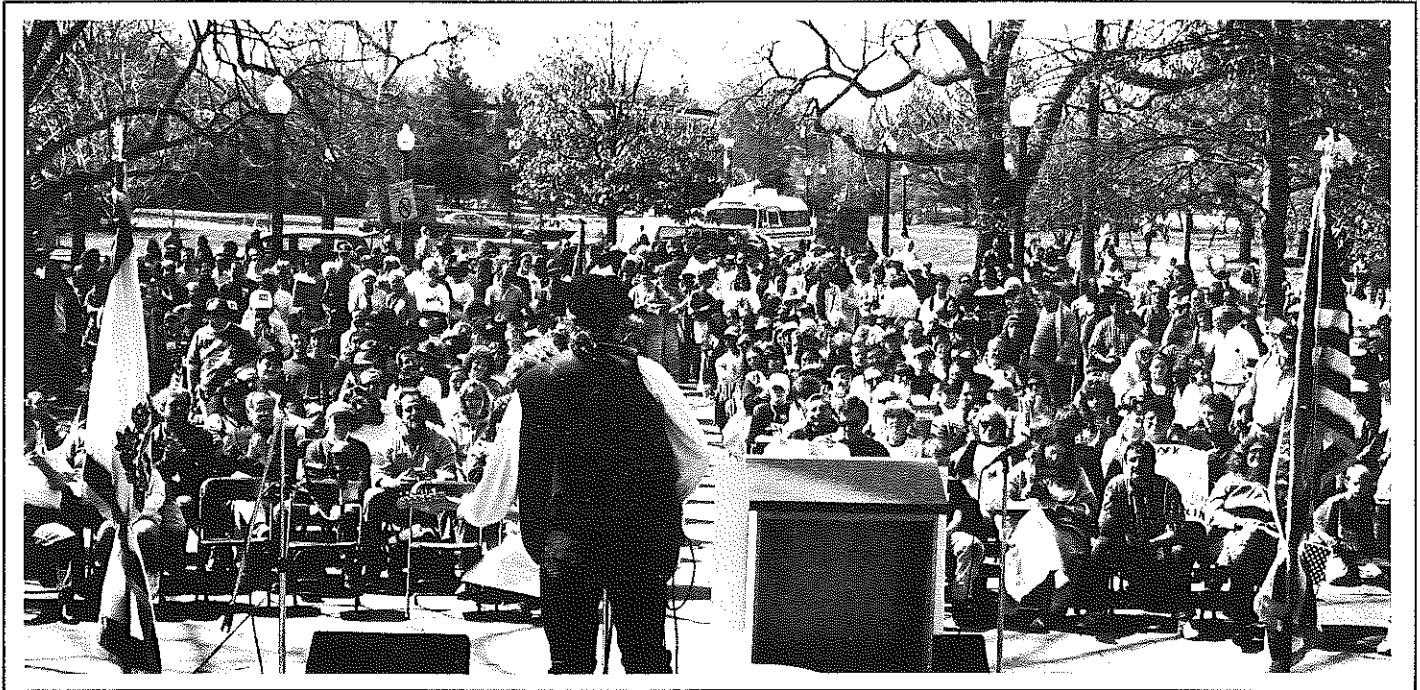


April/May 1996

"E"-NOTES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
OHIO VALLEY
ENVIRONMENTAL COALITION

1101 6th Ave. Suite 222 Huntington WV 25701
Ph: 304-522-0246 Fax 304-523-6051



Musician Robert Shelter performs for the crowd at the Pulp Mill Rally. *Photo by Chuck Wyrstok*

MANY VOICES...A COMMON CAUSE

by Janet Fout

The March 30th rally against the proposed pulp mill, cosponsored by OVEC, West Virginia Citizen Action Group, (CAG) and the West Virginia Environmental Coalition, was an organizer's dream come true. It was the largest and single most inspiring environmental event I've personally attended. TV news estimated the crowd at nearly 1000! Earlier, Norm Steenstra (Director of CAG) had announced that he and I were laying our careers as organizers on the line for this one. Needless to say (if you attended), everyone was pleased with the crowd, the speakers, the music, and the skits.

Christian, Jewish, and Native American prayers were offered at the beginning. From the looks of the beautiful weather (which the odds didn't

favor) and the steadily increasing crowd, it was easy to believe in Divine intervention that Saturday. Activists from 38 out of 55 West Virginia counties and from eight different states gathered on the lawn of the state Capitol in Charleston, with a single purpose--tell Parsons \$ Whittemore, a New York based trans-national corporation, to just GO AWAY! Young people, seniors, labor union members, professionals, students, and politicians, had convened to speak out or to lend their support to the ever-increasing number of citizens who oppose this ill-conceived proposal.

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

The crowd gave shouts of acclamation as Norm welcomed folks and began his opening remarks: "Today is the end of the beginning--for Parsons & Whittemore, it's the beginning of the end." The energy continued to build when Robert Shelter, a Roane County musician, sang what is becoming our theme song--"Let's Beat That Mill to a Pulp." Speakers who followed talked about the numerous dark aspects of the mill--dioxin and its ill-effects, backroom deals, political arm-twisting, no promise of jobs to local citizens, etc.

Pam Nixon, running for House of Delegates in Kanawha County and known nationally for her activism against polluters in the Kanawha Valley, said that the state should only consider a dioxin-free mill built and operated by local labor.

Deborah McHenry, a one-year survivor of breast cancer, who recently won the West Virginia chapter of the National Organization for Women's Susan B. Anthony Award, spoke about the potential health impacts on citizens and said that many mills now use bleaching processes that would not expose citizens to dioxin in their air and water.

"The establishment pays little attention to the research pointing towards dioxin and its connection with cancer," McHenry said. "Parsons & Whittemore is not a responsible corporate citizen."

Steve White, the Director of the Affiliated Construction Trades Foundation (ACT), said that ACT won't back down until the company promises to build the mill dioxin-free, with a pledge to hire local workers.

"We get accused of a lot of things," White said. "But I want to remind you how important this joint coalition is. When environmentalists speak up about something, you get bashed about jobs, but with labor standing with environmental groups, they can't use that. It just doesn't work," White said.

The strength of the coalition was underscored as Joe Powell, the president of the West Virginia AFL-CIO, who introduced gubernatorial candidate Charlotte Pritt, challenged the gathering. "Stand up for clean water. Stand up for clean air." Powell said the best way to win the battle was at the ballot box on May 14.

State Senator David Grubb, D-Kanawha, said that most politicians only care about the big corporations which funded their campaigns. Because this is an election year, Grubb said, "We've got to change that."

Senator Don Macnaughtan, D-Wetzel, who holds a doctorate in chemistry emphasized the reproductive problems in men and women who are exposed to dioxin. "The powers that be may not care if these chemicals cause breast cancer and uterine cancer, but maybe it will catch their attention that they can make men impotent and smaller and less effective as a reproductive system," Macnaughtan said.

Other scheduled speakers included Larry Gibson, a long-time environmental activist from Putnam County, Mike Forman, the Vice President of Huntington Tri-State Audubon, and Steve Gormanzano, a member of the Concerned Citizens Coalition (CCC) of Roane, Calhoun and Gilmer counties. A special thanks to activists from CCC and Pocohantas counties for providing some very entertaining skits.

THANK YOU ROBIN GODFREY! If I could point to a single individual, without whom the rally may not have been the biggest and the best, it would have to be Robin! Believe me, an event like this takes lots of dedicated people coming to weekly planning meetings to make it happen (which we had), but each one probably received at least a phone call a day for six weeks from Robin, reminding them what needed to be done! Robin was the detail person (thank goodness!) behind the rally--he made sure that every "t" was crossed and all the "i's" were dotted. Robin gave his incredible heart and soul to the cause, and no one was disappointed.

As folks gathered before the rally, fabulous free music was provided thanks to the generous donation of talent from Regatta '69 (Chapel Hill, NC), Pagan Babies (Huntington), Fried Chicken (Lincoln County) and Julie and the Rhino Boys.

Thanks, one more time to all the people who made phone calls, addressed post cards, formed car pools or did one little thing to help. We are all important. And last, but not least, thanks to everyone who came out to voice their concern and show their support! Just keep imagining NO PULP MILL

(Quotes compiled from the *Charleston Gazette* story by Ken Ward and *The Daily Athenaeum* (WVU) by Alexandria Solomon.)



Putnam Countian Larry Gibson expresses his concerns
(Photo by Chuck Wyrstok)

ABOUT THE PHOTOS...

The photographs on pages 1, 2, 6, and 12 are copyrighted by AppaLight, Griffith Run Road, Clay Route Box 89-C, Spencer, WV 25276, Telephone/Fax (304) 927-2978. Thanks AppaLight, for the use of your wonderful photos!

AT THE TABLE WITH ASHLAND OIL

by Dianne Bady

For six months Laura Forman and I have been meeting with Ashland's refinery superintendent, environmental manager, two Ashland public relations people, and Kentucky air regulators. What a painful process this has been.

We began these meetings with some hope that Ashland might act upon our concerns. While some improvements have been made at the refinery's most dangerous unit, the HF alkylation unit, with every meeting our hopes grew dimmer. A series of ground rules was agreed upon at the outset, and by the second meeting, the facilitator, Pam Wood of Kentucky's Environmental Cabinet, found it necessary to suggest a new ground rule - no negative body language.

I haven't always been able to follow this rule, and neither has Laura. My eyes still rolled and my arms still flailed. It's hard not to react to the blatant denial which often emanates from the Ashland side of the table. Laura, who lives downwind of the refinery, and who is pregnant with her first child, has gone into gory details about the frequent bad air episodes. At one point, faced with arrogant denial from Ashland, my dear friend Laura left the room and burst into bitter tears.

During the recent OCAW union strike at the refinery, Laura presented the refinery superintendent with photographs of apparently illegal refinery emissions, photographs obtained from Kentucky regulators. The superintendent explained what caused those problems. Just a few days later, the *Huntington Herald Dispatch* quoted a union member who said that there were frequent pollution problems during the strike. The refinery superintendent was also quoted, saying that the refinery ran smoothly throughout the strike.

During the two week long strike over safety issues, Ashland Petroleum president Robert Yancey admitted to the press that Ashland's "Catlettsburg refinery has accident rates far above the national average". But the union's safety demands went unmet. After signing the contract, one worker said to the *Herald Dispatch*, "I don't think many union members thought they got a fair deal". Another pointed out that "We didn't have any choice. We didn't want anybody coming and taking our jobs".

Recent refinery problems include a fire, apparent emissions exceedances at various flares, a huge black plume of pollution, repeated exceedances of smelly hydrogen sulfide, and another failure to notify Kentucky regulators of a planned shutdown of

the refinery's sulfur recovery unit, which resulted in releases of 1200 lbs/hr of sulfur dioxide for 12 hours.

Since 1985 Kenova residents have fought for improvements at Ashland's refinery. Over 2000 people sued the company for pollution damages. The caustic fallouts that once burned paint and skin are no longer a frequent problem, and some additional pollution control equipment has been installed. But most attempts by citizens and regulators to get improvements in Ashland's never ending series of emissions accidents have met with failure. In spite of repeated record fines, in spite of a bitter strike by the company's own workers, the problems persist. Why?



Ashland Oil at Bat?

(Cartoon from *Bloodroot*, a publication by our friends at Heartwood)

Nationwide, activists are now pointing to two fundamental factors which seem to allow out-of-control corporate pollution to continue: the system of campaign financing of political elections, and the legal provisions of the corporate charter. In Ashland's case, it is well known that the company contributes generously to the campaigns of numerous state and federal politicians. When Kentucky's new governor appointed a small committee to select the state's new environmental cabinet secretary, an Ashland Inc. representative was included. Was Ashland's generous campaign support of Gov. Patton a factor in Ashland's ability to help pick the regulator who would oversee enforcement at the company's problem plagued refinery?

AIR TOXICS MONITORING TO BEGIN IN KENOVA AREA

After years of planning and even more years of citizen complaints, a series of monitors in the Kenova, WV, area will soon begin identifying and measuring toxic chemicals in the air. The monitors are run by the Tri-State Geographic Initiative (TGI), an effort involving the three states and their corresponding three federal EPA regions. OVEC is represented on the TGI's Citizen Review committee by Janet Fout and Rick Bady.

The monitors will not detect all the chemicals in the air, but are likely to detect many of the toxics emitted by Ashland Oil. The area around the refinery is the first of 6 industrial clusters in the Tri-State to be monitored. The Kenova area was selected for the first monitoring because industries in this area (mainly Ashland Oil) emit the largest amounts of the most toxic chemicals.

Each of the seven monitors will collect an air sample for 24 hours, once every twelve days. In addition there may be some "grab" samples taken during excessive air pollution episodes. TGI officials are hopeful that EPA will fund a full time person to oversee the monitors and to be available to take spur-of-the-moment samples in response to citizen complaints.

The chemicals to be monitored are not the "criteria" air pollutants already routinely being monitored here and in every urban area in the US. Environmental agencies do not routinely monitor the air for any more than the six most common pollutants. The other chemicals, while emitted in much smaller quantities, are much more toxic, and less well understood. If you don't happen to live downwind of a leaky refinery or chemical plant, you

are not very likely to have much exposure to most of the "air toxics". (see box for details)

The expanded monitoring will go on for at least one year and eventually the data will be evaluated by a group of toxicologists, yet to be determined.

Kenova residents will remember that the last time there was special monitoring for air toxics, routine air emissions decreased. During the six month air toxics monitoring period in the late 80's, the amount of particulate pollution mysteriously decreased, only to increase again after the monitoring stopped. Since air toxics are not routinely monitored, it will not be possible to know if there is any decrease in what's in the air for the next year. Perhaps people's noses will tell them.

OVEC has repeatedly stressed two concerns about the monitoring plan. First, since most of the monitoring will be done on a routine schedule (every 12 days), industries may be able to avoid detection by controlling releases on those days. Also, the 24 hour sampling period means a bad air episode of 2 or 3 hours will be diluted with the better air from the rest of the day. If implemented, the program to "grab" a sample during excess emission episodes will help.

Another concern is that the particularly smelly sulfur compounds that give a skunk-like or other bad odor will not be detected by the monitors. There are so many possible chemicals to detect that not all can be monitored.

For more information call: Janet Fout at 304-522-0246 or Rick Bady at 614-886-5796

AIR POLLUTANTS TO BE MONITORED AS PART OF THE TGI

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC's)

Several dozen chemicals will be detected, such as: benzene, toluene, and naphthalene.

Semi-Volatile Organic Compounds (SVOC's)

Several dozen will be detected, such as: phenol, naphthalene

Acidic or basic Particulates

Sulfur dioxide can react with other pollutants in the air and form an acidic aerosol. Also, the caustic fallout that was such a serious problem in the 80's will be detected.

Metal Containing Particulates

Some particles may contain toxic metals such as chromium, cadmium and arsenic.

When finished with this, don't throw it away-- pass it on to a friend!

THE SEVENTH FOREST CONGRESS--PLEASE LEAVE YOUR BRAIN AT THE DOOR

by Janet Fout

It's hard to imagine that my vision for our nation's forests could ever have much in common with the vast majority of the Seventh Forest Congress attendees. From the outset I had a feeling I was being used. By the end of the meeting, I KNEW.

The list of "collaborators" and organizers of the conference read like "Who's Who" in the forest exploitation business--USDA Forest Service, Weyerhaeuser, Westvaco Corporation, International Paper, Louisiana Pacific, Georgia-Pacific, and others. Why would greedy earth predators spend over a million dollars to assemble environmentalists with forest users and abusers in the same place? The answer seemed clear enough for me from the get-go --to manufacture consensus.

Anyone who read the pre-conference propaganda should have known that all that rhetoric about a common vision and many voices was a con job by the timber industry and their media lackeys. A red flag shot up instantly when I read OVEC's favorite Margaret Mead quote on the front of the registration packet: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has" (At OVEC's next board of directors meeting I'll strongly recommend that we adopt a new slogan by William Shakespeare--"Pardon me thou bleeding piece of earth that I am meek and gentle with these butchers." Let's see the earth rapers try to co-opt that one).

At pre-Congress meetings, environmentalists noted that draft visions from many state round-tables had been drastically edited. During meetings I saw many of my friends agonize over whether to stay at their pre-assigned Congress tables or to walk out; it was as though they were under a wicked spell! Few participants had a clear understanding of the process; for that matter, once the official meetings began, it was clear that the rules and process changed arbitrarily to accommodate industry--making final results meaningless. Every session was tightly controlled and participants were subtly manipulated.

None of my true green friends were asked to speak at the highly controlled press conferences

which presented sanitized versions of what was happening each day. (Environmentalists finally held a press conference of their own blasting the Congress for the industry "trade show" that it was). Impending threats to the forests such as clear-cutting, cutting on public lands, endangered species, preservation of old growth forests, and the evil salvage rider were glossed over or omitted altogether from discourse.

Although some national environmental groups were co-sponsors (and provided scholarships for enviros like me), many of the grass roots groups declined to participate altogether knowing that the outcome was preordained. Hats off to all forest activists who challenged the organizers of the Congress, disrupted press conferences, carried signs of protest and spoke truth to power.

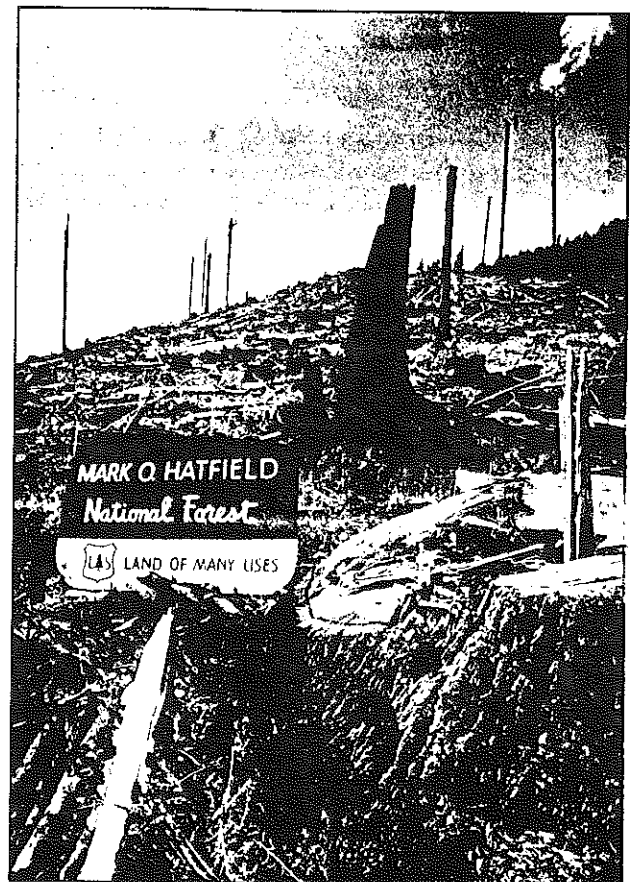


photo and caption by Elizabeth Feryl

***U.S. taxpayers subsidize logging
of national forests***

HEMP--A PARTIAL SOLUTION TO USING WEST VIRGINIA'S HARDWOOD TREES FOR PAPER

The past several years has seen an increasing awareness and growing acceptance of hemp products to meet growing consumer needs. Today, hemp is used for textiles, rope, packaging, furniture, paints, lubricants, fuels, cosmetics, oils, soap and many other consumer products. The use of hemp for commercial products goes back many years, from Colonial America and throughout the industrial era in Europe, to the first century A.D. in China. For at least 2,000 years, hemp fibers have been used to make paper.

In 1750, hemp was the largest agricultural crop in the world. Up until 1883 between 75-90% of all the paper in the world was made with hemp fiber and hurd (the woody pulp of the plant). Just before hemp was made illegal in 1937, Popular Mechanics magazine hailed the plant as the first potential billion dollar crop.

Currently many colleges and universities in the US are conducting cannabis medicine and hemp fiber oil-biomass research. According to The Solar Age Hemp Paper Report (Spring 1996), Hempline, Inc. of Ontario Canada and the Kentucky Hemp Growers Cooperative transported 5,500 pounds of Canadian grown industrial hemp stalks across the Canadian border into the US. The raw hemp fiber of the stalks is being used in product research by various industries including Masonite, Fort Howard Paper Company, and Inland Container. The arrival of industrial hemp in North America may be imminent because of endorsement from the trans-national giant, International Paper, as well as the Farm Bureau.

What makes hemp an attractive alternative to trees for paper-making? An acre of land planted for trees takes 60 years to grow one ton of fiber. Hemp planted on that acre can grow 15 tons of fiber in 120 days. Because hemp fibers are so strong, they can be recycled 7 times, unlike trees which can be recycled only 3 times. Hemp cultivation requires no chemicals or pesticides. Every grade of paper, from toilet paper to business papers, can be made and whitened through a dioxin-free hydrogen peroxide process.

Unlike its cousin, marijuana, one thing industrial hemp cannot do is produce a narcotic effect when smoked.

Support for industrial hemp is growing in the U.S. Vermont lawmakers endorsed the cultivation of hemp as a cash crop by a 108-33 margin. Legislators approved a two-year experiment that could create a new crop that might replace Vermont's declining dairy farms.

In February, the Navajo Nation in Arizona announced their intention to initiate hemp cultivation on Native American soil with a spring planting on March 17. The vision of the Navajo leaders will place their communities in the forefront with the establishment of a micro-managed local hemp industry as a model for the rest of the nation.

Hemp is making a resurgence because of the growing fiber crisis. Paper use is growing at approximately four percent a year worldwide. With population increasing, forest reserves are decreasing which has led to essentially a doubling of wood pulp prices in the last 18 months. It only makes sense (and maybe lots of dollars!) that our public officials show support for this earth-friendly alternative.

To learn more about the history and use of industrial hemp, purchase a copy of *The Great American Hemp Industry*, by Jack Frazier, published by the Solar Age Press, Box 610, Peterstown, West Virginia, 24963. (1 copy \$12.00 + \$1.24 postage, 2-4 copies \$8.00 ea. + \$1.24 postage, or 5+ copies \$7.00 ea. postage paid.)



Uncle Sam (Chally Erb) carries a sign at the March Pulp Mill Rally proclaiming "Pulp Hemp, Not Trees."

(Photo by Chuck Wyrstok)

OHIO RIVER MUSSEL MUSINGS (Source: US Fish and Wildlife Service fact sheet, January, 1995)

The Ohio River basin once contained one of the world's richest assemblages of freshwater mussels that provided food, tools and adornment for Native American people. At one time around 127 distinct species and subspecies of freshwater mussels existed in the Ohio River system. In less than 100 years 44% of this river's mussels have become extinct, endangered, or reduced to the point where Federal protection is being considered.

Alterations imposed by man on the Ohio river ecosystem have contributed significantly to the demise of these once prolific creatures. Mussel populations have declined because of impoundments and channelization, siltation related to coal mining or poor land use practices, and water pollution caused by toxic chemical spills, air pollution, and urban run-off.

Continuation of these adverse practices on the Ohio River will further threaten the existence of remaining mussel species. (Ed. Note: Here's one more reason to oppose the proposed construction of the largest

pulp and paper mill in North America at Apple Grove, West Virginia.) Because of isolation, remaining mussel populations are so small that they may not contain enough genetic diversity to provide for long-term survival. Some species exist only as old individuals that may no longer be capable of reproduction.

Why should anyone be concerned about the loss of this or any other species? Many man-induced changes in the environment have increased the rate of extinction--species are becoming extinct at a much greater rate than speciation is occurring. Each extinction diminishes the richness and complexity of life on earth. While the loss of a single species seems negligible, one by one, we are breaking the strands in this "web of life" on which our future survival depends. When a species becomes extinct, the change is unalterable, and the benefits that species conferred are lost forever. Our own lives are less rich for it.

 **ACTION ALERT! NEW POSTCARD CAMPAIGN! ACTION ALERT!** 

Parsons & Whittemore CEO George Landegger says that his firm "becomes the power structure" in the "boondocks" communities where P&W builds paper mills. It's time to tell Landegger that he will NOT become the power structure here! All you need to do is:

1. Purchase a postcard with a beautiful West Virginia, Ohio, or Kentucky landscape. Most drugstores, bookstores, etc. have them.
2. Next, write on the postcard a clear and simple message to George Landegger, President and CEO of Parsons & Whittemore--"GET OUT OF WEST VIRGINIA!" Sign your name if you choose. Keep the message clear and simple.
3. Attach a 20 cent stamp and mail to : Mr. George Landegger, President
Parsons & Whittemore, Inc.
4 International Drive
Rye Brooke, NY

If you belong to another group and want to help STOP THE PULP MILL, this is an easy project at the beginning or end of a meeting for all your members. Let someone at the OVEC office know if your group sends postcards to Rye Brooke. We encourage you to publish this ACTION ALERT in your newsletter. Thanks for your help! We hope that Mr. Landegger receives thousands of postcards!!

LATE BREAKING NEWS!!!

Bill Lewis, a Marshall University journalism student working on a research project, discovered that after private negotiations with Parsons & Whittemore and the US EPA, the West Virginia Division of Environmental Protection withdrew its plans to modify the water pollution permit for the proposed pulp mill. US EPA, Region III, Director of the Water Management Division, Alvin Morris, indicated in a telephone conversation with OVEC that EPA required that a numerical limit must be in the water permit (the modified permit lacked this). Although a copy of the letter dated March 14, 1996, was sent to Dave Flannery, a Charleston attorney for P&W, informing him that the state had rescinded the changes, neither OVEC nor the Affiliated Construction Trades Foundation, currently involved in legal appeals of the permit, had been notified. As usual, citizens have been kept in the dark. Attorneys for ACT and OVEC have requested a status conference hearing.

IMPORTANT CHANGE OF ADDRESS NOTICE FOR OVEC OFFICE!!
PLEASE NOTE THAT THE OVEC OFFICE ADDRESS HAS CHANGED!
THE NEW ADDRESS IS "SUITE 222" INSTEAD OF "ROOM 225".

ASHLAND DIRECTORS LAMBASTED IN UNION'S RANKING

Excerpts from the *Charleston Gazette* by Ken Ward Jr.

Two members of the Ashland Inc. board of directors are among 23 corporate directors nationwide named in a Teamsters union report as "America's Least Valuable Directors."

Former Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci and Texas oilman James Blanton were cited in the study, which Teamsters said is the first attempt ever to quantify "the ineffective oversight responsible for poor performance or excessive management compensation."

The report uses as its list of poorly performing companies 30 corporations listed by Graef "Bud" Crystal, who was once a compensation consultant to executives but is now a critic of executive pay.

The Crystal list highlights companies that reward poor corporate performance with excessive executive compensation. ...

Blanton was listed in the Teamsters report under the heading, "High Pay, Low Performance, Recurring Pollution."

"At Ashland, Blanton serves on the Public Policy Environmental Committee," the Teamsters report stated.

"On his watch as director, the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration ranked Ashland as one of the worst for intermediate strip mine injuries [among the nation's 25 largest strip mining companies]," the report said.

"In May of 1994, Ashland agreed to pay a record fine of over \$1.5 million for failure to notify state and local officials about accidental releases of sulfur dioxide from its Catlettsburg, Kentucky, plant," the report stated.

"One year later, at this same Catlettsburg facility, Ashland agreed to fix major environmental problems and pay \$100,000 for a long list of pollution violations," it said.

During the same period these environmental problems occurred, Ashland Inc. CEO John R. Hall received nearly \$125,000 in pay raises.

STUFF TO BUY THAT SUPPORTS OVEC'S WORK

The following items are available at the OVEC office for you to buy. Proceeds support our efforts to make the Tri-State a cleaner, healthier place to live:

T-Shirts: 1996 Tree Hugger T-Shirt with nifty quote from Shakespeare on the back--"Pardon me thou bleeding piece of earth that I am meek and gentle with these butchers." Several sizes are still available. Choose from forest green/gold or terra cotta/navy. 100% pre-shrunk cotton for only \$10. There are still some XXLarge Pulpstock '95 T-Shirts (great nightshirts!) and a few of last year's Treehuggers Ball shirt with our favorite Lincoln County, WV, Treehugger featured with a Rachel Carson quote on the back. Same great quality, same low price (\$10).

Buttons: Stop the Pulp Mill!, Save Our Ohio Valley Forests, or Tell the Pulp Mill to Just Go Away! \$1.00.

Bumper stickers: Stop the Pulp Mill \$1.00

Video: Doug Hawes-Davis' "Green Rolling Hills" documents potential impacts of the proposed Parsons \$ Whittemore on our region's forests. A donation of \$3.00 would cover our costs, but if you want a video and can't afford to buy one, call our office. It's been our policy to give them away.

TREE HUGGERS BALL A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS

Thanks to all the folks who came out to this year's Tree Huggers Ball. Special thanks to **Eric Fout** who, as usual, did a fantastic job organizing the event. We appreciate the contribution from the musicians and groups who donated their time and talents:

Robert Shelter & Jill, Blake Sypher, Fried Chicken, Pagan Babies, and True Ewe. Special thanks also to "Speedy" for running the sound board and to the folks at **Calamity Cafe** for hosting our bash. We raised about \$800!



NAKISKA CHALET RAFFLE

Imagine a peaceful retreat for two at a Bed and Breakfast Inn in the WV mountains surrounded by a sugar maple forest! Joyce and Doug Cooper, owners of Nakiska Chalet in Pocahontas County, have donated two nights at the Chalet for OVEC to raffle. Just \$5 buys you a chance to spend a couple of days away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. The raffle drawing will take place at OVEC's Annual Meeting on May 19. Call 522-0246 or stop by 1101 6th Ave. to purchase your ticket(s).

CALENDAR of upcoming important events!

April 29, 6:30 p.m. **OVEC Board of Directors Meeting.** Members are welcome. Please call the Huntington office for details at 304-522-0246.

May 1, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., **Deputy Directors from US EPA Regions III, IV, and V** will meet with the general public at the Appalachian Electric Power/Kentucky Power building at 1701 Central Avenue, Ashland, KY, to discuss environmental problems in the region. Call OVEC for car-pooling information.

May 6, 5:30 p.m. **Tri-State Business and Community Advisory Panel, Pulp Mill Debate**, Grandview Motel, South Point, OH. Call OVEC for more info.

May 14, 7:00 p.m.: **Appalachian Environmental Stewardship Committee.** This ecumenical group meets monthly to pray, discuss environmental issues, and share ways that their faith leads them into caring for all creation. For more information call Mary Ellen O'Farrell at 304-346-3303.

May 19, 1-6 p.m. **OVEC ANNUAL MEETING** (with election of new board members), St. Cloud Commons, Huntington. Call the OVEC office for more info.

THANKS TO OUR DONORS AND INSTITUTIONAL FUNDERS

Sincere thanks to the many individuals who have recently sent contributions to OVEC. Your donations are vital to our organization.

Foundations and church organizations make it possible for OVEC to maintain our three staff positions. But we rely on individual donations to fund expenses such as copying, postage, and long distance calls.

We acknowledge, with much gratitude, OVEC's 1995 - 1996 institutional funders:
Appalachian Community Fund (TN); Commission on Religion in Appalachia (TN); Deer Creek Foundation

(MO); Environmental Support Center (DC); Finlandia Fund for Clean Water (VA); Charles Stewart Mott Foundation (MI); Ruth Mott Fund (MI); Patagonia (CA); Public Welfare Foundation (DC); and the Florence and John Schumann Foundation (NJ).

Unsolicited grants from the Schumann Foundation have paid for media ads, billboards, and the chrysanthemums which OVEC folks planted in Huntington's Riverfront park last fall. We've just received an award from Huntington Mayor Dean for OVEC's "Outstanding efforts to improve the beauty of our city".

CALL FOR BOARD NOMINATIONS

We will elect new OVEC Board Members at our Annual Meeting on May 19. Please send nominations to: Lewis Baker, Chair, OVEC, 1101 6th Ave. Suite 222, Huntington WV 25701.

Cut and mail to: OVEC, 1101 6th Ave. Suite 222, Huntington WV 25701

___ New member or renewal (Dues: \$5 - \$25, pay what you can)

DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

___ Donation enclosed

___ Keep me especially informed on this issue: _____

Name _____

Send info about OVEC to this person:

Address _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____

For more info, call the OVEC office (304) 522 0246

Please leave a message if we're not in or, write to OVEC at: 1101 6th Ave., Suite 222, Huntington WV 25701

Pulp mill foes question company's record

March 17, 1996

By Ken Ward Jr.
SUNDAY GAZETTE-MAIL

West Virginia environmentalists have complained for years about Parsons & Whittemore Inc.'s current plans to build a pulp and paper mill in Mason County. Now they're also complaining about the company's past.

Several members of the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition have attacked the company's ill-fated attempt to run an electricity-producing garbage incinerator in New York more than a decade ago.

Those attacks are included in public comments filed on a draft air pollution permit issued by the state Division of Environmental Protection's Office of Air Quality.

Janet Fout, the coalition's project coordinator, wrote, "In the 1980s, Parsons & Whittemore Inc., in Hempstead, N.Y., was involved in legal disputes and the company defaulted on bonds.

"Resource Recovery Inc. was Parsons & Whittemore's answer to the solid waste problems facing Long Island," Fout wrote.

"Garbage was pulped at its facility and converted to energy," she wrote. "The ... facility operated for about a year and closed because of a labor dispute.

"The [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency] announced that dioxin emissions were detected at the plant which the company refused to acknowledge," Fout wrote.

Fout filed with DEP a series of New York Times articles that detail the problems Parsons & Whittemore had with the New York garbage facility.

According to the articles, the plant at Hempstead on Long Island was completed in 1979 at a cost of \$140 million. It was to burn garbage and generate enough electricity for itself and 20,000 homes.

Parsons & Whittemore "lauded it as the wave of the future for garbage, better than incineration and a substitute for dwindling landfill sites," the Times wrote in March 1987.

"But tests showed the stacks were emitting traces of dioxin, a highly toxic carcinogen, and while these were not regarded as sufficient to pose a health hazard, residents in the area began to voice concern and anger," the Times wrote. "In 1980, amid labor problems and an uproar over the toxic emissions, the plant was closed."

The town of Hempstead and Parsons & Whittemore fought a long legal battle over the plant. It was eventually sold to another company, which blew up the facility to make way for a different sort of garbage disposal facility, according to articles in the Times.

A Sept. 8, 1979 Times article detailed a string of problems the plant faced. Among them:

▲ The plant emitted raw odors from its garbage pits and a pungent smell from its smokestacks.

▲ Staphylococcus and streptococcus bacteria infested parts of the plant, for which it was cited by the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

▲ The plant exposed its workers to two and a half times the legal limits for dust, and it lacked railings, machinery covers and other protections, according to OSHA.

▲ The plant "has kept running for as long as 72 hours while its electrostatic precipitators, which scour brown fly ash out of the flue gas, were broken, and neighbors have complained of accumulations of soot on their windowsills."

In comments also filed with DEP, Laura Foreman, an organizer with the Ohio Valley Environmental Council, wrote that, "From previous actions, the company of Parsons & Whittemore does not appear to be environmentally sound, financially reliable or socially conscious.

"Why does the West Virginia government want to invite this company here, and PAY them to do so?" Foreman asked.

During a public meeting on the draft air pollution permit held in December in Ashton near the Apple Grove mill site, several citizens asked DEP officials if they knew about the Long Island controversy.

Renu Chakrabarty, a DEP engineer who helped write the draft permit, noted that the DEP mining office is able under federal law to deny permits for companies with a history of non-compliance.

The air quality office has no such authority, she said.

C. Kenneth Goddard, a vice president of Parsons & Whittemore, did not return phone calls last week.

The Times quoted George Landegger, president of Parsons & Whittemore, as blaming most of the problems on Long Island unions.

Landegger complained union members would not cross picket lines to deliver garbage to the plant or to help make needed repairs.

"We normally build pulp and paper mills in the boondocks where we provide jobs and, in effect, become the power structure," Landegger told the Times. "We came to Long Island not knowing our place in the power structure — and they're explaining it to us now. Guys think they're working for the local, not for us. They won't close the doors and hatches when their foremen tell them to, even though the state requires it."

Environmentalists and the Affiliated Construction Trades Foundation have been fighting the \$1 billion mill proposal for several years.

The ACT Foundation, a coalition of construction unions, is upset because Parsons & Whittemore has not promised to hire local union workers to build and run the mill.

According to documents released by the West Virginia Development Office under a court order obtained by the Gazette, Parsons & Whittemore has met with West Virginia companies to discuss ways to avoid hiring union workers.

The documents also show that Parsons & Whittemore and the Development Office discussed meeting with law officials and judges in the Mason County area to make sure they could get court orders against any union pickets once the project gets underway.

"We normally build pulp and paper mills in the boondocks where we provide jobs and, in effect, become the power structure."

George Landegger

President, Parsons & Whittemore in a New York Times interview

Pulp mill using Third World tactics in W. Va.

By Steve White

A RECENT Gazette article outlined a letter from C. Kenneth Goddard, vice president of Parsons & Whittemore, the firm that wants to build a new pulp and paper mill in Mason County. Goddard was upset at criticism of the \$738 million super tax credit for which his company is eligible.

Goddard implied that tax breaks do not cost taxpayers and therefore we have given nothing to his company. I disagree completely. Taken to the extreme, if every business and citizen got the same break as Parsons & Whittemore, we would have nothing left to run our state or county agencies.

Not because Goddard talked about it, but because the meetings behind closed doors were discovered, we now know the dark side of economic development. We know the Sunnyside school was moved not to help kids in Mason County but to accommodate the mill. We know our state Division of Environmental Protection tried to raise dioxin standards, not for any scientific justification, but for the mill. We also know the DEP tried to open a loophole to allow more cancer-causing chemicals in all state rivers and streams, for the mill.

Now we discover that Parsons & Whittemore wants us taxpayers to pay \$580 million dollars for road and bridge improvements so 400 to 500 trucks per day can easily collect 10,000 trees per day from across the state.

First, we want to know how many local workers will be hired to build and operate this facility?

Second, we want to know why West Virginia is not getting a mill that uses the most modern technology?

Now what do we get in return? For all the talk about jobs, I have not seen one document in the hundreds uncovered that guarantees even one West Virginian a job. We conclude that the majority of construction workers on this project will come from Parsons & Whittemore's Alabama-based construction company. That's right, their own construction company with a work force ready to travel.

We also believe most of the production jobs will go to current employees in their three Alabama facilities — a ready supply of trained and loyal workers.

For more than five years we construction workers have called both Parsons & Whittemore and our state economic development officials to task for the poor way they have handled the proposed billion-dollar mill.

Look at the disdain they already exhibit for West Virginians. Parsons & Whittemore officials will seldom return any reporter's phone call.

excerpts:

The Charleston Gazette

Monday, February 12, 1996

In five years they have only appeared at one public function to answer questions about their proposed mill.

They have been repeatedly invited but will not participate in any information-sharing process with the public not forced on them by law.

A look at who this company is helps us understand why they act in such an arrogant and condescending way. Parsons & Whittemore made their fortune building pulp and paper mills primarily in Third World countries. Hence the Third World mentality.

What is surprising is the way our governor and state economic development officials have kowtowed and encouraged such Third World treatment.

The Affiliated Construction Trades Foundation has been open in all activities concerning the mill. We have spent a tremendous amount of hard-earned money on television, newspaper ads, as well as experts to help us understand what this mill is all about and inform the public.

Parsons & Whittemore and state officials have worked behind closed doors without public comment or input. This is no way for an outside corporation to behave. If they expect to succeed in our state, they must build relationships with the hardworking people in our communities.

They will have to demonstrate something they have neglected to date: show us, out in the open, in a process all West Virginians can see, that they have our interests at heart.

White is director of the Affiliated Construction Trades Foundation, based in Charleston.

"For life to continue, as responsible citizens, we must protect all that is left of our environment and its capacity for renewal--the soil, the air, and the water--and begin to work together to restore all that we can regardless of ownership."

***-- Tim Hermach,
Director, Native Forest Council***



Photo by Chuck Wyrstok

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