

## **CHE-Penn E-Newsletter #10, April, 2006**

### ----- **Table of Contents** -----

- **March 30** – Free Lecture by Paul Watson at Carnegie Mellon University
  - **April 5** – Pittsburgh Hospital Roundtable with Barb Sattler, PhD, RN
  - **April 8** – Health and Environment in the Valley Conference, New Kensington
  - **April 12** – Environmental Film Series, Pittsburgh
  - **April 12** – Deadline for comments on Pennsylvania Clean Vehicles Program
  - **April 22** – Join the Sierra Club Earth Day Festival – Pittsburgh
  - **April 22** – Rachel Carson Bridge Dedication, Pittsburgh
  - **April 22-30** – National Wildlife Week, nationwide Green Hour
  - **April 24** – Women’s and Children’s Health & the Environment, Baltimore
  - **May 14** – Pittsburgh Race for the Cure
- Join the [www.ReducingRisk.org](http://www.ReducingRisk.org) Team**
- **May 20** – Second Annual Great Wilkinsburg Clean & Green Festival
  - **June 9-10** – Sixth Annual Childhood & Society Symposium
  - **MACCHE** Awarded for Excellence in Children’s Health 2006
  - North Dakota **Pesticide Study** shows lower IQs among exposed
  - 100,000 Public Comments Against **TRI Proposals** (and counting!)
  - **EPA** proposes regulating home renovations
  - **Job Opening** – Environmental Health Director, WE ACT in NYC

### ----- **March 30 – Free Lecture by Paul Watson at CMU** -----

Paul Watson, one of the world’s foremost environmental activists, will speak on Thursday, March 30, 2006 from 7:00 – 10:00 PM at McConomy Auditorium in the University Center at Carnegie Mellon University.

The lecture is free and open to the public and tickets are currently available at the University Center information desk. Aside from being a co-founder of Greenpeace in 1972 and Greenpeace International in 1979 and founder of Sea Shepherd in 1977, Paul Watson was a Field Correspondent for Defenders of Wildlife between 1976 and 1980. He was a field representative for the Fund for Animals between 1978 and 1981, and a representative for the Royal Society for the Protection of Animals in 1979. He co-founded Friends of the Wolf in 1984 and the Earthforce Environmental Society in 1977. Paul's first affiliation with the Sierra Club was in 1968 and he has remained a Sierra Club supporter ever since. In April 2003, Paul was elected to the National Board of the Sierra Club USA. He will be a director until 2006. See: <http://activitiesboard.org/event.php?e=307>

### ----- **April 5 – Pittsburgh Hospital Greening Roundtable Meeting** -----

“Engaging Nurses in Environmental Health” on Wednesday, April 5, 2006 1-3 PM at Magee Women’s Hospital, with Barbara Sattler, PhD, RN, University of Maryland School of Nursing.

While Dr. Sattler is in town, she will have a full schedule. In addition to the roundtable above, she will be lecturing on Tuesday at Nancy Giff’s Environmental Studies class at

Chatham College, meeting with the Dean of the School of Nursing at the University of Pittsburgh, talking with the Patient Education Committee at Magee Hospital and visiting with a group of NICU nurses at Children's Hospital.

Future roundtable programs include:

- "Green Chemistry and Chlorine" May 11, 2006, with Terry Collins, PhD, Carnegie Mellon University.
- "Healthy Food in Health Care" on Tuesday, June 6, 2006 (time and place to be determined) with Leslie Mikkelsen, MPH, RD, of the Prevention Institute.

----- **April 8 – Health and Environment in the Valley** -----

"Health and Environment in the Valley," a conference honoring the life of Amy Mercurio (3/13/68 – 3/5/04) will take place from 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 PM, Saturday, April 8, 2006 at Penn State – New Kensington.

**Keynote Speaker:** Ellen Dorsey, PhD, Environmental Health Program Officer, the Heinz Endowments will present "Taking Precautions: Understanding the Connection between Environment and Health."

**Workshops:**

"Is Cancer In Your Genes?" Dr. Maryann Donovan, University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute, Center for Environmental Oncology.

"Why Can't We Eat Our Fish? What's In Our Water?" Dr. Patricia Eagon, University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute, Center for Environmental Oncology.

"Everyday Exposures In The Valley" Rachel Filippini, Executive Director, Group Against Smog and Pollution; and Vivienne Shaffer, Consultant, Rachel Carson Homestead Association.

Act 48 Educational Credits are available. Registration is free. Refreshments will be provided. Reservations are requested (724-226-9996). **Sponsors:** Allegheny - Kiski Health Foundation, Rachel Carson Homestead Association, Penn State – New Kensington, friends and family of Amy Mercurio. (See: [www.nk.psu.edu](http://www.nk.psu.edu) for directions.)

----- **April 12 – Environmental Film Series, Botany Hall, Schenley Park** -----

The Sierra Club is sponsoring a screening of short environmental films, 7:00 PM, Wednesday, April 12, 2006, at Botany Hall, adjacent to the Phipps Conservatory, across from the Schenley Park Visitors Center, Pittsburgh. Popcorn provided for a small fee!

1. *True Cost of Food* – the Sierra Club's hard-hitting Sustainable Consumption film
2. *The Heifer Project* – a look at a long-time successful sustainable agriculture project.
3. *Kilowatt Ours* – how we could have a major influence on a healthier environment.
4. *Small is Beautiful* – short film by E. F. Schumacher's, great "eco-philosophy."
5. *SoftEnergy Paths* – short film by Amory Lovins, on how we design culture.
6. *Concerto* – on why we work to save the earth. A prayer on film.

---- **April 12 – Deadline for comments on Pennsylvania Clean Vehicles Program** ----

While the legislature has been attempting to kill the Pennsylvania's Clean Vehicles Program, the Environmental Quality Board (EQB) is proceeding ahead with its job to implement it. The EQB is taking public comment until April 12, and the members need to hear that we support implementation so the Clean Vehicles Program will take effect in model year 2008. We of course also support the health, economic, and quality of life benefits the program will bring to Pennsylvania.

Please follow this link to the [Pennfuture Web site](#) to submit your comment to the Environmental Quality Board. There you will find a sample comment letter and additional points that you can use to help emphasize additional concerns you may have. As always, it is good to personalize your comments as much as you can.

Submitted by Heather Sage, [sage@pennfuture.org](mailto:sage@pennfuture.org)

**----- April 22 – Join the Sierra Club Earth Day Festival – Pittsburgh -----**

THIS EARTH DAY, TAKE ACTION FOR THE EARTH. Gather at between 11:00 AM and 12:30 PM for a festival and rally at Rhododendron Shelter on Lake Drive, Highland Park, Pittsburgh. Join the educational neighborhood walk from 12:30 – 3:00 PM.

Join the Sierra Club on Saturday, April 22 for music, speakers, kids' activities, information from local environmental groups, food, and prizes! Learn about energy, global warming, and other environmental issues, and then take action to educate area residents about what we can do to protect our families' health and safety, and care for the Earth.

For more information, contact Rachel Martin at 412-802-6161 or [rachel.martin@sierraclub.org](mailto:rachel.martin@sierraclub.org)

See: <http://www.sierraclub.org/community/pittsburgh>

**----- April 22 – Rachel Carson Bridge Dedication, Pittsburgh -----**

[The Rachel Carson Homestead Association](#) invites you to join Allegheny County and Chatham College to celebrate the dedication of the Rachel Carson Bridge, formerly the Ninth Street Bridge. The dedication will take place on Saturday, April 22, 2006, beginning at 11 AM at Ninth Street and Fort Duquesne Boulevard.

For more information, contact Patty DeMarco at [pmdemarco@verizon.net](mailto:pmdemarco@verizon.net).

**----- April 22 – 30, National Wildlife Week, nationwide Green Hour -----**

The National Wildlife Federation (NWF) is calling attention to nature deficit in children with a call to develop nature experiences, especially during National Wildlife Week, April 22-30, 2006. Research shows that the single biggest reason people feel connected to nature is the time they spend enjoying the outdoors. But kids are now spending an average of nearly six and a half hours a day staring at some form of electronic device -- TV, computer, video game. NWF wants every child in the nation to spend an average of an hour per day outdoor in green spaces -- a "Green Hour."

A new global pediatric health study says nearly 50 percent of U.S. kids will be obese by 2010 -- another study finds that kids need 60 minutes of moderate exercise per day -- such as they would get playing outdoors. See [www.nwf.org/greenhour](http://www.nwf.org/greenhour) for more information.

**--- April 24 – Women’s and Children’s Health & the Environment, Baltimore ---**

An environmental health conference "Women's and Children's Health and the Environment," is being held April 24, 2006, at Harbor Hospital in Baltimore, MD. See: <http://www.midwife.org/siteFiles/news/EHregistration.pdf> to download the registration form.

**----- May 14 – ReducingRisk.org – Register Today -----**



Join the "ReducingRisk.org" team for the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 14, 2006 by registering online, and selecting the ReducingRisk.org team, at <http://www.pittsburghraceforthecure.org>. CHE-Penn is coordinating an environmental health booth on Flagstaff Hill where the race ends. Mark your calendars, register for the race and contact [che-penn@comcast.net](mailto:che-penn@comcast.net) to volunteer your time at the "ReducingRisk.org" booth (and get a black T-shirt with our new logo!). The new website will be unveiled on Race day.

**----- May 20 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Great Wilkinsburg Clean & Green Festival -----**

On May 20th, 2006, the 2nd Annual Great Wilkinsburg Clean & Green Festival will be held on the grounds of the Jane Holmes Residence, 441 Swissvale Ave. Wilkinsburg. For the second year in a row, more than 30 environmental, health and community groups will come together to offer information about their events and services to Wilkinsburg residents. The festival, which had over 100 participants in 2005, will expose this underserved community to the best of the environmental and health resources that are available in this region. For more information, please contact Marna Taylor, Event chair at 412-241-6073.

**----- June 9-10 – Sixth Annual Childhood & Society Symposium -----**

Noted ecologist and environmental health advocate Sandra Steingraber will be speaking at the "Child Honoring: How to turn This World Around,": the Sixth Annual Childhood and Society Symposium at Point Park University in Pittsburgh. The symposium opens up Friday, June 9, 2006, with a panel and keynote from 7:00 – 10:00 PM and continues on Saturday, June 10, 2006, from 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM. ACT 48 hours can be earned. For complete information, visit the Point Park University website: [www.pointpark.edu](http://www.pointpark.edu), look for "News and Events," and click onto Childhood and Society Symposium.

**----- MACCHE Awarded for Excellence in Children’s Health 2006 -----**

CHE-Penn partner organization, the Mid-Atlantic Center for Children’s Health & the Environment (MACCHE), received a 2006 Children’s Environmental Health Recognition Award from the US Environmental Protection Agency for excellence in educational

activities in issues involving children's environmental health. The award is one of 30 given out nationwide this year and is a reflection of MACCHE's dedication and ongoing commitment to protecting children from environmental health risks.

MACCHE is one of 10 Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units in the US. The Center's mission is to create awareness and educate health care providers and the general public on environmental issues that affect children in EPA Region 3 (Delaware, District of Columbia, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and West Virginia). MACCHE is a joint effort of George Washington University (GWU) and the Children's National Medical Center and is based within the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health of the GWU School of Public Health and Health Services.

On Saturday, October 21, 2006, MACCHE is collaborating with Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, CHE-Penn and the Healthy Children Project on a conference on children's environmental health in Pittsburgh. Mark your calendar now for this exciting event; more information will be forthcoming.

**----- North Dakota Pesticide Study shows lower IQs among exposed -----**

Preliminary results of a study by University of North Dakota researchers show that farm children exposed to pesticides performed significantly lower than their peers on IQ tests, though their scores still are within a range considered normal.

The study took place over the summers of 2004 and 2005, and involved 128 children, ages 7 to 12. Half live on or next to a farm, and the remaining half live at least one mile from a farm. The researchers tested each child's cognitive, problem-solving, attention, and IQ abilities, and sent urine and blood samples to the Centers for Disease Control to measure pesticide exposure. Parents also took cognitive tests, filled out a 24-hour food intake chart for their children, and answered questions about their use of cleaners and pesticides around the home.

The researchers found the average intelligence score for the farm children was 98 – still within the range of 85 to 115 that is considered normal but was well below the average IQ score of 103 for the group with lower chronic exposures to pesticides.

The research is unique because of its interdisciplinary nature – the collaboration between psychology, rural health, and biology. The findings were presented to the Dakota Conference on Rural and Public Health in Fargo in late March, 2006 and reported by the Associated Press on Friday, March 24, 2006 (“Researchers Look at Farm Kids, Pesticides”).

Submitted by Bill Couzens

**----- 100,000 Public Comments Against TRI Proposals (and counting!) -----**

More than 100,000 people, according to preliminary estimates, have sent in comments opposing EPA's proposals that would relax chemical reporting requirements for large industrial facilities. The public comment period ended on January 13, 2006, but comments are still coming in, according to EPA sources. EPA expects to issue a final rule sometime in December, but in the meantime, more and more lawmakers are taking notice.

On Feb. 23, Reps. Stephen Lynch (D-MA), Frank Pallone (D-NJ), Luis Gutierrez (D-IL), and Hilda Solis (D-CA) hosted a Congressional Staff Briefing that showed how EPA's proposals would undermine first responder readiness, harm worker safety, interfere with state pollution prevention programs and hinder cancer research. Presenters included: Michael R. Harbut, a medical doctor at the Karmanos Cancer Institute in Detroit; Alan Finkelstein, Assistant Fire Marshall and Cuyahoga County Ohio Emergency Response Chair; Andy Frank, Assistant Attorney General of New York; Bill Kojola with the Safety and Health Department at the AFL-CIO and Sean Moulton, Information Policy Director at OMB Watch.

This news comes from the Working Group on Community Right to Know (A Project of OMB Watch), 1742 Connecticut Ave. N.W., Washington DC 20009, (202) 234-8494 <http://www.crtk.org/>

----- **EPA proposes regulating home renovations** -----

Responding to the rising numbers of US children with elevated levels of lead in their blood, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has proposed a new rule requiring remodelers to use lead-safe work practices when renovating pre-1978 homes. If the proposal, published in the January 10 issue of the Federal Register, is finalized, it would create the first national standards governing how contractors renovate and clean up houses. If a remodeling project might disturb lead-based paint, workers would have to take steps to minimize exposure, including using vacuums with special filters and sealing off work areas. At least one worker would have to be EPA-certified in lead-safe work practices and would be required to train others on-site.

The public comment period on the proposal will last until April 10.

----- **Job Opening – Environmental Health Director, WE ACT in NYC** -----

WE ACT for Environmental Justice (WE ACT) is a non-profit environmental justice organization based in New York City that fights environmental racism and works to improve environmental health through community organizing and education, community-based research and planning, and advocacy.

WE ACT is seeking an Environmental Health Director to direct and implement their Environmental Health Program. The Environmental Health Program serves as a bridge between low-income communities of color, beginning locally in Northern Manhattan, and scientific and other technical resources to empower residents to improve environmental health, and to facilitate the development of community-driven and ethical environmental health research. The Environmental Health program at WE ACT is driven by the belief that science can be used to build power in communities of color. The program is an innovative combination of technical and scientific resources and tools with community-driven and responsive outreach, research, and education, and requires a director who can demonstrate strengths in both the scientific and community realms.

For more information about WE ACT and the position, please visit [www.weact.org](http://www.weact.org) .