



Reporter

Citizens Coal Council Magazine Winter 1998

Working for Justice, Law and Order in the Coal Fields



Citizens win slapp brought by PA mine

This and other great stories in
Grassroots news, pages 15-21

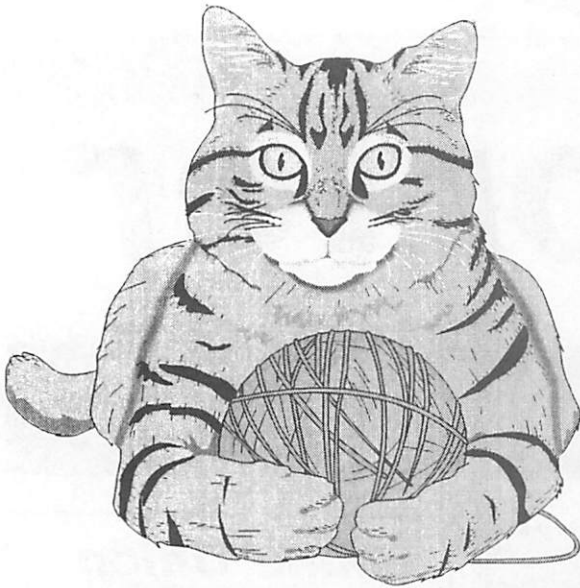
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backs Jobs &
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vanish in
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Jeff Barber, Andy Bessler, Patricia Bragg, Beverly Braverman, Joe Childers, Wyona Coleman, Roy Cosby, Mimi Filippelli, Tom FitzGerald, Ned Ford, Kirstin Garhardt, Carolyn Guthrie, Jerry Hardt, Gil Hough, John Humphries, Patricia Johnson, Gwen Lachelt, Penny Loeb, John McFerrin, Pat McGinley, Mike Mechau, Daymon Morgan, *Navajo Times*, Matt Peters, Cindy Rank, Barney and Vina Reilly, Cynthia Rossi, Jason Tockman, John Wathen, Peter Westcott, and our special OSM friends — you know who you are!

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Citizens Coal Council

CCC is a grass roots federation of citizen groups and individuals who work for social and environmental justice. CCC and its members strive to:

- Protect people and our homes, water and communities from coal mining damage.
- Restore law and order by enforcing the federal Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act.
- Help each other win our issues.

Coordinating Committee (Board)

CCC is run by a committee of delegates representing members in their states and Native American Nations.

Daymon Morgan, Kentucky, Chair

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Gwen Thompson, North Dakota, 2nd Vice Chair

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Doyle Coakley, WV

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Don Mottley, IN

Barney Reilly, VA

Richard Stout, IL

Jason Tockman, OH

John Wathen, AL

Shirley Willie, OK

CCC Member Groups

ALABAMA: Alabama Environmental Council

COLORADO: Crystal Valley Environmental Protection Association, San Juan Citizens Alliance, Western Colorado Congress

IDAHO: People's Action Coalition

ILLINOIS: Citizens Organizing Project

INDIANA: Bridge Alliance, Indiana Citizens Mining Council, Hoosier Environmental Council

KENTUCKY: Kentuckians For The Commonwealth

LOUISIANA: Louisiana Environmental Action Network

MISSISSIPPI: Concerned Citizens for the Future of Choctaw County

MONTANA: Northern Plains Resource Council

NAVAJO NATION: Dineh Alliance, Nenahnezad Chapter Technical Committee

NORTH DAKOTA: Dakota Resource Council

NEW MEXICO: Water Information Network, Zuni Mountain Coalition

NEW YORK: Protect A Clean Environment

OHIO: Buckeye Forest Council, Friends of Dysart Woods

OKLAHOMA: Pittsburgh Co. Mineral & Surface Owners Association

PENNSYLVANIA: Alice Water Protection Association, Concerned About Water Loss due to Mining, Concerned Citizens of New Castle Township, Mountain Watershed Association, Nottingham Network of Neighbors, People United to Save Homes

TENNESSEE: Save Our Cumberland Mountains

VIRGINIA: Coalition for Jobs & Environment, Concerned Citizens for Environmental Awareness, Dickenson County Citizens Committee

WEST VIRGINIA: West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, West Virginia Organizing Project, Holden Environmental Association

WYOMING: Powder River Basin Resource Council, Wyoming Outdoor Council

MULTI-STATE: Commission on Religion in Appalachia, Diné Mining Action Center, Environmental Health Network, Tri-State Citizens Mining Network

News and Updates



The CCC-UMWA summit meeting in March. From left, Gwen Thompson, ND; Ellen Pfister, MT; Bev Braverman, PA; Cecil Roberts, UMWA; Barney and Vina Reilly, VA. (Carolyn Johnson)

Miners back CCC campaign

United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) President Cecil Roberts wrote President Clinton last July urging him to spend the money collected in the Abandoned Mine Lands Trust Fund to clean up abandoned mines and put people to work. With that letter, the UMWA publicly announced their formal alliance with CCC in our Jobs and Justice campaign.

Today, \$1.2 billion collected and earmarked for this work sits unspent in the US Treasury. Meanwhile, over 11,000 coal mines abandoned before 1977 haven't been cleaned up and reclaimed.

The groundwork for this historic partnership was laid last Spring when members of the CCC Executive Committee traveled to Washington for a summit meeting with top executives of the UMWA. The success of this event led to formal support from the union. Staff from both partners continue to meet regularly to plan and carry out efforts for obtaining more support for our campaign.

CCC members have often supported UMWA efforts and union members belong to CCC member groups. The formal CCC and UMWA alliance has already advanced the campaign and we look forward to continued collaboration. ♣

The Virginia challenge

In addition to the UMWA, the Jobs and Justice Campaign has already garnered endorsements from other national organizations: the United Methodist Church's General Board of Church and Society, Friends of the Earth, and Ozone Action.

At this stage, CCC member groups are focusing on building local and state-wide support. Under the leadership of Barney and Vina Reilly,

the **Dickenson County Citizens Committee (DCCC)** has gathered an impressive list of officials, groups and coal companies to sign resolutions of support for increasing the abandoned mine land funds spent to clean up Virginia's old mines.

DCCC now challenges other CCC member groups to gather allies.

Supporters of DCCC's resolution include those listed below:

Signers of DCCC's jobs and justice resolution

Catholic Diocese of Richmond
US Senator John Warner
US Senator Charles Robb
The Virginia Governor's Office
US Representative Rick Boucher
State Senator Reasor
State Delegate Stump
State Delegate Phillips
Virginia Organizing Project
CONSOL Coal Corp.
Pittston Coal Corp.
Virginia Mining Association
Coalition for Jobs/Environment

Cumberland Plateau District
Lonesome Pine Soil & Water
Conservation District
Buchanan County
Scott County
Lee County
Town of Clinchco
Wise County
Tazewell County
Russell County
Town of Hasi
Dickenson County Industrial Development Authority

20th Anniversary News

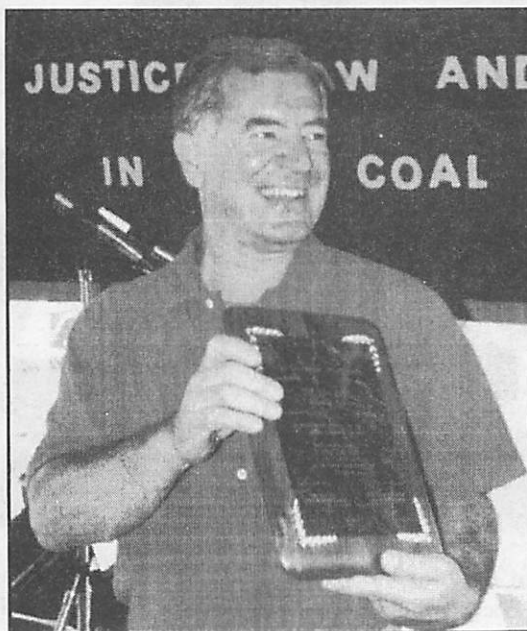
Citizens honor the Act

On August 2, more than 200 citizens traveled to Logan County in West Virginia to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA). Citizens who fought for federal regulation of the coal fields joined present activists to renew their pledge for coal field justice.

The day's events, co-hosted by CCC and the WV Organizing Project, began with a commemoration at the monument to the 125 victims of the Buffalo Creek disaster in 1972. The speakers recalled that the tragedy increased the pressure to regulate coal mining and pointed to problems still plaguing Buffalo Creek residents today as evidence of the work yet to be done.

CCC presented awards to longtime ally U.S. Congressman Nick Rahall (D-WV), a sponsor of the Act, and Louise Dunlap, the coordinator of the citizen lobbying effort to pass the Act.

Rahall's inspiring speech touched the hearts of listeners. He thanked the crowd for traveling to West Virginia to



Nick Rahall, U.S. Congress (D-WV)

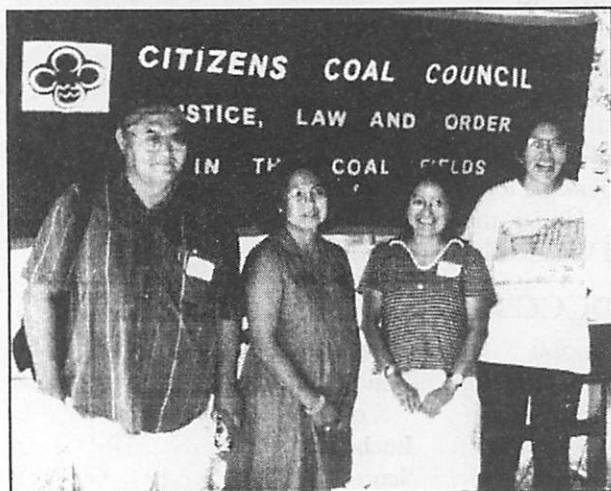
**"We demand environmental justice in the coal fields.
Not ask for it.
Not request it.
But demand it."**

rededicate themselves to the goals of the Act and to "demand environmental justice in the coal fields. Not ask for it. Not request it. But demand it." Rahall read from his "Coal Field Citizens Bill of Rights," a resolution he is pushing in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Dunlap recalled how much effort it took to pass the Act and was visibly moved to be honored by many of the people she had worked with 20 years ago.

The ceremony closed with a powerful performance by singer and activist Elaine Purkey. A picnic followed where people shared their experiences and met with local residents. It was a unique opportunity for citizens new to the movement to interact with seasoned leaders.✿

DMAC members come east



Board members of the Diné Mining Action Center based in Fruitland, NM, made up the largest delegation from the West. CCC announced the Ray Benally environmental justice award program named after a founder of DMAC. From left, Jimmie Blueyes, Elvira Crockett, Jeannie Benally, (widow of Ray) and Christine Benally. (Dennis Short)

'The Mamas and Papas' reunite

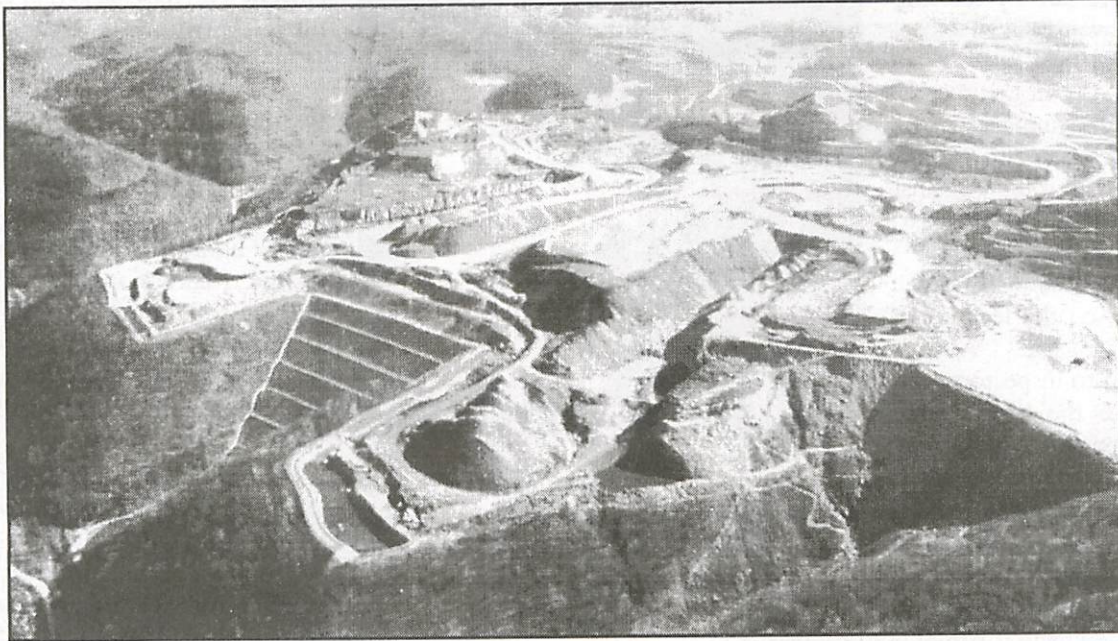


Some of the citizen leaders, organizers and lobbyists who worked to pass the Act in 1977 gathered for a photo. Although many now sport gray hair, time hasn't dampened their passion for coal field justice. From left: Tom Galloway, CO; Joe Browder, MD; Louise Dunlap, MD; Carolyn Johnson, CO; Kathy Fletcher, WA; Nan Hardin, IN; Ellen Pfister, MT; Jane Johnson, IL; Wyona Coleman, PA; and Judy McKinney, VA. (Kirsten Garhardt)

Feature Story

The new plains of West Virginia

Adapted from an article by Cindy Rank



Nightmare in Appalachia as mountains, watersheds and homes are leveled by coal companies. Shown is one of Arch Coal's mountaintop removal mines in southern WV. (Penny Loeb)

Mountain landscapes in West Virginia that took millions of years to shape are being turned into level plains by giant coal operators in their rush for profit.

When the federal surface mining law (SMCRA) was being debated, West Virginia citizens fought, in vain, to outlaw the technique of mountaintop removal. This mining process is exempt from the requirement that operators restore landscapes to their approximate original shape. Instead, operators remove mountaintops to expose coal seams and then deposit the huge quantities of earth in nearby valleys, thus forever changing the landscape and ecosystems.

When SMCRA was passed in 1977, mountaintop removal was not a common practice, but in the continuing push for cheaper and more mechanized mining, coal companies now use it to create massive stripping operations. This mining technique, the companies argue, allows them to compete with the huge underground long wall mines and western strip mines that employ fewer and fewer miners.

In the past, smaller mountaintop removal operations would remove spoil and truck it to the head of a valley where it would be dumped — thus filling the highest reaches of a limited number of valleys. Today, the mines chop off 500 feet or more of the mountain tops and fill the valleys to create level areas where massive drag lines can begin coal mining. These drag lines in turn dig more earth that needs to be disposed and more valleys are filled.

Besides widespread, permanent destruction of mountain landscapes, mountaintop removal and valley fills are ruining surface water systems, but the total amount of streams and rivers that have been destroyed is difficult to determine.

Citizens in West Virginia estimate at least 148 miles of streams have been destroyed in their state, and this figure does not include non-permanent streams and streams buried by fills covering less than 250 acres, which are both exempt from regulation and go uncounted.

The WV Department of Environmental Protection allows mining companies to bury streams in exchange for payment of \$200,000 per flowing stream acre and to "rent" streams for \$20,000 per flowing acre per 5-year period if the impact is "temporary." Paying for the right to destroy streams is far cheaper than effective protection and the mining industry has readily paid. Industry, however, now complains of "prohibitive" costs and has asked the state legislature to reduce the fees.

In southern WV, mountaintop removal and valley fills are becoming the norm. A landscape that influenced and supported a mountain culture and ecosystem is being forever transformed by coal mining without regard for future outcomes. Unfortunately, high-extraction mining has made the lives of residents — and the mountains they love — a mere engineering problem that coal companies can solve for just \$200,000 an acre. ♣

[Cindy Rank is chair of the Mining Committee for the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy.]

Citizens protest OSM awards

Last June, OSM announced it would celebrate SMCRA's 20th anniversary by reviving its reclamation awards given to coal companies. Coal field citizens reacted angrily and protested the US Office of Surface Mining's (OSM) use of scarce resources to reward coal operators who fought against SMCRA's passage and have tried to dismantle it for 20 years.

Gene Wirtz, Dakota Resource Council, expressed the feelings of many when he said, "Awards should be given to inspectors who actually enforce the law, not to mines who merely comply. Drivers who obey the speed limit aren't given prizes for obeying the law."

OSM reacted to the criticism by initiating a last-minute "citizen awards program" and asked for nominations. CCC said it would not take part.

Among those receiving awards, Tom FitzGerald, Kentucky Resources Council, sharply rejected the prize in a letter to OSM. "I am daily faced with the frustrations of eking out some meager justice for coal field residents on issues that should have long ago been settled, and would have been had OSM been doing its job: Awards of attorneys fees in Pennsylvania under a state law that should have been set aside by OSM as incon-



Hazel King and attorney Tom FitzGerald of Kentucky both won OSM citizen awards and protested OSM's failure to enforce the law and protect citizens. (C. Johnson)

sistent with the federal act *without my intervention*; replacement of water supplies for citizens who have waited in vain for months *until my request for inspection.*"

Enforce The Law!

"If you want to recognize my efforts in a meaningful way, implement and enforce the law. Without apology, without delay."

OSM also gave awards to the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy; Hazel King of the Kentuckians For The Commonwealth; a life-time achievement award to Tom Galloway, an attorney who has waged many legal battles on behalf of citizens groups; and the Northern Plains Resource Council in Montana.

King said, "They're taking OSM away from us. I wish we were back where we started from with OSM."

John McFerrin, president of the Conservancy, wrote OSM that the group accepted the award with "regret" that OSM "is not doing more to enforce the Act. Awards are nice; enforcement is better."

OSM western regional director Rick Seibel offered to present the OSM award in person at the Council's annual meeting in Billings, Montana. Chair Julia Page sent him a strongly worded letter saying not to waste OSM money on his travel and use it instead to protect scarce western water from coal mining. ♣

Westerners honor coal law

CCC member groups in Montana, Wyoming and North Dakota commemorated SMCRA's 20th anniversary with press events, ceremonies, and a report card on enforcement.

Dakota Resource Council (DRC) members met near Coteau's Freedom strip mine and spoke of enforcement successes and failures. They honored Oliver County Commissioners, six miners from Basin Electric's Glenharold Mine, the citizens of Underwood, and DRC coal committee chair Gene Wirtz for their persistence in holding North Dakota mining companies accountable to the spirit of the federal Act.

They chose the site to highlight Coteau's distinction of having the lowest percentage of reclaimed land compared to the acres disturbed. Coteau was among the coal companies receiving reclamation awards from OSM, yet Coteau destroyed 19 water wells during mining and has not replaced a single one during its award-winning "reclamation" work.

DRC member Ivan Keller questioned the long-term ill effects of coal mining, "When mining is gone, I think people are going to wake up and see what happened."

Northern Plains Resource Council (NPRC) members praised the law, but pointed to poor enforcement by state and federal regulators. Ellen Pfister, past CCC chair, said, "SMCRA was a very progressive and far-sighted piece of legislation. When the law has failed, it has been because of a lack of will to enforce by the state and federal agencies." Wally McRae stated "The loss, disruption, and fouling of ground water from mining continues, and some Montana mines are woefully behind in their reclamation."

Powder River Basin Resource Council (PRBRC) members honored Teno Roncalio, a former Wyoming Congressman who fought hard for the Act's passage. Members also planted a cherry tree and held a press conference at the state Supreme Court building.

PRBRC Board chair Bob Strayer said, "We are continuing to work to enforce this law and ensure Wyoming is not turned into a National Sacrifice Area. Wyoming reclamation lags far behind and the state makes excuses for this poor performance. We will not stand quietly while this law is ignored." ♣

Moving mountains to defend our land

By Pat McGinley

Harry Caudill, in his classic 1963 book, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, observed the impacts of strip mining on the communities and people of the coal fields:

"The cumulative effects of the wrecking of a coal-filled mountain stagger the imagination. A relatively stable mountain, whose soil and water were to a high degree protected by grass and trees, has been reduced to a colossal rubble heap. The long-range impact of such wrecking on the economy of an already poor and backward state, is incalculable."

This was supposed to change after citizens passed the 1977 Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA), the law that placed the rights of surface landowners and the environment on equal footing as coal mining.

This summer on the 20th anniversary of SMCRA, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt announced: "Twenty years ago, the architects of the law could only dream of the day when coal production in America included environmental protection and quality restoration of the landscape as built-in components of mining operation. Today...that dream is a reality."

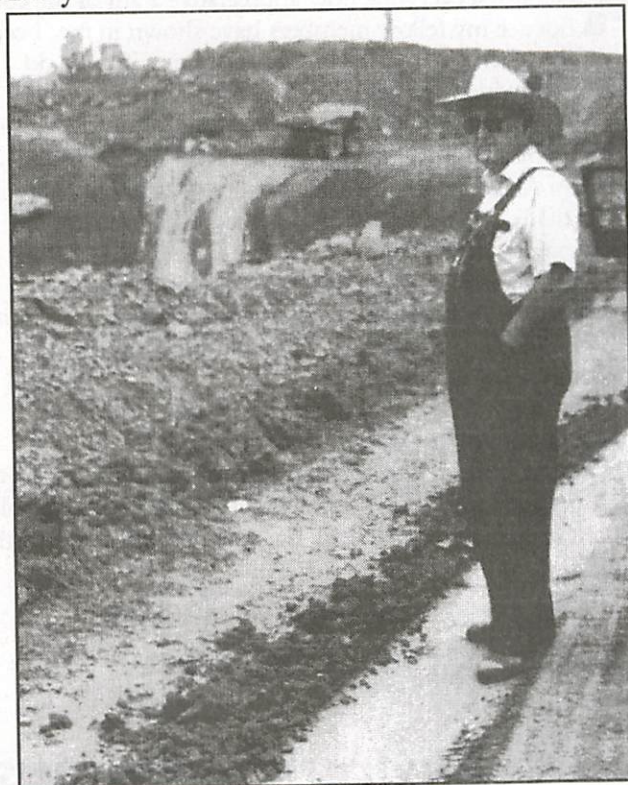
Somewhere along the way the dreams Babbitt referred to turned into nightmares for the southern West Virginia coal fields, where mountaintop removal mining operations are blasting through what used to be "almost heaven." The reality trumpeted by Babbitt is not the reality of those who live and work literally next to the mountains being removed.

Communities threatened by mountaintop removal wonder what Bruce Babbitt was smoking when he visited Arch Coal

For the first time since the "war on poverty" and the strip mine activism of the 1960's and 1970's, southern West Virginia has been "found" by the national media. *US News and World Report* senior editor Penny Loeb recently described mountaintop removal operations that are now leveling 15-25 percent of the mountaintops in southern West Virginia:

"After blasting loosens the rock, shovels and drag lines taller than most city buildings attack the mountain. Once the coal is separated out, machines leave in their wake 50-foot-high piles of broken rock. Then yellow trucks, each as high as a house, dump what was a mountain into adjacent valleys. It is known as a valley fill. Large mines may be surrounded by nearly a dozen valley fills, some 1000 feet wide and a mile long and as much as 500 feet deep."

Steven F. Leer, President and CEO of Arch Coal, Inc., the company that operates West Virginia's biggest mountain removing mine quoted Babbitt in a letter to *US News* complaining about biased media coverage. He said Babbitt is "one of



Daymon Morgan, newly elected CCC chair, at the mountaintop removal mine above his home in Leslie County, Kentucky. (Carolyn Johnson)

our nation's strongest environmental advocates." According to Leer, on a visit to Arch Coal's huge Hobet mine in Logan County, Babbitt said, "In some ways it is a better landscape than before...it's a more diverse landscape. It's a savanna of forests coming back, of fields, of open spaces...it is probably a landscape closer to the landscape that existed here a thousand years ago...."

Those living in communities threatened by mountaintop removal wonder what Bruce Babbitt was smoking when he visited Arch Coal. What other explanation could there be for a statement so out of touch with the reality of the coal fields?

While Bruce Babbitt and his OSM see dreams fulfilled and savannas in the sky, West Virginians are once again organizing to protect what is left of their land, streams and communities. If the promise of SMCRA is to become reality, it will not come from federal and state regulators. Making SMCRA's promise a reality will happen only if the people of the coal fields have the strength and courage to once again move mountains in defense of their land. ❖

[Patrick McGinley teaches at the University of West Virginia law school and has defended the people of the coal fields for over 20 years.]

Not done yet

As the Citizens Coal Council's new board chair, I'd like to tell everyone how appreciative I am of the confidence my fellow members have shown in me. I certainly know there are many who are more qualified to do this job, but with your help we will move forward.

I recently chaired CCC's board meeting in the heart of Alabama's coal country. I surely enjoyed meeting all the folks from Alabama and their hospitality. We all know life in the coal fields is hard, but I was encouraged by the good work people there are doing.

Here in Kentucky, we may again be facing issues we won years ago. Industry may try to repeal the unmined minerals tax. We know the people don't want this tax overturned and we won't let it happen.

In this New Year, I wish you all the best. I know our issues can be tough, but we must continue.

I've been in this fight for 15 years and I'm not done yet. I'm encouraged to see a whole new generation of young folks who are realizing this planet is theirs. Their effort keeps me going. ♣

Daymon Morgan
CCC Chair

Dreaming of justice

By Patricia Bragg

Close your eyes and dream with me. Just think of the day when average American citizens are welcomed to sit at the table with big corporations and government agencies to make decisions together that address the economic and private welfare of all communities.

Imagine an America where an understanding between the "establishment" and average citizens surpasses the barriers of silence and the experience of being shut out that have been tolerated for so long.

Just envision the coal mining communities pulling together from all over the country to become a part of the decision making process, not just the recipient of decisions that have already been made for them.

Can't you see communities of people working hand-in-hand with government agencies to achieve a relationship of cooperation and a better quality of life for all people regardless of geographical location or ethnic origin.

This is the vision of the Citizens Coal Council. Come dream with us so the dream can come true even faster. You make the difference between success and failure for us all. ♣
[Bragg is immediate past chair of the West Virginia Organizing Project and lives in Delbarton, WV.]

Environmental justice in the coal fields

By Wyona Coleman

Nothing defines environmental justice better than Section 27 of the Pennsylvania constitution: "People have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural...environment. Pennsylvania's public natural resources are the common property of all people, including generations yet to come....(and the state) shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all."

The real obstacle to this goal is the lack of political muscle, and nowhere is this goal more elusive than in the nation's coal fields. In every coal-producing state, the coal industry's strongest allies are state legislatures and administrators. King Coal exercises its royal mandate to mine where and how it wants, and to profit without regard to degradation of land and water and profound disruption of people's lives.

The industry continuously points to the wealth and jobs it produces. It has dug millions of tons of black gold from Appalachia, and these states should be the richest in the nation. Right?

Wrong. They are among the poorest. But they are rich in huge gob piles, abandoned mines and thousands of miles of permanently polluted streams.

The industry now has powerful new tools to produce more black gold faster with a greatly reduced work force. Longwall

is the new technology of choice for underground mining. The state estimates 161,000 acres in Washington and Greene Counties in western PA will be mined with these operations.

Longwalling causes instant subsidence to the surface, nearly always instant damage to structures, and damage or loss of wells and springs.

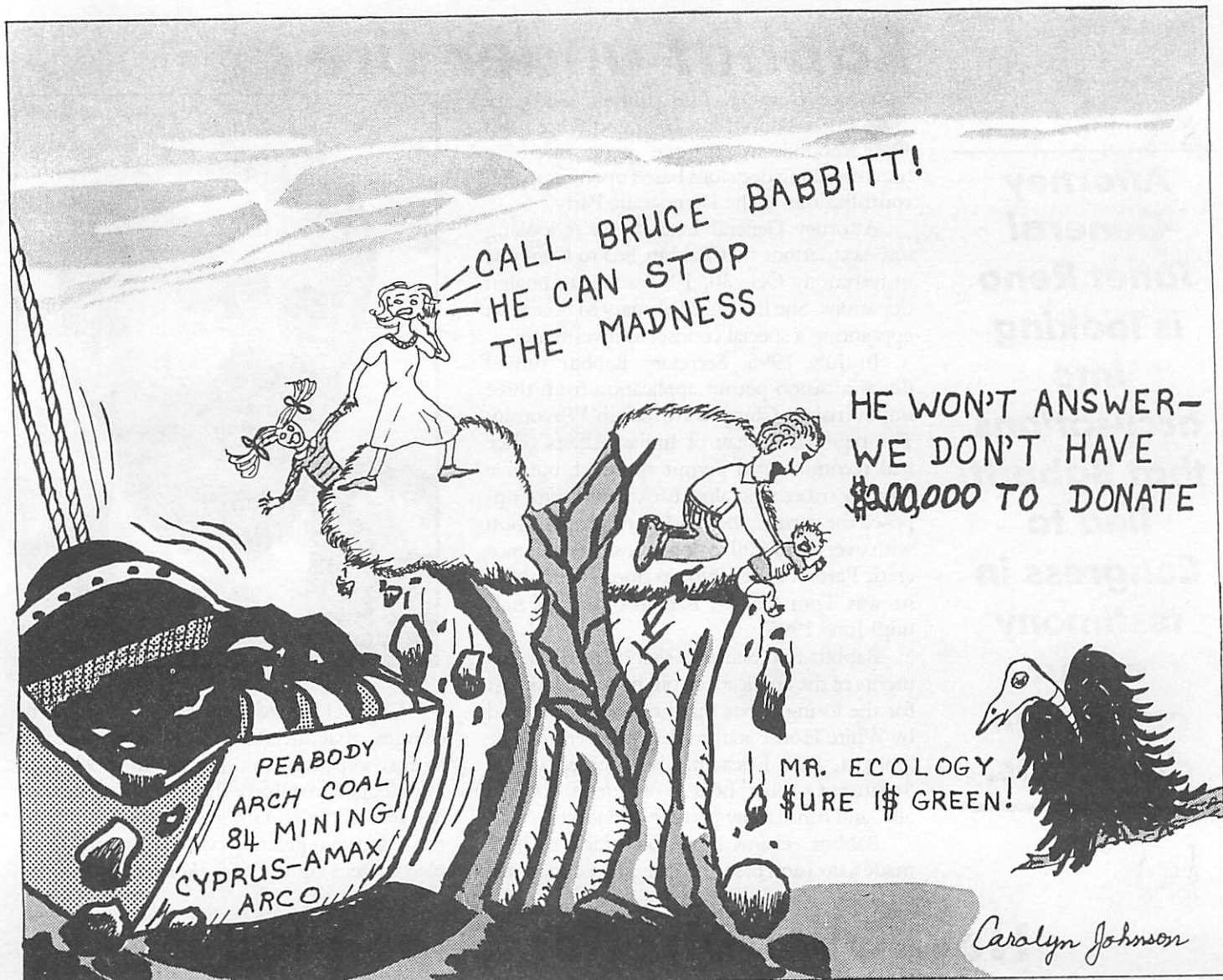
Is there environmental justice in Greene County — the largest coal producing county in PA and the poorest?

Water buffaloes are the new lawn ornaments in the county (water holding tanks brought in to replace lost well or spring supplies). Agriculture used to be the largest industry, but the most valuable resource to farmers is water.

A Greene County dairy farmer recently sold his herd and went out of business. He lost his springs when two deep mines took out coal on both sides of his farm. He will be paid for most of the damage but will not be paid for his lost livelihood and future earnings. Nor will his farmland be restored to its former productivity.

Federal law requires payment to surface owners for subsidence damage and replacement of water supplies. But citizens have no protection from damage. What other industry has the

(Please continue on the next page)



Environmental justice (continued from p. 8)

right to deliberately destroy or damage peoples' homes or to destroy or pollute their natural water supplies?

Citizens have no legal protection from loss of property value — no protection from their property developing cracks, from landslides, flooding, loss or pollution of streams. Nor is there protection of the infrastructure that serves communities.

The largest water company in the state had to dig up and raise its 30-inch water line serving Washington, PA, because 84 Mining Company longwalled under it. Cost? Over \$3 million. Three more longwall panels are planned under the line, so parts of the line will be dug up and raised three more times.

At what cost? The water company now has a request for a 16 percent rate hike. It won't admit the hike is to pay for mining damages but we can make a good guess.

Environmental justice?

Obviously, current practices and laws must change and every effort made to prevent and minimize damages. These large, full-extraction mining ventures impact communities and private citizens intensely and should not be decided only by the operator and the regulator. Communities and citizens must be part of the decision making.

To become the good neighbors industry claims to be, coal operators must honor citizens' rights and protect the environment for future generations. But coal mines are owned by distant money men who have no feel for the communities they impact. They only have a feel for money. ♣

[Coleman is 1st Vice Chair of CCC and heads the Tri-state Citizens Mining Network. She lives in Brownsville, PA.]

Attorney General Janet Reno is looking into accusations that Babbitt lied to Congress in testimony about campaign donations.

Babbitt under fire

Since October, U.S. Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt has been under fire from Republicans and the media, accusing him of making decisions based upon campaign contributions to the Democratic Party.

Attorney General Janet Reno is looking into accusations that Babbitt lied to Congress in testimony Oct. 30, 1997 about campaign donations. She has until February to decide on appointing a special counsel to investigate.

In July 1995, Secretary Babbitt turned down a casino permit application from three impoverished Chippewa tribes in Wisconsin. The regional Bureau of Indian Affairs office had recommended permit approval, but five wealthy tribes who already owned casinos opposed the permit; they backed their opposition with over \$250,000 in donations to the Democratic Party for the 1996 election. Their lobbyist was Tom Collier, Babbitt's chief of staff until June 1995.

Babbitt told Senators that he ruled on the merits of the application, but he told a lobbyist for the losing tribes that he'd been pressured by White House staff to deny the permit. The lobbyist, Paul Eckstein, also testified to the Senate in October; he is an old friend, political ally, and former law partner of Babbitt's.

Babbitt claims he is too ethical to have made a decision based on campaign donations.



DOI Photo

Coal field citizens are not surprised at the charges that he backed wealthy interests against impoverished citizens. In 1993, Babbitt pledged to enforce the federal coal law but has severely cut OSM enforcement staff, retreated from regulating coal mining, and trampled citizens rights. (See the cartoon, p. 9) ♣

New OSM Director appointed



In July, Kathy Karpan became the new Director of the U.S. Office of Surface Mining (OSM). A lawyer from Wyoming, she served two terms as Wyoming's secretary of state and spent six years on the staff of former U.S. Congressman Teno Roncalio in the 1970's.

She is the 13th Director of OSM since the agency began 20 years ago and is a friend of Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt.

CCC reacted with caution to Karpan's appointment. Ellen Pfister, then CCC Chair, said, "We hope Kathy Karpan will succeed, but to succeed she will need the trust and cooperation of citizens. Citizens' trust in OSM has been sorely tried by past failures to enforce the law."

One of Karpan's first actions as OSM Director was signing a new version of the

infamous agency policy on overseeing state enforcement efforts called "REG 8."

Daymon Morgan, the new CCC Chair, wrote Karpan a strongly worded letter in October calling REG 8 "an illegal rule-making, a low-down sneaky way to steal our rights.... SMCRA doesn't give the states and OSM the right to negotiate how our homes, water and rights will be protected."

Morgan said the policy means "OSM gives up trying to prevent harm to people, property and the environment." REG 8 tells OSM inspectors to look only at "off-site effects" not at how a mine operates nor to prevent damage before it occurs. These are the only ways, said Morgan, "to prevent having to do a body count after there is an 'off-site effect.'" ♣

A handy way to support CCC

Many readers of the *CCC Reporter* have told us they hate to wreck their copy of the magazine by clipping out the form to send in their membership dues and contributions.

Problem solved! Here is a pull-out self-contained mailer you can use to become a CCC member, order CCC materials, and help us reach other folks and expand the citizens movement for justice in the coal fields.

The Citizens Coal Council counts on the support of people like you to do our work.



Robert Uram, former director of U.S. Office of Surface Mining.

Use this special pull-out to:

1. Join.
2. Make a tax-deductible donation to support our fight for justice in the coal fields.
3. Give someone you love a membership and subscription to the *CCC Reporter*.
4. Send friends, relatives and colleagues a complimentary copy of the *CCC Reporter*.
5. Order CCC publications.

It's easy! Just carefully pull out this form, fill it out, enclose your check, fold on the dotted line, tape it up securely, stick a stamp on it and drop it in the mail.

The Citizens Coal Council needs your support. We are the only national organization solely devoted to protecting coal field citizens rights, preserving the quality of life and environment of the coal fields, working for jobs through clean-up and demanding full enforcement of the laws on coal mining. We don't receive any money from the government or the coal industry.

We are recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a non-profit, tax-exempt organization, so your contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

Thank you!

Help from CCC: handbooks, fact sheets and more!

Strip-Mining Handbook: A Coal Field Citizens' Guide to Using the Law to Fight Back Against the Ravages of Strip Mining and Underground Mining. By Mark Squillace for Friends of the Earth, 150 pages, 1990. This is the only comprehensive guide to your rights. The title says it all. A must if you are dealing with mining. \$5.95

How To Protect Your Land and Water from Underground Mining. A terrific 6-page guide written for CCC by Tom FitzGerald, Esq. of the National Citizens Coal Law Project. \$3.00

Yes, Virginia, We Still Mine and Burn Coal in the U.S. Sad but true, a lot of people don't know where their electricity comes from when they flip the light switch. This concise fact sheet helps people understand how coal has become the biggest source of energy in the U.S. and what that means to the environment. 5 for \$1

The Campaign for Jobs and Justice in the Coal Fields: A Fact Sheet. This gives you the facts on how the government has simultaneously ripped off the coal industry, coal field citizens, mine workers and the environment. How did they do it? The government has diverted more than \$1 billion in fees earmarked to clean up old coal mines to purposes never intended under the law, and they've been getting away with it. Until now. 5 for \$1

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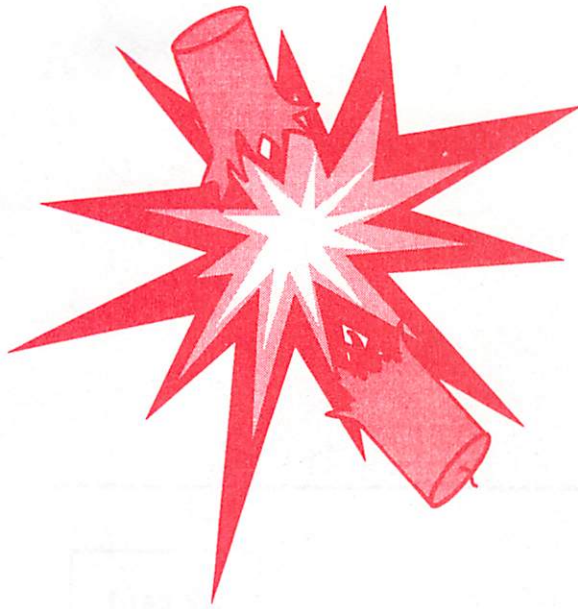
Shear Madness. A special report by *U.S. News and World Report*, August 11, 1997, on mountaintop removal mines in Appalachia. CCC and several of its member groups and allies collaborated to have this special, full-color reprint made of this extraordinary national news report by Penny Loeb. 12 pages. \$2

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ACTION LINE

Sweet victory for Alice on SLAPP

Last spring, members of the **Alice Water Protection Association** (Alice) asked the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to turn down a strip mine permit application by Amerikohl Mining. They argued the mine had made their wells and springs cloudy, smelly and undrinkable.

DEP approved the permit anyway, then Amerikohl retaliated in June by asking a state board to charge Alice members \$20,000 for Amerikohl's attorney fees. Members immediately attacked Amerikohl's effort to shut them up and accused the company of filing a SLAPP (Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation) suit to punish citizens who use their rights in trying to protect their environment.

Alice went on the attack, joined with other groups, and marched in front of the state office. The action was widely covered in the press and several papers editorialized against Amerikohl. In September, the state Environmental Hearing Board denied Amerikohl's request.

Adeline Leichter and Patricia Paul of Alice hailed the decision as a victory for citizens to take part in government without fear of retaliation. Alice members also credit the support of the **Tri-state Citizens Mining Network**, many



Pennsylvania members received widespread publicity on their protest at state offices against Amerikohl. The award for best poster went to Adeline Leichter (6th from left) for "Amerikohl SLAPPS women, widows and citizen rights."

environmental organizations, CCC, and the United Mine Workers for the victory of citizens' rights over corporate bullying tactics.

OSM has told the state to change its rules so they will forbid mining companies from winning fees against citizens who make good faith challenges of mine permits. ♣

Dakotans push for wells

Members of the **Dakota Resource Council** (DRC) continue their fight for coal companies to replace destroyed water wells. They are backing the state's proposed rule that would allow anyone who buys previously-mined land to request a replacement well at the mine company's expense.

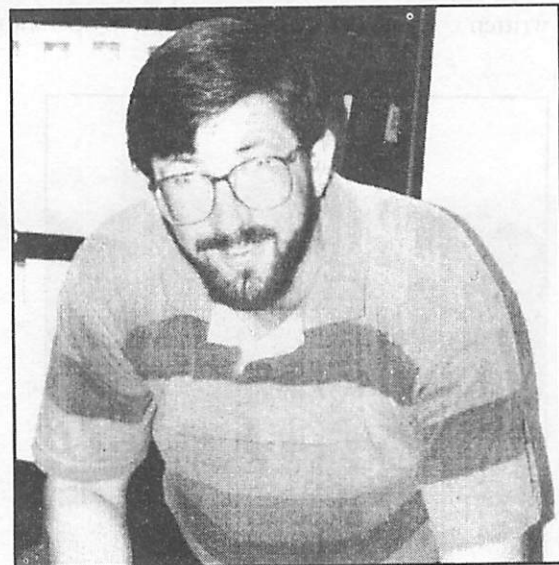
North Dakota law forbids coal companies from owning farmland after mining and reclamation is completed. The land is usually sold to farmers and ranchers who are dependent upon water sources for their survival. Coal companies have already destroyed 30 wells or springs

and are expected to destroy another 20 on areas permitted for mining.

In October, Gene Wirtz, DRC coal committee chair, testified at the state hearings and described the importance of replacement wells to the local economy: "The loss of water delivery systems in a county will severely affect that county's tax base."

DRC members are hopeful they will win this rule and are glad to have the backing of the Farm Bureau; a decision is expected early in 1998.

To no one's surprise, John Dwyer of the Lignite Energy Council is opposing the rule. ♣



Gene Wirtz of the Dakota Resource Council

Navajo protest Peabody trespass

In June, Diné Mining Action Center members Mabel Benally, husband Daniel and two daughters blocked Peabody Coal's bulldozers from coming onto their ancestral land use area around their home on the Navajo Nation in Arizona.

A Peabody official called Navajo tribal police who arrested Mabel and her family for criminal trespass. After spending 19 hours in jail, they were released when Peabody did not file a complaint.

Company operations have twice forced the family to move. It killed 87 of their sheep in 1989 when company employees dumped contaminated water used to wash a truck carrying blasting chemicals into a stock pond. Mabel had vowed to protest any more trespass if Peabody expanded the coal storage piles at its Black Mesa mine onto land traditionally used by the Benally family.

Federal coal law requires companies to get a home owner's written consent before conducting any operations near their



Mabel Benally and her daughters Fern and Lucille stand in front of the Black Mesa mine complex Peabody built next to their home and on their grazing land without their permission. Peabody still operates under an "interim" mining permit. (Marley Shebala, *Navajo Times*)

homes. OSM has refused to enforce the law's protections on the Navajo Nation.

OSM claims the law's protections don't apply because the Nation holds the land in common for all tribal members. It ignores the fact that families own their homes.

OSM also allows Peabody to operate under the weaker standards of an "interim" permit, unlike any other mine.

Mabel said, "Peabody took our land and built everything. We didn't sign any paper and weren't given other land or money. Now we can't grow corn here and we don't have enough land to graze our sheep. Peabody wants us to leave but where would we go? This land is our life."

Two weeks after her arrest, Mabel went to a

United Nations Conference for Indigenous Peoples where she told her experiences. The conference indicted OSM and Kay Henry, then Acting Director of OSM, for environmental racism. ♣

Peabody customer sued

On December 18, the Sierra Club and the Grand Canyon Trust filed notice that they will sue to try to force the Mohave power plant to install scrubbers to reduce the 40,000 tons of sulfur dioxide pollution it emits each year.

Officials at Southern California Edison, which operates the plant on behalf of three other utilities, have said they may have to close the plant if scrubbers are required. The plant at

Laughlin, NV, is the sole customer for the 5 million tons of coal from Peabody's Black Mesa mine. The coal is delivered in a 275-mile-long slurry pipeline that is widely criticized as a waste of the region's scarce water.

Scientists say the sulfur dioxide is causing acid rain and serious air pollution that damages health and can even be seen as a smoggy haze at the Grand Canyon and other national parks. ♣



This fall, up to 200 supporters of Black Mesa residents demonstrated one day each week at Peabody headquarters in Flagstaff, AZ. (Andy Bessler)

WVOP wins in Buffalo Creek

Last summer, 25 years after the disaster that killed 125 people and just in time to mark the 20th anniversary of the federal coal law, members of the **West Virginia Organizing Project (WVOP)** living at Cartwright Hollow in the Buffalo Creek area suffered repeated flooding from Arch Coal's Wylo mine.

Members fought hard to force federal and state officials to conduct a thorough investigation of the mine site following three floods that forced people to evacuate their homes. Their work paid off and Arch has paid for damage to their homes and has agreed to relocate residents to safer areas.

In September, the members declared victory after OSM released a report identifying 10 major problems that Arch Coal must correct.

Russell Mitchem expressed satisfaction with the outcome. "When we got started, I wasn't sure we

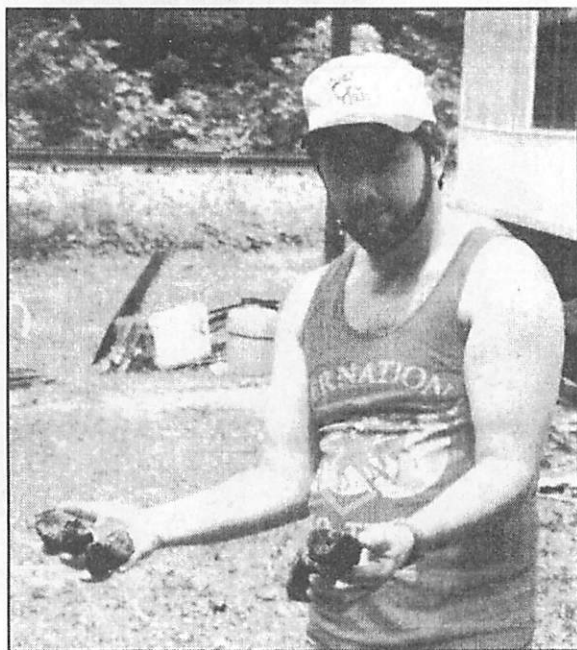
would get any where. But we sure turned things around."

Neighbor Kristi Mounts agreed. "I never thought Arch would settle with us unless we went to court. I believe they came through with reasonable settlements because we were organized and they knew we had them dead to rights."

While the members are pleased with the report, they are angry that OSM failed to cite the state Division of Environmental Protection (DEP) for negligence.

Terry Mounts said, "The first time that DEP inspector came here he sat on my porch and said there weren't any problems up there. Two weeks later, he wrote one violation. Now the OSM has found 10 major problems that Arch has to fix."

"It seems pretty obvious DEP didn't do a good inspection. That inspector shouldn't still be working up here." ♣



Terry Mounts shows coal chunks that washed into his yard from Arch Coal's Wylo mine above Buffalo Creek, WV. (WVOP)

Ohioans work to save national treasure

The **Buckeye Forest Council (BFC)** and **Friends of Dysart Woods**, CCC's newest member group, are determined to protect one of the last tracts of virgin forest in eastern Ohio from underground coal mining. Dysart Woods contains trees over 400 years old and is designated a National Natural Landmark by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

The Ohio Valley Coal Company owns the coal under and surrounding the forest and wants to use longwall mining to remove the seam about 500 feet below the surface. Longwall mines collapse the ground surface, breaking tree roots, and often destroy springs and ground water in the adjacent area.

The state has already approved one mining permit nearby. BFC members expect more permit applications and believe the only permanent protection for this national treasure is for the State to declare the area off limits to coal mining.

In October, the groups delivered a Lands Unsuitable for Mining Petition (LUMP) to the Ohio Division of Mines and Reclamation. The state is required to do an environmental analysis and hold public hearings.

Successful LUMPs depend on public support and the groups are keeping the issue in the spotlight. In November, they organized a rally attended by over 200 supporters. ♣

"Dysart is one of the few ancient forests left in Ohio. There is no doubt about the unsuitability of mining under or near it." Jason Tockman, BFC



Diane Burnham, Friends of Dysart Woods, speaks at a rally of over 200 supporters at the state mining agency office. (BFC)

Alliance battles coal gas



CCC welcomes its 41st member group, the **San Juan Citizens Alliance**, based in Durango, CO.

True to its name, the Alliance has won new allies in its battle with the gas companies that are drilling wells and extracting methane gas from the extensive coal beds in the San Juan basin of southwestern Colorado and northwestern New Mexico.

Officials of La Plata County are actively supporting the Alliance's opposition to the industry's proposal to the Colorado Oil and Gas Commission to double the number of wells. The county has hired expert witnesses to go toe-to-toe with the industry at commission hearings.

The Alliance has also persuaded a state legislator to sponsor a bill addressing conflicts of interest by commission members. State law now requires 5 of the 7 members to have extensive oil and gas experience, and this usually means they have conflicts of interest as a result of their work with the industry.

"This is an outlaw industry that's been allowed to regulate itself — a classic case of the fox guarding the hen house."

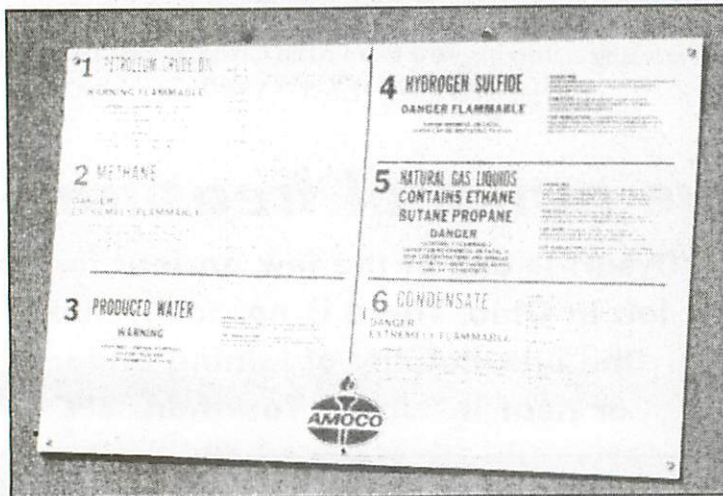
Alliance member Carl Weston said, "This is an outlaw industry that's been allowed to regulate itself — a classic case of the fox guarding the hen house."

Although the public has been led to believe that extracting coal bed methane gas is kinder to the environment than producing fossil fuels like coal and oil, the gas development has exacted a heavy toll on residents.

The gas wells pollute drinking water wells and streams; seeps continue to emit poisonous levels of "rotten egg" (hydrogen sulfide) gas; and explosive levels of methane gas have been found in area homes. The constant noise of production facilities now intrudes on this once-quiet rural area.

Most private surface landowners have little say about the destruction of their land, health and peace of mind because the gas companies leased the gas from mineral estates that had been separated from the surface ownership. Surface owners have no legal rights to prevent or control drilling.

Some relief may be in sight for Alliance members, however. Last July, a Federal appeals court ruled that the coal bed methane gas belongs to whoever owns the coal beds. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management, which owns much of the coal, has adopted a policy — pending appeal of the court decision — to review any proposed drilling on lands where the coal is federally owned. ♣



Dan Randolph, Gwen Lachelt and Carl Weston stand before a noisy coal bed methane production facility. Below: Sign on gas well lists the dangerous pollutants. (Carolyn Johnson)

**Thanks and
a big kiss...**

Ken and Gwen
Thompson of Center,
ND, donated a new fax
machine to the Washington office of CCC!



Alabamans host CCC

In November, CCC board members traveled to central Alabama for a business meeting to assess the first year of our Jobs and Justice campaign and plan for the new year. The event took place at Camp McDowell, located north of Birmingham, and was hosted by Alabama Board member John Wathen, the **Alabama Environmental Council** and the Stokers Paddle Club.

The setting was particularly vivid for CCC members; a beautiful forest surrounded by active and abandoned mines that threaten the camp's streams with acid pollution.

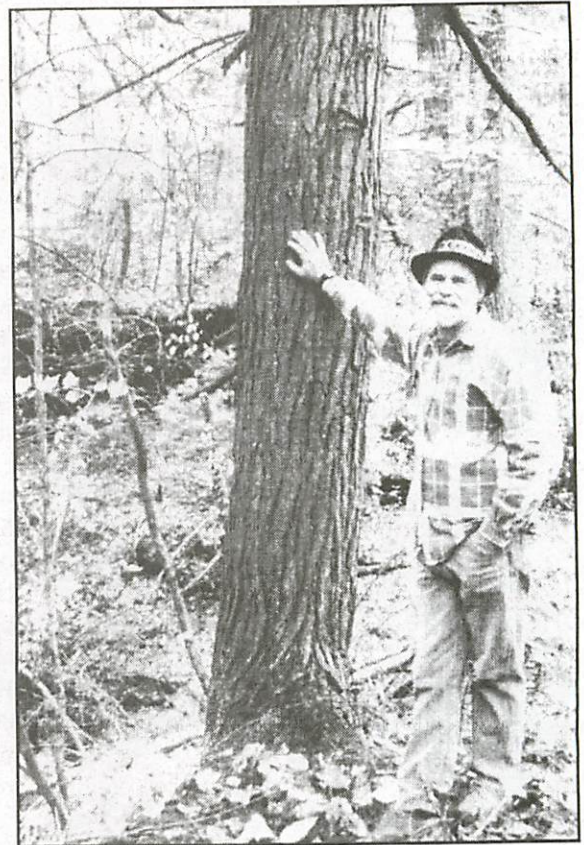
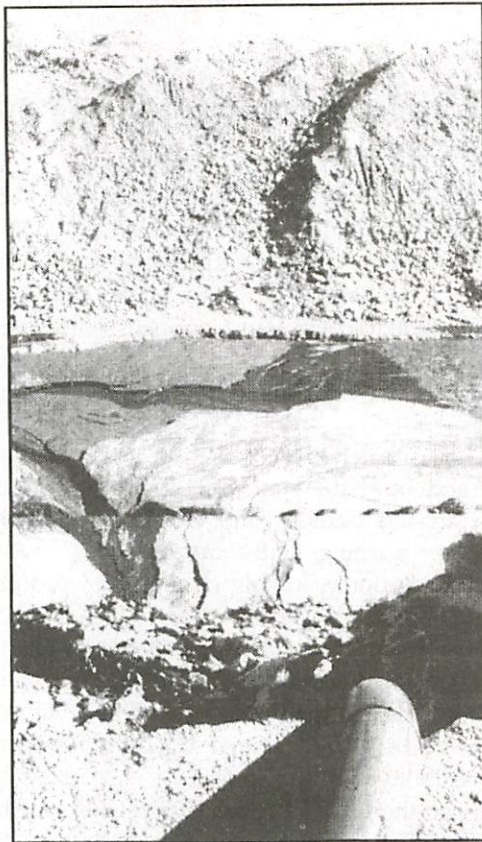
Camp Director Rev. Mark Johnston told of the region's history and led a tour of local active and abandoned mines. Many members remarked they'd never seen active mines so accessible and presenting such a clear danger to public safety.

The board met with federal and state coal regulators to discuss Alabama's abandoned mine lands program. The regulators agreed with CCC that Alabama desperately needs the money being held in the Abandoned Mine Land Trust Fund and would do all they could to further our Jobs and Justice campaign.

The weekend closed with a tour of the coal fields south of Birmingham. Participants saw a landscape scarred by abandoned mines, acid mine drainage, and active mines with shoddy reclamation.

The tour ended with a survey of Jim Walter Resources' Kellerman mine where black water was being pumped from a coal wash plant into an unlined strip pit within the watershed of Hurricane Creek, a recreational waterway popular with local residents.

Board members were impressed by Alabama's beauty and energized by citizen efforts to protect the environment. The tasty barbecue prepared by the Stokers Paddle Club is now the standard for judging all future board meeting meals. ♣



Top: Rev. Mark Johnston shows acid pollution in Camp McDowell's watershed. Left: A mine owned by Jim Walters Resources pumps blackwater into an unlined pit in Hurricane Creek watershed. Right: John Wathen, CCC's Alabama board member. (C. Johnson)

Action Line

SOCM fights Cyprus-Amax mine



Landon Medley, and Annetta Watson plan strategy for SOCM's campaign to protect the watershed of Fall Creek Falls State Park from acid pollution caused by Cyprus-Amax's strip mines in the area. (SOCM)

In May, members of **Save Our Cumberland Mountains (SOCM)** Strip Mine Committee decided to appeal a permit OSM gave to Skyline Coal's Big Brush Creek mine in eastern Tennessee. SOCM members had fought the permit, claiming Skyline's strip mine would surely produce acid pollution. Skyline is a subsidiary of Cyprus-Amax.

OSM awarded the permit based on Skyline's proposal to treat acid-polluted water before it left the permit area. Members fear OSM basically approved endless treatment as a post-mining land use.

SOCM's decision to appeal was also influenced by its campaign to have the watershed of Fall Creek Falls State Park declared off limits to coal mining. Members argue that the only way to prevent acid pollution from entering the park is to not allow coal mining in its watershed. The Big Brush Creek mine is located just outside the park's watershed and members are concerned the decision to allow treatment of acid pollution at the mine could jeopardize that campaign.

In October, SOCM's lawyer Walt Morris and technical witness Richard DiPretoro concluded the appeal hearings; a decision is expected within six months. SOCM members are continuing their public education campaign. ♣

Coloradans urge cleanup

In 1991, the **Crystal Valley Environmental Protection Association (CVEPA)** warned Colorado and federal officials that Mid-Continent Resources' Coal Basin underground mine was going to fold and Mid-Continent's \$3.5 million reclamation bond would not cover the cost of reclaiming the site.

Unfortunately, the prediction was true and both the state Division of Minerals and Geology and OSM ignored the warning. The company declared bankruptcy, leaving cleanup of one of Colorado's largest sources of toxic pollution to the state and OSM. Because the mine was located on federal coal leases in the White River National Forest, OSM shared bonding responsibility with the State.

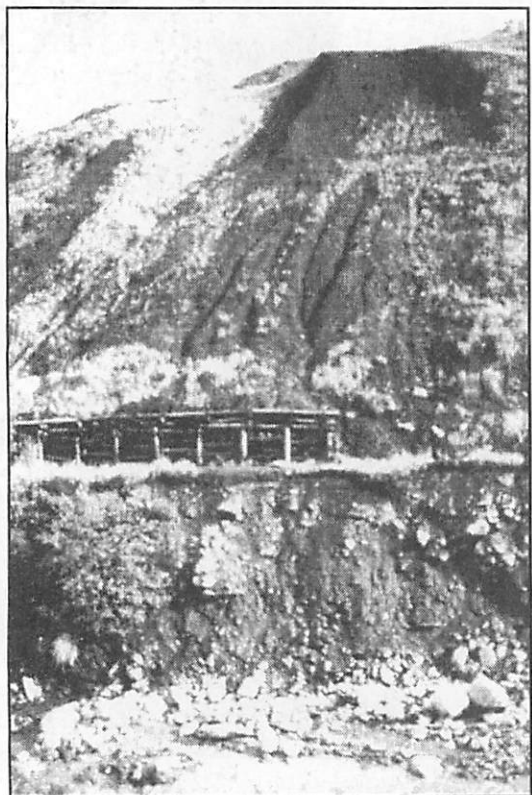
Since then, CVEPA has disclosed Mid-Continent's bond won't cover millions of dollars in reclamation costs and all Colorado citizens may need to pay for both agencies' failure to demand a sufficient reclamation bond.

CVEPA members are now pressuring state officials and Rick Seibel, OSM regional director, to sue Mid-Continent's parent corporation and wealthy officers and directors in the Reeves and Delaney families to secure the needed reclamation funds.

Peter Westcott, CVEPA President, said, "We've long disagreed with the State, and we're worried it will walk away. OSM has ignored the situation and pretended like it's not there."

Area residents are concerned about protecting the Crystal River and the forest from further contamination. When the mine was operating, it regularly discharged "black water" laden with coal dust into the Crystal, killing thousands of trout in the river and at a state hatchery.

Many CCC members fear a number of the big western mines are under bonded and could fold if the already-low price of coal falls even more. The experience of CVEPA members justifies these fears. ♣



Waste pile at unreclaimed Coal Basin mine, CO₂ is eroding into the creek. (C. Johnson)

Kentuckians work for change

When Kentuckians For The Commonwealth (KFTC) member Handy Jackson was asked last year why Wheelwright residents couldn't get problems addressed, he pointed out, "It's because of the color of our skin."

Wheelwright citizens are now hopeful that with the strength of KFTC membership, their African-American community in eastern Kentucky will win more change. As Roy Cosby said, "Everyone deserves equal treatment, no matter where they live or the color of their skin."

Cosby said abandoned underground coal mines in the area are causing landslides and damage to homes. "The whole mountain is coming down. The government fixed part of the slide area several years ago behind some of my neighbors' homes but not all of it. There's water under my home and the foundation is cracked."

"We contacted the OSM and the state and they came and looked at it. They've got the money to fix it but they're passing the buck back and forth and not making a decision."

Since joining KFTC, members have begun to see concrete results, literally, on one problem and hope to be successful on getting the landslides fixed. Members had long complained about an old unsafe wooden bridge that threatened to collapse.



Wheelwright residents held a rally to press their demands for projects in their Floyd County community. They have won a new bridge. (KFTC)

Nothing was ever done until they organized, started attending public meetings, and held an action to publicize the need for a new bridge.

Within two weeks of their action, the county and city began constructing a new concrete bridge. According to Roland Smith, the bridge was a result of "being organized, KFTC, and getting the problem in the media." ♣

Victory string in Montana

The Northern Plains Resource Council (NPRC) is celebrating three hard-won victories that have set back coal development plans in the Tongue River valley.

On Halloween, the state Supreme Court upheld NPRC's position and canceled the Montco mine permit for failure to ever open a mine in 13 years.

In November, President Clinton used his line-item veto to block a giveaway to the state of Montana of federal coal leases containing 500 million tons of coal. Senator Burns and Congressman Hill from Montana had successfully attached the giveaway to a bill approving \$60 million for an agreement that would cancel the proposed New World gold mine next door to Yellowstone National Park. A Presidential veto was the only way to stop it.

NPRC members fought the transfer because the leases would make development of the Tongue River Railroad and new strip mines more likely. Federal law says that before the federal government can lease coal, a mining company must gain permission from the surface owner to mine it. Montana law has no such provisions for state-owned coal lands.

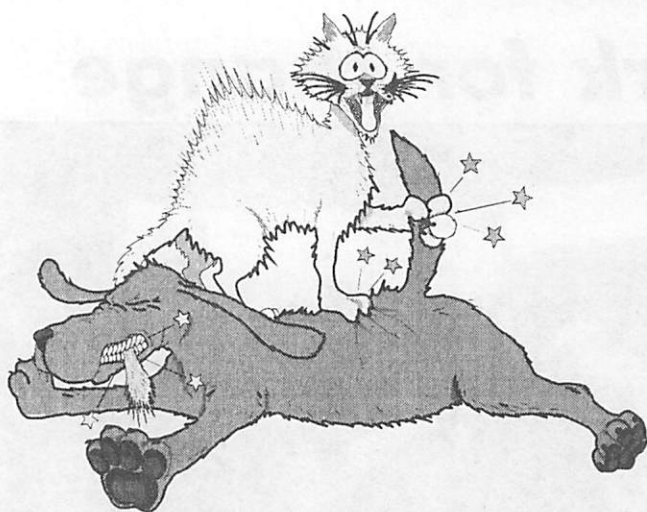
Montanans pulled out the stops to get their arguments inside the largely closed White House, and they got some able help from professional Washington lobbyists who came out of the environmental community.

Bones Brothers Ranch hired Louise Dunlap and Joe Browder and the Greater Yellowstone Coalition hired Russ Shay. With the materials supplied by NPRC, the lobbyists were able to attend a White House meeting and emphasize that the giveaway would harm the area's ranchers and benefit only the promoters of the proposed railroad in south central Montana.

More good news came in December when the U.S. Surface Transportation Board upheld NPRC's challenge to the Tongue River Railroad's attempt to get a new route approved. In 1996, the board approved the route requested by the company despite extensive opposition from NPRC, labor, Native American, and other groups.

In July 1997, the company asked the board for a new route by essentially adopting the arguments of railroad opponents: it said the approved route was too expensive, too steep and unsafe to operate. ♣

Organizing Toolbox



In-fighting

By Will Collette

From the day your group starts until it ceases to exist, leaders have to deal with in fighting. It may range from simple disagreements over tactics to explosive divisions that lead to splinter groups.

Why In-fighting Happens?

- People aren't always going to like each other, no matter how strong their common interests.
- The power play. Many members of a community organization have had little or no experience in dealing with power. For some, the first taste of power can be intoxicating and they will do almost anything to get more. Others feel they increase their own power by taking from someone else.
- Boredom and frustration. When a group isn't working on an active campaign, or has suffered some set-backs, members may find it easier to start attacking each other than to deal with the original common enemy.
- Scapegoating also causes a lot of pain, especially when things go wrong. Trying to pin the blame on someone else is a lot easier than accepting personal or collective responsibility.
- Poor planning and lack of focus. If goals aren't clear or aren't shared by many members, there will likely be in-fighting of the worst kind over the purposes of the organization and how it should carry on its work. Another example of poor planning is making bad judgments over who should be recruited into the group. If you try recruit everyone and keep them all happy, the group may find itself paralyzed as it tries to arrive at "consensus" positions that won't offend anyone.

What Can A Leader Do When It Happens?

Here are five possible approaches a leader can take:

- Try to ignore in-fighting, especially when it's minor, and let people find their own levels. This approach means conceding that people will probably always fight and your job as leader doesn't include holding peoples' hands. Of course, you

should use some sensitivity and judgment to know the difference between minor and serious problems. A problem is serious when it blocks a group from doing what it has to do to win.

- Try raising up internal disputes for group discussion and forcing people to focus on why they are fighting and how to resolve it. This approach works best when you deal with problems early.
- Try to mediate differences between the "trouble-makers" by playing "referee" while they work out their differences. You should also decide how important the people are and whether their value to the group is worth your time and energy. If the dispute involves key leaders, this approach may well be worth the risks and costs involved.
- Have clear rules of operation. For instance, if your group has meetings with a set agenda, a leader could gently but firmly get things back on track by reminding the in-fighters that "The purpose of this meeting is to plan for the next week's public hearing." For members involved in power plays, clear rules allow leaders to enforce proper rules of behavior. Example: "Look, John, we have a rule in this group that only Executive Committee members can make statements to the media on behalf of the group."
- The best response to a splinter group is to try to make peace with them and acknowledge the differences. If you try to fight them, or denounce them publicly, you serve no one's interests except your opposition. "Agree to disagree" if you can. It doesn't hurt to make conciliatory gestures, like asking to work together on things where you still share a common interest.

Ways To Prevent In-fighting

- As mentioned, having a clear focus, statement of purpose and a good plan is all-important. You can prevent the problem of splinter groups by thinking through whom you need to recruit to win — don't try to recruit the whole county if all you need is your neighborhood.
- Set up your organization with a clear democratic structure and reasonable rules for procedure and behavior.
- Develop good leadership skills in yourself, encourage them in others and work toward building new leaders. The most important job of a good leader is to share leadership with others. Dictators deserve all the fighting they cause. Involve others in decisions. Work to develop the utmost participation. Share duties. Help people work out their differences by acting and working together on projects and committees.
- Finally, keep at it and stay busy. When people are working on issues, they have less time to hassle each other over personal problems. Keep it lively and fun. That will keep morale up and prevent people from being at each other's throats. ♣

[Will Collette is Coordinator of CCC's Washington office.]

Fighting back... with a light bulb?



By Ned Ford

A single 60-watt light bulb will use as much as 60 pounds of coal before it burns out! As incredible as this may seem, the price of coal is still only a small part of the price of electricity.

This is why a compact fluorescent light bulb that provides the same amount of light as the ordinary 60-watt (incandescent) bulb, but uses only 15 watts, can save you \$30 to \$70 dollars over its life.

The compact fluorescent bulb will last ten times as long as the ordinary 60-watt bulb. It doesn't make sense to use compact fluorescent bulbs in places where they might get broken, because they cost between \$7 and \$20 in most hardware stores. But anyone can save the cost of the bulb in a few months if the light is on each evening or all night.

If you aren't familiar with compact fluorescent bulbs, look for brand names you are familiar with. Make sure the wattage you buy is at least one fourth of the wattage you are replacing (15 watts for 60 watts, 20 watts for 75 watts, etc.). Buy one or two and make sure you like them before getting a lot more.

It's a smart investment. Paying for a \$15 light bulb to replace a 60-watt light you use three hours a day is the same as putting \$15 in a savings account and getting 20 percent interest for six years. Some utility companies give their customers a rebate on the price of the bulbs or sell them at discount.

Fighting coal companies with light bulbs may seem hopeless, but it's just part of the solution. New efficiency standards

for refrigerators and other appliances have cut the nation's annual growth of electricity use to less than 2 percent each year.

But efficiency isn't going to end coal use any time soon. In the next 20 years, utility companies will have to close all the nuclear plants in the U.S. because of their age. If we don't have a strong efficiency program, this will require a 30 percent increase in the generation of electricity from fossil fuels.

There's growing pressure on utilities to use natural gas to generate electricity, but unless we learn to be more efficient, the new natural gas plants will probably just replace the nuclear plants and won't reduce the need for coal.

Efficiency produces skilled jobs and government policy can ensure those jobs go where needed. But even the strongest efficiency programs, the best new power plants, and everything else we can come up with will still take many decades to end the use of coal. It will happen because the day is not too far away when renewable energy becomes competitive with coal.

In the meantime, we can't let the coal companies scare our political leaders away from essential standards, smart programs and modern technology just because they can't stand the idea of losing their businesses — a half century or so from now.

We can use this time to learn how to be more efficient with electricity, and, yes, our learning and fighting back can start with a light bulb. ♣

[Ned Ford lives in Cincinnati, OH, and is Vice Chair of the National Energy Committee for the Sierra Club.]

Tri-State publishes PA homeowner guide

More and more homeowners in Pennsylvania are finding their homes damaged from expanding underground and strip mines. Many are facing coal mining for the first time and are unprepared to protect themselves.

The **Tri-State Citizens Mining Network** is meeting this challenge with organizing efforts and the publication of a "Homeowner's Guide."

The guide offers the basics people must know to protect themselves if coal mining will impact their property. It provides examples of how to write citizen complaints and gives addresses for public officials and citizens groups working to protect coal field residents.

Although the guide emphasizes the impacts of underground mining in Pennsylvania, it is useful for anyone interested in protecting themselves from coal mine damage and invaluable for citizen groups wishing to develop similar material.

To obtain a Tri-State Citizens Mining Network Guide, write Anna Filippelli, 140 Sugar Run Road, Eighty-Four, PA 15330 and please include \$2 for postage. ♣



Meet the folks of CCC



(People for Puget Sound)

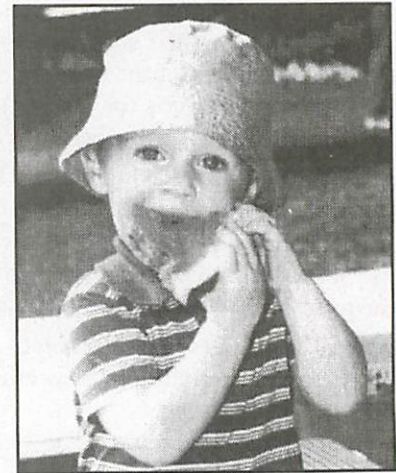


(Carolyn Johnson)

Some of the 200 folks at the 20th Anniversary celebration of the federal coal law (SMCRA) at Buffalo Creek. Clockwise from top left: Kathy Fletcher, Seattle, came the farthest. She organized the White House ceremony at which Pres. Carter signed the law in 1977. Linda Brock, Kentuckians For The Commonwealth, is past Chair of CCC. Shirley Willie, CCC board member in Oklahoma; Jack Caudill of the West Virginia Organizing Project that co-hosted the event; Gwen Thompson, CCC board member in North Dakota. Rainer Humphries of Logan, WV, enjoyed the watermelon.



(Carolyn Johnson)



(Carolyn Johnson)

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