

The CAN-Did Press



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CITIZENS AWARENESS NETWORK

ACT TODAY TO CHANGE TOMORROW...

Rally and Action at Vermont Yankee

More than 100 people turned out for a CAN sponsored rally on Sunday, July 22 at the Brattleboro Town Common. The event was called "Green and Nuclear Free — A Community Gathering in Favor of Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy, and Closing Vermont Yankee."

There was music by Charlie King ("One of the finest singers and songwriters of our time," according to Pete Seeger) and Derrick Jordan on a looped electric violin, plus a comedy performance by Will Nukem (aka Court Dorsey).

There were short speeches by Vermont state Senator Jeanette White, state Rep. Richard Marek, Deb Katz of CAN, and others. There was free ice cream!



At 2 p.m. about 50 people car-pooled from the town common to the Vermont Yankee reactor for the action. Six people were arrested for blocking the entrance with their bodies, an act of non-violent civil disobedience.

The event was also sponsored by the Vermont Yankee Decommissioning Alliance, Nuclear Free Vermont, and the New England Coalition.

These types of actions have a long history of success. Charlie King performed at a June 3, 1979 rally of 17,000 people in favor of closing the

Shoreham nuclear power plant in New York (hundreds were arrested for non-violent civil disobedience). Shoreham was soon permanently closed! Other nuclear plants that have been permanently closed following public protest and action include Yankee Rowe in MA, Maine Yankee, Millstone 1 and CT Yankee in CT, and Rancho Seco (Sacramento, CA, closed by a voter's referendum of those who lived near the plant).

- Eesha Williams, Dummerston, VT, author, "Grassroots Journalism" (www.grassrootsjournalism.org)

Walk for a Nuclear-Free Future

The original inspiration to walk in the state of Vermont to shut down Vermont Yankee came from the teachings of Gandhi and the Buddhist monk Nichidatsu Fujii Gurugi, founder of the order of Nipponzan Myohoji.



Since I personally have walked with monks of Nipponzan Myohoji since 1986 to bring about a nuclear free world, it seemed obvious that this practice of walking and praying to wake people up about the dangers inherent in nuclear power generally, and Vermont Yankee in particular, was essential.

The Buddhist order of Nipponzan Myohoji joined Citizens Awareness Network in sponsoring the walk and the Buddhist nun Ichikawa offered to be the spiritual leader of the walk. Every step of the walk was in unison with a Buddhist Prayer.

I have walked on many walks remembering the atrocities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and since the issue of nuclear power and nuclear weapons was very much in my mind, I began what would become a series of 3 walks in the summer of 2006 beginning on Hiroshima Day and ending on Nagasaki Day. This walk was extremely well supported and energizing and at its end people encouraged me to do it again.

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A Letter From Tim Judson, President, Citizens Awareness Network

Even though there were no major victories, 2007 has been one of the most exciting and eventful years in CAN's history! Certainly there have been years with greater accomplishments we could point to ... like 1992, when we shut Yankee Rowe and proved that a small community could take on the nuclear industry and win ... or 1996, when we helped shut down all four nukes in CT, two of them permanently ... or 2002, when we organized the People's Summit on High-Level Waste, a nation-wide caravan to fight Yucca

Mountain, and started the movement for Hardened On-Site Storage (HOSS) ...

This year is important more for what we have begun and the challenges we have taken on—setting us on the path to create the energy revolution that we need to protect the environment and revitalize our communities. Last year, we took a hard look at ourselves and realized that we don't just want a future without nuclear power. We are working for a future where our communities are prosperous, self-sustaining, and healthy—not just nuclear-free. We are committed to vibrant communities where democracy flourishes and where the despair that nuclear power breeds has ended.

In 2007, we put this new vision into practice and began campaigns that hold this dual promise of laying the groundwork for revitalization and democracy and breaking the nuclear chain. Nowhere is this more true than in Vermont. In the last two years, CAN helped build a statewide coalition (Safe Power Vermont) and mobilized a grassroots movement to shut Vermont Yankee and create a renewable energy-based system. Passed in 2006, Act 160 gives the state the ultimate authority over whether VY can operate after its original license termination date of 2012—making Vermont the first state ever to do so. Last spring, a coalition of groups including Safe Power Vermont helped pass legislation that required Vermont to generate 45% of its electricity from renewables by 2018; Governor Douglas vetoed this progressive legislation. As the movement to shut VY gains momentum, so does the consensus for green energy.

Entergy has applied to NRC for a 20-year license extension, to run VY until 2032. But because of Act 160, it must get the state to pass a resolution authorizing VY to operate past 2012. Entergy is throwing all of its resources into getting that law passed – and CAN must throw everything we have into stopping them. CAN has never fought on the legislative level in this way. We



Protestors drop a banner at Entergy headquarters in Brattleboro last March.

have taken on big issues, campaigns, and lawsuits before, but this job requires an extra set of tools we have never needed before.

First, we need someone to do the 24/7 job of holding legislators accountable, advocating for the people, and signaling to us where and when we need to mobilize the grassroots. In short, a lobbyist—a *people's* lobbyist. Eighth-generation Vermonter and former state legislator Bob Stannard has left his job with the Town of Bennington to work

for CAN in the state capitol. Second, we need to make sure every Vermonter knows not just about VY, but knows that we have the opportunity to shut it down, and what they can do to make it happen. We also need to build a network of people to call on to act at just the right times to stop Entergy's bill from moving forward. We are recruiting, training, and equipping a team of organizers on the ground, to knock on doors throughout the state to inform people and get them involved.

To take on this campaign, we have set up a sister organization that can do legislative work under IRS tax rules—Vermont Citizens Action Network. VCAN will direct and fund the lobbying and canvassing work, while CAN will continue building the grassroots organizing and protest campaign. Bringing all of these tools to bear, we will mobilize and focus the will of the people to stop Entergy, shut VY, and replace it with safe energy, good jobs, and a healthy environment like we never have before.

Across the border, in New York State, we are forging another road by leading the Central New York (CNY) Public Power Coalition. For nearly two years, CAN and the coalition have been organizing the community of Syracuse to form its own power company and generate electricity as a non-profit. With public power, we could realize CAN's vision of a future based on renewable energy where people have local, democratic control over our energy supply. In fact, done at-cost by a municipal utility, green energy could cost almost half as much as we are paying now, and Syracuse alone could save up to \$40 million per year! Making energy affordable and keeping our energy dollars local would make the whole community stronger and could be a catalyst for local businesses and good, long-term jobs.

Our success in Vermont and Central New York can create models for states, communities, and the whole nation to pursue.

- Tim Judson, President, CAN

Vermont Yankee: Clean, Safe, and Reliable?

With each passing month Vermont Yankee lurches closer to permanent shutdown. The aging plant's license expires on March 23, 2012. Of course Entergy wants to run the plant for another twenty to forty years. It's making bucket-loads of cash selling 50 % of the plant's output at premium prices outside Vermont while Vermont utilities have a sweetheart below market deal until 2012. In return for cheap power, Vermont hosts a dangerous aging relic complete with six hundred tons of high-level waste, which will remain on site for a very long time.

To get the public to accept the risky business of running an outdated machine beyond its design limits, Entergy and a group of highly paid atomic cheerleaders bombard the public with full-page ads, constant radio commercials, and glowing testimonials. The theme repeated over and over- Vermont Yankee is "Clean, Safe, and Reliable."

Of course some believe Entergy's spiel what with VT's Gov. Douglas parroting Entergy's PR. But CAN hears a growing number of Vermonters voicing disgust and distrust in response to the VY PR machine. Several times each month CAN members are invited to speak at gatherings held around the state. Citizens are anxious to hear our message and voice their concerns.

CAN's membership in Vermont is steadily growing. However, since late August 2007, concern about Vermont Yankee safety has increased substantially. In August a recently inspected cooling tower at the plant unexpectedly collapsed. The company tried to downplay the incident. When someone from inside the facility leaked photos of the catastrophic collapse, the public got a clear picture of what years of deferred maintenance leads to and the



deep deceit of Entergy's unending spin about safety.

We in Vermont are excited that Entergy's reckless management and irresponsible self-promotion are unmasked. CAN's organizing efforts will undoubtedly gain significant momentum and growing public support as we move closer to the day Vermont Yankee is turned off and replaced with safe, affordable, and sustainable power sources that people do not have to fear but rather be proud of.

- Chris Williams, PO Box 132, Hancock, VT 05748
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Shut It Down Affinity Group



not yet been truly tested during the campaign to close Vermont Yankee.

Shut It Down staged its first action in 2005 with a simple trespass at Entergy's corporate headquarters in Vernon, VT during a CAN rally and followed that action with another aimed at chaining the gates shut.

During a third action, the women placed personal effigies at the nuclear reactor in Vernon and then proceeded to Entergy head-

quarters demanding to speak with the corporation's president. Shut It Down is a women's affinity group that honors the principles of non-violence in its resistance to Vermont Yankee by agreeing to refuse bail, fines, or community service and standing pro se (that is, individuals representing themselves without lawyers) in court. Because charges against members of Shut It Down have been dropped six times, the affinity group's principles have

quarters demanding to speak with the corporation's president.

The women spray painted danger signs on the reactor's driveway and in a subsequent action draped a sign that said *Vermont Yankee: Weapon of Mass Destruction* over the main Entergy corporate sign. They again returned twice to the reactor, chaining themselves across the driveway to prevent people from entering the dangerous facility.

When the VT state's attorney continually dropped the charges, the Shut It Down Women, boldly challenging their dismissal, appeared as originally scheduled in Windham County District Court demanding that they be held accountable for their actions. The judge quickly vacated the courtroom.

The affinity group includes or has included Julia Bonafine of Shrewsbury, VT; Claire Chang of Gill, MA; Jo Comerford of Florence, MA; Frances Crowe and Paki Wieland of Northampton, MA; Dorthie (her full name) of Wendell, MA; Marcia Gagliardi and Hattie Nestel of Athol, MA; Ellen Graves of West Springfield, MA. Julia, the only Vermonter, is in her thirties. The others are in their sixties, seventies, or eighties. Support for Shut It Down has included Deb Katz and Harvey Schaktman of CAN, Mary-Ann DeVita Palmieri of New Salem, MA; Pat Larson of Orange, MA, and a number of women from Wendell, MA.

- Marcia Gagliardi, Shut It Down Affinity Group

Tilting at Windmills

By David Detmold

Plainfield, VT - For the last week, I have been riding my bike around Vermont, shutting down Vermont Yankee. It's a bit like tilting at windmills—only in this case, it's about promoting windmills and photovoltaic panels on rooftops, and methane generators in dairy farms and cogeneration projects, micro-hydro turbines, energy saving light bulbs, wood chip burning plants and geothermal design. But most of all, it's about removing the dark cloud that has hovered over the Upper Connecticut River Valley for 34 years in the form of an antique, embrittled, nuclear steam-kettle in Vernon spewing deadly doses of radioactive gas into our air, food and water every day it is allowed to continue operating. And then dealing with the fiendishly toxic high-level rad waste—more than a million pounds of it so far—that has piled up in a 7th story swimming pool in Vermont Yankee since the plant first went on line in 1972.

At the time, it was designed to put out 540 MW of power for forty years. Last year, compliant state and federal regulators allowed the aging plant to boost output to 650 MW. Now Entergy VY will to run the plant at 120% of design capacity for another 20 years beyond its decommissioning date of 2012. That's like taking a 34-year-old Caddy with 300,000 miles on it, adding a fifth gear and heading it down the highway at 90 miles an hour. Only the tank is full of plutonium, and an accident would leave a large section of New England permanently uninhabitable.

One funny thing about the nuclear power industry in America is that it has succeeded in allowing the corporations that make millions running these atomic pressure cookers to privatize the profits and socialize the risks. Congress, in the 1950s, helpfully passed a law called the Price-Anderson Act providing that in the event of a nuclear meltdown, the corporation that ran the nuclear plant would have no liability. If a few million people have to evacuate most of New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Vermont, and lose all they own, no one has to pay. And Congress has renewed that law.

But Vermont, unlike any other state in the country, decided last year to give itself the power to say yes or no to the continued threat nuclear reactors pose, specifically, to decide whether or not to allow Vermont Yankee to get that 20 year license extension its corporate managers are angling for. In the next two years, Vermont legislators will vote Yes or No on whether Vermont Yankee will stay open until 2032, or close. Our future in Western MA hangs in the balance.

That's where the bike trip comes in handy. With a few other Solar Rollers, a gang of anti-nuke bicycle riders who once rode to Rocky Flats, Colorado from Seabrook, NH to protest nuclear power and weapons, now mostly in their 50s and 60s, I have been pedaling the message to towns and cities throughout the state that Vermonters now have the power to act to create a truly Green powered future for the Green Mountain State, to put enough windmills on their ridgelines, harvest the sun, invest in conservation and efficiency, to replace and reduce the demand for the electricity VY produces, put Vermont's energy dollars to work for a healthy, sustainable local economy, and shut down their old reactor before it blows a gasket and shuts down our Franklin County for good.

And believe me, there is plenty of wind on those ridgelines. I found that out the first day, cycling up Searsburg Mountain with 70 pounds of leaflets in my saddlebags, past those gracefully turning wind turbines in Readsboro.

Speaking to potluck gatherings, talking with local legislators,

passing out 3000 flyers, patching flat tires, speaking on statewide radio, avoiding barking dogs, it's all part of the struggle for positive change. In the end, it is just one drop in a gathering stream of energy turning this state into a leader for a green, renewable, safe energy future. As we criss-cross the state, learning again and again the subtle mystery of the slogan "Vermont Ain't Flat," I wonder, did Cervantes have it right? In the final analysis, can we expect nothing but labor for our pains? Or was Gandhi closer to the mark in saying, "Whatever you do will be insignificant, but it is most important that you do it?" The final word, on that subject, is not yet in.

Bikes Not Nukes, Part II

By David Detmold

The Solar Rollers took to the highways and byways of Vermont over the last three weeks of August, campaigning for a permanent shutdown of the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant in Vernon. By the time we reached the statehouse in Montpelier, we had biked over 800 miles, handed out over 8000 flyers and lists of legislative contacts in every county of Vermont, and talked on statewide radio, to local newspapers, and to potlucks groups from Randolph to St. Johnsbury, Greensboro Bend to Burlington. We got commitments from a number of state legislators to work actively for a shutdown of the nuke, and to fund a clean, truly Green energy future for Vermont and the region.

Adding to the momentum of our statewide tour, as if the god of Plutonium was smiling on our efforts, the nuclear plant itself took a hand in our outreach work by arranging a collapse of one of the plant's 22 wooden cooling towers, breaking a pipe that poured cooling water in a dismaying fountain for 90 minutes on Monday, August 20th, as we were six days into our trip. At the time I was speaking on a statewide radio show about the likelihood the 35-year-old plant would experience component failures and breakdowns if Entergy continued to run it at 120% of its original design capacity. In the wake of the cooling tower collapse, that interview was repeated several times the following day, so as we continued on our tour people had already heard the message and seen our predictions confirmed on the front page of the major Vermont dailies, all of which ran editorial alarms about the condition of the aging nuke before the week was out.

On Wednesday, August 29th, as we talked to 30 or more people at a potluck in Burlington, who pledged to continue working together to seek a shutdown of the nuke, a call came in that VY, operating at half power, had just automatically shut down due to a steam valve malfunction. Though the public was assured the problem was minor, people were reminded that a similar valve malfunction had led to the meltdown at Three Mile Island in 1979, resulting in widespread, unmonitored radioactive releases and subsequent court cases by thousands of residents of western Pennsylvania seeking compensation for a rash of cancer and leukemia.

Public confidence was in no way enhanced by a press release from the Vermont Yankee plant workers, seeking a new contract, who claimed unsafe conditions at the plant were threatening "global disaster." With one million pounds of high level waste in storage in a seventh story swimming pool at VY, on the banks of New England's longest river, this claim did not strike Vermonters as mere hyperbole.

Efforts to permanently retire the nuke before it permanently retires New England are now heating up, with a regionwide petition drive to VT Governor Douglas, legislative lobbying, and letters to the editors of local papers mounting. To get a copy of the petition, and find out about other ways you can get involved, go to www.VYDA.org or www.nukebusters.org.

Westchester CAN

Westchester CAN continues the battle against Entergy's re-licensing attempt at Indian Point, 24 miles north of NYC. While the deck is stacked against us, public opinion against re-licensing continues to grow. The three-year process is pretty much *pro forma* since the NRC has approved every re-licensing application that has ever come before it. However, questions continue to arise about the thoroughness of their oversight and our elected officials are demanding an Independent Safety Analysis (ISA).

Our county executive has gone to court to force NRC to address increased population density and roads as part of relicensing. Rep. John Hall introduced legislation in the Energy Committee asking for an ISA. More importantly, Entergy, owner of Indian Point, can't get its new siren system running right. It was fined; now FEMA refused to approve the second abysmal try. We could not have asked for better headlines than the ones that have emerged in response to Entergy's incompetence. People understand that if the company can't get a warning system to work right, they certainly can't be trusted to run a nuclear reactor.

Both FEMA and NRC seem to be acting tougher. The emphasis is on *acting*—to sway public opinion. They turned down a request for another extension for the sirens. They also granted a deadline extension for filing intervenor petitions on re-licensing, something we really needed.

Enough people have now been elected on all levels of government that things undreamed of in the past are now slowly moving forward. No matter what NRC decides, it will be challenged and appealed. The re-licensing of Indian Point will be decided in a court of law. That's why the intervenor petitions are so impor-



tant. Only information presented to NRC can be considered in a later court action. We are at a critical juncture and no one has a crystal ball to see what will work and what will turn into a dead end. So... we just keep on trying everything we can think of.

Right now the most important question we can answer is how can we replace the electricity generated at Indian Point. Few people understand where their electricity comes from or how the grid works. They are beginning to get it when we talk about conservation and efficiency—that is, doing more with less electricity. We have the facts; we are speaking truth to power. We are smarter and better spoken than they are. What they have going for them is an endless pot of money to buy time and people. Time will tell which is more powerful.

- Marilyn Elie, WestCAN

Seabrook: Decommissioning Dough a Little Short

The Nuclear Decommissioning Finance Committee (NDFC) of the State of New Hampshire is the only such organ of state government anywhere in the country that is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that sufficient funds be set aside by the ownership of New Hampshire's commercial reactor (Seabrook) for decommissioning of the reactor and all related components. Because the availability of an eventual dumping ground for the commercial nuclear industry's High Level Waste is still uncertain, Seabrook's owners, Florida Power and Light (FPL), are in the unenviable position of having to present their plans for an Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation to the NDFC. Through the tenacious efforts of octogenarian Mary Metcalf, who for many years has represented the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League as an intervenor before the committee, the C-10 Research and Education Foundation was granted the opportunity to present testimony for formal entry into the record on the NDFC. C-10's presenter included Debbie Grinnell, C-10 staffer, Patricia Skibbee, C-10 President, and Chris Nord, C-10 and CAN board member.

The funding concerns pertained primarily to the maintenance of the ISFSI during the "decommissioned" phase. Among the points raised:

- The need for real-time heat and radiation monitoring, sent directly to New Hampshire Emergency Management and the Department of Public Health.
- The capability to perform safe repair and maintenance to the Dry Casks. This will probably mean the construction of a new Spent Fuel Pool, since FPL's current plan calls for the closure and dismantlement of the existing pool at decommissioning – yet there

is no other way than submergence to perform safe maintenance on dry casks.

- The capability to transfer the HLW to legitimate transportation casks, when the fuel is finally moved off-site. Again, this necessitates a Spent Fuel Pool, because the containers used in the ISFSI under construction at Seabrook are not certifiable by the Department of Energy for transport – and DOE will not receive the HLW from reactors unless and until it is transport-ready.

- The need for interim Hardened On-Site Storage (HOSS). Because of the increased threat of terrorism, and the likelihood that Seabrook's HLW will remain on-site for decades beyond reactor decommissioning, robust, dispersed storage should be mandated by the effected state, and funded by the utility.

- The need for an environmental impact assessment, in order to properly ascertain that the site would be safe for a return to public or commercial use.

Seabrook's Tritium: Let's Keep it Quiet for Now

By mid-year 2007, Florida Power and Light had quietly dug a half dozen test wells, to try to determine whether the "tritiated water" (Tritium is radioactive Hydrogen) had begun to flow off-site. This stuff is enough of a hazard that a British Dr., Ian Fairlie, in a recent study released by Greenpeace, said people should not be consuming garden vegetables within 5 kilometers of a suspected leak site. I'm sure FPL wants to be a good neighbor; I wonder why they don't tell us more about that Tritium?

- Chris Nord, NH CAN

CNY-CAN

The movement for municipal Public Power in central New York State has made great strides this year through CAN's leadership. The Public Power Coalition came together last year to get Syracuse to form a city-owned and operated power company.

Despite massive public support and early political momentum, city officials backed away from the idea and failed to do anything in 2006. Through a grassroots campaign, CAN and the Public Power Coalition got the city to appropriate \$150,000 for a feasibility study. The Common Council voted unanimously to add the money to this year's budget, calling the Coalition's campaign "the best grassroots effort in Syracuse in years." The campaign is now focused on the Mayor, who has resisted the plan.

By owning its own power company, Syracuse could lower electricity rates by 35 percent—saving residents and businesses up to \$40 million per year. It also means Syracuse could invest directly in renewable energy and conservation, and 150,000 fewer people would be using nuclear power. When New York and other states de-regulated their utilities ten years ago, they believed it would lower electricity rates. In reality, it has had the opposite effect. Rates have skyrocketed as "market prices" are easily manipulated and routinely run several times higher than the actual cost of generating the electricity.

CAN also continues to support Entergy whistleblower Carl Patrickson in his fight for justice. Patrickson was fired four years ago for reporting safety problems and initially won a lawsuit against Entergy in 2005. However, Entergy won its appeal in September, with a shocking ruling that repaints the facts of the case and chastises the original judge for ruling in Patrickson's favor. Patrickson is appealing and CAN is publicizing the case and pressing for an investigation of Entergy managers who may have lied in court to cover up their retaliation.

- Tim Judson, Central NY CAN

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www.nukebusters.org

We Couldn't Do It Without Your Help! Our Thank You's

We want to thank all of our donors, our supporters and volunteers that make our work possible.

We also want to thank the foundations that have supported our efforts:

Resist

Ben and Jerry's Foundation

Ruth Brown Foundation

Van Itallie Foundation

Walk for a Nuclear-Free Future



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Highlighting the dangers of nuclear power, we chose to walk during the week of the anniversary of the accident at Three Mile Island, March 28, 1979. Again, the walk had many participants, great energy, and support. The end of the walk in Burlington was held at the Fire House with a potluck dinner and presentations by David Blittersdorf on windpower followed by Harvey Wasserman speaking about the dangers, as well as the alternatives, to nuclear energy. Deb Katz spoke about the great opportunity we had as citizens to replace Vermont Yankee with sustainable energy solutions. It was a standing room only crowd!

This past summer we again walked, beginning on Hiroshima Day and concluding on Nagasaki Day. We were sponsored and welcomed by 10 peace groups from Rutland to Middlebury, and from Montpelier to Burlington. Following these walks, activism in Vermont has really accelerated and communities are now initiating more actions aimed at shutting down Vermont Yankee.

- Hattie Nestel, MA CAN Organizer

Here's a Way To Help, and Get a GroovyT-Shirt

These one-of-a-kind, hand-made, batiked t-shirts and handkerchiefs are donated by the artist Debra Reger, Corinth, VT, to help CAN raise money for our work. With a donation of \$50 or more we will send you one of these beautiful t-shirts or handkerchiefs.

