

Earth Week 1990

IN CELEBRATION OF EARTH WEEK

A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO THE COMMONWEALTH TIMES

APRIL 10, 1990

There has been an intensification of energy towards the modern environmental movement that has spread across the world.

Individuals and groups from countries all over the world have begun to help by doing their part in mending and repairing our perishing planet Earth. Each country has to deal with the constant, daily influx of the destruction of the environment. Incidents like the Valdez oil spill, Chernobyl's nuclear disaster, tropical deforestation in South America backed by beef industries, global warming and ozone depletion are all disasters that have happened or are still happening that affect the ecological balance of the planet. These disasters have increased concern and sparked the organization of local grassroots action committees that deal with a local issue that, in proportion, has an effect similar to the great environmental tragedies.

The forest that is saved in Brazil can affect the air quality of Australia. Chemical fertilizer used on a farm in Iowa not only destroys the topsoil of that community's farming, and depletes the life in area lakes and streams, but heat-trapping gases are also emitted by nitrates' interaction with soil bacteria. Oil leaked from your car into your driveway can pollute your neighborhood's underground water table. The number and magnitude of these small assaults on the ecosystem add up to create environmental turmoil.

There are grassroots environmental organizations at VCU, such as the VCU Recycling Cooperative, the Rainforest Action Network, and the Noah Project, which have formed to focus on individual pursuits that affect the surrounding community. The Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC) is the hub to which all the individual groups attach. It works on national SEAC campaigns but also aids in developing local ones.

Earth Day 1990

VCU Earth Day 1990, to be celebrated April 16-22, is the current SEAC project on which all of VCU's environmental groups are collaborating. Over 3,000 universities across the nation will be participating in Earth Day 1990, and VCU will be represented in this important global event. One of the main themes of Earth Week at VCU is unity through diversity. The idea is to bring the administration, faculty, different organizations, students and community members together for an all-encompassing, universal cause: Awareness of the environment through education and celebration of the Earth.

It is SEAC's goal to try to get as many people involved as possible by participating in the environmental pledge that was sent out to almost all of the campus organizations as well as different businesses and individuals. The pledge includes activities that groups and individuals can participate in to help save the environment. Some of the pledge projects include adopting dorm floors

or buildings, helping monitor recycling bins, or taking part in the clean sweep from Main St. Grill to Maymont on Earth Day morning. If none of the pledges offered were appealing then the option of coming up with an original world-saving idea was offered.

In order to attempt to have the faculty join in on the Earth Day festivities SEAC is asking the professors to participate in a teach-in reminiscent of the 1970 Earth Day when colleges participated in campus-wide lectures on the environment. SEAC is asking VCU's professors, or students in the classroom, to spend a few minutes and discuss the broad subject of our ecosystem.

Earth Week at VCU

Activities are also planned for each day of Earth Week. On Monday, April 16, the week begins with a recycling workshop and lecture. All recyclable materials will be discussed, as well as the where, when and how's of recycling. The lecture begins at 7:00 in the Commons, so come equipped with questions.

Tuesday night's lecture, which begins at 7:30 in the Business Building. Theatre is sponsored by SEAC and the Maymont Foundation. Dr. Lovejoy, who is a scientist from the Smithsonian, will be discussing rainforests and their role in maintaining life on earth.

On Thursday Dr. Davies, one of the nation's leading researchers in Transcendental Meditation, will lecture. The lecture is titled "The Ecology of the Mind." The thought that one must be able to help oneself before one can help the environment will be a focus of the talk.

Heading off the weekend is the story telling at the Shafer Street Playhouse on Friday night from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. VCU

English professors such as Drs. Walter Coppedge, Bryant Mangum, Richard Priebe, Gary Sange, and Gregory Donovan will weave wondrous tales and poetry from their favorite stories, as well their own original works. The Appalachian dance band will accompany the storytelling with some traditional folk music.

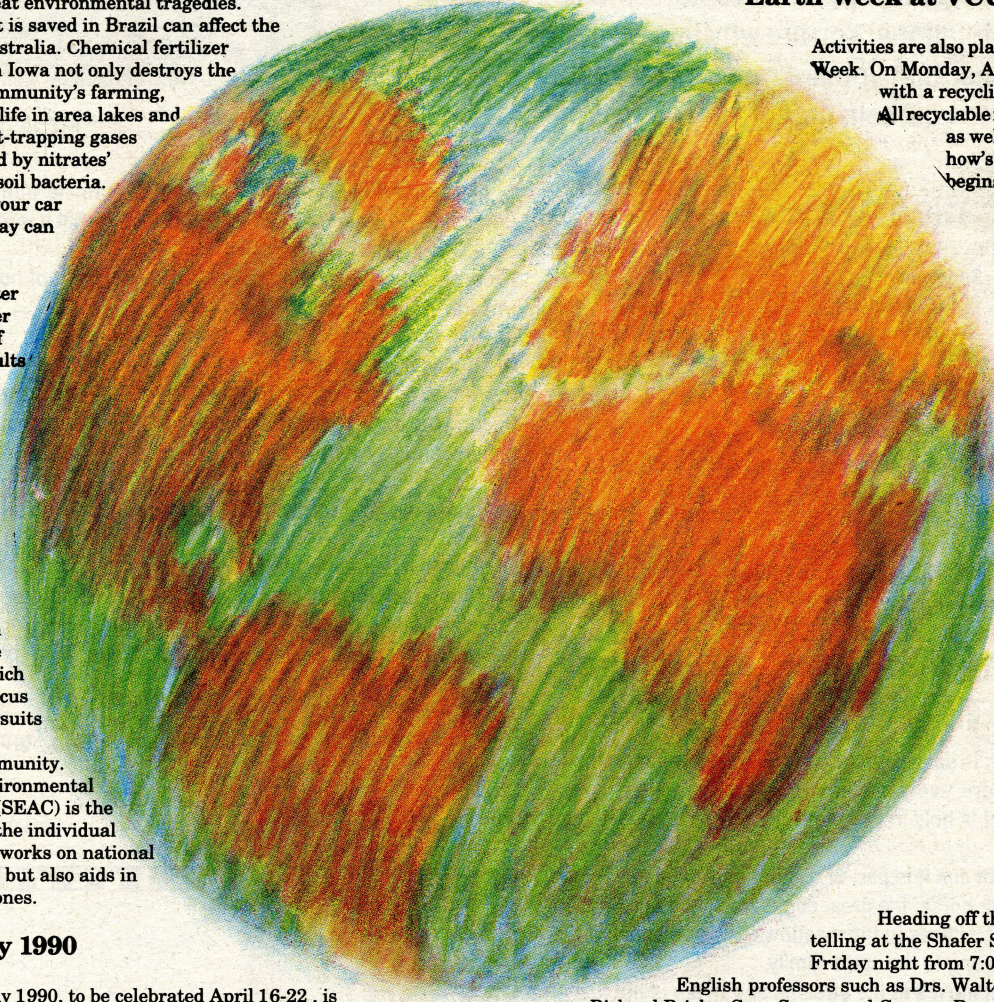
Saturday is the Earth Day celebration, full of games, arts and crafts, music performances (featuring Burma Jam, Ruckus Watasi, VCU Jazz ensemble) and a dance performance by a VCU dance group, Activating Ods. Perhaps

though the most important component of the celebration will be the information tables, from groups like Greenpeace, Sierra Club and other local environmental groups.

On Earth Day 1990, Sunday April 22, SEAC is sponsoring a clean up from the Main St. Grill at 8:00 a.m. through the Fan neighborhood, and then ending up at the Richmond City Earth Day celebration at Maymont.

VCU and the Earth

by Jeff Ray



Thank You

A lot of hard work and effort has gone into the planning and presentation of Earth Week 1990 at Virginia Commonwealth University. There are too many people who have assisted in Earth Week to thank individually, so we'll make it an en masse thank you.

To everyone who has done the slightest thing to assist in this, or any other positive venture, thank you, and congratulations: You are why this works.

Please remember that you are responsible. You are responsible to yourself, first of all. The rest of it follows.

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Reverence Will Be Total or It Will Not Be at All

"Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing and humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people.

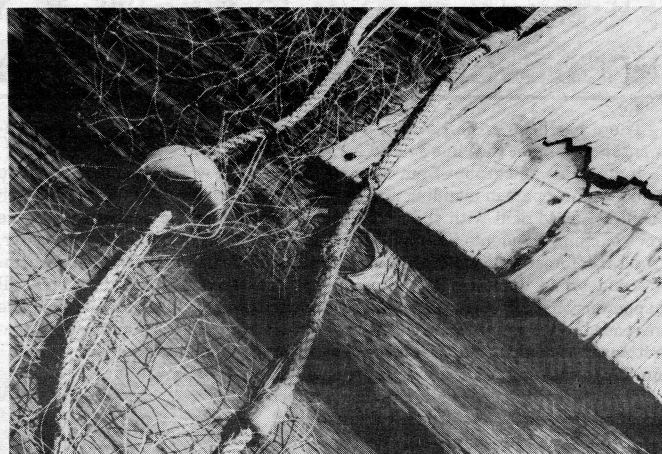
"We are part of the Earth and it is part of us. The perfumed flowers are our sisters; the deer, the horse, the great eagle, these are our brothers. The rocky crests, the juices in the meadows, the body heat of the pony, and man — all belong to the same family.

"This shining water that moves in the streams and rivers is not just water but the blood of our ancestors each ghostly reflection in the clear water of the lakes tells of events and memories in the life of my people. The water's murmur is the voice of my father's father.

"... The air is precious to us, the air shares its spirit with all the life it supports. The wind that gave our grandfather his first breath also receives his last sigh. And the wind must also give our children the spirit of life.

"The Earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the Earth. Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it. What he does to the web, he does to himself."

— taken from a speech by Chief Seattle of the Suquamish Tribe delivered in 1854 to mark the transferral of ancestral tribal lands to the U.S. government



James A. Smith - Commonwealth Times

"A child said *What is the grass?* fetching it to me with full hands,
How could I answer the child? I do not know what it is any more than he.

I guess it must be the flag of my disposition, out of hopeful greenstuff woven.

Or I guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord,
A scented gift and remembrancer designedly dropt,
Bearing the owner's name someway in the corners, that we may see and remark, and say *Whose?*

Or I guess the grass is itself a child, the produced babe of the vegetation.

Or I guess it is a uniform hieroglyphic,
And it means, Sprouting alike in broad zones and narrow zones,
Growing among black folks as among white,
Kanuck Tuckahoe, Congressman, Cuff, I give them the same, I receive them the same.

And now it seems to me the beautiful uncut hair of graves."

—Walt Whitman
from *Leaves of Grass*

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In the Field of Consciousness, the observer and the observed become one - man is no longer separate from his environment

Dr. John Davies to lecture on the Ecology of Consciousness

By Mike Carosi

On April 19, in coordination with "Earth Week 1990 at VCU," Dr. John Davies, research coordinator for the University of Maryland's Center for International Development and Conflict Management, will speak on "the Ecology of Consciousness." Davies, who has done research at Harvard and holds a Ph.D. in political psychology from Maharishi International University (MIU), will discuss his own and others' research in this area over the last two decades.

The "ecology of consciousness" is an approach to solving environmental problems by first solving the problems within the individual. Davies' research in particular suggests that if man is going to introduce coherent and harmonious effects into the environment, he must be individually coherent and harmonious. It is obvious that literature, art, science and technology are expressions of man's state of mind. It is obvious that our impact on the environment, whether constructive or destructive, is also an expression of our state of mind. In particular, this coherence, according to Davies, can be generated on an individual and collective level through the practice of the Transcendental Meditation (TM) technique.

Over the last 20 years hundreds of research studies published in major journals (*Journal of Clinical Psychology*, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *International Journal of Neuropsychology*, etc.) have provided a growing body of evidence that the experience of "pure consciousness" as gained through the TM technique has the ability to produce a calming state of mind, increase intelligence, enhance creativity, improve physical health, and reduce society's level of stress and in turn raise the quality of life. Research conducted by Davies and others and published in academic journals such as Yale University's *Journal of Conflict Resolution* is also providing revolutionary evidence that this meditation practice has a direct beneficial effect on the environment as well.

The TM technique is a simple, non-cognitive mechanical technique that repeatedly enables the ordinary individual to experience "pure consciousness," the fundamental level of one's

own awareness. This fundamental level of one's own awareness is also, according to Davies, intimately connected with the fundamental nature of the environment as a whole. One naturally becomes aware of a basic "connectedness" between oneself and the environment. "We need to challenge right away the old paradigm that 'I am separate from my environment,'" Davies said. "The two are fundamentally unified."

In short, according to Davies, the TM technique teaches the individual to transcend deep into a field of consciousness where all things are connected and from which all things stem. Understanding this field of consciousness is basic to the research. In this field, through direct perception, "the gap between the observer and the observed is removed, and all aspects of

Davies and others in the field of consciousness. For the last 10 years Davies has participated as a researcher with teams at MIU, Harvard and other universities on the effects of the practice of TM and the experience of pure consciousness on the well-being of the individual, the connection between consciousness and social behavior, the well-being of society, and the environment in general.

Two studies he recently co-authored show the range of his research. The first, done while he was at Harvard was published this January in *The Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (attracting widespread commentary in the press) provides direct evidence that the practice of TM can significantly enhance longevity. The second, published in Yale University's *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, deals

and war fatalities in neighboring Lebanon. A follow up study confirmed the impact of this group and six subsequent groups at varying distances from Lebanon in alleviating violence in the Lebanon War. On average, there was a 66 percent increase in cooperative events among the antagonistic parties, a 48 percent reduction in armed conflict, a 71 percent reduction in war deaths, and a 68 percent reduction in war injuries.

How can such results be explained? The explanation offered is that mind is a "field phenomenon," with our individual minds arising from a "field of consciousness" as its localized expressions, like waves on an ocean, much as, according to quantum mechanics, everything in the physical world arises from an underlying quantum field. Meditation researchers and physicists

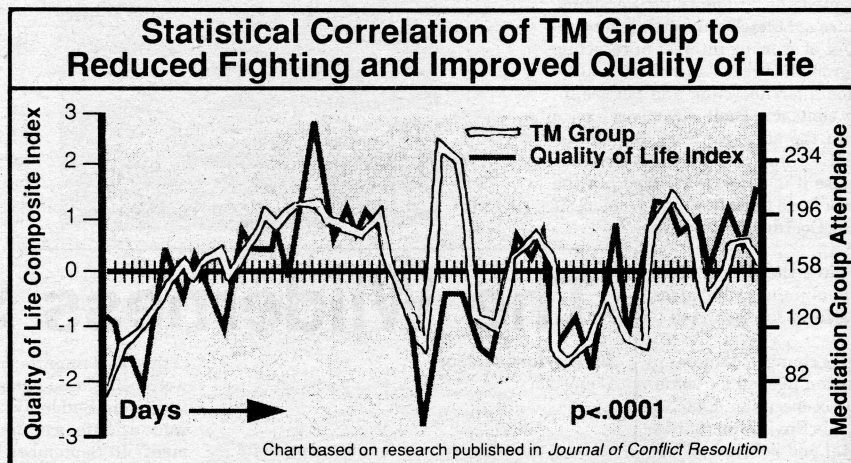
have both begun to argue that these two fields are ultimately expressions of a single underlying "unified field."

"Understanding the field as a source of connectedness," Davies said, "is the key to understanding man's existence in the environment." We ordinarily tend to view the environment as separate from ourselves. The pursuit of goals on the basis of such a fragmented view naturally tends to produce damaging effects: pollution, depletion of the ozone layer, destruction of rainforests, and global warming. These unfortunate effects arise from our ignorance of—and lack of experience of—our true "connectedness" with the environment.

In his lecture Davies will describe how the research over the past 20 years has

led him to the conclusion that coming into direct contact with this unified field can have profoundly beneficial effects on the environment as a whole as well as on the individual. For as an article in the *MIU Review* puts it, "When individuals transcend and directly experience the underlying field of consciousness, the field becomes enlivened in the same way a pebble enlivens the surface of a still pond into which it is dropped." And when man experiences the connection between all things, including especially his connection with the environment, his natural desire is to avoid being unfriendly to it.

The lecture on *The Ecology of Consciousness* will be held Thursday, April 19 at 7 p.m. in the Business Building auditorium.



Researchers at Maharishi International University (MIU) in Fairfield maintain a two-month gathering of Transcendental Meditation experts in Israel correlated strongly with reduced fighting in neighboring Lebanon based on an index they developed measuring quality of life. The chart shows the conference attendees and number of days the program was held.

thought, one's body, and one's physical surroundings are recognized as directly connected." The individual no longer stands at a distance from the bird, the tree, the environment—or their preservation and/or destruction.

The existence of such a field is repeatedly referred to in civilizations throughout all of history. Poets, philosophers, yogis, visionaries and saints, Eastern and Western, have recorded this experience of entering a state of mind where all things appear to be clearly understood, and where all things are one.

To the modern thinker such notions traditionally have appeared rooted in mysticism and without empirical proof. These notions however are now being put to empirical test by the research of

with the effect of meditation on society as a whole.

This study examined the effects of an international Middle East peace project based in East Jerusalem. The study demonstrated the social environmental effect of the group practice of TM and TM-Sidhi (advanced meditation). When small portions of the population meditated simultaneously, levels of warfare, violence, crime and accidental deaths were reduced, and positive social indices improved. Time analysis over a two month period indicated that whenever the size of the TM and TM-Sidhi groups was above the "predicted threshold," there was a significant reduction in violence, crime and auto accidents in Jerusalem and Israel and a reduction in war intensity

Recycling Cooperative Takes Off

By Dave Gedney
Supplement Writer

The VCU Recycling Cooperative began as Students for Recycling in the spring of 1989. Anne Fletcher, Marcella Wells, and John Barimo were the founders of this group, whose paths crossed while pursuing the common goal of university-wide recycling. Students for Recycling tried to reach the individual departments and explain the need to recycle their paper waste. Armed with facts about wasting resources and a growing need to conserve by recycling, they talked to secretaries, teachers and deans. They learned that the state purchasing contract, which includes paper, mandates that all state property be accounted for through the state. Paper is garbage while it's in the trash can, but if it is removed and recycled it is considered property and must be accounted for; if it isn't, the person may be faced with charges of stealing from the government. A plan of action must first be devised within the parameters of the contract, which then has to be approved by the president and administration. The program would then be passed down to faculty, staff, and students.

In response to an advertisement in the Commonwealth Times asking for volunteers and support, Ted Pelikan, the assistant director of operations for the Facilities Management Division, contacted Fletcher to discuss the feasibility of a university-wide recycling program. They set up a task force on recycling to study the problem and come up with a solution.

Dr. Richard Wilson, the vice provost of Student Affairs, represented the administration. Pelikan represented facilities and housekeeping. Fletcher represented the Students for Recycling. Kathleen Hall advised and encouraged Fletcher in getting the support of other student groups. Out of growing interest in recycling and environmental issues, this group has grown to include faculty, staff, administration, the Students for Recycling and parties involved in the state purchasing contract. Their objectives are to design a program that is within the state contract and can be implemented on the VCU and MCV campuses. The task force has undergone a name change because it is not a task force until the president appoints an official task force to address the problem. It is now referred to as the Recycling Coordinating Group. The group meets biweekly.

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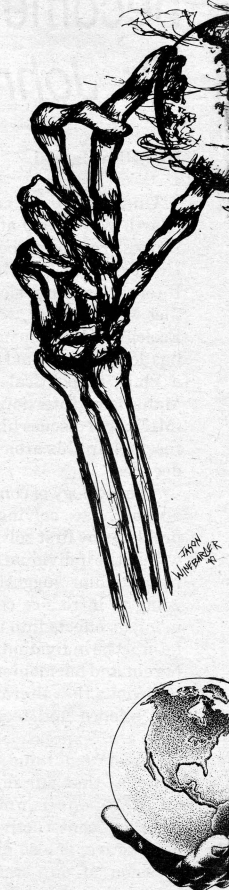
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photo by Holly Radford



The Wilderness Society,

By Gaylord Nelson
Counselor

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A giant oil spill hits the coast of a large western state. Millions of gallons of crude oil wash up on shore for weeks. The nation is riveted by television pictures of oil-soaked birds and dead fish floating in the ocean and washed up on shore. Oil company executives deliver excuses and claim it's a one-in-a-million disaster. Cleanup crews are dispatched, and millions of dollars are spent by state, federal and local governments in a cleanup and recovery program.

It's not what you think. This disaster happened 20 years ago near Santa Barbara, California. It remains one of the worst oil spills in American history. It also proved to be a catalyst in helping to awaken America's environmental consciousness. Some 16 months later, a much more significant phenomenon occurred on April 22, 1970 — the first Earth Day.

It really all started in the summer of 1969 while I was on a tour of western states to talk about conservation issues. As I was flying to Berkeley for a speech to students — after inspecting the Santa Barbara oil spill — I read an

article in *Ramparts* magazine about how teach-ins were being used by anti-war organizers to educate the public. Suddenly it occurred to me -- why not set aside a day for a nationwide teach-in on the environment? In September I announced plans for Earth Day and the response was nothing short of remarkable.

The main purpose of Earth Day was to organize a nationwide, grassroots demonstration that would get the attention of the politicians and force environmental issues into the mainstream of American political debate. It worked. Earth Day 1970 was a huge success and became an instant American legend, due in large part to the tremendous energy, commitment and grassroots activities of college students all across the country.

On this date in the spring of 1970 the modern American environmental movement took off. Twenty million people, 2,000 colleges and universities, 10,000 grammar and high schools and 2,000 communities mobilized for the first nationwide demonstrations on environmental problems. Congress adjourned for the day so members could attend Earth Day events in their districts. Sometimes it is hard to remember that 20 years ago environmental issues were not part of the political mainstream. In the 1968 presidential campaign, for example, not a single campaign speech was devoted to environmental concerns. Changes in the past 20 years assure that from

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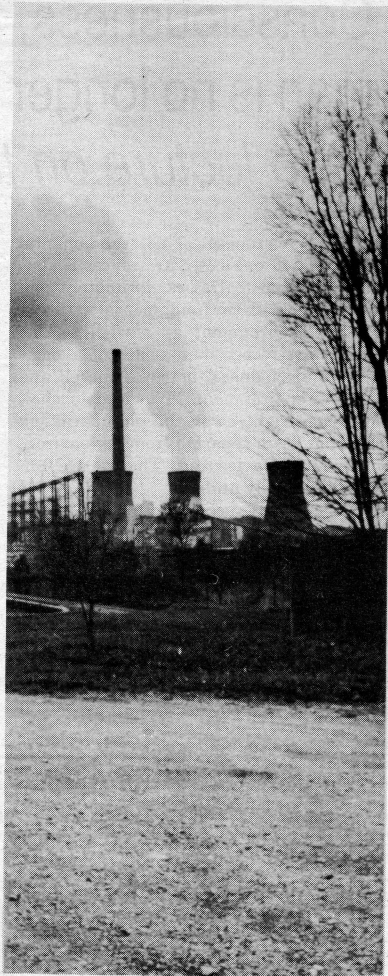


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The Wilderness Society, Founder of Earth Day 1970

By Gaylord Nelson
Counselor

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now on the environment will be an issue in every presidential campaign.

Perhaps the most important advance since Earth Day is one of attitude and understanding — the recognition, finally, that human activities have created a global environmental crisis that urgently demands our attention. This is a giant leap forward.

Plans are now being finalized for a worldwide Earth Day celebration on April 22. Let there be no doubt about the significance of this event: It will be the largest grassroots demonstration in history. The single most important objective of this 20th anniversary celebration is an international public demonstration so overwhelming that it will literally shake the political leadership of the world out of its lethargy and galvanize it into a monumental cooperative effort to stop the destruction and begin the restoration. It is time for political leaders of every nation to recognize that in the long haul the state of our environment is far more important to the condition of man on the planet than the threat of nuclear war, missile gaps, Star Wars, crime in the streets or communism in Nicaragua.

How much longer are the United States and the Soviet Union going to spend \$600 billion a year for weapons that only increase our mutual vulnerability and dissipate our resources? It is time for the two superpowers to agree to cut spending on weapons by 50 percent in the next decade and another 50 percent

in the following decade. Half of the savings should be dedicated to programs to reverse and restore global environmental damage. It is a plan with no losers, and the whole world is a winner.

There has been some significant progress on environmental problems since that first Earth Day. Yet, merely maintaining the current programs and policies will fall far short of what is needed to prevent continued steady environmental decline. The responsibility lies with the world's younger generation. My generation does not have the time left to do it, and, unfortunately came to an appreciation of the monumental significance of the issue too late.

If society is going to develop a conservation ethic to guide its conduct, your generation must become the conservation generation. There is no other choice for the world. Your generation has the power to make a critical difference in the political course of the nation and the world. The first step is to join in the celebration and activities of the 20th anniversary of Earth Day next April. Beyond that, think of the future, have vision and make a commitment to a conservation ethic in your life. Cherish the air, the water and the land that sustains you and all mankind. Seize the opportunity to make a difference. Persist in your efforts, make the politicians listen — and act. You can prevail and win the fight to save the planet.

by Challiss McDonough
Associate Folio Editor

An Earth Week Retrospective 1970-1990

In an ever-changing world, it is almost unforseeable that two events separated by 20 years could be too terribly alike, even if the focus remains the same. Such seems to be the case with this year's 20th anniversary of Earth Day and the original in 1970. Although the activities are different, the issues and the motivation behind them are strikingly similar. The focus of each is the preservation of our fragile planet, the reversal of the damage we have already done, and the slowing or cessation of damage that continues. One would expect different methods for raising awareness when such events are separated by two decades, but despite healthy differences, they seem to have much in common.

Going back in time, Earth Day 1970 at VCU involved a Clean Sweep of an area of town, a rally held in Monroe Park and a "rock festival" in Shafer Court. Organizers took advantage of the school's artistic reservoir in the form of art displays in the park. All of these activities are being duplicated in one form or another by organizers of Earth Week 1990. According to an article on the front page of the Commonwealth Times during Earth Week 1970, "bags of dirt, speakers, teach-ins, films, slides, exhibits, debates and slogans were all a part of 'Earth Day.'" Everything but the "bags of dirt" will again be present this year.

Bags of dirt? Apparently, on Earth Day 20 years ago, a large mound of "the good Earth" was unloaded in the middle of Shafer Court early in the morning. Students held a 24-hour vigil by the mound, handing out plastic bags of dirt to passersby. These bags were intended to be worn around the neck until the following Monday, when they would be emptied onto "the" flower bed in Monroe Park. According to another long-ago article, "the whole purpose of donning the dirt was to make us aware of the pollution problem," and "wearing a bag around one's neck, you know, did bring an awareness of Mother Earth. It evoked one's 'conscious memory' of primitive man when he worshipped and respected the host on which he is a parasite. It felt groovy — almost mystical — to squeeze the cool Earth in the protective bag." Ironically, the "protective bags" were plastic, something environmentalists today would cringe at seeing as a symbol of Mother Earth.

Obviously, there are a few differences. There will be no dirt this year, and no self-respecting reporter would use the word "groovy" with any degree of seriousness.

In addition, the main issue dealt with in 1970 was pollution, especially air pollution from automobiles. In the present, while pollution is still an important focus, environmentalists are equally concerned with the results of generations of pollution and waste — global warming, ozone depletion and acid rain. What can be done about reversing these in addition to their causes, rather than dealing with the causes alone, is a more modern focus. Other issues that were not around, or were not as serious, for the original Earth Day include deforestation and waste management.

Pollution, however, as a focal point, deserves the attention it receives. Air pollution, water pollution, litter - all are causes of the disintegration of our ecosystem. While, in 1970 as now, corporations are the main target of anti-pollution activists, less-corporate sources such as automobile exhaust and incineration have not been ignored and continue to receive attention. Incidents such as the Valdez oil spill are nothing new: they have been taking place ever since man took to the ocean for trading purposes.

Earth Day 1970 marked the beginning of a global movement towards environmental awareness and concern. Earth Day 1990 is a symbol of that same movement, continued. The issues that prompted the first are far from dead. They have been joined by their extended family, and seem to be growing larger every day. This, however, is not the fault of the environmental movement or its activists. It is due to them and the concern they have sparked and inspired that we are beginning to fully realize the toll we have taken on our planet, and can now begin to do something about it.

Mother Earth, for hundreds of years, sheltered us from her own elements and natural disasters; she gave until she can give no more, she gave us everything she had and the foundations for everything we have. It is up to us now, during Earth Week and thereafter, to repay her by protecting her from ourselves. We must come together now, as our predecessors did 20 years ago, to support the environmental movement that is the last hope of our own kind, for if we allow the earth to be destroyed, we allow the same for ourselves. We must also insure that we hand this tradition down, so that future generations of VCU students and earth's children have something to work with, and can carry on where we leave off. We must do our best to insure not only that they, our friends, neices, nephews, cousins, and children, have a tradition of fighting for our planet, but that they have a planet to fight for.

An Earth Week Retrospective

1970-1990

by Challiss McDonough
Associate Folio Editor

In an ever-changing world, it is almost unforseeable that two events separated by 20 years could be too terribly alike, even if the focus remains the same. Such seems to be the case with this year's 20th anniversary of Earth Day and the original in 1970. Although the activities are different, the issues and the motivation behind them are strikingly similar. The focus of each is the preservation of our fragile planet, the reversal of the damage we have already done, and the slowing or cessation of damage that continues. One would expect different methods for raising awareness when such events are separated by two decades, but despite healthy differences, they seem to have much in common.

Going back in time, Earth Day 1970 at VCU involved a Clean Sweep of an area of town, a rally held in Monroe Park and a "rock festival" in Shafer Court. Organizers took advantage of the school's artistic reservoir in the form of art displays in the park. All of these activities are being duplicated in one form or another by organizers of Earth Week 1990. According to an article on the front page of the Commonwealth Times during Earth Week 1970, "bags of dirt, speakers, teach-ins, films, slides, exhibits, debates and slogans were all a part of 'Earth Day.'" Everything but the "bags of dirt" will again be present this year.

Bags of dirt? Apparently, on Earth Day 20 years ago, a large mound of "the good Earth" was unloaded in the middle of Shafer Court early in the morning. Students held a 24-hour vigil by the mound, handing out plastic bags of dirt to passersby. These bags were intended to be worn around the neck until the following Monday, when they would be emptied onto "the" flower bed in Monroe Park. According to another long-ago article, "the whole purpose of donning the dirt was to make us aware of the pollution problem," and "wearing a bag around one's neck, you know, did bring an awareness of Mother Earth. It evoked one's 'conscious memory' of primitive man when he worshipped and respected the host on which he is a parasite. It felt groovy — almost mystical — to squeeze the cool Earth in the protective bag." Ironically, the "protective bags" were plastic, something environmentalists today would cringe at seeing as a symbol of Mother Earth.

Obviously, there are a few differences. There will be no dirt this year, and no self-respecting reporter would use the word "groovy" with any degree of seriousness.

In addition, the main issue dealt with in 1970 was pollution, especially air pollution from automobiles. In the present, while pollution is still an important focus, environmentalists are equally concerned with the results of generations of pollution and waste — global warming, ozone depletion and acid rain. What can be done about reversing these in addition to their causes, rather than dealing with the causes alone, is a more modern focus. Other issues that were not around, or were not as serious, for the original Earth Day include deforestation and waste management.

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photo by Holly Radford

Founder of Earth Day 1970

now on the environment will be an issue in every presidential campaign.

Perhaps the most important advance since Earth Day is one of attitude and understanding — the recognition, finally, that human activities have created a global environmental crisis that urgently demands our attention. This is a giant leap forward.

Plans are now being finalized for a worldwide Earth Day celebration on April 22. Let there be no doubt about the significance of this event: It will be the largest grassroots demonstration in history. The single most important objective of this 20th anniversary celebration is an international public demonstration so overwhelming that it will literally shake the political leadership of the world out of its lethargy and galvanize it into a monumental cooperative effort to stop the destruction and begin the restoration. It is time for political leaders of every nation to recognize that in the long haul the state of our environment is far more important to the condition of man on the planet than the threat of nuclear war, missile gaps, Star Wars, crime in the streets or communism in Nicaragua.

How much longer are the United States and the Soviet Union going to spend \$600 billion a year for weapons that only increase our mutual vulnerability and dissipate our resources? It is time for the two superpowers to agree to cut spending on weapons by 50 percent in the next decade and another 50 percent

in the following decade. Half of the savings should be dedicated to programs to reverse and restore global environmental damage. It is a plan with no losers, and the whole world is a winner.

There has been some significant progress on environmental problems since that first Earth Day. Yet, merely maintaining the current programs and policies will fall far short of what is needed to prevent continued steady environmental decline. The responsibility lies with the world's younger generation. My generation does not have the time left to do it, and, unfortunately came to an appreciation of the monumental significance of the issue too late.

If society is going to develop a conservation ethic to guide its conduct, your generation must become the conservation generation. There is no other choice for the world. Your generation has the power to make a critical difference in the political course of the nation and the world. The first step is to join in the celebration and activities of the 20th anniversary of Earth Day next April. Beyond that, think of the future, have vision and make a commitment to a conservation ethic in your life. Cherish the air, the water and the land that sustains you and all mankind. Seize the opportunity to make a difference. Persist in your efforts, make the politicians listen — and act. You can prevail and win the fight to save the planet.

Charlotte's Web Shatters

By Linda Wright
Supplement Writer

After a hectic evening of contending with the improvident general public, the night manager of McDonald's straightens his polyester red and grey striped uniform, locks the door behind the last dissatisfied customer, and aids the other overworked employees in dumping excess stacks of prepared McDLTs, Big Macs, and Chicken McNuggets into the trash receptacle outside.

A few miles away a light snaps on in a dingy, factorylike building, flooding a room full of cramped, restless cattle, and breaking the thick blackness in which the despondent animals exist 23 hours a day for the 14 months leading up to their systematic slaughter. During the hour each day when darkness does not further discourage the cows from burning calories by shifting balance or straining against their tethers, they are usually fed grain mixed with chemicals, or perhaps injected with steroids.

Over the past 30 years the abuse of animals reared for food has mutated into a moral dilemma as well as a health hazard among meat-eating Americans.

Consumption of animal products that defies moderation, coupled with waste and the overall laziness of the hurried public, has ultimately resulted in a monopoly of factory farming in the United States that chokes out the pastures of yesterday like a blanket of gray ashes. Farmers who cannot compete with intensive farming methods drop out of the business, increasing the economic demand from factory farms, which respond by amplifying production rates.

At this point the situation snowballs as a larger volume of animals are compressed into less space with more drugs to combat disease and speed growth. The outcome of these modern animal-rearing techniques is clearly expressed in a foreword to Ruth Harrison's *Animal Machines*, where famous author and environmentalist Rachel Carson asserts that it is "incon-

ceivable that healthy animals can be produced under the artificial and damaging conditions that prevail in these modern factorylike installations, where animals are grown and turned out like so many inanimate objects."

Carson has a point when she compares the treatment of livestock to that of lifeless chattel. A factory farm is like a production line of the latest rage in children's playthings, except for that the animals are aware of entrapment in their stuffy dark boxes, and when they are finally taken out they don't walk and cry just like the real thing; rather, they often



photo by Kathy Laraisa

fall over from the shock of movement and are jolted with electric cattle prods until they can wobble their way to death.

Aside from ethical reasons for not eating meat, specifically the estimated 6 billion pigs, sheep, birds, and cattle that will be inhumanely processed for food this year in the U. S. alone, the vitamin deficiency and overuse of drugs in intensive rearing methods has devastating effects on human health. According to a pamphlet distributed by PETA, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, which outlines a report by the Office of Technological Assessment of the Congress of the United States, "many of the antibacterials are used for both human therapy and animal feed, resulting in a reduced effectiveness to these drugs in treating humans" and "residues of other drugs found in animal products such as meat and eggs are potentially carcinogenic and may be passed onto the consumers." Deficiency in the human diet and other unsavory matters such as cancer risk and potential immunity to lifesaving drugs is enough to make even the most selfish consumers of animal products take a second look at the quantity rather than quality his or her actions call for. When combined with the cruelty that animals endure for the public's ignorant convenience, these health risks add up to the answer that has been indicated by animal activists all along: Vegetarianism.

With each new person who decides to hold himself accountable for his own actions and stop supporting the meat industry, the rising tension between supply and demand of animal products in the U.S. is alleviated that much more. But for those that would argue for speciesism — the idea of superiority and preservation of the human race at all costs — they only have to acknowledge that a diet of whole wheat, broccoli, bananas and tofu could solve humanity's nutritional needs. In addition, there is a plethora of ethnic food and vegetarian cuisine that most Americans, thriving on meat and potatoes, never explore.

While vegetarianism is a large step to take, the conversion carries impact with it significant enough to justify the means. A vegetarian not only removes his or her direct contribution to factory farming, he also serves as a role model for others to scrutinize and consider. Or as Jennifer Wood, the outreach coordinator for PETA, put it, "It's not just one person in their little island of vegetarianism. You set an example when you're out in a restaurant or in a grocery store. People notice and they ask questions, a perfect opportunity to tell them what it's all about."

And through it all, the animal activist questions the right of humans to seek benefits for themselves through the pain and death of animals, while the speciesist argues that humanity is the superior species simply because it has the ability to acquire these benefits. A solution is possible only by juxtaposing the two ideas and realizing, at least in the case of factory farming, that humanity disrupts the biological chain, subsequently hurting itself by belittling the significance of the animal.

Taking Responsibility for the Greenhouse Effect



By Melody L. Williams
Staff Writer

How much do we actually know about the "greenhouse effect"? According to the Environmental Protection Agency Journal, "the greenhouse effect is the name for the physical process where energy from the sun passes through the atmosphere relatively freely, while heat radiating from the earth is absorbed by particular gases in the atmosphere." This absorption of gases warms the planet.

An example of the type of earth-warming gases is carbon monoxide. Where does such a gas originate? Air pollution is the central origin of carbon monoxide. Industrial corporations are usually looked upon as villains and main contributors to air pollution when the subject of the greenhouse effect is discussed. Can we automatically put all the blame on industrial processes? Aren't the inhabitants of Earth just as responsible for the welfare of the planet as any corporate factory owner? Automobiles, human luxuries, give off greenhouse gases partly responsible for the warming trend. Human destruction of forests is also a contributing factor.

Chlorofluorocarbons, commonly known as CFCs, are artificial gases that are on the increase. These gases have no natural source, according to an EPA report. The report, written by Dr. David Rind, states that these CFCs probably did not exist in the earth's atmosphere before the past few decades. Where did these gases originate? The answer is clear: We put them into our atmosphere. The children of Mother Earth are responsible for her disease and journey toward death. Research shows that other greenhouse gases, such as nitrous oxide and methane, are steadily increasing. Most of the greenhouse gases are man-made compounds. The Industrial Revolution and progress of technology have endangered those whom it intended to help. The environment is presently being mutated due to fossil fuels as well as CFC's. Fossil fuels are fuels stored in the earth, such as coal, oil and natural gas. These fuels are used in the everyday lives of humans.

The topic of the greenhouse effect has been widely publicized since the mid-'80s. The American public, as well as other inhabitants of Earth, are extremely concerned with this highly controversial issue, but it is just one subject in a sea of environmental concerns. People do not realize the toll modern urban life is taking on our planet. The destruction of our planet lies in the hands of its inhabitants. Anyone can do his or her part to assist in the salvation of our planet. The simple boycott of aerosol products or non-sympathetic factory types are just a couple of ways the average concerned citizen can be effective if enough people take part. Environmental groups have many methods in which they exert influence, and lobbying is usually successful. These groups are composed of average citizens who share a common concern for the welfare of our planet.

The greenhouse effect is just one of the many stressful environmental issues we are facing today. The destruction process of our planet began with us and it will end with us, unless we take more action to prevent it from occurring or at least slow it down.

PRECIOUS METALS.



They're worth their weight in cash. Help save our resources. For more information about recycling, call us toll free. Virginia Division of Litter Control, Department of Conservation and Historic Resources.

1-800-KEEP-ITT.

In Celebration of

EARTH WEEK 1990

**MONDAY
APRIL 16**

7-9:30 p.m.
Commons Theater

PANEL DISCUSSION ON RECYCLING

Representative from local recycling industries will discuss the process, materials, and benefits of recycling. A workshop to discuss recyclable materials commonly found in the home or office will follow.

**TUESDAY
APRIL 17**

7-9:30 p.m.
Business Building
Auditorium

RAINFORESTS: THE GREATEST EXPRESSION OF LIFE ON EARTH

Lecture given by Dr. Lovejoy, the Assistant Secretary for External Affairs of the Smithsonian Institute.

5:30 p.m. Tai Chi: PAC/Hibbs Courtyard (weather permitting) Tai Chi is an art form which supports balance and harmony in the environment and one's personal life.

**WEDNESDAY
APRIL 18**

Times and places TBA

EARTH FORUM

A panel will be present to answer questions concerning topics such as global warming, ozone depletion, acid rain, and waste management. Audience is encouraged to ask questions and express their views and concerns.

**for additional
information about
any of these
events, contact
David at 358-7343
or Jeff at 649-3313**

**THURSDAY
APRIL 19**

7-9:30 p.m.
Business Building
Auditorium

ECOLOGY OF CONSCIOUSNESS: A PRACTICAL APPROACH

Professor John Davies, Ph.D., of the University of Maryland Center for International Development and Conflict Studies, will discuss two decades of revolutionary research on the effect of transcendental meditation on society, quality of life, international relations, and world peace.

**FRIDAY
APRIL 20**

7-9:30 p.m.
Shafer Street Playhouse

STORYTELLING

Explore our relations with the earth and the fragile balance through stories past and present. Traditional folk music will accompany storytellers. Storytellers include four VCU Professors of English, Dr. Walter Copledge, Dr. Bryant Mangum, Dr. Richard Priebe, Dr. Gregory Donovan and Dr. Gary Sange, as well as Tom Roby of the Richmond Children's Museum, and I-Be Bulinda Hereford, a professional storyteller.

**SATURDAY
APRIL 21**

8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Monroe Park/Shافر Court

VCU EARTH DAY CELEBRATION

9-11 a.m. Nature walk hosted by the Outdoor Adventure Program

11 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Festivities including music such as a garbage drum circle and Ruckus Watusi, games, crafts, art and environmental exhibits, performance art, chalk drawing, and speakers. Information tables will be set up throughout the park.

3:30-4 p.m. Activating Odds - structured improvisational dance "Slick Animals"

4-5 Burma Jam and VCU Jazz Ensemble will perform at Shafer Court.

**SUNDAY
APRIL 22**

8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
17th Street to Maymont Park

EARTH DAY CLEAN SWEEP

Join us at Main Street Grill, where we will begin our march to Maymont Park, picking up litter in our city. Recyclables will be separated for deposit at the recycling station at Maymont Park. There, we will join the citywide Earth Day 1990 celebration.

10-2 Earth Day Benefit at the Metro

5:30 p.m. Tai Chi 203 Dance Building (See Tuesday for details)

Gladding Residence Center Earth Day

*Earth Week 1990 is brought to VCU by the Student Environmental Action Committee, the VCU Recycling Cooperative, Rainforest Action Network, the Open Forum and the Commonwealth Times.
Poster design by John Sarvay and Jeff Ray.*