



Group Against Smog and Pollution, Inc. Hotline



Winter 2005

www.gasp-pgh.org

2004 Year in Review

by Rachel Filippini, GASP Executive Director and Jonathan Nadle, GASP President

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GASP celebrated thirty-five years of successful, grassroots environmentalism in 2004. The year wasn't without its adversity and challenges, though. There were many victories to commemorate and several obstacles to overcome.

In early spring of 2004, GASP's Executive Director, Sue Seppi, stepped down, and Rachel Filippini, her assistant of three years and the Program Coordinator for the GASPer Air Monitor Program, was promoted to fill that role. Sue left big shoes to fill. Fortunately, Sue stayed on board as the Program Manager at GASP and has been absolutely essential during this transitional phase. GASP also met additional staffing needs by hiring Elizabeth Rosemeyer as our Policy and Outreach Coordinator and Bridget Yupcavage as our Administrative Assistant in 2004. To meet the needs

of our expanded staff, and to vacate our small, donated office space that the owner now needs, GASP moved in December to a more spacious, accommodating office in Squirrel Hill. While the new staff and new space will allow GASP to operate more effectively, thus tackling air quality problems even better than before, they of course don't come without financial costs. This is why your continued support in 2005 and beyond as important as ever and is needed to keep us running for another thirty-five years.

Victories and Successes of 2004

- 1. Diesel school buses stop idling:** In October 2004, Allegheny County's school bus idling regulation became law. With this legislation, school buses are not permitted to idle unnecessarily for

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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.

We've Moved!



GASP's new office can be found in the Wightman School Community Building in Squirrel Hill.

New address: Group Against Smog and Pollution
Wightman School Community Building
5604 Solway Street, Room 204
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

New phone: (412) 325-7382

New fax: (412) 325-7390

Thank you to the many individuals and companies who assisted GASP through various office equipment donations and assistance during the move.

We are very pleased with our new space, but want to express sincere appreciation to the Eastminster Presbyterian Church in East Liberty, which served as GASP's home for nearly thirty-five years.

Progress Continues on Anti-Idling Front

by GASP Staff

Actions toward decreasing the amount of idling by diesel vehicles in Allegheny County continue to move forward. On January 14, 2005, the Allegheny County Health Department announced a 30-day comment period for the proposed Diesel Powered Motor Vehicle Idling Regulation. This rule will limit to five (5) minutes the time a heavy duty diesel vehicle may idle, except during times the temperature is below 40 degrees or above 75 degrees. Heavy duty vehicles



include trucks and buses over 8500 pounds, such as tour buses and PAT buses, delivery trucks, and tractor trailers. The public hearing on the regulation is scheduled for February 14 at 10:00 AM at the Allegheny County Health Department, Building #7, First Floor Conference Room, Clack Health Center, 301 39th St. Pittsburgh, PA.

Overall, GASP is pleased with the proposed regulation and believes this is a significant step towards lowering the harmful toxins and particulate matter emitted from diesel engines. We encourage anyone interested in this regulation to submit written comments or to make a statement at the public hearing. You can obtain a copy of the draft regulation from the GASP website or by contacting the GASP office.

GASP also continues to monitor and support the implementation of the school bus anti-idling regulation, which became enforceable last fall. To help remind drivers to turn off their engines, GASP has designed, produced, and mailed

small magnets to every school bus company in Allegheny County and those school districts that own school buses. These magnets will be placed on the front console of school buses to act as a positive enforcement tool. However, if you witness a bus in violation of the rule, you may use the "ticker" on the back cover of the Hotline as a friendly education tool to hand to a violating driver. This ticket is also available on the GASP website as a pdf file (download the document with Adobe Acrobat and print as many copies as you want). Alternatively, you may request school officials to monitor buses at their facility and/or report violations to ACHD at (412) 687-2243. ☺



GASP created this magnet as a reminder for school bus drivers to turn off their engines while waiting at schools

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

GASP
Wightman School Community Building
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Pittsburgh, PA 15217

phone 412.325.7382
fax 412.325.7390

www.gasp-pgh.org
gasp@gasp-pgh.org



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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.

Soot Designations: An Opportunity to Clean Up Our Air

by Rachel Filippini, GASP Executive Director

On December 17, 2004, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) revealed the soot attainment and non-attainment designations for counties across the United States. Two hundred twenty-five counties nationwide, and 22 across Pennsylvania, have air too unhealthy to meet the fine particulate pollution standard of 15 micrograms per cubic meter of air (known as PM 2.5). In our region, ten counties received all or partial soot non-attainment designations. Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, Mercer, Washington, and Westmoreland counties are all completely out of compliance, with a separate sub non-attainment area within Allegheny County: the Liberty/Clairton area that includes Glassport, Liberty, Lincoln, Port Vue Boroughs, and the City of Clairton. Armstrong, Greene, Indiana, and Lawrence counties received partial soot non-attainment designations.



This map of Pennsylvania highlights the 22 counties designated as being in nonattainment for PM 2.5.

In early November, GASP and twelve other community leaders and representatives from local environmental, health and civic organizations signed a letter to the EPA urging them to oppose the creation of separate, smaller non-attainment areas within the larger Allegheny County non-attainment area. Initially, the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) was pushing for two sub non-attainment areas within Allegheny County—the Liberty/Clairton area, which the EPA granted them—and the North Braddock area, which the EPA did not designate separately. We opposed this designation for several reasons, including how the separate designations would affect the health of the individuals living in those communities, the economic viability of those regions if they are designated separately, issues of environmental justice, and whether this is the best strategy for attaining cleaner air for our region. Our biggest concern is that separate designations will allow for delay in clean-up in the areas that have the most severe air pollution.

The DEP has described the Liberty Borough, Clairton and North Braddock vicinities as having unique, local soot problems that will require the development of highly particular local solutions in addition to regional controls applied throughout the area to control the PM 2.5 problem.

We do not disagree that a combination of regional controls and specific local solutions will be necessary to lower PM 2.5 in Allegheny and surrounding counties. However, it is not clear that a special non-attainment area will result in the facilities in these areas (i.e. Clairton Coke, the Elrama Power Plant, and others in the Liberty/Clairton area) lowering their pollution sooner than if they were designated in non-attainment with the rest of the county. It is not discernible what the full effects of isolating these facilities and the communities surrounding them will do. We do not want to set up a situation that allows this area to receive extensions or modifications to their requirements if they fail to meet attainment by the deadline, while Allegheny County and/or the region are placed in attainment status. The air quality situation in the Liberty/Clairton area is so dire that delaying clean-up of fine particulates any longer will be to the detriment of not only residents of those areas, but to the entire county and surrounding counties downwind of these areas.

During inversions, air quality is not only poor in the Liberty/Clairton area, but also in the surrounding towns, which get pollution from these areas. GASP receives intermittent odor/air quality complaints from those living outside Liberty/Clairton, including Westmoreland County residents, who may be experiencing pollution from the Liberty/Clairton area. We also know that PM 2.5 travels long distances. The imaginary bubbles placed around the Liberty/Clairton area will not encapsulate pollution; the PM 2.5 will travel to areas outside of that non-attainment area. When the other areas of Allegheny County reach attainment, there will certainly still be days of acute air pollution wafting over from the remaining non-attainment areas.

Southwestern Pennsylvania has endured decades of pollution emitted from area facilities, particularly coal-fired power plants. These stationary sources of pollution contribute substantially to the level of PM 2.5 in their individual counties and regionally, putting hundreds of thousands of unsuspecting individuals at risk of serious

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Electricity from Waste Coal

by Kate St. John, GASP Board Member

In late November 2004, the State Legislature approved the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act (SB1030). First of its kind in Pennsylvania, this bill sets goals for generating power from renewable and non-traditional sources. Controversy still swirls around SB1030 because it provides incentives for several fuel sources deemed less-than-clean. Among them is waste coal, a power source the act is specifically designed to promote.

What is waste coal? And is burning it to produce electricity a bad or good idea?

Waste coal is crushed coal and rock that was rejected during mining operations. Up until the 1970s, mining companies in Pennsylvania dumped this waste in huge piles near the mines. The piles are dark, barren, ugly hills with little or no vegetation. They leach iron, manganese and acid runoff into surrounding groundwater and streams.

More than 8,000 acres of Pennsylvania is covered in waste coal piles. One of the area's largest is in Robinson Township, Washington County, on the south side of Route 22 near Bavington. These piles scar and damage the landscape and depress the neighborhoods near them. To correct the damage we can spend money to stop the leaching and plant vegetation, or we can remove the piles through electric generation.

97% of the electricity generated in Pennsylvania comes from boiling water either by burning coal or by using a nuclear reaction to drive steam turbines. These two fuel sources contain enough heat value (BTUs) to be economically feasible, generating more output than they cost to run and allowing for large centrally located power plants.

Waste coal, on the other hand, is harder to make money on. It contains about half the BTU value of mined coal and it burns less completely, leaving 60-70% more ash. To save money on transportation, waste coal power plants are located next to the waste coal piles. The ash is often treated and dumped nearby as well.

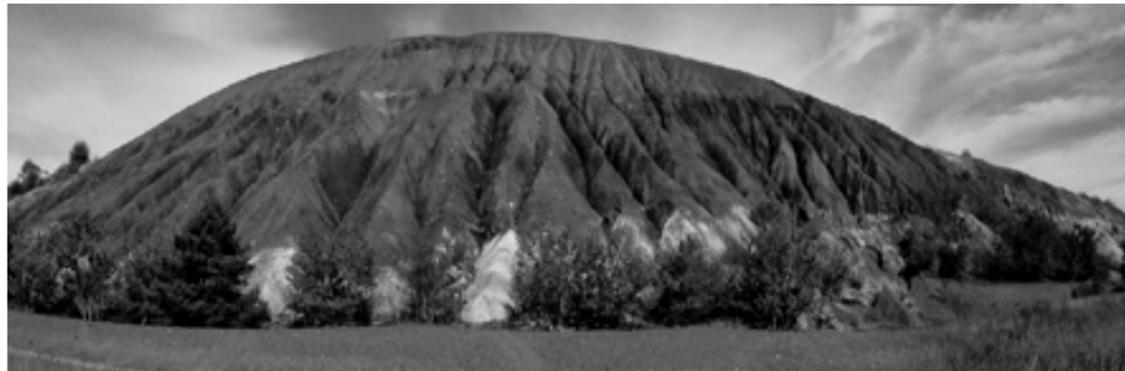
There are currently 14 waste coal power plants in Pennsylvania with at least 5 more in the planning phase. Waste coal plants are typically smaller power stations (50 to 500 megawatts) than the old "Dirty Dinosaur" coal-fired power plants (500 to 2,500 megawatts). Because the old power plants cannot burn waste coal, all waste coal facilities are new installations with up-to-date pollution controls. Reliant's Seward power plant on the Conemaugh River is the most recent to go online. In the planning phase are a 300 megawatt plant in Robinson Twp, Washington County and a 525 megawatt plant near Nemaocolin in Greene County.

The two main problems with waste coal power generation have to do with air quality and ash disposal. Waste coal contains the same—or more—of the sulphur, mercury and toxins found in mined coal and, since twice as much must be burned to achieve the same heat, a new waste coal power plant will create twice the pollution of a new mined-coal power plant. (This is a moot comparison as western Pennsylvania doesn't have *new* coal-fired plants.) Similarly, waste coal produces 60-70% more ash, which creates more intense pollution than the waste piles if not disposed of properly.

On the plus side, if new pollution-controlled waste coal plants *replace* output of the old coal-fired "Dirty Dinosaurs," our air will be far cleaner. If the waste coal ash is disposed of to prevent leaching and the land is reclaimed—as it was not reclaimed at the original waste coal dump—the surrounding land and water will be in better shape.

Taking a wider view, there is little or no money available to re-vegetate the waste coal piles and stop their leaching. If we leave them alone, will our need for electricity prompt us to dig new coal, wreck previously untouched land, and feed the "Dirty Dinosaurs"? And finally, if we do burn waste coal, will pollution and ash disposal be abated, monitored and enforced better than our experience with the old coal-fired plants?

There are still many "ifs" associated with waste coal power generation. It has both pros and cons. In any case, GASP will have interesting, new problems to tackle in the years ahead—another by-product of the cycle of coal.



Waste Coal Pile at Nemaocolin, Greene Co., PA. Photo by Bruce Golden, WPA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

GASP Annual Benefit Gazes into the Future

by Rachel Filippini, GASP Executive Director

GASP's annual fall event accomplished many objectives. It commemorated GASP's past successes, celebrated our 35th anniversary and our most recent accomplishments, and looked into the future. The event also served as an intriguing forum, educating nearly a hundred people about the potential of hydrogen in our energy future. It was, without a doubt, one of GASP's big highlights in 2004.

The evening started off with an informative panel discussion on the prospects of a hydrogen economy. The benefits, complications, and drawbacks were discussed in detail by an enlightening panel of speakers that included Lester Lave and Edward Rubin, both of Carnegie Mellon University, Thomas Flower of Siemens Westinghouse, and Robert Hirsch of Science Applications International Corporation. The panel was moderated by Don Hammonds, a business writer with

the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. For a comprehensive listing of hydrogen resources, please visit the GASP website at <http://www.gasp-pgh.org/hydrogen.html>

The panel discussion was followed by honoring GASP founder Michelle Madoff and all founding GASP members, whose tireless dedication and hard work enabled GASP to celebrate thirty-five successful years. Michelle was applauded for her determination, candor, integrity and commitment to clean air, which made her a natural leader for the organization. We were fortunate enough to have many early GASPs on hand to help us celebrate, including: Jeannette Widom, Ed Swanson, Walter Zadan, and Joshua Whetzel, Jr., to name a few. Many GASPs traveled quite a distance to attend the event, and we thank you for the time you took

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It's Your Event... Help Us Pick the Topic!

As you can read above, this past fall GASP held our 35th anniversary benefit event. A key part of our annual program is the in-depth discussion of an environmental topic. This event takes a lot of advance planning, so we are already starting to plan for next fall's event. One of the first things we want to do is identify a good topic for discussion and good speaker(s) to address the topic. The GASP board has identified some potential topics, but we'd like to hear your ideas as well. Below is a simple mail-in survey, but we also welcome feedback via e-mail, our website (which has an online survey), or phone. We value your input, so please let our staff know what you think!

Check your top two topics:

- Mercury and health
- Nuclear power and the environmental pros and cons
- Waste coal as a power source (read about this issue on p. 4)
- Life cycle of coal
- Author Joe Sherman, on his book, *GASP! the Swift and Terrible Beauty of Air* (see page 8 for an excerpt)
- Other topics you suggest: _____

Check one:

- I prefer 1-2 individual keynote speakers.
- I prefer a panel discussion.

Check one:

- I like the question and answer period.
- I would rather have more time for the speaker(s) and skip questions and answers.

Comments:

Mail this form to:

Group Against Smog and Pollution
Wightman School Community Building
5604 Solway Street, Room 204
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

Or fill out our online survey at:

<http://www.gasp-pgh.org/eventsurvey.html>

Or call (412) 325-7382 or e-mail gasp@gasp-pgh.org with your feedback.

Thank you for your response!

Health Impacts of Transportation Planning Policies

by Marilyn Skolnick, GASP Board Member

Many of us have been made aware of the problems connected to the tailpipe emissions of automobiles, but there has been little discussion about the health impacts of transportation policy and transportation planning practices. Todd Litman from the Victoria Transport Policy Institute has filled that gap in his paper, *If Health Matters: Integrating Public Health Objectives in Transportation Decision-Making*. This paper can be downloaded from <http://www.vtpi.org/health.pdf>.

Litman, in his 28-page paper, shows how planning decisions have affected health in three ways: “through traffic risk, pollution emissions, and by affecting physical activity and fitness.” When transportation planning reduces these risks, it can result in “reduced suffering, cost savings and increased productivity.” He goes on to indicate that agencies responsible for transportation planning tend to focus on per-mile crash risks and pollution emissions, but ignore the factors that result “from increased vehicle mileage, and negative health impacts from less physical activity. As a result, they tend to overvalue roadway and parking capacity expansion, and undervalue mobility management strategies that reduce vehicle travel and increase transport system diversity.”

Per capita traffic fatalities tend to increase as land use patterns become more sprawled. Litman shows that the least sprawled U.S. cities “average 5.6 traffic fatalities per 100,000 population, while most sprawled average 26.3, nearly five times as high.” The paper goes into detail as to how he comes to these conclusions. He adds that “per capita traffic fatalities tend to decline with increased per capita ridership.”

Litman states that studies show that the total costs of inadequate physical activity are far greater than those of traffic crashes.

Litman says that if transportation planners reduced the emphasis on roadway capacity, and instead emphasized mobility management strategies, particularly those that result in more walking and cycling, public health would benefit in one of the most cost effective ways. Many experts, he says, “believe that more active transport (walking, running, cycling and skating) is the most practical and effective way to improve public fitness.”

Currently, transportation planning and land use patterns seem to create barriers to walking and cycling. When roads are widened, this leads to increased traffic speeds and the development of increased parking which, in turn, tend to increase impediments to non-motorized transportation movements. “Urban regions with high rates of walking and cycling tend to have lower per capita traffic fatalities than the more automobile-dependent communities. Residents in areas with higher rates of walking and cycling experience less obesity, diabetes, and hypertension.”

It would appear that those of us who are advocates of fewer highways now have another reason to consider the adverse effects created by

more highways.

At the end of Litman’s paper, there are 4 pages of endnotes with websites that document all of his statements with studies that have been made on the various areas. 🚲



Sidewalks and bike lanes next to the road in Tallahassee, FL.



Bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly intersection in Cologne, Germany.



Pedestrians, bicycles and cars share this street in Holland. The design is called a “woonerf.”

All photos by Dan Burden, <http://www.pedbikeimages.org>

Traffic Pollution and School Students’ Health

by Marilyn Skolnick, GASP Board Member

I received an e-mail detailing some studies conducted in California that discuss the pollution from traffic, “raising the risk of sickness and early death to those who breathe its pollution day in and day out.”

One study, conducted by the California Environmental Protection Agency and the Lawrence Berkley National Laboratory, focused on public schools that were located within 500 feet of a freeway or thoroughfare. The study found that schools located on streets having 25,000 or more vehicles passing daily had a prevalence of asthma and bronchitis that was 7% higher among the students compared with children in schools on streets with less traffic.

Kori Titus from the American Lung Association of Sacramento (ALA) said, “This issues spares no one.”

The worst times for traffic are just before school begins and right as school lets out. Parents line up in their cars, waiting to pick up their children and frequently leaving the engine idling.

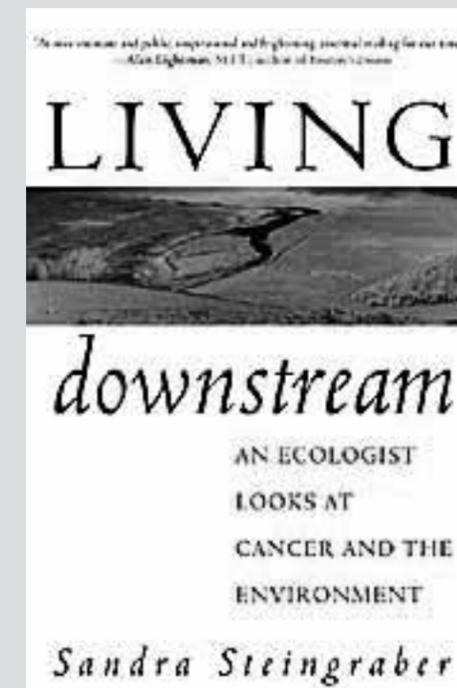
Some remediation solutions that the ALA recommended are:

- installation of filters capable of removing small particles on the schools’ heating, air conditioning and ventilation systems (the finest particles still can pass through)

- planting more trees on the school site, particularly on the perimeter of the school 🚲

From Living Downstream: An Ecologist Looks at Cancer and the Environment

~ by Sandra Steingraber

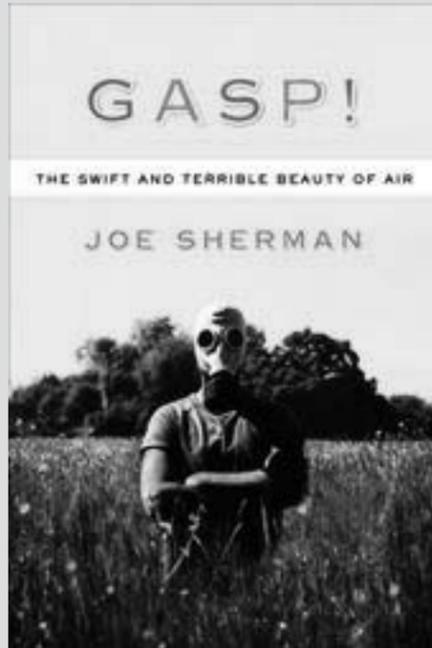


“Of all the component aspects of the environment, air is the one with which we, who inhale about a pint of atmosphere with every breath, are in most continuous contact. Even as the ongoing campaign against secondhand smoke has focused public attention on airborne carcinogens, air remains mysterious. Air is the element most diffuse, most shared, most invisible, least controllable, least understood....”

“Air is by far the largest receptacle for industrial emissions. Of all of the toxic chemicals released by industry into the nation’s environment each year, more than half is released into air. These emissions include about seventy different known or suspected human carcinogens. When vehicle exhaust and emissions from power plants are added into the mix, the number and amount of carcinogens in air rise further. According to the International Agency for Research on Cancer, ambient air in cities and industrial areas typically contains a hundred different chemicals known to cause cancer or genetic mutations in experimental animals. And while air pollution in the United States has markedly improved over the past quarter century, more than a hundred urban areas still fail to meet national air quality standards, In other words, nearly one hundred million Americans breath air that is officially illegal.”

From GASP! The Swift and Terrible Beauty of Air

~ by Joe Sherman



"The atmospheric disruptions I've experienced have never, as far as I know, seriously affected my health. I was always glad to get away from them. A Dijon sky [mustard-colored smog], lung burn, diesel tongue, an excess dose of rads—no human voluntarily chooses to lather himself or herself with these abnormal conditions, which ultimately distill down to molecular, biological threat amid the cellular warren of the body. Even less, of course, do most of us (there are exceptions) want to hear of a bolide hit that incinerates people like crickets in a firestorm. Nor do most of us want to be very close to an erupting volcano. Or get caught in a forest fire. But bolides, volcanoes and forest fires, as dramatic as they are, aren't the kind of disruptions the vast majority of us have to worry about. The disruptions we have to worry about are mostly collective emissions from hundreds and thousands and millions of small sources—tailpipes, chimneys, smokestacks, factory vents, backyard incinerators, smoking dumps, airplane engines, slag heaps of radioactive waste, and others that emit nitrogen oxides, carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, dioxin, benzene, alpha and gamma rays, and so on, that accumulate in the air and the soil and in our bodies over time: days, weeks, years, decades. The disruptions caused by humans are nuanced, subtle, and pervasive."

GASP Annual Benefit continued from page 5

out of your busy lives to celebrate with us.

The beautiful Aaron Courtyard at Rodef Shalom was the setting for the rest of the evening's activities, which included socializing between new and old GASP members alike; noshing on some of the best desserts and appetizers in town, donated by area bakeries, restaurants and volunteers; bidding on a wide variety of unique silent auction items; viewing the multimedia GASP display; and in keeping with the theme of the evening, having fortunes read by Madame Morgiama.

There could not have been a better way to celebrate the last thirty-five years of GASP. Thank you to all the GASP members, volunteers, local businesses and individuals who donated time, money and items for our silent auction and dessert reception. We couldn't have done it without you. For a complete listing of donors or to view pictures from the evening, please visit <http://www.gasp-pgh.org/action/annmtg2004-ty.html> 🚲

Year in Review continued from page 1

more than five minutes, with some temperature-based and safety-related exceptions. To view the entire school bus idling regulation go to <http://www.gasp-pgh.org/action/schoolbusidling.pdf>. Citizens will play a key role in helping to enforce this and other diesel idling regulations that come out in 2005, and GASP will be conducting education to help make citizens aware of the new laws.

2. Pittsburghers learned about the latest hybrid electric vehicles at **Drive Cleaner, Drive Greener 2004**. In May 2004, GASP organized an educational event showcasing the latest hybrid electric vehicles. Attendees had the opportunity to test-drive the Toyota Prius and Honda Civic Hybrid, to meet hybrid vehicle owners whose cars were on display, and to take home educational fact sheets, all while enjoying musical entertainment provided by Brad Yoder and snacks and beverages provided by GASP volunteers. It was a successful event that we plan on holding again in 2005—stay tuned! If you'd like to help with the planning of this event or if you're a hybrid vehicle owner who wants to display your car, contact GASP at (412) 325-7382 or mjackson@gasp-pgh.org.
3. **GASP 35th Anniversary Celebration** honored GASP founder, Michelle Madoff, and educated attendees



GASP's founder, Michelle Madoff, was honored at the 35th Anniversary Celebration.



This Toyota Prius was available for test drives during Drive Cleaner, Drive Greener 2004

about hydrogen as a future fuel source. Both new and old members alike joined the GASP board and staff to commemorate past accomplishments and gaze into the future. To read a review of the event, see page 5.

4. **Settlement Agreement with Reliant:** In February, GASP reached a settlement with Reliant and its subsidiary, Orion Power MidWest L.P. (OPMW), operator of the Cheswick coal-fired power plant, with expectations that the precipitator at the power plant would soon be operating more efficiently. An advisory committee was formed to monitor the plant's compliance with a detailed schedule of repairs and improvements, as well as to meet with the company periodically. More information will be coming as we approach the anniversary of that settlement agreement.
5. **GASP presented our first William W. Mullins Environmental Advocacy Award:** At this past spring's GASPer Air Congress, GASP presented its first ever Mullins Award. The award was funded by GASP's William W. Mullins Fund, an account established by donations from the family, friends and colleagues of the late Bill Mullins, a longtime GASP board member. The recipient of this year's award was Melissa Meighan, a senior at East Allegheny High School. For more information about Melissa and the award, read the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette article at <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/04259/379081.stm>.
6. **Successful Continuing Programs:** GASP is pleased to be able to continue operating some very important programs including our **Citizen Smokereaders**, Title V, and GASPer Air Monitor Programs. In addition to a core group of dedicated citizen smokereaders, who have been reading smoke opacity for years, we gained several new smokereaders this year. Our smokereaders are trained and report apparent exceedances to GASP, who in turn

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reports them to the violating company and the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD).

The **Title V Program** has been more active this year as new Title V permits come out from the ACHD for public comment. In addition to making comments of our own, GASP also hires consultants to make comments and encourages citizens to learn about the permits and companies applying for the permits and to make remarks of their own. If you are interested in learning more about either of the above programs, please contact GASP at (412) 325-7382.

The 2003/04 school year marked GASP's 8th consecutive year of operating the **GASPer Air Monitor Program**. This successful program reached hundreds more students this year, and new teachers and school districts became involved as well. We held our annual GASPer Air Congress in the spring. The Air Congress is an opportunity for participating schools to send a team of students to present their most interesting air quality experiment. For the last several years, GASP has held the Air Congress at Carnegie Mellon University, with participation from CMU professors and tours of CMU facilities.

7. In a 2001 legal action, **GASP and the Sierra Club filed suit** against EPA's action to redesignate the Pittsburgh-Beaver Valley ozone nonattainment area to attainment. In 2003, the U.S. Department of Justice signed an agreement with the litigants which provided for a stronger 1-hour Ozone Maintenance Plan. In 2004, one of the strengthening measures that aimed to reduce emissions from paints and coatings was approved by EPA into the PA State Implementation Program, despite some resistance to this new rule by industry. Having an obligation to comply with this settlement agreement applied additional impetus for EPA to sign off on the new PA regulation. See Post-Gazette article, "EPA to review Pa. plan to cut paint emissions" from 11/14/2004 on the GASP website (<http://www.gasp-pgh.org>) under "GASP in the News."

What does 2005 hold in store for GASP?

As we move ahead into 2005 we will continue with many of the endeavors described above, as well as expand into some new areas. GASP will place a strong emphasis on continuing to clean up diesel emissions by pushing for diesel anti-idling regulations, retrofits of heavy-duty diesel vehicles, and educating the public about diesel sources and how they affect health. GASP will also pay close attention to developing strategies to combat our region's particulate pollution problems.

Thank you to all of our members for your participation and support over the past year. With your continued help we can carry on our work towards a healthy, cleaner southwestern Pennsylvania. Join us in whatever way you can—volunteering, giving financial support, writing articles, attending meetings, or sharing your views with us. *GASP is its members!* 🚲

health problems, even when they live miles from a facility. Armstrong, Greene, Indiana, and Lawrence counties had very small non-attainment areas designated primarily around polluting stationary sources in their respective counties, rather than designating the entire county. Has EPA addressed the region's air quality as a whole or is it only fixing part of the problem?

The Pittsburgh-Beaver Valley non-attainment area, which includes Allegheny County minus the Liberty/Clairton area, Beaver, Butler, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties, and parts of Armstrong County (Washington Twp., Plumcreek Twp., and Elderton Borough), Greene County (Monongahela Twp.), and Lawrence County (Taylor Twp. south of New Castle) will have three years to develop a State Implementation Plan (SIP), and then until 2010 to meet the standards. The Liberty/Clairton area will have the same. The SIP must include enforceable measures for reducing fine particle pollution in the atmosphere. The plan must also provide steps for the area to attain the PM 2.5 standards as quickly as possible, and the area must show how it will make reasonable progress toward attaining the standards. The Allegheny County Health Department will be focusing their efforts on the Liberty/Clairton area, and GASP has been reassured by them that meeting attainment on time for this area will be a priority.

We have expressed some of our concerns about the separate designations; we hope they are unfounded. In any case, we see the non-attainment designations in our region as an opportunity to clean up our air. This is an opportunity for health, environmental, labor and civic organizations to strategize together about improving the air that all southwestern Pennsylvania citizens breathe. Some strides have already been made. Take, for instance, the diesel anti-idling regulations that are coming to fruition; these regulations will certainly help to reduce the PM 2.5 that comes from diesel exhaust. As the process of developing the SIP moves forward, GASP will keep you informed of progress made. 🚲

Spotlight on a Board Member

Karen Grzywinski initially became involved with GASP out of frustration with the practices of industries on Neville Island. She and her family lived in Ben Avon—right across the Ohio River from Neville Island—for over 18 years. Her first contacts with GASP were in the form of complaints against one of the facilities and the inaction of the Allegheny County Health Department.

She notes, "I was immediately impressed with Sue Seppi [GASP's then Executive Director] and the information that she provided me. She was always so well informed and professional. It was obvious that she was very sincere in her work." Karen was invited to try smokereading when GASP began the program. Once trained, she concentrated her readings in the Neville Island area.

Since joining the GASP board almost a year and a half ago, Karen has volunteered to be on the Reliant Advisory Committee (the committee overseeing the settlement agreement between GASP and the company operating the Cheswick Power Plant).

Karen received a BA in Fine Arts from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, then continued her education at the University of Pittsburgh, where she got a BS, then a Masters, in Mechanical Engineering.

Karen's husband, Frank, is an attorney. They have one child, Matthew, "who just crossed that frightening threshold—he became a teenager." Karen claims that one of the best—and unexpected—parts of being a parent has been exploring Matt's interests with him. "I have learned so much about things like dinosaurs, trains, baseball, fishing, and more. I now find so many of these fascinating but I would have never learned about them without him. (Of course there have been other things like Star Wars and worms which I could have done without)."

Karen was an active volunteer long before she got involved with GASP. "Through the years I have done it all—homeroom mother, elementary school tutor, organized assemblies and author's programs, worked at book fairs, helped with scouts, etc." This past year, Matthew became a member of his school's marching band, and she moved on to helping with band events, fundraising and traveling. She says, "it has been a great experience for all of us."

Karen's hobbies include reading, antiquing and especially quilting. As a native Pittsburgher, Karen has "always been happy to live in the Pittsburgh area, and I feel fortunate that I was able to make my home here. I enjoy being one of the 'home bases' for my family and friends who live out of town." 🚲



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<p>Group Against Smog & Pollution Idling Violation Notice</p>	
<p>Ticket Number: 1-2-3-4 <i>please don't idle anymore.</i></p>	<p><i>Diesel has been linked to health problems such as lung damage and can also exacerbate asthma and existing allergies, especially in children.</i></p>
<p>Issue Date/Time:</p>	
<p>Location:</p>	
<p>Vehicle Information: <i>License State:</i> PA <i>Make of Vehicle:</i> School Bus <i>Vehicle Color:</i> Bright Yellow and Black</p>	
<p>Idling Violation: Pittsburgh Ordinance § 2105.91 Allegheny County Article XXI Air Pollution Control Act \$500.00 Maximum Fine</p>	<p><i>This is not an actual ticket</i> but a friendly reminder from GASP that, as of October 12, 2004, school buses in Allegheny County may not idle longer than 5 minutes, except when specific exemptions apply.*</p> <p>Violation of this ordinance may result in a \$500 fine.</p> <p>*To view the full ordinance with exemptions, go to http://www.gasp-pgh.org/action/schoolbusidling.pdf</p>
<p>You've been cited by: Group Against Smog & Pollution</p>	



Attention Residents!

You are the first line of defense for enforcing the School Bus Idling Regulation.* Enforceable by the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) and local municipalities, this regulation relies on parents, school neighbors, and anyone else who witnesses school buses idling to report the violations to the ACHD. As a secondary measure, GASP has created the ticket above for citizens to hand to school bus drivers as a friendly reminder that extended idling is not permitted and their actions are being reported. **When you see a school bus idling illegally, please note the school district and location of the bus, call the ACHD at 412-687-2243 and hand a copy of the ticket above to the school bus driver.** GASP thanks you for your vigilance to help keep the air cleaner for school students and all residents.

* According to the regulation, it is illegal for school buses to idle for more than 5 minutes when the temperature is between 40 and 75 degrees, with some exceptions. When the temperature is less than 40 degrees, the bus may idle for no more than 20 minutes in any 60-minute period. When the temperature is above 75 degrees, the bus may idle for no more than 20 minutes in any 60-minute period if the bus is equipped with air conditioning. For more details on these and other exemptions to the School Bus Idling Regulation, please see <http://www.gasp-pgh.org/action/schoolbusidling.pdf>

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