts the Project Earth advertising package.

In addition to the commercial syndicators, CONUS, the Minnesota company that arranges satellite feeds for local TV stations, is now offering a "Green Feed," which simply takes member stations' pieces and feeds them back out to everyone in the CONUS subscriber network.

These are revolutionary times for broadcast coverage of the environment and the signals about the future are mixed. There is still expansion, but in many places the expanded environmental coverage is being cut.

Chet Burgess, who oversees environmental coverage at CNN/Turner Broadcasting, says "There are resumes shooting across my desk all the time from people where the environmental coverage is being scaled back. The second-hand impression I get is that while places aren't dropping it outright, they're scaling back from, say, three pieces a week to maybe one, and the beat people are being used more as general assignment."

One of those people is Brian Wood, environmental reporter at KIRO-TV in Seattle — until recently.

"We did some really nice stuff early on," he says. A series on toxic waste lagoons at a Weyerhaeuser facility brought a state crackdown. A documentary "War of the Woods" won several major awards.

But the environmental producer has

been laid off. Brian now anchors early morning and weekend newscasts. Environmental news coverage now falls to general assignment reporters. The regular material that shows up features tips and softer stuff.

"At first it was news, heavy journalism, and some public affairs," Brian says. "Now it's lighter on the news, and heavier on the promotion and public affairs."

Brian says the recession has played a part in this.

"Our producer wasn't laid off because the environment wasn't important anymore, but because the bucks weren't there."

In Denver, Paul Day is seeing something of the same trend. There have been no layoffs, but "back around Earth Day 1990, the producers were excited by anything that had an E in it."

Now, he says, environmental news comes behind education, crime, politics and other topics in the number of stories covered.

In Houston, KTRK-TV's Joe Diaz, who had the environmental beat for a year and a half, just moved to a new job elsewhere. The environmental beat is not going to be filled by somebody else, according to their assignment desk.

Like any news medium, TV news responded to the Earth Day cry that the environment would be the issue of the decade by pumping up its coverage. Now that cry is fading, and so is the coverage. As TV news bosses never met a fad they didn't like, or try to profit from, so have they never met a fad they didn't drop in a hurry as soon as the hype around it started to fade.

But public interest in the environment is not fading, and certainly newsrooms will continue to respond. Yet it may well be that the boom in the amount of broadcast coverage of the environment is over, that the growth industry of broadcast environmental beat reporting is now in a shakedown period.

With the hype around Earth Day long gone, environmental coverage is no longer "in." Just how committed news operations are to coverage of this important beat is only now going to be truly tested.

David Ropeik, a member of SEJ's board, is environmental reporter at WCVB-TV in Boston.

Science Angles

By STEVE NASH

A review of story ideas and highlights from scientific journals.

A National Research Council study (Craig Hicks, 202-334-2138) released in mid-December urges a new national quest to put Mother Nature back together again: ecological restoration of 2 million acres of degraded lakes, 10 million acres of wetlands and 400,000 miles of rivers and streams.

Someone is probably committing ecological restoration in your back yard. More than 1,000 projects have been catalogued in the San Francisco Bay area alone. The story, a hope-inspiring counterpoint to doom-and-gloom environmental coverage, can border on the metaphysical. In an Illinois restoration, insects and plants that hadn't been seen for decades suddenly reappeared.

But the science and the hope can be oversold. Some developers offer to restore one natural site to get permission to obliterate another. The losses may outweigh the gains. The offer itself may turn bogus: the scientific capability and/or the money aren't there.

Major ecological restoration attempts can be arduous, long term, expensive and complex enough to baffle practitioners. A half-billion dollars are slated to go into the plan to revivify ruined Kissingmee River wetlands. A billion dollars have been spent since 1980 on the Columbia River watershed, but the salmon population still trends down.

The University of Wisconsin Arboretum (608-263-7889) publishes *Restoration and Management Notes*, which Editor Bill Jordan describes as an "odd little sort of informal cross-disciplinary journal ... no heavy-duty technical papers." It's a good way for reporters to gain a quick sense of what's going on in the field, he adds.

Give Jordan your zip code and he will tap the 2,000-name database of the Society for Ecological Restoration, Madison, Wis., for contacts "as likely as not right in your neighborhood."

Restore the Earth (501-843-2645) is compiling a nationwide index of restoration efforts that should be ready later this

(Continued on page 16)

Reporter rejects EPA protection, keeps documents

by BOWMAN COX

Raising a conflict between free press and environmental protection that might alarm some journalists, EPA Region 6 last year asked Arkansas Gazette reporter Bobbi Ridlehoover to hand over some potentially contaminated documents.

For years, Ridlehoover has bird-dogged the Vertac site in Jacksonville, Ark., an herbicide and Agent Orange plant placed on the Superfund National Priorities List due to dioxin contamination.

She has won laurels from journalists and environmentalists for her work, and darts from the organizations she writes about.



Ridlehoover

She is criticized by Roger Meachum, an EPA Region 6 press officer, for writing "career-building stories" that blew the Vertac site "from what should have been a local story into a national crisis."

After the Vertac plant shut down, workers removed some 50 boxes of documents as evidence for a toxic tort suit. They took some choice items, such as logs books from the dechlorination unit that turned trichlorophenol into the herbicide 2,4,5-T, and made as a byproduct the most feared dioxin isomer, 2,3,7,8-TCDD.

Mark Kressenberg of the Houston law firm Jones and Granger inherited the case — and an office full of the stolen documents, which stink of phenol. He calls them a "tarbaby" he can't get rid of.

Ridlehoover photocopied many of the documents in Kressenberg's possession. She also obtained a few originals and stored it all in the garage of her home in Little Rock.

Vertac and Hercules, a former site operator, very much wanted the documents back. Vertac once told Kressenberg it would get the FBI and Justice Dept. to help it secure the originals from his office. And Ridlehoover heard that Hercules once asked the state attorney general's office to sue to recover her copies.

Last spring, an EPA investigator searching for photographs of the site learned from Ridlehoover and others about the missing documents. He figured they might contain important legal evidence about the site, which was embroiled in bankruptcy, Superfund and toxic tort litigation. The investigator arranged with Ridlehoover to look through them.

But instead of getting a visit from the investigator, she got a call from another EPA official, who said he wanted to remove the documents to protect her health.

Then in a June 20 letter, the agency requested her "voluntary agreement to allow us to remove the boxes and/or documents to a more secure facility" to sample them for dioxin and possibly keep them.

Certainly, a reporter's house would be among the least secure places for sensitive or contaminated information.

The letter, signed by the region's hazardous waste management director, Allyn Davis, said EPA feared for Ridlehoover's health because the documents came from a dioxin-contaminated office, they had an "unusual and peculiar odor" and people reviewing the documents wore surgical gloves while handling them.

Ridlehoover told SEJournal she suspected another motive. "Where were they," she asked, "when these poor guys were slopping around at the plant site in Agent Orange?"

Ridlehoover declined to release the documents after the managing editor, John Starr, assured her the paper would stand behind her whatever she decided.

As with local environmentalists, Ridlehoover has been particularly leery of EPA after it offered money to an industry front group to oversee the cleanup. EPA later rescinded the offer, made under a one-per-site citizens grant program. But it still has not awarded a grant to one of the citizen groups active at Vertac.

Also, the agency, which has operated the defunct Vertac facility since 1987,

picked the incineration remedy that drew lawsuits from local environmentalists.

And despite EPA's key role in cost recovery litigation, lawyers for the state and the workers have taken the lead in trying to "deep-pocket" Dow Chemical, the trichlorophenol generator.

EPA's letter to Ridlehoover cited Section 104 of the Superfund statute, saying it gives the agency authority to inspect and sample a hazardous substance anywhere.

Under section 104, EPA can get a warrant for access to study and remedy any suspected toxic waste site. If EPA contract laboratories were to find that sensitive documents were contaminated, the agency could put them in drums and send them to a hazardous waste facility for long-term storage or incineration.

Meachum asserted that if the documents in Ridlehoover's house were found to be contaminated, it would make her a potentially responsible party for the Vertac site. Under the Superfund law, each such party is liable for the entire cleanup cost.

Although Ridlehoover declined, Kressenberg agreed to let EPA test documents from his office. So did lawyers in Washington, who received some of his originals in the course of their work for Dow and Vertac.

Kressenberg reasoned EPA was an ally and anyway, he was not interested in harboring evidence or in exposing himself or other workers to dioxin.

The documents tested negative and were returned.

Armed with no evidence of contamination, the agency decided against resorting to the powerful legal recourses afforded by Superfund Section 104 to secure the documents held by Ridlehoover.

Bowman Cox is the editor of Defense Cleanup, a Pasha Publications newsletter, co-editor of the SEJournal and a founding board member of the Society of Environmental Journalists.

EPA offers guide to agency hotlines and libraries

EPA's communications and public affairs office offers a handy information directory called "Guide to EPA Hotlines, Clearinghouses, Libraries and Dockets."

Ask any EPA press officer to send you a copy of the guide. The publication number is 20K-1007.



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| <input type="checkbox"/> SEJ 91-10 Nuclear Wastes: from Rocky Flats to Yucca Mountain , Joe Verrengia, Charles Archambeau, Michael Hope, Tom Borak | <input type="checkbox"/> SEJ 91-20 Emerging Environmental Issues in the 1990s , Thomas Merrick, Michael Breed, Roger Bilham, John Birks |

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Reporting from abroad poses additional challenges

By NOEL GROVE

Think of how you covered your last major environmental story. You worked the phones, you interviewed public officials, you dug out studies verifying your suspicions, perhaps you filed a Freedom of Information Act request when public information was not forthcoming. You personally went to the scene of the problem, made your own observations, and asked a ton of questions while scribbling a book's worth of notes.

Now let's turn your journalistic world upside-down. Your environmental story is set in a Third World country and you go there to cover it. The phones are unreliable, public officials won't meet with you, freedom of information is a joke, and when you start asking questions and taking notes you are physically threatened, whisked off to a smelly prison, and accused of working for the CIA. All of this I have experienced as an international writer for the National Geographic magazine.

It's not always that bad, of course. Many developed countries operate under rules of civility similar to our own. Unfortunately, some of the most glaring environmental problems happen in less-developed nations where economic needs are paramount and the general public, as well as public officials, often resents intrusions.

To paraphrase an old Chinese proverb, a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single phone call. Then another, and another. Do your phone work before you leave the U.S., calling people who have already operated in the area you have targeted. For basic information about the country you're going to, pick up a Fodor's guide. For Third World countries, try either the Lonely Planet or Insight Guide series. For the latest State Department advisories, call 202-647-5225.

Journalists are bonded by common travail and I've yet to contact one who would not share information on how to operate in unfamiliar territory. When an article on air pollution directed me to Athens, a New York Times reporter of Greek origin offered names and numbers of people studying acid rain damage to the Parthenon.

Before a trip to Colombia for investigation of illegal wildlife trade, Colombian journalists counseled me outside the coun-

try on the importance of secrecy in my mission. "Don't even describe what you are doing in letters to your contacts," they told me. "Mail gets opened before it reaches the addressee."

If you are dropped suddenly into an unfamiliar country for an environmental catastrophe, local journalists are usually eager to help, since you offer no competition to their own stories. This happened to me last summer when I was practically parachuted into the town of Shimabara,

Reporters' Toolbox

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

Japan, to cover Unzen volcano. A sudden pyroclastic flow (hot gaseous cloud) had just killed 41 people, including the American volcanologist Harry Glicken who had agreed to act as my interpreter when I arrived. Japanese reporters, both print and electronic, were incredibly helpful in steering me to local sources and providing simple logistics.

Most troublesome in developing countries (obviously excluding Japan) is the pursuit of good, hard facts. Dependable studies and reliable statistics are the products of modern, progressive governments, not shaky autocracies that fear uncomplimentary facts. Begin with a search of the literature on your subject for clues to what is available. Post requests for more information on electronic bulletin boards such as Econet, explained by Brad Hurley in the last SEJournal "Toolbox." Check with international organizations whose studies are often ignored by foreign officialdom either because politicians don't know about them or they assume local populations will never see the results.

My inquiries into polluted drinking water in Angola were going nowhere until I found an obscure Cape Verdean in Luanda quietly analyzing samples for the World Health Organization. The United Nations Environmental Program sponsors international surveys into various environmental problems; the results are sometimes helpful, and sometimes require careful scrutiny. Better information often comes from

the World Bank, whose studies into environmental problems often precede the investment of millions of dollars.

Usually, it's a good idea to check in with the U.S. embassy just to let them know you are in the country and to see whether they can offer any help. As an exception, if your subject is particularly sensitive, remember that our embassies are not unbiased: They exist mainly to serve U.S. business interests.

For every environmental problem there is probably an international non-governmental organization looking into it. Check with NGOs such as the International Union for Conservation in Nature, Defenders of Wildlife, Natural Resources Defense Council, Rainforest Action Network, and the like. Their bias will be apparent, but their work may lead you to useful sources.

Once you're operating within the country, check with university departments such as chemistry, physics or forestry to find academics who may have undertaken private research outside governmental aegis. The State of Sao Paulo in Brazil steadfastly denied any adverse health effects from the intense industrial activity at Cubatao, a coastline city sometimes called "the valley of death." I found a university professor who had made comparative blood samplings which showed a higher percentage of cancer precursors in Cubatao than elsewhere in Brazil. Data from an obscure dissertation became part of my story, to the delight of the professor.

I consider visiting most countries of the world safer than taking a casual stroll on many of our own streets, but the same is not true of practicing journalism. Many citizens as well as public officials on your Third World assignment might be courteous to you as a foreign visitor but grow outright hostile when you ask too many questions, especially if the answers are uncomplimentary to the country. For your personal observations and fact-gathering, sometimes a few minor deceptions may be in order. This entails some risk, as deception is rarely popular with the deceived.

For the story on the illegal trade in wildlife, I posed as a zoo purchaser in Bangkok and was shown endangered animals banned on international markets. In a

(Continued on page 16)

Risk assessment experts asking

What are we doing, why, and is it worth the effort?

By DONALD BARNES

Everyone is in favor of protecting the environment, but in what way and at what cost?

Three recent reports shed an interesting mix of lights on this question. It remains to be seen whether the combination of those lights will be "green" or "brown."

First, in mid-1991 a public opinion poll conducted by the Roper organization reaffirmed for the umpteenth consecutive year that the public places a high value on environmental protection. Over 75% of the people interviewed felt that environmental protection should be a high priority.

Second, the independent Science Advisory Board of EPA released its report, "Reducing Risk: Setting Priorities and Strategies for Environmental Protection." A committee of the board, consisting of 39 non-governmental scientists, engineers and research planners from across the country, concluded that the EPA clearly did not have sufficient resources to address all of the environmental problems. In addition, they found that the country had a penchant for throwing big money at small problems, while effectively neglecting some major environmental problems confronting the country and the globe.

Third, EPA released a report called "The Cost of a Clean Environment," which estimated the past and future costs to the country — the government and the rest of society — of complying with environmental legislation. According to their projections, by the year 2000 the U.S. will be expending roughly 3% of gross national product in carrying out its programs of environmental protection. While not exactly competing with the expenditures for defense or health care, this would mean that environmental protection would be literally giving snack foods a run for their money. At the same time our economic rivals in Europe and Japan would be expending only a bit more than one half of that percentage on protecting their portion of the environment. Therefore, economic competitiveness rears its head.

All of this begs the question in regard to environmental protection: What are we doing, why are we doing it and is it worth

the effort?

The day after he received the science advisory board's report, EPA Administrator William K. Reilly gave a major speech at the National Press Club entitled "Aiming Before We Shoot." In that address, Reilly called attention to the board's finding of a disparity between what the technical community considers to be the Big Problems (e.g., global warming, destruc-

Viewpoints

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

tion of the ozone layer, worker exposure to chemicals and indoor air pollution) and what the public (read: Congress) thinks are the Biggies (e.g., Superfund sites, oil spills and medical wastes).

Mr. Reilly left open the question of whether the technical community or the public is right. Instead, he called for a

'... by the year 2000, the U.S. will be expending roughly 3 percent of gross national product in carrying out its programs of environmental protection.'

national dialogue on these issues, in order to set an environmental agenda that is based on careful consideration of a full range of facts, rather than a simple reaction to the latest expose that springs from the undergrowth along the campaign trail or that is dramatically portrayed in the media.

On Jan. 25, 1991, Mr. Reilly and the board's chairman, Raymond Loehr of the University of Texas, carried their case to Congress. At a hearing conducted by Sen. Daniel Moynihan (D-N.Y.), Reilly and Loehr called for a re-examination of the thrust and the means of environmental protection in the U.S. and, indeed, the world. They repeated the board's recommendations:

1. Use the criterion of risk reduction as a measure of relative importance of environmental problems.

2. Re-assert the importance of ecological, as well as human, health in identifying major problems.

3. Use and improve this "comparative

risk" methodology in setting an environmental agenda.

4. Develop a strategic plan for EPA built on risk-based priorities.

5. Adopt a budget that reflects those risk-based priorities.

6. Use innovative tools for environmental protections; e.g., market incentives, information sharing and research, in addition to the traditional command-and-control methods.

7. Emphasize pollution prevention as the preferred method for reducing risk, based on the simple idea that it is cheaper to keep it clean than it is to clean it up.

8. Integrate environmental considerations into broader aspects of public policy in as fundamental a manner as are economic concerns.

9. Improve public understanding of environmental risks and train a professional work force to help reduce those risks.

10. Develop improved analytical methods to value natural resources and to account for long-term environmental effects in its economic analyses.

Frankly, environmental journalists are in a key position to nurture and report on what may well be the overarching environmental issues of the 1990s: What are we doing, why are we doing it and is it worth it? The direction of the environmental movement — even its continued existence — could be determined by the answer.

As a maturing group of professionals, environmental journalists can be instrumental in articulating the issue, generating discussion of the issue and reporting on the public's reaction to the issue.

It will be a measure of the maturity of all of us to see how well we carry out this challenge.

Donald Barnes is staff director of EPA's science advisory board and has played a leading role in the board's efforts to sort through environmental priorities. Since joining EPA in 1979, he has become a recognized and influential expert on the risk posed by dioxins, furans and Agent Orange.

Harris book is 'discovery journalism' in hot pursuit of the selenium story

By JANE KAY

Tom Harris calls the selenium poisoning of the West's wildlife refuges, at best, "a cruel trick of nature" and, at worst, "the predictable price of arrogance, greed and tunnel bureaucratic vision."

In his new book, *Death in the Marsh*, Harris tells what it's like to ride the rough waters of a pioneer environmental investigation.

Harris calls it "discovery journalism." For eight years

he spearheaded a search for the toxic byproduct of farming in the West, the little studied selenium, a natural element that in minute amounts can kill and sicken birds, ranch animals — and people.

Harris started an environmental beat for the San Jose Mercury in 1968 and currently works for the Sacramento Bee.

He didn't break the selenium-in-nature story. From Deborah Blum, then at the Fresno Bee and now at the Sacramento Bee, and Lloyd Carter, then at UPI and now in law school, came the first in-depth reports that selenium had leached out of soils in farm runoff at levels toxic enough to kill or malform birds in California's Kesterson National Wildlife Refuge 70 miles southeast of San Francisco.

Yet in 1985, Harris and a partner at the Bee, Jim Morris, now at the Houston Chronicle, did what the U.S. Interior Department refused to do. They started testing other western national wildlife refuges. Spurred on by evidence from federal scientists who risked demotion to do what they believed was right and ranchers who suffered the agony of sterilized crops and animals, and even health problems, they found dangerous-to-wildlife selenium levels in at least eight states.

Harris recalls one telephone interview: "What the hell is the matter with you? Don't you understand anything I've been saying?" shouted a U.S. Geological Survey scientist. "Thousands of square miles of the West are involved. Selenium will be found in parts of virtually every state west of the Mississippi. Damnation, man, look at the maps. Look for the Cretaceous ma-

rine shale formations. They're all over the place ... and most of them will be highly seleniferous. If they have irrigation projects and poor drainage, there will be other Kestersons. Don't you get it?"

And "follow the marine shales" they did. Step by step, Harris and his editors mapped out the plan of attack. They designed the field studies based on confidential federal reports, followed the "trail of tragedy" in dead plants, animals and stench to collect samples, and made sure laboratory analytical techniques met the USGS method. Then, they began the painstaking work of transforming laboratory results to environmental effects.

Harris pays tribute to others, especially his editors: "What lifts this story above most others of its kind is the resolve of certain gutsy editors to go beyond hard-hitting investigative journalism, beyond the normal secondhand account of environmental tragedies, onto the front line of discovery. The search for selenium was driven by the commitment, and integrity, of government employees and citizens who believed more in their mission and responsibility than in professional advancement."

His insights are particularly valuable because he's a model environmental reporter, respected for his smart, honest instincts. While he understands the profound problems of growing much of the nation's cotton and produce in the alkaline, arid West, he never succumbs to a voodoo cost-benefit approach to reporting. He calls a dump a dump.

So for other reporters, his indecision six years ago over what his lab results really meant strikes a chord, especially considering the thousands of dollars The Bee's owners, the McClatchys, spent on the investigation. The arduous soul-searching by Harris provides company on those rough waters that we all ride.

The reviewer, Jane Kay, covers environment for the San Francisco Examiner. She also periodically teaches college-level journalism courses.

Book Review

"Death in the Marsh"

By Tom Harris.

Island Press. 245 pages. \$14.95.

Nash ... (from page 11)

year. The group's quarterly newsletter has clearly written articles that include scientific journal references.

Steve Packard (312-346-8166) of the Nature Conservancy can provide an overview of its restoration projects and sources.

For background scans: *Wetland Creation and Restoration: The Status of the Science*, Jon Kusler and Mary Kentula, eds., 1990; *Environmental Restoration: Science and Strategies*, John Berger, ed., 1990. Both were published by Island Press, Washington, D.C.

For quicker background: Chicago Tribune, Sept. 29, 1991, Tempo Section, page 1; Time magazine, Oct. 14, 1991, page 62; Los Angeles Times, July 29, 1991, page B3.

Steve Nash writes about the environment and teaches journalism at the University of Richmond.

Foreign ... (from page 14)

Bombay leather shop, playing the part of the well-heeled tourist, I complained loudly to my (photographer) companion that I couldn't find anything in snakeskin to take back to my girlfriend. Ushered into a back room we were shown the illegal goods, which my companion excitedly photographed — "to show the folks back home" — with the single, small camera he had slung over his shoulder.

At a Chinese pharmacy in Macao, by pre-arrangement, a comely translator hung on my arm and purred in Mandarin that she would like something to get me, well, kick-started. Grinning clerks brought out a horn sawed from the nearly extinct black rhino and offered to shave off chips to be ingested as an aphrodisiac. I could scarcely hide my disgust.

I retired from cloak-and-daggership when a carload of thugs chased me away from a Panama warehouse reputed to hold illegally traded wildlife. Deception and spying should always be a last resort but admittedly the tactics of journalism can change dramatically when the usual doors of open societies snap shut.

Noel Grove is a senior writer for National Geographic magazine and SEJ's treasurer.

New Members

The following list represents new SEJ members recorded from Oct. 15, 1991 to Jan. 4, 1992. Memberships recorded after Jan. 4 will appear in the Spring issue of SEJournal.

ALABAMA

- Kevin W. Collins, WBRC-TV, Birmingham

ARIZONA

- Gary Paul Nabhan (Academic), Native Seeds/SEARCH, Creative Writing Program, Arizona State Univ., Tucson

CALIFORNIA

- Christopher J. Bowman, Sacramento Bee, Sacramento
- Terry Bryant, KMPH-TV, Fresno
- Elliot Diringer, San Francisco Chronicle, Oakland
- James Hurwitz, News Travel Network & Impact TV, San Francisco
- Lee J. Peterson, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin, Ontario
- Adam Rogers, Earth News, Agovra Hills
- Steve Scauzillo, San Gabriel Valley Daily Tribune, West Corvina

COLORADO

- Mary Schaefer Benke, Mediacom, Inc., Fort Collins
- Betsy Marston, High Country News, Paonia
- James Sheeler (Academic), Boulder
- Beverly Stauffer (Academic), Lafayette
- Jeff Thomas, Daily Times-Call, Longmont
- Gregory Todd, Boulder Daily Camera, Boulder
- Florence Williams, High Country News, Paonia

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

- Jonathan Adler (Associate), Competitive Enterprise Institute
- Dave Airozo, Nucleonics Week & Inside N.R.C.
- Lester R. Brown (Associate), Worldwatch Institute
- Aaron S. Cohen, Radio News,
- Susan C. Combs (Associate), Recycling Times/Waste Age
- Mike Etheredge, Indoor Pollution News
- Bryan T. Gruwe, Detroit News
- John Heritage (Associate), EPA Journal
- Sheila Kaplan, Legal Times
- Kathleen S. Meade, Recycling Times
- Junichi Taki, NIKKEI

FLORIDA

- Mark Allen Alford, WPTV-TV, West Palm Beach
- Carl Herzog, The Boca Raton News, Boca Raton
- Steve Noble, WEAR-TV, Pensacola
- Denise O'Toole, Daytona Beach News-Journal, Daytona Beach
- Bruce Ritchie (Academic), The Independent Fla. Alligator, Gainesville
- G. Stuart Smith, WBBH-TV News, Fort Myers
- Bradley B. Sussman, First Coast News (ABC News), WJKS-TV, Jacksonville

IDAHO

- Diane Ronayne (Associate), Idaho Wildlife, Boise

ILLINOIS

- Marnie Mead Oberle, Peoria Journal Star, Peoria

INDIANA

- Steve B. Walsh, Vidette-Messenger, Valparaiso

KENTUCKY

- Lori Eckenberger, Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro

LOUISIANA

- Hector San Miguel, Lake Charles American Press, Lake Charles
- Theresa Schmidt, KPLC-TV, Lake Charles

MASSACHUSETTS

- Maryn A. J. McKenna, Boston Herald, Boston
- Natalie A. White, The Standard-Times, New Bedford

MARYLAND

- Patrick J. Kiger, Baltimore Magazine, Baltimore
- Peter Samuel, Greentrack International, Libertytown

MICHIGAN

- Betsy Schultz (Academic), Flint
- John Sinkevics, Grand Rapids Press, Grand Rapids

MISSOURI

- Carol A. Command (Academic), University of Missouri, Columbia

MONTANA

- Beth A. Brennan (Associate), Missoula
- Todd Wilkinson (Associate), Bozeman

NEW JERSEY

- Steve Mitra, Chicago Tribune, Edison
- Roberto Soto, Telemundo TV, WNJU 47 New York, Teterboro
- George G. Strawley, The Press of Atlantic City, Cape May Court House

NEW YORK

- Ron Bernthal, Middletown Sunday Record, Hurleyville
- Joseph P. Boris, Olean Times Herald, Olean
- Holger M. Eisl (Academic), Center for Biology of Natural Systems, Queens College, CUNY, Flushing
- Elizabeth Kaledin, WPTZ-TV News, Plattsburgh
- Patrick L. Kinney (Academic), Institute of Environmental Medicine, NYU, Tuxedo
- Hilary Ann Macht (Associate), New York
- Matthew Maguire (Academic), Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy
- Steven S. Ross, Dept. of Journalism, Columbia University, New York
- Eliot Tozer, Tappan

OHIO

- Scott M. Powers, The Columbus Dispatch, Columbus

OREGON

- Amy Stix (Academic), Portland

PENNSYLVANIA

- Frank Edward Allen, The Wall Street Journal,

Devon

- Kelvyn Anderson, Delaware County Daily Times, Primos
- Christine M. Goldbeck, Shenandoah Evening Herald, Mahanoy City
- Sari Padorr, WJAC-TV, Johnstown
- Stephanie M. Silverman (Associate), Education and Information Programs, New York City Dept. of Environmental Protection, Philadelphia
- Michael G. Weillbacher, Earth Talk, WHYY-FM, Philadelphia

PUERTO RICO

- Sylvia Gómez, WKAQ-TV Channel 2, San Juan
- Ruben O. Palacios, Analisis Magazine, Canouanas
- Michael Pauley, The Tropic Times, Puerto Real

SOUTH CAROLINA

- Cal Harrison, The Herald, Rock Hill

TEXAS

- Elizabeth Juden Christy, Environmental Protection, Waco
- Patrick Driscoll, Big Spring Herald, Big Spring
- Derik Lattig, Consumer Watch, KFDD-TV, Amarillo
- Michele E. Middlebrook, KVUE-TV 24, Austin

VIRGINIA

- Joan Moody (Associate), Earth World Magazine, Arlington
- Randolph E. Schmid, The Associated Press, Alexandria

WASHINGTON

- Brian Collins (Associate), Seattle
- Ken Olsen, Idahonian/The Daily News, Pullman

WISCONSIN

- Ruth Flanagan (Associate), Madison

WEST VIRGINIA

- Dan Trevas, The Charleston Daily Mail, Charleston

International Members

BRAZIL

- Margarida Autran, TV Globo, Rio de Janeiro
- Inês Castilho, Shopping News, DCI Editora Jornalística, Sao Paulo
- Maisa de Lacerda Nazario, Jornal Do Brasil, Sao Paulo
- Ricardo Lessa Rodrigues, TV Manchete, Rio de Janeiro
- Patricia Raposo, Jornal Do Comercio, Pernambuco
- Cesar de Almeida Sowto, TV Pernambuco (Record), Pernambuco

CANADA

- Michael Keating (Associate), Toronto,

KENYA

- Jane Ferrell (Associate), Nairobi
- Dr. Calestous Juma (Associate), African Center for Technology Studies, Nairobi

SWEDEN

- Hans Strandberg, Svenska Dagbladet, Vallingby

Calendar

JANUARY

24-25. Tropical Forest Medical Resources and the Conservation of Biodiversity, New York, N.Y. Contact: S. Laird, Rainforest Alliance, 270 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10012.

30-31. Symposium on Superfund Risk Assessment in Soil Contamination Studies (sponsored by American Society for Testing and Materials), New Orleans. Contact: Marsha Firman, ASTM 1916 Race St., Philadelphia, PA 19103-1187. Phone: 215/299-5400 Fax: 215-977-9679.

31-Feb. 2. Beyond the Right to Know, conference on using Right-to-Know in the fight against toxics, Days Inn Downtown, Washington, DC. US Public Interest Research Group. Phone: 202-546-9707. Fax: 202-546-2461.

FEBRUARY

4-6. *In-Situ* Treatment of Contaminated Soil and Water (sponsored by Air & Waste Management Assn.) Cincinnati, Ohio. Contact: Janet Houthoofd, EPA, 5995 Center Hill Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45224. Phone: 513-569-7524 Fax: 513-569-7879.

4-6. National R&D Conference on the Control of Hazardous Materials sponsored by Hazardous Materials Control Research Institute (topics include bioremediation, controls on toxics and contaminated aquifers), San Francisco. Contact: HMCRI, 7237 Hanover Pkwy, Greenbelt, MD 20770-3602. Phone: 301-892-9500 Fax: 301/220-3870.

6-11. American Assn. for the Advancement of Science annual meeting (with sessions on global climate change, 21st century energy sources, waging war against pollution, environmental modeling and policy, environment and development, and environmental policies for national parks), Hyatt Regency Chicago. Contact: Nan Broadbent, AAAS, 1333 H. St., NW, Washington DC 20005. Phone: 202-326-6431.

9-12. Pollution Prevention through Waste Minimization (sponsored by National Environmental Health Assn.), Denver, Colo. Contact NEHA. Phone: 303-756-9090 Fax: 303-691-9490.

19-21. Second International Conference on Zebra Mussels, Toronto, Ontario. Contact: C. Brousseau, Zebra Mussel Coordinating Office, P.O. Box 5000, Maple, Ontario, Canada L6A 1S9.

23-27. Society of Toxicology annual

meeting (with sessions on genetic susceptibility to environmental agents, chemical allergy and mercury toxicology), Seattle. Contact: SOT, Suite. 1100, 1101 14th St. NW, Washington, DC, 20005. Phone: 202-371-1393; Fax: 202/371-1090.

26-28. Third Annual Recycled Paper Conference: Evolving Issues and Developing Trends (sponsored by EPA and CERMA) San Diego, Calif. Contact: Sandy Enderle or Annette Najjar at 703-750-1158.

26-28. HMC-South '92. The Fairmont Hotel, New Orleans. Contact: Hazardous Materials Control Research Institute, 7237 Hanover Pkwy, Greenbelt, MD 20770-3602. Phone: 301-892-9500.

27-29. Third Annual International Recycling Symposium (sponsored by SWANA), Mesa, Ariz. Contact: Gil Buch at 301-585-2898.

MARCH

1-5. Waste Management '92, Tucson, Ariz. The biggest technical conference of the year devoted to management and cleanup of radioactive and mixed wastes. Phone: 602-621-6160, fax: 602-621-8096.

2-4. Biocycle '92 (West Coast conference on recycling, composting solid waste and sludge), Sheraton Palace Hotel, San Francisco. Contact: BioCycle, 419 State Ave., Emmaus, PA 18049. Phone: 215-967-4135.

16-20. Affordable Comfort VI (sponsored by University of Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania Energy Office, focuses on energy conservation and policy), Pittsburgh. Contact: Diane Tirio, Phone: 412-373-0482.

17-18. Low-Level (radioactive) Waste Storage 1993 and Beyond (sponsored by Electric Power Research Institute), Orlando, Fla. Contact: Linda Nelson, P.O. Box 10412, Palo Alto, CA 94303. Phone: 415/855-2127.

26-27. Third Annual Watershed Resources Symposium (sponsored by Oak Ridge National Laboratory, sessions will include climate change and forests, forest responses to air pollutants, runoff pollution affecting streams), Oak Ridge, Tenn. Contact: Shirley Wright, ORNL, P.O. Box 2008, Oak Ridge, TN 37831. Phone: 615-574-7385.

31-Apr. 2. Southwestern Regional Solid Waste Symposium. Oklahoma City, Okla. Contact: Brad Roberges, SWANA at 301-585-2898.

APRIL

1-2. Fifth Conference on Toxic Substances sponsored by Assn. for the Prevention of Atmospheric and Soil Contamination (topics will include treatment techniques, legal issues and disposal technologies), Montreal, Canada. Contact: Conrad Anctil, Ministere de l'Environnement du Quebec, P.O. Box 11, Sainte-Foy, QC G1X 4E4, Canada. Phone: 418-644-3420.

6-7. Threatened succulents and their endangered pollinators: Conservation of mutualisms. (part of the International Organization for Succulent Plant Study's annual conference, program includes visits to Sonoran Desert) Desert Botanical Garden, Phoenix, Ariz. Contact: IOS Congress, Desert Botanical Garden, 1201 N. Galvin Pkwy, Phoenix, AZ 85008.

6-9. Global Warming — A Call for International Coordination: Third International Conference on the Scientific and Policy Issues Facing Governments (convened by SUPCON International and World Resource Review). Chicago. Contact: Sinyan Shen, SUPCON International, P.O. Box 5275, One Heritage Plaza, Woodridge, IL 60517. Phone: 708-910-1551; Fax: 708-910-1561.

14-16. In Vitro Toxicology (sponsored by Johns Hopkins Center for Alternatives to Animal Testing), Baltimore. Contact: Jeannene Tylee, Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health, Room 1604, 615 N. Wolfe St., Baltimore, MD 21205. Phone: 301-955-3343.

27-29. International Conference on Groundwater Ecology, co-sponsored by Ecological Society of America, EPA and American Water Resources Assn. (will include presentations on effects of pollutants on groundwater biota and effects of pollutants initially found in the air), Tampa, Fla. Contact: John Simons, MCWH-550G, EPA, 401 M St. SW, Washington DC 20460. Phone: 202-260-7091.

MAY

4-8. Measurement of Toxic and Related Air Pollutants, an international symposium co-sponsored by US EPA and Air & Waste Management Assn. (to focus on indoor air pollution, Superfund air monitoring, environmental lead measurements, and atmospheric fate of toxic pollutants), Durham, N.C., Omni Hotel and Convention Center. Contact: Steve Stasko, 412/232-3444.

Green Beat Correspondents

Contribute to Green Beat

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

Alabama and Mississippi — Sharon Ebner at the Sun Herald, P.O. Box 4567, Biloxi, MS 39635-4567, (601) 896-2355.

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

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

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

California:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Florida:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Texas and Oklahoma:

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

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

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

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

Virginia and North Carolina — Cyril Zaneski at the Virginian Pilot, 150 West Brambleton Ave., Norfolk, VA 23517, (804) 490-7219.

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

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

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

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ALABAMA

► The *Anniston Star* has been looking at the Anniston Army Depot, where about 2,000 tons of chemical weapons are stockpiled. Intermittent stories discuss groundwater contamination from toxic waste burial; the Army's plans to begin incinerating rockets, artillery shells and land mines in 1994; and the community's emergency preparedness. The weapons represent about 7 percent of the nation's total and are stored in 154 igloos. For more information, contact *Anniston Star* military reporter Sean Reilly or Librarian Sherry Kughn at (205) 236-1551.

► The Sierra Club and Alabama Conservancy sued the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM), claiming the state agency's Environmental Protection Agency-approved water quality standard does not protect public health and that the method used to determine the standard is not based on science. A hearing was held in November, but no decision had been made as of Dec. 16 by the ADEM-appointed hearing officer. Representatives of the pulp and paper industry intervened on behalf of the state, "so the environmentalists are claiming that there was some collusion between the industry and the department," said Steve Kipp, environmental writer for the *Birmingham Post-Herald*. For more information, contact Birmingham attorney Ned Mudd, who filed the suit on behalf of a landowner, at (205) 251-8143 and James Wright, ADEM's attorney, at (205) 271-7700.

► The *Birmingham Post-Herald* is "wrapping up a whole year's worth of stories on the Cahaba River," said environmental writer Steve Kipp. Two years ago, the Washington, D.C.-based American Rivers listed the Cahaba as one of the nation's most endangered rivers. "There have been a lot of environmentalists here very concerned about it," said Kipp. Among other topics, the stories review endangered species and sewage treatment plants along the river, which begins northeast of Birmingham and runs southwest to the Alabama River, which empties into the Mobile Bay. Contact Steve Kipp at (205) 325-3197.

► Mobile Press reporters Carol Carpenter

and Michael Hardy recently wrote a series of articles on the diminishing wetlands of the Mobile-Tensaw Delta and Mobile Bay. For more information, call Carpenter or Hardy at (205) 434-8495.

ARIZONA

► The *Arizona Daily Star* has published a major piece on exceedingly high emissions of arsenic from a copper smelter in Hayden, Ariz., in which emissions are well above state guidelines, but that state Department of Environmental Quality officials can't do anything about it because they lack authority to regulate the emissions. The state Department of Health Services also has done a study of cancer rates in Hayden and other copper mining towns in Central Arizona that showed the areas had high lung cancer rates. For information or copies of the articles, call Keith Bagwell of the *Arizona Daily Star*, (602) 573-4195. Or write at Box 26807, Tucson, AZ 85726.

CALIFORNIA

► The *Los Angeles Times* published a four-part series in November on the environmental costs of the proposed U.S.-Mexico free trade agreement. It examined Mexico's current environmental regulations and enforcement, the foreign-owned border industries known as maquiladoras and economic incentives for industries to move south. Larry Stammer and Judy Pasternak were among the reporters who worked on the series. (213) 237-7001.

► The *Press-Enterprise* of Riverside County, Calif., reported in August that inland Southern California has become the state's dumping ground, with two hazardous waste dumps, two huge household trash dumps and a low-level nuclear waste dump proposed for two inland counties. Reporter Gary Polakovic is at (714) 782-7564. In November the California Air Resources Board and the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) held a two-day conference highlighting current research on the health effects of air pollution. Topics included short-term and long-term exposure effects, evidence of continued health risks and what the available data means from a regulatory perspec-

tive. For a list of participating researchers and summaries of their presentations, contact the AQMD at (714) 396-3196.

► The *Press-Enterprise*, a 164,000-circulation daily in Riverside County, Calif., expanded its environmental staff by adding a half-time reporter to assist full-time environmental reporter Gary Polakovic.

► The *San Diego Union* put a full-time editor in charge of its weekly science page in March. The page had previously been largely wire copy but is now more locally written with contributions from the paper's science, medical and environmental reporters. Editor Leigh Fenley can be reached at (619) 480-9854.

► The *Los Angeles Times'* weekly science page will fall under the budget cutting ax; it is scheduled to end in mid-January. The page included free-lanced science features and news briefs.

COLORADO

► Understaffed and overworked, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's 206 enforcement agents are powerless to stop rampant poaching of America's prize wildlife, *Rocky Mountain News* Washington correspondent John Brinkley reported in a December 1991 series. In 104,000-square-mile Colorado, for example, only three federal field agents attempt to police more than 1.5 million hunters. The result: poachers operate with near impunity — despite 11 national wildlife protection laws — to bag trophies and satisfy lucrative foreign demand for animal parts. And the very survival of some animal populations is in doubt. The series, which took Brinkley from Colorado and Louisiana to New York and Virginia, also ran on the Scripps Howard News Service wire. For reprints, call Brinkley at 202-408-2726.

► The proposed burning of hazardous wastes in a northern Colorado cement kiln has been addressed in two northern Colorado publications and sparked the creation of a monthly newsletter distributed throughout the Fort Collins, Colo., community at no charge. Recent issues of Concrete Facts summarized lengthy Environmental Protection Agency regulations on the burning

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of hazardous waste in cement kilns and outlined attempts to regulate such burning in several states. For more information, write Concrete Facts, P.O. Box 32, LaPorte, CO 80535 or call (303) 482-4852. Because the group is nonprofit, it will return long-distance calls collect. A packet of information on local and national issues is available for an \$8 donation. *The Fort Collins Coloradan* published a four-part series on hazardous-waste burning in cement kilns in May. The series explored the views of industry and government officials and environmental groups on the safety of burning; examined how rapidly the practice has caught on in the United States, and addressed how common household products contribute to the problem. For more information, contact reporter Jan Knight, (303) 224-7757. A quarterly publication, *Environ*, also addressed hazardous-waste fuels in its most recent issue. The editors printed a list of the Portland Cement Association's most recent list of cement kilns using toxic waste as fuel and questioned whether cement produced in such kilns is safe. For more information, contact editor Ed Randegger, (303) 224-0083 or write him at P.O. Box 2204, Fort Collins, CO 80522.

► The *Boulder Daily Camera* has dedicated its local news page to environmental news one day a week. The page includes a column by lead writer Gregory Todd, a local environmental news story and a column of local environmental news briefs. Trimming the bottom of the page are excerpts from publications around the country. For more information, contact editor Thad Keyes or reporter Gregory Todd, (303) 442-1202.

CONNECTICUT

► For a detailed examination not only of the electromagnetic fields (EMFs) controversy, but how the press is covering it, see the Aug. 18, 1991, issue of *Northeast* magazine published by the *Hartford Courant*. Joel Lang, a staff writer for the Sunday magazine, examines what happened after Paul Brodeur of *The New Yorker* wrote about a cancer cluster near an electrical substation in Guilford, Ct. The response not only by the public and government, but also by the press, is spotlighted. The results are enlightening. *The Hartford Courant's*

phone number is (203) 241-3700.

► The Connecticut Yankee nuclear power plant in Haddam Neck, Conn. has been plagued by fresh water clams that have infiltrated the facility's water discharge and intake pipes. Officials were surprised, because while the Asiatic clams have been found at 19 other plants around the country it was not believed they could survive this far north. Contact Hal Gillam, *Meriden Record-Journal*, (203) 235-1661.

DELAWARE

► The *Wilmington News Journal* printed a four-part series in August accusing the DuPont Co. of whitewashing its responsibility for endangering its workers and the global environment with its production of chlorofluorocarbons. The series, written by Merritt Wallick after a five-month investigation, details how DuPont, Delaware's leading industry, was more obstructionist than pioneering in uncovering the role played by the CFCs it manufactured in thinning the ozone layer. The series also raises questions about the environmental hazards posed by DuPont's proposed CFC replacement. For reprints or info, call Wallick at (302) 324-2882.

► Delaware officials, taking a cue from EPA, have asked the state's top 20 toxic polluters to cut their emissions in half. Eighteen of the firms agreed to make the voluntary reductions within four years. The state's environmental and economic development officials also have launched a campaign to attract "green industries," offering tax incentives and expedited permitting to recycling firms and other similar businesses. For more information, contact Molly Murray at the *Wilmington News Journal*, (302) 324-2698.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

► The Bureau of National Affairs on Jan. 6 launched *Daily Environmental Report*, marking the first time the newsletter publisher has launched a daily since its *Daily Tax Report* premiered in 1954. William Beltz of BNA said the daily would provide comprehensive coverage and analysis of environmental news, legislative and regulatory action and legal decisions in the

United States and worldwide. BNA launched the first weekly environmental publication, *Environment Reporter*, 22 years ago. In December, another leading Washington newsletter publisher, Pasha Publications in Arlington, Va, ended its experiment with a daily environmental newsletter. Launched Sept. 30, Pasha's *Environment Daily* published 47 issues before being put to bed for the last time on Dec. 9. Pasha staff said the publication did not get the subscriber response necessary to maintain a daily.

► Controversial syndicated columnist Warren Brookes, who wrote from the Washington area for *Detroit News*, died Dec. 28 in suburban Washington. He was 62. Brookes, who appeared on a panel at SEJ's national conference in Boulder, Colo., last fall, was eulogized on the editorial page of *The Wall Street Journal* as a "cold-eyed iconoclast ... In his later years, Warren became a major scourge of environmental extremists and wrote path-breaking articles debunking acid rain, the Clean Air Act and global warming—the vogueish causes of the day."

FLORIDA

► The *Florida Times-Union* found in a five-part series that lifestyle factors, such as smoking and occupation, may play the most important role in Jacksonville's historically high lung cancer death rate. The controversial series examined the role air pollution might play, but found little evidence to support the public perception that bad air is the primary culprit. The series did find, however, that more cigarettes are sold per capita in Jacksonville than any other metropolitan area in the state. The report, which followed eight months of research, also chronicled a Jacksonville woman's months-long fight against lung cancer. For more information, contact science writer Michael Nyenhuis at (904) 359-4360.

► The *Times-Union* has been reporting on the decline of water quality in the St. Johns River, the longest river in Florida. The ongoing series has found the river is degrading due to septic tanks, wastewater treatment plants, stormwater runoff, agriculture and industry. The series prompted Jacksonville's Environmental Protection

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Board to give an award to environmental writer Beverly Keneagy. For more information, contact Keneagy at (904) 359-4316.

IDAHO

► The *Idaho Falls Post-Register* discovered recently that the U.S. Department of Energy plans to ship 118 spent nuclear fuel rods from a research reactor in Taiwan to the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory near Idaho Falls. The revelation on Taiwan waste is just the latest indication that the DOE has signed secret contracts with parties throughout the globe to receive spent nuclear fuel for possible recycling. Right now, however, the DOE is stuck because Idaho Gov. Cecil Andrus has doggedly defended his three-year ban on nuclear waste coming across Idaho's borders. Contact Kevin Richert at the *Post-Register* for more information, 1-800-333-1810, or P.O. Box 1800, Idaho Falls, ID 83403.

► The *Twin Falls Times News* reported recently that the Air Force's proposed 150,000-acre training range in the Owyhee canyonlands could wipe out 50-80 percent of the California desert bighorn sheep population in the area, in addition to 30 percent of the pronghorn antelope and 20 percent of the mule deer. Fish and Game biologists say low-level flights and sonic booms would overstress the wildlife. Contact Nils Nokkenved for more information, 1-800-658-3883, or P.O. Box 548, Twin Falls, ID 83303.

INDIANA

► A municipal judge, the state environmental agency and environmental groups have objected to a consent decree filed by the city of Indianapolis and Ogden Martin Systems, which operates the city's waste-to-energy incinerator. The city is part owner of the facility. In August, Hoosier Environmental Council and the Environmental Rights Foundation threatened to file suit because of alleged violations of the plant's air pollution permits. City officials originally downplayed the charges, but then filed the consent decree in October. The state Department of Environmental Management entered the case, saying the de-

creed did not adequately ensure Ogden Martin would stop violating permit standards for temperature and limits on the incinerator's emissions of particulates, carbon monoxide and sulfur dioxide. Municipal Judge Taylor Baker delayed action on the case and directed the city, state and Ogden Martin to work out a new agreement.

► On Nov. 6, a manager at the Amtrak repair shops in Beach Grove, near Indianapolis, decided to save some money by having workers pour a solvent that had been discarded by another department into a mixture used to clean locomotives. The resulting fumes sent several employees to the hospital. The *Indianapolis News* checked back with some of the hospitalized workers a month later and learned that a dozen people had not returned to their jobs yet. Many had developed "chemical bronchitis" and related ailments because of the irritation caused by the cloud. One man found himself back in the hospital after his condition began to deteriorate. The story illustrated the potential after-effects of what reporters often treat as a police beat story covered as a one-day event.

IOWA

► The Iowa Department of Natural Resources collected an average of only \$337 for violations of pollution regulations this year, records show. The administrative penalties are for relatively minor violations of environmental regulations, pertaining to such things as open burning, open dumping and discharging pollutants into water systems. More serious violations are referred to the state attorney general's office, where cases can linger for years before being resolved, according to records. Environmental groups in Iowa said the system allows individuals and companies to pollute at will.

► Workers at the Duane Arnold Energy Center near Cedar Rapids were exposed last year to far higher levels of radiation than most other nuclear power plant employees in the country, a report from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission shows. Iowa's only nuclear power plant exposed workers to a collective dose of 861 rems of

radiation last year, about twice the national average per reactor. Earlier this year, Public Citizen ranked Duane Arnold third-worst in the country in emergency shut-downs and labeled it a "nuclear lemon." Contact your regional NRC office for a report on worker exposure to radiation in 1990.

KANSAS

► High levels of atrazine, used widely on corn crops, are showing up in rivers, reservoirs and drinking water supplies. For the first time, Kansas state officials are talking about restricting its use in certain areas of the state. The state Board of Agriculture, however, is hesitant to do what's necessary, environmental groups say. For more information, contact Terry Shistar, Sierra Club, (913) 748-0950.

► Long cited as a national example of environmental racism, the Quindaro landfill in Kansas City, Kan., is dead. In December, Browning-Ferris Industries Inc., agreed not to build the landfill atop the Quindaro ruins, once a haven for fleeing slaves during the Civil War. It also dropped a \$52 million lawsuit against the city; in return, it will receive \$800,000 over the 20 years. A lame-duck city commission approved the landfill in 1983. Since then, it's been entangled by lawsuits, new state laws aimed at killing it and other controversy. Contact Mike Mansur at *The Kansas City Star* at (816) 234-4433.

LOUISIANA

► The Baton Rouge school system shut down drinking water sources in 45 public schools after the *Baton Rouge Morning Advocate* ran a series of stories showing high levels of lead in the water from those sources. The newspaper also showed that the school system had known about the high levels since July, but had ignored a health department advisory to shut down the drinking water sources and had failed to notify students, parents and teachers. For copies call Bob Anderson or Peter Shinkle at (504) 383-1111.

MARYLAND

► A Baltimore doctor has been ordered to

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pay \$275,500 for failing to order a lead-poisoning test on a toddler who was later hospitalized with dangerously high levels of the toxic metal in his bloodstream. The malpractice award, said to be the first of its kind in the nation, highlights the failure of doctors to heed recently strengthened federal guidelines calling for universal screening of infants and toddlers for lead. Lead poisoning, primarily from lead-based paint in older housing, has been called the No. 1 environmental health threat facing American children. For more information, contact Tim Wheeler at the *Baltimore Evening Sun*, (410) 332-6564.

MASSACHUSETTS

► David Ropeik of WCVB-TV, Channel 5, has been stressing stories about the ocean. "It's a whole area of the environment that I don't believe we pay enough attention to," says Ropeik who spends about 80 percent of his time on the environment beat. Recent stories include the alarming growth of potentially damaging algae blooms in the ocean, the investigation into whether radioactive waste was illegally dumped off Boston Harbor and an examination into the extent of damage from oil spills. Ropeik can be reached at (617) 433-4575.

► The *Worcester Telegram-Gazette*, with a circulation of 177,000 and a tight travel budget, rarely sends reporters overseas. But through a combination of luck and skill environmental writer John J. Monahan spent 10 days in St. Petersburg, Russia in December, 1991. Although he had to write spot news and discuss political and economic issues, Monahan also produced a series of daily stories about a municipal water system that is poisoning its residents, air pollution which is too visible, and a childhood lead poisoning epidemic that dwarfs America's. Monahan can be reached at (508) 793-9236.

MINNESOTA

► The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) denied a permit in November for an 800 ton-per-day trash burner in the greater Twin Cities metropolitan area. Dakota County commissioners wanted to build the \$160 million project

just south of St. Paul to handle growing amounts of solid waste in one of the fastest-growing suburban areas in the state. Proponents argued that Minneapolis-St. Paul landfills will reach capacity by 1996, and that state law prohibits the dumping of "unprocessed" garbage into landfills after 1993. A coalition of neighborhood and environmental groups opposed the incinerator on the grounds that Minnesota already has more trash burners per capita than any other state, and that approving more would interfere with recycling and set off "garbage wars" in the metropolitan area between counties competing for trash. The MPCA decision was the first time the state has ever rejected a proposed incinerator. Contact: Charles Laszewski, *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, (612) 228-5464.

► The Minnesota Environmental Quality Board is nearing the end of a generic environmental impact study (GEIS) on timber harvesting and supply. State officials agreed to conduct the \$900,000 study in late 1990 after environmental leaders complained that specific EIS's for individual pulp and paper company expansions were not addressing the question of cumulative environmental impacts on forests in the state. Boise-Cascade, Blandin, Potlatch and other large firms invested more than \$2 billion in new equipment in northern Minnesota during the 1980s, and more expansions are planned. The GEIS is scheduled for publication in late spring or early summer. Contact: EQB study coordinator Mike Kilgore, (612) 297-2607.

► Northern States Power Company (NSP) is in the middle of a controversy about radioactive waste storage that the nuclear industry is watching closely. NSP's 2-unit Prairie Island nuclear plant on the Mississippi River about 40 miles south of Minneapolis-St. Paul will have no more space to store spent nuclear fuel after 1994. The utility has proposed putting the highly radioactive wastes outdoors in large steel containers (known in the industry as "dry cask storage") for at least 15 years, or until the Department of Energy builds a permanent national repository for nuclear wastes. Native Americans oppose the NSP project because the storage area on utility property adjoins the Prairie Island Indian reservation. Environmental and energy groups

have argued that NSP wouldn't need to worry about storage space for at least another decade if it encouraged more energy conservation and cut its power production from the nuclear units by 50 percent. An administrative law judge heard testimony on the matter in November and December. The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission will decide this spring whether or not the expanded nuclear storage is needed. Contact: Tom Meersman, Minnesota Public Radio, (612) 290-1474.

MICHIGAN

► A little-known and little-studied native community of hunters and gatherers living on an island at the mouth of the St. Clair River may be the victims of "chemical genocide," concludes a three-day series by the *Port Huron Times-Herald*. Walpole Island, downriver from Ontario's Chemical Valley and downwind from Detroit's industry and cars, is home to 1,800 Potawatomi, Ojibwe and Ottawa who live off the fish and game of their abundant wetland home. The people feel they're being poisoned, but can't persuade the Ontario government to come and study them. Birth defects and miscarriages seem common, in spite of societal pressures to keep them secret. Series author Tom Verdin says reporters at 30,000-circulation dailies like the *Times-Herald* can do good environmental projects just like the big guys "when we're not covering the local school board, writing obituaries or suffering through business profiles." To contact Verdin for copies: 911 Military, Port Huron, MI 48060. (313) 985-7171 Ext. 357.

► Michigan's environment reporters and editors want to know more about risk assessment. A survey conducted by the Michigan Sea Grant College Program at the University of Michigan received responses from 34 journalists in the state, mostly newspaper and radio people. The journalists said they were most interested in learning how to explain risk assessments and advisories to their audience and learning how to find data bases and hotlines on specific risks and hazards. The respondents said they currently get most of their training in environmental risk from "self-teaching" and reading. Sea Grant hopes to organize a conference on understanding

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risk in the coming year. Contact Millie J. Flory, communications coordinator for Sea Grant, (313) 763-1437.

► A two-day conference in Traverse City presented current research on effects of toxins in the Great Lakes food web, from the now-familiar cormorants with crossed bills to more subtle things like smaller head size in human infants. Michigan Audubon Society sponsored the symposium, which presented 20 studies on fish, wildlife and humans. For an abstract, including source list, contact Loraine Campbell, Michigan Audubon Society, 1051 Avon Manor, Rochester Hills, MI 48307, (313) 852-1969.

► School districts throughout Michigan are being asked to voluntarily shut down their small trash incinerators. At the urging of the American Lung Association and a parents group from Mt. Clemens, state officials sent out a letter to all of the state's school districts in December asking for the shut-down. Long a familiar fixture of public school architecture, the burners are generally poorly understood and maintained by school custodial staff, reasoned Alex Johnson of ALA's Southeast Michigan office. Unlike industrial air pollution sources, they burn in the midst of children and neighborhoods. Simple gas-fired burners built in the 50s and 60s generally lack pollution control of any kind, other than perhaps a secondary combustion chamber and aren't well suited to burning plastics and wet waste from lunch rooms — a typical use, Johnson says. Many districts said they have already phased out the burners and others are considering the recycling logistics and added dumpster costs of doing so.

MISSISSIPPI

► A Superfund cleanup was set to begin Jan. 6 at Reichhold Chemical's former plant site in Columbia, Miss. This phase is expected to take 120 days, said Alec Van Ryan, spokesman for Reichhold. He said the work would involve the removal of asbestos, which has previously been encapsulated, and debris from the former plant site. The removal of soil, contaminated with PCBs and volatile and semi-volatile chemicals, will start after this phase

is completed. The cleanup is expected to be finished in spring of 1993 at an estimated cost of \$14 million to \$18 million, which Reichhold has agreed to pay. The 81-acre site was abandoned in 1977 after an explosion and fire and has been the subject of the Superfund cleanup since 1984, when 4,900 drums of hazardous waste were found on the property. Hundreds of residents living near the site have filed lawsuits against the company since 1986, asking for millions of dollars in damages and claiming contamination spread from the site into the community. Reichhold, EPA and Mississippi Environmental Quality officials claim tests show no off-site contamination. Some residents claim private tests show dangerous levels of contaminants off-site and resulting health problems. For information, contact Sam Mabry, chief of Mississippi's hazardous waste division, at (601) 961-5062.

► The U.S. Department of Energy will study cancer deaths in Lamar County in an attempt to determine if underground nuclear detonations in the 1960s may have harmed people who lived near ground zero. The study will begin early in 1992 and take one year. The underground Tatum Salt Dome near Baxterville was the site of two nuclear bomb explosions 2,700 feet deep in 1964 and 1966 and two non-nuclear gas detonations in 1969 and 1970. Groundwater and soil tests, which began shortly after the nuclear tests, have not shown high levels of radioactivity, according to the state and EPA. For information, contact the DOE in Las Vegas, Nev., at (702) 295-3521 or Bruce Brackin, Mississippi's public health epidemiologist, at (601) 960-7725.

► Three years after Air Force officials said it was clean, soil that was burned to remove the herbicide Agent Orange sits in an open field at the Naval Construction Battalion Center in Gulfport and is listed by the EPA as a hazardous waste. The Air Force and Navy are petitioning the EPA to delist the waste, a process that will take at least 18 months. If it is not delisted, an additional cleanup could cost \$20 million. The Air Force stored 15,000 barrels of Agent Orange at the Seabee base from the 1960s to 1977, when the Air Force burned the herbicide at sea. Because some of the barrels leaked and spilled during handling, 26,000

tons of soil were contaminated and incinerated in 1988. The EPA will require the Air Force to test groundwater and the original storage area for contamination. For more information, contact Robert Kayser, delisting section chief, EPA's Office of Solid Waste, at (202) 382-2224; Nancy Brooks, public affairs, Naval Construction Battalion Center, at 871-2393; or Maj. Fabiano, Air Force public affairs, (703) 695-5766.

MISSOURI

► As part of a seven-day series on the U.S. Department of Agriculture, reporters for *The Kansas-City Star* showed how agriculture has harmed the environment. More important, the Agriculture Department has done a poor job of changing, even though Congress mandated it to do so in 1985. Confusion, haphazard wetland protection and poor enforcement of its soil erosion programs have hampered the effort. The series also documented widespread problems in the labelling, meat inspection, farm payment programs and the department's near eradication of black farmers. For reprints, call (816) 889-7827 and enter 1411. Leave your name and address.

► National recycling experts say Kansas City is probably the only city of its size to turn down a curbside recycling program. It did so in 1989. Now, it's about to try again. A citizens panel, the Waste Minimization Commission, has developed a new plan over the last 18 months. It calls for a volume-based recycling program that charges residents for sending trash to landfills, not for recycling. It also would set up a citywide composting operation and a household hazardous waste program. For more information, contact Robert Mann, the commission chairman, (816) 561-1085.

MONTANA

► Here's a feature item to tuck away for next year: SEJ member Bert Lindler of the *Great Falls Mont., Tribune* wrote a piece on how to select an environmentally correct Christmas tree. Call Bert at (406) 791-1460 for a copy of the story.

► When Forest Service Region 1 Chief John Mumma resigned under pressure to

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cut more timber from the national forests, he set off a whole batch of fireworks over the issue of timber harvesting and quotas. Sherry Devlin, environmental writer for the *Missoulian*, was in the thick of it, covering Mumma's heart-felt testimony in Washington, D.C., and writing about other national forest supervisors in the hot seat for failing to meet timber quotas. The future of the nation's forests could be at stake in this debate. Contact Sherry at the *Missoulian* for copies, (406) 523-5240.

NEVADA

► Major organizations have declared opposition to Nevada's selection as the only candidate for the U.S. Department of Energy to study as the nation's high-level nuclear repository. In December the American Medical Association sent a resolution to its board for studying health and safety effects of radioactive waste. The resolution, introduced by the Nevada State Medical Association's President Dr. Heather Allen, a Las Vegas oncologist, was introduced during the AMA's interim meeting in Las Vegas. The National Conference of State Legislatures also voted to oppose Nevada's selection as the lone nuclear waste dumping site. The NCSL's previous stance had been one that generally supported the notion that the nuclear repository would be in Nevada. The proposed site, Yucca Mountain, is 90 miles northwest of Las Vegas.

NEW MEXICO

► The *Santa Fe New Mexican* has published numerous stories on a Los Alamos artist's allegations that his studies have uncovered an excessive number of brain tumors near a canyon where toxic wastes were dumped in the 1940s and 1950s. One of the stories in August dealt with a woman who at the time was dying of brain cancer and has since died. One dead brain-tumor victim's family and another living tumor victim recently filed a \$50 million lawsuit alleging they'd gotten cancer because of the dumping. For information, call reporter Keith Easthouse at (505) 986-3045 or write the *New Mexican* for copies of the articles at 202 E. Marcy St., Santa Fe, 87501.

► The *Albuquerque Journal* and *Tribune* have both been giving heavy coverage of

two big nuclear waste issues: the U.S. Department of Energy's unsuccessful efforts to open the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant and the Mescalero Apaches' study of the feasibility of storing the nation's high-level nuclear waste from nuclear power plants. The WIPP site will take transuranic defense waste from weapons plants. For more information on those stories or copies of the stories, write Tony Davis at the *Tribune*, P.O. Drawer T, Albuquerque, N.M. 87103; or Chuck McCutcheon of the *Journal* at P.O. Drawer J, Albuquerque 87103. Call Tony at (505) 823-3625 or Chuck at (505) 823-3954.

NEW YORK

► U.S. EPA has released the first phase of its reassessment of PCBs in the Hudson River, sparking a debate about the wisdom of cleaning up the river and the appropriateness of dredging. Upstate residents and General Electric — which dumped 1.2 million pounds of PCBs into the river and is responsible for the Superfund cleanup — oppose dredging; environmental groups like Clearwater say new dredging technologies are safe. The debate also encompasses new information about the health effects of PCBs. *Gannett Suburban Newspapers*, in Westchester County, published a two-day series on the issue on Nov. 10 and 11. For more information call Tom Andersen at *Gannett*, at (914) 694-5060.

OHIO

► The amount of chemicals dumped into the Cincinnati sewer system has reached a crisis, according to reports in *The Cincinnati Enquirer*. The city's sewer district faces a \$175,000 fine for allowing industries to violate their sewer discharge permits. Four companies face action by the state Attorney General's office and the cases of two companies have been forwarded to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. According to Toxic Release Inventories filed by the companies, 15.58 million pounds of waste was dumped into the sewers in 1990 — eight times more than in any other county in the state, said Nancy Firor, the paper's environmental reporter. The reduction from nearly 20 million pounds in the 1989 reports reflects a change in the way companies figured

ammonia releases. In one neighborhood, the discharges added to combined sewer overflows have polluted a stream and triggered arguments over what to do with dirt dredged as part of a flood control project.

► Cities and towns have had difficulty meeting the astronomical costs of complying with clean water mandates, and the situation stands to get worse, *The Columbus Dispatch* reported in a seven-story series that ran Sept. 8, 9 and 10. Reporter Scott Powers wrote "The Cost of Clean Water" after more than two months of investigation. He looked at cities in Ohio and other parts of the nation. Powers began the series by looking into complaints he had heard from officials on his city hall beat. Now Powers has been assigned to cover other city-related environmental issues as well. Copies of the report may be obtained by writing to Powers at *The Columbus Dispatch*, 34 S. 3rd St., Columbus, Ohio 43215, or calling him at (614) 461-5131.

OREGON

► Watch for the next few twists in the saga of the northern spotted owl, which is listed as a threatened species because of years of heavy logging. Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan has ordered a rare convening of a cabinet-level committee, known informally as the God Squad, to decide whether to toss out protections for the owl on some Northwest logging projects. The results could affect congressional debate about reauthorizing the Endangered Species Act, a landmark environmental law. Interior's press office: (202) 208-6416.

► What's happening at Portland General Electric's Trojan nuclear plant could be a forerunner of trouble at a nuclear plant near you. Trojan is dogged by a form of cracking in its steam generator tubes that neither the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission nor the utility fully understands. According to the commission, the problem also is beginning to appear at other plants.

PENNSYLVANIA

► A three-part series in the *Philadelphia Daily News* explored hazardous materials transportation in the Philadelphia area.

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Although the number of accidents is low, the potential consequences are high because of the volume and potency of the chemicals. The exhaustive review by environmental reporter Ramona Smith includes graphics explaining cargo placards and maps detailing major rail and highway routes. Contact Ramona Smith at the *Philadelphia Daily News*, 400 N. Broad St., P.O. Box 7788, Philadelphia, PA 19101; or call (215) 854-2860.

► Environmentalists have begun to question logging and energy development in the Allegheny National Forest. Unlike many national forests, the Allegheny makes a profit on timber sales because of high-value black cherry and red oak. But erosion and an extensive road network have prompted a flurry of administrative appeals by conservationists. Oil and gas drilling is equally intensive, with 6,000 active wells. The government owns the surface but not the mineral rights. A bill introduced by Rep. Peter Kostmayer, D-Pa., would give the U.S. Forest Service more authority over drilling. For information, contact the Forest Service office in Warren, Pa., at (814) 723-5150 and Rep. Kostmayer at (202) 225-4276.

► Carnegie Mellon University has established an Environmental Institute to coordinate research on air quality, energy, global climate change, risk analysis and communication, waste management and water quality. The new program reflects the university's growing environmental efforts. Contact Anne Watzman, Carnegie Mellon University, Department of Public Relations, 5017 Forbes Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15213; or call (412) 268-6929.

► What do a salmon-colored flower growing in beach dunes on Hawaii's Molokai island and the "Cornfield," site in Maryland of one of the most savage Civil War battles, have in common? They have been preserved by the Pittsburgh-based Richard King Mellon Foundation. Operating with a passion for the low profile, the little-known foundation has donated \$150 million for land conservation — more than any other group or individual in the nation. A story in *The Pittsburgh Press* profiled the foundation. For a copy, contact Ralph Haurwitz, *The Pittsburgh Press*, P.O. Box 566, Pitts-

burgh, PA 15230; or call (412) 263-1986.

PUERTO RICO

► Thirty-two species of wildlife and plants common to Puerto Rico have made it onto the year-end endangered and threatened species review list of the Fish and Wildlife Service. FWS also is considering adding 14 other species of wildlife to the list. The growing list will make it increasingly difficult to develop certain areas of Puerto Rico in future years, especially if projects involve federal funds or clash with federal or Commonwealth regulations. Contacts: Luis Ferre at El Nuevo Dia (809) 793-7070, ext. 2165 and Miglisa Capó or Harry Turner (Washington Bureau) of the *San Juan Star* 782-4200. Larry Shannon USFWS's Chief, Division of Endangered Species, (703) 358-2171.

► The Jamaican Conservation and Development Trust Fund, in a joint venture with the Puerto Rico Conservation Trust Fund, was able to buy \$430,000 of Jamaica's foreign debt at a discount rate in order to purchase thousands of acres of land destined to become natural reserves. The debt was reconverted to 7.1 million Jamaican dollars, which were invested for the management and preservation of three of Jamaica's natural parks, including the country's last virgin tropical forest. This is the second such debt-for-nature swap that the Puerto Rico Conservation Trust Fund has made with a Caribbean country. Last June, the Trust Fund invested in three of the Dominican Republic's national parks. This could become the fastest way to help protect endemic wildlife in the Caribbean. Contacts same as above and Nidia Suárez of the PRCTF (809) 751-4000 and 722-5834.

► The Caribbean National Forest in Puerto Rico has surprised scientists with its quick and dramatic recuperation after 1989's Hurricane Hugo defoliated 40 percent of this 22,000 acre natural reserve, the only of its kind under any U.S. jurisdiction. Scientists from the U.S. Forest Service and from Latin America are reevaluating past theories on the effects of hurricanes on tropical forests. In addition, in 1992 the rainforest will become a center for tropical forest scientists and other professionals who study

the relation between global warming and tropical forests world-wide. It would become the only such center in the Caribbean and along with Hawaii the only two under the U.S. jurisdiction. Contacts: Luis Ferre (809) 793-7070 ext. 2165 and Dr. Ariel Lugo of the U.S.F.S. 766-5335.

RHODE ISLAND

► Rhode Island's efforts to deal with solid waste are threatening to crumble because its quasi-state agency responsible for trash disposal faces insolvency. The Rhode Island Solid Waste Management Corporation decided to go the high-price route, by building trash incinerators and landfills with a pricetag of \$1.2 billion. Local opposition has delayed those projects for years. Meanwhile, political manipulation over how much the agency can charge at its one landfill has kept the price low. Now the problems are catching up with the corporation, which needs a \$30 million bailout from the state. For more information, contact Bob Wyss, *Providence Journal*, (401) 277-7364 or Thomas E. Wright, corporation director, (401) 831-4440.

► When 325 scientists met in late October in Newport they had alarming news: there is overwhelming evidence that toxic algae blooms are proliferating throughout the world. The algae is killing fish and seafood and severely damaging the fishing industry. Some scientists argued that the oceans are sending out a message that they are in severe danger. But others suggested the blooms may have always existed and that the only change is the number of scientists studying it. Contact Peter Lord, *Providence Journal* (401) 277-7364 or Theodore J. Smayda, the University of Rhode Island School of Oceanography, Narragansett, R.I.

TEXAS

► "Goodbye, Dallas! Tears, toasts, hugs and handshakes as last edition marks end of paper's 112 years of journalism history." That was the *Dallas Times Herald's* epitaph for itself on Dec. 9. The heart-breaking news marked the end of one of the last great newspaper wars in America and it meant less environmental reporting in the country's eighth largest city. The *Herald* was a scrappy, often irreverent paper,

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trying to outthink and outmaneuver its much bigger, well respected, but often stodgier crosstown rival, the *Dallas Morning News*. "The *Herald*, at its best, stood for fun and justice," wrote the *Herald's* best-known columnist, Molly Ivins. The *Herald* grabbed a few favorite stories and pursued them with vigor. The two papers' approach to the continuing lead contamination in many West Dallas neighborhoods reflected the different approaches. While the *Herald's* Allison Young frequently scored first with daily developments, the *News* ran fewer but longer stories. Taken together, the two strategies served the city well. There was no sense of victory in the *News's* newsroom — just shock and sadness. (As of this deadline, there was no definite word on how many ex-*Herald* employees would be hired by the *News*.) The *Herald's* demise means that Dallas is now the biggest total-monopoly newspaper city in the country — a frightening trend. It also means an important and honorable voice has been stilled.

► On Sunday, Nov. 24, the *Dallas Morning News* published a 20-page special section entitled "Texas Environment: State of Neglect." The report outlines the status of Texas' human environment, land, water, wildlife and coast. It notes that the Lone Star State is tops in several categories of environmental problems (such as toxic release inventory numbers) but last in per-capita spending on the environment. The report also shows that traditionally conservative, pro-business Texas is the scene of hundreds of pitched battles to correct a century of environmental abuse. For more information, contact Randy Loftis at the *Dallas Morning News*, (214) 977-8483.

► The *Houston Chronicle* on Nov. 24 published a 12-page special section, "The Cancer on our Coast." The newspaper analyzed 1985-89 cancer mortality data for the upper Texas Gulf Coast and found death rates in the area ranged from 4.5 above the state average for Hispanic men to 23.8 percent above average for white women. The upper Texas coast has had elevated cancer death rates for at least 40 years, the *Chronicle* said, but Texas has done little to research the problem, which some believe is related to the petrochemical corridor that stretches from Corpus Christi to the Loui-

siana line. The newspaper reported many coastal hospitals were not complying with a 1979 state law requiring them to report all new cancer cases; as a result, cancer investigators lacked crucial data. For copies call Jim Morris at (713) 220-7948.

► On four successive Sundays in September and October, the *Houston Chronicle* published an eight-article series exploring the multiple pressures on Galveston Bay that have caused a number of scientists to warn that the estuary may be nearing the brink of environmental collapse. The series, "Galveston Bay in Peril," detailed the deterioration of the bay's wealth of natural resources by decades of pollution, development and habitat destruction. It also examined the numerous public policy decisions to be made in the next few years that will determine the bay's environmental future. For copies, call Bill Dawson at (713) 220-7843.

WASHINGTON

► One of the Northwest's top critter stories involves saving dwindling populations of salmon in the Columbia River Basin. This fall's latest development was the Northwest Power Planning Council's unanimous approval of a sweeping, multimillion-dollar rescue plan. Council members expect their fisheries program to become the blueprint for a recovery plan to be developed by the National Marine Fisheries Service. In November, NMFS added the Snake River sockeye salmon to the endangered species list. The plan allows water to flow through spillways on hydroelectric dams during spring fish migration and places severe restrictions on commercial fisherman. The document provides good background on an endangered species issue that's much more complex than the spotted owl controversy. Copies are available from the council's Portland, Ore., office, phone 800-222-3355.

► In a three-day series of December stories, Karen Dorn Steele of *The Spokesman-Review* and *Spokane Chronicle* explained how the arid parts of inland Washington and Oregon are a magnet for disposers of both toxic and solid wastes. The region is under the federal gun to stop shipping its toxics elsewhere. And companies are vy-

ing for the right to build mega-landfills to handle trash from the metropolitan Portland and Seattle areas. One story focused on Washington's status as the top recycler among all the states, recycling about 28 percent of all household and commercial garbage. For copies of the Dec. 7-9 series, write the newspapers' city desk at P.O. Box 2160, Spokane, WA 99210.

► Also in the *Spokane* newspapers, a California resource-management expert proclaimed Washington State "the crown jewel" among states that manage forests for the benefit of schools and other public institutions. In a story by Julie Titone, professor Sally Fairfax praised the way Washington has preserved 41,000 acres of old-growth trees, oceanfront vistas and wetlands, while continuing to make money for the school trusts. Fairfax has a rare national perspective on state trust land management, saying it offers a risky but interesting alternative to the "mushy" multiple use policy that governs national forests. She has studied 22 states with trust lands, which were granted by the federal government at statehood. She and fellow researchers have released a report titled "The School Trust Lands: A Fresh Look at Conventional Wisdom." Fairfax can be reached at the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720, phone (510) 642-7627.

WEST VIRGINIA

► Sheila Gray of WSAZ-TV ran a five part series in October 1991 on West Virginians under siege from out-of-state garbage, profiling counties that won and lost fights against mega-dumps that would take mostly New Jersey and New York garbage, and precedent-setting new legislation to stem the flow. Call (304) 344-3521 for information.

► The deputy director of the state Division of Natural Resources disagreed with her boss on whether an out-of-state landfill owner who imports thousands of tons of trash into West Virginia every day should get new permits, confidential memos detailed by Paul Nyden of the *Charleston Gazette* in a Nov. 10 story revealed. Call (304) 348-5100 for information.

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► The West Virginia Environmental Council, an umbrella organization for grassroots groups throughout the state, has come up with a novel fundraiser—a cassette tape of “green” songs, many of which were first sung at concerts staged by groups fighting landfills that would take mostly out-of-state waste. For information or a copy of the tape (\$10), call (304) 346-5891.

WISCONSIN

► Wisconsin legislators are scrambling to pass laws to regulate oil drilling in the state. That action comes after two companies announced plans to drill exploratory oil wells near Ashland and Milwaukee. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources seems willing to allow the test

wells, despite environmentalist’s worries that the wells could harm nearby lakes Superior and Michigan. Despite all the activity, state geologists believe it extremely unlikely that drillers will find marketable supplies of oil or natural gas underneath Wisconsin.

► As of December, construction has been halted on what would be Wisconsin’s first metallic mine in ten years. A Madison Judge sided with the Sierra Club and ordered the Kennecott Corporation to stop mine construction at Ladysmith. Meanwhile, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is doing a supplemental environmental impact statement for the mine. That comes after a regular environmental impact statement failed to note the local

presence of endangered species.

► A proposed auto racetrack along the Wisconsin-Illinois border has touched off hard feelings between local communities...and may help spur Wisconsin legislation. Developers from Texas and California want to build the motorsports facility in Genoa City, Wisconsin. But nearby towns, which contain the vacation homes of Illinois residents, are concerned about potential noise and traffic from the racetrack. A Wisconsin lawmaker may use the dispute to build support for a bill strengthening the state’s environmental impact review process. Alleged deficiencies in the EIS process were first highlighted in a *Milwaukee Sentinel* article in December, 1990.

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