

Flooding blamed on poor management, destructive drainage projects National Farmers Union calls for Inquiry

By Toby Maloney

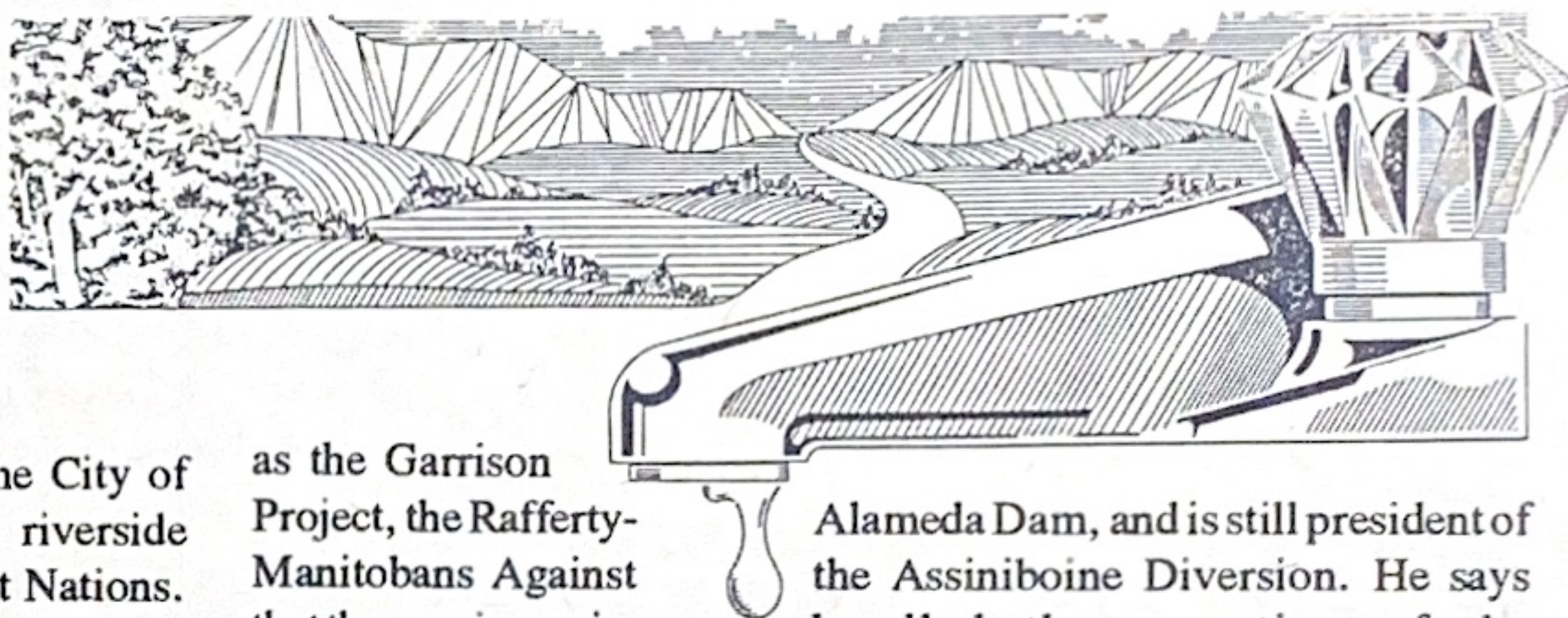
This Spring communities and farmers along the Assiniboine River found themselves engaged in sand-bagging instead of seeding crops or planting gardens.

The river, which flows southeast from Saskatchewan and through Lake of the Prairies just east of the Manitoba border, polluted wells, flooded pasture land and cut off access to cropland, submerged recreation facilities in the City of Brandon and forced the evacuation of residences in riverside settlements such as St. Lazare and the Sioux Valley First Nations.

It was a flood that the provincial Water Resources Branch didn't foresee, and didn't plan for. That, some farmers say, made the flood much worse than it should have been. The National Farmers Union (NFU) is calling for an inquiry into three issues:

- the handling of the water levels in the Shellmouth Reservoir;
- the accuracy of winter snow pack monitoring, flood forecasting and the relationship between staff cuts at Water Resources Branch;
- and the impact of upstream land clearing and drainage projects on the flooding.

Gerry McKinney, who has just been hired as Region 5 secretary for the NFU, has a long history of opposition to river diversions such



as the Garrison Project, the Rafferty-Manitobans Against that the province mis-Shellmouth Dam near Russell by holding back more run-off than it should have and was then forced to release the water as it raised to dangerous levels in the Shellmouth reservoir. Unfortunately that occurred as run-off in other places was reaching its peak.

What everyone seems to agree on, is that there was a great deal of water coming down from the Saskatchewan side of the border. Oldtimers on the Manitoba side say land that has never even seen a hint of flooding was completely submerged this year. They are pointing to ditching and drainage projects on the Saskatchewan side as the source of the excess run-off that overflowed the Assiniboine.

Wally Veal is one Saskatchewan farmer who doesn't want to pass his problems downstream. He says that illegal drainage to the west has flooded him and others and that creates pressure to do the same. But he and his group, the Concerned Ratepayers of Churchbridge, are calling for the ditches to be blocked and fighting a proposed drainage project that would make things a lot worse.

In fact, Veal says it's probably a good thing that the high water was this year before the massive Langenburg drainage project goes ahead. With plans to drain a 30 square mile area a lot more water is on the way.

The area along the Saskatchewan border and up to Camsack is known as pothole country. Many sloughs have been drained to provide more cropland and the water is being passed eastward. Farmers like Wally Veal don't want more drainage and would like to have the unlicensed ditches closed. Even more irksome for Veal is that they pay for the privilege of being flooded.

The Conservation and Development Area receives funding from Saskwater (a provincial Crown Corporation) and the Rural Municipality levies a local tax for drainage projects. Veal says Saskwater is empire building — drainage and irrigation is their business and the more they do

Putting organic food where our mouth is.

In this issue of **Eco-Journal** we are publishing the June issue of **Organic Voice**, the monthly newsletter for the Organic Producers Association of Manitoba, (pages 7 to 10) and circulating it to the memberships of both organizations. As the provincial certifying body for organic producers OPAM ensures ecological practices by members and provides advice to farmers making the transition to organic. The organization is looking for ways to create a dialogue with consumers -- inserting **Organic Voice** in **Eco-Journal** is one effort. Both **Eco-Journal** and OPAM are hoping the readers of this issue will consider supporting a second organization. Let us know what you think.

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EARTH DAY FATIGUE: Another Point of View

Although I was fortunate enough to have served on the Board of Directors of Earth Day this year (I think I was their last hope to find someone who was active in the Environmental Community who would do so) the following comments on **Earth Day Fatigue** by J.H. Olafsson (*Eco-Journal*, March-April) are my own and do not represent the position of the Earth Day Board of Directors.

Olafsson asserts that the Environmental Community is disenchanted with Earth Day and longs for a return to the grassroots. She supports her assertion by citing pious pronouncements, bordering on the sanctimonious, from environmental groups: Earth Day is not green enough for Greenpeace, not pure enough for the Winnipeg Water Protection Group, not tidy enough for the Recycling Council, not organized enough for the Manitoba Naturalists Society.

Have we become so inured to failure that we can't recognize success when it is staring us in the face? Our cause, once marginal, has moved to the mainstream. Environment has become a popular cause. Business has the good dollars to fund Earth Day—we should have the good sense to seize the opportunity.

We should rejoice at the fact that Earth Day attendance now provides us with a forum where we can place our message(s)

before 30,000 people—a mere tenth of a cent per person (\$30 for tablespace divided by 30,000 people). And most people who attend Earth Day have at least a passing interest in the environ-

ment. We spend far too much time sitting around talking to each other and not enough time getting our message out by talking and mingling with the masses.

So what if many of the commercial interests that support Earth Day do so because they view Earth Day as good business. Business gets a bit of a green wash, we acquire a mainstream patina. The blade cuts both ways. By piously shunning Earth Day we marginalize ourselves, leaving the field open to those who would exploit people's environmental concerns.

As a new-comer to the Earth Day Board I was impressed with the ability, creativity, sincerity and hard work of the young people who made Earth Day happen. We owe them a debt of gratitude for keeping Earth Day alive. If Earth Day is co-opted by commercial interests, the fault is ours, not theirs.

Harvey Williams
Winnipeg

Letter to the editor

Introducing the 1995-96 Manitoba Eco-Network Steering Committee

At its Annual General Meeting on May 27, the Manitoba Eco-Network selected its 1995-96 Steering Committee (Board of Directors) from nominations submitted by member organizations. Dennis Bayomi will continue the second year of his term while Steve Rauh, Harry Mesman, and Nick Carter were nominated for re-appointment. Christine Common-Singh, Dave Taylor, Laverne Dalglish, and Glen Koroluk were new nominees. It was noted at the meeting that there will still be seven seats open and a considerable gender imbalance. Delegates briefly discussed an idea to appoint a few individuals who are not group representatives in order to attract board members who are not already committed to another organization. Affiliations of the new steering committee members are as follows:

Dennis Bayomi, Winnipeg Vegetarian Association
Christine Common-Singh, Sierra Club Agassiz Group.,
Laverne Dalglish, National Energy Conservation Association
Steve Rauh, Association of Mental Health Workers for the Environment
Harry Mesman, Manitoba Federation of Labour
Nick Carter, Manitoba Naturalists Society
Glen Koroluk, Recycling Council of Manitoba

One-man campaign collects 4000 names

Petition would force Canada Post to respect "no flyers" stickers

An unemployed forest fire fighter has a new mission to empower citizens who don't want junk mail. Winnipegger Rod Graham, who is unemployed because of back problems, has single handedly collected over 4000 names for petitions aimed at requiring the use of post consumer recycled paper for advertizing flyers and at forcing Canada Post to respect the "No Flyers" stickers.

Graham has registered the name of a non-profit group - the Environmental Defense Coalition and is actively recruiting helpers to spread his message and stickers. He says his efforts shouldn't be called an anti-junk mail campaign: "I'm not really asking to ban junk mail." He does say that 98 per cent of flyers currently end up in landfill sites and that they are the fastest growing material in the landfill sites.

He says that when he is able to go door to door he gets a phenomenal response for the petition. He estimates that 95 per cent of the people he

meets read the petition and sign it even though only 70 per cent want to stop delivery of flyers to their door.

"I want to start out very cautiously and be very moderate and in the next couple of years I'll turn the wick up," he says.

Graham has a kit that include a fact sheet with addresses for getting your name off mailing lists, information about the city bylaw on junk mail, a petition and a mailbox sticker for citizens who want to join his campaign. He is also advertising his phone number 783-7245 as a junk mail hotline.

So far Graham has funded the campaign out of his own pocket. He is asking for help to scrounge up some basic office equipment such as an answering machine and a fax machine. He would also like to attract a few volunteers to take his petition door to door a couple of hours per week.

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To eliminate most local flyer deliveries write to Canadian Media Distributors, 1465 St. James St. Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3H0W9. Post a sticker on your mail box that clearly states you don't want flyers. City of Winnipeg By-law 1076/75 obliges companies to respect your sticker, although penalties have never been assessed.

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Farmers press for compensation, policy changes

Continued from page 1

the more it's "needed." His group is demanding that Saskwater and the Conservation and Development Area provide a full cost benefit analysis before proceeding with the Langenburg project..

Veal says that the message about the destruction caused by drainage projects isn't getting through to proponents. They have actually begun to argue that local flooding and road washouts prove the need for more ditching and wider culverts to move the water out faster.

But McKinney says that videos taken of the upper Assiniboine show that "there's no question" the flooding was caused by drainage schemes rather than by ordinary run-off. He says the drainage projects "benefit the larger Agri-business-type farmers" in the short term, but that other farmers suffer the results.

The implications for the Assiniboine, a river that Veal says has been a special place for him since childhood, are disastrous. Not only is it forced to take too much water in Spring, but the water that might have been held in the upper part of the watershed is wasted leaving the whole system drier in summer.

Veal's group and MAAD are both awaiting guidelines for an environmental assessment of the Langenburg project, and pressuring the provincial government in Manitoba to get involved on behalf of the river.

McKinney said once the province realized how much water was going to hit the communities downstream they "panicked" and tried to hold back too much, flooding farmers around the reservoir. McKinney says they brought the amount of water behind the dam to a dangerous level, taking the Shellmouth Dam to the point where he says "it's lucky the dam didn't collapse. When they started releasing the water the dam started to shake," he said.

The provincial response all stems from a lack of monitoring capability according to the NFU. McKinney says the flood forecasters didn't have enough local data on snow pack and weather conditions. He suggests that may be related to staff cuts at the Department of Natural Resources, which three years ago deemed resource technician positions, the job category which monitors flood conditions as well as a number of unrelated tasks, were henceforth seasonal jobs.

According to Manitoba Government Employees Union representative Jan Malanowich, in 1992, people that had been considered full time employees were deemed 39-week employees, laid off at the end of October, and then hired back in early Spring. The decision affected 50 or 60 people, but not all would be involved in the kind of work McKinney says was needed. While the MGEU isn't ready to blame flooding on the government, it says the difficulties in accurate forecasting stem from management, not workers.

Alf Warkentin is the provincial flood forecaster responsible for many for the predictions the NFU is criticizing. He rejects the farmers' analysis. He says that "in hindsight" forecasts weren't very accurate and that it would have better to retain less water in the Shellmouth reservoir at the beginning of the season. But he insists that forecasters couldn't have known that because all of the additional precipitation in the upper Assiniboine watershed occurred late in the season.

He said that until the last week of February, precipitation levels were almost identical to 1992, a year in which the Assiniboine was practically

a trickle because of near drought conditions, but that the overall snow cover doubled in the following two months. He said that without the additional snowfall, 165 millimetres in April alone, the reservoir would have retained just enough water for summer demand.

Warkentin concedes that his office could always use more data, but not just for the Assiniboine. He would like to collect a lot more data from all the watersheds. But he rejects any inference that decisions were influenced by a lack of data in this case, because the data over the winter months isn't the issue.

The NFU complaint about staffing "doesn't hold water," he said.

Despite the unfortunate metaphor, Warkentin is looking more closely at the NFU's concerns about drainage interference in the western part of the Assiniboine watershed. He doesn't think a public inquiry is warranted.

Elsewhere in Manitoba, farmers and aboriginal people are also organizing compensation claims. In the Pembina Valley a group called the Pembina Valley Protection Association says that diverting water into Pelican Lake and Swan Lake has disrupted a balance that allowed valley farmers to prosper, even in times of drought, for 150 years.

Jim Bell, the past president of the association, says farmers are used to and even take advantage of Spring flooding but natural flood-

ing has different characteristics than the surges of waters at the wrong time that tend to result from management of the flows.

"We like the natural flood to go through in the Spring. The water recedes quickly and the farmers get on with their business." He says the flood from run-off puts nutrients in the soil, stimulates certain valley plants and irrigates hay land. Over the 150 years of agricultural settlement the valley farmers have come to see that they can also benefit in the dry years by selling hay as a cash crop to livestock producers located in drier spots.

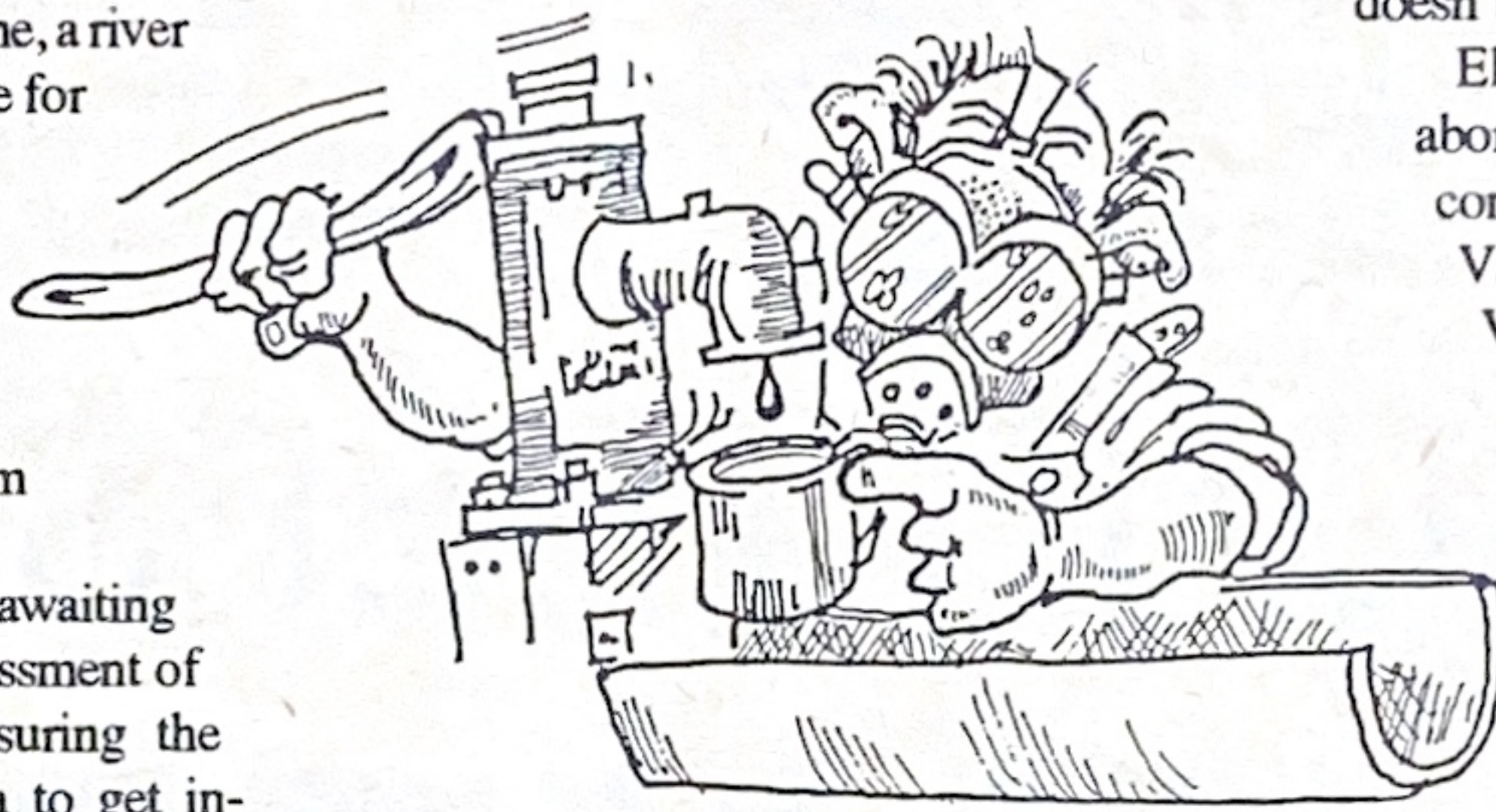
But this year producers have instead been forced to endure pasture land that is under water and haven't been able to can't get access to other fields. The water control emphasis is on tourism and recreation, says Bell. He says the province is lobbied by cottagers and recreational proponents who want the water high because they believe it will reduce algae. Water should have been released from Pelican Lake earlier rather than being stored until the run-off was at its peak and then released, according to Bell.

His group is also fed up with a Ducks Unlimited weir in the Pembina just west of La Riviere which he says is illegal because it hasn't received the necessary international approvals. Long after water returned to its banks at La Riviere (where early flooding imperilled the Holiday Mountain Resort) the Pembina still looked more like a lake behind the weir. Bell says that ducks need nesting sites, not high water, and that DU's penchant for water control projects has more to do with ribbon cutting and fund raising than it does with duck habitat.

"There's no need for some of these dams in the first place," he said.

That's echoed in the north Interlake where a dam built decades ago by Ducks Unlimited, but managed by the province is at the centre of a compensation claim for flooding at Fairford. A representative for the

Continued on following page



Packed house/empty rhetoric for Election Debate '95

by Anne Lindsey

Close to 300 people packed into Eckhardt-Gramatte Hall at the University of Winnipeg on April 4 to hear the leaders of the Tory, Liberal and New Democratic Parties debate "sustainable development". Number-wise, the event was an obvious success, even to the point where several people were turned away. As for the content, however, the jury is out. A hard-working organizing committee set out six tough opening questions, designed to dig through some of the rhetoric and elicit the practical steps which each party would take in working towards sustainability. The responses seemed cautious, often not particularly practical, and in some cases, strangely similar across party lines. Mr. Filmon leaned on his government's past record, defending even some contentious decisions in the face of pointed questions from the floor. His responses would seem to indicate that his new administration will steer a similar course, perhaps with even more emphasis on the "development" side of the equation.

What is clear from the event is that environmentalists of all political persuasions have some work to do in educating political representatives about the ecological realities facing the planet.

Farmers insurance doesn't cover pasture land or access

Continued from previous page

Interlake Tribal Council said that the province diverts water from the Assiniboine into Lake Manitoba to avoid flooding people at Headingley or in the city of Winnipeg but it ends up flooding farmers along the east side of the lake at Langruth. Then the pressure is on to release more water at the Fairford Dam, but that impacts on First Nations people living around Lake St. Martin. Chiefs in the area have said that their interests are traded off for the interests of non-aboriginal people in the south.

Warkentin says that once water gets into the system the decisions get difficult to make and that "sometimes it's impossible to make everyone happy."

Meanwhile Bell said his group is using a video camera to corroborate its compensation claims to the Agriculture Department and asking the Natural Resources department to remove the DU obstruction of the river.

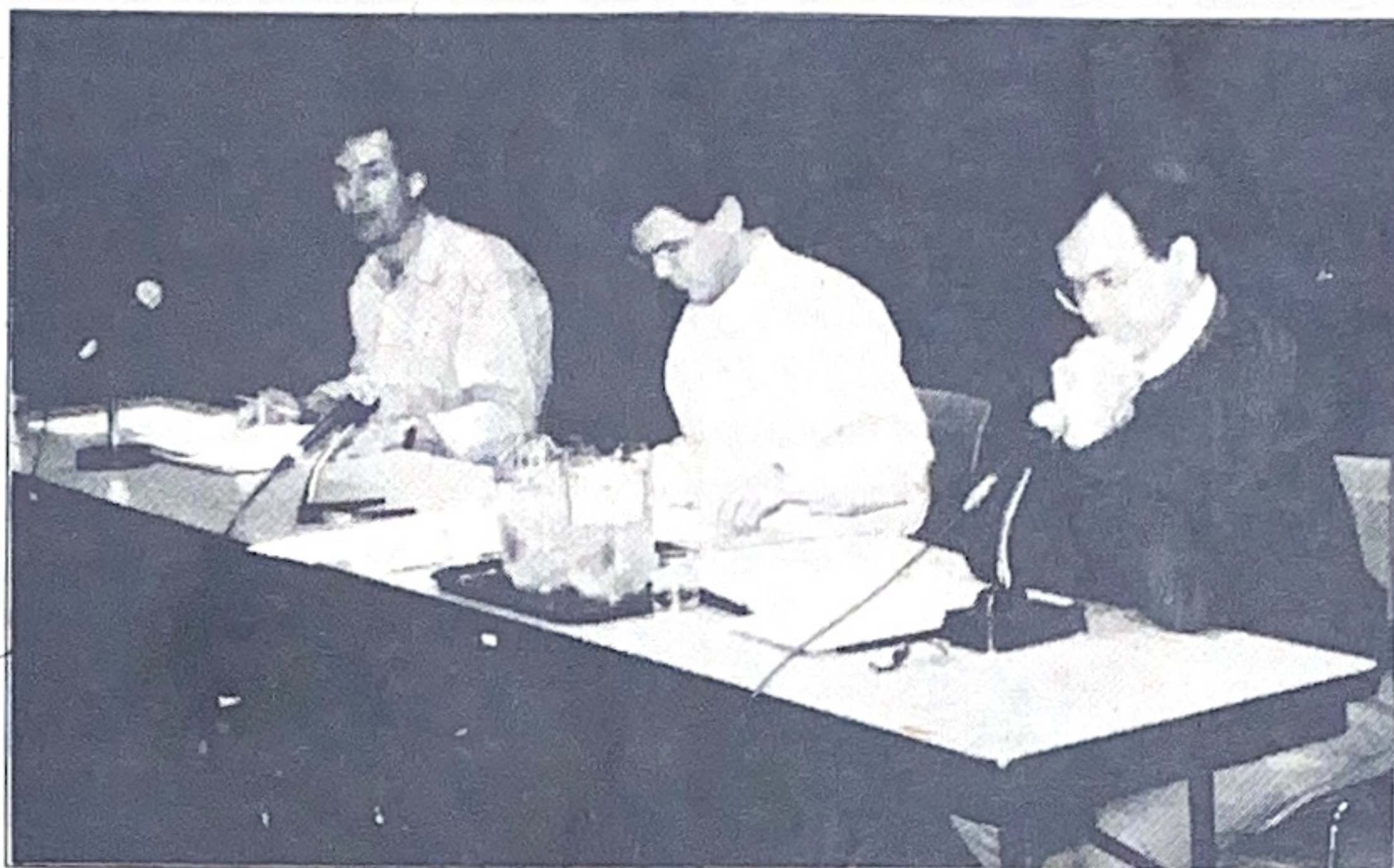
So far, farmers are irritated with the answer they have received from Agriculture Minister Harry Enns. Enns was quoted as saying that farmers should be insured against flooding, but they answer that insurance is not available for pasture land or to compensate for the loss of access to other field. And they wonder why they have to insure their livelihood against what they believe are mistakes by the Department of Natural Resources.

Perhaps even more important, we need to begin setting out our own pro-active agenda for sustainability, one which shows how protection, awareness and restoration of ecosystems can be a win-win

situation in terms of jobs, the environment and the economy. The election debate was co-sponsored by the Eco-Network, the Sustainable Development Coalition, the Joint Masters Program in Public Administration, U of W Political Science Department, Students Association for the Masters in Public Administration, the U of W Political Science Students Association, UWSAFE and the Recycling Council of Manitoba.

Special thanks are due to Dr. Deborah Stienstra, Professor in Political Science and

Women's Studies at the University of Winnipeg, for moderating the event, to the University of Winnipeg, for the use of Eckhardt-Gramatte Hall, and to Gary Filmon, Gary Doer, and Paul Edwards for participating in the debate.



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A woodchuck unable to chuck wood even if she could (above) and the Manitoba Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre puppets help raise awareness (right).



Manitoba Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre opens doors for tours

by Rick Freeman and Andrew Fraser

An organization that for years has been taking care of injured animals from member's basements, backyards and at private veterinary clinics officially opened its new hospital in Glenlea in April. The Manitoba Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre is by the Glenlea Research Station off Highway 75 south of Winnipeg.

Since 1993 the Manitoba Wildlife Rehabilitation Organization has been at work on the facility which will house administrative offices, a reference library with computer database, as well as flight cages and a treatment hospital. The centre will care for and rehabilitate injured and orphaned wildlife throughout

the province, as well as educate the public on associated issues.

About 300 curious people turned out for the Grand Opening on April 9, which included a puppet show which gave visitors a chance to see MWRO's public education program at work, tours of the facilities and an opportunity

to hear volunteers share their experiences in caring for wildlife.

Among the wildlife on display at the opening were a sawlet owl found in Winnipeg with a broken chest bone, a Peregrine Falcon found in northern Manitoba with a broken wing and a woodchuck suffering from an injured limb. (The falcon was identified as part of a release of captive-bred peregrine from Montreal.)

None of the three animals will be scheduled for release to the wild and will instead remain as members of the MWRO public education program which travels to schools, community centres and shopping malls to promote public awareness and responsibility for preserving wildlife.

A scheduled release of a bald eagle was postponed because, according to Centre manager Brian Ratcliff, the bird wasn't yet ready for return to the wild. To date the centre has treated and released over 100 animals.

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♦ORGANIC VOICE♦

Issue 18

June 1995

Manitoba New COAB Headquarters

Celia Guilford first COAB Facilitator

by Barbara Shewchuk

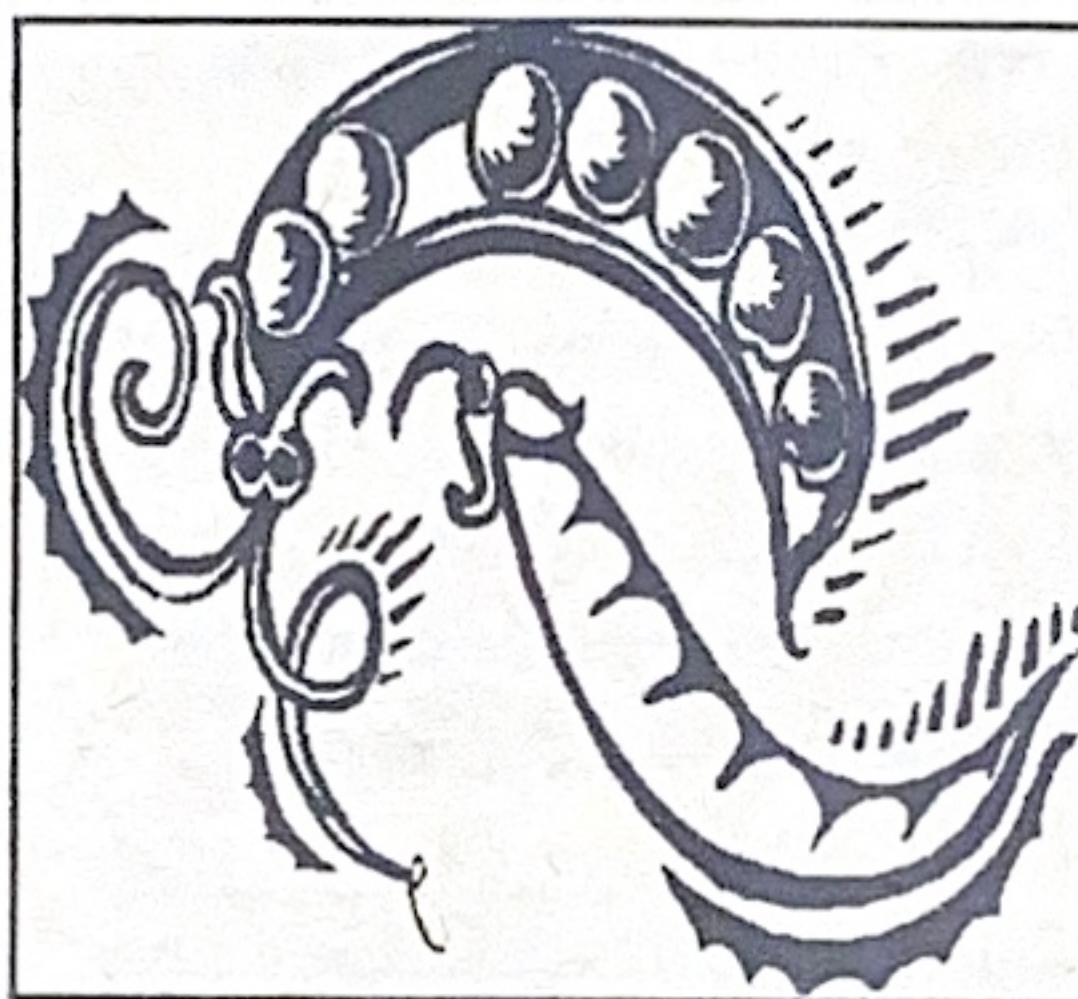
Celia Guilford of Clearwater took on the role of Accreditation Programme Facilitator for the Canadian Organic Accreditation Board in April.

The COAB office will coordinate accreditation of provincial and regional certifying bodies (CBs), giving them the authority to certify farms, horticultural operations and processors as "Canada Organic".

Celia is past President of the Organic Producers Association of Manitoba (OPAM), which recently became the first provincial certifying body to be accredited under Canada's new unified organic standards.

She and her husband Robert run Guilford's Organic Seed and Feed and farm 640 acres organically and take apprentices in organic farming and horticulture through an international program called Willing Workers on Organic Farms.

Celia holds a Diploma in Agribusiness from Assiniboine Community College and a Certificate in Organic Horticulture from the University of California and has written several courses on organic farming for Assiniboine Community College.



"I think it's a real boon to Manitoba to have the COAB office here."

"I think it's a real boon to Manitoba to have the COAB office here," she said. "There were lobbies to have it in other provinces."

COAB is being set up through government and private foundation funding and will be industry funded by organic farmers through their regional certifying bodies.

Congratulations, Celia!! We know you'll do a fantastic job!

Inside This Issue

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Office News or "Of This & That" Page 4

On Knowing How This Food Comes to Us

by Rhonda Barr

Monks in a Buddhist monastery chant "we should know how this food comes to us". As organic producers perhaps we would appreciate not only monks asking this question.

Jane Smiley says, "It seems to me that there are two choices. We can continue to process our food, as through a machine, from field to table, and continue to content ourselves with mechanically opening our jaws and processing it through our alimentary canals, or we can sow the seed, harvest the fruits, bring care and interest to the preparation of meals, and take our daily reward in the pleasure of aroma, flavour, and visceral satisfaction. We can decide that what doesn't taste good cannot be good for us". (December 1994 issue of the Sierra Club magazine quoted from her essay "A Wedge of Lettuce".)

Do we organic producers eat organically grown food? Do we "sow the seeds"? Do we agree that it is important to do so or to find alternatives that support others doing so for us?

When we, for example, eat conventionally grown potatoes,

(Continued on page 4)

One Tomato's Journey to Your Table

1. Our tour begins on land acquired by the U.S. - based Jolly Green Giant Co., in partnership with a Mexican development corporation. Mexican farmers used to work this land together on communally owned cooperative farms called *ejidos*. Structural adjustment reforms in the 1980s opened up Mexican agriculture to large scale private investment and pushed small land holders off the land.
2. To prepare for the mass cultivation and export of tomatoes, the land was first fumigated with methyl bromide, a chemical contributing to ozone depletion. This fact takes us to St. Louis, Missouri, headquarters of the Monsanto Corporation. They produced the pesticides used in the fumigation and are one of America's largest polluters.
3. To follow the trail, our tour takes us to Emelle, Alabama - a poor, predominantly African-American community. Production waste from Monsanto is shipped here to the world's largest hazardous waste landfill.
4. Back to Mexico, we meet local farm workers who now make approximately US\$2.50 per day. They have been given no protection for the pesticides; no gloves, masks or safety instructions. They have no access to health care.
5. The tomatoes are produced

for export. Structural adjustment reforms promoted food exports to earn foreign exchange. The problem is that Mexican people are no longer producing their own food, and cannot afford to buy these tomatoes on the wages they earn.

6. The next stop in our tour is Davis, California, headquarters of Calgene Inc. The tomato seed is a hybrid, patented and owned by this transnational company. It was

The tomato seed is a hybrid, patented and owned by this transnational company.

originally developed from a Mexican strain. Transnational companies are fighting for longer and stronger protection of patents for varieties of plants, like this tomato.

7. To hear the whole story of the tomato seed patents, we need to visit the University of California at Davis. Calgene

bought the research from the University of California who actually developed the hybrid. Their research grant was paid for by U.S. taxpayers.

8. Back in Mexico, the tomato is harvested. It is placed on a plastic tray, covered in plastic wrap and packed in cardboard boxes. The tomatoes are then driven in refrigerated trucks to wholesale distributors throughout North America where they compete with tomatoes produced by local farming communities.
9. Next we tour the Mexican *Maquiladora* zones where some of the tomatoes are sent to be canned and made into sauce. Workers in these food processing plants in the *maquiladora* zones earn \$1.50 - \$4.00 per day and face abysmal health and safety conditions in the workplace. These workers face the same problems as their rural *campesinos*; they don't earn enough to be able to buy the

(Continued on page 3)

Organic Voice welcomes all submissions from OPAM members. Please send committee reports, reports from meetings and seminars, promotions for upcoming events, articles you have written yourselves or interesting media reports to: Barbara Shewchuk, Organic Voice, Box 188, Lowe Farm, MB. ROG 1EO. Fax: 204-746-8867. Phone 204-746-8566.

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An Organic Gardener's Spring Checklist by Andrea Downey-Franchuk

- ✓ Lightly cultivate the soil to aerate, uproot or chop weed seedlings and destroy overwintering insect larvae and eggs.
- ✓ Add organic matter to replenish nutrients and 'lighten' our heavy soils. Use composted household scraps or composted manure.
- ✓ Raise the rows or bed to improve drainage and support good root development. Engineer pathways into the design so the soil won't be compacted as it is tended through summer.
- ✓ Pile the soil 2" - 8" above grade. Angle the sides at 45 degrees or use untreated lumber to frame or support. A raised garden should not be wider than 5' or else it will be hard to tend in the middle. Not enough room? Make more than one bed!
- ✓ Choose open-pollinated, regionally adapted and untreated seed for best success! (such as mail order suppliers like Salt Spring Seeds & William Dam Seeds, or EcoGenesis Seeds and Seeds of Change available through retail outlets.)
- ✓ Rotate your crops this year and try some companion planting arrangements.
- ✓ Don't forget to mulch the beds to protect against soil erosion, slow evaporation, retard weed growth and regulate soil temperature.
- ✓ Use dry grass rakings or clippings or leaf mould on the beds, and clean straw or hay on the paths.
- and . . .
- ✓ Always heed the frost warnings. Tuck the garden in overnight with some old sheets or floating row cover like Reemay® Cloth.

One Tomato's Journey.....

(Continued from page 2)

- goods they produce.
10. Food producing, along with many other types of labour intensive manufacturing, is shifting to the maquiladora zones in Mexico and Central America. Free trade agreements such as NAFTA have made it possible for transnational corporations to locate their factories wherever labour is cheapest and health and safety standards are low. Then they can ship their goods freely throughout the whole free trade region.
 11. Our final stop is a nice Canadian restaurant where an unsuspecting customer looks forward to a juicy tomato salad. Did you notice who took the order? Well, that waitress used to be employed in a food processing plant that closed down and moved production to Mexico. Workers in Canada and United States are losing their jobs because they cannot afford to compete with low Mexican wages which are kept far below their actual level of productivity.
 12. Your tour of the effects of North America economic integration is now complete.

From the "Economic Integration of the America" Education Kit produced by the Ecumenical Coalition for Economic Justice. For more information contact: ECEJ, 11 Madison Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5R 2S2. tel. (416) 921-4615

Summer Solstice Celebration



June 17, 1995
4:00 pm to ???

at
Robert & Celia Guilford's
Clearwater, MB

Potluck/Picnic

Bring your kites, stories, musical instruments, games, etc.

Office News or "Of This & That"

In no particular order of importance here are a few of the things that have been happening within the OPAM office and community recently:

* Andrea Downey-Franchuk has kindly agreed to become the "Marketing coordinator" for the poster "A Seasonal Guide to Gardening Organically". Since she has been assisting with this since before the posters were distributed this won't be anything new to her, however, it will assist OPAM in coordinating a campaign. Anyone with ideas on how to market the poster, or anyone willing to help with the campaign is asked to contact Andrea at 810 North Drive, Winnipeg, MB. R3T 0A5. ph. (204) 284-6414

* The lousy weather didn't prove to be frustrating enough here at the office we had to add a computer malfunction and breakdown of the photocopier to the fray. Therefore, if you called (or wrote) the office in the last few weeks and haven't heard back, please be patient, we will be getting to you shortly.

* The Assiniboine Community College has asked for copyright permission for OPAM's Operating Manual. The Board has agreed to grant permission requesting payment of \$2,500 for the rights, thereby bringing some much needed revenue into the organization.

* We are very pleased to introduce David Kirkup to you. David is a university student whom we have been able to hire through the Summer Career Placement Program offered by Canada Employment. David will be assisting in the office with coordinating the certification program, bookkeeping duties, preparing material for use in the upcoming "Organic Lending Library" at the Assiniboine Community College (more on this in the next newsletter), as well as, other duties as they arise. So don't be surprised if you hear a different voice saying "Good morning, OPAM," when you call. It's not me with pneumonia again, it'll be David!

* The State of Washington's Department of Agriculture now recognizes OPAM's certification program, thereby allowing the sale of OPAM certified products. It is unlawful to sell, or offer for sale, or process any agriculture product with an organic label in Washington unless it is certified by the chapter or an official organic certifying agent (such as OPAM).

* Applications for Inspection for Greenhouses, Fruit & Vegetable, and Grain have all been mailed out. If you haven't gotten yours yet and would still like to apply for inspection this year, please call the office as soon as possible and we will send one out to you.

Knowing How This Food...

(Continued from page 1)

(which are: 1. fed artificial fertilizer, 2. irrigated with an inch of water a day, 3. subject to fungal problems as a result of the irrigation and then sprayed with fungi-

When we "bring care and interest to our daily preparation of meals" we eat organically grown potatoes, grains, meats, vegetables and so on.

cide, and 4. treated with insecticide and herbicide) we are not supporting each other or the values of sustainable agriculture.

When we "bring care and interest to our daily preparation of meals" we eat organically grown potatoes, grains, meats, vegetables and so on and in doing so support ourselves, each other and the values of sustainable agriculture. We weave a relationship between how we eat and how we earn our living and we know how our food comes to us.

Marketing Strategies for the Organic Industry

A one day seminar presented by Tomás Nimmo will be held at Red Gate Farm on Monday, July 24, 1995.

For further information call Rhonda Barr at (204) 824-2350 (Wawanesa) or Andrea Downey-Franchuk at (204) 284-6416 (Winnipeg).

CEAA Office Opens in Winnipeg

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA), which administers the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (also known as CEAA) has opened its Manitoba/Saskatchewan office. Staffed by Dan McNaughton, who was formerly in charge of land use approvals at Manitoba Environment, the office is located at 220-240 Graham Ave. Dan's job, consistent with the Manitoba/Canada harmonization agreement for environmental assessment, is to facilitate co-ordination between federal departments and Manitoba for assessments pertaining to both jurisdictions, and to explain the new legislation (proclaimed in January) to proponents and the public. It seems he will have his hands full - already there are several burning issues on the agenda, including the Louisiana-Pacific Forest Management Plan, Asessippi, and the Winnipeg Arena proposal, along with a host of lower profile projects. And that is just in Manitoba. Under the legislation, the agency has an obligation to maintain a Public Registry, this will be in the form of an electronic index on the Internet. It may be accessed at the following address: <http://gsro.carleton.ca/ceaa> The index will list all projects, along with a listing of all documents that have been filed, and the name of a contact from whom paper copies may be obtained. One may also access the Act and Regulations on the Public Registry. Phone the CEAA office at (204) 984-2457 or fax (204) 983-0964.

Water Conservation Workshop: Become part of the solution

Crossroads Resource Group has initiated a social marketing project to show that rapid change can be achieved by working directly with members of communities and organizations. Crossroads has advocated sustainability policies and economic frameworks for several years and will be trying to apply those goals this summer.

To make the project happen the group needed a dedicated person with research and communication skills. Liz Standing, a masters student in environmental studies, has taken on the challenge.

The first effort of the project, with financial support from the Manitoba urban Green Team Program, will be to host a workshop on water conservation at Robert A. Steen Community Centre at 980 Palmerston Ave. The workshop is on Wednesday June 14 at 7 p.m. (enter by the west side door). The focus is on practical water conservation results. We will present our longer term goals for energy from biomass and rebuilding our prairies soils. We need your participation, feedback and ideas. If you are a representative of an organization that can reach lots of people, we need your help. To get involved or for more information call Crossroads Resource Group 947-3594.

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(business hours 9-3:30 Mon through Fri)

Forks mandate betrayed

New environment legislation a tool to stop arena development

by Anne Lindsey

Whatever your opinion about the future of the Winnipeg Jets Hockey team, as a citizen you clearly have an interest in the possibility of a new arena being built at the Forks. All levels of government seem sold on the idea that this is what Winnipeg needs - and they're prepared to kick in significant levels of funding to help make it happen. In 1994, the Coalition to Save the Forks, comprising a number of heritage, environmental and residents organizations, raised the alarm about a Forks arena proposal, stating that such a development would be a "betrayal of public trust" and that it would be contrary to the wishes of the citizens of Winnipeg for "green, historically-sensitive" development for the entire Forks area as set out in the City of Winnipeg policy document "New Directions for the Forks".

Their press conference resulted in a death threat to spokesperson Christine Common-Singh - a clue to the underlying bitterness of the conflict over proposed land use at this important heritage site. Over the past few weeks, more ugliness has emerged as some Jets fans confuse the Forks arena issue with the prospect of losing their

beloved hockey team and (to hear some tell it) maybe even the total demise of Canadian hockey as we know it! In mid-May, all but three City Councillors caved in to the demands of Jets supporters and voted to make a City contribution of at least \$37 million for a new arena at the Forks site, in spite of the fact that polls show the majority of Winnipeggers do not want public money spent on such a venture, and that no alternative site or proposal for a new arena has been given a fair hearing. It's difficult

to see how City Hall will reconcile that figure when budget time rolls around and yet more cuts to libraries, swimming pools and other public services are announced. Will the Jets

More ugliness has emerged as some Jets fans confuse the Forks arena issue with the prospect of losing their beloved hockey team

stay? At this writing, it's anyone's guess.

But if they do or don't, the forces pushing for a Forks arena/entertainment complex are powerful ones lead by many local business interests. It's interesting that the major tool to stop an arena development at the Forks may be the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA). Since the federal dollar contribution falls under the Western Economic Diversification Fund, the project is automatically subject to assessment under CEAA.

Public hearings await Minister's discretion

Whether or not the arena project will be referred for full Panel review - and thus public hearings - is at the discretion of Federal Environment Minister Sheila Copps. According to Dan McNaughton, in the Manitoba/Saskatchewan office of CEAA, the government is likely to say that the strictly "environmental" issues are relatively minor, however the definition of environmental impact in the Act includes cultural, health, social, and economic impacts. These are undeniably issues of great concern for Winnipeggers and other Manitobans. If a review Panel should find that the proposed Arena development does not respect the integrity of the natural environment, or that it has negative social and economic impacts, it may recommend against proceeding with the project. The lobby of Minister Copps, says McNaughton, has been "significant", and has the potential to result in a referral for public hearings.

Christine Common-Singh, as President of the Agassiz Group of the Sierra Club, has been at the forefront of this lobby. In a lengthy letter to Sheila Copps, Common-Singh documents the public anxiety over this issue, the procedural irregularities at City Hall, and the fact that alternatives to the Arena proposal have not been considered, amongst other points. She urges citizens who are concerned about this issue to write to Sheila Copps, encouraging the Minister to call for public hearings at which all sides of this issue may be fully considered.

For more information contact Agassiz Group, Sierra Club at 775-1144 or the group Thin Ice at 944-9408. To request public hearings on the arena issue write to Sheila Copps, Minister of Environment, House of Commons, Ottawa, K1A 0A6.

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our store at Brandon
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Federal budget brings bad news for development education

Member groups, EDSP slashed

By Kelly Logan

The federal government's recent budget was bad news for many environmental and international education organizations. As part of the budget cuts, Minister of Foreign Affairs Andre Ouellet eliminated all decentralized funds (available to provincial and local NGOs) under the Canadian Partnership Branch. For environmental groups, this means the loss of the Environment and Development Support Program (EDSP).

A recent and welcome initiative, the EDSP had approved funding for approximately 50 projects to be carried out by Canadian and Southern NGOs and Indigenous communities. The projects range from nuclear non-proliferation to community compost centres and their sites literally cover the globe. Funded through Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the EDSP was administered by the Canadian Environmental Network (CEN). The program's goal was to improve communication and coalition-building between Canada and the South.

Locally, these cuts have resulted in two member groups putting their projects on hold. The Marquis Project and the Organic Producers Association of Manitoba (OPAM) together with the Salvadorean organization CRIPEDS (Christian Committee for Displaced Persons) are planning to assist in the reconstruction of the war-torn village of El Porvenir, El Salvador. This community of 150 wants their home and land to be revived within ecologically sound guidelines and agricultural practices, with the village centred around a 15-20 acre ecological preserve. (See Eco-Journal, Vol.5, No.1). The EDSP provided the initial funding for this project and the groups were hoping for an additional \$160,000 from the program over the next three years.

Despite the setback, Marquis Project spokesperson Zack Gross is still optimistic about the project. Currently, staff members are in consultation with the federal government trying to reinstate this funding through the NGO Division of CIDA. Gross is even hoping that groups which were previously approved for funding would not have to re-apply. Nonetheless, the Marquis project is also looking elsewhere for funds for this project and other work. Nearly one-third of their budget was lost with these cuts.

However, the Marquis Project fared better than many other NGOs working on international issues. The Manitoba Council of International Cooperation (MCIC) is trying to function on a fraction of their original budget now that 87 percent of their funding was cut.

MCIC Executive Director Darlene Henderson wasted no words explaining the immediate result of these cuts:

"This means that the capacity for our group to do development education in the province has been wiped out, eliminated."

Unfortunately, MCIC was not the only group hit so harshly. The United Nations Association, the University of Manitoba's Development Education Centre, the Manitoba Inter-Church Committee for World Development Education and the Manitoba League for the Physically Handicapped's Development Education Program have all taken comparable cuts. Consequently, all of these groups have had to lay off staff. Most are functioning only with volunteers now. MCIC has reduced its staff from five to one and a half positions and the Marquis Project has let go of three of their eleven staff members with the remaining members taking reduced hours and pay cuts. Meanwhile, the Inter-Church Committee for World Development Education has folded.

Henderson predicted that these cuts will not only interfere with projects

and development education, but also MCIC's mandate of provincial co-ordination. She added that all provincial councils have been hit with funding cuts, leaving much of the present work to be picked up by national organizations.

However, Henderson acknowledged that no matter how bad the situation is for Manitoba NGOs, this federal budget will have "quite serious effects" on the people, communities and NGOs of the South.

Gross confirmed this view:

"There is no question that these people (in El Porvenir) could use this assistance. They're recovering from war and desperately needing help to get their agricultural land in order and doing it without chemicals. I'm not saying that they're totally helpless, but this is one place that is very remote and normally would not get any help."

Henderson added that without the development education done by Canadian NGOs there will also be greater long-term consequences.

"Indirectly, that may transfer into less fundraising dollars and also less awareness and less understanding of our government's foreign policy," she said.

Environment
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HELP WANTED

Help conserve water. Keep water in the fridge to save running the tap until the water becomes cold enough to drink.

For more information on water conservation and other environmental issues, contact Environment Canada
Toll free 1-800-668-6767.



Thinking globally

An article by demographer Donella Meadows, "Getting to Know the Neighbours" in the latest number of Earth Island Journal wonders what an actual "global village" would be like. If the world was a village of 1000 people the Gross Village Product would be \$3000 per person but most of those people would see very little of that cash. Two hundred of the villagers would snap up 75 per cent of the income, while another 200 would subsist on 2 per cent. Meanwhile of that \$3 million in GVP, \$181,000 would be spent on weapons and warfare, while \$159,000 would be spent on education and \$132,000 for health care.

The village would consist of 6000 acres — 700 in cropland, 1400 in pasture, 1900 woodland, and 2000 acres of desert, tundra, pavement and wasteland. Eighty-three per cent of the fertilizer would be allocated to the 40 per cent of the cropland owned by the richest 270 people. Excess fertilizer would pollute the lakes and wells, while the remaining 60 per cent of the land with its 13 per cent share of the fertilizer would feed almost three quarters of the villagers.

Boreal crunch

Worldwatch Magazine produced an interesting May-June issue with articles on rivers that run dry before they reach the

sea and one on the depletion of desert aquifers. But perhaps more interesting for local environmentalists, Worldwatch, known for its definitive research on global issues, also turned its attention to the problems of the world's boreal forests. As the article "Plundering the Boreal Forests" noted the world's largest terrestrial ecosystem has not been given the global attention it deserves. "There are no 'boreal forest crunch' granola bars" writer Anjali Acharya notes.

The article is quite pointed about the problem we face in our part of the boreal forest: "Canadian logging is essentially a subsidized employment program. The country's provinces which own 80 per cent of the forests are practically giving their trees away to timber companies."

Reread

by Toby Maloney

Avoiding conscription into the "War Against Mosquitoes"

CBC Information Radio was one of the first media outlets of the year to declare the "War Against Mosquitoes" in its Victoria Day news broadcasts. If you are a conscientious objector in the inter-species hostilities you can register your objection to having your property sprayed for mosquitoes and other pests by writing to the Insect Control Branch. You are entitled to a buffer zone around your property (100 metres on either side of your property in the front street for fogging, 30 metres for other applications such as Elm Bark Beetle spraying on the base of the trees). Use the clipout coupon below. If you do not receive confirmation that your exemption has been registered call the Bug Line 986-3222.

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3 Grey Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R2L 1V2

Please be advised that, as the principle owner/tenant at _____, 1995, I would like to register my opposition to the following City of Winnipeg Pesticide programs:

- ☐ mosquito larvaciding using chemical insecticides
- ☐ mosquito larvaciding using biological insecticides
- ☐ cankerworm spraying (chemical)
- ☐ cankerworm (biological)
- ☐ adult mosquito fogging (chemical)
- ☐ adult mosquito fogging (biological)
- ☐ adult mosquito residual spraying (chemical)
- ☐ miscellaneous insect spraying (chemical)
- ☐ elm bark beetle (chemical)
- ☐ elm bark beetle (biological)
- ☐ all of the above

Signed _____

Everyday Exposures:

An index of common chemicals

by J. H. Olafsson

Chlorine

Chlorine is a chemical element. In its elemental form, it is a poisonous, yellowish-green gas. Gaseous chlorine does not occur in nature. It is produced by breaking the bond between chlorine and sodium in sodium chloride, familiarly known as table salt. Gaseous chlorine is extremely volatile and bonds readily with other substances. It can be found in a number of compounds of an organic nature (containing the element carbon) or inorganic nature (containing elements other than carbon).

It is important to clarify that, in environmental terms, the "organic" chloride compounds are not nature's choice. The organochlorides are virtually all toxic. Some, such as pesticides, are highly toxic and carcinogenic. Others, like cleaning solvents, accumulate in the body's fatty tissues, where they eventually damage organs such as the liver and kidneys. Sodium chloride, on the other hand, is an inorganic chloride compound.

Chlorinated water: Chlorine is used in most municipal water systems as a disinfectant. While it is generally considered beneficial in this role, chlorinated drinking water is a suspected carcinogen. There is a more subtle threat from chlorination. When hot chlorin-

ated water is run in a bathtub or shower, it is exposed to the air and the gas chloroform is released. Studies have shown that over one-half of the chloroform is released before the water hits the tub. Large doses of chloroform are known to damage vital organs and cause cancer in lab animals. Exposure to small amounts over many years may increase susceptibility to lung cancer and respiratory diseases. To minimize exposure to chloroform you can open a window or run a fan while the water is pouring.

Household Maintenance: Chlorine is used in the manufacture of several volatile organic compounds (VOC's) that contaminate air at concentrations exceeding 1 part per billion. These include chlorinated solvents, such as 1,1,1, trichloroethylene, trichloroethane, and tetrachloroethylene) as well as p-Dichlorobenzene, methylene chloride, carbon tetrachloride, and chloroform. Some sources of VOC's are paints, and paint strippers, moth crystals, room deodorants, plasticized vinyl tiles, and some hobby products.

Household cleaners: In spite of the dangers of many chlorine-based compounds, many more cleaning products are advertising chlorine bleach as an ingredient. Laundry detergents, general purpose household cleaners, polishing cleansers, and kitchen and bathroom cleansers may contain chlorine bleach. These chemicals are not only dangerous on their own, but may be fatal when mixed. Accidentally combining the wrong cleansers, one with a chlorine base and another containing ammonia, can produce the deadly gas chloramine.

Miscellaneous: Chlorine compounds are used extensively to bleach feminine hygiene products and disposable diapers. While risks from chlorine in these products is minimal, trace levels of dioxin and furans have been found in them. A more insidious group of compounds is Chlorofluorocarbons CFC's, present in air conditioning. While human health is not impacted directly by the release of CFC's they cause ozone deterioration in the upper atmosphere, allowing increases in ultraviolet rays reaching the earth. This significantly increases risk to human health, as well as to any living organism.

Reducing exposure to organochlorides

Water purification can reduce chlorine and other impurities in drinking water. For example, reverse osmosis can remove much of the bacteria, some viruses, and some organic and inorganic impurities from drinking water.

Apply paints, strippers, and solvents in well ventilated areas. Work outdoors whenever possible. Run vented fans or open all doors and windows to allow fresh air to circulate when working indoors. Don't store leftover paint and solvents as containers may leak. And don't toss the leftovers in with regular garbage. They must be disposed of as hazardous waste. (Call 1-800-782-2474 for information).

Baking soda is a pure and safe choice for scouring in the kitchen and bathroom. Clean mould or mildew with a strong solution of vinegar and water. Try an oxygen bleach cleanser instead of a chlorine bleach cleanser. Use borax in the laundry to whiten whites.

Switch from bleached hygiene products to unbleached or non-disposable products. Using either cloth diapers or a diaper service is cheaper and causes less waste than buying disposable diapers.

Cultivate an organic lawn and garden, and learn natural pest and weed control techniques rather than using pesticides.

For more information read the Whitewash kit and the book by the same name available at the Environmental Resource Centre.

Environment Manitoba

YOUNG SCHOLARS PROGRAM

August 8 - 18, 1995

The University of Manitoba is pleased to present for the first time the Young Scholars Program—a challenging opportunity for academically motivated high school students. Students will encounter experts from a wide range of disciplines relating to the environment and will visit sites including The University of Manitoba's Field Station at Delta Marsh.

INTERESTED STUDENTS CAN CALL
Aynsley Toews at (204) 474-8026 or Student
Services at (204) 474-8016 for an application.



Summer '95

CONTINUING
EDUCATION
DIVISION

Eco-Network presents 5th Annual Awards

The Manitoba Eco-Network has honoured three activists and two grassroots organizations in the fifth of its Annual Environmental Awards. The awards recognize "significant contributions to the awareness and protection of Manitoba's environment."

The winners represent the "nitty gritty" of the movement -- citizens who aren't afraid to speak out and act on controversial issues, especially where the integrity of the natural environment is at stake.

Alice Chambers, a 27 year resident of Pinawa and founding member of Pinawa Recycling Inc. won for her dedication and perseverance on a wide range of issues. In her own words, Alice, "attends a lot of meetings, and writes many letters." She is a board member of the Recycling council of Manitoba, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Manitoba Chapter and the Manitou-Abi Model Forest.

Brian Pannell, who recently moved to Toronto to be the Executive Director of Pollution Probe, has been a key figure in the environmental movement in Manitoba. As a lawyer, he worked tirelessly to improve the process of environmental awareness, notably in the case of the Conowapa Dam, the Repap development in the Pas, and the proposed gold mine at Shoal Lake. Frequently consulted by governments, industry and environmentalists, Brian is

also recognized for being a builder in his years as an executive member of the Manitoba Eco-Network steering committee.

Don Sullivan is the environmental spokesperson for CHOICES and a dedicated community organizer. Don has been the

coordinator for the Coalition to Save the Assiniboine, which pulled together rural and urban groups and the Manitoba Future Forest Alliance which campaigned vigorously against the Louisiana Pacific development at Swan River.

Concerned Citizens of the Valley is a group of Swan River residents who courageously withstood enormous community pressure to sacrifice environmental and health concerns for factory jobs in

their community. They held strong to their conviction that the Louisiana Pacific Oriented Strand Board plant is bad news for the forest, for the health of valley residents, and the environment.

The Global Change Game was developed by a group of student volunteers at the University of Manitoba. The Global Change Game travels around the province and across the country by bicycle and train to educate participants in the game about the impacts of our decisions on the global environment. The game is hailed by all who participate as a truly creative and valuable experience.

Manitoba's Environmental Honour Roll

**The Manitoba Eco-Network, P.O. Box 26007
Winnipeg, MB R3C 4K9**

Sign me up as a member of the Manitoba Eco-Network

Enclosed is a cheque for:

- ☐ \$25 Supporting member (individuals)
☐ \$30 Group membership
☐ \$50 Other organizations (businesses, government departments and corporations that do not otherwise qualify for group membership)

I'm also enclosing a donation of _____ to help with your public education activities.

[Charitable tax receipts available for amounts over the cost of membership]

Total Amount enclosed _____

I'm interested in volunteering for the Eco-Network. Please call me! ☐

Name(s) _____
Group (if applicable) _____ Telephone # () _____
Mailing address _____ Postal Code _____
Area(s) of interest _____ Volunteer skills _____

Group members are entitled to nominate representatives for a position on the Eco-Network Steering Committee. Group membership is open to any non-governmental, non-profit group which has as one of its objectives the enhancing or furthering of environmental quality, protecting the environment or environmental education.

A supporting membership includes a subscription to **Eco-Journal** as well as notice of events and regular updates on issues and is open to any individual.