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Maine Statewide News Letter No. 18 (July 1981)

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Number 18

"All The News That Fits To Print"

July 1981

THE SIGNS OF SUMMER..... Petitioners needed!

There are currently at least four worthwhile petitions floating around the state, all of which urgently need people to distribute and sign.

First is another attempt by the Maine Nuclear Referendum Committee to close the Maine Yankee Nuclear Plant in Wiscasset, known officially as the Nuclear Fission Control Act. This act would prohibit the operation of nuclear fission thermal plants in the state after November 2, 1987.

Last year's referendum, which would have shut down Maine Yankee immediately, got a record number of signatures (55,834) and 42% of the vote. This time, MNRC expects to do much better, as anti-nuclear sentiment continues to rise, and because the proposal is more moderate than last year's.

37,000 signatures are needed by Feb. first, 1982, in order to have the state legislature vote on it. If they do not enact the bill exactly as presented, Maine citizens will vote on it on November 2, 1982. The MNRC urgently needs help in collecting signatures and building local groups. Contact MNRC, Box 2627, Augusta 04330 (622-4395)

The second petition is for a referendum to ban moose hunting in Maine. On April 1, 1981, Gov. Brennan approved an act (listed under Chapter 118 of the Public Laws of 1981) which provided an open season on moose. This referendum

would simply repeal this act, and is sponsored by "Save Maine's Only Official State Animal" (SMOOSA). Contact John Cole, Simpson's Point Rd. Brunswick, 04011 (729-8808)

The third petition is an appeal to the US Congress, asking for the dismissal of Secretary James G. Watt. Watt is seen as representing private economic interests, rather than following the laws that define his responsibilities. Petition sponsors feel that he is sabotaging conservation goals supported by a vast majority of the American people.

This petition is sponsored by the Sierra Club and Friends of the Earth (FOE) "Replace Watt" petitions are available from FOE, Box 2614, Augusta 04330 (549-7802) or Sierra Club, c/o Ken Spalding, Box 494, Rangeley 04970.

Finally, there is the AFSC's call to "Halt the Arms Race" campaign, a petition directed at our Maine congressional delegation asking them to introduce a resolution calling for an immediate and mutual bi-lateral (US and USSR) nuclear weapons freeze. It also calls on the administration to negotiate with the USSR for a permanent freeze on nuclear weapons. More information can be obtained from AFSC, PO Box 7097, Lewiston 04240 (772-0680)

Summer is petitioning and leafletting time. Supplies may be limited, so write for yours today!

COUNTDOWN BLASTS OFF

June 30 will mark the beginning of the final year allowed for national ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) To mark this occasion, ERA supporters will host a "Countdown Rally" at noon, June 30, on the steps of the state capitol in Augusta.

The amendment, which has been adopted in Maine and 34 other states, (3 more needed) reads "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States, or by any state, on account of sex."

A speech by New England Regional Director of NOW (National Organization for Women) Lois Reckitt, and music by Joanne Dauphinee will be featured. Governor Joseph Brennan and other political figures have been invited to speak, as well.

NOW is also preparing for a walk across the state, Aug. 21-24, to publicize the ERA and women's rights. Help is needed to do the planning and the walking! Contact: Joanne Dauphinee, 23 March, Bangor 04401 (942-2830) or your local NOW chapter.

DO KIDS READ THIS NEWSLETTER?

"We are Children and Young People who fear for the future of our world. The U.S. and the Soviet Union are building more and more human-killing weapons, and every day, the threat of nuclear war becomes greater. Our leaders are making decisions that affect us, as children, more than anyone else."

The "Childrens' Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament" is asking for letters from children, written to President Reagan, opposing the nuclear arms race.

The letters will be taken to the White House on October 17, and read out loud in public, and then presented to the President. Send letters to Childrens' Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Box 550, RD 1, Plainfield, Vermont 05667 (*802-454-7119). A junior high student in Maine, Susie Dennison, can also be contacted for more information. (Box 538, Temple 04984, 778-2513)

Each and every letter matters!

HIROSHIMA COMMEMORATED

The 36th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (where over 150,000 were immediately killed and thousands more died of radiation) will be commemorated on August 6 through 9.

Past events have included balloon releases, a walk to Seabrook, parades, rallies, and last year, an all night vigil in Portland. A Portland group will be fasting for part or all of those four days, and is encouraging others to do the same in their local areas. Contact: Marty Payson, 257 Foreside Rd., Falmouth, 04105 (781-4769).

A coalition of American Friends Service Committee, Clergy and Laity Concerned, and other local groups and individuals who want to coordinate local actions, and possible plan statewide events, has met once and will meet again to finalize Aug.6-9 plans. That meeting will be Sat. July 1', 10 AM, at All Saints Unitarian Church, 11 King St., Augusta. Contact AFSC, Box 7097, Lewiston 04240, for details.

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INVERT, JR.!

Concerned about peace and social justice issues? Want to receive monthly (just like this newsletter) updates on what is happening around the state and nationally, as well? Then request your copy of the Maine Clergy and Laity Concerned (CALC) Newsletter. Subscription rates don't exist, but contributions for the newsletter, or memberships in Maine CALC are encouraged. Write to: Maine CALC, RFD 1, Newport, Me. 04953 (938-2219) From some of the folks who bring you the MSN, so you know it's got to be low-budget!

THE WOMEN'S ROOM

Iris is a private women's club in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. There is a dance room, with a bar and upbeat music. There is also a quiet room, with softer music, salad bar, and sandwiches. Yearly membership is \$10, and there are now over 300 members. There is a cover charge for guests and visitors. (Men are allowed as guests of members.) Iris is at 40 Pleasant St., downtown Portsmouth, behind the large church.

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"TAX THE ROCKE-FELLERS, NOT THE POOR FELLERS

A national organization called the Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition has been formed to address the issue of oil company profits. CLEC includes over 150 groups, including trade union, senior, consumer, citizen, environmental, religious, and minority organizations. CLEC would like to see Maine pass a 2% oil tax on the gross revenues of integrated oil companies. Similar taxes have been passed in Connecticut and New York, to recapture some of the revenues reaped by the oil companies. For more information on CLEC contact Emily Ecker, Box 5B, Bryant Pond 04219, phone Bryant Pond 70 Ring 5, or write CLEC, 600 W. Fullerton, Chicago, Ill. 60614.

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EL SALVADOR PRESENTATION

"El Salvador: A Country in Crisis" is the title of a slide show to be presented at the Mt. Vernon Masonic Hall at 7:30 PM on Sunday, July 19. Sister Julie Kane is tentatively scheduled to talk about the history of the church in Central America following the slides. A local political action group to work on this issue will hopefully be formed during the meeting as well.

Contact for this meeting is Peter Devine, Box 113, Mt. Vernon 04352, 293-2202. Peter also has tapes of Dr. David Halperin's talks on Nicaragua. Send a 45-minute blank tape and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to him and he will send you a copy of Dr. Halperin's talk.

DIGNITY FOR ME.

Dignity/Maine is an organization of gay and lesbian Catholics and their friends. Dignity/Maine offers education, counseling, fellowship, prayer, and worship in support of the belief that gays and lesbians have a duty to "live the Sacramental Life of the Church" and to serve as "Instruments of God's love working among all people."

Dignity/Maine will initiate support groups anywhere in Maine for parents and families of lesbians and gay men to help them understand what their loved one may be going through. Write: Dignity/Maine, PO Box 7021, Lewiston 04240.

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BERN PORTER STRIKES AGAIN

Bern Porter, poet laureate of the universe, will read his poetry at the Portland Public Library on Thursday, July 2 from 7-9 PM. This reading will open his show of books, "70 Years of Writing and Publishing." The show will be at the library from July 1 to August 30.

Bern Porter is also chairperson of the Institute for Advanced Thinking in Belfast. If you have any questions about that, go to the reading and ask them, if not, go anyway. Refreshments will be served.

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NEW LIFE NEWS

The summer edition of New Life Now, Maine's guide to holistic health, well-being, and natural living is out! The summer residency training in the healing arts begins July 6 in Athens and culminates with the Second Annual Healing Arts Festival, Aug. 21-24. The summer studies program includes weekend workshops and a special 4-day rebirthing training on July 20-23. The toll-free number is back in. For details on any of the above call or write to the New Life Foundation, Box 355, Athens 04912.

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"Reaganomics--as if people didn't matter."

A SCROUNGER'S PARADISE

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SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY

A second-hand shop just opened in Portland. "The End of the Rainbow" is being sponsored by New Age Community Enterprises, Inc. NACE is a non-profit organization that supports community projects in the Portland area.

The shop sells books, records, and tapes, along with household goods, costume jewelry, clothing, and other useful second-hand items. Customers can buy, trade, or consign goods. At "End of the Rainbow" there is a map on the wall pinpointing the location of 30 other second hand and thrift shops in Portland.

"The End of the Rainbow" hopes to become a focal point for finding out about community resources and happenings. There is a display rack and card file about community activities. In the afternoon, Maurice Harter, president of NACE, will be available to help people looking for resources.

Another aim of the store is to provide a source of funding for community groups and projects. Store profits will be channeled back into the community through donations or sponsoring projects. A newsletter is planned, called Rough Times, and should be published starting in July (monthly). This free newsletter will serve as a guide to bargains, thrift stores, and surviving in Portland.

The store is located at 81 Oak St., (downtown area). Hours are Tues.-Saturday, 10-6. Call 773-0847 (b-4 10).

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A (W)HOLISTIC NETWORK FOR HEALTH

The Maine Holistic Health Network (MHHN) is a non-profit organization of lay persons and health professionals concerned with the promotion of high-level wellness through preventative health care and holistic health approaches.

MHHN is a communications system for information sharing, connecting people and events and a support network. Membership is \$10 per individual per year. Membership benefits include: Discount on network conferences, holistic events calendar and newsletter subscription, participation in local network activities, discount on the holistic health resource directory, and support of holistic health and wellness in Maine.

For membership information, write Maine Holistic Health Network, PO Box 7482, Portland 04112.

The South Solon library is now open and accepting donations. In fact, the library is always open, 24 hours a day and has been for four years. Books are loaned and returned on an honor system by anyone who wants to use the library. You don't need a card to join, just go there.

The library is on Molunkus Road in South Solon, ½ mile north of Rt. 43. Over 1,000 books, mostly paperbacks, are housed in a slightly refurbished school bus. Records and magazines are also loaned and donations of good used clothing can be left.

Books are divided into about 15 different sections. Fiction, Sci-Fi., Poetry, Drama, and Children's are just a few. Readers who want to thrill to Agatha Christie will find her books in the "Murder, Mayhem, Calamity, Torture" section. Also there is a women's corner with about 25 books by contemporary women authors. There used to be a full year's subscription to Ms. Magazine and a copy of Our Bodies, Ourselves, but some fink borrowed them and hasn't brought them back---yet!

The library is run on an honor system, but people are expected to bring the books back. The supply has become depleted over the past year, so donations of books are very welcome. To donate, contact Janis Donovan, RFD 4, Skowhegan 04976, 643-2429.

... WOODSWORKERS UNITE ...

A look at the Maine Woodsmans Association in 1981

Woods work is the second most dangerous job in the U.S. today, yet the average employed woodcutter earns an average annual income of around \$9,000. Few have savings to fall back on, when by age 45, they are "burnt out" and can no longer work in the woods. Fair wages are just one reason Wayne Birmingham organized the Maine Woodsmans Association in June of 1975.

Sixty woodworkers gathered in Bangor for the first MWA meeting. By August their numbers had grown to 400. They voted to strike against the paper companies, focusing on several grievances. The primary issue was the butt-scale system, which was considered inaccurate and arbitrary. Unfulfilled contracts were another complaint; as well as preferential treatment to bonded Canadian workers and unfair trucking regulations which gave Canadian truckers an advantage over their Maine counterparts.

The 1975 strike lasted for only two weeks. Over 3,000 people picketed in support of the MWA and things were moving fast, too fast. Scattered incidents of violence were reported which made the strike even more interesting to the press. The strikers had public support, but were under heavy pressure from Gov. Longley, the courts, and paper companies to return to work.

Some painful lessons came out of the strike, many of them due to inexperience in politics. Eventually organized labor, the AFL-CIO tried to step in. To Birmingham it looked like an easy way out. But, "they offered us a lot and gave us nothing" he said of the carpenters union from which he disassociated himself after 6 months.

Mel Ames was voted president of MWA in the spring of 1980. Goals under new leadership remain much the same. They are: to rid the state of alien labor; to get a fairer scaling law that will be enforced; safer and better working conditions; better representation in government; no more

unkept promises from paper companies or government officials; and to see that proper forestry practices are imposed.

Seven large companies own one-third of the land in the state of Maine. Proper forestry management would increase chances for year round work by supplementing tree harvesting with planting and timber stand improvement. Officially the MWA favors Silviculture, a forestry method that allows varied species to mature in a forest, and they are against spraying insecticides to kill the spruce budworm.

Regaining control over the land they work in is only one way the MWA will seek power. They are also asking for support from the State Attorney General for a fair, enforceable, and definite scale law. Companies often use arbitrary weight equivalents, one determining that 4,300 lbs. is a cord of wood, another claiming 5,000. The scale changes, depending on the season and the demand for wood. Wayne Birmingham was fired from his woods job in 1975 after complaining to the State Weights and Measures Dept. He says he cut 80 cord of wood but was only paid for 52. "Figures don't lie, but liars figure" is a favorite woodcutters expression.

The North woods has a unique history and culture which is deeply intertwined with Canada. Today Canadian mills import millions of board feet of wood every year because the supply no longer exists in Quebec. Because of vigorous Canadian land settlement policies and large Catholic families, much of the available work force in northern Maine has been traditionally Canadian. Companies are allowed by law to bring in foreign workers once they prove they cannot hire enough Americans to fill the jobs. However, the wood harvested by the alien labor force will likely cause a surplus this fall and, once again, put Maine woodcutters out of work.

Feelings are hard right now in northern Maine because of an incident with Maibec Logging Co. This May (story continued on p. 8)

Maibec hired 80 cutters, 40 Canadians and 40 Americans. Not only did the company pay \$4.00 less per cord than last winter's prices, but they were accused of putting Canadians in the prime timber. Legally Americans can claim the better wood to cut, which they did. Maibec then gave the Canadian crew use of company skidders and made the American cutters hire their own. Finally, the 40 Americans were fired and they are presently taking legal action over the incident.

Governor Brennan has been co-operative with MWA on the Canadian labor issue. In May, Brennan asked Manpower Affairs Commissioner William Malloy and Ray Sorbono from the regional office of the U.S. Dept. of Labor in Boston to ensure that Federal laws on hiring aliens are strictly enforced.

Senator George Mitchell has also initiated legislation (bill S944) which would require alien labor to establish residency in the U.S. within one year. The bill is pending in congress, but one can expect it to meet strong opposition from the paper industry.

"Not everything should be blamed on the Canadians. It's the greedy contractors who import them and the paper companies that are to blame" says Mark Hardison, spokesperson for the Hancock Co. MWA. "We don't want to fight with the Canadians. Last time we got blamed for some things we didn't do, but the trend goes against us when we are against other woodcutters."

Although another woods strike was talked about this spring, the support was not really there. Instead, the MWA has been quietly and efficiently organizing. Presently there are 300 members in Hancock Co. and over 1,000 statewide. Meetings are held every other week, usually on Sunday; next meeting is on July 12 in Waltham.

Crew members of 10 of the 15 major contractors working for St. Regis Co. in Hancock Co. have voted to be represented by the MWA. The Association wants to organize cutters, truckers, and even contractors to bargain for a

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contract with the paper companies that would include grievance procedures, paid holidays, vacation time, and more pay. After looking at contracts from all over the U.S., they adapted what was useful and tried to eliminate the loopholes. The MWA is certified by the National Labor Relations Board and has union power.

Spokespersons for the paper industry try to dismiss the MWA and the structure that caused it to be formed. This attitude was vividly portrayed during a paper company executive's interview in a movie "Cut And Run", made by Richard Searls.

Supporters say the home-grown labor organization has made some real inroads into the Maine woods industry. A trucking law which allows Maine as well as Quebec truckers to carry loads in both directions is a direct result of MWA efforts. Also, there is now a scaling law enforceable by the State. Dept. of Weights and Measures, which previously had no control over scale determined by the paper companies.

Hancock Co. has organized a woods co-op which sells saws and parts, chains, and cables at a much lower price. The idea behind the co-op is to keep more of the profits at home.

If you would like to receive the MWA monthly newsletter or know more about them, contact:

Mel Ames, President
Rt. 3
Dover-Foxcroft, Me. 04426
564-7570 or,

Mark Hardison
RFD 3 Box 379
N. Ellsworth, Me. 04605
667-7004

MARGARET FULLER will return to Maine in the form of Laurie James and her 1-woman show, "Margaret Fuller, America's First Feminist." The event will be on Sat., July 11, 2 PM, at the Camden Opera House for the Edna St. Vincent Millay Festival. Buckminster Fuller, Margaret's relative, will be there. Tickets are \$5.

For more information or to help sell tickets: Ramona Barth, Women's History Research Center, Box 410, Wiscasset 04578, 586-5051, 236-4769.

FINNISH WORKSHOPS TO START IN JULY

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ORGANIZING IN THE NORTH COUNTRY

Two 8 to 10 day "hands-on" masonry heater workshops will be conducted in July by three Finnish experts, Heikki Hytaneneis, Risto Auttila and Ecke Alto. These men will supervise the construction of two Finnish style masonry heaters.

Finnish heaters are unique in that they are loaded front and center like a traditional fireplace and can be viewed as an open fireplace, or fired with cast iron double doors closed and dampers adjusted so gasses flow up a central core and then spill down the sides to exit via a channel underneath the firebox. With a proper foundation, these heaters can be retrofitted to existing chimneys.

Workshops are open on a limited basis to masons and owner-builders. Cost is \$175.00. Dates are July 9-18 and July 22-31. A one-day intensive design workshop on July 9th will cost \$25. Contact Albie Barden of Maine Wood Heat Co., RFD 1, Box 38, Norridgewock, Me. 04957 or call 696-5442.

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"When public officials can justify our country's support of dictatorial regimes by making a distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian forms of government, it is time to take a close look at dictators so we can better determine which ones are truly worthy of our support."

The North Country Institute (NCI), a training and resource center for organizers working in small cities, towns and rural areas, will hold a summer, rural "Organizing and Training Session" in East Sebago from Aug. 23-27. Cost is \$275.00, which covers meals, lodging, tuition and materials. Cost may be negotiable through NCI.

NCI has been holding training sessions in NH and Vermont since 1979, and has recently opened an office in Portland. The training is for leaders and organizers to utilize their own experiences and those of others, with emphasis on "hands-on" experience and a chance to practice skills. Topics include: leadership development, building organizations, organizing principles, models and strategies, direct action and campaigns, and more.

NCI is a private, non-profit organization, with close associations with grassroots groups in northern New England and other rural areas. For more information: Ellen Fleischmann, North Country Institute, PO Box 7484, Portland, 04112. (775-3050) Early registration is preferred.

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"Only those who have already experienced a revolution within themselves, can reach out effectively to help others."
--- Malcolm X

MAINE STATEWIDE NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION/FEEDBACK FORM

Please return this form with comments/suggestions, articles, and/or a subscription, (paid or not). Return to INVERT, RFD 1, Newport, Maine 04953. (938-2219)

- △ I like the newsletter, but can't give a donation now. Please keep sending it.
- △ Here is a 1981 contribution of \$4 or \$_____ or whatever _____.
- △ I would rather not get the newsletter. Please take my name off the mailing list.
- △ I would like to send articles/events (deadline is 20th of each month), help with production in Palmyra (July 22-24) or with a collating circus, or be part of a newsletter review committee. (Please specify)

I (do/do not) want my name given out for use by other groups or for special mailings.

What do you like most or least about the newsletter? Can you send us information on topics we don't adequately cover? If there are others who would like to receive this newsletter, please send us their names and correct mailing addresses.

The post office charges us 25¢ for each incorrect address. If yours has or will soon be changed, please let us know.

My correct mailing address is: _____
