

CHE EMF Notes from Conference Call -- Monday, November 6, 2006

Attendees:

Jan Newton, Marne Glaser, Milt Bowling, Katharina Gustavs, Lavinia Weissman, Nancy Evans, Cindy Sage

Agenda Items

- 1) National CHE Conference
- 2) CHE Retreat and Core Members Discussion
- 3) EMF Consensus Statement
- 4) List Serve Organization (Marne)
- 5) Educational Website (Marne)
- 6) Disney Foundation (Lavinia)
- 7) Request for Resources/Information on EMF (Lavinia)

National CHE Conference: Title: Environmental Public Health: Science, Medicine, Prevention and Policy.

Nancy Evans relayed information about the very high quality of presentations made at the San Francisco National CHE meeting on October 13th. CHE Partners from around the US, together with researchers, clinicians and advocates attended; and presentations were made on Ecological Medicine and Health, Environmental Oncology, Environmental Cardiology, Science Meets Advocacy, and Chemical Policy Reform.

CHE Retreat and Core Member Discussion

Following the National Conference, about 25 people who compose the CHE Core Membership (founders and facilitators of working groups; and CHE staff) participated in a two-day retreat at Commonweal, in Bolinas. Sunday's agenda included presentations by several members, including Nancy Evans (the EMF Consensus Statement) and Cindy Sage (EMF direction, initiatives, etc).

EMF Consensus Statement (Nancy Evans)

The Consensus Statement was presented to the Retreat members by Nancy; there was discussion and concern on the part of some attendees that, in contrast to some of the other CHE consensus statements, there was no science section preceding the "action" recommendations. After a week of follow-up, it was recommended to CHE-EMF to hold the Consensus Statement as a draft (and post it on the CHE website as a draft) pending preparation of a solid science overview statement. Nancy also presented some statistics on membership of CHE-EMF (79 members from 8 countries and 17 states).

CHE-EMF Interests, Direction and Possible Initiatives (Cindy Sage)

Cindy presented a short overview where there is science and policy related to EMF (ELF and RF) that might be of interest to other CHE working groups. The CHE

National Conference presentations were notably silent about any EMF science/policy, and there were many areas where some cross-fertilization, particularly of science articles, might be useful to other CHE groups. This session was to introduce these ideas to the CHE Core Group and working group facilitators, so it was brief and general. There was some direction from the Core Group that EMF is a relatively unknown science; and that a better platform of information may be necessary before doing further work in this area.

Cindy will be working on a separate "science" initiative (the BioInitiative) and the results may be of some interest to the CHE Core Group and CHE working groups (expected spring/summer 2007).

List Serve Organization and Educational Website (Marne)

Marne discussed her suggestions to better organize email communications among group members. The suggestions include labeling the email "subject" headings with a) Research, b) Grassroots, c) Question, d) Action Alert or e) Group. This should allow us to better follow threads of conversation, segregate discussion on particular topics, etc. She also recommended writers delete long "threads" of conversation, rather than re-circulating them. She will send out her advise again (email dated Oct 15th).

Marne also recommended we look at a website at www.kidshealth.org. It is a heavily used website on children's health issues (350,000 hits per weekday). She sees it as either a model for CHE-EMF, or perhaps a website to which we can contribute articles and educational information. She will resend her email of October 22 containing details.

Disney Foundation (Lavinia)

Lavinia spoke about the opportunity she sees to contact the Disney Foundation (separate from the Disney Company) to alert them to the disconnect between the Foundation's new emphasis on children and health; while the Disney Company has (in the past) had plans to license their characters to cell phone companies, in order to market cell phones to children. Jan Newton is sending out a 2000-era article on the issue as background; Disney Company has since discontinued this effort; but it may resurface. Lavinia will distribute a Business Week article on Disney Mobile on the issue of mobiles and child safety. Nancy Evans has written an article titled "Calling All Parents" which discusses concerns about buying cell phones for children. She will update it, and attempt to find placement for the article before the Christmas buying season (as an individual, not as a CHE advisory).

Request for Resources/Information (Lavinia)

Lavinia has requested information on EMF class-action lawsuits, graphs that summarize the impact of toxins, a report on science and issues in mainstream consumer reports, and examples of good science/policy articles in other areas of environmental toxins.