

News from the ALASKA CENTER FOR APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY
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Our mission is to promote research and education for Alaskans in sustainable economic development.

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Democracy School, Oct. 10-12, Wasilla
General Public Presentation - Corporations Versus Democracy, Oct. 12
APU Grant Hall
ACAT partners with Valley Community for Recycling Solutions

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BIONEERS IN ALASKA: CREATING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES
A conference - October 13-16, 2005 University of Alaska Anchorage

EARLY REGISTRATION ENDS SEPT. 21!! www.sustainak.org

During these trying times, I'm happy to be involved in an effort that focuses on hope and optimism. Join us in viewing a stellar gathering of leading scientific and social innovators of our time. Speakers via satellite from the 15th Annual Bioneers Conference in California include:

Bill McKibben * Thom Hartmann * Janine Benyus * David Orr * Omar Freilla * Ohki Simine Forest * Bernice Johnson Reagon

22 local workshops, including:

Sustainable Energy Systems * Growing Alaska's Economy * Green Building * Gardening Organically * UAA's Alaska Native Oratory Society * Healing Racism * Sustainable Community Start-Up Guide * Corporations & Democracy * The Sacred Feminine * Citizenship & Political Action in Alaska * Sustainability at Alaska's Universities * Making Biodiesel * Alaska Native Science & Engineering * Alaska Earth Institute * Food You Can Trust & Holistic Nutrition * Spirituality in Nature * Holistic Treatment of Cancer & Synthetic Hormone Exposure Precautionary Principle *

Students may attend plenary sessions for FREE!

For more information or to register: www.sustainak.org

info@sustainak.org
907-334-9630

** Early registration ends Sept. 21! Seating is limited! **

Sponsored by:
Alaska Center for Appropriate Technology
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The Inner Dance Yoga Studio
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency

DEMOCRACY SCHOOL in ALASKA

As a result of viewing Thomas Linzey's speech titled "Corporations Versus Democracy" (one of the plenary presentations at the 2004 Bioneers conference), several of us decided to stage a "Democracy School" here in Alaska. At the most fundamental level, Democracy School addresses why democratic self-governance is impossible when corporations wield constitutional rights to deny people's rights, and how we are able to rectify these wrongs. Democracy School was created by Thomas Linzey of the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF) and Richard Grossman, co-founder of the Program on Corporations, Law and Democracy.

Democracy School "teaches a paradigm shift, a dramatic new way of looking at our role as citizens in a democracy, and how to assert our inalienable rights as a sovereign people. Attendees explore the limits of conventional regulatory organizing and learn how to "reframe" single issues to confront the rights used by corporations to deny the rights of communities, people, and the earth. Lectures cover the history of people's movements and corporate power, and the dramatic recent organizing in Pennsylvania by communities confronting agribusiness, sewage sludge, and quarry corporations."

This event represents a bit of a shift from the usual activities sponsored by our group, but I felt it was important to try to bring this School to Alaska because there are many issues facing Alaskans where corporate power can hinder our ability to promote ecologically sustainable communities. I am collaborating with Pam Miller at Alaska Community Action on Toxics, and we have targeted people active in conservation and environmental law.

The School will run October 10-12, in the Wasilla area, and many thanks go to Harvey and Sandy Bowers for making the Agate Inn available for the school, and to Ellen Vande Visse for her generous financial support. Senior instructors Linzey and Grossman will also make a presentation for the general public (see below), and I will present a synopsis of the School at the Bioneers conference. If you want more information please visit <http://www.constitution411.org/dschools/alaska.html>, or call Mark at 907-373-0909.

PUBLIC PRESENTATION: CORPORATIONS VERSUS DEMOCRACY

"Seizing the Reins: Corporations, 'We the People', and Building Sustainable Communities" - featuring Thomas Linzey and Richard Grossman.

Wednesday, October 12, 7 PM, APU's Grant Hall (presentation is free)

In pointing out the failure of our collective work in attempting to control corporate behavior through the regulatory arena, a speaker once declared that the "only thing that environmental regulations regulate is environmentalists." Given that environmental regulations, contemporary labor laws, and the regulatory system itself create an energy sink for community activists (complete with tax deductible compliance costs for corporations), it's a small wonder that a more fundamental movement - of communities challenging the very power and authority of corporations to make decisions impacting nature, jobs, production, and the economy - hasn't taken hold in the United States. In small, rural areas of Pennsylvania, however, that movement is finally beginning to build. It is being built not by seasoned, long-time liberal activists, but by rural municipal officials, farmers, and ordinary citizens - people tired of continually watching corporate lawyers invade their Counties; people tired of getting rolled by corporate lawyers, corporate projects, and corporate law. Starting with corporate hog farms and land applied sludge being rammed into unwilling rural communities, these rural regions have begin to confront the fact that governing decisions today are made by a corporate few - to the detriment of community majorities - and that the law and the Constitution empower those corporate few to usurp community majorities.

This presentation will explore and examine how corporations - and a corporate class - are now shielded by the Courts and the legislatures when community majorities attempt to seize the reins; how an organizing model based on peoples' movements of the past is now being applied in Pennsylvania; and how this model has the capacity to transform all of the ostensibly "single" issues across the country into ones focused on vindicating the decision making authority of 'We the People' to build environmentally and economically sustainable communities.

Thomas Linzey founded the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF) in 1995 to assist communities in rural Pennsylvania threatened by corporate assaults. An attorney in the vanguard of rights-based organizing and litigation, he is breaking new ground working towards the establishment of government of, by and for the people of the United States of America. He is CDC's chief legal advisor.

http://www.constitution411.org/natl_dem_schl/main/natl_ds.html

Richard Grossman is co-founder of the Program on Corporations, Law and Democracy (POCLAD), author of many books and articles, and widely recognized as a leading innovative researcher and thinker on corporations and democracy.

ACAT BEGINS PARTNERSHIP WITH VCRS ON NEW RECYCLING FACILITY

I have recently begun working with Mollie Boyer at Valley Community for Recycling Solutions to help develop a new recycling facility. The facility will be a high-performance "green" building that will include state of the art renewable energy and "waste" treatment systems designed for both function and visibility. The goal is to develop a zero-waste, zero net-energy facility with not only efficient materials processing (key to economic viability), but "transparent systems" to demonstrate these technologies to school and community groups. ACAT will act as project manager to develop conceptual designs and develop funding proposals and partnerships. This is an exciting prospect! Stay tuned, and if you have questions or comments please contact Mark at m.masteller@acat.org or 907-373-0909.