



NEWSLETTER



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WHY BAN DDT?

Editor's Note: In view of recent federal action to curtail the use of DDT and other harmful pesticides, the average citizen might get the idea that the battle is won. Ro Wauer's article explains—in terms of man's fight for survival—why these harmful pollutants will be a continuing world challenge for years to come. CR

By — Ro Wauer, Chief Park Naturalist
Big Bend National Park, Texas

You probably have heard as much talk as I have about the "terrible effects of DDT and the other hard pesticides." A number of people have become upset over a few Robins dying and the fact that DDT was actually found in Antarctic Penguins.

Yet there has not been a single human death that has actually been attributed to any of the hydrocarbons. Soviet scientists report nerve and liver disorders in people working in DDT factories. Disquieting evidence of high pesticide levels in leukemia sufferers has turned up. And the National Cancer Institute has found that DDT causes cancer in mice.

But can DDT actually be dangerous to West Texans? Well, my friend, it can—and is! The following are a few facts that have been dug up that, frankly, scare me to death!

No one knows exactly how long it takes DDT to break down in nature. It is estimated to have a half-life of at least 15 years. That is, if two pounds of it were spread over a field today, with none washing away, in 15 years we would still have one pound of active DDT in the soil; one-half pound left in another 15 years, and so on. Washed into a creek or river it eventually is deposited into the ocean.



Since its first use in the 1940's, thousands and thousands of tons of DDT have been released in the air, on the soils, and in the waters throughout the world. It is the most widespread pollutant we have; you and I are breathing it now, and we'll have it tonight with our dinners.

So what? Well, keep reading as long as you are this far. The first sign of trouble appeared in 1949; DDT was found in milk! Traces of DDT, not detected on alfalfa, are concentrated in the fatty tissues of cows and their butterfat. Since a mother's milk is made from fatty tissues, a nursing baby receives a concentration of DDT its mother ate and thus ingests even higher levels. In fact, the Federal Drug Administration would not consider mother's milk safe for human consumption if it were a marketable item, so high is its content of DDT.

The fact that a higher concentration of DDT can be found in the bodies of each successive species is a process called "biological magnification." Here's how it works. The Rio Grande carries only a few parts per million of DDT in its waters, yet many of the Rio's fish carry 10 to 20 parts per million in their bodies. That's a concentration of more than a million times

DDT Cont'd on page 4.

WOMEN'S ACTIVITIES: A SPECIAL REPORT

The following are excerpts from the report on NPS women's activities delivered to the Employees & Alumni Association Board of Directors on December 10. It was written and presented by Dorothy W. James, wife of William C. James. Western Service Center.

ACTIVITIES

- **NATIONAL CAPITAL PARKS:** The women in this region have never been officially organized, according to Mary Ellen Failor, but they do have one project. The seven kiosks scattered over Washington, D.C., are manned by paid personnel, usually college students, during June, July and August. This service is also needed in the spring and fall, so a volunteer group of fifteen park women have been helping one day a week.

- **NORTHEAST REGION:** The Saratoga Park Wives are assisting with the Revolutionary War Bicentennial. In addition, an information booklet was revised and updated to be made available for incoming families to introduce them to the park. (See January 8 issue of Newsletter for further information on their activities.)

- **SOUTHEAST REGION:** Clare Benjamin is particularly involved in the Environmental Awareness program. She has previewed films to discover those exceptional ones worthy of recommendation. In addition Clare has written to the American Civil Liberties Union to see if there is anything that can be done to

increase the chance to vote in national elections. (So often personnel are not eligible to register because of frequent moves.) The issue will go before the Supreme Court this fall. The women have compiled a list of superintendents' wives names, addresses and areas, and Personnel has this on file.

- **MIDWEST REGION:** Through Pat Iverson, the regional chairman, they have published their first edition of the "Roundup." They have 125 subscriptions and more are coming in. Their Badlands Women's Organization is called the Project Club. They made table favors and decorations for the Kadaka Nursing home for the Holidays.

- **SOUTHWEST REGION:** National Chairman Nancy Dayton is from this region. Their paper "The Smoke Signal" began its third year with almost 200 subscriptions. The Saguara National Monument women are editors this year. Regional Chairman Betty Peterson at the Superintendents' Conference in Santa Fe in July reported that 45 women attended their meeting. Their Alumni is very active—but with Hap Dodge heading it up, why not? The orientation letter and information booklet for new NPS wives will be used service-wide and will be printed in Washington, D.C.

- **WESTERN REGION:** Dagmar Robinson has been studying the scholarship fund and is sending out a questionnaire to all women in her region the first of the year.

- **NORTHWEST REGION:** They are just getting organized in this new region, with Julie Contor as the chairman.

Silhouette

BY —MISS DIANA SKILES

Beatrice Lunt



Whether a new employee needs training or a visitor wants information, Beatrice Lunt, guide at Colonial National Historical Park, is always a wonderful discovery.

Born in Wilburton, Oklahoma, when it was still Indian country, Bea grew up in New Mexico. After graduating from high school in Mountainair, she attended New Mexico Normal University and entered the field of teaching.

Bea's first teaching assignment was in eastern New Mexico near Tucumcari in a very desolate part of the state. She boarded with a family who lived on a ranch,

and only months later discovered they had a secret source of additional income: When she was away or asleep, they ran a still—making frequent trips across the border into Texas!

Later, Bea taught north of Santa Fe at Alcalde. One summer, friends persuaded her to go to Mount Desert Island, Maine, where she met and married her husband, Vernon. They lived there during the depression and had two sons: Vernon, a Naval Commander in the Submarine Service living in New London, Connecticut, and Neil, a Zone Commander and training officer for the Nevada Highway Patrol, living in Reno. Bea now has seven grandchildren—six girls and one boy.

Following the depression and army service, husband Vernon became a ranger in Acadia, superintendent of the Gettysburg National Cemetery, and a ranger at Colonial. He died suddenly in March 1956, and shortly after that Bea started her career with the Park Service at Colonial.

Bea feels that her work has been extremely interesting and rewarding. Each year, with the expert help of Ernest Washington, she decorates the buildings for Christmas. She also makes flower and fruit arrangements at the Moore House for special occasions. For Yorktown Day this year, Bea was assigned to make a laurel wreath for a vignette celebrating Lafayette's visit to America in 1824. She obtained the material for her wreath from the same laurel tree—in the present day Nelson garden—from which the original wreath was made.

Noble Samuel can best be described as the "goodwill representative" of Virgin Islands National Park. His most appealing characteristic is his way with people, combining a quick wit with ability to adapt himself to any situation and any place.

Noble's first service to the federal government was with the U.S. Army at the time of the Korean conflict. He terminated seven years' Army service as a non-commissioned officer, returned to the Virgin Islands, and married Elaine. They have one son, Gilbert.

Noble and Elaine left St. John and went to New York where he was employed a number of years in a New York City hospital. But there was always a longing, for home would always be where the mangoes grow, so the Samuels went back to their tropical paradise.

Upon returning to St. John in the Virgin Islands, Noble worked as a schoolteacher, taxi driver, bartender, policeman and in 1962 joined the National Park Service as a laborer. He moved on to lifeguard, park guide and is presently protection and public use assistant.

Obvious to all that know him, Noble's first pride and love is for his homeland and the 6,500 acre National Park that covers half of St. John Island. He has escorted people around "his island" by sea, foot, air and wheels. An important contribution to the park was his assistance in formation of the first underwater tour in the VINP at Trunk Bay.

Seldom will you find a man with interest and insight into a child's world such as he has. He touches the hearts of youngsters and makes them feel they are vital and keen figures in his life. Recently he was chosen key interest in the last chapter, "Nobly Done," in a book being prepared for publication by Doris Jadan, *A Child's Nature Guide to St. John*.

Community responsibilities include president of the local PTA, scoutmaster, superintendent of Sunday Schools and a production member of the art counsel. His hobbies include gardening, swimming and snorkeling.



ing, dancing and party giving, and his favorite is dramatic acting.

Each year dignitaries and just plain people from Everywhere, USA and from foreign countries write specifically asking his advice and assistance. He has made numerous guest appearances on radio and television and has been featured in many magazine and newspaper articles. Contributions to the park and the people with whom he works won him a superior performance award in 1967.



HOUSING APPROPRIATIONS

Guidelines recently issued by the Senate and House Appropriations Committees provide that the limitation on cost of employee housing—regardless of source of financing—in the continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii and the territories, shall be \$29,000. This limitation includes the engineering and design costs, but excludes provisions for utilities to the lot line. (Senate Report 91-420 & House Report 91-361)



SICK LEAVE EXPLAINED

The Civil Service Commission has amended sick leave regulations as follows:

"Sec. 630.407 Sick leave which is used in computation of an annuity for an employee shall be charged against his sick leave account and many not thereafter be used, transferred, or recredited."

All sick leave to the credit of an employee as of the date of his retirement (or death) and reported to the Commission for credit toward the calculation of annuity is to be considered as having been "used." Thus, no sick leave balance will remain, and the records should so reflect this fact. In the event such a retired employee is subsequently reemployed, his starting sick leave balance is ZERO.

The days of unused sick leave are used only in counting the number of years and months of service for annuity computation purposes; they cannot be used in computing the employee's high-3 average salary or for the purpose of meeting the minimum length of service required for retirement eligibility.

NEW RULINGS ON SAVINGS BONDS

Effective January 31, no savings bonds will be redeemed which have not been held for at least two months, the Treasury Dept. recently advised. Formerly this rule could be waived in cases of emergency or hardship. However, the incidence of early cash-ins has become more frequent, having an adverse effect on the savings bonds effort. Evidently many employees are having deductions made which exceed the amount they can afford to save.

If your financial situation does not allow you to hold bonds for a substantial length of time or until maturity, you may wish to reduce the deduction being made for bonds. Forms are available in personnel or payroll offices for changing bond allotments.

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higher than in their environment.

And the story doesn't end there. The birds and mammals that eat the fish contain 100 or more parts per million, five to ten times higher than the concentration in the fish. This magnification occurs throughout the food chain from the microscopic plankton in the water, to the minnows that eat the plankton, to the larger fish and the predatory birds and mammals, and man.

In birds, we know that DDT concentrations have upset their calcium-processing mechanism, causing them to lay eggs with a lethally thin shell. Those that feed upon fatty foods, such as fish and fowl, already have reached a danger point. America's population of Bald Eagles—our national bird—has decreased drastically. The once-numerous Peregrine Falcon is now extinct as a breeding bird in the East. And biologists found that the nesting success of white Pelican off the West Coast was zero in 1969. As fish-eaters, their concentrations of DDT finally reached a level that none of the thousands of Pelican eggs laid contained shells thick enough to survive.

Human beings reproduce considerably slower than the thousands of wild animals that already are starting to show effects from man's use of DDT. Their problems should be warnings enough. Such signs of the times, along with increases of cancer and other internal "problems" of man, must be acknowledged and something must be done about it. We certainly must become concerned with the effects of pollution upon our wild neighbors—because man is not far behind. For the first time, man has been placed on the world's endangered species listing.

The best that can be done is an immediate halt of the use of DDT and its relatives dieldrin, aldrin, heptachlor, lindane, chlordane, and endrine, some of which are more dangerous than DDT.

If you have any of these chemicals at home or at work don't flush them down the toilet; this is a fast route to the food chain. Don't throw them into the trash can, or burn your aerosol cans. The best way to dispose of pesticides, with the minimum of harm, is to place them in heavy plastic bags and bury them at least two feet deep in the earth.

Still not content? Nor am I! Because it's a pretty small percentage of the human population that is

actually going to do more than give this type of warning more than a casual thought. Therefore, there must be a national ban on all chlorinated hydrocarbons. They already are banned in Hungary, Sweden and Denmark, and in the states of Arizona and Michigan.* But it took lots of letters to appropriate representatives. Let's hope that it's not already too late!

*Maryland, California, and Wisconsin recently announced similar bans.

People on the move—

NEW PLACES

Allcock, Herman J., from Supv. Civil Engr., Yosemite NP, to Civil Engr., WSC
Barton, Thomas E., from Civil Engr., ESC, to Supv. Civil Engr., Natchez Trace Pkwy.
Beach, Warren D., from Supv. Pk. Ranger, Hopewell Village NHS, to same, Delaware Water Gap NRA
Campbell, Mary L., from Sec. Steno., Glen Canyon NRA, to same, Glacier NP
Canta, Aleord J., from Pk. Ranger, Albright TC, to same, Canyonlands NP, Arches & Natural Bridges NM
Carr, Troy F., from Constr. Rep., ESC, to Maintenance Spec., Great Smoky Mtns. NP
Crothers, George R., from Gardener-Landscape, NCP-Central, to same, Morristown-Edison Group
Mahurin, Joseph V., from Admin. Off., Sitka & Glacier Bay NM, to Proc. & Prop. Mgmt. Asst., Alaska Cluster Off.
Olsen, Herbert, from Supt., Shiloh NMP, to Hist., WASO
Points, Larry G., from Pk. Ranger, Albright TC, to Supv. Pk. Ranger, Hopewell Village NHS
Sund, William R., from Supt., Vicksburg NMP, to Prgm. Compl. Appraiser, WASO
Todd, David W., III, from Supv. Pk. Nat., Dinosaur NM, to Pk Mgr., Jewel Cave NM
Zollar, Lawrence J., from Asst. Pers. Off., WASO, to Dir., ESC

JOINING THE ALUMNI

Cecil, Louis E., from Guard, NCP, U.S. Pk. Police

Ray Martinez, Treasurer
Employee & Alumni Association
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20242

☐ New Member ☐ Employee
☐ Renewal ☐ Alumnus
☐ Other

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MEMBERSHIP RATES:	1 yr.	2 yrs.	3 yrs.
Regular	\$ 5.00	\$ 9.00	\$ 13.00
Alumni	3.00	5.50	8.00
LIFE MEMBERSHIP: \$100	FOUNDER MEMBERSHIP: \$1,000		

E&AA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Your National Park COURIER can withstand all kinds of criticism, but apathy will kill it! Frankly, an E&AA membership just a tad over 2,000 is hardly a vote of confidence. May we suggest that all employees and alumni join in a drive for 100 percent participation? With that kind of response, we can put your constructive criticism to work and come up with a truly viable and dynamic E&AA program, and a COURIER that will be fully responsive to your needs.