

## Among Environmentalists, Part II

by Daniel Aronson

In the last issue of the Sierran, I explained that improvements in energy efficiency, including effective mass transit, would improve material well-being while reducing household costs. I'm writing again to point out that reductions in costs would make it more feasible to use increases in labor productivity to reduce the workweek without a cut in pay.

A common response to the idea of shorter hours without a pay cut is, "Great idea, but it will never happen." But in fact technological progress—which leads to continual increases in labor productivity—normally does provide us with greater leisure time without a cut in compensation. For example, in the first half of the 20th century, the workweek fell by about 25% while total pay increased. And recent surveys (conducted by Harris and the Families and Work Institute) indicate that both men and women do want to spend less time at work in favor of more time with family.

After expressing strong interest in shorter hours in 1993, unions have aban-

doned this goal. But with the increasing number of women in the workforce—as well as the increase in the time that men are devoting to household obligations—union members should certainly be receptive to resuming the fight for a reduced workweek.

On average, managerial employees are more overworked than hourly workers. But while they are most in need of shorter hours, managerial employees do not have the ability to organize and make demands. Yet there are ways to overcome this problem. First, to the extent that environmentalists can help bring about a more energy efficient economy, Americans would be able to enjoy an improved quality of life without having to work so many hours.

Second, if environmentalists helped unions to achieve shorter hours without a cut in pay, managerial employees would start resisting long hours; after all, if your subordinates get to go home after, say, six hours, you're not about to accept slavish hours. Third, we should publicize

the fact that both men and women want more time to spend with family, and emphasize that this is consistent with old-fashioned values. This would create public sympathy for employees, managerial or hourly, who express a desire for shorter hours. Finally, the idea of having time for sports, academic study, the arts, or just walking outside with your family, should be seen as the ultimate in the "good life."

Environmentalists should not view shorter hours as a side issue. Unions often perceive steps toward energy efficiency as a threat to job creation. (Remember the Teamsters stand on drilling in ANWR?) But shorter hours without a cut in pay would help avoid higher unemployment, and under this scenario unions would be more willing to join with environmentalists to support efficiency. ♪

(Daniel Aronson ([daronson@raritanval.edu](mailto:daronson@raritanval.edu)) teaches courses in environmental economics at Raritan Valley Community College.)

## Report from San Francisco

Jane Tousman is the Chapter's Delegate to the annual national Sierra Club "circus" meeting (officially known as the Council of Club Leaders = CCL), which took place Sept 18-22, 2002. She filed this report:

The CCL passed resolutions urging the Club's Board of Directors as follows:

1. To mobilize all possible lobbying resources in support of Congressional ratification of the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

2. To adopt a strong policy on the environmental aspects of national security, including guidance on environmental security.

3. To lobby toward a peaceful resolution of US-Iraqi differences - because of the dire potential for negative environmental impacts of war, and the prospect for much loss of human life. (The debate on this resolution was contentious.)

4. To improve the coordination between the Club's national staff and its Chapter volunteers, to reduce the likelihood of conflicts such as occurred recently in a poor district in Los Angeles: where the two Club entities took opposite sides over the placing of a new school on a former toxic waste site.

I was pleased to accept a national Club award (known as the Susan Miller award), for Dick Colby, a long-serving New Jersey Chapter leader, currently editor of this newsletter. (Dennis Schvejda, our erstwhile Conservation Chair and now NJ Chapter's Ken Lloyd Conservation Director, received the Club's Special Service Award in 2000 for his outstanding leadership, dedication and service.) ♪

(For a list of the Club's national award categories, and the names of winners in recent years, go to [www.sierraclub.org/awards/](http://www.sierraclub.org/awards/).)

## POPULATION REPORT: BUSH ABANDONING SUPPORT FOR FAMILY PLANNING

by Bonnie Tillery, our Population Issues Coordinator

The Sierra Club works for a woman's right to decide how many children she will have and when she will have them. When given a choice, women choose smaller families and space their children farther apart, thereby ensuring healthier babies, healthier mothers, and in the long run a healthier environment. To achieve these goals, the Sierra Club's Global Population and Environment Program promotes education through national and international programs that allow women to make responsible choices, in addition to lobbying for safe, effective family planning services.

At a recent United Nations regional meeting on population, held in Bangkok, US officials said that they were acting on the Administration's authority in refusing to reaffirm support for the Cairo Program of Action, a model agreement to improve women's health and help slow population growth that was adopted by 179 countries at the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994.

The Cairo agreement affirmed the most basic of human rights: the right of all people to decide freely how many children to have and when to have them, as well as the right of all individuals to reproductive health care.

If the Administration's plan is to withdraw US support for Cairo, it would mark a fundamental shift in US foreign assistance policy and conflict sharply with this Administration's often stated support for women's rights, family planning and related health programs.

Despite constant political conflict over these family planning programs, until recently the U.S. government's population assistance program has maintained

remarkable continuity in both focus and investment through the administrations of six Presidents, both Republican and Democrat, and sixteen Congresses. The United States was one of the first countries to provide family planning aid. US leadership, both technical and financial, has been indispensable and has encouraged other nations to strengthen their support for these critical programs. The Cairo Program of Action has served as the model for affordable, safe family planning programs around the world that in turn have helped to slow population growth, thereby helping reduce demands on the environment.

To voice your support for international family planning programs, call the White House at 202-456-1111 or email to [President@WhiteHouse.gov](mailto:President@WhiteHouse.gov). Urge the President to reaffirm the U.S. commitment to the Cairo Program of Action. Ask him to uphold the long-standing worldwide consensus, which recognizes the critical importance of family planning and reproductive health services in improving the lives and health of women, children, families and the environment.

For more information, please call me (609-259-6438) or send e-mail ([btl44blt@aol.com](mailto:btl44blt@aol.com)).

I also wanted to mention that newly-re-elected Senator Frank Lautenberg, a New Jersey Sierra Club lifetime achievement award recipient, credits his recent election success to concentrating on domestic issues; in particular, abortion rights and the effort to keep abortion opponents off the US Supreme Court. ♪



## ANNUAL APPEAL UPDATE

Thank you to everyone who gave so generously to our Sierra Club New Jersey Chapter's annual appeal campaign. All the money that is given in this gift drive will stay in NJ to be used on our Chapter's goals.

There are so many caring and giving New Jersey Sierra Club members. Without your charitable contributions to our cause, we would not be able to achieve results on our important State environmental issues.

If you have not had a chance to send in your donation, there is still time. We appreciate whatever you can give.

Thank you,  
Tina Schvejda,  
Departing Chapter Chair

## Letter from our Chapter's Longest Serving Member

communicated by Joan Denzer

Don McClure has the honor of being the "senior" member of the Club in New Jersey. He joined in 1946, at a time when membership required approval by a membership committee. He would have known David Brower, Phil Berry and other Club 'names' as young men. He attended our annual Appreciation Day reception, and sent this commentary:

Thanks for your invitation to the Sierra Club reception (held on Nov 17). And thanks for your warm greeting—it was worth hanging in there all those years for that.

I joined the Club in 1946, the year I went to Berkeley for my graduate work in chemistry. That summer I joined a Club-sponsored two weeks of climbing (in) the Teton Range in Wyoming. We scrambled up everything of significance there. After that, I went out on weekends with the Rock-Climbing Section to practice - on rocks in the Bay area. Then there were week-long trips to Yosemite and to various sites in the Sierras, and skiing in the winter from Clair-Tappan Lodge. It's fun to think about all that. I realized then that the Club was a

remarkable organization; it has evolved from a local California group to a national one in the past 55 years, becoming more and more of a force for the environment. Getting married slowed down my activities, but some years later I took the family (five of us) on a wilderness threshold trip and my older son (a Club member) has done some climbing in the Sierras.

I met people in Berkeley who put mountain climbing as number one in their lives, with all the other stuff serving that passion. In my case science won out, but I could see their point.

My hat's off to you for promoting the activities of the Sierra Club.

Warmest regards, Don McClure

## SierraActivist.org!

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## Try out the DEP's New Map Service

NJ DEP has put much of its GIS information on the web at <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/gis/imapnj/imapnj.htm>. And you don't need GIS software to use it. By zooming to an area that you are interested in, you can retrieve known contaminated sites, soil types, streams, wellhead protection areas, state planning areas, legislative districts, and locations with threatened or endangered species. As you zoom in, you can pick up more of the digital imagery, including infrared aerial photos, for the site you are interested in. Take a look and use it to learn more about where you live or what you care about.

contributed by Steve Kowlton, Jersey Shore Group Chair, 23 Oct 02

Thanks to all members who responded to our annual fund-raising appeal