

# The South Fork Groundwater Task Force

## NEWSLETTER



Summer 2002

### MESSAGE FROM CO-CHAIRS

This season has been busy for SFGTF. Our organic garden tour was informative and well attended. Indeed, we've been working hard on our educational campaign regarding the dangers of using toxic chemicals on lawns and gardens. We are running changing ads in the local newspapers with the lead-in phrase "**Did You Know?**" (see: page 2) presenting facts and figures about the use of pesticides. Similar ads are being aired on two local radio stations, WPBX [now, WLIU] which is a NPR station, and, WLNG.

We've appeared before the Suffolk County Legislature and met with elected officials in an attempt to get their support for groundwater protection legislation. More about that in some of the articles below.

We had our annual General Meeting and Organic Breakfast on June 15th 2002. The slate of officers was approved by the members: Julie Penny & Sue Avedon as Co-chairs, Cile Downs as Secretary and John Anderson as Treasurer. It was a chock-full agenda and we had trouble getting through it because of the lively discussion. We're planning on adding to the frequency of general meetings.

*Julie Penny & Sue Avedon*

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***WEBSITE: southforkgroundwater taskforce.org***  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & ORGANIC BREAKFAST



*Our members enjoyed themselves at our annual general meeting and organic breakfast. The goodies were provided by Provisions of Sag Harbor, King Kullen, Walbaums, and, prepared by Bette Lacina, Dale Haubrich, and Cile Downs.*



## **Did You Know?**

- **That 50%** of East End private wells and **23%** of public wells tested by the Suffolk County Department of Health Services show detectable levels of pesticides. SCWA's "Public" water and our "Private Wells" both get their water from the same place--the ground.

Check the health of your water by calling the Suffolk County Department of Health Services at 631-853-2250

**D.E.C. DROPS FUNDING FOR TESTING**

Much to the consternation of the Suffolk County Department of Health Services, County Legislators, SFGTF and other Environmental Groups, the DEC has pulled the plug on testing for pesticides in private wells on the East End. Sue Avedon, Kate Plumb, and Bob McAlvey testified before the Suffolk County Legislature's Environmental Committee as strong proponents for the continuation of funding by the County if the DEC doesn't reinstate the program. We have joined forces with other environmental groups in a campaign for the reinstatement of these funds.

**HEALTH DEPARTMENT WELL-TESTING PROGRAM, 1997-2001**

By Kate Plumb

In May 2002, the Suffolk County Department of Health Services (SCDHS) reported its findings to the County Legislature's Environmental Committee on the Pesticide Well-Monitoring Program that they and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) have been conducting since 1997.

There are three categories of wells tested: community, non-community, and private wells. *Community* wells—better known as “public water”—are wellfields that are provided by purveyors of the public water supply (eg. The Suffolk County Water Authority). *Non-community* wells supply water to schools, hospitals and large office buildings. *Private wells* are those on private property.

The objectives of the well-testing Program were:

1. to identify pesticide and metabolites that leach into L.I.'s groundwater.
2. to define where the impacts occur
3. to be a non-random sampling.
4. to obtain geographic coverage of both counties.

5. to target suspected heavy pesticide use areas-agricultural, industrial, residential and golf courses.

The program collected samples from less than half of the community wells (226). Of those tested, 23.5% (53) contained pesticides, in spite of the fact that there are activated carbon filters on 1/3 of these wells. Of the 834 private and non-community wells, 422 or 50.6% were found to contain pesticides. And, of those 50%, 38.7% of the private wells had multiple compounds. Some of the pesticides found in the wells at greater than the Maximum Contamination Levels (MCL's) are those that have been banned since 1983, or, earlier.

There is only one “true” MCL for only one compound, carbofluran. All the others use the arbitrary “standard” of 50 parts per billion (see letter below by hydrogeologist, Peter Dermody, on how the “standard” is set and why its arbitrary).

Our concerns about this study that still need to be addressed are:

1. that the MCL's are based upon healthy 165 lb. Males; and, that there have been no studies to determine MCL's for children, who are among the most vulnerable of the population.

2. that there have been no health studies of the effects of the degradates (breakdown products) of pesticides, nor, of the synergistic effects of the combination of these chemicals in the drinking water.
3. that there is no national database logging the occurrences of these chemicals, nor, on the effects of these pesticides and their degradates. Such a database is needed.

The Suffolk County Department of Health Services wants:

1. the DEC to extend the program. (The DEC says a trend has been detected and no further monitoring is necessary.)

2. the Suffolk County Legislature to fund the extension if the DEC will not (See: article above).
3. expansion of analytical capability, as such tools are needed in order to study pesticides and degradates that have the potential to leach.
4. monitoring of newly registered pesticides.
5. Cornell Cooperative Extension to give growers alternatives to pesticide that leach.
6. MCL's for degradates and combinations of these chemicals.
7. testing of private wells in the most vulnerable areas.

# **A L E R T !**

## **CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION**

By Sue Avedon

### *NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE:*

There are several bills in the NY State Legislature that need our support. The most promising, and, therefore, the one we should put most effort into, is a bill which would ***ban the use of pesticides for purely aesthetic and ornamental purposes***. This bill was introduced in the Assembly by DiNapoli and sponsored in the Senate by LaValle. Should this become law, it would apply to commercial lawn and residential applications, golf courses and governmental agencies, including schools. The bill is particularly important because it acknowledges the health risks of pesticides and herbicides.

We need to flood the State Senate with letters urging the passage of ***bill # S6561A*** which is presently in the Environmental Conservation Committee chaired by Senator Carl Marcellino. His address is 250 Townsend Square, Oyster Bay NY 11771. Letters should also be sent to Senate Majority Leader Joseph L. Bruno, Room 909 LOB, Albany, NY 12247.

On a personal note, I feel extremely gratified that the bill has gotten this far. I was one of four people who met with Senator LaValle to urge him to sponsor the bill in the Senate (there was no Senate sponsor) and was informed by his assistant a few days later that he had decided to do it. By all accounts, his sponsorship has made the passage of the bill a real possibility. After all of the frustrations we constantly face, the notion that our efforts may

directly impact on so important a law is what keeps us going!

### *U.S. CONGRESS:*

Senators Clinton and Reid in the Senate, and, Representatives Slaughter and Pelosi in the House, have introduced the Health Tracking Act of 2002 (S.2054/H.R. 4061) which seeks to establish a nationwide environmental health tracking network, and, that will work to address the critical gap that exists in understanding the prevalence and incidence of chronic diseases and environmental factors that may relate to them. Stay tuned for more information about this important initiative.

Senators Clinton, Reid, and others have introduced the "2001 Nuclear Security Act." If passed, this law would increase security around nuclear power plants; require that spent fuel rods be stored in dry casks rather than in open pools as is presently the case; and increase the evacuation planning zone from 10 to 50 miles. This is particularly significant to us on the East End because we "fall through the cracks" being 11 miles from the plant. The dry cask storage (which is presently being done in some European countries) would obviate the fear of an accident or act of terror directed at the spent fuel pools, which are the most vulnerable elements of nuclear power plants because they are virtually in the open. For more information about this bill or to get, or, sign petitions which are being collected, call the STAR Foundation at 324-0655.

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### **MOUNT SINAI'S AD CAPAIGN IN *THE NEW YORK TIMES***

It's nice to know the SFGTF is not alone in trying to alert the public to the effects that pesticides are having on our

health—especially children’s. The Mount Sinai School of Medicine’s Center for Children’s Health and the Environment weighed in with an all-important and enlightening series of full-page ads in *The New York Times* this spring and summer with headlines like: “More kids are getting brain Cancer—WHY?” about the rising incidence of brain, testicular, acute lymphocytic leukemia cancer from exposure to pesticides; “Pesticides could become the

ultimate male contraceptive—WHY?”—explores the frightening reproductive changes and abnormalities in animals and humans that is taking place because of pesticides in our environment. The Mt. Sinai Medical Center has a comprehensive website on this whole topic with all the scientific background for their *NY Times* ads. Check out this important website: [www.childenvironment.org](http://www.childenvironment.org).

### **FREE RESOURCE DIRECTORY AVAILABLE**

A directory of organic methods, products, gardeners/landscapers, and local stores who sell organic products is available from “The Neighborhood Network” at : (516) 541-4321, fax (516) 541-4401.

### **MORE MTBE SPILLS**

More contaminated spots of the gasoline additive have been discovered this year in private wells in Southampton and East Hampton. MTBE is a suspected carcinogen and highly mobile in groundwater and difficult to remove. (For private wells there are no filters that can remove it—the only choice being is to use bottled water or to hook up to public water if it is available). Wells with extremely high concentrations have been discovered in Bridgehampton and Hampton Bays (The Hampton Bays leak has entered Tiana Bay.)

### **UU GRANT**

We have received a grant of \$8500 from the Long Island Unitarian Universalist Fund, of which \$2500 was for a matching grant. And, thanks to our members, we were able to achieve that match. Thank you for your generosity; the goals of this organization could not be realized without your ongoing support.



Noted writer and biologist, Dr. Sandra Steingraber signs her latest book, *“Having Faith”* after delivering a lecture on the **harmful impact that chemicals, like pesticides, can have on the developing fetus.** A woman’s body is a baby’s first environment, and exposure to noxious chemicals through the placenta at a critical moment in fetal development (even within the course of a few hours when certain cells metamorphosis into becoming a particular organ) can have devastating consequences. Same with breast milk which is laden with pesticides. Ingestion of contaminated milk can threaten each crucial stage of infant development. When it comes to exposure, *timing* is all. Her previous book is: *Living Downstream: An Ecologist Looks at Cancer and the Environment.*

## **SUIT BROUGHT AGAINST AGWAY BY N.Y.S. ATTORNEY GENERAL**

The office of Attorney General Eliot Spitzer announced in June that it was taking legal action against Agway stores in Bridgehampton and Riverhead stemming from the repeated sales of illegal pesticides, the “last straw” being a sale last year in May 2001. (The suit is not against the current owners of the local Agways.)

## **SUFFOLK: WORST COUNTY FOR NON-COMPLIANCE**

By Julie Penny

In it’s latest report, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation in its inspection of agricultural establishments (vegetable growers, orchards, vineyards, sod farms, nursery and greenhouse operations) declared Suffolk the worst county in complying when compared to other NYS counties (For example, noncompliance upstate is 7% as opposed to Suffolk with 28% noncompliance). The report covered worker protection standards, pesticide-related requirements such as applicator certification, record-keeping, and the use of antisiphon devices at equipment filling stations to prevent backflow of contaminated water into a water source. As regards “antisiphon” devices, the report says, “At a minimum, 30 % of the agricultural establishments inspected failed to comply with this important measure.

This takes on added significance considering more than 50 pesticides and degradates have been detected in the sole source aquifer underlying Nassau and Suffolk Counties. In fact, in the eastern agricultural communities of Long Island, the pesticides most commonly detected are agricultural.

“It was also found that some growers have been using pesticides that are prohibited from use in Nassau and Suffolk Counties. Such prohibitions are

specifically designed to safeguard groundwater resources.”—NYSDEC

**NYSDEC: AMOUNTS OF PESTICIDES USED IN SUFFOLK**

The following information is taken from “Toxic Treadmill: Pesticide Use and Sales in New York State, 1997-1998” who used as their source the: “1998 NYSDEC Pesticide Sales and Database.”

**Amount of Pesticide Products Applied by Commercial Applicators and Sold to Farmers on Long Island- 1998\***

County	Sales to Farmers		Commercial Applicator Use		Total	
	Gallons	Pounds	Gallons	Pounds	Gallons	Pounds
Suffolk	89,874	631,856	440,247	2,142,782	530,121	2,774,638

\*In 1999, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation re-analyzed and recalculated the amounts of pesticides applied commercially for its 1998 data, making for even *greater* quantities than those listed above.

**USGS DATA**

Data taken by the United States Geologic Survey over the last 50 years in Nassau and Suffolk, and, more recently, on the South Fork, shows that even when taking into account the perturbations caused by drought years, the water table has been dropping.

**WHY GROUNDWATER PROTECTION IS THE HEART OF THE EAST HAMPTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

By Cile Downs

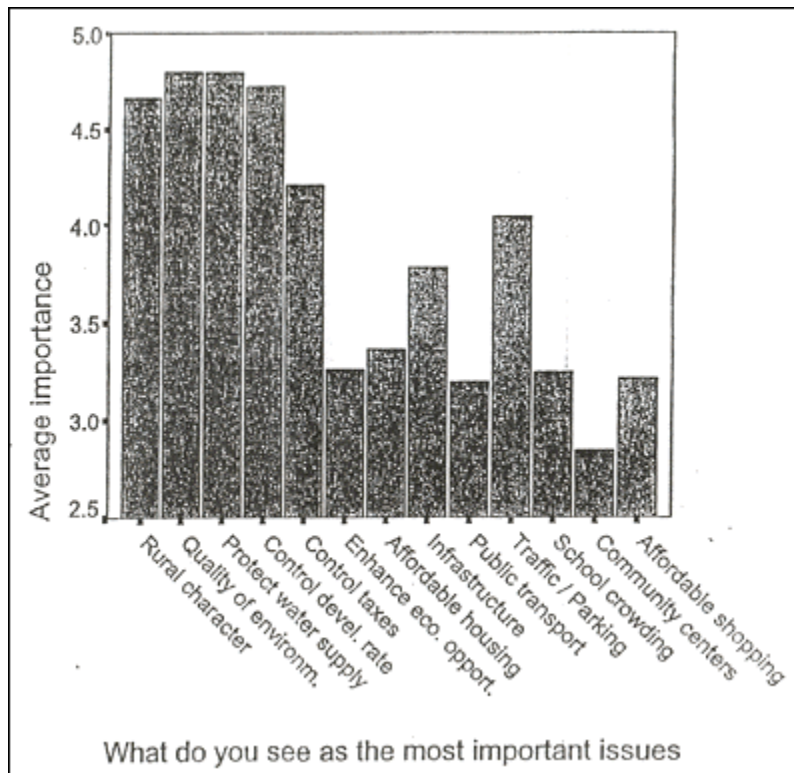
Two summers ago, a loose coalition of

groundwater protection and environmental organizations and concerned citizens hit the streets in both East Hampton and Southampton to gather signatures on an official petition. Its purpose was to put a referendum on the Nov. 2000 ballot requiring a groundwater protection plan in each town. There are rigorous standards for such petitions, and lawyer and state legislator, Fred Thiele, made sure everything was in order. They were presented to the town boards. They were ignored.

A town board that ignores a clear demand by a significant percentage of the voters had better offer *some* answer.

In East Hampton the solution was to promise groundwater protection in the revised comprehensive plan, then getting underway. The resolution creating the plan process conspicuously built it around groundwater and mandated a process of public input via subcommittees representing the major interests in town, plus public forums. Then, Lee Koppelman wisely conducted a town-wide survey, asking, for instance, what issues the citizens considered the most important. The outcome of *that* question is shown here:

GRAPH



Not only did groundwater preservation get the highest vote of any issue, but also environmental concerns occupied the top *four* positions. How could the people have been clearer about what they wanted?

As you have already heard, two members of the SFGTF board served on the environmental subcommittee, labored for a year, and report that many of their questions remain unanswered. The draft groundwater section of the E.H. Comp. Plan is unsatisfactory. The “innovative measures” mentioned in the resolution have not materialized. The target date for completion (April 2001) came and went unmet. Zoning, financing, taxation credits, regulatory programs and so on have been addressed inadequately, or, not at all. The final draft of the Comprehensive Plan Update has just been turned into the Town Board and neither subcommittee members or private citizens have been able to read it as of this writing (Aug. 5, 2002).

But this is not the end of our complaints. Were a perfect plan now on the books the question would remain: What will the Town Board be willing to do to implement it? Here we need an

apolitical desire for the long-term good of the town, which has not lately shown itself on the Board. Immediate political considerations, just as we see on the national level, govern the actions of those in power. Unless enough voters understand the issues well enough to threaten the political future of politicians who ignore their wishes---we will continue on this course.

### **ON BREAKING NEWS**

P.S. Interestingly enough, a legislative survey recently sent out by state Assemblyman Thiele included a question asking if the two towns should be required to implement a regional drinking water protection plan for the South Fork. **This question was answered in the affirmative by an astounding 80% of the respondents**, the highest score attained by any issue in the poll.

### **B & C GOLF COURSE**

Last February, after many years of controversy, the East Hampton golf course, situated in the Stony Hill area of Amagansett, cleared what seems to have been the last legal hurdle that stood in the way of its operation. A lawsuit filed by a coalition of private citizens and environmental groups against the Town of East Hampton was decided in favor of the Town. The plaintiffs, in an "article 78" action, claimed that the Town Planning Board, in approving the golf course, had violated provisions of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) by failing to order a full environmental review. But the judge in the case held that the Planning Board had taken a sufficiently close look

at the environmental dangers and made a reasoned determination regarding the environmental impact of the golf course. The plaintiffs are appealing the decision, so a reversal is still possible but seems unlikely as of this writing. In any event, the golf course is now open for play, and preparations for the construction of a clubhouse and related structures are well under way. Moreover, the course owners are free to operate the course without restraint and to use an approved list of chemicals to maintain fairways and greens as long as they abide by an Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPM) they adopted in settling an earlier lawsuit.

The controversy surrounding the golf course centers on its location. The course lies directly over a federally designated sole-source aquifer that supplies drinking water to thousands of people in the Amagansett and Springs areas of East Hampton and to the Suffolk County Water Authority's reserves. SFGTS' position is that the many different chemicals used to maintain the course—pesticides, fertilizers, and the like, some of them highly toxic—will eventually leach through the ground to contaminate the water supply, and that once that happens the damage will be irreparable. The DEC has warned that the use of toxic pesticides poses significant public health risks, particularly to infants, children, and the elderly. The worst of it is that the risks are not fully understood and are often simply overlooked or ignored. Indeed, ignorance and denial of the realities seems to be the rule, for local and county governmental authorities continue to allow chemicals to be used that should have been banned long ago.

## ***EAST HAMPTON LANDFILL***

The East Hampton landfill lies immediately to the west of, and, adjacent to, the East Hampton golf course. For at least ten years Town and County authorities have known that a plume of toxic substances was emanating from the landfill but, rightly, or, not, believed it was spreading very slowly, if at all, and that it posed no threat to groundwater. In the past year, however, the plume has widened—it now measures about 1,500 feet across—and has spread under ground beneath the golf course as far as Abraham’s Path and beyond. Its full extent and actual boundaries are still not known. It appears to be heading directly towards the community of Springs. Once it gets there, it threatens to contaminate private wells. Beyond that, it is likely to reach Gardiner’s Bay where it will undoubtedly affect the estuarine ecology.

The Town's hydrogeological consultants, until recently at least, maintained that the plume was deep enough underground—about 140 feet—to represent no threat to private wells, which generally extend not more than 100 feet deep. Independent experts, however, warned that a gap of only 40 feet was too narrow for safety and recommended that the Town take immediate action to deflect and decontaminate the plume. The issue has been aired at public hearings, but the Town has so far taken no action; the Board claims the reason is financial. On the other hand, if the plume migrated in such a way as to contaminate private wells in Springs and elsewhere, the Town would have to bring public water to affected homeowners, itself a

costly undertaking. But the Town's hand has now been forced. In tests made last September and again this March, a private well on Birdie Lane, just north of Abraham’s Path, was found to have low but increasing levels of a chemical called dichlorodifluoromethane. While there is apparently no proof that the chemical comes from the landfill, the Town is taking no chances. East Hampton Supervisor Jay Schneiderman has asked the Water Authority to extend public water to residents of Birdie Lane. The Town is underwriting the cost of the installation. The contamination of the Birdie Lane well shows once again how vulnerable the water supply is to the toxic substances heedlessly dumped on the ground. That's why we urgently recommend that the owners of the East Hampton golf course use no chemicals and go organic because even with the best IPM Plan, chemicals will eventually leach into the aquifer below.

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## **SOUTHAMPTON’S “DRAFT CRITICAL WILDLANDS & GROUNDWATER PROTECTION PLAN”**

By Julie Penny

After much public nudging, consternation and public outcry, a first meeting was convened on December 28, 2001, of the town-appointed members of the draft plan’s citizens advisory committee drawn from representatives of the SFGTF, League of Women Voters, Nature Conservancy, Noyac CAC, Peconic Land Trust, to name but a few. A year had elapsed since the Town Board had passed a resolution to create a plan, and, six months since representatives for these committees

were chosen. Another meeting was to soon follow, but didn't.

After constant complaining and petitioning the Town to continue with the committee meetings on the topic, Julie Penny was forced to bypass the Town and write to every individual representative that makes up the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). [TAC committee has representatives, from the USGS, The Town's Consultants, the Suffolk County Water Authority, etc.] Apparently, it had its effect and a meeting was finally convened by the Town. (Heretofore, there had been two meetings for the

## **NON-COMPLIANCE OF "THE BRIDGE" GOLF COURSE**

By Julie Penny

Just as suspected, a study of the documents grudgingly released by Southampton Town (through Freedom of Information Requests [FOIA]) indicate that "The Bridge" golf course was (is) not in compliance with all of the resolutions the Planning Board made in 1999 for its approval of Golf at the Bridge, nor with the recommendations of the 1999 Petrovic & Cambareri Report—which were incorporated into the Planning Board's 1999 approving resolutions, nor, with the "Monitoring Agreement" executed between the developer, the Town, and the Suffolk County Water Authority (SCWA). Adherence to the "Monitoring Agreement" was also a part of the Planning Board's resolutions. However, this didn't stop the Town from hastily issuing a "Certificate of

TAC and one for the CAC committee—at Penny's urging a joint meeting of the TAC & CAC was held in May 2002.)

Consequent to this meeting, we were only given 2 weeks to present our recommendations. (The Town and its consultants had 2 years to do so with no input from the public until December 2001). However, SFGTF made the deadline and handed in 17 pages of recommendations. It remains to be seen whether the Town will act constructively, or, engage in business as usual. Public hearing is set for Sept 10th.

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Occupancy" to the golf course on November 16, 2001 *before* the much awaited Dr. "Petrovic Report" was completed and made available to the Town Board on November 28, 2001, and to the public via FOIA requests on November 29, 2001, along with A Comprehensive Baseline Review provided by the developer. These two documents, amongst many others, when read side by side the 1999 documents show how very many instances of non-compliance there are.

## **LAWSUIT**

An Article 78 has been filed against the Town and Golf Course developers for the golf course having received a Certificate of Occupancy ["C.O.,"] without being in compliance. As per usual, they are trying to "dismiss" the case, not on substance—as in their many instances of non-compliance—but on the

procedural grounds of “standing”—i.e., their argument that the plaintiffs don’t live close enough to the golf course to be impacted by the golf course and therefore do not have “standing” in the eyes of the law. (In fact, the plaintiffs live in the immediate vicinity, and, downgradient to the groundwater flow from the golf course); and, that the plaintiffs should have sought administrative relief from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) within 60 days of the C.O being granted. (Not that the ZBA would have had any power to overturn the C.O. once it had been granted.) For deceit as usual, in their court papers the town tried inflating the distance between the plaintiffs’ residences to that of the 516-acre golf course property by measuring the distance from the center—“centroid”—as they stated in court papers—of the golf course property to the center of the plaintiffs’ properties.

They also misled the Court by trying to give the Court the impression that the golf course was confined to a small portion of the property, when, in fact, it’s design is such that it is spread over a great area including areas at the periphery of the property (and, therefore, close to the plaintiffs). Since their court papers are not under oath,

apparently they say whatever they please, *misleading as it is*.

## **NO OVERSIGHT**

Despite repeated requests by the SFGTF and the Noyac CAC, there continues to be no independent monitoring and oversight of the golf course. And, Freedom of Information requests to the Town indicated that they did not have in their possession test results which should have been given to them in a timely manner as per the monitoring agreement. This has been going on since I started making FOIA requests in 2000 (The town not having in its possession, information it was supposed to have). There is no justification for the Town not to have these test results in hand at the proscribed quarterly intervals. WHY do they tolerate this? Also, as per the Planning Board’s 1999 resolution and my FOIA request of May 2002—they have not received Audubon International’s “Environmental Audit” of the golf course. The “Environmental Audits” are different from the “Natural Resources Management Plan” [NRMP] (shoddy and misleading as the NRMP is) that was finally completed by the developer in September 2001 for Audubon.

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## **NITRATES RISING**

*From Zip to 3.53*

Nitrates are carcinogenic, they also cause “blue-baby syndrome” the inability of hemoglobin to carry oxygen.

Testing taken prior to the grassing of the golf course in July 2000 showed that there were no discernable levels of nitrates according to baseline testing conducted in 1998. Since 2000 fertilizers have been applied (and would apparently also be contained in the newly lain sod), “Monitoring Wells” on the golf course have registered the presence of nitrates—in one well as high as 3.53 ppm.

The ambient amount of nitrates in the water on the South Fork is about “1.5 ppm.” The nitrate level in Suffolk County Water Authority’s wells in Noyack (where “The Bridge” is located) is “ND” (“non-detectible”) or “.1”—absolutely pure! The wells of the majority of the residents in the area is .2 ppm (still pure). Under the terms of the “Monitoring Agreement” the golf course can be polluted with up to “10 ppm” of nitrates (10 ppm is the so-called “drinking water standard”). In heavily contaminated parts of Suffolk County, SCWA changes its filters when its public wells reaches only half that amount—only “5 ppm.” It is criminal stupidity that the Town will allow it to reach “10 ppm,” as the Town’s own Town Code has an **anti-degradation** section as concerns its “deep-water recharge aquifers” in its “Aquifer Protection Overlay District” wherein this 516-acre parcel is located; it’s a parcel of land that was also designated by the State of New York as a “Special Groundwater Protection Area”. The Town has

violated Article XIII, section 330-63 of its own Town Code, which mandates the town strive to protect its sole source aquifer in a pristine state.

## **CHEMICALS FOUND IN GROUNDWATER**

Likewise, the chemical Triadimenol (a break-down product of the fungicide Triadimefon) which was supposedly in the sod laid down, as well as applied afterward to eradicate turf disease had not shown up before the golf course was grassed in. Likewise the chemical “Paclobutrazol.” These chemicals have been detected in a lysimeter and a monitoring well (MW-4).

## **HYDROGEOLOGIST WEIGHS IN ON CHEMICAL CONTAMINANTS** (letter excerpt)

*Peter Dermody, Senior Hydrogeologist at the environmental consulting firm, Enviroscienc Consultants, Inc. wrote to SFGTF in regards to the Triadimenol and Paclobutrazol. It reads, in part:*

- “I have reviewed the information regarding the soil and groundwater issues related to the site. I have found that two chemicals, triadimenol and paclobutrazol, have been detected in the groundwater at well MW-4 at The Bridge golf course. This contamination has occurred after only one season of operation.
- Triadimenol had previously been detected in a site lysimeter

(which is a device to collect water from the shallow depths just beyond the root zone that has passed through the soil in the root zone).

- The detections of the chemicals in the groundwater demonstrate that paclobutrazol and triadimefon (which degrades to triadimenol) that is applied to the surface of the golf course is leaching through the soil column and into the groundwater.
- There are no state groundwater standards for the chemicals detected in the groundwater since there is a lack of research on which to base a standard. There is a guideline of 50 parts per billion (both chemicals are below this guideline) that is applied to any chemical for which insufficient data exists to determine a standard. Chemicals for which insufficient studies exist generally have much lower thresholds (most standards for similar chemicals are between 1 and 5 parts per billion). Therefore, the guideline of 50 parts per billion provides no assurance that consuming levels below this guideline will not result in adverse health effects.
- The computer groundwater modeling that was performed by Environmental and Turf Services” [the golf course’s consulting service]” which was performed to demonstrate analytically that the groundwater would not be impacted failed to predict the groundwater

contamination that has been found.

- Residents in the area north, northeast, and northwest of the golf course have the potential to be impacted by these chemicals since the groundwater contamination is flowing in a generally northerly direction at a rate of up to approximately one foot per day and into an area of numerous residences that use private wells for drinking water.”<sup>1</sup> “Residents who ingest drinking water that contains these chemicals have the potential for adverse health effects. In addition, since the groundwater modeling has been shown to be ineffective in preventing groundwater contamination, the potential exists for other chemicals used at the golf course to result in further contamination of the groundwater. It should be noted that pest management problems generally increase as a golf course matures, therefore, the quantities of chemicals used are likely to increase as a golf course matures, therefore, the quantities of chemicals used are likely to increase. This may compound the existing groundwater contamination problems.
- It should be noted that the existing monitoring well network at the golf course is capable of monitoring only a

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[<sup>1</sup> These wells, with the exception of those with small amounts of iron, have pristine water—SFGTF].

very small portion of the groundwater beneath the golf course. Therefore, since chemicals are applied throughout the area of the golf course, it is very likely that other groundwater contamination exist that have not been detected due to a lack of a sufficient number of monitoring wells...”

Peconic Bay Rally, July 2001



John DiStefano successfully enlisted the help of Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton in preventing the EPA from putting Rowe Industries’ “pump & treat” water into Ligonee Creek during its clean-up of the Superfund Site, which would have changed the ecology of Sag Harbor Cove. Pictured left to right are Senator Clinton, Assemblyman Fred Thiele and John DiStefano.



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