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8-1-2000

### Volume 29, Number 4

Post Amerikan

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#### Recommended Citation

Post Amerikan, "Volume 29, Number 4" (2000). *The Post Amerikan (1972-2004)*. 248.  
[https://thekeep.eiu.edu/post\\_amerikan/248](https://thekeep.eiu.edu/post_amerikan/248)

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A tax on junk food?

Freedom of (hate) speech

CD & book reviews



# POST AMERIKAN

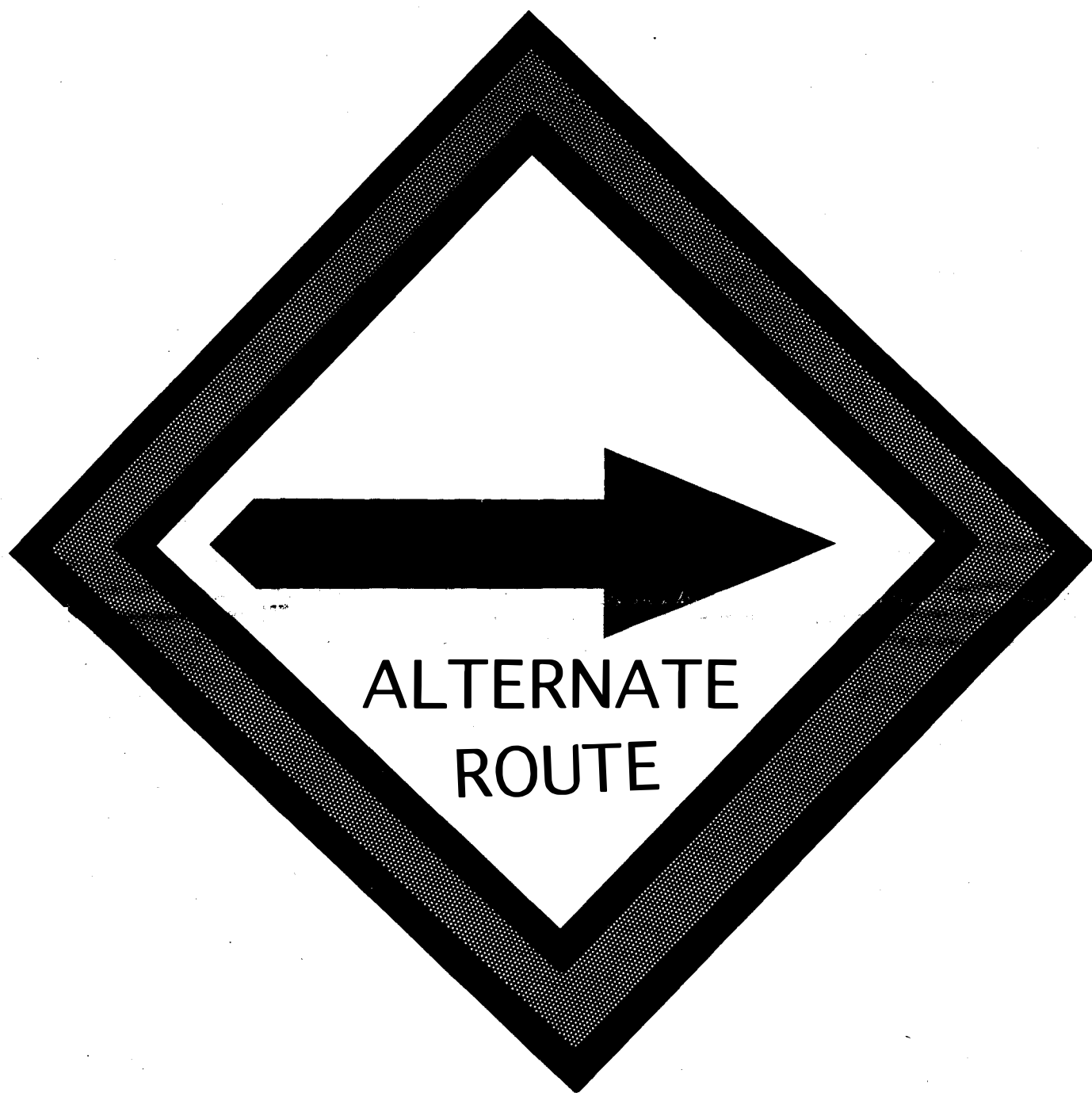


BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL VOLUME 29

**FREE**

NUMBER FOUR

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2000



Discover alternatives to:

Ritalin, gasoline,  
housing, and mainstream press

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BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL VOLUME 29

NUMBER FOUR

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2000

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## About us

The *Post Amerikan* is an independent community newspaper providing information and analysis that is screened out of or down played by establishment news sources. We are a non-profit, worker-run collective that exists as an alternative to the corporate media.

We put out six issues a year. Staff members take turns as "coordinator." All writing, typing, editing, graphics, photography, pasteup, and distribution are done on a volunteer basis. You are invited to volunteer your talents.

Most of our material and inspiration for material comes from the community. The *Post Amerikan* welcomes stories, graphics, photos, letters, and new tips from our readers. If you'd like to join us, call 828-4473 and leave a message on our answering machine. We will get back to you as soon as we can. Don't worry if it takes a while--we don't meet every week.

An alternative newspaper depends directly on a community of concerned people for existence. We believe it is very important to keep a newspaper like this around. If you think so too, then please support us by telling your friends about the paper, donating money to the printing of the paper, and telling our advertisers you saw their ad in *Post Amerikan*.

## Subscriptions

Subscriptions to the *Post Amerikan* are available for the low price of \$6.00 per year for six complete issues. Please send a check (made payable to the *Post Amerikan*) to: *Post Amerikan*, P.O. Box 3452 Bloomington, IL 61702.

This issue of *Post Amerikan* is brought to you by...

David, Linda, Ralph  
and Sherrin

## Pick up a copy

Copies of the *Post Amerikan* are now available for free at the following locations:

### Bloomington

AIDS Task Force, 313 N. Main  
 About Books, 221 E. Front  
 Barnes & Noble, Veterans & Rt. 9  
 Bloomington Public Library, 205 E. Olive  
 Common Ground, 516 N. Main  
 CoffeeWorks, 608 N. Main  
 Gaston's Upper Cut, 409 N. Main  
 Heartland Community College Academic Support Center, 1226 Towanda Ave.  
 Last Chance Newstand, 404 N. Main  
 Lizard's Lounge, 612 N. Main St.  
 Medusa's, 420 N. Madison  
 the Movie Fan, 401 N. Veterans (Cub Food Plaza)  
 Mystic Link, 1206 Towanda Ave. Su.4  
 Shockwaves, 415 N. Main  
 Twin City Exchange, 411 N. Main

### Normal

Acme Comics, 115 W. North  
 Babbitt's Books, 104 W. North  
 Co-op Records, 503 S. Main  
 the Coffeehouse, 114 E. Beaufort  
 Deadpan Alley Records, 107 W. North  
 Koffee Kup, 205 W. North  
 Mother Murphy's, 111 W. North  
 Normal Public Library, 206 W. College Ave.

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 Bloomington Public Library, 205 E. Olive  
 Common Ground, 516 N. Main  
 Gaston's Upper Cut, 409 N. Main  
 Heartland Community College, Raab Rd.  
 Lizard's Lounge, 612 N. Main St.  
 Shockwaves, 415 N. Main  
 Twin City Exchange, 411 N. Main

### Normal

Acme Comics, 115 W. North  
 Babbitt's Books, 104 W. North  
 Co-op Records, 503 S. Main  
 Coffeehouse, 114 E. Beaufort  
 Deadpan Alley Records, 107 W. North  
 Koffee Kup, 205 W. North  
 Mother Murphy's, 111 W. North  
 Mother Wind's, 1410 1/2 S. Main  
 Movie Fan, 202C. W. North  
 Normal Public Library, 206 W. College Ave.

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## Due Date:

The due date for submitting articles to the *Post Amerikan* is: (please laser print your articles in columns of 3" using Palatino 10pt. type if possible.)

Sept 15

## Due Date:

The due date for submitting articles to the *Post Amerikan* is: (please laser print your articles in columns of 3" using Palatino 10pt. type if possible.); or submit via e-mail at: pamerikanusa@netscape.net



# Community News

## BPL's adult reading program

Adults now have the opportunity to be rewarded for reading. Bloomington Public Library will offer a reading program for adults eighteen years or older. registration for "Branch Out with Reading" begins September 11. Participants can register at the reference desk or at any bookmobile stop. The program, which continues to November 11, is easy and offers many valuable prizes. readers pace themselves based on their own schedule. Participants can win in one of three different categories depending on how many books are read.

For more information call the Bloomington Public Library at 838-6091.

## GLT recycled music sale

Looking for a great way to get rid of old music stuff? Donate your old records, CDs, cassettes, sheet music, stereo equipment and musical instruments to the **9th Annual GLT Recycled Music Sale!** We will turn your musical castoffs into cash for the GLT Equipment Fund. Drop-off points are set up all over central Illinois for your convenience now through August 7. Take your no-longer-needed musical stuff to:

Bloomington Public Library, 205 E. Olive, Bloomington  
McLean County Museum of History, 200 N. Main, Bloomington  
Horine's Pianos Plus, 1336 E. Empire, Bloomington  
Schnucks, 1701 E. Empire, Bloomington

College Hills Mall Customer Service Desk, Veterans Parkway and College Ave., Normal  
Normal Public Library, 206 W. College, Normal  
Vitesse Cycle Shop, 206 S. Linden, Normal  
Twin City Self Storage, 2019 Eagle Road, Normal

Horine's Pianos Plus, 8516 N. Knoxville, Peoria  
Lakeview Museum, 1125 W. Lake, Peoria  
Mount Hawley Storage, 8101 N. Hale

Eureka Public Library, 202 S. Main, Eureka  
Washington Public Library, 315 W. Pershing, Washington  
Morton Public Library, 301 Walnut St., Morton

The **9th Annual GLT Recycled Music Sale** is Friday, August 18 through Sunday, August 20 at College Hills Mall in Normal. Mall hours are 10am-9pm Friday and Saturday, and 12-5pm Sunday. A members-only Preview Sale will be held Thursday, August 17, 6-9pm. Memberships are available at the door. Special thanks to Recycled Music Sale sponsors College Hills Mall, The Pantagraph, Stone Container Corp., Paxton's, Dalkey Archive Press and sam goody.

## News from Advocacy Council for Human Rights

### Did you know?

When we were struggling to get a gay/lesbian clause added to Bloomington's anti-discrimination ordinance four years ago, the community came together like never before to push for its passage. When it and a similar proposed ordinance in Normal were defeated, almost everyone disappeared. In 1998 the death of gay student Matthew Shepherd evoked a candlelight vigil on the ISU Quad that drew hundreds of people, but a follow-up meeting a week later to talk about hate crimes legislation only attracted a handful of people.

The goal of equal rights requires an ongoing struggle; the days and months between ordinance battles and candlelight vigils provide prime opportunities for working behind the scenes to change our lives for the better. Equal rights can only be achieved if we work constantly, continuously, to change the laws. Have we come a long way since the fall of 1995, when ACHR was formed? Yes, but we still have a long way to go.

We can't continue to put out a monthly newsletter and weekly email update if no one reads it, nor can we continue to send out 300 newsletters a month if we don't have funds or volunteers to help us prepare the mailing. If you find this newsletter to be a valuable service to the community, drop us a line by e-mail ([achr@mailcity.com](mailto:achr@mailcity.com)) or leave a message on our phone line (309-830-2521).

### Luellen Laurenti, civil rights activist, remembered by many

Luellen Laurenti, a local activist who believed in equal rights for all people, died June 17.

In her role as lobbyist for the Illinois Chapter of the National Organization for Women, Luellen worked endless hours to gain support for equal rights for women. One of her most recent lobbying efforts was an attempt to defeat a bill that would have denied Medicaid funding of abortions. While the bill was passed by the General Assembly, Gov. George Ryan later vetoed the measure.

Luellen also served for many years as the President of Illinois NOW as well as President of the local chapter of NOW. She was among many people who recently protested the opening of a Hooters restaurant in Bloomington.

Luellen didn't limit her activism to women's issues; she spent many hours lobbying for equal rights for the gbt community as well. It was not uncommon to see her lobbying passionately for the passage of HB 474, the state bill that would outlaw discrimination against members of the gbt community in Illinois.

Luellen brought a passion and energy to everything she did, and we join many others in mourning her passing.



A memorial fund in memory of Luellen for Illinois NOW has been established at Commerce Bank 1500 E. College Ave., Normal.

### Sign up for Advocacy Council e-mail updates

Are you on-line? Looking for up-to-the-minute information on glbta events and news in your community? Then the Advocacy Council e-mail update program is for you.

The weekly e-mails consist of information on upcoming ACHR events as well as other activities sponsored by glbta organizations in the Bloomington-Normal and central Illinois areas. Short synopses of local, state and national news stories also are included with each e-mail.

The purpose of the weekly postings is to keep our community abreast of activities that may have been announced after the *Rainbow Connection* goes to press. We also intend to use the e-mail updates to quickly mobilize community members to contact elected officials when gay-supportive legislation is being deliberated.

To sign up for this free service simply send a message to the Advocacy Council at [achr@mailcity.com](mailto:achr@mailcity.com). We will then send an e-mail invitation that the receiver must reply to before he/she can be added to the subscription list.

### Thumbs down

-To Southern Baptists for overwhelmingly voting to rebuke president Clinton for proclaiming June as Gay and Lesbian Pride Month and for his appointment of openly gay James Hormel as ambassador to Luxembourg. The denomination of Southern Baptists was formed in 1845 by rural whites who insisted on their right to own slaves.

-Once again to Rev. Jerry Falwell (of Tinky Winky fame) for avowing there is "demonic legend" behind the Lilith of Sarah McLachlan's Lilith Fair. According to ancient literature, Lilith was created by God as Adam's first wife but left Eden after refusing to be submissive to Adam. Eve came later.

-- from *The Rainbow Connection* newsletter



# Reuse, the misunderstood

I've been ruminating how to delineate "reuse" because it is polysemic, and here is my much thought of, and rife answer: "to use stuff again." There seems to be a different neologism for "reuse" every time you pick up a current periodical. But it still comes down to reusing stuff. That stuff may be a used automobile tire to build a home, converting a brownscapę into an artists colony, or using two tin cans to make a child's telephone. The use of the term "recycle" is oft times substituted for "reuse;" and certainly the line between the "like" terms is fuzzy, which adds to the confusion. I will attempt to codify the myriad of ways in which it is being used in "Metatecture" (alternative architecture) by innovative Architectonic conceptualists like the brilliant Bart Prince,

At the end of 1998 the press was astir with word that a hermit had ventured to build his 136 square foot home eighteen feet below the surface of Nantucket Island's soil. In fact, his simple domicile afforded him the luxury to work sporadically and to own three other homes in Colorado, Pennsylvania, and New York's Catskill Mountains. The dwelling complete with Belgian stone floors, television, a queen size bed, various pieces of furniture and an alcove that kept food cool; it was mostly built with materials that were previously used for other functions and other structures, et cetera, or what is called "reuse." When I simply said to a friend "Oh, that's a reuse shelter," he was greatly mystified by the term "reuse," as many people are.

whose eclectic pastiche-esque use of materials is proof of his acumen. He is, in my mind, one of the great harbingers of "the new architecture" employing non-orthogonal geometry to create wild structures that are organicisms. The other group of harbingers that comes to mind when I think of "reuse" are the wonderful folks at "the Cob Cottage Company" in Cottage Grove, Oregon. They meld heterogeneous materials into a soft and flowing home within their expansive use of the traditional "Cob" building technique, also known as "earthen metatecture." Likewise, Becky Bee, of Ground Works in Murphy, Oregon, is also one of the great gurus of Cob and reuse metatecture. Both the Cob and Cottage folks and Ground Works offer wonderful books on Cob construction. Mr. Prince and these other fountainheads of knowledge should be explored by anyone interested in metatecture.

The ultimate use of "reuse" construction is being done by "Earthship Global Operations" in Taos, New Mexico. They call their version of reuse metatecture "solar survival architecture." Many of you may be familiar with the incredible home constructed for the actor and Earth activist Dennis Weaver built in large part with automobile tires, recycled cans, and a sundry of other material in the desert of Mew Mexico. The solar survival structures generally use between 500 to 2,500 tires and the square foot cost can range from \$30.00 to \$150.00. They make use of passive solar design for heat, catch rainwater and snowmelt for a water source and have designed a remarkable "graywater" treatment planter system. The tires are safely used to form an almost adobe looking structure when covered with plaster. Yet, some of them look like Mad Max gone to Mars.

The other major "reuse" construction method currently being ballyhooed has its roots in ancient Europe and the western Nebraska plains, but it is just now being fully worked with. It's strawbale metatecture. This construction method is undoubtedly the best known reuse metatecture in the alternative thinking world. Strawbale construction is exactly what it sounds like: using strawbales like brobdignagian bricks, pinning them together with rebar, or better yet, with renewable bamboo spikes. The end result is also an adobe looking structure, but it can take on many forms.

These stable and sustainable structures have been built for as little as \$5.00 per square foot. Although the national average is \$60.00 per square foot. Strawbale tested walls have withstood 1850 degrees F heat for two hours, are pest and rodent resistant, can be built by relatively unskilled labor, and perhaps best of all is that straw is a renewable resource which oft times is discarded in the millions of tons. The United States alone grows and disposes of, or burns, enough straw to build five million 2,000 square foot structures each year.

The third major "reuse" metatecture is cordwood construction, a. k. a. cordwood masonry, log-end, stackwood, or stackwall construction. Again the term tells what it is. It is structures composed of stacked cordwood, a

technique dating back as much as a millennia ago. Anyone who has played behind a cord of wood as a child (or as an adult) can attest to their sturdy and easily put together structure. With a little training, one can create a home for \$10.00 to \$30.00 per square foot. A 20' x 30' structure can use 6.5 cords of wood. With proper insulation they can achieve a rating of R-32. The true master of cordwood metatecture is Rob Toy of the Earthwood Building School in West Chazy, New York, whose magnificent sculptural structures have been featured on the television show *People Near Here* and in *Mother Earth News* magazine, among other places. Cordwood construction can utilize parts of trees that are unsuitable for lumber and are thrown away or burned. It also uses a vast assortment of materials such as wine bottles and other found objects. There is a great book and instructional video on cordwood created by Rob Roy available, among other places, through *Mother Earth News*.

In the debut issue of *Earth Quarterly* it was reported that a new substance called "fibrous cement" is being used effectively by Mike McCain and Sean Sands. They claim their houses cost 60 cents and 75 cents per square foot. They are experimenting with a domed structure that they say will bring the cost down to 39 cents a square foot.

Yes, I said thirty-nine cents a square foot. Of course the shell of structure only comprises 10% to 15% of the overall cost of building. But innovations like these are blowing conventional building costs out of the water. Reuse structures have been rebuffed throughout history. The mass media likes to show Ozarkesque tar paper shacks, or the "juggies" (the shelters of India built with scrap materials). I hate to be a mythoclast but many "reuse" construction shelters have proved to be quite efficacious, and in many cases, amaranthine. The Architectonic saying, "Form follows function" is generally the rule of thumb in most survival and/or low cost "reuse" structures, and they tend to be rather pragmatic looking. But modern "reuse" metatecture is far from the commonly known penurious shacks of old.

"Reuse" structures can be commodious because of their low cost, or tiny like Thomas Johnson's "Hermit House" on Nantucket. There certainly seems to be an atavistic calling to return to a simpler construction method. Like when Henry David Thoreau had his tiny home on Walden Pond. When we surrender our primal need to build our own nest, we give up our self empowerment. Generation after generation we get farther and farther away from being able to build shelters on our own.

When we were kids a washing machine box could become a castle; and personally, "The Little Rascals" had nothing on my childhood forts.



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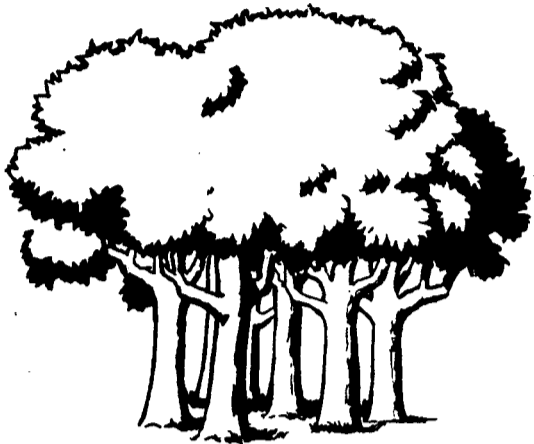
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# element



## SAVE A TREE.

How did we lose that ease to create shelter? As children we built with wooden blocks, legos, Lincoln logs, erector sets, and made sand castles, and we could turn a blanket into a Nile tent. We have it in us, we just need to reach back into our beings to get that naturally occurring Architectonic thought process back.

As a culture we have become so detached from building techniques that many of us can only envisage an endless cycle of paying rent or being strapped to an eternal mortgage payment. That seems to work out fine for the majority of people, until they fall out of the economic loop and end up sleeping on somebody else's couch, in a homeless shelter, or in their car. This harsh reality for many is merely a paycheck away. "Reuse" metatecture is a golden path off the merry-go-round of modern/conventional architecture and housing.

Don't get me wrong, I greatly admire even the most conventional of architects and construction firms, and I cherish my membership in the Boston Society of Architects. Yet we must take back our self empowerment and learn at least the basics of nest building; not only for ourselves, but for the Earth that is being more and more depleted by non sustainable architecture and wasteful demolition methods of preexisting structures many of which could be used or reused to build thus creating opportunities for many persons that can profit from a new "reuse" industry by practicing the high art of scrounging.

The U. S. rail system installs 14 million creosote treated wood railroad ties each year. So where do the removed ties go? If someone is telephonically gifted, they could become a professional scrounger and find out. This concept could be applied to calling restaurateurs to obtain wine bottles, junk yards for tires, construction firms to obtain salvaged items and so on and so on. You can create a whole list of sources: arborists, road crews, paper mills, cabinet makers, . . . . "Deconstruction" (carefully demolished structures so that the majority of the materials can be salvaged) is creating a whole new type of salvage yards and "reuse" networks that provide sinks, toilets, H. V. A. C. ducts, bricks, doors, flooring, plumbing, fixtures and beautiful architectural goodies.

"Reuse" has become a crucial component to my community designs. I combine "reuse" with rammed Earth, air/armature construction, tire construction, and Earthen metatecture, along with a wide usage of inter-connecting solarium walkways, amongst a myriad of building methods traditional and modern. Conventional architecture would have never allowed my designs (even on paper) to be on a scale that they are, because the expense would have been unthinkable for the artists, crafts persons, musicians, writers, performance artists and other "like minded" kindred that the community is being designed for. A community that I call "New Gaia" ( a forest colony) "reuse" metatecture puts this vision within a pragmatic grasp. Likewise "reuse" metatecture is a viable answer to alternative intentional communities, putting cost at a level that even poorly funded groups can obtain. In fact, many intentional communities have been providing grounds and modern day lyceums for metatecture; providing hands-on straw bale, rammed earth, bamboo, cob, and "reuse" courses regularly at very reasonable tuition rates.

"Reuse" can also be a source for bricolage furniture, where antlers, tree roots, stumps, wagon wheels, and other found objects can become chandeliers, chairs, pots and pan racks, clothing racks, bed headboards, or whatever you can imagine.

Imagination is perhaps the most important factor of "reuse" which is why studying architects like Bart Prince is so essential. There is no substituting the need for architectural academics for the vast majority of construction and in no way am I putting down conventional architecture; it's just that metatecture has a place in the social mix of structural design. Metatecture has much to learn from conventional architectural design, likewise alternative architecture has much to teach the architects of the world.

We are living in a time when people can study an assortment of metatecture methods for very little money and without traveling very far. And the internet is chocked full of information on alternative architecture and building materials. Courses can be taken for a modest fee that empower even the most unhandy amongst us. Albert Einstein said "Imagination is more important than knowledge" which is why artists, musicians, poets and those that use the right side of their brain more than the left side can have as much say in "reuse" metatecture as full time architects. Let your mind run free and design the space you have only dreamed of before, but that conventional construction put aside due to the high cost. "Reuse" metatecture can enflish your dreams. With prices that start at 39 cents a square foot, and current information speaks of \$30.00 homes, the only limit to creating you home is your will and desire.

'So what's the catch?' you are probably wondering. Yep, there are catches. The biggest is zoning laws. But just a few years ago it was

prohibited to build strawbale structures, but now there are several states that grant building permits for strawbale construction. Many states grant permits for experimental architecture whilst some people build hybrid conventional/metatecture structures to stay within zoning regulations. You'll have to investigate your local rules, and the dreaded building codes.

The other catch is that "reuse" and metatecture in general tends to be quite labor intensive, further more, finding tools and equipment tends to be a challenge. It is not likely you'll find a strawbale saw at Walmart, but with a little correspondence and some networking you'll find what you need to sculpt your own castle.

--Nikolai Alexanderovich Zarick  
architectonic conceptualist

### Recommended reading

*Underground House Book*, by Mike Oehler  
Mole Publishing Company  
ISBN 0-442-27311-8  
RT 4 Box 618, Dept 8  
Bonners Ferry, Idaho  
83805

*The Architecture of Bart Prince: A Pragmatics of Place* by Christopher Cuetis Mean  
Norton Publishing  
Edward R. Hamilton Booksellers  
Falls Village, CT.  
06031-5000

*Skills for Simple Living* by Betty Tillotson  
ISBN 0-88179-035-4  
Hartley and Marks Inc.  
79 Tyee Dr.  
Port Roberts, WA  
98281

### Garbage & Landfills

Americans produce nearly three times more garbage annually than many other countries, and we throw most of it away. For some time now, other countries have had strict laws requiring the recycling of solid waste. Most citizens of the United States have grown up with the idea that when they place garbage in cans for disposal, it magically disappears and they no longer need to worry about it. But times have changed and the garbage we throw away is causing landfill capacity to diminish.





## Misc. Resources about "reuse" structures

**Earthship Global Operations**  
PO Box 2009  
El Prado, NM  
87529

**The Last Straw**  
HC 66, Box 119  
Hillsboro, NM  
88042

**Building With Nature**  
PO Box 4417  
Santa Rosa, CA  
95402-4417

**The Cob Cottage Company**  
PO Box 123  
Cottage Grove, OR  
97424

**Mother Earth News**  
49th East 21st ST 11th Fl  
New York, NY  
10010

**Groundworks/ Becky Bee**  
PO Box 381  
Murphy, OR  
97533

**Bart Prince**  
3501 Monte Vista N.E.  
Albuquerque, NM  
87106

**Earth Quarterly**  
Box 23-F  
Radium Springs, NM  
88054

**The Permaculture Activist**  
PO Box 1209  
Black Mountain, NC  
28711

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*The Cabin* was the inspiration and home of David Anderson, who died of leukemia in the summer of 1998. David's cabin, like so many of his creations, embodies ideals of simplicity and beauty around which he shaped his life. *The Cabin's* place has changed, but its purpose is not new. David was intensely concerned with advancing the cause of peace and non-violent social change during his own life. One of his defining traits was his devotion to those around him, not just to his friends but to the rights of suffering people all over the world.

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# Notes from the land of anti-fat



## Tax the Fat?

It's a subject that seems to be coming up with increasing frequency in public discussion: the creation of a tax on snacks and soft drinks as an incentive to "keep Americans slim and trim." Most recently, researchers from the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) and Yale University have come out promoting the concept with typical hyperbolic scare language.

"With obesity rates soaring and the costs of diet-related diseases in the stratosphere [emphasis mine], it is essential that government fund major campaigns to promote healthful diets and physical activity," Michael Jacobson, executive director of CSPI, said in a statement. "One way to obtain funding is to apply small taxes to foods that undermine health."

The key word here is "funding," of course. Both Jacobsen and Kelly Browne, a Yale Psychology professor who worked on the study with Jacobsen, have a vested interest in the increased allocation of such moneys. At stake is a proposed increase in millions of dollars for the public coffers.

Consider these figures, proffered by Jacobsen and Browne: a national one-cent tax on 12-ounce soft drinks has the potential to generate about \$1.5 billion every year; a one-cent tax per pound on chips, candy and other snack foods could raise \$124 million; a tax on fats and oils (somewhat - um - slipperier to consider but these are their figures) could bring in \$190 million. No small amount of money, and in the abstract it doesn't sound half bad: think of all the great health programs that could be funded with that amount of cabbage.

Well, let's consider one such program, cited by the American Journal of Public Health writers as a good example of a public anti-fat campaign: a seven-week trial campaign in Clarksburg, West Virginia. Said campaign reportedly was designed to encourage consumers to switch from higher fat to lower fat milk to reduce intakes of saturated fat. "After the 7-week campaign, the market share of one percent or

fat-free milk increased from 18 percent to 41 percent."

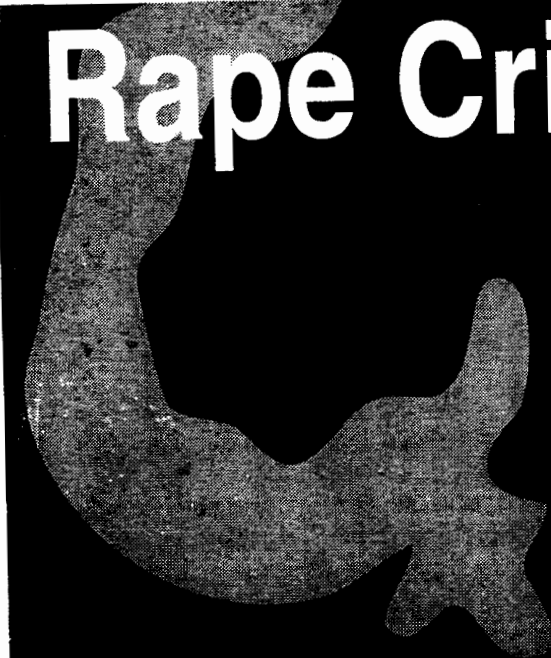
Let's ignore the fact that seven weeks is a piss-poor timeframe for any sort of health study. Let's go to the nitty-gritty presumption that fat-free milk is automatically healthier for all concerned. (New moms: stop that breast-feeding immediately!) To say this involves conceptual leaps and faulty science is to be kind. If this is the sort of program being held as an example of strong public health procedure, then we're all in a lot of trouble.

But this is what frequently passes for policy discussion when you talk about the War on Fat: blurred distinctions and broad generalizations about Dat Ol' Demon Obesity. The fear of fat is so strong that it allows such slippery dialog - all in the holy name of Public Health.

Make no mistake. Unlike the right-wing pundits (who've been yowling about the fat tax ever since it first was proposed) I'm not automatically against a penny tax on crap. What I'm against is scare mongering and half-assed research -- the kind of pseudo public health statements that encourage parents to put their still developing kids on diets, the kind of simplistic sound bites that lay the blame for a poorly substantiated "health crisis" on soda pop and Fritos. I'm against policy discussions that do little to enhance public health, but exist mainly to support an already over-wealthy diet industry and a money-for-hire research community.

Junk science leads to junk policy. Has anyone thought of taxing hidden agendas?

--Bill Sherman



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# Mental illness awareness

## Congress holds hearing on mental health equitable treatment act

The 1996 Insurance Parity Act expires Sept. 30, 2001 unless reauthorized by Congress, so Sen. James Jeffers, (R, VT) convened a hearing on May 18 on Senate bill 796, the Mental Health Equitable Treatment Act. Sen. Domenici (R) and Sen. Wellstone (D) are primary sponsors.

S. 796 would require full insurance parity for schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, panic disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, autism and other severe and disabling illnesses such as anorexia nervosa and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. Further, no health plan may use day and visit limits for mental illness which are different than physical illnesses.

"Sen. Domenici welcomed the conclusions of a new General Accounting Office (GAO) study released at the hearing confirming that employer compliance with the 1996 law is not driving up insurance costs."

### Here are the GAO's findings:

-Costs of the Parity Act of 1996 were "negligible for most health plans" with only 3% of employers reporting an increase in costs

-14% of employers are complying with the 1996 Act, not including small employers of 50 or fewer that were exempt for the 1996 law.

-87% of employers complying with the 1996 act restrict mental health benefits more than medical or surgical benefits.

-Only 5 employers in the nation dropped mental health coverage as a result of the 1996 Act.

-The Administration relies on complaints for monitoring compliance. Though 24 states may not be fully implementing the 1996 Act, 3 states are not complying at all.

The approach of S 796 is similar to that recently taken by 31 states, but not Illinois.

Federal legislation is needed. Too many disparities or gaps exist and state laws do not cover the health plans of self-insured companies. The total cost of parity-based on actual experience represents less than a one percent increase per year in the cost of health insurance coverage.

NAMI is asking members to call or write our Senators to support the Domenici-Wellstone bill, S 796.

## National center created for children's mental health

The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill joined with the newly established Center for the Advancement of Children's Mental Health to announce the creation of a national center

treatment, as well as the wrong treatment, can put a child's future at risk."

## New Book Release

*I am not sick, I don't need help, helping the seriously mentally ill accept treatment, a practical guide for families and therapists*, by Xavier Amador, Ph.D with Anna-Lisa Johanson

This new book is a must read for families and care givers trying to cope with a loved one with mental illness who refuses treatment because he/she does not believe that he/she is ill. You will learn that 50% of all people with schizophrenia and manic-depression do not understand that they are ill and refuse treatment. Whether you are a family member or a therapist, in this book you will find hope in what the new research is revealing about the problem of poor insight into illness. Prepare to be surprised and to have new hope. There is much you can do to conquer denial.

Xavier Amado has a brother with schizophrenia. He is director of Psychology at the New York State Psychiatric Institute and a Professor of Psychology at Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons. He is a world-renowned expert on the problem of poor insight into illness in individuals with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. Anna-Lisa Johanson is the daughter of Margaret Ray, the woman people know as "David Letterman's stalker." Her mother diagnosed with schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder, took her own life in 1998.

Among the critical acclaim the book has already received:

Dr. E. Fuller Torrey - "This is the first book to address the elephantine question running roughshod over families of individual with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder." dedicated to improving identification, assessment and treatment practices for children with mental disorders.

The Center's principal functions will be to help identify new research findings ready for implementation in practice; to disseminate information and engage in public outreach; and to provide technical assistance.

It will concentrate on five areas of pediatric disorders: attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); major depressive disorder; anxiety disorders; obsessive-compulsive disorders (OCD) and youth suicide.

The Center was established by the Dept. of Psychiatry at Columbia University and the New York State Psychiatric Institute.

"National concern clearly exists about children and mental illnesses. Parents are demanding better answers to help them make the right choices," Flynn said. "Some concern is focused on whether too many children are being put too quickly on medication. But in many cases, medication is the right choice. Lack of

together in partnership. It is practical, easy to read and hopeful."

## A word of caution. . .

Johns Hopkins Medical Letter of April 2000 gave a cautionary note on the use of St. Johns Wort. The over-the-counter supplement is a purported natural remedy for depression, but it should not be used while also taking a prescription SSRI medication, such as Paxill, Prozac and Zoloft.

Several cases of serotonin syndrome have been reported in people who took St. Johns Wort concurrently with an SSRI (selective serotonin-reuptake inhibitor). Serotonin syndrome is a condition marked by headaches, tremors, and in severe cases coma.

As a safety measure, always check with your doctor for a possible interaction between any over-the-counter supplement or medication and your prescription medication.

## Giant garage sale planned for September

Jett Jacobs is organizing a second big NAMI garage sale. It is planned for September so start collecting items now.

The sale last year was very successful.

## Family/Genetic study and obsessive-compulsive Disorder (OCD)

The staff of the Laboratory of Clinical Science invites individuals who have experienced OCD and their close relatives, to join in a genetic study. The Interview can be done by phone and a small blood sample is needed. Participants receive \$25 for time, \$25 for giving blood, and expenses for the procedure and shipping will be paid. Confidentiality will be maintained. To participate, call John Gause at 301-496-3421 collect.

## A look back. . .

August 1986: Walter Jacobson of WBBM-TV criticized the Governor for cutting the State Fred Frese, Ph.D. - "The great value of I'm not sick is that it incorporates both the consumer's perspective and that of the clinician. It finds common ground, pointing out where the consumer and his/her clinician can work mental health budget by \$17 million and at the same time offering the White Sox \$17 million to help build a new stadium. Times don't change much.

--NAMI of Livingston/McLean Counties newsletter



# The Poetry Page

## Ode to Barbie

duck!  
she said.

officer, that Barbie doll threw a bathtub at me

I was minding my own business, multi-tasking, as usual:

- (1) protesting the acrid stench in the air
- (2) playing poems on that girl's long brown hair
- (3) reminding the Jesus Freaks that even though I don't need His gift, I care
- (4) munching on potato chips, so debonair

the officer wrestles with a fire ant for the potato chip,  
 "this is state evidence." he announces, his voice like a bullhorn  
 pulling a kumquat from his blue buttoned pocket  
 he sends the fire ant on her way with a heavy load,"no ant to see here"  
 the officer thinks to himself sill-i-lee  
 bending over, plucking a buttercup from the yard next to the bathtub  
 the water is dripping steadily into the tub  
 3 songbirds are shaking their tail feathers in the water  
 & a sprite scrubs his back with a cat tail

the officer closes up his notebook wiggling his ears  
 looking at the bathtub, looking at my head, only a dent

--Stephen Zimmerly

## YOUR POEM HERE.

The Post Amerikan is seeking poetry submissions for the Poetry Page.

If interested, please mail your poem to:  
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# Fuel phenomenon

I am an automobile owner and driver. Almost everyday, for the last ten years, I would unlock my car door, open it, and sit down behind the wheel. A drive to work, a ride to a friends residence, or a trip to another city all require gasoline. To most of us, this is a well-known and often overlooked issue. Until recently. The gas prices have gone up. They are the subjects of casual conversation and gain attention on the evening news. As automobile drivers that seem to be concerned about the gouge on our wallets, we should recognize this as an alarm.

Gas prices going up is not a new trend. I seem to remember that when I was a small child, in the seventies, there was an oil embargo. There were stories of outrageous gasoline prices and long lines at the gas station. I also remember hearing my father praising the rise in cost and begging for it to go higher. My father seemed to so concerned about how he spends his money that I was amazed to hear such things from him. When I asked why he wanted the prices to go higher he gave me the most simple, yet surprising answer: "Alternative fuels, my son, alternative fuels." I have to agree. So, hooray for rising gas prices.

Our planet is getting smaller every year, day, and minute. The population is going to be tremendously large very soon. With that in mind, we are currently depleting our fossil fuel resources at an alarming rate and will decimate them at the current rate of ravage soon. A huge population that, if we remain dependent on fossil fuel use, will be choking on fumes and

greenhouse emissions that reduce quality of life and ecosystems worldwide. Imagine our little blue orb dotted with billions of humans amid gray clouds of toxins.

Some might suggest that global warming is a very difficult issue. Hard to prove and considered highly speculative, this has been a subject of some doubt. After all, the weather doesn't really seem to be noticeably different, and it isn't so unbearable that humans can't exist. I just can't help noticing black exhaust fumes coming from large trucks and cars that aren't well kept. Do you ever wait at a traffic light behind a vehicle like this? If you're at all like me, you might get a headache and have a scowl on your face. According to Christopher Flavin in his article "Energy for a New Century": "As the new century begins, the world's 6 billion people already live with the dark legacy of the heavily polluting energy system that powered the last century. It is a legacy that includes impoverished lakes and estuaries, degraded forests, and millions of damaged human lungs."

So how do we cope with the alleged atrocities that we unleash upon ourselves? It seems to me that humans naturally seek clean substances. We love drinking spring water and we love breathing country air. Yet, the same humans find it difficult to consider alternative or renewable fuel options. In an article written by Rose Marie Berger, she writes, "Even Shell Oil admits that renewable energy could take more than 50 percent of the energy market by 2050." Seems to me that if a major competitor in the fossil fuel industry is willing to admit that their product is on the way out, then we can consider that the need for clean air fuels is becoming more and more urgent. Since the fuel embargo of the 1970s, so many things have changed dramatically. The computer industry shot out like the space shuttle program; space stations are being built, and the compact disc is rocking the house, car, and office. But, due to the 70s, there has been a greater concern over transportation. We were given the proverbial slap in the face. Wake up and smell the exhaust.

So, as we watch gas prices soar again, we are still consuming. John Berger writes in the *Earth Island Journal*: "Since 1970, we've spent more than a trillion dollars just buying foreign oil. More than 50 percent of the oil we use is imported. The growing costs of these imports deprives us of money we could otherwise use to rebuild industries and transportation systems, and to fund our medical care and educational systems."

That means the money we so desperately need for our own well being is sent to the Middle East to add to their coffers. Some of this money, that could be used to educate our children, is spent on weapons that are a potential threat to the U.S.

They have firepower and are able to send their children to our universities, and we have air pollution and little else to show for what they sold us. Berger also writes that "each year the U.S. spends \$25 billion for the military defense of our oil interests in the Middle East."

Dilip Hire, author of "Dictionary of the MiddleEast", writes: "Crude oil does more than drive our cars and heat our homes. It provides an

unrivaled array of end products that are indispensable to our highly industrialized society: asphalt for road making, cleaning agents, explosives, fertilizers, fibers, jellies, jet fuel, paraffin, medicines, naphtha, paints, plastics, synthetic rubber and waxes."

So many items that we, as a society, take for granted everyday and yet, we insist on driving our resources into extinction.

With so many uses for a barrel of oil, it seems that we could do more good by producing than by burning it. Some estimate that our oil resources may only have three to five decades left at the rate that humans are consuming it now. A barrel of oil usually contains about 100 gallons. That hundred-gallon barrel could produce an immense amount of possible items. Arizona State University professor Roy Mcallister writes that a barrel of oil "can be used to produce polymers that are essential to constituents of goods such as televisions, computers, clothing, carpeting, and vehicles - that sell in today's marketplace for over \$3,500." However, that same hundred-gallon barrel, at today's cost per gallon, could be sold to fuel automobiles for the price of \$159. This is a very generous estimate considering that the oil must be refined into consumable gasoline. Perhaps, if we are truly fortunate, we may get three quarters of that barrel for our cars.

The expense of oil need not keep the citizens of our little blue planet from their transportation. There are so many other options and most of them are much cleaner. Such things as electrical batteries, methanol, and hydrogen can fuel vehicles. We can use different sources of energy and we don't have to suffer the blight of oil's high prices to our wallets and our environment.

Electric cars are already on the road and many of us have seen commercials on television about them. The Environmental Protection Agency, in a fact sheet they issued, states that "electrics

flourished before the rise of the gasoline automobile" and "some 50,000 electric vehicles were in use in the United States by 1912." The EPA refers to the electric car as "zero-emission vehicles". However, as clean as the electric car may be, the electric power plants that generate the electricity "to charge vehicle batteries produces air pollution and solid waste." A concern for the car-driving citizen might be how an electric auto would drive. The EPA states that "driving an electric car will feel very similar to driving a gasoline car" and electric cars "have the potential to be quieter."

Another good option, methanol, has already been in use for several years. Methanol has several advantages. For one, it is low in "reactive hydrocarbons which forms smog." It is the only fuel used in Indianapolis-type racecars. Methanol can be made from a variety of readily available sources such as: natural gas, coal, and biomass (e.g. wood). So, not only is a good option to gasoline, it is much less flammable and can be manufactured and sold at prices that are comparable to gas.

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My favorite solution to the fuel dilemma is hydrogen. Roy Mcallister describes hydrogen as "a nontoxic, clean burning fuel that can be produced from readily available hydrogen-containing compounds such as water". Water! Our planet is three-quarters water. Not only is hydrogen a good idea, when burned it "produces heat and clean water." Mcallister goes on to write that hydrogen, when used in an automobile produces "minus-emissions - that is, the exhaust pipe releases cleaner air than that which enters the engine." I would say that cleaner air via auto exhaust is a rather amazing idea.

All of these fuel alternatives are very good concepts. Recently, on some nightly news program, I heard that a van fueled by hydrogen is going to be used as a pace vehicle during the 2000 Olympics in Sydney, Australia. What a wonderful idea! A vehicle that won't emit smog on the runners or bicyclists behind it and proof positive to the world that a capable solution to our gas woes is definitely possible.

Mcallister states that "kits for high-efficiency combustion of hydrogen can be retrofitted on most engines of the global fleet of motor vehicles." Another wonderful idea! Apparently,

through his research at ASU, Mcallister found that "ordinary engines that have been converted to operate on hydrogen show no sign of metal embrittlement or other degradation after decades of pollution-free service. These vehicles can therefore last longer, run better and clean the air".

There are, however, downsides to all solutions to the gasoline problem. Electric cars rely on batteries that must be recharged at home and that electricity comes from questionable resources like coal, natural gas, or nuclear power. All of which have harmful ecological side effects. Methanol is highly toxic and would cause harm to the body if ingested orally. A small amount, about two teaspoons, could cause a person to go blind. Hydrogen has a nasty history of being harnessed to do mass destruction in the form of the hydrogen bomb. So it has the false reputation of being explosive and volatile. It does draw from our seemingly dwindling water resources, but it also produces water. The current power resources pollute a lot of our waterways and the hydrogen engine emits clean air. Downsides indeed!

Knowing that a way to fuel our cars without causing more damage to our environment and ourselves makes it ridiculous to think that we should keep burning fossil fuels. We have created a huge deficit on our planet's ecosystems. The rising price of gasoline at the filling stations doesn't take into account the cost of cleanup for decades of polluting. The planet's health is basically the health of its population. When a runner jogs through a city full of smog he breathes heavier and faster. Taking in smog that damages the soft tissues of his lungs. Whatever oxygen his lungs can salvage from the smog must fuel the rest of his body and his brain. That runner may as well have stayed home and smoked a cigarette.

I have never been much of an activist or a "tree-hugger". But, I do know that I don't like to see garbage on the streets of my town. I know that I don't enjoy inhaling exhaust. So I would say that my interest in alternative fuels is somewhat of a personal interest. I want to breathe clean air. I want to drink clean water. Perhaps this might seem greedy, but I don't believe that I am the only person with this opinion. In an article titled "A Future Without Fossil Fuel", John Berger writes "polls conducted in 1994 and 1995 by

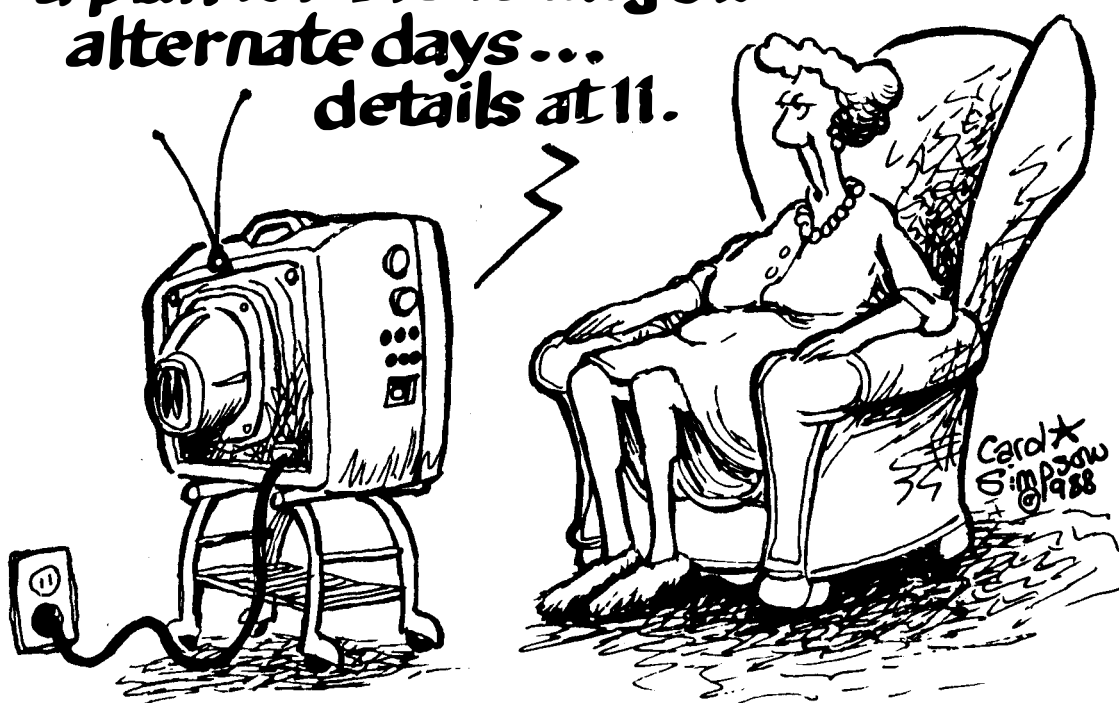
Republican pollster Vince Breglio show that almost two-thirds of Americans believe that renewables should be the Department of Energy's highest or second-highest funding priority."

So there I was, back in discussion with my Dad, after all these years watching gasoline being consumed by the masses. I thought I would tell him about all the wonderful things I had learned about alternative fuels. But, this is a man that I couldn't even try to shock when I showed him my nipple ring. He said to me, "that's all fine and wonderful, but nobody will change." I was shocked; appalled; stunned, even. He went on to add, "I believe in everything you just told me, but I don't believe that the masses are willing to commit to that change until they are forced to. They love their current comforts and are uncomfortable with things that are unknown to them." Dad may be right. Unless it shines like a new states quarter, an alternately fueled car is just going to look as fake as the new five dollar bills.

A solution that could be considered by the big motor companies is to take a cue from companies like Microsoft, IBM, or Sony. They should make the alternative fueled auto look like an item that is needed. The video cassette recorder, the home computer, the laptop computer, and the microwave all started out with expensive and humble beginnings and, now all these items are commonplace in our homes and work places. The shiny, new, hot product that is coming is the all clean, all comfortable hydrogen-fueled four-door sedan. And you want it!!!

--Jeff Schultz

**To conserve the remaining fresh air during the current pollution alert, the EPA has announced a plan for breathing on alternate days... details at 11.**





# Connect the dots

In one corner of Mother Wind's Native American & Spiritual Emporium (1410 1/2 S. Main, Normal, IL) sets a three ring binder, growing as its creator, Greg Brown, adds to it. The notebook contains newspaper and magazine articles, mostly from *The Pantagraph*, and mostly on a biweekly basis, regarding extremely serious ecological issues. These issues cover the three items necessary for ALL LIFE -- air, water, and land. Land because food is grown either on or in the land with all its pollutants. These issues are written about that one time -- almost no one responds to them. A few Letters to the Editor have followed either an article or another Letter to the Editor. *It is almost as if no one sees these articles.* The reporters have done their jobs -- they've written the stories. The paper/magazines have printed the stories and put them into circulation. Why haven't we done our job????

Some of these articles are written by ecologically enlightened people warning of the dangers of continued damage to the Earth; some are presented by public relations firms hired by corporate America to play down specific issues. In fact, one document can be quoted as stating that global warming is an "unexpected and wonderful gift from the industrial revolution." At least three specific scientists names keep cropping up in support of such believable statements, Drs. Robert Balling, Pat Michaels, and S. Fred Singer.

A recent article in *The Pantagraph* (6/9/00) "Temperature increase to change American life" reported on a four year study done by a

dozen government agencies and hundreds of scientists, in and out of government. The report's overview summary stated "Based on the best available information, most Americans will experience significant impacts from Earth's warming." Interestingly enough, the study was criticized by unnamed persons charging that it "paints too dismal a picture and plays down potential benefits of warming."

Books are being written bringing serious issues to light. *A Plague of Frogs* by William Souder talks about all the deformed frogs being found in Minnesota and parts of Canada. Ross Gelbspan talks about the effects of global warming and the scientists hired by public relations firm (Drs. Balling, Michaels, and Singer) to "reposition global warming as theory rather than fact" in his book, *The Heat is On*. There is further documentation indicating the "campaign was designed to target 'older, less-educated men... [and] young, low-income women' in districts which receive their electricity from coal."

In the book *In the Absence of the Sacred -- The Failure of Technology & the Survival of the Indian Nations* by Jerry Mander we are reminded that we need "reverence for the earth." In "lacking a sense of the sacred, we were doomed to a bad result. Today the [human] species of man is facing a question of [its] very survival. . . . The way of life known as Western Civilization is on a death path on which their own culture has no viable answers. When faced with the reality of their own destructiveness, they can only go forward into areas of more efficient destruction. The air is foul, the waters poisoned, the trees dying, the animals are disappearing. We think even the systems of weather are changing. Our ancient teaching warned us that if man interfered with the natural laws, these things would come to be. When the last of the Natural Way of Life is gone, all hope for human survival will be gone with it. And our Way of Life is fast disappearing, a victim of the destructive process. We know there are many people in the world who can quickly grasp the intent of our message. But our experience has taught us that there are few who are willing to seek out a method for moving toward any real change."

There are many books, magazines articles, newspaper articles, etc. reporting on all of the different ecology issues going on today. It is time for us as a people -- as a nation of people setting aside all bigotry -- to stand together, educate ourselves and our families, and speak out. We need to connect the dots -- tie the issues together -- pollution is pollution whether it's in the air, water, or the land. Let the debate begin. Let our voices join together and be heard. We can make a difference by getting the ball

rolling. Change, unfortunately, will not happen overnight -- but the Beginning of the Change can!

Yes, this means changing our lifestyle, and therefore, some inconvenience. Yes, most of us have worked hard for what we have, but in doing so, have caused harm to the Earth. Ashamedly, I admit that for the first forty four years of my life I walked "stupid" upon the face of Mother Earth, contributing in my own way to Her destruction. For the last nine years, I have done my best to walk upon the Earth as SACRED GROUND not as real estate.

This is our world, our home, our children's' home, our grandchildren's' home. Once humanity has destroyed this planet, where will we live? Where will our children/grandchildren play? What will they be drinking? What will they be breathing into their little lungs? How will we answer them when they ask, "WHY?"

In 1851 Chief Seattle said "To harm the Earth is to heap contempt upon its Creator." How will you answer your Creator when he/she asks, "WHY?"

Connect the Dots -- All pollution issues are just that, pollution issues. If you connect the deformed frogs with the global warming with the lead poisoning with the fact that 1/3 of our coast lines are damaged from run-off from farm land [Illinois being the worst offender] with the smog and air pollution in the larger cities, with etc., etc., etc., you will see just how bad a shape this planet is in. and remember,

**WE ARE THE ONES WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!!!**

--Walks The West Wind

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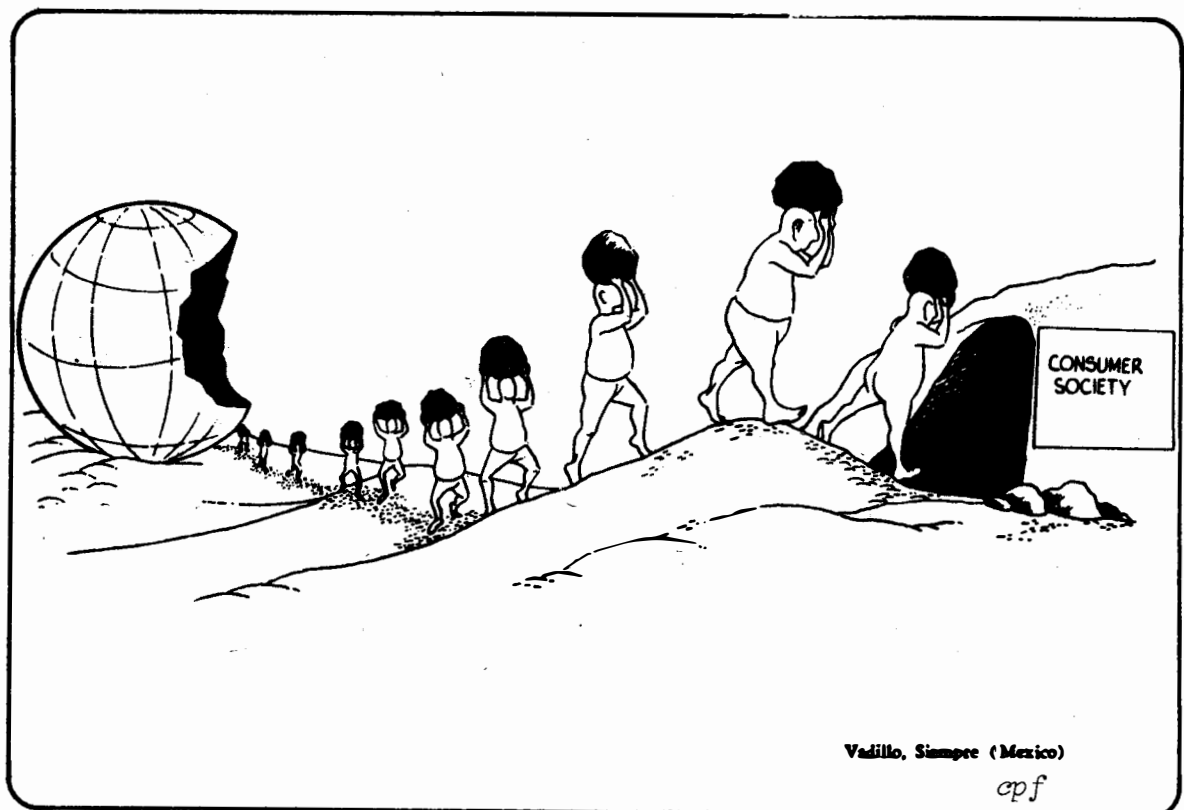
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# Freedom of (hate) speech

*Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.* I always knew that particular childhood mantra was a bit bogus, especially when those words were directed at me. I cringed and cried, and then finally laughed with the other children as they taunted me with such verbal jewels as "dumb Polack," "four-eyes," and the ever popular "fatty, fatty, two by four, can't get through the bathroom door." (Variations include bedroom door and kitchen door, but my school believed bathroom was far funnier.) Add to that the ever-present, whether implied or explicit, "if you're so smart, how come you're a girl?" and you have pretty well summed up the first 18 or so years of my life.

As an adult, we can add to those all the slurs and abuses that come from being a lesbian and, most recently, physically disabled. A wealth of opportunity for anyone who wanted to use words to hurt me. One would think, then, that I would whole heartedly embrace the so-called "hate speech" legislation being debated in Washington and in state capitols all over this country.

I don't.

More important than my personal feelings about my individual situation is the welfare and well-being of a little piece of paper housed at the National Archives--a piece of paper we call the Constitution. It is more important than I am; it is more important than you are. And it is clearly more important than any spoken or written words hurled in hatred or uttered in ignorance. I did not used to be as adamant about this issue. I could hear the proponents of hate speech legislation when they talked of creating an atmosphere of hate and an environment of violence. I never bought it, but I could hear it. Then I read an editorial in the *Pantagraph* on July 4 of this year. It scared me more than I can begin to express. And it made me unable to listen to the arguments I had paid lip service to in the past.

"...the ultimate welfare of the single human soul (is) the ultimate test of the vitality of the First Amendment."

United States Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, *Gillette v. United States*, 401 U.S. 437 (1971).

According to a survey done this spring by the University of Connecticut, in case you missed it, found that:

- 67% of those surveyed believe that public remarks offensive to racial groups should not be allowed, and 36% support a law to ban such speech;
- 40% believe that musicians should not be allowed to sing offensive songs in public;
- 51% believe the press has too much freedom to do what it wants;
- 31% say a group should not be allowed to hold a rally for a cause or an issue if it offends others in the community;

-51% said art should not be placed in public places if it may offend some members of the community;

--84% believe people should not be allowed to burn the American flag in an act of political protest; and

-53% say that public speech that offends members of a religious group should not be allowed, even though 20% believe that freedom to worship was never meant to apply to religious groups that the majority of people consider extreme or fringe.

The real problem here is that almost anything can offend almost anybody at any given time, which is why "offensive" speech has always been constitutionally protected. But when hate speech is confused with offensive speech, which it will be, because there is no substantive difference between the two, then all speech which makes anyone uncomfortable can be defined as hate mongering and legally banned.

It certainly troubles me when coaches of male sports teams and armed forces drill instructors refer to their players and recruits as "ladies" in an attempt (usually successful) to humiliate them by the tactic acknowledgment that females are intrinsically inferior. (I must admit that I myself have come dangerously close to telling one of the 9-year old boys in my charge that he throws like a girl). This kind of speech is deeply embedded in American culture and probably contributes to the belief that women and girls are inferior life forms for whom name-calling, stalking, rape, battery, and murder and their just desserts. It is offensive to one-half of the population; it contributes to a rape culture and violence against women; it is, by definition, hate speech. But should it be constitutionally banned? There is a great difference in explaining to the coach what his use of language says and in jailing him for saying it.

Rather than bog down the Constitution with burdensome amendments which reflect the cause of the day, why not tackle the problem of hate speech in the arena where it belongs -- everyday life. If everyone believes that offensive speech should be banned would take a little initiative and speak out for themselves, we may not need anything further. But it is much easier to support an amendment than is to support people who are different from you. The esoteric has always been easier to follow than the reality. If you tell a co-worker that his use of the term "fag" is offensive to you and to others in the workplace, he might think you're a queer. If you object to sexist comments and sexual stereotyping, you're a humorless man-hater. If you openly acknowledge as valid the Christian Scientists' opposition to modern medicine, people will say you're a godless Commie. Putting one's beliefs in justice and fairness into practice is neither easy nor comfortable. Supporting an amendment to the Constitution is both. It is also unwieldy, unnecessary, and singularly ineffective. It is a "feel good" measure which will do nothing but cheapen the document and do a horrible disservice to every American.

There are two major problems: definition and enforcement. Who gets to decide what is offensive? How many people need to be offended before an issue is banned? What, exactly, constitutes a fringe group? We will not merely be talking about Nazis marching in Skokie or Pat Robertson railing against homosexuals. Many people in this country are uncomfortable around the developmentally disabled. How many Americans would it take to complain before Special Olympics were canceled in a community? Would an irate group of Muslims or Jews be allowed to halt production of the American Passion Play if the city of Bloomington purchases the Consistory? Could the lesbian community get an injunction against public singing or playing of "Stand by Your Man"? (I certainly find it offensive.)

**"Restriction of free thought and free speech is the most dangerous of all subversions. It is the one un-American act that could most easily defeat us."**

Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, address, Author's Guild, December 3, 1952, on receiving the Lauterbach Award.

Are we going to jail Patrick Buchanan or Louis Farrakan for hate speech? Would we stop the *Pantagraph* from printing editorials critical of the Clinton administration? Will we bring charges against the City of Bloomington for offending the town's vegetarians by serving hot dogs in Miller Park during National Night Out?

Of course not, you say, that's absurd. And you would be right. Because the offensive speech would be limited in scope to slurs against Baptists, not the Ba H'ais. The extreme right and the extreme left would be denied any possibility of freedom of expression. It is far better to tell the Matt Hales of this world that their pamphlets are offensive; their web sites unacceptable, and their speech not to be tolerated than to tell them they cannot speak at all. Even small minds and closed minds need the freedom of expression, or that freedom will be taken from all of us.

There are no easy answers to ignorance and no quick fix for hatred. We need to tackle these problems one person, one slur, one act of bigotry at a time. It will be uncomfortable, and disquieting, and at times even dangerous. It will make you unpopular, and frustrated, and at times isolated from both family and friends. You will be ridiculed and harassed. The anger, fear, and hate you are trying to counter will at times be directed at you. It is the road less traveled for a reason, you know.

I would much rather defend my Constitution and demand my freedom of expression than to risk the very possibility of having my rights disintegrated and my liberty destroyed. So call me names. I don't care. You really can't hurt me, because I don't intend to give you that much power.

--Deborah Wiatt





# Alternatives to

Imagine this. As you are waiting in line at a busy supermarket, you see a mother and her preschool aged child in the checkout lane next to you. The mother appears to be tired and stressed while the child is full of energy. Pretty normal, right? You then begin to notice that the child simply cannot or will not sit still despite the mother's numerous attempts at gaining and holding the child's attention. Suddenly, for no apparent reason, the child begins to scream and throw a tantrum that causes all eyes to be on them. You consider the age of the child and the stressful situation, you assume that it has been a long day and that the child is probably just tired. You give the mother a sympathetic nod of your head, quickly pay the cashier and leave the store. Happy to be on your way home, you don't give the incident a second thought because most children display these types of behaviors from time to time, right?

Being a mother of four children whose ages range from four months to five years of age, I've seen these same behaviors and many other that are considered by *The Prescription for Natural Healing* to be signs and symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. The term ADHD is used to emphasize the hyperactive and impulsive aspects of Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). In a book written by Nina Anderson and Howard Piper titled *ADD: The Natural Approach*, they define ADHD as "a neurological disorder relating to abnormal connections in one's brain and faulty regulation of certain brain chemical messenger systems such as those that use dopamine and norepinephrine." Use of drugs like antidepressants and stimulants that may boost the effectiveness of dopamine are often used as treatment for ADHD. Ritalin, which is commonly prescribed to ease the effects of ADHD, can have potentially dangerous side effects including insomnia, decreased appetite, weight loss, slowed growth, increased heart rate and increased blood pressure. It may also produce an initial period of increased irritability.

In the book *ADD: The Natural Approach*, it says that "more than 6 million American children take Ritalin regularly to help them with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, an increase of two and a half times since 1990." However, this same source also states that only 5% of those diagnosed with ADD actually have the disorder. Are the parents of these children who are using Ritalin doing so as a quick fix to a complicated situation? Or are these parents simply using Ritalin as a solution to their child's distractible, disruptive and inattentive behavior before other options have been explored?

As I mentioned before, I am a mother of four young children. Recently I was encouraged to have my four-year-old, who was then three, tested for ADHD. The teachers at his daycare felt that they were no longer capable of dealing with his outbursts and disruptions. They expressed their concern for my child by then encouraging me to have his pediatrician prescribe Ritalin for him. They said he would be less bossy and defiant and that the Ritalin would "calm him down." I, of course, consulted his pediatrician to find out what steps to take to help my child with the proposed problem.

Upon speaking to his pediatrician, she told me that he would have to be evaluated by a psychologist and referred us to a local specialist. The psychologist told me that it was not possible to give an accurate diagnosis of ADHD in a child so young and that I would need to wait until he was around the age of seven. She also told me that the drug methylphenidate, more commonly known as Ritalin, should not be prescribed until the complete examination can be done. Being a conscientious mother, I decided to look for information on ADHD and the use of Ritalin.

There are both positive and negative aspects of the drug Ritalin. Beverly Price, who has a Masters in education with all research geared towards ADD, has a web site that discusses many different problems and concerns that people may have about ADD/ADHD. She also explores many different solutions to these problems. Some of her information concludes that the prescription of Ritalin can be beneficial and has been shown to reduce a wide range of ADD/ADHD symptoms. In a recent posting on ADD/ADHD message board on America OnLine, a mother of three boys who have been diagnosed with ADD/ADHD had this to say: I used to think I was crazy because I couldn't handle my own children, then we got some professional help and a prescription and our lives

did change! Our oldest is 12 and as he gets older the less he has to take Ritalin. My second one, 9 years old, is a wonderful little boy and when it's just he and I we laugh and play and have a great time. When we as a family go out in the afternoon or before his Ritalin wears off, things are great, but when 5:30 hits and it's out of his system he becomes someone totally different.

Price also adds that this medicine is most affective when combined with behavioral modifications. One of the downfalls of Ritalin is that, like other prescription drugs, it is not always successful. In *ADD: The Natural Approach*, Anderson and Piper say that when this happens a child may become violent or excessively irritable and impossible to communicate with. Some children also become withdrawn and depressed. According to an article by Patricia Chisholm, Judy Fox, mother of nine year old Ben Fox, said school authorities urged her to put her son on Ritalin:

At age six they wanted me to put my son on Ritalin because they said he was disruptive in class. I said no and fought to have a teachers aid assist my son. When he turned nine, school authorities in the Vancouver Island community that we live in demanded that I put my son on medication or he would have to be removed from school. We tried Ritalin for 10 days and it was terrible. He was lethargic, having night terrors, and sobbing all the time. We took him off the drug and got him into a program where he learned how to focus and control his anger better. You see, there are other choices.

While most people tend to believe that medication is superior to other types of treatment, my personal concerns about the addiction to prescription drugs led me to search for alternative approaches. Not to mention the fact that Ritalin has been classified by the FDA as a Class II drug. This places it in the same category as cocaine, methadone, and methamphetamines. I have seen children on Ritalin who appear to be in a zombie-like state and I didn't want my child to be like them. According to Kathi Keville and Peter Korn in *Herbs for Health and Healing*, children have shown a dramatic change in behavior when their parents instituted a change of diet and herbal supplements.

You might be unaware of the different alternatives to medication to help your child with signs and symptoms of ADD/ADHD. The two most studied dietary approaches, according to William G. Crook, MD., are the Feingold diet and a hypoallergenic diet. Dr. Crook, author of *Dr. Crook Discusses Alternatives to Ritalin* in the *Management of ADHD*, says that one dietary approach to take is to cut back on the intake of things like sugars, soft drinks and prepackaged foods, which contain hydrogenated fats. Instead, you should offer more fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and fish and vegetable oil.





# Ritalin

The use of nutritional supplements may also help with the natural treatment of the disorder. Deficiencies of essential fatty acids have been observed in children with ADD/ADHD. EFA's, which may also be referred to as Omega-3's or Omega-6's, are of high importance to people with ADHD because EFA's are considered to be food for the brain. Deficiencies in Magnesium, Trace Minerals, Zinc, and Enzymes may also contribute to the signs and symptoms of ADD/ADHD.

Besides diet and nutritional supplements, ADD: *The Natural Approach* lists several other alternative therapies available to help with ADHD. Some of these alternatives are; aromatherapy, Chinese medicine, and herbal medicine.

Using aromatherapy can benefit people with ADHD because of its relaxation benefits. This type of treatment directly affects the Limbic System, the emotional part of our brain, by altering our emotions and thoughts to "create new biochemicals that bathe the bodily tissue.." Different types of essential oils can be used in aromatherapy however, lavender, orange and peppermint are found to be very beneficial in treating ADHD.

In Chinese medicine, acupuncture is used as a relaxation technique. In this process, needles are placed in certain points along the body to intensify the body's flow of energy. By doing this, patients with ADHD are believed to have a heightened ability to deal with stress.

The use of herbal remedies to control hyperactivity and ADD is slowly becoming a more acceptable alternative to Ritalin. In

*Prescription for Natural Healing* it says that Valerian root extract has been very beneficial when treating children with ADD because of its calming effect on the nervous system. Other herbs commonly used for children with ADD/ADHD are Betonica, Ginkgo, Scutellaria, and Vinca minor. While some children respond well to herbal treatments, others feel that there has not been enough research done to warrant giving natural products to children.

According to the organization CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder), "Early intervention is the key to maximizing positive outcomes for your child." On their web site CHADD Facts 2, they list several tips to help you help your child with ADD/ADHD:

Seek up-to-date, scientifically supported information about ADD/ADHD and educate other adults in your child's life about their disorder.

Seek to become your child's best advocate. Seek parent training from a qualified mental health professional experienced in AD/HD. Seek support for yourself.


Tell your child that you love and support him or her unconditionally.

Although life with your child may seem challenging, it is important to remember that children with ADD/ADHD can and do succeed. Consult with your family physician before trying any of the aforementioned supplements, herbal therapies, or diet changes. Have your child thoroughly examined by a psychiatrist. Although the exact cause of ADD/ADHD is not known, it is believed to be a neurobiological disorder. Unfortunately, there is no single or reliable test to diagnose ADD/ADHD. A successful diagnosis and treatment depends on both medical and social factors. A thorough evaluation should be done to rule out other problems that have symptoms similar to those of ADHD. Some children also may have learning disabilities that appear to be ADHD, and other children have learning disabilities in addition to ADHD.

Because of nonphysical factors that cause ADHD-like symptoms, an evaluation should also include an analysis of the child's home environment. For example, a child may be having conflicts at home which cause this child to daydream, have trouble concentrating, and other things that may be considered signs and symptoms of ADD/ADHD. According to the CHADD web site, only pediatricians or child psychiatrists familiar with ADHD can evaluate these nonphysical factors. In conclusion, remember that even though a physician can prescribe Ritalin for your child there are many other factors involved in obtaining an accurate diagnosis of ADD/ADHD. Also, remember that you are not alone in your struggle and you do have other alternatives.

--Michelle Dosage





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# Reviews, reviews,

## CD reviews

Steve Earle: *Transcendental Blues* (E-Squared Records)

Steve Earle topped many "best" lists last year with his bluegrass salute, *The Mountain*. His last offering, *Transcendental Blues*, slightly echoes those roots, though with more standard rock styling.

Perhaps its an odd personal reaction, but the words floating in my head while listening to this disc were "John Lennon." If the prolific and daring Beatle had lived, would he be writing songs like this? Lost love, highway blues and an odd mix of spiritual themes dance 'round here, as Earle skates his own dark moments. Does "transcendence" mean overcoming life's challenges or lunging deep into them to realize their true nature? Earle takes the second route, wrestling with his own demons and hopes.

The lively bluegrass touch that made *The Mountain* a hit resounds again with "The Galway Girl." And a superb prison trilogy concludes the disc with "Until the Day I Die," "All of My Life," and "Over Yonder." This prison is both a literal one of stone, mortar and executions, plus prison of pining, lost love. "Until the Day I Die," with its country twang, could become a classic, with its ironic line, "The only promise that I didn't break was to love you until the day I die."

Earle has a gift to touch numerous styles, from Liverpool rock to bluegrass, rock and roll to rock-a-billy. He stops at each station in *Transcendent Blues*, leaving polished gems behind as he moves on in his musical quest.

### Rediscovering Greatness

Billy Bragg & Wilco: *Mermaid Avenue 11* (BMI)

Various artists: *'Til we outnumber 'em* (Righteous Babe)

That seminal American folk artist Woody Guthrie (1912-1967), whose anthems like "This Land is Your Land" every American knows, was a hard-core union supporter, activist and artist, a deep believer in people and hater of injustice.

Currently a Guthrie revival is underway. The Smithsonian Institution has a major traveling exhibit, "This Land is Your Land," touring the country. Contemporary singer-songwriters are rediscovering the prolific writer who was their all-American prototype.

This revival got a great boost two years ago when British rocker Billy Bragg and Central Illinois band Wilco released *Mermaid Avenue*, a collection of Guthrie song fragments updated and put to music by Bragg. Bragg recently followed with his latest release, *Mermaid Avenue II*, as interesting and compelling as the original.

Guthrie could sing about union organizing, racism, politics and economic inequality. But he also wove delightful songs about everyday life, immediate frustrations, love and life. *Mermaid Avenue* stops at all those doors again. "Hot Rod Hotel" from the dark side and the bright and lively "Joe DiMaggio Done it Again" are daily life snapshots. "Remember the Mountain Bed" and "Secret of the Sea" touch love, and like Guthrie's music, moves beyond the personal to the cosmic. There's the whimsical "My Flying Saucer" and "I Was Born," sung by Natalie Merchant, at first glance a children's song, but flowing onward with methodic, ironic twists.

The politics here is strident, particularly "All You Fascists." "Against Th' Law" is playful frustration with authoritarian local governments, though the live version on *'til we outnumber 'em* is better.

*'Til we outnumber 'em* has its moments, but is also weak in some categories. This is a live concert from 1996 at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland. Along with Billy Bragg and Woody's son Arlo, the Indigo Girls, Ani DiFranco and Bruce Springsteen join in the musical salute.

This is not new territory. A Hollywood Bowl concert after Guthrie's death is a long-time classic, uniting then folk icons like Joan Baez, Judy Collins and Bob Dylan with Guthrie's contemporaries. Folkways compiled a polished studio salute to Guthrie and Leadbelly a few years ago.

There's some bright moments here, particularly the opening group song of "Hard Travelin'". Springsteen highlights Guthrie's playful children's songs and son Arlo does a nice turn with "Dust Storm Disaster". The Indigo Girls' harmony on "Ramblin' Round" is moody and effective. In some cases the disc is a little too ragged. Ani DiFranco's Righteous Babe label deserves credit for pulling these artists together under one banner, unfortunately, her rendition of Guthrie's dustbowl ballad "DoReMe" comes across as self-indulgent, a plaintive wail that lacks the fight-back spunk of livelier versions.

Despite its shortcomings, it's great to see contemporary songwriters drawing sustenance from that scraggly voice from the Oklahoma hills that changed American music and showed there's more to music than "moon" and "June". Check out any and enjoy.

--Mike Matejka  
Union News

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# reviews

## Mystery & intrigue: Who killed Karen Silkwood?

*The Killing of Karen Silkwood*  
by Richard Rashke  
Cornell University Press  
ISBN # 0-8014-8667-x

Like a good murder mystery laced with a multi-layered spy story? Then look no further than the recent re-issue of *The Killing of Karen Silkwood*.

Silkwood was an Oklahoma union activist, employed by energy industry giant Kerr-McGee to process highly toxic atomic plutonium rods. Frequent plant accidents alarmed her, so she secretly gathered evidence on the company's lax policies. 28-years-old, she died in a mysterious car accident on November 13, 1974, en route to a meeting with a union representative and a *New York Times* reporter. A few days previously her apartment was contaminated with plutonium.

Karen Silkwood became a symbolic martyr for the emerging women's movement and union health and safety activists. However, she was no saint. Silkwood's marriage was broken, leaving her three children behind. She was no stranger to sex, drugs and rock and roll.

Despite these frailties, Karen Silkwood was also a high school honors student who took science seriously. She knew plutonium's dangers as she handled it daily in poorly-sealed glove boxes and breathed as it fell from leaking pipes.

When Karen Silkwood's Honda Civic ran off the Highway 74 that fateful night, did she lose control because of a drug overdose, as the Oklahoma Highway Patrol claimed? Or were the mysterious dents in her rear fender clues of a highway hit that sent her car off an embankment and into a concrete culvert? If she was murdered, who wanted to kill her, and why?

Although a little tedious at times, this book very carefully documents numerous possibilities, false leads and bizarre trails that eventually lead to powerful Washington, D. C. sources. Why did the FBI refuse to release its Silkwood files to congressional investigators? Was Karen's discovery of over 40 pounds of missing plutonium the real reason she was murdered? Has she stumbled onto a plutonium smuggling ring? Or was that missing plutonium actually diverted by government sources? Would Silkwood's findings have exposed secret U. S. aid to nations eager to join the nuclear club?

The author, Richard Rashke, covered the case for the National Catholic Reporter. Layers of fascinating characters emerge. There's the skull and dagger CIA-FBI types, darkly hovering around the story's edge, as Silkwood's investigators find themselves tailed by unregistered cars and receive mysterious midnight warnings. Brash U. S. Senator Robert Kerr, co-founder of Kerr-McGee, uses political power for self-enrichment. And finally, there's the strange alliance of Silkwood's family, union activists, feminists, dogged attorneys and Catholic clergy that probe beneath the murky surface, trying to answer the book's question, who killed Karen Silkwood?

Enjoy this book at a number of levels. It's a good who-dun-it, carefully reconstructing all the clues and false leads. It's a quick primer in legal maneuvering, as maverick attorneys challenge the corporate suits. And finally, it's the tale of one resolute but frightened young woman, fast maturing as she stares at death daily in the yellow uranium clouds that choke her workplace.

--Mike Matejka from *Livingston & McLean Counties Union News*

## Book review: Exit 25 Utopia

By Steven Wishnia  
(The Imaginary Press)

Anyone still belaboring under the mistaken belief that the rock-'n'-roll lifestyle is a glamorous one is herewith directed to Steven Wishnia's *Exit 25 Utopia*, a gritty chronological collection of short stories set in the fringe world of urban rockers. Opening with the '72 Republican convention (Southern cops beating on a hapless crowd of demonstrators) and finishing with the nineties' eviction of city squatters (NYC cops doing likewise on Lower East Side tenants), Wishnia's book is a harsh and scrupulously detailed account of life on the edge.

*Utopia's* marginal musicians, caught up in the rock-'n'-roll dream, stumble through a procession of low-rent clubs and poverty scale gigs. The book's centerpiece is a set of stories detailing a series of dismal cross-country tours - with substance-abusing bassist and father Sid Berkowitz the connecting thread. Every one of the bands Sid plays in seems on the verge of making it, but instead they wind up self-destructing. Too much ego. Too much dope. Too much stress from a life spent dependent on the kindness of equally poverty-struck music lovers. Wishnia captures it all unflinchingly, if at times repetitiously.

I'm not sure what a reader unfamiliar with the cult rockdom will make of much of the author's catalog of cool-but-definitely-not-top-forty songs. (If you're the type of music lover who knows the Velvet Underground's Loaded backwards and forwards, then you'll feel right at home.) It's such an essential part of the book - when Sid's girlfriend uses a mid-eighties Marianne Faithful song to comment on their deteriorating relationship we're expected to recognize the song and its meaning without him even mentioning the title - that it risks alienating less cultishly inclined readers.

Still, Wishnia's approach mirrors the protagonists' naive faith in the power of Real

Rock-'n'-Roll to triumph over commercial dross. The attempt may be ultimately be futile, but there's some kind of crazy divine thrill in reading/listening to the effort.

--Bill Sherman

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# Mind Candy

Hey there Post Amerikans! Welcome home to another edition of Mind Candy. First of all I want to thank all the people who sent in "stuff" to be reviewed, zum of it I'll tackle in this edition. Anybody who has, or knows of someone who has "stuff" to be reviewed should send it in to me, so we can turn the world on to your work. Unfortunately at this time I cannot review CDs, videos, cassettes, vinyl, etc. just text and photos, so hold on to that stuff for now, okay? Now let's get down to Mind Candy. This time around we are going to dive into a stew of alternative fun and some enlightening paths of light.

## A little tidbit to share about TV

Has anybody seen the syndicated TV show *Total Recall 2070*? If not, why not catch this little sleeper-cult hit. The title, to me, is a bit confusing because it is much more like the movie *Blade Runner* than it is like the movie *Total Recall*. It's quite a visual trip and the script carries its weight. My local NBC affiliate carries it after midnight (12:15 am, est) on Sundays, which is the kind of time slot you can expect to find it in. If you liked *Blade Runner*, replete with messages between the lines, you'll love *Total Recall 2070*.

## Updates

*The Zine Guide #3* (P. O. Box 5467, Evanston, IL, 60204) is now available with thousands of zine listings and brief reviews. As always, it's worth ten times the price of six bucks. If you're hurting for a zine just right for your head, the zine guide is the place to turn to.

*Lily on the Beach #8* (40 East Main St. Box 170, Newark, Delaware, 19711) just graced my path. This issue reunites us with "Jamie," as she weaves deeper into light and dark planes of existence in the secret world of "The Dark Traveler." We follow Jamie as she unlocks the language of creation, cracks secret codes, as she continues to evolve into something not yet defined, yet wonderful. *The Lily on the Beach* series always leaves you thirsting for more, and this issue teases your esoteric taste buds with some of Fran's artwork, always a treat. Indulge yourself with this new treat.

*The Whizzbanger Guide to Zine Distributors* is out, loaded with international zine libraries, zine stories and web sites. Shannon Cole Bank, who also puts out *Flash Point* (to be peaked at later) does a remarkable job putting this little "must have" zine (for zinesters) together. Order up this newest edition for three bucks at Whizzbanger Productions, P. O. Box 5591, Portland, Oregon, 97728.

## Web Stuff

If you've been reading Mind Candy, you know I'm agog over web radio, the brilliant grandchild of shortwave radio. Now there is a clearing house for web radio stations, *Global Streams* ([www.globalstreams.com](http://www.globalstreams.com)) with access to over 2,500 world wide radio stations. Of course I still love [www.WPKN.org](http://www.WPKN.org) and [www.WNHU.org](http://www.WNHU.org), but what a super way to connect to the world at large. This is just the beginning of the web radio invasion. Surrender! Resistance is futile!

For the morbid, or just those who like to plan ahead, [www.deathclock.com](http://www.deathclock.com) will give you an approximate time when you'll leave this earthly place. It's all very odd, but worth checking out. Another curious site is [www.run.edu/~wkovarik/hist/hist.html](http://www.run.edu/~wkovarik/hist/hist.html) (don't cha just love simple web addresses). Anyway, it is the environmental history time line packed full of "green" info that you can stump your friends with and draw inspiration from. Those of you that are, rightly, concerned that you leave a little piece of your personal data behind each time you log on to a web site, [www.cookiecentral.com](http://www.cookiecentral.com) will show you how to toss your cookies off of snoopy sites. Definitely worth clicking on to.

## Review Corner

When I put out the message that Mind Candy was looking for "stuff" to review, I was delighted on what the heavens poured on to me. One of the gems that came my way was *Hillbillies and Living Ghosts: A Poetic Biography of a Survivor* by Mark Valentine (Celtic Heart Publications, 912 West Mulberry #2, Bloomington, IL, 61701). This heart

clutching collection of poetry takes us through an incest survivor's life. Anybody with similar issues will relate in the most painful way to each page. I wanted to stop reading it, but I was drawn into walking through this nightmare with the writer. I applaud Mark Valentine for opening up the other side of this gehenna. And I highly recommend that you walk in these empathetic shoes that this collection places you in.

*Iron Feather Journal* (P. O. Box 480-004, Denver, CO, 80248-0004) What a cool zine. . . Fairly large for a zine. It's a new insight into the cyber scene; the mindset of computer hackers and crackers and djs. It's laden with cyber jargon, loaded with club/dj reviews and interesting underground articles. *Iron Feather* is a great primer for people waiting to enter "the other cyber universe." If one connection leads to another connection, this zine will certainly put you on your first step, a fun step at that!

*Thought Bombs* (\$2.00: P. O. Box 721, Homewood, IL, 60430) Produced by Anthony Rayson and family. This is a true zine in size and style. It has imaginative poetry, Francis Baconesque drawings along with adorable children's drawings. Farmland environmental activism, the plight of Iraq's children, and other worth-your-time-reading. But where *Thought Bombs* shines is in its prisoner related articles and issues and rich articles about the incarcerated. *Thought Bombs* shows us all the insanity of the U. S. corrections, which is now locking up two million people, 25% of the world's prisoner, in a country that is only 5% of the world's population. *Thought Bombs* shows us that the cure has become worse the initial problem. The juxtaposition of Anthony's son's drawings and the brutally honest prison articles is brilliant, proving to us that there is still hope in our children and love in the world.

*The Human Kindness Foundation* (R. R. 1, Box 201-N, Durham, NC, 27705) The Human Kindness Foundation was founded by Bo and Sita Lozoff many moons ago. The H. K. F. has brought love, light, and a higher consciousness to countless people, many of them incarcerated. Indeed, the central focus of the H. K. F. is to bring a better way to exist within the world behind bars, but their newsletters have a wider appeal, covering Buddhism, poetry, peace through positive action, some tasteful prison art, and stories that will put life in perspective for anybody who takes life for granted. The Lozoffs have been joined by a wonderful troupe of life helpers including such notables as Thich Nhat Hanh. There is still room for anyone wishing to help out in this noble cause. Write them and ask for a sample of their newsletter and see if your path blends with the path of the Human Kindness Foundation.

*Justice Watch* (1120 Garden St., Cincinnati, OH, 45214) Yep, another prison zine, but it's not just another prison zine, it's well sculpted and

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staffed by wonderful people, loaded with poetry, zum prison art work, and insightful articles. If it has any fault it is that it's a bit short, but for those people that want to pack in a bunch of info on this topic in a short amount of time, they'll enjoy the brevity. It's got my thumbs up!

*Worm Digest* (P. O. Box 544, Eugene, Oregon, 97440-0544) If you really want to raise an eyebrow on a passerby, get caught reading *Worm Digest*. You'll get asked "What is that?" *Worm Digest*, you reply. "Oh." followed by a blank stare is the standard response. Besides finding muse in this reaction, *Worm Digest* is a wonderful magazine, and it is exactly what it sounds like, a zine devoted to vermiculture (worm farming) which can be done in an urban apartment, or on a large scale operation. Page after page teaches you how to turn your veggie scraps, yard products and green wastes into "black gold." The people involved in this (literally) underground movement are very cool and centered folk, especially the staff and writers for this little gem. Before you raise an eyebrow, check it out, you may find path, or should I say worm hole, is one more "answer" to put on your tool belt to live responsibly on Mother Earth; plus you might just find a way to pick up a holistic second income. It's one can-o-worms you'll be glad to open up.

*Flash Point* (P. O. Box 5591, Portland, Oregon, 97228) AIDS, religion, sex, hypocrisy, racism, hate, love. No, it's not a family picnic at Jesse Helms' house, it's Shannon Colebank's zine, *Flashpoint*. Colebank, who produces a couple of printed goodies, tackles the tough subjects, and her approach is nothing short of controversial. Some parts of *Flashpoint* I really disliked; some parts I was thankful that I absorbed the rare tidbits she comes up with. No matter what your take is on *Flashpoint*, no matter what your point of view is, *Flashpoint* is a must have for people who question the standard answers and hype put out in the mainstream press. Her research is impressive; her writing is well conceived, which she amalgamates with reprints from other periodicals. For three bucks you can't go wrong. In fact, send in for back issues as well. Pro or con, you'll be wiser for the investment in funds and time.

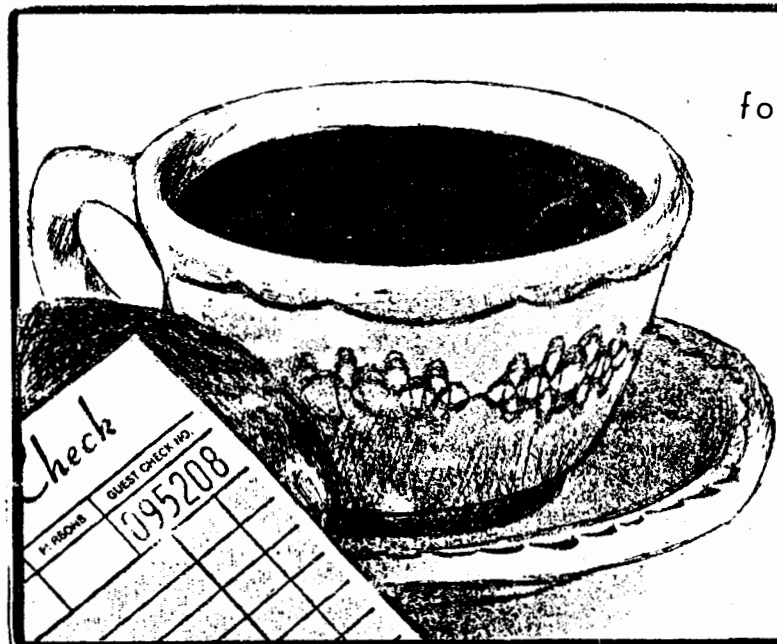
*The Realist* (P. O. Box 1230, Venice, CA, 90294) I'm revisiting *The Realist* because, as previously reported in *Mind Candy*, I thought *The Realist* was folding after zillions of issues. Fortunately, Paul Krassner, of the Chicago Eight fame, an beat generation guru, has extended the life of this uberzine for a few more issues. As can be expected, you'll find the (adult oriented) writing a bit naughty, yet bustingly funny. It's filled with tons of info nobody else has the scoop on. The current plan is to cease publication in the spring of 2001. Hopefully, if we filled P. O. Box 1230 with two buck checks, Krassner will continue to bring us his first person accounts of the beat generation leading into zum of the most important hunks of history of the free thinking phenom. There are thousands of zines out there, but *The Realist* is a one of a kind sapphire.

Well, that's it for another edition of *Mind Candy*. *Mind Candy* is an independently written review article which counts on you to exist. It is essential that you, and your friends send in new goodies to review (see address below). So hunt around kids. The second essential thing is that you support the *Post Amerikan*. Adopt a library, a barber shop, hospitals or anyplace you can think of and buy them a six buck subscription. The independent magazine phenom is essential to our stream of consciousness, and *Post Amerikan* is among the best. Yet, without your support, these grassroots, shoe string budget publishers will fold. Each year independent zines drop like mayflies after a night of love making. Only a rare few that have good friends, like you, survive to give you the other side of the story and to amuse you like nothing else can. Spread you love, light, and pennies. . . I hope you enjoyed this edition of *Mind Candy*. If not, shoot me! Send your comments, love letters, and text and photos to me without

delay. Until next time, may you all bathe in peace and harmony, enjoy each second of life, and waste not a moment.

Nikolai Alexanderovich Zarick

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# Labor News

## Both U. S. & Chinese workers losers in trade pact

Ever bounce around the playground on Keds sneakers, those all-American shoes that kids have worn for years?

Ever wonder where Keds are made today -- try the Kunshan Sun Hwa Footwear Co. in Kunshan City, China. If you visit you'll find 15-year-old girls assembling sneakers with their bare hands, given only toothbrushes to apply the toxic glue. They are locked behind 15-foot tall walls, topped with barbed wire. After their long workday, when they finally leave the factory, they must do so in military, single-file march, according to the National Labor Committee's latest report, "Made in China."

Chinese workers like these, and American workers forced into economic competition with them, are the real losers in the recently completed China trade deal, passed by Congress May 24.

Although the U. S. had trade relations with China, annually that relationship was reviewed, allowing critics an opportunity to highlight Chinese labor and human rights abuses. Now, in the name of "free trade," the door is wide open, with few opportunities to insure decency.

Area representatives Tom Ewing and Ray LaHood, both Republicans, supported Democrat Bill Clinton's effort to pass the China bill. Rock Island-area Democrat Lane Evans voted against the effort.

The AFL-CIO estimates corporate lobbyists spend \$12 million advertising and promoting the bill. Although disappointed with the outcome, the AFL-CIO said the debate helped focus attention on China's behavior. AFL-CIO President John Sweeney said bill supporters, both Democrat and Republican, "bowed to big money" to approve unconditional trade with a "human rights violator of epic proportions."

"It's sad that the president secured his 'legacy' by forging an alliance with the very members of Congress who tried to destroy him and our working families agenda a year ago," Sweeney said.

The AFL-CIO, environmental and religious groups mobilized members and average citizens against the bill.

Profits, however, held the day. Beginning May 22, the *New York Times* reported, business interests launched a three-day, \$1 million advertising blitz as part of "corporate America's costliest legislative campaign ever."

Just what did this mean for Congress members? According to the Center for Responsive Politics, the average contribution by the Business Roundtable in the 1999-2000 election cycle to House members who voted for China trade has been \$44,000.

Along with poor human rights in China, the legislation bodes poorly for American workers. The Economic Policy Institute estimates 900,000 U. S. jobs lost under the trade pact.

The AFL-CIO's effort was part of its campaign to "Make the Global Economy Work for Working Families." The U. S. Senate is expected to vote on the pact in July.

For more information, visit the AFL-CIO website at [www.aflcio.com](http://www.aflcio.com) or write the National Labor Committee for a copy of "Made in China," 275 7th Ave., 15th Fl., NY, NY 10001, or visit their site at [www.nlcnet.org](http://www.nlcnet.org).

--from *Livingston & McLean Counties Union News*

## Mistakes can sabotage your workers' comp claim

by the Chicago Area Committee on Occupational Safety & Health

Many of us never think much about getting hurt on the job. Unfortunately, when we don't know about the Workers' Compensation system, we can make bad mistakes. Susan learned the hard way.

One morning, Susan parked in the company parking lot, and walked toward the entrance. Suddenly, she slipped in an icy hole and fell heavily on her knee. No one saw the fall, so she got up and hobbled inside.

She talked to Kyle, the company safety manager, alone in his office (mistake #1). He was nice to her (or so she thought) and sent her to a doctor. Kyle said that accidents that occur outside the building aren't covered by Workers' Compensation (mistake #2). He told her to use her health insurance (mistake #3). Then, Susan told the doctor only that she had slipped and fallen, but didn't mention where it happened (mistake #4).

This accident was expensive for Susan. She missed two months pay for the time off work plus her health insurance policy required her to pay substantial deductibles. After surgery, steroid injections, and occupational therapy, Susan returned to work.

A year later, during a work speedup, Susan collided with a burly co-worker. She went sprawling and, again, injured her knee. This time, she filed for Workers' Compensation. Her employer, however, refused to provide treatment, claiming that her previous fall caused her injury.

Again, Susan used her health insurance, paid large deductibles, and list thousands of dollars during the sixteen weeks she was off work. A month later after she was discharged from treatment and returned to work, her employer laid her off because of a "work shortage."

Finally, she went to see a lawyer. Her lawyer

told her the truth -- her fall in the company parking lot was covered by Workers' Compensation, and she should receive compensation for both injuries. Her employer, however, now denies responsibility for either injury. So one witnesses the accident, no one saw her give notice to her employer, and her doctor's records said nothing about where the accident occurred.

With little evidence her attorney was unable to persuade the employer to voluntarily compensate her for past and future medical expenses and her permanent injuries. The lawyer is not litigating her case, but her mistakes are making it much harder her the lawyer to help her.

Susan made several key mistakes after her first accident:

- 1) No one can verify that she notified her employer of her injury. When injured, immediately notify your employer. Oral notification is often best, but give notice in the presence of a reliable witness, like a union steward. Be careful what you put in writing. Get a copy of any written statements.
- 2) She accepted legal advice from her employer. Instead, Susan could have received a free consultation from a Workers' Compensation attorney.
- 3) Using her health insurance instead of Workers' Compensation meant she had to pay substantial medical expenses, and received no compensation for lost wages or her permanent injury. Workers' Compensation would have paid all medical expenses, a portion of her lost wages, and compensated her for her permanent injury.
- 4) She failed to provide her doctor with a complete and accurate description of her accident to show it was work related. Consequently, her medical records don't support her claim that the accident happened at work.

By learning and carefully following the correct procedure, you can help yourself and your co-workers to get proper benefit after an on-the-job accident.

--from *Livingston & McLean Counties Union News*

