



OTZINACHSON

Factory Farms Threaten Our Region

Inside this issue:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Antibiotic Overuse | 3 |
| Business of Breast Cancer | 4 |
| Wilderness Under Attack | 4 |
| What's Next on School Menu | 5 |
| Poisoned Lawns, Poisoned Pregnancies | 5 |
| OTZ Endorses Faraguna | 6 |
| Wilderness Week | 7 |
| Sock Hop | 8 |



"To cherish what remains of the Earth and to foster its renewal is our only legitimate hope of survival."

-Wendell Berry

The following is testimony Ed Lawrence gave at a public hearing held by DEP concerning the permit application for a Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) in Montour County. A local group, Montour Citizens for a Clean Environment (MCCE), is actively fighting this factory farm. Recently, Organizations United for the Environment (OUE) has stepped forward to help coordinate and work with the many groups in our region that have been formed to fight this new threat to our ground water, air quality and family farm traditions. OUE meets the first Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m. in the Watonsontown United Methodist Church.

There is an inseparable connection between protecting the environment and safe guarding human health. This intertwining relationship needs to be constantly kept in mind when considering the risks associated with this facility.

Water quality at risk means a community at risk. Decisions often result in unintended or unforeseen consequences, but we are concerned tonight with what we know as possible, what we know as probable, and what we know with reasonable certainty will be the impact on the environment and on public health from having hundreds of thousands of gallons of pig manure stored in holding pits and spread on the surrounding fields.

One of the first casualties of high density

industrial swine production is water quality. Factory farms have been and continue to be major sources of water pollution, largely because of the vast amounts of animal waste they generate.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) animal waste from factory farm operations is known to have polluted 35,000 miles of waterways flowing through 22 states and contaminated ground water in at least 17 states.

Storage lagoons leak or spill liquefied manure. When it is intentionally applied to the land it runs off into streams and seeps into underground water supplies. It brings with it, according to EPA analysis, a potent mixture of ammonia, pesticides, disease causing pathogens, antibiotics, hormones and high

(Continued on page 3)

State Forest Wild Area Protection Campaign

Sometime this spring the DCNR will announce public meetings to get citizen input on state forest planning issues. Please look for these announcements in local newspapers and plan on attending those meetings closest to you. The Bureau of Forestry needs to hear that Pennsylvanians want their public forestlands to have greater protections. Commercial interests that want more access for logging, oil and gas exploration, mining and ATV playgrounds WILL show up at these meetings. It's vital for conservationists to be there and ready to speak out as well. The Pennsylvania chapter of the Sierra Club and

its members are promoting greater protection and expansion of state forest "Wild Areas". Despite being called 'wild', logging and other extraction activities are allowed in these areas. Our goal is to prohibit these uses and to allow these areas to mature undisturbed into old growth ecosystems.

You Can Tell the BOF to:

1. Protect already established state forest Wild Areas by ending commercial logging in them.
2. Create new Wild and Natural Areas.
3. Provide interconnections of old forests using protected public forestlands.

Message from the Chair: A Great Step

Joining the Sierra Club is a great first step in becoming an advocate for environmental and social justice. Otzinachson members know that democracy works when our elected officials hear from us about what is important to us and what we want them to support. The winter 2003 issue of THE SYLVANIAN gives contact numbers for these folks both on a federal and state level.

Making those calls, as often and as politely as necessary is the next big step a member needs to take. It really is important.

To get more physically involved on a group level come to an executive committee (ex-com) meeting, attend special events, speaker presentations and, of course, outings. That's how we get to know each other and strengthen our commitment. As it turns out, Sierra Club members are some pretty nice people. Hope to see you at the Sock Hop, where live music and conviviality rule.

Ed Lawrence, President

Otz Opposes Shopping Complex

At a recent meeting, the Otzinachson, representing over 100 members in East Buffalo Township and the Lewisburg area, passed a resolution to oppose development of a shopping center which was proposed for the Route 15 and Spruce Hills site.

The group believes that the proposed development would be a "Giant" step backwards for land conservation and a "Giant" step forward for Sprawl.

Otzinachson cited the following environmental concerns for its opposition to the proposed shopping center:

1. Huge paved area would produce severe runoff problems resulting in pollution of an adjoining stream that flows into the Susquehanna River. Toxic material from the parking lot would wash into the creek, creating ecological havoc in what is now a relatively healthy aquatic ecosystem.
2. The runoff would create serious flooding problems on nearby streets and adjoining residential properties. Catch basins constructed on the site would have the potential to create stagnant pools that attract mosquitoes carrying West Nile Virus.
3. Because of the steep sloping characteristics of the site, construction would invariably cause massive soil erosion problems which would carry sediment into the local stream, adjoining streets and lawns.
4. Developer's plan to plant 100 trees around shopping complex would not make up for the wide swath of trees and vegetation that would be removed from the site to make room for parking lots; also construction would destroy riparian corridor provided by stream, which is critical for birds and wildlife habitat.
5. Gas station proposed for site would present serious potential for contamination of soil and water with toxic materials.
6. Air quality would be severely degraded by huge influx of cars/trucks. Noise and light pollution from 24 hour market would shatter quality of life.
7. Increased traffic from complex would replace current pedestrian-friendly streets with dangerous thoroughfare.

OTZINACHSON

Executive Committee:

Ed Lawrence, Orangeville; Chair
 Dave Hafer, Lewisburg; Vice-Chair
 Roy Fontaine, Watsonstown;
 Treasurer
 Dodie Lovett; Herndon
 Nicole Faraguna, Coal Township;
 Secretary
 Dave Jansky; Sunbury
 Joseph Rebar, Shamokin

Volunteer Committee Chairs:

Conservation, Ed Lawrence
 Internet Communications/Energy,
 Ken Warn
 Environmental Education, Janet
 Jones

Starting in 03 participants in Group Outings can earn a copy of the
 of the
 Keystone Trails Association's
HIKING TRAILS IN PENNSYLVANIA
 by logging 50 miles with the Edward Abbey Hiking Society. This book is the best compendium of information on hiking trails in Pennsylvania available. Outing leaders will also earn a copy. One more reason to get outside



Factory Farms (con't)

concentrations of nutrients. The EPA notes that drinking water contaminated with animal waste can seriously harm your health.

A waste contaminant of great from industrial size hog operations is nitrogen. Again, according to the EPA, elevated nitrate levels in drinking water can cause 'blue baby syndrome' in infants and may increase the risk of miscarriages and birth defects.

The EPA has documented over 150 pathogens, such as bacteria, viruses, protozoa, fungi and algae that pose a risk to human health in animal factory manure. A Centers for Disease Control investigation of large-scale pig operations found pathogens not only in storage lagoons but also in drainage ditches, drainage wells and even in nearby recreational waters.

A report published last year in the medical journal *Clinical Infectious Diseases* states that the standard practice used in industrial livestock production of feeding low doses of antibiotics to large numbers of animals for long periods of time selects for antibiotic resistant bacteria. These bacteria can pass, through fecal waste, into the production environment and into waterways and other nearby eco-systems.

Groundwater, streams and other waterways contaminated with these fecal wastes can facilitate the spread of bacteria carrying antibiotic resistant traits.

The report then notes that human waste contamination also contributes to this problem. By linking the risks associated with these two waste streams this report should raise a red flag and some serious questions that DEP needs to answer.

The spreading of human sewage sludge in Pennsylvania, which DEP considers a routine farming practice, has been implicated in the sudden and unexplained illnesses and deaths of two young people in this state. Two young boys who came in contact with land-applied Class B biosolids and who died within days of massive bacterial infections.

We don't need routine farming practices that result in unexplained deaths. We don't need routine farming practices of super sized livestock that have a record of contaminating streams, wells and aquifers. A record that is sickening.

We do need a DEP that is committed to protecting the health, safety and best interests of the people of Pennsylvania.

A concentrated animal feeding operation like this will never be hog heaven, but for the surrounding community it can easily become hog hell. DEP has the authority to keep that from

Antibiotic Overuse in Farm Animals *by Ed Lawrence*

I

n February Otzinachson sent the following letter to the Pennsylvania Coalition to Save Antibiotic Strength. If you are a member of an organization in this Coalition ask them to support our request.

"I write to you and the Center for Professional Drug Education on behalf of the members of the Otzinachson regional group of the Pennsylvania chapter of the Sierra Club.

It is our understanding that the Pennsylvania Coalition to Save Antibiotic Strength has not taken a position on the uncontrolled use of antibiotics and anti-microbial in animal agriculture. In a phone conversation, your assistant indicated that the Coalition would need to study the issue before taking a position. We strongly urge the Coalition to do so, and to take a clear and public position.

We understand that the Coalition wishes to focus its present campaign on the human use of antibiotics, but that is not an adequate reason, nor an excuse, to ignore the threat posed by antibiotic overuse in the agricultural livestock sector. Indeed, we believe that the Coalition would be doing a grave disservice to its own goals and to long term public health if it remains silent on this issue.

It is clear that, from a scientific standpoint, the evidence points to a need to regulate, control, phase-out and ban the use of certain important antibiotics in animal agriculture. Expert panels in Europe, Canada and the United States have all reach similar conclusions. As Doctor Sherwood I. Gorbach of the Tufts University School of Medicine wrote in his editorial, *Antimicrobial Use in Animal Feed - Time to Stop*, in the October 18, 2001 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*:

In my view, the findings of White et al., McDonald et al., and Sorensen et al., along with the abundant supporting evidence provided by previous studies, represent the proverbial 'smoking gun'.

The Pennsylvania Coalition to Save Antibiotic Strength has taken on a mission that is both vital and urgent. If it is going to be true to its aim and responsibility, to public trust and public health, it must speak out about the need to 'close the barn door' on the routine use of antibiotics in animal agriculture. Again, we urge you to make this a coalition priority. Thank you." □

**Check out the Group's Website at
www.sierraclub.org/chapters/pa/Otzinachson/**

The Business of Breast Cancer

(from Dr. Andrew Weil's Self Healing—www.drweilselfhealing.com)

Each October, during National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM), women are bombarded with advertisements reminding them that "Early Detection is Your Best Protection". With its pink ribbons and publicity campaigns, NBCAM's educational efforts remind women to get yearly mammograms and practice monthly breast self-exams. But why does its message focus solely on early detection (the effectiveness of which has been questioned) rather than encouraging lifestyle measures that may truly prevent breast cancer, or acknowledge possible causes of breast cancer such as exposure to toxins and other chemicals?

According to some women's health advocates, it could have to do with who controls the message. The pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca is the main sponsor of NBCAM and pours millions of dollars into its educational efforts. But AstraZeneca also manufactures the breast cancer drug tamoxifen, operates a chain of treatment centers and even produces the herbicide acetochlor – a carcinogen suspected of causing breast cancer. Clearly, AstraZeneca and other pharmaceutical and medical-device manufacturers who sponsor "early detection" campaigns have much to gain financially by promoting this agenda, which ultimately benefits their products. Should you ignore the message? Not necessarily, but keep in mind who is giving you the information you receive. For more on this topic, visit the website of the grassroots organization Breast Cancer Action (www.bcaction.org). □

Save the Bobwhite

by Dave Hafer



The exuberant whistle of the Northern Bobwhite was once a familiar call from the old farms, brushy fields and hedgerow habitat throughout Pennsylvania. Today, the call is rarely heard. The Bobwhite is facing extinction over most of its range in Pennsylvania.

The encroachment of sprawl and changes in farming practices—destroying old fields and hedgerows—eliminated most quail habitat. Compounding loss of habitat is the hunting season. Ignoring the drastic decline in population, the PA Game Commission (PGC) insists on continuing a hunting season on the Bobwhite. Unfortunately, the PGC sometimes puts the sale of hunting licenses ahead of its responsibility to protect wildlife. It should be pointed out that wildlife is a natural resource belonging to all the people of our state, not just to hunters who buy a license.

If the Bobwhite is to be saved, we must stop sprawl and save and restore its habitat. In the meantime, we must also convince the PGC to declare a closed season on the Bobwhite. Contact the PGL at 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797. Phone: 717.787.6957. Send copies of your letter to your state senator and representative. □

Wilderness Under Attack

New Roads rule opens up Federal Lands (from American Hiker magazine of the American Hiking Society www.americanhiking.org).

In late December, the Department of the Interior released a rule that could potentially transform thousands of miles of long-abandoned wagon roads, cattle paths, jeep trails and miners' routes into roads, some of them paved.

The rule could affect tens of thousands of claims that states and counties have made to ownership of roads across the West based on a provision of the 1866 mining act known as Revised Statute 2477, whose original purpose was to encourage Western settlement.

The new policy creates a procedure to resolve disputes over who controls rights of ways along many roads, trails, and rivers that cross federal lands and allows any entity claiming title to lands or an interest in lands to apply for a "recordable disclaimer of interest". Congress repealed RS 2477 in 1976, but local politicians and the mining industry resurrected the law in the mid-1980's to preclude wilderness designation and open pristine areas to be developed.

Places at high risk where local governments have made claims based on RS 2477 include several national parks and monuments in Utah (Canyonlands), Alaska (Denali), and California. □

Thank you for Renewing Your Commitment to the Environment

What's Next on the School Menu



P

rovisions of the 2002 Farm Bill, slipped in by Iowa Democrat Tom Harkin, could allow irradiated food to become part of the USDA's nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program which feeds 25 million children.

The meat industry sees irradiation as the silver bullet needed to cover up its failure to address endemic sanitation problems in its meat processing plant practices.

There is, however, scant research of the health effects on children whose diets include irradiated food, and some of the unique chemical by-products of irradiation have been linked to tumor growths and genetic defects.

Federal labeling regulations for irradiated food does not cover schools, so children and parents will have no way of knowing if or what foods on the lunch line have been irradiated.

Some school boards have all ready voted to ban irradiated foods from their nutrition programs. If you have kids or grandkids in school now is the time to protect them from becoming guinea pigs on the lunch line. Contact your school boards and demand a ban.

Public Citizen has an ongoing campaign to fight this issue. Contact them at 202-546-4996. Learn more at their website www.citizen.org/cmep □

EnviroFACT:
According to the EPA: A single snowmobile produces as much harmful

Poisoned Lawns, Poisoned Pregnancy

A

recent study by the University of Wisconsin at Madison and the Universidad de Valparaiso in Chile links very low levels of a common lawn and garden weed killer to lowered fertility. Researchers tested an herbicide mixture in the drinking water of gestating mice and report a 20% increase in failed pregnancies. Even more alarming, the largest reductions in live pups born occurred in mice receiving a dose seven times lower than the maximum allowable level set by US EPA for drinking water.

Toxicologist Warren Porter said that his group deliberately selected the sort of weed killer most commonly employed by American homeowners on their lawns. He would not name the brand, other than to say, "We bought it in a hardware store". The mixture contained three phenoxy herbicides, 2,4-D, dicamba, and mecoprop, plus added ingredients to prolong shelf life and speed absorption. Phenoxy herbicides are found in more than 1,500 pesticide products and applied to lawns and gardens for cosmetic purposes by approximately 29 million US households.

In contrast to the U.S. EPA, which reviews toxicity studies of individual chemicals, the researchers designed their study to examine the toxicity of the herbicide mix as sold over the counter. "You're talking about putting a lot of very reactive chemicals together in a mix, and storing it at room temperature," explained Warren Porter. "We have no idea what kind of reactions might be going on once these active ingredients are formulated in products". □

(Source: Pesticide Action Network North America www.panna.org)

Turning the Tongue Tide *by Ed Lawrence*

G

orge Bush's words are sometimes confused and confusing but thanks to George Orwell we can disentangle the obfuscation so that we don't *misunderestimate* their import and the damage they promise to do to the environment and public health.

When Bush says: Clear Skies Initiative

Orwell Translates thus: Allow for more pollution than would occur with strict enforcement of current law. Ignore repertory-related health problems especially in young people. Ignore the fact that 8 National Parks recorded numerous days last summer when the air was unhealthy to breathe.

When Bush says: Healthy Forest Initiative

Orwell translates thus: Increase logging and road building in our National forests and blame environmentalists for forest fires. Ignore experts who say that fire problem is the result of forest service's own policies of decades of fire suppression. □

Otzinachson Group Endorses BVPA President For Northumberland County Commissioner

The Otzinachson Regional Group of the PA Chapter of the Sierra Club, voted at their last Executive Committee Meeting to endorse John R. Faraguna for Northumberland County Commissioner. The group voted to support Faraguna because of his dedication to environmental issues in Northumberland County and his desire to enhance the quality of life in the area.

Otzinachson commends Faraguna for the leadership he exhibited on behalf of the Brush Valley Preservation Association (BVPA) and the association's successful efforts to preserve a 2000 acre portion of Brush Valley. Faraguna co-founded BVPA and serves as the association's president. As President of the BVPA, Faraguna, working with state and federal officials and agencies, led a grassroots campaign to preserve Brush Valley from development. As a result, the planned destruction of Brush Valley has been averted. In addition, public awareness of recreational and environmental matters has been heightened, thereby, helping to lead the way for the purchase of 9,000 acres of Roaring Creek by the state for the purpose of a public park.

A life-time resident of Coal Township, Faraguna believes his role as BVPA President and his past education in urban, regional and environmental planning help to make him a qualified candidate for County Commissioner.

As County Commissioner, Faraguna will continue to protect our environment and do everything possible to improve the quality of life in our area. As before, he will continue to support the preservation of Brush Valley while seeking to have the federal prison built in one of the acceptable locations proven to exist in the county. "I also believe local municipalities have the right to regulate such things as the importation of sludge or trash. Common sense land use planning is good for our economy as well as our environment."



Quality employment would also be a major priority for Faraguna. "There is no reason why a person working 40+ hours a week should not be able to support themselves. I would not endorse any tax-payer subsidized economic projects that do not offer a living wage. In addition, such projects need to take into account the good of the entire community."

His priorities as County Commissioner would also include the return of financial stability to Northumberland County. "The current debt of nearly \$60 million (principal plus interest) is totally unacceptable and will lead to huge tax increases and reductions of county services if not brought under control." Faraguna proposes making county government more efficient by streamlining and consolidating redundant high-level positions whenever possible, re-bidding all county contracts and purchases, doing department-by-department audits, and imposing salary caps on the highest paid employees, including himself.

"Possibly the most pressing problem I have observed in the last few years is the unwillingness of our county officials to make public information accessible." Therefore, Faraguna's first action as commissioner would be to have all county financial information, costs, payments, bid information, revenues, contracts, salaries, and meeting minutes posted on the Internet. "The public scrutiny could help ensure that no unethical or wasteful spending takes place, but more importantly would help return the trust and confidence in our government that has been eroding for so long."

The Sierra Club encourages Sierra Club members and environmentally-minded individuals in Northumberland County to vote for Faraguna in the primary on May 20th. Faraguna is running under the Democratic Party. □

A grassroots campaign—Contact Friends of Faraguna, P.O. Box 174, Paxinos, PA 17860 or email faraguna@ptd.net.

Remember to Vote on May 20th in the Municipal Primary.

*We have an opportunity to make a difference,
locally and nationally. . .*

*Research your candidates and support those individuals who are
environmentally friendly!*



Wilderness Week in the Nation's Capitol

By Ed Lawrence

In January I got a call from Dave Pacheco of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA) asking if I wanted to come to Washington D.C. and work the hill on behalf of the proposed America's Redrock Wilderness. I had met Dave a few months earlier when Otzinachson sponsored a showing of SUWA's wonderful slide show presentation promoting the citizen's proposal for wilderness designation of 9.1 million acres of publicly owned land in Utah.

Each year SUWA organizes a Wilderness Week where folks from Utah and around the country come to D.C. to let their Senators and Representatives know that they support protecting portions of Utah's unique public lands through wilderness designations.

I had been to Harrisburg before, with the Sierra Club, to express my concerns about expanding ATV trails on state land and to rally against factory farms in Pennsylvania, but never to Washington to lobby on a national issue. It seemed like a great opportunity to gain experience with the potential to help me become a more effective and confident environmental advocate.

After talking it over with my wife, Catherine, and figuring out logistics; I'd have to take a few days off from work, pay my own expenses while in the city and tweek my wardrobe to meet dress code, I agreed to go.

At the end of February I joined 75 other volunteers, ranging in age from twenty-something to seventy-something, and some hard working SUWA staff people for our orientation meeting in The Wilderness Society's D.C. office.

About half the contingent was from Utah and the rest from all across America. We were to become, for five days, the 'Yellow Button People', recognizable by our bright yellow 'Protect Wild Utah' buttons which seemed everywhere when we began criss-crossing the halls of Congress. I shared a room with John Swingle, a retired fireman and Sierra Club state conservation chair from Florida. Having been to D.C. many times, he was able to help me negotiate the metro system and get my bearings.

My lobbying partner was Rita Wechter, a veteran of Wilderness Week and the founder of Pennsylvania Friends of Utah Wilderness. She and her husband had recently moved to Price, Utah so the Pa. Friends group is looking for new leadership to help coordinate the Pennsylvania Effort. We had been pre-assigned half the elected Pa. delegation and had arranged meeting times with legislative assistants before coming into town.

The first full day was devoted to training. We learned that it is rare to get actual 'face time' with the office holder but that their assistant is the screen that information passes through. Also, that most of these assistants are in their mid-twenties, recently

out of college, and working the levers of government behind the scenes.

We reviewed the excellent, high quality booklets and materials SUWA provided us to work with, reference and handout. But mainly we were assured that the message we were bringing would be effective because we were passionate about it and had all cared enough to make the trip.

America's Red Rock Wilderness Act is a citizen driven initiative to protect 9.1 million of the 23 million acres of public land managed by the BLM in Utah. The BLM had originally suggested that less than 2 million acres would qualify for wilderness status under the 1964 Wilderness Act but conservationists familiar with these lands knew that that was a figure that drastically shortchanged the public. Wilderness advocates have spent over a decade doing the ground field work to document and lay the basis for the proposal, a proposal that polls show the people of Utah strongly support.

A second message we carried was the threat to all wilderness areas, National parks, monuments and forests by the Interior departments rule change regarding RS 2477. This provision of an 1866 mining act allowed road building across federal land. Although it was repealed by Congress in 1976, a 'grandfather clause' in the repeal has allowed anti-wilderness forces to claim tens of thousands of miles of pre-existing roads in areas that are currently under protection or would qualify as wilderness. The implications for wilderness of this Bush administration rule change is a potentially devastating.

Wilderness Week was a fantastic experience. Coming together and connecting with good people, many of them Sierra club members, from all over the country for a common goal that we all were working towards. Two particular highlights come to mind. A group of us eating out at a marvelous Ethiopian restaurant near our hotel, and reviewing the merits of not having in the roads in the office of Rep. Bill Shuster.

Pennsylvanians can be proud that it was a native son, Howard Zahniser who wrote the first draft of what would, in 1964, become the Wilderness Act, after 8 years and 66 versions. We can build upon that legacy by continuing to work for and promote wilderness designation.

You can help move America's Redrock Wilderness Act along by calling or faxing your senators and representatives in Congress. Tell them you support more wilderness designation on public lands, and urge them to cosponsor America's Redrock Wilderness Act. If you want to become more active on this issue, contact www.sierraclub.org/wildlands/utahwilderness or the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (www.suwa.org) and ask about joining the Pennsylvania Friends of Utah Wilderness. □



Nicole Faraguna,
Editor
Otzinachson Regional
Group of the Sierra
Club
P.O. Box 65
Lewisburg, PA 17837
[www.sierraclub.org/
chapters/pa/](http://www.sierraclub.org/chapters/pa/)

U.S. Postage
Paid
Non-Profit Organization
Permit No. 52
Lewisburg, PA 17837



Otzinachson Group

invites you to attend the

20th Annual Sierra Club SOCK HOP

Saturday, April 26th 2003, 7:00 PM — 11:30 PM

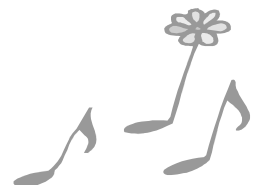
At the

Lewisburg Club

(131 Market Street, Lewisburg)

Music will be provided by “**Riverstone**” & “**Good Without One**”

Proceeds will benefit local environmental groups!!!



Admission—\$8.00

To learn more,
call 523-3107, 538-3334 or 925-5285.

Cash Bar Available