

# THREE MILE ISLAND

# ALERT

MARCH  
1991

315 Peffer Street; Harrisburg, PA 17102

TELEPHONE: 717-233-3072

## TMIA to Mark 12th Anniversary With Pot-Luck Dinner

Alan Hetrick of Warm Springs Lodge will again provide salads and breads for the 12th anniversary observance of the beginning of the TMI accident. The dinner is scheduled for 6PM on Thursday, March 28th at the Harrisburg Friends Meeting House (downstairs) and the cost is \$3.00 per person. At 8PM Dr. Robert Meyers will speak in the Meeting House's library. Meyers is overseeing Chem Nuclear's efforts to site and operate a low-level radioactive waste site in Pennsylvania (*Editor's note: It won't be in the middle of a river, under an airport landing pattern, in the middle of a densely populated area: such areas are reserved for high-level wastes*). Please RSVP by March 25 to 233-7897.

## *It's Only in Your Mind says State Health Department* TMI Accident Era Kids Sicker Say Area Moms

"Your mother should know," sang the "Fab Four" a generation back, not realizing the state knows even more. Though it should come as no surprise to anyone who has been paying attention, a study conducted by the state Department of Health found that women who were pregnant and lived near TMI at the time of the accident rated their children's health as poorer than children born since then. But what do they know? The Health Department dismisses the results, characterizing them as "subjective" and based on the mothers' perceptions of their children's health and development of their own mental state. Overall, they say, this just reinforces their belief that the primary impact of the TMI accident on public health was an increase in psychological stress.



## Elevated Tritium Levels Found on Island

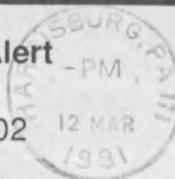
On December 26, 1990, the NRC's resident inspector at TMI was notified that elevated levels of tritium had been found in a monitoring well on the island. Monthly sampling from the well normally finds 150 to 200 pCi/l (picoCuries per liter) of tritium (normal background in water), but analysis of the December 7 sample was at 5200 pCi/l, December 20 at 17,000 pCi/l, and December 26 at 12,000 pCi/l. Investigation showed that TMI staff admitted that during a repair they drained water containing approximately

A RED X INDICATES  
YOUR DUES PAYMENT  
IS REQUESTED

March 28th  
TMI Anniversary  
Commemorative Dinner

OPEN  
IMMEDIATELY

Three Mile Island Alert  
315 Peffer Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17102



2,000,000 pCi/l of tritium from a secondary side heater using a fire hose directed across a building roof. The water went into roof drains which tie into yard drains which pass underground and discharge into a surface ditch about 200 yards from the well. Recent samples of water in the drainage ditch show tritium at 380 pCi/l. According to an NRC document, "If the heater was the source of the water, the licensee does not believe this is radiological concern because the tritium level (2,000,000 pCi/l) in this water is below the 10 CFR 20 limit for discharge to unrestricted areas (3,000,000 pCi/l)."

**Pennsylvania Joins Suit to Block Deregulation of RadWastes**

Pennsylvania was among sixteen states filing an amicus brief in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia in support of a lawsuit brought against the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission challenging the NRC's efforts to deregulate the disposal of radioactive wastes via a policy termed "Below Regulatory Concern."

Under the policy, up to 30 percent (by volume) of the radioactive wastes generated by commercial nuclear power plants could be dumped untreated into the nation's municipal landfills and sewage systems or burned in municipal incinerators.

**National Nuclear Power & Clean Energy Conference to be Held on Fifth Anniversary of Chernobyl**

The first national conference focusing on nuclear power and alternative energy issues since 1983 will be held in Washington, D.C. from April 26 through April 28, 1991. The conference will serve as a national commemoration of the fifth anniversary of the beginning of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster and representatives from international organizations are expected to attend. The need for the conference has taken on new urgency in light of the recent oil war and the bankrupt energy policy recently unveiled by the Bush administration.

The conference is sponsored by the Nuclear Information and Resource Service (NIRS), the Safe Energy Communication Council (SECC) and Greenpeace. See "Calendar" on page 4 for more information.

**Alternative to Bush "Energy Policy" Proposed**

120 national and community-based organizations representing more than four million members endorsed an energy plan titled *A Sustainable Energy Future*, which outlines the principles and goals which they believe should comprise the nation's energy program. It calls for a 25-30 percent reduction in energy consumption by the year 2010 and for a simultaneous quadrupling of the energy provided by renewable energy resources. Further, the statement advocates cutting oil and coal use in half over the next two decades and accelerating the de facto phase-out of nuclear power.

In contrast, the National Energy Strategy calls for major expansions of nuclear power, drilling oil wells in national wildlife refuges, and the use of "clean coal" technologies. While some attention is given energy conservation and renewable energy technologies, the plan proposes few government initiatives to promote these options.

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**Please renew your membership, then give more to support TMIA activities**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP** \_\_\_\_\_

Intervention Fund Contribution:  \$10  \$20  \$50  \$100  MORE (Checks in the amount of \$50 or more can be made payable to the TMI Legal Fund for tax deduction purposes.)

Membership: \_\_\_\_\_ \$15 Regular Members \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 Sustaining Membership  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$25 Non-Profit Organization \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 Patron  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$5 Low Income/Student \_\_\_\_\_ \$200 Club Member  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$5 Non-member newsletter subscription

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO TMIA, 315 Peffer Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102

## UCS Poll Reconfirms Public Opposition to Nuclear Power

The Union of Concerned Scientists repeated its 1989 public opinion poll on energy strategies and repeated the results. When the public was asked how they would prioritize Dept. of Energy funding, 43 percent listed nuclear power dead last. Only ten percent listed nuclear as a top priority while 47 percent listed renewable energy as the top funding priority and 28 percent listed it second. Public support for energy conservation is also high: 67 percent of those surveyed listed conservation as their number one or number two funding priority. The DoE 1990 budget certainly doesn't reflect these concerns. Instead, nuclear power research got \$713 million while solar and other renewable energies received a fraction of this, \$130 million, and that represented a substantial increase over renewable's share during the Reagan years.

## Soviets Victims of Nuclear Testing

A Reuters report quotes a top Soviet researcher as revealing that some 500,000 citizens living near the Semipalatinsk test site have suffered the effects of radiation and 100,000 of them have died of cancer. The Soviets conducted more than 200 above ground atomic tests in the area between 1949 and 1965. Within a 345-mile radius of the site, researchers said, cases of leukemia increased by 70 percent and infant mortality doubled between 1955 and 1960.

## April 21 is EARTH DAY - Celebration Planned at Fort Hunter

Fort Hunter Park will again host a local EARTH DAY celebration with entertainment, music, food, crafts and a focus on how to plug your home into a sustainable future. All kinds of exhibitors will feature earth friendly products for the home. This year, in light of how the celebration is growing, there will be parking at the Farm Show and free CAT bus service to the Park. Mark your calendar now. If you'd like to help with TMIA's table top display, call Vera Stuchinski (232-4763) or Cherie Friedrich (238-6980).

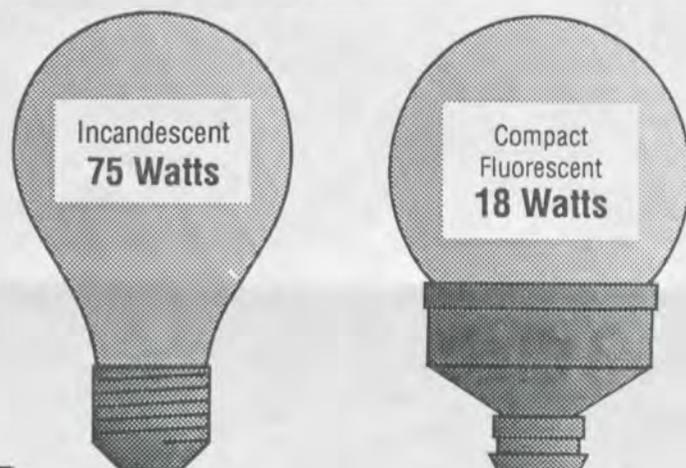
## Rental Space Available at Peace & Justice Center

Rental space is available immediately at 315 Peffer Street for a small non-profit group or individual. All utilities, phone, and furnishings are included in a negotiable monthly rent—from \$20 to \$200 depending on your space needs. If you don't need the space, maybe you know someone who does. Spread the word. For more information: Kay Pickering at 233-3072.

## Whistleblower Protection Act Will Be Introduced

Sponsors have been lined-up to introduce a Whistleblower Protection Act in both houses of Congress. The legislation will provide guaranteed protection for private sector whistleblowers and, if passed, will make

## Q: Which Light Bulb Gives More Light?



**A:** Both give equal amounts of light—but the one on the right uses one-fourth of the energy, and over its lifetime can cut \$30 off your electricity bill and last nine to 13 times longer, than the one on the left.

Sources: Alliance for Affordable Energy, Scientific American

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the world a safer place. Christy Law of the Government Accountability Project said in a recent letter to the 116 groups (including TMIA) backing the bill, "If we keep allowing whistleblowers to be fired at will, we might as well be resigned to big business violated health and safety laws at will. Workers are not going to defend the public, unless we help them defend themselves." She urges letters to members of Congress in support of the bill.

### Personal Rad Monitor on the Market

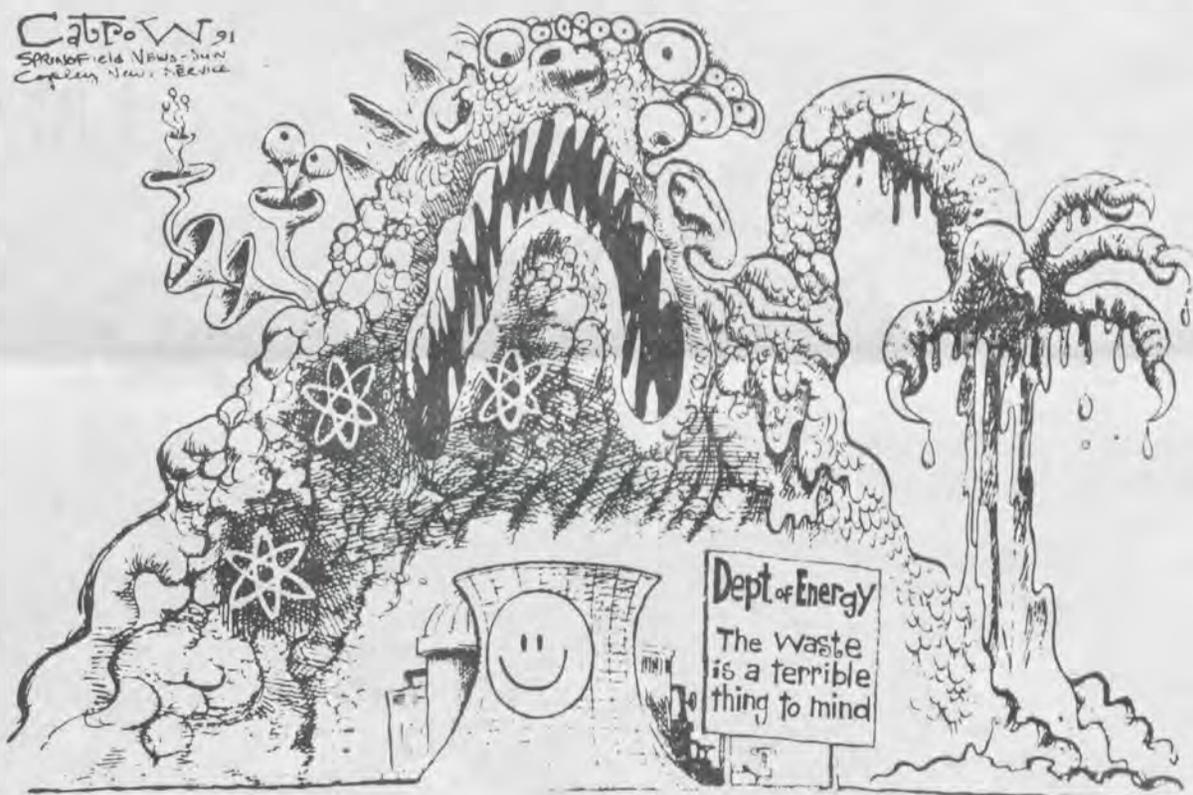
Though we haven't seen any critical reviews of the product, Dan Schacht of Houston, TX wrote TMIA about a new product he's introducing, the Rad\*Scanner Model 101 Personal Dosimeter. According to Schacht, the pocket-sized machine provides real time dosimetry, "responding to alpha and beta particles, gamma photons and X-rays using a shock mounted, gas filled detector traceable to National Bureau of Standards (now NIST)." The dosimeter is designed to operate for six months on a single 9-volt battery. It is priced at \$159 and can be obtained from Schacht at Meter Conversions, Inc., 1620 West Main Street, Houston, TX 77006. Or call, 713/523-0515.

### Doroshow Involved in Documentary Production

Former TMIA legal counsel Joanne Doroshow is now living in Santa Monica, California and is involved in the production of a documentary titled *Invasion in Panama*. The soon to be released documentary examines a side of the invasion story—massive human rights violations by the U.S. and the slaughter of hundreds of civilians—virtually ignored by the mainstream news media. A 15-minute preview on VHS is available from TMIA. Call 233-7897.

## Calendar---Calendar---Calendar

- March 28** 12th Anniversary Commemorative Dinner, 6PM Harrisburg Friends Meetinghouse. 8PM Speaker.
- April 21** EARTH DAY at Fort Hunter Park, 1-6PM.
- April 26-28** National Nuclear Power and Clean Energy Conference, Washington, D.C. For information contact NIRS, 202/328-0002, 1424 16th Street, NW, Suite 601 Washington, D.C. 20036



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