

Sanitarian's Newsletter

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West Virginia Association of Sanitarians

President - Clarence Christian
Pres Elect - Stan Walls
Vice Pres - Gary Hamilton
Past Pres - Larry Main
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3 year - Mike Eltzroth
2 year - Linda Whaley
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EDITOR'S NOTES

I appreciate everyone's input into this newsletter. Response was positive from the last one, and I received several comments about it. The next newsletter is scheduled for release July 15th, so please try to submit an articles you have to me by June 30th. Address mail to me, Fred Barley, at 211 6th Street, Parkersburg, WV, 26101; FAX 485-7383, voice 485-1416.

GOOD VIBRATIONS -

submitted by Gary Hamilton
The cutting edge in dishwashing technology sends super-hot bubbles through water to kill germs and suck grime (literally) off dishes. Designed for commercial kitchens, the technology could save 7.5 gallons of water per cycle, \$75.6 million in energy costs, and untold drums of caustic cleaners (national), according to the Department of Energy.

Fitting the technology to household appliances may not be economical. Ultrasonic Products of Channel Island Harbor, California, expects its units to be hitting the market

later this year. GARBAGE - THE PRACTICAL JOURNAL FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, VOL V, NUM 1, P. 19.

WOOD WINS OVER PLASTIC - *submitted by*

Karol Wallingford
Everyone has urged cooks to cut on nonporous materials, typically plastic.

Supposedly, plastic boards give bacteria, such as *Salmonella* in chicken, less chance of escaping rigorous cleaning, thus reducing the chance that such bugs will survive to contaminate other foods. New research indicates that the safety advocates were wrong: Pathogens prefer plastic. Two microbiologists at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Dean O. Cliver and Nese O. Ak, began studying cutting boards in hopes of identifying decontamination techniques that might render wood as safe as plastic.

They were surprised when they quickly found that within three minutes of inoculating wooden boards with cultures of common food poisoning agents, 99.9% of the bacteria were unrecoverable and presumed dead. Under similar conditions, none of the bugs placed on plastic died. The present big concern is whether bacteria hiding deep within the wood might subsequently surface to contaminate the foods



on the chopping block. "As best we can tell, that isn't going to happen," Cliver says. The microbiologists hope to submit their findings for publication within the next few months. SCIENCE NEWS - VOL 143, P. 84-85

WVAS MID-YEAR MEETING - *submitted by*

Clarence Christian
A FDA sponsored course, "Special Problems in Food Protection," will be offered at this years mid-year meeting, May 4 - 7, 1993. The meeting will be held at Cedar Lakes, and should generate twenty-two and one-half (22) continuing education hours (CEH's).

Topics to be covered include communication skills, microbiology, HACCP, and time-temperature relationships. The cost of registration is twenty dollars (\$20.00). Room reservations can be made by calling 372-7860. Please make every effort to attend the business meeting at 12:20pm, on May 4th, because we will be voting on some proposed constitutional changes.



NOTE that the time mailed out on earlier memorandums indicated the business meeting would be held at 1pm. Because it is felt more time will be needed for the business meeting, Clarence has moved it up to 12:30pm.

UPCOMING IN-SERVICE MEETINGS - *submitted by*

Bill Harvey

Elinor Hurt Memorial Health Center, Beckley, WV; April 23, 1993; 9:00am-3:00pm; determining soils for septic systems, field trip to evaluate soils, learn about childhood lead poisoning - source and control, discussion and updates of pressing environmental issues; 4.5 CEH's

Holiday Inn, Clarksburg, WV - Multi-Flo systems; April 28th, 8:30am-4:00pm; 5.5 CEH's

INTERCEPTED EDITORIAL FROM THE MARTINSBURG "THE JOURNAL" - *submitted by*

Richard Wheeler

Strict inspection of food establishments is vital to restaurants, customers. Actually, it is a coincidence that The Journal has been running a series of stories about health inspections of local restaurants and food service establishments while the national media has been full of the tainted meat scandal in the West that has killed two children and sickened and seriously injured hundreds more.

We have not had such a tragedy in the Eastern Panhandle and if Twila Carr, Berkeley County health inspector has her way there will not be one, at least, not in Berkeley County. A by-the-book inspector, Carr has been closely monitoring food processing and cooking in the country for the past two years, and there has been, by all reports a substantial improvement in the cleanliness and cooking procedures among local restaurants and food handlers as a result.

The general public might suppose that Carr's work, like that of highway patrolmen, is not appreciated by those it monitors. Actually, close and strict inspections should be welcomed. The reason is obvious. Their business will be better in direct relationship to the public's trust that the food they are being served is safe. In other words, the better Carr does her job, the better the food business will be, even if individual rulings orders cause extra expense or bother.

No better example of the way this works could be found than in the West these days. According to published and televised reports, Jack in the Box fast food cooks were cooking their hamburgers to 140 degrees, when regulations required 150 degrees. At 150 degrees the E. Coli bacteria that can cause sickness would have been killed.

A timely inspection of cooking procedures at Jack in the Box would have not only a good thing for the affected children, but also for the fast food chain, the meat packing industry and meat purveyors in general. The reason is that all have suffered severely in the wake of the outbreak. The meat packing industry is especially hard hit, and it should be the first to insist on strict and frequent enforcement of health and safety standards at the their packing houses.

In the long run, their whole industry can be lost if the consumers worry about whether they will get sick with their next hamburger. The irony is that meat packers pushed for, and received from the Reagan and Bush administrations, permission to do more

self-inspections. The smart thing, of course, would be for the self-inspections to be far stricter and more efficient than government inspections.

After all, it is the packers livelihoods that are at stake. Anyway; the customers' confidence that food is safe is of primary importance to vendors and customers alike and that is why the work of Twila Carr, and her counterparts elsewhere, is so important. THE JOURNAL, FEB 17, 1993, WILLIAM M. DOOLITTLE, JR., EDITOR

CAN ANYONE TOP THIS? - *submitted by*

Barley

Gary Epling, of Jackson County, recently rolled his car past 310,000 miles. He bought his 1980 Toyota Celica new, in October of 1980 for \$7000. He still has the original engine, and has only replaced the fuel pump (three times) and the alternator for engine repair work. He has hit a deer, and warns everyone to watch where you park your vehicle when doing a bar inspection. It seems someone banged his fender while he was inside. If anyone knows of a sanitarian with more miles, please let me know.



DID YOU KNOW - BOTULIN - *submitted by*

Gary Hamilton

Did you know that botulin, the toxin produced by the single celled botulinum bacterium is the most poisonous substance in the world; that it is six million times more toxic than rattlesnake venom. Did you know that botulin has a molecular weight roughly 80 times that of insulin; that it

consists of one large poisonous protein accompanied by a group of smaller stabilizing proteins that prevent the large one from changing chemically and losing its potency over time.

Did you know that the U.S. Army began growing botulin almost 50 years ago for the U.S. biological-warfare program during World War II; that it proved ineffective as a battlefield weapon because it doesn't remain potent once it's exposed to air, though it could still be useful for sabotage in food that is eaten without cooking and as an aerosol in small areas. Did you know that the botulin toxin does its deadly work by attaching itself permanently to nerve endings; that once it is in place, neurotransmitters - chemicals that transmit nerve signals - are blocked from reaching a muscle, and that muscle quickly becomes weakened or, if enough of the nerves are blocked, paralyzed.

People who die of botulism generally do so because they suffocate after the chest muscles are paralyzed. Did you know that botulin, in very small doses, is an effective treatment for a whole class of human illnesses known as dystonias - uncontrollable muscle spasms that researchers suspect are caused by involuntary and excessive electrical impulses from the brain. DISCOVER - VOL 13, NUM 8 PP. 29-33

WVPHA UPDATE -
submitted by Fred Barley
The Executive Council of the West Virginia Public Health Association, Inc., met on January 14, 1993 at the Bonanza Restaurant at Weston. Laboratory Employees are still trying to gain affiliation with

the WVPHA. Dr. William Neal, APHA delegate, reported to the Council of the APHA meeting in November. The meeting deal with local Boards of Health. The theme for the conference was "Uniting for Healthy Communities."

Clarence Christian reported for the WVAS, and indicated that Environmental Health is concerned with the Health Care Planning Commission Report and will be planning for the annual meeting in September. Health Administration is considering establishing three awards this years besides the service award for the section. They are (1) Individual or Administrative Leadership (2) Organization Award and (3) Policy Award. Susan Morgan reported that the theme for this year's WVPHA conference will be "Public Health: Responding to Change." There will be a WVPHA regional meeting held in Parkersburg, May 20, 1993, at the Holiday Inn.

MID-OHIO VALLEY NEWS - submitted by Fred Barley

MOVHD recently hired Joe Leffman, formally from McDowell county to fill the Pleasants County Sanitarian position. The department awarded outstanding food service sanitation awards of merit to approximately 16% of their establishments. To qualify for the second annual award required that an establishment maintain an average score of at least 96% with no major violations noted during the year. Earl Burgess has been extremely busy keeping tabs on legislative bills. His help is most appreciated.

WVAS EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING - *submitted by Lee Thompson*

The meeting was held in Bridgeport, March 12, 1993. It was approved to help Clarence pay his registration fee of \$199.00 to enable him to attend the NEHA Conference in Orlando, Florida. Since this amount was within the \$200.00 limit previously approved by the general membership at the Annual Business Meeting at Oglebay Park, September 21, 1988, no further action is necessary. It was voted to allocate up to \$50.00 towards the purchase of a gift, to be donated at the NEHA auction.

The issue of allowing corporate memberships was discussed. Clarence is to check with a prosecuting Attorney to review the Association's Constitution and By-Laws to amend them to accept corporate, sustaining, and related memberships. It is hoped that the additional monies will shore up our treasury. It was approved to purchase new letterheads for the Association. Clarence advised that he had sent a letter to Judy Margolin, secretary to Governor Caperton, requesting that Larry Lewis and Mike Eltzroth be appointed to the Board of Registration.

UPDATE - USDA APPROVES PHOSPHATE TO REDUCE SALMONELLA IN CHICKEN - submitted by Gary Hamilton

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has approved trisodium phosphate (TSP) to reduce salmonella on chicken. TSP is an inexpensive chemical that has been used extensively by the food industry to make processed cheeses. Rhone-Poulenc, Inc., of

Cranberry, NJ, won USDA's nod to sanitize chicken using TSP in a new process called "AvGard." It involves immersing and spraying chilled whole birds with a solution of TSP just before final processing.

Trials were conducted across the country, evaluating the effectiveness of AvGard on more than one million chickens. Less than one percent of the treated chickens were found to have traces of salmonella and there was little or no TSP residue, says Rhone-Poulenc. The method costs only about a penny per bird. One unresolved problem: how to dispose of the TSP solution, which must be changed daily. Pouring it down the drain won't do because it contains phosphates, which upset the delicate balance of marine plant and animal life. Also, like irradiation, treatment with TSP won't eliminate the problem of potential subsequent contamination. ENVIRONMENTAL NUTRITION, VOL 16 NUM 2, P. 3.

EASTERN PANHANDLE NEWS - *submitted by Richard Wheeler*

An In-Service meeting was held on April 15 (Tax Day) at Mineral County Health Dept. in Keyser. An entomologist from WVU gave a presentation on "bugs," complete with specimens. She was followed by several speakers from Maryland Extension Service and Farm Bureau on food safety. We almost made it through an entire meeting without discussing sewage until Dave Dunlap brought up a new grease collector a septic tank manufacturer in Hampshire County is distributing. It is small and plastic and installs on the outlet side of the tank. Looks

like it would work fine for residential use. Jefferson Co. Health Dept. conducted their first Retail Food Sanitation Conference on March 23. Max Fisher, R.S. was guest speaker. They had a good turnout and received some positive treatment from the press, newspaper and television.

Rabies in the EP is always with us. With increasing growth the probability for contact is increasing. Several counties report positive animals this year.

Jefferson	2 cats 1 raccoon 1 person taking rabies treatment
Morgan	2 raccoons
Grant	2 raccoons
Hampshire	2 skunks
Pendleton	4 skunks
Mineral	2 raccoons 1 skunk 1 cat with 10 people taking shots

In most cases there was some contact with domestic animals, with Jefferson reporting 2 positive cats from the same area of the county. It looks like everybody played with that Mineral Co. cat. This deserves some interest. "Don't play with that stray!"

I have now observed my first radon mitigation. Four child care centers in Jefferson Co. are being mitigated. Work is being done by a private contractor certified by EPA and paid for by grant administered by Radiological Health. Judi Rice and I have taken slide photos of two of the job sites to document the mitigation. We are anxiously awaiting final radon testing results.

READER'S RESPONSE TO "AN EDITORIAL" -

submitted by Edward Shaffer
As I digested my copy of the January 15, 1993 newsletter my stomach began to pain me with symptoms parallel to E.coli 0157:H7. Has Gary Hamilton been peeking in my window or hiding under my bed? On second thought with the dust mites under my bed his sneezing would have been continuous. Indoor air pollution at it's max.

Thanks Gary for your uplifting article, I'm sure many of us could use the medicine prescribed. As chief Breeder of discontent and Melancholy Pups I needed your analysis of my character, I too would like to give credit to Mon County's Environmental Health Program. I also enjoyed the recent in-service as most of us old tobacco chewers did. I would like to say "Hail to the Chief" Ron, you are a good guy and I'm sure the stories Tom spins about you are purely fiction. On a down note we sanitarians should not retrograde to the rear for anyone even though our company colors may show a ruptured duck with "reclassified" lightly written across its chest.

We should prepare ourselves for regionalization and compose our own plan. Let's work together and move mountains. Separately we move only grains of sand and it blows right back. God bless us all...

PURE FOOD BILL DEFEATED - *submitted by Earl L. Burgess, R.S.*

On April 5, 1993 a number of dedicated sanitarians from across the state met at the State Capitol to do battle against SB

369/HB 2602, the "Pure Food Bill". This legislation, if passed, would have given the Department of Agriculture the authority for inspection and regulation of all food and food products used or intended to be used for human consumption in West Virginia. Other sanitarians were busy writing letters and making phone calls supporting efforts to table the legislation. Our efforts were successful.

Every sanitarian who actively supported efforts to defeat the "Pure Food Bill" is to be congratulated. This was the first time since our defeat of the DNR efforts to take over Local Health Departments several years ago that I have observed sanitarians come together in such a united effort. This effort was truly uplifting and gave me hope for our future.

We are facing profound change in our health care delivery system in West Virginia. None of us will go untouched. We will be required to change and adapt to the new reform system if we are to survive.

Sanitarians need to be united in their efforts today as never before. We must also be progressive and pro-active in our endeavors and always alert to the effort of others who would "Pick apart" our programs, as almost happened this year with the Department of Agriculture, if we want to preserve our future.

Our future is in our hands. Let's all continue to work in a united effort to preserve our future and come out of this period of Health Care Reform as survivors.

GUIDE TO SAFE

FAXING - *submitted by Sam E. Tarian*

Q. Do I have to be married to have safe fax?

A. Although married people fax quite often, there are many single people who fax complete strangers every day.

Q. My parents say they never had fax when they were young and had to write memos to each other until they were twenty-one. How old do you think someone should be before they fax?

A. Faxing can be performed at any age, once you can learn the correct procedures.

Q. If I fax something to myself, will I go blind?

A. Certainly not, as far as we can see.

Q. There is a place on our street where you can go and pay to fax. Is this legal?

A. Yes. Many people have no other outlet for their fax drives and must pay a "professional" when their need to fax becomes too great.

Q. Should a cover always be used for faxing?

A. Unless you are really sure of the one you are faxing, a cover should be used to insure safe faxing.

Q. What happens when I incorrectly do the procedure and I fax prematurely?

A. Don't panic. Many people prematurely fax when they haven't faxed in a long time. Just start over (most people don't mind if you try again).

Q. I have a personal and a business fax. Can transmissions become mixed up?

A. Being bi-faxual can be confusing, but as long as you

use a cover with each one, you won't transmit anything you're not supposed to.

MONONGALIA COUNTY NEWS -

submitted by John Hathaway

Two new sanitarians have been hired: Darryl Smith and Richard Barnett. Monongalia County Planned approach to Community Health (PATCH) and the Monongalia County Health Department were given an award for "Exemplary Action on Clean Indoor Air," by the West Virginia Tobacco Control Association. Anyone desiring more information about the Monongalia County Clean Indoor Air Regulation can contact the Monongalia County Health Department at 598-5131. If you need details, call me.

EBBS PRELIMINARY RESULTS -

submitted by Francis Holton

I had 30 completed computer accessibility survey forms returned which included 3 district offices and 34 counties. The total number of sanitarians covered by the survey is 99. (1)Nineteen said they share their computer, while 11 have their own environmental health computer. (2)Fifteen departments had a modem and fifteen didn't. (3)Twelve currently have communications software while eighteen said software would be needed. (4)Twenty-one said they could get a designated phone line, two said no, and seven were unsure. (5) Twenty-four respondents indicated that training would be needed while six would not need training. (6)Seventeen said they would be willing to bear the necessary local start up expenses, three would not, and eight were unsure.

A recent phone call requesting information gave me pause to reflect on the many times we sanitarians are called upon to assist the public by disseminating information regarding a variety of environmental and consumer issues. As we all know, there are tremendous resources available through the use of the phone. I decided to list and share some "freebie" 800 numbers to keep as a reference near the phone. These are all voice lines, not electronic boards which would justify a list by themselves. I hope this list may be of help.

West Virginia calls only:

1-800-642-9001 Governor's Office
1-800-423-1271 Bureau of Public Health - Epidemiology
1-800-922-1255 Bureau of Public Health - Office of Environmental Health
1-800-642-3634 State Hygienic Laboratory
1-800-642-3625 Poison Control Center
1-800-642-8279 Legal Services Plan
1-800-368-8808 WV Attorney General - Consumer Hot Line
1-800-642-8544 Public Service Commission - Utility Complaints
1-800-642-8650 Legislative Information
1-800-642-8208 Alcoholic Beverage Commission
1-800-642-8244 WV AIDS Program
1-800-666-0256 Lyme Support Network

National sources:

1-800-336-4797 National Health Information Center
1-800-426-4791 EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline
1-800-535-4555 USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline
1-800-251-3663 Food Protection Certification Program
1-800-638-2772 US Consumer Products Safety Commission
1-800-621-7619 National Safety Council
1-800-752-6367 US National Hazardous Materials Information Exchange
1-800-356-4674 US National Institute Occupational Safety & Health
1-800-255-6725 US Occupational Safety & Health Administration
1-800-332-4010 FDA Seafood Safety
1-800-767-7236 Radon Hotline
1-800-532-3394 National Lead Information Center
1-800-334-8571 EPA Asbestos Hotline
1-800-858-7378 National Pesticides Telecommunications Network
1-800-424-9348 Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (Superfund)
1-800-535-0202 Chemical Emergency Preparedness Program Hotline
1-800-424-8802 National Response Center (Oil & Chemical Spills)
1-800-342-2437 National Aids Hotline
1-800-458-5231 CDC National Aids Clearinghouse
1-800-922-9234 National Information System for Health Related Services
1-800-638-8480 National Library of Medicine
1-800-624-8301 EPA National Small Flows Clearing House
1-800-368-5779 US Health & Human Services Department- Inspector General
1-800-362-0494 Better Business Bureau
1-800-424-9393 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1-800-424-4000 Inspector General's Whistle Blower Hotline

submitted by Gary Hamilton

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