

CHE-Penn E-Newsletter #11, May, 2006

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----- **March 29 and ongoing – Podcast with Ted Shettler, M.D., M.P.H.** -----

In this podcast, PennFuture's Heather Sage speaks with Ted Schettler, M.D., M.P.H., Science Director at the [Science & Environmental Health Network](#) and a national expert on environmental links to reproductive and developmental disorders, neurotoxicity, and other health problems. Dr. Schettler works closely with the [Collaborative on Health and the Environment](#) offering a medical professional’s perspective on the role of the environment in human and ecosystem health. See: <http://www.pennfuturepodcast.org> and look under “mercury.”

----- **April 30 – Interview with Jo Ann Meier on ESPN radio** -----

Jo Ann Meier, Executive Director of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation Pittsburgh Affiliate, was interviewed by Joe DiStio from ESPN radio on the Pittsburgh Race for the Cure and environmental links to breast cancer. Her interview aired Sunday, April 30, 2006 at 7:30 AM.

----- **May 3 – Consumer Health Coalition – Pittsburgh** -----

On Wednesday May 3, 2006, from 2:00 - 4:30 PM, the Consumer Health Coalition 2006 Spring Meeting will take place at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, 6300 Fifth Avenue (Corner of Shady and Fifth Avenue)

Fran Chervenak of the Pennsylvania Health Law Project will discuss the proposed 2006-07 state budget. Ken Thompson, Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Public Health at the University of Pittsburgh, will address revitalization of the health of our community.

RSVP to Leslie Bachurski at 412-456-1877 x200.

----- **May 9 – Diesel Partnership Launch – Plum Borough** -----

On May 9, 2006 from 10:30 AM to 1:00 PM, the [Group Against Smog and Pollution](#) and [Clean Water Action](#) will kick off the 'Diesel Partnership' at the Oblock Junior High School, 440 Presque Isle Drive in Plum Borough with a press conference and luncheon.

The Plum School District was chosen as the site for this event due to the district's initiative to retrofit many of its diesel school buses with diesel particulate filters. The new technology is dramatically reducing diesel emissions affecting the health of students, bus drivers and community at large.

GASP and CWA will be joined by Clean Air Task Force Senior Scientist Bruce Hill, who will demonstrate the advantages of emission control technology in reducing harmful diesel emissions.

The press event and demonstration will be followed by a luncheon. There is a FREE shuttle leaving at 9:30 AM from GASP's office at 5604 Solway Street in Squirrel Hill to the event in Plum.

RSVP to GASP at 412-325-7382 or Clean Water Action at 412-765-3053 ext. 203.

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



May 1 is the final day for *early* online registration, but you can still use the online feature until May 10 to sign up for the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure at <http://www.pittsburghraceforthecure.org>, but the cost of registration jumps to \$30 for the non-competitive walk/run and \$35 for the competitive 5K run.

CHE-Penn is collaborating with the Center for Environmental Oncology at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute on an environmental health booth on Flagstaff Hill where the race ends. Contact 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 14, 2006.

Lisa Wilkes at Komen Pittsburgh (lwilkes@pittsburghraceforthecure.org) is looking for volunteers to help on May 13, the day before the Race to set up, 9 AM – 1 PM, and on May 14, with the following teams: Recycling, 8 AM-10 AM, Site Restoration 9 AM – 11:30 AM, Site Restoration 11 AM-1:30 PM, Advocacy 7-9 AM and 9-11 AM, Course Marshals, 6:30 AM – 10:30 AM.

----- **May 21 – Citizens Hearing on Health Care Reform – Pittsburgh** -----

US Congressman John Conyers, Jr. (D-Michigan) will be at Temple Sinai, 5505 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, on Sunday, May 21, 2006, from 1:30 – 5 PM to conduct a Citizens Hearing on Health Care Reform. Representative Conyers is prime sponsor of HR 676, the "United States National Health Insurance Act," also known as the "Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act."

The hearing will include testimony of local citizens concerning the health care crisis in our region and information on other single-payer solutions, such as PA SB 1085, introduced by Pittsburgh State Senator Jim Ferlo.

For more information, contact Sandy Fox, sm2fox@yahoo.com.

----- May 20 – Second Annual Great Wilkinsburg Clean & Green Festival -----

On May 20, 2006 the Second Annual Great Wilkinsburg Clean & Green Festival will be held on the grounds of the Jane Holmes Residence, 441 Swissvale Ave. Wilkinsburg. 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.

--- May 23-25, Second National Water Quality Trading Conference - Pittsburgh -----

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) are co-hosting the Second National Water Quality Trading Conference on May 23-25, 2006 at the Westin Convention Center in Pittsburgh. The conference theme is "Implementation at the Watershed Scale," and the event will examine the fundamentals and mechanics of water quality trading as well as highlight examples of water quality trading programs.

See: <http://www.farmfoundation.org/projects/06-30WQTHomepageTWO.htm>.

----- June 8 – Sandra Steingraber at the AC-ACLD/Tillotson School -----

Noted ecologist and environmental health advocate Sandra Steingraber, Ph.D., will lecture at 7 PM on Thursday, June 8, 2006 at the [AC-ACLD/Tillotson School](#), 4900 Girard Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15227. Call 412-881-2253 for directions.

This free event is co-sponsored by the Healthy Children Project, the AC-ACLD/Tillotson School and CHE-Penn.

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

Sandra Steingraber will join children's entertainer Raffi at "Child Honoring: How to turn This World Around," the Sixth Annual Childhood and Society Symposium at Point Park University in Pittsburgh. The symposium opens 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, look for "News and Events," and click onto Childhood and Society Symposium.

----- June 9 -10 – First National Conference on Precaution - Baltimore -----

The first national conference on precaution, "Taking Precautionary Action: Roadmap for

Success," takes place June 9 - 11 at the University of Maryland School of Nursing in Baltimore, MD.

Join hundreds of activist groups to share successful precautionary strategies, tools, and programs. The conference will bring together people working on toxics and nuclear pollution, disease prevention, pesticides, worker safety, and many other issues.

Learn about over 50 model local, state, and nationwide precautionary policies. Add practical new tools to your arsenal on messaging, alternative assessments, full-cost accounting and more. Participate in trainings on community organizing, fundraising, advocacy, media outreach, and more. Help build the movement for precautionary action to prevent harm from environmental hazards by registering today!

Go to www.besafenet.com/ppconf.html for conference agenda and registration form.

Space is limited, so please register soon. Reserve hotel at discount rate by Friday, May 12. Register by Friday, May 26th.

----- October 21 - MACCHE Children's Environmental Health Conference -----

On Saturday, October 21, 2006, the Mid-Atlantic Center for Children's Health and the Environment (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.

----- Update on Toxic Mercury Bills in Pennsylvania -----

Pennsylvania is working to move ahead with a state-specific rule to control mercury pollution from coal-fired power plants by 90 percent by 2015. The rule comes in response to a petition for action by Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future (PennFuture) and over 60 health-affected, children's, women's rights, faith-based, sporting, and environmental groups around the state. Unfortunately, the Pennsylvania legislature is now trying to stop the progress, and block the rule, forcing Pennsylvania instead to stick with an illegal and very weak Federal rule called the Clean Air Mercury Rule (CAMR).

Two bills have been introduced in the Pennsylvania legislature (HB 2610 and SB 1201) after heavy lobbyist pressure from the utility and mining industries and related labor organizations. In the House, 121 co-sponsors joined the bill, but many have since removed their names as they have learned about the false claims the bills supporters have been making, chiefly that CAMR will result in 86 percent reduction of mercury in Pennsylvania. This claim has been clearly refuted by the Congressional Research Service that looked at EPA's supporting data and found that though the rule claims that mercury emissions nationally will be reduced by 70 percent by 2018, that reduction would not actually occur until as late as 2030 because of the pollution trading scheme set up by the rule.

Pennsylvania is now second worst in the nation for toxic mercury emissions, behind only Texas. The Commonwealth's power plants are also the number one purchasers of pollution credits under other air pollution programs, so it is likely that plants here under CAMR would do little more than keep polluting and buying credits from upgraded plants

elsewhere. Dangerous hot spots of high mercury concentrations are found within a hundred miles or so of the source, and studies show that reductions from those local sources do result in nearby reductions of mercury pollution in fish within a few years.

PennFuture has launched a new website at <http://www.protectbabies.org> with links to information about the issue and ways to get involved. It is critical to make contact with elected officials to voice your concerns about these bills, and there is a link to take action on the site. PennFuture also has posters and stickers for widespread distribution, and needs your help in getting them in the windows of local businesses. Please contact Heather Sage at 412-258-6681 to request materials or if you have any questions.

Submitted by Heather Sage, sage@pennfuture.org

----- **Berks County website on Children's Environmental Health** -----

The Berks County Environmental Advisory Council has launched a new [website](#) on children's environmental health. The site deals with children's environmental health, the ways a child is different than an adult and the ways the environment affects the health and welfare of the Berks County citizens.

Check it out: <http://www.co.berks.pa.us/eac/children/index.htm>

----- **Food & Water Watch: Career Opportunities** -----

FWW is a non-profit advocacy organization located in Washington, DC that fights corporate control of food and water resources. FFW has approximately 17 - 24 employees with an annual budget of \$2.5 million. There are jobs posted at: <http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org>.