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State PIRG Alumni Network

State PIRG Alumni Newsletter • Edition #1 • Spring 2003

CALPIRG Wins Clean Energy Law

California Gov. Gray Davis signed a CALPIRG-backed renewable energy bill into law in September. The California law is the strongest of its type in the nation.

On Sept. 12, Gov. Gray Davis signed into law the strongest renewable energy bill in the United States.

The California Clean Energy Bill ensures that by the year 2017, 20 percent of California's electricity will come from clean energy sources like wind, solar and geothermal.

"We could not be more excited," noted CALPIRG's **Dan Jacobson**. "California is moving away from dirty, old and unreliable power and toward clean and efficient energy."

As a result of the law, California will generate enough clean energy to power 8 million homes by 2017. Using natural gas to generate that much power would produce as much global-warming pollution as 3.7 million cars.

Jacobson explained that the law also protects consumers from rate hikes. The costs of renewables are tied to the cost of natural gas over an equal period of time.

If any renewable contracts price out higher than this benchmark price, the California Energy Commission will "buy down" the cost of the renewable contracts.

"This clean energy standard protects the environment, it protects our pocketbooks, and it creates more jobs in California," said Jacobson.

"We applaud the governor for his leadership in getting this bill through the Legislature and for signing the bill into law—especially when we have seen a lack of leadership coming from Washington, D.C., on energy issues."

Later in the month, Gov. Davis signed into law two additional bills that help to remove barriers for California consumers who want to install or expand clean energy systems.

The victory preceded the launch of Environment California, the new home of CALPIRG's environmental work (for more information, turn to page 5). ■



Nina Stuenkel

*ENERGY—While advocating the California Clean Energy Bill, CALPIRG's **Teri Olle** and **Daniel Shugar** of PowerLight, a solar power company, spoke with a KCBS news reporter.*

In this issue . . .

Featured Alum Rich McClintock . . . pg 3
Catch up with one of the longest-serving PIRG directors.

New Voices In The Public Interest . . . pg 5
The environmental programs of PennPIRG and CALPIRG have new homes.

Aspen 2002: Celebrating 30 Years . . . pg 6
Alumni reconnect with the PIRGs to celebrate 30 years of action in the public interest.

Alumni Updates Galore . . .
You knew them when. Now, find out where they are, what they're up to, who's married to whom, and meet their kids.

Campaign Highlights

Save Our Shores: A Victory For Florida's Shorelines

Florida PIRG Director Mark Ferrulo released the following statement on May 29.

The settlement announced May 29, 2002 by the Department of Interior on the Destin Dome is one of the most significant victories in the 20-year battle to keep Florida's coast rig-free. Chevron's efforts to open Florida's coastline to full-scale drilling activity were the most imminent threat to Florida's environment. It would have forever changed the environmental and economic landscape of our coastline.

We applaud the decision to end that threat and urge the Bush administration to protect the rest of Florida's coastline and sensitive areas around the country from inappropriate oil and gas drilling.

Allowing the oil and gas industry to "rig" our coastline would

have generated millions in profits for the companies themselves. Floridians would have gotten nothing in return except a polluted and despoiled marine environment. Florida's marine environment is inextricably linked to the health of our economy and our quality of life.

We applaud Gov. Bush, Sens. Graham and Nelson, and our U.S. representatives for opposing drilling off of Florida. Floridians have been united in our resolve to protect the unique and fragile environment of our state.

While the most immediate threat has been negated, dozens of other active leases remain near shore off the Florida coast. This announcement sends a clear message to the companies holding those leases that pursuing exploration or production of oil and gas off the Florida coast would be like throwing money down a well. They maintain a foothold off our coast and though they may be only hang-



staff photo

Gov. James McGreevey and NJPIRG Acting Director Dena Mottola posed for a photo at Round Valley Reservoir after the governor announced strong new protections for state waterways.

ing on by a toe, the door needs to be permanently shut.

President Bush should support permanent protection for our coast and other fragile areas around the United States. ■

NJPIRG Helps Win New Water Protections

After months of calling for stronger clean water protections, NJPIRG's **Dena Mottola** was

invited to Round Valley Reservoir on April 22, where Gov. McGreevey and Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bradley Campbell announced a proposal to strengthen protection for nine drinking water reservoirs and six river and stream segments.

"Our state's high-quality waterways, which provide drinking water to the people of New Jersey and a habitat for threatened and endangered species, are in the direct path of rapid development," **Mottola** noted.

The proposal would protect waterways named 'anti-degradation' status. Gov. McGreevey also directed the DEP to identify another round of waterways for protection.

"The governor has given us a lot to celebrate this Earth Day," **Mottola** said. NJPIRG works closely with former director **Curtis Fisher**, now the governor's policy advisor on Environment and Consumer Affairs. ■

PennPIRG Update: Tobacco Tax



Megan Perry

PennPIRG's Beth McConnell meets with Evonne Tisdale of the Philadelphia Unemployment Project and Sen. Vincent Hughes.

In June, the Pennsylvania Legislature raised taxes on cigarettes from \$.31 to \$1, a move supported by PennPIRG. Unfortunately, the Legislature did not opt to use the extra revenue to fund health care programs, as PennPIRG had advocated.

PennPIRG State Director **Beth McConnell** noted that an April report by the Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention found that the total economic loss in medical care and lost productivity in Pennsylvania due to smoking averages \$7 per pack.

"This tax increase is a step in the right direction," McConnell said. "Pennsylvania remains one of just four states in the nation that does not have a tax on cigars or smokeless tobacco." ■

Rich McClintock: Livable Communities

Rich McClintock began his PIRG career as a MASSPIRG organizer in 1982. The following year, he headed out to Colorado, where he helped sign on CoPIRG's first 10,000 citizen members.

After a four-year stint directing MoPIRG, Rich returned to Colorado to become CoPIRG's executive director, a position he held for 13 years. While directing CoPIRG, Rich met his wife, fellow alum **Steff Clothier**.

In the fall of 2001, Rich passed the CoPIRG torch to **Matt**

Baker and founded the Livable Communities Support Center, which works on sprawl and livable community issues throughout the West. Through the LCSC, Rich collaborates with CoPIRG staff and alum, including **Kelly Nordini** and **Sam Sager**, as well as Green Corps alum **Andrea Broaddus**.

Meanwhile, Rich and Steff's daughter, Charlotte, is doing her part to weigh in on public interest issues: She recently wrote a letter to President Bush letting him know that kids want clean water and clean air. ■



courtesy of Public Interest Group

Rich McClintock during his days as executive director of CoPIRG. McClintock is one of the longest-serving PIRG directors, with a cumulative count of 17 years under his belt.

Illinois PIRG Victory

In June, **Illinois PIRG** won a victory for a more open, responsible government when then-Gov. George Ryan signed new ethics reform legislation into law. The bill bans elected officials from accepting gifts valued at over \$100 per year from any individual lobbyist or government contractor, among other provisions.

"We're glad to see the Legislature and Gov. Ryan pass this reform bill with overwhelming support," said Illinois PIRG's **Frank Houston**.

The law also bans candidates for public office from receiving campaign contributions solicited by public employees from businesses they regulate, and prohibits nearly all state and local government employees who regulate businesses from ever soliciting those businesses for campaign contributions.

"The reforms are key toward securing a fair, responsible government," **Houston** said. "But this bill is just the first step in ethics reform."



courtesy of Rachel Shimshak

Rachel Shimshak: Renewable Northwest

Rachel Shimshak's state PIRGs experience began in the early 80's, when she joined CoPIRG. There, Rachel met **David Barenburg**. Rachel and David married in 1984 and returned to David's native Boston. Rachel began work as MASSPIRG's energy advocate, and later became legislative director.

In 1989, Rachel became the policy director for Massachusetts' Division of Energy Resources. There, she partnered with groups like MASSPIRG and Conservation Law Founda-

tion to design and implement conservation programs.

Rachel was selected to direct the Renewable Northwest Project, an effective organization with a list of accomplishments that includes new renewable energy projects that produce enough energy for 125,000 Northwest households.

Rachel and David, who have been married for 18 years, have an 11-year-old son, Max. She is still in touch with many PIRG friends, including **Kerry Barnett** and **Chris Taylor**. ■

Rachel Shimshak visits the Stateline Wind Project in Walla Walla, Wash., with her son, Max.

Alumni Updates



courtesy of Carrie Doyle

Matt Baker with some of his wedding guests (clockwise from top left): Benson Chiles, Sarah Dijulio, Baker, Becky Stanfield, Ken Ward, Kim Nelson, Amy Winter, Tracy Sheehan, Nancie Koenigsberg, Kristen Brengel, Steve Ma, Dave Rosenfeld and Rex Wilmouth.

Weddings

PIRG alumni **Benson Chiles** and **Sarah Kroon** were married in New Jersey on June 29.

Fund alum **Carrie Doyle** married CoPIRG Director **Matt Baker** on Aug. 24 at Estes Park in Denver, Colo.

Just a week before, on Aug. 17, **Becky Dinwoodie**, Green Corps

class of '93, married Dr. Sharon Flynn.

Movers & Shakers

Jon Golinger, a former CALPIRG advocate, spent the fall as campaign director for a November San Francisco ballot proposition sponsored by the local SEIU. Green Corps alum, **Melanie Nutter**, lent her skills as the canvass director for the

campaign . . . **Justin Ruben**, a Green Corps/Pesticide Watch alum, spent four months last summer in Quito, Ecuador, helping to organizing a massive protest against the Free Trade Area of the Americas summit . . . WashPIRG's '88 state board chair, **Knoll Lowney**, runs his own public interest law firm. He's also started several new organizations, including "Yes for Seattle," an organization that runs local ballot initiatives . . . Legal department alum **Jeff Bernstein** recently joined California Assemblymember Hannah-Beth Jackson's staff. He's currently collaborating with CALPIRG's **Steve**

Blacklege on a "No Contracts For Crooks" bill.

Babies

Mary Emily was born to PIRG alumni **Linda Van Ingen** and **Jeff Schade** on Aug. 2, 2002 . . . On Aug. 6, 2002, CoPIRG/Green Corps alum **Kelly Nordini** and her husband, Mike, had a baby girl, Lillian . . . On Feb. 2, 2002, PIRG alum **Jenny Sowerwine**, and her husband, Tom, had a baby girl, Indigo Heidemarie . . . Former NJPIRG Executive Director **Curtis Fisher**, his wife, Michelle, and their daughter, Carmen, welcomed new baby, Seth, into the family on Sept. 27, 2002. ■

In Memory Of . . .

On June 13, 2002, Sarah Forslund (Green Corps '93 and former Green Corps associate director) and Tom Mooers (Green Corps '93) welcomed Wesley Donald Forslund-Mooers into the world. Unfortunately, on June 16th, Sarah passed away unexpectedly. Her death was a tremendous blow to her family and friends, and to our family of activists and organizers. To honor her spirit and work, we established the Sarah Forslund Memorial Fellowship, to be awarded annually to a Green Corps graduate to work with the state PIRGs on environmental issues.



courtesy of Pete Maysmith

CoPIRG alum **Pete Maysmith** and wife Nancy welcomed Sydney Michelle on March 29, 2002.



courtesy of Michael and Julie Emden Tertes

PIRG alumni **Michael** and **Julie Emden Tertes** had a baby girl, Elliana Emden Tertes, on April 3, 2002.



courtesy of Tom and Abby Shank

Ollie Frederick Subak, son of **Tom** and **Abby Subak**, was born on Feb. 1, 2002.



courtesy of Wendy Schneider

On July 25, CALPIRG alum **Wendy Schneider** and her husband had a baby boy, Alesandro Antonia DeFelice.

Two New Voices For The Public

As you know, the state PIRGs work hard to give the public a voice on a wide range of issues, especially when powerful interests stand in the way of reform.

Now, after careful thought and planning, two state PIRGs have decided that the best way to advance their consumer and environmental work is to separate them into two distinct groups.

On June 17, 2002, PennPIRG's **David Masur** and **Beth McConnell** announced the first such separation, and took on new leadership roles: David as director of PennEnvironment, and Beth as state director of



PennPIRG. On Jan. 26, 2003, CALPIRG followed suit: **Steve Blackledge** is now legislative director of CALPIRG, and **Dan Jacobson** is legislative director of Environment California.

Alumni are an integral part of the boards of directors of both of these new groups. To learn more about these new voices for the public, visit www.PennEnvironment.org and www.EnvironmentCalifornia.org. ■

PennEnvironment Director David Masur released "Our Natural Heritage At Risk," the group's first report.

Alumni Updates

In June, CALPIRG/Fund alum **Holly Carrington** became community liaison for the Domestic Violence Center in Auckland, Australia . . . **Cathy Duvall**, a CALPIRG/OSPIRG alum, will be serving as national field director for Gephardt for President . . . Fellow OSPIRG/CALPIRG alum **Erik Brooks** is working for In Defense of Animals' Guardian Campaign . . . **Jeanne Merrill**, Green Corps '95 and Pesticide Watch alum, is the True Food Network coordinator for Greenpeace USA . . . **Tom Gilbert**, Green Corps '93, is the executive director of the Highlands Coalition, a group of over 90 organizations working to protect the New York/New Jersey Highlands region . . . CoPIRG alumni **Pete Maysmith** and **Jon Goldin-Dubois** ran the Chicago marathon. Both work for Colorado Common Cause . . . **Rob Inerfeld**, Green Corps '94, is now directing Community Greens . . . InPIRG founder **John Fitzgerald** was interviewed on NPR's "Living on Earth" this December . . . Fund alum **Trevor Fitzgibbon** (former WashPIRG ED) is now working with **Parker Blackman** (U.S. PIRG/CALPIRG alum) and **Daniel Silverman** at Fenton Communications on their anti-war/terrorism work . . . **Beka Econopolis**, Green Corps and ecopedge.com alum, was mentioned in a recent New York Times article . . . **John Rumlper** has returned to the PIRGs as national environmental program coordinator. ■

Marc was hired by the Fund in the '80s to build the Toxics Action program. As unofficial Aspen photographer and cofounder of the Tequila Research Center, Marc was well known for his spirited approach to building the PIRG movement.

Since leaving the PIRGs in the early 90's, Marc has earned a Masters in Education and developed several projects focused on democratizing the classroom and teacher collaboration. In his spare time, he's managed a small llama and sheep farm

and expanded his obsession with food to include growing, canning, pickling, baking and smoking anything he can get his hands on.

Marc recently founded the Summit Collaborative, an organization providing management support and collaboration-building assistance to foundations and nonprofit networks. He also launched Dot Org Media, an Internet publishing venture, and developed an effective change management program for nonprofits and executives called Strategic Technology. ■



courtesy of Marc Osten

PIRG alum Marc Osten worked to establish PIRG Toxic Action in the '80s, and also hooked the PIRGs up to their first e-mail accounts.

Alumni Aspen 2002

On Friday, Dec. 13, Aspen felt the first rumblings of the biggest shared vacation ever.

On Saturday, many staff and alumni headed straight for the slopes, while others hit the health club. That evening, we celebrated **Doug Phelps'** 30th anniversary, danced to the Colorado western swing band Dalhart Imperials, and welcomed special guest Michael Moore.

By Sunday, we were 540 strong. At the state PIRGs' 30th Anniversary Dinner that evening, everyone was wowed by a delicious spread, a multi-media retrospective extravaganza, and an inspiring performance by Arlo Guthrie.

On Monday, **Doug Casler** led the First Annual Aspen Fun Run,

Celebrating 30 Years Of Action in the Public Interest



Carolyn Hartmann, Liz Hitchcock, Ennis Carter and Sandy Pooler at the 30th Anniversary Dinner. For more Aspen 2002 photos and details, visit www.pirg.org/aspen.

families met up for an Ice Skating Party, and truly hearty souls headed off on an overnight backcountry ski trip. Alumni and program staff gathered for the **Karpinski-Alt** cocktail party, carnivores headed for **Rex Wilmouth's** Meat Eaters' Night, and Green Corps celebrated their

10th anniversary with live jazz and awards.

On Tuesday, the snow began to fall and didn't stop until there were 14 inches of fresh powder. At the Basketball Tournament, the Late 20's team stole the title from the Geezers, and future

chefs made sushi with **Teri Olle**. Then, everybody danced the night away at the Double Diamond Dance Party.

On Wednesday, families joined **George Lester** and **Jenny Carter** for a pizza and pool party. The Fellows rocked a Revenge of the Nerds Party, and Tolkien fans caught the debut of "The Two Towers," while **Chris Chatto** revived Shakespeare in the Condos with "Henry IV."

Thursday's highlights included chocolate tasting with **Wendy Wendlandt**, a Sprawlbusters Social hosted by **Andrea Broaddus**, and the umpteenth annual Pool Tournament. Later, staff and alumni mingled at CALPIRG's Screen Test Party.

Friday's highlight was the Farewell Dance Party, where everyone toasted each other, an incredible week, and the next Alumni Aspen in 2005 . . . ■

Public Interest Job Listings

The Wilderness Society—Wildlife Refuge Program Associate. Louise Tucker, The Wilderness Society, 1615 M St., NW, Washington D.C. 20036; louise_tucker@twso.org.
Sierra Club—Lands Team Director. Legislative Director, Sierra Club, 408 C Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002; www.sierraclub.org.
State PIRGs—National Consumer Program Coordinator. Margie Alt, (617) 292-4800; altpirg@aol.com.
Trout Unlimited—Program Assistant. Sam Mace, Trout Unlimited, 213 SW Ash, Suite 205, Portland, OR 97204; smace@tu.org.
California ACORN—Development Associate. Nathan Henderson-James; (510) 436-5690 (ph); (510) 436-6395 (fx); (510) 773-8012 (cell); caacornres@acorn.org.
FFPIR—Prospecting Director. Doug Casler, (805) 966-5470; dougcasler@earthlink.net.
Mineral Policy Center—National Campaign Intern. Lauren Pagel, US Program Coordinator, Mineral Policy Center, 1612 K Street, NW, Suite 808, D.C. 20006; (202) 887-1875 (fx); lpagel@mineralpolicy.org.
ecopedge.com—Director. Wendy Wendlandt, (213) 251-3680; w2@pirg.org.
The SPIN Project—Media Trainer/Public Relations Strategist. SPIN Project, 77 Federal St., 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94107; (415) 284-1414 (fx); info@spinproject.org.
NJPIRG, MaryPIRG, OhioPIRG—Executive Directors. Margie Alt, (617) 292-4800; altpirg@aol.com.
AGENDA/SCOPE—Development Director. Deepak Pateriya c/o Development Director Search, AGENDA, 1715 W. Florence Ave., LA, CA 90047; (323) 789-7939 (fx).
Florida Conservation Alliance—Executive Director. Clay Henderson, Chairman, Florida Conservation Alliance, P.O. Box 532004, Orlando, FL 32853; FloridaCA@aol.com.
ACLU—9/11 Organizer. Office Administrator, ACLU, 1333 H Street, NW, 10th Floor, Washington, DC 20005.
Progressive Maryland—Canvass Director. Tom Hucker, 8730 Georgia Avenue, Suite 200, Silver Spring, MD 20910; tom@progressivemaryland.org; (301) 495-9463 (fx); or (301) 495-7004 (ph).

The State PIRGs **30** YEARS OF ACTION IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST



courtesy of Meg Kelly

John Richards, Alumni Achievement Award recipient.

Beginning as a NYPIRG student intern in 1974 and staffer in 1976, **John Richard** embarked on a lifelong commitment to the public interest.

He has spent the 30 years since creating and leading many endeavors, including the Center for

“He’s a little green, but you’ll like him. He’s a keeper.”
-Donald Ross to Ralph Nader, regarding John Richard.

Study of Responsive Law, Essential Information and the Multinational Monitor.

In 1978, **Donald Ross**, a co-founder of PIRG, introduced John to **Ralph Nader** at a national strategy meeting convened by Nader to discuss the recent failure to win a federal consumer protection agency.

Ross told Nader that John was “a little green, but you’ll like him. He’s a keeper.” John has since served as Nader’s chief

advisor for more than two decades.

John has written and contributed to scores of articles and books on corporate behavior, the environment and consumer protection, including a 1981 book he co-authored with Nader called “Who’s Poisoning America,” a study of victims of chemical pollution.

John is the first recipient of the state PIRGs’ Alumni Achievement Award. ■

Alumni Achievement

Over the last 30 years, many of the people who have organized and now lead the nation’s environmental, consumer, political reform and social justice organizations have come from the state PIRGs.

Other PIRG alumni have distinguished themselves in government service, or have made significant contributions to the public interest through work with the media, foundations, universities, and through public-spirited leadership in the private sector.

The Alumni Achievement Award is designed to recognize one of these individuals each year for outstanding contributions to the public interest.

In 1972, a group of passionate and dedicated activists came together with a remarkably simple vision: that public decision should be made in the public, not corporate, interest.

Over the next three decades, this vision spawned the state PIRGs, along with hundreds, if not thousands, of reports, projects,

campaigns, ballot initiatives, lawsuits and organizing drives to win concrete results that improve the everyday lives of the public in countless ways.

Now, it’s time to celebrate, with a series of special events in nearly 20 cities across the U.S. Appropriately enough, one of the first events was held in the birthplace

of the state PIRGs, OSPIRG, on October 17, 2002.

Among the many alumni in attendance were former directors Tom Novick, Joel Ario, and Ross Williams; founding student Nancy Wessinger-Kline, Peter Sorenson and Peter Glazer; and OSPIRG’s first staffperson, Emmy Roe. Richard Benner, student intern in

1973, was one of the events’ featured speakers.

On February 11, 2003, the state PIRGs honored 30 Public Interest Champions in the U.S. Congress at a 30th Anniversary Reception in Washington, D.C.

A schedule of upcoming events can be found on the back of this newsletter or by visiting www.pirg.org/alumni.

Celebrating 30 Years

You're invited to come celebrate your part in 30 years of state-level action in the public interest. There are many more to come . . . check out www.pirg.org/alumni for the complete list.

Feb. 11—State PIRGs Congressional Reception 30th Anniversary

Coordinators: Liz Hitchcock and Liz Guertin, uspirg@pirg.org

Feb. 27—MASSPIRG 30th Anniversary

Coordinator: Dee Cummings, masspirg@masspirg.org

March 6—PIRGIM 30th Anniversary

Coordinators: Brian Imus and Megan Owens, pirgim@pirg.org

March 11—NCPiRG 4th Anniversary

Coordinator: Elizabeth Ouzts, ncpirg@pirg.org

March 13—CALPIRG 30th Anniversary in San Francisco

Coordinator: Teri Olle, calpirg@pirg.org

March 20—WISPIRG 15th Anniversary

Coordinator: Kerry Schumann, wispirg@pirg.org

April 3—CALPIRG 30th Anniversary in Los Angeles

Contact: Nikki Riedt, nikki@calpirg.org

April 9—CALPIRG 30th Anniversary in Sacramento

Contact: Nikki Riedt, nikki@calpirg.org



courtesy of Meg Kelly

*State PIRG alumni **Julie Miles**, **Mary Raftery** and **April Smith** in Aspen. For more photos, visit www.pirg.org/aspden.*

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