

EVERYONE'S BACKYARD

Vol. 24 No. 1 Spring 2006



25TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

The Journal of the Grassroots Environmental Movement
Center for Health, Environment and Justice

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Cover:

New CHEJ logo and
25th Anniversary design

25 Years of an Inspirational Journey

These past 25 years have been an exciting and challenging journey. I never imagined, when traveling to Washington D.C. in 1981, that I would be part of, even help spark, this important and critical health and environmental movement. My initial drive, to stop other families from being exposed to and made sick from toxic chemicals in their community is still, 25 years later, a powerful force that motivates me every day. I've met many extraordinary community leaders, scientists, lawyers and elected representatives along the way. Working with communities across the nation these past 25 years has been both an honor and a privilege.

This special edition of *Everyone's Backyard* is dedicated to CHEJ's 25 years of collective progress. Action Line consists of highlights of victories won and unique strategies used by groups over the past 25 years. We couldn't list them all due to the large number of successes. We also invited individual leaders to provide their thoughts on what they've learned since they began working in this movement.

It is clear that we've won more than we've lost. A strong base for change has been built. Throughout CHEJ's life we've worked with over 10,000 groups – some have continued their efforts, others have become larger-than-local organizations and some have moved on.

You will read in the article on CHEJ's history how our goals moved from stopping new toxic dumps to building a broader healthy communities focus. The battle cries moved from "Not in my backyard"—to "Not in anyone's backyard." The struggle moved from an end-of-the-pipe strategy to life cycle solutions, resulting in moving McDonald's to eliminate Styrofoam in the 1980's to Microsoft eliminating PVC in 2005.

Sadly, we've lost many extraordinary leaders during the past 25 years, including Tim Sampson, John O'Connor, Mary Beth Doyle, Laura Forman, Cora Tucker, and Marvin Lagator to name a few. Their work and spirit lives on with all of us.

Lastly, we've moved from a single focused toxics movement, to a blue/green (labor and environment) and now a kaleidoscope movement that includes faith based, schools, health care, and other civic groups. The new emphasis is cautionary focused, one that asks how much harm we can avoid rather than how much harm we can tolerate.

As we enter our 25th year, I want to thank you for your part in making this work successful. It will become clear, as you read through this newsletter, how we are collectively changing the world. Thank you.

For a Healthy Environment,
Lois Marie Gibbs

ABOUT CHEJ

The Center for Health, Environment and Justice is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization that provides organizing and technical assistance to grassroots community organizations nationwide. The center was founded in 1981 by Lois Gibbs, who together with her neighbors won the relocation of more than 900 families from their neighborhood after it was contaminated by chemicals leaking from the Love Canal landfill in Niagara Falls, NY.

The center's mission is to help people build democratic, community-based organizations to address public health and environmental threats. We believe strongly that the best way to solve local problems is from the bottom up, when the people directly affected speak for themselves and have a meaningful role, as equals, in any and all decisions that affect their lives, homes and family. Our focus and resources are devoted to helping local community based organizations form, grow, and become effective in achieving their goals.

CHEJ's 25 YEARS OF PROGRESS



TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

this April, a housewife-turned-activist named Lois Gibbs completed the long trek from the now infamous Love Canal in Niagara Falls, NY to Washington, DC, about to embark on an entirely different journey. Possessing only a moving van's contents of her life in Love Canal and an intense desire to empower communities nationwide facing similar toxic threats, Lois founded the Center for Health, Environment, and Justice (formerly the Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste).

From the beginning, CHEJ was distinct from other environmental health organizations. Lois and the original four volunteer staffers, crammed into the tiny office in Lois's basement, believed first and foremost in the power of grassroots organizing. Lois had witnessed firsthand how pure scientific data and legal regulations were insufficient to free her family from the toxic dangers at Love Canal. What had worked, however, was garnering local support - one petition signature, one person at a time.

From Lois's conviction that everyone has the right to a clean and healthy environment emerged CHEJ's determination to help those communities without a voice, most notably low income communities and communities of color. CHEJ rapidly became a vital resource for communities that were struggling to clean up local environmental hazards and eliminate health risks. CHEJ offered these communities the tools necessary to succeed. The scientific and organizing assistance CHEJ provided to groups helped put into practice the belief that local political pressure has the power to generate widespread change.

BY KIRA NAOMI VENTURA

While working to help grassroots groups rid their neighborhoods of toxic hazards, CHEJ recognized that using a mop on the floodwaters could only go so far—the influx of pollution had to be stopped at the source. As a result, CHEJ's strategy in these early years was largely preventive—an approach that has continued throughout much of the organization's work. In addition to aiding local groups to shut down existing polluters, CHEJ helped communities prevent new unsafe facilities from being built. CHEJ and its partners worked to make hazardous waste disposal so expensive that it would be more cost effective to simply avoid creating it, or reclaim and reuse it.

The now famous Superfund legislation was created in 1980 with this idea in mind and is considered a direct outgrowth of Lois's work at Love Canal. Lois is often even referred to as "The Mother of Superfund." Superfund taxed polluting industries and channeled the revenue into a fund to be used for the cleanup of existing toxic sites. This legislation was key to CHEJ's work because it aided remediation efforts financially while simultaneously creating a disincentive for polluting industries through joint liability. After the legislation passed, CHEJ helped spawn the Superfund Technical Assistance Grants. This program provided sizeable grants (\$50,000) for communities to hire technical experts to enable citizens to participate in assessing site contamination.

CHEJ demonstrated its commitment to local communities from the start by holding its first Leadership Development Conference in Ohio in 1983. Held at various locations across the country, including Louisiana, Indiana, California, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania, the conferences were aimed at strengthening the skills of grassroots leaders through training programs. At these events, collaboration among participating groups was encouraged, resulting in the formation of numerous

larger-than-local groups and adding fuel to the national grassroots fire. Many of these groups, like the Louisiana Environmental Action Network, continue to be vibrant, powerful voices making a difference at both the state and local levels today.

CHEJ's Landfill Moratorium Campaign was another important step on the road to preventing pollution in neighborhoods nationwide. While dozens of new hazardous waste landfills have been proposed, only one has been built in the United States since CHEJ opened its doors. The law has not changed—it is still perfectly legal to build and use these landfills. Rather, CHEJ has empowered communities faced with the potential burden of a new toxic dumpsite to speak out. When CHEJ declared May 5, 1984 a National Day of Action, hundreds of groups nationwide held marches, rallies, and educational forums to help solidify the national movement to end hazardous waste landfill construction.

CHEJ's Toxic-Merry-Go-Round Campaign in 1985 also captured the attention of many. For years, polluting companies had been relocating waste they had “cleaned up” and dumping it on a new community. Standing beside the local grassroots groups tackling this issue, CHEJ helped develop strategies and regulations to end this detrimental practice. Today, polluters must remove hazards responsibly and cannot simply burden a new community with their waste.

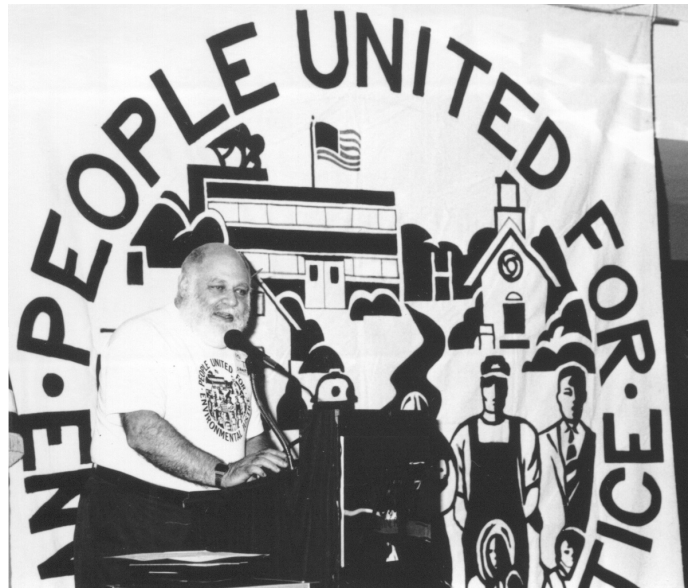
Another strong deterrent that CHEJ helped bring about during the 1980s was Right-to-Know Laws, which were first passed locally in 1985 in Ohio, North Carolina, New Jersey, Maryland, and Tennessee. These laws required local industries to report their emissions of certain toxic chemicals and enabled citizens to find out what chemicals were being released, stored, and disposed of in their communities. This locally-tailored data was often crucial to groups' cleanup efforts. As local successes accumulated, so did the pressure for federal action until a national Right-to-Know law was finally passed in 1986. CHEJ partnered with local organizations to help state governments make emissions and disposal data available to everyone nationwide.

Throughout these early years, CHEJ distributed its quarterly magazine, *Everyone's Backyard*, to all members, as it continues to do today. This publication serves to document the challenges and triumphs of the grassroots movement for environmental health. For many years,

it also provided organizing and scientific features that were designed to demystify technical issues and empower groups to more successful organizing. CHEJ also published many publications related to various environmental health topics. From reports detailing a specific health threat and the alternatives available to handbooks on grassroots organizing, these publications have proven invaluable to groups across the country in their efforts.

As CHEJ became increasingly well known for its unwavering commitment to local groups, a logical next step was to extend the reach of its site-specific support. CHEJ accomplished this by establishing several field offices scattered across the country—from Alabama and California to West Virginia and Georgia—beginning in 1986. Manned by local staff, the field offices facilitated the formation of community groups in their area

by providing organizing assistance and by helping them gather the resources necessary to win their individual struggles. These local



Tim Sampson at Convention '97.

The first organization we contacted in 1985 was Lois Gibbs Love Canal organization. Lois's courageous actions have been an inspiration through the years. The conferences, our introduction to reputable scientists in government and academia has provided the best and brightest. We are indebted to “angels” who assisted us, including Paul Connett, Hugh Kaufman, Peter Montague, and others. By meeting environmental leaders from across the U.S., we know we are not alone in threatening situations. Our primary lesson is “never quit, never give up.” Always assist other struggling groups. We all learn from each other. Congratulations and thanks to CHEJ staff for 25 years of Angelic work.

Corinne Whitehead
Coalition for Health Concern
Calvert City, KY

staffers also linked together distinct groups that shared common geography or issues they were facing, adding to the resources of both groups and heightening their chances of individual victory. For instance, if one group had just closed down an incinerator, they would be put in touch with groups facing a similar battle. One outcome of this strategy was the creation of many larger-than-local and statewide groups. Through their ties to nearby communities, these new groups still enjoyed local political influence and were now even more powerful in statehouses, media forums, and corporate boardrooms due to the increased volume of their combined voices.

Many of these groups came together to celebrate their victories, share ideas and information and to learn from others at CHEJ's National Conventions held in 1986, 1989, 1993 and 1997. Held in Arlington, Virginia, these conventions celebrated the achievements of the grassroots movement while looking toward the future to develop strategies for the goals of the movement left unaccomplished. Perhaps most importantly, they provided training and guidance on how to win that people took back home to their local fights.

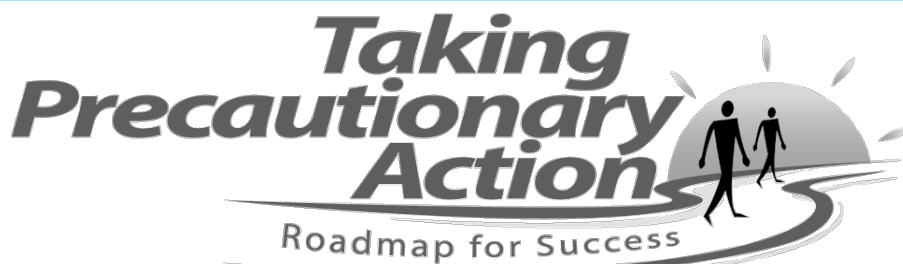
CHEJ further lent a hand to local groups through its Community Leadership Development Grant Program, a resource that was introduced in 1989. While CHEJ's organizing staff provided communities with

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BE SAFE CAMPAIGN

BE SAFE is a nationwide initiative to build support for the precautionary approach to prevent pollution and environmental destruction before it happens.



**Come to the First National Conference on Precaution,
June 9 – 11, 2006 in Baltimore, Maryland**

Join hundreds of activists and groups to share successful strategies, resources, tools, policies and programs.

Build the movement for precautionary action to prevent harm from environmental hazards!

Speakers include Lois Gibbs of CHEJ, Peter Montague of Environmental Research Foundation, Carolyn Raffensperger of Science & Environmental Health Network and 40 other environmental health leaders.

Fifty grassroots, state and national groups helped plan this exciting conference. For brochure and registration form, go to www.besafenet.com or call CHEJ at 703-237-2249 x11 or anne@besafenet.com

The conference features over 35 workshops on:

- Community organizing, fundraising, campaign strategies, advocacy, media;
- More than 50 model local and state precautionary programs and policies;
- Tools to investigate health problems, safer products, pollution's hidden costs and approaches to get out of the "risk assessment box;" and
- Collaborative strategy sessions to build a broader movement for precaution!

Victories from the PVC Campaign

Microsoft Completes PVC Phase out

Microsoft completed their phase out of PVC packaging at the end of 2005, after CHEJ launched a campaign targeting them last year. The company sent letters to their key national retailers asking them to stop re-packaging Microsoft products in PVC. For example, Sam's Club has now agreed to stop using PVC packaging on Microsoft products. This retailer ripple effect is an unexpected victory! On December 7th, CHEJ coordinated a national media event with groups in 16 states, and 24 media markets publicized the corporate PVC phase out trend, including the Wall Street Journal. Visit www.besafenet.com/phaseout.htm to see our News Release, company statements and supporting materials.

NYC Passes Green Purchasing Bills

New Yorkers received a nice holiday present on December 21st when the New York City Council passed a series of environmentally preferable purchasing bills to reduce the City's purchase of PVC and other hazardous

products—and wield the city's \$11 billion annual purchasing budget to drive markets for safer products. CHEJ worked with Citizens' Environmental Coalition (CEC) to build support and counteract vinyl industry lobbying. We testified at a hearing, co-coordinated an organizational sign-on letter and urged groups to call council members in the weeks leading up to the bill's passage. New York City joins a growing list of cities, including Boston, Seattle, San Francisco and Buffalo, that have passed purchasing policies to phase out products such as PVC that lead to the formation of persistent toxic chemicals (PBTs). If you want to work on a PVC municipal purchasing campaign in your community, contact us today!

Crabtree & Evelyn Commits to Phasing out PVC

Crabtree & Evelyn agreed to phase out their PVC packaging after receiving CHEJ's coalition letter signed by over 60 groups, and holding conference calls with CHEJ organizers. The company sells bath and

beauty products packaged in PVC, and has 350 stores in over 40 countries across the world.

Want to Make A Difference? Get Involved in the PVC Campaign!

CHEJ's PVC Campaign is leveraging our recent victories to influence more retailers and manufacturers to phase out PVC. We need YOUR help to win this consumer campaign.

Contact PVC Campaign Coordinator Mike Schade at mike@besafenet.com or 212-964-3680 to find out how you can get involved in the next phase of our winning campaign and sign up for PVC Action listserv to receive updates and action alerts.

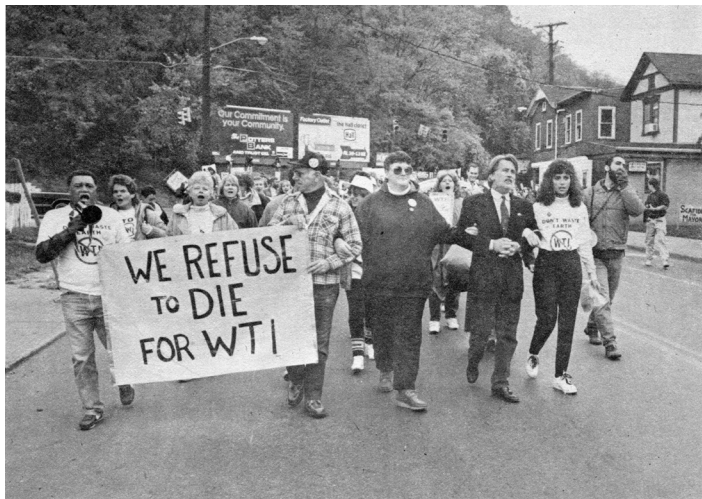
Voices of a Movement

Words of Wisdom from Environmental Leaders

2006 marks the 25th Anniversary of CHEJ. We are quite proud of this accomplishment and want to recognize this achievement and celebrate the progress we've made by looking back over the years at the many groups we have worked with, the many victories won, and the many lessons learned about what works and how to win. We've asked a number of leaders to reflect on their experiences and provide short quotes that capture important lessons they've learned over the years. Many of these quotes are included here, others are included in the article "25 Years of Progress." We want to thank everyone who contributed to this special edition and the thousands of grassroots leaders who have stood up for what they believed in to protect their families and their homes.

In opposing the construction and operation of the WTI hazardous waste incinerator, we have learned that low income populations and communities of color have been targeted for the location of hazardous waste facilities that frequently promise jobs and prosperity, but in fact bring a threat to the health, environment and safety of the families that live in these areas. We have learned that it is never too late to take back the government and to make our public officials truly servants of the people; that common ordinary citizens through hard work and diligence can expose the pretense of using good science to justify the use of risk assessment to evaluate public health; that government does not always act in the best interests of its people; and that the major challenges facing any organization are combating apathy and convincing the membership that "you can fight city hall." Your individual efforts and participation do make a difference, though success does not come easy.

*Alonzo Spencer
Save Our County
East Liverpool, OH*



Alonzo Spencer in 1991 marching with Martin Sheen and others to the gates of the WTI hazwaste burner in Ohio.

Over the past 28 years of working in the environmental justice movement, I have come to realize the importance of longevity, persistence, and connectedness to the place in which we live, work, learn and play. I've come to recognize that communities are not simply groupings of buildings filled with consumers, customers, or clients whose behavior is studied, managed and manipulated by powerful outside forces. Communities are families, neighbors, and individuals, who recognize the necessity of sharing power and sharing responsibility. Their voice brings perspective to the public debate of those most directly affected in ways that can refocus attention to the most urgent needs of our families, neighbors and fellow residents and can breathe new compassion, creativity, and responsibility into the public debate and decision making process.

*Penny Newman
Center for Community and Environmental Justice
Riverside, CA*

One of my favorite quotes is that of Frederick Douglass who said, in part, "If there is no struggle, there is no progress" and "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will." The Environmental Health Coalition's mission and that of the environmental health and justice movement, is to make the demand. Our job is to ask the hard questions, demand what may be unpopular and to have the courage to be persistent until we win. Whether it's air toxics you can't see or smell; pollution at the bottom of our beautiful bay or lead in paint dust, our job is to make the invisible visible to protect people and the environment. Empowering community leaders to be visible and effective is just as important as winning the fight. As our collective voices get louder, we become stronger and more powerful. Together we can do it – ¡si se puede!

*Diane Takvorian
Environmental Health Coalition
San Diego, CA*

We learned Lois Gibbs' lessons on effective organizing the hard way. In fighting the proposed incinerator in St. Lawrence County, we had the best science available in the world but lost every step of the way in state adjudicatory hearings. We couldn't get our foot in the door, even with expensive lawyers. However, we eventually won our battle after 5 and half years - the night before bonds were to be issued - because of grassroots organizing that pressured the local politicians. Lois's message: 1) you won't win with lawyers (they are extremely expensive and your troops go to sleep); 2) science won't win the battle but it helps to know you are on the right side and 3) what wins is mobilizing politically. Build coalitions of citizens and groups with a broad range of interests and backgrounds and put bone-crushing pressure on the decision makers. Effecting change is like driving a nail through wood. The expert can sharpen the nail but you need the weight of public opinion to drive the nail home!

Paul Connett
St. Lawrence University
Canton, NY

After 22 years of work in rural southern communities, I have learned to listen to the wisdom of the people. A wizened cab driver told me, "I knew we were poor, but I didn't know we were that poor." A brand-new 75 year old activist asked, "Why don't they just stop making this stuff?" An exasperated young woman concluded, "I don't care who gets the methane, let's talk about how we're gonna stop this mega-dump." I have learned that community campaigns are like poker: every hand's a winner, and every hand's a loser. Self-confidence and timing are everything. I have learned that one person speaking alone may not be heard, but many people speaking with one voice cannot be ignored.

Janet Zeller
Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League
Glendale Springs, NC

The power of grassroots people united in a cause for health and environmental justice can overcome the combined currencies of money and politics. Despite overwhelming odds, the grassroots people can prevail through an unwavering commitment to the well-being of all people and the environment in which they live, work, play and pray. The power of the people's united voice for good must be respected and nourished.

Suzi Rubl
Environmental Law Institute and founder of the Legal
Environmental Assistance Foundation, Inc.

We outnumber our adversaries nearly 20-to-1 but they keep us divided and therefore conquered. They (the few) rule us (the many) because we don't yet see that all our issues have a common thread -- whether its toxics, or poverty, or homelessness, or bad housing, or lousy schools, or money that steals elections, or good jobs shipped overseas, or low-wage jobs that are boring and dangerous with no benefits, or crappy food, or white supremacy, or seniors tossed aside, or stupid wars, or unaffordable medical care, or unsafe neighborhoods, or sprawl, or women disrespected, or no mass transit, or children who go to bed hungry -- it all boils down to this: the economy and the government are not being run

for the benefit of the people who do all the work and create everything. It's all being run by and for a handful of greedy @\$%*%#! who only care about themselves. And we could change it all if we just decided to get together, make a plan, and do it.

Peter Montague
Environmental Research Foundation
New Brunswick, NJ



Attendees of the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit rally on the steps of the U.S. Capitol Building to protest environmental racism.

We can only use the law as a means, not an end, because fundamentally the laws are not written by or for communities facing environmental hazards. We win in court, the polluters appeal; we win the appeal, they go to Congress to change the law. Any victory we win only in court can disappear in a moment -- we have to win in the streets and in the political arena for there to be lasting change. When groups say, "we need a lawyer!" I warn them that often they are wrong. We need a movement.

Luke Cole
Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment
San Francisco, CA

I shake the hands of all the people that have contributed to 25 years of publication of Everyone's Backyard. This reflects the perseverance and heart of an organization that believes in the work it does. From my experience working in a network of tribal nations and communities, it takes heart and mind working together to be focused on the challenges we face to protect the sacredness of our Mother Earth. To work for the environment is spiritual work that must recognize the four sacred elements of water, soil, air and fire. It is through this foundation that nurtures the spirit of community to organize and draw strength to take action to protect the health of our future generations.

Tom Goldtooth
Indigenous Environmental Network
Bemidji, MN

Continued on page 22

25 YEARS OF ACTION LINE

This special edition of Everyone's Backyard features the "Best of Action Line" highlighting numerous grassroots victories, unique strategies, and important milestones from the past 25 years. As we compiled literally hundreds of victories, we realized that we could not list them all, so we've tried to include a fair representation nationwide. The date of the original article is shown at the end of the entry. We hope you have as much fun reading these as we did.

ALABAMA

Alabamians for a Clean Environment (ACE) and Alabama Network for Grassroots Environment Leadership (ANGEL) win a major concession from the state DEM following a "Diaper Protest" at ADEM's main office to protest ADEM's reluctance to provide access to industry files. ANGEL strung "message diapers" in front of the building asking for information and as ACE leader Linda Wallace put it, we want a "future for our babies." ADEM agreed to open its records as demanded (Jul 88).

Pay-outs were made to 3,322 residents of Triana as part of a \$15M settlement in one of the worst cases of DDT contamination ever. Residents received an average ranging from \$500 to \$22,500 (Feb 89).

A Federal judge dismisses Waste Management Inc.'s (WMI) challenge to the state's new law banning waste imports from states that don't allow hazardous waste treatment or disposal within their borders. WMI argued that the "interstate commerce clause" of the U.S. constitution was violated, but the judge disagreed stating that the ban prevents Alabama from becoming a "dumping ground" and that its impact on interstate commerce is "incidental" (Apr 90).

Saraland Tenants for Relocation, which struggled for 10 years, wins relocation for 57 families living in the Saraland Apartments located near Mobile that were built on contaminated soil (Spr 97).

Anniston residents agree to \$40 M settlement with Monsanto for PCB contamination (Sum 01). Jury rules that company must pay 3,500 residents for damages for dumping PCBs in their town (Spr 02).

ALASKA

Kenai residents organize and win alternative water supply after their water was contaminated by Unocol drilling waste in nearby gravel pit (May 87).

Alaska Community Action on Toxics and Alaska Youth for Environment Action in Anchorage win 3 year fight to convince state regulators to pass legislation to protect children and workers from exposure to harmful pesticides in schools (Win 02).

Kodiak residents led by the **Women's Bay Community Council** succeed in shutting down a soil incinerator located in the middle of a residential neighborhood (Fall 03).

ARIZONA

In an odd case of crime and punishment, Gabe Brett, a 62-year old grandmother, along with her husband and three neighbors link arms and make a human chain across the road in Tombstone to block trucks carrying cyanide from passing. Brett was upset that trucks were traveling too fast and spilling cyanide on the roadside affecting children and others. When a trucker challenged her, she slapped him and drew a \$1,000 fine from the magistrate who later overturned the fine when she agreed to shake the trucker's hand. The company, in the meantime, was fined \$25 for dumping 100,000 gallons of cyanide (Oct 84).

Tucsonians for a Clean Environment come out in opposition to a plan by Hughes Aircraft to "clean up" TCE-contaminated water by running it through filters and venting the filtered air into their community (May 88).

Taking a page from the "Sometimes you Gotta Buy 'Em" strategy book, the state pays ENSCO \$44 M to take a hike, closing a chapter on the fight against the partially built hazardous waste incinerator near Mobile (Dec 91).

Gila River Alliance for a Clean Environment leads successful campaign to shut down Stericycle's medical waste incinerator. Stericycle agrees to treat all waste at its steam-driven autoclave facility (Spr 03).

ARKANSAS

Citizens Against Landfills in Pindall stop a proposed landfill dead in its tracks by recruiting Dept of Interior and Forestry officials who agreed that pollution of the nearby Buffalo River was certain if the landfill was sited (May 87).



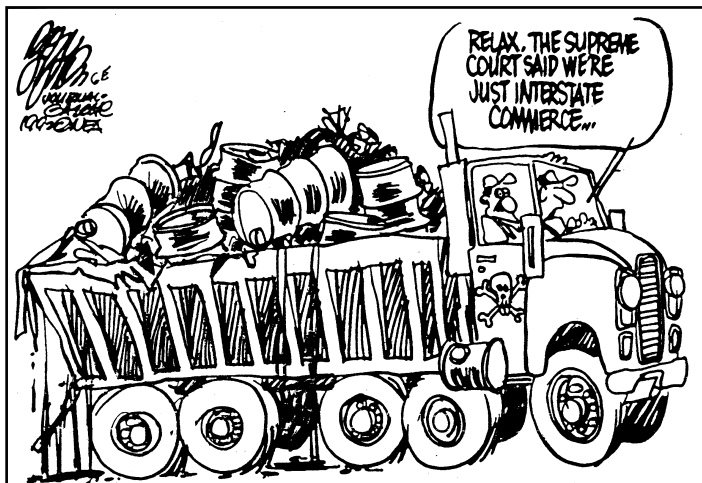
Children in Jacksonville, AR protest for cleanup of dioxin contamination.

Pressure brought on by **People United Against the Burn** of Jacksonville generates widespread public opposition to plans to burn dioxin contaminated waste and soil at the Vertac Chemical site in Jacksonville. EPA agrees to buy out residents living in neighborhood surrounding the plant (Nov 88); 660 people rally in Little Rock to oppose the burn (Dec 90); group holds "Mutants for Toxic Waste" rally in Little Rock to give Gov Bill Clinton their "endorsement" in protest of Clinton's support for the burning of dioxin waste at the site (Aug 90); judge orders burn to stop until there is proof that all of the dioxin is destroyed as required by federal law (Apr 93).

Citizens Advocating a Safe Environment organize and defeat a WMI plan to expand its garbage landfill near Fayetteville (Win 02).

CALIFORNIA

Jesse Jackson joins **El Pueblo para Aire y Agua Limpio (People for Clean Air and Water)** and 500 environmentalists in Kettleman City to protest WMI's proposed hazardous waste incinerator. Jackson says the plan for the incinerator slated for a Hispanic community amounts to "toxic racism" (Dec 91); after a six-year David vs. Goliath fight, WMI, the world's largest toxic waste disposal company, gives up its plans to build a toxic incinerator in this 95 percent Latino, farmworker community (Dec 93).



25 YEARS OF ACTION LINE

Citizens Against Pollution and Industrial Toxics (CAP IT!) storm a permit hearing, educate Bay area citizens and media, stage a raucous protest at a city council meeting and print 10,000 fliers in three languages in their successful effort to block Dow's plan to build a toxic incinerator in Pittsburg (Apr 93).

Desert Citizens Against Pollution of Antelope Valley shut down National Cement's hazardous waste facility by educating the public and every agency associated with the plant, from stockholders to landowners, on the damage being caused by the incinerator. The facility shut down after the landowner refused to sign a new operating permit (Sum 94).

The Coalition for Healthy Communities and Environmental Justice, after years of organizing, outreach and protest, finally forces Integrated Environmental Systems to close its medical waste incinerator in Oakland (Spr 02).

COLORADO

Louisville Dumpbusters block WMI landfill by petitioning to have the needed land annexed before the voters defeat the plan by a 4 to 1 margin in the largest turnout ever in the area for a special election (Nov 89).

Elbert County Concerned Citizens mobilize hundreds of residents to get their county commissioners to vote down BFI's planned 320-acre dump (Nov 89).

The Western Colorado Congress warns of "Wise Use" group invading state and decries the polluter front group "People for the West" (Aug 92).



Oakland youth play a big role in shutting down IES medical waste incinerator in Oakland, CA.

After years of advocating against incineration, the **Chemical Weapons Working Group** and others win a huge victory when the CO Chemical Demilitarization Citizens Advisory Committee agree by a 4 to 3 vote to recommend to the Army and Congress that the chemical weapons stored at the Army's Pueblo Chemical Depot be destroyed using non-incineration technology (Win 00).

CONNECTICUT

Pollution Extermination Group succeeds in shutting down leaking garbage landfill in Laurel Park following a series of protests and actions. Residents were warned not to smoke in their bathrooms because fumes leaking from the landfill could lead to a serious case of "exploding toilets." The last straw was finding dioxin at the dump (Nov 83).

State passes "bad boy" law barring companies that have been fined from seeking a permit, resulting in denial of plan to build hazardous waste incinerator in Groton (Oct 91).

Citizens Opposed to Polluting Our Environment organizes opposition leading to state legislators approval of a bill to stop proposed wood-burning plants in Killingly and Torrington (Aug 92).

DELAWARE

The Greater Cheswold Environment Safety Committee convinces the state to order Chem-Solv to clean up a chemical spill that occurred after an explosion and fire (May 85).

More than 50 local groups celebrate the governor's signing of a law banning garbage incineration in the state's "Coastal Zone" in response to a massive outpouring of public support for the ban (Fall 98).

More than 200 show up at Carneys Point High School, a mile from DuPont's Chambers Works Plant in Deepwater, NJ to reject the Army and DuPont's plan

to dump millions of gallons of VX nerve agent into the Delaware River (Sum 04).

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

PCBs in public buildings become front-page news with the discovery that nearly every building in the Smithsonian Institute has leaking PCB transformers. PCBs are also found in the White House, with concern that PCB-laden dust was spread throughout the building (Nov 85).

River Terrace Community Organization wins final victory in their battle against PEPCO's plan for expansion at their power plant when the company withdraws its proposal (Dec 90).

The Bryant Park Homeowner's Association successfully defeats proposed hazardous soil incinerator. Community's powerful message of "We don't want you - no soil burner" and "We will not sell out" leads a city council to swear that "no incinerator" will be built in the neighborhood (Dec 93).

Felizidades en tu aniversario de 25 años. Your heart has been in the right place all these years of hard work and love and caring for the people and the environment. Your book, Love Canal, My Story, and other writings have been read by many and will be here for other generations to read and learn from. You have made a difference. We all know our work will never be done, but thank you again for what you have done.

*Esperanza G. Maya
People for Clean Air and Water
Hanford, CA*

25 YEARS OF ACTION LINE

FLORIDA

Citizens Against Contaminated Water on Hips Road in Jacksonville wins relocation for 14 families living around landfill operated by the Navy that contaminated local drinking water (May 87).

Concerned Citizens of McDuffie County block proposed USPCI waste site in less than a week through massive public rallies (Apr 90).

Concerned Citizens of America continuously turn out hundreds of people forcing Florida First Processing/Westinghouse to withdraw their plan to build a haz waste incinerator in Polk County (Fall 94).

Florida Families for Clean Air in Green Coves Springs succeeds in forcing Florida Solite to close its doors. The group generated constant pressure on the company and the state DEP to enforce state laws (Sum 95).

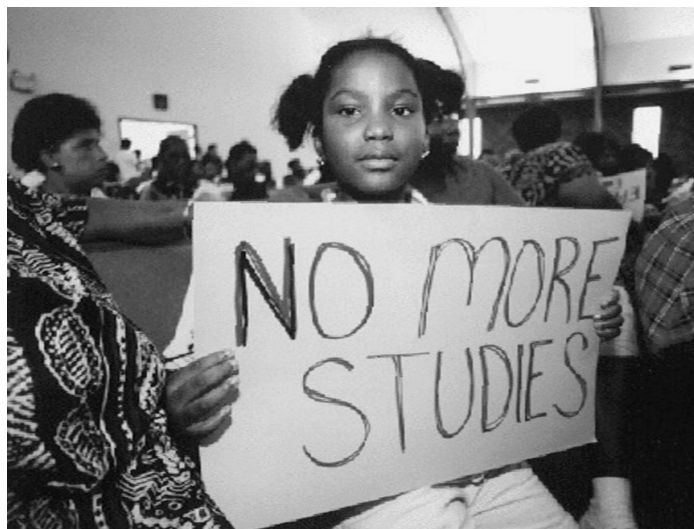
350 families in the neighborhood located next to the Escambia Wood Treating Superfund site are relocated by the USEPA marking a major win for **Citizens Against Toxic Exposure** who refused to settle for anything less than relocation for the entire community (Fall 96).

Years of persistence pay off for the **Pinellas Pasco Technical Assistance Grant** group when the USEPA agrees to re-open their choice of cleanup remedy for the Stauffer Chemical Superfund site in Tarpon Springs (Fall 00).

GEORGIA

STOP of Columbus wins the all-time victory speed award by stopping a WMI proposed garbage burner in 23 hours at a cost of \$12.63, the price of CHEJ's guidebook (plus postage) "How to Deal with a Proposed Facility" which they followed to a "T" (May 89).

The Technical Community Assistance Program (TCAP) at Albany State College gets off the ground with conference focused on educating ministers on current



Child living next to Mt Dioxin in Pensacola, FL expresses community sentiment about what the US EPA should do next. 350 families were relocated shortly after this meeting.

environmental justice issues. The TCAP program was run by ex-CHEJ staffer Barbara Sullivan (Feb 91).

Citizens for Safe Progress in Taylor County succeeds after a four-year fight in convincing the state to overturn its 1988 decision to build a haz waste incinerator in the county (Aug 92).

Organized residents of Hancock force county commissioners to revoke Dixie Recycler's permit to build a 900-acre mega-landfill; later state supreme court refuses to hear Dixie's lawsuit stopping the landfill for good (Apr 93).

Over 200 residents from across the state attend "Toxic Lotto" rally at state capital in Atlanta to emphasize that state is playing toxic lottery with their health and

environment by allowing out-of-state dumping (Sum 94).

Citizens for Clean Air, Land and Water and the **Legal Environmental Assistance Foundation** convince the Quitman County Commissioners to pass the nation's first ordinance designed to prevent human health effects by requiring any company wanting to construct or operate a facility to conduct an Environment and Health Baseline Assessment before a permit will be issued (Spr 95).

HAWAII

Up to 2,000 people march to site in rain forest of the Big Island demanding an end to

True Geothermal plans to drill for geothermal energy which threatens the island's fragile ecosystem; 133 non-violent protestors were arrested for trespassing (Aug 90); a year later the state ordered the project halted when an explosion killed two workers (Dec 91).

Coalition Against the Transport of Sludge in Honolulu, with over 3,600 members, stops N-Viro from building a sludge processing facility on the island of Oahu (Fall 96).

IDAHO

CLUTCH of Shoshone City helps secure 1-year moratorium on construction of U.S. largest PCB incinerator (Sep 86) and then generates enough public opposition to block siting of PCB incinerator by Western Services, Inc (May 87).

The Idaho Citizens Network of Kellogg (now the **Silver Valley Community Resource Center**) holds a "people's parade" to protest EPA's decision to renege on its promise to hire local workers to clean up the US's largest Superfund site. The parade included trucks, tractors, and other equipment that would have been used for the job if EPA had kept its word (Aug 89); ICN surprises attendees of luncheon during a visit by George Bush by giving attendees a packet of soil from the Superfund site that is contaminated with lead, leading to a meeting with the EPA Administrator Bill Reilly (Feb 91).

ILLINOIS

Wabash Lawrence County Taxpayers and Waterdrinkers Assoc blocks K/C Reclamation's proposed landfill and wins prize for longest new group name for year (Jun 90).

Concerned Citizens of Clark County defeats plan by state to site nuclear waste dump in Martinsville. Despite spending over \$85 M, the state cited "overwhelming

A small group of citizens formed the Glynn Environmental Coalition in 1989 in an effort to retake their community from the corporate overlords. Defamation and a media massacre drove home the need for help and training, which came in 1992 from Lois Gibbs and the Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste, now the CHEJ. It was training about how to use our meager resources to tell our story of hope for a safe and healthy place to live and raise our families - a story our community believed was possible as attitudes changed. The injustice of fathers dying in their mid-50's to support families was no longer taboo to discuss. Today our mantra is, "clean environment means a healthy economy," which we are obtaining one victory at a time. Thank you to Lois Gibbs for sharing what she learned by trial and error, and may the Center for Health, Environment and Justice continue doing the same for oppressed communities for another 25 years.

*Daniel Parshley
Glynn Environmental Coalition
Brunswick, GA*

25 YEARS OF ACTION LINE

From the very first time we contacted CCHW, now the Center for Health, Environment and Justice and its director Lois Gibbs, we were given accurate, scientific and factual information about environmental solutions, grassroots organizing, and networked with outstanding environmental justice leaders such as Penny Newman and Florence Robinson. SVCRC credits the success we have seen with the cleanup so far with having access to factual information. Education is empowering, it breaks the control of the polluters and bureaucracy to bring about progress. The Bunker Hill site is still not cleaned up, however SVCRC members have learned that with the continual support extended by CHEJ and their top-notch staff we know we have access to the resources to get the job done, and we will succeed! Happy 25th Anniversary CHEJ, keep up the great work!

Barbara Miller
Silver Valley Community
Resource Center
Kellogg, ID

opposition by community residents” as the reason for walking away from the proposed site (Apr 93).

Foster Wheeler’s garbage incinerator in Robbins shuts down following tremendous local opposition and a host of operating problems including two fires, an explosion, and 779 air permit violations in its first month of operation. The incinerator never operated profitably after the repeal of the state’s Retail Rate Law in 1996 which provided a subsidy to incinerators that generated electricity (Win 01).

Citizens for a Better Environment, South Cook County Environment Action Coalition, Illinois PIRG and the **Sustainable Hospital Project** rejoice when city of Chicago passes ordinance prohibiting municipal waste incineration, closing all burners in apartment buildings, schools, and commercial buildings in the city (Win 01).

Concerned Citizens of Ogle County (CCOC) stops expansion of landfill owned by Rochelle Waste Disposal. The city council rejected the 2,000 ton-per-day expansion after a letter writing campaign spearheaded by CCOC targeted the city councilors. Yard signs were a key part

of their strategy. Dozens of signs were put up including one in the yard of every neighbor of the city council members (Fall 03).

No Burn Evanston shuts down the Evanston Hospital medical waste incinerator (MWI) and all 11 of Illinois’ other MWIs. This effort involved meeting with hospital administrators, city council members, and educating the public with yard signs, protests and press coverage that eventually caught the attention of the Governor who announced that all MWIs in the state must close or he would ask lawmakers to ban them (Win 04).

INDIANA

People Against Toxic Incinerators and 14 other organizations come together to hold Earth Day protest in Bloomington challenging Westinghouse’s support for Earth Day activities and present the company with a blank check so that they could pay for a “just safe cleanup” (Aug 91).

After 15 years of opposition, the **Kilbuck Concerned Citizens Assoc** blocks plan by WMX Technology to build a landfill on the outskirts of Anderson. Opposition culminated in a huge march on the Governor’s mansion and a public hearing with over 400 people, leading the Solid Waste Management Board to permanently reject the project (Sum 94).

Northwest Indiana Residents for Clean Air and Save Our Children protest the US Army Corp of Engineers’ plan to dredge Indiana Harbor and dump PCB-contaminated sediment within a half-mile of a high school. Students from East Chicago High School conduct “walk-out” in protest and march from City Hall to site (Spr 00).

Citizens Organized for Residential Protection presents the Mayor with a sleeping bag at a public meeting after the Mayor claimed that a liquid propane gas packing operation in the middle of a residential area of Elkhart was so safe that he would sleep there. Putting up hundreds of signs and turning out 600 people to public meetings resulted in the city council voting against the plan (Sum 00).

IOWA

Concerned Citizens of Blackhawk County win strange victory when they convince county to buy and shut down the only hazardous waste dump in Iowa. They had the highest turn-out for any special election in their county and won 7 to 1 (May 85).

Say-Del Township Community Group and **Des Moines ACORN** stop BFT’s plan to open a medwaste incinerator in Delaware township in about a week (May 89).

Warren County Residents Against Toxic Hazards wins a campaign to pass an ordinance against Des Moines sludge being dumped in Carlisle (Feb 92).

KANSAS

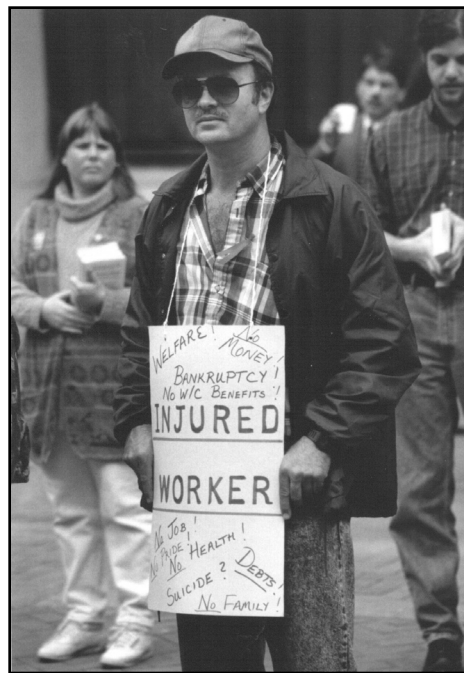
Quindaro area residents in Kansas City defeat BFT’s proposed landfill, which would have destroyed a historical

site on the pre-civil war, anti-slavery underground railroad (Jul 88).

Plainskeeper leader handcuffs herself to chair in Gov. Hayden’s waiting room to protest suffering of victims of air toxics from hazardous waste incinerators such as Vulcan Chemical’s near her home in Wichita. Denying protests by group played any part, Vulcan cancels plans to build incinerator just days later (Feb 89).

Greenwood County Landfill Watch defeats BFT’s mega-landfill on undeveloped prairie land by helping develop solid waste management plan for county that prohibits siting a regional dump (Spr 00).

Concerned Citizens of Marin County (CCMC) celebrate BFT’s decision to withdraw its proposal to buy and expand the Marion County Landfill (Sum 97); the decision closely followed a county meeting where CCMC rallied over 200 people to oppose BFT’s 850 acre dump and “blew them away” at the meeting (Fall 96).



Worker fighting for workman’s compensation attends Justice Day rally in Richmond, VA.

KENTUCKY

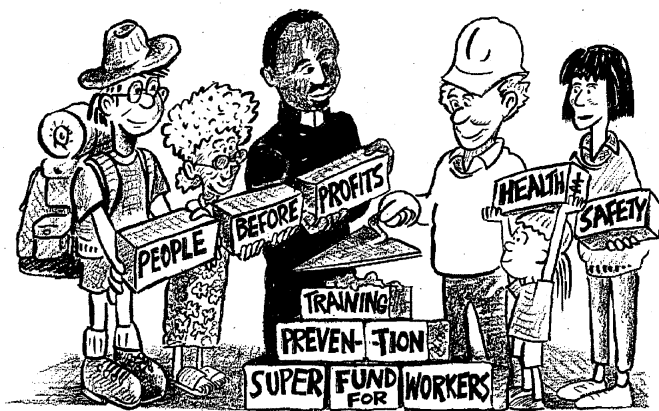
Concerned Citizens of Lawrence County defeats PyroChem plan to build regional hazardous waste incinerator by passing zoning ordinance that blocks development of incinerator (May 85).

Kentuckians for the Commonwealth and the **Paddlewheel Alliance** succeed after a three year struggle in convincing the city of Louisville to abandon its plan to build a solid waste incinerator and to expand its recycling program instead (Jun 92).

25 YEARS OF ACTION LINE

No MESS of Elizabethtown successfully blocks Midwest Environment Services' plan to build a fuel blending, storage and treatment facility that would have taken liquid haz waste and blended it for use as fuel in cement kilns (Sum 95).

After more than 20 years of opposition, the **Coalition for Health Concern** celebrates the closing of the Liquid Waste Disposal (LWD) hazardous waste incinerator in Calvert City when efforts to transfer ownership failed after LWD filed for bankruptcy after 30 years of operating (Spr 05).



Superfund for Workers: Building bridges between labor and public interest organizations. OCAW's Toni Mazzocchi proposed a funding and retraining program in 1993 for workers who loose their jobs as a result of environmental cleanup or protection.

LOUISIANA

Lake Charles residents use old-fashioned organizing to convince the state to order the closure of the BFI deep injection well at Willow Springs (May 85).

SOS of Ascension Parish wins the longest fight against a proposed haz waste site when IT Corp decided to withdraw its plans to build the world's largest haz waste facility after facing community opposition for more than 10 years (Aug 89).

Local 4-620 of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers in Geismar wins its 5-year fight with BASF, getting a new 3-year contract with company after being locked out when workers refuse company demands. The strike was a model community worker coalition where residents and workers stood united against the company (Feb 90).

CLEAN of Calcasieu Parish blocks NL Industries proposed haz waste injection well (Jun 90) and then forces them to withdraw their zoning application for a landfill (Aug 90).

North Baton Rouge Environment Association presents Rollins hazardous waste facility with eviction notice and bill for \$203M to cover property damages, relocation costs, and loss of community and cultural heritage (Aug 93).

Concerned Citizens of Agriculture Street Landfill organizes a "Pennies for Poisoned People" action asking people to send pennies to the Mayor as a way to show support for the families who live in public housing built by the city on a toxic waste site. The city claimed it had no money to relocate the people (Fall 99).

Concerned Citizens of Norco with help from the **Louisiana Bucket Brigade** win relocation for all residents of the Diamond neighborhood in Norco when Shell Chemical company agrees to buy all the homes in the community, not just half the homes as they originally offered (Sum 02).

MAINE

Public opposition by **Concerned Citizens of Hope** is a key factor in the state's decision to cancel the operating permit of Union Chemical Company, the state's only official haz waste handler (Jul 84).

"Dead fish" action pressures bank to stop supporting polluter International Paper. Local group rents a safe deposit box at bank that supports IP, deposits dead fish, and leaves making it clear to bank that they want them to stop supporting IP (May 88).

Concerned Citizens of Howland turn out in record number to vote down BFI landfill proposed for Penobscot tribal lands (Dec 90).

Maine Hospital Assn working with the state DEP and the **Natural Resources Council of Maine** agrees to phase out mercury, reduce use of materials that produce PBTs, and halve the waste they produce (Fall 01).

MARYLAND

Montgomery County's **Eco-Civic Network** and the **Sugarloaf Citizen Association** collect 33,000 signatures in the "Storm of the Century" effort to win mandatory vote concerning the primary financing plan for an Ogden Martin incinerator (Aug 93).

The North Bethesda Congress claims victory following the decision by the National Institutes of Health to close down their medical waste incinerator (Apr 94).

Maryland Pesticide Network celebrates after years of hard work when Maryland becomes the first state in the nation to require a reduction of school pesticide use along with direct notification of parents and employees prior to pesticide use in schools (Sum 98).

Fairfield/Wagner's Point Neighborhood Coalition win their fight to relocate neighborhood situated on peninsula surrounded by more than 50 chemical and petroleum facilities (Win 00).

The Greater Gambrills Citizens Pollution Task Force mobilizes 500 residents to a public hearing, cites concerns for their children and exposes illegal dumping and contamination in their successful effort to block a rubble landfill in their neighborhood (Fall 00).

MASSACHUSETTS

Opposition by **Stop IT** forces IT Corporation in Warren to withdraw its plans to build a haz waste treatment plant (Jul 84).

8 Woburn residents win \$1 million each in settlement with WR Grace for children's leukemia deaths linked to Grace's pollution of drinking water wells with TCE (Jan 87). These families are later relocated (Feb 88).

Concerned Citizens of Cohasset shut down BFI's garbage dump in Cohasset and win acquittal on charges from their dump blockade, using the "necessity defense,"

I wish to Congratulate CHEJ for your major role in "changing and teaching the ways to a healthy future". I have been involved with environmental issues now for 27 years, since the Woburn wells G and H were closed in 1979. After the discovery of what we believed here in this city as a common denominator of very unhealthy contaminated drinking water in Woburn, and the many cases of childhood Leukemia, the fight had just begun. It has been wonderful to have CHEJ as a resource to help Woburn and other communities bordering this city, to continue the battle of bringing polluters to Justice. Keep up the excellent work and I will always be on this end looking for more battles, and looking to CHEJ for whatever advice you have. Best wishes to all, and again Congratulations on your 25th year of powerful achievements.

*Donna Robbins
Co-Founder For a Cleaner Environment
Woburn, MA*

25 YEARS OF ACTION LINE

that is, that they had to do what they did to protect their community from BFI's toxic attack (Jul 88).

Braintree neighbors say no by an 8 to 1 margin to a proposed Clean Harbors haz waste incinerator (May 88); more than 3,000 participate in "mock wedding" protest depicting state regulators as "married" to Clean Harbors by virtue of "backdoor romance" (Aug 90); state closes book on company's plan by rejecting their permit application (Dec 90).

Citizens for a Clean Environment in Douglas win an 8-year fight to stop BFI's plan to build a 1,500 ton/day dump after convincing the state DEP that the company's plan offered no assurances that Douglas State Forest and several watershed areas located nearby would be adequately protected (Fall 95).

Hands Across the River Coalition blocks plan by the USEPA to burn PCB-contaminated river sediment when town of New Bedford refuses to allow water and electrical hook-ups and bans incinerator equipment from city streets (Nov 93).

The Housatonic River Initiative celebrates agreement between EPA and GE to dredge PCBs from the Housatonic River and clean up Allendale School in Pittsfield (Fall 99).

MICHIGAN

Evergreen Alliance joins with groups in 5 towns to fight the city of Detroit's "GUMBY" ("Gotta Use Many Backyards") strategy to site an ash dump for the city's monster incinerator. Detroit targeted 5 towns for the ash dump hoping the towns would fight each other. Instead the 5 towns hooked up and all said NO! (Feb 89).

Angry Muskegon residents get creative when the state refuses to require Marathon Chemical to provide clean water to neighboring residents. The group took buckets to city hall to fill them up with clean drinking and washing water. Over a dozen elderly women in bathrobes and hair curlers showed up just before Christmas demanding to use the restroom facilities. This action put tremendous pressure on the city to find a way to get Marathon to pay for the water hook-ups and end the embarrassment (Feb 90).

The Central Wayne Energy Recovery Facility in Westland defaults on \$80 M bond and shuts down, attributing the decision to the expense of retrofitting rather than on the consistent community pressure that has been applied over the years to shut down the incinerator (Win 03).

The Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision, the **National Lawyers Guild/Sugar Law Center**, the **Ecology Center**, the **Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund**, and concerned parents combine organizing and legal pressure to convince Detroit Public Schools to clean up contamination at the site of the Roberto Clemente Learning Academy in southwest Detroit (formerly the New Beard school)

and to provide parents access to information about the contamination, and legal recourse if the contamination is not properly contained or the area is not tested as scheduled (Win 04).

MINNESOTA

Citizens for the Future of Worthington win 5-0 vote from Stern County Commissioners to withdraw from MN's "voluntary" plan for toxic site by IT Corp, as did 2 other counties (Nov 88).

Homeward Hills Assoc of Eden Prairie organizes action to protest expansion of BFI's leaking landfill. Mothers and children boarded a school bus decked with flags and signs, rolled it in front of the dump and deflated the tires tying up the entranceway to the dump for hours. Sympathetic police refused to arrest the mothers and children. The action brought much attention to their fight and to BFI's poor track record. Shortly afterwards the state found BFI's landfill was leaking and denied their permit to expand the dump (May 88).



Children in Quitman County, GA join in protesting a proposed medical waste incinerator.

Citizens for a Clean Environment and MN FAIR beat Northern States Power's plan to burn PCBs in a coal fired power plant (Oct 91).

The Southeast Minnesotans for Environmental Protection successfully stops a plan to build a tire incinerator in Preston. More than 175 people came to a local fundraiser to show their support. Learning from CHEJ, they quickly recognized that their battle is a political fight, not a scientific one (Win 03).

MISSISSIPPI

MS Environment Management Organization and PEON in Noxubee County win state legislation banning any new haz waste landfills in state (May 85); and defeat

Waste Management plan to "clone" the "Cadillac of Landfills" in Noxubee County (Feb 86).

Citizens for a Clean Environment and **Citizens for Clean Air** join forces to stop WMI medwaste incinerator in Meadville and convince the state to issue a moratorium on new projects (Apr 91).

Choctaw tribe votes down a National Disposal Systems incinerator proposed for their land (Jun 91).

Organized residents of Hancock County succeed in getting a referendum vote and defeat by a 4 to 1 vote a plan to build a private landfill despite support from Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (Win 00).

MISSOURI

Ralls Countians Against Waste organizes to stop BFI's "Mark Twain" landfill. They made T-shirts reading "Don't Dump on Becky," referring to farmland, targeted for dump by BFI, that was once owned by Becky Thatcher, the inspiration behind Twain's Becky character in Tom Sawyer (Jun 91).

Missouri Coalition for the Environment, **St. Louis Gateway Greens**, **Sierra Club**, **ACORN** and **Sustainable St. Louis** unite to shut down medical waste incinerator in one of the poorest sections of St. Louis reviving networks and building on activism that shut down two other incinerators in the city in 1990s (Sum 00).

The city of Times Beach, the "Love Canal of the Midwest" is officially "disincorporated" by former Mayor Marilyn Leistner 5 years after more than 2,000 people were evacuated due to high levels of dioxin found in soil (May 85); EPA decides to burn dioxin contaminated soil from Times Beach and 27 other nearby communities (Oct 90); **Times Beach Action Group**, **St. Louis Area Incinerator Network** and others hold monthly demonstrations to halt plans to burn dioxin-contaminated soil (Apr 92).

Community pressure spearheaded by **People at Risk** and the **St. Louis Lead Prevention Coalition** forces Doe Run Company (the largest lead smelter in country) to relocate 160 families in Herculaneum including 20 families with children under the age of 6 whose children attend school located next to the smelter (Sum 02).

MONTANA

Clark Fork River Coalition succeeds in pressuring the USEPA to declare the entire length of the Clark Fork River a Superfund site, setting a precedent for other large contaminated rivers (Nov 85); CFRC wins buyout of 30 families in Anaconda by Mill Creek Corp because of mining waste contamination (May 87).

Montanans for a Healthy Future successfully turn back proposed plan to use haz waste fuel in a nearby Ash Grove cement kiln by generating widespread public opposition (Fall 95).

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the knowledge and skills necessary to fight environmental injustices, CHEJ's "mini-grants" supplied financial support for the leadership training critical to winning these individual battles. During the seven years this innovative program was in existence, 229 groups were awarded a total of \$589,950. Strengthened by this influx of financial resources, recipients were better equipped to contribute to the national grassroots movement.

Perhaps it was precisely this wider web of dedicated and empowered partner groups that enabled CHEJ to accomplish so much during the next phase of its history. One divisive issue that CHEJ first brought to light in 1986 was evidence that polluting industries intentionally discriminated against underserved communities. The Cerrell report, among others, exposed industry's attempts to site hazardous facilities specifically in low-income, racially diverse, rural, and elderly communities. This report that CHEJ uncovered indicated that the higher-ups for polluting facilities hoped to capitalize on these groups' lack of political clout, thereby ensuring little resistance to their siting efforts. Although industry officials ardently denied allegations that this strategy was more than just an isolated incident, CHEJ and other groups had already opened the public's eyes to the link between race, class, and pollution.

Perhaps CHEJ's most visible campaign in the early years was the McToxics Campaign, which kicked off in 1987. For years, the vast majority of fast food restaurants had packaged their food in Styrofoam packaging. Given the toxic chemicals released during the production, use, and disposal of Styrofoam, CHEJ considered this material to be unsafe and a threat to environmental health. These packages were also an unnecessary source of waste since, by their very nature, fast food sandwiches are typically consumed just moments after purchase. The McToxics Campaign united children, schools, religious communities, and everyday citizens, greatly expanding nationwide grassroots networks. When McDonalds finally announced in 1990 that it would no longer use Styrofoam

packaging, dozens of counties, churches, and government agencies followed suit.

With over a decade of success under its belt, CHEJ began to broaden its base of constituencies. The organization undertook extensive outreach efforts to involve new groups in the movement. Around the same time, it became apparent that the field offices had served their purpose of getting grassroots groups on their feet and establishing statewide support; the decision was made to close those offices and redirect resources to providing support to existing larger-than-local groups as they trained emerging grassroots partners.

The work of such groups became especially critical in 1994, when the EPA released a startling report on the effects of dioxin and its ubiquitousness throughout our environment. One of the most toxic chemicals ever studied, dioxin was found to accumulate in peoples' bodies over time through continual ingestion of meat and dairy products. The EPA revealed that the levels of dioxin found in most Americans was so high that any additional exposure could trigger adverse health effects. In response to these disturbing revelations, CHEJ launched the Stop Dioxin Exposure Campaign in 1995. CHEJ held several regional roundtables on this issue and played a key role

citizens to take action. This book and the interest it generated educated the public about the variety of dioxin sources, including paper mills and incinerators, and sparked grassroots efforts to shut down such facilities. Of the 77 percent decrease in dioxin emissions that occurred between 1987 and 1995, a full 90 percent was due to grassroots groups shutting down large numbers of the two most prominent sources of dioxin – municipal and medical waste incinerators. The Stop Dioxin Exposure Campaign has been one of CHEJ's most victorious campaigns to date.

CHEJ also took the lead in eliminating products that result in the release of dioxin during their production, use, and/or disposal. This led to another campaign in 1996 called the Health Care Without Harm Campaign. CHEJ and other grassroots leaders recognized that many health care products were made of PVC plastic that contained chlorine. When PVC waste was burned (the primary disposal option for medical waste), high levels of dioxin are formed. CHEJ and its partners believe that patients can be treated using alternative materials that neither impact the quality of their care nor pose a health risk when disposed of. In 2001, CHEJ helped spawn an entirely autonomous organization when Health Care Without Harm became an independent

organization working to ensure that the health care industry is environmentally sustainable and truly embodies the medical oath "First do no harm."

The most recent chapter of CHEJ's history has focused on preventing harm to our health by promoting a shift in public perspective. Instead of asking, "How many toxins can be released?," CHEJ encourages

communities to ask, "How much pollution can be prevented?" CHEJ has always been motivated to prevent such waste—rather than debating how much exposure could be tolerated—in the name of protecting public health.



on the organizing committee for the Third Citizens' Conference on Dioxin held in Baton Rouge, LA. In the book *Dying from Dioxin: A Citizen's Guide to Reclaiming Our Health and Rebuilding Democracy*, Lois Gibbs, together with CHEJ's staff and other grassroots groups, detailed the threat posed by dioxin and urged

As a new comer to the environmental health and justice movement 6 years ago, the resources of CHEJ's were invaluable in helping understand key policy issues in the environmental health and justice movement. Working with CHEJ helped me understand the politics and science issues related to school siting policies.

*Martha Dina Argüello
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Los Angeles, CA*

The group with the least political clout is also arguably the most vulnerable: children. In response to countless concerns raised by parents about their children's exposure to a wide range of environmental health hazards, CHEJ developed its Child Proofing Our Communities Campaign in 2000. The program has raised the public's awareness of children's unique vulnerability to toxins in their environment, the heightened risk of disease and lower IQ these contaminants pose, and the appalling lack of regulations to prevent such exposures in schools. As part of this campaign, CHEJ has released several reports detailing the potential health hazards children face in schools and how communities can create safer learning environments for their students.

To help safeguard the health of our nation's children through local action, the Green Flag Schools Program was created as an outgrowth of the Child Proofing Campaign. This program unites teachers, students, and community members to address school environmental health issues such as indoor air quality, toxic cleaning product use, and integrated pest management. By encouraging those involved to investigate these issues and help change their school's practices, Green Flags has empowered citizens of all ages while helping to create healthier spaces in which children can

play and learn. Launched just three years ago, this program has already made a difference in over 55 schools across the country, ensuring a healthier learning environment, one classroom at a time.

Another key program that shares the goal of preventing harm is CHEJ's BE SAFE Campaign, which began in 2002 as a nationwide initiative to build support for the precautionary approach. The BE SAFE Network of over

250 groups held national days of action to promote precaution on toxic and nuclear issues on the 25th Anniversary of Three Mile Island, the 60th Anniversary of Hiroshima & Nagasaki, and the 25th Anniversary of Superfund. BE SAFE has helped groups in

conference will unite hundreds of grassroots groups to promote the widespread adoption of precautionary policies (*see BE SAFE, page 5, for more details*).

A crucial part of the BE SAFE campaign is CHEJ's PVC Campaign, which has worked to spread the word about the hazards of PVC, the "poison plastic," as well as identify available alternatives. Through the release of the report "PVC: The Poison Plastic, Health Hazards, and the Looming Waste Crisis" and a host of advocacy efforts, this campaign has enjoyed widespread success. Numerous major corporations—including Microsoft, Victoria's Secret, Johnson & Johnson, and Crabtree & Evelyn—have agreed to phase out their use of PVC packaging. Since Microsoft completed its PVC phase out in December 2005, over 361,000 pounds of the plastic have already been eliminated from the waste stream. Once again, CHEJ has demonstrated the power of

grassroots organizing and advocacy to create lasting change.

This commitment to helping local communities help themselves has been the hallmark of CHEJ's work throughout its history. Indeed, the organization has gained significant ground since those four devoted volunteers first crowded into Lois's basement 25 years ago. Over the years, CHEJ has empowered more than 10,000 local communities to eliminate chemical exposures that threaten their health. With a network of over 8,000 groups by its side, CHEJ has energized local activists and solidified national coalitions. What began as one woman's desire for a clean, healthy world has flourished into an organization playing a key role in making this vision a



1st graders at Broadneck Elementary School in Maryland celebrate receiving their Green Flag award for developing a paper recycling program in April, 2005.

many states pass precautionary ordinances and laws, including Georgia, Illinois, Oregon, New Mexico, Minnesota, New York, and North Carolina, culminating in the launch of a national Precautionary Policy Clearinghouse.

To help ensure that many more communities will be able to follow their lead, CHEJ and its BE SAFE partners will hold the First National Conference on Precaution in June 2006. The

reality. Despite its growth, CHEJ has remained unwaveringly committed to its original purpose: helping communities nationwide as they strive to provide a healthier environment for their families. The core beliefs inherent in CHEJ's mission have also remained unaltered. Everyone—regardless of race, socioeconomic status, or age—has the right to live, work, and play in a clean, safe environment. ♦

25 YEARS OF ACTION LINE

Continued from page 13

After years of community pressure led by the **Native Forest Network**, **Cold Mountain**, **Cold Rivers**, and **Montana CHEER**, Stone Container announces it will shut down the bleach plant at its liner board mill in Missoula (Spr 99).

CHEJ's counsel and support has provided us with tools to enable us to take up the battle and begin to prevail. We have learned how to plan, set goals and strategize to get us where we need to go. Our involvement with CHEJ has given us courage and inspiration and helped us to realize that ordinary citizens can make a difference. They have been a model for how to move decision and policy makers, and CHEJ's work provides us with the confidence that we are not alone. Their example of never giving up and always looking for the ways to turn adversity to advantage strengthens us when we tire and want to relent. CHEJ has blazed a brave trail for all of us to follow as we seek to secure a safer tomorrow for our children. They are the pioneers who make our victories possible. Thank you CHEJ.

Jackie Elliott

*Citizens Leading for Environmental Action and Responsibility
Claremont, NH*

Women's Voices for the Earth wins a major fight when the VA hospital in Missoula decides to shut down its incinerator almost immediately following a series of radio ads and a public event they sponsored to draw attention to the VA incinerator (Sum 00).

NEBRASKA

Santee Sioux Tribal Council votes 10 to 1 to reject bid by Kean Companies to build and operate a haz waste treatment facility on tribal lands (Oct 90).

Save Boyd County stages a mock funeral at a nuke dump hearing and takes over meeting, spending 6 hours voicing opposition to a proposed dump (Dec 91).

Oakland residents block a Safeway Environment Technologies medwaste incinerator (Apr 92).

NEVADA

GASP of Pahrump, and communities in Oasis and elsewhere, organize to oppose numerous plans to build

toxic waste dumps in the state to take waste from CA where regulations are very strict. They later convince the Gov to declare a 9-month moratorium on all hazardous waste facilities (Nov 85).

Organized residents of Stateline block a planned cement processing plant by American Ready-Mix (Aug 90).

African-American, Latino and Native American activists join together on Indigenous Peoples Day in support of the "Action for Nuclear Abolition." Groups from across the country unite to stand in solidarity with the Western Shoshone, whose homeland is the location of the world's first high-level nuclear waste dump (Win 05).

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Citizens Leading for Environmental Action and Responsibility of Londonderry defeats Waste Management's planned trash incinerator by getting voters to reject the plant by a vote of 362 to 247 (May 88).

SAFE of Manchester helps Goffstown residents block a Wheelabrator mass burn incinerator (May 89).

Residents of Pelham, Hudson and Windham organize to defeat Thermo Electron Energy System's plans to build wood-to-energy plants in North Pelham and Raymond (Aug 92).

Residents of Kingston convince zoning board to reverse earlier decision and reject plans to build asphalt plant based on many issues including noise, damage to roads, dust, and excessive use of land (Win 96).

NEW JERSEY

Ironbound Community Corporation petitions, marches on City Hall, and rallies at DEP in Newark until DEP finally rules against SCA's proposed toxic waste incinerator (Nov 83).

Rockaway township residents celebrate defeat of proposed dump on top of sole-source aquifer after getting their Congressman to include amendment to Superfund banning such dumps (Jan 87).

Bayonne Citizens for Clean Air organizes turn-outs with over 1,000 angry citizens forcing the city council to rescind their decision to build a sludge incinerator (Apr 90).

Ironbound Committee

Against Toxic Waste successfully blocks Wheelabrator Technologies from converting a solid waste transfer station to a sewage treatment plant in Newark when DEP denies plant's final permits plans (Sum 97).

Residents Against Transfer Station block a proposed trash transfer station in Bayonne after organizing a rally of 2,000 outside City Hall and mobilizing thousands more at a town meeting (Fall 99).

NEW MEXICO

Hidalgo County Commission blocks Driggs Corp's plan to build 24,000 acre mega dump for East Coast garbage by passing moratorium on new landfills (May 89); Dona Maria County Commissioners order 2-year moratorium, further stalling Driggs' plans (Aug 89).

600 people cram into Sunderland racetrack's bleachers to call for a showdown of Nu-Mex Landfill's medwaste incinerator located in a Hispanic neighborhood. Following the lead of one of the speakers, people began pelting Nu-Mex representatives and hearing officials with loose change forcing the hearing to end (Aug 91).

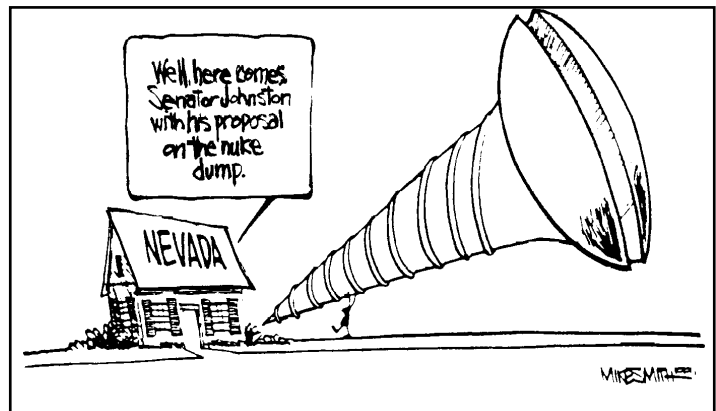
Concerned Citizens of Sunland Park stop a medical waste incinerator (Aug 92)

NEW YORK

Over 300 gather in Niagara Falls and Albany to protest the state's plan to resettle Love Canal with low-income people. Petitions signed by thousands of concerned citizens are strung together and delivered to Governor Cuomo's mansion (Jun 90).

Citizens Against Radioactive Dumping maintain a vigil and blockade near Norwich in Allegheny County to prevent state surveyors from entering the site; protestors on horseback charge a column of state troopers escorting site inspectors in an effort to break their blockade. The following day, Governor Cuomo orders suspension of inspection efforts in the 5 counties that are prospective radwaste dump sites (Jun 90).

Wheelabrator plan to import New York City sewage sludge is stopped by **Citizens of Putnam** who turn out 1,200 people at a zoning board hearing to win a 6-0 vote (Oct 93).



The Coalition to Close the Long Beach Incinerator is victorious when NY DEC announces the closing of the Long Beach incinerator in response to concerns from the community and elected officials and violations of its operating permit (Win 96).



Child Proofing Our Communities: A Campaign to Reduce Threats to Children's Health

Happy Spring from the Child Proofing Our Communities Campaign!

More than 1,000 school districts have a policy or program to reduce the use of toxic pesticides on school grounds – is yours one of them?

Call us at (703) 237 - 2249 ext.21 to find out.

Since 2001, parents across the country have joined the Child Proofing Our Communities Campaign to take action and reduce toxins in their communities. This spring, join us to help your school move towards healthy and pest-free grounds and buildings without the use of toxic products.

Toxic pesticides not only create health problems in those who apply them, but also in children, animals and others who are around them. After applying pesticides, lawn care companies typically line the treated area with flags saying "keep off for 24 hours." However, most pesticides remain present on the lawn surface and toxic for several weeks or more. As a result, the pesticides can be picked up on little hands, shoes and paws and tracked into the house, where they then remain trapped in carpets and fabrics.

Give us a call to receive more information on pesticide free schools. Child Proofing our Communities has a network of parents that we can connect you with, a booklet of case studies of successful non-toxic schools, and numerous resources on how to combat specific pests through non-toxic approaches. Most importantly, we can help guide you through the process of finding out what chemicals are used on your school grounds, the health effects of these chemicals, what non-toxic alternatives are available, and how to work with administrators and facility managers to put this knowledge into action.

Contact the Child Proofing Our Communities Campaign to find out how to achieve great results naturally, without harming children's health!



Complete our School Environmental Survey and form a group of students and staff to investigate environmental issues in your school and receive the Green Flag!

This national awards program is free of charge, and guides Green Flag teams to investigate indoor air quality, cleaning products, pesticide use and recycling efforts in their schools. Teams identify ways to improve the environmental health locally, educate others, and help implement environmentally friendly school programs and policies.

**Contact Green Flags at
(703) 237-2249 ext. 17 or at
www.greenflagschools.org**

Child Proofing Our Communities

Center for Health, Environment and Justice ★ P. O. Box 6806 ★ Falls Church, VA 22040-6806
(703) 237-2249 ★ childproofing@chej.org ★ www.childproofing.org ★ www.greenflagschools.org

25 YEARS OF ACTION LINE

The smokestack of the state's last incinerator is torn down in the South Bronx in a ceremony that includes speeches, prayers, and songs by more than 200 school children. **South Bronx Clean Air Coalition** reflects on countless hearings, dozens of actions and thousands of prayers as they witness the destruction of the symbol of environmental injustice in their community (Sum 99).

After waiting one year for their mayor to develop a relocation plan for their lead and arsenic-contaminated neighborhood, members of the **Hickory Woods Homeowners for a Clean Environment** gather in front of City Hall with a five-foot-high replica of a clock that reads "Time's Up," and delivers a cardboard coffin to the Mayor's office (Spr 03).

Ten Holley families who were forced to live in hotels and apartments for three years as a result of the release of 80 gallons of hazardous chemicals in their neighborhood are permanently relocated by the USEPA (Spr 05).

NORTH CAROLINA

Davidson County Defense League turns out 15,000 people opposing state haz waste site and within days, the site is dropped from consideration by state (Feb 88).

Caldwell County citizens succeed in shutting down notorious Caldwell Systems incinerator (Feb 88).

FORRC organizes over 1,000 residents to oppose the state's plan to site a new haz waste incinerator in Richmond County (Feb 90); over 5,000 angry marchers parade through Salisbury to protest the state's latest efforts to build a new haz waste site (Oct 90); similar organized protests run the plan out of Rowan and Granville (Apr 91); Northampton County Commissioners end a long standing deadlock and vote 3 to 2 to rescind their invite to ThermalKEM (Oct 91); Pender County also uninvites ThermalKEM after intense public opposition (Dec 91); Woodland joins list of towns that reject ThermalKEM (Dec 93).

Unrelenting pressure from **Warren County Concerned Citizens Against PCBs** and other local residents comes to fruition as a state committee agrees that an appropriate technology exists to detoxify the PCB waste buried in the Warren County landfill. Residents were promised by the Gov that the PCBs would be dug up as soon as a treatment technology to detoxify the waste was available. The state allocated the funds to exhume and treat the waste and began planning to redevelop the site (Win 01).

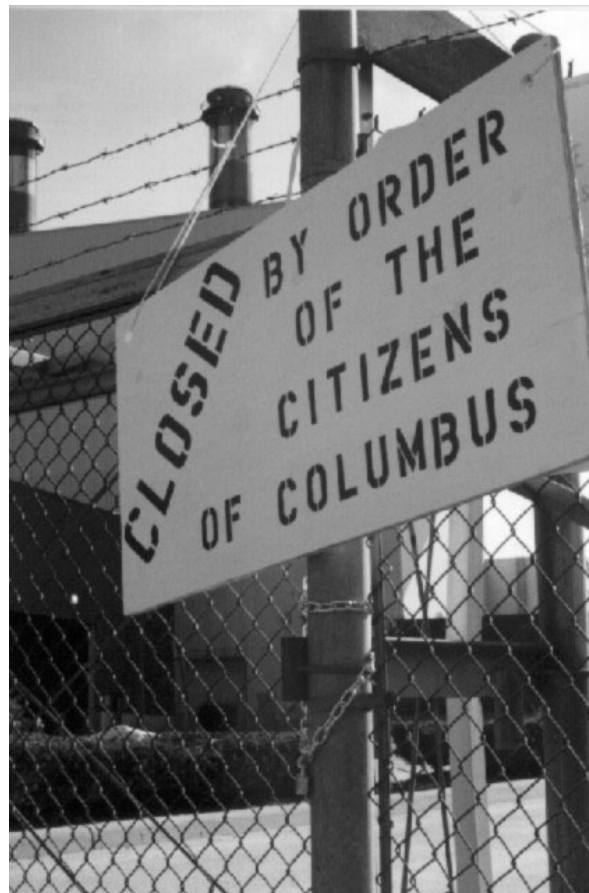
NC WARN wins 12-year fight to block plan to site a low-level radioactive waste dump when the state withdrew from the Southeast Compact, an agreement between several Southern states to find a mutually acceptable radwaste dump (Fall 99).

After an 11-year struggle, **Stanly Citizens Opposed to Toxic Chemical Hazards** and **NCWARN** celebrate as Carolina Solite agrees to stop burning haz waste as fuel in their cement plant (Fall 00).

Citizens Against Landfill Expansion (CALE) defeat a proposal to double the local landfill in Troy. CALE circulated a petition with 1,100 signatures and mobilizes

enough people to force government hearings to move to the courthouse which they packed and overwhelmingly convinced the commissioners to vote against the plan (Win 02).

Neighbors for Environment Safety Today, a chapter of the **Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League**, celebrates the end of its decade-long fight to prevent WMI from expanding its Piedmont landfill when the landfill was capped and closed (Win 04).



Parkridge Area Residents Take Action celebrate closing of Columbus garbage incinerator by placing sign and lock on gate in front of incinerator.

NORTH DAKOTA

Concerned Citizens About Toxic Waste in Grand Fork organizes community opposition that leads to defeat of plan by Union Carbide to use Univ of ND as site for PCB processing center (May 87).

Concerned Citizens for Clean Water helps convince the ND Health Dept to deny USPCI a permit to dump ash from Minneapolis in Sawyer. The group listed USPCI's record of past violations which was given as one of the reasons the permit was denied (Apr 91).

The Richland County Task Force for a Safe Environment succeeds in stopping a WMI/Chemical Waste Management haz waste dump proposed for Antelope Township (Apr 92).

The Dakota Resource Council succeeds in convincing the State Supreme Court to regulate incinerator ash as haz waste, severely limiting out-of-state ash going to a dump near Sawyer (Win 96).

OHIO

CF/WATER in Urbana celebrates victory over Waste Management having forced the company to withdraw from a planned waste oil facility near Springfield (Oct 84).

More than 1,000 strong from OH, PA, and WV line the bridge into East Liverpool in a "Hands Across the River" action symbolically linking the states in opposition to the construction of the WTI waste incinerator in East Liverpool (Aug 91); **Save Our County's** Alonzo Spencer and actor Martin Sheen (pictured on page 6) are among 22 arrested after they climb the fence and kneel in prayer during a protest at the construction site of the WTI haz waste incinerator (Dec 91).

Stop IT, Citizens Against Pollution, and others celebrate passage of House Bill 604 that places a 20 year moratorium on building any new commercial incinerators in the state. The bill effectively eliminated Ohio Technology Corp's plan to build 2 incinerators on farmland in northern Ashland County, a plan opposed by Stop IT for more than 5 years (Sept 93).

Alliance for Incinerator Reform in Miami Valley succeeds in shutting down two of the longest running trash incinerators in North America (Fall 95).

Citizens Lobby for Environment Action Now celebrates withdrawal of proposal for a permit to build a haz waste incinerator in Skinner Landfill Superfund site in West Chester and permanent closure of BFI infectious waste incinerator (Spr 96).

Parkridge Area Residents Take Action (PARTA) celebrates the closing of Columbus trash incinerator, one of the largest generators of dioxin in the US, by placing a chain and padlock on the gate of the recently closed incinerator (Win 94); later PARTA blocks city from using closed incinerator to burn tires using a pyrolysis technology from Taiwan (Win 03).

The Blanchard Township PEARLS (Protectors of Everyone's American Rural Life Style) of Hardin County wins 5 year fight to block a proposed limestone quarry when a District Court of Appeals upheld a County Common Pleas court ruling in favor of the Township. "This proves that prayers and perseverance can pay off! Right can win out over might," said PEARLS founder Theresa Allen (Win 05).

25 YEARS OF ACTION LINE

OKLAHOMA

Native Americans for a Clean Environment of Tahlequah blocks Kerr McGee's plan to expand waste disposal in Gore (Jan 87) and succeeds in shutting down Sequoyah Fuels (owned by Kerr McKee) nuclear processing plant (Dec 91).

NoWaste of Broken Arrow defeats plan by John Zinc, Inc to build haz waste incinerator in landmark victory by getting the state legislature to pass and Governor to sign a law calling for a referendum and majority approval of residents living within one mile of a proposed toxic waste site before a permit can be issued (Aug 87).



Ponca City Concerned Citizens hold 2-month "camp out" at state capitol to protest change of heart by state treasurer Ellis Edwards who promised he'd find money to relocate families from their homes contaminated with petro-chemicals from Conoco-Dupont facility in Ponca City (Nov 88); company agrees to pay \$23-27 million to purchase up to 400 homes and compensate up to another 500 families who suffered from the contamination at the site (Jun 90).

Kaw Tribe turns down \$1.4M in royalties by breaking their contract with Waste Tech for an \$80M haz waste incinerator (Apr 91).

OREGON

State passes novel approach to out-of-state haz waste disposal – dump what you want, but it will cost you \$250,000 a ton (Jan 87).

Organized residents in NE Portland beat Ke-Am International's planned PCB incinerator that would have burned 10,000 transformers in the middle of a residential neighborhood (Nov 89).

NW Environment Advocates and others organize and block WTD Industries planned bleached pulp mill at Clatskanie on the Columbia River (Jun 90).

Alternatives to Burning Committee of Sherwood blocks ThermTec's medwaste burner expansion and get burner shut down pending hearings; voters vote against incinerator by 2 to 1 margin (Apr 91); state denies ThermTec its permit (Jun 91).

PENNSYLVANIA

Centralia Home Owners Association and Concerned Citizens of Centralia wins \$45 million federal buy-out of their homes after living with an out-of-control, toxin-releasing and life-endangering mine fire beneath their residences for 20 years (Nov 83).

Governor Bob Casey institutes "TrashNet," a roadblock and interception program on the NJ-PA line. State

Police, State DOT, environmental regulators and Gov Casey stop, cite, and turn away hundreds of trucks hauling out of state waste into PA. Casey also issues an Executive Order immediately halting all new landfill construction, expansions and incinerators (Nov 89).

Hegins Valley Environmental Association forces Schuylkill Environmental to withdraw its application for what would have been the state's largest medwaste incinerator. The day after the victory, 12 grassroots groups joined together in a 24-hour accountability march around the Governor's mansion in which they pulled pay toilets behind them, and asked the Governor to take action on polluters in "the nation's pay toilet" (Aug 92).

Over 1,000 protestors join **Organizations United for the Environment's** "March to USPCF's Death Row" to oppose the construction of a hazardous waste incinerator in Allenwood, directly across the highway from the largest federal prison in the country (Oct 93).

From the time the citizens of Allendale started our fight to prevent the opening of the Appleton landfill CHEJ has been with us. I do not remember how we got started, but I do remember all the conversation and advice that was given to us. The one thing that is the most important is the technical support. The most important thing to remember is how to deliver the message and to be accurate and truthful. The staff at CHEJ does both. They are always willing to assist with technical support and in helping us to understand all the information. You have connected our community with other communities with similar issues. Through our relationship and your assistance my community has been able to help other communities. I believe CHEJ's 25TH Anniversary is ours, "Working Together Bringing Communities Together."

*Alonzo Frazier
Allendale County Citizens
Opposed to Landfills
Allendale, SC*

In a dramatic victory for the **Red Rose Alliance**, EnviroSafe Services announces that it was ending its thirteen-year fight to create a hazardous waste dump. The 92-acre treatment and disposal facility would have been situated in northeast Lancaster, in the heart of Amish country (Apr 94).

RHODE ISLAND

CONCERN of N Kingston blocks planned regional municipal trash incinerator (Nov 85), a second proposed monster incinerator (Feb 86) and convinces state to begin planning model statewide mandatory recycling program (Jan 87).

A rare alliance of city and community opposition ties up plans by Fort Barton Industries to burn haz waste in densely populated Warwick (Feb 89); city officials force delays on procedural grounds; residents try various tactics including a bank boycott aimed at major shareholder Hospital Trust bank, pulling \$3.5M in deposits from the bank; frustrated, company declares bankruptcy and abandons its plans (Aug 90).

Concerned parents, neighbors, and the public win long well fought campaign when a judge ruled against city of Providence for building two schools on dumpsites (Win 05).

SOUTH CAROLINA

Energy Research Foundation pressures state to require Genstar (GSX) to secure the largest known insurance policy - \$30M with annual premium of over \$2M - to get state approval of license to transfer from SCA Services to operate the Pinewood haz waste dump in Sumter (Feb 86).

After years of frustration trying to get the state and federal governments to close the leaking GSX/Laidlaw haz waste landfill in Sumter, **CASE** members organize a dawn blockage in front of the landfill and 5 residents are arrested (May 88); all 5 are acquitted by a jury using a "necessity defense" for trespassing on the company's property. They argued that their actions were taken to serve a "greater good" and the jury agreed (Nov 88); more than 2,000 turn out to oppose permanent licensing of landfill; CASE hands out "toxic reserve notes" at hearing to signify their claim that GSX is buying state approval (Feb 89).

Allendale County Citizens Opposed to Landfills in Allendale organizes and defeats plan to use the site of an existing landfill to install a construction and demolition landfill (Fall 01).

Citizens for Clean Air and Water succeed in getting the state to deny ThermalKEM's bid to expand their haz waste burner in Rock Hill (Apr 90); state passes law requiring a 2,000 foot buffer around any new haz waste facility further preventing the facility from expanding (Jun 91).

SOUTH DAKOTA

Fall River Citizens Against the Dump stops sewage sludge disposal in Provo by National Ash (May 89).

25 YEARS OF ACTION LINE

Grassroots groups from six states join together to launch “Don’t Waste the West” campaign by marching on the annual meeting of the Western Governors’ Assoc in Rapid City demanding the “Right to say No” to out-of-state waste. The WGA adopted a resolution allowing states to set dumping fees that would control the amount and type of out-of-state wastes headed for their borders (Oct 91).

After 3 and a half years, **Citizens Against Incineration (CSI)** succeeds in blocking the state’s first solid waste incinerator in Newell. CSI turned public opinion against the burner by using petition drives, information and focused organizing strategies that led to a 6 to 1 vote against the burner by the SD Board of Minerals and Environment (Sum 96).

TENNESSEE

The **TN Right-to-Know Coalition** wins the South’s first statewide community and workplace right-to-know law and are part of the process to write the regulations to make it effective (Nov 85).

TN preserves local rights to protect communities from toxic waste by passing state law requiring that before any permit can be issued for a haz waste landfill, county residents must vote on whether to accept the facility in their community (Aug 87).

Citizens Against Hazardous Waste of Marion County organize quickly and turn out 3,000 people forcing the Nickajack Port Authority to unanimously reject sale of land to Federated Technologies for a commercial hazardous waste incinerator; the project was dead within 2 weeks (Aug 90).

Roanoke members of **Save Our Cumberland Mountains (SOCM)** succeed in halting plans to expand a leaking county landfill. SOCM organized opposition focused on the commissioners who voted to rescind support for the plan after standing room only crowds opposed the dump (Spr 95).

A multi-year campaign by **Recycling Advocates of Middle Tennessee, Bring Urban Recycling to Nashville Today** and other local community groups succeeds when the city of Nashville agrees to shut down its main garbage incinerator and increase its recycling capacity (Spr 01).

Save Our Cumberland Mountains succeeds in stopping Waste Industries from constructing a 142-acre landfill in the Piney community near Spencer by using petitions, public hearings, letter writing and old-fashioned organizing (Fall 04).

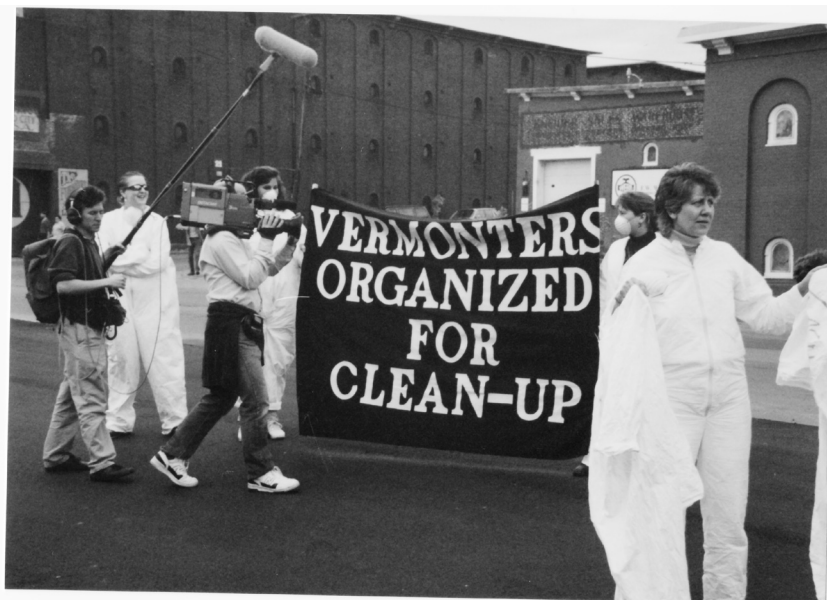
TEXAS

Palestine residents organize and form **STOP-TOX** and block plan by **TEXSTORE** to inject toxics into deteriorating salt dome (Jan 87) by convincing the county to condemn land where company wants to site the facility using eminent domain to claim the land (May 89).

Texas City ordinance restricts building haz waste incinerators within 4 miles of residential areas and halts proposed \$35M chemical waste incinerator (Oct 87).

After three years of hard work **GASP** forces BFI to withdraw its permit application for its Hutchins dump (Apr 92).

Calhoun County Resource Watch leader Diane Wilson ends month long hunger strike in effort to save Upper Lavaca Bay and Gulf Coast fisheries from pollution caused by Formosa Plastics (Oct 93).



Mothers Organized to Stop Environmental Sins (MOSES) celebrates major win when American Ecology decides to no longer accept haz waste at its two injection well disposal facilities due to “unacceptable costs associated with litigation.” MOSES had doggedly been fighting to shut down the plant for years (Fall 96).

Save Sierra Blanca takes a major step toward victory when two administrative judges recommend that the state deny a license for a proposed “low level” radioactive waste dump to be built near the tiny town of Sierra Blanca, whose residents are mostly poor and Hispanic and who already endure the nation’s largest sewage sludge land application project (Fall 98).

Friends of Ward County (FWC) celebrate Envirocare’s decision to drop plans to put a radioactive waste dump in their community. The company withdrew its permit application and sold the site after FWC persisted in

opposing the facility even when many of the town’s officials supported Envirocare’s plan. FWC used petitions, letters to the editor, organized presence at meetings and raised numerous and continuous challenges to the company (Spr 01).

UTAH

Rollins drops plans to build haz waste incinerator when **Concerned Citizens of Iron County** succeed in getting a reversal by county zoning board which denied Rollins needed zoning change to build incinerator (Feb 88).

Grand County Alliance of Moab defeats proposed haz waste incinerator by getting the question put before the voters who turn down the project by a 2 to 1 margin (Feb 89).

Citizens Against Chlorine Contamination score major victory when Magcorp announces it is installing new pollution controls and agrees to clean up dioxin contaminated land caused by its magnesium production plant near Rowley (Win 01).

VERMONT

Vermonters Organized for Cleanup (VOC) kick off nationwide corporate campaign coined the “McToxics Campaign” to get McDonald’s to stop using Styrofoam (Aug 87).

Sunderland VOC blocks Vicon’s planned ash landfill which shuts down and declares bankruptcy (Nov 88); voters in 25-town regional district reject \$19.5M bond proposal to buy defunct Vicon trash burner so that it could be restarted (Feb 90).

United Barre Against the Dump organizes such opposition to proposed dump near a school in Barre that the developers withdraw their plans (Spr 02).

VIRGINIA

White Oak Concerned Citizens make Virginia history by winning the 1st state order to close a solid waste landfill (Jan 87).

The state rejects a 700-acre dump proposed by a “mystery dumper” (company failed to provide office address on their application) two weeks after Halloween weekend, when **Pittsylvanians for Environmental Awareness** organize a “Hunt the Phantom Dumper” motorcade to dramatize the dumper’s mystery status (Feb 89).

Fairfax County children, toting signs reading “Evacuate Texaco, not our homes,” join **Citizens for a Healthy Fairfax** and **CHEJ** in a protest march against the leaking Texaco/Star Enterprise tank farm (Aug 94).

The Mattaponi River Alliance voice their concerns at a public meeting attended by about 200 residents about

25 YEARS OF ACTION LINE

a proposed 1,500-acre reservoir that would violate a treaty with local tribes and wipe out ancestral lands and wetlands on two reservations (Fall 97).

In a precedent-setting agreement, the **Washington Park Lead Committee** wins relocation for 160 families living in public housing next to a lead foundry in Portsmouth after an initial decision to relocate only private homeowners when the lead foundry and the nearby public housing were declared a Superfund site (Sum 00).

WASHINGTON

Citizens Against the Midway Landfill generate such pressure that city agrees to buy-out 14 families as runaway methane gas from Seattle's 30-year old Midway Landfill makes homes unsafe (Sep 86); landfill closes shortly afterwards (May 87).

The Hanford nuclear weapons reactor is permanently shut down (May 88).

Citizens to Save Ritzville defeat ECOS' planned haz waste burner by getting ECOS' own Citizens Advisory Committee to reject project by a 14 to 4 vote (May 89); ECOS was rebuked in 10 other communities across the state (Nov 89).

The Community Coalition for Environment Justice, Washington Toxics Coalition and other community groups succeed in convincing the last two hospitals in Seattle to stop burning their medical waste and begin a process of helping the hospitals reduce their waste so they don't have to burn it someplace else (Win 99).

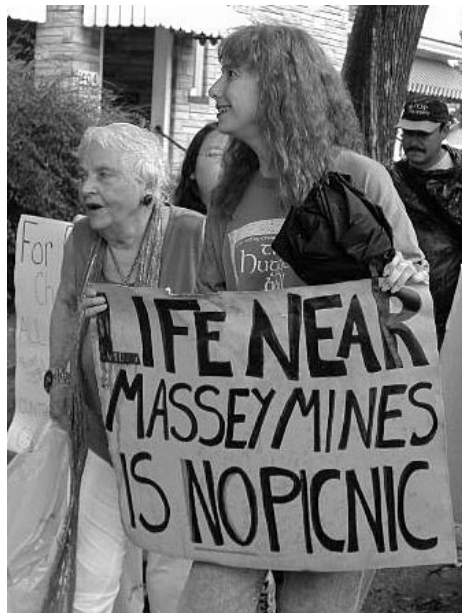
WEST VIRGINIA

Tucker County residents mount an around-the-clock blockade of the Tucker County landfill for 40 days and nights until the landfill operator tears up contracts to take out-of-state waste at the facility (Nov 88).

Wise Guy Award goes to **MACE** of Mason County for cleverly grabbing Pyrochem's corporate name. Pyrochem, who wanted to build a hazardous waste burner in Pt. Pleasant, forgot to register its name in the state. MACE found out and took name for a MACE-

related "environmental consulting business," infuriating company (Aug 89).

Thousands converge on state capitol to demand environmental justice as part of "E-Day." Citizens from all walks of life, including union members, church leaders, teachers, and students turned out for what one WV participant called "the strongest showing for the environment in WV history" (Jun 90).



Members of the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition prepare to crash Massey Energy's company picnic to protest mountain top removal.

The Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition celebrates revoking the last permit for the proposed Apple Grove Pulp Mill. After a ten-year fight, the group defeated what would have been the largest pulp and paper mill in North America (Spr 98).

Members of dozens of activist groups, including **Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition** and the **West Virginia Highlands Conservancy**, walk 492 miles across the state to raise awareness about the devastating effects of mountaintop removal/valley fill coal mining on the environment (Win 00).

At a Massey Energy meeting to discuss "Challenges Facing Southern West Virginia Coal Production," over 60 members of **Friends of the Mountains** and **Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition** gather outside to sing songs protesting mountaintop removal coal mining,

demonstrating one major challenge facing the company (Win 04).

WISCONSIN

Residents of Oshkosh succeed in blocking a plan to dump 34 tons of high-level PCBs dredged from the Fox River in local landfill (Spr 99).

Stop Unnecessary Road Expansion/Highway J Citizens Group gathers 6,000 signatures and inundate Governor's office with phone calls following radio ad campaign to block highway expansion into adjacent landfill (Spr 02).

A remarkable alliance of Native American nations, sportfishing groups, environmentalists, unionists, rural residents and urban students win 27-year fight to block a proposed copper and zinc mine at the headwaters of the Wolf River. The groups used basic grassroots organizing, both door-to-door and over the internet, to stave off the proposal for decades while the mine site changed ownership several times (Win 03).

WYOMING

The Laramie River Cleanup Council rallies to protest the cleanup plan proposed by EPA for the Union Pacific railway site. The EPA's plan was to leave the contamination where it was and move the river (Nov 85).

EPA offers Brookhurst residents \$700,000 water hookup as alternative to local contaminated drinking water, but residents want site cleaned up as well and claim "If you can't cleanup the site, WE WANT OUT!" (May 87); later Sinclair Oil agrees to buy out residents (Nov 88).

Rawhide neighbors win federal emergency declaration enabling them to get help in relocating from toxic gases seeping into homes from underground mines. Over 150 homes taken over by federal lenders; homeowners given checks for lost equity (Jul 88).

The Wyoming Outdoor Council stops a cement kiln from burning haz waste in Landen (Apr 92).

PUERTO RICO

The 2nd largest toxic waste relocation in US history ordered by Commonwealth government for 320 families in the Ciudad Christiana development in Humacao due to mercury contamination by Squibb and Technicon (Sep 86).

Mission Industrial de Puerto Rico forces Westinghouse to pull the plug on its proposed San Juan trash incinerator (Jun 92).

Groups of activists repeatedly enter bombing ranges on Vieques Island, disrupting bombing exercises to protest Navy presence and bombing on island (Sum 02); Navy announces it will leave Vieques - a victory for the movement to expel U.S. forces and a testimony to the effectiveness of organizing and of civil disobedience (Spr 03).



Continued from page 7

Companies that violate environmental laws will also violate labor laws. Those that don't respect the environment also tend to run unsafe operations that place workers, their families, and community members at risk. What this means is that we have more allies than we realize because workers and the community have twin goals: safe workplaces-safe communities. We need to get beyond the myth that protecting the environment costs jobs. The fact is, companies that invest in pollution control equipment are much more likely to continue operating in this country; such investments are really job security.

*Diane Heminway
United Steelworkers
Environmental Projects Coordinator
Pittsburgh, PA*

While our movement has fundamentally been about rights and accountability, it also turned out to be about technologies, solutions and visions. We started by focusing on the problems of dump sites and wastes and we struggled for the right to be free of chemical hazards; to go to work without undue risks, and to live in safe neighborhoods. We learned that no one, not governments or businesses, was going to come up with the solutions. We needed to develop our own literacy in science and technology and we needed to create programs like right-to-know, toxics use reduction, good neighbor agreements, citizen monitoring, precaution, and chemicals policies that would lead us towards a safer and more secure community. We may have started out hoping others might solve our problems; we ended up finding that the solutions to achieving a more just and sustainable future lie mainly in ourselves.

*Ken Geiser
Lowell Center for Sustainable Production
University of Massachusetts Lowell
Lowell, MA*

Scientific information is necessary and plays an important role in the struggle for a cleaner, healthier, more satisfying environment, but its importance pales in comparison to the efforts of local community groups. The most essential ingredient has been citizen initiative, input and involvement not only for the political pressure

community groups provide, but because they are the most important ingredient in the science itself: they know what health effects they are suffering, where the environmental hazards are, and the pathways the hazards take to their families. There is no substitute for a tenacious, engaged and informed community. Without it, nothing will happen. With it, anything can happen.

*David Ozonoff
Boston University School of Public Health
Boston, MA*



One of the most important lessons I've learned over the years is the strength and inspiration of people standing up and speaking "truth to power." I remember a group of us showing up to testify at an EPA Science Advisory Board (SAB) meeting as part of CHEJ's Stop Dioxin Exposure Campaign. The "scientists" on the board were supposed to declare if they had any potential conflicts of interest. Of course they didn't tell the truth about their inherent bias. So, we organized a demonstration in the meeting and stood up with signs showing the industry bias of the committee members who were supposed to be acting on the Dioxin Re-assessment. Each of us stood proudly (we had done our research!) with a placard showing the corporate affiliations of SAB members such as Dennis Paustenbach and John Graham. People standing up and speaking the truth are powerful agents of positive change.

*Pamela Miller
Alaska Community Action on Toxics
Anchorage, AK*

In almost every environmental fight, people at one time or another want to hire a lawyer.

The only possible way that you can get a 100% guarantee that you will lose your fight is to hire a lawyer. It is hard for many people to appreciate the fact that laws are written by the polluters and enforced by the judges chosen by the polluters. The law allows the siting and expansion of dump sites and incinerators and if you go to court you will learn this at a very high cost. The only strategy that has any chance of winning is organizing. So many times when I make suggestions about organizing, I get the response "we have already tried that." My response is always, then "you just have not done it enough." Lawyers only get in the way.

*Ron Simon
Simon and Associates
Washington, D.C.*

You will fight and win many battles along the way, be they small or large. You must always celebrate your wins and learn from your defeats. You have to educate yourself and show the community that you have their best interest at heart, that you truly are an advocate for them. They must feel that they are listened to and that their opinions matter. You have to organize around those issues that negatively affect the community most, allow the community to participate in the planning process to create a plan that you can implement and track together. Involve the community from the beginning, be persistent and always remember that 'a squeaky wheel will get oiled.'

*Shirley Williams-Baker
Mothers and Daughters Protecting Children's Health
Anniston, AL*

Of the many important lessons I've learned, Chief Seattle's simple message stands out: "all things are connected." When we first started Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition, we thought that our problem was ground water pollution and that the solution was cleanup. Over the years we've learned that water pollution is merely a symptom and that we must understand the root causes of any problem before it is possible to develop strategies for sustainable solutions that are comprehensive and not piecemeal. Bottom line, in an era of corporate globalization, we must create a global grassroots movement from the bottom up.

*Ted Smith
Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition
San Jose, CA*

With Special Thanks

CHEJ would like to acknowledge the following individuals and organizations who made critically important donations to support our work between November 17th, 2005 and February 2nd, 2006. We wish we had the space to acknowledge each and every one of CHEJ's donors in these pages because all gifts, regardless of size, are very much appreciated.

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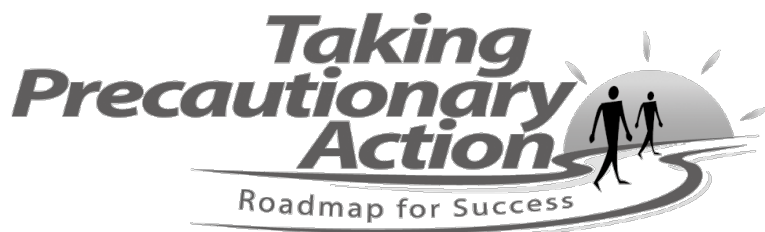
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