

MANITOBA ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK NEWS

office
copy



the manitoba environmental
NETWORK

APRIL/MAY 1988

CANDIDATES DEBATE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

On Wednesday, April 20 the Manitoba Environmental Network sponsored a candidate's debate on environmental issues. Each of the three major parties in the recent provincial election were represented. Mr. Abe Kovnats, then MLA for Niakwa and environment critic attended on behalf of the Progressive Conservatives. The New Democratic Party representative was Mr. Brian Pannell, candidate in Fort Garry and the Liberal Party participant was Mr. Terry Duguid, currently Executive Director of the party in Manitoba. Dr. Allen Mills of the Political Science Department at the University of Winnipeg served as moderator.

The event was well attended and provided an opportunity for the environmental community to learn where the parties stand on some of the major environmental issues facing Manitobans.

The Concerned Citizens of Manitoba provided some unexpected street theatre as they served each of the participants a glass of untreated Red River water immediately after the introductions. The gesture was symbolic of concerns about inadequately treated effluent placed

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CONCERNED CITIZENS OFFER CANDIDATES A SAMPLING OF RED RIVER WATER



photo by Joel Matthews

WE'VE MOVED

But not far. The Network has found a place to call its own - on the second floor of the same building. We are now located in room 202, 128 James Avenue.

We have a lot more space to work in and with. We hope to be able to develop a resource library and work space for users. If you have any ideas for furnishing the new office, we'd like to hear from you.

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CANDIDATES DEBATE

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into the river by the city of Winnipeg and of the need for a comprehensive water policy for the province of Manitoba.

The participants responded to questions on a number of issues. Each of the three representatives stated emphatically that their parties would support a thorough environmental review of the possible environmental impacts of a free trade agreement between Canada and the United States. On the question of nuclear waste disposal in Manitoba, the participants were united in their opposition to the storage of nuclear wastes in the province.

Terry Duguid suggested that the province's efforts in the area of recycling of household wastes have thus far been "woefully inadequate." He further stated that a major policy statement on environment would be forthcoming from Mrs. Carstairs.

After closing statements from each of the participants, the audience was given an opportunity to pose questions directly to the candidates. A range of interesting questions from water policy to the National Task Force on Environment and Economy to intervenor funding were put to the participants.

CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT - Office Established

A CEPA office has recently been created within Environment Canada to act as the focal communications point on CEPA and to facilitate the implementation of the legislation. They will produce a CEPA newsletter on a regular basis. If your group is interested in receiving the newsletter or requires any information regarding CEPA,

contact Janet Davies, Director, CEPA office, Environment Canada, 351 St. Joseph Boulevard, Hull, Quebec, K1A 1C7 (819) 997-2902.

NEW STEERING COMMITTEE

At the Network's Spring meeting on April 16, the new steering committee was selected. The new members and the organizations they represent are:

ARNOLD BAKER - WESTMAN WILDERNESS CLUB

JACK DUBOIS - WILDLIFE SOCIETY, MANITOBA CHAPTER

RANDY EROS - SOLAR ENERGY SOCIETY OF CANADA INC., MANITOBA CHAPTER

BILL GODDARD - CROSSROADS RESOURCE GROUP

LETTY LAST - RECYCLING COUNCIL OF MANITOBA

DENNIS MULDREW - MANITOBA NATURALISTS SOCIETY

BRIAN PANNELL - MANITOBA ENVIRONMENTALISTS INC.

ANNE WIESER - CONCERNED CITIZENS OF MANITOBA

A SPECIAL REPORT TO SAVE THIS PLANET

The April 23 edition of the Globe and Mail contained a special section on a range of environmental issues, many of which make the integration of environment and development. Copies are available, free of charge, from the Network office.

The Manitoba Environmental Network exists to facilitate communication among environmentalists, especially in Manitoba, and between environmentalists and government decision-makers. Membership is open to any non-government, non-profit group that has as one of its objectives the enhancing or furthering of environmental quality, protecting the environment or carrying out environmental education.

PROVINCIAL SECRETARIAT.....JOHN BARKER
EXECUTIVE

PROVINCIAL COORDINATOR.....JACK DUBOIS
VICE-PRESIDENT(ALTERNATE).....BRIAN PANNELL

SECRETARY-TREASURER.....vacant

DATES TO REMEMBER

- April 25 - May 9 Operation Clean-Up Campaign 1988. For more information call the Operation Clean-Up Hotline - 694-4411.
- May 6-9 Canadian Environmental Network Annual Meeting in Ottawa. For further information contact the CEN at (613) 563-2078 or the MEN.
- May 14 Manitoba Environmental Council annual general meeting. 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Building 2, 139 Tuxedo Avenue. For further information contact Keri Barringer at 945-7031.
- May 17 Concerned Citizens of Manitoba meeting. 7:00 p.m. For further information contact Anne Wieser at 452-2352.
- May 27- May 28 Manitoba Greens Conference '88. Augustine United Church, 444 River Avenue. For further information contact the Urban Resource Centre Inc., P.O. Box 2696, Winnipeg, R3C 4B3.
- May 28 Concerned Citizens of Manitoba garage sale (and non-irradiated bake sale!). 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. at 384 Niagara Street. If you wish to donate items please contact Joel Matthews at 475-0671.
- May 29 Helen Caldicott's recent talk in Winnipeg will be broadcast on channel 11 at 7:00 p.m.
- May 30- June 5 Environment Week 1988.
- June 2-3 Household Hazardous Waste Days. June 2-3, 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and June 4, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the parking lot, Fort Osborne Complex, 139 Tuxedo Avenue.
- June 2-5 Marathon Canoe Race. See enclosure for further information.
- June 4 Our Common Future - A Public Forum on Environment and Development. For further information see page 5 this newsletter or call the project co-ordinator, Barb Eros at 786-3440 or 774-8489.
- June 16-21 International Congress on Uranium Mining. Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. For further information write: International Uranium Congress, Programme Committee, 2138 McIntyre St., Regina, Sask., S4P 2R7.
- June 27-30 The Changing Atmosphere: Implications for Global Security. Toronto. An international conference organized by Environment Canada. For further information contact the CEN (613) 563-2078.
- Aug. 23- Aug 24 Focus on water: Key to Life Conference. Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. Keynote Speaker, Mr. Michael Keating. For more information contact Janet Galger, Secretary, 5938 Dewdney Avenue, Regina, Saskatchewan, S4T 1C8. 545-3768 (res) 545-5141 (bus).
- Oct. 25-27 10TH Canadian Waste Management Conference. Winnipeg. For further information contact Dave Thompson at Department of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health, 945-7083.
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At the Network's Spring Meeting on April 16, 1988, the following accounting was presented to the membership of the Manitoba Environmental Network.

MANITOBA ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK SIX MONTH FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Credit Union balances as at September 30, 1987

Chequing account	388.20
Daily savings account	2,372.26
Term deposit	4,000.00
Share	5.00
<u>Total</u>	<u>6,765.46</u>

Disbursements - October 1, 1987 - March 31, 1988 9,275.84

Income - October 1, 1987 - March 31, 1988

Core payments	6,514.84
Interest	204.42
Telephone reimbursement (CEN)	769.34
Telephone reimbursement (MNS)	34.76
<u>Total</u>	<u>8,523.36</u>

Credit Union balances as at March 31, 1988

Chequing account	308.91
Daily savings account	1,698.71
Term deposit	4,000.00
Share	5.00
<u>Total</u>	<u>6,012.62</u>

Disbursements - October 1, 1987 - March 31, 1988

Capital equipment (computer purchase)	1,706.05
Computer supplies	167.72
Credit Union fees	32.74
Fall meeting	137.61
Miscellaneous (Task Force luncheon)	20.75
Miscellaneous	10.05
Newsletter (photocopying/postage)	.
Office supplies	322.85
Photocopying	375.89
Postage	393.61
Recycling Council grant	350.00
Rent	400.00
Staff (salary)	4,274.36
Staff (benefits)	170.37
Staff (training - includes travel to and expenses related to attending training sessions)	225.00
Telephone	-
	688.84
<u>Total</u>	<u>9,275.84</u>

OUR COMMON FUTURE - A PUBLIC FORUM ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

After nearly three and a half years of conducting research and world-wide public hearings into the connections between environment and development, the World Commission on Environment and Development released its report in April of 1987. The Commission was set up as an independent body at the request of the United Nations General Assembly in late 1983. Charged with the task of formulating a "global agenda for change", the Commission set about to ascertain and understand the connections between environment and development at all levels, from local to global. The final report is not only a recounting of some of the most important connections, but provides strategies for achieving an ecologically sound future for the planet through "sustainable development."

The theme of Environment Week '88 (May 29 - June 5) is "OUR COMMON FUTURE." Based on the title of the report released by the World Commission, the theme reflects the Commission's advice that we have a shared interest in the future of the planet.

On Saturday, June 4th, from 9:00am - 4:00pm, the Manitoba Environmental Network and CUSO (Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario) will be sponsoring OUR COMMON FUTURE - A PUBLIC FORUM ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT. The forum will take place at University College at the University of Manitoba. It is one of several Environment Week '88 projects taking place in Winnipeg.

The forum is being held in an effort to raise public awareness of the issues of environment and development and the World Commission's findings. It will be an opportunity to explore these issues from local, national and international perspectives and a

chance for interested people to begin the important process of networking.

The keynote speaker for the forum will be Lloyd Timberlake, a writer and editor with the International Institute for Environment and Development in London, England. Mr. Timberlake is the author of several publications on the subject of environment and development including "Africa in Crisis" and "Only one Earth" - the companion volume to the BBC/Earthscan television series of the same name.

The forum will also feature a panel presentation, including Mr. Ralph Torrie of Ottawa, a consultant in environment and development issues; Dr. Tim Ball, an associate professor of geography at the University of Winnipeg; Ms. Diane Beckett, a consultant in environmental policy and impact assessment with CIDA in Ottawa; and Ms. Toeti Kakiaillatu, an environmental journalist from Indonesia.

There will be a number of workshops that will deal in more detail with various environment and development issues. In addition to Mr. Timberlake and the other panel members, workshop participants will include Pat Mooney of the Rural Advancement Fund International, Jack Dubois of the Manitoba Environmental Network, and Kathy Mallet and Linda Keeper of the Inter-American Indigenous Support Group.

There will be a \$6.00 registration fee for the forum (lunch included). Child care will also be available at no charge, and travel subsidies may be available to those travelling from outside of Winnipeg.

For further information or registration contact the project co-ordinator, Barbara Eros, c/o CUSO, 60 Maryland St., Winnipeg, R3G 1K7 - phone (204) 786-3440 or 774-8489.

OPINION - A PLEA FOR "SUSTAINABLE ACTION"

Two recent Network events have shed some important light on the state of environmental consciousness in this province. The first was the Network Spring meeting, the second was the pre-election candidates debate on environment.

At the Spring meeting I was struck by the way in which three seemingly disparate topics addressed by the guest speakers all seemed to be rooted in one pervasive underlying problem. That problem is a prevailing attitude in our society that says we need more of everything. It says we "need" to develop more hydro-electric generating capacity (rather than take a serious look at what we are actually using electricity for); it says that we necessarily will continue to generate masses of garbage that then require mega-facilities for treatment (rather than seriously setting about reducing our waste); and ultimately it says that it's OK for a handful of powerful multinational corporations to control the genetic stock for the world's seed resources (rather than providing realistic support and protection to the smaller scale farmers who have managed to feed the world for the past 10,000 years or more.

I'd argue that all these assumptions are short-sighted and highly biased toward the (near term) prosperity of the industrialized world, and moreover, that they basically sidestep any consideration of what our real "needs" are.

Clearly if we don't do some serious and public questioning of them, we'll just continue to be "part of the problem."

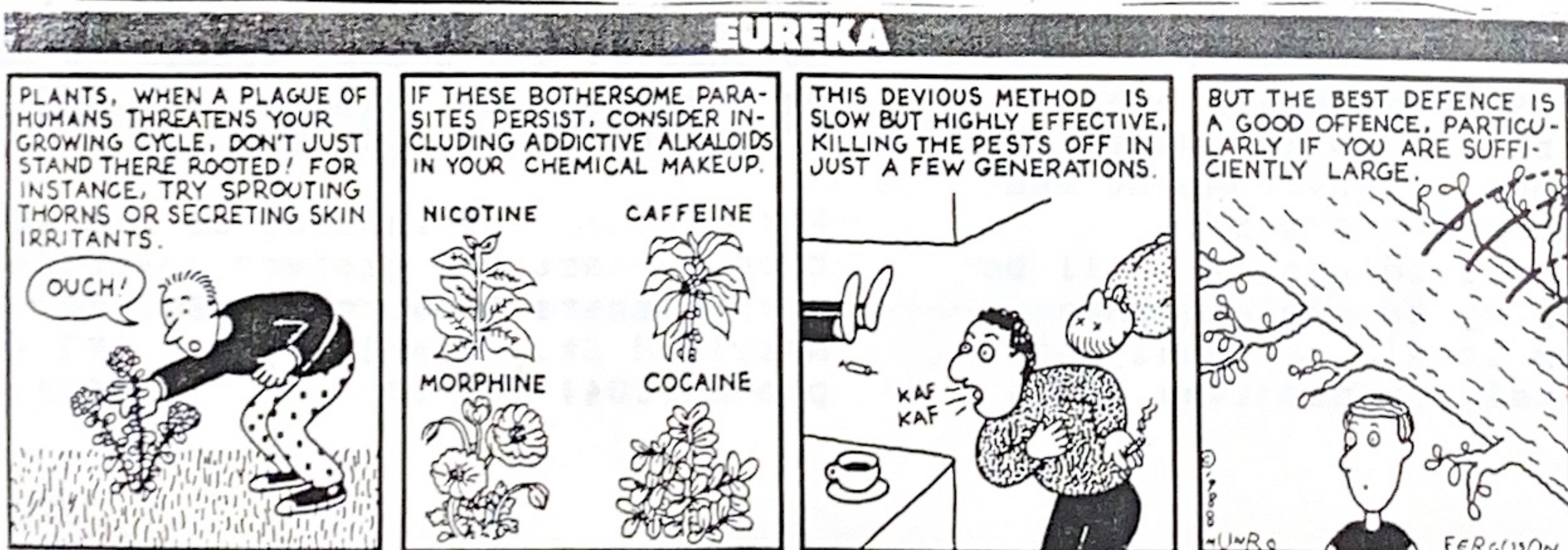
So what are we going to do about it?

This brings up the other event I mentioned - the political debate. In their responses to the very excellent and pertinent questions, the party reps showed quite clearly (although to varying degrees) that Manitoba's politicians aren't going to stick out their necks too far to significantly change our interactions with the natural environment. There has been some movement, to be sure, but it has been tentative, and the conserver ethic is still considered "idealistic."

It seems to me that we in the Network have a big job to do in raising public awareness. It simply isn't enough just to talk about environmental problems. We need to get together on some of the pressing issues and to really push for some solid and tangible action. Not enough public support? I suspect that if the "Man from Glad" can convince Canadians that we all need plastic wrap, it should be an easier task to sell Manitobans on the need for environmental protection, and perhaps in the process, to take a few steps toward a more conserving society as well.

With a new government just elected, there's no better time to act than now.

by Anne Wieser



THE GROUNDWATER POLLUTION PRIMER - PART THREE

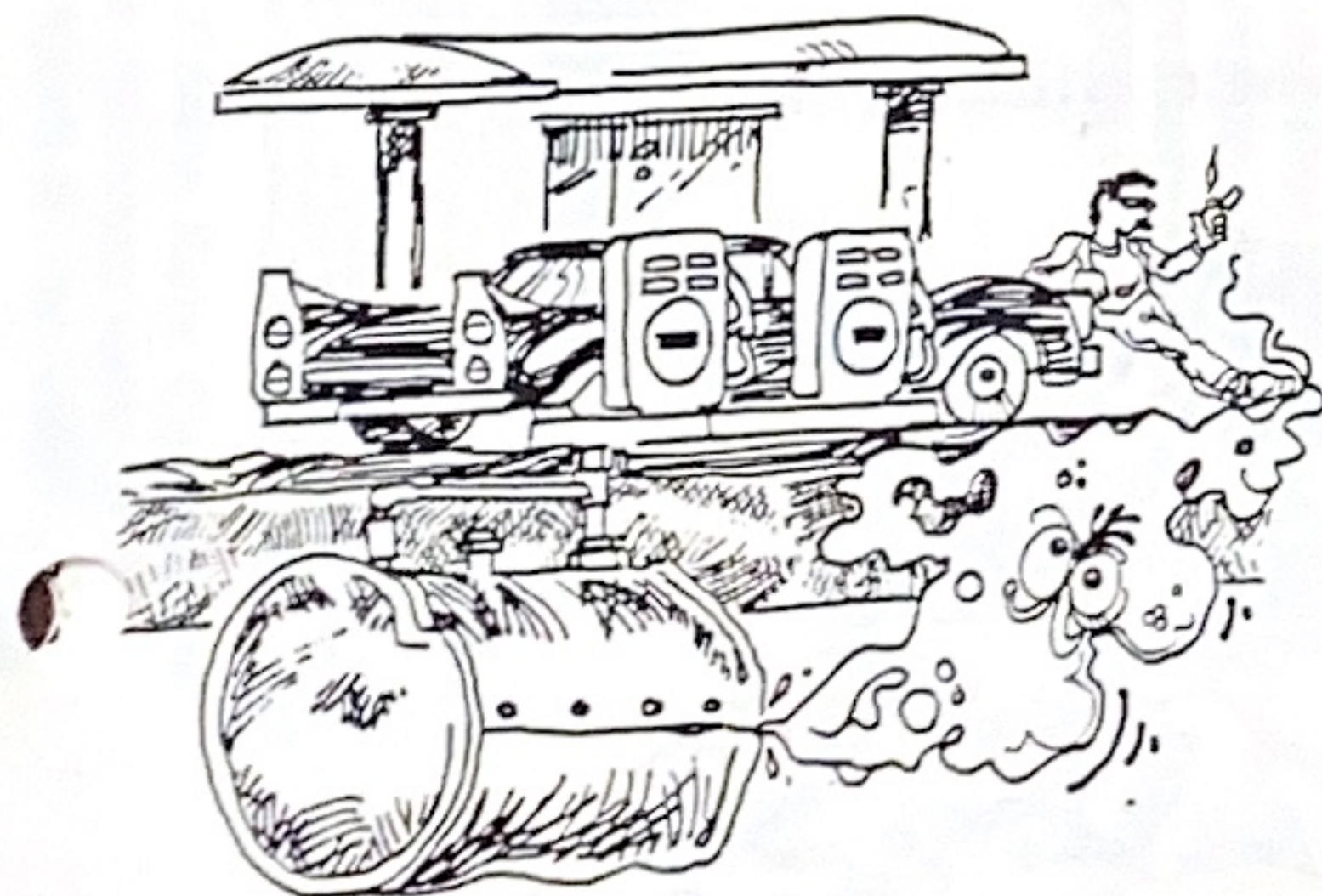
THE GROUNDWATER POLLUTERS

UNDERGROUND GASOLINE STORAGE TANKS

Leaking underground storage tanks present the most pervasive threat to groundwater quality. Leaking tanks have already contaminated over 1,000 wells in the Maritimes, forcing some people to abandon their tap water and haul drinking water from other sources. In New Brunswick alone, 7.2 million litres of gasoline leaked into the ground between 1965 and 1980. In theory a single litre of gasoline can render a million litres of water undrinkable.

There may be as many as 18,000 underground storage tanks spread across the Maritimes. They are found buried beneath gas stations, municipal and provincial garages, car dealerships, trucking firms, taxi companies, farms and marinas. The Maritime landscape is also dotted with thousands of abandoned tanks (their exact number is unknown) which may still contain gasoline.

The problem is that while gas pumps have entered the age of high tech, most storage tanks aren't much different from the one's used to fuel Model T's. Rust or improper installation is causing 20 to 40 percent of these steel tanks to leak. Thousands of them may be leaking at this moment in the Maritimes.



Municipal wells in Hartland, N.B. and Summerside, P.E.I. have been contaminated with gasoline. There are 14 communities in the Maritimes where six, and as many as 31 private wells are known to have been poisoned by petroleum. Businesses, schools, restaurants, day care centres, churches, medical clinics, senior citizen's homes, as well as private homes have been affected.

Gasoline leaks have contaminated 31 wells in Kensington, P.E.I., six wells in Milton, Nova Scotia, 22 wells in Hillsborough, New Brunswick. The list goes on and on. An unsafe water supply is not the only hazard of petroleum-contaminated groundwater either. Contaminants can also enter buildings through basements or sewer lines in vapour form, polluting the indoor air and posing a risk of explosion.

Until all of the storage tanks currently in use are replaced with properly installed tanks that are protected against rust, many more wells will be poisoned by gasoline over the next 10 or 20 years.

HEATING OIL TANKS

While heating oil seeps more slowly through the ground than gasoline, both inevitably end up in the groundwater. However, because it moves so slowly, many fewer wells are contaminated by heating oil than gasoline.

It has been estimated that there are 10,000 storage tanks containing heating oil for commercial buildings, schools, churches, hospitals, and apartment buildings in the Maritimes. There are a further 300,000 home heating oil tanks which may be responsible for at least a third of the reported incidences of petroleum-contaminated wells.

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In most cases of heating oil contamination, the source is an outdoor tank that leaks because of improper or loose fittings, damage to the tank by falling ice, holes caused by rust, or spillage when being filled. The buried piping that connects the tank to the furnace is also a common source of leakage.

LANDFILLS and DUMPS

What's the surest way to pollute groundwater? Bury the potential groundwater contaminants. This is exactly what happens to the wastes produced by households, small businesses, and industry. Hundreds of thousands of tonnes of solid and liquid wastes are annually buried in landfills that amount to little more than holes in the ground.

There are 752 operating dumps in the Maritimes, and an additional 782 closed or abandoned dumps have been identified. There are undoubtedly many more still to be discovered.

Many of these sites contain hazardous wastes. The growing emphasis on monitoring groundwater quality in the vicinity of these dumps bears out the adage that, by definition, dumps leak.

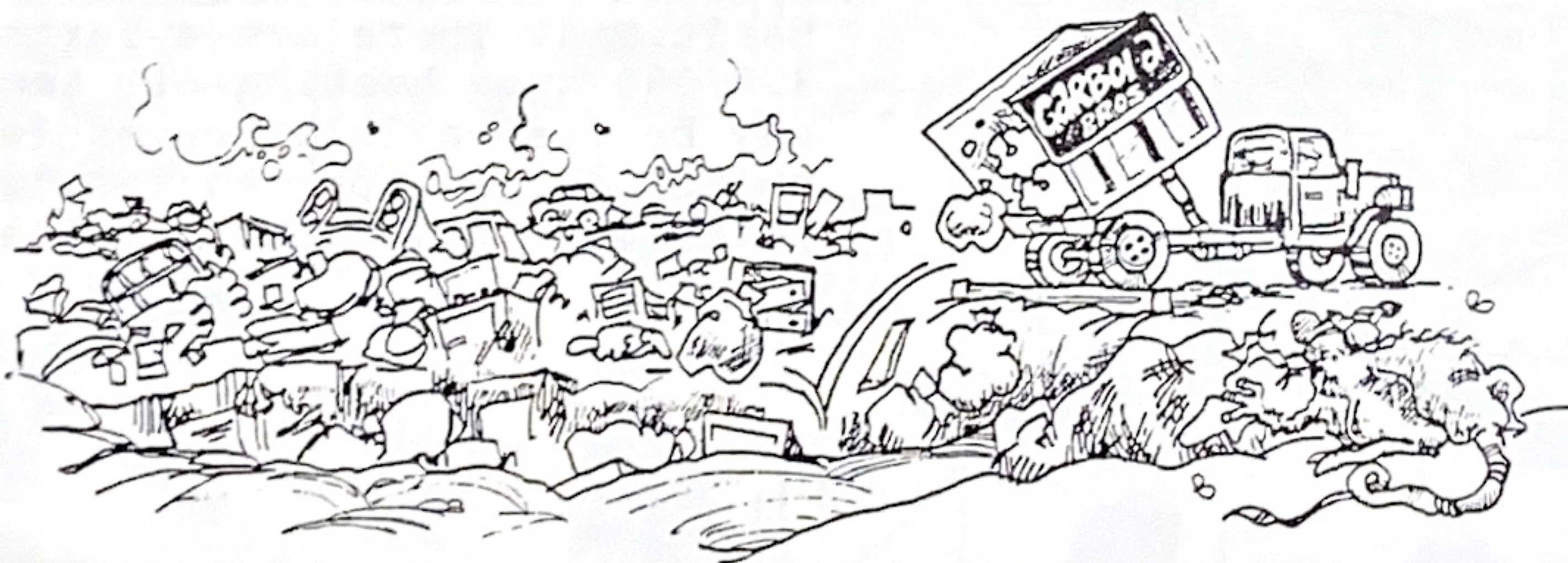
The town dump for Summerside, P.E.I. has contaminated an area of up to 120 hectares with leachate from the municipal garbage that had been buried there up until 1960. A municipal well in Summerside was discovered to have been polluted by the dump in the late 1970's.

The MacDonald Road landfill which serviced Amherst, Nova Scotia until 1978 received thousands of litres of trichloroethylene (TCE), a toxic degreaser, and tens of thousands of litres of PCB's in drums and in contaminated soil and sand. In 1978, 117 drums were excavated, but only 2,000 litres of PCB's were recovered. Monitoring has found that PCB's are leaching off the site. The aquifer beneath the dump is likely connected to the aquifer which supplies drinking water to Amherst, but fortunately the groundwater flow is away from the direction of the town wells.

The Howes Lake dump which serviced Saint John, New Brunswick until 1979 was an open sewer for thousands of tonnes of hazardous wastes: metal plating companies dumped cyanide, NB Power scrapped electrical components containing PCB's, pulp and paper companies and plastics manufacturers dumped truckloads of waste solvents and cleaning fluids. The dump took all comers. Both the underlying groundwater and nearby streams are extensively contaminated.

The Nine Mile River dump between Halifax and Truro has contaminated the aquifer which supplies water for the Shubenacadie Indian Reserve's sand and gravel washwater plant. A dump in Kentville, Nova Scotia polluted several nearby wells forcing the county to buy the homes affected. Fredericton's dump contaminated two private wells with the dry cleaning solvent perchloroethylene. The list goes on and on, and will grow and grow...

Source: The Groundwater Pollution Primer. Conservation Council.



1988 Environment Week Marathon Canoe Race

200-62 Hargrave Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3C 1N1

Thursday, June 2, to Sunday,
June 5, 1988 (Rain or Shine)

ENTRY DEADLINE-MAY 16, 1988.

PLEASE PRINT

Name:.....

Address:.....

City:.....

Prov./State:.....

Country:.....

Postal/Zip Code:.....

Telephone:(.....)

PARTNER IF TWO PERSON CREW:

COMPANY IF RELAY CREW:.....

CATEGORY:

MENS Racing..... Stock..... Open.....
MIXED Racing..... Stock..... Open.....
WOMEN'S Racing..... Stock..... Open.....
ONE PERSON Racing..... Stock..... Open.....

ENTRY FEE:

\$40.00 per team
\$20.00 per entry & Non-
racing / Relay team. (Canadian funds)

Entry fee includes breakfast and dinner
each day, an overnight camping spot,
and a detailed participant package,
including a race map and a T-shirt.

ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST SIGN

In consideration of accepting this entry I, the
undersigned, hereby waive and release all rights and
claims for myself and my heirs against the Environ-
ment Week Marathon Canoe Race Committee and
any other sponsors and organizers and their repre-
sentatives, successors and assigns, for injury and/or
illness which may directly or indirectly result from my
participation. I am in proper physical condition to
participate in this event. I also give permission for the
free use of my name and/or picture in any broadcast,
telecast or other account of this event.

SIGNATURE:.....

FUNDRAISER CANOE RELAY RACE

This event will run in conjunction
with the Marathon Canoe Race and
is specifically designed to raise
funds in support of non-profit Envir-
onment Organizations who are actively
providing educational programming,
research, and resource servicing in
the Province of Manitoba.

The basis of the Relay Canoe Race is
to encourage participation by busin-
esses, corporations, community
organizations, universities, schools
and individuals who will enter as
teams to raise funds for their design-
ated Environmental charity. Funds
will be raised through private sponsor-
ship per kilometre paddled during the
four-day event. Relay team registration
fees will be donated to each sponsored
charity.

Trophies will be awarded during the
Closing Ceremony to the First Place
finishers in each canoe category of
the Fundraiser Canoe Relay Race.
And, a special trophy will also be
awarded at that time to the top
fundraising team.

Registered canoeists in the Fundraiser
Canoe Relay Race are eligible for
participation prizes to be drawn at
the end of each day of the race.

Canoeists in this event are expected to
register in the same manner as those
in the Marathon Event, and to follow
all the stated rules and regulations.

Sponsored by:



PRIZE MONEY AND AWARDS

RACING CATEGORY:		STOCK CATEGORY:	
1st Place...	\$800.00	1st Place...	\$400.00
2nd Place...	\$500.00	2nd Place...	\$200.00
3rd Place...	\$400.00	3rd Place...	\$100.00
4th Place...	\$100.00	4th Place...	\$80.00
5th Place...	\$80.00	5th Place...	\$60.00
6th Place...	\$60.00	6th Place...	\$60.00
7th Place...	\$40.00	7th Place...	\$40.00
8th Place...	\$40.00	8th Place...	\$40.00

*As well as prize money, 1st place in
each category will receive a trophy
and be eligible for daily draw prizes.

OPEN/NON-RACING/RELAY
Although no prize money will be
offered, all participants in this
category are eligible for daily
draw prizes and the first and
second place finishers will receive
a trophy.

CANOE AND EQUIPMENT

CLASSIFICATIONS

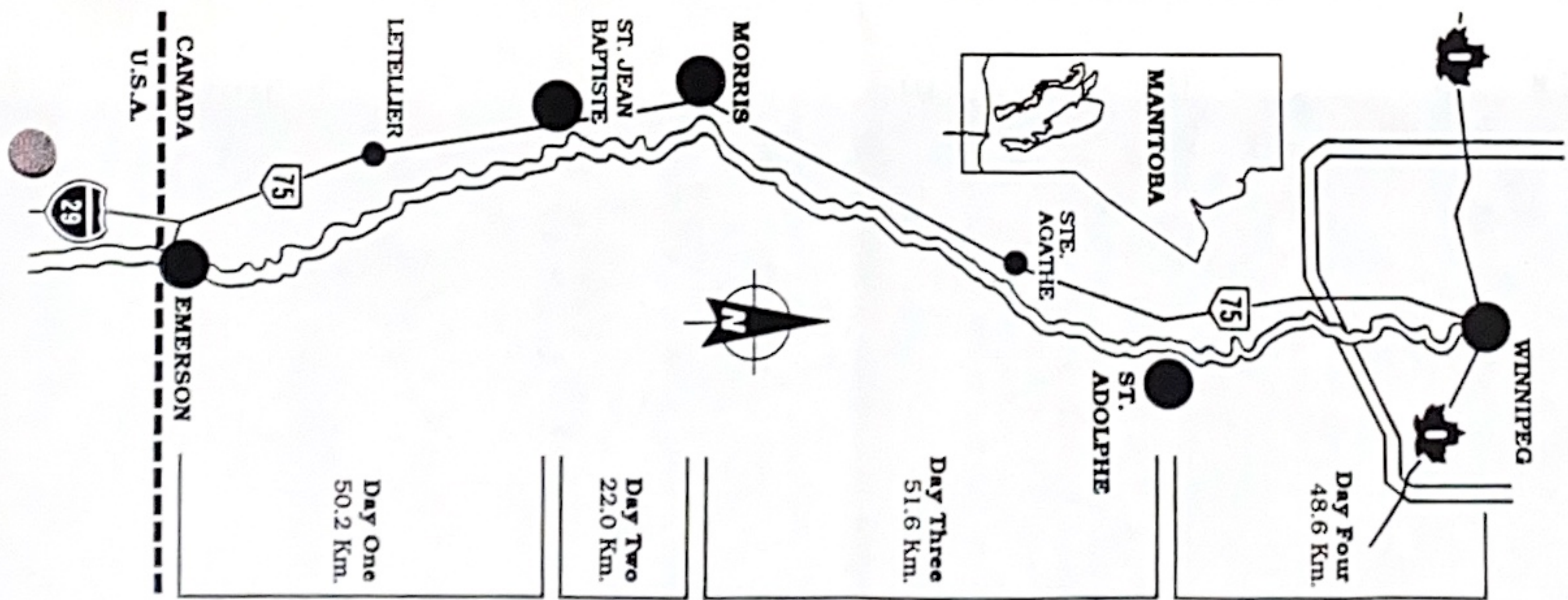
RACING BOATS: Maximum length
18'6 with a width minimum of 27"
at the 3" water-line and minimum
depth of 12".

STOCK BOATS: Maximum length 18'
with a width minimum of 31" at the
3" water-line.

NON-RACING BOATS: Maximum length
17'. This class includes all canoes not
entered in the racing and stock
categories. If there are enough
entries of a certain type of canoe,
i.e. aluminum, a separate category
will be formed.

- Single blade paddles only
- All canoes must carry a personal
floatation device for each participant.
- All canoes must float when submerged.

Kayaks, Olympic and I.C.F. class boats
are welcome to participate and are
eligible for the daily draw prizes, but
can NOT compete for prize money
or trophies.



The First Annual Environment Week Marathon Canoe Race, a 172.4 kilometre (107.3 mile) race with 3 portages, will be held over four days on the Red River. Starting at Emerson, Manitoba (on the Canadian / U.S.A. border) on Thursday, June 2, 1988, the race will have stop - overs Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings at the towns of St. Jean Baptiste, Morris and St. Adolphe. The closing ceremonies will be held Sunday evening, June 5th, in Winnipeg at historic Fort Gibraltar.

The Marathon Canoe Race is one of many events being held during National Environment Week and is being planned to highlight environmental appreciation of and concern for the waterways of Manitoba.

Community celebrations, from pancake breakfasts to river bank clean-ups, will be held in conjunction with the canoe race. It is hoped that these festivities will raise individual and community awareness of the ecological importance and historical significance of the Red River and will serve as a reminder of the importance of preserving our waterways for OUR COMMON FUTURE.



The Marathon Canoe Race Committee has chosen the common loon to symbolize the spirit of the 1988 r

The handsome, aquatic common loon, also called the great northern diver, is found throughout northern North America. The loons' habit of traveling singly or in pairs resembles the life of the canoeist on the water. The beautifully haunting song of the loon reminds us of the wonders of nature and of our fragile relationship to the environment.

The trophies awarded to the race winners will be beautiful bronze castings of a loon created by the noted Canadian wildlife artist, Peter Sawatzky. As well, part of the cash prizes will be in Canada's new dollar coin - affectionately called the loonie because of the representation of a loon on its face.

So come on all you loonies, grab your canoes, pack your paddles and join us for the First Annual National Environment Week Marathon Canoe Race!

NOTE: 1989 is the 100th birthday of the State of North Dakota. To help celebrate the centennial, a marathon canoe race is being planned for the Spring of 1989 (June 10 or 11 starting date). The race will follow the historic Red River from Fargo to the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers at Winnipeg, Canada, a distance of some 300 miles. This marathon race will be the race of 1989! For details and dates of the race, please send your name and mailing address to:

Marathon Canoe Race
200-62 Hargrave Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3C 1N1

Ph: (204) 942-8580

Marathon
Canoe
Race
Environment
Week '88

Manitoba
June 2-5



200-62 Hargrave Street Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada R3C 1N1

A UNIFIED FRONT AGAINST PESTICIDES
by Aedes vexans

In the past few years action by environmentalist and advocacy groups has become badly disorganized and often ineffective. Nowhere is this more true than in the area of pesticide pollution.

The conditions for action against pesticide abuse have never been better. The largest industrial accident in the world occurred in a pesticide plant in Bhopal, India, resulting in 2,500 human deaths. The United Nations has revealed that pesticides cause 10,000 human deaths annually (Our Common Future, p. 125) and advises against their use. In Canada, the insecticide Temik polluted more than 20% of P.E.I. wells to the point where the water was declared unfit for human consumption. Yet the City of Winnipeg has already approved insecticide expenditures of greater than \$250,000 for 1988 alone. There has been virtually no public opposition to these expenditures.

Alternative technologies to the use of toxic materials are being developed globally. In Winnipeg, a local businessman submitted proposals to the Parks, Protection, and Culture Committee that recommended replacing the use of various insecticides with biotechnologies that were environmentally sustainable. The debate was so hot that the city entomologist, Roy Ellis, resigned. Yet more conservative elements at City Hall were able to crush these proposals for environmentally sustainable insect control, even though in many cases they were cheaper than chemicals. The Parks, Protection and Culture Committee did not receive even one letter of support from any environmentalist. There is no evidence that any environmentalist wrote even one supporting letter to any of the media. Why?

As a result of a 1986 conviction of

Industrial Bio Test labs for falsifying test results, the federal government reviewed its pesticide registration procedures. The program was found to be hopelessly outdated and revisions were made. In response, the previous, provincial government tightened up the pesticide application legislation. Several concerned groups made polite comment, but there was no massive public show of support for tough new legislation. Indeed, some would argue that the anti-spray people couldn't effectively oppose a door-to-door salesman, never mind governments, multinational petrochemical companies, and the inertia of the bureaucratic system.

The primary reason for this impotence is that the anti-spray movement is fragmented. Politicians know that anti-insecticide advocacy groups do not work together and therefore can not motivate large percentages of the population (even when the Fall 1987 Environmental Monitor, a quarterly survey of 1,500 Canadians, says that 90% of Canadians believe that human health is suffering from pollution and 87% are angry with the lack of action taken to protect the environment). Because they can not motivate large segments of the population, they do not represent a significant percentage of the vote and can safely be ignored by any politician who does not want to rock the boat.

There are several reasons for this lack of unity. Most of them are based upon vanity and an ugly blend of ignorance, arrogance, and elitism. Each group pretends that it has the only real answers. Should opinions differ, they are hesitant and suspicious of working with other groups. The situation is further aggravated by a very real difference in knowledge and resources among groups. The result is a duplication

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PESTICIDES

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of efforts with little or no effect.

The irony is overwhelming. The environmental movement contains some of the most brilliant and talented people in Canada. Environmentalists come from every walk of life, from housewives to research scientists, and from radicals to church officials. Certainly every level of government is represented among the ranks of the environmental movement. Nonetheless, they are divided.

Wouldn't it be interesting if the anti-spray movement could agree on an agenda, delegate tasks such as type of protest, and coordinate their efforts? Consider what it would look like; one group could apply radical tactics like picketing while another (in another part of the city) could hand out information and collect signatures

on a petition, while yet another group of professional people could present to government a logical discussion of the problem with alternative solutions. The professionals would have the votes to back up their position (represented by petition, media coverage, protesters in the streets, etc.) while the more radical elements would have the sophisticated voice they need for change. Each group would be independent with its own individual name, but the cause would be common and the power overwhelming.

To these ends I would like to invite all pesticide groups, related committees of environmental groups, and interested individuals to meet on Thursday, May 19 at 7:00 p.m. at the office of the Manitoba Environmental Network to discuss an agenda for unified action against unnecessary pesticide spraying. Enquiries may be made in care of the Manitoba Environmental Network.



the manitoba environmental

NETWORK