



Group Against Smog and Pollution, Inc. Hotline



Summer 2005

www.gasp-pgh.org

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Group Against Smog and Pollution, Inc. (GASP) is a non-profit citizens' group in Southwestern Pennsylvania working for a healthy, sustainable environment. Founded in 1969, GASP has been a diligent watchdog, educator, litigator, and policy-maker on many environmental issues, with a focus on air quality in the Pittsburgh region.

Shenango's Pollution Problems

by Karen Grzywinski, GASP Board Member

The summer of 2005 is proving to be a long, hot, and polluted one for many people living or working in the vicinity of Shenango, Inc. on Neville Island. The coke plant has been unable to control emission problems over the last several months. GASP members, along with local residents and Clean Water Action (CWA), have been instrumental in bringing Shenango's performance to the attention of the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD). During April and May, Shenango has compiled a record list of violations for regulations enforced by the Health Department's Air Quality Program.

Shenango operates a 56-oven coke battery that originally went into operation in 1929. The ovens bake coal to produce coke, an ingredient required to produce steel. The battery has been operating at maximum capacity, producing approximately 380,000 tons of coke annually. The plant also includes a by-products facility and a steam and power plant. The facility's by-products include coal tar, benzene, toluene, zylene and ammonium sulfate.

Shenango has a history of pollution violations; major pollutants from the plant include hydrogen sulfide, benzene and

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Adopt a School Bus with GASP Providing a Cleaner Ride for Allegheny County Students

by Bridget Yupcavage, GASP Administrative Assistant

Have you ever been stuck behind a diesel school bus at a red light? The light turns green and the bus accelerates leaving you choking in a cloud of stinky smoke.

While riding a school bus is the safest way for children to get to and from school, recent studies indicate that levels of some pollutants are significantly higher *inside* a school bus than outside. Diesel exhaust contains harmful fine particles known as particulate matter, or PM 2.5, a pollutant that has been linked to asthma attacks and the onset of asthma, coughing and difficulty breathing, chronic bronchitis, decreased lung function, heart attacks,

stroke, cancer and premature death. Children are particularly susceptible because their respiratory systems work at two times the rate of an adult's, taking in more pollutants.

If you think getting caught—even for a few seconds—in the exhaust at a traffic light is bad, imagine what it is like for school children, the majority of whom spend an average of an hour and a half each day riding on a school bus and inhaling its toxic fumes!

According to the Clean Air Task Force study, *Diesel and Health in America: The Lingering Threat*, in Pittsburgh, diesel

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GASP Appeals Two DEP Actions

by Elizabeth Rosemeyer, GASP Policy & Outreach Coordinator

On April 4, 2005, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) issued two air quality Plan Approvals for new facilities: a coke plant in Cambria County and a waste coal-fired power plant in Washington County. DEP issued the permits the day before new rules regulating sources of PM 2.5 went into effect. Consequently, the companies were relieved from having to install stricter emission controls and taking other mitigating efforts to reduce the new plants' negative affect on the areas' air quality. Upon investigation and analysis of the Plan Approvals by GASP, we decided to challenge the legality of DEP actions on behalf of our members.

Cambria Coke Company

GASP filed a joint appeal with Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future (PennFuture) challenging approximately 30 aspects of the permit issued to Cambria Coke Company. At the forefront of these issues is the lack of public participation in the permitting process. DEP did not hold a public hearing, and it failed to give adequate and timely notice to federal land management agencies so that they could properly analyze the affect the plant might have on pristine wilderness areas in West Virginia and Virginia. Additionally, GASP believes the permit does not meet certain legal requirements for the level of emission control of harmful pollutants such as SOx that will be emitted by the plant.

The proposed coke plant will be located near Ebensburg in Cambria County. It will have approximately 280 ovens and generate 1.7 million tons of coke annually. The plant

will also use the steam produced from the coke processing to generate approximately 150 megawatts of electricity.

Robinson Power Company

On June 29, GASP filed a Petition to Intervene in an appeal already filed against DEP for a Plan Approval issued to a waste coal-fired power plant. Similar to the coke plant, GASP is challenging the inadequate public participation in the permitting process. Additionally, GASP believes DEP did not require as strict emission controls for harmful pollutants as the law requires. GASP has also challenged the permit because it believes the permit did not include enough protection for valuable wilderness areas which will be affected by emissions from the plant.

The proposed site of the waste coal-fired power plant sits just across the Allegheny County border in Washington County. Since the prevailing wind is from the west, the emissions from the plant will frequently blow over much of Allegheny County. The plant will use waste coal, or gob (garbage of bituminous), piles left from previous industry to fuel the plant and produce 272 megawatts of power annually.

Future Proceedings

Both of these suits are in the early stages. Discovery—the gathering and exchange of information between the parties—is scheduled to begin in both cases this summer. The actual hearing will probably not occur until the end of the year or the beginning of 2006. ♻️

GASP Events Showcase Hybrid Cars

by Marla Ferency, GASP Board Member

GASP provided the public with two opportunities this spring to view an array of alternative fuel vehicles up close. In April, GASP partnered with Sustainable Students of Carnegie Mellon University to bring *Cars of Today... Fuels for the Future* to campus to celebrate Earth Day. Then in May, GASP joined the 2005 Venture Outdoors Festival to hold our second annual day-long *Drive Cleaner, Drive Greener* event.

Cars of Today... Fuels for the Future

During breaks between classes, Carnegie Mellon students and faculty were intrigued by a display of hybrid electric, biodiesel and electric cars right in the middle of campus. With cars from dealerships, individuals, and the campus fleet, attendees had many opportunities to find out why these cars can all be feasible alternatives to the gasoline-powered cars almost everyone drives today.

Interest in these alternative technologies was very high among the students, who were impressed by the variety of hybrid car choices, from the tiny Honda Insight to the two SUVs available at the time: the Ford Escape and Lexus RX 400h (Toyota has since released the Highlander SUV Hybrid). Many attendees were particularly impressed with Volkswagen's new Beetle, a regular VW easily adapted to run on biodiesel fuel, a clean alternative to diesel.

The four-hour car show led up to an enlightening presentation by Isaac Porche, who was instrumental in developing General Motors' electric vehicle. Carnegie Mellon student Patricia Stallings moderated the subsequent lively interchange among Porche, audience members, and panelists Jim Skees, Jose Mieres and Mike Griffin.

Pittsburgh 365, a weekly lifestyle show on WBGH-TV, devoted an episode to hybrid technology, with this event taking center stage. Between on-camera interviews with car owners and dealers, show host Mike Lee enjoyed taking a spin in one of the exhibits, a GEM (Global Electric Motorcar).

Drive Cleaner, Drive Greener

A sunny, warm spring day provided the perfect backdrop for a celebration of the outdoors at the 2005 Venture Outdoors Festival. This North Shore event featured GASP's hybrid car display and test drives. Throughout the day, nearly 50 people took advantage of the opportunity to test drive one of two hybrid cars provided by local dealers. Enthusiasm for test driving the 2005 Toyota Prius rivaled that for the new Honda Accord Hybrid.

Some 300 people stopped by the GASP tent to learn more about hybrids from GASP volunteers or some of the hybrid car owners who offered their time and their cars for the event. The impressive 20 hybrid car line-up showcased



The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy's Ford Escape Hybrid was featured at *Cars of Today... Fuels for the Future*.



A new Honda Accord Hybrid was available to test drive at GASP's 2005 *Drive Cleaner, Drive Greener* hybrid car event.

throughout the day made a compelling argument that this technology is successful in helping the mainstream consumer avoid contributing unnecessarily to the pollution problem.

Drive Cleaner, Drive Greener attracted the attention of WPXI-TV news, which featured the event that evening, including an interview with volunteer hybrid owner Karen Miyares about the cars' environmental benefits.

To learn more about hybrid cars and other alternative fuels, go to <http://www.gasp-pgh.org/action/hybrids.html> ♻️

The Hotline is the quarterly newsletter of the Group Against Smog and Pollution, Inc.

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GASP Mission Statement

GASP will act to obtain for the residents of southwestern Pennsylvania clean air, water, and land in order to create the healthy, sustainable environment and quality of life to which we are entitled.

Methods of Achieving Mission

GASP is a citizens' group based in Southwestern PA which focuses on Allegheny County environmental issues. When pertinent to these concerns, we participate in state and national environmental decisions.

We believe in the public's right to receive accurate and thorough information on these issues and to actively participate in the decision making process.

To achieve our environmental goals on behalf of our membership, GASP will advocate, educate, serve as an environmental watchdog, mobilize action, and litigate when necessary.

We will work both independently and in cooperation with like-minded individuals and groups as determined by the Board of Directors.

We will uphold GASP's reputation for scientific integrity, honesty, and responsible involvement.

A Breath of Fresh Air

How a Mother of Six Is Fighting a Power Plant

by Cat Lodge, GASP Member

The GASP Hotline welcomes articles from guest authors in our new column, "A Breath of Fresh Air." This column will feature different writers telling their own stories about how and why they got involved in environmental work, whether in their personal or professional life. If you would like to submit your own story, please contact Hotline editor, Marla Ferrency, at hotline@gasp-pgh.org. Note: The opinions of the author do not necessarily reflect the views of GASP.

My husband and I bought a big old rundown house in Carrick just before our wedding. We bought it because we could afford it. We then spent the next 11 years living in it, renovating it and loving it. But both my husband, Chris, and I had always wanted to live on a farm. Chris wanted to raise chickens. I didn't care what animals we had just so that we had some. I am a huge animal lover.

One day I stumbled across a farm that had one residual piece of land left to be sold. We checked it out and fell in love with it. It didn't have a house and the fields were overgrown, but we saw potential.

We had to hold off building right away since I found out I was expecting our fifth child, but at Christmas Santa left our kids a note under the tree that said we'd have to go out to the farm that morning. There in the fence Santa left us "Jackie," a miniature donkey, and an old mare that we named Wynoka after the street we lived on in Carrick. This was the start of our dream.

For two and a half years we had two lives: one in Carrick and one on the farm. After work, Chris would race to the farm and work till dark. During the week I would get the oldest three off to elementary school and then head out to the farm to look after the animals. Occasionally, until we got proper fencing I'd have to chase down the donkey and get him back with the pony. This was tricky with two little ones to look after. Sometimes in the snow we would get stuck, and I would have to dig the minivan out, hoping that I could do it before I had to be back to Carrick to pick up the kids from school. It was always a bit odd for me when I would wait at the school chatting with the other moms. I couldn't tell them that I just buried a dead chicken because one of the dogs got a hold of it. Or how hard it is to muck the barn out. Or how many ticks I just picked off the kids heads.

In July 2003, we moved to the farm permanently.

We were living out our dream raising our six children on a farm. We acquired four dogs, five cats, six rabbits, two ponies, three mini donkeys, one peahen, three geese, twelve ducks and some thirty chickens. Then one day our neighbor came over and told us about a meeting about somebody trying to put up a power plant in our neighborhood. Chris and

I attended the meeting with our neighbor.

I was so upset sitting there listening to people claim that a power plant was such a good idea for the environment. Even Senator J. Barry Stout (D) of District 46 was saying what a great thing this is. Then I was most disgusted when a woman from a local watershed association stood up and proclaimed that this was a solution to the watershed problem that the gob piles were creating. I knew nothing at that time about gob or its high levels of mercury. But it seemed obvious to me that burning something like waste coal would create an air pollution problem. Also, I thought about the watershed when the ash would go back into the ground. Sure enough, there is no plan to have a liner like a landfill does. So the ash goes right into the soil. I was worried about my own well. So I started asking questions.

A few days later, I received the plan approval for the Robinson Power Company air quality permit, dated April 4, 2005. This was issued just one day shy of a change in the particulate matter emissions requirement by the state (see "GASP Appeals Two DEP Actions" on page 2). I was so sad. I was so mad.

"It's a bit scary when you see your name versus the Commonwealth of PA DEP."

I then started calling people: DEP, EPA, PennFuture, Mike Ewall of Action PA, GASP, University of Pittsburgh, US Department of Agriculture, air specialists—anyone that could give me information about waste coal power plants. I also wrote letters to the Montour Trail Council, Fort Cherry School Board members, West Allegheny School Board members, Mt. Lebanon School District, as well as South Fayette and Burgettstown School Districts. I was accumulating so much information I starting doing what any housewife and mother would do with extra stuff, I began to fill a laundry basket up with the papers. I needed to get organized.

As a parent, you try to give your kids the things that they need to live a healthy and safe life. Things like love, food, shelter, clothes. You take for granted that they will have

clean air to breath and clean water to drink. Then you learn that a businessman wants to make a lot of money—I've heard \$200 million over the next 30 years. You also learn that the department that was set up to protect the environment, including our clean air, seems to be protecting the businessman more than the environment by expediting a permit. What would you do?

I decided to fight back. Elizabeth Rosemeyer from GASP sent me forms for the Environmental Hearing Board so that I could appeal the air permit. I had never done anything like this before in my life, but it broke my heart when I would look at my children and think about what was coming just up the road.

After long conversations on the phone with knowledgeable people, I was able to form what I thought were at least three valid points to appeal the air quality permit. Like any legal or important forms, they needed to be copied and mailed out to various people. This wouldn't be such a big deal if I were in some office typing away with access to a fax machine or photocopier or even having a mailbox nearby. Instead I was sitting at my dining room table trying to complete the forms in between my toddler's nap and feeding the other five children plus laundry, cooking and all that other stuff that comes with taking care of a home and farm. Once I was able to fill out all the forms I packed up the kids and headed to Kinko's and then the post office.

After a couple of days I began calling all the neighbors that attended that first meeting held by DEP. I found that there were others like myself that wanted this stopped. One neighbor, Karen, is a nurse and had knowledge of health problems linked to environmental pollution. She and I began formulating a plan.

One of the first few things we did was write letters and make phone calls. We both called Senator Stout to say that we did not want this power plant to come. This power plant will sit just over the Allegheny County line in Washington County. The prevailing winds will generally take this pollution toward Allegheny County, affecting its residents as well.

To inform more people, Karen and I decided we needed a name for our forming group. So one day on the phone I was playing around with letters and told Karen, "maybe something like RRAPP for Robinson Residents Against Power Plant." She made the executive decision to adopt the name, and RRAPP was formed.

My next biggest hurdle came when I received the official notice from the Environmental Hearing Board that they received my appeal. It's a bit scary when you see your name versus the Commonwealth of PA DEP. So I started on



Cat Lodge and her six children

the phone again pressing various statewide organizations and environmental attorneys to no avail. I also kept in touch with GASP. Elizabeth Rosemeyer was talking to the Environmental Law Clinic of the University of Pittsburgh.

Our hope was that someone there could take on my appeal, but time was ticking away and I couldn't get a firm answer from anyone.

On May 12, 2005, I finally got legal representation! Tom Buchele from the Environmental Law Clinic, University of Pittsburgh was taking on my case. I called my husband right away and danced around the house with the kids.

We still needed to organize with the community. Karen and I hit the road with flyers in hand. We are determined

to inform as many people about this as we can. I told my oldest daughter that if I told at least one person a day about the power plant I would be happy. One of the biggest reactions neighbors give us is surprise that they had no idea about the power plant. The other is that they feel helpless—like it is in the hands of politicians and is a done deal. But we all agree that the ones greatest at risk are the littlest ones, the children. We have to, as adults and as parents, stand up for them and fight for their sake.

On June 7, almost 50 people gathered in our local church for RRAPP's first community meeting. I was pleased with how the meeting went. But there is still a lot of work to be done. The legal appeal will cost some money even though the attorneys work pro bono. There are fees for depositions and expert testimonies. So RRAPP needs to collect donations, and do some fundraising.

Allegheny County, as well as Washington County, must know what is coming their way. Pollution does not stop at township or county lines. It blows wherever it wants to. Our supervisors at Robinson Township need to hear from all communities that they do not want Washington County's power plant. We need to view Pennsylvania as a whole and make changes now to improve all of the state for the benefit of our children and grandchildren. Local ordinances need to be established to protect residents.

There are days when all this RRAPP stuff seems overwhelming and I long for the days when the toughest things I had to do that day were pay bills and potty train the baby. Then I think of what a wise woman named Kate St. John told me. She said to focus on small victories. This keeps me going and staying focused. Thank you Kate. ☺

If you want to learn more or support the work of RRAPP, contact Cat Lodge or Karen Dysert at 724-796-5596 or tophcat@netzero.com.

2005 GASPer Air Congress

by Bridget Yupcavage, GASPer Air Monitor Program Coordinator

Do Boys Really Smell More Than Girls? This question was just one of the unique topics presented at this year's GASPer Air Congress held at Carnegie Mellon University on May 3, 2005. Fortunately, the only one doing the actual "smell testing" was our GASPer air monitor!

More than 20 people—GASP staff, students, teachers and experts in the environmental field—gathered at CMU's Steinbrenner Institute for Environmental Education and Research to observe presentations from middle and high school students who participated in the GASPer Air Monitor Program during the 2004-2005 school year.



Students from local middle and high schools gathered for the GASPer Air Congress

The GASPer Air Monitor Program is an opportunity for students to learn more about the components of a natural resource that surrounds all of us: the air. For two weeks, each school is provided with GASP's educational air monitor, the GASPer, along with a laptop computer to record data and produce reports and graphs of the various monitored air components: ozone, particulates, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, ultraviolet radiation, ionizing radiation, barometric pressure, ELF radiation, wind speed and wind direction, temperature and relative humidity.

GASP has purchased an additional monitor to be used by GASPer Air Monitor Program participants starting this year: the TSI SIDEPAK™ AM510 Personal Aerosol Monitor. Weighing only a pound, this compact and quiet monitor comes with a built-in sampling pump allowing attachment of multiple size-selective inlet conditioners. We use this monitor specifically to measure fine particulate matter, PM 2.5.

Because both monitors are portable and relatively easy to set-up by the students, the opportunities for experimenting are endless and result in some interesting and sometimes surprising findings!

Woodland Hills High School Gifted Department not only carried out the gender smell test, they also monitored

CO₂ levels in the library and found a correlation between high levels of CO₂ and sleepy students. It is expected that their results will soon replace the excuse, "the dog ate my homework," and become the top excuse for not completing school work!

North Hills Senior High Environmental Science Classes conducted experiments with lawn appliances and presented their findings in a report titled, "Lawn Appliances and Air Pollution." They even went as far as designing a newsletter to inform the public on more environmentally friendly lawn-care practices and appliances. Contact the GASP office if you would like to receive a copy of their newsletter.

Ingomar Middle School students were curious about the components of the air they breathe on a daily basis and chose to present, "What Gases Are in the Air?"

Following student presentations, Cliff Davidson, Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering, was on hand to answer technical questions and discuss some of the air sampling projects currently being conducted at CMU.

After enjoying a donated lunch from Papa John's Pizza, the students viewed an episode of Pittsburgh 365, a weekly lifestyle show, in which the GASP hybrid car display at CMU was featured and hybrid electric technology discussed.

Jim Skees, School of Computer Science, Building Facilities Manager at CMU (and new GASP member!), was on hand with his Toyota Prius to let middle and high school students explore the "futuristic" vehicle. Many had never seen a hybrid car before, let alone sat in one. They were all impressed with Jim's knowledge and enthusiasm for the innovative technology.

It was another eventful and thought-provoking GASPer Air Congress and, even though school is out of session for the summer, that doesn't mean the GASPer Air Monitor is on vacation. We are gearing up for another exciting year of questioning, testing, sampling and experimenting, all in hopes of finding out... what's up with the air?

To learn more about the GASPer Air Monitor Program please email bridget@gasp-pgh.org or call (412) 325-7382.

And, if you're curious to see if boys really do smell more than girls, you can review the students' presentation by contacting the GASP office. 🚲



Jim Skees answers questions about his Toyota Prius

2005 Award Recipients of the William W. Mullins Environmental Advocacy Competition

by Bridget Yupcavage, GASP Administrative Assistant

GASP is pleased to announce the recipients of this year's William W. Mullins Environmental Advocacy Competition.

Lake Erie-Allegheny Earth Force, Youth Action Board Environmental Health Labyrinth

Lake Erie-Allegheny Earth Force, Youth Action Board received a certificate and award of \$300 for their work on educating the public about the health effects of diesel exhaust through the Environmental Health Labyrinth: a 15' x 15' canvas, painted green and blue, with orange cards containing facts about diesel pollution, and pink cards containing solutions. Why a labyrinth? According to the YAB students, "A labyrinth is a symbol of both a journey and a puzzle. It's like a maze, but it has no dead ends—just one way out. You think about your problem on the way in, reach the center, turn around and come up with a solution while walking out."

The portable canvas has been displayed at the Chatham College Earth Day festivities and the 2005 Venture Outdoors Festival. In addition to creating, designing and displaying the educational labyrinth, the Youth Action Board has had their experiences recorded and aired to the public on WYEP's environmental radio show, the Allegheny Front. More information about the Lake Erie-Allegheny Earth Force can be found at <http://www.earthforce.org/section/offices/lea>



A visitor at the Venture Outdoors Festival walks the Environmental Health Labyrinth

North Hills Senior High School Lawn Appliances and Air Pollution

North Hills Senior High School received a certificate and \$300 award for their extensive look into Lawn Appliances and Air Pollution. During the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 school years, the Environmental Science classes (grades 11 and 12) compared the air pollution given off by the most commonly used lawn appliances—electric and gas lawn mowers and electric and gas leaf blowers—both of which were heavily used in the community and on school grounds.

Using the GASPer Air Monitor, the students tested various lawn appliances to obtain levels of carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, ozone, particulates, sulfur dioxide, and heat produced while the lawn equipment was in use. Their findings were presented at the 2005 GASPer Air Congress held at Carnegie Mellon University's Steinbrenner Institute for Environmental Education and Research.

North Hills Senior High students also created a newsletter describing their research and providing the public with "tips for reducing lawn equipment related pollution." The newsletter was distributed at the Arts Alive Community Event in early May and can be obtained by contacting the GASP office at (412) 325-7382.



A North Hills student tests the emissions from a leaf blower

The GASPer William W. Mullins Environmental Advocacy Competition awards a student group or independent students whose work best exemplifies the ideals and efforts of the late William W. Mullins, a highly respected scientist and member of GASP's Board of Directors, and of GASP itself, by developing a project during the school year that deals with the following aspects:

- defining and making an inquiry into a local or statewide environmental problem
- defining and recommending a course or courses of action to remedy that problem
- making efforts to inform the public, encourage public action and address decision-makers

Winners are announced each spring. If you are interested in receiving an application for next year's award please contact GASP at (412) 325-7382 or bridget@gasp-pgh.org. All Allegheny County students in middle or high school are eligible to apply. 🚲

Status of Permit Application for Hays Woods

by Fran Harkins, GASP Board Member

On April 6, 2005, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) issued its fourth letter to the Pittsburgh Development Group (PDG) detailing deficiencies in its permit application to surface mine the 635-acre Hays Woods site.

The DEP requested “an informal pre-denial conference” to discuss 62 deficiencies cited in its letter; this conference has been held. As of this writing, PDG has requested and received two extensions and the current deadline is July 6.

Many of the 62 deficiencies are substantive. A full 25 of them relate to PDG’s Alternative Analysis written to support their contention that Hays Woods was the best site for their envisioned race track/slots/hotel/housing/retail development. But the DEP comments: “you have chosen a development plan that is not well suited to the topography of western Pennsylvania, and does not allow minimization of environmental impacts. The terrain of the Hays site is not conducive to the application of this development plan. Provide a site plan for development that considers the site’s topographic and environmental constraints and minimizes environmental impacts.”

The DEP also requests copies of the horse track and slot parlor licenses which Charles Betters needs for his proposal, but which look increasingly unlikely to be granted, as court appeals have been denied or dismissed. PA code

requires that the proposed post-mining land use (racetrack) is reasonably likely to be achieved before the land’s original topography can be drastically changed from hilly to a flat tabletop.

A recurrent concern of the DEP is water. It sees inadequacies in PDG’s erosion and sedimentation control plan, slope stability analysis, water table modeling, proposed drainage systems, ditch designs, runoff channels, post-development storm water management plan, wetland mitigation plan, and proposed stream mitigation plan. As one full mile of perennial streams or 7,691 feet of perennial and intermittent streams would be eliminated, the DEP requests a siting analysis for stream mitigation be undertaken locally in “the watersheds of the proposed impacts,” rather than in a Beaver County watershed as PDG wishes.

Six deficiencies focus on the blast plan. As yet, no blasting contractor has been named. Other deficiencies include the lack of written approvals from the affected utilities, Equitable Gas and Duquesne Light, and the need to address concerns earlier expressed by the PA Game Commission.

Though the letter spotlights omissions, incorrect data, and internal contradictions, every indication is that Mr. Betters and PDG continue to pursue this development. Stay tuned. ☺

The Forest in the City

If you viewed Pittsburgh from the air, as birds do, you might perceive an overall web of the natural world within the city. Areas of green space are everywhere. The largest of these is Hays Woods, a 635-acre undeveloped forest located on a plateau overlooking the Monongahela River, three miles from Point State Park. This area is a robust habitat for birds, animals, plants and people. Hays Woods is currently threatened with destruction through logging, mining, and development.

The plight of Hays Woods raises questions about the value of the natural world, the relationship of man and nature in the urban environment, and the rights of all living things. “**Hidden in Plain Sight—The Forest in the City**” brings artists from a variety of disciplines together to present work which address these issues. The exhibition also seeks to begin a dialogue on the value of urban greenspace with the people of this region.

This important upcoming exhibit runs from September 2 to October 22, 2005, at the Three Rivers Art Festival, 937 Liberty Ave. in downtown Pittsburgh. Call 412-281-8723 for a listing of associated workshops, talks, performances and receptions. ☺



PHOTO: TOM MERRIMAN

This waterfall is part of the “Forest in the City”

Generation Y: Changing the World

by Meliza Jackson, GASP Development Director

Generation Y has begun to supercede Generation X, those children of Baby Boomers who garnered media attention by actively rebelling against idealism. Since analysts tell us that most of Generation Y has high hopes of changing the world, this could be good news for the environment. The *Hotline* decided to find out, and spoke to Patricia Stallings.

There are many directions Patricia could take after college graduation next year. She could teach English overseas, or go to law school, or become a lobbyist and then go into politics, or support environmental non-governmental organizations. In selecting these choices to be the ones she contemplates, Patricia typifies the Generation Y world-changing agenda.

Patricia’s suburban Philadelphia Quaker elementary school valued peaceful harmony and taught her about the interrelationship of humans and the environment. She grew up loving math and science and her first choice of a college was Carnegie Mellon University. Patricia matriculated there, thinking that if she studied water quality and how to improve manufacturing processes, she could be a chemical engineer who improved the environment.

Along the way Patricia became more interested in policy-making than in research. She decided that, while engineering studies would be her minor, her two majors would be Policy & Management and Environmental Policy.

Looking for more involvement with campus environmental activities, Patricia contacted CMU’s Green Practices Committee co-chair Barb Kviz and was pointed to the Sustainable Students group. The group is a relatively recent outgrowth of EARTH, a campus environmental education and awareness organization. Sustainable Students focuses more on activities, both larger initiatives and smaller hands-on projects such as composting and butterfly gardening.



Patricia Stallings with a Toyota Prius on display at *Cars of Today... Fuels for the Future*

Under Patricia’s leadership, Sustainable Students has initiated a number of outstanding activities, including spinning off an environmental book club. Sixty members have joined Sustainable Students, which is also open to faculty and staff. In April 2005, GASP partnered with the group on a very successful event on campus about alternative transportation, *Cars of Today... Fuels for the Future* (see article on page 3).

Asked about Generation Y’s interest in environmental issues, Patricia commented that, although some individuals resist being interested in the issues and the organization’s mission, “We usually have an overwhelmingly positive response and support whenever Sustainable Students sets out to do a project or sponsor an event.” Using the *Cars of Today* event as an example, she pointed out that informing people is the key to engaging them: “once they observed the cars and learned about them, they [members of Generation Y] were very responsive to their environmental benefits.” ☺

“Born between 1980 and 1999, [Generation Y] is the largest since the Baby Boom. They comprise 28.6 percent of the population and, just as with their boom parents, their presence is being felt in all aspects of life.”

—from *Kidfluence* by Anne Sutherland

“Youth everywhere are coming forward to demand a better world for themselves... Youth around the country have been sparked to action. Their desire to educate themselves and others is more powerful than ever. Many young people feel a new sense of their role in the making of history.”

—from “9.11-9.11: The Year in Youth Activism,” *WireTap*

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exhaust cuts short the lives of 237 people, triggers 340 heart attacks and nearly 4,000 asthma attacks *each year*. In addition to heavy-duty trucks, shipping vessels, and locomotives, school buses are a source of diesel pollution in the county. Diesel exhaust from school buses represents a pollution hotspot for one of our more vulnerable populations to poor air quality, children, not to mention its deleterious effect on bus drivers, mechanics and the rest of us. Consider the alarming consequences right here in Allegheny County, currently not in attainment for acceptable levels of particulate matter, where over 2,000 diesel school buses crisscross our roads several times a day, nine months or more each year.

The good news is that there is effective retrofit technology available *today* that will significantly reduce diesel emissions and protect the health of our young school bus riders, their drivers and the community. The bad news is that school districts often do not have enough money to purchase retrofits or alternative fuels and cover the costs of installation and maintenance.

It was out of this need that GASP developed the **Adopt-a-School Bus Program** designed to reduce diesel exhaust emissions by promoting aggressive fleet turnover and by helping school districts obtain matching funds for retrofit technology and or alternative fuels.

The **Adopt-a-School Bus Program** is a cooperative effort among area businesses, government agencies, corporate sponsors, and foundations, with GASP as the coordinating organization. **Our goal is to see 100% of the school buses in Allegheny County replaced or retrofitted by 2010**, reducing particulate pollution by thousands of tons and ensuring that students are getting the cleanest and healthiest possible ride to school each day.

The American Lung Association affirms that a reduction in diesel emissions will result in a decrease in the following: lost school days for children and workdays for parents; large amounts of particulates which are precursors to ozone; hospital admissions for respiratory and heart diseases; and the national 8,300 premature deaths attributed to diesel pollution annually.

Please feel free to contact the GASP office to learn more about the Program by calling (412) 325-7382 or by e-mailing bridget@gasp-pgh.org. ☺

Air Quality and YOU Teacher Workshop

GASP, as part of the Air Quality Education Initiative, is pleased to announce an opportunity for area teachers to participate in a Teacher Workshop addressing air quality issues in southwestern PA. The EPA has designated this area as not meeting the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for both ground-level ozone and fine particulate matter. It is imperative that we, as citizens, examine this issue and become part of the solution!

The Air Quality Education Initiative has worked closely with educators in the southwestern PA seven-county non-attainment area. Educators provided invaluable assistance and insight in the development of the *Air Quality and YOU* curriculum and in the choosing of resources and materials. Participating teachers will be provided with background information and resources, including an air quality curriculum and activities designed for middle school students. This **Act 48 accredited teacher workshop** will focus on the human health and environmental impacts of air pollutants as well as behavioral changes that can minimize emissions and exposure.

Act 48: Participating teachers who complete the 7.5-hour workshop will receive 7.5 Act 48 credit hours. *Remember the new 5-year cycle for Act 48 credits begins 7/1/05.*

What you'll experience at the workshop:

- ▶ Introductory background information about ground-level ozone and particulate matter
- ▶ Demonstration of the Group Against Smog and Pollution's GASPer air quality monitor
- ▶ Hands-on activities
- ▶ Lesson plans packet and resources review
- ▶ Demo of student activities
- ▶ Demonstration of an energy audit by Conservation Consultants, Inc.
- ▶ Take home resources to use in the classroom.

The *Air Quality and YOU* workshop is a collaborative effort among GASP, the PA Department of Environmental Protection, the Southwest Pennsylvania Air Quality Partnership, Inc., and the Pennsylvania Resources Council.

Teachers are responsible for a \$10.00 registration fee. Upcoming workshops will be held in late summer and fall 2005. For more information, please contact Rachel Filippini at (412) 325-7382 or see <http://www.gasp-pgh.org/events>

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particulates. The facility has been operating under a Consent Decree with regulatory agencies since 2000 to achieve compliance with the coke battery stack emissions and its desulfurization plant. However, the emissions observed over the past several months have increased so dramatically that the plant has also violated even less stringent Federal Coke Oven National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP). These federal regulations are based on a 30-day average of emissions.

GASP volunteer smokereaders monitoring the coke combustion stack have recently recorded opacity violations on several occasions. Any stack emissions greater than or equal to 20% opacity for three or more minutes during a one-hour period is a violation of ACHD regulations. An emission of 60% or more for any length of time is also a violation. Smokereaders also noted significant emissions from the coke oven battery. These exceedances were reported to Shenango and ACHD.

The smokereader reports were corroborated by video monitoring of the Shenango facility conducted by CWA's Neville Island Good Neighbor Committee. The video, which was made available to ACHD, captured serious and recurring emissions from the battery and combustion stack. In addition, ACHD noted a significant increase in local residents' complaints of odor and pollution problems related to Shenango.

As a result of these citizen complaints, ACHD increased Shenango inspection frequency, having the county's only coke oven inspector spend approximately 60% of his time at Shenango. The inspections identified severe and repeated air pollution violations. For instance, during April, the combustion stack was in compliance only 40% of the time. Coke oven push emissions met compliance standards only 36% of the time and, even worse, coke oven doors were in compliance a dismal 13% of the time.

ACHD went on to identify four major causes of Shenango's emission problems:

- Deterioration of oven end walls and flues
- Deterioration of oven door jams
- Breakdown of door cleaning equipment
- Poor battery pressure control

It is evident that Shenango has neglected to perform even routine maintenance to assure that the battery is operating properly.

On April 27, Shenango presented ACHD with a repair and maintenance plan to address non-compliance issues. However, Shenango's compliance performance during May has been reported by ACHD to be just as poor as compliance in April. Additionally, there has been no improvement noted through continued smokereader monitoring.

ACHD plans to maintain increased inspections at Shenango. In addition, ACHD has promised that substantial penalties will be assessed for non-compliance in April and May. The penalties are expected to be announced in July.

At a press conference held on June 28, GASP, CWA and local residents called on ACHD to develop an enforcement action that demands Shenango become a responsible corporate neighbor, after years of environmental violations and disregard for community health. GASP urges Allegheny County Council to hire more coke oven inspectors to sufficiently monitor both Shenango and the 12-battery U.S. Steel plant in Clairton. Residents are encouraged to contact the ACHD Hotline (412-687-2243) to report visible emissions and odor complaints. Remember, it was citizens' complaints about Shenango that initially got ACHD's attention. ☺

Join GASP Today!

- \$35 Grassroots Supporters (\$15 low income/student rate) *Call GASP at (412) 325-7382 to learn about automatic monthly giving, deducted directly from your checking account or charged to your credit card. An easy, hassle-free way to support GASP all year round!*
- \$60 Grassroots Contributors
- \$100 Grassroots Patrons
- \$250 Clean Air Defenders
- \$500 Clean Air Protectors
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All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Group Against Smog and Pollution, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The official registration and financial information of GASP may be obtained from the Department of State by calling 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Save the Date for GASP's Fall Benefit

Please save the date of Saturday evening, October 1, 2005 when GASP will explore **Transportation Solutions** at Rodef Shalom in Oakland. The keynote speaker, RAND Corporation policy analyst Issac Porche, will anticipate what the future consumer is going to want and will highlight a variety of strategies for solutions to our transportation needs. The evening will also include time for meeting and mingling, enjoying music, wine, and light refreshments, and bidding on GASP's popular array of silent auction items.

Corporate Environmental Responsibility Event

Since the Industrial Revolution, corporations have been driven by profit. Now, behaving in an environmentally and socially responsible way are being seen as goals of business—along with profit. The two do not have to be mutually exclusive. **Get in on the ground floor of helping GASP plan a 2006 conference on this important topic** by letting us know you would like to help with it! Call Meliza Jackson or Elizabeth Rosemeyer by September 1 at (412) 325-7382, or email mjackson@gasp-pgh.org or elizabeth@gasp-pgh.org.

We look forward to having business students be among those participating in this learning opportunity, and we may partner with a university to stage the conference. GASP hopes to involve businesses, including both those wanting to improve their green quotients and those that are outstanding examples of corporate environmental responsibility.

Reminder: You can **read this newsletter online** in the form of a pdf file (Adobe Acrobat required) and help us save paper (and printing/ mailing costs). E-mail the editor at hotline@gasp-pgh.org if you'd prefer get a downloadable pdf link via e-mail (instead of a hard copy) when the next issue of the Hotline is published. Prompt delivery of the GASP newsletter, whether via hard copy or a pdf version, is one of the benefits of GASP membership.

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