

# MENDOCINO ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER NEWSLETTER



Issue 8

106 W. Standley St., Ukiah, CA 95482 707/468-1660

Winter 1990-1991

## The War That Didn't Have to Be

*The following statement was made by Joe Volk, the Executive Secretary of the Friends Committee on National Legislation, in response to the onset of the U.S. military offensive against Iraq.*

by Joe Volk

With commencement of U.S. bombing attacks against Iraq, another war has come to take the lives of many innocent civilians and of soldiers on all sides of the conflict. They will suffer and die because their trusted leaders did not choose life. We grieve at this senseless loss of life and destruction. All the worse, this war did not have to be. But human beings took one turn after another toward war, instead of one turn after another toward peace. Every human being is a holy place.

Every injury and every killing insults God. Our profound regret and deepest sympathy are extended to the families--to all the families, on all sides of the conflict--who have lost loved ones.

We say, still, it is not too late to stop now. Cease bombing, make no more attacks, hold your places, and let talking begin immediately to prevent further bloodshed and destruction.

President George Bush, we appeal to you to choose life that others may live; give us an agenda for peace and justice. President Saddam Hussein, we appeal to you to choose life that others may live; give your people a peace and justice agenda.

You both have failed the public trust by taking our two nations to war.

The United Nations Security Council, the Congress of the United States, the European Community, and the Arab League failed too. Each allowed you to persuade

them that the answer to an illegal and unjustified military aggression by Iraq against Kuwait is a legal and rationalized bigger war by the United States against Iraq. The United Nations and our Congress have acquiesced in the logic that two wrongs make a right. In consequence, the Iraq-Kuwait conflict may multiply and spread to many other nations.

Neither of you can redeem your failures without cooperating with the other.

Precious lives are at stake. Let your hearts soften for their sake. Cease fire, meet together, talk directly, and resolve your differences without shedding the blood of others.

The American administration believes the bombs dropping today on Iraq will sprinkle the world with international justice and enduring peace.

They say that this war will create a new world order free of aggression.

They are wrong. Death, destruction, and generations of hatred are the things that germinate from the wreckage of war. The Iraqi leaders believe that standing up



to the military might of a superpower will demonstrate courage, bring honor and assure them a place in history. The latter may prove to be true, but a

place in history for a few men is little consolation for the many who will die now, and for the generations who will suffer into the future. We believe that you, President George Bush, and you, President Saddam Hussein, can exercise the courage and vision to stop the killing and to negotiate a just outcome, and so we appeal to you to do the right thing: negotiate now.

The war will end in some kind of negotiated outcome sooner or later. Why not sooner? Why not choose life? We appeal to all people of good will to condemn and oppose this war and to counsel their leaders to stop the bloodletting now.

*The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), based in Washington, DC, was founded in 1943 to represent Quaker views on national policy. It is governed by a General Committee of representatives from 26 Friends' Yearly Meetings and eight Friends' organizations. FCNL speaks for itself and like-minded Friends.*

# Mendocino County Peace Groups

*A more complete list of national and Bay Area peace groups is available from the MEC.*

## Willits Working For Peace

c/o WEC, 459-4119

Contact: Carrie Switzer, 459-5370

## War Resisters' League

Contacts: Susan Crane, 463-1023;

Martin Bradley, 462-5029;

MEC, 468-1660

## Anderson Valley

Contacts: David Severn, 895-2861;

Mary Aisner, 895-2833

## Pt. Arena - Concerned Americans For Peace

After 6:00 PM, 882-2498

## Ft. Bragg

Contacts: Rella, 964-0536;

Anna Marie, 961-0302

## Draft And Military Counseling Ukiah Area

Contacts: Ree Slocum, 468-5622;

Susan Crane, 463-1023

## Laytonville Area

Don Fiers, 984-6522

## Non-Violence Training

Contacts: MEC, 468-1660;

Susan Crane, 463-1023

## Students For Peace

Contact: Troy O'Connell, 459-9785

# Ft. Bragg Environmental Center Comes of Age

by Dale Glaser

The Ft. Bragg Environmental Center has decided it's ready to go its own way, and separate from the umbrella of the Mendocino Environmental Center. This is a very positive move that will allow the Ft. Bragg center to evolve its own unique style of environmentalism.

The Ft. Bragg MEC began about a year ago when several people came to a MEC Board meeting and asked for help in setting up an environmental center on the coast. The MEC opened its arms and the Ft. Bragg Environmental Center was set up as an equal partner, benefiting from the MEC's experience and already established non-profit status, bookkeeping system, newsletter, etc. Now the energy and people are there for Ft. Bragg to create its own identity. We wish you well, as we continue working together in the future.

# MEC Going Strong ... More Members Needed !

by Gary Ball

A new benefit of being a MEC Member recently came to light. At the play *Beautiful Swimmers* in Ukiah, MEC Members were offered a discount on the price of admission. The good news is that MEC Members were very pleased to receive this discount. The bad news, though, was that there were a lot of people who said they didn't know it was possible to be a MEC Member!

Whoa! What's wrong with this picture? Without MEC Members there would be no MEC. Members, of course, are those who purchase an annual membership in the MEC. A MEC Membership costs a minimum of \$1 a year, but we ask that people give \$20 a year or more if they can afford it. The funds derived from memberships constitute the bulk of the MEC's operating budget. Without this membership support, there simply would not be a MEC.

At this point in time, the MEC needs members more than it has ever needed them before. This is because the work load at the MEC and the services offered by the MEC have grown much faster than the membership support base of the Center. Currently at the Center, the phones, the computers, the copier, the desks and the space inside the building are maxed out. The all volunteer staff is also stretched pretty thin. It is obvious that the Center needs to grow in order to keep up. We need more phone lines, computers, desks and space to work in. More importantly, it is not possible to imagine that an all volunteer staff can continue to deal effectively with an ever increasing work load. The Center needs some paid staff if it is to go confidently into the future.

All this is possible and, in fact, very much in reach. But it is not possible if people don't even know that they can be MEC Members. So, why are we telling you? If you're getting this newsletter, chances are you are already a MEC Mem-

ber. Well, the point is, you probably know a lot of people who aren't. And we need your help to reach them. People need to know that it is possible for them to be a member of the MEC. And they might even be interested to know that they get certain benefits from being a member.

The most obvious benefit of membership is that membership assures that there will be a MEC, doing its work for our environment and for all of us day after day, all year long. Membership also entitles you to vote in MEC elections and to thereby determine who sits on the MEC Board of Directors. Of course, only members may run for the Board. Membership means that you will receive the MEC Newsletter. MEC membership entitles you to bank at the Mendo-Lake Credit Union. And last but not least, membership just may enable you to save on the price of admission to certain special events. It's worth it! So, please tell your friends. Thanks!

# THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE GULF WAR

This is a summary of an article which recently appeared on EcoNet. The original article was prepared by the Political Ecology Group [Josh Karliner, EPOCA, [(415) 788-3666, San Francisco, CA]; Friends of the Earth [John Bell, (202) 544-2600, Washington, DC]. Except where specific sources are cited, it was drawn from the New York Times and other news media in the U.S. and Europe. Copies of the full text can be obtained from the MEC.

Because details are lacking, much of what follows here must remain somewhat tentative. However, it is all based on conditions that have occurred elsewhere and in that sense must be considered realistic.

As we have already witnessed, a deliberate oil spill is now devastating the already heavily impacted Gulf.

## Oil spills.

The Persian Gulf is an ecosystem already severely stressed. Beaches along the Gulf are reportedly caked with oil, the result of two decades of massive oil transport through the Gulf which has given rise to many large spills. One spill at Nowruz during the Iran-Iraq war created an oil slick 1000 kilometers (600 miles) long, extending the entire length of the Gulf; that one spill released three times as much oil as the Exxon Valdez accident. This one spill reportedly decimated the shrimping industry in the Gulf. The number of spills per year in the Gulf nearly doubled during the 8-year Iran-Iraq war because of hazards to navigation created by sunk ships, floating mines, and increased maritime traffic. The present U.S.-Iraq conflict seems certain to increase the number of oil spills for some or all of the same reasons.

During the course of even a short war, oil spills could reasonably be expect-

ed to exceed the size of the Exxon Valdez spill by a factor of 10 to 100. [And has already occurred!] As is well-known, oil spills on such a scale will kill birds, fin fish, shell fish, sea turtles, sea snakes, dolphins and dugongs (an endangered Manatee-like mammal) and other wildlife. Longer-term negative effects on marine food chains, and consequent loss of productivity, should also be expected. Oil

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contamination implies contamination by not only hydrocarbons (many of which are carcinogenic, mutagenic, and teratogenic) but also by toxic heavy metals such as lead, mercury, cadmium, and arsenic.

## Oil well fires

Oil well fires in Kuwait, Iraq, and perhaps even in Saudi Arabia could have serious long-term consequences. Before the U.S. attack on Baghdad, it was reported that Saddam Hussein had placed explosive charges on 300 of Kuwait's 1000 oil wells; detonating these explosives—on purpose or as an unintended side-effect of war—would be expected to start oil well fires. Missile attacks or other bombardment could also ignite well-head fires. There are only about a half-dozen experienced fire-fighting crews in the world capable of putting out oil well fires; Red Adair leads the best-known of these.

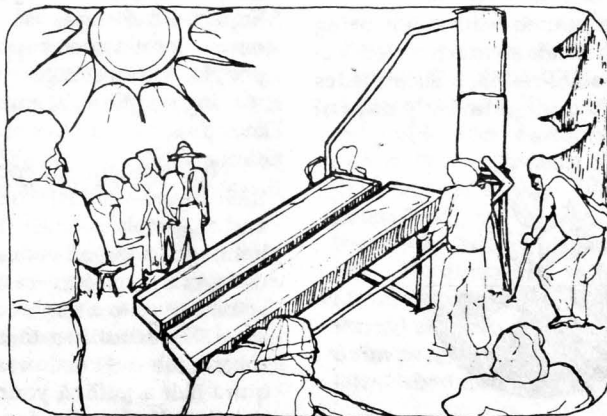
Therefore, in the event of several hundred simultaneous oil-rig fires, rigs could be expected to burn for weeks or perhaps even months. The accumulated smoke from these fires could have effects similar to those that occurred in the northwestern United States during summer of 1987 when smoke from forest fires blanketed an enormous area, filtering out sunlight and reducing surface temperatures as much as 20 degrees Celsius. British scientists have suggested that regional smoke clouds (perhaps 1000 miles or more in diameter) from oil well fires in the Gulf region might affect the onset, duration, and character of the Asian monsoons which are an essential component of the agricultural systems that feed about a billion people on the Indian subcontinent. Since food stocks are marginal on the Indian subcontinent, a disruption of crop yields could cause famine among large numbers of innocent people.

## Bombing strikes

Bombing strikes against chemical-biological warfare (CBW) agent manufacturing facilities would almost certainly release those agents into the local environment. Such agents known or strongly suspected to be manufactured in Iraq include mustard gas, the nerve gases tabun, sarin, and phosgene, and a bacterial agent that causes the fatal disease anthrax. While mustard gas will bioaccumulate, Tabun, Sarin and phosgene will disperse when released; they are acutely toxic but will not persist in the environment and presumably will not bioaccumulate. Anthrax, on the other hand, is an acute infectious bacterial disease of sheep and cattle caused by *Bacillus anthracis*; the disease is fatal and can be transmitted easily to humans. Reportedly *Bacillus anthracis* can make land uninhabitable by humans or domestic animals for up to 40 years.

## Nuclear weapons in the Gulf

According to a careful analysis by Greenpeace, the U.S. now has close to 1000 nuclear warheads in the Gulf region. Even if none of these weapons is intentionally detonated, a direct hit on a warhead by conventional artillery or by rocket fire could release significant quantities of radioactive plutonium into the local environment (and possibly for many miles



# THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE GULF WAR *concluded from page 3*

downwind, depending upon specific conditions at the moment of impact), permanently contaminating the area.

## Bombing attack on nuclear power reactors

There are up to five U.S. Naval nuclear reactors in the Persian Gulf and two to three nuclear power reactors operating in Iraq. The destruction of power reactors could release large amounts of radioactivity. The spread of this radioactivity could be limited to ship's crew or spread thousands of miles depending on weather conditions. Presently many U.S. nuclear reactors are within range of Iraqi missiles and bombs. At least one newspaper report has recently indicated that U.S. air attacks have already hit the Iraqi reactors. No plan for dealing with a potential nuclear accident has yet been put forth by the U.N. or the U.S. administration.

## Environmental effects of underwater explosions

Adverse environmental effects of underwater explosions include deposit of chemical products in the water, destruction of fragile coral reefs and the killing of marine life. Depending on many variables such as size and depth of an explosive charge and composition, any underwater explosion will affect marine species close to the impact.

This newsletter is a publication of the Mendocino Environmental Center, a non-profit organization which began in March 1987 with the purpose of promoting the conservation, restoration, and wise use of the Earth's natural resources and to provide a facility where the public can work together to achieve this purpose.

### Mendocino Environmental Center

#### Board of Directors

Betty Ball - 468-1660  
Gary Ball - 468-1355  
Dale Glaser - 462-3312  
Margene McGee - 462-7407  
Joy LaClair - 895-2043  
Leona Williams - 462-7255  
Vera Zimmer - 1-800-421-2810

THANKS: Green Mac for laser Copies,  
Printing Express in Willits for printing, and  
Dale Glaser for editing and layout.

## Pollution from military installations

Even military bases operated on a permanent footing during peacetime are notorious polluters, releasing large quantities of gasoline, kerosene (jet fuel) and fuel oil into the local environment, along with significant quantities of other toxic chemicals (benzene and degreasing compounds such as trichloroethylene, for example). Many of these compounds are human carcinogens and have the poten-

*It is time for Americans to insist on sensible energy and materials policies aimed at freeing us from bondage to the oil companies, and setting us onto a new road toward sensible, safe alternatives that minimize environmental destruction and do not require half a million young Americans to risk their lives on foreign soil.*

tial for contaminating water supplies on a massive scale. Contamination of groundwater, once it occurs, must be considered permanent because attempts at cleanup in many locations in the U.S. and elsewhere in the world have failed. The military bases operated by the U.S. and its allies constitute a temporary city larger than Miami, Florida. The wastewater and sewage treatment needs of such a temporary encampment have a major potential for long-term degradation of local water supplies and the spread of disease through contamination of drinking water.

## The long-term consequences of victory.

This is a resource war; it not being fought for high ideals so much as it is being fought for oil. President Bush's aides said this openly during the early days of



August though recently they have emphasized more noble reasons for attacking Iraq. A U.S. victory in the Gulf will solidify the U.S.'s commitment to a petroleum-based economy. [It is interesting to note that the U.S. Energy Policy adopted this fall, far from starting us down the road to conservation and switching to clean, renewable energy sources, reaffirmed reliance on fossil fuels!] This may well lead to further international instability as we find ourselves required to "secure" other supplies of oil, a diminishing and nonrenewable resource. Other environmental consequences will include expanded oil drilling on the continental shelf, in the Antarctic, and on lands owned by native peoples.

According to recent newspaper estimates, Congress will soon be asked to appropriate more than \$85 billion dollars to fund the initial stages of this war; the longer-

term costs of maintaining a presence in the Gulf to protect our oil interests will certainly be larger. These costs, factored into the true price of oil will mean that a barrel of Middle Eastern crude is really costing us up to \$100 per barrel. Energy conservation can be achieved for only about \$5 per barrel; furthermore, conservation avoids international conflict and environmental degradation as well. Our petroleum-based economy is contributing significantly to the serious worldwide problem of global warming; it is contributing to regional-scale destruction of forests and agricultural lands in Europe and North America because of acid rain. Petroleum forms the building blocks of nearly all the toxic chemicals that have created the nation's Superfund dumps, which are contaminating local water supplies, frightening people, destroying property values, making people sick, and disrupting communities.

It is time for Americans to take back their future—to insist on sensible energy and materials policies that free us from bondage to the oil companies, liberating us from a petroleum-based economy and setting us onto a new road toward sensible, safe alternatives that minimize environmental destruction and do not require half a million young Americans to risk their lives on foreign soil.

# Masonite Interim Variance Denied

by Betty Ball

Since last Fall, the MEC has been receiving an ever increasing number of complaints from people experiencing impacts to their health from air pollution. While we realize that our air is impacted by smoke from wood stoves, emissions from automobiles, smoke from controlled burns, emissions from asphalt plants, pesticides, etc., the greatest single emitter is Masonite. More and more frequently people began complaining of strong odors of paint and linseed oil, which were identified as emanating from Masonite.

We followed closely the granting of the variance to Masonite last fall, and were quite aware that many community people had protested the granting of that variance, including a woman whose son has cancer and whose breathing is adversely affected by the pollution. We were also aware that the problem did not seem to be greatly alleviated even though Masonite had supposedly "fixed the problem" and was again operating normally. There was obviously growing concern about Masonite's emissions.

## The MEC calls for a hearing

On January 18th, the MEC was flooded with calls about what seemed to be the worst emissions to date from Masonite. Lily Phoenix called the Air Pollution Control District and learned that Masonite had applied for two more variances: a regular variance, which would be heard before the full Air Hearing Board and

would require a public hearing, AND an interim variance for up to 60 days - or until the regular variance could be heard. Hearing Board member George Rau granted the interim variance. (According to the Air District Rules, in counties under 750,000 population, an interim variance can be granted by a single member of the Air Hearing Board.) Both variances would allow Masonite to continue to exceed both State and District emission limits.

Because of the growing number of complaints from people whose health was being impacted, we knew something must be done. We proceeded to prepare to appeal the interim variance, and received a great deal of enthusiastic support from people wishing to help us make the appeal possible. (Thank you all very much!)

We then learned that an appeal is not necessary, yet, because according to the statute, **any one person** may protest the granting of an interim variance by a single member of the Air Hearing Board, thus requiring the application to be heard by the full Board within ten days of the original decision. This is not a "public hearing", but the public may be allowed to attend. And it is not an appeal. It is simply the full Hearing Board hearing the request for the interim variance, which was granted by one of its members.

At the same time that we learned of this procedure, we learned that several people had already called George Rau to complain about the granting of the inter-

im variance. So Lily Phoenix called both the Air Pollution Control District and Mr. Rau to let them know that since there had been complaints about the issuing of the interim variance by a single member of the Board, a hearing by the full Board would be required - within ten days of the original decision. Mr. Rau requested that the MEC submit a protest of the issuing of the interim variance in writing, which we did. The District then set the date for the hearing by the full Board, the first part of which occurred on January 26th at Mendocino College.

## The interim variance hearing

Even though there was only 24 hours notice prior to the Saturday hearing, over 200 people attended. The auditorium was filled with both Masonite employees and many people concerned about the health impacts of the increased emissions.

David Faulkner, the Officer of the Air Pollution Control District, presented the staff recommendation that the interim variance be denied based on new information he had that Masonite did not yet have a valid permit for this new operation, and was still operating under an authority to construct.

Following Mr. Faulkner's recommendation and Masonite's response, public comment was allowed. A letter was read from the woman whose son has cancer, who had protested the variance granted last fall. There was also testimony from a

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## Masonite responds to interim variance denial by laying off at least 45 employees - guess who gets blamed ?!

Currently, even though Masonite's own records show that they could operate this line in question on a limited basis without exceeding emission standards, they have chosen to shut the line down and lay off at least 45 employees. We are very disappointed that Masonite has chosen this course of action.

Masonite has known for a long while that they had a problem with this new line - and they have received numerous citations. Instead of acting responsibly to fix the problem as

quickly and efficiently as possible so people wouldn't have to be laid off, they chose to proceed until a crisis existed - jeopardizing the health of the public and their employees. Then they compounded the problem and exacerbated the polarization in the community by laying off employees - of course, blaming "environmentalists" and people concerned about increasing health problems for the layoffs. If people had to be laid off while Masonite corrects the problem, they should be given leave with pay for the interim period. It is indeed a sad state of affairs when corporations act to convince

their employees that those who seek to make them operate within the law are "the enemy."

No one wants employees to suffer, and we would like to see the community come together in support of the Masonite employees who were just laid off. Anyone interested in organizing a support group with and for these employees is urged to contact the MEC. We will put you in touch with others who are also interested. The community must do what the corporations won't.

# Masonite Interim Variance Denied

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woman whose husband, a chronic asthma sufferer, had died the weekend after the interim variance was granted - at the same time that Masonite's emissions increased so drastically. So many other people wished to testify that the hearing had to be continued.

The second part of the hearing occurred on January 30th at the Civic Center. More excellent testimony was presented by a wide spectrum of the community. Robert Leonard from the Surveillance Division of the State Air Resources Board gave a very dynamic presentation, stating emphatically, over and over again, that if the interim variance was granted, it was clear that a public nuisance would exist. Masonite employees testified that their jobs would be jeopardized if the interim variance was not granted. In all, more than ten hours of testimony was presented, after which the Hearing Board voted to deny the interim variance.

Masonite still has an application before the Hearing Board for a regular variance, and at this time it appears that the public hearing for this variance will be on March 5th.

In the meantime, Masonite cannot exceed State or District emission limits without being cited and (hopefully) fined. Stay in touch with the MEC (468-1660) and the Air Pollution Control District (463-4354) regarding the next variance

hearing - for many things could occur between now and the March 5th date. An abatement order could be issued which would nullify the need for the variance; Masonite could withdraw the application for the variance and submit a new application - or - a miracle could occur, and Masonite might find a way to properly fix the equipment and rectify the problem, so they wouldn't need to have either an abatement order or a variance!

## Thanks to everyone who helped

We wish to thank everyone in the community who responded so quickly and attended these hearings. It is our vigilance and our participation which will ultimately correct this and the many other situations facing us. Thanks, also, to those who contributed to our "appeal fund". An appeal may still be necessary, so those funds are greatly appreciated. Anyone else who wishes to contribute to our "appeal fund" may send checks to the MEC, marked "appeal fund."

## Thanks to Lily Phoenix and Phyl Diri

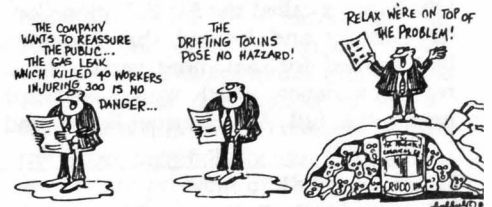
A special thanks to Lily Phoenix and Phyl Diri!!! It is largely Lily's expert and thorough research and persistence that enabled this re-hearing to take place. And we greatly appreciate Phyl Diri agreeing to serve as MEC's legal counsel

for this matter. It was rather short notice and Phyl did a great job!

We must continue to be vigilant! We are asking for volunteers to go out of their way to monitor Masonite. We will keep a central log of complaints at the MEC in case legal action becomes necessary. We ask that you do the following:

If you are having health effects, see dirty plumes, thick smog layers, or smell odors such as linseed oil and/or paint (Masonite has a waste-paint processing facility too, and the tanks are open to the air), make three calls:

- APCD, 463-4354. Even if the machine answers, give them your name, the time, the date, your address and phone number, and the nature of your perceived complaint. Specifically ask that they investigate, issue appropriate citations, and advise you of their actions.
- Supervisor Marilyn Butcher (Masonite is in her District) and the Supervisor from your District: 463-4221. Tell them the nature of your observation and complaint, and let them know you have also notified Air Quality.
- The MEC, 468-1660. Give us just the facts of your complaint and your action so we can keep a central log.



## Holly Tannen in Concert

Saturday, March 30th, 8 p.m.

Traditional singer and satirical songwriter Holly Tannen will present a benefit concert for the Mendocino Environmental Center on Saturday, March 30th at the Sun House of the Grace Hudson Museum, Ukiah.

Holly has been playing mountain dulcimer and singing the ballads of England, Scotland, and the Appalachians for over twenty-five years. She lived and performed in England from 1974 to 1980, studying the ritual and seasonal songs that harken back to pre-Christian ceremonies. Her albums include "Invocation" and "Between the Worlds".

Holly moved to Mendocino in 1988 to teach folklore and anthropology at the College of the Redwoods. She has been addressing environmental and political issues in her "Advice to the Folklorist" column in the *Mendocino Commentary* and through her satirical songs, "The Ballad of J. Edgar Hoover," "Song of the Suburban Shaman," and "Lament of the Computer Widow."

The concert will cost \$7.00 (\$6.00 for MEC Members). Call the MEC at 468-1660 for further info.

## Vichy Springs

by Dan Hamburg

On January 9, the MEC and Dan Hamburg filed a lawsuit against the Mendocino County, the Board of Supervisors, and the Vichy Springs Investors Group.

The suit petitions the court for a writ of mandate, ordering that the respondents void the negative declarations for the latest phase of the Vichy development and require the preparation of an EIR.

Residents of Ukiah Valley know that a large housing development is already under construction in the Vichy Springs area. When built, there will be 170 houses

# WMI: A corporate profile

By Jonathan Shepard

For more than a year, one of the most powerful corporations in America has waged a largely secretive and at times highly unethical campaign to secure long-term monopoly control over Mendocino County's trash-hauling, landfill, incineration and recycling business.

The name of the corporation is Waste Management, Inc., the largest waste disposal company in the world, operating in over 1,300 communities in thirty-six states, with subsidiaries in Canada, Europe, the Middle East, Latin America and Asia. WMI is, indeed, a giant, ranking 19th in the Fortune 500 List of diversified service companies in the U.S. with 1989 revenues exceeding four and a half billion dollars.

WMI subsidiaries include Chemical Waste Management, the largest hazardous waste disposal company in the U.S., Chem-Nuclear, the largest nuclear waste disposal firm in the U.S., Brand Industries, the largest asbestos removing company in the U.S., and Wheelabrator Technologies, largest manufacturer and operator of garbage incineration firms in the U.S. WMI also owns over seven hundred other subsidiaries, such as regional waste hauling and incineration companies and including, locally, Empire Waste Management and Fort Bragg Disposal.

WMI's executives are among the highest paid in the world. CEO Dean Buntrock, President Phillip Rooney and Senior V.P. Donald F. Flynn are all paid in excess of \$13 million a year, all three

ranking in the top ten highest paid executives in the U.S. at the present, largely fuelled by the highly lucrative toxic waste handling business and by the take-over of existing landfill and local trash-hauling firms. WMI acquired 337 businesses from 1982 to 1986 and the pace has accelerated since. Needless to say, such developments did not take place in a political vacuum and by 1987 WMI was making substantial campaign contributions to more than 250 senators and representatives from both political parties.

Recipients of WMI campaign largess include George Bush, Dan Quayle, Alan Cranston and Doug Bosco, in addition to a virtual Who's Who of Senate and House members. WMI's "Better Government Fund" was the seventh largest corporate P.A.C. (Political Action Committee) during the 1988 electoral campaign.

## What's wrong with WMI?

O.K., so WMI is a politically well-connected company doing business all over the world, their big shots are paid too much and they probably exercise too much lobbying muscle in Washington, Sacramento, maybe even Ukiah, but so what? They put those nice, white recycling bins outside of Safeway and Harvest Market, and the T.V. ads with the teary-eyed Indian and those happy recyclers in San Jose don't look too bad, so what's the beef with these guys?

The problems with WMI are twofold. One is philosophical, having to do with, among other things, environmental threats to the planet. The other is technical and legal, and also impacts on the en-

vironment. We'll start with the former. For many thousands of ordinary people in the United States, WMI's business ethics leave a stench in the nostrils.

For many victims of WMI's callous and highly dangerous mishandling of toxic waste, the company is seen as a potentially lethal enemy, immune to reason, seemingly incapable of rational compromise and calculatingly indifferent to the health and well-being of truly innocent victims of their corporate behavior.

Many individuals who have suffered at the hands of this company have devoted their lives to cleaning up what they feel is an out-of-control criminal enterprise. In addition, organizations such as the National Toxics Coalition, Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste and Greenpeace have spent years monitoring and documenting the criminal convictions of WMI and sharing the information with communities confronting similar problems at the hands of the same company. Many parallels between WMI's business methods and organized crime have been made in print.

Many knowledgeable experts consider WMI the most irresponsible, greed-driven organization operating in America today, ruled over by men who seem to be unaffected by the suffering they inflict on whole communities in the name of profit. These same critics will tell you that WMI is probably the single greatest contributor of CO<sub>2</sub>.

*This article was concluded in the January 30 Anderson Valley Advertiser.*

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## Development Lawsuit Filed on January 9

on a parcel of 110 acres. This development was approved in 1987. In mid-1988, the Vichy Springs Investors Group asked the Board of Supervisors to again amend the General Plan to allow an additional 30 houses on a 23 acre parcel. Also, the Group asked for a new General Plan designation to allow further development of the 83 acre Vichy resort site.

Planning Department staff consistently recommended denial of these proposals based on conflicts with the General Plan. The Planning Commissions of both the City of Ukiah and the County voted unanimously on three separate occasions

to deny the proposals, or, at the very least, require an EIR. Nonetheless, the Board of Supervisors, on a 3-2 vote (de Vall and Henry in opposition), gave their approval on Nov. 20, 1990.

The MEC wrote a letter to the Board of Supervisors in September of 1990 describing numerous significant environmental impacts and requesting the preparation of an EIR. Dan Hamburg addressed the Board at length prior to the November 20 vote, raising a number of issues including the need to make specific findings if they were intending to override their own General Plan. Hamburg

also brought up the issues of proximity to the Ukiah landfill, traffic congestion, fire protection and water availability. A Board majority ignored the MEC and Hamburg.

Having exhausted all administrative remedies, a decision was made to proceed with a lawsuit. Susan Brandt-Hawley, a Sonoma County attorney, and Lily Phoenix of the MEC worked with Hamburg on preparation of the suit. The petitioners have 30 days to respond. Hopefully, this action will encourage the County and the Board to more carefully consider the environmental impacts of development decisions in the future.

# Alaska For Sale

by Bob Whitney

## Living with Wilderness

Living on the edge of a vast wilderness, easily over half of Alaskan residents are involved with hunting, fishing and gathering for food; possibly as much as 20% of Alaskans depend upon this activity for some level of subsistence. Interestingly, probably as many non-Natives as Native Alaskans pursue these subsistence activities. This reliance on subsistence is not the only comparison that links Alaska to characteristics of a third world nation-state. Physically isolated from the "lower 48" and independent minded, Alaskans feel torn between the need for economic development and exploitation (i.e. the sale of resources to the Northern Pacific Rim countries) and protection of their beloved wilderness.

With the abundance of bald eagles concentrated near fishing harbors and spawning grounds, these majestic beings carry the wind of wilderness to most urban areas. Sitka in the Southeast Alaska Panhandle and located on Baranof Island fortunately is surrounded by wilderness with a heavy concentration of eagles. Last year my family and I were privileged to be able to volunteer our time at a raptor rehabilitation center. We were able to work with sick and injured eagles to help them regain their health and strength for release. Direct physical contact and communication with eagles does transform human understanding of wildlife. Bald eagles certainly command respect for their independence and national symbolism. Eye-to-eye they appear to transmit an emotion of Alaska, its wilderness and wildlife.

The previous MEC newsletter had a

well-meaning, but I believe misguided article by Wolf Action Group (WAG) of Montana. They advocate a tourist boycott of Alaska. I am sure we could find good reasons not to visit most any state or region of almost any area in this world. And some past geographic boycotts have been justified, like the ban on business, travel and sports with South

*The Alaskan State government has long been subservient to the oil and gas industry, as well as the Japanese. Over 80% of all state revenues come from oil and gas production! The Japanese treat Alaska as a third world colony for a source of raw materials.*

Africa. However, when someone asks us to boycott an area within our own country, that is totally new to me. If I had heeded the boycott of Alaska, I never would have found the teaching job last year in my travels through Alaska. More importantly, because of that experience, it seems a far more effective way to change the Alaska State policy of wolf hunting is to join and support Alaska environmental groups. Maybe even consider living up there, but definitely visit them, if you can. It is useful to understand the Alaskan personality and how to effectively work with Alaskans for a solution to the incredible onslaught of forces raping the resources of Alaska. Of course, I feel that WAG or any of us can play a valuable role to pressure Alaskan authorities and tourist businesses to stop the slaughter of wolves; and more importantly to regain control over the sale of

Alaska resources and to stop the destruction of wilderness.

## Over-Dependence on Oil and Gas

Ominously, the recent November election in Alaska resulted in Republican Walter J. Hickel being selected as Governor. Hickel was Secretary of the Interior for Nixon and was deeply involved in the development of oil and gas on the North Slope and the Alaskan Pipeline to Valdez in the late '60's and early '70's. As recently as March of 1990, Hickel, as Chairman of Yukon Pacific Corporation, was promoting the sale of 14 million tons of liquefied natural gas

(LNG) to South Korea, Japan and Taiwan.

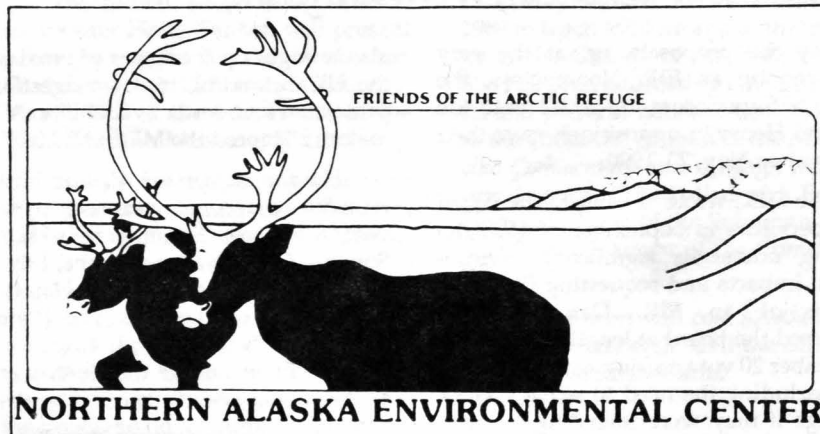
The North Slope has 26 trillion cubic feet of natural gas which is being re-injected and stored underground. Yukon Pacific and now Governor Hickel plan to build another 800-mile pipeline to Valdez where natural gas would be liquefied and LNG tankers would be loaded for Asia. This massive project has all the environmental approvals and stands to earn over \$80 billion in revenues. It was certainly no coincidence that Hickel as Chairman of Yukon Pacific was elected Governor of Alaska.

The Alaskan State government has long been subservient to the oil and gas industry and to Japanese corporations. Over 80% of all state revenues come from oil and gas production! The Japanese treat Alaska as a third world colony for a source of raw materials. They set up coal and mineral mines, and paper and rayon pulp mills that create local jobs and local economic dependence with horrendous health, safety and environmental damage.

Local officials are under tremendous pressure by the business community not to upset the polluters and exploiters. In fact, there are not so subtle junkets, pay-offs and kickbacks to these local greed-heads and flunkies that is so typical of some of our self-righteous free enterprisers who are usually leveraging some type of government legislative advantage for their subsidized business.

The environmental awareness of the people of Alaska was dramatically altered

*continued next page*





# Alaska For Sale

by the 1989 Exxon Valdez Oil Spill. However, the fear of declining oil revenues and recession have apparently put on hold these concerns. The State is leasing the remaining state-owned offshore oil and gas tracts at a much faster pace than federal lease sale plans. Virtually the entire coastline of Alaska from the Arctic through the Bering Sea to the Gulf of Alaska has either been leased or is up for grabs by State and Federal agencies. It is a race to the platforms. No statewide politician (2 U.S. Senators, 1 Congressman, Governor, Lt. Governor, etc.) is against development of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), nor to my knowledge ever has been. Caution and sound delay is advocated at the State level on oil exploration and development in Bristol Bay, only because of the highly lucrative salmon fishery. This localized token delay by the State government has absolutely nothing to do with the intrinsic value of the fish species or its habitat.

The oil industry has a substantial influence over the media, as well as government officials. Veco International, owned by a consortium of oil companies (with Exxon a major shareholder), was the prime contractor for the March 1989 oil spill "cleanup". In December 1989 Veco purchased the Anchorage Times, the second largest circulation daily newspaper in Alaska. The total state legislative lobbying expenditures reported in 1989 were \$6.9 million. Of that, \$1.3 million (about 19%) was from the oil lobby. The breakdown of Prudhoe Bay oil reserve owner-

ship is British Petroleum (50.7%), ARCO (21.8%) and Exxon (21.8%) the dominant three companies. Lisburne is a separate reservoir of oil located below the Prudhoe Bay reserve within the North Slope complex, with 2 billion barrels of oil in place compared to 22 billion barrels of oil in place for the Prudhoe Bay reserve. Lisburne is owned by ARCO (40%), Exxon (40%) and British Petroleum (20%). These two oil reserves, one above the other, are the largest in North America. Corruption of the North Slope Borough government was rampant during the '70's when the pipeline was under construction. Two of these Borough administrators and politicians were convicted last year of embezzlement and fraud of millions of dollars in oil revenues and local government funds. Big oil tends to corrupt local, state and national governments.

## At a Political Crossroad

There are two important minority population groups that strongly influence the politics of Alaska: military personnel, civilian base workers, and their families; and Native Alaskans. Each comprises about 15% or more of the population. Un-

fortunately, the residents that are dependent upon the military are a politically far more conservative and potent voting block than the Native Alaskan population.

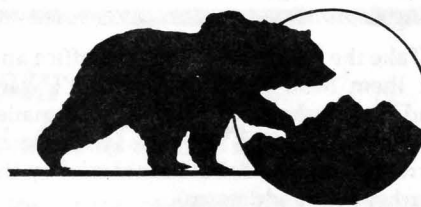
Alaska tends to have a very conservative military frontier bias. The political and economic normalization with the U.S.S.R is expected to demilitarize the state. This could be expected to dovetail in with the loss of big oil's production and influence. With this increase in the relative size of the more liberal political voting block is the rise of the Alaska Native tribal independence movement. These Alaskans combined should be a growing influential voice in stronger subsistence and wilderness protection.

In the 1990's Alaska is confronted with a major last chance to plunder her natural resources for just one more decade by Big Oil, Japan and Big Timber. And with Governor (or is it Chairman?) Hickel in the driver's seat there is big trouble for environmentalists and the vast but shrinking wilderness. Alaska needs you now more than ever before.

## How You Can Help

The February 1991 Sierra magazine features Alaska and has a summary of resources and contacts on page 137. The Sierra Club is probably one of the most active and effective national environmental groups with offices and programs throughout Alaska.

Clearly the most effective grassroots organization protecting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) from the big political push this year behind the smoke screen of an oil war of our Commander-in-Chief and his Big Oil clients, is the Northern Alaska Environmental Center (NAEC). Very much like the MEC, or the NEC in Arcata, this Fairbanks based center truly reflects the growing and strong environmental concerns of a broad spectrum of the community of the Interior and Far North of Alaska which includes the ANWR area and its Native Alaskan people. You can join their organization (I have given the MEC their literature) and subscribe to their informative quarterly newsletter by writing to NAEC, 218 Drive-way, Fairbanks, AK 99701. They are very effective and well organized, but underfunded. If you wanted a dollar to go a long way to save ANWR, a donation to NAEC's ANWR Campaign is your best investment in wilderness and wildlife preservation.



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## Thanks, Don

by Lily Phoenix

As most of you know, Betty and Gary Ball went on a much-needed three-week vacation to Colorado over the holidays. In their absence, the office was staffed by volunteers, who tried their best to answer inquiries, keep everyone informed of events and developments, and do a little environmental action too.

None of this could have been done without the incredible contribution of Don Cameron. Don is the MEC volunteer business manager and usually comes in two days a week from Laytonville. He came in 9-5 three days a week so that we

could have those days open for members.

Don's astonishing project was to single-handedly plow through a five-foot high stack of newspapers, scanning and clipping them for environmentally-related news for the MEC reference files. There had been a lack of volunteers to take care of this very hard and time-consuming job. Don "clipped to infinity" and never once moaned or whimpered or refused to go on (the usual result when people have tackled this job before). We are up to date at last! This project took him hundreds of hours! Thanks, Don, and everyone involved in the effort to give Betty and Gary a greatly-deserved break.

# Born Again Trash

by David Giesen

Until we seek and assume our role as a creature capable of producing what we need and responsible for what we produce, we will remain intellectual and spiritual underlings.

You see, in the beginning there was a job to be done and someone in the community did it: the garbage hauler. Eventually enough folks let that individual do what needed to be done that they largely ignored the business altogether.

Perhaps you think this a strange way to approach the subject of recycling and trash, but hear me out, please. The issue is not one of not caring. I believe we all care about our environment and our neighbors... but only, of course, if we know about our neighbors and the environment. And we can only know about these things if we are thinking—that is cognitive and sentient—beings.

Recycling, as I will demonstrate, is a very simple business. Why is there such resistance to it? Easy: lack of meaningful mind-thought.

Observe: I sat and thought about the mass of trash I produced; I admitted that trash was a part of my life; I further admitted that I have mostly acted as though it weren't part of my life, but have let someone else dispose of it; I decided to dispose of it and to minimize what would be abandoned to the landfill.

## A neighborhood recycling operation

Gasp: On October 1, 1990, I commenced with a number of my neighbors on my block in Fort Bragg a collection collective. Each household separated glass, plastics, paper, metals and vegetable matter from everything else (snot tissue, cellophane wrapping, paper milk containers). I collected each household's set asides, took the recyclables to the recycling depots, and took the rest to the dump. Prior to October 1 the average household produced a full 32 gallon can of garbage each week, after that date each household has generated just 2.5 gallons of garbage each week!

Take heed, don't heel, hustle: Review what I have done, consider its advantages for Mother Earth, for our health, for your pocketbook. Don't behave as you have been conditioned to—letting somebody else manage your life by carting off your garbage while you carelessly wave it bye-

bye. Separate the recyclables and haul the trash; Speak with your neighbors; Organize your immediate neighbors and make a community.

## Organize your neighborhood

If you live in town it goes like this (if you live in the country simply link up with no more than eight of your nearest neighbors):

- Get a box for newspapers.
- Get a smaller box for junk mail.
- Stack them.
- Get a small box for all your metal cans, plastic and glass beverage and food containers: wash them and flatten as appropriate.
- Get a small wastebasket-sized plastic container with a lid; put your kitchen food scraps in it.
- Generate as little other stuff as possible (for instance, you might take a glass container to the store and transfer milk from paper to your glass container, leaving the store with the unwanted carrier).
- Build a compost box out of scrap wood and place it in your yard. Put the food scraps (no meat) in the compost box.
- Take the recyclables to the nearest recycling depot.
- Take the junk mail to the post office and let them have the junk you don't want and never asked for (you can get a mailer at the post office to have your name stricken from the list of names sold by the marketeers of addresses).
- Call around and get the use of a yard and garden chipper (that's what I did, called around) and mulch your prunings and yard stuff. If you do this you'll match me and my block; we went from sending 32 gallons a week per household to the dump to just 2.5 gallons per household!

We do it for much less than the professional garbage hauler. We move recyclables, not garbage. You should do what I do on my block. I ask for a \$5 donation each month from each household and I pick up everybody's separated stuff. I put all the kitchen stuff in my compost. I chip up all the garden debris and use it on my vegetable garden walkways. I take the recyclables to the depot and earn enough in aluminum to just about pay my way into the dump! It takes me about an hour each Saturday, including chipping up the garden stuff.

I recommend you only take responsi-

bility for one side of a block, dividing the block into two parts with the alley. You don't want to go into business, after all; you just want to do your part in your little community. And community it will become! You'll meet all your neighbors and speak with them. Good will come of your endeavor. Support and cheerfulness will imbue your block. Things will be casual enough you can delay pickup by days if you're going out of town.

Do what I'm doing, work with another half block near by and trade off going to the dump with whoever is doing pickup on that block. I have a little truck and it costs me the same if I take one bag or sixteen (there is a minimum gate fee), so it works better to consolidate with at least one other block. Believe me, my half block produces just one 32 gallon garbage can a week! If I wanted to store all the trash I could wait months before I had a full load for my eensy-weensy pickup. We save so much money that we're setting aside funds for a larger, better chipper that several blocks can use.

## WMI

I don't want to talk about professional haulers. They're obsolete because you can do it. If you haven't heard the news, I'll simply say this. Professional garbage hauling in this country is fast becoming an oligarchy with all the corporate misjudgment and belligerence and degradation of local business that attends big conveniences. Waste Management, Inc. which now owns all but you and me in this county, was fined \$19.5 million by the Feds for business crimes last month. Bid-rigging, price-fixing, bribery. Three former Sonoma County supervisors, some former mayors and other former public officials work for them in Sonoma County. They're a big convenience that steals your autonomy. But really, speaking plainly, you're just giving it to them if you do business with them. You, friends, are your own bottom line.



# Timber Association Move on Mendocino County Air Quality Blocked

by Peter J. Tyson

In a move to weaken the Toxic Hot Spots Act of 1987, professional lobbyists, paid by the Timber Association based in Sacramento, presented a plan to revise the reporting and monitoring guidelines for the Act scheduled for full implementation on July 1, 1991. In two meetings held on the cusp of the holiday season the county Air Pollution Control Officer, David Faulkner, received public input on the adoption of toxic hot spots guidelines for the Mendocino County Air Pollution Control District.

The Toxic Hot Spots Act of 1987 calls for the tabulation and reporting of emission data from industrial sources. A risk assessment rating based on the health risk created by the facility would then be assigned. This rating could then be used by insurance companies, housing developers, concerned groups and individuals when evaluating the air quality of an area. Arsenic, asbestos, PCB compounds, mercury, environmental tobacco smoke and dioxins are a small portion of the over 150 carcinogenic and noncarcinogenic substances required to be reported

by the 1987 act.

In the first hearing on November 29, 1990 concerned citizens, including Lily Phoenix of the MEC, presented their grievances concerning air quality in Mendocino County.

Steve Petrin, paid lobbyist of the timber association, presented a plan that would reduce the toxic visibility of its timber industry constituents. The plan would have virtually exempted G-P Ft. Bragg and Masonite from the high risk category. A move which, in financially strapped Mendocino County, would have exempted them from reporting. Reporting of high risk assessment facilities is mandated by the toxic hot spots act, while lesser ratings are left to the abilities and desires of the individual counties. Such lesser level reporting is virtually impossible for the MCAPCD which Faulkner describes as both "understaffed and under-equipped".

Questioning the ability of a "bunch of pollution control engineers" to interpret timber industry figures properly Petrin requested that timber association guidelines be adopted. The major revi-

sion being the exemption of businesses as receptors of air pollutants.

Given the need to review the timber association proposal, the lateness of the hour, and the ire of the audience Faulkner continued the meeting until December 21, 1990.

The December 21 meeting was a stark contrast to the earlier meeting. Requests for State Air Resource Board participation made by both David Faulkner and the Mendocino Environmental Center were effective. Two representatives of the ARB were present as Faulkner brought the proceedings to order. With limited discussion Faulkner adopted the State guidelines in full, thus insuring the integrity of the Hot Spots Act in Mendocino county.

## *Saving Forests through Grassroots Activism*

by Joy LaClair

Though our brainchild—Prop. 130—didn't quite win at the polls, Forests Forever managed to establish a solid network of grassroots activists in its very first year of existence. From our North Coast origins, we branched southward into most counties, and eastward through the Sierras.

Forests Forever organizers around the state are reviewing forest and wildlife protection goals, and developing strategies we hope will be useful to grassroots activists and local groups. The first post-election discussions indicate that preserving California's few remaining ancient forests remains a primary goal, especially the 3000 acre Headwaters Forest in Humboldt county. Other common concerns include stopping overcutting of timberlands, reducing environmentally destructive impacts of logging, and gain-

ing strong protection from all threatened or endangered forest-dwelling species. We will struggle for serious revision and vigorous enforcement of California's Forest Practice Rules, along with reform in the makeup of the Board of Forestry. Our focus is likely to expand beyond privately owned forests, to address abusive logging on federal lands as well.

Thus far our efforts were concentrated on promoting the Forests Forever Initiative. In coming months we expect to conduct more lobbying and demonstrations, to network with organizations like the Native Forest Council and AFSEE, and perhaps develop another initiative for 1992. We want to support the efforts of local forest protection groups, giving them access to a statewide audience.

For more information on getting or staying involved, call Don Lipmanson, grassroots coordinator, at (707)895-2043.

*Benefit for the MEC*  
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PEACE  
A DANCE**

**!!!**

**March 9**  
**Ukiah Grange**  
*featuring*

**Rootstock**

D.J. 7pm to 9pm  
followed by  
the Changlings,  
then Rootstock

Minimum donation \$5.

# UCB Department of Forestry Election Fraud

by Lily Phoenix

A formal challenge is being lodged by activists throughout Northern California to a controversial report (the "Davis Report") issued by UC Berkeley's Department of Forestry on the timber initiatives immediately before the November election. The report, commissioned by the state Department of Forestry to "evaluate" Propositions 130 and 138 ("Forests Forever" and "Big Stump") in terms of their probable future impact on timber communities and forestry revenues, was circulated to a special media list by the University and to key timber industry figures just before the election. It consisted of two parts. The first, issued on September 25, 1990, was a comparison of provisions of current law against provisions of the two initiatives. This report, even before release, was challenged by persons knowledgeable about the content of "Forests Forever" for inaccuracies and distortions. These challenges resulted in the late circulation of a short "errata" sheet.

The second portion, however, was extremely damaging to the "Forests Forever" initiative. It was released on October 23, 1990. Interested persons who heard about its existence before the election had no time to read, analyze, and respond to it until after the election. This portion contained computer-generated estimates of the initiatives' dollar and environmental impact. The technical content—obscure, difficult to understand or paraphrase—was of little use to the media. They focused instead on the summary section, and also on a six-page report attached to the main report which purported to be a sociological study of Northern California timber communities. This report, known as the "Fortmann Report", and the summary section provided the press with the imagery and predictions of doom that resulted in numerous articles being written, citing the reports word for word, about the harm being done to timber workers by environmentalists and the devastation of an industry and way of life that would result from passage of Proposition 130. Readers of the report after the election were horrified to find that the passages so widely quoted had no basis in scholarly research or fact. The "Davis Report" technical section was riddled with errors that even a lay-person could easily spot, and in many cases simply did not conclude what the summary said it concluded. The shoddiness of the scholarship and the clear bias emanating from

an institution quoted so widely, simply because of its perceived "objectivity", provoked scathing letters and comments from other scholars. But, the "Fortmann Report" continues to elicit the most outrage. Not one source was identified for its conclusions and no methodology of any type was indicated. Environmentalists in Northern California, after reading this report, recalled being contacted by some of the writers earlier in the year. However, they concealed their true occupation, and no one had the impression that they were being interviewed as no tape recorders, formal questions, or notes were used. It appears that these "interviews" were thrown out anyway. Only opinions from the timber industry were included in the report, but often given as statements of fact rather than opinions. For example, the report cites timber workers being harassed by wealthy and well-dressed outside agitators. The Fortmann team wrote that they "feel a deep responsibility to provide a voice for these people." At taxpayer expense?! Just before a crucial election?!

It is common knowledge that the University's research facilities have often financed private interests at public expense. But here the line has been clearly crossed: a state department commissioned and helped shape and pay for a report that would be perceived as objective, and credited over any report prepared by the proponents of "Forests Forever" (in fact such a report was prepared but virtu-

ally ignored by the press as inherently biased). The report was released too close to the election to be challenged. As hoped, the summary section was quoted verbatim and helped shape public opinion that the cost of Proposition 130 outweighed environmental benefit, and that the timber workers were getting an unfair deal. Not from the timber corporations, but from environmentalists. In fact, Dr. Louise Fortmann has appeared at numerous timber industry conferences with variations on her theme of the endangered and maligned loggers greeted enthusiastically.

Helen Libeu, Lily Phoenix, and others have determined that this blatant scheme of releasing misinformation from a revered and perceived objective source like UCB must be challenged. The University has met inquiries and demands for documentation, defense, and retraction with hostility and silence. An inquiry into scientific misconduct was promised. However, because of the University's hostility and the refusal of the Davis and Fortmann report authors to respond to criticism and defend their work, a legal challenge will probably be pursued. It is important that the public and media image of UCB as being unbiased be corrected before any further initiatives on forestry hit the ballot. Anyone interested in reading the reports or assisting in the effort to discredit them is urged to contact Helen Libeu at (707) 823-7785, or Lily Phoenix at the MEC.

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## The EcoNet Connection

by Gary Ball

The MEC has been using EcoNet for a couple of years now and we want to make sure that our members know this service is available to them. EcoNet is an international computer network specializing in information concerning the environment. There is a wealth of information available from the EcoNet conferences on about any environmental or peace issue, and these conferences are often updated daily. EcoNet is also interactive, which means that the MEC can post information to the network as well as retrieving it. The EcoNet network also offers an electronic mail service (E-mail) to all users, which means that private communications can be sent to any EcoNet users via computer. To send E-mail to the MEC via EcoNet you send it to the EcoNet E-mail address: bball.

MEC staff is available to help you take advantage of EcoNet services, so you do not have to be able to operate a computer yourself in order to send or receive messages on the network. As always, MEC staff is also available to teach you to use EcoNet yourself if you want to. There are a couple of advantages to using EcoNet aside from the wealth of information in store there. EcoNet can be faster than sending a letter by mail, and you can send things to fax machines through EcoNet as well. Furthermore, electronic posting to certain "announcement" conferences can be faster, easier and cheaper than sending a mass mailing or putting up posters in order to invite the public to attend a special event. Please contact us if you are interested in finding out more about EcoNet services at the MEC.

# State Teachers Retirement System Asked to Divest from Corporate Enemies of The Earth

by Bob Whitney

On November 15, 1990 a delegation of the Redwood Coast Teachers Alliance, a grassroots group of educators and parents from the Redwood Coast region of Northern California asked the Board of Directors of the State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS) for fundamental changes in their investment policies and programs. Bob Whitney and Susan Van Dongen of the Redwood Coast Teachers Alliance and Val Muchowski, representing the California Teachers Association traveled to Sacramento to present these proposals.

They placed before the Investment Committee proposals for divestiture and oversight of investments, as well as implementation of internal adherence to the Valdez Principles. These proposals initiated by the Redwood Coast Teachers Alliance were substantially endorsed by the State Council and the Board of the California Teachers Association.

STRS is presently over-committed toward the goal of maximizing the return on investment, in this case teachers' retirement funds contributed from teachers' salaries and the taxpayer. Unfortunately, these public funds held in trust include billions of dollars of stock and bonds invested in socially or environmentally irresponsible corporations that are doing tremendous harm to our society and planet.

## Divestment from Irresponsible Corporations

They requested that STRS divest from five corporations, with Exxon heading the list, both for obvious environmental mismanagement and for the arrogance displayed by the corporation in the wake of the Valdez spill. The remaining four have extensive operations on the North Coast. WMI, Waste Management Incorporated, set records for penalties and settlements for pollution violations at dump sites, incinerator stacks, deep-well injections, and water contamination. The three remaining firms are multi-national industrial timber corporations whose operations are making an irreversible and substantially negative environmental impact on the Redwood Coast: while both Georgia-Pacific and Maxxam continue to harvest timber at a dangerously high rate in order to finance costs incurred as a result of takeover moves, Louisiana-Pacific,

in a move typical of its mode of operation, recently "mistakenly" axed all but 12 trees in a grove of old-growth redwoods rather than sell the land to the Save the Redwoods League.

These are not the types of investments many teachers care to hold. Many teachers cheered when, in the wake of the Alaskan Oil Spill, the Investment Board of STRS adopted a Statement of Investment Responsibility (STRS Resolution No. 89-38) which claimed to ensure "that the Retirement System . . . does not promote, condone or facilitate social injury . . . [which includes] practices which are known to endanger the environment." After all, these instructors reasoned, this is the money of teachers the Board is investing; it should be put to uses compatible with that fact. If teachers do not invest in socially responsible companies, who will?

Instead, questionable investments abound in the State Teachers Retirement System's stock portfolio. These items are questionable not only in terms of "social injury," but also in the wisdom of holding such stock at all--stock, for instance, in companies whose short-term earnings demand liquidation of base capital (such as the overcutting of trees). Exxon, Georgia-Pacific, Louisiana-Pacific, Maxxam and Waste Management, Inc. have repeatedly violated the Valdez Principles. Teachers are concerned about providing examples of stewardship of our ecosystems; and as investors, teachers question the wisdom of placing their funds at risk in socially irresponsible companies with a record of destructive natural resource management which results in harmful ecological and community impacts.

The STRS Board was asked to respect the wishes of those whose money the Retirement System invests by immediate divestiture of the five stocks mentioned above--and a critical review of other stocks currently held by the System. Teachers, parents and students want investments teachers can be proud of. Responsible investments.

*As investors, teachers question the wisdom of placing their funds in socially irresponsible companies with a record of destructive natural resource management.*

## Implementation of Valdez Principles

Pursuant to the STRS endorsement of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 84 and the Valdez Principles, the Redwood Coast Teachers Alliance requested that the STRS Board implement the following recommendations:

1. Inclusion of the Valdez Principles in the existing criteria for responsible voting of corporate shares owned by the system.
2. Supporting, through the voting of proxies, corporate adoption of the Valdez Principles.

In addition, they urged the STRS to take a leadership role and to go beyond this well meaning resolution

and implement the Valdez Principles throughout all aspects of the STRS. The delegation warned STRS Board not to point the finger at irresponsible corporations while their management has yet to fully make a good faith effort to implement these principles internally within the system. The delegates strongly recommended that the STRS Board adopt the Valdez Principles for the STRS and specifically begin to immediately implement the following actions pursuant to principles numbered 9 and 10:

1. Establish procedures to ensure that the board of directors and chief executive officer are informed of all environmental matters affecting the STRS and its employees.
2. Include on the board of directors a person qualified to represent pertinent environmental issues.
3. Establish a board committee on environmental affairs.
4. Conduct and make public an annual self-evaluation of progress in implementing the Valdez Principles and in complying with all applicable laws and regulations throughout the world.

For further information, tax-deductible contributions and/or offers of assistance, please contact Bob Whitney, Susan Van Dongen or Val Muchowski by phone or write: Redwood Coast Teachers Alliance, C/O Willits Environmental Center, 42 South Main Street, Willits, CA 95490, (707) 459-4110

# Redwood Coast Watersheds Alliance Report

by Bob Whitney and Bill Johnson

## Greenwood Watershed

The Greenwood Watershed Association lawsuit involves three timber harvest plans. This case is still pending before the Superior Court in Mendocino County which has issued a preliminary injunction. The long-term viability and quality of the water supply for the town of Elk is in serious jeopardy, and both the stream and offshore fishery resource have been adversely affected by the incremental and devastating effect of repeated logging. It is also clear that CDF does not listen to the concerns of the public, and chooses instead to categorically endorse the opinions of the registered professional forester (RPF).

## Navarro Watershed

There are two timber harvest plans which CDF recently denied, THP 126 and THP 280. Both of these plans would have had a terrible impact upon the drainage had they gone forward. THP 126 is in Anderson Creek drainage. It was originally submitted as THP 046, and, when recommended for denial, it was resubmitted as THP 126. A hydrologic analysis was conducted considering the steep terrain, high annual rainfall, persistent soil and stream channel erosion problems due to previous logging, and the proposal for road building and timber harvesting, and any other operations that could result in significant upland soil and stream channel erosion and excessive stream turbidity. There were obvious serious irreversible soil degradation and site class depletion problems and THP 126 was denied by CDF. The denial was not appealed by LP. The day after the November 1990 election, the plan was resubmitted and is currently being reviewed by CDF.

THP 280 was denied by CDF and appealed by the timber plan submitter LP to the Board of Forestry. It is located on Deer Creek on the Navarro River. The Board of Forestry upheld the denial by CDF on technical grounds only, and asked for new information. This THP is expected to be resubmitted.

## Big River Watershed

There has been much written about the condition of the Big River Watershed and the estuary. The bottom line is that it

is in a state of significant decline. One drainage in the Big River Watershed System is Daugherty Creek, a major tributary to the South Fork of Big River. There was litigation over a harvest plan approved by CDF in 1988. CDF's decision of approval was reversed by the Superior Court. Over 50% of the watershed has been harvested in the past ten years, with over 90% of the "silvicultural method" being clearcut or overstory removal, with the Soil Conservation Service rating hazard over a majority of the timberland as severe under bare soil conditions.

## Albion and Salmon Creek Watersheds

The Albion River and Salmon Creek Watersheds are drainages that have been heavily impacted by logging. In the Railroad Gulch drainage of the Albion River, over 85% of the area has been impacted from logging since 1977. CDF estimates that this rate of harvest approximates that of the entire Albion drainage. The approval of THP 122 is now in litigation because of the conditions of the watershed and the failure by CDF to once again evaluate cumulative impacts. Two harvest plans have recently been approved in the Salmon Creek watershed, and are in litigation (THP's 1-90-567 and 1-90-578). The watershed has been subjected to repeated harvest entries such that almost 100% of the area has been under harvest in the past ten years.

## Schooner Gulch

The Schooner Gulch total watershed area is approximately 3,050 acres, of which some 2,150 acres are in various states of recovery following timber harvest activities during the past 20 years. A proposed harvest of 610 acres will add dramatically to this devastation, and bring the total harvested acres to over 90% of the watershed.

## Redwood Coast Watersheds Alliance

The Redwood Coast Watersheds Alliance, Inc. is a public interest non-profit tax-deductible corporation that offers support to watershed groups within the Redwood Coast Bioregion. This bioregion is a geomorphic unit of three major watershed regions located in the western areas of Humboldt, Mendocino and Sonoma counties. Two regions of the Eel and Russian Rivers embrace the third region, a portion of the North Coastal River System. We have an information list of contacts for watershed groups currently organized and working together within this Redwood Coast Bioregion. If you wish to contact a watershed group or become active in protecting your watershed, please contact Bill Johnson 468-1253 or Betty Ball at the Mendocino Environmental Center, 468-1660. We encourage your participation. And please continue to support your local watershed association. They are a vital link in our

## Help provide a vision for Ukiah's future

Project Direct Democracy and the City of Ukiah are co-sponsoring two events at the Civic Center. On March 25 will be an art show celebrating what we value about life in this valley. Bring submissions to 296 Gardens Avenue.

Phone: 468-5364. The second show will be in May. We invite visions of what we want this valley to look like in 25 years. Let's recreate our valley in art, and then let us create it as we want it to be.

# WalMart Update

by Betty Ball

As you will recall, last March the MEC challenged the City of Ukiah's approval under a Negative Declaration of a site development permit for the construction of a 93,000 square foot Wal-Mart Store. The proposed site is on a 14.8 acre parcel of the Redwood Business Park, which is a part of the Airport Industrial Park Planned Development located along Highway 101 just south of the Talmage Road exit.

In addition to the store, the site development permit would allow construction of a 742-vehicle parking facility, landscaping, loading facilities, and a possible additional 30,000 square feet of store space. The project also includes a proposal to amend the Airport Industrial Park Planned Development to allow "commercial uses", currently defined as "conditional", to become "principal" uses in a portion of the Planned Development currently designated for Office Commercial, Highway Oriented Commercial, and Industrial/Commercial.

In June, 1990, the City, Wal-Mart and the MEC agreed that the approval of the project would be set aside along with the approved Negative Declaration and that an EIR would be prepared prior to any future City determination of whether to approve or deny the project.

On November 15, 1990, the first of the required public procedures in the EIR process, a "Scoping" meeting, was held at the Ukiah City Hall. Comments, both written and oral, made at this meeting, will be used to determine the final scope of the EIR, which at this point includes at least the following issues:

## Issues to be addressed in the EIR

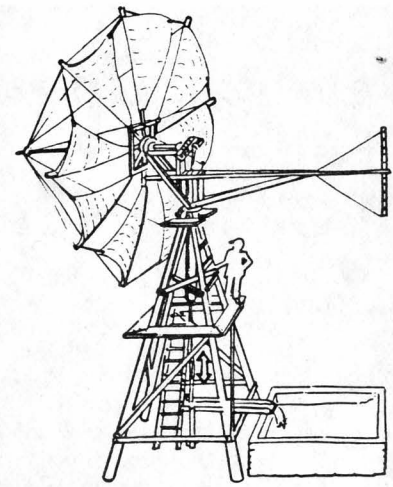
1. Possible geologic hazards and geologic impacts resulting from grading and filling; assessment of erosion impacts.
2. Adequacy of area drainage to handle increased runoff from the Wal-Mart project; impacts on water quality and downstream flooding.
3. Impacts on biota including the possible presence of a rare plant population.
4. Impacts on local air quality due to increased vehicular use in the area.
5. Possible noise constraints due to the proximity of Highway 101.
6. Consistency with zoning and land use plan designations.
7. Traffic impacts on Talmage Road, State Street, and intersections on those streets including the ramps on and off Highway 101.
8. Impacts on public services including fire, police, sewage, and water systems.
9. Impacts on area views and aesthetics.
10. Archaeological and historic resources.
11. Economic impacts on existing downtown businesses.
12. Cumulative impacts, growth-inducing impacts, and project alternatives will be fully assessed per requirements of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

## EIR process taking place

The EIR process is now proceeding, and we will continue to keep you informed of progress. If you wish to be included in the process and be notified of the preparation of the Draft EIR, attend future public hearings, etc., you may call and give your name to Michael Harris at the City Planning Department, 463-6242.

We are very glad that the EIR process is happening, and that the community now has the opportunity to fully participate. In that regard, we believe it is very important that the EIR process integrate closely with the Growth Management Task Force that is now working to develop a unified and comprehensive plan for what we wish the City to be in the future.

It is essential that planning be comprehensive in nature, and fully take into account how proposed developments either contribute to or detract from the ability to realize overall visions for the community; it would be a shame for this EIR process to proceed in a vacuum without the benefit of evaluating how this proposed project would impact proposals evolving from this Task Force. (If you would like more information regarding the Growth Management Planning Process, you may call the City Manager's office, 463-6200.) Call the MEC at 468-1660 if you'd like more details about the Wal-Mart EIR process.



## The Recycle Everything List

There are many things that are collecting in large numbers and are re-useable, if you have a need for them.

We are calling these "don't-need-to-be-discarded" things "ITEMS."

The places that want these items are called "TARGETS."

### Items to recycle that need targets:

- black rubber pipe, with and without holes & cracks
- bond paper with 1 blank side
- Bond/computer paper with 2 blank sides
- 1-gallon glass jars with lids
- 5-gallon buckets
- canning jars with lids
- coffee cans with lids
- mayonnaise jars with lids
- milk cartons & plastic jugs
- yogurt containers
- fancy gift boxes, slightly used
- heavy duty plastic bags
- plastic storage containers with & without lids that fit
- pre-formed styrofoam packing "blocks"
- rectangular foam packing "blocks"
- rubber bands
- shredded paper
- styrofoam packing peanuts.

Let us know if you want any of these things, or if you have any other items that need to be added to the list.

Recycle Everything  
P.O. Box 643,  
Ukiah, CA 95482

Or call the Environmental Center, and leave us a message.

# New Banking Benefit for MEC Members

by Lily Phoenix

Recently a woman newly arrived to Mendocino County stopped in at the MEC for our recommendation on local banks. We ended up discussing the ideal of non-profit member-owned banks that loan their funds back to members and keep the funds in the community, and this led us to investigate the question of credit union membership for our members as a way of putting this ideal into practice. We chose to affiliate with Mendocino-Lake Credit Union because their funds remain within their two counties.

For convenience, a brochure is being mailed with the newsletter. To become a member you complete an application, indicate that you are an MEC member (your family automatically becomes eligible also), pay a \$1.00 membership fee (which is lifetime even if you move away), and put a minimum \$25.00 deposit into savings. To open a checking account you must maintain a minimum \$100.00 balance in savings. A \$4.00 per month service charge applies to those interest bearing checking accounts that fall below a \$1,000 minimum balance in any month, and to non-interest bearing checking accounts that fall below a \$500.00 minimum balance. Checks are available only in duplicate style, because cancelled checks are not returned by the bank. If you ever need to produce a photocopy of a cancelled check they will provide it for a fee. For more information drop in at the Ukiah main office at 526 South State Street, or call 468-0161.

# MEC T-Shirt Design Contest

by Gary Ball

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Announcing the greatest contest in MEC history (herstory-itstory-yourstory)! Calling all artists, photographers, designers, visionaries and doodlers! The MEC needs your creative genius, NOW!

The MEC has decided to print its very own t-shirt design. The problem is, we have no design to print. So, this is the first official call for people to enter the Great MEC T-Shirt Design Contest. Another problem is, we don't have much of a contest either. That is to say, so far there are absolutely no rules! This means anyone can enter a design, or as many different designs as they want to. And the designs can be single color, multi-color, full color, words only, graphics only, words and graphics, words as graphics, any size and in any media. So long as the design can eventually end up on a t-shirt,

it'll do.

Of course, the MEC board is probably going to come up with some rules for this contest sooner or later. But right now, there is no deadline by which designs must be submitted, there is no mechanism by which a winner will be selected. And there is no prize of any sort being offered to the winner. But don't panic! These details will be worked out in due time. Right now just let those creative juices flow. There's lots of fun we can have while the contest is in progress. Perhaps we can put the design entries on display. Perhaps we can hold a public debate about who gets to judge the contest and name the winner. Perhaps we can even come up with some kind of worthy prize to offer. Whatever we do, it'll be fun. So enter! After all, it's for a good cause.

## The MEC Wish List

*We need the use of:*  
Fax Machine  
Industrial Stapler  
IBM Selectric II or III  
File Cabinet

3-ring binders  
Paper Cutter  
typing chair  
transcriber (full size tapes)  
2 portable video cameras

Nothing will ruin the country if the people themselves undertake its safety. Nothing can save it if they leave it in any hands but their own.

*Daniel Webster*

**Mendocino Environmental Center**  
106 W. Standley St.  
Ukiah, CA 95482

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